

# Ward 4 update

May 2006

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## From your councillor



Councillor Peter Wlodarczak

### Hello Ward 4 residents.

It wasn't long ago that we were struggling with the snowfall and the consequent struggle on our roadways. This was a very difficult time for you, and I am aware of many of your frustrations. Though it probably seemed painfully slow to you, our Transportation Department was working flat-out to try to remedy the matter and overall, I think they did an excellent job. I would like to thank all residents for their patience, courtesy and understanding during this difficult period.

The passage of time has been a great teacher and I think my learning curve

is now a lot shallower. Nevertheless, I and Council still face many decisions that pose challenges. Not challenges in the sense that you are not informed, but challenges in the sense that you have to balance your decision for the greater good of the community and the wishes of the residents.

When I sat from afar and pontificated on Council decisions, I was pretty smart. When it comes to making the decisions, the challenges of self are very difficult. I have agonized over many decisions as I am acutely aware that the decisions we make do affect a lot of people.

Very soon, Council will face a decision on the proposed Municipal Development Plan. Such a broad-reaching document of course has the potential to affect many, many people.

Perhaps one of the major components of that decision-making process is where the next population centre will be. As of now, the first draft of the plan indicates that it will be in the Colchester area, in the southwest portion of the County.

This proposed growth area has the potential to see as many as 75,000 people residing there with the passage of time. I have attended a considerable number of open houses on this matter and the comments from many of the people reveal at times, far different opinions than what is proposed.

## Peter Wlodarczak Councillor, Ward 4

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# Strathcona County

www.strathcona.ab.ca

From your Councillor, continued from page 1

I believe that we live in a wonderful community that is blessed in many ways. In my mind, it is the people and the effort that they make, that is perhaps the single biggest reason that makes our community that great.

I look around and see the amazing number of volunteers we have who impact our community so greatly. I think of all the service organizations, the support organizations, the schools and the churches that build and define the fabric of our community.

We do, though, face challenges. In facing those challenges we must all show resolve and strive ever forward to meet those challenges head on. The honour to serve you is mine.

Please be assured that I will strive at all times, to serve you to the best degree possible.

May God bless Strathcona County.



## Community Centre proposed for Centre in the Park

The Centre in the Park project is moving along nicely with residential buildings and work on the community energy system that will serve new and existing buildings in the area.

Centre in the Park is a multi-use area being developed over the next five to seven years. It will include residential buildings, retail services, walkways, a central plaza and public spaces.

You may have heard about another component that is proposed for the project—the Community Centre. This would include indoor and outdoor spaces that could house the library, Council Chambers, some County services, and multi-use space that would be available to community groups.

The project would also include an agora, an open space that could be used for a variety of public gatherings, exhibitions and events.

At this point, Council has not decided to proceed with the Community Centre. Information is still being gathered, including cost estimates.

The cost of the project would be significant. One option we might consider is fast-tracking the project, completing it in three to four years rather than over a more extended period. This would curtail inflationary costs, which could be significant.

This proposal would require no municipal tax-supported debt to finance the project. Notwithstanding, the monies that would be spent are taxpayer dollars.

I am writing about this because I would like to hear your comments.

Your feedback is important; please let me know what you think.

## Strathcona Industrial Association Update Line: 1-866-653-9959

If you're wondering about unusual activity at the major industrial facilities near Sherwood Park, here's a number to keep handy:

 **UPDATEline**  
1-866-653-9959

It's a 24-hour telephone line set up by companies who are members of the Strathcona Industrial Association. The companies post information on the line about non-routine activity on their sites—for example, flaring, noises, odours, or alarms.

If the information you need is not on the line, existing contacts remain:

- 1-800-222-6514 to contact Alberta Environment
- 911 for emergencies
- 429-CAER (2237) to contact SIA member companies

## Highway 16 upgrades

The intersections on Highway 16 have been a source of frustration for some time. We have just received news of some construction that will take place this summer, to alleviate some of the concerns.

As you are likely aware, the highway is a Provincial responsibility. The contract has been tendered, and construction will take place from May until October. I am sure the changes will be well received. The following will occur:

### Broadmoor Boulevard

- Upgrade the eastbound roadway from two lanes to four lanes from Highway 216 to the on ramp to Broadmoor Boulevard
- Upgrade ramp interchange to include 2 exit lanes on the loop ramp.
- Improve the ramp intersection north of Highway 16 to include a bypass lane and signals.
- Upgrade the eastbound roadway from two lanes to three lanes from

Broadmoor Boulevard to east of Sherwood Drive.

### Sherwood Drive

- Upgrade the on and off ramps by lengthening the tapers.

### Clover Bar Road

- Upgrade the interchange by lengthening the tapers and providing a deceleration lane prior to the loops ramp.
- Improve the ramp intersection south of Highway 16 to include double left turn lanes with signals.
- Improve drainage under Clover Bar Road as well as creek improvements downstream to alleviate ponding water and flooding.

### Lakeland Drive

In my last newsletter, I commented on the need to have Lakeland Drive extended to meet Clarkdale Drive to provide some relief to the southern exits of Clarkdale Meadows.

I brought this matter up during budget discussions, and based on budgetary needs and the greater needs of other road works, I allowed this matter to fall from the budget.

One of the problems the County is facing in completing roads is the escalating costs. Last year projects had to be cancelled at the tendering stage, owing to cost factors. This year, to avoid inflationary costs, Council has approved funding for the entire Lakeland Drive and it will be tendered as one package.

The timeline for construction is:

- 2006: Broadmoor Drive (near Millennium Place) to Sherwood Drive
- 2007: Clover Bar Road to Highway 21
- 2008: Sherwood Drive to Clover Bar Road

During the budget debate this year, I will solidify the construction of Lakeland Drive from Davenport Drive, to at least Clarkdale Drive, to ensure a northern access/exit point.

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## Hospital proceeding, location to be determined by Capital Health

As you are aware, the hospital will be going ahead. The anticipated construction completion date is late 2008 or early 2009.

An issue that I have responded to residents on has been its location. Some time ago, the County offered the plot of land on Sherwood Drive, just north of the RCMP detachment, at a \$1 per year lease. This is the land where the proposed Lakeland College was to have gone.

Some residents felt that Council was choosing the location of the hospital. That is not correct. We offered the land in order to ease the cost of land for the hospital. In that way, the maximum

dollars could be put into hospital development.

However, County Council has no authority at all to decide where the hospital should be located. The decision rests solely with the Capital Health Authority. They are presently engaging an architect, and a "hospital footprint" will be determined.

Once that is done, Capital Health will, I presume, proceed on the design of the hospital and make a choice as to where it will be built. At this time neither administration nor Council has any information as to where it will be built.

## Library's 2006 Water Garden Tour

Sunday, July 9: that's the date for the Sixth Annual Water Garden Tour, hosted by the Friends of Strathcona County Library.

This self-guided tour of local area water gardens is one of the library's most successful projects, raising over \$7,000 last year.

For only \$10, you can visit 10 impressive local gardens where you will be able to pick up many great ideas, or simply enjoy the beauty of these special sites.

Tickets go on sale at the Library in May. This event is co-sponsored by Aqualine Waterfeatures and Salisbury Greenhouses. Volunteers are always needed and receive free passes to the tour. For information about tickets or volunteering, call Joan at the Library, 449-5812.

## Taxes

### 93 per cent collected by federal and provincial governments

I and all other councillors often receive comments about the need to ensure we hold the line on tax increases. As a municipality, our ability to obtain revenue depends to a great extent on our ability to tax.

Considering all levels and forms of taxation, the federal and provincial governments collect 93 per cent of all tax revenue!

Municipalities are very restricted in their ability to tax—and as a result, we receive only 7 per cent of all taxes collected.

Yet it is widely acknowledged that municipalities need more resources to deliver services to their citizens.

Both the federal and provincial governments have provided tax dollars, through GST rebates, and the rebate on gasoline tax as well as infrastructure funds from the Alberta government.

This is a start and municipalities are very appreciative, but there is still a long way to go. Municipalities have a need to be fiscally sound and with ongoing deliberations with other levels of government, we hope we will be heard.

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## Sump pump retrofit continues

This season, work will continue on the sump pump retrofit program. Approximately 134 houses are scheduled for retrofitting in Ward 4 in 2006. Work will continue as it can be scheduled starting in the spring.

Residents scheduled for retrofit will receive further information in the mail before the work begins. Detailed retrofit maps are on our website at [www.strathcona.ab.ca/utilities](http://www.strathcona.ab.ca/utilities).

The retrofit is an underground piping system that collects water released from your sump pump, and directs it into the stormwater drainage system. This will minimize the risk of basement flooding, and help eliminate algae on the sidewalks in the summer and ice on sidewalks in the winter caused by sump pump discharge.

If your home has problems with sump pump discharge and your area is not immediately scheduled for work, staff is available to inspect your lot, and discuss recommendations with you on how to improve drainage.

For further information, call 467-7785, or e-mail [drainage@strathcona.ab.ca](mailto:drainage@strathcona.ab.ca).

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## Traffic Safety Committee

I receive a large number of calls from the residents on traffic issues within the ward. The other urban councillors also receive many calls on traffic-related issues.

I and the other councillors are acutely aware of the concerns that residents express regarding road safety in the neighbourhoods.

Since my last newsletter, the Traffic Safety Committee has been meeting regularly. We have had presentations from various experts on traffic topics as well as presentations from County engineering and the RCMP.

The Committee is looking at all aspects of traffic safety throughout all areas of the County. It is premature to comment on where we stand and what we have achieved, as nothing has been finalized yet. I can assure you that we are delving into all aspects and we feel we will make strides towards enhancing traffic safety throughout the community.

The Committee has to have an interim report to Council by the end of June with a final report by October 24. In this fashion, the recommendations made can be considered for the 2007 budget year.

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## Can grass get any greener?

As you care for your yard, Strathcona County Utilities offers two suggestions to help care for the environment.

One is to put your grass clippings and leaves in clear plastic bags, and leave them out with your garbage on collection day.

Grass clippings and leaves make up almost 12 per cent of the materials Strathcona County residents put out for weekly waste collection. That's enough to fill four indoor soccer pitches or hockey rinks to the top

of the boards! The grass clippings and leaves are taken to the City of Edmonton's Regional co-composter to be composted instead of going to the landfill.

An alternative to raking and collecting your grass clippings is to grasscycle—simply leaving your clippings on your lawn as you mow. They usually decompose within a few days and act as a natural fertilizer to the soil. Grasscycling is a natural process that saves time and money!

## Safety Corner

- Thousands of lawnmower injuries occur annually, many involving children. Children under 14 are at the greatest risk of injury and children under the age of six have the greatest risk of death. Most injuries occur from direct contact of the spinning blade with the child's body.
  - If your teenager is starting a new job, make sure they ask for and receive appropriate safety training. Canadian statistics show that one in seven young workers is injured on the job. Remind your teen that they have the right to refuse unsafe work.
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