

CLEARWATER COUNTY COUNCIL AGENDA
February 13, 2018
9:00 am
Council Chambers
4340 – 47 Avenue, Rocky Mountain House, AB

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. AGENDA ADOPTION

C. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

1. January 23, 2018 Regular Meeting Minutes

D. PUBLIC WORKS

1. Endeavour to Assist Policy Review and ***Tabled Item*** Spongberg Cost Share Request

E. PLANNING

1. Bylaw #1040/18 Land Use Amendment regarding Medical Marijuana Production Facilities

F. CORPORATE SERVICES

1. Manager, Revenue and Assessment Position

G. MUNICIPAL

1. Clearwater Trails Initiative – West Country Recreation Management Survey
2. Alberta Environment and Parks - Letter to Deputy Minister

H. CLOSED SESSION*

1. Caroline Industrial/Commercial Subdivision; *FOIP s.25(1)(b) – Disclosure Harmful to Economic or Other Interests of a Public Body*

* For discussions relating to and in accordance with: a) the Municipal Government Act, Section 197 (2) and b) the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

I. INFORMATION

1. Interim CAO's Report
2. Public Works Directors' Report
3. Accounts Payable
4. Councillor's Verbal Report

J. ADJOURNMENT

TABLED ITEMS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Item, Reason and Status</u>
06/13/17	213/17 identification of a three-year budget line for funding charitable/non-profit organizations' operational costs pending review of Charitable Donations and Solicitations policy amendments.
11/28/17	464/17 Live Video Feed in Council Chambers pending more information and additional quotes on alternative live video feed systems
01/09/18	005/18 Spongberg Cost Share Request



REQUEST FOR DECISION

SUBJECT: Endeavour To Assist Program Policy Review		
PRESENTATION DATE: February 13, 2018		
DEPARTMENT: Public Works	WRITTEN BY: Erik Hansen/ Keith McCrae	REVIEWED BY: Rick Emmons, Interim CAO
BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS: <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Funded by Dept. <input type="checkbox"/> Reallocation		
LEGISLATIVE DIRECTION: <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial Legislation (cite) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County Bylaw or Policy (cite) Endeavour To Assist Program Policy		
STRATEGIC PLAN THEME: Managing Our Growth	PRIORITY AREA: Transportation	STRATEGIES: Support a transportation network that connects and moves residents and industry.
ATTACHMENT(S): Endeavour To Assist Program Policy, Spongberg Letter		

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

1) That Council reviews the draft policy revisions provided, recommend any changes and approves the policy revisions in principle with a final draft to be presented at the next scheduled Council meeting.

2) That Council agrees to share a portion of the Spongbergs cost contribution as the County is a benefitting landowner.

Or

3) That Council uphold their current policy that the policy triggers are not yet applicable and re-visit this matter in the context of the Joint Development Area pending recommendations from the IDP committee.

BACKGROUND: As per Council's direction, staff is bringing forth the Endeavor To Assist Program Policy for Council's review.

Through an administrative review process, staff have concluded that the policy generally meets the intended purpose and provides adequate mechanisms for

developers to recover a portion of their investment in public infrastructure. Small changes include removing Clearwater County and the Province of Alberta as being exempted from contributing to an Endeavour To Assist.

Items that are intended to be added are identified in **red bold** whereas items intended to be removed have been ~~struck through~~.

See Attached

During the January 9, 2018 regularly scheduled Council meeting, Council made Motion **# 005/18**

“That Council tables Spongbergs’ Metaldog Industrial Subdivision - Cost sharing request for RR 7-2 overlay' pending the Endeavour to Assist policy review.”

As Council may recall, the Spongbergs were required to upgrade a portion of Range Road 7-2 as a condition of their Metaldog Industrial Park development. As per their letter, dated December 11, 2017, the request is that Council consider cost sharing their contribution of \$161,375.00. The County purchased the adjacent ¼ section and acreage in July 2015. To date the County has graded approximately 30 Acres, constructed the access road, salt / sand storage facility and a small cold storage building. Council has not finalized the future development plan for the balance of the property.

With the staff recommended policy changes to the Endeavour To Assist Program Policy the County would not be obligated to contribute to the Spongbergs investment. Council could however deal with this request as a “one off” and determine that there is a county benefit and contribute the Spongbergs investment.



**CLEARWATER COUNTY
ENDEAVOUR TO ASSIST PROGRAM**

POLICY

EFFECTIVE DATE:	February 24, 2015
REVISED DATE:	Revised XXXXXX
SECTION:	Public Works
POLICY STATEMENT:	To provide a mechanism for a developer to recover a portion of a capital investment into publicly owned infrastructure that was required as a condition of development by Clearwater County or the Province of Alberta. This mechanism will be referred to as the Clearwater County Endeavour to Assist Program.
DEFINITIONS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Publicly Owned Infrastructure –</u> This includes but is not limited to, any municipal road, municipally owned water and wastewater systems, municipally owned fire ponds, municipally owned storm water management ponds and, Provincial Highways and associated infrastructure. • <u>Capital Investment –</u> The quantifiable amount a Developer was required to pay to construct or enhance Public Infrastructure. • <u>Developer –</u> An individual, group of individuals, company, corporation or organization that has made a quantifiable capital investment into Public Infrastructure.
PROCEDURE:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A Developer that has paid in full or in part for the construction of or enhancement to Publicly Owned Infrastructure may be eligible for the Endeavor to Assist Program. The terms and conditions of the Endeavor to Assist Program are as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) When a development is approved and the project is eligible for the Endeavor to Assist Program, the developer may submit an application form indicating the description of the project, construction completion and acceptance date and the costs associated. A detailed cost breakdown and verification may be required depending on the complexity of the project. b) The eligibility of a project, for consideration, will commence upon the final completion and acceptance of a development by the Municipal or Provincial Authority. c) As additional development is applied for, utilizing in whole or part of an approved Endeavour to Assist project, the County will determine, in its sole discretion, the derived measurable benefit and the value of a reasonable cost contribution. The cost contribution amount shall be



**CLEARWATER COUNTY
ENDEAVOUR TO ASSIST PROGRAM**

	<p>determined by the Director, Public Works or his designate, in their sole discretion.</p> <p>d) The determined amount will be payable to Clearwater County as a condition of development then dispersed to the appropriate parties.</p> <p>e) Eligible projects include, but are not limited to, any property, lands, systems, or infrastructure that is owned by government.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Municipal road construction including Industry Access Roads on road allowance, Isolated Access Roads on road allowance, Forced Municipal roads, Residential /Commercial/ Industrial Subdivision Roads and Resource Roads- Municipally owned water and wastewater systems- Municipally owned fire ponds/storm water management ponds and associated infrastructure.- Intersectional treatments or improvements to Municipal or Provincial Highways asphalt surfacing, road widening, or,- Any project deemed eligible by Clearwater County <p>f) Ineligible projects include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Dust suppression- Road Maintenance or additional gravel- Gravel road construction or improvements more than (5) five years after construction completion and acceptance.- Surfaced road construction or improvements, asphalt overlay and intersectional treatments more than (10) ten years after construction completion and acceptance.- Water treatment systems, wastewater treatment systems, fire ponds, storm water management ponds more than (15) fifteen years after construction completion and acceptance.- Clearwater County, will evaluate, in their sole discretion, any other projects that may be considered ineligible under this policy. <p>g) Development that is excluded from contributing to an Endeavour to Assist project include, but are not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">—All development by Clearwater County—All development by the Province of Alberta- Any development that does not require a Development Agreement or permit- Access to a field or agricultural purpose approach- Residential development not associated with subdivision <p>h) This program will be made available only to the original applicant(s) or their spouse. This program is not transferable to subsequent land owners, family members or other assigns.</p>
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Kelly and Andrea Spongberg
[REDACTED]

Clearwater County, AB
T4T 1A4

December 11, 2017

Clearwater County Council
4340 – 47th Ave
Rocky Mountain House, AB
T4T 1A4

RE: Metaldog Industrial Subdivision – cost sharing request for RR 7-2 overlay

Reeve and Council,

As you may know we are developing 13 industrial lots north of town on Range Rd 7-2. We began this process in 2010. They are now nearing completion. We are requesting Clearwater County Council consider assisting us, the developers of Metaldog Industrial Subdivision, with the costs that were incurred for an asphalt overlay of Range Road 7-2. We requested the overlay in August of 2013 to remove the seasonal 90% Road Ban from RR 7-2 to allow for our own construction as well as to provide any potential lot owners with a ban free road. RR 7-2 is a main artery through designated industrial and commercial zones, connecting the Rocky Mountain House Airport with the Town and County. We were told at this time that we could apply for an Endeavor to Assist to be placed on this infrastructure upgrade so that we would be able to recover some of our costs if future development used RR 7-2 and we therefore applied for an Endeavor to Assist on August 16, 2013. We also entered into a Cost Contribution Agreement with the County on October 1, 2013 to have the work completed by the County for which we provided an Irrevocable letter of credit for \$270,000.

The asphalt overlay of RR 7-2 from Road 40-0 to our north approach was completed in August of 2014 and our cost was \$161,374.87 for the upgrade. (Exhibit 2) Please note that there was additional work done on the road at the same time that was not considered to be our responsibility, listed as County Portion. On August 28, 2014 a 10 year Endeavor to Assist was placed on file for all properties utilizing RR 7-2 that could potentially benefit from the road upgrades.

Subsequently in July of 2015, Clearwater County purchased land directly to the west of us on RR 7-2 for salt and sand storage, a potential new administration building and/or industrial lots. The asphalt overlay that we paid for allows County trucks to use the ban free road now, the main County approach is directly across from our north approach. Also of note is the fact that we constructed a large firepond, as required by County conditions, that may be used in the case of fire on County property or any property in the area.

We had been encouraged to submit a request to Clearwater County Council for assistance in the summer of 2013 by County staff in accordance with the Access Roads Policy. (Exhibit 1) However we found out that a new policy was being drafted and that we should wait, therefore when we applied to Council to include the upgrades in the 2014 Overlay project we did not ask for any assistance with the cost apart from establishing an Endeavor to Assist. When the new Endeavor to Assist Program was released February 24, 2015 we found that the policy had been written to specifically exclude County development from any need to assist developers with public upgrades. (Exhibit 3) This does not seem to be in accordance with Section 651(3) of the Municipal Government Act.

(3) If a municipality has at any time, either before or after this section comes into force, or before or after section 77.1 of the Planning Act was deemed to come into force, entered into an agreement providing for reimbursement of payments made or costs incurred in respect of the excess capacity of an improvement by an applicant for a development permit or subdivision approval, the municipality must, when other land that benefits from the improvement is developed or subdivided, enter into an agreement with the applicant for a development permit or subdivision approval for the other land, and that agreement may require the applicant to pay an amount in respect of the improvement, as determined by the municipality, which may be in excess of the cost of the improvement required for the proposed development or subdivision

We applied to Clearwater County Public Works Department for assistance through the Endeavor to Assist Policy on October 18, 2016 but were denied due to the fact that the “current Endeavor to Assist Policy does not apply to development by Clearwater County.” (Exhibit 4) We have reviewed other Municipal Endeavors to Assist and Infrastructure Cost Recovery policies and we have not found another one yet that specifically excludes the Municipality.

We are now appealing to Clearwater County Council to share the cost of upgrading RR 7-2 to ban free status. It is not fair for us to pay for the whole cost of upgrading this road, especially now that the County itself and it’s citizens are benefitting from its use.

We are available for a public presentation of this request should there be any questions arising.

We thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely

Kelly and Andrea Spongberg



REQUEST FOR DECISION

SUBJECT: Bylaw 1040/18 Amendment to the Clearwater County Land Use Bylaw, Regarding Medical Marijuana Production Facilities		
PRESENTATION DATE: February 13 th , 2018		
DEPARTMENT: Planning	WRITTEN BY: Dustin Bisson	REVIEWED BY: Keith McCrae and Rick Emmons, Interim CAO
BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS: <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Funded by Dept. <input type="checkbox"/> Reallocation		
LEGISLATIVE DIRECTION: <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial Legislation (cite) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County Bylaw or Policy (cite) Clearwater County Bylaw No. 714/01 The Land Use Bylaw		
STRATEGIC PLAN THEME: Managing our Growth	PRIORITY AREA: Planning	STRATEGIES: Ensure appropriate land use planning
ATTACHMENT(S): Draft Bylaw 1040/18 Amendments to the Clearwater County Land Use Bylaw, in regards to Medical Marijuana Production		

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

That Council grant 1st reading of Bylaw 1040/18 and proceed to a public hearing.

BACKGROUND:

With the legalization of marijuana for medical purposes, the Clearwater County Planning Department has been researching land use regulations in regards to the production of medical marijuana. After looking into the Federal regulations for the production of medical marijuana, we looked at what other municipalities have done when it comes to their practices and dealings with the land use considerations of production. We also contacted a lawyer for legal advice as to whether a medical marijuana production facility could be considered agricultural or even a greenhouse. With this research in mind, our department is bringing forward a bylaw that will amend the County's Land Use Bylaw to allow for the production of medical marijuana in Clearwater County.

This bylaw would amend some definitions in our Land Use Bylaw to state that Medical Marijuana production is not included under the following definitions: Farming, Farm Building, Farm Subsidiary Business, Green House, Home Occupation or Market Garden.

This bylaw would also add a definition for Medical Marijuana Production Facility to the Land Use Bylaw. The definition for a Medical Marijuana Production Facility: means the use of land, buildings or structures for the cultivation, processing, testing, destruction, packaging and shipping of medical marijuana as permitted and licensed by the Federal Government of Canada.

The bylaw adds a special land use provision for Medical Marijuana Production Facility under Section 7 of the Land Use Bylaw. The special land use provision sets out considerations and guidelines for Development Officers and the Municipal Planning Commission when it comes to future Medical Marijuana Production Facility applications. The special land use provision provides direction as to where production facilities may be located in the County. The special land use provision also sets out some guidelines in regard to setbacks from existing land uses.

This bylaw would add Medical Marijuana Production Facility as a discretionary use in the three (3) following Land Use Districts in Clearwater County's Land Use Bylaw:

- Industrial
- Light Industrial
- Nordegg Industrial

Administration is therefore requesting that Council grant first reading to Bylaw 1040/18 and proceed to a public hearing that is tentatively scheduled for March 27, 2018.

BYLAW NO. 1040/18

A Bylaw of Clearwater County, in the Province of Alberta, for the purpose of amending the Land Use Bylaw, being Bylaw No. 714/01.

PURSUANT to the Authority conferred upon it by the Municipal Government Act, Statutes of Alberta, 2000, Chapter M-26.1 and amendments thereto, and;

WHEREAS, a Council is authorized to prepare, to adopt, and to amend a Land Use Bylaw to regulate and control the use and development of medical marijuana production facilities within the Municipality;

NOW, THEREFORE, upon compliance with the relevant requirements of the Municipal Government Act, the Council of the Clearwater County, Province of Alberta, duly assembled, enacts that the Land Use Bylaw be amended as follows:

1. Part One: General**1.7 Definitions**

Amend the following definitions to read:

“FARMING” means the use of land or buildings for the planting, raising, growing, production and sale of crops, livestock, poultry, trees and shrubs, wildlife, game, bees, honey, milk, and eggs; but does not include game farming or game ranching for viewing, tourism or recreational purposes, market gardening, sod farming or medical marijuana production facilities.

“FARM BUILDING” means the improvements used in connection with the raising or production of crops, livestock, poultry, nursery trees and shrubs, fish, wildlife, game, fur production or bee keeping and situated on land used in connection with such farming operations, but does not include a dwelling, or any buildings associated with a medical marijuana production facility.

“FARM SUBSIDIARY BUSINESS” means a business for an occupation, trade, profession or craft approved in accordance with this Bylaw to be carried out on the farm unit as a use secondary and subordinate to the agricultural use and employing not more than two employees. This shall not include a medical marijuana production facility.

“GREENHOUSE” means a building specially designed and used for the growing of vegetables, flowers and other plants for transplanting or for sale, excluding medical marijuana production facilities.

“HOME OCCUPATION” means a development consisting of the use of part of a dwelling unit or ancillary building by a resident of the dwelling unit for an occupation, trade, profession, business or craft as a use secondary and subordinate to the residential use of the parcel of land. This shall not include a medical marijuana production facility.

“MARKET GARDEN” means the growing of vegetables or fruit for commercial purposes, but does not include a medical marijuana production facility.

Add the following definition:

“MEDICAL MARIJUANA PRODUCTION FACILITY” means the use of land, buildings or structures for the cultivation, processing, testing, destruction, packaging and shipping of medical marijuana as permitted and licensed by the Federal Government of Canada.”

2. Part Seven: Special Land Use Provisions

Add the following under Part Seven: Special Land Use Provisions

7.12 Medical Marijuana Production Facility

- (1) Clearwater County should direct medical marijuana production facilities to locate in a business park
- (2) All medical marijuana production facilities, applying for a development permit, within a business park, must be located outside of a 50 m radius of a property boundary, that has any of the following attribute:
 - (a) an existing residence;
 - (b) zoned recreational facility district;
 - (c) an existing religious assembly use;
 - (d) an existing school;
 - (e) an existing child care facility;
 - (f) an existing community hall;
 - (g) public recreation
- (3) All medical marijuana production facilities applying for a development permit on a standalone industrial parcel, must be located outside of a 300 m radius from a property boundary, that has any of the following attribute:
 - (a) an existing residence;
 - (b) zoned recreational facility district;
 - (c) an existing religious assembly use;
 - (d) an existing school;
 - (e) an existing child care facility;
 - (f) an existing community hall;
 - (g) public recreation
- (4) Medical marijuana production facilities shall:
 - (a) be contained in a fully enclosed stand-alone building;
 - (b) be the only use permitted on a parcel, with the allowance for an ancillary building on the parcel;
 - (c) must not have any outside storage of goods, materials, and supplies;
 - (d) No use or operation shall cause or create conditions that may be objectionable or dangerous beyond the building that contains it.
 - (e) Follow the Federal Government Directive on Physical Security Requirements for Controlled Substances.
- (5) The Development Officer or Municipal Planning Commission shall not approve a development permit for a Medical Marijuana Production Facility unless, in its opinion, it is satisfied that the proposed use is suitable, harmonious, appropriate and compatible with the existing quality of life in the surrounding area.
- (6) In evaluating the appropriateness of a development permit application for a Medical Marijuana Production Facility, the Development Officer or Municipal Planning Commission shall consider:
 - (a) compatibility with adjacent and neighboring land uses;
 - (b) impact on existing traffic volumes and patterns of flow;
 - (c) appropriate vehicle parking and site access/egress requirements (the locations of access/egress points shall not route traffic through residential areas);
 - (d) lighting and signage;
 - (e) any other matters considered appropriate.

3. Part Thirteen: Land Use Districts

13.4 (5) Industrial District

Add the following under discretionary use:

- 31. Medical Marijuana Production Facility

13.4 (6) Light Industrial District

Add the following under discretionary use:

- 16. Medical Marijuana Production Facility

13.4 (23) Nordegg Industrial District

Add the following under discretionary use:

- 31. Medical Marijuana Production Facility

READ A FIRST TIME this _____ day of _____ A.D., 2018.

REEVE

MUNICIPAL MANAGER

PUBLIC HEARING held this _____ day of _____ A.D., 2018.

READ A SECOND TIME this _____ day of _____ A.D., 2018.

READ A THIRD AND FINAL TIME this ___ day of ____ A.D., 2018.

REEVE

MUNICIPAL MANAGER



REQUEST FOR DECISION

SUBJECT: Manager, Revenue & Assessment Position		
PRESENTATION DATE: February 13, 2018		
DEPARTMENT: Corporate Services	WRITTEN BY: Murray Hagan	REVIEWED BY: Janice Anderson and Rick Emmons, Interim CAO
BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS: <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Funded by Dept. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reallocation		
LEGISLATIVE DIRECTION: <input type="checkbox"/> None <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Provincial Legislation (cite) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County Bylaw or Policy (cite)		
STRATEGIC PLAN THEME:	PRIORITY AREA:	STRATEGIES:

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:
That Council approves re-creation and posting of the above position and reallocates \$110,000 from contracted services to salaries & benefits with the 2018 Revenue & Assessment budget.

BACKGROUND:

Subsection 284.2(1) of the Municipal Government Act requires Clearwater County to appoint a person as Municipal Assessor. This person can be either an employee of the County, or a contractor.

The Municipal Assessor for Clearwater County was the Manager, Assessment & Revenue until October 31, 2017 when the incumbent retired. Effective November 1, 2017, this person was contracted by the County to be the Municipal Assessor for a period of one year. The 2018 operating budget for Revenue & Assessment was adjusted by decreasing amounts within salaries & benefits and increasing those for contracted services. This effectively eliminated the position.

On January 28, 2018, the contractor provided 60 days notice of termination of the contract. As of March 29, 2018, she will no longer be the Municipal Assessor for Clearwater County.

In preparation for this change, Administration has considered the options of continued contracting vs. re-creation of the Manager, Revenue & Assessment position. While contracting can offer a workable solution to the County's immediate needs, Administration recommends the position be re-created for the following reasons:

- A higher level of customer service can be provided by having expertise in-house to more quickly and appropriately address ratepayer concerns and answer their questions, particularly with consideration to the diversity and complexity of properties within the County.
- Ongoing training and leadership can be provided to members of the Revenue & Assessment team, enabling them to provide better service, and ensure higher quality of information maintained.
- More timely response to Council inquiries regarding assessment and taxation related issues, including the evaluation of options with respect to municipal tax rates.
- Increased ability to evaluate and mitigate risk to the County coming from changing legislation, industry trends, and ratepayer concerns.
- Greater certainty and control of costs.
- Ability to demonstrate Clearwater County values and priorities when dealing directly with property owners.

The transfer of responsibility for the assessment of Designated Industrial Properties (DIP) to the provincial government is underway, but the ultimate impact to the County is still uncertain. The Province has indicated that it currently doesn't have the required resources to accomplish this work on its own and has asked municipalities for assistance. If the Province fully assumes this work in the future, the impact to the Manager position would not be expected to be significant as the Municipal Assessor has delegated these duties to contracted providers in the past.



REQUEST FOR DECISION

SUBJECT: Clearwater Trails Initiative - West Country Recreation Management Survey		
PRESENTATION DATE: February 13, 2018		
DEPARTMENT: Council	WRITTEN BY: Christine Heggart	REVIEWED BY: Rick Emmons, Interim CAO
BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Funded by Dept. <input type="checkbox"/> Reallocation		
LEGISLATIVE DIRECTION: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial Legislation (cite) <input type="checkbox"/> County Bylaw or Policy (cite)		
STRATEGIC PLAN THEME: Well Governed and Leading Organization	PRIORITY AREA: 1.4 Value and protect the natural environment for future generations.	STRATEGIES: 1.4.7 Continue to monitor impacts of recreational uses within West County and advocate for programs that support sustainability of public lands/ eastern slopes areas.
ATTACHMENT(S): West Country Recreation Management Survey		

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

That Council reviews and receives as information CTI's West Country Recreation Management Survey results from 2017.

BACKGROUND:

Attached for Council's information is a summary of results from a survey conducted by the Clearwater Trails Initiative (CTI) Committee in the summer of 2017, from May to September.

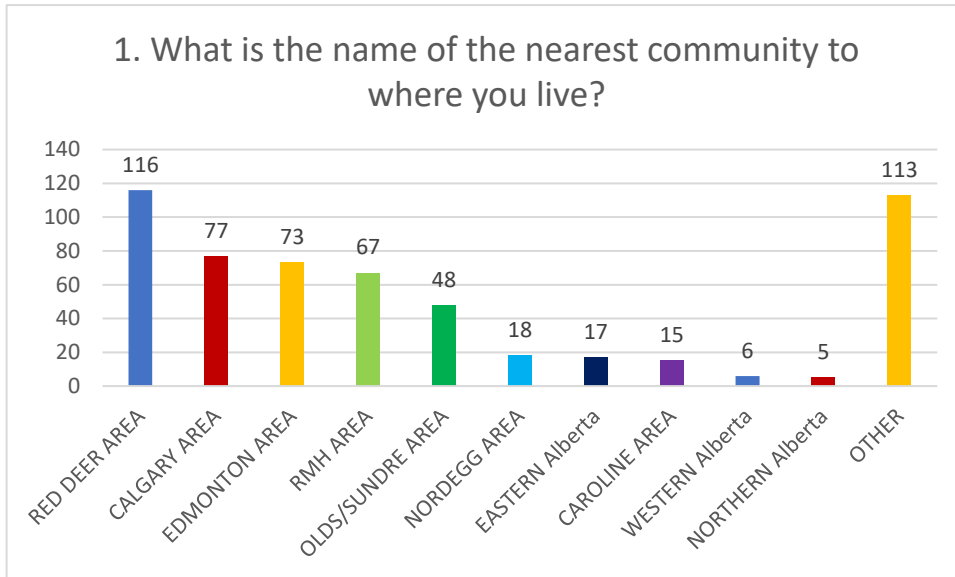
During that time, the *West Country Recreation Management Survey* was available online on the County's website and hard copies were also distributed by members, with 559 responses to provide the CTI group insight into West Country usage.

Councillor Duncan would like to provide Council an update on the survey and activities of CTI.

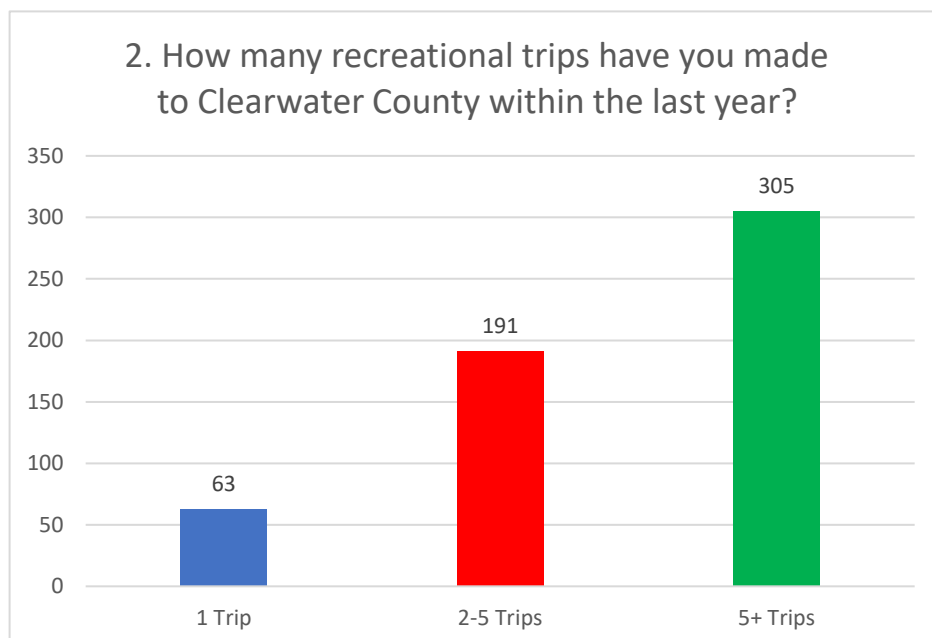
West Country Recreation Management Survey – Summary of Responses

The Clearwater Trails Initiative group conducted a survey of West Country users from May until September 2017, asking respondents to complete the online or hard copy survey to provide insight into their use of the West Country.

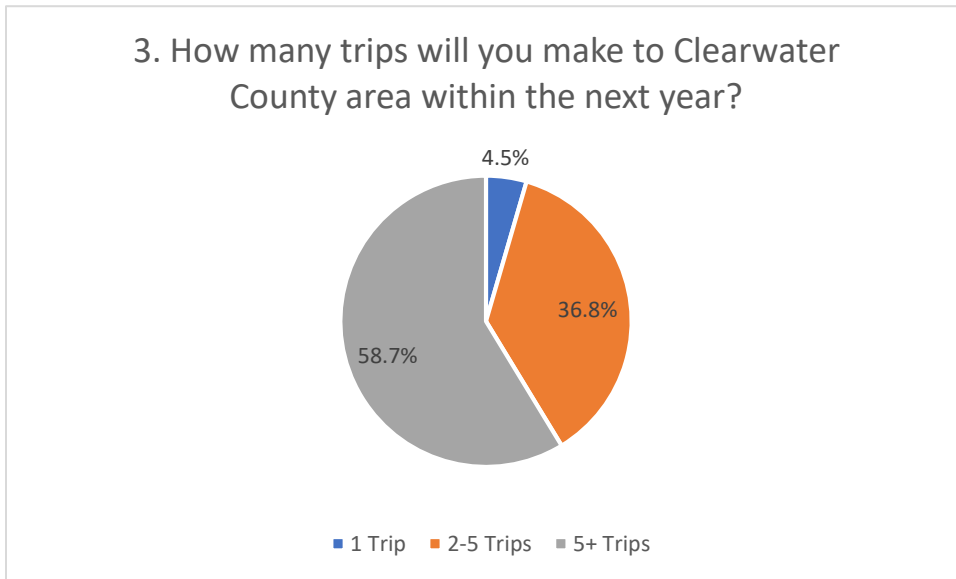
A total of 559 survey responses were received, with the following charts summarizing the responses.



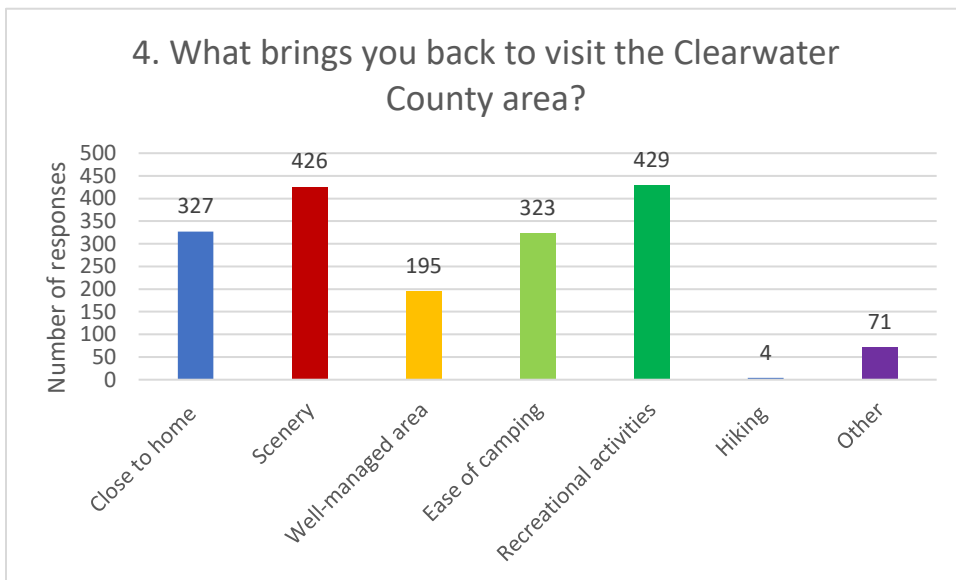
For question 1, the majority of West Country Users originated from urban areas - with Red Deer (116), Calgary (77) and Edmonton (73) ranking amongst the top three (48%). As well, users from the local area of Rocky Mountain House (67), Olds/Sundre (48), Nordegg (18) and Caroline (15) made 26% of West Country users.



For question 2, the majority of respondents (55%) indicated they’ve made five or more trips to Clearwater County in the previous year.



For question 3, the majority of respondents (59%) indicated they intend to make five or more trips to Clearwater County in the next year.



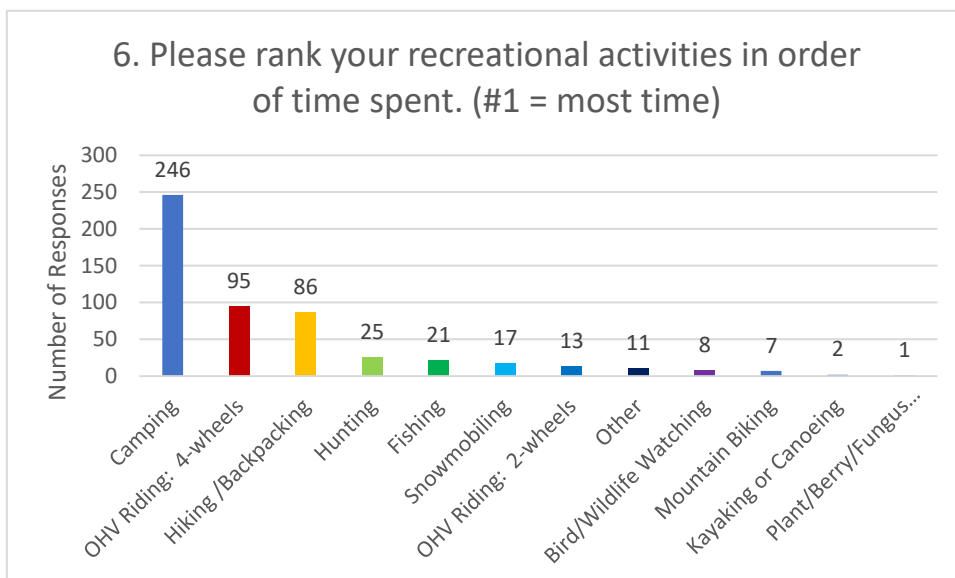
For question 4, the majority of respondents indicated “Recreational Activities” as the main reason they return to Clearwater County, with “Scenery” being a significant consideration as well.

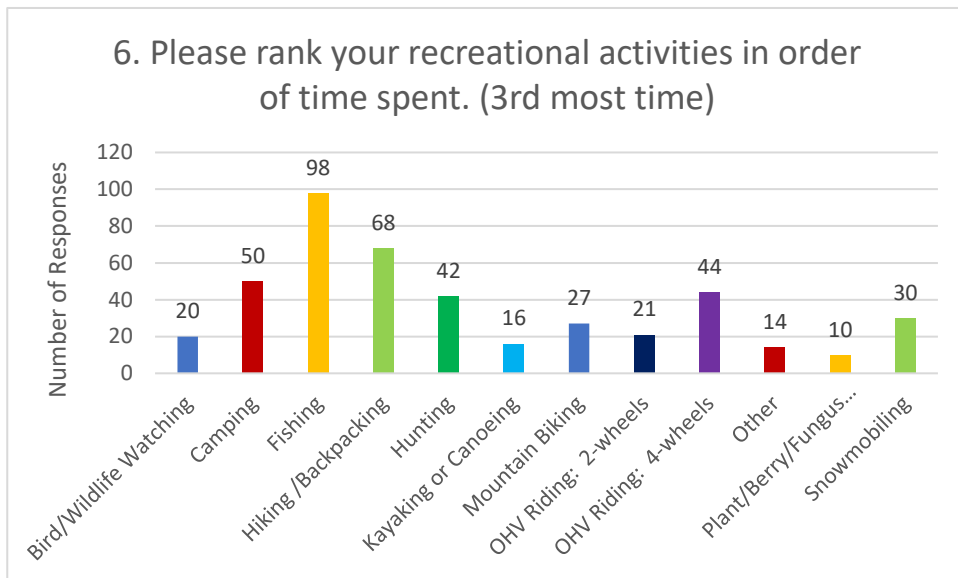
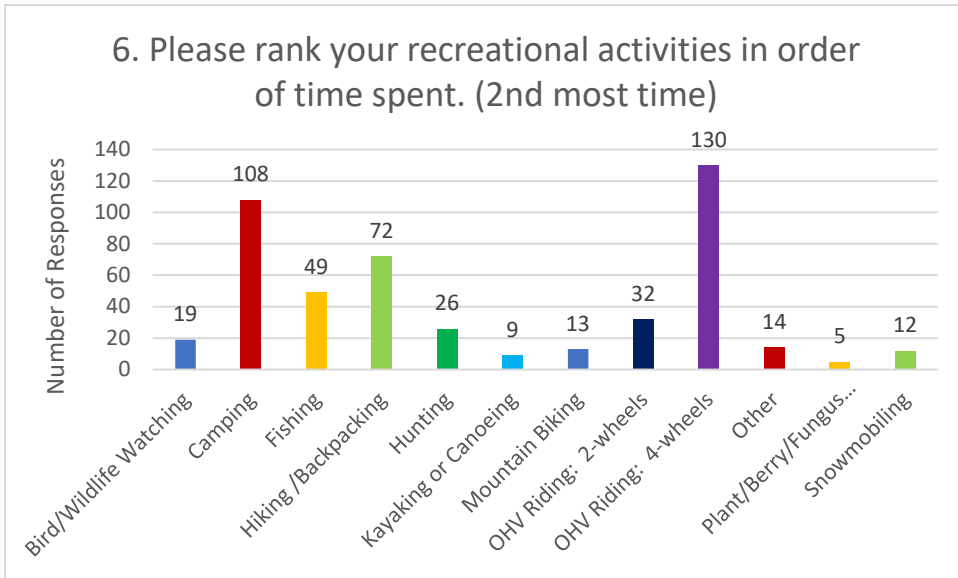
Note: “Other” category included: owning property, hunting, family, OHV, equestrian, wilderness, dirt biking, great people, fishing, views, trails, freedom, emergency services, areas with no quads, kitesurfing, peacefulness, trapping, camping.

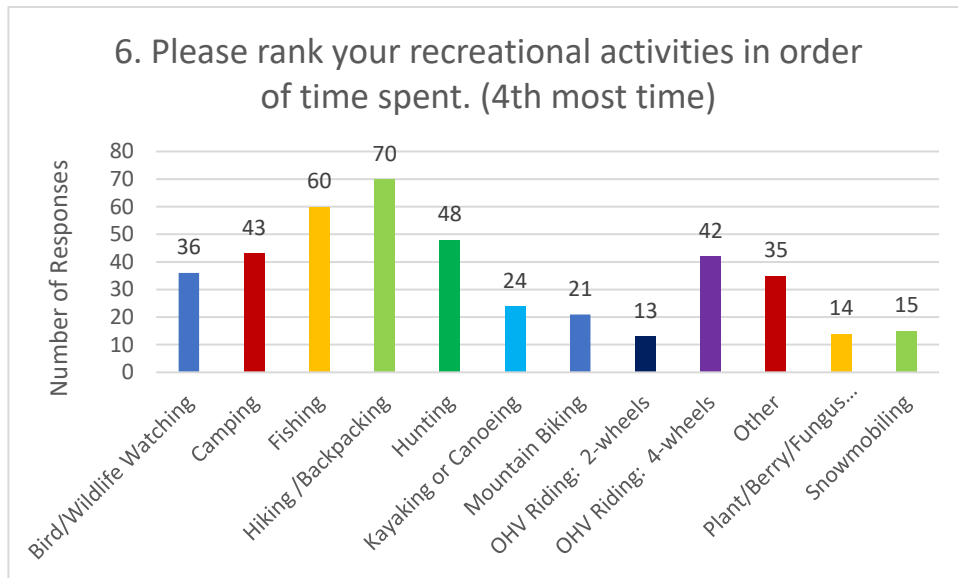


For question 5, the majority of respondents (80%) indicated “Camping” as their planned recreational activity, with 445 instances. 63% of respondents also indicated that they’d be “OHV Riding (4 wheels)” and 52% of respondents indicated they’d be “fishing”.

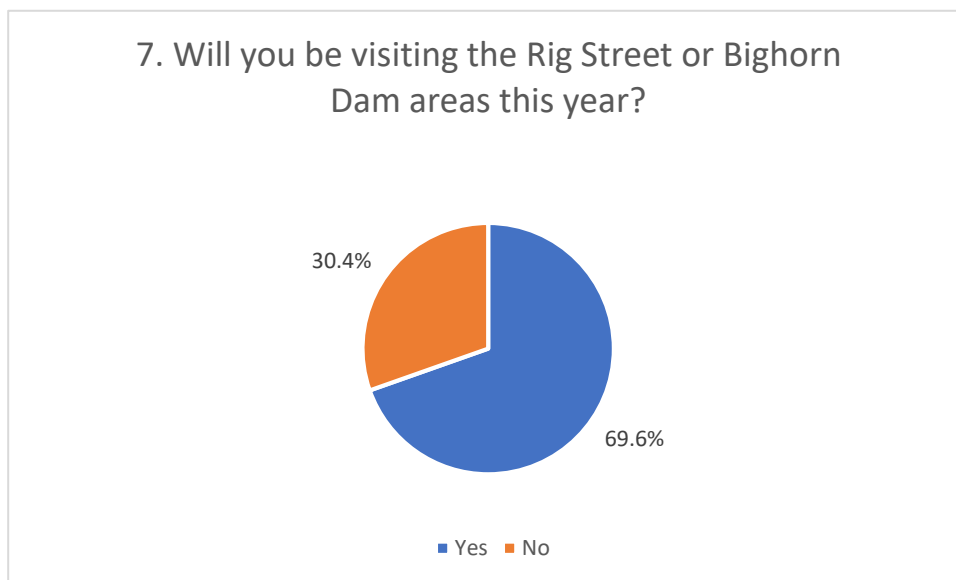
Note: “Other” category included: boating, trapping, observing wildlife, rock climbing, photography, running, shooting, snowshoeing, kitesurfing, family time, firewood, relaxing, views, motorcycling, beach.



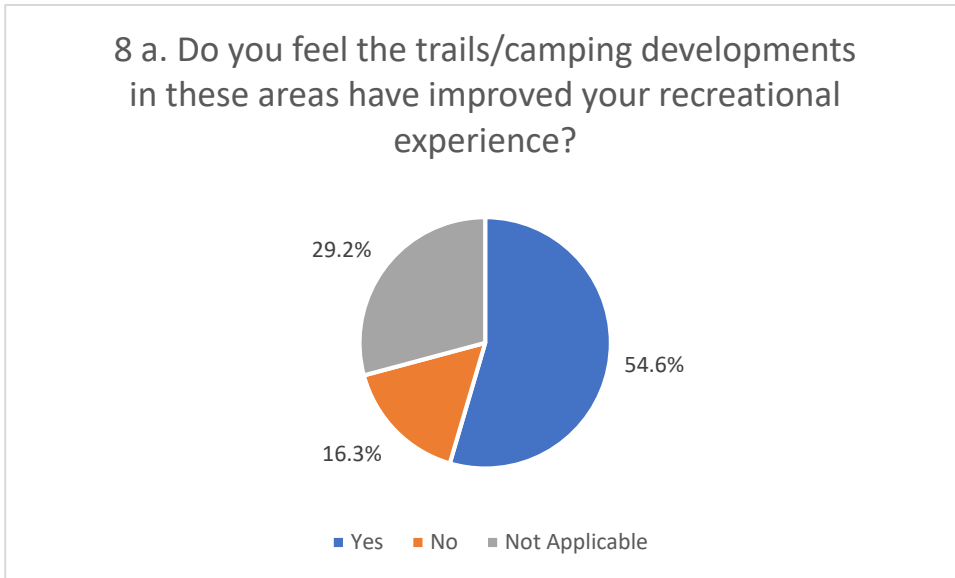




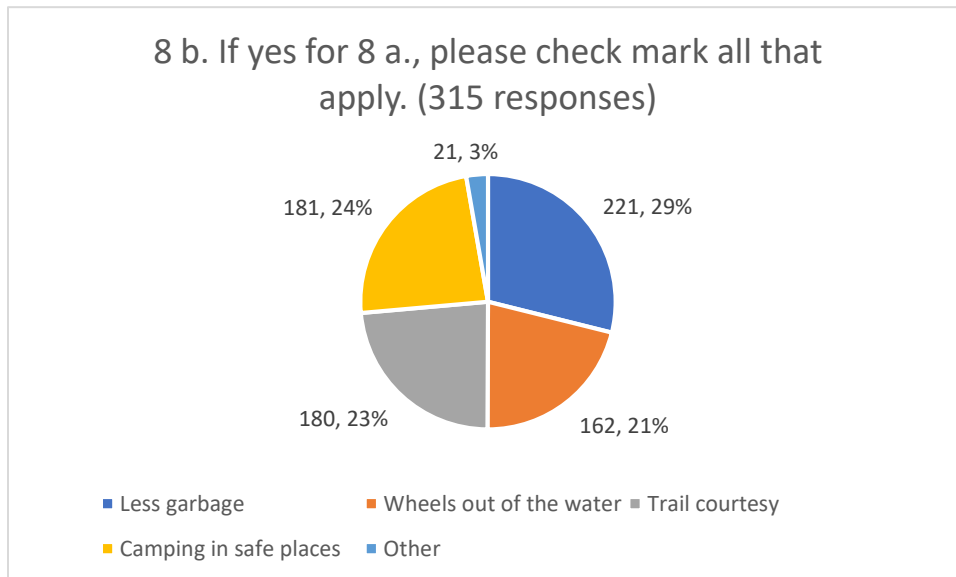
For question 6, the majority of respondents (80%) indicated “Camping” as their recreational activity, with 447 instances. 56% of respondents indicated they’d be “OHV Riding (4 wheels)” and 53% indicated they’d be “hiking/Backpacking”. “Fishing” was fourth, 41% or 228 instances.



For question 7, the majority of respondents (70%) indicated they intend to visit either Rig Street or Big Horn Dam areas.

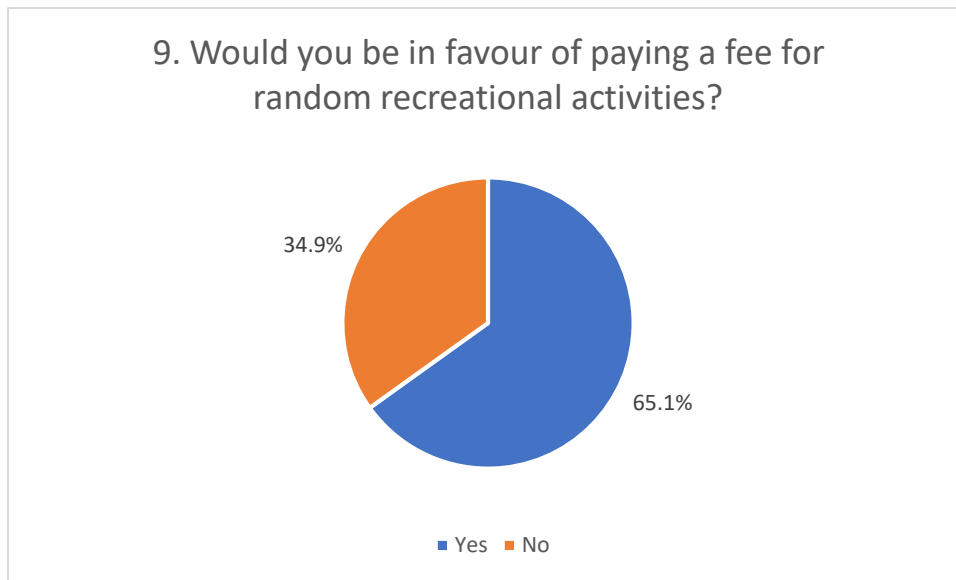


For question 8a, the majority of respondents (55%) indicated government working with industry and volunteers to enhance the motorized recreational experience in the Big Horn and Rig Street areas had improved their recreational experiences. 30% indicated these enhancements weren't applicable to them.



For question 8b, 29% of respondents who in question 8a indicated they felt that the work of government, industry and volunteers has enhanced their motorized recreational experience indicated they've noticed "less garbage". 24% indicated they noticed "safe camping" has improved, 23% indicated they noticed "trail courtesy" improved, 21% indicated they noticed "wheels out of water" improved.

Note: "Other" included: haven't been there, organized system, working together, better/well-maintained trails, tourism, hiking trails, free camping, trails need to connect, enforcement.



For question 9, the majority of respondents (65%) indicated that if funds were collected and directly allocated towards improvements and management of trails/camping development, that they would be in favour of paying a fee for random recreational activities.

For question 10, West Country users were asked for any additional comments (106 written comments were provided). The theme of many of the comments supported “leaving area as is” and “not shutting down areas” or “no new parks” (approximately 47 instances), along with the alternate perspective of need to “limit random recreational areas/activities” or “reduce areas for OHV use” (approximately 47 instances).

Some respondents supported user fees, including “trail pass” or “camping pass” (approximately 33 instances), while other respondents did not support any fees (approximately 12 instances).

The other predominant theme from the comments received included the need for more “enforcement” and “education” (approximately 27 instances).

Another theme included the need for “more trails”, “trail management”, “staging areas” and “trail signage” (approximately 19 instances).

Some respondents indicated the need to keep motorized and non-motorized trails separate (approximately 11 instances) and the desire to put more emphasis on non-motorized trails.

A few respondents suggested “washrooms at trailheads”, “bear-proof garbage bins” (approximately 9 instances), and the same number of respondents indicated that there is a good balance and management in the area, and thanked volunteers for their efforts.



REQUEST FOR DECISION

SUBJECT: Alberta Environment & Parks - Letter to Deputy Minister		
PRESENTATION DATE: February 13, 2018		
DEPARTMENT: Council	WRITTEN BY: Christine Heggart	REVIEWED BY: Rick Emmons, Interim CAO
BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS: <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Funded by Dept. <input type="checkbox"/> Reallocation		
LEGISLATIVE DIRECTION: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial Legislation (cite) <input type="checkbox"/> County Bylaw or Policy (cite)		
STRATEGIC PLAN THEME: Well Governed and Leading Organization	PRIORITY AREA: 2.5 Advocate in the best interests of our community and region.	STRATEGIES: 2.5.8 Actively pursue opportunities to discuss with the Premier, Cabinet Members, and Deputy Ministers issues concerning provincial legislation, programs or initiatives.
ATTACHMENT(S): Draft letter to AEP		

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

That Council authorizes the Reeve to sign a letter to Alberta Environment and Parks Deputy Minister regarding West Country recreation and management.

BACKGROUND:

Members of Council previously discussed West Country recreation management with Alberta Environment and Parks Deputy Minister, Andre Corbould at a meeting he held in Rocky Mountain House on December 4, 2017. Deputy Minister Corbould also met with members of the business community in Nordegg in December, and the Bighorn Backcountry Committee on January 25, 2018.

Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre MLA Jason Nixon called a "Town Hall to Discuss West Country Concerns" meeting to take place at the Dovercourt Hall on February 7.

Councillor Duncan attended the Bighorn Backcountry Committee meeting on January 25 and members of Council will be in attendance at the MLA's town hall meeting, and collectively may provide Council an update on these discussions. Councillor Duncan also drafted the attached letter to Deputy Minister Corbould for Council's consideration. Administration has contacted the Deputy Minister's office to coordinate a future meeting date with Council.

February 13, 2018

The Honourable Andre Corbould
Deputy Minister, Alberta Environment and Parks
10th Floor, South Petroleum Plaza
9915- 108 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2G8

Andre.corbould@gov.ab.ca

Dear Mr. Corbould:

This letter is to follow up with Clearwater County Council members and Town of Rocky administration staff's meeting with you on December 4th of last year. Thank -you for taking the time to travel to our backyard and meet with us, as well as other community groups. It is rare that your level of provincial government engages at the local level.

Exploring the views and concerns of stakeholders who live, work and play in the headwaters is vital to developing a solid regional plan for the North Saskatchewan River basin. Clearwater County has always favored the participation of stakeholders in both the planning and management of recreation and development in the West Country. To that end we also recognize that sustainable management of recreation comes with a high cost that can be difficult to justify when there are many social wants, needs and service demands in Alberta. Therefore, we feel, some form of user-pay system outside of Provincially managed parks and recreation areas is necessary. Using existing systems, there are ways to accomplish this outcome that would not be onerous administratively and would provide much needed funding for trails and camping areas. Funding for managed trails and camping areas are essential for sustainability into the future and fees are supported largely by those who are using the West Country area. Management could be further supported by appropriate land use planning designation.

We look forward to further discussions with your ministry and seeing the North Saskatchewan Regional Plan moving forward.

Sincerely,

John Vandermeer, Reeve

cc: Town Administration; Crystal Damer, Land Use Secretariat crystal.damer@gov.ab.ca