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Funding boost for roads in 2017 budget

Investing in roads is a priority for the County's 2017 budget. The \$132.1 million budget includes estimated expenditures of \$75.7 million for general operations and \$56.4 million for capital, 59 per cent of which is being allocated to capital road projects.

The overall 2016 taxable assessment decreased \$207 million (2.5 per cent decrease from 2016) representing an estimated \$223 million in new growth and a decrease of \$430 million in market value assessment.

What impact does the budget have on taxes?

The average residential rate payer will see their total municipal tax bill increase slightly. For example:

- An average home with a 2016 assessed value of \$415,500 would be assessed at \$405,113 this year. That property will see an overall increase of \$45 per year. Of this, \$42 is the provincial education tax requisition; \$2 is the Seniors Foundation requisition; and \$1 is the County's municipal tax portion, which supports the provision of municipal programs and services. This sample property will pay a total of \$2,629 per year in taxes – \$1,588 for the municipal services portion plus \$1,041 in requisitions for Provincial Education and Seniors Foundation. Individual properties will vary depending on the different market values of property throughout the County.

Provincial Education and Senior's Foundation Tax Explained

All Alberta municipalities are required to collect education taxes on behalf of the Government of Alberta. The County also collects on behalf of the Senior Foundation. Approximately 38.9 per cent of residential taxes are transferred to the province for education purposes and 0.7 per cent for Senior Foundation purposes. The County's education requisition has increased 1.9 per cent for the year.

Overall, farmland taxes will remain virtually the same as 2016.

Non-residential properties including machinery and equipment may experience an increase based on individual property assessments and changes to the market value.

"It has been a challenging year maintaining the County's extensive gravel road network due to the inclement weather conditions we've experienced in the region. Council remains responsive to these challenges which is why 59 per cent of our capital budget is being invested on improving our roads," said Reeve Leanne Beaupre.



“Investing in our communities and maintaining the services and programs we provide to residents was also a theme when developing the 2017 budget. We commend staff for developing a fiscally responsible budget that meets the current and future needs of our community, and keeps tax rates reasonable while taking into consideration the current economic climate,” added Beaupre.

For more information:

- See attached 2017 Budget Highlights

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Budget Highlights

Capital Budget

Approximately \$33.2 million is being invested in capital road projects.

The proposed new construction includes 29.3 km of road surfacing including the paving of gravel roads, surfaced road overlays, and re-construction, with divisional road projects to be determined. Grant funding for road projects is estimated at \$6 million, including a \$1.1 million Federal Gas Tax Grant and \$4.9 million in funding from Provincial Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) Grant.

The following is a list of road projects scheduled:

- Wedgewood Phase 2 Rehabilitation – overlay 1.7 km
- La Glace sidewalks Improvements
- Clairmont West Phase 2/103 Avenue-104 Avenue and 98 Street) – curb and gutter 0.8 km
- Township Road 714/Richmond Avenue from Range Road 51 west to City limits – widen and overlay 5.8 km
- Township Road 710 from Highway 40 west to Range Road 65 – overlay 4.9 km
- Range Road 62 from River Road Estates entrance south to Township Road 704A – grade, base and pave 1.5 km (carry over)
- Clairmont Parkway Phase 1 from Township Road 725 to Northfield Landing – grade, base and pave 2 km (carry over)
- Pipestone Creek campground emergency access study (carry over)
- Sandy Ridge – microsurface 2 km (carry over)
- Lakeview Estates – base and pave 2.9 km
- Arthur Lane –overlay 1 km
- Pine Valley Estates – microsurface 1.6 km
- Bear Ridge Estates – overlay 0.7 km
- Spring Creek Subdivision – base and pave 0.85 km
- Whispering Ridge School Road extension and sidewalks – grade, base and pave 0.34 km
- Range Road 62 from Township Road 723 North to Township Road 724 – base and pave 1.6 km
- Township Road 750 and Intersection from Range Road 85 West to Range Road 91 – base and pave 3.2 km
- Range Road 111 from Highway 671 North to Township Road 730 – base and pave 3.2 km
- Mercer Hill (Township Road 730) from Range Road 51 West to Range Road 52 – base and pave 1.7 km
- Range Road 53 from Township Road 744 North – base and pave 0.7 km



- Township Road 730 from Range Road 50 West to Range Road 51 – base and pave 1.6 km
- Township Road 744 (Webster Road) From Range Road 51 West – grade, base and pave 1 km
- Range Road 53A, Township Road 712 and Range Road 54 – base and pave 2.7 km
- Range Road 63 and Bauman Road Intersection – grade, base and pave 1.1 km (carry over)
- Horse Lake Road/Township Road 734 from Highway 43 to Range Road 120 – base and pave 7.5 km (carry over)
- Range Road 51 from Township Road 733 North to Township Road 734 – grade 1.6 km (carry over)
- Township Road 730 from Range Road 35 West to Range Road 40 – grade 1.6 km (carry over)
- \$2.7 million for bridge rehabilitation projects
- \$2.76 million for spot construction, chip sealing and road widening projects
- Additional \$682,000 for an extra 198 km of gravel to be applied to gravel roads with 200+ traffic counts

In addition to road construction, the capital budget includes:

- \$2.6 million for replacement vehicles and equipment
- \$3.49 million for public works, water and sewer management projects (including water truck fill and new water well in Bezanson, sewage lift station in Valhalla, and water meters in Bezanson, Teepee Creek and La Glace)
- \$575,000 for the West County Shop expansion
- \$18,000 for new playschool in Whispering Ridge for a total contribution of \$483,000
- \$415,000 for the Clairmont Transit System
- \$145,000 for refuse collection bins for homeowners who receive curbside refuse collection services in Clairmont, Westlake Village, Whispering Ridge, Wedgewood, Maple Ridge Estates, and Dunes on 17
- \$110,000 for Information Technology (IT) systems upgrades
- \$100,000 for a storage shed at the Clairmont Centre for Recycling and Waste Management
- \$50,000 for solar energy project at the Clairmont Centre for Recycling and Waste Management

Operating Budget

The operating budget proposed for 2017 includes:

- \$4.3 million in Community Grants for organizations such as STARS, Prairie Art Gallery, Nighthawk Year-Round Recreation Park, 18 community halls, six community arenas, seven curling rinks and two swimming pools and all of the following:



- \$600,000 over three years (2015-2017) for a total contribution of \$1.8 million for the Bezanson Community Centre Phase 1
- \$150,000 over three years (2015-2017) plus \$175,000 for 2017 for a total contribution of \$1.75 million to the Teepee Creek Ag Events Centre
- \$1.88 million to the Grande Prairie Regional Agricultural & Exhibition Society (Evergreen Park)
- \$300,000 to the Philip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum
- \$280,000 to the Town of Beaverlodge Pool
- \$268,775 to the Grande Prairie Public Library
- \$200,000 for STARS operations over three years (2016-2018)
- \$184,191 for Nitehawk Year-Round Recreation Park
- \$100,000 for the Canada 150 Grant Program
- \$80,834 to the South Peace Centennial Museum
- \$65,000 over four years (2015-2018) to the Grande Prairie Art Gallery
- \$50,000 over two years (2017-2018) for the 2018 Alberta Summer Games
- \$50,000 to the Valhalla Recreation Centre
- \$45,000 to the Wembley and District Agricultural Society
- \$43,000 for the Crystal Creek Recreational Society
- \$37,398 over four years (2015-2018) Grande Prairie Museum
- \$41,600 over three years (2015-2018) to the South Peace Regional Archives Museum
- \$25,000 over four years (2014-2017) to Grande Prairie Sport Council
- \$25,000 to the Rio Grande Sports Association for Rio Grande Rodeo's 100th Anniversary
- \$22,500 over three years (2015-2017) for Technical Search and Rescue Association
- \$20,000 to the Community Foundation of Northwestern Alberta Vital Signs
- \$10,000 over three years (2015-2018) for a total contribution of \$30,000 for Grade Three Reading University
- \$1.11 million to the City of Grande Prairie for the tax sharing agreement (share of municipal tax revenue- 20 per cent from co-generational facility and 10 per cent on any new commercial/industrial development in areas serviced by Aquatera).
- \$457,000 in FCSS Grants
- \$150,000 for the Wapiti Recreation Area Implementation Plan
- \$110,000 to the Town of Wembley for a replacement fire truck
- \$90,000 for special needs and seniors transit operating costs

Council requested Administration provide options for a two-year, \$20 million infrastructure program to be funded through borrowing.

For more information, please contact Bill Rogan, CAO at 780-532-9722.