

Subject: Rural Area Structure Plans (ASPs)**APPROVALS:**

Brad Evanson, Acting Director
Brian Moore, Executive Director
Marcel Ulliac, Chief Administrative Officer

Administrative Recommendation:

THAT the status updates on the Area Structure Plans for Willow Lake, Draper, Fort Chipewyan, Fort McKay and Janvier be received as information.

Summary:

Planning and Development will complete at least four rural Areas Structure Plans (ASPs) before the end of 2015. These are the ASPs for Willow Lake Area, the Draper community and the hamlets of Fort Chipewyan and Janvier. The ASP for the hamlet of Fort McKay is expected to be finalized in early 2016.

Background:

An ASP provides a framework for future development and subdivision of land. It is a statutory document that is developed in accordance with section 633 of the Municipal Government Act. ASPs are the result of collaborative efforts with residents, local community organizations, private and public agencies.

Planning and Development embarked on the preparation of seven ASPs for the rural communities in 2010, which were subsequently put on hold until the completion of the MDP in 2011. The Anzac ASP Bylaw No. 12/018 and the Conklin ASP Bylaw No. 13/024 are completed. The other ASPs are at various stages of completion. Willow Lake Area and Draper ASPs are being finalized while the ASPs for Fort Chipewyan and Fort McKay are ongoing. The ASP process for Janvier is projected to begin early 2015.

Since the start of the ASP processes, there has been a number of community engagements in all communities with the exception of Janvier. During these engagements, community visions for long term development were either confirmed or developed, development issues and priorities were identified and guiding principles were developed. Policy recommendations were developed from these guiding principles and shared with the communities.

Although planning issues vary across communities, there were some similarities identified. Similar issues include but are not limited to: the need to protect the natural environment; the need to

provide improved services; the need to allow for limited economic growth and the need to maintain the rural character and integrity.

The following is a brief description of the planning issues identified in the communities engaged:

Willow Lake- which includes the Hamlet of Gregoire Lake Estates (a residential area of approximately 270 people) is an important recreational amenity. Outside the Hamlet, the existing 1991 ASP restricts development on most of the land and limits development on land classified as Forest Conservation Area. Development trends have changed somewhat with the subdivision of private lands near Surmount Creek for industrial purposes and the Government of Alberta's proposal to expand the Provincial Park. The ASP addressed these issues by allowing for approved uses along with recreational and tourism uses as mandated in the Lower Athabasca Regional Plan (LARP).

Draper- a residential community of almost 200 people is located in the Clearwater River Valley. The natural environment influences the development pattern of large residential acreages. Steep slopes and low lying flood prone areas present major challenges to land development in the community. There is a desire for the community to remain predominantly residential with a minimum lot size of one hectare and the ability to have home based businesses. There is also the desire for additional recreational opportunities. The Draper ASP provides opportunities for the community to maintain a minimum lot size of one hectare and allow for home based businesses.

Fort Chipewyan- is the most northerly hamlet in the municipality with a population over 1,000 people. The main planning issue is the shortage of housing for both ownership and rental use. Challenges such as the limited developable area, and high land and development costs due to isolation and the lack of an all-weather year round road. These challenges make it difficult for additional residential development to occur in the short term. There are a number of vacant and underutilized lots that with better utilization could reduce the need, but would still be inadequate in the long term, even with maximum utilization. The Fort Chipewyan ASP will explore ways to better address the housing shortage.

Fort McKay- is a predominantly Metis community with over 50 people living on land leased from the Province. The Fort McKay Metis leadership is interested in improving the existing housing stock and providing adequate housing for its residents. As a result there is a proposal for the planned expansion of the physical area, adding new residential areas and commercial development to the community in the long term. Administration will continue to collaborate with the leadership and local community to ensure there is alignment of the plan with the vision of the community.

Recognizing the importance of an ASP in guiding development decisions, the comprehensive planning branch is expecting to have all outstanding rural ASPs adopted by Council before December 31, 2015. A more compressed approach will be used for the Janvier ASP process, which will begin by March 2015.

Budget/Financial Implications:

There is a limited financial implication as funds for the completions of the ASPs will be taken from the approved operational budget.

Rationale for Recommendation:

It is important that the RDC is aware of the development priorities and issues identified in the rural communities through the ASP process, and is involved in the process.