

Stettler County Connection

MAKING CENTS

OF YOUR TAX BILL

pg 06

BUFFALO LAKE

ACTIVITIES

pg 26

Highway

855

Rehabilitation

is a go!

pg 21



Share with us what you've been doing for fun, while the COVID-19 Pandemic has altered our regular plans. Submit them to our photo contest at www.StettlerCounty.ca

2020 PHOTO CONTEST REBOOT...

Look for the rainbow.

With an abrupt change in activities in 2020, from what everyone planned to do, to what we are actually doing because of the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, we have decided to make a small change to our ongoing photo contest!

We encourage you to provide photos to our contest, not only depicting 'games and activities we play' in Stettler County which was our original theme for 2020, but now to include showing us your rainbows: the good, the blessings, the unexpected upsides you have experienced as we all adjust to the restrictions provided by this ongoing pandemic. As always, your submissions must be photos taken within the County of Stettler.

Our 2020 Photo Contest will continue throughout 2020. Participants are invited to submit up to three (3) photos per SEASON. Following are the remaining submission deadlines:

SPRING: April 1 - June 20

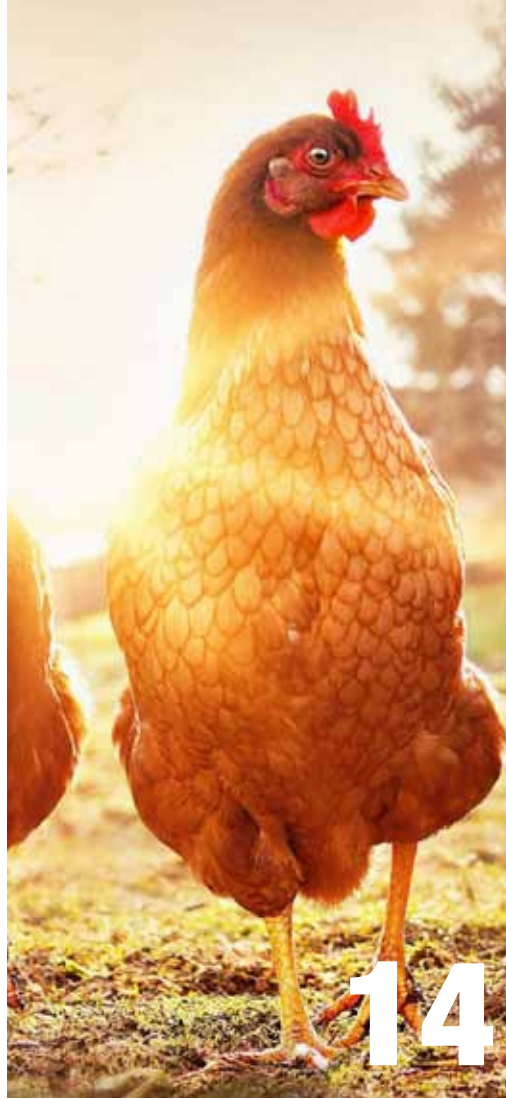
SUMMER: June 22 - September 8

FALL: September 8 - November 2

Please note - your photos do not have to be taken during the above timelines, the timelines simply outline the submission 'opening' and 'deadline' for that season. Judging for our 2020 Photo Contest will occur in November and winning entries will be included in our 2021 Calendar. For eligibility, complete contest rules and to make submissions please visit our website at www.StettlerCounty.ca and click on Photo Contest. Prizes for contest winners include \$75 in Heart of Alberta dollars (Stettler Bucks) and one grand prize winner will be awarded an iPad.



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COUNTY CONNECTION

INTRO

Look for the rainbow.

As I write, we are just in the midst of Stage 1 Alberta Relaunch, following the COVID-19 Pandemic sweeping our province, country and world. These are certainly strange times for us all and we are experiencing so many struggles.

While our County quickly adjusted operations to protect our employees, citizens, friends, relatives and neighbors, we continued to operate without skipping a beat. We are just having to do things a little differently now, like everyone else.

We have observed a few things:

1. We are a strong, committed and resilient bunch out here in Stettler County.
2. We were ahead of many of our urban counterparts, in that we already knew how to physically distance, we have the room to do so, and the spaces to enjoy it.
3. Our local essential service providers, including grocery stores, pharmacies, health care workers, police, fire, ambulance etc. not only did their jobs with smiles on their faces, they bent over backwards to assist and make our lives easier.

Not to make light of our continuing worries and struggles, I would encourage you to look for and recognize some of the good things you have experienced, witnessed or heard about. And if you feel like it, share a few photos of 'your rainbows' with us on our website and enter our annual photo contest. As we look back in pictures on this year and reflect someday, I for one would like to be reminded of the blessings we discovered, amidst the storm of 2020.

Niki Thorsteinsson
Director of Communications



Stettler County Connection

Summer 2020

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We were honored to be invited to the Phase 2 Grand Opening at the Stettler Hospital in February, which included two new labour and delivery suites. (L-R) Mayor Sean Nolls; Stettler Health Services Foundation Member Tom Campbell; Diane Palmer, site manager with Alberta Health Services; MLA for Drumheller-Stettler Nate Horner; and Reeve Larry Clarke.

REEVE'S RAMBLINGS

As I look out the window fields are busy with livestock giving birth, combines taking off crops left in the field last fall and spring work preparing and seeding crops. It is hard to believe when you see these normal yearly activities that the world has been turned upside down with such a devastating health pandemic and the economic disaster with the collapse of oil pricing and associated world markets.

I know many of my articles have discussed finances, with this being no exception as we have just finalized our 2020 budget. Our departments have been challenged by this health pandemic, reduction in taxation due to unpaid/uncollectable taxes and assessment changes that lowered collectable taxes. Uncollectable taxes coupled with reduced government funding strains an already very tight budget. Staff have shown resiliency in meeting these challenges by cutting many projects to reduce the budget and constantly adjusting work schedules and duties to utilize staff on varied tasks and completing plans for gravelling, mowing, spraying and other projects to be completed by regular staff. Hats off to CAO Cassidy and her dedicated staff for keeping County operations running smoothly through this crisis, and as always putting the future of the County of Stettler in the forefront.

We have attended many video and teleconferencing meetings with the Rural Municipalities Association of Alberta (RMA), government departments, and government officials throughout the above situations, to be presented current conditions and to discuss our concerns, debate or lobby decisions and discuss possible solutions. We will continue to meet ensuring the County of Stettler is well represented during discussions. Agriculture as always is a very important part of our County and we need to ensure

all producers, processors and transportation of these products are kept safe and running to ensure we can continue to meet our goal of supplying top quality products, and do our part in feeding and powering the world.

We at the County of Stettler may have locked our front doors, but remain open for business in ensuring all essential services are being conducted and that local development can proceed in a safe and orderly fashion. A hiring freeze has been imposed which included all summer staff, so please consider that we are performing all extended and seasonal duties with our regular full-time staff, and may not have the same response times as County of Stettler residents have been accustomed too. We have just been approved for Canada Summer Jobs funding which will fund a few summer students to help us out. Tasks will be prioritized and completed as the schedule and changing situation allows. There are certain duties and services the County of Stettler will not be supplying this year due to health concerns or budget restrictions as outlined on page 10 of this publication.

Please be safe and practice the required social distancing to prevent the spread of this terrible virus. We are all so fortunate to live in one of the most safe and beautiful places in the world. Please treat County of Stettler staff as you would your neighbors, as they are trying their best to deliver on decisions made by Council, and they are your neighbors. As always please watch the roads as they are busy with construction and agricultural units.

Larry Clarke, REEVE

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Stettler Dodge Community Service Award
Karen Armstrong (presented by Mark Higgins, Kelly Hicks (Stettler Dodge), and Barbara Lieurance)



ATCO Arts, Culture and Heritage Award
Alfred Erichsen (presented by Mark Higgins, Tracy Volker ATCO, and Buck McMillan)



Sullivan Lake West Agricultural Society Community Service Award
Terry Gallant (presented by Scott McKenzie, TD Canada Trust, and Doreen Nixon)



Donalda and District Ag Society Community Service Award
Jennifer and Duncan Charles (presented by Ron Borchuk)

2020 COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

43rd Annual Community Service Awards

The 43rd Annual County of Stettler Community Service Awards were held at the Erskine IOOF Hall on February 6, 2020.

This event celebrated the outstanding contributions of our volunteers in agriculture, recreation and culture. We recognized 12 volunteers from all areas of the County of Stettler including five youth who have shown outstanding commitment to their community.

If you have anyone that you would like to nominate for the Stettler Dodge Community Service Award or the ATCO Arts, Culture and Heritage Award, please submit your nomination to Lorraine Hankins – Manager of Recreation and Insurance at the County of Stettler No. 6. The Byemoor Community Hall will host the 44th County of Stettler Community Service Awards in 2021.



Big Valley Agricultural Society Community Service Award
Sue and Bob Boswell (presented by Dan Webster and Megan McFaul, Royal Bank)



Big Valley Agricultural Society Youth Service Award
Aughtum Wilkie (presented by Cheryl Bartley)



Stettler and District Agricultural Society Community Service Award
Steve and Melissa Thiessen (presented by Dawn Gertner)



Erskine Social Recreation Society Youth Service Award
Jaydon Haustein (presented by Darren Benson and Mark Higgins)



The Linda Hall Society Community Service Award
Brian Johnston (presented by Denise Nitschke)



Botha Community Centre Youth Service Award
Kaleigh Morris (presented by Dwayne Grover (Vision Credit Union) and Buck McMillan)



Botha School Youth Service Award
Kallia Maki (presented by Buck McMillan)



Endmoor Youth Community Service Award
Chase Walker (presented by Doreen Nixon)

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Example of a Non-Residential (Business) Tax Bill: 2020 over 2019 Comparison

CLASS	2019 ASSESSMENT AMOUNT	2020 TAXES	2018 ASSESSMENT AMOUNT	2019 TAXES	+ / (-)
Non Residential	\$1,458,790*		\$1,456,410*		
	MUNICIPAL TAXES (COUNTY)	\$18,953.47		\$18,967.70	(\$14.23)
	SCHOOL REMITTANCE	\$6,369.66		\$5,598.73	\$770.93
	STETTLER HOUSING	\$704.74		\$618.39	\$86.35
	POLICE SERVICE (NEW)	\$155.79		-	\$155.79
	RECREATION	\$107.22		\$97.87	\$9.35
	STETTLER WASTE	\$388.18		\$351.58	\$36.60
	TOWN RECREATION	\$462.44		\$461.68	\$0.76
	TOTAL	\$27,141.50		\$26,095.95	\$1045.52 increase

*Assessment increase on this property was \$2,380.00

Example of a Farmland/Residential/Non Residential (Business) Tax Bill: 2020 over 2019 Comparison

CLASS	2019 ASSESSMENT AMOUNT	2020 TAXES	2018 ASSESSMENT AMOUNT	2019 TAXES	+ / (-)
Farmland	\$1,358,400*		\$1,378,360*		
Residential					
Non Res					
	MUNICIPAL TAXES (COUNTY)	\$7,858.29		\$8,155.93	(\$297.64)
	SCHOOL REMITTANCE	\$3,728.18		\$3,569.11	\$159.07
	STETTLER HOUSING	\$573.92		\$512.99	\$60.93
	POLICE SERVICE (NEW)	\$126.87		-	\$126.87
	RECREATION	\$87.31		\$81.19	\$6.12
	STETTLER WASTE	\$316.12		\$291.65	\$24.47
	TOWN RECREATION	\$376.60		\$382.98	(\$6.38)
	TOTAL	\$13,067.29		\$12,993.85	\$73.44 increase

*Assessment DECREASE on this property was \$19,960.00

FINDING IT HARD TO MAKE CENTS: YOUR 2020 TAX BILL

The County of Stettler's 2020 budget and 2020 Tax Rate Bylaw, proposes a 0% municipal tax increase.

Our 2020 budget originally proposed a 1.6% municipal tax increase to account for inflation to the cost of living. However, since the oil and gas industry has been impacted again in 2020 with devastating effects, and the COVID-19 Pandemic has impacted our entire community, Council has been working hard to reduce the budget and introduce no increase to the municipal portion of taxes, which we have control of.

A new policing model, announced by the Province in December 2019, will introduce an increase to all taxpayers on municipal tax bills. This new item, which will appear on 2020 tax bills must be collected by the County and remitted to the Province. Municipal taxpayers can further project what appears under 'policing' on their 2020 tax bill, to in fact triple over the next five years with the Province collecting from the County of Stettler, \$145,321 in 2020; \$218,138 in 2021; \$290,643 in 2022; \$436,277 in 2023 and \$436,277 in 2024.

Economic times are tough across our entire province. We recognize this and are currently trying to work out a cost discrepancy identified

between our municipality and the Province, which became evident once we examined a sample of our average 2020 municipal tax bills. The Province determines what our municipality will owe them for Education and Senior's Housing Requisitions, and sent us a bill (requisition) in May 2020. As a municipality, we must collect and remit these requisitions to the Province.

For the 2019 assessment, the Province introduced the Shallow Gas Well Tax Relief Initiative, which gave shallow gas well operators a 35% tax reduction across the board, resulting in a significant decrease in their taxes, which the County will absorb. The problem currently facing our taxpayers is, the Province is basing their requisitions on what they assessed properties within the County of Stettler in 2018, BEFORE they introduced the Shallow Gas Tax Relief Initiative giving shallow gas well operators a 35% tax reduction in property taxes. Additionally, the County of Stettler has had to write-off over \$4 million in unpaid taxes from this oil and gas sector - meaning we were not able to collect taxes but were still required to remit the Education and Senior Housing Requisitions.

As a result, we are being asked to collect based on a lower assessment and remit based on a higher assessment, meaning the burden of Provincial

Example of a Residential Tax Bill: 2020 over 2019 Comparison

CLASS	2019 ASSESSMENT AMOUNT	2020 TAXES	2018 ASSESSMENT AMOUNT	2019 TAXES	+ / (-)
Residential	\$969,850*		\$973,860*		
	MUNICIPAL TAXES (COUNTY)	\$3,692.99		\$3,738.45	(\$45.46)
	SCHOOL REMITTANCE	\$2,546.05		\$2,494.05	\$52.00
	STETTLER HOUSING	\$468.53		\$413.50	\$55.03
	POLICE SERVICE (NEW)	\$103.58		-	\$103.58
	RECREATION	\$71.28		\$65.44	\$5.84
	STETTLER WASTE	\$258.07		\$235.09	\$22.97
	TOWN RECREATION	\$307.44		\$308.71	(\$1.27)
	TOTAL	\$7,447.94		\$7,255.24	\$192.20 increase

*Assessment DECREASE on this property was \$4,010.00

Example of M&E (Industrial)/Non Residential (Oil and Gas) Tax Bill: 2020 over 2019 Comparison

CLASS	2019 ASSESSMENT AMOUNT	2020 TAXES	2018 ASSESSMENT AMOUNT	2019 TAXES	+ / (-)
M&E	\$1,011,300.00*		\$1,009,270.00*		
Non Residential	MUNICIPAL TAXES (COUNTY)	\$13,139.41		\$13,144.33	(4.92)
DIP	SCHOOL REMITTANCE	\$689.24		\$618.45	70.79
	DESIGNATED INDUSTRIAL	\$76.86		\$79.33	(\$2.47)
	STETTLER HOUSING	\$488.56		\$428.54	\$60.02
	POLICE SERVICE (NEW)	\$108.01		-	\$108.01
	RECREATION	\$74.33		\$67.82	\$6.51
	STETTLER WASTE	\$269.11		\$243.64	\$25.47
	TOWN RECREATION	\$320.58		\$319.94	\$0.64
	TOTAL	\$15,166.10		\$14,902.05	\$264.05 increase

*Assessment increase on this property was \$2,030.00

requisitions has been shifted away from shallow gas well operators and shifted to rural taxpayers. We are being asked to remit the Education and Senior's Housing requisitions calculated on overinflated assessments, which increases the property taxes of every ratepayer in the County of Stettler to make up the difference.

Our Council and Administration has been lobbying every level of government to try to get the Province to base their assessments on the amount shallow gas well operators were actually assessed at, but at time of publication, we have not received any solutions or proposed solutions from the Province. Under Section 325 of the Municipal Government Act, the Minister of Municipal Affairs has the power to change equalized assessment. This is what needs to be addressed, so our taxpayers aren't paying more taxes for shallow gas well operators who have already received a reduction in taxes.

The County of Stettler invoices our ratepayers exactly what the Province requisitions for Education. We do not adjust municipal tax rates to balance (higher, or in our favor) when the Province's requisitions are lower, and vice-versa, which is a practice some municipalities support. This 'balancing' practice used by some municipalities, works in a municipality's favor (gives a municipality more revenue) when the Province's requisition comes in lower (however, the taxpayer gets no relief when the Education requisition is lower). This practice works against taxpayers when the Province's requisition comes higher, as is the case this year. The County of Stettler does not manipulate this balancing practice - we collect, and we remit exactly what we are billed for.

In 2020, despite the Province keeping Education Remittance 'the same as 2019', as promised, the County is being asked to supplement Education:

- \$165,000, due to the Shallow Well Tax Relief Initiative 35% reduction
- The County of Stettler will still/also be responsible for remitting \$204,000, estimated remaining Education Remittance. This amount is due to reduced assessment and a drastic downturn in the economy from 2019 to 2020. Other municipalities who absorbed a 35% reduction for Shallow Gas Well Tax Relief Initiative, and are experiencing similar financial burdens of supplementing the Education remittance passed on by the Province include, but are not limited to: Cypress County, Wheatland County, County of Forty Mile, Mountain View County, Kneehill County, Starland County and Red Deer County.

We will continue to advocate for fairness to correct the \$369,000 burden of unfair Education Property Tax levied to the County of Stettler ratepayers. The tax bill samples above outline examples of how the new modified policing model, and this year's Education Requisition will appear on our tax bills, and what those numbers could look like.

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WEED OF THE MONTH: COMMON TANSY

Common Tansy is a noxious weed that has been spotted throughout Alberta, and has established dense populations in central/southern Alberta. Originally introduced from Europe in the 1600's, Common Tansy was brought to North America for its medicinal and food uses. It commonly grows along roadsides, waterbodies, fields and pastures, disturbed areas, and urban areas. Common Tansy forms thick stands once established that can take over native grass stands.

Common Tansy is a problem because it can grow in a wide variety of habitats and thrives in low nutrient soil where other plants are unable to grow. Each flower head can produce hundreds of seeds, which can remain viable in the soil up to 25 years. The plant can also reproduce by short, shallow roots called rhizomes, which limits the effectiveness of cultivation to control Common Tansy. Common Tansy is avoided by cattle and decreases plant diversity, and if left unchecked will decrease the amount of forage available for grazing. Dense areas of the plant

can increase the amount of bare soil in an area as they do not provide good ground cover.

This plant grows up to 1.5 m tall and the stems are branched, erect and often purplish red. The leaves alternate up the stem and are deeply divided into numerous narrow, individual leaflets with toothed edges. The flowers are easily identified. Each stem will have many yellow button-like flowers growing in dense flat clusters at the top of each stem. Several methods are available to control this weed. Regular mowing to prevent seed set will reduce the population over time, but must be repeated in order to reduce seed bank. Several herbicide options are also available which can be sprayed before flowers develop. Once a flower has developed on the plant, the flower head must be cut and bagged in order to prevent seed bank increases.

Once this invasive ornamental starts to spread it can be very difficult to contain, so contact your local Agricultural Fieldman if you think you've spotted it.



Photo credit: Advanced Grain via Twitter

G3 PROJECT UPDATE

- Construction continues on G3's new grain elevator in Stettler County, with physical distancing and hygiene precautions in place due to COVID-19. The project is on track to open later this year.
- Canada's grain supply chain is an essential service and G3's network of grain elevators and port terminals is working hard to keep it operating, while taking measures to protect employees and customers from COVID-19 and limit its spread.
- G3 Stettler County is already a visible part of the community; construction crews poured the tall concrete silos last fall and installed the big steel bins more recently.
- When complete, G3 Stettler County will have a capacity of 42,000 tonnes and high-efficiency features like fast truck unloads to save farmers time, and a loop track for quickly loading trains and keeping grain moving to market. Grain from G3 Stettler County will mostly be shipped to G3's new grain export terminal, G3 Terminal Vancouver, also due to open this year.
- G3 Stettler County currently has a general manager and some staff in place signing contracts with area farmers for future grain deliveries. The facility will eventually have a full time staff of about a dozen – there are job openings currently posted on g3.ca/careers.
- G3 Stettler County is one of six new G3 elevators planned or under construction in Alberta, with several opening this year.



YOU'RE ADJUSTING - WE'RE ADJUSTING

OUR RESPONSE

On March 16 we made the difficult decision to shut down public access to our facilities in an effort to protect our citizens, staff members and safeguard resources intended for emergency response in this region due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

OUR ADJUSTMENTS

We are committed to flattening the curve and supporting our health care workers and our province in a massive combined effort to physical distance and avoid the spread of COVID-19.

Stettler Regional Emergency Management Agency Emergency Operations Centre activated on March 16 and is supporting our region through a HOTLINE, seven days per week from 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM for anyone with questions or concerns: 403-742-7300.

Our communities, our businesses, our family, our friends and our neighbors have all been affected by this pandemic, and the devastating and wide-reaching effect it is having on our economy. Our oil and gas and shallow gas well industry was already strained. In 2019 the County of Stettler wrote off \$4,280,169 in uncollectable taxes due to the decline in oil and gas. Our annual budget for our municipality in 2015 was \$34,822,641. Five years later, our annual budget is \$26,414,824 mainly due to losses in revenue from the oil and gas industry. We have adjusted our operations and absorbed this 25% loss in revenue over the last five years. Now we are preparing for a further estimated \$3,800,000 loss in 2020, due to an anticipated further decline in oil and gas revenue, as we further prepare for the trickle down effect of reduced assessments appearing in 2021. Predictions indicate Alberta's oil and gas markets will suffer the effects of a battered oil economy for some time, and we are adjusting our budgets now to prepare.

HOW WE'RE PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

All planned capital purchases have been put on hold. We have frozen hiring, including 20 seasonal, casual and part-time staff. Canada Summer Jobs funding has just been released to us, which will allow us to now hire up to four summer students. Our original budget proposed a 1.6% tax increase for cost of living, but Council was able to pass the 2020 Tax Rate Bylaw on May 27, with a zero per cent increase to the municipal portion of taxes. The Province pulled back a planned increase to the education requisition and will hold it to 2019 levels, but will continue to collect a new Modified Policing Service requisition from all County taxpayers, which will add up to \$145,000 in 2020.

PROPOSED SAVINGS-CHANGES IN SERVICES

- Seasonal staff (frozen hiring/Canada Summer Jobs funding will be used to fund four student positions)
- Dust Control (County supplied is cancelled for 2020)



- Oiling
- Crushing (on hold)
- Contract Gravel Haul (on hold)
- Road construction, upgrades and improvements (on hold)
- Brushing
- Highway Clean Up program
- Culverts (reduced budget)
 - We maintain a bridge reserve fund for emergency situations
- Training, seminars, conferences (cancelled or postponed)
- Beaver Control/Predator (considering partial-pay or user-pay)
- Roadside Spraying (reduced)
- Considering funding cuts to external programs

We have \$8 million in projects prepared, shovel ready, should government stimulus money become available, which would support contractors and our local economy. The County of Stettler would be responsible to provide some funding (90-10 funding means 90% Provincial or Federal Government and 10% Municipal), to capitalize on government stimulus moneys.

We have reserved funds to ensure this is possible. We will avoid depleting utility reserves so we are prepared for any 90-10 funding opportunities, to extend clean potable water lines to those in need.

WE'RE HERE FOR YOU - WE'RE OPEN

County operations continue and while our facilities remain closed to the public at time of publishing, we are here to help you by phone, email or Facebook messenger. Please call 403-742-4441, reach out on Facebook, or email info@stettlercounty.ca if you have any questions or concerns with tax payments, utility payments or other requisitions, or for permits or service from the County of Stettler. Follow our website for any changes in how we conduct our business. We're in this together.

COUNCIL FOR THE COUNTY OF STETTLER NO.6

Reeve Larry Clarke and Councillors Ernie Gendre, Dave Grover, Cheri Neitz, James Nibourg, Wayne Nixon and Les Stulberg

STETTLER REGIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

SREMA

The Stettler Regional Emergency Management Agency (SREMA) consisting of the County of Stettler, Town of Stettler, Village of Big Valley, Village of Donalda, Summer Villages of White and Rochon Sands mutuality activated their Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) on March 16, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This regional partnership ensures a coordinated approach to any incident in our region.

SREMA has activated an emergency hotline accessible by calling 403-742-7301 Monday through Sunday from 8:30 am - 4:30 pm.

SREMA has also developed the Community Resource Connection Form. This form aims to connect residents in need of assistance with volunteers or individuals available for hire. Through the Community Resource Connection Form, SREMA will establish connections for the following services: Childcare, Groceries & Household Essentials Delivery, Medication Delivery, Petcare and Tutoring. You can access this form on the County of Stettler website at www.stettlercounty.ca.

In order to connect local businesses with emergency information & planning, the Stettler Board of Trade has launched the Business Resources Support Form. The form will assess the assets of participating businesses and also measure the needs of these businesses resulting from ongoing emergency restrictions and regulations. You can access this form by visiting the Stettler Board of Trade website.

SREMA would like to remind residents to continue to prevent the spread of COVID-19 by following the Public Health Orders from the Chief Medical Officer of Health. Please continue all the good work and flatten the curve.

DEVELOPMENT SETBACKS

Please remember that you do not need a development permit from the County for any agricultural operation as long as any structures such as hay sheds, granaries, dugouts, livestock shelters and barns meet the 125 feet setback from the center line of the County road.

Shelterbelts must be set back 75 feet from the center line of the road. If you would like to vary from these setbacks for any agricultural operation, you would require a development permit.

You may need a license/permit from the Natural Resources Conservation Board if your agricultural operation includes a confined feeding operation (please call the NRCB at 1-340-5241).

If development is proposed along a provincial highway a Roadside Development Permit issued by Alberta Transportation is required. Please contact Alberta Transportation at 403-854-5550 or visit their website at <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca>.

For more information regarding development please contact the County's Planning & Development Department at 403-742-4441.

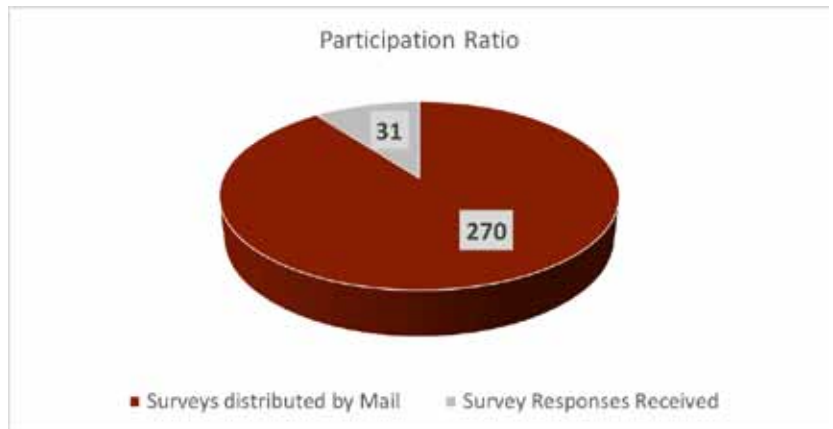
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ZERO TOLERANCE

Please contact our Planning and Development Department when you start planning your development in order to ensure you obtain the required development permit and other approvals in good time. Anyone who intends to undertake a non-agricultural development in the County of Stettler No. 6 is required to first obtain a development permit from the County. This could also help you avoid any unforeseen expenses you may incur if your idea for your development does not comply with the County's policies and bylaws (e.g. yard setbacks, road upgrades, etc.), so you may make the necessary adjustments before you start digging or laying down concrete.

The County does not want to penalize anyone. Rather, we want to work with ratepayers to ensure the proper development approvals are issued in order to comply with municipal, provincial and federal regulations. The County's Fee Bylaw states a penalty of \$1,000 for residential developments and \$2,000 for commercial developments that are started without the benefit of a development permit.

The County of Stettler No. 6 has adopted a zero tolerance approach to persons who start construction without the benefit of a development permit. All relevant penalties required pursuant to the County's Fee Schedule and other actions under the Municipal Government Act (MGA) for such a contravention will be strictly imposed on anyone who fails to obtain a development permit prior to construction start. This information has been made widely available and no exceptions will be made.



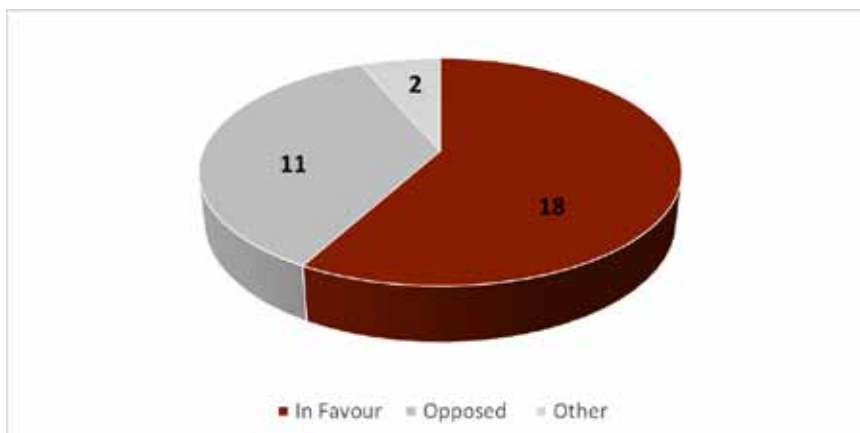
BACK YARD CHICKENS: FEEDBACK FROM SURVEY

Ratepayers requesting to keep chickens on a small scale for personal use have periodically approached the County of Stettler regarding an amendment to the Land Use Bylaw. Currently, the keeping of chickens falls within the definition of an “Agricultural Operation” within the County of Stettler Land Use Bylaw and as such does not allow for the keeping of chickens outside of the Agricultural (A) and Country Residential – Agricultural (CR-A) Districts. The addition of “Urban Chicken” definitions and regulations to the Land Use Bylaw would allow for the expansion of small scale keeping of chickens into the Country Residence (CR), Country Residence – Small Lot (CR-SL) and the Hamlet Residential (HR) districts as well. In order to gauge the support and/or opposition for this type of amendment a small survey was sent to landowners of properties within the districts that would be affected by this type of an amendment.

Adding “Urban Chicken” definitions and regulations to the Country Residence, Country Residence – Small Lot and the Hamlet Residential districts will affect 357 lots throughout the County of Stettler. This number includes the communities of Erskine, Endiang, Byemoor, Red Willow, Nevis, the Anderson Subdivision and Pheasantback Close. The survey was not sent to the communities of Botha and Gadsby due to the fact that they had not yet been integrated into the County of Stettler Land Use Bylaw and the property zonings have not yet been finalized. The community of Botha encompasses 132 lots and the community of Gadsby encompasses 79 lots which may or may not be affected by an amendment of this nature.

On May 13, Council reviewed the following information and directed Administration and Planning & Development to draft an amendment to the County’s Land Use Bylaw to provide for the keeping of ‘Urban Chickens’ in the Hamlet Residential Land Use District. **If First Reading of the Bylaw is granted, a Public Hearing will be scheduled to provide another opportunity for the public to provide their input.**

1. In general, do you support the keeping of chickens (hens) within the hamlets and multi-lot subdivisions of the County of Stettler?



2. What do you consider to be the benefits and/or concerns related to the keeping of chickens (hens) within the hamlets and multi-lot subdivisions of the County of Stettler?

Advantages

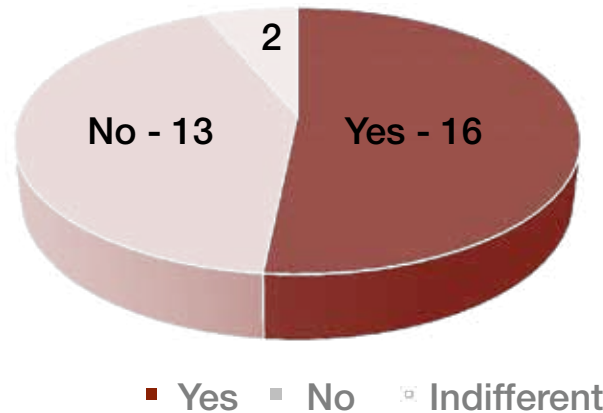
- You have your own eggs.
- Limit number of chickens, odor, size and structures. Humane care.
- I would be concerned about the noise and smell in keeping them in a closed space. The enclosure would need to have air circulation.
- Kids will know where eggs come from. Needs the same care as pets.
- Benefits - Fresh eggs with more omega 3 fatty acids, Vitamin A and Vitamin D when chickens are outside in the sun. Responsibility of chores for young people and educational.
- Benefits include fresh eggs produced with ethically based methods of production such as free range and semi-free range production.
- Same as above: eggs, pest control, lawn maintenance, added responsibility for my children to contribute.
- Benefits: organic eggs, excellent fertilizer, natural garbage disposal, control bugs and weeds naturally, fresh, home grown meat.
- Benefits: If they are laying hens the benefit would be knowing where your eggs are coming from. Teach children how to care for different types of animals. Concerns: They do not run loose onto roadway or neighbors property.
- Fresh eggs but there must be a standard for the hen house and the chickens should not be allowed to run wild.
- Stated the benefits above. Concern is that they keep pens or yard clean.
- Benefit: able to grow your own food, have access to your own eggs. Concerns: smell, if they aren't cleaned the neighbors (property) could smell awful. Roosters crowing at all hours.
- Benefits: biodiversity, less environmental impacts, the opportunity to grow/produce your own food and control your food chain. Concerns: escaping chickens, control of the smell of chicken feces.
- Benefits: eggs and meat. Concerns: unhealthy conditions, chickens allowed to roam free, increase of predators in town.
- Organic raised chickens for organic eggs.
- Can be more self sufficient.

Disadvantages

- My concern is wild animals in town, already have had skunks in town and coyotes.
- Predators (foxes/coyotes, etc) could be drawn to area in greater numbers. Residents with small pets would be at risk of attack on their furry friends. Additional flies and rodents are a concern.
- (1) Attracting unwanted predators (coyotes, birds of prey).
- (2) Chickens getting loose and into neighbors yards.
- (3) I have a dog and if chickens get into our yard I'm not responsible for what she does. So possible dissention amongst neighbors over mishaps. No benefits!
- It would be too hard to enforce or control who would be responsible owners or not. Noise and smell could be problems.
- Noise, smell. Bring in predators to town to try to kill the chickens - fox, coyotes, skunks, etc.
- Chickens could get out. The smell from chicken feces.
- I think chickens would bring other unwanted animals coming to eat the chickens. What if a coyote comes in my yard and kills my dog or kid looking for chicken.
- Own use eggs would be a benefit but whether the chickens would always be looked after i.e. being fed, watered, clean facility and always enclosed would be a concern, as well as aroma.
- I have always felt that Erskine has been a beautiful "classy" place to live. Beautiful big lots, lots of green space. Farm animals I love too, however always better actually on a farm they should remain.
- Concerns - irresponsible owners and another enforcement cost to the County paid by all ratepayers. Complaints and neighbor complaints. Fresh eggs are available at the neighboring Hutterite colony. They could purchase an acreage.

continued...

3. Do you want to be notified if one of your neighbors (adjacent properties) applied for a permit to keep chickens (hens)?



4. If the Development Authority were to consider permits allowing for the keeping of chickens (hens) within hamlets and/or multi-lot subdivisions, what type of conditions would you like to see attached to those permits (limits on the number of chickens, minimum property size, etc.)?

- This is the whole question (small scale?) What do you consider small scale? You did not quote a limit. I think up to 12 hens is appropriate. Over that is NOT.
- If the chickens are kept on their own property it won't hurt me any.
- Number of chickens, lot size, fencing, hen houses.
- Max. 8 chickens, permission of neighbors.
- Property size, number of chickens, make sure it doesn't smell, make sure it is clean and tidy, make sure they don't escape.
 - 6 chickens per 5000 square feet of property owned
 - Proper fencing to keep the chickens within the property.
 - Proper housing for the chickens to cope with weather conditions.
 - Proper manure handling practices - composting, etc.
 - Proper disposal of dead livestock as required.
 - Preventative measures taken to reduce the attraction of predators like coyotes, foxes, skunks, owls, hawks.
- Yes. Limits on the number of chickens. I think 6-12 per home.
- The County needs to define "small scale for personal use". Small scale for the Hutterites will be different than "small scale" for homeowners.
- Limit 12 hens/chickens per household.
- Lot size should be no smaller than 7500 square feet. No more than 6 chickens. A proper and well built chicken house built to a County standard.
- Does not matter how many. Just as are contained to yard.
- Limit number of chickens. Proper facility to keep chickens - pen sizes. Must be out of sight of front yards and not able to run free in town.
- Limits on numbers for sure, maybe attached to lot size as well. Setbacks from neighboring fences. No roosters, egg and meat production only.
- Limit on numbers and area to be used. Area should be fenced.
- Limit size, smell, noise, traffic to sell eggs, if doing so. I worry about increase in traffic as there are already 2 businesses in my close.
- Maybe the limit. I wouldn't want to be next door to 100 chickens. Under 20 would be fine.



5. Please share any other comments/concerns regarding the keeping of chickens (hens) within the hamlets and multi-lot subdivisions of the County of Stettler.

- I have no concerns. I like the sound of hens.
- The smell would be a big concern. Also the chickens leaving their droppings on my property.
- Main concerns are the handling of manure, smells, flies, proper cold weather chicken coops, overwintering, and sufficient fencing to contain chickens and deter predators. Done properly urban agriculture is a benefit to the people within the community. Locally produced, sustainable agriculture is going to be an important part of the future.
- Perhaps neighborhood animals and wild animals hunting hens is a concern.
- I think it is great. I will not do it but for those that can, go for it.
- I know that bylaws have boundaries attached to them for some parameters so I would like council to consider allowing chickens in some hamlets that it proves desirable and not in others. Say at the lake or where people have more issues. This does not have to be an all or nothing solution. Bylaws can be written in ways that exclude or include different areas. (i.e. traffic bylaw). Also, I would like the opportunity in the future to complete surveys electronically. Now someone is going to have to waste time typing this up. Also, indicating which hamlet/subdivision the responder is from would be useful.
- If the numbers are kept low, they are properly taken care of and perhaps monitored for the first while it may be ok.
- I worry that there will always be that one rule breaker who spoils it for everyone. Thank you for a say, much appreciated.
- This should have been done a long time ago. We need to help our neighbors support themselves.
- Thought this issue was dealt with a year or two ago.
- How many council people would like chickens next door to them?
- Would prefer not to have them.
- I want to know who is going to enforce the bylaw, who will be keeping eyes on people with chickens? Does it become the responsibility of neighbors to make sure fellow neighbors are minding the rules? It's already an issue trying to get a hold of a bylaw officer to monitor stray dogs!!
- I/We pay a very large sum for our taxes. If we wanted to live on a farm we would have bought one in the first place!
- Thank you for reaching out to the landowners for feedback.
- I really don't want to be on my deck having friends over and having hens upset by our activities.
- Oversight on care of chickens, fencing, hen house



COVID PRECAUTIONS- STETTLER AMBULANCE

It has been surreal to watch as the COVID-19 pandemic unfolds. The impact this pandemic is having on people everywhere is crushing. The stress of the pandemic will undoubtedly have lasting effects on all Albertans. It's so important to know you are not alone. Loneliness can affect your mental and physical health, and social distancing can exacerbate it.

All Albertans should practice physical distancing to help limit the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the risk of getting sick. Physical distancing involves taking steps to limit the number of people you come into close contact with. This is not the same as isolation – you do not need to remain indoors, but you do need to avoid being in close contact with people.

To protect yourself and others:

- keep at least 6 feet (about the length of a hockey stick) from others when going out for groceries, medical trips and other essential needs
- limit the number of times you leave your home for errands; try to limit grocery store visits to once a week
- try to have only one person in the household do the shopping
- try to shop at less busy times
- order online/by phone to have groceries or other items delivered if possible, by local vendors
- go for a walk in your neighborhood or park while maintaining distance from others
- avoid overcrowding in elevators or other

enclosed spaces

- follow Alberta's mandatory restrictions on gatherings
- wash or sanitize your hands after touching communal surfaces

Although public health measures are in place to quickly identify potential cases, all Albertans must take personal steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

To protect yourself and others:

- practice physical distancing
- wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your elbow
- avoid touching your face with unwashed hands
- avoid travel outside Canada
- watch for COVID-19 symptoms: cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose or sore throat

Follow mandatory isolation requirements from the Government of Alberta.

- 14 days if you recently returned from travel outside of Canada or are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, plus an additional 10 days from the onset of symptoms, should they occur, whichever is longer
- 10 days minimum if you develop any COVID-19 symptoms, or until the symptoms resolve, whichever is longer



If you have symptoms:

- take the COVID-19 self-assessment from the Government of Alberta to arrange testing
- call Health Link 811 if concerned about your health
- do not go to an ER or clinic. If you need immediate medical attention, call 911 and inform them you may have COVID-19

Medical masks include N95 masks and surgical or procedure masks. These should be kept for health care workers and other providing direct care to COVID-19 patients.

- N95 masks protect from exposure to biological aerosols that may contain viruses or bacteria. They are generally only required during specific, high-risk medical procedures.
- Surgical or procedure masks provide a barrier to splashes, droplets, saliva or spit. They are not designed to fit tightly against the face.

Wearing a non-medical mask, such as a homemade cloth mask, has not been proven to protect the person wearing it. However, it may be helpful in protecting others around you.

- Face coverings are another way to prevent respiratory droplets from contaminating other people or surfaces.
- They should only be used in addition to other prevention steps as determined by the Government of Alberta

If you choose to use a non-medical face mask:

- you must wash your hands immediately before putting it on, before taking it off, and immediately after taking it off
- it should fit well (non-gaping)
- do not share it with others

Face masks can become contaminated on the outside, or when touched by your hands. When wearing a mask:

- avoid touching your face mask while using it
- continue practicing good hand hygiene
- change a cloth mask as soon as it gets damp or soiled
 - put it directly into the washing machine or a bag that can be emptied into the washing machine and then disposed of
 - cloth masks can be laundered with other items using a hot cycle, and then dried thoroughly
- masks that cannot be washed should be discarded and replaced as soon as they get damp, soiled or crumpled
 - dispose of masks properly in a lined garbage bin
 - don't leave discarded masks in shopping carts, on the ground, etc.

If you violate public health orders to isolate, you may be subject to a \$1,000 fine. Courts could also administer fines of up to \$100,000 for a first offence and up to \$500,000 for a subsequent offence for more serious violations.

If you are concerned someone is not following public health orders, you can:

- remind the person that not following public health orders is against the law and puts people at risk
- submit a complaint to AHS public health inspectors at <https://ephisahs.microsoftportals.com/create-case/>



RURAL CRIME PREVENTION COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Rural Crime Prevention Committee (RCPC), like everyone else, is having to explore new avenues to stay connected during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their meeting scheduled for April 8 was cancelled, however, they were able to host a conference call on April 15 which most members dialed in for.

The RCPC is presently exploring ways to improve the sharing of non-emergency information to the community. A secure e-mail service is being considered to share minutes from our crime watch meetings and other non-emergency type communications.

The “Whatsapp” is working very well to alert the community of incidents or activity as it happens. In order to maintain the integrity of Whatsapp as a crime watch tool, it is important to keep posts on the app crime related and not to be used as a community chat room.

Posting on Whatsapp should follow reporting to the RCMP and should fit into one of the following categories;

- I need help now at _____(location)
- suspicious person/vehicle/activity at _____(location)
- crime in progress at _____(location)
- person or vehicle involved in previous report spotted at _____(location)

Pictures can be very helpful in identifying the culprits to both the RCMP and to the Whatsapp community.

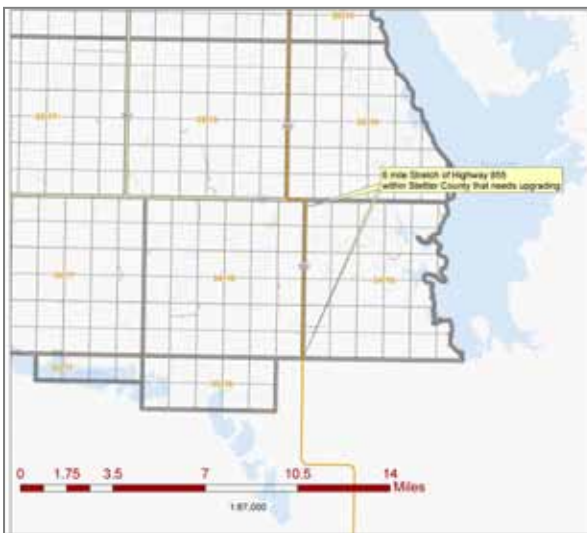
The RCMP asks that ALL suspicious activity be reported as it is happening, for emergencies call 911, non-emergency call 403-742-3381 (24 hrs). ***“If you see something, say something”.***

Sgt. Gaultois, Stettler Detachment Commander, has indicated that rural crime itself has declined during COVID-19, possibly due to more people being home throughout the day, however, the Stettler detachment has seen an average amount of calls for service regarding suspicious vehicles and /or activity.

The RCPC would ask people to remain vigilant and continue to make it difficult for the criminals to operate in our communities.

- Keep vehicles locked, keep vehicles locked, keep vehicles locked....did I mention to keep vehicles locked??
- Keep sheds, shops and homes locked when not in use or when you are away from your property.
- Keep quads, snowmobiles, motorcycles etc. locked and out of sight when not in use.
- Communicate with your neighbors if you will be away from your property for an extended period
- And again, “If you see something, say something!”

To contact RCPC members with concerns, suggestions or to discuss any rural crime issues, please call 403-742-4441 and speak with Protective Services.



HIGHWAY 855 REHABILITATION PROJECT

Government of Alberta announces Highway 855 in Stettler County is going to be part of \$2 billion in stimulus projects.

The County of Stettler received official confirmation that the Highway 855 rehabilitation project in Stettler County is part of Alberta Government's stimulus projects improving highways and creating jobs in Alberta.

"Every region of the province has felt the economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis and the collapse of energy prices. We are doing everything we can to get Albertans back to work, and these projects will create good jobs for central Albertans while improving driving conditions and ensuring our important transportation corridors are ready to support the region's businesses and job creators, once the economy recovers."

Ric McIver, Minister of Transportation

Highway 855 is a well-travelled corridor used by agriculture, oil and gas industries, daily commuters and school buses as well as Canada Post. A ten kilometer (six mile) section of Highway 855 that lies within Stettler County's borders has presented safety concerns to our region for years.

"I'm very pleased to see the Stettler County portion of the 855 included in the Province's Accelerated Capital Maintenance and Renewal Plan. This portion of road was beyond basic repair and the work will require rehabilitation of the base

and a double seal coat. Necessary maintenance at an important time in Alberta. I'd like to thank the Minister of Transportation for addressing this in 2020."

Nate Horner, MLA Drumheller-Stettler

Council for the County of Stettler has been faithfully and passionately advocating and requesting work be undertaken to improve Highway 855, a well-used provincial transportation route in rural Alberta, for the past seven years.

"This stimulus project for our region is great news in a time when we could all use some good news. As the Council representative for Byemoor and Endiang I could not be more pleased that the Alberta Government has heard and responded to our requests for highway improvements to 855 in Stettler County. We were so pleased to hear Premier Kenney announce the stimulus program to improve provincial highway maintenance and construction. It is an excellent idea to stimulate our economy while addressing safety concerns and producing long-lasting benefits," Les Stulberg, Councillor for Ward 1 - Byemoor/Endiang.

Highway 855, at nearly 400 km long, is the longest secondary highway in Alberta, running from Highway 63 in the north at Atmore, to Highway 9 in the south near Hanna.



PROPERTY ASSESSMENT AND TAX: 101

What is property assessment?

In Alberta, property is taxed on the “ad valorem” principle. This means that the amount of tax a property owner pays is “according to value” of the property.

“Assessment” is the process of assigning a value to property in order to distribute a municipality’s revenue requirements among property owners. Property assessment is regulated by the Municipal Government Act.

Valuation Standards

Market Value:

The price a property might reasonably be expected to sell for if sold by a willing seller to a willing buyer after appropriate time and exposure in an open market.

Regulated Procedure:

Prescribed rates and procedures for properties that:

- Seldom trade and usually include non-assessable items in the sale price
- Cross municipalities and municipal boundaries, or
- Are of a unique nature.

Market Value Assessments

Prepared for properties defined as:

- Residential Property
 - Single & Multi-Family Dwellings
- Non-residential Property
 - Commercial & Industrial

Regulated Property Assessments

Prepared for properties defined as:

- Farmland;
- Machinery & Equipment
 - Related to refineries, chemical plants, pulp and paper plants, oil sands plants, etc.;



- Linear Property
 - Oil and Gas wells;
 - Pipelines;
 - Electric Power Systems;
 - Telecommunication Systems;
 - Cable Television Systems;
 - Railway.

Property Tax

Property Taxes are the primary source of revenue for municipalities and fund a number of local services.

- “Property Taxation” is the process of applying a tax rate to a property’s assessed value to determine the taxes payable by each property owner.

Education Taxes

Education taxes are requisitioned from municipalities based on their assessments and the provincial revenue requirement.

- Revenues raised in support of education are pooled and distributed to schools across the province based on a per student formula.
- Municipalities collect the education tax and remit the taxes collected to the province for distribution to school divisions.
- Stable funding through education taxes contributes to a high-quality K-12 school system.

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{Municipal \& Education Tax Rates} \\
 \text{Municipal Revenue Requirements} \div \text{Assessment Base} = \text{Municipal Tax Rate} \\
 \text{Education Requisition Requirements} \div \text{Assessment Base} = \text{Local Education Tax Rate} \\
 \text{Setting the Individual Tax Bill} \\
 \text{Tax Rates} \times \text{Property Assessment} = \text{Taxes Payable}
 \end{array}$$

Assessment Notices

Assessment notices inform property owners of the value that has been assigned to their property. The notice includes the following information:

- Property Address & Description;
- Assessment;
- Assessment Class;
- School Support Declaration;
- Taxable / Exempt Status;
- Date the notice is sent; and
- Date by which & to whom a complaint* must be made.

*No complaint may be made about a tax rate or the amount of a tax



CONTINUED...

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT AND TAX:101

Tax Notices

Tax notices include the same information as an Assessment Notice as well as:

- The tax rate and amount of each tax imposed;
 - The total amount of all taxes imposed (and other requisitions as applicable);
 - The amount of tax arrears, if any; and
 - A notation if the property is subject to a tax agreement.
- Tax notices may be combined with assessment notice information.

Factors Impacting Property Taxes

- Local budget requirements;
- Provincial education requisition;
- Available assessment base; and
- Changing property values.

What do Property Taxes support?

The portion of services (i.e. road maintenance, police and fire protection, etc.) unfunded after government grants and user fees are accounted for; and

- A portion of classroom costs for K-12 education (i.e. teachers' salaries, textbooks, etc.)

Why is education partially funded through the Property Tax?

The education property tax provides Alberta's education system with a stable and sustainable source of revenue. Pooling the education property tax in the Alberta School Foundation Fund ensures that students receive a quality education regardless of their municipality's assessment base.



WELCOME GADSBY

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome the newest hamlet in the County of Stettler - GADSBY.

The Village of Gadsby dissolved on February 1, 2020 and while 'village' has now become 'hamlet', Gadsby's unique and vibrant community remains the same.

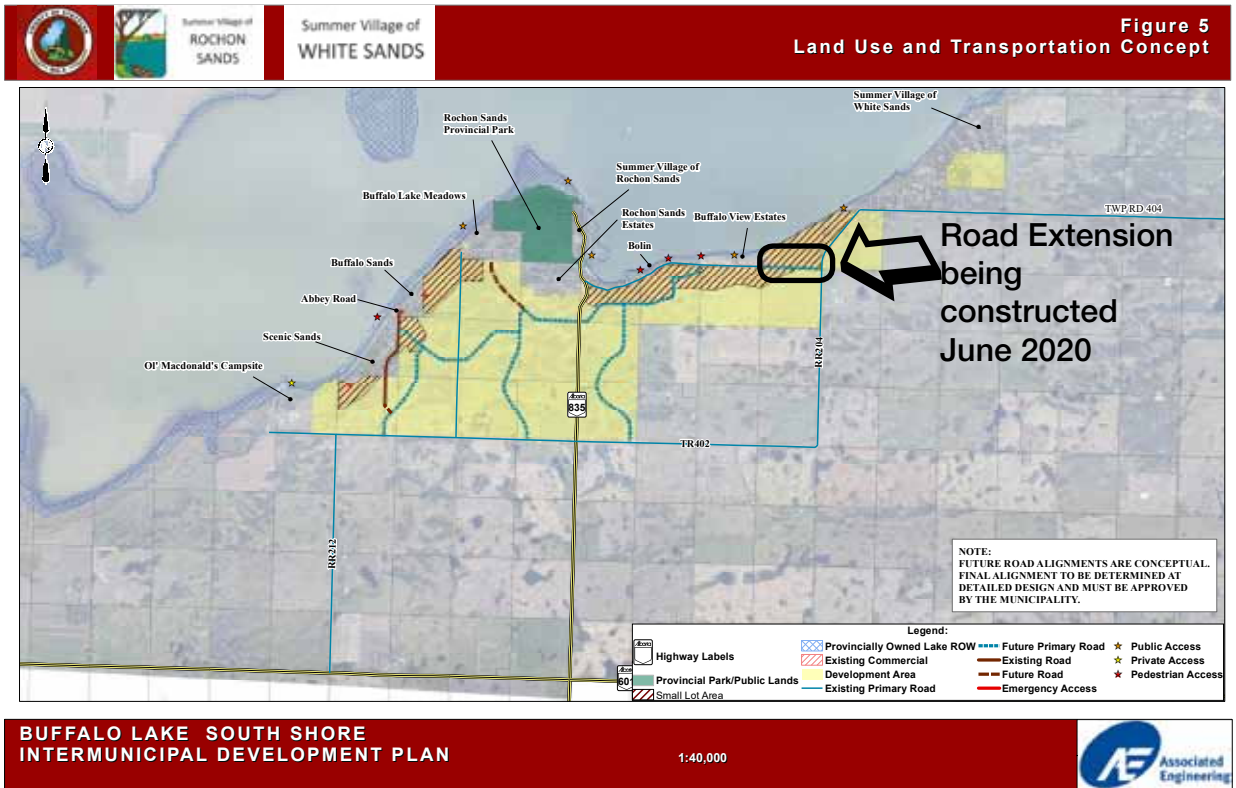
Gadsby residents can call the County of Stettler at 403-742-4441 for all their questions. Any correspondence and bill payments can be made at the County of Stettler mail slot, or by sending to Box 1270, Stettler, AB T0C 2L0. Bill payments can also be made at your bank or through online banking. Call 403-742-4441 for details.

UPDATE: LEAD SAMPLING

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic the County of Stettler will be postponing the collection of lead samples. We want to thank everyone who submitted Lead Management Surveys, and invite those of you who have not to continue to do so. We will still use the surveys to prioritize our lead sample requirements at a later time.

Health Canada has recently lowered the acceptable limits of lead in drinking water. The water that leaves the Water Treatment Plant does not contain any lead; however, lead can leach into the water from lead pipes after leaving the plant. The County does not have lead mains.

We will continue to provide residents with information on the matter as it arises. If you have further inquiries, please contact the County of Stettler Utilities Department at 403-742-4441.



BUFFALO LAKE ACTIVITIES

The County of Stettler has secured a right-of-way access and will construct a long-awaited Primary Road, as identified in the Buffalo Lake South Shore Intermunicipal Development Plan, on a County of Stettler registered road allowance, for the benefit of all who live, work and play along the south shore of Buffalo Lake. We expect to have the County of Stettler connector road completed by the end of June 2020, weather pending.

With currently only one entrance/exit for the Summer Village of Rochon Sands, and summer lake community populations steadily climbing, the south shore of Buffalo Lake was long ago identified to require more access and egress routes. The Stettler Regional Emergency Management Agency (SREMA), of which Rochon Sands, White Sands and the County of Stettler are all members, has had access and egress for Buffalo Lake south shore identified as a top priority since 2006. Additionally, south shore community Emergency Management risk assessments site emergency access and egress as top priorities.

“This spring, the County of Stettler was gifted a piece of land, which was one of the missing pieces to our emergency access puzzle. This land provides us with the perfect link to provide an emergency intake and outlet for residents, police, ambulance personnel and firefighters, in the event a weather or emergency event occurs on our south shore. Our emergency services and all citizens who visit, live and recreate along the south shore will benefit from the security of knowing they can get out in a more timely manner, and help can get in,” said Reeve Larry Clarke.

Fire Chief Mark Dennis added, “We are extremely relieved this emergency access has at last been addressed along the south shore. Every time we have concluded a mock disaster/emergency exercise for the south shore, the number one concern identified has long been egress to get residents safely out of the area in an orderly fashion, at the same time as providing adequate access for our emergency personnel and equipment to get in to help.”

REMINDER: Use of Reserve Land

Any parcel of land with an 'R', 'MR' or 'ER' contained in its legal description shall be used only for those purposes provided for in the Municipal Government Act. The private development or use of municipal and environmental reserve land is strictly prohibited, unless prior approval is received from the Development Authority. Private development includes any alterations (e.g. clearing of vegetation) and any structures (e.g. the placing of a fire pit, a boat lift, a shed).

No alterations, including the removal or clearing of vegetation, or other changes to municipal and environmental reserve land may be made without prior written consent from the Development Authority, which may approve alterations and changes only if satisfied the changes will not detrimentally impact the environment or restrict public access to reserve land and the use by the public of the reserve land. Enforcement measures will be taken including the imposition of monetary fines up to \$10,000, to address all encroachments and/or the removal of vegetation from reserve lands.

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Additionally, one of the deterrents for completion of a waterline extension from White Sands to Rochon Sands, with the Shirley McClellan Regional Waters Services Commission (SMRWSC), was that we did not have land secured for the waterline to travel down. The Commission, which the County of Stettler and the Summer Villages of Rochon Sands and White Sands are all members, has been chasing a provincial grant for the past five years which would afford the opportunity to provide water to Rochon Sands. The County of Stettler was finally able to secure this right-of-way, for no cost, which now also secures SMRWSC's eligibility for grant moneys to extend the waterline.

Over the past 18 months, 'connecting communities' was brought up as a priority for south shore residents wishing to enjoy the nature and fresh air the lake environment provides, with many wishing our south shore communities were better connected. Once the connector road has been constructed providing for emergency services, as time and budget allows a pathway will be constructed along the south side of the connector

road further connecting our communities and citizens and providing for recreational activities.

A map from the Buffalo Lake South Shore Intermunicipal Development Plan outlines the transportation concept for the south shore, identifies existing roads, future primary roads and future roads. The County of Stettler connector from Buffalo View Estates (Bay View Street) to Range Road 20-4 is clearly identified as a Future Primary Road. The road itself will be constructed to a heavy vehicle standard to ensure responding emergency vehicles will have sturdy, reliable access.

Safety remains paramount in all of our decisions. The County of Stettler commits to continuing to work together with the Summer Villages of Rochon Sands and White Sands to monitor the safety of Bay View Street for all residents and visitors as we continue the road and water network expansion, as per the plans of the BLSSIDP.

We look forward to completing the projects as weather allows, for all to enjoy the benefits.

Save a Tree

Sign up for e-versions of County Connection magazine by contacting nthorsteinsson@stettlercounty.ca or by calling 403-742-4441.

It's also available on our website at www.stettlercounty.ca.



SPL STAFF: READY TO HELP YOU

2020 has turned out to be a much different year than what we had been planning. However, life truly is what happens when we get busy with our plans. With that said, it has been gratifying for us to watch our communities coming together to support and protect one another as we cover this new ground together. On behalf of the Board and Staff of the Stettler Public Library, we hope you are all staying well and healthy, and thank you for your continued support.

Although our building has been closed to the public, staff are still in the building and ready to help connect you with materials to inspire, entertain, inform and distract. For more information about re-opening, and our services during COVID-19, check out our website at <https://spl.prl.ab.ca>, follow us on Facebook @stettlerpubliclibrary or call us at 403-742-2292 from Monday - Friday, between 10 am - 6 pm.

If you are searching for reading material, we have a wealth of books, magazines, comics and newspapers waiting for you in the eLibrary. All you need is a library card to access the eLibrary and for residents of Stettler and Stettler County membership is free thanks to the support of Town and County Council. Now is the perfect time to sign up for a card if you have not already. We have a form set up on our website or you can call us and we will sign you up over the phone. If you prefer to printed books, DVDs or videogames, we offer curbside pickup. Call the library to request material, and schedule a pickup time. If you are feeling adventurous, tell us what types of books

you enjoy and we will shop our shelves for titles for you to try, it is like having a blind date with a book.

A number of additional resources are available from publishers and organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic; check our website under <https://spl.prl.ab.ca/services> for links. We keep updating the COVID 19 Resources page, so if you know of additional useful resources, please share and we will add them. In the meantime, some of the resources we now link to include TumbleBooks for children and Audible audiobooks for children. LinkedIn Learning (Lynda.com) has made a few online courses available, one stream for job seekers and another stream for building productivity and resilience while working from home. Remember the library offers a wonderful reference service, if you are looking for information give us a call or email spl@prl.ab.ca and we will do our best to find information you can count on.

Planning is underway for Summer Reading Club. While it is sure to be different this year than in previous years, we hope to plan fun activities for children and families to do from a distance. We also hope to offer a few challenges in partnership with other community organizations. The purpose of Summer Reading Club has always been to encourage children to read over the summer, so they do not lose ground to the 'summer slide'. We will have fun prizes for participation, plus some grand prizes at the end of the program, and we look forward to hearing what your children enjoyed reading most.

Wishing you all happy days ahead. Stay well.

COMMUNITY NEWS



Home Support

Home Support is a non-profit organization. We provide services to the seniors, disabled, convalescent people of our community. Homemaker Services; Nail Care; Caring Companionship; Meals on Wheels; and Handyman Referrals.

Don't need these services yet? Consider volunteering! Call Terri Monday-Friday at 403-742-6568.

Mattress Recycling

Box Springs • Foam Mattresses • Foam Underlay

Stettler Waste Management Authority has re-opened our mattress recycling program.

Drop-off location: Stettler Transfer Site

Mattresses must be dry and free from mud/heavy dirt.

Please place your mattress efficiently into the bin. Inefficient stacking means it costs us more to transport them for recycling.

Mattresses are a huge and very inefficient filler of our landfill:

- they do not compress
- one mattress = 2 cubic metres of landfill space
- without recycling, we would landfill about 800 mattresses per year.
- once landfilled, recyclable mattress parts are lost forever

We accept: Mattresses; Box springs; Foam mattresses; Electric beds; Foam underlay

The mattress or box spring is separated into its raw materials (wood, foam, felt, metal, etc.) and about 95% of the materials are reused. These raw materials are sent to local Alberta manufacturers to be made into new products.

"Where do I Take it? A-Z Guide"

Not sure where to recycle, re-use or responsibly dispose of an item locally?

Consult our "Where do I Take it? A-Z Guide" of over 600 items at www.stettlercounty.ca

We update this list annually.



COMMUNITY EVENTS

COVID-19 INFORMATION

HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD

Prevention starts with awareness.
Be informed on how you can
protect yourself and others from
novel coronavirus:

- Self-isolate if you're feeling sick
- Wash your hands frequently
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Avoid touching your face

Concerns about your health?
Call Health Link 811.

Transfer Station Summer Hours (Easter to Thanksgiving)

Regional Land Fill:	M-F	8AM-6PM
	Saturdays	10AM-2PM
Closed Sundays and ALL STAT HOLIDAYS		
Botha:	Tuesdays	1:30PM-5:30PM
	Saturdays	8AM-Noon
Big Valley:	Tuesdays	10AM-4PM
	Saturdays	10AM-4PM
Byemoor:	Wednesdays	6:30PM-8:30PM
	Saturdays	10AM-2PM
Donalda:	Saturdays	10AM-2PM
	Wednesdays	10AM-2PM
Erskine:	Wednesdays	1:30PM-6PM
	Saturdays	9AM-2PM
	Sundays	1PM-6PM
Gadsby	Wednesdays	1:30PM-5:30PM
	Saturdays	1PM-5PM
Stettler	Every Day	10AM-6PM
	CLOSED ALL STAT HOLIDAYS	



Public Mail Agreement #41398593
Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to:
County of Stettler No. 6
Box 1270
Stettler, AB T0C 2L0