



Statement from County of Grande Prairie Regarding Wedgewood Estates Land Issue

The County of Grande Prairie Council issued the following statement after again discussing the issues related to erosion of several properties in Wedgewood Estates.

County Council understands and appreciates the difficulty faced by a small number of Wedgewood Estates landowners with respect to the erosion of their property and is extremely sympathetic to their situation. Council understands the landowners in this situation have undergone financial, emotional and personal hardships dealing with this issue.

It is essential to recognize however, that the County is not responsible for the situation and cannot be responsible to financially support remedial work on privately-owned land. While the County is extremely sympathetic to the property owners involved it would be unfair and inappropriate to ask other County taxpayers to assume the cost burdens to resolve issues that are the responsibility of individual private property owners and contributed to by the actions and decisions of individual property owners.

When the subdivision creating these lots was approved, a caveat was attached to individual property titles stating that additional site-specific geotechnical work should be done prior to development. There were also specific instructions within the caveat that outlined steps to protect future developments. These instructions included items such as ensuring a sufficient setback, not installing underground irrigation systems, and avoiding disruption to existing vegetation. Regrettably many of the specific instructions in the caveat that could have mitigated the risk were not followed by past and current landowners.

However, sympathetic to the situation of our residents the County has attempted to assist these landowners over a number of years to identify the exact problems and possible remedial actions that could be taken by the homeowners themselves.

To support landowners, in 2015, Council offered to pay half the cost of a geotechnical engineering study on the land with sloping issues. The landowners disregarded this offer and chose to attempt to remedy the problem themselves. In 2016 and early 2017, as an additional support to residents, the County voluntarily had geotechnical investigations completed to further identify the problems for residents and help determine solutions to address potential damage to residents' properties and surrounding County infrastructure, and look into impacts the sloping might have on land that can be accessed by the public.

According to the site assessments, geotechnical engineering studies and investigation the County had completed, the actions taken by landowners over time have worsened the condition of the soil and created further problems.

The County is committed to continuing to work with these property owners in Wedgewood Estates to assist in any way that is appropriate for the County and within



County responsibility, and to assist the homeowners in seeking disaster assistance funding from the Alberta Government.

While the County continues to be extremely sympathetic to the property owners involved it would be unfair and inappropriate to ask other County taxpayers to assume additional cost burdens to resolve issues on private property.