

Environmental Advisory Committee

Annual Report to Council (2022)



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RECOMMENDATION

That the Environmental Advisory Committee's 2022 Annual Report be accepted as information and that the Environmental Advisory Committee continue to operate as presently constituted through 2023.

MEMBERSHIP

Citizen Members (January 1 through to December 31, 2022)

Bill Marsh (Chair)	Citizen-at-large	Last of two-year term
Adrienne McGarrigle (Vice Chair)	Citizen-at-large	First of two-year term
Heidi Cossey	Citizen-at-large	Last of two-year term
Kevin Aschim	Citizen-at-large	First of two-year term
Alan Luck	Citizen-at-large	First of two-year term
Carmen Piercey	Citizen-at-large	First of two-year term
Monique Vetch	Citizen-at-large	First of two-year term

Council Representation

In November 2021, Council appointed Councillor Killick as the City Council representative and Councillor Biermanski as the alternate City Council representative for the Environmental Advisory Committee for 2022.

In November 2022, Council reappointed Councillor Killick as the City Council representative and Councillor Biermanski as the alternate City Council representative for the Environmental Advisory Committee for 2023.

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 Human Resources, Safety & Environment Department staff:

Payton Homeak, Environmental Coordinator – Community Strategy & Engagement
Meghan Myers, Acting Manager, Environment

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 Human Resources, Safety, and Environment Department staff.

On January 31, 2022, Council provided the EAC with the following annual priorities:

1. Recommend the 2022 Environmental Initiatives Grant program and Community Recognition Program (environmental stewardship category) recipients.
2. Provide advice on the development of the Clean Energy Improvement Program
3. Provide advice on the development of the Climate Adaptation Strategy
4. Provide advice on the update and review of the Environmental Advisory Committee Bylaw and Sustainable Building Policy

ACTIVITIES PROGRESS REPORT

The EAC met ten times during 2022 (January, February, March, April, May, June, September, October, November, December). Due to COVID-19 restrictions, meetings were hosted virtually through Zoom until all mandatory public health restrictions were lifted on June 14, 2022. Meetings then transitioned to a hybrid model for members to optionally attend in person or via Zoom.

Priorities – Advice to Council

Community Recognition Program

On February 24, 2022, Meghan Myers, Acting Manager, Environment provided an update on the Community Recognition Program and introduced one nomination in the Environmental Stewardship category. Based on discussions the Environmental Advisory Committee recommended the 2022 Community Recognition nomination to Council for their consideration and approval on April 11, 2022.

Environmental Initiatives Grant Program (EIGP) Recommendations

The EAC continued one of the key priorities to review the annual EIGP applications and provide recommendations to council. A low number of submissions leading up to the October 6, 2022, application deadline, upon consideration of post-covid challenges. Environment staff extended the application deadline to October 19, 2022. The one-time extension for submission of applications was received on October 19, 2022, for the EIGP in accordance with existing Council Policy C-EUS-02. On October 27, 2022, the EAC reviewed 12 applications and 10 applications were recommended for funding.

Relevant motion from October 27, 2022, EAC Meeting:

Moved by M. Veitch

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

Applicant (alphabetical)	Project Description	Grant Allocation
Braeside Pop Up Neighbourhood Garden	Funding would support the neighbourhood pop-up garden for a second season. The group intends to use space as an outdoor community hub to host various events to increase the awareness of growing food, continue to grow neighbourhood connections, and build long-term community relationships.	\$2750.00
Coal Mine Road Community Garden Rainwater Capture System	To fund the supplies needed to build a sustainable rainwater harvesting system by capturing rainwater from the roofs of existing buildings on site. The rainwater capture project will provide a solution having no access to water for the community gardens and provide the opportunity to have an effective and working compost system on site.	\$4850.00
Grandin Village Community Garden Enhancement	To implement a large on-site compost system to divert organics from the landfill in the condo community; support enhancing an inclusive community space by building a community board on site for education and planting a large community garden plot that can accessed by anyone in the community.	\$3788.55

Joseph M Demko Biodiversity Project	This project will educate students on how to support pollinators and increase biodiversity in the community. Funds requested will purchase the supplies needed for Grade 1, 2 and Junior High students to build bee homes, bird houses and bat houses.	\$1527.50
Paul Kane High School - Botanical Studies Course	Funds requested will support greenhouse and planting materials needed to implement a new Botanical studies course. This course will teach students about sustainable gardening practices, renewable resources, native plant species, and produce food for the culinary arts program.	\$4,695.50
Riverlot 56 Naturalization Project	Funds will support testing several new planting techniques and collecting that data to continue naturalizing and regenerating the Aspen Forest at Riverlot 56. The day of the planting event will be communicated in advance and the open for anyone in the community to be involved in this project.	\$3,495.00
St. Albert Botanic Park - Sustainable Soil Project	Funds requested will support the first stage in remediating major deficiencies in the soil by adding compost in various park beds and gardens at the St. Albert Botanic Garden.	\$4,003.68
St. Albert Catholic High School River Education Mentorship Program	Funds will purchase additional resources needed to support the education of the Sturgeon River. Biology 20 students will utilize resources to create a lesson plan and interactive outdoor	\$2,010.00

	workshop with K-Grade 2 students relating to river health, water conservation, aquatic ecosystems, plant & animal biodiversity, etc.	
St. Albert Catholic High School Space Club; Air Quality Balloon Project	Funds will be used to purchase and launch a high-altitude weather balloon equipped with sensors that will detect and track several air quality components. The Space Club will analyze the data and communicate findings with the St. Albert high schools, and the community.	\$1,079.77
Star Garden -Together We Grow	Funds will support the development of a cooperative urban garden space focused on the education of growing indigenous medicinal plants, fostering no till garden techniques, and establishing partnerships in the community to increase access to fresh produce for those in need within the community.	\$5,000.00
TOTAL	Funds Available: \$33,200.00	Funds Allocated: \$33,200.00

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Environmental Advisory Committee Bylaw

May 26, 2022 – Meghan Myers, Acting Manager, Environment provided an overview of the Environmental Advisory Committee Bylaw. The committee reviewed and discussed the bylaw. Changes to the Bylaw were not recommended at this time.

Sustainable Building Policy Review

Due to conflicting priorities in the Environment Branch, the Sustainable Building Policy was postponed to 2023. City Administration will complete an internal review of the proposed changes and present to EAC in 2023.

EAC Input Provided to Administration

Clean Energy Improvement Program (CEIP)

January 27, 2022– Payton Homeak, Environmental Coordinator -Community Strategy and Engagement provided an update on the CEIP program.

September 29, 2022, - Meghan Myers, Acting Manager, Environment gave a presentation on the Clean Energy Improvement Program Terms and Conditions. The committee reviewed and discussed the Terms and Conditions in detail.

Climate Adaptation Plan

February 24, 2022 – Calvin Kwan, Project Assistant at All One Sky Foundation, and Sarah Prescott, Project Manager at All One Sky Foundation gave a presentation on the Climate Adaption Challenge and facilitated a Climate Action Planning workshop. The committee participated by providing feedback for the Climate Change Vulnerability and Risk Assessment.

On April 28, 2022 - Calvin Kwan, provided a presentation on the Final Report of Climate Adaptation Plan. This report identified six priority climate risks and two priority opportunities, and the actions to address these risks and opportunities. This plan is published on the Environmental Reports Section on the City [webpage](#).

Updates Provided to EAC

Waste & Diversion Programs

March 15, 2022 – Katie Burd, Waste & Diversion Programs, Supervisor, City of St. Albert, provided a presentation on the 2021 Waste and Diversion Programs.

Water Conservation Bylaw 22/2015 Update

May 26, 2022 – Meghan Myers, Acting Manager, Environment provided an update to the Committee on the Water Conservation Bylaw review.

Environmental Projects Tour

June 23, 2022 – The Committee went on a scheduled tour across the city and stopped at three unique locations. The first was the Lacombe Park Garden and Connection place, located at the Grace Family Church. Members got to see firsthand how this project came to life with an Environmental Initiatives Grant. The second location was the Legacy Stormwater Management Facility, Melissa Logan, Environmental Coordinator - Sturgeon River and Natural Areas, provided an overview of the function of Stormwater Management Facilities, highlighting the benefits to implementing a naturalized

boundary. The final stop was at the Dez Liggett Transit Facility: Tom Kumka, Fleet Manager, Public Operations, Transit, provided an overview of the electric buses and solar rooftop system.

Environmental Management System Update

September 29, 2022 – Kristen Glass, Environmental Management Supervisor, Environment, provided an update on the City's Environmental Management System programs and outcomes including the 2022 internal and external audit results with the Environmental Advisory Committee.

Air Quality in the Capital Region

October 27, 2022 – Casandra Brown, Atmospheric Scientist, Alberta Environment and Parks and Lauren Tabor, Air Monitoring Technologist, Alberta Environment and Parks provided information on air quality data and trends from 2021 and early 2022 within the City of St. Albert and the Capital Region.

Municipal Energy Management Program Updates

November 19, 2022 –Gage Tweedy, Municipal Energy Specialist provided an update on the Municipal Energy Management Program. Updates included facilities projects, Energy Management Assessment updates, amount of grant funding accessed, total estimated operational cost savings, GHG reductions, employee engagement and future projects.

3-YEAR WORK PLAN

On December 14, 2022, the EAC met to complete a 3-year work plan (2023-2025). The work plan was developed to provide a longer-term picture of the EAC's workload and identify potential priority areas for the next three years. The session was facilitated by City staff from Strategic Services and supported by staff from Human Resources, Safety and Environment. Prior to the session the EAC reviewed City documents including Flourish, Corporate Business Plan and the Environmental Master Plan. The plan is under development and will be included in the Committee's 2023 Annual Report.

2023 Priority Recommendations

These are the major environmental initiatives that are being developed in 2023 that require in depth formal involvement from EAC.

1. Recommend 2023 Environmental Initiatives Grant Program and Community Recognition Program (environmental stewardship category) Recipients
2. Provide advice on the update and review of the Sustainable Building Policy and Water Conservation Bylaw
3. Provide advice on the development of urban biodiversity pilot education programming

The EAC greatly appreciates the support provided by City Administration in the completion of the EAC's 2023 priorities and workplan. The EAC was always provided comprehensive background information before taking up key issues and making recommendations to the Council.

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 Environment staff throughout 2023 as well as their ongoing support towards the Committee. It is through the efforts of the Human Resources, Safety, and Environment, department that important sustainability focused programs are developed and put into practice in the community to ensure resilience.