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OPINION COLUMN

Mayor's Muse biweekly column by Mayor Lorne Mann



By Lorne Mann

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Get your nominations in prior to Jan 23, for the annual Town Peace River Community enhancement Awards! Help us recognize one special individual and one super business that contributed distinguished efforts during 2012 -improving our quality of life here in the prettiest place on the planet - Peace River!

Your Town Team has been checking off the list to a host of infrastructure deficit items. This has only been possible with the Provincial, Federal, and local governments working together to 'get 'er done'! Thanks to Honourable MLA Frank Oberle, MP Chris Warkentin... And of course to all property, and other tax... taxpayers.

* water treatment plant capacity increase and water distribution system increases will deliver 'water for life' for Peace River citizens and into the south end of County of Northern Lights to meet our Regions projected rapid growth demands long into the future.

* the aggressive & successful "report a pothole" program put a dent in old man winter's annual road rage damage & will continue, ... but the "formerly" worst roads and sidewalks in Peace River around the north end schools were checked off, along with other area upgrades, upon a daunting capital expense list.

A 10 year capital plan is in place to restore aging infrastructure and put into place the funding models for equipment necessary to maintain these upgrades and improvements. Slightly over twenty million in grants secured for 2013 alone. We are building reserves aggressively and shall balance in the mix, prudent & minimal borrowing... all to minimize individual impact - while getting done what needs to get done.

* Pavement , sidewalks , underground utility delivery systems, etc may make we municipal servants go rrrrrrruh!... However, quality of life infrastructure must also keep pace. So far there have been many ambitious successes, both in facility rehab, maintenance and repairs, and new construction - all of which are equally important.

*Progressive planning is taking place to meet future demands, including recreation, culture, and other quality of life needs ... as the planets and the ability to fund align.

The upcoming year of our Council is anticipated to be a 3rd year of our term with no property tax rate increase - as we adhere to a "growth must fund growth" philosophy... As property values go up so does revenue for all of the above. **We have battled hard against a minority of naysayers for positive results which speak louder than critics.**

Thanks to all who continue to invest and grow here! ...enjoy our N W Alberta advantage - it is our time to shine, join in!

As growth kicks in your local government leadership in co-operative planning with all orders of government, working with all residents (corporate, private and public) is ready, willing and able to successfully meet and greet any challenges the future may bring. -Bring it on!

Special thanks to Sun Media general manager, and on up the ladder, for the opportunity to shine some truth and ethics about our great Valley.

Rock on Cultureville! (queue closing "harp" riff),

May every one of you have a Healthy, Happy , and Prosperous New Year!

I am looking forward to unveiling my gymnastic floor routine at the "opening soon" Gymnastics Club ...do not go visual on the spandex though people!

Mayor Lorne G Mann QC

proud to serve, and HERE for YOU!

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