



REF 2016-004
Strathcona County
Proposed Municipal Development Plan Amendment

Recommendation

CRB Administration recommends that REF application 2016-004 be approved.

Background

On May 27, 2016 the CRB received an application from Strathcona County (the County) for approval of a proposed Municipal Development Plan (MDP) amendment. The County submitted the statutory plan pursuant to the following submission criteria in the Regional Evaluation Framework (REF):

- 3.1 *A Municipality must refer to the Board any proposed new Intermunicipal Development Plan, Municipal Development Plan and any proposed amendment to an Intermunicipal Development Plan or Municipal Development Plan.*

CRB Administration deemed the application complete on May 31, 2016.

The Application

The purpose of the amendment to the Municipal Development Plan text and maps is to establish the Urban Reserve Policy Area (Bremner) as the County's next area for urban growth. The amendment expands the current Sherwood Park Urban Service Area boundary to the north and northeast to include both the Urban Reserve Policy Area (Bremner) and the West of 21 Area Concept Plan area.

Evaluation

CRB Administration obtained the assistance of Lovatt Planning Consultants Inc. to evaluate the application with respect to the REF requirements. The Lovatt evaluation (attached) reviewed the proposed amendment in relation to the objectives of the Capital Region Growth Plan (the Growth Plan) in section 11 of the Regulation, the Principles and Policies of the Growth Plan, and the remaining evaluation criteria in section 5.4 of the Regional Evaluation Framework. The Lovatt evaluation recommends that the proposed MDP amendment be approved.



CRB Administration Comments

The current Strathcona County Municipal Development Plan identifies the areas of the proposed amendment as the Transition Urban Reserve Policy Area and Urban Reserve Area.

The Transition Urban Reserve Policy Area is located immediately north of the Sherwood Park Urban Service Area on the west side of Highway 21. Policies in the MDP indicated that the area will be planned to an urban scale of development for industrial uses through the creation of an Area Concept Plan in line with the intent of the Capital Region Growth Plan. The West of Highway 21 Area Concept Plan, which encompasses the entire Transition Urban Reserve Policy Area, was approved in 2015.

The Urban Reserve Area is located directly east across Highway 21 from the Sherwood Park Urban Service Area and north of Highway 16 and covers approx. 4,000 ha. Policies in the MDP directed the County to undertake a Growth Management Strategy for the Urban Reserve Area in conformance with the intent of the Capital Region Growth Plan. The County endorsed the Growth Management Strategy for the Urban Reserve Area earlier this year.

The effect of the amendments to the MDP elevate the Transition Urban Reserve Policy Area and Urban Reserve Area from tentative future areas for urban growth to areas that are destined for urban development through the expansion of the Urban Service Area boundary which currently only defines the boundary of Sherwood Park. The lands, the West of Highway 21 Area Concept Plan area and the new Urban Reserve Policy Area (Bremner), are contiguous to the existing Urban Service Area and constitute a logical extension of the existing urban development pattern of Sherwood Park. The proposed amended Urban Service Area boundary aligns with Priority Growth Area “F” of the Growth Plan.

The Urban Service Area boundary designation in the MDP simply points to the direction that urban development will occur in the County. Future planning and development within the area will continue to be subject to review and compliance with the Capital Region Growth Plan principles and policies. In the meantime, agriculture will continue within the Urban Reserve Policy Area (Bremner) and the Agriculture Large Holdings Policy Area policies of the MDP will apply until an Area Concept Plan is adopted.

In this regard, approval and full implementation of the proposed MDP amendment is consistent with Section 11 of the CRB Regulation, the criteria in the Regional Evaluation Framework, and the Principles and Policies of the Growth Plan.

CRB Administration agrees with the third party’s evaluation and supports approval of the Statutory Plan bylaw by the Capital Region Board.



Recommendation

CRB Administration recommends that REF 2016-004 be approved.

Attachments

Evaluation Lovatt Planning Consultants Inc.

REF Documents

- 1 - Cover Letter date stamped
- 2 - Bylaw 15-2016
- 3 - Administration Report to Council
- 4 - REF Report
- 5 - Current MDP
- 6 - Revisions to MDP Chapter 2 Community Profile
- 7 - Revisions to MDP Chapter 4 Sustainability and Growth Management
- 8 - Revisions to MDP Chapter 17 Implementation
- 9 - Revisions to MDP Definitions