

Wheatland County

Request for Decision

Regular Council Meeting
May 18, 2021

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Bylaw 2021-10: The Wheatland County and Rocky View County Intermunicipal Development Plan, Public Hearing and Second Reading

Recommendation from Administration

Resolution 1: That Council move Second Reading of Bylaw 2021-10, this being a bylaw for the purpose of adopting the Rocky View County and Wheatland County Intermunicipal Development Plan in accordance with Sections 230, 606, 631 and 692 of the *Municipal Government Act*, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Chapter M-26, as amended.

Resolution 2: That Council direct Administration to proceed with the Calgary Metropolitan Regional Board approval process, and once approved bring the Rocky View County and Wheatland County Intermunicipal Development Plan back to Council for consideration of Third Reading.

Chief Administrative Officer's Comments

N/A

Report

Divisions 3, 4, 5, & 6

The purpose of the Rocky View County and Wheatland County Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) is to foster a collaborative planning approach for lands along the common border between the two municipalities. The Plan Area is approximately 27,690 hectares (68,424 acres) in size, covering one mile on either side of the municipal boundary between in Wheatland County and Rocky View County. Rocky View County is located to the west of Wheatland County.

Background

Municipalities that shared a border may enter into an IDP in accordance with the Municipal Government Act (MGA). The purpose and intent of an IDP is to foster intermunicipal relations by addressing:

- The future land use within the area,
- The manner of and the proposals for future development in the area,
- The provision of transportation systems for the area, either generally or specifically,
- The co-ordination of intermunicipal programs relating to the physical, social and economic development of the area,
- Environmental matters within the area, either generally or specifically,
- Any other matter related to the physical, social or economic development of the area that the councils consider necessary,
- A procedure to be used to resolve or attempt to resolve any conflict between the municipalities that have adopted the plan,
- A procedure to be used, by one or more municipalities, to amend or repeal the plan, and

- Provisions relating to the administration of the plan.

Staff at Wheatland County and Rocky View County collaborated to prepare the draft IDP document. In order to determine key considerations for inclusion in the plan, engagement of area Councillors and landowners was conducted. Landowners were notified of the project by post, and were invited to provide feedback. Landowner feedback was minimal, and largely consisted of questions regarding the purpose of the IDP. Further engagement was not determined to be necessary, as interested landowners were contacted individually by phone. Councillors were engaged through the Intermunicipal Committee (IMC), which consists of two Councillors from each municipality, the CAOs or their designates, and Administrative staff. Once a final draft was completed, the document was presented to the IMC for final confirmation prior to proceeding to the approval process.

Wheatland County's Council granted first reading to the IDP on April 20th, 2021. Rocky View's Council granted first reading on March 23rd, 2021, and their public hearing was held on May 11th, 2021.

Prior to final approval, the Counties are required to submit the IDP to the Calgary Metropolitan Regional Board (CMRB). The CMRB will assess the IDP in accordance with the Interim Growth Plan. Once compliance is confirmed, the County will return the IDP to Council for third and final reading. The final reading will not require an additional public hearing.

Overview of the IDP

As per the planning document hierarchy below, the IDP is required to comply with the Alberta Land Stewardship Act, the *Municipal Government Act*, the Subdivision and Development Regulations, and the Provincial Land Use Policies. The municipal statutory plans are required to comply with the IDP, and at this time they are aligned.

The IDP's land use goals and objectives focus on retaining agriculture and grazing as primary land uses in the Plan area while also allowing for development in accordance with each municipality's statutory plans. As there is little development pressure within the Plan area, the IDP's policies are high-level, focusing on notification process for proposed developments and encouraging collaboration. The policies address all of the above noted topics while allowing each municipality to retain control within their respective jurisdictions. Areas of particular importance are summarized below.

General Land Use

Require the municipalities to communicate effectively. Requires referral of planning and development applications to the other municipality for comment.

Highway Growth Areas

Recognizes the importance of the Highway 1 area as a gateway to both municipalities and the region. Encourages high quality appearance of development.

Agriculture

Promotes use of interface tools such as buffering or screening. Encourage awareness of agricultural practices for lands adjacent to developed areas. Requires notification of confined feeding operation applications.

Environment & Open Space

Requires consideration of Provincial policy with respect to wetlands, drainage channels, and waterbodies. Consider alignment of wildlife corridors and natural open space.

Utilities, Resource Extraction, & Energy Development

Notification requirements for new aggregate extraction operations, ensuring that haul routes do not negatively impact the other municipality without necessary upgrades. Requires notification for renewable energy and telecommunication tower applications.

Transportation

Provisions for access to a roadway under the jurisdiction of the other municipality. Mitigate development impact on transportation infrastructure. Enhance communication concerning road closures.

Dispute Resolution

It is anticipated that enhanced communication at the administrative level will reduce the potential for intermunicipal disputes. If they do arise, the IDP provides a process for collaboration and mediation prior to the appeal process provided in the *Municipal Government Act*. The MGA process requires consideration of the matter through the Municipal Government Board, which can be costly both in terms of administrative time and financial considerations.

The portion of Wheatland County that is within the Calgary Metropolitan Regional Board is within the Plan area, and so the IDP does not contain policies referencing the CMRB. The IDP has been drafted in consideration of the principles of the CMRB, however no additional requirements or restrictions have been proposed.

Relevant Policies, Practices, and Legislation

- Municipal Government Act
- South Saskatchewan Regional Plan
- Calgary Metropolitan Regional Board
- Municipal Development Plan

Alignment with the Strategic Plan

The IDP will reinforce and protect both municipalities' development philosophies and goals while mitigating the potential for future intermunicipal conflict. The IDP will help ensure that development within both municipalities occurs in an orderly, economic, efficient, and harmonious manner that is sustainable by considering existing development conditions and future municipal goals.

Response Options

Option 1: THAT the proposed recommendation is accepted/approved.

Option 2: THAT the proposed recommendation is not accepted/approved.

Option 3: THAT an alternate recommendation is accepted/approved.

Implications of Recommendation

General

Land use decisions in the specific geographical area require the IDP to be consulted, if approved.

Organizational

N/A

Financial

Staff time allocated.

Environmental, Staff, and Public Safety

N/A

Follow-up Action / Communications

Should Council approve Second Reading of the Rocky View County and Wheatland County Intermunicipal Development Plan, Administration will submit the IDP to the Calgary Metropolitan Regional Board in order to confirm compliance with the Interim Growth Plan. Once compliance is confirmed, the County will return the IDP to Council for third and final reading. The final reading will not require an additional public hearing.