



athabasca county connection

A newsletter for residents and businesses of Athabasca County

November 2016

Business Visitation Program

Building a dialogue and connecting services with area business owners

Beginning this month Athabasca County's Tourism and Economic Development Officer will be engaging area business owners as part of a new business visitation program.

The purpose of the visits is to gather information to help plan how the Tourism and Economic Development Committee (TED) can help support the retention and growth of businesses operating within the region. The Business Visitation Program is one of the strategies being implemented by TED Committee as part of its Strategic Plan.

While the TED Committee is interested in fostering new business, its major focus is on retention and development of existing business. One of the most powerful aspects of this approach is sharing conversations with business owners and operators about their goals and opportunities. These conversations are often the catalyst for new approaches to problem solving.

The business visits are also about establishing and strengthening relationships between business and the County and Town of Athabasca.

Building relationships among the existing businesses and local organizations also helps to let business know how much they are valued in the community.

Continued on Page 3.



BOATING SAFETY REMINDER - Athabasca County's Recreation Board partnered with Mother's Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and its newest safety program which brings awareness to the problem of impaired boating. The partnership saw impaired boating signage added to many of the boat launches maintained by the municipality. According to MADD, alcohol is a factor in more than 40 per cent of recreational boating fatalities, and 37 per cent of boaters in Canada admit to consuming alcohol every time they boat. For more information about the new signs visit athabascacounty.com.

LUB/MDP in final approval stages

Residents can share their thoughts at the final public hearing or online

Since April 2015, Athabasca County administrative staff and Council have worked together with the consulting firm ParioPlan to update the County's Municipal Development Plan (MDP) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB).

These updates were deemed necessary because land uses and development in the County have significantly changed since these plans were adopted in 2002.

Updating the bylaws to current uses helps protect residents from negative effects of conflicting

development and puts in place a course of action to deal with new land uses from a County enforcement perspective.

Following an extensive public consultation process including 8 open houses, an online survey, meetings with groups, commissions and educational institutions to help set a direction, First Drafts of the documents were completed and released on April 2, 2016.

A Public Hearing on Thursday, October 27 followed the First Reading of the Bylaw. It provided another opportunity for the public to share their thoughts about the two bylaws.

Continued on Page 3.

2017 Seasonal Campsite Applications available!

Forms and info online or at the County office

**Your summer
HOME
away from home**

County Briefs

Safety on County Roads

Winter roads offer more challenging driving conditions. This year we've experienced some wet weather conditions which has had an overall effect on County roads.

With freezing conditions upon us, it's important to remember a wet road can become a frozen road quite quickly. Although the maximum speed limit on our roads is 80 km/h we encourage drivers to slow down and drive according to road conditions.

We want everyone to get where they are going safely and just want to remind everyone that the speed you drive has a bearing on vehicle control.

Clearing snow across municipal roadways

It may seem harmless enough, but when snow is pushed across roads, ridges are left in the driving surface either from frozen snow or the gravel itself being moved.

When vehicles drive across these ridges the wheels temporarily lose contact with the road and it can cause the vehicle to go out of control.

Keeping the snow on your own property is a safer option for everyone. We ask that all property owners remember this when clearing snow this winter.

Driveway Snow Flags

Driveway Snowplow Flags are available for residents who need some help clearing snow from their rural residential driveways this winter.

The snowflags are \$50 each plus GST and can be purchased at the County Admin Office. A hold harmless agreement will need to be filled out with your application.

Seniors over the age of 65 are eligible to apply for free snow removal of their rural residence. Age verification and a hold harmless agreement are also required.

As a reminder, private driveway snowplowing does not start until all County roads have been cleared for the travelling public.

2016 Fire Prevention Week



TRAINING TO HELP - volunteer firefighters in the region were training to hone their skills in vehicle extraction. They also hosted Fire Prevention Week events to educate residents about things they can do to increase safety.

Check your smoke alarms for date of manufacture

Each year Fire Prevention Week focuses on one aspect of fire safety to raise awareness of fire safety and remind us all of specific things we can do to prevent a tragedy from happening.

This year the importance of replacing smoke alarms after 10 years of service is being reinforced. Data from Alberta's Office of the Fire Commissioner shows that many homes have smoke alarms that aren't working or aren't being properly maintained.

Usually the problem is missing, disconnected or dead batteries but sometimes the smoke alarm itself is the problem when they are close to or have surpassed their intended life cycle.

In 2015, building codes were changed to increase the number of fire alarms installed in new homes. The new requirement is one smoke alarm per bedroom.

Current research suggests that deep sleepers or children may not wake up when a smoke alarm sounds. The only way to find out is to conduct a test. It will make you aware of who is responsive in your home and who is not.

It may also tell you if you need to increase the number of smoke alarms or change their location.

"The goal is to make everyone aware of what they can do to improve fire safety at home," says Steve Hamilton, Athabasca County's Regional Fire Coordinator.

"Replacing old smoke alarms, and adding carbon monoxide detectors, can significantly increase the odds of getting out safely when a fire does occur."

Fire Prevention Week was held October 9 - 15 across Canada. More tips to increase fire safety can be found by visiting the Athabasca County website or firepreventionweek.org.

Contact: Steve Hamilton
780-675-2273 | info@athabascacounty.com

Don't Wait CHECK the date!



REPLACE ALARMS EVERY 10 YEARS

The back of your smoke alarm has a date of manufacture on it. Check it and replace your alarm if it is 10 years old. Conducting regular tests of its ability to function is also a good idea. It's well worth the effort!

Folding bridge signs added to assist producers

Bridge safety for the travelling public

Folding bridge sign mechanisms have been installed on a number of bridges across the County.

Their purpose is to allow for the passage of wide agricultural equipment, such as combines and swathers, without damaging the bridge marker signs.

Bridges outfitted with the mechanisms can easily be identified by red folding latches on the sign posts. To fold them down, simply pull the latch up and swing the sign down towards the outside of the bridge.

Once the equipment has gone through, the signs must be returned to the upright position in order to protect the safety of the traveling public.

“Prior to the folding indicator signs being installed, wide loads would often damage indicator signs on the bridges in rural areas,” says Travis Wierenga, Assistant Director of



BRIDGE SAFETY UPGRADES - bridges across Athabasca County have been outfitted with folding marker signs to ensure safety for the travelling public and convenience for agricultural producers crossing bridges with equipment.

Infrastructure Services.

“Farm equipment is much wider today than when these bridges were first installed. This solution seems to be working well so far.”

Please contact us with any concerns, questions, or ideas for improvement.

Contact: Infrastructure Services
780-675-2273|info@athabascacounty.com

Land Use Bylaw and Municipal Development Plan

Continued from Page 1.

Public Consultation continues and amendments to the second draft are being made following the most recent Public Hearing. Members of the public are encouraged to review the draft bylaws and provide suggestions for changes or to identify any concerns they have.

“Our goal is to make the MDP and LUB as current and useful as possible to guide development and the use of land in Athabasca County,” says Director of Planning and Development Jesse Ajayi.

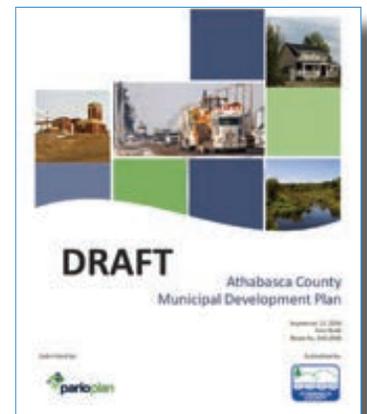
A second Public Hearing has yet to be scheduled and will provide another opportunity for residents to share their thoughts about the draft of the two bylaws. Second and third readings of the bylaw will follow the final public hearing after which the draft bylaws will come into effect.

Written submissions are being accepted by email or letter. They can be mailed or dropped off at the County Administration Office, 3602 – 45 Avenue, Athabasca, AB T9S 1M8. Emails can be sent to landusereview@athabascacounty.com

Temporary Camping Bylaw

As part of the October public hearing, input was also received on the Temporary Camping Bylaw, which is currently in its First Reading. The hearing provided a number of points for the County to review before second reading takes place. Submissions are still being accepted to share your ideas for changes to the Temporary Camping Bylaw.

Contact: Jesse Ajayi, Director Planning and Development
780-675-2273 | 1-844-662-2273
landusereview@athabascacounty.com



Creating a dialogue with area business owners

Business Visits will be conducted to:

- Meet the owners, learn about business challenges and opportunities in Athabasca County and the Town of Athabasca;
- Connect owners with resources for future growth and networking; and,
- Discuss Economic Development & Tourism services.

Continued from Page 1.

“Creating a dialogue with businesses operating in the region is a first step to understanding the needs of owners,” says Robert Buckle, Tourism and Economic Development Officer.

“We will use this information to help develop new programs and connect businesses with existing programs with a

goal of growing and sustaining businesses into the future.”

It’s just one way we can stay connected, find out what the concerns are and how we can assist in resolving them.

To arrange a visit contact us today.

Contact: Robert Buckle
Tourism/Economic Development Officer
780-675-2273 / rbuckle@athabascacounty.com

Farm Woman of the Year nominations forms available

**Nominate a
deserving farm
woman today!**

The Farm Women's Conference & Awards honours deserving individuals who have made significant contributions to their families, communities and region.

You can help recognize the contributions of rural women in our region by nominating a Modern Farm Woman of the Year or a Pioneer Farm Woman of the Year.

Nomination forms are now available. Once completed and submitted, the contributions of the nominee will be considered alongside other deserving women from the County.

Each year the nomination process helps share some great stories of personal accomplishment and dedication with those who attend the annual Farm Women's Conference and Awards.



2017
**Farm Women's
Conference
& Awards**

February 2, 2017 | Athabasca Agri-plex

Nomination Criteria

Pioneer Farm Woman – The nominee must have been farming full-time within Athabasca County.

Modern Day Farm Woman – The nominee must be a resident of Athabasca County and presently living and working on a farm.

The nominee must not be a member of the present Athabasca County Farm Women's Conference Organizing Committee and must

not be a previous Farm Woman of the Year award recipient. A previous nominee, who was not selected to receive the award, may be nominated again so please forward a nomination form to us.

The winner, and the winner's nominator, will each receive (1) one complimentary ticket to the annual Farm Women's Conference. It's an occasion to join with other rural women and their families and friends to celebrate the rural

lifestyle in Athabasca County. The winners are presented with laser cut driveway signs to share their accomplishment with everyone.

Nominate a deserving Farm Woman today! The forms are available from the County administration office or by visiting www.athabascacounty.com. Nominations close on January 5, 2017.

Tickets for the 2017 Farm Women's Conference and Awards will be available in early December and can be purchased from the following places:

**Athabasca County
Administration Office**
3602 - 48th Avenue, Athabasca

Athabasca Value Drug Mart
4911 - 50 Street, Athabasca

Contact: Roxanne Senyk
780-675-2273 | 1-844-662-2273
rsenyk@athabascacounty.com

Mentorship program celebrates 15th Anniversary

The Athabasca Mentorship Program (AMP) celebrated its 15th Anniversary with a public event at the Athabasca Seniors' Centre.

In recent years, the program hosts an average of 25-30 mentee youth who are matched with adult mentors. New for the program this year is two adults sharing the mentorship of a local youth. It is benefiting the program and one more local youth gets to take part in the program.

"Willingness on the part of the community to participate in some way has helped make our program a success," says Karen Wintonyk, Mentorship Program Coordinator.

"It truly is a community supported program."

TransCanada Pipelines and the Athabasca Youth Justice Committee provides funding to help run the

program; Athabasca Value Drug Mart helps kick off the program each year by hosting a window display; and the Athabasca Senior Citizens' Association provides space for AMP functions, just to name a few.

New this year is a partnership with the Edwin Parr Composite High School Foods group to provide catering at AMP events, providing experience for the students and great food for all who attend.

Local media support has been outstanding as well, with publicity about the programs work and some great mentors as well.

Mentors are still needed. If you are interested in getting involved in the 2016-17 Mentorship season contact the Athabasca FCSS office.

Contact: Karen Wintonyk
780-675-2623
kwintonyk@athabascacounty.com



ANNIVERSARY PARTY - Mentors and mentees gather at the Athabasca Seniors' Centre for a 15th Anniversary Celebration of the Athabasca Mentorship Program. Mentors are still needed for about 40 student mentees.

**County Office
for general inquiries**

780.675.2273 | 1.844.662.2273

**Public Works
road & maintenance issues**

780.675.2404 | 1.844.675.2404

**After Hours Emergencies
safety issues evenings/weekends**

780.689.9000

Athabasca County
at the centre of it all

www.athabascacounty.com

The Athabasca County Connection newsletter is produced bi-monthly and is available to every resident by mail or electronically through email or on our website.

To receive or cancel your copy call the County Administration Office at 780-675-2273 | 1-844-662-2273 or via email: connection@athabascacounty.com

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