

Location of photo: Bear Lake Park

# COUNTY CONNECTIONS



SPRING 2020

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## Reeve's Message



When this issue of Connections arrives in your inbox or mailbox, parts of the economy will slowly be re-opening. The County supports a very planned approach to this re-opening. This phased approach will protect our greatest assets: the people of our community.

Though COVID-19 continues to impact our lives, we have worked together and made many sacrifices to help flatten the curve in our community and province. I know this has been very difficult.

Thank you.

County Council will continue to support our residents and businesses over the upcoming weeks and months, while continuing to adhere to the provincial guidelines. We are working within the Grande Prairie Regional Emergency Partnership (GPREP) with partner municipalities and with a business taskforce to assist businesses with developing and implementing re-entry plans that align with the Province's phased approach to re-opening our economy. Over the past months, this taskforce has offered programs such as weekly training webinars for local businesses, a #LoveLocalGP campaign, and a voucher program that provides grants to businesses for a variety of advisory services.

The County has also been contributing resources and personnel to GPREP in response to the COVID-19 pandemic since March 13 by helping coordinate programs for vulnerable residents, like the Community Care Program (See more details on page 14); sharing information about mental health supports; declaring a State of Local Emergency; working with the Province and Alberta Health Services; and reinforcing safety messaging and regulations in the region to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Internally at the County, we've shifted the way we're doing things to ensure the safety of our employees and the public

while continuing our operations. This includes such things as conducting virtual Safety Code inspections and holding virtual Council meetings. We will continue to follow the lead of the Province and will adapt as the situation changes.

For updates on County information regarding COVID-19, visit [www.countygp.ab.ca/covid19](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/covid19). I remind you that there are many mental health resources and supports available at [www.gprep.ca](http://www.gprep.ca). These are great resources accessible to all citizens in our area.

### BUDGET 2020

County budget discussions concluded on April 17 to finalize our 2020 budget. Here are some highlights of how tax dollars are put to work:

#### Reduced Property Taxes

To help reduce the challenges many of our residents and businesses may be experiencing due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the current economic climate, Council has applied the 2019 surplus of \$1.15 million to the 2020 budget, resulting in a 1.2 per cent decrease to the municipal tax rate. While the interim budget in December included a one per cent increase for 2020, in this current environment, we felt it was essential to change our course and reduce taxes for our citizens. The County is also waiving penalties until October 30 for late payments on property taxes. See pages 3, 4, 8 and 9 for more details on the 2020 Budget.

#### Transportation Network

Always a priority for our residents, Council remains committed to investing in improvements and maintenance of County roads and bridges. Approximately 45 per cent of the budget will go towards our transportation network. Visit pages 12 and 13 to see the projects slated for upgrading.

Just this spring, heavy snowfall followed by warm temperatures caused washouts and flooding of roads. Public Works continues to repair roads. Last month, as part of GPREP, the County lent resources to address flooding throughout the region.



[countygp.ab.ca](http://countygp.ab.ca)

## **Community Grants**

Volunteer organizations are the heart of our communities. Each year, the County invests millions of dollars into these organizations to support recreation, community activities, culture, Family and Community Support Services, seniors, special needs transportation, and library grants. This year, \$5.7 million in grants will be contributed to various organizations. See pages 5 to 7 for the list of organizations receiving major capital, capital assistance and community assistance grants this year. Recipients of operating assistance, Family and Community Support Services, Library, Transportation and other grant programs will be announced and distributed later this year.

## **Critical Infrastructure Projects**

There's a lot we don't see below the ground that supports the well-being of our communities. Projects include a wastewater line in Clairmont, a new water treatment plant in La Glace, stormwater drainage in Clairmont, land purchases for industrial development, servicing sites for future schools, and more.

## **Safety**

Regional Enforcement Services budget increased by 15 per cent to accommodate two additional RCMP Enhanced Policing members to work out of the Beaverlodge RCMP detachment. Who will primarily focus on the West County. Current officers will then concentrate on crime reduction in other areas of the County. We're also investing in a new traffic control system for our Regional Fire Service emergency vehicles, improvements to the fire training centre site, and equipment replacements and upgrades.

## **Agriculture**

A large portion of the agriculture budget will be directed into our Weed Management Program.

## **Economic Development**

Allocations for business partnerships and initiatives including the Commercial Investment and Attraction strategy; and the Business Visitation Program to strengthen local businesses and help drive investment in our region.

## **Campground Upgrades**

One way we strive to keep the County beautiful and accessible is by taking care of our campgrounds and making sure they receive regular maintenance and upgrades. This year's budget will see investments into Pipestone Creek and Bear Lake campgrounds.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN**

The County released our 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, which will guide all planning, initiatives, and operations in the County over the next five years. It is essentially a "roadmap" to balance community building with fiscal responsibility and speaks to a vision of the County that is livable, vibrant and resilient. View the plan on page 10 and 11. This is a living document and will be reviewed annually and adjusted to reflect our ever changing environment as necessary.

## **ADVOCACY**

I am pleased to share results of our advocacy work around local road network improvements, as well as updates on

other advocacy priorities. This work is very important to Council, as it has a direct impact on the quality of life. See page 4 for updates on our advocacy work.

## **INTERMUNICIPAL COLLABORATION FRAMEWORKS (ICF)**

In April, the County adopted ICFs with both the towns of Beaverlodge and Wembley. The agreements will guide the municipalities over the next three years planning, delivering shared programs, services in a way that benefits residents in all municipalities. We are working on ICFs with the City of Grande Prairie and the Town of Sexsmith. This type of collaboration is important as it recognizes our interconnectedness as neighbours, while supporting our autonomy as separate municipalities.

## **VILLAGE OF HYTHE VIABILITY REVIEW**

The Village of Hythe Council made a motion to request a viability review from the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The County will be working with Village representatives and assist in answering questions that may arise during this review.

## **UPDATE ON EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

Due to COVID-19 safety concerns, many events and activities have been cancelled or delayed. We are pleased to open campgrounds in the County on June 1. Day use areas are already open. See page 20 and 21 for more details. Restrictions continue to be in place, so please check [www.countygp.ab.ca/covid19](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/covid19) for updates before venturing out.

## **COMING UP!**

### **New Fire Station**

The new La Glace Fire Station is slated to open and be fully operational later this year. Earlier this year, three new tenders that can pull water from various sources like hydrants, water standpipes and dugouts were delivered to the County. One of these specialized fire protection units operates out of the Sexsmith Fire Hall. This unit is especially important for the safety of all County and regional residents.

### **New and Improved Website**

We've all become more reliant on online information. Later this year we'll be launching our new County website. We're making it easier for you to find information, stay in touch with what's happening, fill out forms and more.

Over these past months, we have pulled together, drawing on each other to get through this difficult time. I believe we'll be stronger because of it. Over the next few months as plans to slowly re-open programs in our new normal are underway, please continue to follow provincial guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Thank you for the part you have played in keeping our community healthy and safe. I wish you all a safe spring and summer. And I remind you that farmers are on the roads with large equipment, so please drive cautiously.



# County Council approves a tax decrease at 2020 Budget Deliberations

After further consideration of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the current economic climate in Alberta, County of Grande Prairie Council decided to apply the 2019 surplus of \$1.15 million to the 2020 budget, resulting in a 1.2 per cent decrease to the municipal tax rate.

"The interim budget we passed in December included a one per cent increase, but things have changed substantially since then," said Reeve Leanne Beaupre. "As it stands now, we know even a small increase would be difficult for our community, so we have reduced the budget, with a 1.2 per cent decrease to the municipal portion of property taxes. We hope this, combined with the waiving of penalties for late payments from June 30 to October 31, will help reduce the challenges many of our residents and businesses may be experiencing."

While some services, programs and events have been delayed, suspended or cancelled this year, the County continues to move forward on critical projects, essential programs and services such as maintaining and investing in roads and infrastructure; community safety; family, community and social support services; and agriculture programs.

"We have found ourselves in uncharted territory dealing with the impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic," said Beaupre. "I commend Council for their leadership and Administration for their hard work on following best practices to balance fiscal responsibility while ensuring essential services are maintained during this particularly difficult time of unpredictability. The County will continue to find ways to get through this difficult time and minimize the impacts to our community."

The \$149.5 million budget includes estimated expenditures of \$78.4 million for general operations and \$71.1 million for capital, 58 per cent

of which is being allocated to capital road projects. This equates to a two per cent increase in operations and eight per cent decrease in capital expenditures from 2019. Measures to reduce the budget include not proceeding with proposed new hires and implementing additional cost-saving measures while ensuring essential services are maintained.

The overall 2019 taxable assessment increased by \$444.3 million (5 per cent increase over 2018).

The 2019 surplus of \$1.15 million represents less than 1 per cent of the County's total budget, and results from departmental cost savings.

## BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

### Capital Budget

Approximately \$40.9 million is being invested in capital road and bridge projects.

The proposed new construction includes 29.7 km of road surfacing including the paving of gravel roads, surfaced road overlays, and re-construction and divisional road projects. Find the complete list of road projects slated for this construction season on Page 12 and 13.

In addition to road construction, the capital budget includes:

- \$7.3 million for replacement of vehicles and equipment
- \$6.5 million for servicing the lands adjacent to the Five Mile Community Hall site for future schools
- \$3 million to purchase crown land for industrial development
- \$1 million to construct storm water drainage system along 156 Avenue in Clairmont
- \$590,000 to install sewer line along 148 Avenue in Clairmont to 94 Street
- \$460,000 to build Phase 1 of the La Glace Water Treatment Plant

- \$412,000 in Regional Fire Service equipment replacements and upgrades including a new Live Fire Training Facility

- \$250,000 for Accounting Software

- \$235,000 for Pipestone Creek Campground and Bear Lake Campground site upgrades

- \$158,000 for equipment replacements at the Crosslink County Sportsplex including new bouncy castles and for rebuilding a compressor, as well as a new gas detection system

- \$115,000 for new transport vehicle for spot and miscellaneous construction projects

- \$75,000 for GPS traffic control system for emergency vehicles to enhance response times

## OPERATING BUDGET

The operating budget proposed for 2020 includes:

- \$5.7 million in recreation, community, culture, library, seniors and special needs transportation, and FCSS grants to various organizations

- Over \$1.6 million towards Weed Control services and programs (over 63 per cent of the Agriculture department budget)

- Additional \$44,000 for Evergreen Park to support operations for a total contribution of \$444,000

- Additional \$100,000 each year over five years (2020-2024) to support STARS for a total contribution of \$300,000

- \$250,000 for Pipestone Creek Park 2nd Access Engineering Study

- \$100,000 per year for two years for the Sunrise House Youth Emergency Shelter

- \$258,000 for the Tri-Municipal Industrial Partnership

# Advocacy Updates

## Highway 40 Twinning

With far too many fatalities and collisions on a road that is a key economic driver for our region, and a busy route for tourists and locals, we're proud to be part of a cost-sharing agreement with the Municipal District of Greenview and the Province to twin 19 kilometres of highway from Grande Prairie to south of Norbord, construct a second bridge over the Wapiti River, and make other improvements to bridge structures, intersections and more. More details are available at [www.alberta.ca](http://www.alberta.ca).

## Twinning of Highway 43 Between The City of Grande Prairie and The British Columbia Border

The twinning is needed to support economic development in the region and will allow the region to take advantage of any future natural gas export projects in BC. Highway 43 is also part of the CANAMEX corridor linking Canada and Mexico through the United States, established through the North American Free Trade Agreement. Upgrades to this important highway will also improve safety on the highway.

## Highway 43 Intersection Improvements

Creating an alternative intersection at the congruence of Highway 43X and Range Road 62 is needed to support economic development in the area until a flyover is necessary. It will create southern access to industrial businesses situated north of the Highway, improving travel times and economic efficiency, and improving safety and access for residents travelling to the Crosslink County Sportsplex.

## Highway 2 Clairmont Corridor

Improved access to Clairmont Heights is critical to the vitality of the development of and to allow for economic and commercial development along Highway 2. Improved accesses will also expand the opportunity for more growth in the Clairmont Heights area.

## Highway 40X Construction

Along with our municipal neighbours, we continue to advocate for a new southwest road connecting Highway 43 west and Highway 40 south of the City of Grande Prairie. This new connection would allow heavy truck traffic to avoid driving on local roads in the County and City of Grande Prairie, improving safety, increasing economic efficiency and supporting economic growth in the region.

## Beaverlodge Hospital

A priority for the County and local municipalities is the replacement of the Beaverlodge Hospital. It is the oldest healthcare facility in the province. It is also critical for quality healthcare, as well as for attracting and retaining businesses and residents.

## Philip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum

Assistance with promotion and operation of the museum is required to ensure its financial sustainability.

## Rural Crime

The Province must ensure that it considers the needs of the region when developing new rural crime strategies aimed at addressing the recent rise in rural crime.

## Species at Risk Act

Any additional restrictions put in place to protect species at risk should look to minimize impacts, where possible, on the economic and recreational interests of residents and local businesses.

## Agriculture

Our local farmers and agricultural producers have been faced with many challenges over the past few years. Some of our local producers have been impacted yet again this spring, due to flooding. Council will continue to advocate to the provincial government to implement programs, such as the Efficient Grain Dryer Program grant. The grant will help local farmers cover some of the costs for our agricultural community and supports a competitive environment for producers.

- \$187,675 for Commercial investment and attraction strategy
- \$162,200 to develop Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks with the Town of Beaverlodge and the Town of Wembley, respectively
- \$140,000 for records management program initiative
- \$120,000 for concrete crushing at Clairmont Centre for Recycling and Waste Management
- \$60,000 for Business Visitation program
- \$35,000 to take over operations and maintain the Clairmont Adventure Park

## SCHEDULE OF FEES AND RATES CHANGES

Fees for the Assessment Review Board Appeal Deposits for Residential and Farmland properties will decrease from \$100 per appeal to \$50 per appeal.

Fees for Commercial/Industrial and Residential/Non-member rates will increase from \$95 to \$96.90 per tonne for waste disposal.

Fees for the Residential curbside recycling collection will increase from \$4.50 to \$4.75, and from \$9.25 to \$9.50 per month for curbside waste collection due to an increase in contract hauling service costs.

There will be a 3 per cent increase in sewer rates, which amounts to a \$1 increase bi-monthly for residential property owners; and a \$2 bi-monthly increase for commercial property owners in the hamlets of Bezanson, La Glace, Teepee Creek and Valhalla.

A 3 per cent increase to bi-monthly water rates equating to a \$3 increase bi-monthly for residential property owners, and \$9 increase bi-monthly for commercial property owners in the hamlets of Bezanson, La Glace and Teepee Creek.

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

**Find out more about the 2020 Budget on page 8-9 and watch our video at [www.countygp.ab.ca/budget](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/budget).**

# County Boosts 55 Community Groups with \$2.75 Million in Grants

Each year the County of Grande Prairie supports non-profit community groups across the County as well as in Beaverlodge, Sexsmith, Wembley, Hythe, and the City of Grande Prairie through capital and operational funding. This year, 55 groups will benefit from more than \$2.7 million in grants.

Reeve Leanne Beaupre said, "I believe that this year's grant allocation of over \$2.7 million really speaks to the tremendous personal commitment of the 'people on the ground' – the staff and volunteers of local non-profits – who are putting these funds to work for their communities."

About \$1.6 million of the grant will help support and offset the costs of operating the organizations (Community Assistance Grants). Around \$443,109 will be put to work by non-profits who own or operate recreational, sport and cultural facilities (Capital Assistance Grants). And more than \$706,583 will go toward the cost of facility improvements or building new facilities (Major Capital Grants).

We talked to some of the grant recipients about how they are using these dollars in their organizations. Read on to learn more about how these funds – together with the commitment of these organizations – are helping shape vibrant and healthy communities for local residents.

## STARS NEW HELICOPTER



"The County of Grande Prairie has supported operations at the STARS Grande Prairie base since almost the day we opened. The funds help sustain the operational missions that we fly throughout the County. The County really understands the importance of having this kind of service available for northern residents, and recognizes STARS as an additional asset for their emergency protective services.

More recently, STARS made the decision to replace our aging fleet of BK117 helicopters. We launched a capital campaign to purchase nine new Airbus H145 helicopters to serve Western Canada from STARS' six bases located in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and serving eastern B.C.

The County stepped up with a \$500,000 dollar commitment over five years toward a new helicopter for the base serving Grande Prairie and the northern region. We're expecting delivery in 2022."

– **Glenda Farnden**, Senior Municipal Liaison, STARS

## GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL HOSPITAL FOUNDATION KEY TO CARE CAMPAIGN

"County of Grande Prairie funding is helping make family-centred care a reality. It supports the purchase of a new bedside engagement system for hospital patients. Patients will be able stay connected with friends and family during their time at the hospital through online channels like social media and video chat. This is incredibly important for the well-being of patients in our northern area, as it is so vast. Patients will also be able to access their entertainment accounts for music and movies.

The system also has an educational component called Connect Care that supports the gap in hospital-based care to home-based care. It allows medical professionals to easily connect with patients, gives them in-room access to their patients charts and test results, and educates patients on their condition by giving them access to informative materials and videos.

Once in place in the new hospital, we'll be only one of two Canadian hospitals with this innovative system."

– **Keith Curtis**, Executive Director, Grande Prairie Regional Hospital Foundation



## GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL SPORT CONNECTION PROGRAMS & EVENTS

"The County of Grande Prairie grant is an integral part of the Grande Prairie Regional Sport Connection's operations. With the County grant, we are able to support over 60 regional sport organizations annually; host two annual Try It Day events, giving more than 1,000 youth ages six to 17 the chance to participate in a new sport; recognize our athletes, coaches, and volunteers with the annual Northwest Alberta Sport Excellence Awards; and so much more!

Albertans are more likely to volunteer for sports and recreation organizations than for any other type of organization. Sometimes those volunteers need help. The County recognizes this and continually steps up to support the sport and recreation community.

Our little organization is very proud of what we can accomplish each year. We simply would not have the opportunity to do the work we do without the ongoing support from the County."

– **Karna Gernsheid**, Executive Director,  
Grande Prairie Regional Sport Connection

### PARDS FACILITY UPGRADES

"The County grant is improving accessibility at our facility through parking lot and entryway paving. We've also used the grant for a modular storage structure to protect our hay, which helps ensure our horses stay healthy. The funds were also used to install a fence to improve safety.

Accessibility, client safety and healthy horses are all critical to the success of our programming. Peace Area Riding for the Disabled Society (PARDS) Equine Assisted Therapeutic programs serve over 700 children, youth and adults living with a variety of challenges within our community.

This grant is only one of many ways the County of Grande Prairie has supported PARDS over the years, especially at our new home. Thank you for this funding and for recognizing PARDS as a vital service for the community."

– **Jennifer Douglas**, Executive Director,  
PARDS



### SOUTH PEACE REGIONAL ARCHIVES COMMUNITY EVENTS

The South Peace Regional Archives (SPRA) is regionally and publicly funded, which is very out-of-the ordinary for archives in Alberta. The County has been a key supporter in helping make that happen. Through a unique and collaborative funding partnership between the County and three other municipalities, we are able to offer our services across the region to urban and rural residents.

"We're excited because with this ongoing funding commitment to our operations, the public is not only able to use our archives services for free; we're also able to "bring" the archives to the community. Over the past five years, we've been able to increase the number of community

events we've attended from four to 44 and are continually reaching more communities!

We bring the region's history directly to people, by offering programs to libraries, community groups, Grande Prairie Regional College, home schooled students, and more. This is very innovative for SPRA, and we appreciate the forward-thinking commitment of the County and all other supporting municipalities."

– **Alyssa Currie**, Executive Director, South Peace Regional Archives

### ART GALLERY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE TRAVELLING EXHIBITION PROGRAM

"The Art Gallery of Grande Prairie is one of the largest free admission art museums in western Canada. It is a national-class facility showcasing local, regional, national and international contemporary artworks and pieces of art history, exemplified in their Permanent Collection of art. The County of Grande Prairie provides \$75,000 annually to the gallery from 2019-2022 as a major investment in quality of life, and the regional local economy.

The Art Gallery of Grande Prairie is proud to be the beneficiary of major funding from the County of Grande Prairie. We know that nearly 20 per cent of our annual visitation of approximately 22,000 people are County residents. This means that thousands of people who live in the County participate in our exhibitions and public programs each year; from shows on environmental sustainability to school tours and art camps. Furthermore, the support enables the gallery to manage a travelling exhibition program, which places art exhibitions and education packages directly in County communities like La Glace, and others in northwestern Alberta such as Hinton and Fairview. With these exhibitions touring throughout the Peace Region, available to all towns, community centres, libraries and schools, more than 200,000 people bear witness to these shows each year; challenging, inspiring and expanding people's knowledge and critical thinking.

Galleries are powerful social and cultural enterprises in communities, and we're exceptionally gifted in that, because of County support, we have the opportunity to deepen our understanding of our world and each other through the arts."

– **Jeff Erbach**, Executive Director, Art Gallery of Grande Prairie

### ABOUT THE COUNTY'S COMMUNITY GRANTS

These yearly grants provide operating assistance to non-profit organizations and volunteer groups that provide recreational or cultural services to their community. Groups must be open to County residents, provide proof of volunteerism and fundraising, and achieve identified goals. Applications are available through any of the six area County recreation boards to eligible community-based volunteer groups, nonprofit organizations, municipalities, schools and sports clubs.

For grant application timelines and more information, visit [www.countygp.ab.ca/grants](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/grants).

# 2020 County Grant Recipients

## MAJOR CAPITAL COMMUNITY GRANT (\$50,000+):

- \$333,333 per year over six years for the La Glace Regional Recreation Centre (2018-2023)
- \$150,000 to the Grande Prairie Regional Agricultural & Exhibition Society
- \$113,250 to the Nitehawk Adventure Park
- \$60,000 to Peace Area Riding for the Disabled Society (PARDS)
- \$50,000 to Wembley Agricultural Society

## CAPITAL ASSISTANCE GRANT (\$5,000-\$50,000) RECIPIENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- \$50,000 to the Clairmont & District Agricultural Society
- \$50,000 to the Clairmont & Area Seniors Club
- \$45,991 to the Beaverlodge Curling Club

\$40,000 to the Hythe & District Recreational Society

\$30,000 to the Grande Prairie Regional Agricultural & Exhibition Society

\$30,000 to the Rio Grande Sports Association

\$25,000 to the Whispering Ridge Participarent Society

\$25,000 to the Bezanson School Booster Club

\$22,000 to the Hythe Athletic Association

\$20,805 to the Twilight Club of La Glace

\$15,000 to the Saskatoon Lake Agricultural Society

\$15,000 to the Wembley and District Arts, Culture & Historical Society

\$12,500 to the Wapiti Nordic Ski Club

\$10,626 to the South Peace Centennial Museum

\$10,000 to the Friends of Hythe Community Playground

\$9,937 to the Bezanson Agricultural Society

\$7,500 to the Beaverlodge Area Cultural Society

\$7,500 to the Grande Spirit Foundation

\$6,250 to the Grande Prairie Disc Golf Club in Evergreen Park

\$5,000 to the Red Willow (Beaverlodge) Boys and Girls Camp Society

\$5,000 to the Hythe & District Recreational Society

## COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE GRANT RECIPIENTS INCLUDE:

\$414,000 to the Grande Prairie Regional Agricultural & Exhibition Society

\$400,000 to the Philip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum

\$200,000 per year for four years to STARS (2019-2022)

\$100,000 per year for five years to STARS (2020-2024)

\$100,000 per year for 10 years to the Grande Prairie Regional Hospital Foundation

\$75,000 per year for four years to the Art Gallery of Grande Prairie

\$66,700 per year for four years to the South Peace Regional Archives (2019-2022)

\$56,000 to the Grande Prairie Regional Sports Connection

\$50,000 per year for five years to the Nitehawk Year-Round Adventure Park (2015-2022)

\$37,398 to the Grande Prairie Museum

\$15,000 to Grande Prairie Technical Search and Rescue

\$14,240 to the Kleskun Museum Society

\$10,000 to the Grade 3 Reading University

\$10,000 to the Recreation Assistance Fee Program

\$9,000 to the Peace Air Shed Zone Association

\$7,500 to the Community Foundation

\$6,000 to Agricultural Fairs

\$6,000 to Kids Sport Grande Prairie

\$5,000 to the County of Grande Prairie Seasonal Ice Surface Grants Program

\$4,000 to the Reel Shorts Film Society

\$3,300 to the Peace Draft Horse Club

\$2,500 to the Big Hearts for Big Kids Charity Fundraiser

\$2,500 per year for five years to the City of Grande Prairie Pursuit of Excellence Program (2016-2020)

\$1,700 to the Grande Prairie Petroleum Association

\$1,200 to the Grande Prairie Regional EMS Foundation

\$1,000 to Hospital Foundations

\$600 to Dry Grad Committees

\$567 to the Grande Prairie & District Rural Crime Watch



# MAKING SENSE OF THE BUDGET

## COUNTY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE

### 2020 Residential Property Taxes



MUNICIPAL TAX RATE DECREASE OF **1.2%**  
 AVERAGE PROPERTY VALUE: **\$435,000**  
 TAX BILL: **\$2,872.70**  
 MUNICIPAL TAX THE COUNTY KEEPS: **\$1,772.63**  
 SCHOOL TAX THE COUNTY SUBMITS TO THE PROVINCE: **\$1,080.45**  
 SENIORS TAX THE COUNTY SUBMITS TO THE GRANDE SPIRIT FOUNDATION: **\$19.62**

### Reading your Property Tax Notice

Your property tax notice includes more than municipal taxes – it also includes taxes for education, seniors foundation, and designated industrial properties (if applicable). These taxes are not set or kept by the County. The Province of Alberta and the Grande Spirit Foundation determines the rates and the County is required to collect and send these funds to each of them, respectively.

TAX ACCOUNT DETAILS					
		Assessment Total:		435,000	
		Taxable Total:		435,000	
TAX CATEGORY	TAX RATE	MUNICIPAL TAXES	SCHOOL TAXES	OTHER TAXES	TOTAL
RS Provincial Education Tax	2.4838		1,080.45		1,080.45
RS General Municipal	4.075	1,772.63			1,772.63
Grande Spirit Foundation	.0447			19.62	19.62

25%	50%	75%
Municipal Taxes - County	Provincial Education Tax - Education	Grande Spirit Foundation - Seniors
61.7%	37.6%	0.7%

The amount for the Provincial Education Tax is what the County collects for the provincial government and is allocated towards education, with the amount for Grande Spirit Foundation going towards seniors lodging. General municipal taxes are what is used to help fund our budget.

### How Are Property Values Assessed?

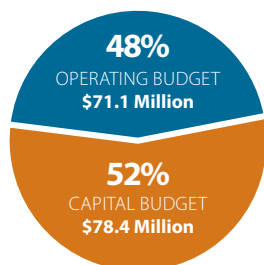
Residential property values are based on the home's market value, which is what the price a property is reasonably expected to sell for if sold by a willing seller to a willing buyer.

Some types of property such as farmland, machinery and equipment, and linear are assessed using provincially regulated values

and therefore have different valuation standards than market value.

For more information on property assessment, contact the Assessment department at 780-532-9722 or visit [www.countygp.ab.ca/assessment](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/assessment).

### A Detailed Breakdown Of How Taxes Are Spent



Every program and service in the County has an associated cost. Every year, Council makes financial decisions by allotting money for each of them into the **Operating** and **Capital** budgets. The total expenditure for 2020 is **\$149.5 million**.

**Operating Budget:** The County's operating budget goes towards the day-to-day costs to keep everything running smoothly, including enforcement and fire services, parks and recreational facilities, road maintenance including snow removal, and waste management.

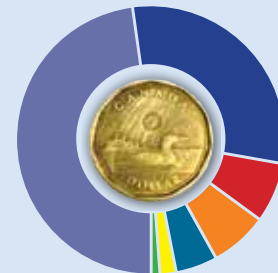
**Capital Budget:** The County's capital budget funds major assets, including machinery and equipment, vehicles, buildings, and major road construction projects.

See the reverse side for a breakdown of the 2020 operating and capital budgets.

### How Does The County Fund Its Budget?

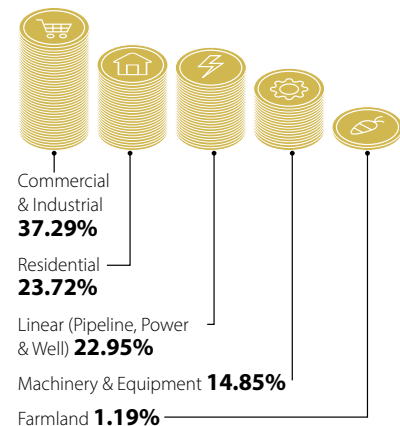
Funding for the County's programs and services comes from several sources, with most of the funding coming from property taxes.

#### Your Tax Dollar by Funding Source



- Municipal Taxes **48¢**
- Transfer from Reserves **30¢\***
- Return on Investment **7¢**
- Grant Revenue **7¢**
- User Fees, Sale of Goods & Misc. Revenues **5¢**
- Permits, Licenses, Fines & Penalties **2¢**
- Levies (Operating & Capital) **1¢**

### Municipal Tax Breakdown by Assessment Class



\*A portion of municipal taxes are put into Reserves, which is similar to a savings account. Money is transferred out of reserves when needed for critical capital and operational projects. The advantage of putting money into reserves is that interest accrues on a large portion of the balance.

**For more information on the County's 2020 Budget, visit [www.countygp.ab.ca/budget](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/budget).**



# MAKING SENSE OF THE BUDGET

## COUNTY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE

### A Detailed Breakdown Of How The Municipal Portion of Taxes Are Spent

This is how much of our sample residential property tax bill (see blue house on reverse side) went towards County operational and capital expenses:

#### Municipal Property Taxes \$1,772.63



### How Your Tax Dollar is Spent



### A Detailed Breakdown of How Your Tax Dollar is Spent

#### Transportation Network



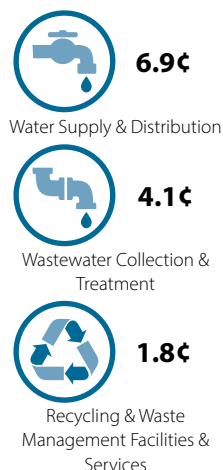
#### Planning & Development



#### Community, Recreation, Culture & Safety



#### Recycle & Waste Management, Water Supply & Distribution, and Wastewater Collection & Treatment



#### Running the Municipality

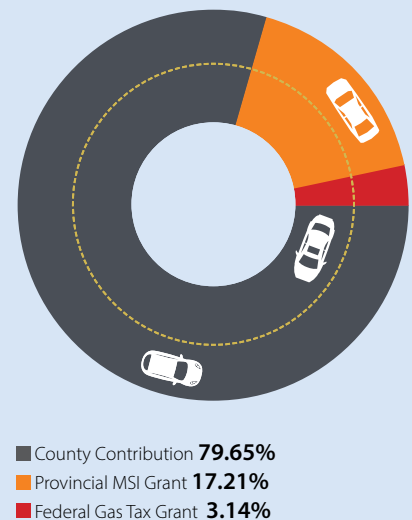


### Funding County Roads & Bridges

Maintenance of 3,600 km of roads and 317 bridges and bridge culverts are some of our biggest expenses.

In 2020, we budgeted **\$40.9 million** for new road construction, including 29.7 km of road surfacing.

This year, the County will receive a **\$1.3 million** Federal Gas Tax Grant as well as a **\$7 million** Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) grant, which will help build and revitalize our public infrastructure.



For more information on the County's 2020 Budget, visit [www.countygp.ab.ca/budget](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/budget).



[countygp.ab.ca](http://countygp.ab.ca)



# County of Grande Prairie Strategic Plan 2020-2025

## Introduction

### Reeve's Message

The County of Grande Prairie's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan is our roadmap to guide our priorities, processes and decision-making over the next five years. Seven key themes form the foundation for our approach, with each one of these supported by objectives that will propel the plan forward. The plan reflects Council's desire to advance us with forward-thinking and innovative leadership, while building on our success as a liveable, vibrant and resilient community.

The County's plan puts people first. As a Council, the work we do is aimed at making a positive difference in the lives of people who live and work here. Guided by input and insights from the public and County administration and staff, Council charted a path that we believe best reflects how our citizens want to experience their community today and for future generations.

We'll make meaningful investments in community-building priorities like safe, liveable communities; quality services and amenities; sustainability; smart growth; and initiatives that drive innovation, connectivity, partnerships and economic growth. These will be balanced by being fiscally responsible, continually looking for efficiencies in our daily operations, and keeping life affordable for our citizens.

The plan calls us to continue to build on what's working well. It also requires us to be bold – to be flexible and visionary, continuously looking for ways to create conditions so that every citizen has the opportunity to thrive. By monitoring and reporting on the plan each year, we'll be able to track our progress and make adjustments as needs shift and opportunities arise.

Municipalities are constantly in a state of change: that is how we mature and evolve. Our strategic plan has been thoughtfully crafted to help us transition through change in our communities and the economy. Given our current environment, some of the challenges we'll face will be especially complex and difficult. Our strength as a Council and administration is in our proactive planning, focused leadership, fiscal sustainability, and our readiness to adapt to emerging realities in our country and around the globe. It's in our strong commitment to developing our inter-municipal and First Nations partnerships to work together to attract investment, drive innovation, and care for our citizens.

Our strengths as a community and region are many: we're entrepreneurial and creative, with a young and educated workforce; our quality commodities help supply a growing global population; innovative partnerships offer the opportunity to harness the potential of shared wisdom; a vast outdoor playground meets us right on our doorstep; and our people are caring and connected.

This County's strategic plan belongs to all of us. It invites each of us – citizens, businesses, community organizations, and other levels of government – to work collectively with the County to build the best version of our community for today and for tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Reeve Leanne Beaupre

## Vision, Mission and Values

The County of Grande Prairie has a long-term commitment to strategic planning guided by its Vision, Values and Mission. These foundational components are listed below.

### Vision

The County of Grande Prairie No. 1. First in building sustainable, prosperous and safe communities.

### Mission

The County of Grande Prairie builds on its natural environment and the entrepreneurial spirit of its citizens to provide an unmatched quality of life and opportunity for all.

## Values & Operating Principles

### Our Values

The County of Grande Prairie Council commits to the following values. We will maintain high standards of ethical and professional conduct by being:

- **Trustworthy** in our decision-making and interpersonal relationships.
- **Transparent** in our communications.
- **Respectful** of others.
- **Collaborative** in achieving our goals.

### Our Operating Principles

We will use these principles to guide the decision-making and service delivery of our County. We will:

- Place the people we serve at the centre of our work.
- Be good stewards of our land, air and water.
- Demonstrate fiscal responsibility and good financial management.
- Provide programs and services in an effective and efficient manner.
- Foster an entrepreneurial spirit and encourage sustainable agriculture, industry and tourism pursuits.
- Be a good neighbour to our surrounding municipalities.
- Practice good governance and respect each other's roles.
- Create a work environment that contributes to employee health and well-being.

## Council Strategic Themes

County Council has identified seven areas which will receive special attention and focus during the term of this strategic plan. These strategic theme areas were selected based on community feedback, current service information from administration, and a thorough understanding of the challenges that lie ahead.

For each Strategic Theme, Council outlined the outcomes it wishes to achieve in the next five years.

### Strategic Theme #1: Effective Transportation Networks

Provide transportation networks that take advantage of responsive technology and align with the needs of residents, business, and industry.

- **Key Outcome 1.a:** Build on our success as advocates and work to complete major transportation components.
- **Key Outcome 1.b:** Plan and complete effective internal transportation networks meeting citizen needs.
- **Key Outcome 1.c:** Analyze the benefits of joining the regional Airport Authority.

### Strategic Theme #2: Fiscal Sustainability

Develop a financial framework for establishing tax rates which recognizes the difference between classes of assessment, compares favourably with other municipalities, and demonstrates the relationship between service levels and revenue generated.

- **Key Outcome 2.a:** Develop robust reserve policies to aid in long-term fiscal and infrastructure sustainability.
- **Key Outcome 2.b:** Review tax revenue and assessment policies to meet the financial needs of the county, while remaining competitive.
- **Key Outcome 2.c:** Review and implement organizational efficiencies.

### Strategic Theme #3: Economic Development

Encourage economic/community development in our communities and provide supports to our partners to build vibrant and prosperous communities.

- **Key Outcome 3.a:** Identify and lead opportunities with partner agencies to support economic development growth.
- **Key Outcome 3.b:** Develop greater flexibility in land use for economic development benefits.
- **Key Outcome 3.c:** Ensure that Subdivision Development and Appeal Board (SDAB) members are well versed in municipal land-use functions.

### Strategic Theme #4: Technology Infrastructure

Use technology to solve physical problems, provide effective services and support the future growth of the community.

- **Key Outcome 4.a:** Consolidate and upgrade internal technology services to streamline and improve citizen services.

- **Key Outcome 4.b:** Review County's role as distributor for broadband and fibre services including geographical distribution of service and financial strategy.

### Strategic Theme #5: Density & Servicing Standards

Manage land effectively by balancing the need for growth while minimizing conflict through land-use planning.

- **Key Outcome 5.a:** Confirm the key provisions of the Municipal Development Plan (MDP) and conduct ongoing analysis to determine its impact on land development.
- **Key Outcome 5.b:** Clarify and communicate the County's density and servicing plans to all interested stakeholders.

### Strategic Theme #6: Safe Communities

Encourage community development by supporting partners in the development and delivery of programs and activities.

- **Key Outcome 6.a:** Develop a Safe Community Strategy including an inventory of programs, services, agencies and partners, to improve the safety and security of residents.
- **Key Outcome 6.b:** Continue to strengthen partnerships amongst policing organizations (RCMP, Peace Officers).
- **Key Outcome 6.c:** Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in both short-term and long-range land approval processes.

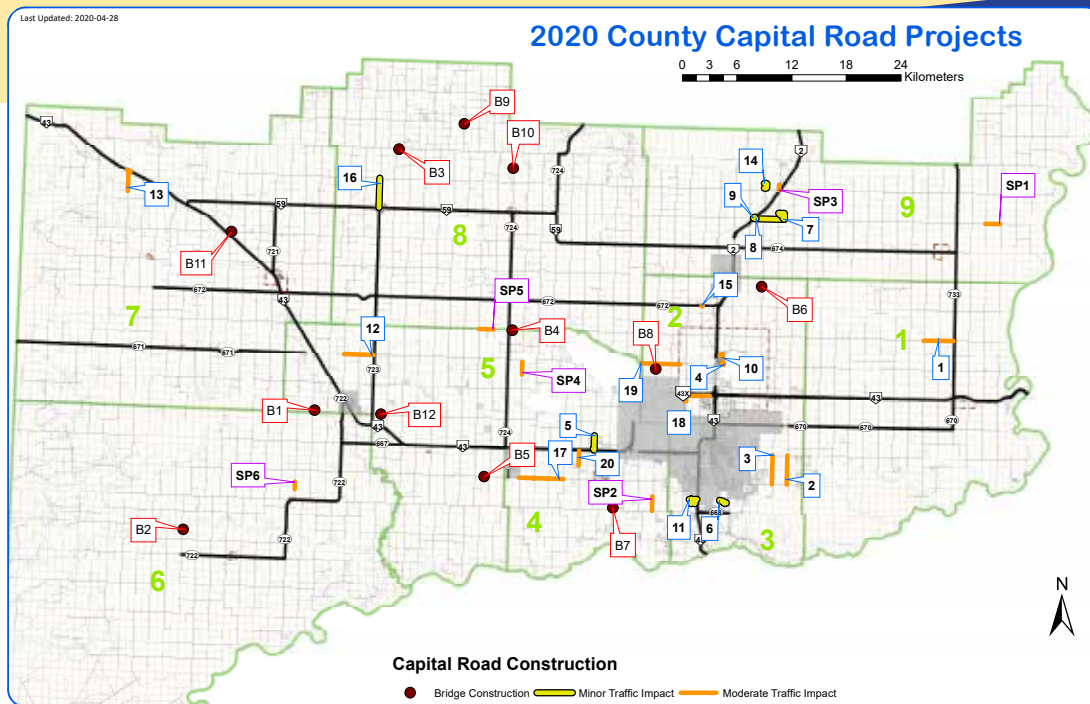
### Strategic Theme #7: Governance & Leadership

Deliver municipal services through the use of innovative tools and a strong commitment to customer service. Understand the demographics of our citizens and focus on service levels and methods that best fit residents' and business's needs. Be a leader in development of inter-municipal partnerships.

- **Key Outcome 7.a:** Provide resources and attention to inter-municipal and inter-government relationships.
- **Key Outcome 7.b:** Improve customer service protocols for the County.
- **Key Outcome 7.c:** Review citizen demographics and use data as ongoing planning input.
- **Key Outcome 7.d:** Develop clear and standardized procedures for creating Council committees and agencies, and for appointing members to them.

**For more details on the County's Strategic Plan including the Corporate Business Plan, view the full Strategic Plan at [www.countygp.ab.ca/stratplan](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/stratplan).**

# 2020 Road Construction Projects



Another busy road construction season is gearing up in the County this spring.

Council approved over 58 per cent of the capital budget to go towards capital road and bridge projects this year.

The proposed new construction encompasses 29.7 km of road surfacing including paving of gravel roads, surfaced road overlays, re-construction and divisional road projects; bridge replacement and rehabilitation projects including the replacement of the Rio Grande Bridge, as well as grading, oiling, gravelling, signage, spot and miscellaneous construction.

The capital budget also includes \$2.14 million for spot construction, road widening and chip sealing projects; and an additional \$350,000 for the Ditch Cleaning Program bringing the total to \$515,000.

Grant funding is projected to be \$8.3 million, including an estimated \$1.3 million Federal Gas Tax Grant and a \$7 million in funding from Provincial Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) Grant.

The County would like to thank residents and commuters for their patience through the upcoming construction season.

The following is a list of planned activities on County roads for the 2020 construction season. The projects are labelled depending on the type of work and shown on the 2020 Road Projects Map.

Visit [www.countygp.ab.ca/roadconstruction](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/roadconstruction) to view the interactive map with all roads being upgraded this construction season, project timelines and potential traffic impacts.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**Grading** involves digging out an existing road structure to realign, level or widen the road and building a new road from the bottom up.

**Overlay** work involves adding a new layer of pavement. This type of work can also include minor spot fixes and milling the surface on occasion.

**Base paving** work involves removing the top layer of gravel, repairing the base of the road, if needed, then packing of the current road surface, and paving a layer of asphalt.

**Curb and Gutter** work involves constructing concrete curbs and gutters along street sides to ensure proper stormwater drainage.

**Intersection Improvements** can involve traffic light installations and/or the improvement, extension, expansion or additional traffic lanes.

**Spot Construction** involves rebuilding a gravel road, including digging out old sections of a road and replacing with new clay and gravel.

**Culvert Replacement** involves replacing an underground steel tunnel, known as a culvert. Culverts carry stream water.

1	Township Road 730 from Range Road 35 east to Highway 733	Grading 3.2 km
2	Range Road 52 from Township Road 712 north to Township Road 714	Grading 3.2 km
3	Range Road 53 from Township Road 712 north to Township Road 714	Grading 3.2 km
4	Willowdale Phase 4 Rebuild, 95 St, 103 Ave, 101 Ave, 95 St, 103 Ave, 101 Ave	Paving, curb and gutter 0.53 km
5	Lakeview Road/Range Road 73	Overlay 1.8 km
6	Wedgewood Phase 3 surfaced road rehabilitation	Overlay 0.7 km
7	Spruce Villa Estates	Base paving 1.8 km
8	Township Road 742	Base paving 3.4 km
9	Township Road 742 and Highway 2	Intersection improvements
10	Wynngate Estates - 108 Ave, 108A Ave, 109 Ave, 96 St	Paving, curb and gutter 0.9 km
11	Sprucewood Park	Base paving 2.1 km
12	Township Road 724 from Highway 723 west to Range Road 102	Reconstruction and grading 3.2 km
13	Range Road 125 from Highway 43 south	Grade, base paving 2.6 km
14	JD Willis Estates	Overlay 1.1 km
15	Range Road 62	Intersection improvements
16	Range Road 100	Overlay 3.3 km
17	Township Road 712 from Range Road 75 west to Range Road 82 Phase 2	Base paving 4.9 km
18	162 Avenue	Base paving 3 km
19	Township Road 724 from Peregrine Industrial Park to Range Road 70	Reconstruction and grading 4.3 km
20	Range Road 74 from Highway 43 south	Grade 1.6 km
SP1	Township Road 742 from Range Road 30 to Range Road 31	Spot construction 1.6 km
SP2	Range Road 65 1.6 km north from Township Road 710	Spot construction 1.6 km
SP3	Range Road 53 0.8 km north of Township Road 744	Spot construction 1.6 km
SP4	Range Road 82 1.6 km south from Township Road 724	Spot construction 1.6 km
SP5	Township Road 730 from Range Road 84 to Range Road 85	Spot construction 1.6 km
SP6	Range Road 105 - Bridge Crossing North of Highway 722	Spot construction 0.6 km
B1	Beaverlodge River (SW-4-72-10-W6M)	Bridge maintenance
B2	Redwillow River - Rio Grande (NW-24-70-12-W6M)	Bridge replacement
B3	Bear Creek - Valhalla Centre (SE-5-75-9-W6M)	Bridge maintenance
B4	Colquhoun Creek - La Glace (SW-3-73-8-W6M)	Bridge maintenance
B5	Pipestone Creek (SE-17-71-8-W6M)	Culvert replacement
B6	Kleskun Creek (SW-21-73-5-W6M)	Bridge maintenance
B7	Spring Creek (SW-2-71-7-W6M)	Culvert replacement
B8	Bear River (NW-20-72-6-W6M)	Bridge maintenance
B9	Webber Creek (NW-7-75-8-W6M)	Bridge maintenance
B10	Mulligan Creek (NW-27-74-8-W6M)	Bridge replacement
B11	Beaverlodge River (SW-4-74-11-W6M)	Bridge maintenance
B12	Harold Creek (SE-6-72-9-W6M)	Bridge maintenance

# County Property Owners to Report Flood Damage by July 3



Owners of residential and non-residential properties within the County are asked to complete an online form at [www.countygp.ab.ca/floodclaims](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/floodclaims) or contact Public Works at 780-532-7393 and provide details on the damage to their property caused by overland flooding due to the spring thaw. This information will be compiled in an application to the Province for financial assistance as part of the Disaster Recovery Program (DRP).

"In order to qualify for the program, the County has to provide details on the extent of the damage experienced within the municipality to the Province," said Dale Van Volkingburgh, Director of Public Works. "We need property owners to provide us information regarding their uninsured damages by no later than July 3. The province will then review the application, along with environmental data, to determine if we qualify for financial support."

If the County's application is approved, the DRP will provide financial assistance to residents, businesses, and the County itself for uninsurable losses from the flooding that occurred due to spring run-off, which started in mid-April.

To help support the application, property owners should take photos and document damages along with extraordinary costs not covered by insurance as a result of the flooding. Property owners will also need to obtain a letter from their insurance company outlining any exclusions to their policy.

Several roads in the County were closed due to flooding and flood-related damage from the rapid spring thaw event and Public Works crews continue to work to repair and re-open closed roads. Lists of roads re-opened and closed can be found at [www.countygp.ab.ca/roadclosures](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/roadclosures). Residents are asked to call the Public Works Emergency Line at 780-532-7393 to report any roads that impede travel or have a significant risk to safety and property and requires immediate attention.

Visit the Government of Alberta website at [www.alberta.ca/disaster-recovery-programs.aspx](http://www.alberta.ca/disaster-recovery-programs.aspx) for more information on the Disaster Recovery Programs as well as helpful information and advice on property clean-up, insurance claims, and protecting yourself from home repair rip-offs.



## COVID-19 Community Care Program

### Food & Pharmacy

Helping ensure residents have continued access to essential goods like food and medication.

#### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

**Residents of all ages in the Grande Prairie Regional Emergency Partnership (GPREP) service area who have an urgent need for essential goods because they:**

- do not have access to other financial support to purchase essential goods
- are unable to visit stores, supermarkets and pharmacies due to self isolation requirements, as directed by Alberta Health Services and have no one to assist them
- live in areas where delivery service is not available
- GPREP service area includes:
  - Beaverlodge
  - City of Grande Prairie
  - County of Grande Prairie
  - Hythe
  - Sexsmith

#### WHAT ARE "ESSENTIAL GOODS"?

- groceries
- personal goods, such as feminine hygiene products
- medications
- baby formula and baby food

#### HOW DO I LEARN MORE OR TO APPLY?

**Online:** We recommend visiting us at [gprep.ca/covid19/communitycare](http://gprep.ca/covid19/communitycare)

**Phone:** Community Care Program Hotline at 780-830-7070

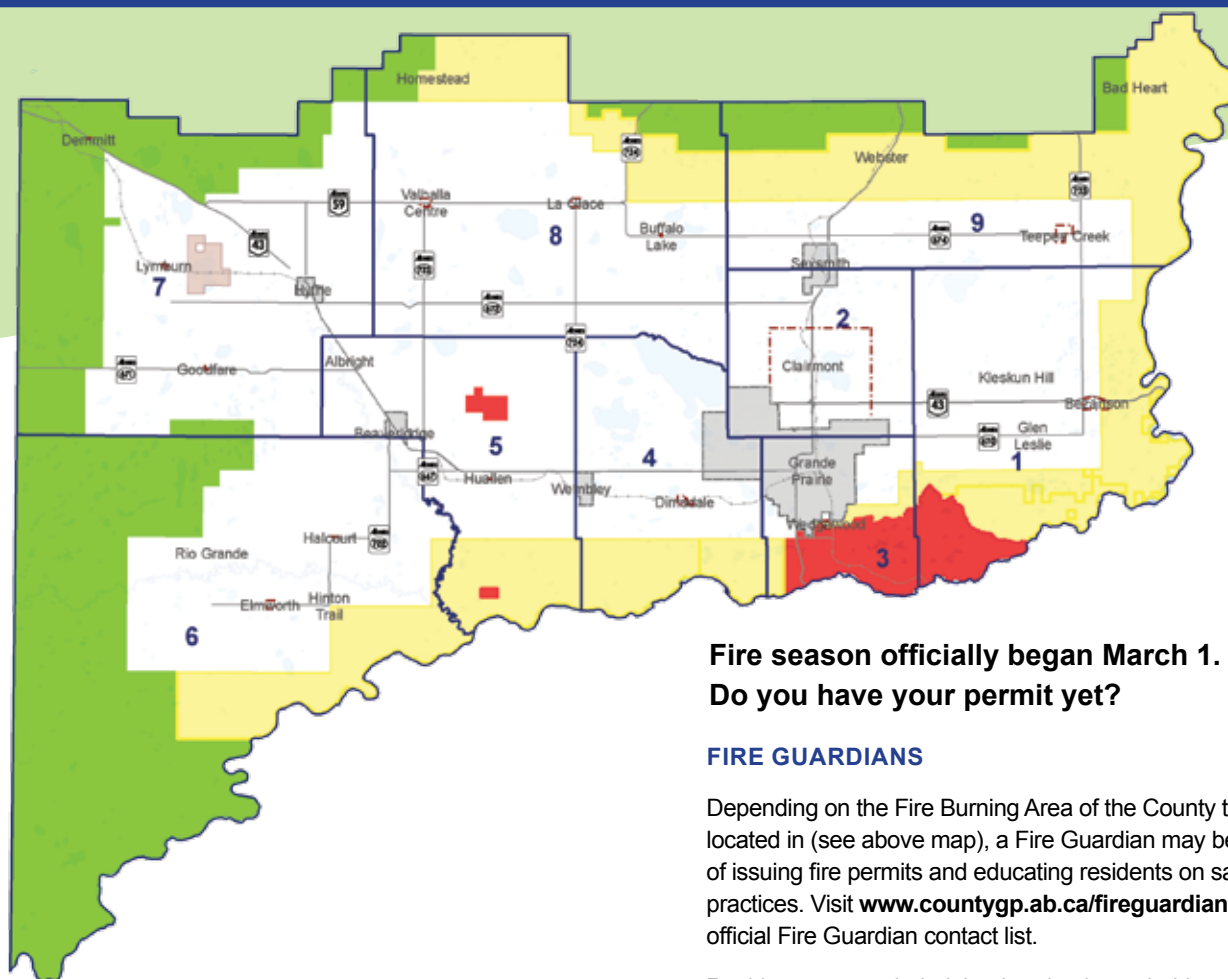
#### Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

You will receive a call back from a program assessor within 24-hours of making your request online or by phone.

\*Please note that this program may be subject to change. For up-to-date information, visit [www.gprep.ca](http://www.gprep.ca).

# It's Fire Season - Do You Have Your Permit?



**The County has four different Fire Burning Areas that are displayed in white, yellow, green and red.**

**COUNTY WHITE AREA** - Requires a verbal permit during fire season. Fill out the Fire Permit Request Form at [www.countygp.ab.ca/firepermits](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/firepermits) and you will be contacted about your request.

**COUNTY YELLOW AREA** - Requires a written fire permit during fire season. Contact your Fire Guardian.

**COUNTY RED AREA** - This is a restricted burn zone. Permits are required year round. Call 780-532-9727 for information on how to obtain your permit.

**COUNTY GREEN AREA** - Requires a written fire permit during fire season from a Forestry Fire Guardian as this area is designated as the Forest Protection Area. Contact the Forest Fire Guardian listed at [www.countygp.ab.ca/fireguardians](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/fireguardians).

**Fire season officially began March 1.  
Do you have your permit yet?**

## FIRE GUARDIANS

Depending on the Fire Burning Area of the County that you're located in (see above map), a Fire Guardian may be in charge of issuing fire permits and educating residents on safe burning practices. Visit [www.countygp.ab.ca/fireguardians](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/fireguardians) for the official Fire Guardian contact list.

Residents are reminded that burning household garbage is not permitted within hamlets or residential subdivisions (an area of land divided up into building lots containing more than five adjoining residences). An inspection and permit is required prior to burning and burning must take place in an approved incinerator or burn barrel.

Fire Marshal Ken Atamanchuk stresses that burning in any Red Zone without a permit is prohibited. "This entire region is considered to be at extremely high risk for wildfires due to heavy forestation. The amount of vegetation also poses a hazard because it makes it very hard for fire and emergency crews to access the area during emergency situations. Residents are encouraged to visit the County's website for information about fire permits and Burning Areas."

**In the event that a Fire Ban is issued in the County, burn permits are invalid until the ban is lifted. Notifications of fire bans are made through local media, and the County's website and social media channels.**

For more information about fire permits, to clarify your Burn Area or request an inspection, contact Regional Fire Service at 780-532-9727 or visit [www.countygp.ab.ca/firepermits](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/firepermits).



[countygp.ab.ca](http://www.countygp.ab.ca)

# Protecting your Home, Business and Property from Wildfire



*A neighbourhood before and after a wildfire.*

Wildfire season is upon us. We have increasingly seen the devastating impact of wildfires across Canada, and the loss experienced by communities.

Well over a decade ago, the County of Grande Prairie set to work to identify the potential risk to our local communities. We proactively started planning and taking action against wildfire at a local level. The work was especially urgent, due to the destruction of local forests caused by the Mountain Pine Beetle. Left in the beetle's path were walls of dead trees that act as fuel for wildfire.

The County also has a Wildfire Mitigation Strategy which identifies the areas of the County that could be affected by a wildfire along with a strategy on how to reduce the risk in these areas. The County's strategy is multi-pronged. It involves clearing dead trees and brush on crown land to remove the fuel and reduce the risk of wildfire; building fire barriers to slow the wildfire spread; and working with the public to educate them about their role in prevention. Our focus is on areas at highest risk, where forest meets community.

## Before a wildfire threatens your area...

To help prevent wildfires, every member of the public has a responsibility. The following are some very practical steps you can take:

### PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY AND HOME

- **CLEAR** debris from gutters, eaves, and decks to stop embers from igniting.
- **REMOVE** items and dead vegetation from under your deck and within 10 feet of the house. Learn more about the basics of defensible space.

- **SCREEN** or box-in below patios and decks to prevent accumulation of combustible materials.
- **REMOVE** flammable materials (firewood stacks, propane tanks) within 30 feet of your home's foundation and any outbuildings. If it can catch fire, don't let it touch any structure.
- **PRUNE** trees so the lowest branches are 6 to 10 feet from the ground.
- **WATER** and maintain lawn, and cut brown grass. Dry grass and shrubs fuel wildfire.
- **CLEAR** and dispose of debris and lawn cuttings.
- **REPLACE** or **REPAIR** loose or missing shingles or roof tiles to prevent ember penetration.
- **COVER** exterior attic vents with metal wire mesh no larger than 1/8 inch so sparks can't enter.
- **ENCLOSE** under-eave and soffit vents or screens with metal mesh to prevent ember entry.

### CREATE AN EMERGENCY PLAN

- Keep an emergency supply kit in a safe spot. Include important documents, medications and personal identification.
- Develop an emergency evacuation plan and practice it with everyone in your home.
- Plan two ways out of your neighborhood and designate a meeting place.

Learn more about how to protect your home and property at [www.countygp.ab.ca/fire](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/fire).

### LEARN WHAT YOU CAN DO IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Check out the Fire Permit Map on Page 9 to find out if your home is in a high wildfire risk area and what type of fire permit is required for safe burning.
- Work with your homeowner association to support the use of proven preparedness landscaping, home design and building materials.
- Contact our Regional Fire Service's Fire Marshal if you would like more information on how to prepare, when to evacuate, and the response you can expect in the event of a wildfire.

Learn more about wildfire risk reduction efforts in the County at [www.countygp.ab.ca/wildfiremitigation](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/wildfiremitigation).

## MANAGING VEGETATION AROUND YOUR HOME TO REDUCE WILDFIRE RISK

Here are three ways to look after the vegetation in your yards to decrease the risk of losing your home, business and property to wildfire.

**FUEL REMOVAL** - Remove flammable vegetation, such as mature spruce trees near your home.

**FUEL REDUCTION** - Reduce flammable vegetation by pruning, thinning, mowing, grazing, mulching, hazard reduction burning and/or pile burning. Please check [www.countygp.ab.ca/firepermit](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/firepermit) for fire ban information prior to burning.

**SPECIES CONVERSION** - Remove flammable vegetation and replace with less flammable varieties (i.e. replacing coniferous with deciduous).

### WILDFIRE SAFETY TIPS

Each year, the County is at work in local forests and in the community assessing the risk of wildfire, removing dead trees and vegetation that serve as fuel, and educating community members on steps they can take to reduce risk to their homes and businesses. While our work significantly helps minimize the risk, it is also critical that all of us take precautions to minimize injury in the event of wildfire locally.

#### If a wildfire is in your area...

- **STAY AWARE** of the latest news and updates from your local media and fire department. Prepare your family, home and pets for evacuation.
- **PLACE** your emergency supply kit and other valuables in your vehicle.
- **MOVE** patio or deck furniture, cushions, door mats and potted plants in wooden containers either indoors or as far away from the home, shed and garage as possible.
- **CLOSE** your home's openings, including attic and basement doors and vents, windows, garage doors and pet doors to prevent embers from entering your home.
- **CONNECT** garden hoses and fill any pools, hot tubs, garbage cans, tubs, or other large containers with water. Firefighters have been known to use the hoses to put out fires on rooftops.
- **LEAVE** as **EARLY** as possible, and if possible, before evacuation orders have been issued. Do not linger once evacuation orders have been given. Roads must be clear so firefighters can get equipment in place to fight the fire.

**DID YOU KNOW...** that more than 90 per cent of homes damaged or destroyed by wildfires are ignited by embers. Maintaining a 1.5 metre non-combustible surface around your entire home will reduce the chance of embers igniting materials near your home.



### How to reach County Regional Enforcement Services

Do you have questions, concerns, complaints? Would you like information regarding traffic safety and enforcement? The following is a list of important contacts in the event you ever need to reach Regional Enforcement Services.

Feel free to tear away this contact information and place it in a familiar place for your reference.

**Phone:** 780-532-9727

**Email:** [enforcementservices@countygp.ab.ca](mailto:enforcementservices@countygp.ab.ca)

**Online:** [www.countygp.ab.ca/occurrencereport](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/occurrencereport)

**Secure Fax:** 888-779-5895

### How to reach the Grande Prairie Regional Animal Care Facility

For animal shelter, pound services and adoptions:

**Phone:** 780-830-0199

**Email:** [regionalpound@countygp.ab.ca](mailto:regionalpound@countygp.ab.ca)

**Fax:** 780-532-4745

### How to Report a Drug House

**Phone:** 780-830-5889

**Online:** [www.countygp.ab.ca/drughouse](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/drughouse)

### For Emergencies

EMERGENCIES (POLICE, FIRE & EMS)	911
RCMP GRANDE PRAIRIE	780-830-5700
RCMP BEAVERLODGE	780-354-2485
LITTER – CROWN LAND/TRAILS	1-800-222-6514
WILDLIFE EMERGENCIES	1-800-642-3800
PUBLIC LANDS ABUSE	1-800-642-3800
REPORT A POACHER	1-800-642-3800
REPORT A DRUG HOUSE	780-830-5889
SAFE COMMUNITIES (SCAN)	1-866-960-SCAN (7226)
WILDFIRE HOTLINE	310-FIRE (3473)
ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCIES	1-800-222-6514
PUBLIC WORKS EMERGENCIES	780-532-7393
ALBERTA SPCA	1-800-455-9003
DANGEROUS GOODS	1-800-272-9600
POISON AND DRUG INFORMATION	1-800-332-1414
PET POISON	1-800-213-6680
ANIMAL POISON	1-888-426-4435
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY	1-866-415-8690
CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE CRISIS UNIT	1-800-638-0715
CANADIAN NATIONAL (CN) RAIL	1-800-465-9239



# Recreation on Public Land – A Guideline for County Residents



With spring and summer on the horizon, more people are taking advantage of the long hours of daylight to get some fresh air and enjoy some outdoor fun in warmer temperatures. For some that means going on a hike, biking or off highway (OHV)/ all-terrain vehicle (ATV) riding or perhaps exploring new territory.

Before you venture out, it is important to know if your adventure is taking you into a County park or greenspace, onto private property, or onto public land (commonly known as crown land). The following information is a handy reference guideline to help you learn more about regulations when using public land.

## WHAT IS PUBLIC LAND AND HOW CAN I USE IT?

Public (crown) land is managed for the benefit of all Albertans by the Province of Alberta under the Ministry of Environment and Parks, with the support of local municipalities and community associations. While the definition of crown land is very broad, all public land is administered under the Public Lands Act and the Provincial Parks Act.

Recreation on public land is a privilege. These lands should be treated with respect, and good land stewardship is the responsibility of all users. Not all public land is created equal, however. The land is subject to acceptable purposes and extents of use determined by those responsible for managing the land. As such, there are restrictions for both individuals and companies around how they can use different areas of public land across the province.

Some public land within the County of Grande Prairie municipal borders, for example, the “Dunes” area south of the Correction Line / Highway 668 and around Evergreen Park, is subject to County bylaws regarding open fires (Bylaw #2924). This is why bush parties are not permitted in this area. This area of public land also prohibits the discharge of weapons (Bylaw #2630). All County bylaws can be viewed at [www.countygp.ab.ca/bylaws](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/bylaws).



Dumping garbage on public land is also illegal, and offenders can face fines of up to \$100,000. Locally, there are options available for area residents who wish to dispose of unwanted items at no charge. Aquatera, for example, offers an annual “free tipping day” on the last Sunday in October. County residents can take advantage of a free Landfill Access Tag, which allows them to dispose of unwanted items at the Centre for Recycling and Waste Management free-of-charge. For information on how to get a Landfill Access Tag, visit [www.countygp.ab.ca/landfillaccess](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/landfillaccess). Other waste management facilities that are open to County residents to use include the West Grande Prairie Regional Landfill, and transfer stations in Demmitt, Elmworth and Teepee Creek. For more information on these facilities, visit [www.countygp.ab.ca/recycleprograms](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/recycleprograms).



## WHAT IS A “RECREATION LEASE,” AND WHY ARE SOME GROUPS ALLOWED TO HAVE THEM ON PUBLIC LAND?

The Province can issue a recreational or miscellaneous lease (formal disposition) on public land to non-profit community groups or municipalities for a variety of recreational purposes. These can include, but are not limited to, campgrounds, community halls, equestrian facilities and agricultural facilities. In some situations, recreational leases

are accessible to the general public, such as Pipestone Creek Park & Campground, which is operated by the County of Grande Prairie.

If a registered non-profit organization requires exclusive use of the site for a specific purpose, a miscellaneous lease can be issued to allow the lease holder to limit access. Local examples of recreational and miscellaneous leaseholders include the Wapiti Shooters Club, Camp Tamarack, Wapiti Nordic Ski Club, Peace Area Riding for the Disabled Society (PARDS), Evergreen Park and the Boy Scouts of Canada.

The Province manages most recreation leases under an approved management plan. The plan outlines the lease holder's mandate, operations, site plan, membership/user fees, etc. If any changes are required, such as, say, the addition of a new trail or new buildings, the plan can be updated. All changes to the plan must first be approved by Alberta Environment and Parks.

#### **CAN I LET MY DOG RUN OFF-LEASH ON PUBLIC LAND?**

While dogs off-leash are generally permitted on public land, this does pose a serious risk to you, your dog and to wildlife. Dogs can chase wildlife, such as bears, deer or elk, which can not only result in wildlife injury, but can create a human safety risk. Bears can turn on the dog and your dog may instinctively run back to you for safety. Cougars or other wildlife can also pose a risk to dogs, attacking or luring them for prey. It is advised that dogs are kept on-leash unless in officially approved or designated off-leash areas. Allowing dogs to chase or harass wildlife may result in charges under the Wildlife Act. Areas held under disposition may be managed to restrict access to where the public can recreate with their dogs and under what conditions on those lands.

#### **CAN I RIDE MY OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE (OHV) OR ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLE (ATV) ANYWHERE ON PUBLIC LAND?**

In general, OHV and ATVs can access public land unless:

- It is designated as closed to OHV/ATV use, including temporary OHV bans
- It is a park or other wilderness area that prohibits the use of OHV/ATVs
- It is held under a disposition or other agreement with Alberta Environment and Parks that allows for the restriction of access to the public.

OHV use in and around waterbodies can cause serious impacts on aquatic life and water quality. If it necessary to cross to waterbody, care should be taken to ensure it is done so with due care and attention to have the least impact as possible and using a designated crossing whenever available. Driving

OHV vehicles in rivers and lakes is illegal and offenders can be fined.

OHV's operated on public lands are required to be registered and insured according to the Traffic Safety Act.

#### **CAN I HUNT ANYWHERE ON PUBLIC LAND?**

Individuals are required to be aware of the regulations for the areas they are hunting and can face penalties for not ensuring to do so before actively engaging in the activity. Public land is managed in a variety of ways, which can influence access and hunting privileges. Public land may be leased or have a specific designation, so different rules may apply depending on the land use. The following are a few examples:

- **Agricultural Public Land:** The public may be required to obtain permission from the lease holder prior to entry. Contact information and other access requirements can be found at: [www.recagpublicland.alberta.ca/](http://www.recagpublicland.alberta.ca/). More information on recreating on Agricultural public lands can be found at [www.alberta.ca/accessing-agricultural-lease-land.aspx](http://www.alberta.ca/accessing-agricultural-lease-land.aspx).
- **Public Lands under formal disposition:** These lands are leased to an individual or group for a specific purpose. Examples include sand and gravel operations; recreational areas or campgrounds, industrial camps, and well sites. In some circumstances, depending on the disposition, access may be totally restricted or limited to foot access only. Individuals are responsible for ensuring they are aware whether they are entering onto any such disposition.
- **Provincial Parks, Recreation Areas, Natural Areas and Wildland Parks:** Hunting may be allowed in these areas. For more details go to [www.albertaparks.ca/](http://www.albertaparks.ca/).
- Conservation sites may also be open to hunters. Information is available at [www.albertadiscoverguide.com/](http://www.albertadiscoverguide.com/).
- For further information about hunting in Alberta, visit [mywildalberta.ca/](http://mywildalberta.ca/).

#### **WHO CAN I CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION?**

- Recreation on Public Lands: [www.alberta.ca/recreation-on-public-land-overview.aspx](http://www.alberta.ca/recreation-on-public-land-overview.aspx)
- Report A Poacher: **1-800-642-3800** (also for illegal dumping)
- AEP Fish & Wildlife: **780-538-5263**
- AEP Land Management Questions: **780-538-8080**
- Environmental Emergency Hotline: **1-800-222-6514**
- County of Grande Prairie Regional Enforcement: **780-532-9727**

# Reserve your Staycation!

## COUNTY CAMPGROUNDS AND PARKS OPEN JUNE 1ST

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All County campgrounds and parks will be open for everyone to enjoy from June 1 until October 15, 2020.

Whether you are looking to spend a few days in the great outdoors, take a day-trip not too far away from home, have some family or friends visiting, be sure to take advantage of the many recreational opportunities and overnight camping facilities in the County. Our campgrounds and parks are the perfect setting to unwind, relax, explore and have fun!

Plan ahead and book your site by phone at Bear Lake, Hommy or Kleskun Hill campgrounds or reserve online for Pipestone Creek. The sites at the Demmitt Campground are available on a first come, first serve basis. Payment options include debit and credit. Cheques are no longer accepted and cash will not be accepted until further notice.

Although campgrounds and parks will re-open on June 1, there will be restrictions in place to ensure safety of campers and park users due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. These are in sync with recommendations set out by the Province and will be updated as information becomes available.

Current safety measures include\*:

- Playgrounds and public shelters or cookhouses in day-use areas will remain off limits due to high touch surfaces
- A fire ban, which prohibits the lighting of any fires in County operated parks and campgrounds until further notice\*
- A maximum of 15 people per gathering
- Users must practice 6 ft/2 m physical distancing
- Users must practice enhanced personal hygiene, especially when using outhouses
- Users cannot enter campgrounds and parks if they are experiencing flu-like symptoms or have travelled outside of Canada within 14 days
- Overnight campers may be asked to sign a Code of Conduct as a condition of their reservation

To reserve a site, view campground and park locations, descriptions, photos, amenities and services, for day-use and overnight camping individual and group rates, and more, visit [www.countygp.ab.ca/campgrounds](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/campgrounds).



*Bear Lake Campground & Park*

**BEAR LAKE CAMPGROUND** - An ideal lake for canoeing, kiteboarding and paddleboarding, Bear Lake is about 5 km wide, nearly 10 km long and 2 m deep at its deepest point.

**DEMMITT CAMPGROUND & PARK** - Located northwest of Hythe, near the Alberta/BC border, the Demmitt Campground is an ideal spot for overnight camping, picnics and for travellers to rest.



*Hommy Campground & Park*

**HOMMY CAMPGROUND & PARK** - The former homestead of the Hommy family, generously donated for the public to enjoy. It has a wonderful park like setting along the banks of the Beaverlodge River, and all sites have power hook ups.

**KLESKUN HILL CAMPGROUND & PARK** - Capture a glimpse of the northernmost badlands at Kleskun Hill Campground, located adjacent to the Kleskun Hill Natural Area and the Kleskun Hill Museum. Explore the fascinating cacti, native grasslands and land formations left behind after the ice age, step back in time at the historical village, or just relax while you enjoy the roar of an open fire.



*Kleskun Hill Campground & Park*



*Pipestone Creek Campground & Park*

**PIPESTONE CREEK CAMPGROUND & PARK** - Take a dramatic drive down the river valley where Pipestone Creek meets the Wapiti River. Here lies the hidden gem of Pipestone Creek Campground. Located along the Wapiti River, it is near one of the richest areas for dinosaur fossils in western Canada, and the largest site in the world for Pachyrhinosaurus fossils.

**BEAR HILL CAMPGROUND** - A great private, rustic venue.

**VALHALLA CENTRE DAY-USE PARK** - Conveniently situated in downtown Valhalla, the surrounding countryside is a welcome setting. It has the basic comforts for anyone looking to use it for an afternoon or a day.

**OLD BEZANSON TOWNSITE** - Along the banks of the Smoky River just 12 km southeast of Bezanson is the Old Bezanson Townsite and what remains of the dream of Ancel Maynard Bezanson. In the early 1900s he started building a community here in anticipation of the railroad link. The line passed through Grande Prairie instead, and now the Old Bezanson Townsite building footprints is what remains of his legacy.



*Red Willow Day Use Park*

**RED WILLOW DAY-USE PARK** - Nestled along the banks of the Red Willow River, the setting is perfect for large and small groups for day-use. The area is a haven for wildlife including moose, white-tailed and mule deer, black bear and a variety of small mammals and songbirds.

\*Campground and park operations and safety measures in place are subject to change. Refer to [www.countygp.ab.ca/campgrounds](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/campgrounds) for the latest information. Fire Bans may be subject to change. Please check [www.countygp.ab.ca](http://www.countygp.ab.ca) for updates.

# Camping Etiquette 101

Planning an afternoon, overnight or weekend visit to any of our campgrounds and parks in the County? To ensure everyone has an enjoyable experience, all guests are asked to follow these basic guidelines:

- Remember the 3 x Rs:
  - Respect the Environment
  - Respect your Neighbours
  - Respect our Park Staff
- Avoid excessive and offensive noise at any time of day: Talking or singing loudly, music at high volume and any other noisy behaviour is not permitted.
- Quiet hours are from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. This means all music and generators must be turned off, and noise must be kept to a minimum.
- Keep campfires small. This helps us conserve firewood, reduce the risk of wildfires and helps maintain low camping fees.
- Never leave your campfire unattended.
- Make sure your fire is extinguished before you leave. Soak it with water once, and then again, stirring the ashes. Do not burn any garbage in the fire pits. It is an offence to leave a fire unattended or burning (even smouldering) after vacating your site.
- Pets must always be kept on a leash.
- Check-out time is 2:00 p.m.
- Respect all posted speed limits. Be mindful and cautious of pedestrians and other obstructions while driving.
- A maximum of one vehicle is permitted per campsite.
- Visitors or additional vehicles must park in day-use or designated overflow spaces.

# What's Happening at the Clairmont Adventure Park?



The County has taken over operating the Clairmont Adventure Park located at 9801 - 107A Avenue from the Clairmont Agricultural (Ag) Society. The Ag Society has long envisioned the Park being a central hub for community development in Clairmont, and the County embraces that same vision.

The Skate Park in the Adventure Park is now open; however, with regulations in place to ensure everyone's safety and wellbeing.\* The County is following the rules put in place by Alberta Health Services in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. This means:

- There is a limit of 15 people per group size
- Social distancing of 2 metres/6 feet distance apart must be practiced
- Those using the Park are also recommended to bring their own hand sanitizer
- The Outdoor Exercise Equipment is closed until further notice
- Do not visit the Park if you are experiencing flu-like symptoms or have travelled outside of Canada within 14 days

The County is also working to enhance the Park, which includes repairs to the Spray Park. When restrictions are eased, we want you to bring the family down and see what else the park has to offer. For updates on the Clairmont Adventure Park, stay tuned to [www.countygp.ab.ca/adventurepark](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/adventurepark) and the County's social media accounts.

The County is also pursuing new ways to enhance the Park, including:

## • Art for the Park

From May 12 to June 12, 2020 we invite you to submit an original artwork, and an original art concept for possible display in the park. For those who submit artwork and/or art concepts will be entered into a draw to win one of four \$100 cash prizes. For more details, visit [www.countygp.ab.ca/artforthepark](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/artforthepark)

## • Community Garden

The Clairmont Gardeners are a brand-new community group that is working with the Parks and Recreation department to build a raised bed garden in the Adventure Park. Contact Devin Bateman at 780-228-4335 for more information and if you would like to get involved.

For further information, please contact the Parks & Recreation department at **780-532-9727** or [parksandrec@countygp.ab.ca](mailto:parksandrec@countygp.ab.ca).

\*Note that access to the Clairmont Adventure Park is subject to change given the COVID-19 situation and regulations put in place by the Province and the County. Updates will be provided when available.



# Don't "Waste Create." Get Recycling!

Shelly Lutz is the County's Recycling Coordinator. She invites you to learn a bit more about the benefits of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle, and provides an overview of some of the recycling and waste management programs offered at the County.

At the Clairmont Centre for Recycling and Waste Management, we have many options to help with your recycling journey. We accept everything from paper and cardboard to metal and tires, old paint and household hazardous waste and more!

If you are looking to dispose of five or more barrels of used oil, contact the Centre to chat with Shelly or one of the attendants about a solution. And drop off your empty bottles at our bottle donation trailer; local community groups are selected to receive the proceeds raised from these donations.

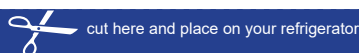
Ask Shelly or another attendants about the changes to our Landfill Access Tag Program. And remember, for those paying customers, the site will only be accepting credit and debit cards as of June 1, 2020.

More information about the County's various recycling and waste management programs and services can be found at [www.countygp.ab.ca/recycleprograms](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/recycleprograms) or by contacting the Clairmont Centre for Recycling and Waste Management at [clandfill@countygp.ab.ca](mailto:clandfill@countygp.ab.ca) or at **780-567-4194**.



Staff attendants, including Shelly are also available on-site to answer all your questions recycling and waste management related questions, while maintaining social distancing of 2 metres/ 6 feet, and during regular business hours of 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Saturday.

\*Clairmont Centre for Recycling and Waste Management programs are subject to change given the COVID-19 situation. Visit [www.countygp.ab.ca](http://www.countygp.ab.ca) for updates.



## Recycling and Waste Management Facility Regular Hours of Operation

### CLAIRMONT CENTRE FOR RECYCLING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

**OPEN:**  
Monday to Saturday  
from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

### WEST GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL LANDFILL

**OPEN:**  
Tuesday to Saturday  
from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

### DEMMITT TRANSFER STATION

**OPEN:**  
Wednesday and Saturday  
from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

### ELMWORTH TRANSFER STATION

**OPEN:**  
Wednesday and Saturday  
from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

### TEEPEE CREEK TRANSFER STATION

**OPEN:**  
Tuesday and Thursday  
from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m.  
Saturday  
from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Visit [www.countygp.ab.ca/recyclingprograms](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/recyclingprograms) to view an interactive map of all the County's waste management and recycling service facilities and to learn more about our various recycling programs. For landfill and transfer station information please call our Landfill Information Line at **780-513-3967**.



[countygp.ab.ca](http://countygp.ab.ca)

# Emerson Trail Columbarium

Purchasing a niche at the grain elevator-themed Emerson Trail Columbarium is a wonderful way to honour loved ones from our community. The County's Cemetery Specialist, Gail Temple, will work with individuals or families to discuss your options.

For questions, or to set up your appointment, contact Gail at 780-532-9727.

## COSTS

**\$1,250** - 28 niches are available.

Each niche has room for two standard size urns.

**\$250** - Opening fee to place a second urn in a reserved niche.

Inscription services are available through Peace Country Memorials.

Visit [www.countygp.ab.ca/cemeteries](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/cemeteries) for more information about cemeteries in the County of Grande Prairie.



## DID YOU KNOW...

That all sump pumps, eavestroughs and any type of pump drainage on properties in the County must drain within their own property lines? This is with accordance section 8.10 in the Community Standards Bylaw #3098, introduced in spring of 2019.

Excess water that flows into County greenspaces, parks and playgrounds can cause water damage and drown trees, as shown in the picture. Furthermore, waterlogged playground sand encourages weed growth. And in many cases, parks have their own irrigation systems already, so do not require any additional watering. In the winter, improper placement of these drainage mechanisms can cause ice hazards on trails and other publicly accessed walkways and land. Failure to comply with this bylaw may result in the property owner being fined or facing other penalties for repeat offenses. For more information about the Community Standards Bylaw, visit [www.countygp.ab.ca/csb](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/csb).

# Ray and Dunnigan Families named Farm Family of the Year



The Ray and Dunnigan families of the Halcourt Land and Cattle Company are the County of Grande Prairie's 2020 Farm Family. The Award recognizes significant contributions to the agricultural community within the County of Grande Prairie, the region and the province.

"Our 2020 recipients exemplify longevity on the land and a deep commitment to agriculture and family," said Sonja Raven, Agricultural Fieldman. "We are proud to have them as our Farm Family for this year."

The family has been in the Halcourt area since 1911, starting with Gary's grandparents, Scotty and Helen Ray and continuing with Gary's parents, Eldon and Thelma Ray. Today, Gary and Daphne Ray, their son Josh, and his wife, Catherine, along with their three children, son-in-law Don and daughter, Chelsea Dunnigan, and their three children, work together to make their family farming operation a success.

Currently farming 3,500 acres of mixed grain and husbanding a thriving cattle operation, the family keeps busy year round. They also own and operate All Peace Realty, Artesian Insurance Beaverlodge and the Riverbend Golf and Country Club.

During the summer, the family takes time to camp on the shores of the Redwillow River and the winter months always include coaching hockey, as well as volunteer work for the minor hockey association and daycare. All of the kids participate in activities including hockey, baseball, volleyball, swimming, and dance. They fundraise extensively to support their involvement in sports. The entire family enjoys the time spent at games.

"We're thrilled with this honour," said Josh Ray. "It's important to be able to carry on a long-standing family tradition and raise our children to be proud of this heritage. We love our farm life and being part of the local community."

The Farm Family Award is a tradition in the County, dating back to 1969. More information about the Farm Family Awards Program can be found at [www.countygp.ab.ca/farmfamily](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/farmfamily).



# Nominate a Kind Heart Today



Councillor Sutherland presenting the Kind Heart Award earlier this month



Reeve Beaupre presenting the Kind Heart Award to Mya last February



Councillor Sutherland presenting the Kind Heart Award to Brent last February

Kind Heart Awards are given to County residents who deserve to be recognized for their good deeds or altruistic acts. Recipients willingly give their time and energy to help others in need, without being asked or paid.

Eligible acts of kindness include any good deed, like helping shovel driveways at your neighbours' place, mowing the neighbours lawn, or bringing a warm meal to a family experiencing hardship.

The awards were created to honour those who go out of their way to help others and create community spirit.

Thank you to the following Kind Heart Award recipient for your contributions to our community:

**Rush and Louise McEachern** were nominated by their neighbours Sherrida Rossol; Leigh and Beth Goldie; and Don and Shirley Thompson for having kind hearts and being wonderful, amazing neighbours who are willing to give a helping hand whenever needed. Some of the examples of their acts of kindness include Rush plowing many driveways, keeping a close watch on moose that roam neighbours' yards, filling tractors with fuel, cutting grass, splitting firewood, help with building projects; and Louise being an active community member who provides encouragement, wisdom and support to neighbours' in need.

**Mya**, who is nine years old, was nominated by Dale Bond for having a kind heart and being selfless. Every day, she takes the time at school drop-off to help Dale's daughter, who is in a wheelchair, get into school so that Dale can get to work on time. She helps her with opening doors, carrying items, pushing her when needed and much more.

Last Halloween, Mya came trick or treating with Dale's daughter and spent the evening pushing her wheelchair and gathering treats for her when she was unable to get to the doors. "I have never seen another child her age that has been so thoughtful and helpful," said Dale.

**Brent McCurdy** was nominated by his neighbour Anne Green. Anne said that every spring Brent shows up with his big tractor to till her garden, without being asked or rewarded. Anne added that she really appreciates his help as she is a senior.

The County is extremely grateful to have people in our communities like Rush, Louise, Brent and Mya whose kind hearts continually fosters community spirit and the willingness to help others.

To learn more about the Kind Heart Awards Program or to nominate a deserving person, go to [www.countygp.ab.ca/kindheartprogram](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/kindheartprogram) or contact Family and Community Support Services at **780-532-9727**.

# County Goods Now Available Through Online Auction Site

The County is now selling its gently used assets on an online auction site that sells government property. You can now see and bid to purchase a range of County-owned items that have a lower value, are unusual, or are specialized and are no longer needed on **[www.govdeals.ca](http://www.govdeals.ca)**.

As outlined in the Disposal of Surplus Assets and Good Policy, approved and adopted by Council late last year, GovDeals allows anyone to bid on items at any time and from anywhere. Also, this site puts all bidders on an equal footing; so, whoever has the highest registered bid at the time the bidding period closes, owns the item. It is that simple.

If the County does not post an item for sale on [govdeals.ca](http://govdeals.ca), we either donate it to a charitable or non-profit organization; offer assets at their net residual value to local area municipalities; or sell items at a traditional auction. Items sold at traditional auctions are generally more valuable, such as vehicles or graders.

If you would like to have an opportunity to bid on County-owned items, go to **[www.govdeals.ca/register](http://www.govdeals.ca/register)**.

For more information on the Disposal of Surplus Assets and Goods Policy C-21, visit **[www.countygp.ab.ca/policies](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/policies)**

## Building Season Is Upon Us

Don't delay, submit your applications early!

**Building permits are required to ensure construction follows the building code, including:**

- Construction of a building
- Renovations
- Relocations
- Additions
- Change in occupancy

**Development permits are required for approval of the use of the land, including:**

- Excavation
- Stockpiling
- Building and additions
- Change of use or intensity of use of the land or building

**Separate permits for Electrical, Plumbing, Gas, Propane and Private Sewage Systems may also be required.**

**Learn more at [www.countygp.ab.ca/permits](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/permits), by phone at 780-513-3950, or email [plan@countygp.ab.ca](mailto:plan@countygp.ab.ca)**

# Changes to County Bylaw Support Home-based Businesses



Last year, the County made changes to its Land Use Bylaw, making it easier to operate and grow a home-based business in the County. As well, the revised bylaw is more readable, making it easier for business owners to recognize their responsibilities while operating in a residential area, and avoid consequences for violations.

The County does not issue business licenses. What we do issue are development permits for home occupations. Home occupations are businesses within a residential property, and are operated by a resident of the property.

Three of the changes impact classification categories of home businesses:

## NEW CLASSIFICATION - INTERMEDIATE

The revised bylaw includes a new classification of home business - Home Occupation, Intermediate. Intermediates fall between Minor and Major Home Occupations, and tend to use an accessory building, outdoor storage, and/or external signage on the residential property. Intermediates may be proposed in any Country Residential CR-2, CR-3, CR-4, or CR-5 property greater than 2.47 acres in size.

## ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS - MAJOR

The revised land use bylaw includes additional requirements for home occupation, major regarding the maximum number of business-related visits per day, maximum number of vehicles/equipment related to the business, and maximum outdoor storage area. Majors may only be proposed on any Country Residential CR-5 property.

## PERMIT MAY NOT BE REQUIRED - MINOR

Changes to the bylaw are also impacting Home Occupation, Minors. These businesses may no longer require a development permit. Businesses in this category might include bookkeeping businesses, massage and salon studios, or cleaning services. Eliminating development permits for most Minor businesses will make it simpler to open and operate a Minor business. "Please be aware that if you are looking to make changes to your home for your Home Occupation, Minor business, you may require separate permits through the County such as building, plumbing, and electrical permits. It is also recommended that you look into permits that may be required by other, external agencies for your Home Occupation, Minor business.

To view the bylaw, visit [www.countygp.ab.ca/LUB](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/LUB). If you have further questions or want to apply for a development permit, email [plan@countygp.ab.ca](mailto:plan@countygp.ab.ca) or call the County Planning and Development department at 780-513-3950.

## OPERATING A HOME BUSINESS IN THE COUNTY: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

### DO I REQUIRE A DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FOR A HOME OCCUPATION BUSINESS?

Yes, if you operate an Intermediate or Major Home Occupation and, in some cases, Minor. The application process is simple. Consideration is given to the impact the proposed business will have on the neighbourhood.

### WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF HOME OCCUPATION BUSINESSES?

There are three types:

- 1. Home Occupation, Minor:** one with little or no impact on the neighbourhood. An example of a Minor Home Occupation Business is one in which a room in your house is used as an office. It would generate little or no additional traffic and would not be perceptible from the outside of the home.
- 2. Home Occupation, Intermediate:** Intermediates fall between Minor and Major Home Occupations. Home Occupation, Intermediates tend to use an accessory building, outdoor storage, and/or external signage on the residential property. Intermediates may be proposed in any Country Residential CR-2, CR-3, CR-4, or CR-5 property greater than 2.47 acres in size.
- 3. Home Occupation, Major:** are larger than Intermediates, may also use accessory buildings, outdoor storage, and/or external signage on the residential property and can be a wide range of businesses. Classification of a Home Occupation, Major is largely dependent on a number of factors, such as the types of vehicles/equipment associated with the business, and the number of business-related visits per day.

### WHAT SHOULD I CONSIDER BEFORE I OPEN, RENOVATE, OR BUY?

If you are planning to start a home occupation on your property, or purchase a property which you plan to operate a home occupation on, it is best to contact the County Planning and Development Services department to ensure the property meets zoning requirements.

In addition to zoning requirements, consideration is given to the effect the proposed business will have on the neighbourhood, with respect to aesthetics, traffic flow, noise and disturbance to the neighbourhood.

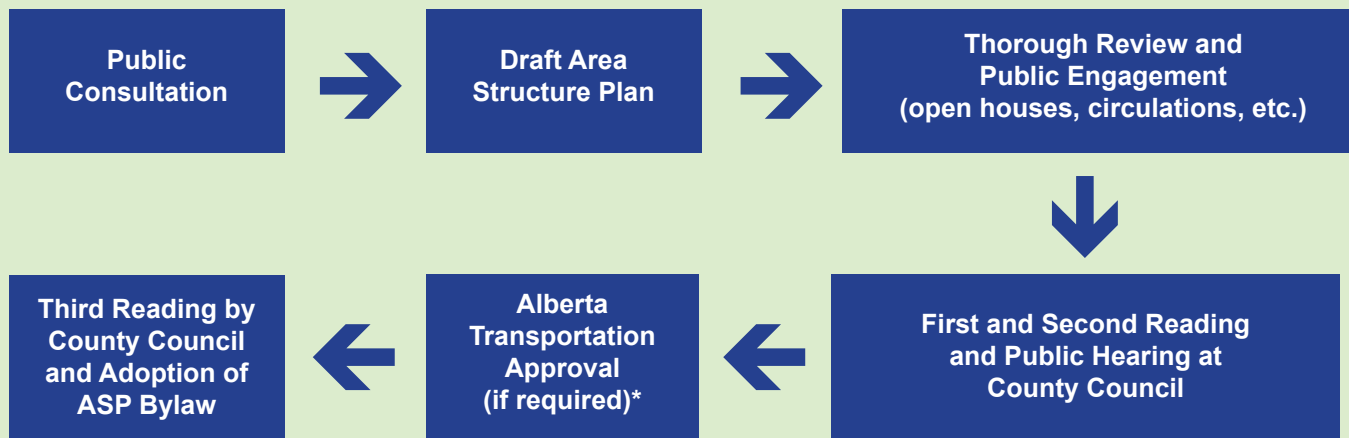
To reach County Planning and Development call 780-513-3950 or email [plan@countygp.ab.ca](mailto:plan@countygp.ab.ca).

# Area Structure Plans

## INVITING YOUR VOICE TO HELP SHAPE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT

As growth and development occur throughout the County, Area Structure Plans (ASPs) help guide future residential, commercial and industrial development. These long-range documents must lay out the proposed land uses, including reserve land for parks and school sites, if appropriate. Technical items such as water supply, sewage disposal, transportation networks, storm water systems, and many other factors associated with the development are also required. An ASP must be consistent with the Municipal Development Plan, a broader plan which covers the entire County.

### AREA STRUCTURE PLAN APPROVAL PROCESS



*\*Area Structure Plans located within 1.6 km of provincial highways require approval from the Alberta Minister of Transportation.*

The adoption of an ASP does not mean that existing uses need to move, zoning has changed, farming operations need to stop, nor that your taxes will change. However, if landowners within the area want to develop their land, all future subdivision and development proposals within the plan area will need to follow the approved plan.

### WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU...

County staff work with stakeholders like residents, business owners, landowners and developers through the approval process of these plans. There are many ways to have your voice heard and stay up to date:

- Invitations to provide feedback are sent in the mail to area landowners,
- Open Houses are held in the general location of the proposed plans

- Watch the County's website, social media, and local newspapers for updates and public engagement opportunities

For a list of all approved and proposed ASPs, visit the County's website at [www.countygp.ab.ca/ASP](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/ASP).

For more information, contact Planning and Development at **780-513-3950** or [plan@countygp.ab.ca](mailto:plan@countygp.ab.ca).



## Send Us Your Ideas for County Connections

Do you have any ideas for topics you would like covered in upcoming County Connections Newsletters to keep residents and businesses informed about important programs, services, initiatives, and events? Let us know at [communications@countygp.ab.ca](mailto:communications@countygp.ab.ca).

### SIGN UP FOR OUR E-NEWSLETTER

Interested in receiving an electronic copy of the County Connections Newsletter? Sign up to receive a copy of our e-newsletter at [www.countygp.ab.ca/subscribe](http://www.countygp.ab.ca/subscribe).



[countygp.ab.ca](http://countygp.ab.ca)



# PHILIP J. CURRIE DINOSAUR MUSEUM

## Upcoming Programs

Visit [www.dinomuseum.ca/events](http://www.dinomuseum.ca/events) for more information.



### What's on at the Philip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum This Summer?

The Museum is currently closed to respect the need to isolate and avoid social contact during the COVID-19 Pandemic. We hope to open this summer and will inform the public of our hours when this information is determined.

If you have booked Palaeontologist for a Day or Summer Camp, refunds will be issued once we confirm summer closure. Please call the museum at **587-771-0662** and leave a message to contact a staff member.

**All school field trips are cancelled for the 2019/2020 school year.**

Join the Museum on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/curriemuseum/](https://www.facebook.com/curriemuseum/) and Twitter [@CurrieMuseum](https://twitter.com/CurrieMuseum) for our Isolation activities

### Quarantine Challenges

Do you have a creative budding paleontologist at home? We are posting weekly challenges for young enthusiasts to try at home. Set up a digital playdate with a friend and photograph your creation. Or make a new friend in another country. Submissions have come from all corners of the globe. Remember to keep your creations. The museum is planning an exhibition of your works for when we re-open.

### Pipestone Creek Bone Bed Tours

**Dates to be determined | \$5.00/person**

One of the most significant deposits of dinosaur bones in this region is the Pipestone Creek dinosaur bonebed. Here, 73 million years ago, a massive herd of Pachyrhinosaurus died and became fossilized. The discovery of this bonebed ignited an ongoing interest in the paleontology of northwestern Alberta.

To ensure that we continue with social distancing, participants will be responsible for their own transport to the site.

The tour is 60-90 minutes in length. The walk is moderately easy with some slight hills and two bridge crossings. Tour capacity is 15 people. It is recommended that tour attendees bring appropriate footwear for hiking, a hat, sunscreen, water, and insect repellent. Smoking, alcohol, and food (except for diabetic requirements) are not allowed on tours. Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult. Pets are allowed while on a leash. Safety waivers must be signed by all participants. Tour is subject to weather conditions.

Tickets are available online at [dinomuseum.ca/visit/bonebed-tours/](http://dinomuseum.ca/visit/bonebed-tours/)



## Dig for Dinosaurs

### Dates to be determined

Join a real dinosaur dig and find out what it's like to be a real palaeontologist in our Palaeontologist for a Day program. The program runs weekly from June through August. We will be offering a discount for all groups of families.

## Palaeontologist for a Day

**(12+) July 3, 4, 5, 17, 18, 19, 31. August 1, 2, 15, 16, 28, 29, 30**

This is our classic fossil dig program. Spend the day with our palaeontologists learning how to dig up dinosaur bones at the Pipestone Creek Bone Bed, one of the densest dinosaur sites in the world. Get behind-the-scenes to see how a fossil goes from the ground to a museum display. Includes lunch and some memorable souvenirs. For pricing and to book, [www.dinomuseum.ca/programs/palaeontologist-for-a-day/](http://www.dinomuseum.ca/programs/palaeontologist-for-a-day/)

## Family Palaeontologist for a Day

**June 13, 14, 20, 21, 27, 28**

This is our fossil dig program for the whole family. Spend the day digging for dinosaur bones with just your family and our palaeontologists. This package includes registration for two adults and up to three minors.

## Summer Camps

Wondering whether summer camps will happen? The museum is developing a camp that may help to take the worry out of planning. This summer, we are developing camp boxes. Each box will contain materials and tools for an introduction to palaeontology for each camper. If camp is running at the museum, camper will bring their boxes to the museum. If a camper needs to isolate, camp will be concurrently online. Field trips will be a virtual behind-the-scenes visit to a museum in another country. Book early, as camps are limited in capacity and will book up fast. Book online at [dinomuseum.ca/programs/summer-camps/](http://dinomuseum.ca/programs/summer-camps/)

### Dinosaur Juniors

**Ages 4 - 6 | July 6 - 10, August 4 - 7**

An introduction to the world of dinosaurs for young kids! We'll learn, play, and have a blast during this week at the museum building a life-sized 3D dinosaur puzzle!

### Mesozoic Mystery

**Ages 7 - 10 | July 13 - 17, August 17 - 21**

A prehistoric crime has been committed, and only you can help us figure it out! As we look for clues, we'll check out cool local dinosaur fossils and explore the museum like real dino-sleuths.

### How to be a Paleontologist

**Ages 10 - 13 | July 27 - 31, August 24 - 28**

Get a real authentic introduction to the science of paleontology in this camp! You'll learn all the tricks of the trade in this behind-the-scenes look at real dinosaur science.

## Visit the Café on 43

### The Café is open for take-out only during closure

The museum has a new café. Come in and enjoy coffee and a treat, some food or our wonderful patio.

## Facility Rentals and Catering

### Bookings for Fall and Winter will not require a non-refundable deposit.

Planning a meeting, staff event or family gathering? You can rent a board room, meeting room, theatre, or the whole museum. We cater from refreshments to a full meal. You can even rent the bus to pick meeting participants up from hotels or the airport. Contact us for pricing.

## The Gift Shop is Growing

### Check out our online gift shop

We are increasing our product line this summer. Come out to find the perfect gift for the dinosaur fan in your family or pick up some Canadian souvenirs for your visitors.

## Volunteer

Ever wanted to wrangle 20 costumed dinosaurs? Maybe you want to learn more about the lab and would like to get others excited too. We are looking for volunteers to help us with our summer programs.

\*Please note that the Museum operations, programs and events are subject to change given the COVID-19 situation and regulations put in place by the Province. Visit [www.dinomuseum.ca](http://www.dinomuseum.ca) for up-to-date information.

Return undeliverable  
Canadian addresses to:  
The County of Grande Prairie No.1  
10001 - 84 Avenue, Clairmont, AB T8X 5B2



**TOP ROW FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:** Councillor Harold Bulford, Councillor Bob Marshall, Deputy Reeve Peter Harris, Councillor Corey Beck

**FRONT ROW FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:** Councillor Linda Waddy, Councillor Daryl Beeston, Reeve Leanne Beaupre, Councillor Ross Sutherland, Councillor Karen Rosvold

## COUNCILLOR CONTACT INFORMATION

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**Councillor Corey Beck**  
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**Dawn Sauvé**  
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## COUNTY CONTACT INFORMATION

### EMAIL:

info@countygp.ab.ca

### ADDRESS:

10001 - 84 Avenue  
Clairmont, AB T8X 5B2

### WEBSITE:

www.countygp.ab.ca

### OFFICE HOURS:

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Closed from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.  
and on statutory holidays

## COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDINGS

Administration, Assessment,  
Economic Development, Finance  
& Systems, Communications, Human  
Resources, Public Works, Planning  
and Development Services

**780-532-9722**

## COMMUNITY SERVICES BUILDINGS

Agriculture, Family and Community  
Support Services, Regional  
Enforcement Services, Regional Fire  
Service, Parks and Recreation

**780-532-9727**

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