### **County of Grande Prairie Economic Development**



County of Grande Prairie No. 1

# MIDDLE OF everywhere

## **CLAIRMONT HEIGHTS**

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The Challenge

Throughout North American history, the birth of Instant Towns, or Resource Towns, has most often resulted from sizable revenues generated over a short period by a single source industry; such as, agriculture, forestry, minerals, oil and gas, or the once powerful railway companies.

These "Instant Towns" commonly struggle to survive in cases where the local industry can no longer compete with international markets, have diminishing supplies or experience shifts in market values, resulting in significant population fluctuations. This vulnerability to industry changes inevitably forces employees to relocate to other towns that offer more diversified and stable economies, leaving employers with the challenge of attracting and retaining qualified personnel.

Additionally, "Instant Towns" typically exclude crucial social aspects such as place-making, lifestyle, and character and form. These towns are generally only capable of meeting the basic needs of their residents through elemental housing, retail services, and other amenities. Infrastructure such as water and sewer systems, roads, schools, and hospitals had to be developed in a short amount of time to service the community's rapidly growing needs. Tumbler Ridge and Mackenzie BC are recent examples of "Instant Towns" which were developed primarily around a single source industry, and thus, have historically experienced a series of hardships and population fluctuations.

The proposed Clairmont Heights is in direct contrast to that of Tumbler Ridge and Mackenzie due to its diversity of industries and employment income. Unlike "Instant Towns," Clairmont Heights is the result of long-term planning with engagement and input from both community and industry. The importance of place-making, community spirit and connections, were focal points during the planning stages. All necessary aspects including the interactive use of roads, trails, parks and green space were key elements necessary to create a sustainable and vibrant community.



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## **The Story & Statistics**

Located in the County of Grande Prairie, the Community of Clairmont benefits from the market strengths of a diverse set of industries including agriculture, forestry, manufacturing, transportation, and service. Unlike many other regions in the Province of Alberta, Oil and Gas represent a relatively small portion of Clairmont's overall employment income, accounting for only about 18% of its total, making Clairmont and the County of Grande Prairie less susceptible to resource market fluctuations.

Furthermore, the County and Clairmont present a larger and more enabled labor force, demonstrated through its populations' median age of 36.8 years old. Clairmont also has an average total household income of \$109,000 which is approximately 18% and 61% greater than Tumbler Ridge and Mackenzie BC respectively and higher than both the national and provincial averages. \$109,000

The County of Grande Prairie and Clairmont's average household income

## The Only One in North America

The proposed Clairmont Heights is an exceptionally well planned, ground up, new greenfield town development - currently the only one underway within North America. Over the past several years, input from all affected stakeholders and consulting professionals have determined the most suitable approach to build-out the over 1,200 acres of land that will encompass the new community. Once completed, there is a projected population of over 20,000 residents. The densified town core will occupy +/- 58 acres, not including roads, sidewalks, and parking lots, with a blend of high and low-rise buildings, with up to a maximum of 10 stories. (Appendix A: Bulk Form Diagram). Surrounding this will be 1000+ acres of medium density and single family residential houses interspersed with local retail. Current plans for the town core estimate that approximately 1.4 million square feet will be built out for high-density apartment/condominium residential use and approximately an additional 550,000 square feet for commercial/retail use. The total combined build out construction cost for these two products will be \$396 million CAD. This number is based on current average construction value of \$237.50 per sqft for residential and \$110 per sqft for commercial retail. The per sqft value for commercial/retail does not include any tenant improvements, levies, fees or soft costs and is only representative of the base building construction hard cost. With an estimated market absorption over the next 15- 20 years of both products. Furthermore, the County of Grande Prairie and Clairmont currently do not have any Development Cost Charges.





#### Clairmont Heights – Bulk Form Images

Watch "The Clairmont Heights Project" on our Youtube channel: youtube.com/user/CountyofGP

While planning this new ground-up town core, the Town of Sidney, British Columbia was used, as a real time comparable, to help guide our understanding of the demand for residential and commercial components. Like the proposed town core of Clairmont Heights and surrounding community, Sidney has a population of approximately 22,000, equally divided between the town core and the surrounding area.

Clairmont Heights' feature Parkway is designed to enhance the quality of life with spacious sidewalks, a boulevard that can accommodate seasonal activities, food trucks, and a central gathering point for all residents and visitors. Currently, engineering and design have been completed on the Parkway, and Phase One is nearing completion. The new potable water reservoir is currently due to commence construction Spring of 2017 along with the other necessary utilities. The blend of high and low-rise buildings will be situated to optimize the site lines and views of Clairmont Lake for all residents. This location, along with the character and form design guidelines, is intended to create a resort-like destination look and feel, not often found in the province of Alberta. A new Mixed-Use Land Use Bylaw has been drafted specifically for Clairmont Heights. Once adopted by Council, this contemporary Bylaw will allow for great flexibility in uses. Although the permitted uses for the ground floor require that occupying businesses are animated, bring character to the retail outlets, and improve the streetscape and curb appeal, all remaining floors have a wide and varied range of permitted uses allowing for the developer to build in accordance with trending market demands.



The proposed Clairmont Heights is being developed in an aesthetically pleasing location, with views of a natural 4 square mile lake, situated on a gentle south slope. Residents of Clairmont Heights will have picturesque views of the Rocky Mountains and will be overlooking the night lights of the City of Grande Prairie. Aside from its unique location, Clairmont Heights is also extremely well connected. Highway 2 and 43, which are minutes from the town core, are major arteries that connect to the larger cities within Alberta; including, City of Grande Prairie, Calgary, Edmonton, Grande Cache, Peace River, Valleyview, and, in the B.C. Peace River region, Dawson Creek and Fort St. John. Additionally the Airport of Grande Prairie, currently with pearly.

2019

Opening of Grande Prairie's New Regional Hospital and Cancer Center

Fort St. John. Additionally, the Airport of Grande Prairie, currently with nearly a half a million annual passengers, and the existing amenities in Clairmont and the City of Grande Prairie, are just a 20 minute drive away. This entire development will also connect to existing recreational trail systems that run throughout the County.

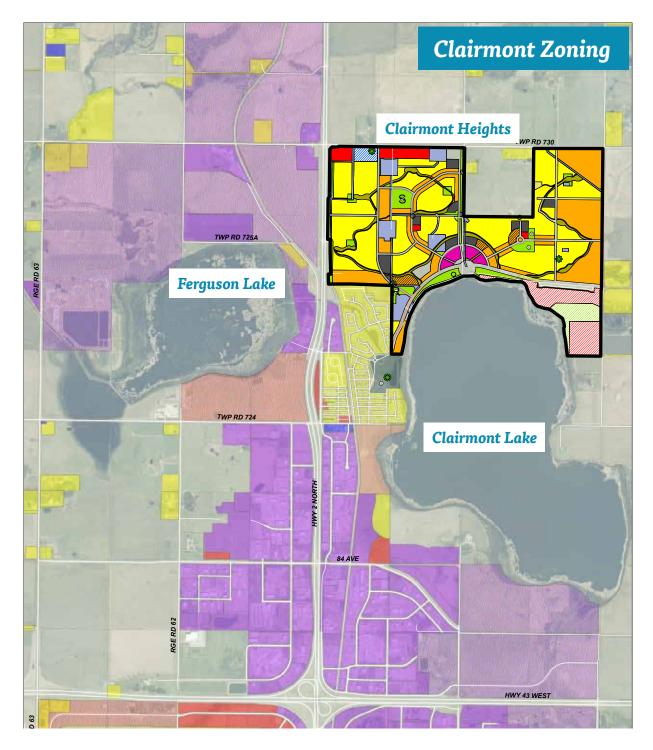
Within the past two years, two new schools have been built in the County. Also, a new regional hospital and cancer center in Grande Prairie will open its doors in 2019, helping northern patients receive specialized and complex care closer to home, with shorter wait times. The \$730 million regional hospital will also function as a referral center, providing health services to the entire region.

There are approximately 280,000 people within the 200 km radius Trade Area. As a part of the greater trade area population, Northern Alberta's population represents over 230,000 people, with approximately 9,400 registered companies employing over 115,000 employees and annually generating over \$9.3 billion into the economy. In addition to this, Ironstone Mines has formally announced that they are now permitted to begin the operations of their mine, construction of steel mill and manufacturing center located in Clear Hills about 60 minutes north of Clairmont. Ironstone anticipates hiring upwards of 1,000 skilled workers, with operations in full production by 2021. Announcements such as this will only increase the growing housing demands on the County and Clairmont.

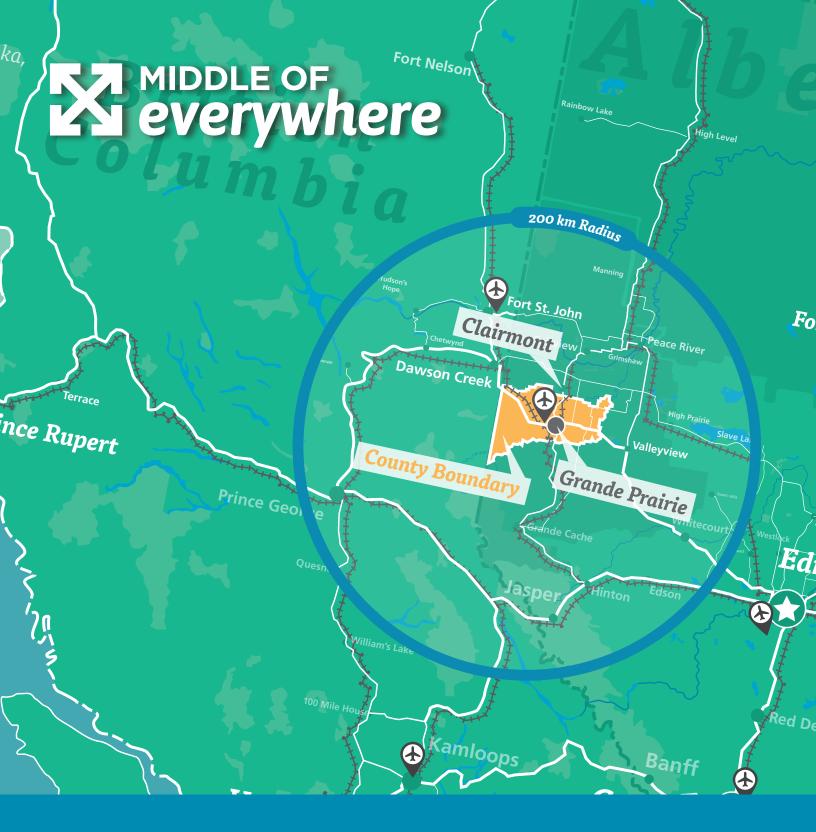
Clairmont Heights has the potential to be a hub for local and national retail outlets. Worth noting is the lack of provincial sales taxes within the province of Alberta.

Unlike "Instant Towns" within northern Alberta that have a large component of temporary housing for transient employment, Clairmont is a place with high demand for permanent residency. This is a popular part of the province, and there is a tendency for employees to quickly migrate their families to this area.

If Alberta is not currently included in your business portfolio, it makes good economic sense to change that, and the County of Grande Prairie and Clairmont are strategically the right places to do so. If Alberta is already a part of your portfolio, you can never have too much of a good thing!









County of Grande Prairie No. 1 Alberta, Canada

### **Interested in knowing more?**

For further information on this, or any other investment development opportunities within the County of Grande Prairie, please contact:

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