

When it does pay to listen

Penticton City Council deserves praise for not once — but twice — for their wisdom related to the expansion of the Penticton campus of Okanagan College. They've offered financial assistance to the ambitious project and they also followed the recommendation of an advisory committee.

■ Council does the right thing — twice

Council announced that it will be providing a grant to the educational institution enabling the college to apply for a reduction in development cost charges in addition to a grant

towards the building permit fee.

The total cost is \$267,000 for the grant plus an anticipated \$160,000 in savings through the reduced development cost charges.

As stated numerous times in Herald editorials, the expansion of the local campus will generate economic spinoffs in numerous ways in addition to offering area students the opportunity to save money by living at home while attending post-secondary education. Some citizens can also use this as an opportunity to rent out secondary suites in their homes.

As far as the reduction in development cost charges, the College can thank the economic development advisory committee.

The initiative came as the result of a brainstorming session under the guidance of the Economic Development Commission office. Three major initiatives were targeted and this was one of them.

What is important here is that after some negotiating with senior staff with the City of Penticton, an agreement was reached in principle and was left to council. While the wheels of bureaucracy often turn slowly, this made it through council in a relatively short period of time.

Kudos to all those involved including City Council which took the recommendation of one of its committees.

Committees, whether they are the city's or not, can make things happen. It made life easier for the council by helping the College out without having to find money in reserves. It will help the EDC office to go out and sell the city and it provides those already here an incentive to expand.

Ask any businesses in Penticton and they will tell you the same thing — we need this sector to get moving.