

FALL 2020

# Stettler County Connection

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# CELEBRATING 65 YEARS

County of Stettler No. 6 - Incorporated in 1955.

The County of Stettler No. 6 is celebrating 65 years in 2020!

Join us in celebration.

Have you ever entered our annual photo contest? Consider contributing to our 2020 Photo Contest which is set to wrap up this year on November 2.

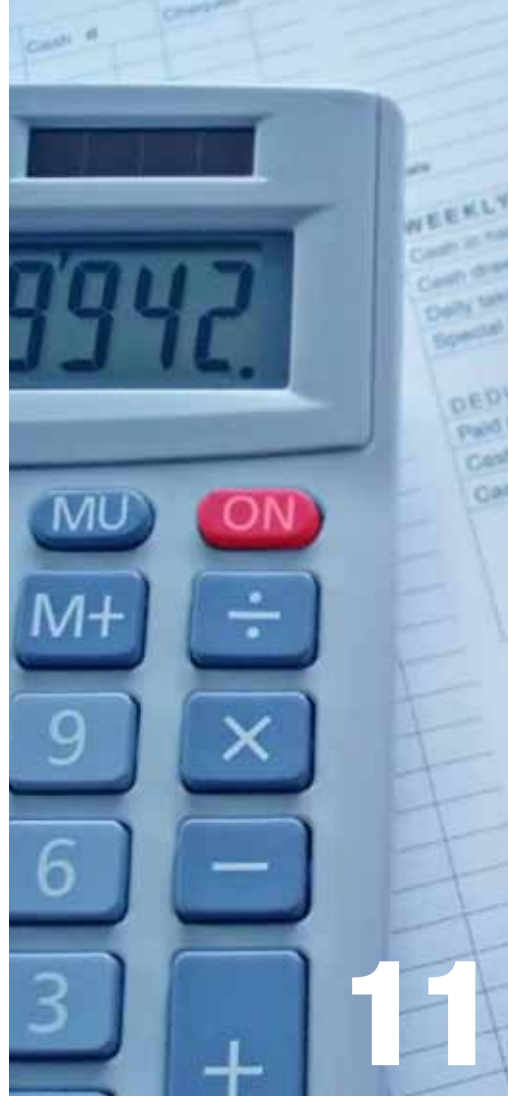
We encourage you to provide photos to our contest, not only depicting 'games and activities we play' in Stettler County which was our original theme for 2020, but now also to include showing us your rainbows: the good, the blessings, the unexpected upsides you have experienced as we all adjust to the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

Participants are invited to submit up to three (3) photos for our annual contest for each season. The remaining submission deadline:

FALL: September 8 - November 2

Please note - your photos do not have to be taken during the above time line, the time line simply outline the submission opening and deadline. 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](http://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

"Because this is the beauty of strangers: we're all just doing our best to help each other out, motivated not by karma but by a natural instinct to help the greater whole."  
- Sloane Crosley

Harvest is in full swing in the County of Stettler and we don't need to remind you all to slow down, enjoy the view, respect the increase in rural activity and perhaps give our farmers the right of way, as they attempt to get their fields harvested at the best possible time in the fastest and safest possible way. We don't need to remind you. But we will. Because at the end of the day, we want everyone to come home safely.

In respect to safety we really do appreciate the calls and concerns logged on our Ratepayer Request line at 403-742-4441. This time of year there are many, and our crews prioritize and respond to all requests received in the most efficient possible way.

We too feel the washboard on our way home, which historically increases in the fall when harvest begins, school buses return, roads are dry and everyone gets in a bit more of a hurry. Washboard is always a concern. We know also, that it occurs because of acceleration and deceleration, which is why you most likely find it at intersections where traffic is slowing down to stop, or speeding up after a turn or a stop. While our public works crews will be out working on washboard, our community can also do their part by slowing down a little more before approaching and after departing an intersection. Happy harvest everyone - stay safe.

Niki Thorsteinsson  
Director of Communications



## Stettler County Connection

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We have appreciated the opportunity to bring the issue of the oil and gas assessment review to the public, through Stettler Local TV. Reeve Clarke speaking with Wendy Rairdan about proposed assessment changes on August 10.

## REEVE'S RAMBLINGS

As I drive down the roads or look out the window the fields are brown or indicating hints of browning with hopes that this fall the bins and feed yards are full to the brim. Combines have started and equipment is moving to get all fall work completed prior to Mr. Winter's entrance. RV's are still travelling the roads and the nights indicate fall is here but the days are still teasing that summer remains.

2020 so far has certainly been a year of change and challenge with Covid-19 and all the social distancing, closures, maximum size of indoor and outdoor events and now with the re-opening of schools and other facilities we will see the outcomes of these start-ups as we all watch the evolving cycle of this pandemic.

This year we have also been challenged with the repeating reduction in taxation due to unpaid/uncollectable taxes and assessment changes that lowered collectable taxes. Staff and council worked through these challenges and cut staff and reduced many projects and activities to try and meet these financial challenges and then mid-July we were informed of results of a reassessment of oil and gas properties that could be passed in the fall session.

This review was carried out by provincial government, Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA), Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) and 4 representatives of the Rural Municipalities Association (RMA). The details of these 4 scenarios could not be discussed between RMA and members prior to the mid-July release due to an information embargo/gag order. This lack in consultation with municipalities allowed industry to be able to design and pick the favored scenario as this reassessment will give the Tier 1 (large) oil and gas companies tax breaks up to 109% while it will do little or nothing to

assist the small to mid-sized oil and gas companies, which are the ones that have been hurting and seeking relief.

CAPP represents 4% of the producing companies and 8% of the production of Alberta oil and gas so only select companies are favored in this arrangement.

To combat this regulation, we protested on the Alberta Legislative Grounds July 30 with other rural municipalities. This event was covered by Global, CTV and CBC News. We have had numerous newspaper interviews, radio interviews and Stettler Local TV sessions. The details of this regulation have been advertised on radio, Stettler Local TV, in the Stettler Independent and East Central Review newspapers and on our County website, Twitter and Facebook sites to get the facts and contacts out to you, our residents, so you can voice your concerns to Premier Jason Kenney and our MLA Nate Horner.

We have met with Mr. Horner and all the rural municipalities he represents to voice our concerns and discuss what we feel is a fair approach to this issue. We have voiced our concerns to Alberta's Minister of Finance, Travis Toews when he presented the economic re-start in Stettler on August 20. We were to meet with Minister Madu (Minister of Municipal Affairs) on August 24 which was postponed on August 23 until after the premier's cabinet shuffle.

On September 4, we were pleased to have been provided the opportunity to meet with the newly appointed Municipal Affairs Minister, Tracy Allard and MLA Horner to hear the government's plan, voice our concerns and agree this issue needs further review.

continued...



(L-R) MLA for Drumheller-Stettler Nate Horner; newly appointed Minister of Municipal Affairs Tracy Allard; MLA for Camrose Jackie Lovely; and MLA for Brooks-Medicine Hat Michaela Glasgo all attended a Town Hall in Stettler, with municipal representatives from central-east Alberta, to discuss the opposition rural municipalities are voicing in response to the Alberta Government's initial proposals for adjusting oil and gas assessment in Alberta.

## REEVE'S RAMBLINGS CONTINUED...

Our County operates on approximately \$9.8 million dollars annually, and this proposed loss in revenue to our county would be \$3-4 million. We maintain 2,777 km of roads and 73 bridges with many of them built and maintained for the oil and gas industry.

A loss such as this cannot be simply absorbed and with limited sources of income - either services and programs would require severe cuts or elimination, taxes would have to increase, or a combination of both. To put this into perspective, to make up a revenue loss of this magnitude, residential taxes would need to increase 2x and farmland by 1.5x in order to try and maintain an already reduced level of service we as county residents have come to enjoy and expect. Please don't perceive this as a threat but as an attempt to quantify the magnitude of this issue in a dollars and cents way which our citizens can relate to.

We have communicated and worked closely with the Town of Stettler on this and many matters, and certainly appreciate their urban concerns to government on how this could affect our entire community and the departments and programs we partner with the town on. This collaboration makes the Stettler community a great place to live and raise our families, and this potential loss to our revenue would unfortunately impact us all.

We have asked the provincial government to go back to the drawing board. We fully support our oil and

gas industry and a review, however, these proposals threaten the rural viability and existence of ourselves and many more municipalities in our province.

We believe every company, industry and person in our province has benefited from oil and gas, and we believe the burden of responsibility for helping the industry, in turn, needs to be shared. Thanks again to CAO Cassidy and her dedicated staff for keeping county operations running through these issues and as always putting the future of the County of Stettler in the forefront.

Please be safe in all fall activities and practice the required social distancing to prevent the spread of this terrible virus. As stated before, please treat County of Stettler staff, all of our wonderful business frontline workers and school staff with respect as you would your friends and neighbors, as they are trying their best to deliver on decisions made by Council, boards, owners and government, and they are your neighbors.

As always please slow down and watch the roads as they are busy with construction and agricultural units.

Larry Clarke, REEVE



# 2020 TAX PAYMENTS DEADLINE: OCTOBER 30

## Tax Deadline

- The County of Stettler 2020 Tax Payment Deadline: October 30, 2020 (last working day in October).
- To avoid a 10% penalty, payments must be received by 4:30 p.m. or **postmarked October 30, 2020**.

Tax Payments can be made:

- Cash
- Cheque
- Interac
- Online Banking (Please choose 'Tax') (Use Roll Number or Customer ID)
- At most financial institution

Tax payments will continue to be collected at the County Administration Building at 6602 – 44 Avenue, Stettler AB. Due to Covid-19 we are restricted to having two ratepayers in our foyer at a time. If you are able to pay by one of the remote payment methods it would be appreciated and help with line-ups and wait times. For more information please contact our office 403-742-4441.

Another method of payment to consider is ONLINE BANKING PRE-AUTHORIZED – Autopay (TIPPS) Program. This program spreads tax payments out over 12 months. In order to qualify for the TIPPS program, your taxes have to be at a zero balance. Application forms must be received prior to December 15 if possible. The payments are withdrawn monthly, from January to December. This is a payment we process monthly and it is automatically withdrawn from your bank account. The amount of your tax payment is determined from your previous years taxes. For example, a tax bill of \$1,200 would be divided by 12 payments of \$100 per month. The payment of \$100 would begin in January, and continue until the current year's taxes are levied. The balance of the year would be recalculated to equal what is left owing, to come to a zero at the end of the year. We typically try to take payments on the first of each month. If you happen to miss two payments, you will be taken off the TIPPS program. Please contact our office for an application.

We are in the process of collecting taxpayer information for sending tax/assessment notices by electronic means. If you are interested in receiving your tax notices by email, we require the following information:

Roll and legal descriptions of property

Name

Address

Town, Province, Postal Code

Phone number email address

Send the above information to [tax@stettlercounty.ca](mailto:tax@stettlercounty.ca) or call 403-742-4441.



# LOBBYING GOVERNMENT OIL AND GAS ASSESSMENT

## What is the happening with the oil and gas assessment review?

At the end of July 2020, the County of Stettler was informed an ongoing review being conducted by the Alberta Government/Municipal Affairs had put forth a proposal of four options, on how oil and gas properties in Alberta could be assessed for taxes, going forward.

While we agree, an oil and gas assessment/taxation review is long overdue, the four proposals unveiled to us strongly favored large oil and gas companies (giving them up to 109% in savings), but actually threatened further tax increases for small to mid-sized oil and gas companies. At the same time, all four of the proposals threatened the future viability of our municipality by reducing our taxation income by 30-40% more (oil and gas was given a 35% tax reduction the two years prior). The proposed models threatened the viability of many other rural municipalities in Alberta, like ours, who have substantial oil and gas activity within their borders.

County Council immediately began a dynamic lobbying effort, first by attending a protest on the steps of Alberta's Legislature building on Thursday, July 30. We were asking our government to allow more input, as the interests and viability of large oil and gas had been closely considered – but

not the interests and viability of thousands of rural Albertans and our communities.

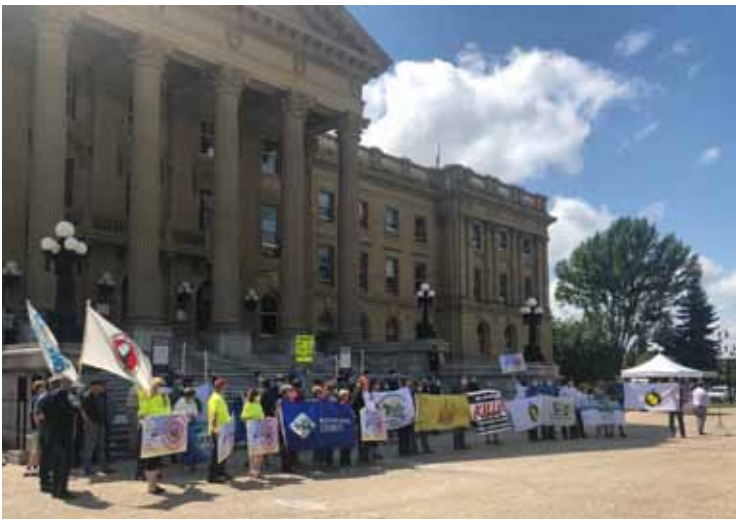
- The continued viability of rural municipalities was not considered in any of the solutions put forward. Industry was at the table, leading this review. To date, we have still not received data the existing proposals were based on.

The Canadian Association of Oil and Gas Producers (CAPP) represents only 4% of Alberta's Oil and Gas companies and 8% of production in Alberta, yet they led this review. *Industry* leading *government* reviews sets a dangerous precedent.

While the province has indicated municipalities need to cut spending, the County of Stettler has cut 39% from our annual budget over past five years. The Province proposed changes to how they tax oil and gas suggest we will need to cut 30%-40% more from our budget, but this time, all at once in 2021.

Further, the province said municipalities need to look at staff levels and salaries for municipal employees. The County of Stettler has trimmed 35% off our workforce. It is also true, that municipal employees often leave us when oil and gas ramps up, as municipal government salaries can not and do not compete with private business.

The province has told us oil and gas companies



On July 30, 2020 over 38 rural municipalities in Alberta protested the proposed oil and gas assessment models on the steps of the Alberta Legislature Building. These models were unveiled by the Alberta Government at the end of July.

were telling them Saskatchewan and British Columbia are 'more competitive', and to compete Alberta must be more competitive. If the numbers CAPP is sharing are accurate and in context, then no oil and gas company would have drilled a well in Alberta in the last 10 years - and they have.

The County of Stettler has worked collaboratively alongside oil and gas for many years. We have held a 0% tax increases for oil and gas for the past three years. This review was not comparing apples to apples. In British Columbia for example, the province looks after road maintenance. In Alberta, 65% or more of a municipal budget goes towards road and bridge maintenance and over the years went to building the roads and bridges to access the sites oil and gas drilled and operated from. The County of Stettler has 2,777 km of roads we maintain and 73 bridges.

The province is saying municipal oil and gas taxes are too high, however, the province actually controls the ratio of how much municipalities can charge oil and gas versus residential. The province says the ratio can be as high as 5:1, (oil and gas can be charged up to 5 times the mill rate that residential taxpayers pay). The County of Stettler maintains a 3:1 ratio – meaning business/oil and gas, pay three times the mill rate that residential taxpayers pay. If the province would like to change the allowable ratio – that would be the province's prerogative.

In 2019, the County of Stettler asked the government for assistance. Unpaid oil and gas taxes are a huge concern for municipalities. It is the only industry which seems to find it acceptable to simply 'not pay' their taxes. The County of Stettler used to be quite successful in collecting unpaid oil and gas property taxes, prior to the *Virginia Hills decision* (February 12, 2019). The *Virginia Hills decision* made it impossible for municipalities to collect unpaid oil and gas taxes. We asked our government to amend the Municipal Government Act to in turn, provide us with tools to assist. To date, nothing has been done. The County of Stettler 'bad debts' due to oil and gas unpaid taxes over five years equals \$7.6 million. Yet, Alberta's Energy Regulator (AER) continues to approve licenses to oil and gas companies who owe money.

Throughout the month of August the County of Stettler continued to lobby the province to go back to the drawing board for the oil and gas assessment review. The province's proposed solutions did not fit the problem. All four proposals favored large oil and gas companies, with assets of \$500 million or more, with offshore holdings and no obligation to re-invest in Alberta.

Small to mid-sized oil and gas companies – the ones that live, work and support our region, would actually see tax increases from some of the models proposed. Tax increases – to the sector of  
continued...



## CONTINUED...

oil and gas who has been struggling the most – our partners, friends and neighbors.

At the end of August, the Premier of Alberta, Jason Kenney, shuffled his cabinet, moving the previous Minister of Municipal Affairs, Kaycee Madu to be the new Minister of Justice, with Tracy Allard, MLA for Grande Prairie, taking over the position of Minister of Municipal Affairs. One week later we were informed by our MLA from Drumheller-Stettler, Nate Horner, that a meeting would be held in Stettler for his region, with the new Minister, Tracy Allard coming to speak with rural municipalities affected by the oil and gas assessment proposals. We thank all of you who joined us throughout August in voicing concerns to our government officials.

We were very pleased to welcome Minister Allard to the Stettler Community Hall, along with more than 13 other municipalities, to re-start this conversation. We are cautiously optimistic and now looking forward to continuing this important conversation with Minister Allard as we navigate the future of a depressed oil and gas market, a struggling economy due to the ongoing pandemic and the important work of ensuring the future of rural Albertans is carefully considered and prioritized by our province.

We strongly believe the future viability and quality of life for all rural Albertans deserves a closer, collaborative review.

### What is the solution?

We believe rural Albertans, and the viability of rural municipalities is a worthy consideration as this review is paused for further review.






We believe rural municipalities deserve an equal opportunity to be represented in a fair and transparent review process, which includes open and honest consultation, with data provided by the oil and gas industry being reviewed and shared.

We believe the solutions deserve more thought and consideration of how rural Alberta, and rural Albertans will survive a depressed economy, a global pandemic and future changes to the weights of taxation.

In Stettler County, our oil fields are old. Oil and gas technology was developed and fine-tuned in our fields years ago, and then expanded across our province. We were the testing grounds and our lands and landscape are evidence of this activity.

It is impossible to ignore the entire province of Alberta – every business, individual and industry has benefited from oil and gas. We believe, the solution is one that should be shared among us all and we will continue to advocate for fairness for all.

## ELECTRONICS EXPANDED **Alberta recycling** MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

 SMALL APPLIANCES	 AUDIO VISUAL	 TELECOM	 POWER AND AIR TOOLS	 GAMES, TOYS AND MUSIC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clock</li> <li>Fan</li> <li>Hair dryer</li> <li>Heater</li> <li>Iron</li> <li>Microwave</li> <li>Residential Air Conditioner</li> <li>Toaster</li> <li>Shaver</li> <li>Vacuum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CD Player</li> <li>Clock Radio</li> <li>Digital Camera</li> <li>DVD Player</li> <li>Headphones</li> <li>Satellite Dish</li> <li>Satellite Radio</li> <li>Speakers</li> <li>Video Camera</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Answering Machine</li> <li>Cell Phone</li> <li>Landline Phone</li> <li>Modem and Router</li> <li>Pager</li> <li>Satellite Phone</li> <li>Speakerphone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drill</li> <li>Grinder</li> <li>Miter Saw</li> <li>Nail Gun</li> <li>Residential Air Compressor</li> <li>Sharpener</li> <li>Shop Vacuum</li> <li>Skillsaw</li> <li>Table Saw</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action Figure</li> <li>Amplifier</li> <li>Guitar</li> <li>Keyboard</li> <li>Microphone</li> <li>Ride-on Toy</li> <li>Toy Robot</li> <li>Toy Vehicle</li> <li>Video Gaming Equipment</li> </ul>

Ask us about other electronics not listed above or visit [albertarecycling.ca/epilot](http://albertarecycling.ca/epilot)

## FAQ

**Will I now be charged an environmental fee on these products when I buy new ones like I do for computers or TVs?**

*No, you will not have to pay for these electronics that are being recycled as part of the pilot project.*

**How long will this electronics pilot project run?**

*The tentative end date for the pilot is September 2022.*

**What happens after September 2022?**

*ARMA will provide the pilot data to government to determine the best course forward in recycling additional electronics for the long-term.*

**Who can I contact if I have questions about the electronics pilot?**

*Email [ePilot@albertarecycling.ca](mailto:ePilot@albertarecycling.ca) with any questions or comments about the pilot.*



# 10

## Tell Us Where You Think Municipal Tax Dollars Should Be Spent.

If you are able, please fill out the below survey online at [www.stettlercounty.ca](http://www.stettlercounty.ca). If you do not have internet access, please fill out this form and return to the County of Stettler No. 6 (details below). Deadline: October 12, 2020.

### Strategic Planning Survey 2021

1) What services would you describe as essential, that you want the County of Stettler to provide? Please prioritize the following 1-12, using 1 as most important and 12 as least important.

- Road maintenance: grading and snow plowing county roads
- Snow plowing rural driveways
- Graveling county roads
- Rural Water Service (waterlines to farms and acreages)
- Building new roads
- Bylaw enforcement control and patrols
- Animal control
- Agricultural Support (weed control, patrol pest control support and elimination)
- Agricultural Education (workshops, keynote speakers, demonstrations)
- Recycling
- Rural Recreation Funding (assisting/providing community facilities w/recreational funding and opportunities)
- Cemetery Maintenance

Comments:

2) Are there any services listed above that you would recommend get cut completely/quit funding?

3) What would you do?

With the downturn in the oil and gas industry, pandemic impacts, and Federal and Provincial Government announcements there will be less taxation and grant revenue in the budget. Do you have suggestions for accommodating for this loss in revenue?

4) Do you have any other concerns or ideas you would like Council to consider as they plan their municipal priorities and budgets for 2021-2024?

5) Do you vote in the County of Stettler?      YES      NO

6) Please provide your Rural Address

Additional Comments:

If you are unable to fill this survey out online, please fill it out and return to us by fax at 403-742-1277; scan and email it to [info@stettlercounty.ca](mailto:info@stettlercounty.ca); mail to County of Stettler No. 6, Box 1270, Stettler AB T0C 2L0; or drop it off at our Administration Building at 6602-44 Avenue, Stettler.

THANK YOU!



# 2021 BUDGET PLANNING - WHERE DO YOUR PRIORITIES LIE?

## Step 1: We want to hear from you!

Every summer the County of Stettler Corporate Services department begins reviewing budget for the current year. They compare budget to actuals to projections, and begin to reconcile differences. This process has begun. While Corporate Services is looking at the dollars and the cents, our first step in determining the direction our municipality will head and where priorities should lie begins with you. We are inviting feedback from our ratepayers.

This year will be no different, except that in addition to a worsening oil and gas economy we are now also evaluating the effects of a worldwide pandemic on our region, our businesses and our citizens. Individually we have experienced how 2020 has impacted our own families and community. We know, that we do not know all of the struggles and adversity being felt by individuals and families in Stettler County. Internally, we understand how 2020 has impacted our municipality and our

own operations. Provincially, we understand 'a reckoning' is coming with our province recording the largest debt across our country.

Please take a moment and think about what services are important to you. Think about what you think our municipality could do without, because it is inevitable services will be decreased or cut completely in some areas. This is your chance to provide your municipal elected officials with your input.

We would invite you to fill out our survey online at [www.stettlercounty.ca](http://www.stettlercounty.ca). If you are unable to access our survey online, please fill it out on the previous page, cut it out and return to us by fax at 403-742-1277; scan and email it to [info@stettlercounty.ca](mailto:info@stettlercounty.ca); mail to County of Stettler No. 6, Box 1270, Stettler, AB T0C 2L0, or drop it off at our Administration Building at 6602-44 Avenue, Stettler.



# WARD BOUNDARY REVIEW BALANCING POPULATION

The County of Stettler No. 6 is currently divided into seven wards with seven elected officials, one official from each ward representing each ward. Good governance calls for equal opportunity for representation across our county. Wards are divided by population. Upon review over the past two years, increased population in the County region surrounding the Town (Stettler Ward), and the addition of Botha and Gadsby to the County of Stettler population (both villages have now been added to the Botha-Gadsby Ward), has led to a natural unbalancing of population in some of our seven wards within our boundaries.

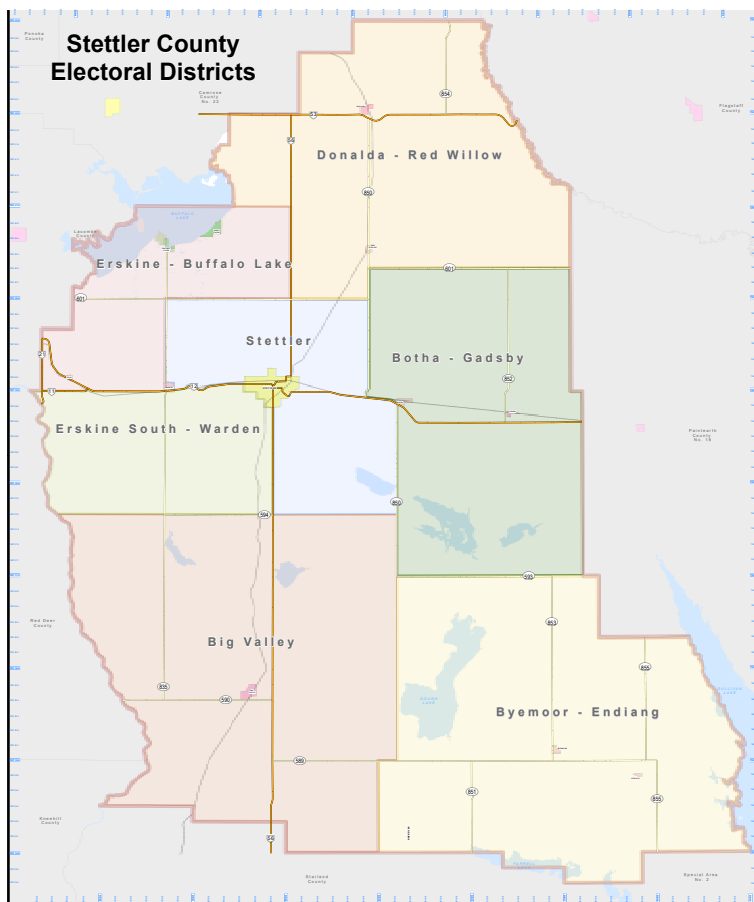
In response, earlier this year we began a thorough review of current ward populations and ward boundaries within our borders.

Currently we have seven wards in the County of Stettler, and as it sits today, the Botha/Gadsby Ward has 35% more than the median population of each ward, and Byemoor/Endiang has 35% less than the median population of the wards. The goal, to offer all equal representation in their wards, is to equalize the population of each ward. To do so, the boundaries of our wards must be adjusted. We will be looking for your feedback on proposed adjustments.

Further to this review, we will be seeking feedback on whether you would prefer your Chief Elected Official (Reeve/Mayor) to be appointed by Council or elected by residents of the whole municipality. Currently, our Reeve is appointed by fellow Council members annually, at an organizational meeting held in October of each year. The other option, adopted by some municipalities, sees a Mayor elected by the voters.

- County Council currently consists of seven (7) Councillors in seven (7) wards
- One Councillor is elected from each of the seven (7) wards
- Councillors must be nominated by the ward in which they reside
- All Councillors are Councillors for the ward in which they were nominated
- All Councillors must be elected and nominated in accordance with the Local Authorities Election Act.

If we were to change our bylaw, to have a Mayor 'Elected at Large' (elected by the public) then instead of 7 wards, we would adjust to 6 wards plus a Mayor.



There are pros and cons to be considered for both sides of this decision:

- Deleting a ward (from 7 down to 6 wards) could mean less representation for your area, as each ward gets a little bigger and your elected official would have a bigger area/larger population to manage. A Mayor, elected by the public, will mean one ward will end up with a Councillor representing that ward, plus have the Mayor reside in that same ward.
- Some would say a ward with both an elected Councillor and an elected Chief (Mayor) would have better or more representation than the other 5 remaining wards.
- Councillors would have to choose to either run for Mayor or run for their ward. If a Mayoral candidate loses a bid for Mayor, the possibility exists that you have lost a great candidate to represent your ward.
- With the public electing a Mayor, a single person is elected for a four year term, to represent the entire municipality.
- With a 'Council appointed' Reeve, the term lasts only one year, so a potential for 4 different Reeves over the 4 year term.

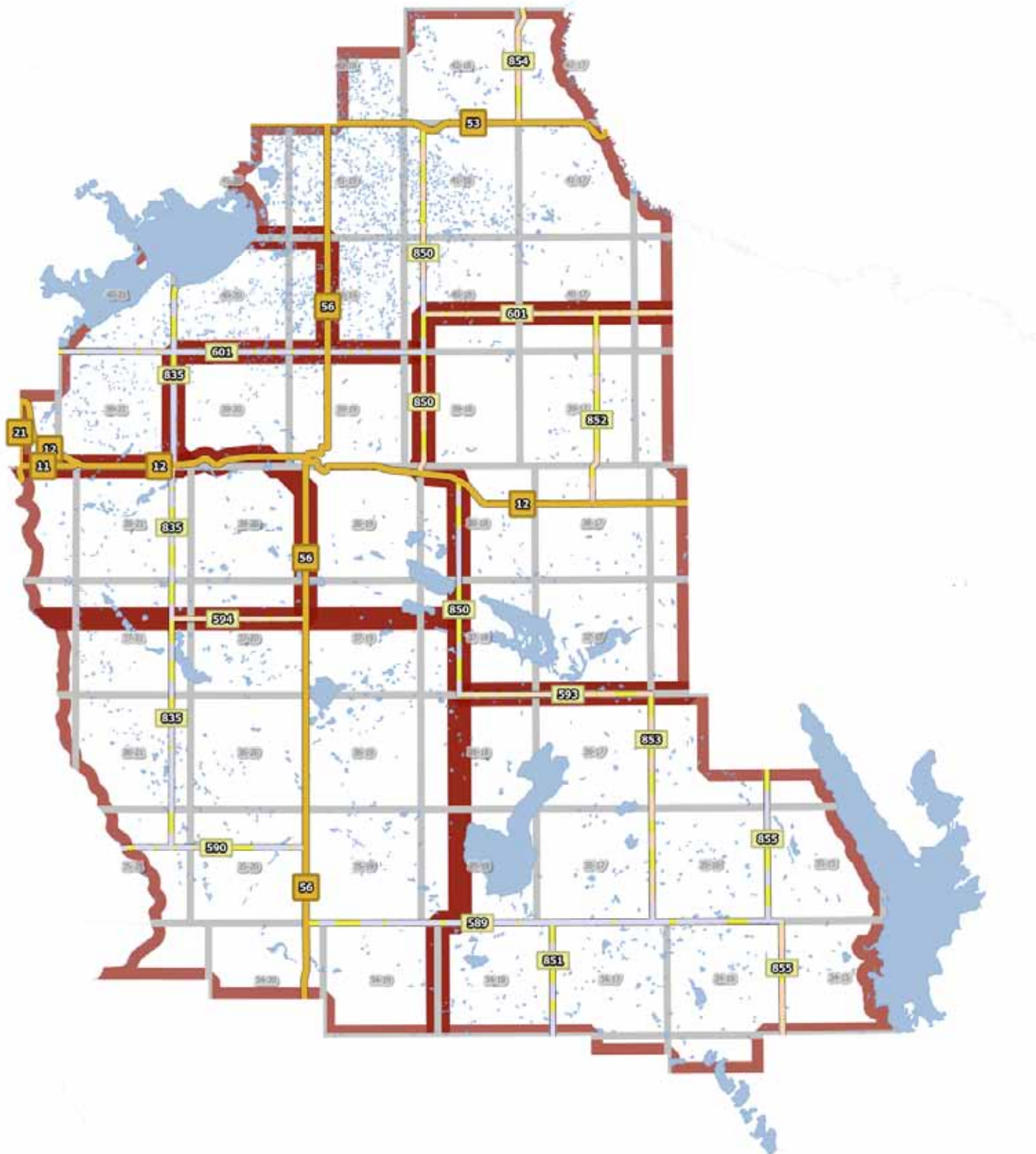
*The terms Mayor and Reeve are actually interchangeable. For the purposes of this explanation we have referred to a 'Chief Elected Official elected by the public as a Mayor, and a 'Council appointed Chief Elected Official' as a Reeve, but actually, the title of Reeve or Mayor could apply to either position.*

Please review the following three pages. One map outlines our current ward boundaries which need to adjust to balance population. The next map shows what the adjustment of the current seven ward boundaries would look like, if we continued the practice of a 'Council appointed Reeve'. The third map outlines what a six ward County of Stettler would look like, if we moved to a 'public-elected Mayor'. After you have studied the materials, we are asking for your feedback through our WARD BOUNDARY SURVEY which you will find on our website at [www.stettlercounty.ca](http://www.stettlercounty.ca). We require your feedback be provided by filling out our survey online, prior to October 12, 2020. If you are unable to fill out a survey online, please fill out the survey on page 17 of this magazine, and return it to us by October 12.

continued...

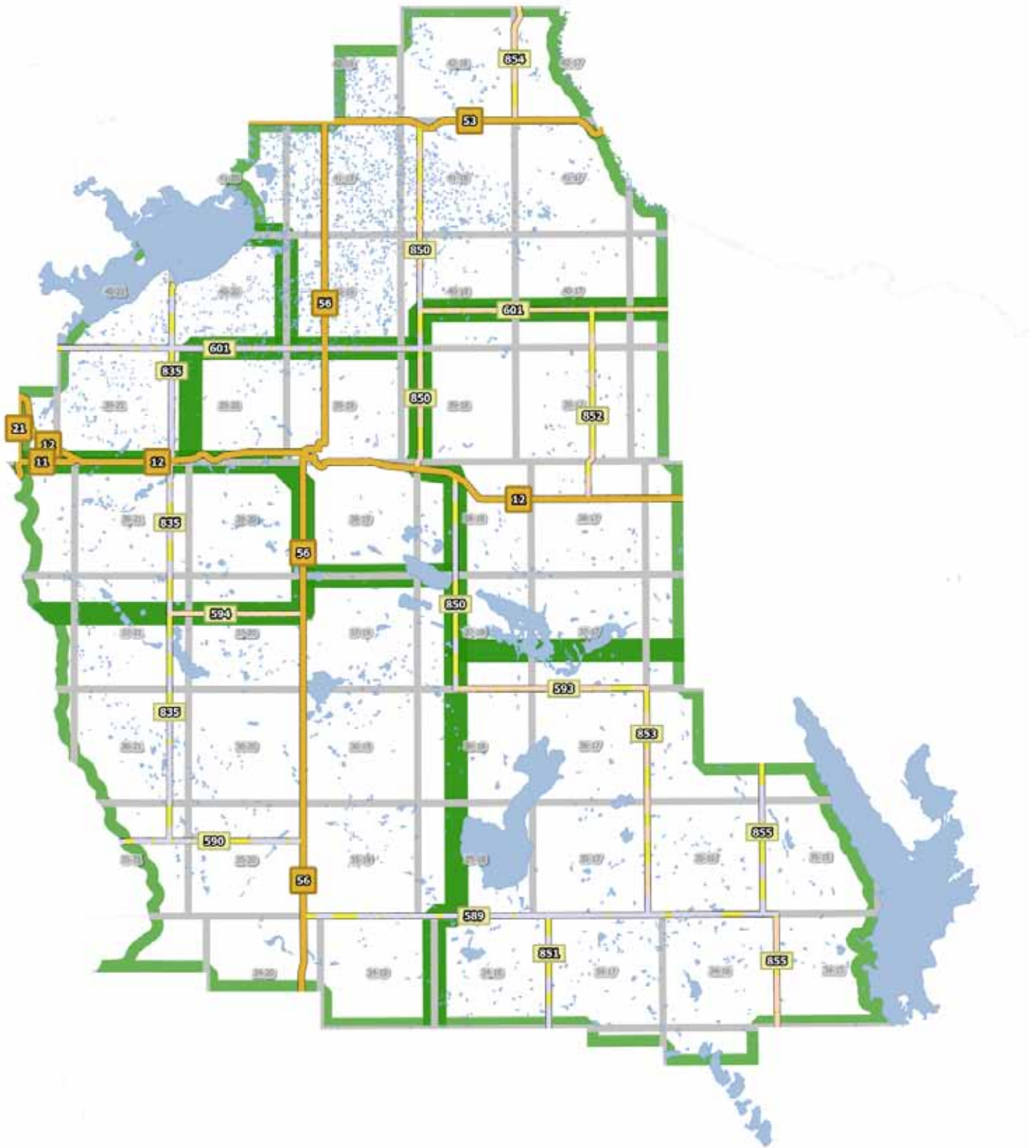
# CURRENT Ward Boundaries in the County of Stettler No. 6

7 Wards (Reeve Appointed Annually By Council)



# ADJUSTED Ward Boundaries to equalize population in the seven wards of the County of Stettler No. 6

7 Wards (Reeve Appointed Annually By Council)







# WARD BOUNDARY SURVEY

*Please fill out this survey at [www.stettlercounty.ca](http://www.stettlercounty.ca) if you have access to the internet. Otherwise, please complete below and return to: County of Stettler No. 6 Box 1270, Stettler, AB T0C 2L0 or fax to 403-742-1277 or scan and email to [info@stettlercounty.ca](mailto:info@stettlercounty.ca). We ask everyone of voting age please fill out this survey. For more copies email [info@stettlercounty.ca](mailto:info@stettlercounty.ca) or call 403-742-4441.*

1. Is your primary residence in the County of Stettler No. 6?

Yes

No

2. Do you vote in County of Stettler municipal elections?

Yes

No

3. Have you voted in past County of Stettler No. 6 municipal elections?

Yes

No

4. Are you:

A home owner in the County of Stettler?

A land owner in the County of Stettler?

A renter in the County of Stettler?

A business owner in the County of Stettler?

5. Do you plan to vote in the 2021 Fall Municipal Election?

Yes

No

6. Have you examined the proposed new ward boundaries for 7 Wards with adjusted boundaries to balance population?

Yes

No

Comments:

7. Have you examined the proposed ward boundaries if we went with a publicly elected Mayor and then divided the County of Stettler into 6 Wards?

Yes

No

8. Would you prefer:

a) 7 elected Council Members from 7 Wards, with a Council Appointed Reeve (current bylaw)?

b) A Mayor elected by the public and 6 Wards represented by Councillors (new format)?

Please explain why:

9. Would you prefer the title for our Chief Elected Official for the County of Stettler be:

a) Reeve

or

b) Mayor

Please explain why:

Thank you for your feedback.

**\*REQUIRED: NAME** \_\_\_\_\_ **Legal Address:** \_\_\_\_\_



To request a Buddy Bag  
 Email: [buddybagsab@gmail.com](mailto:buddybagsab@gmail.com)  
 or call B Adair @ 403-741-8984

# OPERATION: BUDDY BAG 2020 BACK-TO-SCHOOL EDITION



For details, visit:  
[facebook.com/operationbuddybag](https://facebook.com/operationbuddybag)

100% of donations purchase essential school supplies  
 for students across the County of Stettler

**TO DONATE: CONTACT LORRAINE**

**403.742.1155**

E-TRANSFER DONATIONS TO: [LORRAINE@STETTLERINFO.CA](mailto:lorraine@stettlerinfo.ca)



# 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.



## SPECIAL PROJECT FUNDING HISTORY

Recreational Special Project Funding was first established in 2006. The purpose was to set aside funds to assist with the construction and/or enhancement of recreational facilities, in order to serve the needs of the County's rural population outside of the Town of Stettler, with the exception of properties owned by the Stettler Agricultural Society.

Over the past 15 years we can report the County of Stettler has approved funding for 117 projects totalling \$1,551,834. Some of these projects have included new siding, furnaces, flooring, windows, as well as electrical and plumbing repairs for many halls and arenas. Additionally, many community playgrounds and baseball diamonds have been established and built.

While many consider recreation a 'nicety' not a 'necessity', these facilities help shape the communities which surround them, creating gathering centres, recreational facilities and opportunities and a sense of community and belonging for those who live in our rural areas. Special Project Funding has helped create and/or maintain the facilities listed on the following page. We have been proud to partner in and support these projects. With the threat of the provincial government's review on how oil and gas is assessed in Alberta, and their initial proposal which introduced devastating affects and revenue

losses to our region - Special Project Funding is one of many County of Stettler programs which would be considered for review and possible elimination if our budget is detrimentally impacted by the changes to how oil and gas is taxed in Alberta. At present - the Alberta Government has paused their review to reconsider the affects their proposed changes would have on our rural way of life, and has promised to reconsider options and oil and gas tax models. We hope their future proposal does not eliminate our ability to continue with this and many other programs and services which draw citizens and families to our region promoting a sense of community in our rural settings.

The maximum funding currently available for distribution in 2020 through the Special Project Funding program is \$50,000.00. An information booklet has been developed to accompany the application that provides much information about the program and outlines projects that are eligible under program guidelines.

The information booklet and application form are available at the front counter of the County of Stettler Administration Building and our website at [www.stettlercounty.ca](http://www.stettlercounty.ca). The deadline to apply for SPF funding is Friday, October 30, 2020, but applications are welcome at any time throughout the year.

# FUNDING HISTORY

<b>Community Organization</b>	<b>Funding Allocated for Projects</b>
Big Valley Parent Council	\$16,000.00
Big Valley Agricultural Society	\$159,724.00
Big Valley Bust Out Rodeo	\$2,524.00
Big Valley Community Hall	\$69,885.00
Big Valley Drop In Centre	\$7,398.00
Botha Community Centre	\$107,656.00
Botha School Parent Council	\$21,000.00
Buffalo Lake Meadows	\$15,000.00
Buffalo Sands Residents Association	\$14,068.00
Byemoor Community Hall	\$26,758.00
Byemoor Curling Club	\$23,283.00
Byemoor Parks/Rec	\$33,913.00
Donalda Agricultural Society	\$163,775.00
Donalda Parent Council	\$21,000.00
Endiang Community Society	\$23,070.00
Endiang Riding and Roping Club	\$7,000.00
Erskine Curling Club	\$56,856.00
Erskine IOOF Hall	\$80,076.00
Erskine School Parent Council	\$32,950.00
Erskine Social and Recreation Society	\$5,000.00
Erskine Seniors Centre	\$6,500.00
Ewing Community Centre	\$3,000.00
Gadsby Ball Association	\$83,257.00
Gadsby Community Hall	\$49,647.00
Linda Hall	\$106,743.00
Nevis Hall	\$65,960.00
Pilot Knob Community Hall	\$10,344.00
Red Willow Agricultural Society	\$11,781.00
Rochon Sands	\$14,752.00
Scenic Sands	\$34,250.00
Stettler Gun Club	\$3,789.00
Stettler Agricultural Society	\$82,361.00
Sullivan Lake West Agricultural Society	\$174,727.00
Union Hall	\$4,000.00
Westwoods Community Hall	\$13,787.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,551,834.00</b>



## RURAL WATER HOOK UP

### Do you need water?

Did you know, the County of Stettler has a large network of rural water lines throughout our region supplying clean, potable water to County of Stettler residents in need?

Currently, our water distribution budget is very slim however, and we are unable to bring water to everyone on our list waiting for water as many of those who are wait-listed live far away from existing lines and the County can not at this time afford to subsidize these installations.

Depending how close you live to one of our water lines, and/or how many of your neighbors in your region are in need and may like to 'team-up' with you to bring water to your area - we might be able to help you out.

On the adjacent page you will find a map outlining our current water lines. If you need to 'zoom in' and look more closely at our water line map, please

go to [www.stettlercounty.ca/DocumentCenter/View/1398/County-Waterlines](http://www.stettlercounty.ca/DocumentCenter/View/1398/County-Waterlines).

If you happen to live directly adjacent to one of our lines, and are in need of water, give us a call to discuss the possibilities. If you do not reside along a water line, canvas your neighbors and bring us a list of how many may be in need of water.

If you live directly adjacent to one of our water lines, Rural Water Installation can be provided for a fee which is currently set at \$15,000. This rural water installation fee can be amortized and paid off over 15 years with very affordable interest rates available to our municipality.

For more information or to inquire if your property would be eligible or could be added to the list, contact our Environmental Services Department at 403-742-4441. If you are looking for water hook up in one of our hamlets that has water distribution, different rates apply. Please contact our office for more information.

# Existing Water Lines in Stettler County

Camrose County No. 22

Lacombe County

Red Deer County

Kneehill County

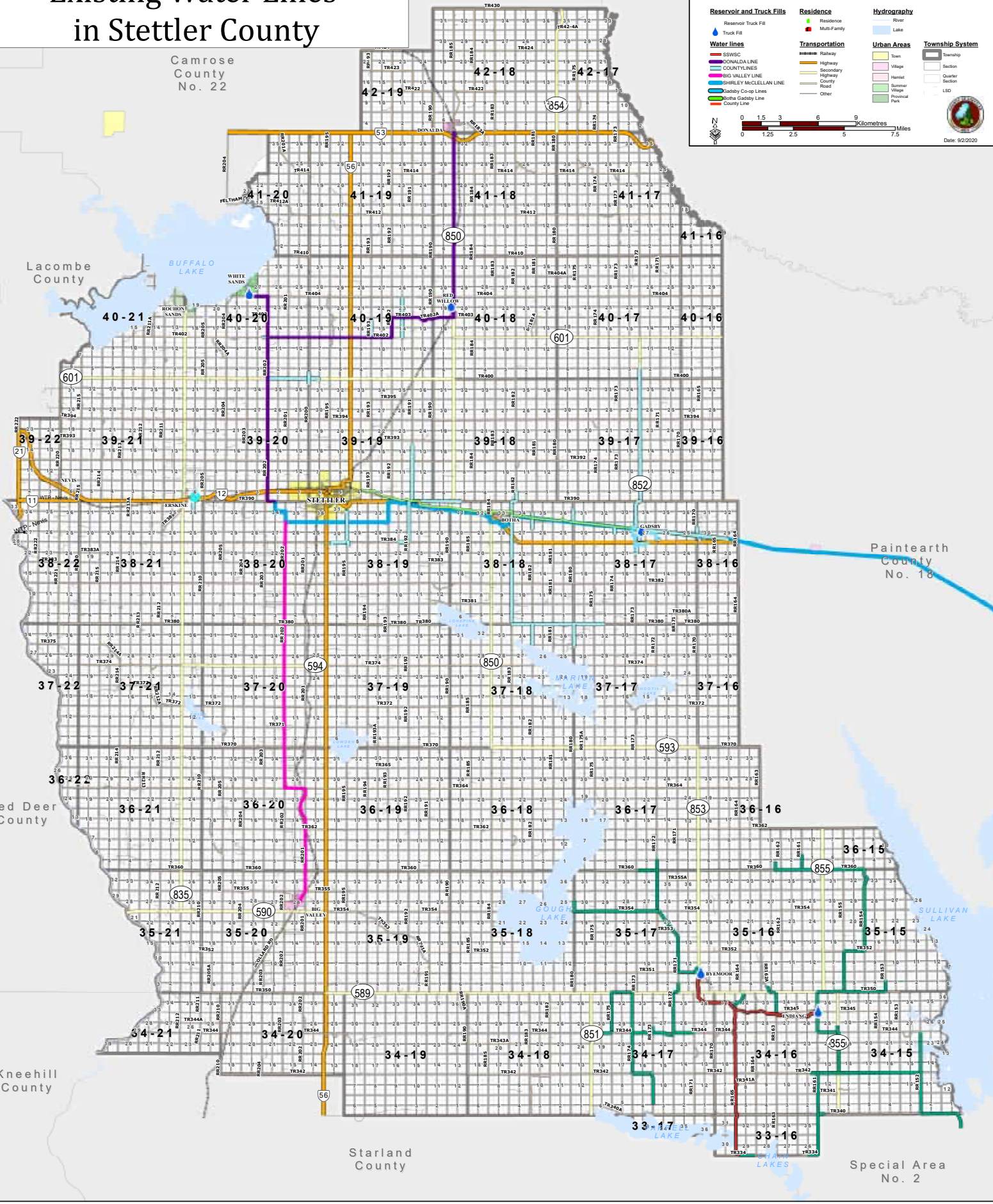
Starland County

Special Area No. 2

Reservoir and Truck Fills	Residence	Hydrography
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reservoir Truck Fill</li> <li>Truck Fill</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residence Multi-Family</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>River</li> <li>Lake</li> </ul>
Water Lines	Transportation	Urban Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SSWSC</li> <li>DONALDA LINE</li> <li>COUNTYLINES</li> <li>BIG VALLEY LINE</li> <li>SHIRLEY MCCLELLAN LINE</li> <li>Quality Co-op Lines</li> <li>North Gadsby Line</li> <li>County Line</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Railway</li> <li>Highway</li> <li>Secondary Highway</li> <li>County Road</li> <li>Other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town</li> <li>Village</li> <li>Hamlet</li> <li>Summer Village</li> <li>Provincial Park</li> </ul>
		Township System
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Township</li> <li>Quarter Section</li> <li>LSD</li> </ul>

0 1.5 3 6 9 Kilometres  
 0 1.25 2.5 5 7.5 Miles

Date: 9/2/2020





# WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO GET A DEVELOPMENT PERMIT?

## Processing a development permit.

Thinking of building on your property? First you will require a development permit and be aware, this process takes some time - there's a little more involved than simply filling out and submitting an application to develop.

A very detailed application process is required which is outlined on our website under Planning & Development. Following the completion of a detailed application, once all of the boxes have been checked and all information and diagrams submitted, and any approvals from external sources like Alberta Transportation have been received, the County of Stettler Development Authority will review your application within 20 days, to determine if it is complete.

Planning & Development will determine the following:

- Whether the proposed development meets the requirements of the County's Land Use Bylaw (LUB), Municipal Development Plan (MDP), the Town & County Inter-municipal Development Plan (IDP), Buffalo Lake Inter-municipal Development Plan, local area structure plan or any other statutory plan depending on where the property is located within the County.

- Whether the proposed development falls under the list of permitted or discretionary uses in that district.
- Whether the information submitted with the application is sufficient to proceed with the processing of the application.

If after this review the development permit application is deemed complete, the Planning and Development Department will proceed with beginning to process your application.

A permitted use development permit application is generally issued by the Development Officer but may be referred to the Municipal Planning Commission (MPC) for consideration.

A discretionary use development permit application must be reviewed/approved by the County's Municipal Planning Commission at a regular scheduled meeting. It is important to note, if it determined your application should go to the MPC for review/approval, the Municipal Planning Committee is held once a month, on the fourth Wednesday of each month.

A decision on a discretionary use development permit is referred to adjacent land owners for review and advertised in the local newspaper. Anyone that feels they may be negatively impacted by the decision may submit an appeal to the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board within 21 days of the decision date.



A development permit will only be issued **following** the appeal period, and provided no appeals are filed and all of the conditions of the approval have been satisfied. It is important to note, construction must not commence prior to the appeal period passing, conditions of the permit being met, and a development permit being issued.

If the applicant is applying for a commercial, industrial or home occupation development permit, the following information must be provided in addition to our detailed application:

- Business Operation Details
- Description of Business
- Office Location
- Will the business be advertised, marketed or signed? Provide details.
- Will the development generate additional traffic to the business/home? Provide details.
- How many people will the business employ? Resident? Non Resident?
- Will there be outdoor storage? Will it be visible from the road? Provide details?
- Services – Water supply, sewage disposal. Provide details.

**NOTE:** All applications for development adjacent to a provincial highway require approval from

Alberta Transportation. Applications for a Roadside Development Permit can be found at: <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/Content/docType329/Production/rdpapp.pdf>.

- A response from Alberta Transportation is required before a development permit can be issued by the County of Stettler No. 6.

The County of Stettler will review the application to determine whether it is complete within 20 days of submission pursuant to Section 683.1 (1) of the MGA. Site inspections are scheduled to be conducted on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month.

We remind anyone wishing to obtain a development permit to allow ample time for all of the required reviews, processing times, inspections, referrals, MPC meetings if applicable and for the appeal period.

If you have questions regarding the process, please call Planning and Development at 403-742-4441 and schedule a meeting.



## BACK TO BOOKS AND PROGRAMS TOO, AT SPL

The crisp has returned to our days, signaling a return to routines and schedules and to the kind of cozy you get indoors with a cup of something pumpkin scented and a great book. If you enjoy curling up with a great book or movie or prefer to download great entertainment on your device, we have you covered at the Stettler Public Library. Search for titles in our online catalogue at <https://search.prl.ab.ca/Polaris> or explore eBooks in the eLibrary at <https://spl.prl.ab.ca/elibrary>.

We receive calls regularly asking about changes at the library in response to Covid-19. We have thinned out our chairs and have installed plexiglass, and we are ready to welcome you back to the library when you are ready. We are open regular hours, Monday, Friday and Saturday from 10 – 6 PM and Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10 – 8 PM. We ask that you return your books to the outside book drop (in the wall of the SRC) before coming upstairs, sanitize your

hands when entering the library and maintain six feet of space between yourself and other patrons when visiting the library.

We hope you have been getting out into the community and enjoying some of the great events organized for Alberta Culture Days here in Stettler County throughout September. Events are advertised on the Alberta Culture Days website at <http://www.stettlerboardoftrade.com/CultureDays>. There is something for everyone from drawing and writing to horse pulls and an international market.

At the Library we have resumed programming but are limiting numbers so that we can ensure social distancing is possible. *Something Cool After School* is back on Thursdays at 4:00 PM, *Teen Scene* resumes on Wednesdays at 4:30 PM, *Read and Rhyme* is back on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays at 3:00 PM.



*Adult Crafting* is back on Thursday evenings at 6:30 PM and *Tutoring* resumes on Mondays and Tuesdays after the Labour Day weekend. We will also have a variety of special programs throughout the month including crochet club, ukulele, book clubs and more. We are asking everyone to register for our programs by calling the library at 403-742-2292. Not sure what is going on? Find out all about our upcoming events on our website at <https://spl.prl.ab.ca/events> or follow us on Facebook.

Christmas Wine Survivor is back and this time it is all virtual. Your \$20 entry and \$15 bottle of wine (homemade wine is not eligible) gives you a chance to win the big prize, 30% of all the wine entered (up to 60 bottles) to see you through the holidays and then some. Winners in second and third place each take home 20% of the wine collected and the winners in fourth through sixth place each receive

10% of the wine collected. That's still a lot of wine. Rather than having an in-person elimination party, we are taking it online this year. Find out all about at the library or track down one of the Friends of the Library to learn more.

Stop by to learn more about the resources available to you through your membership at the Stettler Public Library.

Membership is free thanks to the generous support of the Town and County of Stettler.

We have more going on than you can imagine. Stop by for a tour, we are looking forward to meeting you.

## Save a Tree

Sign up for e-versions of County Connection magazine by contacting [nthorsteinsson@stettlercounty.ca](mailto:nthorsteinsson@stettlercounty.ca) or by calling 403-742-4441.

It's also available on our website at [www.stettlercounty.ca](http://www.stettlercounty.ca).



# LET'S BE IDLE-FREE AT OUR TRANSFER SITES

## Let's Be Idle-Free at our Transfer Sites



- ❖ Idling pollutes the air around your vehicle (including CO2, carbon monoxide, benzene, nitrogen dioxide and adds ground level ozone, all known to have adverse health effects)
- ❖ Idling at Transfer Sites makes safe breathing difficult for you and for others who are unloading their items.
- ❖ Idling wastes fuel.
- ❖ Idling costs money.
- ❖ Idling is an outdated habit. Idling is unnecessary with today's fuel-injected engines and can actually decrease engine life.
- ❖ Please turn off your vehicle while unloading at our Transfer Sites.

### Remember the 10 Second Rule:

- Idling more than 10 seconds takes more fuel than restarting your engine.
- After 10 seconds, always turn off your motor.



# COMMUNITY NEWS



## Home Support

Home Support is a non-profit organization. We provide services to the seniors, disabled, convalescent people of our community.

Don't need these services yet? Consider volunteering.

Call Terri from Monday-Friday between 8:30 AM and 4:30 PM at 403-742-6568.

## 2020 Stettler Pheasant Festival

This year's Stettler Pheasant Festival is a GO!

Hunts are already selling out with people excited to get in on this annual pheasant hunt and the fun in Stettler from October 16-18.

There are many of opportunities for the community to get involved with this event:

- Buy tickets for the Friday night Social and Street Food event being held October 16!
- Join in the hunt - book your pheasant hunts on the website or call Stettler Board of Trade for more info.
- Join us for the banquet on Saturday night - limited tickets available, following Covid guidelines.
- Volunteer!
- Donate your lands for pheasant release and hunts.

For more information contact the Stettler Board of Trade at 403-742-3181 or visit [www.stettlerpheasantfestival.com](http://www.stettlerpheasantfestival.com).

## Stettler & District Health Emergency Line Program - Operated by FCSS

This is a 24 hour service.

If an emergency arises, with a two-way voice communication you can reach Good Samaritan anytime of the day or night by simply pressing a cordless 'HELP' button.

You may wear this button as a bracelet or a pendant. You can tell the staff what is wrong, they will assess the situation and contact the appropriate help. You are able to maintain voice contact with them until help has arrived.

For more information about fees and hook up, contact the Health Emergency Line Program at 403-742-6568.

# COMMUNITY EVENTS

## Home Support Services Stettler & District Association

Home Support is a non-profit organization. They provide services to seniors, disabled, and convalescent people of our community.

Services include:

- Meals on Wheels\*  
Hot nutritious meals prepared by Points West Living. Provided at a cost, delivered by volunteers at noon Monday through Friday.
- Housekeeping  
Housecleaning, laundry, meal preparation, errands, shopping etc. Cost determined on income and ability to pay in consultation with the Home Support Program Supervisor
- Laundry  
Subsidized pricing determined on income in consultation with Home Support Program Coordinator
- Caring Companionship
- Emergency Child Care
- Support for Caregivers
- Handyman Referral
- Hand Nail Care
- Foot Nail Care

\*All services are available in the County of Stettler, with the exception of Meals on Wheels.

For more information or information on pricing for these services, call the Home Support Stettler & District Program Supervisor, Terri Visser at 403-742-6568.

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM  
Closed from 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM  
Visit [www.stettlerfcss.com/home-support](http://www.stettlerfcss.com/home-support)



## Hold Harmless Agreements

Have you filled out your 2020-2021 Hold Harmless Agreement and paid your administration fee to have your rural drive-way plowed this winter? Don't forget to do so before the snow flies. Inspections need to occur annually before a flag may be issued, due to insurance requirements.



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