



July 3, 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 File LDA18-0414 – Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan Amendment;  
REF 2019 – 016**

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Please find attached our final statutory plan evaluation report for the above referral from the City of Edmonton.

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 (Growth Plan) and the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board Regulation. As such, certain statutory documents from member municipalities require review to ensure compliancy.

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

The primary purpose of REF 2019 – 016 is to review the proposed amendment of the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan (Bylaw 18851) to accommodate a high-density mixed-use development, to ensure the proposed development conforms to the regional growth framework laid out in the Edmonton Metropolitan Regional Growth Plan. The subject site is located in the Edmonton Metropolitan Core, on 105 Street NW between 80 Ave and 81 Ave NW.

Specifically, the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) is to be amended to exclude the subject site from three policies and two objectives that currently direct residential and commercial development within this area as being low in density, scale and intensity. The amendment effectively facilitates an increase in density from 0 (commercial site in a vacant state) to 431 du/nrha. One map is also being amended which provides direction on publicly-owned parking.

The City of Edmonton Zoning Bylaw is to be amended to redistrict the subject lands from CB2 (General Business Zone) to DC2 (Site Specific Development Control). Redistricting of the subject lands is not the subject of this review, but it informs review of the amendment to the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan.



### 3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

**Municipality:** The City of Edmonton

**First & Second Reading Date:** June 6, 2019

**Location:** 8019 – 105 Street NW (Lots 11-28, Block 49, Plan 8163ET)

**Land Use Designations Impacts:** The Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan requires an amendment to exclude this site from existing policies. However, it was noted that the more recent plan Whyte Land Use Study has taken precedent and was the main planning document used by the City of Edmonton administration in their evaluation to City Council.

Upon review, the City of Edmonton administration concluded that the proposed mix of commercial and residential uses, with commercial space locating at ground level and residential units above grade, complements adjacent land uses. In our opinion, the proposed development does not create any land use incompatibility.

#### Summary of the Referral

This evaluation reviewed the proposed amendments to the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan in relation to the Guiding Principles of the Growth Plan, the Objectives and Policies of the Growth Plan, and the evaluation criteria in the Regional Evaluation Framework (REF).

The information presented in this report represents our professional opinion on how the referral aligns within the framework of the EMRGP, and we have concluded that the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board should **support** the proposed amendments.



## 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 subject site is located within the Metropolitan Core, defined as “the contiguous developed area within the City of Edmonton with the highest density development served by higher order transit and the highest concentration of regionally significant amenities and services, including downtown Edmonton.”

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


Applicable Growth Directions for the Metropolitan Core are to:

1. Encourage intensification in built-up urban areas including brownfield sites to optimize existing and planned infrastructure; and
2. Plan for and build transit-oriented development with the highest level of density in the Region in areas with existing and planned LRT service.




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>N/A</p>	
<p>1.2: Promote job growth and the competitiveness of the Region's employment base</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>The proposed amendments to the Strathcona ARP would allow for an increased diversity in employment opportunities located in close proximity to higher density residential uses and the transportation corridor along Whyte Ave.</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>The proposed amendments will facilitate the location of high-density residential and commercial uses in close proximity to a planned LRT corridor. This will promote the efficient movement of people within the Region as well as provide the commercial opportunities with access to a larger target market.</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>The amendments will allow for a greater diversity of housing options, including family units, and will also increase the mix of jobs, services and amenities offered within a high-traffic location.</p>




PRINCIPLES + OBJECTIVES	CONSISTENCY	EVALUATION + COMMENTARY
 <p><b>GUIDING PRINCIPLE</b> Protect natural living systems and environmental assets.</p>		
2.1: Conserve and restore natural living systems through an ecological network approach	N/A	
2.2: Protect regional watershed health, water quality and quantity	N/A	
2.3: Plan development to promote clean air, land and water and address climate change impacts	N/A	
2.4: Minimize and mitigate the impacts of regional growth on natural living systems	√	<p>By developing on an infill site (existing surface parking lot) the proposed amendments would increase the density of an existing built-up area while reducing the need for development of greenfield lands that could have impacts such as the loss of natural areas.</p> <p>The application package submitted to the City of Edmonton includes findings from Phase 1 and 2 environmental site assessments which indicated some concentrations of contaminants. A remediation plan is required at the Development Permit stage to ensure the land is brought to within acceptable criteria for the mixed uses planned for the site.</p>



PRINCIPLES + OBJECTIVES	CONSISTENCY	EVALUATION + COMMENTARY
 <p><b>GUIDING PRINCIPLE</b>  <b>Recognize and celebrate the diversity of communities and promote an excellent quality of life across the Region.</b></p>		
<p>3.1: Plan and develop complete communities within each policy tier to accommodate people’s daily needs for living at all ages</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>The proposed development of three residential towers and four podiums of commercial uses at-grade promotes the development of complete communities within the area around the subject site. Residents and community members will be able to conveniently access the new commercial development for their daily needs.</p>
<p>3.2: Plan for and promote a range of housing options</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>The proposed amendments would permit the development of three new residential towers. The proposed development contains a range of housing options, including a minimum of 20 family-oriented dwellings (three or more bedrooms, dedicated and enhanced storage and bicycle parking spaces).</p>
<p>3.3: Plan for and promote market, affordable, and non-market housing to address core housing need</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>This site is being sold by the City of Edmonton to the developer. In accordance with City Policy C582 Developer Sponsored Affordable Housing, the City is provided the option to purchase 5% of the units at 85% of their market value for affordable housing or receive the equivalent as cash-in-lieu. If units are not available for sale (i.e. rental units), funds will be transferred to the City’s Housing and Homelessness Section from the funds received through the sale of the land.</p>




PRINCIPLES + OBJECTIVES	CONSISTENCY	EVALUATION + COMMENTARY
 <p data-bbox="402 380 1321 449"><b>GUIDING PRINCIPLE</b> Achieve compact growth that optimizes infrastructure investment.</p>		
4.1: Establish a compact and contiguous development pattern to accommodate employment and population growth	√	Amending the Strathcona ARP allows for higher-intensity infill development within the Metropolitan Core that accommodates both employment and population growth that is contiguous with existing development surrounding the site.
4.2: Enable growth within built-up urban areas to optimize existing infrastructure and minimize the expansion of the development footprint	√	The proposed amendments will accommodate growth within the Metropolitan Core area of Edmonton. The development will make use of existing infrastructure and will not expand the development footprint of the Region.
4.3: Plan and develop greenfield areas in an orderly and phased manner to contribute to complete communities	N/A	
4.4: Plan for and accommodate rural growth in appropriate locations with sustainable levels of local servicing	N/A	
4.5: Plan and develop mixed use and higher density centres as areas to concentrate growth of both people and jobs	√	The Strathcona ARP is located in the Metropolitan Core of the City of Edmonton, close to the Downtown CBD and University of Alberta. Amending the ARP to accommodate higher density mixed-use development will concentrate population and employment growth in a key inner-city neighbourhood, next to a transportation corridor (Whyte Ave) planned for a future LRT line, the university, and close to Downtown.
4.6: Prioritize investment and funding of regional infrastructure to support planned growth	N/A	






PRINCIPLES + OBJECTIVES	CONSISTENCY	EVALUATION + COMMENTARY
4.7: Ensure compatible land use patterns to minimize risks to public safety and health	√	A land use compatibility analysis was performed by the City. Adjacent uses range from a vacant parking lot to low rise apartment/commercial buildings. The proposed development will be compatible in terms of use and the planWhyte land use plan. In particular, removing vacant land and adding residential and mixed uses is shown to benefit public health and safety.



PRINCIPLES + OBJECTIVES	CONSISTENCY	EVALUATION + COMMENTARY
 <p data-bbox="402 380 878 449">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>N/A</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>Supporting the proposed amendments will allow for a high-density development in close proximity to a planned LRT line and station, a transit avenue, and is near bike lanes. Residents will be encouraged to utilize the more convenient, alternative modes of transportation readily available to the amendment area.</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>Supporting the proposed amendments will create opportunities for more user access of alternative modes of transportation to and from the site (i.e. transit, future LRT, active transportation).</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>N/A</p>	



PRINCIPLES + OBJECTIVES	CONSISTENCY	EVALUATION + COMMENTARY
 <p data-bbox="402 378 1263 449">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>N/A</p>	
<p>6.2: Minimize the fragmentation and conversion of prime agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>The proposed amendments encourage higher intensity commercial and residential development within an existing built-up area in Edmonton, reducing the need to fragment and develop agricultural land in greenfield locations.</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>N/A</p>	



## 5.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

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

Economic Competitiveness & Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides opportunities for additional employment</li> <li>Supports increased variety of commercial uses and allows for greater diversity in commercial built form</li> <li>Encourages an increase in employment density in an area that has access to multiple modes of transportation, vehicular, public transit, a planned LRT route and existing bike lanes</li> </ul>
Natural Living Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Makes use of existing infrastructure by encouraging growth and development on an infill site</li> <li>ESA Phase 1 &amp; 2 assessments have been performed. The findings indicate some contamination which is required to be included in a Risk Remediation Plan prior to a development permit being issued</li> <li>Additional infill density reduces the need to develop additional greenfield areas, further impacting natural living systems</li> </ul>
Communities & Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides housing &amp; increases the diversity of housing types (i.e. family units)</li> <li>Adds higher density within a block of main corridor and removes a vacant site, strengthening the community fabric</li> <li>Creates greater variety of commercial uses and built forms (creating more mixed-use areas that enhance the livability and provides for the daily needs of residents in the area)</li> </ul>
Integration of Land Use & Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enables employment and residential growth in a built-up urban environment utilizing existing infrastructure</li> </ul>
Transportation Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increases residential and commercial density and available destinations in close proximity to planned LRT lines and stations, a transit avenue, and bike lanes which encourages the increased use of alternative transportation options</li> </ul>
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed development adds population within an infill area reducing pressure for greenfield development, fragmentation and loss of agricultural land</li> </ul>

## 6.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board **support** The City of Edmonton’s proposed Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan amendment (Bylaw No. 18851).