

Questions and Answers *Alberta Land Stewardship Act (ALSA)*

Who does this Act affect?

By setting out the regional planning process and the importance of regional plans, the Act potentially affects all activities on the land and all Albertans. We all share responsibility for the management of our land and natural resources.

ALSA makes regional plans binding on:

- all provincial government departments and decision-making boards and agencies;
- municipalities and local government authorities;
- industry, including companies with mineral rights leases and forestry management agreements as well as agricultural operations; and
- all Albertans.

Does this Act affect other provincial laws?

To support the Act, a number of other laws need to be amended, to ensure that provincial and local government boards and authorities align their activities and decisions with regional plans.

When will *ALSA* take effect?

The law takes effect once it is proclaimed, which we expect later this year.

How will regional planning work?

The draft *ALSA* sets up a strong, provincially led regional planning system. Government will provide direction for the development of regional plans, including strategies that will have to be implemented as part of regional plans. Government will appoint regional advisory councils, which will consist of members representing of a wide range of interests, expertise and experience within each region.

Regional advisory councils will provide advice to government on what should be in

the regional plans. Plans will be developed by the Land Use Secretariat, and will be reviewed and approved by government. They will become legally binding documents, which give the government the ability to ensure the plans are followed.

Will there be public input?

Yes. In addition to the input received from each regional advisory council, the Alberta government will consult with residents, stakeholders and Aboriginal communities in the region. Public input is critical to the development of the regional plans.

How often will regional plans be reviewed?

Regional plans must be reviewed at least every 10 years, and may be reviewed sooner if needed.

What is the Land Use Secretariat and what will it do?

The secretariat is an organization within the public service, independent of any existing ministry, that will support Cabinet, government ministries, regional advisory councils and local governments in developing and implementing regional plans. It will provide information and technical support to these bodies and help prepare draft and final regional plans.

Does the legislation require cumulative effects management in regional planning?

Yes. *ALSA* clearly states that its purpose is to enable sustainable development by taking account of and responding to the cumulative effects of our activities on the land.

What effect will *ALSA* have on municipalities?

Municipalities and local government authorities will have the same decision-making authority as they now have, but they will have to align their plans, bylaws and decisions with regional plans.

How does this legislation affect the Calgary and Capital metropolitan plans?

Those plans are a priority under the Land-use Framework, and municipalities in both regions have devoted a lot of time and effort to the development of effective, long-term plans. Our intent is to ensure alignment of both plans with regional plans as these are developed.

How does this legislation affect industry?

The legislation requires that existing provincial and municipal authorities that make decisions affecting industry, such as the Energy Resources Conservation Board, comply with regional plans.

One intent of the legislation is to create more certainty for industry. When regional plans are in place, industry will know the regional blueprint they have to follow, and will have a better idea of how their activities fit within that plan. This will give them more certainty in planning their own activities and investments.

How does this legislation affect parks and recreational activities?

This Act ensures that any regulations or programs around recreational activities or the development of parks align with regional plans. The government is developing a strategy for managing recreational use of public lands.

Does the law affect the development of transportation and utility corridors?

A provincial transportation and utility corridors policy is being developed.

Regional plans will help support the development and implementation of this strategy.

How will the government make sure regional plans are followed?

Through *ALSA*, the government will require existing processes and agencies to follow the direction in the regional plans.

Will landowners and industries be compensated for changes in how land can be used as a result of regional plans?

The only new compensation provided for by *ALSA* is in the case of conservation directives, and only when there is a loss in market value of land as a result of the directives. Otherwise, compensation is only available as already allowed under Alberta's laws—such as under the *Expropriation Act*.

What is a conservation directive?

In a regional plan, the government may require that a specific valued, sensitive or scenic landscape be set aside for conservation or protection. If there is a decrease in the market value of the land as a result, the titleholder can apply for compensation. The titleholder continues to own the land.

How does the legislation affect Aboriginal Albertans?

Alberta recognizes that those First Nations and Métis communities that hold constitutionally protected rights are uniquely positioned to inform land-use planning. We continue to consult and work with Aboriginal communities across the province.

How can we learn more about the bill?

Information on the bill and the Land-use Framework can be found at www.landuse.alberta.ca. In addition, public information sessions are planned. Details will be posted on the website.