

# Ward 6

## UPDATE

August 2008

### Alan Dunn Councillor, Ward 6

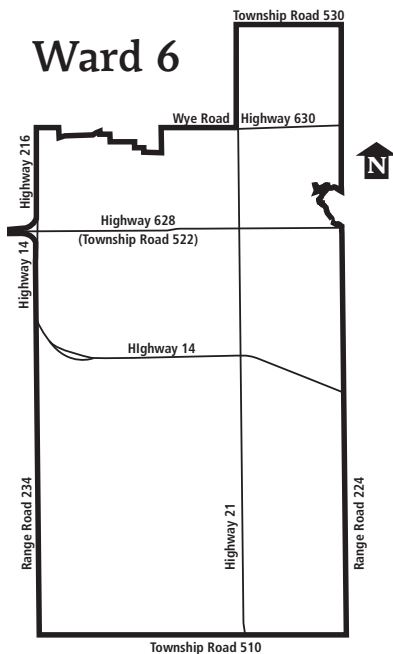
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County

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### Ward 6



#### Distribution of this newsletter

This newsletter is intended for residents of Ward 6, as shown on the map above. To economize, it is being distributed according to delivery zones established by Canada Post, which do not coincide with ward boundaries.

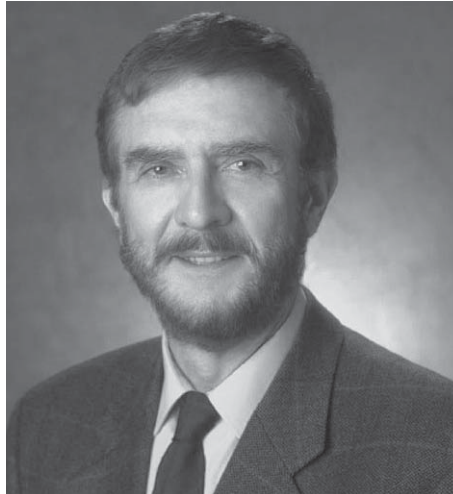
A limited number of households in Wards 5 and 7 may receive a copy as a result. If so, please enjoy the information and make note of the councillor for your area.

Ward 5, Councillor Jacquie Fenske, 780-464-8147  
Ward 7, Councillor Glen Lawrence, 780-464-8003



This newsletter is also available at  
[www.strathcona.ab.ca](http://www.strathcona.ab.ca).

### from your councillor



Councillor Alan Dunn

#### Solid Waste Management

The "Green Routine" has been in place now for about a month now and finally the phone calls and e-mails are starting to taper off.

I cannot recall anything that has generated so much public interest. Nobody is indifferent; everyone has an opinion. Fortunately, the majority of folks seem to be adapting quite well and in fact the new system is so much easier to use than the old.

No more sorting out the coloured glass from the clear, or newsprint from glossy paper. There are only four streams to deal with and the lot is picked up at the driveway.

Of course for that minority of folks who do not recycle and do not care about their community, the new system is a hassle. I even had one irate individual advise me to move to California if I wanted to be green. Brilliant. Even such folks will eventually realise that this is not driven by some flakey, new age philosophy.

This is about economics and

survival: the Clover Bar landfill will no longer be available to the County as of December 31 of this year.

#### Here are the economics of the alternative

The old manual collection of unlimited quantities of waste, newspapers and seasonal grass clippings at the curb with the waste materials going to the Ryley landfill (the nearest available) would cost approximately \$2.20/household/month more than the new \$18 fee for processing and transport in 2009.

Had we made no change, fees would have had to increase to just over \$20 per month per household. We would also fail to achieve the diversion targets from landfill set by Alberta Environment.

By separating organic materials and increasing recycling through curbside pickup, we are able to use processing facilities nearby (in Edmonton), thus saving transportation costs.

The cost of processing both recyclable materials and organic materials is cheaper than the landfill rate at Ryley. The tipping fee at Ryley is anticipated to be approximately 57 per cent more than the Clover Bar rate.

We also anticipate an increase in transportation and transfer costs to Ryley of approximately \$17-\$20 per tonne, depending on fuel prices.

History offers many examples of societies that suffered because they could not find solutions to basic problems such as waste disposal. Rather than waiting for a crisis, this municipality is taking responsible and decisive action to deal with the issue before it becomes a more serious problem.

# Ward 6

## UPDATE

### Loss of freedom? Changing times call for a new approach

A few weeks ago, I received an angry communication from a resident. His complaints touched a number of areas and I no longer recall which one set him off.

He made one comment, however, that caught my attention. He was very unhappy about the proliferation of rules, regulations and laws he felt Council and the County were imposing on folks like him.

I felt that it was a valid observation and one that deserved an answer.

I remember when I first arrived in Alberta as a young man, just out of school how refreshing it was to be able to do pretty much whatever I pleased without interference from anyone.

If I wanted to shoot or hunt, I could toss a rifle in the back seat of the car, drive a few miles and blaze away to my

heart's content, limited only by the amount of ammunition I could afford.

I could ride a Ski-doo pretty well anywhere in the County and not have to cross a fence all day. There was a sense of total freedom and independence unlike anything I had known growing up in southern Ontario.

Of course, at that time, Sherwood Park's population was less than 10,000 and the entire population of the County was not much more than that. Today after many decades of growth and "progress" we are nudging 100,000, one of the most populous municipalities in Alberta. And with this burgeoning population, we must acknowledge that the old days of freedom and open spaces are gone forever.

As we pack more and more people and businesses into a shrinking landscape, we find that more restrictions are needed to avoid harming one another or getting in each other's way.

As more and bigger vehicles compete for space on a road network mostly laid out before the 1920s, we resort to elaborate – some would say bizarre – schemes to keep gridlock from shutting us down.

We can no longer dump our garbage in a hole and forget it. We can no longer run our sewage into a ditch and hope that it gets lost before it gets to the well. Those days are over.

We on Council do not spend our days sitting around in a circle thinking up bylaws just to be deliberately annoying, though to some it might seem that way.

Rather, we are obliged to address the real social, economic and environmental problems that a population explosion creates. Growth has consequences, including a parallel growth in restrictions and loss of freedoms. That is the reality we are living today and it is unlikely to change.

### Making tracks: The Rural Roads Master Plan (Continued from the April Ward 6 newsletter)

Last newsletter, we looked at the conception of Strathcona Country's Rural Roads Master Plan (RRMP), a hands-on working document used by the Country's Transportation and Agriculture Services and Engineering and Environmental Planning departments. This document provides a blueprint to maintain and, over time, upgrade various components of the rural road system.

The RRMP aims to provide the best possible service levels on the five major rural roadway categories based on a balanced funding allocation between road reconstruction, surface rehabilitation and annual maintenance:

- **major re-construction network (Class I roads)**  
Roads that experience high volume traffic and/or industrial-type traffic. These roads are engineered to industry standards to ensure that the safety of the road user is not compromised.

- **cold-mix grid road network**

Many of our rural roads have a cold mix surface. These roads experience moderate traffic volumes. For the most part, these roads have a non-engineered road base. Over the years, significant base stabilization has occurred to provide a much more stable road surface.

- **gravel network**

There are two standards of gravel roads found in rural Strathcona. These roads typically see low traffic volumes. The first road (Class III) sees dust control accomplished through the use of an oil-based dust suppressant applied on a length of road in front of each occupied residence. The second road, (Class IV), is a gravel road that has received an oil-based dust suppressant from intersection to intersection. The result is a fully

bound road surface. These are not a cold mix surface road and will behave in a similar manner to a regular gravel road.

- **rural hamlet roads**

A mixture of engineered and non-engineered roads, depending upon the date the roads were constructed, are paved at existing profiles to provide residents with smooth, long-lasting surfaces.

- **country residential roadways and small holding subdivision roads**

A mixture of engineered and non-engineered roads, with the objective of eventually providing all country residential roadways with asphalt surfaces.

These parameters are kept in mind as County staff manage our rural road infrastructure.

(Continued in the November Ward 6 newsletter)

## Communication: everyone has a role

During the recent rollout of the new solid waste management programme, both Council and County Administration received numerous complaints about the lack of prior communication and opportunities for input.

In view of the long-term planning and consultation spanning at least two councils, I find this a surprising criticism.

“Nobody told me!” can often be decoded as “I don’t like it!”, so it is tempting to brush off such criticism as a reflection of the bad humour of the disgruntled.

Putting that observation aside for the moment, I believe it useful to review what communication methods are available to the municipality and how much responsibility devolves to the residents to keep themselves informed.

Many of the folks who are the most irate about being uninformed admit that they do not receive my newsletter because they don’t accept bulk mail; they do not read the local newspaper; they never sign on to the County website; they have never attended a council meeting or even dropped into County Hall.

### How then should we keep in touch?

Addressed mail is fine for very local issues; for more global concerns, it becomes very expensive and labour intensive.

### Willing to listen

Person-to-person communication is usually effective and I am always available to attend community meetings or other gatherings to share whatever information I may have. I need to know about them and to be invited, of course.

If you have specific issues, you are welcome to meet with me or with other members of council or administration.

Apart from that, I am at a loss as to how best to keep the information flowing and I am certainly happy to listen to any suggestions that folks may have.

## Wye School parking

A number of years ago and after considerable effort, Strathcona County and Elk Island Public Schools jointly funded a project to provide enhanced school bus parking and parent drop-off parking at the Wye School.

This was in response to numerous complaints by both parents and residents about the congestion in front of the school as parents dropped off and picked up their children.

For some time each morning and afternoon, the street was effectively impassable. There were minor collisions as well as serious near-misses that could have killed or injured a child.

Now, two school years later, the situation seems as bad as ever. In spite of the availability of ample parking both

in front of the school and at the local bible chapel, some parents still insist on leaving their vehicles in the middle of the road while they escort their kids the dozen metres to the front door.

Enough is enough. With the changes to Highway 21 and the resulting changes to traffic patterns in the area, we can no longer tolerate this situation. When engineering and education (not to mention common sense) do not accomplish the required results, we are left with enforcement.

This summer and in time for the return to school in September, the west side of the street will be posted as a no parking and no-stopping zone. This will be enforced and fines will be significant.

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## Wye Road Functional Plan

This innocent sounding document has caused many of the residents of Ward 6 and Ward 3 a great deal of unnecessary anguish and heartburn.

A no doubt well-meaning, but ill-informed private individual circulated a note announcing a number of radical and imminent changes affecting the Wye Road and Range Roads 232 and 233. Here is the real story:

In the 2008 budget year, funds are approved for the construction of a “jughandle”(essentially a bypass around an intersection) between Wye Road and Range Road on the east side.

Its purpose is to relieve traffic congestion at Sherwood Drive and Wye. Its installation at this time is related to the South Wye Commercial/ Residential development currently under construction.

At the same time, Wye Road is to be widened to six lanes from Sherwood Drive to Ash Street.

Funds approved in previous budgets are to pay for construction of various improvements to Range Road 233 including widening, roundabout traffic control and bike/pedestrian paths. Some of this work is underway now; the rest will be completed over the next few years.

Council has approved no other roadwork in the area nor have funds been provided.

The functional plan displayed on the County web page is a long-term “what-if” document intended to illustrate possibilities should certain scenarios materialise in the future.

These would have to result in massive development further east and a large increase in traffic count on Wye Road.

Could it happen? Anything is possible in 10 or 20 years’ time, but there would have to be a huge amount of public discussion together with a large influx of funding beforehand.

Above all, it would be necessary to convince Council that it would be a good idea. That would be the hard part.

I have often opposed the creation of high-speed connector highways through this community and shall continue to do so. I believe that many on Council are of a similar mind.

The moral of the story is not to believe everything you find tucked into your mailbox, at least not without checking with reliable sources.

## 500 kV power line:

### possible route through Ward 6

In June we had yet another visit from the Alberta Electrical System Operator (AESO), who would like to run a 500 kV power line along Highway 216 west of Fountain Creek in the Transportation and Utility Corridor (TUC).

The main reason for their visit, however, was to discuss the “other” high voltage power line – that running from central Alberta to the Calgary area. This too could wend its way through Strathcona County.

The idea would be to export power from the Fort McMurray area and the Industrial Heartland, south to Calgary.

AESO were never able to satisfactorily explain why we needed one line to provide power to the north and another line to export power to the south.

It makes one think that they’ve not really thought this out that well. In any event, we are down to two possible routes for the line to the north: beside Fountain Creek or west of Edmonton.

Turnout for the meeting was impressive. I publicly repeated my position that I oppose this line.

A long line of speakers said much the same thing including David Quest, our MLA. It was pleasant to renew acquaintances with a few of my long-term colleagues from the electrical power industry, though we are decidedly on different sides of the fence on this issue.

A group of residents opposing this project is being formed. Anyone wishing to join, help or be added to the mailing list is welcome to contact me and I shall put you in touch with the organizers.

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## Open houses—Weight restriction and road ban bylaw

Weight Restriction and Road Ban Bylaw 13-2008 is for the purpose of restricting the weight of commercial vehicles and goods being carried by commercial vehicles on Strathcona County’s highways.

Commercial truckers hauling in Strathcona County may need a permit.

To find out more about this bylaw and commercial trucking permits, attend an open house!

Ardrossan Memorial Hall	4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, August 12, 2008
Partridge Hill Hall	4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, August 13, 2008
Strathcona Olympiette Centre:	4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m., Thursday, August 21, 2008

## Highway 21 update

Ward 8 Councillor Peter Wlodarczak and I met with provincial officials at the beginning of July for an update of this project.

Some rework of the road grade is required because of the time elapsed since the first efforts two years ago. Expect to see and hear the buggies rolling by the time you read this.

This is part of Phase 2 of the project, which will see the completion of the section from Highway 16 to Highway 628 (the Whitemud extension).

There will be new traffic lights at Highway 628 and Lakeland Drive in addition to those already installed at Wye Road and Baseline Road. The access to Ranchlands will be kept and properly signed and illuminated with access both north and south on Highway 21. Similarly, the access at Country Club Estates will be maintained.

All other accesses to Highway 21 will be eliminated with service roads provided for sections north of Baseline, south of Ranchlands and at various points south of Wye to compensate.

The bridge at Highway 16 is complete, as are any required modifications to the CN crossing. Highway 628 will be twinned for a short distance west of Highway 21 as part of the intersection upgrade. This will include improved access and parking for the Highway 21 Park/Off-Leash area.

Noise remains an outstanding issue, perhaps more for Ward 4 and Ward 8 residents but also for some Ward 6 folks. Alberta Infrastructure & Transportation (AIT) are confident that the 65 DbA sound levels will not be exceeded;

however, they remain committed to monitoring the situation.

One solution could be to reduce the speed limit on the section from Baseline Road to Wye Road, some of which is already at 70 km/h. Councillor Wlodarczak, Councillor Jason Garipey and I intend to pursue this option by lobbying the provincial government without awaiting the results of the sound study.

A speed limit reduction would be useful for safety reasons in any event. Dave Quest, our newly elected provincial MLA for the area, hosted the meeting with AIT and continues to be very supportive of our position on this issue.

The entire project is to be completed by October 15, 2009 barring disasters. No details as to milestone dates between now and then were available at the time of writing.

There are no immediate plans to continue twinning south of Highway 628 in the near future, as the current traffic counts do not warrant the cost.

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## Wastewater service

Bringing municipal wastewater collection servicing to existing Country Residential subdivisions is an important step towards protecting public health and the integrity of the groundwater over the long term.

The health and environmental benefits of the Country Residential Septic Tank Effluent Pumping (STEP) system are strong; however, the project continues to be challenged and delayed by the financial component. I have requested that Council consider subsidization for this project to mitigate the financial challenges and I will continue to work with my colleagues to see what may transpire.

In the meantime, County staff will commence with an information campaign, beginning in the Bailey’s Subdivision this summer/fall, to assist residents with understanding the proposed wastewater system, the health/environmental benefits, and the financial aspects.