Dear Ward 2 Residents:

This report describes how council is working to protect our environment and provide quality recreational services for Regina citizens. We want to build complete neighbourhoods where residents can enjoy healthy and fun living and where young people can grow, learn and play without the temptation of gangs and drugs.

You will find stories about our dedicated volunteer community associations, our work to beautify downtown, our investment in pools and parks, our support for inclusive homes and heritage housing and our efforts to make Regina a sustainable city.

Residents have told me that office buildings belong downtown, not in Wascana Park. I will continue to oppose the proposed construction of the Brandt Office Tower in the park. In December, the Provincial Auditor will release her report examining the approval process for this project. I have written to her pointing out where that process has failed to meet the legal requirements for meaningful public consultation.

City administration’s 2020 budget proposals come before council in December. The public will have an opportunity for input. I think that it is possible to provide essential services – roads, police, fire, parks, recreation, water, waste disposal, public transit and cultural support – while still keeping the mill rate affordable especially for those on fixed incomes. Efforts to use best practices and to get maximum value for your tax dollars will be top of mind.

Every day I am grateful for the privilege of serving you. You can always reach me by phone, 306-789-2888, or email, bhawkins@regina.ca.

You have my best wishes for happiness and health as winter and the holiday season approach.

Bob Hawkins, Councillor, Ward 2
A New Recreation Master Plan

Key to the future quality of life for all residents of Regina, and for providing alternatives to gangs and drugs for our young people, is the provision of good recreation opportunities. Earlier this year, after extensive public input, consultants presented the City with a detailed Recreational Master Plan.

The average age of public recreation facilities in Regina is 43 years. It would cost $199 million to replace all recreation facilities at current service levels and $350 million at modern standards.

The report recommended a new outdoor pool, better indoor pool capacity, more trail connections, dog parks, picnic sites, accessible playgrounds, athletic fields, ball diamonds, cricket pitches, pickleball courts and spray pads.

The challenge will be to find the necessary financial resources to achieve this. Modelled on the recent highly successful Residential Road Renewal Program, I have placed a motion before Council that would dedicate .5% (i.e. one-half of one percent) of any mill rate increase for the next five years to funding a recreation infrastructure program. This would yield $1.25 million in 2020, rising steadily to $6.75 million in 2024, and an equal amount every year thereafter without any further mill rate increase.

I was grateful that the mayor and all councillors agreed to co-sponsor the motion.

The Input Home

Last May the shovel went into the ground to begin construction of a new home in Harbour Landing for ten young adults living with intellectual challenges. It is a dream come true for the new residents who will be able to live independently in their own private condo units while sharing space kitchen, dining and activities space. The residents are long standing Friends who will be able to support each other.

The condominium is being constructed by the parents of the residents who put together a non-profit group, Input Housing Corp. Elizabeth Popowich, a parent, explained that our children, “can come together as a family with the idea that one day (when we) will be gone and they will be family to each other.”

The idea immediately received enthusiastic support from city council. The city was able to assist with a change to the zoning bylaw and helping with the acquisition of a building permit.

For progress reports visit www.inpthousing.com

Wascana Pool

Wascana pool, built in 1947, was at the end of its useful life. It was demolished in October. A new pool will be ready for use in the summer of 2021.

Feedback on the design has been sought from all stakeholders. 4,000 residents replied to an online survey. The three design options being considered all provide for leisure and 25 metre lap swimming. Other features include zero depth entry, diving boards, water slides, separate hot pools, inclusive change rooms, a concession and, outside the pool fence, a playground. Accessibility and environmental standards are being given priority. Further feedback is now being gathered.
The Cook House

This castle-like residence at the south-west corner of Albert and Hill, in Ward 2, was built by Regina pioneer businessman Robert Cook, founder of the Regina Brewing Company. That company later became Molson’s. Noted Regina architect, Van Egmond and Storey, designed this tutor revival-style home, with exterior two-story tower, and an interior that features a grand staircase, beautiful woodwork, an elegant living room with large central fireplace, a dining room bordered by a unique sculptured metal ceiling trim, a sun room with multi-paned leaded glass windows, and interior construction using wooden pegs instead of nails.

Deirdre Malone, Cook’s granddaughter, recently came from Toronto to tell Regina city council of the grand occasions held in the home including a visit by Prime Minister Mackenzie King who held an event there during the 1935 federal election campaign. He mentioned the home in his diaries that are now one of our country’s most important historic documents.

When the new owners of the Cook residence sought a demolition permit from the city, Heritage Regina rallied a group of Regina citizens to save the home. “If we rip apart the works of the last generation,” I argued at council, “then we can expect our children and our grandchildren to rip apart the works that we’re most proud of, the works that reflect who we are and the things we value.” Reaffirming our commitment in Regina’s Official City Plan to “embrace built heritage,” City Council recently voted to declare the Cook House a designated heritage property.

“The Hole in the Heart of Regina!”

It was more than an eyesore; it was an embarrassment and was unsafe. Over two years ago I expressed concern about this. After much work, the city was able to obtained permission from the courts to fill in the Capital Pointe excavation at the north-west corner of Victoria and Albert.

The owner of the property has it up for sale. The cost of filling in the hole was approximately $2.5 million dollars. The city has first claim to recover those costs out of the proceeds of any eventual sale. The province needs to give the city the regulatory tools to insure that a situation like this never happens again.
Five years ago, Council adopted a motion introducing a Residential Road Renewal Program. One percent of yearly mill rate increases, each year for five years, was dedicated to establishing a fund for residential road renewal. Since that fund has been established, $47.3 million has been allocated to improving 88 km of residential roads.

City staff assesses all residential roads yearly. They are graded good, fair or poor. Roads in fair condition, with concrete sidewalks in good condition, are eligible to receive a surface treatment that involves laying down a thin layer of asphalt to extend the life of the road by 10-12 years.

Roads with pavement in fair condition, but with sidewalks, curbs and gutters in poor shape, receive a rehabilitation treatment. A fresh layer of asphalt is applied and the sidewalks, curbs and gutters are either upgraded or replaced.

Roads with pavement, sidewalks, curbs and gutters all in poor shape are eligible to be Rebuilt. The entire road and cement work is removed and replaced along with aging underground infrastructure such as pipes.

The diagram above shows how expensive this work is. 190 meters of road, about one block, cost $375,000 to rebuild, or $115,000 to rehabilitate, or $30,000 to be given the thin-lift surface treatment.

Reducing the backlog of repairs will take time. Money is spent rebuilding the poorest roads but also repairing roads in fair condition so that their lives can be extended.
Maple Leaf Pool

Maple Leaf pool has come to the end of its useful life. When a recommendation not to replace the pool came before council, numerous citizen delegations came to tell us of the good times and friendships made at Maple Leaf and of the kindness of the lifeguards.

One speaker, a 14 year old young man from the inner city, spoke powerfully: “You people have cottages and beaches to go to for a vacation. What you don’t understand is that Maple Leaf pool is our summer vacation.”

That’s all it took for council to unanimously agree to rebuild the pool. The city stepped forward with the entire financing required after the provincial government refused to contribute the dollars necessary to obtain the release of federal funds available for this purpose. The pool will be ready for next summer.

REGINA, a Sustainable City!

Ward 2 residents frequently remind me that nothing contributes more to our quality of life than protecting the environment. You want to see less talk, more action. To that end Council unanimously approved a motion to commit Regina to becoming a 100% renewable city by 2050.

Worried that I might not be around in 2050 to celebrate my one hundredth birthday, I moved to have administration bring forward at least four “new and concrete actions” for improving environmental sustainability for implementation by 2023.

Many topics were raised during the debate – electrification of Regina’s vehicle and bus fleets, grey water piping systems, solar panels on city buildings, organic waste recycling, and wind and geothermal energy.

This past May, on my motion, council asked City Administration to report on options for limiting the use of single-use plastics such as plastic straws, polystyrene drinking cups, food take-out containers and micro beads. I followed this up by asking City Administration to draft a bylaw for consideration that would ban single-use plastic shopping bags, with appropriate exceptions for bulk, perishable and frozen goods, effective January 1, 2021.

Regina will host an Environmental Conference next May to which citizens and municipalities are being invited to hear cutting-edge speakers describe best practices in energy management and environmental sustainability. I will push for action on the ideas coming out of this conference.
Ward 2’s Community Associations are Busy

Lakeview Park is a one block city park at 20th and Montague just west of Lakeview United Church. The Lakeview Community Association (LCA) has decided to give the park a significant face lift. It has saved money for the project and is looking for donations (tax receiptable) and grants.

The improvements will be made in stages as funds become available. This past spring the LCA provided $17,000 which enabled the city to plant a variety of trees along the east and south borders of the park. The next stage will see the installation of recreation equipment and the last stage the installation of a ‘pump track’ for young cyclists and skateboarders.

Several years ago, the Albert Park Community Association raised funds to build an outdoor gym and an all-season walking path in Realtors’ Park. Elsewhere in this newsletter you can read of the establishment of the new Harbour Landing Community Association. We owe a big thanks to these dedicated volunteers who do so much for our neighbourhoods.

The New Harbour Landing Community Association


For the first time in 40 years, Regina has a new community association. The rapid growth in the number of families in Harbour Landing, and the opening of the new schools, meant that it was time. I asked city staff to put together exploratory meetings with potential volunteers. Today, under the energetic leadership of Lauren Benesh, the Harbour Landing Community Association has been launched.

The Association’s vision for Harbour Landing is to be a safe, caring and vibrant community that celebrates diversity and brings people together. Its mission is to create opportunities for community engagement and program participation that meets the diverse and unique needs of the Harbour Landing neighbourhood.

Volunteers are putting together plans for a family outdoor skating event at the Fairchild rink, a family game night at Harbour Landing Village, a basketball day, a volleyball program and, with the arrival of spring, a community picnic. Next fall, sporting programs will be offered.

For more information visit www.facebook.com/hlcaregina or email info@hlcaregina.com.