

FEBRUARY 26TH COUNCIL UPDATE

- **DIVISION 5 APPLICATION HELD AT SECOND READING**
- **DIVISION 4 APPLICATION APPROVED AFTER LIMITED SCOPE HEARING**
 - **SOLAR FARM GIVEN THIRD READING**
 - **BEARSPAW'S INDIGO HILLS GIVEN THIRD READING**
 - **INTERNET SERVICING MOTION FUNDING APPROVED**
- **RECENTLY APPROVED FIREARMS BYLAW SLATED FOR REVIEW**
- **AIRDRIE RCMP DETACHMENT ENHANCED POLICING POSITION APPROVED**
- **COUNTY PLAN RECEIVES BUDGET ADJUSTMENT OF \$150,000 FOR TARGETED REVIEW**
- **NOTICE OF MOTION TO DISPOSE OF MUNICIPAL RESERVE LANDS IN SPRINGBANK**

DIVISION 5 APPLICATION HELD AT SECOND READING

An application to redesignate a 7-acre parcel in Division 5 was held at second reading in a 6-3 decision. Reeve Boehlke, Kissel and I were the opposition.

The proposal sought to change the lands from Farmstead to Business-Industrial Campus (5-acres) and R1 (2-acres). The lands are not located in an Area Structure Plan and the intended use contravenes the Interim Growth Management Plan and the Municipal Government Act. Administration found the application non-compliant with policy.

For the past six years, the applicant had been operating his truck trailer storage company on the subject lands as a home-based business. However, the expansion of the operation meant that it no longer met the criteria of that designation. It was noted that there were lands available in both the Balzac East ASP and the OMNI ASP (both minutes away from the property) that would allow for this type of operation.

The applicant's neighbour spoke in opposition to the application. They had no objection to the home-based business, as it was approved in 2016, but felt the recent expansion had dramatically impacted the look and feel of the parcel and was negatively impacting the enjoyment of their own property. Aerial photographs supported this claim.

Local Councillor Jerry Gautreau felt that the Business-Industrial Campus was difficult to justify in what is a predominantly agricultural and residential area. He, therefore, proposed to create a temporary land-use. His motion directed Administration to prepare an amendment to the bylaw that is site-specific and has a time limit. At the end of that limit, the lands will return to the Farmstead designation.

Throughout the debate, there was much discussion about the need to create a live/work bylaw that would allow these types of businesses to exist. This may be true but changing policy on the fly is not good governance in my books, nor is allowing businesses to operate outside of areas

already designated for such purposes. Lands that are not within identified growth areas do not have to hook into servicing nor do they pay off-site levies. This is unfair to those who play by the rules and purchase lands appropriate for such businesses. Not to mention, the land-use bylaw is currently being reviewed and the County Plan is coming forward for review.

DIVISION 4 APPLICATION APPROVED AFTER LIMITED SCOPE HEARING

Last June, an application came to Council to create 15 lots off Canal Court in Division 4. At that time, Council had asked the applicant to further address concerns with regards to groundwater, road upgrade options, access and ownership arrangements on two of the lots, and the need to undertake further community engagement. As such, the February 26th hearing was limited in scope to the above noted topics.

To address the requirements, the applicant performed an assessment of the existing aquifer and a traffic study. They also held an engagement session that attracted 20 neighbours.

There was some question about upgrading the existing roads that will feed the new development. The applicant's engineer had misunderstood the County's servicing standards and believed the road could remain as a gravel road. However, it was determined that as a condition of subdivision, the applicant will have to upgrade the road to a paved standard. The application was approved unanimously.

SOLAR FARM GIVEN THIRD READING

The application to create a solar farm spanning six quarter-sections in Division 4 was approved unanimously. The application had been held at third reading by Councillor Hanson – he had wanted additional information on how the solar farm would be taxed.

BEARSPAW'S INDIGO HILLS GIVEN THIRD READING

As reported on February 26th, I held the Indigo Hills application at third reading in the hopes that, given the overwhelming surrounding neighbor opposition, my colleagues would give the application some sober second thought. Unfortunately, this was not the case and the application was approved 8-1.

INTERNET SERVICING MOTION FUNDING APPROVED

On January 8, 2019, Council directed Administration to prepare a report that evaluates the activities set out in the High-Speed Internet Provision Notice of Motion and provides an estimate of the resources required to achieve the strategic direction provided by the Notice of Motion. On February 26th, Administration requested \$60,000 to complete the work identified. The Motion passed 7-2 with all in support but Reeve Boehlke and Councillor Kissel.

The breakdown as to how the money will be spent is as follows: Project Consultant \$45,000.00; Research and Reports \$10,000.00; Technical Advisory and Support \$5,000.00. The consultant's report will provide a high-level understanding of the technical and logistical challenges. It will

also provide estimated costs and timelines. Administration had asked for 8 months to complete the work, but Council was emphatic it be done sooner.

RECENTLY APPROVED FIREARMS BYLAW SLATED FOR REVIEW

As mentioned in my last update, Councillors Henn and Schule brought forward a motion to have certain aspects of the Firearms bylaw amended. In specific, they wanted to remove the definition of weapon, bow, and crossbow from the bylaw and replace all references to weapon with the definition of firearm. This would remove the prohibition of the use of bows, crossbows and any other device that propels a projectile in 'No Shooting Zones' within the County.

Administration had indicated that during public engagement sessions, residents had requested the inclusion of bow and crossbow. However, it was determined that public consultation had not been done since 2003.

Many Councillors raised concerns over what constituted a weapon (hockey stick and puck, BB gun, or glass bottle) and stated they had received calls from residents who didn't understand the bylaw. I too, received these calls but once I explained what landowners could and could not do, they seemed satisfied.

When Councillors Schule and Henn were asked why they wanted to remove crossbows and bows specifically, Henn stated he had received calls from residents who had previously lived in the city that moved to country residential R2 parcels so they could enjoy practicing archery on their own lands. Schule felt the bylaw was a "total waste of time". He also believed there were misconceptions about how far a bow could shoot. Both believed provincial and federal regulations were sufficient without a County bylaw.

Councillor McKylor stated that she understood the spirit of the bylaw, she believed it could be better written. As such, she made a motion to have the Firearms bylaw sent to Council's Policy Review Committee. Her motion also required that Administration hold at least one engagement session that could be used as an educational forum, as well as an ability to receive public feedback on the bylaw.

McKylor's motion was approved 7-2, with Reeve Boehlke and Councillor Schule in opposition.

While I don't necessarily believe that a bylaw that was passed less than a year ago should be up for review, I do support making sure that we have wording that is readily understandable, that the correct lands are being identified as 'No Shooting Zones', and that the bylaw accurately conveys its true intent – public safety. I also support going to the public to receive their input. I will keep you posted as information comes available about any public engagement.

AIRDRIE RCMP DETACHMENT ENHANCED POLICING POSITION APPROVED

The County funds enhanced RCMP positions throughout the County. Since 2013, Airdrie's enhanced officer's primary duties have been traffic enforcement and criminal code infractions.

In 2018, the County participated in a pilot project with the City of Airdrie to implement crime reduction strategies and resources through a Crime Reduction Unit (CRU). The project was successful and property crime in the Airdrie detachment area decreased by 24% last year.

The CRU project will now become a committed RCMP program and Airdrie's RCMP Inspector Kim Pasloske wanted to ensure that she had Council's continued support of the program. The CRU is responsible for identifying prolific offenders and crime hot spots; using covert and overt investigative techniques to deter property and drug crime; and, conducting proactive patrols for stolen vehicles.

Council unanimously approved to have the County's RCMP member assigned to the Crime Reduction Unit.

COUNTY PLAN RECEIVES BUDGET ADJUSTMENT OF \$150,000 FOR TARGETED REVIEW

On January 22, Council directed Administration to review and prepare targeted, limited-scope amendments to the County Plan. Based on Administration's current work load, it was determined that a consultant should be retained to prepare the amendments and conduct the public engagement.

It was estimated that the work would take between 9 and 10 months to complete and cost \$85,000 – \$150,000. When I asked what it would cost to perform the comprehensive review, Council was advised between an additional \$250,000 – \$400,000.

It was argued that the results of the targeted review (minor changes to the existing plan) could be reused when the comprehensive review comes forward next year. However, dependent on the results of the comprehensive review, the exact opposite could be true and they could all be discarded.

The motion passed 7-2 with all but Councillors Kissel and I in support. Councillor Kissel believed that the targeted review could be handled by hiring more staff. Given the number of planning documents that are coming forward for review, I share this belief. However, I also believe that spending \$150,000 on a few targeted issues is a colossal waste of tax-payer funds. Instead, these funds should be directed to one comprehensive review.

NOTICE OF MOTION TO DISPOSE OF MUNICIPAL RESERVE LANDS IN SPRINGBANK

A Notice of Motion by Councillors Kamachi and McKylor was proposed to remove the municipal reserve (MR) designation of the Commercial Court Municipal Reserve Parcel in Springbank.

The 4-acre parcel was created in 2004, where it was believed it would be suitable for the future home of the Springbank Community Association. However, modern practices indicate that the parcel will not adequately accommodate both parking and a community centre.

Should the MR designation be removed, and the lands disposed of, the Notice of Motion also states that the County's share of the proceeds be used to acquire a minimum of 14-acres on or near the Range Rd 33 corridor for a future community centre in Springbank. The motion will be debated on March 12th.