



Impacts of Reduced Transportation on Air Quality in Alberta Associated with COVID-19 Project Team

Terms of Reference

Approved by the Clean Air Strategic Alliance, July 2021

CONTEXT¹

The Clean Air Strategic Alliance (CASA) formed an ad hoc group to explore how anticipated COVID-19-related trends in emissions due to reduced transportation could inform future air quality management policy. Members noted that CASA is an ideal forum to both gather interested parties to explore this issue and share the findings with Albertans² to improve air quality management and stewardship.

The discussions of the ad hoc group resulted in a statement of opportunity related to messaging on vehicle emissions and air quality. Team members will collaboratively provide or resource supporting information through subject-matter experts and available reference material for the project.

The project team will operate in a manner that is consistent with the rules, policies and procedures adopted by CASA, including the use of consensus to make decisions in a multi-stakeholder process.

STRATEGIC INTENT (GOAL)

Collaboratively develop messaging that links changes in air quality associated with measures undertaken to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The messaging would aim to generate provincial awareness of the impacts that reductions in motor vehicle transportation can have on air quality, and how individuals, governments, businesses, and other Albertans can act to improve air quality.

¹ Additional project context can be found in the statement of opportunity approved by the CASA board, March 11, 2021.

² Throughout this document, “Albertans” refers to individuals and all elements of our society (i.e., governments, industries, businesses, and other organizations and institutions).

OBJECTIVES

The project would achieve the following four objectives:

1. Summarize existing information on Alberta's ambient air quality and traffic counts before and during the implementation of measures taken to reduce the spread of COVID-19.
2. Link observed air quality changes associated with measures taken to reduce the spread of COVID-19 to outcomes that are relatable to Albertans.
3. Write a project final report including performance measures and recommendations.
4. Develop a plan for communicating the work of the project team on transportation reductions due to COVID-19 and the impacts on air quality.

KEY TASKS³

1. Summarize existing information on Alberta's ambient air quality and traffic counts before (2019) and during (Spring 2020) the implementation of measures taken to reduce the spread of COVID-19.
 - a. Gather information and data related to provincial ambient air quality and motor vehicle transportation.
 - b. Compile and summarize relevant data and information from Alberta and other jurisdictions.
 - c. Identify possible reasons for any changes in traffic counts and air quality.
 - d. Conduct an inventory of existing communication to leverage or build on existing initiatives.
 - e. Identify any data sources, gaps, or additional analyses required for the CASA project.
2. Link observed air quality changes associated with measures taken to reduce the spread of COVID-19 to outcomes that are relatable to Albertans.
 - a. Use the AQHI (or other metrics as appropriate) and Health Canada's 2019 report, *Health impacts of air pollution in Canada: estimates of morbidity and premature mortality outcomes*,⁴ where suitable, to communicate the data findings from key task 1 to those less familiar with air science.
3. Complete a project summary report.
 - a. Compile all information and prepare a summary report based on key tasks 1 and 2.
4. Write a final report.
 - a. Assemble a draft final report progressively throughout the project and present to the CASA board for feedback.

³ An initial list of sources relevant to the key tasks can be found in the Statement of Opportunity. The working group identified additional resources for the tasks which are captured in the group's meeting minutes.

⁴ <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.874080/publication.html>

- b. Incorporate feedback on the draft final report and present the final report to the CASA board.
5. Develop a communications plan.
 - a. Create a list of potential channels through which key messages could be distributed and select a subset of channels appropriate for the known or expected messaging.
 - b. Create a set of key messages for each of the selected channels. Key messages will be aimed at Albertans regarding ambient air quality during the public health emergency relative to past conditions, the potential contribution of reduced transportation to improved air quality, and actions Albertans can undertake to help improve air quality.

TIMELINES and DELIVERABLES

The project team will provide the following deliverables to CASA:

- **Summary report: Jul - Aug 2021**
 - including project methodology, findings, outcomes
- **Final report: Aug - Sept 2021⁵**
 - including the summary report, key messages, any recommendations, next steps, and performance measures
- **Communications Plan: Aug - Sept 2021**
 - for dissemination of the findings and results on reduced transportation emissions due to COVID-19 and their impact on air quality

It should be noted that CASA's *Performance Measures Strategy: A "how-to" guide to performance measurement* at CASA, indicates that each project team is required to generate one specific metric that will allow the success of the team to be evaluated five (5) years in the future.

It is expected that the project team will also provide brief monthly status updates to the CASA board.

MEMBERSHIP

The project team is expected to encompass membership from Industry, Government, and Non-Government Organizations. A list of potential project stakeholders identified by the working group can be found in Appendix A, which includes organizations not part of the CASA board membership. The working group membership is listed in Appendix B.

⁵ The working group felt there was a possibility that the project could be completed before the September 2021 CASA board meeting. If so, the project team will request that the CASA board review the final deliverables prior to the meeting.

BUDGET

The working group anticipates the project can be completed within an estimated \$13,500 of CASA core funds to support the project team’s work as shown in Table 1. No additional project-specific funding is required.

Table 1: Core Funding Costs (covered by CASA)

Type	Amount
Stakeholder support	\$7,000
Hosting	\$1,500
Communications	\$5,000

Appendix A – Potential stakeholders for the project

- Provincial Ministries and Agencies (e.g., Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Environment and Parks, Alberta Energy Regulator, Transportation, Alberta Health, Municipal Affairs, Education)
- Federal Government (e.g., Environment and Climate Change Canada, Natural Resources Canada, Health Canada)
- Municipalities (Large Urban, Small Urban, Rural)
- First Nation and Métis
- Airshed Organizations
- Industry (e.g., agriculture, electricity, mining, construction, forestry)
- Transportation (e.g., Alberta Motor Association, Alberta Motor Transport Association, Alberta Motor Vehicle Industry Council, commercial operators, fleet operators)
- Health and Environmental Non-Government Organizations (e.g., Alberta Lung Association)
- Research Institutions (e.g., University of Alberta Centre for Smart Transportation)
- Education Bodies (e.g., Alberta Council for Environmental Education)

Appendix B – Working Group Membership

Name	Stakeholder Group
Andria Panidisz	Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
Ann Baran	Southern Alberta Group for the Environment
Anne Vigneau	Heartland Generation
Dave Reid	ENMAX Corporation
David Spink	Prairie Acid Rain Coalition
Kamran Faisal	City of Calgary
Kevin McCullum	Alberta Airsheds Council
Kevin Warren	Alberta Airsheds Council
Mike Bisaga	Alberta Airsheds Council
Scott Blurton	Environment and Climate Change Canada
Sean Mercer	Imperial Oil Limited/ Canadian Fuels Association
Rhonda-Lee Curran	Alberta Environment and Parks
Ruth Yanor	Mewassin Community Council
Yayne-Abeba Aklilu	Alberta Environment and Parks