

Implementation Guidelines for Priority Growth Areas (PGAs)

1. WHAT IS A PGA?

The Capital Region Growth Plan defines Priority Growth Areas (PGAs) as:

Locations where growth is directed, including major employment areas, due to existing or planned multi modal transportation corridors, the proximity to existing or proposed major employment areas, the redevelopment or intensification opportunities within an existing urban area, and the ability to utilize and maximize existing infrastructure or logically and efficiently extend that infrastructure.

The intent of the Growth Plan is to concentrate most new growth that is expected to occur within the Region over a 35-year time horizon in identified PGAs. By identifying PGAs, the Region can make efficient use of existing and new infrastructure investments. By focusing most new growth in PGAs, and through the implementation of residential density targets, the Region is also moving toward reducing the regional development footprint (the amount of land consumed by development and infrastructure); a core principle of the Growth Plan.

Figure 1: Priority Growth Areas and Cluster Country Residential Areas of the October 2009 Addendum to the Growth Plan (Section 2: Land Use), identifies seven PGAs within the Capital Region. The municipalities of Beaumont, Edmonton, Fort Saskatchewan, Leduc, Spruce Grove, St. Albert and Stony Plain, and portions of Leduc County, Parkland County, Strathcona County (including Sherwood Park), and Sturgeon County have lands within PGAs.

PGA boundaries do not follow municipal boundaries and are defined at the regional level of the Growth Plan. This approach allows significant land uses and infrastructure to be considered at the regional level, most notably transit corridors that cross jurisdictional boundaries, and also encourages regional partnerships among Capital Region Board (CRB) member municipalities.

2. ARE THE DENSITY TARGETS ASSIGNED TO PGAS TO BE ACHIEVED IN THE 35 YEAR TIME HORIZON OF THE CAPITAL REGION GROWTH PLAN?

The Capital Region Growth Plan intends that residential growth within PGAs will reach the approved density target for the PGA over the 35-year horizon of the Growth Plan. Member municipalities will achieve the density target assigned to PGAs located within their boundaries through the amendment, adoption and implementation of statutory plans.

Density for PGAs is measured by net residential area (NRA) which is defined in the Growth Plan as the land required for residential purposes within a residential neighbourhood. This excludes environmental and municipal reserve, roadways (including local, collector and arterial), public utilities, stormwater management facilities, and commercial, industrial, and institutional lands.

Density targets for PGAs are listed in *Table 3: Capital Region Density Targets* of the October 2009 Addendum to the Growth Plan (Section 2: Land Use).

3. DOES EVERY DEVELOPMENT PLAN WITHIN A PGA HAVE TO MEET THE DENSITY TARGET ASSIGNED TO THAT PGA?

It is the intent of the Capital Region Growth Plan that every municipal statutory development plan over time will meet the density target assigned to its respective PGA. Each plan must demonstrate how it will achieve the target. The planned future density by municipality before the application of density targets, as shown in *Appendix B (Table 2)* of the October 2009 Addendum to the Growth Plan (Section 2: Land Use), will be used as a benchmark.

4. WHAT ARE THE LAND USE CHARACTERISTICS OF A PGA?

A PGA will include a broad mix of residential land use types developed at high densities to achieve the assigned density target. Municipalities will encourage higher residential densities, redevelopment and intensification opportunities within existing urban areas, and the efficient use of infrastructure.

Municipalities with major transit stations may promote transit-oriented development to assist them in achieving the assigned density target. Transit-oriented development also aligns with Policy 2.2.III.C of the Capital Region Growth Plan (March 2009) by creating communities with increased densities to support public transit at the local and regional level and increasing accessibility to key transit facilities.

Exhibit 1: Example of Residential Statutory Plans for Assigned Priority Growth Area Density Targets, next page, illustrates a potential mix of residential land uses that, with varying densities, could achieve three of the assigned density targets.

5. WHAT LANDS IN THE ABOVE MUNICIPALITIES ARE WITHIN PGAs?

The conceptual boundaries of Priority Growth Areas (PGAs) presented in the October 2009 Addendum to the Capital Region Growth Plan (Section 2: Land Use) may not necessarily represent logical planning units at the municipal level. Therefore, a set of interpretive clauses has been developed to help determine the logical location of the PGA boundaries, thereby determining which particular lands are within PGAs.

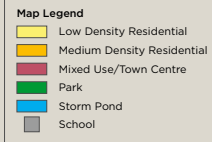
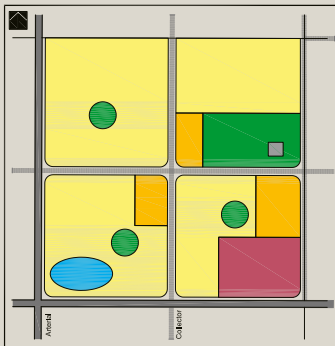
These interpretive clauses are based on similar language used by municipalities across the Region in their Land Use Bylaws. The clauses are intended to be used by municipal representatives (administrators and elected officials) for making local land use planning decisions and also providing direction to landowners and developers within their jurisdictions.

Figure 1: Priority Growth Areas and Country Residential Areas of the October 2009 Addendum to the Growth Plan (Section 2: Land Use) depicts the general location of PGAs and Cluster Country Residential Areas (CCRAs) within the Capital Region. The boundary location for PGAs may be determined by applying the following interpretive clauses:

1. where a PGA boundary is shown as approximately following the centre of existing or future highways, regional roads, municipal roads or other public thoroughfares, the PGA boundary should be considered as following the centre line of these roads;
2. where a PGA boundary is shown as approximately following the edge or shorelines of waterways (e.g., rivers or creeks) or other bodies of water (e.g., lakes), the PGA boundary should be considered as following the edge or shoreline, and in the event of change in such edge or shoreline, the PGA boundary should move with the same;

EXHIBIT 1: EXAMPLE OF RESIDENTIAL STATUTORY PLANS FOR ASSIGNED PRIORITY GROWTH AREA DENSITY TARGETS

25-35 dwelling units / net residential Hectare



Low Density - Single Detached Dwelling



Low Density - Semi-Detached Dwelling



Medium Density - Row Housing



Medium Density - Low Rise Apartment



Mixed Use - Low Rise Apartment

residential land use statistics

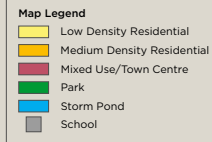
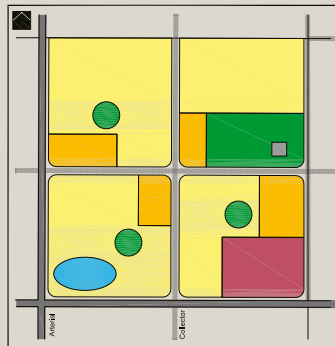
total net residential	41.4 ha
Low Density	32.6 ha
Medium Density	4.2 ha
Mixed Use/Town Centre	4.6 ha
total residential units	1,065
Low Density (20 du/NRha)	652
Medium Density (60 du/NRha)	252
Mixed Use/Town Centre (35 du/NRha)	161
average density	26
total Population	2,864
Low Density (3.2 p/du)	2,086
Medium Density (2.0 p/du)	504
Mixed Use/Town Centre (1.7 p/du)	274

du/NRha - dwelling/units per net residential hectare
p/du - persons per dwelling unit

residential land use ratios

total units	100%
Low Density	61%
Medium Density & Mixed Use/Town Centre	39%
total Population	100%
Low Density	73%
Medium Density & Mixed Use/Town Centre	27%
total area	100%
Low Density	79%
Medium Density & Mixed Use/Town Centre	21%

30-35 dwelling units / net residential Hectare



Low Density - Single Detached Dwelling



Medium Density - Row Housing



Medium Density - Stacked Housing



Medium Density - Low Rise Apartment



Mixed Use - Mid Rise Apartment

residential land use statistics

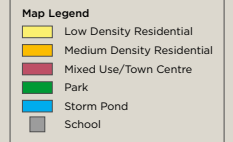
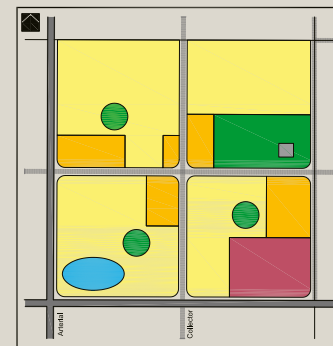
total net residential	41.4 ha
Low Density	30.9 ha
Medium Density	5.9 ha
Mixed Use/Town Centre	4.6 ha
total residential units	1,340
Low Density (20 du/NRha)	618
Medium Density (60 du/NRha)	354
Mixed Use/Town Centre (80 du/NRha)	368
average density	32
total Population	3,312
Low Density (3.2 p/du)	1,978
Medium Density (2.0 p/du)	708
Mixed Use/Town Centre (1.7 p/du)	626

du/NRha - dwelling/units per net residential hectare
p/du - persons per dwelling unit

residential land use ratios

total units	100%
Low Density	46%
Medium Density & Mixed Use/Town Centre	54%
total Population	100%
Low Density	60%
Medium Density & Mixed Use/Town Centre	40%
total area	100%
Low Density	75%
Medium Density & Mixed Use/Town Centre	25%

35+ dwelling units / net residential Hectare



Low Density - Semi-Detached Dwelling



Medium Density - Fourplex



Medium Density - Low Rise Apartment



Town Centre - Mid Rise Apartment



Mixed Use - High Rise Apartment

residential land use statistics

total net residential	41.4 ha
Low Density	30.4 ha
Medium Density	6.4 ha
Mixed Use/Town Centre	4.6 ha
total residential units	1,682
Low Density (20 du/NRha)	608
Medium Density (60 du/NRha)	384
Mixed Use/Town Centre (150 du/NRha)	690
average density	41
total Population	3,887
Low Density (3.2 p/du)	1,946
Medium Density (2.0 p/du)	768
Mixed Use/Town Centre (1.7 p/du)	1,173

du/NRha - dwelling/units per net residential hectare
p/du - persons per dwelling unit

residential land use ratios

total units	100%
Low Density	36%
Medium Density & Mixed Use/Town Centre	64%
total Population	100%
Low Density	50%
Medium Density & Mixed Use/Town Centre	50%
total area	100%
Low Density	73%
Medium Density & Mixed Use/Town Centre	27%

3. where a PGA boundary is shown approximately following the boundary of a member municipality, or an urban service area recognized by Alberta Municipal Affairs, it should be considered as following the boundary of the member municipality or urban service area;
4. where a PGA boundary is shown as approximately following the boundary of the Edmonton Transportation and Utility Corridor (TUC), it should be considered as following the Edmonton TUC boundary;
5. where a PGA boundary is shown as approximately following the centre of pipelines, railway lines or utility easements, it should be considered as following the centre line of this infrastructure;
6. where a PGA boundary is shown as approximately following the edge of an identified environmentally sensitive area, as shown in *Figure 1: Priority Growth Areas and Cluster Country Residential Areas* of the October 2009 Addendum to the Growth Plan (Section 2: Land Use), or the top-of-the-bank line of an escarpment, or other significant topographic feature, then the PGA boundary should be considered as following the edge line of the feature, and in the event that this line is changed, the PGA boundary should move with that line;
7. where a PGA boundary is shown as approximately following the edge of an approved statutory plan boundary (or boundaries of identified policy areas, land use designations or land use overlays within an approved statutory plan) as the approved statutory plan existed at the time that *Figure 1: Priority Growth Areas and Cluster Country Residential Areas* of the October 2009 Addendum to the Growth Plan (Section 2: Land Use) was approved by the Capital Region Board (October 18, 2009), the PGA boundary should be considered as following that boundary, and in the event that the approved boundary is changed, through a successful Regional Evaluation Framework application, the PGA boundary should move with that boundary;
8. where a PGA boundary is shown as approximately following the boundary of a quarter section or a registered parcel, or a legal subdivision within a quarter section (outside urban municipalities only), then the boundary of the PGA should follow the portion of the PGA boundary which approximates the quarter section, registered parcel or legal subdivision boundary;
9. where a curved portion of a PGA boundary is shown as approximately following a quarter section line prior to entering a curve, splitting quarter sections as a result, then the curved PGA boundary should be considered to be coincident to the quarter section lines at right angles;
10. where a PGA boundary is shown as being parallel to, an offset of, or as an extension of features noted above, it should be so construed; and
11. in all other cases where a PGA boundary appears to divide a quarter section or registered parcel, the PGA boundary should be adjusted inward to the nearest quarter section line or public roadway (or the nearest geographic feature noted above) to minimize the regional footprint in accordance with the Capital Region Growth Plan.

In the event where a PGA boundary follows more than one of the geographic features listed in the above interpretive clauses, it is suggested that the geographic location that is listed first have precedence over the others.

In the event where the boundary of a particular PGA is shared with another PGA, it is suggested that the boundary used be that of the PGA with the higher density target range. The intent is to maximize the area allotted to the higher density target.

In the event where the boundary of a particular PGA is shared with CCRA, it is suggested that the boundary used be that of the PGA rather than the CCRA.

In the event where features on the ground differ from how they appear on *Figure 1: Priority Growth Areas and Cluster Country Residential Areas* of the October 2009 Addendum to the Growth Plan (Section 2: Land Use), or in any other circumstances not mentioned above, a member municipality may request assistance from the Capital Region Board to interpret that portion of the PGA boundary.

6. WHAT SHOULD MUNICIPALITIES CONSIDER IN PLANS FOR PGAs?

Municipalities should consider ways to maximize the use of infrastructure and public transit by incorporating mixed land use and development that would significantly exceed existing residential densities for lands within the Priority Growth Areas. The mix of land uses includes major employment areas, social infrastructure and services to create complete communities. Transit corridors and transit centres are also necessary to support and increase access to transit facilities.

7. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC TRANSIT IN SUPPORTING PGAs AND REDUCING THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOOTPRINT?

Transportation and public transit were significant factors in the identification of Priority Growth Areas (PGAs) within the Capital Region. The Capital Region Growth Plan recognizes that future growth, and those development policies and patterns that intensify land use, need to be coordinated with existing and future transit corridors and related transit nodes. The regional transit corridors and related transit nodes are identified in the Capital Region Intermunicipal Transit Network Plan of the Growth Plan.

Municipalities are encouraged to undertake integrated planning to include more intensive urban forms and higher density land uses in proximity to existing and future transit corridors and related transit nodes. Doing this will support PGAs and also serve to reduce the regional development footprint. The integration of intensified land uses with transit corridors represents both land use and transportation planning best practices, and will result in more efficient use of land and transportation infrastructure.

Due to the strong relationship between land use and transportation, applications reviewed through the Regional Evaluation Framework will be evaluated with reference to the direction of the Intermunicipal Transit Network Plan.

8. WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PGAs?

For more specific information please refer to:

- Sections 2.2.II.B of the Capital Region Growth Plan, March 2009;
- Section 2.3, Appendix A and B of the Capital Region Growth Plan, October 2009 Addendum; or
- contact your CRB Member Municipality.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Capital Region Board

Web: www.capitalregionboard.ab.ca

Phone: (780) 638-6000

Email: info@capitalregionboard.ab.ca

DISCLAIMER: This Planning Toolkit is a guide to aid understanding of the Land Use Principles and Policies of the Capital Region Growth Plan. It is not a substitute for reading and understanding the Growth Plan. For certainty, the reader is advised to refer to the Growth Plan and related legislation available through the Capital Region Board.