

Additional Public Input

April 1, 2019

City Council Meeting

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Hearings](#); [Mayor Cathy Heron](#); [Wes Brodhead](#); [Jacquie Hansen](#); [Sheena Hughes](#); [Natalie Joly](#); [Ken MacKay](#); [Ray Watkins](#)
Subject: Erin Ridge North Amending Bylaws to MDP, ASP and Land Use
Date: March 26, 2019 8:52:48 AM

Mayor and Council.....Municipal Development Plans define the aspirations of a municipality that go beyond the tenure of any single Council. MDP's are the culmination of typically protracted consultation with residents, landowners, businesses and developers. Changes to an MDP should be viewed critically with an eye on how it will affect more than just a specific parcel of land. Not to be ignored in this present case is the current consultation process to revise the MDP for a St. Albert of 100 000 that includes the lands outlined in Bylaw 6/2019. I have several concerns with the proposed changes to the Municipal Development Plan, Area Structure Plan and Land Use Bylaw for Erin Ridge Phase 2 as outlined in Bylaws 6, 7 & 8/2019. It is my intent to address Council at the Public Hearing on April 1st, however it is possible that some of my views may change as a result of seeing the Agenda Report that will only be released this coming Friday after the March 26 deadline for submitting comments as part of the agenda package.

Since November 2017, I have attended public consultations and discussed concerns with city planning staff over the development of Erin Ridge North lands. Much of my general concerns with the development of these lands, as outlined in the following points, have been previously vetted at those same meetings and conversations. For all intents and purposes, these comments are now being formally conveyed to Council at a time when decisions have to be made since these concerns have not been incorporated into the proposed Bylaws. Specifically, those concerns are:

1. it is not clear to me how the proposed reduction of the Commercial Designation benefits St. Albert's long term need for commercial development. The amendment contradicts the major tenets and emerging proposals outlined in the present public consultations concerning a new MDP for St. Albert, i.e., *flourish Growing to 100K*. Council should take heed to consider this input and reject the proposal as outlined. Over the course of time I have noted many amendments of Erin Ridge as proposed by the developer that are based on the unattractiveness of a large commercial belt adjacent to St. Albert Trail in favor of more readily developable residential initiatives. Thinking beyond present day economics, considering longer term growth, emergence of rapid transit/LRT development adjacent to the St. Albert Trail corridor, there is merit in retaining the commercial zoning detailed in the existing MDP.
2. Council should ensure that connecting roads to St. Albert Trail are limited to Neil Rose Road and Earnest Boulevard and not from the commercial development properties adjacent to St. Albert Trail as evident south of this development area. The guideline that permits right in – right out every 200 m should be suspended in favor of demanding the developer make access only available from internal connecting roads.
3. Alternatives to proposed Area Structure Plan zoning should be pursued from those contained in the Bylaw.
 - a. Assuming St. Albert wants to continue to take pride in selling the story of its parkland and receptive residential settings, the residential development should incorporate features that enhance resident use and safety. I propose, the Park area situated adjacent to the proposed Lift Station should be moved to the east side of the Stormwater Management Facility. This would enable the development of the proposed

TRAIL AROUND the Stormwater Management Facility instead of just one side. Such a change would better serve the interests of residents from the adjacent residential development. The change would limit the risk and hazard of residents having to utilize the sidewalks and associated driveways fronting the residential development if the trail is limited to one side of the Stormwater Management Facility.

- b. All the walkways should be correctly identified in Bylaw 7/2019 - Figure 2 (there is indication of a walkway yet no symbol)
 - c. Sidewalks adjacent to St. Albert Trail are needed to improve connectivity and residents accessibility to the Commercial Corridor lands. This should be conditional to any approval.
4. Previous Councils have acceded to requests by the developer for exemptions to the density requirements on the premise they would ultimately be met in later developments. Situating the High Density Residential land use adjacent to a narrow strip of land that is closer to the noise of St. Albert Trail compromises any benefit of this development being located adjacent Parkland/Storm Water Management Facility. It also presents the prospect of future conflict amongst residents of the development and adjacent residential lands for vehicle parking at the northeast end of Phase 2 (refer Figure 2 – Bylaw 7/2019).

Ken Crutchfield



"Nature cannot be conquered but by obeying her" Sir Francis Bacon

To: Mayor and Members of City Council

March 28, 2019

From: Richard H.M. Plain (PhD Econ), President

St. Albert Planning Committee

Subject: Proposed Amendments to Bylaws 6/20 - Municipal Development Amendment, Bylaw 7/2019 Erin Ridge Area Structure Plan and Bylaw 8/2019- Land Use Bylaw Schedule A Amendment

The following points provide City Council with land use concerns arising from proposed amendments to Bylaws 6/2019, Bylaw 7, 2019 and Bylaw 8, 201.

1) The residential/non-residential assessment split in St. Albert has ranged from approximately 94/6 in the early 1970s to 85/15 percent in 2018 . Given this unfavourable state of affairs, various St. Albert Councils have adopted the precedent set by other municipal councils and taken steps to achieve a more "acceptable or fairer" sharing of the property tax burden by levying a higher mill rate on non-residential vis-a-vis residential property owners.

2) Specific fiscal targets have been established and policies have been articulated both within planning legislation (the Municipal Development Plan) and within the Strategic Priority Growth Policy Framework established by City Council and its administration.

3) Rectifying the imbalance between the growth of residential and non-residential assessment within St. Albert has been an objective of successive City councils for over 40 years. It has been a slow and difficult process for the city to develop a strong commercial and light industrial base given St. Albert's close proximity to the City of Edmonton which has maintained a relatively large supply of lower priced serviced non-residential land abutting St. Albert's southern boundaries.

4) Section 8.8 of the St. Albert MDP states:

" The City of St. Albert has identified as a corporate priority the need to balance strong residential growth with continued growth in non-residential assessment. **The City of St. Albert's long-term target is to continue to move toward a 20/80 percent non-residential/residential assessment split..**".

5) In 2018 St. Albert's assessment split was 84.9 percent residential versus 15.1 percent non-residential. St. Albert was only able to achieve an 80 versus a 20 percent municipal tax split by levying a 14.5 versus a 10.5 mill rate (38 percent higher) on non-residential versus residential property.

6) Figure 1 depicts the applicants proposal to reduce the land earmarked for commercial development in the northern portion of Erin Ridge North by 3.37 Ha (8.33 acres) and redistrict the land for residential development. An earlier proposal to rezone commercial land for residential purposes was successful. The current application is a continuation of the developers land use strategy in Erin Ridge North Phase 2.

7) If this change in land use occurs and development proceeds then the percentage of residential assessment will be increased while the percentage of non-residential assessment is reduced.

8) Increasing the amount of residential development in Erin Ridge North by reducing the amount of commercially zoned land is desirable from the applicants point of view. Unfortunately, it is the exact opposite of the economic policies the city should be pursuing if it wants to raise a larger portion of its tax revenue from the business community and provide more employment opportunities for members of the St. Albert labour force that wish to work in the community where they live.

9)Rezoning commercial and industrial land to facilitate more residential development reduces employment opportunities. From an economic perspective St. Albert needs to be open for business and it needs to keep a large supply of commercial land located in key locations to accommodate future business demand even if in the short run the total supply of commercial

Close-up MDP Amendment

Bylaw 6/2019



0 100 200 Meters

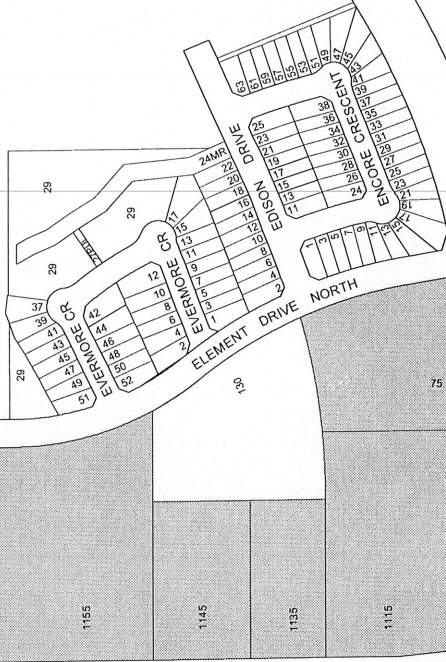
Sturgeon County
City of St. Albert

Amendment Area
From Commercial
To Residential

3, 54307 HWY 2
FRACTIONAL SW 1/4 21-54-25-4
RESIDENTIAL

COMMERCIAL

ERNEST BOULEVARD



ST ALBERT TRAIL

NEIL ROSS ROAD

Costco

4, 54302 HWY 2
752 1587 A,1

MDP Amendment



From Commercial to Residential Designation

land in an area in the northern portion of the St. Albert trail corridor is in excess of short and medium term absorption rates.

10) The rationale advanced by the applicant for amending the MDP and reducing the amount of commercial space along the St. Trail is based upon the claim that the outlook for future big box developments is limited. This observation is being made at a time when the city is in the process of preparing a new MDP to accommodate a future population of 100,00 people, annex a potential large amount of new land and the province of Alberta is in the throes of one of the most depressed real estate markets the region has encountered in the past four decades.

11) Numerous examples exist of instances in St. Albert's past where short run decisions by city council have been made to rezone industrial and commercial land for residential purposes only to have city development department personnel and private sector realtors being placed in the unhappy position of being forced to turn away new business prospects due to the lack of an adequate supply of serviced commercial and industrial properties being available for development within St. Albert.

12) Erin Ridge North phase 1 and the southwest corner in phase 2 were developed under the Capital Region Board density requirements of 30 dwellings per net residential hectare. The north, northwest portion of Erin Ridge phase 2 not including the southwest corner with a residential area of 15.5 ha and 645 dwelling units will have 42 dwelling units per net hectare (HA).

13) The increase from 30 to 40 dwelling units per net HA increases density by 33 percent. The increase in population associated with the marked increase in the dwelling unity density will vary in accordance with the urban form and economic conditions and other factors that exist when development occurs. It is clear the major increase in density mandated by the Capital Region Board will have a major effect on St. Albert taxpayers once it is fully implemented.

14) The Fiscal Impact Analysis (FIA) for the Erin Ridge North ASP 2 has not been updated despite the fact the City of St. Albert is being potentially exposed to a "double-whammy" - a reduction in the future percentage of non-residential assessment stemming from the applicants proposal to reduce the amount of commercial land and the 33 percent increase in the number of dwelling units mandated by the Capital region board.

Recommendations:

R-1) Reject the MDP amendment proposal to reduce the existing commercial land in Erin Ridge

Phase 2 by 3.37 Ha (8.33 acres).

St. Albert needs to meet its 80-20 assessment target set out in its MDP so it can reduce the portion of the property tax burden borne by its residential tax payers. If land that is identified for commercial purposes that is located in a prime location is consistently being rezoned as is the case in Erin Ridge North then fewer businesses will be able to locate in St. Albert and fewer citizens will have an opportunity to be employed in the City where they live and pay taxes

R-2) Adjourn the Public Hearings on By-laws Bylaw 7/2019 Erin Ridge Area Structure Plan and Bylaw 8/2019- Land Use Bylaw Schedule A Amendment.

If the MDP amendment is rejected leaving the public hearing open will allow City planners and the applicant to make the necessary adjustments to the ASP and land use by-law and avoid any lengthy statutory delay.

R-3) Provide an analysis of the effect on assessment and property tax splits of an increase in density from 30 to 40 net residential hectares.