

Wheatland County

Annual Report



*2008 In
Review*

*Proud Heritage,
Golden Future...*



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

Once more a very busy year is over with County Crews building 12 miles of new construction as well as 5.5 miles that were contracted out for a total of 17.5 miles of road construction.

Our paving program that was put in place last year allowed us to base course and pave 6 miles on the Hammer Hill Road in 2008. This paving program will also allow us to base course 4 miles and pave 10 miles on Rockyford Road south of the 564 in our 2009 season.

Our Gravel Crew spread 175,603 cubic yards of gravel as well as crushed 180,000 cubic yards for the 2009 season.

The Oil Crew was kept busy with chipping, dust control, road repairs, bridge repairs as well as chip overlay on 2 miles of the Lyalta Road.

As well as four new bridge structures being built we were also able to reclaim ninety miles of road under our road reclamation program. We feel this program will help keep our roads in better repair for a longer period of time at a significantly lower cost to the County.

Our Hamlet Crew was kept busy with numerous activities in our 9 Hamlets. For example there was a new irrigation pivot put in Gleichen; there was a rebuild of the Carseland lagoon drainage; the old reservoir was removed at Rosebud; repaired aeration at Gleichen raw reservoir and tree pruning. There were many more improvements that are too numerous to mention.

The Ag Service Board has been busy as usual and will be covered under the Ag Service Report.

Your Council and Staff have also been busy investigating options for a regional water supply to provide drinking water and hopefully by sometime in 2009 will have a positive report for our ratepayers.

We hope to finalize our deal with the CPR railway from Standard to Bassano by mid 2009 and have now also become involved with the CN line from Lyalta to Oyen that was scheduled for closure at the end of 2008.

At the close of 2008 we are still in discussions with Strathmore over Annexation of lands surrounding Strathmore.

What has been presented thus far by no means covers all the activities our Staff have been involved with over the last year and as a Council we would like to thank the Staff in all our departments for their hard work and devotion to our County.

If you, as our ratepayers who we serve and provide services for, should require any information on our programs, policies, or just wish to make a comment please contact your local Councillor or County Staff.

With the capable leadership of our CAO Jennifer Deak and her staff we are sure that 2009 will be as productive as 2008.

We all have the best interest of your Municipality at heart and welcome your comments.

Respectfully submitted,
Ben Armstrong
Reeve of Wheatland County on behalf of Wheatland County Council



Left to Right Top: Don Vander Velde, Ben Armstrong, Ken Sauve, Glenn Koester
 Left to Right Bottom: Alice Booth, Shirley Reinhardt, Berniece Bland, Jennifer Deak

Wheatland County Council

Ben Armstrong	Reeve, Division 7
Shirley Reinhardt	Deputy Reeve, Division 5
Berniece Bland	Councillor, Division 4
Alice Booth	Councillor, Division 1
Glenn Koester	Councillor, Division 6
Ken Sauve	Councillor, Division 2
Don Vander Velde	Councillor, Division 3

Jennifer Deak, CLGM Officer	Chief Administrative
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<p>2008</p> <p>WHEATLAND COUNTY</p> <p>COUNCIL COMMITTEES</p> <p>S-Strathmore St-Standard R-Rosebud Ro-Rockyford H-Hussar C-Cluny/Gleichen</p> <p>A-Alternate *Alternate C- Chair V- Vicechair</p>	<p>B O O T H (1)</p>	<p>S A U V E (2)</p>	<p>V A N D E R V E L D E (3)</p>	<p>B L A N D (4)</p>	<p>R E I N H A R D T (5)</p>	<p>K O E S T E R (6)</p>	<p>A R M S T R O N G (7)</p>
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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	V	X	X	C	X
ASSESSMENT REVIEW BOARD	X	X	X	A			
BADLANDS AMBULANCE SOCIETY						A	X
BOW RIVER BASIN COMMITTEE		A	X				
C.A.A.M.D.&C. DIRECTOR					X		A
CALGARY REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP (CRP)			X		X		
CRP – GENERAL ASSEMBLY	X						X
CANADIAN BADLANDS LTD.	X					X	X
COMMUNITY/HAMLET MEETINGS	LOCAL COUNCILLOR						
COMMUNITY FUTURES WILD ROSE	X			A			
COURTESY MATTERS		X				X	
DISASTER SERVICES COMMITTEE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
DRUG TASK FORCE (SWAT)			X	A			
DRUMHELLER SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT	A						X
EAST CALGARY REGIONAL WATER					X		X
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE					X		X
FINANCE COMMITTEE	X	X	X			X	
FIRE PROTECTION COMMITTEE	LOCAL COUNCILLOR (S)						
GRAVEL PIT COMMITTEE (AND LOCAL COUNCILLOR)					X		X
HANDI BUS ASSOCIATION	X						
HOSPITAL PLANNING COMMITTEE			A	X	X		
INTER-MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN/ANNEXATION		X		X	X		
JOINT IRRIGATION ISSUES		X			A	X	
MACHINE ALLOCATION					A		X
MARIGOLD LIBRARY COMMITTEE		A		X			
PARKS COMMITTEE	X	X				X	
PALLISER REGIONAL MUNICIPAL SERVICES (PRMS)							X
PRMS – CN RAIL ABANDONEMENT COMMITTEE						A	X
POLICY HANDBOOK COMMITTEE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
RAIL/COMMUNITY ADVISORY PANEL – CP (AREA COUNCILLORS) – CN	X	X	X		X	X	X
RATEPAYER MEETINGS	LOCAL COUNCILLOR (S)						
RED DEER RIVER BASIN COMMITTEE	A					X	
REGIONAL WATER PARTNERSHIP		X			A	X	
ROCKY VIEW INTER-MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE			X	X	X		
SEED PLANTS	H	S	S*			R	H*R*
SIGNING AUTHORITIES				X	X		X
SOUTH REGION ASB COMMITTEE		X				A	
STRATHMORE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE				X	A		
W.A.D.E.M.S.A.			A	X		X	
W.F.C.S.S. COMMITTEE	A			X		X	
WATERS OF WHEATLAND (ASB)		A	V			C	
WHEATLAND FOUNDATION AND HOUSING MGT. BODY	A	X			X	X	

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

It is again my pleasure to present Wheatland County's 2008 Annual Report. Each department of the County has contributed to the 2008 Annual Report and provided an overview of their operations.

As a rural municipality we face many demands and expectations such as balancing growth in our communities and providing services to our ratepayers. We recognize and acknowledge that our residents have a huge investment in our County – their homes and families. They expect experienced representation to protect these interests and qualified, skilled County employees to ensure that the many different and diverse services required to run our municipality, operate to optimum efficiencies. Each of these services involves specialized personnel and equipment. Local governance and needs, along with regulations from various levels of government, determine operations. Nothing is simple – things are complex and keeping track to ensure your municipality provides good services is no small feat; it is the combined efforts of Council, staff and the cooperation of our ratepayers.

During 2008, the County's focus was on long range planning. This included the implementation of a ten year paving program to augment our existing road programs and the approval of a fire capital policy to address building structures for our fire departments. Sharing and providing regional services was also expanded during 2008, when the County agreed to provide assessment services to the village of Standard and also explore options for providing bylaw enforcement services. A regional communication project was undertaken to improve radio communications for the County, the ambulance service and the local fire departments. New partnerships were created when the Rosebud Lions Club, the County and a private operator entered into an agreement that saw the private operator take over the management of the Rosebud campground. The County is also working with two developers in the Carseland area on a regional waste water treatment disposal system that will serve the existing hamlet of Carseland, the expansion of the hamlet and the Speargrass residents.

Wheatland County is rich in history and pioneers. During the year, a total of seven plaques were presented to pioneer farm families in recognition of the 100th anniversary of their family farm in our County. A milestone was achieved by the Clarks of Crowfoot Creek who celebrated the 125th anniversary of their family farm. It is the pride and commitment of the people that make a community. Wheatland County is proud of its history and of the people that choose Wheatland County for its home.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work and dedication of Council and their support of staff. To our staff, thank you for your continued commitment in ensuring policies and procedures are implemented in an effective, sustainable manner that best serves our ratepayers. To you, our ratepayers, thank you for your input and participation. Working together we can continue to achieve results that reflect your goals and make our municipality one of the best places to live, work and play.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Deak, CLGM
Chief Administrative Officer

Wheatland County Values Statement

We recognize our role in providing effective and responsible government to the citizens of Wheatland County.

We Value: Excellence in performance
 Efficiency and accountability
 Continuous improvement in operations

We will be responsive to the needs of our customers and stakeholders.

We Value: Consistently high quality service to our customers and stakeholders
 Timely, easy to use service
 Rewards based on performance results and customer satisfactions

We will perform our responsibilities with integrity and professionalism.

We Value: High professionalism and ethical standards
 Public safety and respect for the environment
 Fair and open government

We work as a team and advocate teamwork.

We Value: Open, honest and timely communication
 Participation and innovation
 Empowerment

We are committed to personal growth and organizational development and will seek ways of constantly expanding our capabilities.

We Value: Each employee and their contribution to the success of Wheatland County
 A competent, skilled organization
 Continuing personal and professional development

We recognize the benefits of diversity in our workforce and will continue efforts in recruitment, promotion and retention toward this goal.

We Value: The worth and dignity of each member of our organization
 Respect for our differences
 Maximizing the potential of our workforce

PUBLIC WORKS

The following information is a breakdown of the various projects which were completed in 2008 and some which are scheduled for the 2009 season.

The work is divided into the following categories: gravel, pavement, construction, maintenance/oiling, bridge structures, hamlets, and road reclamation.

Gravel

In 2008 a total of 175,603 cubic yards of gravel including base course gravel was distributed on Wheatland County roads. In addition, our contractor crushed 180,000 cubic yards at various County pits.

In 2009 we expect to spread 175,000 cubic yards on County roads and crush an additional 140,000 cubic yards.

Pavement

In 2008 we completed base course and paving for a total of 6 miles on Hammer Hill Rd. (TWP Rd. 232).

In 2009 we will base course 4 miles and pave 10 miles on the Rockyford Rd. (RR 233).



Hammer Hill Road



Construction

In 2008 we completed 1.5 miles on the 842 Extension Rd. (RR 211) which was remaining from the 2007 construction program west of 1 & 12-26-21 W4.

Projects Completed in 2008:

- Rebuilt 4 miles on Rockyford Rd. West of 15, 22, 27, 34-24-23 W4.
- 2 miles on Drummond Rd. West of 6 & 7-24-23 W4.
- 2 miles on Mitchell Rd. West of 30 & 31-21-21 W4.
- 1.25 miles West of 25 & 36-21-20 W4.
- 1.25 miles south of 5 & 6-23-25 W4.

We also contracted out 5.5 miles on TWP Rd. 232 East of Hwy 1 – South of 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 & 18-23-22 W4 (includes Bridge File #08851).



2009 Construction Program:

- 3 miles on RR 261 West of 12, 13 & 24-25-26 W4.
- 4 miles on Cairnhill School Rd. (TWP Rd. 230) South of 1 & 2-23-25 W4 and South of 5 & 6-23-24 W4.
- 3.5 miles on RR 255 West of 8, 17, 20 & 29-22-25 W4.
- 1.25 miles on RR 260 West of 31-21-26 W4 and West of 6-22-26 W4.

Oiling/Maintenance Crew

Following are the projects which were completed by the Maintenance Crew during 2008:

- Graveling and grading yard at the new Hussar shop.
- Road repairs including patching and crack filling as required on surfaced roads.
- Bridge repairs and maintenance including repairing guardrails and strip decks on various bridges throughout the County.
- Trucks and backhoe fixed numerous soft spots on County roads during spring break-up.
- Re-chip 5 miles on the Old 901 S of 29 & 30-22-25 W4, S of 25, 26 & 27-22-26 W4.
- Chip overlay on Lyalta Rd. (2 miles) west of 16 & 21-25-26 W4.
- Dust Control – both Calcium Chloride and oil.

Maintenance/Oiling Crew Program for 2009:

- 2 miles on Eagle Lake Rd.
- 2 miles on Acreage Rd.
- 2 miles on North Boundary Rd.

Bridge Structures

There were 4 new bridge structures constructed in 2008:

- Bridge File 84086 SW 1-25-24 W4
- Bridge File 08851 S 17-23-22 W4
(Contracted on TWP Rd. 232).
- Bridge File 75284 SW 6-23-25 W4
- Bridge File 77119 SW 26-23-24 W4
- Bridge File 84103 SW 21-23-23 W4

There are 5 new bridge structures scheduled for construction in 2009:

- Bridge File: 00234 SW 28-27-24 W4
- Bridge File: 70138 SE 26-23-24 W4
- Bridge File: 75861 NW 3-25-23 W4
- Bridge File: 07130 SW 2-23-21 W4
- Bridge File: 80564 NW 6-25-24 (Put on new extensions).

Hamlet Crew

2008 Projects:

- Re-build aeration at Gleichen raw water reservoir.
- Communities in Bloom – Buffalo mound.
- New pivot, effluent irrigation system at Gleichen.
- Re-built Carseland Lagoon drainage system.
- Re-built control manhole at Rosebud Septic Field.
- Remove old water reservoir at Rosebud and cleaned up old site.
- Rebuilt 2 manhole bottoms in Gleichen.
- Maintenance as required – tree pruning with Asplund.

2009 Projects:

- Demolish old Cluny hotel
- Plan to demolish old I.H. building in Gleichen (516 Main St.)
- Emergency Repairs
- Routine Maintenance

Road Reclamation Program

The crew began mulching on June 26th 2008 and shut down the first week of November. Ninety miles were completed in total which included the following:



- 14 miles in Division 3
- 5 miles in Division 2
- 16 miles in Division 4
- 5 miles in Division 5
- 7 miles in Division 6
- 43 miles in Division 1

Although the 2009 map is not yet complete, to date 125 miles have been mapped out for the upcoming season which include the following:

- 26 miles in Division 3
- 14 miles in Division 4
- 25 miles in Division 5
- 20 miles in Division 2
- 15 miles in Division 1
- 26 miles in Division 6

Waste Transfer Sites

2008 Projects:

- Moved operator's kiosk at Strathmore Waste Transfer Site to improve security and better monitor activity at the site.

2009 Projects:

- The association is planning to offer both cardboard and newspaper recycling bins at our waste transfer sites.

UTILITIES

In 2008 the Utilities system continued on with two major projects which were implemented the previous year. We completed the design phase of the SCADA system, which will allow us to monitor and control a total of six different facilities online. This should reduce overtime and speed up response time to emergency situations. It has also been mandated by Alberta Environment in order to gather historical trend data and move towards on-line reporting directly to AENV. Implementation began before the end of the year and is scheduled for completion in June of 2009. We are looking to the provincial government for grant funding for part of this project.

Year two of the meter upgrade saw approximately 50 of the new style ARB meters installed in Carseland. There were also a few done in Gleichen. These were mainly meters which were broken and instead of repairing them they were replaced. We are already seeing some of the benefits of replacing the old style meters in that reading time is being reduced. This will be an ongoing project due to the time required and funding available. We are investigating the use of grant funding with this as well.

We continued to operate three facilities for other municipalities under contract throughout the year. These are Mossleigh, Rockyford, and Hussar. This is billed to the appropriate municipality on a cost recovery basis.

THE AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARD

The 2008 Wheatland County Agricultural Service Board (ASB) included the entire County Council and CAO, Jennifer Deak. Glenn Koester served as Chairman, and Don Vander Velde as Vice Chair.

ASB Staff included Agricultural Fieldman, Russ Muenchrath; Assistant Agricultural Fieldman, Jason Regehr; Rural Extension Specialist, Sarah Schumacher; Equipment Operator's, Sheldon Roes and David Pinder and Weed Inspector Ron Bartholow.

Waters of Wheatland (WOW)

The Waters of Wheatland committee continued in 2008 with Glenn Koester as Chair and Don Vander Velde as Vice Chair. Members included: Division 1 – Leigh Christensen, Division 2 – Spencer Hilton, Division 3 – Doug Rabb, Division 4 - Kerry Brewin, Division 5 – Scott Klassen, Division 6 - Barry Van Laar, Division 7 - Randy Kaiser. Lois Wegener 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. In the spring of 2008 WOW ran a web based watershed survey. The purpose of this survey is to help develop educational programs and to provide WOW and the wider community of Wheatland County with a baseline assessment of community knowledge and attitudes regarding water issues and conservation. A summer tour was also planned with the Western Irrigation District to tour new and efficient irrigation technology. Water quality monitoring continued with 2 collection sites along the Rosebud River and 2 along Serviceberry Creek.

Other projects included a Value Chain workshop, Riparian Health workshop with cows and fish, the Southern Alberta Grazing School for Women, Ladies Livestock Lessons and the Ranching Opportunities Conference partnered with Olds College.

Thurn Pit Demonstration

The Thurn pit site owned by Wheatland County and located near Irricana demonstrates the benefits of fencing, rotational grazing and an off-site watering system and how these management practices can impact upland range and riparian health. This is a long term on-going project.

Vegetation Management Program



Our vegetation management program involves the use of Integrated Pest Management Techniques. Our Equipment operators spot sprayed approximately 1319 acres of noxious weeds while mowing grass on 3800 km's 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. Spot spraying was also carried out on 145 km's of roadside spraying patches of Toadflax, Russian Knapweed, Leafy Spurge, Common Tansy and Hoary Cress.

Weed inspection, monitoring and control were a major focus throughout the year on private and public land. Staff also participated in an inspection trip along the Bow River which resulted in the control of approximately 25 Purple Loosestrife plants. Control was also carried out on 50 plants from an infestation discovered last year on private land. This was down from an infestation of 1889 plants in 2007. Numerous other weed species were also noted along the Bow River; one being the restricted weed Spotted Knapweed which was handpicked throughout the season along with some controlled spraying. Monitoring was continued for the Scentless Chamomile seed weevil and gall midge which are biological control agents for Scentless Chamomile released in 2007 along the Bow.

Thirty-three calls for weed identification and management were dealt with by staff along with 184 requests from Environmental companies in regards to weed concerns on land being crossed by pipelines. Weed management meetings were held with Husky, Encana, Quicksilver and Siksika Nation. The weed inspector is also an active member of the Wheatland Weed Consensus committee which is made of up energy companies operating in the County as well as contract sprayers and landowners. The weed consensus committee organized a clubroot update in March of 2008 with over 80 people in attendance.

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.



Spraying of Hamlets and dump sites is done on a rotational basis at the end of 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 17 miles of new road construction right of ways along with 80 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.

Pest Control

Activities included participation with Alberta Agriculture in surveying for Bertha Armyworms and the yearly grasshopper survey.

The annual grasshopper forecast count identified field ratings as low throughout the County.

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

The Richardson's ground squirrel control program made 2% liquid strychnine available to farmers from March through July. A total of 271 orders were taken for a total of 396 cases of strychnine.

Richardson's ground squirrel control was carried out on specified areas of County owned land by ASB staff.



Surveying for Clubroot was started in 2008 with 75 Canola fields being inspected. Suspect samples were sent away with all coming back negative with the exception of one test where the results were inconclusive. Surveying will continue in 2009.

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. 24,370 trees were distributed for planting in Wheatland County.

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, pasture sprayer, tree sprayer, livestock scale, skunk and magpie traps and a forage sampler.

Extension Program

Extension activities included publication of 3 Landowner Link newsletters through the Strathmore Standard newspaper reaching 16,000 readers.

The 2008 ASB Agriculture bursary recipient was Jordan Deeg of Strathmore. The Lorne & Noreen Stewart Family of Rocky Ridge Land & Cattle from Strathmore were nominated as Wheatland County's representative for the 2008 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
Glenn Koester,
Chairman

Russ Muenchrath,
Agricultural Fieldman

ENFORCEMENT



In 2008, Wheatland County Protective Services merged operations with Disaster and Safety Services. This merger combined several operations that were running parallel into one unit, particularly on the disaster services side.

The bylaw section added to Protective Services in 2007 has been a very successful addition. With the population increase within the County, these calls are now being handled by a dedicated Peace Officer.

The traffic section of Protective Services has also been a very busy unit in the past year. With increased population brings increased traffic issues. These issues range from normal traffic flow to commercial vehicle operations. Protective Services has experienced an increase in not only calls for service from the community, but calls for assistance from other agencies operating within Wheatland County.

Although financial situations in Canada have slowed commercial drilling on a minor scale, oil and gas operations are still very active within Wheatland County. As such, Protective Services will continue to consider the protection of our infrastructure a priority in our day to day operations.

The 2008 statistics for Protective Services are as follows:

- Approximately 7761 overload approvals were processed with the assistance of Roadata Services.
- Approximately 162 formal investigation files were created as a result of calls for service.
- Approximately 458 violation tickets were issued by Protective Services for the 2008 year.



FIRE/SAFETY/DISASTER SERVICES

Fire

New fire trucks were delivered, one each to the Strathmore Rural, Rockyford and Standard fire departments. In addition, a new fire truck was approved for the Dalum Fire Department through the fire Capital Fund. Several firefighting courses were held in the County which were funded by a grant from the Province.

Safety

Defensive driving courses were completed in 2008, 2 county employees completed the Safety Auditors course. Wheatland County maintained its certification of recognition in 2008 after an external audit. Wheatland County purchased an emergency defibrillator which is located in the main administration building.

Disaster Services

Municipal Emergency Plan was updated through the Emergency Management Agency. Wheatland County also held a Basic Emergency Management Course.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Although the number of development permits remained stable, 2008 saw a decline in the number and value of building permits issued in Wheatland County.

Wind farm proposals were approved in 2008 for potential of 189 Wind Towers. Continued growth has also occurred in the West Highway 1 Commercial Area Structure Plan with approved plans for a future arterial road network and regional storm water management plan.

Wheatland County continues to be a member of Palliser Regional Municipal Services. In remaining a member Wheatland County receives services including, but not limited to, subdivision review and approval, Land Use Bylaw amendments/re-designations and Area Structure Plan reviews.

Land Use Bylaw (Bylaw 2007-56) was amended to include detailed provisions for wind farms and enhanced Country Residential guidelines.

2008 Development Permit Statistics:

Type	Development permits issued 2008	Development permits issued 2007
Single Family Dwellings	91	126
Accessory/Agricultural Buildings	67	67
Commercial/Industrial	11	6
Discretionary Uses	9	17
Secondary Use Businesses	18	9
Other/Refused	39	14
Total	235	239

2008 Building Permit Statistics:

Type	Building permits issued 2008	Total Project Value 2008	Building permits issued 2007	Total Project Value 2007
Residential	65	\$16,082,565	105	\$29,506,684
Commercial	7	\$1,931,000	3	\$540,000
Industrial	3	\$2,795,000	8	\$3,639,670
Institutional	1	\$100,000	-	-
Accessory Buildings	4	\$710,000	3	\$280,000
Other	4	\$1,205,000	1	\$200,000
Minor Permits	60	\$1,151,129	43	\$843,540
Total	144	\$23,974,694	163	\$35,009,894

Wheatland County Staff

Michael Ziehr, C.E.T.
Municipal Engineering Technologist/Development Officer





Palliser Regional Municipal Services (PRMS) is an intermunicipal service agency with a membership base of 29 towns, villages, and rural municipalities within south central Alberta.

Wheatland County has been a member of Palliser Regional Municipal Services (PRMS) since 2006. The communities of Standard, Hussar, and Rockyford within Wheatland County have also recently joined.

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 the Municipality
- Process subdivision applications pursuant to Legislation

MUNICIPAL ADVISORY SERVICES

- Day to day advice to Municipal Officials and general public
- Consultation with provincial departments and 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

2008 STATISTICS

Subdivision and Land Use Redesignation applications

Subdivisions: 53

Land Use Redesignations: 62

Appeals: 4 (2 won, 2 lost)

WHO TO CONTACT?

David Yee
Planner II



Phone: 1-403-361-2024

Fax: 1-403-934-4889

Email: dyee@palliserservices.ca

David is assigned fulltime to Wheatland County at the County administration building during regular business hours. It is advised however that appointments be made in advance if you are interested in developing your land.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES



Personnel

With the economy slowing down and companies, big and small tightening their belts, the importance of having the right employees becomes even more vital. We continue to promote and encourage staff to undertake training in an effort to promote from within our organization and address succession planning. We have implemented a professional development agreement whereby training dollars remain with the County, should an employee leave for another employer. Criminal record checks are conducted on all new hires. All County Supervisory Personnel are enrolled in the SAIT Applied Management Certificate Program.

Records Management

At present we have over 1600 files coded and indexed in central storage with another 400 pending processing. Work has been started with the Planning & Development departments in coding and indexing all hamlet and rural land files. Work will continue with all departments to amalgamate documentation into central filing.

New Resident Guide – This guide was designed to familiarize new residents with services and contacts they will likely utilize when living in Wheatland County. Copies are available at reception in the Administration Office.



Website – The County Website has been redesigned and is constantly being upgraded. Council Minutes, Agendas, Bylaws and frequently used forms (burn permits, credit card authorization etc.) are now available on the County website www.wheatlandcounty.ca. Credit cards are accepted for miscellaneous purchases such as tax certificates, maps, development permits. They are not accepted for Tax or Utility Payments or refundable deposits.

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
- 2007 Color ortho aerial photography flown during the summer and fall with a detail resolution (0.3m pixel) for the entire County except for all of Township 21 and TWP22 Range 25
- 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
- Assessment data including pictures of all residences and other assessable buildings
- Municipal data showing areas of: Electoral district, Fire Response, Rescue & Ambulance
- As-built drawings for the County's underground assets such as water and sewer lines
- Oil & Gas installations including wells and pipelines location
- Agriculture displaying roadside mowing & spraying locations for 2005 and beyond

2008 GIS Initiatives

Some of the 2008 year initiatives have been:

- Implementation of New Digital Radio Communication System.
- Started on establishing Rural Addressing scheme for all properties outside of a hamlet boundary.
- Developed a Joint Ownership Map depicting both Wheatland & Kneehill County on one larger map with the boundaries clearly identified.

Planned future GIS Initiatives

Future projects include the following:

- Summer/Fall of 2009, Township & Range Road Signs to be setup for each road intersection within the County.
- Public website(WEBMAP) allowing free access to some of the GIS data.
- Link Land Use and Development information to the WEBMAP for public access.
- New 2009(to be flown in fall time) color ortho aerial photography.
- Update the civic addresses for all hamlet properties.
- Update Ownership maps on quarterly basis.
- Vehicle tracking with Geographic Positioning System (GPS) units for the majority of public works graders and snow plows.
- Implementation of a weed inspection workflow using GPS.

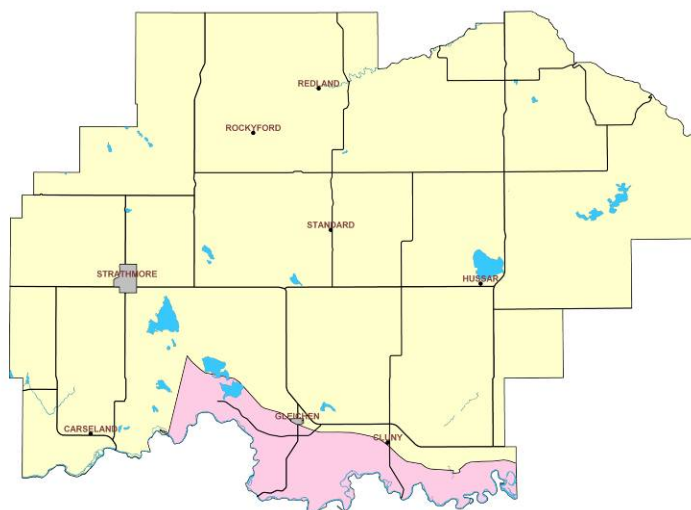
GIS Products for Sale

The following products are for sale in either paper copy or digital copy, please contact Wheatland County for current prices:

- Ownership wall map 30"X42" (Please note that all County maps are updated on a semi-annual basis).
- Color aerial photography (2000, 2005, and 2007) can be printed on letter, legal or tabloid (11"X17") size paper.
- Map Book(approx 90 pages) that has the County map and hamlet map in one booklet form containing 1 page per township or hamlet.

Contacts

Please contact Dennis Klem, Senior Assessor / G.I.S. Co-coordinator or Cindy Sweere at the County office 403-934-3321 with any questions pertaining to the G.I.S. Department.



ASSESSMENT

2008 Highlights

For the 2008 Assessment year approximately 11.25% overall increase or \$395.72 million (M) was added to the assessment roll which results in a total taxable of 3,914.1 M. Approximately \$130.998 M of the assessment change was as a direct result of new growth (new: houses, commercial, oil & gas activity) and \$264.72 M was due to market value &/or regulated value changes. The bulk of the new growth was directly related oil & gas activity along with the expansion of Hamlet of Lyalta (Lakes of Muirfield) and Speargrass.

Assessment is the evaluation of all 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, 2008 Assessment (valuation Date) for 2009 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 in the production of an agricultural product: (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.

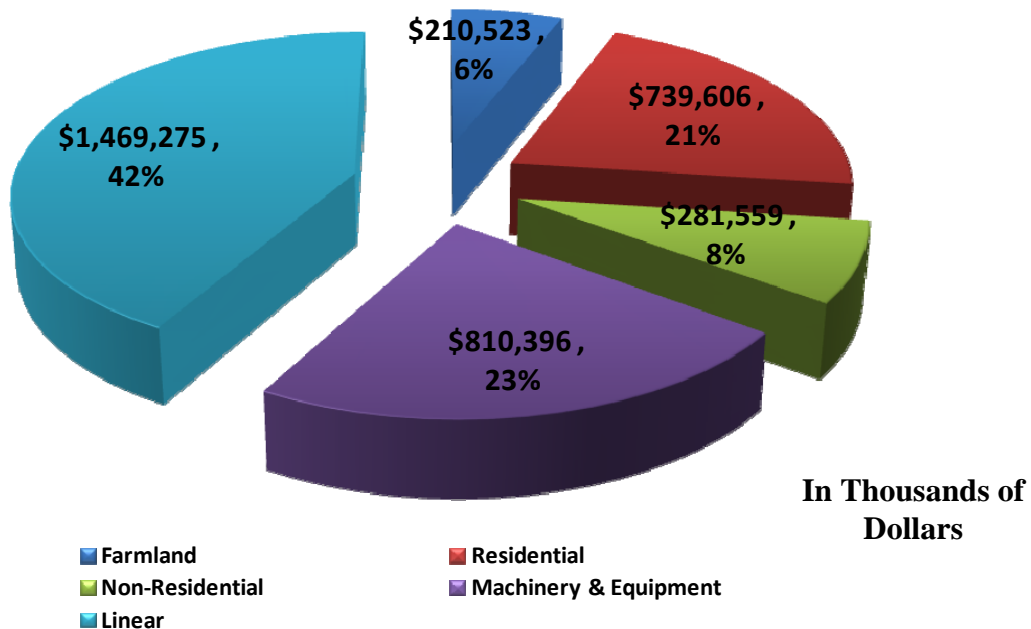
The assessment department consists of 2 personnel: Dennis Klem A.M.A. Senior Assessor and Nadine Bray Assistant Assessor.

Assessment Details

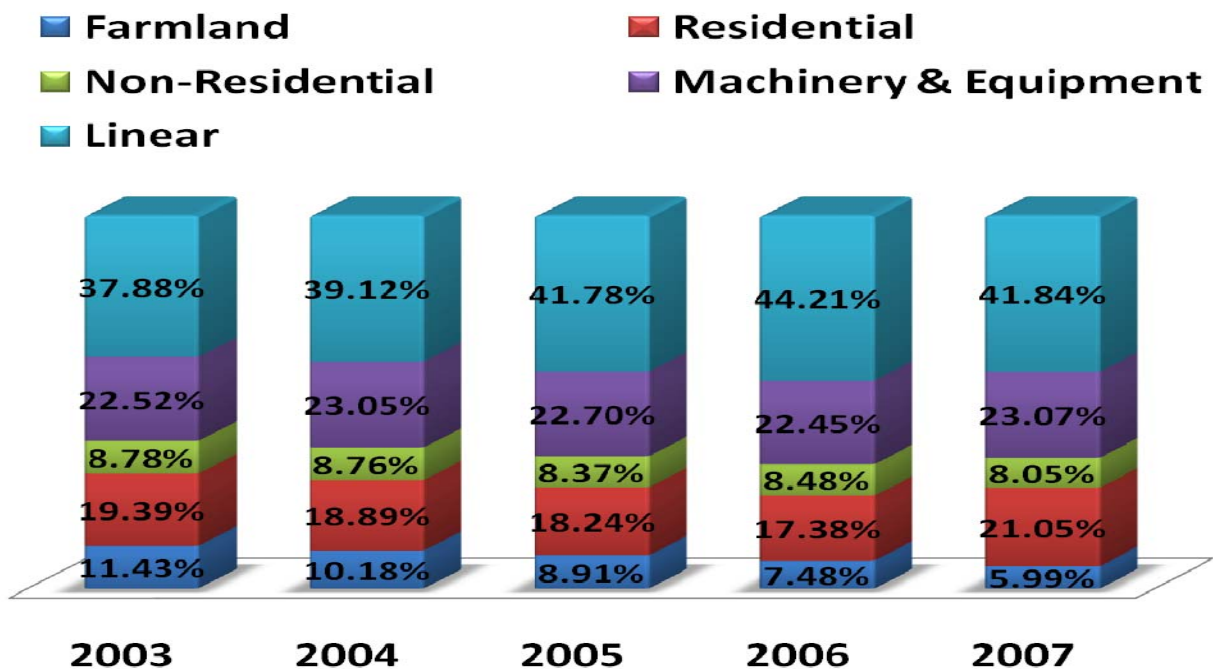
- **Farmland:** Land used in the production of an agricultural product.
- **Non-Residential:** A commerce or industry takes place.
- **Linear:** Straddle Many Muni's, i.e. Electrical Power Systems, Street Lighting Systems, etc.
- **Machinery & Equipment:** Anything used in processing or manufacturing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

- **Residential:** House, Taxable portion of House at Farm site, Trailer, Garage, Warehouse.

2007 Assessment Value



Assessment Comparison by Class



In Thousands of Dollars

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

As Chief Financial Officer, I am pleased to present the financial statements of Wheatland County for the year ended December 31, 2008. A complete set of financial statements, with BDO Dunwoody's Auditor's Report, is available at our office and on our web site.

Of note in the 2008 fiscal year, the total balance in reserves increased by \$3.68 million to \$31.06 million. The reserves have been established by Council to be used for specific purposes in future years. Reserves are also established where the County has received grant funds for projects that have not yet been completed. The most significant reserves include the following:

- \$8.97 million – Future expenditures. This reserve has not been allocated to any specific project. This reserve represents the need for funding of major projects that the County deems necessary to meet the needs of the rate payers. Setting the funds aside in advance reduces lending costs and helps to keep tax rates from fluctuating in years with large capital projects.
- \$4.87 million - Alberta Municipal Infrastructure Reserve. This represents grant funding allocated to the County for 2005 to 2007. An application has been approved for the construction of a waste water treatment plant in Speargrass / Carseland. The project will be started in 2009 and these reserve funds will be used to help pay for the project.
- \$3.99 million – Rural Road Reserve. Council has made a motion to contribute a minimum of \$500,000 every year for the future construction of roads in the County. A contribution of \$2 million has been budgeted for 2009. Funding from this reserve of \$3.91 million will be used to help fund the Rockyford Road (Range Rd 233) paving project with a total cost of \$5.87 million.

As we move forward, the County continues to improve our cost and project accounting. We have continued with the implementation of the public works inventory, project costing and work order system, resulting in a more streamlined and accurate record keeping structure.

In 2009, we will continue with our work on our inventory and valuation of all tangible capital assets. This will allow us to comply with the new accounting regulations that require us to record amortization on all capital assets in the financial statements (PSAB 3150). New software to assist us with this requirement will also be implemented in 2009. It will also assist us with better long term forecasting for asset replacement and provide useful information for our capital asset management.

I look forward to the continued progress of the County in 2009 and I am confident that the additional information we will receive through the tangible capital asset implementation will enhance financial planning and improve long term asset management.

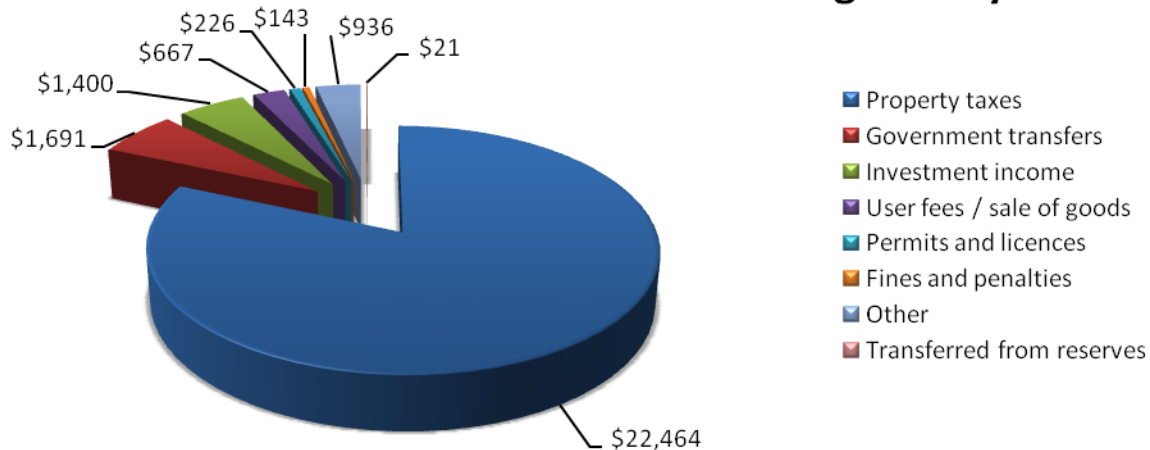
Sincerely,

Pat Leitch, CGA
Chief Financial Officer

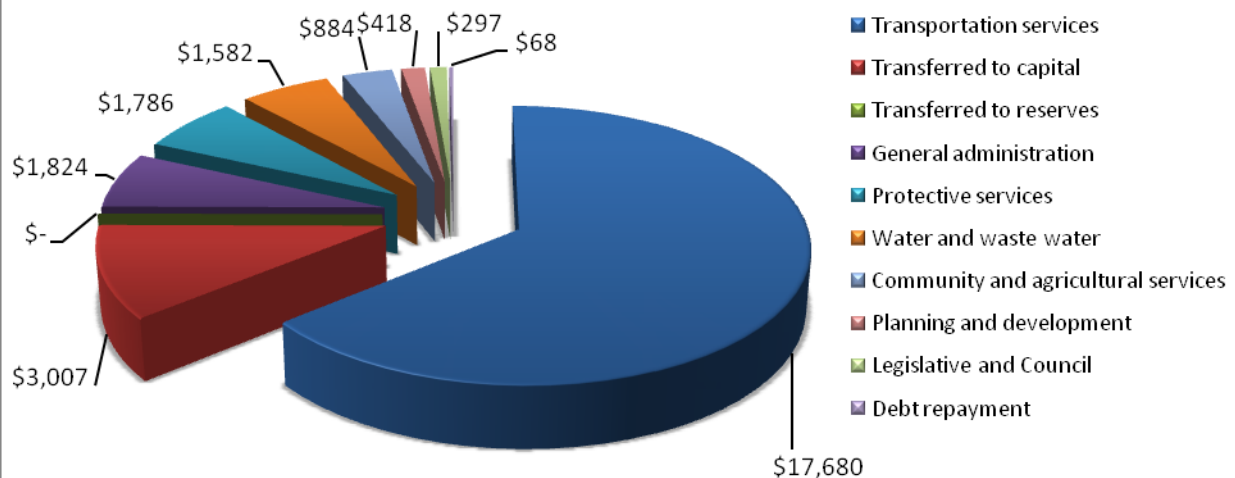
2008 Operating Financial Summary

The following graphs show where we are getting our money from and what we are spending it on. These graphs reflect our operational revenue and expenditures only. This does include amounts transferred for capital expenditures and to or from reserves. For the 2008 financial year, we had an overall operating surplus of approximately \$2,000. Government transfers include both conditional and unconditional grant funding.

Where We Are Getting Money*



Where We Are Spending Money*



* Amounts on the graphs are shown in thousands of dollars.

Wheatland County
Statement of Financial Position

December 31	2008	2007
Financial Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents (Note 2)	\$ 34,984,197	\$ 31,658,438
Tax receivables (Note 3)	462,466	503,295
Trade and other receivables	1,293,868	1,465,469
Other	222,105	189,414
	<u>36,962,636</u>	<u>33,816,616</u>
Trust assets (Note 4)	95,589	91,685
Physical assets		
Inventory	1,689,317	1,608,485
Capital assets (Note 5)	50,909,839	49,047,478
	<u>\$ 89,657,381</u>	<u>\$ 84,564,264</u>
Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 3,295,118	\$ 2,505,317
Deferred revenue (Note 6)	3,265,743	4,509,347
Long term debt (Note 7)	825,773	893,928
	<u>7,386,634</u>	<u>7,908,592</u>
Trust liabilities (Note 4)	95,589	91,685
	<u>7,482,223</u>	<u>8,000,277</u>
Municipal Equity		
Fund balances		
Operating fund (Schedule 2)	1,034,669	1,032,536
Capital fund (Schedule 3)	-	-
Reserve fund (Schedule 4)	31,056,423	27,377,901
	<u>32,091,092</u>	<u>28,410,437</u>
Equity in capital assets (Schedule 5) (Note 15)	50,084,066	48,153,550
	<u>82,175,158</u>	<u>76,563,987</u>
	<u>\$ 89,657,381</u>	<u>\$ 84,564,264</u>

Contingencies (Note 13)

**Wheatland County
Statement of Operations**

For the year ended December 31	Budget (Unaudited)	2008	2007
Revenues			
Net taxes for municipal purposes (Schedule 6)	\$ 22,065,315	\$ 22,342,592	\$ 19,184,853
Local improvement	35,600	84,665	71,502
Special levy water debenture	35,600	36,700	36,652
Sales and user charges			
Water and wastewater	219,300	260,100	195,996
Administration	45,100	34,437	44,577
Police	400	-	-
Cemetery	300	320	280
Safety	2,900	1,525	3,473
Roads, streets, walks and lighting	255,300	275,111	250,179
Community and/or agricultural services	23,800	81,718	22,807
Fire and bylaws enforcement	600	1,940	380
Subdivision and land development	31,900	11,700	-
Permits and licences	196,600	226,165	193,062
Fines	58,600	68,120	56,671
Penalties and costs on taxes	84,200	75,328	78,822
Return on investments	1,353,000	1,400,478	1,219,834
Rentals	25,500	25,547	21,091
Federal government transfers	161,900	19,002	485,223
Local government transfers	157,700	153,658	172,979
Provincial government transfers	4,993,700	4,974,539	2,032,595
Other revenues	562,500	909,254	725,721
Net proceeds on disposal of Capital Assets	641,000	834,453	451,062
	<u>30,950,815</u>	<u>31,817,352</u>	<u>25,247,759</u>
Expenditures (Schedule 7)			
Legislative	334,000	297,223	255,661
Administration	2,704,800	2,191,178	1,763,001
Assessment	400,300	284,787	286,135
Police department and preventative service	442,200	371,516	414,599
Fire	1,001,300	965,992	854,817
Bylaw enforcement	76,500	78,367	69,115
Ambulance services and first aid	344,000	343,941	331,108
Disaster services and emergency services	26,800	26,029	15,801
Roads, streets, walks and lighting	20,892,600	20,188,490	15,688,164
Water and wastewater	1,167,100	1,280,434	908,028
Waste management	910,100	697,260	804,091
Cemetery	200	-	-
Community and agricultural services	777,400	805,506	710,379
Family and community support services	45,800	45,153	44,123
Subdivision and land development	546,100	418,179	427,325
Recreation, parks and cultural	78,100	74,487	80,865
	<u>29,747,300</u>	<u>28,068,542</u>	<u>22,653,212</u>
Excess of revenue over expenditures	<u>\$ 1,203,515</u>	<u>\$ 3,748,810</u>	<u>\$ 2,594,547</u>

Wheatland County
Statement of Changes in Fund Balances

For the year ended December 31	Budget (Unaudited)	2008	2007
Excess of revenue over expenditures	\$ 1,203,515	\$ 3,748,810	\$ 2,594,547
Capital debt repaid	(68,400)	(68,155)	(64,277)
Change in Fund Balances	1,135,115	3,680,655	2,530,270
Fund Balances, beginning of year	28,410,437	28,410,437	25,880,167
Fund Balances, end of year	\$ 29,545,552	\$ 32,091,092	\$ 28,410,437



Wheatland County
HWY 1, RR1, Strathmore, AB
T1P 1J6

Phone (403) 934-3321
Fax (403) 934-4889

Hours 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.
Monday to Friday

E-mail – admin@wheatlandcounty.ca
Website – www.wheatlandcounty.ca

NOTES

