2011 REPORT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

The 2011 Report on the Environment is our way of sharing progress and achievement on the eight goals and targets of the City of St. Albert's Environmental Master Plan (EMP). To view the EMP, visit **www.st.albert.ca/our-environment.**

CITY OF ST. ALBERT'S ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

The City of St. Albert is committed to maintaining a healthy natural environment and ensuring its sustainability for future generations.

The City accomplished this by adopting the following standards:

- Compliance with all environmental regulations
- Pollution prevention
- Use of environmental management systems
- Communication of its environmental performance to staff and the community
- Continuous improvement of its environmental performance

City of St. Albert **Office of Environment**
Green by nature

City of St. Albert
Cultivate Life

AIR

GOAL: MAINTAIN AIR QUALITY

Where are we now?

Alberta Environment and Water classifies St. Albert's air quality as 'good,' although they have noted that the levels of ozone and particulates are approaching excessive levels for National Air Quality Standards.

Where do we want to be?

Target:

- Establish an air quality monitoring station in St. Albert.

How are we reaching our target?

As a member of the Alberta Capital Airshed Alliance, the City is working to finalize report recommendations for a regional air quality monitoring system. The report recommends St. Albert as a priority for a continuous air quality monitoring station. To determine the best location for a permanent station and start collecting baseline data, initiation of a temporary or season air quality monitoring project in St. Albert is recommended.

In 2011, Alberta Environment and Water and the federal government partnered to provide Albertans with an Air Quality Health Index (AQHI), a web tool that provides a number from 1 to 10+ to indicate the level of health risk associated with the local air quality. The higher the AQHI number the greater the health risk. For more information, visit *www.environment.alberta.ca.*

GOAL: REDUCE NON-RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) EMISSIONS

Where are we now?

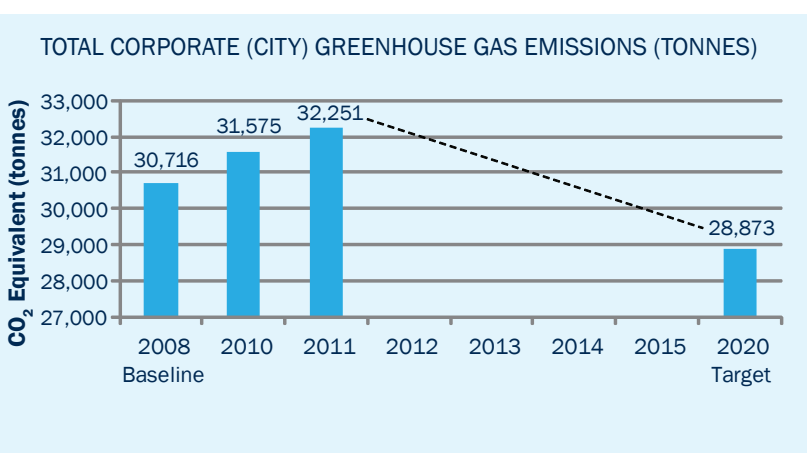
- Baseline information (2008) was calculated in 2010 through the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory Project. Based on recommendations from this report, community emissions are calculated every three to five years and corporate (City) emissions are calculated every year. To view the full inventory and forecast document, visit ***www.stalbert.ca/greehouse-gas-emissions.***

In 2011, the City's GHG emissions increased an additional 2.21% for a total of 5% increase over 2008 levels.

Where do we want to be?

Targets:

- Reduce total corporate (City) emissions to 20% below 2008 levels by 2020.
- Reduce total community GHG emissions to 6% below 2008 levels by 2020.

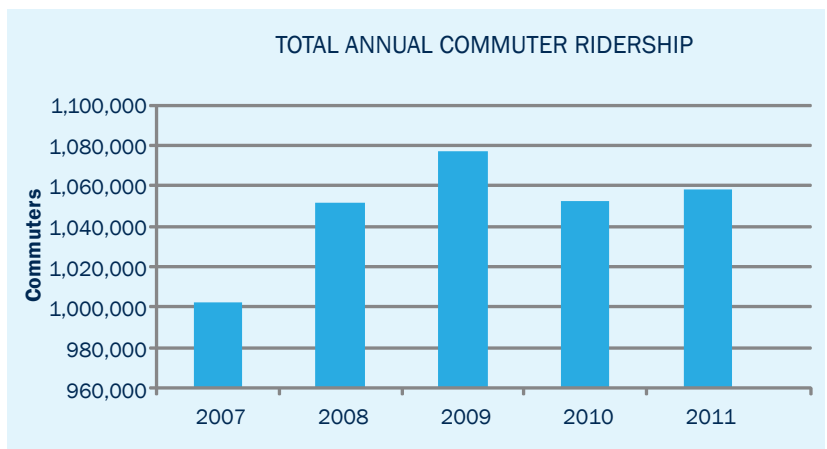


How are we reaching our targets?

- The City had planned to develop a greenhouse gas emissions reductions plan in 2011 but the project was dependent on receiving matching funds from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Green Municipal Fund (GMF). As the GMF was suspended for one year, due to a high volume of applications, the plan has been delayed until fall 2012. This is milestone three of the Partner for Climate Protection five-milestone program.
- Fire Hall No. 3 received Gold Certification for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), an environmental designation from the Canada Green Building Council.

Fire Hall No. 3 is the first fire hall in Alberta and the second in Canada to receive LEED-Gold Certification.

- Council approved three recommendations on the future northwest Light Rail Transit (LRT) for collaboration with the City of Edmonton: the Northwest LRT Functional Alignment Study; land acquisition in the Transportation Utility Corridor; and fare integration. The City also submitted grant funding application to Alberta Municipal Affairs Regional Collaboration Program for $250,000 to be used towards the Northwest LRT Functional Alignment Study.



- In 2011, St. Albert launched NextBus, an online automated vehicle location system that provides transit riders with real-time arrival times. ***www.stalbert.ca/nextbus.***
- The City received notification of conditional funding from Green Transit Incentives Program (TRIP) through Alberta Transportation to fund the South Park and Ride. Land acquisition presents the greatest challenge to the City's progress.

'Smart Driver' program was reintroduced in 2011 to provide focused training for bus operators on more fuel efficient driving techniques.

LAND

GOAL: **PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

Where are we now?

St. Albert's residential development has mainly consisted of low-density single housing units. The City's current average net residential density is approximately 18.4 dwelling units per net residential hectare and most existing neighbourhoods have an average of 20% medium density.

Where do we want to be?

Targets:

- Achieve minimum density of 30 dwelling units per net residential hectare for new neighbourhoods.
- Achieve minimum of 30% for medium- or high-density residential units for new neighbourhoods.

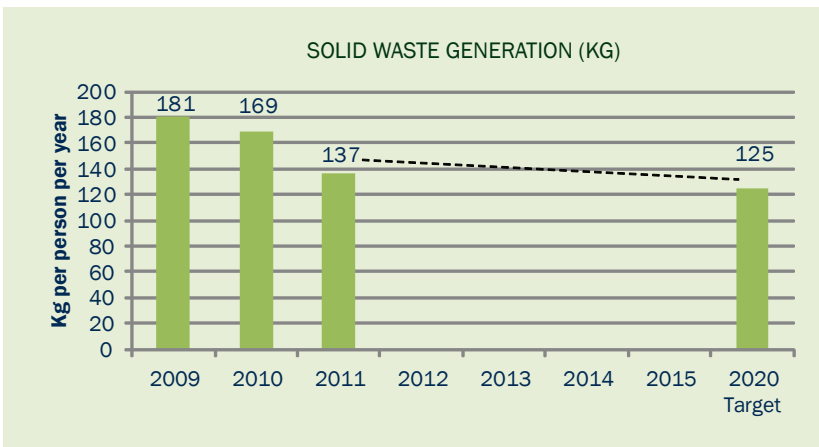
How are we reaching our targets?

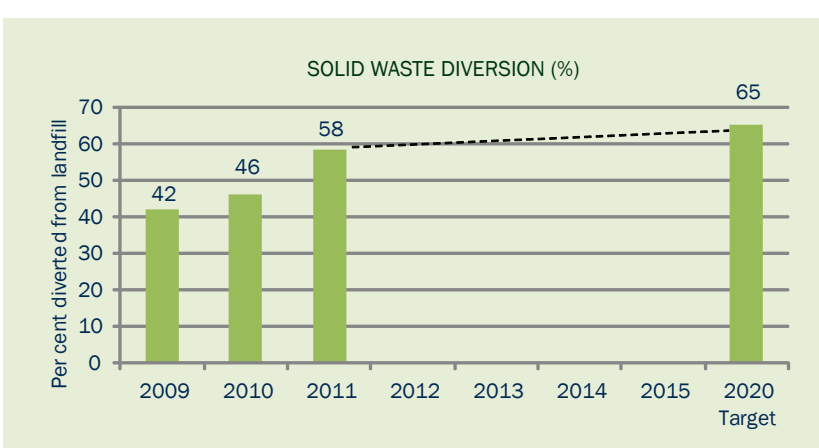
- City Council approved an amendment to the Municipal Development Plan to reflect the Capital Region Board Growth Plan target. Updated density targets have been established as a result of this regional goal.
- All references of Smart Growth were removed from the Municipal Development Plan.
- St. Albert received a $6.8 million grant from the Government of Canada to be used for Big Lake Pointe, a 118-unit density development that will include affordable and market rental units.

GOAL: **REDUCE SOLID WASTE GENERATION**

Where are we now?

St. Albert's solid waste generation is at 137 kg annually per person, which continues to be much lower than the provincial average of 267 kg annually per person. The amount of waste diverted from the landfill has increased from 46% to 58% in 2011.





City hosted its fourth annual Shred-It event with 12,000 kg of paper recycled.

Where do we want to be?

Targets:

- Reduce solid waste generation to 125 kg per person per year by 2020.
- Increase solid waste diversion rate to 65% by 2020.

How are we reaching our targets?

- Full implementation of the automated solid waste and organics program occurred in June 2011 with the addition of curbside organics and yard waste pickup and automated bi-weekly collection.
- St. Albert held its first annual Large Item Drop Off event. Nearly 450 vehicles lined up to get rid of unwanted big household items.
- The City's Recycle Depot services expanded in 2011 to accept Household Hazardous Waste materials. For a list of accepted products, visit ***www.stalbert.ca/household-hazardous-information.***

In 2011, Clean Up the Sturgeon and the River Edge Enhancement Project was a success with a record participation of 475 volunteers collecting garbage and planting trees along the Sturgeon River.

GOAL: **PRESERVE AND MANAGE TREES, PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS**

Where are we now?

The City manages more than 900 hectares of treed boulevards, sports fields, parks and natural areas. This represents one of the highest per-capita proportions of trees and open spaces for Canadian municipalities.

Where do we want to be?

Targets:

- Complete a review of the current standards for parks and natural areas as part of the Parks and Open Spaces Management Plan and Municipal Development Plan update review process.
- Protect 100% of proposed prioritized important natural areas.

How are we reaching our targets?

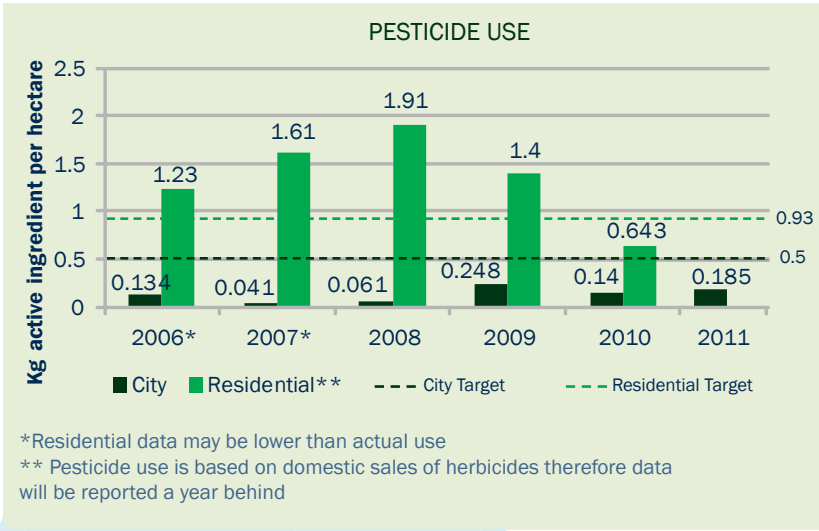
- The boardwalk through Riel Marsh in Lois Hole Provincial Park was completed including installation of the signage that provides educational information on the importance of wetlands.
- City designated the White Spruce Forest as a Municipal Historic Resource during National Forest Week and renamed the forest Grey Nuns White Spruce Park. A committee will direct the development of a forest management plan in 2012 for the area.
- Naturalization projects took place in Riel Pond, Willoughby Park and Lacombe Park areas.

LAND

GOAL: **REDUCE CONTAMINATION BY IMPROVING HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT**

Where are we now?

The amount of pesticide used by the City varies and is dependent on the weather and types of weed and pest infestations.



*Residential data may be lower than actual use
** Pesticide use is based on domestic sales of herbicides therefore data will be reported a year behind

- Residential pesticide use has decreased by 47.7% since 2006, which surpasses our goal to reach 25% by 2020.
- The City received an extension on the deadline to complete the final stages of the Riel Park Integrated Redevelopment Plan from 2012 to 2015. The final phases of the Riel Park project will start in fall 2012.
- The City continues to monitor the former public works yard for salt contamination concentrations and movement.

Where do we want to be?

Targets:

- Reduce municipal pesticide use to 0.5kg of active ingredient (ai) per hectare or lower by 2020.
- Reduce residential herbicide use (2-4D, Mecoprop, Dicamba) by 25% by 2020.
- Complete environmental management plan for the former landfill and the former Public Works yard by 2012.
- Active ingredient (ai) per hectare is a measure of the amount of kilograms of active pesticide substance used over a certain area.

How are we reaching our targets?

- Council approved the City's Integrated Pest Management Plan in 2011 which is a multi-disciplinary approach to prevent and manage pests on lands within the City of St. Albert. For more information visit ***www.stalbert.ca/pestcontrol.***

WATER

GOAL: **PROTECTING AND MAINTAINING THE STURGEON RIVER WATERSHED**

Where are we now?

Since 2006, the City has regularly tested water quality at four locations along the Sturgeon River during the summer months. Based on the 2011 testing results:

- Pesticide levels in 2011 continue to be acceptable for maintaining a healthy river; however, pesticide detections increase as the water moves through the city.
- The levels of nitrogen and phosphorus are above guidelines for protecting the health of the river. Nitrogen and phosphorus, the main ingredients in turf fertilizers, are detected at high concentrations throughout St. Albert.
- Although within acceptable levels for protection of aquatic life, bacteria levels increased through the city in 2011. Bacteria levels are usually related to animal waste or unexpected waste water releases.
- Through the annual stormwater catch basin cleaning and spring street sweeping, the City continues to reduce the amount of grit and sand that reaches the river.

Where do we want to be?

Target:

- Maintain Sturgeon River quality as its water moves through St. Albert.
- Capture 90% of municipal winter road sanding material by 2020.

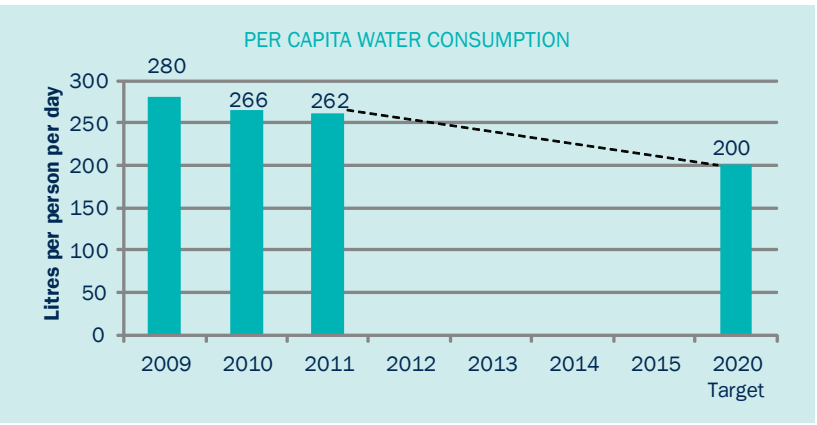
How are we reaching our targets?

- The City updated the Stormwater Sedimentation and Erosion Control Program including a review of the performance of two of the existing grit/hydrocarbon interceptors built in 2004 and 2007. The updated list of outfalls that require sediment control was used to develop a 10-year capital plan that will include construction of six to eight new grit interceptors and other erosion control features in Grandin and Forest Lawn Ravines.

GOAL: **REDUCE WATER CONSUMPTION**

Where are we now?

Water consumption continues to decrease, moving from a per-capita rate of 266 litres in 2010 to 262 litres in 2011.



Where do we want to be?

Target:

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

How are we reaching our targets?

- Continuing with the success of rain barrel programs over the past four years, the City sold 500 barrels at a reduced cost in 2011.

WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

Your Opinion Matters. For more information or to provide feedback, please contact:
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