

## **PARKING ON WHYTE AVENUE**

Things have changed on Whyte Avenue since the fire in mid-March of 2003. The oldest businesses on 103rd and Whyte Avenue became, in one horrific night, unrecognizable and non-existent. But now, they have been replaced by new businesses. Since the opening of businesses such as Starbuck's Coffee, Opa, Peruga Spa and Salon, Chilli's, and Marble Slab there has been limited space to park. The traffic on Whyte Avenue has increased considerably because large amounts of people visit Whyte Avenue more than ever before. These new businesses do not have additional parking lots for customers and visitors to park and shop. Consequently, finding 'safe' areas to park on Whyte Avenue has become an issue. An increased number of tickets are constantly distributed to visitors to Whyte Avenue because they have parked in areas that are designated only to business owners and employees. Because these areas are not properly marked, it is difficult for visitors to identify the areas where it is safe to park without receiving a ticket.

Unfortunately, the South Scona parking lot does not have the capacity to hold a large volume of Whyte Avenue visitors, and this has been a problem for some time. There is a growing need for the expansion of the South Scona parking lot. The production of an expanded parking lot in the South Scona area is expected to take place in the summer of 2005. The South Scona parking lot is expected to double in size, and this means that it will be able to accommodate at least 1,500 parking stalls. Expanding the parking lot will certainly resolve the parking issue for Whyte Avenue visitors, and it will also decrease the number of tickets distributed.

This expansion will take a considerable amount of time to complete, and the road along the Western Boulevard will be affected. The Old Strathcona area will be looking forward to this expansion, and so will those who visit Whyte Avenue.