

Rezoning Rationale

#265, 52307 Range Road 213, Sherwood Park, AB

1.0 Background

The subject site consists of one lot located within the old Farrell Properties subdivision. The combined site area is approximately 6.9 hectares (17 acres). Currently, the lot is developed with the Uncas Veterinary Clinic and a single detached residence. The site is located immediately east of Range Road 213. The existing access to the site is from the internal ring road (*refer to Figure 1, below*). The surrounding land uses appear to be mostly residential in nature with all but one of the surrounding lots being zoned RCL – Low Density Country Residential.



Figure 1: Location Map (Legally described as Lots 2, Block 1, Plan 7520595)
(Source: Google Maps, 2019)

In 2016, Uncas Veterinary Clinic changed ownership. Currently, Uncas employs two full-time veterinarians, three veterinary technicians, two veterinary assistants, two receptionists, and one office manager. Momentum Equine Veterinary Specialists are currently an ambulatory equine practice consisting of two equine surgeons, two registered veterinary technicians, one receptionist, and one office manager. The team currently travels from British Columbia to Manitoba with the largest proportion of their services being elective sports medicine and surgical care to equine performance athletes and working horses.

The surgical team would like to move their mobile clinic to a full-time home on the Uncas Property. The proposal is to build a world-class facility that would be used for evaluation of sports medicine cases, advanced diagnostic imaging or resonance imaging, and surgical and medical management of equine cases. The majority of the work would be done within a new 15,000 square foot hospital and horses would rarely be outside on the property. However, corrals are planned for horses that may be outside. The existing dwelling would provide a residence for visiting veterinary students and interns.

Associated Engineering Alberta Ltd. has been retained by Momentum Equine Veterinary Specialists to rezone their property from RA – Rural Residential/ Agriculture to DC – Direct Control District (*refer to Figure 2, below*). The purpose of this rezoning is to allow for a Veterinary Service, Major use on the site, in addition to the existing Veterinary Service, Minor use and the existing residential use. The rezoning will provide the opportunity for the development of an equine veterinary hospital to locate on the site. The hospital will be designed to complement the surrounding area and the site will be landscaped.

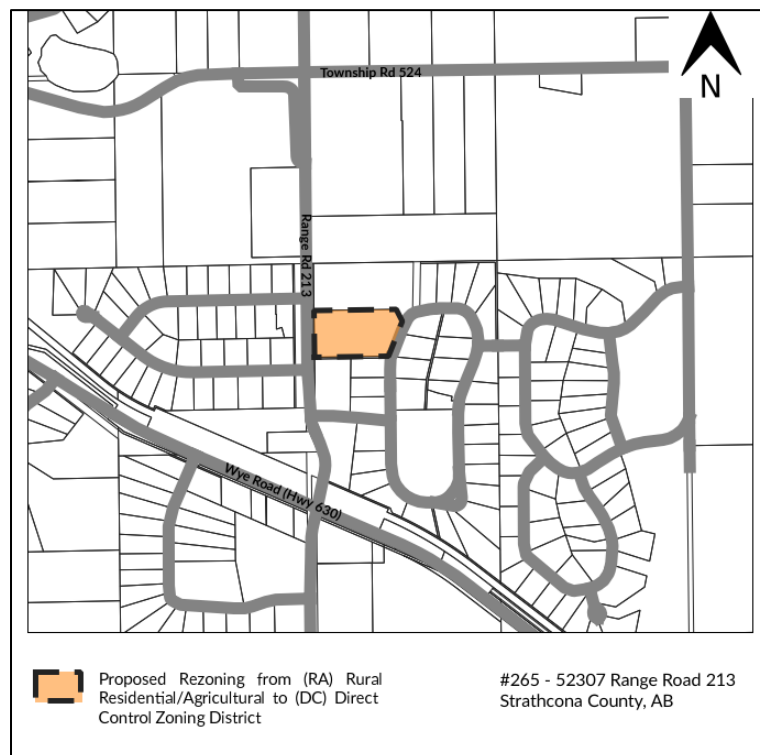


Figure 2: Rezoning Area of Application Map

2.0 Rezoning Rationale

A rezoning is required because the Veterinary Service, Major use is not a permitted or a discretionary use in the RA – Rural Residential / Agriculture Zone. In fact, within the Rural Area Zoning Districts, a Veterinary Service, Major use is only a permitted use in the IMH – Medium Industrial (Heartland) Zone and is a discretionary use in the AG- Agriculture: General Zone. The existing Uncas Veterinary Clinic (Veterinary Service, Minor) has been serving patients from this location since 1982. The residential dwelling located on the site was constructed in 1967.

The DC zoning has been based on the existing RA zoning and additional regulations from the Strathcona County Land Use Bylaw 6-2015, such as parking, loading, landscaping, and signage so that surrounding residents understand that the site is planned to be nicely landscaped and sensitive to the surrounding land uses. It is understood that if specific land use regulations are not mentioned in the DC, the Development Officer will refer to the regulation in the Land Use Bylaw; however, the wording was repeated in the proposed DC so that reviewers and those in the neighbourhood understand that their requests for landscaping and access have been considered and proposed.

The purpose of the existing RA – Rural Residential / Agriculture Zone is to promote an agriculture and a rural lifestyle, including a range of more intensive agriculture and agriculture-related uses. It can be argued that the proposed equine hospital promotes a rural lifestyle and given that almost all of this agriculture-related service will be provided behind closed doors for a short period of time (from between 1 – 4 days), this is not considered an intensive use as defined in the Strathcona County Land Use Bylaw.

2.1 Municipal Development Plan Review

Since there is no Area Structure Plan for this area, the policies of the Municipal Development Plan were the only policies reviewed in an effort to provide support for the proposed rezoning.

The property is located within the Beaver Hills Policy Area of the Strathcona County MDP. The following MDP policies support this proposal:

Section 3.3 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - General

- *Ensure a strong, diversified and sustainable economy by requiring:*
 1. *the optimal utilization of infrastructure to attract businesses to the County.*
- *Promote a strong, diversified and sustainable economy by encouraging:*
 3. *a balanced economy of tourism, recreation, agriculture, residential, commercial, and industrial uses as a means of providing diverse opportunities for employment.*
 4. *innovative employment opportunities in a variety of sectors.*
 5. *agricultural opportunities, while fostering an environment for innovative agricultural support services.*

6. *continued promotion of Strathcona County locally, nationally and internationally as a place that is open for business and investment.*
7. *promotion of the County's unique rural/urban character.*
8. *opportunities for locally-owned small businesses.*

Section 5.6 - AGRICULTURE POLICIES

- *Promote opportunities for agricultural operations by encouraging:*
 4. *the development of extensive agricultural and livestock operations.*
 5. *the development of equine and equestrian facilities.*

Section 5.6 - RESIDENTIAL POLICIES

- *Ensure responsible human interactions with nature by requiring:*
 11. *that residential forms are limited to single dwellings and associated accessory buildings or collective communal housing supporting the primary agricultural use of the parcel.*

The proposed equine surgical hospital will be a new, local business that may provide more employment opportunities for people in the County. In addition, the facility will bring attention to the County because it is planned to be a world-class facility that will house visiting veterinary students and interns. The existing residential dwelling will provide housing for the visiting students and interns, supporting the operations of the equine surgical hospital.

3.0 Conclusion

In summary, the Momentum Equine Veterinary Specialists are interested in establishing a presence in the County by constructing a world-class facility on the same property as the existing Uncas Veterinary Clinic. The facility will be designed to complement the surrounding rural character of the neighbourhood, and the majority of the service will be provided indoors so as not to negatively impact surrounding landowners.

To provide more efficient access to the hospital and reduce the traffic entering the inner ring road of the subdivision, it is our preference to develop an access from Range Road 213. The existing access off of the inner ring road will be solely for the use of the Uncas Veterinary Clinic. As is explained in the Pre-Application Consultation Summary Report, an access from Range Road 213 to the new world-class facility is the preference of surrounding landowners, as well.

We are excited about the opportunity to submit this proposal to you and look forward to working with you on this project.