



## **NEWS RELEASE** – For Immediate Release Thursday, April 18, 2013

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### **2013 Final Budget approved**

The 2013 Final Budget was approved by County Council Thursday. An additional increase in assessment of \$232 million provides an estimated 8.8 per cent increase in operating expenses. The overall 2013 taxable assessment increased by \$499 million over 2012, representing an estimated +\$363 million in new growth and an increase of \$136 million in market value assessment.

“The County of Grande Prairie is looking forward to investing in the future of its communities,” said Leanne Beaupre, County Reeve.

The County recognizes the value in investing in our roads and infrastructure and remains committed to investing a large portion of its budget into them, as well as maintain and enhance the services, programs and opportunities provided to not only keep up with, but proactively plan for the future of our fast growing communities. The additional revenue from growth will allow Council to approve and provide extra services/project such as:

- Philip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum building construction
- Teepee Creek Lift Station upgrade
- Bridge repair and STEP funding due to loss of provincial grants
- Odyssey House supportive housing facility
- Hythe Fire Department rescue unit
- Pipestone Creek Park water and sewer system and Bear Hill Park study
- Sexsmith Spray Park rubberized coating resurfacing
- Public Works salt shed in Beaverlodge
- \$4000 per hall for 16 community halls in the County for utility costs

### ***What impact does the budget have on taxes?***

Even though the County did not increase the mill rate, residential taxes will increase by about 2.8 per cent for an average residence due to an increase in market value. For example:

- an average home assessed at \$303,300, which had a market value assessment increase of 2.8 per cent would have an increase in municipal taxes of \$31 per year or \$2.58 per month. There will be an increase of \$5 in requisition taxes; this tax levy is not a reflection on the municipal budget. Individual properties will vary depending on the different market values of property throughout the County.

Farmland taxes will remain the same. Non-residential and machinery & equipment may experience an increase based on individual property assessments and changes in the market value.

“The County is very pleased with the final budget,” says Reeve Beaupre, “We are able to continue to develop infrastructure to sustain and support our growing communities and provide affordable, quality services to our residents while practicing good financial management and fiscal responsibility and maintaining our traditional lifestyle.”

For further information on the 2013 budget and taxation rates, please call 780-532-9722, or for assessment information call 780-513-3952.

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**For more information:**

- 2013 Budget Highlights

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### **2013 Budget Highlights - \$137 million operating and capital budget**

- \$28.5 million infrastructure and road construction includes 46 kms of County roads. Approximately \$9.7 million in projects is being carried over from 2012:
  - 28.5 kms to pave gravel roads
  - 14.3 kms to surface road overlay
  - Bridge construction \$1.24 million.
  - *The County will use \$1 million from Federal Gas Tax grant.*

In addition to road construction, the 2013 capital budget includes:

- Additional \$8 million to Philip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum project bringing the County's total contribution to \$12.6 million.
- \$6.8 million for the Highway 43 east (McRae) Water & Sewer Servicing and Paving Local improvement project.
- \$4.4 million for County Shop expansion and Administration Building Renovations.
- \$3.3 million for the second year of construction for the Public Works and Systems Office building.
- \$3 million carried over from the previous budget year to complete the Sportsplex site work.
- \$1.1 million for vehicle and equipment replacement units.
- \$1.2 million for new vehicles and equipment.
- \$852,000 for replacement of playground equipment at Kleskun Hills Park and Hommy Park; upgrades to playground equipment at Bear Lake; improvements of Clairmont School field; replacement of electrical at Pipestone Creek Park; and replacement of water and sewer system at Pipestone Creek Park dependent on Community Infrastructure Improvement Funding Grant; and supply and install uprights, nets, and player benches at the eight outdoor athletic fields at the County Sportsplex.

### **Operating Budget**

The operating budget proposed for 2013 includes:

- \$3.3 million in Community Grants including continuing support of STARS, Prairie Art Gallery, 16 community halls, six community arenas, seven curling rinks and two swimming pools.
- \$225,000 over two years for a total contribution of \$450,000 to the Teepee Creek Ag Events Centre.
- \$225,000 over two years for a total contribution of \$450,000 for Odyssey House supportive housing facility.
- Hiring of 11.5 new employees (full-time equivalent) for services including Community School Liaison Worker, Public Works and Mowers to reflect the growth in the County.