

Strathcona County

Living

Keeping you informed

March 2010

Message from your Mayor and Council

Economic update points to continued growth

Indications are that Strathcona County has come through the recent economic downturn in relatively good shape, and that we can anticipate continued modest and sustainable growth through 2010 and into 2011.

Each year, Strathcona County's Economic Development and Tourism presents an economic update on our community to the Sherwood Park and District Chamber of Commerce. Following are some of the highlights of this year's update.

Who we are

Total overall population growth in the County was 2.9 per cent in 2009 (up 6.7 per cent since 2006, and 22.2 per cent since 2001). This population, which now numbers 87,998 individuals, has a median age of 37.8 years, and a



median family income of \$102,004; 55.3 per cent of residents have some post secondary education.

Residential Housing Market

Strathcona County expects to see a modest growth in new single-family and multi-family housing over the next five years. Last year, residential building permits totalled \$179 million, which added 416 new single-family homes, 29 mobile homes and eight row housing projects. The average house price for Sherwood Park was \$409,576, down slightly from \$423,000 in 2008; however, prices have been trending up since last April. A total of 976 homes sold through MLS listing service; up from 914 in 2008.



Commercial/Industrial Development

Over \$26 billion in major projects are announced, under construction or recently completed in Strathcona County.

More than 200,000 square feet of commercial space was added to Sherwood Park in 2009: Phase 1 of Wye Road Crossing; Summerwood Development, including a new Save-On-Foods; London Drugs Expansion; and opening of Acklands Grainger in Strathmoor Industrial. Commercial projects on the books for 2010 include: Sherwood Ford Dealership, Emerald Hills medical building and commercial area, Phase 2 of Wye Road Crossing, as well as a Sawmill Restaurant and Rona store. The Community Centre in Centre in the Park will also open this year.

As a major player in Alberta's Industrial Heartland, Strathcona County is also well positioned for growth in value-added commodities in the petroleum, petrochemical and chemical industries. The expansion at Shell Scotford is moving forward, with expansion materials expected to be purchased locally. The Total E&P Upgrader review is nearing completion, and Enbridge's pipeline terminal expansion on Baseline Road continues.

—Cathy Olesen, Mayor

Cathy

Strathcona County Transit goes green-er

Strathcona County celebrated the arrival of the final six new buses purchased as part of a three-year plan (2007-2009) to replace 20 buses in its fleet. The purchase includes 10 new clean-burning diesel and 10 hybrid electric buses to replace aging, less fuel-efficient and less-accessible buses.

The \$11.7 million cost for these buses was made possible through a \$6 million grant provided by the Canada-Alberta Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (CAMRIF), coupled with a Strathcona County allocation of \$5.7 million.

As part of the unveiling event, Grade 4 students from Lakeland Ridge School became the first residents to ride on the new hybrid buses. Mayor Cathy Olesen, pictured at the podium noted, "The enthusiasm of these students speaks to the importance young people place on being environmentally responsible." All 20 buses are low-floor, accessible buses, equipped with appropriate safety features to

improve transportation for seniors, persons with disabilities and even families with child strollers.

"We are very excited to have these new buses in our fleet. They take us a long way toward making our transit system and community even more environmentally responsible," says Mayor Olesen. She also acknowledged the support of

both the federal and provincial governments, and thanked them for their contribution through the CAMRIF Partnership, which has as a goal to help communities construct, restore or improve public transportation infrastructure that would result in the reduction of environmental impacts, congestion, energy use or greenhouse gas emissions, and improve safety.



Sharing the podium with Mayor Olesen were (left to right): Tim Uppal, Member of Parliament for Edmonton-Sherwood Park; Dave Quest, MLA for Strathcona; and Matthew Carpenter, Manager, Strathcona County Transit.

Community gardens update



Strathcona County Council recognizes the contribution of community gardens to sustainability and community development, and has approved an initiative to foster garden development in our community.

The first community garden in the County was organized by the Strathcona Garden Club and is located at the Old Man Creek site north of Highway 16. The garden is a huge success; it provides a fantastic recreational gardening opportunity, as well as fresh vegetables for gardeners and the food bank, cut flowers for nursing homes, and an educational experience for many children and their families.

A group of interested residents has now come forward. They are looking to select additional sites, develop guidelines for the use of sites and promote the opportunity to our residents. If you are interested in more information about how you can get involved, please call Arlene McWilliam-Protz at 780-416-6729.

New 9-1-1 technology locates cellphones

Strathcona County's Regional Emergency Communications Centre (9-1-1) adopted technology February 1 that can locate a cellphone call within metres of its origin. The centre serves 116 municipalities across northeast Alberta. Almost half of the calls received are from cellphone callers.

"To this point, we had virtually no information on where a 9-1-1 cellphone caller was located," says Deputy Fire Chief Ken Jones. "Under the best circumstances, using this technology, we will be able to locate the cellphone coordinates within 20 metres, up to 90 per cent of the time. This advancement will greatly increase our ability to help people in an emergency."

New federal regulations require Canada's cellphone providers to begin using this technology. Until this technology is widely adopted; however, Deputy Chief Jones suggests the following tips to ensure you get the help:

- Know where you are at all times and be able to tell the 9-1-1 operator.
- Phones produced within the last five years should be equipped with global positioning technology (GPS), which is the most accurate, provided the cellphone company chooses to use it.
- Older cellphones may be located with triangulation, which is finding your location from three or more cellphone towers. Triangulation is the least accurate, especially in areas where cellphone towers are spaced far apart. Because of this, a cellphone's location may only be narrowed down to a broad range – anywhere from 10 to 100 kilometres apart.

Ardrossan Community Recreation Master Plan

The Ardrossan Community Recreation Master Plan received positive nods from community members who participated in its review. On December 8, 2009, Strathcona County Council formally approved this plan that guides the development of future recreation facilities, parks, and open spaces in Ardrossan.

Goals for the plan's foundation

- New outdoor recreation facilities and amenities should leverage existing facilities and community assets.
- Community hubs in the hamlet should be fostered and interconnected.
- Safety should be a primary factor.
- A multi-use approach should be taken wherever possible.
- Existing land designation, be it Municipal, Environmental Reserve or Conservation Easement should be respected.

The strategic themes

1. Creation of a walkable community

Toward: An improved network of paved and granular trails to provide safe and accessible pedestrian connections to existing and future residential areas and community amenities.

2. Places for community gathering

Toward: Enhancing the existing community grounds for flexible recreational use, adding park amenities such as an entrance feature, amphitheatre, benches, picnic tables and new plantings.

3. Places for specialized activities and youth

Toward: A proposed permanent skateboard/BMX park and a spray park, located near the recreation complex and safe access trails, to complement existing playgrounds.

4. Teams sports

Toward: Improving the quality of the fields and access to services with entry features, new plantings, additional parking, upgrades to two ball diamonds, space identified for new field needs, and relocation of the outdoor rink next to the recreation complex.

The plan's timeframe: 2010 to 2023. Funding for the various proposed elements is determined through the annual budget process. Community partnerships are important to the timely and full implementation of the plan. The complete plan is available at www.strathcona.ca/revitalize.



Youth inspired by positive attributes

Hundreds of students from Elk Island Catholic Schools and Elk Island Public Schools were invited to share the personal qualities that inspire them. These could be based on their ideas about positive character in general or focus on specific character attributes such as respect, courage, responsibility, inclusiveness, honesty, integrity, civility, fairness, caring, trustworthiness, initiative and optimism.

Over 300 students from Kindergarten to Grade 9 participated in Strathcona County's *Where Character Lives* contest. They focused on positive characteristics they experience in their own circles and in the community — attributes demonstrated by parents, friends, neighbours and even those who work to keep the community safe, such as soldiers, firefighters and the police. Some focused on everyday, small ways people demonstrate positive character, such as telling the truth, standing up to bullies and caring for others. Respect was widely mentioned in terms of respecting others and respecting their school and the environment.

The *Where Character Lives* initiative complements character education occurring in most Strathcona County schools.

"The outcomes of being a community where character lives are significant," says Mayor Cathy Olesen. "We can help create a safe and caring environment based on respecting others, encouraging personal success and achievement, and improving personal relationships."

"Most of our residents demonstrate positive character in their lives, whether at work, at school, while out shopping or towards teammates and neighbours. This initiative is about acknowledging and celebrating these everyday actions. We want to promote making positive choices in our lives and in contributing to stronger families, safer communities and a real concern for one another."

You can find the contest winners and learn more about the initiative on the Strathcona County website, or by contacting Family and Community Services at 780-464-4044.



Jean Bell (left) and Marnie Lee (far-right), both of Family and Community Services (FCS), present a certificate of Honourable Mention to Shae-Lynne Rendle (centre), a Grade five student at Our Lady of Perpetual Help School.

New waste collection calendar

Some residents have inquired why the waste calendar changed from the one-page style to a calendar format. The previous format did not provide all the information for making the Green Routine successful in households. Below are some answers to frequently asked questions.

I don't need all the information in the calendar; I just look at the website.

There is no one communication method that will reach everyone in our large and growing community. That is why the County uses a variety of methods – the website, newspaper advertisements, newsletters and displays among these. Over the last couple years, there have been some changes in the Green Routine. Resident feedback indicated that many were not receiving information about some of the changes and services being offered. To help make sure this information reaches everyone, the calendar was chosen as one of the most economical ways to reach our customers.

How much more does this new calendar cost?

Overall, the 2010 calendar costs less than the one-page calendar. Using a company that specializes in municipal waste calendars enables lower printing costs. Sending the calendar out by unaddressed airmail through Canada Post is a much more economical way of distribution (it costs approximately three times less to send it out this way than addressed mail). It also reduces the number of returned calendars from Canada Post for incorrect addressing.

As not all households receive unaddressed airmail, there are also several locations where residents can pick up a copy:

- County Hall, 2001 Sherwood Drive, Sherwood Park
- Glen Allan Recreation Complex, 199 Georgian Way, Sherwood Park
- Heartland Hall, 55305 Range Road 214
- Millennium Place, 2000 Premier Way, Sherwood Park
- Strathcona Public Services Yard, 370 Streambank Avenue, Sherwood Park
- Strathcona Wilderness Centre, 52535 Range Road 212

You can also view a copy at:

www.strathcona.ca/utilities.

Why are you using more paper when you are promoting recycling?

The calendar is nine pages. It is printed double sided and folded in half. The paper used is Forest Stewardship Council certified and contains over 83 per cent post consumer fibre product. A goal of the Green Routine is to close the recycle loop. It is important that products purchased contain recycled content and help to drive the recycle markets.

Questions? Call 780-449-5514 or email greenroutine@strathcona.ab.ca



Olympic torch relay events highlight community spirit

Strathcona County was proud host to the Olympic Torch in January as an official Route Community. To build excitement for the arrival of the official Olympic Flame, over 8,000 elementary students throughout Strathcona County demonstrated their Olympic Spirit and Canadian Pride by participating in a Community Spirit School Torch Relay around their school yards.

The torch made a one-minute stop on a stage outside Madonna Catholic Elementary/Junior High School. The on-stage delegation included

representatives from the federal and provincial governments, Mayor Cathy Olesen (far right), Strathcona County, Elk Island Catholic Schools, Elk Island Public Schools and the Canadian Progress Club.

A special thanks to Elk Island Public Schools and Elk Island Catholic Schools for teaming up with Strathcona County Recreation, Parks and Culture, the RCMP, Emergency Services, Strathcona County Transit and the Canadian Progress Club to host this fantastic community spirit event!



Lighten your load to protect our roads

ROAD BANS

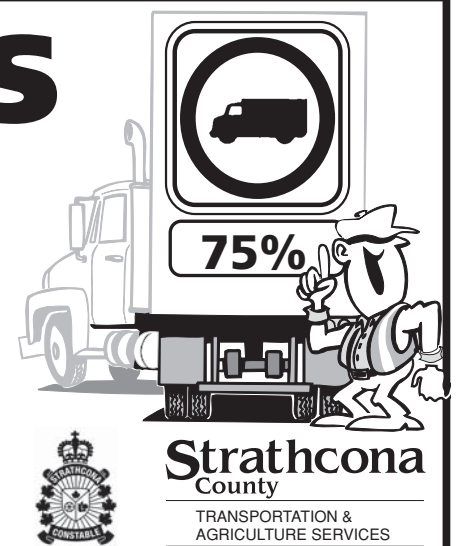
in effect March 8 to June 1, 2010.

Watch for signs.

Further information:

Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100 (24 hours)
www.strathcona.ab.ca/tas

Enforcement Services
780-449-0170 (24 hours)



Strathcona County responds to proposed Heartland Transmission Project

The Heartland Electrical Transmission Project could result in major electrical transmission lines running through Strathcona County. The Heartland Project Team has selected a preferred and an alternate transmission line route. The preferred route would use the Transportation Utility Corridor (TUC) on the west side of Sherwood Park.

Strathcona County has reviewed the proposal closely and will be providing input to help ensure our community's interests are well represented. The County does not have the final decision on this project — that is up to the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC). We will advocate for a decision that considers the best balance of technical, environmental and social requirements.

As part of our submission to the AUC, the County will highlight health and environmental concerns, and propose that electric transmission lines are constructed underground.

It is important that we all take part in this process. A combination of involvement from

Strathcona County and our residents will help ensure our community's interests are appropriately considered.

You can get involved by becoming informed about the project and the proposed routes. Visit the Heartland Electrical Transmission Project's website at www.heartlandtransmission.ca/new/index.asp, or make a written submission to the AUC. The AUC also has opportunities for public participation. If the AUC deems that you are directly and adversely affected, you will be eligible to participate in a public hearing.



Economic Sustainability Framework

Strathcona County wants a healthy, innovative and sustainable economy – one that balances social responsibility and the environment. A healthy economy means jobs and business opportunities. It allows the County to run quality community programs, and provide the services and infrastructure that residents value.

With this in mind, Strathcona County has begun work on an Economic Sustainability Framework to guide decisions that will foster and sustain a healthy economy benefiting residents, business and industry. Community members have been asked what is important to them in how the County supports economic opportunities. How can municipal fiscal policies, for instance, encourage development and diversity for local business, employment and quality of life?

Community consultation has included targeted interviews and stakeholder focus groups and an online questionnaire.

The Economic Sustainability Framework, together with the Social Sustainability Framework approved in 2007 and the Environmental Sustainability Framework approved in 2009, completes Strathcona County's triple-bottom-line approach to sustainability.

“Our Strategic Plan is based on the ideal of having a healthy community in three areas — economic, environment and social,” says Mayor Cathy Olesen. “These strategic frameworks are important guides for decision making. They will help the County consider the appropriate balance in serving community needs. I encourage residents to provide input through the questionnaire to help shape the Economic Sustainability Framework.”

Once input has been gathered, a draft Economic Sustainability Framework will be available for public review in late spring this year.

Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association welcomes new member



Mayor Cathy Olesen, centre, participated in a signing ceremony January 29 to welcome the City of Edmonton as the fifth municipal partner of Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association (AIHA). Edmonton is the first new municipal partner to join the Association since it was created in 1998 by the City of Fort Saskatchewan and the counties of Lamont, Strathcona and Sturgeon. On hand to sign the agreement with Mayor Olesen were (l to r): Mayor Stephen Mandel, City of Edmonton; Mayor Don Rigney, Sturgeon County; Reeve Wayne Woldanski, Lamont County; and Mayor Jim Sheasgreen, City of Fort Saskatchewan.



Coyote

Urban Wildlife Watch

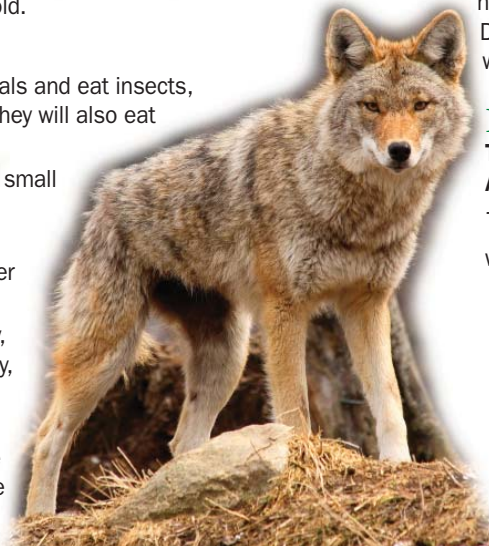
A cut-out-and-keep guide to urban wildlife

Appearance

- Coyotes resemble small dogs, weighing, on average, 20 to 35 pounds (nine to 16 kilograms). They can grow up to five feet in length.
- A coyote's fur varies in colour, but is usually reddish-brown to grey.
- They are intelligent and wary animals, with good eyesight, hearing and a keen sense of smell.
- Coyotes can live to be 14 years old.

Behaviour

- Coyotes will scavenge dead animals and eat insects, rodents, rabbits and songbirds. They will also eat garbage, compost and pet food.
- Occasionally, coyotes will prey on small dogs and cats if the opportunity presents itself.
- They communicate with each other via yips and howls.
- Breeding commences in February, producing one litter in April or May, with an average of six pups.
- In autumn, pups leave the den and move to new areas that have a home range of about 20 square kilometres.



Management

- Keep all garbage in plastic or metal containers with tightly secured lids. Also, bring pet food inside to a secure location every night or feed your pets indoors.
- Keep pets inside at night and ensure that your pet has regular vaccinations.
- The risk of coyotes biting humans is extremely low. Coyotes will avoid people unless they learn that humans are a source of food. Do not feed coyotes or any other wildlife.

Further information

Transportation and Agriculture Services

780-417-7100 (24 hours)
www.strathcona.ca/tas

Strathcona County

TRANSPORTATION & AGRICULTURE SERVICES

New fire station will serve the needs of a growing community

A new fire and emergency services station will be built within two years in north central Sherwood Park. Station 6 is the first new fire station Strathcona County has built in Sherwood Park since 1991.

The station will address future emergency response requirements in that area created by an anticipated growth in population, as well as size and density of development.

“This new station is going to be instrumental in providing the services we will need to maintain community safety and well-being,” says Mayor Cathy Olesen.

The addition of Station 6 is expected to improve response time and provide direct benefits for emergency response to Sherwood Park, rural Strathcona and industrial areas.

The new station will be staffed 24 hours a

day by firefighters cross-trained to provide emergency medical services. It will become the centre for Emergency Services' Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) and Training branch, and the Fire Prevention and Investigation branch. Equipment will include an aerial truck to respond to large or elevated buildings and industrial infrastructure, a rescue truck equipped for hazardous materials response, and a water tanker to increase the water hauling resources in response to fires in rural areas.

Station 6 will also incorporate environmental features that are expected to qualify as a LEED Standard. LEED or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design is an internationally recognized standard that recognizes the performance of buildings in areas of human and environmental health.

Drive carefully, tread lightly

Share the road with agricultural equipment

- » Spring is on its way - and Spring means large agricultural equipment on our rural roads. **Be cautious and share the road.**

Avoid driving on wet fields during the Spring season

- » Driving on wet fields may cause soil degradation and erosion.
- » Rutting can potentially:
 - divert water to unwanted areas
 - disturb vegetative cover
 - compact soil
 - result in uneven yields

Remove soil from equipment after exiting a wet field

- » Remove dirt and mud from your equipment prior to leaving fields to prevent hazardous driving conditions for yourself and other road users.
- » Removing dirt and mud helps prevent the transfer of soil from field to field.
- » Transporting soil between fields increases the risk of transferring weed seeds and plant pathogens such as clubroot.

Further information

Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100 (24 hours)
www.strathcona.ca

Give your Role Model a High Five!

Strathcona County Youth are invited to nominate their hero today!

The Strathcona County Youth Council is gearing up for its 3rd Annual High Five Awards on **June 7, 2010** at Festival Place. This awards program is an initiative of the Strathcona County Youth Council and Strathcona County Family and Community Services to honour the adults who have made a difference in the lives of children and youth in the community.

Anyone kindergarten to age 18 in Strathcona County can nominate their hero. This person can be a family member, teacher, coach, spiritual leader, or any adult who has been a mentor. There are four divisions for awards, based on grades K-3, 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12. There is one adult picked in each category for an award but all of the nominees will be recognized at the ceremony.

Online nomination forms can be found at www.strathcona.ca, various schools and some community venues. For more information please call 780-464-4044.

Deadline for all nominations

April 30, 2010.

Strathcona County
2001 Sherwood Drive, Sherwood Park, Alberta T8A 3W7
780-464-8111
www.strathcona.ca info@strathcona.ab.ca

Strathcona County