



BYLAW 1309/19

PONOKA COUNTY / LACOMBE COUNTY INTERMUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

November 7, 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. 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.

An open house was held on September 17, 2019 at the Morningside Hall to present the draft to the public. There were 25 attendees at the meeting and the majority of the questions and / or comments were taken in via one on one conversations. Many of the questions centered around the hierarchy of plans, and where this IDP fits in. There were no suggested plan changes by the public. Two comment sheets were submitted and both of the respondents simply wished to have a copy of the final plan emailed to them once it was adopted. Following the public open house, the Steering Committee agreed that they did not wish to make further revisions to the Plan based on community feedback. Ponoka County Council has since granted 1st reading at their October 8th council meeting.

KEY POLICIES

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

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.

The only other change was to reflect the repeal process and requirement to enter into a new IDP should the member municipalities wish to repeal the plan.

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.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Lacombe County sees the value in engaging the public through a variety of mediums and is committed to open, accountable and responsive decision making, including different levels of engagement with the public as outlined in the Policy AD(40): Public Participation Policy. The appropriate level of engagement for each public participation opportunity should be selected on a project-to-project basis. The levels of engagement within the policy are as follows:

- Inform: To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.
- Consult: To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.
- Involve: To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
- Collaborate: To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
- Empower: To place final decision making in the hands of the public.

Assuming that both municipalities grant first reading to the IDP, the IDP committee has recommended that each municipality schedule their own public hearing to provide the public an opportunity to understand and provide input on the draft IDP. After the public hearing, the public's input would be considered and a report prepared for both Council's consideration and any recommended changes will be made to the draft plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommend that Council give First Reading to Bylaw 1309/19 for the *Ponoka County / Lacombe County Intermunicipal Development Plan*.

If Council gives First Reading, then staff proposes a Public Hearing be scheduled at 9 am on December 12, 2019 at the County Council Chambers.

PREPARED BY: Peter Duke, Planner / Development Officer

REVIEWED BY: Dale Freitag, Director of Planning Services

REVIEWED BY: Tim Timmons, County Manager

PD
D.F.
T