

Principle 3

Increase the proportion of new development that takes place within already developed or disturbed lands either through infill, redevelopment and/or shared use, relative to new development that takes place on previously undeveloped lands

Most cities, towns and rural communities have previously developed areas that are currently underutilized. This may include large, under-used parking lots around old commercial plazas, vacant buildings that have been closed-up, vacant lots along main streets or in downtowns, abandoned industrial areas and so on. Making more efficient use of sites like these through redevelopment reduces the need to utilize previously undeveloped land to accommodate growth. One example of a tool that municipalities have used to achieve this is the establishment of minimum intensification requirements, in which municipalities require a minimum proportion of future growth to be accommodated within existing urban areas and limit the proportion of growth that can take place on new greenfield lands.



Similarly, in areas used for resource development, existing roads and utility corridors could be shared among multiple industries and land users, thereby reducing the need to construct new corridors. Industrial access management plans are an example of a tool that is used in Alberta for identifying and implementing opportunities for shared use agreements.

Principle 4

Plan, design and locate new development in a manner that best utilizes existing infrastructure and minimizes the need for new or expanded infrastructure

The footprint associated with infrastructure development is extensive. Linear infrastructure such as roads, utility corridors and rail lines require large areas of land and they can also fragment the land base. The placement and development of this infrastructure needs to be done in a way that reduces the fragmentation of valued landscapes and also minimizes the overall built environment footprint. Non-linear infrastructure such as houses, schools, hospitals, waste management facilities and water and wastewater treatment plants also require large land areas. Where development occurs, what form it takes and how it is distributed across the landscape is a key determinant of how much infrastructure will be needed to service it and how much land will be required to accommodate that infrastructure.

One way that municipalities have used to locate development in a manner that utilizes existing infrastructure is to identify priority growth areas in their planning documents. These areas are usually on existing water and sewer lines and close to transit. By encouraging a greater proportion of development in these locations, the need for new infrastructure elsewhere can be reduced.