



Rural Multi-Jurisdictional Intermunicipal Development Plan Engagement Phase I - What We Heard Report

Project Overview

The project undertakes a collaborative approach to developing Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDPs) for the County of St. Paul, Lac La Biche County, Smoky Lake County, the Municipal District of Bonnyville, the County of Vermilion River, and the County of Two Hills.

Together, these six municipalities share nine separate boundaries:

- County of St. Paul and M.D. of Bonnyville
- County of St. Paul and County of Lac La Biche
- County of St. Paul and Smoky Lake County
- County of St. Paul and County of Two Hills
- County of St. Paul and County of Vermilion River
- County of Lac La Biche and MD of Bonnyville
- Smoky Lake County and County of Two Hills
- County of Two Hills and County of Vermilion River

Each IDP will include a main component and a supplementary component. The main component will include those sections common to all municipalities including governance and dispute resolution. The supplementary components of the IDP include those topic areas specific to the two municipalities in question. When finished, the project will satisfy recent changes to the Municipal Government Act that will require all municipalities that share a border have an IDP.

Engagement Overview

The project takes a multi-phase engagement approach as the team works through the process of developing the IDPs. The first phase of public engagement took place in February 2018 and worked to achieve the following objectives:

- Introduce the project and inform affected stakeholders about the IDP process
- Gather a high-level understanding of boundary conditions, issues and potential topics for further collaboration

The IAP2 Spectrum level for this phase of engagement was 'Consult' which obtains feedback on analysis, issues alternatives and decisions. It promises to listen to and acknowledge participant concerns. Input collected during this phase will help the project team understand what needs to be addressed at the boundary level, specific issues and opportunities for further collaboration.



The engagement strategy was designed to be inclusive to all parties that wanted to participate by providing multiple touch points for input. Opportunities to engage were offered both in-person and online. A project email and information for municipal contacts were also provided in the targeted stakeholder invitations and on each municipal website.

Advisory Committee

A project Advisory Committee was established with a minimum of one Council member and members of administration from each of the six municipalities. The purpose of this committee is to provide local area context and insight into the IDP boundary areas.

Targeted Stakeholder Meetings

Seven separate in-person stakeholder meetings were held based on the following schedule:

February 12, 2018 at the Centennial Seniors Citizen Club Hall, 5114 49th Street, St. Paul

12:00 – 2:00 pm - Smoky Lake County / County of Two Hills

3:00 – 5:00 pm - Smoky Lake County / County of St. Paul

February 13, 2018 at the Mallaig Legion, 3501 1st Street West, Mallaig

9:30 – 11:30 am - Lac La Biche County / County of St. Paul & Lac La Biche County / Smoky Lake County

12:30 – 2:30 pm - Lac La Biche County / M.D. of Bonnyville

3:00 – 5:00 pm - County of St. Paul / M.D. of Bonnyville

February 14, 2017 at the St. Paul Seniors Citizen Centre, 4809 47th Street, St. Paul

9:00 – 11:00 am - County of Two Hills / County of Vermilion River & County of St. Paul / County of Two Hills

12:00 – 2:00 pm - County of St. Paul / County of Vermilion River

Invitations were sent directly to targeted stakeholders including 1,492 land owners within a half kilometre of the boundaries, all adjacent First Nations and Metis Settlements, and other identified stakeholder groups including recreation and oil and gas industries. There was a combined total of 15 stakeholders that attended the meetings.

At these meetings, the team distributed project information and municipal staff were present to answer questions about the IDPs and the planning process. Round table conversations gave stakeholders the opportunity to relay important issues in the IDP boundary areas. Participants helped the project team identify several potential areas for coordination and collaboration that could be addressed through the IDP. Due to the high-level nature of IDPs, some of the input included items that are outside of the scope of an IDP; however, it was still collected to be passed on to the appropriate parties for further consideration. Comments were recorded by a facilitator and are included as Appendix 1 of this report.

An exit survey was provided to all meeting participants. In general, participants felt very satisfied with the meetings, and that their voice was heard. The summarized results of this survey are included as Appendix 2.



Online Engagement

An online questionnaire was open for stakeholder input from February 7 to February 21, 2018. The questionnaire was advertised in invitations mailed and emailed to targeted stakeholders regarding the in-person stakeholder meetings and was also posted on each of the six municipal websites. Participants were provided with the same information shared at the targeted stakeholder meetings, including the mapping exercises, and were able to provide feedback. There were 37 unique surveys filled out to varying degrees of completion.

Due to the limited number of respondents, the verbatim online questionnaire results have been compiled into a separate appendix not attached to this report. Online engagement along with in-person engagement has been summarized in the What We Heard section of this report.

Communications Overview

An Engagement and Communications Plan was developed to strategically consult the community through the life of the project. The primary strategy in the first phase of project engagement was to target specific stakeholders, primarily landowners whose property is within a half kilometre of the shared municipal boundary and would likely be directly affected by the development of an IDP. The invitation was also sent to all adjacent First Nations Band, Metis Settlements and other identified stakeholder groups such as recreation groups, and contacts from oil and gas industries.

IDP Areas

The IDP areas are primarily rural consisting of agricultural, grazing, parks and protected lands. Some borders also contain waterbodies including lakes and rivers stretching over two separate watersheds. Some small residential settlements in places like Heinsburg, Lac Sante and Garner Lake also exist along or nearby the border areas.

What We Asked

Both the in-person and online questionnaire asked participants:

- What are the opportunities and constraints within the area along or nearby municipal boundary?
- What are the current and future development constraints within the area along or nearby the municipal boundary?
- What are your development preferences and land use priorities for the area along or nearby the municipal boundary?
- What is your relationship to the boundary area?



What We Heard

Due to the nature of an IDP being a high level long-term plan, there was a relatively low level of interest in participating in the IDP stakeholder sessions and online survey. However, a range of input was heard across both platforms.

Some of the main themes that we heard through participant comments were:

- The Iron Horse Trail and other recreational trails are well loved across the region and draw many users.
- Opportunities to expand and enhance trails could drive economic development opportunities through tourism and recreation.
- Concerns about the impacts from recreational users, particularly to lakes and shorelines.
- The rules and levels of enforcement are different for OHV users across the municipalities.
- Consistent enforcement and accurate information that educates recreational users is desirable.
- Management and access of water bodies including lakes and rivers is important to residents.
- There are different approaches to road management for industry across the region including forecasting, road bans, and permitting which can impact preferred access routes.
- Some road improvements are needed; however, municipalities generally work with industry to manage impacts of agricultural and oil and gas on roads.
- Preservation of agriculture and sensitive lands was a priority for most participants.
- The oil and gas industries have many sites around or nearby the IDP areas and are a major stakeholder in the area.
- Crime, particularly theft on oil sites and farms, has impacted the region.
- The impact of Provincial regulation changes for fishing has eliminated commercial fishing and reduced tourism for anglers in the region.
- Agriculture is the major land use in the IDP areas. Invasive species and disease like club root is a concern across the region; however, municipalities and agricultural service boards have worked to address it.



Appendix One - Target Stakeholder Sessions - Facilitation Notes

1. February 12, 2018

Smoky Lake County / County of Two Hills

3 Attendees

- 857 road bans – provincial – took a week to get a permit
- New inland terminal
- Why road bans for farmers? Means extra 60 mile road trip
- 857 – two years ago there were two battery stations added to limit heavy oil being transmitted down it
- Transport challenges – updates are needed
- 652 is the same
- Counties up to par on everything else
- Land use – don't see any land use changes – don't want to see high intensity farming (poultry, livestock etc.)
- No gravel extraction in the area – gravel is straight north of Anju – old gravel pits should be reclaimed
- Victoria Trail – Snowmobile trail
- Water – can't run your cattle through the river
- Parcels end 200 m from the high-water mark
- Water access for sprayer – Willington Bellis Spedden – can't get a big truck, tight location
- Trails – connecting trails would be good
- Desjarlais Ferry Crossing – potential for campground / picnic area – privately owned c
- Very little public area for recreation – public land is generally Environmental Reserve
- Lac Sante needs better access – it's drying up
- Lacking public access to the river for boats – no access at Shandra Bridge to go fishing
- EMS doesn't have good access to the river – challenging for search and rescue operations
- Victoria settlement doesn't have public river access either



County of St. Paul / Smoky Lake County

4 Attendees

- Garner Lake
 - Quad use on Garner Lake
 - Environmental reserve is “no mans land”
 - Erosion, wildlife is being chased – need for protection
 - Side by side and jeeps on the lake and in the water
 - Likely youth that can’t go all the way to the Iron Horse Trail and a lot of local users
 - Considered lake shore - all aspects should be enforced
 - Returning water level = pollution
 - Provincial park – duty to protect
 - Direct letters from the CAO did work
- Fiber optics across the municipalities – Hwy 28
- Lake destruction near Spedden
 - Lac La Biche County/ County of St. Paul
 - Lakeshore destruction
 - Weekend warriors – not locals
 - Potential to provide education through power bills
- Potential Iron Horse Trail
- Good opportunity available
- Region wide
- St. Paul bylaw – but not enforced
- Larger population on the Smoky Lake Side of Lac Sante – demographics and turn over
- Some signage in the Spedden area but no impact
- Spring run off - Not reaching the lake because of the recession -> need to protect the natural flow of water
- Reflect ASP – 410 meters from the waters edge in both municipalities (consistent application needed) as it’s enforced on the St. Paul side but not the Smoky Lake side
- Enforcement and collaboration potential on this issue
- Education and random enforcement
- Snow clearing is good



- Roads are good and maintenance agreements in place
- Waster transfer – agreement and pick up – 3 years old
- Future development:
 - Some lots available on the Smoky Lake side
 - Mobile homes park – timelines amending coming soon
- Support for collaboration with the telecommunications companies
- No condos – preference for single family residential only
- Commercial and industrial closer to villages and towns
- Iron Horse Trail
 - Some vandalism (6 years ago)
 - Generally well maintained and well used
 - Drives tourism
 - Already staging areas throughout
 - Muni Corp is the stewardship group that does year round grooming– some maintenance by each municipality
 - Some repairs are needed where the trail has wasted out
- New water line too Mallaig / Ashmont along the trail
- Good mix of users: equestrian/pedestrian/bike/runs
- Smoky Lake RV planned future west – will be demand 3years / 5 years
- Off road vehicles are allowed on county roads for access with license and insurance in both municipalities
- Some concerns over grass fires – along or near First Nations reserves
- Ideas for collaboration:
 - Recreation management
 - Lake management
 - Economic development supporting telecommunications companies
 - Stormwater/watershed



2. February 13, 2018

Lac La Biche County / Smoky Lake County & Lac La Biche County / County of St. Paul

2 Attendees

- Specific to White Fish Lake
 - Includes lake water – certain %?
 - Currently rec uses around the lake – 1000's of people on the weekends.
 - RFI – sell land 2016. Previous council wanted an RV park – could take 10 -20 years to sort out the treaty rights over the water with the First Nations and Council timing.
 - Potentially last area for waterfront development within the IDP area – if tax generating = ok.
 - Want it to stay in its natural state with recreational use.
 - Lots of trails – historic trails. First Nations have been using for hundreds of years.
 - Fire concerns – fire break to cabins.
- Mineral lease in N.#2 of Whitefish Reserve.
- Nice to have, less impact on the natural area.
- Some challenges with destruction → recommended to lock gate but with help from neighbours → ok now.
- Public access to the lake is ok.
- Water quality is good.
- No commercial fishing exists.
- ATV on lakeshore on the other side but not this area.
- Recreational tourism is good.
- Beaver problem → has caused flooding by blocking the water flow into the lake. Barb Mail from AEP has been the contact. Trappers are also used to control the animal populations.
- Trails:
 - Exist between the settlement and the lake on the west side – a quad rally has been held in the past. Unsure of who did that.
 - Collaboration potential for tourism regionally: hiking/quads
 - Better connection to the lake.
- Hunting is active on county lands.
- Tourism areas: paved roads for dust control – it's not healthy for the cows but recognize its impact on road maintenance.



- Garbage/solid waste is okay.
- Fire fighting a challenge on the south side. Cutting grass and mutual aid agreements.

Lac La Biche County / M.D. of Bonnyville

2 Attendees

- Heavy oil locally has been impacted by the downturn. Costs are up, production is down – it's a struggle.
- Lowering costs is important for the industry – taxes are the biggest cost
- Taxation and the mill rate – negotiation to lower the cost
- The differential tax rate and pipelines would be beneficial.
- Pipelines to get to market needed for heavy oil.
- The industry adds to local economic development – the pipeline and differential tax rate
- The M.D. of Bonnyville has been great to work with particularly around road maintenance. Agreement in place for CNRL to either pay for damage or fix it themselves.
- Generally successful working relationships with the municipalities.
- Finding more efficiencies – negotiation is desirable.
- Guidelines around public lands / AEP lands are needed because it's not always clear. Alignment of rules and clear regulations – even for lease holders. It's a problem – people come to the municipality asking for guidance on provincial lands.
- Also, this is an issue for lease holders who don't know their rights – land owner vs. lease holder vs. energy company.
- How do we enforce recreational users? It's tricky.
- The Iron Horse Trail is great for recreational users.
- Recreation around Wolf Lake.
- Muni-Corr trails – diversifying with cycling/walking tied together.
- Pinehurst has great recreation and trails (they are planked and marked etc.) It's safe, you don't get caught in bogs, lots of recreational users.
- The M.D. of Bonnyville has the only access to the south end of Siebert Lake via an old forestry road.
- All commercial fishing licences have been pulled.
- Land uses are not expected to change.



- Marketing for recreational uses could be beneficial.
- Roads:
 - Bans are different across municipalities
 - M.D. of Bonnyville has been great, they don't implement bans. Collaboration between CRNL and the municipality to repair roads damaged by industry – either CNRL fixes it or they pay the county to fix it. Back and forth on the agreement.
 - Has come along way.
 - Mutually beneficial relationship.
- M.D. of Bonnyville does pre-planning and road forecasting for the year ahead – it works well to establish scheduled routes and they are always flexible if there is road work etc.
- Vermilion River works differently.
- AER issues with locked gates, preferable not to have locked gates but is required.
- Staff notes:
 - Future Seibert campground / recreation interest
 - Snug Cove

County of St. Paul / Municipal District of Bonnyville

2 Attendees

- Mostly AG lands
- Road 1930's/40's
 - Corduroy roads
 - Hasn't been maintained – need 4-wheel drive to get through
- Local use only
- Grader operator knows
- 881 grain farming on border in M.D.
- Shared Hutterite Colony
- 881 repaired recently – challenging for farmers
 - Has to use it because that's where
 - Farming equipment has a challenge
- Theft has been a major issue – collaboration for advocacy?
- Neighbourhood crime watch?



- Club Root – bigger issue. Can be transferred with equipment
 - Mutates – 10th or 12th variety
 - Changes its character
 - Best practices
 - Collaboration
 - Program: invasive species
 - Prov. County sprayed 2 fields
 - Pest Act gives municipalities power to enforce
 - St. Paul charged back for cost
 - Education program
- Don't see land use changes – agricultural
- EMS – closest to Mallaig but comes from M.D.
 - Cop from each side – RCMP
 - Good response times
- Using service cross boundary because easier to access
- Garbage services are good
- St. Paul closed Monday, not open on
- Natural Resource – windmills
- Impacts on roads (logging, oil and gas, gravel), heavy traffic
- Agriculture – Economic Development
 - Programs are setup
 - LARA (Lakeland Agricultural Research Association)
- ASBs are active
 - Collaborative already NE-AB
 - Club Root falls within ASB's
- Consistency in how its handled across the municipalities
- Iron Horse – connects to town but not lakes
- Coal Lake – don't want quads in town
- Discouraged tourism
- Access in walking distance
- In St. Paul can leave the trails – in Bonnyville you can't



- Quad from trail to Minnie Lake
- Potential signage, servicing, awareness around rules
- Riverland – Trail Stewart
- St. Paul can go
- Bungee jumping on the rail trestle
- Recreation Users
- Caught in mudhole – occasionally
- Adjacent to Iron Horse – snowmobilers sometimes on the field. Quads not a problem.
- Not much fencing – don't like quads spreading
- Club Root
- Snow machines – for the most part they use the gates.
- Trail cuts through field pie shapes
- Asset that brings in tourism
- Maintenance cost/water impacts/holding back water
- Widened the trail
- Concern around invasive species being spread
- Fishing – catch and release only
- Marc's idea: fish lottery
- Users of Muriel Lake provincial recreation in decline – often are workers
- Maybe that the municipality would take it over
- AEP may want to offload
- Changes in place – which are to
- Recreation sites – driven by when you can fish not just catch and release
- Flooding – not an issue (only in wet year)



3. February 14, 2018

St. Paul/Vermillion River

2 Attendees

- Heinsburg
 - Losing some commercial
 - 15 minutes from nearest gas
 - 50 people
 - Have the school – many work at the school
 - Have post office
 - Riverboat tours
 - Community Hall – seniors
 - Exercise group/card group
 - Hall rental – recently upgraded
 - Old ferry landing – drive down and load boats
 - Nice campground
 - River Valley Park – theatre/caboose
 - Tourism from all over
 - End/start of Iron Horse Trail
 - Potential to connect further
 - Part of the Great Trail
 - Not too bad for conflict between users
 - Nowhere to eat – but desirable
 - Talk about doing something in the train station – say weekend chili tea/cold drinks
 - Provincial Historic Resource
 - Convenience store near closed before Christmas
 - Have a car wash
 - No flooding history
 - No community water supply/no sanitary
 - Impacts people wanting to buy – costly
- Oil Industry:
 - Upkeep of roads: sanded and graded



- Industry liaison relationship working
- Banned roads: understand why – think its working
- Vermillion: same working relationship
- Agreement – beat up the roads, we put in majority of the funding.
- Budgeting and forecasting regularly
- Out of schedule with municipality
- Meet earlier to hit CNRL's budget cycle
- Volume of traffic
- Dust concerns
- Harvest time: can't see the swath
- 560 road – mostly oil and gas traffic
- Like to pave the road, but with prices at the moment – would be hard to do
- Rebuild Northern Valley Road
- Continue to advocate with the Province
- Paving grants – STIP
- Then the connection to Vermillion R
- Road connection isn't aligned
- Resource Road Program – was called
- Banned roads not an issue
- No conflict with recreational users
- Landowners have issues with users not sticking to the trails
- Riverland – stewardship group – follow-up on any user complaints
- Issues:
 - Theft active on farms now with oil and gas slowing down
 - Policing an issue
 - St. Paul – discussion with residents and RCMP
 - Lack of police patrolling
 - Emergency services are good
 - First responders and ambulance very good
 - Fire protection from Dewberry
 - Garbage drop – 4 mi – hours are good



- Open Sunday, good for lake people
- Potential for more tourism support
- Agriculture: well supported by the municipalities (and ASB's)
- Retail in Dewberry
- Club Root – not in that area
- Vermillion: policies in place
- Whitney and Laurier
- Flooding now
- Impacting buildings
- Threatened and groundwater flooding
- Beaver control impacting overland flooding
 - Hire trappers/water flow
 - Not an easy task
 - Remain agricultural land use except Heinsburg
 - Potential impact of wetlands on oil and gas/agriculture/municipal infrastructure
 - Impacts on cattle watering
- Poor internet service in Heinsburg



Appendix Two - Exit Survey Summary

1. How satisfied were you with today's session?

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	N/A
Clarity of information provided	8	3	1		
Project team's response to my questions	10	1	1		
Opportunity to provide input	9	1	2		
Opportunity to hear others	9	2	1		
Session location	8		4		
Session time	9	1	2		

2. Do you feel your input was heard?

Yes - 12

No -

3. How did you hear about this session? Please check all that apply.

Stakeholder invitation in the mail - 8

Municipal website -

My Councillor or Reeve -

Word of Mouth -

Other – 3 Email

1 Not specified

4. What worked for you about the session format and activities today? Is there anything we could do to make it better?

- Would be valuable to have additional GIS layers to provide information on land users, (eligible), constraints, etc. in order to identify current situation and potential overlaps/opportunities for collaboration.



- All at the table were able to express concerns or ask questions.
- My comments were heard.
- The information was excellent. Only a little bit more “pre-information” so that we could know what to come prepared for.
- I feel that I had a voice. The group understood.
- Not really anything to be improved.
- Hearing from everyone worked well.
- Heard input from landowners and county rep’s.
- Felt very welcome.

5. Do you have any additional comments about the IDP or the project that you would like to share?

- Will run with the agenda in mind.
- Sounds like a very good program and to make things work better for all.
- No.
- N/A
- Not at this time.