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The Sunny South News

News

Communities in Bloom



YARD OF THE WEEK: Pictured at 2235, 23 Avenue. Communities in Bloom will be holding their 20th Anniversary Coaldale Garden Tour on July 30, 2-4 p.m.

Town of Picture Butte provides update on 4th Street construction

By Erika Mathieu
Sunny South News

After several weeks of uncertainty, Picture Butte council held a special council meeting to discuss the ongoing construction along 4th Street.

The nature of the meeting was to discuss a cost increase request to the existing contract. Most of the July 18 meeting was closed to the public, as per the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (FOIP).

Several community members publicly expressed concern and frustration over council entering into a closed session over the issue. Although there are strict parameters which must be met before municipal council may enter into a closed session, some residents expressed their concerns over what they perceived as a lack of transparency in the process.

According to a pre-meeting communications bulletin issued by the Town's official social media channels, "the request to have a cost increase to the contract is the reason that work did not begin (on time) as previously communicated and as scheduled."

Once the meeting came out of the closed session, Deputy Mayor Henry de Kok sponsored a motion that council "proceed with this project and approve the extra expenditures due to unforeseen circumstances provided that the contractor pays for half of the increase in engineering costs." The motion was carried unanimously. Although exact figures were not discussed in the open portion of the council meeting, the Town later posted an update to Facebook on July 22 which explained "the increase in costs is rounded up to \$50,000 which includes engineering and an increase in costs for concrete and pavement. The original budget for engineering and construction was \$690,000."

The Town put out an updated communications bulletin following the meeting to assure residents, that "construction was to commence July 25, and provided updated maps to direct local traffic to surrounding amenities during the upgrades. "At this time 4th Street from Highway 25 to 5th Street South will be closed to vehicular and pedestrian traffic."



ROAD CLOSURE: Work on the 4th St. sanitary main upgrade was expected to begin on Monday, July 25.

Coaldale council hears results of Transportation and Connectivity Study

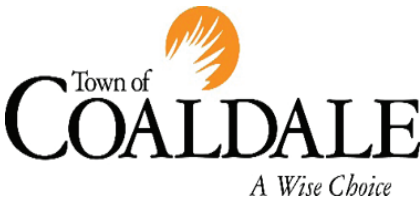
By Erika Mathieu
Sunny South News

The Town of Coaldale was recently presented with a report outlining information on the potential options for a future pedestrian crossing following a presentation which highlighted the findings of the West Coaldale Transportation and Connectivity Study.

A report was presented to council by Dustin Yanke, Infrastructure manager for the Town, Eric Dyson from MPE, and Steve Prozniak from DIALOG, which outlined background information reviews, pedestrian crossing assessments, cost considerations, connectivity evaluations, and provided recommendations based on the findings.

The study examined existing transportation networks, focusing on Highway 845, 20th St., Land O' Lakes Drive, and 30th St.

In 2018, the Town underwent a



Transportation Master plan which highlighted areas for potential improvements along 30th street. Through public engagement, a recommendation came forward for a pedestrian overpass in the area to accommodate a pedestrian overpass.

Highway 3 and Land O' Lakes drive also completed a traffic assessment in 2016 and focused on the volume of traffic in the Land O' Lakes area. A further assessment was completed in 2021 at 30th St

Dyson said, the intersection of Land O' Lakes Dr. and Highway 3, "kind of hit as the first location that had some real potential for a

crossing," during the most recent study.

As part of the pedestrian crossing assessment, MPE completed a functionality assessment and cost estimate for a pedestrian crossing at Land O' Lakes, at grade, as an overpass and as an underpass. As well, 30th St, at-grade.

An at-grade crossing at Land O' Lakes would involve a signalized intersection, which according to Dyson, "is considered the safest, at grade, crossing control that one can provide." The cost estimate for this project comes in at \$1,094,200, with an estimated completion date by winter 2023.

Dyson said the 30th Street at-grade crossing would be feasible and cost just under \$1 million.

It was noted that a similar implementation and cost schedule would apply to an at-grade crossing at Land O' Lakes Dr.

Continued on Page 2

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