

REPORT OF THE URBAN MUNICIPALITIES TASK FORCE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Government of Alberta is currently finalizing regulations for the creation of the Calgary Metropolitan Region Growth Management Board (GMB). During the three years before the GMB develops a regional plan, The City of Calgary will continue to rely on and utilize a number of interim strategies to address regional and intermunicipal planning matters.

One such interim strategy was the establishment of the Urban Municipalities Task Force (UMTF) in which The City of Calgary worked with The City of Chestermere, The City of Airdrie and The Town of Cochrane. The mandate of the UMTF was “to address (regional) concerns including reducing regional sprawl and fiscally responsible planning” and “clarify the CMP implementation issues in this sub-region and to jointly develop a set of implementation tools.” The specific issues of concern for the UMTF partners are with respect to Rocky View County’s development plans and the potential adverse impacts of those plans on the region.

In keeping with its mandate of a “shared common municipal interests, infrastructure and a vision for a sustainable region” the UMTF clarified the content of those interests in the form of a regional story. Finally, the Task Force identified the suite of legislative tools available that support realization of its story. In evaluating the benefits, opportunities, costs and risks of each tool, the Task Force identified the optimal tool in the short term while allowing the Growth Management Board the three years to develop its regional plan.

It is recommended that the UMFT be dissolved with direction to use MGA section 690 appeals as appropriate while continuing to advocate on the necessity of an interim regional growth plan. The City of Calgary Task Force members further provide recommendations of steps that should be undertaken by The City of Calgary.

URBAN MUNICIPALITIES TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee recommend that Council:

1. Accept for information the report from the Urban Municipalities Task Force that it has completed its mandate and that the UMTF be dissolved in accordance with the UMTF Terms of Reference;
2. Accept for information the UMTF statement of a compelling Regional Story (Attachment) with respect to reducing regional sprawl and the need for fiscally responsible planning, as per the Task Force’s Mandate;
3. Continue to rely upon the use of MGA section 690 appeals in the short term supported by the Regional Story, and continue advocating to the Government of Alberta the necessity of developing a Calgary Metropolitan Regional Growth Management Board Interim Plan; and

Furthermore, The City of Calgary representatives to the UMTF recommend that Council direct Administration to:

4. Conduct a review of the resource requirements associated with developing options that enhance both regional sustainability and long range financial viability of The City of Calgary as part of the forthcoming review of the Municipal Development Plan and to prepare a business case and recommendations to be considered as part of the 2017 November Budget Adjustment process.

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PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

At the 2015 September 28 meeting of Council, IGA2015-0693 established the committee and adopted the Terms of Reference of the *Urban Municipalities Task Force* pursuant to Section 9(1) of the Procedure Bylaw 44M2006 and appointed two (2) members of Council to represent The City of Calgary on the *Urban Municipalities Task Force* for a term of one year.

At the 2016 September 08 meeting of the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee, IGA2016-0551, *Terms of Reference Renewal – Urban Municipalities Task Force*, the UMTF was extended for an additional two years, with the option to disband the group earlier as required.

At the 2017 June 08 meeting of the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee, IGA2017-0537, IGA recommended to the 2017 June 26 meeting of Council that Administration support an Alberta Community Partnership Strategic Initiatives Grant Application for an Interim Metropolitan Region Growth Plan and Regional Evaluation Framework for the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board.

BACKGROUND

In 2015, The City of Calgary and other urban municipalities within the Calgary region had grown frustrated with The Government of Alberta's apparent unwillingness to legislate the *Calgary Metropolitan Plan* as a sub-regional plan. In response, The City and the municipalities of Chestermere, Cochrane and Airdrie agreed to form the Urban Municipalities Task Force.

The Terms of Reference included a mandate statement in which it was specifically stated that the task force members "*recognized that current circumstances represent an impasse to achieving regional sustainability and that new approaches to managing our growth are required. The role of the task force is to clarify the Calgary Metropolitan Plan implementation issues in this sub-region and to jointly develop a set of implementation tools*".

The Urban Municipalities Task Force met a total of ten times between 2015 July and 2017 June. In accordance with the UMTF mandate, the focus of those meetings was to:

1. Collaborate, gather and share information between the partners with respect to regional development issues;
2. Develop a shared "sub-regional" vision with respect to regional development (the "story");
3. Review legislative tools available to the partners to address regional issues, including the benefits, opportunities, costs and risks associated with each tool;
4. Develop options and a coherent unified strategy with respect to promoting sustainable and financially responsible regional planning;
5. Recommend a course of action to respective Councils to address regional planning issues.

INVESTIGATION

The final meeting of the Urban Municipalities Task Force is scheduled to be held 2017 June 29. Specific outcomes from that meeting will be provided as a verbal report at Intergovernmental Affairs Committee to enable to the UMTF to complete its mandate.

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The Urban Municipal Task Force is proposing the following strategy:

- 1) Continue to advocate to the Government of Alberta for the need for an interim Metropolitan Region Growth Plan and Regional Evaluation Framework; and
- 2) With respect to the forthcoming review of the Municipal Development Plan, develop options that enhance both regional sustainability and long range financial viability in accordance with the principles, goals and objectives outlined in regional story.

In accordance with IGA2017-0537, Administration will work collaboratively with most members of the future Growth Management Board to prepare an Interim Metropolitan Region Growth Plan and Regional Evaluation Framework. The purpose of this effort is to address the planning gap that will occur between time of Board establishment and the approval of the metropolitan growth plan in 2020.

The work undertaken through the Urban Municipalities Task Force also identified a need for The City of Calgary to develop strategic options that enhance both regional sustainability and long range financial viability of Calgary. This work should be undertaken in preparation for the forthcoming review of the Municipal Development Plan. As a result, The City's appointees to the UMTF are recommending that The City initiate, and fund, this work in response to this report of the Task Force.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

The mandate of the Urban Municipalities Task Force did not include any stakeholder engagement. Stakeholder engagement would occur as part of future planning processes.

Strategic Alignment

The City of Calgary Municipal Development Plan (MDP) currently aligns to the policy framework provided by the draft Calgary Metropolitan Plan (CMP) and supporting the growth directions of the CMP is a key policy of the MDP. As the Province has directed the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board to create a new Regional Growth Plan, it will be necessary to ensure that the MDP remains aligned to regional policies.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

There are no direct social, environmental or economic impacts associated with this report.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

The forthcoming review of the Calgary Metropolitan Development Plan will require specific legal and economic analysis with respect to the various tools available to The City with respect to regional development. It is recommended that a consulting firm with expertise in regional planning be contracted to develop that analysis. The expected one-time operating cost for this review is \$200,000.

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Current and Future Capital Budget:

There are no capital budget impacts associated with this report. The development of regional area structure plans without collaboration and coordination with The City has considerable potential to adversely impact The City's transportation and recreational infrastructure.

Risk Assessment

As the Municipal Government Board members, governance and mandate are established, it will be important for The City to maintain positive working relationships with other future board members. Specifically, decisions on this report may impact administrative and Council relationships with other UMTF members

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

The Urban Municipal Task Force completed its assigned mandate by identifying options for Administration to establish a response to the need for a strategic approach to regional growth. The proposed response includes a short-term reliance on s.690 appeal supported by the regional story so as to allow additional time to advocate to the Province the necessity for an interim planning solution. Finally, the recommendations provide direction for The City of Calgary to initiate work to better understand options to enhance both regional sustainability and long range financial viability as part of the forthcoming review of the Municipal Development Plan.

ATTACHMENT

The Regional Story