



Transportation Utility Corridor program could alleviate costly and divisive land use conflicts

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New provincial legislation to enable the Government of Alberta to identify and set aside land for large infrastructure projects for transportation, utilities and water management has the potential to reduce land use conflicts. The Calgary Chamber of Commerce made this recommendation last year during the Provincial Land Use Framework consultation, and was pleased to see its adoption.

"Our idea was to take a concept that worked well for Calgary and apply it provincially," said Geoff Pradella, Vice-President of Public & Government Affairs with the Calgary Chamber of Commerce.

Transportation Utility Corridors (TUCs) are not new. Originally established around the cities of Calgary and Edmonton in the mid-1970s, TUCs were designated to accommodate major power lines, pipelines, linear municipal utilities and ring roads.

"TUCs offer a long-term solution to many of today's land use problems by concentrating major facilities and infrastructure in defined areas," said Pradella. "A TUC investment strategy will help the province plan for future growth and avoid the costly and divisive hearings on utility land use issues affecting Alberta."

With our population expected to grow to 5 million by 2028, the demand for power and other utility services will increase. TUCs will provide certainty for landowners and lay the foundation for future economic growth at a much lower cost.

"As our economy and population grows, decisions and choices related to the 'optimal' or best use of ever-decreasing supplies of available land become increasingly critical and influential," said Pradella. "The role of the government in this process is both stewardship of the resource, and stewardship of the process."

TUCs will enable the government to better plan, and more fully engage the representatives of competing demands (oil and gas, electricity transmission, transportation, forestry, environmental, farming, recreational, residential etc.) and most importantly, the people of the province.

The Chamber also views TUCs as a rare opportunity to secure right of ways for the possibility of developing a world-class high-speed rail system when sufficient demand exists and economic conditions improve.