
Agricultural Subdivision Conceptual Scheme SE 15-53-22-W4

June 2010



Conceptual Scheme

SE 15-53-22-W4

1. INTRODUCTION / DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

This Conceptual Scheme has been specifically prepared for SE 15-53-22 W4 to facilitate the development of an agricultural subdivision. If developed to the extent contemplated in this Conceptual Scheme, this development would consist of a small cluster of agricultural businesses intended to provide value-added services to the local agricultural industry. Having similar land users concentrated in a local setting will provide a unique concentration of businesses - intended to create benefits to the County greater than if such businesses were scattered throughout the County.

The quarter section is located in the Agricultural Small Holdings Policy Area of the Municipal Development Plan (MDP). This Policy Area has been traditionally developed with family run farms and residential acreages. This proposal, for agricultural businesses, introduces a compatible and complementary use of land, one which reflects changing trends in the agricultural industry.

Proximity to Highway 16 makes this land undesirable for residential development, given the nuisance factor of traveling vehicles. While this is a drawback for residential development, the visibility and access to the site from the highway lends itself in favour of agricultural businesses.

The quarter section contains a large developable area which will host the concentration of this development. This area is naturally severed by Pointe-Aux-Pins Creek and is boxed in by Highway 16 and Range Road 222. Additionally, Alberta Transportation has planned for a highway service road to run through this area which will further physically sever this land (see Figure 3). As a large farming operation will no longer be feasible, and as this area is not conducive to residential development, the proposal is an appropriate fit for this site.

The area between Queensdale Place South and west of the creek remains a large parcel of agricultural land. The best use of this land is for the continuation of the agricultural operation, thereby maintaining an effective buffer and transition to Queensdale Place South.

2. SITE CHARACTERISTICS

2.1 Legal Description: The proposed Conceptual Scheme encompasses SE15-53-22 W4 and has been prepared in consultation with the affected and adjacent landowners (See Figure 1 for location).

2.2 Existing Land Uses and Development: There are currently four developed AG Agriculture: General District parcels within this quarter section, and one parcel of Environmental Reserve land. The soil is rated in the Canada Land Inventory Soil Rating as Class 2 & 3.

The 53.0 ha (131.0 ac) parcel, which initiated the Conceptual Scheme contains a single detached dwelling and several accessory buildings associated with general agricultural practices. The 5.5 ha (13.5 ac) parcel along the eastern boundary contains a single detached dwelling and agricultural buildings previously used as a turkey farm (confined feeding operation). In the northeast corner is a 1.2 ha (3.0 ac) parcel containing a single

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detached dwelling and in the southwest is a 1.3 ha (3.2 ac) vacant parcel. A landswap agreement, which will affect the areas cited, is being negotiated between the 53.0 ha parcel and the 5.5 ha parcel, which is reflected in the concept plan.

2.3 Adjacent Land Uses:

North: An unsubdivided agricultural quarter section.

South: Highway 16.

West: Queensdale Place South residential subdivision.

East: Eleven agricultural parcels, several of which contain dwellings.

3. POLICY COMPLIANCE

- 3.1** The purpose of a Conceptual Scheme is to provide a framework for the subsequent subdivision and/or development of land within the Country Residential Policy Area and the Agriculture Small Holdings Policy Area of the Municipal Development Plan.

A Conceptual Scheme also establishes a potential plan of future subdivision or development that applies to a specific parcel of land, and ensures that the subdivision under review does not prohibit the ability of remnant parcels, or adjacent parcels, to be further subdivided in the future.

- 3.2** As per Strathcona County Council Policy statement SER-008-019, the proposed Conceptual Scheme is necessary in this case as:

- a) The land being proposed for redistricting or subdivision is within the Agriculture Small Holdings Policy Area of the MDP;
- b) The proposed subdivision would result in more than two parcels on the quarter section; and
- c) There is a need to coordinate development planning or servicing of adjoining lands.

- 3.3 Strategic Plan:** The Strategic Plan identifies the County's desire for this type of development as identified in this statement: "Develop plans to attract business in the following areas: research and development, post-secondary affiliates, technology and agribusiness".

- 3.4 Municipal Development Plan (MDP):** The MDP (Bylaw 1-2007) identifies SE 15-53-22-W4 within the Agriculture – Small Holdings Policy Area. This Policy Area is intended to respect existing agricultural operations, provide for the ability to create new ones, and allow carefully planned residential subdivisions. In the case of the subject quarter section, existing residential uses are found and will remain while invoking Policy 14.10 stating "Allow the subdivision of agricultural land for the development of small agricultural operations where such uses are compatible with adjacent uses". This Conceptual Scheme provides policy ensuring such compatibility, and the development will not interfere with existing nearby residential uses.

Additionally, to ensure compatibility, this Conceptual Scheme will respect statements in the MDP such as "Conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses have been cited as an issue by both the general public and active farmers. Residential acreage owners may

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be negatively impacted by agriculture-related activities that occur sporadically throughout the year such as manure spreading or during specific times, such as spring seeding or fall harvest. Conversely, acreage owners may have negative impacts on farming operations, such as the problem of domesticated pets attacking livestock on neighbouring farms..." This Conceptual Scheme will provide policy to limit the nuisance factor of agricultural operations on existing residential uses, while providing opportunity for specialization in the agricultural industry not found elsewhere in the County, in a well-planned setting.

The MDP notes "According to the Future of Agriculture Study, 2002, traditional, medium-sized farming operations are on the decline. However, the number of smaller intensive agriculture operations such as; poultry farms, greenhouses, nurseries and specialty fruit and vegetable operations have been increasing in the County. While this trend has been noted, there has previously been little done to foster or promote the development of this growing sector of the agricultural industry." This Conceptual Scheme will provide policy to grow this specialized sector of the agricultural industry and allow for diversified agriculture operations, consistent with agricultural policies within the MDP.

This development will provide value-added agricultural opportunities helping to meet the following objectives of Section 13 – Economic Development, being: "Enhance and strengthen the economy of the County" and "Continue to retain, expand and attract new industry and business to Strathcona County".

- 3.5 Land Use Bylaw (LUB):** The LUB (Bylaw 8-2001) districts the subject quarter section as AG Agriculture: General. The AG district allows for a range of permitted and discretionary uses, many of which do not meet the intent of this proposal. Additionally the AG district limits subdivision to 2 parcels per quarter section.

To meet the development vision, a site-specific DC Direct Control District is proposed. The DC district will present a small range of agricultural uses, it will provide development regulations, and limit the density to 8 developable parcels for the whole quarter section.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1** A biophysical assessment was conducted on November 9, 2009, and provides information on the following environmental features:

4.2 Pointe-Aux-Pins Creek:

- a) The wetland habitat is restricted to the creek and riparian area bisecting the subject property.
- b) The Pointe-Aux-Pins creek system is well demarcated on the landscape by steep slopes and the years of agricultural activities have further marked the boundary between upland and riparian land. There is also an associated tributary along the east boundary of the subject property which intermittently funnels water into the creek at the northeast portion of the subject property. The tributary is also a significant habitat feature and while it may not function primarily as a drainage system, the connectivity to the creek and to adjacent properties to the east is significant. The vegetation mirrors what was observed within the creek channel.

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- c) Other than the creek, there are no wetlands or drainage features present in the upland. The creek provides an important connection to adjacent properties and the North Saskatchewan River valley.

4.3 Vegetation Coverage / Landscape:

- a) A portion (approximately 75%) of the subject property has been cleared for agricultural use. The remaining natural areas on the subject property are directly related to Pointe-Aux-Pins creek which traverses the site from southwest to northeast. The land has been cleared to the top of bank for the creek.
- b) The previously cleared agricultural area of the landscape is gently rolling, sloping towards Pointe-Aux-Pins creek. The agricultural area has been used for primary production and has been cleared of trees and tilled. Potential for wildlife in the area was significant with respect to the creek and riparian area.
- c) The subject property contains priority wetland habitat, as identified in the Priority Landscape Ecology Assessment (PLEA) of Strathcona County.
- d) The age class of this forest is variable, due to the heavy use of the corridor by beavers. The oldest forested areas are dominated by spruce and may be 70 to 100 years old. The youngest forested areas are dominated by aspen and are currently being harvested by beaver.

5. RESERVES

- 5.1 An existing 0.1 ha (0.25 ac) strip of Environmental Reserve (ER) exists along the south western boundary of Pointe-Aux-Pins creek (Lot 2ER, Plan 9721088). This parcel will be incorporated into the overall protected area.
- 5.2 Municipal Reserves (MR) does not appear to have been previously dedicated and Strathcona County will take full dedication allowable. Reserves will be taken as recommended in the biophysical site assessment and in conjunction with the Trails Master Plan, which shows a pedestrian linkage along Pointe-Aux-Pins creek. This will be reflected in a minimum of 10m of MR dedication adjacent to the ER, on both sides of the creek, which will widen the buffer zone along the top of bank. This will ensure an appropriate area for trail development.
- 5.3 The biophysical was conducted on the large remnant parcel and did not necessarily address every parcel on the quarter section. Should other parcels on the quarter section be subdivided, further environmental considerations will be required, especially with regard to reserve dedications.

6. TRANSPORTATION AND UTILITIES

- 6.1 Alberta Transportation prepared a functional plan for the interchange of Range Road 222 and Highway 16 in 2000 and identified land requirements for a future service road connection to Range Road 222 north of the existing. This road right-of-way would be dedicated at the time of subdivision. However construction would not be a requirement of this proposal, and may be deferred into the future such as when further developments in the area are proposed or when Alberta Transportation initiates highway improvements.

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- 6.2** As the proposal is agricultural in nature, Alberta Transportation has concluded that the land uses proposed in this Conceptual Scheme will not trigger the need for the construction of the future highway service road. If it is determined that a future use of the site will trigger the construction of the future service road, then that development will be required to construct the road.
- 6.3** As the proposed parcels will acquire their access through the existing service road, and as the service road alignment will be altered with the new interchange design, the Design Concept was prepared in a manner that works with Alberta Transportation's future interchange plans and which makes sense with current realities.
- 6.4** Road widening, and other land requirements for road infrastructure, will be required adjacent to Range Road 222 at the time of future subdivision in accordance with County Policy SER-012-004. Road right-of-way widening dedication for a revised Range road 222 southbound turning westbound on-ramp onto Highway 16 is also required (MGA 661(1)).
- 6.5** When the future service road is constructed, the existing right-of-way for the current service road may be partially consolidated into a developable parcel.
- 6.6** The existing quarter section has seven (7) accesses, two (2) on the existing service road (one servicing Phase III remnant and proposed lot 3; and one servicing Phase II remnant lot), and five (5) on Range Road 222 (servicing the proposed Lot 4 and Lot 1). As such, no additional access shall be granted to Lot 1 and access consolidation needs to occur on Proposed Lot 4. At such time as the future service road is constructed, all accesses shall be removed from Range Road 222 and relocated to the proposed service road.
- 6.7** At the time of future subdivision, all existing and proposed accesses will be finalized and must be to the satisfaction of Strathcona County's Engineering Servicing Standards.
- 6.8** The appropriate sewer servicing will be determined at the time of subdivision to the satisfaction of Strathcona County. Prior to subdivision application, percolation and water table testing will be conducted on the proposed undeveloped lots by a qualified professional so that suitable locations can be chosen for building sites and private sewage disposal systems.
- 6.9** Drainage easements and/or PULs may be required for overland drainage that exists, needs to be relocated, and/or is required for stormwater management.
- 6.10** An existing gas line transverses the site. Required setbacks must be observed.

7. DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA

To assist in the preparation of future redistricting and subdivision applications the following list of Development Criteria have been prepared. The criteria was developed from policies, standards and regulations within the various applicable bylaws and statutory plans and from information gathered from landowners within SE 15-53-22-W4 and the surrounding area. Additional

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development criteria may be identified at the detailed subdivision stage. The proposed Conceptual Scheme is presented in three (3) phases, illustrated in Figure 3.

- 7.1** Alberta Transportation has identified the interchange of Range Road 222 and Highway 16 as being inadequate for future traffic volumes. At the time of subdivision, Alberta Transportation will acquire the land necessary for their future needs, based on their detailed engineering plans. At this time there is no indication as to when the service road will be constructed. The Conceptual Scheme was designed to work with the existing service road alignment, as well as the future anticipated alignment (the right-of-way is contained within Phase I).
- 7.2** Phase I identifies land for immediate development, with an intended Agriculture Product Processing user of the site. This phase also contains proposed Lot 4 which contains an existing dwelling. Development on proposed Lot 4 will be sensitive not to cause undue nuisances (including visual) to adjacent residential land uses.
- 7.3** Phase I, subject to a subdivision application, will contain two parcels. At subdivision, land requirements for the future service road will be dedicated, as well as other infrastructure land requirements, such as 10m road widening along Range Road 222.
- 7.4** Phase II, subject to one, or multiple, subdivision application(s) will contain no more than 4 developable parcels. The proposed lot layout of Phase II will depend on the land area needs of future users of the site. The future users of the site will be agricultural in nature and development in Phase II will be similar to the development in Phase I.
- 7.5** With the development of Phase II, all remaining reserve land owing will be dedicated at that time, in a manner satisfactory to Strathcona County.
- 7.6** Phase III (the land west and north of Pointe-Aux-Pins Creek) will remain as agricultural land, unless municipal policies change in the future. No development permits will be issued for proposals which could, in the opinion of the Development Officer, negatively impact the adjacent residential uses.
- 7.7** Subdivision applications will be required to address servicing for water and sewer, access locations, internal road layout, municipal reserve, environmental reserve, environmental reserve easements and potential conservation easement requirements, public utility lots, geo-technical considerations/constraints, groundwater, stormwater management, approval fees, rural road levies and any other requirements deemed appropriate by Strathcona County at that time.
- 7.8** Future development may require a development agreement to address infrastructure and any offsite improvements required.
- 7.9** Development adjacent to slopes, wetlands and water courses shall conform with environmental setbacks contained within the Land Use Bylaw.
- 7.10** Existing Lot 1 and Lot 3 will retain their current configuration, the quarter section will not contain more than eight developable parcels.
- 7.11** An amendment to change the land use of Lot 3 may be initiated. Development on Lot 3 will be sensitive to nearby residential land uses and the Development Officer will ensure that the site plan mitigates potential nuisance factors prior to the issuance of a Development Permit.

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7.12 All non-residential developments within the quarter section will be sensitive to adjacent residential uses and mitigate nuisance factors that result from their businesses, to minimize disturbance and enjoyment of surrounding property.

7.13 Development on the quarter section will be sensitive to the visual impact created as it relates to the traveling public on Highway 16, at the discretion of the Development Officer. The Developer will be sensitive to outdoor display areas, signage and building facades as not to deteriorate the rural character of the County.

8. SUBDIVISION APPROVAL

8.1 Notwithstanding any other issues that may arise through the subdivision review process, the following will be addressed as conditions of subdivision:

a) Final location of property lines and parcel areas may be adjusted at the time of subdivision, however, they shall comply with the maximum density and minimum lot areas of the Land Use Bylaw District for the lands.

b) Any other conditions which may be applicable.

9. COMPLIANCE WITH OTHER LEGISLATION

9.1 Nothing in this Conceptual Scheme shall be interpreted as relieving a person from complying with Federal, Provincial or Municipal statutes or bylaws. In the event of a conflict between any of the provisions of this Conceptual Scheme and the provisions of any statute or bylaw, the provisions of the statute or bylaw shall prevail.

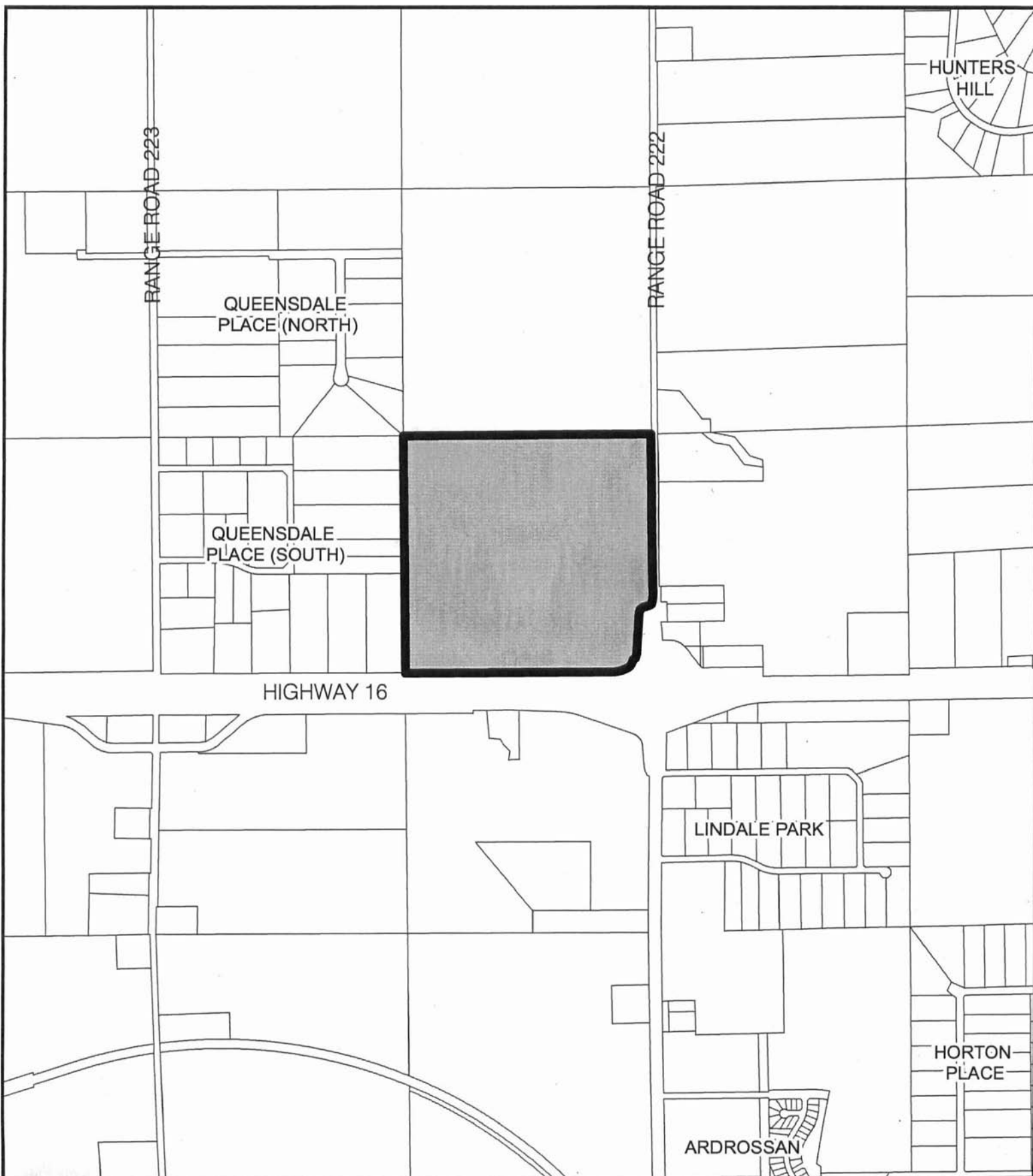


FIGURE 1
LOCATION MAP
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 **Subject Area**



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES **Strathcona**
County

Drawn By: C. Trenholm

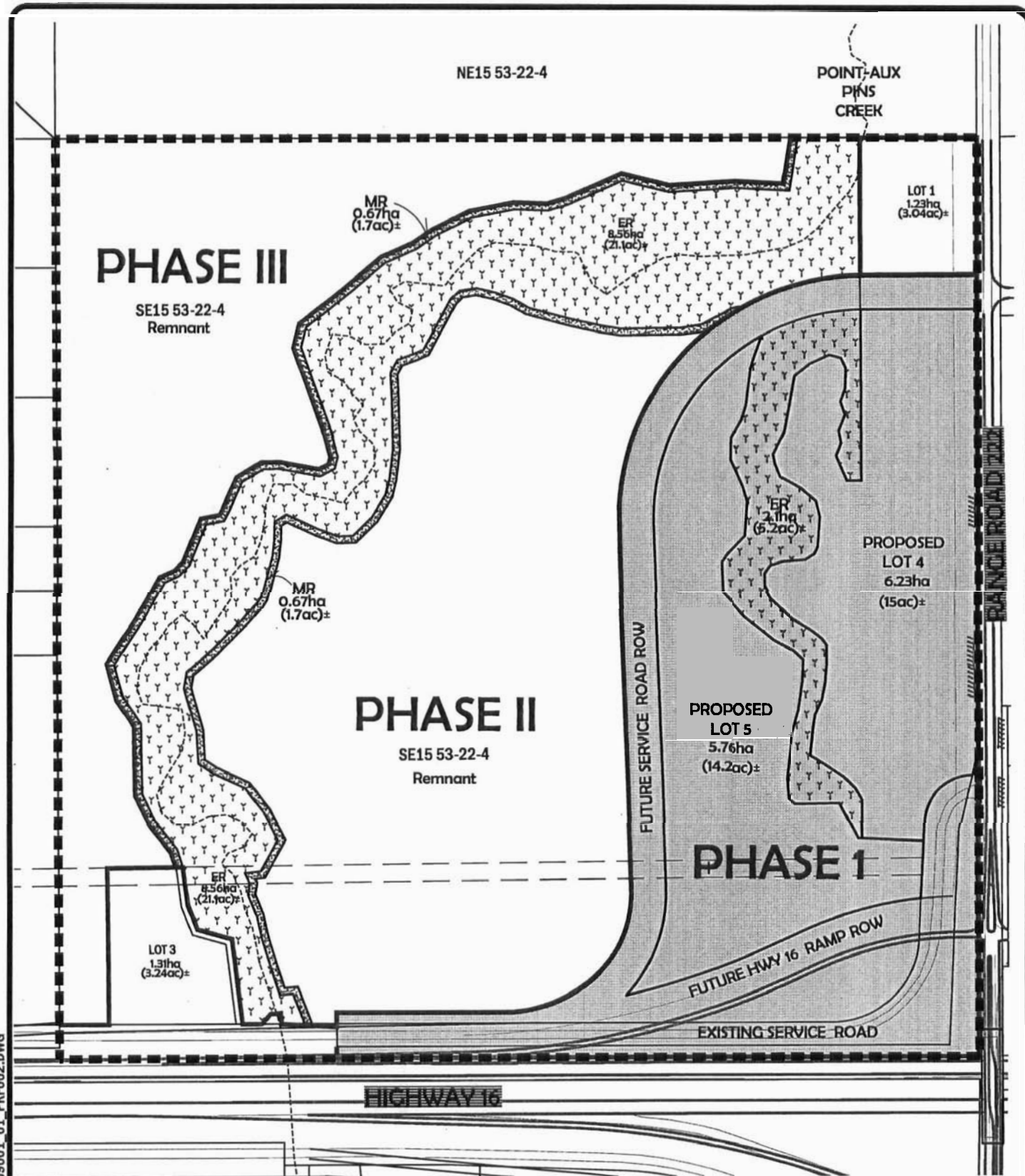
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Scale: Not to scale

File No.: 4090-2009CS002

Dwg No.:
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4090 Land Use-Conceptual Scheme\2009\2009CS002
Location Map.mxd



LEGEND

- ■ ■ Conceptual Scheme Boundary
- Staging Boundary
- STAGE I:
- PROPOSED LOT 4 = 6.23ha (15ac)±
- PROPOSED LOT 5 = 5.76ha (14ac)±
-  Proposed Environmental Reserve = 10.7 (26ac)±
-  Proposed Municipal Reserve = 1.3ha (3ac)±

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Figure 3