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**Final Report**

# Capital Region Land Use Plan

March 12, 2009

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# Acknowledgements

The following people are recognized for their commitment, dedication and contribution to the preparation of the Capital Region Land Use Plan.

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# 1.0 Introduction

Regions, not cities, towns or counties are the focus of economic growth. The future prosperity of the Capital Region will depend, to a significant extent, on its ability to compete with other leading regions in offering the best mix of economic opportunity and lifestyle amenities to attract and retain its most valuable resource, its people. This challenge to maximize benefits for the Capital Region can only be effectively met by the coordinated efforts of interdependent communities within a prosperous, sustainable region.

The Capital Region Land Use Plan's primary purpose is to manage sustainable growth that protects the region's environment and resources, minimizes the regional development footprint, strengthens communities, increases transportation choice and supports economic development. The Capital Region Land Use Plan (the Plan) aims to accomplish these objectives through an integrated and strategic approach to planning which coordinates planning and development decisions in the region and identifies a regional development pattern to complement existing infrastructure, services and land uses.

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

In June 2007, Premier Stelmach initiated a process which recommended coordinated land use planning for the Region as a whole. In April 2008, the Capital Region Board (CRB), which consists of 25 municipalities of the Capital Region, was established pursuant to the Capital Region Board Regulation under the Municipal Government Act. The CRB's priority is to create a Capital Region Growth Plan by March 31, 2009 which is comprised of regional land use, inter-municipal transit, social and affordable housing, and geographic information services (GIS).

## 1.2 PURPOSE

The Land Use Plan lays out a strategy to manage growth to minimize the Region's footprint, based on transit-oriented development and densification of existing developed areas. The Plan can be used by all levels of government, the private sector and the public as a framework to guide planning and development decisions in the Region. The Plan is to promote an integrated and strategic approach to planning for future growth in the region; to identify the overall development pattern and key infrastructure investments that would best complement existing infrastructure, services and land uses to maximize benefits; and to coordinate decisions to sustain economic growth and ensure strong communities and a healthy environment.

## 1.3 CAPITAL REGION BOARD REGULATION

The Municipal Government Act is provincial legislation that provides the framework for municipal government and planning. Established by Regulation pursuant to the Municipal Government Act, the Capital Region Board was mandated to prepare a Capital Region Growth Plan; advise and make recommendations to the Minister regarding its implementation; facilitate the resolution of issues arising from its preparation and implementation; implement policies for the sharing of

costs among the participating municipalities for regional projects; and carry out any other functions and duties as the Minister directs.

The CRB Regulation also detailed a number of specific components required to complete a "comprehensive, integrated regional land use plan for the Capital Region." These were:

(i) population and employment projections

(ii) the identification of:

- (a) priority growth areas
- (b) land supply for residential, commercial and industrial purposes
- (c) agricultural lands
- (d) buffer areas
- (e) density of development
- (f) the development and location of infrastructure

(iii) the identification of corridors for recreation, transportation, utilities and intermunicipal transit

(iv) policies regarding environmentally sensitive areas

(v) policies for the co-ordination of planning and development among the participating municipalities

(vi) specific actions to be taken by the participating municipalities to implement the land use plan

There were other significant elements to the Regulation, including a Ministerial Order that created the Transitional Regional Evaluation Framework (a mechanism for the approval of statutory plans and statutory plan amendments).

## 1.4 PROVINCIAL LAND USE FRAMEWORK

To provide additional direction, the province of Alberta has created a Land Use Framework that supports land use planning, decision-making and research. This framework guides management of public and private lands, and natural resources, to achieve Alberta's long-term economic, environmental and social goals. It leaves local decision-making with current authorities. However, in future, local decisions will have to align with the Land Use Framework and the North Saskatchewan Region Plan. This Plan is evaluated against the three desired outcomes stated in the Land Use Framework.

### Healthy economy supported by our land and natural resources

Includes current and future economic benefits realized by the use and enjoyment of our land and natural resources. Much of Alberta's prosperity is derived from the land and other natural resources. We must ensure our land and natural resources continue to provide economic benefits to Albertans over time.

**Healthy ecosystems and environment**

Alberta lands should be managed to ensure healthy ecosystems. Albertans accept the responsibility to steward our land, air, water and biodiversity so that they pass on to the next generation in as good or better condition as we received them. The means to achieve this outcome may vary from region to region and be different on public and private lands, but the goal is the same.

**People-friendly communities with ample recreational and cultural opportunities**

Albertans live in communities. How we design, plan and recreate in and how we move through the communities, and how these communities grow, impacts the land and future land use in Alberta. We want our communities to be safe and healthy, and we want citizens of Alberta to have ready access to parks, forests and other areas to pursue outdoor recreational and cultural interests.

Section 2.2 of this Plan outlines how the Land Use Principles and Policies align with the desired outcomes of the Land Use Framework.

## 1.5 PLANNING PROCESS

The Plan was prepared through a collaborative process with the Region's municipalities as well as public consultations. The consultation included focus groups with a broad spectrum of stakeholders throughout the Region and a quantitative survey of Capital Region residents. The public consultation is summarized in Appendix 2 to this Plan.

A key element of the process was the formation of a Land Use Committee (Committee) consisting of twelve (12) of the CRB's Mayors. The Committee developed a broad vision and core principles for the Region, and then worked with staff and consultants to recommend a comprehensive set of principles and policies that are the basis of the Plan. Throughout the development of this Plan, the Committee was advised by a Blue Ribbon Panel consisting of leading academics and professionals in the fields of land use planning, demography, agriculture and agricultural economics.

Future work will be completed with the member municipalities, as outlined in Section 3 of this Plan, to ensure that priority growth areas, country residential areas and other issues of regional significance are identified and incorporated into this Plan.

## 1.6 POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

An integral part of the preparation of the Plan was the development of population and employment projections for the Capital Region and the municipalities to 2043. Further details on the population and employment projections are contained in the Population and Employment Projections Report, Appendix 5 to the Capital Region Growth Plan.

The projections are tied to the economic growth anticipated over the study period. An optimistic or high growth scenario was chosen to ensure sufficient consideration of land requirements for the forecast period. If growth turns out to be over-anticipated, the population and employment projections may occur over a longer time frame than was expected.

It has been assumed that growth in the region will be around 0.5% higher than the provincial average throughout the study period, primarily dependent on relatively high investment in oil sands in the province, for the medium and longer term, and on the Capital Region being the major beneficiary of the associated spin-off and indirect growth.

Over the next 35 years, it is projected that employment in the Capital Region will increase by an average annual growth rate of 1.2%, adding about 285,000 jobs for a total of approximately 830,000 jobs in the region. Based upon an average annual growth rate of 1.3%, it is projected that, by 2043, the regional population will increase by 615,000 people to 1,708,000.

Two planning scenarios were prepared for the Growth Plan. The Trend Scenario represents a status-quo approach to the future growth of the region in which existing patterns of development in the Capital Region are continued with little or no change. An Alternate scenario was based on the land use principles and policies of this Land Use Plan. It assumes an advanced public transit system and a more environmentally sensitive approach to land use as the basis for future patterns of development. It should be noted that this is one of many potential Alternate Scenarios. The 2043 population and employment projections for this Alternate Scenario are shown in the following tables:

***Alternate Scenario Population Projection by Municipality***

| Municipality | Quadrant | 2008 | 2013 | 2018 | 2028 | 2043 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alexander First Nation | North | 976 | 1,033 | 1,126 | 1,257 | 1,405 |
| Bon Accord | North | 1,603 | 1,781 | 2,039 | 2,452 | 2,950 |
| Gibbons | North | 2,906 | 3,729 | 4,446 | 5,945 | 7,348 |
| Legal | North | 1,252 | 1,357 | 1,516 | 1,735 | 1,938 |
| Morinville | North | 7,228 | 7,730 | 7,992 | 8,555 | 9,801 |
| Redwater | North | 2,302 | 3,057 | 3,927 | 5,020 | 6,235 |
| St. Albert | North | 58,501 | 64,996 | 72,606 | 85,191 | 99,998 |
| Sturgeon County | North | 19,204 | 19,810 | 21,135 | 23,219 | 25,608 |
| Bruderheim | East | 1,385 | 1,585 | 1,867 | 2,313 | 2,783 |
| Fort Saskatchewan | East | 17,243 | 21,162 | 25,591 | 33,826 | 41,913 |
| Lamont County | East | 3,937 | 3,966 | 4,170 | 4,492 | 4,661 |
| Strathcona County | East | 84,415 | 89,787 | 98,769 | 110,892 | 119,891 |
| Town of Lamont | East | 1,689 | 1,743 | 1,853 | 1,970 | 2,094 |
| Beaumont | South | 10,820 | 11,921 | 13,011 | 15,043 | 17,752 |
| Calmar | South | 2,004 | 2,177 | 2,349 | 2,565 | 2,788 |
| Devon | South | 6,400 | 7,110 | 7,639 | 8,538 | 9,777 |
| Leduc City | South | 20,529 | 23,830 | 30,211 | 37,963 | 43,795 |
| Leduc County | South | 12,985 | 15,802 | 21,175 | 27,753 | 33,110 |
| New Sarepta | South | 417 | 441 | 481 | 537 | 600 |
| Thorsby | South | 964 | 1,045 | 1,167 | 1,336 | 1,493 |
| Warburg | South | 632 | 669 | 729 | 794 | 887 |
| Enoch Cree Nation 135 | West | 1,521 | 1,649 | 1,842 | 2,109 | 2,355 |
| Parkland County | West | 29,850 | 30,861 | 31,150 | 31,887 | 32,231 |
| Spruce Grove | West | 22,380 | 24,565 | 26,776 | 30,904 | 36,191 |
| Stony Plain | West | 14,310 | 15,399 | 17,199 | 19,887 | 24,125 |
| Wabamun | West | 610 | 629 | 669 | 712 | 756 |
| Wabamun IR | West | 1,300 | 1,409 | 1,574 | 1,802 | 2,013 |
| Region Total | | 327,363 | 359,242 | 403,010 | 468,697 | 534,500 |
| Edmonton Total | | 766,742 | 829,058 | 902,583 | 1,029,625 | 1,174,279 |
| Capital Region Total | | 1,094,105 | 1,188,300 | 1,305,593 | 1,498,322 | 1,708,779 |

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## *Alternate Scenario Employment Projection by Municipality*

| Municipality | Quadrant | 2008 | 2013 | 2018 | 2028 | 2043 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alexander First Nation | North | 232 | 247 | 269 | 307 | 329 |
| Bon Accord | North | 236 | 264 | 301 | 370 | 424 |
| Gibbons | North | 654 | 768 | 894 | 1,098 | 1,257 |
| Legal | North | 434 | 459 | 506 | 592 | 636 |
| Morinville | North | 2,095 | 2,260 | 2,519 | 3,007 | 3,480 |
| Redwater | North | 1,065 | 1,132 | 1,227 | 1,360 | 1,557 |
| St. Albert | North | 16,935 | 17,504 | 18,336 | 20,699 | 22,486 |
| Sturgeon County | North | 10,202 | 13,677 | 16,426 | 18,665 | 21,155 |
| Bruderheim | East | 270 | 311 | 366 | 463 | 546 |
| Fort Saskatchewan | East | 7,959 | 10,664 | 11,937 | 13,917 | 15,169 |
| Lamont County | East | 1,118 | 1,162 | 1,232 | 1,337 | 1,399 |
| Strathcona County | East | 28,187 | 31,051 | 35,205 | 37,146 | 39,537 |
| Town of Lamont | East | 248 | 258 | 274 | 297 | 312 |
| Beaumont | South | 1,527 | 1,657 | 1,848 | 2,314 | 2,723 |
| Calmar | South | 558 | 624 | 682 | 825 | 927 |
| Devon | South | 1,477 | 1,751 | 1,938 | 2,403 | 2,723 |
| Leduc City | South | 6,991 | 7,705 | 8,670 | 10,331 | 11,314 |
| Leduc County | South | 15,335 | 18,075 | 23,691 | 33,605 | 48,155 |
| New Sarepta | South | 152 | 162 | 176 | 201 | 216 |
| Thorsby | South | 547 | 591 | 645 | 725 | 770 |
| Warburg | South | 387 | 408 | 439 | 479 | 509 |
| Enoch Cree Nation 135 | West | 1,198 | 1,321 | 1,485 | 1,737 | 1,865 |
| Parkland County | West | 7,106 | 8,907 | 11,639 | 13,649 | 17,347 |
| Spruce Grove | West | 7,440 | 7,771 | 8,018 | 9,193 | 9,857 |
| Stony Plain | West | 4,947 | 5,178 | 5,388 | 6,073 | 6,224 |
| Wabamun | West | 336 | 345 | 363 | 386 | 394 |
| Wabamun IR | West | 208 | 227 | 252 | 295 | 317 |
| Region Total | | 117,847 | 134,481 | 154,726 | 181,470 | 211,629 |
| Edmonton Total | | 428,890 | 450,883 | 490,503 | 549,916 | 620,370 |
| Capital Region Total | | 546,737 | 585,364 | 645,229 | 731,386 | 831,999 |

# 2.0 Regional Land Use Plan

## 2.1 VISION AND CORE PRINCIPLES

The foundation of a Regional Land Use Plan needs a shared vision for the future and a clear understanding of what must be done to make that vision a reality. To ensure a positive outcome, the Committee held a visioning session in July 2008 to provide a vision and principles for developing the Plan. The vision was based on three related themes:

- A family of diverse, interdependent communities within a prosperous, sustainable region;
- A region where the unique qualities of its residents, communities and natural environments are respected and supported; and
- A region that adapts to and promotes change to ensure the social, economic and cultural well-being of its residents and communities, and that sustains its natural and human environments.

Building on these statements, the Committee established preliminary core principles to guide the preparation of the Plan. These principles included statements about the environment, the economy, and the social aspects of community. They covered a range of issues from accommodating growth in a manner that minimizes the demands on our land, air and water; fostering diversification of the economy in unique and innovative ways; and ensuring residents and their communities are healthy and safe.

These initial principles were refined by the Committee throughout the development of the Plan with input from the Blue Ribbon Panel, the public consultation program, and the best planning practices. They are summarized in the following six principles:

- Protect the environment and resources;
- Minimize the regional footprint;
- Strengthen communities;
- Increase transportation choice;
- Ensure efficient provision of services, and
- Support regional economic development.

The following section explains the principles and policies in more detail.

## 2.2 LAND USE PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

Land use principles and policies were developed through an iterative process that involved input from Committee members, municipal administrators, a review of best planning practices, and the public stakeholder consultation. There was considerable debate over the principles and policies and, in particular, on the issues of agricultural lands and priority growth areas.

Throughout the debate, the Committee received extensive input from the Blue Ribbon Panel. The Committee acknowledges the Blue Ribbon Panel's contributions.

The following land use principles and policies are the planning framework that the Capital Region Board and the municipalities will employ to guide future growth and development in the Capital Region and to achieve the regional vision. The principles and policies are summarized in the Chart below.

| |
|---|
| **I: Protect the Environment and Resources**<br>*Principles*<br>a. Preserve and Protect the Environment<br>b. Preserve Agricultural Lands<br>c. Protect Natural Resources<br>d. Minimize the Impact of Development on Regional Watersheds and Airsheds<br>e. Minimize the Impact of Heavy Industrial Developments |
| |
| **II: Minimize Regional Footprint**<br>*Principles*<br>a. Identify, Protect and Prioritize Lands for Regional Infrastructure<br>b. Concentrate New Growth Within Priority Growth Areas<br>c. Allow Growth Outside of Priority Growth Areas<br>d. Support Expansion of Medium and Higher Density Residential Housing Forms<br>e. Support Cluster Country Residential Development |
| |
| **III: Strengthen Communities**<br>*Principles*<br>a. Create Inclusive Communities<br>b. Support Healthy Communities<br>c. Support Public Transit<br>d. Support Innovative and Affordable Housing Options |
| |
| **IV: Increase Transportation Choice**<br>*Principles*<br>a. Integrate Transportation Systems with Land Use<br>b. Support the Expansion of Transit Service in Various Forms |
| |
| **V: Ensure Efficient Provision of Services**<br>*Principles*<br>a. Design Integrated Physical Infrastructure within the Region<br>b. Maximize Utilization of Existing Infrastructure |
| |
| **VI: Support Regional Economic Development**<br>*Principles*<br>a. Ensure a Supply of Land to Sustain a Variety of Economic Development Activities<br>b. Attract and Retain Individuals and Families with a Diverse Range of Skills to the Capital Region to Satisfy the Region's Economic Development Goals<br>c. Support Regional Prosperity<br>d. Position the Capital Region Competitively on the World Stage |

# I. PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES

## *A. Preserve and Protect the Environment*

Preamble

The natural assets of the region provide the basis of life for all of us – clean air, water and food. These assets, integral to sustaining a liveable region, will continue to come under pressure from growth. The Plan must therefore ensure that development does not occur at the loss of significant natural features within the region. The Plan must strive to integrate land use and natural features more beneficially by retaining ecological values. Land use decisions shall strive to minimize its impact on the environment and natural resources through actions such as reducing green house gases and improving air quality.

Policies

(i) Any development which may cause detrimental effects such as erosion or pollution to lakes, rivers, water bodies and shorelines shall be prohibited unless appropriate mitigative measures are implemented.

(ii) Any development which fragments contiguous natural features, functions and habitat, such as water systems, moraines, forests, wetlands, and wildlife habitat and corridors shall be discouraged.

(iii) Support governmental environmental initiatives and seek opportunities for coordinated initiatives between municipalities.

(iv) Manage regional watersheds to protect, restore and ensure the sustainability of natural water systems.

(v) Support innovative design, construction and operational technologies and strategies which reduce emissions.

(vi) Manage land use distribution patterns to reduce reliance on automobiles.

## *B. Preserve Agricultural Lands*

Preamble

Agricultural land is a limited, non-renewable resource which is competing with other forms of development. If the land is not protected in the long term for food production, the land will be converted to another use and lost forever. Agricultural land has significant value, both at the local and regional levels, beyond its pure economic capacity, including green space, aesthetics, community character, lifestyle, air quality, wildlife habitat, as well as a risk management measure in the event of future food shortages. In order to ensure agriculture lands are complementary with policies to reduce the regional footprint, further collaboration on implementing agricultural land policies is required.

Policies

(i) To comply with the requirement of the Regulation, Map 1 has been prepared to identify agricultural lands. Map 1 identifies all agricultural lands designated in the existing Municipal Development Plans of CRB Municipalities.

(ii) In accordance with the final Provincial Land Use Framework (i.e. the North Saskatchewan Regional Plan), and through a process involving consultation with CRB municipalities and consideration of the full policies of the CRB land use framework and overall Growth Plan, a revised map will be prepared to identify agricultural lands which will need to be preserved from future fragmentation and conversion to other uses.

### *C. Protect Natural Resources*

Preamble

There are significant deposits of sand, gravel, minerals, oil and gas in the region. The extraction and use of these resources can, however, be incompatible with growth and development. It is therefore necessary to establish appropriate policy to ensure a balance between resource-based activities and regional growth.

Policies

(i) Any development that compromises the extraction of natural resources shall be discouraged.

(ii) Prevent development of incompatible uses adjacent to natural resource areas.

(iii) Prevent premature development of natural resources.

### *D. Minimize the Impact of Development on Regional Watersheds and Airsheds*

Preamble

As the region grows, there will be impacts on water and air quality. The quality of life in the region is directly dependent on a sustainable supply of clean air and water. Therefore, development decisions shall also consider potential impacts on the regional airsheds and watersheds.

Policy

(i) Any development which impacts the regional watersheds or airsheds shall comply with all applicable federal and provincial legislation.

### *E. Minimize the Impact of Heavy Industrial Developments*

Preamble

The major industrial growth in the region focuses primarily on the heavy industrial uses of Alberta's Industrial Heartland. While integral to the growth and economic stability of the region, specific attention shall be paid to minimize the impacts of heavy industrial uses on the surrounding natural environment and other uses. Responsible integration and risk management practices shall be implemented to minimize potential conflicts.

Policies

(i) Require appropriate risk management practices in approving heavy industrial development or other development in proximity to heavy industrial areas.

(ii) Promote eco-industrial principles in the development of heavy industrial areas.

## II. MINIMIZE REGIONAL FOOTPRINT

### *A. Identify, Protect and Prioritize Lands for Regional Infrastructure*

Preamble

Development of the region will require regional infrastructure. Since regional infrastructure extends across municipal boundaries, it will require coordination among municipalities and the province to identify land required for such infrastructure, and to protect it from premature and incompatible development to ensure its future availability.

Policies

(i) Ensure that lands identified for regional infrastructure such as energy transmission, highways, municipal infrastructure, transit and related facilities are protected from incompatible development.

(ii) The Province and the municipalities shall continue to identify lands that will be used for regional infrastructure. Once identified, these lands shall be protected for the designated use in applicable plans.

(iii) The CRB will work with the Province and municipalities to define and prioritize the need for and, if required, the future form, function and final alignment of multi use corridors, including infrastructure, storm water, potable water, sewer, utility, transportation (rail, roads and trails), pipeline and communications.

(iv) The CRB shall set priorities on regional projects to ensure the targeting of regional public investments in priority growth areas. The establishment of regional infrastructure priorities shall be updated as required.

(v) Encourage and support sustainable development within the region.

### *B. Concentrate New Growth Within Priority Growth Areas*

Preamble

Achieving regional objectives and meeting future funding requires the integration of regional public investments and growth. It is therefore important to concentrate growth within priority growth areas in order to maximize the use of infrastructure and public transit by incorporating mixed use and higher density development. This section establishes the principles and policies necessary for establishing priority growth areas. The process that will be used to evaluate and identify priority growth areas in the region will be undertaken as part of the implementation of this Plan.

Policies

(i) Most new growth shall occur within priority growth areas.

(ii) Priority shall be given to accommodating growth in major employment areas and in locations that meet at least three of the following four criteria:

a. Existing and proposed multi-mode movement corridors, including transit nodes

b. Adjacent to existing and proposed major employment areas

c. Redevelopment and intensification opportunities within existing urban areas

d. Locations that utilize existing infrastructure and servicing capacity or logically and efficiently extend that infrastructure

(iii) The CRB shall review the priority growth areas in conjunction with, or subsequent to, the approval of:

a. Changes to the routing of LRT or regional bus service in the Capital Region Intermunicipal Transit Plan

b. Creation of new or significant adjustments to major employment areas in the Plan area

c. New alignments or changes to alignments and/or location of major regional infrastructure

(iv) In making decisions regarding allocation of regional infrastructure resources, first consideration will be given to priority growth areas.

(v) Priority growth areas shall incorporate intensive forms of development that significantly exceed existing development patterns.

(vi) Transit corridors and nodes within the priority growth areas shall be identified. Growth within nodes and along these corridors shall be intensified. Encourage and support multi-use and multi-storey development at the nodes within the priority growth areas.

(vii) Ensure that transit corridors and nodes are identified and developed with a range of mixed uses and densities. These uses shall be integrated with existing and potential employment centres.

(viii) Determine the degree of intensity for each transit corridor and node based on its location.

(ix) Development on or near municipal boundaries shall be compatible and consistent with the policies of the Plan and shall not impede the sustainable delivery of infrastructure.

### *C. Allow Growth Outside of Priority Growth Areas*

Preamble

All municipalities should be allowed to have growth, appropriate to their size and as per the principles and policies of the Plan. However, it shall be addressed on a comprehensive basis to ensure that the collective impact of such growth does not compromise growth occurring within the priority growth areas, thereby compromising regional infrastructure investments and the intent of the Plan as defined by the other policies.

Policies

(i) Allow development outside of the priority growth areas if the following criteria are met:

a. It is contiguous to existing development

b. It follows the principles and policies of this plan related to the form of development

c. The level of services provided is appropriate to the form of development

d. Development in this area will not adversely impact the provision of regional infrastructure required to service the priority growth areas

(ii) Growth generated by new development should conform to the principles and policies of the CRB plan.

(iii) All municipalities shall be allowed to grow. The cumulative amount and impact of growth outside of the priority growth areas shall be monitored by the CRB.

(iv) Development on or near municipal boundaries shall be compatible and consistent with the policies of the Plan and shall not impede the sustainable delivery of infrastructure.

### *D. Support Expansion of Medium and Higher Density Residential Housing Forms*

Preamble

Medium and higher density housing forms have several benefits compared to low density housing forms. These include a much smaller development footprint and lower cost of provision of infrastructure (utilities, roads, etc.) and services (police, fire, ambulance, etc.) as well as contributing to more affordable housing. Medium and higher density housing also allows concentration at transit nodes and in corridors, thereby supporting public transit and encouraging less reliance on automobiles.

Policies

(i) New residential developments shall provide a greater proportion of higher density residential units.

(ii) Support innovative housing designs and/or built forms within new and existing residential neighbourhoods.

(iii) Greenfield developments shall make provision for a mixture of uses including a diversity of housing forms, community services, local retail and employment opportunities.

(iv) Transit accessibility must be included in the design of all new developments.

(v) This Section does not apply to country residential developments.

### *E. Support Cluster Country Residential Development*

Preamble

In cluster developments, housing units are developed relatively closely together to create a more compact footprint, to provide open space and preserve environmental features. With a smaller footprint, infrastructure and services can be provided in a more efficient way, in comparison to conventional country residential developments.

Policy

(i) Country residential uses shall be allowed in designated areas in a clustered form in order to preserve environmental or open space features. Such developments shall utilize municipal water and sanitary services. Private communal services may be allowed at the discretion of the Municipality.

## III. STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES

### *A. Create Inclusive Communities*

Preamble

Strong and inclusive communities will contribute to a stronger region. Therefore, the Plan shall support strong social infrastructure such as hospitals, community and recreational

facilities, public parks, open spaces, and civic uses, and encourage and support the establishment of social infrastructure throughout the region.

Policy

(i) Support initiatives to improve the livability of communities.

(ii) Integrate uses with adjacent developments to improve connectivity and accessibility to local parks, open space, commercial, and community services.

(iii) Encourage co-location and/or shared use of compatible public service infrastructure, such as education facilities, parks and civic uses.

### *B. Support Healthy Communities*

Preamble

Well planned communities can promote livability and a healthy lifestyle. Therefore, the Plan shall ensure that communities are designed to support alternate modes of transport such as transit, walking and biking and provide easy access to parks, open spaces, and trails. Communities designed with less reliance on automobiles will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality.

Policies

(i) Support the implementation of present and future initiatives to create and enhance parks, trails and natural areas for public use.

(ii) Improve accessibility to community services by providing sidewalks, bicycle trails to encourage walking and cycling and locate these services within proximity to transit, where possible.

(iii) CRB municipalities will work together to define and prioritize the need for, and if required, the future form, function, and location of a system of regional parks, open space, and greenways that will preserve important environmental and natural features for public purposes

(iv) Encourage and support innovative and green design solutions for neighbourhoods and buildings.

(v) Encourage and support innovative forms of communication and technology within the region.

### *C. Support Public Transit*

Preamble

A viable and efficient public transit is an integral part of a sustainable region. Therefore, new communities within the region shall be designed to support public transit by providing higher intensity uses in key locations and increasing accessibility to transit facilities.

Policies

(i) Provide a mix of higher intensity land uses along transit corridors, at nodes, and employment centres.

(ii) New developments shall plan for public transit support facilities such as park and ride lots, (where appropriate).

(iii) New developments shall be designed for connectivity and accessibility to transit facilities.

(iv) Prioritize public investments in multi-modal transport, park and ride lots, transit, and transit related services, in locations approved by the CRB.

### *D. Support Innovative and Affordable Housing Options*

Preamble

Success of the region is directly dependent on its ability to provide needed affordable housing to skilled workers, so that they may live close to, or within commuting distance of employment centres. Therefore, all municipalities shall provide a greater variety of housing types in new neighbourhoods, or support intensification opportunities within existing neighbourhoods to provide housing for a wider population spectrum.

Policies

(i) Municipalities shall provide for a diversity of housing needs for the entire population of the region.

(ii) All residential developments shall provide a greater variety of housing types.

(iii) Encourage intensification opportunities within existing residential neighbourhoods.

## IV. INCREASE TRANSPORTATION CHOICE

### *A. Integrate Transportation Systems with Land Use*

Preamble

Land use and transportation systems are intrinsically linked. The Plan shall support the creation of a sustainable transportation system by making sure that local land use decisions are aligned with regional transportation goals, and that communities are designed in a manner that provides alternatives and reduces the need for intra-regional travel.

Policies

(i) Ensure the identified function and capacity of local transportation facilities is consistent with regional land use principles.

(ii) Ensure the integration of public transportation infrastructure and land use development

(iii) Design transportation infrastructure to support multiple modes of transport.

(iv) Support development of inclusive communities to reduce the need for travel.

### *B. Support the Expansion of Transit Service in Various Forms*

Preamble

Transportation systems based on automobiles have proved to be unsustainable. Such systems consume excess energy, create pollution, and deliver a declining level of service despite increasing investments. Since transportation and land use systems are intrinsically linked, the Plan shall support the creation of a sustainable transportation system that supports public transit and other modes of transport (i.e. walking, biking, etc.) across the Capital Region.

Policies

(i) Expand and extend the level, quality and range of public transportation options available to serve the region.

(ii) Direct public infrastructure investments to the transit corridors and transportation projects that support regional growth plan policies.

(iii) Support expanded transit options through investment in alternative transit methods (e.g. designated transit lanes, high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, and park and ride facilities).

(iv) Support multi-modal transportation options by providing multi-use streets sufficient to accommodate bicyclists, motorists and pedestrians.

(v) Support public transportation options that are environmentally friendly and safe.

## V. ENSURE EFFICIENT PROVISION OF SERVICES

### *A. Design Integrated Physical Infrastructure within the Region*

Preamble

Integration of mutually shared municipal infrastructure promotes cost effective and efficient delivery of services and reduces duplication and competition for scarce capital funding.

Policies

(i) Coordinate and align infrastructure planning between municipalities.

(ii) Identify and protect corridors for transportation, transit and infrastructure requirements.

(iii) Ensure coordination of plans with, and provide support to, organizations that provide municipal services in the Capital Region in a shared and coordinated matter.

### *B. Maximize Utilization of Existing Infrastructure*

Preamble

Significant investments have been made in infrastructure in the Capital Region. This investment should be optimized to its full potential and capacity to get the best value from the investment. Given limited funds available for large infrastructure, under-utilized infrastructure shall be maximized before investments in additional infrastructure are considered.

Policies

(i) Identify methods to share, consolidate or co-locate infrastructure, such as water and wastewater services, between municipalities to improve efficiencies and minimize infrastructure costs.

(ii) Utilize energy efficient or green building technologies when upgrading or constructing new infrastructure.

## VI. SUPPORT REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### *A. Ensure a Supply of Land To Sustain a Variety Of Economic Development Activities*

Preamble

It is important that the region be in a position to capitalize on various economic opportunities when they arise. This will require monitoring of economic trends and anticipating land, infrastructure and workforce requirements and ensuring that they are in place to accommodate growth in various sectors.

Policy

(i) Ensure an adequate supply of land is available for future development of the region's industries and support further diversification of the regional economy.

### *B. Attract and Retain Individuals and Families with a Diverse Range of Skills to the Capital Region to Satisfy the Region's Economic Development Goals*

Preamble

Regional prosperity depends not only on the efficient production of goods and services and flows of capital but also on the ability to attract and retain a workforce. The future prosperity of a region is dependent on its ability to offer the best mix of economic opportunities, educational advantages and lifestyle amenities to attract and retain its most valuable resource, people.

Policies

(i) Provide a wide variety of agricultural, commercial, industrial, institutional, research and other employment opportunities to attract and retain a diverse range of people.

(ii) Provide a wide variety of social, educational, recreational and cultural amenities to attract and retain a diverse range of people.

### *C. Support Regional Prosperity*

Preamble

By working together with a common vision, the Region will be able to position itself as an economic engine that will be able to successfully compete in the global market. A targeted regional approach to economic development will ensure that new opportunities are suitably located to optimize the economic advantage to the Region.

Policies

(i) Support efforts to place economic development opportunities in the most appropriate location in the region.

(ii) Promote the concept of a “borderless” region and support efforts to place economic development opportunities in the most appropriate location in the region for the benefit of all. The purpose of this policy is to promote rational land use choices and efficient delivery of infrastructure and public services, not to limit healthy competition among municipalities to attract economic development.

(iii) Designate areas to support industrial, manufacturing, trading, and transportation activities and services located in the region.

### *D. Position the Capital Region Competitively on the World Stage*

Preamble

Regions, not cities, towns or counties, are the focus of economic growth. The Capital Region needs to position itself on the world stage as an attractive and competitive location to do business. A co-operative regional environment where communities work together is key to future prosperity.

Policies

(i) Support and retain vibrant, inclusive communities that attract a diverse range of people to the region.

(ii) Provide a wide variety of employment opportunities throughout the region.

(iii) Support healthy, inclusive, sustainable communities throughout the region.

(iv) Provide high quality social, educational, recreational and cultural amenities to attract and retain a diverse range of people.

## Compliance with the Provincial Land Use Framework

As mentioned earlier, the CRB used the Provincial Land Use Framework as a kind of oversight mechanism, to ensure that the Plan was complying with the provincial mandate. The Land Use Plan sought to comply with the Provincial Land Use Framework wherever possible, and a compliance checklist is provided below.

| **CRB Land Use Principles and Policies** | **Compilance with Provincial Land Use Framework** | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Healthy Economy | Healthy Environment | People-friendly Communities |
| **1. Protect the Environment and Resources** | | | |
| a. Preserve and Protect the Environment | ✔ | ✔ | |
| b. Preserve Agricultural Lands | ✔ | ✔ | |
| c. Protect Natural Resources | ✔ | | |
| d. Minimize the Impact of Development on Regional Watersheds and Airsheds | | ✔ | |
| e. Minimize the Impact of Heavy Industrial Developments | | ✔ | |
| | | | |
| **II. Minimize Regional Footprint** | | | |
| a. Identify, Protect and Prioritize Lands for Regional Infrastructure | ✔ | | |
| b. Concentrate New Growth within Priority Growth Areas | | ✔ | |
| c. Allow Growth Outside of Priority Growth Areas | ✔ | | |
| d. Support Expansion of Medium and Higher Density Residential Housing Forms | | ✔ | ✔ |
| e. Support Cluster Country Residential Development | | ✔ | ✔ |
| | | | |
| **III. Strengthen Communities** | | | |
| a .Create Inclusive Communities | | ✔ | ✔ |
| b. Support Healthy Communities | | ✔ | ✔ |
| c. Support Public Transit | | ✔ | ✔ |
| d. Support Innovative and Affordable Housing Options | | | ✔ |
| | | | |
| **IV. Increase Transportation Choice** | | | |
| a. Integrate Transportation Systems with Land Use | | ✔ | ✔ |
| b. Support the Expansion of Transit Service in Various Forms | ✔ | ✔ | ✔ |
| | | | |
| **V. Ensure Efficient Provision of Services** | | | |
| a. Design Integrated Physical Infrastructure within the Region | ✔ | ✔ | ✔ |
| b. Maximize Utilization of Existing Infrastructure | ✔ | ✔ | ✔ |
| | | | |
| **VI. Support Regional Economic Development** | | | |
| a. Ensure a Supply of Land to Sustain a Variety of Economic Development Actitivities | ✔ | | |
| b. Attract and Retain Individuals and Families with a Diverse Range of Skills to the Capital Region to Satisfy the Region's Economic Development Goals | ✔ | | |
| c. Support Regional Prosperity | ✔ | | |
| d. Position the Capital Region Competitively on the World Stage | ✔ | | |

Implementation of the Principles and Polices will be an important part of the Capital Region Board's work on an ongoing basis. Throughout the Land Use Plan there are references to the actions that have to be taken by all three levels of government to implement the Principles and Policies to achieve the regional vision. These references are summarized in the table that follows:

| No. | Principle | Implementation Strategy | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Municipal Actions | CRB Actions | Provincial Actions |
| I. | **Protect the Environment and Resources**<br><br>A. Preserve and Protect the Environment<br>B. Preserve Agricultural Lands<br>C. Protect Natural Resources<br>D. Minimize the Impact of Development on Regional Watersheds and Airsheds<br>E. Minimize the Impact of Heavy Industrial Developments | • Ensure all municipal plans contain appropriate policies for the protection of the environment and resources as per the CRB Plan, Land Use Framework and other Provincial directives.<br>• Prepare Regional Context Statements that outline how MDP's will align with policies I. (A), (B), (C), (D) and (E).<br>• Collaborate with the CRB to implement the strategies of the CRB Plan. | • Consult with CRB municipalities on agricultural lands as required in Clause I.B.(ii) of the Principles and Policies and Appendix 4 of the Land Use Plan.<br>• Collaborate with Alberta Environment and conservation organizations (i.e. River Valley Alliance) to identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas and natural features.<br><br>. | • Within the context of the Provincial Land Use Framework, establish provisions for the preservation of agricultural lands by 2010. |
| | | | | |
| II. | **Minimize Regional Footprint**<br><br>A. Identify, Protect and Prioritize Lands for Regional Infrastructure<br>B. Concentrate New Growth Within Priority Growth Areas<br>C. Allow Growth Outside of Priority Growth Areas<br>D. Support Expansion of Medium and Higher Density Residential Housing Forms<br>E. Support Cluster Country Residential Development | • Minimize development footprint to support the principles and policies of the CRB Plan, Land Use Framework and other Provincial directives.<br>• Prepare Regional Context Statements that outline how MDP's will align with policies II. (A), (B), (C), (D) and (E).<br>• Collaborate with the CRB to implement the strategies of the CRB Plan. | • Consult with CRB municipalities on Cluster Country Residential issues per Appendix 4 of the Land Use Plan<br>• Work with Alberta Environment to review current standards for private communal sewage treatment systems.<br>• Collaborate with Alberta Infrastructure and Alberta Transportation regarding identification and protection of land required for future Transportation and Utility Corridors with the Capital Region. | • Undertake a review of standards with respect to private communal sewage treatment systems to identify ways to allow more flexibility in the approval and use of such systems in the Capital Region.<br>• Collaborate with the Capital Region Board to identify and protect land required for future Transportation and Utility Corridors in the Capital Region. |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **III.** | **Strengthen Communities**<br><br>A. Create Inclusive Communities<br>B. Support Healthy Communities<br>C. Support Public Transit<br>D. Support Innovative and Affordable Housing Options | • Ensure that all municipal plans contain appropriate policies that strengthen communities as per the CRB Plan, Land Use Framework and other Provincial directives.<br>• Prepare Regional Context Statements that outline how MDP's will align with policies III. (A), (B), (C) and (D). | • Ensure that land use activities of the Capital Region Board are supportive of the Intermunicipal Transit Network Plan and the Capital Region Housing Plan in achieving Policies III. (A), (B), (C) and (D). | |
| | | | | |
| **IV.** | **Increase Transportation Choice**<br><br>A. Integrate Transportation Systems with Land Use<br>B. Support the Expansion of Transit Service in Various Forms | • Ensure that municipal policies align with the CRB Plan, Land Use Framework and other Provincial directives.<br>• Prepare Regional Context Statements that outline how MDP's will align with policies IV. (A) and (B). | • Collaborate with Alberta Infrastructure and Alberta Transportation regarding identification and protection of land required for future Transportation and Utility Corridors with the Capital Region<br>• Ensure that land use activities of the Capital Region Board are supportive of the Intermunicipal Transit Network Plan in achieving Policies IV. (A) and (B) | • Collaborate with the Capital Region Board to identify and protect land required for future Transportation and Utility Corridors within the Capital Region. |
| | | | | |
| **V.** | **Ensure Efficient Provision of Services**<br><br>A. Design Integrated Physical Infrastructure within the Region<br>B. Maximize Utilization of Existing Infrastructure | • Ensure that municipal policies align with the CRB Plan, Land Use Framework and other Provincial directives.<br>• Prepare Regional Context Statements that outline how MDP's will align with policies V. (A) and (B). | • Collaborate with Alberta Infrastructure and Alberta Transportation regarding identification and protection of land required for future Transportation and Utility Corridors with the Capital Region<br>• Collaborate with Capital Region infrastructure organizations on the development of regional infrastructure in the Capital Region. | • Collaborate with the Capital Region Board to identify and protect land required for future Transportation and Utility Corridors within the Capital Region. |
| | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **VI.** | **Support Regional Economic Development**<br><br>A. Ensure a Supply of Land to Sustain a Variety of Economic Development Activities<br>B. Attract and Retain Individuals and Families with a Diverse Range of Skills to the Capital Region to Satisfy the Region's Economic Development Goals<br>C. Support Regional Prosperity<br>D. Position the Capital Region Competitively on the World Stage | • Ensure that municipal policies align with the CRB Plan, Land Use Framework and other Provincial directives. | • Collaborate with the Alberta Industrial Heartland Association regarding planning and development activities within the heartland area and integration with the Land Use Plan.<br>• Collaborate with the Edmonton Regional Airports Authority with respect to the development of Port Alberta and other airport-related activities in the Capital Region. | • Collaborate with the Capital Region Board to support the Alberta Industrial Heartland with planning and development activities in the Heartland, and with respect to the Water Management Framework. . |

## 2.3 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

The Capital Region Board Regulation specifies the content of the Land Use Plan component of the Capital Region Growth Plan. The components of the Land Use Plan are listed in the chart below.

| CRB Regulation Requirements |
|---|
| **1. Population and Employment Projections** |
| **2. Identification of Priority Growth Areas** |
| **3. Identification of Land Supply for Residential, Commercial and Industrial Purposes.** |
| **4. Identification of Agricultural lands** |
| **5. Identification of Buffer Areas** |
| **6. Identification of Density of Development** |
| **7. Identification of the Development and Location of Infrastructure** |
| **8. Identification of Corridors for Recreation, Transportation, Utilities and Intermunicipal transit** |
| **9. Policies Regarding Environmentally Sensitive Areas.** |
| **10. Policies for the Coordination of Planning and Development Among the Participating Municipalities.** |
| **11. Specific Actions to be Taken by Participating Municipalities to Implement the Land Use Plan.** |

The following section describes in detail how the Plan meets the requirements of the Regulation and, if necessary, identifies additional steps to comply with the Regulation.

1. **Population and Employment Projections (Section 12(1)(a)(i)) Regional population and employment projections were prepared to aid the development of the Regiona**l Intermunicipal Transit Network Plan, Social and Market Affordable Housing Plan for the Capital Region, assisted in the development of the Capital Region Land Use Plan and provide regional aggregate projections. Population and employment projections at the municipal level were used to develop the Growth Plan. The Regional Population and Employment Projections will be updated as growth occurs in the Region. The Population and Employment Projections Report is contained in Appendix Five of the Capital Region Growth Plan.

2. **Identification of Priority Growth Areas (Section 12(1)(a)(ii)(A))**

   The CRB, in conjunction with member municipalities, will continue the process to identify priority growth areas in the implementation of the Land Use Plan. A Priority Growth Area must meet at least three of the four policy criteria noted in Section 2.2, Principle II, B (ii).

   This Plan allows for growth outside of identified priority growth areas if the growth is contiguous to existing development, follows the principles and policies related to the form of development, provides a level of service appropriate to the form of development being proposed and ensures that the proposed development will not adversely impact the provision of major infrastructure required for priority growth areas.

   *Next Step*

   > *Evaluation tools will be developed to establish a process for determining regional priority growth areas. Once identified, the priority growth areas will be mapped and included as an update to this Plan. Section 3.2 of the Plan requires this work to be completed by September 30, 2009.*

3. **Identification of Land Supply for Residential, Commercial and Industrial Purposes (Section 12(1)(a)(ii)(B))**

   Within their MDPs, the Capital Region member municipalities must ensure that they have identified sufficient land for a variety of purposes. Municipalities will have to demonstrate conformance with this Plan their regional context statements and annual reports. The CRB, through its business plan and annual reporting process will monitor the supply and availability of residential, commercial and industrial land uses to ensure that the Principles and Policies and regional objectives of the Land Use Plan are being met.

*Next Step*

*Municipalities will prepare annual evaluation reports that will be used by the CRB to monitor the supply and availability of residential, commercial and industrial lands throughout the region.*

**4. Identification of Agricultural lands (Section 12(1)(a)(ii)(C))**

Map 1 identifies all lands designated in the Municipal Development Plans of CRB Municipalities that are consistent with the Glossary definition of "Agricultural Land." In some cases the uses allowed on agriculturally designated lands within existing MDP's may go beyond those defined as agricultural uses by this Plan.

*Next Step*

*A recommended implementation process for determining agricultural lands is contained in this plan. Once identified, agricultural lands will be mapped and included as an update to this Plan.*

**5. Identification of Buffer Areas (Section 12(1)(a)(ii)(D))**

The use of buffers is necessary to avoid conflicts between incompatible land uses and to protect public safety.

*Next Step*

*Buffers must be defined and identified in the respective MDP's to address the unique circumstances and requirements of each municipality. Municipal policy must also include appropriate risk mitigation strategies, where appropriate.*

**6. Identification of Density of Development (Section 12(1)(a)(ii)(E))**

A fundamental principle of this Plan is the requirement to intensify development in order to minimize the development footprint and utilize existing and future infrastructure as efficiently as possible. It is expected that areas near LRT lines and transit nodes will be developed as high density mixed use areas in order to maximize transit investments and increase ridership.

Existing developed areas are expected to densify through redevelopment of underutilized sites to higher density forms of development.

Greenfield development will be expected to be of a higher density than has traditionally been done in the region with a transit oriented design focus where transit is proposed. Innovative neighbourhood design principles of sustainability (i.e. Low Impact Development, LEED ND™, etc.) are encouraged.

This Plan recognizes that intensification will vary depending upon the relative size of the community, but all municipalities will have to implement intensification strategies through policy in their MDP's. Regional context statements must demonstrate that intensification policies and practices are being implemented through municipal statutory plans.

Country residential developments are to be of a higher density than has traditionally been practiced in the region. New country residential subdivision design must be clustered to retain large areas of open space, tree stands or environmental features. New country residential subdivisions must be connected to either municipal or independent communal water or sewage treatment systems.

*Next Step*

*A recommended implementation process for determining country residential areas is contained in this Plan. Once identified, country residential areas will be mapped and included as an update to this Plan. Section 3.2 of the Plan requires this work to be completed by September 30, 2009.*

**7. Identification of the Development and Location of Infrastructure (Section 12(1)(a)(ii)(F) ) & Identification of Corridors for Recreation, Transportation, Utilities and Intermunicipal transit (Section 12(1)(a)(iii))**

Policy II A (ii) and (iii) address the need for the CRB and the Province to prioritize and coordinate infrastructure and the identification of multi-use corridors. The transit component of the Regional Growth Plan describes the potential location of future major transit corridors.

The location of regional infrastructure will be refined by the CRB as the priority growth areas are identified (see Identification of Priority Growth Areas above) and timing/phasing of regional transit corridors is determined. Dialogue between the CRB and municipalities will be ongoing. The annual report process will be used to determine regional infrastructure priorities.

*Next Step*

*Ongoing dialogue with Alberta Transportation, Alberta Infrastructure, etc., and Federal agencies will be a necessary function of the CRB to ensure that CRB priorities and regional infrastructure initiatives and funding are consistent and to assist in determining alignments for linear infrastructure.*

**8. Environmentally Sensitive Areas (Section 12(1)(a)(iv))**

Regional municipalities have already identified major environmentally sensitive areas within their boundaries. Map 2 shows the environmentally sensitive areas noted in existing MDPs. The Capital Region Board supports the River Valley Alliance's *A Plan of Action for the Capital Region River Valley Park* along the North Saskatchewan River as shown on Map 2. The Capital Region Board views the *Plan of Action for the Capital Region River Valley Park* and other existing plans for environmentally sensitive areas as the foundation for a regional strategy to protect these areas for the purposes of recreation and preserving open space.

**9. Policies for the Coordination of Planning and Development Among the Participating Municipalities (Section 12(1)(a)(v))**

The purpose of regional planning is to facilitate coordination between municipalities regarding regional issues. Section 3 of the Plan identifies specific actions that need to be taken.

**10. Specific Actions to be Taken by Participating Municipalities to Implement the Land Use Plan (Section 12(1)(a)(vi)).**

Section 3 explains the implementation of this Plan and the specific actions that need to be taken by member municipalities.

# Capital Region

N

Scale 1: 500,000

Sturgeon County
Lamont County
Strathcona County
Parkland County
Leduc County

Legal
Redwater
Bonaccord
Gibbons
Bruderheim
Lamont
Morinville
Alexander I.R. 134
C.F.B. Edmonton
Fort Saskatchewan
St. Albert
Edmonton
Sherwood Park
Wabamun
Wabamun I.R. 133A
Spruce Grove
Stony Plain
Stony Plain I.R. 135
Devon
Edmonton International Airport
Beaumont
New Sarepta
Calmar
Leduc
Thorsby
Warburg

Legend

- Capital Region Boundary
- County Boundary
- Agricultural Designated Areas
- Urban Municipalities
- Lands Designated for Other Purposes in MDPs

## Map 1 - Agricultural Lands

# Capital Region

N

Scale 1: 500,000

Sturgeon County
Legal
Redwater
Bonaccord
Gibbons
Morinville
Alexander I.R. 134
Bruderheim
Lamont
Lamont County
C.F.B. Edmonton
St. Albert
Fort Saskatchewan
Strathcona County
Edmonton
Sherwood Park
Spruce Grove
Stony Plain
Wabamun
Wabamun I.R. 133A
Stony Plain I.R. 135
Parkland County
Cooking Lake
Beaumont
Devon
Edmonton International Airport
Leduc
New Sarepta
Calmar
Leduc County
Thorsby
Warburg

Legend

- Capital Region Boundary
- County Boundary
- Environmentally Sensitive Areas
- Urban Municipalities
- Lands Designated for Other Purposes in MDPs

## Map 2 - Environmentally Sensitive Areas

# 3.0 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

A clear, viable strategy for implementation is critical to the success of the Capital Region Land Use Plan. Implementation must be a collaborative, coordinated effort in order to realize the Plan's goals. Measuring the success of the Plan will require consistent evaluation of progress and change in the Capital Region.

This section outlines the needed components for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Plan over time.

## 3.2 GOVERNANCE

Subsequent to the approval of the Plan by the Minister, the CRB will establish the following:

- A Land Use Committee (LUC) that represents geographic areas and different types of municipalities to oversee the implementation and co-ordination of the Plan. The responsibility of the LUC will be the following:
    - Within one month of the approval of the Plan, develop and adopt an overall process with associated timelines for the completion of the implementation strategy and the additional work required to meet the requirements of the CRB regulation. Best efforts will be taken to complete implementation work within one year of the approval of the Plan.
- The CRB directs the Land Use Committee to identify the priority growth areas and country residential areas by September 30, 2009.
- Regional Evaluation Framework (REF) to succeed the Transitional Regional Evaluation Framework (TREF).
    - CRB will develop criteria and finalize procedures to evaluate new municipal statutory plans and statutory plan amendments to ensure consistency with the Capital Region Land Use Plan.
    - REF will mirror the roles and responsibilities of TREF.

## 3.3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBLITIES

### 3.3.1 Capital Region Board

The role of the CRB is to ensure the adoption and implementation of an effective growth management strategy for the Capital Region. It will serve as the governing entity through which plan amendment requests shall be processed. As part of the implementation of the Plan, the CRB, with the assistance and support of the CRB Administration, will:

- Review, require amendment if necessary, and approve the Municipal Development Plans (MDPs) of municipalities as they are submitted to the CRB.
- Review and approve any subsequent new statutory plans, amendments to MDPs and other statutory plans.
- Establish processes for the ongoing administration of the Land Use Plan by the CRB through the Land Use Committee, which may include but are not limited to the following:
    - Develop criteria for the evaluation of applications by the CRB to determine whether the approval is consistent with the Plan.
    - Develop a set of monitoring indicators and tools to assist in charting the implementation of principles and policies.
    - Prepare annual reports for the Provincial Government, member municipalities, stakeholders, and the general public. These reports will review annual change and cumulative impacts in order to determine whether the CRB and municipalities are meeting the principles and policies of the Plan.
    - Complete a comprehensive review, including public consultation, of the Plan at least every five years.
    - Prepare a Regional Context Statement to ensure compliance with the North Saskatchewan Regional Plan (once prepared) and the Provincial Land Use Framework.
    - Prepare the Annual Evaluation Report template.
    - Develop and finalize a procedure to amend the Plan.

### 3.3.2 Capital Region Municipalities

The Plan's vision for the Capital Region must be a shared vision, in which municipalities are strategic partners. Municipalities will work together in a coordinated and collaborative way to ensure implementation of and compliance with the policies of the Plan. As part of the implementation of the Plan, the municipalities will:

- Submit a copy of their current/existing MDP (and where they exist, IDPs) to the CRB for information within three months after the approval of the Plan by the Minister.
    - A cover letter indicating that the MDP (and IDP) either conforms or does not conform to the Plan must accompany the MDP document, including a description of any areas of non-conformity.
- Update/amend all statutory plans and bylaws, as needed, to comply with the Plan.
- Ensure that all statutory plans come into conformance with the Plan.
- Complete Annual Evaluation Reports and submit them to the CRB.
- Notify the CRB of any new statutory plans or amendments to statutory plans that are consistent with their respective MDPs and IDPs and conform to the Plan.

- Submit to the CRB any new statutory plans or amendments to statutory plans that do not conform to their MDPs , IDPs or the Plan.

### 3.3.3 Government of Alberta

The Plan's vision for the Capital Region must be a shared vision with the Government of Alberta as a strategic partner. In implementing the Plan with the Government of Alberta, the Capital Region Board notes the following:

- The Government of Alberta is intending to implement the Provincial Land Use Framework and establish legislation for mechanisms and approaches for the preservation of agricultural lands. The Capital Region Board wants to work with the Government of Alberta on this issue to further address the requirement to identify agricultural lands.
- Alberta Environment, as a Ministry of the Government of Alberta, approves private communal sewage disposal systems and requires municipalities to assume responsibility and liability for the ongoing operation of these systems. The Capital Region Board wants to work with Alberta Environment on this issue to fulfill the Cluster Country Residential policy of the Plan.
- A number of Boards operate under a mandate from the Government of Alberta. These include the Alberta Utilities Commission, the Energy Resources Conservation Board, the Natural Resources Conservation Board and the Municipal Government Board. The decisions of these Boards remain directive to municipalities in the Capital Region.

## 3.4 CAPITAL REGION LAND USE PLAN AMENDMENT PROCESS

The Land Use Plan will guide the development of the Capital Region. It is recognized that as the Region grows, there may be amendments to the Land Use Plan required. The following explains the process for a municipality to submit a request to the CRB to consider an amendment to the Plan.

- The request must include a copy of the proposed plan amendment, documentation to explain the rationale for the amendment, documentation of the public consultation process undertaken to date and where relevant, a summary of any inter-municipal issues.
- The CRB administration will review the application and prepare a recommendation to the LUC.
- The applicant Municipality must be the sole presenter of the application to the LUC and CRB.
- The LUC will make a recommendation to the CRB to support, modify or reject the proposed amendment.
- The CRB will not hold a public hearing on an amendment to the Plan.

### 3.5 REVIEW OF STATUTORY PLANS

Municipalities will submit all new statutory plans and all statutory plan amendments to the CRB for review. The review and approval of statutory plans by the CRB will occur generally as follows:

- As per Section 18 (5) of the CRB regulations, all statutory plans adopted prior to April 1, 2008 are not required to conform to the Plan until there is a proposed amendment to a statutory plan or a new statutory plan that does not conform to the Plan.
- Municipalities will notify CRB of all new statutory plans or amendments to statutory plans that conform to the Plan.
- Municipalities will be required to bring their MDP and IDP (if applicable) in conformance with the Plan when the municipality initiates its initial MDP or IDP amendment.
    - Any proposed amendment to the MDP or IDP will require that the entire MDP or IDP is brought into conformance with the Plan.
    - Within one year of applying to amend a MDP or an IDP, a municipality must submit for approval a MDP or IDP that conforms to the Plan.
    - Municipalities shall prepare and adopt Regional Context Statements as part of their revised MDPs. Regional Context Statements describe the municipal principles and policies that support the Capital Region Land Use Plan and, where necessary, how these policies will evolve toward greater consistency with the Plan.
    - Once the MDP or IDP has been amended to conform with the Plan, municipalities are only required to notify the CRB of any subsequent statutory plans or amendments to statutory plans that conform to the MDP or IDP. Municipalities will submit a statement to the CRB indicating that the application conforms to their MDP or IDP and to the Plan.
    - A copy of the approved plan or amendment will be provided to the CRB so that information is available to inform periodic updates of the Capital Region Growth Plan.

### 3.6 REMEDIES

An appeal on a Capital Region Board decision can be made to the Court of Queen's Bench on all matters.

### 3.7 RECOMMENDATIONS TO EXTERNAL BODIES

The implementation of the Land Use Plan will be successful with the cooperation and collaboration of many other parties in the Capital Region. The CRB believes that the following recommendations to external bodies will facilitate the implementation of the Plan.

**Recommendations to Government of Alberta for Legislative Amendments, Action or Policy Change**

1. That legislative enabling provisions be introduced to adopt the Regional Evaluation Framework (REF) to succeed the Transitional Regional Evaluation Framework (TREF).
2. That legislative enabling provisions be introduced to establish that an appeal on a Capital Region Board decision can be made to the Court of Queen's Bench on all matters.
3. Within the context of the Land Use Framework, that the Government of Alberta establish provisions for the preservation of agricultural lands by 2010.
4. That the Government of Alberta undertake a review of standards with respect to private communal sewage treatment systems to identify ways to allow more flexibility in the approval and use of such systems in the Capital Region.
5. That the Government of Alberta collaborate with the Capital Region Board to identify and protect land required for future transportation and utility corridors (TUC) within the Capital Region.

In order for the Capital Region Board to realize the regional vision in the Capital Region Growth Plan and, more specifically, to realize the Principles and Policies of the Plan, the Board must establish partnerships with other external bodies that are involved with growth and development in the Capital Region.

**Regional Partnerships to be Established Between:**

1. Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association and the Capital Region Board to coordinate planning and development activities in the Capital Region
2. Capital Region regional infrastructure organizations (e.g. EPCOR, Alberta Capital Region Wastewater Commission, individual Water Commissions) and the Capital Region Board to collaborate on the development of regional infrastructure in the Capital Region.
3. The Water Management Framework and the Capital Region Board to collaborate on the withdrawal and discharge of water from the North Saskatchewan River.
4. Edmonton Regional Airports Authority and the Capital Region Board to collaborate on the development of Port Alberta and other airport-related activities within the Capital region.
5. Alberta Environment and conservation organizations and the Capital Region Board to collaborate to identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas and natural features.

# APPENDIX 1: GLOSSARY

This glossary defines the terms found in the Capital Region Land Use Plan.

**Accessibility**

Ease by which people are able to access employment, learning and recreation opportunities from their place of residence regardless of age, gender, income, or physical ability.

**Adjacent Land**

Land that is contiguous or land that would be contiguous if not for a railway, road or utility right-of-way, reserve land, or water body.

**Affordable Housing**

Rental or ownership housing that generally does not require on-going (operating) subsidies and is both affordable and targeted for long-term occupancy to households with incomes between 100% and 80% of the median renter income for their housing size.

**Agricultural Land**

Land that is or can be used for a range of extensive (e.g. field crops, cow-calf operations) and intensive (e.g. confined feeding operations, greenhouse, market gardens, agricultural processing facilities) agricultural uses that produce food for human or animal consumption. Beyond its pure economic capacity, agricultural land provides value in terms of green space, aesthetics, community character, lifestyle, air quality, and wildlife habitat. Agriculture designations do not preclude extraction of natural resources provided that they are reclaimed for agricultural uses in the long term.

**Airshed**

A region sharing a common flow of air, which may become uniformly polluted and stagnant.

**Alberta's Industrial Heartland**

A major processing centre for the petroleum, petrochemical and chemical industries located in Strathcona County, City of Fort Saskatchewan, Sturgeon County and Lamont County.

**Best Practices**

Widespread agreement within a professional or technical field on an activity, technique, method, or process, or any combination of these factors, that is most effective in arriving at a desired outcome.

**Capital Region**

The lands lying within the boundaries of the participating municipalities in the Capital Region.

**Capital Region Board**

The Capital Region Board established by Section 2 of the Capital Region Board Regulation A.R. 49/2008.

**Cluster Country Residential**

Rural lands that have been subdivided to create multiple residential lots that are connected to communal services, and designed to group or "cluster" the residential uses together on smaller lots in order to maximize the retention of open space.

**Connectivity**

Development or infrastructure that maximizes opportunities for people to physically connect with each other on, for example, bike trails, walking paths, or transit.

**Contiguous Development**

Development that occurs immediately adjacent to existing development.

**Country Residential**

Subdivision of rural lands that creates multiple residential lots that are serviced with wells or cisterns and septic systems or by connection to communal water and sanitary services. Typically, Country Residential subdivisions have an average net residential density less than 200 units per quarter section.

**Corridor**

A passageway or route, such as a major utility, roadway and transit route through an area

**Density**

The relative number of people, structures, jobs or some other attribute per a unit of measure, for example, per acre or hectare of land.

**Development**

A change in the intensity of use of land or a building or an act done in relation to land or a building that results in or is likely in a change in the intensity of use of land or building.

**Development Footprint**

The amount of land consumed by development, typically including impervious surfaces, such as the buildings, sidewalks, roads and parking.

**Economic Development**

Any effort, initiative or undertaking designed to aid or increase the growth of an economy.

**Greenfield Development**

The conversion of undeveloped land or land that has been developed for low intensity uses, such as agriculture, to more intense forms of development.

**Greenway**

A greenway is a linear park or public open space that connects parks and other public open spaces to one another. Greenways are active recreation spaces that accommodate active transportation options for the community (e.g., walking or cycling to work, etc.).

**Growth**

Growth of a region or municipality is defined as increase in its size, population or employment.

**Healthy Communities**

A community that is continuously creating and improving physical and social environments that enable people to achieve a better quality of life by working, for example, to improve obesity and related health problems, air quality, economic vitality and poverty, and social cohesion.

**Heavy Industrial Development**

A manufacturing or processing activity which, may have a detrimental effect on people and/or the environment through: high volume vehicle movement; pollution of air, soil or water; nuisance as a result of noise, smoke, odour, dust, fumes, glare or humidity; or hazard arising from fire, explosion, radiation or contamination.

**Inclusive Communities**

Communities that have a variety of housing, commerce, recreational, institutional, social and public amenities within their boundary. Inclusive communities provide a physical and social environment where residents can live, learn, work and play without having to travel beyond the community boundary.

**Infill Development**

Development in existing developed areas, occurring on vacant or underutilized lands, or re-development of a developed site to a higher density.

**Infrastructure**

Physical assets developed by the province or municipality to provide services to citizens and to support the functioning of a local or regional economy, including roads, sewer lines, transit, emergency response vehicles, recreational facilities, parks, information technology and more.

**Infrastructure, Local**

Services and facilities that have capital investment and maintenance responsibilities, including roadways, sidewalks, street lights and traffic signals, transit facilities, solid waste and water delivery systems, potable water distribution systems, storm sewers, sanitary sewers, sports fields, playgrounds, arenas, pools, police and emergency stations, civic buildings and parks.

**Infrastructure, Regional**

Physical infrastructure developed by the federal government, province and/or municipality to provide services to citizens and businesses, and to support the functioning of a regional

economy (e.g. major interchange, post-secondary institutions, hospitals, bridges, highways, extension of light rail transit line, regional water and/or sewer systems, etc.).

**Intensification**

The development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists, e.g. redevelopment (including the reuse of Brownfield sites), development of vacant and/or underutilized lots, the conversion or expansion of existing buildings, and infill development, and may include Greenfield sites with development densities higher than historical norms.

**Light Rail Transit (LRT)**

A transit mode using electrically powered rail vehicles operating in one to five car trains. The rails can be on exclusive right-of-way or incorporated into the road right-of-way.

**Livability**

The environmental and social quality of an area as perceived by residents, employees, customers and visitors. This includes safety and health (traffic safety, personal security, public health), local environmental conditions (cleanliness, noise, dust, air quality, water quality), the quality of social interactions (neighbourliness, fairness, respect, community identity and pride), opportunities for recreation and entertainment, aesthetics, and existence of unique cultural and environmental resources (e.g., historic structures, mature trees, traditional architectural styles).

**Major Employment Areas**

Areas that have, or are anticipated to have, a significant concentration of jobs, such as Port Alberta, Acheson, Nisku and Alberta Industrial Heartland.

**May**

An operative word meaning a permitted action, based on fulfillment of specific criteria.

**Multi Use Corridor**

A generally linear area of land designed to accommodate major infrastructure such as roads, transmission lines, and pipelines within and between regions.

**Natural Area**

An area of land or water that is dominated by native vegetation in naturally occurring patterns. Such areas could include grasslands, forests, wetlands, peatland, or riparian areas. Areas such as groomed parks, sports fields and schoolyards are not natural areas.

**Nature/Recreation/Open Space**

Lakeshores, riverbanks, provincial parks, recreation areas and crown lands of significant size. Open Spaces are areas of land and water that could include active recreation parks, schoolyards, cemeteries, conventional stormwater management facilities, and farmland.

**Natural Resources**

Naturally forming substances that are considered valuable in their relatively unmodified (natural) form. Examples include: sand, gravel, coal and other minerials, oil and gas, wood etc.

width, prevailing wind direction, intersection treatment, curb cuts, ramps and landscaping.

**Plan**

The Capital Region Land Use Plan

**Policy**

A deliberate statement of action to guide decisions and achieve rational outcome(s).

**Preserve**

An act to maintain the quality or condition of a resource in its current form, and to retard the deterioration of the resource (e.g. agricultural land).

**Principle**

A basic or shared value that guides the direction of policy formulation.

**Priority Growth Area**

Locations where growth is directed, including Major Employment Areas, due to existing or planned multi modal transportation corridors, the proximity to existing or proposed major employment areas, the redevelopment or intensification opportunities within an existing urban area and the ability to utilize and maximize existing infrastructure or logically and efficiently extend that infrastructure.

**Provincial Land Use Framework**

A policy of the Government of Alberta to introduce and implement regional land use plans to ensure the long-term health of Alberta's communities, economy and the environment.

**Reclamation**

Action taken to restore disturbed lands to the state or near to the state that the lands were in prior to disturbance**.**

**Recreation and/or Open Space**

Public and private lands acquired or preserved in the public interest to conserve and protect natural features, landscapes and resources, and/or to provide passive recreation space with limited or no development, e.g. school yards, public parks, parks adjacent to water courses and/or water bodies, and recreation areas.

**Region**

The Capital Region, specifically the geographic area contained within the participating municipalities.

**Regional**

Relating to the Region, whether by geographic proximity or by the impact that actions or decision may have on others.

**Regional Context Statement**

Report prepared by each Municipality that describes how the municipal policies, principles and programs support the Capital Region Growth Plan and is included as part of the Municipal Development Plan.

**Regional Transit**

A coordinated and integrated publicly funded and managed transportation system which is designed and delivered through a variety of modes for the efficient and effective movement of people living and working in the Capital Region.

**River Valley Alliance**

A company formed by the City of Edmonton, the City of Fort Saskatchewan, Parkland County, Leduc County, Sturgeon County, Strathcona County and the Town of Devon for the development of the North Saskatchewan River Valley for environmental and recreation purposes pursuant to *A Plan of Action for the Capital Region River Valley Park*.

**Shall**

An operative clause word meaning mandatory compliance.

**Should**

An operative word meaning that, in order to achieve regional objectives, it is strongly advised that the action be taken.

**Social Infrastructure**

Social infrastructure, or soft infrastructure, can refer to services provided by or in municipalities such as hospitals, community and recreational facilities, public spaces, social housing, volunteer networks and community based agencies.

**Statutory Plan**

A statutory plan is an intermunicipal development plan (IDP), a municipal development plan (MDP), an area structure plan (ASP), and an area redevelopment plan (ARP) adopted by a municipality.

**Sustainability**

Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Bruntland).

**Transit Node**

A strategic location where development is directed because of good accessibility to transit services.

**Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)**

Refers to intensified development around transit stations with progressively lower density development spreading outwards from the centre. TOD creates attractive, livable and compact neighbourhoods with housing, jobs, shopping, community services and recreational opportunities all within convenient walking distance of a node.

**Urban Form**

A physical pattern of human settlement that is typically characterized by compact mixed land uses, varying residential densities, and includes various public and private facilities, open spaces and a roadway network.

**Utilities**

Facilities for gas, electricity, telephone, cable television, water, storm and sanitary sewer.

**Watersheds**

An area of land that is geographically distinct in which snowmelt and rainfall are drained by a river and its tributaries to the same outlet, and the river, tributaries and outlet are unique to that geographical area. Watersheds are also sometimes referred to as drainage basins.

# APPENDIX 2: STAKEHOLDER / PUBLIC CONSULTATION

## Executive Summary

In the fall of 2008, a two-phase study was begun in the Capital Region to collect public and stakeholder input to the Capital Region Board Land Use Plan. The research objectives were to:

- Engage stakeholders to test vision and principles developed by the Committee
- Identify themes and key issues while exploring attitudes
- Provide feedback to inform the draft plan

Participants were selected to reflect a geographical mix of the Capital Region as well as a range of occupations/specializations, and stakeholder concerns.

Phase One of the research was comprised of focus groups, interviews and consultations. Phase Two consisted of telephone surveys (December 2008) and follow up consultations. The follow up consultations (February 2009) were designed to gather feedback on the **Principles and Policies** developed by the Land Use Committee.

Findings from these discussions can be summarized along two broad dimensions: planning themes identified by participants and impressions of the most prominent land use issues.

## Land Use Issues

There were seven major issues of concern identified by the participants. They centred around:

1. Transportation and Roads - Respondents argued that transportation and road issues created by growth were regional issues. They expressed cautious optimism that a regional approach to transportation planning would be an improvement over the current practices. The need for a consistent regional approach to the design, building and sharing of necessary road infrastructure project costs was mentioned frequently. Many agreed that increased public transit and LRT to the airport are important. A regional trails system and coordinated road planning are priorities.

2. Environmental Concerns – The environmental sector believes that ecological elements must be considered on par with social and economic elements. Currently, the quantity and quality of water is a central concern, followed closely by air quality. There was a strong agreement that any land use plan should align with existing conservation plans, and aim to be additive rather than redundant. Several groups suggested that development and planning occur according to legislated environmental Best Practices and science-based data at all times. For some groups, there is a conflict between traditional views of private property and a willingness to protect land for the public good. This is often represented as a function of

where participants live. However, both phases of study groups supported the inclusion of the environmental pillar in **The Principles and Policies**.

3. Agricultural Lands – In the quantitative survey, a significant majority (60 percent) of residents said agricultural lands should be preserved and protected. This support was consistent across the region. At the same time in the qualitative research, there was very high interest and diverse views among key groups about agricultural lands. In the stakeholder meetings, developers had concerns that agricultural lands in areas of current growth and development would have to be developed in order to sustain contiguous growth patterns. At the same time, groups representing environmental interests, together with those who would like to see sufficient lands protected for agriculture use and to ensure the capacity to produce food locally said a definitive land use policy that would protect these lands for agricultural purposes was a priority.

4. Infrastructure Issues – Respondents were in agreement that regional planning would be a great benefit to infrastructure development. They were concerned with redundancies in utilities and roadways, although some noted that there are existing regional systems that are working well.

5. Development Pressures – All groups expressed their desire for consistent regional development standards and guidelines. Phase Two consultations revealed concerns regarding a need for more economic support and diversification. In general, there is widespread agreement that the region needs to control sprawl through densification and a change in attitudes towards land. There was also significant discussion on how to preserve good agricultural land on the one hand while still enabling development of additional housing options that were sustainable on the other. No easy solution was envisioned on this matter, however the perceived need to set aside some agricultural land and protect it from future development was widely supported. Agreement on where to do so and under what conditions was less universally supported.

6. Taxes and Spending - The issue of how best to fund future growth and pay for regional services through taxes also emerged as a key concern. Taxation is a particularly divisive issue, mainly because of the divergent views among different groups of taxpayers over who is paying relatively more or less for the services everyone in the region is using. Cost sharing was raised as one way to resolve the issue; however there is very little agreement on what constitutes a fair share of costs. Additionally, regional planning was seen as a way to give the region a stronger voice provincially.

7. Process and Governance - There were also a host of process and governance issues raised by participants, ranging from how the new Capital Region Board will be governed, to the expected process for providing input into finalization of a regional land use plan. Using an integrated ‘triple bottom line’ approach (which takes into account economic, social and

environmental factors) was viewed as a good starting point. Nevertheless, there were concerns and questions about voting protocol and the veto process.

To gain broad public and stakeholder support for a regional land use plan it is important to openly acknowledge the conflict between individual and collective needs and preferences. The process through which public and stakeholder involvement will be incorporated into specific elements of a long range land use plan is almost as crucial as the content of the plan itself.

## I. Introduction

The following report summarizes the research undertaken on behalf of the Capital Region Board Land Use Committee. Stakeholders across the region were engaged in consultations, focus groups, and interviews in order to gain insight into their perspectives and concerns about regional growth pressures and future planning. A telephone survey was also conducted to get the views of the general public.

## II. Methodology

In the fall of 2008, qualitative research was conducted in the Capital Region to collect public and stakeholder input to the Capital Region Board Land Use Plan. The research objectives were to:

- Engage stakeholders to test vision and principles developed by the Committee
- Identify themes and key issues while exploring attitudes
- Provide feedback to inform the draft plan

Participants were selected to reflect a geographical mix of the Capital Region as well as a range of occupations/specializations, and stakeholder concerns.

Phase One of the research was comprised of focus groups, interviews and consultations. Phase Two consisted of telephone surveys (December 2008) and follow up consultations. The follow up consultations (February 2009) were designed to gather feedback on the **Principles and Policies** developed by the Land Use Committee.

### a) Phase One Qualitative Research

Ten focus groups were conducted between October 7—17, 2008. There were between three and twelve respondents in each focus group. Respondents in the informed public groups were recruited using random digit dialling. They were screened for those who self-identified as closely following issues relating to regional planning or integration in the Capital Region in and around Edmonton. All focus group respondents were between the ages of twenty-five and sixty-nine. Respondents in the specialized occupation groups were recruited using lists of individuals employed in each specialty area.

The groups were:

- Informed public – Edmonton, South (Leduc) and North (St. Albert)
- Environmental
- Developers
- Utilities
- Transportation and logistics
- Water, waste water, solid waste
- Economic development authorities

Twelve executive interviews (one-on-one) were conducted among members of the informed public and specialized occupation groups between October 7 and October 24, 2008.

Thirteen community consultations were conducted throughout the region with various stakeholders between September 22 and October 10, 2008. Groups consulted included:

- UDI Edmonton and Developers (2 sessions)
- Agricultural Societies
- School Divisions
- Community Health Councils
- Family Community Support Services (FCSS)
- Environmental Groups
- Greater Edmonton Alliance
- Greater Edmonton Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Parks and Recreation
- Business and Industry Associations (3)

**b) Phase Two Quantitative and Qualitative Research**

Telephone surveys were conducted between December 4—15, 2008. There were 1307 respondents who were a representative sample of the Capital Region. The sample was deliberately disproportionate to allow for inclusion and analysis of specific sub regions such as smaller communities.

Follow up consultations were held for eight target groups that represented the three pillars known as the Triple Bottom Line-- Economic, Social and Environment:

- UDI, Developers, and Commercial Realtors
- Greater Edmonton Region Chamber of Commerce
- Business and Industrial Associations
- School Boards
- Family Community Support Service
- Agricultural Societies
- Environmental Agencies
- Greater Edmonton Alliance

## III. Issues

Discussion in focus groups, executive interviews and consultations as well as the quantitative research consistently centred upon six priority issues: transportation and roads, environmental concerns, infrastructure issues, development pressures, taxes and spending, and process/governance. The telephone surveys revealed the unprompted issues that caused the most concern in the region are roads and infrastructure (23% of mentions) and the economy/financial stability (22%). Other key issues included health care (16%), taxes, (13%) and public transportation. The combined force of the quantitative and qualitative results supported the Land Use Committees basing the Principle and Policies on the triple bottom line, or the three pillars of Economic, Social and Environmental considerations.

### a) Transportation and Roads

Nowhere was the negative impact of growth and development reflected more strongly than on discussions surrounding Transportation and Roads. Respondents argued that transportation and road issues created by growth were regional issues. They expressed cautious optimism that a regional approach to transportation planning would be an improvement over the current practices.

> *"Regional planning must be dually-focused on the immediate transportation needs (congestion and safety), and on long-term future developments."*

Safety issues and expensive delays in moving large equipment were cited as major concerns with current highways, interchanges and overpasses. The most often cited examples were Highways 19 and 625 that were dangerous due to lack of basic features required for moving industrial traffic. The lack of a railway overpass on Highway 60 was also a concern.

Despite efforts by the plant and upgrader sites to have staging areas and bussing to the sites, the traffic congestion on Highways 37 and 15 was seen as still significant.

> *"The section of the highway running through Namao is an immediate concern because it runs through two school zones and by a church."*

Of concern to both industrial and business associations was the lack of public transit to business and industrial parks. Where public transit exists, the transit schedules do not align with the hours of operation of the businesses.

Planning decisions were often questioned. The most frequent examples were the 23 Avenue interchange and congestion caused by traffic lights on the high density section of the Anthony Henday.

Light Rail Transit to the airport was seen as a 'must' for several groups, particularly those attempting to attract industry partners from Europe and Asia. The hi-tech sector in particular felt that the Capital Region needed to increase its LRT capacity in order to be considered a major player on the world stage.

> *"The world's best cities all have an institute of higher learning, a vibrant arts community, a solid industrial base and rapid transit. We can't compete until we add the missing link of rapid transit."*

Regional planning was considered essential for the enhancement of a trail system. Integration of community and city trails to bypass massive industrial sites which currently block linear pathway systems (e.g., Sherwood Park to Edmonton route) could be accomplished under a regional system.

> *"We need to acknowledge major pathway systems as transportation corridors, and re-designate land requirements as alternate commuter routes under Alberta Transportation."*

Many, particularly those in Edmonton, agree that improved public transit is a must. According to Edmonton respondents, the current transit system discourages use: there are too few bus routes, too few busses running on existing routes, bus schedules are inadequate, lack of parking makes Park 'n Ride difficult to use, and there is insufficient service to outlying industrial areas.

Transit safety is an issue for many respondents. While many are in favour of a regional transit authority, those from outlying communities who enjoy good public transit service fear that regional control would lead to a deterioration of their local service.

> *"It goes back to the problem of different regions looking after their own transportation a friend in Sherwood Park is quite pleased with the service, St. Albert is the same thing. Those communities have the tax base and are using their money advantageously.*

Efficient public transit is seen as necessary for economic opportunity. While the problem of low ridership in non-peak periods is acknowledged, participants felt that *"in transit you have to look broad scale and commit to it as a greater good – it will never pay for itself"* (Transportation and Logistics). Privately operated transit is not considered an option, as they would only be interested in the busiest, most profitable rush hour routes. The research indicated differentiating priorities when it came to public transit. Expanding public transit is not a high priority in Parkland County and Lamont County (35% and 28%) compared to other areas of the region.

Road planning is also a priority. Concerns about roads and infrastructure are more pronounced in Edmonton (26%) and Sturgeon County (28%). In fact, respondents in the St. Albert group believe that there should be a greater focus on roadways than transit. There is a widespread belief that roads should be built before communities, and that roads should be planned for more capacity than is currently required, since *"we are always playing catch-up"*. Participants also expressed a need for well-planned bus, carpool and bike lanes.

> *"You will never have everyone off the roads; we need a balance between public transit and improved car infrastructure."*

Participants in the informed public groups accuse developers of planning high density zones without addressing increased traffic volume and insufficient road capacity. Developers, on the other hand, express frustration that the roadways are not approved and services established before the development goes in.

Some of the informed public, particularly in groups from St. Albert and Leduc, praise the Anthony Henday ring road as convenient and long overdue. However, those who use the section with traffic lights complain that there is little advantage to using the road due to congestion. Those who would prefer to encourage alternate means of transportation feel that ring roads

> *"create moats. They are difficult to cross, they only funnel in people who drive, and what does that mean for someone who wants to ride a bike or walk. It creates ghettos."*

Respondents in the Transportation/Logistics and Economic Development Authorities groups expressed concern about the impacts of growth on increased volume of train traffic in terms of congestion and safety in Edmonton.

> *"What happens if there's a fire at 5:00 in Spruce Grove? It could take 20 minutes to get there. There are huge traffic jams when the trains are going through."* (Economic Development Authority)

> *"Train lengths are now one mile long, and roads are one mile apart – they could be blocking two roads at once and tying up a lot of traffic. There will be a need for more overpasses in Western Canada. All the goods going from China to Ontario pass through here. It's only going to get worse."* (Transportation and Logistics)

A final area of transportation that will benefit from regional cooperation is airports: *"there needs to be a rationalization of airports in Alberta"* (Transportation and Logistics). *"A huge amount of infrastructure is required"* for these facilities, and there are a number of existing routes that are not well utilized.

**b) Environmental Concerns**

The environmental groups that participated in the Phase One and Phase Two consultations as well as the Focus Groups stated that they were already planning on a regional basis, based largely on river basins that do not subscribe to regional boundaries.

Currently, the quantity and quality of water is a central concern, followed closely by air quality. Air shed definition seems arbitrary; prevailing winds do not pay attention to jurisdictional boundaries.

There was a strong agreement that any land use plan should align with existing conservation plans, and aim to be additive. As with air sheds, rivers, wetlands, and bogs do not acknowledge borders and boundaries. With this in mind, a multi stakeholder plan has been developed that extends across the region (*"Natural Connections Strategic Plan: Edmonton's Integrated Natural Areas Conservation Plan"). Office of Natural Areas: Edmonton, 2007* was referenced not only by environmental groups, but other stakeholder groups as a well balanced document. Similarly, the Beaver Hills Initiative (www.beaverhills.ab.ca) crosses many jurisdictions. Current boundaries between municipalities and between public and private land bases inhibit seamless planning and hinder the implementation of protective regulations.

Concerns were raised that the current emphasis on growth may mean that land is considered simply as either resource potential or as protected parks. There is no consideration for the value of the entire ecological network. The Capital Region has a functional ecological network, and careful land use and management will allow growth and development to occur in harmony with natural areas. Special attention needs to be paid to the maintenance of linkages: build transportation and utility corridors for multi-use to reduce their land presence.

Participants in the environmental focus group reiterate comments made by consultation participants. They strongly recommend that environmental issues be considered at the start of planning by identifying what is on the landscape prior to the development of a land-use plan. It is necessary to develop an understanding of the character of the land and consider the entire region when shaping policy.

> *"We need a universal policy that works throughout the region"* (Environment).

> *"Have conservation plans as a foundation for land use planning… with enough teeth to protect habitat and ecological function"* (Environment).

Developers would like to see a regional policy for protection of wetlands in order to clearly identify the most important areas. As it stands now, there appear to be different rules in different municipalities. Developers say that *"if it's a regionally significant wetland, you want to preserve it"*, but that currently they waste much time and money protecting small, insignificant patches.

The research supports the inclusion of an Environmental Pillar, with 69% identifying it as an important priority. All groups in the Phase Two consultations, when commenting on **The Principles and Priorities,** supported the inclusion of the environmental pillar. Environmental groups in particular commented that "Overall, it appears to be quite a promising document." However, they would like to adopt a biodiversity plan as well. They once again strongly recommended adherence to a biodiversity plan, and reemphasized the adoption of a multi stakeholder plan that has been developed that extends across the region ("Natural Connections Strategic Plan: Edmonton's Integrated Natural Areas Conservation Plan"). Office of Natural Areas: Edmonton, 2007 was once again referenced not only by environmental groups, but other stakeholder groups as a well balanced document. And they make a suggestion that the word 'resources' be changed to 'assets'.

> *"When we label things 'natural **resources,** the implications is that they are only of value if they are used, resourced. We should call them natural **assets** which means they are of intrinsic value just as they are, without exploitation."*

### c) Infrastructure Issues

Past infrastructure planning was seen to be the cause of many present day challenges. Effective utility development is hindered by lack of linear and logical planning of corridors throughout the region. Respondents were in agreement that regional planning would be a great benefit to infrastructure development.

> *"To avoid the recurrence of long standing problems, infrastructure planning needs to be carried out without borders: municipalities need to strive for seamless planning."*

Participants were especially frustrated with what they saw as redundancies. Parallel highways and half-empty utility pipelines running through unconnected municipalities were seen as flaws that would be eliminated by implementing a regional land use plan.

> *"We need to plan combined utility and roadway corridors regionally and make use of existing lines."*

As well, the future development of valuable land is restricted by pipeline right-of-ways and participants questioned whether greater efficiencies could occur. Conversely, co-location of utilities and pipelines increase the probability of an attack on resources, or serious incidents and will impact safety. Participants saw the need for a balance.

Respondents familiar with infrastructure report that utilities such as water, waste management, and sewers are examples of areas where regional cooperation already exists. A number of developers agree that *"in terms of infrastructure, we have some regional systems that have worked quite well; I've never heard anyone complain about the regional sewer system, or water. It works quite nicely, good service."* Another, however, feels that *"the regional plan should look at issues that need to be addressed in each specific area. There are some very clear ones."* Another example of an area requiring attention is *"the industrial heartland on one side of Edmonton and power generation on the other – we need a way to get more power over there"* (Transportation and Logistics).

> *"Water is a classic example: there has been regional coordination on that… since the late '70s, early '80s." (Transportation and Logistics)*

Both the informed public and specialized occupation groups note that densification would reduce infrastructure costs *"because you don't need to service so many people so far out"* (Utilities). New country residential developments are identified as being particularly intensive with respect to utilities needs.

While regionalization of utilities is often considered logical, respondents in the specialized occupation groups warn that losing jobs and turf is a real concern with regionalization. In addition, there are fears that municipalities with high quality infrastructure, would suffer with regionalization, as services would be *"brought down to the lowest common denominator"*.

**d) Development Pressures**

During the Phase One Consultations, there was anticipation for a regional land use plan from a development perspective. All groups – from developers to emergency responders to industrial associations – expressed their desire for consistent regional development standards and guidelines.

> *"One set of Capital Region standards for industrial, community and residential development guidelines, based on best practices on Social, Economic, and Environmental metrics, leveraged across the region and adhered to by all communities."*

In particular, communities welcomed the thought that Best Practices could be adopted across the region, thus preventing communities from being 'played off' against each other. High standards and adherence to Best Practices could make the Capital Region a 'highly desired'

place in which to grow and develop. Participants felt that the Capital Region will be a powerful force when it leverages its power as a region.

The Phase Two Consultations, however, revealed a concern with the direction of the draft **Priorities and Principles** that participants were asked to comment on**.** While supporting the environmental and social pillars outlined in the plan, several groups felt that the economic growth pillar was not strong enough.

> *"Sixty six percent of the plan is great—the social and environmental pillars work. But the economic pillar has been neglected."*

The Principle that drew the most comment was **Principle Two: Minimize the Regional Footprint**. The level of detail in the **Principles** was seen as inconsistent; social and environmental pillars were seen to have descriptive and overarching principles, which were viewed as appropriate. The economic pillar, however, was described by several groups as overly prescriptive. Participants were concerned that if the **Principles and Policies** are viewed as too restrictive, industry will relocate.

The Developers, Chamber of Commerce, Commercial Realtors and Industrial Associations felt that the **Principles and Policies**, as written, would limit the ability to master plan communities. They also were concerned that it would limit the quality and variety of neighbourhoods and communities.

They also felt that it was setting the stage for 'haves and have-nots', in terms of urban vs. rural and creating conflicts between perceived winners and losers.

The specificity of language and perceived prescriptive nature of the document were seen to limit flexibility relative priority growth areas "*adjacent* to existing and proposed major employment areas" be changed to "in close proximity to existing and proposed major employment areas".

> "These changes are required to allow planners flexibility to approve developments once the plan is adopted. In practice, good planning dictates that heavy industrial uses require a 1-2 mile buffer separating it from residential use. Examples of this exist in Sherwood Park. Adjacent is the wrong word."

Participants were also concerned with the Principle to **Allow Growth Outside of Priority Growth Areas**, particularly when compared with the Alternate Scenario Population document produced for the **Inter-municipal Transit Network Plan** that participants found on the Capital Region Board website.

Participants questioned the projections that have been made in the assumptions for population growth in Beaumont, Devon, and Leduc City and County.

All of the groups that expressed concerns with the economic pillar of the plan offer their expertise and knowledge, indicating that "we want to make this work; we want to be a part of this". The economic engines want more in-depth ways to engage with the development of the plan.

**The Three Pillars**

In the Phase One Consultations and Focus Groups, there was overwhelming support for a '*principle based'* planning approach that consistently demanded the three pillars of Social, Economic, and Environment to be built into all decisions. Current planning was seen to emphasize the Economic pillar at the expense of Social and Environmental Pillars.

More than one group felt the need for economic diversification. A secure and self reliant food system industry is shown to be an economic generator in other communities, and is attracting a great deal of attention in the Capital Region. It would contribute to the economy, the environment (smaller footprint transporting food that could be easily grown locally) and good use of agricultural land.

A massive public shift towards autonomy of self-directed recreation activities (unique schedules and interests) means that parks and facilities need regional flexibility for spontaneous-use access. It was suggested that the Capital Region develop a universal guideline for the provision of basic community amenities (for example, each community needs a fitness centre, squash courts, outdoor sports fields, etc.) as well as a model for shared amenities. Basic recreation needs should be met in each municipality with facilities geared for recreational use, while more specific Centres of Excellence could be shared across the region. Regional planning would assist the development of economic generators like multi sports fields by assuring presence of supportive amenities.
There was a strong sense that the region does not need new communities. It needs to encourage growth and development in the communities that currently exist.

> *Edmonton can develop its core density /decrease costly urban sprawl; rural communities can increase their density /revitalize; industry can attract workers because of quality of life in a range of communities."*

The Phase Two consultations revealed that all groups were pleased with the three pillars that were woven throughout the Principles and Policies. In particular, the five Industrial Associations supported the Triple Bottom Line and wanted that to be more strongly reflected in the document.

> *"Everything needs to be done for the betterment of society as a whole. If this is the concept that the document is going for, then it needs to be clearer."*

The telephone surveys also support this. While greater municipal integration (39%) and building new Transportation and Utilities Corridors (48%) were viewed as important, they were relatively less important that a host of other issues such as affordable housing (63%), protecting farmland

(60%), planning for growth (59%), economic issues of provincial funding (58%), economic promotion (55%) and expanding public transit (55%).

Participants commenting on the **Principles and Polices** recognized the social outfall that accompanies large industrial development and rapid growth.

> *"The importance of strong social economics is finally being attended to. We are seeing dramatic impacts from dysfunctional workforces, dysfunctional schools, dysfunctional families. The marriage of social and economic issues is long overdue."*

Participants felt that triple bottom line accounting and costing needs to be reflected more strongly in the document.

> *"The triple bottom line must be the lens through which all decisions are made. There is no indication of the genuine progress indicator."*

**Densification**

There is widespread agreement that the region needs to control sprawl. The true cost of sprawl needs to be considered with respect to utilities, services, roads, pollution, and loss of prime farmland. Developers recommend being *"smarter about density and the way we manage density… over time land will get absorbed for a balanced set of uses."*

> *"In Edmonton, Canada even, we look at the vastness of the country – it's cheap and easy to spread out. If you look at any great examples of good models, they had constraints of land: how do we make this a good place to live? They increased the density. We have to get beyond this idea that land is free forever, because it isn't."*

Integrated economic development must be an offshoot of industry development; plans should include increasing density and avoiding sprawl. Light industrial and business growth situated around 'the rim of the wheel' would help to connect industry with the city and rural communities. Proper infrastructure is necessary for ideal connectivity. Prime agricultural land should be last choice for development. Use the abundance of non prime land in the area for development.

Densification was endorsed but with the caveat that it *"encourage new urbanism principles. High density areas should demand a communal feel with mixed demographics and on-site amenities such as health centres"*. Participants stated that densification with the proper infrastructure is proven to encourage healthier lifestyles: less driving, increased social interaction and support for community members.

There was some opposition in the informed public groups toward mixed use planning and high density development next to single home residential. Future development of country residential is another potentially sensitive issue:

> *"Yes, it's nice to have country residential. But we have to plan for country residential to densify in 20 years, because there's an unreasonable expectation that they bought three acres 42 years ago and there will never be anything near them."* (Developer)

A number of respondents note that one advantage of densification as opposed to continued sprawl is the revitalization of core urban areas. Vancouver's Lower Mainland is given as an example of this, and some note that there are areas of downtown Edmonton that would similarly benefit.

While densification was seen as positive, and sprawl should be contained, participants in Phase Two, upon reviewing the **Principles and Polices**, suggest that an 'urban fringe' be established.

> *"An urban fringe area surrounding the City of 1-2 miles should be maintained for future growth. Communities should have an urban fringes area of at least ½ mile beyond its boundaries for future growth. These urban fringe areas should not be labelled 'agricultural' or 'interim agricultural land."*

Participants commenting on **Priority Growth Areas** recommended that quality of development should be part of the language.

> *"We should strive to become a Centre of Excellence, supporting high quality as well as high density."*

**Agricultural Lands**

There is widespread agreement within the informed public and environmental groups that *"the best agricultural land in the province is around Edmonton"* and that there is little of it left. Most agree that this land should be protected, and that new development should focus on brownfield wherever possible. Some participants cautioned that, while farmland should be protected, so also should the rights of farmers, who need the right to sell a percentage of their agriculturally designated land.

The advantages of choosing agricultural land for development means that clear and stringent policies are required if they are to be protected. Participants recognized that good agricultural land is the easiest to develop but is flat land that due to its agricultural designation is wide open space with no existing structures to interfere with development. This makes it valuable land for development but lost for agricultural value. Some respondents comment that currently there is a lack of drive to preserve agricultural land, especially Level 1 and Level 2 soils.

Developers feel that agricultural land should be protected only when it is logical, and that using this land is acceptable as long as it is used wisely. Developers contend that the cost and environmental destruction of going around a piece of land is greater than protecting it. Issues such as affordability and *"providing options for people who don't want to live in a condo in the city"* must be considered. However, while developers insist that the market should decide what

land gets developed, they also believe that that this prime agricultural land needs to be used effectively and not wasted.

In addition, developers argue that there is little point in preserving small pockets of farmland because it is no longer affordable for farmers to work the small farms.

Several groups and coalitions disagree with this assessment. The move towards local food security, often through the use of local market gardens, was not only seen as highly desirable but highly important as well.

Phase Two participants endorsed the emphasis on protecting agricultural lands and supported the concepts of "**Priority Growth Areas and Transit Issues**."

Participants felt that smaller communities could be economic engines and a part of stimulating rural Alberta economies.

Some participants felt that existing land use statutes and inter-municipal plans need to be respected when labelling agricultural land.

There were some concerns that the document did not adequately project 20-40 years ahead and the Greater Edmonton Alliance, with over 1000 members, urged the Land Use Committee to include the importance of food security in the plan.

> *"For our region to thrive, we need sustainable access to food. Do we know where our food will come from in 20 years?"*

Other groups supported Greater Edmonton Alliance, suggesting that the value of food security should not be overlooked as a key component to the region's success and sustainability.

> *"Food security would be a triple win for the region uniting urban, rural and economic. Diversifying the economy to include a sustainable food system would lessen our dependence on the price of oil, and has the potential to be a significant economic generator."*

**e) Taxes and Spending**

The survey results indicated that keeping taxes and user fees low was an important priority (66%). Taxation is a divisive issue. Developers agree that projected revenues from taxation, not planning issues, are currently the driving force behind decision-making within municipalities. Many feel that equalization would remove much of the debate and conflict between communities and that a tax-based equalization system across the region would improve land-use efficiency and promote more effective zoning allocation. However, some participants note that much of the tax revenue gets sent to the province for allocation – that the "pooling mechanism for taxes

already exists, and it is the distribution system that must be fixed" (Transportation and Logistics).

From a new business perspective, tax rates are one of the last factors considered by companies in deciding where to locate, according to respondents in the Economic Development Authorities group. Tax rates typically come into play once the decision has been narrowed to 2 or 3 locations. Factors considered before tax rates include access to labour, cost of building and land, existing infrastructure, major transportation corridors, quality of life issues, and how fast the business can be up and running.

### f) Process and Governance

There were questions about the CRB governance model and decision making process.

Almost all groups were optimistic that with principle-based planning and responsible stewardship, the Capital Region Board could set a standard of excellence that would benefit the entire region, and thus each community.

> *"The Region has the ability to set higher standards and use its collective 'clout' to demand more from industry and developers. Adoption of best practices across the region in all areas- development, environmental practices, infrastructure can happen if the region works together."*

Groups already involved in regional planning initiatives advised that the Capital Region Board "look to existing regional strategic plans for guidance (for example, the Natural Connections Strategic Plan). Models of regional planning and service delivery already exist. Look at successful practices within the region to plan according to pre determined values."

Questions were also raised about the consultation process and developing a land use plan. Some groups felt honoured to be invited to contribute their thoughts; other groups felt that they should play a more active role in the development of the actual plan. The need for ongoing consultation was common to all groups.

There was much positive reaction to the idea of a regional board to guide land use planning and future strategic growth of the region. Most respondents agreed that a longer term, more strategic plan for the region is a positive move, in contrast to the current situation of case by case planning decisions and lack of cooperation between municipalities.

> *"When you talk about development, it all kind of seems like knee-jerk reaction. Times were booming and we were building wherever there was space."*

> *"It's pretty hard to know where you're going if you don't have a strategic plan, so you pretty well need a super board and they have to have a strategy."*

*"There is a need for that level of coordination to get the access, for example a LRT is needed to the airport, but it could not be done in the past because we could not get all the parties to sit down together, it's too complex an issue."* (Transportation and Logistics)

*"Use recycling as an example. It wasn't very popular 15 years ago, but now… it's possible to change the way people think. Use common interest things, such as water. It causes people to rally around an issue."* (Informed Public, Edm.)

Many respondents agree that using triple bottom line as a guiding principle is a must, however an environmental group respondent suggests that the CRB needs *"a process and methodology to document it, so that it's transparent and auditable… my experience is that the economy is a priority, rather than a true three-tiered approach*

As in the consultations, there were many questions from focus group respondents about the CRB governance model and decision-making process:

- Decision-makers

  Respondents in the Economic Development Authorities and some in the informed public groups recommend that Board decision-makers should include professionals, business people and chambers of commerce: people who are knowledgeable, informed, have no personal agenda and will work for the benefit of the region as a whole. Environmental group respondents would like board members to be informed about environmental values and alternative strategies. Developers are also concerned that the Board will not have the resources to address issues knowledgeably and in a timely manner.

- Potential Process Delay

  Economic Development Authorities recommended that the *"Board should be involved in a joint process to prevent delays. It has to be concurrent. If it takes too long, we'll lose business to other areas"*. Developers are also concerned that approval times will increase due to another layer of bureaucracy and roadblocks in the approvals process, such as disagreements between the Board and the city, or politicization of issues by special interest groups.

- Choices

  While there is a need for regional cooperation and coordination, and a need to be prescriptive on some issues (such as environmental concerns), developers want to maintain choice and encourage local creativity and individuality. The developers interviewed believe that local communities place different values on different things, that each community has its own needs and defining characteristics and should be encouraged (perhaps through incentives) to make decisions which address those individual needs.

- Areas of Focus

  Economic Development Authorities respondents question whether the Board will be involved in every decision; they suggest that they should only be able to intervene when the issue is one with regional impact.

- Consistency

  Participants in the informed public groups want planning to be consistent, logical and transparent. They suggested that a CRB website should be developed to aid in transparency.

- Universal Access

  Create clear policy, consistent terms, and universal access across the region, *"so that everyone is talking about the same thing."* Similarly, region-wide legislation is required in a variety of areas; for example, not all jurisdictions have legislation protecting trees.

  > *"One of my big worries is that you'll come out with a broad general apple pie motherhood statement that everyone can feel good about. We need to interpret it when it comes down to things… must have clarity."* (Developers)
  >
  > *"Heavy industrial and medium industrial should be defined the same way in all municipalities."* (Economic Development Authorities)
  >
  > *"Create a clearing house of information where plans could be put out there and everyone has access so we can make better decisions."* (Transportation and Logistics)

- Less Confusing

  Participants hoped that regional organization will be less confusing than the current jurisdictional structure, making it easier to find the correct department when there is an issue to be addressed.

  > *"It's hard to know whose door to knock on when you're dealing with different areas… parks, personal property, and farmland are each under a different jurisdiction."* (Environment)

- Best Practices

  Find Best Practices from other jurisdictions in North America, pick the best ones and use them to develop CRB policy.

# APPENDIX 3: REGIONAL EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The specific details and wording of the regional evaluation framework processes will be established at a later date, after consultation with the Municipalities, the CRB and legal counsel

**Purpose**

The CRB will establish a Regional Evaluation Framework (REF). The framework outlines the process and procedures which evaluates whether new municipal statutory plans and statutory plan amendments are consistent with the Plan. The framework includes a review committee which will report to the CRB.

**Composition of CAO Committee**

The CAO Committee will be a rotating review committee consisting of Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) or deputy CAOs from the municipalities. The committee will consist of up to six CAOs (with a quorum of five), two from counties, two from cities and up to two from towns and villages.

**Conflict of Interest**

If a member has any interest whether direct or indirect, in any matter before the CAO Committee, the member shall declare in advance such interest to the CAO Committee before discussion of the matter and shall not participate in the discussion or vote upon the matter and such absence shall be recorded in the minutes.

**CAO Committee Functions**

The Committee is responsible for reviewing, evaluating and making decisions on applications submitted by the municipality associated with new municipal statutory plans and statutory plan amendments and whether the aforementioned plans are consistent with the principles and policies of the Plan.

**CAO Committee Review Procedures**

1. Receipt of Application

An application is received by CRB staff from a municipality. Staff has a maximum of 25 working days in which staff must present a recommended disposition to the CAO Committee. Staff notifies all CRB municipalities that the application was received.

2. Preliminary Staff Review

Staff reviews application for completeness and may refer the application to a qualified and independent land use planning professional to evaluate the application in accordance with the principles and policies of the Plan. Staff prepares a report and recommendation to the CAO Committee.

3. Staff Recommendation

Staff notifies the CRB of recommended decision of the application and the rationale of recommendation.

4. CAO Committee

Staff convenes a meeting with the CAO Committee who are authorized to unanimously accept and thereby approve the application, or reject the recommendation made by the staff.

The Applicant Municipality may, at its option, attend and make a presentation at this meeting.

Rejection of an application or an absence of unanimity by the CAO Committee results in the application proceeding to the CRB.

5. Deemed Approval

In the event the CAO Committee accepts staff recommendation by unanimous vote, the application is deemed to have been approved by the CRB. Staff will notify the CRB of the unanimous approval of the application by the CAO Committee.

6. Referral to the CRB

The application is referred to the CRB for decision if the CAO Committee is unable to achieve unanimous acceptance of the recommendation or results in the rejection of the application.

7. Decision by the CRB

The application is referred to the CRB for resolution and vote at the next regularly scheduled meeting, unless the next regularly scheduled meeting is less than one week away, in which case a special meeting will be called for a date no more than three weeks away. The application is accepted or rejected by vote by the CRB and there is no appeal.

The Applicant Municipality may, at its option, make a presentation at this meeting.

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# APPENDIX 4: PROCESS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND AND COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL POLICIES

The CRB will work with participating municipalities and other stakeholders to implement the Plans agricultural land and country residential Policies. The purpose of this Appendix is to outline the purpose of the work and the steps that will be taken.

## INTRODUCTION

Preservation of agricultural land is identified as a principle of the regional land use plan. The Capital Region prefers to receive Government of Alberta direction on preservation and other questions related to agricultural land before implementing final land use policies in this regard. In the interim, the Capital Region Board has committed to a collaborative research and information-gathering exercise with Capital Region municipalities to identify and map agricultural lands which will need to be preserved from future fragmentation and conversion to other uses.

The location of country residential land uses in the Capital Region in designated areas is a policy of the regional land use plan. The allowance of country residential land uses on a clustered basis on either public or private communal sewer servicing is also a plan policy, to reduce the development footprint and increase open space and environmental protection. Notwithstanding this, the Capital Region Board recognizes that current rural servicing standards, particularly for sewage disposal, do not align with the policies. The Capital Region Board has committed to identifying and mapping designated areas for country residential land use, and reviewing the issues of sewer servicing standards, as part of the above collaborative research and information-gathering exercise with Capital Region municipalities.

## OBJECTIVES

- To carry out the research, gather the information and prepare the mapping required by Policies 1(B)(i)(ii) and the 2(E)(i) of the Principles and Policies (i.e. to identify agricultural lands which will need to be preserved from future fragmentation and conversions to other uses, and to identify those designated areas in which country residential uses are to be allowed).
- To prepare recommendations for transition frameworks that will ensure that CRB policies are implemented in these areas as municipalities amend their statutory plans.
- To ensure that the transition frameworks are achieved through a collaborative process involving the CRB and the municipalities.

## WORK PLAN

### Phase 1 (Start-up and Research)

a. The CRB team engages municipal Administrations to discuss and agree on the Work Plan.

b. The Work Plan is referred to the Land Use Committee for consideration and approval.

c. On the adoption of the Work Plan by the Committee, municipalities provide the CRB team with an overview of the planning policies and mapping in existing statutory plans that relate to agricultural and country residential lands.

d. Municipalities provide the CRB team with an overview of the policies related to sewer services provided in country residential development, and the relationship that these policies have to Safety Codes legislation and related discipline Codes, where applicable.

e. The CRB team investigates and summarizes potential agricultural land preservation strategies including but not limited to transfer of development credits, land trusts, and agricultural and conservation easements.

f. The CRB team reviews current standards and practices related to individual and communal sewage disposal systems with Alberta Environment and Alberta Municipal Affairs, Public Safety Division.

g. The CRB team conducts a best practices review of related policy frameworks in other jurisdictions.

h. The CRB team compiles the information received in a preliminary summary document that outlines the existing policy framework for agricultural and country residential land uses in the Capital Region.

i. The CRB team reviews the preliminary summary report with municipal Administrations.

j. The preliminary summary report is presented to the Land Use Committee for consideration.

k. The CRB team presents an interim progress report to the Capital Region Board.

**Phase 2 (Develop Mapping and Prepare Transition Frameworks)**

a. On the adoption of the preliminary summary report by the Land Use Committee the CRB team proceeds with the mapping of agricultural lands and designated country residential areas.

b. The CRB team will prepare draft transition frameworks:

   i to move from existing agricultural land policies to policies that will identify agricultural lands which will need to be preserved from future fragmentation and conversion to other uses, to comply with Policy 1(B)(i)(ii) of the Plan, and pending the requirement to conform to the future Land Use Framework, and

   ii regarding individual and communal sewage systems to outline how and when municipalities are to achieve Policy 2(E)(i) of the Plan.

c. A summary report of the transition frameworks and corresponding recommendations will be prepared by the CRB team and reviewed with the municipal Administrations.

d. The above summary report will be presented to the Land Use Committee for consideration.

**Phase 3 (Recommendation and Approval)**

a. On adoption of the summary report by the Land Use Committee, the Committee will recommend the summary report for adoption to the Capital Region Board.

b. The Land Use Committee recommendation is to be presented to the Capital Region Board for consideration.