



AGENDA ITEM

PONOKA COUNTY / LACOMBE COUNTY INTERMUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

August 8, 2019

BACKGROUND

In May of 2019, Ponoka County and Lacombe County assembled the steering committee to develop a rural to rural Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP). The committee has had two meetings to discuss the plan and staff have prepared a draft working document. An open house has tentatively been scheduled for September 17, 2019 at 7:00 PM at the Morningside Hall to present the draft to the public.

At the first IDP committee meeting on May 21, 2019, staff presented an initial analysis of the existing plans in the study area, (1 mile on either side of our shared border). The Municipal Government Act requires that plans be consistent with one another, and IDP's are at the top of this hierarchy. This is why these plans are typically broad in nature. In order to simplify the interpretation and application of our planning documents, the committee decided to exempt the Gull Lake IDP boundary from the Ponoka County / Lacombe County IDP plan area. This will result in less amendments, and less confusion over which IDP would take precedence when referencing the plans.

KEY POLICIES

There are eight plans in place for lands entirely or partially within the IDP area, identified on *Map 2 - Existing Plans within the IDP Boundary*. These Plans provide a more detailed level of planning for these lands and should be referred to for more detailed and specific policy and development direction. As such, this plan seeks to direct development to areas already identified under one of the existing eight plans within the plan area.

The Lacombe County Plans within the IDP plan area are:

- Milton Morningside ASP (2018)
- QEII North ASP (2013)
- Gull Lake IDP (2010)

The Ponoka County Plans within the IDP plan area are:

- Morningside ASP (2018)
- Highway 2 Industrial Policy (2014)
- East Gull Lake Overview Plan (2009)
- West Gull Lake Overview Plan (2010)
- Chain Lakes Watershed Management Plan (2012)
- Gull Lake IDP (2010)

Agricultural uses represent the largest land use category in the Plan Area. The IDP strives to maintain the importance of agriculture by directing future growth in a compact, contiguous manner that minimizes intrusions into agricultural operations. With that said, through the Chain Lakes Watershed Management Plan, Ponoka County has identified a CFO exclusion zone in order to protect Chain Lakes. As such a Chain Lakes Policy area has been created with the intent that the Lacombe County lands surrounding Chain Lakes mirror the same exclusion zone listed in the CLWMP. This policy states that no new or expanded confined feeding operation shall be permitted less than 1.6 kilometers (1 mile) from the boundary of Chain Lakes. It is important to note that there are no existing operations that are currently within this exclusion area.

The committee also felt that additional guidance for conducting referrals beyond ones own municipal boundaries would be a benefit for both parties. This means that in a case where a circulation area extends into the adjacent municipality, each municipality shall share landowner contact information with the other so that the circulation can be completed by the municipality triggering the circulation.

The Environmental Management section includes policies that ensure that permanent structures are not placed in the 1:100 year floodplain, and that the Wolf Creek/Whelp Brook Master Drainage Plan is adhered to. This allows each municipality to conserve environmentally significant natural features when accommodating growth.

LEGISLATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 631 of the Municipal Government RSA 2000 cM-26 (as amended) requires two or more Councils of municipalities with common boundaries to prepare and adopt an Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) for the purpose of providing more detailed planning direction for development of lands within a common boundary.

An IDP is expected to provide the municipalities with a comprehensive long range land use plan that reduces potential development conflicts, addresses other community concerns and provides a framework for ongoing consultation in areas of mutual interest.

An intermunicipal development plan must address:

- (i) The future land use within the area
- (ii) The manner of and the proposals for future development in the area
- (iii) The provision of transportation systems for the area, either generally or specifically,
- (iv) Proposals for the financing and programming of intermunicipal infrastructure for the area,
- (v) The co-ordination of intermunicipal programs relating to the physical, social and economic development of the area,
- (vi) Environmental matters within the area, either generally or specifically
- (vii) The provision of intermunicipal services and facilities, either generally or specifically; and,
- (viii) Any other matter related to the physical, social or economic development of the area that the councils consider necessary.

PROCESS

A public open house is scheduled to be held on September 17, 2019 at 7:00 PM at the Morningside Hall to present the draft to the public. (see Schedule 'B' for draft advertisement).

Following the public open house, the planning committee may wish to make further revisions to the Plan based on community feedback. Once all revisions have been incorporated, the Plan will be considered by both Councils for First Reading. Upon First Reading, both Councils will announce a Public Hearing date.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that Council accept the draft *Ponoka County / Lacombe County Intermunicipal Development Plan* (Schedule A) and the *Notice of Public Open House* (Schedule B) for information.

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REVIEWED BY: Tim Timmons, County Manager