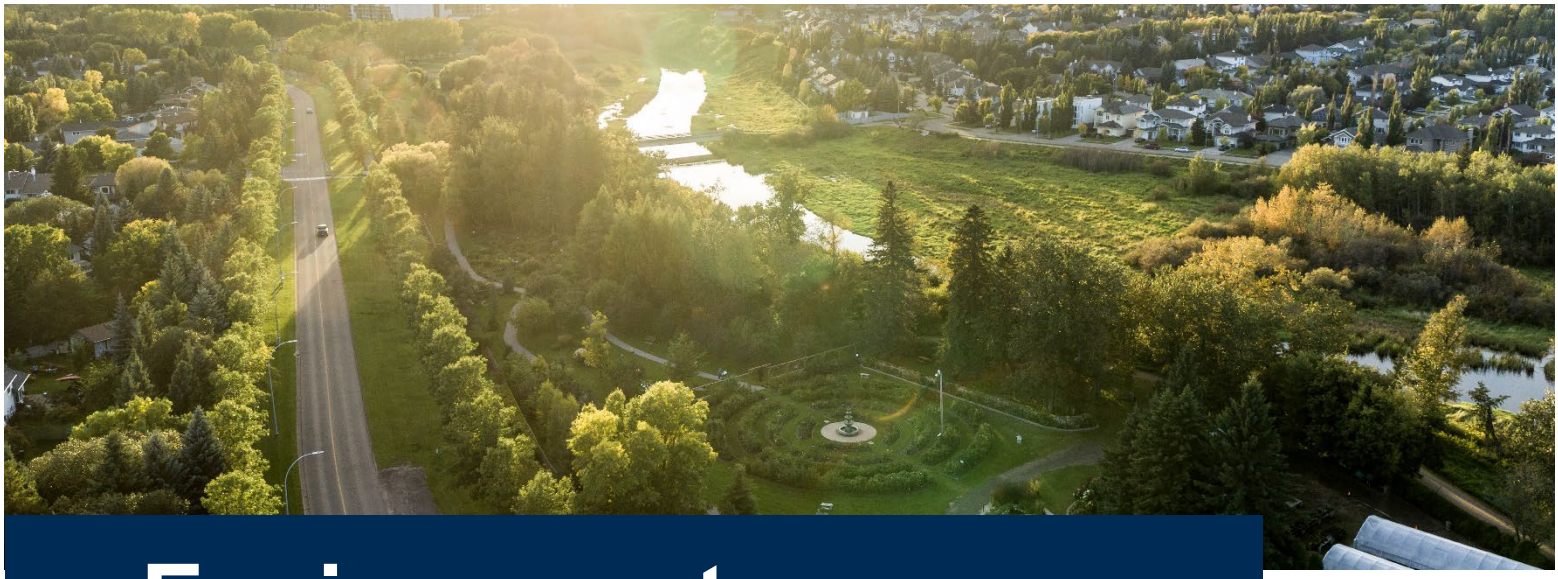


Environment

2023 REPORT CARD

The City of St. Albert publishes an annual Environment Report Card to inform residents on progress towards achieving the goals and targets set out in the Environmental Master Plan (EMP). Future reporting will focus on the progress of the City's Green Environment Strategy. This long-range strategy will play an important role in guiding operational activities over the next 10 years and reinforcing the City's commitment to ecological sustainability. As such, this will be the final report on the EMP.

GOAL 1: MANAGE AIR QUALITY

TREND: STABLE AIR QUALITY

CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE
St. Albert Air Quality Monitoring

Progress Update

In 2023, the St. Albert Air Quality Health Index was mainly in the low- to moderate-risk range. However, the St. Albert Air Quality Monitoring Station detected several high-risk ratings in early June due to active wildfires across the province.

The EMP sets air quality targets at Level 2 triggers, as indicated in the Capital Region Air Quality Management Framework (CRAQMF). In recent years, reporting on air quality measures have transitioned and are now based on the Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards assessment (CAAQS).

Service Delivery Highlights

Based on the most recent CAAQS report*, St. Albert is within the orange management level for particulate matter and ozone, consistent with level 3 of the CRAQMF. Sulfur dioxide remains within the green management level consistent with level 1.

LEVEL 3
Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)

LEVEL 3
Ozone (O_3)

LEVEL 1
Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)

*Note: This is based on 2018-2020 CAAQS report was released in September 2022.

GOAL 2: REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION & GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

CITY TREND: DECREASED EMISSIONS **COMMUNITY TREND:** DECREASED EMISSIONS

Progress Update

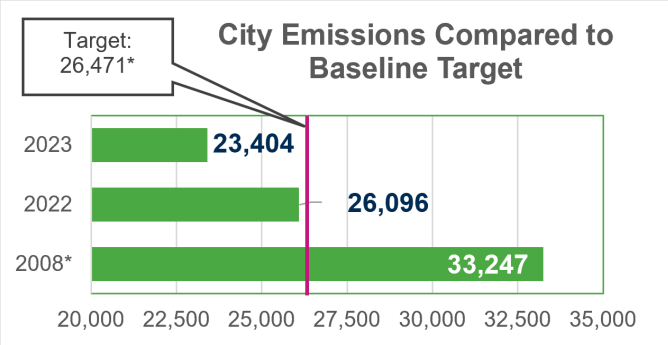
In late 2022, the City introduced the Clean Energy Improvement Program (CEIP) and Home Energy Efficiency Grant (HEEG) to empower residents to make home energy upgrades. By 2023, 189 homeowners were approved for HEEG. In partnership with Alberta Municipalities, the CEIP program completed 11 projects with 23 underway, providing nearly $700,000 in low-interest loans to residents.

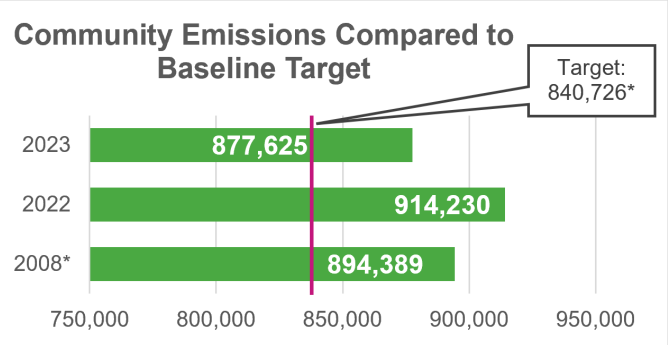
The Solar Energy Generation Dashboard was launched in September 2023, and provides real-time data of solar energy production at Servus Place, Jack Kraft Facility and Liggett Place. This is a valuable online tool to track historical best periods for energy production amongst civic facilities, including the best year, best month and the average solar energy production for each period.

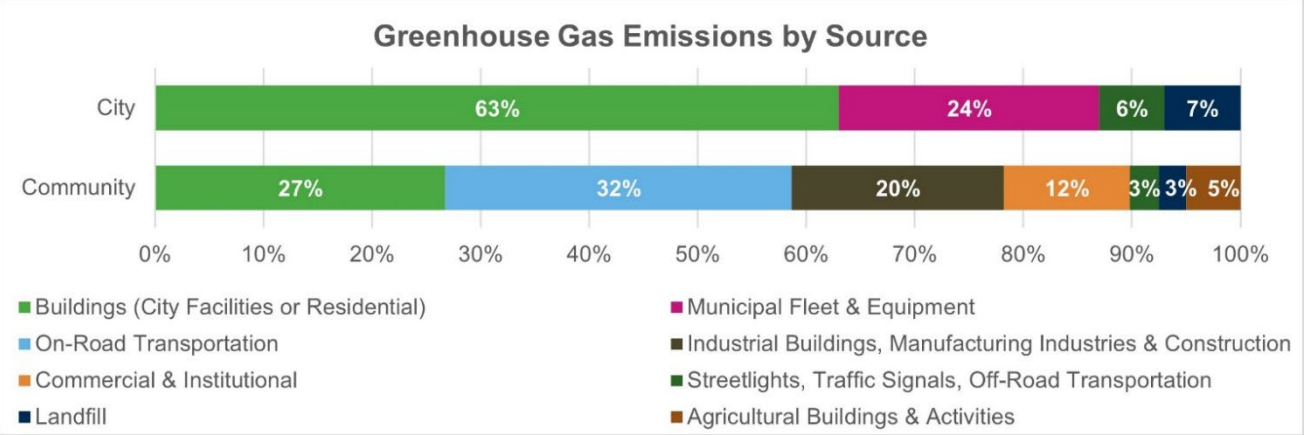
Compared to the baseline year of 2008, the City's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in 2023 have decreased by 29.6 per cent. In 2023, the City's GHG emissions decreased approximately 10 per cent from the 2022 reporting year. The goal to reduce GHG emissions to 20 per cent below the 2008 baseline level has been surpassed and maintained below the target level.

In 2023, community emissions were approximately two per cent below 2008 levels. Compared to the 2022 reporting year, the community GHG emissions have decreased by approximately four per cent. The target to reduce emissions by six per cent from 2008 levels has not been met.

Service Delivery Highlights







GOAL 3: PROMOTE NEIGHBOURHOODS & TRANSPORTATION CHOICES

LAND-USE TREND: MEETING TARGETS **TRANSIT TREND:** INCREASED RIDERSHIP

Progress Update

Total transit ridership in St. Albert increased significantly compared to previous years from 455,100 to 804,563. This increasing trend matches pre-COVID numbers and meets the EMP target to increase ridership equal or greater to population growth.

With support from the Electric Vehicle Charger Program and Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure program, 24 Electric Vehicle Charging Stations were successfully installed at four City of St. Albert locations: Servus Credit Union Place, Naki Transit Centre & Park and Ride, St. Albert Place and Fountain Park Recreation Centre.

In August 2023, the Area Structure Plan (ASP) and Neighbourhood Plan Terms of Reference was updated to reflect a Two-Tier Policy Framework in accordance with the MDP neighbourhood policies and land use designations. The Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan and Ville Giroux ASP have been amended and meet the targets outlined below. Additionally, the St. Albert West ASP completed its second phase of engagement in 2023.

Service Delivery Highlights

40	**20%**	**804,563**
*Target: Dwellings per net residential hectare	*Intensification Target: new residential redevelopment	Total St. Albert Transit passengers commuting (Target: increase = or > population growth)

*Targets are based on the Sustainable Growth goal and principles of the new Municipal Development Plan - *Flourish*.

GOAL 4: PRESERVE AND MANAGE TREES, PARKS & NATURAL AREAS

STATUS: ON TRACK

Progress Update

St. Albert received its fourth consecutive Tree City of the World designation in 2023. The City continued to meet the five core standards that illustrate our long-term commitment to caring for our trees and forests.

22	**5,214**	**1,660**
Naturalization* project events	Native trees and shrubs were planted within 0.58 hectares	Volunteers participated in naturalization activities

*Naturalization is an alternative management technique in which landscape maintenance is reduced by planting native trees and shrubs and restricting mowing. For more information on naturalization projects, please visit stalbert.ca/spruceup.

GOAL 5: REDUCE GARBAGE TO THE LANDFILL

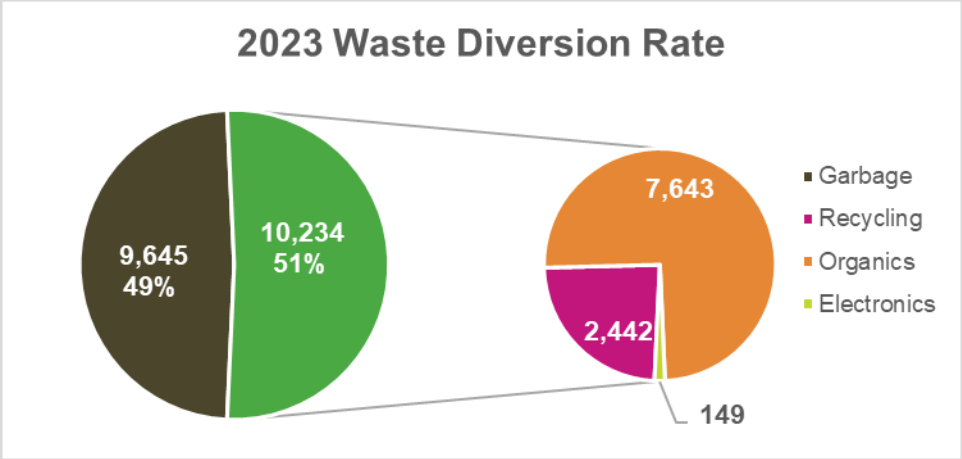
TREND: DECREASED PARTICIPATION IN WASTE AND DIVERSION PROGRAMS

Progress Update

In 2023, residents generated 9,645 metric tonnes (Mt) of garbage – just over 134 kilograms per capita. This equates to a decrease of 749 Mt city-wide compared to 2022 (10,394 Mt). Some new waste diversion additions at the Mike Mitchell Recycling Depot launched in 2023, including: clothes and textiles are now accepted for redistribution or repurposing through a partnership with Goodwill; expanding the Styrofoam recycling program to include #4, #5 and #6 label type; and the City has introduced a larger Universal Compactor for more efficient cardboard recycling.

The Waste and Our World Program returned to in-person presentations and was delivered to over 518 Grade 4 students in 20 classrooms. The Curbside Waste Education Program also began revisiting houses and tracking the neighbourhood trends in waste sorting for the future. In 2023, City staff found a 13 per cent decrease in contamination items in the Blue Recycling Bags, and 616 households received a well-deserved 'thank you' sticker for both properly sorting their waste appropriately on the date of their inspection.

Service Delivery Highlights



Waste diversion is calculated as the volume of waste diverted from the landfill, as a percentage of the total waste generated. Diverted waste includes organics from the Green Organics Cart and recycling from the Blue Recycling Bag. This calculation does not include tonnage from the Compost or Mike Mitchell Recycling Depots. In 2023, waste diversion was 51 per cent (10,233 Mt). Diversion continues to be highest in the spring and summer due to residents placing large volumes of leaf and yard waste in the Green Organics Cart. In 2023, contamination of the organic carts declined by 50 per cent from the 2022 levels.

GOAL 6: PROTECT AND IMPROVE THE STURGEON RIVER WATERSHED

STATUS: TARGET ACHIEVED

Progress Update

In 2023, the SRWA launched several initiatives to study and improve road salt management throughout the watershed. An environmental consultant was contracted to gather and summarize water quality data from across the Sturgeon River Watershed. This effort centralized multiple data sources and allows for analysis of water quality parameters of concern within the river and lake systems of the watershed. The detailed analysis of water quality data can be found on the Sturgeon River Watershed website.

Service Delivery Highlights

6
Key outcomes form the Sturgeon River Watershed Management Plan

Plan includes strategies and actions to implement over the next **10 years**

$200,000
Alberta Community Partnership Grant to address short-term actions

*The Sturgeon River Watershed Alliance (SRWA) was formed in 2014 to assess, advocate for and protect the long-term health of the Sturgeon River Watershed by developing and implementing a management plan.

GOAL 7: IMPROVE WATER QUALITY IN THE STURGEON RIVER

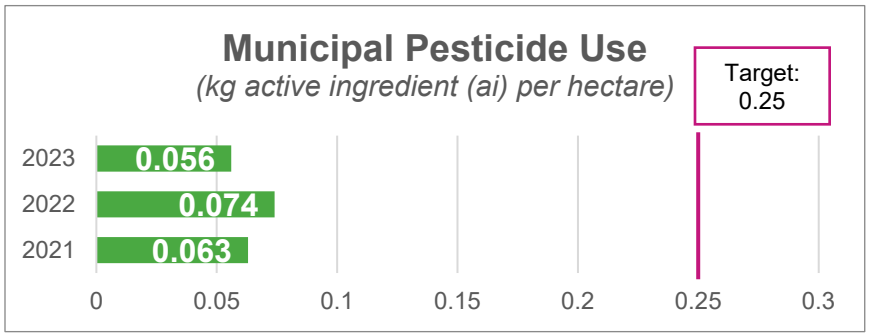
TREND: STABLE WATER QUALITY

TO LEARN MORE, CLICK HERE.
River Water Quality Index

Progress Update

Within St. Albert boundaries, water quality in 2023 was adversely affected by a sewage spill that took place in December 2022, with notable impacts recorded throughout the summer in the Sturgeon River. Chloride and bacteria levels were high during winter and spring but improved by late summer, ultimately meeting provincial surface water quality guidelines. Nutrient levels remained fair to good, while total suspended solids stayed consistently low throughout the year.

Service Delivery Highlights



Provincial legislation requires the City to take action on invasive weeds. When treating these weeds, the number of pesticides used varies and is dependent on the weather, the type of species or pests and the management techniques used. The addition of the annexed area of 1,558 hectares imposed new challenges for pest management. Overall, the City's pesticide use decreased compared to 2022, and pesticide use continues to be well below the target.

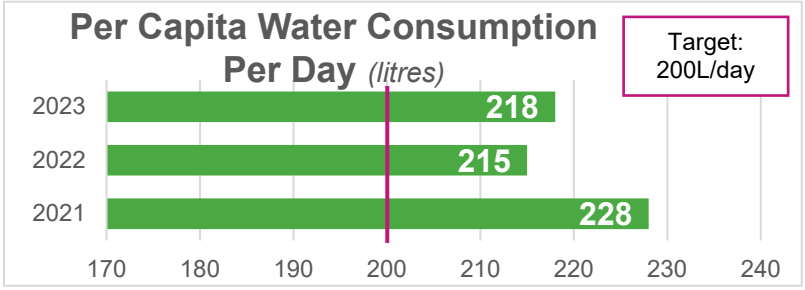
GOAL 8: REDUCE WATER CONSUMPTION

TREND: INCREASED WATER CONSUMPTION

Progress Update

Residential water consumption in 2023 increased slightly to 218 litres per day compared to 2022 (215 litres per day). This slight rise can likely be attributed to increased water use during hotter and drier conditions in the summer months.

Service Delivery Highlights



Bylaw UPDATE!

Outdoor sprinkler water use is limited between **7 p.m.** and **9 a.m.** **YEAR-ROUND** according to the City's Water Conservation Bylaw.

GOAL 9: FOSTER COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

TREND: STABLE PARTICIPATION

Progress Update

In October 2023, the Environmental Initiatives Grant Program (EIGP) received eight applications, ranging from $700 to $7,500. Of these applications, seven were approved and covered a diverse range of topics relating to land, water, air and people.

Spruce Up St. Albert ran from April to October and featured its kickoff event, the Garbage Can Design Contest, where 180 students brought to life the theme “Seeds of Tomorrow”. A total of 20 schools also participated in celebrating trees and forests during Arbor Day. Eight schools participated in our schoolyard cleanups, engaging 2,270 students in the effort. Meanwhile spring and fall neighborhood cleanups saw impressive community involvement, with 1,356 residents from 44 groups coming together to help keep our neighborhoods clean while enjoying safe outdoor activities. The annual TD Clean and Green RiverFest continued to be held in late September, with 188 participants in attendance working together to clean up the city’s river valley and plant over 309 native trees and shrubs.

The community's outstanding commitment to environmental initiatives and programs has been incredibly rewarding for all City staff involved. Together, we continue to build a more hopeful and resilient future.

Service Delivery Highlights

155 Environmental Initiatives Grants awarded since 2007	**1,073** Grade 1 Arbor Day tree seedlings provided	**630** Hours contributed by 87 Partners in Parks beautifying public spaces

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ENVIRONMENT, CONTACT:

PHONE: 780-459-1500

EMAIL: environment@stalbert.ca