

Peace Region Municipalities Position Northwestern Alberta as a Future Nuclear Development Hub

Gavin Fitch, K.C., Michael Barbero, Matt Hammer, Alex Dingman, Rachel Donnelly

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Alberta's emerging nuclear energy framework is beginning to generate responses from local governments seeking to position their communities for future investment and project development opportunities. On July 13, 2026, the Peace Regional Energy Alliance (PREA), a coalition of municipalities in northwestern Alberta, released a [Position Paper](#) expressing support for nuclear energy development and advocating for the Peace Region to become Alberta's preferred location for future nuclear projects.

PREA's announcement comes as Alberta continues to develop its nuclear policy framework following the release of the final [report](#) of Alberta's Nuclear Energy Engagement and Advisory Panel (Alberta Nuclear Report) in April 2026 and shortly after the federal government's release of the [Nuclear Energy Strategy for Canada](#). Together, these developments suggest that municipalities are beginning to assess their role in Alberta's emerging nuclear sector and compete for future nuclear-related investment.

The initiative is also notable because it emerges against the backdrop of Energy Alberta's proposed [Peace River Nuclear Power Project](#), which is currently advancing through the federal impact assessment process, having recently (on April 20, 2026) entered the Impact Statement phase. If approved, this project could generate up to 4,800 MW of electricity from multiple reactor units northeast of Peace River. While PREA's Position Paper is not directed at any specific project, it reflects growing regional interest in the potential role of nuclear development in northwestern Alberta's economy and electricity future.

For background on Alberta's and Canada's evolving nuclear policy frameworks, see our earlier articles, ["Alberta and Canada Advance Strategies to Promote Nuclear Energy"](#) and ["Expanding Uranium Production Under the Nuclear Energy Strategy for Canada."](#)

PREA's Vision for a Nuclear Hub in Northwestern Alberta

PREA is comprised of the County of Northern Lights, Municipal District of Peace No. 135, Northern Sunrise County, the Towns of Grimshaw, Manning, and Peace River, and the Villages of Berwyn and Nampa. The organization describes itself as a regional alliance established to advance energy and economic development opportunities throughout the Peace Region.

In its Position Paper, PREA states that it "boldly endorse[s] nuclear development" in northwestern Alberta

and encourages the Government of Alberta to advance its nuclear framework and designate the Peace Region as the location for future nuclear developments in the province. PREA also identifies regional advantages that it believes support such a designation, including available land, water resources, infrastructure potential, workforce development opportunities, and broader economic diversification benefits.

Although framed as a regional policy initiative rather than support for any particular project, PREA's announcement is notable because it represents one of the first organized efforts by a coalition of Alberta municipalities to publicly position itself as a future nuclear host jurisdiction while provincial policy development remains ongoing. As Alberta moves toward the release of a nuclear roadmap, similar initiatives may emerge from other municipalities seeking to demonstrate their suitability for future nuclear investment and infrastructure.

Building Social Licence as a Regional Priority

A central feature of PREA's Position Paper is its focus on the social license for nuclear energy development, a critical component for successful deployment, particularly in Alberta where nuclear energy is a novel energy form. Rather than concentrating exclusively on economic or energy-policy considerations, PREA places significant emphasis on public engagement, emergency preparedness, waste management, and regional benefit-sharing to enhance social acceptance for the nuclear industry.

PREA states that it intends to serve as a regional voice for the dissemination of evidence-based information regarding nuclear development and contemplates future public engagement initiatives designed to promote understanding of nuclear energy and associated regulatory processes. The Position Paper also contemplates the development of regional benefits arrangements and identifies the importance of maintaining public confidence throughout the lifecycle of any future project.

Many of these priorities closely parallel recommendations contained in the Alberta Nuclear Report, which highlighted the importance of public education, municipal participation, emergency planning, and meaningful engagement with affected communities as Alberta considers how nuclear energy may fit within the province's future electricity system.

Indigenous Engagement and Regulatory Considerations

PREA's Position Paper also acknowledges the importance of meaningful engagement with First Nations and Métis communities. The document recognizes that any future project proponents would be required to undertake ongoing consultation and engagement throughout project planning, assessment, and development processes, and emphasizes the importance of considering Indigenous perspectives, rights, interests, and traditional knowledge.

Those issues are already becoming prominent in the regulatory review of the proposed Peace River Nuclear Power Project. As the project proceeds through the Impact Statement phase of the federal impact assessment process, participating Indigenous communities and organizations have raised concerns regarding project definition, assessment methodologies, consultation processes, cumulative effects assessment, and opportunities for meaningful participation in project planning and decision-making. The issues emerging through that process are indicative of the complex engagement and regulatory considerations that are likely to accompany any future nuclear development proposal in Alberta.

While PREA's initiative is focused primarily on regional readiness and public engagement, any future nuclear project in Alberta would remain subject to extensive federal regulatory requirements, including licensing by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission and, like the [Peace River Nuclear Power Project](#), federal impact assessment processes. Project-specific regulatory reviews would also be expected to involve Indigenous consultation and consideration of environmental, safety, emergency management, and waste management issues.

Positioning for Alberta's Emerging Nuclear Economy

The release of PREA's Position Paper may also signal the beginning of broader competition among Alberta municipalities seeking to attract future nuclear-related investment. Alberta's Nuclear Energy Engagement and Advisory Panel identified growing electricity demand, economic development opportunities, and potential new nuclear technologies as factors supporting further consideration of nuclear energy in the province. Meanwhile, the federal Nuclear Energy Strategy identifies nuclear development as a key component of Canada's long-term energy security, industrial competitiveness, and economic growth objectives.

Against that backdrop, municipalities may increasingly seek to distinguish themselves as attractive locations for future nuclear projects by demonstrating community readiness, infrastructure capacity, workforce availability, and local support. PREA's announcement appears to reflect an early example of this trend and may provide a model that other regions consider as Alberta continues to develop its nuclear roadmap and regulatory framework.

At the same time, PREA's Position Paper highlights another feature of Alberta's developing nuclear landscape: the emergence of organized stakeholder coalitions seeking to influence the policy and public discourse surrounding nuclear development. As project reviews advance and provincial policy continues to evolve, governments, proponents, Indigenous communities, municipalities, industry organizations, and other stakeholder groups can be expected to play increasingly active roles in shaping the future of nuclear development in Alberta. PREA's coordinated regional approach may therefore be significant not only as a statement of municipal readiness, but also as an early indication of how local governments may seek to participate collectively in future nuclear policy and project discussions.

What Comes Next

The Government of Alberta has indicated that further work on its nuclear roadmap and regulatory framework is expected to continue into 2027. At the federal level, implementation of the Nuclear Energy Strategy for Canada is also expected to continue through a range of policy, investment, and regulatory initiatives intended to support future nuclear development across the country.

Although PREA's Position Paper does not correspond to any specific project proposal, it represents an important indication of how local governments may begin positioning themselves within Alberta's emerging nuclear-development landscape. As provincial and federal policy frameworks continue to evolve, municipalities across Alberta may increasingly seek to establish themselves as preferred jurisdictions for future nuclear energy investment and development.

As federal and provincial nuclear frameworks continue to evolve, project participants and stakeholders will face a complex and rapidly developing regulatory landscape. Cassels is closely monitoring Alberta's emerging nuclear sector and Canada's broader nuclear regime. To discuss the potential impacts and opportunities arising from these developments, please reach out to a member of our [Regulatory](#) or [Major Projects](#) Groups.

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