



February 17, 2021

Town and County proceed with mediation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

On February 11, 2021, Brazeau County and the Town of Drayton Valley began a mediation process in order to resolve differing interests on some issues in a collaborative and productive manner.

While a number of municipal partners in the Province have used arbitration to resolve differences, the Town and County have agreed that mediation is a preferred process where a resolution can be agreed to among the parties, rather than have one implemented by an arbitrator.

The major items of discussion are the plan and referral areas and the recreation component of the Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) and Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework (ICF) which all Alberta municipalities are required to enter into by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

An Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) is a high-level policy plan created by neighbouring municipalities. An IDP is designed to foster cooperation and integrated development near the municipal boundaries so that unnecessary costs and negative impacts for the municipalities are avoided.

An Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework (ICF) highlights and formalizes existing collaborative work between adjacent municipalities and provides a forum to work together. The primary goal of ICFs is ensuring neighbouring municipalities work together regarding service delivery to residents in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Brazeau County and the Town of Drayton Valley have an existing IDP that was completed in 2012. The Government of Alberta has recently updated the *Municipal Government Act* with a strong focus on intermunicipal planning. To accommodate these changes, the examination of the IDP will evaluate what worked and what did not work in the 2012 IDP, explore what services can be shared, and determine how and where we should grow.

Each municipality has appointed a negotiation team composed of three Council members and respective Chief Administrative Officer. Representing the Town is Mayor Michael Doerksen, Councillor Corey Peebles and Councillor Nancy Dodds, County representation will be comprised of Reeve Bart Guyon, Councillor Anthony Heinrich and Councillor Kara Westerlund. Each municipality has appointed a third-party mediator to assist the process. Both municipalities have agreed to the other municipality's selection of mediator and the two mediators, Bill Sutherland and Andrew Fulton will collaborate on facilitating a compromise that works for the collective benefit of the County and Town as much as possible. The Town has applied for a municipal grant to offset the Town and County costs related to the mediation process. The parties have agreed that mediation discussions are confidential, and any messages to the public will be jointly agreed to and released. Meetings are scheduled over the next

several weeks, with the goal to reach a conclusion and approve the IDP and ICF before the provincial deadline of April 1. Each municipality will ratify any agreement reached at a public Council meeting.

“We value our relationship with the Town of Drayton Valley, and I’m glad to be working together with our urban neighbours through the mediation process to reach a conclusion that is in the best interests of all residents,” says Brazeau County Reeve Bart Guyon. “Our separate communities are strongest when working together.”

“We welcome the opportunity to work collaboratively with our municipal neighbours,” commented Mayor Michael Doerksen. “The mediation process will ensure that we are working together to serve all residents in our region.”

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