



Regional Leaders Eye Single Governance Model

Direction of Communities Collaboration Initiative taking shape

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Members of the Flagstaff Intermunicipal Partnership (FIP) unanimously voted to design a single-tier governance model for all member communities in the region to consider.

The goal would be to dissolve Flagstaff County and all urban municipalities within its boundaries and have regional elections in October 2017 for a newly-created single municipality.

“All the research, data and consultation feedback we’ve collected over the past year clearly indicates that one regional government gives our communities the best chance of success moving forward,” said Bob Coutts, Deputy Mayor of Forestburg and FIP Chair. “This is a bold step, but we have to work together if we want to grow and attract new families and businesses to our communities.”

A sub-committee consisting of one representative from each of the nine-member FIP communities will immediately begin work on fleshing-out the details of a potential single-tier governance model for the region, based on the principles that have already been agreed to. The committee will focus on what the governance structure would look like, such as how many elected officials there should be and what their boundaries should look like. They will also be working on ideas to ensure there is still strong local representation within the regional model.

“We need to ensure that communities and citizens at-large have a strong local voice within a regional governance model. That is important if we are to be successful,” said Anita Miller, Mayor of Hardisty.

The committee will report back to FIP with a draft model in late-February or early-March. More public consultations on the initiative will follow in March and April. Details such as taxation rates, services levels and merging of bylaws could take up to three years to finalize after a new governance model is implemented.

“The goal is to ensure we can maintain or increase service levels for all citizens at a cost they are willing to pay,” said Gail Watt, member of the sub-committee and Mayor of Daysland. “Acting in silos and protecting what we have is no longer an option – it will do nothing to make our communities attractive to people and businesses.”

The FIP Committee was established in 2003 to find local solutions for regional issues and is made up of elected representatives from all municipalities within the Flagstaff region: Towns of Daysland, Hardisty, Killam and Sedgewick, the Villages of Forestburg, Heisler, Alliance, Loughheed and Flagstaff County. More information on FIP and the initiative can be found at www.flagstaffunited.ca

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