

Big Lake Environment Support Society (BLESS) Ongoing Concerns with the City of St Albert Area Structure Plan West

Presentation to the City of St Albert Committee of the Whole

July 11, 2023

Kevin Aschim – Vice President – BLESS
on Behalf of the BLESS
Membership



View of area south of Meadowview Drive currently designated as Employment Lands.

Good morning and thank you for this opportunity to address the Committee.

My name is Kevin Aschim, Vice President of the Big Lake Environment Support Society also known as "BLESS". When not volunteering for BLESS, I work in the chemical industry where I have done so for the past 33 years.

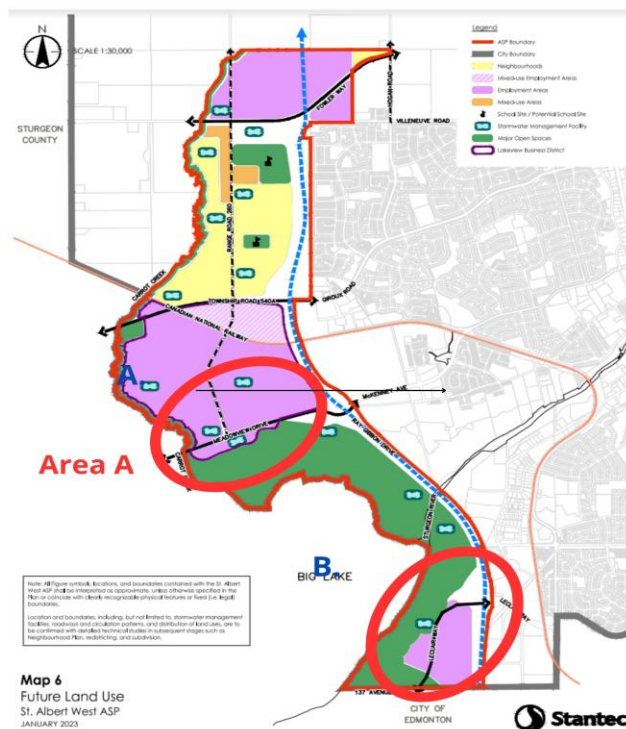
We are here today to advise of BLESS's ongoing concerns with the Area Structure Plan West.

BLESS's mandate is to ensure the preservation of the character and ecological integrity of Big Lake and its surroundings and to work with all levels of government to assist in its preservation and management.

We have three areas of concern to bring to your attention.

First is the area south of Meadowview Drive now designated as Employment Lands and designated as Area A on the map below:

Proposed St. Albert West ASP



BLESS Areas of Concern

- A. South Side of Meadowview Drive
- B. Adjacent to LeClair Way Extension

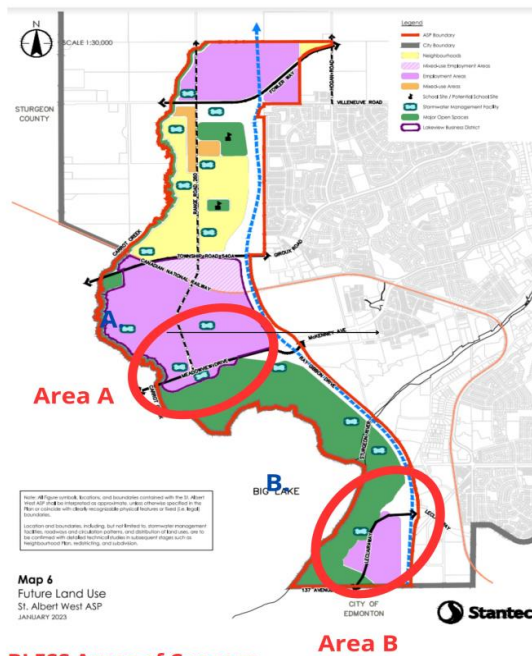


You will be familiar with this area as it affords very pleasant views looking south along Meadowview Drive and is a pleasant way to enter St. Albert.

We believe it is undesirable to have these wetlands, forests and vistas disturbed as they provide good wildlife corridor connectivity to Grey Nuns White Spruce Forest adjacent. We recommend the City use this area for constructed wetlands as part of its stormwater management program. This maintains a natural aspect to this area and results in little to no net disruption of a taxable land base.

The second area of concern is a 60-acre parcel known as the Cook Lands east of the future LeClair Way directly adjacent to Ray Gibbon Drive and shown as Area B on the following map.

Proposed St. Albert West ASP



We prefer this area not be designated as Employment Lands and be redesignated to compatible, context sensitive uses in this area so close to Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park

Mr. Cook, the owner of the parcel, confirms his support for BLESS' alternate proposal that the City change the land use designations on the parcels South of the River in both the City MDP and West ASP to match what affected landowners, the general public, local nearby residents and Park users have stated they want developed there.

The third area of concern is a 90-acre parcel of provincially owned lands newly designated as Employment Lands located west of the future LeClair Way and designated as Area B on the map above. BLESS prefers these lands be included within Lois Hole Provincial Park and so designated.

The Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park Management Plan issued in February 2019 already has these lands designated for natural areas and an education facility. We cannot be withdrawing lands already designated for a Provincial Park for use in industrial development.

We recommend the City consult with Rohit Land Development who are developing the Starling neighbourhood in northwest Edmonton.



Starling Roadway Improvements 2023 to 2025



Note the development of 137th avenue and the placement of a roundabout to be constructed in 2024. BLESS suggests that the city connect to 137th avenue via LeClair Way in a direct south route per ITEM B below and not in a southwest direction to preserve more of Lois Hole Provincial Park as shown in ITEM C below.



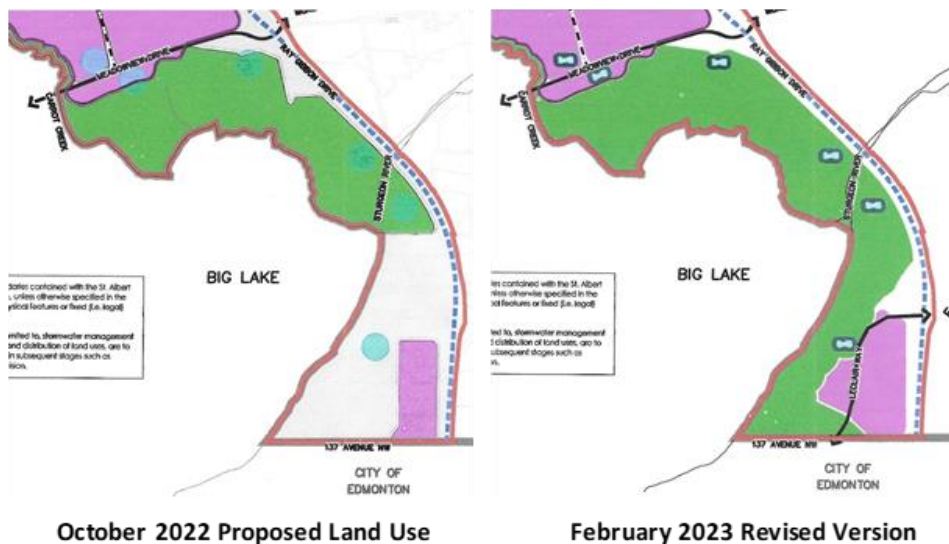
The ITEM B alignment should also be lower cost for the City as it avoids construction of a bridge to cross a ravine in the area

These last two areas have extremely high visibility to St Albertans as it is directly beside Ray Gibbon Drive and the main entry into the parking lot for Lois Hole Provincial Park as well as covering very popular walking trails. Disruption here will not be well received by park users.

The road alignment and land use designation at this location was significantly changed in February 2023 per the map below and has yet to be posted on the ASP website. This revised Plan with its significant changes must be presented to the public at a public Open House prior to going to Council for first reading.

Cook Lands and Provincial Lands now Designated as Employment Lands

Changes Made to the ASP After the Public Review Process Was Completed



I would remind everyone how lucky St Albert is to have a Provincial Park and such an amazing ecological asset so close to our City. Today, St. Albertans place an ever-greater appreciation and value for these assets. Not every City is so fortunate as us.

We must remember who this park is named after. The late Honourable Lois Hole, Lieutenant Governor of Alberta and St. Albert's most beloved citizen.

Many of you would have met Mrs. Hole. Maybe you were inspired by her commitment to Public Service and that contributed to your desire to serve the city. Mrs. Hole had an innate sense of what was right and important for all people from all points of view,

I ask that you consider what Lois Hole would think would be the best actions to follow to protect this park, her legacy and the legacy of all of us here today.

View of Cook Lands Designated as Employment
Lands from Lois Hole Park Parking Lot



Thank you,

Big Lake Environment Support Society (BLESS) Membership