

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

FOR THE YEAR ENDING
DECEMBER 31, 2020



Mackenzie County

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Our Vision...

AN ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE,
CHOICES IN COMMUNITY
OPPORTUNITIES AND HEALTHY
ECONOMIC CLIMATE.

Our Mission...

THROUGH THE EFFECTIVE USE OF
RESOURCES, PROVIDE A REASONABLE
AND EQUITABLE LEVEL OF SERVICE AND
ENDEAVOR TO CREATE A SUSTAINABLE
ECONOMIC CLIMATE.

Our Values...

EFFICIENT, FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE
ORGANIZATION THAT IS SINCERE AND
APPROACHABLE, TREATS PEOPLE WITH
RESPECT AND MAINTAINS A HIGH
DEGREE OF INTEGRITY.

MESSAGE FROM THE REEVE

On behalf of Mackenzie County Council, I am pleased to present to you the Annual Report for 2020.

The Report contains the Audited Financial Statements from 2018, 2019 and 2020, highlights from various departments as well as statistics on multiple services provided by the County. On a positive note, revenues have been consistently above expenses for the past three years.

The last Annual Report presented in May of 2018, reflected on the Audited Financial Statement for 2017 including department highlights and statistics. The last three years caused multiple interruptions in the regular operations of Mackenzie County, not solely for Council and Staff but all Ratepayers. Just to recap;



- 2018 we endured overland flooding and Peace River flooding in Fort Vermilion and Buttertown,
- 2019 the Chuckegg Fire consumed all of our energy with hosting evacuees and later evacuating our own Ratepayers for fear of homes, properties and livestock being consumed by flames,
- 2020 brought another Peace River flood, though drastically more devastating than that of 2018 for the residents of Fort Vermilion and Buttertown.

We completed many projects this year! Several rural roads received upgrades in the form of rebuilds and culvert upgrades. Additions/Upgrades for the Water Treatment Plant and the Rural Truck Fill were completed. A new park with playground equipment was installed in the Hamlet of La Crete. Under the Recreation Department, new tennis/basketball/pickleball courts were constructed. Through the Mitigation Projects for the flood-affected areas, we have made much progress to place residents in new homes and/or working with them achieve safe and comfortable homes and constructing new subdivisions. It has been so encouraging for me seeing progress within our County. To stay informed and current on services and all information pertaining to the County check out our new website at: www.mackenziecounty.com

This Report is the perfect opportunity to thank the outgoing Councillors for their many years of dedicated service to the County and its Ratepayers. Special appreciation to Eric Jorgensen for eleven years of service as Councillor for Ward 6. Eric has been an active member on numerous committees and boards as a County representative and we applaud his passion. Best wishes to Eric and his family as they embark on the next chapter of their lives. Anthony Peters decided to end his political career with the County as Councillor in Ward 2. We wish Anthony all the best as he leaves us for other paths.

I would like to welcome Darrell Derksen as the new Councillor for Ward 2 and Garrell Smith as the new Councillor for Ward 6. Many familiar faces remain steady and devoted to Mackenzie County. I look forward to working with our new and seasoned Councillors as we continue to plan for the future of Mackenzie County. A big thank you to everyone who put their names forward.

Thank you all for your continued support and contributions to Mackenzie County! Together we will strive to make Mackenzie County a wonderful place to live, work, play and pray.

Though we will continue to face challenges as we move forward, if we stand united, stay positive and focused, I am confident that Mackenzie County will continue to be the best place that one could call home.

Respectfully,

Reeve Josh Knelsen

MACKENZIE COUNTY: THE ORGANIZATION

GOVERNANCE

Mackenzie County is divided into ten electoral areas called wards. Each ward has a Councillor that has been elected by citizens within his/her ward boundaries. Each Council member serves a four-year term. The elected Council then elects a Reeve and Deputy Reeve from within, on an annual basis at their Organizational Meeting.

In addition to attending Regular Council Meetings (two per month during regular business hours). Council Members also attend community functions and serve on various internal and external committees. The Reeve is ex-officio for all Council committees and boards, while Councillors select representatives for these committees during their annual Organizational Meeting.

Council provides direction, makes strategic policy decisions, represents the public's interests, and performs the duties of Councillors as per the Municipal Government Act.

Council's effectiveness depends on Councillors providing input on their areas while thinking and voting for the whole municipality.

COUNCIL 2017-2021 TERM

Reeve Josh Knelsen, Ward 1 (Blue Hills/Buffalo Head)

Deputy Reeve Walter Sarapuk, Ward 8 (Rocky Lane)

Councillor Anthony Peters, Ward 2 (La Crete Rural)

Councillor Peter Braun, Ward 3 (La Crete)

Councillor David Driedger, Ward 4 (La Crete/LC Rural)

Councillor Ernest Peters, Ward 5 (Blumenort)

Councillor Eric Jorgensen, Ward 6 (Fort Vermilion Rural)

Councillor Cameron Cardinal, Ward 7 (Fort Vermilion)

Councillor Jacquie Bateman, Ward 9 (High Level Rural)

Councillor Lisa Wardley, Ward 10 (Zama)



MACKENZIE COUNTY: THE ORGANIZATION

ESTABLISHMENT HISTORY

Mackenzie County became an incorporated municipality on January 1, 1995, when it was formed as a Municipal District from being an Improvement District.

The County received specialized municipality status on June 23, 1999, to address concerns about municipal government and management in a municipality that serves a number of unique communities within a very large territory. Therefore, provisions of the MGA and other enactments are modified.

Under the Specialized Municipality status, the following matters are not valid unless passed at a council meeting to which 2/3 of the Councillors present at the meeting vote in favour of the bylaw or resolution:

- a) Procedures of the Council of the municipality;
- b) Remuneration of Councillors;
- c) Property tax;
- d) Changing the number of Councillors, the boundaries of wards or the methods of selecting a chief elected official;
- e) Appointing and terminating the chief administrative officer;
- f) Adopting a budget;
- g) Any other matter designated by the Council pursuant to the procedure as established under clause (a).

Then on March 8, 2007, the municipality's name was changed from Municipal District of Mackenzie No. 23 to Mackenzie County.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population	12,512 (2018 Municipal Census)
Total Area of Municipality	7,761,580 hectares
Total Area of Farmland	790,000 acres
Number of Hamlets	3 (La Crete, Fort Vermilion, Zama)
Number of Dwelling Units	3,775 (2018 Municipal Census)
Number of Full-Time Positions	73
Number of Part-Time Positions	2
Number of Summer/Seasonal Positions	15
Length of Roads	2005 km (incl. 104 km of paved roads)
Length of Water Mains	169.57 km
Length of Wastewater Mains	68.05 km
Length of Storm Water Drains	10.40 km
Vehicle Fleet (incl. fire equip)	63 (cost ≥ \$5,000/unit)
Equipment (incl. graders)	180 (cost ≥ \$5,000/unit)
Building Structures	88 (cost ≥ \$5,000/unit)
Bridges (incl. culverts > 5' in dia.)	73 (cost ≥ \$5,000/unit)



MACKENZIE COUNTY: THE ORGANIZATION

2020 - 2021 BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

In addition to regular duties, members of Council serve on several boards and committees. These boards and committees can be internal (created by Council for a specific reason) or external (where the County has been invited by an outside organization to participate). Members of Council represent the interests of the municipality while serving on these boards and committees, and report back to the rest of Council.

Council currently has approximately 15 internal boards and committees. Meeting frequency and the number of Council appointees depends on the committee's terms of reference. Generally, the Reeve serves as ex-officio (appointed by position) on all County boards and committees. Council also participates on approximately 25 external boards and committees.

Council appoints Members-at-Large to various boards and committees depending on the committee terms of reference, either in an advisory capacity or as the result of statutory requirements. Some of these include the Municipal Planning Commission, Mackenzie County Library Board, Community Streetscape Committees, Appeal Boards and the Boreal Housing Foundation. Advertisements are placed in September of each year for available positions with appointments being made at the annual Organizational Meeting in October. Below is a list of the current boards and committees on which Councillors sit. Some committees are more active than others.

Internal Boards/Committees

- Agricultural Appeal Board
- Agricultural Service Board (ASB)
- Assessment Review Board
- Committee of the Whole
- Community Services Committee
- Community Streetscape Committee - Fort Vermilion
- Community Streetscape Committee - La Crete
- Emergency Advisory Committee
- Indigenous Liaison Committee
- Inter-Municipal Planning Commission
- Inter-Municipal Subdivision & Development Appeal Board
- Mackenzie County Library Board
- Municipal Planning Commission
- Northwest Alberta Regional Emergency Advisory Committee
- Subdivision & Development Appeal Board

External Boards/Committees

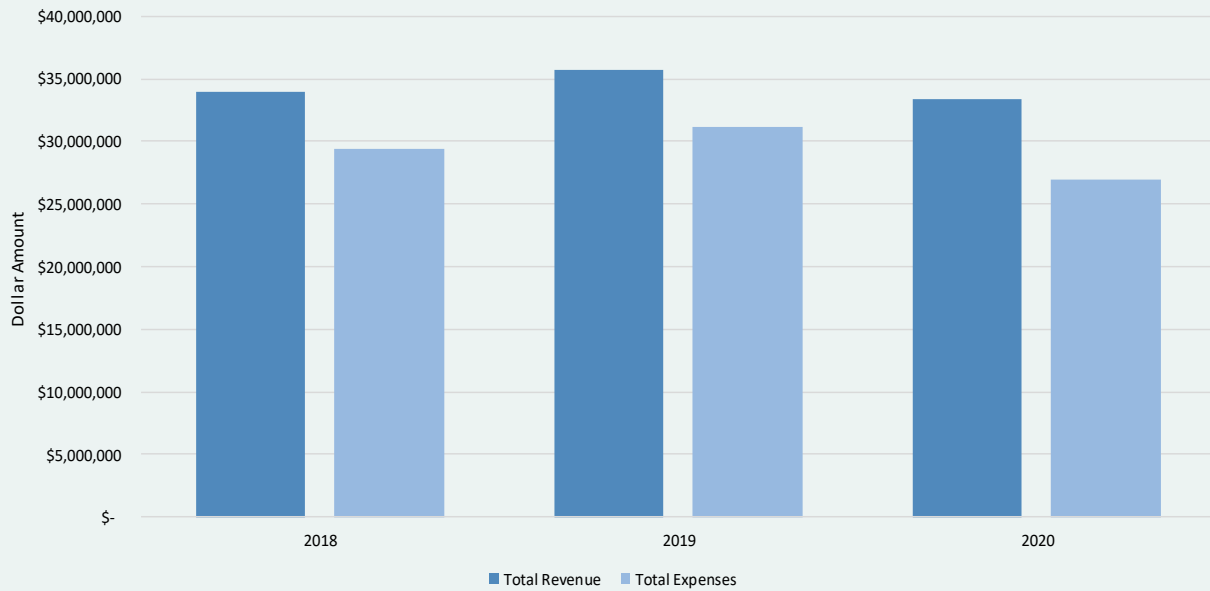
- Boreal Housing Foundation
- Community Futures Northwest
- FCSS Fort Vermilion
- FCSS La Crete
- FCSS Zama City
- Hay-Zama Committee
- High Level Forests Public Advisory Committee
- High Level Recreation Facility Task Force
- Indigenous Joint Mutual Aid Committee
- La Crete Community Adult Learning Council
- Mackenzie Applied Research Association (MARA)
- Mackenzie Frontier Tourist Association (MFTA)
- Mackenzie Regional Community Policing Society
- Mackenzie Regional Waste Management Commission
- Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance
- Northern Lakes College CEC, Fort Vermilion
- Northern Lakes College CEC, High Level
- Northern Transportation Advocacy Bureau (NTAB)
- Northwest Species at Risk (NWSAR)
- Recreation Board, Fort Vermilion
- Recreation Board, La Crete
- Recreation Board, Zama City
- Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI)
- Veterinary Services Incorporated (VSI)
- Water North Coalition (WNC)

AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

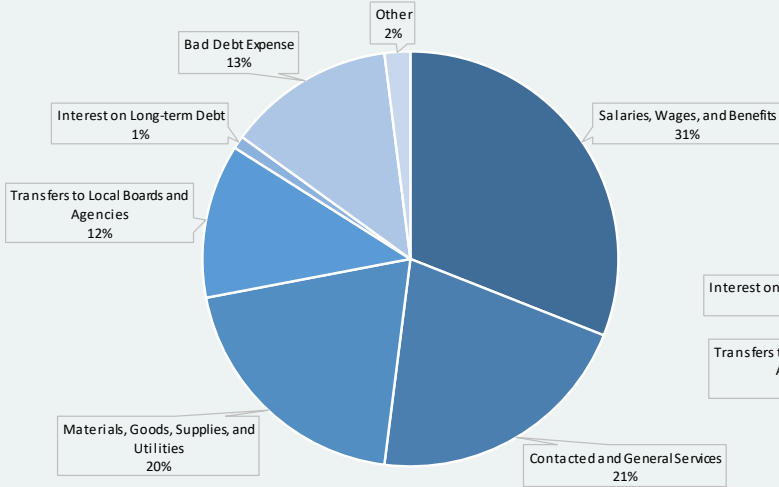
2020 AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS

Below is a snapshot of the year end details for 2020. The deadline to submit our Audited Financial Statements to Alberta Municipal Affairs is July 5, 2021. A copy has been posted on our municipal website.

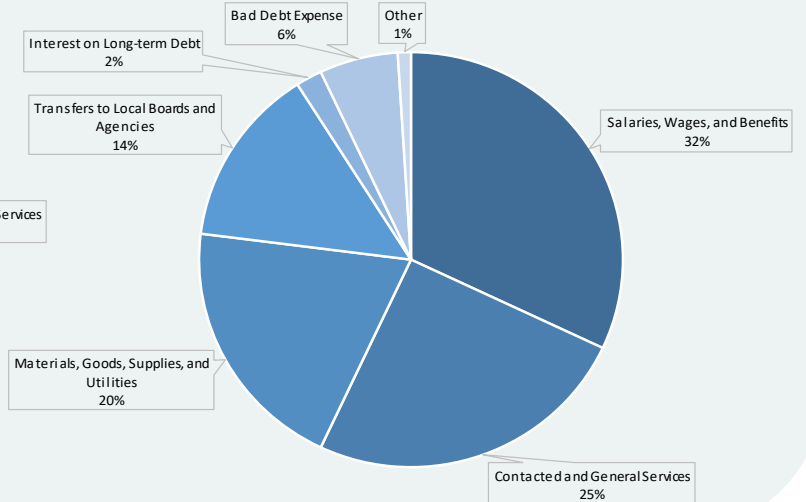
Total Revenue vs. Total Expenses



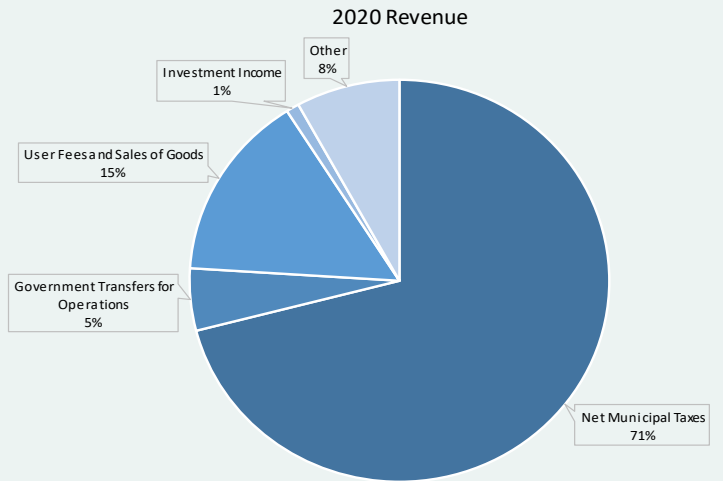
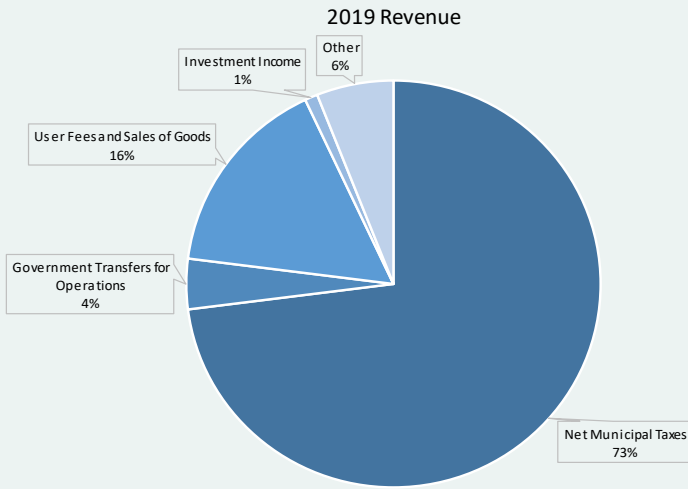
2019 Expenses



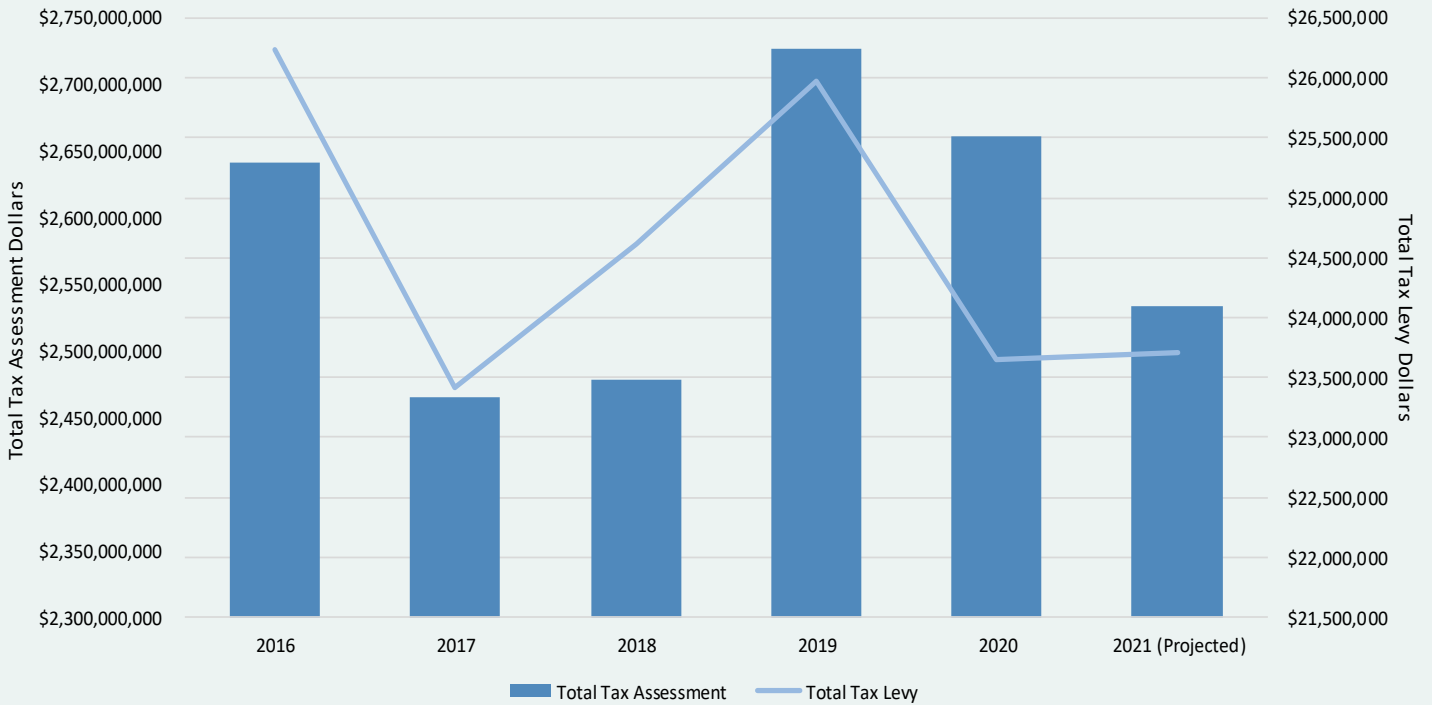
2020 Expenses



AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

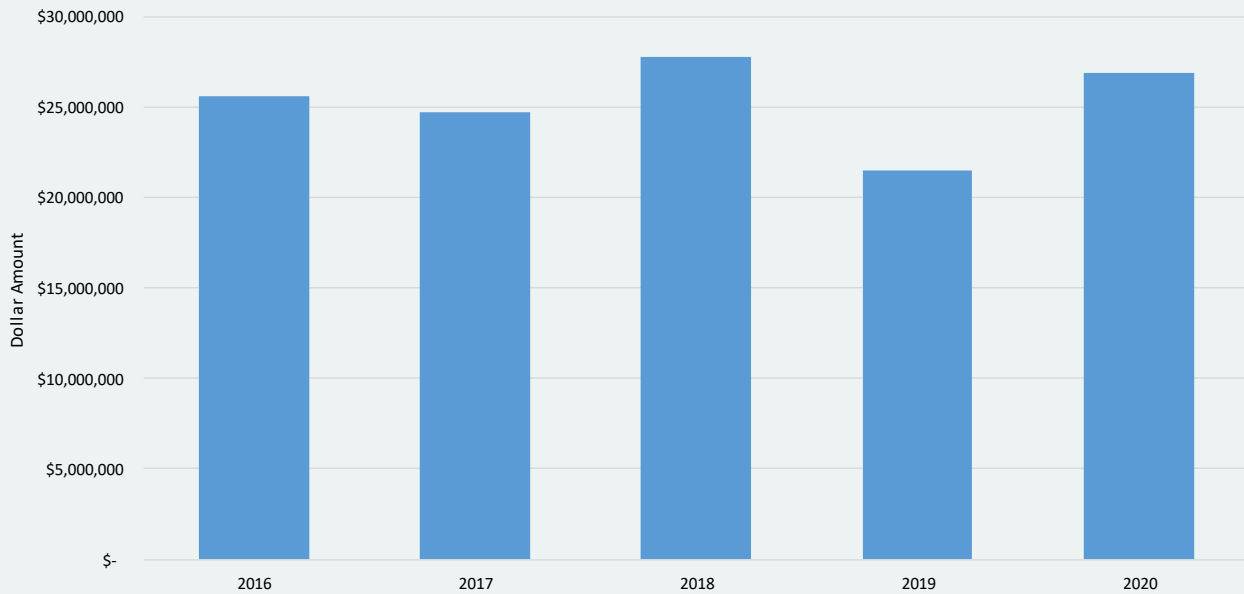


Total Tax Levy vs. Total Tax Assessment

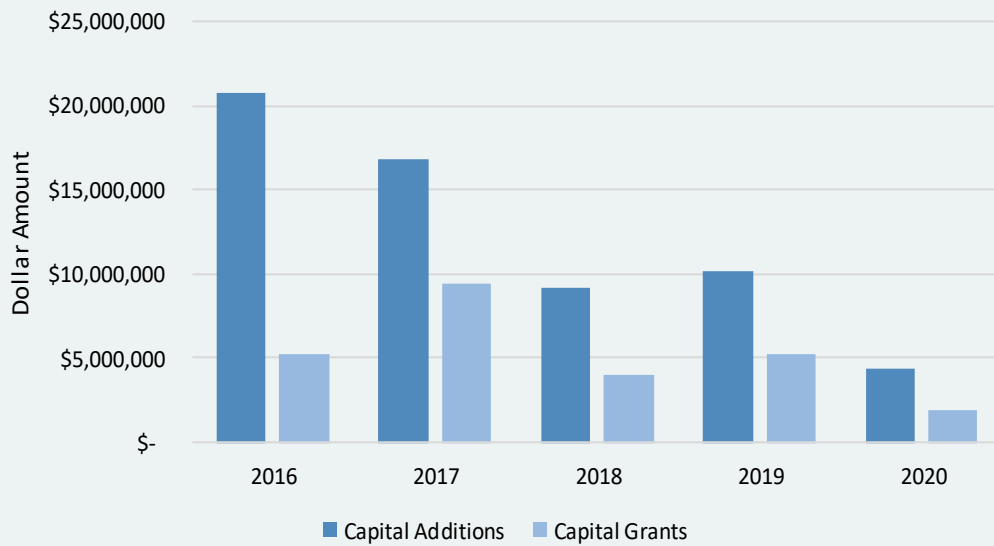


AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Cash & Investment Balances



Capital Additions & Capital Grants



2019 Significant Projects

- Grader Replacements
- 88 Connector Overlay
- Teachers Loop
- Various Road Projects

2020 Significant Projects

- Grader Replacements
- Waterline to Hill Crest Community School
- Overlay Heliport Road

2021 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

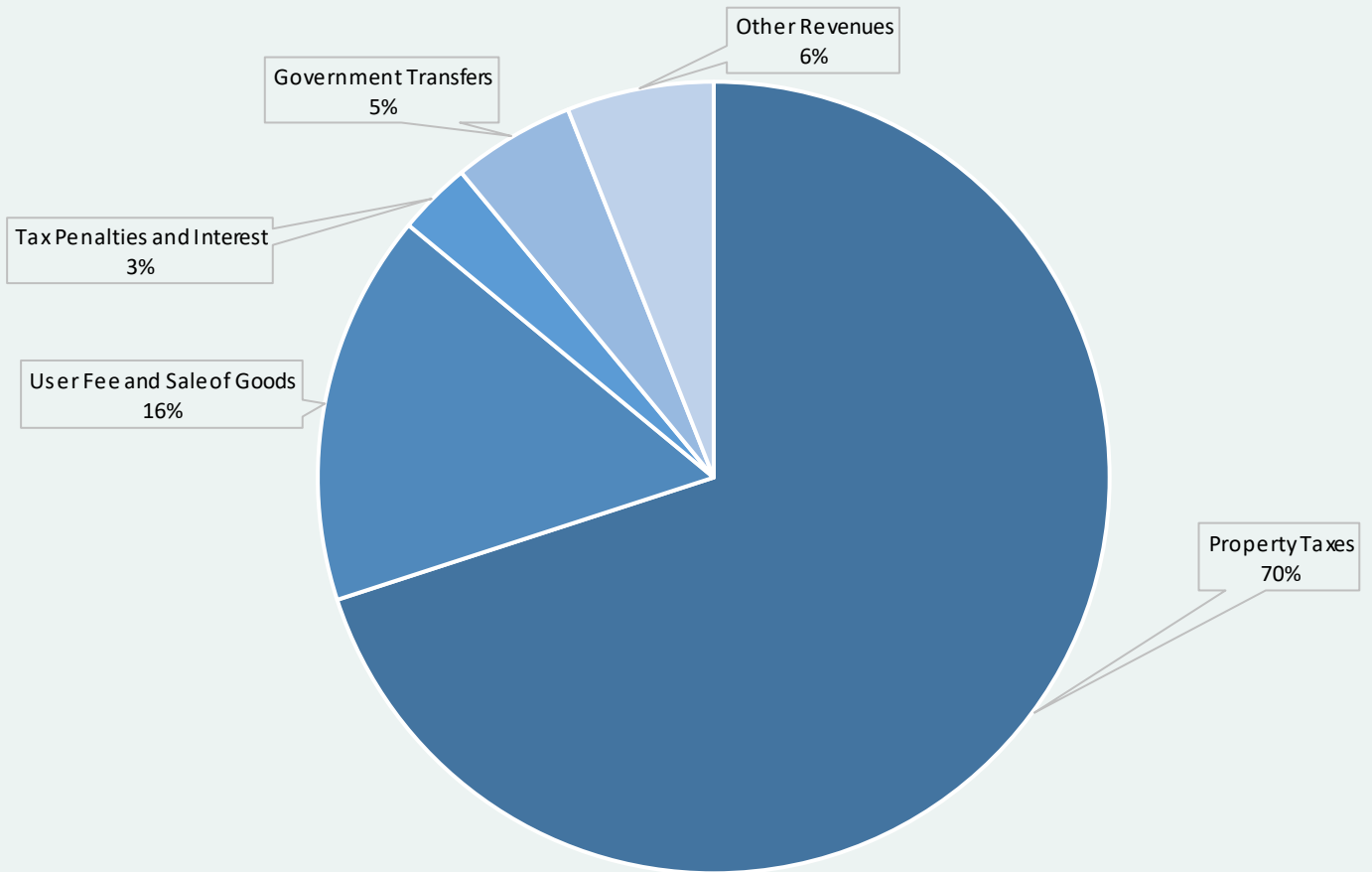
2021 OPERATING REVENUES

Under the Municipal Government act, each council must adopt an operating and capital budget for each calendar year. Mackenzie County Council reviewed, deliberated and adopted the 2021 operating and capital budgets. Council has the drive and energy to build a fiscally responsible, results oriented culture and enjoy working in a publicly accountable environment.

Council developed the 2021 budget on a tax and user pay supported budget, while limiting the effect of service levels. User pay revenue increases assisted in offsetting the shortfall in revenue from tax levies, while not effecting the residential, and non-residential mill rates. This is a budget that looks at the now – it prioritizes maintaining essential services and programs and supports initiatives to help decrease the burden on our residents during these challenging times. It is also forward-thinking, ensuring our investments support community sustainability and quality of life today.

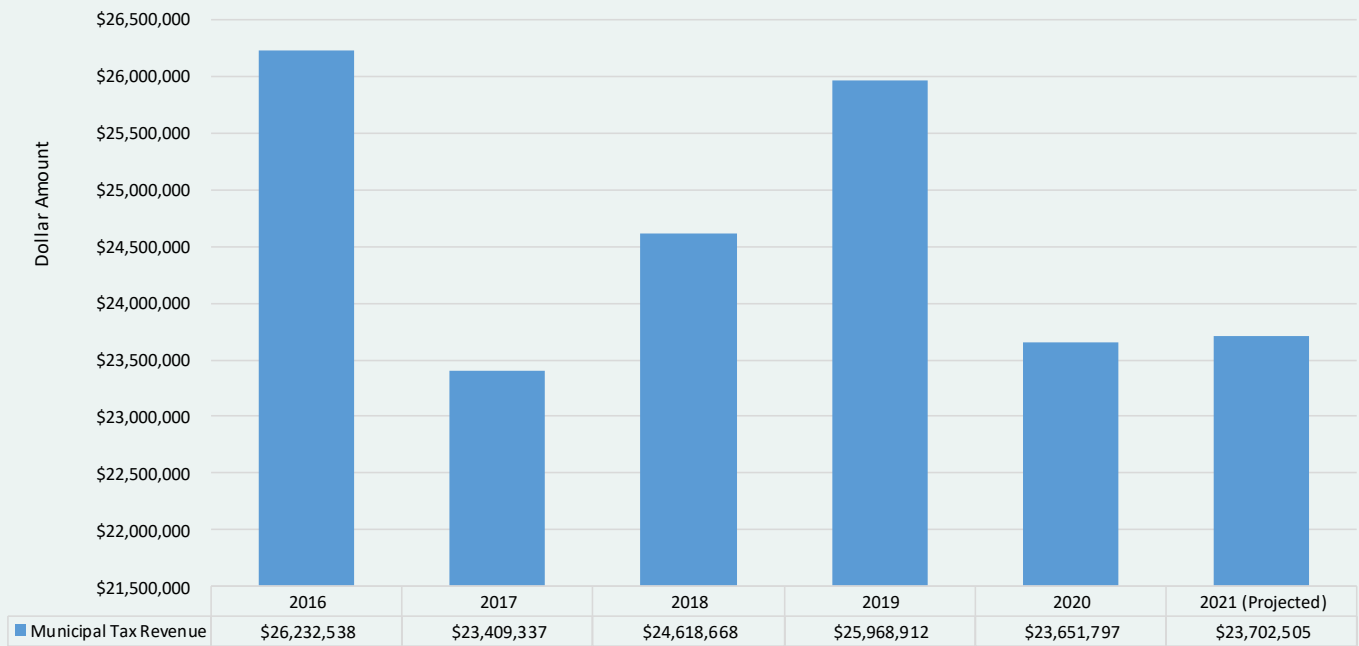
Total operating revenues are projected to be \$34.06 million (a slight decrease from 2020 \$34.21 million).

2021 Operating Revenues - \$34,058,529
(Excluding Requisition Amounts)

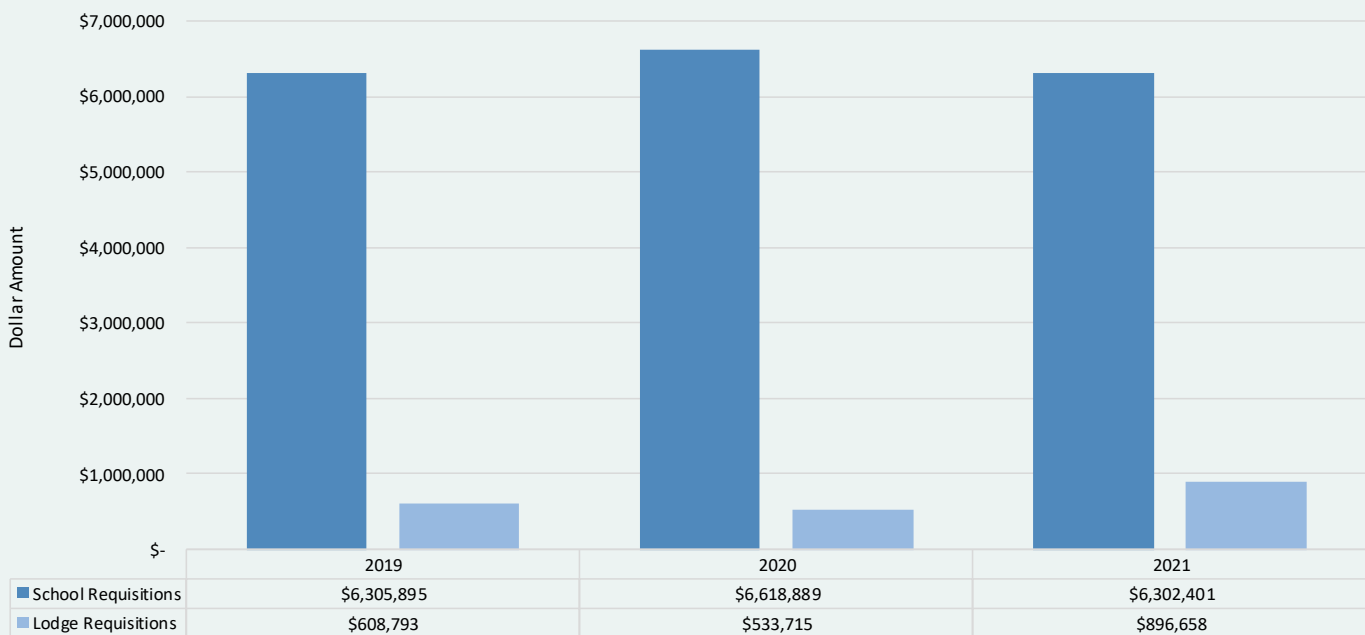


2021 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

Municipal Tax Revenue



School & Lodge Requisitions



2021 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

2021 OPERATING EXPENSES

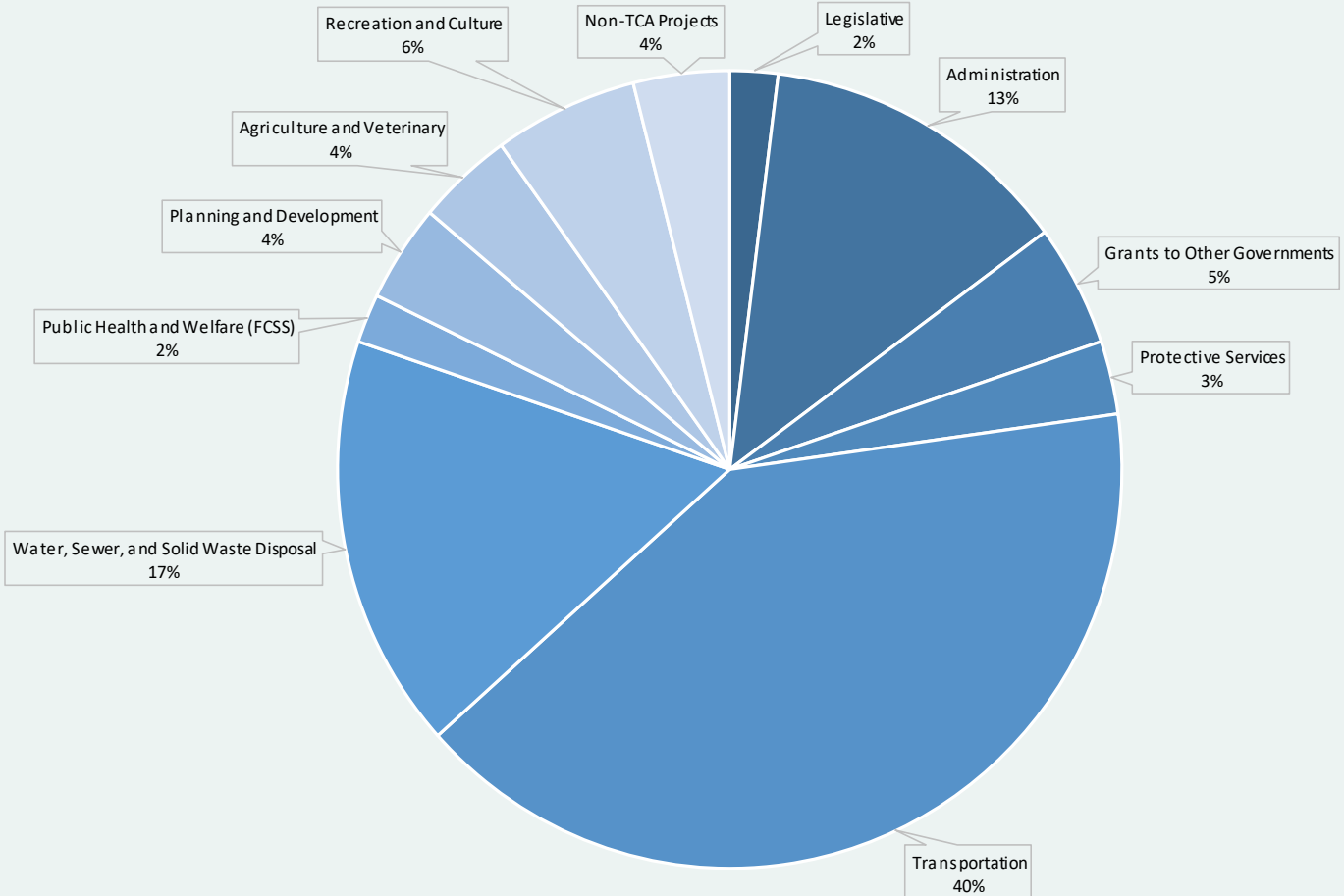
Total operating expenses, excluding requisition transfers but including amortization of tangible capital assets, are projected to be \$44.20 million, which is an overall 5.45% decrease from 2020. The decrease is mainly due to anticipated reduction in wages, engineering fees, fuel & gas costs, and contributions to reserves while budgeting for bad debt/write off of taxes, and an increase to the regravelling program, along with some contracted services.

The schools requisition transfer will be \$6,302,401 (2020 - \$6,618,889), and the seniors lodge requisition transfer will be \$896,658 (2020 - \$533,715).

Operating expenses include \$584,350 in grants to non-profit groups and bursaries, \$373,353 to FCSS (Family and Community Support Services), \$1,071,143 to recreation boards, and \$243,000 to the Mackenzie Library Board.

In order to support the regional services provision, the County entered into agreements with the neighbouring municipalities of the Towns of High Level and Rainbow Lake. The 2021 transfer to these local governments is projected to be \$2,227,017.

2021 Operating Expenses



2021 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

2021 PROJECTS

Parks & Playgrounds

- New Hamlet Park (LC)
- Water Well at Jubilee Park

Planning & Development

- Drainage Ditch NE-8-106-15-W5M

Recreation

- Tennis Court, Basketball Pickle Ball Court

Water Treatment & Distribution

- Rural Truck Fill Pump Install
- Water Treatment Plant Tower Replacement

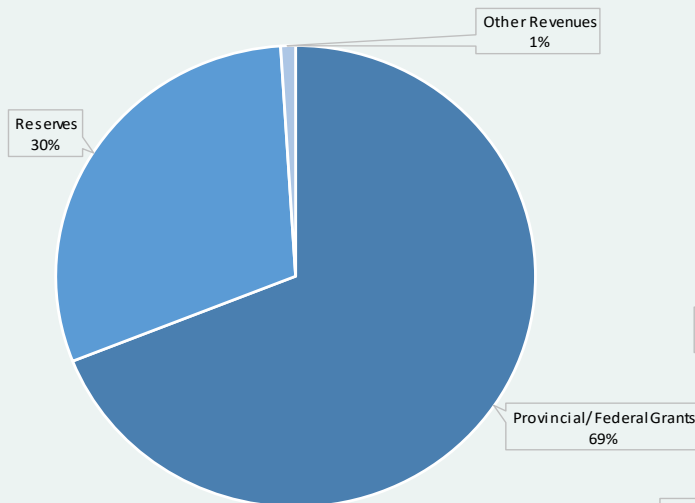
Transportation

- Intersection Upgrade of 100 St & 109 Ave
- Intersection Upgrade Traffic Lights 100 St & 94 Ave
- 101 Ave Asphalt (300m)
- Rebuild TWP RD 1044 (1 mile)
- Road Repair & Culvert TWP RD 1042 RGE RD 144-145
- Rebuild 6 mile N road (2 miles)
- Plow Truck
- Ground Penetrating Radar Unit
- Lawnmower Purchase

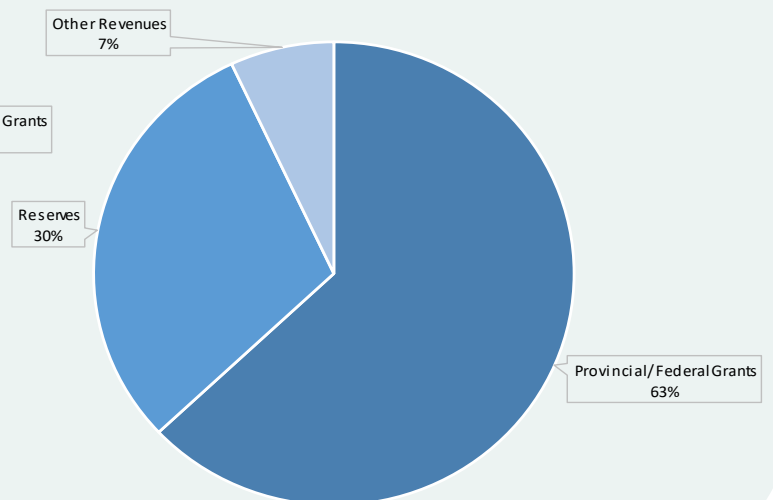
Waste

- Waste Bin Replacement

2021 Projects



2020 Projects



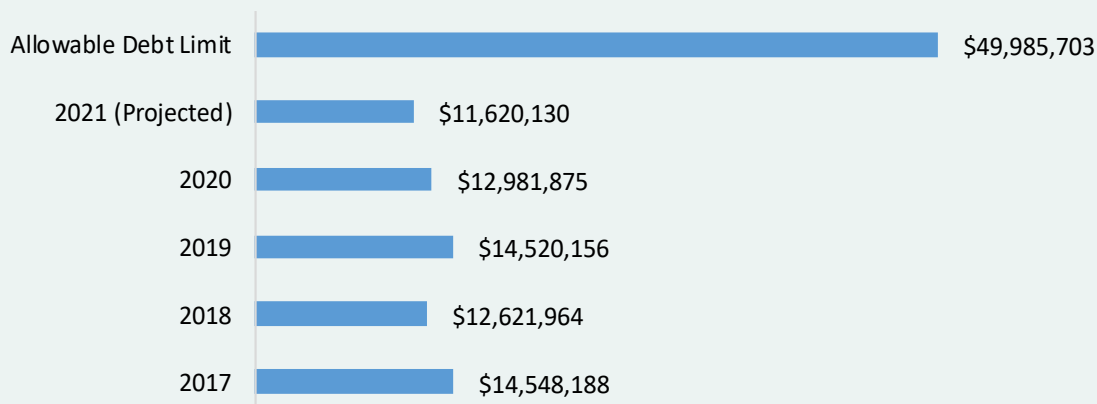
2021 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

LONG-TERM DEBT

The County has been borrowing funds for major capital projects. All of the County's debentures are arranged through the Alberta Capital Finance Authority who offers low fixed rates.

The Municipal Government Act and Alberta Regulation 255/00 defines the debt limits for municipalities. If the borrowing takes place as intended based on the preapproved bylaws, the County will be at 23% of its allowable debt limit on December 31, 2020 as permitted under MGA, AR 255/00.

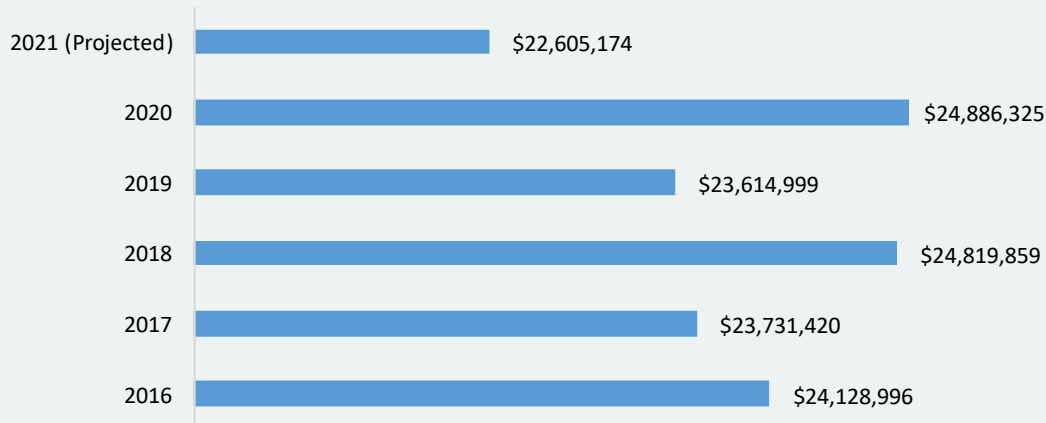
Long-term Debt



MUNICIPAL RESERVES

In general, establishing reserves and setting aside a specified amount of funds annually assists in long term financial planning, and assists in maintaining a stable taxation structure. Council has established various reserve policies. These policies define the purpose, permitted uses (must have a motion of Council), targeted minimum and maximum reserve levels, and the annual minimum contributions.

Municipal Reserves



* Noted amounts may be allocated to existing approved projects.

2021 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

INTERMUNICIPAL COLLABORATION

The Mackenzie Region has three incorporated municipalities within its boundaries: Mackenzie County, Town of High Level and Town of Rainbow Lake. Three municipalities are continually working together on regional sustainability initiatives.

Agreements with the Town of High Level

Mackenzie County has a Regional Service Sharing Agreement (RSSA) and an Inter-Municipal Development Plan (IMDP) agreement with the Town of High Level. The purpose of the RSSA is to share certain services provided by the Town to the County's residents residing within close proximity to the Town and/or regionally. These services are recreation, airport, fire protection, and potable water (Footner line north of the Town).

Based on the agreement, the County shares revenues from service areas (defined as 40 kilometers radius around the Town) in exchange for provision of these services. An annual payment is equal to 25% for the property tax levied by the County against all properties in the service area or \$500,000, whichever is larger for any given year. In addition, the County funds the Town's capital projects at the following rates: 20% for recreation projects, 30% for airport projects and 50% for fire protection projects. Total contributed dollars vary and based on the actual capital projects undertaken by the Town.

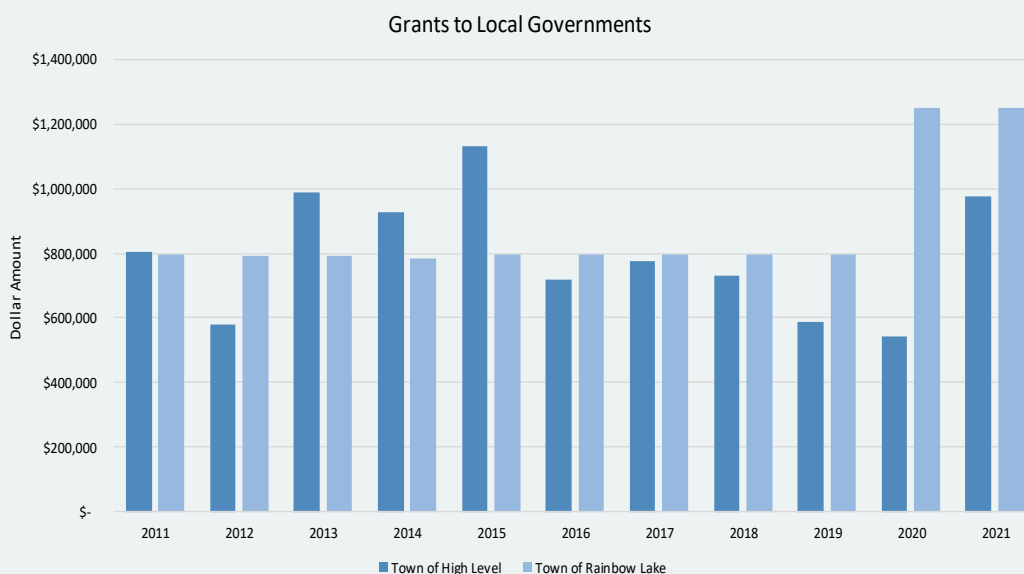
The County began deliberations with the Town of High Level regarding proposed amendments to the Regional Service Sharing Agreement as it was up for renewal.

The purpose of the IMDP is to jointly control the development within an area around the Town of High Level. This is accomplished through a joint Inter-Municipal Planning Commission that meets on a monthly basis to review the proposed developments within the specified area.

Agreement with the Town of Rainbow Lake

Mackenzie County Council recognizes the small urban centre, "one industry town" challenges experienced by the Town of Rainbow Lake. Therefore, the County and the Town entered into a revenue sharing agreement. The agreement is meant to assist the Town through a consistent and predictable funding source. The Town uses this funding for provision of services to their residents. The current agreement began in 2020, and funds the Town of Rainbow Lake with \$1,250,000 annually.

Alberta municipalities are encouraged to collaborate with each other for the provision of services. Cooperation and collaboration promotes effective and efficient use of resources and reduces duplication of services. The chart below shows the cost-shared amounts provided by Mackenzie County to the Town of High Level and the Town of Rainbow Lake since 2011.



2021 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

GRANTS TO OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

County Council recognizes the value of volunteers and the non-profit groups operating within the region. The application deadline is October 15th of each year. The 2021 operating budget includes \$2,457,843 in funding that will be provided to FCSS, Recreation Boards, and numerous other non-profit organizations.

The chart below identifies the Council approved grants during budget deliberations.

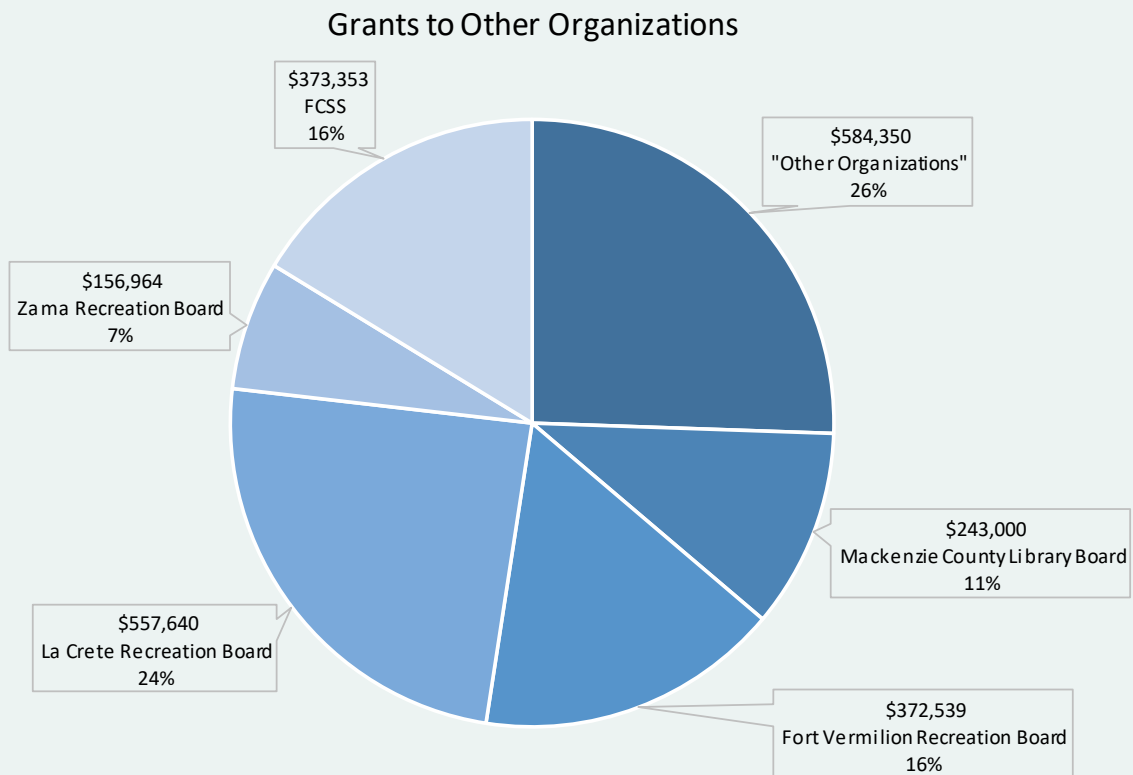
The County has an operating agreement with many of the local non profit groups whereby the County pays all conventional utilities. These groups include the La Crete Agricultural Society, the La Crete Heritage Centre, Fort Vermilion Recreation Board, La Crete Recreation Board, and Zama Recreation Board, the La Crete Equine Centre, the Old Bay House, the Rocky Lane Agricultural Society Indoor arena, and the 3 local Library facilities.

The County has a cemetery funding policy whereby each cemetery that is located within Mackenzie County receives a \$600 maintenance grant annually.

The County provides operating and capital funding to the Fort Vermilion, La Crete, and Zama recreation boards. The recreational boards operate the County-owned facilities and provide a range of programs and activities to local residents and visitors.

The County provides funding towards the provision of FCSS programs and activities which is 80% funded by the provincial government grants.

Mackenzie County also received COVID 19 funding from the provincial government to assist non-profit groups with revenues that may have been lost during the provincial shutdowns. These funds are included within the budget noted.



2021 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

GRANTS TO OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Organization	2021 Budget	2020 Budget	2019 Budget
Fort Vermilion Agricultural Society - Heritage Centre	\$27,750	\$27,750	\$27,750
Fort Vermilion Area Board of Trade	\$17,000	\$17,000	\$17,000
Fort Vermilion & Area Seniors' and Elders' Lodge Board 1788	\$0	\$0	\$8,000
Fort Vermilion Friends of the Old Bay House Society	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
Fort Vermilion Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 243	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000
Fort Vermilion Seniors' Club	\$6,000	\$18,000	\$6,000
High Level Agricultural Exhibition Association	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$68,000
High Level Rural Community Hall	\$17,500	\$20,000	\$25,000
L.A. on Wheels Society	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$45,000
La Crete Area Chamber of Commerce	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
La Crete Agricultural Society	\$103,000	\$103,000	\$101,000
La Crete Community Equine Centre	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000
La Crete Ferry Campground Society	\$2,500	\$2,000	\$8,615
La Crete Field of Dreams Stampede Committee	\$0	\$0	\$7,500
La Crete Meals for Seniors	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
La Crete Polar Cats	\$7,500	\$5,000	\$5,000
La Crete Seniors Inn (drop-in centre)	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$7,000
Rainbow Lake Family Centre	\$0	\$0	\$1,420
Rainbow Lake Youth Center	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
Rocky Lane Agricultural Society	Gravel + \$25,000	\$28,000	\$39,450
Zama Chamber of Commerce	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000
Mackenzie Frontier Tourist Association	\$12,500	\$12,500	\$12,500
Mackenzie Regional Charity Golf	\$0	\$0	\$1,000
Frontier Vet Services	\$85,000	\$85,000	\$80,000
Fort Vermilion Mackenzie Applied Research Association (MARA)	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$65,000
Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI)	\$28,000	\$28,000	\$28,000
High School Bursaries	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
Cemetaries	\$3,600	\$5,400	\$4,800
Festival of Trees	\$0	\$0	\$2,000
Miscellaneous Support of Events	\$22,500	\$22,500	\$22,500
Subtotal:	\$584,350	\$590,650	\$692,035
Mackenzie County Library Society	\$243,000	\$243,000	\$243,000
Fort Vermilion Recreation Board	\$372,539	\$441,619	\$459,007
La Crete Recreation Board	\$557,640	\$584,818	\$703,987
Zama Recreation Board	\$156,964	\$153,887	\$186,576
Total Grants to Other Organizations:	\$2,473,843	\$568,150	\$667,535

2020 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

OPERATIONS

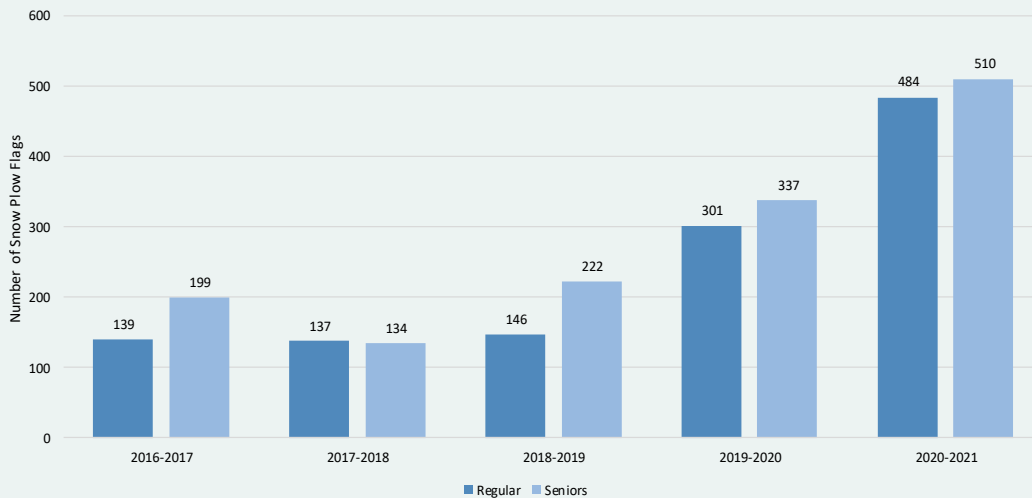
Mackenzie County provides a variety of operational services year round. The following graphs are intended to provide a glimpse into the daily operations of our municipal services.

Snow Plow Flags & Dust Control Applications

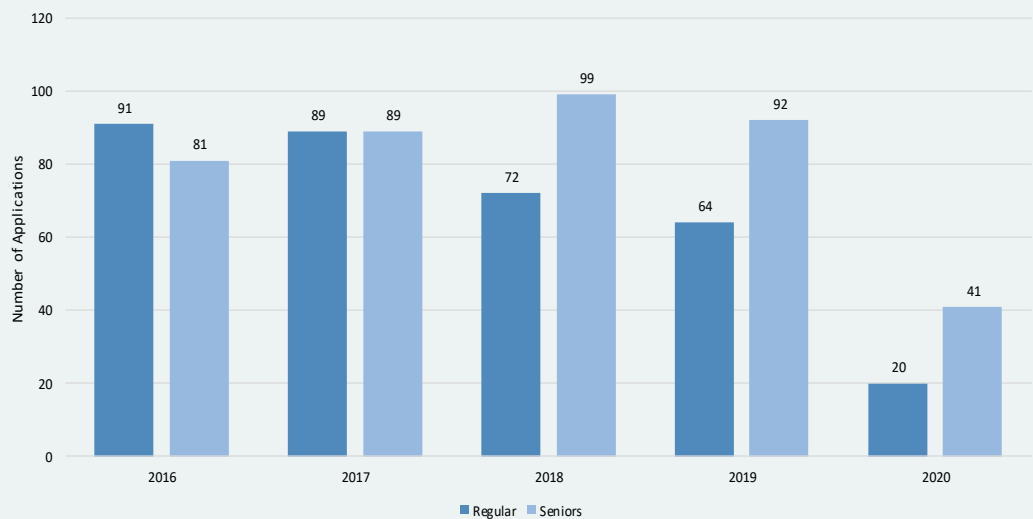
Mackenzie County has a winter maintenance program which offers plowing service (up to 1/4 mile) to rural residents. In 2020, the County completed services 510 times for seniors and 484 times for other residents.

The County applies dust control along gravel roads within the Hamlets, within school zones, major intersections, and other identified areas. Residents within the County may also apply for dust control at a cost of \$1,350 + GST per 200 linear meters with calcium chloride, and \$450 + GST per 200 linear meters for seniors (65 years and older).

Snow Plow Flags



Dust Control Applications



2020 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

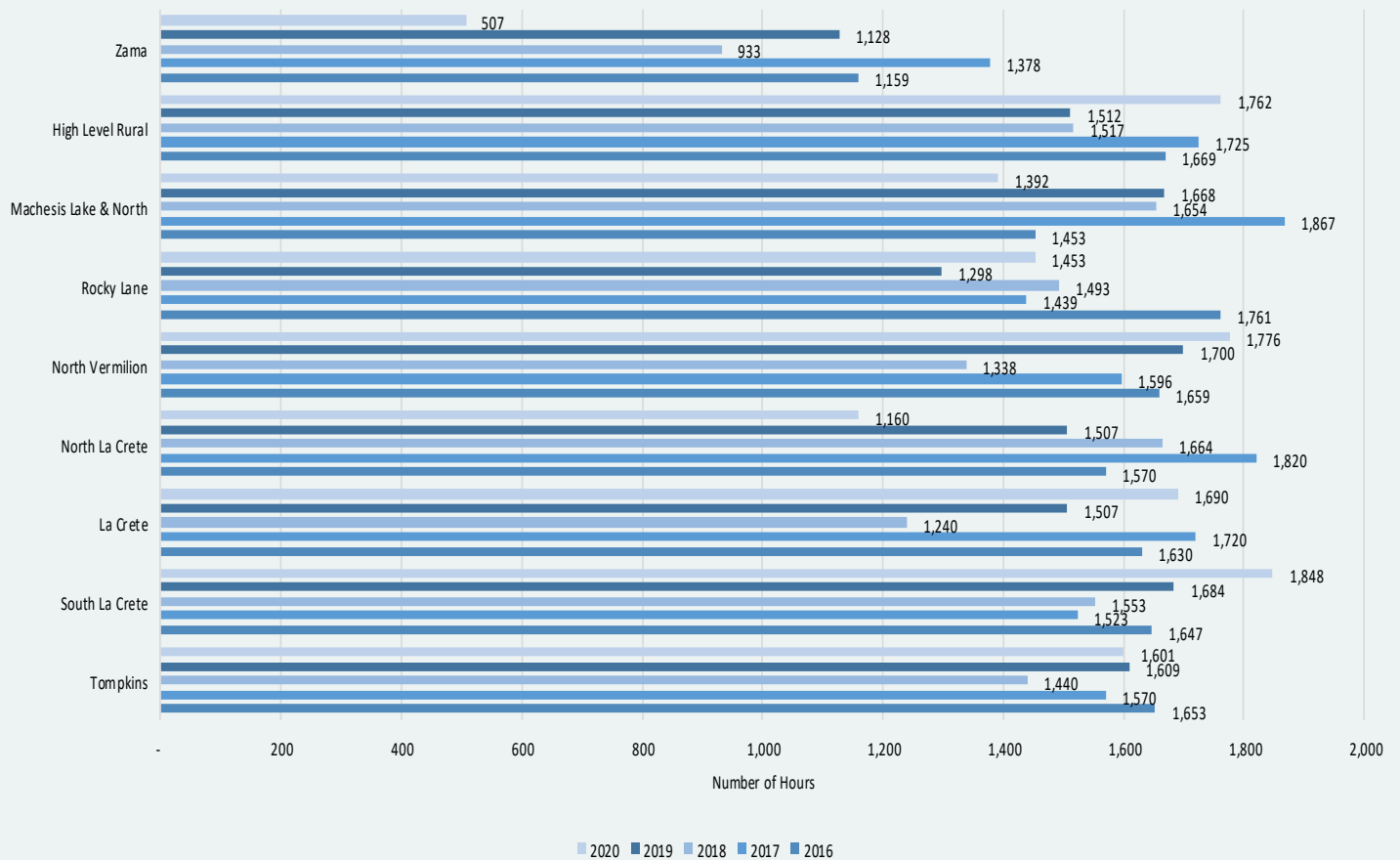
Grader Beat Hours

Mackenzie County has a nine grader beats, however Zama became a contract in April 2020. Their hours of operation are indicated on the graph below. The variances in unit hours are due to weather, number of dust controlled areas, staff vacancies, etc.

The average grader beat is 205 kilometers.



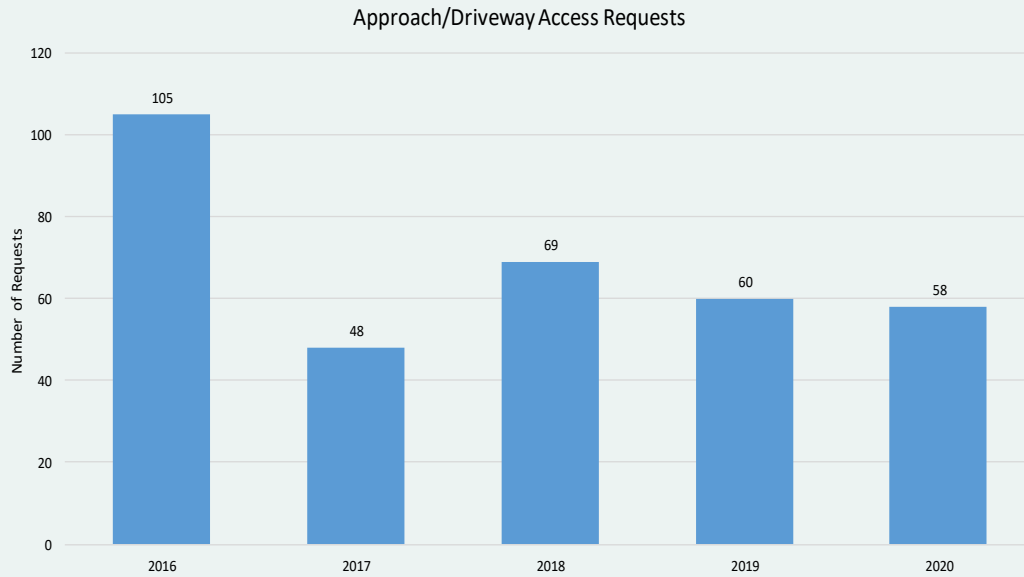
Grader Beat Hours



2020 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

Approach/Driveway Access Requests

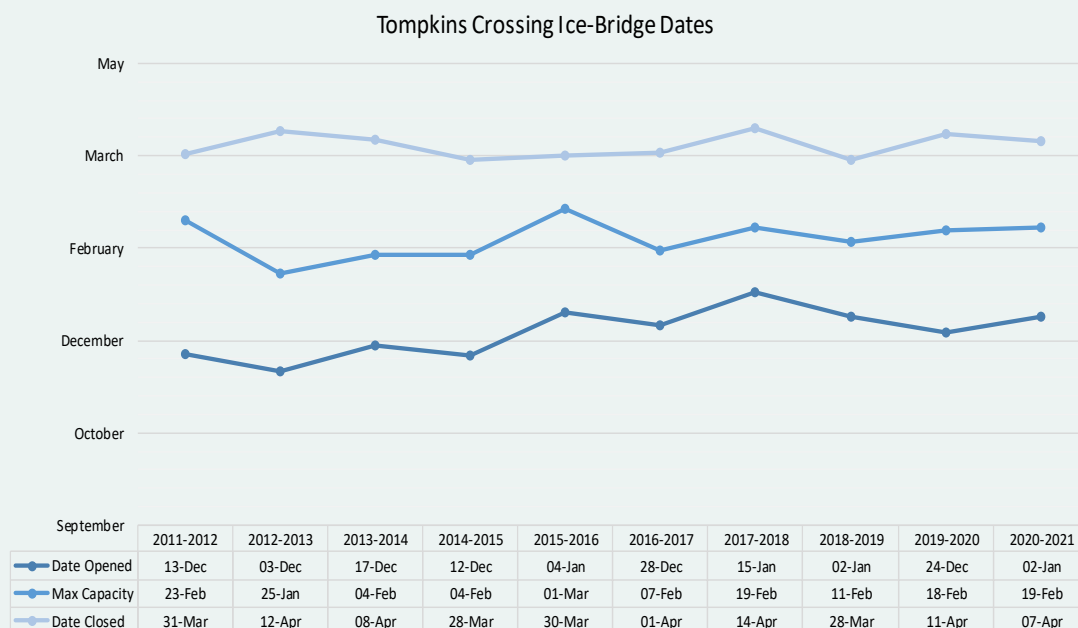
All new subdivisions require proper access that meets the County’s standard. Policy PW039 Rural Road, Access Construction and Surface Water Management Policy outlines the application and approval process.



Tompkins Crossing Ice-Bridge

Mackenzie County has an agreement with Alberta Transportation for the construction and maintenance of the ice-bridge on the Peace River at the Tompkins Crossing. The County subsequently tenders the contract work locally (typically every three year).

The chart below identifies the opening and closing dates since 2011 as well as the date the ice-bridge reached its maximum capacity of 63.5 tonnes.



2020 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

COMMUNITY SERVICES

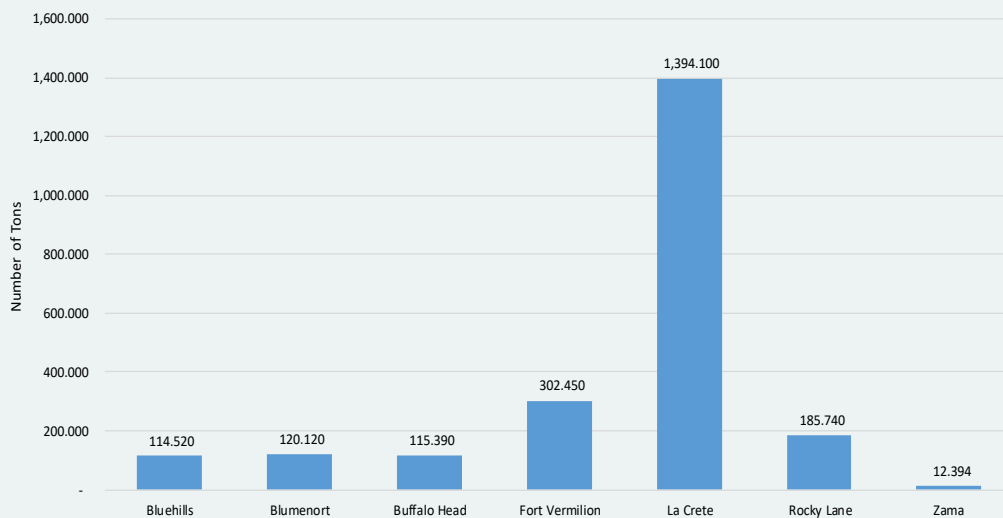
Waste Transfer Stations

Mackenzie County owns and operates seven solid waste transfer stations. Each transfer station has a contracted attendant responsible for the daily operations. The type of refuse that is allowed to be disposed of at the transfer station is regulated by policy set by Council.

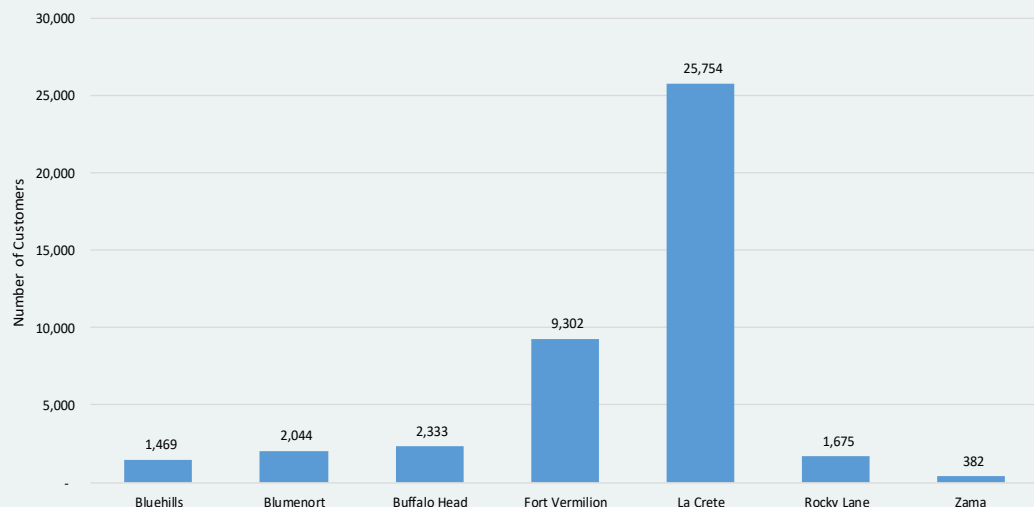
The County also contracts the transportation of waste from each transfer station to the Mackenzie Regional Landfill. The Mackenzie Regional Landfill is administered by a Commission of equal representation from Mackenzie County, Rainbow Lake and the Town of High Level.

Mackenzie County is responsible for all costs of solid waste (generated within the County) that is disposed of at the Landfill with the exceptions of commercial and industrial waste. This includes waste that is collected from waste transfer stations, rural residential and hamlet residential areas.

Waste Hauled from Transfer Stations (2020)



Waste Transfer Station Customer Count (2020)



2020 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

Campgrounds & Parks

There are a number of parks and campgrounds within the area that are operated through the County, local Recreation Societies and Volunteers. These include:

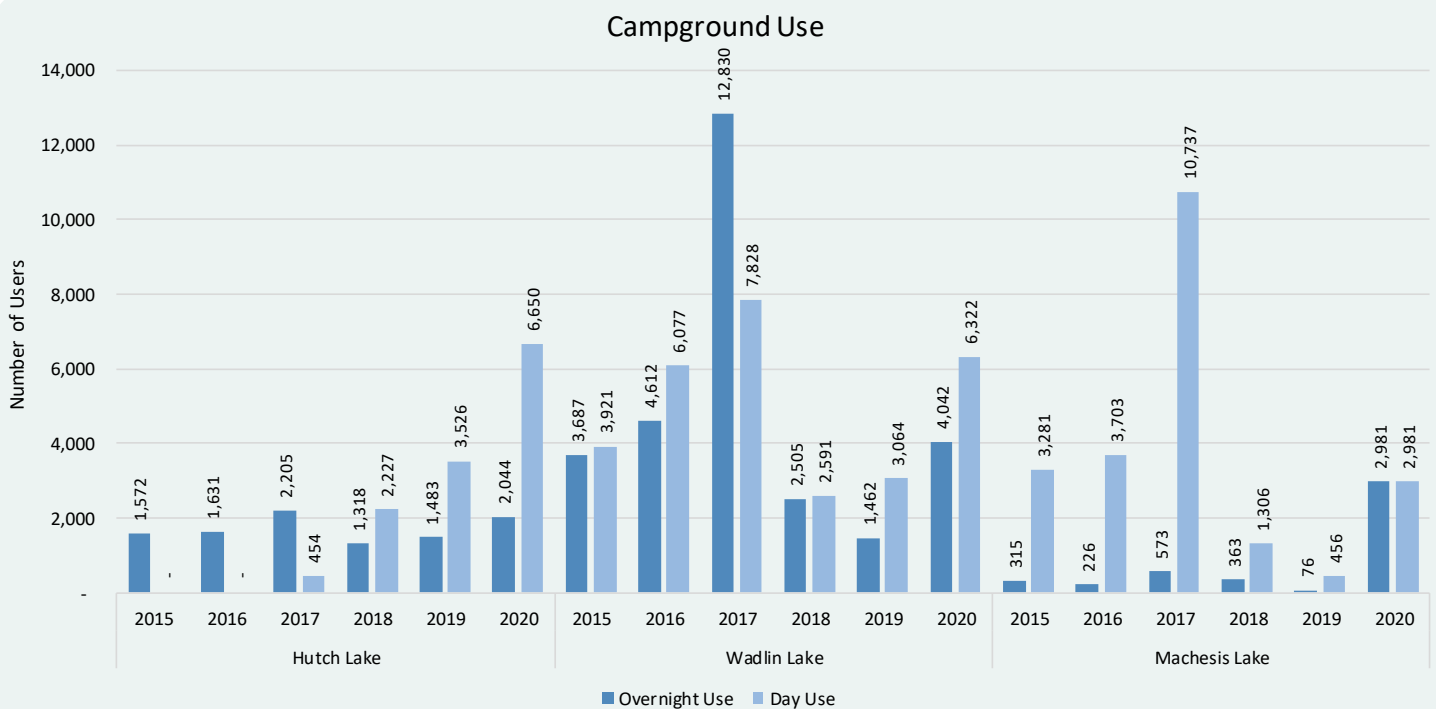
- Arena Parks (La Crete & Fort Vermilion)
- Atlas Landing
- Bridge Campsite (Fort Vermilion)
- Buffalo Head Tower Day Use Area
- D. A. Thomas Park (Fort Vermilion)
- Hutch Lake Campground (High Level)
- Jubilee Park (La Crete)
- Knelsen Park (La Crete)
- Machesis Lake Campground (Rocky Lane)
- Mackenzie Housing Park (Fort Vermilion)
- Pioneer Park (Fort Vermilion)
- Reinland Park (La Crete)
- The Big Backyard Park (La Crete)
- Tompkins Landing Day Use Area
- Tourangeau Lake Day Use Area (La Crete)
- Wadlin Lake Campground
- Walking Trails (La Crete & Fort Vermilion)
- Zama Park & Campground

Maintenance of these facilities are provided by the Mackenzie County, these duties include:

- Grass trimming
- Grass cutting
- Weeding
- Flower beds
- Maintenance of playground equipment
- Boat launch care
- Garbage disposal
- Supply firewood

Four Campgrounds operate from mid May to September 30th. These campgrounds are located at Hutch Lake, Wadlin Lake, Machesis Lake and Zama City. Visitors have come from all provinces of Canada, United States, England and abroad for this unique northern Alberta camping experience.

In partnership with Alberta Parks, the Machesis Lake Equine Campground opened in July 2016 with eight sites for overnight horse camping. This is the only facility of its kind north of Grande Cache and is adjacent to over 20 kilometers of trails.



2020 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

Fire Services

Mackenzie County operates four fire stations located in Tompkins Landing, La Crete, Fort Vermilion, and Zama. High Level rural residents are served by the Town of High Level Fire Department under a Regional Service Sharing Agreement.

Members on the various fire departments are volunteers and are paid an honorarium by the County.

- La Crete/Tompkins—33 active members
- Fort Vermilion—13 active members
- Zama— 7 active members

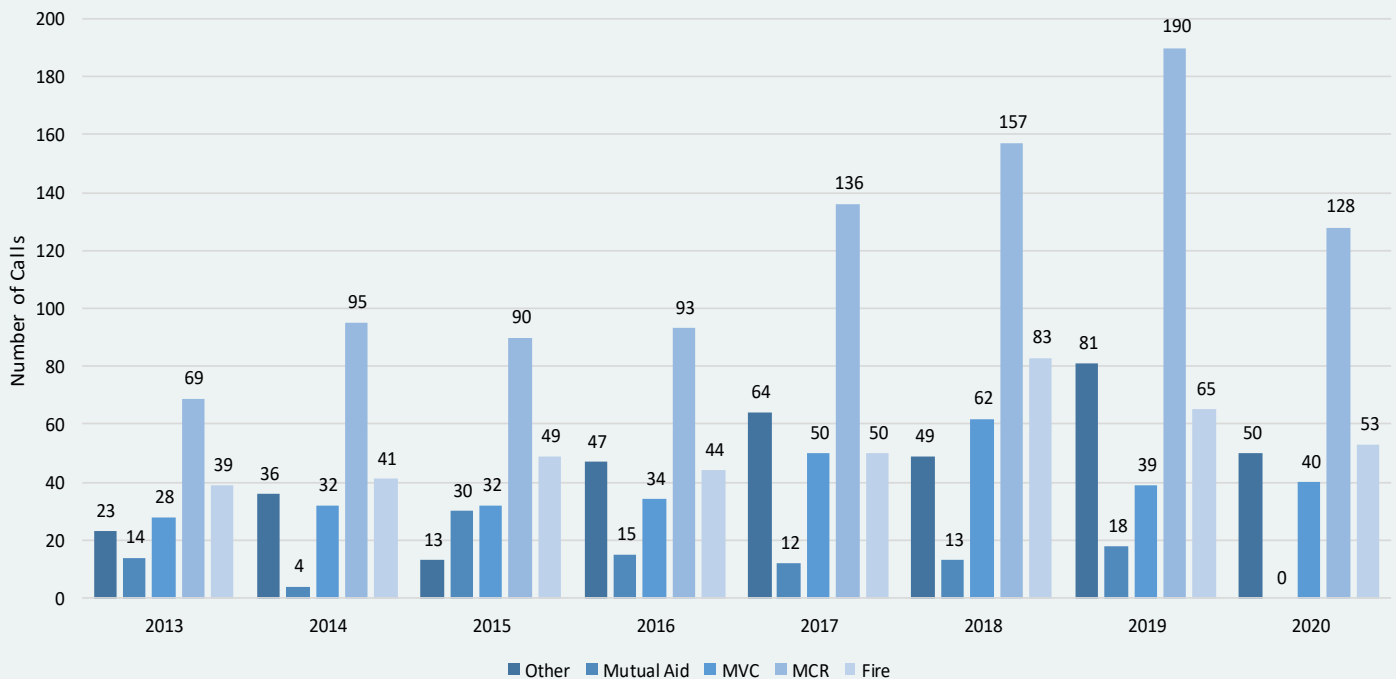
Becoming a firefighter requires a considerable amount of commitment and availability. Some of the expectations and duties of a member are as follows:

- Attend training nights in order to maintain and build skills.
- Obtain appropriate fire/emergency training as per the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).
- Respond to emergency calls, not only within the County, but also those in other fire districts.
- Be on voluntary call.
- Be a team player.
- Help maintain an organized and neat station, as well as the maintenance of equipment.

If you are interested in joining please contact your local Fire Department.

The type of calls the department respond to are categorized in five types of responses. Fire, Medical Co-response, Motor Vehicle Collision, Mutual Aid and Other (Alarms, Hazards, etc.)

Fire Department Calls by Type



2020 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

The Planning and Development department is responsible for the operational functions of development permits, safety code permits, subdivision applications, Land Use Bylaw revisions including rezoning, mapping/GIS, engineering standards, future planning, environmental and regional planning. The department is based out of the La Crete office and provides service to other areas of the municipality at the request of the client.

The Planning and Development department has completed several projects these past few years.

Community Streetscape Implementation Committees

The La Crete Streetscape committee initiated and implemented some new design elements in their community. The La Crete Streetscape committee has planted 40 trees along 100th Street and 100th Avenue in 2018, and an additional 40 trees in 2019.

The Fort Vermilion Streetscape committee also initiated and completed some new projects outlined in the Streetscape design plan. This include the completion of small lookout deck across from LimeBlu, and 8 additional trees on River Road in 2019.

The Streetscape committees are now a function of the Community Services department.

Fort Vermilion Peace River Flood Risk Assessment

The Fort Vermilion – Peace River Flood Risk Assessment project was completed on March 30, 2019. The assessment was created to help the County to identify flood hazards, and areas at risk of flooding in and within the immediate vicinity of Fort Vermilion. Alberta Environment and Parks is continuing the project, which will include flood mapping from the 2020 Ice Jam Flood event.

Inter-municipal Development Plans and Inter-municipal Collaborative Frameworks

The County has worked diligently in creating Inter-municipal Development Plans (IDP) and Inter-municipal Collaborative Frameworks (ICF) with each adjacent municipality. This process has been mandated by the updated MGA and agreements are required to be in place by April, 2021.

The IDP's and ICF's are agreements that promote friendly working relationships with adjacent municipalities by creating processes and plans together such as mutual aid, notification of major projects, cost sharing, transportation, future development along borders etc. There are six (6) adjacent municipalities that have entered into ICF agreements with Mackenzie County.

Airport Planning

The County is working towards the implementation of Airport Development Plans for each the La Crete airport and the Fort Vermilion airport, and a review of the Airport Vicinity Protection Area is also underway. These documents will ensure appropriate planning restrictions are in place to protect future airport use and development.

Strategic Plan

The department has also worked with Council to update the Strategic Plan for Mackenzie County. The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to establish critical priorities and activities of the County for the four year period between 2018 and 2021. This plan is used by Council, administration, and stakeholders for guidance.

La Crete Industrial Growth Strategy

The County began working with O2 Planning to determine the best area to push for industrial growth around the La Crete area. In 2019, several developers applied to construct multi-lot industrial and commercial subdivisions in different areas around La Crete. O2 Planning aided the planning department in hosting two open houses for business owners and members of the public to share their input on where industrial development may be best suited. Mackenzie County council has since approved the strategy, this will be integrated into existing planning documents.

2020 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

Aerial Imagery

The County has since updated the aerial imagery for all privately-owned land with the municipality. These images are current as of August 2020, and have been made publicly available on Munisight, which is our web-based mapping system.

General Municipal Improvement Standards

The department has completed a full review and update of the Mackenzie County General Municipal Improvement Standards (GMIS) which are the minimum construction standards for all municipal infrastructure. This document is often referred to when reviewing engineered drawings for all new developments in the municipality.

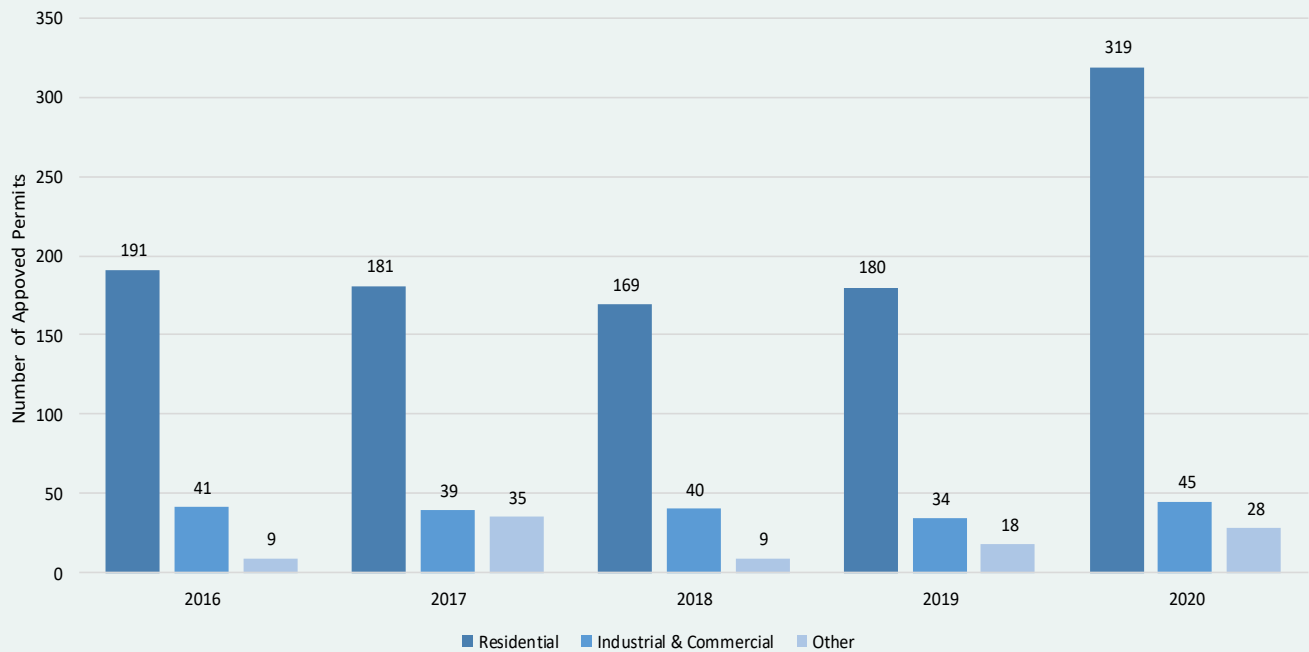
Development Permits/Safety Codes

In terms of operations, the number of development permits increased significantly in 2020 from previous years. While only 55 permits can be attributed as normal increase from 2019, the major increase was an aftermath of the FV flood.

Also, there were 3 development permit appeals in 2018, 4 development permit appeals in 2019, and none in 2020.

The number of development permits has been fairly consistent from 2016 through 2019. However, in 2020 there was a significant increase by 160 development permits, of which 105 of them were as a result of the 2020 FV Flood.

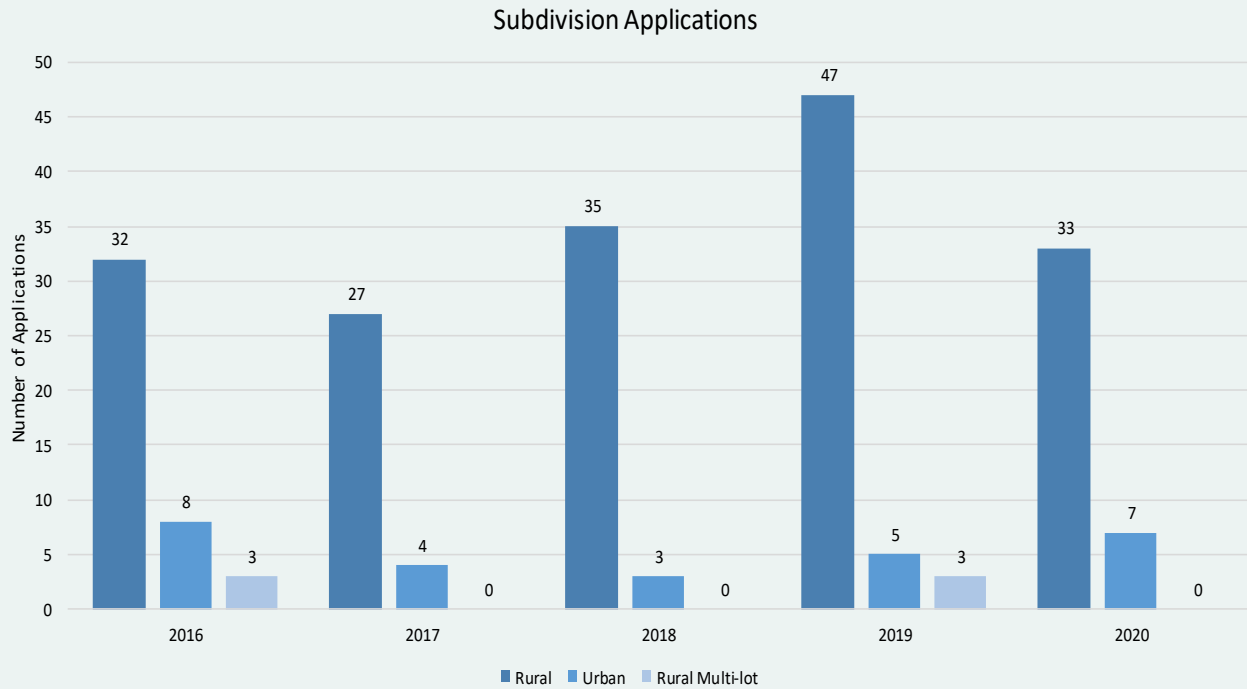
Approved Development Permits



2020 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

Subdivisions

Subdivision applications remain steady with both rural and urban development.



The Building Code Regulation has adopted two new codes;

- National Building Code- 2019 Alberta Edition – This code provides the minimum safety standard for the design and construction of new buildings and energy efficiency in construction for new housing and small buildings.
- National Energy Code for buildings- 2017 Edition- This code provides the minimum requirements for energy efficiency in construction of new buildings other than housing and small buildings.

The Fire Regulation also adopted:

- National Fire Code- 2019 Alberta Edition- This code provides minimum fire safety requirements for building, structures and areas where hazardous materials are used, and addresses fire protection and fire prevention in the ongoing operation of buildings and facilities. This code also allows for minimum safety standards for storage tank fuel systems.

The new codes came into effect on April 1, 2019. In 2019, administration reviewed and amended the Quality Management Plan. With careful consideration and input from council, we have created a user-friendly document to effectively permit, inspect and manage all the documentation required by the safety codes system.

2020 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

Species at Risk management continues to be a priority topic for the County. The reality is that caribou are important animals in our northern forests, are considered an iconic species representative of Canada but are being used by Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS) and governments for political gain. It is within this larger, much more complex environment that the County has been advocating for a common sense approach to caribou recovery.

Mackenzie County continues to be an active member of the Northwest Species at Risk Committee (NWSAR) which is mandated to collectively provide and share information, ideas and resources relating to the continued and future prosperity of Northwest Alberta. Instill effective regional adaptive management and transparency, which allows all stakeholders to play a vital role in shaping our collective future. Develop tangible solutions founded upon an evidence-based approach, to ensure a balance of smart economic growth, a sustained quality of life, and an enhanced natural environment for all of our businesses, communities and wildlife.

The NWSAR Committee and municipality have reviewed and commented on the draft Bistcho Sub-Regional Plan independently. The Bistcho Sub-Regional Plan is a being developed to regulate and monitor provincial land in the Mackenzie region in part with the Lower Peace Regional Plan. This document is made publicly available for review and comment.

The NWSAR has completed the State of the Region report which provides an accurate and current socio-economic and environmental status for the NWSAR region. This report was created in response to the need to develop more regionally relevant datasets for municipal, regional, and provincial lands. This information will be used when advocating for the region, and all planning initiatives.

NWSAR has partnered with the Alberta Bio-diversity Monitoring Institute (ABMI) to determine the thematic accuracy of our human footprint inventory and to support with the Northwest Landscape Monitoring of remote cameras for all five Northwest Boreal Caribou Ranges. The information gathered is used for species monitoring, to update the footprint inventory and to map major terrestrial land cover classes. This is a key piece in caribou habitat recovery planning. After collecting high resolution aerial photos, ABMI's geospatial staff manually confirmed or reclassified the human footprint data for 20 townships in northwestern Alberta.



ALBERTA
NWSAR
COMMITTEE
NORTHWEST SPECIES AT RISK



2020 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mackenzie County has been working closely with the Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI) to promote and support economic development in the region.

Community and Regional Economic Support (CARES) Grant

Mackenzie County received a Community and Regional Economic Support (CARES) program grant to conduct research and promote the region's agricultural competitive advantage. Mackenzie Applied Research Association tested crop seeds that were grown within the Mackenzie region against crop seeds grown at other research farms across the province to establish differentiating factors. The project hired consultant Corey Keith from Keith and Associates to analyze the crop seed data and undertake extensive research to create a report that outlines two unique value-added agricultural aspects for the region. The growing of pedigree seed for sowing and processing organic oats and peas was recommended as the best possible way of progressing value-added agriculture.

After extensive public consultation and local producer feedback, the process of creating a marketing package started. The development of a logo and brand called "Mackenzie Agriculture" pinpointed the style and messaging. The completed marketing package includes a folder with a brochure that outlines agriculture in the region, along with ten inserts that highlighted a breakdown of value-added opportunities and crops for in the region. A website was developed called www.mackenzieagriculture.com, it was designed to build a database of interested local producers and become a landing page for investment enquiries. Mackenzie County sent out fifty packages to food and ingredient companies highlighting the value-added agriculture opportunities. There have been two local producer groups interested in investing in oat processing locally, with the potential to partner with a more prominent national ingredient company. Packages are available online and at each County office.

Alaska to Alberta (A2A) Railway – Regional Introduction

REDI has been working diligently on a rail line's feasibility and local consultation phase. At this point, REDI has been heavily involved with bringing A2A to the region to undertake the first round of municipal and First Nations consultations. We aim to make it as seamless as possible to initiate consultations and ensure the northwest region is unified in its approach to a new rail corridor. That includes open dialogue about the proposed route and potential obstacles. REDI hosted A2A Rail on November 25 & 26, 2020, in High Level. The meetings included First Nations councils, municipalities, the local Chambers of Commerce and educational institution representation. A2A engineers tracked the route and evaluated potential crossing points along the Peace River.

To assist with the facilitation of railway routing through the region, REDI has assisted in the appointment of a local representative on the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC). The Council will focus on developing one or more multi-modal corridors across the north, which would include broadband, utilities, roadways, and rail.

REDI has also assigned a budget and appointed a board member to sit on the new Transport Utility Task Force with MLA Shane Getson. The new task force will formulate and recommend a path forward for the province. In doing so, it will set the foundation for future generations to flex the Alberta Advantage once again.



incredible!



2020 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

Significant Provincial Announcements from 2020

Grain Elevator in High Level

Richardson Pioneer's new elevator in High Level, Alberta, will nearly quintuple storage space for farmers in the region. Richardson Pioneer's new high throughput grain elevator in High Level, Alberta., is expected to nearly quintuple storage capacity in the region, providing 32,000 tonnes of space. The new elevator should allow more farmers in the region to unload their products closer to home.

School Renovation and Addition in Blue Hills

The project will see the Blue Hills Community School modernized. Upon completion the school will be able to accommodate up to 200 students from K – 12.

Tompkins Bridge

The provincial Government announced the construction of a Highway 697 bridge over the Peace River near La Crete to replace the existing ferry at Tompkins Landing.

This bridge would replace the winter ice road crossing and aging seasonal ferry. Seasonal crossings are closed 30% of the year and are often disrupted by poor weather and wait times of up to 3 hours during peak periods. A reliable year-round bridge would reduce travel times and congestion, improve trade movements, and attract investment to the region.

The bridge is expected to cost \$200 million and is not in the 2020-23 Capital Plan. A new financing approach using road user fees could allow this project to proceed during this time of fiscal challenges. Road user fee systems exist in 5 provinces and territories.

New Natural Gas Line

Construction on a new natural gas supply line is set to begin after receiving a grant of \$16.2 million from the provincial government. Northern Lights Gas Co-op will be installing 92 kilometres of six-inch high-pressure line roughly from Peace River to La Crete.

The project is expected to create around 50 construction jobs, as well as attract industrial employers needing access to natural gas to the region. Upon its completion, it is expected to provide stable energy supply to some of Alberta's northernmost farming communities.



2020 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

UTILITIES

The Utilities Department is responsible for managing the water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer systems. Operationally this includes water and wastewater treatment, distribution and collection maintenance programs like hydrant flushing, sewer flushing, account connects/disconnects, meter installs and repairs. The department also plans for growth by following consumption and population trends to secure water supply and ensure the services are prepared for the growth.

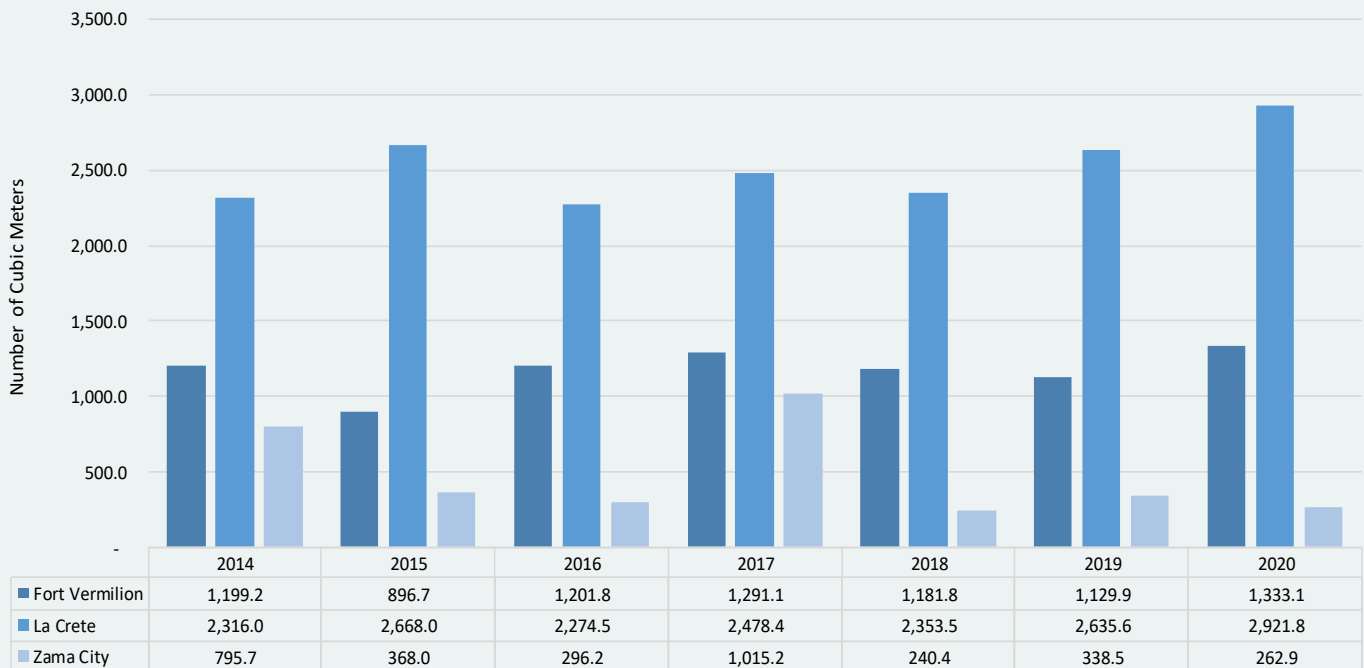
Under provincial regulations the department is required to operate in accordance with the Alberta Environment Protection and Enhancement Act, Water Act, Potable Water Regulation, as well as Code of Practice for Wastewater Systems Using a Wastewater Lagoon. Additionally, we are also required to operate within the Federal requirements such as the Fisheries Act and Wastewater Effluent Regulations.

In 2020 in collaboration with the Fort Vermilion School Division the Hill Crest Waterline project was completed. This was a 1.85 kilometer extension from Range Road 140 west along Township Road 1074. A majority of 2020's time was spent with the COVID 19, Fort Vermilion Flood and Mitigation.

Utility Services Rendered - 2020

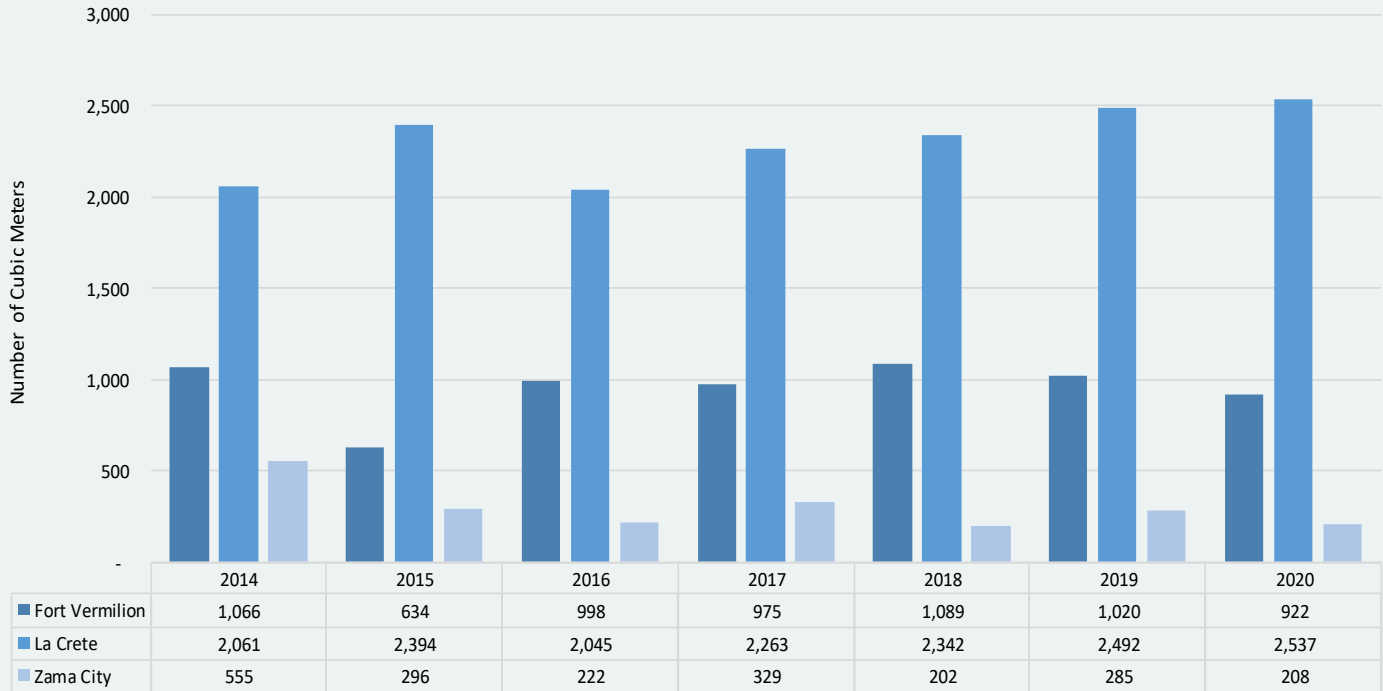
- New Installs = 50
- Meter Changes = 210
- Water Meter Service Calls = 267
- CC Locates/Repairs/On or Off = 286
- Miscellaneous Service Calls = 144
- Miscellaneous Sewer = 23
- Main Service Line Tie In = 2
- CC Service Tie In = 45
- Rural Service Tie In = 17

Treated Water - Single Day Maximum

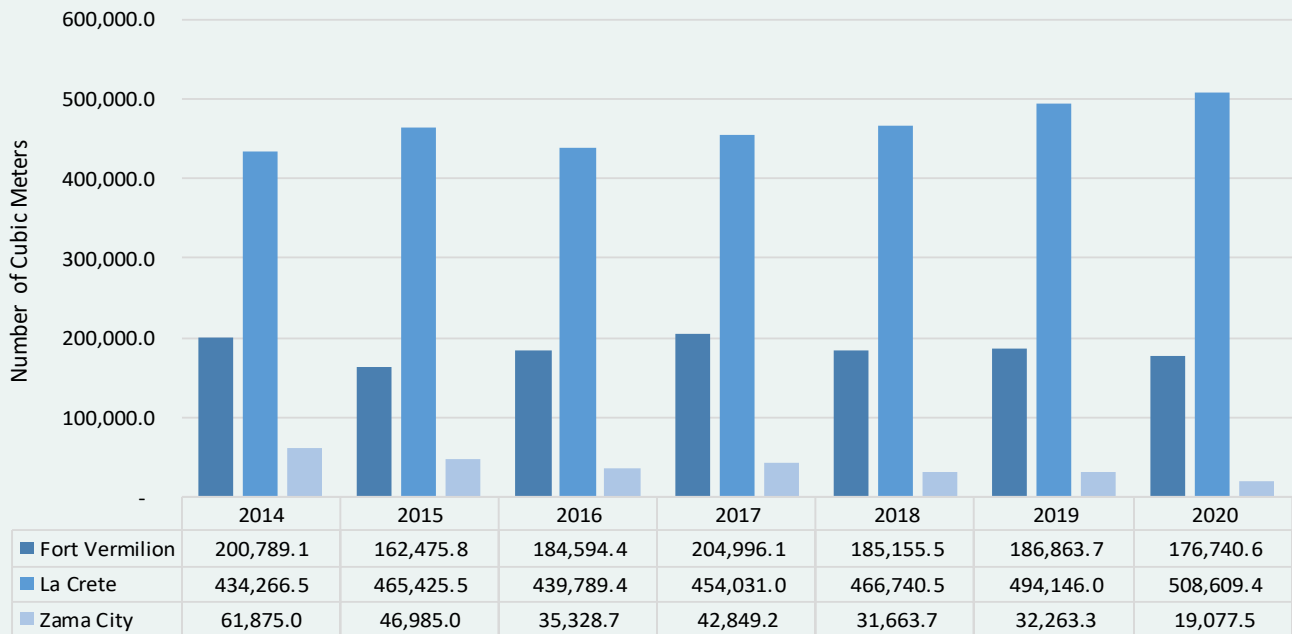


2020 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

Treated Water - 3-day Peak Average



Treated Water - Annual Total



2020 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARD (ASB)

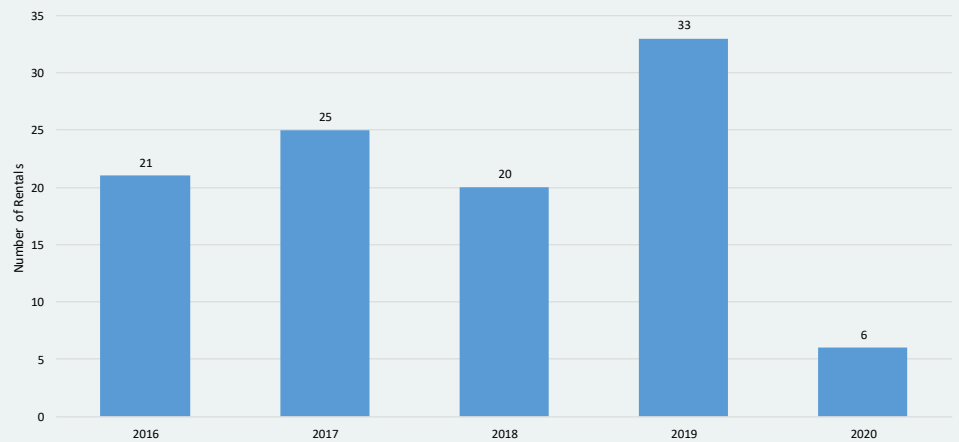


Mackenzie County's Agricultural Service Board (ASB) consists of two municipally appointed Councillors and three municipally appointed members at Large.

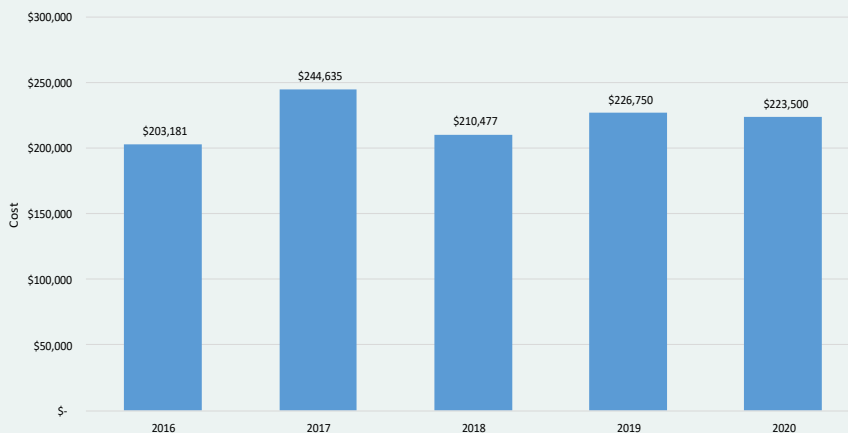
ASBs are established under the Alberta Agricultural Service Board Act and are responsible for administering and enforcing the provincial agricultural related acts; Weed Control Act, Agriculture Pest Act, Soil Conservation Act, Livestock Disease Act, and the Agricultural Service Board Act. This is achieved through our business plan (available on the Mackenzie County website) where goals and strategies are outlined. The business plan is updated on a regular basis, but our main goals remain the same.

- Encourage development of new value-added agricultural farms and agri-businesses.
- Promote sustainable agricultural policies and practices.
- Strong internal policies and programs to support responsible agricultural land development.
- Appropriate land uses within the County.
- Continuing agricultural land expansion.

Pump & Pipe Rentals



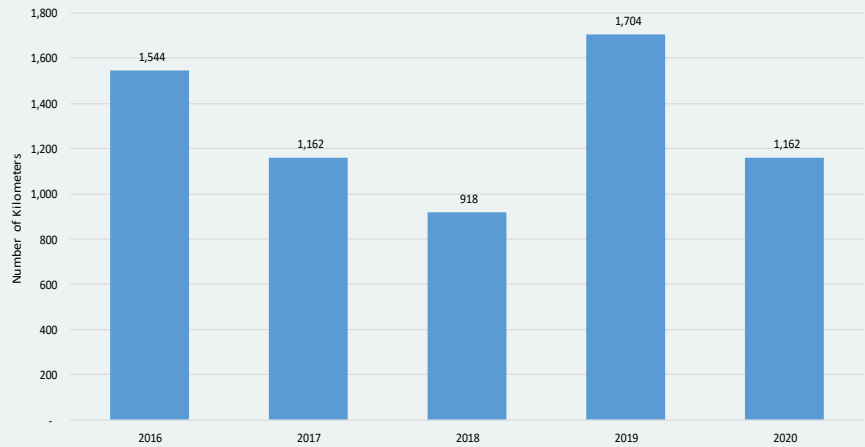
Roadside Grass Mowing



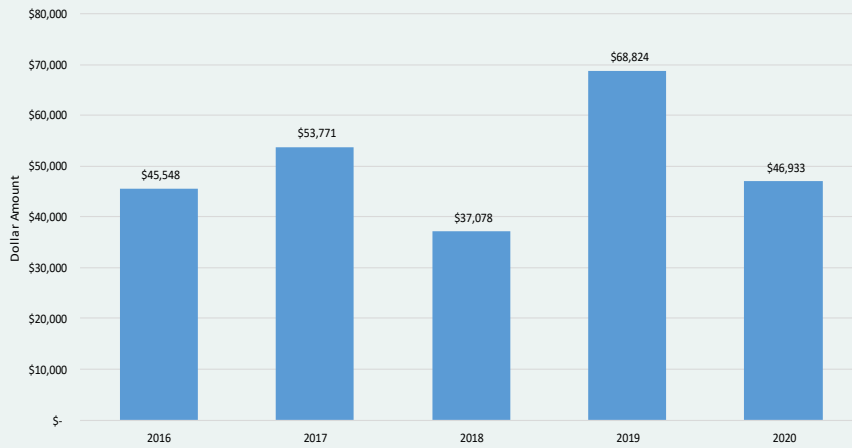
The ASB works closely and provides financial assistance to Mackenzie Applied Research Association (MARA). MARA coordinates and conducts all applied research and provides extension services to local agricultural producers.

2020 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

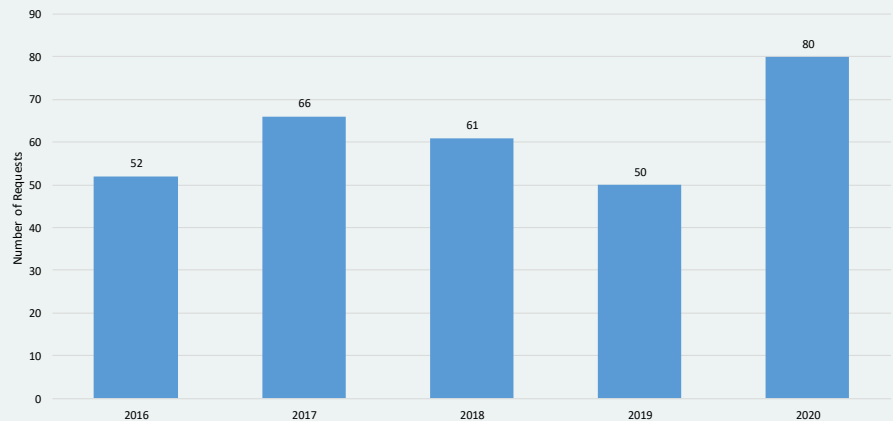
Roadside Spraying - Kilometers Covered



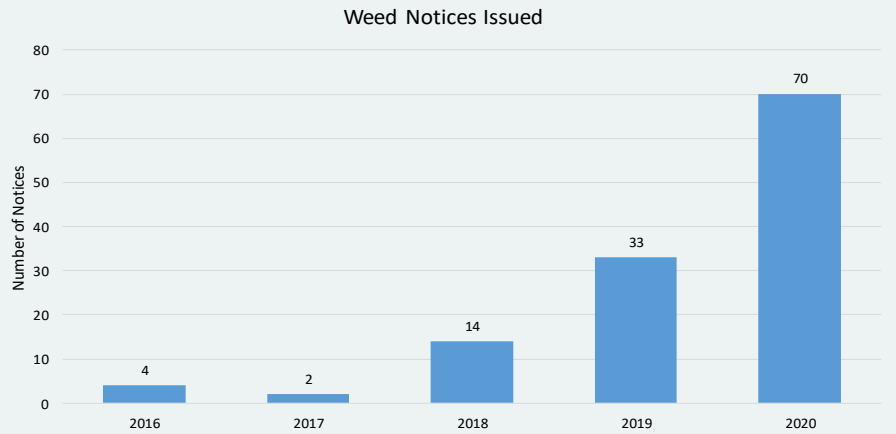
Roadside Spraying - Cost



"Do-Not-Spray" Requests



2020 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS



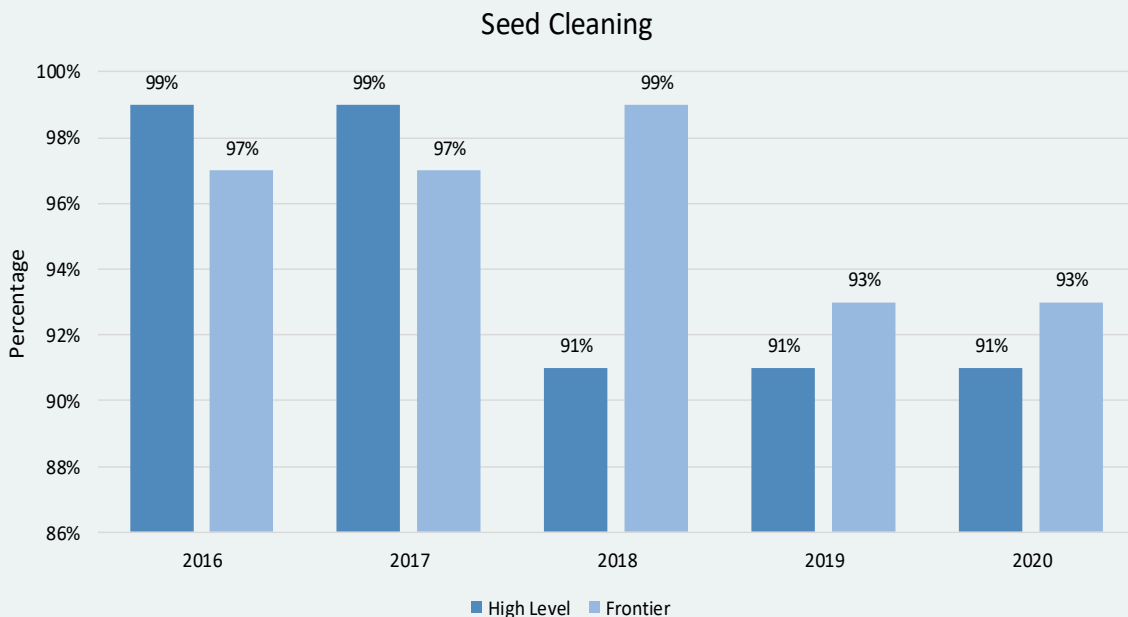
Seed Cleaning Plant Inspections

Licenses are issued to Seed Cleaning Plants under the authority of the Weed Control Act. The purpose of licensing is to protect users from the spread of weeds due to faulty practices, design or maintenance of seed cleaning plants.

Plants are rated in two categories:

1. The design, maintenance and operation of the plant relating to the prevention of cross contamination of seeds.
2. The quality of the end product or seed produced.

The chart shows the scores of the High Level Seed Cleaning Co-op and the Frontier Seed Cleaning Co-op inspections. Plants must achieve at least 50% to operate.



2020 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

Beaver Control

The County has a beaver bounty program to help agricultural producers deal with problem beavers that are flooding their agricultural land.

When a complaint is received from a landowner, the Agricultural Fieldman will inspect the area and decide which method of dam removal is appropriate (backhoe or blasting). Members from one of the two Local Trappers Associations will remove the beaver from the problem area to help ensure that the problem dam will not be recurring. The Local Trapper's Association receives a \$50 bounty for each beaver tail collected from problem areas.



Beaver Control

