

March 7, 2024

## RMA Seeks Information on Implementation of Changes to Renewable Energy Approval Process

*Following the announcement of policy changes to the renewable energy industry, RMA is seeking clarity on how specific changes will be finalized and implemented*

On February 28, 2024, the Government of Alberta [announced several policy changes](#) to the renewable energy approval process. The RMA remains hopeful that the proposed changes will result in improved collaboration between the industry and municipalities and contribute to the strategic growth of the industry. However, there are currently some unanswered questions about the implementation of several policy changes, including the buffer zone around viewscapes and restrictions to renewable development on some types of agricultural land. The RMA has reached out to the Minister of Affordability and Utilities to seek information on next steps in the process of designing the details of each policy change and when implementation will take effect.

There is concern that the viewscapes policy change could sterilize a significant portion of land in the province, creating a scenario where some communities will not have an opportunity to grow a renewable energy industry. The RMA has asked for clarification on the definition of “pristine viewscapes” and ways in which restrictions can be implemented to balance viewscapes protection with strategic industry growth.

Further, the RMA is interested in learning more about the ministry’s approach to the co-existence of agriculture and renewable energy development as a condition for project approvals on class 1 and 2 land. Defining “agriculture” can be difficult in practice and regionally dependent, and there is a need for municipal input into this definition.

Due to the high risk of unintended consequences of the changes for industry, municipalities, and landowners, engaging with key stakeholders in developing detailed approaches would be appreciated and would increase the likelihood of broad buy-in to the new approach. The RMA will continue to advocate for municipal input into the implementation process of these changes and looks forward to working collaboratively with the Ministry of Affordability and Utilities.

**Karrina Jung**

*Policy Advisor*

780.955.4085

[karrina@RMAAlberta.com](mailto:karrina@RMAAlberta.com)

**Wyatt Skovron**

*Director of External Relations & Advocacy*

780.955.4096

[wyatt@RMAAlberta.com](mailto:wyatt@RMAAlberta.com)