



RECREATION, PARKS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

TO: Council

DATE: January 14, 2020 **DIVISION:** All

FILE: N/A

SUBJECT: Terms of Reference – Recreation and Parks Master Plan

POLICY DIRECTION:

At the July 23, 2019, meeting, Council approved the creation of a new County-wide Recreation Governance Model with the intent of increasing efficiency, enhancing transparency and communication, and providing fiduciary responsibility for recreation in the County. The newly approved model aims to improve service delivery, strategic alignment, and collaboration amongst communities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

As part of the implementation plan of the newly approved Recreation Governance Model for the County, RVC will be seeking and retaining the services of a consulting firm, or firms working in partnership, to carry out a comprehensive Recreation and Parks Master Plan to provide vision, guidance, and an implementation plan for recreational development in the County for the next 20 years.

The purpose of this report is to present Council with a Terms of Reference to guide the development of the Recreation and Parks Master Plan project. The proposed Terms of Reference, included as Attachment "A", describes the scope of work, goals, objectives, and phases for this project.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

Administration recommends approval in accordance with Option #1.

BACKGROUND:

Increased expectations for recreation service provision as well as population changes over the last 40 years necessitated a thorough review of the state of recreation governance and needs in the County. In addition, in the next 20 years, transformational change will be required to ensure the County can manage the diverse and growing needs for recreation, parks, and community support.

Consequently, long-term strategic planning is required, needs for future services and facilities need to be prioritized, and funding strategies must be defined. In order to meet those needs and to plan for future growth, in July of 2019, Council approved the new County-wide Recreation Governance Model.

As part of the proposed Recreation Governance Model, a series of process steps outlined in the implementation plan include the development and achievement of the following phases:

- Phase I Establishment of the Recreation Governance Committee and associated terms of reference. Residents of the County were informed through various channels of the changes in the Recreation Governance Model.
- Phase II County-wide needs assessment. Currently underway, this study aims, through the engagement of our residents, community groups and recreation service providers, to better understand, serve, and prioritize all our residents' recreational needs, and to inform the Recreation and Parks Master Plan.

Administration Resources

Ines Cortada, Recreation, Parks & Community Support



Phase III Development of a comprehensive Recreation and Parks Master Plan. The plan will serve as a directive for Council and Administration by outlining the types of services, programs, and facilities to be provided, prioritized, and supported for the County as a whole. The Community will again have the opportunity to provide input on the draft master plan through open houses before the Plan is finalized.

The Recreation and Parks Master Plan is critical and advantageous as the County continues to grow and develop. This strategic plan should be as unique as the County, a “made in Rocky View solution” that should examine county-wide recreational needs and assist with prioritizing programs, funding frameworks, and capital development in the County.

The Recreation and Parks Master Plan would define the path forward to recreation, parks, and community facilities in the County. It would involve extensive research and review of related studies and plans; policy writing; short, middle, and long-term planning; and grant allocation strategies that should guide the decision-making process for recreation planning and funding allocations in the County. Should the proposed Terms of Reference be adopted, the project would be initiated in the first quarter of 2020.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

No budget implications, as the Recreation and Parks Master Plan is part of the 2020 County Operating Budget.

OPTIONS:

- Option #1 THAT the Recreation and Parks Master Plan Terms of Reference be approved as per Attachment ‘A’.
- Option #2 THAT Council provide alternative direction.

Respectfully submitted,

Concurrence,

“Theresa Cochran”

“Al Hoggan”

Executive Director
Community Development Services

Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment ‘A’ – Recreation and Parks Master Plan Terms of Reference



Recreation and Parks Master Plan

Terms of Reference

TOR #X-XXX

Introduction

- 1 Comprised of farms, residential acreages, rural hamlets, as well as industrial and urban developments, Rocky View County is a unique municipality in the province of Alberta. The County also envelops a number of urban centres such as the cities of Airdrie and Chestermere, and the towns of Cochrane, Irricana, and Crossfield. It has a land area of 986,683.22 acres, and a total household population of approximately 40,705 (2018 County Census).
- 2 Currently, the County does not provide direct recreational programs or facilities, and depends on non-profit community groups and municipal partners to provide recreational opportunities to residents. RVC supports recreational services by providing funding opportunities to these community groups and recreational facilities, as well as adjacent municipalities by shared agreements.
- 3 As part of the implementation plan of the newly approved Recreation Governance Model for the County, RVC has taken the following steps:
 - (1) Established the Recreation Governance Committee as the approving authority to all recreation related matters in the County, including grant allocations and long-term planning, and developed the associated terms of reference.
 - (2) Conducted, in 2019, a Recreation Needs Assessment study to better understand, serve, and prioritize the residents' recreational needs, and to inform the Recreation Master Plan.
 - (3) Planned for the development of a comprehensive Recreational Master Plan to provide guidance and implementation plans for the recreational development in the County for the next 20 years.
- 4 Preparation of a County-wide Recreation Master Plan is critical and advantageous as the County continues to grow and develop. This strategic plan should examine County-wide recreational needs and assist with prioritizing programs, funding frameworks, and capital development in the County.
- 5 The Plan should serve as a directive for Council and the Recreation, Parks and Community Support office by outlining the types of services, programs, and facilities to be provided or supported for the community. It is essential that this plan:
 - (1) Defines the path forward for recreation, parks and community facilities in RVC;
 - (2) Considers RVC's role in the delivery of recreational services;
 - (3) Identifies and prioritizes recreational needs of Rocky View residents based on the 2019 Recreation Needs Assessment study;
 - (4) Defines a grant allocation framework, and informs grant policy development;
 - (5) Determines an appropriate level of infrastructure relative to population;



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- (6) Informs annual capital and operational budgets;
 - (7) Identifies interface opportunities with adjacent municipalities; and
 - (8) Prioritizes capital projects, facility lifecycle analysis, and action plans.
- 6 To mitigate the current and future recreation challenges, RVC is moving forward by taking a strategic and active role in community recreation development. It is essential that a comprehensive Recreation Master Plan and a funding model be developed together as the success of implementing the Master Plan is tied to potential funding processes and opportunities.

Scope of work

- 7 The Master Plan should provide a definition of a path forward for the delivery of recreation and cultural opportunities for our residents, prioritization of community needs, allocation of funds, partnership opportunities, and a planning system for the region.
- 8 The Recreation Master Plan should include:
- (1) Consideration of the County's role in the delivery of recreational services;
 - (2) Prioritization of County-wide recreational needs;
 - (3) Regional recreation opportunities;
 - (4) Current state analysis - inventory of existing assets and services;
 - (5) Short, middle and long-term planning;
 - (6) Desired state; and
 - (7) Funding vehicles and opportunities.
- 9 Deliverables and supporting documents to the Recreation Master Plan are as follows:
- (1) Strategic framework: vision, mission, prioritization of County-wide recreational needs, facility provision strategy, and partnership frameworks.
 - (2) Grant allocation strategies: current state, funding allocation criteria and framework, and partnership opportunities and agreements.
 - (3) Implementation plans: short, medium, and long-term implementation plans.
 - (4) Regional recreation plan: opportunities for shared-service delivery; a framework and criteria for funds allocation with neighboring municipalities should be identified.
 - (5) Current capital assets plan and capital replacement plan: prioritizes capital projects, facility lifecycle analysis, and action plans.
 - (6) Funding strategies: identification of different funding alternatives, and possible sources of revenue.



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- (7) Review cycle: A systematic approach for evaluating, reviewing, and revising recreational priorities in the County including the funding framework.
- (8) Communication and Engagement plans.

Background

- 10 As the landscape of recreation in the County evolves, as our population grows and demographics change, and as our residents and stakeholders request a wider range of recreational opportunities in their communities, a new model for recreation in the County is needed.
- 11 Rocky View County Council approved significant changes to the County's recreation model at the July 23, 2019, Council meeting to better support, plan, and manage the diverse and growing needs for recreation, parks, and community support.
- 12 A clear path forward on the County's role for the delivery of recreation and cultural services for our residents as well as long-term strategic planning is required, and consideration for future development of facilities, parks, and pathways needs to be prioritized as many requested amenities are beyond what can be sustained by the current or anticipated tax base.
- 13 A comprehensive Recreation Master Plan and a funding process will provide conditions for sustainable and responsible growth in alignment with:
 - (1) County Plan principles, by growing in a fiscally sustainable and responsible manner, while providing a variety of well-designed parks, pathways, and recreation opportunities for our residents, and enhancing their quality of life by providing access to a variety of recreational, social, and cultural opportunities.
 - (2) Council's Strategic Plan, which outlines the importance of setting priorities in order to achieve a moderate level of growth while maintaining fiscal sustainability, improving service delivery, and enhancing transparency. This will be achieved by having a comprehensive Recreation Master Plan that guides the development of recreation, parks and community facilities and provides a methodology for the allocation of funding.
 - (3) The Municipal Government Act and Calgary Metropolitan Region Board, which mandate that neighboring municipalities must work together and plan for growth. As part of the Recreation Master Plan, regional planning will be evaluated, regional facilities will be identified, and shared-agreements with neighboring municipalities will be reviewed, with a regional focus that will identify, where possible, opportunities to share municipal services as it relates to recreation.

Recreation and Parks Master Plan Objectives

- 14 Prioritize current and future recreation and cultural demands of current and future facilities for recreational services and programs in the County as a whole.
- 15 Prioritize opportunities for sustainable recreational development in the County for the next five, ten, and twenty years to address the service gaps identified.

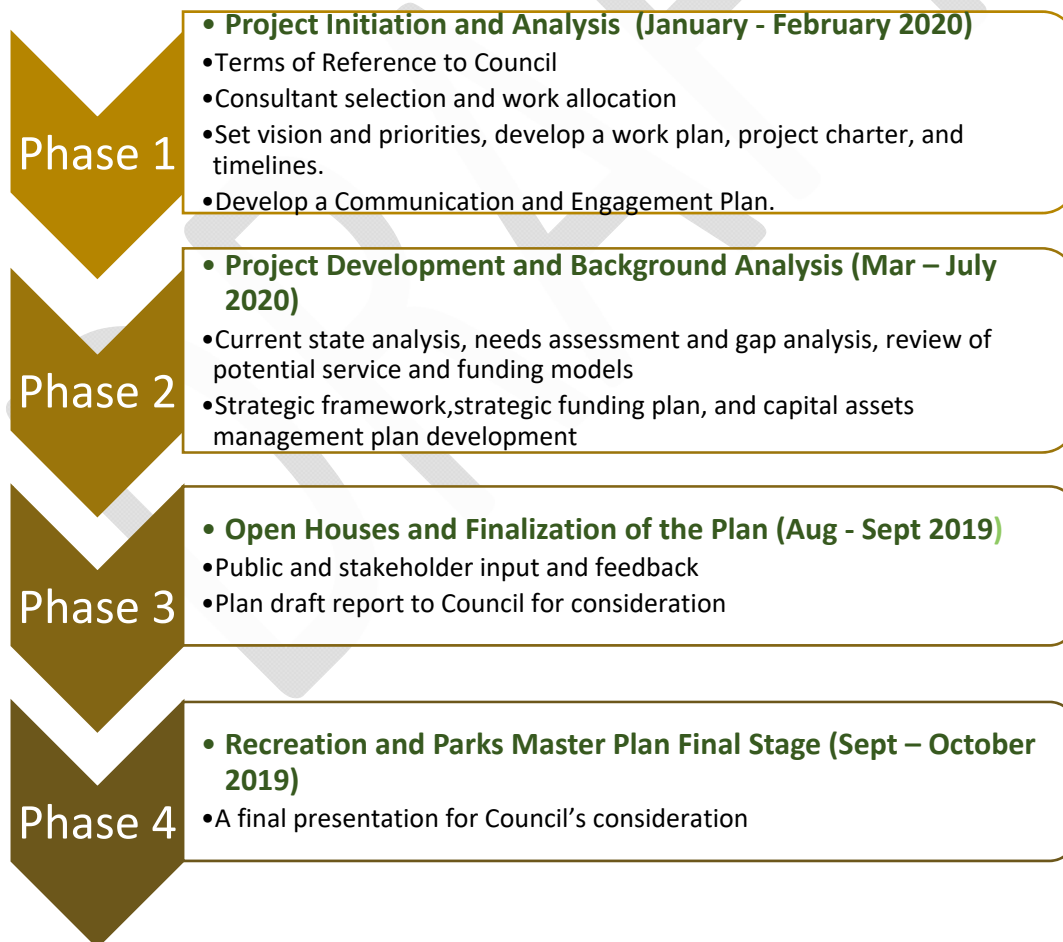


Recreation and Parks Master Plan

- 16 Develop an assets management program: a lifecycle assessment of County-owned facilities - this could include repurposing or recommending divestment of facilities or services if appropriate, and identification and implementation plan for future facilities.
- 17 Develop funding models to support recreation, which could include tax, levies, debt financing, among others.
- 18 Define recreation service level framework (regional and divisional) with grant allocation criteria, partnerships proposal, and multi-year agreements, with a methodology to evaluate projects and allocate funds according to the prioritization plan. Identify opportunities for collaboration with other municipalities where appropriate.
- 19 A strategy to communicate and engage our residents with the Recreation and Parks Master Plan during and throughout the implementation process.

Work Program

- 20 The Work Program is anticipated to occur in four phases as follows:





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Phase 1 – Project Initiation and Analysis (Jan – Feb 2020)

- 21** The initial phase of the project includes the development of the RFP and consultant selection as well as the project initiation and background analysis, including:
- (1)** Confirmation of goals and objectives of the project;
 - (2)** Creation of the Terms of Reference;
 - (3)** RFP development;
 - (4)** Work plan development, milestones establishment, and timelines development to guide overall project management; and
 - (5)** Communication and engagement strategy development.
- 22** Phase 1 deliverables:
- (1)** Council's endorsement of the Terms of Reference;
 - (2)** Publication of the RFP;
 - (3)** Consultant selection;
 - (4)** Work plan development; and
 - (5)** Community communication and engagement strategy.

Phase 2 – Project Development and Background Analysis (Mar – July 2020)

- 23** This phase includes extensive research, analysis, and plan preparation. Key aspects include:
- (1)** Research, best practices analysis, and workshops to define the County's role in the delivery of recreation services, and to define the mission and vision for recreation in alignment with the County Plan;
 - (2)** Review and analysis of the County's plans, studies, and supporting documents.
 - (3)** Identify and prioritize recreational needs of County residents based on the 2019 Recreation Needs Assessment study:
 - (a)** Current state of recreation analysis;
 - (b)** Needs assessment analysis and gap analysis; and
 - (c)** Informing of annual capital and operational budgets.
 - (4)** Strategic framework, Capital Asset Management Plan development:
 - (a)** Prioritizes capital projects, facility lifecycle analysis, and action plans;
 - (b)** Determines an appropriate level of infrastructure relative to population; and



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- (c) Identifies interface opportunities with adjacent municipalities.
- (5) Develop a grant allocation model that will consider:
 - (a) The prioritization of the recreational needs in the County;
 - (b) A funding allocation methodology;
 - (c) Multi-year agreements with service providers;
 - (d) Shared-agreements with neighboring municipalities; and
 - (e) Definition of regional and divisional facilities.
- (6) Discussions with key stakeholders shall occur throughout the process.
- 24 Phase 2 Deliverables:
 - (1) County's role in recreation considered;
 - (2) Draft of mission and vision statement;
 - (3) Draft prioritization of County-wide recreational needs and funding models;
 - (4) Draft Strategic framework, Capital Asset Management Plan; and
 - (5) Draft methodology for the allocation of recreational funding.

Phase 3 – Open Houses and Finalization of the Plan (Aug - Sept 2019)

- 25 This phase marks the official public launch of the project. It shall begin with public open houses to gather stakeholder and community member input and feedback on the Draft Plan, and finishes with the completion of the Final Draft plan. Stakeholder engagement will be conducted as per the engagement plan determined at the onset of the project.
- 26 Phase 3 – Deliverables:
 - (1) Open houses to be conducted to share the Master Plan draft;
 - (2) A report summarizing public and stakeholder input and feedback; and
 - (3) A final draft of the Master Plan.

Phase 4 – Recreation and Parks Master Plan Final Stage (Sept – October 2019)

- 27 This is the final phase of the project, where all the research, analysis and engagement pieces come together to present a final Recreation Master Plan.
- 28 Phase 4 – Deliverables:
 - (1) Final version of the Recreation Master Plan with supporting strategic planning documents;
 - (2) Presentation to Council of the final version of the Recreation Master Plan;
 - (3) Release of the final Recreation Master Plan with Council's amendments to the public; and



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- (4) Circulate the plan to key stakeholders.

Conclusions

- 29 As the County grows, so too does an increased demand in community recreational programs, amenities, and services it provides. To ensure that the County is keeping up with the current needs of its residents while also considering future plans, it is critical to have a plan established.
- 30 A comprehensive Recreation Master Plan will provide conditions for sustainable and responsible growth, establishing the County-wide priorities and setting the stage for how recreation services will be provided moving forward.
- 31 The Recreation Master Plan aims to inform long-term strategies for the County while also prioritizing recreational amenity and programming needs for current residents.
- 32 A funding plan and associated processes will ensure that the Recreation Master Plan can be implemented and will lay out the County’s fiscal responsibilities for recreational service provision. Furthermore, a funding plan allows residents to understand how and why their money is spent, and recognizes that the needs of the County as a whole are to be considered in the planning and development of future recreation facilities and amenities.
- 33 The Recreation Master Plan will establish a framework to create livable communities where people can stay, play, and work as a reference for current and future developments.
- 34 The Recreation Master Plan shall align with Council’s strategic vision and mission, and will serve as a tool for Council to make strategic decisions to support the unique and diverse recreation needs across RVC.



Approval Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 14, 2020
Replaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • n/a
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Committee Classification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council
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Next Review Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • n/a