



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Topic: Land Use Bylaw amendment - Outdoor Participant Recreation Services and Outdoor Shooting Ranges

Introduction

Proposed Bylaw 2017-19 is a Land Use Bylaw amendment that adds “outdoor shooting range” as a new land use class and lists it as a discretionary use within the AGG and RE land use districts. The amendment also adds development standards for the new use and revises the existing Outdoor Participant Recreation Services use class definition. The proposed amendments provide greater regulatory clarity regarding outdoor shooting ranges and facilitate effective decision-making.

Background Information:

Council’s Direction to Administration

On May 9, 2017, Council made the following motions:

Motion 1

That administration be directed to prepare an amendment to the Land Use Bylaw and the accompanying definition section of the Bylaw to exclude outdoor gun ranges in all residential districts from the definition of Outdoor Participant Recreation Services.

Motion 2

That administration provide a full comprehensive review of shooting ranges on all regulatory matters within its purview in 2018 as part of the broader Municipal Development Plan and Land Use Bylaw change.

First Reading

On July 11, 2017 administration presented Council with Bylaw 2017-19 for first reading. Council made an amending motion that revised the proposed definition of Outdoor Shooting Ranges. Subsequently, Council gave first reading and set a public hearing date for September 12, 2017.

Analysis

Bylaw 2017-019 is attached to this report. Bylaw 2017-019 would:

- Change the existing definition of Outdoor Participant Recreation Services to exclude outdoor shooting ranges
- Create a new use class and definition for outdoor gun ranges
- Include Outdoor Shooting Ranges as a discretionary use in the AGG and RE districts
- Add development standards that apply to the new use class, outdoor shooting ranges

Currently, outdoor shooting ranges fall into the definition of the Outdoor Participant Recreation Services use class. Therefore, the Land Use Bylaw allows outdoor shooting ranges in the 13 land use districts that list the use. Five of those districts are residential. Outdoor Participant Recreation Services is broadly defined and include a range of outdoor recreational uses and activities. While typical outdoor recreational uses and activities may be consistent with a district’s purpose section, others, such as outdoor shooting ranges, may not.

Administration is therefore of the opinion that the most effective approach to carry out Council’s May 9, 2017 motions is to treat outdoor shooting ranges independent of the Outdoor Participant Recreation Services use. Outdoor shooting ranges have unique land use implications that make it distinctly different from typical uses contemplated under the more general Outdoor Participant Recreation Services use. As a result, Bylaw 2017-19 proposes a new use class and specific definition for outdoor shooting ranges. As a separate use class, the Land Use Bylaw can accommodate the new use in districts where Council determines it to be appropriate, thus prohibiting it where inappropriate.

Outdoor shooting ranges would be allowed as a discretionary use in two districts, the Agriculture General District (AGG) and Resource Extraction District (RE). While the May 9, 2017 motions did not exclude other non-residential districts, the new use would pose land use implications if located within these districts. The table below provides rationale for why the new use is not appropriate in the remaining non-residential land use districts.

Land Use District	Rationale
ANC – Agriculture/Nature Conservation District	This district is primarily located adjacent to the North Saskatchewan and Pembina Rivers. Noise from firearms is likely to carry through the river valleys, and may impact wildlife.
AGR – Agriculture Restricted District	Due to the nature of this land use district, being adjacent to residential and urban areas, an outdoor shooting range use would likely have the same or potentially greater land use implications as it would within residential districts.
LC – Local Commercial District PC – Conservation District	Outdoor shooting ranges would be inconsistent with the general purpose of the district.
PR – Recreation District PS – Public Service	These districts are typically adjacent to areas of high density residential. Therefore, an outdoor shooting range would have similar land use implications as it would within residential districts.

The proposed amendments would also increase the Land Use Bylaw’s consistency with a number of the County’s statutory planning documents. The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) identifies residential areas as Country Residential Core and enables compact, economical, and efficient residential development within these areas. The Atim Creek North Area Structure Plan (Bylaw 26-2002) states that the primary use of the land in Country Residential Core areas would be country residential with farming and horticultural uses being compatible (Section 6.3.1). The Woodbend-Graminia Area Structure Plan also refers to residential and compatible uses in Section 4.3.1. The proposed Land Use Bylaw amendments are consistent with the policies that encourage higher density residential development and recognize the need for compatible land uses within residential districts.

Recommendation:

Administration recommends that Council give second and third readings to Bylaw 2017-19.

AUTHOR: Craig Thomas

Department: Planning and Development

Date written: July 26, 2017