

# Terms of Reference

## 1.0 PROJECT

### 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this RFP is to retain the services of a consulting firm to complete a Future of Agriculture Study for Parkland County. Completion of this study will:

- clarify current and future agricultural characteristics, practices and resources in the County;
- provide a vision and develop principles for a healthy agricultural system;
- provide direction on diverse agricultural opportunities the County should pursue currently and into the future;
- develop scenarios and recommendations for the enhancement, diversification and security of agricultural land and practices in Parkland County;
- provide policies and procedures for the implementation of the chosen recommendations for the ongoing security, enhancement and diversification of agricultural activities in Parkland County.

### 1.2 Background

Parkland County is preparing a Community Sustainability & Development Plan (CSDP). The CSDP will function as the County's Sustainability Plan and Municipal Development Plan. In preparation of this plan, Parkland County has prepared several background documents to support the development of the CSDP. Background documents include the County's Environmental Conservation Master Plan (ECMP), a Community Scan & Analysis Report, and Development Scenarios (fiscal review of land development scenarios). The Future of Agriculture Study will be another document used to inform the CSDP. *A brief explanation of these reports is included in Appendix 2 – SUMMARY OF CSDP REPORTS and can be downloaded from the Parkland County website.*

### 1.3 Scope of Work

#### **1.3.1 Phase 1 – Inventory, gap analysis and profile: current and future state of agriculture**

Phase 1 involves:

- Inventorying relevant municipal, provincial and federal documents (acts, plans, studies) as they relate and impact agriculture in Parkland County;
- Comparing current agricultural activities in Parkland County to similar rural counties in Alberta, and to Alberta in general;
- Completing a gap analysis of missing information, and inventorying and profiling the current agriculture and agricultural industry in Parkland County;

- Gathering data and missing pertinent information to fill in identified data gaps;
- Using the most recent spatial analysis and data available (Farmland Assessment Rating (FAR) and Canadian Land Inventory (CLI)) to establish and map historical and current agricultural and soils information in Parkland County;
- Ascertain, review, and analyze the relationships between agricultural land uses and other land uses and activities in Parkland County;
- Identifying current and future agri-business, tourism, food and industry trends for Parkland County and completion of interim report (State of Agriculture Report).

### **1.3.2 Phase 2 – Recommendations, Scenarios and Policies: Options for Future of Agriculture in Parkland County**

Phase 2 involves:

- Determining a vision of “what is agriculture” in Parkland County;
- To establish mainstay principles for a healthy agricultural system;
- Analysing findings to determine potential options to support both the current and future agricultural industry in Parkland County;
- Providing recommendations and scenarios to support future agriculture –and agricultural diversification in Parkland County. Recommendations and scenarios include, but are not limited to, recommendations to support the agriculture industry, agri-food industries, agri-business and agri-tourism;
- Identifying “priority agricultural” land use areas in Parkland County, and policies to support these areas;
- Developing policies, tools, and incentives to support the recommendations and implementation for the security and enhancement of agricultural activities in Parkland County.

## **1.4 Project Tasks**

The following tasks shall be undertaken by the Consultant in completing Phase 1 and Phase 2 work outlined in this Request for Proposal:

### **PHASE 1**

**Task One: Project Start-up Meeting** - a start-up meeting with County Administration will occur to outline the expected project tasks, deliverables, timelines, milestone dates, and budget. The County will answer any clarifying questions related to the project. This meeting will occur shortly after contract award and execution.

**Task Two: Review of Background Work** - the Consultant will undertake an extensive current review of the “state of agriculture” in Parkland County. The Consultant will review existing background documents including, but not limited to:

- Parkland County municipal statutory plans;

- Key municipal plans, studies, reports;
- Relevant federal and provincial information (plans, studies, reports, mapping);
- Other industry-specific (agriculture) information;

**Task Three: Gap analysis, inventory and profiling current agriculture, agriculture industry(s) and agri-businesses in Parkland County** – based on findings from Task One and Two – the consultant will be in a position to complete a “gap analysis” of missing information needed to finish the Future of Agriculture Study. Once the gap analysis has been completed, the data gaps and/or missing information will be gathered, developed and extrapolated for use as part of the foundation for the development of recommendations, scenarios and policies. The Consultant will then prepare an inventory and profile of current agricultural practices in the County based on all information gathered from tasks 1-3. This profile will also include a comparison to agricultural practices in other rural Alberta counties, and to Alberta as a whole.

**Task Four: Establish historical and current soils and agriculture information** – this task uses the most recent spatial analysis and data available; it identifies, reviews, and analyzes historic and current agricultural development and soils in Parkland County –and their productivity levels. This task also involves mapping the County’s soils resources (FAR rating and the most up to date CLI data), and reporting where the County’s most productive soils are located. In addition, this task involves various mapping techniques and tasks; including but not limited to, mapping the types of crops, location of traditional and non-traditional livestock operations, and other agricultural practices that have historically and are currently being used in Parkland County.

**Task Five: determine and ascertain the relationships between agricultural land and activities and other land uses and activities** – based on findings from previous tasks, this task will determine the rural-urban fringe “urban shadow” (i.e. areas where development pressures are placed on agricultural lands) and examine and analyze the relationships and impacts on agriculture as they relate to other land uses or activities in Parkland County. These findings should illustrate the impacts from urban, county residential, environmental and industrial development on the growth, viability and diversity of agriculture within Parkland County.

**Task Six: Identify current and future agricultural trends for Parkland County and complete interim report (State of Agriculture Report)** – based on findings from previous tasks, the Consultant will identify current and future agricultural trends in agriculture and agri-businesses as they relate to Parkland County. Information gathered from previous tasks will also be used by the Consultant to complete an interim report (State of Agriculture Report) for the County which will also outline preliminary options to support future agricultural practices and agricultural diversity in the County. The State of Agriculture Report will be a critical piece needed to guide Phase 2 and the final Future of Agriculture Study.

**Task Seven: Interim report to Administration and Council** – the consultant will be expected to present findings from Phase 1 (including the State of Agriculture Report) to County Administration, the Agricultural Service Board, Council, and other stakeholders as required (i.e. Agricultural and Rural Life Advisory Committee).

## **PHASE 2**

**Task Eight: Analysis of findings - identifying options for the agriculture industry in Parkland County** – this task analyzes the different findings / options based on findings from the State of Agriculture Report (Phase 1). Task Seven requires in-depth consultation / engagement with the County and area agricultural producers, business, Agricultural Service Board, Agricultural and Rural Life Advisory Committee and County Administration to “flesh out” options proposed in Phase 1, and to ensure the options are practical for both Parkland County and its agricultural producers.

**Task Nine: Recommendations and Scenarios:** - this task develops final recommendations and scenarios for agriculture in Parkland County. The recommendations and scenarios will direct agricultural activities and trends in such areas as, but not limited to the agri-industry, agri-food, agri-tourism, agri-business, specialty crops, production size, intensive v.s. extensive farming trends and other agricultural opportunities within the County. In addition, this task will include mapping/satellite imagery or other types of graphic information to assist in the development and understanding of the final “future of Agriculture Report”.

The Consultant shall also through mapping, identify “priority agricultural” land use areas in Parkland County. Priority agricultural areas will be determined through an analysis of multiple factors including soils and vegetation mapping, the review of existing agricultural trends in Parkland County, and previous task findings. The Consultant shall also identify preliminary policies to support these areas.

**Task Ten: Policies, tools, incentives and Final Study** – the Consultant will develop policies, tools, and incentives to implement the recommendations developed in Task Eight. Task Nine findings need to be SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound) to facilitate development of future implementation plans. Policies, tools, and incentives will also need to be written in such a way as to be implemented in the final Community Sustainability & Development Plan (CSDP) document. Task Nine cumulates in the preparation of the final “Future of Agriculture Study for Parkland County”.

**Task Eleven: Final report to Administration, Agricultural Service Board, and Council** – the consultant will present the final “Future of Agriculture Report in Parkland County” and key recommendations and policies to Administration, Council at a regularly scheduled Council meeting. At the discretion of Council and Administration, the Consultant may be required to report findings to key stakeholder groups (i.e. Agricultural and Rural Life Advisory Committee).

**Note:** *the Consultant will be expected to identify any other key “milestone dates” or tasks as part of their proposal.*

## 1.5 Study Boundaries

The study boundaries are identified in Appendix 1. Study boundaries include all lands in Parkland County, not including First Nations Reserve Lands, incorporated summer villages, villages, towns and cities. All shorelines, subdivisions, communities and hamlets under the jurisdiction of Parkland County fall inside the study boundaries.

## 1.6 Deliverables

The Consultant shall submit the following deliverables; at minimum to the County:

1. **Project Brief #1:** Background Work, Gap Analysis and Profile of Agriculture – this brief Incorporates all findings from tasks 1-3.
2. **Interim project mapping:** this report includes all relevant soils and agriculture mapping (task four findings). Mapping shall be provided in both paper, PDF, AUTOCAD, and / or shapefile format as per Parkland County specifications outlined below. *(NOTE: deliverables # 1 and # 2 may be combined).*
3. **State of Agriculture Report:** this report incorporates all Phase 1 findings. Especially important will be the reporting of current and future trends, as well as preliminary options to support future agriculture and agricultural related practices in the County.
4. **Options, recommendations and scenarios report:** this report analyzes and “flesh out” preliminary findings from Phase 1. Administration expects several options to be presented to support future agricultural practices in the County.

The report provides the most practical and realistic recommendations and scenarios to support future agricultural practices, and the diversification of agriculture in the County. This report moves beyond options by identifying the key approaches / recommendations to support and sustain agricultural practices in the County given the County’s current agricultural status (land base, economy) and future agricultural trends. Mapping of “priority agricultural areas” and draft policies to support these areas will also need to be included in this report.

5. **Final Report – Future of Agriculture in Parkland County:** this report will be an accumulation of all findings from Phases 1 and 2. Most importantly, this report outlines the policies needed to implement key recommendations, as well as the policies needed to support both existing agricultural operations and providing enhanced opportunities for agriculture within the County.

### 1.6.1 Mapping

Any draft and final mapping associated with interim or final reports shall be provided at project completion – and – at the request of the County. Mapping shall be provided in both a hard copy and a digital format as outlined below. Mapping should be easily legible, with the ability to be copy, pasted and manipulated. Interim and final copies of all maps shall be provided in digital formats that are compatible with existing County software.

AUTOCAD, Micro station, Shapefiles and all other reference files used to prepare map documents are part of the project deliverables due to Parkland County at the end of the project. Digital file specifications will be provided to the successful Consultant.

The Consultant will be required to sign a licensing agreement with Parkland County in regards to the use of municipal digital mapping resources.