



Mayor's Monthly Message

March 2021



It has been exciting to see the start of construction on the new medical clinic and pharmacy beside Village Dental. This project will be a great addition to our community and provide a convenient local option for primary care. Stirling and area residents will now have a convenient one-stop-shop on the same block for all your family dental, health care and pharmacy needs. Council appreciates the investment being

made in our community by the ownership group. It will soon be even easier to support local and “skip the trip”.

In another sign of growing confidence, the Village has conditionally sold 3 of 4 municipally owned lots which could see several new homes being built this year. Infill development has been a priority for Council to help ensure long term financial sustainability of our community while at the same time protecting the historic and family friendly feel that makes Stirling so special. Council will continue to explore ways to promote reasonable economic development and growth.

Final completion and paving of 3rd Street from 4th to 5th Avenues is scheduled to begin on June 17th. The schedule could still change if the weather does not co-operate, but this timing should allow us to have the project completed by the end of summer. Our annual road rehabilitation program will see additional streets in the Village repacked and re-oiled as well. Our goal is to maintain our normal pace of 6 to 8 blocks rehabilitated each year. You can review the road rehabilitation plan on the Financials and Strategy section of the Village website or by clicking here:

<http://stirling.ca/government/financials/road-rehabilitation-plan-2018-2022>

Construction is also underway at the Village office in the former location of the Library. Much needed replacements of the building's mechanical systems and windows will be completed in the next few weeks. The Village office will be relocating to the former library space allowing us to create the Ridge Utilities Community Business Support Centre in the remainder of the building. This will be community use space based on a coworking model to help support local entrepreneurs with access to things like professional meeting rooms, offices, printing services and other tools needed to grow and expand.





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Council approved the first reading of the 2021 Tax Rate Bylaw this month. The municipal portion of your property taxes will remain the same as prior years with no increase to the mill rate. Council appreciates the hard work of our administrative and operations teams to continue to realize efficiencies to offset inflation and absorb new costs being downloaded to us by the province. (IE: policing) The Government of Alberta has, however, increased the education portion of your property taxes which you can expect to see on property tax notices when they are mailed out. In addition, property value assessments fluctuate from year to year so even though the tax rate for the municipal portion did not increase, the taxes you pay could still go up if your assessed value increases. The Tax Rate Bylaw will likely receive second and third reading at our April meetings.

Council received a delegation this month from the Ridge Regional Public Safety Services Commission. Sgt. Ross Bond and Commission Manager Abe Tinney reviewed the annual business plan, bylaw enforcement outcomes from the prior year and answered questions about the program. Council remains concerned about the increasing costs of the program but recognizes the value of a regional approach to bylaw enforcement. You can review the Commission's annual business plan documents on the news section of the Village website or by clicking here: <http://stirling.ca/archives/8979>



Council also met with our planner from the Oldman River Regional Services Commission as we begin the process of updating our Municipal Development Plan or MDP. The current MDP dates back to 2008 and does not reflect many new provisions required under Alberta's Municipal Government Act. The Municipal Development Plan is a planning document that will guide the growth of our community for the next 10+ years. There will be a number of public engagement sessions where people can provide input into how Stirling should develop and the types of community facilities that should be considered as part of future capital budgets. Look for more information on this process to have your say in the coming months.



Your Village
Your Vote
2021

It is hard to believe Council's four-year term is almost at an end. Municipal elections will be held across the province in just under 7 months on Monday, October 18th. Qualified residents who are interested in running for Council can submit nomination forms anytime from now until 12 noon on Monday, September 20th. Information for both prospective candidates as well as voters can be found on the elections section of the Village website or by clicking here: <http://stirling.ca/government/municipal-elections>.



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The Stirling Fire Department continues to host volunteers from neighbouring departments to provide an affordable regional training solution across our area. The department is working towards a long-term goal of building a regional live fire training facility that could help support fire departments across southern Alberta with improved access to training. Pictures are from the recent offering of the Hazardous Materials (NFPA 1072) course that included participants from the Town of Bow Island and County of Forty Mile. Council expresses its appreciation to our dedicated volunteers who continue to invest considerable amounts of their personal time in training and simulations.



Council continues to work with our administrative team to explore how we can return our public facilities to more “normal” operations. Public health restrictions are still in place that limit the size and type of gatherings at the Community Centre for example. While current regulations have impacted how our library can serve clients, the library team has been creative to develop solutions like curbside pickup and scheduled appointments to provide as much access as possible. It also remains unclear from Alberta Health Services if or how we might operate the pool this summer. We will continue to work with AHS and work towards as normal of a summer as we can.

Trevor Lewington