

# REGIONAL GOVERNANCE STUDY



## Regional Governance Study – For Immediate Release (July 19, 2021)

### Recommendations from Regional Governance Study between the Village of Caroline, Clearwater County, and Town of Rocky Mountain House

The Village of Caroline, Clearwater County, and the Town of Rocky Mountain House have been working with an external consultant on a Regional Governance Study to explore the most effective and efficient governance structure to support the region's growth and long-term prosperity for all citizens. The municipalities are committed to identifying the path forward that best serves the region and citizen input was an important part of the Study process.

The external consultant has completed an independent analysis of existing services, agreements, and financial and operational information. These results together with the input from public engagement earlier this year have been used to provide a recommendation to the Project Steering Committee.

"The Regional Governance Study has effectively and efficiently identified multiple options for service and financial efficiencies within our area. The Study was a laborious effort conducted by the consultants to pinpoint the most problematic present and future issues. Thank you to all citizens who gave their valuable input. Thank you to all three municipalities' administrations for their tireless efforts to provide the necessary data. All three Councils look forward to sharing the final report with our citizens", said Village of Caroline Mayor Rimmer.

Findings from the consultant's study and engagement process identified that the County and Town are viable as independent municipalities; the Village has a balanced and viable operating budget but an infrastructure deficit; the Village and County have a strong relationship and can amalgamate without substantial negative fiscal impact.

The key recommendation of the Regional Governance Study is for the County and Village to pursue amalgamation and, with this newly-formed municipality, continue in their regional collaboration with the Town. "This Regional Governance Study is the culmination of data mining and analysis to assist our community in examining options to consider, which our community has wondered about for some time. As part of the process the Town of Rocky Mountain House took the lead and secured a grant for a third-party review. After months of data gathering and analysis, we are pleased to have an opportunity to share the findings and recommendations. Clearwater County Council would like to acknowledge the efforts of staff who took countless hours to provide the information for the process and thank the many residents who took their valuable time and effort to provide your perspectives and suggestions. We look forward to sharing the final report and taking next crucial steps in the process", said Reeve Laird, Clearwater County.

From July 28 to August 25, residents and stakeholders from the three municipalities will have an opportunity to learn about the recommendations and share their comments and concerns. Input from residents will be provided to the Steering Committee and each Council to inform their next steps.

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The Councils of the Village, County, and Town will determine if they wish to act on the recommendation of the consultants. Should the Village and County decide to pursue amalgamation, next steps will involve undertaking the provincially legislated amalgamation process which would include detailed reviews and negotiations around services, taxation, operations, bylaw alignment, and timelines.

“Exploring a different type of Regional Governance has been a topic of public discussion for many years. It was important to this Council to investigate different governance structures, to ensure that we have the most effective model for future growth. The Town of Rocky Mountain House administration was successful in securing a two hundred-thousand-dollar grant to proceed with hiring a professional firm to conduct this study. We are very thankful for the public’s eager participation as all options were explored and we look forward to sharing the final report with all”, said Town of Rocky Mountain House Mayor Tammy Burke.

More information about the Study, including a copy of the Recommendations Report, and upcoming engagement opportunities is available on the project website: <https://ccrregionalgovernancestudy.ca/>

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## Media Inquiries

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