

Tri-Municipal Region MoU on Environmental Sustainability Initiatives and Planning
MoU and Proposed Implementation Approach
March 2012

Background

Over the last few decades the concept of sustainability has slowly moved up the municipal agenda to the point that it has become a major priority for both rural and urban municipalities today. This national trend is well reflected in our region – indeed all three municipalities have developed, as a result of their own initiative, sustainability plans for their respective jurisdictions.

However, since many of the sustainability challenges we face as individual municipalities spill over beyond our borders, we have realized that there is a need to begin discussing ways we can address these challenges in a more coordinated manner. To begin this discussion, this MoU focuses on working together on environmental sustainability initiatives and planning where synergies exist. At some future point it may make sense to expand this MoU into other components of sustainability. This MoU is expected to provide two major benefits to the region:

1. Initiatives and sustainability planning will have more impact if implemented on a region-wide basis rather than on a smaller scale
2. More effective use of limited resources

The governments of the Tri-Municipal Region have a strong history of working together to promote the common interests of the region, and this is an attempt to extend this cooperative relationship to the realm of environmental sustainability. In sum, we believe that by strengthening our cooperative relationship we will be better positioned to address those sustainability challenges we face on a regional basis.

Adopted Environmental Sustainability Plans and Strategies in the Tri-Municipal Region

Town of Stony Plain	Community Sustainability Plan http://www.stonyplain.com/admin/contentx/default.cfm?PageId=9105 Environmental Stewardship Strategy http://www.stonyplain.com/admin/contentx/default.cfm?PageId=9141
County of Parkland	Integrated Community Sustainability Strategy http://www.parklandcounty.com/What_is_New/Current_Projects_and_Initiatives/Integrated_Community_Sustainability_Plan.htm
City of Spruce Grove	Sustainability-based Municipal Development Plan www.sprucegrove.org/yourbrightfuture Environmental Sustainability Action Plan http://www.sprucegrove.org/Assets/pdf/plans/env_action_plan.pdf

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

For exploring an increased level of cooperation between Parkland County, the Town of Stony Plain and the City of Spruce Grove with respect to environmental sustainability initiatives and planning.

Entered into as of the ____ Day of ____, 2012.

Parties:

Parkland County, AB
The Town of Stony Plain, AB
The City of Spruce Grove, AB

As representatives of the City of Spruce Grove, the Town of Stony Plain, and of Parkland County, we acknowledge society's desire to create a stable sustainable future. We further acknowledge that such a future is not certain. It will take the good will and determined work of many individuals and organizations as well as an increased level of cooperation between our municipalities to achieve this goal.

We are proud to be part of a community as rich in natural amenities, economic opportunities, and social possibilities as the Tri-Municipal Region, and to be working on behalf of a future in which our economy, environment, society and governance are integrated in ways that foster vibrant communities, strong economies, and healthy ecosystems. To that end, we commit ourselves to creating conditions necessary for a sustainable future. As a first step towards reaching this future end-point, we initially commit to focusing our attention and resources on the environmental component of sustainability. Expansion of this MoU to include the economic, governance, and social/cultural aspects of sustainability could be considered at some future date.

By seeking innovative and flexible solutions to the challenges that confront us, by sharing our knowledge, and by working together, we strive to explore:

- Initiatives of shared interest and the possibility of establishing cooperative arrangements for individual initiatives where and when it makes sense to do so.
- The possibility of establishing a commonly-held definition of Sustainability.
- The potential of establishing a shared regional sustainability planning framework.

We commit to working together to explore our options and to select the path that will be in the best interest of each community, and of the region as a whole as we shift towards a more sustainable way of life.

Implementation Strategy

Three components form the basis for advancing this discussion following the adoption of the MoU and its Terms of Reference by each of councils in the Tri-Municipal Region.

1. Responsibility for advancing the MoU will rest with the Tri-Municipal Region Environmental Sustainability Working Group. Chief Administrative Officers will designate members of administration from their respective communities to participate in the Working Group. It is recommended that members be selected based on their experience with and responsibility for implementing environmental sustainability initiatives within their respective municipality. This Working Group will come into effect with the adoption of the MoU.
2. On-going communication with Council, senior administration, and members of the public to collect input on proposed initiatives will occur through existing channels of communication within each municipality.
3. Annual updates to the assembled councils on MoU progress by the Working Group.

Draft Terms of Reference
Tri-Municipal Region Environmental Sustainability Working Group
January 2012

1. Purpose

To advance the Tri-Municipal Region Memorandum on Environmental Sustainability Initiatives and Planning.

2. Background

The governments of the Tri-Municipal Region, Parkland County, the Town of Stony Plain, and the City of Spruce Grove, have a strong history of working together to promote the common interests of the region. Recent years have demonstrated increasingly that sustainability challenges spill over municipal borders and require cooperation amongst neighbouring communities. The purpose of the MoU on Environmental Sustainability Initiatives and Planning is to facilitate this cooperation.

This MoU is expected to provide two major benefits to the region:

- Initiatives and sustainability planning will have more impact if implemented on a region-wide basis rather than on a smaller scale
- More effective use of limited resources

3. Role of the Working Group

The Working Group is responsible for advancing the MoU on Environmental Sustainability Initiatives and Planning. This includes exploring:

- Initiatives of shared interest and the possibility of establishing cooperative arrangements for individual initiatives where and when it makes sense to do so.
- The possibility of establishing a commonly-held definition of sustainability.
- The potential of establishing a shared regional sustainability planning framework.

Members of the Working Group also are responsible for engaging in on-going communication with Council, senior administration, and members of the public to collect input on proposed initiatives as required. This will occur through existing channels of communication within each municipality. Input received through this process will be incorporated into Working Group discussions.

4. Composition of the Group

City Mangers will designate members of administration from their respective communities to participate in the Working Group. It is recommended that members be selected based on their experience with and responsibility for implementing environmental sustainability initiatives within their respective municipality.

5. Meetings and Documentation

Meetings are held quarterly and/or on an as needed basis. The location will rotate between each municipality. Meeting outcomes will be documented by a rotating secretary. Formal records will be held by Parkland County.

6. Working Group Term

The Working Group will come into effect with the adoption of the MoU and its Terms of Reference. Its function will be reviewed regularly in the context of the MoU for on-going relevance and effectiveness and will be dissolved as appropriate.

7. Reporting

The Working Group will report on MoU progress to the assembled councils on an annual basis.