

WHAT DOES REGIONAL PLANNING REALLY MEAN FOR ROCKY VIEW?

The County is advertising the Council majority's view to try and convince residents that the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board (CMRB) is the worst thing that has ever happened to Rocky View. Here's another perspective on their claims.

Do the urban municipalities have control over future growth in Rocky View?

No – development within existing Area Structure Plans is grandfathered and can continue under those Plans. Elsewhere in Rocky View, first parcels out, subdivisions of less than 50 new houses, and/or new businesses on no more than 20 acres can also go ahead without CMRB involvement – these are the vast majority of development in Rocky View.

Will the CMRB cause your land value to go down?

No – unless, perhaps, you hold speculative land holdings outside of Area Structure Plans purchased with the expectation of developing large-scale high density residential communities. As noted above, almost all development and growth will continue unaffected by the CMRB, so how will its presence impact your land value?

Is the CMRB biased towards urban high-density development?

No – it is biased towards having high density development located where it can be serviced effectively and economically. 95% of our region's population live in the urban municipalities. From Rocky View's perspective, encouraging higher density in those urban communities is far better than continuing suburban sprawl. It reduces pressure to annex our land.

Does the CMRB limit business development?

No – unless you want to locate more than 20 acres of new business development outside of already-approved Area Structure Plans – even then, if there's solid planning rationale and buy-in from our neighbours, it can still continue. Working with our regional neighbours will permit Rocky View to develop the already-identified commercial / industrial areas in Balzac and Conrich more intensively – and there is still decades worth of available land for business development in those areas.

Does the CMRB limit housing and lifestyle options in Rocky View?

No – unless you want to live in a new high-density urban-style development without the services available in a true urban setting. Langdon, Harmony, and Bragg Creek will all continue to develop as planned, with their variety of housing options.

Does the CMRB limit residents' say in their own municipal government?

No – unless residents want high density urban development randomly scattered around Rocky View. The CMRB only reviews regionally significant development decisions. The CMRB turned down Rocky View's revised Municipal Development Plan and Springbank Area Structure Plans – all of these were pushed through by the current majority against almost unanimous opposition from residents. It's hard not to conclude that the CMRB listens to our residents far better than our own council.

Is the CMRB biased against its rural municipalities?

No – Foothills and Wheatland Counties, the other rural municipalities in the CMRB, brought forward three Area Structure Plans for CMRB review – they were all approved. In contrast, Rocky View brought forward amendments to the County Plan, the revised Municipal Development Plan, and the Springbank Area Structure Plans – all were refused.

It's hard not to conclude that Rocky View is the problem rather than a general bias against the rural municipalities. Rocky View might be more successful if council stopped pushing through high density development that relies on infrastructure and services paid for by our urban neighbours. It might also be more successful, if it wasn't trying to game the system and ram through as many developments as possible under looser interim rules before the Province finalizes the CMRB's growth plan. It's hard not to see the council majority as anything other than opportunistic.

Why Did the County Run Their Ad?

Regardless of Rocky View's misleading message, putting their ad in the newspaper reeks of hypocrisy. The council majority stopped all newspaper advertising because they concluded that posting notices on the County website and social media was adequate to fulfill their legal obligations to inform residents about important decisions.

Now that they want to sway the opinions of those same residents, the County website isn't sufficient to get their message out to people. How does that work?

The timing of the County's advertisement is highly suspect. Why is it coming out now, at the beginning of the municipal election campaign? It's hard not to conclude that the council majority, all of whom oppose the CMRB, want to influence Rocky View voters in the upcoming election. While bullying is never acceptable, it is ironic that they're willing to bully their residents; but cry loudly when they aren't getting their own way.

**Rocky View's election is October 18th.
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