

# Edmonton wants power line buried

## Heartland transmission line hearings begin next week

By Gordon Kent, Edmonton Journal April 8, 2011 11:27



**Epcor Utilities and AltaLink have submitted their application to the Alberta Utilities Commission to build the controversial Heartland high-voltage transmission line.**

**Photograph by: Larry Wong, [edmontonjournal.com](http://edmontonjournal.com)**

Edmonton will argue the planned Heartland power transmission line should go underground through the city at hearings starting next week, a lawyer said Friday

Utilities Epcor and AltaLink want to build a 500-kilovolt line on giant lattice towers from the Wabamun Lake area to the industrial heartland region near Fort Saskatchewan.

Edmonton, along with Strathcona County and other groups, is concerned about the impact of the project on esthetics, noise, potential health problems, wildlife, property values and planning, city lawyer Mark Young told a news conference.

The route the companies prefer would follow the Anthony Henday Drive corridor south of Mill Woods, along the east side of the city and across the North Saskatchewan River valley, he said.

If that route is followed, the Edmonton portion of the line should be buried to minimize the effect on about 5,300 homes that would be within 800 metres of it, he said.

“These massive towers will be visible for miles and have all sorts of impacts that a highway wouldn’t.”

City council voted in 2009 to intervene in the Alberta Utilities Commission hearings and arguments, which are expected to last five weeks.

“What impact would that (project) have on those people who are visiting our city?”  
Coun. Amarjeet Sohi said.

“Having this huge electrical fence around your city doesn’t send a message that our city is a good one to live in.”

But changes will add to the construction time and the price.

City estimates based on burying only a 20-kilometre portion of the line suggest it would boost the cost of the project at least \$90 million, while the companies argue there would be an increase of more than \$400 million, Kennedy said.

If the line isn’t buried, council wants to use an alternate route that bypasses Edmonton to the north and affects less than 400 homes, he said.

gkent@edmontonjournal.com