



News Release – For Immediate Release Thursday, May 2, 2013

City not to proceed further with mediation: To ask Province for decision *-- County disappointed in outcome and welcomes further discussions*

After six meetings held from January to March 2013 involving a professional mediator, the City of Grande Prairie has chosen to stop discussions and instead submit its annexation application to the Municipal Government Board.

“This is truly an unfortunate turn of events for both the County and City,” said County Reeve Leanne Beaupre. “As neighbours, I had hoped we would be able to work together and identify a final solution that would benefit all parties.”

During all negotiations, the County has used past annexation practices and annexation agreements with the City as its guide. For example, in the past the City compensated the County for road and infrastructure improvements, lost tax revenue and acceptable transition periods.

Throughout all annexation discussions, the County’s primary focus has been to ensure all decisions are in the best interests of residents and businesses affected by the annexation. The County has asked the City for a commitment to respect the pledge made by the County to improve the network of roads in the area affected. Road access and quality has been and continues to be a major concern for many landowners in the annexation area.

A major area of disagreement continues to be the revenue recovery the County believes it is entitled to given the major investments in infrastructure it has performed that will now benefit the City.

There continue to be several outstanding issues that the County would like addressed:

- Disagreement on the number of years of growth the proposed annexation will provide the City. The City’s position is that the annexation will provide a 30-year land supply while the County believes the land should be able to sustain the City’s growth needs for a much longer period of time. This is based on the fact that the City’s own growth study indicates they currently maintain a 28-year supply of land for growth within their current boundary.
- The County has requested a longer term assessment and tax transition period for residents and businesses affected by the annexation application. The County’s key concern is that agricultural operations in the annexation area will continue as long as possible under the



same assessment and tax regime as if they were still in the County until urbanization occurs.

- The County requested greater flexibility for landowners to enable subdivision and developments without triggering higher taxes prior to urbanization.

“Being the second largest annexation in Alberta’s recent history makes this a special and unique application,” stated Reeve Beaupre. “We need to ensure that the special conditions of this annexation effectively work for the affected landowners considering the large amount of land and expected longer time period of the proposed annexation.”

The County will continue to keep all residents and businesses affected by the proposed annexation informed as developments move forward. If at any time you have questions or concerns or wish to find out how you can become involved in the annexation process do not hesitate to contact Intermediate Planner Anna Martin at 780-513-3950 or amartin@countygp.ab.ca.

For more information contact:

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