

Subject: **Municipal Participation in Lone Butte Solar Project**
 Meeting Date: Tuesday, October 22, 2024
 Prepared By: Barb Hazelton, Manager of Planning & Development
 Presented By: Barb Hazelton

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: (Check all that apply)

	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
High Quality Infrastructure		Economic Resilience		Quality of Life		Effective Leadership		Level of Service	

RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

Provincial (cite)- Municipal Government Act, Alberta Utilities Commission Act, Renewable Energy Act
Council Bylaw/Policy (cite)- Bylaw 1829: Municipal Development Plan, Bylaw 1808: Land Use Bylaw, Bylaw 1889: Land Use Bylaw amendment for Renewable Energy

BACKGROUND/PROPOSAL:

On May 30, 2023, Council moved to consider on a case-by-case basis the level of participation they would like the municipality to take during the AUC process regarding applications for renewable energy projects. This Request for Decision is to bring forward the Lone Pine Solar project for Council direction.

On October 4, 2024, Acciona Energy Canada Global, Inc. submitted their application to the Alberta Utilities Commission for the Lone Butte Solar Project proposed on approximately 2,000 acres of privately owned and cultivated land in Kneehill County. The proposed power plant will have a total capacity of 450MW_{ac} (585MW_{dc}) The application has been attached for information purposes.

Administration has downloaded all the documents accompanying this application and they can be made available to Council upon request.

DISCUSSION/OPTIONS/BENEFITS/DISADVANTAGES/OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

Administration is looking for Council direction specific to the Lone Butte Solar Project level of participation. Are there any steps Council would like Administration to take regarding this specific proceeding? When the Three Hills Solar Project submitted their application, Council specifically noted the following concerns:

1. The high quality of agricultural land that is being removed from production for renewable energy projects.
2. The concern with the reclamation of the site, specific to the ability to recycle components and clarification of the responsible party if the company becomes insolvent.
3. Weeds, pest control and disease transfer.
4. Timing of the construction and the potential for erosion of the lands.

Council has since amended the renewable energy sections of the Land Use Bylaw outlining protections for agricultural land and incorporating setbacks to waterbodies and urban boundaries. Are the requirements as laid out in the renewable energy sections of the Land Use Bylaw sufficient, or are there



other considerations Council would like to include specific to this project? At the writing of this RFD, the deadline for submissions has not been set.

FINANCIAL & STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

Depending on the level of involvement that Council would like administration to take, there may be implications to staff resources. There could also be potential financial impacts. If Council wants to fully participate in the hearing (including the hiring of experts), Council will need to designate funds for this level of participation. Potential costs are unknown at this time and could exceed \$50,000 with some reimbursement potential.

RECOMMENDED ENGAGEMENT:

Directive Decision (Information Sharing, One-Way Communication)

Tools:	Individual Notification	Other:	
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ATTACHMENTS:

Lone Butte Solar Project Application

COUNCIL OPTIONS:

1. That Council provide direction to Administration regarding the level of AUC participation they would like to engage in for the Lone Butte Solar Project.
2. Council move to participate by written submission.
3. Council move to have staff representation at the hearing to outline specific concerns and highlight the information we would like the AUC to consider.
4. Council move that Administration proceed with acquiring expert representation at the hearing.
5. Council accept as information.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

That Council determine the level of municipal participation in this project.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

Administration to follow the Direction of Council.

APPROVAL(S):

Mike Haugen, Chief Administrative Officer

Approved-

