



Mayor's Monthly Message

January 2022

Council was pleased to release the initial business plan for our 4 year term this month. We have held several planning sessions over the last few months to align our efforts around a few key priorities. The action-oriented strategy is supported by 3 pillars: Build Community, Grow Community & Celebrate Community. Council would welcome your feedback on the focus areas and project ideas. You can download the document from the "strategy" section of the Government menu on the Village website or click here to learn more:



<http://stirling.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2022-2025-Business-Plan.pdf>

Member of Parliament Glen Motz attended our second meeting this month to ask questions about Stirling's priorities and Council's concerns. MP Motz provided an update on the legislation expected to be brought forth in the next parliamentary session. We discussed a number of issues including the costly burden of federal carbon taxes, infrastructure funding and the pandemic response. Council appreciates our MP taking time to visit with us in the community.



Council also received a delegation from Maurice Duncan this month on behalf of the Stirling Cemetery Society. The Society is requesting that the Cemetery Bylaw from 2009 be reviewed and updated. We also discussed a number of potential long term enhancements to the cemetery including exploring the addition of a columbarium for those looking for an alternative to burial of cremated remains.

Council approved first reading of a Clean Energy Improvement Program Bylaw. Accessing affordable financing is one of the biggest barriers property owners face when deciding to invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades. The Clean Energy Improvement Program is a Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE)-style program that helps people make energy efficient upgrades to their properties without having to put money down. The cost of the upgrade is recovered through the owner's property taxes. Eligible projects focus on energy efficiency or on-site renewable energy such as solar power, upgraded insulation and high-efficiency heating. Look for more details in the coming months as we formalize Stirling's participation with Emissions Reduction Alberta, administrators of the program.



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Council reviewed updated policies brought forward by Administration including a new consolidation of payroll and benefits practices for Village staff. Council approved a snow removal policy that codifies our long standing and existing practices. The Village's public works team focusses on priority routes like around the school, fire hall, community centre and businesses first after a major storm. During major snowfall events where visibility and conditions are poor, our crews wait for conditions to improve to ensure both the safety of themselves and other road users.



Many of you likely had the same reaction as myself when opening natural gas and electricity bills this month. (Hint: Gasping and stomping of feet might have been involved!) A long stretch of bitterly cold weather combined with increasing commodity prices has left many people surprised. The regulated rate option or default for electricity rose to 16 ¢/kWh. Many in our

region have benefitted by switching to a fixed rate plan from Ridge Utilities with options around 8¢/kWh. With no contract and no penalties to switch to a variable rate later – this can be a good way to protect yourself against market volatility. We can't do much about the transmission, distribution, taxes or other regulatory charges that make up the bulk of your bill but shop around and find yourself the best deal possible. Ridge is owned by the Village so our community benefits directly from your choice of energy provider. Learn more at www.ridgeutilities.net.

Finally, a reminder that you can receive a 3% discount on the municipal portion of your property taxes if you prepay in full by February 15th. Alternatively, for residents looking to avoid one big bill at tax notice time, consider joining the Tax Installment Payment Program or TIPP. The program allows you to divide your annual property tax bill into 12 installments.


Trevor Lewington