

MMSA Monitor



MACKENZIE MUNICIPAL SERVICES AGENCY

Volume 17, Issue 06/11

JUNE 2011

NEW STAFF MEMBERS ARRIVE AT THE MMSA

Two new Junior Municipal Planners joined the MMSA staff in June. Jesse Auspitz, originally from Thornhill ON, arrived June 6 and Matthew Konowalchuk from Winnipeg, MB arrived on June 13.

Jesse graduated from the University of Waterloo with a Bachelor of Environmental Studies and then completed a graduate degree at Ryerson University in Urban Development. He was attracted to the position at the MMSA because of the opportunity to work in a rural and culturally unique part of Canada. Jesse strives to improve upon and develop

planning tools to empower local governments.

During his spare time, Jesse enjoys hiking. Since his arrival he has been taking in the scenery of the Peace River Valley.

Matthew attended Dalhousie University in Halifax where he studied Urban Planning and received his undergraduate degree in Architecture from the University of Manitoba. He chose to work with the MMSA to increase his planning experience in rural and urban settings. He brings a wide range of planning experience

from rural Nova Scotia, research on affordable housing and skills in urban environmental design.

Matthew has been a percussionist for approximately 14 years, playing the drum set and bongos. In his free time, he stays active tossing a Frisbee and biking.

Matthew and Jesse will spend much of their time on the Land Use Framework initiative. Since their arrival, they have joined in with the other Planning staff to provide the Municipal presentations.



Jesse Auspitz and Matthew Konowalchuk

Editor's Note: The Agency Staff occasionally hold a potluck lunch based on ethnic backgrounds. It will be interesting to see what Jesse & Matthew bring to the table and how their cooking skills compare to their professional skills. Stay Tuned...

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



By Ron Longtin

First of all, I would like to personally welcome our two new planners,

Jesse and Matthew, to the Agency and to the Peace Country. I am confident that the experience that they will gain, not only professionally, but personally will be of benefit to them throughout their careers.

On another personal note, I take advantage of this space to bid farewell to Harry Aspin, the Village of Berwyn's Chief Administrative Officer for the past 20 years. In 2002, when I was first elect-

ed to Council, I had very little knowledge of the workings of a municipal government and from the beginning, Harry provided me with the guidance and direction to be an effective municipal councillor. Municipal chief administrative officers are given the unenviable task of running the municipal office on a daily basis and most importantly ensuring that the elected council are carrying out their duties in accordance with the governing legislation. They have to keep us focussed on the business at hand and also be prepared for whatever is thrown at them – and as you know this can be almost anything from controlling the weather for a community

event to balancing the budget to include a new snowplow. So it is with a great deal of respect that I bid farewell to Harry and to say thank you for all the many years of hardwork and dedication that you have provided to the Village of Berwyn. This also provides me with the opportunity to salute all the chief administrative officers out there in the Peace Region - your commitment to your communities has made this region a great place to live and work.

In closing, I wish you all a happy and safe summer. As for myself, as soon as this rain stops, I hope to get in a lot of golfing time!

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LAND USE FRAMEWORK - PROJECT UPDATE

By Elise Willison

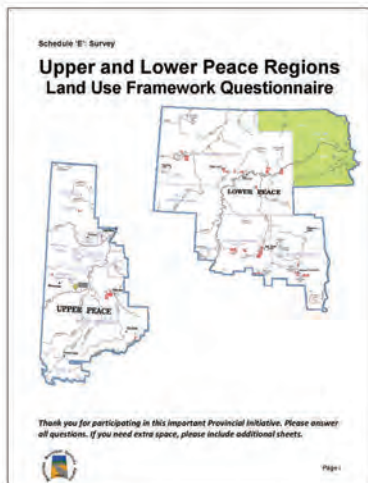
In January 2011, the Mackenzie Municipal Services Agency (MMSA) prepared a grant application under the Regional Collaboration Program. The grant application was submitted by the MD of Peace No. 135 to Municipal Affairs to support the funding of a position paper as a proactive approach in providing input into the Land Use Framework process and Regional Plans to be developed. This grant application was submitted on behalf of 28 municipalities within the Upper and Lower

Peace Watershed Regions, including the MMSA's 12 member municipalities and an additional 16 municipalities within the two watershed regions. The grant was approved in April 2011. This funding will enable MMSA to move forward with this important project.

The MMSA is now in the process of meeting with the individual municipal project partners to discuss their input through Council and/or public participation. Input will be gathered through a survey questionnaire that addresses

the 7 LUF Strategies. The results of the questionnaire will form the basis of the position paper which will ultimately be submitted to the Regional Advisory Councils of the Upper and Lower Peace Regions.

The MMSA is excited about being a part of this important provincial initiative and is looking forward to working with the municipal project partners in developing a position paper that reflects their issues and concerns that will help shape the future of their municipalities.



MANNING, BERWYN, NAMPA MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS: A NEW ERA IN PLANNING

By Kemi Apanisile

The Town of Manning, Village of Berwyn and Village of Nampa are about to embark on a new and exciting era in planning. All three municipalities are poised to begin the complex challenge of preparing a Municipal Development Plan (MDP).

An MDP is the main planning document that provides the framework for addressing the future land use, development and growth within a community. Under provincial legislation it is mandatory that all municipalities with a population of 3500 or more complete an MDP, and although Manning, Berwyn and Nampa fall outside this criterion they have realized that such a policy document is essential in moving their communities forward. This new era of planning will mark Berwyn and Nampa's first review/rewrite of their MDP's since 1998, while for Manning, it will be the preparation of their first MDP.

Creating such a crucial document isn't easy. The process has changed significantly since 1998. Community planning has evolved into a more social exercise that now relies heavily on public input. This has resulted in a major overhaul of how we as planners practice our profession, and more importantly, how we work with local municipalities and citizens to achieve a common vision for their community.

So, how does this relate to the upcoming MDP's for Berwyn, Manning and Nampa? The planning process will involve a new approach to public engagement. Incorporating a Steering Committee into the planning process will allow residents to attain a more direct involvement in the planning exercise. The Steering Committee provides members with the opportunity to make both formal and informal suggestions to the planner with respect to how the planning process should proceed and what the MDP should include. The Steering Committees also

allow members to have a better understanding of the planning issues that are pertinent to their community. Members will be involved in workshops, input meetings and the reviewing of the draft MDP before it goes to Municipal Council for adoption.

Youth participation, such as school workshops, will also be used in the planning process. The youth are our future, therefore their insight into how their community should look, feel and function in the future is necessary to any planning document.

Conducting workshops, having open discussions, and filling out survey questionnaires, are essential in the MDP process. These innovative tools have already been used in the MDPs for the towns of Rainbow Lake and Grimshaw. Mackenzie Municipal Services Agency looks forward to continuing these trends.



Mural, Downtown Manning



Aerial view of Downtown Berwyn



Legacy Park, Nampa

VILLAGE OF NAMPA WE ALL NEED SOME FUN IN OUR LIVES

By Natalie Shing

Parks and playgrounds are essential in all communities. Creating outdoor play areas helps the development of children; physically, socially and mentally. Without play, creativity does not exist.

The Village of Nampa has received a provincial grant for upgrading and/or replacing play equipment in its parks and playgrounds.

MMSA and the Village are working hand in hand to complete the Parks and Playgrounds Needs Assessment. The assessment will analyze the existing condition of the Village's playgrounds and provide advice on how best to spend the grant money.

Three public input methods were explored: student surveys at Nampa Public School, general public surveys at a

Family Day event and surveys mailed with water bills. Survey responses have indicated that, overall, the public wants new and updated playground equipment for all ages in the form of upgrade,

replacement or expansion of existing playground equipment.

The needs assessment is expected to be completed in June 2011.



CLEAR HILLS COUNTY: DESIGNING FOR THE PUBLIC

By Natalie Shing

The increase in demand for development-ready land in the Hamlet of Cleardale has prompted Clear Hills County to revise the Hamlet of Cleardale Area Structure Plan.

The original Hamlet of Cleardale Area Structure Plan was adopted in 1988, with subsequent amendments and adoption in 2006.

With the revised Cleardale Area Structure Plan, another public consultation process was undertaken. A community visioning session was held to gather public input on land

uses. Three options were presented during the session.

A combination of the community vision and best planning practices were used in developing the final concept plan which is included in the Revised Area Structure Plan.

The Revised Cleardale Area Structure Plan was adopted on April 26, 2011. Next, the County is planning to revise the Worsley Area Structure Plan in preparation for the anticipated iron ore plant.



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For Subdivision Application Packages

The Mackenzie Municipal Services Agency provides land use planning and subdivision services for a large area in northwest Alberta. In a region stretching from Northern Sunrise County in the south and east to the Town of Rainbow Lake in the north, we provide municipal planning services to 12 member municipalities, pursuant to Section 625 of the Municipal Government Act. We also provide a full range of services on a contract fee-for-service basis.

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Clear Hills County	Bonnie Bigam	M. D. of Peace #135	Veronica Bliska
Town of Fairview	Larry Chorney	Village of Nampa	Ed Skrlík
Town of Grimshaw	Brian Allen	Northern Sunrise County	Carolyn Kolebaba
Village of Hines Creek	Jim MacKenzie	Town of Peace River	North Darling
Town of Manning	Sunni Walker	Town of Rainbow Lake	Boyd Langford

AROUND THE REGION

STAFF GOODBYES:

Dolu Gonzalez left the MMSA in March after 4 years as a Municipal Planner. She is now a Planner with Planning and Development Services at Mountain View County.

Natalie Shing, who worked 2 years at the MMSA, went off to Strathcona County in June. She is working as a Planner with their Land Use and Policy Planning Department.

CAO CHANGES:

Martin Taylor from Fairview moved on to Barrhead in June.

Harry Aspin retires July 1 after 20 years as Municipal Manager at the Village of Berwyn.

Welcome Hendrik Slegtenhorst to the Town of Peace River.

CONGRATULATIONS:

Audrey Bjorklund graduated from the National Advanced Certificate in Local Authority Administration Level II with Distinction through the University of Alberta in June 2010.

ROBERT E. WALTER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP:

Leanne Cottrell of Peace River is the recipient of the 2011 scholarship. Leanne is an employee with the Town of Peace River and enrolled in the Local Government Studies Program through the University of Alberta.

Jim MacKenzie, MMSA Board and Scholarship Review Panel member presented Leanne with her award in the Peace River Council Chambers on June 6.



Jim MacKenzie with Leanne Cottrell