



# COUNTY PLAN AMENDMENTS COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

## Terms of Reference

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### Introduction

- 1 Long-term, high-level strategies for growth and development are important for a municipality, as they provide vision and direction for efficient and effective long-term planning and service delivery.
- 2 For Rocky View County, the strategic approach to managing the County's growth is contained within Rocky View County's Municipal Development Plan (MDP): the County Plan. The County Plan, adopted October 1, 2013, provides a strategic approach and vision for growth in the County, supported by community and stakeholder input. This strategic approach to growth has since guided County policy development and service delivery since.
- 3 The County Plan includes six (6) key principles to guide growth:
  - (1) Growth and Fiscal Sustainability;
  - (2) The Environment;
  - (3) Agriculture;
  - (4) Rural Communities;
  - (5) Rural Service; and
  - (6) Partnerships.
- 4 The County Plan's growth strategy, as well as the policies and actions of the County Plan, are derived from the County Plan's vision and the six key principles.
- 5 The County Plan envisions the residential population of Rocky View County to be approximately 2.5% to 3% of the Calgary region's population, which is in keeping with the County's historic population share of the region. In order to achieve a balanced tax revenues and manage long-term fiscal impacts of development, Council also set a goal to achieve an assessment split ratio of 65%:35% by 2035 (Policy C-197).
- 6 Given recent changes, particularly with respect to a new regional governance model, it is important to review this strategy and determine if changes are required.
- 7 Council has directed Administration to review the County Plan through two (2) motions arising: one (1) on May 8, 2018, and one (1) on September 4, 2018.
- 8 This Terms of Reference is a Comprehensive Review of the County Plan, consisting of an in-depth review of the fundamental pillars of the strategy. Revising the County Plan may determine the level of growth and where it should go, identifying new and revised settlement areas, new development densities/intensities, new development forms, the fiscal impact of greater residential growth on the County, and/or other specific items that Council wishes to investigate further.



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- 9 To achieve the objectives identified in this Terms of Reference, the Comprehensive Review will also evaluate the most appropriate policy framework whether it be through amendments to the County Plan, or through the creation of a new MDP.
- 10 Contributing to the Comprehensive Review of the County Plan will be:
  - (1) Community and stakeholders input;
  - (2) Intermunicipal input;
  - (3) Growth projections;
  - (4) Fiscal impact to the County;
  - (5) Benefit and impacts to the communities;
  - (6) Market demand; and
  - (7) Direction and intent of higher order documents (e.g.: Interim Growth Plan and County Plan).
- 11 The Comprehensive Review of the County Plan will result in new MDP policies in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA).

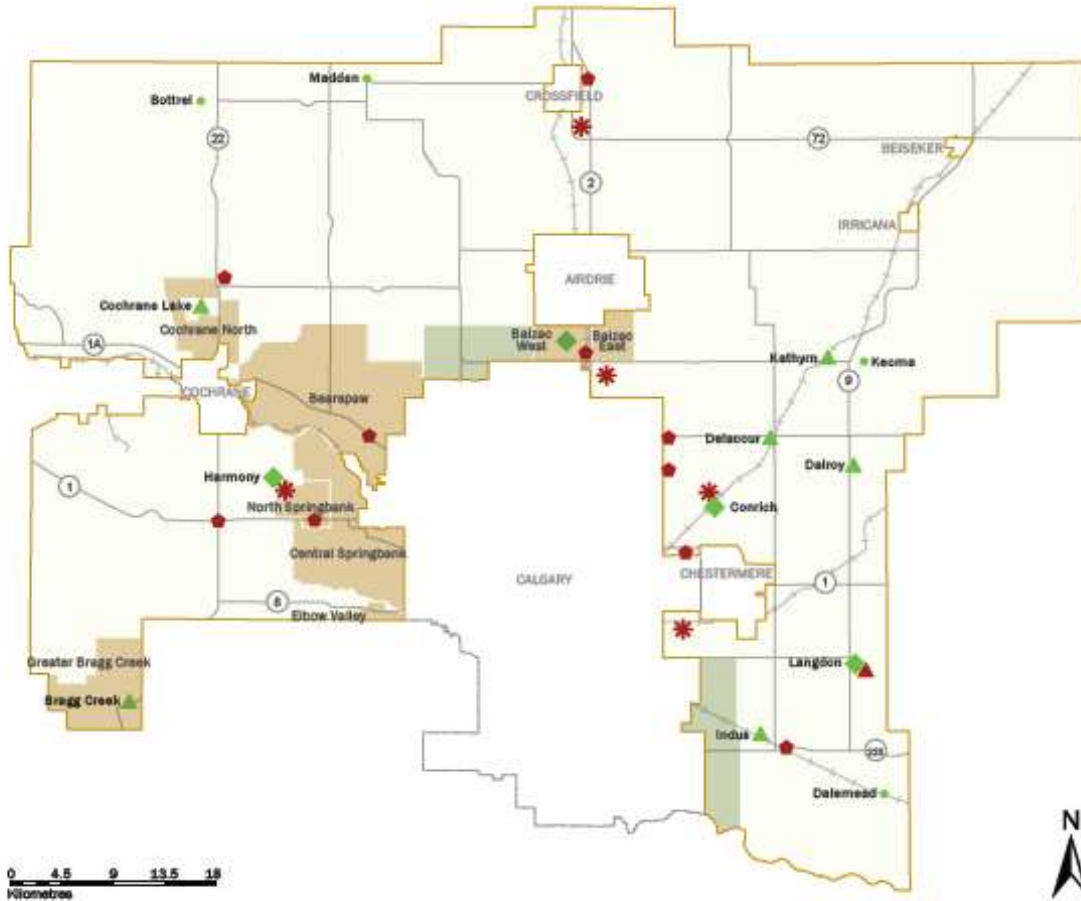
## Study Area

- 12 The study area of the County Plan Amendments Comprehensive Review encompasses the entirety of the County, as shown on Figure 1 – County Plan Managing Growth Map.
- 13 This is in keeping with the Section 31.0 of the County Plan, which states:
  - (1) *The County Plan is a living document, to be amended from time to time to reflect changing conditions; monitoring, evaluating, and progress reporting is required.*



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Figure 1 – County Plan Managing Growth Map



**Residential Communities**

- Hamlet - Full Service
- Hamlet - Growth as per the adopted plan
- Small Hamlet
- Country Residential (Area Structure Plan)

**Business Areas**

- Regional Business Centre
- Highway Business Area
- Hamlet Business Area

**Future Urban Growth Areas**

- Calgary Growth Area  
 (Rocky View County / Calgary Intermunicipal Development Plan)

**General Legend**

- Highway
- Rocky View Boundary
- City/Town/Village





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## Base Assumptions and Circumstances

- 14** A number of basic assumptions and circumstances guiding the planning framework for the area have changed since adoption of the County Plan in 2013:
- (1)** In October 2013, the County Plan was adopted.
  - (2)** In September 2014, the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan came into effect.
  - (3)** In 2016, the Province of Alberta reviewed and amended the MGA.
  - (4)** In July 2017, amendments to the County Plan’s policies to support the implementation of the Glenbow Ranch Area Structure Plan were adopted.
  - (5)** In April 2018, amendments to the County Plan’s policies on first parcels out were adopted.
  - (6)** In January 2018, the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board (CMRB) was established as the provincially mandated growth management board in the Calgary region. Rocky View County became a participating municipality of the CMRB.
    - (a)** Under the Calgary Metropolitan Regional Board Regulations (AR190/2017), certain statutory plans, or amendments to statutory plans, to be adopted by a participating municipality must be submitted to the Board for approval.
  - (7)** In October 2018, the Interim Growth Plan (IGP) and the Interim Regional Evaluation Framework (IREF) were approved by the CMRB and are awaiting Ministerial approval. Under the IGP, amendments to existing statutory plans shall be submitted to the CMRB for review and approval. The CMRB may approve or reject a statutory plan in accordance with the IREF.

## Background

### History

- 15** The County Plan was adopted on October 1, 2013, and was amended on July 25, 2017 and April 10, 2018.
- 16** Table 1 below provides the County’s population in context with the Region, including projections to 2026. As of 2016, the County’s population is 2.59% of the region’s population, meeting the moderate growth target within the County Plan.

**Table 1: Municipal Population – Calgary Region (2016 Census)**

	2011	2016	2026
RVC Population	36,461	39,407	46,813
Regional Population	1,332,583	1,519,285	1,984,264
% Regional Pop.	2.74%	2.59%	2.36%
RVC Annual Growth Rate	1.91%	1.57%	1.57%
Regional Annual Growth Rate	2.40%	2.66%	2.66%



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### Interim Growth Plan

- 17 The Interim Growth Plan (IGP) identifies different types of plans that would be subject to the CMRB review and approval.
- 18 Section 4.1 of the IGP identified the importance of MDPs in the implementation of the IGP, subjecting the Comprehensive Review to the Interim Regional Evaluation Framework (IREF); which is based on the Principles, Objectives, and Policies of the IGP.
  - (1) *MDPs are essential means of implementing the Interim Growth Plan and future Growth Plan. New MDPs, and amendments to existing MDPs will be subject to the IREF process (see Section 4.3 of this Plan), in accordance with the IREF submission and evaluation criteria.*
- 19 As such, the Comprehensive Review will be considered 'Regionally Significant' by the CMRB, which the IGP defines as:
  - (1) *Regionally Significant – Of a scale and significance such that it may benefit or impact two or more municipal members of the Region by virtue of: adjacency, land-use, infrastructure, and/or servicing requirements. A resource, service, development or opportunity may be regionally significant where:
    - (a) *it can reasonably be assumed to benefit or impact the wider regional membership, and*
    - (b) *impact to it by natural or human disturbance and disruption could have an adverse effect on the growth and prosperity of the Region.**
  - (2) *Proximity to regionally significant corridors and reliance on regional infrastructure may affect the regional significance of a proposed development.*
- 20 Plans and developments identified as Regionally Significant will likely have higher level of scrutiny from the CMRB and will likely require a significant amount of engagement with our intermunicipal partners.

### County Plan

- 21 The County Plan identified a moderate rate of growth within the County. Moderate residential growth means an increase of no more than 2.5 to 3.0% of the region's population by 2026 (approximately 11,000 to 20,000 net new residents), provided financial and environmental goals can be achieved.
- 22 The County Plan identifies the preferred areas for residential and business growth in Figure 1 – County Plan Managing Growth Map. The growth areas reflect the Area Structure Plans (ASP) and other identified growth areas that existed at the time the County Plan was prepared. The population and build-out data indicates that these areas have sufficient capacity to fulfill the moderate growth goals.
- 23 The financial strategy of the County Plan is to increase the County's business assessment base in order to balance residential growth, as businesses typically have higher assessment rates, have a higher marginal tax rate than residential homes, and do not demand the level of service that



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residential development does (i.e. soft services). In order to achieve a balance and to not rely heavily on residential tax revenues to manage long-term fiscal impacts of development, Council set a goal to achieve an assessment split ratio of 65%:35% by 2035 (Policy C-197). This policy is used when assessing new development proposals.

- 24** The County Plan also recognizes agriculture as a land use, a business, and a service. The agricultural policies of the County Plan came from the recommendations of the Agriculture Master Plan, a document prepared with input from the County's agricultural producers. The County Plan recognizes that agriculture encompasses a multitude of uses including crop production, ranching, greenhouses, specialty crops, equestrian uses, tree farms, and forestry. County agricultural producers also identified fragmentation of agricultural land as an impediment to continued production viability, which resulted in policies to reduce impact and fragmentation.
- 25** The County Plan also identifies long-term areas beyond the 10-12 year County Plan timeframe through policy 5.14 and Appendix A of the County Plan.

### Envisioned County Plan Amendments

- 26** The intent of the project is to conduct a Comprehensive Review of the County Plan and present amendments or a new MDP for Council's consideration. The following sections detail the objectives, goals, and project timing that will guide the review process:
- 27** Mapping revisions, which will:
- (1)** Incorporate changes to the land use strategy and reflect land use planning best practices, development feasibility, and community input;
  - (2)** Identify expanded settlement areas;
  - (3)** Identify new freestanding settlement areas; and
  - (4)** Identify new/expanded infrastructure requirements.
- 28** Policy revisions in the plan to:
- (1)** Identify the most appropriate policy framework for the lands, amendments to the County Plan or a new MDP;
  - (2)** Align policies with higher-order policy and guiding documents adopted since 2013;
  - (3)** Establishing a new vision and principles to guide the development of policies;
  - (4)** Review the organization of the policies and determine if a new framework is required to implement the revised growth strategy;
  - (5)** Overhaul the existing development policies to implement the new growth strategy;
  - (6)** Incorporate new/revised policies on the role of agriculture in the County;
  - (7)** Promote new development forms in growth areas;



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- (8) Review the level of service (urban services, full rural services, basic rural services, etc.) required to be provided in growth areas;
- (9) Include new/revised criteria and application requirements for evaluating development proposals in, and outside of, growth areas;
- (10) Include new/revised policies regarding residential densities and population targets;
- (11) Include new/revised policies regarding non-residential development intensities and land use in;
- (12) Provide new/revised policies on how to manage new infrastructure and utility (road, water servicing, sanitary servicing, stormwater infrastructure, etc.) requirements, and how they are funded and maintained;
- (13) Provide new/revised policies on when/where soft services (recreation, health, cultural, and social services) are required, and how they are funded and maintained; and
- (14) Provide new/revised policies on when and where reserves (Municipal, Environmental, School, and Conservation) are required and how they will be maintained.

### Comprehensive Review Goals

- 29 The Comprehensive Review should take into account a number of goals:
- (1) Be supported by growth projections (residential and employment), desired growth size, and availability of servicing;
  - (2) Determine if the Area Structure Plan priority policy is required to be reviewed to implement the Comprehensive Review;
  - (3) Achieve a logical extension of growth patterns, including vehicular and pedestrian transportation infrastructure;
  - (4) Support methods to infill existing development;
  - (5) Support the use of alternate forms of development;
  - (6) Demonstrate sensitivity and respect for key environmental and natural features;
  - (7) Allow the County the ability to achieve rational growth directions, cost effective utilization of resources, and fiscal accountability;
  - (8) Achieve effective community engagement in a fair, open, considerate, and equitable manner;
  - (9) Align with other planning documents; and
  - (10) Other achievable goals identified by the communities.



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### Comprehensive Review Objectives

- 30** The objectives for the Comprehensive Review are to be achievable, based on best practices and work as described in the following subsections.

#### Work Plan

- 31** To develop a Work Plan that identifies and implements key process requirements, timelines, and analysis that result in the timely creation of the amendments.

#### Community, Stakeholder, and Intergovernmental Engagement

- 32** To implement an effective and meaningful engagement process with the communities, identified stakeholder groups, and intergovernmental organizations that:
- (1)** Raises the awareness of the planning process and encourages participation;
  - (2)** Identifies the full set of issues and opportunities the new growth strategy should address;
  - (3)** Shapes the new growth strategy through a blend of research, input, and discussion-focused activities;
  - (4)** Responds constructively to the interests of various audiences; and
  - (5)** Ensures broad support for the resulting growth strategy.
- 33** A detailed communication and engagement strategy will identify all relevant interest groups within the County, intermunicipal partners, and external stakeholders affected by the planning process outcomes. The strategy will spell out how the process will proceed through several phases, and how various tools / techniques will be used in each phase to meaningfully engage a range of participants.
- 34** The strategy will identify an engagement strategy to collaborate with our intermunicipal partners to ensure compliance with the IGP.
- 35** The strategy will result in a participatory process that is educational, inclusive, transparent, responsive and timely, and that builds community and stakeholder trust.

#### Plan Creation

- 36** The review process will result in:
- (1)** Policy that meets the requirements of Section 632 (3) the *MGA*.
  - (2)** Policy consistent with goals and policies of the IGP and applicable Intermunicipal Development Plans.

#### Land Use

- (3)** Significant changes to the land use strategy as it relates to residential, business, and agricultural land use; and
- (4)** New development requirements for new and existing growth areas.





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## Servicing

- (5) New transportation infrastructure requirements, under both Provincial and County jurisdiction, to determine future transportation needs and opportunities;
- (6) Determine whether the County is required to provide water, sanitary sewer, and/or storm infrastructure to implement the land use strategy; and
- (7) Identification of other required physical services.

## Physical Environment

- (8) Review impacts on environmental and natural features that may result from a refined the land use strategy; and
- (9) Determine whether the County should require environmental reserve for new developments and the capital and operational impacts of requiring environmental reserve.

## Other

- (10) Determine the fiscal impact of expanded and new settlement areas;
- (11) Determine the fiscal impact of the level of service (urban services, full rural services, basic rural services, etc.) required to be provided;
- (12) Determine the impact of soft services (recreation, health, cultural, and social services) required to be provided;
- (13) Identification of other existing County policies and plans that will require amendments to implement the new land use strategy;
- (14) Refine the monitoring framework the long-term effectiveness of the Plan (as required); and
- (15) Meet the intent and direction of the IGP, the County Plan, and other relevant policy frameworks.

## Enabling Legislation

- 37 The *Municipal Government Act, Revised Statutes of Alberta, 2000, Chapter M-26, as amended*, enables Council to adopt an MDP for the purpose of establishing a framework to guide growth and development within the municipality. In accordance with the MGA, the County Plan Amendments Comprehensive Review must provide notification to intermunicipal partners, and be consistent with the Act.

## Work Program

- 38 The Work Program is anticipated to occur in four phases.
- 39 The Comprehensive Review will likely be one of the first amendments to an MDP, or new MDP, that will be considered by the CMRB. The CMRB process has not yet been implemented in the region; as such, timeframe for CMRB approval is unknown.



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## Phase 1 – Project Initiation and Background Analysis

**40** In this phase of the project, technical studies will be conducted while the project initiation and background analysis take place:

- (1) Confirm goals and objectives of the project and update Terms of Reference;
- (2) Develop a community communication and engagement strategy;
- (3) Create a work plan and budget to guide overall project management; and
- (4) Create a Background Report to inform the Comprehensive Review. The timing of the public release of the report and its findings will be in accordance with the community engagement strategy.

**41** Phase 1 – Deliverables:

- (1) Communication and engagement strategy;
- (2) Budget;
- (3) Work plan;
- (4) Identification of planning issues; and
- (5) Background report.



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### Phase 2 – Community Consultation and Plan Writing

- 42** This phase marks the official public launch of the project. It begins with community and stakeholder engagement and finishes with the writing of the draft amendments. Community and stakeholder engagement will be as per the engagement plan.
- 43** A pre-application will be made to the CMRB to discuss the County Plan Amendments Comprehensive Review. This pre-application will discuss identify opportunities as well as concern, issues, and questions raised by our intermunicipal partners.
- 44** The preparation of the amendments integrates the refined growth strategy, with:
- (1)** The goals and objectives identified in the Terms of Reference;
  - (2)** Other relevant planning documents;
  - (3)** The IGP; and
  - (4)** Relevant Intermunicipal Development Plans.
- 45** Phase 2 – Deliverables:
- (1)** A report on communication and engagement process and findings;
  - (2)** A draft of the amendments.

### Phase 3 – Draft County Plan Release

- 46** This phase of the project is the release of the draft amendments with an opportunity for community and agency review. Upon completion of the external review, the Plan will be amended as required.
- 47** Phase 3 – Deliverables:
- (1)** Final version of the amendments;
  - (2)** Release of the amendments (final - proposed); and
  - (3)** Circulation of the amendments to agencies.

### Phase 4 – County Plan (Public Hearing)

- 48** This phase of the project is the public hearing and consideration of the proposed amendments and consideration of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> hearing of Council. Consideration of 3<sup>rd</sup> reading will be considered by Council if the County Plan is accepted by the CMRB.

## Conclusion

- 49** The Comprehensive Review will revise the manner in which the County allows growth, aligns with higher order policy documents, and facilitates growth within the County.





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Approval Date	•
Replaces	• n/a
Lead Role	• County Manager
Committee Classification	• Council/Advisory
Last Review Date	• n/a
Next Review Date	•

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Approval Date