

# COUNTY OF ST. PAUL

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[www.county.stpaul.ab.ca](http://www.county.stpaul.ab.ca)



**Our Mission - To create desirable rural experiences**



## County Communicator

May 2022



**Open House** Assessors from Accurate Assessment Group will hold an Open House to discuss any questions you have about your property assessment. The Open House will take place at the County Administration Office on June 8 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and on June 9 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

To schedule an appointment contact the County Administration Office: [emailtax@county.stpaul.ab.ca](mailto:emailtax@county.stpaul.ab.ca) or phone 780-645-3301 ext. 1202.

To discuss your assessment at any another time please call Accurate Assessment at 1-877-438-2305 and speak with Bob or Jesse.

The deadline for appealing assessments is indicated on the front page of the tax notice.

**Property Tax Penalties** Property Taxes are due on/by Thursday, June 30, 2022. The penalty dates for the 2022 taxation year are:

July 1, 2022: 3% penalty on the current tax amount  
December 1, 2022: 10% penalty on the current tax amount  
February 1, 2023: 10% on all outstanding taxes

**PAID**

**Payment Options** Payments to the County can be made in a number of ways. Remember to include your account number on payments and the roll number on tax payments. See the County's website under 'Payment Options' for additional information.

**By Mail** Please do not mail cash.

**Administration Office Front Door Drop Box** Cheque or money order only. No cash please.

**In person at the County Administration Office.**

**Internet Banking** for utilities, property taxes or accounts receivable.

**Monthly Pre-Authorized Debit** for the Tax Installment Payment Plan or Utility Pre-Authorized Debit Payment Agreement. Contact the County Administration Office for information.

**Online Credit Card Payments** through OptionPay. Payments can be made for utilities, property taxes or accounts receivable. A fee is charged by OptionPay.

**Do you need a receipt for your property tax payment?** A receipt for payments made online or by mail are not mailed automatically. Request a copy of your property tax

receipt from the County by emailing [tax@county.stpaul.ab.ca](mailto:tax@county.stpaul.ab.ca)  
[Pursuant to Section 334 of the *Municipal Government Act*]

**Reminder: Property Sales/Purchases** Should you sell a property with monthly County Water Utility charges, it is your responsibility to notify the County of the change.

Similarly, if you purchase a property check whether any County Water Utilities are being charged on that property. If so, contact the Utilities Department to complete an Application for a Water Utilities Account: Email: [ut@county.stpaul.ab.ca](mailto:ut@county.stpaul.ab.ca)

**Spring Clean-Up** During May, residents can dispose of air conditioning units, dehumidifiers, freezers, fridges, and water coolers that contain Freon without paying the fee at all County, Town and the Evergreen Regional Waste Commission Transfer Stations. *The \$20 Freon fee waiver is valid only during May Spring Cleanup.*



**Recycling your beverage containers** at the Transfer Stations help to support the Elk Point 4-H Beef Club, Lac Sante Recreation Family Society and the Mallaig and District Ag Society. Through the Recycling Beverage Container Program and the work of society/club members, over 48,000 beverage containers have been recycled. The recycled value has gone back to support the community organizations. Please continue your support by dropping off empty beverage containers at the Transfer Stations. 'Thank you!'

**County Landfills & Waste Transfer Facilities Hours**  
*Summer Operating Hours (May 1 to October 31) for all County Transfer Stations except Ashmont:*  
Tuesday and Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Ashmont Transfer Station:

Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Evergreen Waste Management Site

Monday to Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m./ Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Closed on Statutory Holidays

### County Administration Office Hours

Monday to Friday from 8:30 to noon/  
1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Closed on weekends and Statutory Holidays.

The Administration Office will remain open over the lunch hour from June 1 to June 30, inclusive, to allow residents additional time to pay their taxes. The Office will return to regular office hours on July 4.

### Public Works Shop

April 25 to October 14th, 2022 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Closed for lunch from noon to 12:30 p.m.

*Come in!*  
**WE'RE OPEN**

## Are you camping this summer?

The online campground reservation system through Camp Reservations Canada has been very busy for the Municipal Campgrounds located at Floating Stone, Lac Bellevue, Stoney Lake and Westcove. New larger non-powered sites have been added to Floating Stone. Do you want to stay longer? Book a campsite for up to four weeks at a time. The campgrounds are scheduled to open on May 19.

See what's there - view the drone footage through the County 'Campgrounds' webpage.



## Change to the Safety Permit Application Process

All Safety Code permits for the County of St. Paul are now issued through Superior Safety Codes Inc. These include Building, Electrical, Gas, Plumbing and Private Sewage Disposal System permits.

Applications for safety permits should be emailed directly to Superior Safety Codes Inc.

Email: [info@superiorsafetycodes.com](mailto:info@superiorsafetycodes.com)

Phone: 780-870-9020

Contact [Municipal Planning Services \(2009\) Ltd.](#) if you have questions about subdivisions or if you are planning to apply for a subdivision.

Email: [admin@munplan.ab.ca](mailto:admin@munplan.ab.ca)

Phone: 780-486-1991

Development Permits are processed through the County.

All information and application forms for safety permits, development permits and subdivision application packages are available on the County's website under 'Planning & Development'.

## Maximum number of Recreational Vehicles on Country Residential I Properties is 2 (with restrictions)

Property owners are reminded that no development permit is required for a maximum of 2 recreation vehicles on a Country Residential I lot *if* the mobile vehicles are on the site for 7 days or longer and have no accessory buildings or structures, or the unit is not mobile for more than 7 days or has any accessory builds or structures associated with it. A discretionary development permit is required for placement of accessory buildings.



The number of recreation vehicles on a parcel may, on occasion, exceed the maximum of two subject to the provision of the Development Authority being made for the disposal of the sewage. *The maximum period of time of more than two recreation vehicles on a site shall not exceed 5 consecutive days.*

County of St. Paul Land Use Bylaw: Section 8.4(4)(e.)



## County Councillors

Standing: Darrell Younghans; Ross Krekoski; Louis Dechaine; Kevin Wirsta; Dale Hedrick

Seated: Sheila Kitz, CAO; Glen Ockerman, Reeve; Maxine Fodness, Deputy Reeve

## Contact Information

Glen Ockerman, Reeve

Email: [gockerman@county.stpaul.ab.ca](mailto:gockerman@county.stpaul.ab.ca) Phone: 780-210-1025

Division 1: Darrell Younghans

Email: [dyounghans@county.stpaul.ab.ca](mailto:dyounghans@county.stpaul.ab.ca) Phone: 780-645-8513

Division 2: Kevin Wirsta

Email: [kwirsta@county.stpaul.ab.ca](mailto:kwirsta@county.stpaul.ab.ca) Phone: 780-614-5959

Division 3: Ross Krekoski

Email: [rkrekoski@county.stpaul.ab.ca](mailto:rkrekoski@county.stpaul.ab.ca) Phone: 780-614-8295

Division 4: Maxine Fodness, Deputy Reeve

Email: [mfodness@county.stpaul.ab.ca](mailto:mfodness@county.stpaul.ab.ca) Phone: 780-645-4778

Division 5: Dale Hedrick

Email: [dhedrick@county.stpaul.ab.ca](mailto:dhedrick@county.stpaul.ab.ca) Phone: 780-210-0889

Division 6: Louis Dechaine

Email: [ldechaine@county.stpaul.ab.ca](mailto:ldechaine@county.stpaul.ab.ca) Phone: 780-210-0467

Council Meetings and Public Works Meetings  
are live streamed on  
'YouTube/County of St. Paul No.19 Council Meeting'.



2022 recognizes 60 years since  
the County was incorporated as the  
County of St. Paul No.19

## County Budget 2022

## Reality Check

The County recognizes the challenges that all levels of government face with increasing costs and being fiscally responsible with taxpayers' dollars. As we deal with the fiscal difficulties brought on by the challenges outlined below, the County will be reviewing all levels of service and spending to ensure that we are operating within our means while meeting the service needs of County residents.

The County's budgetary decisions may impact - for example - service, road work, and funding levels to community organizations. We recognize that our residents are also facing tough economic times.

The County Council and Administration have taken a responsible approach to the 2022 budget by delaying or cancelling planned initiatives. For example, equipment purchases and planned projects have been delayed or cancelled. Council has taken a 10% cut in base salaries, and the number of road construction and repair projects have been reduced.

Municipalities are required to operate on a balanced budget. The County will continue to maintain services while listening to your concerns; however, there may be some tough decisions that need to be made in the future that will balance and manage service expectations against budget realities. **The County's '2022 Budget Narrative' provides an explanation of the revenue and expenditures and is available on the County's website under 'Budget'.**



### County 2022 Budget Impacts

The province mandated that all municipalities partially fund policing. The County's contribution in 2022 is \$333,580 and will increase to \$500,728 by 2023.

The Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) funding allocation for the County for 2022 is \$1,239,944 which includes the operating funding of \$113,336, which represents a 43% decrease in funding from the 2021 allocation of \$2,891,527. MSI funding is used to maintain core infrastructure such as roads and bridges.

The provincial government introduced a three-year property tax exemption (Tax Holiday) beginning in 2022 for energy companies drilling new wells or building new pipelines and has eliminated the well drilling equipment tax for new drills. The total assessment impact to the County is a loss of \$2,000,000 which equates to a tax revenue reduction of \$46,800 this year. This will equate to an overall loss of \$140,000 for these properties over the three year 'tax holiday'. It will be compounded by the wells drilled or pipelines constructed in 2022 and 2023 which will not be taxed until 2025.

The County has \$39,216 in outstanding oil and gas property taxes. Rural municipalities are continually advocating to the province to assist us in establishing a process that will ensure that municipalities get paid the taxes that are levied on all types of properties, particularly Designated Industrial Property. Other property types have a very defined tax recovery process.

The provincial government integrated the County into the centralization of Assessment of Designated Industrial Properties (DIP) in July 2021. Previously, assessors appointed by the County conducted inspections of 100% of oil/gas properties each year. The provincial assessors target only 20% each year with onsite inspections and rely on self reporting by oil and gas companies to determine assessed values. The County is concerned that this change in process may result in missed assessment and, therefore, missed tax dollars.

### County 2022 Budget Priorities

The County has budgeted \$70,000 for community grants to assist community halls, non-profit organizations, societies, and other civic groups that provide services to its residents. Community Halls/ Agricultural Societies will continue to receive support of \$110,000.

The County awards four-\$1000 scholarships to students each year.

8.7 km of road repair/maintenance and three bridge culverts are planned.

A new boat launch will be installed at Lac Bellevue.

A \$50 fee for a Letter of Consent to cross County Lands for the purpose of acquiring a permit from Alberta Environment and Parks for a Mooring Structure (dock) has been implemented to cover administrative costs.

The County is undertaking a review of the water distribution lines in Ashmont, Lottie Lake, and Mallaig as well as the sewer collection lines in Ashmont and Mallaig. This review will provide details to consider for the future repair and replacement of these lines.

Council has allocated \$2.00/capita to STARS Air Ambulance.

As in previous years, the County has allocated funding for doctor recruitment: \$20,000 to the Town of St. Paul and \$7,500 to the Town of Elk Point.

The Ashmont Fire Department will receive a new Rescue/Pumper Fire Truck. The pumper truck currently in Ashmont will be reallocated to the Elk Point Fire Department.

The Agricultural Services Department will be replacing one of their road side mowers.



## County Budget 2022

### Long Term Financial Planning + Asset Management + Levels of Service = Responsible Budgetary Planning

#### Long Term Financial Planning

The County plans for five years ahead through Asset Management and Long Term Financial Planning (LTFP).

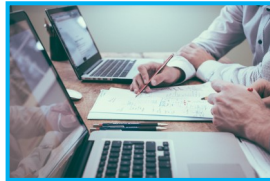
The County received a \$50,000 grant from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to develop a draft Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP).

The main goal of the LTFP is to bring together the financial priorities with strategic planning in operations, services, and capital asset management. The LTFP will be reviewed every two years.

LTFP also sets financial priorities and financial stability, particularly when there are often unknowns such as increasing costs and cuts to provincial grants and programming.

The goals of LTFP are:

- reliability in operating cost
- ensure that taxes don't fluctuate hugely
- ensure there is a contingency plan
- ensure that everyone pays a fair amount
- eliminates vulnerability and risk
- provides resilience



#### The key question is:

#### What can the County afford now and in the future?

The County's policy and practice is to be transparent to ensure accountability to ratepayers. This means that the financial realities 'connect' with long-term capital and operational plans.

#### Economic Development

The County is also investigating the types of new investment and business that could be developed and/or attracted to the County to grow the local economy, attract new residents, and create jobs. The County, Town of St. Paul, Town of Elk Point, and Summer Village of Horseshoe Bay created the STEP Economic Development Alliance that will investigate the opportunities for new investment and new business and retention coupled with increasing the local economy and create jobs.

The STEP Committee has hired a Regional Economic Development Officer that has been focusing on possible avenues for development such as food/hemp production, destination tourism initiatives, attracting the film industry and energy/climate action programs.

The benefit to economic development is an expanded tax base which, ultimately, leads to a more secure financial future and the ability to plan for even a longer term.

See <https://stepeconomicdevelopment.ca/> for information on the 'steps' that STEP is taking.

## Responsible Budgetary Planning

#### Asset Management

Asset management is a juggling act. It's an ongoing exercise in setting priorities in spending, taking into consideration what is best for the ratepayer and residents. It's a process of making decisions about how assets are cared for and used in a way that manages current and future needs, considers risks and opportunities and makes the best use of resources.

The County's assets include:

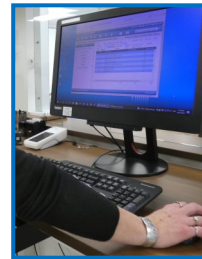
- \* Buildings and property
- \* Campgrounds
- \* Equipment
- \* Roads
- \* Vehicles
- \* Waste removal
- \* Water and sewer lines



One example of ongoing asset management is the conditional assessment by Public Works of gravel roads. Once the assessment is completed it is then analyzed for consequences of the condition to provide a risk assessment score which will determine the priority for action needed in order for this road to provide the level of service that is established by Council for that type of road.

#### Levels of Service

Each department in the County provides a service to our residents be it through the County's road network, water distribution, wastewater systems, solid waste management, planning and development permits and others.



County Council and Administration each year review the services that are offered to our residents. This review considers quantity, quality, reliability and timeliness of the service. We put on our 'resident hats' to try to understand what is important to our residents and what is required in each department to deliver this service.

What equipment is needed, the number of staff, what technology, and what goods are required to meet the current level of service. What does it cost to increase the level of service? Alternatively, what can we save if we decrease the level of service?

As the availability of budget dollars become more challenging the review of services levels will become more important. It will be a balancing act to determine if the County can continue to provide all of the current services, or perhaps we will need to deliver them in a different way, or not at all.

**County Council and Administration remain  
committed to responsible budgetary planning  
that guide how our services evolve as the  
needs of our County grow.**