

YOUR PARKLAND

2023 SPRING

Keeping you connected with your County

**Message from
Mayor and Council**

**2023 Budget
Highlights**

**WHAT'S NEW IN
PARKLAND COUNTY**

Cover photo: Constable Chelsea Robinson Day Use Park, Theresa Muth Photography

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UPCOMING OFFICE CLOSURES

Our offices will be closed on the following dates:

APRIL 7 – Good Friday

APRIL 10 – Easter Monday

PROCLAMATIONS

MARCH:

Fraud Prevention Month – March

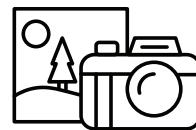
APRIL:

Pitch-In Canada Week – April 17 – 23

Earth Day – April 22

National Volunteer Week – April 16 – 22

International Day of Mourning – April 28



Share Your Feedback and Photos

If you're out exploring the County and snap a beautiful photo, be sure to share it with us and you might see it featured in one of our future editions! Email your photos, and your thoughts on this publication, to communications@parklandcounty.com.

You can also share your photos by tagging us on social media.

Concerns

If you notice a concern or have a question within Parkland County, you can use our County Concerns tool to send it in right from your smartphone or computer.



REACH OUT OR FOLLOW US:

Find out more on what's happening in Parkland County, follow us or visit parklandcounty.com

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday – Friday; 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

T: 780-968-8888

E: hello@parklandcounty.com

53109A HWY 779

Parkland County, AB T7Z 1R1



MESSAGE FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Welcome to *Your Parkland*! We are excited to be expanding our engagement offerings by bringing this newsletter to each and every resident in Parkland County. In this newsletter, we will be sharing news, updates on County projects and activities, and community events. We strive to stay connected and engage effectively with our communities and are always looking for ways to provide superior service delivery throughout the County.

We want to hear from you, and there's lots of ways to get in touch! Along with the *Your Parkland* newsletter, we are also reaching residents through our newly launched online engagement platform, **YourParkland.ca**.

It's been a busy year and Council is very proud of all we have accomplished. In this newsletter you'll find some of our successes highlighted in the 2022 Year-in-Review along with our 2023 Budget. Parkland County had the lowest tax rate increase in the Edmonton region at 2.78%, reflecting a commitment to reasonable and consistent tax rate adjustments.

Our various departments have been hard at work, and in this edition, you'll learn more about the County's recent achievements and upcoming projects, such as our sustainability award, broadband project, and agricultural programs. We appreciate you reading and catching up with your County.

To everyone who calls Parkland County home — thank you for your support as we work to ensure that Parkland will always be a great community to live, work and play, now and in the future. We are excited for all that 2023 will bring!

Parkland County Mayor and Council

Parkland County Mayor and Council (left to right): Councillor Natalie Birnie, Councillor Allan Hoefsloot, Councillor Sally Kucher Johnson, Mayor Allan Gamble, Councillor Phyllis Kobasiuk, Councillor Kristina Kowalski, Councillor Rob Wiedeman. (photo above)

2023 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS



2.78%
Tax revenue increase

\$88.06 M

Projected Net Financial Asset

(Financial assets after deducting the County's liabilities)



\$42.89 M

Capital Investment planned for 2023



\$7.67

Monthly tax increase for median home owner



34%

Utilized Allowable Debt Limit

(The amount of debt Parkland County is legally allowed to carry)



Strategic Capital Investment

- Wabamun
- Acheson
- Broadband
- Trails development



Budget Pressures

- Inflation
- Declining Linear assessment (Tax revenue from power generation, utilities, oil & gas, etc)
- Provincial policing contract
- Cost Sharing Pressures



Low Tax Increase

Leveraging strong fiscal position to keep tax rates competitive while funding important investments in regional infrastructure

Tax Reduction Strategy

To keep tax increases to a minimum, Parkland County was able to offset some of the components that would have increased taxes further through disciplined financial strategies. The result is Parkland County ranking among the most competitive property taxes in the region.

Budget Pressures

Decline in Assessment (Lost Revenue)	(1.48%)
Inflation	(5.11%)
Other Pressures	(0.79%)
Capital Projects	(1.23%)
Provincial Policing Contract	(1.18%)
Cost Sharing Pressures	(0.15%)
Total	9.94%



Tax Reduction Measures

Revenue Increase	(0.61%)
Budget Efficiencies	(6.55%)
Total	7.16%

WHAT'S NEW IN PARKLAND COUNTY

Parkland County wins sustainability award

Parkland County is proud to have won a Sustainable Communities Award for the County's work in determining the value of natural infrastructure in rural road networks. The County is reducing road maintenance and drainage costs through an informed partnership that considers the needs of nature and the community, and this award celebrates our work as an environmental innovator among Canadian cities and communities of all sizes.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Sustainable Communities Awards recognized our Community Sustainability departments' efforts in the Natural

Asset Management category — a reflection of Parkland County's commitment to sustainable environmental practices. It was the only award given to a community in Western Canada this year.

About the project

In recent years, Parkland County has experienced various extreme weather events, from large-scale wildfires and drought to flooding and water disruptions. These events affect our residents' quality of life, impact service delivery, and increase costs. Maintaining our road and drainage networks is among the largest annual expenses for a rural municipality.

“ In Parkland County, our goal is not just to integrate sustainability considerations into the asset management process, but to embed the asset management process into our environmental and sustainability programs.”

Krista Quesnel,
Manager of Community Sustainability

In consideration of these costs, Parkland County investigated how natural assets, such as wetlands, help to reduce the effects of extreme weather events over time — and how we can restore these assets to reduce servicing costs.

Alongside our partners, the Community Sustainability team researched the cost and benefit of preserving and improving wetlands and other natural infrastructure on agricultural land. The goal was to identify cost savings, efficiency, and

other metrics to create easier decision-making for municipal stakeholders and to stress the potential negative impacts if further ecosystem loss was to occur.

Overall, the project demonstrated that municipalities can and should consider the value of natural assets in their everyday decision-making. Parkland County now has a stronger understanding of the value of natural assets to our community, especially the road and drainage network. We also have an improved understanding of the financial costs of restoring natural assets.

Council, management, and staff are now better equipped to make decisions regarding natural assets. We are using results and recommendations from this project to better understand the value of natural infrastructure as well as the potential impact of its loss on the community. These outcomes will also help us consider natural assets in the decision-making process and as practical solutions to drainage issues and road washouts.

Parkland County would like to thank our partners at ALUS, The North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance, InnoTech Alberta, and Dr. Wanhong Yang's team from the University of Guelph for their efforts on this project.



DID YOU KNOW?

Wetlands and riparian areas provide social, economic, and structural value to the local and global community, including:

- Water filtration and retention
- Increased water storage capacity for droughts
- Lower risk of flooding
- Carbon sequestration
- Increased wildlife habitat and biodiversity





YOUR PARKLAND

We want to hear from you! *Your Parkland* isn't just the name of this new County newsletter — it is also the name of our new online engagement portal, a way for you to stay informed on what is happening in your County. While quarterly issues of *Your Parkland* will keep you in the loop, we then invite you to log onto *Your Parkland* online to get involved. Get information and share your thoughts on various County plans, projects, and initiatives as well as connect with our Enforcement team on safety programs specific to your community.

Your Parkland will allow you to participate in the planning process and have your voice heard. Questions and comments entered on *Your Parkland* will be shared with County stakeholders and decision-makers, whether it's a member of the Planning staff, a Peace Officer, Council members, or the Mayor.

VISIT YourParkland.ca FOR INFORMATION ON UPCOMING ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES THIS SPRING:

The Trails Strategy Plan

This plan will provide long term direction to trail development and the creation of an integrated trail network for County residents and visitors. The plan will focus on the next 20 years, with a more detailed focus on the next 5 – 10 years.

Bylaw Review

A process that includes input from the community on the updating of seven existing bylaws and the creation of one new bylaw. The resulting input will be drafted into a report and presented to council.

Land Use Bylaw Redesign

Parkland County's Land Use Bylaw regulates how and where land within Parkland County develops. A provincial requirement, Land Use Regulations are reviewed and updated regularly to reflect the needs of the community. As part of a regular and ongoing process, Parkland County is updating the County's Land Use Bylaw in an

effort to streamline regulations and create clear and transparent decision-making processes for development in the county. The County's Land Use Bylaw was last updated in 2017, with a previous update in 2009 and minor changes completed every few years. Now that the former Village of Wabamun is part of the County, it is desirable to ensure consistency throughout the County and integrate Wabamun into the Land Use Bylaw. This project is a county-led initiative with a project team of County staff, and changes to Parkland County's Land Use Bylaw will be informed by feedback from local residents and business owners with regular engagement planned throughout the project. Ultimately, the updated Land Use Bylaw will go before Council for final approval where residents and business owners will also have an opportunity to share their feedback with Council.

We want to hear your thoughts on how to ensure our Land Use Bylaw is responsive to the unique needs of Parkland County

residents and businesses. Learn more about Parkland County's current Land Use Bylaw here: www.parklandcounty.com/LUB. If you're interested in the updates to Parkland County's Land Use Bylaw, please select "Receive Email Updates" on the bottom of that page, and you'll be notified by email when the page is updated, as we will link to opportunities for you to get involved and share your thoughts throughout the process, which is expected to continue into 2024.

Municipal Development Plan Amendment

A high level plan that establishes a vision and guides growth for the County over the next 30 years.

Parkland County is growing and changing, which provides this important opportunity for community involvement that will lead to tangible results. We want you to join the conversation, share your perspective, and help shape *Your Parkland's* future!

Upcoming Meetings

Council and committee meetings will be taking place in-person at the County Council Chambers. All meetings commence at 9:00 a.m.

Residents are welcome to provide suggestions and/or raise concerns for 10 minutes at the beginning of the meetings or formal appointments can be made by contacting Legislative Services at 780-968-8471.

Stay up to date with Council meeting agendas, recaps and more by subscribing to "Receive Email Updates" at www.parklandcounty.com/Council.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council meetings are more formal. Council makes decisions on important matters in the community.

MARCH

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

APRIL

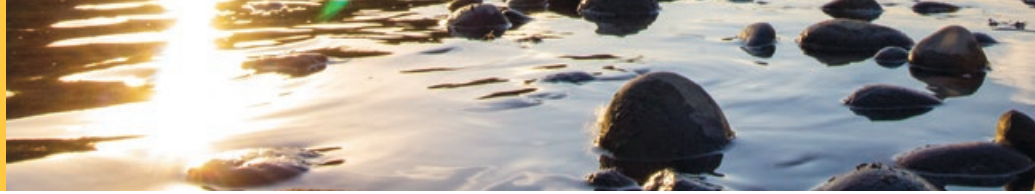
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30

MAY

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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

■ COUNCIL ■ GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE



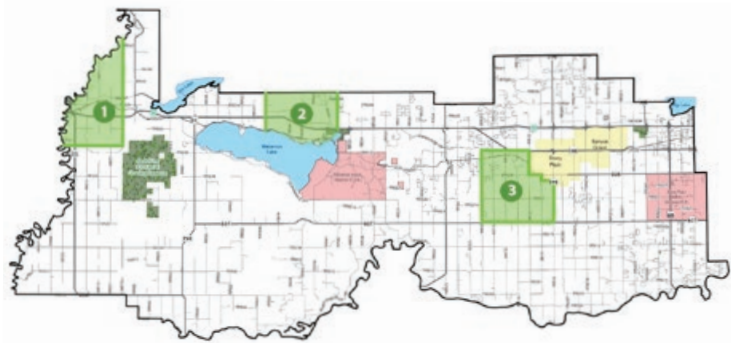
Weed Control Program

Not all plants are good! There are specific weeds you cannot leave unmanaged on your property. These weeds, designated as “prohibited noxious and noxious” under the *Alberta Weed Control Act*, can spread rapidly and cause serious problems. Property owners are responsible for controlling these plants on their property.

As shown in the image below, we have selected areas of the County where we will focus our resources

for 2023 weed inspections and control. We will begin with controlling weeds on County lands and then begin assessing private properties. Properties with noxious and prohibited noxious weeds will be inspected and recommendations for control will be given.

Please note: A weed notice can be issued in extreme cases where no efforts are made to prevent the spread of noxious weeds or destroy prohibited noxious weeds.



Vegetation Control Program

Parkland County's Agricultural Services Department will be using a combination of methods to control noxious and prohibited noxious weeds on County lands as designated under the *Alberta Weed Control Act*. These methods include:

- Herbicide application
- Mowing
- Biological control agents
- Manual removal

Herbicides used this upcoming season may include:

Clearview PCP #29752
Truview PCP# 30920
Lontrel XC PCP #32795
Milestone PCP #28517
Navius PCP #30922
Escort PCP #23005

Biological control agents are used to control Yellow Toadflax, Leafy Spurge and Canada Thistle at sensitive sites throughout the County.

For your safety and worker safety, please refrain from approaching staff or disturbing biological control sites while work is in progress.

For more information on the Vegetation and Weed Control Programs, visit www.parklandcounty.com/weeds

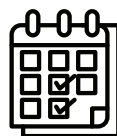
DID YOU KNOW?

You can rent pasture sprayers from our Agricultural Services!

Call 780-968-8467



Community League Events — check out what's happening at your local community league!



For more information, visit your community league website:
www.parklandcounty.com/CommunityLeagues

Holborn Community Hall

March 18, April 15 –
Family Bingo

Keephills Community Association

Every Wednesday until May –
Community Gym

Westland Park Community League

March 18 – FCSS –
Youth Stay Safe Program

Sand Hills Community League

March 25 – Spring Fling
Vendor Market

Garden Valley Community Centre

March 25 – Spring Market
(9:30 am – 3:30 pm)

March 31 – Spring Family
BINGO
(Doors open at 6:30pm,
Game at 7:00 pm)

Woodbend Hall

April 1 – Partners’
Crib Tournament

April 8 – Pancake Breakfast
and Easter Egg Hunt

April 29 – Community
Garage Sale

Interested in Quarterly Corporate and Financial Updates?

Each quarter, updates are provided at both Council & Governance and Priorities Committee meetings on the corporate and financial status of Parkland County.



Upcoming Corporate and Financial Updates:

Quarter 4 – 2022: March 14

Quarter 1 – 2023: June 6

Quarter 2 – 2023: September 5

Fire Chief's Dedication Celebrated with the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal

Parkland County Fire Chief Brian Cornforth has been awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal in recognition of his dedicated service to Parkland County and our community.

Chief Cornforth has been a fire chief for over 39 years and has served in Parkland County for the last seven years. He is a dedicated leader who is committed to keeping our community safe and serving others. The Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal is awarded to Albertans in recognition of their significant contributions to the province, and Chief Cornforth is humbled by the acknowledgment of his hard efforts.

"It is a great feeling to know that your time and knowledge in helping others is positively impacting the community and lives of Albertans, and humbling when these contributions are recognized by others," he said.

This recognition comes after a busy and challenging past few years for Parkland County Fire Services. From dealing with the pandemic to fighting strenuous wildfires, there have been many obstacles to overcome. Fortunately, the team has had Chief Cornforth's leadership to guide them.

The commitment and hard work of Chief Cornforth and the entire team in Fire Services helps make Parkland County a better place to live, work, and play.

"Being able to share in helping people through some of the most difficult and challenging times in their life is very rewarding for one's soul," said Brian. "It helps me achieve my purpose."

Congratulations to Parkland County Fire Chief Brian Cornforth on this accomplishment, and thank you to the rest of the fire services team for all you do to protect our community.

"We are grateful for Brian's leadership and his commitment to the community."

Dave Cross, General Manager of Agriculture, Community & Protective Services



Photo: Fire Chief Brian Cornforth was presented with the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal at the January 10 Council Meeting.

Amazon Opening in Acheson

Parkland County is excited for the opening of the new Amazon Robotic fulfillment centre in the Acheson Industrial Area.

This will be Amazon's first robotic fulfillment centre in Alberta, boasting five stories and around 2.9 million square feet – the size of more than 50 NFL football fields. The centre will be used to pick, pack and ship a variety of items to Amazon customers. Robots help the flow of inventory by delivering mobile shelving units to stations, increasing the number of products that can be packed per hour.

"We are thrilled for the upcoming opening of the new Amazon robotic fulfillment centre here in our Acheson Industrial Area," said Mayor Allan Gamble. "This facility will boost our economy by creating over 1,000 jobs. It also demonstrates why Parkland County is a great place to do business."

Amazon joins many other local, Canadian and international businesses who have chosen to call Acheson home including Champion Pet Foods, Overwaitea Food Group, and Fountain Tire.

"It's great to see our vision for Parkland County's economic future become reality with the opening of this fulfillment centre in Acheson," said Laura Swain, Chief Administrative Officer. "We take pride in each company that joins the County, and we are excited to celebrate Amazon's impressive addition to our business community."

An advertisement for "ON-DEMAND LOCAL TRANSIT". The text "ON-DEMAND LOCAL TRANSIT" is in large, bold, white letters on a black background. Below this, it says "Get around Stony Plain, Spruce Grove, Parkland Village, and Acheson!" in white text on a blue background. Underneath is the website "parklandcounty.com/transit" in white. At the bottom, there are logos for "The City of SPRUCE GROVE", "TOWN OF STONY PLAIN", and "parkland county". On the right side, there is a graphic of a bus with the text "GET THE APP" and "PICK-UP" in a pink box.

Bringing in Broadband

High speed internet is a necessary utility, and improving and expanding this service throughout Parkland County will keep residents and businesses connected and ready for whatever the future will bring. As part of the County's broadband strategy to bring reliable and affordable high-speed internet to our residents, we will be swiftly

moving forward with a partner on the next stage of this project. In this early phase of our broadband rollout, we expect network construction and installation to be completed in 2023, which will allow fibre-based home internet connections to at least 3,000 households in the initial target area — northeast and northcentral Parkland County.

WHAT IS BROADBAND?

Broadband refers to a type of highspeed internet connection that can be accomplished in various ways, such as through coaxial cables, fibre-optic cables, and radio waves. The faster and more reliable option is fibre optics, which is what we are working on bringing to more homes in the County.

Keep an eye on our webpage for updates on the next steps of Parkland's broadband rollout!

Visit www.parklandcounty.com/Broadband




Looking to apply for a building or development permit?
It's all online with PLANit Parkland!

PLANit
parkland county

Your home	Your business	Your land
☐ Build a house, deck or garage	☐ Commercial / Industrial business	☐ Regrade land or clear trees
☐ Renovate or demolish a building	☐ Build an office or warehouse	☐ Subdivide land
☐ Compliance Certificate	☐ Install a sign	☐ Redistrict land for development
☐ Home Based Business		

Visit www.parklandcounty.com/PLANit to learn more and submit your applications.



SCAN ME



Join a committee or board!

 parkland county

www.parklandcounty.com/Committees

Tri-Municipal Region Rain Barrel Sale

Saturday, April 29
Sale starts at 7 a.m.

Rona (175 AB-16A, Spruce Grove)

 **\$89.99**

    **RONA**



Senior Space
Wednesdays 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Entwistle Community Recreation Centre



JOIN OUR TEAM!

careers.parklandcounty.com

DID YOU KNOW?

Parkland County is responsible for 1,250 km of graveled roads and 800 km of asphalt surface roads.

COUNTY ROAD CLEARING

Wondering how roads are prioritized for snow clearing? We aim to have the main road system (arterial and collector roads) plowed within 36 hours after a snow fall stops, and other local, subdivision and hamlet roads plowed within 72 hours. The type, depth, duration, and intensity of the snowfall may impact the overall timelines as the County addresses roads in priority sequence. Drivers should always allow extra time as conditions may vary.

SNOW REMOVAL PRIORITY:

1. Arterial Roadways (highly used roads)
2. Collector roads (roadways connecting arterial and subdivision roads)
3. Local and Subdivision roads (including Hamlets)
4. Parking lots (Parkland County facilities and Community Halls)

To view snow removal updates during major snowfalls please visit:

www.parklandcounty.com/SnowRemoval

During snow removal, ridges or windrows may occur across approaches. Residents are responsible for maintaining their approaches.

Provincial Highways

The province is responsible for clearing all provincial highways. Parkland County takes care of range roads, township roads, and subdivision roads. Please contact Alberta Transportation with concerns on Provincial Highways or view 511.alberta.ca for updated highway conditions.

Alberta Transportation: 780-963-5711

Snow Removal Subsidy Program

We know that shoveling can be a lot of work, and we recognize that not every resident has the ability to do so. Our Snow Removal Subsidy Program provides funding support to physically challenged residents for snow removal. Up to \$300 per winter season is available per household.

CRITERIA:

- Person applying must be the owner or renter of the residence where the driveway is being plowed, and it must be their primary residence.
- Residence must be located within Parkland County.
- Person must be physically challenged either by age or disability and must provide a doctor's certificate or note verifying that they are physically unable to remove snow from their driveway.
- All persons 18 years of age or older living in the residence must be physically disabled.

Residents can apply by completing the Snow Removal Subsidy Program application, and submit along with the required doctor's certificate or note, to:

Parkland County
Snow Removal Subsidy Program
c/o Parks, Recreation & Culture
53109A HWY 779, Parkland County, AB T7Z 1R1

Applications are reviewed and residents will be contacted. If approved, the resident will be responsible for making arrangements to have their driveway cleared. Residents then submit proof of work completed, via paid invoice, to the County for reimbursement. Proof of payment must be submitted before April 30, 2023. Visit www.parklandcounty.com/SnowRemovalProgram to find the application.

Spring Thaw

Soon enough, spring will be in the air! When temperatures rise and daily highs are above freezing, spring thaw begins. Here are some tips to help you out:

- Inspect your property for drainage issues.
- Ensure culverts are clear to avoid potential flooding.
- Stay off the ice and stay safe!
- Make sure eaves and downspouts are extended away from your home.
- Double check that sump pump!

Road Bans

Road bans in Parkland County are usually placed on the roadways any time after mid-March and stay in effect until the end of May. Road bans are dependent on weather; therefore, this time period can fluctuate. Most oil surfaced and asphalt base roads are banned at 75%, but there are some roads that are banned at 50%. The potential for damage and the current condition of the road dictates the percentage of ban. Gravel roads are not generally banned but can be if conditions warrant. View current road bans at www.parklandcounty.com/RoadBans.



2022 IN REVIEW



150
HOURS

JANUARY

Parkland County launched the Digital Economy Program which provides free training for digital services to local businesses. 150 hours were spent supporting small businesses in the county.

+300
HOUSEHOLDS



FEBRUARY

Since 2016, Parkland County's total number of households grew by 300 (partially due to the addition of Wabamun to the county).

MARCH

Parkland County Fire Services donated 100 breathing apparatuses and 40 sets of protective gear to teams in Ukraine to support their ongoing efforts.



3000
HOUSEHOLDS

MAY

Council approved Phase 1 of its Broadband Strategy which will provide the capability of fibre-based home internet connections to at least 3,000 households by Fall 2023.

APRIL

Council announced a \$51 million investment to move forward on key strategic initiatives throughout the County to shape Parkland's future prosperity.



\$51 MIL.

JUNE

The Wabamun Farmers' market launched its inaugural season with 14 vendors.



14
VENDORS



\$26K
DONATED

JULY

The County's Major Business Attraction Program was the winner of the 2022 Minister's Awards for Municipal Excellence in the Building Economic Strength Category.



AUGUST

The West Central Fire Hall and medical clinic in Wabamun had its Grand Opening.



SEPTEMBER

\$26,000 was donated to the Parkland Food Bank Society from the inaugural Tri-Region Mayors' Golf Classic

OCTOBER

Parkland County launched PLANit, an online planning and permitting application tool. 550 permits issued since launch.



550
PERMITS



DECEMBER

Parkland County celebrated "Chipmas Day" on December 12, a celebration of eating chips for every meal, and raised awareness of the Parkland Food Bank.

NOVEMBER

2023 Budget was approved by council, with a tax increase of 2.78%, the lowest in the Edmonton Region.



2.78%
LOWEST
IN REGION

WAGNER NATURAL AREA

Visit One of the County's Beautiful Natural Areas

Wagner Natural Area is a wetland of boreal forest located just off the Yellowhead Highway between Spruce Grove and Acheson. Stroll through this area and take in the many different habitats, including the meadow, willow swamp, aspen parkland, black spruce forest, white spruce forest and marl ponds.

This area is maintained by its members. Please remember to clean up after yourself and be kind to the area. www.wagnerfen.ca



**ALUS
PARKLAND**

Build Resilience

Are you a farmer or rancher with marginal land or sensitive ecology?

ALUS helps you establish alternative watering systems, wetlands, rotational grazing, pollinator habitat and other projects.

Over 1,400 farmers and ranchers have enrolled 37,000 acres of land in the ALUS program.

Join Us!

For more information, contact your local ALUS program coordinator

Chad Ritter
Office: 780 968-8888 ext. 8286
Cell: 780 668-9245
chad.ritter@parklandcounty.ca

ALUS.ca

[f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [v](#)

"Conservation will ultimately boil down to rewarding the private landowner who conserves the public interest."
Aldo Leopold

Share the Road

Soon enough, farmers will be busy preparing for the upcoming season. Please be sure to keep an eye out and share the road with large farm equipment. Allow plenty of space between your vehicle and farm equipment, be patient, and make sure kids know to keep a safe distance when using the road.

