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NOTES FROM COUNCIL

Dear Residents & Ratepayers,

After all the wet weather this July, road conditions in Vulcan County have proved challenging for drivers and for maintainers. I have been following up on road complaints from residents, and I can certainly appreciate that grader operators are working hard to stay on top of their assigned roads. Please do not hesitate to call me should you be aware of a problem area and would like to see it addressed. Councillor divisions cover a large tract of land and often a councillor will not know about a problem area unless someone communicates with them about it. The other advantage of reaching out to your councillor is that they usually get some idea from operations on when and how a road issue will be addressed. They can then follow up on it and keep you updated. My contact information is above.

For those wondering about the ditches along provincial highways, I did receive one inquiry about the high growth of grass and weeds. As we all know, this can be a significant road hazard. While high growth makes it harder to spot wildlife in certain areas, it also creates something of a fence for drifting snow in winter when it is not cut down. Administration has been in communication with Alberta Transportation and Volker Stevin, the contract operator who maintains their highways. As the roadside haying program is now concluded for the season, Volker Stevin will commence their mowing of highway ditches.

On July 10th, Councillor Kelly Nelson and I had the honour of attending the BMO Farm Family Award at the Calgary Stampede to recognize the Matlock Family from Vulcan County. This award recognises their family legacy in agriculture and their community service to our region—especially the Champion Community. As shared on social media, the award was presented to Byron and Jo,

along with their immediate family—all three generations! It was a poignant reminder of how instrumental family farming has been to the development of viable communities in rural Alberta.

Hats off to the organizers of the Hamlet of Queenstown Centennial Anniversary on July 12th, both to community members and their supportive County Councillor, Kelly Nelson, on a job well done. Steve Paul, the owner of the Queenstown Hall, along with his spouse, friends, and community volunteers, did a great job of cleaning up the nearly 100-year-old building, applying a fresh coat of paint, tile on the bar, and decorations. Levona Dixon's painting gave a great view of how Queenstown used to look. Everything was very well-organized, including a walking tour of Queenstown with QR code activated videos at different locations, a historical display by the Friends of the Milo Library archive volunteers, a car show, an all-day food truck, as well as Larry Vanatta's band playing their very first Queenstown dance until the early hours. Thank you everyone!

County Council voted to approve a new Municipal Development Plan (MDP) after having heard public feedback in June at the required public hearing. I want to thank those who took the time to provide input on this statutory plan, providing some rationale for their policy preferences. While these documents are considered a "living document" and do get updated over time, an MDP is one of the unique ways that a municipality can formally state clear policy preferences (or not!), on a wide array of planning matters, to all stakeholders. While majority rules at a municipal council table and many policies stem from Intermunicipal Development Plans, an MDP should strive to provide clarity and clear choices when necessary.

Sincerely, Christopher Northcott