

Wheatland County Annual Report



2006
In Review

Wheatland County

Vision

*To provide Responsible, Accountable and Effective
Governance*



Mission

Wheatland County is committed to provide services that recognize and encourage balanced, sustainable, long term growth and opportunities. We advocate prudent use of our resources and promote a quality of life for our citizens that reflect our agricultural heritage.

Message from the Reeve

Well, another busy year has come and gone with Wheatland County putting in a very busy year behind the. Our Construction Crews rebuilt 10 miles of road and repaired 6 miles, along with installing 9560 ft. of culverts.

Since Council revisited and updated the Wheatland County Land Use Bylaw our Development Office and the Palliser Regional Municipal Services have been putting in huge time commitments to try and accommodate everyone. Council has, since the retirement of Bill Clark, hired the services of Palliser Regional Municipal Services to handle our subdivision applications.

Even though we have only been applying our new land use bylaws for 18 months, Council is already looking at some amendments to clarify and help the Administration of the bylaws.

The West Area Structure Plan from west of Strathmore one half mile deep on the south side of the #1 Highway to the County line in starting to see some commercial activity.

Council has also been working with the Villages of Hussar, Standard, and Rockyford; and the Town of Strathmore through our Regional Partnership to help acquire potable water through a regional water line from Calgary.

Because of a 10 year secondary road program with the Alberta Government we are this summer and fall looking for completion of a paving program to finish 564 from the 56 Highway to 842 and the 561 east of Hussar to the County line. This will be a total of 26 miles of non-ban pavement.

Council is also in discussion with the Town of Strathmore over their planned annexation of 14 quarters of land surrounding Strathmore. Rockyford and Hussar are also applying for some annexation because of growth issues with their boundaries. Thus, as you can tell with a wet spring and prosperous Province, our construction crews and development staff are going to continue to be very busy.

At this time I would like to thank all our staff for their continued good work and dedication to the residents of Wheatland County. Council is very appreciative of what the staff are involved with to keep everything running smooth. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Armstrong

Reeve of Wheatland County

Councillors:: Roy Clark, Ken Sauve, Steve Farthing, Clarence Skuter, Shirley Reinhardt, Glen Koester

Wheatland County Council

Ben Armstrong, Reeve	Division 7
Shirley Reinhardt, Dep. Reeve	Division 5
Roy Clark	Division 1
Stephen Farthing	Division 3
Glenn Koester	Division 6
Ken Sauve	Division 2
Clarence Skuter	Division 4



WHEATLAND COUNTY COUNCIL COMMITTEES	K O E S T E R	S A U V E	C L A R K	R E I N H A R D T	S K U T E R	A R M S T R O N G	F A R T H I N G
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COUNTY COUNCIL	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
MUNICIPAL PLANNING COMMITTEE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARD	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
POLICY HANDBOOK COMMITTEE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
DISASTER SERVICES COMMITTEE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE				X		X	
SIGNING AUTHORITIES				X	X	X	
MACHINE ALLOCATION				A		X	
FINANCE COMMITTEE	X	X	X				X
SEED PLANTS	R	S	H	S*		H*R*	
WHEATLAND FOUNDATION AND HOUSING MANAGEMENT BODY		X		X	A		X
W.A.D.E.M.S.A.	X	A		X			
W.F.C.S.S. COMMITTEE	X				X		A
ASSESSMENT REVIEW BOARD	A	X	X		X		
C. A. A. M. D. & C. DIRECTOR				X		A	
DRUMHELLER SOLID WASTE MAN.			A			X	
PARKS COMMITTEE	X	X	X				
GRAVEL PIT COMMITTEE (AND LOCAL COUNCILLOR)				X		X	
BOW RIVER BASIN COMMITTEE							X
RED DEER RIVER BASIN COMMITTEE	X						
WATERS OF WHEATLAND (ASB)	X		X				
BADLANDS AMBULANCE SOCIETY						X	
HANDI BUS ASSOCIATION				X			
CALGARY REG. PARTNERSHIP					X	X	X
SOUTH REGION ASB COMMITTEE	A	X					
HOSPITAL PLANNING COMMITTEE				X			A
POLICY & PROCEDURE REVIEW	X	X			X		
CP RAIL/COM. ADVISORY PANEL		X	X				X
JOINT IRRIGATION ISSUES		X			X		A
MARIGOLD LIBRARY COMMITTEE		A					X
WILD ROSE ECONOMIC DEV. COM.	X			A			
FIRE PROTECTION COMM.							X
CANADIAN BADLANDS LTD.							X
COMMUNITY/HAMLET MEETINGS	Local Councillor						
FIRE PROTECTION COMMITTEE	Local Councillor						

S - Strathmore H - Hussar Ro. - Rockyford/Levelland A - Alternate
R - Rosebud St. - Standard C - Cluny/Gleichen

MESSAGE FROM THE CAO

It is my pleasure to present this 2006 Annual Report.

Within the report you will find information from the various departments and a consolidated financial statement.

It is Council that is responsible for identifying services and setting policies that benefit our ratepayers and communities. Implementation of these services and policies is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team and requires the attention of both human and financial resources to ensure Council's directives are delivered in a manner that is appropriate, effective and efficient. Success in doing so is directly linked to the efforts, skills, and dedication of our employees. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation for their support and commitment over the past year.

Without question, we have faced several challenges during 2006. One of our major challenges was in our planning department where we received record breaking development applications. The West Highway 1 Area Structure Plan is underway with industrial development applications within the plan area. In addition to the Lakes of Muirfield, a residential development within the hamlet of Lyalta, expansions are also taking place in the Speargrass community and interested parties are exploring expansion options in our other hamlets. Palliser Regional Municipal Services was contracted to provide planning services and currently deals with all our area redesignations and subdivision applications, leaving our in-house planning staff to deal with development permits.

A significant milestone in 2006 was the signing of the Mutual Aid Agreement by the Town of Strathmore, Villages of Rockyford, Hussar and Standard and Wheatland County. This agreement sets out the protocol for providing assistance to our neighbours during such emergencies that require more than the resources of the one local government. The agreement is a positive, win/win situation for all our communities.

There are several projects on the horizon as we look ahead to 2007. One of the projects is a regional water line that will be phased in over several years to serve all communities within the County. The Town of Strathmore has applied to annex fourteen and a half quarter sections from the County. The County will be endeavouring to work with the Town in negotiating this annexation in conjunction with an Inter-municipal Development Plan that will set out an agreed upon framework and guideline for future expansion and land use that is mutually benefitting for all involved parties. These projects along with the daily business of providing municipal services will keep us all busy during the coming months and it is with considerable optimism that we look forward to 2007.

In closing I would like to thank Council for their continued support and acknowledge all of our staff for their commitment to the municipality. To our residents, we are always open to comments, suggestions and encourage your participation in municipal issues. By working together we can achieve your goals and make Wheatland County one of the best places to live, work and play.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Deak, CLGM
Chief Administrative officer

2007 BUDGET

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER – 2007 BUDGET

On behalf of Administration, I am pleased to present the 2007 budget. The challenges faced in budget preparation are reflective of increasing market costs and the pressures to compete with industry for manpower. Despite these pressures we have managed to complete a budget which addresses the current growth in the county without digging deeper in to the pocket of the ratepayers.

2007 Budget Challenges and Highlights

- 2007 Budget estimates include a 7% increase in assessment growth, and a 12% increase in market value or regulated assessment.
- Competition from Alberta's thriving economy, especially the oil and gas industry, has placed pressures on staff retention, wages and benefits. The budget for salaries increased by 6.5%. An increase of 5% was allocated to all staff in order to remain competitive in today's tight labour market. The remaining 1.5% results from the addition of a few positions, as well as increases for performance.
- The Bank of Canada is currently targeting a 2% target for inflation during 2007. Expenses were budgeted based on this increase as well as consideration to the prior year budget, and actual expenses from 2005 and 2006.
- The 2006 Census results released from Statistics Canada indicate that the population of Wheatland County is 8,164. This is a modest increase of 3.5% over the past five years, which has increase infrastructure demands in the county. By comparison the population of Strathmore increased by 34.2% in the same time period.
- The importance of financial reserves continues to play a vital role particularly with respect to future considerations such as water, sewer, waste transfer, gravel pits, infrastructure, and major capital purchases. The 2007 budget includes contributions to several reserves for projects planned in future years. As an example we currently budget \$500,000 per year to a paving reserve. Without the long-term contributions to these reserves, major yearly tax fluctuations would occur.
- Residential, industrial and commercial growth continues to put significant demands on staff. A significant amount of Council and staff time has been dedicated to planning matters. With the approval of our new Land Use Bylaw, Municipal Development Plan and Highway 1 West Area Structure Plan, Council has established extensive guidelines for future developments.

Summary:

In setting the 2007 budget, Council and administration have strived to balance increased costs and additional services/initiatives necessary to keep pace with growth, while recognizing any tax increases kept to a minimum. Council has promoted accountability and exploring new ways of doing business which are more effective and efficient.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the many hours of dedication to the preparation of the budget by all the staff at Wheatland County.

Sincerely,

Stephen Johnson, CA
Chief Financial Officer

PUBLIC WORKS



The following information is a breakdown of the various projects which were completed in 2006 and some which are scheduled for the 2007 season.

The work is divided into the following categories: gravel, pavement, construction, oiling, bridge structures, hamlets, and waste transfer sites.

Gravel

In 2006 a total of 173,881 cubic yards of gravel including base course gravel was distributed on Wheatland County roads.

Pavement

There was no paving done in 2006.

Construction

Projects not completed during any given year are carried forward and receive first priority the following year. In addition to the 2006 construction program some projects completed in 2006 were originally slated for the 2005 season.

Projects Completed in 2006:

- 1 mile on the Duck Lake Hall Road (carried forward from 2005)
- 3 ½ miles on the Nightingale Road (carried forward from 2005)
- 4 miles on the Gayford Road
- 1 mile on the 842 Extension Road

2007 Construction Program:

- 2 miles on the Gayford Road
- 10 miles on the 842 Extension Road
- 5 miles on the Hammer Hill Road east of Hwy #1
- 2 miles on the Mitchell Agg. Road
- 1 ¼ miles on the Crowfoot Ferry Road

Three of the smaller projects are slated to be contracted in 2007.

Oiling Program

Following are the projects which were completed by the Oiling Crew during 2006:

- Nightingale Road – 6 miles of chip seal overlay done.
- East Gleichen Access Road – chip seal overlay done.
- 10 Mile Road – extensive patching done.
- Dust Control - Dust control was applied using an oiling method as well as Calcium Chloride applications.

Oiling program for the 2007 season:

- Re-chip 4 miles at Duck Lake
- Spot repair Namaka Road
- Re-chip Cheadle Streets
- Dust Control – calcium and oil
- Re-chip all 5 miles of the old #901
- ½" overlay on the Lyalta Road
- ½" overlay on the Rockyford Road from #564 south for 2 miles
- Possibly re-work the rest of the Prescott Road
- Install bridge size culverts

Bridge Structures

There were 3 new bridge structures constructed in 2006:

- #74511 strutted
- #75938 done
- #75863 done

There are 5 new bridge structures scheduled for replacement in 2007, and 3 approved for engineering:

- #02123 replace - south of 17-22-26 west of Carseland
- #13263 replace - west of 22-24-23 on the Rockyford Road



- #09867 replace - west of 14-24-23 east of the Rockyford Road
- #80565 replace - west of 33-24-24 northeast of Strathmore
- #00279 replace - west of 5-23-22 north of Gleichen
- #08851 engineering - south of 17-23-22 north of Gleichen
- #75284 engineering - south of 6-23-25 north of Carseland
- #77119 engineering - west of 26-23-24 north of Namaka



Hamlets

2006 Hamlet Projects:

Rosebud

- The major project in 2006 was the completion and commissioning of the new Rosebud Water Treatment Plant. We experienced a few start-up challenges which required an increase of personnel time.
- Water wells at Rosebud were cleaned and flushed and a new header on the distribution line was installed to increase the chlorine contact time.
- Carseland
- The next phase of the curb and gutter replacement on Nelson Road and Cole Crescent was tendered out, however, due to high bids no contractor was hired, and this phase of the project has been delayed.
- Engineering study was completed for Carseland sanitary sewer and storm water.
- Streets in the older section of Carseland were re-chipped.
- Gleichen and Cluny
- Various areas in Gleichen and Cluny were patched and re-chipped, and maintenance was performed as required.

2007 Hamlet Projects:

- Extensive rebuild to the irrigation system at Gleichen Sewage Lagoon.
- Control and communication upgrades to the Gleichen Water Treatment Plant.
- Hamlet maintenance as required.

Waste Transfer Sites

Wheatland County has contracted Huxted Waste Disposal to look after larger items such as appliances, furniture, lumber and wire.

THE AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARD

The 2006 Wheatland County Agricultural Service Board (ASB) included the entire County Council and CAO, Jennifer Deak. Glenn Koester served as Chairman, and Roy Clark as Vice Chairman with Linda Ferguson as the recording secretary.

ASB Staff included Agricultural Fieldman, Russ Muenchrath; Assistant Agricultural Fieldman, Jason Regehr; Rural Extension Specialist, Sarah Schumacher; Equipment Operator's, Sheldon Roes and Ron Kisko; Weed Inspector Ron Bartholow and Linda Ferguson as administrative support.

Waters of Wheatland

The Waters of Wheatland committee continued in 2006 with Glenn Koester as Chair and Roy Clark as Vice Chair. Members included: Division 1 – Leigh Christensen, Division 2 – Spencer Hilton, Division 3 – Doug Rabb, Division 4 - Kerry Brewin, Division 5 – Earl Harriman, Division 6 - Barry Van Laar, Division 7 - Randy Kaiser. Jim Greer represented the Town of Strathmore with Duane Binning representing the Villages of Standard, Rockyford and Hussar. The aim of the group is to focus on water related issues throughout the whole county rather than just on specific watersheds. The Mandate of WOW is to promote the environmental sustainability of water through information, demonstration and community participation and to proactively assess the health of water and work with local producers, partners and residents towards the adoption of practices that help preserve water quality and quantity.

Vegetation Management Program

Our vegetation management program involves the use of Integrated Pest Management Techniques. Our Equipment operators spot sprayed approximately 775 acres of noxious weeds while mowing grass on 2,397 miles of roadside. Our grass cutting graders are equipped with a rotary grass mower, direct injection spray equipment, GPS, radiarc and boombuster applicators, and a water tank.



Weed inspection, monitoring and control was carried out on a total of 60 Scentless Chamomile locations; 3 of which were new. Staff also participated in an inspection trip in conjunction with the M.D. of Rockyview along the Bow River which resulted in the control of approximately 57 Purple Loosestrife plants. Numerous other weed species were also noted along the Bow River; one being the restricted weed Spotted Knapweed which was hand picked throughout the season along with some controlled spraying. Two Biological control agents were released along the Bow River for the control of Scentless Chamomile. The agents released were the Scentless Chamomile seed weevil and gall midge. Monitoring and more releases will take place in 2007.

Efforts continue to increase on the inspection and control of Downy Brome as we continue to find more infestations, yet we are optimistic that it is still at a manageable point in the County. Thanks to reports from our ratepayers three weeds not common to Wheatland County; Hounds Tongue, Wild Caraway and Wild Cucumber have been identified and controlled.

The South Region weed inspector undertook inspections for us on the C.N. & C.P.R. rail lines and co-ordinated control efforts on numerous weed problems including Leafy Spurge and Toadflax. Spraying of Hamlets is done on a rotational basis at the end August and regular weed inspections are carried out in the Hamlets throughout the year.

The interlocal municipal agreement between Wheatland County, the Town of Strathmore, and Villages of Standard, Hussar and Rockyford for sharing a Weed Inspector has continued to be a success. Work involved identifying and controlling noxious and nuisance weeds of concern to the partners with attention on Scentless Chamomile, Dandelion, Canada Thistle, and Toadflax.



Roadside Seeding and Reclamation



ASB staff seeded approximately 13 miles of new road construction and 53 acres of borrow areas. Work was also carried out in conjunction with contractors on pre-site assessments on borrow areas as well as reclamation and straw shredding for erosion control.

West Nile Program

We once again implemented a West Nile Mosquito Larval control program as well as an adult trapping program for Wheatland County and the Villages of Hussar, Rockyford and Standard. The work in 2006 was contracted to Art Tellier of Artswork Services who sampled over 115 sites

with only 3 containing the species that carries West Nile. From our adult trapping program there were 2 positive samples detected for West Nile Virus.

Pest Control

Activities included participation in the Alberta Agriculture and Grasshopper survey and a Fusarium Graminearum survey which was new for 2006.

The annual grasshopper forecast count identified field ratings as low throughout most of the County and we are still waiting for results of the Fusarium survey.

Coyote control involved issuing 1080 poison bait to livestock owners experiencing predation problems.

The Richardson's ground squirrel control program made premixed ready to use wet (RTUW) strychnine bait available to farmers from March through mid May. A total of 87 orders were taken for a total of 2480 kg of bait.

Shelterbelt Tree Program

Our shelterbelt tree program involved partnering with the Wheatland District 4-H Council in distributing trees supplied by PFRA Indian Head Nursery and Alberta Nurseries. 21,195 trees were distributed for planting in Wheatland County. Our tree planter was rented to 5 County residents

Seed Cleaning Plants

Seed cleaning plants operating within Wheatland County that were licensed to clean seed include the Strathmore, Rosebud, and Hussar Cooperative stationary plants.

Equipment Rental Program

Wheatland County continued the rental of our tree planter, weed wiper and livestock scale with the addition of skunk and magpie traps, a forage sampler and a pasture sprayer through the AESA Program.

Extension Program

Extension activities included publication of 3 Landowner Link newsletters through the Strathmore Standard newspaper. This allowed us to reach all Wheatland County ratepayers.

The 2006 ASB Agriculture bursary recipients were Colin Jensen of Dalum and Joel Ostrom of Carseland. The Sevcik Family (Sevcik Simmental Ranch) of Hussar was nominated as Wheatland County's representative for the 2006 Stampede Farm Family Award.

With the increased activity in development and industry in the county it will be important for the ASB to continue to build on its current programs. Vegetation management and reclamation will be focused on more in the future and with the help of the Waters of Wheatland Committee our water management programming will continue to develop further.

Respectfully submitted

Russ Muenchrath,
Agricultural Fieldman

Glenn Koester
Chairman

ENFORCEMENT



In 2006, Wheatland County Protective Services, like other departments, experienced an increase in service requirements. Midway through the year, the addition of a third member greatly reduced the workload on the two members of the department. Also midway in 2006, Protective Services contracted the services of Roadata Services Inc. for the purposes of assisting with the overload approval process for road use.

A specialized By-Law enforcement unit within the Protective Services Department was also created in anticipation of population growth in the area, and calls for service. With these additions, Protective Services was able to increase the services to Wheatland County and the residents of the County.

2006 statistics for Protective Services are as follows:

- Approximately 5,500 overload approvals were processed with the assistance of Roadata Services.
- Approximately 200 formal investigation files were created as a result of calls for service.
- Approximately 300 violation tickets, warnings, by-law tags, and commercial vehicle documents were issued by Protective Services for the 2006 year.



FIRE/SAFETY/DISASTER SERVICES

Fire



New Fire trucks were purchased for the Cluny, Dalum, Gleichen, and Rosebud fire halls from Wheatland County's Fire Capital fund and Local communities. Training of volunteer firefighters was completed this year from a training grant of \$15,000. A Mask fit tester (port account) was purchased through the Fire Capital fund. Mutual Aid Agreement for Fire/Disaster was signed by Wheatland County, Town of Strathmore, Villages of Hussar, Rockyford, Standard, and our Fire Associations. These fire departments responded to over 300 emergencies for 2006.

Safety

Courses completed through Safety this year - Jim Wells completed the Transportation of Dangerous goods train the trainer. Gerald Skibinsky and Tom Shultz attended the Health & Safety Management Auditors course. Several in-house courses were run WHIMIS, Operating Fire Extinguishers, Work place Violence and Winter driving.



Health and Safety inspections were carried out on all Wheatland County Buildings by the Joint Health and Safety Committee. Fire drills were completed as required for the Main Admin Building, Agriculture Building and the Public works Building. Annual maintenance of fire Extinguishers and First Aid kits were completed. Gerald completed a safety audit of Wheatland County and received his peer auditor's certification ensuring the County's Certificate of Recognition through Alberta Municipal Health and Safety was in compliance with their regulations.



Disaster Services

Randy Tiller, Director of Emergency Management Alberta audited our Municipal Emergency Plan. Phone numbers updated as required. Gerald Skibinsky was appointed as EOC manager and attended the Emergency Operations Center Management course in Ottawa. Gerald is currently updating the MEP book.

Gerald Skibinsky
Fire/Safety/Disaster Coordinator

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

2006 saw a continued increase in development within Wheatland County. To face increased pressures and growth, the Planning and Development Department was restructured.

Wheatland County became a member of Palliser Regional Municipal Services. By becoming a member Wheatland County has received services including, but not limited to, subdivision review and approval, Land Use Bylaw amendments/redesignations, and Area Structure Plan reviews.

A position for a Municipal Engineering Technologist was also created.

2006 Development Statistics:

Development Permit applications received: 221

Applications for Subdivision: 47

Applications for Land Use District Redesignations: 101

Subdivision and Development Appeal Board number of appeals: 6

Building Permit Statistics:

Type	Building permits issued	Total Project Value
Residential	112	\$13,917,931
Commercial	13	\$3,121,700
Industrial	10	\$699,543
Farm	1	\$151,500

For 2007 the Land Use Bylaw and Municipal Development Plan will be reviewed and amended as required.

Wheatland County Staff

David Yee
Planner/Development Officer

Micheal Ziehr C.E.T
Municipal Engineering Technologist



PALLISER REGIONAL MUNICIPAL SERVICES



Effective August 9, 2006; Wheatland County became the 25th member municipality of Palliser Regional Municipal Services (PRMS).

As a member, PRMS provides to the County planning and associated professional and technical services including;

SUBDIVISION SERVICES

- Act as subdivision authority on behalf of municipality
- Process subdivision applications pursuant to legislation
- Advise municipality: subdivision report and recommendation
- Inform applicant and agencies of decision
- Endorse registerable documents

MUNICIPAL ADVISORY SERVICES

- Day-to-day advice to Municipal Officials
- Advice to General Public
- Consultation with Provincial Departments & other relevant agencies

LONG RANGE AND SPECIAL PLANNING ADVISORY SERVICES

- Municipal Plans and Bylaws
- Intermunicipal Plans and Studies
- Municipal Research and Policy Development
- Design Planning
- Area Structure Plans, Concept Plan review
- Land Use Bylaw redesignations
- Training

OTHER

Attendance at Municipal Planning commission, Subdivision & Development Appeal Board and Council meetings to provide advice.

Mentoring Development Office staff.

ABOUT PALLISER REGIONAL MUNICIPAL SERVICES

PRMS is an intermunicipal service agency with a membership base of 25 covering an area stretching from Acme to the west, to Consort in the north, to Oyen in the east and to Wheatland County in the south.



WHO TO CONTACT

Brad Wiebe and Tracey Connatty are the planners assigned to Wheatland County. When not working out of the County office, they may be reached at

115 Palliser Trail
PO Drawer 1900
Hanna, Alberta
T0J 1P0

Phone: 1-877-854-3371

Fax: 1-403-854-4684

Email:

info@palliserservices.ca

Information in regards to planning can be found by visiting Palliser's website at www.palliserservices.ca. General inquires can also be forwarded to info@palliserservices.ca

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)

Background

In 2004, Wheatland County established a Geographic Information System (G.I.S.) Department. The main purpose of the G.I.S. department is to digitize the County map and link all other digital County-related information to the map, thereby allowing quick and easy retrieval of the County's digital information. Some examples of the digital information that is available through the County's GIS include:

- Property features such as: Parcel boundaries and dimensions, legal description, location of residence
- Assessment data including pictures of all residences and other assessable buildings
- 2005 Color ortho aerial photography and 2000 ortho black & white aerial photography
- 2006 September black & white aerial photography Highway No.1 area structure plan
- Ownership and contact information
- Municipal data showing areas of; Electoral district, Fire Response, Rescue & Ambulance
- Oil & Gas installations including wells and pipeline location
- Agriculture displaying roadside mowing & spraying locations for 2005 and beyond

2006 GIS Initiatives

Some of the 2006 year initiatives have been:

- Complete digitizing locations of all signage (Stop , Yield, Bridge, etc)
- Development of a Map Book that will have the County map and hamlet map in booklet form containing 1 page per township or hamlet.
- Digitizing as-built drawings for the County's underground assets such as water and sewer lines
- Update of the Emergency Response Map

Aerial photography was flown in July, 2005 at a standard resolution (0.5m pixel) for the rural areas of the County and at a more detailed resolution for the County's hamlets (0.2m pixel resolution). The color aerial photography can be printed by the County on letter, legal or tabloid (11"X17") size paper. Please note that all County maps are updated on a semi-annual basis. All map products and aerial photography can be purchased in either hard copy or digital form.

Planned GIS Initiatives

Future projects include the following:

- New Color ortho aerial photography in summer or fall of 2007
- Update the civic addresses for all hamlet properties.
- Vehicle tracking with Geographic Positioning System (GPS) units for the majority of public works graders and snow plows.
- Implementation of a weed inspection workflow.
- Public website allowing free access to some of the GIS data

Contacts

Please contact Dennis Klem, Senior Assessor / G.I.S. Co-ordinator or Cindy Sweere at the County office (934-3321) with any questions pertaining to the G.I.S. Department.



ASSESSMENT

The assessment department consists of 3 personnel: Dennis Klem A.M.A. Senior Assessor, Don Arsenault, Assessor and Nadine Bray (.5 full time equivalent) clerical.

Assessment is the evaluation of assessable properties on an annual basis with adherence to the Alberta Statute, Municipal Government Act (M.G.A.) and associated regulations. The purpose of assessment is to fairly and equitably establish values allowing for the fair distribution of the property tax burden.

Assessed values are based on establishing either a Market or Regulated Value.

- **Market Value** is defined by the M.G.A. Section 1(n) "**as the amount that a property might be expected to realize if it is sold on the open market by a willing seller to a willing buyer.**" The market value date is established as of July 1st, the year proceeding the tax year (i.e., July 1, 2006 Assessment (valuation Date) for 2007 Tax Year).
- **Regulated Value** is based on rates established annually by Alberta Municipal Affairs, Assessment Services Branch, and published in the Alberta Farmland Assessment Manual, the Alberta Machinery and Equipment Assessment Manual and the Alberta Linear Property Assessment Manual.

Four Classes of Assessment Exist:

Farmland: Land used for farming operations (i.e. crop, hay, pasture, tree, sod, horticulture (shrubs), aviculture (birds), apiculture (bees), aquiculture (fish)) is assessed at a Regulated Value. The current base rate for the agricultural use value of farmland is set at \$350 / Acre for Dry Arable or Pasture Land and is adjusted downwards for any factors that hinder productivity (i.e., type of soil, texture of the soil's surface and subsurface, topography, stones, any other productivity impediment).

Non-Residential: Commercial or Industrial activity occurring on the property including land, buildings and structures (i.e., stores, mechanical repairs, golf courses, gravel pits, land and structures situated at industrial plants excluding Machinery & Equipment) is assessed at Market Value. **Linear property**, a subclass of non-residential, includes cable, electric transmission lines, telecommunication equipment, pipelines, oil and gas wells, is assessed at a Regulated Value.

Machinery and Equipment: Any installation used in the processing or manufacturing of a product (i.e., separators or dehydrators or compressors at gas and oilfield installations, certain components at the large grain elevators) is assessed at a Regulated Value.

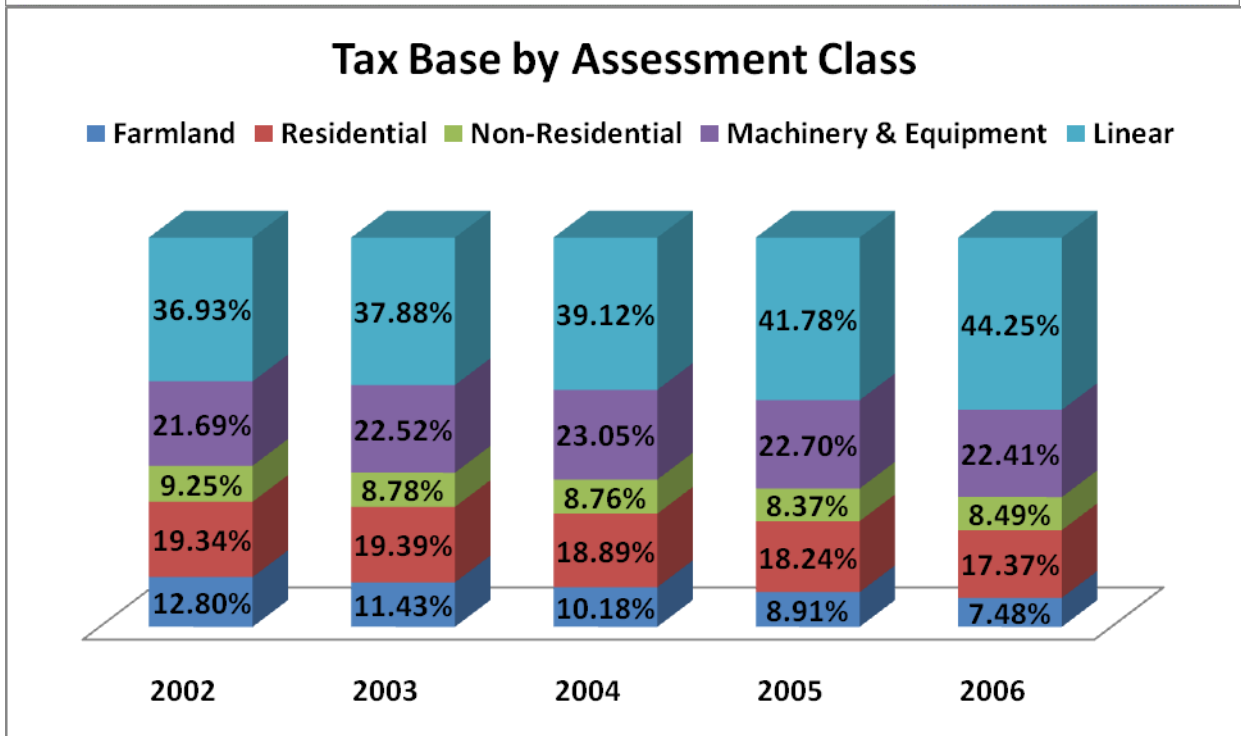
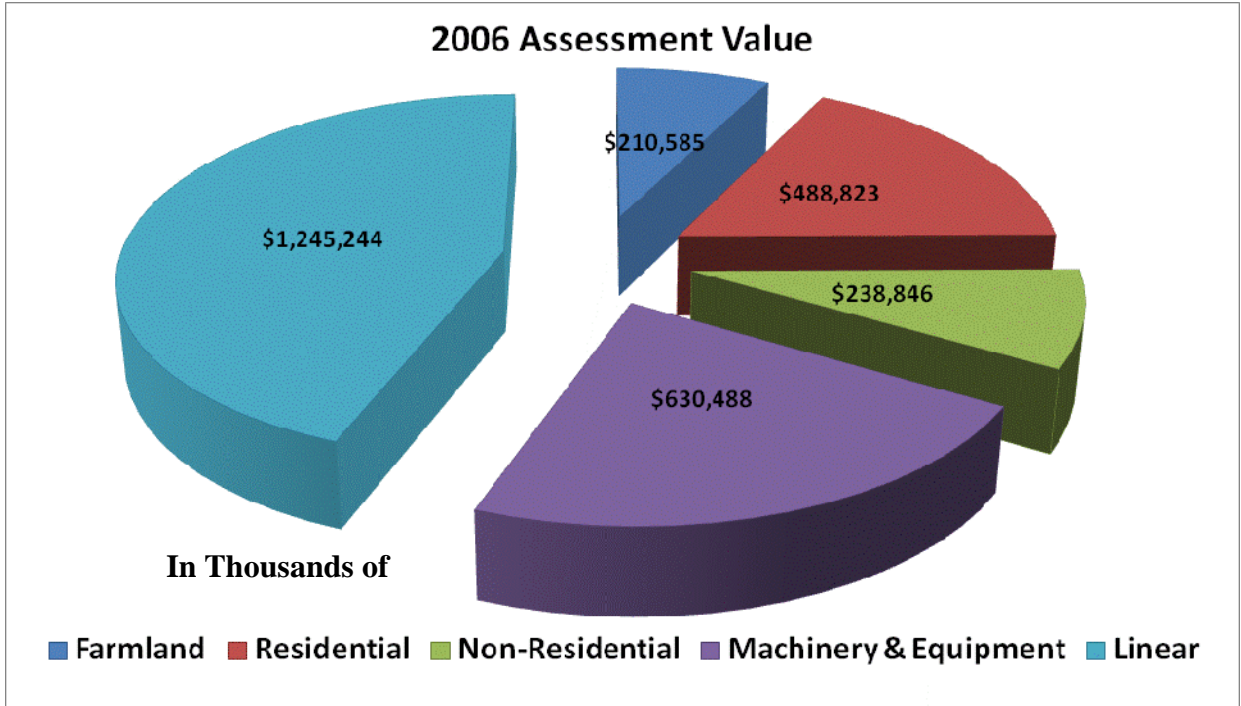
Residential: Typically a residence or use of property that has not been classed as any of the above. The assessment for residential parcels less than or equal to 3 acres represents the average market value for land and improvements (any buildings, structures). For parcels greater than 3 acres, the assessment includes a minimum of 3 acres and the residential improvements assessed at market value and any remaining land is assessed at market value unless deemed farmland.

2006 Highlights

During the 2006 year, approximately \$449 million (M) was added to the assessment roll which equates into an 18.99% overall increase. Approx. \$166.4 M of the assessment change was as a direct result of new growth (new: houses, commercial, oil & gas activity) and \$282.6 M was due to market value &/or regulated value changes. The bulk of the new growth was directly related to oil & gas activity.

Assessment Details

- **Farmland** : Land used in the production of an agricultural product.
- **Non-Residential**: A commerce or industry takes place.
- **Linear**: Straddle Many Muni's, i.e. Electrical Power Systems, Street Lighting Systems, etc.
- **Machinery & Equipment** : Anything used in processing or manufacturing a product.
- **Residential** :House, Taxable portion of House at Farm site, Trailer, Garage, Warehouse.



**Wheatland County
Statement of Financial Position**

December 31	2006	2005
Financial Assets		
Cash and temporary investments	\$ 20,592,267	\$ 17,326,165
Tax receivables	507,388	449,861
Trade and other receivables	709,512	578,405
Inventory	1,346,811	1,352,581
Other	196,256	205,039
	<u>23,352,234</u>	<u>19,912,051</u>
Other assets	56,036	36,943
Capital assets	46,855,121	42,662,407
	<u>\$ 70,263,391</u>	<u>\$ 62,611,401</u>
Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	1,499,009	1,303,698
Deferred revenue	6,506	261,731
Current portion of long term debt	64,277	56,583
	<u>1,569,792</u>	<u>1,622,012</u>
Other liabilities	56,036	36,943
	<u>1,625,828</u>	<u>1,658,955</u>
Long term debt	893,928	854,424
	<u>2,519,756</u>	<u>2,513,379</u>
Municipal Equity		
Fund balances		
Operating fund	4,087,637	3,729,754
Reserve fund	17,759,082	14,616,868
	<u>21,846,719</u>	<u>18,346,622</u>
Equity in capital assets	45,896,916	41,751,400
	<u>67,743,635</u>	<u>60,098,022</u>
	<u>\$ 70,263,391</u>	<u>\$ 62,611,401</u>

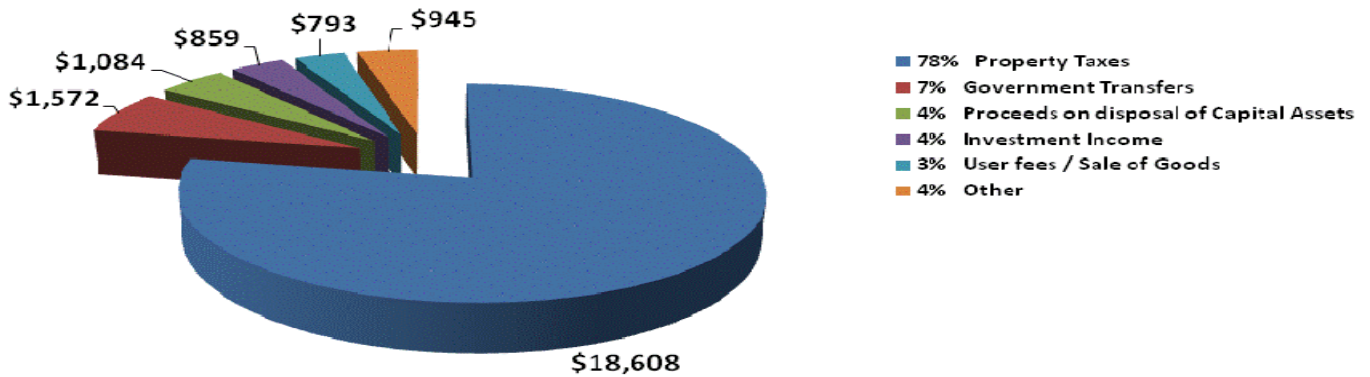
Wheatland County

For the year ended December 31	Budget (Unaudited)	2006	2005
Revenues			
Net taxes for municipal purposes	\$ 18,082,209	\$ 18,608,249	\$ 16,558,464
Local improvement	80,758	99,463	84,715
Special levy water debenture	36,700	36,591	36,745
Sales and user charges			
Water and wastewater	236,000	252,096	204,342
Administration	20,500	41,064	36,239
Police	-	1,431	-
Cemetery	200	-	130
Safety	1,800	780	-
Roads, streets, walks and lighting	229,000	241,473	184,503
Community and/or agricultural services	43,000	22,104	41,680
Fire and bylaws enforcement	168,500	234,455	170,264
Subdivision and land development	30,000	-	6,921
Penalties and costs on taxes	45,000	90,704	63,672
Return on investments	450,000	859,151	469,288
Rentals	25,400	34,133	28,554
Federal government transfers	8,036	8,640	78,884
Local government transfers	61,768	69,687	197,236
Provincial government transfers	2,047,288	1,493,513	3,562,029
Other revenues	93,560	684,509	433,676
Insurance proceeds	-	-	123,934
Proceeds on disposal of Capital Assets	539,500	1,084,027	1,097,639
	<u>22,199,219</u>	<u>23,862,070</u>	<u>23,378,915</u>
Expenditures			
Legislative	237,250	242,369	226,484
Administration	1,696,761	1,607,722	1,139,512
Assessment	249,152	242,206	228,377
Police department and preventative service	238,736	275,005	233,210
Fire and bylaws enforcement	701,802	1,177,655	748,276
Bylaws enforcement	92,075	56,132	72,708
Ambulance services and first aid	217,355	236,762	215,283
Disaster services and emergency services	36,562	67,788	95,518
Roads, streets, walks and lighting	21,504,065	10,028,643	13,035,657
Water and wastewater	819,712	833,934	1,478,207
Waste management	581,912	395,186	398,485
Cemetery	3,100	-	795
Community and agricultural services	811,636	704,893	861,622
Family and community support services	42,160	42,816	41,917
Subdivision and land development	268,754	404,567	304,917
Recreation, parks and cultural	55,200	60,045	56,250
	<u>27,556,232</u>	<u>16,375,723</u>	<u>19,137,218</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures	<u>\$ (5,357,013)</u>	<u>\$ 7,486,347</u>	<u>\$ 4,241,697</u>

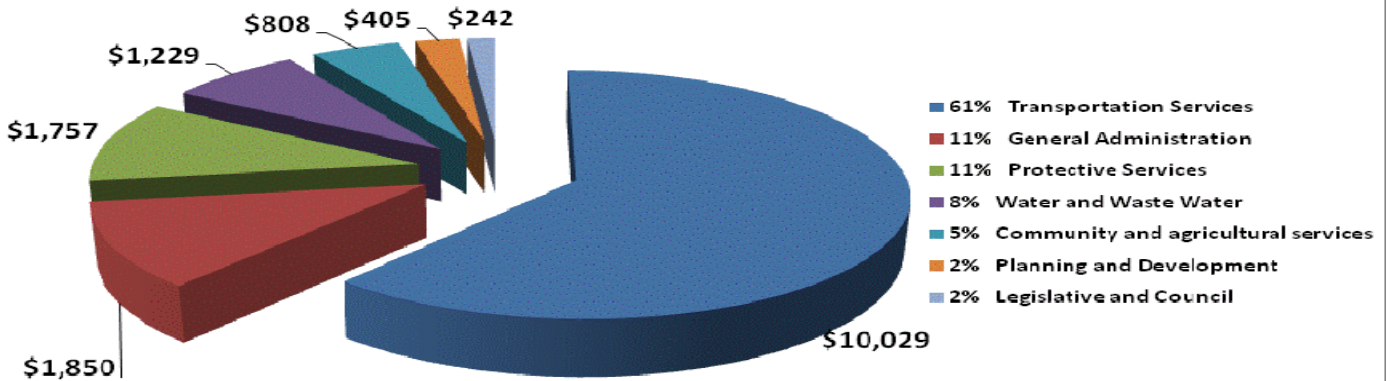
Wheatland County Statement of Changes in Fund Balances

For the year ended December 31	Budget (Unaudited)	2006	2005
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures	\$ (5,357,013)	\$ 7,486,347	\$ 4,241,697
Capital debt acquired	-	103,781	-
Capital debt repaid	(54,594)	(56,583)	(52,571)
Change in Fund Balances	(5,411,607)	7,533,545	4,189,126
Fund Balances, beginner of year	18,346,622	18,346,622	14,157,496
Fund Balances, end of year	\$ 12,935,015	\$ 25,880,167	\$ 18,346,622

Where We Got Money*



Where We Spent Money*





*Signing of Mutual Aid Agreement
February 8, 2007*



Gleichen Fire Truck



Dalum Fire Truck



Rosebud Fire Truck



Centennial Xeriscape Garden in Bloom