

AMALGAMATION QUESTIONS REQUIRING ANSWERS

Prepared by the Council of the Village of Alma

March 7, 2022

Revenue and Tax Rates:

- Will the founding municipalities have the same tax rate once amalgamation becomes effective? If not, how are the different rates established?
- We have been told that the former LSD areas will have a different tax rate than the former founding municipalities. Is this true?
- If it is true that LSD areas will have a different tax rate than the founding municipalities, will all our amalgamated LSDs have the same tax rate? If not, how will it vary in terms of geography and criteria?
- What are the services that the LSD areas are perceived NOT to receive in our entity, and thus (according to the stated local governance reform principles) they should not have to pay for?
- We have been told LSD area tax increases (if any) will be phased in over time. But in the meantime, who picks up the tab for the shortfall?
- Will non-tax revenue (e.g., rent) stay within the local community where it is raised, or will it go to the entity's general coffers?
- If a tourism accommodation levy is implemented within the entity, will the Council be free to spend the revenue generated wherever they choose in the entity?

Debts:

- If, as stated by Department of Local Government, that debts will remain with the founding municipalities, will the associated assets associated with these debts also remain, forever, with those municipalities? If these assets are subsequently sold, how will the proceeds be distributed?
- For existing debts associated with common systems (e.g., water and sewer) and/or shared assets (e.g., fire trucks, recreation facilities, library, etc.), will those debts remain with the founding municipalities, or will they go to the new entity? If the debts remain with the founding municipality, when these assets are subsequently sold, how will the proceeds be distributed?

Water and Sewer:

- Will the three water and sewer systems be combined (in a financial sense) into one common system with one common rate structure? If no, how will the various rate structures of the three, separate water and sewer systems be established?

Public Works:

- Will the three municipal snow removal systems/contracts/arrangements and the DTI snow removal services be combined (in a financial sense) into one common system with one common rate structure for all taxpayers? If no, how will the various rate structures for snow plowing be established?
- Will the three public works organizations be combined into one common system with one common rate structure for taxpayers? If no, how will the various rate structures be established?

Fire Protection and Other Municipal Services:

- Will there be one common fire department for the entire entity? If yes, will the fire protection budget be split evenly among all taxpayers? If no, how will costs and levels of service for taxpayers be established?
- Will there be one common garbage collection service for the entire entity? If yes, will the garbage collection budget be split evenly among all taxpayers? If no, how will costs and levels of service for taxpayers be established?
- Will there be one common recreational budget for the entire entity, no matter where any recreational facility is located? If yes, will the recreation budget be split evenly among all taxpayers? If no, how will costs for taxpayers be established?
- Will there be one common library budget for the entire entity, no matter where any library facility is located? If yes, will the library budget be split evenly among all taxpayers? If no, how will costs for taxpayers be established?
- Will there be one common animal control budget for the entire entity? If yes, will the animal control budget be split evenly among all taxpayers? If no, how will costs for taxpayers be established?
- Will there be one common bylaw enforcement budget for the entire entity? If yes, will the bylaw enforcement budget be split evenly among all taxpayers? If no, how will costs for taxpayers be established?
- Will there be one common beautification budget for the entire entity, no matter where any beautification initiatives are implemented? If yes, will the beautification budget be split evenly among all taxpayers? If no, how will costs for taxpayers be established?
- How will streetlight costs be distributed within the entity?
- Will the policing budget for the entire entity be split evenly among all taxpayers? If no, how will costs for taxpayers be established?
- If the entity is required to pay another entity for services that the other entity provides our entity (e.g., fire, recreation), are these costs shared by all entity taxpayers or only those who (realistically) use the other entities services? [former Coverdale LSD residents using Town of Riverview facilities is good example].

General Governance:

- Will there be only one General Operating budget for the entire entity? If no, how many different budgets will there be and how will they be differentiated from one another?
- Will any existing Committees of Council of the three founding municipalities be automatically enabled within the new entity effective January 1, 2023?

One Last Question Specifically for the Deputy Minister (DM) of Local Government:

- What other options were considered for Entity 42 and why were they rejected? [The DM told the Village of Alma Council on March 3, 2022, that many other options were considered]