



Councillor Shawn Lewis

Ward 2

2020 NEWSLETTER

DEAR NEIGHBOURS,

It is hard to believe we are already approaching the end of 2020 and to say it has been a year like no other is an understatement. The arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic in March changed everything.

Council responded quickly to provide some immediate short-term relief from City Hall by deferring property tax payments, and waiving penalties and disconnects on overdue water bills. We deferred license renewals for businesses to give them a chance to adjust to the multitude of requirements they had to meet before reopening could occur and made it easier for restaurants to put in temporary patios for outdoor dining. And, although slowly, we've worked to reopen city programs and services as soon as we could. City Hall was not immune either; services were reduced or suspended as we had to lay off nearly 1500 staff and transition hundreds more to work from home duties.

Of course much of the COVID response has been out of Council's hands. Whether it was the CERB support payments, restrictions on what could be closed or open, or other measures, much of the COVID response had to come from and was directed by the Federal and Provincial Governments. I think it is important to acknowledge to you that Federal MPs Lindsay Mathyssen and Peter Fragiskatos as well as provincial MPPs Jeff Yurek and Peggy Sattler have been excellent at connecting with Council regularly to ask what we're hearing and how they can help. That "Team London" approach has helped move issues forward including; temporarily removing the time of day electricity rates, restarting driver testing, and getting funding secured to help keep people working and for help with temporary shelter and accommodation needs for more vulnerable Londoners among others.

While COVID is still here in London, contact tracing, treatment, and public safety measures have all come a long way since March, and we will get through this. Despite COVID, good things are continuing to happen in Ward 2 and I will keep working to deliver results for you and for London!

Sincerely,



Julian (top) and Kyler (bottom) were among 10 Ward 2 students I recognized this year for their community volunteer work.

ENHANCING COMMUNITY

- ◆ Hosted 2nd annual free Family Day Skate at Argyle Arena for residents in Feb
- ◆ Hosted online Civics Class and "Ask Me Anything" sessions for local students to help keep them engaged during the COVID school shutdown
- ◆ Worked with School Board Trustee Corrine Rahman to create the "Go Gold for Grads" initiative to celebrate our students when graduations had to be cancelled
- ◆ Worked with the Argyle Business Improvement Association and Argyle Community Association to start an "Argyle area regeneration study" (ongoing) to try to develop a Community Improvement Plan the way the city has in other neighbourhoods
- ◆ Worked successfully to get route 35 transit service before 8am reinstated for students and workers



EAST LIONS COMMUNITY CENTRE UPDATE

No issue has been a more frustrating one than having delay after delay in the completion of our new community centre. I feel it as much, or more than anyone. Living across the road, I've been looking out my window at a lingering construction site, month after month, after month.

Although there have been a number of different factors behind the delays, the city ultimately removed the general contractor from the site this summer. Once that happened, we had additional delays as lawyers sorted out details necessary to allow the work to resume. In October we

cleared the legal hurdles, opening the door to having work resume and I was also able to join staff to see inside the building. The good news is the project is 85% finished. The hardwood flooring for the gymnasium basketball court is probably the single largest item to finish. Most of what is left is the "finishing touches".

Sub contractors are back to work in the building and of course work has continued in the park all summer so the outdoor amenities are also nearly finished. I'm hopeful that we will FINALLY be able to celebrate the opening of this new space and all it will do for east London in the near future.



MAKING A CITY WIDE IMPACT

While campaigning I promised I would try to change some of the city's on street parking rules and I delivered.



This spring council **passed my motion to change the "overnight parking ban"** that used to run from September 1st to Victoria Day, to a shorter time of November 1st to April 30th. We also changed the 12 hour time limit to 18 hours, allowing people to leave a car parked in the same spot a little longer.

IMPROVING INFRASTRUCTURE IN WARD 2

- ◆ After 20+ years, finally had the city complete the sidewalk connecting Hudson and Joliet, a walk to school route for many students
- ◆ School zone speed bumps installed at St. Pius Catholic School & traffic calming curb bump out on Admiral Dr.
- ◆ Spruce & Haig St; new sewers, watermains, and road repaved
- ◆ Churchill & Winnipeg; new sewers, watermains, road repaved
- ◆ Jena Cres & Seaforth Crt; new sewers, watermains, road repaved
- ◆ Worked with veterans groups to develop the plan for Vimy Ridge Park improvements, which is now being completed
- ◆ New crosswalks on Merlin/Goddard/Atkinson/Starlight to connect pedestrian walkways through the neighbourhood
- ◆ New crosswalk on Hale St. connecting to Kiwanis Park & Bournemouth to access Grampian Woods Park
- ◆ New playground installed at Lord Nelson School working with the Home & School Association



Your questions and comments are always welcome, connect with me at:

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