

DAVE HANCOCK'S Keeping in Touch

MLA | EDMONTON WHITEMUD

MESSAGE FROM DAVE

Edmonton's Voice in Government

On July 21, 2007 many of us woke up to the news that one of the worst residential fires in the history of Edmonton tore through the community of MacEwan in the early hours of the morning. That day, people's homes were burned to the ground in a terrible act of arson. Many families' security and safety were extinguished when fire damaged 149 condominiums, 18 duplexes and 72 homes.

As I toured the disaster site that hot July afternoon, I was impressed by the strength of the victims and the people in our community. With any disaster, it's only a catastrophe if nothing comes of it. I'm pleased to say that many good things have risen from the ashes of this devastating experience.

First, the Edmonton Police Service is working diligently to find those responsible for this crime and they're stepping up security in new communities to prevent such action from occurring again.

Second, a provincial working group, which includes representatives from emergency services, is evaluating investigative data from recent fires in Alberta to look at whether our standards are appropriate. This work began even before the MacEwan fire occurred. Now we're pressing forward to make recommendations and some real changes that will improve safety at construction sites and building code standards.

We are also continuing to work with the National Research Council to be sure that current construction practices are safe.

There is lots of work to do. Government is looking at everything from the amount of space there is between residences, to the requirements for a protective layer underneath wood or vinyl siding as well as how construction sites themselves are maintained and secured. Even before changes are made to the Building Code, we as individuals can take steps to make our homes safer. For example, drywalling a basement ceiling will create a firewall which can slow a fire's progress giving our fire service essential time.

At the top of everyone's mind during these discussions is how we can prevent this from happening again.

However, perhaps the best thing that has come of this is that we have an even stronger, more cohesive community spirit.

In addition to the exceptional work of the firefighters and emergency personnel, I was taken aback by how quickly people came together. Within a few hours monetary donations were being collected, an unprecedented amount of household furnishings and supplies were dropped to the Salvation Army and friends and neighbours were opening their doors to those in need.

It's that kind of compassion that surpasses the shock of a disaster and brings hope to the community.

And it's that kind of spirit that makes me so proud to represent you and drives me to continue to work hard for the betterment of our community.

Royalty Review

Premier Stelmach followed through early this year on his promise to review the royalty structure for royalties paid on Alberta's natural resources (a position I also took during the leadership process and which I strongly support). A Royalty Review Committee was struck and a significant consultation process undertaken involving hearing from Albertans as well as engaging expert analysis. That report is now in and Premier Stelmach immediately released it for public review and discussion.

As owners of the resource, Albertans now have the opportunity to consider the details of this report as government thoroughly examines it before making any final decisions.

Our goal is to ensure the royalty framework strikes the right balance.

It must provide you with a fair return on the province's natural resources, while maintaining an internationally competitive system that allows the Alberta economy to continue to prosper.

I encourage you to visit www.albertaroyaltyreview.ca or call my constituency office to obtain a copy of the report so you can draw your own conclusion.

As I am committed to taking your views forward during my discussions with my caucus colleagues over the next few weeks, please take a moment to let us know what you think about the recommendations by giving my office a call at 413-5970 or email me at edmonton.whitemud@assembly.ab.ca.

You can also share your views at www.alberta.ca or by calling 427-0265.

The Royalty Panel's report is extensive and covers many aspects of the oil and gas economy. We are hearing loud public response from many sectors, particularly from companies active in the energy business. You may have seen public responses and advertisements. My view is that it is not simply sufficient to claim that harm will be done. It is necessary to identify where facts or assumptions upon which the report is based are wrong or where the analysis is faulty.

Government is doing its due diligence and analysis. A formal response is expected by later this month. It is a complex and comprehensive task, but the result will be a fair and reasonable share for Albertans.

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Students and Schools Gain National Recognition

Alberta Shines

Ranking of performances by 15 year olds

MATHEMATICS	READING	SCIENCE
Hong Kong	Finland	Finland
Alberta	Alberta	Japan
Finland	British Columbia	Hong Kong
South Korea	South Korea	Alberta
British Columbia	Ontario	South Korea
Netherlands	Canada	British Columbia
Quebec	Quebec	Liechtenstein
Liechtenstein	Australia	Australia
Japan	Liechtenstein	Macau
Canada	New Zealand	Netherlands

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

We have some of the best schools in the city right here in the constituency of Edmonton-Whitemud.

The Economist magazine recently declared that it's not just the economy that's booming in Alberta: schools are too.

Many people have started to notice that Alberta has quietly built one of the finest education systems in Canada.

Over the past few years curriculums have been revised stressing core subjects like english, science and mathematics. School facilities have also improved and the province has attracted some of the best teachers in the industry. In addition, each school day Alberta invests \$27.9 million to ensure our children continue to receive not just a good education – but a great education.

And it's paying off.

In 2004, Alberta's students regularly outshone those from other provinces. Alberta's 13-16 year olds ranked first in mathematics and science and third in writing.

One of the gems in our community contributing to the province's national reputation is St. Monica's/ St. Mary's elementary school. Just a few years ago, Today's Parent magazine awarded St. Monica's/ St. Mary's as the country's All Round Cool School.

Every time I visit this unique campus, I continue to be impressed by their truly creative approach to

Thank you to all of the teachers and staff in our schools, for your dedication to the children in our community – we couldn't do it without you!

Regional Growth Plan

In June, Premier Stelmach gave the City of Edmonton and the 24 surrounding communities a clear direction to set aside regional bickering and come up with an integrated growth strategy to plan for and be ahead of the real issues related to the unprecedented growth in the region.

Development of upgraders and other industrial development in the region significantly impacts Edmonton. Industry should be located to minimize impact on the region both in terms of traffic and housing issues, as well as environmental load and use of utilities.

The plan must identify long term solutions to support growth, with particular attention to the economic, social and environmental impacts on all residents of the region – and it must address an appropriate sharing of the tax base to pay the physical and social infrastructure costs borne, not just by the host municipality but by the whole region.

I fully support Edmonton as it works with surrounding communities to find solutions for their shared concerns because a regional plan is an essential component of any progressive urban area.

If the region cannot attain this without the province's help, the province will have to act unilaterally to ensure a strong environmentally sound and fiscally sound plan is in place.

This is what our Mayor has been asking for and I will be ensuring that we follow through on the June announcement to make sure it happens. It is important not only for our city but for our region and province.

The regional strategy is to be prepared for Premier Stelmach by January 2008 and implementation will start in the Spring.

For more information visit <http://www.gov.ab.ca/acn/200706/2163921CC353A-AEFD-0EFA-791DFEEC88BE87A6.html>



PRINCIPALS MARIE WHELAN (FAR LEFT) AND MARGO MCGEE (RIGHT) ILLUSTRATE ST. MARY'S CREATIVE AND INNOVATIVE WAYS OF TEACHING TO HON. RON LIEPERT, MINISTER OF EDUCATION (CENTRE) AND HON. DAVE HANCOCK DURING A RECENT VISIT.

learning and many of the families in our community are attracted to this award winning-school so their children can excel through this unique experience.

It's an experience that has a variety of programs to meet the learning needs of children.

The school's literacy support team assists kindergarten and grade 1 students at the Early Learning Centre. The school is also home to a Robotics Lab to enrich science and math studies. Children's talents are explored and realized through the Artists in Residence program, which has local artists, work directly with students.

St. Monica's/St. Mary's also initiated an Adventure Week for each class where kids get a first-hand learning experience at the zoo, museum, art gallery, the Muttart Conservatory and the Telus World of Science.

And even though the school has also been honoured by the Network of Innovative Schools for its success in integrating technology to improve learning, perhaps it's best known for its commitment to children with special needs.

It's no wonder that St. Monica's/St. Mary's consistently exceeds provincial achievement tests and the district exams every year.

In a recent tour with Hon. Ron Liepert, Minister of Education, I highlighted these attributes and made certain the Minister knew St. Monica's/St. Mary's was selected by Industry Canada as one of 18 schools for demonstrating "leading practices" in advanced technology by connecting students with children as far away as Tasmania.

I'd like to acknowledge and thank Marie Whelan and Margo McGee for their ongoing leadership at this fantastic campus and the teachers and staff for their dedicated, child-centred approach to education.

And as we embark on a new school year, I'd also like to thank all of the teachers and staff in our schools for your dedication to ensure that the children in our community get the best possible education.

We simply couldn't do it without you!

Making Housing More Affordable

Affordable housing is the most significant social issue facing Alberta as we continue to grow and prosper. An issue which previously was focused on the homeless and hard to house. It has grown to include the working poor, those on fixed incomes and many families arriving from other parts of the country and the world, looking for a job and a better quality of life.

Over the past year, many constituents have shared with me their concern about the housing market.

Even though there are lots of jobs available and many of us have a means to pay for homes we enjoy today, we all want to be sure that our children will be able to realize the dream of purchasing their own home.

Ensuring housing is affordable is a complex issue. Market values, affordable rent, transitional and special needs housing, and shelter programs are all interdependent upon one another.

But given the population explosion there are few easy answers. As residents of our constituency know, construction of new housing is proceeding at record levels. We need to continue to find ways to encourage the development of projects which include affordable starter homes and rental accommodation.

In the Spring the province injected \$285 million to help housing agencies and municipalities get more housing on the market quickly.

In addition, on August 22, the province set aside an additional \$3 million to help alleviate pressure on shelter programs across the province. This is in addition to the half million dollars Edmonton receives annually to help housing agencies operate 8 shelters in the city.

Yet there are many other programs as well.

The province funds housing initiatives for Aboriginals living off reserves, people transitioning from an emergency shelter to a permanent residence, as well as many housing options for seniors.

We will also soon see some results with the completion of many affordable housing projects funded through the Canada-Alberta Affordable Housing Partnership. In 2005, over \$63 million was invested through this partnership to provide stable, affordable housing for low-income families and people with special needs.

However, as we move ahead to manage growth better and ensure that everyone, including our children can have an affordable place to live, we're committed to helping those in greatest need first.

Housing Facts

- As of March 31, 2007, the province helped house 1,395 Albertans with special needs.
- The \$33 million Rent Supplement Program provides a subsidy based on the difference between the market value rent and 30% of the household's income.
- \$23 million was spent in 2006-07 so that 2,505 people in 25 emergency and transitional shelters in 7 major cities in Alberta had a safe place to sleep.
- This past spring, a new program called the New Direct to Household rent supplement program was launched. This subsidy is paid directly to the tenant to help them with the cost of rent.
- There are over 24,000 seniors receiving support through a variety of housing initiatives across the province.

Working Hard for Edmonton

Edmonton is a terrific place to live. As the province's capital city we enjoy an exceptional quality of life, with some of the lowest taxes and largest disposable income in the country.

And there's lots of opportunity for us ahead.

Edmonton's economy is set to experience some tremendous growth over the next few years.

As your provincial voice, I'm committed to continuing to work to ensure that we reach our potential so that everyone can benefit equally.

But there are some areas where we need to better plan so we can accommodate more trade opportunities and ensure we have the capacity for all the additional people these opportunities will bring to our fine city.

That's why I'm working so hard to address key areas like roads and infrastructure.

Completing the Anthony Henday will certainly help get the city moving. In July the government announced we are moving ahead with the construction of the North Edmonton Ring Road by using a made-in-Alberta public-private partnership (P3) model. Once the 21-kilometre stretch of road finished, Edmonton's ring road will be 90 percent complete.

But I won't stop there.

I took your concerns about the 23rd Avenue interchange to my colleagues and I'm pleased changes have been made so cities can use funding provided by the province on priority areas that meet the needs of the community.

I'm also supporting other important projects, like the 41 Avenue SW interchange, to go ahead on a timely basis to serve the growth in the south part of the constituency.

Not only will these improvements reduce traffic congestion, it will ensure that Edmonton has some of the best trade routes in North America.

It will also contribute to Edmonton becoming a national transportation hub.

With CP Rail's move of their intermodal transfer station from 99th Street to the southern city limits, they will be able to handle greater volumes. In addition, Edmonton's connections along two railway lines is advantageous for moving products to global markets thru the new deep water port in Prince Rupert and Vancouver.

It's evident I'm dedicated to doing what it takes to assist the City of Edmonton and international business leaders as they collaborate with the province to improve and sustain our transportation and infrastructure so we can reach our full economic potential.

DAVE IN THE COMMUNITY



PHOTO COURTESY OF DR. ROB AGOSTINIS

Lillian Osborne High School

Dave Hancock together with George Nicholson, Edmonton Public School Trustee – Ward H, and future student Alyssa Agostinis officially launched construction of the Lillian Osborne High School on June 14. Dave confirmed the province's \$17.4 million contribution to build this important school in south west Edmonton.

Annual Pancake Breakfast



Dave greets another constituent and flips pancakes at his annual Capital Ex Pancake Breakfast at Riverbend Square on July 26. This year, close to 1,000 folks attended and raised over \$1,100 for breast cancer. It was a huge success!

DAVE IN THE COMMUNITY



Henderson Park Playground

Dave presents a plaque to Cynthia Reckhard, President of the Ridge Community League. The community league received \$125,000 from the Community Facility Enhancement Program (CFEP) to assist with the Henderson Playground redevelopment.



Welcome to the Neighbourhood

Dave extends a warm welcome to the constituency's newest residents and their families at the September 6 opening of Ambleside.

Questions or comments?

Contact Dave's
constituency office at
413-5970

Municipal Funding

Recently Premier Ed Stelmach announced the Municipal Sustainability Fund allocations.

This unprecedented announcement gives municipalities a clear vision of the future by providing predictable funding for the next 10 years. In addition, the allocations are flexible and accountable to meet the individual needs of the community.

Some people feel that the funding formula is not fair to Edmonton.

It is important to understand where this funding comes from and why our Premier believes that municipalities in Alberta should benefit in a way that no other jurisdiction does. The Alberta Association of Urban Municipalities (AUMA) has for years requested the Province to stop collecting education property taxes and to leave that taxing room to the cities so that they could increase their tax base to pay for growing infrastructure costs.

This is difficult to do for many reasons, not the least of which is the constitutional right the courts have confirmed in the Catholic School Boards to access that tax. However, last fall during the PC Leadership process Premier Stelmach promised that if he was elected he would return an amount equivalent to that collected from education property taxes in 2006 to municipalities. I also campaigned during that time for a new financial arrangement for municipalities.

The natural assumption of municipalities was that the \$1.4 billion would be provided back to municipalities in the same amount as was collected from their taxpayers - in other words, based upon equalized assessment.

Those communities with a high assessment base - Calgary for example - wanted distribution to be based solely on that formula. Municipalities with a lower assessment wanted distribution based on population. Some wanted it based on the metres of horizontal infrastructure (roads and water/sewer). The final compromise is a formula based on 48% population, 48% equalized assessment and 4% owned roads. Smaller municipalities received a minimum allotment. Calgary, with a larger population (1,019,942) than Edmonton (730,372) and a higher assessment both in terms of the number of property owners and the average assessed value clearly receives a higher allotment. If the Capital region is included the population is slightly higher than Calgary and the allotments are significantly close. Ironically, when one-time funding of \$3 billion was provided following the 2004 election, people in Edmonton complained that a population based allocation was not fair!

While we may feel that Edmonton should have fared better - the formula was devised so that every municipality was within a 6% range of each other. Together with the existing Alberta Municipal Infrastructure Program (the province gives Edmonton 5 cents out of the 9 cents per litre collected on gasoline sold at the pumps to Edmonton), this program brings Calgary, Edmonton and the Capital region within 93 - 94.5 % of their preferred allocations.

The total \$2,512,300 that Edmonton will collect over the next 10 years is a very significant and important commitment to Edmonton's infrastructure needs.

What is even more important to Edmonton is how the infrastructure (both physical and social) of the city will be impacted by industrial growth in the region. It is very important to look at the industrial base on a regional level and see how we pay for the physical and social infrastructure that comes from industrial growth as we move through the regional planning process. This infrastructure funding program will set the base but, as I discussed on page 2, the Regional Growth Management Plan and the corollary governance model will be where Edmonton deals with its infrastructure issues in a regional context.

Safety Concerns Prompt Managed Closure of 'Tent City'

Ongoing concerns for the safety of the campers in Edmonton's 'tent city' prompted the managed closure of the site on September 15.

At various events this summer, many constituents expressed concern for Edmonton's homeless people. Most of us can't imagine why in a resource rich province like Alberta, we had a makeshift camp downtown? And I have to say, I agree with them and have voiced these concerns around the cabinet table.

The fact is many people chose to set up camp rather than use emergency shelters. Meanwhile close to 200 shelter spaces were unused each night.

My colleague Hon. Ray Danyluk, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing understands there were reasons why the campers were not utilizing the shelters spaces and took steps to address their concerns.

As a result, Hope Mission has agreed to provide some space for couples. They will also add space for individuals with drug and alcohol addictions.

In addition, the province, along with staff from Capital Health's Regional Mental Health team, spent three weeks at the camp assessing camper's needs and providing them with a variety of services including income and health support, as well as housing and shelter support.

By the end of August, numerous campers secured an affordable place to live and the outreach work continues.

Long term sustainable housing solutions are part of Premier Stelmach's plan for managing growth pressures and I'm working hard to ensure we make housing more affordable for Albertans.

And we're also committed to helping those in need and have been looking at how Toronto and New York City effectively help homeless people transition from emergency shelters to an affordable residence to see if any of those methods can be applied here.

For more information about affordable housing visit www.gov.ab.ca



SHEILA WEATHERILL, CAPITAL HEALTH PRESIDENT/CEO (LEFT) AND INDIRA SAMARASEKERA, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA PRESIDENT (RIGHT) ILLUSTRATE THE NEW EDMONTON CLINIC FOR DAVE.

Edmonton Clinic is a Go!

Sod was turned October 1 on the largest project that Capital Health and the University of Alberta have ever undertaken. Construction will soon begin.

Delivering outstanding health services to improve Albertan's quality of life is a key priority.

The province is investing \$909 million for the new Edmonton Clinic, which will house all diagnostic services including MRI, CT, ultrasound and other medical laboratories.

It will also be home to a number of day clinics which will free up some much needed space for more beds at the University and Stollery Children's hospitals.

Over 2,000 health professionals will provide care and treatment to over one million patients who are expected to visit the Edmonton Clinic each year.

The Edmonton Clinic will be the model for academic health centres across North America. It will enhance patient care and service in a cost-effective way while contributing to research and education. While people now talk about the Mayo Clinic or the Cleveland Clinic as the place to go for high-quality care – the future will see the world looking to the Edmonton Clinic.

In addition to providing leading-edge care and treatment, the 143,000 square meter facility will be the hands-on teaching centre for all the university's health-sciences faculties.

One of the revolutionary aspects of this project is its unique approach to learning.

The team-based approach gives students access to the latest health care developments and increases the university's ability to educate more students. In the end, more health care professionals will be educated which will reduce the current labour shortages.



Over 2,000 health professionals will provide care and treatment to over one million patients who are expected to visit the Edmonton Clinic each year.

Getting more patients treated faster while better educating more students is why we are covering the spiraling construction cost associated with the development of this innovative facility.

DAVE HANCOCK (LEFT) ALONG WITH PREMIER STELMACH (CENTRE), SHEILA WEATHERILL AND INDIRA SAMARASEKERA (FAR RIGHT) BEGIN BUILDING THE GROUND-BREAKING MEDICAL CLINIC.

Edmonton-Whitemud



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Seismic Testing Halted on Marie Lake – Lease Cancelled

The controversial seismic testing proposed for Marie Lake has been stopped and the lease to Oil Sands Underground Mining Corp. (OSUM) has been cancelled.

Premier Stelmach has heard the concerns raised by Albertans, including those that I took forward from this constituency, and has made the decision to put the environment ahead of more development and resource extraction. This is an important step towards recognizing that, as we grow from 3 to 4 to 5 million people and as we continue to develop, we need to balance our desire to maximize resource value with the need to sustain and steward our environment.

Clearly, our environment is a precious resource. Yet sometimes, our economic growth and increasing population put pressure on our natural resources.

Land-use activities such as resource development, agriculture and recreation are happening throughout the province, and with communities growing by leaps and bounds, the impact on public and private land is growing.

Together these plans will help ensure the environment we enjoy today is here for future generations.

This is not about choosing the environment over economic development opportunities. It's about finding a sustainable balance so that our children and grandchildren benefit as much from the environment as we do today. We need to make sure we manage it in a responsible way.

That is why I pushed forward on the land use framework. Consultations are underway and a draft framework is expected later this year.

The province's Water for Life strategy, which I also endorsed, is also important for future sustainability.

By recently establishing the Alberta Water Council, we have made significant progress in implementing the Water for Life strategy. We also announced the Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils in the Oldman, North Saskatchewan and Bow basins. These councils, along with Watershed Stewardship groups, will make recommendations to government, stakeholders and the public on ways to improve water management throughout Alberta.

We are also enhancing water monitoring programs and reviewing water storage sites. In addition, we are examining protocols to reduce the amount of fresh water used in oilfield injection and have developed the Alberta Water Information Centre and water use reporting system.

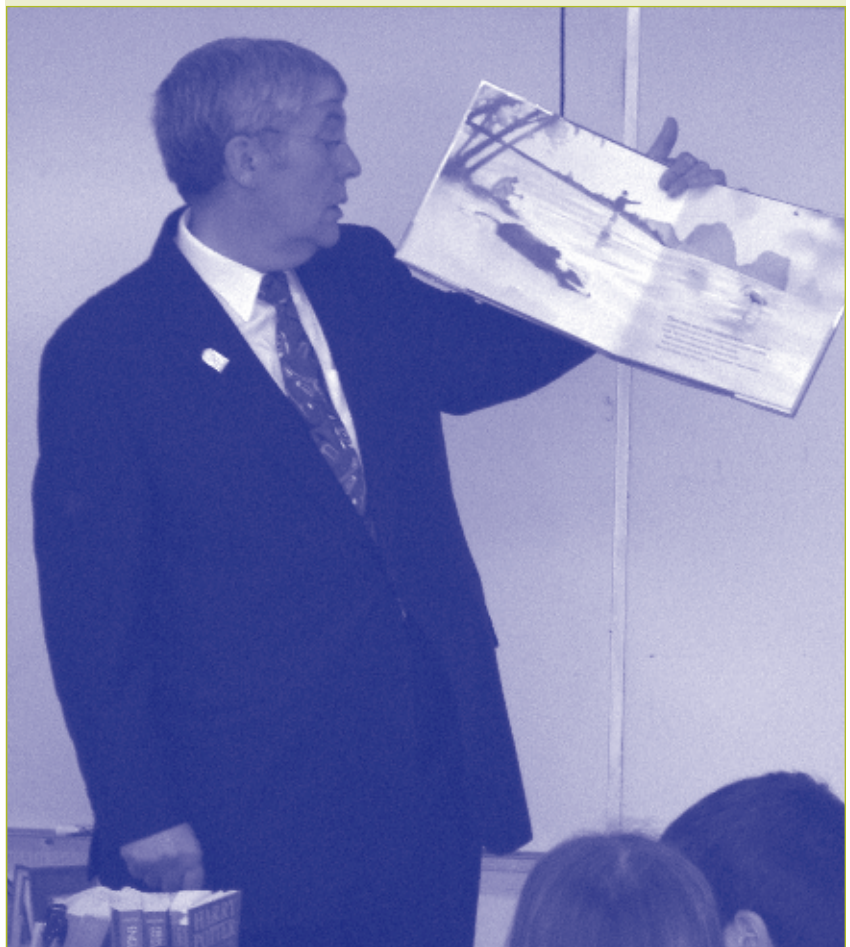
Together these plans will help ensure that environment we enjoy today is here for future generations.

For more information about our commitment to the environment and sustaining resources visit www.gov.ab.ca

CONTACT DAVE



DAVE IN THE COMMUNITY



Dave read to four grade 6 classes at St. Mary's elementary school on Friday, October 5 during Read In Week.



On October 1, Dave Hancock, Minister of Health and Wellness addressed over 650 delegates at the 5th Annual National Conference on Tobacco.

Birthday and Wedding Anniversary Scrolls

Is someone you know celebrating a special occasion?

Dave would be pleased to arrange for a commemorative scroll to honour the milestone.

Please call Dave's office at 413-5970 at least six weeks before the event.

Birthdays (5 year intervals)

- 65+ MP, MLA
- 75+ Prime Minister, Premier
- 80+ Lieutenant Governor
- 90+ Governor General
- 100+ Queen

Anniversaries (5 year intervals)

- 25 + Prime Minister, Premier, MP, MLA
- 50+ Governor General, Lieutenant Governor
- 60+ Queen