

Division 5 Residents. Businesses and Landowners,

This is the second installment of my quarterly reporting back to you on County activities that I think you might find most relevant, dated March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018. If there are other issues that you would like information on, please don't hesitate to contact me. Also, please feel free to pass this along to anyone you think may be interested; and to those receiving this for the first time if you would like to be added to the distribution list please send me an e-mail.

Please remember as well that fire permits are required from March 1<sup>st</sup> to October 31<sup>st</sup> and can be obtained via our automatic system <http://www.mountainviewcounty.com/council-boards-services/fire-permit-controlled-burns>

Also, road bans have been in effect since midnight of March 12<sup>th</sup> and will continue to June 5<sup>th</sup>. Updated listings of banned roads can be found at: <http://www.mountainviewcounty.com/council-boards-services/roads>

### **Sundre Recycle Centre**

An agreement was signed with Sundre on November 10, 2017 and is effective January 1, 2018. Rural people have always had access to this site, but now the County is contributing funds to maintain the site. The site will be open to the public 7 days per week, 24 hours per day and the cost to the County is estimated to be \$14,000 annually. The costs are comprised of the following:

- Town staff time to maintain the site in a neat and tidy manner
- Additional staff time as required during Christmas, Spring Clean-up etc.
- Bin rental
- Disposal of non-recyclable material deposited at the site as unfortunately the odd couch or mattress finds its way to the facility.

The Agreement is for one year but can be extended by mutual consent of both municipalities.

### **Upper Red Deer River Study by Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP)**

This is just to give you all a heads up that AEP has prioritized expanding the floodway study on the Upper Red Deer River, which encompasses the McDougal Flats area, Sundre and North of Sundre to the extent of some 75km of the Red Deer River and 18km of the Bearberry Creek. This study was not requested by Mountain View County and is in no way being driven by Mountain View County. This project is entirely at the discretion of AEP. Anticipated completion of the study is spring 2019. An overview of the study can be found on the AEP website at <http://aep.alberta.ca/water/programs-and-services/flood-hazard-identification-program/river-hazard-studies/default.aspx>. Mountain View County will do our best to keep our residents up to date on any information that we receive from AEP on the floodway study.

### **Request for Resident Information on Water Well Quality**

In February, myself and our CAO met with members of the McDougal Flats Area Protection Society. One of the issues that was discussed was the development of a water quality monitoring program in McDougal Flats. Water quality is the jurisdiction of Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP), however, the County will be discussing the request for water quality monitoring with the [Red Deer River Watershed Alliance](#) as well as with AEP to determine if data gathering on water quality can be done. Another option discussed was to put out a request to community members who have historical well test data that they would be willing to share with the County, so we could try and build a historical data base on water quality monitoring. If you would be willing to share your information, please contact me.

## Snow Removal

We have had our share of snow this year, and there are always questions on snow removal and the timing of seeing a snow plow or a grader on your road. School bus routes are often referred to as an expectation of snow removal priority, however, the County does not prioritize school bus routes in our current Service Levels. Please find the table below (directly from [Procedure #4018-01](#) – snow and ice control) which summarizes road snow removal priorities and the service levels Council has set for timing on snow removal. If you find that your roads are not be cleared in line with this, please let me know.

Priority	Location	Trigger	Goals
1	County Collector Network (CCN) (minor and major)  Hills, bridges, super-elevated curves	5cm (2") Surface accumulation	To be opened within 24 hours of commencement of snow removal operations.  Widen roads within 72 hours of last measurable snow accumulation.
2	Industrial Roads	5cm (2") Surface accumulation	To be opened within 24 hours of commencement of snow removal operations.  Widen roads within 72 hours of last measurable snow accumulation.
3	Local Roads	10cm (4") Surface accumulation	To be opened within 72 hours of commencement of snow removal operations.  Widen roads within 96 hours of last measurable snow accumulation.
4	Multi-lot Subdivisions and Community Halls	Discretionary	From commencement of Priority 4, to be opened within 72 hours.  Widen roads within 96 hours of last measurable snow accumulation.

### 1. Definitions

- 1.1 Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) – means the CAO of Mountain View County or his delegate.
- 1.2 County – means Mountain View County.
- 1.3 County Collector Network (CCN) – means Mountain View County's officially recognized road network for which long-term plans for maintenance and/or upgrading exists and may include asphalt paved, chip-sealed, and gravel roads.
- 1.4 Hard Surface – means asphalt pavement, concrete or chip-sealed surface.
- 1.5 Industrial Roads – mean roads which have been identified that have access roads leading to commercial or industrial operations.
- 1.6 Local Roads – mean roads which service subdivisions, local residential areas, agriculture community, and rural roads.
- 1.7 Multi-lot Subdivision – means a subdivision of two (2) or more lots.
- 1.8 Opened Road – means a road which has been made passable by snow plowing equipment but may still require widening or additional work to be fully functional.
- 1.9 Quadrants – means local Foreman areas as follows: Quadrant 1 is the south-east area, Quadrant 2 is the north-east area, Quadrant 3 is the north-west area, and Quadrant 4 is the south-west area of Mountain View County.

## Operational Budget

In my last report, I provided information on the Capital budget as well as some of more significant projects / costs that make up the Capital budget. Council is now discussing the operational budget. The main reason these are split is that the capital budget is passed in December in order to put large infrastructure projects out to tender early in the new year to achieve more competitive pricing; whereas the operational budget can not be passed until all information from the Province is received on Provincial assessments (i.e., well sites, pipelines) as well as the Alberta School Foundation Fund requisition. The operational budget is normally passed in April; however, the County operates under an interim operating budget for the first quarter of the year.

Some interesting elements of the operational budget are the following;

- \$2,024,000 - Community funding to the Towns (Carstairs, Didsbury, Olds and Sundre) and Village (Cremona) for Operating and Capital maintenance costs for Culture, Recreation and Libraries. The new inter-municipal collaboration agreements that the County negotiated in 2016/17 resulted in a 40% increase (roughly \$580,000) in operational and capital maintenance funding to the Towns and Village as annual transfers. This is in addition to the \$615K that has been put towards a capital reserve fund to support recreation and culture facilities in the Towns and Village.
- Roughly \$21M is spent on or road maintenance, accounting for an estimated 60% of the total operating budget.
- \$1,159,930 has been budgeted for Mountain View County's share of operating the firehalls (Sundre, Water Valley, Cremona, Olds, Didsbury, Carstairs). This is in addition to the capital contributions for fire vehicles and equipment of \$1,246,725.
- Council has included \$170K in the 2018 operating budget to look at initiatives to support reducing the rural crime rate in the County. Many Councillors, including myself, have attending rural crime forums and are trying to incorporate the community feedback into an initiative that the County can execute.
- A breakdown of the revenues that Mountain View County collects is listed in the following table. This does not include the requisitions for [Mountain View Seniors' Housing](#) or the [Alberta School Foundation Fund](#).

Tax category	Taxes collected, Millions \$	Percentage of total taxes
Farmland	1.3	4%
Linear (pipelines, wells, electrical Power systems and generation, telecommunication systems and cable distribution)	12.4	42%
Machinery and Equipment (underground tanks, separators, fuel and gas scrubbers, compressors, chemical injectors, metering and analysis equipment)	5	17%
Non-residential (commercial properties)	3.6	12%
Linear co-generation	0.3	1%
Railways	0.1	0%
Residential	6.6	23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29.3</b>	<b>1</b>

## Land Use Bylaw Open Houses

Council opens up the [Land Use Bylaw](#) periodically for review and holds open houses to get feedback from the public and businesses on suggested changes. Some of the key topics highlighted for review, update and addition are:

- Horticultural use, medicinal, cannabis production facilities and cannabis retail sales – LUB section 2.5, 13.1, 14.1, 14.2 and 16.2
- Sour Gas facilities – LUB section 2.5 and 10.14
- Borrow pits – LUB section 4.2.2
- Other amendments, such as amending the definition of a Portable Batch Plant to exclude set scrubber plants.

Open houses have been set up for the following dates in the following locations

- April 10<sup>th</sup>, Council Chambers at the Mountain View County office
- April 24<sup>th</sup>, Sundre Legion

This is your opportunity to bring forward any questions or concerns you have with the current Land Use Bylaw as well as any recommendations you may have to improve the Bylaw.

## Land Assessment for Agriculture Use

There have been some questions on the assessment criteria to determine Agriculture versus other land uses. The assessment of lands is purely based on land use and not your status as a farmer. Therefore, someone could own land and rent it out to a farmer for grazing cattle, or crop production and that land would be considered Agriculture land as that is what it is being used for. The land owner does not have to be a farmer and so therefore there is no need to show the Tax Assessors any income statements. There is also not a threshold requirement for a certain value in a lease agreement to rent your land out for agriculture use. The assessment evaluation is based on land use only.

As per the Municipal Government Act, Farming operations in order to determine the land use of Agriculture are the following;

Matters Relating to Assessment and Taxation Regulation 2018:

Section 2(1) (f): “Farming operations” means the raising, production and sale of agricultural products and includes

- (i) Horticulture, aviculture, apiculture and aquaculture,
- (ii) The raising, production and sale of
  - a. Horses, cattle, bison, sheep, swine, goats and or other livestock
  - b. Fur bearing animals raised in captivity,
  - c. Domestic cervids within the meaning of the domestic cervids industry regulations (AR 188/2014),  
or
  - d. Domestic camelids,
- (iii) The planting, growing and sale of sod,

- (iv) An operation on a parcel of land for which a woodland management plan has been approved by the Woodlot Association of Alberta or a forester registered under Regulated Forest Profession Act for the production of timber primarily marketed as whole logs, seed cones or Christmas trees but does not include any operation or activity on land that has been stripped for the purposes of, or in a manner that leaves the land more suitable for, future development.

If you are not farming the land yourself, in order to get your land assessed as agriculture your options would be to get a lease with a farmer for grazing or crop production (again no dollar amount is necessary if you lease in kind for something else or just for the sake of land maintenance) or to go through the woodlot association (<http://www.woodlot.org/>) or get an agreement with a business like [West Fraser](#) mills for timber harvesting.

These are just some issues that I thought you might be interested in. If you have additional questions or would like information on a topic that I have not addressed, please contact me.

Thanks,

Angela Aalbers

Division 5 Councillor, Mountain View County

[aaalbers@mvcounty.com](mailto:aaalbers@mvcounty.com)

403-507-1057

P.S. Keep tabs on County information and updates through our social media accounts:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MVCounty/>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/mvcounty>
- Instagram (new): [https://www.instagram.com/mountain\\_view\\_county/](https://www.instagram.com/mountain_view_county/)