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June 3, 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: Notice of Intent to Annex

On February 2, 2010 I wrote to you on behalf of Town Council informing you of the Town's desire to make an application to the Municipal Government Board to annex lands to the north west of the town.

I am attaching a copy of the February 2nd letter for your reference. The letter refers to the Town's desire to plan for a time horizon in excess of 50 years and to approach future land needs for that time period on a comprehensive basis. Preliminary studies have suggested that approximately 2500 acres of additional land would be required. We see the logical areas for that growth to be to the north and south of the present town boundary.

Our anticipation was that we would proceed with three sequential annexation applications, one for the north west lands, one for the north east lands and one for the south lands. As the north west application was further advanced, that was to proceed first.

Subsequent to my February 2nd letter, Council has been requested by some landowners in the north east area to include them in the first annexation application. Based on further knowledge that all of the landowners in the north east area were in agreement with annexation of their lands going forward at this time, Council has agreed to expand the scope of the annexation application to include the north east lands. This letter therefore constitutes a formal *Notice of Intent* to annex both the north west and north east lands and is being written in accordance with Section 116 of the *Municipal Government Act*.

The land that is now the subject of the annexation application is indicated on the attached map. The total area of land in the proposed annexation area is 1730 acres (approximately 11 quarter sections) and wraps around the northern boundary of the town from near

Highway 2 in the east to the Highwood River in the south. The area is generally in agricultural use and has few constraints, with the exception of land that lies within the *floodway* and *flood fringe* of the Highwood River.

It should be noted that the following lands have not been included in the current proposal: the *Eldridge Lands*, the *Ag Society Lands* and the country residential parcels adjacent to the west side of Highway 2. The landowners have not expressed a desire to be annexed at this time. Should this change in the future, consideration to annex could be given at that time.

All of the land proposed to be annexed is within the area indicated for “urban growth” in the MD of Foothills/Town of High River Inter-Municipal Development Plan. Further, it is not anticipated that the proposed annexation will encumber the ability of either the Town or the MD to achieve rational growth in a cost effective manner.

From preliminary analysis of the land in the proposed annexation area that could be developed for residential purposes (approximately 700 acres) it is possible that approximately 12,000 people could be accommodated (assuming a density of 8 units per acre). This would provide for approximately 28 years of growth. However, this would be a maximum number as it is likely that some of the land would have to be developed at a lower density to allow for transitioning from current density levels to higher levels and also to provide for adequate buffering along the western edge, adjacent to the river and near the rodeo grounds. We do not know at this point what the reduced capacity would be but it will reduce the 28 year land supply significantly.

Also attached to this letter is a list of all current landowners within the proposed annexation area. Discussions with the landowners will take place to ensure that there is full knowledge of the tax implications of the proposed annexation.

The Town and MD held a joint Open House recently and the results will be discussed at the next meeting of the Inter-Municipal Committee (IMC) on June 7th. I am confident that the IMC, acting as an Annexation Committee, will provide an appropriate forum to discuss and resolve any issues associated with property assessments and tax compensation as well as any other matters that may arise.

Thank you for your consideration of this amended annexation request. We look forward to discussing this matter in more detail with the Inter-Municipal Committee and with your Council.

Sincerely,



Les Rempel, Mayor
Town of High River

cc.

Honourable George Groenfeld, MLA, Highwood Constituency
Mr. Jim Ellis, Deputy Minister, Alberta Environment
Mr. Rick Duncan, Municipal Government Board
Mr. John Thomas, Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation
Ms. Penny Rae, 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
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Shaw

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.”

.../2

February 2, 2010

MD of Foothills #31
High River, Alberta

Page Two:

Re: Letter of Intent – Proposed Northwest Annexation (cont'd)

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.

.../3

February 2, 2010

MD of Foothills #31
High River, Alberta

Page Three:

Re: Letter of Intent – Proposed Northwest Annexation (cont'd)

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.

February 2, 2010

MD of Foothills #31
High River, Alberta

Page Four:

Re: Letter of Intent – Proposed Northwest Annexation (cont'd)

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
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