



2025 MUNICIPAL ELECTION

CANDIDATE NOMINATION PACKAGE

countygp.ab.ca/election

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General Information

This information guide has been developed to answer questions most frequently asked by candidates prior to Nomination Day. It also contains important information that candidates running for Councillor should be aware of.

Election Office

The Election Office for the 2025 Municipal Election for the County of Grande Prairie No. 1 is located at:

Address	Administration Building 10001 - 84 Avenue Clairmont, AB T8X 5B2
Phone	(780) 532-9722
Returning Officer	Carol Gabriel, General Manager, Corporate Services and Strategy
Substitute Returning Officer	Tatiana Catana, Supervisor, Legislative Services
Email	election@countygp.ab.ca
Website	www.countygp.ab.ca/election

FOIP Statement

The personal information that is being collected under the authority of the Local Authorities Election Act will be used for the purpose under that Act. It is protected by the privacy provision of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. For more information please contact the FOIP Coordinator at 780-532-9722.

Disclaimer

The material contained in this information package is the County's understanding of the meaning of the legislation. This summary is not intended to replace the candidate's responsibility for reading and understanding the legislation, or to seek appropriate legal or accounting advice from professionals as required. The candidate is responsible for ensuring that their campaign complies with all provincial laws and regulations.

Legislation can be obtained from the Alberta Kings Printer online at: www.alberta.ca/alberta-kings-printer.

Electoral Divisions and Council Composition

Electoral Divisions

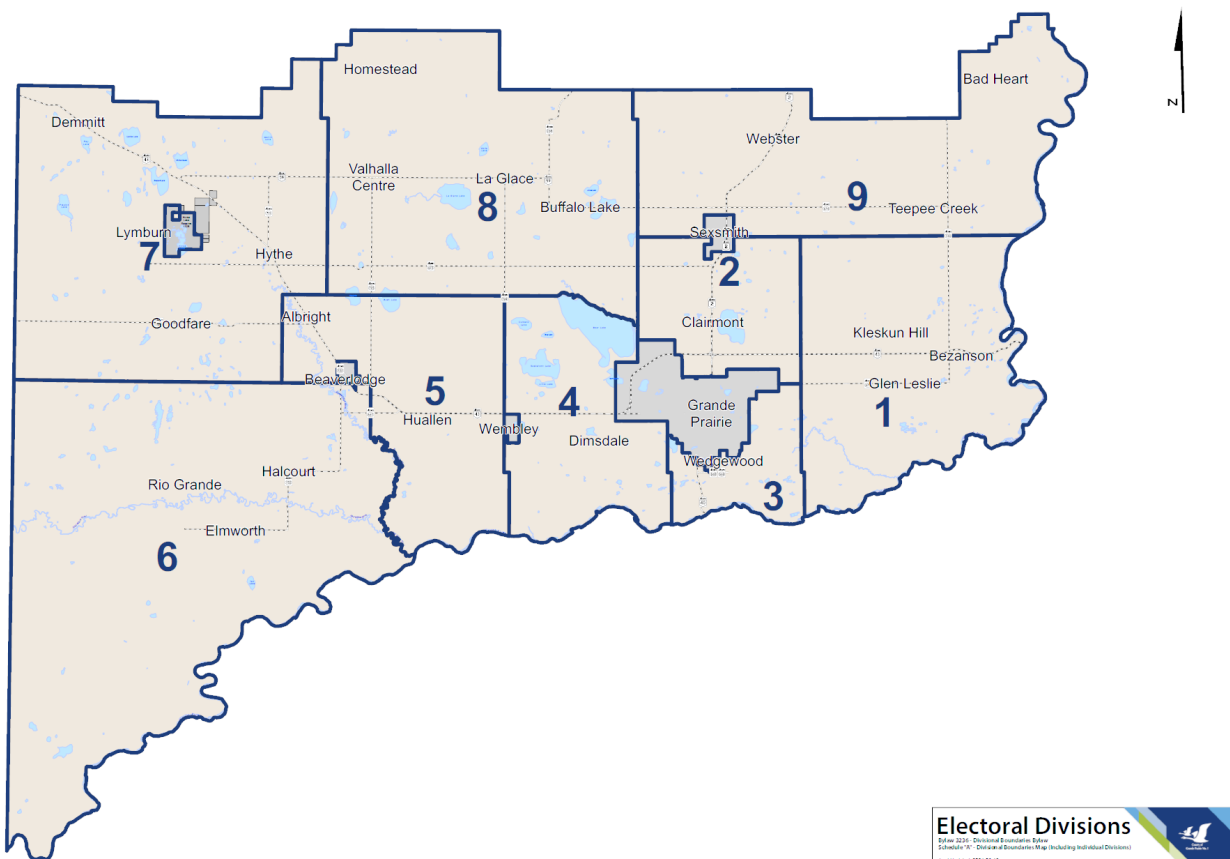
The County of Grande Prairie Divisional Boundaries and Council Composition Bylaw establishes the electoral structure consisting of nine (9) electoral divisions with one (1) Councillor elected from each division.

Term of Office

The term of office of Councillors is governed by the *Local Authorities Election Act*. The term is currently four (4) years.

Chief Elected Official

The Chief Elected Official for the County has the title of “Reeve”. The Reeve and Deputy Reeve are elected annually from among the Councillors at the Organizational Meeting. The Deputy Reeve assumes the duties of the Reeve in the Reeve’s absence.



Candidate Information

Understanding the Position

A municipality is the “front-line” level of government. The elected council is the governing body of the municipality. Elected officials make decisions by passing resolutions or enacting bylaws. Resolutions are formal decisions made by Council. Bylaws are the laws of the municipality.

The Councillor’s job is to work with other Council members to set the overall direction of the municipality through their role as policy maker. The policies that Council sets are the guidelines for Administration to follow as they perform the day-to-day operations of the County.

An individual member of Council does not have the power to commit the municipality to any expenditure or to direct the activities of the municipal employees. Any promise made as part of a candidate’s election campaign that involves municipal expenditures, or the activities of employees can only be carried out if a majority of Council votes in favor of the matter at a meeting.

A Councillor is elected to look after the interests of the entire municipality in accordance with section 153(a) of the Municipal Government Act (MGA). In a municipality with electoral divisions, it can be difficult to balance the needs of the division and that of the municipality as a whole. Councils’ effectiveness depends on Councillors providing input on their areas while thinking and voting for the municipality as a whole.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governance (Council) Determines the “what”	Management (Administration) Determines the “how”
The creation of a setting in which Administration can manage effectively.	The making of operational decisions by Administration.
Strategic Plan Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Vision ➤ Strategic Priorities ➤ Strategic Objectives 	Strategic Plan Execution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mission ➤ Values ➤ Strategic Actions ➤ Departmental Business Plans
Approve Council Policies	Implement Policies and Development of Procedures
Approve Bylaws	Enforce Bylaws
Approve Budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Total Revenue and Expenditures ➤ Service Area Budgets 	Manage Budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Financial Reporting
Set Direction (Council Motion)	Provide Information and Recommendations

Duties of a Councillor

The Municipal Government Act provides for a broad spectrum of powers and duties for a Council and Councillors.

The duties of Councillors include:

- to consider the welfare and interests of the County as a whole and to bring to Council's attention anything that would promote the welfare or interests of the municipality;
- to promote an integrated and strategic approach to intermunicipal land use planning and service delivery with neighbouring municipalities;
- to participate generally in developing and evaluating the policies and programs of the County;
- to participate in Council meetings and Council committee meetings and meetings of other bodies to which they are appointed by the Council;
- to obtain information about the operation or administration of the municipality from the County Manager or their designate;
- to keep in confidence matters discussed in private (closed session) at a Council or Council committee meeting until discussed at a meeting held in public;
- to adhere to the code of conduct established by the Council;
- to perform any other duty or function imposed on Councillors by this or any other enactment or by the Council.

Duties of the Reeve

In addition to performing the duties of a Councillor, the Reeve also has the following duties:

- presides over all meetings of Council in accordance with the Procedural Bylaw;
- signs all bylaws and Council minutes that Council passes at a meeting in which they are presiding; as well as contracts and agreements in accordance with the Signing and Approving Authority Policy;
- to perform any other duty imposed on the Reeve by an enactment, bylaw, or resolution of Council;
- official spokesperson of the County.

When the Reeve is not in attendance then the Deputy Reeve will assume these duties.

County Manager

The County Manager is the administrative head of the municipality. The County Manager's responsibilities include ensuring that the municipality's policies and programs are implemented, advising and informing Council on the operation of the municipality, performing other duties as assigned by Council, and ensuring appropriate staffing is in place.

In accordance with section 201(2) of the Municipal Government Act, "a Council must not exercise a power or function or perform a duty that is by this or another enactment or bylaw specifically assigned to the chief administrative officer [the County Manager] or a designated officer.

For more information on how Council communicates with Administration and tools to help support effective and efficient decision-making processes and foster a respectful working atmosphere refer to the following policies available in the Appendices section.

[Policy F11 Council Decision Making Framework](#)

[Policy F12 Council and Administration Communication Framework](#)

Pecuniary Interest and Conflict of Interest

Councillors must be aware of situations involving pecuniary interest and conflict of interest, including a perceived conflict of interest. Elected officials are responsible for upholding the public interest ahead of any private interests.

Failure to follow these procedures could lead to disqualification from Council.

For more information refer to the [Pecuniary and Conflict of Interest for Councillors, Municipal Affairs, 2024](#) in the Appendices section.

Code of Conduct

The Council Code of Conduct Bylaw sets the standards for the ethical conduct of Councillors and Council Committee Members relating to their roles and obligations as representatives of the County and a procedure for the investigation and enforcement of those standards. The establishment of a Code of Conduct Bylaw is a requirement under the Municipal Government Act.

Candidates should become familiar with [Bylaw #3238 Council Code of Conduct](#).

Time Commitment

During the four-year term as an elected official, Councillors are required to attend many internal meetings, inter-municipal and inter-governmental meetings, conferences, conventions, training workshops, and community or social events and functions. A considerable amount of time will be spent reading and preparing for meetings in order to make informed decisions. Additionally, attendance at numerous functions and events as dignitaries, representative and officials during the day, evening, and occasionally on the weekend may be required.

Meetings

The County of Grande Prairie Council typically meets twice a month for regular Council meetings. Regular Council meetings are held on Mondays and are usually full-day meetings. In preparation for these meetings, an agenda is prepared and provided to Councillors four (4) days prior to the meeting. Review of material provided will be crucial in order to make informed decisions.

Council also meets monthly as a Committee of the Whole. This meeting is typically reserved for more in-depth presentations and discussions and provides direction to Council for final decision.

Councillors also serve on a variety of internal and external committees and boards. Appointments to these boards and committees is done annually at the Organizational Meeting. Meeting times and frequency will vary.

Additional information regarding committees and current membership is available on the County website.

Candidates interested in running for municipal Council should be aware of the demand on their time once elected. However, the time commitment can be rewarding through serving residents and strive to make positive change.

The 2025 Council meeting and conference calendar is provided for reference of Councillor activities in the Appendices section.

Council Orientation

In order for new and returning Council members to become fully acquainted with the scope of their roles, and in accordance with the Municipal Government Act, Council must participate in an orientation following each election.

Orientation topics include:

- Role of Municipalities in Alberta;
- Municipal organization and functions;
- Key municipal plans, policies and projects;
- Roles and responsibilities of Council and Administration;
- Review of Council's Code of Conduct;
- Budgeting and financial administration;
- Public participation;
- Governance and Strategic Planning;
- Internal systems training, including voting software, expense claim training; technology setup, etc.

Compensation and Benefits

Council members are remunerated with a base salary (honorarium) and per diems for meetings attended. They are eligible for mileage and reimbursement of expenses incurred for County business as provided by [Policy F10 – Council and Board Member Honoraria and Expense Reimbursement](#).

In the year of election, a committee including members of Council and the public are engaged to conduct a review of Council remuneration and expense reimbursement policies. The review will be concluded by August 2025 and the committee will provide recommendations for Council consideration.

Additionally, Councillors are eligible for benefits, health and wellness spending reimbursement, and the option to participate in a registered retirement savings plan as offered by the County's service provider.

Learning More

Candidates are encouraged to become more informed on County operations by:

- reviewing County bylaws and policies;
- reading past Council agendas and minutes;
- observing Council meetings in person or virtually;
- attending the Municipal Government 101 session being offered to interested candidates (dates and times to be announced).

More Information

Additional information regarding Council, Council committee procedures, nomination and election matters is available by contacting the Legislative Services Department at (780) 532-9722 or by email to election@countygp.ab.ca.

Nomination Process

All required forms to become a candidate are supplied in this Nomination Package and on the County website at www.countygp.ab.ca/election.

It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure they are not in violation of any eligibility conditions.

Candidate Qualifications

A person is eligible to be nominated as a candidate if, between January 1, 2025 through to Nomination Day (Monday, September 22, 2025), they meet the *Local Authorities Election Act* requirements set out in section 21, 22, and 23, and:

- are at least 18 years of age on Nomination Day;
- are a Canadian citizen;
- have been a resident of the electoral division of the County for which they intend to run for the six (6) months preceding Nomination Day; and
- are not otherwise ineligible or disqualified.

An Employee of the County can run for a position on Council, however, they must first take a leave of absence.

Notice of Intent to Run

Candidates who plan to run in the municipal election can only accept campaign contributions and incur campaign expenses once they have submitted a Notice of Intent to Run and have been added to the Register of Candidates posted on the County website.

Nomination Requirements

To become nominated, a candidate must:

- complete the Nomination Paper and Candidates Acceptance (Form 4);
- ensure the Nomination Paper is signed by at least five (5) eligible voters who are electors and residents of the electoral division of the County in which the candidate intends to run;
- complete the Candidate Financial Information form (Form 5);
- contact the Returning Officer to arrange a time to deliver the above in-person to the County Administration Building at 10001 - 84 Avenue, Clairmont, AB before the nomination period ends.

The candidate must indicate their acceptance of the nomination by stating that they are eligible for nomination, not disqualified from office, and that they will accept the office if they are elected. They must swear or affirm that affidavit before a Commissioner for Oaths or the Returning Officer.

Submission in person is encouraged to ensure receipt. If a candidate is unable to file in person, someone may file on their behalf provided that the documents are fully completed. Late submissions will NOT be accepted in accordance with the *Local Authorities Election Act*. Nominations submitted by fax or email will not be accepted.

The Returning Officer cannot accept a Nomination Paper and Candidates Acceptance for filing if:

- The nomination is not completed in the prescribed form.
- The nomination is not signed by at least a minimum of five (5) electors required to sign the form.
- The nomination is not sworn or affirmed by the person nominated.

It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that they are fully aware of all the nomination requirements and comply with them. It is not the Returning Officer's responsibility to review the validity of the information contained in the Nomination Paper and Candidates Acceptance. That responsibility lies with the courts if the candidate's nomination or election is challenged.

Withdrawing a Nomination

A candidate may withdraw their nomination at any time during the nomination period. At any time within 24 hours after the close of nomination period, if more than the required number of candidates for any particular office are nominated, a candidate may withdraw by filing with the Returning Officer a withdrawal in writing.

The Returning Officer is unable to accept a withdrawal after the close of nominations if it could result in less than the required number of candidates for that office.

Insufficient Nominations

If the number of nominations filed is less than the number of vacancies, the Returning Officer will open and accept nominations the next day between the hours of 10 a.m. until 12 noon for the purpose of receiving further nominations for the elected office.

The Returning Officer shall continue to accept nominations between the hours of 10 a.m. and 12 noon for a total period of six (6) days, including nomination day (excluding Saturday, Sunday and any holidays).

If sufficient nominations are not received to fill the vacancy, the County Manager is required to immediately notify the relevant Minister.

Official Agent

Candidates may appoint an official agent when they submit their nomination papers. An official agent must be an elector who is eligible to vote in the County on election day. The duties of the official agents are those assigned to the official agent by the Candidate in accordance with the *Local Authorities Election Act*.

Key Dates

January 1, 2025	Nomination Period Begins
July/August 2025 (date to be determined)	Municipal Government 101 Session for Interested Candidates
September 22, 2025	Nomination Period Ends (12 noon)
September 23, 2025	Withdrawal Period Ends (12 noon) subject to conditions
October 15, 2025	First Advance Vote
October 18, 2025	Second Advance Vote
October 20, 2025	ELECTION DAY
October 24, 2025	Official Election Results Declared
October 24, 2025	Council Orientation Session (Mandatory Attendance)
October 27, 2025	Council Swearing-in Ceremony and Organizational Meeting (Mandatory Attendance)
October 28, 2025	Regular Council Meeting
October 29, 2025	Regional Orientation Session with George Cuff

Refer to the 2025 Council Calendar in the Appendices section for additional scheduled meeting dates.

Authorization for Release of Personal Information (optional)

The Returning Officer will receive requests for information regarding candidates running for County Councillor in the municipal election from the media, local organizations, or other individuals.

Candidates submitting their Notice of Intent to Run and Nomination Paper and Candidates Acceptance will be listed on the Register of Candidates on the County website.

Completing the optional Authorization for Release of Personal Information and submitting it along with the Nomination Paper and Candidates Acceptance, the Returning Officer will be able to release, upon request, the following information:

- Candidates name
- Contact phone number
- Contact address
- Picture

Campaign Information

There are several things to remember as candidates prepare to campaign for Election Day.

There are no “standard” or legislative requirements for campaigning when it comes to municipal elections. A candidate’s campaign style will want to match the uniqueness of the municipality to the candidate’s personality and available resources.

Candidates have used various strategies, such as:

- Door knocking;
- Signage;
- Brochures or posters;
- Participating in local candidate debates or forums;
- Social media pages or websites; and
- Hosting a meet and greet event.

Campaign Restrictions

Restrictions specific to advance and Election Day voting do not allow candidates, their agent, or scrutineers to:

- Interfere with a voter who is in the process of voting;
- Solicit votes in or immediately adjacent to a voting station;
- Distribute any kind of campaign material within a voting station; or
- Engage in bribery or undue influence.

The County Bylaw 3228 Council Code of Conduct prohibits the following:

- use of County facilities, equipment, supplies, services, municipal logo or other resources, such as staff services of the County for any election campaign or campaign-related activity.
- campaign-related activities may be permitted at a County owned facility or grounds subject that the facility or grounds are normally available for rental to general public and such rental has been arranged through the normal rental process and all applicable fees are paid.
- to reduce the possibility of undue benefit for candidates and current incumbents, Councillors shall:
 - refrain from using the County’s postage or other resources of mass mailings of any kind.
 - refrain from referring to themselves in campaign advertisements as “Councillor X”.

- refrain from using County owned electronic devices except to fulfill the legislated duties as a current Council Member.

Campaign Literature (Election Signs)

The County of Grande Prairie's Land Use Bylaw permits:

- the erection/placement of temporary political signs without a development permit provided that
 - the sign is not illuminated,
 - does not exceed 1.8 square metres (20 sq. ft.) and
 - is limited to one (1) sign per parcel.
- Signs may be placed on private or public property with the permission of the landowner / public authority and must adhere to the provisions of federal, provincial and municipal legislation.
- Signs must not cause a safety concern.
- Election signage must be removed within fourteen (14) days of Election Day.

No signs are allowed on the properties where voting stations are located.

Alberta Transportation – Election Signs

Candidates should refer to the Alberta Transportation guidelines for placement of election signs along public roadways or on public property and are to be adhered to by all candidates in the upcoming municipal election. A permit to install an election sign along provincial highways is not required. It is recommended that the same guidelines be adhered to for placement of election signs on private property.

If a sign does not comply with these guidelines, a peace officer or a person authorized by Alberta Transportation may, without notice or compensation, remove the sign.

For more information visit www.alberta.ca/election-signs

Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure

All candidates are responsible for reviewing the relevant sections of the *Local Authorities Election Act* to ensure they are compliant with all requirements.

All candidates must submit a campaign disclosure statement and financial statement to the municipality on or before March 1, 2026 even if they had no contributions or expenses. The campaign disclosure statement must be filed whether or not the candidate was elected.

Failure to comply with the filing of disclosure statements will result in a late filing fee and other fines and consequences.

For more information refer to Part 5.1 Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure of the *Local Authorities Election Act*.

Offences

It is important that Candidates are aware of offences as they relate to the *Local Authorities Election Act*. Part 6 of the Act deals with offences related to integrity of the vote, a candidate's acceptance, advertisement distribution, campaign activities at a voting station, and interference with posted documents.

It is the candidate's responsibility to be familiar with all relevant legislation which can be downloaded at www.alberta.ca/alberta-kings-printer.

Election Day

Elector Eligibility

A person is eligible to vote, if the person:

- is at least 18 years of age on Election Day;
- is a Canadian Citizen;
- is a resident of Alberta;
- is a resident of the voting subdivision on Election Day;
- has not voted previously in this Election.

Every person attending a voting station must provide proof of elector eligibility and permitted to vote if:

- the **elector's name appears on the permanent electors register** and
- produces **one (1) piece of identification** issued by a Canadian government, federal, provincial or local, or an agency of that government, that contains a **photograph** of the person.
- If the electors name does not appear on the permanent electors register the person must make a statement that the person is eligible to vote as an elector in the presence of an officer at the voting station, in the prescribed form.

Any person who does not comply with the legislation will not be allowed to vote. A person may only vote once at either an Advance Vote or on Election Day.

Voting stations are open at 10:00 a.m. and close at 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.

When will election results be released?

Unofficial election results of the ballot count will be released as soon as possible after the voting stations close and displayed on election night on the County website at www.countygp.ab.ca/election.

Official results will be posted and released by the Returning Officer at 12:00 noon on Friday October 24, 2025 in the County of Grande Prairie Administration Building, on the County website, and to the media.

Appendices

Reference Documents

- Bylaw #3238 - Council Code of Conduct
- Policy F10 – Council and Board Member Honoraria and Expense Reimbursement
- Policy F11 – Council Decision Making Framework
- Policy F12 – Council and Administration Communication Framework
- Pecuniary and Conflict of Interest for Councillors, Municipal Affairs, 2024
- 2025 Council Meeting and Conference Calendar
- Guidelines for the Installation of Election Signs – Government of Alberta
- Changes to the Local Authorities Election Action 2024 – Campaign Financing Fact Sheet
- What Every Councillor Needs to Know – A Council Member’s Handbook

Forms

- [Notice of Intent to Run](#) – must be filed in person with the Returning Officer by arranging a delivery time in advance.
- [Form 4 – Nomination Paper and Candidate’s Acceptance](#)
- [Form 5 – Candidate Financial Information](#)
- [Supplementary Nominations – Additional Elector Signatures](#) (optional attach to Form 4)
- Authorization for Release of Personal Information Form

Reference Links

- County Elections website at www.countygp.ab.ca/election
- Alberta Kings Printer online at www.alberta.ca/alberta-kings-printer
- [Boards, Committees and Task Forces - County of Grande Prairie No.1](#)
- [Bylaw #3238 - Council Code of Conduct](#)
- [Bylaw #3242 - Procedural Bylaw](#)
- [Policy F10 – Council and Board Member Honoraria and Expense Reimbursement](#)
- [Policy F11 – Council Decision Making Framework](#)
- [Policy F12 – Council and Administration Communication Framework](#)
- [County Strategic Plan](#)

- www.alberta.ca/election-signs
- [Changes to the Local Authorities Election Act 2024 – Campaign Financing Fact Sheet](#)
- [What Every Councillor Needs to Know – A Council Member’s Handbook](#)
- [Rural Municipalities of Alberta \(RMA\) and Alberta Municipalities \(ABMunis\) Videos](#)



BYLAW #3238

Council Code of Conduct Bylaw

A bylaw of the County of Grande Prairie No. 1 in the Province of Alberta to establish a Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Members of Council Committees or any other body established by Council.

WHEREAS: pursuant to section 146.1(1) of the *Municipal Government Act*, a council must, by bylaw, establish a code of conduct governing the conduct of councillors; and

WHEREAS: pursuant to section 146.1(3) of the *Municipal Government Act*, a council may, by bylaw, establish a code of conduct governing the conduct of members of council committees and other bodies established by the council who are not councillors; and

WHEREAS: pursuant to section 153 of the *Municipal Government Act*, councillors have a duty to adhere to the code of conduct established by the council; and

WHEREAS: the public is entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from the members that it elects to council for the County of Grande Prairie No. 1; and

WHEREAS: the establishment of a code of conduct for members of council is consistent with the principles of transparent and accountable government as well as safeguard the reputation and integrity of the County to the highest standard; and

WHEREAS: a code of conduct ensures that members of council share a common understanding of acceptable conduct extending beyond the legislative provisions governing the conduct of councillors;

NOW THEREFORE, under the authority of the *Municipal Government Act*, the Council of the County of Grande Prairie No. 1, in the Province of Alberta, hereby enacts as follows:

INTERPRETATION

1. This Bylaw shall be cited as the "Council Code of Conduct Bylaw".
2. Headings in this Bylaw are for reference purposes only.
3. Words in the masculine gender will include the feminine gender whenever the context so requires and vice versa.
4. Words in the singular shall include the plural or vice versa whenever the context so requires.

DEFINITIONS

5. In this Bylaw, words have the meanings as set out in the Act, except that:
 - 5.1 “Act” means the Municipal Government Act, R.S.A. 2000, c. M-26, and associated regulations, as amended.
 - 5.2 “Administration” means the administrative and operational arm of the County, comprised of the various departments and business units and including all employees who operate under the leadership and supervision of the County Manager (CAO).
 - 5.3 “Conflict of Interest” means a situation in which the Member is in a position to derive personal benefit from actions of decisions made in their official capacity.
 - 5.4 “Council” means all members of County of Grande Prairie No. 1 duly elected and holding office.
 - 5.5 “County” means the municipality of the County of Grande Prairie No. 1 having jurisdiction under the *Municipal Government Act* and other applicable legislation.
 - 5.6 “County Manager” also known as “CAO” or “Chief Administrative Officer” means the person, or delegate appointed by Council to the position of Chief Administrative Officer under the Municipal Government Act for the County of Grande Prairie No. 1.
 - 5.7 “FOIP” means the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.A. 2000, c. F-25, any associated regulations, and any amendments or successor legislation.
 - 5.8 “Family” means a Member’s spouse or inter-dependent partner, children, grandchildren, parents, parents-in-law, brothers, sisters, children-in-law, uncles, and may include others who are reasonably perceived to be family by Council, staff or public.
 - 5.9 “Investigator” means the person or persons appointed by Council to fulfill the role and duties of a third-party investigator as outlined in this Bylaw.
 - 5.10 “Member” means a member of Council and includes a councillor or the Reeve and members of council committees or other bodies established by Council who are not councillors or the Reeve.
 - 5.11 “Pecuniary Interest” means a situation as defined and regulated by the Act.

PURPOSE OF CODE OF CONDUCT

6. The purpose of this Bylaw is to establish standards for the ethical conduct of Members relating to their roles and obligations as representatives of the County and a procedure for the investigation and enforcement of those standards.
7. In addition to this Bylaw, all Members shall adhere to any other Federal, Provincial and Municipal acts or regulations that govern their role as members of Council, including but not limited to:
 - 7.1. Alberta Human Rights Act

- 7.2. Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
 - 7.3. Local Authorities Election Act
 - 7.4. Occupational Health and Safety Act.
8. This Bylaw is to be given a broad and liberal interpretation in accordance with applicable legislation. It is impossible to write a code of conduct that covers every scenario and accordingly, Members are to be guided by and conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the spirit and intent of this Bylaw.

REPRESENTING THE COUNTY

9. Members shall:
- 9.1. act honestly and, in good faith, serve the welfare and interests of the County as a whole.
 - 9.2. perform their functions and duties in a conscientious and diligent manner with integrity, accountability and transparency.
 - 9.3. conduct themselves in a professional manner with dignity and make every effort to participate diligently in the meetings of Council, committees of Council and other bodies to which they are appointed by Council.
 - 9.4. arrange their private affairs and conduct themselves in a manner that promotes public confidence and will bear close public scrutiny.

COMMUNICATING ON BEHALF OF THE COUNTY

10. Unless Council directs otherwise, the Reeve is Council's official spokesperson and in the absence of the Reeve the Deputy Reeve becomes the spokesperson. All inquiries from the media regarding the official Council position on an issue shall be referred to Council's official spokesperson.
11. A Member must not claim to speak on behalf of Council unless authorized to do so.
12. A Member who is authorized to act as Council's official spokesperson must ensure that their comments accurately reflect the official position and will of Council as a whole, even if the Member personally disagrees with Council's position.
13. No Member shall make a statement when they know that statement is false.
14. No Member shall make a statement with the intent to mislead Council or members of the public.
15. A Member does have the option to respectfully disagree with other Members provided the Member is clear that when expressing their personal opinion or position, the Member shall explicitly state that their opinion or position does not represent or reflect the position or direction of Council.
16. As with any other activity, Members must ensure that their use of social media complies with the law, the requirements of this Bylaw and any related bylaws, policies or procedures. This Bylaw applies for all communications a Member makes, regardless of the social media account or device from which the communication is made.

17. For the purpose of section 16 of this Bylaw, “communications” means any information or data submitted by a Member to a social media network or platform that is capable of being displayed using software or approved hardware such as text, images, videos, or links to other content and includes a Member “liking”, “retweeting”, commenting on or sharing content created by other users of the social network or platform.

RESPECTING THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS

18. Decision making authority lies with Council, and not with any individual Member. Council may only act by bylaw or resolution passed at a Council meeting held in public at which there is a quorum present.
19. No Member shall, unless authorized by Council, attempt to bind the County or give direction to employees in Administration, agents, contractors, consultants or other service providers or prospective vendors to the County.
20. Members shall conduct and convey Council business and all their duties in an open and transparent manner other than for those matters which by law are authorized to be dealt with in a confidential manner in a closed session, and in so doing, allow the public to view the process and rationale which was used to reach decisions and the reasons for taking certain actions.
21. Members shall:
 - 21.1. accurately communicate the decisions of Council, even if they disagree with Council’s decision, while fostering the decision-making processes of Council.
 - 21.2. represent the best interests of the County at all times.
 - 21.3. debate in a manner that is respectful, considerate, and limited to the topic directly related to the motion on the floor.
 - 21.4. take all points of view into account when making decisions.
 - 21.5. think independently and refrain from forming allegiances or factions within Council.
22. For greater clarity, Members shall adhere to **Policy F11 – Council Decision Making Framework**.

ADHERENCE TO POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND BYLAWS

23. Members shall uphold the law established by the Parliament of Canada and the Legislature of Alberta and the bylaws, policies and procedures adopted by Council.
24. Members shall respect the County as an institution, its bylaws, policies and procedures and shall encourage public respect for the County, its bylaws, policies and procedures.
25. A Member must not encourage disobedience of any bylaw, policy or procedure of the County in responding to a member of the public, as this undermines public confidence in the County and in the rule of law.

RESPECTFUL INTERACTIONS WITH COUNCIL MEMBERS, STAFF, THE PUBLIC AND OTHERS

26. Members shall act in a manner that demonstrates fairness, respect for individual differences and opinions, and an intention to work together for the common good and in furtherance of the public interest.
27. Members shall treat one another, employees of the County and members of the public with courtesy, dignity and respect and without abuse, bullying or intimidation.
28. No Member shall use indecent, abusive, or insulting words or expressions toward another Member, any employee of the County or any member of the public.
29. No Member shall speak in a manner that is discriminatory to any individual based on the person's race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation.
30. Members shall respect the fact that employees in Administration work for the County as a corporate body and are charged with making recommendations that reflect their professional expertise and a corporate perspective and that employees are required to do so without undue influence from any Member or group of Members.
31. Members must not:
 - 31.1. involve themselves in matters of Administration, which fall within the jurisdiction of the COUNTY MANAGER.
 - 31.2. use, or attempt to use, their authority or influence for the purpose of intimidating, threatening, coercing, commanding or influencing any employee of the County with the intent of interfering in the employee's duties.
 - 31.3. maliciously or falsely injure the professional or ethical reputation, or the prospects or practice of employees of the County.
32. For greater clarity, Members shall adhere to **Policy F12 – Council and Administration Communication Framework**.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

33. In the course of their duties, Members may also become privy to confidential information received outside of a "closed session" meeting. Members must not:
 - 33.1. disclose or release by any means to any member of the public, including the media, any confidential information acquired by virtue of their office, unless the disclosure is required by law or authorized by Council to do so.
 - 33.2. access or attempt to gain access to confidential information in custody or control of the County unless it is necessary for the performance of the Member's duties and is not otherwise prohibited by Council, and only then if the information is acquired through appropriate channels in accordance with applicable Council bylaws and policies.
 - 33.3. use confidential information for personal benefit or for the benefit of any other individual or organization.

34. Confidential information includes information in the possession of, or received in confidence by the County that the County is prohibited from disclosing pursuant to legislation, court order or by contract, or is required to refuse to disclose under FOIP or any other legislation, or any other information that pertains to the business of the County, and is generally considered to be of a confidential nature, including but not limited to information concerning:
 - 34.1. the security of the property of the County.
 - 34.2. a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land or other property.
 - 34.3. a tender that has or will be issued but has not been awarded.
 - 34.4. contract negotiations.
 - 34.5. employment and labour relations.
 - 34.6. draft documents and legal instruments, including reports, policies, bylaws and resolutions, that have not been the subject matter of deliberation in a meeting open to the public.
 - 34.7. law enforcement matters.
 - 34.8. litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals.
 - 34.9. advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege.
35. To respect the confidentiality of closed session meetings, if a Member makes notes during a closed session meeting, they shall provide the notes to Administration for secure destruction and shall return all confidential documents to Administration at the conclusion of the closed session meeting.
36. Incidents where a Member may have collected, used, or disclosed personal information in contravention of Part 2 of the FOIP Act, will be proactively reported to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Alberta for Investigation.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

37. Members have a statutory duty to comply with the Pecuniary Interest provisions set out in Part 5, Division 6 of the Act and a corresponding duty to vote unless required or permitted to abstain under the Act or another enactment.
38. Members are to be free from undue influence and not act or appear to act in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, family, friends or associates, business or otherwise.
39. Members shall approach decision-making with an open mind that is capable of persuasion.
40. It is the individual responsibility of each Member to seek independent legal advice, at the Member's sole expense, with respect to any situation that may result in a Pecuniary or other Conflict of Interest. Section 170 of the Act sets out when a Councillor has a Pecuniary Interest in a manner, how a person is monetarily affected by a matter, and lists examples of specific interests where a Member would not have a pecuniary interest.
41. Council Members shall complete and file a statement of disclosure pursuant to Section

171 of the Act within 30 calendar days of taking the Oath of Office. The statement of disclosure shall be filed with the COUNTY MANAGER. Council Members shall be responsible for updating their statement of disclosure if necessary, during the term in office.

IMPROPER USE OF INFLUENCE

42. No Member shall use the influence of the Member's office for any purpose other than for the exercise of the Member's official duties.
43. No Member shall act as a paid agent to advocate on behalf of any individual, organization or corporate entity before Council or a committee of Council or any other body established by Council.
44. Members shall not contact or otherwise attempt to influence members of any adjudicative body regarding any matter before relating it to the County.
45. Members shall refrain from using their positions to obtain employment with the County for themselves, family members or close associates. Members are ineligible to apply or be considered for any position with the County while they hold their elected position and for one (1) year after leaving office, with the exception of Council Boards and Committees.

USE OF MUNICIPAL ASSETS AND SERVICES

46. Members shall use municipal property, equipment, services, supplies and staff resources only for the performance of their duties as a Member.
47. Members shall use municipal property, equipment, services, supplies and staff resources only for the performance of their duties as a Member, subject to the following limited exceptions:
 - 47.1. municipal property, equipment, service, supplies and staff resources that are available to the general public may be used by a Member for personal use upon the same terms and conditions as members of the general public, including booking and payment of any applicable fees or charges.
 - 47.2. electronic communication devices, including but not limited to desktop computers, laptops, tablets and smartphones, which are supplied by the County to a Member, may be used by the Member for personal use, provided that the use is not for personal gain, offensive or inappropriate.

ORIENTATION AND OTHER TRAINING ATTENDANCE

48. Every Member must attend the orientation training offered by the County within 90 days after the Member takes the oath of office. Attendance at additional training sessions throughout the Council term is discretionary.
49. Every Member must attend all orientation and other training organized at the direction of Council for the benefit of Members throughout the Council term.
50. Council Members must adhere to **Policy F10 - Council and Board Member Honorarium and Expense Reimbursement, Schedule C – Mandatory Meetings Attendance.**

RENUMERATION AND EXPENSES

51. Members are stewards of public resources and shall avoid waste, abuse and extravagance in the use of public resources.
52. Members shall be transparent and accountable with respect to all expenditures and strictly comply with all municipal bylaws, policies and procedures regarding claims for remuneration and expenses.
53. For greater clarity, Members must adhere to **Policy F10 - Council and Board Member Honorarium and Expense Reimbursement**.

GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

54. Members shall not accept gifts, hospitality or other benefits that would, to a reasonable member of the public, appear to be in gratitude for influence, to induce influence, or otherwise to go beyond the necessary and appropriate public functions involved.
55. Members may accept hospitality, gifts or benefits that normally accompany the responsibilities of office and are received as an incident of protocol or social obligation, provided that the value of the hospitality, gift or benefit does not exceed \$350 (three hundred and fifty dollars).
56. Gifts received by a Member on behalf of the County as a matter of official protocol which have significance or historical value for the County shall be left with the County when the Member ceases to hold office.
57. If a Member wins a prize while attending a conference or event related to their position with the County, they may keep the prize where there is equal opportunity for participants to win. Alternatively, a Member may donate the prize for a draw or to be auctioned off at a County event.

ELECTION CAMPAIGN

58. No Member shall use any facilities, equipment, supplies, services, municipal logo or other resources, such as staff services of the County for any election campaign or campaign-related activity.
59. The campaign-related activities may be permitted at a County owned facility or grounds, subject that the facility or grounds are normally available for rental to general public and such rental has been arranged through the normal rental process and all applicable fees are paid.
60. For greater clarity, and to reduce the possibility of undue benefit for candidates and current incumbents, the Members shall:
 - 60.1. refrain from using the County's postage or other resources of mass mailings of any kind.
 - 60.2. refrain from referring to themselves in campaign advertisements as "Councillor X".
 - 60.3. refrain from using County owned electronic devices except to fulfill the legislated duties as a current Council Member.

COMPLAINT SYSTEM

61. Any person who has identified or witnessed conduct by a Member that the person reasonably believes, in good faith, is in contravention of this Bylaw, may make a complain. It is recognized that complaints may vary in severity, complexity, and whether they are admitted or denied. As a result, complainants are given the option of an informal or formal complaint process.

INFORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS

62. An informal complaint process is appropriate for quick problem solving where the parties can seek agreement and shared understanding of how to avoid problems in the future.
63. Any person who has identified or witnessed conduct by a Member that the person reasonably believes, in good faith, is in contravention of this Bylaw may address the prohibited conduct by:
 - 63.1. advising the Member that the conduct violates this Bylaw and encouraging the Member to stop.
 - 63.2. requesting the Reeve to assist in informal discussion of the alleged complaint with the Member in an attempt to resolve the issue. In the event that the Reeve is the subject of, or is implicated in a complaint, the person may request the assistance of the Deputy Reeve.
 - 63.3. at their discretion, the Reeve or the Deputy Reeve may document and submit the issue for discussion with the Whole Council in closed session. A motion on the recommendation may be made (i.e. requesting training or other appropriate intervention).
64. Persons are encouraged to pursue this informal complaint procedure as the first means of remedying conduct that they believe violates this Bylaw. However, a person is not required to complete this informal complaint process prior to pursuing the formal complaint process as outlined below.

FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS

65. Any person who reasonably believes, in good faith, that a Member is in contravention of this Bylaw may file a formal complaint:
 - 65.1. formal complaints shall be made in writing and shall be dated and signed by an identifiable individual.
 - 65.2. the complaint must set out reasonable and probable grounds for the allegation that the Member has contravened this Bylaw, including a detailed description of the facts, as they are known, giving rise to the allegation.
 - 65.3. the complaint must be received no later than 60 calendar days after the date the person becomes aware of the conduct giving rise to the complaint.
66. All formal complaints shall be filed with the Reeve and COUNTY MANAGER, or the Deputy Reeve and COUNTY MANAGER if the alleged wrongdoing involves the Reeve.
67. The formal complaint shall be shared with Council "in confidence" without delay, as soon

as practicable, including the Member(s) about whom the complaint is made.

Review by Council

68. The Member(s) who is subject to the complaint shall provide a written response to Council regarding the complaint within ten (10) business days of receiving the complaint from Council.
69. Within ten (10) business days of receiving the written response from the Member(s) being accused of breach of the Code of Conduct, Council, excluding the Member(s) concerned, shall conduct a review as follows:
 - 69.1. review the complaint and the Member(s) written response in closed session.
 - 69.2. provide an opportunity to respond to the allegations by the Member(s) before Council deliberates and makes any decision.
 - 69.3. decide if a complaint is frivolous or vexatious or is not made in good faith, or that there are no grounds or insufficient grounds and dismiss the complaint, and/or
 - 69.4. request further information from the complainant, in which case the review shall be deferred to a later date, and/or
 - 69.5. decide if the complaint is not, on its face, a complaint relative to the Code of Conduct or is covered by other legislation while clearly formulating the reasons and referrals to the appropriate authority to be provided to the complainant, and/or
 - 69.6. request legal advice, in which case the review shall be deferred to a later date, and/or
 - 69.7. decide if there are grounds to conduct an independent investigation.
 - 69.8. depending on the circumstances and complexities of the complaint, issue limited sanctions to the Member(s), subject to Section 81 [*sanctions that may be imposed upon Review by Council*] and notify the Member(s) concerned and the complainant of the next steps or actions in writing within five (5) business days of completing the review by Council. If the complaint is dismissed, the complainant must be advised in writing, with reasons.
70. If Council decides to investigate the complaint, it shall appoint an independent Investigator as soon as feasibly possible. The complainant and the Member(s) concerned shall be notified of the appointment.

Review by Investigator

71. The Investigator shall take such steps as is considered appropriate, to investigate and may attempt to settle the complaint. All proceedings of the Investigator regarding the investigation shall be confidential.
72. Once all relevant information required has been provided to the respondent Member(s) by the Investigator, the respondent Member(s) will have ten (10) business days to respond in writing and may provide further information in support of their response. This deadline may be extended at the discretion of the Investigator, who shall advise Council

if such extension is granted.

73. The Investigator shall, upon conclusion of the investigation, provide Council and the Member(s) who is subject to the complaint, the results of the Investigator's review.
74. Council shall review the results of the investigation as provided by the Investigator within ten (10) business days of receiving the Investigation Report.
75. The Member(s) who is subject to an investigation shall be afforded procedural fairness, including an opportunity to respond to the allegations before Council deliberates and makes any decision or any sanction is imposed.
76. The Member(s) who is the subject of an investigation is entitled to be represented by legal counsel, at the Member(s)'s sole expense.

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

77. Members shall uphold the letter and the spirit and intent of this Bylaw.
78. Members are expected to co-operate in every way possible in securing compliance with the application and enforcement of this Bylaw.
79. Each Member, newly appointed, will be provided with a copy of the Council Code of Conduct and will be requested to sign the Statement of Commitment, attached as Schedule A, acknowledging that he/she/they has/have read the Council Code of Conduct and support(s) it. The signed Statement of Commitment shall be filed with the Legislative Services.
80. No Member shall:
 - 80.1. retaliate against anyone, including other Member(s), who participated or provide information in good faith, in Council Code of Conduct investigation.
 - 80.2. obstruct Council, or any other person, in carrying out the objectives or requirements of this Bylaw.
81. Sanctions that may be imposed upon review by Council on a Member that has been found to have breached this Bylaw may include:
 - 81.1. a letter of reprimand addressed to the Member.
 - 81.2. requesting the Member to issue a letter of apology.
 - 81.3. requesting the Member(s) attend specified training.
 - 81.4. publication of a letter of reprimand or request for apology and the Member's response.
82. Sanctions that may be imposed following a review by Investigator on a Member that has been found to have breached this Bylaw may include:
 - 82.1. a letter of reprimand addressed to the Member.
 - 82.2. requesting the Member to issue a letter of apology.
 - 82.3. requesting the Member(s) attend specified training.

- 82.4. publication of a letter of reprimand or request for apology and the Member's response.
 - 82.5. suspension or removal of the appointment of a Member as the chief elected official under section 150(2) of the Act.
 - 82.6. suspension or removal of the appointment of a Member as the deputy chief elected official or acting chief elected official under section 152 of the Act.
 - 82.7. suspension or removal of the chief elected official's presiding duties under section 154 of the Act.
 - 82.8. suspension or removal from some or all Council committees and bodies to which council has the right to appoint members.
 - 82.9. reduction or suspension of remuneration as defined in section 275.1 of the Act corresponding to a reduction in duties, excluding allowances for attendance at council meetings.
 - 82.10. any other sanction Council deems reasonable and appropriate in the circumstances provided that the sanction does not prevent a Member from fulfilling the legislated duties of a councillor and the sanction is not contrary to the Act.
83. Nothing in this Bylaw requires Council to impose a sanction for any substantiated complaint or contravention.

REVIEW

84. This Bylaw shall be brought forward for review at the beginning of each term of Council, when relevant legislation is amended, and at any other time that Council considers appropriate to ensure that it remains current and continues to accurately reflect the standards of ethical conduct expected of Members.

GENERAL

85. This Bylaw applies to all persons that are elected councillors or members of council committees and other bodies established by the council who are not councillors.

SEVERABILITY

86. Every provision of this Bylaw is independent of all other provisions and if any provision is declared invalid by a Court, then the invalid provisions shall be severed and the remainder provisions shall remain valid and enforceable.

REPEAL

87. Bylaw #3090 - Council Code of Conduct Bylaw and amendments thereto are hereby rescinded.

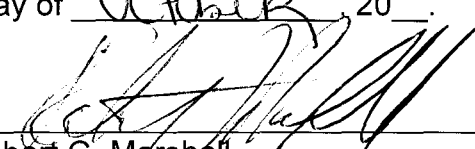
EFFECTIVE DATE

88. This Bylaw shall come into force and effect on the third and final reading thereof.

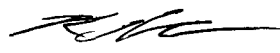
Read a FIRST time this 21 day of October, 2024

Read a SECOND time this 21 day of October, 2024

Read a THIRD time and finally passed this 21 day of October, 2024



Robert G. Marshall
Reeve



Joulia Whittleton
County Manager

ATTACHMENTS

Schedule A – Statement of Commitment to the Council Code of Conduct

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO THE COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT

I _____
(Member's full name)

declare that as an elected Councillor or appointed Member of County of Grande Prairie No. 1, I acknowledge and support the Council Code of Conduct Bylaw #3238.

Signature of Councillor or Member _____

Declared this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

Signature of Witness: _____

Printed name of Witness: _____ Position: _____



Council and Board Member Honoraria & Expense Reimbursement

Council
Policy F10

Policy:	F10 – Council and Board Member Honoraria & Expense Reimbursement
Policy Department(s):	Council
Adoption Date:	September 13, 2021
Adoption Reference:	CM20210913.007
Effective Date:	October 25, 2021
Last Amended:	January 13, 2025

Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish compensation for Elected Officials.

Objectives are to:

- a) Provide fair, consistent, and adequate compensation for Elected Officials at a level that will attract community-minded citizens as candidates for public office;
- b) Ensure compensation provided to Elected Officials is done in a transparent and cost-effective manner;
- c) Ensure that personal costs related to conducting Council business are minimized for Elected Officials; and
- d) Maintain compensation relative to comparative municipalities in Alberta.

Policy Statement

The County of Grande Prairie No. 1 shall provide compensation to Elected Officials for Council Business. It is necessary for the County's Elected Officials to network, to meet with residents, and to support community, committee, and other events. Council will utilize best governance practices and committee structures that encourage and support a work life balance for Council and Committee members. This policy applies to all County of Grande Prairie Elected Officials and Board/Committee members.

Definitions

“Alternate” means the individual(s) who is appointed to a board/committee/commission as an alternate member and is expected to attend on behalf of the appointed elected official when they are unable to attend, or when invited by the appointed elected official or board/committee chair.

“Board” means any board or other body established by the Council of the County of Grande Prairie or, any external board or other body to which a Councillor is appointed by the Council of the County of Grande Prairie.



Council and Board Member Honoraria & Expense Reimbursement

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“Committee” means any committee or other body established by the Council of the County of Grande Prairie or, any external board or other body to which a Councillor is appointed by the Council of the County of Grande Prairie.

“CAO” also known as “County Manager” or “Chief Administrative Officer” means the person, or delegate appointed by Council to the position of Chief Administrative Officer under the Municipal Government Act for the County.

“Conference” means a formal meeting at which individuals participate in the exchange of ideas, information, and expertise in work-related subject areas.

“Convention” means an assembly, usually of members of a professional group or delegates, whose primary purpose is to elect officers, report progress and obtain approval for future activities.

“Council” means the duly elected Council members of the County of Grande Prairie No. 1.

“Council Business” means the activities conducted by Council in keeping with the provisions of the Municipal Government Act. Examples of Council business includes, but is not limited to, attendance at Council and Committee meetings, municipally sanctioned events, meetings with the CAO, and meetings with constituents.

“Councillors” means the Elected Officials of the County of Grande Prairie, excluding the Reeve.

“County” means the municipality of the County of Grande Prairie No. 1 having jurisdiction under the Municipal Government Act and other applicable legislation.

“Designate” means the person authorized by Council to conduct the duties and functions assigned to the Reeve by Council under the Municipal Government Act and under this or any other bylaw or policy.

“Elected Officials” means the Reeve and Councillors of the County of Grande Prairie.

“Expenses” means the costs incurred by Elected Officials when conducting Council business.

“Reeve” means the Chief Elected Official as defined in the Municipal Government Act.

“Receipt” means the original documentation provided by a vendor which provides detail about the item(s)/services received and the amount of GST paid. Debit and/or credit card slips are not considered receipts and are not sufficient for reimbursement purposes.

“RMA” means the Rural Municipalities of Alberta Association.

“Training and Development” means a process of enhancing a Council member’s ability to perform in relation to their governance role.



Council and Board Member Honoraria & Expense Reimbursement

Council
Policy F10

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Elected Officials shall
 - 1.1. Follow this policy to demonstrate transparency and accountability to the taxpayers;
 - 1.2. Approve any amendment to this policy. Rates may be adjusted annually to reflect the same adjustment that the staff may receive as approved during budget deliberations (ie. COLA);
 - 1.3. Engage the services of a public committee to review this policy in accordance with the terms of reference that are specified by Elected Officials;
 - 1.4. Obtain receipts and/or other required documents to substantiate all expenditures. Only detailed itemized receipts with GST number (if applicable) will be accepted. Debit and credit card receipts do not provide sufficient information to substantiate expenditures; however, in the instance where a receipt could not be obtained (ie. Parking machine), approval will be at the discretion of the designated approver;
 - 1.5. Submit their expense claims to the CAO's office;
 - 1.6. Provide a Council Report prior to each regularly scheduled Council Meeting. Council Reports must be in writing and are in the form of a list of meetings, conferences or community events the Elected Official has attended since the last Council Meeting and may include highlights. Council Reports are to be included in the Council Meeting Minutes.
 - 1.7. Elected Officials should demonstrate a prudent use of resources focusing on transparency and accountability.
2. Administration shall
 - 2.1. Review and budget sufficient funds during the budget cycle, in consultation with Elected Officials, to enable individual Elected Officials and Council as a whole to carry out their respective duties and manage their individual budget;
 - 2.2. Review all Elected Officials expense submissions for accuracy and compliance with this policy, and authorize payment of all claims that fully comply with the provisions of this policy;
 - 2.3. Inform Elected Officials of any expense claims that do not fully comply with the provisions of this policy;
 - 2.4. Coordinate travel, accommodation, convention and conference activities of Elected Officials to benefit from group rates or discounts to the extent feasible and practical;
 - 2.5. Coordinate and manage travel and accommodation for mandatory training, conventions, conferences and County events;
 - 2.6. Present copies of Council honorarium and expense claims to Council on a monthly basis;



Council and Board Member Honoraria & Expense Reimbursement

Council
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- 2.7. Report basic honorarium and approved expenses of Elected Officials in the annual audited financial statements for the County and disclose to the public in the County Connections newsletter, published three times annually.

Policy Guidelines

3. Basic Honorarium – (equivalent to 4.75 per diems)
 - 3.1. A basic (monthly) honorarium shall be paid to Elected Officials for the performance of their duties as Elected Officials. The current rates are identified in Schedule A.
 - 3.2. The Reeve shall receive a ten (10%) percent honorarium differential.
 - 3.3. Each Elected Official shall receive basic honorarium for the following duties:
 - 3.3.1. Elected Officials meetings with residents and community.
 - 3.3.2. Meetings with Administration to discuss County business.
 - 3.3.3. Meetings with constituents and business of the County.
 - 3.3.4. Preparation work, including agenda and correspondence review.
4. Per Diems
 - 4.1. The current rates are identified in Schedule A.
 - 4.1.1. An Elected Official, when acting as the official spokesperson for the County, as authorized by the Reeve and Council, shall receive a ten (10%) percent honorarium differential.
 - 4.1.2. A Designate for the Reeve, when acting in official capacity, shall receive a ten (10%) percent honorarium differential.
 - 4.2. Elected Officials are to provide details of meetings that they have attended, including the length of the meetings (inclusive of travel time) on their expense submission.
 - 4.3. A maximum of one and a half per diems are allowed per day.
 - 4.4. Half-day or evening meetings are subject to the following qualifications for per diems per meeting, inclusive of travel time:
 - 4.4.1. Meeting 0:00 – 4:00 hours – one half per diem
 - 4.4.2. Meeting 0:00 – 4:00 hours which extends through the lunch hour – one per diem
 - 4.4.3. Meeting 4:01 – 8:00 hours – one per diem
 - 4.4.4. Meeting greater than 8 hours – one and a half per diem
 - 4.5. Per diems will be paid for attendance at the following:



Council and Board Member Honoraria & Expense Reimbursement

Council
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- 4.5.1. Council or Committee of the Whole meetings, which qualifies as a minimum of an eight (8) hours day for each meeting, this also includes Special Council Meetings and Municipal Planning Commission.
 - 4.5.2. Conducting annual evaluations of the CAO.
 - 4.5.3. Meetings where attendance as a dignitary or representative of the County. The Reeve or Designate is eligible.
 - 4.5.4. Special Council Meetings such as capital grants and disaster/emergency meetings that may be called from time to time.
 - 4.5.5. Meetings of any external committee or board to which the Elected Official is appointed by Council. Or attendance as an alternate when the appointed Elected Official is unable to attend, or when invited by the appointed Elected Official or board/committee chair. *Honorariums and expenses shall be paid for attendance at regular committee meetings or as provided through a Terms of Reference. Additional attendance requirements by the committee or board must be pre-approved by Council (i.e., Training sessions, conferences).*
 - 4.5.6. Internal Elected Officials committees or boards to which the Elected Official is appointed by Council, or attendance as an alternate when appointed Elected Official is unable to attend, or when invited by the appointed Elected Official or committee chair.
 - 4.5.7. Meetings with other governments and government agencies outside of Council or Committee of the Whole meetings days, including joint council meetings.
 - 4.5.8. Conferences and conventions as identified in Schedule B or as otherwise approved by Council. The maximum per diem to be claimed while attending a conference is one per diem. This one per diem includes attendance at evening events and hospitality suites, etc. If a Councillor attends a formal meeting in the evening an additional .5 per diem may be claimed.
 - 4.5.9. Mandatory training sessions as identified in Schedule D or as otherwise approved by Council.
 - 4.5.10. Approved Professional Development courses.
 - 4.5.11. Elected Officials Strategic Planning sessions.
 - 4.5.12. If per diems are paid by external organizations, no per diems will be paid to the Elected Official by the County of Grande Prairie.
 - 4.5.13. Attendance at internal County functions in the context of celebrations or functions).



Council and Board Member Honoraria & Expense Reimbursement

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- 4.5.14. Attendance at community events (i.e., Parades, Ticketed Events (i.e., Grande Spirit Foundation, STARS, Resource Centre for Suicide Prevention, etc.) or other events by invitation)
 - 4.5.15. Meetings with local rural crime watch groups.
 - 4.5.16. Meetings with local interest groups (i.e. cemetery operators) by invitation from CAO.
 - 4.5.17. Educational or informational webinars offered through municipal, provincial or federal government or related agencies.
 - 4.5.18. Inter-municipal social functions by invitation (i.e. municipal bonspiel, golf tournaments, etc.).
 - 4.5.19. Compensation related to an extraordinary circumstance, or where a State of Local Emergency is declared, shall be paid in accordance with Policy L14 – Compensation During Extraordinary Circumstances.
5. Virtual Meeting Attendance
- 5.1. Elected Officials are eligible to participate by means of virtual attendance as provided in the Procedural Bylaw. This requirement may be varied in extenuating circumstances (i.e., Health pandemic) or otherwise pre-approved by Council.
6. Benefits
- 6.1. Elected Officials will be given the opportunity to join the County Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) up to a maximum of ten (10%) percent of the gross pay for all per diems claimed on the monthly time sheets including the Basic Honorarium.
 - 6.2. If an Elected Official chooses not to participate in the Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP), or is not eligible due to age, the County will pay an amount equal to ten (10%) percent of the gross pay for all per diems claimed on the monthly time sheets including the Basic Honorarium.
 - 6.3. Elected Officials are also eligible to participate in County-provided benefits, as listed below, in accordance with the requirements and limits set out in each plan:
 - 6.3.1. Extended Health Care, Vision Care, Out-of-Province Emergency Travel Benefits, Dental.
 - 6.3.2. Employee Family Assistance Program.
 - 6.3.3. Group Life Insurance.
 - 6.3.4. Basic Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance.
 - 6.3.5. Health/Wellness Spending Account.
 - 6.3.6. Optional group benefits available at the Elected Officials expense for:
 - 6.3.6.1. Enhanced Health and Dental coverage



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- 6.3.6.2. Critical Illness Insurance
 - 6.3.6.3. Life and Dependent Life Insurance
 - 6.3.6.4. Additional AD&D Insurance
 - 6.3.6.5. Elite Diagnostic Imaging
- 6.4. Elected Officials are to provide sufficient information to Payroll and sign up for eligible benefits.
7. Other Compensation/Allowances
- 7.1. Personal Communication Device
 - 7.1.1. Each Elected Official shall receive a monthly allowance for the use of a personally owned communication device. The current rates are identified in Schedule A.
 - 7.1.2. *Elected Officials in office prior to October 16, 2017 have the option to remain under the County's Corporate-Issued Mobile Device Plan.*
 - 7.2. Electronic Devices
 - 7.2.1. Each Elected Official shall receive a monthly allowance for the use of data on a personally owned electronic device. This includes a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet. The current rates are identified in Schedule A.
 - 7.2.2. Each Elected Official shall receive a monthly allowance for the hardware, upgrade, or replacement of a personally owned electronic device. The current rates are identified in Schedule A.
 - 7.2.3. *Elected Officials in office prior to October 16, 2017 have the option to continue to use the Corporate-Issued Laptop.*
 - 7.3. Internet Service
 - 7.3.1. Each Elected Official shall receive a monthly allowance to cover basic high speed internet operation costs from their place of residence. The current rates are identified in Schedule A.
 - 7.4. Travel Expenses
 - 7.4.1. Refer to Policy L4 - Travel Expense Reimbursement for current travel expense rates and guidelines.
 - 7.4.2. Elected Officials are eligible to claim mileage for activities related to basic honorarium duties as outlined in Section 1(c) of this Policy.
 - 7.5. Training and Professional Development



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- 7.5.1. Elected Officials are encouraged to participate in professional training and development opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge to effectively fulfill their governance roles and responsibilities.
 - 7.5.2. Mandatory training will be budgeted as general training in the Council budget. Mandatory training is identified in Schedule D.
 - 7.6. Conference and Conventions
 - 7.6.1. Elected Officials are expected to represent the County of Grande Prairie at conferences and conventions. Pre-approved conferences and conventions are identified in Schedule B. These will be budgeted in the Council budget, as it is encouraged that all of Council attend.
 - 7.7. Other
 - 7.7.1. Elected Officials have the option to use the County's Microsoft Home Use Program which provides a licensed copy of most Microsoft Office Desktop PC applications to install and use on a home computer. Antivirus software is also available. One License per Elected Official.
 - 7.7.2. Elected Officials are eligible for a one-time wearing apparel allowance, to a maximum of \$200, to be used to purchase County branded apparel.
 - 8. Exclusions
 - 8.1. In the event that an Elected Official receives any remuneration from an external board or committee or commission for that Elected Official's duly authorized attendance on behalf of the County at a meeting of the said board, commission or committee, the Elected Official shall not be paid by the County.
 - 8.2. In the event that a member of Council attends an event that is hosted by a provincial or federal political party (such as a provincial fund-raising function), the Elected Official shall not be paid a per diem by the County for their attendance. For expenses that are deemed to not be political, contributions shall be reimbursed as a meal expense only, up to a maximum of \$25, pursuant to the Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act Section 23(3)(a).
 - 8.3. The County shall not pay for any spousal or guest expenses, with the exception of the annual banquet held at the Rural Municipalities of Alberta convention. Any upfront costs for spousal conference packages will be reimbursed to the County by payroll deduction.
 - 8.4. The County shall not reimburse any Elected Official for, or otherwise directly or indirectly pay for, any political contributions.
 - 8.5. Other related items including printers, land line phones, related long distance calls, telephone answering machine or services, paper and toner, etc. are the responsibility of the Elected Official.
 - 9. Conflicts or Disputes



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- 9.1. In the event that requested remuneration is beyond what is outlined in this policy, or a conflict arises, the details of the matter shall be referred to Council for decision through resolution.

10. Remuneration Review

- 10.1. A review of this Policy and applicable rates will occur every four years, prior to August 1 of the year of the upcoming municipal election, with any changes to the Policy being implemented following the municipal election.
- 10.2. The Policy shall be reviewed by a Committee established and appointed by Council.

11. Board/Committee Member Compensation

- 11.1. Board/Committee members, appointed by Council, shall be eligible to receive per diems and expenses in accordance with this Policy, unless otherwise stated.

12. Claim Submission and Approval Process

- 12.1. Monthly claim forms must be submitted electronically to the CAO's Office for processing by the 21st day of each month. Payment will be made by the last day of the month.
- 12.2. Administration will review all Elected Officials expense submissions for accuracy and compliance with this policy, and authorize payment of all claims that fully comply with the provisions of this policy;
- 12.3. Administration will inform Elected Officials of any expense claims that do not fully comply with the provisions of this policy;
- 12.4. Claims will be subject to peer review at the first Closed Session of each month. Any adjustments will be made on the Elected Officials subsequent pay.

Attachments

- Schedule A – Honorarium, Per Diems and Allowances
 Schedule B – Pre-Approved Conferences and Conventions
 Schedule C – Mandatory Meetings
 Schedule D – Mandatory and Pre-Approved Training

References

Legal Authorities	Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000, c M-26 Income Tax Regulation (ITR s. 7306) CRA guide "Employer's Guide - Taxable Benefits and Allowances T4130(E) Rev. 20
Related Plans, Bylaws, Policies, Etc.	Policy B1 - Policy Development Policy L4 – Travel Expense Reimbursement Policy R1 – Electronic Devices, Messaging Tools and Internet Use
Other	N/A



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Revision History

Review Date	Description
January 13, 2025	Reviewed and Amended CM20250113.010
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June 11, 2024	Reviewed and Amended CM20240611.005
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January 10, 2022	Reviewed and Amended CM20220110.018
September 13, 2021	Adoption Date CM20210913.007



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Schedule A – Honorarium, Per Diems and Allowances (rates effective January 1, 2025)

Basic Honorarium

Reeve \$1,890.16 (\$397.93 per diem x 4.75)

The Reeve, or Designate, when acting in official capacity, shall receive a ten (10%) percent honorarium differential. An Elected Official, when acting as the official spokesperson for the County, as authorized by the Reeve and Council, shall receive a ten (10%) percent honorarium differential.

Councillor \$1,718.33 (\$361.75 per diem x 4.75)

Per Diems

Meeting Duration	4 hours or less	Over 4 – 8 hours or 4 hours or less over the lunch hour	More than 8 hours
Reeve	\$198.96	\$397.93	\$596.89
Councillor	\$180.88	\$361.75	\$542.63
Board/Committee members	\$180.88	\$361.75	

Allowances

Electronic Device	\$25.00 per month
Internet Service	\$100.00 per month
Mobile Device – Data	\$75.00 per month
Mobile Device – Hardware	\$20.00 per month

Mileage

Rate per Kilometre As per Policy L4 - Travel Expense Reimbursement

Meals

Rates As per Policy L4 - Travel Expense Reimbursement

Other Travel Expenses

Accommodation	As per Policy L4 - Travel Expense Reimbursement
Economy Class Airfare	Reimbursement by receipt at cost
Cab Fare	Reimbursement by receipt at cost
Registration Fees	Reimbursement by receipt at cost



Council and Board Member Honoraria & Expense Reimbursement

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Schedule B - Pre-Approved Conferences and Conventions

Funds will be budgeted annually for Elected Officials to attend the following pre-approved events (includes travel and conference fees):

Conference/Activity
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Conference
Agricultural Service Board Summer Tour
Alberta Community Crime Prevention (ACCPA)
Alberta Economic Development Conference
Alberta Forest Products Association (AFPA)
Alberta Municipalities Conference
Alberta Municipalities Spring Municipal Leader Caucus
Alberta Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA)
CPAA Annual Planning Conference
FCSSAA Conference
FCSS Spring Regional Meeting
Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Conference
Growing the North Conference
Rural Municipalities of Alberta Conventions (Spring and Fall)
Rural Municipalities of Alberta Zone Meetings (two times per year)

Note: County representation is encouraged, however, attendance by all Councillors is not required.

Additional Conferences, Meetings and Conventions **requiring approval by Council motion:**

Conference/Activity
Alberta Recycling Fall Conference (CARE)
Alberta Recycling Spring Conference
Cross Roads
Rural Community Health Provider Attraction Conference
Rural Libraries – Peace Library System
Synergy Conference
Travel Alberta Industry Conference and Tradeshow



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Schedule C – Mandatory Meetings

Mandatory Meeting Attendance

Regular Council Meetings
(26 meetings per year)

Budget Council Meetings
(6 meetings per year)

Committee of the Whole Meetings
(12 meetings per year)

Strategic Priorities Planning Sessions
(2 days per year in an election year (held outside the jurisdiction area), 1 day per year in non-election year)



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Schedule D – Mandatory & Pre-Approved Training

Mandatory

In the year following a municipal election, all Councillors are required to participate in the following orientation and training events:

- County of Grande Prairie Orientation Program
- County hosted training to enable the Elected Official to effectively use electronic devices and County related programs
- Media Training (Communications)
- Munis 101 Course (Elected Officials Education Program)

Pre-Approved

Funds will be budgeted annually for Elected Officials to attend the following pre-approved training events (includes travel and conference fees):

- Elected Officials Education Program – Municipal Elected Leaders Certificate courses
- Brownlee LLP Emerging Trends
- Reynolds Mirth Richards Farmer Municipal Law Seminar



Council Decision Making Framework

Council
Policy F11

Policy:	F11 – Council Decision Making Framework
Policy Department(s):	Council
Adoption Date:	August 12, 2019
Adoption Reference:	CM20190812.040
Effective Date:	August 12, 2019
Last Amended:	February 7, 2022

Policy Purpose

To provide a transparent, clear and concise process for informed decision-making by Council for the County of Grande Prairie No.1.

Policy Statement

The County of Grande Prairie No.1 recognizes that through a good debate and adequate information presented for the debate, the best decisions/outcomes will be reached for the County as a whole.

Definitions

“CAO” means the person appointed by Council to the position of Chief Administrative Officer under the Municipal Government Act for the County, or designate.

“Administration” means the CAO and Directors of the County.

Policy Guidelines

1. Council shall provide direction to Administration by way of resolutions and be responsible for:
 - 1.1. Making their decision while assuring fairness in the process and in good faith;
 - 1.2. Wording the resolutions, with the following key elements addressed in a resolution whenever possible (5 W’s):
 - 1.2.1. Why – the key results or outcomes that Council is looking for, including the reasons for a particular outcome;
 - 1.2.2. Who – who will take the lead responsibility for carrying out the resolution (Council or Administration);
 - 1.2.3. When – target dates;
 - 1.2.4. What – the preferred response option to achieve the desired outcome; and



Council Decision Making Framework

Council
Policy F11

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- 1.2.5. Where – identify a location, or source of funds if applicable;
 - 1.3. Defining what ‘adequate information’ means for each topic in order to provide clarity to Administration when requesting additional information from Administration;
 - 1.4. Defining specific criteria (such as when and what) that may be established for issuing individual requests for proposals or tenders, in addition to the proposed administrative considerations as required; and
 - 1.5. Defining any other action steps as may be desired by Council.
 2. Administration shall utilize a Request for Decision (RFD) to provide information and their professional advice to Council at Council Meetings.
 3. Request for Decision (RFD) is intended to serve as a complete summary of the key information required for Council to make an informed decision and therefore shall be titled “Council Request for Decision” and include the following:
 - 3.1. Meeting information (regular, budget, special, etc.)
 - 3.2. Meeting date;
 - 3.3. Name and title of presenter;
 - 3.4. Category in the agenda that the Request for Decision (RFD) will fall under;
 - 3.5. Title of the topic/issue to be presented;
 - 3.6. Executive Summary:
 - 3.6.1. Include a brief introduction of what the issue is regarding and what you need direction on.
 - 3.7. Background/Proposal:
 - 3.7.1. Available reports, information and data relevant to the topic such as:
 - 3.7.1.1. How has the topic/issue been defined;
 - 3.7.1.2. If the issue was to be resolved, what would the results be;
 - 3.7.2. Prior decisions/motions of Council relevant to the topic; and
 - 3.7.3. Relevant legislative reference, if applicable.
 - 3.8. Options and Benefits
 - 3.8.1. Option(s) for consideration. Be clear and concise;
 - 3.8.2. If multiple options can be perused, for each option:



Council Decision Making Framework

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- 3.8.2.1. Policy implications – legislation, previous resolutions or existing policies;
 - 3.8.2.2. Pros and cons;
 - 3.8.2.3. Organizational capacity and staffing implications;
 - 3.8.2.4. Financial implications – current or future budget and where is the funding coming from;
 - 3.8.2.5. Under what Policy, Bylaw, Plan, Strategy allows for Council to consider this request;
 - 3.8.2.6. May include suggested wording for a resolution for each presented option if selected by Council (including the 5 W's and how when able);
 - 3.8.2.7. Any other information that is, in the opinion of Administration, critical or relevant for Council decision-making;
 - 3.8.2.8. If a resolution is not required, make this clear (For information only, no resolution required).
- 3.8.3. An administrative recommendation for a preferred option may be included.
- 3.9. Costs and Source of Funding:
- 3.9.1. Summary of costs for options as applicable; and
 - 3.9.2. Existing or proposed sources of funding.
- 3.10. Municipal Plans
- 3.10.1. Identify the applicable Strategic Plan section, or specify how the topic relates to Council's strategic objectives, or identify the potential need to address the topic in the future strategies if applicable; and
 - 3.10.2. Reference the applicable section(s) of other existing municipal plans (sustainability, municipal development plan, etc.) if applicable.
- 3.11. Communication:
- 3.11.1. Reference to mandatory public notification if applicable;
 - 3.11.2. Suggested approaches as per County's Public Participation Policy;
 - 3.11.3. Or any other applicable County Communication policies.
- 3.12. Administrative Recommended Action:
- 3.12.1. Will include suggested wording for Council consideration; or



3.12.2. As Council directs.

3.13. Attachments:

3.13.1. List the attachments.

Attachments

Schedule A – Request for Decision Template

References

Legal Authorities	Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000, c M-26 Robert's Rules of Order
Related Plans, Bylaws, Policies, Etc.	Policy B1 – Policy Development Policy F12 – Council/Administration Communication Framework Policy S3 – Public Participation Policy
Other	N/A

Revision History

Review Date	Description
February 7, 2022	Reviewed, Amended and Transferred from Legislative Services (B27) to Council (F11) – CM20220207.008
August 12, 2019	Adoption Date – CM20190812.040



Schedule A – Request for Decision Template

Request for Decision

Report Title – Presenter, Position

Supported By: ---

Meeting: ---

Meeting Date: ---

Agenda Category: ---

Executive Summary

Background / Proposal

Options & Benefits

Costs & Source of Funding

Municipal Plans

1. **Strategic Plan:**
2. **Other Municipal Plans:**

Communication / Public Participation

Inform (one-way communication)

Goal: to provide balanced, objective information to citizens.

Tools: Public Notice Article Other

Consult (two-way communication)

Goal: To obtain feedback, listen and respond to public concerns.

Tools: Survey Open House Public Hearing Other



Council Decision Making Framework

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Involvement (involve the public to ensure their concerns and aspirations are considered in decision)

Goal: to work with the public through the process

Tools: Public Notice Open House Community Workshop

Other

Not Applicable

Administrative Recommended Action

Attachments

Approved by Director

Approved by Chief Administrative Officer



Pecuniary and Conflict of Interest for Councillors

Pecuniary and Conflict of Interest for Councillors | Municipal Affairs

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Disclaimer

The Government of Alberta and Municipal Affairs will not be liable for any damages that result from the use of this guide. While Municipal Affairs attempts to ensure the accuracy of the information contained within this guide, a municipality and/or councillor may wish to obtain advice from a lawyer in order to ensure the legislative requirements with regards to pecuniary interest and conflict of interest provisions are met. Municipal Affairs and the Government of Alberta do not warrant or make any other representations regarding the use, accuracy, applicability, or reliability of this guide.

It is important to recognize that this guide has been developed as an explanatory document to the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*. This guide is not legal advice, and it cannot be used in place of consulting with a lawyer. This guide cannot anticipate every aspect, circumstance, or situation that a municipality or councillor may encounter. If a municipality or councillor needs help finding a lawyer, please visit the Law Society of Alberta website at www.lawsociety.ab.ca/.

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Note: This document has been updated to reflect the addition of conflict of interest provisions in the MGA. There are significant differences between the declaration processes for pecuniary interest and conflict of interest. As such, the matters will be dealt with separately.

This document is only a guide to the legislation. It is recommended you consult your solicitor for advice on specific situations.

1. Pecuniary Interest

Alberta's municipal councillors have a strong record of public service to their communities. As an elected official, you are responsible for upholding the public interest ahead of any private interests you may have.

The *Municipal Government Act (MGA)* describes pecuniary interest and sets out the procedures you must follow if a matter in which you have a pecuniary interest comes up at a council meeting or a committee of council meeting.

In order that the public interest is served and seen to be served, it is important that you are open and honest about dealings with the municipality.

Definition

Section 170 of the *MGA* describes pecuniary interest as something which could monetarily affect you, your spouse or adult interdependent partner, your children, your parents or the parents of your spouse (in other words, your immediate family), or a business which employs you or in which you have an interest.

Pecuniary interest means an interest in a matter which could monetarily affect:

- a person directly;
- a corporation, other than a distributing corporation, in which you are a shareholder, director or officer;
- a distributing corporation in which you; beneficially own voting shares carrying at least 10% of the voting rights attached to the voting shares of the corporation or of which you are a director or officer; and/or
- a partnership or firm of which you are a member.

This section also states that “a councillor has a pecuniary interest in a matter if (a) the matter could monetarily affect the councillor or an employer of the councillor, or (b) the councillor knows or should know that the matter could monetarily affect the councillor’s family.” You must decide when you have a pecuniary interest. Council or the chief administrative officer cannot make the decision for you.

Exceptions

Several exceptions are listed in section 170(3) of the *MGA*.

A councillor does not have a pecuniary interest only because of any interest:

- the councillor, an employer of the councillor, or a member of the councillor's family may have as an elector, taxpayer, or utility customer of the municipality;
- the councillor or a member of the councillor's family may have by reason of being appointed by the council as a director of a company incorporated for the purpose of carrying on business for and on behalf of the municipality or by reason of being appointed as the representative of the council on another body;
- the councillor or member of the councillor's family may have with respect to any allowance, honorarium, remuneration or benefit to which the councillor or member of the councillor's family may be entitled by being appointed by the council to a position described above;

- the councillor may have with respect to any allowance, honorarium, remuneration or benefit to which the councillor may be entitled by being a councillor;
- the councillor or a member of the councillor's family may have by being employed by the Government of Canada, the Government of Alberta or a federal or provincial Crown corporation or agency, except with respect to a matter directly affecting the department, corporation or agency of which the councillor or family member is an employee;
- a member of the councillor's family may have by having an employer, other than the municipality, that is monetarily affected by a decision of the municipality;
- the councillor or a member of the councillor's family may have by being a member or director of a non-profit organization as defined in section 241(f) or a service club;
- the councillor or member of the councillor's family may have:
 - by being appointed as the volunteer chief or other volunteer officer of a fire or ambulance service or emergency measures organization or other volunteer organization or service; or
 - by reason of remuneration received as a volunteer member of any of those voluntary organizations or services.
- the councillor, an employer of the councillor or a member of the councillor's family that is held in common with the majority of electors of the municipality or, if the matter affects only part of the municipality, with the majority of electors in that part;
- the interest is so remote or insignificant that it cannot reasonably be regarded as likely to influence the councillor; or
- they discuss or vote on a bylaw that applies to businesses or business activities when the councillor, an employer of the councillor or a member of the councillor's family has an interest in a business, unless the only business affected by the bylaw is the business of the councillor, employer of the councillor or the councillor's family.

What to Do

Section 172 of the *MGA* sets out the procedure you must follow if a matter in which you have a pecuniary interest arises in a council or committee of council meeting. Failure to follow these procedures could lead to your disqualification from council.

This section says that you may not take part in the discussion and decision-making on any matter in which you have a pecuniary interest. The legislation attempts to ensure that you are not influencing council's discussion or decision by your presence.

If you have a pecuniary interest:

- you are to disclose that you have an interest and its general nature;
- you are to abstain from any discussion of the matter and from voting; and
- you are to leave the room until the matter has been dealt with, and you should make sure that your abstention is recorded in the minutes.

For example, you might say *“Mr. Mayor, I am abstaining on this matter because I am a shareholder in the company. I am leaving the room and I ask that my abstention be recorded.”*

If the matter is one in which you, as an elector or property owner, have a right to be heard by council (for example, a land use bylaw amendment, lane or street closure, etc.), you are to disclose your interest and abstain, but you may remain in the room to be heard by council in the same manner as any person who is not a member of council. In this case, you should follow the procedure required of any other person to be placed on the list of delegations to be heard by council. When the matter comes up for hearing, you might say *“Madam Mayor, I am abstaining from this matter because I own the property affected. I ask that my abstention be recorded.”*

You should then leave the council table and go to the area where the public sits. The mayor should call you to make your presentation in the same manner as any other person. You should state your case, answer any questions that may be asked of you and then be seated in the public area for the remainder of the public hearing.

When council debates the matter, it would be advisable to leave the room during the decision-making process.

Temporary Absence

On occasion, you may be temporarily absent from a meeting when a matter in which you have a pecuniary interest comes up for discussion. If so, upon returning to the meeting, or as soon as you discover that the matter was discussed, you are to disclose the general nature of your interest in accordance with section 172(4). The *MGA* requires the secretary to note your disclosure in the minutes. The purpose of this provision is to ensure that a member of council does not avoid disclosing an interest by simply leaving the meeting before the matter is discussed and returning after the discussion is complete. If a matter is discussed by council while you are temporarily absent from a meeting, upon your return and as soon as you become aware of the matter, you should get the attention of the chair and say something like *“Mr. Mayor, during my absence a matter was discussed in which I have an interest. I am disclosing that my husband is an employee of the company and I ask that my disclosure be recorded in the minutes.”*

All Meetings

The disclosure and abstention rules apply to every meeting of council and any of its committees. They also apply to you at a meeting of any board, committee, or agency to which you are appointed as a representative of council (section 172(1) of the *MGA*). In other words, any time you are acting as a councillor, the disclosure and abstention rules apply to you.

It is important to remember to ask the secretary at any of these meetings to record your abstention and to check that it is included in the minutes.

Business with the Municipality

Although there is no prohibition on doing business with the municipality when you are a member of council, every contract or agreement with the municipality in which you have an interest must be approved by council (section 173 of the *MGA*). If your council has delegated purchasing authority to administration, it is important that those officials know of any business interests that you have and that you ensure council approves of any contract with your business. If, as an elected official, you submit a bid or offer for a contract or agreement, you should note in your submission that the matter must receive council approval under section 173 of the *MGA*. If council does not approve the contract or agreement, you will be disqualified from council under section 174 of the *MGA* and the contract or agreement will have no force or effect.

The following are the only exceptions:

- if the contract or agreement is for the performance of work or the provision of a service in the case of an emergency; or
- if the contract or agreement is for the sale of goods or services to the municipality or to persons contracting with the municipality at competitive prices by a dealer in those goods or services, that is incidental to, or in the ordinary course of business; or
- the agreement was entered into before your term of councillor started.

Statement of Disclosure of Interests

If you have extensive business interests, it may be difficult for you to know when these businesses are dealing with your municipality. It may be even more difficult for purchasing agents to identify a contract that requires the approval of council because a member of council has an interest.

In such cases, it may help everyone involved – yourself included – if a listing of interests is available in the office. Council may, by bylaw, require its members to file a statement with a designated officer showing the names of their immediate family members and any business in which they have an interest (section 171 of the *MGA*). The designated officer then compiles a list of all the names reported on the statements and provides it to the employees of the municipality indicated in the bylaw.

This provision is enabling. This means the council has the power to pass such a bylaw; however, is not required to do so.

Remember

If you vote on a matter in which you have pecuniary interest, you are subject to disqualification, even if you vote against your interest.

Ask to have your abstention recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The rules apply at all meetings of your council and its committees, and at the meetings of any board, commission, committee or agency to which you are appointed as a representative of the council.

If your council passes a bylaw requiring a statement of disclosure of interests, keep your statement up-to-date by regularly informing the designated officer of additions or deletions.

If you are in doubt as to whether you have a pecuniary interest, obtain a written legal opinion from your own solicitor.

2. Conflict of Interest

Prior to the introduction of Bill 20, the *Municipal Affairs Statutes Amendment Act, 2024*, councillors were only required or permitted to abstain from discussion and voting on matters before council when they had a pecuniary interest or due to an absence from a public hearing. Councillors can now abstain from a vote or discussions on a matter if they believe they may have a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest.

Conflict of interest means a matter that could affect a private interest of the councillor or an employer of the councillor. It is also considered a conflict of interest if the councillor knows or should know that the matter affects the private interests of their family.

Similar to the *Conflicts of Interest Act*, which defines the ethics rules for members of the legislative assembly, the *MGA* defines what a private interest is not rather than providing a definitive list of potential private interests.

A private interest is not something that:

- is of general application;
- affects a councillor as one of a broad class of the public;
- concerns the remuneration and benefits of a councillor; or
- an interest that is trivial.

It is not possible to define every situation that presents a conflict of interest. However, these provisions enable councillors to abstain from voting or discussing a matter in which there may be a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest. This is important to build trust in locally elected officials and the decisions that they make as members of council.

What to Do for a Conflict of Interest

Section 172.1(1) and (2) of the *MGA* set out the procedure you may follow when you believe you may have a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest in a matter before council, a council committee, or any other body to which you are appointed as a representative of council.

If you believe you may have a conflict of interest:

- you may disclose the general nature of the conflict of interest;
- once you have disclosed the conflict of interest, you may abstain from any discussion of the matter and from voting; and
- you may leave the room until the matter has been dealt with, and you should make sure that your abstention and the disclosure of the conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest is recorded in the minutes.

No Review of Conflict of Interest

If a councillor decides to take or not take any of the actions under section 172.1(2) after disclosing a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest, that decision cannot be considered during any hearing respecting the potential disqualification of the councillor. Nor can that decision be considered when determining the validity of a complaint alleging a breach of the code of conduct bylaw (Section 172.2 of the *MGA*).

This document is only a guide to the legislation. It is recommended you consult your solicitor for advice on specific situations.

2025

Council Meeting Schedule

January						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
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30	31					

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31						

September						
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30						

December						
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28	29	30	31			

- Council Meeting
- Organizational Meeting
- Municipal Planning Commission
- Committee of the Whole
- Statutory Holiday
- Budget: (Pre, Interim, Business Cases)
- Council Orientation after Election
- Election Day
- Agricultural Service Board
- County Open Houses
- Recreation Boards Grants
- Pre-Approved Conference
- Tentative Conference or Conference Requiring Motion
- Family & Community Support Services
- Strategic Planning Session
- Post Election Speaker

2025 Council Meeting Schedule

PRE-APPROVED CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS and Mandatory Training

Conference/Activity	
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Conference	January 22 – 25, 2025 Lethbridge
Agricultural Service Board Summer Tour	2025 dates unknown
Alberta Community Crime Prevention (ACCPA)	2025 dates unknown – 2024 dates were May 6 - 8 Calgary
Alberta Economic Development Conference	April 9 – 11, 2025 Kananaskis
Alberta Forest Products Association (AFPA)	September 24 – 26, 2025
Alberta Municipalities Conference	November 12 - 14, 2025 Calgary
Alberta Municipalities Spring Municipal Leaders Caucus	2025 dates unknown (Mar 14 - 15,2024)
Alberta Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA)	2025 dates unknown - October 24 – 26,2024 Jasper
CPAA Annual Planning Conference	April 28 – 30, 2025 Red Deer
FCSSAA Conference	2025 dates unknown (November 13 - 15, 2024)
FCSS Spring Regional Meeting	Date to be released in January
Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Conference	May 28 – June 1, 2025 Ottawa
Growing the North Conference	February 18 – 20, 2025
Rural Municipalities of Alberta Conventions (Spring and Fall)	March 17 – 19, 2025 Nov 17 – 20, 2025
Rural Municipalities of Alberta Zone Meetings (two times per year)	February 14, 2025 August 1 or 8, 2025
Reynolds Mirth Richards Farmer Municipal Law Seminar	February 21, 2025 in Grande Prairie
Elected Officials Education Program	Sessions held during RMA Conferences. Additional dates will be announced post election.
Brownlee LLP Emerging Trends	2025 dates unknown (usually held in February)

Additional Conferences, Meetings and Conventions **requiring approval by Council motion**

Conference/Activity	
Alberta Recycling Spring Conference	2025 dates unknown (Feb 28 – Mar 1, 2024)
Alberta Recycling Fall Conference (CARE)	October 22 – 24, 2025 Jasper
FarmTech (now called CrossRoads)	January 28-29, 2025 Edmonton
Rural Community Health Provider Attraction Conference	2025 dates unknown (October 8 – 10, 2024 Wainwright)
Rural Libraries - Peace Library System	2025 dates unknown
Synergy Conference	2025 dates unknown
Travel Alberta Industry Conference and Tradeshow	2025 dates unknown

Other Events and Activities

Conference/Activity		
Strategic Planning - Leadership		
Family and Community Support Services	February 11, May 6, July 15, November 5	
Agricultural Service Board	April 24, June 11, Oct. 17, Dec. 8	
Budget	Final Budget	April 15 - 17
	Pre-Budget	July 17
	Capital Grants	November 3 - 4
	Business Cases	November 6 - 7
	Interim Budget	December 10 - 13
Recreation Boards	November 3 - 4	
Interprovincial / Intermunicipal Meeting		
County Road Tours		
Open Houses	June 16, 18, 19	
Council Orientation Session	October 24	
Council Orientation Session - Regional with George Cuff	October 29	

Other Conferences Council Attended in 2024 by Council Motion (New)

PNWER	July 20-24, 2025 - Washington
Inventures Conference	May 28-30, 2025 – Conflict FCM Ottawa
Economic Developers Association of Canada (EDAC)	2025 dates unknown (September 30 – October 3, 2024)
Canadian Hydrogen Conference	April 22 – 24, 2025
ASCHA Home for Housing Convention & Trade Show	March 30 – April 2, 2025

Sign Removal

All election signs must be removed three days after the election. The removal shall include the sign panel, supporting structure and any tie wiring used to install and support the sign.

When the removal of an election sign is necessary due to safety or operational concerns, the appropriate Alberta Transportation district office will notify the responsible campaign office to take the required action. Failure to respond within the specified time will result in the sign being removed. Signs will be stored at the nearest highway maintenance facility or Alberta Transportation district office. The campaign office will be notified to arrange to have the signs picked up.

Signs that pose immediate hazard to the public will be removed immediately by Alberta Transportation's highway maintenance contractors without notification.

Alberta Transportation is not responsible for any signs damaged during the removal process. The campaign office is responsible for installing and removing election signs.

For more information contact the nearest Alberta Transportation district office.

Athabasca District Office
Unit #2, Jewell Building, 3603 – 53rd Street T9S 1A9
Phone: 780-675-2624 Fax: 780-675-5855
transdevelopmentathabasca@gov.ab.ca

Calgary District Office
2nd Floor, Willowglen Business Park, 803 Manning Road N.E. T2E 7M8
Phone: 403-297-6311 Fax: 403-297-7682
transdevelopmentcalgary@gov.ab.ca

Edson District Office
Rm. 202, 111 - 54th St., Edson T7E 1T2 Phone: 780-723-8250 Fax:
780-723-8387
transdevelopmentedson@gov.ab.ca

Fort McMurray District Office
6th Floor, West Tower, Box 9, 9915 Franklin Ave. Fort McMurray T9H 2K4
Phone: 780-743-7376 Fax: 780-743-7215
Application.Permit.FM@gov.ab.ca

Grande Prairie District Office
1401, Provincial Bldg., 10320 99th St. Grande Prairie T8V 6J4
Phone: 780-538-5310 Fax: 780-538-5384
transdevelopmentgrandeprairie@gov.ab.ca

Hanna District Office
P.O. Box 1300, Hanna T0J 1P0
Phone: 403-854-5550 Fax: 403-854-3086
transdevelopmenthanna@gov.ab.ca

Lethbridge District Office
3rd Flr, Admin. Bldg., 909 3rd Ave. N, Lethbridge T1H 0H5
Phone: 403-381-5426 Fax: 403-382-4057
transdevelopmentlethbridge@gov.ab.ca

Peace River District Office
Bag 900, Box 29, 9621 96 Ave., 3rd Floor Peace River T8S 1T4
Phone: 780-624-6280 Fax: 780-624-2440
transdevelopmentpeacereiver@gov.ab.ca

Red Deer District Office
401, 4920 - 51st St, Red Deer T4N 6K8 Phone: 403-340-5166 Fax:
403-340-4876
transdevelopmentreddeer@gov.ab.ca

Stony Plain District Office
Rm. 223, Provincial Bldg., 4709 44th Ave. Stony Plain T7Z 1N4
Phone: 780-963-5711 Fax: 780-963-7420
transdevelopmentstonyplain@gov.ab.ca

Vermilion District Office
Box 28, 4701-52nd St., Vermilion T9X 1J9 Phone: 780-853-8178
Fax: 780-853-8270
transdevelopmentvermilion@gov.ab.ca

Guidelines for the Installation of Election Signs



Election Signs Guidelines

Those installing election signs on Alberta highways need to follow these guidelines:

1. For signs located within highway rights-of-way, the maximum sign size will be one and a half square metres. There is no size restriction for signs located on private property.
2. Election signs are temporary signs and are only permitted from the date the election is called until three days after the election.
3. Signs of the following types will **not** be allowed:
 - signs that display an intermittent flashing, rotating or moving light
 - signs that are floodlit which could cause visual distractions to the motoring public
 - signs that have any moving or rotating parts
 - signs that imitate the wording of a standard or commonly used highway traffic sign, such as stop, stop ahead or yield.
 - signs that imitate or resemble the visual appearance of a traffic control device (e.g., stop sign).

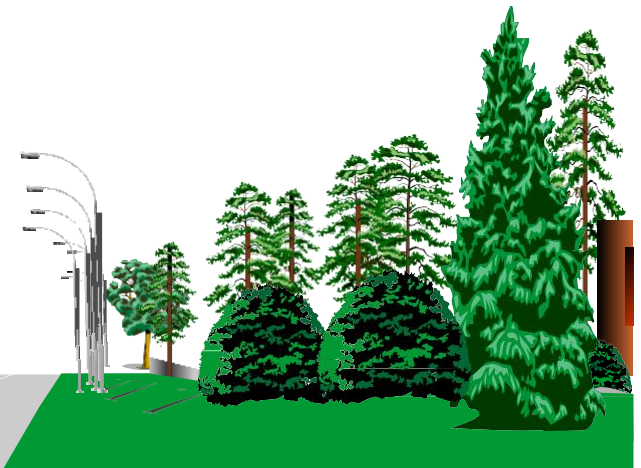
If a sign is in contravention of these guidelines, a peace officer or a person authorized by the road authority may, without notice or compensation, remove the sign, and may enter onto privately owned land to do so.

Location Guidelines

In general, election signs shall be placed as far from the shoulder line as practical, always allowing the travelling public to have an unobstructed view of the roadway.

The following shall be considered when placing election signs.

- Signs must be placed no closer than two metres from the edge of pavement (or, in the case of gravel roads, no closer than two metres from the shoulder of the road).
- During winter conditions, there is a high probability that signs less than six metres from the road will be either covered with snow or damaged during snow removal and sanding operations.
- No election signs will be allowed within the median of a divided provincial highway.
- No election signs shall be mounted on highway signs or sign posts. These signs will be removed immediately.
- No election signs shall be placed in or within 500 metres of construction zones.
- No election signs shall be placed that obstruct a motorist's view of an intersection in an urban area or within 250 metres of an intersection in a rural area.



Safety Precautions

Those installing election signs must use safety precautions to ensure their safety and prevent driver distraction.

All persons working near the highway shall wear reflective vests and bright clothing.

Election signs shall be installed during daylight hours only.

Vehicles used for transporting election signs must be parked so as to minimize the impact to the travelling public (preferably on an approach), as far as possible from the travel lanes, and have four-way hazard warning signals operating at all times.

Changes to the *Local Authorities Election Act (LAEA)* 2024

Campaign Financing

This fact sheet has been developed as an explanatory resource. It is not legal advice and cannot be used in place of consulting with a lawyer.

What changed?

The campaign period for general elections is now the period beginning on January 1 of the year immediately following a general election and ending on December 31 immediately following the next general election, and both intended and nominated candidates must give notice in their local jurisdictions before they may accept contributions or incur campaign expenses.

The Expense Limits Regulation has been created, which establishes campaign expense limits for candidates for chief elected official (CEO) and councillor in each year of the election cycle.

No campaign expense limits were established for candidates for school board trustee.

Who is impacted by the change?

Prospective candidates, nominated candidates, contributors, and local jurisdictions are all impacted by the changes to campaign financing rules.

What does this change mean for me?

No individual and no person acting for the individual shall accept a contribution or incur a campaign expense unless the individual has given written notice (Section 147.22).

Individuals who intend to be nominated or who have been nominated to run for election must give written notice to the local jurisdiction. Written notice must include:

- the full name, address, and contact information of the individual;
- the address of the place(s) where records are maintained, and of the place to which communications may be sent;
- the names and addresses of the financial institutions to be used as depositories for campaign contributions; and
- the names of the signing authorities for each financial institution to be used for campaign contributions.

No candidate or person acting for a candidate shall accept a contribution in respect of an election outside the campaign period for that election.

Local jurisdictions must maintain a register of candidates who have given notice. The register must be made publicly available on the local jurisdiction's website until December 31 immediately following a general election, or 60 days following a by-election (Section 147.221).

The register must be made available in a partial or redacted form with the mailing address of the candidate and candidate's agent, and any personal information that the returning officer, deputy, or secretary believes would compromise the personal safety of the candidate, removed. If a criminal record check was filed with a candidate's nomination papers, the results must not be withheld or redacted.

Who is prohibited from making contributions?

No individual ordinarily resident outside of Alberta, or a prohibited organization, or trade union or employee organization other than an Alberta trade union or Alberta employee organization, shall make a contribution to a candidate (Section 147.1). Prohibited organizations include:

- A municipality,
- A corporation controlled by a municipality that meets the test in Section 1(2) of the *Municipal Government Act*,
- A non-profit organization that has received a grant, or real or personal property from a municipality since the last general election,
- A provincial corporation as defined in the *Financial Administration Act*, including management bodies within the meaning of the *Alberta Housing Act*,
- A Metis settlement,
- A board of trustees under the *Education Act*,
- A public post-secondary institution as defined in the *Post-secondary Learning Act*,
- A corporation that does not carry on business in Alberta,

- A registered party as defined in the *Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act* or the *Canada Elections Act* (Canada), or
- An organization designated by the Lieutenant Governor in Council as a prohibited organization.



What is the campaign period for the 2025 General Election?

For the 2025 General Election, the campaign period begins once the amendments are in force on October 31, 2024, and ends on December 31, 2025.

In the case of a by-election, the campaign period begins on the day after the resolution or bylaw is passed to set the election day for the by-election and ends 60 days after the by-election.

For more information, please refer to Municipal Affairs' Returning Officers Manual Module 3.

What are the limits on contributions?

Subject to candidate self-contributions in Section 147.2(4), contributions by an individual ordinarily resident in Alberta shall not exceed, in the case of a general election, in a calendar year during the campaign period, or, in the case of a by-election, during the campaign period,

- (a) \$5,000 in the aggregate to all candidates for election as a councillor in a particular municipality,
- (b) \$5,000 in the aggregate to all candidates for election as a school board trustee of a particular public school division under the *Education Act*, and
- (c) \$5,000 in the aggregate to all candidates for election as a school board trustee of a particular separate school division under the *Education Act*.

Contributions by a corporation other than a prohibited organization, by an Alberta trade union or by an Alberta employee organization shall not exceed during the campaign period \$5,000 in the aggregate to all candidates for election as above.

A candidate may contribute up to \$10,000 during the campaign period of the candidate's own funds that is not reimbursed to the candidate from the candidate's campaign account by the end of the campaign period (Section 147.2(4)).

Any amount paid by a candidate for campaign expenses from the candidate's own funds not reimbursed to the candidate from the candidate's campaign account by the end of the campaign period, is a contribution to the candidate's own campaign (Section 147.2(5)).

No candidate and no person acting on behalf of a candidate shall, directly or indirectly, solicit or accept a contribution if the candidate or person knows or ought to know that the prospective contributor is a prohibited organization, or an individual ordinarily resident outside Alberta, or a trade union or employee organization that is not an Alberta trade union or Alberta employee organization (Section 147.2(6)).

No candidate or person acting on behalf of a candidate shall solicit or accept a contribution if the candidate or person knows or ought to know that the amount of the contribution will exceed the amounts referred to above (Section 147.2(7)).

What are the campaign expense limits for municipal candidates?

The Expense Limits Regulation establishes the following campaign expense limits for municipal candidates are based on the population in the most recently published Municipal Affairs Population List. The population list may be viewed at: <https://open.alberta.ca/opendata/alberta-municipal-affairs-population-list>

A candidate for election as a councillor or their chief financial officer (in the case of a local political party) may not incur campaign expenses in the first two years of a campaign period after a general election.

In the year before a general election:

- In municipalities with no wards:
 - Candidates for and councillor may incur campaign expenses up to \$10,000 or \$0.50 per person based on the population of the local jurisdiction determined in accordance with the regulation, whichever is greater.
- In municipalities with wards:
 - Candidates for CEO may incur expenses up to \$10,000 or \$0.50 per person based on the population of the local jurisdiction determined in accordance with the regulation, whichever is greater.
 - Candidates for councillor other than the CEO may incur campaign expenses up to \$10,000 or \$0.50 per person based on the average population of the wards in the local jurisdiction determined in accordance with the regulation, whichever is greater.

In the year of a general election:

- In municipalities with no wards:
 - Candidates for CEO and councillor may incur campaign expenses up to \$20,000 or \$1 per person based on the population of the local jurisdiction determined in accordance with the regulation, whichever is greater.
- In municipalities with wards:
 - Candidates for CEO may incur campaign expenses up to \$20,000 or \$1 per person based on the population of the local jurisdiction determined in accordance with the regulation, whichever is greater.
 - Candidates for councillor other than the CEO may incur campaign expenses up to \$20,000 or \$1 per person based on the average population of the wards in the local jurisdiction determined in accordance with the regulation, whichever is greater.

For by-elections, candidates for both CEO and councillor will have campaign expense limits equal to the limits for the year of a general election.

When will these changes take effect?

The changes under the *Municipal Affairs Statutes Amendment Act, 2024* came into force on October 31, 2024.

Who can I contact for more information?

If you have questions about campaign financing, please contact municipal advisory at 780-427-2225 (Toll-free by dialing 310-0000 first) or via email at: ma.advisory@gov.ab.ca.

Where can I find additional resources?

- *Local Authorities Election Act*, King's Printer: https://kings-printer.alberta.ca/570.cfm?frm_isbn=9780779839575&search_by=link
- Bill 20: *Municipal Affairs Statutes Amendment Act*, Legislative Assembly of Alberta: https://docs.assembly.ab.ca/LADDAR_files/docs/bills/bill/legislature_31/session_1/20230530_bill-020.pdf.
- Manuals and election resources: <https://www.alberta.ca/municipal-elections-overview>
- Expense Limits Regulation MSD:073/24: https://kings-printer.alberta.ca/Documents/MinOrders/2024/MunicipalAffairs/2024_MSD073-24_Municipal_Affairs.pdf

- Local Political Parties, Slates and Campaign Expense Limits: <https://www.alberta.ca/system/files/ma-local-parties-and-campaign-expense-limits-fact-sheet.pdf>



What every councillor needs to know

A council member's handbook

What every councillor needs to know: A council member's handbook [2025] | Municipal Affairs

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Should this handbook conflict with the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA), RSA 2000, Chapter M-26, the *Local Authorities Election Act* (LAEA), or any other enactment, the legislation, as the case may be, shall prevail.

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Introduction

Congratulations on your election to council. This booklet presents an overview of your responsibilities as a municipal councillor and is intended to help you understand the powers and duties of a municipal council.

History of Local Government in Alberta

The first local government election in Alberta was held in 1883 under the Northwest Municipal Ordinance. Rural local government began with herd districts in 1883, fire districts in 1886, and statute districts in 1887, which were combined into local improvement districts in 1897. Urban local government began with unincorporated town ordinances in 1888. The village ordinance followed in 1895.

In 1912, separate acts were put in place for towns, villages, rural municipal districts, and improvement districts. Cities were incorporated by special charter.

Municipal Government Act

In 1967, the various pieces of municipal legislation were consolidated into the original *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*.

In 1994, a further consolidation and revision of municipal legislation took place. The 1994 revisions gave municipalities greater autonomy in local decision making and incorporated the provisions of the former *Planning Act*.

The current *MGA* is the primary statute governing the affairs of your municipality. The *MGA* has undergone extensive review and amendments. Your chief administrative officer (CAO) should provide you with a copy.

Section 3 of the *MGA* states the purposes of a municipality are:

- to provide good government;
- to foster the well-being of the environment;
- to foster the economic development of the municipality;
- to provide services, facilities or other things that, in the opinion of council, are necessary or desirable for all or a part of the municipality;
- to develop and maintain safe and viable communities; and
- to work collaboratively with neighbouring municipalities to plan, deliver and fund intermunicipal services.

A municipality is a corporation and has the powers of a natural person, except to the extent that those powers are limited by the *MGA* or any other enactment. The introduction of natural person powers provides council with a great deal of flexibility in terms of how the municipality is organized and administered, what services are provided, and how those services are delivered.

The power to pass bylaws is stated in general terms. This gives councils broad authority and respects their right to govern the municipality in the way that council considers appropriate within the jurisdiction provided under the *MGA*. However, bylaws authorized by the *MGA* or any other enactment are subordinate to federal and provincial legislation and regulations.

Council Roles and Responsibilities

Council is the governing body of the municipal corporation and the custodian of its legislative powers. As a councillor, you will exercise the powers of the municipality through decisions made at council meetings and define the policies and direction your municipal administration will put into action.

The *MGA* provides that councils can only exercise the powers of the municipal corporation in the proper form, either by bylaw or by resolution. What this means is that no individual or group of councillors can make a decision or ask administration to take action; this can only be done through an appropriate bylaw or resolution passed at a public meeting of council where quorum is present.

Your job as a councillor is to work with other council members to set the overall direction of the municipality through your role as a policy maker. The policies council sets are the guidelines for administration to follow as it handles the operations of the municipality. Much of your time on council will be spent considering new policies and programs and reviewing the current ones to make sure they are working as they should.

Councillor Duties

Under Section 153 of the *MGA*, all councillors have the following duties:

- to consider the welfare and interests of the municipality as a whole and to bring to council's attention anything that would promote the welfare or interests of the municipality;
- to promote an integrated and strategic approach to intermunicipal land use planning and service delivery with neighbouring municipalities;
- to participate generally in developing and evaluating the policies and programs of the municipality;
- to participate in council meetings and council committee meetings and meetings of other bodies to which they are appointed by the council;
- to obtain information about the operation or administration of the municipality from the chief administrative officer or a person designated by the chief administrative officer;
- to keep in confidence matters discussed in private at a council or council committee meeting until discussed at a meeting held in public;
- to adhere to the code of conduct established by the council by bylaw; and
- to perform any other duty or function imposed on councillors by this or any other enactment or by the council.

Code of Conduct

The *MGA* requires every council in Alberta to establish a code of conduct bylaw governing the conduct of councillors. This bylaw must apply to all councillors equally. Additionally, a council may by bylaw, in its sole discretion, establish a code of conduct governing the conduct of members of council committees and other bodies established by the council who are not councillors.

There is no model code of conduct prescribed by legislation. Instead, the Code of Conduct for Elected Officials Regulation simply mandates what topics must be addressed at a minimum, namely:

- representing the municipality;
- communicating on behalf of the municipality;
- respecting the decision-making process;
- adherence to policies, procedures and bylaws;
- respectful interactions with councillors, staff, the public and others;
- confidential information;

- conflicts of interest;
- improper use of influence;
- use of municipal assets and services; and,
- orientation and other training attendance.

Every code of conduct bylaw must include a complaint system outlining who can make complaints, the method by which complaints can be made, the process to determine a complaint's validity, and the process to determine how sanctions will be imposed for valid complaints.

A council is prohibited from including provisions or sanctions that prevent a councillor from fulfilling their legislated duties as a councillor and a councillor may not be disqualified or removed from office for a breach of the code. Councillors are strongly encouraged to review and become familiar with their municipality's bylaw as abiding by it is an important councillor duty.

Councillor Liability

As you carry out these duties, the question of liability may arise as a result of your actions; however, Section 535 of the *MGA* was written to protect you from personal liability while acting in good faith for your municipality. This section does not apply in circumstances of defamation and does not protect the municipal corporation from any such liability.

There are several provisions in the *MGA* that impose liability on a councillor. One of these is found in Section 249 which deals with unauthorized expenditures, and is discussed later in more detail under "Procedure for Expenditure Authorization." Another is found in Section 275 which deals with borrowings, loans, or guarantees that cause the municipality to exceed its debt limit, and is discussed later in more detail under the section titled "Borrowing."

While it is important to be aware of these liabilities, they should not be a concern as long as the municipality follows appropriate processes.

The Chief Elected Official

(*MGA* Sections 150, 154 and 155)

The chief elected official (CEO), in addition to performing a councillor's duties, must preside when attending a council meeting unless a bylaw provides otherwise. The CEO must also perform any other duty imposed under the *MGA* or any other enactment. In practice, the CEO is also generally the main spokesperson for the municipality, unless that duty is delegated to another councillor. The title CEO may be changed to one that council believes is appropriate to the office, such as mayor or reeve.

The CEO of a city or town is elected by a vote of a municipality's electors, unless council passes a bylaw requiring council to appoint the CEO from among the councillors. In a village, summer village, or municipal district, council appoints the CEO from among the councillors unless it passes a bylaw providing that the official is to be elected by a vote of the municipality's electors.

Orientation and Training Opportunities

(MGA Section 201.1)

Understanding the relationships, roles and the responsibilities of an elected official and the associated limitations, will be critical to your success in the position. Municipalities are required to offer orientation training and each councillor is required to attend the orientation training offered [Section 201.1(1)]. The topics that must be covered are broken into two parts.

The first part of the training must be held prior to, or on the same day as, the organizational meeting following a general election. In the case of a by-election, this first training session must be attended on or before the day the councillor takes the oath of office.

The topics in the first part of the training that must be covered are:

- the role of municipalities in Alberta;
- municipal organization and function;
- roles and responsibilities of council and councillors;
- the municipality's code of conduct; and
- roles and responsibilities of the CAO and staff.

Training on the second group of topics must be attended prior to, or on the same day as, the first regularly scheduled council meeting, or in the case of a councillor elected via by-election, within 90 days of taking the oath of office.

The topics in the second part that must be covered are:

- key municipal plans, policies and projects;
- budgeting and financial administration;
- public participation; and
- any other topic prescribed by the regulations.

Council has the authority to extend the time for the second part of training by resolution for up to 90 days [Section 201.1(2)].

Within 90 days of taking office, all newly elected municipal chief elected officials and councillors must also complete required online emergency management training offered by the Alberta Emergency Management Agency. More information can be found at www.alberta.ca/training-requirements-and-mandatory-exercises.

Your associations, Alberta Municipalities and Rural Municipalities of Alberta, offer educational sessions for elected officials. They also offer conferences throughout the year that will provide invaluable information and networking opportunities.

If you are newly elected, attending training, conferences, and workshops is an excellent way to obtain the information you need to serve effectively. If you are a returning councillor, your knowledge and experience hold significant value for new councillors.

Policy-Making and Program Monitoring

Council is responsible for considering the types and levels of services that are necessary or desirable for the municipality. This responsibility involves providing input regarding the municipality's programs and services (policy making) and making sure administration provides the programs and services in the best possible way (program monitoring).

Policy making provides a way of ensuring that consistent decisions are made on similar matters. Policies should establish general guidelines that council sets for administration to follow. Administration then provides programs and services to the residents according to those policies.

Program monitoring involves staying up to date on the programs and services the municipality offers and assessing the results against what council planned to achieve.

The Entire Municipality

As a councillor, you are elected to look after the interests of the entire municipality. If you are a councillor in a municipality that has wards, you will have to be careful you do not place the interest of the ward or electoral division above the interest of the whole municipality. As difficult as it may be at times, you must base any decision you make on what is best for the entire municipality. Council's effectiveness depends on you providing input as a representative of your area, while thinking and voting for the needs of the whole municipality.

Time Management

As a council member, there will be significant demands on your time. There will be council, council committees, and various other meetings to attend. To participate effectively in all these meetings, you should review meeting materials and become familiar with the issues that will be discussed. Conferences and workshops sponsored by the municipal associations or educational institutions will help provide you with the tools to be an effective elected official. If you choose to attend, these will also help you to understand the wider picture on issues affecting the whole province or other municipalities. Telephone calls, visits from your electors, and community events are all important components of the job. Managing time to adequately deal with both personal and public demands is an important part of becoming an effective member of council.

Team Approach

Working as a team with the rest of council and administration will contribute to making your time on council a success. It may not always be easy. Your influence as a council member rests on your ability to persuade other members of council to consider your point of view. When an issue is being studied, be sure to express your views as part of the debate.

Disagreements among council members on specific issues are common and healthy. The respectful exchange of ideas and opinions will lead to good decisions. While working through these debates, keep in mind that you all share the same desire for your municipality to be strong, safe, and viable. You may have different views about how to get there, but you do share broader common goals.

Most votes on a council resolution do not require a consensus of all councillors. As a result, there will be many occasions where a decision is made that you did not support with your vote. However, once the resolution has been passed, it becomes the official direction of the municipality. The health and ongoing success of a municipality is largely dependent upon the ability of councillors to respect and support the decisions of council in principle, despite their personal views during the debate.

Some municipalities have a communications policy in place in addition to the code of conduct bylaw that directs media through prescribed channels. Becoming familiar with communications procedures will allow you, council, and administration to work as a team and deliver a cohesive message.

Oath of Office

(MGA Section 156)

Before taking part in your first council meeting, you will be required to make and subscribe to the official oath. By taking the oath, you swear or declare that you will diligently, faithfully, and to the best of your ability, fulfill the duties of the office to which you have been elected.

Organizational Meeting

(MGA Sections 159 and 192)

The first meeting of council will be the organizational meeting, held within two weeks of the general election (or by August 31 for a summer village), or sooner if an election was not required. This marks the official commencement of your term of office and the completion of the previous council's term. This meeting allows council to address preliminary matters such as electing a CEO if necessary, electing a deputy CEO, and commonly includes appointing people to the various committees and other bodies associated with council. If other regular business is to be conducted, the organizational meeting must be adjourned, and the regular meeting convened and recorded as a separate meeting.

Procedural Bylaw

(MGA Section 145)

Your municipality may have a procedural bylaw to provide a standard format for council meetings and make it easier for members of council, staff, media, and public to understand the decision-making process. A procedural bylaw may provide for naming and prescribing the responsibilities of council committees, provide for the order of business and method of distributing the agenda for council meetings, set rules regarding the proceedings at regular meetings of council, and describe how items may be put on the council agenda.

Regular and Special Meetings

(MGA Sections 153, 181, 193, 194, 196, 197, 198, and 199)

It is up to council to decide how many meetings are needed to govern the affairs of the municipality. The decision to hold regular meetings must be made at a meeting with all councillors present. The time and place of a regular meeting can be changed by resolution of council. While all councillors do not have to be at the meeting to change the time or place, all councillors and public must be given 24 hours notice of the change.

All council and council committee meetings must be open to the public, except as noted in the following section. Only people who have been expelled from the meeting because of improper conduct have no right to attend. The provisions of the *MGA* regarding public presence at meetings are intended to promote public involvement and the accountability of the local government process.

The timing of regular council meetings does not always align with urgent business that requires council attention. There will be times when a special council meeting is required. Section 194 of the *MGA* states that a special meeting may be called if the CEO believes one is needed and must be called if a majority of councillors request one in writing.

Council and council committees can hold meetings by means of electronic or other communication facilities if a bylaw has been passed in accordance with Section 199. Notice must be given to the public of such a meeting,

including the way it will be conducted. The facilities must enable all the meeting's participants to watch or hear each other, and the public to watch or listen.

Meetings Closed to the Public

There are times when council or a council committee must discuss something in private. Personnel matters, where it would be unfair to the people involved to have the issue discussed in public, are a common example. To recognize specific circumstances that necessitate confidentiality of council discussions, Section 197(2) of the *MGA* allows meetings (or portions of meetings) that are closed to the public where the subject matter falls within one of the exceptions to disclosure in Division 2, Part 1 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. The exceptions include matters where disclosures could be harmful to personal privacy, individual or public safety, law enforcement, intergovernmental relations, or economic or other interests; reveal confidential evaluations, local public confidences, or advice from officials; or disclose information that is subject to legal privilege.

Resolutions or bylaws cannot be passed while in a closed session, other than a motion to proceed with the meeting in an open session. Any decisions must still be made at a meeting open to the public. Under Section 153 of the *MGA*, councillors are required to keep in confidence matters discussed in private at a council or council committee meeting. They must keep this confidence until the matter is discussed at a meeting held in public.

Voting

(*MGA* Sections 183, 184, 185, and 172)

You are on council to make decisions. Under the *MGA*, you are required to vote on all resolutions and bylaws unless you are required or permitted to abstain from voting under other legislated provisions. Council must ensure that each abstention and the reason for it are recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

If there is a public hearing on a proposed bylaw or resolution, you must abstain from voting on the bylaw or resolution if you were absent from all of a public hearing, and you may abstain if you were absent for a part of a public hearing. Section 172 of the *MGA* states that you must abstain from voting on matters in which you have a pecuniary (monetary) interest. You may also choose to abstain from voting if you believe you have, or it may be perceived you have, a conflict of interest (Section 172.1(1)).

At any time before a vote is taken, you may request that the vote be recorded. The minutes must show the names of the councillors present and how they voted.

Each councillor has one vote. A resolution is passed by receiving the majority of votes from the councillors in attendance at the meeting. When there is a tie vote on a motion, the motion is defeated.

Quorum must be present at a council meeting for any resolution or bylaw to be valid. A quorum is a majority of councillors making up the municipal council. For example, if your council consists of seven councillors (including the CEO), four councillors would constitute a quorum.

Pecuniary and Conflict of Interest

(MGA Sections 170, 172 and 172.1)

Membership on council is a position of public trust. The *MGA* describes pecuniary interest and sets out the procedure you must follow if a matter in which you have a pecuniary interest comes up at a meeting in which you are participating as a member of council. Failure to follow these procedures can lead to disqualification.

The *MGA* was also recently amended to address non-pecuniary conflicts of interest. If a matter arises where a councillor believes they have, or will be perceived to have, a conflict of interest, they may disclose the general nature of the conflict before or during discussion on the matter. If the general nature of the conflict is disclosed, councillors may then abstain from a vote or discussions on the matter. Further information on this can be found in the "Pecuniary and Conflict of Interest for Municipal Councillors" resource available online at [Pecuniary and conflict of interest for councillors - Open Government](#).

Council Committees

(MGA Sections 145 and 203)

Council may create council committees, by bylaw, and appoint committee members. Council may decide to create a temporary committee to look at a specific issue. There may also be standing committees that run from year to year to deal with ongoing issues.

Committees can play a bigger role in making decisions on issues for council. If council wants a committee to make decisions, council may delegate some of its powers to the committee by bylaw. If a committee makes a decision delegated to it by council, it is then as if the council made the decision itself. Some council decisions, such as passing bylaws or adopting the budget, cannot be delegated to a committee.

If council is part of an emergency services committee, you may have some specific responsibilities in the case of a local emergency. You need to know what those responsibilities are and how they are to be carried out. The system of emergency response is described in the *Emergency Management Act*.

Municipal Organization and Administration

A vital part of the smooth operation of municipal government is the interaction between council and administration. Understanding how administration works will help you carry out your role as a municipal councillor.

Your administration exists to take care of the everyday work of running a municipal government. This includes providing a variety of programs and services based on the priorities council has set for the municipality. As a councillor, residents will ask you for information on the municipality's programs and services. Your most important contact is the CAO.

Chief Administrative Officer

(MGA Sections 205, 205.1, 207, 208, and 209)

Every council must establish, by bylaw, a position of chief administrative officer (CAO). Council may give the position an appropriate title. The CAO is the administrative head of the municipality and is directly responsible to council for the operational performance of the organization. The CAO is responsible to implement the decisions of council, implement the municipality's policies and programs, advise and inform council on the operation of the municipality, and perform any other duties assigned by council. The CAO, together with the administrative team, will also provide advice, information, and recommendations to council on any matters that council is dealing with.

Successful municipalities have found that clear lines of communication and accountability are essential for effective operation. This is generally achieved when the CAO is provided with the authority to take council direction (through resolutions and bylaws) and implement that direction through the administrative team. Although well intentioned, individual councillor's attempts to become involved by providing direction to the administrative team can blur this accountability. It is important for council to develop a strong working relationship with the CAO based on mutual respect and trust and allow the CAO to direct and set priorities for the administrative team.

A performance appraisal system for the CAO is a key building block for a lasting and positive relationship between council and the CAO. Even though the current relationship may be good, a formal appraisal process provides the opportunity to discuss opportunities for improvement. The *MGA*, therefore, requires that council provide the CAO with an annual written performance evaluation.

Designated Officers

(MGA Sections 209 and 210)

A CAO may delegate any of their powers, duties, or functions to a designated officer or an employee. Designated officer positions are established by bylaw and are subject to the CAO's supervision, unless otherwise provided by bylaw. A designated officer may also delegate any of those powers, duties, or functions to an employee of the municipality.

Policies

The importance of policies will become apparent the first time you try to find out if a past council established guidelines on a certain matter. Most successful municipalities maintain a policy manual or files together with an index to enable easy reference. Policies should be approved by council and periodically reviewed and updated to ensure that they continue to be relevant.

Organizational Chart

Most municipalities maintain an organizational chart of the administration structure. A review of the organizational chart will help you to understand the types of functions and services the municipality provides, and how it is organized to deliver those services.

Staff Development

Your human resources are as important as your financial resources. A variety of educational opportunities are available for both new and experienced municipal administrators. The most successful municipalities encourage staff development and training to ensure their employees can effectively carry out their duties and stay familiar with new developments in the field of municipal administration.

Finance

Almost everything the municipality is engaged in will have a cost associated with it. You will spend a lot of time on council assessing the financial implications of decisions.

Operating and Capital Budgets

(MGA Sections 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, and 247)

The budget is the center of the municipal finance system. Service delivery and project development are always subject to constraints, but financial constraints are generally the most limiting. As a result, the priorities of council will necessarily be reflected in the funding priorities established in the budget. Through the budget, council sets the municipality's priorities for the next year (or number of years) by allocating funding for each program, service, or project. Careful and realistic budget planning and control can translate into better and more cost-effective services for the community.

Many municipalities have a strategic plan that maps out longer term goals and identifies the municipality's priorities over several years. A strategic plan can provide year-to-year guidance and direction to the annual budget process and provides the longer-term context for annual goals.

The *MGA* requires that every municipality adopt an annual operating and a capital budget. Property and business tax bylaws cannot be passed until both budgets have been adopted. It should be noted that municipalities are not allowed to budget for a deficit; however, sometimes unexpected circumstances may result in the municipality having a deficit at year end. If the deficit does not cause the municipality to have an overall accumulated deficit, net of the value of tangible capital assets, then the municipality remains on-side with legislative requirements and can budget to recover that deficit in future years as council sees fit.

The operating budget is a detailed estimate of how much your municipality needs to spend to meet its ongoing financial obligations and provide programs and services to the residents. The capital budget identifies the sources and uses of funding for fixed assets such as buildings, roads, vehicles, water and sewer facilities, and land.

Long Range Financial Plans

A long-range capital infrastructure plan, covering at least three to five years, is required to receive provincial Local Government Fiscal Framework grant funding. The plan should set out what capital expenditures are needed and when, the future cost of maintaining the asset, when it has been built or purchased, and how the assets will be financed. Additionally, municipalities are required to have, at minimum, a three-year financial plan and five-year capital plan. These plans allow council to see the long-term impact of decisions made today, ensuring council is considering the continued sustainability of the municipality when making financial decisions.

The budget is a plan of council expenditures and revenues over the course of the year. Council needs to keep an eye on what is happening to make sure the municipal operations match the budget. It is recommended that council receive regular financial reports at least quarterly from administration that compare actual results to the budget. Financial reports are a good source of information and budget control.

Procedure for Expenditure Authorization

(*MGA* Sections 248 and 249)

Each council must establish procedures to authorize and verify expenditures that are not included in a budget. If you, as a councillor, make an unauthorized expenditure, or vote to spend granted or borrowed funds for a purpose other than that for which they were granted or borrowed, you could be held personally liable under section 249 of the *MGA* for the amount of the expenditure, grant, or borrowing.

Borrowing

(*MGA* Sections 249, 252, and 275)

The Minister of Municipal Affairs has, by regulation, established municipal debt and debt service limits. If a municipality is within its limits, no provincial approvals are required for borrowing, but the Minister's approval is required for any borrowing beyond the regulated debt limits. If you vote for a borrowing that puts the municipality

above the regulated debt or debt service limit, you could be held personally liable for the amount of the borrowing, unless the borrowing is approved by the Minister.

Auditor

(MGA Sections 276, 277, 278, and 280; Alberta Regulation 313/2000)

Each council must appoint an auditor for the municipality and must submit audited financial statements and an audited financial information return to the Minister of Municipal Affairs by May 1 of each year. In addition, the financial statements or a summary of them must be made available to the public by May 1 of each year. The financial statements must disclose the municipality's debt limits, as well as the salaries of the CEO, individual councillors, the CAO, and the designated officers of the municipality.

Property Assessment, Taxation, and Other Revenues

Assessment

(MGA Sections 285, 298, 454, 454.1, 454.2, 454.3, 460, 460.1, 468, and 470)

Property assessment is the process of assigning a dollar value to a property for taxation purposes. In Alberta, property is taxed based on the ad valorem principle. Ad valorem means “according to value.” This means that the amount of tax paid is based on the value of the property.

Each municipality is responsible for ensuring that each property owner pays their share of taxes. Property assessment is the method used to distribute the tax burden among property owners in a municipality.

The market value based standard is used to determine the assessed values for the majority of properties in Alberta. Market value is the price a property might reasonably be expected to sell for if sold by a willing seller to a willing buyer after appropriate time and exposure in an open market.

Some types of properties are difficult to assess using a market value based assessment standard because they seldom trade in the marketplace (and when they do trade, the sale price usually includes non-assessable items that are difficult to separate from the sale price); they cross municipalities and municipal boundaries; or they are of a unique nature. Municipal Affairs prescribes rates and procedures to assess these types of properties, which are referred to as “regulated property”. Rates and procedures are determined by what a type of property is used for, its activity, or its production capability. There are four types of regulated property:

1. Farmland;
2. Designated industrial property;
3. Machinery and equipment; and
4. Railway property.

Assessments for all types of property are prepared by professional certified assessors. Assessors receive training in a variety of areas including property valuation techniques, legislation, and quality assurance. The assessor designated by the Minister of Municipal Affairs assesses designated industrial property, while assessors employed or contracted by municipalities assess all other types of property. Under provincial legislation, a municipality must establish, by bylaw, the position of assessor, and appoint an individual to the position. An appointed municipal assessor is responsible for the completion of a number of tasks laid out by provincial legislation and regulations.

After the assessed value of a property has been determined, the property is assigned an assessment class. The assessment class determines the tax rate that will be applied to each property, as assessment classes may have different tax rates.

The assessor for the municipality is responsible for assigning the assessment classes to property. Property is classified according to its actual use. The classes are set out in the *MGA*. They are:

- Class 1 – residential;
- Class 2 – non-residential;
- Class 3 – farmland; and
- Class 4 – machinery and equipment.

Each year, every municipality is required to send an assessment notice to every assessed person listed on the assessment roll. Each municipality must publish a notification in one issue of a local newspaper to announce that the assessment notices have been mailed to property owners within the municipality.

To ensure property owners have a voice in the property assessment system, the *MGA* has set out a complaints and appeals system for property owners who have concerns about their assessment.

The process involves filing a complaint with the municipality's assessment review board. The type of property the complaint is about will determine the type of assessment review board that will hear the complaint. Residential property with three or fewer dwelling units, farmland, or a tax notice other than a property tax notice will be heard by a Local Assessment Review Board. Residential property with four or more dwelling units or non-residential property will be heard by a Composite Assessment Review Board. If the taxpayer believes an error in law or jurisdiction has been made by the assessment review board, the decision may be appealed to the Court of King's Bench of Alberta.

Property Taxation

(*MGA* Sections 242, 297, 318, 354, 355, 356, and 359.1)

Each year, municipal councils determine the amount of money they need to operate their municipality through the budget process. From this amount, the council then subtracts known revenues (for example, licenses, grants, and permits). The remainder is the amount of money the municipality needs to raise through property taxes to provide services for the year.

This revenue requirement is then used to calculate the tax rate. The tax rate is the percentage of assessed value at which each property is taxed in a municipality. The revenue requirement is divided by the assessment base (the total value of all assessed properties in the municipality).

The tax rate calculation is expressed in the following formula:

$$\text{Revenue requirement} / \text{Assessment base} = \text{Tax rate.}$$

The tax rate is applied to each individual property assessment using the following formula:

$$\text{Property assessment} \times \text{Tax rate} = \text{Taxes payable.}$$

Council is required to pass a property tax bylaw annually (Section 353). Council may set different municipal tax rates for each of the four assessment classes once each year; however, the difference between non-residential and residential tax rates can be no more than 5:1. Council may also set different tax rates for vacant and improved non-residential property and for different sub-classes of residential property, if the municipality has, by bylaw, established sub-classes of residential assessment.

If, after sending out the tax notices, the municipality discovers an error or omission in the tax rates, the bylaw can be amended to correct the error, new tax notices sent out and a copy of the new bylaw must be provided to the Minister within 30 days.

In addition to municipal tax rates, municipalities must set tax rates to raise funds that are requisitioned for cost sharing programs such as the Alberta School Foundation Fund. This is discussed in the next section.

For more information on Property Assessment and Taxation, visit alberta.ca/municipal-property-assessment.

Education Tax and Equalized Assessment

(MGA Sections 318, 359.1 and 359.2; School Act: Part 6 Division 3, Section 174; Alberta Regulation 22/2004-Sec 10)

Property assessment is used as the basis on which to requisition property taxes from all or a number of municipalities for the financial support of several regional and provincial programs. Equalized assessment is a process that levels the playing field for municipalities so property tax requisitions and grants can be fairly allocated.

Just as property owners pay taxes in proportion to the value of the property they own, municipalities are required to contribute to the provincial education and other requisitions based on the proportion of assessment within their jurisdictions. Equalized assessments are used to determine the specific contributions to be made by each municipality, and they are also used in formulas for provincial grants to municipalities.

Intermunicipal fairness and equity is important when requisitioning property taxes from municipalities or calculating grants. In this regard, it is usually necessary to make some adjustments in the assessment base figures that each municipality reports to the province before those assessments are used to determine each municipality's contribution to a regional or provincial program, or its equitable share of grant dollars. These adjustments are made through the equalized assessment process.

The MGA requires that most properties be assessed at market value. Ideally, all properties would be assessed at 100 per cent of market value. In practice, assessments may vary from market value to a limited degree. Because this variance may occur, equalization is used to adjust each municipality's assessments to 100 per cent of market value. The equalization process removes the variations in assessment levels to make the assessment bases more comparable among municipalities. The process produces a set of adjusted, or "equalized," assessments that can then be used to distribute requisitions or allocate grants among municipalities in a fair and equitable manner.

For more information on Equalized Assessment, visit: open.alberta.ca/publications/5333000.

Other Taxes and Revenues

(MGA Sections 7, 360, 371, 381, 382, 388, 393, and 399)

In addition to the property tax levy, a municipality may impose a business tax, a special tax, or a local improvement tax. As well, the MGA provides for taxes within a business improvement area and on well drilling equipment (although the well drilling tax rate has been set at 0, and is not expected to be reinstated).

Under Section 360 of the MGA, franchise agreements may exist between a municipality and a utility service (power, gas, cable, telephone) that, among other things, provide for the payment of a franchise fee. The fee is usually a percentage of the distribution charges levied by the utility company, and is a rate set for rent of the municipal rights-of-way, the exclusive franchise rights granted within a municipality, and the property taxes that would otherwise be paid by the utility.

There are other sources of revenue available, mainly user fees. Utility charges for water, sewer treatment, and garbage collection are common in Alberta municipalities. Council may want to develop a policy setting the rates based on the degree of cost recovery considered desirable (full cost recovery is normal for utilities). Fees can also be set for other services, such as recreational facilities, photocopying, or meeting room rentals.

Municipal Grants Listing

Information on all provincial and federal grant programs supporting municipalities is available at: municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/all-grants.

This website includes:

- a brief description of the program, including the type of projects supported and the eligibility requirements;
- information on which ministry administer the program; and
- links to program websites.

Municipal Grant Funding Reports

Information on provincial and federal grant dollars provided to Alberta municipalities and summary reports of grants provided by Government of Alberta ministries by grant type is available at: alberta.ca/lookup/grant-funding-reports.aspx.

Planning and Development

Council shapes the physical future of the community through its authority over land-use planning and development; this authority is exercised through statutory plans, the land use bylaw, and other bylaws and policies. It is the responsibility of council to focus on the future of the community, while balancing the current rights, needs and concerns of property owners and residents. A number of tools are available to council for this purpose.

Alberta Land Stewardship Act Regional Plan

(ALSA Sections 20, 21, and 22; MGA Sections 618.3 and 618.4.)

If an *Alberta Land Stewardship Act (ALSA)* regional plan is approved or amended, municipalities within an applicable ALSA regional plan are required to review their regulatory instruments, such as but not limited to, existing statutory plans, the land-use bylaw, policies and procedures, and make any amendments to comply with the ALSA regional plan. After the review, municipalities are required to file a statutory declaration with the Land

Use Secretariat stating that the review is complete, and that the municipality is 'in compliance' with the regional plan. The *ALSA* regional plan establishes the time within which municipalities must review and amend existing planning documents to show compliance.

Where there is an approved *ALSA* regional plan, municipal council, the subdivision authority, development authority, municipal planning commission, subdivision and development appeal board, etc., within that region must act in accordance with the applicable *ALSA* regional plan's regulation and policies. Note- as of December 2024, regional plans are in place in the South Saskatchewan and the Lower Athabasca regions.

Intermunicipal Development Plan

(*MGA* Sections 631, 636, 637 and 638)

Two or more municipalities adopt an intermunicipal plan (IDP) to address issues of mutual concern with respect to designated lands. The plan must address the future use of land, the manner of and proposals for future development, or other matters relating to the area, etc. The plan must include a procedure to resolve, or attempt to resolve, conflicts; a procedure to amend or repeal the plan; and provisions relating to plan administration.

If the municipalities cannot agree on the need for an IDP or the issues in the IDP, the Land and Property Rights Tribunal can hear the matter. The Minister may then require two (2) or more municipalities to enter into an intermunicipal development plan.

Municipal Development Plan

(*MGA* Sections 632, 636, 637 and 638)

Every council of a municipality must adopt a municipal development plan (MDP). The MDP provides a general framework for development within the municipality and is the official statement of your municipality's policies concerning the desired future pattern of development. The municipality must afford opportunity to affected persons, school boards, adjacent First Nations or Metis Settlements, as well as adjacent municipalities, to review and make comment on the plan. A municipal development plan must be consistent with an intermunicipal development plan.

Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework

Part 17.2 (*MGA* Sections 708.26 – 708.52)

Each municipality that shares a common boundary with another municipality must have an Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework (ICF). This framework must provide for the integrated and strategic planning, delivery, and funding of intermunicipal services, steward scarce resources efficiently in providing local services, and ensure municipalities contribute funding to services that benefit their residents.

The framework must describe the services to be provided under it that benefit residents in the municipalities; identify which municipality is responsible for providing which services and outline how the services will be delivered and funded; and contain provisions establishing a process for resolving disputes that occur while the framework is in effect.

If the municipalities involved in an ICF cannot reach an agreement on the framework, disagree on its application, interpretation, or are unable to resolve their dispute related to the framework within one year after starting their ICF dispute resolution process, the *MGA* includes a mandatory and binding arbitration process to resolve any such issues.

Area Structure and Redevelopment Plans

(MGA Sections 633, 634, 635, 636, 637 and 638)

Council may, by bylaw, adopt an area structure plan (ASP) to provide a framework for subsequent subdivision and development for a particular area. The area structure plan will generally describe the sequences of development, proposed land use, population density, and the location of major transportation routes and public utilities and may address matters related to reserve land dedication or money in lieu of land dedication.

When an area is undergoing redevelopment, council may adopt an area redevelopment plan (ARP) and must describe the objectives of the plan and how they are proposed to be achieved, the proposed land uses, etc. In addition, a redevelopment levy may be used to acquire land for park, school, or recreation purposes in the redevelopment area.

An ASP or ARP must be consistent with the municipality's MDP and existing IDPs.

Land-use Bylaws

(MGA Sections 638.2, 640, 642, 685, and 686)

All municipalities must have a land-use bylaw (LUB). This bylaw is the central planning document that provides a specific means of implementing statutory plans and policies. For instance, if a council wishes to adopt a direct control district in the land-use bylaw, council must also adopt an MDP that establishes that direction. All statutory documents must be consistent with each other. The LUB provides for a system for issuing development permits and divides the municipality into land use districts or 'zones' prescribing permitted and discretionary uses for land, and development standards for each land use district. Council must establish a development authority to administer the development approval process and make decisions.

When an application conforms to the provisions of the LUB and is for a permitted use, a development permit must be issued with or without conditions as provided for in the bylaw. Where an application is for a discretionally use, it may be approved with or without conditions as provided for in the bylaw, or it may be refused. Development permit applications may be appealed to the subdivision and development appeal board (SDAB) or in certain situations to the Land and Property Rights Tribunal of Alberta. Additionally, people who believe they may be affected by the proposed development may appeal the decision of the development authority.

Subdivision

(MGA Sections 623, 638.2, 652, 654, 655, and 678)

Dividing a piece of land into two or more parcels or consolidating two or more lots generally requires approval from a subdivision authority. The authority ensures that the land to be subdivided is appropriate for its proposed use. Council must establish the subdivision authority by bylaw. Decisions may be appealed to the subdivision and development appeal board, or in certain situations to the Land and Property Rights Tribunal of Alberta. While a subdivision is approved by the subdivision authority, any changes to zoning that accompany the subdivision must be brought to council for approval by bylaw prior to approval of the subdivision application.

Subdivision or Development Agreements

(MGA Sections 638.2, 650 and 655)

As a condition of subdivision or development approval, your municipality may require a developer to enter into agreements to address matters related to roads; pedestrian walkways; public utilities; off-street or parking facilities or loading and unloading facilities; to pay off-site levies or redevelopment levies imposed by bylaw; etc. These

agreements ensure that certain conditions of the proposed development are documented and completed. Municipalities may obtain legal advice to address the subdivision or development agreement.

Subdivision and Development Appeal Board

(MGA Sections 627, 678, and 686)

A municipal council is required to establish a SDAB to act as a quasi-judicial body to deal with subdivision and development appeals. No more than one member of council can serve on a panel hearing a matter under the SDAB unless the Minister of Municipal Affairs authorizes it. The SDAB appeal hearing must be a public hearing.

Economic Development

The Economic Developers Alberta (EDA) is an incorporated, non-profit organization formed to enhance the economic development profession in the province of Alberta, providing an active network of communication, information and education. EDA coordinates programs and workshops for municipal councils and economic development committee members to help communities with their economic plans by creating an awareness of what they can do on the local front to enhance their economic development activities. You can visit their website at edaalberta.ca.

Conclusion

This document is a starting point, not the final word. You will benefit from your time on council as you meet new people and develop a greater understanding of the local government process and its role in your community. Your community will benefit from your leadership, vision, and service. Best wishes for your success, and for the success of your community.

This guide is an information summary only and has no legislative sanction. For certainty, refer to the *MGA* and request your own legal advice. Copies of the *MGA* or other legislation mentioned in this document can be downloaded or purchased from Alberta King's Printer Bookstore:

7th floor Park Plaza Building
10611 - 98 Avenue Northwest
Edmonton AB T5K 2P7

Phone: 780-427-4952 (or toll-free in Alberta at 310-0000)

Fax: 780-452-0668

Email: kings-printer@gov.ab.ca

Website: <https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-kings-printer>

Notice of Intent

Local Authorities Election Act (Section 147.22)

LOCAL JURISDICTION: County of Grande Prairie No.1 _____, PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

Election Date: October 20, 2025
date

I, _____, of

_____ complete address and postal code

intend to be nominated, or have been nominated, to run for election as a candidate in the

_____ name of local jurisdiction and ward, if applicable

I understand that by completing this form, I am declaring my intent to become a candidate as defined in the *Local Authorities Election Act*, which carries with it certain obligations and responsibilities.

Candidate Information

Title Candidate Last Name Candidate First Name

Gender Telephone Number Email Address

Address of place(s) where candidate records are maintained:

Name(s) and address(es) of financial institutions where campaign contributions will be deposited (if applicable):

Name(s) of signing authorities for each depository listed above (if applicable):

SWORN (AFFIRMED) before me at the _____

of _____, in the Province of Alberta, this _____

day of _____, 20 ____

Signature of Returning Officer or Commissioner for Oaths or Notary Public in
and for Alberta

Signature of Candidate

Commissioner for Oaths Stamp

RETURNING OFFICER'S ACCEPTANCE

Returning office signals acceptance by signing this form

Signature of Returning Officer

IT IS AN OFFENCE TO SIGN A FALSE AFFIDAVIT OR A FORM THAT CONTAINS A FALSE STATEMENT

The personal information collected through this form is for administering the election. This collection is authorized by section 33(c) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. For questions about the collection of personal information, contact your local municipal office.

NOMINATION PAPER AND CANDIDATE'S ACCEPTANCE

Local Authorities Election Act
(Sections 12, 21, 22, 23, 23.1, 27, 28,
47, 68.1, 151, 158.3, Part 5.1)
Education Act (Sections 4(4), 74)

The personal information collected through this form is for administering the election. This collection is authorized by section 33(c) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. For questions about the collection of personal information, contact

FOIP Coordinator / County of Grande Prairie No. 1

780-532-9722

Business Title/Organization

Business Phone Number

10001 84 Avenue

Clairmont

AB

T8X 5B2

Address

City or Town

Province

Postal Code

LOCAL JURISDICTION: County of Grande Prairie No.1, PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

We, the undersigned electors of _____,
Name of Local Jurisdiction and Ward (if applicable)

nominate _____ of
Candidate's Surname and Given Names

Complete Address and Postal Code

as a candidate at the election about to be held for the office of _____
Office Nominated for

of _____
Name of Local Jurisdiction

The candidate's local political party or slate is _____ (if applicable).

Provide signatures of at least **5 ELECTORS ELIGIBLE TO VOTE** in this election in accordance with sections 27 and 47 of the *Local Authorities Election Act* and sections 4(4) and 74 of the *Education Act* (if applicable). If a city or a board of trustees under the *Education Act* passes a bylaw under section 27(2) of the *Local Authorities Election Act*, then the signatures of up to 100 electors eligible to vote may be required.

Printed Name of Elector	Complete Address and Postal Code of Elector	Signature of Elector

CANDIDATE’S ACCEPTANCE

I, the above-named candidate, solemnly swear (affirm) that

I am eligible under sections 21 and 47 (and section 12, in the case of summer villages) of the *Local Authorities Election Act* and sections 4(4) and 74 of the *Education Act* (if applicable) to be elected to the office,

I am not otherwise disqualified under section 22, 23 or 23.1 of the *Local Authorities Election Act*,

I will accept the office if elected,

I have read sections 12, 21, 22, 23, 23.1, 27, 28, 47, 68.1 and 151 and Part 5.1 of the *Local Authorities Election Act* and sections 4(4) and 74 of the *Education Act* (if applicable) and understand their contents,

I am appointing _____
Name, Contact Information or Complete Address and Postal Code, and Telephone Number of Official Agent
as my official agent (if applicable),

I have provided a criminal record check with my nomination package (if applicable),

I will read and abide by the municipality’s code of conduct if elected (if applicable), and

The electors who have signed this nomination paper are eligible to vote in accordance with the *Local Authorities Election Act* and the *Education Act* and resident in the local jurisdiction on the date of signing the nomination.

(Print name as it should appear on the ballot.)

Candidate's Surname

Candidate's Given Names
(may include nicknames, but not titles, i.e. Mr., Ms, Dr.)

SWORN (AFFIRMED) before me

at the _____ of _____,
in the Province of Alberta,
this _____ day of _____, 20_____.



Signature of Candidate

Signature of Returning Officer or
Commissioner for Oaths

Commissioner for Oaths Stamp

**IT IS AN OFFENCE TO SIGN A FALSE AFFIDAVIT
OR A FORM THAT CONTAINS A FALSE STATEMENT**

RETURNING OFFICER’S ACCEPTANCE

Returning Officer signals acceptance by signing this form:

Signature of Returning Officer

The personal information collected through this form is for administering the election. This collection is authorized by section 33(c) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. For questions about the collection of personal information, contact

FOIP Coordinator / County of Grande Prairie No.1

780-532-9722

Business Title/Organization

Business Phone Number

10001 84 Avenue

Clairmont

AB

T8X 5B2

Address

City or Town

Province

Postal Code

Candidate's Full Name

Candidate's Address and Postal Code

Address(es) of Place(s) where Candidate Records are Maintained

Name(s) and Address(es) of Financial Institutions where Campaign Contributions will be Deposited (if applicable)

Name(s) of Signing Authorities for each Depository Listed Above (if applicable)

Where there is any change in the above mentioned information, the candidate shall notify the local jurisdiction in writing within 48 hours of such changes by submitting a completed information form.



County of
Grande Prairie No. 1

Supplementary Nominations (Optional)

Attach to Form 4 - Nomination Paper and Candidates Acceptance

Local Jurisdiction: County of Grande Prairie No. 1

Candidate: _____

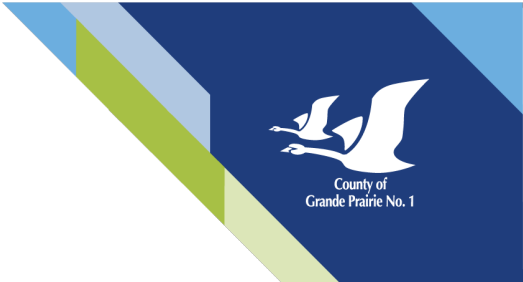
Division: _____

To avoid eligibility challenges you are encouraged to obtain more than the minimum of five (5) elector's signatures.

Printed Name of Elector	Complete Address and Postal Code of Elector	Signature of Elector

Candidate Signature

Date



AUTHORIZATION FOR RELEASE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

The County of Grande Prairie No. 1 often receives requests for personal information regarding candidates running for County Councillor in the Municipal Election from organizations, individuals, and media.

The County, therefore, requests the type of information that we can provide the electors, media/social media and the County of Grande Prairie’s public website.

Please complete the information that you authorize for release. Please print clearly.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Picture: (please email picture to election@countygp.ab.ca and initial here) _____

Social Media and/or Website: (please email link(s) to election@countygp.ab.ca and initial here) _____

Disclaimer

I, _____,
as a potential candidate for the position of Councillor, give permission for my above information to be released for publication purposes, both to the media and to the County of Grande Prairie No.1 for use on their website.

Signature

Date

The personal information requested on this form is collected under the authority of Section 33(c) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act and will be used for the purpose of the 2025 Municipal Election. Personal information will be protected in accordance with Part 2 of the Act. If you have any questions regarding the collection, use or disclosure of personal information, please contact the FOIP Coordinator at 780-532-9722 or email foip@countygp.ab.ca

