

ALBERTA	Answers
1. When did regional planning begin and describe why it began?	<p>1. The land use framework (LUF) (Alberta's current approach to regional land use planning) initiative began in 2006 and was completed in 2008 with the release of a provincial planning document called: <i>Land-use Framework</i>.</p> <p>Land use planning was initiated to reduce the prevalence of land use conflicts and to balance competing economic, environmental and social demands. According to the Government of Alberta, at the regional level, plans will set the economic, environmental and social outcomes for the regions. Each regional plan will articulate desired outcomes for a region, which should reflect and integrate provincial policies and objectives that have been set by Cabinet. In turn, the plan will demonstrate how major provincial strategies will align with each other at the regional level (Government of Alberta, 2008).</p>
2. Describe the state of regional planning in the jurisdiction.	<p>2. The Land-use Framework created seven regions for Alberta based on the major watersheds in the Province, with boundaries aligned to best fit with existing municipal boundaries and the natural regions. Only one region has an approved land use plan.</p> <p>The Lower Athabasca Regional Plan (LARP) was approved on August 22, 2012. It became effective on September 1, 2012. According to the Government of Alberta, the Lower Athabasca Regional Plan (LARP) is a comprehensive, forward-thinking and legally binding roadmap that enhances the Alberta government's environmental management, addresses growth pressures and supports economic development. The regional plan considers the cumulative effects of all activities on air, water and biodiversity. It establishes new environmental frameworks with limits to protect air and surface water quality and increases the total conserved land within the region to more than two million hectares (Government of Alberta n.d.).</p> <p>According to some authors the Land-Use Framework is deficient and needs to be improved in a number of key areas in order to address current and future land use challenges (Droitsch, Kennet & Woynillwicz, 2009).</p>
3. What legislation guides the planning process? and describe the links to other legislation.	<p>3. The <i>Alberta Land Stewardship Act</i> supports the Land-Use Framework and establishes the legal basis for the development of regional plans (Government of Alberta n.d.).</p> <p>Planning on private lands is primarily governed by the <i>Municipal Government Act</i> and instruments made under its authority (Government of Alberta n.d.).</p> <p>The implementation of regional plans must follow the laws of Alberta. All decisions that implement regional plans will be made through existing laws. All rights to appeal, requirements for due process and rights to compensation</p>

enjoyed by landowners and rights holders under these laws are not changed by the LARP (Government of Alberta n.d.).

the Government of Alberta will continue to meet Alberta's legal duty to consult aboriginal communities whose constitutionally protected rights under section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 (Canada) are potentially adversely impacted by development (Government of Alberta, 2008).

The Land-use Framework will create a new regional planning structure and affect many laws and policies that guide decisions by provincial ministries, municipalities and land users. Legislation to clarify roles, responsibilities and processes and give authority to plans and policies that emerge under the framework is needed. Developing that legislation and amending existing laws is a priority for the Government of Alberta (Government of Alberta 2008).

The scope of the legislation will include;

- establishing the Land-use Secretariat and Regional Advisory Councils and defining their mandates,
- outlining the purpose, process and content for regional plans,
- defining the approach to cumulative effects management for the purpose of regional planning,
- supporting the use of conservation and stewardship tools, and
- defining the authority of regional plans, once approved.

A significant number of consequential amendments to other legislation (Municipal Government Act, Public Lands Act, Forests Act, etc.) will also be required (Government of Alberta, 2008).

Other key pieces of legislation:

A number of key pieces of legislation include:

- ***Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*** – Provides for the assessment and regulation of activities to minimize their environmental impacts, based on principles including continuous improvement and pollution prevention. Activities are designated based on their level of risk, where activities with higher risks are subject to increasing levels of regulatory oversight.
- ***Water Act*** – Provides for the allocation and use of Alberta's water resources and the protection of rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands.
- ***Climate Change and Emissions Management Act*** – Provides for the management and reporting of emissions of carbon dioxide, methane and other specified gases, and requires measurable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions for specified activities.
- ***Public Lands Act and Public Lands Administration Regulation*** – Provides for the setting of land disturbance standards and land conservation tools in support of biodiversity management.
- ***Forests Act*** – Provides for the sustainable management of Alberta's forests, including a legislated requirement for reforestation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife Act – Provides for harvesting limits and designation and recovery of species at risk. • Provincial parks legislation – Plays an important role in protecting natural diversity and intact habitat for supporting biodiversity, in addition to ensuring a wide range of recreation opportunities and tourism experiences. • Alberta Fisheries Regulation – Provides for harvesting limits. • Mines and Minerals Act – Governs the management of rights in Crown-owned minerals, including the levying and collecting of bonuses, rentals and royalties. <p>In addition to legislation, a number of strategies—such as the Clean Air Strategy, Water for Life, Alberta’s Plan for Parks and the Land-use Framework—provide high level direction about air, water, land and biodiversity management goals and how Alberta will achieve these goals (Government of Alberta, n.d.).</p>
4. What is the composition of the planning body?	<p>4. For each land-use region, a Regional Advisory Council is established. Each Regional Advisory Council is comprised of members with a cross-section of social, economic and environmental expertise and experience. These individuals bring local insight and perspectives on present and future land-use activities and challenges in the region. The mandate of the Regional Advisory Council is to provide advice to Cabinet regarding the regional plan. A project team, representing Alberta government ministries and agencies, will work with the Land Use Secretariat to develop the regional plan (Government of Alberta, 2009).</p> <p>As an illustration from the The Lower Athabasca regional planning process: Seventeen people from industry, agriculture, environmental interests, aboriginal (Members from Treaty 6, Treaty 8 and the Métis Settlements) and other groups were on the Regional Advisory Council for the Lower Athabasca regional planning process. Members were expected to provide their advice, insight and perspective.</p>
5. What land do the land use plans apply to?	<p>5. Land use plans apply to Crown and Private lands in the planning region.</p> <p>As an illustration from the Lower Athabasca regional plan: On public lands, direction under the Lower Athabasca regional will be delivered through existing legislation such as <i>the Public Lands Act, the Forests Act and the Provincial Parks Act</i> and through existing tools such as integrated resource plans, access management plans and forest management planning. These further define access to and use of provincial Crown land, and focus on operational activities that reflect the regional priorities and direction (Government of Alberta, n.d.).</p> <p>Municipal governments maintain their responsibility and authority for local land-use planning and development on all lands within their boundaries. This includes the creation of municipal development plans, area structure plans and land-use bylaws. This delegated authority will remain with municipalities. Municipal planning and development decisions will, however, have to be in alignment with the regional plan to achieve the regional outcomes established</p>

	<p>in the plan. Métis Settlements likewise maintain their responsibility and authority for local land-use planning and development on settlement patented land (Government of Alberta, n.d.).</p> <p>Lands under federal jurisdiction, such as First Nations lands, national parks and military lands, also need to be considered. Although a regional plan will not direct activities on these lands, it must consider the long-term needs of these areas and how they may impact desired outcomes in the region (Government of Alberta, 2009).</p>
<p>6. Describe the jurisdictions</p> <p>a. planning process (i.e what are the stages)</p>	<p>6a. The diagram in Appendix 1 illustrates the model in which land-use planning and decision-making would be conducted within the Land-use Framework. It begins with provincial policy direction guiding the development of regional plans. At times, and depending on the issue, a region will be strongly directed by provincial interests. (Government of Alberta, n.d.).</p> <p>Example from the Lower Athabasca regional planning process</p> <p>The Regional Advisory Council will start by conceptualizing the region in broad terms. It will provide advice on what the region should look like over the long- term and how activities in the region should be planned.</p> <p>As the Regional Advisory Council is informed by data, modelling projections and provincial policies about the region, it will refine its advice in more focused and specific terms.</p> <p>Guidance from Cabinet will be provided in stages, framing the work of the Regional Advisory Council as it progressively narrows its focus from broad to specific questions and issues. In turn, the Regional Advisory Council will feed back advice to Cabinet, which will inform the development of the regional plan. The planning process is an evolving conversation between Cabinet and the Regional Advisory Council as the Regional Advisory Council addresses important and complex questions about land use in the region (Government of Alberta, 2009).</p> <p>The development of Lower Athabasca regional plan used a three phase consultation process which gathered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input on the region's issues • Feedback on the advice from the Lower Athabasca Regional Advisory Council; and • Feedback on the Government of Alberta's Draft Lower Athabasca Integrated Regional Plan.

b. associated planning products.	<p>6b. Each regional plan will contain the same main components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profile of the Region The plan will summarize the current state of the region, discussing key economic, environmental and social considerations and trends in land use. Major issues facing the region now and in the future will be highlighted, with particular attention to the next decade. • Policy Context The plan will explain the context in which the plan is being created. This includes key policy direction and instructions provided by Cabinet that framed the plan's development. • Regional Vision Statement The plan will set out a vision that describes the desired future of the region. This vision must support the outcomes and principles of the Land-use Framework. • Regional Outcomes The plan will outline integrated outcomes that qualitatively describe what the Regional Advisory Council wants to achieve at the regional level to support the three outcomes of the Land-use Framework: a healthy economy supported by our land and natural resources; healthy ecosystems and environment; and people-friendly communities with ample recreational and cultural opportunities. • Objectives and Goals The plan will describe what must be done to achieve the regional vision and outcomes, and it will set quantitative, measurable targets and thresholds in this regard. The plan will also identify trade-offs and choices that will be made in the region to balance economic development with environmental and social considerations, and it will provide rationale for these choices. • Strategies, Actions and Approaches The plan will also recommend possible regulatory and non-regulatory approaches that could be used to achieve the plan's objectives and goals. • Monitoring and Reporting The plan will outline how the Alberta government will monitor, track and report on the quantitative targets and thresholds that have been established in the plan (Government of Alberta, 2009).
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<p>7. Describe how the information gathering stage of the planning process is coordinated amongst the planning body.</p>	<p>7. Planning process relies on science, evidence and experience, including traditional knowledge of aboriginal peoples. The Alberta Government acknowledges that accurate, timely and accessible information is essential to good land use planning and decision making (Kennet, 2009). The Government of Alberta will collect the required information to support land-use planning and decision-making, and create an integrated information system to ensure decision-makers have access to relevant information (Land-Use Framework, 2008).</p> <p>Information management</p> <p>To ensure planners, decision-makers and Albertans have timely access to relevant information; the Government of Alberta will create an improved Integrated Information Management System that monitors the state of the land and the status of land use in the province. This will be done by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • building on existing information sharing initiatives to ensure timely and practical access to information; • reviewing and improving protocols for information sharing, taking into consideration proprietary and sensitive information; and • incorporating scientific and traditional ecological knowledge to inform land and natural resource planning and decision-making (Government of Alberta, 2008). <p>The Government of Alberta will facilitate the establishment of a network connecting researchers, practitioners, institutions and programs to address strategic needs and priorities for the Land-use Framework. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing a virtual centre of excellence or other appropriate mechanism to provide a focal point for land-use knowledge and information, • identifying research needs (e.g., economic, environmental, and social), • improving technology and knowledge transfer, • improving capacity for practitioners to use technology and be aware of best management practices, experience and knowledge, • developing tools for continuous improvement (e.g., scenario models and other simulators for decision support, etc.), and • exploring opportunities for using traditional knowledge along with scientific data (Government of Alberta, 2008).
<p>8. Describe how conflicts between:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the governments are addressed 	<p>8a. Information not found.</p>

b. the stakeholders are addressed	8b. Information not found.
c. others involved, i.e. overseer and planning body	8c. Information not found.
9. Describe how decisions are made amongst the planning body throughout the planning process.	<p>9. The Land-Use Framework states that decision making “will be informed by science, evidence and experience” and will be “collaborative and transparent” (Land-Use Framework, 2008). During the planning process some policy objectives may conflict with each other. Some will have greater relevance in one region than in other regions. Some policy objectives will be more achievable in certain regions and less achievable in other regions. An important part of the Regional Advisory Council’s work is to sort out these issues, based on the guidance it receives from Cabinet about the region.</p> <p>Guidance will include elements such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General directions on priorities for the region; specific policies that should be considered by the Regional Advisory Council; • Qualitative and quantitative assumptions that the Regional Advisory Council should follow; • Possible land-use conflicts that must be reconciled; • Key land-use questions on which Cabinet would like the Regional Advisory Council’s advice. (Government of Alberta, 2009).
9a. Describe who is employed to conduct the planning work, i.e. contractors, planning board staff, etc.	9a. Information not found.

10. Describe the role of the body who oversees the planning process	<p>10. The provincial government will create a Land-use Secretariat and establish a Regional Advisory Council for each region. Cabinet will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide provincial oversight of regional planning, • review and decide terms of reference for regional plans, • review and make final decisions on regional plans, • ensure integration of provincial land-use related policies, and • ensure regional plans are implemented to achieve provincial outcomes (Government of Alberta, 2008). <p>The Alberta government's Land Use Secretariat will oversee the development of each regional plan. It will provide policy analysis, research and administrative support to the Regional Advisory Council (Government of Alberta, 2008).</p>
11. Describe how the process is funded.	11. The Government of Alberta will ensure that the Land- use Secretariat and regional planning processes are sustained through appropriate resourcing (Government of Alberta, 2008).
12. Describe the role that the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provincial/Territorial government play during the planning process. 	12a. Planning and decision-making in Alberta are carried out under various provincial legislation and policies. These are applied by a range of decision-makers including Alberta government departments, boards and agencies, and municipal governments responsible for making decisions about activities in the region (Terms of Reference - The Lower Athabasca regional planning process, 2008). Regional plans will be reviewed and approved by Cabinet, and they will become official policies of the Government of Alberta (Government of Alberta, 2009).

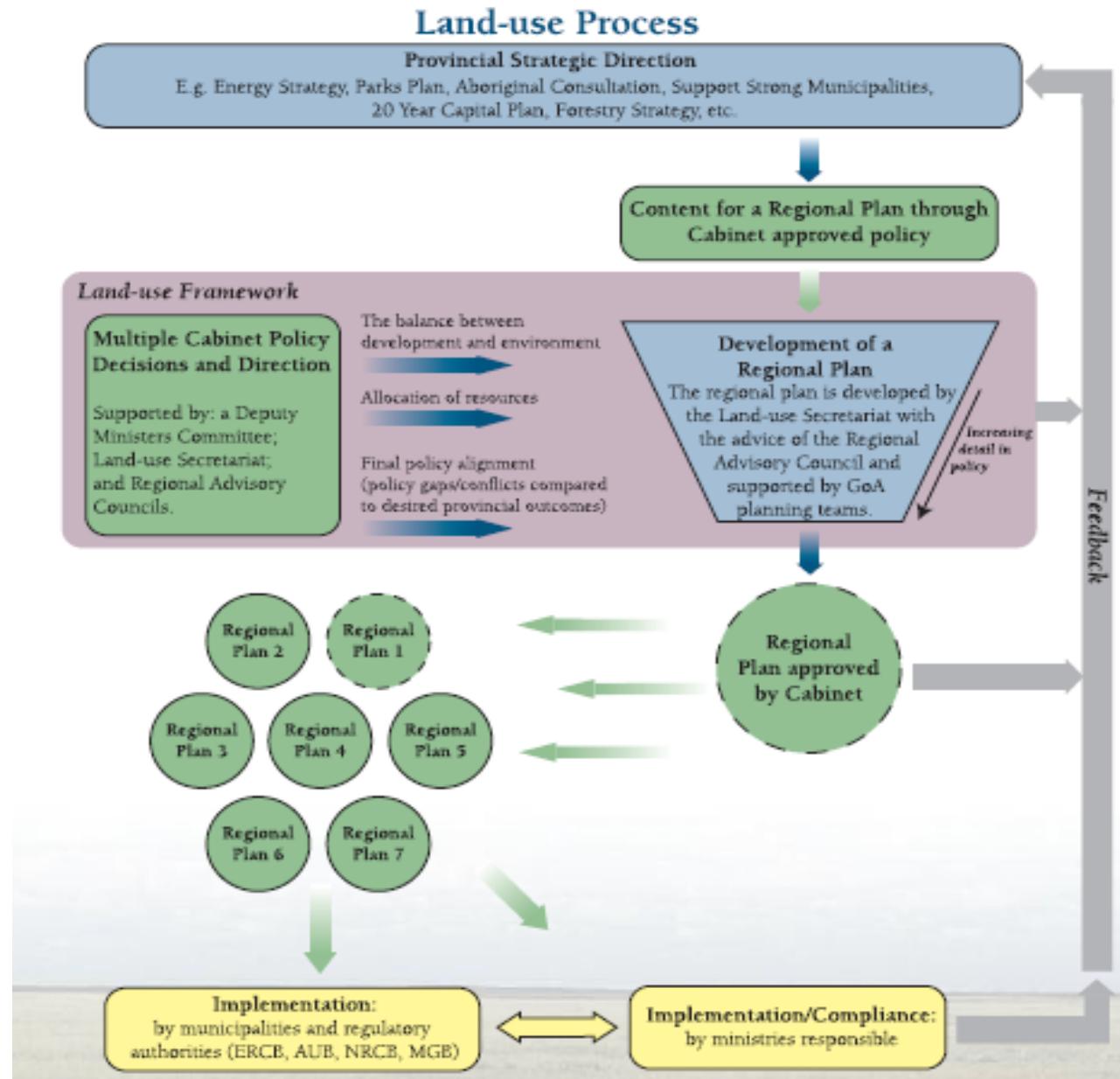
b. First Nation(s)/ First Nation government(s) play during the planning process.	<p>12b. First Nations are Consulted throughout the planning process (Government of Alberta Land-Use Framework, n.d.).</p> <p>Aside: Efforts to build First Nations capacity have been underway for several years and include programs such as the Traditional Use Studies Program and the First Nations Consultation Capacity Investment Program, which are administered by the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations. By investing in the gathering and maintenance of information on First Nations land uses, Alberta has also helped prepare First Nations for increased dialogue in regional planning (Government of Alberta, 2008).</p>
c. Stakeholders	12c. Albertans, land owners and land users work with government (Kennet, 2009)
And describe how these groups interests are communicated to the planning body?	Provincial interests are communicated to Regional Advisory Council's regarding the economic, environmental and social expectations for the region in the context of the entire province, to ensure that the regional plan is consistent with the Alberta government's vision, objectives and priorities for the province. (Government of Alberta, 2009).
13. Describe the land designation system used in the jurisdiction and comment on the consistency of the designation from planning region to planning region in the jurisdiction.	13. The Land-Use Framework states that Cumulative effects management will be used at the regional level to manage the impacts of development on land, water and air (Government of Alberta, 2008).
14. How does the land designation system provide management direction? i.e. how do land users	14. Albertans expect municipalities and provincial ministries to act in a way that is consistent with the direction set out in the regional land use plan (Government of Alberta, 2008).

interact with the approved plan.	
15. What are the stages of the approval process for a regional plan?	15. Final decision on regional plans rests with Cabinet. Once Cabinet approves the final plan local governments, provincial departments and other decision-makers will need to follow. Once the regional plan is approved, the Alberta government will determine what action will be taken to implement the plan (Government of Alberta (2009)).
16. Who is responsible for plan implementation and review?	16. Various governments, ministries and agencies will work together in an integrated manner as they develop the required system and tools to support implementation of the regional plan. While the following strategies and actions each fall primarily into the mandate of one or more ministries, it is important to note that a government-wide approach will be taken to implement the strategies. This is part of the shift to a cumulative effects management system as envisioned by the Land-use Framework (Government of Alberta, n.d.).
a. How often are the plans reviewed?	16a. At the broadest level, each regional plan will consider a planning horizon of at least 50 years. The plan will be designed to be effective for a 5 to 10 year period, after which it will be reviewed and updated as needed to address the realities of the day (Government of Alberta, 2009).
b. How are variance and amendments handled?	16b. Broad policy direction and the approval and amendment of regional land-use plans are Cabinet functions, subject to political accountability. To address specific implementation challenges, Alberta has created a “trilateral process” involving senior representatives from industry, First Nations and government (Government of Alberta, 2008).
17. What is the average cost of regional planning processes in the jurisdiction?	17. Information not found.

References

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Appendix 1 Land use Planning Process



Source Government of Alberta 2008