



bhpbilliton

resourcing the future

Jansen Project

Community Readiness Study Summary

February 2012

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HZSD	Horizon School Division
km	Kilometres
OCP	Official Community Plan
PIER	Prairie Innovation Enterprise Region
REACT	Regional Authority of Carlton Trail
RM	Rural Municipality

DEFINITION OF TERMINOLOGY

Subdivision	A division of land that will result in the creation of a surface parcel, or the rearrangement of the boundaries or limits of a surface parcel (Saskatchewan Ministry of Municipal Affairs 2011d).
Concept Plan	A detailed layout of an anticipated development for an area based on expected road design, location and capacity of services, drainage needs, density or type of development, phasing, and land use allocation (Saskatchewan Ministry of Municipal Affairs 2011b).
Servicing Agreement	A legal contract that a municipal council may require with a subdivision application... With such an agreement, council accepts responsibility for maintaining services in a new subdivision in exchange for the developer installing the services needed for the subdivision (Saskatchewan Ministry of Municipal Affairs 2011e).
Official Community Plan	A comprehensive policy framework to guide the physical, environmental, economic, social, and cultural development of the municipality or any part of the municipality. A community plan is a growth management strategy for a municipality (Saskatchewan Ministry of Municipal Affairs 2011a).
Property tax exemption	A full or partial retraction of property tax that would normally be collected from a property owner.
Facultative lagoon	Type of stabilization pond using a natural process to treat wastewater.
Reverse osmosis system	A water filtration system used to remove a large number of contaminants commonly found in water. Dissolved particles are removed by the filtration process including most minerals, metals and many organic impurities.
First Nation	Entities formerly referred to and legally recognized in the federal Indian Act as “bands.” Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution (1982) protects the existing Aboriginal and treaty rights of First Nations and two other distinct groups of Aboriginal peoples, Inuit, and Metis.
Reserves	Land set aside by the federal government for the use and occupancy of an Indian group or Band. Legal title rests with the Crown in right of Canada.
Aboriginal	Refers to those persons who are identified with at least one Aboriginal group, as defined under Section 35 of the federal Constitution Act (1982), including the First Nation, Metis, or Inuit peoples of Canada.

Municipality	The term is used to refer to a legal entity; in Saskatchewan it is a city, town, village, or rural municipality.
Rural Municipality (RM)	A Rural Municipality (RM) is an administrative district consisting of an elected council who provide essential services within their area. An RM typically consists of about nine townships, each defined by an area of 9.6 square kilometres (6 square miles).
Indirect employment	Employment in associated supply industries serving the direct industry.
Induced employment	Increased employment that will result from an increase in business activity from direct and indirect project employees spending their incomes.
Transitional housing	Housing intended to provide the support needed for temporary occupants to move into long-term housing. Transitional housing is usually offered as part of a transitional program.

Community Readiness Study Summary

List of Contents

List of Abbreviations.....	1
Definition of Terminology	2
1. Overview and Study Objectives	6
2. Study Region.....	7
3. Regional Overview	8
3.1 Planning.....	8
3.2 Infrastructure Summary.....	9
4. Community Summaries	10
4.1 City of Humboldt	10
4.1.1 Planning	10
4.1.2 Infrastructure	10
4.2 Village of Muenster	10
4.2.1 Planning	10
4.2.2 Infrastructure	11
4.3 Town of Lanigan	11
4.3.1 Planning	11
4.3.2 Infrastructure	11
4.4 Town of Wynyard.....	11
4.4.1 Planning	11
4.4.2 Infrastructure	12
4.5 Town of Watson.....	12
4.5.1 Planning	12
4.5.2 Infrastructure	12
4.6 Town of LeRoy.....	12
4.6.1 Planning	12
4.6.2 Infrastructure	13
4.7 RM of LeRoy.....	13
4.7.1 Planning	13
4.8 Village of Jansen and RM of Prairie Rose.....	13
4.8.1 Planning	13
4.8.2 Infrastructure	13
4.9 Village of Punnichy	13

4.9.1	Planning	13
4.10	Village of Drake	14
4.10.1	Planning	14
4.10.2	Infrastructure	14
5.	Stakeholders	15
5.1	Developers.....	15
5.2	Financial Services.....	15
5.3	Educational Services	15
5.4	Health Services.....	15
5.5	Enterprise Region	16
5.6	Provincial Government Agencies	16
6.	Fort McMurray	17
6.1	Overview of the Experience	17
6.2	Lessons Learned	17
7.	Conclusion	19
8.	References.....	20

1. OVERVIEW AND STUDY OBJECTIVES

BHP Billiton commissioned the Jansen Project Community Readiness Study (the Study) to investigate the capacity and readiness of communities near the proposed Jansen Project (the Project) to adapt to the expected increase in the regional population. In the fall of 2011, BHP Billiton consulted with municipal governments, provincial government, regional services providers, and other stakeholders to understand current capacities and existing constraints, as well as concerns and opportunities as identified by the communities themselves. The Study, the results of which are summarized in this report, incorporates the information shared by these stakeholders.

The specific objectives of the Study are to:

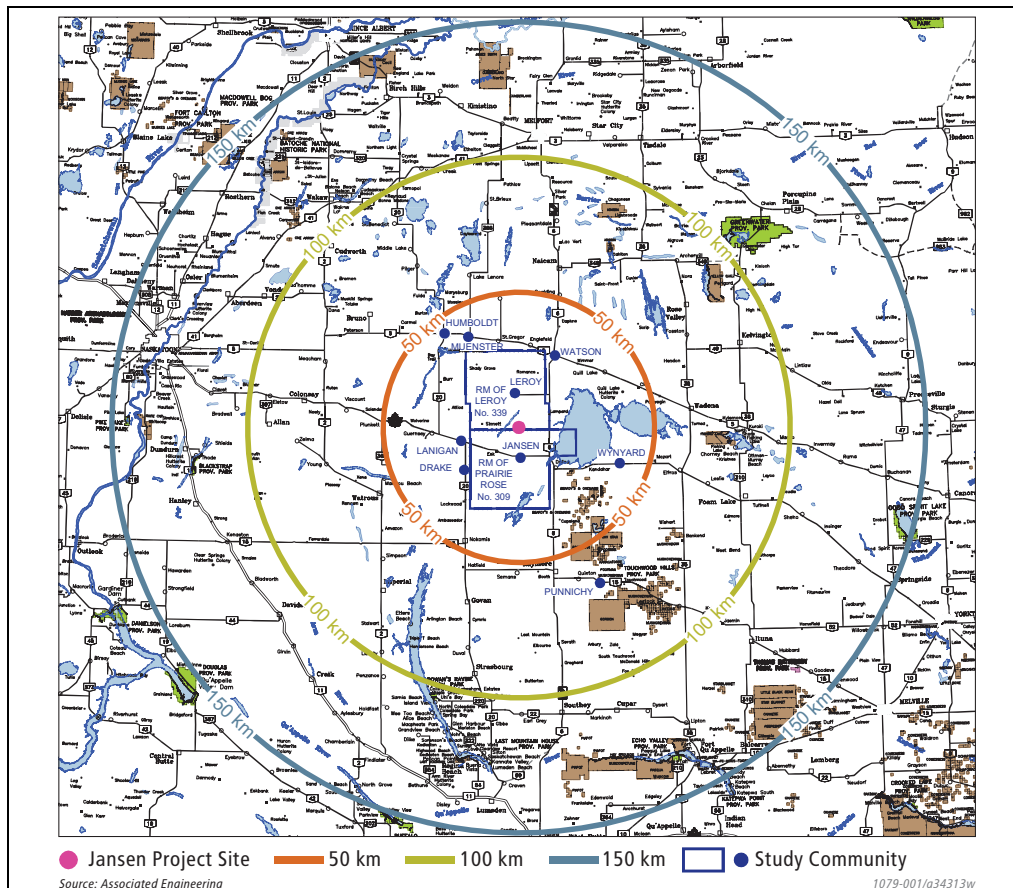
- identify and describe current community infrastructure, services, and housing capacity and needs;
- identify and describe municipal plans, actions, and allowances for the further development of infrastructure, services, and housing;
- assess and evaluate the existing plans, actions, and allowances, and describe the likely challenges within each affected community; and
- as a case study, describe the lessons learned from Fort McMurray's (Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo's) past experiences, challenges, and constraints in the provision of community services, infrastructure, and housing resulting from that municipality's rapid growth due to the development of the oil sands.

2. STUDY REGION

Figure 2-1 illustrates the 11 communities selected to make up the study region as a result of their proximity to the Project, the potential level of impact by the Project, and their potential to benefit from Project-related employment. The study communities, all within approximately 50km of the Project, consist of:

- the Village of LeRoy;
- the Village of Jansen;
- the Regional Municipality (RM) of LeRoy;
- the RM of Prairie Rose;
- the City of Humboldt;
- the Town of Wynyard;
- the Town of Lanigan;
- the Town of Watson;
- the Village of Muenster;
- the Village of Drake; and
- the Village of Punnichy.

Figure 2-1. Study Region Communities



3. REGIONAL OVERVIEW

A number of changes are taking place across the Province of Saskatchewan associated with the expansion of the commodity sector, which is contributing to a growing economy and population. Provincial trends are reflected in the region in which the Jansen Project (the Project) is located, where increased opportunities in mining, oil and gas, agriculture, and manufacturing industries create challenges for the provision of community infrastructure, housing supply and affordability, and the provision of community and social services.

3.1 PLANNING

The Project is expected to directly employ approximately 500 people at the start of operations in 2015, increasing steadily to a maximum of approximately 1,050 people by 2023 (Rescan 2010). The development of the Project will result in further opportunities and challenges in the region as an estimated 4,500 to 5,500 new residents are expected to move to local communities by 2023. The growth represents an increase of about 35-45% over that period, from a current regional population of about 12,400 in 2010 (Saskatchewan Ministry of Health 2010) to a population of about 17,000-18,000 in 2023. This projected growth occurring within the local communities will result from direct, indirect, and induced employment because of the Project, and does not take into account other growth that may occur unrelated to the Project. Although local communities are enthusiastic about potential opportunities, some concerns have been expressed about further pressures on the region's infrastructure and services.

Community capacity and amenities to support and attract growth resulting from the Project varies across the local communities. With comparative commuting times among local communities and a general acceptance of commuting in the area, distances are predicted to have modest impact on Project employees' choices of residence. It is believed that the provision of community amenities and services will serve as the dominant draw for employees.

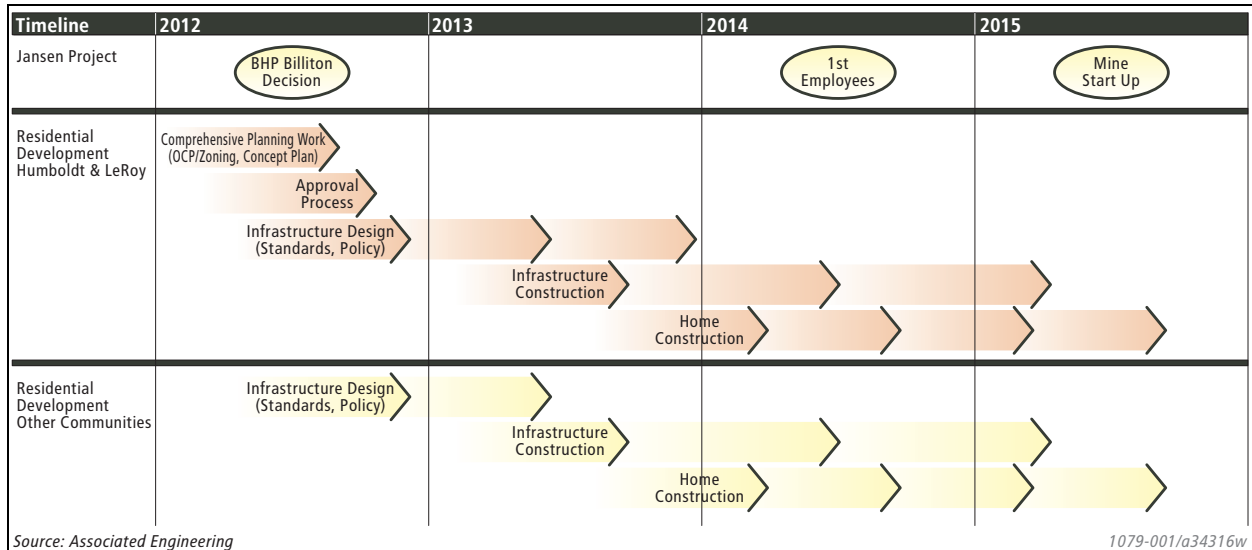
Humboldt is evolving as the hub and residential community of choice as a result of its scale, amenities, services, housing continuum and supply, availability of developers to invest, and future growth potential. Other communities will likely also attract new development as led by Wynyard and, within their capacity, Watson, Lanigan, LeRoy, Muenster, Jansen and others. Some country residential development will likely occur in the Rural Municipalities (RMs) of LeRoy and Prairie Rose.

Overall, the local communities have the capacity and are well-positioned to support the projected growth they will attract over the next 10 to 15 years. Currently across the region there is capacity for new housing development (based on lot availability) to support up to an additional 4,000 people. This new housing development capacity does not account for the additional capacity that exists in each community with infill lots or the potential for higher density housing, which could achieve results with better use of existing infrastructure.

In communities where existing new housing capacity and infill lots or higher density development may not be sufficient to meet growth demands, further community planning and infrastructure upgrading will be required as growth occurs. The planning and investment required to accommodate this long-term incremental growth is reasonable to achieve in the communities over a number of years; instead, the main challenge is addressing the initial influx of Project-related growth expected near the start of operation in 2015 or sooner.

The projected timeframe and process for residential development in the local communities and their alignment with BHP Billiton’s general timeframe for the Project is illustrated in Figure 3.1-1.

Figure 3.1-1. Community Land Development Process



3.2 INFRASTRUCTURE SUMMARY

The majority of the local communities are well positioned for growth in the next 10 to 15 years and the relationship between infrastructure needs and projected growth is well understood. Solid waste management by the Regional Authority of Carlton Trail (REACT) is nearing capacity; however, it is expected that REACT will manage this as it works towards locating its future facility. With respect to water and sewer infrastructure to support new housing development, it is important for communities to consider that servicing agreement charges and development levies are based on the capital costs for services created by development, and that allowances should be made for long-term maintenance and service costs to infrastructure. Overall, the municipal water treatment and wastewater systems within the communities will accommodate the projected population growth.

4. COMMUNITY SUMMARIES

The following provides a summary of the findings of this study with respect to the planning and infrastructure readiness of the communities for growth.

4.1 CITY OF HUMBOLDT

4.1.1 Planning

The City of Humboldt is the largest centre in the area, serving as a regional hub for commercial, recreational, and health care services. Humboldt's population in 2010 was approximately 6,000, with the vision to grow to a population of about 10,000 within the next 10 to 20 years. The Official Community Plan (OCP) was updated in 2008, and a strategic plan adopted in 2010. The city has implemented a range of initiatives to address increased demands on housing capacity and commercial services. No longer acting as a developer, the city encourages developers with capacity. Private and public investment into the community has occurred over recent years including: the new Humboldt District Health Complex (serving as the primary health facility for the region), a new high school facility (underway), elementary school expansion, a new hotel, and a seniors assisted living complex. Additional private investment in residential and commercial development is currently being planned. The City of Humboldt is in a strong fiscal position with financial capacity and limited debt. Consideration could be given to the development of concept plans and increased planning capacity to respond to anticipated accelerated growth pressures in a sustainable and timely manner. The City of Humboldt has expressed concerns over increased social issues and traffic resulting from population growth and the Project.

4.1.2 Infrastructure

The City of Humboldt is well positioned to accommodate growth levels anticipated by the Project, although some additional infrastructure planning is needed. The city's potable water storage and pumping system will require some upgrades to accommodate growth. The city's wastewater lagoon is currently permitted to a population of 8,000 at which time expansion will be required. The current landfill site of the Regional Authority of Carlton Trail (REACT) will soon reach capacity and a new facility will be required. Additional effort is expected to manage stormwater in the northwest areas of the city as growth continues. The city completed a traffic study in 2009 which identifies a number of traffic issues along Highway 5 and Highway 20.

4.2 VILLAGE OF MUENSTER

4.2.1 Planning

This community of 350 offers, generally, more affordable housing prices and property taxes as compared to the City of Humboldt. Muenster has a seniors housing complex, though much of its older population is choosing to move closer to medical services in Humboldt. Younger families are moving to Muenster with residents commuting to adjacent communities for employment. The community has noticed increased traffic along Highway 5 and has concerns over the further effect the Project will have on highway traffic. Muenster provides Kindergarten to Grade 12 education and the first two years of post-secondary education, as well as an array of recreational facilities. The Village of Muenster is the developer of a residential subdivision and

has sold the first of four phases of 14 lots. Muenster sold all available commercial lots in 2011 and is not currently pursuing the development of additional commercial lots.

4.2.2 Infrastructure

The Village of Muenster has excellent infrastructure to accommodate modest growth for a community of its size. The administration's current plans for growth are realistic and in line with its capacity. The existing water reservoir has a capacity for a population of up to 375; approximately 25 people greater than the existing population (Catterall & Wright 2011a). The village is aware of the upgrade requirement and is planning for this work. The wastewater treatment lagoon is functioning well with no capacity issues at present. The Village of Muenster relies on the current landfill site of REACT.

4.3 TOWN OF LANIGAN

4.3.1 Planning

The current population of Lanigan is approximately 1,450, down from its peak of 1,870 in the mid-1970s following the opening of the Alwinal potash mine in the 1960's (Rescan 2010). Growth expectations of over 3,000 during this period were not met in spite of infrastructure and subdivision development. Lanigan has an acute and long-term care hospital and a new medical clinic, though Lanigan's medical facilities will likely be serviced by doctors operating out of Humboldt in the future. Lanigan offers daycare, pre-school, elementary school, and high school, as well as recreational facilities. The Town of Lanigan continues to promote and invest in the community, growing at a stable pace. The town offers a one year tax exemption on new homes and is currently developing a 20 lot subdivision. An additional 146 lots are available, but there is limited developer interest currently other than for a seniors' complex.

4.3.2 Infrastructure

The raw water quality from SaskWater's Dellwood reservoir is relatively poor and the town is considering connecting to an alternate SaskWater raw water supply line from the Zelma reservoir if the Project proceeds. The existing water treatment and distribution system and wastewater lagoons are not nearing capacity and can accommodate additional growth. Lanigan relies on the current landfill site of REACT.

4.4 TOWN OF WYNYARD

4.4.1 Planning

With a stable population of approximately 1,900 and good fiscal position and policies, Wynyard has plans and capacity to exceed 2,500 residents. Plans include the development of an industrial area and a new residential subdivision with up to 120 lots. There is also interest from private land owners, including the development of a seniors' complex. The community has a prominent senior population and four seniors' housing facilities and various support services. The community also has well-established medical services including an acute and long-term care hospital, a long-term care home, and a community health centre offering an array of services. Wynyard offers pre-school, elementary, high school and post-secondary education, recreational opportunities and over 100 retail, trade, and home-based businesses. There is some concern expressed by the Town of Wynyard that the Project will result in employee loss for the agriculture, food processing, and resource sectors, which serve as important economic drivers of the community.

4.4.2 Infrastructure

A search for a groundwater supply with additional capacity is ongoing (Catterall & Wright 2011b) since only 9 of 13 wells are in production as a result of licensing restrictions. Wynyard estimates the town has approximately 10% excess water capacity. Engineers have recommended conducting hydraulic modelling of the system and strengthening the water distribution network layout (Catterall & Wright 2011b). The town's wastewater treatment facility and landfill are operating at a capacity of about 40% and 5%, respectively, and there are no concerns related to drainage. Traffic-related issues were raised by the municipality, as the Saskatchewan Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure does not support further town development south of Highway 16. Existing new growth areas on the east side of town can service over 85 lots. The town's current draft OCP addresses the need for Wynyard to assess servicing agreement charges and development levies based on the capital costs for services created by development.

4.5 TOWN OF WATSON

4.5.1 Planning

The Town of Watson envisions growing by an additional 300 people, bringing the town to a population of approximately 1,300. Watson has implemented an infrastructure upgrade plan for sewer and water and developed a 50-lot concept plan with capacity for an additional 50 lots. Local developers have also been building on infill lots. Housing affordability is returning with more modest prices following fluctuations in recent years. The community has good rail system connections and its transportation network and central location have helped the town develop a small service-based sector, with the ability to further develop industrial services. An industrial business recently moved into the community to provide support services to the Project. An array of medical and lab services are provided out of a combined clinic and health centre. The town also has a pharmacy and other health services as well as a long-term care facility and seniors housing. Watson offers a diversity of recreational amenities and Kindergarten through to Grade 12 in one school.

4.5.2 Infrastructure

The Town of Watson's raw water is supplied by two wells with plans of decommissioning the older of the two. There are plans to upgrade the existing water treatment plan to a reverse osmosis system (Strasser 2011), with the planned capacity to exceed 1,000 people and accommodate an increase in population of 200 to 300 people. The town's wastewater treatment facility is planned to be upgraded in 2012 and 2015 to accommodate population growth of up to 1,000 additional people (Strasser 2011). Watson relies on the current landfill site of REACT. The community has the ability to accommodate 200 to 300 new residents in the next several years.

4.6 TOWN OF LEROY

4.6.1 Planning

LeRoy envisions doubling its population of approximately 525 to 1,000 residents. The last 11 remaining infill lots in the community were developed in 2010. The town has recently developed a 34-lot subdivision. Potential for an industrial area exists. The town works with the RM of LeRoy to provide emergency services, to support the regional park, and to address annexation considerations. Medical services are provided by a health clinic staffed by doctors on rotation out of Humboldt. A variety of recreational amenities are available. The LeRoy school currently offers Kindergarten to Grade 12.

4.6.2 Infrastructure

The Town of LeRoy's water treatment plant consists of a reverse osmosis filtration system that was upgraded in 2005. The current water treatment capacity is for a population of 1,000. There were no concerns expressed by the town with respect to the treatment plant's ability to accommodate growth from the current population of approximately 525. The wastewater treatment lagoon was last upgraded in 2007 to serve a capacity of 1,000 people. LeRoy also relies on the current landfill site of REACT.

4.7 RM OF LEROY

4.7.1 Planning

The RM of LeRoy has experienced an influx of inquiries, building and development permits, and subdivision applications since BHP Billiton came to the area. The administrative work load is reportedly increasing and there is an interest in developing planning tools; however, this has resulted in planning capacity challenges to meet the increased demand. The RM would like to encourage development along Highway 5 near the regional park. The RM is concerned about the expectations of new residents for higher levels of service. A further concern of the RM is increased local traffic as a result of the Project.

4.8 VILLAGE OF JANSEN AND RM OF PRAIRIE ROSE

4.8.1 Planning

Located within the RM of Prairie Rose (population approximately 300), the Village of Jansen has a stable population of approximately 130 people. The two communities have a regional vision of working in partnership with their surrounding communities. The village and RM do not offer any medical, social, or educational services within their boundaries and rely on neighbouring communities such as Lanigan for these needs. Minimal retail and service businesses exist in the communities and recreational services are limited. The village has the capacity to service 20 to 30 additional lots. The RM has received requests for the subdivision of farm land for country residential lot development. There is a willingness to support development in the RM with a coordinated approach.

4.8.2 Infrastructure

The Village of Jansen receives its raw water supply from two wells constructed in 1978 and 1983. Current reservoir capacity is estimated to serve a population as high as 300, but the water treatment plant may require upgrades in the near future. The village has reported no problems with their existing treatment system. The wastewater lagoon is estimated to have the capacity to serve a population of up to 300, but may also be in need of an upgrade. Solid waste management for the RM and village is currently handled by the Touchwood Hills Regional Landfill (THRL), which has a projected remaining lifespan of approximately 10 years.

4.9 VILLAGE OF PUNNICHY

4.9.1 Planning

The Village of Punnichy has active and committed leadership but limited planning capacity. A large proportion of the community is Aboriginal with several choosing to live in Punnichy because of housing shortages on the nearby reserves. Some vacant infill lots exist in Punnichy

but there are no additional plans for development as the village has limited capacity and does not expect growth pressures. The community has a renovated medical clinic but offers no medical services as the village has been unable to recruit medical staff. Kindergarten to Grade 12 is offered through an elementary and a high school and mature students may upgrade at the high school through Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology or Carlton Trail Regional College. The schools in Punnichy have exclusively Aboriginal enrolment with non-Aboriginal children typically being bussed to Raymore to access a broader sports curriculum, French immersion, and non-modified curriculums. Aboriginal children are bussed into Punnichy for schooling from surrounding First Nation communities. Recreational services are limited.

4.10 VILLAGE OF DRAKE

4.10.1 Planning

The Village of Drake has a population of approximately 377 (Saskatchewan Ministry of Health 2010) with plans to grow to 500. There are infill lots available in the community and additional land could be acquired and serviced incrementally, though there are currently no incentives to encourage housing development. The village currently offers Kindergarten to Grade 8. Medical services are a concern for the village as well, as the community relies on Lanigan for health care. Recreational facilities in Drake include a community centre and arena.

4.10.2 Infrastructure

The Village of Drake receives its raw water supply from one well and the water treatment plant has adequate capacity to meet the demands for up to 500 people. The wastewater lagoon is currently over capacity and the Saskatchewan Ministry of Municipal Affairs has halted approval of subdivision applications until upgrades have been implemented. A new lagoon is planned but the village is facing funding challenges. Drake relies on the current landfill site of REACT.

5. STAKEHOLDERS

This section highlights a number of findings of the study with respect to other stakeholders that have a direct role in community readiness for growth. These stakeholders include developers, financial services, educational services, health services, and the Enterprise Region, as well as provincial government agencies.

5.1 DEVELOPERS

Developers actively involved and pursuing housing developments within the region have shown particular interest in Humboldt. Their decision to further invest in the region is dependent on BHP Billiton's decision to move forward with the Project. Specific decisions with respect to the type and scale of housing developments that will be pursued are dependent on obtaining more information on employee demographics, timing, and housing requirements as the Project proceeds.

5.2 FINANCIAL SERVICES

Banking institutions with a strong presence and active involvement throughout the region have an optimistic outlook for the region. They are seeing further growth opportunities in the commercial and service sector, with investment and new residents gravitating to Humboldt, in particular. Banking institutions expressed a willingness to finance mortgages throughout the region, but also expressed a concern for affordable housing and the supply of rental units.

5.3 EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

The region's school division and colleges are awaiting BHP Billiton's decision to move forward with the Project and for further information to better understand the impact this will have on the demand and delivery of their educational services. The Horizon School Division (HZSD) is faced with declining student enrolment in several of the smaller communities and growing enrolment and demand for increased programming in Humboldt. The HZSD is expected to experience further challenges around the prioritization of capital investments and school operations in the region because of fiscal constraints. St. Peter's College and Carlton Trail Regional College are both responsive and flexible to regional needs and delivery options. Both colleges have considered additional skills and training that may be required if the proposed Project were to proceed, and are interested in gaining a further understanding of the educational service needs and in defining their role.

5.4 HEALTH SERVICES

The Saskatoon Health Region (SHR) services a large area of the province and is challenged to provide accessible and appropriate services in an efficient, effective, and sustainable manner to many rural communities, including the smaller communities near the Project. The challenges are associated with a lack of critical mass for service delivery, an aging population, lack of community resources, difficulty in the recruitment and retention of staff, and differing needs from community to community (Saskatoon Health Region 2010). The larger communities of Humboldt and Wynyard offer a higher level of health services. To service the smaller communities in the region, the SHR applies a 'hub and spoke' approach, with Humboldt serving as the regional hub with higher level services and a new hospital.

5.5 ENTERPRISE REGION

The Prairie Innovation Enterprise Region (PIER) is one of 16 Enterprise Regions in the Province of Saskatchewan. PIER identifies issues affecting the continued growth of industry in the region, and recognizes labour shortages, affordable housing, and community infrastructure as the most significant barriers to industry growth. PIER plans to address these issues through various initiatives.

5.6 PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

To address emerging pressures related to growth occurring across the province, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Municipal Affairs implemented the Planning for Growth Program which is currently being used by several of the communities to update and develop their planning documents. All funding through the program has been allocated, but the Saskatchewan Ministry of Municipal Affairs is seeking additional funding resources to support ongoing professional planning services across the province.

The Saskatchewan Housing Corporation (SHC) has no programs specifically targeting the region, but has recently implemented several housing initiatives to respond to the province's current housing demand and to build upon existing programs.

6. FORT MCMURRAY

6.1 OVERVIEW OF THE EXPERIENCE

A review of the Fort McMurray (Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo) experience was conducted to provide valuable insight into community growth issues and options/strategies that could be employed to effectively manage the pressures on community services, infrastructure, and housing.

Overall, Fort McMurray was not well-prepared for the planning needs to meet growth in several respects including policy and documentation, standards and procedures, and human resources. Housing supply fell below demand and caused serious concerns for price inflation and competitive employee recruitment and retention. For a period of time, employers offered high daily living allowances to their employees, which inflated market rents but did not induce sufficient new supply. One of the identified shortfalls in community readiness in Fort McMurray was the lack of reliable and consistent information on the pace and scale of development, employment trends, transportation needs, and other infrastructure needs. An Oil Sands Developer Group was implemented by industry with a mandate to address regulatory content, timing and consistency, and regional infrastructure needs (Radke 2006).

Fort McMurray was under fiscal stress to meet the growing infrastructure and service demands as the oil sands developed. The industrial operations paid taxes to the local improvement district, yet the costs and demands for fiscal commitment rested with the city where employees lived and services and infrastructure were required (Radke, 2006). After concerted regional collaboration and support, the area was amalgamated to a single governance body, Wood Buffalo Municipal District, to direct all taxes to the growth needs and increase the capacity of the governing body to address these needs.

The population of Fort McMurray quickly outgrew the area's health and educational facilities; community and social services were reported to be inadequate to address the growing number of people in need of assistance and who became involved in socially-damaging behaviour (e.g., alcohol and drug abuse, family violence).

Aboriginal community engagement was raised as an important factor in the success of industry in Fort McMurray. First Nations communities exist throughout the oil sands development area, often very near the mines themselves. Communication and understanding of the First Nations needs and opportunities were key to the industry's success.

6.2 LESSONS LEARNED

While Fort McMurray experienced a rate of growth and development that is expected to far exceed the growth to be experienced by the communities near the Jansen Project, there are a number of important lessons learned:

- commit planning resources early to prepare with comprehensive community plans;
- engage the community in meaningful dialogue to define the community vision and plan;
- consider innovative means to address housing affordability for lower income families (e.g., a non-profit housing corporation);

- consider employee incentives for recruitment and retention that have specific objectives to increase housing supply and that allow the housing market to respond to changing needs;
- avoid employee incentives that distort the market in the short term (e.g., daily housing allowances) and instead focus on incentives that support supply increases by developers and investors;
- routinely and transparently share information about project developments and decisions with regional stakeholders and communities;
- consider collective action at the regional level on issues of labour force development, skills identification and training, immigrant attraction and retention, and assimilation of workers within the communities; and
- local government and institutional service providers, with industry support, that advocate collectively for the enhancement of community services and infrastructure can have greater success.

7. CONCLUSION

The Jansen Project is expected to attract approximately 4,500 to 5,500 new residents to the communities in the immediate vicinity of the Project. The communities are enthusiastic about the opportunities that will be created because of the Project and, in general, are realistic about the amount of growth they expect and their ability to accommodate this growth. Most of the communities have the infrastructure in place and availability of lots to accommodate the anticipated incremental growth. The City of Humboldt is predicted to see the most substantial growth as it is already acting as a regional service centre and is a reasonable commuting distance from the Project.

To ensure continued progress toward high quality community readiness for the Project and employee attraction and retention, and to provide employees choosing to live in the region with an increased, diverse, and cost-competitive housing market, the following areas require attention: municipal planning; communication; regional collaboration; and housing development.

8. REFERENCES

- Catterall & Wright. 2011a. Waterworks system assessment report for Village of Muenster, Saskatchewan. Draft.
- Catterall & Wright. 2011b. Waterworks system assessment report for Town of Wynyard, Saskatchewan.
- Radke, R. 2006. Investing in our Future: Responding to the Rapid Growth of Oil Sands Development. <http://alberta.ca/home/395.cfm> (accessed December 2011).
- Rescan. 2010. Jansen Project Environmental Impact Statement. Prepared for BHP Billiton.
- Saskatoon Health Region. 2010. Saskatoon Health Region's Rural Health Strategy, 2010. http://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/about_us/documents/RuralHealthStrategy-2010-August-V7-PRINT-smallfile.pdf (accessed December 2011).
- Saskatchewan Ministry of Health. 2010. Covered Population 2010. <http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/covered-population-2010> (accessed December 2011).
- Strasser, M. 2011. Permit to Construct Reverse Osmosis Water Treatment Plant. Communication from Town of Watson to Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment. Letter: April 29, 2011.