

October 27, 2025

RE: A Message from the Mayor – Clarifying the Naming Rights Discussion

To the homeowners and business owners of Duck Lake,

I know the past few days have felt intense. The idea of naming rights arrived suddenly, and strong feelings are natural. Now that we've all had a moment to breathe, I want to explain clearly what this conversation is—and what it isn't.

First: This is a discussion, not a decision.

No Canadian municipality has sold its name before, which is why Duck Lake is in the national spotlight. That attention, so far, has been positive—and yes, visibility was part of the goal. Even if nothing else happens, the conversation has introduced our town to people who might never have heard of us, and that can open doors: tourism, investment, and new residents among them.

I have never said we *should* sell the town's name. What I've said—and still believe—is that we should listen and see what's possible. If publicity alone generated this much interest, imagine the attention if we received an actual bid—whether or not we accepted it. If that interest brings people here, wasn't asking the question worth it?

Second: Council cannot act without you.

Council has no authority to change the town's name without community involvement. If any offers arrive, they will be opened publicly at our April council meeting. Every taxpayer will be informed, and any serious proposal will trigger a referendum. You would decide. Even then, any change would require provincial approval. In short, no surprises, and no change without your vote.

Property titles and legal standing.

If Duck Lake's name ever changed—say from “Town of Duck Lake” to a new name—your property title would remain valid and enforceable. The municipality's name is part of the legal description, not your ownership. Provincial land title systems, like Saskatchewan's ISC, update their records so future searches reflect the new name. Your existing title would

remain valid; you wouldn't need to re-register unless you were making other changes (selling, refinancing). If you prefer your title to reflect the new name, you could request an administrative update. There are no tax implications, no hidden costs, and no change to your rights.

What else would change and how we'd manage it.

Postal services would update their databases, and residents would eventually need to update mailing addresses. Canada Post typically supports a transition period where both names are recognized, though long-term use of the old name can cause delays.

Legal and personal documents such as wills, bank and credit card billing addresses, government IDs, and CRA records would need routine address updates. Businesses may need to amend licenses and contracts.

Municipal systems, including land titles, emergency dispatch, schools, and health records would update in coordination with provincial and regional agencies. The key to a smooth transition is clear communication, formal resolutions establishing continuity, and practical grace periods. The Town would work with these agencies to develop a framework aimed at helping residents make a smooth transition.

Why explore this at all? Infrastructure, culture, and renewal.

We all share the same top concern: our roads. But we can't pave properly until we replace the aging water and sewer lines beneath them. A nearby town twice our size recently completed similar work for about \$10 million. A serious naming-rights offer could fund a full replacement of our underground infrastructure and allow us to pave all our streets.

Every household has been contributing toward a long-term infrastructure loan via utility bills for nearly two decades, with about two years remaining. If we could finish the remaining underground work now, funded by a naming-rights agreement, we could avoid extending that charge. That's money back in your pockets each month. That's real relief for every family. If no offer comes, the work still must be done. Without a major grant, we'd likely be looking at taxes, levies, or new debt with a 20–25-year horizon to complete.

Who might partner with us—and on what terms.

This conversation isn't only about a sale; it's about partnership. What if an organization offered \$15 million and we kept "Duck Lake" in the name for something like SIGA–Duck Lake or Nutrien–Duck Lake? What if the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan proposed paying to

keep the name Duck Lake—or to rename it Riel? I find “Riel” a powerful name that honours our heritage and moves us beyond the old “Stuck Lake” jokes. The point is: we should be open to proposals that respect who we are and strengthen our future.

Protecting our history and identity.

Some worry that even considering a change risks losing our identity. Let me be clear: that will not happen. Our legacy lives in our people, stories, landmarks, and shared values, not just in a name. Any serious proposal would be scrutinized to ensure it reflects and elevates our heritage. With the right partner, we could restore murals, support the Interpretive Centre, and create new spaces to honour our past while building our future. Identity is not what we call ourselves; it’s what we choose to preserve and celebrate.

Thinking generationally.

I’m inspired by the foresight of the First Nations leaders who signed the treaties, thinking beyond their lifetimes for the sake of future generations. That’s the lens we need now. This is not only about today’s convenience, it’s about the town our children and grandchildren inherit: safer roads, modern infrastructure and above all, stable prosperity.

None of us can predict the future. I’m asking for patience and openness until March 31, 2026, while we see whether any offers arrive. If none do, we’ve still raised our profile and carry on as we are. If one does, we’ll evaluate it together, openly and respectfully.

Let’s stay informed, open-minded, and neighbourly. This is about exploring possibilities so we can choose wisely if and when the moment comes.

Sincerely,

Jason Anderson

Mayor, Town of Duck Lake