

LAND USE PLANNING

Land use planning is an important responsibility of the **municipal council, as established by the Municipal Government Act**, “giving broad authority to councils and to respect their right to govern the municipality in whatever way the councils consider appropriate, within the jurisdiction given to them under this or any other enactment and to enhance the ability of councils to respond to present and future issues in their municipalities.” Land is developed for a variety of uses within municipalities, and decisions about land use often depend on the location of communities, resources and economic activities.

Land use planners are people who work to balance the needs of all individuals and groups in a municipality, while thinking ahead and considering how their planning decisions will impact the future.

Laws establish rules and guidelines that people and businesses or communities must follow. Laws in a municipality can be called bylaws. Every municipality must pass a land use bylaw, which is known as a living document. This document is amended as the need to address different issues regarding lands or uses occur. The land use bylaw deals with any development, activity, industry, business or thing in different ways, divides each of them into classes and deals with each class in different ways. This is established in the land use bylaw as “Permitted Uses” and “Discretionary Uses” and in Brazeau County is divided into Districts such as:

Agricultural (AG)	Light Industrial (LI)
Agricultural Holdings (AGH)	Recreation (R)
Birchwood Village County Condo District (BVC)	Direct Control (DC)
Country Residential (CR)	Institutional (I)
Compact Country Residential (CCR)	Urban Reserve (UR)
Crown Land (CL)	Natural Resource Extraction & Processing (NREP)
Hamlet Residential (HR)	
Modular Manufactured Home Park (MHP)	
Commercial (C)	
Rural Industrial (RI)	



“Permitted Uses” means the use of land or a building provided for in the Land Use Bylaw for which a development permit must be issued or conditionally issued by the Development Authority upon application having been made to the County. **“Discretionary Uses”** means that one (1) or more uses of land or buildings that may be permitted in a given district at the discretion of the Development Authority, with or without conditions.

Discretionary uses and permitted uses requesting a variance to a minimum more than 50% must go to the Municipal Planning Commission for approval as it would be in excess of the Development Officer’s authority.