

# Foothills Regional Water & Wastewater Collaborative

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2016-10: On behalf of the Members of the Foothills Regional Water & Wastewater Collaborative (the Collaborative), we would like to share the outcomes of the work we have completed as a Collaborative this past year and provide you with a copy of our completed Sub-regional Wastewater Feasibility Study.

**Background:** The Collaborative came together in 2012 as a group of communities with a vision to ensure a sustainable and secure supply of potable water, and state of the art treatment and release of wastewater to service a 50 year community planning window forming the basis for community and ecological sustainability and economic prosperity in the Foothills sub-region. This regional initiative is being driven in collaboration with the several municipalities representing communities in the Highwood, Sheep, and Upper Little Bow River Watersheds (including tributaries and diversions).

In 2014, the Collaborative scoped and obtained funding for a Sub-Regional Wastewater Feasibility Study. The Study was conducted by MPE and Urban Systems, included a review of four sub-regional wastewater servicing scenarios with consideration of economic, social and environmental sustainability in the Foothills sub-region. In the fall of 2015, the Collaborative narrowed the scope of the study to two preferred scenarios and conducted a further layer of study which included cost analysis.

Through an analysis of the two preferred sub-regional options, the Collaborative determined that no favored option could be selected, given that the costs for both preferred sub-regional options exceed the current and foreseeable economic viability of the sub-region; and that neither option is feasible at this time without the establishment of provincial direction on watershed limits and thresholds for phosphorous and effluent loading rates for other parameters; and provincial direction on availability of funding for a regional wastewater solutions.

The Collaborative has determined that, given the results of this Study, that it is in the best interest of the region, and our watersheds, that stand-alone plants in each community, or alternate sub-regional solutions are the most feasible for the region as a whole. Each individual Member decision for water and wastewater infrastructure has implications for other Members and their future decisions in these watersheds.

With this understanding, the Collaborative remains committed to continuing to work together as a region to make decisions on water and wastewater infrastructure and source water protection. This approach is critical to balancing the economic, social, and environmental needs of each community.

We invite you to review the Study and to provide comments, from your perspective, as we proceed with our ambitious but necessary goal of coordinating planning efforts in consideration of the future health of these interconnected watersheds and our communities.

**Councillor Suzanne Oel (Foothills) Co-Chair**

MD of Foothills

**Councillor Matt Rockley Co-Chair**

Town of Okotoks

**FRWWC Governance Committee**

CC.

**Shirley Pickering, Co-Chair**

Highwood Management Plan Public Advisory Committee

**Marley Oness, Co-Chair**

Town of Okotoks

**FRWWC Technical Committee of the FRWWC**

*Attached: Regional Wastewater Treatment Feasibility Study*