



## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

### THE ST. PAUL – ELK POINT REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP: A COLLABORATIVE ADVANTAGE



JUNE 2017



## BACKGROUND:

The County of St. Paul, Summer Village of Horseshoe Bay, Town of Elk Point, and Town of St. Paul together form the St. Paul – Elk Point Regional Partnership. While each municipality has their own unique political and jurisdictional identities, the collective region has intersecting visions, challenges and opportunities as defined by a shared regional geography. Within these shared commonalities lies the collaborative ability for the four municipalities to act together and achieve the benefits offered by joint ventures and further, to offer each other support while facing challenging issues.

The four municipalities within the St. Paul – Elk Point Regional Partnership have had a very productive relationship in collaborative projects. Traditionally, each municipality has met on an ad hoc basis with one another to network, share information and to pursue collective action as desired. Since the 2013 Municipal Elections, the municipalities have partnered more frequently through joint servicing and an aggressive pursuit of grant funding for mutually beneficial projects. In 2016, the partnering municipalities implemented a Regional Strategic Plan was drafted to identify and monitor collaborative pursuits moving forward.

With the forthcoming changes to the *Municipal Government Act*, which emphasize inter-municipal collaboration efforts, and in addition to the implementation of a Regional Strategic Plan, the four councils in the St. Paul – Elk Point Regional Partnership are executing in the spirit of fellowship, an additional framework to guide future collective action.

## PURPOSE OF THE INTER-MUNICIPAL COLLABORATION COMMITTEE:

The purpose of establishing of the Intermunicipal Collaboration Committee (ICC) is to generate continued success in both current and future joint endeavours. To clarify, this committee is not intended to reduce municipal autonomy, replace current joint governance or servicing agreements, or duplicate the work of other council committees. The ICC will collectively approach the identification, review and implementation of regional projects. The intent of ICC is to promote the sharing of resources, expertise, and the risk and benefits associated with coordinating joint projects. These collaborative efforts include but, are not limited to, those special projects for which grant funding has been obtained or for which the partners are attempting to obtain grant funding.

The ICC will enhance awareness of each municipality's respective challenges and priorities and will create a mechanism for the partnering municipalities to submit ideas for regional grant consideration; this will substantially benefit the St. Paul – Elk Point Region. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a framework for the St. Paul – Elk Point Regional Partnership to establish principles and processes for direct communication to support the partnership within the ICC and further, to provide a formalized process to continue past collaborations and to promote fellowship.





## PURPOSE OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING:

The commitment built into this Memorandum of Understanding lies in the ongoing desire for increased sustainability in the region and finding efficiencies and economies of scale through special projects, and joint service provision. This desire further underlines the need to address matters collaboratively. As sustainability pressures increase, the ability of each municipality to provide the necessary services to its residents in the region is affected. Being proactive in identifying possible projects, utilizing joint planning, and sharing visions for the region will allow for more orderly growth and reduce the risks of municipalities having an adverse influence on one another.



**ST. PAUL – ELK POINT REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP  
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR REGIONAL COLLABORATION**

**BETWEEN:**

COUNTY OF ST. PAUL  
SUMMER VILLAGE OF HORSESHOE BAY  
TOWN OF ELK POINT  
TOWN OF ST. PAUL

(hereinafter referred to as “the Parties”)

**WHEREAS** the Parties have the legislated authority to enter into an agreement for the purposes of sharing resources, expertise, risk, and benefits associated with coordinating regional collaboration efforts on special projects on behalf of their respective communities; and

**WHEREAS** the Parties believe it is in the public interest to pursue regional collaboration for the following reasons:

- Contributes to knowledge and information sharing
- Obtains efficiencies through the pooling of resources
- Enhances communication, understanding, and respect for different viewpoints
- Saves money on current and/or future expenditures
- Enhances or maintains current service levels
- Creates the potential for the provision of new services to meet emerging needs
- Maximizes service delivery efficiency and avoids duplication of effort
- Generates new revenue sources
- Offers opportunities for joint advocacy efforts
- Strengthens lobbying efforts for access to external resources both governmental and corporate in nature; and

**WHEREAS** the Parties feel it is critical to provide a framework to guide the Inter-municipal Collaboration Committee in areas including:

- Formulating general principles to guide inter-municipal relations (Section 1)
- Establishing roles and responsibilities for all Parties (Section 2)
- Creating a defined committee structure to represent all Parties (Section 3)

**NOW THEREFORE**, the Parties wish to declare their spirit of fellowship by entering into a Memorandum of Understanding for striking an Inter-municipal Collaboration Committee with the following considerations:





**SECTION 1.0: ESTABLISHMENT OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The parties agree to the following principles to guide Inter-municipal Collaboration Committee efforts:

- 1) Advancement of shared interests while maintaining local autonomy
  - Each municipality understands and maintains its responsibility to make decisions in the best interests of its residents while balancing their perspective towards building a strong region.
- 2) Encourage defined opportunities for communication and information sharing
  - Enhancing opportunities for communication and dialogue to express and exchange information, which allows for challenges and differences to be understood quickly to avoid the development of misunderstandings.
- 3) Promote networks and linkages through consultative process
  - Developing increased collaboration will create efficiencies by sharing opportunities, which reduces the duplication of services, and promotes common goals and a heightened regional profile.
- 4) Pursue relations through an open, honest, and transparent relationship
  - Each level and department of the municipal organizations knows its counterparts and feels comfortable in having an open and frank discussion on various inter-municipal issues to avoid unaddressed matters and to create an atmosphere of trust, respect, and continuous learning.
- 5) Recognize and embrace differences while cultivating a culture of respect and understanding
  - Increased cooperation and communication does not mean that the municipalities will always agree or be required to participate in every proposed initiative. The distinct characteristics of the individual municipalities means there will be differences in vision and opinions. It is imperative that each municipality recognizes and respects the differences and rationale of each other's perspective and understands these differences are advantageous in providing choice and diversity, which creates a more robust region.
- 6) Commit to seeking opportunities and solving issues at their closest point of origin
  - When issues or matters of opportunity arise, the responsibility to deal with these opportunities and issues should be addressed as soon as possible by the people directly involved and with the greatest knowledge of the issues.
- 7) Generate continuity
  - Encourages a standard of cooperation and communication that will outlast political change with successive Councils.
- 8) Enhance public awareness of progress and results of regional collaboration
  - Create a unified voice to celebrate and disseminate results of collaborative efforts.





## **SECTION 2.0: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **The Role of Council**

Each Council retains autonomy and the responsibility to make decisions on behalf of their residents. However, by signing on to this MOU each Council affirms their commitment to increased collaboration through the ICC, which provides direction to their respective administration staff. Furthermore, the MOU signals a desire to harness a regional perspective in local decision-making by facilitating a forum for the municipalities to work together productively and harmonizing their interests.

### **The Role of the Inter-municipal Collaboration Committee**

The four municipalities will create an Inter-municipal Collaboration Committee (ICC). The ICC will become the focus for special projects requiring inter-municipal consideration and oversight. Although the ICC will be non-decision making, it will be responsible for the negotiation and management of inter-municipal opportunities, challenges, and special projects as required. The ICC will strategically identify opportunities and prioritize inter-municipal actions to formulate recommendations for the Councils' consideration and address areas of inter-municipal differences in need of attention.

Any single municipality may choose to participate as an observer on a matter where it is jointly agreed their contribution or impact directly on the issue is not warranted.

The ICC is responsible to:

- Coordinate regional collaboration efforts and meetings;
- Suggest opportunities for collaboration and information dissemination;
- Develop ideas for the review and consideration of the Parties; and
- Facilitate decision-making by Councils on special regional collaboration projects.

### **The Role of CAOs and Senior Administration**

Administration through the direction of the CAOs, will be the mechanism through which the MOU is formalized, maintained, implemented, and enhanced over time.

Administration brings continuity to the relationship between the municipalities and can initiate communication on an as-needed basis and ensures that staff adheres to the principles of the MOU. The CAOs in each municipality are conduits by which inter-municipal information flows. Their knowledge of one another's municipality, structure, and personnel is significant and all information will flow through and be managed by them. CAOs may also strike ad hoc committees as required with appropriate staff to manage distinct projects.

CAOs will be responsible for delivering recommendations back to their respective Councils. If requested by an individual Council, a delegation from the ICC will attend a Council meeting to provide further information.





CAOs and Senior Administration will build consensus around various important matters for carrying out projects. This may include, but is not limited to evaluating options for:

- Proceeding with a given special project;
- Selecting a method of procurement for a joint project; or
- Hiring a consultant or contractor for a joint project.

If the matter comes before the ICC, the CAOs are jointly responsible for structuring the information necessary, arranging the agenda and facilitating the proceedings for the ICC to consider the matter.

The CAOs will also annually draft a Regional Strategic Plan that identifies regional priorities and projects. This document will be submitted to each respective Council for approval.

### **The Role of Staff**

Staff at all levels will be responsible to ensure the guiding principles of the MOU are carried out operationally for special projects overseen by the ICC. This means that staff will work with their municipal counterparts to address issues that arise within the scope of their authority and mandate. Staff will also raise issues and be accountable for informing the appropriate levels of authority about matters that require attention for the mutual benefit of the municipalities.

## **SECTION 3.0: STRUCTURE OF INTER-MUNICIPAL COLLABORATION COMMITTEE**

### **Composition and Scheduling of ICC**

The ICC will be composed of eight (8) members as follows:

- One (1) Council member from each Council. The opportunity to appoint an alternate and rotate Council members on to the ICC will be at the discretion of each municipality;
- The CAOs of each municipality (will not have voting rights).

Quorum will consist of at least one elected official from each municipality and at least two CAOs in attendance.\* For the purposes of this Committee, attending the meeting by phone will satisfy attendance requirements for the purpose of obtaining a quorum.

\*In the event of their absence, the Council representative from the Summer Village of Horseshoe Bay may delegate their voting power by proxy to the CAO of the Summer Village of Horseshoe Bay.

The Committee shall annually appoint a chairperson and vice-chairperson.

Meetings of the ICC will be held at a minimum two (2) times per year with recognition that more frequent meetings will be scheduled as special projects arise and as issues may develop.



The two (2) meetings per year will be scheduled annually to:

- Summarize and update progress on issues and projects to date;
- Inventory and prioritize matters to be addressed;
- Strategize, plan, and schedule for new items;
- Address any outstanding matters.

Any additional meetings will be utilized to address specific matters as they arise. Should presentations to the ICC be required, the invited parties will be agreed to and coordinated ahead of the meeting by the CAOs.

### SUMMARY:

The St. Paul – Elk Point Regional Partnership is inherently bonded together by a shared vision, common interests, and a desire to provide residents of the region with a high quality of services and high quality of life. This MOU is constructed to form a foundation for future discussions, to support working together towards regional prosperity for the region's residents through the ICC, and to demonstrate leadership through cooperation and the promotion of ongoing inter-municipal communication.

By signing this document, each municipality acknowledges their commitment to, and agreement with, the spirit, intent, and content of this Memorandum of Understanding.

Signed this \_\_\_\_ day of June, 2017 in the Town of St. Paul, Alberta.


**County of St. Paul**

**Summer Village of Horseshoe Bay**

**Town of Elk Point**

**Town of St. Paul**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reeve Steve Upham

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Gary Burns

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Parrish Tung

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Glenn Andersen

\_\_\_\_\_  
CAO Sheila Kitz

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
CAO Norman Briscoe

\_\_\_\_\_  
CAO Ken Gwozdz

\_\_\_\_\_  
CAO Holly Habiak

