

Intermunicipal Relationships and Regionalization

Council
Policy F9

Policy:	F9 – Intermunicipal Relationships and Regionalization
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Policy Purpose

To provide a statement regarding Council’s beliefs, values and direction regarding building inter-municipal collaborative relationships and regarding regionalization.

Policy Statement

Local governments are the orders of government closest to the people with the best understanding of local needs and community aspirations. Local governments do not operate in isolation. Through the intermunicipal collaboration framework, the municipalities are mandated to work collaboratively with neighboring municipalities to plan, deliver and fund intermunicipal services. Therefore, successful local governments today and into the future will be those with effective local leadership and effective inter-jurisdictional relationships within or outside of the region.

Regionalization is a focused growth approach and integration of collaborative systems and services that cross municipal boundaries while maintaining a localized autonomy and governance. The County of Grande Prairie will support proactive, organized, and voluntary collaboration between the municipalities in our region through complimentary services and/or Sharing of Services and Resources.

County of Grande Prairie’s values identified in the Strategic Plan of being **trustworthy, transparent, respectful**, and collaborative will always be the cornerstone of our conduct. One of the County’s operating principles is being a good neighbor to our surrounding municipalities. The County recognizes that success of our neighbors contributes to the overall health and prosperity of the region.

Definitions

“Autonomy” means the ability for municipalities to act freely, and identify, prioritize and achieve priorities that reflect the desires of their residents.

“Focused Growth Approach” means mutually developed integrated pathways and solutions that address varying needs while respecting municipal autonomies and desires.

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“Inter-jurisdictional” means occurring between or involving two or more orders of government; includes intermunicipal and interprovincial.

“Intermunicipal” means occurring between or involving two or more municipalities.

“Intermunicipal Agreement” means any formal agreement established between the County of Grande Prairie and another municipality or municipalities.

“Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework” means a framework created between municipalities with common boundaries pursuant to the Municipal Government Act. The purpose of the framework (MGA, s. 708.27) is to provide for intermunicipal collaboration related to planning, delivery and funding of intermunicipal services while stewarding scarce resources, and ensuring municipalities contribute funding to services that benefit their residents.

“Intermunicipal Development Plan” means a plan that may be established by municipalities with common boundaries pursuant to the Municipal Government Act. The plan will identify those areas of land lying within the boundaries of the municipalities as the municipalities consider necessary. The purpose of the plan is to achieve the orderly, economical, environmentally sustainable, beneficial development, and use of bordering lands in collaboration between municipalities with common boundaries.

“Interprovincial” means between the County of Grande Prairie and municipalities in British Columbia that border on municipalities in the Grande Prairie and Central Peace Region.

“Inter-provincial Meetings” means meetings with municipalities in the Grande Prairie and Central Peace Region that border the Province of British Columbia (BC) municipalities:

- Peace Regional District, BC
- Saddle Hills County, AB
- Clearhills County, AB

“Neighbouring Municipality” means all municipalities bordering the County of Grande Prairie:

- City of Grande Prairie
- Town of Sexsmith
- Town of Beaverlodge
- Town of Wembley
- MD of Greenview
- Saddle Hills County
- Birch Hills County

“Sharing of Services and Resources” means two or more municipalities deliver a service through a joint agreement when a business case for the service delivery clearly identifies qualitative (impact on service outcomes) and/or quantitative (enhancement of production and cost variables due to economies of scale) improvements.

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Policy Guidelines

1. The County will **respect autonomy** and will communicate this expectation to other municipalities we work with. Autonomy provides the ability of all municipalities to act freely, to identify, prioritize and achieve priorities that reflect the desires of their constituencies.
2. The County commits to deliberate and proactive **relationship and trust building** with our municipal neighbours and we will do so by:
 - 2.1. Early **engagement**, proactive **communications** and **information sharing** with our municipal neighbors.
 - 2.2. Striving for **regional awareness** through proactive and deliberate action to establish common facts to prevent spread of misinformation.
 - 2.3. Promoting a **unified voice** while supporting “rural and remote” interests of our region.
 - 2.4. Providing **service levels** (shared or otherwise) reflective of our communities’ values.
 - 2.5. **Transparency** and **accountability** for all shared services and expect the same from our neighbors.
 - 2.6. **Honoring** our Intermunicipal Agreements.
3. The County of Grande Prairie will utilize various tools to foster Inter-jurisdictional collaboration, including but not limited to:
 - 3.1. Annual council-to-council meetings with each Neighboring Municipality.
 - 3.2. Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework agreements.
 - 3.3. Intermunicipal Development Plans, if applicable.
 - 3.4. Intermunicipal Sharing of Services and Resources agreements.
 - 3.5. Formal and informal communications and meetings between Chief Elected Officials in the region.
 - 3.6. Formal and informal inter-municipal and inter-governmental (British Columbia) leaders’ meetings.
 - 3.7. Attendance of Alberta Municipalities conferences to gain a deeper understanding of all Alberta communities.
 - 3.8. Invite and host a Chief Elected Official from a Neighbouring Municipality to each spring and fall Rural Municipalities of Alberta conventions.
 - 3.9. Participation in the Northern Alberta Elected Leaders.

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- 3.10. Participation in the Northern Alberta Mayors and Reeves Caucus.
- 3.11. Informing County ratepayers of all Intermunicipal initiatives through various forms of media on an ongoing basis.

Attachments

N/A

References

Legal Authorities	Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000, S.3 & Part 17.2
Related Plans, Bylaws, Policies, Etc.	Policy B1 – Policy Development
Other	N/A

Revision History

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March 9, 2026	Reviewed and Presented for Information
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