Status Update on Contaminated Site Management Program

Recommendation

1. That the January 18, 2021, Integrated Infrastructure Services report CR_7590, be received for information.
2. That Attachment 1 of the January 18, 2021, Integrated Infrastructure Services report CR_7590, remain private pursuant to sections 25 (disclosure harmful to economic and other interests of a public body) and 27 (privileged information) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the September 5, 2019, Executive Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

> That Administration provide a report to Committee, with an update on the status of the Contaminated Site Management Program, including the exploration of using Open Data to disclose information related to City-owned contaminated sites, and recommendations on reporting options.

Executive Summary

The City of Edmonton owns and manages approximately 9,000 titled properties, which combined exceed 8,000 hectares. An important part of managing these land assets is understanding and addressing any potential risks associated with them, including contamination. In 2019, the City began the implementation of the Contaminated Site Management Program (the Program) to comprehensively manage properties that contained contamination, for which the City is responsible.

Based on a systematic review of the City's properties, there are 76 sites managed under the Program as of December 31, 2019. Only those that exceed the provincial guidelines for contaminant concentrations will be managed under the Program. While the sites exceed guideline concentrations, there is no identified risk to human health at this time. In addition to the sites already managed under the Program, Administration will continue to screen and identify additional sites that may be at risk of contamination.

To address the Committee motion passed on September 5, 2019, Administration explored the use of Open Data to provide additional environmental information to the public. For enhanced transparency of the program, Administration has subsequently released, through Open Data, a list of sites managed by the Program. The release of environmental information through Open Data is in addition to the existing practice of releasing environmental information to the public through the City's Environmental Site Information Database and other sources such as the province's Environmental Site Assessment Repository (see below).

Options for reporting status updates of the Program to City Council were evaluated. The list of sites managed by the Program will be updated regularly on Open Data, initially on an annual basis, to coincide with financial reporting of environmental site liabilities.

Report

In 2019, the City began the implementation of the Contaminated Site Management Program (the Program) to comprehensively manage properties that contained contamination, for which the City is responsible. The purpose of the Program is to:

- Identify City-owned contaminated sites and non-City-owned contaminated sites, for which the City has accepted environmental responsibility;
- Effectively manage these contaminated sites;
- Minimize environmental, financial, and legal risks associated with contaminated sites;
- Meet financial reporting obligations for environmental liability, as directed by the Municipal Government Act (MGA); and
- Ensure compliance with environmental legislation, including the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act (EPEA).

What constitutes a contaminated site?

For the purposes of the Program, a contaminated site consists of one or more properties where substances exist in soil, groundwater, and/or surface water in a greater concentration than is allowed under the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act (Alberta). Contamination can occur through operational use, such as at fuelling sites or maintenance yards, as well as through historical activities due to human occupation, such as filling of low areas, fires, coal mining, or the unmanaged dumping of refuse.

Contaminated Sites Management Program Status Update

As of December 31, 2019, there were 76 sites managed by the Program. Five of these sites are the responsibility of a third party; however, they are included in the Program to ensure the contamination is addressed to the City's satisfaction.

The 76 sites have been grouped into land use categories as follows:

Site Category	Total
Fire Station	5
Golf Course	3
Land For Capital Projects	7
Operations Facility	25
Park or Natural Area	14
Right-Of-Way	2
Vacant Land	4
Other*	16
Total Number of Sites Managed by the Program	**76**

* Other includes sites where land use is mixed, lands not owned by the City, lands that are part of the land transfer agreement negotiated with EPCOR, lands leased to others, and lands that are planned for resale or used for parking.

In 2020, individual projects valued at over $2.5 million were completed in support of environmental management of sites within the Program portfolio. This included site investigations, remediations, risk management plan development, and site monitoring. In addition, over 30 new sites were added to the program for site evaluation.

Information Currently Available to the Public Related to City-Owned and Privately-Owned Contaminated Sites

There are several sources of environmental information available to the public related to City-owned and privately-owned contaminated sites. These sources include:

- **edmonton.ca** – The Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessments - Property Inquiries edmonton.ca page provides information on how to contact various City departments regarding environmental information. The information available includes the location of former landfills, records of buildings or structures that may have been contaminated by a substance causing a potential risk of fire or explosion, charges under the Drainage Bylaw, as well as other development and property bylaw infractions. It also includes information on how to request searches of the Environmental Site Information Database, described below.

- **City of Edmonton Environmental Site Information Database** – The City maintains a library of geotechnical and environmental reports for City-owned properties. The public can request searches and obtain documents from this database. Approximately 300 requests are received each year. Requests are made by phone or email using the contact information and request form available on the edmonton.ca page mentioned in the bullet above.

- **Province of Alberta Environmental Site Assessment Repository** – The Province of Alberta maintains a public webpage where individuals can obtain reports for both private and public lands (including City-owned lands) at no charge. This service is called the Environmental Site Assessment Repository and is a publicly searchable database for contaminated sites covering the entire province of Alberta.

New Information Sources Available to the Public Related to City-Owned Contaminated Sites

Administration has explored the opportunity to release further environmental information on contaminated sites for which the City is responsible. The review was consistent with the principles of the Open City Policy (C581), where the City recognizes that it stewards this information on behalf of Edmontonians.

Administration has released, through Open Data, a list of sites currently managed under the Program for which the City is responsible. The Open Data set is linked to a new City webpage about the Program (Example; Attachment 2). Additionally, in order to enhance the transparency of the Program, Administration intends to release a list of environmental site assessments in the Environmental Site Information Database relating to City-owned properties to Open Data. A list of City-owned properties has been released to Open Data through a separate initiative.

Next Steps

Throughout 2021, sites that require further environmental work will be prioritized for action based on the environmental, social, and financial impacts of the contamination present. Administration will continue to support capital project delivery, operations, and real estate transactions to manage the City's environmental liability associated with contaminated sites. A risk-based approach will be used to manage any contamination that is identified.

Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management

Corporate Outcome(s): The City of Edmonton has sustainable and accessible infrastructure.			
Outcome(s)	Measure(s)	Result(s)	Target(s)

The City of Edmonton has sustainable and accessible infrastructure.	Edmontonians' Assessment:access to infrastructure, amenities and services that improve quality of life.	68% (2017)	70% (2018)

Corporate Outcome(s): The City of Edmonton is a safe city

Outcome(s)	Measure(s)	Result(s)	Target(s)
Edmonton is a safe city.	Edmontonians' Assessment: Safe City (percent of survey respondents who agree/strongly agree)	66% (2017)	68% (2018)

Corporate Outcome(s): The City of Edmonton has a resilient financial position.

Outcome(s)	Measure(s)	Result(s)	Target(s)
The City of Edmonton has a resilient financial position.	City of Edmonton Credit Rating AA+ (Standard and Poor's rating)	AA+ (2017)	AA+ (2018)

Attachments

1. Legal Advice (PRIVATE)
2. Open Data Sample and New CSMP Web Page

Others Reviewing this Report

- G. Cebryk, Deputy City Manager, City Operations
- M. Persson, Chief Financial Officer and Deputy City Manager, Financial and Corporate Services
- S. McCabe, Deputy City Manager, Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development
- C. Owen, Deputy City Manager, Communications and Engagement
- R. Smyth, Deputy City Manager, Citizen Services
- B. Andriachuk, City Solicitor