



Strathcona County

Living

Keeping you informed May 2010

Message from your Mayor and Council Capital Region Board update

It has been my privilege over the past 18 months to work alongside the mayors and reeves from 24 surrounding municipalities to develop a long-range growth management plan for the region. I would especially like to thank my colleagues - Councillor Peter Wlodarczyk, who acted as my alternate, as well as Councillors Alan Dunn and Roxanne Carr – for all their hard work on this plan.

Our efforts were validated in March, when Premier Stelmach accepted the Capital Region Growth Plan. In a news release announcing formal acceptance of the plan, Premier Stelmach said, “I expect the Capital Region will become known in Canada for smart development, planned growth, and a greener, more coordinated approach to land use.”

The plan was built on two principles very closely aligned with the County’s Strategic Plan:

- Reduce the development footprint by focusing growth in priority areas, and
- Create a region that will be economically, socially and environmentally sustainable into the future.

The most significant work focused on the future growth of the region and the development of a land use plan. We addressed key questions on the location of growth, population densities, employment centres, housing, transportation and transit links, buffers and environmental areas.

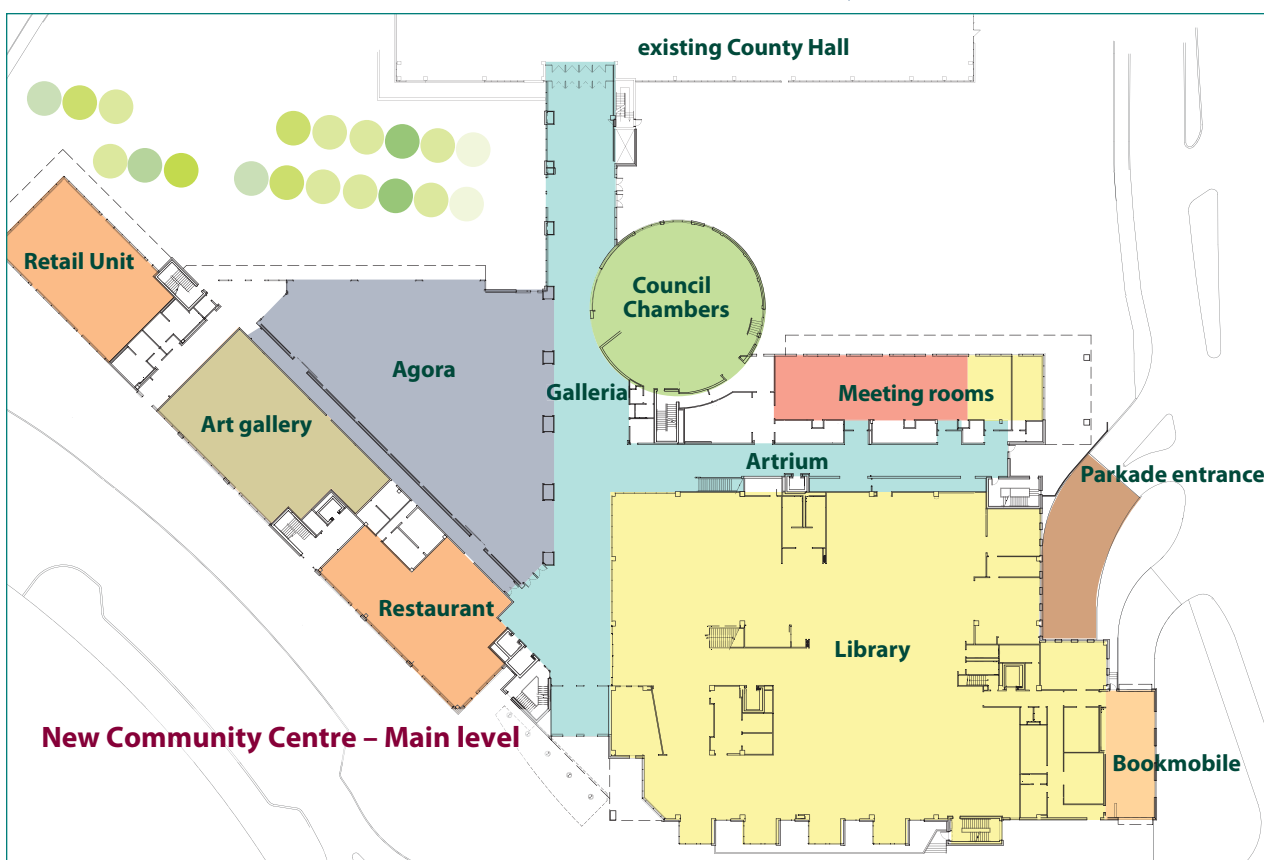
The recommendations of the Capital Region Board align very well with decisions made by our Council three years ago, when we approved our new Municipal Development Plan. The

principles on which the regional plan was built and the direction that has been approved are also remarkably consistent with the feedback we received from County residents, businesses and community groups during the preparation of our own land use plan. It was gratifying to receive this validation of our efforts.

Industry has been a significant contributor to our quality of life in Strathcona County and the Capital Region Board recognized the importance of our industrial partners, and specifically the Heartland initiative, to the economic prosperity of the region, Alberta and Canada. The continued development of the Heartland was also identified as a priority in the plan.

—Cathy Olesen, Mayor

Environmental features key aspect of new community centre



From a rooftop rainwater collection system, to reams of rebar made of recycled steel, and an indoor lighting system that adjusts to sunlight, Strathcona County has raised the bar again when constructing the Community Centre.

In fact, the environmental features incorporated into our new Community Centre will put the project on an exclusive list for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED).

Building an environmentally sustainable

structure that earns LEED status is an exacting science. As Project Manager Colin Roggeveen explains, LEED is a building measurement tool with four levels – Certified, Silver, Gold and Platinum. Strathcona County has designed the Community Centre targeting a Gold certification, and when it’s finished, the Green Building Council will judge whether it has met that LEED level or another one.

But because it’s been designed under LEED standards, regardless of the eventual stamp it

receives, the Community Centre will have a host of innovative features that will encourage energy savings, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and make the building a comfortable, healthy workplace.

Community Energy System

The Community Energy System is a core component of the Centre in the Park, with the Community Centre being the largest building in its loop. The system’s heart is a heating plant, located across from County Hall. The system has been up and running for three full years, and has proven effective as envisioned.

It has high-efficiency boilers that heat hot water, which is pumped through a series of insulated pipes to the new condominiums in the Centre in the Park, as well as Festival Place, the Sherwood Park Arena, the Kinsmen Leisure Centre, County Hall and, now, the under construction Community Centre, which includes the new library.

Benefits of the system include saved energy costs, conserved resources and reduced pollution. Buildings served by the Community Energy System convert fuel at 80 per-cent efficiency, helping to reduce the emissions profile of these buildings.

Built-in energy efficiency

The Community Centre’s energy efficiencies are based on an energy model program for the whole building. Roggeveen says the comprehensive

...continued on page 2

...continued from page 1

Environmental features key aspect of new community centre

energy model indicates the centre will be 33 per cent more efficient than the standards set out in the Model National Energy Code for Canadian Buildings. Features boosting the centre's energy efficiency include an upgraded chilling system, a revolutionary lighting system and, of course, its zero-emitting heating system.

Construction – Recycled content and recycling waste materials

Recycling is the key to many of the environmentally sustainable elements incorporated into construction of the Community Centre.

A significant amount of recycled content is going into construction of the centre according to Roggeveen, starting with fly ash in the concrete mixture. Fly ash is a by-product of coal production that normally heads to landfill. Concrete suppliers have discovered that fly ash can reduce the amount of cement powder required in their mixtures. Given that the process to make cement takes a lot of heat, using fly ash supports the environment from an energy use perspective as well.

The structure's rebar also uses 100 per cent recycled steel. Roggeveen says 1,250 tonnes of recycled steel – equivalent to 700 cars – has gone into the Community Centre.

LEED processes encourage the use of regional materials. Strathcona County did not have far to look – the fly ash came from Wabamun and the nearby Stelco plant supplied the steel.

Waste diversion is another important aspect of the construction. County contractors collect and sort all waste on site, with bins available for wood, drywall, metal, plastics and other materials. Once full, these bins are transported to recyclers for reuse. Through this successful program, the County is able to direct 81 per cent of all construction waste material to recycling, leaving just 19 per cent headed to landfill.

Moving forward, a centralized recycling room will allow staff and tenants to continue to collect and sort waste materials on site.

Underground rain barrels

Raindrops falling on the roof of the Community Centre will gather and flow into two tanks located under the parkade, to be filtered and treated for use as grey water in the building and on the grounds. In addition to collecting rainwater, the entire Centre in the Park project has been landscaped to take advantage of rainwater and reduce the need to water vegetation. Drought-resistant trees and shrubs have been planted, and a waterline from Broadmoor Lake will siphon water from the lake to irrigate the area, further reducing the amount of potable water used for that purpose.

Light pollution – Don't beam me up

LEED standards include design features extending beyond the normal understanding of environmentally sustainable. One such factor is light pollution control – the Community Centre is designed to reduce the amount of light spilling off its site, with no upward facing lights and a specific light boundary.

Revolutionary “smart lighting”

In designing a multi-purpose building, which includes municipal offices, council chambers, a library, public meeting space and art gallery, the County opted to install a smart lighting system.



Agora: artist's rendering (above), under construction (below)



This Encilium lighting system is multi-functional in the following ways:

- The County can program lights on and off at certain times
- Movement sensors turn lights on only when they're needed
- A daylight harvesting feature sees sensors gauge the amount of ambient light in the building and adjust internal lights accordingly
- Employees can control the ambient light in their offices with a computerized program

The building has also been designed to capture plenty of natural light through skylights and large windows. Offices are located to give employees windows to the outside or near the interior skylights.

“As the sun rises and comes into the building, the lights will dim and provide consistent light throughout the day,” says Roggeveen. “The Encilium system makes sense from a healthy workplace aspect, and its efficiencies will pay for the initial investment in three years.”

Indoor environment – healthy workplace

When designing the Community Centre, the County also wanted to ensure a workplace with a safe and healthy environment. To that end, Roggeveen says low- or zero-emitting natural materials will be installed throughout the building, such as carpets and paints that don't give off volatile organic compounds. The building also has an internal air quality management plan incorporated at the construction stage. It will include starting up all mechanical systems prior to occupancy to flush contaminants from the building.

Buses, bikes and hybrids

The County is providing incentives to carpool or drive hybrid vehicles to encourage residents to reduce their reliance on single occupancy vehicles. For instance, prime parking stalls will be provided for staff carpooling and for staff and visitors driving hybrid vehicles. A secure bike storage room will also make it easier for employees to cycle to work. Plans are also in the works to locate transit stops close to the Community Centre to encourage people to hop the bus downtown.

More information on the Community Centre and Centre in the Park is at www.strathcona.ca.

Dry conditions lead to early fire ban

In early April, Strathcona County Emergency Services (SCES) issued a County-wide fire ban. Bans are issued based on a number of factors, including:

- Levels of recent and total precipitation
- The risk of a fire burning out of control
- Analysis of weather-related factors, such as temperature and humidity
- Water restrictions or bans
- Ongoing assessment of available staffing and equipment resources due to other fires being fought in the County or region

During a fire ban, no outdoor fires are permitted. This includes using charcoal briquettes, burn barrels and outdoor recreational fire pits. Propane and natural gas-fuelled appliances, such as barbecues, are permitted. Fire permits and fireworks permits are temporarily suspended and no new permits will be issued until the fire ban is lifted. Any person found in violation of the ban can be fined up to \$1,000 and be responsible for fire fighting costs in the event the fire gets out of control.

When the ban is lifted, please use extreme caution when burning. Fires that require a permit include open fires in rural areas (grass or brush) and incinerator fires in rural areas (burn barrels). Stubble burning and ground-thaw burning are rarely allowed. Permits can be obtained for free online at www.strathcona.ca/sces, and at Fire Stations 1, 2, 3, and 4 (times may vary – phone 780-467-5216 for more information).

Fires that do not require burn permits include recreational fires such as fire pots and pits and smudge fires on rural property two acres or larger.

Before you burn, make sure to have an adequate water supply on hand to extinguish the blaze, ensure that an adult is in attendance at all times and that the fire is a safe distance away from any combustibles (eg. a recreational fire needs to be a minimum of three metres away from a tree/fence/deck. A much larger combustible-free area is needed for open fires.)

SCES, Shell and Partners in Protection hosted three free FireSmart information sessions this spring. Participants learned how to help reduce the risk of wildfire spreading to their home. To obtain an information booklet about FireSmart, visit any of the Fire Stations, phone 780-467-5216 and ask for one to be mailed to you, or go to www.partnersinprotection.ab.ca.



Does your organics or waste cart need repair?

Utilities will repair any cart that breaks or cracks through normal use.

Carts that are damaged by improper use or abuse will be subject to a replacement and service fee.

Call Utilities at 780-449-5514.



2010 Weed Inspection Program



In May, Transportation and Agriculture Services will begin its annual Weed Inspection Program to control the spread of noxious and prohibited noxious weeds. Following are some commonly asked questions and answers.

What are noxious and prohibited noxious weeds?

Weeds are categorized as noxious and prohibited noxious when they are aggressive, difficult to manage and invasive in nature. These weeds:

- infest pastures and crops
- alter natural habitats
- compete with our native plants
- affect animal, insect and bird species
- are costly to control

Why do these need to be controlled?

Provincial legislation — the *Weed Control Act* — requires noxious and prohibited noxious weeds to be controlled as these plants are destructive in productive lands and native habitats.

How can residents help control the spread of these weeds?

When you locate noxious and prohibited noxious weeds on your property, please take the necessary action to inhibit their growth. Information about specific weed control is available at www.strathcona.ca/tas.

How can a weed inspector help?

Strathcona County recognizes the importance of controlling these weeds to protect native habitat and productive lands. Strathcona County's Weed Inspection Program includes five weed inspectors, each assigned to a specific zone. They are responsible to:

- Act as a resource to provide information to residents on noxious weed control
- Inspect lands for noxious and prohibited noxious weeds as required
- Issue weed notices and follow through to compliance
- Respond to and follow up on complaints

What do I do if I am issued a weed notice?

A weed notice is a legal document issued by a County weed inspector notifying a property owner of weed problems. As the landowner, it is your responsibility to control the establishment and spread of these weeds. When a property owner does not take the appropriate steps, the County will undertake this work at the owner's expense.

Your efforts go a long way to maintain and enhance the economic vitality of our agriculture community and the beauty and biodiversity of Strathcona County.

For further information or to report a weed concern, call 780-417-7100 or visit www.strathcona.ca/tas.

Rural Roadside Vegetation Control Program

The 2010 Rural Roadside Vegetation Control Program begins on June 1. The program helps Strathcona County keep roadsides clear of weeds and brush, while reducing dependence on the use of herbicide.

Keeping rural roadsides free of noxious weeds and brush:

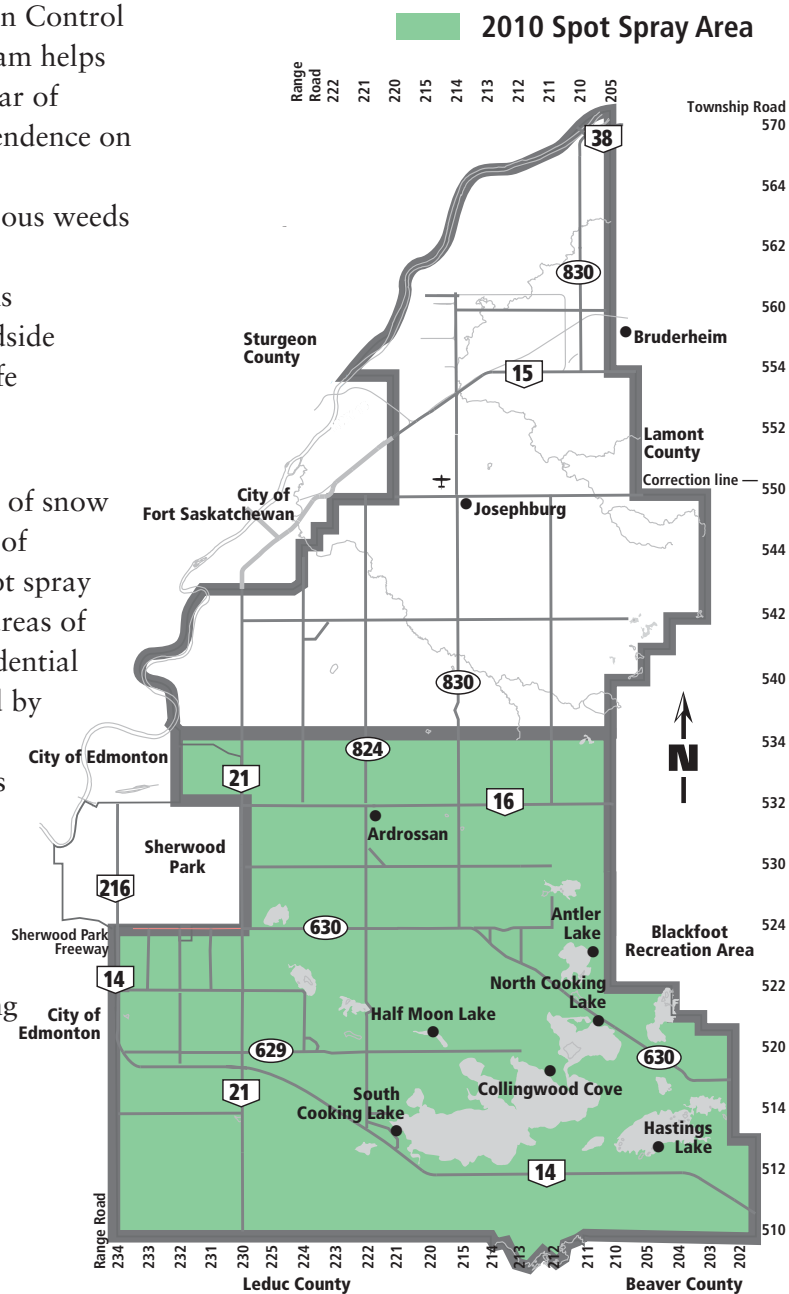
- Improves visibility at intersections
- Improves visibility along the roadside making it easier to see any wildlife
- Improves drainage
- Controls noxious weeds
- Makes it easier to clear the roads of snow

This year, all rural grid roads south of Township Road 534 will receive a spot spray application of herbicide. In all other areas of the County, including all country residential subdivisions, herbicide will be applied by the spot spray method on noxious weeds and brush under two metres, as required.

Landowner Option Program

Rural residents have the option to control vegetation adjacent to their property themselves rather than having it done by County staff. For more information, call Cindy Uden at 780-417-7146.

Residents' comments and questions are welcome — call 780-417-7100.



Backyard composter tips

Set up your composter in a well drained area of your yard. Place loose twigs, pine needles or other coarse, dry material at the bottom of your composter for drainage and air circulation. Add some dried leaves or dry plant clippings, top with a splash of water, then add vegetable and fruit peelings, coffee grounds, egg shells and yard scraps and top with garden soil. Repeat these layers a second time—each layer should be five to 10 centimetres thick.



If your pile is too dry, add water and more nutrient-rich scraps. If it is too wet or has an odour, turn it with a shovel and add more dry material.

Compost should have a neutral, earthy odour and a black, crumbly texture when finished. Add finished compost to gardens, around shrubs or sprinkle as a top dressing over your lawn.

Learn more at www.strathcona.ca/utilities.

Beautiful gardens inspire others

Nominate a front yard in Sherwood Park this summer

The next time you are out walking, rollerblading, cycling or driving around Sherwood Park, keep your eye out for beautiful front yards worthy of Communities in Bloom recognition.

Outstanding front gardens inspire others and help beautify our community. For that reason, we invite you to nominate attractive front yards in Sherwood Park. They can be your

neighbours, friends, relatives — anyone with a noteworthy front yard. Every nomination will receive a small yard sign. Winners will receive prizes and special recognition.

Call 780-464-8287 with your name and phone number, as well as the address you wish to nominate. You can also nominate by email to: pat.brehaut@telus.net.



Driver feedback signs coming to Sherwood Park

Strathcona County is purchasing five driver speed feedback signs – one for each of the five urban wards. The purpose of the signs is to alert motorists of their speed. Built-in radar is used to determine the speed of an oncoming vehicle, which is then displayed on a lighted board. Only vehicle speeds between a site-specific minimum and maximum limit will be displayed.

The signs have been ordered and are expected to be ready by late May. FortisAlberta has agreed to let the County use their light standards to mount the signs and accompanying solar panels.

Signs will be placed mid-block on a collector road (such as Nottingham Boulevard, Alder Avenue and Jim Common Drive) in each ward for a period of eight weeks. For the first two weeks, the sign will be in stealth mode. It will appear that the sign is not working when, in fact, it is gathering speed data on passing cars. For weeks three to six, the display will be activated. During the final two weeks, the sign will once again be programmed to stealth mode. This will give traffic engineers information on whether the speed being displayed makes a difference to drivers' speeds. Signs will also be placed in school and playground zones.

Strathcona County Transit wants to hear from you

Strathcona County Transit is asking the community for feedback to help guide the future growth of transit services in the County. As part of its Transit Master Plan, the County is encouraging both riders and non-riders, from urban and rural areas, to participate in an online questionnaire.

The goal is to ensure Strathcona County Transit provides appropriate service to the County and to clearly understand community expectations and needs. The Transit Master Plan will help Strathcona County identify the rationale for transit services, set strategic direction and guiding principles, define appropriate service levels, service design, operating and capital costs, and develop an implementation strategy.

The Master Plan will combine input from the public and stakeholders, as well as a comprehensive technical analysis. Draft recommendations are expected in late 2010.

The online questionnaire is available at www.strathcona.ca/transit; residents can also request a hard copy of the survey by calling 780-464-RIDE.

Rural Living Days



An open house for acreage owners and rural residents

Drop in and get information on:

- water wells and septic systems
- vegetation and pest control
- riparian management
- water testing and conservation
- turf and lawn care
- tourism
- waste management
- shelterbelts and tree care
- pond management
- community safety

Workshop presentations

- 10 a.m. Septic systems management
- 11 a.m. Weeds and vegetation control
- Noon Turf establishment and management
- 1 p.m. Tourism trends and business opportunities for acreage owners
- 2 p.m. Trees – care and management in a drought
- 3 p.m. Dugout and pond management

Saturday, May 15, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Ardrossan Recreation Complex
80 – 1 Avenue, Ardrossan

Further information 780-417-7100
Hosted by the Agricultural Service Board of Strathcona County

Strathcona
County
TRANSPORTATION AND
AGRICULTURE SERVICES
www.strathcona.ab.ca

Lawn busting takes hold in Strathcona County

With the snow melted and spring in the air, yard maintenance is now top of mind for many Strathcona County residents. For some older adults in our community, lawn care can be challenging and dangerous. In the 2009 Seniors Plan Survey, County seniors indicated that assistance with home maintenance, such as yard work, is one of the best ways to help them remain in their homes longer.

In response, Strathcona County Family and Community Services introduced a lawn mowing program. Lawn Busters matches eligible seniors with volunteers who will help them with their yard maintenance.

Residents can help by 1) taking some extra time when caring for their own yard to give a neighbour a helping hand, or 2) registering as a volunteer with the Lawn Busters program.

Volunteers may be individuals, families, teams or groups, who enjoy working outside, want to make community connections and prefer a flexible volunteer schedule.

To register in the program, seniors must:

- Be a Strathcona County resident aged 65 or over
- Be physically unable to perform yard maintenance tasks
- Have an annual income of less than \$24,000 for an individual or \$39,000 for a couple

To request help with your lawn or to register as a volunteer, call 780-464-4044.

More information at www.strathcona.ca/fcs.



Summer collection begins

Starting the week of June 14, organics will be collected every week for residents in:

- Sherwood Park, including those who subscribe to weekly collection in Fountain Creek Estates and Balmoral Heights
- Antler Lake
- Ardrossan
- Collingwood Cove
- Half Moon Lake
- Hastings Lake
- Josephburg
- North Cooking Lake
- South Cooking Lake

Spring cleaning

It's time to wake up your lawn and gardens from their winter rest. To help accommodate the increased volume of yard waste, Strathcona County offers extra collection periods. During the weeks of May 24 to 28 and June 7 to 11, put any extra yard waste that doesn't fit in your organics cart into clear plastic bags. Remember to have extra yard waste out for collection by 7:30 a.m. on your collection day and place it at least one metre (three feet) from your cart. There is no limit to the amount of clear bags you can put out during these dates only.

If you have back alley collection, please ensure the clear bags of yard waste are placed at the front of your property for collection.

Notable events

High Five Awards

Monday, June 7, 2010

Festival Place, 100 Festival Way, Sherwood Park

For more information, call Erin McKeown at 780-464-4044

Pride of Strathcona Awards

Monday, June 21, 2010

Festival Place, 100 Festival Way, Sherwood Park

Event starts at 7 p.m. and is open to the public; attendance is free.

Everybody Gets to Play Golf Tournament

Friday, August 20th

Broadmoor Public Golf Course

2100 Oak Street, Sherwood Park

Register by Friday, August 6, 2010

Forms available at www.strathcona.ca

Strathcona County proposes parking management plan

Centre in the Park's vision has long been to achieve a walkable, pedestrian-oriented community in support of sustainable development. Few roads and a well-managed, limited-parking system will help realize this vision. The County proposes a parking program, offering a combination of free parking and paid longer-time-limit parking, with the opening of the Community Centre November 1. The program will apply to the underground parkade, street parking and surface parking lots in the area.

User-pay parking provides the County with a means of controlling the demand for parking, by helping to ensure turnover of the limited number of stalls. Regulating the length of time a vehicle may be parked should also make it easier to find a spot to park for the many visitors, library patrons, staff and residents who come to the Community Centre and County Hall. Once a paid parking system is in place, people may also consider alternatives to driving their vehicle to the area, such as walking, biking, transit or carpooling.

The first hour of parking will be free in all paid parking areas, including the underground parkade. As well, a 30-minute maximum parking lot will be free at all times to serve quick visits to the Community Centre and County Hall. To return items to the library, there will be a convenient, free parking drop-off area.

During weekdays, and after the first hour free, the hourly rates to park will be one or two dollars per hour depending on the parking area. During evenings and weekends all parking is free, except for the underground parkade where a \$2 flat rate will be charged.

Residents can obtain more information and provide their views on the Centre in the Park-Parking Management Plan page at www.strathcona.ca/parkingmanagement, or by phoning Facility Services at 780-464-8403, or sending an email to County_Hall_Parking@strathcona.ab.ca.

Strathcona County

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Strathcona
County