REQUEST FOR DECISION

Subject: Proposed Bylaw 490, Banff Community Plan – First Reading

Presented to: Council
Submitted by: Randall McKay, Manager, Strategic Initiatives + Special Projects
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Date: May 26, 2025
Item #: 7.1

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Give First Reading to Bylaw 490 "Banff Community Plan"; and
2. Schedule a Public Hearing for Monday, July 14th, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.

BACKGROUND

Reason for Report

To present Bylaw 490 – the Banff Community Plan for consideration of First Reading. A complete copy of proposed Bylaw No. 490 is attached as Appendix A. A copy of the existing 2009 Banff Community Plan is attached as Appendix B.

A redlined copy of the draft plan with strikeouts has been provided to illustrate where amendments to the plan have been made by Administration in response to public input and feedback during Stage B of the public review process. A complete copy of the Stage B What We Heard Report will be provided at the public hearing.

Administration is requesting that Council not proceed with scheduling a date for the public hearing until July 14, 2025, to allow for a minimum of 30 days until after the time period for national public input on the draft of the plan is completed by Parks Canada. The Government of Canada has a duty to consult with Canadians on national park community plans. The process for national public engagement was put on hold because of the timing of the recent federal election. The Government of Canada required that all communications activities temporarily cease during the election, including announcements, public opinion research, consultations, public engagement, and advertising.

In addition, both the Town of Banff and Parks Canada previously determined that the best way to streamline the national public engagement process was to conduct regional, national and Indigenous engagement concurrently with engagement on the Banff Community Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Draft Terms of Reference, which is also subject to national public review engagement. This reason for this was because:

a. Parks Canada Agency already has a national portal and online tool to direct Canadians to the Town of Banff for engagement; and
b. Engaging together on the Community Plan and SEA terms of Reference would help alleviate some of the capacity pressures for Indigenous nations.

Summary of Issue

The Banff Community Plan (Municipal Development Plan) is a statutory plan prepared by the municipality under the authority of the Municipal Government Act (MGA, RSA 2000, s. 632) and Article 5.4 of the Incorporation Agreement. All municipalities in Alberta, regardless of size, are required to prepare and have an MDP. Within five years of approval of the 2022 Banff National Park of Canada Management Plan, an updated community plan is to be tabled in Parliament.

The Banff Community Plan is the Town's primary long-range planning document and is a statement of the goals, objectives, principles and planning philosophy for the community's future. The updated Community Plan must meet all of the criteria listed in the Municipal Government Act for municipal development plans and be consistent with the provisions of Section 33 of the Canada National Parks Act for Park Communities, and the Banff National Park of Canada Management Plan which includes the principles of no net negative environmental impact, environmental stewardship and heritage conservation, and accord with any guidelines established by the Minister for appropriate activities within the park community.

A key focus of the updated community plan has been to align the updated vision and policy direction with other master plans, strategic plans and policies that establish direction in matters relating to environment and sustainability, housing, tourism and economy, mobility and transportation, community wellbeing, and managing land use.

A copy of the draft community plan including an overview of the plan contents and structure was first presented to Council on December 16, 2024.

Banff Community Plan Content & Structure
The content and structure of the updated Banff Community Plan was based on input from the advisory committee and Administration and is divided into the following sections as follows:

- OUR JOURNEY TOWARDS RECONCILIATION
  In the spirit of reconciliation, here we acknowledge the enduring relationship between Indigenous Peoples and the territories they traditionally occupied. We recognize and deeply appreciate the historic connection they have to this place - both the land and the water.

- INTRODUCTION
  The introduction serves to establish context, outline the plan's purpose and scope, and engage stakeholders by explaining the planning process and its goals for the community.

- PART 1. BANFF: A NATIONAL PARK COMMUNITY
  This section provides and overview of the legislative context for the plan, purposes of the town, and a brief summary of the current situation and issues.

- PART 2. IMAGINING BANFF IN 2040
  Here a long-term view to the future is provided by working backward from a desired outcome or future state to the present.

- PART 3. PLAN VISION AND PRINCIPLES
  This section identifies the community's vision and guiding principles which set the direction for decision-making when implementing the objectives of the plan. For the first time, a graphic vision statement has been incorporated into the plan.

- PART 4. ACHIEVING OUR VISION
  Each of the following subsections contains more targeted background statements, goals and objectives, all linked to the plan vision and guiding principles. This interconnectedness

ensures that strategic initiatives are aligned with the community's vision, providing clarity for residents, stakeholders, and users of the plan.

- 4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP
  Identifies the Town's commitment to no net negative environmental impact (NNNEI) and becoming a model environmental community. This includes policy objectives for ecological integrity, climate change, community wildfire protection, waste diversion and infrastructure development.

- 4.2 A PLACE TO CALL HOME
  Addresses the critical importance of housing needs, affordability, and types of housing. A key goal is to ensure that housing costs are affordable for a wide range of incomes, through policy objectives that promote a shared approach in building an inclusive and equitable community.

- 4.3 BALANCING A PROSPEROUS ECONOMY
  This section sets goals and objectives for attracting, promoting and sustaining economic growth in alignment with the Lead Tourism for Good - 10-Year Vision for Tourism and its "Five Trails to Tomorrow. The new plan is committed to developing a complete community that balances a high-quality living environment with a diverse, vibrant and sustainable local economy that supports a robust and stable tax base to fund essential community services and provides wide access to goods, services and business investment opportunities.

- 4.4 INDIGENOUS CONNECTIONS
  This section acknowledges the unique histories, cultures, and rights of Indigenous peoples, the importance of Indigenous knowledge, perspectives, and protocols and building strong relationships with Indigenous communities.

- 4.5 MOVING PEOPLE SUSTAINABLY
  Mobility and transportation policies within the plan aim to ensure efficient, accessible, and sustainable movement of people and goods, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for residents and visitors. Policies prioritize sustainable transportation modes like walking, cycling, and public transit, reducing reliance on private vehicles and mitigating environmental impacts like air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

- 4.6 COMMUNITY WELLBEING
  This section of the plan builds on the work of the most recent Community Social Assessment and focuses on the core principles of community wellbeing and quality of life. It recognizes the importance of social connections, inclusivity, cultural diversity, community health and safety promoting a sense of belonging and opportunity for all.

- PART 5. LAND USE
  This section addresses the Town's approach to growth management and land use planning by providing a description of land use designations, guidelines for development, sites that

require area specific plans and more detailed land use planning strategies, a planning approach for the public realm and heritage conservation.

- PART 6. MEASURING IMPACT AND OUTCOMES
  This section outlines how the plan will be implemented and what actions will be taken for tracking the plan's progress and making adjustments as needed.

- PART 7. APPENDICES
  The Appendices A through E and are comprised of a Glossary of Terms, a town Context Map, a town Land Use Map, National Park Planning Context and an overview of the Community Consultation process.

Response Options

1. Council may give First Reading to proposed Bylaw 490 as presented;
2. Council may choose not to give First Reading of proposed Bylaw 490 and take no further action at this time; or
3. Council may request other information as deemed necessary prior to proceeding with First Reading.

IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

Budget

There are no budgetary implications with any formal readings of the draft plan by Council other than staff time and resources. However, some external environmental consulting expertise will be required to assist with the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) required by Parks Canada once the plan has been finalized. It is anticipated that the cost of the SEA will be approximately $40,000. Cost associated with graphic design and printing of the plan are estimated at $5,000.00. Both initiatives have been budgeted for in the Planning & Environment 2025 operating budget.

Internal Resources

The Director, Planning and Environment and Manager, Strategic Initiatives + Special Projects have led the process to review and update the community plan along with the assistance of the Director, Communications & Marketing who has coordinated all public engagement and consultation activities.

Communication

Once the content and text of the final draft plan is approved, the document will be professionally designed for publishing and a section of thebanff.ca website will be programmed with digital plan content for ease of reference.

The development of the 2025 Banff Community Plan involves three major stages:

Stage A: Locals Create and Verify Priorities for Banff (2023-2024)

This included:

Raising awareness and understanding of the process

- Residents and stakeholders were invited to public information sessions to learn more about the community plan and provide feedback on key topic areas, challenges, and opportunities. This included raising broad awareness of the planning process, what the Banff Community Plan is, and why it is being reviewed and updated.
- Providing clear information about key issues and opportunities.
- Building a shared understanding of what the plan will look like ‘on the ground’.

Providing opportunities for input

- The Town provided a range of meaningful engagement opportunities for the public to learn about the project, share input, perspectives, and dialogue around key issues. This included public outreach at various venues, public drop-in sessions, special interest focus groups and information sessions, and online surveys.

Ensuring accountability and transparency

- Documenting the process with clear and transparent information about what we heard through engagement activities and how input was used to influence the update the community plan.

Stage B: Feedback on the Draft Community Plan (April-May 2025)

1. Banff local interested groups and organizations invited to provide feedback on the 2025 Draft Community Plan by answering these key questions:
   - Will the draft Community Plan help get what our community needs and address our priorities?
   - What do you like in the Draft Community Plan and why?
   - Is anything missing from this Draft Community Plan?
   - Should anything in the Draft Plan be emphasized, enhanced or increased?
   -
2. Public Online Survey on Draft Community Plan - April 7-30, 2025
   - Made available online https://banffviewpoints.ca/communityplan
   - Made available by request at Banff Town Hall or by emailing project team.
3. Interested Groups Open House and Feedback Session on the Draft Community Plan - Tuesday, April 18, 2025
4. Public Open House and Feedback Session on the Draft Community Plan for residents and organizations of Banff - Wednesday, April 23, 2025

Stage C: Validate the Banff Community Plan (Summer 2025)

Residents and interested groups will be invited to review revisions to the draft plan that incorporate input from previous stages, federal feedback and considerations from the Strategic Environmental Assessment culminating in the public hearing before Banff Town Council before final review by the Government of Canada.

Council Strategic Priorities

A 2025 Council Service Review priority is to bring forward the Banff Community Plan to council for a decision and approval.

Legislation/Policy

The Province of Alberta Municipal Government Act (MGA) requires that a Council of a municipality with a population of 3500 or more must by bylaw adopt a municipal development plan. The community plan must be adopted by bylaw in accordance with the provisions of the MGA and does not come into full force and effect in Banff until approved by the Minister responsible for Parks Canada.

In accordance with the requirements of the MGA, the Bylaw to adopt the community plan must be considered and adopted by the majority of council in three distinct and separate readings. The MGA also required that Council hold a public hearing before second reading during a regular or

special meeting of council. If a bylaw does not receive second or third reading within two years after first reading, or if it is defeated on second or third reading, all previous readings of the bylaw are automatically rescinded.

If the bylaw to adopt the new community plan is granted three readings and approved by council, under the provisions of the Town of Banff Incorporation Agreement, the federal minister responsible for Parks Canada or their designate must give final approval to the amending bylaw prior to coming into effect.

In creating the community plan the Town of Banff must also take into account its unique and special role. Banff is, first and foremost, a town within a National Park, as well as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. As such, the Town has a legal obligation to maintain and enhance natural and cultural heritage resources that are of importance to all Canadians. Certain laws and government policies reflect this special role and outline the framework within which the Town must operate including:

- The Canada National Parks Act
- Banff National Park of Canada Management Plan
- Town of Banff Incorporation Agreement
- No Net Negative Environmental Impact (NNNEI) The principle of NNNEI, established by the Federal Government, is to be adopted in all National Park Community Plans.

In accordance with the Banff National Park of Canada Management Plan, the Banff Community Plan must speak to the principles of no net negative environmental impact, environmental stewardship, and heritage conservation, and accord with any guidelines established by the Minister for appropriate activities within the park community. It must also describe:

- the purposes and objectives of the community;
- the lands comprising the community and its commercial zones, and the maximum permitted commercial floor area in those commercial zones as described in Schedule 4 of the *Canada National Parks Act*;
- the strategy for commercial growth management;
- the highest and best use of community lands while preserving the intent and character of residential, public service, environmental protection and public park lands in the community;
- the strategy for preservation, protection, and commemoration of heritage resources;
- the approach to becoming a model community in respect of environmental management, sustainable development and tourism with a goal of no net negative environmental impact; and
- a description of the regular monitoring and reporting on no net negative environmental framework of the community.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required under the provisions of the Government of Canada Impact Assessment Act (IAA). The SEA is intended to provide a cumulative effects framework for assessment of individual projects and initiatives resulting from the newly proposed policy objectives and demonstrate how the plan:

- Is consistent with the *Banff National Park of Canada Management Plan;*
- Is consistent with the principles of no net negative environmental impact;
- Is consistent with the responsible environmental stewardship; and,
- Ensures ecological integrity of Banff National Park is maintained or improved by the plan.

Parks Canada has worked with Administration in making a determination on the scope and level of environmental review, which includes the preparation of a Terms of Reference and a description of the roles and responsibilities of the municipality, the project proponent and Parks Canada.

Other

MDPs are the highest-level statutory plan and provides guidance to all the other community plans. It sets the community vision and can be seen as the overarching community strategic plan, guiding the community's future growth and development. The updated community plan ensures the vision and policy direction for the community continue to be relevant, in their ability to help achieve the vision for the community and to plan for the future sustainability of the municipality.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Proposed Bylaw 490, The Banff Community Plan
Attachment 2 – Proposed Bylaw 490, The Banff Community Plan - Schedule A
Attachment 3 – The Banff Community Plan First Reading - Redline Copy
Attachment 4 – 2009 Banff Community Plan

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