

Background Notes from the Mayor's Desk – May 2017

Sundre's Broadband Opportunity - Council needs your help on this decision.

Tuesday, May 9th there will be 3 presentations at the Community Centre regarding Broadband and the questions Council is asking the public to answer.

The Town of Sundre has looked at having provided either a private outside supplier or a "Town owned" broadband network that would wholesale access to internet service providers (ISPs), to provide improved broadband service to businesses and residents. We need your help answering two important questions:

1. Would you subscribe to the service (which would provide internet, TV and phone services)? and
2. Do you support using taxpayer money to construct a "Town owned" network?

To make a "Town owned" service feasible, we must have a commitment of 50% of businesses and 30% of residences agree to sign up (or averaged out to 33% of total premises in Town). The purpose of the information sessions on May 9th is to provide information to all of you about what the services might look like so you can make an informed decision about whether you would commit to subscribing, and whether you believe the Town should take on this project.

We will be asking everyone to respond to a survey online to answer these questions and we are looking for 100% response. We are looking for only one response from each household or business. We have hired a firm to do follow up calls, and even knock on doors to be sure we get the largest number of public responses possible, before Council makes the decision about our broadband future.

There are many questions I'm sure you will have. What is broadband? What will it cost me? What are the services I can expect, compared with what I have now? Will this project cause my taxes to go up? Why should I be concerned about broadband at all? When would the service be available? Why would the Town take on this project? What are the risks of the Town doing this project, and what are the possible rewards? What will improved broadband mean to the business community, the medical community, and schools? Is there any economic development benefit to having improved broadband in Sundre? What will our future look like if we don't do anything about broadband?

I'm sure you have many more questions, and that is the reason the presentations on broadband are set for Tuesday May 9th at the Community Centre. At 10:00 AM, the presentation will cater to seniors and those members of the public who can come during the day. At 12:00 noon, the presentation will address issues that are of concern to the business and medical communities. At 5:30, the presentation will focus on issues, concerns and questions that the general public may have. Please mark your calendar and come out to ask questions and inform yourself about this issue so you can give Council your informed response to the two big questions we really need your help with.

On another matter, how are you all doing in your recruitment efforts for vacant Council positions in the upcoming Town Council election in October? If not you, then who would be an excellent candidate to sit on Council? Look for upcoming information sessions because time passes quickly and we don't want to be trying to convince people at the last minute to serve for the next four exciting years :)

Please call me (403-559-7352) if you want to talk about any of the information above, or any other topic.

Terry Leslie, Mayor