



Heartland Transmission Team chooses East TUC Preferred Route and West Alternate Route

EDMONTON (January 6, 2010) – The Heartland Transmission Project Team (EPCOR Utilities Inc. and AltaLink, L.P.) has identified the route that passes through the East Transportation/Utility Corridor (the East TUC) and then travels generally northeast to the Heartland region as its preferred option.

In addition, the route that is west and north of Edmonton (the West Route) has been chosen as the alternate option. Consultation with the public and evaluations of each of four proposed options showed that these routes, respectively, have the least overall impact.

In addition to these two routes, the Heartland Project Team will include a stakeholder-requested underground option in its Facility Application to be filed with the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) if the Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO) – through its underground study – determines that underground transmission is a technically feasible option for this project.

Stakeholder packages, which include more detailed information on the routes and how they were chosen, will be mailed out this week to stakeholders.

As part of its analysis of the four proposed routes for the project, the team received extensive feedback from stakeholders through nearly 3,000 one-on-one consultations plus discussions at open houses and Information Centres, as well as at presentations to stakeholder groups and various levels of government. The team also received comments from stakeholders through hundreds of e-mails, letters, and phone calls.

The East TUC route is preferred because it has the lowest impact when studying a number of factors, including the distance the line would be from residences. In addition, the East TUC allows for routing on the maximum amount of public land, therefore reducing the amount of private property that will be crossed by the line. In coming to the decision, the Heartland Team was guided by Section 6 of AUC Rule 007, which sets out which specific factors are to be considered. Those factors include impact on visuals, environment, residences and agriculture as well as special constraints, electrical considerations and cost.

“We’ve talked to many people, and our work has led us to understand that the East TUC route is the option with the least amount of overall impact,” said Guy Bridgeman, Senior Vice-President of Strategic Planning and Development for EPCOR. “We will continue our consultation with people on the preferred and alternate routes as we now move toward completing our Facility Application that we plan to submit to the Alberta Utilities Commission.”



Leigh Clarke, AltaLink Senior Vice-President, External Engagement and General Counsel, said the team listened to stakeholders' concerns about residential impact, proximity to schools, daycares and hospitals, as well as their interest in underground transmission installation.

"We were successful in shifting the preferred route so that it is farther away from residences along the East and South TUC," said Clarke. "And on all routes there are no schools, daycares or hospitals within 150 metres of the centre line. In addition, we will include a stakeholder-requested underground transmission option in our Facility Application, pending the results of the AESO's study on underground transmission."

The AUC will make the final decision regarding the project. The Heartland Project Team expects to file its Facility Application in the Spring of 2010.

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About the Heartland Transmission Project

The proposed Heartland Transmission Project (the project) involves the construction of a high voltage transmission line, which will connect the Heartland region (northeast of Fort Saskatchewan) to existing transmission facilities either west of Edmonton or in southern Edmonton. AltaLink and EPCOR, the Heartland Project Team, are working together in the project's development.

About EPCOR Utilities Inc.

EPCOR's wholly-owned subsidiaries build, own and operate electrical transmission and distribution networks, water and wastewater treatment facilities and infrastructure. EPCOR, headquartered in Edmonton, Alberta, is an Alberta Top 50 employer. EPCOR's website is www.epcor.ca

About AltaLink, L.P.

AltaLink, Canada's only fully independent transmission provider, is responsible for the maintenance and operation of more than 11,800 kilometres of transmission lines and approximately 270 substations in Alberta. As Alberta's largest supplier of safe and reliable transmission, AltaLink is moving forward to provide a transmission system that will continue to meet the growing needs of Albertans. AltaLink has been a proud supporter of Alberta 4-H since 2003, and as a Legacy Builder it is the title sponsor of all regional, district and provincial communications and public speaking programs.