

COUNTY CONNECTIONS



SPRING 2023

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Reeve's Message



On May 5, time stood still for the County of Grande Prairie as our hearts and actions centered on the Dunes West Wildfire. Everything was set aside for the most important matter at hand – the safety of our residents who were impacted by the various evacuation orders and alerts issued on that day, and on the days that followed.

I want to express my sympathy to those who lost their homes and property or were affected in any way by the wildfire. Our hearts are with you as you begin to rebuild, not just your physical property but also your internal peace. We trust that better days are ahead, and we are here to provide our support.

We are grateful that no lives were lost in the fire. In an emergency, difficult decisions must be made to ensure the very best outcome for all. We owe a debt of gratitude to the Grande Prairie Regional Emergency Partnership (GPREP), the many firefighters and supporting organizations who placed everything on the line in service to others.

The County of Grande Prairie continues to value open and transparent communication with our residents, businesses, and anyone who could be affected by our decisions.

As we return our attention to our ongoing tasks, in 2023-2024, we will undertake important work that will form our development standards and processes. Your feedback will be vital to developing plans and policies to suit the specific needs and culture of our County.

PLAN YOUR COUNTY

To continue growing in a way that meets the needs of our community in the long term, the County is reviewing and updating the plans, bylaws, strategies, and guidelines that shape local development.

'Plan Your County' will begin in 2023 with development of the Hamlet Resiliency Strategy and review of our Municipal Development Plan which outlines a high-level vision for development in the County. The learnings we gather will inform work in 2024 with the Land Use Bylaw Update and Area Structure Plan reviews, extending all the way down to our permit application forms and processes.

BUDGET 2023

For the fourth year in a row, Council adopted a budget with no increase to the municipal tax rate, providing ongoing relief to residents while remaining committed to our infrastructure and service levels in a difficult economic climate. Approximately 59 per cent of the capital budget is going toward capital road and bridge projects, including carryovers. Find more details in this newsletter.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Earlier this year, Council approved minor updates to its 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, our roadmap to guide our planning, initiatives, and operations. Review the plan at www.countygp.ab.ca/strategicplan.

MUNICIPAL CENSUS & ELECTORAL BOUNDARY REVIEW

As part of the dissolution of the Village of Hythe in June 2021, the County must review its number of councillors and divisions, and division boundaries before the 2025 municipal election. As a first step, the County will conduct a municipal census in 2024 to determine whether growth or decline has created a population imbalance among divisions.

STAY INFORMED

We invite County residents to stay informed as we undertake the municipal census, electoral boundary review, 'Plan Your County' and any other initiative. In addition to the following, I encourage you to reach out to your Councillor.

- Sign in and view our Engage page to provide your feedback on current projects at www.countygp.ab.ca/engage

- Subscribe to receive County news and alerts at www.countygp.ab.ca/subscribe
- View our calendar and subscribe to receive a weekly digest of meetings, events, and activities across the County at www.countygp.ab.ca/events

WITH THANKS

County Council and staff extend heartfelt thanks to Mr. Travis Toews for his service as MLA for Grande Prairie-Wapiti, Minister of Finance and President of the Treasury Board, and for his support of critical projects to improve our region, including progress to date on the Mountview Health Complex. Most recently, Mr. Toews facilitated a meeting with the Minister of Transportation and Economic Corridors which was instrumental in securing provincial funding in Budget 2023 for engineering and land to get the Highway 40X project construction ready.

Volunteers are vital to our communities, and we're pleased to recognize them through our new 'It Takes a Volunteer' program. Meet some of the amazing individuals on page 10. Also, make a point to say thank you to the volunteers in your community who give their time to support a high quality of life for everyone.

STAY SAFE

I wish everyone a wonderful and safe summer. Please review the FireSmart™ advice provided in this newsletter and remember to drive with care during the busy farming and construction season.



County Council avoids municipal property tax increase for residents, maintains services in 2023 final budget

Following deliberations, County Council approved the final capital and operating budgets for 2023 with no increase to the municipal tax rate. The \$195.1 million budget includes an estimated \$106.7 million for general operations, \$6.7 million for debt payments and \$81.7 million for capital investments including \$39.6 million for projects continued from previous years.

"County Council passed this budget under challenging circumstances by balancing impacts to residents while dealing with significant increases in many areas such as utilities and general inflation," said Reeve Bob Marshall. "Despite the difficult economic climate and lost revenue from provincial changes to assessment rules, this budget reflects our commitment to infrastructure and service levels while maintaining stable tax rates."

The County continues to contend with millions in lost revenue following provincial changes to assessment rules. Between the pause on taxes for new well and pipeline projects and the permanently eliminated well drilling equipment tax, the County has lost an estimated \$7.2 million in revenue in 2021 and 2022. This is combined with over \$1.4 million in unpaid property taxes from the oil and gas industry.

A FEW OF THE SERVICES, PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS COUNCIL APPROVED FOR 2023 INCLUDE:

- Approximately 59 per cent of the capital budget is going toward capital road and bridge projects

- \$7 million of the \$25 million total to construct a Regional Enforcement Services and RCMP Detachment Building in the Hamlet of Clairmont
- \$6.5 million in recreation, community, culture, FCSS, seniors and special needs transportation, and library grants to various organizations
- \$3.33 million for the final contribution of a total \$10 million toward the Highway 40 Twinning and Bridge Construction (cost shared with the Province of Alberta and MD of Greenview)
- \$2.8 million in transfers to the provincial government for RCMP policing costs
- \$2.6 million in Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework (ICF) Contributions, cost sharing agreements with other municipalities, including the City of Grande Prairie and the towns of Beaverlodge, Sexsmith, and Wembley
- \$1.8 million for the new Teepee Creek Fire Hall
- \$1.3 million to the City of Grande Prairie for the revenue sharing agreement which has the purpose of fostering regional development (share of municipal tax revenue – 20 per cent from the co-generational facility and 10 per cent on any new commercial/industrial development in areas serviced by Aquatera)

Find out more about the 2023 operating and capital budget in the attached Budget Highlights or at www.countygp.ab.ca/budget.

Budget Highlights

CAPITAL BUDGET

The 2023 capital budget is \$81.7 million, including \$39.6 million for projects carried forward from previous years.

Approximately \$22.4 million is being invested in new capital road and bridge projects, including 16.30 km of proposed surface road overlay work.

Grant funding is estimated at \$6.9 million, including an estimated \$1.5 million Canada Community Building Fund, an estimated \$3.4 million in funding from Provincial Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) Grant and an estimated \$2 million Alberta Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Program grant.

ROAD AND BRIDGE PROJECTS PLANNED FOR THE 2023 SEASON:

- Range Road 30 south of Highway 43 (Knelsen Pit Road) – overlay 4.88 km
- Range Road 71 and Township Road 711 south of Township Road 712 – overlay 4.60 km
- Crossroads South Industrial Park – overlay 3.02 km
- County Industrial Park Access Road (Range Road 61) – overlay 1.60 km
- Richmond Hill Estates rehabilitation – overlay 1.30 km
- 100 Street in the Highway 43 West Industrial Park – overlay 0.90 km
- \$2.5 million for the Kleskun Creek Bridge replacement
- \$2.4 million for spot construction projects
- \$910,000 for bridge replacement at tributary to Kleskun Creek
- \$250,000 for bridge culvert improvements to Range Road 74 between Highway 43 and Township Road 712

IN ADDITION TO ROAD AND BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION, THE CAPITAL BUDGET INCLUDES:

- \$7 million toward the \$25 million total construction cost of the Regional Enforcement Services and RCMP Detachment Building in the Hamlet of Clairmont. Construction is expected to be complete by 2025
- \$1.8 million for the new Teepee Creek Fire Hall
- \$1.1 million for a pedestrian trail from the new Highway 40 bridge underpass to Township Road 704A through the future Wapiti Recreation Area
- \$250,000 per year over two years for an asset management system
- \$204,000 for the third and final phase of IT equipment and network server replacement project, a total of \$849,000

- \$179,680 to replace vehicle extraction tools for Regional Fire Service
- \$169,267 for improvements to Bear Lake campground
- \$87,000 for facility improvements to improve user experience at the Crosslink County Sportsplex, including a replacement batting cage and lighting enhancements
- \$51,000 for road and fencing improvements at the Clairmont Centre for Recycling and Waste Management
- \$40,000 for improvements at the Old Bezanson Townsite campground and day use area
- \$13,000 for repairs to Riverview Pine playground.

OPERATING BUDGET

The \$106.4 million operating budget for 2023 includes:

- \$6.5 million in recreation, community, culture, FCSS, seniors and special needs transportation, and library grants to various organizations
- \$2.6 million in Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework (ICF) Contributions, cost sharing agreements with other with other municipalities, including the City of Grande Prairie and the towns of Beaverlodge, Sexsmith, and Wembley
- \$2.8 million in transfers to the provincial government for RCMP policing costs
- An estimated \$1.3 million to the City of Grande Prairie for the tax sharing agreement to be allocated to projects fostering regional development (share of municipal tax revenue – 20 per cent from the co-generational facility and 10 per cent on any new commercial/industrial development in areas serviced by Aquatera)
- \$792,000 in additional utility costs to operate County facilities
- \$750,000 for ditch maintenance to improve drainage across the County
- \$241,000 for operational improvements for the Hythe water treatment system, including required licensing and connection to the remote operating system
- \$235,000 to review the County's electoral boundaries as required by the province after the dissolution of Hythe
- \$150,000 to inventory and develop a management plan for stormwater infrastructure
- \$100,000 to update the landfill masterplan for the Clairmont Centre for Recycling and Waste Management as required by the province every 10 years
- \$61,000 for annual business visitation surveys to inform Economic Development programs

SCHEDULE OF FEES AND RATES CHANGES

The schedule of fees, rates and charges is available at www.countygyp.ab.ca.



OF THE

MAKING SENSE 2023 BUDGET



BUDGET BASICS

Every program and service in the County has a cost. Each year, Council makes financial decisions to provide money for each program and service in the Operating and Capital budgets.

The total budget for 2023 is \$195 million.

OPERATING BUDGET: The County's operating budget is for day-to-day costs to keep everything running smoothly. This includes enforcement and fire services, parks and recreation 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, major road construction projects and debt repayments.



* includes \$39.6 Million in carried forward projects

READING YOUR PROPERTY TAX NOTICE

Your property tax notice includes more than municipal taxes – it also includes taxes for education and seniors lodging. The Province of Alberta and the Grande Spirit Foundation determine the financial amount required and the County is required to collect and send these funds to each of them, respectively.

County of Grande Prairie No. 1
10001 - 84 Avenue
Clairmont, AB T6X 5B2

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT AND TAX NOTICE (Notice of Assessment Date) Tax Year

Legal Description: _____ Municipal Address: _____ Roll Number: _____

Issued to: _____
A copy of this notice has been sent to the following:
Additional Owners: _____
Reference: _____

Tax Levy Summary

Total Property Tax:	\$ 3,112.87
Local Improvement:	.00
Total Current Tax:	\$ 3,112.87
Credits or Arrears:	.00
Outstanding Balance:	\$ 3,112.87

ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Assessment Class	Land	Improvement	Other	Total
RS Residential	118,250	354,750		473,000

To file an assessment complaint, send to the Clerk of the Assessment Review Board at the above mailing address. Not applicable to linear DPs. (See reverse side of this notice for further details.)

Assessment Total: 473,000
Taxable Total: 473,000

TAX ACCOUNT DETAILS

Tax Category	Tax Rate	Municipal Taxes	School Taxes	Other Taxes	Total
RS General Municipal*	0.0040750	\$1,927.48			\$1,927.48
RS Alta Foundation Fund	0.0024542		\$1,160.84		\$1,160.84
Grande Spirit Foundation	0.0000519			\$24.55	\$24.55
SUB-TOTAL		1,927.48	1,160.84	24.45	3,112.87

School Support

	Public	Alta School Foundation (ASF)
Public:	100.00	
Separate:		
Undeclared:		
Messages:		

Alta School Foundation (ASF) Taxes are collected on behalf of the Province of Alberta. ASF tax rate is determined by the Province.

Local Improvement

Description	Amount
Bylaw: _____ Expiry: _____	\$ _____
Bylaw: _____ Expiry: _____	\$ _____
Bylaw: _____ Expiry: _____	\$ _____

MUNICIPAL TAXES 61.92%

County of Grande Prairie
Used to fund the budget

EDUCATION TAX 37.29%

Province of Alberta
Allocated towards education

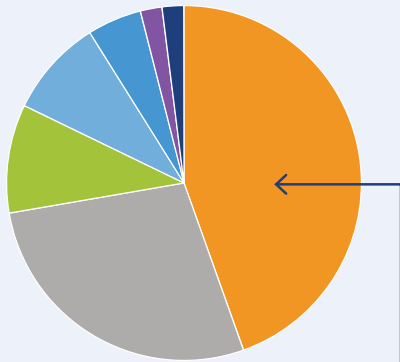
SENIORS LODGING 0.7%

Grande Spirit Foundation
Allocated towards seniors housing

*A phased tax rate reduction is in place for the Hamlet of Hythe, bringing them in line with the rest of the County. The reduction will take place from 2022 to 2025 and applies to all properties, including residential, non-residential and farmland. Hythe taxpayers will also pay an additional amount to repay the Hamlet's long term debt, at the time of dissolution, until the debt is paid in full.

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM

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



45%
MUNICIPAL TAXES
YOUR PROPERTY TAXES

28%
TRANSFER FROM RESERVES*
SAVINGS SET ASIDE FOR SPECIFIC PROJECTS

10%
GRANT REVENUE
FROM OTHER ORDERS OF GOVERNMENT

9%
DEBT FUNDING

5%
USER FEES, SALE OF GOODS
& MISC. REVENUES
FOR EXAMPLE EQUIPMENT RENTAL,
ANIMAL RECLAIM, GARBAGE COLLECTION

2%
RETURN ON INVESTMENT
EARNINGS ON COUNTY INVESTMENTS

2%
LEVIES, FINES & PENALTIES
FOR EXAMPLE DEVELOPMENT LEVIES

*A portion of municipal taxes are put into reserve accounts, similar to savings accounts. Money is transferred from reserves when needed for critical capital and operational projects. Reserve accounts provide additional funding for the County as interest builds up on a large portion of the balance.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
→ countygp.ab.ca/budget

MUNICIPAL TAX DOLLARS AT WORK

This is how much of our sample residential property tax bill went towards County operational and capital expenses:

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK



\$807.61

- 17.1% ROAD CONSTRUCTION & BRIDGE PROGRAM
- 17.1% ROAD MAINTENANCE, SIGNAGE, SPOT & MISCELLANEOUS CONSTRUCTION
- 4.1% PUBLIC WORKS ADMINISTRATION
- 3.6% MOBILE VEHICLES, SHOPS & EQUIPMENT

COMMUNITY, RECREATION, CULTURE & SAFETY



\$589.81

- 14.5% REGIONAL ENFORCEMENT, FIRE & DISASTER SERVICES
- 5% PARKS & RECREATION SERVICES
- 4.5% COMMUNITY GRANTS
- 3.6% AGRICULTURAL SERVICES
- 2.1% FAMILY & COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES
- 0.9% LIBRARY SERVICES

RUNNING THE MUNICIPALITY



\$373.93

- 19.4% ASSESSMENT, ASSET MANAGEMENT, COMMUNICATIONS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OFFICE, FINANCIAL SERVICES, HUMAN RESOURCES & SAFETY, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, INSURANCE & RISK MANAGEMENT, LEGISLATIVE SERVICES, PROCUREMENT

RECYCLE & WASTE MANAGEMENT; WATER SUPPLY & DISTRIBUTION, AND WASTEWATER COLLECTION & TREATMENT



\$92.52

- 2% WASTEWATER COLLECTION & TREATMENT
- 1.6% WATER SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION
- 1.2% RECYCLING & WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES & SERVICES

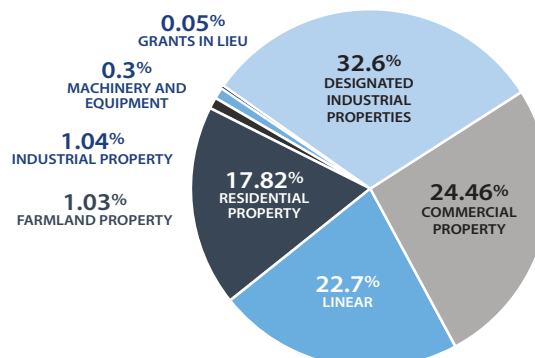
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT



\$63.61

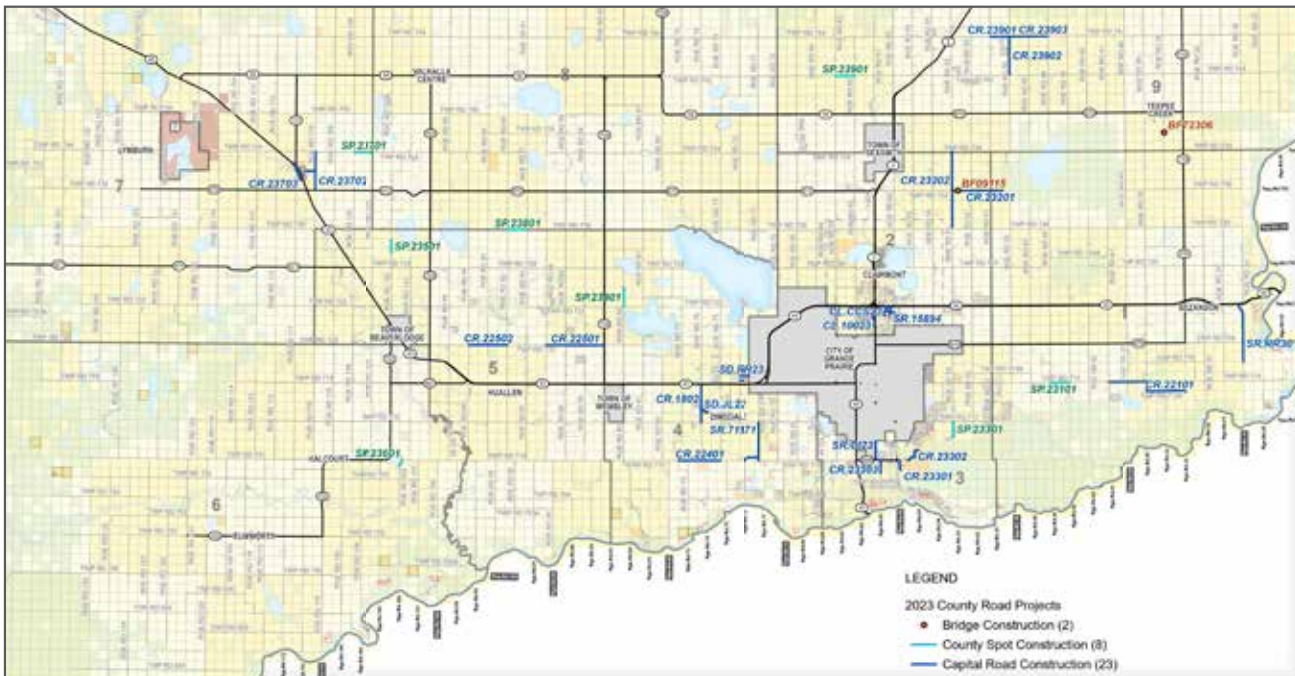
- 2.4% LAND USE, PLANNING, ZONING & DEVELOPMENT
- 0.9% ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SOURCE OF MUNICIPAL TAX PORTION



countygp.ab.ca

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County residents can expect another busy season of improvements to our vast transportation network.

Council approved approximately 59 per cent of the capital budget, an investment of approximately \$22.4 million, for capital road and bridge projects.

Projects planned for the 2023 construction season includes 16.30 km of proposed surface road overlay work, bridge replacement and improvements, and re-construction road projects including \$3.33 million for the final contribution of a total \$10 million toward the Highway 40 Twinning and Bridge Construction project (cost-shared with the Province of Alberta and MD of Greenview).

Grant funding is estimated at \$6.9 million, including an estimated \$1.5 million in federal funding from the Canada Community Building Fund, an estimated \$3.4 million in funding from the Provincial Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) grant, and an estimated \$2 million Alberta Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Program (STIP) grant.

See page 7 for a list of projects planned for County roads for the 2023 construction season. Projects are also marked on the Construction Projects Map above. View an interactive version of the map along with timelines and potential traffic impacts at www.countygp.ab.ca/roadconstruction. Thank you for your patience through this construction season.

DID YOU KNOW?

GRADING involves digging out an existing road structure to re-align, 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 it with new clay and gravel.

BRIDGE CULVERT REPLACEMENT involves replacing an underground steel tunnel, known as a culvert. Culverts carry stream water.

PLANNED PROJECTS FOR THE 2023 CONSTRUCTION SEASON

Visit www.countygp.ab.ca/roadconstruction to view an interactive version of the map along with timelines and potential traffic impacts.

PROJECT #	ROAD PROJECT	TYPE OF WORK
SD.JL22	Juggers Landing	Overlay 0.8 km
CR.1802	Range Road 74 between Township Road 712 and Highway 43	Grading 3.2 km
CR.22101	Township Road 714 and Township Road 713A, east of Range Road 41	Grading 7.4 km
CR.22501	Township Road 720 between Highway 724 and Range Road 90	Grading 5 km
CR.22502	Township Road 720 between Range Road 92 and Range Road 94	Grading 3.2 km
CR.22401	Township Road 710 between Range Road 73 (N) and Range Road 75A	Grading 3.5 km
CR.23201	Township Road 732 between Range Road 51 and Range Road 53	Grading 4.3 km
CR.23202	Range Road 53 between Township Road 730 and Township Road 734	Grading 6.4 km
CR.23301	Range Road 60 Evergreen Access Road	Base Paving 0.9 km
CR.23302	Township Road 710 and Range Road 55 - Evergreen PARDS Rear Access	Base Paving 1.6 km
CR.23303	Range Road 61 south of Highway 668	Grading, Base Paving 1.2 km
CR.23702	Range Road 110 and Township Road 733 - Hythe East	Grading 4 km
CR.23703	Highway 43 Service Road and 98 Avenue Drainage, Hythe	Grading, Drainage 1.7 km
CR.23901	Township Road 744 between Range Road 50 and Range Road 51	Base Paving, 1.6 km
CR.23902	Range Road 50 south of Township Road 744	Base Paving, 3.2 km
CR.23903	Township Road 744 between Range Road 44 and Range Road 50	Base Paving, 3.2 km
SR.15894	158 Avenue and 94 Street	Overlay 1.2 km
CL.10023	100 Street between 148 Avenue and 156 Avenue, Clairmont	Overlay 0.9 km
CL.CCS23	Clairmont Community School Development - 158 Avenue, 163 Avenue, 95 Street, and 96 Street	Overlay 1.9 km
SD.RH23	Richmond Hill Estates	Overlay 1.3 km
SR.71171	Township Road 711 and Range Road 71	Overlay 4.6 km
SR.CI23	County Industrial Park Access Road	Overlay 1.6 km
SR.RR30	Range Road 30 south of Highway 43 - Knelsen Pit Road	Overlay 4.9 km
SP.23101	Township Road 714 between Range Road 43 and Range Road 44	Spot Construction 1.6 km
SP.23301	Range Road 53 south of Township Road 712	Spot Construction 1.3 km
SP.23401	Range Road 82 for 1.6 km north of Township Road 722	Spot Construction 1.6 km
SP.23501	Range Road 102 from NW-26-72-10 north for 1 km	Spot Construction 1 km
SP.23601	Range Road 102 for 0.5 km south of Township Road 710	Spot Construction 0.5 km
SP.23701	Township Road 734 between Range Road 103 and Range Road 104	Spot Construction 1.6 km
SP.23801	Township Road 730 between Range Road 91 and Range Road 92	Spot Construction 1.6 km
SP.23901	Township Road 742 between Range Road 62 and Range Road 63	Spot Construction 1.6 km
BF72306	NW-28-73-3-W6M - Kleskun Creek	Bridge Culvert Replacement
BF09115	SW-15-73-5-W6M - Tributary to Kleskun Creek	Bridge Culvert Replacement

Apply for Community Capital Grants Starting August 1

Organizations that deliver recreation or cultural services to County residents can apply to the Capital Grant program starting August 1 for improvements or repairs to their facility.

Tanya Wald, Executive Director of the Grande Prairie Youth Emergency Shelter Society which operates Sunrise House said the organization was thrilled to receive a total of \$500,000 from the County for their replacement youth facility.

"Our total project is \$6.3 million, and the County's investment is among the largest donations to our facility," says Wald.

The County provided two Capital Grants to the organization – a two-year gift totaling \$200,000 from 2021 to 2022, followed by \$300,000 spread across 2023 to 2025.

The current Sunrise House facility only offers emergency shelter to youth ages 12-17 for short-term housing and supports, whereas the new facility will continue this service with the addition of housing units for 15- to 24-year-olds requiring long-term shelter and support.

"We've been operating out of a small, converted duplex that provides a five-bedroom space with little room for



programming and brings the added complexity of security and accessibility challenges," says Wald. "It's the only youth facility of this type in Northern Alberta. The new facility will increase our capacity to facilitate youth struggling with family issues, exploitation, drug and alcohol abuse, and who are, or may be at risk of becoming homeless.

"We'll be able to provide housing access for youth who are unable to return home, along with mental health supports and much-needed life skills. Kids living in the community will also be able to access our supports.

"Our number one goal has always been preventing youth from transitioning to adult homelessness due to aging out of care or falling through the cracks. We'll have space to bring together agency partners such as nurses, addictions counsellors and mental health supports under one roof to help break the cycles of addiction and family issues," explains Wald.

The new facility will take the organization from 12 beds to 24 and Wald says the idea of not having to turn youth away is key to the initiative. Construction on the new Sunrise House is more than halfway complete, with plans to open later this fall.

TWO CAPITAL GRANT OPTIONS

Community groups can apply for up to 50 per cent of project costs, up to \$50,000, to improve or repair a physical facility. The infrastructure must be a recreational or cultural facility that serves County residents.

OR

Community groups can apply for funding to support projects of more than \$100,000. New construction, rehabilitation, repairs or improvements to a recreation or cultural facility that serves County residents are eligible.

These grants support local groups in keeping the County a great place to live, work and play. The funding provided through these programs helps support the spaces and places where our residents and visitors spend time.

The County awards Capital Grants annually. Last year, Council approved \$8 million in community contributions and grants, including \$1,710,177 in Capital Grants to support important projects throughout the County and the region.

For more information, visit www.countygp.ab.ca/grants.

APPROVED 2023 CAPITAL GRANTS:

- \$551,000 to the Nitehawk Year-Round Adventure Park for capital equipment replacement – over four years (2023-2026)
- \$300,000 to the Grande Prairie Youth Emergency Shelter Society for the new Sunrise House – \$100,000 per year over three years (2023-2025)

- \$200,000 to the Rotary Club of Grande Prairie for the D-Coy Armouries Community Hub project – \$100,000 per year over two years (2023-2024)
- \$50,000 to the Spring Lake Ski Hill Association for ski hill rehabilitation
- \$30,000 to the Saskatoon Lake Agricultural Society for a roofing project
- \$25,375 to the Viking Cultural Centre for a play structure
- \$24,930 to the Beaverlodge Boys and Girls Camp Society for playground upgrades and replacements
- \$22,767 to the Clairmont Community School playground enhancement project
- \$22,518 to the Bezanson Agricultural Society for a divider curtain and LED lighting
- \$17,500 to the Valhalla Recreational Centre porch project

Apply Today: New Community Safety and Wellness Grant

Groups or organizations that take measures to respond to and protect their community from harm or contribute to providing a safe and healthy community are eligible to apply for a new Community Safety and Wellness Grant.

As the first recipient of the grant, Tim Wiebe, President of the Grande Prairie & District Rural Crime Watch Association says the organization appreciates and looks forward to the ways the \$2,500 grant will help them serve their rural community members.

“Our mandate is to be the eyes and ears in our communities to create safe places to live, work and play,” adds Wiebe. “As personal and property crimes continue to rise, we need to stand together, watch each other’s backs, and assist law enforcement in helping us remain safe.”

In a presentation to County Council, Wiebe said the \$2,500 grant will go toward the association’s operating costs over the next three years. The volunteer group works collaboratively with law enforcement to help prevent crime by providing education and information and having a presence in rural communities in areas of the County and the M.D. of Greenview.

The new grant is also open to groups or organizations that foster connections among people by offering socially inclusive services such as cultural and recreational opportunities that may fall outside existing Family Community Support Services (FCSS) social services and community grants.

In December, County Council approved a \$25,000 addition to the Community Assistance Grant program to fund the new grant.

Details on all County grant programs, including the new Community Safety and Wellness Grant, are available at www.countygp.ab.ca/grants.



June is Recreation and Parks Month

The month of June is the perfect opportunity to get active and explore the many parks, campgrounds, and trails in the County of Grande Prairie. Need a few ideas to get you started? Why not take a day trip to Pipestone Creek Campground, explore the trails at Evergreen Ridge, or have a picnic with family at Kleskun Hills (pictured). Gather with your family and friends this June and enjoy the County’s parks and recreation areas. We look forward to celebrating with you! For details on events happening throughout the month of June, check out the ‘Recreation Events and Programs’ link found at www.countygp.ab.ca/recreation.

Need a Permit?

Building permits are required to ensure construction follows the building code and development permits are required for approval of the use of land. Separate permits for electrical, plumbing, and private sewage systems may also be required. If you’re planning to host an outdoor event with a temporary building, such as an event tent, a permit may be required.

Learn more at www.countygp.ab.ca/permits or contact Planning & Development staff at 780-513-3950 or plan@countygp.ab.ca



countygp.ab.ca

Three Cheers for 'It Takes a Volunteer'!

The County of Grande Prairie introduced a new campaign this year to recognize and highlight the commitment of volunteers who donate their time, skills, and knowledge to benefit our communities.

Reeve Bob Marshall explains that the 'It Takes a Volunteer' initiative is an opportunity to express gratitude and appreciation to the people and organizations that support a high quality of life for everyone in the County by volunteering.

Volunteers from various organizations were nominated earlier this year. All nominees received a recognition package from the County and were celebrated during National Volunteer Week in April.

"In celebrating National Volunteer Week, we were able to highlight three of our nominees with a special video series," says the Reeve. "We look forward to featuring even more groups, organizations and volunteers in future videos."

Take a look at the amazing individuals and organizations honoured for their volunteer contributions by visiting the 'It Takes a Volunteer' Hall of Fame at www.countygp.ab.ca/volunteers. Stay tuned to the County's social media channels for more videos profiling local volunteerism.



SHERI FUNK



After her son's first year of hockey, Sheri Funk saw the need for volunteers. She has poured her heart into the Hythe Minor Hockey Association over the last four years, filling the roles of team manager, tournament coordinator and more. "It's very fulfilling and a big help in our communities," says Funk. Everybody has something to give back. Whether it's a small job or a big job, every little bit helps."

CARLA LUMMERDING



As a Volunteer Family Advisor for the Stollery Children's Hospital Neo-Natal Intensive Care (NICU) team and the Alberta Health Services Pediatric Eating and Swallowing (PEAS) Project, Carla Lummerding says it's incredible to provide feedback and share resources and initiatives to help other families. She shares her family's experience of caring for their daughter, who at birth, required life-saving surgeries and a feeding tube. "The moments when we go beyond ourselves and live a life that serves the greater good, we also experience more happiness and fulfillment," says Lummerding. If you could use a little more 'happy' in your life, try volunteering in your community. You will be glad you did!"

CHERYL KIMBLE



With 40 years of volunteering to her credit, Cheryl Kimble is a familiar face at the Northern Spirit Light Show, district and provincial high school rodeos, Grande Prairie Minor Hockey, Grande Prairie Chuckwagon Heritage Foundation, 4-H, Grande Prairie Stompede, Harry Balfour School, and many other organizations. Most recently, Kimble worked with a group of young breast cancer survivors on The Mozart Mission, an initiative to raise funds for a Mozart 3D Surgical System for more effective treatment of breast cancer. Kimble offers these inspiring words to others who may be considering volunteering: "Once a volunteer, always a volunteer. It's all about making life better for everybody."

2022 Volunteer of the Year

Congratulations to Devin Bateman (left) on receiving the 2022 Volunteer of the Year award, presented by Jaimie Rigler (right) of Servus Credit Union on behalf of the Grande Prairie Regional Association of Volunteer Organizations. Devin's contributions are most noticeable in the community of Clairmont where he dedicates countless hours to ensure the success of the Clairmont Community Garden Society. Last year, the group donated 1,043 pounds of homegrown tomatoes and potatoes to the Clairmont food bank. Since its launch in 2021, the Clairmont Community Gardeners have received more than \$11 thousand dollars in grants and funding from the County of Grande Prairie.



How to Access Mental Health Services

If you or someone you know needs emotional support or feels overwhelmed, remember you are not alone. Contact one of the resources below for help. For more information about additional resources and supports, visit www.alberta.ca/mentalhealth.

RESOURCE	CONTACT	ABOUT
Alberta 2-1-1	Call or text 2-1-1 www.ab.211.ca	For information/referrals to Alberta's community, social, health-related, and government services.
Alberta Health Services (AHS) Integrated Crisis Access Team	587-259-5513	Walk-in support for adult mental health concerns, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday to Friday.
AHS Child/Youth Addiction & Mental Health	780-538-5162 Call after 8 a.m. to book a session.	Single session and walk-in counselling for children/youth, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday, 4th floor, Nordic Court, 10014-99 Street, Grande Prairie
AB Mental Health Helpline	1-877-303-2642	Support for mental health concerns.
AB Addiction Helpline	1-866-332-2322	Support for alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and problem gambling.
Adult Bullying Help Line	1-888-456-2323	Support for adults experiencing bullying or harassment.
Kids Help Phone	1-800-668-6868	Support for struggling youth under 20.
Crisis Text Line	Text "HOME" to 686868	Text support by a trained crisis responder.
Distress Line	1-780-482-HELP (4357)	Confidential, non-judgmental short-term crisis intervention, emotional support, and distress resource.
Family and Community Support Services	780-567-5584	Not sure who to call? FCSS can provide information and referral to the appropriate service.
Family Violence Information Line	780-310-1818	Anonymous help in 170 languages.
Help Seeker	www.helpseeker.org	Free location-based help services network.
Indigenous Mental Health Help	1-855-242-3310	Indigenous community support and counselling in Cree, Ojibway, and Inuktitut.
Money Mentors	1-888-294-0076 www.moneymentors.ca	Credit counselling, debt consolidation, and financial education agency
Income Supports	1-866-644-5135	Support for individuals and families for basic expenses like food, clothing, and shelter.
Resource Centre for Suicide Prevention	780-539-6680 www.sp-rc.ca	Free drop-in Men's Support Group, Wednesdays, 7 p.m., Nordic Court, Room 200, 10019-99 Street, Grande Prairie.
Virtual Rapid Access Counselling	1-877-244-2360 www.rac.janeapp.com	Call or book online for free counselling sessions.

Need a Ride?

Drive Happiness offers a Seniors Assisted Transportation program to eligible riders. The program's friendly volunteer drivers provide transportation to local businesses, social events, medical appointments, and more. If you are 65+ and able to enter and exit vehicles on your own but have personal challenges that restrict you from using other forms of transportation, learn more and sign up by calling 1-888-336-4503 or visiting www.drivehappiness.ca.



Community Groups Corner

Miriam Mahnic, Community Group Support Coordinator with the County's Parks and Recreation department is ready for another busy year and invites more people to get involved in volunteering.

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER

Want to stay on top of our news and find out about new opportunities? Subscribe to the Parks, Recreation and Culture Community Groups newsletter at www.countygp.ab.ca/communitysupport. You'll get updates, information and reminders about County grant opportunities, training events and programs, articles on fund generation, board governance and leadership, safety, and risk management, as well as links and referrals to resources.

MICRO-VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

Carlie Woroschuk is volunteering with La Glace and District Agricultural Society, researching grant support options. She says the experience of being paired with a mentor with local government experience has been positive.

"My mentor is always available to answer my questions and her amazing background is a great resource," she says. "To be honest, I didn't know where to begin and my mentor has really taken the stress out of the process for me."

Mentors also offer encouragement, support, constructive feedback, and a listening ear. Both mentors and mentees broaden their networks and gain new perspectives.



There are many "micro-volunteering" opportunities in the County as community organizations seek help managing their fundraising work, especially researching grant opportunities, developing grant proposals, requests for corporate sponsorship, and more. These opportunities are often briefer than the usual volunteer roles and can be done virtually. If you want to donate a gift of time, send an email to parksandrecreation@countygp.ab.ca with Volunteer in the subject line.

COMMUNITY GROUPS WEBSITE & FUNDING GUIDE

Maybe you're already part of a community group and need information about funding opportunities. Visit our website for funding resources, including links to toolkits, a crowdfunding platform, a Learning Centre for board members and volunteers, service providers, and funding search engines: www.countygp.ab.ca/communitysupport

One of our most popular resources is our Funding Guide. It will assist you with funding strategies and features resources and links to funders and grant programs. It's a great overview of the depth and variety of funding opportunities that may be available.

Community groups can also promote their non-profit, community-based events and meetings on the County's online events calendar: www.countygp.ab.ca/events.

Join us! County Open House Events

County Councillors and staff look forward to connecting with residents during three County Open House events in June. Join us from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. for fun, food, and friendship. Talk to staff from every department and learn about County programs and services. Stop by the location nearest to you:

- 1. Hythe & District Memorial Arena**
Tuesday, June 13
- 2. Bezanson Community Event Centre**
Wednesday, June 14
- 3. Crosslink County Sportsplex**
Monday, June 19



Book Your County Staycation



CAMPGROUNDS AND PARKS OPEN FOR RESERVATIONS

Looking to spend a few days outdoors, take a day trip or enjoy quality time with family and friends? Take advantage of the County's many recreational opportunities and overnight camping facilities. All County campgrounds and parks are now open for the season.

Marcy Thoresen and her family enjoy Pipestone Creek Campground. "It's close to Grande Prairie which is convenient if my husband has to leave for work. He can simply return to our site each evening."

"Our son likes to ride his bike to the playground and it's so safe that we don't have to worry," adds Thoresen. "We're able to bring our dog and enjoy family walks along the river where our son will spend hours searching for fossils. It's so great to see him enjoying the outdoors."

Visitors to Pipestone can also enjoy approximately seven kilometres of natural woodland trails, thanks to an Alberta Environment and Parks Recreation Partnership Initiative grant. The single-track trails wind through the Wapiti River valley and have signs indicating their level of difficulty. The trails are perfect for hiking, mountain biking, and snowshoeing, but motorized vehicles are not permitted on any trails within the park.

Thoresen says the Park Hosts do an amazing job. "The campground is clean and there's always plenty of firewood which is wonderful because we enjoy being unplugged, relaxing and sitting around the fire together."

A \$5 nightly fire permit fee is in place at all County campgrounds to supplement the costs of firewood handling and firepit safety maintenance.

In addition to existing online reservation options for Pipestone Creek Campground and Hythe Municipal Campground, visitors can now book online for the Bear Lake, Demmitt, Hommy and Kleskun campgrounds, as well as Bear Hill and the Old Bezanson Townsite for exclusive group camping. The move to online reservations is consistent with provincial and national park campgrounds.

COUNTY CAMPGROUNDS & PARKS

Demmitt Campground & Park ★ [Book Online](#)

Northwest of Hythe near the Alberta/BC border.

Hommy Campground & Park ★ [Book Online](#)

Along the banks of the Beaverlodge River.

Hythe Municipal Campground ★ [Book Online](#)

Left off 104 Street in the Hamlet of Hythe.

Kleskun Hill Campground & Park ★ [Book Online](#)

Experience the northernmost badlands of the Kleskun Hill Natural Area and visit the Kleskun Hill Museum and historical village.

Pipestone Creek Campground & Park ★ [Book Online](#)

Along the Wapiti River near one of the richest sources of dinosaur fossils in western Canada.

Bear Lake Campground ★ [Book Online](#)

Ideal for canoeing, kiteboarding and paddleboarding.

Bear Hill Campground ★ [Book Online](#)

Private, rustic, and available for day-use and group camping reservations.

Old Bezanson Townsite ★ [Book Online](#)

Along the banks of the Smoky River, 12 km southeast of Bezanson.

Red Willow Day-Use Park

Along the Red Willow River. Perfect location for large and small group day-use.

Valhalla Centre Day-Use Park

Downtown Valhalla. Offering basic comforts for day use.

BE A COURTEOUS CAMPER

Guests at County campgrounds and parks are asked to follow these basic guidelines:

REMEMBER THE 3 Rs:

1. Respect the environment
2. Respect your neighbours
3. Respect our park staff

To ensure everyone has an enjoyable experience:

- Disruptive singing, music, yelling and other noisy behaviour is not permitted.
- Quiet hours: 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. Turn off music and generators and keep noise to a minimum.
- Keep campfires small to reduce the risk of wildfires. Do not burn garbage in fire pits.
- Never leave your campfire unattended.
- Extinguish your fire before you leave. Soak it twice with water, stirring the ashes each time. It is an offence to leave an unattended or smouldering fire at any time in your site.
- Pets must always be on a leash.
- Check-out time is 2 p.m.
- Respect posted speed limits. Drive safely and watch for pedestrians.
- One vehicle per campsite. Additional vehicles can park in the day-use or designated overflow spaces.

For photos and more information, and to book online for overnight camping, visit www.countygp.ab.ca/campgrounds. Fire bans are subject to change – check www.countygp.ab.ca for updates.



Appeal Process 101

APPEALING YOUR PROPERTY ASSESSMENT



HOW IS MY ASSESSMENT DETERMINED?

Residential property values are based on the home's market value – the price a property is reasonably expected to sell for. Assessors gather information on the ranges of sale prices of similar properties to establish the assessed values of residential property.

The province regulates value on some types of property, such as farmland, machinery, and equipment, and linear. Farmland is assessed based on productivity – its ability to produce income from growing crops and/or raising livestock.

HOW IS THE TAX RATE DETERMINED?

The tax rate is made up of three parts:

1. Municipal taxes to fund services and operations provided by the County
2. Education taxes which the County collects on behalf of the province
3. Seniors' lodging taxes which are set by the Grande Spirit Foundation

See 'Making Sense of the Budget' on page 4 for more information.

WHAT IF I DON'T AGREE WITH MY ASSESSMENT?

Talk to an Assessor: Call 780-513-3952, Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

File an Appeal: If you and your Assessor cannot come to an agreement, you may file a complaint/appeal to the Clerk of the Assessment Review Board within 60 days of the Notice of Assessment Date indicated on your Combined Assessment and Property Tax Notice. Pick up forms and information in person at the County Administration Building or download the Assessment Review Board Complaint Form from www.alberta.ca.

APPEAL FEES:

Fees are per appeal (tax roll); fees are refundable if the appeal is successful.

TYPE OF PROPERTY	FEES
Residential and Farmland	\$50
Non-Residential (Commercial, Industrial, M&E)	\$650

Find the County's appeal deadline at www.countygp.ab.ca/assessment. Mail-in or drop off appeals in person to the County of Grande Prairie, 10001-84 Avenue, Clairmont, AB T8X 5B2 or email legislativeservices@countygp.ab.ca.

To avoid penalty charges, you must pay your taxes by the deadline, even if you plan to appeal your assessment. For appeal process information, contact Legislative Services at 780-532-9722.

Pay Your Property Taxes by the End of June



Property owners are encouraged to pay their property taxes on or before the last business day of June to avoid late penalties. The County of Grande Prairie collects property taxes to help pay for services, facilities, and projects in the county. Your property tax notice includes municipal taxes along with taxes for education and seniors

lodging as determined by the Province of Alberta and the Grande Spirit Foundation. To learn more about how your tax dollars are used, read 'Making Sense of the Budget' on page 4.

DIDN'T RECEIVE YOUR PROPERTY TAX NOTICE BY MAY 31? CONTACT THE COUNTY

Did you recently transfer or purchase property in the County? Due to delays with Alberta Land Titles, you may not receive your property tax notice. **If you do not receive notice by May 31, contact the County's tax office at 780-513-3968 or taxes@countygp.ab.ca.**

Questions or concerns about your change in land title ownership? Call Alberta Land Titles at 780-427-2742. If you recently purchased property in the County but did not receive a 2022 Property Assessment & Taxation Notice from us, and paid a penalty for late payment, you may be eligible for reimbursement from the Government of Alberta.



Recycling Corner

Clairmont Centre Access Program: Tap, Talk, Go

Waste Card is the word if you plan to visit the Clairmont Centre for Recycling and Waste Management in 2023. A new Access Program at the Clairmont Centre now allows County households to dispose of up to 1,000 kg of waste for free each year.

County resident, Scott, and his family visit the Clairmont Centre frequently with household waste and recycling. "The staff at the Clairmont Centre are wonderful to work with and are always very helpful during our visits," said Scott.

When visiting the Clairmont Centre, simply tap your new Waste Card, talk to the scale operator and then be on your way, in or out. While a weight limit is in place for waste, recycling remains free and unlimited.

Scott said that he and his family do their best to take advantage of the various recycling programs offered at the Clairmont Centre. "We use the Shelve and Share, household hazardous waste disposal, and the hay, manure and yard waste recycling programs to help divert waste from the landfill and ensure we're staying within our limit of free waste."

By individually reducing our waste, we collectively benefit the overall environment and help ensure a sustainable future for the next generations.

"We are pleased to see residents adopting this change for the benefit of our natural environment," says Jennifer Besinger, Technical Services Manager. "Reducing the waste from each household coming into the landfill reduces greenhouse gas emissions and extends the lifespan of this landfill cell, saving us money in the long term."

Wondering how to get your new Waste Card? Apply online at www.countygpp.ab.ca/wastecard and simply pick up your new card on your next visit to the Centre.



TIPS TO LESSEN THE LOAD

Before you purchase new or toss a gently used item, Kate Biendarra, Recycling Coordinator at the County of Grande Prairie offers this simple advice: "Reduce and reuse."

"Take a moment to check buy-and-sell pages, thrift stores or the Shelve n' Share at the Clairmont Centre for Recycling and Waste Management," says Biendarra. "The Shelve n' Share accepts gently used items that are in good working order, at no cost to the donor."

"Another option is to think of ways to turn used items into something new, such as using an old freezer as a stock water tank," adds Biendarra. "Additionally, the County offers 12 community recycling bin locations for paper, plastics, tin, glass, and cardboard."

Both the Clairmont Centre and the West Grande Prairie Regional Landfill also accept used oil, paint, household hazardous waste, electronics, batteries, wood, scrap metal, concrete, tires, large appliances, and agricultural plastics. Find clothing bins at the Clairmont Centre where you can also drop off accessories, footwear, household linens, and sleeping bags.

If you'd like to try composting at home, Biendarra points to the County's Backyard Organic Diversion Program.

"Many organic items can be kept out of the landfill. Simply build your own composter or buy a home composting or food digester unit from the County at www.countygpp.ab.ca/composter."



Welcome to Your New Home in the County

Welcome to rural living! Having your own slice of heaven in the County is a wonderful experience, but it can bring lifestyle changes. The following tips will assist you as you settle into your new home.

- **Weed Control Act:** All landowners are subject to this Act. Weed Inspectors have the authority to come onto your land to inspect for regulated weeds. They will have identification stating they are a County Weed Inspector. You are required to address any weed concerns they tell you about.
- **Noxious Weeds:** Believe it or not, daisies are not native to Alberta. White daisies are likely noxious weeds that will need to be controlled to prevent costly crop infestations for farmers, reduce negative impacts on insects and animals, and other problems. View a list of regulated weeds at www.countygp.ab.ca/WeedControl.
- **Ask Before Crossing Land:** Always ask permission even if the land isn't fenced. Taking your quad or snowmobile across land without permission is trespassing and can damage crops.
- **Herbicide Spraying:** Farmers are permitted to spray their land and will usually do so when winds are not high. Concerns or sensitivities? Talk to the farmer first. Most are very considerate and accommodating.
- **Farming Equipment:** Farmers may use their equipment at any time of day. This is a normal expectation of country living.
- **Slow-Moving Farm Equipment:** Farmers must often move large machinery down county roads. Be aware, they may not be able to see you. Stay back, give them plenty of room, and only pass when safe to do so.
- **Wildlife:** Rural living includes the wildlife around you, such as coyotes, skunks, or bears. Unless they are causing conflict, they have every right to be there. Learn how to skunk-proof your property, and make sure you aren't attracting bears.
- **County Roadside Mowing:** Takes place usually once a summer. Proceed with caution when you see a mower and pass only when safe.
- **County Herbicide Application:** Spot spraying of County roadsides to control regulated weeds starts in May, and runs until mid-October, weather permitting. For concerns about regulated weeds, call the Agriculture department at 780-532-9727, or complete the 'Report A Weed' form at www.countygp.ab.ca/agriculture.

Drysdales Named 2023 Farm Family



Congratulations to Ken and Sherry Drysdale of Kendal Farms on being named the County's Farm Family for 2023. We celebrated them and their significant contributions to the community and agriculture at the Farm Family banquet on March 10, 2023.

Before you know it, we will be looking for our 2024 Farm Family. Do you know a farm family in the County of Grande Prairie that is deeply committed to agriculture and actively involved with helping their community? Please nominate them for the 2024 Farm Family Award by December 1, 2023.

Find the nomination package at www.countygp.ab.ca/farmfamily or pick one up at the County Community Services Building, Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to noon and 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. Need more info? Contact Sonja Raven, Agricultural Fieldman, 780-532-9727.

Register Your Weed Management Plan

Are you an agricultural producer with regulated weeds but you have a plan to deal with them? Then our new 'Register Your Weed Management Plan' program is for you.

The County's Agriculture Department and Agricultural Service Board worked with local producers to develop a Weed Management Plan Registration form. Using the form, producers will need to indicate land location, whether land is rented or owned, crop types, the herbicide or control method being used, and the expected application timing.

The program launched in late March. Applications are reviewed and accepted if qualified. You may receive a call from the Fieldman if further details are needed. Those who follow their registered weed management plan will not be contacted by County weed inspectors this season. Instead, inspectors will focus on addressing problem areas and providing education on the importance of controlling regulated weeds. Producers who have received weed notices or have ongoing significant weed concerns may not be eligible.

Visit www.countygp.ab.ca/RegisterYourPlan to register your plan online or complete the printable form and mail it to Sonja Raven, Agricultural Fieldman, County of Grande Prairie, 10001 - 84 Avenue, Clairmont, AB, T8X 5B2. Plans will need to be renewed each year.



BE PREPARED

What to Include in an Emergency Kit

The recent evacuation orders and alerts stemming from the Dunes West Wildfire have highlighted the importance for everyone to be prepared for emergencies. The Regional Municipalities Association of Alberta provides the following tips on what to include in a basic emergency kit, as well as suggestions for additional items to consider.

CHECKLIST: BASIC EMERGENCY KIT

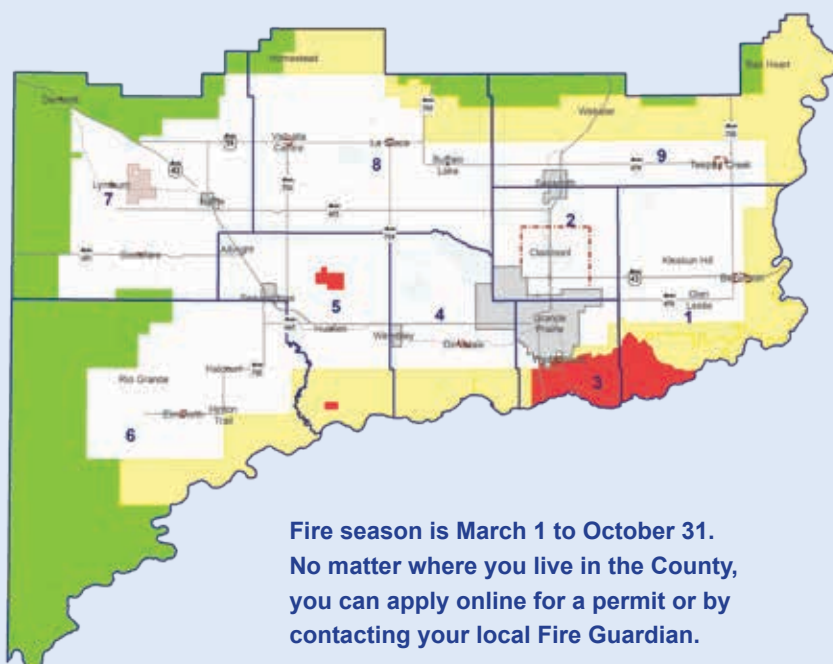
- Water – two litres of water per person per day. Include small bottles.
- Food that won't spoil, such as canned food, energy bars and dried foods.
- Manual can opener
- Battery-powered flashlight
- Battery-powered radio
- First aid kit
- Extra keys for your vehicle and house
- Cash
- Prescription medications and medical equipment
- Important documents, identification, passports, and insurance cards
- Emergency plan – keep a copy in your kit as well as contact information.



CONSIDER THESE ADDITIONAL SUPPLIES

- Two additional litres of water
- Candles and matches/lighter
- Change of clothing and footwear
- Sleeping bags and warm blankets
- Toiletries and personal hygiene items
- Hand sanitizer, toilet paper and garbage bags
- Phone chargers
- Pet food and supplies (leash, kennel, etc.)
- Infant formula, baby food and supplies
- Activities for children like books, toys, and puzzles
- Utensils, plates, and cups
- Household bleach or water purification tablets
- Basic tools (hammer, pliers, wrench, screwdrivers, gloves, knife)
- Small fuel-operated stove and fuel
- Whistle (to attract attention)
- Duct tape

It's Fire Season



Fire season is March 1 to October 31. No matter where you live in the County, you can apply online for a permit or by contacting your local Fire Guardian.

The County has four Fire Burn Areas, each with its own guidelines for fire permits. If you live in one of the following three areas, visit www.countygp.ab.ca/firepermits to complete the Fire Permit Request form and find contact information for your area Fire Guardian.

- **WHITE AREA**
Requires a verbal permit during fire season.
- **YELLOW AREA**
Requires a written fire permit during fire season.
- **RED AREA**
Restricted burn zone where permits are required year-round.

GREEN AREA:

Designated Forest Protection Area requiring a written fire permit during fire season from a Provincial Forestry Fire Guardian. Visit www.wildfire.alberta.ca/firepermits to find your nearest office or call 310-0000.

To stay up to date with any fire bans in place, visit www.countygp.ab.ca/fireban.



countygp.ab.ca

FireSmart™ Your Property Today

On May 18, the County was relieved to see the safe return of residents to their homes following the evacuation orders related to the Dunes West Wildfire.

As wildfire conditions continue across the province, the County Regional Fire Service encourages all County residents to take necessary steps to prepare their homes against the threat of fire.

The FireSmart™ program offers practical advice on reducing the risk and impact of wildfires. These steps include:

- **Creating a FireSmart™ Zone:** Remove dry leaves, twigs, and other fire fuels from your property. Aim to make a 10-meter zone around your home that is free from all flammable materials.
- **Protect your home from embers:** Use fire-resistant materials when possible and cover all vents, eaves, and soffits.
- **Have an emergency plan and kit:** Prepare an evacuation plan and have a list of essential items and important documents that can be quickly accessed.
- **Stay updated:** Download the Alberta Emergency Alert application and keep track of local news for any updates on fire activity in the area.

The fire is classified as under control. If you see smoke on your property, please call 911 and report it. Authorities and emergency response teams will continue to closely monitor the region, and action priority areas.

FIRESMART™ HOME ASSESSMENTS

Free home assessments help County residents and businesses identify actions they can take to reduce risks: your property is checked for hazards, then a customized report is developed with practical tips to make your property safer.



“We’re happy to help homeowners, and home assessments play an important role in reducing wildfire risks for our communities,” says County Regional Fire Chief Trevor Grant. The County was pleased to welcome Chief Grant back to his former role in December 2022 after almost five years with the City of Grande Prairie.

As part of his FireSmart™ Home Assessments, Fire Marshal Ken Atamanchuk promotes the use of a simple yet effective sprinkler system for extinguishing wildfire embers that may land on roofs.



“The WASP Gutter Mount Sprinkler System involves attaching a garden hose to a sprinkler head which can hang on household gutters, fascia, or fences to direct water onto your roof,” says Atamanchuk. “The kits include everything you need to protect a standard sized home and can be purchased at the County’s Community Services Building in Clairmont.

For more information or to request a home assessment, visit www.countygp.ab.ca/firesmart or call 780-532-9727.

Sign Up and Stay Up to Date

Want to know what the County is up to in your community? We have a number of ways to keep residents informed of the work we are doing.

- Sign in and view our Engage page to provide your feedback on current projects at www.countygp.ab.ca/engage
- Subscribe to receive all our news and alerts at www.countygp.ab.ca/subscribe
- View our calendar and subscribe to receive a weekly digest of meetings, events, and activities across the County at www.countygp.ab.ca/events

ANSWER THE CALL

Make Firefighting Part of Your Life

Are you looking for a unique way to contribute to your community? Become a member of the Regional Fire Service and help protect lives and property! There are two options to serve: as a paid responder or a rural on-call firefighter.

PAID RESPONDERS



Paid responders bring a variety of skills and experience to their role. When you join the Regional Fire Service, you get access to ongoing education and training — vital components for success.

That's what drew Abigail Emon to serve with the County Regional Fire Service. "This was the perfect way to gain experience while helping out and getting to know people in the area," she says. "The training and experience I received will go a long way in my goal to become a career firefighter."

ANSWER THE CALL TODAY: Paid responders are currently needed at the Bezanson, La Glace and Teepee Creek fire halls. Find out more and apply at www.countygp.ab.ca/paidresponders or call District Fire Chief Trevor Grant at 780-532-9727.

ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS



On-call firefighters work in a supportive team environment that includes flexible work — as little as a few hours a month — and also receive free professional training.

Ryon Hemingson works as the Recreation Infrastructure Coordinator with the County's Parks and Recreation department, but he also enjoys his role with the Regional Fire Service. "Like many firefighters, I initially joined to help my community and save lives," he says. "But when I learned about the County's Large Animal Rescue program, I knew that's what I wanted to do."

He's now the lieutenant leading that effort, and does a lot of community relations, especially with kids and encouraging the next generation of firefighters.

ANSWER THE CALL TODAY: Let us know about your interest in becoming an on-call firefighter. Call the County Regional Fire Service at 780-532-9727.

Community Safety Gets Boost with New Committee

Being part of a community means watching out for each other and working together for community wellness and safety. That's why Stuart Rempel is pleased to see the establishment of a new Crime Prevention Committee.

Rempel is the Manager of County Regional Enforcement Services Department (RES), the County of Grande Prairie's municipal enforcement service. He will be part of the new committee, along with members of County Council and administration, and members of the Grande Prairie and Beaverlodge RCMP.

"The County has always been considered a leader in policing initiatives and the RESD has been working to reduce rural crime in our area for 46 years," says Rempel. "We know residents have concerns about rural crime, so I'm especially pleased to be part of this work."

County Council has identified 'Community Wellness and Safety' as one of the County's strategic priorities. The committee's bylaw provides Council with strategic recommendations related to reducing crime and engaging and educating the community on crime prevention and reduction.

"Engagement will be key. The committee will meet quarterly, but there will also be opportunities for the public to participate at a variety of locations," Rempel explains. "The goal is to identify and strengthen relationships, explore crime solutions, and increase Peace Officer safety and their role in crime prevention."

Rempel has high expectations for meaningful recommendations. "We're going to work hard to help improve safety and overall quality of life in the County and region."

Watch for updates and opportunities to participate at www.countygp.ab.ca.



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



Rural Renewal Stream

CONNECTING EMPLOYERS AND WORKERS

The County's Economic Development office is leading a program to promote the County as a great place to work and live — and help reduce the impact of labour shortages.

The County is a designated community under the Rural Renewal Stream of the Alberta Advantage Immigration Program (AAIP), along with the towns of Beaverlodge, Sexsmith and Wembley. Hetti Huls, Economic Development Officer with the County says, "This designation helps us support local businesses by attracting and retaining newcomers for vacant positions."

And it's working. Oliver Dietrich joined MKD Construction as a carpenter's helper through AAIP and has been working for over 10 months.

"This program made it easier for my employer to offer me a job," Dietrich says. "I already had construction experience but not too much carpentry related, so I got on-the-job training as well as language skills."

The AAIP benefits businesses in communities with populations under 100,000 by increasing the pool of potential workers; those workers are more likely to stay in full-time jobs as the process to gain permanent residency status is also accelerated under the program.

Businesses who are interested in participating must offer full-time positions for at least one year, along with wages and benefits that meet or exceed industry standard. Employees must work full time, live in the community, and be endorsed by a local Economic Development Officer.

To date, 17 employers are participating, ranging from health care, trucking, administration, construction, farm operations, food service, retail management, and energy industries. And 17 newcomers have received endorsement letters. Huls notes, "Most of the approved newcomers were not in our area already — they are moving here specifically because of this program."

Dietrich appreciates how the program is giving him the opportunity to immigrate from Germany more easily. "I like the area and that I'm close to nature. I enjoy working in the County."

Find more details at
www.countygp.ab.ca/ruralrenewalstream.

Help Shape our Future: Participate in Plan Your County

It's important that the County's development reflect the unique needs and variety of people, businesses, activities, and industry in our municipality. That's why we're asking those who live and work here to help Plan Your County over the next few years.

WHY ARE WE REVIEWING PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT?

To continue growing in a way that meets the needs of our community in the long term, the County is reviewing and updating the plans, bylaws, strategies, and guidelines that shape local development. This is an opportunity to review how changes around provincial regulations, population growth, industry practices, and infrastructure like highways, and bridges, should be reflected in our planning documents.

'Plan Your County' is an engagement project that will ensure residents, businesses, community groups, members of industry, and others have an opportunity to provide their input and vision for the County to help shape these plans and guiding documents.

TAKE PART

This year we will:

- Study several hamlets to consider long-term needs like infrastructure, and cultural and recreational amenities, to develop a Hamlet Resiliency Strategy.
- Review our Municipal Development Plan (MDP) which outlines the high-level vision for development and the policies used to achieve this vision, like what types of development are most appropriate in different areas and how we provide land for schools and parks.

Attend in-person events or participate online through a survey and more to provide feedback so results are shaped by community needs and feedback.

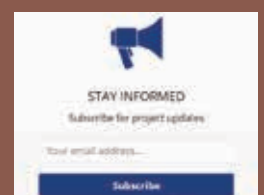
This year, residents will also be engaged on Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDPs) with neighbouring communities.

SIGN UP TO STAY INFORMED

For more information about the Plan Your County project and opportunities to get involved, visit

www.countygp.ab.ca/planyourcounty.

Sign-up to 'Stay Informed' about project updates.





Parent and Tots Programs

Parents, caregivers, and children aged 0 to 6 are invited to FREE parent and tot playgroups. Bring a snack for your child and join us for crafts, stories, songs, and playtime! Learn more at www.countygpp.ab.ca/EarlyChildhoodDevelopment.

KNELSEN CENTRE, BEZANSON

Tuesdays | 10 a.m. to noon

Start Date: September 12, 2023

WELLINGTON RESOURCE CENTRE, CLAIRMONT

Thursdays | 10 a.m. to noon

Start Date: September 14, 2023

FIVE MILE HALL

2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month | 10 a.m. to noon

Start Date: September 13, 2023

HYTHE & AREA FCSS OFFICE

1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month | 10 a.m. to noon

Start Date: September 18, 2023

SASKATOON LAKE COMMUNITY HALL

2nd and 4th Monday of the month | 10 a.m. to noon

Start Date: September 11, 2023

Register for Playschool



Playschool applications for 2023-2024 school year are open! Our programs are child-centered and focus on delivering developmentally appropriate programming for three- and four-year-olds. Children can start the program the month they turn three and must be potty trained.

Learn more and apply online at www.countygpp.ab.ca/EarlyChildhoodDevelopment for programs offered in Bezanson, Clairmont, Elmworth, La Glace, Valhalla, and Whispering Ridge.

Summer Day Camps

Do you know a child aged 6 to 12 looking for fun and exciting activities this summer? Our summer day camps are led by engaging and energetic leaders.

- Activities will include arts and crafts, games, and much more. Healthy morning and afternoon snacks are provided. Remember to pack a lunch.
- Camps will run Tuesday to Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in various communities throughout the County starting July 4 to August 17. Registration for specific camp locations will be available in June. Register early as spaces are limited.
- Fee: \$30 per child, per camp.

Stay tuned to the County's website at www.countygpp.ab.ca/summercamps and the County's social media channels for details.



Summer at the Library

Public libraries are located throughout the County for all your summer reading and learning needs. Visit your community library to get a free library card and enjoy membership perks such as unlimited check-outs, e-books and e-audiobooks, free wi-fi and, of course, air conditioning!

This summer, County Libraries located in the hamlets of Elmworth, Hythe, La Glace, and Valhalla will be offering reading contests for all ages and a variety of fun, educational activities for kids throughout July and August. Check with your library for details.

Elmworth Community Library - www.elmworthlibrary.ab.ca

Hythe Community Library - www.hythelibrary.ab.ca

La Glace Community Library - www.laglacelibrary.ab.ca

Valhalla Community Library - www.valhallalibrary.ab.ca



countygpp.ab.ca



Come Play!

The Crosslink County Sportsplex has a program for everyone!

780-830-7407 | info@cgpsportsplex.com | www.crosslinkcountysportsplex.com

KIDS SUMMER CAMPS

Kids aged 5 to 12 are invited to participate in seven weeks of fun-filled activities at our Summer Kids' Camps. Camps are planned for July 10 - August 25, 2023, with a new theme each week! Our Summer Camps are designed to spark the imagination, confidence, independence, and communication skills of all our campers.

Registration fees are per week. Children must bring their own beverage and water bottle, two snacks and a lunch, along with a change of clothes, swimsuit, skates, and appropriate outdoor wear. Drop-off from 7:45 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Pick-up from 4:00 p.m. to 5:15 p.m.

To register, visit www.crosslinkcountysportsplex.com or call 780-830-7407.

SUMMER CAMPS 2023

CROSSLINK OLYMPICS

Week 4 | July 31 - August 4

\$250



UNDERWATER ADVENTURE

Week 1 | July 10 - 14

\$250



INTERGALACTIC ADVENTURE

Week 5 | August 8 - 11

\$200



CROSSLINK SAFARI

Week 2 | July 17 - 21

\$250



AROUND THE WORLD

Week 6 | August 14 - 18

\$250



CHRISTMAS IN JULY

Week 3 | July 24 - 28

\$250



CELEBRATIONS

Week 7 | August 21 - 25

\$250





PHILIP J. CURRIE DINOSAUR MUSEUM

SUMMER PROGRAMMING



BOOK A BIRTHDAY PARTY OR EVENT AT THE MUSEUM

Book your child's birthday party and have a roar-ific time. The museum also accepts bookings for adult gatherings. Contact us for pricing.

THINK YOU'VE FOUND A FOSSIL?

Be a part of Alberta's fossil heritage by reporting your find to a paleontologist! Members of the public have produced some of the most significant finds in the Peace Region. Email our curator, Dr. Emily Bamforth, at curator@dinomuseum.ca. Include a photo of your discovery beside an object (coin, finger, pencil, etc.) for scale.



This summer, go beyond the walls of the museum and join us in the field or on the Wapiti River for an unforgettable experience! The museum offers unique opportunities to go exploring with palaeontologists.

BOOK AHEAD! All bookings must be confirmed 24 hours before arrival.

PALAEO FOR A DAY

Become a paleontologist for a day, working beside researchers at one of the densest bonebeds in North America. Uncover 72-million-year-old mysteries of a world lost to time.

SECRETS OF THE WAPITI

Learn about the natural history of the region on a guided river float tour, encountering modern and ancient wildlife on stops along on your way.

SPECIAL FOR SUMMER 2023

Coming to the Philip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum in May 2023, in partnership with the American Museum of Natural History: The exhibition, *Dinosaurs Among Us* will highlight the unbroken line between modern birds and the charismatic dinosaurs that dominated the planet for about 170 million years. View large-scale lifelike colour illustrations of familiar and newly discovered extinct dinosaur species. Don't miss this temporary exhibition.

PALAEO PALOOZA - BACK FOR A THIRD YEAR

Come out and support your museum during a two-day science festival with a dinosaur midway, August 12-13, featuring palaeontologists from around the world. Ask questions, learn, and enjoy their stories!

Visit www.dinomuseum.ca for more information and follow [@curriemuseum](https://twitter.com/curriemuseum) on



countygp.ab.ca

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



LEFT TO RIGHT: Councillor Brian Peterson, Councillor Karen Rosvold, Councillor Bob Chrenek, Reeve Bob Marshall, Councillor Amanda Frayn, Councillor Leanne Beaupre, Councillor Kurt Balderston, Councillor Steve Zimmerman, Deputy Reeve Peter Harris

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info@countygp.ab.ca

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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, Asset Management, Corporate Services, Economic Development, Finance, Information Technology, Insurance/ Risk Management, Legislative Services, Procurement, 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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