



Miistakis  
Institute

# CRP EcoPlan Strategies Catalogue: Summary Description

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# Introduction

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The CRP Regional EcoPlan is a key component of the CRP Ecological Conservation and Protection Initiative. The EcoPlan is the implementation plan for the Calgary Metropolitan Plan's Principle 1: "Protecting the natural environment and watershed." The intent of the EcoPlan is to guide measurable action toward achieving the CMP's Principle 1. It does so by identifying conservation and protection themes, and several measurable sub-themes. For each sub-theme, targets will be collectively identified by the Calgary Regional Partnership member municipalities, which will require both individual municipal action as well as coordinated action as a region.

This means the EcoPlan must draw from the activities that can be – and are being – taken at the municipal level, while both catalyzing activity at the regional level, and seeking to measure impact at that scale.

## The CRP EcoPlan Strategies Catalogue

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As part of the CRP Regional EcoPlan development, a *Strategies Catalogue* was created with the intent to support the 'Target-setting' activities that will occur as a latter part of the plan development.

The catalogue contains several types of activities and initiatives that CRP members can undertake – individually or collectively – to make progress under each of the ecological conservation and protection themes. Each strategy is tied to a theme, and is a practical step a member municipality can take with regard to policy, practice, outreach, infrastructure, etc.

*... the target-setting process can be confounded by limited awareness of the possible strategies ...*

Although, logically, setting targets is a step taken prior identifying specific actions towards achieving those targets, the target-setting process can be confounded by limited awareness of the possible strategies. In some cases, strategies are known, but have not been thought of with specific reference to a conservation theme or target. Targets that seem daunting on paper, may actually be more doable than anticipated with a clearer sense of the strategies and tools that are available. And

CRP members may be able to benefit from the strategies already employed in partner municipalities.

For this reason, preliminary development of the Strategies Catalogue commenced before the target-setting was undertaken by the CMP membership

The practical purpose of the Strategies Catalogue is to:

- Provide a catalogue of practical, applied strategies that municipalities can use to support ecological conservation and protection
- Inform the conservation and protection target-setting process within the CRP Regional EcoPlan
- Relate strategies directly to the EcoPlan conservation themes that they could support
- Provide strategies usable at all scales (urban, rural, municipal, regional)
- Provide strategies at all stages of enablement (information, policy, planning, and practice)
- Assist municipalities with conservation and protection goals they have already identified
- Identify strategies already being employed within the Calgary Region

The term 'strategy' is used throughout this document. It refers to any active initiative which a municipality can use to make progress toward a measurable conservation and protection target. These can be tools, practices, policies or other devices, and can be found in bylaws, implementation plans, codes of practice, or other mechanisms which guide a municipality as it plans for and promotes the community's conservation of or impact on the natural environment.

## Catalogue Structure

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The strategies catalogue is intended to show discrete conservation strategies, relating them to the conservation themes<sup>1</sup>, and giving information about who is using them and where additional support can be found. It is intended to be searchable and filterable, allowing users to find different types of strategies, operational at different scales, and to identify the strategies that do the heaviest lifting, addressing multiple conservation themes at once.

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<sup>1</sup> The CRP EcoPlan is based on the 5 conservation and protection themes (and 16 sub-themes)

## Descriptions, Details and Filters

Each strategy listing has the following components.

### Strategy Overview

The strategy overview gives the basic details of the strategy itself.

*Title* – a short summary statement of the strategy.

*Description* – a brief description of the strategy, including how it is intended to work, or the role it is intended to play in support of conservation.

*Resources* – any critical resources that might supplement [not including from the actual source document].

*Notes* – any special considerations or other relevant information not provided in another column.

### Strategy Examples

The strategy examples give details on instances where the strategy has been used by a local municipality.

*Summary* – a brief, common-language description of an actual instance of the strategy being used.

*Policy excerpt* – verbatim text of the policy, plan, clause, or bylaw that enables the strategy [with policy section number]

*Source*

*Municipality* – the local government which created or is currently using the strategy.

*Document* – the specific source document for the policy excerpt, including web link if possible; or, if applicable, the provincial government policy/law.

### Strategy Type(s)

The strategy type identifies where in the municipal mandate or operations that strategy would most effectively lie. One strategy may have several facets meaning it has more than one 'type'.



*Information* – strategies which focus on acquiring the necessary foundational information or providing that information to the necessary parties; these could include inventories, mapping of resources; examples include groundwater mapping, connectivity analyses, and Environmental Significant Areas identification.

*Policy*<sup>2</sup> – strategies which focus on developing the enabling policy, or modifying existing policy to better support conservation and protection efforts; these could include new stand-alone bylaws, or enabling clauses in bylaws, Municipal Development Plans or Land Use Bylaws.

*Planning* – strategies which are included in or the focus of the various municipal planning processes; these could include Area Structure Plans, growth management strategies, infrastructure plans, open space plans, watershed plans, sustainability plans, or others.

*Practice* – strategies that focus on direct action or use of targeted tools or practices; these could include direct protection, restoration, environmental reserves, cluster development, Transfer of Development Credits, conservation easements, design parameters, infrastructure criteria, access restrictions, or others.

*Capacity* – strategies that focus on extending the implementation capacity beyond the municipality; these can include partnerships, information sharing, joint-funding, provincial authority, citizen engagement, regional initiatives, etc.

## Strategy Scale(s)

The 'strategy scale' identifies at which spatial and jurisdictional scale the strategy is most effective. The scale descriptions here in fact represent two different scales (both of which are continuums, rather than end points): urban vs. rural, and municipal vs. regional. Note that there are many cases where strategies are effective across the continuum.

*Urban*<sup>3</sup> – strategies that are focused at, or effective at, the scale and land use pattern represented by the urbanized landscape.

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<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this Catalogue, 'policy' refers to municipal direction that says "when you are going to do something, this is the approach you should take" while 'planning' refers to municipal direction that says "this is what we are going to do."

<sup>3</sup> Statistics Canada now separates 'urban' into three more useful terms: population centres that are small (1000-30K), medium (30K to 100K), or large (>100K); because 'scale' in the context of these

*Rural*<sup>4</sup> – strategies that are focused at, or effective at, the scale and land use pattern represented by the rural landscape.

*Municipal* – strategies that are focused at, or most effective at, the spatial or jurisdictional scale of part or all of a single municipality.

*Region* – strategies that are focused at, or effective at, the spatial or jurisdictional scale of multiple municipalities.

## Theme(s)

'Themes' refers to the CRP EcoPlan's five (5) conservation and protection themes (and 16 sub-themes), and identify which of those a given strategy could help support. Many strategies are not theme dependent, and could be employed for several purposes; for this reason, one strategy may correspond to several themes.

### *Landscape Health*

- Ecological connectivity zones
- Escarpments and ridges
- Large patches of natural vegetation

### *Watershed Health*

- Wetlands
- Riparian areas
- Water quality
- Water quantity
- Source water

### *Natural Spaces*

- Natural open space
- Urban forest
- Permeable surfaces
- Natural flood zones

### *Food Production*

- Regional agricultural land base

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strategies more represents a land use pattern than a population threshold, we will continue to use 'rural' and 'urban'.

<sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada defines rural areas as being below the threshold of 100 people and a density of 400 people per square kilometre.



- Urban agriculture

#### *Airshed Health*

- Air quality
- GHG mitigation

## Format and Web Delivery

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The intent is for the Strategies Catalogue to be accessible and dynamic, with some sort of web-based interface, and the ability for it to be a 'living' document with members able to upload and refresh resources in the catalogue.

Although determining the actual form of the Catalogue was not within the scope of the current project, an initial structure was created. Currently, the Catalogue is in an MS Excel spreadsheet format, and is in the preliminary stages of being populated. The goal was to have the structure established and preliminarily populated, with recognition that as the target-setting process proceeds, entries to the Catalogue will increase.

The CRP is developing a data and information hub with the intention of providing easy, accessible information on a variety of topics of value to the CRP membership. It would be ideal for the Strategies Catalogue to be hosted here. CRP staff and the Miistakis Institute met in November 2016, and drafted a basic web-delivery structure that would allow for easy population, searchability, and member-municipality use.

