

## Town of High River

309B Macleod Trail S.W.  
High River, Alberta  
Canada T1V 1Z5  
Ph: (403) 652-2110  
Fax: (403) 652-2396  
Website: www.highriver.ca



February 2, 2010

The Municipal District of Foothills No. 31  
P O Box 5605  
High River, Alberta  
T1V 1M7

**Attn: Reeve Roy McLean and Members of Council**

### Re: Letter of Intent - Proposed Northwest Annexation

You may recall that the Town of High River provided to the MD of Foothills a formal *Letter of Intent* on July 5, 2008 relative to the proposed annexation of lands adjacent to the northwest part of High River. Since that time a number of studies have been undertaken that have delayed the annexation application. However, the Town is now in a position to proceed with the application and we are re-issuing the *Letter of Intent* as some of the ownership details of the land comprising the application have changed.

This Letter of Intent supersedes that of July 5, 2008 and is written in accordance with Section 116 of the *Municipal Government Act*.

The area of land that comprises the annexation application remains unchanged. Attachment 1 outlines the area that is proposed to be annexed and Attachment 2 provides updated information on land ownership. You will note that all of the constituent land owners are supportive of the annexation application and as such the application is "uncontested".

Town Council reconfirmed its support of the annexation application and passed the following resolution on September 28, 2009:

*"Council reconfirms the authorization to proceed with the Spitzee Group annexation application given in its April 14, 2008 resolution, to direct the Administration undertake all necessary notifications, and further to direct Administration to arrange for a joint Council to Council meeting with the MD of Foothills."*

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### **"THE MEETING PLACE"**

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The reasons for pursuing the annexation application are as follows:

1. The Town Plan (MDP) adopted by Council in August 2009 establishes a policy framework for the future of the town. Work has commenced on a Growth Management Strategy that will determine where and when future growth will take place and the results will be incorporated into the Town Plan. The provincial government through the Land Stewardship Act advocates taking a long term view of growth (50 years) and with this in mind the Town is studying the implications of growth over such a time frame.
2. The Town's potential growth in a 50+ year period could result in a town in excess of 50,000 people, a quadrupling of the present population. To accommodate such an increase, together with the services, commercial and industrial development and infrastructure needed, would require a considerable expansion of the present town boundary. Assuming available land within the present town boundary is developed, there would be a need for approximately 1012 ha (2500 acres) of additional land.
3. Council is of the opinion that a comprehensive rather than a piecemeal approach should be taken to annexing land into the town and that a program to annex all the lands likely to be required to accommodate long term growth be incorporated into the town. Doing this will allow for the efficient planning of future communities and infrastructure. Accordingly, Council would like to proceed with a series of annexations that would add all the land needed in the long term.
4. The landowners in the proposed northwest annexation area have jointly approached Council with a request to annex their lands. Council supports the proposal and sees it as the first of 3 major annexation applications.

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5. All of the land comprising the northwest annexation application is indicated in the *Inter-Municipal Development Plan* (adopted by both Councils, November 2000) as an area for “urban growth” and suitable for annexation in principle. The proposed annexation is consistent with the policies for growth as outlined in Section 3.4 (“Future Growth and Annexation”) that provide for orderly, economical and beneficial urban development.
6. It is not anticipated that the proposed annexation will encumber the ability of either the Town of High River or the MD of Foothills to achieve rational growth in a cost effective manner.
7. The Town of High River engaged consultants to undertake an environmental survey of all land within two miles of the town boundary to determine if there are any significant constraints to development. Within the proposed northwest annexation area the only land that is constrained is in the south near the Highwood River. Some of this land could be affected by flood water and has been approved by the MD for golf course use. This constraint is not anticipated to affect the logical and orderly development of the rest of the land.

It should be noted that the landowners in the proposed annexation area are aware in principle of the tax implications of annexation. Further meetings between the Town, the MD and landowners will identify the full extent of the tax implications.

The Town is proposing to hold an Open House in the near future for interested parties to determine if there are any objections to the annexation.

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Thank you for your consideration of this annexation request. We look forward to discussing this matter further with the MD of Foothills and the Intermunicipal Committee.

Sincerely



Les Rempel, Mayor  
Town of High River

cc.

Honourable George Groeneveld, MLA Highwood Constituency  
Mr. Jim Ellis, Deputy Minister, Alberta Environment  
Mr. Rick Duncan, The Municipal Government Board  
Mr. John Thomas, Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation  
Ms. Penny Rae, the Calgary Health Region  
Foothills School Division #38  
Christ the Redeemer Catholic School Division  
Mr. John Lockhart, Highwood Business Development Corporation  
High River Agricultural Society  
Enmax  
ATCO  
TELUS  
Shaw