



# MUNICIPAL DISTRICT *of Willow Creek*

Volume XIV | Spring Newsletter • Published May 2026



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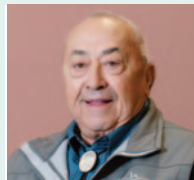
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# COUNCIL MESSAGE

. Spring showers are supposed to bring May flowers – Do snow showers (blizzards) count? At least it was moisture – welcome by some but not by those calving or lambing!!! It just goes to show that not everyone can be pleased with the same things.

*"I cannot give you a formula for success, but I can give you a formula for failure - which is: Try to please everybody"* (Herbert Bayard Swope)

## Welcome to 2026 – Did you Know???

### 1. The **Land Use Bylaw (LUB)** - Why is this important?

For anyone thinking about any kind of development within the MD, (now including Granum), this document is your guide. It can be found on the MD website (mdwillowcreek.com) OR anyone can contact the Planning and Development Services at 403-625-3351

Hopefully it is easier to follow and find information like the following new item for Rural General:

**\*\*\*"Farm Building Exemption"** form. Under Schedule 2 RG -Rural General Page 3 of the LUB Section 9 AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS, FENCES AND SHELTERBELTS Section 9. 9.1 states **"Agricultural buildings and structures, as defined are not required to obtain a development permit if all requirements of this bylaw are met but are required to complete the Farm Building Exemption"** form

Setbacks from adjacent property(ies) and from road allowances are not being honored. Why do ratepayers insist on developing without permission and then beg forgiveness when there are rules? The same applies to those who do not follow development permit guidelines – when caught, they also ask forgiveness!! Just follow the LUB and you will not pay more in fees.

1. **NEW "FEES BYLAW # 2028"** - - This is partly a result of ratepayers going ahead with development without permission but also administration spends a lot of time dealing with projects and their issues. If you do not want to be penalized monetarily, then adhere to the Land Use Bylaw. Mind you there can be exceptions, but Council is always willing to listen, but do not go ahead without permission

2. **Our Strategic Plan 2026-2031** This helps guide Council and Administration in doing what is best for the MD. This Plan contains the Vision and Mission Statements, Core Values, Guiding Principles and Priorities for the next 5 years. There are Key Performance Indicators and Measures to see if these are being done. Priorities are Community & Governance, Accountability & Communication, Economic Growth & Diversity, Municipal Infrastructure (Sustainable Service Delivery & Asset Management; Waste Management Innovation) and Collaboration & Advocacy,

3. **Budget 2026** - Refer to the Director of Finance's Message in this Newsletter for details!!

Again, the **School Requisition, which the MD collects for the Province** has gone up considerably (\$4,885,233.79 in 2025 to \$5,343,303.95 in 2026) **The Provincial Policing Costs the MD is required to pay has also increased from 2025's \$469,498.00 to \$551,655.22.** The **Seniors Housing Foundations** have stayed relatively the same. Expenses keep up with inflation and other issues which we have no control over (utilities, fuel, insurance, supplies, wages, and the increase in product pricing. **Overall Administration and Council have tried to keep your taxes within reason – our mill rates are still one of lowest in the surrounding**

**municipalities and counties.** Any surpluses are designated for future use – especially in transportation. You will see a very minor mill rate increase in the Farmland and Linear/Non-Residential with a slight decrease in Residential rate. Overall, this Municipality gets the BANG for the BUCK as the saying goes.

**Many questions were raised during Budget discussions,** especially for the 2027 budgeting process when monies are getting tight and the Province seems to be downloading more on the Municipalities. Years ago, municipalities biggest concerns were the roads, bridges, etc. - basically transportation as it is vital to moving people and agricultural and other goods. Now we are involved in many other ventures – Planning & Development, Airport, Medical Clinics (the MD owns Claresholm's, partner in Nanton's), Libraries, FCSS (Family Community Support Services), Senior Facilities, Recreation funding, Waste Management, Water systems, Fire and Emergency, Transportation Societies, etc.

Just a sample of our discussions: Do we need to continue funding some things that should be as close to self proficient as possible?? Water Development (supplying water) is expensive and how do we cost recover? As a ratepayer (farmer/rancher) no one put our water system in (well)and paid for it. We did that our own cost, and we maintain and repair it at our cost. The question is always asked “Why do we subsidize water supply to areas of the MD? Another example was said about a Transportation Society – When they first came to Council for funding, they said they would be self sufficient in 5 years and that time is well past!! Now they are basically a line item on the MD's budget. There are other examples – Do we continue to provide free Garbage Collections and Disposal at sites in the MD? Many ratepayers pay for their own. And the list goes on!!

4. **ICF (Intermunicipal Collaborative Framework) – Recreation Agreement** – was renewed in 2026 for another 5 years between the MD and Fort Macleod, Claresholm, Stavely and Nanton. This is the MD's share of usage of the recreational facilities in these towns and is based on fixed costs of running the swimming pools, curling/hockey rinks, etc. Yearly, the MD gives each of Nanton, Claresholm and Fort Macleod \$94,300.00, Stavely \$51,200.00 and Granum \$21,050.00 for a total of \$355,150.00 plus each receives \$5000 for Celebration Events like Canada Day, That is a total of \$380,150. The Stavely Elks took over the management of Clear Lake, Pine Coulee and Willow Creek Park and the Macleod Lions took over John Zoeteman Park – this has saved the MD a lot of money and the parks are doing great.

5. **Renewable Energies** – With regards to the SPWC Development GP Inc. **Willow Ridge Wind Project** south of Fort Macleod , the MD ( the Administration), along with the WRAG (Willow Ridge Action Group) managed to get the AUC (Alberta Utilities Commission) Stage 2 Panel to find in the public interest to apply the LUB (Land Use Bylaw) residential and aerodrome setbacks and to deny 15 wind turbine locations that are in non-compliance with these setbacks. Quite a win - now it is in SPWC hands to decide what they will do – They have until July 2026 to respond to the AUC. This MD is constantly making the Government of Alberta and the AUC aware of issues regarding green energy projects.

6. **Council is planning a road tour** in May (weather permitting)

7. **Congratulations to a couple of our exemplary staff:**

To our Director of Finance, Johanne Hannas who received the Canadian Award for Financial Reporting for municipalities for a second time. To our Director of Emergency Services, Kelly Starling who was presented with the Federal Service Award by John Barlow Member of Parliament for Foothills.

With the current snowpacks looking great and all the fogs we have had, it does not look like we will be facing drought. Hoping for timely rains, no flooding and a great summer. With all that is going on the world, we are so grateful to live in the M.D. Of Willow Creek No. 26

*John Van Driesten, Maryanne Sandberg, Brian Nelson, Earl Hemmaway,  
Cecilie Fleming, Evan Berger & Glen Alm*

**COFFEE WITH COUNCIL**

August 19  
in Fort Macleod  
from 6 – 8 p.m.

**CONGRATULATIONS** to all Grade 12 Graduates  
in June, and all the best in your future endeavors!

*Wishing all  
Mothers and Fathers  
Happy Mother's Day in May  
& Happy Father's Day in June*

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24**  
**MD Open House & BBQ**  
at the Granum Homesteader  
Council looks forward to visiting with  
many MD residents and ratepayers.

The MD of Willow Creek No. 26 is pleased to present the “2025 Statement of Operations” as prepared by KPMG. It must be noted that the auditors reviewed all aspects of our financial information and provided us with the following opinion:

“In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Municipality as of December 31, 2025, and its results of operations, its changes in net financial assets (debt) and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.”

Some of last year’s financial highlights include:

- As of December 31, 2025,

The 2025 Financials were approved by Council on April 27, 2026.

- The MD recognizes that certain challenges have and will occur on the operating side due to rising costs (i.e. utilities, Insurance, supplies, fuel, etc.
- The net Municipal property taxes do NOT INCLUDE requisitions such as School (ASFF), Seniors Foundations, Designated Industrial Property (DIP) or policing costs that are required to be collected.
- We were still able to set aside \$1.5 million for infrastructure reserves due to an increase in revenue. With the proposed decrease in future Provincial and Federal grant funding, it is imperative that municipalities set aside funds for future infrastructure replacement.

The following pages describe:

- 2026 Operating Budget Revenue & Expenditures
- 2027 – 2029 Operating Budget Plan

(The 2026 Operating Budget and 2027-2029 Budget Plan were both approved by Council on April 22, 2026)

- Capital Budget and 5 Year Plan
- Property Assessment Values
- Property Tax Rates

Please refer to our website

([www.mdwillowcreek.com](http://www.mdwillowcreek.com) > Services > Corporate Services) for all financial reports.

**Johanne C. Hannas**, BMgmt, PLP, CLGM  
 Director of Finance

## MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF WILLOW CREEK NO. 26

### Statement of Operations

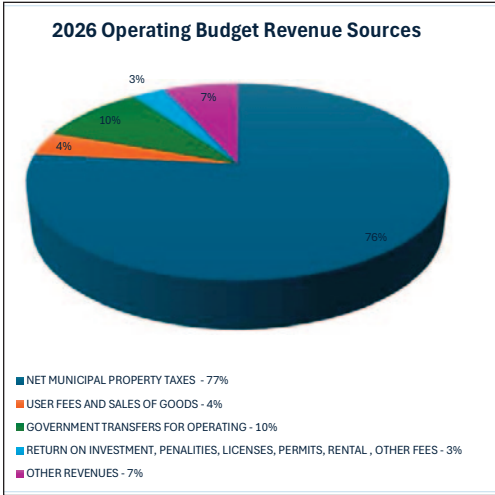
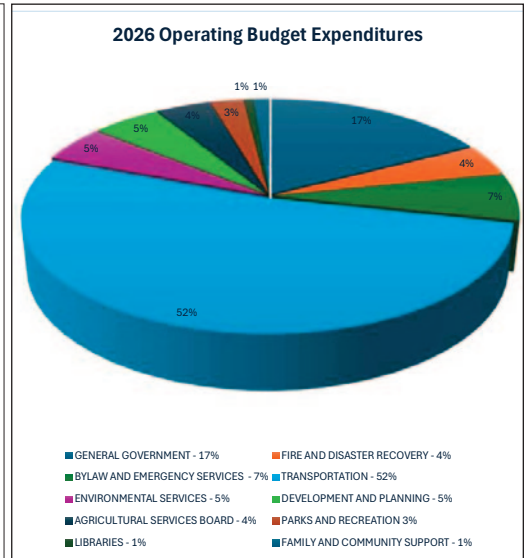
Year ended December 31, 2025, with comparative information for 2024

	Budget (note 17)	2025	2024
<b>Revenue:</b>			
Net municipal property taxes (Schedule 4)	\$ 13,585,000	\$ 13,557,771	\$ 12,790,445
User fees and sales of goods	555,800	1,002,238	717,932
Government transfers for operating (Schedule 1)	1,635,950	1,628,654	2,479,750
Return on Investments	404,000	230,378	468,373
Penalties and costs on taxes	117,500	312,086	132,811
Licenses and permits	9,500	7,869	9,020
Other revenues	1,270,116	1,503,166	1,311,360
Rentals	94,500	93,295	99,195
Franchise fees	-	-	5,140
Fines	30,000	36,865	30,942
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>17,702,366</b>	<b>18,372,322</b>	<b>18,044,968</b>
<b>Expenses (Schedule 5):</b>			
Elected officials	435,175	443,897	421,721
General administration	1,782,175	1,836,277	2,442,931
Information technology	805,875	737,896	708,035
Fire	746,950	749,922	700,725
Disaster and emergency services	38,000	61,296	45,407
Claresholm medical clinic	4,900	28,204	13,231
Emergency services and bylaw enforcement	1,189,664	1,095,972	974,694
Transportation	8,934,100	7,991,464	7,578,834
Water development	724,750	704,393	734,227
Garbage collection and disposal	308,225	278,670	245,363
Cemeteries	56,717	42,030	22,310
Development and planning	742,125	756,338	738,110
Agricultural services board	718,125	658,413	658,518
Recreation boards	360,150	359,300	372,275
Parks and recreation	49,410	59,802	46,871
Libraries	132,100	132,706	131,027
Family and community support	223,500	223,360	223,360
Amortization of tangible capital assets	-	5,401,508	6,230,863
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>17,251,941</b>	<b>21,561,448</b>	<b>22,288,502</b>
<b>Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses from operations</b>	<b>450,425</b>	<b>(3,189,126)</b>	<b>(4,243,534)</b>
<b>Other:</b>			
Contributed tangible capital assets	-	84,565	80,514
Government transfer for capital (Schedule 1)	417,700	3,520,835	2,518,279
Gain on sale of tangible capital assets	-	330,230	422,718
	417,700	3,935,630	3,021,511
<b>Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses (Schedule 2)</b>	<b>32,725</b>	<b>746,504</b>	<b>(1,222,023)</b>
Accumulated surplus, beginning of year	93,993,397	93,993,397	95,215,420
<b>Accumulated surplus, end of year</b>	<b>\$ 94,026,122</b>	<b>\$ 94,739,901</b>	<b>\$ 93,993,397</b>

# 2026 Operating Budget

REVENUES	2026
NET MUNICIPAL PROPERTY TAXES	14,735,000
USER FEES AND SALES OF GOODS	741,100
GOVERNMENT TRANSFERS FOR OPERATING	1,864,175
RETURN ON INVESTMENT	306,000
PENALTIES AND COSTS ON TAXES	110,000
LICENSES AND PERMITS	20,700
OTHER REVENUES	1,297,747
RENTALS	94,000
FINES	60,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>19,228,722</b>

EXPENSES	2026
ELECTED OFFICIALS	456,125
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION	2,011,450
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	714,550
FIRE	759,175
DISASTER AND EMERGENCY SERVICES	36,500
CLARESHOLM MEDICAL CLINIC	9,700
EMERGENCY SERVICES AND BYLAW ENFORCEMENT	1,215,262
TRANSPORTATION	9,554,750
WATER DEVELOPMENT	643,870
GARBAGE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL	294,000
CEMETERIES	30,050
DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING	973,453
AGRICULTURAL SERVICES BOARD	779,625
GRANTS TO RECREATION BOARDS	361,000
PARKS AND RECREATION	68,400
LIBRARIES	133,650
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT	223,500
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>18,265,060</b>



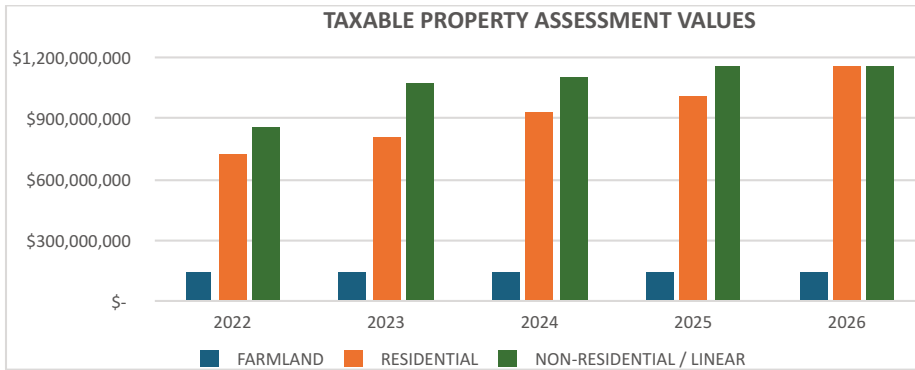
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES FROM OPERATIONS BEFORE OTHER	963,662
OTHER:	
Government transfer for capital	963,662

EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES

The 2026 Operating Budget and 3-Year Operating Plan for 2027 - 2029 were approved by Council on April 22, 2026

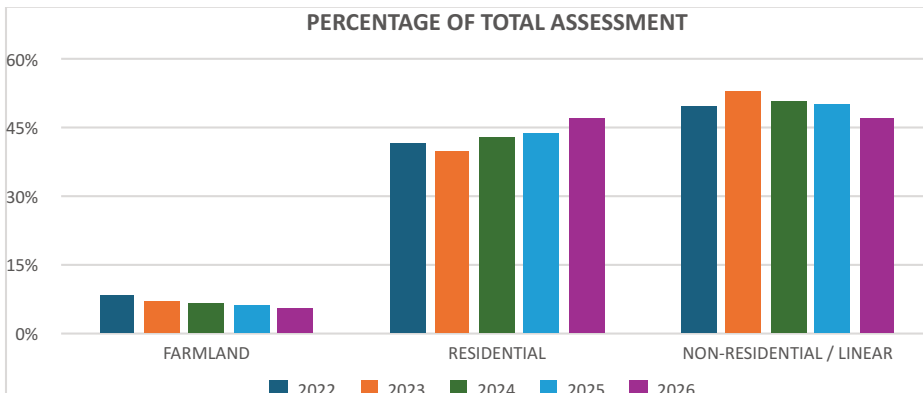
## Assessment Information 2022-2026 Tax Years

The following charts note property assessment activity over the past five years.



Overall, the total property assessment values have increased from \$1,724,415,580 in 2022 to \$2,453,634,270 in 2026 – a \$729,218,690 increase in five years.

Since 2022, the Farmland category maintains its assessment value, while the Residential category experiences an assessment growth of over \$430,000,000.



Over the same period, the Non-Residential / Linear category has experienced an assessment growth of almost \$296,000,000.

## ASSESSMENT GROWTH

CATEGORY	PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT	GROWTH	INFLATION	CURRENT VALUE
FARMLAND	\$ 143,506,500.00	\$ (13,840.00)		\$ 143,492,660.00
MACHINERY & EQUIPMENT	\$ 6,183,200.00	\$(2,989,600.00)	\$ 772,160.00	\$ 3,965,760.00
DIP - MACHINERY & EQUIPMENT	\$ 58,935,790.00	\$ 1,278,730.00		\$ 60,214,520.00
NON-RESIDENTIAL	\$ 86,665,330.00	\$ 3,453,250.00	\$ 7,310,940.00	\$ 97,429,520.00
DIP - NON-RESIDENTIAL	\$ 32,450,070.00	\$ 672,190.00		\$ 33,122,260.00
NON-RESIDENTIAL - LINEAR	\$ 974,684,810.00	\$(3,804,980.00)		\$ 970,879,830.00
RESIDENTIAL	\$1,153,969,730.00	\$26,826,530.00	\$119,153,860.00	\$1,299,950,120.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,456,395,430.00</b>	<b>\$25,422,280.00</b>	<b>\$127,236,960.00</b>	<b>\$2,609,054,670.00</b>

The MD notes that inflation impacted Machinery and Equipment, Non-Residential, and Residential; yet had minimum to no impact on Farmland, DIP – Machinery & Equipment, DIP – Non-Residential and Non-Residential – Linear. DIP – Machinery & Equipment, Non-Residential, and Residential categories experienced the highest growth increases – approximately 2% to 6% respectively.

## Requisitions

The Alberta School Foundation Fund (ASFF) and senior housing foundations (such as Mosquito Creek, Porcupine Hills and Willow Creek) requisition municipalities for funds.

Although not currently defined as a “requisition” by the province, Alberta Public Safety and Emergency Services has the authority to “invoice” each municipality for their portion of the “police funding model”.

All municipalities are legislated to collect these funds through property taxation and submit the same to the respective authorities as invoiced.

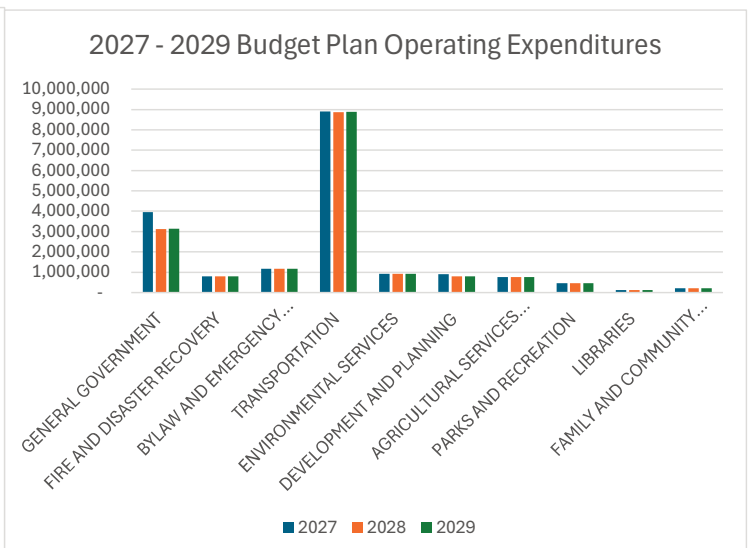
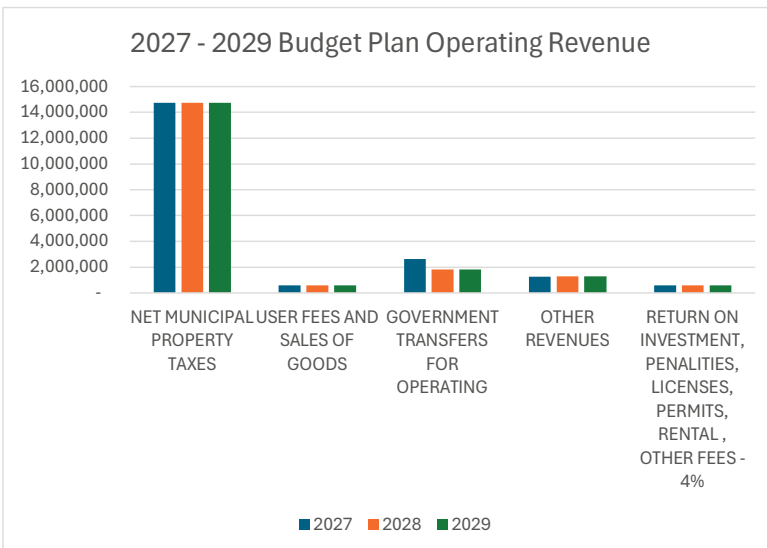
Each ratepayer’s portion of these requisitions are based on individual property assessment values multiplied by the corresponding tax rate.

The increases in external requisitions do have a significant impact on your property taxes.

REQUISITIONS	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
POLICING COSTS	\$293,565.00	\$440,662.00	\$495,085.00	\$469,408.00	\$551,655.00
SCHOOL (ASFF)	\$3,679,379.00	\$3,770,270.00	\$4,139,243.00	\$4,885,234.00	\$5,343,304.00
SENIOR FOUNDATIONS	\$485,039.00	\$584,131.00	\$621,788.00	\$657,685.00	\$658,652.00
DESIGNATED INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY (DIP)	\$60,590.00	\$74,600.00	\$77,950.00	\$75,027.00	\$77,610.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,518,572.00</b>	<b>\$4,869,663.00</b>	<b>\$5,334,065.00</b>	<b>\$6,087,354.00</b>	<b>\$6,631,221.00</b>

# 2027-2029 Operating Budget Plan

REVENUES	2027	2028	2029
NET MUNICIPAL PROPERTY TAXES	14,735,000	14,735,000	14,735,000
USER FEES AND SALES OF GOODS	616,100	616,100	616,100
GOVERNMENT TRANSFERS FOR OPERATING	2,623,560	1,846,545	1,846,545
RETURN ON INVESTMENT	306,000	306,000	306,000
PENALTIES AND COSTS ON TAXES	110,000	110,000	110,000
LICENSES AND PERMITS	20,700	20,700	20,700
OTHER REVENUES	1,257,980	1,277,690	1,297,664
RENTALS	94,000	94,000	94,000
FINES	60,000	60,000	60,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>19,823,340</b>	<b>19,066,035</b>	<b>19,086,009</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
ELECTED OFFICIALS	456,125	456,125	456,125
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION	2,830,050	1,989,050	2,009,050
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	675,550	675,550	675,550
FIRE	759,175	759,175	759,175
DISASTER AND EMERGENCY SERVICES	36,500	36,500	36,500
CLARESHOLM MEDICAL CLINIC	9,700	9,700	9,700
EMERGENCY SERVICES AND BYLAW ENFORCEMENT	1,179,755	1,172,740	1,172,740
TRANSPORTATION	8,906,350	8,877,550	8,880,850
WATER DEVELOPMENT	644,395	645,220	646,030
GARBAGE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL	274,500	274,500	274,500
CEMETERIES	30,050	30,050	30,050
DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING	908,453	803,453	803,453
AGRICULTURAL SERVICES BOARD	775,125	775,125	775,125
GRANTS TO RECREATION BOARDS	360,150	360,150	360,150
PARKS AND RECREATION	64,150	64,150	64,150
LIBRARIES	134,900	134,900	134,900
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT	223,500	223,500	223,500
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>18,268,428</b>	<b>17,287,438</b>	<b>17,311,548</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES FROM OPERATIONS BEFORE OTHER</b>	<b>1,554,912</b>	<b>1,778,597</b>	<b>1,774,461</b>
<b>OTHER:</b>			
Government transfer for capital	1,554,912	1,778,597	1,774,461
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>



# Property Tax Information - 2022-2026 Tax Years

The charts below indicate the MD of Willow Creek's tax rates from 2022 to 2026.

TAX RATES	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
FARMLAND	0.0079897	0.0083930	0.0096174	0.0102320	0.0111145
RESIDENTIAL	0.0036838	0.0030610	0.0024200	0.0023180	0.0022618
NON-RESIDENTIAL / LINEAR	0.0079360	0.0079360	0.0080953	0.0082610	0.0089045



While the Farmland tax rate has increased, it must be noted that when compared to area municipalities, the MD is well below the average Farmland tax rate of 0.013532.

The average area municipal tax rate for Residential properties is 0.0039137 – compared to the MD's 0.0022618.

The MD has gradually increased the Non-Residential / Linear tax rate to 0.0089045 – while the area average tax rate is 0.0105979.

Based on the above information, the projected revenue portion - Municipal share only – is broken down as follows:

CATEGORY	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
FARMLAND	10.80%	9.90%	11.00%	11.00%	11.00%
RESIDENTIAL	24.97%	20.16%	18.00%	17.50%	18.00%
NON-RESIDENTIAL / LINEAR	64.23%	69.94%	71.00%	71.50%	71.00%

## TAXATION - PROJECTED REVENUES - MUNICIPAL ONLY

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
FARMLAND	\$ 1,148,141	\$ 1,205,525	\$ 1,380,500	\$ 1,468,511	\$ 1,595,000
RESIDENTIAL	\$ 2,654,268	\$ 2,455,385	\$ 2,259,000	\$ 2,335,927	\$ 2,610,000
NON-RESIDENTIAL / LINEAR	\$ 6,826,485	\$ 8,519,418	\$ 8,910,500	\$ 9,545,373	\$ 10,295,000

# 2026 Capital Budget, 2027-2031 Capital Plan

Capital Budget and Forecasts	Budget 2026	Forecast 2027	Forecast 2028	Forecast 2029	Forecast 2030	Forecast 2031
<b>CAPITAL ACQUIRED:</b>						
Land	-	-	-	-	-	-
Land Improvements	-	-	-	-	-	-
Buildings	1,099,250.00	630,000.00	2,600,000.00	-	-	1,400,000.00
Engineered Structures	12,129,900.00	9,150,000.00	3,035,000.00	5,235,000.00	5,225,000.00	6,225,000.00
Machinery & Equipment	2,128,200.00	2,284,000.00	2,104,000.00	1,758,000.00	2,375,000.00	2,012,000.00
Vehicles	965,000.00	1,020,350.00	1,351,850.00	1,145,000.00	907,500.00	834,000.00
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL ACQUIRED</b>	<b>16,340,350.00</b>	<b>13,084,350.00</b>	<b>9,090,850.00</b>	<b>8,138,000.00</b>	<b>8,507,500.00</b>	<b>10,471,000.00</b>
<b>CAPITAL FUNDING:</b>						
<b>Capital Grants</b>						
Fire Grant	54,000.00	30,000.00	-	-	-	-
MSI Capital Grant	700,800.00	1,750,000.00	2,030,000.00	1,540,000.00	1,570,000.00	1,800,000.00
STIP/FGT Grant	8,139,400.00	-	-	-	-	-
STIP Bridge Grant	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00
STIP/Reserves	1,365,500.00	6,000,000.00	-	-	-	-
Sale Of Assets	318,500.00	628,000.00	599,000.00	563,500.00	630,800.00	636,000.00
Transfer To Equipment Reserves	(318,500.00)	(628,000.00)	(599,000.00)	(563,500.00)	(630,800.00)	(636,000.00)
Contributed Assets	71,000.00	86,350.00	86,350.00	24,000.00	-	-
Insurance Proceeds	265,000.00	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Transfer From Reserves</b>						
Building Reserves	99,250.00	-	2,000,000.00	-	-	1,400,000.00
Capital Acquisition Reserves	693,100.00	625,000.00	700,000.00	-	3,785,000.00	-
Equipment Reserves	565,000.00	1,308,000.00	1,039,500.00	1,339,000.00	1,627,500.00	1,246,000.00
Fire Reserve	927,500.00	30,000.00	-	-	-	-
Protective Services Reserves	-	100,000.00	250,000.00	-	-	-
Bridge Reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-
Road Reserve	1,200,000.00	1,250,000.00	1,150,000.00	4,000,000.00	300,000.00	5,000,000.00
Debtenture	1,000,000.00	630,000.00	300,000.00	-	-	-
Claresholm Medical Clinic Reserve	10,000.00	-	300,000.00	-	-	-
Transfer From Operating - Special Tax	250,000.00	275,000.00	235,000.00	235,000.00	225,000.00	225,000.00
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL FUNDING</b>	<b>16,340,350.00</b>	<b>13,084,350.00</b>	<b>9,090,850.00</b>	<b>8,138,000.00</b>	<b>8,507,500.00</b>	<b>10,471,000.00</b>

## Keep Property Information Current

### DID YOU KNOW ...

- It is up to the property owner to ensure the Calgary Land Titles Office has the correct information on your property
- In cases of life-altering events, it's important to keep your property ownership current – such as proper legal owner names, correct mailing address, death / divorce, marriage, etc.
- Privacy laws (FOIP / ATIA) prevent us from releasing information to anyone but the registered owner

Please contact the Tax Department at 403-625-3351 – Extension 226 if you have any questions

2026 Capital Projects	
<b>Buildings</b>	\$ 1,099,250.00
Admin - Security/Fire Alarms ( Admin Building & Shop) WIP	
Admin - Nanton Health Centre Renewal (with grant) + FFE allowance (\$700,000)	
Admin - Administrative Office Expansion	
<b>Engineered Structures</b>	\$ 12,129,900.00
Public Works - Claresholm Airport - Tie-Down Area (STIP - LMI)	
Public Works - Township Road 12-2 - Base / Pave (STIP - LMI)	
Public Works - Local Road Bridges (STIP - LRB)	
Public Works - Twp. Rd. 92 Widening (STIP - LMI)	
Public Works - Claresholm Airport - Cross Strip Rehabilitation - (STIP - CAP)	
Public Works - Rng. Rd. 263 from Twp. Rd. 92 north 825 meters - Widening (STIP -RRP)	
Public Works - Bridge File 00963 Replacement - (WIP)	
Public Works - Claresholm Airport Lighting and ARCAL System Replacement	
Public Works - Rng. Rd. 241 from MRE to Hwy 3 (4.5 miles) - Repairs and Overlay	
Public Works - MRE Wells (WIP)	
Granum - Surfacing Works - Base / ACP - Railway Ave	
Granum - Main Lift Station Pump, Reservoir maintenance	
<b>Machinery &amp; Equipment</b>	\$ 2,128,200.00
Admin - Photo Copier	
Admin - Software Upgrade Server	
Admin - Enterprise Resource Planning ( Financial Software/Implementation/ Support)	
Admin - PSD CityWide - Asset Management	
Admin - Regional Emergency Management Unit	
Fire - Extrication Tools - Granum	
Fire - Breathing Apparatus - Granum	
Fire - Lift Bag System - Granum	
Fire - Etools ( Ram Spreader Cutter) - Granum	
Fire - Positive Pressure Ventilation Fan - Fort Macleod	
Emergency Services - Granum Training Grounds (WIP)	
Public Works - Graders 160M	
Public Works - Kenworth T880 (2)	
Public Works - Till Deck Trailer	
Public Works - GPS Rover & Base Station Kit	
Public Works - Bobcat Finishing Mower	
Public Works - Disc and Harrow 3 Point Hitch	
<b>Vehicles</b>	\$ 985,000.00
Fire - Claresholm - Trailer	
Fire - Fort Macleod Rescue	
Public Works - 1/2 Ton Pickup (2)	
ASB -F450 Spray Truck - Deck	
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL ACQUIRED</b>	<b>\$ 16,340,350.00</b>

These Capital Projects that are applied for through (STIP) Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Program will only proceed if grant funding is approved. Total project amount applied for is \$8,539,400.00

## Did you know...

Property assessment is the process of assigning a dollar value to a property for taxation purposes.

The MD of Willow Creek No. 26 contracts Benchmark Assessment Consultants Inc. to perform property assessment services.

Benchmark Assessment is required to review the physical property to the information the MD has on file to confirm accuracy. Maintaining accurate property records ensures that property assessments remain fair and consistent for all property owners and that each property owner pays their fair share.

Property reviews can be performed through:

- Utilization of aerial photography
- On-site visits (no interior access is required, and visits usually take 5 – 10 minutes)
- Telephone calls

If you have any questions on property assessment, please contact Logan Wehlage at Benchmark Assessment Consultants Inc. at 403-291-6455 or e-mail lwehlage@benchmarkassessment.ca

# IMPORTANT PROPERTY TAX INFORMATION

## Important Changes

The 2026 Combined Assessment and Property Tax Notices will be mailed on **Thursday, May 28, 2026, with a due date of Monday, November 2, 2026.**

If you have not received your property tax notice by mid-June, please contact the MD of Willow Creek No. 26 at 403-625-3351 – Extension 226 and we will gladly re-issue your property tax notice.

Please note that a **10% penalty** will be assessed on any outstanding balance on **Tuesday, November 3, 2026**, as well as **Thursday, December 31, 2026**. Bylaw 2011 – Tax

Penalty Bylaw can be viewed on our website – [www.mdwillowcreek.com](http://www.mdwillowcreek.com).

If paying close to the deadline date, please remember to consider bank / mail processing times. In cases where payments have been mailed, the date stamped by Canada Post will be utilized to determine if penalties should be applied.

**Remember, the onus is on the ratepayer to ensure that property tax payments have been received by the Monday, November 2, 2026 due date.**

### Tax Installment Payment Plan (TIPPS)

Numerous options are available to pay your property taxes, with the most common being the “Tax Installment Payment Plan” or “TIPP’s”.

How it works -

- The ratepayer completes the “Tax Installment Payment Plan – Enrollment Form” found on our website
  - o [www.mdwillowcreek.com](http://www.mdwillowcreek.com) > Services > Assessment & Taxation > Payment Options
- Payments are automatically withdrawn from your bank account on the 15th day of each month
- Basically, payments are based on the prior year’s property tax levy until the current tax levy is known.
- The property tax notice will note your revised TIPP amount to ensure that there is a zero-dollar balance owing as of October

If you have any questions, contact our office:  
403-625-3351



### *PAYMENT OPTIONS AVAILABLE*

We can accept payment in many forms!

**E-Transfer:** [finance@mdwillowcreek.com](mailto:finance@mdwillowcreek.com)

**Note: This is the only e-mail that will accept e-transfer payments**  
**\*\* Please note invoice / account number in message area \*\***

**Cheque, mail to:** M.D. of Willow Creek No. 26  
PO Box 550, Claresholm, Alberta T0L 0T0

**In Person:** Cheque, Cash, Debit Card, Credit Card accepted  
Office hours are Monday through Friday – 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**Drop-Slot:** Located to the left of the front doors of the Administration Building for after hours drop off.

**Electronic Payments:** Each banking institution will have the MD of Willow Creek No. 26 set-up differently as a “Payee”. For example:

ATB Financial	MD of Willow Creek No 26
Bank of Montreal (BMO)	Willow Creek No 26, the Municipal District of – Tax
CIBC	Willow Creek MD No 26
Central 1 Credit Union	Willow Creek No26
Royal Bank	MD OF WILLOW CREEK NO 26
Scotia Bank	District of Willow Creek No 26 Tax
TD Canada Trust	Willow Creek #26 (Mun Dist of) Taxes

**Please use your tax roll / customer number / utility account number**

Most banks require seven digits (enter without the “decimal” or first “0”)

Sample: 0123.000 Enter as 0123000 or 123000

Remember to allow a few business days for “processing time”

**Credit Card:** [www.mdwillowcreek.com](http://www.mdwillowcreek.com)

★ Bottom banner – Click on “Online Payment”

★ Scroll down to “Pay Your Municipal Bills” – Click on “Pay Now”

★ Enter credit card information

★ Note: You are responsible for the load fee

**\*\* Please note invoice / account number in message area \*\***

**Tax Installment Payment Plan:** Commonly referred to as “TIPP’s”

Automatic withdrawals will occur on the 15th day of each month, with the intention that by October, there will be a “zero balance” owing.

**Utility Pre-Authorization Payment Plan:** Payments are automatically withdrawn from your bank account on the 28th day of the month

# FINANCIAL REPORTING AWARD

On April 16, 2026, the Municipal District of Willow Creek No. 26 was notified that the annual financial report submitted for the year ended December 31, 2024 qualified for the Canadian Award for Financial Reporting (CANFR). The CANFR recognizes excellence in governmental accounting and financial reporting and represents a significant accomplishment by a local government and its management.

Below is a copy of the news release issued April 16, 2026, along with a copy of the award. Director of Finance Johanne Hannas wishes to extend a sincere thank you to the Council of the MD of Willow Creek, and Chief Administrative Officer Derrick Krizsan for their support.

## Government Finance Officers Association

News Release – April 16, 2026

(Chicago) – The Canadian Award for Financial Reporting has been awarded to the Municipal District of Willow Creek No. 26, Alberta by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) for its annual financial report. The Canadian Award for Financial Reporting Program was established to encourage municipal governments throughout Canada to publish high-quality financial reports and to provide peer recognition and technical guidance for officials preparing these reports. Its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.

The annual financial report has been judged by impartial Canadian Review Committee members to meet the high standards of the program, including demonstrating a constructive “spirit of full disclosure” designed to clearly communicate the municipality’s financial story and to motivate potential users and user groups to read the report.

*Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) advances excellence in government finance by providing best practices, professional development, resources, and practical research for more than 21,000 members and the communities they serve.*



Government Finance Officers Association

## Canadian Award for Financial Reporting

Presented to

**Municipal District of Willow Creek No. 26  
Alberta**

For its Annual  
Financial Report  
for the Year Ended

**December 31, 2024**

*Christopher P. Morill*

Executive Director/CEO

## Agricultural Service Board - Contacts

273129 Sec Hwy 520 West

**ASB Shop is located in the SW End of the Main Shop**

### Carla Preachuck

*Agricultural Fieldman*

403-625-3351 ext. 229

carla@mdwillowcreek.com

### Ryan Dovell

*Asst. Ag. Fieldman*

403-682-7834

ryan.dovell@mdwillowcreek.com

## NO SPRAY AGREEMENTS

**Vegetation Control by Owner**



The municipality is committed to providing vegetation management services along our roadsides for the purpose of visibility and safety, as well as controlling noxious and prohibited noxious weed species.

If you do not want the MD of Willow Creek to apply herbicide in the road allowance adjacent to your property you will need to complete a Vegetation Control by Owner Form (now found at: [www.mdwillowcreek.com/p/agricultural-services](http://www.mdwillowcreek.com/p/agricultural-services) or by following the QR Code) as well as **maintain adequate control of the vegetation** in the road allowance.



\*Last year's agreements will remain on file.\*

If there have been any changes, or if you would like to sign a new agreement, please contact Agricultural Services. 403-625-3351 ext. 229 / 403-625-3351 ext. 249

## 2026 Agriculture Season & Vegetation Management

Our vegetation management season begins in early May, and our skilled team of applicators is ready to get started as soon as they return. Throughout the season, you'll see our crews working on a variety of projects, including roadside spraying with our specialized trucks, invasive species control in riparian zones, and land reclamation work such as seeding roadsides and gravel pits to stabilize soil, reduce erosion, and limit weed growth.

These services are completed to uphold legislation such as, but not limited to:

- **Agricultural Service Board Act** - lets municipalities create Agricultural Service Boards to manage local agriculture issues. These boards handle weed and pest control, soil and water conservation, animal disease assistance, and sustainable agriculture initiatives, and they hire an agricultural fieldman to carry out these programs.
- **Agricultural Pests Act** - requires individuals and municipalities to prevent and control pests declared by the Minister, and it gives inspectors the authority to enforce pest management, issue notices, and ensure harmful species don't threaten land, livestock, or property.
- **Weed Control Act** - requires landowners and municipalities to prevent, control, and destroy noxious and prohibited noxious weeds, gives inspectors authority to enforce weed management, and outlines penalties, notices, and responsibilities to limit the spread of harmful invasive plants.
- **Soil Conservation Act** - requires landholders to prevent or stop soil loss or deterioration, gives municipalities authority to enforce soil conservation through designated officers, and outlines processes for notices, appeals, and penalties related to soil degradation.
- **Animal Health Act** - is legislation that empowers the province to detect, control, and respond to animal diseases that could affect animal health, public health, food safety, or market access. It authorizes inspections, surveillance, biosecurity measures, control zones, and requires owners to report suspected or confirmed reportable diseases within 24 hours.

**If you see our team out in the field, feel free to wave and say hello.**



## Rental Equipment

The ASB has the following equipment available for rent by ratepayers:

- **Soil Conservation:**
  - Manure Spreader (\$300/day)
  - Straw Incorporator (\$100/day)
  - Handheld Broadcast seeder (no fee)
- **Vegetation Management:**
  - Skid Weed Sprayer (\$30/day)
  - Tree Sprayer (\$30/day)
  - 15L Backpack Sprayer (no fee)
- **Livestock:**
  - Livestock Scale (\$100/day)
  - Livestock Tag Reader (no fee)
- **Animal Control:**
  - Pressurized Exhaust Rodent Controller (\$200/day)
  - Various Magpie Traps (no fee)
  - Skunk/Raccoon Traps (no fee)

**For more information, or to book an equipment rental, please call: Ryan – 403-682-7834; Gary – 403-625-6095**

## WILLOW CREEK OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

2026 marks the 4th Willow Creek Outdoor Adventure! This year, on May 13th we expect to see nearly 150 students at the Pine Coulee Group Site. This event is focused on conservation in all its forms, and geared towards Grades 5 & 6 students from our local elementary schools. This year, we're excited to welcome students from A.B. Daley Elementary, Stavely School, and W.A. Day Elementary.

Students will get the opportunity to participate in activities and short presentations from a wide range of organizations that deal with conservation in one form or another. This year, we'll see presentations from

- Nature Conservancy of Canada
- Alberta Conservation Association (Prairie Conservation Forum/MultiSAR)

- Aquatic Invasive Species (AB Gov.)
- Mackin Outfitting Ltd.
- Flying E Ranche
- Oldman Watershed Council
- Waterton Biosphere Region Association
- Freshwater Conservation Canada
- Alberta Wildfire
- MD of Ranchland
- MD of Willow Creek - Emergency Services
- MD of Willow Creek - Enforcement Services

This well-rounded educational day is meant to encourage our next generation of land stewards to start thinking about their contributions to our cherished environment.



WILLOW CREEK  
OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

## ROAD ALLOWANCES Help Us Help You!

Municipal roadways feature a road allowance for various reasons. For the purposes of vegetation management, this provides us a grass buffer where we complete control of weed species. This buffer is extremely important to maintain because it allows us to ensure that we are not spreading weed species into agricultural lands, and vice versa. When the grass buffer is compromised from a bare-ground control product such as glyphosate, it leaves a space along the fenceline where control and reclamation becomes extremely difficult. This area of disturbance is prime real estate for an invasive plant to call home. Once invasive species (like Kochia) establish here both the producer and municipality will struggle to regain appropriate vegetation here. Please ensure when field spraying that municipal road allowances are not sprayed out, this will help us utilize our time efficiently to control weed infestations across the entire municipality. We have a lot of land to cover and we need your help!



# MD OF WILLOW CREEK DEADSTOCK REMOVAL PROGRAM

In collaboration with the Waterton Biosphere Region Association, the MD of Willow Creek offers reimbursement for payments made to West Coast Reductions for the removal of cattle and horse carcasses within the carnivore conflict area of the municipality.

This initiative aims to minimize large carnivore attractants in grazing areas, reducing the risk of predation on live animals and enhancing human safety near farm or ranch buildings. When carnivores become habituated to deceased livestock as a food source, the likelihood of predation on live animals increases significantly.

Under the Deadstock Removal Program, livestock producers can apply for refunds on paid receipts from West Coast Reductions for deadstock removal within the project area. Please note that Intensive Livestock Operations permitted by the Natural Resources Conservation Board and other classes of livestock are not eligible for refunds.

Contact Information for West Coast Reductions:

Southern Alberta Processing (SAPC)  
A Division of West Coast Reductions Ltd.  
Phone: (403)-328-1336 Fax: (403)-327-8461

## Project Area Definition:

The program applies to all lands within the MD of Willow Creek west of the east boundary of Range 29 West of the 4th Meridian. You can view the Deadstock Area Project Map at [www.mdwillowcreek.com](http://www.mdwillowcreek.com) under the "Services > ASB Programs & Services" tab.

Please note that program funding is limited. Updates will be posted on the MD of Willow Creek website if funds are depleted.

For further information, contact:

Carla Preachuk | Director of Agricultural Services

Office: (403)-625-3351 ext. 229 | [carla@mdwillowcreek.com](mailto:carla@mdwillowcreek.com)



## Cleanfarms Agricultural Plastic Recycling Program

Since collection of grain bags and baler twine began in the MD of Willow Creek in 2023, we have managed to recycle 49,510kg of grain bags, and 9490kg of twine.



If you have neatly rolled grain bags, or cleaned and bagged baler twine (no net wrap) to recycle, visit the Willow Creek Regional Landfill

[113053 Rng Rd 263 - South of Township 114 (NW-22-11-26-W4th)] to recycle it!

Please note:

- Pesticide jugs are no longer accepted at the landfill location. All jugs/totes/containers for pesticides must be recycled at the retail location you purchased the product from originally.
- Grain bags must be cleaned, wrapped tightly with a grain bag roller, and then tied with several pieces baler twine to ensure the roll stays together. No silage plastics are accepted.
- Baler twine must be clean of other materials and bagged in clear, Cleanfarms bags. (Bags are available at both the Willow Creek Regional Landfill, and the MD of Willow Creek Agricultural Services shop)

23rd Annual  
**SOUTHERN ALBERTA  
GRAZING SCHOOL FOR WOMEN**  
*"Celebrating Women Stewards in the  
International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists"*

JULY 22 & 23, 2026

CASSILS COMMUNITY CENTER  
NEAR BROOKS, AB

SCAN ME

## MAPS AND PROPERTY INFO FOR THE MD OF WILLOW CREEK

**DID YOU KNOW?**

You can now find public maps for the M.D. of Willow Creek right on our website!

Here is what you can do:

- **Check Property Details:** Look up the address and tax assessment for any property in the area.
- **See the Land:** View up-to-date photos of the land with property lines clearly marked.
- **Use Map Tools:** You can measure distances, draw on the map, and print your own copies.
- **Quick Tip:** If your internet is a bit slow, the map might take a minute to load. Stick with it—there is a lot of great information waiting for you!

# GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

## THE ON-FARM EFFICIENCY PROGRAM (OFEP)

- Through RDAR – The OFCAF program provides costshared funding to help producers adopt Beneficial Management Practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve longterm farm sustainability. Producers must develop a BMP Action Plan with a PAg or CCA, meet minimum income and projectcost requirements, and pay costs upfront before reimbursement.
- FCAF supports three key areas—improved nitrogen management, cover cropping, and rotational grazing—and offers resources, agronomic guidance, and reimbursement for eligible onfarm projects. This includes virtual fencing in the rotational grazing stream of the program.

Please scan the QR code to learn more about this program.

Through CFGA – CLOSED TO APPLICATIONS

## SUSTAINABLE CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL PARTNERSHIP (S-CAP)

- Resilient Agricultural Landscapes Program – CLOSED TO APPLICATIONS (Due to significant interest)
- On-farm Efficiency Program (OFEP) – CLOSED TO APPLICATIONS (expected to reopen in 2026)
- On-Farm Value-Added Program – CLOSED TO APPLICATIONS
- Water Program – ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS
- The SCAP Water Program helps Alberta primary producers secure, develop, and manage reliable on-farm water sources. It provides cost-shared funding for projects like dugouts, dams, wells, spring developments, cisterns, pipelines, and irrigation upgrades, supporting improved water quality, supply, and long-term farm resilience. The program includes two streams—On-Farm Water Supply and On-Farm Irrigation—and offers grants of up to \$40,000, with requirements such as obtaining approvals and meeting construction standards.

## DUCKS UNLIMITED CANADA

- Provide many grant opportunities for agricultural producers to manage their land. Please scan the QR Code to see the complete list of programs available in Alberta.



## WILLOW CREEK REGIONAL LANDFILL

### SUMMER SATURDAY SCHEDULE

May 9 & 23      August 8 & 22  
 June 13 & 27    September 12 & 26  
 July 11 & 25     October 10 & 24



**Saturday Hours 9:00am to 4:30pm**  
**Monday - Friday 9:00am to 4:30pm**  
**• 403-687-2603 • wcrlandfill@gmail.com**

The landfill may close without notice during times of inclement weather. Please call before you head out if unsure.

Please ensure your loose debris is bagged and your load is secured before heading to the landfill.

# CELEBRATING PASTORAL STEWARDSHIP RESEARCH AND RANCHING TOGETHER



Join us for a day at the Stavelly Research Centre to hear from leading researchers and producers, including: Edward Bork on Precision Ranching: Habitat Selection by Cattle: Activity & Diet, Cameron Carlyle on Soil Carbon & Soil Health, Walter Willms on Grazing Exlosures, and Tim Nelson with a Producer Perspective. A great opportunity to learn, connect, and explore practical insights for your operation.

### The Stavelly Research Station

July 8, 2026

9:00am - 4:30pm

\*Please meet at the Stavelly Community Centre, where buses will take us to the research centre.\*

### COST

Attendees: \$40

Students: \$25

(includes bagged lunch)

For details & to register, visit:

<https://pastoralstewardship.eventbrite.ca>

For inquiries regarding agricultural grants, please contact Ryan Dovell at (403)-682-7834 or [ryan.dovell@mdwillowcreek.com](mailto:ryan.dovell@mdwillowcreek.com).



## UPDATES TO THE WEED CONTROL ACT

As of January 2026, the Alberta Weed Control Act & Regulation has amendments that adjusted some of the weed species requiring control. For reference, this Act separates weed species into two categories: Prohibited Noxious and Noxious. These categories have different requirements if found on a person's land. They are:

- Noxious – “a person shall control a noxious weed that is on land the person owns or occupies” - Weed Control Regulation, Alta. Reg. 19/2010, Part 1.2
- Prohibited Noxious – “a person shall destroy a prohibited noxious weed that is on land the person owns or occupies” - Weed Control Regulation, Alta. Reg. 19/2010, Part 1.3

This graphic shows a summary of the changes to the regulation. For a complete list of all species regulated on this Act, please visit: <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/w05p1>

## EMERGENCY USE REGISTRATION FOR 2% STRYCHNINE – VERY LIMITED SUPPLY

Agricultural producers across parts of Alberta continue to face serious challenges managing Richardson's ground squirrel populations, which can pose risks to crop productivity, livestock safety, and farm infrastructure. In response to these concerns—and following significant review—an Emergency Use Registration (EUR) has been approved for 2% strychnine for targeted Richardson's ground squirrel control.

This registration applies only within a defined geographic area (shown on the provincial map) and at specific times of the year. It includes enhanced safeguards to protect wildlife, ecosystems, and the public, and is in effect until November 2027.

The product is currently being manufactured and is expected to be available through participating municipalities sometime in June. Supply will be very limited and access will be closely managed. The first shipment is expected to include no more than 20 cases per participating municipality. A total of 800 cases have been allotted for Alberta across 48 municipal districts and counties within the approved use area. A second shipment is anticipated in late July, with a third shipment expected in the fall.

The revised 2026 approval introduces stronger geographic restrictions, expanded stewardship requirements, enhanced monitoring, and mandatory training. These measures were specifically designed to reduce risks to predators, scavengers, and nontarget species, while allowing producers a limited tool where other control options may be insufficient.

Before accessing or using strychnine, producers must complete new mandatory training focused on safe handling and storage, appropriate timing of use, monitoring treated areas, and proper disposal of carcasses and unused product. Once the link is available, it will be shared on the MD website. While alternative training delivery methods have been requested, online training is currently the only option.

Access to strychnine will be strictly controlled. Eligible users must complete the mandatory training, submit a declaration confirming a significant ground squirrel infestation, agree to comply with all label directions and emergency use requirements, and provide a basic treatment plan including site location and land use. **Use is only permitted in early spring (March 1st to June 15th) before vegetation has emerged, and in later summer (July 15th to September 1st) after vegetation has died down.**

Users are required to monitor treated areas, collect and safely dispose of carcasses and any unused product, and submit a posttreatment evaluation form. Continued access will depend on

## Alberta Weed Control Act & Regulation

### Summary of Updates:

#### Removed from Regulation

- Creeping Bellflower
- Perennial Sowthistle

#### Added as Prohibited Noxious

- Palmer Amaranth
- Common Hawkweed
- European Hawkweed
- Polar Hawkweed
- Smooth Hawkweed
- Spotted Hawkweed
- Jimsonweed
- Wall Hawkweed
- Invasive Phragmites
- Queen Anne's Lace
- African Rue
- Alkali Swainsonpea
- Black Swallowwort
- Pale/European Swallowwort
- Field Thesium
- Ventenata
- Tall Waterhemp

#### Prohibited Noxious → Noxious

- Meadow Hawkweed
- Mouse-ear Hawkweed
- Orange Hawkweed
- Bighead Knapweed
- Black Knapweed
- Brown Knapweed
- Diffuse Knapweed
- Hybrid Knapweed
- Meadow Knapweed
- Spotted Knapweed
- Squarrose Knapweed
- Tyrol Knapweed

#### Added as Noxious

- Kingdevil Hawkweed
- Queendevil Hawkweed
- Tall Hawkweed
- Whiplash Hawkweed
- Yellowdevil Hawkweed

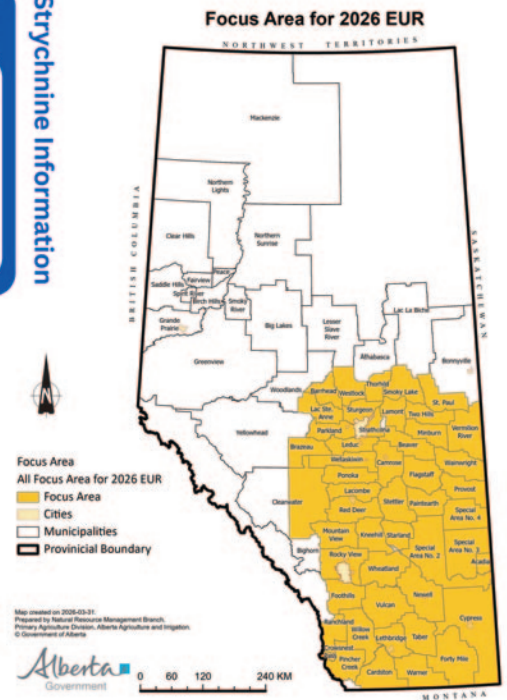


Strychnine Information

full compliance with all program conditions.

We understand that due to the late decision from Health Canada on the Emergency Use Registration, timelines will be very tight or may be unfeasible for effective Richardson's ground squirrel control in 2026. As a result, this option may have limited practical benefit for some producers during the current season.

For more information, including maps of the approved use area and additional requirements, please visit: <https://www.alberta.ca/richardsons-ground-squirrel-control#strychnine-access>



## Wildfire Season

Runs March 1 - October 31

Whether you live in a small town or rural area, wildfires and wildfire smoke can impact you with little notice. Taking a few simple steps now can help protect your loved ones, pets, health and property.

### #BePrepared by:

- Knowing the risks. Check fire danger ratings for your area to help you assess conditions and make informed decisions about how to prepare.
- Downloading the Alberta Emergency Alert and Alberta Wildfire apps for mobile devices.
- Checking the Alberta Wildfire Status Dashboard for the status and location of wildfires, fire bans and restrictions, and learn more about wildfire prevention.
- Downloading the Weather Can app for advisories in your chosen location(s) and visit the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) map to track air quality in your community.
- Visit FireSmoke Canada for information about wildland fire weather and smoke. Monitor smoke forecasts to plan for poor air quality, even when fires are far away.
- Maintaining an emergency kit with essential supplies – individuals and families should be prepared to take care of themselves for at least 72 hours.



## FIRESMART BEGINS WITH YOU!

After a winter of fluctuating temperatures and conditions, it appears that spring is here! Now is a great time to start crossing off some of those FireSmart tasks around your home.

When doing your spring yard cleanup, pay close attention to where leaves, needles, and debris naturally gather - these areas can collect embers during a wildfire, so removing that material helps eliminate a potential fuel source. Here are some great places to begin:

- Remove leaves and pine needles from your roof and gutters
- Remove flammable debris and items within 1.5 meters around your home
- Look into FireSmart plants for your landscaping projects
- Prune tree branches hanging within two meters of the ground

For more information go to <https://firesmartalberta.ca/resources/>



## FireSmart Plant – Candytuft

Candytuft is a fire-resistant perennial known for its bright white spring blooms and glossy evergreen foliage. This versatile, low-growing plant works beautifully in rock gardens, along pathways, or cascading over retaining walls and raised beds.

It's also a great choice for a living mulch, helping stabilize soil on slopes while adding year-round texture to your landscape. With minimal maintenance requirements, it's a great choice for the Intermediate Zone of a FireSmart landscape.



## HOW WE DETERMINE FIRE BANS

Many people ask how we decide to call for a fire ban or restriction. We don't make these choices lightly; we use a scientific system called the Fire Weather Index to see how dry the land is and how a fire would act if one started.

### WHAT WE LOOK AT:

**Surface Dryness:** We check how dry things like grass, leaves, and twigs are. When these are very dry (common in the spring), a fire can start from just a tiny spark.

**Deep Ground Moisture:** We also check deep into the soil. If the ground deep down is dry, a fire will burn much hotter, last longer, and be very hard to put out.

**Wind and Speed:** We look at how fast the wind is blowing. This tells us how quickly a fire could spread across a field or forest.

**Fuel Levels:** We keep track of how much "fuel" (like fallen branches and dead brush) is on the ground ready to burn.

**The Bottom Line:** By mixing weather science with common sense, our team tries to get ahead of the danger before it starts. Fire bans are a tool to help us work together to protect our homes, our neighbors, and our land.



# FUNCTIONAL EXERCISE DEMONSTRATES STRONG MUNICIPAL & PROVINCIAL READINESS

From March 30 to April 1, regional and provincial All-Hazard Incident Management Teams (AHIMT) came together for a three-day Functional Exercise that strengthened coordination, built confidence, and demonstrated a high level of readiness across all levels of response.

## Day 1: Building Confidence and Capability

The exercise began on March 30 with a full day of learning, collaboration, and hands-on practice for the regional AHIMT. Participants worked through a designed scenario with the facilitation and support of AEMA Collective Training Officers, AEMA Field Officers, and the Simulation Cell (Sim Cell).

Throughout the day, team members deepened their understanding of AHIMT roles and responsibilities while working collaboratively to address evolving issues. A total of 50 participants were involved on Day 1, contributing to a dynamic and realistic training environment.

A major highlight of the day was the successful development of a comprehensive Incident Action Plan (IAP)

that was suitable for handoff to a provincial All-Hazard Incident Management Team. This marked the first time during training that a municipal AHIMT fully completed its portion of an exercise and formally transitioned the incident to a provincial team. This milestone clearly demonstrated strong coordination, operational readiness, and confidence at the municipal level.

## Days 2 and 3: Integrated Municipal-Provincial Operations

The focus of the exercise shifted on March 31 and April 1 to integrating the regional AHIMT with the South Zone All-Hazard Incident Management Team to ensure a seamless and effective handover of the incident.

Members of the provincial team - including our own Kelly Starling, who remained in place as Incident Commander - continued to work through the scenario, addressing emerging issues, solving operational challenges, and developing pathways to support the impacted community. Several regional team members also extended their learning by stepping into roles alongside provincial AHIMT members gaining valuable experience and insight through hands-on collaboration.

## Appreciation and Collaboration

We extend a sincere thank you to the members of the South Zone All-Hazard Incident Management Team for the opportunity to work alongside you and for your willingness to share knowledge and expertise. Your support was instrumental in creating a meaningful and successful learning experience.

Thank you as well to the AEMA Collective Training Officers, AEMA Field Officers, Simulation Cell, and Agency Representatives who participated. Your involvement played a key role in the success of the exercise and in strengthening regional and provincial emergency management partnerships.

Exercises like this are critical to ensuring we are prepared to respond effectively when it matters most - and this event clearly demonstrated our collective commitment to readiness, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

## RECHECK BURN SITES: A Simple Step To Prevent Big Problems

As spring unfolds, it's important to remain vigilant around old burn sites. Even when you're confident a fire has been fully extinguished, we strongly encourage returning to these sites to check for any lingering heat, smoke, or flame. Smoldering embers can remain hidden for months afterwards and reignite when conditions are right.

With green-up still several weeks away, large areas of dry, exposed grass remain a concern - especially on warm, windy days. These conditions can allow a small, unnoticed hotspot to quickly turn into a fast-moving grass fire.



Remember to check old burn sites!

Taking a few extra minutes to revisit and monitor old burn areas can make a critical difference. Your attention helps protect property, livestock, and our community. When it comes to fire safety, a second look is always worth it.

If you have questions or concerns regarding your burn site, please don't hesitate to contact the Willow Creek Emergency Services Department.



**The Granum Fire Academy is nearing the end of the 2025-2026 season.**

The program is offered by the Livingstone Range School Division and is open to high school students. Each year alternates between learning firefighting skills or intermediate first aid. There are eight participants this year representing Stavely, Claresholm, Pincher Creek, and Blairmore. Students have worked to be comfortable in firefighting gear and working

while on air. After learning about fire department organization and function, students learned about fire department communications, and then transitioned into learning about ropes and knots used on scene. Students learned to position and move ladders, and how to conduct an interior search and rescue. Recently, students have been working on hose rolling and hose operations and have been excited to try out the new live fire burn prop in the Granum training grounds. The students will next learn about hazardous materials awareness and then take first aid before closing with an Incident Command System course. It has been a great course so far as everyone is working hard and forming a strong team.

Any students interested should contact their school and get ready for the 2026-2027 intake!

**The NFPA 1001 Firefighter Level 2 course is moving into the home stretch**

Firefighters from Nanton, Stavely, Claresholm, Granum, and Fort Macleod have been working together since October 2024 with level one and are looking to finish strong. Students started the year working on incident scene management, as well as fire cause and determination.

This was followed by developing fire prevention skills, as students prepared life safety presentations to a wide range of audiences, hosted fire hall tours, and presented home safety inspections. Students then worked on tool maintenance skills and then

transitioned into vehicle extrication. To wrap up the year, students will learn about hazardous materials operations. The level one and two firefighter program is done in two four-month segments over the course of two years and is a significant investment in time and effort.

Many thanks to the firefighters and their families for that commitment, and best of luck heading into the testing day at the fire tower in Vulcan next month!



**COUNCIL**  
**Open House BBQ**  
**WED., JUNE 24 | 5 p.m.**  
**at the Granum Homesteader,**  
**340 Aberdeen Street – Granum**

Council invites MD of Willow Creek residents and ratepayers to come enjoy Hotdogs and Hamburgers and great conversation.

# TWO NEW BYLAWS SUPPORTING SAFETY AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Two important new bylaws adopted by Council on March 11, 2026: the Animal Control Bylaw and the Livestock and Prohibited Animal Bylaw. Both of these bylaws are essential steps in supporting public safety, responsible animal ownership, and nuisance control throughout the MD.



## Animal Control Bylaw (No. 2022)

This bylaw provides clear standards for the responsible care, control, and supervision of domestic animals, including dogs and cats.

### Key Highlights:

- Limits on the Numbers of Dogs and Cats allowed on properties, depending on whether the residence is within a hamlet or rural location.
- Rules for animals running at large, including the requirement to control animals in public spaces and prevent nuisances such as excessive barking, property damage, and the scattering of garbage.
- Stronger provisions for dogs who create a threat to public safety, including containment requirements, mandatory muzzling in public, and licensing rules.
- Clear enforcement tools, such as remedial orders and penalties to help ensure public safety and supporting peaceful neighbourhoods.

These updates modernize the MD's approach to animal control and help create a safe and respectful environment for residents and their animals.

The M.D. of Willow Creek remains committed to maintaining a safe, healthy, and respectful community for all residents – whether they live in hamlets, on acreages, or on working agricultural operations. We encourage residents to review both bylaws in full to ensure understanding of responsibilities and requirements. These bylaws, application forms, and additional resources are available through the MD of Willow Creek and on our website.

## Livestock and Prohibited Animal Bylaw (No. 2021)

The MD has a strong agricultural foundation, and this bylaw aims to balance rural traditions with modern community expectations – especially in hamlets and small-acreage areas.

### Key Highlights:

- Regulations for keeping livestock within hamlets and on properties zoned Use Specific Direct Control.
- Roosters being prohibited within hamlets and or on Use Specific Direct Control parcels.
- Temporary Grazing Permits are now required for grazing animals on developed road allowances.
- Prohibited animals, as defined under provincial pest and nuisance regulations, must not be kept within the MD.
- Parcels of property in Hamlets under 0.5 of an acre, are prohibited from keeping or housing livestock, including chickens.
- Parcels more than 0.5 of an acre are permitted to keep or house livestock, but must follow a table for the number of animals permitted.
- Any parcel where there is a Restrictive Covenant in place, which prohibits the owning of livestock, shall not keep livestock.

This Bylaw supports safe neighbourhoods, protects property, and helps prevent conflicts between agricultural activities and residential living.



# MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN RENEWAL

The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) establishes a 25-year strategic framework to guide growth and land use with the MD and policies found in the plan are designed to support informed and balanced decisions that protect agricultural lands, conserve natural areas, support a robust local economy and guide municipal investment in a manner that reflects the values and priorities of the community.

The Municipal District of Willow Creek is undertaking a renewal project focused on updating the current Municipal Development Plan, Bylaw 1765, first adopted 2017. As part of the Renewal Project, Council has approved an online survey to gather input from residents and businesses within the MD.

Follow the progress of the Municipal Development Plan Renewal at <https://whatshappening.mdwillowcreek.com>

## WHAT IS A MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN?

Under Alberta's *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*, the MDP provides the overarching policy direction that informs all subsequent statutory plans and regulations, including intermunicipal plans, area structure plans, area redevelopment plans, and the Land Use Bylaw. Collectively, these instruments ensure that development decisions are coordinated, transparent, and aligned with Council's long-term vision.

The MDP renewal is intended to:

- Reflect changing community values, demographic trends, and economic conditions;
- Reinforce the protection of agricultural lands and environmentally significant areas;
- Support appropriate and diverse housing opportunities;
- Provide clear policy direction for infrastructure and municipal investment;
- Ensure consistency with provincial legislation and intermunicipal planning obligations.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND SURVEY ROLE

As part of the renewal project, Council has approved a public engagement program that includes an **online survey** targeted to residents, landowners, and business operators within the MD. The survey is a critical component of the planning process, designed to bridge the gap between technical landuse planning and lived community experience.

Public input gathered through the survey will:

- Help identify priorities, concerns, and aspirations related to growth and land use;
- Inform policy updates and strategic directions in the MDP;
- Enhance transparency, accountability, and public trust in municipal decision-making;
- Ensure the renewed MDP reflects local context rather than solely technical or regulatory considerations.

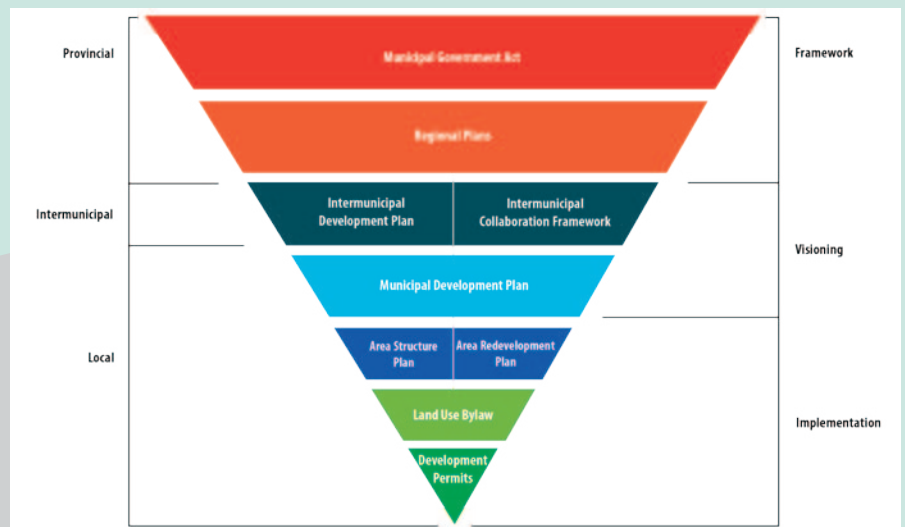
Engagement outcomes will be reviewed alongside technical analysis, legislative requirements, and Council direction to produce a balanced and implementable plan.

## Hierarchy of Municipal Planning Instruments

Municipal planning in Alberta follows a hierarchical structure, where higherlevel plans establish direction that must be followed by lowerlevel plans and regulatory tools.

Planning Hierarchy Overview (Top to Bottom)

1. **Municipal Development Plan (MDP)**
  - o Sets the long-term vision, goals, and high-level policies for the entire municipality.
2. **Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP)**
  - o Coordinates land use, growth, and infrastructure planning between neighbouring municipalities.
3. **Area Structure Plans (ASP)**
  - o Provide detailed policy direction for specific geographic areas or future growth nodes.
4. **Area Redevelopment Plans (ARP)**
  - o Focus on redevelopment, intensification, or reinvestment in existing developed areas.
5. **Land Use Bylaw (LUB)**
  - o Implements planning policies through zoning, development standards, and permitted uses.
6. **Subdivision and Development Decisions**
  - o Day-to-day implementation through permit approvals and conditions.



# Planning & Development Services

Development permit and approval is required when planning new construction, modifications to building or land use. Development requiring a permit include new buildings or previously owned buildings, move on buildings/structures, additions, accessory structures, replacement or renovations of existing buildings, home occupations, commercial / industrial operations, signage or change in use and much more.



**To determine whether your development requires a development permit, contact the Planning and Development department at (403) 625-3351, email: [development@mdwillowcreek.com](mailto:development@mdwillowcreek.com) or visit the Municipal website [www.mdwillowcreek.com](http://www.mdwillowcreek.com)**

All development and planning applications may be obtained from the Municipal website: [www.mdwillowcreek.com](http://www.mdwillowcreek.com) or contact the office to arrange for a meeting to discuss your plans.

## DEVELOPMENT PERMITS FOR PERMITTED OR DISCRETIONARY USES

Applications and all required information supporting the application can be emailed. A Development Officer will review the application and will contact you once the application is deemed complete for processing or incomplete.

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS (LAND USE BYLAW AMENDMENT, SUBDIVISION, ETC.)

Land Use Bylaw Amendment Applications and information supporting the application can be emailed to [development@mdwillowcreek.com](mailto:development@mdwillowcreek.com), for review and completeness for processing.

Subdivision applications may be obtained from Oldman River Regional Services Commission (ORRSC) website: [www.orrsc.com](http://www.orrsc.com) or the Municipal District of Willow Creek office. Subdivision applications can be emailed to [admin@orrsc.com](mailto:admin@orrsc.com) or dropped off at the Municipal Districts office during office hours.

## CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

A Certificate of Compliance is confirmation from the Municipal District of Willow Creek that a development permit has been issued and the locations of structures on the property comply with the Land Use Bylaw. This is confirmed on a Real Property Report (RPR) prepared by an Alberta Land Surveyor. It does not regulate or enforce any building code requirements or serve as a confirmation of permit history on a property.

The policy 610-05 Certificate of Compliance Policy may be reviewed on the Municipal District website: [www.mdwillowcreek.com](http://www.mdwillowcreek.com) Contact the Planning & Development office for information.

## DEVELOPMENT FEES BYLAW NO. 2028

Bylaw No. 2028 Development Fees came into effect January 28, 2026. Development and Safety Code fees have increased.

If development or use requires a development permit approval and has commenced *before* September 24, 2025, on the land without benefit of development permit, applicable fees will be doubled. All applicable safety code permit fees will also be doubled.

If development or use requires a development permit approval and has commenced *after* September 24, 2025, on the land without benefit of development permit, applicable fees will be tripled. All applicable safety code permit fees will also be *doubled*.



## Developing Property

Before purchasing property, developing or undertaking any construction or placement of development in the MD, it is important to check the following:

- Verify the Land Use District (land use designation/zoning) of the parcel with the MD to ensure your project conforms to MD regulations.
- Some subdivisions have additional restrictions and guidelines in the form of Restricted Covenants with further restrictions such as the size, design of buildings and the use of the lot. To determine if the lot is affected by a Restrictive Covenant, it is recommended that you obtain and research an up-to-date copy of the title from Alberta Land Titles or any Alberta Registries office.
- Consider having the property surveyed by an Alberta Land Surveyor to ensure the property plan and property lines are accurate. Fences do not necessarily reflect property lines.
- Inquire about Development Permit requirements for your project.
- Inquire about required Safety Code permits. A Development Permit is not a Building Permit.
- Become aware of policies for existing and future land uses as established in the Municipal Development Plan.

## FARM BUILDING EXEMPTION

Farm buildings shall meet and adhere to all the definitions and exemptions within the National Building Code (AE), Safety Codes Act, Agricultural Operations Practices Act and the Land Use Bylaw.



A Farm Building Exemption Form is available on the MD website for submission and review to determine if the development qualifies. Contact the Planning and Development department to discuss farm building exemption.

## PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES CONTACTS:

**Cindy Chisholm**, Director of Planning & Development

**Sheena Johnson**, Development Officer

**Jumai Robinson**,

Development Asst. & Business Licenses

273129 Sec Hwy 520 West, Box 550,  
Claresholm, AB T0L 0T0

**Office: 403-625-3351 • Fax: 403-625-3886**

**Email: [development@mdwillowcreek.com](mailto:development@mdwillowcreek.com)**

**Service Request:**

**[www.mdwillowcreek.com/servicerequest](http://www.mdwillowcreek.com/servicerequest)**

## ALBERTA SAFETY CODES PERMITS

Safety Code permits are required to ensure that work on buildings will conform to construction and safety standards as accepted under the Safety Codes Act. It is the landowner's responsibility to comply with the Safety Codes Act for new construction, additions or renovations, and demolition of buildings by obtaining a Safety Codes permits.

The Municipal District is an accredited municipality and has contracted three accredited safety code agencies to provide services within the Municipality. The agencies provide knowledge, support, experience and qualified professionals for all safety code disciplines: Building, Electrical, Gas, Plumbing and Private Sewage Systems.



### Superior Safety Codes Inc.

422 North Mayor Magrath Dr,  
Lethbridge  
403-320-0734  
1-877-320-0734  
info@superiorsafetycodes.com



Scan The QR Code & Visit  
[superiorsafetycodes.com](http://superiorsafetycodes.com)  
For More Information



### Park Enterprises

#10, 491 W.T. Hill Blvd.  
Lethbridge  
403-329-3747  
800-621-5440  
contact@parkenterprises.ca



Scan The QR Code & Visit  
[parkinspections.com](http://parkinspections.com)  
For More Information



### The Inspections Group Inc.

2825 18 Av N, Lethbridge  
587-787-4143  
1-888-852-3558  
south@inspectionsgroup.com



Scan The QR Code & Visit  
[inspectionsgroup.com](http://inspectionsgroup.com)  
For More Information

## PLANNING A SPECIAL EVENT?

WHO DOES THE ASSEMBLIES BYLAW 1420 APPLY TO?



**It applies to anyone, or an organization proposing to operate amusements, concerts or event gatherings, indoor or outdoor, anywhere within the MD of Willow Creek.**

The event could be one-time, frequently or annually. These types of events require submission of an application to obtain the Municipality's authorization and consent. Start your planning well in advance of the event date and submit a completed application at least three months in advance. The Bylaw is to provide safety, health and welfare of people, and property within the Municipal District of Willow Creek through the regulation and control of public places and assemblies.

For more information and if this applies to your event contact

**Planning and Development at 403-625-3351  
or [development@mdwillowcreek.com](mailto:development@mdwillowcreek.com)**

## DAMAGE PREVENTION IS A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY



### BEFORE STARTING ANY EXCAVATION,

whether it's pruning trees in your yard, seeding your crops, moving large equipment, or planning a construction project, connect with Utility Safety Partners.

Find your location on the **Look Up and Live map**.

The interactive map shows you the location of overhead energy and utility lines in relation to your work area. By clicking or tapping on the line within the map, you are provided with the utility operators' name, contact information and additional safety information and planning tools. Use your phone, tablet, or computer – all you need is a web browser.



**Click to Know  
What's Above  
and Below**

Where's the LINE?



# MUNICIPAL BUSINESS LICENSES

Business conducted within the Municipality with an office, shop or home are required to obtain a Business License from the Municipal District of Willow Creek.



This includes home-based businesses, commercial and industrial operations.

A development permit is required and upon approval, a business license will be issued.

Businesses or persons that are not residents of the Municipality but do business within the municipality must obtain a non-resident Business License.

Licensing is mandated to promote safe and legitimate business premises and operations within the MD.

The Municipal District is a member of the Alberta Southwest Regional Alliance – in our capacity as members we are able to offer the opportunity to our residents to add on to their license with the purchase of a Regional Business License. A Regional Business License issued by the MD is valid in 14 other communities that are members of the Alberta Southwest Regional Alliance.



## WE HAVE A NEW BUSINESS LICENSE BYLAW!!

The Business License Bylaw has been updated to ensure it remains current, effective, and responsive to the evolving needs of the community and local business environment. Fees have been updated to reflect current costs and to ensure the licencing program remains fair consistent, and sustainable while continuing to support local businesses.



## WHAT CAN YOU FIND ON OUR WEBSITE???



- 2026 Business Directory
- Business License Application Form
- Regional Business License Information
- Bylaw 2036 Business License Bylaw
- Business License Profile Update Form

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

- Do you have questions about applying for a business license
- Do you want to update your phone number, email address for your business profile

Cindy Chisholm, Sheena Johnson, Jumai Robinson,  
Office: 403-625-3351 • Fax: 403-625-3886  
Email: [develpoment@mdwillowcreek.com](mailto:develpoment@mdwillowcreek.com)

## SOUTHERN ALBERTA SUMMER GAMES

July 8 - 11, 2026

hosted by

County of 40 Mile

REGISTRATION OPEN  
MAY 11 - JUNE 11

RESIDENTS  
WITHIN THE  
MD OF  
WILLOW CREEK  
BORDERS  
WELCOME!



• 18-20 Sporting and Cultural events to take place in Bow Island, Foremost, Burdett & Forty Mile Park

• Competitors 6 to 80 years old welcome

Questions about volunteering or participating contact the Games Coordinator at [recreation@mdwillowcreek.com](mailto:recreation@mdwillowcreek.com)

Keep your eye on the MD of Willow Creek Social Media pages in the coming month for more information!



[www.southernalbertasummergames.ca/](http://www.southernalbertasummergames.ca/)

## Operational Initiatives

The MD of Willow Creek Public Works Department is preparing for another active construction and maintenance season in 2026. These programs play a vital role in maintaining a safe, reliable, and cost-effective road network throughout the municipality. The primary operational activities planned for 2026 include the Gravel Program, Shoulder Pull Program, Road Oil Program, and Dust Abatement Program.

### Gravel Program

The Gravel Program remains one of the largest and most important annual initiatives undertaken by Public Works.



In 2026, the MD will operate six gravel trucks to re-gravel approximately 420 kilometers of municipal roadways. Work is scheduled to April 27 - November 25, 2026, weather permitting.

Gravelling provides a fresh wearing surface for roadways, improving driving comfort and vehicle safety while reducing rutting, potholes, and washboarding. It also helps protect the road structure by shedding water more effectively, which extends the overall life of the road and reduces long-term maintenance costs. Gravel placement is prioritized based on gravelling frequency defined in the Municipality's Grading and Gravelling Level of Service document and observed road conditions.

### Road Oil Program

The 2026 Road Oil Program will include work on approximately 8 miles (12.8 kilometres) of roadway throughout the municipality. This will consist of:

- 1 mile of road oil removal
- 0.75 miles of new road oil acquisition
- Approximately 6 miles of road oil renewal

To complete these projects, the MD anticipates using approximately 5,000 tonnes of gravel and 370,000 litres of road oil.

Road oil treatment significantly reduces dust generation, improving air quality and visibility for residents and motorists. It also helps bind the road surface, reducing gravel loss and washboarding while improving driving comfort. Over time, well-maintained oiled roads can lower maintenance costs and reduce the frequency of gravelling by protecting the underlying road structure.

### Shoulder Pull Program

The Shoulder Pull Program supports proper road profile and drainage by pulling material from the road shoulder back onto the driving surface. In 2026, the MD plans to complete approximately 20 kilometres of shoulder pulling throughout the municipality between April 27 and October 23, 2026.

This work helps maintain proper crown and slope on roadways, allowing water to drain away from the driving surface more effectively. Improved drainage reduces surface deterioration, minimizes soft spots, and helps prevent premature road failure. Shoulder pulling also reclaims valuable gravel material, reducing the need for additional gravel and improving overall maintenance efficiency.



# CONSTRUCTION SAFETY TIPS FOR RESIDENTS

The MD of Willow Creek asks all residents and motorists to exercise caution during construction and maintenance activities. Your cooperation helps protect both road users and Public Works crews.

Please remember to:

- Slow down when approaching construction zones or working equipment
- Obey all posted signage and temporary traffic controls
- Allow extra travel time during peak construction periods
- Stay alert for workers, flag persons, and heavy equipment entering or exiting roadways
- Maintain safe following distances, especially on freshly graveled or oiled roads
- Avoid driving on newly treated roads whenever possible until surfaces have properly set



Public Works crews work diligently to minimize disruption while completing essential maintenance. Safe driving and patience help ensure projects are completed efficiently and without incident.

## Dust Abatement Program

Dust control continues to be an important service for residents living along gravel roadways. In 2026, the MD plans to apply dust control product to approximately 100 kilometres of road between May 19 and June 26, 2026. An estimated 1.8 million litres of product will be used. The MD will utilize two approved dust control products:

- MG30, supplied by Kortech
- Brooks 35GT5, supplied by Tiger Calcium



Dust abatement improves quality of life for residents by reducing airborne dust, which can impact visibility, respiratory health, nearby crops, and property cleanliness. Treated roads also experience reduced gravel loss and surface deterioration, which helps extend the life of the roadway.

In addition to municipal applications, the MD offers private dust control services to residents at a cost of \$2.50 per linear foot, with a minimum order of 400 feet. The application form can be found on the MD Website under the tab "I WANT TO..." and Transportation Applications link.

***The deadline to submit applications for private dust control is May 15, 2026.***

## Willow Creek Regional Landfill

113053 Range Road 263 • 403-687-2603

### Hours of Operation:

Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Closed all general holidays, Sundays, and Saturdays, except during Summer Season

### Summer Saturday Season:

2nd and 4th Saturday of each month  
from April to October 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

### WCRL recycles:

- Car batteries
- Propane tanks & cylinders
- Tires
- Paint & stain products
- Electronics
  - o Small appliances
  - o Audio visual
  - o Power tools
  - o Computers & printers



### ABSOLUTELY, BRING IT:

- Municipal solid waste
- Construction & demolition
- Mattresses
- Furniture
- Appliances
- Refrigerants
- Bundled up wire (no posts)
- Concrete
- Silage wrap



### NOT AT THE WCRL:

- Burning or hot materials
- Asbestos
- Creosote
- Liquids
- Toxic/hazardous waste
- Animal carcasses
- Explosives
- Biochemical waste
- Vehicle oil, filters &/or containers
- Chemicals



**CUSTOMERS & VISITORS MUST REPORT TO SCALE OFFICE UPON ARRIVAL.**

**NO SMOKING**

### General Information

- ★ Tipping fees will apply for disposal of waste.
- ★ Anyone entering the landfill does so at their own risk.
- ★ All materials deposited at the landfill shall become the property of the WCRL.
- ★ Waste must be separated and deposited into designated areas as directed by the staff.
- ★ Please ensure to keep your children & pets in your vehicle at all times while on site.
- ★ No scavenging allowed!
- ★ During times of inclement weather, customers are urged to call ahead as the landfill may close without notice.
- ★ Use of the landfill site may be denied to anyone who does not obey the directions of landfill staff.
- ★ Landfill staff is permitted to inspect any load upon arrival at the landfill site. We maintain the right to refuse any unacceptable waste.
- ★ Loose material including film plastic, paper, styrofoam etc. must be bagged, bundled or otherwise contained.

## RISING COSTS, REAL IMPACTS:

### The Challenges of Delivering Public Works in Rural Alberta

Across rural Alberta, public works departments are facing a growing challenge: delivering the same essential services—often at higher standards—while costs continue to rise at an unprecedented pace. From road maintenance to water systems, snow control to fleet operations, the price of keeping communities safe and functional is increasing faster than many municipal budgets can absorb.



#### FUEL, MATERIALS, AND LABOUR: THE COST PRESSURES ADD UP

One of the most visible drivers of increased costs is fuel. Rural municipalities depend heavily on large, diesel-powered equipment, and fuel price volatility directly impacts operating budgets. A single season of grading or snowplowing can consume tens of thousands of litres, turning even small price increases into significant budget pressures.

Material costs tell a similar story. Gravel, asphalt, culverts, pipe, and aggregate have all seen sharp price increases, driven by supply chain disruptions, inflation, and higher transportation costs. In rural areas, materials often travel long distances before reaching the job site, compounding those costs further.

Labour is another growing challenge. Recruiting and retaining skilled operators, mechanics, and utility staff has become more competitive, particularly as private industry offers higher wages and more predictable schedules. Rural municipalities must balance fair compensation with fiscal responsibility, all while ensuring institutional knowledge is not lost as experienced staff retire.

#### Aging Infrastructure Requires Greater Investment

Much of rural Alberta's infrastructure was built decades ago and is reaching or exceeding its design life. Roads carry heavier agricultural and industrial traffic than they were originally built for. Bridges require more frequent inspections and maintenance. Water and wastewater systems demand upgrades to meet modern standards.

Aging infrastructure costs more to maintain, and delaying repairs often leads to even higher replacement costs down the road. Rural public works teams increasingly find themselves choosing between short-term fixes and long-term solutions, both of which come with financial trade-offs.

#### GEOGRAPHY MATTERS

Providing services across large geographic areas amplifies every cost. Longer response times, greater travel distances, and dispersed populations mean rural municipalities must maintain extensive infrastructure networks for relatively small tax bases. A few kilometres of road may serve only a handful of residents, yet still require the same level of maintenance and safety standards.

Weather compounds this challenge. Alberta's freeze-thaw cycles, intense rainfall events, drought, and extreme

winter conditions accelerate wear on roads and drainage systems. Climate variability means municipalities must design and maintain infrastructure to handle more extreme conditions than in the past, often at higher cost.

#### INCREASED EXPECTATIONS, LIMITED RESOURCES

Public expectations continue to rise, regardless of municipal size. Residents expect reliable roads, quick snow removal, safe bridges, and uninterrupted water service. Regulatory requirements around safety, environmental protection, and reporting have also expanded, increasing administrative and operational costs.

While grant funding and cost-sharing programs help, they rarely cover the full lifecycle cost of infrastructure. Municipalities must still fund ongoing operations, future maintenance, and eventual replacement—often without corresponding increases in revenue.

#### FINDING WAYS FORWARD

Rural municipalities are responding with innovation and collaboration. Asset management planning is helping councils make informed decisions about where to invest limited dollars. Shared services, bulk purchasing, and inter-municipal cooperation are reducing duplication and lowering costs. Many public works departments are also investing in preventative maintenance, recognizing that proactive work is more affordable than emergency repairs.

Equally important is communicating the value of public works to residents. Roads, drainage, and utilities are often taken for granted—until something fails. Transparent conversations about costs, risks, and priorities help build understanding and trust between municipalities and the communities they serve.

#### A COMMITMENT THAT ENDURES

Despite rising costs, one thing remains constant: the commitment of rural public works professionals. They continue to find ways to do more with less, working long hours, responding to emergencies, and keeping infrastructure functioning in some of the most challenging environments in the province.

As municipalities navigate the financial realities ahead, recognizing the true cost—and true value—of public works service delivery will be essential. These investments are not just expenses; they are the foundation of safe roads, clean water, emergency response, economic activity, and rural life in Alberta.

# THE QUIET BACKBONE OF RURAL ALBERTA

If you drive a gravel road at sunrise, steam rising from a ditch that was just cleaned yesterday, you're seeing public works at its finest—quiet, practical, and absolutely essential. Across rural Alberta, public works professionals are the invisible backbone that keeps communities moving, often under conditions that demand creativity, resilience, and a deep understanding of the land.

Unlike urban centres where services are dense and immediate, rural public works stretches across vast landscapes. A single crew may be responsible for hundreds of kilometres of roads, water systems serving small hamlets, snow clearing in whiteout conditions, and emergency response during floods or wildfires. Every decision has to balance cost, safety, and long-term stewardship.

## **Wearing Many Hats—Sometimes All at Once**

In rural municipalities, public works staff rarely have the luxury of specialization. The same operator who grades roads in the summer may be fixing a water line in January, fighting spring runoff in April, and hauling gravel by July. This versatility isn't just impressive—it's necessary.

Budget constraints and distance mean rural teams become problem solvers by nature. When a culvert collapses miles from the nearest supplier, ingenuity matters just as much as technical skill. Whether it's repurposing materials, coordinating with neighbouring municipalities, or timing work around weather that changes by the hour, rural public works demands adaptability.

## **Infrastructure Meets Environment**

Nowhere is the connection between infrastructure and environment more immediate than in rural Alberta. Roads follow the contours of the land. Drainage decisions affect fields, ranches, and watersheds. Increasingly unpredictable weather—intense rainfall, prolonged drought, freeze-thaw cycles—puts additional pressure on aging infrastructure. Public works teams are responding

by thinking long-term. Bigger culverts, improved ditching, better asset inspections, and proactive maintenance are becoming standard practice. Many municipalities, including ours are also integrating asset management plans, not as paperwork exercises, but as practical tools to prioritize where limited dollars will have the greatest impact.

## **Safety First—For Everyone**

Rural public works isn't just about infrastructure; it's about people. Operators work along highways at high speeds, respond to emergencies in remote locations, and operate heavy equipment in challenging conditions. Safety isn't a box to check—it's a culture built from experience, training, and looking out for each other. At the same time, public safety is always the end goal. Clear roads mean kids can get to school and ambulances can respond quickly. Reliable water systems protect public health. Well-maintained bridges and roads support agriculture, industry, and everyday life.

## **Community You Can See**

One of the most rewarding aspects of rural public works is visibility. When roads dry faster after a storm, residents notice. When a bridge reopens, farmers and truckers feel the difference immediately. In small communities, public works staff aren't anonymous—they're neighbours, family members, and volunteers. That connection builds trust, but it also brings accountability. Rural public works teams know the names of the people who rely on their work, which makes doing the job right personal.

## **Looking Ahead**

The future of rural public works will bring challenges: workforce recruitment, funding pressures, climate adaptation, and rising service expectations. But it will also bring opportunity—new technology, better data, shared services, and continued innovation rooted in local knowledge.

What won't change is the dedication of the people behind the plows, graders, and wrenches. Long after the snow melts or the dust settles, rural public works will continue to quietly uphold the quality of life that defines Alberta's rural communities. Because when the work is done right, most people never notice—and that's the highest compliment of all.

