

Update of the Calgary Metropolitan Region Growth and Servicing Plans

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Council:

1. Receive the report for the Corporate Record; and
2. Direct that the closed session presentation, Attachment 1 and discussion remain confidential under Section 21, 23 and 24 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, to be reviewed 2031 February 8.

HIGHLIGHTS

- This report provides background and context on the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board's (CMRB) draft Growth and Servicing Plans that are currently under development. At the 2021 January 29 meeting of the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board, the Board voted to request from the Minister of Municipal Affairs an extension to timelines from 2021 March 1 to no later than 2021 June 1. It is also anticipated that HDR | Calthorpe, the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board's lead consultant, will present a public update focused on the Growth Plan to Council on 2021 February 9 at 1 p.m.
- What does this mean to Calgarians? The City of Calgary is a member of the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board. Provincial approval of the Growth and Servicing Plans should result in increased collaboration and coordination among the member municipalities, and increased efficiency and coordination of servicing provision. Further, some environmental benefits associated with the Plans include reduced greenhouse gases and reduced water consumption.
- Why does this matter? The ten members of the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board (the Board) will vote on the Draft Regional Growth Plan spring 2021. Should the Board approve the Regional Growth and Servicing Plans they will be submitted to the Minister of Municipal Affairs: the Growth Plan will be approved by the Minister and the Servicing Plan will be submitted for information. It is anticipated that the Growth and Servicing Plans will set the stage to accommodate the next million residents of the Calgary Metropolitan Region. As such it will influence the environmental, social and economic sustainability of Calgary and region.
- The Board voted in favour to request a time extension for the project to no later than 1 June 2021. At the time of writing this report, the Minister of Municipal Affairs decision on the exemption had not been communicated to The Board. The Plans have been developed by an external consultant. Once approved, the Growth Plan will replace the Interim Growth Plan that has been in place since 2018. The Servicing Plan is not considered as a statutory plan in the planning hierarchy. It will be submitted to the Minister but not approved by Ministerial Order as is the case with the Growth Plan.
- At the 2019 September 16 Strategic Meeting, Council directed Administration to: "Revise the City's approach to the City's regional strategy, based on feedback received from the 2019 September 16 Strategic Council Meeting, considering tools, risks, resources and report back to Intergovernmental Affairs Committee with an update no later than Q1 2020."
- Strategic Alignment to Council's Citizen Priorities: A prosperous city

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- Background and Previous Council Direction is included as Attachment 1.

DISCUSSION

The Calgary Metropolitan Region Board (the CMRB) was formalized on 2018 January 01. The Board was mandated by the Government of Alberta through the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board Regulation (Alberta Regulation 190/2017).

Prior to this, The City participated in the voluntary Calgary Regional Partnership as a founding member. The Partnership was established in 1999 after the Province disbanded its mandatory regional planning system in 1995. By 2009, the Calgary Metropolitan Plan (CMP) was developed and endorsed by Calgary Regional Partnership member municipalities.

However, certain municipalities had concerns regarding governance and the CMP's policy direction and left the partnership. The City remained committed to the collaborative process and advocated that the CMP become a legislated regional plan.

On 2015 September 15, the Province announced that mandatory growth management boards would come into effect for the Calgary and Edmonton regions. By the end of 2017, the voluntary Calgary Regional Partnership was disbanded, with the mandatory Calgary Metropolitan Region Board operating by early 2018.

Today, the CMRB has ten member municipalities: City of Airdrie, City of Calgary, City of Chestermere, Town of Cochrane, Foothills County, Town of High River, Town of Okotoks, Rocky View County, Town of Strathmore, and a portion of Wheatland County.

The Board's mandate is to promote the Calgary Metropolitan Region's long-term sustainability by:

- Ensuring environmentally responsible land-use planning and growth management,
- Coordinating regional infrastructure investment and service delivery, and
- Promoting the economic wellbeing and competitiveness of the Region.

To fulfill this mandate, the Regulation requires the CMRB to develop a long-term Growth Plan and Servicing Plan. The Plans were to be completed by 2020 December 31, however, due to the ongoing pandemic, this timeline was extended to 2021 March 01. The Calgary Metropolitan Region Board voted in favour of requesting a further time extension from the Minister of Municipal Affairs to a date no later than 1 June 2021. At the time of writing this report the Minister of Municipal Affairs decision on the exemption had not been communicated to The Board.

After the CMRB was formalized in 2018, the membership agreed to prepare an interim plan as a stopgap measure to address ongoing planning activities and encourage regional collaboration and investment certainty until more fulsome Growth and Servicing Plans could be completed. The Interim Growth Plan was approved by the Board on 2018 October 4, and was subsequently approved by Ministerial Order on 2018 December 13. The Interim Growth Plan is limited in scope. For example, it does not provide a vision, or identify priority growth areas, agricultural lands, density of development, or policies for environmentally sensitive areas.

In 2019, the CMRB hired a consultant to develop the long-term Growth and Servicing Plans through a Request for Proposals process. The CMRB selected regional planning firm HDR | Calthorpe to develop the Plans in consultation with member municipalities, and under the Board's leadership. Since then, work on the Plans has been ongoing through the CMRB

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administration, and has included workshops for municipal staff, stakeholders and elected officials, as well as engagement opportunities for external stakeholders (e.g., Building Industry and Land Development Association Calgary (BILD), Calgary Real Estate Board (CREB), National Association for Industrial and Office Parks (NAIOP) and Bow River Basin Council) and the public.

The Growth and Servicing Plans will contain policies and high-level guidance to municipalities on regionally significant topics including:

- Residential, commercial and industrial land use
- Corridors for transportation, recreation, energy transmission, utilities and transit
- Infrastructure planning and development
- Water quality, water use and management (including flood mitigation)
- Environmental sustainability and the conservation of agricultural lands

The approval of the Growth and Servicing Plans will require a vote of the CMRB. This is expected to occur in spring 2021. For any decision to move forward, it must include both City of Calgary support and the support of six other member municipalities. The process can be halted by either The City or by a coalition of four member municipalities.

Should the CMRB approve the Plans, they will proceed to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The Growth Plan would be approved through a Ministerial Order and the Servicing Plan would be received for information. Once the Plans receive final approval, all new statutory plans from member municipalities must align with the Regional Growth Plan.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION (EXTERNAL)

- ☐ Public Engagement was undertaken
- ☒ Public Communication or Engagement was not required
- ☐ Public/Stakeholders were informed
- ☐ Stakeholder dialogue/relations were undertaken

Internal stakeholder engagement was undertaken as the Growth and Servicing Plans were developed. A cross Corporate Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) team included representation from Planning & Development, Water Resources, Transportation, Transit, Climate, Resilience and Law. The TAC Team identified key City interests and objectives relative to the region, which informed City input into the process. Administration has and will continue to review numerous iterations of the Growth and Servicing Plan content and will continue to participate in workshops organized by the CMRB and its main consultant. Intergovernmental & Corporate Strategy worked with TAC Team members to advance critical City interests throughout the process.

HDR | Calthorpe, the project consultant, managed both public and external engagement. Updates by the consultant were provided to the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board Land Use and Servicing Committee, and to the Board.

IMPLICATIONS

Social, Environmental and Economic Implications

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The Plans are anticipated to contain policy intended to promote long term social, environmental and economic sustainability in the Calgary Metropolitan Region, and will include guidance on land use, utilities, infrastructure, water quality, use and management, and other topics. It will promote transit to connect intermunicipal employment and residents. Further, the Plans should also promote cost-sharing of infrastructure and servicing, which is intended to reduce the pressure on services that Calgarians enjoy.

The planning consultant has documented several positive outcomes relating to the current preferred growth scenario for the region, including climate related improvements of a 25 per cent reduction in carbon from residential buildings, 15 per cent reduction in vehicle kilometer travelled, 40 per cent reduction in land consumption and 15 per cent reduction of water and wastewater requirements.

Overall, more efficient servicing and infrastructure reduces ongoing costs to The City, while pursuing a regional economic development plan and coordinating economic activities instead of competing over them may lead to greater shared economic benefits for both The City and the region.

Service and Financial Implications

No anticipated financial impact

RISK

This report is intended to provide background information to Council as context for Administration's current understanding of the Growth and Servicing Plans. Two high-level risks were identified during the writing of this report.

- Endorsement of the Plans: Even with the timeline extension, The Board may not endorse the Growth and Servicing Plans. The CMRB Administration may still circulate to the Minister of Municipal Affairs for guidance.
- Review of statutory plans prior to final approval by the Minister of Municipal Affairs: There is a risk that a member municipality may take Area Structure Plans to the Board for approval in the time gap between now and when the Minister of Municipal Affairs approves the Growth and Servicing Plans. As policy stands at the time of writing this report, statutory plans would be considered against the Interim Growth Plan and would not require consideration against the Growth Plan.

ATTACHMENT

1. Background and Previous Council Direction (confidential)

Department Circulation

General Manager	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Chris Arthurs	Deputy City Manager's Office	Approve