

COUNCILLOR'S CORNER



One of the things that I love about Blackfalds is that it reminds me of my early years growing up. In the early 70's I was a child, and our young family bought our first home in Sherwood Park, which was relatively small at that time, but growing rapidly just like our Town. Much of my childhood community, and certainly my neighborhood was literally surrounded by undeveloped woods and farmland, and for me, it was a wild wonderland.

I was particularly drawn to water as a youth. As I write this, the first snowfall of this season is melting away, and it reminds me of what I would be doing as a child on a day such as this - playing along the sidewalk following the water flowing down to the storm sewer. Often friends and I would find natural objects, wood or paper that would float, and we imagined ourselves forging our way down a rapid. When I was a little older, and able to wander a few blocks from home, you would easily find me in the forest, or in a field, particularly if there was a stream or a pond. There was always some interesting growth, or life that I could watch and interact with.

As I grew, so did that community, and that natural environment slowly disappeared - replaced by houses and malls, schools and businesses. The methodology for managing the streams and ponds back then was often to just fill them in and replace the natural flow of water with underground infrastructure. For me, my childhood progressed to adulthood alongside the demise of many of those micro-ecosystems. Needless to say, I didn't like it, and have always been interested in a different approach. When I moved to this town, I saw that difference immediately. I think most of us enjoy how close we are to this fringe of nature here in Blackfalds.

I have been fortunate during my time on Council to be involved in environmental and watershed activities that the Town engages in. As it turns out, Blackfalds borders 2 incredibly large, and diverse watershed systems - The Red Deer River Watershed (www.rdrwa.ca), and the Battle River Watershed (www.battleriverwatershed.ca). Around and throughout our community, we have numerous small waterbodies that are part of these watersheds. Much of the current, and future development is carefully planned to work in harmony with these systems. Past and present Council and Administration have made watershed protection a vital part of our sustainable growth. The Town is currently engaged at different phases of two major, and one minor stormwater management projects that will both closely resemble natural watershed flow and ecosystems. The East Stormwater project was largely completed this year, and the North West Stormwater Project is in the final stages of pre-construction preparation. The Multi-Plex Expansion will require adaptations to the current Stormwater System.

All of these will be growth sustainable projects, and add an enormous amount of beauty and natural feel to the community as it grows.

The Town is actively working on a comprehensive Environmental Plan, and we work closely with both watersheds, the Province, and more recently began working with Wolf Creek Public Schools on the future of watershed education and community projects. In addition, Council just passed a new utility bylaw with more comprehensive protection measures to our local water.

I for one don't take the water and natural environment in and around our community for granted. I hope you take some time today to appreciate the nature in your backyard.

Jamie Hoover

Councillor



November 2020

UPCOMING COUNCIL MEETINGS:

Regular Meetings

November 10 | 7:00 p.m.

November 24 | 7:00 p.m.

Standing Committee

November 16 | 7:00 p.m.

Regular Council (RCC) and Standing Committee meetings (SCC) are closed to the public until further notice.

Never miss a Council meeting! Watch live on the Town's YouTube channel.

All meetings are held in Council Chambers Civic & Culture Centre 5018 Waghorn St.



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