

Regional Evaluation Framework

HIGHLIGHTS:

- The Regional Evaluation Framework (REF) is the process to review and approve municipal statutory plans.
- The REF (Ministerial Order No. L:270/10) came into effect March 31, 2010 at the same time as the Capital Region Growth Plan.
- The REF will be used by the Capital Region Board (CRB) to evaluate the compliance of new municipal statutory plans and statutory plan amendments that meet the REF referral criteria, with the Capital Region Growth Plan's Land Use Principles and Policies, the provisions of the October and December 2009 Addenda, and long-term regional interests.
- The *Municipal Government Act* determines the types of municipal statutory plans that are subject to the REF. These are: Intermunicipal Development Plans, Municipal Development Plans, Area Structure Plans, and Area Redevelopment Plans.
- If approval of a statutory plan is not issued by the CRB, the submitting municipality must revise its proposed plan or plan amendment and resubmit. Individual landowners, developers, or other third parties cannot submit proposed plans or plan amendments directly to the CRB for approval.

OVERVIEW OF REF PROCESS

A municipality submits a Regional Evaluation Framework (REF) application for a new statutory plan or statutory plan amendment to the Capital Region Board (CRB) Administration between first and third reading of the related bylaw. If a municipality is uncertain about REF applications in general, or uncertain whether a particular plan or plan amendment triggers a REF application, the municipality should consult with CRB Administration for clarification.

Once the CRB Administration has received a complete REF application, it has 25 days to produce an evaluation report and recommendation to the CRB. This is only a recommendation to the CRB for a decision on the REF application, not the decision itself.

The CRB has delegated the authority to make decisions on REF applications to a Subcommittee of Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) of the CRB's member municipalities. All CAOs of the Subcommittee vote on the application. If the CAO Subcommittee decision to approve a REF application is not unanimous, or if an application is rejected by the CAO Subcommittee, the application must be brought before the CRB for approval. If the CRB Administration makes a recommendation to reject a REF application, the application bypasses the CAO Subcommittee stage and goes directly to the CRB for a decision.

It is expected that only a small number of REF applications will go to the Board for approval. For most REF applications, it is likely that the decision on approval will take place at the CAO Subcommittee.

Fact Sheet: Regional Evaluation Framework

REF EVALUATION CRITERIA

Ministerial Order (MO) L:270/10 establishes the evaluation criteria for REF applications and should be referred to for the official language of the REF. The evaluation criteria are summarized below:

- Compatibility of the new statutory plan or statutory plan amendment with the objectives of the Capital Region Growth Plan, as set out in Section 11 of the Capital Region Board Regulation.
- Whether approval and full implementation of the new statutory plan or statutory plan amendment would result in development that is consistent with the Land Use Principles and Policies of the Capital Region Growth Plan, including:
 - Provisions for buffer areas, Priority Growth Areas (PGAs), Cluster Country Residential Areas (CCRAs), density targets, and growth outside of PGAs;
 - Regional population and employment forecasts;
 - The Intermunicipal Transit Network Plan and the City of Edmonton's approved Transportation Master Plan;
 - Identified regional infrastructure (transportation, water, wastewater and power) and regional corridors; and
 - Boundaries and policies of the Alberta's Industrial Heartland Area Structure Plans and the Edmonton International Airport Area Structure Plan.

The Growth Plan and its Addenda are available through the Capital Region Board and its website www.capitalregionboard.ab.ca

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please contact the CRB for information about the REF. For questions about statutory plans in your municipality in relation to the REF, or questions about your statutory plan application, please contact your local municipality.

Capital Region Board

Web: www.capitalregionboard.ab.ca

Phone: (780) 638-6000

Email: info@capitalregionboard.ab.ca

DISCLAIMER: This Planning Toolkit is a guide to aid understanding of the Land Use Principles and Policies of Capital Region Growth Plan and this Module is a guide to aid understanding of the Regional Evaluation Framework (REF). The Planning Toolkit and this Module are not substitutes for reading and understanding the Growth Plan and the REF. For certainty, the reader is advised to refer to the Growth Plan, the REF, and related legislation available through the Capital Region Board.