

Environmental Advisory Committee

Annual Report to Council (2019)



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RECOMMENDATION

That the Environmental Advisory Committee's 2019 Annual Report be accepted as information and that the Environmental Advisory Committee continue to operate as presently constituted through 2020.

MEMBERSHIP

Citizen Members (January 1 through to December 31, 2019)

| | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Brad Peori (Chair) | Citizen-at-large | First of two-year term |
| Ben Thronson* (Vice Chair) | Citizen-at-large | First of two-year term |
| Tanya Doran** | Citizen-at-large | Last of two-year term |
| Bill Marsh** | Citizen-at-large | Last of two-year term |
| Allisson Lefebvre | Citizen-at-large | Last of two-year term |
| Matthew Wheatley*** | Citizen-at-large | Last of two-year term |
| Tara Fulton | Citizen-at-large | First of two-year term |

*Resigned December 2019 – moving in 2020

**Served three consecutive terms (six years)

***Resigned October 2019

Council Representation

In October 2018, Council appointed Councillor Joly as the primary and Councillor Hansen as the alternate representatives for the Environmental Advisory Committee. In October 2019, Council reappointed Councillor Joly as the primary and Councillor Hansen as the alternate representatives for the Environmental Advisory Committee.

On October 21, 2019, Council approved a governance restructure as a two-year pilot project. As a result, the Council representative (and one alternate Council member) for Citizen Committees (i.e. EAC) will serve as an *ex officio* non-voting member.

The EAC appreciates that a Council representative can be made available for the scheduled committee meetings. The importance of this liaison has proven beneficial for this committee to bring environmental issues to Council.

City Administration Representation

Committee assistance was provided by Utilities and Environment Department staff:

Meghan Myers, Environmental Coordinator – Community Strategy & Engagement

Christian Benson, Manager, Environment

Kate Polkovsky, Director, Environment & Utilities

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 provide advice to Council with respect to environmental policies, plans, and initiatives, especially where a public perspective is desirable.

Direction and assistance to the EAC were obtained through the City's Utilities and Environment Department staff.

On January 21, 2019 Council provided the EAC with the following annual priorities:

- Recommend the 2019 Environmental Initiatives Grant Program recipients;
- Provide advice on environmental policies included in the Municipal Development Plan;
- Provide advice on leadership opportunities in waste (Council priority); and
- Provide advice on the Parks Bylaw and Fire Bylaw reviews and PACE Bylaw development.

ACTIVITIES PROGRESS REPORT

The Environmental Advisory Committee met nine times during 2019, meeting monthly except in July, August, and December.

Priorities – Advice to Council

Environmental Initiatives Grant Program Recommendations

The EAC continued with its major function, namely reviewing applications submitted under the City's Environmental Initiatives Grant Program (EIGP) and providing funding recommendations to Council. A one-time submission of applications was received on October 10, 2019 for the EIGP in accordance with existing Council Policy C-EUS-02. The EAC reviewed 17 applications totalling \$93,832.91 in requested funds and 11 were recommended for funding totalling \$32,200.

Relevant motion from October 24, 2019 EAC meeting:

Moved by A. Lefebvre

That the Environmental Advisory Committee recommend to Council that the following Environmental Initiative Grant Program applications be approved:

| Applicant (alphabetical) | Project Description | Grant Allocation |
|--|--|-------------------------|
| Bertha Kennedy Elementary School | Bertha Kennedy's Learning Garden project will provide an outdoor learning space that includes bee houses, hummingbird feeder, birdhouses, feeders and baths. As well as an orchard of native berry trees and an outdoor garden of pollinator plants. | \$4,000.00 |
| Empower Me | Funding will be used to implement education programming on energy and utilities conservation (including waste and transit use) to the under-served and under-represented residents in St. Albert. | \$5,000.00 |
| Joe M. Demko School | Funding would be used to build an urban farm inside and outside the school. Seeds will be started indoors and then planted in garden boxes in the spring. | \$2,000.00 |
| Keenoshayo Elementary School | Funding will be used to create a Green Team environment club and pursue projects like regular schoolyard clean ups, plastic bag recycling collection, school PSAs and classroom energy checks. | \$865.00 |
| Lacombe Park Garden and Connection Place | Funding would be used to design and create (phase 1) a garden that includes educational and gathering spaces through a multi-year, phased design plan on the property of the Grace Family Church. | \$5,190.00 |
| Outreach High School | Funds will be used to revitalize outdoor space of the school with garden boxes and native species in addition utilizing an existing greenhouse. | \$1,650.00 |
| Paul Kane High School Environmental Leadership | Environmental Leadership club will use the funds to develop and deliver elementary school presentations on environmental issues, solutions and how they can get involved. | \$1,645.00 |
| Ronald Harvey Elementary School | Transform outdoor space into an outdoor classroom by adding outdoor planters, seating, and trees and shrubs. | \$2,000.00 |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Sister Alphonse Academy | The funding would be used to develop an edible learning garden on school property including garden boxes and fruit bearing trees. | \$2,000.00 |
| St. Albert Tool Library Society | Funding would be used to assist with the purchase of tools that the society could not purchase second hand or get donated. In addition, assist with one more year of getting the tool library running sufficiently. | \$3,850.00 |
| WILDNorth | Funds will be used to continue the wildlife rehabilitation and rescue care programs in St. Albert. | \$5,000.00 |
| TOTAL | | \$33,200.00 |

CARRIED

Moved by: B. Thronson

That EAC recommend WILDNorth be funded with ongoing funds separately beginning 2021.

CARRIED

On December 16, 2019 Council accepted and approved the EAC EIGP recommendations.

Community Recognition Program Recommendations

New in 2019, the Environmental Advisory Committee reviewed the nominations under the environmental stewardship category of the City's Community Recognition Program. The addition of the environmental stewardship category to this program was a recommendation from the EAC 2018 work plan (environmental leadership recognition).

At the March 28, 2019 EAC meeting, the Committee met in camera to review three submissions in accordance with Council Policy C-CS-03 and two were recommended to City Council for recognition.

On June 17, 2019, City Council presented the following individuals the Community Recognition Program award in the environmental stewardship category:

- Daryl D'Amico - Daryl is a St. Albert resident that has served on the Grey Nuns White Spruce Park (GNWSP) Working Group since 2012. Daryl was instrumental in the designation and naming of GNWSP and the continuous work to protect and manage the historically significant white spruce forest.
- Leah Kongsrude - Leah is a St. Albert resident who worked for the City of St. Albert in the Environment for over 13 years. Leah's legacy in St. Albert not only lies in her community and professional work, but the leadership for the

projects and initiatives that improved and protected the long-term health of the environment in St. Albert. Her passion and energy for environmental work in St. Albert was empowering to others to become involved.

Environment Bylaw and Policy – 4 Year Review

City staff are required to review bylaws and Council policy every four years. In 2019, the environmental documents for review included Environmental Initiatives Grant (EIG) Council Policy, Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) Bylaw and the Environmental Sustainability Policy. At the February 28, 2019 EAC meeting, the Committee reviewed the three environmental documents and determined that the EAC Bylaw and EIG Council Policy do not require any changes and that the Environmental Sustainability Policy should be reviewed in more detail.

At the April 25, 2019 EAC meeting the Committee reviewed the policy and discussed changes. A red-lined version of the policy was developed and approved at the May 23, 2019 EAC meeting and forwarded to City Council for approval on August 26, 2019.

Flyer Opt-In

At the November 28, 2019 meeting, staff from Economic Development, M. Killoh and N. Pearson, presented background information and preliminary research on the flyer distribution opt-in Council motion. EAC provided written advice (Appendix I) to Economic Development to include in the report to Council February 2020.

Fire Bylaw and Parks Bylaw Reviews

The review of the Fire Bylaw and Parks Bylaw was postponed to 2020 and will be added to the Committee's work plan.

EAC Input Provided to Administration

Environmental Initiatives Grant Program Promotions

January 24, 2019 – to encourage potential applicants and promote innovative projects for the 2019 allocation of the Environmental Initiatives Grant Program, EAC developed a project idea list to be used by administration for grant promotions. In addition, EAC decided to offer an Application Mentor Program for applicants to discuss and review their project ideas with Grant Review Members. EAC members also attended the Grant Information Session to answer potential applicants' questions and provide them with suggestions on their project ideas.

Municipal Development Project Champion Team

In 2019, Brad Peori represented the Environmental Advisory Committee on the Project Champion Team for the Municipal Development Plan project, Flourish Growing to 100k.

Municipal Development Plan

March 28, 2019 – Kristina Peter (Manager, Planning) and Carley Holt (Planner), introduced the Municipal Development Plan (2000) and presented the project for the development of a new MDP (Flourish: Growing to 100K). The Committee received growth scenarios based on a population of 100000 around the year 2044 and provided suggestions based on the areas west, north and in the core.

Annual Report on the Environment

March 28, 2018 – Committee received a summary of the 2018 Report on the Environment published annually to update residents on the goals and targets set in the Environmental Master Plan. The Committee provided suggestions for incorporation into the following years report.

Local Action Plan for Energy Conservation and Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions

May 23, 2019 – Committee reviewed and provided input on an update to the Local Action Plan for Energy Conservation and Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions (2013), specifically the energy conservation measures for both the corporation and the community.

Public Participation Target

May 23, 2019 – Committee discussed the public participation target in the Environmental Master Plan (EMP) and provided suggestions on how to meaningfully track and report on environmental stewardship until the update of the EMP in 2020.

Smoking Bylaw

June 27, 2019 - Darija Slokar (Senior Advisory & Project Manager, Corporate Initiatives) and Marta Caufield (Deputy City Solicitor, Legal Services) provided background on the Smoking Bylaw amendments and solicited feedback from Committee members. The Committee discussed environmental impacts of the bylaw amendments, specifically littering and air quality. This engagement was completed on the EAC's environmental tour bus.

Updates Provided to EAC

Transportation Master Plan

February 28, 2019 – Dean Schick, Manager, Transportation, presented on the work completed on the Transportation Master Plan included an implementation plan overview and priority deliverables (road network, Intelligent Transportation System, public transportation, goods movement/network function, and active modes).

Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE)

February 28, 2019 – Christian Benson, Manager, Environment provided an update on the PACE program now called Clean Energy Improvement Program (CEIP). The City of Edmonton scheduled to complete a pilot in 2020 and St. Albert (specifically C. Benson) is on an advisory committee in the Capital Region and will update the EAC as information becomes available.

CN Railway Fence

February 28, 2019 – EAC discussed the development of a fence along the CN railway going through St. Albert.

Relevant motion from March 28, 2019 EAC meeting:

Moved by B. Thronson

That EAC requests a City representative attend the September 26, 2019 EAC meeting to identify issues of wildlife connectivity and mitigation methods for the CN fence.

September 26, 2019 – Melissa Logan, Environmental Coordinator – Sturgeon River & Natural Areas, provided a brief presentation on results of the wildlife cameras set up along the CN fence within City limits.

River Water Quality Index

April 25, 2019 – Melissa Logan, Environmental Coordinator – Sturgeon River & Natural Areas, presented on the River Water Quality Index, a tool developed to communicate the health of the Sturgeon River.

Net Zero Residential Development

April 25, 2019 – Christian Benson, Manager, Environment, introduced the Net Zero Residential Development Council priority project. Net zero refers to a home that produces as much energy as it consumes on an annual basis.

Environmental Projects Tour

June 27, 2017 - the Committee went on a scheduled tour and stopped at three locations of interest. The first was the City's air quality monitoring station behind the Sturgeon Reservoir with Farron Bibby, Air Quality Monitoring Technologist with Alberta Environment and Parks. At second stop they toured the net-zero home at 10 Legacy Terrace by the home owner and the home designer. Lastly, the City's Utilities Manager Brian Brost gave the Committee a tour of the Lacombe Park Reservoir and Pump Station.

Grey Nuns White Spruce Park – Project Update

September 26, 2019 – Erin Pickard, Operations Supervisor, Parks & Open Spaces provided an overview of the history of Grey Nuns White Spruce Park and an update on the projects within the area (grant funding, trial plots, cone collection and extraction, seedling orders, planting through reforestation companies, partnerships, snag and fallen tree management).

Urban Forest Management Plan – Update

November 28, 2019 – Louis Stewart, Senior Manager, Public Works Operations and Erin Pickard, Operations Supervisor, Parks and Open Spaces presented on the Urban Forest Management Plan, approved in 2017 and the progress on the four goals within the plan.

3-YEAR WORK PLAN

In October 2018, EAC completed a 3-year work plan for 2019-2021. The purpose of the work planning session included:

- To update the EAC 3-year work plan developed in 2016;
- Reaffirm Committee's role (Bylaw 35/2015);
- Determine Committee's planned actions for next 3 years based on the Environmental Master Plan;
- Ensure Committee's work is aligned with major City plans and guiding environmental plans; and
- Provide advice to Council priorities related to environment.

The EAC 3-Year work plan 2019-2021 summary is attached in Appendix II.

2020 Priority Recommendations

These are the major environmental initiatives that are being developed in 2020 that require in depth formal involvement from EAC and written advice to Council.

1. Recommend 2020 Environmental Initiatives Grant Program and Community Recognition Program (environmental stewardship category) Recipients
2. Provide advice on the Environmental Master Plan update
3. Provide advice on the Single Use Item Reduction Strategy
4. Provide advice on the Parks Bylaw and Fire Bylaw reviews and PACE/CEIP Bylaw development

EAC ENDORSEMENT OF CITY PROGRAMS

The EAC would like to acknowledge the continued support and leadership of St. Albert Council for establishing the EAC to provide advice to Council and Administration on environmental matters. The EAC supports innovative programs and encourages citizen participation in environmental responsibility as an extension of the Environmental Master Plan.

The EAC acknowledges the dedication and competency of the City of St. Albert's Utilities and Environment staff throughout 2019 as well as their ongoing support towards the Committee. It is through the efforts of the Utilities and Environment department, that important sustainability focused programs are developed and put into practice in the community to ensure resilience.

APPENDIX I – WRITTEN ADVICE TO COUNCIL

WILDNorth – Environmental Initiatives Grant Program

Recommendation – approved October 24, 2019

As part of the overall funding recommendations, EAC has provided the following statement to be included in the agenda report to City Council:

EAC recognizes the importance of WILDNorth in providing wildlife rescue and rehabilitation services in St. Albert and recommends that City Council considers allocating sustainable funding to WILDNorth outside the Environmental Initiatives Grant Program.

EAC acknowledges that WILDNorth contributes an important service to St. Albert by providing care to injured and orphaned wildlife with the goal of returning these wild animals to their natural habitat. In the last two years, EIGP funding has been allocated in recognition of the essential service provided by WILDNorth.

Opt-In Flyer Distribution

Recommendation – approved December 2019

The Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) appreciated Economic Development's presentation regarding the City of St. Albert's research into an "opt-in" program for flyers. The EAC recognizes that the distribution of flyers consumes a large amount of paper and energy. As such, the EAC is supportive of measures which will enable residents to reduce their consumption of flyers. The Committee is happy to provide further advice should this proposal move forward.

APPENDIX II – EAC 3-YEAR (2019-2021) WORK PLAN SUMMARY

The EAC 3-Year Work Plan is developed around the nine goals in the City’s Environmental Master Plan. Committee actions are either **Provide advice to Council**, **Provide input to Admin**, or **Receive information**.

| 1. Manage Air Quality | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| Targets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish baseline of St. Albert’s air quality by 2020. Maintain air quality below Level 2 triggers (nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, fine particulate matter and ozone) as outlined in the Capital Region Air Quality Management Framework (CRAQMF) completed by Alberta Environment and Parks in partnership with the Alberta Capital Airshed (ACA). | | | |
| Topic | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
| Air quality data | Receive information 2016-18 ambient air quality data (level within CRAQMF, trends, number of poor air quality days, comparison with other locales, etc.) from AEP and ACA. | Receive information 2019 ambient air quality data (level within CRAQMF, trends, number of poor air quality days, comparison with other locales, etc.) from AEP and ACA. Provide advice to Council State of the ambient air quality in St. Albert and recommend actions | Receive information 2020 ambient air quality data (level within CRAQMF, trends, number of poor air quality days, comparison with other locales, etc.) from AEP and ACA. |
| Citizen Science | | Receive information Current citizen science and small sensor activities in St. Albert and Alberta Capital Airshed. | |
| Education | | Provide input to Admin New public awareness opportunities (displaying live Air Quality Health Index on existing electronic boards, why we monitor, etc.) | Receive information Metrics of Idle free bylaw update |
| Transportation Master Plan | | | Provide advice to Council |

| | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|--|
| | | | Air quality considerations for the TMP |
| Fire Bylaw Review | Receive information Connection between air quality and rules governing wood burning | Provide advice to Council Air quality considerations for the Fire Bylaw | |

2. Reduce Energy Consumption and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Targets:

- Achieve 20 per cent reduction of total corporate greenhouse gas emissions from 2008 levels by 2020.
- Achieve six per cent reduction of total community greenhouse gas emissions from 2008 levels by 2020.

| Topic | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|-------------------|--|---|------|
| Greenhouse Gases | Provide input to Admin Review of implementation plan of the Local Action Plan for Energy Conservation and Greenhouse Gases Emissions | Provide advice to Council Review of implementation plan of the Local Action Plan for Energy Conservation and Greenhouse Gases Emissions | |
| City Energy Usage | Provide input to Admin Green utilities | Provide input to Admin Disclosing energy use of City facilities (ahead of mandated disclosure in 2027) | |
| Transportation | Provide input to Admin Local bus route review and plan to increase ridership within Transportation Master Plan | Receive information Regional Transportation System | |
| Green Energy | Provide advice to Council PACE (Property Assessed Green Energy) bylaw to support financing of green energy upgrades | | |

3. Promote Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Transportation Choices

Targets:

- Achieve a minimum density of 30-40 dwelling units per net residential hectare for new neighbourhoods.
- Achieve a minimum of 30 per cent for medium- and/or high-density residential until for new neighbourhoods.
- Increase transit ridership equal to or greater than the overall rate of population growth of St. Albert.

| Topic | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|
| Municipal Development Plan | Receive information Net zero residential development (Council Priority 6.3) | | |
| | Provide input to Admin Municipal Development Plan updates | | |
| Transportation | | Receive information Active transportation implementation | Provide input to Admin Review and update Transportation Master Plan |

4. Preserve and Manage Trees, Parks and Natural Areas

Targets:

- Measure existing tree canopy cover and set future targets.
- Protect top three priority natural areas in the undeveloped areas of St. Albert.

| Topic | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|-----------------------|---|---|--|
| Climate Resiliency | | Receive information Climate Resiliency Plan | |
| Trees | Receive information Urban Forest Management Plan | | Provide advice to Council Urban Forest Management Plan (tree canopy targets, incentives, etc.) |
| Natural Areas | Receive information Grey Nuns White Spruce Park projects update | | Provide advice to Council Conservation Reserve Strategy |
| Municipal Development | Provide input to Admin Preservation of trees through conservation reserve within Municipal Development Plan | Provide input to Admin Review management plans of alignment | |

5. Reduce Garbage to the Landfill

Targets:

- Reduce garbage to the landfill to 105 kg per person per year by 2020.
- Increase diversion rate to 75 per cent by 2020.

| Topic | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|------------------|---|--|------|
| Waste Management | <p>Provide advice to Council</p> <p>Technologies to reduce waste to the landfill (Q1) (Council Priority 6.1)</p> | <p>Provide advice to Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leadership opportunities in waste management ▪ Commercial waste disclosure plan ▪ Extended producer responsibility | |

6. Protect and Improve the Sturgeon River Watershed

Targets:

- Create watershed group by 2015.
- Complete a watershed management plan by 2020.

| Topic | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|----------------------|--|---|------|
| Watershed Management | <p>Receive information</p> <p>Watershed Management Plan public engagement</p> | <p>Provide input to Council</p> <p>Watershed Management Plan</p> | |

7. Improve Water Quality of the Sturgeon River

Targets:

- Reduce nutrients, pesticides and bacteria levels detected in the Sturgeon River by 2020 as measure by future River Water Quality Index.
- Capture 75 per cent or greater of municipal winter sanding material by 2020.
- Reduce municipal pesticide use to 0.25 kg of active ingredient (ai) per hectare or lower by 2020.

| Topic | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|---------------|--|---|------|
| Water Quality | <p>Receive information</p> <p>River water quality index</p> | | |
| Roads | | <p>Provide input to Admin</p> <p>Road sand recovery</p> <p>Provide input to Admin</p> | |

| | | | |
|------------|--|---|--|
| | | Chloride use on roads | |
| Stormwater | | Provide input to Admin Stormwater rate bylaws | |

8. Reduce Water Consumption

Targets:

- Reduce total water consumption to 200 litres per person per day by 2020.

| Topic | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|--------------------|--|---|--|
| Smart Water Meters | Receive information Water usage tracking | Receive information Impact of residents tracking water usage with online tool | Receive information Outcomes of smart water meters adoption |
| Water Conservation | | | Provide advice to Council Review of Water Conservation Bylaw |

9. Foster Community Environmental Stewardship

Targets:

- Grow participation in the Clean and Green RiverFest, Arbor Day and Naturalization projects to 1000 participants or more by 2020.
- Allocate funding to a total of 150 Environmental Initiatives Grant applications by 2020.
- Develop one or more new community and/or interdepartmental partnerships each year by 2020.

| Topic | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Environmental Initiatives Grant (EIG) | Provide input to Admin EIG review and brainstorming of potential initiatives / projects | | |
| | Provide input to Admin Update of public participation targets | | |
| Environmental Master Plan | | Provide input to Admin Update of EMP | Provide advice to Council Update of EMP |