



APPI TASK FORCE - PLANNING IN ALBERTA: A RECHARGE

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

Reason for Recharge

Albertans elected a NDP government with a mandate to promote sustainable development, invest wisely in infrastructure and address Climate Change. While the Government has made significant headway notably in the development and implementation of climate change policies with the support of oil and gas companies, indigenous communities and ENGOs, there are still detractors of the Government's initiatives.

Good planning is essential to the definition and successful implementation of these initiatives as well as to the focused impactful growth of Alberta's economy. Unfortunately, the Province's planning system and resources have been significantly weakened over the past twenty-five years. Alberta's planning framework needs updating to deal with the challenges and opportunities associated with Climate Change and the development of new approaches to resource management.

Purpose of APPI's Task Force on the Recharge of Alberta Planning: APPI's RAP Force

- to rebuild political awareness of the critical importance of planning to Albertans
- to promote planning for sustainability as a major Provincial priority with particular emphasis on climate change – planning for adaptation and mitigation
- to rebuild Provincial planning expertise, resources and support for municipalities and rural areas
- to encourage re-examination of regional planning models and establish clear Provincial direction
- Help integrate alternative planning approaches into one planning model
- to encourage longer-term rebuilding and refreshing of Alberta's planning system

What Does Planning for Sustainability Mean

Planning for sustainability promotes responsible development. It is a process that makes durable decisions in a holistic and informed manner. It fosters an ethic of stewardship that is future oriented. Looking beyond current needs and opportunities it recognizes environmental limits to human development and arouses/elevates/evokes respect for living within the environment's parameters of resiliency and adaptiveness.

STAKEHOLDERS: WHO IS TO BE ENGAGED

- Task Force (Project Team including APPI Council representation)
- APPI Council (Project Sponsors) and APPI members
- Provincial Cabinet and Ministers (in particular those with responsibilities pertaining to the Provincial environment, land use, resource development and management, community and land based cultural activities, historical and traditional attributes)
- Senior Administrative Staff providing support to particular Ministers
- Provincial Legislature (including opposition parties) and senior Provincial civil service
- Allied professions (Landscape Architects, Architects, Biologists, APEGA, ASET)
- Environmental, business and other NGO's / community / professional organizations
- Thought leaders, including Universities and academics
- Media

PRINCIPLES UPON WHICH ENGAGEMENT WILL BE BASED*

Purpose Driven

- People need to be aware of why they should engage with APPI's initiative

Inclusive Engagement

- All parties with a significant interest in this initiative should have the opportunity to contribute to the design and the implementation of the initiative's engagement

Flexible and Equal Opportunity

- All parties must have equal access to relevant information and the opportunity to participate effectively throughout the process reflective of their respective resources and capabilities to do so

Respect for Diverse Interests

- Acceptance of the diverse values, interests, and knowledge of the parties involved in the process is essential

Accountability

- The parties are accountable both to their constituencies and the process to which they've subscribed

Time Limits

- Realistic deadlines are necessary throughout the process

**Acknowledgment: National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy: Building Consensus for a Sustainable Future*

2. SITUATION ANALYSIS: ASSESS CURRENT SITUATION

TASKS

Position on Lobbying

Agreed at June 22, 2016 meeting in Red Deer that we will coordinate our activities with MaryJane Alanko APPI's Head Lobbyist. Our activities will be defined and pursued as lobbying activities. This will minimize the potential of us being challenged at some point in our process as we'll meet the essence of lobbying from the outset.

Need to work with MaryJane in developing lobbying parameters to our engagement process.

Topical Content of our Activities

Agreed at June 22 2016 meeting that we will first focus on the topic of climate change in our reaching out to stakeholders. This is due to the fact Premier Notley and colleagues are committed to addressing and realizing their party platform as described in their campaign. They will not entertain anything else until they are satisfied these platform 'planks' are being effectively realized.

While our focus with government will be based on climate change we will develop further responses where feasible regarding how our suggested ongoing changes to the MGA can help them continue to improve the act while addressing climate change initiatives.

Discussion was also held about the need to improve what we as planners are in fact able to offer the government in improving planning. Concern was registered about the need to address the current quality of planning that students are receiving to help them appreciate how planning can play a significant role in effective climate change management.

Need to review with APPI personnel the current status of messaging the Institute has available to introduce itself and register its credentials with key stakeholders. Determine how we might contribute to this messaging.

Describe the current 'lay of the land' within the Provincial Government

Coincident with the development and preparation of our introductory material, there is a need to canvas senior APPI members within government about what they see as the planning topics, issues and opportunities of concern to government. This will entail talking with individuals such as Wayne Gordon, Olivia and Andre Pantelimon and others.

Need to identify other representatives with whom we can talk and set a timeline to have this completed. Prepare talking points to introduce what we are considering along with a set of questions that can be discussed with all representatives.

Identify the key decision makers/influencers within the provincial government

Concurrent with developing a description for the lay of the land identify the key politicians and their associated personnel including senior people within the Government of Alberta with whom we may wish to meet. Attempts should be made to prioritize these individuals given their influence upon sustainable planning as we've defined it. Reference needs to be made to current responsibilities of these individuals where possible.

Need to select Task Force members to do this and set time to do so.

Assess APPI resources

As information in the above tasks are analyzed, assess the APPI resources available to help with/support arranging, preparing for and meeting with (as well as following up with) key government people

3. REVISE/REFINE OBJECTIVES AND FOCUS TASKS

With information compiled and reviewed from discussions above determine with APPI personnel determine how our engagement objectives and the packaging of APPI introductory material needs to be refined. Consideration must be given to the metrics that will be used to determine the 'success' of our initiative as well as what we will do the resulting findings. The latter will include reporting back to the APPI membership

4. IMPLEMENT ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE

The engagement initiative is 'a work in process'. To date it has consisted of:

- A meeting with Council in March 2016 to discuss and seek approval for this initiative. This was preceded with informal discussions with individual APPI councillors and administrative representatives;
- Formation of an informal working group consisting of Doug Leighton, Gary Willson, Jolie Whetzel, Harry Harker, Ron Morrison, and Jean Ehlers. This group met via telephone and directly in Red Deer (a total of 5 times). The purpose of the group was to generally discuss the perceived need (and support) for this initiative, how it could be undertaken, involvement and representation of APPI, and the audiences to be engaged. Council was kept informed through the direct participation of an APPI Councillor as well as administrative representatives. Conversations with individual councillors supplemented this work.
- Presentation of the initiative to APPI members as part of the plenary session at October 2016 APPI conference. After the presentation, a request was made for those interested in participating in the realization of the initiative to please come forward. This request was complemented by invitations to others whose interests were known but unable to attend the conference.
- The facilitated workshop being held in Red Deer on Friday December 9, 2016 will provide the basis upon which the initiative can be formally developed into a working plan. An integral part of this plan will be the definition of ways in which APPI members will be kept informed and can provide input.