# WHEATLAND COUNTY

Hwy. 1, R.R. 1 Strathmore, Alberta T1P 1J6 Tel. (403) 934-3321 Fax (403) 934-4889
*Web*: www.wheatlandcounty.ca


May 25, 2009

FAX: 403 851 8762
e-mail: rick@calgaryregion.ca

Calgary Regional Partnership
Box 2093
Cochrane, AB
T4C 1B8

Attention: Rick Butler, Executive Director

Dear Mr. Butler:

**Re: Calgary Metropolitan Plan (CMP)**

On behalf of Wheatland County I would like to thank you and Colleen Shepherd for meeting with County Council on Tuesday, May 11, 2009 to further discuss the 'Proposed Calgary Metropolitan Plan For Consideration by Member Councils (May 2009)', herein after referred to as the "CMP". The meeting provided an excellent opportunity for you and Colleen to provide further information and clarity on this proposed document.

The following is a recap of the County's comments and recommendations for changes to the CMP draft document, as requested by the Calgary Regional Partnership (CRP).

**Overall Statement:** Wheatland County recognizes the values and gains that can be realized from regional planning. However, the County considers it paramount that local municipalities retain their current legislated land use and decision making authority to develop and implement local plans in alignment with the regional land use framework. That is, should a local municipality not be in favour of a regional issue within its boundaries it will have a veto vote on the matter – that is, no other municipality can impose conditions, planning or otherwise, upon a municipality if that municipality is not in favour of it. We feel that a local municipality should have the ultimate decision making on regional planning matters within its boundaries. Who else better understands the dynamics of a municipality than the local jurisdiction?

Wheatland County's comments to the May 2009 Draft CMP lie primarily in two areas:

1. Governance
2. Land Use

In the spirit of the above overall statement, the following recommendations are made:

1. Page 17 – Decision Making Process/Governance Issue
   Wheatland County continues to have issues with the super majority vote. We feel that one jurisdiction should not hold a veto vote over another jurisdiction. Local autonomy needs to be respected along with diversity, as set out in the "Terms of Agreement for Working Together Document" that all the membership signed and agreed to. Although Calgary may have the population base, the rural municipalities have the land base which is needed by the population. The rural municipalities are the most affected stakeholders and a fair and equitable recognition should be given to these rural municipalities. Population should not trump land use planning. Also, member municipalities should be given the latitude to work together on projects that affect their municipalities without seeking the approval of the CRP membership. This governance issue could be addressed with the following recommendation:
   **Recommendation: Add:**
   **The receiving municipality that is affected by a regional issue must be in favour of any action.**
   **A majority vote must include two of the three rural municipalities vote.**
   **Need to define a "sub-region" within the Calgary Regional Partnership (CRP) then add that, should municipalities within a sub-region of the CRP agree to pursue a project that benefits these municipalities, they should be allowed to proceed with the project, providing that the members of the involved sub-region agree.**

2. Section – Regional Infrastructure and Services
   It appears that servicing is being used as a control tool. For example, water is a provincial resource and the CMP is tying this to population density.
   Page 7, first paragraph at the top of the page:
   **Recommendation: Remove "major urban" in the sentence and replace with "growth" , "The CMP uses the provision of regional infrastructure as a tool to both guide and enable the development of *[major urban]* growth 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."**

3. Page 9 - Watershed Protection

We question the landowner concerns in this section as provincial legislation regulates and addresses these issues.

**Recommendation: Remove all items that are governed by provincial legislation, regulation, etc. These items include water and environmental issues and, in Section 1.8 - annexation.**

4. Page 18, Section 4 – Implementation of the CMP

First bullet currently reads, "the CMP would not be able to force a municipality to change its zoning bylaw to house a landfill site contrary to its will; and"

**Recommendation: Change to "the CMP would not be able to force a municipality to house a landfill site contrary to its will; and.."**

5. Page 20, Section 5 – Ratification of the CMP, Section 5.1

Third paragraph, last sentence currently reads, "It should not be possible, therefore, for communities to *cherry pick*, to opt into or out of individual components of the CMP"

**Recommendation: Remove this sentence in its entirety. Our first recommendation should address this, that being: The receiving municipality that is affected by a regional issue must be in favour of any action.**

6. Land Use Framework

We question the rush to approve this document for two reasons:

- **a.** It should comply with the provincial Land Use Framework.
- **b.** Given the amendments to the document, there has not been sufficient time allocated for public review and comments.

**Recommendation: Make further amendments, as approved by the CRP, to ensure the CMP aligns with provincial legislation, including the Land Use Framework, and then take the CMP document back for public consultation before final ratification by the CRP membership.**

7. West Highway 1 Area Structure Plan (WHASP)

We note that your land maps have not corrected the area of Wheatland County's WHASP – the CMP shows this area encompassing both the north and south sides of Highway 1, west of Strathmore to Highway 24. The WHASP is the area on the south side of Highway 1 from the Town of Strathmore, west of the Western Irrigation District, to the County's boundary, not Highway 24. That is from Part of the NE 9-24-25-W4 south along Highway 1 to NW 7-24-26-W4.

**Recommendation: Change the CMP maps to reflect the correct area that is included in Wheatland County's West Highway 1 Area Structure Plan, that being, the area on the south side of Highway 1 from the Town of Strathmore,**

**west of the Western Irrigation District, to the County's boundary, not Highway 24. That is from a Part of the NE 9-24-25-W4 south along Highway 1 to NW 7-24-26-W4.**

To recap, the above comments reflect the views of Wheatland County. Should the CMP document be amended to address the governance issues, as set out in our first recommendation, most other issues will fall into place.

Wheatland County is committed to the Calgary Regional Partnership "Terms of Agreement for Working Together" and believes that the terms of agreement in this document, that all members agreed to and signed off, should be reflected in the Calgary Metropolitan Plan. To ignore the agreed upon terms and commitments of the "Terms of Agreement for Working Together" document would be a disservice to the membership and the communities in the Calgary Regional Partnership.

We thank you for your consideration to the above comments and in implementing our recommendations into the Calgary Metropolitan Plan.

Yours truly,
WHEATLAND COUNTY

Ben Armstrong, Reeve