Shared Investment for Shared Benefit (SISB) Task Force

Thursday, June 11, 2020
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
Public Viewing via YouTube

Task Force Members:
Rod Frank, Strathcona County (Chair)
Cathy Heron, City of St. Albert (Vice Chair)
Ken MacKay, City of St. Albert (Alternate)
John Stewart, City of Beaumont
Ray Ralph, Town of Devon
Michael Walters, City of Edmonton (Alternate)
Gale Katchur, City of Fort Saskatchewan
Barry Turner, Town of Morinville
Rod Shaigec, Parkland County
Stuart Houston, City of Spruce Grove
William Choy, Town of Stony Plain
Alanna Hnatiw, Sturgeon County

Working Group Members:
Grant Bain, Leduc County
Wendy Boje, City of Spruce Grove
John Dance, City of Fort Saskatchewan
Simon Farbrother, City of Spruce Grove
Stacy Fedechko, Strathcona County
Tony Kulbisky, Town of Devon
Stephane Labonne, Town of Morinville
Travis Peter, Sturgeon County
Paul Ross, City of Edmonton
Kevin Scoble, City of St. Albert
Irene Sasyniuk, City of Leduc

Regrets:
Don Iveson, City of Edmonton
Bob Young, City of Leduc
Tanni Doblancko, Leduc County

EMRB Staff:
Karen Wichuk, CEO
Sharon Shuya, Director of Regional Growth Planning
Alex Bonkoski, Project Manager
Dan Rose, Senior Communications Advisor
Carol Moreno, Project Coordinator

Consultants:
Slavi Diamandiev, Deloitte
Dalibor Petrovic, Deloitte
Sabrina Reschny, Deloitte
Stewart Young, Deloitte
Karen Gilchrist, Karen Gilchrist and Associates
1. Opening

1.1 Quorum

Quorum achieved; 11 of 13 voting members present.

1.2 Call to Order

Chair Frank called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m.

1.3 Chair’s Opening Remarks

Chair Frank welcomed members of the Task Force, the Working Group, and regional stakeholders. Opening remarks included a reflection on how the world has changed since this Task Force last met but there is willingness to work together towards common goals.

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion: That the Shared Investment for Shared Benefit Task Force approve the June 11, 2020 meeting agenda.
Moved by: Mayor Ralph
Accepted by: Chair
Decision: Carried unanimously

3. Approval of Minutes

CEO Wichuk noted a minor correction in Item 2 of the previous minutes to amend the reference to “Chair Heron” to read as “Vice Chair Heron”.

Motion: That the Shared Investment for Shared Benefit Task Force approve the February 20, 2020 meeting minutes as amended.
Moved by: Mayor Choy
Accepted by: Chair
Decision: Carried unanimously

4. Update of Project Progress to Date

Mr. Petrovic led the Task Force in an open discussion of potentially compressing the project schedule. Questions from the Task Force clarified that such an adjustment to the timeline would not impact the project budget or consultant contract and that public engagement was not included in this project’s scope. Chair Frank canvassed members and determined that the Task Force was not in a position to make any decisions regarding the project schedule at this time.

Mr. Petrovic shared that individual stakeholder interviews were completed in April and a second Working Group workshop was held in May. The Working Group participated in a
survey, of which some of the results are included in this meeting material. Work on the Environmental Scan continues despite challenges connecting with other jurisdictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ms. Reschny provided an overview of the Project Team’s interview with each Task Force member and summarized the themes that emerged. She noted the variety of opportunities and priorities held by the members, the challenges of working on behalf of the Region and also their respective municipalities, and feedback on the communication strategies employed to date.

Mayor Heron joined the meeting at 1:51 p.m. replacing Councillor MacKay.

In highlighting the emerging issues, Mr. Petrovic drew the Task Force’s attention to the topics of governance and administration of the SISB model, addressing differences in affordability among municipalities, defining “regional significance”, and determining regional economic development priorities. Identified as factors critical to the success of this initiative, these issues will be addressed later in the project or may exist beyond its scope. The Project Team suggested the model and evaluation framework under development would help build the definition for “regional significance”.

5. SISB Model Features

Mr. Young presented the Task Force with a selection of possible model features including mixed, single or multiple variable cost-sharing mechanisms, a revenue pool, a proportionate revenue-sharing mechanism, and host jurisdiction compensation. Although presented through two separate scenarios, Mr. Young suggested that the final model could incorporate a combination of features that resonate most among Task Force members.

Comments from the Task Force on the proposed scenarios included the possibility of host municipality compensation, partnerships with private industry, consideration of long-term costs to maintain infrastructure projects, economic development in relation to the selection process, opportunities for flexibility based on the project opportunities, governance implications around opting out, and possible opt out penalties.

Members of the Working Group were also invited to share their perspectives based on their discussions and deliberations at their latest workshop. Comments included a recognition that there is no one magic solution but SISB provides a valuable toolkit to promote equity, not equality, among all partners. There was also a suggestion to look for projects with a multiplier effect and the potential for other spin-off benefits when selecting projects.

The Task Force and CEO Wichuk engaged in a discussion around the mandate of Edmonton Global and the potential linkages to EMRB’s Shared Investment for Shared Benefit initiative.

Break 2:35 p.m. to 2:45 p.m.

Mr. Young shared the results of the Working Group survey and invited members to participate in a live poll to share their perspectives on possible approaches to sharing of
costs and revenues as well as the nature of municipal contributions. A large majority of members favoured a mixed formula for cost sharing with some support for looking to assessed value, expected usage and population as part of the formula. Responding to the poll on revenue sharing, a large majority supported sharing in direct proportion to contributions with several members in favour of considering a portion allocated to a revenue pool or to compensate the host municipality. The Task Force strongly supported the concept that municipal contributions would be financial but also indicated that the provision of key services and land would also be contemplated. Technical expertise as a possible municipal contribution was also supported by the Task Force to a lesser extent.

Responding to the results of the polls, members suggested that a number of features and approaches could be combined to offer greater flexibility. The Project Team clarified that non-financial contributions, such as land, would be monetized to assign a value for the purpose of the model.

6. Initiative Selection Framework

Mr. Petrovic led the Task Force through the draft framework for the evaluation and prioritization of regional projects. He noted that the evaluation process would include a qualitative screen followed by a more rigorous quantitative approach to allow for ranking proposed projects. Mr. Petrovic noted the opportunities for members to opt out at various stages, which were included at the request of members through their individual interviews.

Mr. Diamandiev elaborated on the draft initial screening process and its considerations for alignment of priorities, feasibility, affordability, and the magnitude and regional dispersion of economic impact of potential SISB projects. He also described the proposed components of the ranking process for short-listed projects to include a cost-benefit analysis that also takes broader societal costs and benefits into account. Mr. Diamandiev also suggested that a more qualitative approach to ranking could include multi-criteria analysis but that most of the scenarios discussed with the Working Group would benefit from the described quantitative approach.

Comments from the Task Force included references to opt-out disincentives once commitments are made, the possibility of SISB proposals resulting from EMRB’s Growth Plan implementation instead of a municipal sponsor, EMRB’s role in facilitating sub-regional initiatives, desire for flexibility to pursue projects that do not generate revenue but provide cost savings or other social benefits, and an acknowledgment that SISB is a tool or framework to help allocate an equitable distribution of costs and benefits.

7. Next Steps / Questions

Mr. Young suggested that the Task Force meeting planned for July 10, 2020 proceed as an opportunity to continue discussions on the initiative selection framework. The Project Team will continue its design work on the conceptual model incorporating Task Force feedback. A hypothetical test case will be utilized to demonstrate the model’s practical application.
8. **Next Meeting**

   Shared Investment for Shared Benefit Task Force  
   July 10, 2020, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
   Virtual Meeting via Zoom

9. **Adjournment**

   Chair Frank declared the meeting adjourned at 3:59 p.m.

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Task Force Chair, Rod Frank