

INTRODUCTION:

Members of the Environment Advisory Committee (EAC) at its January 2012 meeting elected Jocelyn Crivea as Chair and Sarah Turnbull as Vice Chair. EAC members met on following days in 2012:

- January 5th
- March 1st
- April 5th
- May 3rd
- June 28th
- September 6th
- October 4th

This document provides a review of the work conducted by the EAC in 2012.

In May 2012, the EAC met to determine, which areas of the Work Plan would require the most resources over the next six months. The Work Plan focuses the EAC's efforts and attention so that it may fulfil its mandate to advise and recommend on the City of Regina's planning and governance efforts in relation to potential or current aspects of sound environmental management.

The EAC recognizes the overwhelming dedication and support of the following people affiliated with the City of Regina: Elaine Gohlke as our lead Administrative Support, Neil Vandendort, Director of Open Space and Environmental Services, and Councillor Fred Clipsham as Councillor Liaison to the EAC. We also graciously thank all delegations that presented to us and invited further consideration of their environmental concerns.

EAC WORK PLAN:

EAC members determined its resources would be best used on determining specific deliverables related to the approved overarching Work Plan. Through discussion and analysis of the current issues have the potential to impact the City of Regina and its citizens and based on the issues brought before the EAC two deliverables, Table 1, were chosen for 2012.

"I serve on the EAC because I enjoy working with like-minded and smart citizens who want to see the City of Regina be a leader in environmental sustainability." -- Jocelyn Crivea

Table 1 - Deliverables

<i>Deliverable</i>	<i>Action</i>
1. Provide advice and recommendations on pesticide use.	Due diligence on best practices for pesticide management.
2. Provide advice and recommendations on solid waste reduction and management.	Promote alternative disposal methods for waste. Promote packaging reduction.

EAC members continued to explore the means by which the Committee could become an effective partner with Council and Administration, within the mandate identified in its Terms of Reference.

In 2012, the EAC's work concentrated on the Deliverables, as well as reviewing material presented before it by various parties. Two working groups were established. The first was formed to develop a definition of "pesticide free" and advance recommendations to City Council on this topic. The second working group developed a position to recommend to City Council on alternatives to disposable diapers that will reduce the burden to landfills. This position was established within the context of a full lifecycle analysis about disposable diapers, spurred by a recommendation from Happy Nappy Enterprise SK to the City of Regina with respect to a proposed pilot program involving reimbursement to Regina citizens for their diaper starter kit.

"During my tenure with the Environment Advisory Committee my experiences have been extremely engaging and rewarding. Learning much from my colleagues, with the city administration and staff regarding various issues facing our community; has involved much research, reading and discussion. I look forward to a continued emphasis on developing a sustainable future for my grand-kids and future citizens of Regina." -- Lyle Benko, EAC

PESTICIDE USE

PESTICIDES SECTION

The EAC's fourth deliverable is to provide advice and recommendations on pesticide use in Regina. This topic has engaged the committee since before the 2012 reporting year, and also continues into 2013, with the topic now having moved on to the Public Works Committee.

In September 2011, the EAC heard from the Canadian Cancer Society and the Saskatchewan Environmental Society on the topic of pesticides. A working group was created to examine the issues around pesticide use in Regina. In November 2011 the working group submitted its report with recommendations on pesticide use in Regina. The EAC adopted a resolution to seek further information and further consider the issue in February 2012.

In March 2012 the EAC considered a set of proposed recommendations that the City of Regina eliminate the cosmetic use of pesticides and introduce bylaws and communications supporting such a policy. The Committee adopted a resolution to further research the recommendations especially with respect to an implementation timeline, and to report back in April.

In April 2012 the EAC heard from the Saskatchewan Nursery Landscape Association on the proposed recommendations put forward in March 2012.

"If there's a chance to make a positive and sustainable difference in our city environment, perhaps enhance the quality of life for Regina resident, then work with this Committee is well worth the effort." -- Sharon Rodenbush

EAC also received a communique from the Saskatchewan Environmental Society (SES) that it intended to put forward a report of its own on the subject of pesticides by the end of April. The Committee therefore put off any further consideration until May in order to examine the SES's report.

The SES's report was delayed and the EAC pushed back further consideration of the subject of pesticides until June. The EAC prepared further recommendations for a meeting to be held on June 28th. The new recommendations included: that the City of Regina adopt a policy avoiding pesticide use on its own land; that it encourage the Wascana Centre Authority to avoid pesticide use in its jurisdiction; that the City encourage residents to reduce their own pesticide use; and, that the City review its policies after two years.

At the June 28, 2012 meeting the EAC heard from fifteen delegates on the above recommendations. At this same meeting the EAC adopted a set of recommendations to bring forward to the City of Regina's Public Works Committee. The recommendations read as followed:

1. The City of Regina adopt a policy of avoiding pesticides for cosmetic or non-essential use in the management of lands owned or administered by the City.

"I participate in the EAC because it is important to contribute to an environmentally healthy and sustainable Regina." -- Norman Henderson

2. The City of Regina encourages Wascana Centre Authority to avoid pesticides for cosmetic or non-essential use in the management of lands under the jurisdiction of Wascana Centre Authority.

3. The City of Regina encourages residents to avoid pesticides for cosmetic or non-essential use on their own lands.

4. The City of Regina undertake a public education campaign on avoiding pesticides for cosmetic or non-essential use.

5. The City of Regina review the pesticide policy and its practices after two years and continue or modify them as appropriate at that time.

6. The City of Regina identify, through conspicuous signage, areas that it has treated with any and all biocides.

7. The City of Regina encourage the Regina Public School Board and the Regina Catholic School Board to avoid pesticides for cosmetic or non-essential use in the management of lands under the jurisdiction of each school board.

These recommendations were presented to the Public Works Committee on July 17, 2012. At the Public Works Committee meeting there were many delegations who presented on pesticides, and the Public Works Committee concluded by asking City Administration for further information on the topic. At the time of drafting this report, the final fate of EAC's recommendations around pesticide policy is not yet known (the issue will be re-considered by Public Works Committee in 2013).

The pesticides issue is of interest to many stakeholders in the City, and the EAC appreciated the input of stakeholders and the public, some of whom presented multiple times. The input of City administration in EAC's deliberations was invaluable. EAC looks forward to being further engaged on this issue in 2013.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

"Serving on the Environmental Advisory Committee has provided a great opportunity to observe firsthand the abundant passion for environmental protection that is in Regina citizens. The EAC provides an excellent conduit for engaging these citizens in important environmental issues and assisting Regina in striving to develop a healthy urban environment." -- Chris Yost, EAC

The EAC's second deliverable is to provide advice and recommendations on solid waste reduction and management. In this context, the EAC was approached by the Saskatchewan Abilities Council (SAC) to consider a proposal for a partnership between the City of Regina and a cloth diaper service, Happy Nappy Cloth Diaper Service. The SAC purchased the Saskatchewan franchise rights to this diaper service.

At the June 2, 2011 meeting of the EAC, Karen Moore, regional director for the SAC provided a presentation regarding the Happy Nappy Cloth Diaper Service. At the conclusion of the meeting the EAC adopted a resolution to table the matter to the September 2nd meeting to allow time for Ms. Moore to provide additional information regarding other municipalities supporting this type of service. The matter was subsequently tabled several times upon the request of Ms. Moore to gather more information. New information was provided by Ms. Moore for the March 1st 2012 meeting of the EAC. Ms. Moore was not in attendance at the March 1st meeting.

The Working Group examined the new information provided in March 2012 and conducted research to determine a full understanding of alternatives available to consumers concerning diapers. The Working Group found that technological innovations had created new choices for consumers to consider when selecting a diapering option in the context of environmental stewardship. These new options include changes to both cloth and disposable options. As such, the EAC did not think it appropriate for the City of Regina to endorse any one form of alternative diaper use or diaper service. The EAC provided the following recommendations:

1. That the City of Regina does not adopt the Happy Nappy Diapering Service proposal requesting the City to subsidize users of the Happy Nappy service.
2. That the Public Works Committee request City Administration to include education about alternatives to conventional disposable diapers in current and future education, as well as recycling education programs and communications.

OTHER WORKS

The EAC also reviewed information on Design Regina, which will replace the current Official Community Plan. Design Regina is expected to serve as the City's plan for guiding growth, development and change for the next 25 years. As such, the Plan will provide a city-wide policy framework that guides decisions on investments, services and actions.

"Effective municipal environmental intervention cannot occur without a full appreciation of the scope and complexity of the relevant challenges facing the City. Working on the EAC has allowed me to appreciate those challenges in a way I otherwise never could have, and hopefully to become more effective in participating in the solutions." -- Kathleen Livingston

The EAC also approved the following guidelines to be used when approving use of funds from the EAC's annual travel allowance:

- Attendance at workshops, conferences, and other educational opportunities must be directly related to items on the EAC's current Work Plan; and
- No more than 40% of the annual travel allowance be approved for use by an individual for a single event.

SUMMARY

In its third year as an Advisory Committee to City Council, the EAC members continued to demonstrate their commitment to work with and advise City Administration and Council on efforts toward sound environmental policies, strategies and practices.

As per the Terms of Reference, EAC's mandate spans a broad scope of the services delivered by the City of Regina to its residents and businesses. There are remarkably few areas of endeavour that remain free of environmental stewardship concerns. Specifically in 2012, the EAC's time and efforts were concentrated on two of these deliverables: the examination of pesticide use in City parks and solid waste reduction.

The EAC looks forward to continuing its advisory role for the City of Regina in 2013, to ensure sound environmental management.