December 12th, 2023

To whom it may concern:

Subject: Regional Agriculture Master Plan: Regional Context Statement Response

In accordance with Section 9 of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan, Parkland County is submitting the attached Regional Agriculture Master Plan Regional Context Statement. This statement is modelled after the template provided by the EMRB and identifies that Parkland County will be implementing the RAMP's policies and definitions into the County's Municipal Development Plan Update Project. The purpose of this letter is to provide context on the MDP Update Project and other County initiatives mentioned in the Regional Context Statement.

Municipal Development Plan Update Project

The County's Municipal Development Plan Update Project is a comprehensive update to respond to regional and economic changes such as:

- The phase out of coal: Coal was a primary industry in the region, this change will lead to opportunities to foster and diversify growth within the County;
- Integration of Wabamun: The former Village of Wabamun became a hamlet within Parkland County in 2021. A minor amendment to the MDP was completed in 2022, but a broader amendment is needed to align with work being done in the region; and
- Alignment with the Regional Agricultural Master Plan: Updating the MDP to reflect the shared goals of the region.

The MDP Update Project started in Spring 2023 and is projected to be completed by the end of 2024 (possibly extending into Spring 2025 if required). This timeline aligns with the intent of the RAMP Section 9 that requires partner municipality's MDPs to be updated within two years of RAMP approval.

Technical Growth Study

A Technical Growth Study is being conducted by the MDP Update Project Team as the first phase to support the greater policy update identified during the latter portion of the project (phase 2). The Technical Growth Study is being conducted to better reflect the current economic and market state of the County which in turn will direct how and where growth will be represented through land use policy. A key outcome of the Technical Growth Study will be the identification of preferred areas within the County for different forms of development, including agricultural related uses.

Land Use Bylaw ReDesign

The Land Use Bylaw ReDesign is occurring concurrently with the MDP Update Project. Administration is working together to ensure the resulting policies and land use regulations are aligned with one another. Any RAMP related policies in the MDP will be reflected in the related regulations of the LUB.

If you have any questions or comments please contact the undersigned at 780-968-8888 ext. 7689, email derek.macdonald@parklandcounty.com, or Natasha De Sandi (Senior Planner, Long Range Planning) at 780-968-8888 ext. 8203, email natasha.desandi@parklandcounty.com

Sincerely,

Derek Macdonald, Long Range Planner

Requirement Type	RCS Description	RCS Description Meaning	Will It Be Addressed in the MDP Update Project?	Action
Definition	Agricultural System	A group of inter-connected elements that collectively create a viable and vital agricultural sector. The system has three components; a) an agricultural land base comprised of prime agricultural areas and all other agricultural areas that together constitute a continuous functional and productive land base for agriculture, b) agricultural operations and practices producing food, feed, fibre, and energy products, and c) an agriculture and agri-food network that includes Infrastructure, services, and assets important to the viability of agriculture and the agri-food sector.	Yes	Include definition that aligns with the definition in the RAMP.
Definition	Agriculture	The growing, raising, managing and/or sale of livestock, crops, horticulture and agriculture related products or services including food, feed, fibre, energy and other complementary value-added activities.	Yes	No action required. Existing MDP Term aligns with RAMP and will be carried over.
Definition	Agri-food	All aspects related to the production, sale, and distribution of agricultural food including a system of producers, businesses, suppliers, transporters, retailers, and consumers.	Yes	Include definition that aligns with the definition in the RAMP.
Definition	Agricultural Land	Land that is or can be used for agriculture.	Yes	Include definition that aligns with the definition in the RAMP.
Definition	Prime Agricultural Land	Agricultural lands identified through the EMR Land Evaluation Site Assessment tool (LESA) that meet or exceed the identified threshold.	Yes	Include definition that aligns with the definition in the RAMP. The MDP Project will identify Prime Agricultural Land as defined by the EMR LESA tool, and will distinguish Prime Agriculture Areas from Prime Agricultural Land to avoid confusion.
Definition	Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Tool (LESA)	An analytical tool to evaluate land capability land and inform the identification of lands for conservation. LESA includes two components: 1. Land Evaluation (LE) measures the land's biophysical considerations; and 2. Site Assessment (SA) measures other important geographic, economic and social factors.	Yes	Include definition that aligns with the definition in the RAMP.
Definition	Prime Agricultural Areas	An area where prime agricultural lands predominate and may include lands considered as all other agricultural lands if they are contiguous to prime agricultural lands. Prime agricultural areas will be delineated in detail by member municipalities in municipal development plans.	Yes	The MDP Project will assess the existing MDP's Prime Agriculture Areas and modify them based on the Project's Technical Growth Study, and the EMR's LESA tool to ensure that sufficient Prime Agricultural Land is included within these areas.
Definition	Specialty Agriculture Land	Provides optimum conditions for agricultural production due to unique factors including but not limited to soils, water supply, and climatic conditions. Specialty agriculture land may be located in prime agricultural areas and in all other agricultural areas.	Yes	Include definition that aligns with the definition in the RAMP.
Definition	All Other Agricultural Areas	Agricultural lands outside of prime agricultural areas.	Yes	Align the existing MDP term Rural Agriculture Area with the definition for All Other Agricultural Areas in the RAMP.
Definition	Agricultural Uses	Land uses directly associated with agriculture and includes buildings and structures accessory to and supportive of the activities.	Yes	Include definition that aligns with the definition in the RAMP.
Definition	Agriculture-related Uses	Are uses directly related to agriculture, primarily support agriculture, benefit from being in close proximity to agriculture and provide direct products and/or services to agriculture.	Yes	Include definition that aligns with the definition in the RAMP.
Definition	On-farm Diversified Uses	Are secondary uses and limited in area to the principal agricultural use and are compatible with the principal agricultural use and agricultural uses in the adjacent area. On-farm diversified uses may include but are not limited to home occupations, agri-tourism uses, and uses that produce value-added agricultural products.	Yes	Rename or add to existing MDP term Agriculture, Value-Added definition to align with the definition the RAMP.
Definition	Non-agricultural Uses	Land uses other than agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses or on-farm diversified uses.	Yes	Include definition that aligns with the definition in the RAMP.

Requirement Type	RCS Description	RCS Description Meaning	Will It Be Addressed in the MDP Update Project?	Action
Definition	Agri-Tourism Uses	Farm related tourism uses, including limited accommodation, direct-to-consumer sales, agricultural education, recreation and activities that involve observation and participation in the farming operations.	Yes	Modify existing MDP term to align with the definition in the RAMP, if necessary.
Definition	Value Added Agriculture	The addition of a process or service to an agricultural raw material being produced by the (farmer) producer. This may include some form of processing (such as milling, drying, cleaning, sorting, slaughtering, distilling, refining, or direct marketing through farm gate sales, farmers' markets or direct distribution).	Yes	Modify existing MDP term to align with the definition in the RAMP, if necessary.
Definition	Cluster Site	An area or node identified in the growth plan for growth such as a major, planned or local employment area, a rural or urban centre, growth hamlet or hamlet. A cluster site may also include a local agricultural services area designated under an area structure plan, or other existing areas with appropriate designation and/or districting.	Yes	Include definition that aligns with the definition in the RAMP.
Definition	Development	Means the same as Section 616 (b) of the Municipal Government Act RSA 2000 M-26, as amended.	Yes	No action required. Existing MDP Term aligns with RAMP and will be carried over.
Definition	Ecological Goods and Services	Ecological goods and services (EG&S) are the environmental benefits resulting from physical, chemical and biological functions of healthy ecosystems and include market goods produced from ecosystems (such as food, fibre, fuel, fresh water, genetic resources, etc.), the benefits from ecosystem processes, (ex: nutrient cycling, climate regulation, water purification, waste treatment, pollination, etc.) and non-material benefits (ex: aesthetic values, recreation, etc.).	Yes	Modify existing MDP term to align with the definition in the RAMP, if necessary.
Definition	Farmstead	Existing development, including a habitable dwelling, accessory buildings, and structures located in a rural area.	Yes	Include definition that aligns with the definition in the RAMP.
Definition	Generally Accepted Agricultural Practice	A practice that is conducted in a manner consistent with appropriate and accepted customs and standards as established and followed by similar agricultural operations under similar circumstances, and without restricting the generality of the foregoing includes the use of innovative technology used with advanced management practices.	Yes	Include definition that aligns with the definition in the RAMP.
Definition	Infrastructure	Infrastructure provides services related to, and including but not limited to, sewage, water, irrigation, storm water management, waste management, electricity (generation, transmission, and distribution), communications/telecommunications, broadband, transit and transportation modes (including road, rail, air, and airports), oil and gas pipelines and associated facilities.	Yes	Modify existing MDP term to align with the definition in the RAMP, if necessary.
Definition	Natural Capital	The land and water resources that anchor our quality of life and support economic activity including agriculture, forestry, recreation, tourism, and energy generation. It also includes resources – minerals, timber, oil and gas as well as the ecosystems – grasslands, wetlands, rivers and forests – that produce valuable ecological goods and services.	Yes	Modify existing MDP term to align with the definition in the RAMP, if necessary.
Definition	Urban Agriculture	Is the growing, processing, and distribution of food and other products through intensive plant cultivation and animal husbandry in and around cities.	Yes	Include definition that aligns with the definition in the RAMP.

RAMP Section	RCS Policy #	RCS Policy Description	Consistency Requirement (Taken from RAMP RCS Template)	Will It Be Addressed in the MDP Update Project?	MDP Update Project Action
Part 1 RAMP Framework, Policy Areas and Agricultural Areas					
Policy Definitions	Section 3.2	Twenty-three definitions as described on Page 32-34 of the RAMP	-	Yes.	Definitions will be updated to include new RAMP requirements. Please refer to Definitions table within this Regional Context Statement for a detailed response.
Identify relevant RAMP Policy Areas	Schedule B	Four Policy Areas: Rural Agriculture, Agriculture Co-exists with Other Land Uses, Agriculture in Future Transition Lands, and Urban Agriculture.	-	Yes	Mapping, definitions, and policies will be updated to be consistent with the four Policy Areas of the RAMP.
Identify relevant Prime Agricultural Areas	Section 3.2	As defined on Page 32 of the RAMP.	-	Yes	Identify Prime Agricultural Areas as defined by the RAMP.
Identify relevant All Other Agricultural Areas	Section 3.2	As defined on Page 33 of the RAMP.	-	Yes	Identify All Other Agricultural Areas as defined by the RAMP.
Part 2: RAMP Policies					
Policy Area 1	4.1.1	Agriculture is the priority land use in Policy Area 1	-	Yes	Agriculture will be the priority land use in Policy Area 1.
	4.1.2	Policies must be included in statutory plans to enable the continuation, development, and expansion of all types, sizes and intensities of agriculture throughout Policy Area 1.	-	Yes	Preserve and allow for the continuation, development, and expansion of agriculture in Policy Area 1.
	4.1.3	Agricultural uses that follow generally accepted agricultural practices must be able to operate in suitable locations without being unduly encumbered or hindered by non-agricultural development, or by adjacent land uses in neighbouring Policy Areas.	-	Yes	Include the right to farm for generally accepted agricultural practices.
	4.1.4	Prime agricultural lands will be conserved in Prime Agricultural Areas to provide a secure, long-term local food source for future generations.	-	Yes	Align the existing MDP's definitions and mapping locations of Prime Agriculture Areas with those of the RAMP, as well as incorporate the RAMP's description of Prime Agricultural Lands.
	4.1.5	Prime Agricultural Areas and all other agriculture areas will be informed by the outcomes of the Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) tool and designated in statutory plans	*Designation of Prime Agricultural Areas*	Yes	Use the outcomes of the LESA tool to inform the designation of Prime Agricultural Areas and All Other Agricultural Areas.
	4.1.6	Specialty agricultural land may be identified in either Prime Agricultural Areas or in all other agricultural areas.	-	Yes	Consider specific policies to enhance and encourage Specialty Agriculture within designated Prime Agricultural Areas and Policy Area 1.
	4.1.7	Two or more municipalities that share a prime agricultural area(s) must coordinate the designation of the area to recognize the geographic continuity.	*Identification of relevant areas*	Yes	Coordinate the alignment of Prime Agricultural Area(s) with neighbouring municipalities.
	4.1.8	Agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses, value-added agriculture uses, and on-farm diversified uses are supported throughout Policy Area 1.	-	Yes	Include policies that allow for agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses, value-added agriculture uses, and on-farm diversified uses to be supported throughout Policy Area 1.
	4.1.9	Notwithstanding Policy 8, agriculture-related uses and value-added agriculture uses must not hinder agricultural operations in the surrounding area.	-	Yes	Include policies regarding compatible uses for traditional, agriculture-related, and value-added agriculture.
	4.1.10	Agriculture-related uses and value-added agriculture uses should be directed to lower capability agricultural lands when possible.	-	Yes	Evaluate areas that are best suited to agriculture related and value-added agricultural uses while preserving the best agriculture lands for traditional operations.
	4.1.11	Development of agriculture-related uses and value-added agriculture uses should minimize the amount of agricultural land taken out of production.	-	Yes	See response to 4.1.10. Policies will be included that minimize the amount of land being taken out of production.
	4.1.12	Consideration should be given to directing agriculture-related, and value-added agricultural uses to cluster sites.	*Identification of cluster sites*	Yes	A Technical Growth Study is being undertaken that will identify the most suitable sites for agri-business and value-added agricultural nodes and corridors.
	4.1.13	Non-agricultural uses are discouraged in Prime Agricultural Areas.	-	Yes	Prioritize agricultural uses within Prime Agricultural Areas and Policy Area 1.
	4.1.14	Non-agricultural uses may be considered in all other agricultural areas and should be minimized to maintain agriculture as the priority land use pursuant to Policy Area 1.	*Designation of All Other Agricultural Areas*	Yes	Prioritize agricultural uses within Prime Agricultural Areas and Policy Area 1.
	4.1.15	Consideration should be given to directing non-agricultural uses to lower capability land, where possible or to cluster sites.	-	Yes	A Technical Growth Study will identify the most suitable sites for non-agricultural uses.
	4.1.16	In Prime Agricultural Areas, development of in-situ, resource-based economic assets such as coal, sand and/or gravel, marl, and peat may be considered. Reclamation of lands after resource-based activities must be to a soil rating equivalent to or higher than its original state.	-	Yes	Review best practices for resource extraction and create policy that aligns with the provincial reclamation requirements, that may include returning the lands to equal or better soil classification if the lands are located within Policy Area 1.
	4.1.17	In Prime Agricultural Areas, other non-agricultural uses may only be considered, preferably on lower capability land if it can be demonstrated that other locations in all other agricultural areas or at cluster sites are not feasible. An Agricultural Impact Assessment is required to confirm the proposed use will not hinder the agricultural operations in the surrounding area.	-	Yes	Prioritize agricultural uses within Prime Agricultural Areas and Policy Area 1 and address Agricultural Impact Assessment requirements for non-agricultural uses.

RAMP Section	RCS Policy #	RCS Policy Description	Consistency Requirement (Taken from RAMP RCS Template)	Will It Be Addressed in the MDP Update Project?	MDP Update Project Action
Policy Area 1	4.1.18a	Prime Ag: Subdivision of a residential parcel for an existing farmstead should be considered.	*Identify MDP subdivision policy and how RAMP subdivision criteria will be implemented*	Yes	Evaluate the effectiveness of the existing policies on farmsteads subdivisions and ensure that they are working as the RAMP intends.
	4.1.18b	Prime Ag: Subdivision of land for agriculture, agriculture-related, and value-added agriculture uses may be considered.	*Identify MDP subdivision policy and how RAMP subdivision criteria will be implemented*	Yes	Create policies that may consider the subdivision of lands for various agricultural uses within Prime Agricultural and Priority 1 areas.
	4.1.18c	Prime Ag: Subdivision for a new residential parcel from a quarter section with no existing residential use may be considered subject to Policy 15.	*Identify MDP subdivision policy and how RAMP subdivision criteria will be implemented*	Yes	Create policies that allow for the subdivision of lands for residential purposes within Prime Agricultural and Priority 1 areas only where the appropriate.
	4.1.18d	Prime Ag: Subdivision for non-agricultural uses is discouraged and may only be considered subject to Policies 15 and 17.	*Identify MDP subdivision policy and how RAMP subdivision criteria will be implemented*	Yes	A Technical Growth Study will identify the most suitable sites for non-agricultural uses.
	4.1.18e	Subdivision of a residential parcel for an existing farmstead should be considered.	*Identify MDP subdivision policy and how RAMP subdivision criteria will be implemented*	Yes	Evaluate the effectiveness of the existing policies on farmsteads subdivisions and ensure that they are working as the RAMP intends.
	4.1.18f	Subdivision of land for agriculture, agriculture-related, and value-added agriculture uses may be considered.	*Identify MDP subdivision policy and how RAMP subdivision criteria will be implemented*	Yes	Consider policies for the subdivision of lands for various agricultural uses within Prime Agricultural and Priority 1 areas.
	4.1.18g	Subdivision for a new residential parcel from a quarter section with no existing residential use may be considered subject to Policy 15.	*Identify MDP subdivision policy and how RAMP subdivision criteria will be implemented*	Yes	Consider policies for the subdivision of lands for residential purposes within Policy Area 1.
	4.1.18h	Subdivision for non-agricultural uses may be considered subject to Policy 15.	*Identify MDP subdivision policy and how RAMP subdivision criteria will be implemented*	Yes	A Technical Growth Study will identify the most suitable sites for non-agricultural uses.
	4.1.19	Subdivision of agricultural land should result in parcels sized appropriately for the type of agriculture use(s) common in the area and sufficiently large to maintain flexibility for future changes in the type or size of agricultural operations.	-	Yes	Include policies that allow for appropriate parcel sizes and a variety of agricultural uses.
	4.1.20	Subdivision for any purpose should minimize the amount of agricultural land taken out of production and must not hinder the operation of surrounding agricultural land uses.	-	Yes	Include policies that minimize the amount of agricultural land being taken out of production and protects the right to farm.
	4.1.21	Consideration must be given to directing subdivision for agriculture-related, value-added and non-agricultural land uses to cluster sites and wherever possible to lower capability land.	-	Yes	A Technical Growth Study will identify the most suitable sites for non-agricultural uses.
	4.1.22	Subdivision policies for Prime Agricultural Areas apply to specialty agriculture land.	-	Yes	Align subdivision policies for Prime Agricultural Areas and Specialty Agriculture Land.
Policy Area 2	4.2.1	Agricultural lands co-exist with existing designated land uses and shall remain in agricultural use until required for conversion.	-	Yes	Include policies to allow for agricultural land uses to remain until required for conversion to the designated land use.
	4.2.2	Reclaimed lands should be rehabilitated for agriculture uses. Where it may be more appropriate, reclaimed lands may be rehabilitated for environmental or ecological purposes, or for commercial, industrial, institutional or recreational uses that can leverage existing infrastructure.	-	Yes	Review best practices for resource extraction and align with the provincial remediation requirements that may include returning the lands to agricultural purposes in Policy Area 2. The County will also consider the value addition of reclaimed coal mine lands for other uses that leverage existing infrastructure and built landscapes.
	4.2.3	When applications are made to re-designate and/or re-district non agricultural lands, consideration must be given to re-designating and/or re-districting the lands for agricultural uses.	-	Yes	Work with Land Use Bylaw ReDesign Project to ensure that policies and regulations that consider redistricting to agricultural uses during redistricting applications.
	4.2.4	Agriculture related and value-added agriculture uses may be considered but must not hinder the operation of agricultural uses in the surrounding area, nor hinder the development of a designated non-agricultural use.	-	Yes	Include policies that ensure surrounding land uses are not negatively impacted by agriculture related or value-added developments.
	4.2.5	Existing agricultural uses shall be given consideration to be kept as an existing land use within statutory plans.	-	Yes	Include policies that protect the right to farm.
	4.2.6	Encourage public education about the daily and seasonal operational needs of agriculture and agricultural operators, fostering awareness, understanding and reducing potential land use conflicts.	-	Yes	Public education will be reflected in agricultural policies.
Policy Area 3	4.3.1	Agricultural lands in Policy Area 3 will remain in agriculture use until the lands are needed for population and/or employment growth.	-	Yes	Include policies to allow for agricultural land uses to remain until required for conversion to the designated land use.
	4.3.2	Subdivision and development should be limited to maintain large parcel sizes to support ongoing agricultural uses until the lands are needed for population and/or employment growth.	-	Yes	Include policies that minimize the amount of agricultural land being taken out of production and protects the right to farm.
	4.3.3	Until the lands are needed for population and/or growth, agricultural producers must have access to their agricultural lands to farm their lands. This includes but is not limited to maintaining field approaches and local roads sufficient to accommodate agricultural machinery.	-	Yes	Maintain the right to farm and consider potential land use and infrastructure conflicts that could affect agricultural access when evaluating areas for future growth.
	4.3.4	Consideration must be given to public education about the daily and seasonal operational needs of agriculture and agricultural operators, to increase awareness and understanding and reduce conflict.	-	Yes	Public education will be reflected in agricultural policies.
	4.3.5	Existing agricultural uses shall be given consideration to be kept as an existing land use supported by an urban agriculture plan.	-	Yes	Allow agricultural uses in Policy Area 3, and consider forming policies relating to Urban Agriculture Plans.

RAMP Section	RCS Policy #	RCS Policy Description	Consistency Requirement (Taken from RAMP RCS Template)	Will It Be Addressed in the MDP Update Project?	MDP Update Project Action
Policy Area 4	4.4.1	Urban agriculture plans will be prepared for each member municipality with an urban or rural center and is encouraged for Hamlets with a minimum population of 500. (See Appendix A – Urban Agriculture Plan Guidelines).	*Identify the requirement for an Urban Agriculture Plan*	Yes	Consider forming policies relating to Urban Agriculture Plans.
	4.4.2	Existing agricultural uses shall be given consideration to be kept as an existing land use and supported by an urban agriculture plan.	*Identify potential operations for consideration*	Yes	Allow agricultural uses in Policy Area 4 until development requires the land for other uses, and consider forming policies relating to Urban Agriculture Plans.
	4.4.3	Policies must be included in statutory plans to enable urban agriculture in suitable locations throughout Policy Area 4.	-	Yes	Allow agricultural uses in Policy Area 4 until development requires the land for other uses, and promote urban agriculture in suitable locations.
	4.4.4	Value-added agriculture uses will be considered in this policy area.	-	Yes	Design policies to ensure that value added agriculture can exist within Policy Area 4.
Implementation	5.1.1	Soil should be recognized as a limited non-renewable resource and managed accordingly.	-	Yes	Include language that refers to soil as a limited, non-renewable resource.
	5.1.2	Soil management, including its reuse and recycling, should be considered as part of an area structure plan for greenfield areas.	-	Yes	Consider more direct language related to soil management for Area Structure Plans in greenfield areas.
	5.1.3	Soils should be managed in the municipality in which they originate. Where soils are exported to another municipality, the municipality in which the soils originated is encouraged to engage with the municipality receiving the soil to ensure effective soil management.	-	Yes	Include language that addresses intermunicipal soil management.
	5.2.1	The policies and outcomes of RAMP and all other policies in the growth plan to achieve responsible growth, will be considered, as part of the EMRB 5-year interim review of the growth plan, specifically to:	-	-	See below response to each sub-policy for RAMP Section 5.2.1.
	5.2.1a	Complete a regional growth study to update and inform the rate of land consumption. The results of the regional growth study will consider the alignment of the metropolitan area policy line in conjunction with RAMP policy area 3. The resulting analysis should strive for a no net increase in land within the metropolitan area policy tier of the regional growth plan to 2044;	-	Yes	Parkland County is a participant in the EMRB 5-Year Interim Review and will incorporate knowledge from that review into the MDP Project. The MDP Project is also conducting it's own Technical Growth Study to determine the expected rate of land consumption and potential growth scenarios.
	5.2.1b	The regional growth study should inform the identification of thresholds for % build out of area structure plans and infill development before new lands (unplanned /greenfield) are considered for development to conserve agricultural lands for as long as possible and ensure responsible growth. (Includes both residential and non-residential); and	-	Yes	Parkland County is a participant in the EMRB 5-Year Interim Review and will incorporate knowledge from that review into the MDP Project. The MDP Project is also conducting it's own Technical Growth Study to determine the expected rate of land consumption and potential growth scenarios. Threshold percentages for when it's acceptable to move into agricultural lands for future greenfield development will be considered.
	5.2.1c	The regional growth study should inform the direction of future growth in the Region, in all policy areas, to protect prime agricultural lands identified through the EMR LESA analysis, for as long as possible, and in accordance with the objectives for each policy area.	-	Yes	Parkland County is a participant in the EMRB 5-Year Interim Review and will incorporate knowledge from that review into the MDP Project. The MDP Project is also conducting it's own Technical Growth Study and will create a Development Concept that relies on the LESA tool to modify the existing Prime Agriculture Areas to align with the EMRB's intent for prime lands. Preservation of Prime Agricultural Lands is a priority.
	5.2.2	Update RAMP Objective 6.1 to broaden the scope to include the global opportunity to supply food, fiber and fuel.	-	No	This Policy is about updating the RAMP in future revisions and not about updating the County's MDP to align with the RAMP. The MDP Project will not incorporate direction or guidance for future RAMP updates.
	5.2.3	Member municipalities will be responsible to ensure compatible land uses are achieved, particularly in areas where agricultural uses and non-agricultural uses interface. Mitigation measures shall be incorporated within the area being developed to reduce conflicts.	-	Yes	Promote responsible growth and compatible land uses wherever possible, and direct development of uses that are not compatible with agriculture to Hamlets and Employment Nodes.
	5.2.4	Member municipalities shall strive for reclaimed lands to benefit the agricultural system as a priority in all policy areas with appropriate consideration for the environment, land, water resources and surrounding agricultural operations.	-	Yes	Review the latest best practices for resource extraction and align with the provincial remediation requirements.
	5.2.5	Member municipalities shall be responsible to ensure compatibility and connectivity to natural areas. Particularly in areas where agricultural uses and non-agricultural uses interface. Consider the ecological integration of biodiversity, wildlife corridors and conservation of ecological areas. Mitigation measures may include buffers / setbacks between agriculture and natural areas including water features (rivers, streams, and lakes) to protect water quality and mitigate the effects of climate change.	-	Yes	Base the new Development Concept off of data and stakeholder input gathered during the Technical Growth Study phase (and future engagement phases). Take into account environmentally significant areas, natural infrastructure opportunities, and prioritizing connectivity and compatibility with natural areas.
	5.3.1	Member municipalities are encouraged to implement strategies to support and enhance the agricultural system when undertaking integrated planning for growth management, including goods movement and transportation planning and identify priority infrastructure to enable growth in agri-foods and value-added agriculture. Ensuring any adverse impacts to the agricultural system are avoided, or if avoidance is not possible, efforts are applied to minimize and mitigate impacts.	-	Yes	Consider land use compatibility and transportation and infrastructure requirements when looking at growth areas for agri-business. Protect high-capability soils and promote agri-business in areas that are the most likely to succeed in attracting responsible growth.

RAMP Section	RCS Policy #	RCS Policy Description	Consistency Requirement (Taken from RAMP RCS Template)	Will It Be Addressed in the MDP Update Project?	MDP Update Project Action
Implementation	5.3.2	Member municipalities are encouraged to support the growth and development of agricultural and agri-food sectors by:	-	-	See below response to each sub-policy for RAMP Section 5.3.2.
	5.3.2a	Considering the impacts on the agricultural system when municipal decisions are made on investments, growth, infrastructure, programs, policies, bylaws and services;	-	Yes	Prioritize the continued use of lands with the different RAMP Policy Areas for agricultural purposes, promote responsible growth and complimentary land uses wherever possible, and direct development of non-compatible uses to Hamlets and Employment Nodes.
	5.3.2b	Review and align economic development and tourism strategies with opportunities to promote agriculture and elevate the agri-food sector and a vibrant food culture in the Region contributing to a sense of community connection and placemaking. (e.g. Open Farm Days, Support Local Food hubs, Farm to Fork connections, cultural diversity and heritage);	-	Yes	Recognize that agricultural pursuits are a key long-term industry to the County, with increasing agri-tourism being a major focus. New or updated policies will reflect this.
	5.3.2c	Adopt an agricultural lens as part of urban planning: to ensure water conservation/ reclamation/ recharge and encourage a range of approaches to support various forms of agriculture;	-	Yes	Adopt an agricultural lens when updating and/or creating new policies around water usage.
	5.3.2d	Member municipalities are encouraged to adopt policies fostering "buy local" first approach, including procurement of food and landscaping products;	-	Yes	Engage with the County's Economic Diversification team to ensure that the MDP Project incorporates policies that promote existing and future agriculture related local businesses.
	5.3.2e	Recognize urban agriculture as a land use contributing to municipal resiliency and sustainability helping to mitigate the effects of climate change; and	-	Yes	Continue allowing agricultural uses in Policy Area 4 until development requires the land for other uses. Consider forming policies relating to Urban Agriculture Plans. Add policies related to natural infrastructure and resiliency , which can relate to urban agriculture.
	5.3.2f	Recognize and celebrate the diverse populations that contribute to the heritage and culture of the Region.	-	Yes	Consider more direct language for preserving and celebrating the County's cultural and heritage diversity.
	5.3.3	Member municipalities are encouraged to support the long-term economic prosperity and viability of agriculture and the agri-food sector, for example through:	-	-	See below response to each sub-policy for RAMP Section 5.3.3.
	5.3.3a	Integrate agricultural economic development, infrastructure, goods movement and freight considerations with land use planning;	-	Yes	Include land use compatibility and transportation and infrastructure requirements when looking at growth areas for agri-business. Protect high-capability soils and promote agri-business in areas that are the most likely to succeed in attracting responsible growth.
	5.3.3b	Encourage clustering diversified and value-added agriculture to create efficiencies, synergies and economies of scale in support of the growth of the sector;	-	Yes	Identify growth nodes and corridors suitable for agri-business and value added uses.
	5.3.3c	Support new forms of agriculture enabled through technology and innovation;	-	Yes	Include land use policies that support agriculture related technology and innovation over the 30 year life span of the plan.
	5.3.3d	Engage with producers and agri-food experts, forming advisory committees; and	-	Yes	Coordinate with internal and external agriculture experts and the County Council's Agriculture Services Committee. Support the Council Committee and other agriculture initiatives will be incorporated as necessary.
	5.3.3e	Providing outreach and education opportunities to promote the sector and local food connection.	-	Yes	Public education will be reflected in agricultural policies.
	5.3.4	Member municipalities are encouraged to adopt policies, incentives and to identify partnerships to leverage agriculture as a source of renewable energy, bio-mass energy, and /or carbon sequestration.	-	Yes	Include policies that reflect the findings of the Technical Growth Study and public / stakeholder engagement regarding agriculture as a source of renewable energy, bio-mass energy, and /or carbon sequestration.
	5.3.5	Member municipalities are encouraged to develop a regional approach to addressing the disposal of agricultural waste and municipal waste management services to increase composting, lower costs, and divert organics from landfills.	-	Yes	Update waste and recycling policies to reflect current concerns regarding agricultural waste management among regional partners.