



February 2010 Newsletter

Alderman Diane Colley-Urquhart

Giving a tour of the Traffic Management Centre with students of the First Calgary Lego Team.

SW Connector Update

It is time to get the road built! At the end of last year another critical step was taken on the long road toward the greatly needed Southwest Connector. In late November, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the City and the Province laying the groundwork for a comprehensive study of the future transportation corridor. The MOU establishes how we will work together to complete this major transportation project as soon as possible.

The Province will be leading an extensive citizen consultation process over the next 18 months. This will identify and address community concerns and result in the final road standard and alignment. Such concerns range from the possible effects on the City's drinking water to the impact on area residents such as noise, lighting and congestion. Road capacity and alignment will be determined along with the required upgrades to our primary road network and utility corridors.

My Ward 13 Land Use Mobility Advisory Council (LUMAC), chaired by Mr. Tony Cleveland, will play a key role in giving a voice to Ward 13 residents. Please contact my office if you wish to get involved with LUMAC or with your Community Association. I will be holding an Open House in March to keep everyone in the loop. You can find a copy of the MOU on my website.

Shawnee Golf Course Sale

This issue is the number one priority for me and the residents of Ward 13 this year. The City Planning Department has received a formal application for redevelopment of the Shawnee Slopes Golf Course. The application has been submitted by the new owners who require a land use amendment to fully develop this site. City staff will spend the next several months reviewing the application. I, along with all residents of Shawnee/Evergreen and Ward 13, am very concerned about this application and the potential impact on all of Ward 13 & 14.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to conduct community meetings and consult with key stakeholders in the community. It will require extensive public consultation and eventually a Public Hearing of City Council where residents will get a chance to speak. I encourage all residents to join the debate by getting involved with your Community Association.

City Budget Update

The worldwide recession within the past year has had a significant impact on Calgary. Everyone has been affected in some way. It has resulted in a lower growth rate than forecasted a year ago, which has significantly affected City revenues. The City Audit Committee, which I am on, monitored the risks monthly, and I want to express how pleased I am with the job Administration

did during this historic series of events. Throughout the year, in response to our changing circumstance, City Administration made cuts in every area except for policing. They mitigated \$45 million in cost increases while slashing an additional \$20 million from the 2010 operating budget. The primary role at the local level is to provide services to the community. We have an excellent public service in our city, doing a very good job. As a result, Council approved the following 2010 budget adjustments:

- A reduction in the municipal property tax increase for 2010 from 6.1% to 4.79%. This will increase property taxes for the average household by \$54 a year, or \$4.50 per month.
- No increase in the business tax rate for the 17th year.
- Reductions in previously approved water, wastewater and drainage rates of 1%-1.6% in 2010.
- Reduced short-term parking rates.
- Elimination of Park n' Ride fees at Bus Rapid Transit parking lots.
- An additional \$2.0 million for a two-year snow and ice removal project.
- 2.34 million hours of transit service in total.
- Preservation of 32 previously approved positions in the Calgary Police Service budget.

I look forward to serving all of you this year and to running in the coming civic election.

I want to introduce Anthony Masleck as my new Executive Assistant and Riley Georgsen as my Community Assistant.

As always, you can contact my office regarding this or any other civic matter at 268-1624, by email at dcolley@calgary.ca.