

**Calgary Regional Plan
Draft Policies**
*for public consultation
and feedback*

**DRAFT
ONLY**

Calgary Regional Partnership

***Final CMP Policy Package for March Engagement
– As Approved By the CRP Executive Committee,
20 February 2009***



February 20, 2009

Section A - Calgary Regional Plan

– Plan Concept –

Focusing on what is most important from a “regional” perspective . . .

- The general approach of the Calgary Regional Partnership has always rested in bringing municipalities together to build a **broader, common view of this region** as a whole acknowledging that current legislation and roles place much of the implementation for actions, specifically, in the hands of local municipalities - thus the term ***Thinking regionally ... acting locally***
- Recognizing that planning for a healthy future for generations to come requires thinking and acting beyond municipal boundaries - member municipalities’ **collective view of the entire region is more complete and integrative** than the sum of their individual jurisdictions
- Recognizing, too, that this Plan must reflect the outcomes, strategies and processes outlined in the ***Provincial Land Use Framework*** – this being the “*Calgary Metropolitan Plan*”, which will be nested within the emerging “*South Saskatchewan Regional Plan*”
- The Plan takes **the long-view – 60 – 70 years**, when the region’s population is expected to have increased from 1.2 million today to around 2.8 million people – adding **1.6 million new residents and about 800,000 new jobs**
- How and where that growth is accommodated across the region, over time – **the emerging settlement pattern** – is the Plan’s purpose and focus – setting provisions to actually “protect” those long-term urban growth areas from inappropriate development in the interim will be a significant contribution of this Plan

Regional Landscape

- The Plan recognizes the interconnected, complex “**natural systems**” that define the Calgary region’s physical character – the land, water, air, vegetation, habitats, land forms . . .
 - The 5 priority elements of this **ecological infrastructure** include:
 - Wetlands
 - Riparian buffers
 - Regional corridors
 - Large patches of natural vegetation
 - Ridges and escarpments

- The Regional Plan is committed to understanding, respecting, and even **enhancing the integrity of the region's ecological infrastructure** through land use and environmental conservation stewardship strategies AND by directing significant growth away from sensitive natural areas
- This Plan, like the *Provincial Land Use Framework*, reflects the conviction that there is a **shared responsibility for the protection, conservation and enhancement of Alberta's natural environment** – among all orders of government, communities, private landowners and industry
- While this Plan will be implemented within the current legislative and financial frameworks available to local municipalities, it is this region's expressed intent to work with the **Province to create new legislative and funding tools to support and fund a wide range of conservation activities**

While land uses are inherently “local”, the integrity of the region's landscape, ecological systems and related settlement pattern, supported by region wide infrastructure, are all of fundamental “regional” interest ...

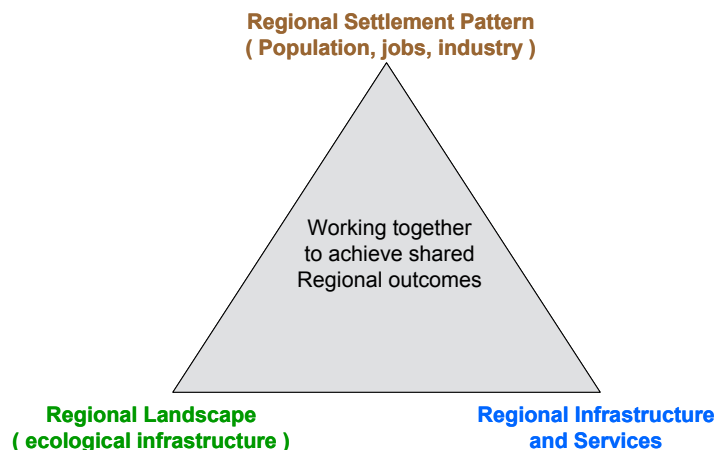
Regional Settlement Pattern

- Overlaying the natural systems are “**built systems**” – communities, settlement patterns, economic activities, transportation networks, municipal infrastructure and services.
- The Plan will **minimize the future human footprint** by:
 - Intensifying development in the existing developed rural and urban areas
 - *Organizing the future new urban growth around transit-based nodes*
 - Organizing new rural growth in “clusters” of small lots
 - Locating rural-based commercial and industrial uses near major corridors
- The Plan builds on the assets of the **existing communities and current infrastructure** capacity already in place
 - Directing a substantial portion of anticipated growth into the **intensification** and renewal of existing communities – where municipal infrastructure and services already exist - in locations and forms that will be determined by each local municipality through local planning processes
 - In rural areas, **encouraging the in-fill of existing developments** and the clustering of new developments in locations and forms that will be determined by each member municipality through local planning process.

Regional Infrastructure and Services

- The Plan is committed to providing **improved access to better infrastructure and services** for more people and economic activities by:
 - identifying, mapping and planning for three major Regional Infrastructure Systems, including:
 - Regional Water, Wastewater and Storm Water
 - Regional Transportation and Transit Systems
 - Regional Waste Management (organic and solid)
 - Locating **future urban / suburban growth in locations, forms and densities** that can be supported by the efficient provision of viable region-wide water, wastewater and regional transit services over time
 - Making provision for the possibility of extending regional water and wastewater infrastructure **to address existing environmental problems and risks** associated with existing development
- The Plan provides a consistent picture of where a changing **settlement pattern** should encourage significant growth in population and jobs, and where significant urban development should not be encouraged
 - Directing the expanding settlement pattern away from natural areas to be conserved / protected and into locations (Compact Urban Nodes) that can be supported by the efficient delivery of regional water, wastewater and transit systems

As such, the Plan **integrates environmental conservation, growth in the settlement pattern and its related infrastructure investment** in an intentional, proactive way. The Plan uses the provision of regional infrastructure as a tool to both guide and enable the development of major urban areas in locations and forms that will support improved access to services, lessen the extent of our growing human footprint on the natural landscape, and improve the mobility choices available to residents of the region.



Associated with the Plan's policies are a series of **conceptual land use, environment and regional infrastructure maps**, intended to illustrate the general nature of the Plan's land use and servicing concepts, but NOT intended to zone lands or to tie local municipalities to prescriptive actions.

Working together to Achieve Shared Regional Outcomes

Together, **this statement of regional outcomes, integrated strategies, policies and conceptual maps comprise the *Calgary Metropolitan Plan***. This Plan commits local municipalities to pursuing common strategic directions at the metropolitan level, aligned to the *Provincial Land Use Framework*, and enables all partners to begin the task of implementation individually, and collaboratively, by:

- Each municipality's determination of local approaches to policy implementation and addressing more detailed local planning efforts
 - CRP municipalities will retain their current legislated land use planning and decision making authority to develop and implement local plans in alignment with the Calgary Regional Plan and the Provincial Land Use Framework
- Identifying the collective (regional) actions necessary to create and support regional strategies, systems and the delivery of regional infrastructure
- Determining, within this region-wide plan, processes for setting short-term targets and priorities around the provision of regional services and infrastructure
- Work with the Province to ensure alignment between the *Calgary Regional Plan* and the emerging *South Saskatchewan Regional Plan*

Section B - Calgary Metropolitan Plan

- Policies -

1. Working Together

Policies – Working Together

- 1.1 **Align with the Province.** CRP will align the Calgary Regional Plan to the Provincial Land Use Framework – South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP).
- 1.2 **Leverage Resources.** CRP will establish tools and programs which leverage the collective financial and technical resources of the member municipalities in order to address important regional priorities
- 1.3 **Align Local Plans.** Member municipalities will amend and/or otherwise align all relevant local Municipal Development Plans (MDPs) and Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDPs) with the Calgary Regional Plan within 3 years of the final approval of the plan by the Calgary Regional Partnership and the Province of Alberta.
- 1.4 **Decision Making Process.** Member Municipalities will abide by the agreed upon CRP decision-making and dispute resolution process to:
 - a) Endorse and amend the Calgary Regional Plan and,
 - b) Make regional scale implementation decisions.
- 1.5 **Plan Update and Amendment.** Following adoption of the Calgary Regional Plan, the plan will be scheduled for periodic updates and amendments. General updates and amendments will be scheduled in year two and year five to incorporate:
 - Provincial Land Use Framework – SSRP directions in 2010
 - New MGA legislation and/or other provincial policy and regulation
 - Key elements of new regional systems
 - Refinements arising from focused CRP policy studies and/or further sub-regional planning and,
 - New Compact Urban Nodes (if any identified, that have been assessed for their fit into the plan)

A comprehensive plan review and amendment will occur every 10 years and will include a full performance-based analysis which may result in fundamental changes to the core policies and directions of the plan.

Notwithstanding the above, amendments to the Calgary Regional Plan may be brought forward as required with unanimous consent of the members.

- 1.6 **Regional Implementation.** CRP and member municipalities will identify and develop appropriate regional strategies and collective actions in order to address the key policy directions of the Calgary Regional Plan.
- 1.7 **Triple Bottom Line.** CRP and all member municipalities will ensure the integrated and balanced consideration of all social, cultural, economic and healthy environments in developing regional, local and intermunicipal plans and programs.
- 1.8 **Provision for Annexation.** Annexation continues to be an important tool in managing growth for municipalities. The Plan recognizes and supports the potential for annexation from time to time based upon municipal growth rates, long-term land needs, and other strategic interests, in accordance with the requirements as set out in the Municipal Government Act. (Additional clarity may be provided at a future date.)
- 1.9 **Subsequent Planning Processes.** Following approval of the Regional Plan, it is expected that local, intermunicipal and sub-regional planning processes will occur in order to refine / fine-tune the shapes, locations and population capacities of Compact Urban Nodes identified on the Plan's Conceptual Land Use Map. Significant shifts in the location and/or scale of the identified Nodes may be proposed to the Partnership and must be reviewed and confirmed on a region-wide basis by CRP through a Plan amendment process.

2 Regional Landscape

Overarching Regional Landscape Policies

- 2.1 **Ecological Infrastructure.** CRP and member municipalities acknowledge the effect that population growth and development pressures have on the environment and will align and coordinate local, regional and intermunicipal plans to protect the five key elements of the region's ecological infrastructure:
 - Wetlands
 - Riparian buffers
 - Regional corridors
 - Large patches of natural vegetation and,
 - Ridges and escarpments
- 2.2 **Landscape Connectivity.** Member municipalities will work together to maintain and enhance landscape connectivity across the region to ensure the health and integrity of the ecological system.

- 2.3 **Regional Open Space Strategy.** CRP will pursue the creation of a Regional Open Space strategy which would include the provision of publicly accessible parkland.
- 2.4 **Sustain Agricultural Lands.** Member Municipalities will minimize the fragmentation and conversion of agricultural lands to other land uses.
- 2.5 **Cumulative Effects.** CRP will work with the Province of Alberta to develop and implement a regional cumulative effects management (CEM) approach.
- 2.6 **Conservation Tools.** CRP will work with the Province, member municipalities and the private sector to develop and implement a range of conservation tools to support the goals of the Calgary Regional Plan and the Provincial Land Use Framework.
- 2.7 **Coordination.** CRP will support the coordination of environmental actions and conservation initiatives of regional interest with member municipalities, the Provincial and Federal Governments and First Nations.
- 2.8 **Ecological Restoration.** Member municipalities will encourage the restoration of strategically important ecological infrastructure that has been impacted by past development.

Watershed Protection

- 2.9 **Riparian Lands.** Member municipalities will protect the ecological function of riparian lands within their jurisdiction and will recognise site-specific needs.
- 2.10 **Integrated Watershed Management (IWM).** CRP and member municipalities will actively work with the Province of Alberta, the Bow River Basin Council (BRBC), and other key stakeholders to support the development and implementation of an integrated watershed management (IWM) approach to deal effectively with the relationships between land use, water quality management and water supply in the Calgary Region.
- 2.11 **Wetland Impacts.** Member municipalities will adopt a “no net loss of wetlands” approach by avoiding, minimizing and mitigating impacts to wetlands. Municipalities will determine actions within their jurisdiction and will recognise site-specific needs
- 2.12 **Supporting Watershed Protection.** CRP will identify and pursue options and opportunities to support member municipalities in their efforts to actively protect critical watershed areas for the benefit of the region.

Biodiversity

- 2.13 **Ecosystem Diversity.** CRP and member municipalities will strive to work together to maintain the diversity of species and ecosystem types in the region.

Climate Change / Adaptability

- 2.14 **Climate Strategy.** CRP will investigate, develop and implement a regional greenhouse gas and climate change strategy.
- 2.15 **Emphasize Air Quality.** CRP & member municipalities will ensure that air quality receives a high priority in the development and approval of local and regional land use and transportation plans.

3 Regional Settlement Pattern

Overarching Land Use Policies

- 3.1 **Intensification.** Member municipalities will strive to accommodate at least 25% of new population growth across the region through intensification of existing developed areas.
- 3.2 **Efficient Use of Land.** Member municipalities will ensure that new development occurs in ways that achieve efficient use of the land and infrastructure.
- 3.3 **Compact Urban Nodes and Corridors.** Member municipalities will protect the identified long-term lands for development of Compact Urban Nodes and corridors, existing and new, across the region.
- 3.4 **Evaluating Location Proposals for New Compact Urban Nodes.** The plan recognizes that new Compact Urban Nodes may be proposed in the future in areas not presently identified in this plan. This will require a plan amendment, as well as incorporating the same local planning and infrastructure criteria as all new urban development must follow under this plan.
- 3.5 **Potential Compact Urban Nodes.** Municipal Districts have identified a number of specific locations which may, over time, intensify and evolve into Compact Urban Nodes. The REGIONAL PLAN acknowledges this possibility for these specific locations, including Cochrane Lakes, Langdon, Balzac, Conrich, Harmony, Aldersyde, and a possible development node along Hwy. 8, west of Calgary. The Plan recognizes the possibility that regional infrastructure might be made available to support their development, subject to satisfying Policy 4.4 and all related policies for Compact Urban Nodes. These

requirements include local plan alignment with this plan, and land use designations put in place for existing areas to intensify in conjunction with the extension of regional utility and transportation infrastructure.

- 3.6 **Scenic Corridors:** CRP and member municipalities should identify and encourage the protection of scenic corridors and major view sheds

Policies for Development inside Compact Urban Nodes

- 3.7 **Development Form.** Member municipalities will ensure that all new development in Compact Urban nodes is compact, mixed-use, walkable and connected through a range of local and regional mobility systems.
- 3.7(b) **Protecting Future Compact Urban Nodes.** New development that does not meet the criteria for a Compact Urban Node shall not be located within areas identified for future Compact Urban Nodes.
- 3.8 **Transit Oriented Mixed-Use Activity Centres.** All new and existing Compact Urban Nodes will develop and maintain one or more viable mixed-use activity centres, integrated with local and regional transit stations and services, to promote local employment opportunities and transit accessibility.
- 3.9 **Transit Oriented Mixed-Use Activity Centres (minimum densities).** Member municipalities will ensure appropriate land use intensities in all new and existing transit oriented mixed-use activity centres to support an enhanced network of local and regional transit services and make transit service available to the greatest number of people. A minimum intensity threshold of 100 people or jobs / gross developable hectare, within walking distance of regional transit services, should be achieved in new mixed-use activity centres.
- 3.10 **Minimum Density.** Unplanned lands in existing Compact Urban Nodes and lands identified for new Compact Urban Nodes will be designed to achieve a minimum density of 8 – 10 units per gross residential acre, and encourage higher densities where achievable.
- 3.11 **Housing Location.** New housing in Compact Urban Nodes will be located in close proximity to local and regional transit service.
- 3.12 **Housing Choice.** Compact Urban Nodes will support a range of house types and choices.
- 3.13 **Contiguous Development.** Development within Compact Urban Nodes should be built out in a contiguous and connected manner
- 3.14 **Jobs and Employment.** New industries and jobs will be strategically integrated

into Compact Urban Nodes.

- 3.15 **Community Identity.** Member municipalities will identify and protect important historic and cultural resources that contribute to the unique character of existing communities.

Policies for Development Outside of Compact Urban Nodes

- 3.16 **Hamlets and Villages.** Growth of existing and new Hamlets and Villages which do not require regional water and wastewater services will continue in accord with the strategies of the individual member municipalities.
- 3.17 **Rural Residential Development.** Residential growth occurring outside the Compact Urban Nodes and corridors should be located and designed to minimize the impact on the environmental processes and agricultural capability of the land.
- 3.18 **NEW POLICY – Placeholder** for new policy to investigate opportunities for supporting the intensification of rural residential land uses on their existing developed footprint
Note: this has been identified as an ongoing task over March and April 2008
- 3.19 **NEW POLICY – Placeholder** for new policy to address planning for / responding to impacts of development on services and costs of adjacent municipalities.

Policies to Support a Prosperous Economy

- 3.19 **Economic Development Strategy.** CRP and member municipalities will develop a Regional Economic Development Strategy to ensure a diversified and globally competitive region that continues to enjoy a high quality of life and is able to attract and retain a viable and adequate regional workforce.
- 3.20 **Distribution of Jobs.** Member municipalities will endeavor to achieve an improved distribution of jobs and economic activities throughout the region that are accessible by transit and located close to where people live.
- 3.21 **Protection of Employment Lands.** CRP and member municipalities should strategically identify and protect lands and corridors for future economic activities from encroachment by incompatible land uses.
- 3.22 **Industry Location.** Member municipalities should encourage industrial and commercial sectors to establish in areas across the region that have been identified as compatible and strategic locations for specific types of activity and investment.

- 3.23 **Transportation Networks.** CRP and member municipalities will endeavor to maintain and enhance the region's strategic transportation networks (roadways, railways, airports, transportation hubs) that link regional industries to markets, locally, regionally, nationally and globally.
- 3.24 **Resource Industry Activities.** CRP should work proactively with the province and the private sector to effectively manage resource development activities (e.g. forestry, oil and gas) that impact the region's economy, natural environment and settlement pattern.
- 3.25 **Criteria and Planning Requirements for Servicing Identified Rural Employment Areas.** Placeholder for new policy to establish outcomes / criteria and planning requirements related to identified rural employment areas (commercial and industrial) prior to extension of regional water, sewer and transit service to support their development and use.
- 3.26 **Evaluating Location Proposals for New Rural Employment Areas.** The plan recognizes that new rural employment areas may be proposed in the future in locations not presently identified in this plan. This will require a plan amendment, as well as incorporating the same local planning and infrastructure criteria as all new rural employment areas must follow under this plan (policy 3.4 above).

4. Regional Infrastructure and Services

Overarching Regional Infrastructure and Services Policies

- 4.1 **Regional Infrastructure Systems.** CRP, in concert with Member Municipalities will identify, map and plan for three major Regional Infrastructure Systems:
1. Regional Water, Wastewater and Storm Water
 2. Regional Transportation and Transit system
 3. Regional Waste Management (organic and solid)
- 4.2 **Regional Servicing for Regional Land Use Strategies:** CRP and member municipalities will support the provision of regional water and wastewater infrastructure and services to existing and new Compact Urban Nodes, corridors and rural employment areas (commercial and industrial areas), as specifically identified in the Calgary Regional Plan, and where aligned with the policies of the Plan.
- 4.3 **Integrated Planning of Land Uses and Infrastructure.** CRP and member municipalities will integrate the planning, funding and staging priorities of regional infrastructure systems with the implementation of identified Compact Urban Nodes, corridors and rural employment areas (commercial and industrial areas),

as specifically identified in the Calgary Regional Plan.

- 4.4 **Staging of Infrastructure System Investments.** CRP and member municipalities will support the effective staging of the region's Compact Urban Nodes, corridors and rural employment areas (commercial and industrial areas), as specifically identified in the REGIONAL PLAN, with related infrastructure systems in the short (0-15 year), medium (15-30 year) and long-term (30-75 year) timeframes of the Calgary Regional Plan.
- 4.5 **Local Plans.** Member municipalities will ensure that all existing and new Compact Urban Nodes, corridors and rural employment areas (commercial and industrial areas), as specifically identified in the Calgary Regional Plan and requiring regional infrastructure, will develop a plan that addresses all areas of municipal servicing and land use (including water, waste water and transit), demonstrating alignment with the Regional Plan and compatibility with neighboring municipalities. For Compact Urban Nodes, requirements include local plan alignment with this plan, and land use designations put in place for existing areas to intensify in conjunction with the extension of regional utility and transportation infrastructure.
- 4.6 **Infrastructure System Cost.** CRP and member municipalities will ensure fairness, accountability and efficiency in how regional infrastructure and services are provided and funded, including recognition of investments to date.
- 4.7 **Infrastructure System Design.** CRP and member municipalities will endeavor to design, construct and operate regional systems using the best current environmental and sustainable practices.
- 4.8 **Servicing to Address Existing Environmental Problems.** Provision of regional sanitary sewer infrastructure may be provided to address existing environmental problems, such as contaminated water and soils, created by existing development identified in this plan. This policy is not intended to facilitate regional water and sewer servicing to additional infill or similar new low density development in close proximity to these areas.

Policies – Regional Water, Wastewater and Storm Water Systems

- 4.9 **Situationally-appropriate Regional Water / Wastewater Solutions:** Regional water / wastewater solutions will be specifically described within the Calgary Regional Plan's "Water, Wastewater and Stormwater System" reports, and may incorporate a mix of Calgary-centred, sub-regional and local servicing approaches for land uses specifically identified in the Regional Plan as being eligible for access to regional infrastructure.
- 4.10 **Water Conservation.** Member Municipalities will commit to achieving provincial

water management goals and targets as a region.

- 4.11 **Planning for Storm Water Management.** CRP and member municipalities will identify locations where stormwater management may impact regional infrastructure systems, develop appropriate policies and approaches to address potential areas of impact and address cumulative effects management considerations.

Policies – Regional Transportation System

- 4.12 **Regional Transportation and Utility Corridors.** CRP and member municipalities will identify and protect future regional transportation and utility corridors (transit corridors, regional roadways, water and wastewater servicing, and energy transmission)
- 4.13 **Rights-of-Way Requirements.** CRP and member municipalities will identify and protect future rights-of-way requirements for regionally connected transit, pedestrian, bicycle and roadway facilities and utility corridors.
- 4.14 **Air Quality.** CRP and member municipalities will develop a regional transportation and transit system that contributes to the improvement of regional air quality, over time.
- 4.15 **Regional Transit.** CRP and member municipalities will work together to provide increased regional transit service and facilities that stimulate travel by means other than single occupant vehicle (SOV), encourage the development of transit oriented urban nodes and provide enhanced mobility options.
- 4.16 **Proactive Transit Planning.** CRP and member municipalities should support the proactive advancement of regional transit investments in order to stimulate desired land use patterns and transit oriented nodal development forms.
- 4.17 **Connecting to Regional Transit.** Member municipalities will provide local transit service, cycling and walking facilities and systems to connect with regional transit systems within growth corridors.
- 4.18 **Transportation Demand Management.** Member municipalities should encourage transportation demand management strategies and active transportation programs in order to change travel behavior and provide incentives to use transit.
- 4.19 **Transit System Funding.** CRP and member municipalities will endeavor to create ongoing and innovative approaches for funding the capital and operating costs of existing and expanded transit systems (these approaches may draw on new and/or expanded Provincial and Federal funding commitments, innovative

public private partnerships, user pay and local tax based incentives etc ...).

Policies – Regional Waste Management System

- 4.20 **Integrated Waste Management.** CRP and member municipalities will develop an integrated and coordinated system for waste management across the region to encourage efficiencies, economies of scale and innovation.
- 4.21 **Recycling.** Member municipalities should recognize waste as a resource and encourage local reuse and recycling through programs, education and incentives.

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