



February 13, 2025

Hon. Ric McIver
Minister of Municipal Affairs
10800 – 97 Avenue NW
Edmonton, AB T5KJ 2B6
minister.municipalaffairs@gov.ab.ca

To the Honorable Ric McIver:

RE: Edmonton Growth Board Dissolution

BILD Edmonton Metro is a non-profit organization representing over 500 companies in the building and development industry. Our members are committed to shaping our region to ensure more people and businesses choose to live, invest, and thrive here.

As you are aware, a series of events over the last 3 months has led to a vote by the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) members to discontinue the organization. Our members are concerned that the dissolution of the EMRB, following the announcement that this Board would no longer receive Provincial funding and membership would be voluntary, will lead to additional red tape and uncertainty for land use and development in the region. We are hopeful that this risk can be reduced through changes to the *Municipal Government Act* and associated regulations.

In absence of the Growth Plan, municipalities will need to produce Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks (ICFs) and Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDPs) according to the regulations under the *Municipal Government Act*. Only municipalities that belong to a growth management board are exempt from these additional layers of planning. Given the number of new plans that will be required, this means additional time, staff resources taken away from other planning activities, and additional costs for consultants of various forms to negotiate these plans with the former EMRB municipalities.

The additional layers of regulatory frameworks, and variety of unique boundary conditions they will produce in the Edmonton metro region via the required creation and implementation of ICFs and IDPs, is concerning from a red tape and efficiency perspective. The rapid growth experienced in Alberta has been concentrated in the large cities, and competition for new development – and sometimes disagreement – is inevitable. The appeal tool within the EMRB, which saw reviews of plans within 25 working days and an appeal period of 28 days, followed by a hearing at the next Board meeting, was at times contentious. However, those timelines meant that disputes could ostensibly be resolved within approximately 3 months.



The replacement process, which will see the Land and Property Rights Tribunal resolve appeals, is trending closer to 6-12 months, with the added risk that the Tribunal can set conditions that neither party requests.

As a worst-case scenario, some municipal boundary areas could be sterilized for a period of time due to uncertainty about bringing forward development and enduring appeals. This occurred in the past when the City of Edmonton appealed Strathcona County's Municipal Development Plan, and while it was under appeal, no development was allowed in the plan area (see MGB order 098/08). In addition, affected parties spent millions of dollars on the costs of the appeal process.

We ask that Municipal Affairs address the introduction of red tape that has inadvertently taken place. This includes addressing requirements for additional planning, a variety of regulatory documents with varying conditions, and increased timelines to resolve disputes under the *Municipal Government Act*. Without some clear messaging to the land development industry on next steps, we will see reduced certainty and lowered investor confidence, and growth in an area like Edmonton metro with so many municipalities in close proximity will take more time and money than under the previous growth board.

Thank you for your consideration. I am available to discuss opportunities to provide clarity on next steps and quell the uncertainty surrounding the changes in regional planning and cooperation with our industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kalen Anderson".

Kalen Anderson, RPP, MCIP
CEO
BILD Edmonton Metro

CC: Katrina Rowe, BILD Edmonton Metro Chair
Lindsey Butterfield, Vice President, BILD Edmonton Metro
Scott Fash, CEO, BILD Alberta