

June 6, 2021

Paul Brandt  
255073 Glenbow Road  
Cochrane, AB [REDACTED]

Kent Robinson  
Executive Director, Corporate Services/Acting CAO  
Rocky View County  
262075 Rocky View Point  
Rocky View County, AB, T4A 0X2

Mr. Robinson,

Congratulations on your recent appointment, thank you for your service to our community, and thank you for the opportunity to bring perspective regarding the ongoing safety challenges on Glenbow Road.

While I imagine you've been briefed, I'd like to provide you with a situation report on Glenbow Road.

Our family has lived on Glenbow Road for 14 years, and over this time have had the pleasure of watching the opening and development of the Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park. In the early days of the Park's opening there were infrastructure improvements which were required for safety (the addition of a turn lane on highway 1A to facilitate safer access to Glenbow Road when turning left off of the highway). Despite the fact that Glenbow Road is narrow, winding, steep-graded, and has ravines and no shoulders, we had limited concerns about the development of unsafe conditions as we were ensured by representatives of the Park that the Glenbow Road entrance was planned only to be an administrative and limited-use access to the Park. We were assured that plans for main access points to the Park with ample parking would be located in Calgary and Cochrane. Glenbow Road differs from other high traffic roads in the county where parking is allowed due to it's narrowness, steep grades, ravines and curves— While there are other areas in the county where parking on the roadside might be acceptable, Glenbow Road is not one of these areas. Opinions between stakeholders differ on the issue of the actual safety of the road, but as a resident of the area and daily road-user, my observation has been that since the opening of the Park, the increase in traffic on Glenbow Road has been a challenge to public safety due to the fact that the road is under-engineered for the amount of traffic it is receiving.

Glenbow Road is a 2-lane gravel road with many steep grades, curves, and no shoulders. There are a number of areas on the road where the roadway drops off into ravines. I've assisted a number of motorists who were stranded in the winter time and could not make their way up the road due to poor conditions and steep grades, neighbours have towed motorists who have driven off the road and into steep ravines, and I've even observed a maintenance vehicle which rolled off of the road and landed upside down on its roof as it had not navigated the steep, shoulder-less drop off on the side of the road where it was mowing. The road has blind curves, often has poor visibility due to lack of dust control, and potholes, washboarding, and large rocks are becoming an increasingly common issue as road-use continues to increase in volume.

I would like to take this opportunity to send thanks along to RVC road crews and maintenance staff for their dedicated work. I would imagine that this has been an incredibly challenging situation for them to attempt to maintain this road with the amount of use it receives, and while road conditions have deteriorated since the Park opening, I have observed that they are taking great care and pride in doing the best they can in a less than ideal situation.

While these road engineering issues are concerning to me as an area resident, this is not the primary issue.

Over the past 2 years, we've observed a significant increase in road use by Park visitors, and this increase in road use has been documented in traffic studies. Park infrastructure for accommodating parking for its visitors is not adequate, and as a result, Park visitors have been parking along Glenbow Road. **As Glenbow Road is so narrow, shoulder-less, and has ravine drop-offs, parking anywhere on Glenbow Road creates a situation where emergency vehicle access is restricted or blocked, pedestrians and cyclists are navigating down the middle of the road in low visibility conditions, and children are running out between parked cars.** The urgency and frustration apparently felt by Park visitors due to the lack of parking facilities seems to have been translated into their increase in speed along the road, and we often observe cars traveling at high speed on this dusty 2 lane road, passing each other, and generally displaying their frustration through unsafe driving. I've documented cars parked on one and/or both sides of the road extending well beyond 1/2 a kilometre up the road. Access to my residence has been blocked twice in the past 4 months by Park visitors parking in the mouth of my driveway, which has been concerning as it puts my family at safety risk should the need for an emergency vehicle arise for medical or fire reasons, not to mention the inconvenience of not being able to enter or exit my place of residence.

It was because of these increases in safety risk to the public that I finally decided to call a meeting of stakeholders to look at options to improve the situation. I have met with Minister of Environment and Parks Jason Nixon on this issue, along with many of his staff, members of RVC council, Bylaw Enforcement, and Alberta Parks Fish and Wildlife officers. After completing a site visit with concerned parties, it was determined

that indeed parking anywhere on Glenbow Road created an unacceptable safety risk to the public, and it was determined that the placement of No Parking signs coupled with enforcement would be a needed intervention.

The No Parking signs, in combination with informational warning signs at the top and bottom of Glenbow Road coupled with Bylaw enforcement have dramatically improved the safety of the road. Changing the current balance that has been achieved would be a dramatic and unacceptable step backwards as it would undoubtedly cause a resurgence of the unsafe conditions caused by parking along the road.

I recently had a conversation with Mark Olson, Board Chair of the Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park Foundation. During this meeting it was confirmed for Mr. Olson that indeed I and other residents on the road did not support parking anywhere on the road. He expressed his frustration at the challenging situation that has been created for the GRPF since the installation of No Parking signs and subsequent enforcement, especially because of the pressure this puts on the foundation from a funding standpoint (Mr. Olson let me know that the more visitors GRPP receives, the more funding they stand to receive). **This statement was particularly concerning to me, because it seems that GRPF has prioritized funding over public safety.** I have subsequently had a phone conversation with Mr. Olson where I implored him to not attempt to make suggestions to relax the current parking restrictions on Glenbow Road, and I reminded him that any parking on the road has already been determined to create an unacceptable public safety risk. I suggested to him that the risk to public safety creates major liability for all stakeholders, and relaxing the current parking restrictions and turning a blind eye to the risk to the public created by parking anywhere on Glenbow Road would be an irresponsible move. Should Mr. Olson push the agenda for relaxation of Parking along Glenbow Road, my concern is that a Park visitor may be injured or killed.

Clearly this is a challenging situation, and I admit, as a National Champion for the Great Trail, my interests are also split. I want to see the Park flourish and will celebrate the day when the trail finally connects Calgary to Cochrane and points beyond, but this should not be done at a risk to public safety. Parking along Glenbow Road is not a viable option, and **I am in opposition to the suggestion and request being made by the Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park Foundation to allow relaxation of parking restrictions anywhere on the road.** Further planning and continued cooperation and collaboration by all stakeholders is required to find short and long term solutions to this infrastructure and planning issue.

In the interest of safety and for the full use of the beautiful GRPP, I would propose that an appropriate alternative direction would be the creation of a properly engineered access road, ample parking to safely accommodate Park visits with room to grow, or pedestrian and emergency vehicle access provision by building a bridge from Cochrane across the Bow River connecting the Park to Cochrane.

I've attached the GRPF letter for your convenience and information, as well as a letter of position on this issue provided by Michael Roycroft, Alberta Parks Regional Director, Kananaskis Region. I don't believe that this is the type of situation where anyone can rightly just look the other way until Spring of 2022 as suggested by GRPF. Safety is not patient, and the reason that we've raised this issue as adjacent landowners has not changed. Glenbow Road was never planned or intended to be a main access for GRPP. While the increasing popularity of the Park is a good thing, Glenbow road is under-engineered, and the Park simply does not have the access and parking infrastructure to support the number of visitors it is seeing.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Brandt", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Paul Brandt

**CC:** Michael Roycroft, BA, MPA | Regional Director, Kananaskis Region

**From:** Michael Roycroft [michael.roycroft@gov.ab.ca](mailto:michael.roycroft@gov.ab.ca)  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL] - Kananaskis Region contacts/Glenbow Road No Parking  
**Date:** June 4, 2021 at 4:30 PM  
**To:** Paul Brandt  
**Cc:** Murray Ingstrup [Murray.ingstrup@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Murray.ingstrup@gov.ab.ca), Andrew Schoepf [Andrew.Schoepf@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Andrew.Schoepf@gov.ab.ca), Shane Schreiber [shane.schreiber@gov.ab.ca](mailto:shane.schreiber@gov.ab.ca), Kieran Maxwell [Kieran.Maxwell@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Kieran.Maxwell@gov.ab.ca), Daynika White [Daynika.White@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Daynika.White@gov.ab.ca), Darren Tansowny [Darren.Tansowny@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Darren.Tansowny@gov.ab.ca), Joshua Wolchansky [Joshua.Wolchansky@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Joshua.Wolchansky@gov.ab.ca)

MR

Hi Paul,

Thank you for your report and for bringing the June 8 council agenda item on this issue to our attention. As you may recall we had previously discussed parking restrictions for only one side of the road to allow for some relief when lots are full, however, for a variety of reasons that you reiterate in your note below, we decided the best course of action was to restrict all roadside parking. It is the simplest and safest option to implement given currently engineered road specifications. Until the road is upgraded I would support RVC administration recommendation of Option 1.

Re road condition – this is a matter that will require RVC to increase the frequency of road inspection and regrading. As regular users of this road, our staff have never considered it as unsafe. Apart from some heavy wash boarding at the top of the hill it is well within the standards of most gravel roads throughout the county. There is no question that it is underspecified for the volume of traffic but that is a bigger issue that will need to be dealt with at a future date. In the meantime if there are still safety concerns, a lower posted speed limit may be the next most practical step.

Alberta Parks will be retaining a parking control contractor to manage traffic at various day use areas throughout the Region on a priority basis. We have identified the need for active management on weekends on Glenbow Road. The idea is that radioed traffic control attendants could limit entry onto Glenbow Road based on available parking spots. I trust that these measures will significantly reduce weekend in/out traffic on the road and reduce the level of frustration for both park visitors and area residents alike. Commencement of these services is anticipated by the end of June.

As you are well aware, the vision for Glenbow was always to have a Calgary to Cochrane connection. The progress of establishing these connections was however dependent upon the progress in adjacent urban municipal development. With time, these connections will be established and I appreciate any support you can provide in championing this park as a key connector in the Great Trail. The movement of people, visitor experience and sustaining the sensitive ecology of the park is dependent on good planning. We have identified the need for planning in Glenbow and hope to be able to initiate this important work soon.

With respect to your request for a letter expressing support for the recommended option proposed by Council Administration for the June 8 meeting, I trust this email will suffice to clearly document our current position on this issue.

Thank you again.



**Michael Roycroft, BA, MPA** | Regional Director, Kananaskis Region  
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May 13, 2021

Kent Robinson  
Acting CAO  
Rocky View County

Via E Mail

Dear Mr. Robinson,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation ("GRPF"). As you may be aware, GRPF in partnership with Alberta Parks and Environment operates Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park.

We are seeking the County's assistance for relief from a significant problem for the Park that has been created by the total ban of parking along Glenbow Road leading to the entrance.

To provide some context, due to general restrictions on outdoor activities for Albertans as well as the closure of Big Hill Springs Park, visitor counts to GRPP have reached levels at 120% over the previous year. The result was that the limited amount of parking inside GRPP boundaries was overwhelmed and vehicles were parking on both sides of Glenbow Road leading back to the Highway.

This congestion did create safety concerns which our Foundation initially brought to the County and was supportive of a neighboring landowner in his petition. However, it was always the Foundation's belief that parking would only be disallowed on the west side of the road adjacent to the owner's property. This would facilitate emergency vehicle access while still enhancing capacity. The current situation has created a deluge of complaints to the County, Parks, and the Foundation. The volume of said complaints will only increase in coming weeks as the weather turns and schools close. By way of example, I was personally at the Park on Wednesday May 12<sup>th</sup>. When I left at 1145am, there was not a parking spot available, and this is mid-week!

The Foundation, working with Parks and area landowners are exploring options to add an additional paved lot. Unfortunately, there is no option that provides us with relief in 2021. We are thereby requesting the County allow vehicle parking on the east side of Glenbow Road until a better solution can become a reality, hopefully by spring 2022.

We know all stakeholders involved realize how fortunate we are having this grassland jewel in our proverbial backyards. More than ever, it is playing a significant role for the physical well being and mental health of its many patrons.

We appreciate your prompt consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Olson".

Mark Olson  
Board Chair  
Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation

c.c. Sarah Parker- GRPF Executive Director, Andrew Schoepf-Kananaskis East Area Manager