

Update: Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB)

Initiative Title: Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB)

City Council Lead(s):

- **City Council Lead(s): Mayor D. Iveson (Councillor M. Walters, Councillor T. Cartmell, Councillor A. Knack, Councillor M. Banga)**
 - **Department Leads:**
 - **Deputy City Manager Catrin Owen, Chief Advisor Y. Oke, Senior Policy Advisor H. Edwards**
 - **Deputy City Manager Stephanie McCabe, Director M. Wispinski, Senior Planner G. Davis**
-

Objective:

The primary objective of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) is to plan for and manage the growth of the region in a strategic, coordinated and integrated way to ensure long term economic prosperity and quality of life for the citizens of the region.

Key outcomes, projects or activities and their status as of June 2021:

- **Governance updates**
 - **New Chair:** Following the departure of Dr. Jodi Abbott as the Board Chair in September 2020, Mayor William Choy (Town of Stony Plain) was selected as the new Board Chair and Mayor Alanna Hnatiw (Sturgeon County) was selected as the new Vice Chair.
 - **Dispute Resolution and Appeal Mechanism:** The Board passed its first bylaw to create a new Dispute Resolution and Appeal Mechanism in February 2021 to align with the requirements of the *Municipal Government Act*. It allows appeal of decisions that are believed to have procedural unfairness or discriminatory treatment. This bylaw is awaiting Ministerial approval before it takes effect.
 - **Board Charter:** The new Board Charter approved in April 2021 includes removal of the Executive Committee and the creation of the Committee of the Whole along with the Governance and Human Resources Committee. Other pre-existing tables remained in place.
 - **Strategic Plan:** The Board approved the 2021-2023 Strategic Plan at their April 2021 Board meeting. This included three priorities:
 - Enable responsible growth across the region
 - Commit to environmental, social and governance (ESG) practices and policies
 - Collaborate to enhance outcomes across the region
 - **Initiative Assessment Framework:** Adopted as a mechanism to assess value, opportunity and capacity for proposed new initiatives.

- **Environmental, Social and Governance Opportunities**
 - The City of Edmonton led a motion on developing Environmental, Social and Governance opportunities. Region CAOs are to explore options to support climate resilience, including coordinating standards, and the role of climate budgets in the Growth Plan.
 - This motion was passed by the Board in June 2021 with a report back from the CAOs expected after the municipal elections in 2021.
- **Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board Growth Plan**
 - Following collaboration between the Urban Development Institute, City Administration and EMRB Administration, a new Regional Evaluation Framework (REF) was recommended by the Board for approval in May 2020, and approved by the Minister in December 2020. The changes are expected to reduce the number of applications in the REF process by 40-50 percent without impacting overall compliance with the Growth Plan.
 - The City of Edmonton led a notice of motion to make additional adjustments to Board policy and procedures in December to provide the development industry greater opportunities to participate in the REF process.
- **Metropolitan Region Servicing Plan Standing Committee**
 - This committee is directed to oversee the creation and ongoing work of collaboratives for the four service areas outlined in the Metropolitan Region Servicing Plan.
 - Collaboratives for Solid Waste and Stormwater Management have been set up, with two more still anticipated for Fire/EMS and Emergency Management.
 - Based on direction from the Solid Waste Collaborative, the Board approved the Business Case for a Solid Waste Regional Monitoring and Measuring Program.
- **Regional Agriculture Master Plan Task Force**
 - In support of the Growth Plan, the Regional Agriculture Master Plan (RAMP) will seek to conserve an adequate supply of agricultural land, minimize fragmentation of land, and promote diversification and value-added production within the Edmonton Metropolitan Region.
 - Engagement occurred in November 2020 and May/June 2021.
 - A draft plan is expected to be considered by the Task Force in July and the Board in August 2021.
- **Shared Investment for Shared Benefit Task Force**
 - The goal of the Shared Investment for Shared Benefit project was: “to contribute to the long-term sustainability of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region and its member municipalities through investments in projects that provide benefits throughout the Region.”
 - The Task Force completed its work in April 2021. The Framework and Final Report were approved by the Board in June 2021 bringing the end of the project.

- **Integrated Regional Transportation Master Plan (IRTMP) Task Force**
 - After two years of work, a new Integrated Regional Transportation Master Plan was approved by the Board in June 2021.
 - Further work is still ongoing on developing a new list of regional transportation priorities that will be used to inform capital plans with Alberta Transportation. This new prioritization process has been created to align with the Growth Plan and the new IRTMP.
- **Financial outlook**
 - The EMRB budget for 2021 is \$ 3.7 million. Due to reductions in provincial funding, there are anticipated deficits in subsequent years. Options to address this shortfall will be discussed at future board meetings, such as fewer meetings, reduction in scope of work, or increased membership fees.

Evaluation and Recommendation:

- The City will continue to work with the EMRB to advance the work of the Board.