

## **Update on the Progress of the Annexation Proposed by the Town of High River.**

Thursday the 7<sup>th</sup> of October, 2010 The MD of Foothills held a non-statutory public hearing, regarding the proposed annexation of approximately 1730 +/- ac. of land from the MD of Foothills into the Town of High River.

A number of MD residents turned out to voice their concerns and then Council discussed the matter at length. There were four primary areas of concern that became apparent:

1. The concerns of mineral rights holders relative to claims that the annexation sterilizes their mineral rights;
2. The proximity of Western Feedlots to the western portion of the annexation territory and the potential for an odor nuisance for Town residents, together with the possibility that additional urban development could hamper Western's ability to carry on their business.
3. The desire to protect the "non-developable" lands in the agreement particularly the riparian areas along the Highwood River;
4. The necessity to ensure that the MD residents who live on the east side of 112<sup>th</sup> Street East (the road on the eastern boundary of the annexation territory) receive assurances that their access will be maintained once the road is under the control of the Town of High River and that they will be considered in future alterations to both the road and stormwater management facilities.

Subsequent to the hearing, it was decided by the MD of Foothills Council that the matter should be referred back to the Intermunicipal Committee (IMC) / Annexation Negotiation Committee (ANC) for further discussion to address the four areas of concern.

Tuesday November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010 the Annexation Negotiation Committee met to discuss the four issues of concern brought forward by the MD Council and proposed amendments to the Draft Annexation Agreement to address those concerns.

On Thursday December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010 the MD of Foothills Council approved the final version of the annexation agreement with the Town of High River.

December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2010 the Town of High River and MD of Foothills Annexation Negotiation Committee endorsed the agreement and directed that it be forwarded with associated documentation to the Municipal Government Board (MGB) for consideration.

### **What Happens Next:**

The MGB will review the annexation application and negotiation report, and then advertise the Annexation to affected landowners, stakeholders, and the public, if NO objections are received, the MGB will prepare a report and make recommendations to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. If objections ARE received, the MGB will hold a public hearing on the matter

and listen to concerns prior to preparing their report or making recommendations. Finally the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta will consider the report and make the final decision on the proposed annexation. If it is approved, an Order-in-Council will be signed and the annexation will take effect.

The annexation of land into an urban municipality is only the first step in a lengthy process towards the development of land. There are several planning processes that will precede development and public consultation plays a part in each of these. Anyone interested in what form the eventual development on these lands will take is encouraged to stay involved with the subsequent planning processes that the Town of High River will undertake.

For further information on the annexation agreement or the annexation process, please contact:

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