



The Wood Buffalo Monthly

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From Your President: I would like to take this opportunity to update our membership on recent developments with respect to land release and in particular WBH&DC's proposal as presented to Municipal Council. Based on discussions with WBH&DC in early January, UDI issued a letter of support to WBH&DC. The rationale was that we did not want to impede the land release process and felt that we could live with the proposal if our concerns were addressed in the final proposal. UDI-Wood Buffalo remains committed to developing a sustainable land release policy for the region that supports and enhances the free market system. The draft proposal presented to council did not address our concerns and after a lengthy debate, the board decided to withdraw our support. RMWB does not need more experiments and interventions in the housing markets— we must get the Municipality into a position where the development industry has sufficient land available to react to the demands of the housing market. The following items were opposed by UDI-Wood Buffalo: 1. Ownership of 2400 acres (13 years of supply) would be transferred to Newco. Newco would be owned 100% by WBH&DC and WBH&DC is owned 100% by RMWB. This puts RMWB into land development and puts them in a monopoly situation for 13 years. UDI-Wood Buffalo does not support RMWB being in the land development business and does not believe that monopolies are healthy for our industry. 2. The whole premise of the proposal is based on transferring the provision of affordable housing from the provincial government to the new home buyers of Fort McMurray. Affordable and social housing are quality of life issues and should be born by society as a whole, not by new home purchasers. UDI-Wood Buffalo has recently met with the Oil sands Secretariat to discuss land release strategies and will be submitting a formal position to them shortly. We will keep you informed..... **Cliff Maron**

Mark April 11 on your calendar,

This breakfast event will feature **Heather Kennedy**, Assistant Deputy Minister for the Oil sands Secretariat, as our guest speaker, to be held at the SawRidge Inn & Conference Centre at 7:30 am. Friday April 11, 2008.



If you've created a unique solution to advance housing affordability in Canada, it's time you received the national recognition you deserve! In 2008, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) will present up to 16 awards to honour the nation's **Best Practices in Affordable Housing**. Don't miss this unique opportunity to showcase your housing initiative! Initiatives may include large or small projects and demonstrate various ways to create affordable housing that

meets the needs of the communities they serve. Visit the Housing Awards on CMHC's website at www.cmhc.ca/affordablehousing to download the Guidelines and Application Form.

ReminderAnnual General Meeting (AGM) March 7th, 2008 Friday at 12:00 pm at the Sawridge Inn & Conference Centre. Our keynote speakers will be **Onufry Shinkewski (President)** of UDI Alberta and **Nicole Martel**

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Quote of the Month

A wise person knows that there is something to be learned from everyone.

Author unknown •