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July 17, 2024
File: 11611111685-305

Attention: Ms. Karen Wichuk, CEO
Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board
Suite 1100, Bell Tower
10104 – 103 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5J 0H8

Dear Ms. Wichuk,

Reference: REF# 2024-004
City of Spruce Grove
Municipal Development Plan

Attached is our third-party evaluation of the referral to the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board from the City of Spruce Grove regarding their proposed Municipal Development Plan.

It is our opinion that the proposed new Municipal Development Plan is generally consistent with the objectives of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan being Schedule A to Ministerial Order MSD 088/20 and consistent with the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board Regulation.

It is recommended that the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board **support** the new City of Spruce Grove Municipal Development Plan as submitted.

Regards,

Stantec Consulting Ltd.

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Attachment: REF# 2024-004 (Stantec Evaluation)
c. C.C.

Design with community in mind

Regional Evaluation Framework: Third Party Evaluation

City of Spruce Grove: Municipal Development Plan – The Shape of Our Community
Proposed New Statutory Plan
REF 2024-004
Proposed City of Spruce Grove Bylaw C-1338-24

Introduction

Pursuant to Ministerial Order MSD 088/20, the Province revised the Regional Evaluation Framework (REF) for the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) to ensure consistency with the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan (EMRB Growth Plan) and the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board Regulation.

Section 4.1 of the Regional Evaluation Framework requires a municipality to refer to the Board any proposed new statutory plan, that is not otherwise exempted by 4.1 (a), (b), (c), or (d). This proposed plan is not exempted and has been referred because it meets the criterion.

Background

Status: On June 24, 2024, The City of Spruce Grove Council passed first reading of proposed Bylaw C-1338-24.

Location: The proposed City of Spruce Grove Municipal Development Plan (MDP) encompasses the corporate boundaries of the City of Spruce Grove which is located west of the City of Edmonton. The proposed plan area is outlined in **Appendix 1: Proposed City of Spruce Grove Municipal Development Plan Location** in this report.


Purpose: The purpose of the proposed City of Spruce Grove Municipal Development Plan – The Shape of Our Community Bylaw C-1338-24 is to adopt a new municipal development plan for the City of Spruce Grove. The new municipal development plan has been prepared in accordance with Section 632 of the Municipal Government Act and in alignment with the EMRB Growth Plan and the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board Regional Agriculture Master Plan (EMRB RAMP).


Evaluation Criteria


Policy Tiers

EMR Structure	Applicable Policy Tier(s)
Metropolitan Area	This statutory plan is located within the Metropolitan Area as shown on EMRB Growth Plan Schedule 2: Edmonton Metropolitan Regional Structure to 2044. Spruce Grove is designated as an Urban Centre.

Regional Policy Areas


Principles and Objectives	Relevant Policies
<p>Guiding Principle</p>  <p>Promote global economic competitiveness and regional prosperity.</p>	
<p>1.1: Promote global economic competitiveness and diversification of the regional economy</p>	<p>The MDP aligns with EMRB Growth Plan Policy 1.1 through the implementation of a comprehensive array of policies aimed at stimulating competitive economic growth and augmenting regional economic diversity. These initiatives include enhancements to local and regional transit systems, investments in multi-modal transportation infrastructure, promotion of tourism initiatives, advocacy for mixed-use land utilization, and facilitation of efforts to broaden the scope of business and industrial activities. Additionally, the MDP supports the collaboration with neighboring municipalities within the Edmonton Metropolitan Region to enhance global competitiveness in attracting and retaining commercial and industrial investments, thereby advancing mutual interests and objectives.</p>
<p>1.2: Promote job growth and the competitiveness of the Region's employment base</p>	<p>The MDP area is identified as an Urban Centre with Local Employment Areas located north of Highway 16A and a Major Employment Area south of 16 A on the EMRB Growth Plan Schedule 3B: Planned and Local Employment Areas. The MDP promotes and provides policy direction for new development, redevelopment and infill development that supports economic diversification and job retention and growth including providing for land uses such as mixed use, commercial, industrial and the City Centre. These policies promote contiguous and infill development to lower land consumption and sprawl.</p>
<p>1.3: Enhance competitiveness through the efficient movement of people, goods and services to, from and within the Region</p>	<p>The MDP provides for a transportation network of existing and future roadways allowing for movement within the MDP area and beyond with connections to Highway 16 A, Highway 16, and Highway 628, see Appendix 2 in this report. This aligns with EMRB Growth Plan Schedule 10 A: Transportation Systems – Regional Roads 20 2044 which identifies Highway 16 as a Regional</p>

	<p>Freeway, Highway 16 A as a Regional Arterial, and Highway 628 as a Regional Expressway This vehicular network is complemented by a trail and pedestrian network which supports active transportation in the community, see Appendix 3 in this report.</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>The MDP proposes a mix of complimentary public service, commercial, recreational, industrial, mixed use nodes, and residential land uses. Policies provide for flexibility to allow the community to respond to changing housing and economic development needs over the life of the MDP, see Appendix 4 of this report.</p>
<p>Guiding Principle</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> <p>Protect natural living systems and environmental assets.</p> </div> </div>	
<p>2.1: Conserve and restore natural living systems through an ecological network approach</p>	<p>EMRB Growth Plan Objective 2.1 is facilitated by the policies outlined in the MDP. The plan features an integrated open space network depicted in Appendix 3 of this report, which encompasses parks, open spaces, natural areas, school sites, and interconnected trails. The MDP policies are specifically designed to uphold the conservation of natural habitats, facilitate the remediation of polluted sites, and ensure the protection and revitalization of natural ecosystems.</p>
<p>2.2: Protect regional watershed health, water quality and quantity</p>	<p>Atim Creek is located in the northwest corner of the City and is identified in the EMRB Growth Plan Schedule 4: Natural Living Systems. At a regional level MDP policies call for the City to work with the Town of Stony Plain, Parkland County and other relevant landowners and agencies to maintain the ecological integrity of the Atim Creek and the Dog Creek drainage courses. In addition, the MDP provides policy direction which calls for the protection of wetlands, watershed areas, riparian zones, and flood-prone areas; and surface water and ground water flow which supports environmentally significant areas affected by development.</p>
<p>2.3: Plan development to promote clean air, land and water and address climate change impacts</p>	<p>MDP policies provide direction for the protection, restoration, and integration of environmentally significant and natural areas. With the integration of these natural areas into the city's parks and</p>

	open space network. In addition, MDP policies support the use of emerging, alternative, and green infrastructure technologies and principles that reduce energy, water, and land consumption and minimize waste for municipal operations and facilities.
2.4: Minimize and mitigate the impacts of regional growth on natural living systems	The MDP provides policy direction for compact and contiguous greenfield development along with infill development of built up areas. In addition, the MDP provides policy direction for the coordination between municipalities to support environmental initiatives to mitigate or minimize impacts of growth on natural living systems.
<p>Guiding Principle</p>  <p>Recognize and celebrate the diversity of communities and promote an excellent quality of life across the Region.</p>	
3.1: Plan and develop complete communities within each policy tier to accommodate people's daily needs for living at all ages	The MDP aligns with this objective through its vision and principles which envision a complete community in alignment with EMRB Growth Plan Table 1A-C. The MDP provides policy direction for: compact and contiguous development; a diversity of housing built form and densities; infill development; for new greenfield areas to have a minimum 35 dwelling units per net residential hectare in alignment with EMRB Growth Plan Schedule 6: Greenfield Density, Centres, and Intensification Targets; an interconnected street network to support active transportation; connections to trails and open spaces; promotion of employment opportunities; and provision of local amenities and services.
3.2: Plan for and promote a range of housing options	EMRB Growth Plan Objective 3.2 is facilitated by policies outlined in the MDP which provide strategic guidance for both greenfield and infill development, ensuring a diverse array of housing choices and configurations that accommodate market-driven and non-market housing units. The MDP promotes varying densities and types of housing, including single detached dwellings, duplexes, triplexes, manufactured homes, apartments, and housing options for seniors. This approach aims to support urban development that is inclusive and responsive to diverse housing demands and community needs.

<p>3.3: Plan for and promote market affordable and non-market housing to address core housing need</p>	<p>The MDP addresses the provision of both market-affordable and non-market housing by directing policies that advocate for diverse housing types and densities, encompassing secondary suites and infill developments. This approach aims to facilitate the availability of a spectrum of affordable housing options, catering to both market-driven demands and social housing needs within the community.</p>
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Guiding Principle




Achieve compact growth that optimizes infrastructure investment.

<p>4.1: Establish a compact and contiguous development pattern to accommodate employment and population growth</p>	<p>The MDP provides policy direction for compact and contiguous development, including the promotion of infill development within developed areas of the city. New area structure plans for greenfield areas will be required to achieve a minimum density of 35 dwelling units per net residential hectare in alignment with the EMRB Growth Plan’s Schedule 6: Greenfield Density, Centres, and Intensification Targets. In addition, MDP Policy 4.39 notes that the City will work with landowners, developers, and other affected parties in existing area structure plan areas to increase residential densities.</p>
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<p>4.2: Enable growth within built-up urban areas to optimize existing infrastructure and minimize the expansion of the development footprint</p>	<p>The MDP provides policy direction for the promotion of infill development including mixed use, residential, commercial, and industrial within the built-up areas of the city to minimize the city’s footprint and optimize existing infrastructure. Policies also directs higher residential densities to the City Centre and along major transportation corridors along the edges of existing neighbourhoods.</p>
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<p>4.3: Plan and develop greenfield areas in an orderly and phased manner to contribute to complete communities</p>	<p>In alignment with Objective 4.3, the proposed MDP requires the preparation of area structure plans and neighbourhood plans for new greenfield areas. Through the preparation of these plans the City will: direct development, so it is contiguous and makes efficient use of land, infrastructure, transportation networks; support mixed land uses, provide for a variety of housing forms; and ensures that required densities are met as outlined in EMRB Growth Plan Schedule 6: Greenfield Density, Centres, and Intensification Targets. In addition, as the City of Spruce Grove shares its western boundary with</p>
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	the Town of Stony Plain MDP policy 4.3.11 requires that the City explore with Stony Plain the most economic and efficient way to service the lands along the shared boundary.
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	In alignment with EMRB Growth Plan Schedule 6: Greenfield Density, Centres and Intensification Targets, the MDP provides support for new mixed use development and compatible mixed use redevelopment, with particular focus in the City Centre, through policy direction and identification of mixed use nodes on the proposed Future Land Use Concept, see Appendix 4 of this report.
4.6: Prioritize investment and funding of regional infrastructure to support planned growth	The EMRB Growth Plan Schedule 8A: Infrastructure Corridors identifies an existing regional water line and existing regional wastewater line running through the city. In addition, EMRB Growth Plan Schedule 8B: Energy Corridors identifies an existing power transmission corridor north of the City's boundary. MDP policies support the City continuing to work cooperatively with Parkland County and Stony Plain with respect to regional growth, the environment, regional transportation system, coordination of major infrastructure, and community services.
4.7: Ensure compatible land use patterns to minimize risks to public safety and health	The proposed uses within the MDP are generally distributed in a compatible manner and there are no unusual risks to public safety or health, see Appendix 4 in this report.
<p>Guiding Principle</p> <p> Ensure effective regional mobility.</p>	
5.1: Develop a regional transportation system to support the growth of the Region and enhance its regional and global connectivity	As shown on EMRB Growth Plan Schedule 10A: Transportation Systems – Regional Roads 2044 Spruce Grove is bounded by: Highway 16, a regional freeway, located on the northern boundary; Highway 682, a regional express way, on its southern boundary and is bisected by three regional arterials including Highway 16 A. The

	<p>MDP provides guidance for Highway 16A as the major east west arterial through the city and beyond to the wider region and the responsible access management of Highway 628 as it is developed in the future.</p> <p>MDP policies support EMRB Growth Plan Schedule 10B: Regional Transit and Trails to 2044, which identifies Highway 16 as a Transit Priority Corridor and Regional Bus line. With a regional Park and Ride facility located in Spruce Grove. The MDP supports the provision of transit and multi-modal transportation choices within the city, its neighbourhoods, recreational and employment areas, and the broader region.</p> <p>EMRB Growth Plan Schedule 10B: Airports, Rail Facilities and Overdimensional Corridors to 2044 identifies Highways 16 and 16A as Long Combinations Vehicle Routes and identifies the Active CN railway line that runs west to east through Spruce Grove. While the MDP recognizes the potential economic benefits of the CN railway line it also identifies the challenges with the railway line bisecting the city and its impacts on connectivity, safety, and emergency response. To address these issues the MDP advocates for the development of rail overpasses in strategic locations.</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>The MDP provides policy direction for city and regional transit. In addition, MDP policies provide opportunities for active transportation in the form of pedestrian and cycling routes through a network of pedestrian focused streets, trails, sidewalks, and public spaces, see Appendix 3 in this report.</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>MDP policies establish a structured framework for integrating land use, multi-modal transportation systems. This integration supports the safe movement of people, goods, and services within the urban environment. Additionally, MDP policies protect regional transportation corridors, which are vital for facilitating efficient and secure movement of people, goods, and services in the region.</p>
<p>5.4: Support the Edmonton International Airport as northern Alberta’s primary air gateway to the world</p>	<p>MDP policy 4.1.5 acknowledges the Edmonton International Airport as a regionally significant economic engine and as the primary air gateway to the world for northern Alberta.</p>

<p>5.5: Ensure effective coordination and alignment of regional transportation policies and initiatives between all jurisdictions</p>	<p>Spruce Grove's north boundary is adjacent to Highway 16 which is identified as a Regional Freeway on EMRB Growth Plan Schedule 10A: Transportation Systems – Regional Roads to 2044. The city's southern boundary is located adjacent to Highway 628 which is regional express way, and the city is bisected east to west by Highway 16 A, a regional arterial, that runs through the city and beyond to the wider region. The MDP provides policy direction for the protection and cooperative planning of the regional transportation system with Parkland County, the Town of Stony Plain, and other EMRB member municipalities.</p>
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Guiding Principle



Ensure the wise management of prime agricultural resources.

<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>Spruce Grove is located in the Metropolitan Area on EMRB Growth Schedule 11: Agricultural Land Suitability Ratings. Schedule 11 identifies non Built-Up Areas within the City's boundaries as being class 2 soil prime agricultural land. MDP policies call for compact and contiguous development; infill development; and for new greenfield areas to have a minimum density of 35 dwelling units per net residential hectare in alignment with EMRB Growth Plan Schedule 6: Greenfield Density, Centres, and Intensification Targets. In addition, the MDP requires the preparation and adoption of an urban agriculture plan. As well as continued support of agricultural pursuits within the city on lands that are not yet planned for development, until they are needed for future population/employment growth.</p>
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<p>6.2: Minimize the fragmentation and conversion of prime agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses</p>	<p>MDP policies call for the prevention of premature development or fragmentation of lands currently in agricultural use through compact and contiguous development of new residential, commercial, and industrial areas as well as promoting infill development. For unplanned areas the MDP requires agricultural impact assessments in support of Area Structure Plans to identify any prime agricultural lands to ensure their fragmentation is minimized and to conserve their use for agricultural purposes for as long as possible recognizing that these lands will urbanize over time to accommodate growth.</p>
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<p>6.3: Promote diversification and value-added agriculture production and plan infrastructure to support the agricultural sector and regional food system</p>	<p>In support of agriculture production within the city the MDP requires the preparation and adoption of an urban agriculture plan which includes identifying and coordinating infrastructure and services that are needed to support urban agriculture and the value-added sector. As well, as support for the continuation of agricultural operations in non built up areas of the city until these lands are needed for future population/employment growth.</p>
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Regional Agriculture Master Plan (RAMP)

The development of the RAMP was a requirement outlined in Policy 6.1.1 of the growth plan, Re-imagine. Plan. Build. The growth plan was amended in December 2022 to incorporate the approval of RAMP. The policies in RAMP do not replace the policies within growth plan policy area 6 (agriculture), however they offer additional policy direction. In this regard, growth plan policies and RAMP policies should be read in tandem with one another.

As per Policy 6.1.1 (c), Schedule A in RAMP (Prime Agricultural Lands as Determined by LESA Model) replaces growth plan Schedule 11 (Agricultural Land Suitability Rating) for determining prime agricultural lands and applying associated policies.

<p>Alignment with the vision and guiding principles.</p>	<p>The MDP community values, planning principles and policies align with the vision and guiding principles of the EMRB RAMP. The MDP promotes compact and contiguous development and the continuation of agricultural practices until such time as land is needed for population/economic growth.</p>
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<p>Alignment with policies of applicable policy area.</p>	<p>EMRB RAMP Schedule B: RAMP Agriculture Policy Areas identifies the City of Spruce Grove as being located in the metropolitan area. The non built out area of the city are identified as being located in Policy Area 3 Agriculture In Future Transition Lands. The built out area of the city is identified as being located in Policy Area 4 Urban Agriculture</p> <p>In alignment with the RAMP Policy Area 3 policies, the MDP supports compact contiguous development and the continuation of agricultural operations in non built out areas until such time as these lands are required to for population/employment growth.</p> <p>The MDP also aligns with RAMP Policy Area 4 policies including the requirement to develop and adopt of an urban agriculture plan.</p>
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<p>Alignment with policy definitions.</p>	<p>The MDP's definitions align with EMRB RAMP policy definitions</p>
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<p>Alignment with Schedules:</p> <p>Schedule A: Prime Agricultural Lands as Determined by LESA Model</p> <p>Schedule B-G: RAMP Agriculture Policy Areas and Policy Area Maps</p>	<p>MDP mapping for prime agricultural lands as shown in Appendix 5 of this report aligns with the EMRB RAMP. This aligns with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule A: Prime Agricultural Lands as Determined by LESA Model. Identifies non built out area within Spruce Grove as containing prime agricultural lands. • Schedule B: RAMP Agriculture Policy Areas identifies the City of Spruce Grove as being in the metropolitan area. The non built out area of the city is identified as being in Policy Area 3 - Agriculture In Future Transition Lands. The built out area of the city is identified as being in Policy Area 4 - Urban Agriculture • Schedule C: Policy Area 1 – Rural Agriculture identifies The City of Spruce Grove as being an EMRB Member located outside of Policy Area 1. • Schedule D: Policy Area 2 – Agriculture Co-Exists with Other Land Uses identifies Spruce Grove as being an EMRB Member located outside of Policy Area 2. • Schedule E: Policy Area 3 – Agriculture in Future Transition Lands identifies portions of lands located within the city as being in Policy Area 3. • Schedule F: Policy Area 4 – Urban Agriculture identifies the built out area of the city as being located within Policy Area 4. • Schedule G: LESA-Identified Prime Agricultural Lands and RAMP Policy Areas identifies non built out areas of Spruce Grove as being within Policy Area 3 with a portion of these lands being prime agricultural lands.
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Guiding Principle



Collaborate and coordinate as a Region to manage growth responsibly.

Implementation of the plan and its alignment with the growth plan and implications to the Region.	The MDP aligns with the intent of the EMRB Growth Plan for urban centres. If implemented the MDP would result in development that is consistent with the policy of the EMRB Growth Plan.
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Opinion

Pursuant to Section 8.1 of the Regional Evaluation Framework, it is our opinion that if approved and fully implemented, REF 2024-004 would result in development that is consistent with the policy of the EMRB Growth Plan with respect to the proposed City of Spruce Grove Municipal Development Plan. It is recommended that the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board support the City of Spruce Grove’s proposed Municipal Development Plan (Bylaw C-1338-24) as submitted.

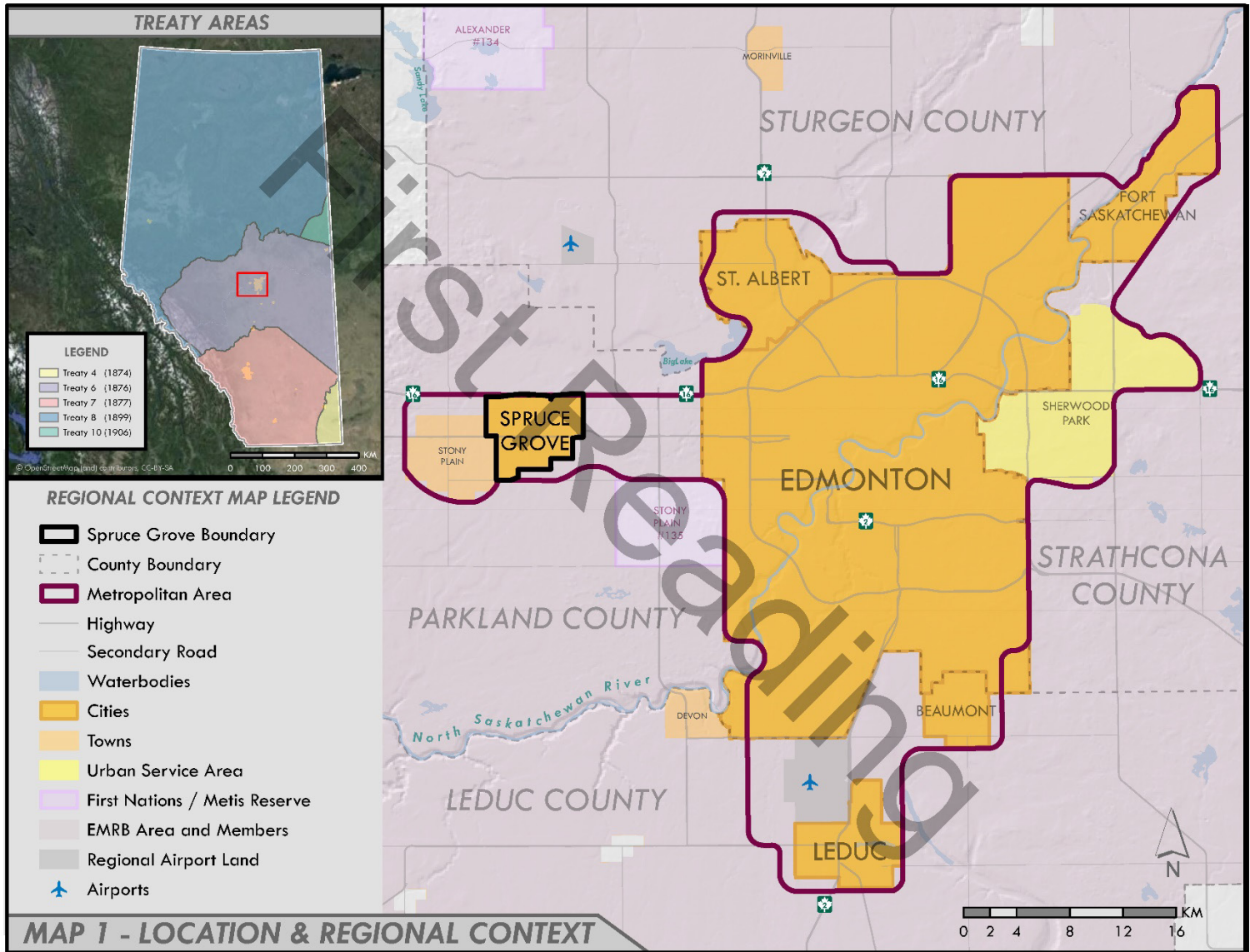
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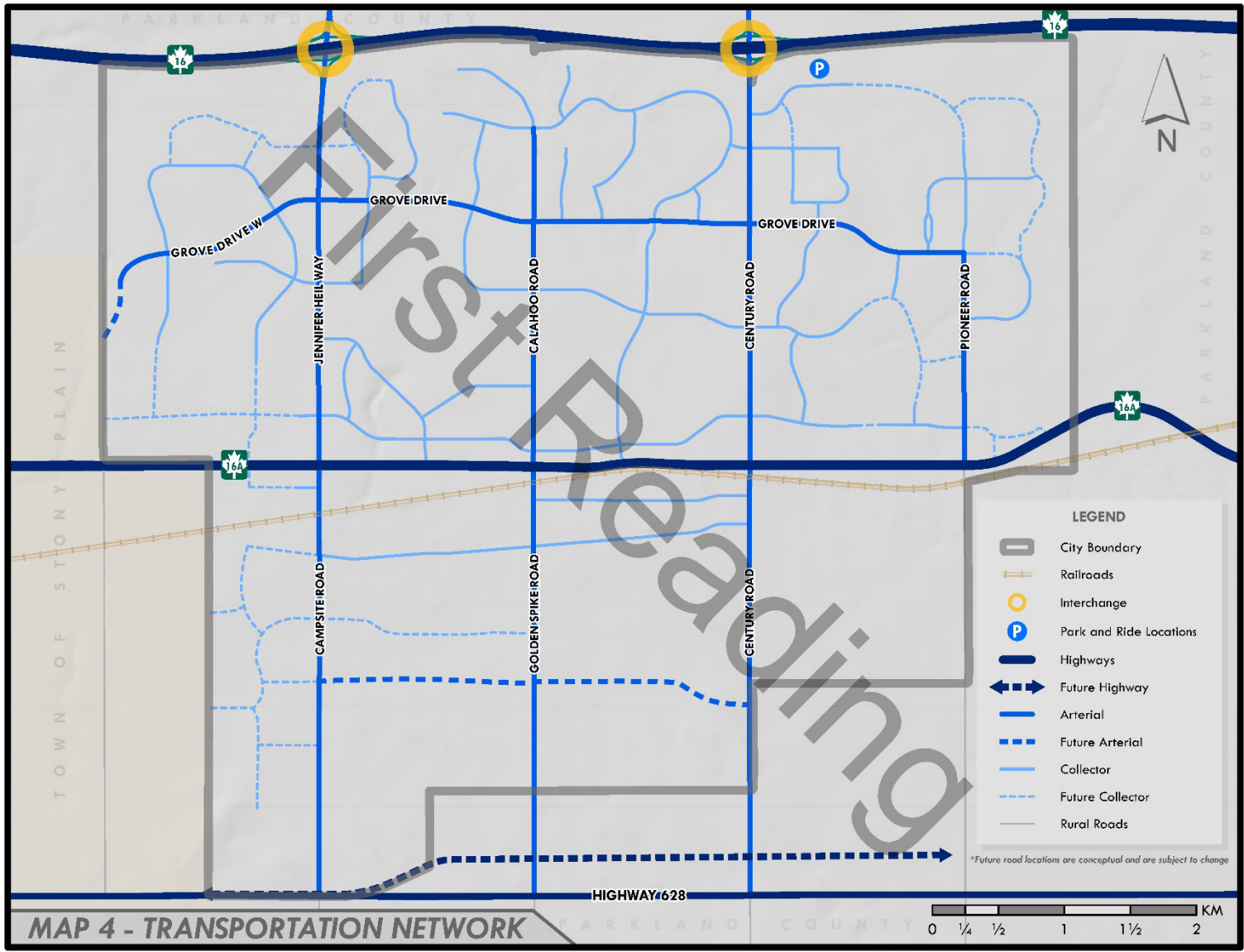
Sylvia Summers, RPP, MCIP

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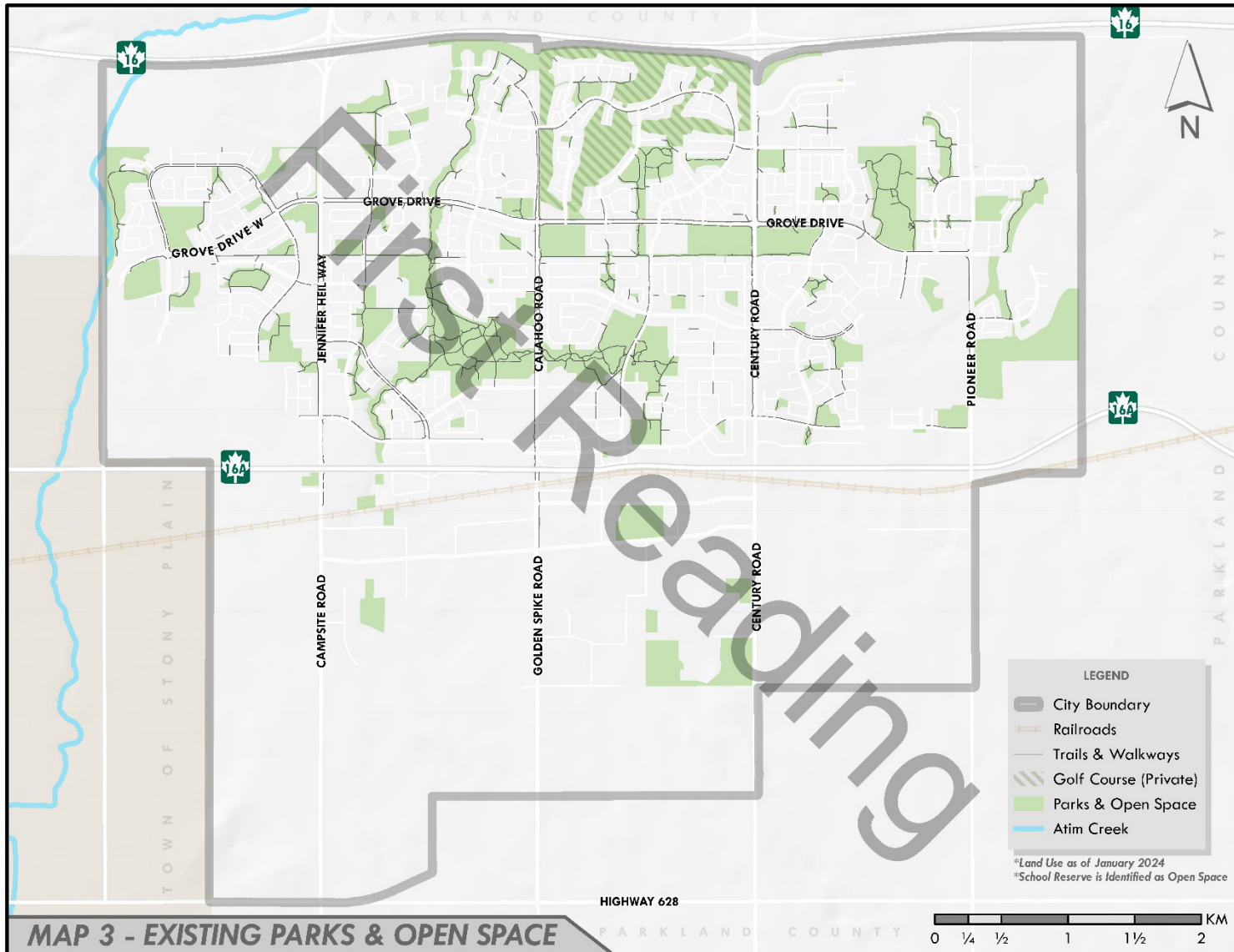
Appendix 1: Proposed City of Spruce Grove Municipal Development Plan Location



Appendix 2: Proposed City of Spruce Grove Municipal Development Plan Transportation Network



Appendix 3: Proposed City of Spruce Grove Municipal Development Plan Existing Parks and Open Space



Appendix 4: Proposed City of Spruce Grove Municipal Development Plan Future Land Use Concept

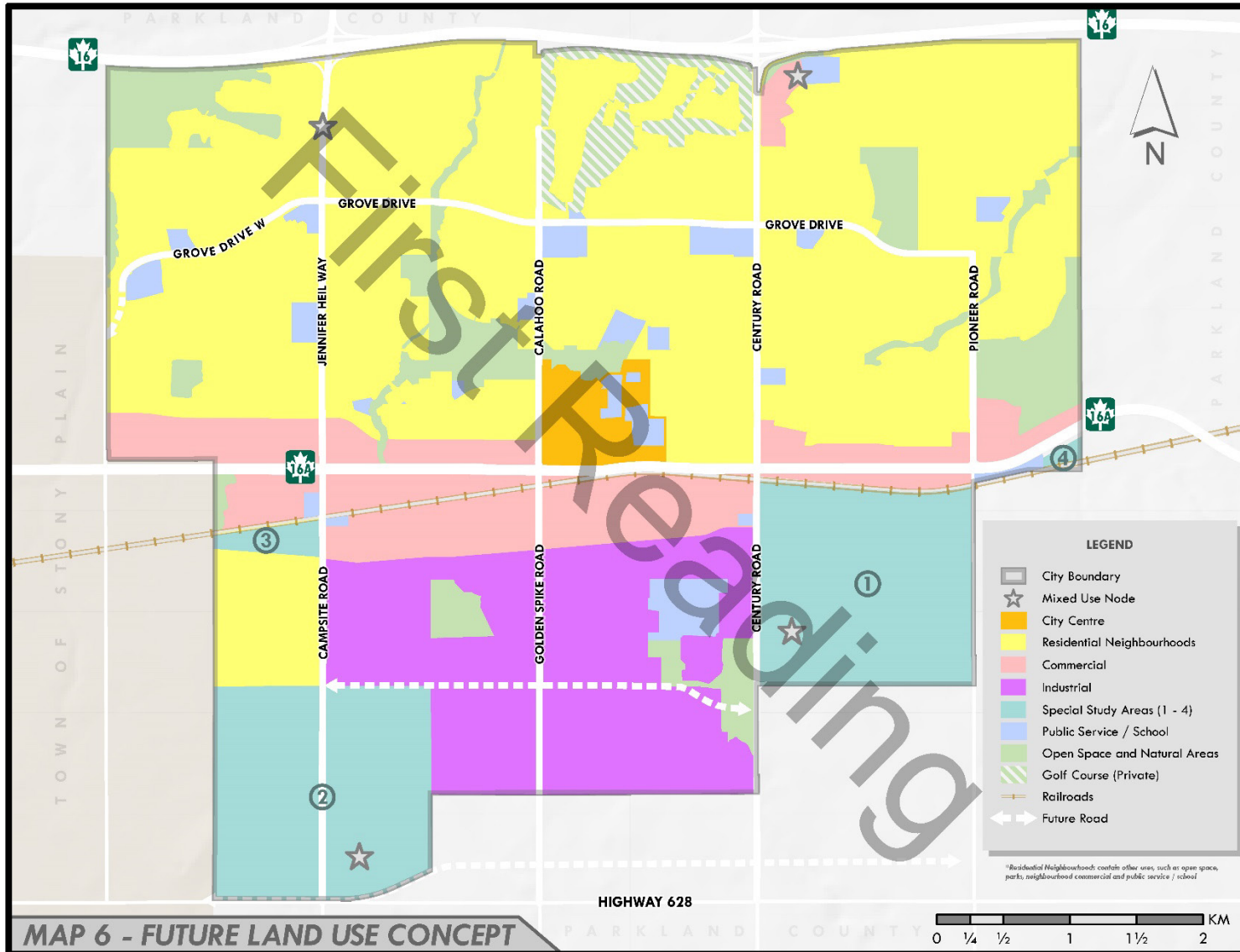
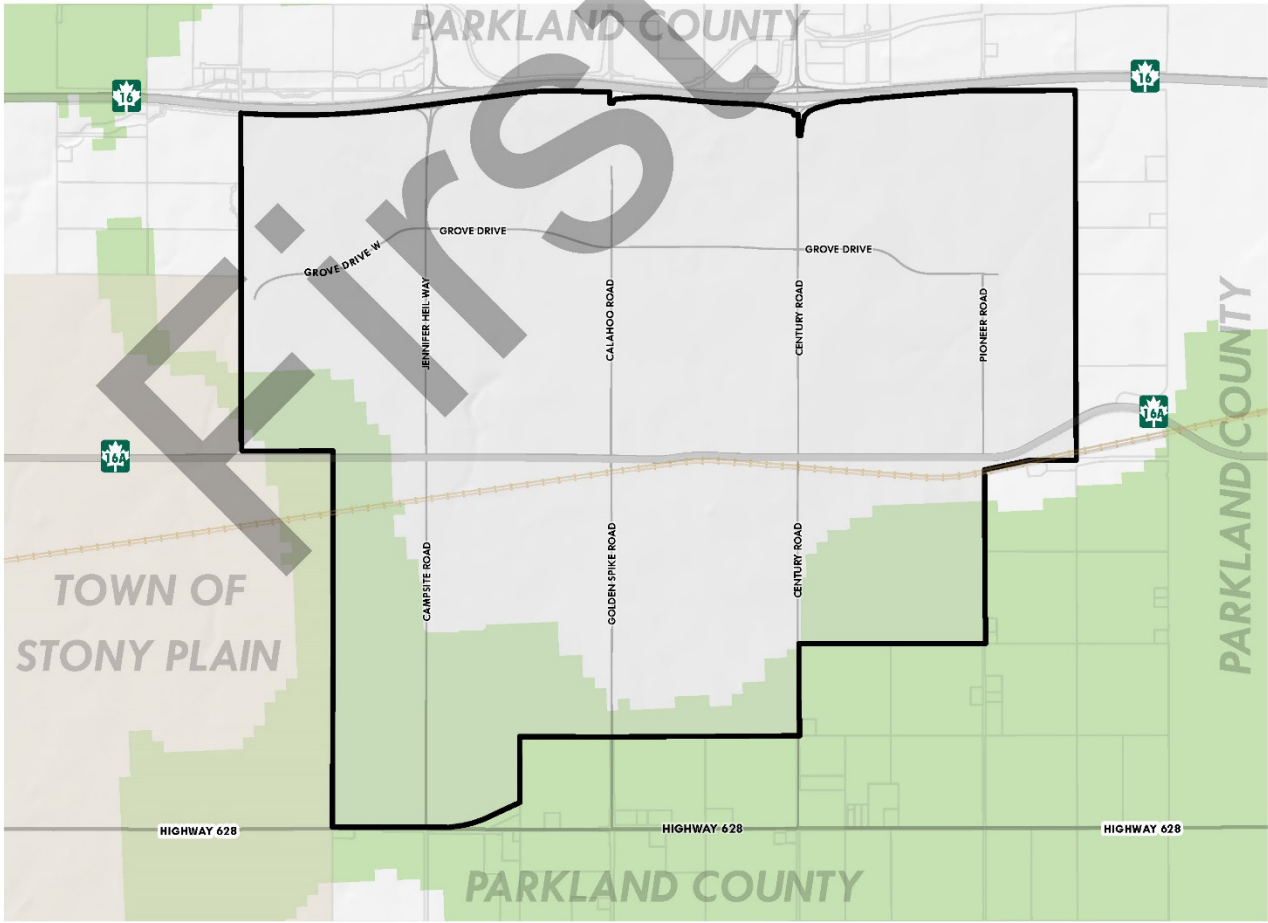


FIGURE 9 – Prime Agricultural Land



 Prime Agricultural Land