



October 10, 2019

Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board  
#1100 Bell Tower  
10104 – 103 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 0H8

Attention: Taylor Varro, MPlan  
Project Manager, EMRB

Dear Mr. Varro,

**RE: Referral of the Town of Devon Municipal Development Plan (MDP) Amendments**

**REF 2019 – 021**

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Please find attached our third-party evaluation of the referral to the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board from the Town of Devon regarding amendments to the Municipal Development Plan (Bylaw 933/2019).

If you have any questions, please contact Alan Wallace at 306.291.7024.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Wallace', written over a light blue circular stamp.

Alan Wallace, RPP, MCIP

Planning Lead – Saskatchewan



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to Ministerial Order MSL 111/17, the Province of Alberta adopted the Regional Evaluation Framework (REF) for the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) to ensure consistency and alignment with the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan (EMRGP) and the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board Regulations. As such, certain statutory documents from member municipalities require review to ensure compliance.

Section 4.0 of the REF states that a member municipality must refer proposed statutory plans or statutory plan amendments to the EMRB under certain conditions, after the first reading by Council and prior to the third reading pursuant to Section 5.1 of the REF.

## 2.0 PURPOSE

Bylaw 933/2019 was presented to Council for first reading on September 23, 2019. After passing first reading, the amended MDP was submitted to the EMRB for a referral in accordance with the REF. The purpose of REF 2019 – 021 is to review the amended MDP for consistency with the EMRGP.



### 3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

<b>Municipality:</b>	Town of Devon
<b>First Reading Date:</b>	September 23, 2019
<b>Location:</b>	SW of the City of Edmonton (45 km), northern portion of Leduc County adjacent to the North Saskatchewan River.
<b>Purpose of the MDP:</b>	Connecting Devon, the Town's MDP, was created in response to the annexation of a significant area of land in the SE of the Town. The MDP was created to guide growth and development in a manner that aligns with the principles and policy directions of the Alberta Land Use Framework and the EMRGP.

#### Summary of the Referral

This evaluation reviewed the proposed amendments to the Town's MDP in relation to the Guiding Principles, Objectives, and Policies of the EMRGP. The MDP was first adopted in August 2017 and the EMRGP took effect on October 26, 2017. For this reason, we've analyzed the entire MDP document (as well as the amendments) for alignment to EMRGP Principles, Objectives and Policies.

The information presented in this report represents our professional opinion on how the referral aligns within the framework of the Growth Plan, and we have concluded that the EMRB should **support** the proposed plan adoption.



## 4.0 EVALUATION CRITERIA

Section 8.1 of the REF states that “When evaluating a statutory plan or statutory plan amendment, the Board must consider whether approval and full implementation of the statutory plan or statutory plan amendment would result in development that is consistent with the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan.”

### Applicable Policy Tiers

The Town of Devon is located within the Rural Area, defined as “land outside the metropolitan area within the wider Edmonton Metropolitan Region.” Based on the EMRGP Regional Structure (Schedule 2 in the Growth Plan) the Town of Devon is both a rural centre and a sub-regional centre.


Edmonton Metropolitan Regional Structure Policy Tier	Applicability
Metropolitan Core	N/A (Not Applicable)
Metropolitan Area	N/A
Rural Area	Applicable

Applicable Growth Directions for the Rural Area are to:


1. Encourage growth in existing towns, villages and in the built-up urban area.
2. Plan and build rural centres and sub-regional centres with a mix of land uses and higher densities.
3. Support employment growth in rural/sub-regional centres.

**The review of the MDP against the Growth Directions of the Rural Area concluded that the proposed amendments are consistent with the Growth Plan. The following tables highlight how the MDP meets the Growth Plan’s various principles and objectives. **Note: proposed amendments will be identified in red.****




PRINCIPLES + OBJECTIVES	CONSISTENCY	EVALUATION + COMMENTARY
 <p><b>GUIDING PRINCIPLE</b>  <b>Promote global economic competitiveness and regional prosperity.</b></p>		
<p>1.1: Promote global economic competitiveness and diversification of the regional economy</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>Section 6.1 of the existing Town’s MDP addresses the EMRGP guiding principle and objective through policies relating to the diversification and growth of the energy and commercial sectors, protecting lands for future employment and policies to foster local entrepreneurship.</p>
<p>1.2: Promote job growth and the competitiveness of the Region’s employment base</p>		
<p>1.3: Enhance competitiveness through the efficient movement of people, goods and services to, from and within the Region</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>Existing policies within Sections 6.1 and 6.3 of the Town’s MDP support regional transportation infrastructure and the preparation of a future transportation master plan.</p>
<p>1.4: Promote the livability and prosperity of the Region and plan for the needs of a changing population and workforce</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>Section 4.0 of the existing Town’s MDP documents historical population growth and future projections. Sections 6.2 and 6.7 acknowledge the increase and changing dynamic of the Town’s and Region’s population. Policies are included to promote liveability and maintain a high quality of life.</p>




PRINCIPLES + OBJECTIVES	CONSISTENCY	EVALUATION + COMMENTARY
 <p data-bbox="404 365 1153 432">GUIDING PRINCIPLE Protect natural living systems and environmental assets.</p>		
2.1: Conserve and restore natural living systems through an ecological network approach	<p data-bbox="727 842 760 884">√</p>	<p data-bbox="857 527 1414 842">Section 6.5 of the existing Town’s MDP addresses the EMRGP guiding principle of protecting the natural living systems and environmental assets. Goals and policies within Section 6.5 include the protection of natural areas, conserving regional and ecological wildlife corridors, protecting water and land quality, and using environmental and conservation reserves as a tool to achieve these goals.</p>
2.2: Protect regional watershed health, water quality, and quantity		
2.3: Plan development to promote clean air, land, and water and address climate change impacts		
2.4: Minimize and mitigate the impacts of regional growth on natural living systems		



PRINCIPLES + OBJECTIVES	CONSISTENCY	EVALUATION + COMMENTARY
 <p>GUIDING PRINCIPLE <b>Recognize and celebrate the diversity of communities and promote an excellent quality of life across the Region.</b></p>		
3.1: Plan and develop complete communities within each policy tier to accommodate people’s daily needs for living at all ages	√	Section 6.2 of the existing Town’s MDP addresses communities and housing, and includes policies promoting a diversity of housing forms, encouraging density and affordability, and setting minimum greenfield density requirements for future development.
3.2: Plan for and promote a range of housing options	√	<b>Policies within Section 6.2 of the Town’s MDP were amended to increase opportunities for row housing and low-rise apartments, and to encourage innovative ways to deliver affordable and inclusionary housing options.</b>
3.3: Plan for and promote market, affordable, and non-market housing to address core housing need	√	




PRINCIPLES + OBJECTIVES	CONSISTENCY	EVALUATION + COMMENTARY
 <p data-bbox="402 365 643 390">GUIDING PRINCIPLE</p> <p data-bbox="402 401 1271 432">Achieve compact growth that optimizes infrastructure investment.</p>		
<p>4.1: Establish a compact and contiguous development pattern to accommodate employment and population growth</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>Existing policies within Section 6.2 of the Town’s MDP are in place regarding the intensification and redevelopment of the Downtown area, encouraging compatible land uses and providing safe pedestrian access between residential and commercial areas.</p>
<p>4.2: Enable growth within built-up urban areas to optimize existing infrastructure and minimize the expansion of the development footprint</p>	<p>✓</p>	
<p>4.3: Plan and develop greenfield areas in an orderly and phased manner to contribute to complete communities</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>Policies in Section 6.2 of the Town’s require Area Structure Plans (ASP) to be prepared for all development in Future Neighbourhoods and Industrial areas prior to consideration of zoning and subdivision.</p> <p>ASP requirements were amended to include Established and Planned Neighbourhoods. Phasing of development is a required component of ASP approval.</p> <p>Future neighbourhoods and minimum greenfield density requirements were amended into the updated MDP.</p>
<p>4.4: Plan for and accommodate rural growth in appropriate locations with sustainable levels of local servicing</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>The Town of Devon is a Rural and Sub-Regional Centre as per the EMRGP. As such, rural growth is primarily located outside of the MDP boundary. The MDP does acknowledge that the Town of Devon is a centre that serves the rural area.</p>






PRINCIPLES + OBJECTIVES	CONSISTENCY	EVALUATION + COMMENTARY
4.5: Plan and develop mixed-use and higher density centres as areas to concentrate growth of both people and jobs	√	Existing policies in Section 6.2 of the Town’s MDP support providing a mix of land uses in a compact form, including a mix of residential and employment uses to support complete communities.
4.6: Prioritize investment and funding of regional infrastructure to support planned growth	√	Section 6.4 of the MDP outline how the Town of Devon is committed to explore new and innovative ways to provide infrastructure, and to capitalize on utility corridors where possible.
4.7: Ensure compatible land use patterns to minimize risks to public safety and health	√	Existing policies in Section 6.2 of the Town’s MDP place emphasis on ensuring compatible land use patterns to minimize and manage risks to public safety and health.



PRINCIPLES + OBJECTIVES	CONSISTENCY	EVALUATION + COMMENTARY
 <p>GUIDING PRINCIPLE Ensure effective regional mobility.</p>		
<p>5.1: Develop a regional transportation system to support the growth of the Region and enhance its regional and global connectivity</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>Existing policy contained in Sections 6.3 and 6.9 of the Town’s MDP addresses the EMRGP transportation systems objectives with a wide variety of goals and policies related to exploring future transit, increasing accessibility to active transportation, development of a transportation utility corridor, efficient movement of people and goods, and exploring regional transportation partnerships.</p>
<p>5.2: Encourage a mode shift to transit, high occupancy vehicles and active transportation modes as viable alternatives to private automobile travel, appropriate to the scale of the community</p>	<p>√</p>	<p><b>Note: The size of the community limits the full range of viable options for transportation/transit; however, Devon has made a policy commitment to participate in all endeavours to utilize more efficient and sustainable modes of transportation</b></p>
<p>5.3: Coordinate and integrate land use and transportation facilities and services to support the efficient and safe movement of people, goods and services in both urban and rural areas</p>	<p>√</p>	
<p>5.4: Support the Edmonton International Airport as northern Alberta’s primary air gateway to the world</p>	<p>N/A</p>	
<p>5.5: Ensure effective coordination and alignment of regional transportation policies and initiatives between all jurisdictions</p>	<p>√</p>	



PRINCIPLES + OBJECTIVES	CONSISTENCY	EVALUATION + COMMENTARY
 <p>GUIDING PRINCIPLE Ensure the wise management of prime agricultural resources.</p>		
<p>6.1: Identify and conserve an adequate supply of prime agricultural lands to provide a secure local source of food security for future generations</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>Section 6.7 (Urban Agriculture) of the Town’s MDP was amended to include the following policies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote diversification and value-added agriculture production through urban agriculture and edible landscapes in public open spaces and gathering places to increase the community’s capacity to grow food locally.</li> <li>2. Minimize the fragmentation and conversion of agricultural lands for non-agricultural uses until there is demand for development.</li> <li>3. Recognize the value of agriculture within the Town of Devon, as well as its adjacent lands.</li> </ol> <p>The amended policies provide further support to the EMRGP agricultural policies.</p>
<p>6.2: Minimize the fragmentation and conversion of prime agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses</p>	<p>√</p>	
<p>6.3: Promote diversification and value-added agriculture production and plan infrastructure to support the agricultural sector and regional food system</p>	<p>√</p>	



## 5.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The following summary provides an overview of how the proposed amendments work towards each Guiding Principle within the EMRGP:

Economic Competitiveness & Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides opportunities for additional employment.</li> <li>Policy direction to diversify and grow the energy and commercial sectors.</li> <li>Support regional transportation through future master transportation plan.</li> <li>Acknowledges location within the EMRGP boundary and that the Town represents a rural &amp; sub-regional centre.</li> </ul>
Natural Living Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Goals and policies within Section 6.5 of the Town’s MDP include the protection of natural areas, conserving regional and ecological wildlife corridors, protecting water and land quality, and using environmental and conservation reserves as a tool to achieve these goals.</li> </ul>
Communities & Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Town’s MDP contains policies to develop a range of housing options.</li> <li>Increased policy direction to encourage row houses and low-rise apartments.</li> <li>Policy direction to explore innovative ways to deliver affordable and inclusive housing.</li> </ul>
Integration of Land Use & Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Redevelopment of the Downtown is encouraged in the amended MDP.</li> <li>Focus on the pedestrian for redevelopment and establishing greenfield density requirements to minimize future demand on infrastructure.</li> </ul>
Transportation Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MDP promotes density proximate to transit and transportation systems.</li> <li>Policy for future transportation utility corridor.</li> <li>Amended MDP puts priority on the efficient movements of people and goods.</li> </ul>
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amended MDP includes policies to promote agriculture diversification and value-added agriculture production.</li> <li>Policy to minimize the fragmentation of agricultural lands.</li> <li>MDP recognizes the value of agriculture to the Town of Devon.</li> </ul>

## 6.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board **support** The Town of Devon’s proposed Municipal Development Plan amendments (Bylaw 933/2019).