



Christopher Northcott,
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NOTES FROM COUNCIL

Dear Residents & Ratepayers,

There was one council meeting in March where we dealt with three bylaws. Council gave First Reading to Bylaw 2026-007 to rezone lands proposed for the development of a data centre. Being a Land Use Bylaw amendment, this type of bylaw requires a Public Hearing to be held prior to Second and Third Reading. A Public Hearing is scheduled for April 1st so please check out the County's website for more information on the proposal. Your input is welcome.

Bylaw 2025-033 concerns borrowing funds for the Marquis Foundation (seniors housing) building project. This project will replace the Peter Dawson Lodge with a new facility to the west of the Vulcan Community Health Centre. This project is projected to cost \$35,467,232.00 with funds being provided by the following: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation for \$23,474,041; Alberta Affordable Housing Partnership grant for \$8,300,000 (a significant provincial investment in the project); Marquis Foundation and other member-municipalities for \$2,444,096; Vulcan County for \$1,249,095.

Finally, Council finalized Parking Bylaw 2025-030 after having a Public Hearing earlier this year. This bylaw establishes a framework for parking restrictions to be developed in areas of the County that require specific restrictions. Council did not favour establishing parking standards for the entire County beyond empowering peace officers to address safety and traffic issues as they arise. That said, hamlets and residents in other areas can request that parking restrictions be developed and applied where stakeholders believe them necessary and to what degree. Ultimately, the onus will be on County Council to decide the matter in the public interest.

I chaired the board meeting of the Oldman River Regional Services Commission on March 5th. This past month, I also did two days of mandatory "refresher" training to continue sitting on the Assessment Review Board. The Vulcan District Recreation Board met on March 9th and is recommending to Council a reasonable operating grant for the Berrywater Community Hall. This is in line with what occurs in other recreation districts, being a historic facility that has been well-maintained by a dedicated board of volunteers.

The Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) held its Spring Convention from March 16th to March 18th where we participated in the ministerial forum as well as the resolutions session for the advocacy work of RMA. The workshops I attended were on wildfire mitigation strategies, "Who's Driving The Grader" (roles and responsibilities in local government), and Strong Foundations for Building Community Connections (social assistance, community support, housing needs, etc.).

On March 25th and 26th, I attended the SouthGrow Tourism and Economic Development Summit in Lethbridge. The presentations on systems thinking and barriers to collaboration were very good. It was a good networking opportunity with others pursuing investment attraction. The County's industrial park, the MacGregor marina project, and the Northwest Regional Water Line project hold significant economic development potential for our region.

I represented the County at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of HALO Air Ambulance on March 26th in their new hanger. This critical service has developed from scratch over the last 25 years. HALO does emergency medical airlift, as well as search and rescue and wildfire monitoring. The AGM gave an overview of their society business.

Sincerely, Christopher Northcott