



A message from **Councillor Jennifer Vardy**

WARD 1



Dear Wood Buffalo,

As we begin 2026, I want to take a moment to thank residents for staying engaged, sharing feedback, and continuing to care deeply about our community. The start of a new year is always a time for reflection, renewed energy, and looking ahead.

The past two months have been active and meaningful, with a focus on community connection, preparation, and learning. Below is a brief update on what December and January have looked like, along with a few key areas Council is currently working on.

Community Connections

Even during the quieter weeks, I continued to stay engaged in the community:

- I had the pleasure of supporting the 4-H Roughriders Club, helping students prepare for their annual public speaking competition. It was inspiring to see young people building confidence and leadership skills.
- I attended Malanka, celebrating the Ukrainian New Year, a meaningful cultural event that reflects the diversity and traditions within our region.
- I participated in a CIPAC meeting totalling 13 hours. Thank you to the committee members for their diligence, care, and commitment to this important work.
- When the weather warmed up (briefly), my family and I enjoyed tubing at Vista Ridge.

Boards & Committees

Over the past two months, I also attended my first board and committee meetings, including:

- Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo Economic Development & Tourism Board
- Homelessness Initiative Strategic Planning Committee

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VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The FuseSocial Wood Buffalo Volunteer Center has a list of upcoming opportunities

www.woodbuffalovolunteers.ca

CONTACT RMWB

If you have questions or concerns, contact PULSE online or by phone

780 743 7000

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Winter Maintenance & Snow Removal

Over the past several weeks, Council has received a high volume of emails and messages from residents regarding snow removal and winter road conditions. I want you to know that these concerns are being heard. Council is actively working with Administration to better understand the challenges this winter has presented, review current practices, and identify opportunities for improvement. This includes looking at response times, prioritization, and communication with residents.

Preparing for Budget Season

Administration and Council are now preparing for Budget 2026, with **formal budget deliberations scheduled for February 2–6**. Budget discussions are one of Council's most significant responsibilities, and I am focused on being well-prepared to ask thoughtful questions and make informed decisions on behalf of residents.

Ongoing Training & Capacity Building

Over the past few months, Council has dedicated significant time to training and orientation to ensure we are equipped to serve the community effectively. This training has covered a broad range of areas, including municipal governance, budgeting and capital planning, emergency management, legal responsibilities, Indigenous rights and reconciliation, community services, public safety, planning and development, media relations, and labour relations. **We are currently sitting at almost 200 hours of training time completed since November 2025.** This ongoing education supports informed, accountable decision-making as we head into a full year of Council business.

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REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
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January has set the tone for a busy and productive year. I remain committed to listening, learning, and working collaboratively to address challenges and advance priorities that reflect our community's needs.

Thank you for staying engaged and connected.

with gratitude,
Jennifer

Disclaimer: This newsletter is provided by me in my capacity as a Councillor and is not an official communication of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. For any official information, please visit the RMWB website.

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