



## **Black Diamond and Turner Valley Agree to Explore Amalgamation**

February 19, 2016

This week, Black Diamond and Turner Valley Councils agreed to explore the feasibility of amalgamating the two communities. The decision to proceed with examining the viability of becoming one community evolved from Friendship Agreement meetings held over the past year. Adopted in 2012, the Friendship Agreement formalized a commitment between the two towns to collaborate toward expanded shared services and improved communications. Numerous achievements have been realized since that time including the implementation of a joint growth study, coordination of a municipal development plan encompassing both communities, regional economic development and community services initiatives and expanded shared services.

There has also been resurgence in public interest regarding the amalgamation. As many residents are aware, amalgamation discussions are not new having been visited several times over the past few decades. Both communities have experienced significant growth in this time and have faced similar issues throughout. The June 2013 flood, while devastating, demonstrated and confirmed the strongest commitment to working together yet. That same spirit of cooperation has led both Councils to take the next step in the municipal relationship.

A grant application to support this initiative has been submitted through the Alberta Community Partnership Municipal Restructuring Program. The scope of work for the study is not yet finalized but will examine all aspects of potential amalgamation including cost/benefit analysis, identification of opportunities and efficiencies and potential challenges. The application requests \$150,000 to facilitate the process and was supported by both Councils (passed by Turner Valley on February 16 and by Black Diamond on February 17).

Public input will be obtained as early as possible in the process and regular progress updates and information will be provided. The goal of the project is to create an outstanding service delivery model for the residents of both towns. Black Diamond and Turner Valley Councils are committed to working with Municipal Affairs to ensure this happens.

Mayor Sharlene Brown  
Town of Black Diamond

Mayor Kelly Tuck  
Town of Turner Valley