

# What's hot in Outlook: Residents turn out for information night

By Hiromi Fusano  
*The Outlook*

hfusano@theoutlook.ca

About 90 residents converged on the Outlook Civic Centre last Monday night to find out what's on and what's hot in the Outlook district. The two-hour long event marked the second occasion to inform the public about various local initiatives, both public and private, from those responsible for the projects.

The attendance was slightly down compared to the first-time around when over 100 people showed up. Regardless, organizers were calling the second Outlook information night another success. "It went very good. I think a lot of people were here," said Lyle Rankin, president of the Outlook & District Chamber of Commerce. "I think presenters were good. I think a lot of good information came out tonight," Rankin added.

Indeed, the attendees came home with a wide range of factual information on the new integrated health centre, Murray Silljer's recreational housing development along the South Saskatchewan River, a brand-new location for the Bethlehem Lutheran Church, to name a few ongoing projects.

There were also representatives from two different irrigation groups - the Westside Irrigation Projects and the South Saskatchewan River Irrigation District. But unfortunately delegates from the Gardiner Dam Terminal and the Whitecap Dakota First Nation were unable to attend that night.

A total of six speakers took roughly ten minutes to briefly go over their plans and progress after Outlook May-

or Bob Stephenson made his opening remarks.

The first speaker was Grant Pederson of the SSRID. He talked about continuous demand for irrigation, making partnerships with other irrigation groups and potential expansion plans around the Loreburn and Elbow area.

Doug Ball, project manager for the Westside group, reported to the audience that federal and provincial funding for the phase two study has been approved. The group is using a total of \$340,000 to identify specific locations, he added.

Russ McPherson of the Mid Sask CFDC/REDA provided a reality check for rural dwellers and strongly promoted the concept of regionalism as a way to revitalize rural economy. "We have growth opportunities. We have to take advantage of them," he told the crowd. With several municipalities working in cooperation, he said, small communities could increase their fiscal and infrastructural volumes as well as human resource and administrative capacities.

With all these benefits in mind, he said he's been working to establish an initiative on tax and investment sharing. McPherson is also trying to see if municipalities are interested in creating a position for regional water technician.

It may take time to see the results. But he said one good example of regional cooperation was evident in the announcement of Highway 219. Several surrounding municipalities stepped up to the plate. The outcome is a new highway - many locals consider a transportation lifeline to Saskatoon.

Murray Silljer, a private housing developer, briefly spoke about the steps he has made to get permission to build 37 residential housing units and two commercial areas. He said his project has taken a lot longer than he thought because of all sorts of regulatory requirements, including environmental and heritage studies. However, he is planning to get all the permits as well as service and supply agreements in place by early next year. And, he'll hit the ground shortly after.

Tony Peter, representing the Bethlehem Lutheran Church, told the crowd that his project was also going to see some ground activities around the same time. "We are planning to start construction in April or May," Peter said. There is an obstacle though that his group has to remove the gas pipeline currently placed underneath the new location near LCBI.

Following Peter's presentation, Ball came up to the stage again and started talking about the health centre. From the break down of all the costs associated with the facility, to detailed design plans of the new west wing, and to the determination of bed numbers, the project manager tried to cover the basic information.

According to Ball, long-term care beds will be reduced to 45 from 50 and acute care beds will go from 14 to 10. These new numbers were determined by the Saskatchewan Health and were based on future projections of population decrease for seniors. Many residents may think the population of seniors is growing in Outlook. It is true, Ball said. However, he told the crowd that those who come to Outlook are from surrounding areas. Therefore, the regional population forecast remains unchanged.

The crowd was also told that there would be some new features, such as the availability of digital x-ray equipment and improved emergency services. The completion of the health centre is expected in the fall of 2007.

Before the end of the night, Elwin Hermanson, MLA for the Rosetown-Elrose constituency, touched on a couple of issues discussed in the legislature and introduced his successor, Jim Reiter.

Overall, the event went smoothly. Before taking any sort of break, the organizer is already eyeing the third information night. "This is the second one we've done and we will see what happens in the spring," Rankin said.

Canadian Community Newspapers Association



**newspapers**  
tell the local story

*Special Memories*