



Mountain View C O U N T Y

News Release

For Immediate Release

Council Approves Template to Guide Land Annexation Discussions With Urban Partners

February 21, 2007 • Didsbury, Alberta – At the February 14th 2007 Council meeting, Mountain View County approved in principle a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) template to be used in discussions with County urban municipalities. The Councils of Carstairs, Cremona, Didsbury, Olds and Sundre will be presenting the same MOA to their respective Councils for approval over the next two weeks. The MOA will be used, along with the Intermunicipal Development Plan template as the basis for negotiations on land annexations with each of the urban municipalities.

As part of an ongoing process to strengthen intermunicipal communication, the Councils of Mountain View County, Carstairs, Cremona, Didsbury, Olds and Sundre have committed to a cooperative relationship to ensure the interests of both rural and urban citizens are addressed. Together, Mountain View County and the municipalities agreed that development of a template for Intermunicipal Development Plans would benefit all parties and shorten the time needed to process individual annexation requests.

Accordingly, the MOA template was developed by the six Chief Administrative Officers with Municipal Area Partnership providing the services of Austrom Consulting Ltd. to support the process. All six respective Councils were involved at each stage of the process. Features and benefits of the MOA include:

- The County will increase support for recreation and culture programs in Carstairs, Cremona, Didsbury, Olds and Sundre from the 2006 level of \$408,915 per year, in annual steps, to \$1,106,200 per year by 2011, plus inflation and adjusted for population changes
- Carstairs, Cremona, Didsbury, Olds and Sundre will support the inclusion of the County as a member of the Mountain View Regional Water Commission, and have agreed to provide water and wastewater services to developments outside their boundaries
- The County will provide for tax sharing for developments outside the urban boundaries that are provided with water and wastewater services, based on 10% of taxes for each service
- Carstairs, Cremona, Didsbury, Olds and Sundre, and the County agree on planning principles that will apply to annexations by urban municipalities and nearby serviced developments

“We acknowledge that recreation and library services are used by County residents, and that the cost of these services is rapidly escalating,” says Reeve Al Kemmere. “The County wants to pay our fair share as a part of a package that provides for mutual benefit for all municipalities, and this provides the means to access water and sewer services.

“This MOA represents an important step forward in terms of intermunicipal cooperation. By working together, we create efficiencies, reduce costs and ensure that development in our County reflects the wishes of both rural and urban residents. Capital projects will continue to be reviewed on a request by request basis”

-30-



Mountain View C O U N T Y

Background

Please note: The term “urban centres” includes the Town of Carstairs, the Village of Cremona, the Town of Didsbury, the Town of Olds and the Town of Sundre

Why has the County increased funding to the urban centres?

Growth is triggering escalated costs and rural residents are increasingly using urban services.

A typical urban centre spends over \$200 per capita on operating recreation (arenas and playing fields) and cultural facilities (libraries and community halls). In 2006, the County gave a grant for recreation operations of \$31.70 plus a grant of \$2.00 for library operations for each rural resident in the recreation district around each urban centre. This did not represent a fair share of the urban cost to support these programs for rural residents.

“New growth is a triggering factor in supporting these increased costs,” comments Reeve Kemmere. “To ensure the County is paying a fair share of escalating costs, the grant for recreation and cultural services will be increased over a five-year period as per the following.”

- To \$92.57 for urban community recreation operations with a current swimming pool
- Or to \$59.66 for urban community recreation operations without a swimming pool
- A grant of \$8.75 for library operations, for each rural resident in the recreation district around each urban centre
- These grants will be adjusted each year for population changes and inflation, according to a formula outlined in the MOA

Will the County become involved in the operation of recreation and/or library services?

No. Each urban centre will continue to be responsible for the operation of their respective recreation and culture facilities.

The County’s involvement will continue to be limited to the provision of grants and appointment of committee members.

Are these grants a subsidy to the urban centres?

No, these monies reflect an increased share of costs of recreation and culture programs used by rural residents, but the funds can be allocated as per the wishes of each municipality.

The increased funding grants give each urban centre the option to: (1) Increase spending in the same areas; (2) Allocate funds to different areas; or (3) Decrease property taxes. So that recreation and culture spending remains consistent, each urban centre must match the County grant in funding programs on a per capita basis. Where an urban centre spends less than the County on recreation or library services, then the difference must be returned to the County.



Mountain View C O U N T Y

Will this increase funding trigger a rise in County taxes?

No. It is expected that the MOA formula for increasing the grant over five years will not cause an increase in property taxes.

The increase in grants has been spread out over a five year period so that the funds will be generated from property taxes coming from new construction in the County. If construction levels are higher or lower than 2% in any year, this will adjust the rate at which the grants increase. Years where there is little or no construction in the County will see grants staying at the same level.

What can the urban centres annex?

The Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) template provides for annexation of sufficient land for each urban centre to accommodate 20 years of residential, commercial and industrial growth within its boundaries.

As well, there is a “fringe area” that designates land outside the urban boundary to accommodate an additional 20 years of growth. Development in the County normally occurs outside of the fringe area. Growth is an estimated factor, and as such, proposed annexation land and fringe areas must be agreed to by both the County and the respective urban Council.

Landowners in the annexation and fringe areas will be contacted on their preference regarding the future of their land. Where feasible, landowner wishes will be factored into the determination of annexation and fringe area boundaries.

Why have separate IDP and MOA templates?

Each template has unique parameters.

The Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) is a formal process that incorporates public consultation and a public hearing on a bylaw, both for the urban centre and the County. The IDP is fairly static and will not change for long periods of time.

The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) addresses the sharing of services and is an agreement between the County and each Municipal Council. The MOA will be reviewed in 2009, 2012, 2015 and every three years thereafter, with necessary changes proposed to reflect ongoing changes in the relationships between the municipalities.

How will the MOA benefit local citizens and businesses?

By offering a platform for addressing the needs of rural and urban citizens.

The MOA template creates a forum for communication between urban municipalities and the County. In so doing, it drives a culture of intermunicipal cooperation, ensures development discussions reflect a broad spectrum of rural and urban needs, and strengthens communication between key stakeholders in the future of Mountain View County as a whole.



Mountain View C O U N T Y

Summary of Additional Features of the IDP and MOA

In addition to the items noted above the IDP and MOA templates include the following:

Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) Template <i>This document is based on the recognition that all municipalities are equal and have the right to growth and development and provides for:</i>	Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) Template <i>This document creates a forum for regular communication on the agreement, recognizes existing separate agreements on fire services, and provides for:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound planning purposes and principles • Referral areas in both municipalities so that development in those areas are reviewed for negative impacts on the adjacent municipality • Development standards • An Intermunicipal Planning Commission for approval of developments in the fringe area, and an Intermunicipal Subdivision and Development Appeal Board for appeals on those development approvals • Administration and maintenance of water and wastewater services in County developments within the fringe • Coordination of transportation systems and utility corridors • Cooperation on economic development • Dispute resolution methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed subdivision guidelines • Measures to direct different types of development to the urban centre or the County as appropriate • Access to cemeteries for all regional residents on an equal basis • Access to parks and open spaces for all regional residents on an equal basis • Ongoing cooperation on Family and Community Support • Development of a Recreation and Culture Master Plan identifying the needs of all six municipalities for future facilities • Ongoing cooperation on agricultural pest and weed control programs • Indemnification of each party to the agreement • Dispute resolution methods

For more Information:

Reeve Al Kemmere

alkemmere@airenet.com

T: 403. 507.3345

Doug Plamping, Chief Administrative Officer

doug.plamping@mountainviewcounty.com

T: 403.335.3311

F: 403.335.9207

www.mountainviewcounty.com

Copies of both templates will be posted on the County web site or can be obtained by calling the County Office.