

Q&A: Communities Collaboration Initiative

What is the Flagstaff Intermunicipal Partnership (FIP)?

Established in 2003, FIP is a committee comprised of representatives from all municipalities within the Flagstaff Region: Towns of Daysland, Hardisty, Killam and Sedgewick, the Villages of Alliance, Forestburg, Heisler and Loughheed, and Flagstaff County.

What role does FIP play in the region?

The FIP committee meets monthly and seeks local solutions for regional issues. Successful initiatives include: Regional Emergency Services Communications System; Regional SCADA System for Water Treatment Plants; Regional Assessment Review Board; and the Regional Subdivision and Development Appeal Board.

What is driving this Communities Collaboration Initiative?

We no longer are competing with each other; we are competing with other regions across Alberta, the country, and the world. By working together, we have a better chance of being successful, sustainable communities that deliver the services people want, making each community a more attractive place to live and raise families.

What are the goals of the initiative?

We are exploring what stronger regional collaboration might look like. To do this, we are looking at services desires and levels, an assessment of infrastructure to give us a better financial picture, and more collaborative governance models. This work is dedicated to considering how to position the region and its communities for next generation prosperity and to provide desired services in a cost-effective way.

How long will the initiative take?

Phase One, which explored the appetite for more collaboration among FIP members, began in May and ended in November 2015 with resolve of FIP communities to develop shared services/governance details for the public to consider. Phase Two began in April 2016 and is scheduled to be complete in December 2017.

Why is FIP undertaking this initiative now?

The provincial government has sent strong signals to municipalities across Alberta that things will be done differently and it expects more collaboration. FIP believes now is the time to take action and develop a home-grown strategy for regional collaboration, rather than have one imposed upon us.

Are there opportunities for input from the community?

Yes, your voice will be heard. A robust community engagement strategy will be ongoing throughout the process.

How much is this initiative costing?

Phase One cost \$50,000, which was covered by an Alberta government grant. Alberta Municipal Affairs approved three grants in 2016 that allow FIP to move forward with Phase Two discussions:

- Develop a business case for collaboration options (\$150,000)
- Conduct an assessment of underground infrastructure (\$350,000)

- Hire a firm to help manage the project (\$40,000 grant plus an additional \$40,000 requisitioned from FIP members). This firm was subsequently hired. [13 Ways, Inc.](#) is currently engaged to develop the business case for collaboration options, and worked with FIP to hire a consultant (Urban Systems) to complete an underground infrastructure assessment.

FIP is also seeking a grant to develop a regional economic development plan as part of this initiative.

What consulting firm was hired to help with the project?

Alberta-based 13 Ways, Inc. has been contracted to help FIP complete the work.

Where can I get more information?

Regular communication will be provided to the community through the traditional media (newspaper and radio), and municipal social media (Twitter and Facebook) when relevant. This website will be specifically dedicated to the initiative and will be updated as more information is generated.