

**Environmental Advisory Committee  
Annual Report - 2008  
to  
St. Albert City Council**

**1. RECOMMENDATION**

That the Environmental Advisory Committee's 2008 Annual Report be accepted as information and that the Environmental Advisory Committee continue to operate through 2009.

**2. OVERVIEW**

The Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) was established through Bylaw 29/2005 to advise Council on issues related to the environment. The purpose of the Committee is to assist City administration and advise Council with respect to environmental policies, strategies and initiatives, especially where a public perspective is desirable. The Committee membership currently includes five citizens at large, one member of council, a representative of Alberta Environment, a representative of the Capital Health Authority and one representative from a post secondary institution.

Direction and assistance to the EAC were obtained through involvement of the City's Office of the Environment (OE) and frequent attendance of a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Council provided the EAC with four main priorities for 2008:

- i) Environmental Master Plan;
- ii) Solid Waste Management Systems Review;
- iii) AltaLink Transmission Line Relocation Proposal;
- iv) Review of Environmental Advisory Committee Bylaw 29/2005.

**3. MEMBERSHIP**

January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008

• Jason Cooke <sup>*</sup>	Citizen-at-large	Last of two year term
• Corey De La Mare	Citizen-at-large	Last of two year term
• Audrey Hebel <sup>§</sup>	Citizen-at-large	Last of two year term
• Rasel Hossain	Alberta Environment	First of two year term
• Carole Newton <sup>‡</sup>	Citizen-at-large	Last of two year term
• Ludmilla Rodriguez	Capital Health	First of two year term
• Merv Rogan	Citizen-at-large	First of two year term
• Dan Stoker	Citizen-at-large	First of two year term

<sup>\*</sup>continued as Chair January 1 through December 31, 2008

<sup>§</sup>served as Vice-Chair January 24 through December 31, 2008

<sup>‡</sup>in lieu of post-secondary representative

## Council Representation

Carol Watamaniuk continued as the Council representative, and Roger Lemieux continued as the alternate.

## City Administration Representation

Committee assistance was obtained from Leah Jackson and Meghan Myers of the Office of the Environment. Rachel Vincent, Laurie Hodge and Cheryle Landry of Legislative Services recorded the minutes of the meetings and provided advice on legislative matters and protocol. Glenn Tompolski and Neil Jamieson represented the Senior Leadership Team at various meetings throughout the year.

## **4. ACTIVITIES DURING 2008**

The Environmental Advisory Committee met eleven times during 2008, meeting monthly except in August and December; two meetings were held in July to accommodate a time-sensitive issue. A sub-committee of the EAC met with Council at the City's annual board meetings in November. No other meetings of the full committee with Council or the Senior Management Team were deemed necessary. The Chair (J. Cooke) and Past Chair (D. Stoker) met with the Mayor, Council's EAC representative (Councillor Watamaniuk) and members of City administration to establish Council's four priorities for the EAC in 2008. Various sub-committees of the EAC met with City administration and their hired consultants during the year to work on specific issues.

### Council's Four Priorities for the EAC in 2008

#### i) Environmental Master Plan (EMP)

The EAC served primarily in an advisory role for the creation of the Environmental Master Plan (EMP), as developed by *IMI strategics* for the Office of the Environment. The EMP was discussed at six regular EAC meetings in 2008 and was also the focus of an additional workshop held on January 12, 2008. Initially, the EAC assisted in the development of the initial goals and targets and later provided feedback on public consultation plans. A subcommittee of EAC members (D. Stoker, A. Hebel, C. De La Mare) participated in the drafting of the EMP, with the full committee becoming involved in providing suggestions for the review and revision of the full document. The EAC's advice to Council on the EMP is summarized in Appendices I and II.

#### *Relevant Motion:*

##### (EAC39-2008) Moved by D. Stoker

That the two statements prepared by the EMP subcommittee for inclusion in the document and the accompanying agenda report be approved, and that the EMP be endorsed, conditional upon the revisions discussed at the November 27, 2008 meeting being included in the final EMP document.

CARRIED

#### ii) Solid Waste Management Systems Review

The EAC assisted in an advisory capacity during discussion of the Solid Waste Management Systems Review (SWMSR), as prepared by *sonnevera international*

*corp.* The SWMSR was discussed at five regular EAC meetings in 2008. A subcommittee of EAC members (J. Cooke, A. Hebel, M. Rogan) met with representatives from *sonnevera* and City administration several times to provide feedback on various aspects of the SWMSR. The full committee also received presentations from *sonnevera* and the Office of the Environment for full panel discussion/debate. The EAC's advice to Council on the SWMSR is summarized in Appendices III and IV; the advice was drafted by the subcommittee and was approved by consensus of the committee members.

iii) AltaLink Transmission Line Relocation Proposal

The AltaLink Transmission Line Relocation Proposal was discussed at five regular EAC meetings in 2008. The EAC received presentations from Leah Jackson (Office of the Environment, City of St. Albert), Todd Wyman (Director of Engineering, City of St. Albert), Elke Blodgett (resident of St. Albert), and Nikki Heck, Scott Schriener, Hudson Foley and Gerry McNabb (AltaLink). A subcommittee of EAC members (D. Stoker, A. Hebel, C. De La Mare) was tasked with formulating the EAC's advice to Council, which is summarized in Appendices V and VI; the advice was approved by consensus of the committee members.

iv) Review of Environmental Advisory Committee Bylaw 29/2005

The Review of Environmental Advisory Committee Bylaw was discussed at two regular EAC meetings in 2008. A subcommittee consisting of the EAC Chair (J. Cooke), L. Jackson (Office of the Environment) and R. Vincent (Legislative Officer) collated and summarized various issues that had been identified by the committee over the preceding year. The Review of Environmental Advisory Committee Bylaw is summarized in Appendix VII.

*Relevant Motion:*

(EAC38-2008) Moved by C. Newton

That the Committee recommend to Council that Administration prepare a bylaw to amend Environmental Advisory Committee Bylaw 29/2005, as amended, in accordance with the list of issues identified, amended and approved by the Committee on November 27, 2008.

CARRIED

Environmental Initiatives Grant Program

In addition to the four priorities identified by Council for 2008, the EAC continued with its other major function, namely reviewing applications submitted under the City's Environmental Initiatives Grant Program (EIGP) and providing funding recommendations to Council. Two rounds of applications were held for the EIGP in 2008 in the spring and fall in accordance with Council policy.

*Relevant Motions:*

(EAC9-2008) Moved by M. Rogan

That the EAC recommend to Council that the following grants be awarded:

Big Lake Environmental Support Society (BLESS) - Web camera	\$ 1,000.00
Big Lake Environmental Support Society – 2008 Summer Nature Program	1,050.00
Sturgeon River Watershed Initiative Society (SRWI) – establishment of SRWI	1,500.00
River's Edge Enhancement Project (REEP) – Sturgeon Point Biodiversity Project	1,450.00
Ronald Harvey Elementary Discovery Garden Club – schoolyard, classroom, and discovery garden improvement	1,000.00
E.S. Gish School – recycling project	313.80
Carbon Zero Schools Foundation Canada – 'Paper for Trees' project	720.00
St. Albert Catholic High School – aquatic sampling nets	500.00
Vital Grandin Catholic Elementary School Environment Committee – Outdoor classroom/learning garden	1,500.00
Outreach High School – flower/plant gardens	500.00
St. Albert Botanic Park – water sensitive irrigation system	3,000.00
Friends of Bertha Kennedy Playground Committee – playground naturalization	2,500.00
St. Albert Singers Guild – 'GREEN' production	750.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$15,783.80</b>

CARRIED

(EAC34-2008) Moved by D. Stoker

That the Committee recommend to Council that the following Environmental Initiatives Grants be awarded:

Leo Nickerson Elementary	1,032.00
St. Albert Nature Study Group	350.00
Robert Rundle Parent Society	3,800.00
Friends of Father Jan/Ecole Father Jan	2,300.00
Eco-Action Group/Paul Kane H.S.	940.00
Vincent J. Maloney Jr. H.S.	603.00
Bellerose H.S.	4,141.33
Keenooshayo Elementary	1,300.00
St. Albert H. S.	620.00
Sir Alex Mackenzie Elementary	500.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$15,586.33</b>

CARRIED

Other Issues Before the EAC in 2008

- Reviewed and made suggestions for amendments to the **Report on the Environment 2007**;
- Received information on the **Utilities Master Plan**, specifically the planned standards for storm water management in new developments;

- Received information on the **Tree Protection Bylaw**;
- Received information and provided input on the education campaign supporting the **Idle-Free Bylaw**;
- Developed and implemented an 'Agenda Practices Document' to assist current and future committee membership in smooth running of meetings;
- Received information on the newly formed Sturgeon Watershed Initiative;
- Received updated information on pesticide use by the City and recommended that the issue be addressed in the Environmental Master Plan;
- Received quarterly reports from the Office of the Environment on e-mail correspondence from residents on topics of environmental relevance;
- Received information on and discussed City environmental initiatives including the Outfall #17 Stormwater Ponds and stormwater ponds in the Riel Wetlands;
- Received presentations from the public relating to Environmental Initiatives Grant Program (EIGP) applications and additionally received a follow-up presentation made by St. Albert High School students reporting their findings on biodiversity of the Sturgeon River (using equipment obtained in part from EIGP funding);
- Received information related to environmental events of interest to the community including 'The Christmas Bird Count', 'BLESS Summer Nature Program' and 'Earth Hour';

## **5. YEAR 2009 EAC ACTIVITIES**

In 2009, it is anticipated that the Environment Advisory Committee will continue to provide input and advice as requested from Council especially related to issues where public consultation is necessary. The EAC anticipates that Council will implement the Environmental Master Plan (EMP) and that, as a result, the EAC will draw significant direction from the EMP's stated targets and goals.

In addition to the above, issues, topics and other needs that may require specific involvement of the EAC could include, but are not limited to:

- Assessment of grant applications on behalf of Council for the Environmental Initiatives Grants Program;
- Participation in the development of the Parks and Open Spaces Management Plan (POSMP);
- Further consideration of the Tree Protection Bylaw;
- Liaison with City departments on matters of environmental importance.

## **6. CONGRATULATIONS EXTENDED TO CITY**

The Environment Advisory Committee wishes to congratulate the City on its innovative programs that encourage citizen participation in environmental responsibility as exemplified through implementation of the Environmental Initiatives Grant Program. Efforts to openly involve and encourage public input and involvement in improving our environment must be applauded.

## **Appendix I – Written Advice Submitted to Council Environmental Master Plan**

### **General Endorsement of the Environmental Master Plan (EMP)**

The Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) has appreciated the opportunity to consult on the creation of the City of St. Albert's first Environmental Master Plan (EMP). The EAC's role has been primarily in an advisory capacity, with the leadership for the development of the plan having originated within City administration, specifically the Office of the Environment. The EAC would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all involved parties and stakeholders in their contributions to the EMP.

The EAC considers the EMP to be a fundamental and important step towards working on the most significant environmental challenges facing the corporation and residents of St. Albert in the near future. The EAC considers the EMP to be a significant framework document, but cautions that it cannot be considered to be a completely comprehensive and inclusive strategy to meet all current or future environmental challenges. The EAC expects that the EMP will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, and considers the included five-year timeframe to be the minimum acceptable. The EAC would hope that an annual review would be possible of the seven major environmental goals, and is willing to commit to assisting the City in meeting this standard.

Accordingly, the EAC recommends that Council accept and implement the EMP. Furthermore, the EAC stands ready to assist Council and City administration in whatever way it can towards achieving the goals and meeting the targets that the EMP has set for the corporation and residents of St. Albert.

### **Significant Concern with a Specific EMP Target / MDP Provision**

However, notwithstanding the above general endorsement, the EAC would be remiss if it did not point out one significant concern with respect to a target that is stated within the EMP. Specifically, under Goal #4 (Preserve and manage trees, parks and natural areas), a target is set to "Complete a review of the current standard for parks and natural areas as part of the Parks and Open Spaces Management Plan (POSMP) and the Municipal Development Plan (MDP) update review process by 2012." This target was revised very late in the development of the EMP once it had been identified that the MDP contained a provision to provide a minimum of 2.4 hectares of parks and natural areas per 1000 people. The EAC notes that the EMP states that St. Albert currently has 18 hectares of parks and natural areas per 1,000 people and that, given the 900 hectares of parks already under City management, it would take a population of 375,000 within our current borders to reach the minimum standard of 2.4 hectares of parks and natural areas per 1,000 people. Stated another way, for a build-out

**Appendix I – Written Advice Submitted to Council  
Environmental Master Plan**

population of 125,000, the above provision could be interpreted so as to allow parks and natural areas to fall to only 300 hectares while still meeting the minimum standard.

Residents continually express pride in St. Albert's extensive system of parks and natural areas. Therefore, we do not believe that the stated target in the MDP, even expressed as a minimum, is representative of the vision that residents have for the future of the City of St. Albert. As such, following implementation of the EMP, the EAC urges that Council direct Administration to begin to revise this aspect of the MDP and to specifically involve the EAC in the process. Our concern is that retention of a very low minimum target for the ratio of parks and natural areas to population would have the potential to allow the destruction of established parks and natural areas in the distant future.

## Appendix II – Presentation Made to Council Environmental Master Plan

### City of St. Albert Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) Recommendations to Council: Environmental Master Plan (EMP)

January 5, 2009

#### The EAC Endorses the Environmental Master Plan (EMP)

- The Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) has appreciated the opportunity to consult on the creation of St. Albert's first Environmental Master Plan (EMP).
  - The EAC's role has been primarily in an advisory capacity, with the leadership for the development of the plan having originated within City administration, specifically the Office of the Environment;
  - The EAC would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all involved parties and stakeholders in their contributions to the EMP.

2

#### The EAC Endorses the Environmental Master Plan (EMP)

- The EAC considers the EMP to be a fundamental and important step towards working on the most significant environmental challenges facing the corporation and residents of St. Albert in the near future.
  - However, the EAC cautions that the EMP cannot be considered to be a completely comprehensive and inclusive strategy to meet all current or future environmental issues;
  - The EAC expects that the EMP will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, and considers the included five-year timeframe to be the minimum acceptable;
  - The EAC is willing to assist the City with an annual review of the major environmental goals within the EMP.

3

#### Future Cooperation Between the EAC and SAEDAC Towards Achieving EMP Goals

- Subcommittees of the EAC and the St. Albert Economic Development Advisory Committee (SAEDAC) met in December to discuss common perspectives on the EMP.
  - The EAC recognizes that economic and development factors will be critical to successful implementation of the EMP;
  - Equally, economic development can be undertaken in a sustainable way that has environmental benefits;
  - The EAC looks forward to further conversation and cooperation with SAEDAC towards achieving goals of mutual interest.

4

#### Significant Concern with a Specific EMP Target / MDP Provision

- The EAC would be remiss if it did not point out one significant concern with respect to a target that is stated within the EMP.
  - For Goal #4 (Preserve and manage trees, parks and natural areas), a target is set to "Complete a review of the current standard for parks and natural areas as part of the Parks and Open Spaces Management Plan (POSMP) and the Municipal Development Plan (MDP) update review process by 2012."
  - This target was revised very late in the development of the EMP once it had been identified that the MDP contained a provision to "provide a minimum of 2.4 hectares of parks and natural areas per 1000 people".

5

#### Significant Concern with a Specific EMP Target / MDP Provision

- The EMP states that St. Albert currently has 18 hectares of parks and natural areas per 1,000 people.
  - Given the 900 hectares of parks already under City management, it would take a population of 375,000 within our current borders to reach the minimum standard of 2.4 hectares of parks and natural areas per 1,000 people;
  - Stated another way, for a build-out population of 125,000, the above provision could be interpreted so as to allow parks and natural areas to fall to only 300 hectares while still meeting the minimum standard.

6

## Appendix II – Presentation Made to Council Environmental Master Plan

### Significant Concern with a Specific EMP Target / MDP Provision

- Residents continually express pride in St. Albert's extensive system of parks and natural areas.
  - The EAC does not believe that the stated target in the MDP, even expressed as a minimum, is representative of the vision that residents have for the future of the City of St. Albert;
  - We urge that Council begin to revise this aspect of the MDP and to specifically involve the EAC in the process;
  - Our concern is that retention of a very low minimum target for the ratio of parks and natural areas to population would have the potential to allow the destruction of established parks and natural areas in the distant future.

7

### Questions?

8

## **Appendix III – Written Advice Submitted to Council Solid Waste Management System Review**

### *Overview*

The City of St. Albert Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) believes that the City of St. Albert has a clear responsibility to adopt a Solid Waste Management System that encourages its residents to minimize waste generation while adopting best practices to ensure that any waste that is produced is handled in the most environmentally responsible way, specifically through optimizing opportunities to divert as much waste from the landfill as possible. Furthermore, the EAC believes that the City of St. Albert should strive to meet or exceed the level of service that is provided by neighbouring municipalities in the Capital Region. In doing so, the waste management system should strive to maximize environmental benefits while working within a balanced, sustainable budget. Additionally, the Solid Waste Management System should be designed to be as adaptable for the future as possible and should evolve over time with advanced planning, monitoring, and continuing assessment built into the management model.

### *Historical Perspectives*

The EAC recognizes that the City of St. Albert acted in a leadership role when it adopted an innovative Pay-as-you-Throw (PAYT) system in 1996, the first such program to be offered by a municipality in Canada, and believes that this system is responsible for motivating the citizens of St. Albert to generate significantly less landfill waste per capita than the average Albertan. However, in the past decade, the EAC believes that St. Albert has fallen behind and now trails most municipalities in the Capital Region in the level of service provided by its waste management system. Additionally, residents have expressed some frustration with certain administrative aspects of the PAYT system. Notwithstanding the preceding statements, the EAC congratulates the citizens of the City of St. Albert for their efforts to make the very best out of the present system and thereby achieve waste diversion (recycling and composting) rates that exceed many comparable municipalities in Alberta.

### *Basis for EAC Advice*

The EAC has been involved in the development of the Solid Waste Management System Review (SWMSR) with City Administration and *sonnevera international corp.* Specifically, a sub-committee of the EAC participated in several meetings held during the discussion phase and provided feedback on drafts of the SWMSR. The full EAC held a workshop with *sonnevera* early in the process, and met again with *sonnevera* to discuss the final version of the document. The EAC therefore considers itself to be well informed on the general contents of the report and of the fundamental principles described within.

### *EAC Perspective on Basic Goals for Waste Management*

The EAC believes that responsible management of municipal waste is a key environmental obligation for the City of St. Albert, and that Pay-as-you-Throw (PAYT) forms the cornerstone of a successful waste management system. As such, the EAC

## **Appendix III – Written Advice Submitted to Council Solid Waste Management System Review**

endorses the four principles developed by the internal City of St. Albert review of the PAYT system, namely

- minimize waste going to landfills;
- provide choice and equity to all residents;
- keep the program simple;
- achieve and maintain financial sustainability.

Furthermore, the EAC believes that waste diversion rates can continue to rise with additional material kept out of the landfill if St. Albert residents are afforded more convenient means of recycling and composting a wider range of materials. A fully automated curbside waste management system will undoubtedly evolve as the preferred collection system to achieve the above goals.

### *Overall EAC Perspective on the Solid Waste Management Systems Review (SWMSR)*

The SWMSR is a comprehensive, informative document that summarizes best practices of a variety of comparable municipalities and provides excellent advice for future practices for the City of St. Albert. The EAC has the utmost confidence in the work that *sonnevera international corp.* has carried out and in the report that has been produced. The EAC therefore fundamentally recommends that Council accept the SWMSR and advise Administration to use the SWMSR to frame future management decisions that are designed to reduce the City's overall environmental impact through responsible waste management practices.

Given the volume of information that has been collected and analyzed in the SWMSR, the EAC believes it is critical for the City to continue to collect and analyze relevant information on a regular basis. Not only will this facilitate tracking the important trends that will frame future waste management decisions, it should also permit direct measurement of the environmental benefits that have resulted from responsible decision making.

### *Specific Recommendations*

The EAC has the following specific recommendations for Council that have originated from its review of the SWMSR:

#### 1) User-Pay System

**That the City of St. Albert continue the Pay-as-you-Throw (PAYT) philosophy and adopt the recommended “2-1-half” interim PAYT structure.**

The EAC believes that PAYT is a fundamental motivation for residents to reduce garbage production and divert recyclable/compostable materials. Additionally, the EAC recognizes that the City of St. Albert will soon reach a “crossroads” at which its existing system will cost significantly more due to increased landfill fees and the possibility of requiring transfer stations when existing contracts expire. In

## **Appendix III – Written Advice Submitted to Council Solid Waste Management System Review**

addition to the increased costs, current practices will have a more negative environmental impact through the need to truck landfill waste greater distances.

However, the EAC recognizes that citizens have expressed some frustration with certain aspects of the current PAYT system and therefore encourages a plan that would reduce administrative problems while offering citizens greater value for the fees levied. Specifically, so long as the PAYT system uses a “tag-a-bag” approach, there should be no expiry date for said tags.

### **2) Automated Garbage Collection**

**That the City of St. Albert move towards a fully automated system for garbage collection.**

The EAC believes that this system is the most efficient, environmentally-friendly option and has a number of built-in benefits. Specifically, full automation would allow the greatest flexibility for future changes to service levels (such as adding curbside collection of recyclable materials and/or yard waste) that would improve service for residents and potentially further reduce the environmental impacts of the system. Full automation also has the potential to stabilize costs while allowing for service improvements, and offers residents durable, easily manoeuvred refuse containers with close-fitting lids that remove many negative issues associated with bag-based systems. From an environmental perspective, the removal of unnecessary plastic bags from the waste collection system would be an added benefit.

### **3) Curbside Recycling Program**

**That the City of St. Albert adopt curbside collection of recyclable materials and compostable yard waste as its next major added services in waste management.**

Further, the City should strongly consider interim measures that may pre-date the adoption of a fully automated collection system. The EAC additionally recommends that curbside recycling and yard waste composting be implemented alongside the revised PAYT structure so as to best facilitate increased citizen participation and maximize the environmental benefits of waste diversion.

The EAC recognizes that the citizens of St. Albert already participate to a high level in diverting both types of material from landfilled refuse but believes that the level of participation would rise if a more convenient collection system was in place. The EAC believes that the future economic value of certain recyclable materials will continue to increase, and that this may provide some offset of program costs. The EAC agrees with the recommendation in the SWMSR that the existing pilot green cart program for yard waste be discontinued in favour of a consistent, city-wide system.

**The EAC notes that curbside collection of recyclables and compostable yard waste directly complements the City’s Transportation Master Plan**

### **Appendix III – Written Advice Submitted to Council Solid Waste Management System Review**

(TMP), as it decreases residents dependence on private automobiles and enhances the associated environmental benefits identified in the TMP. Furthermore, the current absence of curbside collection directly disadvantages certain segments of the community as it requires access to an automobile in order to participate in environmentally beneficial recycling and composting.

The EAC believes that there would be environmental benefits through reduced Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions if a curbside collection system was implemented. We believe, on a common-sense level, that this situation is directly analogous to encouraging the use of public transit instead of driving personal vehicles for daily commuting.

The EAC also notes that the 2008 Community Satisfaction Survey indicated that 75% of St. Albert citizens would be in favour of introducing curbside recycling systems, and that 31% of residents were dissatisfied with current recycling options because curbside pick-up was not offered. Of concern to the EAC was the companion result that only half of the citizens who supported curbside recycling (37% of the total) were willing to pay more for the enhanced service. **The EAC therefore advises that the City of St. Albert undertake a public consultation and education process that would present residents with a clear cost/benefit analysis for curbside recycling and yard waste composting programs.**

#### 4) Organics Collection Program

**That the City of St. Albert implement a step-wise program for organics collection, beginning with yard waste only and expanding to full organics (kitchen waste etc) only after public consultation and education has been completed.**

While the EAC recognizes the SWMSR's findings, that the diversion of organics represents the greatest potential means of reducing landfill waste in the future, we feel that a rush to adopt a full organics diversion system should wait until both a successful curbside compostable yard waste system has been demonstrated to be successful and conclusive evidence exists that its residents would accept and use such a system. In short, the EAC recommends that curbside recycling and yard composting precede a full organics curbside diversion program.

However, in order to facilitate this option in the future, **the EAC recommends that the City of St. Albert invest in totes capable of handling all forms of organic waste when it adopts curbside collection of compostable yard waste.** This step would eliminate the need to change to a different tote in the future and would thereby minimize overall infrastructure costs.

**Appendix III – Written Advice Submitted to Council  
Solid Waste Management System Review**

5) Recycling / Solid Waste Drop-Off Depot

**That the City of St. Albert adopt the recommendations in the SWMSR relating to enhancing the existing drop-off recycling depot in Campbell Industrial Park.**

Specifically, the EAC supports implementing on-site cardboard compaction and using the revenue generated to fund full-time staffing of the depot. Further, the EAC recommends that the City investigate means of providing expanded facilities capable of collecting additional materials, such as plastics, that residents presently have to transport to EcoStations in the City of Edmonton.

With full staffing, the EAC advises that the City of St. Albert begin a regular program that would allow residents to safely dispose of hazardous household waste, as this would have the significant environmental benefit of diverting dangerous materials from the landfill. Importantly, the EAC believes that measures should be taken to ensure that all materials collected at the depot are properly handled and recycled or disposed of according to best environmental practices. Wherever possible, the EAC advises that said materials are processed at Canadian facilities rather than being exported.

Additionally, the EAC believes that an opportunity exists to provide residents with a fee-based drop-off facility for large item disposal. Although not specifically addressed within the SWMSR, the EAC notes that the lack of a local program for large item disposal may be contributing to the illegal dumping of large items in unmonitored regions of the City and surrounding rural areas.

6) Additional Drop-Off Depots

**If there is any delay in implementing curbside collection of recyclable materials, the EAC believes that a second collection facility should be promptly established in north St. Albert.**

The EAC believes that this provision is necessary to provide residents with increased access to environmentally beneficial recycling options and to minimize the negative environmental implications of fuel consumption and GHG emissions associated with driving private vehicles unnecessary distances, thereby complying with the objectives set forth in City's recently adopted Transportation Master Plan.

7) Commercial Waste Reduction

**That the City of St. Albert should seek to encourage the Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (ICI) and Construction and Demolition (C&D) sectors to adopt best practices in waste reduction and diversion of materials from landfills.**

The EAC endorses the recommendations contained within the SWMSR, and believes that the City of St. Albert has an obligation not only to manage

### **Appendix III – Written Advice Submitted to Council Solid Waste Management System Review**

residential waste generation but also to oversee the other activities that generate waste within its boundaries.

#### **8) Community Outreach/Additional Program Enhancements**

**That the City of St. Albert should engage in an array of alternate programming options that are aimed towards engaging and educating its citizens on best practices in waste reduction and diversion.**

Specifically, the EAC believes that there is great potential in such options to enhance citizen participation without excessive additional cost. In the short term, the EAC would encourage the City of St. Albert to consider community-based social marketing, grasscycling/xeriscaping, backyard composter promotion, the establishment of a permanent Re-Use Center, and expanding the services that are available to multi-family communities.

In addition to the above, the EAC stands ready to provide Council with more specific advice on any aspect of the SWMSR in the future, should it be desired.

## Appendix IV – Presentation Made to Council Solid Waste Management System Review

### City of St. Albert Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) Recommendations to Council: Solid Waste Management Systems Review

January 5, 2009

#### The Importance of Responsible Solid Waste Management

- The EAC believes it is a **fundamental environmental responsibility of our community** to reduce the solid refuse that we send outside our borders to be buried in a landfill.
- How can we meet our responsibility?
  - Encourage residents to reduce refuse production;
  - Encourage diversion of as much recyclable and compostable material as possible;
  - Provide local options for safe disposal of hazardous materials.

2

#### Reducing Refuse Production

- Continue the Pay-as-you-Throw (PAYT) philosophy for residential waste collection, with appropriate changes to simplify administration and improve service levels.
  - The EAC believes PAYT is a fundamental motivator for creating environmentally responsible attitudes towards waste reduction.
- Encourage commercial waste reduction.
  - The City of St. Albert should be proactive in attempting to reduce all forms of waste production within its corporate limits;
  - Opportunities exist to engage this sector and make significant gains in waste reduction and diversion.

3

#### Encouraging Waste Diversion

- Provide convenient options for waste diversion.
  - St. Albert residents are already firmly committed to recycling and composting;
  - However, some residents do not or cannot participate in the current self-drive/single-depot system;
  - Convenient, service-oriented **curbside** collection of materials will increase participation and enhance environmental benefits.
- Curbside collection fits with other City Master Plans.
  - Achieves goal of reducing reliance upon individual automotive transport in the Transportation Master Plan and related goals in the Environmental Master Plan.

4

#### Local Hazardous Waste Disposal

- St. Albertans currently have limited options for local disposal of hazardous waste.
  - Apart from once-a-year toxic round-up, residents must rely upon Edmonton EcoStations;
  - Enhancing existing recycling depot should allow for full-time staffing and establishment of a collection facility for hazardous waste.

5

#### The EAC Fundamentally Endorses the Recommendations of the Solid Waste Management Systems Review (SWMSR)

- The City has been presented with a comprehensive, well-researched report that should be accepted as a guide for its future solid waste diversion and disposal practices.
  - The EAC has appreciated the opportunity to work with City staff and its consultants in contributing to the SWMSR;
  - The EAC has a high level of confidence in the research and findings within the report.

6

December, 2008 (Presented to and Received by Council January 5, 2009)

## Appendix IV – Presentation Made to Council Solid Waste Management System Review

### The EAC Fundamentally Endorses the Recommendations of the Solid Waste Management Systems Review (SWMSR)

- The EAC believes that **adopting the recommendations within the SWMSR is crucial to achieving one of the eight main goals described within the Environmental Master Plan.**
  - The EAC believes that if the facilities and processes are in place and are practical for residents to use, they will either increase their participation in waste diversion and reduction, or they will begin participating if they find the current program to be unsuitable for their needs.

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Questions?

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## **Appendix V – Written Advice Submitted to Council AltaLink Powerline Relocation**

The St. Albert Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) has reviewed the issues relating to AltaLink's 747L transmission line that currently crosses the mouth of the Sturgeon River near Big Lake. There is public pressure to move the line due to the fact that it has a negative aesthetic effect on the landscape, given that it is within the vista of Big Lake and Lois Hole Provincial Park, and that there are known bird collisions with the transmission line infrastructure. We understand that there have been ongoing discussions between the City of St. Albert, AltaLink and Alberta Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture (ATPRC) regarding the potential relocation of this transmission line. As a result, the City of St. Albert, AltaLink and ATPRC have agreed, in principle, to share the costs of relocating the transmission line.

The EAC has received two presentations on this issue, and considers itself to be well-informed of the various stakeholder positions and technical considerations. However, the EAC also recognizes that there is a high degree of uncertainty with regards to final route selection and ultimate costs, and therefore the advice below aims to address the issue in a broad sense.

On the basis of the information received, it is the recommendation of the EAC that Council endorse the relocation of AltaLink's 747L transmission line and move towards the process of final route selection. The EAC strongly recommends that the selection of the final route maintain the existing cost-sharing partnerships while striving to balance social, aesthetic, environmental, and economic factors. Based on our current understanding, a re-alignment that achieves these goals may be best realized by relocating the transmission line parallel to and to the east of the Ray Gibbon Drive Right-of-Way (route A1-A10-D10-D12-D25-D35 (Tan Line) in Attachment 3); this is referred to as Option 3 in the accompanying Agenda Report and in Attachment 2.

We believe that Options 4 through 6 are cost-prohibitive; additionally, Options 4 and 5 include construction practices that would require the destruction of existing wetland and/or tree stands. While Option 5 might be considered "ideal" by some from the perspective of removing aesthetic concerns and collision risk, we could not responsibly endorse its consideration unless the balance of funding came from non-municipal tax sources and evidence was presented that the environmental concerns relating to construction could be minimized. Option 2 may relieve some of the concerns regarding the social and environmental aspects, but in our opinion does not move the transmission line far enough away as Option 3 to be acceptably effective at minimizing environmental and aesthetic effects. The EAC does not support Option 1 as we consider the status quo to be unacceptable.

After serious and careful consideration of all options proposed in the Agenda Report, the EAC reiterates its support for relocating transmission line 747L and specifically for Option 3 because it provides higher mitigation value and superior benefit to the Lois Hole Provincial Park and the integrity of Big Lake and adjacent wetlands, in general.

## **Appendix VI – Oral Advice Submitted to Council AltaLink Powerline Relocation**

Mr. Mayor and Councillors of the City of St. Albert,

I am speaking this evening on behalf of the Environmental Advisory Committee to provide recommendations regarding the relocation of AltaLink transmission line 747L that crosses the Riel wetland adjacent to Big Lake in front of Lois Hole Provincial Park.

Our committee recently had the privilege of discussing this matter with City staff and representatives from AltaLink. Over three hours of presentation and frank discussion occurred, and we therefore consider ourselves to be well-informed of the various issues that impact this complex problem. We would like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank AltaLink for participating in the process and for taking the time to educate our committee on the various issues surrounding the relocation of the transmission line. Although environmental issues are at the forefront of our advice, we recognize that there are myriad social and economic considerations for Council to weigh.

Big Lake is an internationally recognized natural area that has been designated a "Wetlands for Tomorrow" by Ducks Unlimited Canada. Over 200 bird species have been recorded in Big Lake, a region that Alberta Fish and Wildlife considers to be one of the 20 most important habitat areas in Alberta and one that will only increase in exposure with the establishment of Lois Hole Provincial Park. This area is of great importance to the City of St. Albert and to its citizens and forms a sort of "ecological anchor" for our community.

The EAC strongly believes that the status quo is unacceptable, and that transmission line 747L must be relocated in a manner that recognizes the overall importance of the wetlands surrounding Big Lake. Furthermore, the EAC believes that a perfect solution does not exist for this particular problem, and that a compromise will be required.

Importantly, we recognize AltaLink and Alberta Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture have already pledged financial support to relocate the line. This is in and of itself unprecedented and presents a unique opportunity for the City to leverage existing support for a project that can have very real benefits for its citizens. The EAC further believes that the relocation will not proceed unless the City is willing to participate in a meaningful way. We should not endeavour to "pass the buck" and make the relocation entirely somebody else's problem. Additionally, Council must consider how our existing partners would view a retraction of the earlier commitment. It is not just possible, but likely that future partnerships would be placed in jeopardy.

We believe that Council is committed to making the best decisions possible based upon sound advice. One of our committee's responsibilities is to ensure that Council receive the best possible advice on environmental issues. As such, we must point out a misunderstanding that occurred at Council's last meeting. A statement was made that precedence existed for the burial of a transmission line in a natural area in the Kananaskis region of the province. Our committee was advised that the only example of a buried AltaLink transmission line occurred in the Three Sisters development in Canmore at the request of a land developer for an upscale housing subdivision. In this case, the land developer paid the full cost of burying the line. We therefore believe that Council would be ill-advised to proceed on the assumption that there is precedence for the Province to be involved in burying an AltaLink transmission line. To the best of our committee's knowledge, there is no comparable example within the Province of Alberta that supports the burial of a transmission line in an ecologically sensitive area.

Additionally, statements were made that Transmission Line 747L was located on Crown land. In fact, the boundary of Lois Hole Provincial Park occurs at the edge of Big Lake, while the

## **Appendix VI – Oral Advice Submitted to Council AltaLink Powerline Relocation**

transmission line crosses the Riel wetlands on City land and proceeds north parallel to Ray Gibbon Drive also on City land. To the best of our committee's knowledge, only a very small portion of the line crosses Crown land at the point where the Sturgeon River emerges from Big Lake. Our committee firmly believes that this fact makes the relocation of the transmission line an issue for the City of St. Albert to resolve in partnership with the Province of Alberta, and not an issue for the province alone.

We recognize that this is an extremely complex problem and one that will very likely not have a clean, simple solution. If Council has concerns with the options it has been presented, we urge that time be taken to properly address the concerns before any firm decisions are taken regarding the removal of City funds from the existing partnership. Our committee stands ready to assist Council in whatever manner it can in addressing the environmental concerns that relate to relocating the transmission line. Additionally, we would encourage the City to broadly investigate whether other sources of funding are available to assist with the relocation of the transmission line. We are aware of at least one grant program, The North American Wetlands Conservation Act, that is worthy of consideration.

As it is likely that further contemplation will be required, the EAC further recommends that the City should engage in a dialogue with AltaLink to complete the installation of "Firefly Flappers" along the full length of the shield wires, particularly where line 747L crosses the Sturgeon River. While the EAC does not believe that this is a permanent solution to the problem, it does recognize that completing this particular project would likely have a meaningful influence on reducing bird mortality in the short term.

In conclusion, we urge Council to accept the advice it has received from Administration and our committee and commit municipal funds to the project to recognize the benefit that the transmission line relocation will ultimately have for the ecologically important wetlands surrounding Big Lake, and ultimately, the residents of our great City.

## **Appendix VII – Written Report Provided to Council EAC Bylaw Review (Bylaw 29/2005)**

Subcommittee Report, November 2008  
(Jason Cooke, Leah Jackson and Rachel Vincent)

### *Recommended EAC Motion*

“That the EAC recommend to Council that Administration prepare a bylaw to amend Environmental Advisory Committee Bylaw 29/2005, as amended, in accordance with the list of issues identified and approved by the Committee on November 27, 2008.”

### *Issues Identified*

- i) Absence Provision – propose that the bylaw be amended to include an absence provision similar to other Committees of Council.
- ii) Non-Voting Participants –
  - a. include the General Manager, Planning & Engineering in this category;
  - b. propose that representatives from Alberta Environment, Alberta Health Services (formerly Capital Health), and a Post-Secondary Educational Institution have their status changed to non-voting participants who can attend meetings, either of their own choosing or by specific invitation. The intention would be for these participants to primarily act as information resources for the committee.
  - c. propose that an additional member-at-large be appointed to maintain an odd number of voting members.
- iii) Roles and Responsibilities –
  - a. include specific mention of the committee’s involvement in providing funding recommendations for the Environmental Initiatives Grant Program;
  - b. better define committee roles with respect to formal advice provided to Council on legislative matters and informal discussion/input provided to administration on operational policies.
- iv) Chair – revise wording to reflect that the Chair and Vice-Chair are nominated by the committee at the first meeting of the year.
- v) Annual Report – revise wording to reflect that the committee will provide Council with an annual report (not semi-annual).
- vi) Subcommittees – as per the bylaws governing other Committees of Council, refer to the ability to form subcommittees to deal with specific matters.

### **Additional Background on Each Issue**

#### Absence Provision

Legislative Services agrees with the committee’s concern that the bylaw does not include an absence provision. Suggested wording would be similar to s.10 of the CSAB Bylaw, and would be included in the ‘Appointments and Membership’ section, namely:

“In the event a member appointed:

## **Appendix VII – Written Report Provided to Council EAC Bylaw Review (Bylaw 29/2005)**

- (a) fails to attend three (3) consecutive regular meetings of the Committee, without the permission of the Board;
- (b) ceases to be a resident of the City; or
- (c) is hired in any capacity by the City;

that member is disqualified. This does not apply to the Councillor.”

### Non-Voting Participants

Given that the GM of Planning & Engineering frequently attends meetings, it would be appropriate to recognize the position formally in the bylaw. SAEDAC has a provision that “the City Manager and General Manager may attend any regular Committee meeting...” and “the Director or his or her designate shall attend...”. The CSAB Bylaw says “the Director and staff of the Department (which is defined in the definitions section) may attend a meeting of the Board or a public meeting for the purpose of advising the Board.” Presently, the EAC bylaw just refers to ‘an individual from the City’s Office of Environment may attend’.

Notwithstanding the extremely positive experience that has been reported by the current representatives from Alberta Environment and Alberta Health Services (formerly Capital Health), there has been discussion of whether it would be beneficial for all parties to increase the flexibility of these representatives by changing their status to non-voting participants whose role would be primarily as a resource for specialist information. Many of the issues the EAC currently hears have a distinctly “local flavour” which potentially may be of limited interest to Alberta Environment and Alberta Health Services. However, in order to facilitate a strong connection between municipal and provincial organizations, it should remain the option of these representatives to attend EAC meetings out of their own interest, and not simply at the express invitation of the committee. It was also felt that the post-secondary representative (should the position be filled) would best fit within this category also.

The above would be broadly similar to the situation within the SAEDAC Bylaw that now includes a provision:

“The Committee may invite representatives from Alberta Economic Development,..... to attend meetings as non-voting participants.”

### Roles and Responsibilities

Now that the committee has been in operation for several years, it would seem appropriate to revisit the “Roles and Responsibilities” section generally.

Specifically, there could be better definition of committee roles with respect to formal advice to Council on legislative matters and informal discussion/input provided to administration on operational policies and other issues.

Additionally, the EAC’s role in the EIGP grant program should be added to this section, with wording similar to that used in the CSAB Bylaw, perhaps:

“...review, comment and recommend policies and allocations for grants under the Environmental Initiatives Grant Program.”

### Chair

There is a discrepancy under 16(1) wherein Council designates the Chair. The CSAB bylaw has appropriate wording to cover this...

“In each year, at the First Meeting, the members shall appoint a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson who shall act in the absence of the Chairperson. (‘First Meeting’ is also defined in the bylaw as “means the first meeting of the Board in the calendar year”)

## **Appendix VII – Written Report Provided to Council EAC Bylaw Review (Bylaw 29/2005)**

The Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson shall serve until the First Meeting in the year subsequent to their appointment.”

S.18(2), about the Chair’s responsibility to call a Committee meeting, also needs to be amended to reflect something like...(CSAB) “Within thirty (30) days of receiving a request from any two members of the Board, or the Mayor, the Chairperson shall call a meeting of the Board”.

### Annual Report

There is an identified discrepancy under 20(c) which required semi-annual reports to be submitted to Council; this should be revised to an annual report of the committee’s activities in the past year.

### Subcommittees

Under ‘Roles and Responsibilities’, include a provision describing the committee’s authority to strike subcommittees to deal with specific matters, as determined and appointed by the full committee. For example, from the CSAB bylaw...

“The Board may appoint subcommittees to deal solely with a matter or question referred to it by the Board, which subcommittees may be comprised of Board members or members of the public or both.”

The wording should reflect the intention that the subcommittee would report back to the full committee with recommendations for consideration or decision.