

Press release



February 7, 2008

Mountain View County Council puts Netook Crossing on the map

New name for Opus 2/27 business park honours Olds area, First Nations history and culture

A name familiar to Olds-area residents will soon become as synonymous as Gasoline Alley and Nisku to Albertans and travelers along the QEII. On Wednesday, Mountain View County christened the Opus Highway 2 (QEII) and Highway 27 business park development “Netook Crossing”, selecting the name from a short list of choices.

Netook Crossing was one of three names forwarded to Council by a group of County representatives and community stakeholders after a Jan. 21 branding exercise for the commercial and light industrial business park. According to Division 5 Councillor Gerald Ingeveld, three names including Netook Crossing were brought forward after a great deal of study and discussion amongst the group.

“During the workshop there as a lot of emphasis put on the historical aspects of Olds- what was the history of Olds and what were some of the names, some of the early pioneers,” says Ingeveld. “One of the names that came up was Lone Pine- being one of the early names for this part of the country- and Netook being the Blackfoot name for Lone Pine.” Development at Netook Crossing is projected to begin around May 1, with servicing of sites estimated to be complete by September, 2008. Construction at Netook Crossing Business Park is expected to be underway by early 2009.

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Backgrounder

The story of “Netook”

The origins of the word “Netook” can be traced back to the journals of explorer Peter Fidler, who in 1792 while traveling through what is now central Alberta, mentioned that he and his party “were approximately 20 kilometers away from a point of woods containing a large single pine tree the Blackfoot called ‘nee-tuck-kis’- meaning “lone pine tree”. An 18th century account of a smallpox epidemic among the Blackfoot, related to explorer David Thompson by Piikani Leader Saukamap-pee (Young Man), also mentions the lone pine tree, or “Nee tuck kis”.

Landmarks in Mountain View County which have derived their name from the early references to the lone pine tree include: Lonepine Creek, Lone Pine Hall east of Didsbury, the former Lone Pine School District No. 579, and the historic Lone Pine Stopping House, which was located approximately four miles north and east of present-day Olds (near the site of Lone Pine- Bennett Hall).

During more recent times, the Calgary- Edmonton Railway established “Netook” siding 12 kilometers north of Olds in 1891, with the Canadian Pacific Railway operating a station there between 1913 and 1916. A post office at Netook was later operated by postmaster Fred Smith at NE 34-33-1 W5M, from its inception in March, 1928, until his death in April 1958. Two grain elevators also operated at Netook siding (12 kilometres north of Olds) along the Calgary- Edmonton CPR line, both of which ceased operations by the 1960’s. During the Second World War, the airfield at Netook was an auxiliary field for #32 Royal Air Force Elementary Flying School Bowden. In 1953, the airfield was leased to the Town of Olds, and an Olds Flying Association was formed. With the construction of the Olds/ Didsbury Airport, Netook became a gliding centre, and is used today by the Royal Canadian Air Cadets.

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