



December 3, 2019

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

Attention: Taylor Varro, RPP, MCIP  
Project Manager, EMRB

Dear Mr. Varro,

**RE: Referral of the City of Spruce Grove East Pioneer ASP Amendment & MDP Amendment;  
REF 2019 – 024**

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

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', is 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 Regulation. 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's C-1065-19 and C-1066-19 were presented to Council for first reading on March 25, 2019. After passing first reading and second reading on November 12, 2019 the East Pioneer ASP and Spruce Grove MDP amendments were submitted to the EMRB for a referral in accordance with the REF. The purpose of REF 2019 – 024 is to review the East Pioneer ASP and Spruce Grove MDP amendments for consistency with the EMRGP.



### 3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

<b>Municipality:</b>	City of Spruce Grove
<b>First Reading Date:</b>	March 25, 2019
<b>Location:</b>	East sector of Spruce Grove, adjacent to the north side of Parkland Highway (reference ASP Figure 1).
<b>Purpose of the East Pioneer ASP:</b>	The purpose of the ASP is to establish a development and servicing framework for a residential neighbourhood approximately 277 ha in size.

The ASP was first approved by the City of Spruce Grove on May 13, 2013 and has since been amended three times:

1. Re-designation of a 1.58 ha site from Low to Medium to Medium to High Density Residential to accommodate a senior's housing site in the NW plan area (Bylaw C-950-16).
2. Reconfigure the central Stormwater Management Facility, re-align the collector road, add linear park space (Bylaw C-952-16).
3. Re-designation of 1.0 ha site from Medium to High Density Residential to Commercial within the NW corner of the Fenwyck neighbourhood (Bylaw C-1008-17).

The purpose Bylaw C-1066-19 is to amend the ASP for a fourth time to update the land use concept and land use statistic to reflect changes within the Easton Neighbourhood.

The purpose of Bylaw C-1065-19 is to amend the MDP to reflect the amendments to the East Pioneer ASP.



## Summary of the Referral

This evaluation reviewed the proposed amendments to the East Pioneer ASP and Spruce Grove MDP in relation to the Guiding Principles of the EMRGP, the Objectives and Policies of the EMRGP, and the evaluation criteria in the REF.

The City of Spruce Grove gave second reading to Bylaw C-1066-19 on November 12, 2019 to amend the East Pioneer ASP to update the land use concept and land use statistics to reflect the following proposed amendments:

- Add Easton Natural Area site west of Pioneer Road,
- Remove Section 4.4.8 Urban Village and all other reference to an “urban village” land use from the ASP,
- Add residential, commercial and municipal reserve park spaces to the Easton Neighbourhood,
- Remove the Urban Village Land Use and the Urban Village Influence from Figure 5, and replace with defined locations for residential, commercial and park/open space land uses,
- Relocate the stormwater management facility (SWMF) to the south, adjacent to the future extension of McLeod Avenue,
- Remove a portion of the north/south collector road and replace with a linear park,
- Remove 2.0 ha Urban Village Park from the land use statistics and add park spaces to the land use concept,
- Add potential commercial access location from Highway 16A to Figure 7,
- Update Table 2 – Proposed Land Use Statistics,
- Change the name of the neighbourhood in the S.E. ¼ Section 2-53-27-W4 to Easton neighbourhood for future reference,
- Remove the symbol for Transit Centre from Figure 7

The City of Spruce Grove also gave second reading to Bylaw C-1065-19 on November 12, 2019 to amend the City’s MDP to reflect the ASP changes, to remove the Urban Village land use from both the text and the associated mapping.

Section 5.1.1 of the EMRGP grandfathers existing ASPs that have been adopted in accordance with the MGA prior to the EMRGP coming into effect. Substantial amendments to grandfathered ASPs are subject to REF evaluation.



One criterion for ASP amendments in the EMRGP is no net reduction in greenfield residential density. The ASP amendments would reduce the greenfield density for the entire plan area to 33 du/nrha (from 34 du/nrha), while the greenfield density target is 35 du/nrha. The amendments would increase the density in the 53-ha amendment area (within the Easton neighbourhood) to greater than 48 du/nrha, which is well above the EMRGP target density.

It is also important to note that the ASP was approved under the Capital Region Growth Plan which specified a greenfield residential density of 25 du/nrha. The proposed amendments are well above the density targets that were in place at the time of plan adoption.

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 ASP and MDP 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 Area, defined as “the contiguous urban settlement pattern where major and local employment areas are located, and that host cultural and health facilities and major commercial centres. The Metropolitan Area has urban levels of service and regional commuter transit service with varying levels of local service and park and ride facilities.”

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




Applicable Growth Directions for the Metropolitan Area are to:


1. Encourage intensification of built-up urban areas including brownfield sites to optimize existing and planned infrastructure;
2. Plan and build transit-oriented development (TOD) with higher densities and foster active transportation opportunities; and
3. Support employment growth in major employment areas, local employment areas, and within urban centres and TOD centres and encourage the growth of institutional, health and education sectors.

**The review of the East Pioneer ASP amendments and Spruce Grove MDP amendments against the Growth Directions of the EMRGP concluded that the proposed amendments are consistent with the Growth Directions for the EMRGP Metropolitan Area.**




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>The proposed ASP amendments change the Urban Village area by separating land uses, locating commercial sites adjacent to Highway 16A, and locating higher density residential uses near the proposed commercial centre. The commercial centre will serve the future residential population within the ASP area, as well as serve highway-oriented users along the transportation corridor.</p>
<p>1.2: Promote job growth and the competitiveness of the Region's employment base</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>The proposed ASP amendments (creating dedicated commercial lands) would result in an estimated 70 additional jobs over the Urban Village concept based on the ASP amendment report prepared by SEC in October 2019.</p> <p>The residential land uses within the ASP will support the City of Spruce Grove as a Major Employment Area by locating higher density residential uses close to commercial centres and transportation corridors.</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 Easton Neighbourhood will see a residential density over 48 du/nrha with the proposed amendments and is situated along a key transportation corridor. Both residents and businesses will benefit from the ease of access to Highway 16A and Pioneer Road.</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 ASP amendments seek to offer a variety of housing forms, from single-family to high density apartments for the Easton neighbourhood.</p> <p>The proposed amendments seek to create a complete community by locating residents close to parks, open spaces, and commercial development providing residents with choices within walking distance of their homes.</p>




PRINCIPLES + OBJECTIVES	CONSISTENCY	EVALUATION + COMMENTARY
 <p data-bbox="404 365 646 392">GUIDING PRINCIPLE</p> <p data-bbox="404 401 1138 434">Protect natural living systems and environmental assets.</p>		
<p>2.1: Conserve and restore natural living systems through an ecological network approach</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>A small tree stand has been identified on the NE corner of the site and has been designated municipal reserve (MR).</p> <p>A biophysical assessment was conducted by Stantec as part of the ASP preparation, and was updated in 2017 to reflect the addition of the Planned Natural Area.</p> <p>A Natural Area Restoration and Management Plan is required to be prepared to ensure appropriate management of the area when any redistricting application for the identified natural area or bordering residential lands is made (ASP Section 2.1.5).</p>
<p>2.2: Protect regional watershed health, water quality, and quantity</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>A biophysical assessment and environmental screening were completed and no wetlands were identified within the proposed ASP amendment area (Easton Neighbourhood).</p>
<p>2.3: Plan development to promote clean air, land, and water and address climate change impacts</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>The ASP includes parks and open spaces and mix of land uses that provides a range of choices to residents that are within walking distance of their homes. This indirectly reduces the need for the use of combustion vehicles vs traditional development and therefore a reduction in emissions.</p>
<p>2.4: Minimize and mitigate the impacts of regional growth on natural living systems</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>The ASP provides a space for regrowth of a disturbed tree stand. The planned natural area will provide a natural habitat and contribute to the greenspace network, including opportunities for walking trail connections.</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>Although the proposed ASP amendments remove the Urban Village concept, the new land use concept includes a mix of uses that create a complete community where residents are located near commercial uses and recreational spaces. The Easton Neighbourhood, upon full build out, will be a community that provides for a range of ages and lifestyles through a variety of housing types and easy access to commercial areas and transportation corridors.</p>
<p>3.2: Plan for and promote a range of housing options</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>The ASP allows for a range of housing types including low to medium density (single detached, semi-detached and townhouse) and medium to high density residential (townhouses and low-rise apartment buildings).</p>
<p>3.3: Plan for and promote market, affordable, and non-market housing to address core housing need</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>The East Pioneer ASP proposes residential land uses to accommodate a wide spectrum of housing types that cater to various income levels and family types.</p>




PRINCIPLES + OBJECTIVES	CONSISTENCY	EVALUATION + COMMENTARY
 <p data-bbox="402 365 643 390">GUIDING PRINCIPLE</p> <p data-bbox="402 401 1260 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>The proposed ASP amendments provide a contiguous development pattern by mirroring the land use patterns of the existing Lakewood neighbourhood. Commercial uses are extended along Highway 16A with residential developments locating north of the commercial centre.</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>The ASP is within the City of Spruce Grove boundary. The proposed ASP amendments increase density in the Easton neighbourhood which optimizes through connecting into existing infrastructure.</p>
<p>4.3: Plan and develop greenfield areas in an orderly and phased manner to contribute to complete communities</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>The East Pioneer ASP is a phased plan that seeks to develop residential and commercial linkages in the Easton neighbourhood to the existing Lakewood neighbourhood and along Highway 16A.</p> <p>Figure 11 in the ASP outlines the staging concept which identifies the sequence in which the ASP area will be developed.</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 ASP is not within the Rural Policy Area.</p>
<p>4.5: Plan and develop mixed-use and higher density centres as areas to concentrate growth of both people and jobs</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>The ASP amendment includes low, medium, and high-density residential areas, a large commercial centre, and parks and open spaces. In addition, the proposed amendments will create more jobs than the Urban Village concept (as indicated in the ASP amendments report prepared by SEC).</p> <p>The ASP amendment area is also consistent with the EMRGP Schedule 6: Greenfield Density, Centres and Intensification Targets.</p>



PRINCIPLES + OBJECTIVES	CONSISTENCY	EVALUATION + COMMENTARY
4.6: Prioritize investment and funding of regional infrastructure to support planned growth	√	The proposed ASP amendments seek to locate the large commercial centre adjacent to Highway 16A. The commercial area will serve consumers and provide employment opportunities for the region.
4.7: Ensure compatible land use patterns to minimize risks to public safety and health	√	The proposed land uses are consistent with adjacent development in the Lakewood neighbourhood, both the Lakewood and future Easton neighbourhood's commercial development is located adjacent to Highway 16A and residential land uses are situated North of the commercial centre.




PRINCIPLES + OBJECTIVES	CONSISTENCY	EVALUATION + COMMENTARY
 <p data-bbox="402 365 841 432">GUIDING PRINCIPLE Ensure effective regional mobility.</p>		
<p data-bbox="201 531 574 747">5.1: Develop a regional transportation system to support the growth of the Region and enhance its regional and global connectivity</p>	<p data-bbox="727 680 760 722">√</p>	<p data-bbox="859 531 1395 684">According to the Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) prepared by Bunt Engineering the ASP amendments have been designed to meet the internal and external traffic flow requirements for the East Pioneer ASP area</p> <p data-bbox="859 722 1403 842">The ASP has been developed to accommodate vehicular, pedestrian, future public transit and active transportation movement that connects the Easton neighbourhood to the region.</p>
<p data-bbox="201 905 623 1157">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 data-bbox="727 1100 760 1142">√</p>	<p data-bbox="859 905 1414 1150">The extent of future transit service has not been finalized with the City of Spruce Grove; however, the proposed ASP amendments seek to increase density in the Easton neighbourhood, above the EMRB minimum greenfield density that will locate more residents near transportation corridors thereby making transit more viable for the amendment area.</p> <p data-bbox="859 1188 1398 1308">Pedestrian connections within the ASP amendment area will promote active transportation by providing convenient access to amenities.</p>
<p data-bbox="201 1371 631 1623">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 data-bbox="727 1499 760 1541">√</p>	<p data-bbox="859 1371 1406 1556">The ASP includes an enhanced pedestrian connection from the commercial centre to future residential development. The collector and local roadways will provide pedestrian linkages through the development of sidewalks and multi-use trails.</p> <p data-bbox="859 1593 1398 1682">Situating the commercial centre adjacent to Highway 16A allows for efficient movement of goods and services within the region.</p>
<p data-bbox="201 1711 615 1850">5.4: Support the Edmonton International Airport as northern Alberta’s primary air gateway to the world</p>	<p data-bbox="721 1782 769 1814">N/A</p>	<p data-bbox="859 1711 1390 1770">The East Pioneer ASP is outside of the Airport Vicinity Protection Area Regulation.</p>



PRINCIPLES + OBJECTIVES	CONSISTENCY	EVALUATION + COMMENTARY
5.5: Ensure effective coordination and alignment of regional transportation policies and initiatives between all jurisdictions	√	Based on analysis of the City of Spruce Grove Transportation Master Plan and the TIA that was prepared for the East Pioneer ASP, the proposed amendments align with transportation network and transportation policies within Spruce Grove.



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>According to Schedule 11 in the EMRGP the ASP area is classified as prime agricultural lands; however, because the ASP is grandfathered and the ASP boundaries are not expanding an Agricultural Impact Assessment is not required and the proposed ASP amendments do not contravene EMRGP policy.</p> <p>The ASP area has also been identified for future residential and commercial development in the City of Spruce Grove’s MDP.</p>
<p>6.2: Minimize the fragmentation and conversion of prime agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>The proposed ASP amendments are located on lands designated for residential and commercial uses in the City’s MDP.</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>	<p>The proposed ASP amendments create more commercial opportunities for the agricultural sector and regional food system.</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>• The ASP amendments provides opportunities for additional employment by increasing the commercial capacity in the Easton neighbourhood (estimated 70 additional jobs from the Urban Village concept)</li> <li>• Transportation network planned to facilitate the movement of people, goods, and services</li> <li>• Encourages an increase in employment density in an area that has access to multiple modes of transportation</li> <li>• Supports Major Employment Area</li> <li>• Mix of land uses promotes livability and supports the needs of future residents</li> </ul>
Natural Living Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree stand protected as Municipal Reserve</li> <li>• Biophysical assessment conducted for initial ASP and a Natural Area Restoration and Management Plan is required during the redistricting process to ensure appropriate management of the Planned Natural Area</li> <li>• Planned Natural Area provides a natural habitat that contributes to the greenspace network</li> </ul>
Communities & Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASP amendments will provide a range of housing types, from single-detached homes to mid-rise apartments</li> <li>• Higher density residential development within a couple of blocks of the Main Street and transportation corridors/hubs</li> <li>• Contiguous development that builds off of commercial and residential land use pattern of the adjacent Lakewood neighbourhood</li> <li>• ASP amendments to provide a range of housing types or various family types and income levels</li> </ul>
Integration of Land Use & Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed Easton neighbourhood is adjacent to existing residential and commercial development</li> <li>• ASP development is phased and includes compatible land uses with connections between the commercial and residential area</li> <li>• Increasing residential density in the Easton neighbourhood by concentrating higher density residential uses near existing and planned commercial development will make more efficient use of infrastructure</li> <li>• The ASP was developed using Spruce Grove engineering standards</li> </ul>
Transportation Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher density residential land uses in the proposed Easton neighbourhood make transit more viable by locating more people in close proximity to collector and arterial transportation systems</li> <li>• Plans for future transit service</li> <li>• Internal and external traffic requirements have been considered when developing the transportation system for the updated ASP (Bunt TIA)</li> <li>• ASP amendments include enhanced pedestrian connections between commercial centre and residential development</li> <li>• Complies with Transportation Master Plan for Spruce Grove</li> </ul>
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed development adds population within an area designated for future residential and commercial purposes which reduces additional 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 Spruce Grove's proposed amendments to the East Pioneer ASP (Bylaw C-1066-19) and MDP (Bylaw C-1065-19).