

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On January 15, 2013 the County issued a Request for Proposal (RFP #13.0553) titled **Bremner Growth Management Strategy-Public Engagement, Communications and Planning Program**.

The gravity of the March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016 decision by a majority of the current County Council to approve Bremner as the future Urban Service Area, is cited on page 6(*attached*) of the RFP by Oliver Wendell Holmes' famous quote: *"A hundred years after we are gone and forgotten, those who have never heard of us will be living with the results of our actions"*.

The planning process cited on page 7 (*attached*) in the RFP's *Project Overview* stated the successful bidders were to create *"two distinct components"*:

First, *"we are seeking an...extensive public engagement that will appeal to a variety of stakeholders with a specific focus on citizens under the age of 25"*.

Second, the planning process *"will use the public input to generate and test various development scenarios based on their financial, social and environmental impacts"*.

Identification of these two components of the RFP raise two important questions that require further explanation to all County stakeholders and tax payers:

1. Why was the study's "specific focus on citizens under the age of 25" when this age group is generally not a current stakeholder group that pays property taxes?
2. Why were more extensive efforts beyond open houses, not made to generate public input?

Finally, the question must be asked, why did the **Background** (1.1) portion of the **Information and Instructions** (1.0) section of the RFP, provide potential contractors with an "unsubstantiated" piece of information which they were expected to consider in the development of their bid?

*"The Sherwood Park boundary cannot be expanded due to the desire of the community to limit outward traditional residential sprawl beyond the existing boundary."*

This statement suggests that at least three additional questions must be asked:

1. When and how, was the "desire of the community" regarding growth beyond Sherwood Park's "existing boundary" established?
2. Where are the survey instruments and statistical results to support this claim?
3. What was the rationale for providing this statement to potential contractors?

The public is entitled to a comprehensive, user friendly explanation of all historical studies, influences and decisions that resulted in council approving that an Area Concept Plan be developed for Bremner.

Since the County's MDP was passed in 2007, the County's communications department has provided the public with link information and FAQ's on the County's website regarding the MDP, the two Growth Management Studies and the Capital Region Board.

The Communications department has the resources necessary to bring information and people together in one place that would help the public understand how all of the pieces fit together. It also has the expertise necessary to expedite information from various sources to determine what information needs to be presented to the public, as well as how to present that information in a more user-friendly format.

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

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### BREMNER GROWTH MANAGEMENT STRATEGY - PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT, COMMUNICATIONS AND PLANNING PROGRAMS

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

RFP # 13.0553

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#### **Issued:**

Date: Tuesday, January 15, 2013

#### **Proposal submittals will only be accepted by:**

Strathcona County  
Planning & Development Services  
Main Floor, County Hall  
2001 Sherwood Drive  
Sherwood Park AB T8A 3W7

#### **Closing (non-public):**

Date: Monday, February 11, 2013  
Time: 14:00:00 Hours, Alberta Time

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## Growth Management Strategy for Bremner Project Overview

*"A hundred years after we are gone and forgotten, those who have never heard of us will be living with the results of our actions".* Oliver Wendell Holmes

Strathcona County is embarking on an exciting, once in a lifetime project that will change the face of the municipality. There is a large undeveloped tract of land northeast of Sherwood Park. In 50 years Bremner, a new community in the County, will become home to over 100,000 people. Imagine a community that is both financially sustainable and fiscally responsible - an urban community that accommodates residents' needs to live, learn, work and play. This will be Bremner in 50 years!

Strathcona County is looking for the best, brightest, most innovative public engagement professionals and planners to be part of this legacy project.

How will this be achieved?

The planning process that Strathcona County wants to create involves two distinct components. In the first component we are seeking an innovative, compelling and extensive public engagement process that will appeal to a variety of stakeholders with a specific focus on citizens under the age of 25. This component will also involve provision of communication support for the project.

The second component is to provide professional planning services which will use the public input to generate and test various development scenarios based on their financial, social and environmental impacts, establish a preferred scenario and synthesize results into a growth management strategy.

The project will be launched in early April 2013, and community interest and momentum will be achieved through a combination of digital and traditional media.

What will the launch look like? Perhaps there will be a well known speaker or a series of community events. It has yet to be decided.

At some point in the process, the community will participate in a Design Charrette to develop three or four possible concepts. These concepts will be analyzed and shared with the community at some sort of celebration event. Once finalized, they will be formally reviewed by planners for viability.

Be prepared to wow us!

If this sounds intriguing, challenging and exciting, Strathcona County invites you to read on!

## 1.0 INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

We are seeking a dynamic and engaging team of professional planners, communicators and public engagement practitioners who will develop and implement an innovative process that will result in creating a Growth Management Strategy for a future urban community.

### 1.1 Background

Strathcona County consists of the Urban Service Area of Sherwood Park and an extensive Rural Services Area of country residential acreages, farms and smaller hamlets. According to the 2011 federal census, the total population of Strathcona County is 92,490, consisting of the Sherwood Park urban population of 64,733 and a rural population of 27,757. With a focus on social, environmental and economic sustainability, Strathcona County is committed to balancing the unique needs of its diverse community.

Strathcona County has experienced rapid growth for several years. Residents enjoy a broad range of municipal services, and business and shopping opportunities. Strathcona County is home to Canada's largest oil refining complex and North America's third largest petrochemical complex.

Population increase in the Urban Service Area will increase pressure on not only the rural environment, but also for the County to continue to provide future opportunities for urban development over the next several generations. The Sherwood Park boundary cannot be expanded due to the desire of the community to limit outward traditional residential sprawl beyond the existing boundary; the nature of the surrounding development; and the servicing capacities of the existing infrastructure. This should be viewed as a new community and new Urban Service Area for the County.

The Capital Region Growth Plan also provides direction regarding where growth should occur. In April 2008, the Province of Alberta mandated the formation of the Capital Regional Board by adopting the Capital Region Board Regulation AR 49/2008. The Board was tasked with creating a Capital Region Growth Plan that would guide regional land use planning and transit network; address regional affordable housing issue; and coordinate a regional geographic information system. Strathcona County is a participating member of the Capital Region Board and is responsible for conforming to and implementing the Capital Region Growth Plan.

On October 23, 2012 Strathcona County Council, via resolution 665/2012, directed Administration to "initiate a Growth Management Strategy and Timeline for the Urban Reserve Area (Bremner)."