

Sharing Information and Ideas on Your Behalf SW Elected Officials Group

On July 16 the SW Elected Officials group (MP James Rajotte, Councillors Bryan Anderson and Don Iveson, Trustees Marilyn Bergstra and Catherine Ripley, and MLAs Dave Hancock and Fred Horne) met to share information and continue our ongoing discussion on how we can work collaboratively on our constituents' behalf.

MLA Horne's main concern was the spate of arson-related fires in the Duggan area over the last year, including alley fires, the costly fires at St. Augustine and Rideau Park Schools, plus the devastating fire at Lifestyle Options on 106 Street in the spring. Councillor Anderson remarked that Edmonton Police Services Superintendent Nigel Stevens is constantly reminding community members to phone in any suspicious activities. By doing so, crime and disorder activities can be better tracked and then tackled by police. Out of this comment rose a commitment by all of us to encourage you – the community – to follow through on this advice so that, together, the police and the community can resolve these issues in our neighbourhoods. So, if you see something suspicious and urgent, please call 911. If you see something suspicious but consider it a non-emergency, please call 780-423-4567. Thank you!

Other topics of conversation included an update by MP Rajotte on several federal infrastructure funds: Infrastructure Stimulus Fund, Knowledge Infrastructure Fund, and the Recreation Infrastructure Fund. Through these funds have flowed resources for the LRT and SW interchange, grants to U of A, Grant MacEwan and NAIT, and funding for several recreation projects.

Councillors Anderson and Iveson distributed materials on the City Centre Airport and Capital Power decisions and the Edmonton Taskforce on Community Safety (www.edmonton.ca/safetytaskforce), and then mainly focused their comments on the future plans for the LRT. The City's long-term vision is to provide LRT to all quadrants of the city ultimately building and operating over 128 km of transit line. The City cannot achieve this vision on its own, but the Councillors showed that through an investment of \$100M by the City, Province, and Federal Government over the next 20 years, almost 60% of the final LRT network could be accomplished.

MLA Hancock and Trustees Bergstra and Ripley all spoke about the needs of the immigrant and refugee families in Edmonton. Trustee Bergstra pointed to work being done in Finland to successfully integrate students with little or no English into the education system while Trustee Ripley pointed to the new Multicultural Education Policy passed in June by the Board of Edmonton Public Schools and some developmental work underway on a year-round Transition Centre for those students with limited English and minimum understanding of Canada and the Canadian education system.

Trustee Ripley also spoke about a SW Community Mapping Meeting held in June, which showed the dearth of social services for children, families, seniors, and immigrants in the southwest, especially below 23 Avenue (www.mapsalbertacapitalregion.ca/L-

[SWEEdmonton.html](#)). This situation is something this group will continue to discuss in the future, and if you have thoughts about how to ameliorate or fast-track the provision of services into these ever-expanding neighbourhoods, please contact one or all of us.

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