

W Rocky View WEEKLY Y

FORMERLY THE ROCKY VIEW FIVE VILLAGE WEEKLY

Volume 33, Number 46

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER FOR THE MD OF ROCKY VIEW #44

Tuesday, November 21, 2006

[Headlines](#) | [Opinions](#) | [Classified Ads](#) | [Book Classifieds Online](#) | [Display Ads](#) | [About Us](#) | [Links](#)

Dialogue possible, head of regional partnership says

Enrique Massot

The re-elected head of a group of municipalities in the Calgary area says urban and rural jurisdictions must try to smooth edges and work together, after exchanging blows through their respective provincial associations.



M.D. of Foothills Clr. Ron Laycraft; City of Airdrie Mayor, Linda Bruce; and Townsite of Redwood Meadows Mayor, Tim Anderson were all re-elected as Vice-Chair, Chair, and Secretary-Treasurer at the AGM of the Calgary Regional Partnership on Thursday.

"It's a challenge that we have to face," said Airdrie Mayor Linda Bruce, who was re-elected on Thursday as Chair of the Calgary Regional Partnership.

The group of rural and urban municipalities make up the first attempt to return to some degree of regional coordination since the province cut funding to regional planning commissions. These commissions folded in 1995. The CRP's membership rapidly grew to 19 jurisdictions in 2006, from an original group of 12 rural and

urban municipalities and the Tsuu T'ina Nation in 2002. It has launched a series of regional initiatives in fields such as regional growth and sustainability framework; development of a sustainable business attraction strategy; implementation of a regional geographical information system (GIS); and regional transportation planning. Another initiative of the regional group is a study looking at options to build a regional water pipeline similar to one built in the Edmonton area that provides treated water to about 40 regional communities.

It should become a tool helping to establish a common ground across boundaries, said Bruce.

"We are lucky to have a partnership, a strong entity allowing us to get past urban and rural issues and start to think and focus regionally."

Bruce, however, acknowledged that solving current disagreements over the right of rural municipalities to carry out high-density development on the edge of cities will not be easy without provincial leadership and an active dialogue of the parties involved.

"Everybody looks at their community because that is what we are elected to do," she said.

In October, Airdrie co-sponsored a resolution of the Alberta Association of Urban Municipalities (AUMA) pressing the provincial government to define the roles of urban and rural municipalities, after a recent ruling of the Municipal Government Board confirmed that both have equal rights to development.

However, the urban municipalities contend that development of high-density, urban-like development in rural jurisdictions around cities imposes a burden on their services and leads to haphazard development.

"The urbans have their concerns and that is what we were saying at the AUMA," said Bruce.

The rural municipalities, meanwhile, claim their right to increase their tax income by attracting high-density residential, industrial and commercial development. In a direct application of that principle, the M.D. of Rocky View has recently approved an area structure plan assigning to high-density residential thousands of acres of farmland in west Balzac between Calgary and Airdrie.

But the M.D. has put the plan on hold, following Airdrie's protests, and the plan is now under a dispute resolution process.

Last week, through a resolution at its Fall 2006 Convention, the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMD&C) reaffirmed its support for "balanced opportunities among all municipalities", to continue to be included in the current Municipal Government Act.

The resolution was sponsored by seven municipalities having common boundaries with large urban jurisdictions, including the Municipal Districts of Foothills and Rocky View.

"The rurals have their concerns, that is what they were saying at the AAMD&C," said Bruce.

However, Bruce sees pooling the resources of individual municipalities into a regional group will allow economies of scale, providing partnership members resources much greater than individual municipalities would be able to afford.

"This is very important for our communities and our region," she said. "What happens here is going to set the

pace and the tone for the rest of the province."

In addition to confirming Bruce as chair, the CRP Annual General Assembly elected Ron Laycraft as Vice-Chair and Secretary-Treasurer Tim Anderson.

Laycraft is a councillor with the M.D. of Foothills, and Anderson is mayor of the Townsite of Redwood Meadows.

All three have served two years after being elected in 2004 at the general assembly.

More Headlines This Week ...

[Groundwater study a valuable tool: expert >>](#)

[Lands near water should be protected: expert >>](#)

[Subdivision conditions prompt questioning >>](#)

[Partnership addresses regional, sustainable growth >>](#)



ROCKY VIEW WEEKLY

Published by Tall Taylor Publishing Ltd

Box 40, Irricana, AB T0M 1B0

Phone: 403-935-4221 ... Fax: 403-935-4981



Proud Publishers of the Carstairs Courier, Rocky View Weekly, Alberta Wheel & Deal, Prairie Central Wheel & Deal

© Tall Taylor Publishing Ltd