



Hal Zorn

Councillor Blog

Welcome back fellow residents of White City, and those reading from the surrounding area, for the October 2021 edition of the White City Councillor Blog.

As many of you know, I've been advocating for a One Community approach in our region for well over a decade. I believed then and still do now that we are stronger together, as one-united urban community.

Residents and businesses across the region would benefit from the clarity, stability, and proactive planning of a single, united government.

It does really mean stronger communities, stronger services and a stronger future for all across this great area of Saskatchewan.

No other system of two governments, bumping up against each other, with competing goals and diverging visions about the future of the community makes sense.

One Community is simple and just makes sense.

We have the opportunity to jointly create Saskatchewan's next city – which is unique, and I can't wait to be part of it.

I even have some good news to report on our One Community proposal.

On November 18th, White City and the RM of Edenwold will finally have the first hearing with the Saskatchewan Municipal Board (SMB).

While this hearing is only a jurisdictional hearing, it is nevertheless a step in the right direction. This hearing was delayed for months because of COVID. In fact, the hearing is only necessary because the RM of Edenwold requested a review of how we submitted our proposal. The result has been a significant delay.

If this jurisdictional hearing goes as expected, we look forward to a binding decision by the SMB on bringing our communities together by mid-to-late 2022.

Many have asked how we got here and what has been done since the launch of the project.

Below is a brief history of events.



**ONE COMMUNITY.
STRONGER TOGETHER.**

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We completed our Future Growth Study in 2018 which showcase the need for a proper system of government to meet the needs of this growing area. We followed the recommendations of the Future Growth Study and launched a detailed proposal of how the only common-sense solution was all the communities coming together as a new community.

Over the period of several months, we held four open houses with hundreds of people attending along with positive media coverage and conducted several formal meetings with residents to explain the ins and out of the proposal and to gather residents' feedback.

We also began negotiations with the RM of Edenwold to seek their support in forming a new city and to reach an agreement in how to move forward. It was clear their leadership was not interested in joining together, despite support from many in the RM.

These negotiations transition into voluntary mediation sessions facilitated by Saskatchewan Justice between the Town and the RM, which proved unproductive.

That's why in late 2019 we ended up submitting an application to the Saskatchewan Municipal Board to seek a decision on our proposal to bring Our Communities Together. In May 2020, a case manager was finally assigned to our file only for the RM to bring up the jurisdictional technicality mentioned above.

However, we continued to push as best we could. At the same time, we updated the Town's Future Growth Study to confirm its accuracy and the need to push forward in the best interests of our growing region. We also provided additional financial analysis and documentation as requested by the SMB.

In early 2021, the jurisdictional hearing was finally set to move the application forward and then quickly cancelled because of COVID.

COVID has certainly set us back, but it's good to see the process continuing as this long-time coming hearing is now set for November 18th, 2021.

A big thank you to our advocates, our Town's administration and fellow councillors for working so hard to make our One Community vision a reality.

We will continue to move forward for the betterment of this region.

If you'd like to be an advocate for One Community, please sign the petition in support at **www.one-community.ca**. We continue to need your support to push forward.

Thanks for reading and talk to you soon!

If you have any questions, have a comment, want more information or want to suggest a topic for a future blog please email **townoffice@whitecity.ca** or call **306-781-2355** – we look forward to hearing from you!

