



For Immediate Release

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Town of Ponoka and Ponoka County Sign Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework

Framework Identifies Shared Services Provided to Residents in Both Municipalities

(February 28, 2020 – Ponoka, Alberta) – Following a series of discussions and meetings with representatives of the two municipalities, Ponoka Town Council and Ponoka County Council have signed a new Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework (ICF).

ICFs are a new requirement under the Alberta Municipal Government Act for municipalities that share common boundaries. The purpose of developing an ICF is for neighbouring municipalities to explore mutually beneficial and integrated strategic planning, delivery and funding of shared services that are offered to residents of both municipalities. An ICF identifies the shared services that will be provided on an intermunicipal basis, and outlines how those services will be delivered and funded by each municipality.

“The approval of this ICF between the Town of Ponoka and Ponoka County is the latest success in a long history of our two municipalities working together to provide services jointly to the residents of both municipalities,” said Ponoka Mayor Rick Bonnett. “Working together to fund and deliver shared services allows our municipalities to effectively plan for growth and leads to enhanced service delivery for the greater benefit of both Town and County citizens,” said Mayor Bonnett.

ICF Solidifies Spirit of Collaboration Between Municipalities

“Our municipalities have continued to exemplify the spirit of western hospitality, cooperation and collaboration to build a resilient and strong community that is the envy of the province. The formalization of the ICF is just a bureaucratic way of solidifying this spirit of unity between the two municipal entities who do not see municipal boundaries as a barrier to providing the best of service and amenities our ratepayers deserve,” said Ponoka County Reeve Paul McLauchlin. “We will continue to evolve and explore better modes of recreational and service delivery in this continuing partnership,” said Reeve McLauchlin.

The new ICF between the Town of Ponoka and Ponoka County outlines the following shared services and funding agreements that are provided for the benefit Town and County residents:

- **Recreation Services** – The Town and County approved a new Shared Recreation Services Funding Agreement this week that provides increased funding over the next five years for recreation facilities in Ponoka that are utilized by citizens in both municipalities.
- **Library Services** – The Town and County contribute to the Parkland Regional Library system annual budget, and both municipalities contribute to the Ponoka Jubilee Library budget. The Town provides the building and associated operating costs for the Ponoka Jubilee Library, which is governed by a board appointed by Town Council.

- **Fire Services** – Ponoka County provides fire protection services to the Town of Ponoka on a fee-for-service basis under a Fire Services Agreement that was signed in March 2018.
- **Emergency Services** – A regional emergency management partnership agreement was signed between the Town and County, as well as with the Town of Rimbey and the Summer Village of Parkland Beach in 2014, under which the municipalities agree to work together to respond to emergencies in the region. Ponoka County and the Towns of Ponoka and Rimbey also have a joint All Hazards Mutual Aid Agreement under which the municipalities agree to provide each other with emergency services support, equipment and facilities as needed in the event of emergencies such as fires, train derailments, floods and other weather-related emergencies.
- **Seniors Housing** – Ponoka County and the Towns of Ponoka and Rimbey are members of the Rimoka Housing Foundation which provides housing for seniors within the region and is funded by the member municipalities.
- **Ponoka Family & Community Support Services (FCSS)** – The Town and County both provide funding to Ponoka FCSS under an agreement with the Province of Alberta. FCSS operates under the Alberta Family and Community Support Services Act.
- **Fort Ostell Museum** – The Town and County both provide operating grants to the museum. The Town of Ponoka owns and maintains the museum building.
- **Cemetery** – The Town of Ponoka operates the Forest Home Cemetery with the County providing annual funding support for operational costs.

ICF Includes Process for Future Projects and Services

The ICF agreement between the Town and County includes a process for initiating future conversations between the two municipalities about new projects or services that may require cost-sharing agreements.

Under the ICF, an Intermunicipal Committee with representatives from both municipal Councils has been created. The Committee will meet at least once every five years to review the terms and conditions of the ICF. The Committee will also meet on an as-required basis to address matters of strategic direction and cooperation affecting residents of both municipalities. The Alberta MGA requires all municipalities to have an ICF in place by April 1, 2020.

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