

Lower Athabasca Regional Advisory Council

Team Charter

Statement of Purpose

The Regional Advisory Council (RAC), established under the Land-use Framework, will provide strategic advice and recommendations to the Government of Alberta on the development of the Lower Athabasca Regional Plan (LARP), operating within the draft Terms of Reference approved by the Government of Alberta.

Philosophy and Guiding Principles

The RAC's advice and recommendations will respect the Land-use Framework (LUF) and the LARP draft Terms of Reference including:

Examples for consideration:

- o Respect for people and communities
- o Being open to new ways to solve old problems
- o Consideration of cumulative effects
- o Provincial/national/local perspectives
- o Short- and long-term goals
- o Social, environmental and economic issues
- o Economic cycles
- o Adaptability for specific circumstances and characteristics (water, air, land, etc.)
- o Existing legislative/regulatory guidelines
- o Sustainability

Structure

The LARP RAC consists of 17 members appointed by the Government of Alberta. Heather Kennedy, Assistant Deputy Minister, Alberta's Oil Sands Secretariat, will Chair the LARP RAC. The vice-chair, Hildy Hanson, will provide leadership to the team in the event that the chair is not available.

The RAC collectively will be responsible for providing advice on the development of the Regional Plan and participating in the consultation process. The Chair will be responsible to relay advice from the RAC to the Assistant Deputy Minister, Land Use Secretariat to enable discussion with the Deputy Minister LUF Committee and Cabinet. The Land-use Framework governance outlines the interaction of the RAC with other groups.

The RAC will provide their advice and recommendations to the Government of Alberta Regional Planning Team (RPT). The RPT will be led by a Regional Project Manager provided by the Land-use Secretariat. The RPT will include senior staff from government ministries that have an interest in the development and implementation of the Regional Plan. The expectation is that Ministry representatives will support the RPT as a priority over other responsibilities and provide analysis, information and research expertise as requested. The RPT will be responsible for the drafting of the Regional Plan based on input from the RAC as well as feedback gained from Alberta residents during direct consultations.

The RAC will have the support of a dedicated project facilitation team provided by the Land-use Secretariat to handle meeting logistics as well as to act as an envoy to the RPT with RAC requests.

Collection, Use and Disclosure of Information

The information received and collected in the course of planning and preparing the RAC's advice and recommendations to the Government of Alberta is subject to the protections and provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the rules respecting records management and retention of the Government of Alberta. All such information shall be considered by all members to be restricted and confidential information of the Government of Alberta unless expressly identified on the face of the record in which it is found as being "For Public Distribution." Information contained in records that are not marked "For Public Distribution" may only be shared outside the RAC and Land Use Secretariat if the Assistant Deputy Minister, Land Use Secretariat provides written authorization to do so. Members are required to ensure protection of Government of Alberta information in their possession at all times.

Meeting Frequency

The RAC will meet at least once monthly throughout the development process. Meeting dates will be determined at the first RAC meeting but we can expect 12–17 meetings of the full committee. We also expect that other activities will need to be performed between meetings. Sub-committee work may be required.

Decision Making

The Council will seek consensus on the advice they provide to the Government of Alberta i.e. advice that all members can accept, support, live with or agree not to oppose.

At the discretion of the Chair, voting will determine decisions in those instances where consensus cannot be achieved. Decisions made in this way will require at least 60% favorable vote of all members present and that the Council will include the opposing positions when providing this advice.

If a consensus or 60% majority cannot be accomplished after significant discussion by the RAC, then at the discretion of the Chair, the issue can be forwarded for decision to the Cabinet Minister accompanied by the appropriate background information. This option should only be used in circumstances when the Chair has determined that after significant effort, consensus or a 60% majority vote cannot be accomplished.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Role:** Members are expected to provide perspectives from their area of expertise and interest. Members are not representing their respective company or organization position.
- **Responsibility:**
 1. Familiarization with background materials provided by the Government of Alberta and other sources as required

2. Provide advice that is consistent with the direction in the Land-use Framework
3. Provide advice that is consistent with the draft Terms of Reference for the Lower Athabasca Regional Plan
4. Consider the input of stakeholders in the development of the Regional Plan
5. Commit to the development and timely delivery of the Regional Plan
6. Commit to the code of conduct, as described below

Code of conduct: The RAC will identify and commit to the “Ground Rules” that are described below.

- **Respect:** Councils members will agree to treat each other with respect and dignity at all times.
- **Open and honest communications:** Council members will contribute to the creation of an environment where fully open and honest communication is modeled.
- **Attendance:** Attendance at all meetings is mandatory. If a member cannot continue to participate in the Council, a replacement may be identified by the Government of Alberta.
- **Confidentiality:** Council members agree that all information distributed to the Council is restricted and confidential unless marked "For Public Distribution". The information distributed to the Council is provided for the purpose of obtaining advice for the Executive Council of the Government of Alberta, and the discussions of the Council may take the form of advice, recommendations, policy considerations, draft legislation. As such, the disclosure of such information could be expected to cause harm the relationships between the Government of Alberta and Local Government Bodies and other governments. Council members must agree to respect the confidentiality of their discussions at Council meetings, and to refrain from commenting to media or third parties regarding the Council's discussions and ongoing work.
- **Accountability:** Council members agree to hold each other accountable to this code of conduct. Council members are also expected to have an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all parties (Cabinet, RAC Chair, Secretariat, and Regional Planning Team) and be familiar with issues/challenges in the region.
- **Be Informed:** The RAC will define the level and focus of proposed strategies and actions in their recommendations and advice, as well as develop a common understanding of terminology among members. This includes an understanding of the region, its complexity and its impact provincially.
- **Innovative Approach:** Council members are expected to be prepared to generate and discuss innovative strategies and options to address challenges.

The Minister may remove any Council member who fails to comply with their role and responsibilities.

Combined Ground Rules

Advisory Council Members agree to:

Openness

- Willingness to listen and learn from others
- Be flexible/adaptive e.g. new information, different processes

Establish clear Accountability

- Maintain openness to establish trust
- Responsibility of the RAC is to provide recommendations, not decisions

Don't get caught up in the details

- Create long term vision
- Keep the end in mind
- Keep the bigger picture in mind
- Wordsmithing only when appropriate
- Accept the "Peak"
- Accept iterations (prepare to re-visit if/when appropriate – new information, etc.)

Participation

- Only one conversation at a time
- Committee must keep working if one is missing
- Participate in subject even though you do not have a personal stake
- Watch out to ensure all participate
- Be committed to effective participation – prepare to participate (pre-reading)
- Get all information and views on the table
- Participants that miss a meeting are responsible to get caught up

Respect

- Appreciate diversity as all have something to offer
- Respect everyone
- Start/end on time
- Respect (individuals, opinions, chair, presenters)
- Respect – accept people for who they are/for ideas/no one opinion dominates
- Have fun

Honour group decisions

- No back room deals/politics
- Agree that it is time to move on
- Agree/validate then trust the process (evaluation)

Strive for excellence

- Commitment to individual participants/ preparation
- Friendly challenge
- Stay focused/disciplined – start/finish
- Capture full range – all ideas/pertinent perspectives/principles

Single voice

- Alignment/consistency on key messages
- Honour single point of contact with media

Confidentiality

- What is said here stays here until we are agreed
- Need to clearly identify what can and cannot be communicated outside of the RAC

Operating Protocols

Communications

- The Government of Alberta will be the sole media contact for the Land-use Framework, the Regional Plan and the status of the Regional Advisory Council process
- Council members agree to respect the confidentiality of any information identified as confidential that is distributed to the Council

Resources

The Government of Alberta will provide technical support as required.

Meeting facilities, website access, conference call connections, and other physical materials required for the completion of the Council's work will be facilitated through Stantec.

Key Project Success Factors

Identify RAC team key success factors including measures of team effectiveness.