



REF 2019-014 Strathcona County Bremner and Local Employment Area (LEA) Area Concept Plan and Municipal Development Plan Amendment

Recommendation

EMRB Administration recommends that REF application 2019-014 be approved.

Background

On May 23, 2019, the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) received an application from Strathcona County (the County) for approval of the proposed Bremner and LEA Area Concept Plan (ACP) and a proposed amendment to the Municipal Development Plan (MDP). The County submitted the proposed amendment pursuant to the following submission criteria in the Regional Evaluation Framework (REF):

- 4.1 *A municipality must refer to the Board any proposed new statutory plan, except for:*
- a) a new sub-area structure plan that is subordinate to and consistent with its higher order area structure plan or area redevelopment plan;*
 - b) a new area structure plan for country residential development within the zoned and/or designated country residential areas as depicted on Schedule 2: Edmonton Metropolitan Regional Structure to 2044 in the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan; or*
 - c) a new area structure plan in a town or village with a population of less than 5000 that is consistent with the town or village municipal development plan.*
- and
- 4.2 *A municipality must refer to the Board any proposed amendment to a statutory plan that meets one or more of the following conditions:*
- c) The proposed statutory plan amendment would result in a change to the boundaries of an area structure plan, area redevelopment plan, intermunicipal development plan, urban service area, growth hamlet or hamlet that is not designated a growth hamlet in a Municipal Development Plan where the boundary change includes a population gain of more than 200 and/or an increase in area of 32 ha or more in the hamlet.*
 - e) The effect of the proposed statutory plan amendment requires the extension and/or increase in the capacity of the Regional Water and Wastewater Lines, as identified on Schedule 8A: Infrastructure Corridors in the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan, or to Regional Water or Wastewater treatment facilities.*



- f) *The boundaries of the proposed amendment to the statutory plan are within 0.8 km of a pipeline corridor as depicted on Schedule 8B: Energy Corridors in the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan.*
- h) *The effect of the proposed statutory plan amendment requires improvements to a road identified on Schedule 10A: Transportation Systems -Regional Roads to 2044 in the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan.*
- j) *The plan area of the proposed amendment to the statutory plan includes a Park and Ride or Planned LRT line or the boundaries of the proposed amendment to the statutory plan are within 0.8 km of a Park and Ride or Planned LRT line as identified on Schedule 10B: Transportation Systems - Regional Transit and Trails to 2044 in the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan.*

EMRB Administration deemed the application complete on May 28, 2019.

Application

The proposed Bremner and LEA Area Concept Plan and associated MDP amendment will provide the planning framework for Strathcona County's next Urban Centre and an adjacent Local Employment Area (LEA).

Evaluation

EMRB Administration obtained the assistance of Associated Engineering Alberta Ltd. (Associated Engineering) to evaluate the application with respect to legislative requirements. The Associated Engineering evaluation (attached) reviewed the proposed ACP and MDP amendment in relation to: Part 3 of EMRB Regulation 189/2017; Section 8 of Schedule A of REF Ministerial Order MSL 111/17; and, the Principles and Policies of the Growth Plan. The Associated Engineering evaluation recommends that Strathcona County's proposed Bremner and LEA ACP and MDP amendment be supported by the EMRB.

EMRB Administration Comments

The proposed ACP affects lands that are largely within the Metropolitan Area tier (Bremner), but also includes lands within the Rural Area tier (Local Employment Area) of the Metropolitan Region Structure to 2044 (Schedule 2 of the Growth Plan); therefore, the evaluation has been reviewed for consistency with the principles and policies of both tiers pursuant to these Policy Areas in the Growth Plan.

The ACP is located directly east of Sherwood Park and is dissected by Highway 16, with Bremner to the north and LEA to the south.



MDP Amendment

The MDP amendment proposes to reduce the overall size of Bremner and the ACP. Two areas of land (northwest and southeast corners) previously designated as Urban Service Area have been redesignated to Agriculture Policy Areas. Additionally, a small portion of land just north of Highway 16 is being redesignated to Local Employment Area to reflect current operations and land use.

Bremner and LEA Area Concept Plan

Strathcona County adopts Area Concept Plans (ACPs) to present a comprehensive planning policy framework and a generalized future land use concept. In this regard, the ACP is the equivalent to an Area Structure Plan in the Municipal Government Act and this statutory plan will guide the future development of Sub-Area Structure Plans that will provide greater specificity and implementation detail.

The ACP establishes the framework for Bremner to develop as a complete community. Within the policies are provisions for a mix of uses, housing typologies and densities, integrated within a multi-modal transportation network supporting the efficient movement of people and goods within the area. Residential neighbourhoods are planned to be built around a series of nodes enabling efficient, multi-modal access to services and amenities for residents of all ages and lifestyles. Additionally, the ACP ensures that all residential development will be developed in alignment with the Minimum Greenfield Residential Density Target of 40 du/nrha for Strathcona County (urban) as outlined in Schedule 6 of the Growth Plan. As Bremner is directly adjacent to Sherwood Park, this presents an opportunity for a contiguous extension of the existing built-up urban area, phased in a logical manner, to enable efficient infrastructure development and servicing.

The ACP also includes a local employment area (LEA) to be developed at a rural service level (roads, water, etc.) to maintain its commitment for existing agriculture services and operations. The proposed LEA will provide opportunities for light and medium industrial development, and encourages agri-tourism and promotes the continued importance of agriculture in the area. Overall, the planned employment for the LEA is approximately 2,000 jobs at full build-out, on 970 hectares of land. The scale of the area and the land use mix are similar to existing local employment areas in the Rural Tier within Sturgeon County and Leduc County, such as those located outside of Devon, Legal, and Redwater. Looking at planned Local Employment Areas, the subject development is similar in size to the more intensive West Town Centre and surrounding industrial business parks planned to the southeast of Edmonton International Airport as adopted in the City of Leduc – Leduc County Intermunicipal Development Plan.

The ACP includes policies both for Bremner and the LEA, in accordance with the associated agriculture impact assessments, to manage and mitigate development over the life of the plan. Land use strategies, such as the requirement for staged, contiguous development, are addressed; however, policies are also included that help manage invasive species, proper land use buffering, and topsoil conservation to address operational impacts to nearby agriculture.



It should be noted that the 'footprint' for the ACP has been reduced, placing some agriculture lands back into long-term land use designations supportive of agriculture operations. Further examination of the LEA shows a fragmented area with over 40 titled lots, some of which are developed. The LEA promotes value-added agriculture operations and support services appropriate to the Rural Area tier.

The ACP provides for transportation policies appropriate to the two distinct development types. Bremner policies promote complete streets supporting multi-modal transportation options through all seasons, including requiring regional active transportation facilities and supporting on-street transit transfer facilities. Design guidelines incorporated into the ACP for Bremner will ensure development is designed to support walkability and transit use. Higher-order transit is required through policies tailored to each development area and is addressed throughout the ACP; the policy framework is consistent with the regional bus routes, Transit Priority Corridor, and Park and Ride facilities planned for the area as shown within Schedule 10B: Regional Transit and Trails to 2044.

Pointe-Aux-Pins Creek and Oldman Creek are two of the environmental assets identified in the ACP and flow through the plan area. The plan places strong emphasis on conserving natural living systems and protecting regional watersheds. An objective directs conservation of Pointe-Aux-Pins and Oldman Creeks to ensure their long-term sustainability as contributors to the regional watershed network. Additional policies direct the conservation and incorporation of identified priority wetlands into a comprehensive open space and stormwater management network. Policies specific to the LEA require biophysical assessments in the sub-area structure planning stage to define and identify environmental reserve to ensure the conservation of environmentally significant areas. Further, required development setbacks from environmental areas will promote clean land and water by minimizing the impacts of development on the environment. Together, the environmental policies and objectives will enable a green network of natural areas integrated with parks and open spaces to mitigate the impacts of regional growth on natural living systems.

Conclusion

Policies in the Bremner and LEA ACP direct the development of a complete community offering a wide range of housing and employment anchored by a multi-modal transportation network connecting it to the Region, consistent with the six policy areas of the Growth Plan. Overall, the Bremner and LEA ACP and the proposed MDP amendment are consistent with the principles and policies of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan and Section 8.0 of the REF.

Recommendation

EMRB Administration recommends that REF 2019-014 be approved.



Attachments

Evaluation
REF Documents

- Associated Engineering Alberta Ltd.
1. Cover Letter
 2. Bylaw 3-2019 Bremner and LEA Area Concept Plan
 3. Statistics Bremner and LEA
 4. Bylaw 2-2019 MDP Amendment
 5. Consolidates MDP Bylaw 20-2017
 6. Council Report Bylaw 3-2019 ACP
 7. Council Report Bylaw 2-2019 MDP
 8. Strathcona County REF Report
 9. Bremner Agriculture Impact Assessment
 10. Local Area Employment Agriculture Impact Assessment
 11. Bremner Biophysical Assessment
 12. Local Employment Area Biophysical Assessment
 13. Bremner Area Project Design and Construction Standards
 14. Bremner Area Project Transportation Plan
 15. Bremner and LEA Utilities Master Plan
 16. Bremner Financial Viability Report