

# Vantage Point



## Rocky View County's 2016/17 Report to the Community

<b>County Council</b> .....	2	<b>Transportation</b> .....	9
Council Members		Roads	
Reeve's Message		<b>Development</b> .....	10
<b>Quality of Life</b> .....	3	Planning	
Family and Community Support Services		Building Services	
Recreation		<b>Finance</b> .....	12
Public Libraries		Taxes	
Parks & Trails		Sources of Revenue	
<b>Environment</b> .....	4	Assessment	
Agriculture		Deficit & Debt	
Solid Waste & Recycling		Reserves	
<b>Safety</b> .....	6	<b>Take Our County Quiz</b> .....	15
Fire			
<b>Protection</b> .....	8		
Enforcement			



**ROCKY VIEW COUNTY**  
Cultivating Communities

# County Council



**Division 1:**  
**Councillor Liz Breakey**  
 LBreakey@rockyview.ca

**Division 2:**  
**Councillor Jerry Arshinoff**  
 JArshinoff@rockyview.ca

**Division 3:**  
**Councillor Margaret Bahcheli**  
 MBahcheli@rockyview.ca

**Division 4:**  
**Councillor Rolly Ashdown**  
 RAshdown@rockyview.ca

**Division 5:**  
**Deputy Reeve Earl Solberg**  
 ESolberg@rockyview.ca

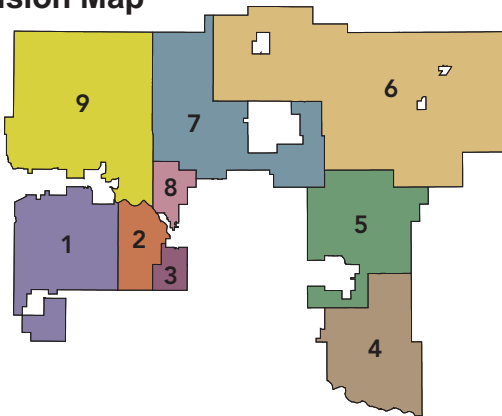
**Division 6:**  
**Reeve Greg Boehlke**  
 GBoehlke@rockyview.ca

**Division 7:**  
**Councillor Lois Habberfield**  
 LHabberfield@rockyview.ca

**Division 8:**  
**Councillor Eric Lowther**  
 ELowther@rockyview.ca

**Division 9:**  
**Councillor Bruce Kendall**  
 BKendall@rockyview.ca

## Division Map



## From the Reeve

On the following pages, you'll see a snapshot of some of the work we've been doing at Rocky View County over the past year.

Rather than long, dry reports, we like to show you information in a way that helps you quickly and easily understand the kind of activities the County undertakes. But always remember, if you want more information you can always visit the County's website to search for topics that interest you, or get in touch with us through [questions@rockyview.ca](mailto:questions@rockyview.ca).

Creating a strong municipality such as Rocky View County is a question of balance. We must balance the taxes we're willing to pay with the services and infrastructure we demand. We must balance the need for growth and development with the preservation of our rural heritage. And we must balance the differing expectations of all residents, whether they live in a hamlet, a country residential community, or an agricultural area.

As councillors, one of the tools we use to help us achieve balance is our Strategic Plan, which outlines three main "pillars" that are always at the forefront of our actions:

- **Fiscal Responsibility:** Focusing on the financial impacts of our decisions in the short and long term, and ensuring the fiscal health of the County.
- **Sustainable Communities:** Cultivating sound infrastructure, stewarding open spaces, managing land responsibly, and providing effective community services.

- **Service Excellence:** Ensuring that road maintenance, fire, enforcement, recreation, and other County services are well run and meet appropriate quality standards.

As I wrote to you in last year's *Report to the Community*, many Alberta municipalities yearn for the success Rocky View County has seen as a result of our strategic focus. Our economic diversification, low tax rates, and ability to maintain a strong quality of life for residents

are sources of great pride for County residents.

As we move closer to municipal elections in October, you'll hear a great deal about what people think we're doing right and wrong in Rocky View County, and you'll hopefully hear some new ideas and workable

solutions alongside the inevitable complaints.

Whatever choices we make as a municipality come October, we are in the enviable position of looking to the future of Rocky View County from a position of great strength.

We can all take pride in Rocky View County as an outstanding place to live, learn, work, and play.

**97%**  
 of County residents surveyed rated their quality of life in the top categories of good or very good.

Greg Boehlke  
 Reeve

## On the Cover

The Fox family is celebrating 100 years of farming in Rocky View County this summer. Shown from left to right, are current family members Kim, Jaxon, Bryan, Judy, Houston, and Kyle.

Photo by Carl Patzel



# Quality of Life



## Family and Community Support Services

Rocky View County values the social well-being of our residents, and the County partners with the Government of Alberta to provide programs over and above the standard provincially-funded social services programs.

The County funds non-profit societies and local government agencies that help people develop independence; strengthen their coping skills; become more resistant to crisis; assume responsibility for decisions and actions which affect them; develop interpersonal

and group skills; and give back to the community through volunteerism.

For more information on Family and Community Support Services programs, visit [www.rockyview.ca/VP-FCSS](http://www.rockyview.ca/VP-FCSS).

*The Province and County provided an extra \$200,000 in funding for 2016 to help with challenges brought by the economic downturn.*



**\$913,300**  
total funding provided



**3,416**  
information or referrals given



**13,285**  
volunteer hours



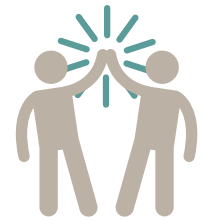
**632**  
families served



**4,648**  
individuals served



**425**  
community partners



**504**  
volunteers

## Recreation

The County supports a wide range of recreation facilities, playing fields, pathways, and community recreation and culture groups, and participates in the Marigold Library System.

Rocky View County looks to encourage recreation, leisure, and cultural opportunities that are accessible, diverse, and that maximize community use.

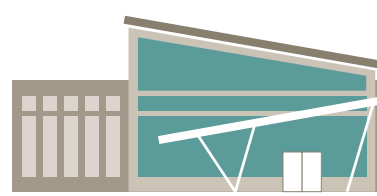
For more information visit [www.rockyview.ca/Recreation](http://www.rockyview.ca/Recreation).



**28**  
community halls and recreation facilities



**40**  
sports fields



**21**  
supported recreational amenities in other municipalities

*Residents rank recreation as their fourth highest priority behind roads, fire, and enforcement.*

## Public Libraries

Rocky View County provides over \$470,000 to public library systems in neighbouring municipalities to ensure full access for Rocky Viewers. Grants are provided to individual libraries and to the Marigold Library System.

With your library card you can use an impressive range of in-branch and online library services, from borrowing books and DVDs to online daily newspaper access and other resources. Plus your card allows

you to obtain a free The Alberta Library (TAL) card that can be used at the Calgary Public Library.

Visit any of these County-funded libraries to get your library card (small card fees may apply), or go to [www.marigold.ab.ca](http://www.marigold.ab.ca) for information on the overall library system and details on more-distant libraries that you can also use.

- Airdrie Public Library – [www.airdriepubliclibrary.ca](http://www.airdriepubliclibrary.ca)

- Beiseker Municipal Library – [www.beisekerlibrary.ca](http://www.beisekerlibrary.ca)
- Chestermere Public Library – [www.chestermerepubliclibrary.com](http://www.chestermerepubliclibrary.com)
- Cochrane Public Library – [www.cochranepubliclibrary.ca](http://www.cochranepubliclibrary.ca)
- Crossfield Municipal Library – [www.crossfieldlibrary.ca](http://www.crossfieldlibrary.ca)
- Irricana Municipal Library – [www.irricanalibrary.ca](http://www.irricanalibrary.ca)

# Quality of Life

## Parks & Trails

Rocky Viewers value parks, paths, and open spaces. Rocky View County features trails and pathways, in addition to environmental

and municipal reserves. The County's efforts are enhanced by the outstanding open spaces and amenities available in the

Bragg Creek, Glenbow Ranch, and Big Hill Springs provincial parks.



54

kilometres of regional pathways

*In 2016 the County added 9 kilometres of pathways and trails for residents to enjoy...*



1,722

acres of municipal reserve lands



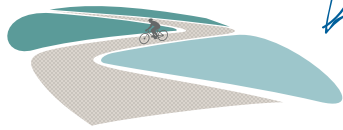
1,310

acres of environmental reserves



38

kilometres of natural trails



81

kilometres of local pathways or trails

*...and 12 acres of new municipal reserve land.*

## Environment

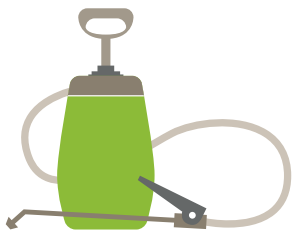
### Agriculture

In Rocky View County agriculture is valued, respected, and recognized as vital to our social, economic, and ecological integrity.

The County provides our residents with a range of information and services aimed at

protecting and enhancing agriculture and rural living. Services include weed and pest control, maintaining County-owned lands, developing agricultural and environmental policies, educational programs, scholarships, and awards.

For more information visit [www.rockyview.ca/Agriculture](http://www.rockyview.ca/Agriculture).



69%

reduction in herbicide use since 2008



667

invasive weed cases



112

canola fields surveyed for clubroot



4,734

acres of noxious/prohibited noxious weeds controlled

### Rats!

Rats may have made major contributions to laboratory sciences, but outside of the lab they take an enormous economic toll and pose a significant health risk to humans. The cost of rat damage to crops, buildings, and human health reaches into the billions of dollars each year in Canada and the U.S.

Alberta is the only place on earth to be rat free, other than the Arctic and Antarctic. Just after WWII, Alberta decided to eradicate rats to avoid the health and economic damage they cause. Rats are banned

as pets, and a team of full-time specialists patrol to destroy any rats that enter on trains, vehicles, aircraft, or by land.

If you see a rat, report it to Rocky View County's Agricultural Services department at 403-230-1401.





## Eye in the Sky

This past year, Rocky View County began using a new unmanned aerial drone in its fight against noxious weeds.

Invasive weeds can cause millions of dollars in damage to crops and livestock, and pose a serious risk to native wildlife and plant species. Provincial law requires landowners to control or destroy dozens of different weed species that pose an economic or environmental threat. Rocky View County conducts weed inspection and enforcement programs on private lands, and mounts an aggressive program to control and eliminate weeds on public land as part of this provincial directive.

The aerial drone allows the County to inspect coulees, steep river banks, dangerous outcroppings, and other hazardous hard-to-reach areas. Finding weed problems early saves the County and private landowners a great deal of money and effort.

County staff are trained on the safe operation of the drone, which is used only for weed inspection purposes.

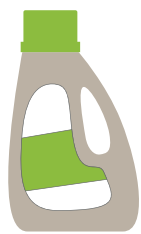


## Solid Waste and Recycling

Our ability to manage waste and recycling is an important indicator of our commitment to Rocky View County's environment.

We provide a number of facilities for residents to dispose of, or recycle, their household or agricultural waste.

For more information visit [www.rockyview.ca/Garbage](http://www.rockyview.ca/Garbage).



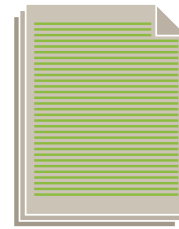
**25,346**

kilograms of plastic



**10,370**

kilograms of twine



**247,900**

kilograms of mixed paper, cardboard, and newsprint



**210,403**

kilograms of metal



**23,913**

kilograms of electronics



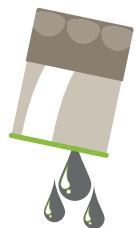
**10,642**

kilograms of paint



**237,830**

kilograms of grass and wood



**4,181**

kilograms of oil filters



**29,300**

litres of oil



**3,097**

kilograms of oil containers



**2,271,000**

kilograms of garbage



**1,256,000**

kilograms of mixed recycling



## Fire

Rocky View County provides effective and efficient fire protection through an innovative network of staffed and volunteer stations, plus mutual

aid agreements with a number of neighbouring municipalities.

All County firefighters – paid or volunteer – are trained to National Fire Protection

Association standards, and are dedicated to the safety of you and your family.

For more information visit [www.rockyview.ca/Fire](http://www.rockyview.ca/Fire).



**421**

fire dispatches



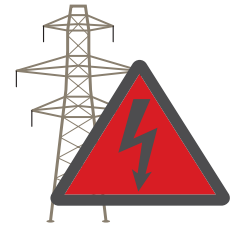
**34**

rescues



**289**

fire alarms



**189**

public hazards



**23**

carbon monoxide (CO) calls

*CO kills more people in Alberta than fire-related causes. Visit [www.rockyview.ca/VP-CO](http://www.rockyview.ca/VP-CO) to find out how to protect your home.*



**385**

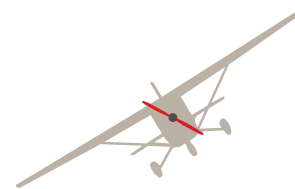
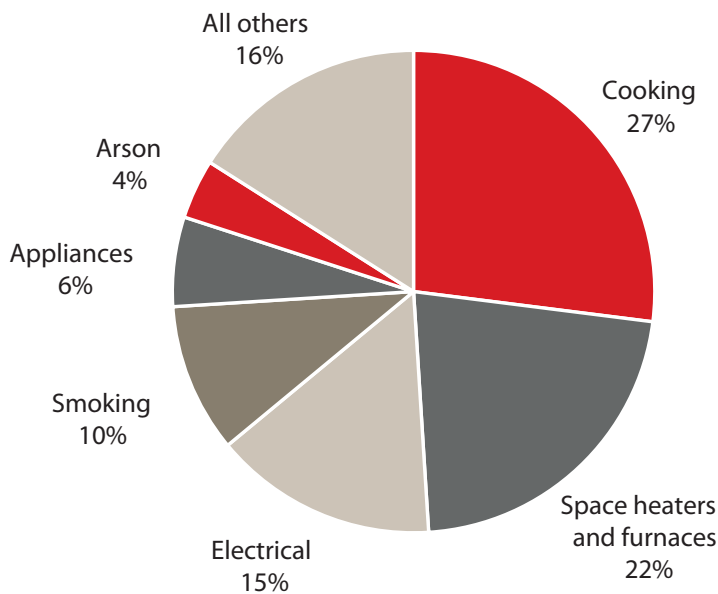
motor vehicle accidents



**479**

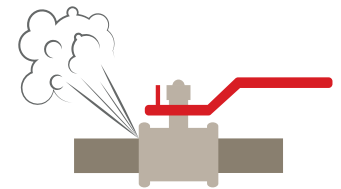
medical

### Known Causes of County House Fires



**10**

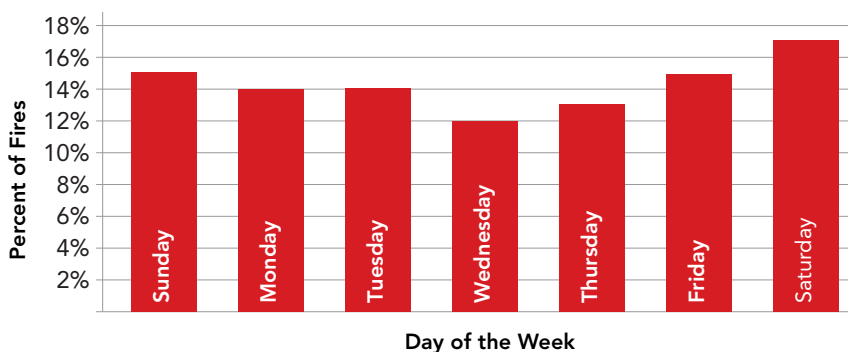
aircraft incidents



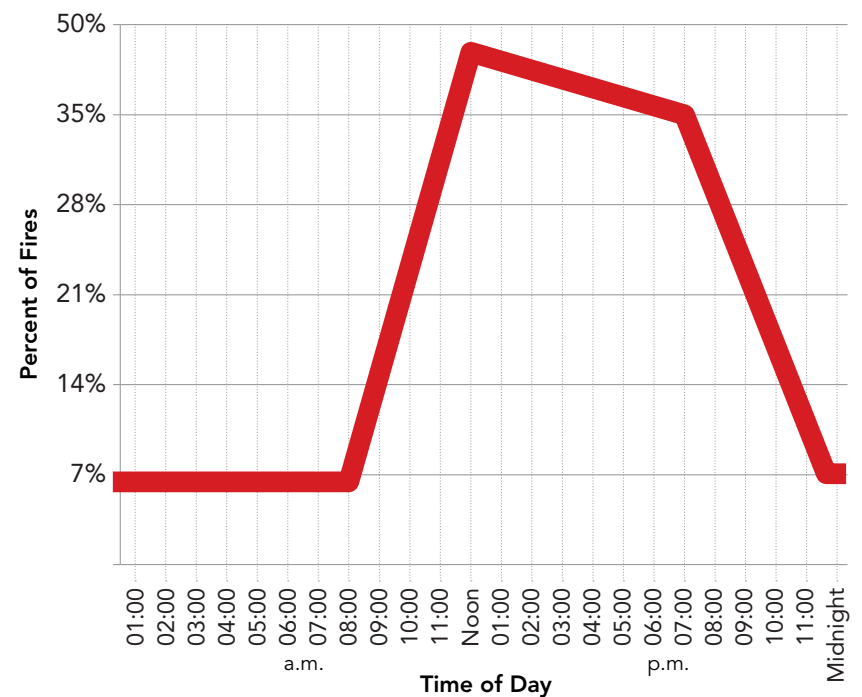
**45**

gas leaks

### Fires by Day of the Week



### Fires by Time of Day





## Emergency Preparedness

Rocky View County has a strong emergency preparedness program to co-ordinate the municipality's response to any kind of large scale emergency. First responders are backed up by staff from throughout the County who trained under the Incident Command System to ensure

an effective response in time of crisis. You can play a role in your own safety by signing up for the County's Safe & Sound alert system, and by keeping your Household Emergency & Resource Guide up-to-date.

For more information on Safe & Sound alert system visit [www.rockyview.ca/Safe](http://www.rockyview.ca/Safe). If you don't have a copy of the Safe & Sound Household Emergency & Resource Guide, you can get one by e-mailing [Communications@rockyview.ca](mailto:Communications@rockyview.ca).



Rocky View County regularly leads and participates in regional emergency response training involving neighbouring municipalities. Shown here is the briefing for the start of a wildfire exercise this past April in Bragg Creek.



Rocky View County conducts training exercises for staff and volunteer firefighters to stay up-to-date and prepared for emergencies.

# Protection



## Enforcement

Rocky View County has dedicated officers who enforce County bylaws and patrol all County roads for traffic violations. Our bylaw and peace officers work closely with the RCMP, who provide policing service to

the County out of detachments located in four neighbouring municipalities.

Enforcement efforts help to ensure that Rocky View County communities are safe, and that everyone follows the rules that

help us live together as good neighbours.

For more information visit [www.rockyview.ca/Enforcement](http://www.rockyview.ca/Enforcement).



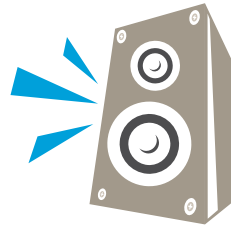
408

animal control complaints



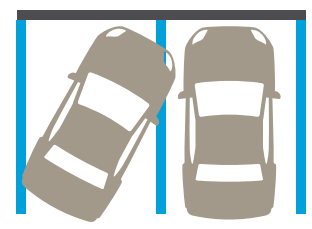
39

burning complaints



39

noise complaints



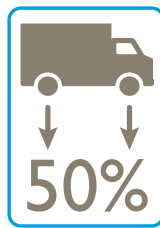
102

parking control complaints



36

public safety hazard complaints



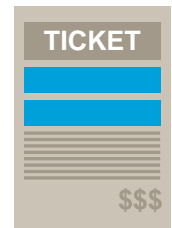
43

road damage complaints



25

abuse of public land complaints



8,720

traffic tickets issued



36

littering complaints



41

pumping complaints



44

unsightly premises complaints



17

signage complaints

## To Serve and Protect

Rocky View County is policed by RCMP officers out of four regional detachments in Airdrie, Cochrane, Strathmore, and Beiseker. The County's own bylaw and peace officers work with the Mounties to ensure the protection of Rocky Viewers.

Rocky View County's Enforcement Services staff:

- Patrol County roads, including secondary provincial highways, for speeding, distracted driving, running stop signs, etc.
- Enforce County planning and development bylaws
- Enforce other County bylaws, such as animal control and controlled burning

Bylaw and peace officers focus on education and collaboration first, followed by enforcement when needed, to help all Rocky Viewers live together in ways that balance individual needs with the smooth, safe, and secure operation of the municipality and its communities.





# Transportation



## Roads

Rocky View County looks after about 2,400 kilometres of roads, working to keep them safe and appropriately maintained for the traffic volumes they carry.

The County provides a number of road services, including pothole repair, gravel

road grading, dust mitigation, snow plowing spring sweeping, roadside mowing, and more.

The Province of Alberta is responsible for maintaining all highways or secondary highways, and Rocky View County looks

after all the remaining public roadways in the municipality.

For more information visit [www.rockyview.ca/Roads](http://www.rockyview.ca/Roads).



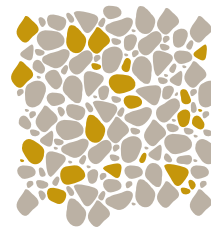
**2.74**

million litres of calcium chloride applied for dust control



**2,481**

single-trip heavy haul, overweight, or over-dimension permits



**1,500**

kilometres of gravel roads maintained



**25**

agricultural hauling permits



**2**

bridge structure replacement projects



**4**

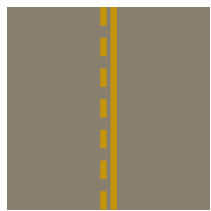
completed bridge repairs



**152**

completed bridge inspections

*Almost 3 times more bridge inspections were completed, as the County focused on this critical infrastructure.*



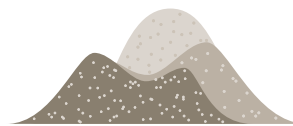
**892**

kilometres of hard-surface roads maintained



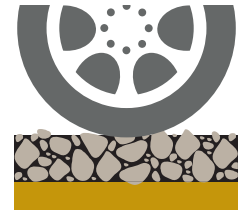
**744,000**

litres of calcium chloride applied for anti-icing roads



**6,735**

tonnes of winter sand applied for snow and ice control



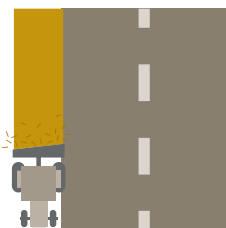
**18.5**

kilometres of roads re-chipped



**1,090**

tonnes of asphalt used for pothole repairs



**2,350**

kilometres of roadsides mowed



**36**

kilometres of roads surface-stabilised



**497**

traffic control signs installed, repaired, or replaced



**79,140**

linear metres of pavement crack sealed

*This past year, a new pilot process resulted in a 350% increase in crack sealing on paved roads. Crack sealing reduces the risk of pavement failure from water infiltration. That extends the life of the road, and saves tax dollars.*



## Planning

Rocky View County works through our County Plan, Land Use Bylaw, and other plans and bylaws to ensure that short- and long-term development is undertaken in a way that supports needed growth while protecting

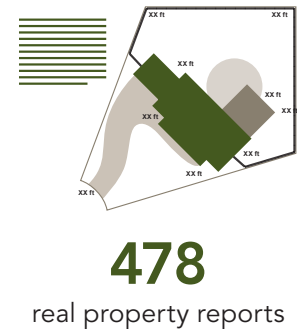
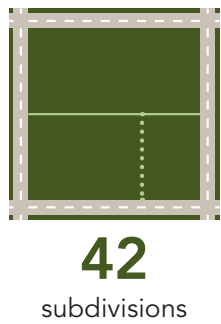
agriculture, the environment, and our overall quality of life.

The County designates land for certain types of use, reviews the impacts of possible changes, develops area structure

plans, and examines and approves conceptual schemes and other plans from developers.

For more information visit [www.rockyview.ca/Planning](http://www.rockyview.ca/Planning).

### Planning Applications by Type



## Improving Processing Times

You very often hear about “red tape” in government – too many forms, too many rules, and long waiting times. While it’s a good thing to reduce red tape, it’s important to remember that the rules exist to protect people and quality of life, and to ensure a fair process for everyone.

Rocky View County Council established new service standards for processing re-designation and subdivision applications, while still ensuring proper oversight of planning files.

Through careful analysis, testing, and process restructuring, the County’s planning department was able to achieve faster completion times on 80 percent of applications in 2016 over 2015.

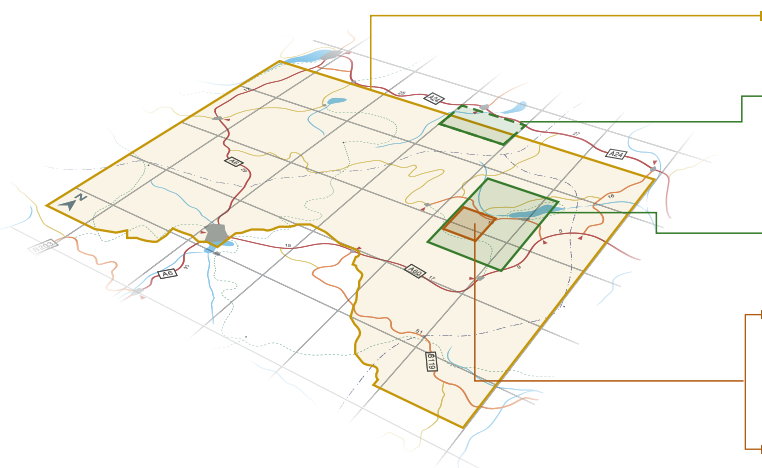
The result is the best of both worlds. Those looking to develop their property in standard, approved ways saw faster turn-around times. But for the 20 percent of projects that are complex, controversial, or unusual, proper oversight still took precedence over speed.

### Planning Application Processing Times 2015 to 2016

Type	Re-designation	Subdivision
Farmstead First Parcel Out	75% Faster	96% Faster
Residential First Parcel Out	38% Faster	145% Faster
Fragmented Quarter Section – Country Residential & New or Distinct Agricultural Use	55% Faster	4% Faster
All other residential applications	117% Faster	60% Faster
Commercial / Industrial / Institutional	98% Faster	145% Faster

## Rocky View County Planning

Development in the County is guided by a number of planning documents. Here’s a brief look at the main types of plans you may hear about.



**COUNTY PLAN:** Guides overall growth and development for the County.

**INTER-MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN:** Guides growth and development in an area where the County shares a border with another municipality.

- or -

**AREA STRUCTURE PLAN:** Provides the vision for the physical development of a community.

**CONCEPTUAL SCHEME:** A detailed design showing where proposed lots, roads, parks, and other amenities will be placed within a development.

- or -

**MASTER SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN:** A design showing where proposed buildings, parking, operations, signs and road entrances will be placed on a single piece of property.

# Development



## Building Services

The County also works with residents, developers, and Provincial and Federal

building codes to conduct inspections, issues permits, and ensure compliance.

For more information visit [www.rockyview.ca/Building](http://www.rockyview.ca/Building).

### Building Permits



**245**

residential



**298**

residential additions or renovations



**13**

additional dwelling units



**145**

garages or sheds



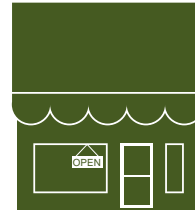
**1**

barn



**5**

agricultural



**52**

commercial



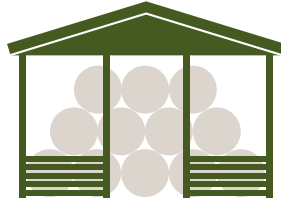
**69**

industrial



**6**

institutional

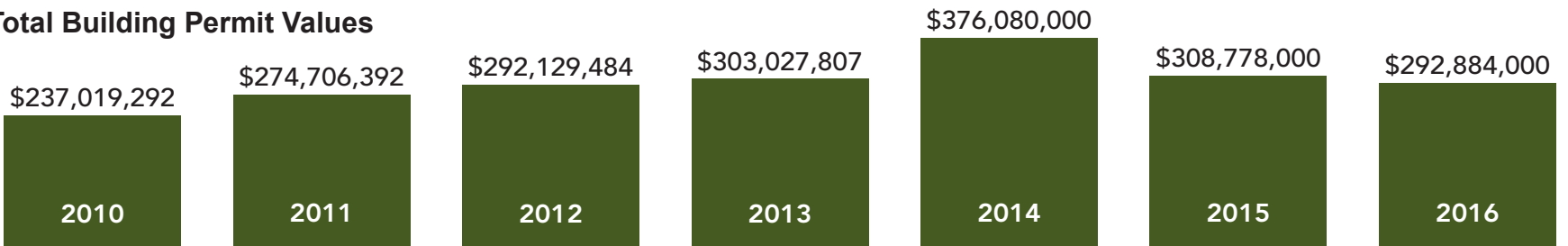


**78**

farm building location permits



### Total Building Permit Values



## New County Hall

In August of 2016, Rocky View County began construction on the new County Hall building at Highway 566 and Range Road 291 in east Balzac.

Regular project updates, including a time lapse video of construction, can be found by visiting [www.rockyview.ca/CountyHall](http://www.rockyview.ca/CountyHall).

The new County Hall is scheduled for completion in October of 2018. Watch for details of the grand opening late next year.





## Taxes

Property taxes fund the majority of services that Rocky Viewers expect from the County.

Rocky View County has one of the lowest residential property tax rates in Alberta, and a highly competitive non-residential tax rate.

The tables (right) show the 2016 tax rates for Rocky View County and all our neighbouring municipalities.

For more information visit [www.rockyview.ca/Tax](http://www.rockyview.ca/Tax).

2016 Residential Property Taxes	
Community	Rate Per \$1,000 of Property Value
Beiseker	\$8.95
Irricana	\$8.26
Kananaskis I.D.	\$5.25
Chestermere	\$5.24
Crossfield	\$4.82
Cochrane	\$4.23
Airdrie	\$4.06
Wheatland County	\$3.86
Calgary	\$3.71
M.D. of Foothills	\$3.38
Mountain View County	\$2.81
Kneehill County	\$2.80
Rocky View County	\$2.44
M.D. of Bighorn	\$1.89

2016 Non-Residential Property Taxes	
Community	Rate Per \$1,000 of Property Value
Kneehill County	\$12.73
Calgary	\$12.15
Irricana	\$10.81
Mountain View County	\$9.98
Beiseker	\$9.98
Wheatland County	\$8.39
M.D. of Foothills	\$8.04
Chestermere	\$7.76
Airdrie	\$7.51
Rocky View County	\$7.33
M.D. of Bighorn	\$7.03
Crossfield	\$6.45
Cochrane	\$6.25
Kananaskis I.D.	N/A

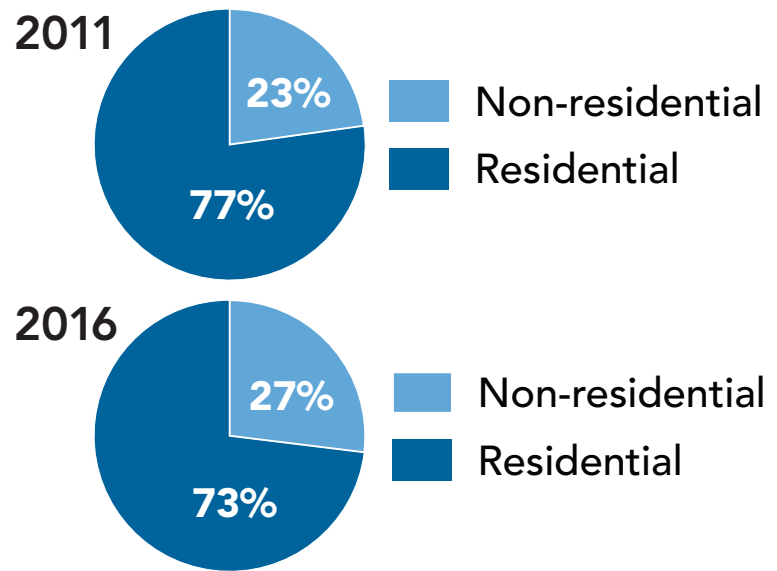
Rates shown are for 2016, the most recent year available. Information from Alberta Municipal Affairs.

## Residential/Non-Residential Property Split

A healthy municipality has a strong balance between residential and non-residential property. Getting the balance right means that a municipality can keep its taxes low when providing quality-of-life services, such as parks, sports fields, fire halls, community centres, road networks, libraries, and more. That's because business and commercial properties help pay for these services, but don't make as much use of them as residents do.

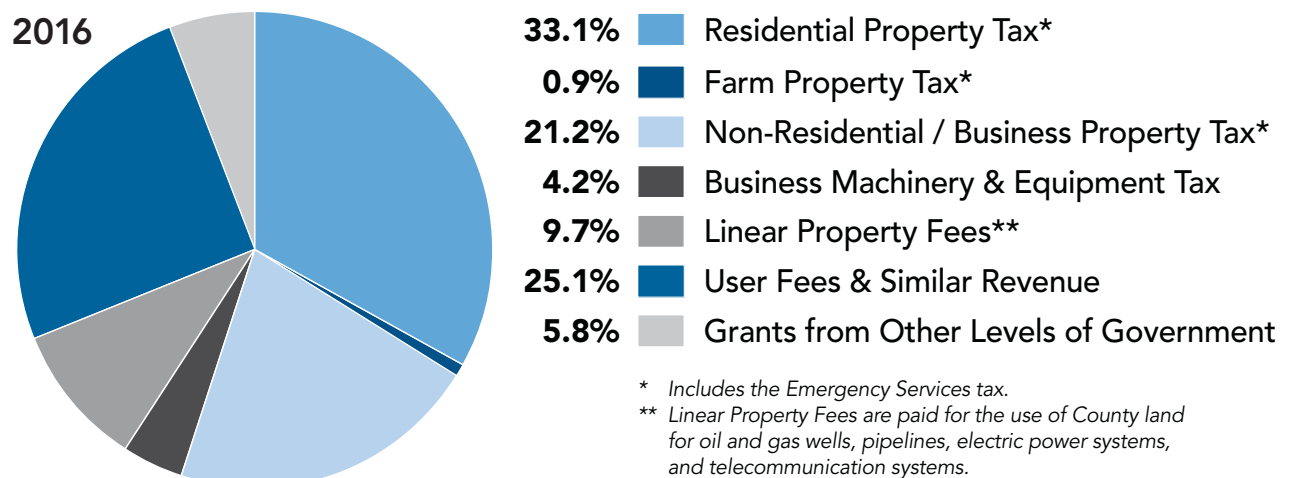
The County currently has an impressive property assessment split of 73 percent residential and 27 percent non-residential. That's a one percent improvement over last year, and the envy of many Alberta municipalities.

This past year, Rocky View County Council set an even more ambitious long-term property assessment target of 65 percent residential and 35 percent non-residential. The County is currently creating a new Economic Development Plan to help achieve this goal.



## Sources of Revenue

Providing municipal services to 39,407 people spread over almost one million acres of land takes resources. Each year, Council debates and decides what services are needed and at what levels. This then drives the County budget. The pie chart shows the various sources of revenue that fund services in 2017.





## Assessment

Most of the services Rocky View County provides residents are funded through property taxes. The value of land is carefully determined each year under Provincial guidelines to ensure that

everyone is assessed fairly and treated equally under the rules.

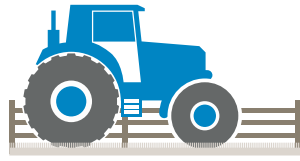
Property tax assessments are always based on the value on July 1 of the previous year. If your property goes

down in value because of market conditions, you won't see a lower assessment until the following year. But when the market goes up, you'll also see a year's delay, so the system remains fair.

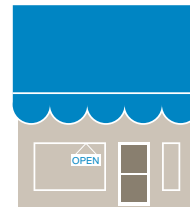
## 2016 Total County Equalized Assessment Values



**\$12,522,307,200**  
residential



**\$152,261,240**  
farmland



**\$2,817,178,690**  
non-residential



**\$1,724,442,110**  
machinery, equipment, and linear

## Deficit

A deficit occurs when a government spends more money on general programs and services than it takes in for a given year. Like all Alberta municipalities, Rocky View County cannot pass a deficit budget, and if a deficit occurs due to unexpected expenses or economic conditions, it must be addressed quickly.

Even in these challenging economic times, Rocky View County has not seen a deficit budget because of the County's sound financial planning, careful budgeting, and strong economic base.

<b>Deficit Per Capita Rocky View County</b>
<b>\$0</b>
For Comparison
Alberta \$2,651

## General Debt

Large purchases or capital projects (such as fire trucks, fire halls, or recreation facilities) can have a big impact on property taxes. With a small population, these items can cause tax rates to jump up and down from year to year, which no one likes to see. That's why – especially in a low interest rate environment – it can make sense for the County to borrow funds and pay them back over time.

This helps spread the costs over the useful life of these capital assets, and keep property taxes stable. The services the County provides through this type of debt benefit most residents, so the debt is paid back through general tax revenue. As the County's *2016 Audited Financial Statements* show, this debt stood at \$2.677 million on December 31, 2016.

Where it makes more economic sense, the County "saves up" for upcoming expenses, special projects, and emergency situations, instead of incurring debt. See the "Reserves" section on the next page for more information.

<b>General Tax-Supported Debt Per Capita Rocky View County</b>	
<b>\$68</b>	
For Comparison	
Alberta \$8,187	Airdrie \$715
Calgary \$363	Chestermere \$828
Cochrane \$905	Crossfield \$1,627
Irricana \$255	M.D. of Bighorn \$2,573
M.D. of Foothills \$487	Wheatland County \$219
<small>Numbers from each municipality's 2016 Audited Financial Statements (2016/17 for Alberta) and Statistics Canada's 2016 Census populations. Rounded to the nearest dollar.</small>	



## Special Projects Debt

Some large capital projects – especially water and wastewater projects – only benefit a certain number of County residents or businesses. That’s why Rocky View County takes the approach that the people or businesses who benefit should be the ones to pay back this debt.

As the County’s 2016 Audited Financial Statements show, the debt held by banks

and financial institutions for special projects is \$56.24 million. Special Projects Debt shouldn’t be looked at on a per person basis, since it’s not paid back by all Rocky Viewers. Only those who benefit from the water and wastewater projects pay back this debt through development levies (often called offsite levies) and local improvement taxes.

In some municipalities where water and wastewater systems benefit the entire population, this kind of debt is paid back through general taxes, or is recorded on the books of municipal utility corporations (such as the \$1.647 billion ENMAX debt in Calgary).

## Revenue from Special Projects Debt

Some Special Projects Debt is for residential water systems, such as the new system in Bragg Creek. But much of this debt supports water and wastewater systems that encourage commercial development in the County. This development helps keep residential property taxes low (see the “Residential/

Non-Residential Property Spilt” section on the previous page).

As one example, the east Balzac and Conrich water and wastewater system enabled non-residential development over the past ten years that would not have been possible without these services. The new development currently

generates over \$9.7 million each year in property taxes, but only costs the County approximately \$5.38 million to service. This makes a contribution to the County’s budget of \$4.32 million each year. This funding can be used to enhance services to residents, to keep property taxes low, or a combination of both.

## County Contributions to Special Projects

Since 2005, Rocky View County has contributed just over \$25 million to water and wastewater projects from its own funds. This money will be repaid to the County through offsite levies on future development.

## Reserves

Rocky View County is in the healthy position of having over \$73 million in various reserve accounts. You sometimes hear these accounts referred to as a “rainy day fund,” but that’s not the complete story.

Reserve funds are part of careful long-term fiscal planning for the municipality.

They are used for:

- Natural or man-made disaster response
- Known future costs (planned heavy equipment replacement or refurbishment, for example)

- New initiatives (one time or pilot projects)
- Special purposes (money set aside specifically to build roads, for example)
- Unexpected municipal revenue declines or expenses (“rainy day”)

This year, County Council voted to restructure reserve accounts in order to more clearly report on the funds and their purposes, and to better identify what future needs and lifecycle replacement costs might be. This reinforces the role of reserve funds in sound financial planning and municipal sustainability.



**\$73,262,976**  
in reserve funds

## Education Taxes

This year Rocky Viewers faced a substantial 7.9 percent increase in their education taxes. Rocky View County is required by the Province of Alberta to collect education taxes, but the County does not control those funds. The Province determines the education tax

rate, and school boards determine how the money is spent.

If you have any questions or comments about education taxes, contact your local school trustee or your Member of the Legislative Assembly.

Government of Alberta  
2017 Education Tax  
↑ **7.9%**

# Take Our County Quiz



This year we celebrated Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> birthday, and we thought it would be a great time to take a look at some of Rocky View County's history. See if you know the answers to these questions about the County.

If you want to keep score, check off each numbered point that you visit, so that you can count the total when done.

**1** In what year was Rocky View County founded as a municipal district?

- If you think 1905 is the right answer, go to number 3.
- If you think 1955 is the right answer, go to number 5.

**2** Rocky View County residents voted in favour of cloud seeding to prevent hail right up to 1970, when costs went sky high. Today, the Province deals with hail suppression. The weather's just right for heading over to number 9.

**3** We don't look that old, do we? Alberta and Saskatchewan were founded in 1905, but Rocky View County is much younger. Skip down to number 5.

**4** Rocky View County does have one of the lowest residential property tax rates in Alberta, but not because of plebiscites. Go to number 2.

**5** What is now Rocky View County was founded as the Municipal District of Calgary on January 1, 1955. No one liked the name, so a year later it was changed to the M.D. of Rocky View. On June 24, 2009 we became Rocky View County. Now visit number 6.

**6** The name Rocky View was chosen in a contest. What names did the contest judges put in second and third place?

- If you think Bow View and Chinook, go to number 8.
- If you think Prairie Rose and McLeod, go to 10.

**7** R.B. Langdon left his namesake hamlet to work on American railroads. He went on to become a Minnesota state senator from 1873 to 1881. Now jump down all the way to number 20.

**8** Rocky View was suggested by Leslie Burwash of Balzac, who won a \$25 prize (\$231 in today's dollars) for the suggestion. Bow View took second place and Chinook took third. Go to number 13 next.

**9** Back in 1912, Balzac was known by what name?

- If you think it was Beddington, go to number 11.
- If you think it was Harvest Hills, go to number 14.

**10** These are actually the names of rural municipalities in Saskatchewan, and weren't considered for Rocky View County. Go back to number 8 for the right answer.

**11** Until 1925, Balzac was called Beddington, which is now the name of a Calgary community. Head over to number 15.

**12** James Howlett is the birth name of the fictional Wolverine from Marvel's X-Men comic books. He's an Albertan, but never served mankind as the County's reeve. Slash your way over to number 19.

**13** Every year between 1956 and 1970, a plebiscite was held where Rocky Viewers voted in favour of what?

- If you think the answer is weather modification, go to 2.
- If you think it's low taxes, go to number 4.

**14** Balzac originally had the same name as a current Calgary neighbourhood, but not Harvest Hills. Head on back to number 11.

**15** The hamlet of Langdon was named after a contractor who built the rail lines in the area. Do you know this man's other claim to fame?

- If you think he later became a state senator in Minnesota, go to number 7.
- If you think he later became the mayor of Edmonton, go to number 17.

**16** The Bearspaw community was named in honour of Chief Masgwaahsid, who signed the Blackfoot Crossing treaty in 1877. Masgwaahsid translates into Bear's Paw. Go to number 24 next.

**17** Unfortunately for Edmontonians, they've never had the privilege of a mayor from Rocky View County. We vote that you go way back to number 7.

**18** In 1913 – long before spell check – a sign painter mixed up the letters in Kathryn on the railway station sign. It was simply never corrected. Time for you to check out number 23.

**19** J. Lewis Bull was selected reeve from among eight original councillors, including Osia Rosenberger, Alios Reumiller, Janus Wray, L.H. Bittle, James Robinson, Robin Echlin, and Amos Joyce. You're our first choice to go to number 25.

**20** How did Rocky View County's Bearspaw community get its name?

- If you think it's named after a First Nations chief, go to number 16.
- If you think it's from the many bear tracks seen in the area, go to 22.

**21** The Dutch have a similar name to McKay in Makaay, but culture and language have nothing to do with the spelling of Kathryn. Go back to number 18.

**22** While you do find bear tracks (and bears) in Bearspaw, that's not how the community got its name. Hike on over to number 16 for the right answer.

**23** What was the name of Rocky View County's first reeve, who took office on March 15, 1955?

- If you think it was James Howlett, go to number 12.
- If you think it was J. Lewis Bull, go to number 19.

**24** The hamlet of Kathryn is named after the daughter of area farmer Neil McKay, but the name usually ends with "ryn" not "yrn." How did the unusual spelling come about?

- If you think it was a spelling mistake, go to number 18.
- If you think it's the traditional Dutch spelling of the name, go to 21.

**25** You're done! Count up the number of points you visited. If you went to 17 of the points (including this one), you have a perfect score! Visiting 21 of the points is average. If you went to all 25 of the points, you got every question wrong, but we salute your persistence!

# VISION:

Rocky View is an inviting, thriving, and sustainable County that balances agriculture with diverse residential, recreational, and business opportunities.

# MISSION:

To effectively provide municipal services that cultivate and support our distinct communities.

# VALUES:

Accountability, Integrity, and Leadership



## ROCKY VIEW COUNTY

911 – 32 Avenue NE, Calgary, AB, T2E 6X6  
403-230-1401 | [Questions@rockyview.ca](mailto:Questions@rockyview.ca) | [www.rockyview.ca](http://www.rockyview.ca)