

ROCKY VIEW COUNTY
AGGREGATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Committee Meeting Summary Notes

September 26, 2023

9:00 - noon

RVC Council Chamber

Attendance:

- Gerry Bietz, Tom Foss, Hazel George, Monty McNair, Dale Soetaert, John Weatherill. Members.
- Gerrit Scheffel. Administration
- Barbara McNeil. Chair

Agenda: The meeting was guided by the following agenda:

9:00 am	1. Welcome and reconnect. 2. Review the August 15 th summary notes 3. Review committee scope
9:15	4. Overview from administration on aggregate resources in the County 5. Review the previous ARP - brief presentation from administration
9:45 to 11:30	6. Discuss and identify gaps in the ARP. Identify the themes 7. Define the topics this committee will focus on. Set a schedule for discussion on the topics.
11:30	8. Determine any further information required. 9. Other agenda items as needed. (if time allows, begin discussion on public engagement) 10. Site tour details: Friday October 13: 1:30 pm. 11. Rescheduling of the November 15 th meeting 12. Next steps

2. August 15th Summary Notes: These were reviewed, and no changes were made.

3. Committee Mandate was reviewed.

Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree upon principles and approaches to guide the Aggregate Resource Plan (ARP) which reconcile the interests of residents, landowners, aggregate operators, environmental stakeholders, and the County.• Identify gaps and suggest areas of improvement from the previous ARP draft.• Propose desired public and stakeholder engagement methods (frequency, type, location, and timing)
Function
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the TOR, the previous Aggregate Resource plan and other related documents.• To debate listen and discuss in a collaborative manner with the goal of reaching consensus on agenda items.• To provide recommendations on agenda items.• To establish interest-based working groups for input into the Committee recommendations.• NOT a detailed technical review of the previous ARP draft.

4 & 5. Overview from Administration on County Aggregate Resources and the 2018 Aggregate Resource Plan. The slides are attached with these notes.

Observations and questions from members, and the responses:

- *What is the overall supply and demand:* Alberta Sand and Gravel estimates this as 12-15 T/person/year.
- *Please clarify the approval process:* Provincial approvals need to be in place. The County reviews the MSDP and then considers the development permit. Council will do this in a public hearing.
- *What are the direct and indirect economic benefits to the County?*
- *How is demand for aggregate and development of resources matched?*
- *Information on the volume of gravel in a proposed pit would be useful.*
- *Does RVC have the technical expertise to evaluate applications?* Concern was expressed that administration relies only on the technical studies provide by the applicant.
- *Phasing of reclamation – what is happening with the industry?*
- *Setbacks could be more flexible.*
- *All pits should comply with provincial standards, but ARP says county pits are exempt – this is a red flag. Why can some operators operate outside of standards?*
- *Education of the public is important – people don't understand bylaws and can get very upset. News gets spread very quickly.*

6. Gaps identified in the ARP.

John	<p>Overall, the ARP needs to be clearer. There are four themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Location</u>: Where in the County is development explicitly prohibited and where is development allowed? ARP is skewed to protect the resource. There was no exploration of cost and benefit of development. • <u>Balance</u>: There was a sense that the application process is not balanced between landowners and operators. • <u>Application Process</u>: It seems like a checklist and that administration looks to see if the report was done and not at how good the information is. Process felt superficial and misleading. (when a community opposed the Scott development they hired experts who found gaps in the quality of the proponent's reports). There was no funding for stakeholders to do their own studies. There was distrust from residents about admin. Needs to be consideration of documents not provided by the proponent. • <u>Enforcement</u>: the current process is complaint based. Need funding for enforcement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents want consistency and certainty. • Would like to see GIS mapping for the full County. • Recognise diversity around the County with different setbacks. • Policy 6.4 Denies property owners to develop anything non aggregate. The bias is in favor of aggregate.
Dale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are competing interests. Industry would be happy to have more performance standards. • Certainty of supply is important to industry. The map largely overestimates the supply of gravel in RVC. Wouldn't want to potentially sterilize land for aggregate development. • Public education is important. • Process: important not to require duplicate processes. Alberta Environment does have the expertise to assess technical reports. • Important to recognize this is a non-renewable resource. • Need caution in affecting property rights and values with setbacks. • Doesn't feel that the plan favours industry. <p>Dale provided maps of current sites and potential aggregate deposits.</p>

Gerry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ARP is comprehensive. • Some applications were approved by Council entirely on what the applicant provided- there was no other digging for more information. • Applications are ad hoc. Would like to see them in a more orderly and thorough fashion. • RVC needs independent experts to adjudicate opposing interests. • Important to look at cumulative effects of an application - this is not properly developed in the ARP. • There's work to be done on environmentally sensitive areas. Studies need to be more comprehensive. There are regional aspects to the environmental impacts of development. • The plan has no definition of what constitutes a risk.
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Tom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider cumulative effects of pit development on sensitive areas. • Landowners may not have the resources to come up with the technical information versus what companies have. • Consider traffic impacts – what are the cumulative effects for traffic? • The ARP does little to look at balancing the rights of property and the opportunity to develop. • Everyone operates on their own 'island'. Can industry share infrastructure? • Reclamation • County can look at areas that are vulnerable to development • ARP should remove uncertainty. • When there are opposing technical research reports, err on the conservative side.
Hazel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alberta Transportation and County pits should follow the same rules. Transparency is important, for example in reclamation. • Education by RVC and industry about the process is important – people truly don't understand. • Would like to see phasing clarified in the document. • Extending the life of old pits. • Setbacks- identify more clearly that Council can change setbacks.

Monty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The map and areas of potential aggregate needs to be revised. • The ARP doesn't have enough to protect aggregate • Prescribed performance standards should be used over setbacks. • Use robust technical information to protect standards. • Processing of aggregate is where setbacks are need – the aggregate resource is too valuable to eliminate by setbacks. • How to protect landowners rights – the ARP has no mention of landowners • Some land isn't viable for agriculture and is used mainly for pasture. Landowners should have more right to realize the potential of the land. Reclamation can improve land. • Grandfathering provisions. • Fixed set of requirements may not be practical. The process should allow for some flexibility. For example, a pit extension that is close to a project has been delayed in the application process, but not because of opposition. • County pits are a double standard
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Note: Monty and John provided their notes; these have been included as an attachment with the email of the summary notes.

What are the themes of the gaps identified? Members worked in pairs and suggested the following:

Gerry and Tom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance of rights • Efficiency versus impacts • Imbalance of power (resources, time, experts) • Trust and transparency and the lack of information • Err on the side of conservatism and protective assumptions – risk management.
Hazel and Dale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk • Supply and demand economics • Consistency • Education and transparency • Let's focus on what we can tackle and not go down rabbit holes and micromanage.
Monty and John	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location and setbacks - what are the 'go' and the 'no go' areas? • Balance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protecting environment & residents/protecting the resource. Supply and demand Cost/benefit • Process: Too lax in some areas and yet sometimes too onerous • Trust in technical reporting.

Site Tour. Friday October 13. Meet at RVC at 1:30. Bus transportation to the Beisker area and return to RVC by 4:30 - 5:00 pm

Next meetings: Three hours goes by very fast for a working group. Barbara asked if members' schedules could allow for longer or even full days when the committee meets. The next meeting times were set as:

Thursday October 19: 8:30 am to 4: 30pm

Thursday November 23rd. 7:30am - noon.