

Power-line choice jolts residents

Heartland transmission group favours new electrical line be built through east utility corridor

Also in Calgary Herald

HANNEKE BROOYMANS
Journal Environment Writer
EDMONTON

Heartland transmission project officials announced Wednesday they would prefer to run the high-voltage line through the east-transportation utility corridor.

Teresa Ball, who lives in northeast Quarry Ridge, isn't happy the proponents are looking at running the line above ground near her neighbourhood, but burying it in southeast Edmonton and along part of the boundary with Strathcona County. "It doesn't seem fair. Are our lives worth less than the lives of the people in Sherwood Park? ... I'm fed up with being given the stuff that nobody wants."

Ball estimated at least 2,000 residents in Quarry Ridge and the nearby Evergreen mobile home community would be within about one

kilometre of the proposed route. "I'm stunned right now. I'm disappointed."

Project officials have delayed a decision on whether or not they would like to bury a portion of the line until the Alberta Electric System Operator finishes a feasibility study. That decision will be incorporated in the facility application, to be filed in the spring. Officials also chose an alternate route west and north of Edmonton. The controversial project involves running a double-circuit 500 kilovolt line from existing transmission facilities either west of Edmonton or in southern Edmonton to the Heartland region northeast of Fort Saskatchewan.

Made up of Epcor and Altralink, Heartland officials chose the east-utility corridor route because, in part, the line will be further away from most residences and because it minimizes the amount of private

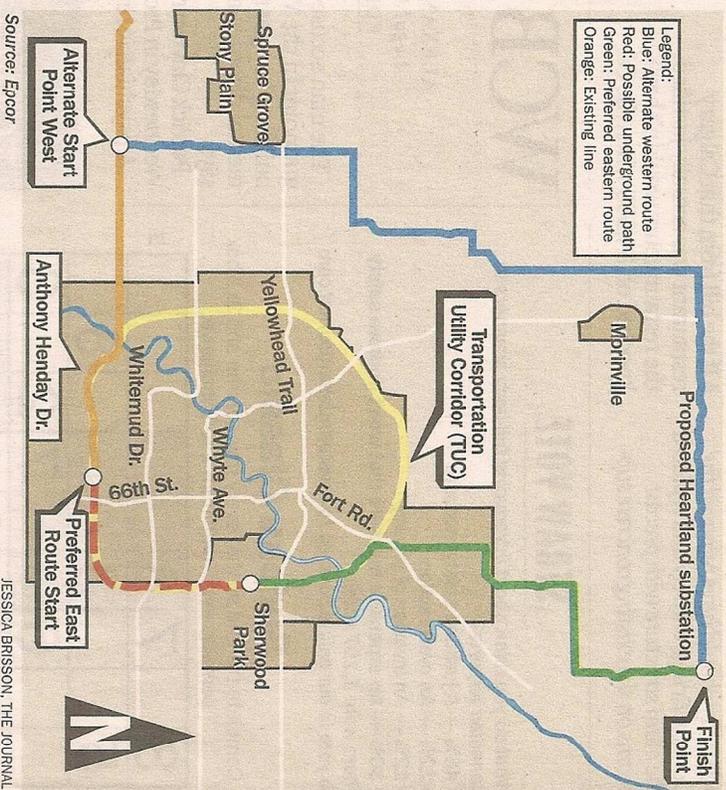
property that will be crossed.

New information packages will be sent to people along the four routes initially proposed, said Guy Bridgeman, senior vice-president of strategic planning and development for Epcor. There will also be information about a potential underground line portion in the east-utility corridor sent to those living near the two preferred routes. More open houses and consultations with people living closely to the routes will begin again, he said.

Residents have expressed strong concerns — they are worried about health, safety, environmental, esthetic and property value impacts.

Last November, a group called Responsible Electricity Transmission for Albertans held a meeting at Rexall Centre, which they say attracted about 3,500 people.

See POWER LINE / B3



Source: Epcor