

CORPORATE QUARTERLY REPORT – THIRD QUARTER 2004

City Council and Administration are continuing a high level of accountability to residents with the publication of a Quarterly Report. At the end of each quarter, a report is completed and presented to Council and is available to the public.

The City's Corporate Business Plan outlines seven Outcome Goals: municipal leadership and governance, fiscal responsibility, safety, environmental protection and preservation, economic development, quality of life, and long term planning. This report highlights the significant accomplishments in each strategic area during this quarter.

Corporate Goal: Municipal Leadership and Governance

Annexation

On October 6, 2003, City Council passed the formal Notice of Annexation to proceed with the annexation of approximately 1,320 hectares of land north and west of the City's present corporate boundaries. Public meetings were held in December 2003 with landowners and other stakeholders to determine what, if any, issues may need to be addressed when the City and County undertake formal negotiations and mediation. A summary report of the public open meeting was provided to Council for its review in late January 2004 – this is available on the City's website. The issues raised at the public meetings were addressed during the negotiations and mediation with Sturgeon County Council.

Mediated negotiation was initiated in January 2004. The City and the County met on 10 occasions between February and June 2004 to continue the dialogue on this matter. In June, 2004, the negotiating teams of both sides agreed that the differences between the parties were too great to be able to achieve any substantial agreement on the proposed annexation. The teams agreed the City would proceed with its annexation application to the Municipal Government Board (MGB). The two teams made their termination recommendations to their respective Councils. The Councils then authorized their respective annexation mediation teams to end mediation.

In July 2004, City Council authorized the administration to proceed with the annexation application to the MGB and endorsed the principles upon which the application will be made. The City's application for annexation was submitted to the MGB in September. The Municipal Government Board does not have a statutory time period when they must complete their hearing(s) and make a recommendation to the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Land Use Bylaw

Planning and Development completed the entire re-write of the Land Use Bylaw and the Municipal Planning Commission finalized the review May. Council, at its Special Council Meeting on June 8, 2004 opted to review the draft Bylaw in winter 2004 or early 2005. This timing was to ensure that stakeholder feedback on the draft Land Use Bylaw was not occurring during the summer months of July and August, and to allow for continuance of the review by the new City Council.

Smoking Bylaw

The City passed its controversial Smoking Bylaw in Spring of 2004 and implemented it on July 1. The ban on smoking in bars, lounges, casinos and bingo halls will begin on July 1, 2005.

Communications

Communications Plans and Strategies for various projects are in place. Working with the Departments involved, these strategies continue to evolve. The status of plans for major projects are listed below.

- **Annexation** – A protocol established through the mediation process has resulted in no public communication on the Annexation issue. Even though mediation has concluded the protocol remains in place apart from notices notifying residents of public meetings.
- **West Regional Road** – Now that the West Regional Road has been approved, a permit has been received and a contract is about to be awarded. A media release will be distributed the week of October 18. Meetings will soon be held to develop a major communications plan and protocol on the West Regional Road and associated work with the Red Willow Park system.
- **Red Willow Park** – A Communications Plan is in place for the Red Willow Park Master Plan update. Background work on the Plan continues and communication initiatives are being rolled out in conjunction with discussions with various parties involved in development of the overall master plan.
- **Multipurpose Leisure Centre** – Corporate Communications will continue to take a lead role in communications regarding the MPLC. A communications strategy will be prepared based on the outcome of the October 18 plebiscite.
- **Smoking Bylaw** – The latest phase of communications for the smoking bylaw has been completed. Information packages for all businesses in St. Albert have been mailed out. Smoking bylaw updates will also be included in future editions of Citylights and through ongoing media coverage. A new communications strategy will be in place prior to July 2005 when the full smoking bylaw takes effect.
- **Infrastructure Review** – Corporate Communications is working closely with Planning & Engineering to develop a Communications Strategy in conjunction with the current two-year review of City infrastructure.
- **Transit** – Corporate Communications and Transit have worked closely to roll out Transit's new logo and accompanying advertising. This was achieved in September, 2004.

Policy Review

Council and the City Manager completed the first phase of the Governance Policy Review in September 2002. Staff initiated the review of other corporate policies that require updating and writing. The review was initiated in early 2004.

The project included completing the second phase of the Corporate Governance Review. This involved the review of outstanding Council Governance policies, validating prior Council assessment of the disposition of various policies (i.e. which are no longer applicable and which need to be updated) and gaining closure through appropriate legislative and administrative action. This includes prioritization of "clean up" initiatives to complete the project over 2004 and 2005.

The scope of the review was changed to reflect the development of a policy work plan including a policy template and policy manual index. This was reviewed with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on April 6, 2004 and then again on July 13, 2004. An in-depth review has been undertaken by the City Manager, and Corporate Services General Manager. It will be submitted to the SLT for further review direction prior to going to City Council later this year. The draft policy work-plan including the policy template and policy manual index has been prepared for the SLT to review.

The intent of this final stage will result in a centrally stored Council and Administration Policy handbook with all policies developed in a standardized format and available both in hard copy and online.

Regional Governance Project

Regional Governance is supported through Council's participation in Alberta Capital Region Alliance, the Mayor's and Council members' dialogue with regional counterparts and SLT's participation in the regional and provincial networking opportunities.

Departments are meeting opportunistically with their counterparts from Morinville to discuss intermunicipal co-operative opportunities. Dialogue continues with Edmonton regarding opportunities for intermunicipal co-operation. (eg: joint snow storage facility/compost site). There is no Council or administrative policy direction regarding the objective of this type of co-operation (ie: revenue generation, cost recovery, economies of scale, capacity building)

No activities have been undertaken with respect to investigating a Specialized Municipality and pursuing a regional workshop as this Council Priority was suspended in March, 2004. The recommendation was to defer any dialogue on this matter until after Annexation, municipal elections (2004) and the Provincial election (2004). This direction was confirmed during review of Council Priorities for the balance of term at the June 8, 2004 Council meeting

Corporate Goal: Fiscal Responsibility

2004-2006 Corporate Business Planning Framework

Business planning for 2004 is proceeding in a manner very consistent with 2003, with some key process enhancements. Council outcome goals, corporate strategies and assumptions continue to guide departmental and corporate planning.

In 2004, the Business Planning sub-team is playing a key role in prioritizing business cases, which are requests for funding involving additional staff, changes in service levels and operating practices. These investments have now been fully assessed and the recommended budget is almost finalized. The Economic Development and Policing (ie: RCMP and Bylaw) Long Term Department Plans are expected to be complete by December 30, 2004.

Budget adjustments and funding requisitions are being used to ensure appropriate and sufficient allocation of resources to maintain current services and service levels. User fee changes are submitted through a new user fee template that focuses on the fees of comparable municipalities and the revenue impact of changes in rates

Unlike in 2003, City Council will not review the preliminary business plan and budget prior to the budget being tabled with the Council elected on October 18, 2004. This is based upon the June 8 direction from Council regarding Council Priorities.

Long Term Financial Plan

The Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) that is underway will provide Council, administration and the public with a fiscal road map for the future based on the current plans of Council.

This LTFP will enable sound decision making related to current and future infrastructure and program needs. The plan will assist the Corporation in better understanding the future financial impacts of current policy discussions. The LTFP will be based on sound fiscal principles that will result in the development of Financial Policies that guide and direct the long-term plans of each Department.

The High Level LTFP starts with general assumptions and then refines the plan with more detailed information. Currently the plan includes the detailed planning for five of the largest departments, debt servicing and salaries. Of the remaining work, the most significant section is the long-term capital plan.

The long-term capital plan is very large project that is expected to provide reasonable detailed projections within the next year. The plan will become more accurate on an ongoing basis as more information is obtained on the condition the City's infrastructure. Relative to other comparable cities, the City of St. Albert's capital plan is proceeding well; when complete it will provide an accurate inventory of capital assets.

Capital re-engineering is in phase two with administration reviewing the progress of current capital projects and the development of a 10-year capital plan. While the 10-year capital plan has been given priority by the SLT, other priorities such as the West Road and the MPLC coupled with limited resources in the engineering department may delay this project. One of the main tasks of one of the new engineering positions will be to assist in the development of the 10-year capital plan.

Infrastructure Review

The Infrastructure Review will examine the inventory of infrastructure assets the City manages, evaluate the condition of these assets and propose a preservation strategy.

City staff and a consultant have completed the Phase 1 (Year 1) of the project, which includes data collection, analysis and strategy development. A final report was received in April 2004 and a Communications Plan has been drafted. Specific details associated with the state of the current infrastructure in St. Albert have been provided and the essence of a long term plan associated with infrastructure needs has been established.

Pending Council approval, commencement of Phase 2 is anticipated in the late fall of 2004 with final completion of the project by fall of 2005.

Corporate Goal: Safety

170 Street Widening

The City of St. Albert, the City of Edmonton and the Province, through mutual agreement for funding, agreed to complete the project in two phases. Phase 1 involved the overlay and lane marking of 170 Street between Levasseur Road and 137 Avenue so as to have two lanes northbound and one lane southbound. This work was completed on Thanksgiving weekend, 2003.

Phase two – the installation of lane-control signals – was completed by the City of Edmonton on October 15, 2004.

Corporate Goal: Environmental Protection and Preservation

Environmental Management System

The City of St. Albert has adopted an environmental policy statement to address environmental matters that encompass all City operations.

The administration has produced the first annual report on the environment and has completed approximately 80% of an EMS in the Transit Department.

Corporate Goal: Economic Development

Economic Development Master Plan

The City of St. Albert Economic Development Master Plan 2004-2024 was unanimously approved by City Council July 5, 2004. The Master Plan, which had previously been unanimously endorsed by the St. Albert Economic Development Advisory Committee (SAEDAC), provides a visionary direction for economic development activities for the next 20 years.

The Plan contains recommended goals and objectives, and clearly demonstrates the linkages with other long-range planning documents approved by the City, including the Municipal Development Plan, the Corporate Business Plan and so on.

Sharing the Economic Development Master Plan with community stakeholders is underway. The Master Plan has been printed in booklet format and distributed to community stakeholders such as the Chamber of Commerce, Team St. Albert and SAEDAC.

The City of St. Albert Economic Development Master Plan 2004-2024 will serve as the basis for the Economic Development and Tourism department long-term plan.

High-Tech Park

To accommodate growth of clean industry in St. Albert and to ensure a servicing plan is in place for industrial and commercial lands, City Council approved the expansion of Campbell North into a cohesive, upscale business park. City Council has also authorized the establishment of the Capital Asset Revolving Fund to ensure adequate financial resources are in place to continue to develop future commercial and industrial land in St. Albert.

To maximize the development on each parcel, the new lots were designed attract small, intensive uses. A set of Design Guidelines has been developed to maintain high aesthetic standards and to encourage innovation in site planning and development including architecture, landscaping and graphic design. Each lot sale requires the purchaser to develop the parcel within a specified timeline, or the City has the option to reacquire the property.

Four lots zoned medium industrial were serviced in 2002 and were sold by mid 2003. Stage 2 of the Campbell Business Park was constructed in 2003 consisting of 18 lots. Included in the 2004 Capital Budget is a capital project for the design of Stage 3. Lots will be serviced and added to the inventory available for sale as demand warrants. The City will attempt to maintain 10-20 lots ready for sale.

Economic Development and Tourism continue to market the available lots through contacts with realtors, the business community and through brochures, newspaper advertising and signage. Based on a recommendation from City Council and the Finance and Audit Committee, administration was instructed to issue a call for proposals to engage a qualified commercial/industrial real estate firm to market the Campbell Business Park North properties. Administration has selected Torode Realty (Edmonton) Ltd. for this one-year pilot project. It is hoped that this firm can use their extensive regional and national network of associates to raise the awareness of St. Albert's advantages.

With competitive land costs in the Greater Edmonton Region, it is not possible to obtain full cost recovery from each land sale. Including the cost of the raw land, servicing and financing costs, the City would need to recover \$205,000/acre. However, financial models demonstrate that, over the long term, the Business Park is viable, as the City receives the added benefit of taxation from developments within Campbell Business Park North.

Marketing of the Focal Point was delayed pending the relocation of the Atco high-pressure gas line. The gas line was relocated by the end of July 2004. Marketing efforts for this large site centered on attracting a knowledge-based or technology firm that would serve as the anchor tenant for Campbell Business Park North. In mid October 2004, the City of St. Albert began negotiating an agreement with an international software developer who originally started business in St. Albert some 20 years ago. An understanding has also been developed with the Northern Alberta Business Incubator (NABI) for a portion of Campbell Business Park North for their new, expanded facility. These two recent developments will greatly assist in attracting other business interests to the park, further diversifying the City's tax base.

Corporate Goal: Quality of Life

Multipurpose Leisure Centre

Based on the consultation process from the Leisure Services Master Plan and continued growth of the City of St. Albert, the corporation has undertaken several different processes in an attempt to find a cost effective way to develop a Multipurpose Leisure Centre.

Under the direction of Council, Administration has been directed to develop the proposed Multipurpose Leisure Center at the Campbell Arena site. The business plan has been updated to reflect current direction. The components being addressed architecturally and financially are: fitness and wellness centre, leisure aquatics centre (water slide, tube slide, hot tub, sauna and steam), 1,700 seat ice-arena/event center, family skating rink, twin indoor soccer fields, gymnasium/field house, jogging/walking track, premier outdoor football field (with lights and bleacher seating), revenue generating commercial space for food concession, sporting goods sales/services

A communication plan is being carried out to inform the community and user groups regarding the MPLC and the Plebiscite on October 18. The Director of Public Works has taken on the role of project manager of construction and is currently reviewing the design and preparing for site work, redistricting of the site and relocation of the storm pond. Staffing and financial impacts are being reviewed.

On September 7, Council approved the Plebiscite question and gave first reading to the borrowing bylaw.

Residents of St Albert voted 54.89% in favour of the proposed Multipurpose Leisure Center during the vote of the electorate on October 18. Staff are preparing recommendations for City Council to proceed with the project. The recommendations will be presented to Council on November 3.

Parks and River Corridor

During 2003 the higher level of effort provided to the Red Willow Park river corridor and parkway system project resulted in a fewer citizen complaints, improved the overall aesthetics of the park corridor, and enhanced the City's ability to be more proactive in the protection, management and maintenance of this valuable resource.

Council approved \$55,900 in the 2004 Budget under the title "Spruce Up St. Albert" program to further this initiative. Staff implemented this new initiative that contributes to the overall cleanliness of the City, which further augments the Parks and River Corridor maintenance in the community.

The Spruce Up St. Albert initiative has been well received through three-quarters of the year in 2004. Some of the initial program statistics are:

- 5572 people participated in the program;
- three schools are involved in the fall clean up; and
- 1500 garbage bags were distributed.

Ongoing evaluation and preparation for the upcoming year's projects will be a focus for the last quarter of the year.

Joint Use Agreement

On August 31, 2004 City Council and the three School Boards endorsed the new Agreements (Reciprocal Use and Site Allocation). A formal signing ceremony was held on August 31.

Corporate Goal: Long Term Planning

West Regional Road

The City received approval on August 20, 2004 from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans for construction of the West Regional Road and the bridge crossing of the Sturgeon River.

City Council approved the detailed design on August 24. Detailed design is occurring and components of construction are being planned to commence in late October, 2004. A tender for the placement of embankment fill material, wick drains and pile work for the bridge has been awarded. Clearing of the right-of-way of City-owned lands and those lands to which the City has received access rights will occur in October. Land negotiations for road right-of-way, detailed design, environmental co-ordination and all other critical issue items are being studied, reviewed and developed on a on-going bases.

Red Willow Park

City Council approved in principle the Red Willow Park Master Plan and initial implementation began in 2004. This included detailed site planning and feasibility assessments as per the capital budget submissions. Further implementation on these projects will be dependent upon feasibility assessment information. Partnership development is being explored on the day-use picnic area with St. Albert Rotary in the Riel quadrant. Other preliminary implementation strategies for all quadrants are also taking place in 2004.

In the 3rd quarter of 2004, with the West Regional Road project underway, a process has been initiated to begin site planning for the Nature Centre and feasibility of canoe/kayak pond.

Space Needs Review

The City of St. Albert has outgrown its currently available administration space. Additional space is required to accommodate all of the needs of the corporation now and into the future as the City continues to grow.

A consolidated space needs review has been assigned to the Director of Corporate Planning and Business Management.

The 2004 Budget contained a business case to initiate the project. This business case was not approved and administration was asked to undertake a cursory review over the year and bring forward a business case for 2005 to address this issue. A business case for 2005 has been prepared and will be brought forward in the budget process.