

President / Chairman's Report - AGM - October 16, 2018

Welcome to the 62nd Annual General Meeting of the Millican Ogden Community Association.

As I have said many times – “for as big as this City is, it will never be this small again”. This district started out as a village outside the City of Calgary. It had a hotel and a business district along Ogden Road, and many employees of both the Imperial Oil Refinery and C P Rail called Ogden their home. Of course things will evolve, as they always will, and Ogden is now practically inner city and we have become a victim of the growth of the City as evidenced by the volume of traffic on both Ogden Road and 18th Street, where drivers from the new communities in the south east parts of the City as well as drivers from Okotoks and High River and other places, use Ogden as part of their commuter route to and from their work. Of course, the Quarry Park Business Park has added to that as well with roughly 10,000 employees working there, and very inadequate transit at this point, although that transit service could be improving in the near future. Anyway, I say this because the entire Ogden district is in the early stages of transition as we get retrofitted for an LRT line and prepare for the potential of new development that is expected to come with that. We can't stop progress, but we are doing our best to monitor that progress. As much as the district will never again be the way it was years ago, we are trying hard to maintain the small town feel that we all like so much.

As for MOCA as we complete our 62nd year, once again this past 12 month period has been an extremely exciting and productive year for the Board, our staff, and our volunteers. We are in good financial ground and you will hear more about that when Director Pieter makes his presentation.

The new MOCA Bylaws that were approved at the last AGM have now been approved by the Province, and these are now the Bylaws that govern the organization. That was a big job and again I want to thank Director Lorraine Robinson for her diligence. It is a difficult task but she happens to be good at that stuff and we are grateful for that.

We continue to monitor the progress, or lack of progress, on the installation of the traffic signals at Ogden Road and 76th Avenue. These were promised for last winter but there were scheduling delays for a variety of reasons. Finally the underground electrical was done and the support posts installed which gave strong indication that the traffic signals were close. Now, months later, we are told that the only thing holding things up is the need to remove a wooden power pole. This is a job for Enmax and we can only guess that this job has not made it into their work program yet as they deal with the many other projects that are ongoing throughout the City, and that the removal of our power pole is lower on their priority list. We will continue to monitor this project with periodic follow ups.

Cannabis has been the key topic of recent months and as you know, the purchasing and consuming cannabis becomes legal tomorrow, October 17. We at MOCA did not really have an issue with the principle of designating legal consumption sites, but we did have an issue with the site that was selected for the Ogden area. Just because a site meets certain criteria to allow it to qualify as a legal consumption site, should not be the deciding factor – there has to be some logic and justification for the selection, and we believed that was missing from the recommendation of the Ogden site, which was a spot in the centre of the field at Ogden Road and 78th Avenue. Luckily that proposal was withdrawn and is no longer a concern.

At this point there are five business locations that have applied to the City to be retail outlets of cannabis. Two locations, one in the Glenmore Plaza and one in Riverbend Shopping Plaza were approved for Development Permits and we presume that they are now going through the approval stages with Alberta Gaming for licencing, etc. One location, on 62nd Avenue near Rick's Grocery, was approved but that approval was appealed and we are waiting to hear the outcome of that appeal. And the applications for Development Permit of two others remain under review and we await the outcome of that review. Comments have been made about perhaps there are too many for the neighbourhood and that might be the case. But just getting approval for a Development Permit does not mean that a store will be built. They still have to meet the requirements of Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission for a Provincial licence and they will also need a Business Licence for the City of Calgary. Also, we have to believe that someone is doing their due diligence with respect to the preparation of a business plan to justify their investment, and whether the market will support their store. At the end of the day, we fully expect that whatever locations open for retail sales of cannabis, that they will operate professionally, have an attractive appearance, will offer a quality product, and will provide excellent service to their customers. Just as we expect the same from any business operating in the neighbourhood.

I have talked a little in my newsletter articles about the potential changes to bus routes that service the district. Just as a recap, here is bit of a summary.

- Route 24 is proposed to be changed and the route change proposed is that the bus will travel up and down 18th Street to Quarry Park. This change is in response to requests by Ogden residents to provide more direct bus access to Quarry Park and the library. 20 A Street, 76th Avenue and Shepard Road will no longer be served by this bus. Now, we are aware that several residents have expressed concerns through social media about the proposed change to Route 24 and I am told that some of those concerns have been passed on to Councillor Carra's office. We will continue to monitor this situation.
- Route 302 [BRT] – will experience no change through Ogden with stops at 78th Avenue and 69th Avenue. The proposed change will see this bus travel along 24th Street along the east side of Quarry Park but will not circle through Quarry Park providing a more direct route to downtown.
- Routes 72 and 73 – Circle Routes are being eliminated.
- A new Route 43 is being created which will travel to Chinook Station and north on Barlow Trail to McKnight Blvd. Note- this bus will use 76th Avenue and not 78th Avenue and will service those passengers traveling east/west through Ogden
- Routes 41 and 36 that service the area to and from Chinook Station are not being affected – no changes.
- Riverbend Route 136 is being eliminated
- A new Crosstown BRT is being introduced but it will not travel through Ogden. It will service Quarry Park and Riverbend over to the Heritage LRT Station.

I attended the open houses held by Calgary Transit, and I attended two of three meetings over the summer for community reps, and I do want to explain that the intended purpose of these route changes which are occurring throughout the City, is to provide more direct

routes, reduce travel times, and allow for increased bus frequency. These route changes will not come into effect until at least November, although that is far off.

We are now in the middle of some negotiations with the City over our two lease Agreements.- this includes the lease on the land for the community hall and arena, and another Agreement for the piece of land just on the west side of the arena where the football clubhouse sits. Both were long term with an expiry of 2027 and both required an amendment because of certain boundary changes. This one because the north baseball diamond improvements now encroaches into our existing boundary, and the other one because we expanded the storage pad for the football club, which caused us to require a small expansion to the boundary. Unfortunately the City would not allow a simple amendment to the boundary page of the document but demanded an entire rewrite. Because the City has now opened up the entire document, we are using this opportunity to raise our concerns about the wording of certain clauses within the Agreements, and how they should be interpreted, and we are requesting changes to the wording of those clauses. Unfortunately dealing with the City is a slow and painful process as we are now close to two years with no end in sight.

Likewise we are currently dealing with the renewal of our lease with Calgary Housing Corporation for the building occupied by the Southeast Calgary Resource Centre. This lease actually expired last April and we have been under numerous extensions since then. Again, this is a painful process as we suspect they have changes in mind but we have no idea what they are and, because a lease is a legal document, we will need time to review and understand whatever terms and conditions are going to be presented to us, and to determine how we going are to respond.

As I have mentioned in the past, I wish that I had more to report on the prospect of seniors housing in the neighbourhood. This has been an ongoing issue for many years as you know, but it is extremely complex. It would be so much simpler if a private developer would come along, but even that is not happening. This Board, previous Boards, and I am sure future Boards, will continue to support the need for seniors housing, but speaking for this Board, as much as we would like to move this idea forward, we are not developers. We do not have the resources to buy up property and arrange for the construction of a seniors housing complex. Finding a suitable site of City owned land is very difficult because, while we have an abundance of open space in the district, the land could be undevelopable because of prior contamination, it could be treated as public park space which is very unpopular to develop even for seniors housing, or it might just be in a poor location for seniors housing based on access to other amenities like shopping and transit. I am not even sure we know how seniors housing is to be defined -- is it just adult living for older folks like transitional housing for people who want to downsize from their homes – or is it some degree of assisted living – or is it some form of long term care? Obviously the types of services to be provided by a seniors housing complex will greatly affect the construction cost, potential operating costs, and ultimately the rental charges. We have no answers at this point and really no idea how to move this forward. There are no magical solutions, but I felt that I needed to include these comments in my Report.

And, just to update you on a few other outstanding matters that I know are of interest to all residents.

- **Lynnview Ridge** – We were hoping to see the area open up this year but that has not happened yet. We keep getting reports that the growth of the newly seeded areas and other

vegetation has not yet reached a stage where City Parks will sign off and accept the site into Parks inventory. This is a requirement, and when that happens, the current chain link fence will come down and a post & cable fence will be installed, and the site can be opened up to public use. The good news is that the end is in sight and we can soon begin to have meaningful discussions about how the site can be used, although I said this last year too. We will continue to monitor this.

- **Refinery Park –** It is difficult to see the improvements that have been made but essentially the physical construction of the reclamation project is now complete. Again there was significant planting of approximately 5000 new trees and shrubs, new top soil and seeding in other areas. The pathway has been opened up as you know, but I expect the park will remain closed for another full year to allow more time for the new plantings to reach the acceptable level of growth. Then the same process will occur with Parks needing to accept the area before it can be officially opened up. Again, we will continue to monitor this.

We have spoken a lot over the past couple of years about our plans to expand and modernize this community hall. As discussed many times, this building is not getting any younger and it would be irresponsible of us to not recognize the need to put this building in a condition that would allow it to be available for residents for the next 30 or 40 years. It is in dire need of some lifecycle mechanical improvements, but to deal with that alone still leaves us with an old building. We need to look to the future and not just upgrade the mechanical, but to also modernize the building. In defence of previous Boards who were aware of this need, this type of work costs money. We were fortunate that the seed money for our expansion plans came from the former Ogden Legion Branch 154. Director Pieter van Linderberg has been leading the project and I will let him provide a more detailed update when he presents the Financial Report but suffice to say we have run into a number of delays, mostly created by the City and their approval process, which has caused us to lose this year as a construction period, and so the difficult decision had to be made to postpone construction until spring with the hope that all issues can be resolved and we can be in a better position of readiness. Again, Pieter can provide more of the specifics.

I am sure you are aware of the two long range planning documents that are currently underway. The Millican Ogden Area Redevelopment Plan, and the South Hill Station Area Plan. Your Civic Affairs Committee made up of some Board members and some local volunteers have spent countless hours working with City planners over the past three years with respect to the future vision of the community that is outlined in these documents. Unfortunately we have not been pleased with the public consultation process and there are several sections within these planning documents where we have concerns and we do not agree with the vision of the planners. There are areas where we feel that the vision outlined is not realistic, or achievable, in an already existing and well established neighbourhood. Both of these documents have now been deferred for at least two more years until 2020, apparently so that other related Planning documents like the Developed Areas Guidebook can catch up. We find this process really frustrating as I continue to feel that the objective is to wear us down. And not just us, Inglewood and Ramsay have the same concerns. The City Planners are not interested in our comments as evidenced by the fact that none of our input ever makes it into the document as new drafts are prepared, and I continue to maintain that City's vision was prepared long before the public input process started, and everything since then is just the means to justify the end. No doubt they can

produce a long list of dates and locations where they held public input, public consultation, public engagement sessions, so there is no way we can say that we were not consulted, or that we did not have an opportunity to have input, but I can tell you that there are proposed redevelopment areas in the document that simply do not make any sense, are not realistic or achievable in our opinion, and the City cannot even give us a decent logical explanation as to why their vision, which has been prepared by planners who do not live here, is best for the long term viability of the community. Anyway, I am happy to provide more specifics if anyone has any questions, but we plan to continue to stay involved, and with any luck, at some point our input will be taken seriously.

The new season at the arena is opening real well. The prime time ice is fully rented out and they are always looking at opportunities to make better use of the non-prime time ice availability. Jack Setters Arena has a reputation of having one of the best ice surfaces in the City compared to other arenas, and we want to maintain that reputation.

The Southeast Calgary Community Resource Centre for which MOCA is the official agent and operator, continues to be an area of operations that we are very proud of. Yes, it is an agency that provides a number of programs and services to that area of the population that require higher needs. It serves not only the Ogden area, but well beyond, and in fact, the entire service area includes about 40 communities in the southeast corner of the city. The programs are funded by the United Way, Child and Area Family Services, and FCSS- Family and Community Support Services. They are always looking for donations of clothing and other small items, so with all due respect to the many other agencies out there who are also doing a great job, please think of the local Resource Centre with your donations. They are always looking men's clothing as us guys tend to wear stuff till it practically falls off but if you have things in your closet that you have not worn for a while and it is still in good shape, please think of the Resource Centre. They do a great job there and provide a much needed service. Our Resource Centre Manager, Lynn Mutch, will provide a brief presentation shortly.

As I mentioned in my opening comments, we are in the early stages of transition as we get retrofitted for a light rail transit system. We are victim of the growth of the City and to get a rapid transit system to the districts in the southeast part of the City, that system must come through us. It will be short term pain for long term gain, but that pain is going to last for several years. We will benefit by it with three LRT stations and we are hopeful for some nice development projects along Ogden Road, but getting there is going to be painful at times.

I have mentioned many times over the past year about some of the preliminary projects that are expected that are Greenline related. We were told that much of this work was to have been started over the past year but obviously that did not happen so we have no idea of the construction schedule.

These are some of the projects that could see some preliminary work.

- Reconfiguration of the north ball diamond at Pop Davies Park to accommodate the proposed parking lot upgrades.
- Improvements to the grade on Millican Road to reduce the slope of the road. I am guessing but I am thinking that because the LRT tracks at that point will be a level crossing, the road will need to be built up to meet the level of the LRT tracks. We have seen some work on the deep utilities

but we have no time line on the road improvements themselves, but when they do happen, we anticipate that Millican Road could be closed for a short period.

- We talked about a small parking lot at the south end of Pop Davies Park for the benefit of the users of the southern sports fields. As you know, those players currently park in the gravelled area along Ogden Road and that parking would be lost once the LRT tracks and security fence are installed. We now learn that another option might be available which would eliminate the need for that parking lot. That option would be to create a level crossing of the LRT across Ogden Road to the east side, which would also eliminate the expense of the tunnel that is currently planned. On the surface this sounds like an option worth considering but I am sure will involve more negotiations with CP Rail. We look forward to hearing how this option proceeds.
- As you know, C P Rail wants to close the level crossing at 69th Avenue and because of that, a new access road through to Ogden Dale Road becomes necessary. The obvious choice was 78th Avenue for a variety of reasons but mostly because at that point to the future LRT tracks will be elevated to the same height as the CP Rail tracks making an underpass easier to do and better for traffic management. Our primary concern at this point is whether that new road will be treated as commercial truck route. We have asked that it not be but the City does not move too quickly, and we have no confirmation either way.
- Preparation for a new road – 90th Avenue - along the extreme south side of the South Hill Mobile Home Park. This new road will eventually become the new east/west connection between Shepard Road and 24th Street. We expected to see some evidence of this work over the past year but I have seen none other than the work on the land fill area to the south. We continue to monitor this stuff.

We all know that the actual Greenline LRT is still a long way off, but because of the age of our community and where it is located, a lot of retrofitting must occur to allow the LRT to happen. The districts north of us are also experiencing similar issues. This is going to be a little difficult for all of us over the next few years but there is not much we can do about it. Like it or not, we are a victim of the growth of the City as I have said, but at the end of the day we expect there will be benefits. Unfortunately, the end of the day is several years away.

To summarize, as you might know, MOCA, by default, is essentially a facility operator, and as such, we own and operate the Community Hall and lower level Lounge, and we are the operator and manager of the City owned Jack Setters Arena. In addition, we are the official agent and operator of the South East Calgary Community Resource Centre – formally known as the Family Resource Centre. And of course we are actively involved in the quality of life issues like traffic, community planning, bylaw enforcement issues, and others. Going forward, we will continue our work with the City planners on the Greenline issues, the Millican Ogden Area Redevelopment Plan, and the South Hill Station Area Plan, as well the many other community issues that come up from time to time through our Civic Affairs Committee. And of course to keep the Community Hall Expansion project moving forward.

And by the way, we have another casino coming up scheduled for January 3 and 4, 2019. This is a Thursday / Friday event. These casino events are very important to organizations like ours as they allow us to generate a lot of money that can be used for a multitude of projects that we might not be

able to afford otherwise. Unfortunately they do require a number of volunteers so if you can help, we would appreciate it. Volunteer applications are available here tonight.

And so in closing, I want to explain that I have been so fortunate over the past five years to have had a great group of Board members to work with. As I have said many times – when you surround yourself with good people, good things happen. I want express my personal thanks to each and every one of the current Board members for their dedication to the community, for their various contributions, and specifically for their commitment to the Millican Ogden Community Association.

And as always, I would be remiss if I did not mention a vote of gratitude to the families of the Board members and volunteers, and even the staff. Board members and volunteers often spend time away from the home for meetings, or projects, and sometimes they are even working on community matters while at home. Without the support of the families, the commitment of giving back to the community may not be possible. Thank you to the families.

Again, it has been my pleasure to serve on MOCA's Board, and particularly to have served as your President over the past five years. There is much yet to do and I look forward to the upcoming year.

Thank you.

Rick Smith

President, Millican Ogden Community Association