# Regional Agriculture Master Plan

## Task Force

March 29, 2018, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Morinville Cultural Centre
9502-100 Avenue
Morinville, AB
Hall A

### 1. Opening

1.1 *Quorum*
   - **Action:** Confirmation
   - **Lead:** Chair Shaigec

1.2 *Call to Order*
   - **Action:** Declaration
   - **Lead:** Chair Shaigec

1.3 *Chair Opening Remarks*
   - **Action:** Information
   - **Lead:** Chair Shaigec

### 2. Approval of Agenda

- **Action:** Approval
- **Lead:** Chair Shaigec

### 3. Approval of Minutes

- **Action:** Approval
- **Lead:** Chair Shaigec

### 4. Regional Agriculture Master Plan

#### 4.1 Regional Agriculture Master Plan- Draft Project Purpose Statement

- **Action:** Information/ Discussion
- **Lead:** Chair Shaigec/Ms. Shuya

**Recommended Motion:** That the Regional Agriculture Master Plan Task Force endorse the draft Project Purpose Statement and outcomes and recommend the Board receive it for information.
4.2 Regional Agriculture Master Plan - Draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan
   *Action: Information/Discussion*
   *Lead: Chair Shaigec/Ms. Shuya*

**Recommended Motion:** That the Regional Agriculture Master Plan Task Force receive the draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan for information.

4.3 Regional Agriculture Master Plan – Draft Key Messages
   *Action: Information/Discussion*
   *Lead: Chair Shaigec/Ms. Shuya*

**Recommended Motion:** That the Regional Agriculture Master Plan Task Force receive the draft Key Messages for information.

5. Next Meeting
   - TBA

5.1 Adjournment
   *Action: Declaration*
   *Lead: Chair Shaigec*

**Recommended Motion:** That the Regional Agriculture Master Plan Task Force meeting of March 29, 2018 adjourn.
1. Opening

1.1 Quorum

Quorum achieved.

1.2 Call to Order

CEO Bruce called the meeting to order at 8:59 a.m.

1.3 CEO Opening Remarks
2. Approval of Agenda

Motion: That the agenda of March 2, 2018 be approved.
Moved by: Mayor Tanni Doblanko, Leduc County
Accepted by: Chair
Decision: Carried unanimously

3. Governance

3.1 Selection of Chair

Motion: That the Regional Agriculture Master Plan Task Force appoint Mayor Shaigec to the Chair position and recommend that the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board endorse and reaffirm that appointment effective March 2, 2018.
Moved by: Councillor Paul Smith, Strathcona County
Accepted by: Chair
Decision: Carried unanimously

3.2 Selection of Vice Chair

Motion: That the Regional Agriculture Master Plan Task Force appoint Councillor Michael Walters as Vice Chair.
Moved by: Mayor Tanni Doblanko, Leduc County
Accepted by: Chair
Decision: Carried unanimously

3.3 Task Force Terms of Reference

Motion: That the Regional Agriculture Master Plan Task Force review and reaffirm the Task Force Terms of Reference approved by Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board.
Moved by: Mayor John Stewart, Town of Beaumont
Accepted by: Chair
Decision: Carried unanimously

4. Regional Agriculture Master Plan

4.1 Context

Ms. Shuya provided context on the approach to members of the Regional Agriculture Master Plan Task Force.

4.2 Agriculture Policy Area

Ms. Shuya provided an overview of the Agriculture Policy Area for the Regional Agriculture Master Plan Task Force members.
4.3 Engagement Strategy

Ms. Shuya advised members of the Engagement Strategy used by the Growth Plan Task Force and how it may serve the mandate of the Regional Agriculture Master Plan Task Force.

**Motion:** That the Regional Agriculture Master Plan Task Force direct EMRB Administration to prepare a draft of the Engagement Strategy for review at the next Task Force Meeting.

**Moved by:** Councillor Michael Walters, City of Edmonton

**Accepted by:** Chair

**Decision:** Carried unanimously

4.4 Communications Plan

Ms. Shuya provided brief overview of the communications plan, confirming the plan will be further informed by the Engagement Strategy.

5. RFP Update

Ms. Shuya provides an update on the RFP process to the members of the Regional Agriculture Master Plan Task Force.

6. Next Meeting

- Thursday, March 29, 2018 at 10:30 a.m. hosted by Sturgeon County, details to be distributed.

7. Adjournment

**Motion:** That the Regional Agriculture Master Plan Task Force meeting of March 2, 2018 be adjourned at 10:26 a.m.

**Moved by:** Mayor Tanni Doblanko, Leduc County

**Accepted by:** Chair

**Decision:** Carried unanimously

Task Force Chair, Rod Shaigec
Regional Agriculture Master Plan – Draft Project Purpose Statement

**Recommended Motion:** That the Regional Agriculture Master Plan Task Force endorse the draft Project Purpose Statement and outcomes and recommend the Board receive it for information.

**Background**

On February 8, 2018, the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board approved the development of a Regional Agriculture Master Plan (RAMP) identified as an implementation priority within the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan, approved October 26, 2017.

The development of a RAMP and the supporting *land evaluation and site assessment tool* is a complex undertaking due to the need to consider the broad spectrum of competing rural land uses in the development of a plan to address the future growth and sustainability of Agriculture. This will require a robust discussion about the long-term sustainability of the sector, and asking the question... What do we want the future of Agriculture to look like in this region 30-50-100 years out?

Because of the complex nature of this project, it will be critical from the start of the project to define the project purpose. The project purpose must put the project in context for the intended audience, to effectively manage perceptions and expectations among regional stakeholders.

As Task Force Members, the Board and member Councils and municipal administrations will be key interfaces between the project and a broad range of regional stakeholders, they will need to be provided with consistent information about the project. Details about the project purpose, process, and its outcomes and implications is required as part of the launch of the project and initial communications about the project.

The RAMP Working Group met on March 16, 2018, and had a robust discussion about the Project Purpose, which resulted in the recommended Project Purpose Statement below, and is presented to the Task Force for consideration and further discussion.

**Recommendation:**

**Project Purpose**

To develop a Regional Agriculture Master Plan that will enable a long-term sustainable agricultural sector and will contribute to the region’s economic prosperity, environmental stewardship, and development of sustainable communities.
Project Outcomes

- Provide certainty and flexibility for the agricultural sector
- Establish a framework for consistent decision-making for municipalities (this does not mean one-size-fits-all)
- Enable economic diversification and economic prosperity
- Create the condition for a continued viable, thriving agricultural sector
- Be responsive to urban and rural agriculture
- Identify mechanism(s) to achieve integrated and collaborative planning in the rural area
- Develop partnerships and alliances between different economic sectors

Rationale:

The identification of a purpose statement and project outcomes early in the process is important to manage expectations and perceptions about the project and its intent among regional stakeholders.

It is imperative that regional stakeholders understand that the RAMP aims to foster a broader conversation about creating a balance amongst different and competing rural land uses to protect and enable the growth of the sector for future generations. e.g. Food and water are essential to sustain populations, land is an essential for agriculture, and not all land is equal.

The success of the project will depend on the extent to which regional stakeholders support the development of RAMP, including its project outcomes as being the way forward to ensure a more effective way to plan the rural area of the region.
Regional Agriculture Master Plan - Draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Recommended Motion: That the Regional Agriculture Master Plan Task Force receive the draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan for information.

Background

Of the recommendations made to support the implementation plan of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan (EMRBGP), two were identified as priorities, the development of:

1. a Regional Agriculture Master Plan (RAMP) and
2. a land evaluation and site assessment tool, to identify and quantify a supply of prime Agricultural lands to conserve and maintain for the growth and sustainability of the Agriculture sector (Policies 6.1.1a and 6.1.1b).

On February 8, 2018, the Board approved these recommendations, and approved a seven member Task Force to oversee the two-year project.

The development of a RAMP and a land evaluation and site assessment tool will be firsts for this Region and will require the input of a range of regional stakeholders to ensure the Plan responds to the future needs of the sector while achieving the objectives identified for Agriculture in the growth plan.

On March 2, 2018, the Task Force met to discuss the Engagement Plan for the project and through the discussions acknowledged that careful consideration must be given as to who/and which organizations are the right stakeholders to include in the conversation about how to achieve the Task Force objectives.

The Task Force passed a motion directing EMRB Administration to work with the project working group to develop a draft Engagement Plan for consideration by the Task Force at its next meeting.

Status

The Working Group met on March 16, 2018 to discuss the Engagement Plan for the Project. From that meeting EMRB Administration has prepared a draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan for review and discussion by the Task Force.

Recommendation
That the Task Force review and provide further input on the proposed framework, which will be finalized in conjunction with the project work plan. In general, the engagement strategy will follow a similar process used in the development of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan.

Attachment
1. Draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan
Draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan

REGIONAL AGRICULTURE MASTER PLAN

Sharon Shuya
EDMONTON METROPOLITAN REGION BOARD
1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Scope

This Stakeholder Engagement Plan is about having the important conversation about the future and importance of ensuring the viability and sustainability of Agriculture in this region for its economic, environmental and social benefits. The future being the next 30-50-100 years.

The implementation of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan (EMRGP) identifies the requirement to develop a Regional Agriculture Master Plan (RAMP) and a land evaluation and site assessment tool, to identify and quantify a supply of prime Agricultural lands to conserve and maintain to enable the growth and sustainability of the Agriculture sector (Policies 6.1.1a and 6.1.1b).

On February 8, 2018, the Board approved the development of a RAMP and supporting land evaluation and site assessment tool and appointed a seven-member task force to over-see the two-year project.

The development of a RAMP and supporting land evaluation and site assessment tool are new initiatives for the region. They have the potential to establish a framework for other regions to follow provincially and nationally, balancing the need for urban and rural growth.

Given the importance placed on addressing the issues facing rural growth and competing land uses, the subject of preservation and conservation of agricultural lands is complex and requires a strategic approach and input from a wide range of regional stakeholders from public and private sectors. This will ensure the Plan responds to the needs of the sector to ensure its future viability and sustainability.

On March 2, 2018, the Task Force met to discuss the Engagement Plan for the project. This Stakeholders Engagement Plan (SEP) was developed in collaboration with the Regional Agriculture Master Plan Working Group. The SEP will assist the Board Member Municipalities with managing and facilitating conversations among regional stakeholders regarding the purpose, process, and expected outcomes for this project.

This SEP adopts an inclusive stakeholder approach, and serves as a guide, which will evolve over time as the project develops. The SEP is linked to the communications plan for the project. This first draft of the SEP addresses the overall framework and initial start up of the Project and identifies areas requiring further work.

NOTE: This SEP framework addresses the needs of the Project, as they are known today. The Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board is in the process of developing a Public Engagement Policy to be completed in 2018/2019. Once in effect, this SEP may need to be adjusted to be consistent with the Policy.
1.2 Purpose of the Engagement

The purpose of this project is to develop a Regional Agriculture Master Plan that will enable a long-term sustainable agricultural sector and contribute to the region’s economic prosperity, environmental stewardship, and development of sustainable communities.

The purpose of this SEP is to develop targeted approaches to engage with affected stakeholders from across the region throughout the project, to seek their input, and ideas to address the issues while developing support for the solutions. Leveraging local and expert knowledge and experience will inform how we create the conditions for a viable and sustainable agricultural sector.

During the development of the EMRGP, the Board identified a number of issues as being critical to the future growth and sustainability of the agriculture sector: the impact of urban growth on the loss of prime agricultural lands, fragmentation and conversion of agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses; and lack of supportive infrastructure. The result was the identification of three objectives requiring further exploration, including other influences such as the impact of technology & innovation, climate change and lifestyle and other competing rural land uses on the future of Agriculture.

Through the development of a RAMP, these policy objectives will be further explored and addressed in the context of achieving responsible growth, a key tenet of the growth plan.

1. Identify and conserve an adequate supply of prime agricultural lands to provide a secure local food source for future generations.
2. Minimize the fragmentation and conversion of prime agricultural lands for non-agricultural uses.
3. Promote the diversification and value-added agriculture production and plan infrastructure to support the agricultural sector and regional food system.

1.3 Engagement Objectives

The intent of the SEP is to define an appropriate approach to engaging with a range of interested regional stakeholders and to achieve the following objectives:

- to improve and facilitate decision-making;
- create an atmosphere of understanding that actively involves those directly affected and other stakeholders in a timely manner;
- provide these groups with sufficient opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns that may influence Project decisions; and
- develop long-term partnerships among the rural industries and regional stakeholders to support future planning and policy development.
1.4 Engagement Principles

The SEP is informed by a set of principles defining core values underpinning all interactions with stakeholders. The following are the engagement principles that will serve as a guide for this project.

- **Commitment** – is demonstrated when the need to understand, engage and identify the stakeholders is recognized and acted upon early in the process.
- **Trust** – is achieved through open and meaningful dialogue that respects and upholds a person’s or organization or community’s beliefs, values and opinions.
- **Integrity** – is established when engagement is conducted in a manner that fosters mutual respect and trust.
- **Respect** – is created when the rights, cultural beliefs, values and interests of stakeholders are recognized.
- **Transparency** – is achieved by being clear and open about the process, and providing timely responses to concerns.
- **Collaboration** – is encouraged among stakeholders when they work together towards workable solutions.
- **Openness and Learning** – is encouraged in a safe environment when one can explore new ideas, learn and apply information in ways that generate options collaboratively, and ensures engagement is effective and relevant.
- **Expectations** – are set when the purpose of the engagement and how much influence people will have on the outcomes is clear.
- **Inclusiveness** – is achieved through broad participation and supported by appropriate participation opportunities; and
- **Planning** – ensures the engagement serves both a clearly defined purpose and the needs of participants.
2.0 Stakeholder Analysis

2.1 Definition

The term “stakeholder” generally refers to any individual or group that, either positively or negatively, impacts or is impacted by the decisions and actions of an organization. Stakeholders are often categorized into two groups based on direct or indirect impacts.

2.2 Methodology

In the development of this SEP, the RAMP Working Group has identified a list of regional stakeholders. To determine their role in the engagement process, the stakeholders have been identified as either an internal or an external stakeholder for the purposes of this project.
2.2.1 Internal Stakeholders

The internal stakeholders are the Board Member Municipalities and the Province of Alberta, in recognition of their role as the decision-makers. The Board members, the Province and member municipalities will also have a unique role to play when it comes to communications.

The Board, member municipalities and the Province will be engaged throughout the process.

- The Board will be directly involved with vetting the work of the Task Force, approving project milestones and the final Plan.
- Member municipalities and their administrations will be a critical interface between the various local publics, regarding this project. They will need to have up to date information of the project, progress, key decisions and opportunity to have input while being able to represent the importance and value of the project for the long term.
- The Province will be informed of the direction and outcomes of the project: through information sessions at the ADM level (with affected Ministries); and through internal briefings organized by the Land Use Secretariat and/or the Alberta Agriculture and Forestry representative (s).

2.2.2. External Stakeholders

External stakeholders will be engaged based on the issues under consideration, and at the appropriate time in the process in order to gather data, information, and opinions, and to explore options and solutions relative to the project purpose and outcomes.

An initial list of regional stakeholders or publics was identified, then categorized into nine different segments each with varying degrees of interest, influence and impact on the issues to be addressed and the final plan. The segments, in no particular order, are:

1. Producers
2. Agriculture Industry Associations
3. Academic Institutions
4. Provincial and Federal Government;
5. NGO’s – includes producers, agriculture input providers, development industry;
6. Business/ Other Industry
7. Other, Special Interest Groups – includes Indigenous populations, Youth Groups and, municipalities residing with the region and not on the Board
8. Consumers
9. Media
Once the project work plan has been approved, more work will be required to identify the timing and appropriate method of engagement of specific *publics* determined through a stakeholder mapping process.

### 2.3 Stakeholder Engagement - Phased Approach

Stakeholder engagement within the Regional Agriculture Master Plan development is critical for supporting the project’s risk management process, specifically the early identification and avoidance/management of potential impacts (positive and negative) that can occur from a lack of information.

Stakeholder engagement will be an ongoing process as part of developing a RAMP and it is expected that external stakeholders will be engaged in accordance with the project work plan and communications plan to keep them *Informed* of the project status and opportunities for consultation and participation. The intent is to ensure information is being disseminated to the right organizations / or public most affected, in order to raise the level of awareness, understanding and support for the solutions that will enable and ensure the sustainability of the Agriculture sector in the region.
There will be opportunities to participate in formal planned consultations to facilitate input (collect information) and stimulate dialogue on options, directions, and possible decisions and associated implications. In this way, affected and interested stakeholders will have opportunities to provide input on policies and initiatives before they are finalized.

3.0 Key Messages

Developing key messages and updating them throughout the process will be critical to ensure the organization is able to manage the perceptions of stakeholder regarding the project and its outcome(s).

Key messages will be updated and refined over time to ensure stakeholders have up to date information about the progress of the project. The members of the Board, member municipalities and their Administrations, the Province and the Media are viewed as the primary audience for the key messages to ensure consistent information is being provided to all publics at all times.

3.1 Project Launch Key Messages – proposed

The following is an initial list of questions that have been identified as being important to building the foundation for this project.

- What is the Project and why is it important?
- Who is the EMRB, what is our role & purpose / interest in the Project?
- What is our current understanding of the problem, project rationalization
- What is the role of the Province, with this project?
- What is the role and purpose of engagement and stakeholder input in the project
- What are the outcomes of the project expected to be?
- What are the Project Timelines?

4.0 Engagement Risks & Mitigation

4.1 Grievance Management

The Task Force may want to consider implementing a process to allow member of the public to express concerns and complaints that can result from real or perceived impacts of this project.
A grievance is not a question or a suggestion about the project. The intent would be to provide stakeholders with a clear process for providing comment and raising grievances:

- To allow stakeholders the opportunity to raise comments/concerns anonymously in some form and through a defined process; and;
- To establish a fair and consistent approach to ensure all comments, responses and grievances are handled in a fair and transparent manner, consistent with EMRB policies.

5.0 Reporting & Evaluation

As with any major project, and now standard practice with EMRB, the lesson learned from each engagement will inform future improvements and will be part of the overall project evaluation, i.e. What worked well? Areas for improvement? What did we learn?

The Task Force will be provided a summary of the outcomes of all public engagement sessions.

6.0 Budget

Further work is required to determine the Budget for Stakeholder Engagement, and will depend on the final project work plan.

7.0 Communications Plan

The purpose of the Communications plan is to identify the most effective methods and structures through which to disseminate project information, and to ensure regular, accessible, transparent and appropriate consultation with stakeholders.

The Communications Plan will be completed once the project work plan has been approved.

8.0 Resources & Responsibilities

See next page for a preliminary outline of the resources and responsibilities to support scheduled stakeholder engagement session.
### 8.1 Resource and Responsibility Outline

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Regional Agriculture Master Plan – Key Messages

Recommended Motion: That the Regional Agriculture Master Plan Task Force receive the draft Key Messages for information.

Background

On February 8, 2018, the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board approved the development of a Regional Agriculture Master Plan (RAMP) identified as an implementation priority within the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan, approved October 26, 2017.

The development of a RAMP is in response to one of the significant challenges identified by the Growth Plan as facing the region in the next 30 years: the viability of the agricultural sector. Land is not a renewable resource and this region is under pressure for urban development and conversion to non-agricultural uses. Of concern is the loss of high quality soil for agricultural uses. We know that agriculture relies on land - good quality soil, water and growing conditions to produce commodities and food to feed the population, which will become increasingly more important in the future with global population growth.

The development of a RAMP and the supporting land evaluation and site assessment tool is a complex undertaking and for the most part a new initiative for this region, requiring focused, constant and clear communication with respect to the intent and expected outcome(s) of the plan amongst a range of regional stakeholders. (See Project Purpose RFD)

The RAMP Working Group assembled a comprehensive list of regional stakeholders or publics and categorized them into nine segments, each with varying degrees of interest, influence and impact on the issues to be addressed and the final plan. In no specific order these are:

1. Producers
2. Agriculture Industry Associations
3. Provincial and Federal Government
4. NGO’s – includes agriculture input providers, development industry
5. Businesses / Other Industry- includes forestry, oil and gas, mining
6. Academic Institutions
7. Other, Special Interest Groups – includes Indigenous populations, Youth Groups and, municipalities residing with the region and not on the Board.
8. Consumers
9. Media
The Task Force, Working Group, Board, Member Councils and municipal administrations can have contact with any member or representative of the publics identified for this project and it is critical to avoid misunderstanding about the project, project process, roles and responsibilities and the project outcome(s).

The development of tools to support the communications about this project will be critical to ensure regional stakeholders are kept informed and are receiving consistent information.

Recommendation:

At this preliminary stage of the project, it is critical to set the project up for success by reinforcing the Key Messages that establish the background and context for the project.

These Key Messages create the foundation for the project and reinforce the Project Purpose Statement & Project Outcomes.

**Project Launch- Key Message Questions** (see responses next page)

1. What is the Project and Why is it important?
2. Who is the EMRB, what is its role & purpose/interest in the Project?
3. Is the Province involved? What is its role?
4. What is our current understanding of the problem?
5. What is the role and purpose of stakeholder engagement and stakeholder input in the project?
6. What are the project outcomes expected to be?
7. What are the Project Timelines?

Rationale:

Communications is an on-going process, and critical to the project’s risk management process, specifically to identify and ensure avoidance/ management of potential impacts (negative/positive) that can occur from a lack of information.

Developing Key Messages and updating them throughout the process will be critical to ensure Task Force members, the Board, member Council’s and municipal administrations, have the most current information and can provide it to regional stakeholders at all times.

The key messages will be part of a comprehensive communications plan for the project once the Engagement Plan is approved, and aligned with the project work plan. The Communications Plan will
address the needs of the different publics, identify communication strategies & platforms, key messages by stage of project and roles & responsibilities and budget impacts.

Project Launch- Key Messages

1. What is the Project and Why is it important

The project’s purpose is to develop a Regional Agriculture Master Plan to enable a long-term sustainable agricultural sector and contribute to the region’s economic prosperity, environmental stewardship, and development of sustainable communities.

This region has an abundance of the highest quality of soils in the country. Currently it is under constant pressure from competing land uses, from other economic sectors, and from within the sector requiring a more integrated and collaborative approach to land use planning that prioritizes agricultural land uses to ensure a viable and sustainable agricultural sector. What is needed is a long-term vision for the sector, and a supporting policy framework to enable growth, diversification, and sustainability for future generations. Its about balancing competing interests to ensure responsible and sustainable growth and maintaining a viable ag sector.

2. Who is the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB), what is your role & purpose / interest in the Project?

The EMRB is a Growth Management Board and exists under Provincial Regulation.

The Board’s mandate is to prepare and oversee the implement of a Regional Growth Management Plan and a Metropolitan Servicing Plan for the Edmonton Metropolitan Region. Its primary functions are - regional planning, public policy and advocacy.

The EMRB is made up of 13 member municipalities – Beaumont, Devon, Edmonton, Fort Saskatchewan, City of Leduc, Leduc County, Morinville, Parkland County, St. Albert, Spruce Grove, Stony Plain, Strathcona County, and Sturgeon County, The Board member is generally the Mayor of the municipality.

On October 26, 2017, the province approved the updated regional growth management plan for how this region will plan for future growth in the next 30 years. Included in the plan are six interconnected policy areas, one of which is Agriculture. During the update of the growth plan growth, pressures in rural growth and competing land use issues were identified as important to overall planning, but the Board did not have enough time to address them at that time.
To ensure that rural growth and the pressures facing the agricultural sector are addressed, the Board identified a regional agriculture master plan as its first priority following the approval of the growth plan, with the work to be completed within two years.

3. **Is the Province involved? What is its role?**

The Province of Alberta is involved for the full length of the project. There are two provincial representatives participating, one from the Land Use Secretariat and one from Alberta Agriculture and Forestry. Their role is to be the liaisons between the project and those provincial departments with vested interests.

4. **What is our current understanding of the problem?**

In the development of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan, the viability of agriculture was identified as one of the top issues facing the region in the next 30 years. Specifically, the loss of prime agricultural lands due to fragmentation and conversion to non-agricultural uses, e.g. urbanization, rural settlement, growth of other economic sectors - mining, oil and gas, recreation and environmental considerations.

The agricultural sector is under constant pressure itself and is having to adapt to changes in business models, technology, innovation, new crops, market volatility and effects of climate change.

The EMRBGP recognizes that food is essential and that not all land is equal. The conservation and preservation of a supply of high quality land is critical for a viable and sustainable agricultural sector. Agriculture is the largest landowner in the region and a major contributor to the region’s working and natural landscape. Producers are, in effect, stewards of the land and have an important role to play in determining the future viability and sustainability of the sector in this region.

5. **What is the role and purpose of Stakeholder Engagement and stakeholder input in the project?**

Stakeholder engagement seeks input in the form of data, information, opinions and ideas on how to ensure a viable and sustainable agricultural sector for the long-term; long term being 30-50-100 years.

The issue is complex and will require an understanding of all the competing interests – public and private – and the opportunities for rural land use in order to arrive at a path forward.
6. What are the project outcomes expected to be?

- Provide certainty and flexibility for the agricultural sector
- Establish a framework for consistent decision-making for municipalities (but not one-size-fits-all)
- Enable economic diversification and economic prosperity
- Create the condition for a continued viable, thriving agricultural sector
- Be responsive to urban and rural agriculture
- Identify mechanism(s) to achieve integrated and collaborative planning in the rural area
- Develop partnerships and alliance between different economic sectors

7. What are the Project Timelines?

The Board has allocated two years to complete this project. The expected completion date for this project is April 2020.