

# *Saskatchewan Municipal* **Best Practice**

## **Adoption of a Long-term Development Plan**

### **CONTACT**

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### **THE PRACTICE**

In 1983, it became evident to the RM of Edenwold that significant changes were required in order to maintain a quality level of service at an affordable cost to the ratepayers. There was also mounting pressure from the general public to accommodate business and country residential growth. Council was left with two options. They could carry on the operation of the municipality under the provisions of the existing zoning bylaw, which limited growth potential, or they could adopt a plan which would provide for a diversified tax base.

### **THE PROCESS**

Council scheduled a series of public meetings to present their views and to solicit input from individuals and neighbouring municipalities. As a result, a local development committee was established and a planning consultant was hired. Throughout the year, council and the administrative staff worked closely with the committee and the planner to draft a long-term goal for development in the RM of Edenwold. Public participation was a priority, and numerous open houses and workshops were held.

In order to attract new people and industry, council offered a three-year tax exemption on new industrial or commercial buildings. A plan which included high density residential, commercial and industrial development could take the municipality from an agricultural-oriented tax base to a more diversified tax base.

### **THE RESULTS**

Since the implementation of the development plan, population has increased from 1,992 (1981 Census) to 3,611 (2006 Census), a growth rate of 81.3%, highest of all rural municipalities in Saskatchewan. Perhaps more importantly, the RM now has a diversified tax base, which has enhanced municipal service delivery.

The most significant changes have occurred since 2000. The development of 123 high density residential lots and 78 country residential properties has been followed by the development of 30 industrial and commercial lots. The latest developments include a strip mall and the creation of a gas bar and convenience store on the Cowessess First Nation.

### **LESSONS LEARNED**

Through this process, the municipality learned the importance of justifying major changes to ratepayers. The RM also saw the need to develop attractions in the community to draw people to the area. The most significant challenges were to sell the idea to the residents of the municipality. Patience and a mutual understanding eventually resulted in the growth of the municipality.