



Christopher Northcott,
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NOTES FROM COUNCIL

Dear Residents & Ratepayers,

On November 5th the Champion Fire Association will be having their annual fundraiser at the Champion Community Hall. There are tickets still available. Beef and bison will be served. Ryan Fleetwood will auction a unique selection of items. It will be an enjoyable evening as we celebrate our rural fire protection service.

County Council will consider Second Reading of the Linear Tax Incentive Bylaw on November 2nd. At the October 19th meeting, I proposed a Notice of Motion outlining the reasons why Council should consider delaying this item until our Municipal Development Plan (MDP) has been updated. It includes a letter from Division 6 resident, Leslie Warren, as well as excerpts from the 2012 Vulcan County MDP, the 2021 Vulcan County and Village of Lomond Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP), and the 2021 M.D. of Pincher Creek MDP; you can find it on my website.

In the agenda package for the November 2nd meeting of County Council, there is an overview of the Linear Tax Incentive Bylaw written by our excellent Director of Corporate Services, Mark DeBoer. He does a thorough job explaining the bylaw, contextualizing public feedback, as well as the legislated intent behind tax incentives for non-residential properties.

My main concern (among others), as outlined in my Notice of Motion, is that we are incentivising projects to come to Vulcan County before we are ready to provide robust comment on their applications, before our MDP is updated. We rely on this document in communicating with

higher regulatory approving bodies on certain types of development. Our comments on these permit applications (specifically, renewable energy installations as permitted by the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC)), must be contextualised within our MDP. When this plan is not robust, our range of potential input on these applications is limited. While the 2012 MDP for Vulcan County identifies agriculture as our priority, there is a mere one line regarding renewable energy project development; it simply states that we want to encourage it. There is no further detail provided, let alone outlining how this objective remains compatible with agriculture (The MD of Pincher Creek has recently updated their MDP to address such inadequacies.). My fear is that applicants to the AUC will need only say, "Vulcan County supports renewable energy development" and "we are hoping to take advantage of their Linear Tax Incentive Bylaw," and County Council will be left highly constrained in commenting further; again, being expected to use the MDP to contextualize the application. As such, I think we need our MDP updated before we consider implementing linear tax incentives, however, I welcome your feedback on the matter.

Also, as a reminder, Council received a remuneration study that will inform 2023 budget considerations. It proposes an increase to councillor compensation in addition to a cost-of-living adjustment. This study is on my website, along with my meeting and expense reports for the last year. Please review and tell me what you think. Deciding how much County Councillors get paid is one of the responsibilities of County Council.

Sincerely, Christopher Northcott