

The Reeve ReSOURCE



Hello, Mountain View County!

It is my pleasure to bring you this first quarter newsletter, which I hope you will find informative. This edition will cover Area Structure Plan Reviews, Assessments, the Land Use Bylaw Review, the Municipal Development Plan Monitoring Report, Property Tax Administration, and Roads. If you have any questions or comments, I encourage you to contact your local Councillor. Furthermore, Council began to livestream our Council meetings just over a year ago, and those videos are retained and can be viewed at your convenience on the Mountain View County YouTube channel. Links to these videos can also be found on the County's website. If you have not already downloaded the County's mobile APP, please consider it. We provide a wealth of information on the APP as well as a simple way for rate payers to send in service level requests and complaints.

Reeve Angela Aalbers

Area Structure Plan (ASP) Reviews

To align statutory plans with Council's Strategic Plan and balance community and development needs, the County continues to review and update its Area Structure Plans (ASPs). The Water Valley Winchell Lake ASP Open House was recently held on March 26th and all feedback will be discussed further by the steering committee. The Olds Didsbury Airport ASP is scheduled for a Public Hearing on April 27th and the Bergen ASP Review and the Sundre Airport Concept Plan are both scheduled to begin later this year. The South McDougal Flats Area Structure Plan was officially approved by Mountain View County Council during their regular council meeting on March 27th, incorporating revisions suggested by the steering committee. The revised ASP includes a variation in the size of future country residential parcels, accommodating options for parcels of up to 15 acres to mitigate the impact of water wells and septic systems and to align with the rural environment in the area. Notably, the ASP emphasizes infill country residential development where appropriate, reduces the area designated for future country residential development, and expands opportunities for commercial and industrial development along HWY 584. Additionally, it mandates a phasing plan limiting disturbed aggregate extraction areas to 30 acres to minimize offsite impacts. Recognizing the concerns of residential and agricultural water users, particularly in anticipation of the 2024 drought season, County Council emphasizes the long-term nature of ASPs, as land use planning documents span over multiple drought/flood cycles. Importantly, the ASP outlines potential future land uses without mandating land redesignations, as any redesignations must be initiated by landowners or their representatives and adhere to the process outlined in the Municipal Government Act (MGA), requiring a public hearing prior to a decision of Council.

Assessments

Assessment work is continuously ongoing as assessment values change annually. To align with provincial

recommendation, each year, Mountain View County's assessment department reviews assessment details on 20% of properties. This process starts in January with a mailout notifying those within a re-inspection area and includes a Request for Information (RFI) to allow owners to respond at their convenience. On-site inspection of those properties will take place afterwards which may only take 5-10 minutes, beginning in April. We respect your privacy and understand the RFI may be concerning to some ratepayers. In your tax mail out this year, Council has included a brochure titled "Why the RFI?" This brochure includes some frequently asked questions and outlines contact information should you have further questions. If you have questions about your Assessment/Tax Notice, please contact us to review the information with an Assessor.

Land Use Bylaw Review

After hosting three Open Houses and sharing the proposed Land Use Bylaw (LUB) changes with ratepayers, a Public Hearing is scheduled for April 10th and is the next step in the review process. Based on all the information and feedback collected, some of the proposed changes are highlighted as follows:

- Including the opportunity for applicants to apply for a development permit for unserviced, overnight, self-contained accommodations associated with public riding arenas and agri-tourism businesses. This use does not include recreational vehicles storage.
- Including the definition for an event centre, meaning, "a facility that accommodates events held inside building(s) or outdoors to which members of the general public are invited or admitted for a fee or free of charge. Events may include, but not be limited to, gatherings, weddings, celebrations, or similar type of activities." This would be a discretionary use in the Parks and Recreation district, requiring proper zoning and a development permit.
- Introducing a recreation vehicle exemption for temporary accommodations in the agriculture and residential farmstead districts, which would provide temporary use from May 1 to October 31, unless otherwise justified by the agriculture operations. With this, Council is aiming to address the shortage of accommodations for farm workers.
- Allowing one shipping container as a permitted use in residential districts.
- Reducing setbacks in agricultural and residential districts.
- Including the term "insect production facility" in our industrial, manufacturing/processing general definition. By doing so, applications for these facilities can only be proposed in industrial districts and not in commercial or agriculture districts. Without this specification, applicants could propose such facilities anywhere in the County via direct control districts.

Proposed amendments, along with others in the LUB draft available on the County website, aim to enhance business support, expand

storage options, enlarge building envelopes, and address farm worker housing shortages. None of these changes have been finalized, and we value your feedback on these proposals or any other concerns. The Public Hearing for the Land Use Bylaw will take place during the April 10th Council meeting, and the public can attend the meeting in person at the County Office or virtually. Please refer to the adjacent page in this newspaper for all pertinent details.

Municipal Development Plan (MDP) Monitoring Report

The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) Monitoring Report for 2023 was presented to Council on February 14th, 2024. This report highlights performance indicators set by Council to determine how the Municipal Development Statutory Plan is supporting Council's strategic direction and goals. The County continues to re-designate less than a quarter section of land per year to residential districts. A total of 26 new businesses received approval while 6 businesses expanded. Working with subdivision applicants, 10 new agreements were signed to protect riparian areas. For more information on the MDP Monitoring Report, including a webmap, please visit our website, at: www.bit.ly/MVCPlanDocs

Property Tax Administration

Preparations are underway for the 2024 Assessment/Tax Notice mailout, anticipated to be sent out in early May. The Property Tax Incentive Program remains active, entailing a 1.5% reduction on the total tax bill if the full amount of current year taxes owed is paid before June 28th. Historically, the County has seen approximately one third of tax rolls take advantage of this program. If you are concerned about meeting the property tax payment deadline of September 15th, please consider enrolling in the monthly tax installment plan.

Roads

Dust Suppression applications are now available online or at the County office. The cost for a 200m stretch in front of your property is \$608. Applications close on May 10th, with work to begin early in the summer. Seasonal road bans are currently in effect to June 5th, reducing the legal loading on the chipseal road network to 75% of axle weight. You can find a full list of road bans on our website. During the spring thaw, our graders are actively addressing potholes, washboards, and wheel ruts. However, caution is exercised to avoid exacerbating road conditions. While large-scale grading or gravel hauling isn't feasible during this period, pothole patching primarily occurs in May and throughout the summer when our crews are fully operational. When encountering road crews in the summer, please reduce speed as crews work on one lane at a time for safety reasons. Given the road bans, exemptions may be granted for agricultural purposes, allowing a 90% allowance. To request such an exemption, please contact the County Office.