

**FLAGSTAFF INTERMUNICIPAL PARTNERSHIP
PROTOCOL FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION**

BETWEEN:

VILLAGE OF ALLIANCE;
TOWN OF DAYSLAND;
FLAGSTAFF COUNTY;
VILLAGE OF FORESTBURG;
VILLAGE OF GALAHAD;
TOWN OF HARDISTY;
VILLAGE OF HEISLER;
TOWN OF KILLAM;
VILLAGE OF LOUGHEED;
TOWN OF SEDGEWICK; and
VILLAGE OF STROME

(Hereinafter referred to as the “Parties”)

WHEREAS the above local governments have the legislated authority to enter into an agreement for the purposes of sharing resources, expertise, risk and benefits associated with coordinating regional cooperation efforts on behalf of their respective communities.

WHEREAS the above parties believe it is in the public interest to pursue regional cooperation for the following reasons:

- Knowledge Sharing – from the skills and experiences of others
- Share human resources – expertise and time
- Better communication for understanding and respecting differences
- Save money on current and/or future expenditures
- Enhance or maintain current service levels
- Provide a new service to meet emerging common needs
- Maximize service delivery efficiency and avoid duplication of effort
- Generate new revenue sources
- Lobby for or access external resources – government or corporate
- Pursue joint advocacy with other organizations and governments

AND WHEREAS the above parties feel it is important to provide a framework to guide regional cooperation in the areas of:

- Agreeing on general principles (Section 1) to guide organizational relations
- Create a defined structure (Section 2) to represent all parties
- Facilitate effective communication (Section 3) between the parties
- Selecting suitable shared service and strategic topic candidates (Section 4)
- Following a process (Section 5) to pursue specific areas for cooperation
- Using a concerns process (Section 6) to address issues arising
- Identifying general conditions (Section 7) to guide regional cooperation efforts

NOW THEREFORE, the above parties wish to declare their spirit of fellowship by entering into a Protocol for Regional Cooperation with the following considerations:

1.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The parties agree to the following principles to guide regional cooperation efforts:

- 1.1** To have defined communication channels to share information.
- 1.2** To encourage respect of different views and interests.
- 1.3** To pursue relations based on transparency and openness.
- 1.4** To work together in attempts to resolve issues.
- 1.5** To develop a consultative process to ensure shared goals and efforts.
- 1.6** To respect jurisdictional interests.
- 1.7** To acknowledge not all parties need to be involved in each regional project.
- 1.8** To advance shared interests to other levels of government with a common voice.
- 1.9** To ensure the public awareness of the progress and results of regional cooperation.

2.0 STRUCTURE

The parties agree to the following structure to promote effective cooperation:

2.1 Steering Committee

- 2.1.1** The membership of the Steering Committee is made up of one elected official, as appointed by their individual council from the eleven parties. An alternate elected official may attend Steering Committee meetings from time to time when the appointed individual is not available.
- 2.1.2** The Steering Committee shall be referred to as the Flagstaff Intermunicipal Partnership Committee.
- 2.1.3** The Steering Committee is responsible to:
 - 2.1.3.1** Coordinate regional cooperation efforts and Regional Cooperation Forum meetings;
 - 2.1.3.2** Suggest opportunities for cooperation and information dissemination;
 - 2.1.3.3** Develop work plan(s) for the review and consideration of the parties;
 - 2.1.3.4** Facilitate decision-making by Councils on regional cooperation initiative;
 - 2.1.3.5** Select a Chairperson as a spokesperson and to chair meetings.

2.2 Chief Administrative Officers (CAO) Committee

- 2.2.1** The CAOs of each party are responsible to meet regularly to:
 - 2.2.1.1** Support the Steering Committee;
 - 2.2.1.2** Annually assess the performance of the Coordinator (see below);
 - 2.2.1.3** Coordinate efforts to implement the work program;
 - 2.2.1.4** Prepare or review reports on shared service projects
 - 2.2.1.5** CAOs shall attend all Steering Committee meetings as a participating but non-voting member;

2.3 Coordinator

2.3.1 The designated Coordinator is the party which has agreed to undertake the management role and is responsible to:

2.3.1.1 Coordinate administrative support to the Steering Committee;

2.3.1.2 Work with the Chairperson to prepare notice of meetings and agendas;

2.3.1.3 Oversee the development and implementation of the regional cooperation strategy.

2.4 Regional Cooperation Forum

2.4.1 The Regional Cooperation Forum is made up of all elected officials of each party and is expected to meet semi-annually to:

2.4.1.1 Assess the progress of regional collaboration efforts;

2.4.1.2 Evaluate shared services and determine areas for attention;

2.4.1.3 Examine and determine strategic opportunities for cooperation;

2.4.1.4 Establish a schedule for regular meetings;

2.4.1.5 Adopt a communications strategy for joint decisions;

2.4.1.6 Review and approve the regional cooperation strategy.

3.0 COMMUNICATIONS

3.1 Steering Committee

3.1.1 The Steering Committee will operate in an open and transparent manner, in terms of participating Councils. Individual Councillors on each Council will be welcome to attend Steering Committee meetings as observers. Meetings of the Steering Committee will be public, unless issues of a legal nature or negotiations are being discussed.

3.1.2 Requests for information, presentations, etc., on issues being addressed by the Steering Committee will be directed to and responded to by the Chair.

3.1.3 The Committee will provide for regular reporting to the public, through media releases, public information meetings, etc. To the extent possible, the Chair will ensure that Councils are informed before a public release is issued.

3.2 Referrals

3.2.1 The parties agree to use the best efforts to provide referrals to potentially affected parties prior to a local Council decision being made.

3.2.2 The purpose of the referral is to provide the other party with timely and sufficient information for meaningful dialogue only prior to either Party taking a position or making a decision.

4.0 SHARED SERVICES AND STRATEGIC TOPICS

4.1 The parties agree to use the following guidelines to assess areas for regional cooperation:

4.1.1 A Shared Service candidate is a service or program that one or more parties provide or may want to apply.

4.1.2 A Strategic Topic is an issue or opportunity that one or more parties want to address.

4.1.3 Shared Service or Strategic Topic criteria (Display 1) are intended to be used to:

4.1.3.1 Evaluate the success likelihood of a potential area for regional cooperation;

4.1.3.2 Clarify expectations of the parties if the topic is addressed;

- 4.1.3.3 Identify requisite conditions for success at the start of an initiative;
- 4.1.3.4 Explore the actions required to sustain the initiative.
- 4.1.4 Shared Service candidates offered by any party are expected to be:
 - 4.1.4.1 Assessed by the party suggesting the candidate;
 - 4.1.4.2 Submitted with supporting documentation of the area assessment;
 - 4.1.4.3 Discussed with potential regional cooperation parties before detailed analysis;
 - 4.1.4.4 Reviewed at a CAO meeting prior to a Steering Committee meeting;
 - 4.1.4.5 Considered at a Regional Cooperation Forum, where possible.

5.0 PROJECT PROCESS

- 5.1 The parties agree to the following steps for identifying, selecting, implementing and monitoring shared services and strategic topics for regional cooperation.
- 5.2 Shared Services
 - 5.2.1 A notice of initiative is provided by the initiating party when it wants to examine a service with regional cooperation potential or possible jurisdictional implications, by submitting a written notification to all other parties. The notification must be supported by a Council Resolution. Wherever possible, the idea should be introduced at a Regional Cooperation Forum.
 - 5.2.2 Other parties indicate their interest and/or concerns to the initiating party about the proposed regional cooperation project, so that they can be addressed or acknowledged in the preliminary examination, within forty-five (45) days.
 - 5.2.3 The initiating party conducts a preliminary examination using the regional cooperation candidate criteria contained in Section 4.1.3 in partnership with other interested parties.
 - 5.2.4 The initiating party is responsible to coordinate a discussion of the regional cooperation project with the other parties by:
 - 5.2.4.1 Providing a written report of its preliminary examination to all other parties;
 - 5.2.4.2 Placing a matter on the Steering Committee meeting agenda for direction;
 - 5.2.4.3 Facilitating discussion at a regular or special Regional Cooperating Forum.
 - 5.2.5 Two (2) or more parties may pursue the feasibility of a regional cooperation project by way of a "Feasibility Memorandum" to include (but not limited to):
 - 5.2.5.1 Scope for the feasibility analysis and concerns of other parties to be addressed;
 - 5.2.5.2 Degree to which fiscal and human resources will be cost shared by the parties.
 - 5.2.6 The Feasibility Stage produces a detailed business plan to include:
 - 5.2.6.1 Resolution of key requirements to sustain the regional cooperation initiative;
 - 5.2.6.2 Identification of critical success indicators to be achieved and monitored;
 - 5.2.6.3 Preparation of a draft shared services contract.
 - 5.2.7 The parties formally commit to a shared service project by way of a contract that is:
 - 5.2.7.1 Reviewed by the CAOs (and legal counsel) on behalf of all or each party;
 - 5.2.7.2 Ratified by a resolution (or bylaw) by the respective parties.
 - 5.2.8 The shared service contract must include implementation considerations such as:

5.2.8.1 Identification of the lead party designate(s) responsible for implementation;

5.2.8.2 Success indicators and desired results to evaluate the initiative;

5.2.8.3 Sharing of financial resources and other organizational resources.

5.3 Strategic Topics

5.3.1 Strategic Topics may be introduced at a Forum through the Steering Committee to:

5.3.1.1 Discuss the scope and possible strategies with required resources and actions;

5.3.1.2 Determine if at least two (2) parties wish to place it on the Regional Cooperation Work Program.

6.0 CONCERNS PROCESS

6.1 The parties agree to the following process for addressing complaints related to Shared Services.

6.1.1 The steps for dealing with complaints related to Regional Cooperation include:

6.1.1.1 An individual Councillor or CAO must raise their concern with their own Council;

6.1.1.2 A Council Resolution is required for a party to take action;

6.1.1.3 The 'complaint' party is to give a response time frame within ten (10) working days;

6.1.1.4 A ninety (90) day requirement for the issue to be addressed by the parties;

6.1.1.5 Provision of rationale for extensions to the above ninety (90) day response requirement;

6.1.1.6 The 'complaint' party is expected to bring the complaint to the Steering Committee;

6.1.1.7 The Steering Committee will monitor the follow-up to complaints.

6.2 The options for dealing with an unresolved conflict between the parties include:

6.2.1 A CEO of one party may facilitate discussions with other parties;

6.2.2 Discussion at the Steering Committee meetings in an attempt to resolve the matter;

6.2.3 Retain a third party to facilitate a resolution process; and/or

6.2.4 Agree to a legal proceeding to decide on the matter.

6.3 A party (or service authority) must notify other parties of services changes that reflect:

6.3.1 Modifications to service contract conditions;

6.3.2 Significant change in an existing policy or a new proposed policy;

6.3.3 Reallocation of monies that exceed the approved authority level;

6.3.4 Adjustments to service levels that are not reflected in the contract.

6.4 The steps for dealing with complaints related to the Coordinator include:

6.4.1 An individual Councillor or CAO must raise their concern with their own Council;

6.4.2 A Council resolution is required for a party to take action;

6.4.3 The 'complaint' party is required to provide to the Coordinator, in writing, a summary of the complaint and suggested action(s) to remedy the complaint;

6.4.4 The 'complaint' party is to be given a response timeframe within ten (10) working days

6.4.5 The Coordinator will provide a response to the complaint, in writing, within sixty (60) days of receiving notice of the complaint issue.

- 6.5 The options for dealing with an unresolved conflict between the complaining party (ies) and the Coordinator include:
 - 6.5.1 A CEO of one party may facilitate discussions with other parties;
 - 6.5.2 Discussion at the Steering Committee meetings in an attempt to resolve the matter;
 - 6.5.3 Retain a third party to facilitate a resolution process;

7.0 CONDITIONS

- 7.1 Any party may withdraw from this protocol with six (6) months’ notice to other parties.
- 7.2 The purpose of referrals is to provide parties with timely and sufficient information for meaningful consultative dialogue, prior to any of the parties making a decision which may impact upon the other party.
- 7.3 Notices and referrals referred to in the Protocol shall be delivered in writing to all the signatories to this agreement.
- 7.4 Nothing in this Protocol shall be constructed as to fetter the legislative discretion of the parties within their respective jurisdiction, or to oblige either party to pursue an action, the application of any laws, statutory or otherwise.
- 7.5 It is acknowledged that the spirit of this Protocol will be reflected in each of the party’s best efforts rather than any enforceable obligations to implement its terms and conditions.
- 7.6 The Protocol may be amended upon agreement to all parties.

As evidence of their agreement to the above terms, the parties have executed this Protocol as set out below.

ASSENTED TO THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2014 BY:

VILLAGE OF ALLIANCE

TOWN OF DAYSLAND

Mayor

Mayor

Chief Administrative Officer

Chief Administrative Office

FLAGSTAFF COUNTY

Reeve

Chief Administrative Officer

VILLAGE OF GALAHAD

Mayor

Chief Administrative Officer

TOWN OF HEISLER

Mayor

Chief Administrative Officer

TOWN OF LOUGHEED

Mayor

Chief Administrative Officer

VILLAGE OF STROME

Mayor

Chief Administrative Officer

VILLAGE OF FORESTBURG

Mayor

Chief Administrative Officer

TOWN OF HARDISTY

Mayor

Chief Administrative Officer

VILLAGE OF KILLAM

Mayor

Chief Administrative Officer

VILLAGE OF SEDGEWICK

Mayor

Chief Administrative Officer

Display 1

SHARED SERVICE REVIEW CRITERIA (DETAILS)

The following criteria provide prompts to discuss and assess the suitability of existing or proposed services as potential candidates for cooperation among one or more parties.

CRITERIA	NOTES		
	High	Medium	Low
1. STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE (Does it contribute to strategic goals?)	Mutual Vision	Compatible Goals	Uncertain
2. COST SAVINGS (Will it save money?)	Current Reduction	Zero Sum	Reduced Future Cost
3. SERVICE LEVEL (How will it impact service delivery?)	Maintain Level	Enhance Delivery	New Function
4. DETERMINED NEED (Is the service critical to the service agenda?)	Essential/ Legislated	Important	Discretionary/ Optional
5. SERVICE DEPENDENCY (Can service be provided alone?)	Cannot do alone	Hard to do	Can do on own
6. ACCOUNTABILITY HISTORY (Is there a positive partner track record?)	Positive Experience	Uncertain	Negative Experience
7. EXPECTED CAPACITY (What is the service benefit to be shared?)	Over 50%	Under 50%	Very Limited
8. JURISDICTIONAL RELEVANCE (Does it relate to each party?)	All Parties	More than 50% of Parties	Less than 50% Of Parties
9. GEOGRAPHIC RELEVANCE (What areas are affected?)	All of region	Partial Regional	Specific Area
10. PUBLIC SUPPORT (Will the public support change?)	Visible and Strong	Neutral	Uncertain
11. EXTERNAL LEVERAGING (Does it access third party resources?)	Reading and waiting	Potential Exists	Uncertain
12. PUBLIC AWARENESS (Is the public a factor for implementation?)	Invisible	Visible/ Simple	Visible/ Complex
13. AFFORDABILITY (How critical is this service?)	In Budget	Reallocate Budget	New to Budget
14. PARTNER CAPACITY (Does the partner have resources?)	In Budget – Less Cost	In Budget – Zero Sum	More Cost
15. COST/BENEFIT ANALYSIS (What is the return on investment?)	Low Cost/High Impact	Medium Cost/ High Impact	Medium Cost/Medium Impact
16. RESOURCES EXPECTED (What types of resources are expected?)	Cash	Cash/In Kind	In Kind
17. SHARED EXPERTISE (Does it help access skills and knowledge?)	Fill Critical Void	Create Synergies	Save Time
18. REVENUE GENERATION (Will it increase revenues?)	Yes	Potentially	Unsure/No