

## Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board: a successful metropolitan regional governance model?

The study aims to develop a paper to examine the efficacy of the EMRB as Metropolitan Regional Governance in Alberta. Specifically, this study will examine high-level regional frameworks, such as Municipal Government Act (MGA), Municipal Government Act – Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board Regulation, Alberta Land Stewardship Act (ALSA), and EMRB Growth Plan. Unfortunately, there is no academic literature focusing on this. The existing plans and strategies only provide piecemeal information for this research, making this work more intriguing. Under the authority of the MGA, the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) implemented the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan and presented a strong motivation and intention to develop other sub-metropolitan region plans that do not require by the MGA, including the Transportation Master Plan (IRTMP). Although the Growth Plan has indicated the joint area planning initiative, the effectiveness is worth discussing.

This paper answers the topic and the research questions from two general approaches, understanding and examining. Since this is the first academic paper contributing to the examination of this fledging Edmonton regional model, it is vital to provide readers with some factual information to understand the regional governance structure and the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) model. By understanding the policies, legislations, and literature review, this paper identified the EMRB model as a tiered regional approach. However, unlike the traditional tiered approach, EMRB has weakened the notion of boundaries. Rather than defining municipalities' boundaries in the region, which might lead to conflicts related to overlapping services, jurisdictions, and land-use patterns, EMRB has adopted a policy tier system (rural area, metropolitan area and metropolitan core), replacing the traditional concept. In this way, the tiered approach EMRB practiced is more balanced and has fundamentally resolved many problems and avoided the failure caused by the 11-tiered regional model in Ontario.

This paper has identified four current challenges through interview results and policies examination, including Legislations and policies gap, Lack of knowledge, Resource, budget, and jurisdictions, and EMRB's direction in approaching rural planning matters. In response to the challenges, this paper developed three-piece of planning specific recommendations to mitigate the impact of these problems.

1. Resilient Growth Plan, Resilient Planning and Resilient Region;
2. Public Education Program;
3. Strategically Guiding the Allocation for Future Investment.

Along with these three planning specific recommendations, we are looking forward that EMRB can develop a more robust regional model for the region.