



Recommendation to County Council

REPORT NAME

Municipal Development Plan (MDP) – 1st Reading

RECOMMENDATION

That, in accordance with the Council Motion #222-17 on May 23, 2017 approving the MDP approval process recommended by the MDP Steering Committee, Leduc County Council give first reading to By-law # _____, a bylaw that proposes to adopt a new Municipal Development Plan.

Options (if applicable):

1. Give first reading to Bylaw # _____ to adopt the new MDP and continue to follow the MDP approval process approved by Council (Motion #222-17); or
2. Postpone first reading and/or establish an alternate approval process and schedule to adopt the MDP.

IMPLICATIONS

Reason: To give first reading to the Bylaw to adopt the new Municipal Development Plan.

Authority (MGA/Bylaw/Policy):

- 632(1) of the MGA requires that a municipality with a population of 3,500 or more must, by bylaw, adopt a MDP.
- Section 63(1) and 2(b) of the Municipal Government Act empowers Council to undertake a comprehensive review and update of the Leduc County Municipal Development Plan Bylaw #35-99.
- Leduc County Strategic Plan 2015 – 2019 identifies growth and land use as a priority area. A key result of the strategy is “an Updated Municipal Development Plan to set clear guidelines and processes for: urban development standards; agricultural land and environmentally significant areas study (ESA) portions; economic growth and diversification of industrial/commercial base; funding sources for development; municipal support for planned growth projects; preservation of open spaces.”
- Leduc County Council Motion 222-17 that states “that Leduc County Council approves Option 1 with respect to the timeline for the Municipal Development Plan schedule, with adoption by mid-September.”

Funding Required: \$235,000

Funding Source: 2015/2016 Budget

Submitted by: Laurie Johnson, Senior Planner, Long Range Planning

Reviewed by: Jordan Evans, Manager, Long Range Planning

Date: July 4, 2017



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BACKGROUND

In 2015, B&A Planning Group was retained by the County to update the County's MDP. The MDP is the County's long-term blue print that guides future land use and policy decisions for the County. The MGA requires municipalities with a population of 3,500 or more to adopt a MDP. The County's current MDP was adopted in 1999 and much has changed since that time. The County's population and employment has grown; new legislation, regulations, and Acts have come into force; and new planning initiatives and practices have been introduced. To ensure a bright and sustainable future for today's generation and for future generations, the County, in accordance with the Leduc County Strategic Plan 2015 – 2019, undertook a comprehensive review of the MDP.

Supporting Research

The following research was undertaken to inform the MDP:

1. Agriculture Strategy
The Agriculture Strategy identifies four principles: champion agriculture; protect long term priority agriculture areas; limit fragmentation; and support education programs to promote understanding. The draft MDP supports these principles.
2. Economic Development and Growth Management Strategy 2016
The Economic Development and Growth Management Strategy provides recommendations to enhance the County's economic growth and prosperity. Many of these recommendations have been captured in the MDP.
3. Environmentally Significant Area Study 2015
The Environmentally Significant Area Study identifies important ecological areas within the County and provides recommendations for their management. The MDP illustrates these ecological areas and reflects the recommendations of this Study.
4. Aerotropolis Viability Study 2016
The Aerotropolis Viability Study (AVS) leverages and enhances the Aerotropolis concept locally. The Study plans for seamless connections between air, ground, and rail to stimulate economic diversification. The MDP has incorporated this concept.

Public Engagement

As part of the MDP update, a Public Engagement Strategy and Communication Plan was established. In addition to traditional engagement tools such as open houses, small group meetings, posters, newspaper advertisements and the County's website, other engagement tools including discussion papers, workshops, surveys (Survey Monkey and Metroquest), a whiteboard video, and social media (Facebook and Twitter) were used to engage the public. The Public Engagement Strategy and Communication Plan included four phases with Council, resident and stakeholder engagement in each phase. The feedback received during the public engagement process combined with the recommendations and directions of the research shaped the directions and goals of the MDP.

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Plan Overview

The following goals form the core of the County's strategic direction related to planning and development and are the foundation of the MDP:

- Protect agricultural land and support diversity in agriculture;
- Promote economic development;
- Develop compact, mixed use and walkable communities;
- Recognize natural resources as a valuable economic asset;
- Protect and enhance the natural environment;
- Develop opportunities for recreation;
- Promote an efficient and cost-effective system of transportation and utility service infrastructure;
- Collaborate with neighbours and regional partners; and
- Implement the policies of the MDP consistently and fairly.

There are two distinct policy areas within the MDP: Urban Central and Rural County. This structure enables the MDP to reflect the County's role in guiding land use decisions in both urban and rural development. The policies of the Urban Central are support compact, urban, and mixed used development. The policies of the Rural County area are intended to preserve agricultural land, concentrate growth in hamlets and maintain the rural character. The MDP, while organized into sections, is intended to be read and used in a comprehensive manner.

Capital Region Board (CRB)

The MDP is subject to evaluation by the CRB. The MDP must be referred to the Board after 1st reading and before 3rd reading of the bylaw.

The MDP was drafted on the premise that it would be evaluated for conformance with the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan (EMRGP) as the EMRGP was expected to be approved by the Minister in early 2017. The CRB approved the EMRGP in 2016; however, it has yet to be approved by the Minister. Thus, it is anticipated that the MDP will be evaluated for consistency with the Capital Region Growth Plan (CRGP), but also with an eye towards the EMRGP.

The guiding principles of the CRGP are:

- I. Protect the environment and resources.
- II. Minimize regional footprint.
- III. Strengthen communities.
- IV. Increase transportation choice.
- V. Ensure efficient provision of services.
- VI. Support regional economic development.

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The guiding principles of the EMRGP are as follows:

1. Collaborate and coordinate as a Region to manage growth responsibly.
2. Promote global economic competitiveness and regional prosperity.
3. Recognize and celebrate the diversity of communities and promote an excellent quality of life across the Region.
4. Achieve compact growth that optimizes infrastructure investment.
5. Ensure effective regional mobility.
6. Ensure wise management of prime agriculture resources.
7. Protect natural living systems and environmental assets.

The MDP complies with the principles of both the EMRGP and the CRGP. However, the MDP more closely aligns with the language and terminology of the EMRGP. For further details regarding conformance of the MDP with the CRGP, please refer to the attached report.

Approval Process

On May 23, 2017, Council approved the following process:

- First Reading of the MDP
- Submission of REF to the Capital Region Board
- Open Houses (July 11, 12, and 13)
- Public Hearing
- 2nd and 3rd Reading

The above approval process is not the process typically followed; however, Council opted to follow this process in order to have the MDP, which has been in development for some time, in place for the new council expected in October. It was felt by Council that the MDP, as drafted, is reflective of the extensive research and consultation undertaken as part of the MDP update. Further, that if the feedback received at the open houses or the public hearing warranted substantial revisions to the MDP, the MDP could be revised and resubmitted to the CRB.

The process above does not follow the MDP Engagement Strategy and Communication Plan to the letter. However, it is in keeping with the general principle of the plan wherein feedback from stakeholders on the MDP will be sought and considered before the Plan is finalized.

If Council gives first reading to the Bylaw proposing to adopt the MDP, administration recommends council schedule a date to hold the public hearing.

ATTACHMENTS

- Bylaw # _____ proposing to adopt the MDP
- Schedule A, Leduc County Municipal Development Plan
- Evaluation Report – Capital Region Growth Plan

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