



Working Together

Two Communities, One Purpose

Cardston County and the Town of Magrath

INTERMUNICIPAL COLLABORATION FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

Foreword

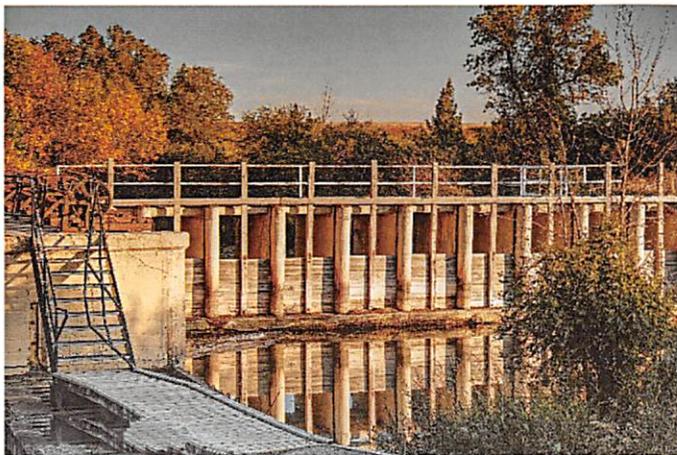
The Town of Magrath and Cardston County share a common history, with early pioneers receiving contracts to build irrigation canals and settle in the area, all sharing the common desire to see the region grow into a successful and welcoming community. The Town of Magrath followed the Plat of Zion for community design, which allowed for individuals to reside within the Town while working in the fields of the County. The result of the two municipalities working together has resulted in economic prosperity, a safe place to raise families, and an area with potential future growth.

Most people understand an increased level of collaboration as an ability to provide more efficient and better service levels to citizens. However, while some services can possibly be provided solely in a single municipality, the increased opportunity in working together is also recognized in increased economies of scale, sustainability of some services, quality of services and efficiency in delivery. In other words, dovetailing the individual characteristics of the municipalities, where feasible, creates expanded resources and advances quality of life opportunities to the people in the regional community. The image of "two municipalities-one purpose" describes the philosophy of the two Councils.

The two municipalities are committed to identifying current and future issues where joint benefits may be realized through more formalized and rigorous processes and cooperation. Examples are evident in servicing areas such as planning, economic development and creating a complete region that is attractive for people to live, work and play.

As the Provincial Government seeks to encourage regional thinking, Cardston County and the Town of Magrath are well placed to lead proactively through the creation of this Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework (ICF) Agreement.

The Town of Magrath and Cardston County share a common pioneer history



Goals of the Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework Agreement

The Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework has five main purposes:

1. To meet the requirements of provincial legislation.
2. To promote the principles of collaboration between neighbouring communities sharing a common boundary.
3. To ensure that the municipalities consult and communicate on intermunicipal matters.
4. To clearly lay out a process that the partners to this agreement can use to review service levels in an effort to determine the benefits of regionally operated and funded services.
5. To consider appropriate fair funding mechanism to deal with differences which may occur from time to time.

The ICF Agreement between Cardston County and the Town of Magrath will:

Recognize and share the vision and priorities of the two municipalities toward providing effective and efficient levels to their citizens: Where feasible and practical, each municipality will work together to assess how commonly utilized services will be provided and funded for the benefit of both municipality's citizens.

Strengthening the region while maintaining local autonomy: Each Council maintains the right to make individual decisions for its citizens, but each agrees that they will always consider the bigger regional municipality in the decision-making process.

Promote networks and linkages: Developing positive joint approaches, where practical, to create efficiencies by sharing opportunities, connections, goals, knowledge, and experience to promote the greater good between both municipalities.

Embrace differences in respective municipalities: The distinct characteristics of the individual municipalities is advantageous in providing choice and diversity.

Cooperation, not competition: Although each municipality is responsible to its citizens, there is a recognition that the citizens and businesses of the region share similar needs and interests and as such each Council will emphasize cooperation and therefore not direct competition with respect to setting municipal policy.

Foster an environment of openness and trust: Cooperation and collaboration requires communication that in turn encourages understanding and better results in reaching common goals.

Commitment to Consultation and Cooperation – Consultation Protocol

The fundamental basis of this agreement is communication and consultation, and as such, the two municipalities agree to consult on projects which have a regional impact. By recognizing the requirement to consult, each municipality will include the other in their project circulations and both agree to meet and work through matters as they arise. Where notification has been provided that a meeting is required, it shall first be handled by the respective Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs), or their designate. If that does not resolve the concerns at hand, it shall be dealt with by a committee from each Council recognizing time may be of the essence. The purpose of this consultation protocol is to ensure that the municipalities leverage opportunities and develop common solutions to any challenges that affect the area.

It is understood that this agreement will encourage communication at all levels of the organization to ensure opportunities are recognized, information is passed through the respective organization and decision-makers are informed not just about their own municipality but about regional issues and concerns. Cooperation, collaboration and commitment to consult are not meant to constrain or restrict the authority or the ability of individual Councils or to homogenize the unique culture and identity of each municipality. It is possible that there will be instances of differences in values, goals, beliefs, perspectives and decisions which are not common to both communities. In these instances where differences remain, the commitment to communicate will enable the communities to develop proactive and positive solutions to issues that may arise.

Roles in Managing the Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework Agreement

The role of both Councils: Each Council retains the ability and responsibility to make decisions on behalf of their citizens. As the public is at the center of any governance initiative, their voice needs to be taken into account to ensure the impacts of services and actions taken in the region have the desired results and support the sustainability of the region. By signing onto the agreement, each Council affirms the commitment to increased cooperation at both the Council and administration levels.

This agreement signals a shift towards maximizing regional benefit through collaborative decision making. Each Council member will demonstrate leadership to act strategically as they formulate plans for each of their organizations which will bring value to the citizens of both communities.

The role of the CAOs and Administration: The CAOs have been identified as the principals responsible for maintaining the agreement, its delivery and dealing with intermunicipal issues that surface from time to time during the term of this agreement. Administration brings continuity to the relationship between the municipalities and they each have the ability to initiate communication on an as needed basis to ensure that each municipality adheres to the principles of the agreement. The

CAOs will foster increased communication and will act as conduits for facilitating the sharing of information, identifying opportunities and prioritizing municipal actions for the consideration of each Council. Disputes or disagreements between CAOs will be dealt with by a dispute resolution committee set up with members from each Council.

The role of staff: Staff at all levels will be responsible to ensure the principles of the agreement are carried out operationally. This means that staff will work cooperatively with their municipal counterparts to address issues that arise within the scope of their authority and mandate. Staff will also bring to the attention of their respective CAO any issues that arise which require their attention with respect to meeting the commitment and intent of this agreement. Disputes among staff or municipal contractors between the municipalities will be dealt with by the CAOs.

The Framework Protocols

Development of an intermunicipal communication protocol: The success of this agreement is based upon the understanding that both municipalities must be committed to ensuring that the provision of information is handled in a transparent and honest manner. To foster the longevity and durability of this agreement, both municipalities should jointly develop and abide by the principles of a communication protocol which should include the following principles:

1. The protocol should recognize that cooperative communication is the key to a successful relationship. At all times and through all levels of each organization the following principles should apply:
 - a. Seek to understand
 - b. Avoid personal attacks either privately or publicly
 - c. Asking for clarification on policies adopted by the other municipality to ensure understanding
 - d. Address issues as being of a joint nature meant to be resolved together
 - e. Seek to maximize the benefits for both parties
2. The protocol should seek to ingrain collaboration and cooperation in each municipal organization:
 - a. Both organizations agree to ensure proper training takes place on intermunicipal collaboration following a municipal election
 - b. Both organizations agree to provide additional training as required following any change in elected officials or senior administration
3. The protocol should ensure that each municipality provides to the other information pertaining to:
 - a. Major capital projects which may impact the other municipality

- b. Lobby efforts to higher levels of government with respect to issues which may impact regional services
- c. Adopted strategic plans
- d. Funding, aid or support to other organizations within the other municipality when requested
- e. Ceremonies, celebrations, events of regional impact
- f. Promotion of collaborative successes

Conflict Resolution: The municipalities recognize that the development of this agreement is the start - not the end of the process. Recognizing that not all issues may be agreed upon, the municipalities recognize the need to establish a conflict resolution process based upon the following principles:

1. At the earliest opportunity and at the point closest to where the problems initiated, the CAO will seek to address matters of conflict.
2. All matters of conflict should be sought to be resolved swiftly, inexpensively and in an uncomplicated way.
3. All matters of conflict should be resolved using a clear procedural pathway.
4. Maintain at all times, the essence of collaboration on the majority of issues even though conflict may exist on some issues.

Process: If a municipality believes an obligation under the agreement has been breached, the matter should be immediately brought to the attention of their CAO. The CAO will investigate and if it appears as if a 'breach' of the agreement has occurred, the matter will be immediately brought to the attention of the other municipality's CAO. Once that has occurred, an effort to resolve the matter through informal problem-solving discussions is to be initiated.

If differences occur outside of an outright 'breach' of an agreement, which may include divergent expectations in the delivery of a joint service, variance on how the committee wishes to proceed on an issue or any circumstance which may impact or disrupt service delivery or relationships, an informal discussion between CAOs will be conducted.

If this does not resolve the issue, an Intermunicipal Dispute Committee shall be appointed by both Councils who will decide on and negotiate an effective solution.

If the subcommittee negotiation process is unsuccessful, a mediated process is initiated using the services of a jointly agreed-upon mediator with costs shared equally between municipalities. The mediator will be solely responsible for the governance of the mediation process.

If the process cannot be resolved through mediation the municipalities will select an arbitrator, sharing all costs in doing so, and will have the matter resolved through the process defined by Section 708.35 of the Municipal Government Act. The arbitrator is governed by the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.



This Agreement encourages the municipalities to consult with each other and develop opportunities for collaboration for the benefit of both municipalities.

Inventory of Municipal Services

According to the *Municipal Government Act*, this Agreement must address services related to transportation, solid waste, recreation, wastewater, water and emergency services. The discussion on the aforementioned topics is prescribed by the *Act*, however the outcomes are not.

The following list is an inventory of shared municipal services between the two municipalities. The inventory is a consideration of who provides the service, who funds the service and what and where those services exist. The services listed below are a representation of shared services and agreements but are obviously not a list of all services provided by each municipality to their respective citizens.

Transportation: The Town of Magrath is intersected with Highway 5 and Highway 62, providing easy access into or out of the town. All other roads are controlled and maintained by Cardston County or the Town of Magrath.

The two municipalities have worked together to ensure well maintained shared roads. In August of 2015, both municipalities agreed to a road swap, in which Cardston County would begin maintaining Township Road 54, while the Town would begin maintaining Range Road 221(4th Street). This swap was completed because it made common sense.

Solid Waste: Both communities have signed on to the Chief Mountain Solid Waste Authority and are committed to the continuing operations of the Regional Waste Authority. Currently, the Authority is transitioning to a Commission, and both Cardston County and the Town of Magrath have taken an active role in this transition.

Recreation: The Town of Magrath and Cardston County held a number meetings to discuss the purpose of the Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework, and have mutually arrived at the following arrangements:

1. Cardston County will contribute annually to the Town of Magrath an amount of \$123,877.00 to be forward before or on July 1st of each year;
2. This amount will remain the same for 5 years (2025) at which time the ICF committees will review and discuss future shared services arrangements; and
3. Cardston County will contribute \$50,000 in 2020 and \$150,000.00 in 2021 for the Town of Magrath's new pool. The 2021 funding will be delivered to Magrath before March 31, 2021.

Wastewater: The Town of Magrath operates a wastewater lagoon, and the County currently has limited needs to access a wastewater facility. If and when citizens of Cardston County require access to wastewater services, the two communities will work together to develop a plan that is mutually agreeable.

It is also agreed to that in the event that the Town of Magrath intends to extend deep wastewater lines, the two municipalities will discuss the possibility of a shared project if Cardston County deems project to be beneficial to its citizens.

Water: Cardston County and the Town of Magrath signed a Membership and Joint Development Agreement in 2013 which created the "Magrath and District Regional Water Services Commission". Each community is equal owners of the Commission and are its only customers. The commission has been considered a success and source of pride for both communities.

Emergency Services: The Town of Magrath and Cardston County are equal partners in the Magrath and District Volunteer Fire Department and share the cost in equal amounts. The Fire department as a board which is made up or equal members from the Town and County Council. The Town of Magrath is the managing partner for the Department.

Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP): As a requirement under Sections 631 and 692 of the Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000, an Intermunicipal Development Plan will be updated by separate Bylaws between Cardston County and Town of Magrath. The Cardston County and Town of Magrath Intermunicipal Development Plan will be a statutory planning document that fosters ongoing collaboration and cooperation between both municipalities regarding planning matters and will clarify land-use expectations within the plan's area.

Attachments to this Agreement

Attached to this Agreement is the current Cardston County-Town of Magrath Intermunicipal Development Plan Bylaw as well as the Agreements aforementioned within this document.

Commitment to Collaboration

Cardston County and the Town of Magrath acknowledge and affirm that they will seek to fulfill both the intent and the spirit of this Agreement by seeking opportunities to collaborate where practical as well as to honour all applicable legislation with respect to intermunicipal collaboration within the Province of Alberta.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties have hereunto set their hands and affixed their corporate seals as witnessed by the hand or hands of its proper signing officers duly authorized in that behalf as of the day of June 23, 2020.

TOWN OF MAGRATH

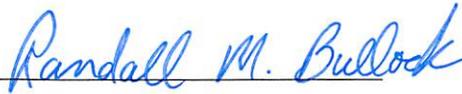
Per:  _____

MAYOR

Per:  _____

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

CARDSTON COUNTY

Per:  _____

REEVE

Per:  _____

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER