

Ward 4 update

November 2006

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From your councillor



Councillor Peter Wlodarczak

The Municipal Development Plan is still a work in progress. At this time, there are three areas designated as potential new population centres, but no final decision has been made. The selection of a new population centre has become somewhat of a focal point in the community.

Council has asked for an independent review of administration's recommendations and the Design Centre for Sustainability at the University of British Columbia has been requested to provide a terms of reference for a study. At this time no decision has yet been made on whether this study will proceed.

Two years have now passed in my term as Councillor, and as I have commented before, it's been a time of learning, experiencing and understanding. The words "time flies" certainly are most appropriate. I have learned a lot in two years, not only about the County, its administration and the Municipal Government Act, but also about myself.

Though our Oath of Office says that we have to act for the greater good of the entire County, I still feel that one of my prime functions as a Councillor is to serve the Ward residents and that is where a large part of my work lies.

Come next, August, we will be hosting the Western Canada Summer

I hope that you all have had a great and restful summer. I do not know where summer went and now we are anticipating another winter.

Winter in all its glory conjures up images of children riding on sleighs, people skating on the pond. Yet there is also the reality of snow, ice and cold. Even though that snow, ice and cold will come, I am comforted by the words of the poet Shelley in his poem "Ode to the West Wind," when he said "O wind if Winter comes can Spring be far behind?"

In regards to snow, I certainly hope that our snowfall does not come all at once like it did last year.

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Ward 4 update

News for Ward 4

From your Councillor, continued from page 1

Games, with 2,300 athletes and coaches in attendance. There will also be a cultural component to the Games. This will be a very exciting time for our community and we have a chance to showcase ourselves.

The Games office is gearing up and I know that they need quite a number of volunteers. If you are interested, check out their web site at www.2007.westerncanadasummertimegames.ca.

In the coming year, no doubt we will face challenges. I will do my best to meet those challenges. I have come to learn that there are always going to be conflicting views out there in the community and therein lies the challenge. I will however definitely always make every effort do my best for you, the residents of Ward 4, and for the County as a whole. May God bless Strathcona County.



Community Energy System starts operation soon

Construction on the Community Energy Centre is moving ahead. The Centre has been designed and constructed to the LEED Silver (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standard.

Late this month, the County will begin the LEED certification process. Final certification is expected in 2007. It will be the first LEED-certified building in Strathcona County.

The first building to receive heat from the energy system will be County Hall. The next customers to be connected will be Festival Place, the Kinsmen Leisure Centre, the Sherwood Park Arena and recreation offices.

In November, the system will begin providing heat to Festival Estates and Park Vista, the residential buildings under construction by Christenson Developments in Centre in the Park.

Construction of the Community Energy Centre building is expected to be completed in January 2007.

The community energy system will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by an estimated 18 per cent or 1,100 tonnes per year. It will be operated as a utility, so that all capital and operating costs are paid by users.



The Community Energy Centre building, east of Sherwood Drive across from County Hall.

The biggest concern — traffic

By far the largest concern I deal with is traffic as it relates to speed and driver attitude.

Residents from all areas of the ward express great concern over how fast some people drive, not only in the residential areas but also on the major roads. I have written on this in past newsletters and in the Councillor Comment articles appearing in The

Sherwood Park News where I have asked for people to really consider their driving habits.

I know that a large part of the residents do drive prudently and obey the law. There are though a number of people, who for reasons best known to them, appear to ignore the traffic laws.

To those who drive too fast, I would ask that you please stop and think

about your neighbours and their children and slow down.

I am positive no one leaves their home and plans to get into a catastrophic collision with some one or some thing. Yet if you persist in driving showing no regard for the law, yourself or your neighbours, that day will come. I urge you to please slow down.

Traffic Safety Committee

In my last newsletter, you will remember I commented on the structure and work of the Traffic Safety Committee. I am a member of this committee and we have been examining a broad range of issues in regards to traffic safety in the County. The Committee made its final presentation to Council on October 17, 2006.

The report is comprehensive and covers a large range of issues in three areas: education, engineering and enforcement. Though the report is a bit long, I would urge everyone to read it so you can gain a good understanding of its content.

Transportation

Lakeland Drive

The extension of Lakeland Drive, from Clover Bar Road/Davenport Drive, to Clarkdale Drive has been a longstanding issue for me. Clarkdale Meadows desperately needs a northern exit to relieve pressure on Meadowview Drive.

I feel Lakeland Drive should have been put in place before northern Clarkdale was built out. At a recent Council budget meeting, it was established that Lakeland Drive from Davenport Drive to Clarkdale Drive will absolutely be built in 2007. I am pleased to see this finally will occur and development of this road will be welcomed by all.

Clover Bar Road

As you probably know, the north end of Clover Bar Road is seeing a lot of new construction and development. Very soon, we will see considerable population in that area.

The twinning of Clover Bar Road is planned for 2007, from the Trillium School at Crimson and Dawson to close proximity to the Clover Bar overpass.

It is not solely focused on one issue but is designed to meet a variety of needs. The report can be viewed on the County website at www.strathcona.ab.ca.

The Committee has worked long and hard in finalizing our recommendations and if they are accepted, the Committee looks forward to many positive changes. This will not be a quick fix and it will take a considerable period of time to change habits and attitudes. The Committee has, though, recognized the need for some short-term successes.

I would encourage you to read the report.

This will be a welcome addition and will allow a freer flow of traffic in that area.

Highway 16 - Yellowhead Highway

As you have probably observed, the renovations to Broadmoor Boulevard overpass, the Sherwood Drive exit and Clover Bar Road overpass are moving along. It may appear somewhat slow in coming to completion but that is a matter in the hands of the Province and the contractor. The changes at Clover Bar Road will be welcomed greatly when they are complete.

The only information I have at the time of this writing is that it is to be completed this year. The twin exit lanes, as well as the longer approach to the exit, should help immensely in dealing with the traffic tie ups, especially at rush hour. I also notice that all the changes to the drainage have already improved the situation greatly. I very seldom see water on the road and the recent curbs placed beneath the overpass and all the other changes will hopefully rectify the water problem once and for all.

New ward boundaries being considered

Shortly before a municipal election, it is customary to review the boundaries of the wards.

For the democratic process to be fair, the value of each vote should be about the same for all areas of the municipality. Current guidelines require that the population of a ward be no more than 25 per cent greater or less than average for the municipality.

As a result of the rapid growth of Sherwood Park, we are now well outside these limits. Administration has brought forward a number of possible solutions to this problem and Council has supported a proposal to readjust boundaries and add one new ward in the urban service area of Sherwood Park.

The new Ward 8 would include areas currently in Ward 4, north of Baseline Road.

This would create a nine-member Council (eight councillors plus the mayor) rather than the seven we have now.

The adoption of this proposal would meet the requirement in the Municipal Government Act for an odd-numbered council.

The proposal has been advertised for comment by the public before a final decision later in the year. You can find more information, including the proposed new wards, at www.strathcona.ab.ca.

The ward boundary changes would take effect for the next municipal election in October 2007.

Safety reminder

Construction is underway to twin Highway 21 from Highway 628 to south of Highway 16.

Please slow down and observe the reduced speed limits through the construction zone.

Hospital update

Capital Health continues its work on plans for Strathcona County's hospital.

One major decision is the selection of a site, with two possible locations under consideration. One is south of Highway 16 and east of Clover Bar Road. The second is a 20-acre site west of Sherwood Drive and north and west of the RCMP detachment.

A consultant for Capital Health is doing an environmental study on the proposed sites. They are also looking at servicing issues related to both sites. They have requested and received a variety of information from the County. We have been told a decision on the site will be announced in November.

Silver Birch Lodge

To meet the growing need in our community for seniors' housing, Pioneer Housing Foundation is proposing an expansion to Silver Birch Lodge, the 100-room building near the RCMP station on Bison Way.

Preliminary plans are to add 41 rooms, along with 40 apartment suites in a new building on the site. A new designated assisted living section would be created. Support services for the complex including laundry, a staff room and maintenance, would be consolidated in a single area.

Flush away the water waster

Winter is coming and you know what that can mean - home renovations! If bathroom renovations are on your list, why not replace that high-flush toilet with a low-flush model.

Not only is it better for the environment, it can save money for you.

Strathcona County Utilities is offering a \$50 rebate to residents who replace their 13-litre per flush (or greater) toilet with a dual flush or a six-litre per flush toilet.

Application forms and full details are available at County Hall, on the County website, or can be mailed to you upon request. Visit www.strathcona.ab.ca/utilities or call 467-7785.

Municipal Development Plan Review



Municipal Development Plan

For almost two years, Strathcona County has been carrying out a comprehensive review and update of our Municipal Development Plan. An important part of this process has been public involvement, encouraging residents to review information and provide their input.

Most recently, we held a series of open houses in September and invited comment on Draft 2 of the Municipal Development Plan.

Work is underway to complete revisions so the draft can be presented to County Council for consideration later this year. As part of Council's deliberations on the new plan, a public hearing will be held on November 28.

Solid Waste Management Plan

A number of people have commented to me on our recycling programs as well as the recycling site. From those comments, it is clear there is some will to expand the recycling program to include a curbside pick up. County administration is at the present time conducting a review of our solid waste management program.

Though not limited to these, some of the options the County is looking at are such things as roll-out carts and blue bag recycling. There are other broader issues involved such as landfills.

This report is due to be presented to Council some time this year and I am sure that it will receive some publicity in the local papers. Once presented, the report will be posted on the County website. I encourage you to watch for information later this year.

These plans are based on the idea of aging in place. This simply means providing different types of housing and different levels of care within the same complex. The benefit for residents is that as they require additional care, they can access those services while remaining in the same familiar surroundings.

County Council has provided a letter of support for this project on condition of the financial feasibility of the project, and on Pioneer Housing Foundation's securing of funding.

Raising funds for the Library: Councillor Wlodarczak, left, with Library volunteer Helen Lavender and Councillor Brent Jewell at the October 14 Nylons' concert at Festival Place.

