



FORT AIR PARTNERSHIP

We Monitor the Air You Breathe

Vision 2030

Stakeholder and Community Consultation

What We Heard Report

March, 2018

INTRODUCTION

In May 2017, Fort Air Partnership (FAP) embarked on creating a blueprint for the organization's future growth and development in keeping with our mission, which is to monitor and report on ambient air quality. Called Vision 2030, FAP's stakeholders (including public, government and industry) were invited to participate. A [Consultation Discussion Guide](#) was created to guide input. It was made available on-line and in print. Several face-to-face sessions were held, and stakeholders were also invited to submit written input. Many companies, communities and individuals provided their input.

During the Vision 2030 exercise, we made a commitment to participants that we would share consultation results with them and all of our stakeholders. This document provides a summary of what we heard but it is not an action plan. An action plan will be developed, once the input has been considered by FAP through a number of lenses such as feasibility, desirability, funding and other factors. Any new initiatives or services that FAP may employ as a result of the Vision 2030 consultation will be contingent on identifying sufficient and sustainable funding for development and operational support.

If you have any questions about the consultation or would like to have a hard copy of the Vision 2030 Consultation Discussion Guide sent to you, please [email us](#) or call toll free 800-718-0471.

AIR QUALITY INFORMATION

Stakeholders were pleased with FAP's efforts to share ambient air quality information in a transparent manner. Website content and real-time data reporting were noted as particularly useful. They did however have a number of suggestions regarding how FAP could expand its efforts to get information about air quality in front of more people.

These suggestions centred around complementing what we do on-line by sharing more information in print form – for example, through local newspapers and piggybacking onto communications materials provided to residents by local municipalities. It was noted that many smaller communities in the Airshed have a high population of senior citizens who are not Internet or social media users.

Other Types of Monitoring

Stakeholders were split on whether FAP should get more involved in assessing data trends, comparing data to other jurisdictions and helping to explain the impacts of ambient air quality data FAP collects. Those who advocated for FAP to do more data interpretation indicated this would expand stakeholders' knowledge and understanding of what the data means. Others believed this would move the organization away from its prime objective of being a monitoring and reporting entity, and run the risk of undermining FAP's credibility and impartial reputation.

The majority of stakeholders supported FAP adopting other types of monitoring to expand its understanding of local ambient air quality, even if that type of monitoring is not required by provincial or national regulations. FAP was encouraged to consider doing more localized monitoring where there may be isolated emissions (examples included brush piles, well sites, lagoons, heavily travelled roads, tank farms and loading yards), or monitor for substances FAP does not currently monitor for but may be produced in the Airshed.

Air quality monitoring that showcases the extent of environmental monitoring done in the region and therefore provides a platform to support future investment activity in Alberta's Industrial Heartland, or to meet a funding partner's specific need, was considered appropriate. A few public stakeholders suggested FAP offer an indoor air quality monitoring service to increase awareness of FAP (as a type of marketing tool).

All stakeholders agreed FAP's first responsibility was to monitor and report on ambient air quality as required by provincial and federal regulations. Therefore, FAP was cautioned to carefully consider the need and cost benefit of any expansion of its current monitoring efforts.

While some stakeholders thought making hand held monitors available to residents and students would be a good way to engage and educate the public about local air quality, most believed it would be of little benefit and may contribute to a misunderstanding of true air quality.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND BOUNDARIES

Stakeholders were satisfied with the current size and structure of FAP's Board, noting it provided the right balance of public, industry and government involvement. Some stakeholders thought offering a general FAP membership would encourage more people to be interested in the organization and get involved. However, advocates of expanding membership conceded this would likely interest stakeholders only if they received benefits from FAP not available to others.

A suggested alternative to expanding membership was the establishment of FAP committees or advisory panels to offer involvement opportunities beyond the Board of Directors and the Technical Working Group. Another suggestion was to host periodic, issue-based dialogue sessions to help shape FAP policy and direction, or simply to gather opinion.

Boundaries

FAP's lack of alignment with municipal or planning boundaries was not an issue for stakeholders. They emphasized that meeting the air monitoring needs of stakeholders and producing high quality results was more important than matching administrative boundaries.

There was some minority support to mirror municipal boundaries as a way for elected officials and administrations to respond more effectively to citizens regarding air quality concerns. Several stakeholders mentioned that a guiding factor for any boundary changes should be air movement and its potential impact on a community or region.

Most stakeholders supported FAP offering services to communities outside of the current Airshed who do not have air quality monitoring and reporting coverage. In addition to likely interest from nearby communities, it was recognized that offering quality air monitoring services to others may focus FAP's core competency while generating some revenue to reduce funding requirements from current partners. However, stakeholders were universal in their caution that service expansion beyond existing boundaries should only be done if the level of service and performance currently provided within the existing boundaries is maintained.

While stakeholders supported regional collaboration with other Airsheds (such as joint planning, sharing of data and provincial advocacy through the Alberta Airsheds Council), the vast majority did not favour FAP becoming part of a large Capital Region Airshed, fearing this may result in a loss of local autonomy, control and focus.

FUNDING

The majority of stakeholders supported FAP seeking funding from small industry emitters, particularly companies operating oil and gas wells and batteries. However, for FAP to be successful in obtaining such funding, stakeholders advised companies would have to be convinced FAP has value added benefits to them. Support was also tempered by recognition that such an effort may not be cost effective (i.e. resources spent on collecting funds may not be offset by funds received) particularly during a time when the economy is still recovering.

Stakeholders were not supportive of seeking funding from small businesses or applying a per capita charge among residents. Stakeholders believed such an approach would be difficult to justify, noting these sectors were already contributing via the province's carbon tax and other levies to government air quality management and environmental protection activities. Instead, stakeholders suggested increasing efforts to educate and advocate good air quality practices to small business (including farmers) and residents.

Fee for Service

Most stakeholders supported FAP introducing a cost recovery, fee for service program to offset additional service costs, respond to special requests and market the organization's knowledge and expertise. While some viewed this as an opportunity to grow the organization, there was consensus that introducing such a program should not be done if it takes away from FAP's core monitoring and reporting mandate, or undermines its reputation.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Stakeholders were complementary regarding FAP's current education and outreach efforts and most were supportive of the organization doing more, particularly in schools and among the public at large. Stakeholders identified several information gaps among the public regarding FAP's work and air quality in general and offered a variety of suggestions on how FAP could enhance education and outreach.