

March 2, 2009

New legislation enhances process to assemble land for large-scale infrastructure projects

Province will be required to consult with affected landowners

Edmonton... Enhanced accountability and transparency is the focus of proposed legislation to improve the way the Government of Alberta identifies and sets aside land for large-scale infrastructure projects related to transportation, utilities and water management.

Bill 19, the *Land Assembly Project Area Act*, was introduced in the Alberta legislature on March 2. The proposed legislation enables government to designate land for major infrastructure projects and to regulate future development within an approved project area, with the understanding that the land will ultimately be purchased by the Province.

“The success of the Transportation and Utility Corridor program, which includes the Edmonton and Calgary ring roads, is due in large part to government’s foresight 35 years ago to start identifying and setting aside land for these important projects,” said Jack Hayden, Minister of Infrastructure. “This new legislation will facilitate similar types of projects that often require years of preparation, while ensuring affected Albertans are treated fairly and have the opportunity to provide input.”

The legislation requires government to notify and consult with affected landowners before a proposed project area can be considered for approval. As part of the process, a project plan must be prepared and publicized in advance.

“This legislation strikes the right balance,” said Hayden. “It recognizes the need for government to proactively assemble land for major infrastructure projects, while helping ensure that government uses its authority responsibly by taking the interests of Albertans into account before making a final decision to undertake a project.”

Landowners within a designated project area will be fairly compensated for the acquisition of their lands. The government’s policy is to pay fair market value.

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