



The Way We Green

Stakeholder Update

September 2010

To: Stakeholders - The Way We Green

From: Office of Environment, Deputy City Manager's Office, City of Edmonton

Hello Stakeholders!

Thanks everyone for making the first half of this project a great success! In May and June we came together, learned about environmental sustainability, and discussed its implications for Edmonton. Based on your input (plus input from sustainability experts and citizens), *The Way We Green* is starting to emerge.

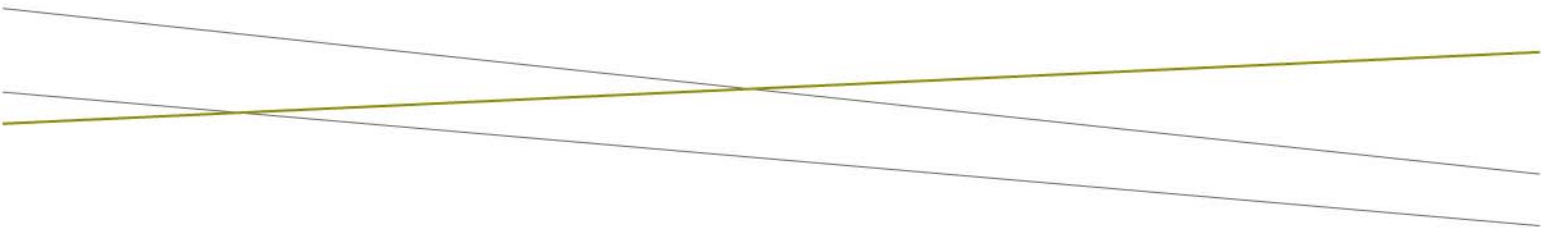
This month's *Update* reviews where we've been, what we've heard, and where we're going from here.

Where We've Been

Understanding the Challenges of Environmental Sustainability

As you know, the purpose of the project is to develop Edmonton's environmental strategic plan- *The Way We Green*, with an objective: *To support the City Vision and the City's ten-year strategic goals by developing a bold and visionary strategy for making Edmonton the nation's leader in setting and achieving the highest standards of environmental preservation and sustainability both in its own practices and by encouraging and enabling the practices of citizens, businesses and institutions.*

The first part of this project was devoted to learning. Twenty-one experts were invited to answer questions of sustainability relating to energy, climate change, air, water, biodiversity, food security, waste management, transportation, renewable energy, energy efficiency and



environmental economics. Their discussion papers provided insights into environmental conditions that exist today, environmental challenges we could face in the future, and opportunities that Edmonton might want to consider on the path to sustainability.

The learning process also involved a review of highly regarded sustainability plans from around the world – *San Francisco, Helsinki, Newcastle, Portland, Malmo, Copenhagen, Calgary, Ottawa, Montreal and Whistler*. From these, we learned that many cities are moving rapidly on the path to sustainability. For example, San Francisco is pursuing a zero net energy goal for all buildings, Ottawa is striving for 30% forest cover, Malmo wants to run its entire city on renewable energy by 2030, and Copenhagen has set a target for at least 50% of people to go to work or educational institutions by bike.

If there are other plans you think Edmonton can learn from, please let us know.

Public Involvement – Stakeholder Workshops

Thanks again to everyone who attended the Stakeholder Workshops in June. Our consultant, Bill McMillan (Defining Common Ground) did a skillful job leading you through a number of complex discussions involving definitions of sustainability, principles of sustainability, identification and ranking of sustainability challenges, and evaluation of sustainability policies. If you haven't had a chance to read the workshop report, please do. It's on our website: edmonton.ca/thewaywegreen. While we won't go into all the details here, it's worth noting that there was strong consensus amongst stakeholders (and the authors of the Edmonton Sustainability Papers) that Edmonton is likely to face future sustainability challenges in areas of energy, climate change, water supply, food security, biodiversity and water quality.

Public Involvement – Citizen Consultations

In developing The Way We Green, we know that its eventual implementation will require informed citizens who understand the serious implications of sustainability and are motivated to work toward its achievement. This of course will be a major challenge given the complexity of this subject. Realistically, it will take time to build this community understanding and move toward more sustainable lifestyles.

Over the first part of this project, activities were undertaken to inform citizens about Edmonton's sustainability challenges and gauge their opinions and perceptions. Efforts included:

- Making sustainability information available to Edmontonians on The Way We Green website in the form of The Edmonton Sustainability Papers and videos featuring sustainability leaders;
- Taking The Way We Green to festivals and special events, where we shared sustainability information and asked citizens for their opinions and advice with more than 500 citizens completing iPad surveys;

- Conducting six citizen focus group sessions to understand the sustainability principles they support, and how that support can be turned into action. A more detailed survey will follow in September;
- Arranging speaking events where citizens were able to listen and learn from sustainability experts and ask questions.

Citizens will be further consulted in the coming months in the following ways:

- Community Conversations (small groups): The Office of Environment has developed a guide and workbooks for citizens who are interested in hosting small gatherings of friends, family, colleagues and co-workers to discuss their ideas on sustainability. Completed workbooks can be returned to the Office of Environment for consideration in the drafting of The Way We Green. Let us know if you or someone you know is interested in hosting a community conversation. We'll give you the tools and get you started. E-mail thewaywegreen.ca
- Community Conversations (large groups): The Office of Environment invites larger group—community, religious, professional, cultural, recreational groups of all kind — that are interested in working through the same discussion described above, to call on our office staff to facilitate that discussion. Let us know if your group would be interested in participating in a discussion on sustainability, hosted by the Office of Environment. E-mail thewaywegreen.ca
- Opportunities are being made available for similar discussions for High School students in October.
- The Edmonton Youth Council is planning to host a The Way We Green workshop for High School students in October.
- More speaker sessions are planned for the Fall, the next being a presentation on September 17 by Craig Applegath (Principal of Cohos Evamy) who will discuss the concept of resilient cities.
- A large Public Workshop will be held at City Hall on November 3 (4 p.m. to 9 p.m.) and November 4 (7 a.m. to 6 p.m.). Citizens will be invited to review and respond to the ideas that are proposed for The Way We Green.
- A third Stakeholder Workshop will be held in mid November (date to be determined). Stakeholders will be asked to respond to the ideas that are proposed for The Way We Green.
- Citizens will continue to have an opportunity to learn and express their points of view (blogs and surveys) at edmonton.ca/thewaywegreen.

Please let us know if you have any other ideas on how we can bring The Way We Green to citizens and stakeholder organizations.



Calling All Sustainability Champions

Even though The Way We Green is in a formative stage, it's important to start thinking about its eventual implementation. Implementing an environmental sustainability plan will require an enormous community effort and a team of community champions. It's time to start building that team!

The Office of Environment has started developing a data base of Edmonton nonprofit organizations that are delivering sustainability services to the community. This database will include details on their projects and programs. If your organization is providing sustainability-related services, please let us know and we'll send you a questionnaire to capture your information.

Leading up to The Way We Green, and beyond, we'll also be looking for opportunities to meet with sustainability champions and interested organizations to explore your potential role in implementing The Way We Green. More about that in coming Updates.

Next Step! Important!

To date, the project has generated a lot of ideas, information and suggestions from experts, stakeholder organizations and citizens. It's time to start shaping this information into The Way We Green. This will happen in two steps:

- **Step 1:** A White Paper is in the final stages of development, proposing definitions, principles and strategies for inclusion in The Way We Green. It will be distributed to stakeholders (and released to the public) the week of September 20th. During September to November, the Office of Environment will meet with stakeholder organizations and citizens who want to discuss it further and provide feedback (full details on how you or your organization can respond to the White Paper will be included with the paper when it is sent to you). A Citizen Workshop in early November and a Stakeholder Workshop in mid November will also provide opportunities for feedback.
- **Step 2:** The final White Paper (reflecting the results of public feedback) will be tabled with City Council in December. Based on Council's direction, The Way We Green will be drafted and presented back to City Council in early 2011.

Coming Events in September

- The Way We Green Speakers Series - Featuring Craig Applegath (Cohos Evamy)
Topic: Resilient Edmonton - How and Why
When: September 17, 2010, 12:15 to 1:00 p.m.
Where: City Room, Edmonton City Hall (free admission, everyone invited).



Spread the Word

Please let your friends and colleagues know that the City of Edmonton is developing The Way We Green and that their input is needed. One way to do that is by forwarding the email that delivered this Update to your email distribution list. Encourage your colleagues to visit edmonton.ca/thewaywegreen, complete the citizen survey, and start thinking “sustainability”.

Contact Us

Feel free to contact us if you have questions about information contained in this Update or if you have any suggestions about how to make this project a success. We’d love to hear from you!

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