

COUNCILLOR MARIANNE WILKINSON'S

2007 YEAR-END REVIEW - FOR KANATA NORTH -



Dear Residents of Kanata North,

During the Municipal Election, I made a number of commitments to residents in the Kanata North ward. One year has now passed and this, my first annual report, will let you know what progress I've made on many fronts and on meeting the promises I made to you.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

During the past year, Council has dealt with two budgets. Members worked together to produce a 0% increase in the 2007 budget in order to give the Mayor time to set up his transformation process and change the way business is done at City Hall. To achieve the 0% increase, most reserves were drained.

In the spring, Council took part in a transformation exercise to set priorities for the City, review the governance structure, set strategic directions and recommend a sustainable financial framework for the City. From this exercise, the Long Range Financial Planning Committee, of which I'm a member, developed a fiscal framework to provide a high-level roadmap to sustainable finances and a tool to measure the City's financial condition.

This fiscal framework was used to develop the 2008 budget. It included recognizing the need to put more funds into maintaining our infrastructure. This was acted upon by setting a 2% tax levy. We also agreed to spend the first three months of 2008 reviewing administrative departments to find efficiencies and reduce the tax rate by means of any savings found before the 2008 tax bill is finalized. We changed the policy on the proportion of transit costs to be borne by the taxpayer from 45% to 50% and adjusted transit fares to meet this level. Operating budgets were set at inflation increases but with some cuts and some increases in fees, the tax increase for operations was held to 1.5%. The remainder of the tax increase was for policing at 1.4%.

During the election, I committed to working to ensure value for tax dollars. This budget is moving in that direction. The review of administrative departments, followed by a review of all service departments over the next 3 years, is geared toward finding additional efficiencies without hindering basic services.

TRANSIT

My transit commitments were to cancel the light rail project, improve bus routes within Kanata and complete the western transitway. In December I was elected Vice-Chair of the Transit Committee where I've been able to work on meeting these commitments.

The North-South Light Rail project was the first major issue dealt with by Council. Details on the project confirmed that costs had escalated and that the low projected usage together with capital costs would lead to tax increases. After several lengthy and contentious debates, the proposal was cancelled by a 13-11 vote. Since then, Council has approved an interim plan that includes a downtown tunnel, completion of east, west and southwest transitways and providing light rail to the southeast.

Kanata North residents will benefit from the construction of the transitway from Pinecrest to Bayshore now under way. The portions from Bayshore to Moodie and from March to Terry Fox are now being designed with construction funds in the budget for 2009. Updating the environmental study for the section from Woodroffe to Pinecrest is in the 2008 budget with construction funds in 2010. The environmental assessment for the extension to Scotiabank Place is also now underway.

Meetings were held about local bus routes for all parts of Kanata during the winter with major improvements for both residential and business areas in Kanata implemented in September.

ROADS AND BRIDGES

Kanata North lacks many needed major roads. Terry Fox Drive is incomplete, the Goulbourn Forced Road needs to be moved out of Trillium Woods, Kanata Avenue needs to be finished, and both Campeau Drive and March Road need to be widened. All of these are identified as needs on the City's Master Transportation Plan.

I've been working with staff to move these road needs forward. At least 3 years ago, March Road was supposed to be widened to the Old Carp Road, with traffic lights there and at Klondike. Most problems have now been addressed, with the final major obstacles (with respect to drainage and land acquisition) close to being resolved. The final working design is underway and a tender call for its construction is expected by spring.

Advancing the completion of Terry Fox Drive has been another priority. I was pleased that the Mayor's Task Force on Transportation acknowledged this as an immediate need in their report *Moving Ottawa* released in June. Terry Fox Drive is a development charge (DC) road, meaning its funding comes from money paid for each new home and business. The DC's provide funds for many services in developing areas so that property taxes don't need to be used. Council passed a motion this fall asking for grants of 1/3 of the cost from each of the federal and provincial governments for the construction of the first 2 lanes of Terry Fox and the construction of the Strandherd Bridge. As a result of this motion, funds have been provided in the 2008 budget to prepare the final design of the road, although construction will not occur until federal and provincial funding is confirmed.

Council approved the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Goulbourn Forced Road (GFR) and Kanata Avenue in July. The GFR will follow a new alignment, roughly from its present location on Kanata Avenue to Terry Fox, west of its present terminus. It includes two roundabouts as traffic calming devices and provision for an overpass at the railway line. The local developer has asked for a 'bump-up' of the EA, which could postpone construction. Funds are available to construct the portion of Kanata Avenue from the GFR to Stikine and the GFR to approximately the Rockeries in 2008.

All of these roads will help to alleviate traffic concerns for Morgan's Grant, Briarbrook, the Kanata North Business Park, rural Kanata, West Carleton and Kanata Lakes. It will also result in changing the present location of the GFR through the Trillium Woods into a trail.

The National Capital Commission, together with the governments of Ontario and Quebec, have started an Environmental Assessment to determine the location of future bridge crossings on the Ottawa River. They have stated that one will be needed in the east and one in the west, with construction for one occurring within 20 years and the other within 50 years. I supported a motion at Council to make an east end bridge at Kettle Island a priority. This bridge would move huge trucks, including logging trucks, away from downtown Ottawa, reducing pollutants, congestion and supporting local communities and businesses. A west end bridge is a long way off but I have concerns that a route in rural Kanata, far from any Ontario destination, is being considered rather than a location that would connect urban areas on both sides of the river. Visit the study website, www.ncrcrossings.com, to find more information and to participate as this process continues.

CARP LANDFILL

One great concern for residents is the potential expansion of the Carp Landfill and I promised to do what I can to ensure that it is closed. I've been working closely with the four other west-end Councillors, the Mayor and community groups to deal with the odour problems, develop a response to any expansion plan and support activities that would reduce the amount of garbage going to landfills and hence reduce the need to expand the Carp Landfill.

Approval for a landfill rests with the province. Early in 2007, Waste Management applied for the approval of the terms of reference for a study to triple the size of the Carp Landfill. I participated in activities with the citizen coalition and local Councillors to oppose this expansion, and we were successful in having Waste Management take back its submission to the province. There is still a need for vigilance as we expect Waste Management to submit a new application for a smaller expansion and possibly a garbage incinerator.

We were able to get the Ministry of the Environment to take a strong stand on the odour problems - which were and continue to be a concern. You can view the odour reports, which I receive weekly, at www.nodump.ca With present usage, the existing landfill will be closed within 4 years.

I continue to be vigilant and to work with community groups to be ready to quickly respond if another application for expansion is made to the province. I will report any such action in my weekly column so that residents are kept abreast of the situation.

REDUCING GARBAGE

One way to reduce dependence on landfills is to increasingly follow the 4 R's – refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle – to minimize the amount of waste for disposal and to look to technology to deal with the residual. The City of Ottawa is responsible for dealing with residential garbage while the Province of Ontario is responsible for industrial, commercial and institutional (ICI) waste. 33% of residential garbage is recycled while only 17% of the ICI waste (which is 67% of the total garbage in Ottawa) is recycled. Both the City and the Province have a 60% diversion target.

SOURCE-SEPARATED ORGANICS

In October, City Council approved the implementation of source-separated organic waste material collection across the city. A private company is building the plant to turn the organics into compost and has been awarded a 20-year contract to take city organics. The collection part of the program will be implemented when the plant is completed, set for March 1, 2009. The City will provide the organic containers to all households. The organic program will enable the City to meet the 60% diversion for household waste.

PLASCOENERGY

PlascoEnergy is a Kanata North company that has constructed a commercial scale demonstration plant at the City's Trail Road landfill that converts waste to energy. Built at no cost to the City, this technology, coupled with a higher diversion rate, could eliminate the need for more landfill sites as well as reducing the landfill gases that contribute to global warming.

GIVE AWAY DAY

For many years Kanata had held a successful Give Away Day. The new City of Ottawa cancelled it. In 2006 the Kanata Beaverbrook Community Association decided to bring it back as one way of reducing the garbage going to landfills. Although it rained that day, much was put out so someone else could reuse it.

Last spring I put forward a motion to Council to bring the Give Away Day back and have it held across the entire City. Council agreed and our first citywide event was held in June. After an evaluation of the event, which deemed it a success, it was agreed to hold Give Away Days twice a year, in the spring and fall on regular dates that could be included in the recycling calendar. Watch for the 2008 dates and put aside anything that you no longer need and are willing to give to another person.

There are many other opportunities to reduce your waste. Check out the Rethink Garbage section on the City website for more information. If we work together to reduce waste then we will be in a strong position to stop the expansion of the Carp Landfill site.

TOXIC WASTE

The City holds regular days for you to take any toxic materials, including the efficient light bulbs that contain some mercury, to a depot where they are safely recycled. Watch for the dates at the Maple Grove facility in Kanata. To deal with the long line-ups, there will be an increase in the number of depots in 2008.



Tree Planting at EEP Kanata

PUBLIC SAFETY

It is disappointing to see the amount of graffiti and vandalism in our community. It is really a community problem and we all need to work together to minimize it. One good way is to organize a Neighbourhood Watch Group on your street. Such groups are a deterrent to crime and help to keep our communities safe and attractive.

Vandalism and graffiti removal is costly. Every broken panel in a bus shelter costs about \$6,000 to repair and replace; broken lights are also a safety problem. Individuals also suffer through damage to homes and cars. If you know of someone who has committed vandalism, please report it. Young people who start with vandalism can move on to other crimes if it is not stopped quickly.

Congratulations to the Briarbrook/Morgan's Grant Community Association who have undertaken to rid their community of graffiti by setting up a Graffiti Patrol. The City is developing training to assist community groups undertaking this kind of work.

If you see graffiti or other results of vandalism, report it by calling the City of Ottawa at 311. If you see it happening, it is considered a crime in progress and can be reported by calling 911 or 613-230-6211.

KANATA TOWN CENTRE AND THE WEST DISTRICT LIBRARY

One of my positions is as a Trustee on the Ottawa Library Board. The Board is a mixture of City Councillors and citizen appointees. It sets policy for the Library, is responsible for preparing the Library budget, and develops long range plans for library service. The plan for improving library service, which has grown by 45% since amalgamation, is to build District Libraries to provide centralized reference materials, greater access to computers and to augment the service of the branches. Plans were already in place for the next library to be the West District Library and in September, the Board approved the location for this Library to be in the Kanata Town Centre as part of a civic building that would also include a Client Service Centre.

The Kanata Town Centre is an area planned by the City of Kanata along both the north and south side of the Queensway. The key commercial area is in Kanata North and includes not only the Centrum but also the area west of Terry Fox Drive to the Carp River and the lands between Kanata Avenue and Village Green south of Campeau Drive. The latter includes lands purchased by the City of Kanata for both a major natural park and a future Main Street as well as lands owned by Urbandale that were serviced this year and are now undergoing development.

The City lands are to be the commercial heart of Kanata. In the 2008 budget, funds have been provided to do the necessary studies needed prior to development and to conduct a search for a developer to implement the vision for these lands. Along Main Street there would be storefront retail with residential above, a town square at the height of the land and the civic building fronting on a town square and backing on to a natural environment park.

At one of the Ward Council meetings, there was a discussion on the vision for Main Street and there will be further opportunities to input into specific developments as they come forward. The Kanata Visioning report is on my website and I encourage you to read it and send me any comments as we move forward in developing an important part of our community.

WARD ACTIVITIES AND BUSINESS

WARD OFFICE

To serve you better I am pleased to have my Ward Office in the Mlacak Centre, 2500 Campeau Drive in Kanata, open for business. I will have staff in the office on Wednesdays and Fridays from 10am to 3pm. I'll be there when I don't have meetings at City Hall. I am happy to meet with you, either in Kanata or downtown at a time convenient for you, including Saturdays. Please call my office to book an appointment.

WARD COUNCIL

Your input into important issues, large and small, is of great value to me. As promised, I have set up regular Ward Council meetings to bring information to you as well as to hear feedback on various issues. The Council is a core of representatives from various groups but since all meetings are open to everyone, many residents come when an issue of importance to them is on the agenda. I've covered a variety of topics from graffiti, to speeding, blasting concerns, environmental and development issues and much more. Kanata residents have always been active in ensuring that their community meets their expectations, so I'm pleased that your involvement and interest in the development and growth of our community continues. The first Ward Council in 2008 will be on January 28th in the program room of the Kanata Senior's Centre and will feature a dialogue with Police Chief White. I look forward to more engaging conversation and great ideas brought to the table through this forum.

WARD PICNIC

The first annual Kanata North Ward Picnic was held on a beautiful July afternoon and it was a wonderful success! The food and activities were free thanks to our generous sponsors. More than a thousand Kanata residents, from all parts of the community, walked, cycled or drove to the Sandwell Green for bbq treats and great entertainment, including Maria Hawkins, Bob FM, a bouncy castle, a giant slide, and a number of other fun activities for people of all ages. It was a great time for everybody to enjoy some fun with their families and meet their neighbours. My staff and I are looking forward to next year's picnic already!

CHILDCARE

One major concern of many parents in Kanata North is the lack of childcare facilities. Last spring there were 1300 children in Kanata North waiting for childcare. Some parents drive into Ottawa to their child's childcare provider and then back to work in Kanata! There is no funding available to add new facilities in places like Kanata where there are large numbers of young children. In April I established a Kanata North Childcare Committee to work toward meeting this large unmet need for licensed childcare spaces in Kanata North. The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board has agreed to include a childcare centre in the proposed Briarbrook public school and we are also looking at other locations.

WEBSITE

Early in 2007 I launched my website, www.mariannewilkinson.com, which is regularly updated with lots of helpful information for you. On my website you'll find a list of upcoming meetings and community events, an archive of publications including my newsletter, columns, and media releases, as well as City news and information. My website has an archive for Ward Council information, and includes an agenda and materials for upcoming meetings. I encourage you to check it regularly, since as well as providing information it is a great tool for me to receive feedback from you through online surveys and forms.

Photo by Sabine Gibbins EMC



Photo by Roger Lalonde

COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES/WHAT DO I DO AS A COUNCILLOR

I often get asked what it is like to be a Councillor and what I do all day. Students doing an assignment ask the most penetrating questions and really make me think about the impact of decisions. The 'job' consists of two basic parts – representing the needs of my ward and working on policies and projects that serve the City as a whole.

Ward issues vary from individual problems and concerns with respect to city services to signing off on all development projects. I spend a considerable amount of time meeting with staff and other Councillors to get the approvals needed to have our roads built, our recreation complex approved and our Main Street moving forward. To provide a forum for residents, I write a weekly column in the community papers, a monthly newsletter emailed to a list and I hold a monthly Ward Council Meeting. Other meetings are held on specific issues – for example blasting, safety, park development, noise problems, childcare and local street problems. I also attend community association meetings, Kanata Chamber events and special activities for schools or charities. These are the fun parts of the job – I enjoy meeting with students and in helping the wonderful volunteers in our community at their events.

I'm a member of four Council Committees – Corporate Services and Economic Development, Long Range Financial Planning, Transportation and Transit (on which I'm the Vice-Chair) and I am also a Trustee on the Library Board. I attend other Council Committees when there is an item on the agenda that affects Kanata and I participate in the debate. As well as attending lengthy meetings, I go through the agenda reports to ensure I'm prepared. Most days are completely booked with regular meetings or meetings on specific city issues. I also receive an average of 100 or more of emails each day. I read them all while my staff assists me in finding answers to them.

This is not a 9 to 5 job. Many days start with a 7:30am breakfast meeting and end at 10pm when I return from a community meeting. Weekends have special events in the community. And each day the commute, by car or bus, to City Hall eats up 1-2 hours. I certainly miss having a Kanata City Hall! When possible, I use the Ward Office to save the commute. It's a busy but satisfying life.

WARD COUNCIL MEETING

January 28th, 7:00pm

Program Room
Kanata Senior's Centre
2500 Campeau Drive



Photo by Daniel Reid, Kanata Courier Standard

MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE SOUTH MARCH HIGHLANDS

The City owns more than 700 acres of environmental land adjacent to Kanata North and several hundred additional acres within Kanata North which are part of the 40% parkland. Many residents now use these properties for hiking, cross-country skiing and mountain biking. The City, together with user groups, has started preparation of a management plan that will respect the delicate nature of these lands while permitting outdoor recreational activities. Public meetings will be held in the spring for input into the plan.

KANATA EXPO FIFTY-FIVE+ IN SEPTEMBER

The wonderful event, held jointly with Councillor Feltmate, was a wonderful opportunity for neighbours to meet neighbours and to find out about health, social and community services provided for older adults.

CITY WIDE POLICIES

During 2007, Council approved a number of major policy documents. These included a Pedestrian Plan, Housing Strategy, Street Lighting Policy, and the preparation of an overall Zoning Bylaw that will have its final approval early in 2008.

MY HEALTH

At the end of May I was informed that tests had confirmed a spot picked up by a regular mammogram showed that I had breast cancer. I used the opportunity to hold a press conference with representatives of the Canadian Cancer Association and the Breast Screening Program to urge women, particularly those aged 50-70, to have regular mammograms, as early detection is important in dealing with cancer.

I had surgery in June where it was confirmed that the cancer had not spread so I was spared having to go through chemotherapy. I fit my daily radiation appointments into the early morning or late afternoon to enable me to carry out all of my duties as a Councillor. I have now finished all treatments and feel fine. During the entire medical process I missed only one meeting the day after the surgery, and was even able to represent the Mayor at a conference in China in July. So women, don't put off those mammograms – it won't stop cancer from happening but it can minimize the impact.

I deeply appreciate the flowers, cards and best wishes I received after my surgery and the care of my medical team.



CHINA TRIP

In July the Mayor asked me to represent the City at a conference on Urban Innovation in Shenyang, China. The Chinese organizers covered the cost of the trip. I was able to add short trips to Shanghai and Beijing before the conference, where I presented a paper. In Shanghai I visited the Shanghai Library, met with representatives of their largest business park and did some sightseeing. Ottawa is twinned with Beijing, so I had a formal visit and luncheon with the Deputy Mayor responsible for technology, visited the Great Wall and Imperial City and had an interesting discussion with the Manager of all of the technology parks in Beijing, who just happened to have done his studies at the University of Ottawa! Since I returned, representatives of both the Beijing and Shanghai technology parks have asked to connect with Ottawa businesses and we're presently arranging for a visit from Shanghai.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For all City services, call 311 (you do not need an area code) or email 311@ottawa.ca You will be given a tracking number for any follow-up needed.

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Ward Office 613-580-2424 ext. 33242
Councillor's Fax 613-580-2514

City website www.ottawa.ca

YOUR MAILING ADDRESS

Although you live in the City of Ottawa, your official address is still Kanata, Ontario. This is similar to Toronto and other Canadian cities that have changed their municipal status but retained local names for their mailing addresses.

BEYOND OTTAWA 20/20

Beyond Ottawa 20/20 is a review of the Official Plan – which must be reviewed every five years as mandated by the Ontario Planning Act. The Transportation Master Plan and the Infrastructure Master Plan, which are supporting plans, will be reviewed at the same time.

The review revisits the existing policies and strategic directions of the Official Plan and master plans and, in consultation with Ottawa's residents, makes revisions and updates to reflect the city's current growth challenges – whether they be land-use, transportation or infrastructure related.

Kanata North was planned by the City of Kanata to contain residential areas, business areas and a town centre with retail and business uses. It also includes the 40% open space agreement for the golf course, natural environment areas and parkland. I will work to ensure that Kanata's plans are retained and that the priority for the provision of transportation and transit systems provides the services needed in our area. You are encouraged to participate in this planning process. Check the City website for details and watch my column for information on local meetings.

CHANGES IN KANATA NORTH

During 2007 many development applications were approved in Kanata North. These include four new buildings in the Centrum: Best Buy, Hockey Life Sports Store and the restaurants Scores and Moxies. Along Terry Fox there is a new store for Play It Again Sports and a new auto dealer. Farm Boy has located in the Signature Plaza while Canadian Tire is adding to its building. Plans for a Rona Store, funeral parlor, new Loblaws, 5 storey storage building and addition to the Ministry of Transportation Building along Didsbury have been approved and an application for a 30 and 24 storey hotel/office/condominium complex has been received. Between Campeau Drive and the Queensway, Urbandale has installed servicing for development of a portion of the Town Centre. A senior's centre is under construction along Campeau and an apartment complex and hotel are in the planning stages on lands closer to the Queensway. Local shopping complexes for Morgan's Grant are close to construction. Additions were added to All Saints and Walden Village and approved for Jack Donohue School.

Residential development continues in Morgan's Grant, Briarbrook and Kanata Lakes. The Brookside development is now underway and you will soon see new homes north of Kanata Avenue. A new school is being planned in Briarbrook for completion in 2009. Richcraft has started building homes off Kanata Avenue while Urbandale and Phoenix homes are servicing additional residential lands for development to start in 2008. In the business park, a new building has been constructed for Dell, a business condominium is under construction on Terry Fox and two other new buildings are in planning stages.

CONCLUSION

Working with a Council of 24 members has been challenging. Each one is dedicated to the City and to the communities they represent but not always in the same way. It makes for some interesting debates. We also no longer have the same local knowledge of staff, although we are fortunate to have some former Kanata employees working on Kanata issues at City Hall.

My staff of Jessica Stoner, Jean O'Brien, Linda Leinan and Jonathan Joynt, assist me in answering your inquiries, researching issues and arranging public meetings. Together we are dedicated to making Kanata North the best served area in the City of Ottawa.

For Police life-threatening emergency or crime in progress call 911

Other Police emergencies	613-230-6211
Community Police Centres and other inquiries call	613-236-1222 (TTY is 613-232-1123)
OC Transpo	613-741-4390 (transit info) 613-842-3600 (customer service)
Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre	613-591-3686
Kanata Food Cupboard	613-836-7847