



REQUEST FOR DECISION

MEETING DATE: February 26, 2024

TITLE: Annexation Proposal and Notice of Proposed Annexation

DIVISION: Sustainable Growth and Development Services

SUMMARY:

Administration is seeking Council's support of the Notice of Proposed Annexation (the "Notice"), as required by Section 116 of the *Municipal Government Act*, in order to proceed with initiating negotiations with the Town of Stony Plain and engage with affected landowners, affected utility operators, and affected authorities on annexing Boundary Road. This work will result in the eventual annexation application to the Land and Property Rights Tribunal.

PROPOSED MOTION:

THAT the City of Spruce Grove provide written notice of its proposed annexation of the lands in "Schedule A" and "Schedule B" of the Notice of Proposed Annexation pursuant to Section 116 of the *Municipal Government Act*.

BACKGROUND / ANALYSIS:

On November 8, 2023, the Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC) made a resolution to "recommend to Council that Administration be directed to initiate proceedings on annexation of Boundary Road" (Resolution # GPC-041-23). The resolutions from the GPC meeting were included in the 2024 - 2026 Corporate Plan. With approval of the Corporate Plan at the December 4, 2023 Regular Council Meeting, all the resolutions from the GPC meeting, including the resolution on annexation of Boundary Road were in effect approved by Council (Resolution # RCM-255-23).

In order to initiate the legislated process to annex land, as per Section 116 of the *Municipal Government Act*, Spruce Grove must give written notice of the proposed annexation to the Town of Stony Plain, the Land and Property Rights Tribunal, affected landowners, and affected

local utility operators and authorities like the area utility commissions, school divisions, and adjacent municipalities.

The annexation process is legally regulated by the *Municipal Government Act* and the provincial government. The process requires formal applications, public hearings, and negotiations between affected municipalities. Ultimately, annexation decisions are made by the Land and Property Rights Tribunal, which considers factors such as the impact on affected communities, services, finances, and infrastructure. A flow chart describing this process is attached (Attachment 2).

In 2016, a Growth Study and Fiscal Impact Analysis was completed in support of the City's previous annexation proposal with Parkland County. An update to the 2016 Growth Study is being undertaken to refresh changes in population that supports the need for this portion of Stony Plain. The updated information is not expected to have an impact on the proposed annexation area that is identified in the attached Notice. If there are any significant changes, the Notice will be brought back to Council for further direction.

The 2016 Growth Study identified the eventual need to extend Boundary Road/Grove Drive to Highway 16A through this small portion of land that is to the west of the City's boundary. However, in discussions with the Town of Stony Plain, the City agreed to pause annexation because the Town of Stony Plain was not in agreement and the proposed western expansion was not pursued.

Since pausing the small annexation of the Town of Stony Plain, the northwestern sector's (neighbourhoods of Copperhaven, Harvest Ridge, and Spruce Ridge) population has increased 43 per cent going from 4,082 (2016) people to 7,153 people (2023). By almost doubling the population in just seven years, there is a need to advance the road connection to Highway 16A via Boundary Road/Grove Drive. Future neighbourhoods and commercial development to the south of Copperhaven and Spruce Ridge are also being initiated. The 2030 population for this sector is expected to be over 10,800 people.

Initiating the annexation process and eventually acquiring these lands are essential to the completion of this sector of Spruce Grove. The extension of Boundary Road/Grove Drive to Highway 16A is critical in the final development schemes for both the Central and West Central Area Structure Plans. This crucial connection to Highway 16A, providing a secondary access to northwest Spruce Grove, will support reduction of traffic congestion, emergency access within the northwest, and more efficient transit routes.

OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES:

Council could decide not to make a motion to direct Administration to proceed with the annexation proposal.

CONSULTATION / ENGAGEMENT:

The annexation process is outlined in Attachment 2 and involves negotiations with the Town of Stony Plain, as well as engagement with landowners and other affected parties and agencies. Public engagement and communications strategies are being developed.

IMPLEMENTATION / COMMUNICATION:

The City will deliver the Notice of Proposed Annexation, as required under Section 116 of the *Municipal Government Act*, then pursue the required process as outlined by the Land and Property Rights Tribunal (Attachment 2).

IMPACTS:

The issuance of the Notice of Proposed Annexation marks the first significant milestone in the annexation process. Upon completion of the simultaneous negotiation and consultation phases, it allows for the formal annexation application to be made to the Land and Property Rights Tribunal.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The approximate range of costs associated with the proposed annexation application would be from \$180,000 to \$230,000 for an uncontested annexation and up to \$530,000 for a contested annexation. These costs would include such items as legal fees and updating the Growth Strategy, and are estimates within a limited scope of work. There may be additional work required to meet the Land and Property Rights Tribunal's Annexation Principles and other requirements.