



News Release – For Immediate Release Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Council approves interim budget for 2018

Today, County of Grande Prairie Council adopted the 2018 interim budget, which focuses on maintaining essential services and programs, improving and enhancing service levels, and supporting sustainable growth of the community well into the future.

The overall \$147 million budget includes estimated expenditures of \$79.3 million for general operations and \$67.7 million for capital.

“Council is optimistic about a zero increase to taxes for 2018 based on forecasted economic, population and development growth for the year; however, market and linear assessments and pending provincial grants will shape the final tax rates set in the spring,” says Reeve Leanne Beaupre. “I commend Council and staff for their work on ensuring the 2018 budget addresses the needs of our growing community now and into the future and further strengthens our community through investments, all while keeping tax rates reasonable.”

A few of the services, programs and projects Council approved for 2018 include:

- Nearly 75 per cent of the capital budget going towards road and bridge projects
- Two youth program coordinators for the new FCSS youth summer program and a coordinator for the FCSS home support program
- New road maintenance equipment and three Public Works Equipment Operators for capital road projects and year-round road maintenance programs
- Nearly \$5.2 million in recreation, culture, community, FCSS, and library grants to go towards various organizations
- A new firehall for the hamlet of La Glace, water tender for the Town of Sexsmith Fire Department, and a new radio communications system for Regional Fire and Enforcement Services
- \$1.5 million towards Weed Control services and programs (over 62 per cent of the Agriculture department budget)
- Clairmont Centre for Recycling and Waste Management and Bezanson Lagoon expansion and upgrades
- Funds going towards supporting existing and new parks and recreation initiatives such as the Wapiti Recreation Area Implementation Plan and Pipestone Creek Campground improvements (additional powered sites)

County of Grande Prairie residents can find out more about the 2018 interim operating and capital budget in the attached Budget Highlights.

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Additional information: Budget Highlights attached

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Budget Highlights

Capital Budget

Approximately \$49.8 million is being invested in capital road and bridge projects.

The proposed new construction includes 23.3 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 \$6.3 million, including a \$1.1 million Federal Gas Tax Grant and \$5.2 million in funding from Provincial Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) Grant.

The following is a list of road projects scheduled:

- Clairmont East – 101 Ave, 102 Ave, 103 Ave and 104 Ave – grade, base and pave 1.2 km
- Range Road 51 from Township Road 714A to Highway 670 – chip seal 2.4 km
- Sandy Lane Estates – overlay 0.82 km
- Riverview Pines – overlay 2.8 km
- Pinebrook Estates – overlay 1.15 km
- Range Road 60/Saddle Hills Road from Highway 2 north to Township Road 744 – base and pave 5.3 km
- Township Road 750 from Range Road 83 to Range Road 85 – base and pave 3.2 km
- Township Road 732 from east of Township Road to Range Road 131 to east of Range Road 131 – base and pave 3.2 km
- Township Road 714 from Range Road 103 to Range Road 105 – base and pave 3.2 km
- Township Road 722 from end of pavement to Range Road 90 – base and pave 2.4 km
- Range Road 84 from Highway 43 north – grade 1.6 km
- Township Road 712 from Range Road 73 to Range Road 75 – base and pave 3.2 km
- Range Road 64 from Township Road 710 north – grade, base and pave 1.6 km
- Resources Road/Range Road 60A and Township Road 704A intersection improvements
- Range Road 54 from Highway 43 to Township Road 724 – base and pave 3.2 km
- Township Road 730 from Range Road 45 to Range Road 50 – grade, base and pave 3.6 km
- Range Road 92 from Township Road 712 north – base and pave 0.8 km
- Range Road 60A/Resources Road and Township Road 710 – signalization and intersection
- Lakeview Estates – base and pave 2.9 km (carry over)
- Township Road 705/Spring Creek – base and pave 0.85 km (carry over)



- Township Road 750 from Range Road 83 to Range Road 85 – base and pave 3.2 km (carry over)
- Township Road 750 from Range Road 85 south to Range Road 91 south and intersections – base and pave 3.2 km (carry over)
- Whispering Ridge School sidewalks and road extension – grade, base and pave 0.34 km (carry over)
- \$11.7 million for divisional road projects
- \$5.6 million for bridge rehabilitation and replacement projects
- \$2.2 million for spot construction and road widening projects and road condition assessments

In addition to road construction, the capital budget includes:

- \$3.1 million for replacement vehicles and equipment
- \$1.57 million for a new firehall in La Glace
- \$775,000 for Beaverlodge Shop expansion
- \$500,000 to Clairmont Centre for Recycling and Waste Management site expansion and upgrades
- \$534,000 for the Bezanson Lagoon Expansion Project
- \$392,000 for a new plow truck and pup trailer to maintain service levels on the increased amount of paved roads
- \$300,000 for a new water tender for the Town of Sexsmith Fire Department
- \$250,000 for Geographic Information Systems aerial photos and digital storage
- \$150,000 for Wapiti Recreation Area Management Plan Phase 1 Implementation
- \$142,500 for internal and external website replacement
- \$140,000 to replace ice resurfacers for the Crosslink County Sportsplex
- \$100,000 for Pipestone Creek Campground improvements (additional powered sites)
- \$75,000 for a Alberta First Responder Radio Communications System
- \$60,000 for pull behind disk used to dry road material for road construction projects
- \$30,000 for Bezanson Firehall roof replacement

Operating Budget

The operating budget proposed for 2018 includes:

- \$3.9 million in recreation, community and culture grants to various organizations
- \$1.5 million towards Weed Control services and programs (over 62 per cent of the Agriculture department budget)
- \$510,000 in grants for public libraries in Grande Prairie, Beaverlodge, Hythe, Sexsmith, Wembley and the hamlets of Elmworth, La Glace and Valhalla
- \$442,000 in FCSS grant programs



- Nine additional employees (combination of full time, part time, temporary, contract and seasonal employees equaling to 8 full time equivalent positions) including three Public Works Equipment Operators, one FCSS Home Support Program Coordinator, and two part time summer youth program coordinators to support the new FCSS summer youth program.
- \$30,000 for four portable dugouts for the newly converted softball diamonds at the Crosslink County Sportsplex
- \$20,000 for the Grande Prairie Area Joint Recreation Master Plan Implementation

Schedule of Fees and Rates Changes

Utility fees for water and sewage/wastewater will increase by 3 per cent for the average residential and commercial utility customer in the hamlets of Bezanson, La Glace, Teepee Creek and Valhalla.

The fee to surrender an animal at the Grande Prairie Regional Animal Pound will increase from \$100 to \$150.

The introduction of a \$100 fee to renew a development permit.

The updated schedule of fees, rates and charges will be posted on www.countygp.ab.ca in the beginning of 2018.

For more information on the 2018 preliminary budget, please contact Bill Rogan, CAO at 780-532-9722.