



COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, February 25, 2026
10:00 AM

Join Us

In Person

County of Stettler No. 6

Administration Building

On YouTube

www.YouTube.com/StettlerCounty

By Zoom

www.StettlerCounty.ca/Zoom

By Phone

578-328-1099

Meeting ID: 237 185 7702

Passcode: 660244

In the spirit of Truth and Reconciliation, the County of Stettler No. 6 acknowledges that we gather, live, and work on Treaty 6 and 7 lands, the customary and traditional lands of the Indigenous Peoples of this territory.

Thank you for respecting our commitment to Scent Reduction in the workplace.

1. Call to Order

2. Agenda Additions and Approval

3. Public Hearing

4. Delegation

5. Council's Request for Information

5.1 Fire Permits (Reeve Clarke)

Page 4

5.2 Roadside Brushing (Councillor Hunter)

6. New Business

- 6.1 Request for Decision: 4-H Intermediate Excellence Award Sponsorship Page 11
- 6.2 Request for Decision: Buffalo Lake Public Access Enhancement Report Page 14

7. Old Business

8. Agenda Items

- 8.1 Request for Joint Advocacy Page 109
- 8.2 Village of Donalda Viability Review Update

9. Bylaws

10. Correspondence

- 10.1 Alberta Game Wardens Association: Donation Request Page 117

11. Consent Agenda Items

- 11.1 National Police Federation: Federal Government RCMP Commitment Through 2032 Page 120
- 11.2 Drumheller RCMP: Q3 Policing Report Page 122
- 11.3 Stettler RCMP: Q3 Policing Report Page 140
- 11.4 County of Stettler: Community Service Awards Page 155

12. In-Camera Session

- 12.1 Proposed Tax Agreement
ATIA Section 30: Disclosure harmful to economic and other interests of a public body
- 12.2 Fire Transition
ATIA Section 30: Disclosure harmful to economic and other interests of a public body
- 12.3 Hamlet Lot Pricing
ATIA Section 30: Disclosure harmful to economic and other interests of a public body
- 12.4 Buffalo Lake Public Access Enhancement: Public Input Report
ATIA Section 20: Disclosure harmful to personal privacy

13. Next Meeting

Next Council Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 10, 2026

14. Adjournment

BYLAW 1706-23

BYLAW 1706-23 of the County of Stettler No. 6 being a bylaw for the purpose of preventing, regulating, and control of fires within the County of Stettler.

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Municipal Government Act, Chapter M-26 RSA 2000 and amendments thereto, the Council for a Municipality may pass bylaws for the safety, health, and welfare of people and the protection of people and property.

NOW THEREFORE, the Council of the County of Stettler No. 6, in the Province of Alberta, duly assembled enacts the following:

1. Name of Bylaw

- 1.1. This bylaw may be cited as the “Fire Protection Bylaw.”

2. Interpretation

- 2.1. **Camp Fire** means a fire conducted outdoors exclusively for the purpose of cooking or obtaining warmth in a Fire Pit.
- 2.2. **Council** means the Council of the County.
- 2.3. **County** means the County of Stettler No. 6.
- 2.4. **CAO** means the Chief Administrative Officer as appointed by Council.
- 2.5. **Fire Department** has the meaning assigned to *fire service organization* under the MGA.
- 2.6. **Fire Permit** means a permit issued by the CAO or their designate pursuant to either the FPPA or this bylaw allowing for the setting of outdoor fires or structure fires within the County.
- 2.7. **Fire Pit** means an outdoor receptacle that meets the following specifics:
 - 2.7.1. a minimum of 3 meters of clearance, measured from the nearest pit edge to the closest edge of a building, property line or other combustible material;
 - 2.7.2. a height not exceeding 0.6 meters measured from the surrounding grade to the top of the opening for solid fuel;
 - 2.7.3. a diameter not exceeding 1 meter;
 - 2.7.4. equipped with a mesh screen with openings no larger than 12.5 millimeters;
 - 2.7.5. enclosed sides made from bricks, concrete blocks, heavy gauge metal, or other non-combustible materials; and
 - 2.7.6. not located over any underground utilities or under any above ground wires.
- 2.8. **Fireworks** mean high hazard fireworks as defined in the Alberta Fire Code.
- 2.9. **Fireworks Permit** means a permit issued by the CAO or their designee pursuant to this bylaw allowing for the sale, storage for the purpose of sale, or discharge of fireworks.
- 2.10. **Fluid Fuel Appliance** means an appliance used exclusively for the purposes of cooking or obtaining warmth which is fueled by liquid or gas, including but not limited to propane and natural gas.
- 2.11. **FPPA** means the Forest and Prairie Protection Act, RSA 2000, c F-19, its regulations, and any amendments thereto.

- 2.12. **Incinerator Fire** means a fire that is confined within a noncombustible structure, container, or barrel with openings covered with a heavy gauge metal screen having a mesh size not larger than 13 millimeters and which are used for the purpose of burning refuse, protecting livestock from insects, or for protecting garden plants from frost.
- 2.13. **MGA** means the Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000, c F-25, its regulations, and any amendments thereto.
- 2.14. **Outdoor Fire** means any fire other than that defined as an Incinerator Fire, Structure Fire, or Camp Fire and shall include fires involving humus, soil, farm produce, bush, brush, grass, feed, straw, coal, or any fire that has escaped or spread from a building, structure, machine, vehicle, or incinerator. An Incinerator Fire without the required metal screen shall be deemed to be an Outdoor Fire.
- 2.15. **Peace Officer** means:
- 2.15.1. a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, while they are in the exercise or discharge of their powers or duties;
 - 2.15.2. a Community Peace Officer appointed under the Peace Officer Act, while they are in the exercise or discharge of their powers or duties; or
 - 2.15.3. A Bylaw Officer appointed under the MGA, while they are in the exercise or discharge of their powers or duties.
- 2.16. **Resident** means the owner, occupant, or person having control of the specified land.
- 2.17. **Running Fire** means a fire burning without being under the proper control of any person.
- 2.18. **Solid Fuel Appliance** means an appliance used exclusively for the purpose of cooking or obtaining warmth which is fueled by solid fuel, including but not limited to charcoal and wood.
- 2.19. **Structure Fire** means a fire confined to or within any building, structure, machine, or vehicle which will or is likely to cause the destruction of or damage to such building, structure, machine, or vehicle.
- 2.20. **Violation Ticket** has the meaning assigned to it under the Provincial Offences Procedures Act.

3. Powers of the Chief Administrative Officer

- 3.1. Where an emergency or a potential emergency exists, including weather conditions which increase the possibility or severity of wildland fires, the CAO or their designate shall be authorized to
- 3.1.1. suspend or cancel any and all Fire Permits;
 - 3.1.2. suspend the discharge of fireworks;
 - 3.1.3. suspend the authority for the public to light Structural Fires, Incinerator Fires, Outdoor Fires, Camp Fire, Fire Pit Fires, fires within a Solid Fuel Appliance and/or fires within a Fluid Fuel Appliance; and/or
 - 3.1.4. order the extinguishing of any Structural Fire, Incinerator Fire, Outdoor Fire, Camp Fire, Fire Pit Fires, fire within a Solid Fuel Appliance and/or fire within a Fluid Fuel Appliance.

4. Fire Permits

- 4.1. In addition to any Fire Permit required under the FPPA, Fire Permits shall be required for controlled Outdoor Fires and Structure Fires, year-round.

- 4.2. Any Fire Permit issued pursuant to the FPPA shall be deemed for all purposes to be a Fire Permit issued pursuant to this bylaw.
- 4.3. The CAO or their designate shall be authorized to issue Fire Permits in accordance with this bylaw.
- 4.4. The CAO or their designate may refuse issuance of a permit on reasonable and probable grounds that a public interest risk exists for the proposed fire.
- 4.5. A Fire Permit may be subject to any conditions deemed appropriate by the CAO or their designate.
- 4.6. Fire Permits issued pursuant to this bylaw are valid for such period of time as shall be determined and set by the CAO or their designate issuing the Fire Permit.
- 4.7. An applicant for a Fire Permit shall provide any details the CAO or their designate deems reasonable and appropriate, including but not limited to the location of the proposed burn, the materials being burned, and contact information for a responsible adult.
- 4.8. Upon receiving notice of the suspension or cancellation of a Fire Permit, the Resident shall immediately extinguish any fire set.
- 4.9. A Fire Permit shall not be transferable.
- 4.10. Any person who applies for a Fire Permit shall first get the permission of the owner of the lands for which the Fire Permit is being requested.

5. Fireworks

- 5.1. A Fireworks Permit shall be required to sell, store for sale, and discharge Fireworks year-round.
- 5.2. The CAO or their designate shall be authorized to issue Fireworks Permits in accordance with this bylaw.
- 5.3. The CAO or their designate may refuse issuance of a permit on reasonable and probable grounds that a public interest risk exists for the proposal.
- 5.4. A Fireworks Permit shall be subject to any conditions deemed appropriate by the CAO or their designate.
- 5.5. A Fireworks Permit issued pursuant to this bylaw shall be issued for such a period of time as shall be determined by the CAO or their designate.
- 5.6. An applicant for a Fireworks Permit shall provide any details the CAO or their designate deems reasonable and appropriate, including but not limited to the location of the proposed Fireworks, type of Fireworks, and contact information for a responsible adult.
- 5.7. A Fireworks Permit shall not be transferable.

6. Exemptions

- 6.1. A Fire Permit is not required under this bylaw for:
 - 6.1.1. An Incinerator Fire,
 - 6.1.2. A Camp Fire,
 - 6.1.3. A Fire Pit Fire or
 - 6.1.4. Fires within a Fluid Fuel Appliance or a Solid Fuel Appliance.

- 6.2. This bylaw does not apply to any industrial or commercial incinerators which are required to be licensed under the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act.
- 6.3. This bylaw does not apply to fires that are set for the purpose of training firefighters that are authorized by the CAO or their designate.

7. Offences

- 7.1. When a fire is lit and the authority to light such a fire has been suspended or ordered to be extinguished, the Resident for the lands where the fire is lit shall:
 - 7.1.1. Extinguish the fire immediately, or
 - 7.1.2. When they are unable to extinguish the fire immediately, report the fire to the Fire Department.
- 7.2. No person shall light an Outdoor Fire, Structure Fire, or Incinerator Fire in a hamlet.
- 7.3. No person shall light an Outdoor Fire or a Structure Fire without, or in contravention of, a subsisting Fire Permit if required under this bylaw or the Forest and Prairie Protection Act.
- 7.4. No person shall sell, store for sale, or discharge fireworks without, or in contravention of, a subsisting Fireworks Permit.
- 7.5. No person shall permit an Outdoor Fire or Structure Fire to be lit upon land they own, occupy, or is otherwise under their control except when such fire is permitted pursuant to the bylaw.
- 7.6. No person shall, either directly or indirectly; personally, or through an agent; servant; renter; or employee, light a fire and let it become a Running Fire on any land that is not their own property, nor shall they allow a Running Fire to pass from their own property to the property of another.
- 7.7. No person shall light an Outdoor Fire, a Structure fire, an Incinerator Fire, Fire Pit Fire, or a Camp Fire without first taking sufficient precaution to ensure that the fire can be kept under control at all times.
- 7.8. Any person who lights a fire, whether in possession of a valid Fire Permit or otherwise, who lights a fire for the purposes described in this bylaw is responsible for ensuring that the burn is conducted in a safe matter.
- 7.9. No person shall light an Outdoor Fire, Structure Fire, Incinerator Fire, Fire Pit Fire, Camp Fire, or solid fuel barbecue during a period where the Province has declared a fire ban or the CAO or their designate has suspended the authority to light such a fire in accordance with Section 3.1.

8. Penalties

- 8.1. Any person who fails to hold a subsisting Fire Permit when one is required under this bylaw, or who contravenes the conditions of a valid Fire Permit, is guilty of an offence and is liable to a fine of \$200.00 on Summary Conviction for the first offence; to a fine of \$500.00 on Summary Conviction for the second offence; and a fine of \$1,000.00 on Summary Conviction for the third and each subsequent offence.
- 8.2. A person who fails to comply with any provision contained in this bylaw, except for the failure to hold a subsisting Fire Permit; which is otherwise provided for under Section 6.1 of this bylaw, is guilty of an offence and is liable on Summary Conviction of imprisonment to a term of not more than six (6) months, or to a fine of not more than Twenty-Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500), or to both a fine and imprisonment.

- 8.3. Any Peace Officer is hereby authorized to enforce this bylaw and issue a Violation Ticket to any person whom the Peace Officer has reasonable and probable grounds to believe has contravened any provision of this bylaw.
- 8.4. No Person shall interfere with or obstruct a Peace Officer while they are in the course of their duties in relation to investigation and enforcement of this Bylaw

9. Miscellaneous

- 9.1. This bylaw shall come into force and effect upon being given third reading.
- 9.2. Should any Section or Part of this bylaw be found to have been improperly enacted for any reason then such Section or Part shall be regarded as being severable from the rest of this bylaw and the bylaw remaining after such severance shall be effective and enforceable as if the Section found to be improperly enacted had not been enacted as part of this bylaw.
- 9.3. This bylaw shall hereby repeal previous bylaw 1240-03.

READ A FIRST TIME this 12th day of July, 2023 on a motion of Councillor Nibourg.

READ A SECOND TIME this 10th day of January, 2024 on a motion of Councillor Stevens.

READ A THIRD TIME this 14th day of February, 2024 on a motion of Councillor Gendre.

DATED THIS this 14th day of February, 2024.

Original Signed
Reeve

Original Signed
Chief Administrative Officer



Fire Permit

Fire Permit No. _____

Please call 587-799-0710 BEFORE and AFTER you burn

Issued under the Authority of the Forest and Prairie Act RSA 2000 - c. F-19, the Regulations thereunder and Bylaw No. 1240-03

Applicant Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Burning Material: _____

Location of Burn

Roll: _____ Legal: _____ Address: _____

This permit authorizes the above person to kindle fires on the aforementioned lands for the purpose of burning the indicated materials subject to the conditions listed below:

Conditions of Permit

1. Abide by the requirements of the Forest and Prairie Protection Act and the Substance Release Regulation.
2. Obtain a permit to burn stubble from the County of Stettler No. 6 if burning stubble.
3. The permit period is limited to 14 days, including the date on which it was issued.
4. Permittee is responsible for the safe control of the burning herein authorized.
5. Winds must be less than 10km per hour.
6. A minimum of one adult must be in attendance at all times.
7. Sufficient tools, equipment, and quantities of water must be readily available for the size of the burn being conducted.
8. All brush piles and/or permitted debris piles must be buried under ground and covered with soil when burning is complete to ensure the fire cannot re-kindle.
9. Permittee must contact the Fire Chief's office before burning buildings.
10. Consideration must be given to neighbours to avoid physical discomfort as a result of burning.
11. The permittee agrees to indemnify and save harmless the County of Stettler No. 6 from all liability arising out of the operations authorized by this fire permit.
12. The permittee agrees to pay the cost of the fighting of all fires arising from the initial fire set by the permittee of this fire permit.
13. The permittee certifies that they have the landowner's consent to conduct this burn.
14. This permit may be cancelled at any time.
15. By lighting a fire under this permit, the permittee certifies that they have read and understand the conditions above and the regulations of the Forest and Prairie Act and accept full responsibility.
16. Any waiver of modification to the conditions of this permit shall only be applicable if made in writing by the Manager of Regional Fire Services or the County Fire Chief.

Effective Date _____

Expiry Date _____

Excerpts from the Forests and Prairie Protection Act, RSA 2000 c F-19

- Section 19** (3) A fire permit is valid only for the period for which it is issued.
- (4) A forest officer or fire guardian issuing a fire permit may endorse on the permit any special fire control conditions with which the applicant must comply in addition to this Act and the regulations.
- Section 20** (1) For the purpose of fire control the Minister may, by order,
- suspend or cancel within any part or all of Alberta all fire permits, or
 - prohibit the lighting or require the extinguishing of a fire set other than under the authority of a fire permit.
- (2) An order under subsection (1) must be communicated immediately to the public by a means that the Minister considers most likely to bring the matter to the attention of the public.
- (3) In an area affected by an order made pursuant to subsection (1), every person shall immediately proceed to extinguish every open outdoor fire lit by the person or under the person's authority and every fire located on land occupied or owned by the person.
- Section 22** No person shall
- light an outdoor fire without first taking sufficient precautions to ensure that the fire can be kept under control at all times,
 - light an outdoor fire when any fire hazard or burning hazard is conducive to a fire readily escaping out of control,
 - fail to take reasonable steps to control a fire for the purpose of preventing it from spreading onto land other than the person's own,
 - deposit, discard or leave any burning matter or substance in a place where it might ignite other matter and result in a fire, or
 - conduct in a forest protection area any activity that involves the use of fire or that might reasonably be expected to cause a fire, unless the person exercises reasonable care to prevent a fire from occurring.

Excerpts from the Forest and Prairie Protection Regulation

- Section 3** The holder of a fire permit who lights a fire under authority of the permit shall
- keep the fire under control at all times
 - unless otherwise authorized by a forest officer or fire guardian, ensure a responsible person is in attendance at the site of the fire to supervise the fire until it has been extinguished,
 - keep the fire permit at the site of the fire,
 - show the fire permit to a forest officer or fire guardian immediately on request, and
 - extinguish the fire when the earliest of the following occurs:
 - the holder of the permit is ordered to extinguish the fire under the Act;
 - the permit expires;
 - the permit is cancelled or suspended.

Excerpts from the Substance Release Regulation

- Section 1** (1) d. "burnable debris" means all combustible waste other than prohibited debris and includes but is not limited to
- wooden materials, which do not contain wood preservatives, from the construction or demolition of buildings;
 - "prohibited debris" means any combustible waste that, when burned, may result in the release to the atmosphere of dense smoke, offensive odours or toxic substances and includes but is not limited to
 - non-wooden material;
 - waste material from building or construction sites, excluding wooden materials that do not contain wood preservatives;
 - rubber or plastic, or anything containing or coated with rubber or plastic or similar substances, except rubber or plastic attached to shredded scrap steel;
 - wood or wood products containing substances for the purpose of preserving wood;

- Section 5** No person shall release or permit the release into the ambient air of a visible emission so that it impairs visibility on a highway or on a developed property.



Request for Decision

Agenda Item: Sponsorship Support for 4-H Districts - Beef

Issue

The Stettler District 4-H Beef Council organizes an Annual 4-H Show and Sale for all Beef Clubs in this district, and historically the County of Stettler has provided for the sponsorship the Intermediate Excellence Award.

Options for Consideration (Recommendations)

That the County of Stettler No. 6:

1. Support the Stettler District 4-H Beef Club's annual event, with the requested sponsorship for the Intermediate Excellence Award of \$1,000.00, and conduct the interviews of the four nominees, and recommend a recipient for the *4H Beef Intermediate Excellence* award.
2. Decline sponsorship for the Stettler District 4H Beef Club's Intermediate Excellence Award.

General

Each year, the Stettler District 4-H Beef Council organizes an Annual 4-H Show and Sale for all four 4-H Beef Clubs in this district. The County of Stettler has been a long-time sponsor of the annual 4H Beef Show - Intermediate Excellence Award.

The 4-H name represents four personal development areas of focus for the organization: head, heart, hands and health. The goal of 4-H is to develop citizenship, leadership, responsibility and life skills of youth through experiential learning programs and a positive youth development approach. Though typically thought of as an agriculturally focused organization as a result of its history, 4-H today focuses on citizenship, healthy living, science, and engineering and technology programs. The 4-H motto is "To make the best better", while its slogan is "Learn by doing" (or "Learn to do by doing").

Financial

Council has supported the Stettler District 4-H Beef Club's Intermediate Excellence Award previously. In 2025 we increased sponsorship to \$1,000 in order to match the Junior and Senior Award amounts. Previously, we supported annually with a donation of \$400.

This amount may be funded through Rural Development Fund if Council wishes to continue this sponsorship for 2026.

Policy/Legislation

Under the authority of the Municipal Government Act, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Chapter M-26, Section 180 (1) where a Council may act only by resolution or bylaw. While Council approved Policy AF 6.23 – Community Investment Program at the April 14 Council Meeting, we have not yet rolled this Policy out and communicated it adequately to the public and to our community groups.

Strategic Plan Linkages

Emerging Issue

Implementation/Communication

We will contact the event organizers to arrange the County's sponsorship and participation. We will assemble a committee for interviews, and candidates for the award will be interviewed.

Target Decision Date

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

Prepared By

Niki Thorsteinsson, Director of Communications

Reviewed By

Yvette Cassidy, Chief Administrative Officer

Stettler District 4-H Beef Council

Box 1211
Stettler, Alberta
T0C 2L0

February 9, 2026

County Of Stettler



On behalf of the Stettler District 4-H Beef Council, we would like to express a heartfelt **THANK YOU** for your continued sponsorship of our annual Achievement Days. Our event this year will be on **May 18th & 19th** at the **Stettler Agriplex**. There are **70** members and **13** cleaver members in the Big Knife, Big Valley, Erskine and Byemoor Beef Clubs.

Us 4-H members are dedicated to excellence, and we are extremely grateful for the support we receive to help our journey to be successful and contributing members of our community.

Can we count on your repeat support as last year of \$ 1000 for Intermediate Excellence Award?

Your donation will receive you a written receipt, specific award recognition, signage at the show, social media advertising, 2 banquet tickets, crowd recognition at our awards presentation prior to the live steer sale, and listed in our show catalogue under the applicable sponsorship level.

Platinum - over \$500

Gold - \$250-\$500

Silver - up to \$250

Regards,

Rylen Hoopfer

Big Knife 4-H Beef Club

Jordan Hoopfer 403-323-0587

RECEIVED

FEB 13 2026

County of Stettler



Request for Decision

Agenda Item: Buffalo Lake Public Access Enhancement

Issue

Consideration of the recommendations contained in the Buffalo Lake Public Access Enhancement Report.

Options for Consideration (Recommendations)

1. That the County of Stettler No. 6 receives the Buffalo Lake Public Access Enhancement Report dated 2026 and Administration's proposed implementation framework for information and schedules further consideration of the report's recommendations and implementation for the April 22, 2026 Council meeting (*recommended option*)

OR

2. That the County of Stettler No. 6 receives the Buffalo Lake Public Access Enhancement Report dated 2026 and Administration's proposed implementation framework for information and schedules further consideration of the report's recommendations and implementation for a different future Council meeting.

General

In 2025, Parkland Community Planning Services undertook a project for the County to create plans for three vehicular access points that are identified in the South Shore Area Structure Plan and the Buffalo Lake Intermunicipal Development Plan. The three County owned public access locations along the shore of Buffalo Lake are the Buffalo View Estates marina (now being changed to Rochon Sands Heights marina), the Scenic Sands park, and the municipal reserve parcel and road allowance at the west entrance to Buffalo Lake Meadows. The process identified the types of activities that should be considered for each site and based on the selected activities, the nature of site improvements and facilities that could be added. The process and the resulting recommendations are documented in the attached Buffalo Lake Public Access Enhancement Report.

The creation of a plan for the three public access sites is a follow-up item stemming from the Buffalo Lake Intermunicipal Development Plan and the South Shore Area Structure Plan. The sites are intended to serve future development in the area and all residents of the County by giving defined locations and facilities to access and enjoy the lake. The three access locations are also intended to serve the remaining 1,500±, yet to be created development units that are allowed in the County portion of the South Shore Growth Node. The majority of these future development units will not have direct access to the lake shore and, in this respect, the three access points will be critical in accommodating the desire of future residents to recreate near or on the lake.

The concepts and recommendations in the Report can be implemented in a staged manner. Administration is proposing the following implementation framework:

1. Limit initial development in 2026 and 2027 to land under the direct control of the County to allow time for further discussions with Alberta Environment and Protected Areas (AEPA) regarding any

improvements on the Provincial Right of Way. These discussions may result in a recreation lease for a portion of lake shore or dispositions for individual improvements. The discussions will also have to account for existing dispositions that AEPA has issued to community associations.

2. Focus on smaller scale improvements for 2026 and 2027 with some improvement directed at each of the three sites including:
 - a. Site identification signs for the main access to each of the three locations and re-naming of BVE Marina to Rochon Sands Heights Marina.
 - b. Information signs for each location outlining basic information about the site and expected etiquette.
 - c. Garbage receptacles for each location.
 - d. Trial use of portable toilets and related maintenance and service contract at each of the three locations.
 - e. Public seasonal dock for the Rochon Sands Heights Marina location under the existing disposition for the marina.

3. Schedule larger scale improvements such as expanded parking areas for 2028 and beyond.

Financial

Proposed spending related to the implementation of recommendations will be provided in the RFD for the April 22 meeting. The 2026 Budget includes \$200,000 for implementation.

Policy/Legislation

Municipal Government Act, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Chapter M-26, Section 248
a municipality may only make an expenditure that is (a) included in an operating budget, interim operating budget or capital budget or otherwise authorized by the council.

Buffalo Lake Intermunicipal Development Plan (Bylaw 1637-20) Policy 3.3.3(e) The municipalities must prepare public access plans in conjunction with the development of each growth node plan.

South Shore Area Structure Plan (Bylaw 1662-21) Section 4.4 Lake Access Plan Policies

Strategic Plan Linkages

Emerging issue.

Implementation/Communication

Administration is proposing to schedule full consideration of the report recommendations and implementation framework for the April 22, 2026 Council meeting to enable further community feedback. Materials will be referred to the four municipalities that are partners in the Buffalo Lake Intermunicipal Development Plan and posted on the County website for comment. Ratepayers will be invited to attend the April 22, 2026 Council meeting to observe or make comments.

Creating the recommendations of the Buffalo Lake Public Access Enhancement Report involved several stages of public consultation. This included open comment opportunities through the County website postings, an online survey, and two open houses. The Report contains a summary of the public consultation and the attached What We Heard Report provides more detail. A separate document containing all comments, including private information of participants, will be provided to Council as a confidential resource.

Target Decision Date

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

Prepared By

Craig Teal, RPP MCIP, Director of Planning & Development

Reviewed By

Yvette Cassidy, Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

Buffalo Lake Public Access Enhancement (2026)

Buffalo Lake Public Access Enhancement – What We Heard – Community and Stakeholders Engagement 2025



BUFFALO LAKE PUBLIC ACCESS ENHANCEMENT 2026



Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
1) INTRODUCTION	2
2) BUFFALO LAKE OVERVIEW	2
3) GUIDING POLICIES AND FRAMEWORK	4
3.1) COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION	4
3.2) LAKE ACCESS STRATEGY.....	4
3.3) ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP.....	4
3.4) PLANNING AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES	5
3.5) COMPLIANCE AND COLLABORATION	5
3.6) INFRASTRUCTURE, RESOURCE EFFICIENCY AND IMPLEMENTATION	5
4) EXISTING PUBLIC ACCESS SITES	6
4.1) SCENIC SANDS SITE	6
4.2) BUFFALO LAKE MEADOWS SITE	9
4.3) BUFFALO VIEW ESTATES SITE	12
5) ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT	15
5.1 BIOPHYSICAL AND AERIAL IMAGERY REVIEW	17
5.2 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND CONSTRAINTS	19
5.3 PROVINCIAL REGULATIONS REVIEW.....	20
6) COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDERS' ENGAGEMENT.....	23
6.1) ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY	23
6.2) OPEN HOUSE I	26
6.3) OPEN HOUSE II	27
7) DESIGN CONCEPTS FOR ENHANCEMENT.....	29
7.1) ACTIVITY-FACILITY MATRIX.....	29
7.2) SCENIC SANDS – ENHANCEMENT CONCEPT	31
7.3 BUFFALO LAKE MEADOWS.....	36
7.4) BUFFALO VIEW ESTATES	42
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.....	48
ATTACHMENTS.....	49

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Buffalo Lake Public Access Enhancement Plan provides a strategic framework and design concepts for improving public access along the south shore of Buffalo Lake under County of Stettler No. 6 jurisdiction. The plan balances recreational opportunities, accessibility, stakeholder priorities and environmental concerns, to ensure enhancements are both practical and sustainable.

The enhancement focuses on three key public access sites: Scenic Sands, Buffalo Lake Meadows, and Buffalo View Estates. Scenic Sands offers a family-friendly sandy beach with woodland surroundings, while Buffalo Lake Meadows provides expansive grassy areas and sensitive environments suitable for passive recreation and small-craft boating. Buffalo View Estates, adjacent to residential development, features scenic lake views and existing infrastructure, providing opportunities for targeted improvements to enhance visitor experience.

Enhancement strategies link recreational activities to corresponding physical improvements. Walking and hiking are supported through upgraded trails and natural paths. Nature watching and learning are enhanced with viewing platforms and interpretive signage. Socializing and picnicking are supported through picnic sites and seating areas, while boating facilities provide small craft launches and storage. Health, hygiene, and safety improvements include washrooms, garbage and recycling bins and emergency access routes.

At Scenic Sands site, upgrades include a new gravel access road, a new parking, a prefabricated washroom, picnic amenities, a viewing platform, improved waste management, information signage, and a controlled entry gate. Buffalo Lake Meadows site incorporates similar improvements, with the addition of a designated boat and dock storage area to support the community members' small watercraft use while managing shoreline impact. Buffalo View Estates site builds on its existing infrastructure with portable and flushable washroom options, expanded picnic areas, enhanced viewing opportunities, updated signage. Together, these enhancements create a consistent, low maintenance facilities, and environmentally responsible public access network along south shore of the Buffalo Lake.

Preliminary cost estimates support a phased implementation approach based on priority, funding availability, and site readiness, enabling the County to maximize public benefit while maintaining fiscal responsibility. The estimated cost of enhancements ranges from approximately \$100,000 to \$265,000 per site, with a total projected investment of around \$600,000 for all three locations.

1) INTRODUCTION

Under the jurisdiction of County of Stettler No. 6, there are three public access points at the south shore of Buffalo Lake: Scenic Sands, Buffalo Lake Meadows, and Buffalo View Estates. (Fig 1)

Fig 1: Buffalo Lake Public Access Sites – County of Stettler No. 6



Each of these access points plays a significant role in the local community, serving as vital recreational spaces that enhance social interaction, support the local economy, promote tourism, and protect natural habitats.

By addressing areas for enhancement, these access points can further improve the visitor experience while ensuring the preservation of the beautiful natural environment surrounding Buffalo Lake.

2) BUFFALO LAKE OVERVIEW

LOCATION AND SPECIFICATION

- **Location:** Buffalo Lake in central Alberta is a large, popular destination for water recreation, located about 40-55 km east of Red Deer, known for fishing (pike, perch, walleye), boating, swimming, and camping.
- **Size :** The lake spans about 17 kilometers in length and 7.5 kilometers in width, covering a surface area of 93.5 square kilometers which converts to approximately 9,350 hectares or 23,100 acres. It lies at an elevation of 785 meters above sea level.
- **Depth :** The lake averages about 1.2 to 1.5 meters (4 to 5 feet) in depth, with some areas reaching up to 3 meters (about 10 feet).

ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITY

- **Biodiversity:** Buffalo Lake is known for hosting more than 300 species of birds , making it an important site for bird watching and ecological study.
- **Water Quality:** Regular monitoring of water quality indicates that nutrient levels (especially phosphorus) can peak during the summer months due to runoff, which can create algal blooms if not managed.
- **Wetlands:** The area around the lake features approximately 1,000 hectares of wetland ecosystems, critical for maintaining habitat for many species.

SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES

- **Visitor Numbers:** Rochon Sands Provincial Park attracts approximately 100,000 visitors annually , who participate in a range of activities from camping to fishing and boating.
- **Camping Facilities:** The park features around 200 camping spots, accommodating families and groups throughout the summer season.
- **Fishing:** Species like northern pike and walleye present in the lake draw anglers, with fishing licenses increasing by about 10% in the summer months.

ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE FOR COUNTY OF STETTLER NO. 6 AND ALBERTA

- **Tourism Revenue:** The tourism sector surrounding Buffalo Lake generates an estimated \$20 million annually , impacting local businesses significantly.
- **Population:** County of Stettler No. 6 and the Town of Stettler have a combined population of approximately 12,000 residents , with Buffalo Lake contributing to a transient seasonal population that can increase this number significantly during peak tourist months.

TOURISM INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS CONDITIONS

- **Business Growth:** Local businesses have seen revenue growth of about 5-7% annually , attributed to increased tourism and recreational use of Buffalo Lake.
- **Investment in Development:** Recent initiatives by local governments have aimed to invest in infrastructure enhancements, including roads and recreational facilities around the lake.

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC AND INCOME LEVEL OF RESIDENTS

- **Income Levels:** The median household income in County of Stettler No. 6 is approximately \$81,000 , which reflects a diverse economy with both agricultural and tourism-dependent incomes.
- **Demographics:** The average age of residents in the Buffalo Lake area is around 43 years , with a relatively balanced mix of families and retirees.

CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND AMENITIES

- **Transportation:** A network of public roads and trails fosters regional transportation and local access and enhances tourism by supporting recreational activities such as fishing and boating, which in turn boosts the local economy.
- **Water and Sewer:** The existing Water and Sewer System in the region offers essential services that benefit both local communities and visitors.

- **Health Services:** The nearest hospital is in Stettler, which serves a regional population of 12,000 and provides a range of medical services, including emergency care.
- **Public Facilities:** Facilities include several parks, public beaches, and the Rochon Sands Provincial Park, which spans over 1,200 hectares of recreational land.

3) GUIDING POLICIES AND FRAMEWORK

This section is a summary of guidelines and strategic policies derived from the South Shore Area Structure Plan (SS-ASP), Buffalo Lake Integrated Shoreland Management (BLISMP), Buffalo Lake intermunicipal Development Plan (BL-IDP) and County of Stettler No.6 Municipal Development Plan (MDP). The following captures of the essence of the most important sections of these documents focused on the Buffalo Lake and Public Access facilities.

3.1) COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION

- i) **Community Involvement:** Community and stakeholders’ engagement must be facilitated in planning and maintaining access points, fostering stewardship and a sense of ownership among residents.
- ii) **Education Programs:** Educational programs should be developed to raise awareness about sustainable practices and the importance of protecting the lake’s ecosystem, aligning with SS-ASP, IDP and MDP objectives.

3.2) LAKE ACCESS STRATEGY

- i) **Designated Access Points:** Focusing on maintaining public access locations with safe entry for both pedestrians and vehicles. Developing infrastructure such as boat launches and parking, ensuring it aligns with designated areas per the SS-ASP and IDP.
- ii) **Sustainability:** Considering sustainable practices in developing access points, utilizing eco-friendly materials and designs that minimize environmental impact.

3.3) ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

- i) **Sensitive Area Conservation:** Avoiding disrupting habitats and wetlands and implementing measures for erosion control and ensuring developments maintain water quality standards.
- ii) **Integration with Open Spaces:** Public access points should be integrated with open spaces and preserved areas as dictated by the SS-ASP and IDP to offer educational and recreational opportunities while preserving biodiversity.
- iii) **Wetlands and Water Quality:** It is essential to prevent activities that could degrade water quality and ensure wetlands are preserved or used as retention areas only as a last resort.
- iv) **Riparian Zone Protection (Buffer Zones):** It is required to implement buffer zones around shorelines, maintaining setback requirements (e.g., 30 meters) to protect riparian zones and ensure water quality.

3.4) PLANNING AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- i) **Trail Systems:** Interconnected trail systems should be developed to link public access points with parks and community facilities, enhancing the usability and accessibility of the lake.
- ii) **Diverse Recreational Options:** Creating spaces that accommodate various recreational activities, ensuring design aligns with community needs and ecological considerations outlined in the MDP and SS-ASP.
- iii) **Land Use Compatibility :** Developments must align with designated land use categories. Incorporating residential, recreational, or commercial facilities must be done with attention to compatibility with existing uses.
- iv) **Design for Safety :** Ensure that all facilities are designed for safe public use, providing accessible routes for individuals with disabilities and integrating public safety measures.

3.5) COMPLIANCE AND COLLABORATION

- i) **Compliance with Regulations:** All enhancements must comply with local, provincial, and federal regulations, including zoning bylaws and environmental protection rules.
- ii) **Cross-Municipal Collaboration:** Enhancement collaboration among municipalities as per Buffalo Lake Intermunicipal Plan requirements is a vital key to manage growth, infrastructure planning, and environmental protection collaboratively.

3.6) INFRASTRUCTURE, RESOURCE EFFICIENCY AND IMPLEMENTATION

- i) **Resource Management:** In alignment with the BLISMP objectives efficient resource management strategies should be developed to provide adequate water, wastewater, and waste management services without compromising the lake's ecological health.
- ii) **Impact Mitigation:** Infrastructure should minimize visual impacts on the landscape, preserving scenic views and the natural character of the area.
- iii) **Gradual Implementation:** Public access enhancements should proceed in phases, aligned with projected growth to avoid overburdening current infrastructure and resources.
- iv) **Water and Waste Management :** New developments must incorporate collective water and wastewater systems to ensure sustainable resource management

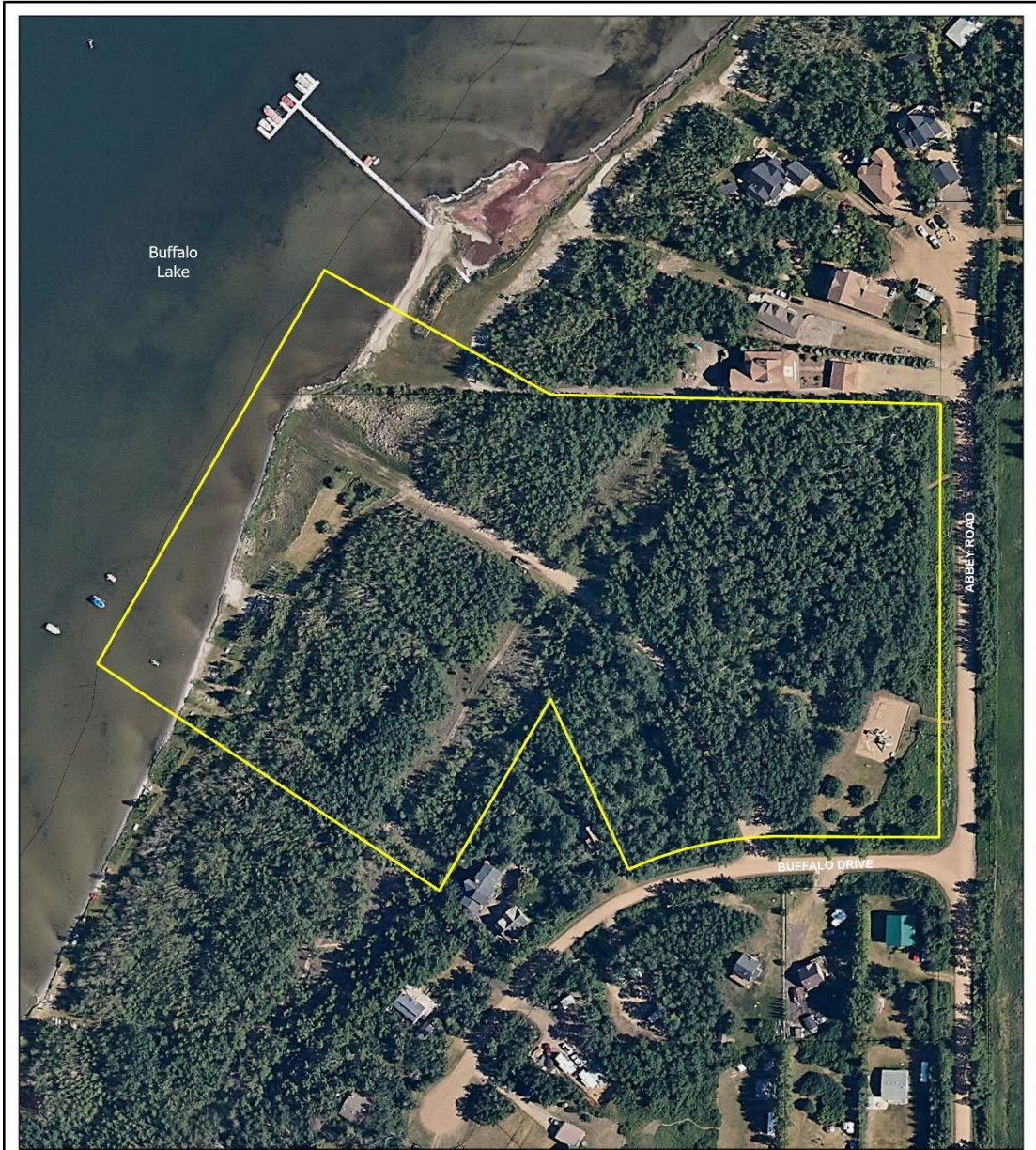
4) EXISTING PUBLIC ACCESS SITES

4.1) SCENIC SANDS SITE

OVERVIEW

Scenic Sands offers a naturally sheltered public access point featuring a sandy shoreline well suited for swimming, sunbathing, and beach-related recreation. The site covers approximately 54,000 m² and provides a high-quality natural experience due to its extensive vegetation and relative separation from nearby residences.

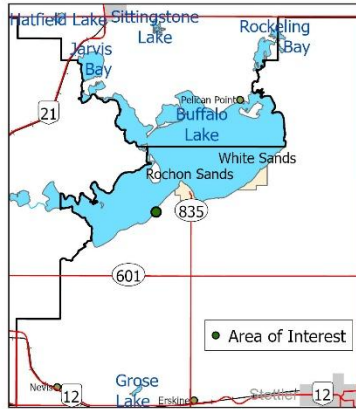




**BUFFALO LAKE
PUBLIC ACCESS ENHANCEMENT
Scenic Sands Location Map**

0 25 50 100 Meters

Map Date: January 2026
Scale: 1:1,500
When printed on 11" x 17" paper



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Site Character and Environment

The area is surrounded by dense woodland, creating a strong natural buffer that enhances privacy and contributes to a tranquil, nature-oriented visitor experience.

Proximity to Residential Areas

Residential properties exist to the east and west; however, mature vegetation provides an effective buffer that mitigates noise and maintains residents' privacy.

Access

The site is reached via gravel public roads. While functional, these routes may require ongoing maintenance and can present accessibility challenges during wet weather or peak-use periods.

Beach and Shoreline

Soft, white sand along the shoreline provides a highly attractive swimming and relaxation area. The natural beach character is a defining feature of the site.

Facilities and Amenities

Current amenities include a small playground, picnic shelter and an informal parking area. However, the site lacks key visitor services such as washrooms, changing facilities, and formal picnic areas.

Trails

Undeveloped and natural trails connect portions of the site and the adjacent residential community. These assets offer recreational potential but require upgrades to improve safety, accessibility, and user experience.

POTENTIAL AREAS FOR ENHANCEMENT

Infrastructure

- **Beach Access:** Develop clearly defined pathways to improve access for users.
- **Parking:** Formalize and expand parking areas to accommodate peak seasonal demand.
- **Trail System:** Establish a connected network of upgraded trails with opportunities for interpretive signage highlighting local ecology.
- **Shoreline Protection:** Consider erosion-control measures such as native plantings or naturalized barriers.

Facilities

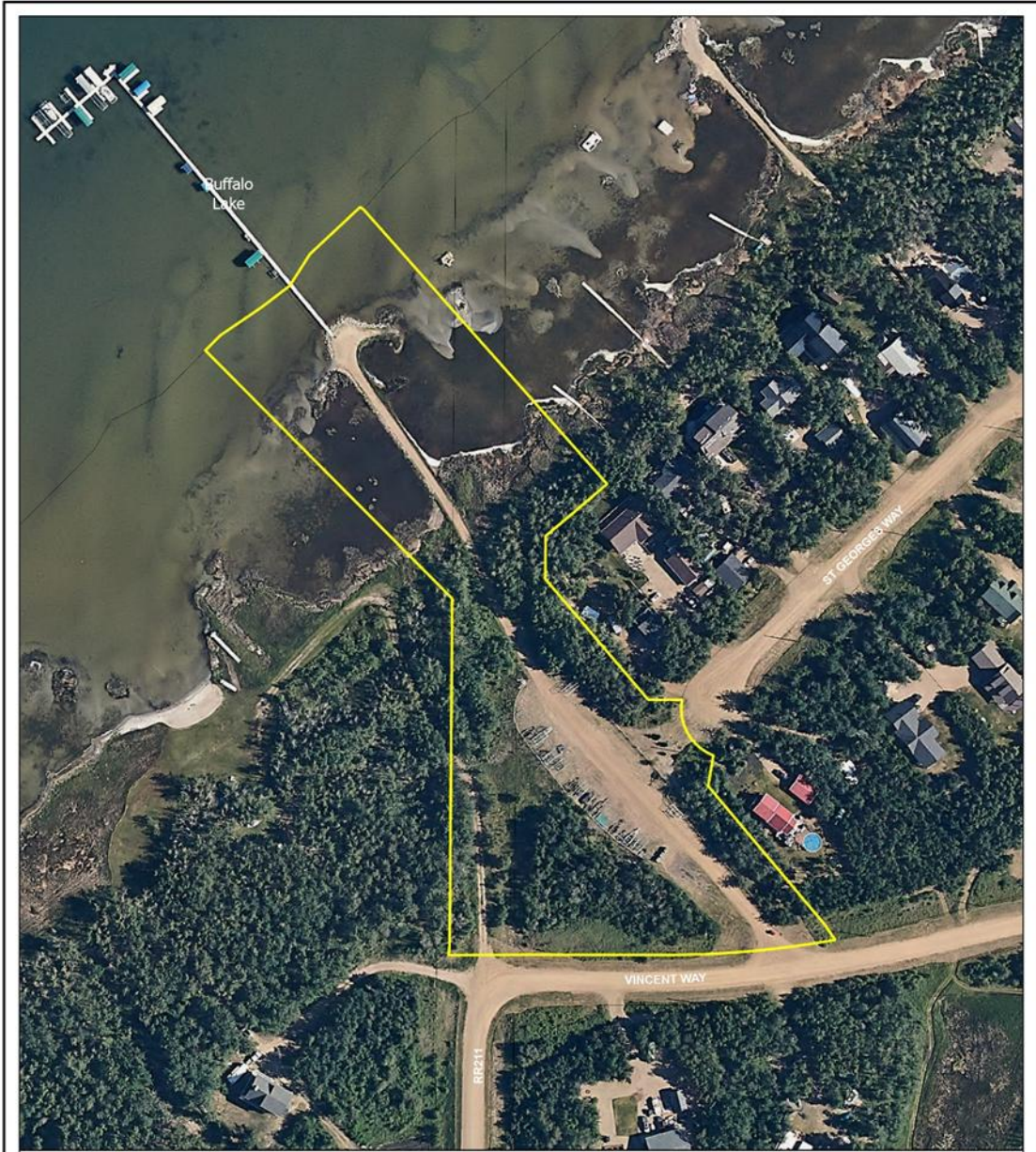
- **Swimming Area:** Install markers and safety signage to support safe recreation.
- **Restrooms:** Provide environmentally sensitive washroom facilities to accommodate longer visits.
- **Picnic Areas:** Incorporate picnic sites, seating, and waste-management facilities.
- **Recreation Features:** Consider nature-based play elements or low-impact activity areas such as volleyball courts.

4.2) BUFFALO LAKE MEADOWS SITE

OVERVIEW

Buffalo Lake Meadows is located further northeast along the south shore and offers approximately 27,900 m² of predominantly open and treed land suitable for various outdoor and family-oriented activities. The site benefits from convenient access via Range Road 21-2, though current amenities are limited.

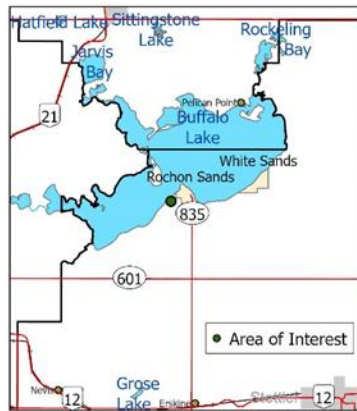




BUFFALO LAKE
PUBLIC ACCESS ENHANCEMENT
Buffalo Lake Meadows Location Map

0 25 50 100 Meters

Map Date: January 2026
Scale: 1:1,500
When printed on 11" x 17" paper



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Natural Environment

The site is framed by mature wooded areas that provide a peaceful, nature-focused setting. Aquatic vegetation is abundant near the shoreline due to the shallow depth of water, reducing suitability for larger watercraft and indicating that any future dock infrastructure should be designed for smaller vessels such as jet boats, kayaks, or personal watercraft.

Proximity to Residential Areas

Residences are located east of the site and buffered by existing trees. This proximity necessitates future design considerations to maintain privacy and minimize noise impacts.

Access and Circulation

The site is accessed by gravel public roads.

Parking and Services

A formal public parking area is available, but occupied by dock storage, restricting visitor capacity and creating potential safety and circulation issues.

Shoreline and Swimming Area

The shoreline is ungroomed and natural, offering opportunities for future design while preserving the site's natural qualities.

POTENTIAL AREAS FOR ENHANCEMENT

County of Stettler No. 6 plans; specifically the IDP and South Shore Area Structure Plan, emphasize significant upgrades to this access point to support anticipated growth in the South Shore Growth Node. Key improvement directions include:

- **Parking Facilities:** Develop a formal parking lot with defined access points and circulation.
- **Basic Amenities:** Introduce washrooms, changing facilities, and seating to improve comfort and encourage longer visits.
- **Low-Impact Trail Connections:** Construct pathways or boardwalks that protect sensitive vegetation while improving lake access.
- **Environmental Protection:** Design access and recreational facilities to minimize disturbance to wooded areas and aquatic vegetation.
- **Water Access:** Install docks suitable for small watercraft only, consistent with environmental conditions and ASP direction.

Both the IDP and South Shore ASP recommend significant upgrades and expansions to the existing public access to accommodate the anticipated residential growth in the South Shore Growth Node. This includes the development of new access facilities or the expansion and enhancement of existing ones.

For this site, improvements and designs could focus on sustainable development that enhances visitor experience while preserving the natural environment. Priorities should include the development of parking facilities, access to basic amenities, and potentially the construction of low-impact paths or boardwalks to improve accessibility. The lack of washrooms is a significant gap in current amenities, potentially affecting visitors' comfort. This is an important consideration for future development to accommodate longer stays and increase user satisfaction.

Design considerations should also focus on minimizing the environmental footprint to maintain the natural appeal of the wooded area.

4.3) BUFFALO VIEW ESTATES SITE

OVERVIEW

Buffalo View Estates encompasses approximately 19,200 m² of public access on the southern shore of Buffalo Lake within an established residential area. The site offers panoramic lake views and benefits from a higher level of built infrastructure compared to other access points. This access point offers beautiful views of the lake and includes amenities for visitors, such as parking and pathways for easy access to the water. It may also provide areas for picnicking and enjoying the natural surroundings.

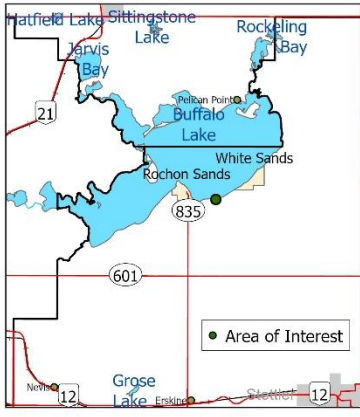




**BUFFALO LAKE
PUBLIC ACCESS ENHANCEMENT
Buffalo View Estates Location Map**

0 25 50 100 Meters

Map Date: January 2026
Scale: 1:1,000
When printed on 11" x 17" paper



EXISTING CONDITIONS

- **Residential Context:** The site is integrated within a well-developed residential community that includes private amenities and landscaped open spaces.
- **Transportation Network:** A well-maintained system of paved roads and pathways provides reliable access for both vehicles and pedestrians.
- **Boat Launch Area:** The access point includes a designated public boat launch and a private marina with a series of small docks and mooring spots that are rented out to individuals enabling safe and efficient water access.
- **Public Parking:** A paved parking lot and off-street parking supports recreational demand and provides convenient parking.

POTENTIAL AREAS FOR ENHANCEMENT

Infrastructure

- **Parking Capacity:** Evaluate opportunities for expanding or optimizing parking to address peak-season demand.
- **Open Space Enhancement:** Improve grassy open areas for passive recreation, picnicking, or community gatherings.

Facilities

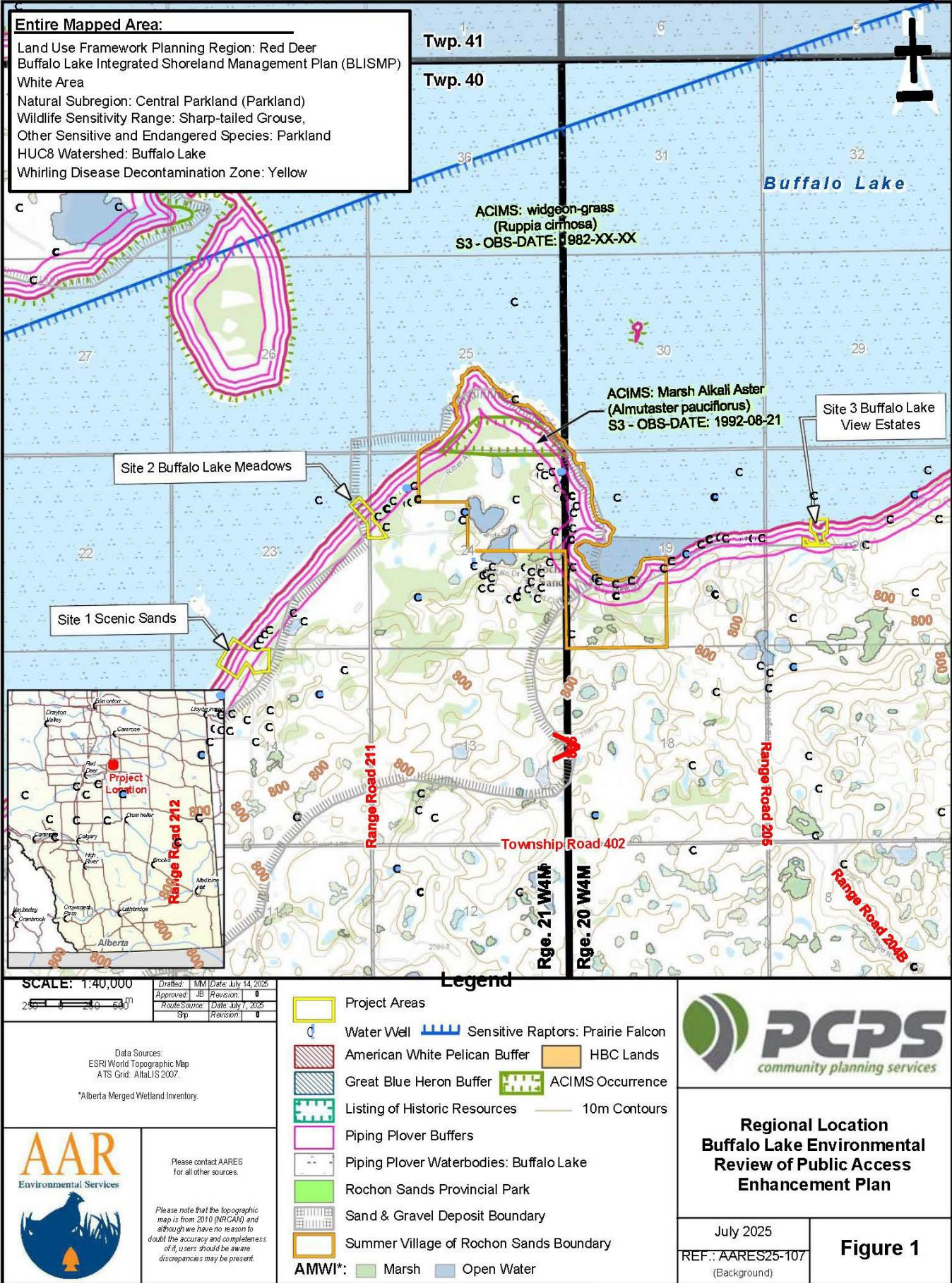
- **Picnic Amenities:** Install picnic tables, seating, and potentially fire-safe cooking areas.
- **Small Craft Launching:** Consider adding dedicated launch facilities for kayaks, canoes, or paddleboards.
- **Restroom Facilities:** Add or upgrade public washrooms to meet visitor needs.
- **Accessibility:** Improve paths, ramps, and surfaces to ensure barrier-free access across the site.
- **Recreation Amenities:** Explore opportunities for additional community recreation features such as playgrounds or sport courts.
- **Environmental Education:** Integrate interpretive signage highlighting local ecosystems, wildlife, and stewardship messages.

5) ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

On behalf of the County of Stettler No. 6, PCPS engaged AAR Environmental Services (AARES) to carry out an Environmental Review aimed at assessing the potential environmental impacts of the proposed public access enhancements on Buffalo Lake. The Review offers a comprehensive overview of the environmental conditions, issues, and site-specific concerns associated with the project.

AARES conducted their assessment utilizing existing data sources to identify biophysical site features and evaluate historical and environmental conditions. The information for this review was gathered from publicly accessible databases and maps, aerial imagery, as well as published reports and government documents.

The findings of this environmental assessment indicate that there are no wetlands associated with the project sites. Furthermore, no watercourses, drainages, or ditches were observed in relation to the proposed enhancements.



5.1 BIOPHYSICAL AND AERIAL IMAGERY REVIEW

Aerial imagery review summaries for each site are presented in Tables 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3. These include assessed wetlands and other waterbodies, examination of vegetation communities, land use, and wildlife habitat potential. In general, the three sites are similar, and they all occur between the open water edge of Buffalo Lake to the forested areas upslope of the lake. Aerial imagery and identified biophysical site features are provided in Figures 2A through 2C.

Table 5.1 Scenic Sands – Biophysical Review

Wetlands and Waterbodies	Site 1: No wetlands associated with this site
Watercourses, Drainages and Ditches	No watercourses, drainages, or ditches were observed in association with the project sites.
Land Use and Vegetation Communities	Topographic mapping and aerial imagery show there is a gentle rise of land from the shore of Buffalo Lake to a beach forest area dominated by deciduous trees and shrubs. Away from this, the landscape is generally undulating with low wetland filled depressions surrounded by minor hills with scrubby aspen and willow shrubs especially on north facing slopes and dry native grass pastures present on hilltops and on gentle slopes surrounding wetlands. Some areas have been cleared for use as pasture. Croplands are not present.
Potential Wildlife Habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitive species zones that interact with the project sites include Piping Plover, Sharp-tailed Grouse, and Prairie Falcon. • The area also supports sensitive parkland bird species, many of which are migratory species and protected under the Migratory Bird Convention Act. • Piping plover habitat is present throughout the Lake and shore habitat. This species nests in sandy beaches. • This area has potential to support sharp-tailed grouse/lekking habitat due to the open grassy areas intermixed with forested and shrubland areas. This habitat occurs adjacent to Site 1, to the east across a road, and within the potential buffer area for protection of leks while active (500 m). • Prairie Falcon prefer high cliff areas for nesting. This habitat is not common in the Buffalo Lake area. • Suitable habitat for various species groups considered to be “Other Sensitive and Endangered Species - Parklands” (e.g., songbirds and amphibians) is present within 100 to 300 m of the site.

Table 5.2 Buffalo Lake Meadows site – Biophysical Review

Wetlands and Waterbodies	Site 2: No wetlands associated with this site
Watercourses, Drainages and Ditches	No watercourses, drainages, or ditches were observed in association with the project sites.
Land Use and Vegetation Communities	Topographic mapping and aerial imagery show there is a gentle rise of land from the shore of Buffalo Lake to a beach forest area dominated by deciduous trees and shrubs. Away from this, the landscape is generally undulating with low wetland filled depressions surrounded by minor hills with scrubby aspen and willow shrubs especially on north facing slopes and dry native grass pastures present on hilltops and on gentle slopes surrounding wetlands. Spe areas have been cleared for use as pasture. Croplands are not present.
Potential Wildlife Habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitive species zones that interact with the project sites include Piping Plover, Sharp-tailed Grouse, and Prairie Falcon. • The area also supports sensitive parkland bird species, many of which are migratory species and protected under the Migratory Bird Convention Act. • Piping plover habitat is present throughout the Lake and shore habitat. This species nests in sandy beaches. • This area has potential to support sharp-tailed grouse/lekking habitat due to the open grassy areas intermixed with forested and shrubland areas. This habitat occurs adjacent to Site 2 with a cleared area immediately to the southwest. • Prairie Falcon prefer high cliff areas for nesting. This habitat is not common in the Buffalo Lake area. • Suitable habitat for various species groups considered to be “Other Sensitive and Endangered Species - Parklands” (e.g., songbirds and amphibians) is present within 100 to 300 m of the site.

Table 5.3 Buffalo View Estates site – Biophysical Review

Wetlands and Waterbodies	Site 3: Two wetlands occur immediately south of Site 3. WL01, a Semipermanent Graminoid Marsh is located about 65 m south of the Buffalo Lake View Estates Project Site. WL02 is a Seasonal Graminoid Marsh and occurs 20 m south of the west side of the site. Additionally, a former wetland was observed to be present on the location of the current marina.
Watercourses, Drainages and Ditches	No watercourses, drainages, or ditches were observed in association with the project sites.
Land Use and Vegetation Communities	Topographic mapping and aerial imagery show there is a gentle rise of land from the shore of Buffalo Lake to a beach forest area dominated by deciduous trees and shrubs. Away from this, the landscape is generally undulating with low wetland filled depressions surrounded by minor hills with scrubby aspen and willow shrubs especially on north facing slopes and dry native grass pastures present on hilltops and on gentle slopes surrounding wetlands. Spe areas have been cleared for use as pasture. Croplands are not present.

Potential Wildlife Habitat

- Sensitive species zones that interact with the project sites include Piping Plover, Sharp-tailed Grouse, and Prairie Falcon.
- The area also supports sensitive parkland bird species, many of which are migratory species and protected under the Migratory Bird Convention Act.
- Piping plover habitat is present throughout the Lake and shore habitat. This species nests in sandy beaches.
- This area has potential to support sharp-tailed grouse/lekking habitat due to the open grassy areas intermixed with forested and shrubland areas. This habitat occurs adjacent to this site. immediately south there are open areas surrounding wetlands and wooded areas across Bay View Street.
- Prairie Falcon prefer high cliff areas for nesting. This habitat is not common in the Buffalo Lake area.
- Suitable habitat for various species groups considered to be “Other Sensitive and Endangered Species - Parklands” (e.g., songbirds and amphibians) is present within 100 to 300 m of the site.

5.2 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND CONSTRAINTS

5.2.1 Environmentally Significant Areas and Protected Areas

The planned development sites are not in an Environmentally Significant Area per provincial mapping. The sites are not in a provincial park, although Rochon Sands Provincial Park occurs near all three sites.

5.2.2 Rare Plants

Rare plants are not formally protected in this area, except in the Provincial Park. The rare plant species should be noted if found during pre-site surveys, but specific surveys and mitigation will not be required

5.2.3 Wetlands and Water Act

A desktop delineation of wetlands within the project area was conducted, as per the Alberta Wetland Identification and Delineation Directive (Government of Alberta, 2015). This process included a time series of photographs (six years) representing wetland hydrology and vegetation in wet, moderate, and dry conditions. The photographs obtained for the proposed recreational area options were from the years 1951, 1969, 1976, 1988, 1998, and 2024.

Photographs were obtained from the Alberta Air Photo Library, and the most recent aerial image was obtained from ESRI® as per AARES’ GIS license. The desktop review identified the boundaries and classifications of all detectable wetlands, other waterbodies (ephemeral waterbodies and anthropogenic water bodies or dugouts), and drainages that may be traversed by the project (Table 3). No wetlands directly interact with the project sites; however, aerial review shows there are two wetlands located south of Buffalo View Estates site. As these sites will not be disturbed, there is no

regulatory concern for these sites and approval under the Act for access into wetlands or disturbance/removal is not required. The wetlands occur across the road, so there is little concern about the spread of silt or construction site runoff water into these features. However, these sites are likely good habitat for waterfowl and other water birds in the spring and early summer and may affect activities within the breeding bird season, as some species, particularly sensitive or other listed species may require setback buffers to protect these birds while nesting.

Historical imagery review showed a wetland was formerly present on the site of the present-day marina at Buffalo View Estates site. Development of this marina occurred after 1999 and was approved under the Water Act. However, there should also have been an approval for the wetland removal activity to support this marina. The Alberta Authorization Viewer was searched (Alberta Environment and Protected Areas, 2023), and no past approval for wetland disturbance was identified for this site (an approval and several amendments have been issued for the marina at this site, however, there is no discussion of wetland removal in these records).

5.2.4 Wildlife

Several known sensitive species and migratory bird species occur at the project sites and nearby areas. Wildlife surveys and sweeps are a requirement for approval of a Public Lands Act application for a disposition (for permanent access) or temporary field authorization (for temporary access). On private/municipal lands surveys and/or sweeps are also recommended to ensure due diligence under the Wildlife Act is achieved and that no wildlife or their dens or nests are harmed during the site development. Additional wildlife discussions are provided as part of the mitigations and best practices and regulatory sections below.

5.2.5 Historical Resources

The project sites all have high potential for archaeological artifact occurrence (Sites Listed as 5a), and Site 1 also is associated with a known archaeological site (4a). This does not mean the site is in the exact area, as the listings are provided per Legal Subdivisions. All new developments associated with roads typically require Historical Resources Act approval, regardless of Historical Resource Value. Because of these listings in this area, it may be needed to complete an Historical Resources Impact Assessment (HRIA), especially if a known site will be affected by project activities. HRIA may also be required for the sites related to the 5a ratings. It is advised to apply to Alberta Culture (via the Ministry of Arts, Culture and Status of Women) for Historical Clearance. As part of their review, Alberta Culture will determine whether Clearance is granted or a detailed HRIA is needed.

5.3 PROVINCIAL REGULATIONS REVIEW

5.3.1 Water Act

Water Act approval will be needed for any water feature that will be directly impacted. Water Act approval is required for direct and indirect disturbances to wetlands and other waterbodies. A Code of Practice notification is needed to permit watercourse crossings following standard conditions and

best management practices. For approvals of wetland disturbances or crossings, additional requirements under the Alberta Wetland Policy and its Directives must be followed. Though no direct interactions are expected with wetlands or other waterbodies, nearby construction activities could affect water quality of a wetland or waterbody (including Buffalo Lake) via runoff; therefore, if work is carried out when water is present, the Contractor must take steps to prevent runoff of silt laden water into water bodies and if water is affected, ensure the water quality meets the provincial Environmental Quality Guideline for Alberta Surface Waters and the federal Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment’s Water Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Life – Freshwater (Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, 2020).

5.3.2 Public Lands Act

Activities will occur on Crown lands and therefore public lands dispositions must be obtained or amended for permanent access or temporary field authorizations for temporary access (Government of Alberta, 2000b). This includes all land within the 1:100-year flood zone around Buffalo Lake, to an elevation of 781.2 m. This boundary must be present in the survey drawings. To meet the requirements for disposition applications, wildlife surveys must be completed for any sensitive wildlife species per the Sensitive Species Inventory Guidelines. All conditions for approval must be met as per the Master Schedule of Standards and Conditions (Government of Alberta, 2024c). Approval standards must also be met, or a variance must be applied for.

5.3.3 Historical Resources Act

This act protects historic, archaeological and/or paleontological resources. Clearance is required under the Historical Resources Act (Government of Alberta, 2000c) prior to stripping or soil works. If the review of the site identifies the potential for significant archaeological, cultural, paleontological or historical artifacts, the Alberta Ministry of Arts, Culture, and Status of Women may require a Historical Resources Impact Assessment prior to granting clearance. Once clearance is granted, all requirements stated in the signed response letter must be followed. If a HRIA is required and if significant sites are identified, these would be mitigated through avoidance or collection/cataloguing requirements.

The discovery of any archaeological or palaeontological resources must be reported as required under Section 31 of the Historical Resources Act (Government of Alberta, 2000c).

5.3.4 Wildlife Act

The provincial Wildlife Act requires protection of wildlife species listed under this act (Government of Alberta, 2000d). Proponents that result in death, harm, or harassment of wildlife under the provincial or federal Acts can be assessed fines or this may result in a stop work order.

This act protects active nest or den sites of specific wildlife species. A wildlife sweep, as per the Provincial Wildlife Sweep Protocol, is required on Crown land and recommended on private land if the land clearing occurs in the higher risk breeding period from March 01 to August 29 (Government of Alberta, 2020). The higher risk period for potential issues with migratory bird nesting is between

April 19 to August 29 but given the early breeding period for some species (raptors especially) this is extended to start at March 1. It is recommended that clearing and construction activities occur outside March 1 to August 29 to minimize potential impacts on local wildlife species.

5.3.5 Weed Control Act

Weeds and invasive species are regulated under the Weed Control Act (Government of Alberta, 2008) and lists of Prohibited Noxious and Noxious species are provided in the Weed Control Regulation (Government of Alberta, 2010a). The Weed Control Act prescribes activities that must be undertaken should a Noxious or Prohibited Noxious weed be encountered. Weed control methods, including use of herbicides or pesticides, must comply with the Environmental Code of Practice for Pesticides (Government of Alberta, 2010b).

5.3.6 Soil Conservation Act

The Soil Conservation Act (Government of Alberta, 2000e) requires that any soil materials stripped for construction must be conserved for reuse.

CONCLUSION – ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES

The environmental assessment completed by AARES helped guide how the enhancement concepts were shaped and where proposed roads, buildings, and amenities could be located. The review confirmed that there are no wetlands, watercourses, or drainage features within the project sites, which reduced environmental constraints on the placement of access roads, parking areas, washrooms, and viewing platforms. This allowed the design team to focus on locating facilities in practical areas while avoiding unnecessary disturbance to the surrounding landscape. Even with these fewer constraints, the concepts were developed using a careful, low-impact approach limiting vegetation removal, keeping road footprints modest, and amenities and pathways to work with existing site conditions. Overall, the environmental findings supported designs that improve public access while respecting the natural character and long-term sustainability of the area. A copy of the Environmental Assessment report is provided as Attachment 1 to this report.

6) COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDERS' ENGAGEMENT

According to the County's Municipal Development Plan Community and Stakeholders' engagement must be facilitated in planning and implementation of any development and enhancement. In alignment with this direction and requirement a comprehensive communication and engagement plan was implemented through the following three components:

- 1) Community Survey
- 2) Public Open House I
- 3) Public Open house II

In addition to the Community Survey, Open House I, and Open House II, continuous opportunities for engagement were provided throughout the project. From project initiation and between each stage - particularly following Open House I and Open House II - residents and stakeholders were able to review background information, understand the planning process and project progress, and share additional insights and feedback with the County regarding the Public Access Enhancement project.

6.1) ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY

An online community survey was implemented as the first phase of public engagement for the Buffalo Lake Public Access Enhancement project to inform residents and stakeholders and to obtain broad, early input. The survey was conducted from June 13 to July 4, 2025, and received a total of 40 completed responses.

The survey introduced the project objectives, the location and characteristics of the three public access sites, and the general scale and nature of potential enhancement options under consideration. Participants were invited to share their perspectives on existing site conditions, preferred recreational activities, desired facilities, and potential improvements at each location. This early engagement ensured that local knowledge, community priorities, and site-specific considerations were incorporated at the outset of the planning process, helping to inform and shape the development of initial concept options prior to more detailed design work.

What improvements would you most like to see at Scenic Sands public access site?

Improvement Sought	Number of Mentions
Improved boat launch/ramp facilities	13
Trails connecting to communities/parks	12
Accessible paths and infrastructure	11
Restrooms / change rooms	10
Swimming or beach areas	9
More vehicle/trailer parking	7
Nature and wildlife viewing	6
More picnic/campfire areas	6
Garbage disposal facilities	6
Safety lighting and signage	5
Community gathering/event spaces	4
Non-motorized boat rentals	4

Note: Some responses listed more than one item; each mention is counted for its category. The totals reflect the number of mentions, not number of respondents. "Other" responses could include site-specific suggestions or ideas outside the listed categories.

What improvements would you most like to see at Buffalo Lake Meadows public access site?

Improvement Sought	Number of Mentions
Trails connecting to communities/parks	17
Improved boat launch/ramp facilities	14
Accessible paths and infrastructure	12
Restrooms / change rooms	12
Swimming or beach areas	10
Garbage disposal facilities	8
Community gathering/event spaces	7
Nature and wildlife viewing	7
More vehicle/trailer parking	6
More picnic/campfire areas	6
Safety lighting and signage	5
Non-motorized boat rentals	4

Note: Some responses listed more than one item; each mention is counted for its category. The totals reflect the number of mentions, not number of respondents. "Other" responses could include site-specific suggestions or ideas outside the listed categories.

What improvements would you most like to see at Buffalo View Estates public access site?	
Improvement Sought	Number of Mentions
Improved boat launch/ramp facilities	16
Trails connecting to communities/parks	13
Swimming or beach areas	13
Garbage disposal facilities	11
Accessible paths and infrastructure	10
Restrooms / change rooms	10
More picnic/campfire areas	9
Nature and wildlife viewing	8
Safety lighting and signage	7
More vehicle/trailer parking	6
Community gathering/event spaces	6
<i>Note: Some responses listed more than one item; each mention is counted for its category. The totals reflect the number of mentions, not number of respondents. "Other" responses could include site-specific suggestions or ideas outside the listed categories.</i>	

By analyzing the survey results, we can identify the following key shared interests and areas of concerns.

1. **All-Season Activities:** Respondents expressed interest in a variety of activities that are not limited by season, such as hiking, nature watching, and ice skating.
2. **Trail Connectivity and Accessibility:** Strong interest in improved trail connections, accessible paths, and infrastructure across all sites.
3. **Understanding Site Characteristics:** Respondents have specific site-based requests such as improved boat launches and unique recreational offerings.
4. **Infrastructure Enhancements:** Highlights needs for better restrooms, garbage disposal, and parking facilities at public sites.
5. **Non-Motorized Boating:** Interest in activities like kayaking and canoeing is noted among respondents.
6. **Nature and Wildlife Viewing:** Many respondents emphasized the importance of preserving and improving opportunities for wildlife and nature observation.

INTEGRATION OF SURVEY RESULTS INTO INITIAL CONCEPT DESIGN

The results of the online community survey were directly used to guide the preparation of the initial enhancement concepts for each public access site. Survey responses helped identify priority activities, infrastructure needs, and site-specific expectations, which were translated into physical design elements and planning principles. Strong interest in all-season and low-impact activities, such as walking, nature viewing, and passive recreation, informed the emphasis on trails, viewing platforms, and multi-season usability across all sites. Feedback related to trail connectivity and accessibility influenced the inclusion of accessible paths and logical circulation within and between sites.

Survey responses also highlighted the importance of recognizing each site's unique characteristics, which guided a differentiated design approach rather than a one-size-fits-all solution. Requests for improved basic infrastructure, including washrooms, garbage disposal, and parking, informed the inclusion of these elements as foundational components in the initial concepts. Interest in non-motorized boating and nature and wildlife viewing further reinforced the focus on small-craft facilities and environmentally sensitive enhancements that minimize ecological disturbance.

By aligning survey findings with the County of Stettler No. 6's strategic planning directions, the initial concepts were developed to reflect both community aspirations and policy objectives, ensuring that proposed enhancements are responsive, practical, and grounded in local input.

The shared priorities between the community's feedback and the County's directions indicate an overlap that could guide enhancement projects. Key focus areas should be on ensuring diverse, recreational opportunities, improving basic site infrastructure, and respecting each site's unique character while fostering a sustainable interaction with the natural environment. These shared goals can support informed and mutually beneficial planning and development at Buffalo Lake.

6.2) OPEN HOUSE I

As the second phase of the community engagement process, Public Open House I was held on July 17, 2025, to present the initial enhancement concepts for the Buffalo Lake Public Access Enhancement project. For each site, two alternative concept options were prepared and presented for review and discussion. The purpose of this session was to introduce the preliminary site-specific alternatives for Scenic Sands, Buffalo Lake Meadows, and Buffalo View Estates sites, respond to participants' questions, and collect feedback on the feasibility, appropriateness, and potential impacts of each option. Participants provided both general and site-specific input, emphasizing the importance of balancing enhanced recreational opportunities with the preservation of community character, environmental quality, safety, and long-term sustainability. This feedback informed the refinement and adjustment of the initial concepts prior to further design development.

Overall Themes from Open House I

1. **Support for Enhanced Public Access and Amenities:** Residents expressed general support for improvements such as washrooms, garbage facilities, picnic areas, and

recreational amenities, reflecting a desire for better local access to lake-related and community activities.

2. **Feasibility and Environmental Constraints:** Certain proposed enhancements, particularly boat launches, were seen as unrealistic due to shallow water, flooding, or dense vegetation. Minimizing impacts to natural habitats was a recurring concern.
3. **Community Character and Safety:** Maintaining the quiet, residential nature of the communities was emphasized, with concerns about potential increases in crime, vandalism, and safety risks near playgrounds or high-traffic areas.
4. **Redundancy and Existing Facilities:** Participants noted that some communities, especially Buffalo Lake Meadows, already provide well-maintained recreational infrastructure, suggesting that new amenities should complement rather than duplicate existing facilities.
5. **Site-Specific Adaptations:** Flexible solutions were recommended, such as revisiting historic access points, combining elements from multiple scenarios, or adjusting amenity placement to ensure functionality while preserving environmental and community values.

INTEGRATION OF OPEN HOUSE I FEEDBACK INTO CONCEPT REVISIONS

Feedback received during Open House I was reviewed and used to refine the initial concept options for each site. Comments regarding environmental constraints and feasibility led to the reconsideration or removal of features that were not well-suited to site conditions. Concerns related to community character, safety, and traffic influenced adjustments to access routes, the scale of proposed facilities, and the proximity of amenities to residential areas and playgrounds.

Where participants expressed support for specific elements from both Concept A and Concept B, preferred components were selectively combined to form more balanced and site-responsive solutions. Feedback highlighting existing community amenities guided efforts to avoid duplication and instead focus on complementary enhancements. As a result, the revised concepts reflect a more targeted, environmentally sensitive, and community-informed approach, establishing a clear foundation for the single refined concept for each site presented at Public Open House II.

6.3) OPEN HOUSE II

Public Open House II was held on October 1, 2025, as the final phase of the community engagement process. The purpose of this session was to share the revised concept plans reflecting stakeholder input, and to provide an additional opportunity for participants to review the proposals, ask questions, and share further comments or concerns, both generally and for each site specifically. Based on the feedback received through the online survey and Open House I, one refined concept was developed for each site and presented for final review and comment. The

feedback from this session helped confirm priorities, identify remaining issues and concerns, and ensure that the final concepts were responsive to community expectations and site conditions.

Overall Themes from Open House II

1. **Community Character and Quietness:** Residents stressed preserving the quiet, natural, and residential character, limiting traffic, noise, and disruption.
2. **Environmental Sensitivity:** Minimizing road construction and habitat loss remained a key concern, particularly at Scenic Sands and Buffalo Lake Meadows.
3. **Amenity Placement and Safety:** Proper siting of washrooms, picnic areas, and playgrounds was critical to maintain safety, accessibility, and minimal disturbance.
4. **Preferred Investment Priorities:** Participants recommended focusing resources on functional, high-value improvements such as trail connections, and selective site amenities rather than large-scale development or new roads.
5. **Maintenance and Operations:** Feedback emphasized the need for low-maintenance, sustainable solutions for waste management, and amenities, with minimal impact on neighboring residents.

INTEGRATION OF OPEN HOUSE II FEEDBACK INTO FINAL CONCEPTS

Feedback received during Open House II was used to confirm and refine the final enhancement concepts for each site. Concerns related to traffic, noise, and safety informed adjustments to access design, amenity placement, and the overall scale of development. Environmental feedback reinforced the emphasis on low-impact infrastructure, reduced road development, and protection of sensitive shoreline and vegetated areas. Operational considerations influenced the selection and location of amenities to ensure practicality, ease of maintenance, and long-term sustainability.

CONCLUSION – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

Through the online community survey and two public open houses, residents and stakeholders provided valuable general and site-specific feedback that directly influenced the evolution of the Buffalo Lake Public Access Enhancement concepts. Community input consistently emphasized the importance of balancing improved accessibility, comfort, and recreational opportunities with the preservation of environmental quality, community character, and public safety. The final enhancement concepts reflect this guidance by incorporating practical, site-responsive solutions that are environmentally sensitive, operationally feasible, and aligned with community expectations. Through two open houses participants provided valuable general and specific feedback on proposed improvements emphasizing the need to balance enhanced recreational opportunities with the preservation of community character and environmental quality.

A comprehensive summary of the public engagement process and detailed feedback from the Online Community Survey, Public Open House I, and Public Open House II is provided in a separate “*What We Heard*” report, included as Attachment 1.

7) DESIGN CONCEPTS FOR ENHANCEMENT

The design concepts presented in this section translate the policy direction, site analysis, environmental conditions, and community input into a set of practical, place-specific improvements for the three public lake access sites. These concepts are intended to enhance user experience, improve safety and accessibility, and ensure minimal environmental impacts, while respecting the unique character and natural constraints of each location.

7.1) ACTIVITY–FACILITY MATRIX

To ensure that enhancement decisions remain grounded in the needs of users and the characteristics of each site, a comprehensive Activity – Facility Enhancement matrix has been developed. This matrix identifies common recreational activities and the associated facility improvements that best support them. It provides a framework for evaluating enhancement options across all public access points and ensures consistency with broader planning objectives outlined in the County’s MDP, IDP and the South Shore Area Structure Plan. The matrix serves as a reference point for the detailed, site-specific concepts that follow in subsections 7.2 to 7.4.

Although the core activities and associated facilities at public access sites around Buffalo Lake have traditionally focused on summer use, the frozen lake and adjacent shoreline also support a range of informal winter recreational activities, including ice fishing, natural ice skating, snowshoeing, skiing and wind-based winter sports, subject to ice and weather conditions.

Table 7.1) Master Matrix: Activities and Facilities

ACTIVITIES	AVAILABILITY		
	Scenic Sands	Buffalo Lake Meadows	Buffalo View Estates
Hiking / Walking	√	√	√
Wildlife Viewing	√	√	√
Fishing	√	√	√
Windsurfing / Paddleboarding	√	√	√
Canoeing / Kayaking	√	√	√
Power Boating	-	-	√
Interpretation / Education	√	√	√
Picnicking	√	-	√
Swimming	√	√	√
Cross Country Skiing	√	√	√
Snowshoeing	√	√	√
Snow Kiting	√	√	√
Ice Fishing	√	√	√
Ice Skating	√	√	√
FACILITIES	AVAILABILITY		
	Scenic Sands	Buffalo Lake Meadows	Buffalo View Estates
Parking	√	√	√
Playground	√	-	-
Washrooms / Resting Areas	√	√	√
Waste / Recycling	√	√	√
Public Dock	-	-	√
Boat & Dock Storage	-	√	-
Guidance / Wayfinding	√	√	√
Boat Launch	-	-	√

7.2) SCENIC SANDS – ENHANCEMENT CONCEPT

The Scenic Sands public access area presents a unique opportunity to enhance an already popular lakeshore destination while preserving its natural character and calm setting. This subsection begins with the site-specific Available Facility Matrix, which outlines the proposed available facilities after implementing the enhancement plan at Scenic Sands.

Table 7.2) Available Facility - Scenic Sands

FACILITIES	AVAILABILITY	NOTE
Vehicle Access Road	√	New gravel surface road Approximate length: 135 m Approximate width: 6 – 6.5 m
Parking	√	New gravel surface parking lot Approximate size: 1000 sqm.
Playground	√	Existing
Wildlife Viewing Platform	√	New wood structure platform Approximate size: 15' X 15'
Washrooms / Resting Areas	√	Two Prefab - Portable toilet
Waste / Recycling Bins	√	Two organic waste bins Four waste and recycle bins
Picnic Tables	√	Five wood structure tables
Picnic Shelter	√	Existing
Interpretive Sign	√	One new interpretive sign Approximate size 4' X 8'
Information / Wayfinding Sign	√	One information sign Approximate size 3' X 6'
Public Seasonal Dock	-	
Boat & Dock Storage	-	
Marina	-	

Building on this foundation, and considering the existing facilities on the site, the concept design focuses on improving accessibility, strengthening safety and emergency response capacity, and enhancing day-use amenities in a low-impact and environmentally responsible manner. The subsection concludes with a preliminary cost estimate table to guide budgeting and implementation.



**BUFFALO LAKE
PUBLIC ACCESS ENHANCEMENT
Scenic Sands Site Map**



Map Date: January 2026
Scale: 1:1,400
When printed on 11" x 17" paper



Legend	
	Water Line in 2021
	Provincial Waterline ROW
	Enhancement Site
	Marina
	Open Grass/Picnic Areas
	Gravel Surface
	Treed Area
	Private Community Dock
	Pathways



BUFFALO LAKE
PUBLIC ACCESS ENHANCEMENT
Scenic Sands Site Map

Legend

- Provincial Waterline ROW
- Water Line in 2021
- Enhancement Site



Map Date: January 2026
Scale: 1:1,400
When printed on 11" x 17" paper



Photorealistic Concept - Scenic Sands



Objects sizes are illustrative only and not to exact scale

Table 7.3) Cost Estimate – Scenic Sands

ENHANCEMENT ITEMS & COST ESTIMATE-SCENIC SANDS			
Facility	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total Cost
New Gravel Road	\$100-\$110/m2	810 m2 (135m X 6m)	\$81K - \$89K -
New Parking Lot	\$80-\$100/m2	1063 m2	\$85K - \$107K
Portable Washroom	\$2K	2	\$4K
Washroom Services	\$3k - \$4k/Year	2	\$6k - \$8k
Picnic Tables	\$1K	5	\$5K
Garbage Bin	\$2K	6	\$12K
Viewing Platform	\$15K	1	\$15K
Information Sign	\$2k	2	\$2K
Interpretive Sign	\$4k	1	\$4k
Control Gate	\$1K	3	\$3K
TOTAL COST (ESTIMATE)			\$217K - \$249K

7.3 BUFFALO LAKE MEADOWS

Buffalo Lake Meadows offers expansive open space and ecological richness, making it well-suited for a balanced approach to recreation, shoreline protection, and nature appreciation. The site-specific Activity–Enhancement Matrix provides an organized summary of recommended improvements based on public use patterns, stakeholder input, and the area's environmental sensitivity particularly its dense vegetation and shallow aquatic zones. The concept design builds on these insights by proposing enhancements that improve access, support small-craft boating, and establish a more functional and welcoming day-use setting.

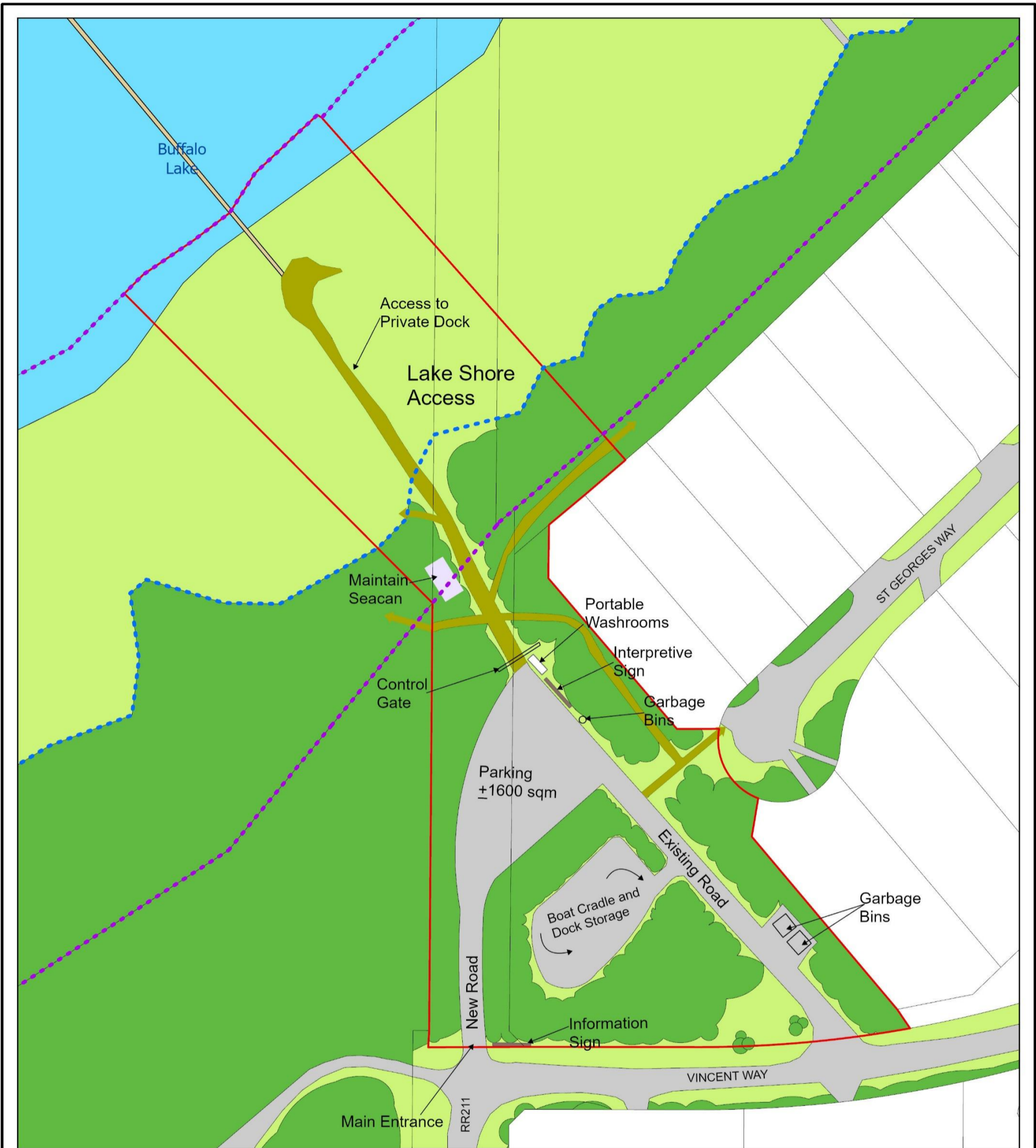
Table 7.4) Available Facility – Buffalo Lake Meadows

FACILITIES	AVAILABILITY	NOTE
New Vehicle Access Road (Gravel)	√	New gravel surface road Approximate length: 60 m Approximate width: 6 – 6.5 m
New Parking	√	New gravel surface parking lot Approximate size: 1600 sqm.
Washrooms / Resting Areas	√	Two Prefab - Portable toilet
Waste / Recycling Bins	√	Three waste bins
Interpretive Sign	√	One new interpretive sign Approximate size 4' X 8'
Information / Wayfinding Sign	√	One information sign Approximate size 3' X 6'
Boat & Dock Storage	√	Existing - Community Members
Picnic Area	-	-
Public Dock	-	-
Playground	-	-
Marina	-	-

To support clear understanding of the proposed enhancements concepts, three complementary visualization tools have been prepared for each site. First, two-dimensional drawings illustrate the existing conditions and identify the precise location of proposed facilities. Second, GIS-based aerial photographs show these enhancements spatially overlaid on the real landscape, highlighting orientation, placement, and functional relationships. Third, photorealistic concept renderings provide a visual perspective by integrating facilities such as washrooms, viewing platforms, parking areas, and signage into current site images. Together, these three formats offer Council and

stakeholders a comprehensive and intuitive representation of each enhancement concept, supporting informed review and decision-making.

A corresponding cost estimate table is provided to assist the County in prioritizing and sequencing future capital investments.



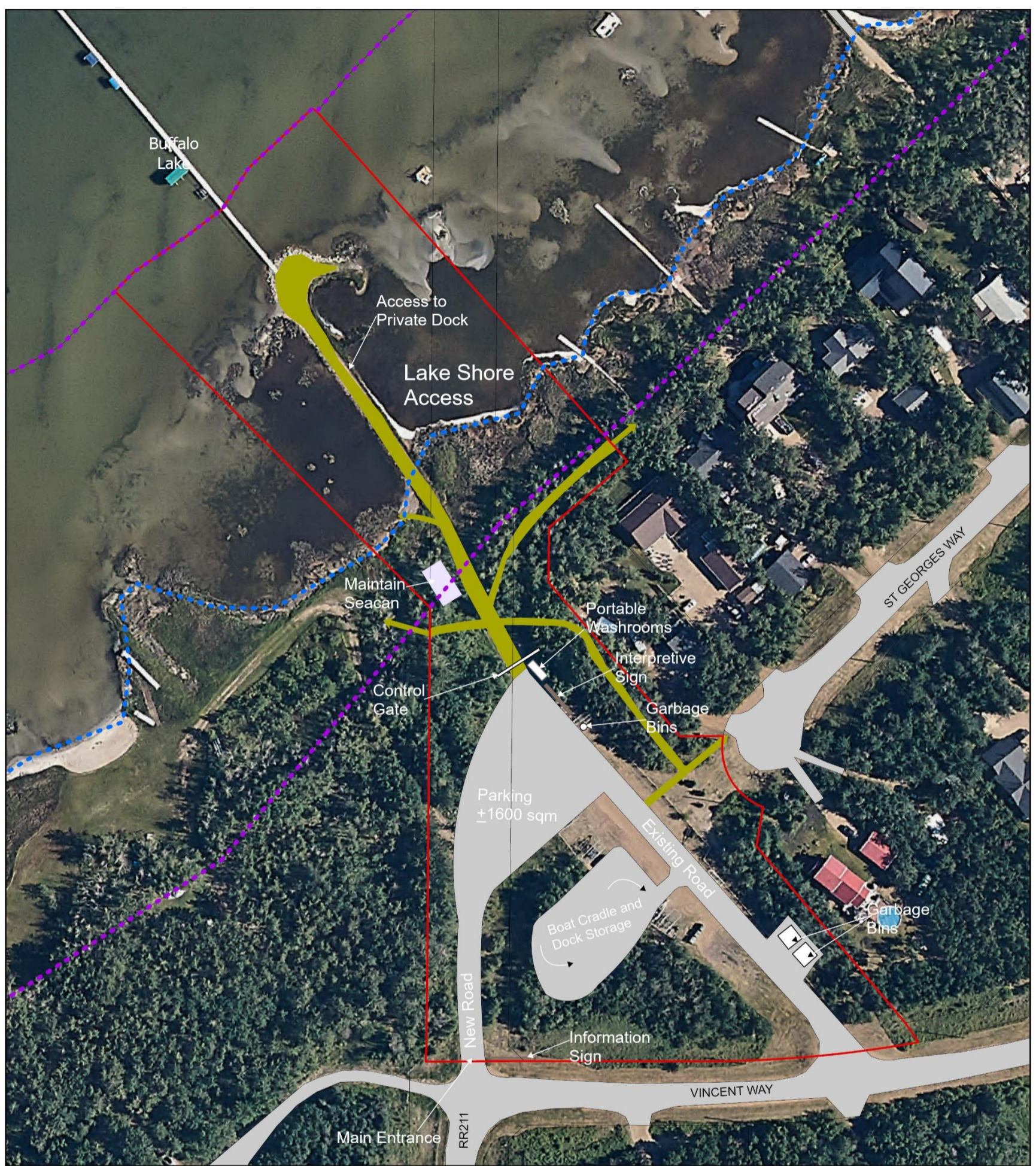
**BUFFALO LAKE
PUBLIC ACCESS ENHANCEMENT
Buffalo Lake Meadows Site Map**

0 25 50 100 Meters

Map Date: January 2026
Scale: 1:1,200
When printed on 11" x 17" paper



Legend	
	Water Line in 2021
	Provincial Waterline ROW
	Enhancement Site
	Marina
	Open Grass/Picnic Areas
	Gravel Surface
	Treed Area
	Private Community Dock
	Pathways



BUFFALO LAKE
PUBLIC ACCESS ENHANCEMENT
Buffalo Lake Meadows Site Map

Legend	
	Provincial Waterline ROW
	Water Line in 2021
	Enhancement Site
	Gravel Surface
	Pathways



Map Date: January 2026
Scale: 1:1,200
When printed on 11" x 17" paper



Photorealistic Concept - Buffalo Lake Meadows



Objects sizes are illustrative only and not to exact scale

COST ESTIMATE – BUFFALO LAKE MEADOWS

Facility	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total Cost
New Gravel Road	\$100\$ - 110/m2	360 m2 60 x 6 m	\$36K - \$40K
Parking Lot	\$100/m2	1600 m2	\$160K
Boat & Dock Storage-Expansion and landscape screening	\$60 - \$80/m2	500 m2	\$30K - \$40K
Prefab Washroom	\$2K	2	\$4K
Washroom Services	\$3k - \$4k/Year	2	\$6k - \$8k
Garbage Bin	\$2K	3	\$6K
Interpretive Sign	\$4K	1	\$4K
Information Sign	\$2K	1	\$2K
Control Gate	\$1K	1	\$1K
TOTAL COST (ESTIMATE)			\$249K - \$265K

7.4) BUFFALO VIEW ESTATES

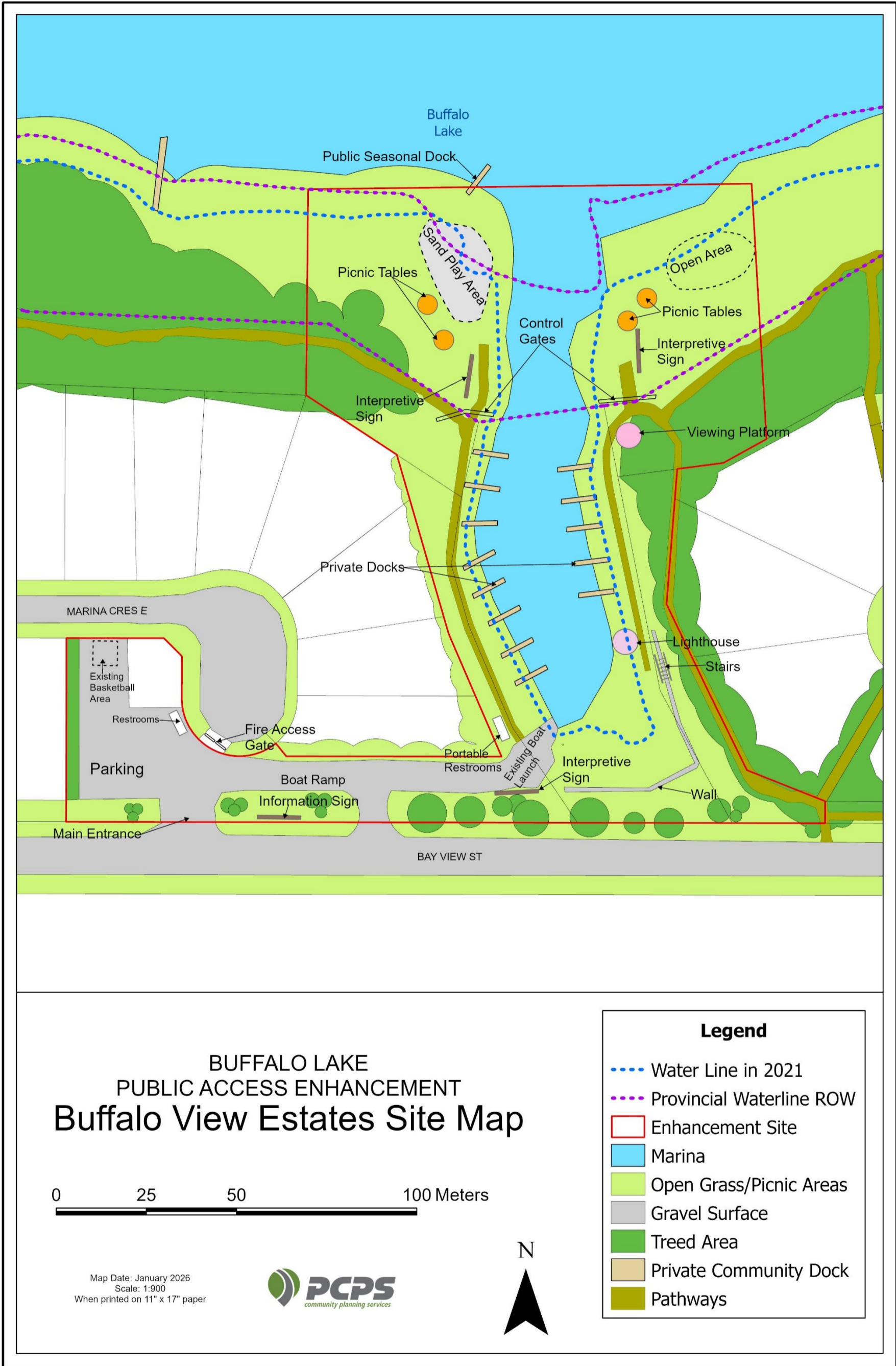
The Buffalo View Estates access point functions as a small but well-maintained community-oriented lakeshore node, offering strong existing infrastructure and proximity to residential development. The Activity–Enhancement Matrix for this site identifies targeted improvements that complement existing amenities while addressing gaps identified through public engagement and environmental review.

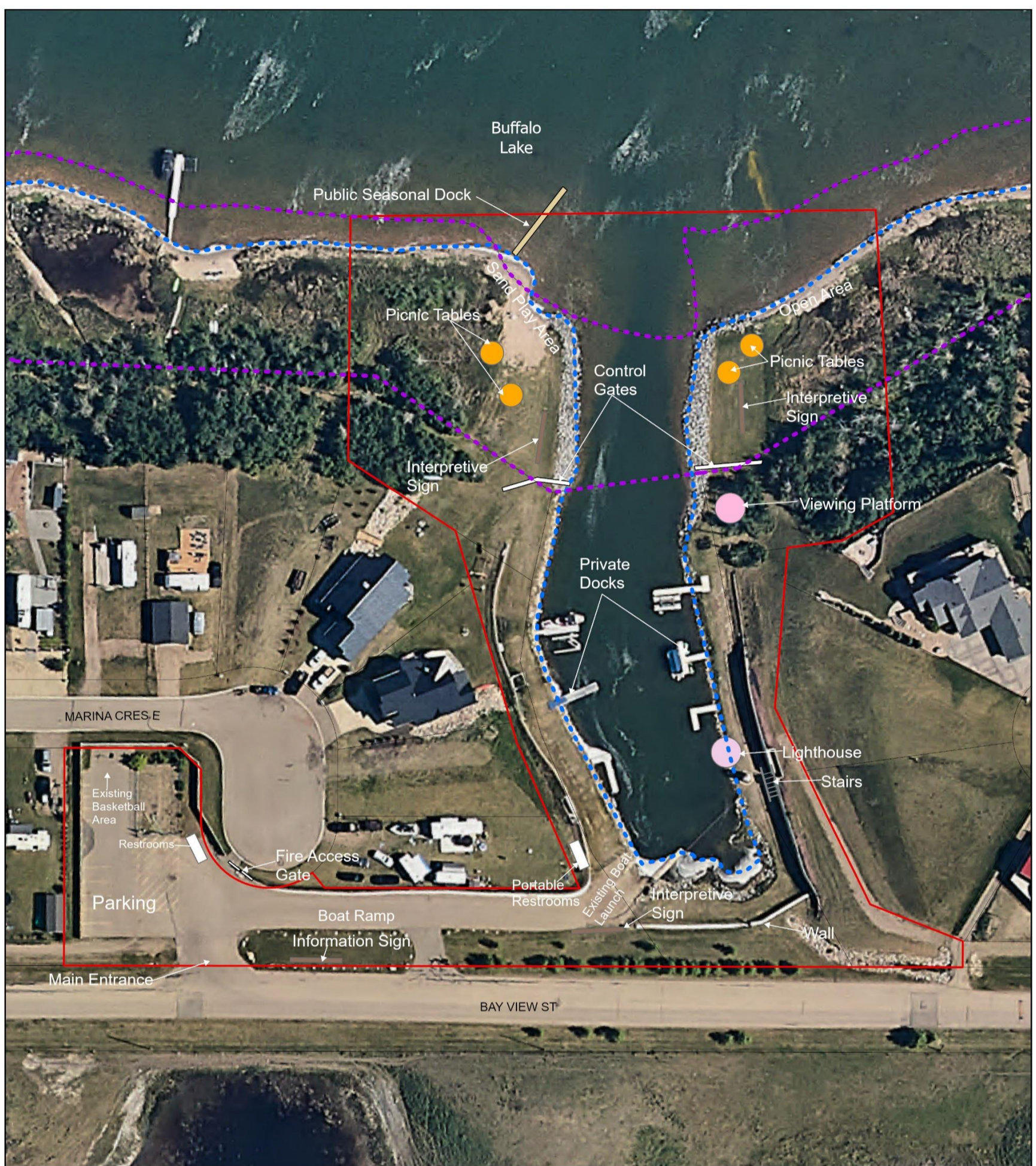
The concept design emphasizes refinement rather than expansion, focusing on upgraded sanitation facilities, improved interpretation and viewing opportunities, and strengthened site navigation. This subsection concludes with a detailed cost estimate table outlining anticipated capital requirements for achieving the proposed enhancements.

Table 7.5) Available Facility – Buffalo View Estates

FACILITIES	AVAILABILITY	NOTE
Vehicle Access Road (Gravel)	√	Existing
Parking	√	Existing
Washrooms / Resting Areas	√	Two portable Toilets Two connected to sewer system
Information / Wayfinding Sign	√	Two Information Sign Approximate size: 3' X 6'
Interpretive Sign	√	Two Interpretive Signs Approximate size: 4' X 8'
Viewing Platform	√	New wood structure platform Approximate size: 15' X 15'
Picnic Tables	√	Four wood structure tables
Beach playing area	√	Available on both sides of Marina
Seasonal Public Dock	√	One Floating 12' X 30' Seasonal Dock for public use
Boat Launch	√	Public
Boat Docks*	-	Private

* The boat launch at the Buffalo View Estates site is available for public use. However, the boat docks located within the marina are privately owned. One public boat dock is located at the west corner of the beach area and is available for public use.





BUFFALO LAKE
PUBLIC ACCESS ENHANCEMENT
Buffalo View Estates Site Map

Legend

- Provincial Waterline ROW
- - - Water Line in 2021
- ▭ Enhancement Site



Map Date: January 2026
Scale: 1:900
When printed on 11" x 17" paper



Photorealistic Concept - Buffalo View Estates



Objects sizes are illustrative only and not to exact scale

Photorealistic Concept - Buffalo View Estates



Objects sizes are illustrative only and not to exact scale

COST ESTIMATE – BUFFALO VIEW ESTATES			
Facility	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total Cost
Portable Washroom	\$2k	2	\$4
Washroom Services	\$3k - \$4k/Year	2	\$6k - \$8k
Prefab Flushable Washroom – Connected to Sewer system	\$20K – \$30K	2	\$40K – \$60K
Picnic Site	\$1K /Table	4	\$4K
Viewing Platform	\$15K	1	\$15K
Information Sign	\$2k	2	\$4K
Interpretive Sign	\$3k	2	\$6K
Public Seasonal Dock (Floating)	\$10k - \$15k	1	\$15K - \$19K
TOTAL COST (ESTIMATE)			\$94K - \$120K

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This report has presented a comprehensive assessment and enhancement plan for public access to the south shore of Buffalo Lake within the County of Stettler No.6 jurisdiction. Through detailed site analyses, environmental assessment, and extensive community and stakeholder engagement, three public access points: Scenic Sands, Buffalo Lake Meadows, and Buffalo View Estates have been evaluated to identify opportunities for improvements that balance recreational use, accessibility, and environmental stewardship. Each site was analyzed in terms of existing conditions, user needs, and natural constraints to ensure that proposed enhancements are both practical and sustainable.

The development of a master Activity – Facility Matrix, along with site-specific matrices, provides a framework linking recreational activities with corresponding physical improvements. These matrices ensure that enhancements are consistent, user-focused, and responsive to natural conditions and community expectations. The proposed concept designs for each site emphasize safe, accessible, and environmentally sensitive infrastructure, including walking paths, viewing platforms, small craft boating facilities, washrooms, picnic areas, and associated amenities. Consideration has also been given to emergency access, parking, signage, and site control measures, reflecting a holistic approach to public access management and long-term site operation.

In addition to design considerations, this report includes a preliminary cost estimate for each enhancement site, providing a practical framework for budgeting and phased implementation. By outlining anticipated expenditures and prioritizing high-value enhancements, the County is provided with a clear roadmap for allocating resources efficiently, ensuring that improvements can be implemented in stages without compromising environmental protection or visitor experience.

Overall, the Buffalo Lake Public Access Enhancement Plan offers an integrated approach to strengthening recreational opportunities along the south shore. By following the framework outlined in this report, the County of Stettler No. 6 can improve accessibility, enhance user experiences, protect the natural environment, and promote stewardship of Buffalo Lake. These improvements will support sustainable recreation and public enjoyment for current and future generations, establishing a long-term vision for well-managed, attractive, and safe lakeshore public access.



**BUFFALO LAKE
PUBLIC ACCESS ENHANCEMENT**

WHAT WE HEARD

Community and Stakeholders Engagement

2025



Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
1. COMMUNITY ONLINE SURVEY.....	3
SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS.....	3
2. PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES	6
OPEN HOUSE I.....	7
OPEN HOUSE II.....	9
SUMMARY OF RESULTS	10
3. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS via E-MAIL.....	11
ATTACHMENT 1 -ONLINE PUBLIC SURVEY	
ATTACHMENT 2 – COMMENTS PROVIDED BY OPEN HOUSE PARTICIPANTS	
ATTACHMENT 3 – COMMENTS RECEIVED via EMAIL	

INTRODUCTION

Collaboration with local communities and stakeholders has been considered as a key component of Buffalo Lake Public Access Enhancement project

The *What We Heard* report summarizes the community engagement undertaken as part of the Public Access Enhancement Plan for Buffalo Lake. The engagement process was designed to ensure that residents, landowners, recreational users, and other stakeholders had meaningful opportunities to share their perspectives, priorities, and concerns. Input was gathered through four main components: an online community survey, two in-person open houses, and the submission of written feedback via email. Throughout the project, stakeholders were also kept informed through regular updates and publicly available project information. The following sections present a comprehensive overview of the comments, insights, and recommendations shared by the community.

1. COMMUNITY ONLINE SURVEY

As the initial step in the community engagement process, a comprehensive online survey was conducted to capture input from a wide cross-section of the community, focusing on current usage patterns, satisfaction levels, perceived challenges, and priorities for future improvements. The survey was available from June 23 to July 11, 2025, and received 40 responses.

The questionnaire was structured into three sections comprising a total of 16 questions designed to provide a thorough understanding of community needs and expectations regarding public access to Buffalo Lake. A complete report of the survey is provided in **Attachment 1**. The following section summarizes the key findings of this survey.

SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

1. Overall Community Context & Respondent Profile

- The majority of respondents are **permanent or seasonal residents**, with only a small portion being visitors/tourists. This means the survey primarily reflects the views of people with a long-term stake in the local area.
- Public engagement is relatively high, but there is a clear divide in viewpoints between those seeking enhanced public access and those concerned about impacts on private community character.

2. General Use Patterns and Priorities

- Most people visit public access sites **weekly or seasonally**, with swimming, boating (motorized & non-motorized), hiking/walking, and nature watching being the most popular activities.
- Many respondents use more than one access site, showing that improvements to a single site can have wide benefit.
- Across all sites, key priorities for improvement are:
 - Upgraded boat launches

- Better trails & connections
- Enhanced restrooms/change rooms
- More and better picnic/campfire areas
- Accessibility, garbage management, parking , and beaches

3. Shared and Divergent Community Opinions

- **Support for improvements** is strongest around fundamental needs: safe, functional boat launching (but at the “right” sites), trails for connecting communities, core amenities (restrooms, garbage disposal), and accessible, clean beaches.
- **Concerns/Opposition** were voiced most strongly regarding:
 - Expansion of access within residential neighborhoods
 - Increased potential for crime, garbage, crowding, and loss of tranquility/natural aesthetics
 - Equity for residents who already pay for and maintain community spaces
- **Sufficient Development:** Some residents feel the present distribution of public access mainly via provincial parks or existing developed sites is sufficient or already underutilized .
- **Suggested approach:** Concentrate significant investments at locations where technical feasibility and community support are strongest (primarily Buffalo View Estates and select shared-access points), while limiting the “footprint” of public access enhancements in residential clusters.
- **Governance:** Calls for transparent, responsive planning and respect for community stewardship roles.

4. Site-Specific Insights

A) SCENIC SANDS

- **Usage data:** Scenic Sands site sees regular use but, like Meadows, faces physical/geological challenges that make extensive investment (like boat launches) difficult or impractical. Residents report poor results from earlier boat launch attempts due to shallow water and winter ice.
- **Priorities:** Modest, nature-compatible improvements (benches, walking trails, signage, and well-managed trash/recycling stations) are likely to garner the most acceptance.
- **Insight:** Maintain the area’s quiet and natural character, avoid actions that draw large volumes of non-resident visitors to the core of the community.

B) BUFFALO LAKE MEADOWS

- **Top improvement themes:** Trails to other communities/parks, accessible paths, garbage disposal, restrooms, and some interest in picnic/campfire areas.
- **Boat launch Concerns:** Many Meadows residents do not support a boat launch here, citing technical challenges (shallow water), maintenance history, and concerns about attracting excessive public use to residential areas.

- **Community pride:** Meadow’s residents show strong local stewardship, with ongoing maintenance by volunteers and fees.
- **Insight:** Improvements should focus on maintaining local infrastructure, supporting existing stewardship, modest upgrades (benches, bins, trail grooming), and not expanding lake access beyond current levels.
- **Opposition:** Clear themes of concern regarding increased traffic, noise, and risks of increased crime/vandalism if access expands.

C) BUFFALO VIEW ESTATES

- **Top improvement themes:** Improved boat launch/ramp facilities, trails/connection to parks and communities, swimming/beach areas, accessible paths, restrooms, and garbage management.
- **Boat launch as priority:** This site is widely seen as key for boaters, with calls for launches that handle both low water and larger boats and can serve as a main south-shore access point.
- **Interest in social and safety features:** Community gathering/event spaces, safety lighting/signage, and picnic areas frequently requested.
- **Environmental concern:** Calls for more garbage bins, wildlife viewing areas, and a strong emphasis on not over-developing or harming nature.

2. PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES

As the second phase of the community engagement process, two Open Houses were held to involve local residents and stakeholders in the Buffalo Lake Public Access Enhancement Project. The first Open House took place on July 27, 2025, followed by the second on October 1, 2025. The primary objective of these sessions was to present the initial concept plans and gather feedback, insights, and suggestions from the community. The following section summarizes the key comments and input received during these events.

Copies of all comments submitted by participants during the two Open Houses are included as **Attachment 2**.

OPEN HOUSE I

LOCATION	DATE & TIME	PARTICIPANTS
Erskine Community Hall	July 17, 2025 - 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm	30
COMMENTS		
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well put together and throughout. Public access is needed as well as off-lake actuaries? • Anything not water related, we find ourselves going to the summer village of Rochan Sands to use. • Development without community support is not ideal. So, this Open house is appreciated. It is clear though that the proposals for development are not very realistic. • I applaud your efforts to be proactive & appreciate you listening to our concerns. • In general, we are happy without a lot of public traffic in & out our communities. We have had very little theft & vandalism, therefore no have concerns that access of public might travel to • Like the Restrooms and Garbage bins • Plan looks nice and functional 	
Scenic Sands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get some support from county to deal with environment regarding OL' MacDonalds Boat Launch Locals that have been accessing. This launch could use it again. May be help with rebuilding it. • Had you realized that Scenic Sands is VERY shallow. Lake access cannot support a boat launch. • Combo of A (Scenario) and B. 	
Buffalo Lake Meadow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (We) already have public parking. Beach volley & Playground development in community. Adding that to a potential boat launch area makes little sense. Boat launch as proposed seems impossible at this site. • Our community has already spearheaded many funded, used, and maintained public facilities. We have the playground, volleyball court, new pavilion + sport court. We have noticed an increase in crime lately so are nervous about more public access. Our beach area is often flooded and not friendly for building any type of entry 	
Buffalo View Estate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our community has discussed the need for the items in both scenarios (public beach, volleyball court, garbage, washrooms). 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The location of the “swimming spot” will not work as that area (NW) out of marinas is quite busy with boat traffic. • Looks good to me. Thanks for the Open House and the information. Thank you for consulting with residents. Thank you for addressing the concerns and wishes of the residents. Thank you, Justin, for all the great trail information.
--	---

Summary of Open House 1 Feedback

The first public open house, held on July 17, 2025, at Erskine Community Hall with 30 participants, generated a range of comments reflecting both support for improved public access and concerns about feasibility, environmental constraints, and community impacts.

General Feedback

Participants expressed appreciation for the consultation process and noted that the presentation materials were well-prepared. Several attendees supported the need for expanded public access and amenities such as restrooms and garbage facilities. However, concerns were raised about the realism and feasibility of some proposed concepts, particularly in areas with environmental or physical limitations. Some residents indicated satisfaction with the current low levels of public traffic and worried that increased access could lead to higher crime or vandalism. Others noted that many non-water-related activities currently require travel to nearby summer villages, suggesting a gap in local recreation options.

Scenic Sands Feedback

Comments highlighted environmental and physical constraints, particularly the shallow water conditions that limit boat launch feasibility. Some residents suggested revisiting past access points such as the former Ol’ MacDonald’s boat launch and questioned whether County support could help re-establish it. Participants expressed a preference for a blended approach combining elements of multiple conceptual scenarios.

Buffalo Lake Meadows Feedback

Residents emphasized that the community already provides several recreational amenities—playground, volleyball court, pavilion, sport court—and questioned the need for redundant facilities. Concerns were raised regarding increased crime, environmental flooding of the beach area, and the impracticality of the proposed boat launch given the site’s shallow and vegetation-rich shoreline. Several comments suggested that additional public facilities may not be compatible with existing site conditions.

Buffalo View Estates Feedback

Participants generally expressed support for improved amenities such as washrooms, garbage facilities, and beach areas. However, concerns were raised about the proposed location of a swimming area due to heavy boat traffic near the marina entrance. Many attendees expressed appreciation for the consultation process and the trail information provided, noting that the scenarios reflect community needs when aligned with safe and practical site conditions.

OPEN HOUSE II

LOCATION	DATE & TIME	PARTICIPANTS
Erskine Community Hall	Oct 1, 2025 - 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm	28
COMMENTS		
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great displays and presentations, appreciate the opportunity to comment. • Thank you for the open house. • Cost is too high given the outcomes. • Basic beach grooming is required. 	
Scenic Sands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concepts will create too much traffic, dust and noise on the main road. • Need to maintain quiet community. • Buffalo Drive and access cannot handle any increase in traffic. • Option B has less road and great picnic area. • A is the option to spend so much money on putting another road in at the expense of losing more natural habitat is terrible. • Also, having it going past the playground area where children may be running around is of concern. • The second option (B) of having commercial Day Camping almost right up to my backyard is absolutely unacceptable to me. The noise, vandalism, trash, etc. that this will impose on my backyard is of great concern. I beg you to reconsider this option. If you must proceed with something, then - like I discussed with you at the meeting - please consider moving the Day Camping into the area south of the proposed parking lot - parallel to the lake. • If funds need to be spent here, then we would rather they be spent on establishing a good boat launch area. 	
Buffalo Lake Meadow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option A has less roads keeping area more natural. 	
Buffalo View Estate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire pit too dangerous. • Garbage bin location would displace an existing basketball play court. • Gravel path around the marina would provide better access and connect existing ER paths and public areas. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wanted confirmation on the types of public washrooms, their safety for the lake, service truck access and vandalism. • Washrooms needed on both sides of the marina. • More parking is needed long-term. • Would like to see a playground lot instead of a picnic area on the east side of the marina. • Bathrooms poorly located and too many - one on the beach side and one on the picnic side would serve both trail heads, the beach, picnic and play areas and people using the Marina. A bathroom in the parking lot is not necessary. • Garbage would be noisy, unsightly and attract undesirable pests. The 3 days at the Erskine transfer centre works well, plus the occasional bag of garbage in the village. • Firepits present a fire danger as well as a maintenance nightmare! Wood needs to be supplied and stored, ashes and burnt wood cleaned daily plus people are inclined to use the fire pits for garbage - beer boxes, tin cans, plastic wrap etc.
--	---

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

General comments: Overall, participants appreciated the clarity of the displays and presentations and valued the opportunity to provide input during the open houses. Attendees generally expressed support for the engagement process and the planning effort but noted concerns regarding the cost of the proposed enhancements, suggesting that some improvements may be expensive relative to the expected outcomes. Additional comments highlighted the need for basic beach maintenance and grooming to improve visitor experience.

Scenic Sands - Specific Feedback

Participants from Scenic Sands expressed strong concerns about increased traffic, noise, and environmental impacts associated with the proposed enhancement concepts. Many comments emphasized that Scenic Sands is a quiet residential community and that any improvements should preserve this character.

Key themes included:

1. Traffic, Dust, and Noise

- Residents believe the concepts, especially Option A, would generate excessive traffic, dust, and noise on the main access road.
- Multiple comments stated that Buffalo Drive and the existing access roads cannot accommodate any increase in vehicle volume.

2. Protection of Community Character and Safety

- Strong preference to maintain the quiet nature of the community.
- Concerns that proposed road alignments could increase vehicle movement near playgrounds, raising child-safety risks.

3. Environmental and Habitat Concerns

- Opposition to adding new roads due to loss of natural habitat.
- Residents prefer options with less roadway development and minimal disturbance.

5. Preferred Investment Priorities

- Several residents stated that if funds are to be invested, they should be directed toward creating a proper boat-launch area rather than new roads or day-camping areas.

Buffalo Lake Meadows - Specific Feedback

Residents generally preferred Option A, citing that fewer roads would help maintain the natural character of the area. Comments reflected a desire to minimize development impacts, preserve open space, and avoid unnecessary infrastructure that could disrupt the existing environment. There were no strong objections to amenities like trails or viewing areas, but participants emphasized that any road or facility improvements should be carefully scaled to protect the site’s ecological and recreational qualities.

In particular, feedback highlighted safety, functionality, and proper placement of amenities:

- **Fire pits** were considered unsafe and difficult to maintain, creating potential fire hazards and litter issues.
- **Garbage bins** were a concern due to noise, visibility, and attracting pests; residents suggested minimal, centralized collection rather than multiple onsite bins.
- **Washrooms** required careful consideration for safety, service access, and vandalism prevention; residents suggested one strategically located facility serving multiple areas instead of several.
- **Paths and connectivity** were supported, with a gravel path around the marina recommended to link existing trails and public spaces.
- **Parking and playgrounds** were noted as long-term needs, but placement should avoid interfering with existing recreational areas.

3. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS via E-MAIL

After each Open House, community members and stakeholders were invited to submit additional comments and insights to the County or PCPS (the planning consultant) via email or regular mail. Throughout the project, stakeholders were also kept informed through regular updates and publicly available project information.

Copies of all comments received via email are included in this report as **Attachment 3**.

ATTACHMENT 1 -ONLINE PUBLIC SURVEY

ATTACHMENT 2 – COMMENTS PROVIDED BY OPEN HOUSE PARTICIPANTS

ATTACHMENT 3 – COMMENTS RECEIVED via EMAIL



Buffalo Lake Public Access Enhancement

COMMUNITY SURVEY

(Results)

July 2025



Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Introduction.....	5
Findings and Interpretation.....	6
Section One – Connection to Buffalo Lake	6
Section Two – Access and Facilities.....	9
Section Three - Open Ended Questions	21
Summary and Key Findings.....	25
1. Overall Community Context & Respondent Profile.....	25
2. General Use Patterns and Priorities	25
3. Shared and Divergent Community Opinions.....	25
4. Site-Specific Insights	26
Recommendations	27
Attachment – The Questionnaire	

Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of a comprehensive community survey conducted to understand stakeholder perspectives on enhancing public access at three sites on Buffalo Lake: Buffalo Lake Meadows, Buffalo View Estates, and Scenic Sands . Responses were gathered from a diverse group of stakeholders, with a strong representation of permanent and seasonal residents, as well as some visitors and property owners.

Key Findings

- **Usage Patterns:** The majority of respondents visit Buffalo Lake’s public access sites on a weekly or seasonal basis. Popular activities include swimming, boating (both motorized and non-motorized), hiking, and nature watching—demonstrating the lake’s value for a variety of recreational interests across all ages.
- **Universal Priorities:** Across all sites, there is substantial support for practical improvements such as upgraded boat launches, enhanced trail connections, better parking, improved restrooms and change rooms, and more accessible and well-maintained picnic or gathering spaces. Accessibility, garbage management, and environmental stewardship emerged as important supporting themes.
- **Distinct Community Perspectives:**
 - **Scenic Sands:** Geographical and seasonal challenges (such as shallow water and ice movement) limit support for substantial upgrades like new boat launches. Residents favor modest, nature-compatible improvements, with strong preference for maintaining a low-impact, quiet, and nature-focused character.
 - **Buffalo Lake Meadows:** Residents express strong stewardship and pride in their community. There is significant opposition to new or expanded boat launches and public access in this area due to concerns over shallow water, security, noise, and preserving the current character of the neighbourhood. Most support centers on trail improvements, maintenance of existing infrastructure, and preserving local decision-making.
 - **Buffalo View Estates:** This area is identified as the most appropriate focus for major upgrades, especially improved boat launch/ramp facilities, gathering spaces, beaches, trail connections, and core amenities. There is also a call for managing environmental impact and ensuring public investment is matched to infrastructure capacity and community needs.
- **Divergent Views:** While many respondents support facility upgrades, a significant contingent—particularly residents adjacent to access points—voice concerns about overdevelopment, increased crime and traffic, environmental impact, and loss of local control or community character.

Recommendations

- **Tailor Access and Investments:** Customize enhancements to reflect the unique needs, geographical realities, and stakeholder preferences of each site.
- **Prioritize Facility Enhancements at Buffalo View Estates:** Focus on this area due to its substantial need for upgrades and community support for improvements.
- **Implement High-Impact Projects:** Address practical concerns through specific initiatives such as improving boat launch facilities, enhancing trail connectivity, and providing modern, accessible amenities.
- **Promote Environmental Stewardship:** Respect local traditions of stewardship and limit new interventions in areas where there is opposition or impracticality.
- **Maintain Engagement and Collaboration:** Foster transparent and ongoing dialogue with all stakeholder groups to ensure continuous input and support for any proposed changes.

Conclusion

Enhancing public access at Buffalo Lake requires a balanced, sensitive approach honoring both the diverse recreational needs of the broader public and the character, stewardship, and security concerns of local communities. Investments should be targeted, practical, and community-led, ensuring Buffalo Lake remains a valued space for both residents and visitors, now and into the future.

Introduction

Buffalo Lake is a significant natural resource in Alberta, valued by both year-round residents and seasonal visitors for its recreational opportunities, natural beauty, and vibrant communities. As public interest in lake access and amenities evolves, thoughtful planning and management are essential to ensure that Buffalo Lake remains welcoming, sustainable, and enjoyable for all.

In recognition of the complexity of balancing diverse community needs with environmental stewardship, the County of Stettler is planning to enhance three public access sites on the south shore of Buffalo Lake: Buffalo Lake Meadows, Buffalo View Estates, and Scenic Sands. Collaboration with local communities and stakeholders has been considered as a key element of this practice.

A comprehensive survey was conducted to gather input from a broad cross-section of the community, focusing on current usage patterns, satisfaction levels, perceived challenges, and priorities for future improvement. An online public survey was made available to stakeholders from June 23 to July 11, 2025 resulting in 40 responses.

The community survey questionnaire is organized into three main sections comprising a total of 16 questions. This structure ensures a comprehensive understanding of community needs and expectations regarding public access to Buffalo Lake.

Section 1 gathers information about the respondents' characteristics and their relationship with the Buffalo Lake Public Access Points.

Section 2 includes four multiple-choice questions that explore respondents' perspectives on the current and desired conditions of accessibility and amenities available at various public access points to Buffalo Lake, both in general and at specific locations.

Section 3 features two open-ended questions aimed at understanding respondents' priorities and insights concerning the public access enhancement initiative.

This report summarizes the key findings from the community survey, providing an analysis of perspectives on public access facilities, infrastructure, and amenities. It highlights the shared interests and concerns of local communities and various user groups. By strengthening stakeholder voices, the findings are intended to guide informed, equitable, and transparent decisions regarding the enhancement of Buffalo Lake's public access sites.

Ultimately, the insights presented here serve as a foundation for collaborative action enhancing Buffalo Lake as a place where recreation, nature, and community all thrive.

Findings and Interpretation

Section One – Connection to Buffalo Lake

Question 1: *What is your connection to Buffalo Lake? (Check all that apply)*

Results Summary:

A total of 38 respondents answered this question. Since respondents could select more than one option, the totals below may exceed 39.

Response Summary

Connection Type	Number of Mentions	Percentage of Respondents
Seasonal resident	23	60%
Permanent resident	19	50%
Visitor/Tourist	3	8%
Other	1	2.6%

FINDINGS

- The majority of respondents identified as **Seasonal residents** (60%), followed by **Permanent residents** (50%). Some respondents selected both.
- **Visitor/Tourist** connections were limited (8%), and only 2.6% provided another type of connection.
- Most survey participants are either permanent or seasonal residents, indicating that the survey reached those most invested in the Buffalo Lake community.

INTERPRETATION

The results show that the vast majority of respondents are either seasonal residents or permanent residents of Buffalo Lake, with only a small proportion identifying as visitors or tourists, and just one response falling under “Other.” This indicates that the survey predominantly reached individuals with a deep and constant relationship to the area, either through residency during all or part of the year.

This high engagement from residents can be a double-edged sword: on the one hand, it means the views collected likely reflect the concerns and interests of those most invested in Buffalo Lake’s long-term well-being, such as environmental health, community amenities, and governance decisions. On the other hand, the relatively low participation from tourists and other visitors may mean the perspectives of casual or infrequent users who may have different priorities are

underrepresented. For stakeholders or planners, this suggests that any analysis of the survey should be conscious of the resident bias in the dataset, and future outreach could be targeted at broadening participation from the visitor/tourist segment.

Question 2: *How often do you visit or use public access sites at Buffalo Lake?*

Response Summary

A total of 38 respondents answered. Some chose more than one frequency; therefore, the number of selections totals higher than 38.

Frequency	Number of Mentions	Percentage of Respondents
Weekly	12	32%
Seasonally	12	32%
Rarely	9	24%
Monthly	6	16%
Daily	5	13%

FINDINGS

- The most frequent responses were Weekly and Seasonally (both 32%).
- Rarely was chosen by 24% of respondents.
- Daily use is less common (13%), and Monthly use is also relatively low (16%).
- Conclusion: Most people access Buffalo Lake public sites on a weekly or seasonal basis. Regular daily use is less common.

INTERPRETATION

The majority of responses cluster at weekly and seasonal use, with a significant but smaller group using these sites only rarely . Very few respondents reported daily or strictly monthly use. This pattern suggests that public access sites play an important role in the lives of many residents and visitors, but typical use is not part of most people's daily routine it's more often structured around weekends, holidays, or seasonal activity (e.g., summer cottages, fishing seasons, or holiday visits).

The high number of seasonal users aligns well with the strong presence of seasonal residents in the first question, confirming that many people engage with Buffalo Lake primarily during specific periods. The “rarely” group may reflect those with access to private sites, those with mobility or transportation challenges, or simply those who have shifted their recreational patterns elsewhere.

For decision-makers, these results highlight the need to maintain access site quality and amenities in line with peak-use patterns (weekends, holidays, and summer), rather than focusing resources on everyday maintenance at levels appropriate for daily usage. Additionally, programming and communication may best target both frequent and seasonal users rather than attempting to encourage major shifts in public site usage among residents who currently rarely visit.

Question 3: *Which public access site(s) do you typically use at Buffalo Lake?*

Response Summary

A total of 38 responses were received. Some chose more than one site per response. Below is a tally of each site and answer type mentioned:

Site/Response	Number of Mentions	Percentage of Respondents
Site 1: Scenic Sands	10	26%
Site 3: Buffalo View Estates	10	26%
Site 2: Buffalo Lake Meadows	9	24%
I'm not sure/None of those	9	24%
Other	7	18%

FINDINGS

- The three main public access sites: Scenic Sands (Site 1), Buffalo Lake Meadows (Site 2), and Buffalo View Estates (Site 3) were each used by a comparable number of respondents, suggesting general accessibility and relevance across the lake community.
- Each of these sites was mentioned around 9–10 times, indicating no single site is overwhelmingly more popular than the others.
- A notable portion, nine responses, indicated uncertainty or non-usage of these three specified sites. This could reflect either lack of knowledge about official access site names, preference for private access points, use of informal access routes, or simply limited interaction with the lake’s public access sites.
- The appearance of “Other” (seven mentions) also highlights a set of users whose preferred sites are not captured by the three named locations or who may use less formal lake entries.

INTERPRETATION

This distribution of responses implies that Buffalo Lake’s public access infrastructure is broadly utilized but that communication about site names/locations may be unclear for some, and that

there may be other sites (official or unofficial) in use by a small minority. For management and planning purposes, there's value in further exploration of what "Other" includes, and whether improved signage or information could reduce the "I'm not sure/None of those" segment. Additionally, balancing maintenance and upgrades across all three main sites may be appropriate, as usage is relatively even.

Section Two – Access and Facilities

Question 4: *What activities do you most frequently engage in at Buffalo Lake? (Check all that apply)*

Response Summary

Respondents could select multiple activities per response. Below is the tally of each activity mentioned (total responses 38; total mentions are much higher since most selected several.

Activity	Number of Mentions	Percentage of Respondents
Swimming	27	71%
Boating (motorized)	27	71%
Hiking / Walking	25	66%
Nature watching / Photography	20	53%
Boating (non-motorized: kayak, canoe, paddle board)	18	47%
Fishing	18	47%
Ice skating	13	34%
Picnicking	9	24%
Cycling	7	18%
Camping	6	16%
Other	5	1%

FINDINGS

The data reveals that **swimming** and **motorized boating** are the dominant leisure activities at Buffalo Lake, each being mentioned by over two-thirds of all

respondents. **Hiking/walking** and **nature watching/photography** also rank highly, indicating a robust interest not just in water-based, but also in land-based and nature appreciation activities.

Non-motorized boating (kayaks, canoes, paddle boards) and **fishing** are equally popular, each with about half the frequency of swimming, underscoring both the sporting and relaxation appeal of the lake’s natural resources. **Ice skating** , while more seasonal, is still notable, reflecting the lake’s use in winter months.

Activities such as **picnicking** , **cycling** , and **camping** are less common but showcase the diversity of recreational interests the lake supports. The presence of the “Other” category, while small, may include unique or emerging activities justifying further inquiry.

INTERPRETATION

This pattern suggests Buffalo Lake is viewed as a multi-season, multi-purpose destination, with infrastructure and management needing to accommodate peak usage in both water and land areas. The strong favoring of both active (e.g., swimming, boating) and passive (e.g., walking, nature watching) uses recommends a balanced approach to planning—supporting both structured and unstructured activity spaces.

The results suggest for well-maintained beaches and boat launches, protected natural areas, accessible trails, and ongoing attention to both safety and ecological health to serve the full spectrum of visitor interests.

Question 5: How do you rate parking availability at Buffalo Lake?

Response Summary

Respondents rated parking availability using descriptive categories.

Rating	Number of Mentions	Percentage of Respondents
Good	17	45%
Excellent	8	21%
Poor	6	16%
Fair	5	13%
Not Sure	2	5%

FINDINGS

- The majority of respondents rated parking availability at Buffalo Lake as **“Good”** or **“Excellent”** (25 out of 38, or about 66%). This suggests that, for most users, finding parking is typically not a significant challenge and that the infrastructure currently meets the needs of day-to-day visitors.

- However, a notable minority selected “Fair” (5) or “Poor” (6), indicating that there may be specific times, locations, or user groups experiencing difficulties. These ratings may reflect peak usage periods (such as summer weekends), special events, or particular public access sites where demand temporarily exceeds capacity.
- The “Not Sure” responses (2) may come from infrequent users or those who have not needed to park at public facilities.

INTERPRETATION

While the general view toward parking is positive, attention should be given to gathering more information regarding when and where parking challenges are most acute. Transparent signage about parking capacity and open dialogue about future use trends will be important to ensure continued visitor satisfaction, especially if Buffalo Lake experiences population growth or increased tourism.

Question 6: *How do you rate boat launch facilities at Buffalo Lake?*

Response Summary

Respondents rated the boat launch facilities using descriptive categories.

Rating	Number of Mentions	Percentage of Respondents
Poor	15	39%
Good	10	26%
Excellent	7	18%
Fair	4	11%
Not Sure	2	5%

FINDINGS

- There is a notable spread in satisfaction with boat launch facilities at Buffalo Lake, but the single most common rating was “Poor” (15 out of 38, nearly 40%). This suggests that dissatisfaction with boat launches is a prevailing sentiment among many users, and improving these facilities may be a key community priority.
- Nonetheless, a sizable group (10 “Good” , 7 “Excellent”) is satisfied with the current state, indicating that experience may differ between access sites or among different types of boaters (e.g., size/type of boat, familiarity with launch conditions, or peak vs. off-peak use).

- The moderate “Fair” ratings (4) and a few “Not Sure” responses (2) further suggest mixed experiences, possibly based on how often or recently a respondent has used the facilities.

INTERPRETATION

Taken together, these results highlight both a significant shortfall and some strengths in the current infrastructure. Addressing the concerns behind the “Poor” ratings—whether related to maintenance, accessibility, congestion, safety, or other usability issues—should be a clear area of focus for future improvement. It may also be valuable to gather more specific feedback from users to understand the root causes of dissatisfaction, and to communicate with satisfied users to identify what is working well in certain locations. Targeted upgrades or management changes could significantly enhance visitor satisfaction, safety, and the overall recreational boating experience at Buffalo Lake.

Question 7: How do you rate accessibility at Buffalo Lake?

Response Summary

Respondents rated accessibility using descriptive categories.

Rating	Number of Mentions	Percentage of Respondents
Good	14	37%
Fair	9	24%
Excellent	8	21%
Poor	6	16%
Not Sure	1	2%

FINDINGS

- A majority of respondents positively viewed accessibility at Buffalo Lake, with most ratings falling under “**Good**” (14) or “**Excellent**” (8). This suggests that, for a substantial portion of the community, public facilities, paths, or general ease of access are functioning well and contributing to a positive visitor experience.
- However, a significant minority reported “**Fair**” (9) or “**Poor**” (6), indicating that not all users are equally well-served. These ratings may originate from individuals with mobility challenges, those using particular sites with known limitations, or during high-demand periods when accessibility is reduced. The presence of only one “Not Sure” suggests that most respondents have direct experience with the lake’s accessibility features.

INTERPRETATION

This distribution indicates overall satisfaction, but it also points to important areas for enhancement—especially if the goal is equitable access for all, including people with disabilities, families with young children, and elderly community members. Ongoing evaluation, user feedback, and targeted improvements focused on removing physical or informational barriers can contribute to a more universally accessible lake environment.

Question 8: How do you rate trail connections at Buffalo Lake?

Response Summary

Respondents rated trail connections using descriptive categories.

Rating	Number of Mentions	Percentage of Respondents
Good	17	45%
Excellent	8	21%
Fair	5	13%
Poor	4	11%
Not Sure	4	11%

FINDINGS

- Trail connections at Buffalo Lake received mostly favorable ratings, with **“Good”** (17) and **“Excellent”** (8) making up the large majority of responses. This suggests that the existing trail network is generally well received by lake users and provides reasonable connectivity for recreation and access.
- A smaller but noticeable group rated trail connections as **“Fair”** (5) or **“Poor”** (4), indicating that there may be gaps, maintenance issues, or limited connectivity in certain areas. The **“Not Sure”** responses (4) may reflect individuals who either do not use the trails or are unaware of available routes, suggesting that promotion or wayfinding could be improved.

INTERPRETATION

The results indicate that while satisfaction with Buffalo Lake’s trails is high, there is still room for improvement, particularly in expanding connections, enhancing maintenance, or increasing awareness of trails. Ongoing trail development or community engagement around trail system improvement could further boost satisfaction and broaden usage, making the area even more attractive for walkers, hikers, and cyclists.

Question 9: How do you rate picnic/gathering spaces at Buffalo Lake?

Response Summary

Respondents rated picnic/gathering spaces using descriptive categories.

Rating	Number of Mentions	Percentage of Respondents
Good	16	42%
Fair	10	26%
Excellent	7	18%
Poor	3	8%
Not Sure	3	8%

FINDINGS

- The majority of respondents rated picnic and gathering spaces at Buffalo Lake as either **“Good”** (16) or **“Excellent”** (7), indicating that these facilities generally meet community needs and are appreciated by most users. Such positive ratings reflect well-maintained, accessible, and sufficiently available spaces for social and family activities around the lake.
- However, **10 respondents** rated these areas as **“Fair”** and **3 as “Poor”**, suggesting that some users perceive issues such as limited seating, shade, accessibility, or crowding during busy times.
- The presence of **3 “Not Sure”** responses may reflect non-use or lack of awareness regarding available spaces.

INTERPRETATION

While satisfaction is strong, improvements could focus on increasing comfort features (benches, shade, tables), expanding capacity, or ensuring regular maintenance. Continued attention to gathering space quality will help support the social fabric of the Buffalo Lake community, fostering positive recreational experiences for all.

Question 10: How do you rate playground/recreation amenities at Buffalo Lake?

Response Summary

Respondents rated playground and recreation amenities in the following categories:

Rating	Number of Mentions	Percentage of Respondents
Good	15	39%
Excellent	9	24%
Poor	7	18%
Fair	5	13%
Not Sure	2	5%

FINDINGS

- Most respondents viewed playground and recreation amenities at Buffalo Lake positively, with **“Good”** (15) and **“Excellent”** (9) accounting for nearly two-thirds of the responses. This indicates these amenities are appreciated by the majority of users and that Buffalo Lake provides supportive recreational infrastructure for families and children.
- However, 7 respondents rated these facilities as **“Poor”** , and 5 responded as **“Fair”** , underscoring a notable minority who feel that improvements are needed. Issues could include limited equipment variety, aged or unsafe equipment, lack of accessible features, or insufficient quantity to meet community needs, especially during busy periods.
- The “Not Sure” ratings may come from users who do not use these amenities or are unaware of their presence and quality.

INTERPRETATION

The data indicates a solid foundation for recreation opportunities but also highlights the potential for focused upgrades, such as modernizing playground structures, adding inclusive play elements, or improving maintenance scheduling to ensure all families have equitable and enjoyable experiences at Buffalo Lake’s public spaces.

Question 11: *Generally, what improvements would you most like to see at Buffalo Lake’s public access sites? (Choose up to 5)*

Response Summary

Responses were open-ended, with respondents able to select or mention multiple improvements in each answer. The results below reflect the frequency with which each improvement was identified (multiple selections per respondent possible):

Improvement Sought	Number of Mentions	Percentage
Improved boat launch/ramp facilities	25	66%
Trails connecting to communities/parks	19	50%
Nature and wildlife viewing	15	39%
Swimming or beach areas	14	37%
Restrooms / change rooms	13	34%
More picnic/campfire areas	12	32%
Accessible paths and infrastructure	10	26%
Garbage disposal facilities	10	26%
Community gathering/event spaces	7	18%
More vehicle/trailer parking	6	16%
Safety lighting and signage	4	11%
Non-motorized boat rentals	4	11%
Other	6	16%

Note: The totals reflect the number of mentions, not number of respondents. “Other” responses could include site-specific suggestions or ideas outside the listed categories.

FINDINGS

- The strongest call for improvement is for **better boat launch/ramp facilities** (25 mentions) , representing concerns expressed in previous questions about current boat launch conditions. This high frequency signals a clear priority for both infrastructure and operational enhancements at water access points.
- **Trail connectivity** (19 mentions) is also a significant theme, with many respondents wanting improved or expanded trails linking communities and parks around the lake. This desire supports the results from earlier trail satisfaction questions, and points toward demand for multi-modal recreation and environmentally friendly travel between sites.
- **Nature and wildlife viewing** (15 mentions) and **additional or improved swimming/beach areas** (14 mentions) saw considerable interest, reflecting a high value placed on both

passive and active outdoor experiences. Similarly, consistent demand for **more and better restrooms, change rooms, picnic/campfire areas, and accessible infrastructure** highlights the importance of basic amenities and inclusivity for diverse community members and visitors.

- Secondary priorities include **improved garbage disposal** , increased **vehicle/trailer parking** , and enhanced **community event spaces** all of which support the broader lake user experience, especially during peak visitor seasons.
- Some respondents included “Other” improvements, indicating a need for continued open-ended feedback to capture further unique concerns or creative ideas that may not have fit into preset categories.

INTERPRETATION

These preferences present a clear roadmap for investment and planning at Buffalo Lake’s public access sites. Focusing on boat launch upgrades, enhanced trail connectivity, and core amenity upgrades (restrooms, accessibility, and gathering spaces) will directly address the interests and needs of the community, potentially increasing satisfaction, safety, and enjoyment for all users.

Question 12: *Specifically, what improvements would you most like to see at **Scenic Sanda** public access sites? (Choose up to 5)*

Response Summary

(Note: Some responses listed more than one item; each mention is counted for its category.)

Improvement Sought	Number of Mentions	Percentage
Improved boat launch/ramp facilities	13	34%
Trails connecting to communities/parks	12	32%
Accessible paths and infrastructure	11	29%
Restrooms / change rooms	10	26%
Swimming or beach areas	9	24%
More vehicle/trailer parking	7	18%
Nature and wildlife viewing	6	16%
More picnic/campfire areas	6	16%

Improvement Sought	Number of Mentions	Percentage
Garbage disposal facilities	6	16%
Safety lighting and signage	5	13%
Community gathering/event spaces	4	11%
Non-motorized boat rentals	4	11%

FINDINGS

- The most frequently mentioned improvement is **better boat launch/ramp facilities** (13 mentions) , again highlighting this as a persistent concern and a clear first priority for many Buffalo Lake users. **Improved trail connections** (12 mentions) between communities/parks and **accessible paths and infrastructure** (11 mentions) also stand out as prominent needs, reflecting the value placed on ease of movement, inclusivity, and the opportunity for non-motorized recreation at the lake.
- Other high-priority needs include **upgrades to restrooms/change rooms** (10 mentions) and to **swimming or beach areas** (9 mentions) , both essential for enhancing comfort, family-friendliness, and overall user satisfaction. The ongoing importance of **vehicle/trailer parking** (7 mentions) suggests practical access issues for those bringing boats or traveling in groups.
- Mentions of **nature and wildlife viewing , picnic/campfire areas , and garbage disposal facilities** point to a desire for an enjoyable setting that is both aesthetically pleasing and environmentally responsible. The inclusion of **community gathering/event spaces** and **safety lighting/signage** demonstrates an interest in both social connection and feeling secure while using public amenities.

INTERPRETATION

These responses reinforce key trends seen throughout the survey: users are seeking improvements that increase both functional access (boat launches, trails, parking) and comfort/experience (beaches, restrooms, gathering spaces), with a secondary emphasis on the environment and inclusivity. Addressing these needs, particularly the top-requested upgrades, would likely have the greatest positive impact on lake use, recreation quality, and community well-being.

Question 13: *Specifically, what improvements would you most like to see at **Buffalo Lake Meadows** public access sites? (Choose up to 5)*

Response Summary

Responses allowed multiple selections. Each mention is counted in its category.

Improvement Sought	Number of Mentions	Percentage
Trails connecting to communities/parks	17	45%
Improved boat launch/ramp facilities	14	37%
Accessible paths and infrastructure	12	32%
Restrooms / change rooms	12	32%
Swimming or beach areas	10	26%
Garbage disposal facilities	8	21%
Community gathering/event spaces	7	18%
Nature and wildlife viewing	7	18%
More vehicle/trailer parking	6	16%
More picnic/campfire areas	6	16%
Safety lighting and signage	5	13%
Non-motorized boat rentals	4	11%

FINDINGS

- Survey participants most frequently called for improvements in **trail connections (17 mentions)** , **boat launch/ramp facilities** (14 mentions) , and **accessible paths and infrastructure** (12 mentions) at Buffalo Lake Meadows. This indicates a strong desire for better connectivity both within the site and to neighboring parks and communities along with smoother, safer, and more inclusive access points for various user groups.
- Other highly sought improvements include **restrooms/change rooms** (12 mentions) and **swimming or beach areas** (10 mentions) . These results reinforce prior findings that fundamental amenities and comfort features are vital to visitor satisfaction.
- **Garbage disposal facilities** (8 mentions) , **community gathering/event spaces** (7 mentions) **nature/wildlife viewing** (7 mentions) **parking** (6 mentions) and **picnic/campfire spaces** also feature as recurring needs, signaling demand for a well-rounded recreational environment.

- Mentions of **non-motorized boat rentals** and **safety lighting/signage** reflect the importance of stewardship, diverse recreational opportunities, and user safety, respectively.

INTERPRETATION

These preferences point toward a vision for Buffalo Lake Meadows as a well-connected, accessible, and welcoming destination, with both core infrastructure and added amenities supporting a range of experiences. Addressing trails, boat launches, restrooms, and accessibility will likely make the most impactful difference for lake users, while not neglecting secondary but still meaningful amenities noted in the responses.

Question 14: *Specifically, what improvements would you most like to see at **Buffalo View Estates** public access sites? (Choose up to 5)*

Response Summary

Respondents could select multiple improvements per response. Each mention is counted in its category.

Improvement Sought	Number of Mentions	Percentage
Improved boat launch/ramp facilities	16	42%
Trails connecting to communities/parks	13	34%
Swimming or beach areas	13	34%
Garbage disposal facilities	11	29%
Accessible paths and infrastructure	10	26%
Restrooms / change rooms	10	26%
More picnic/campfire areas	9	24%
Nature and wildlife viewing	8	21%
Safety lighting and signage	7	18%
More vehicle/trailer parking	6	16%
Community gathering/event spaces	6	16%

Improvement Sought	Number of Mentions	Percentage
Non-motorized boat rentals	5	

FINDINGS

- For Buffalo View Estates’ public access sites, the strongest call is for **improved boat launch/ramp facilities** (16 mentions) continuing a clear theme found throughout the survey. Respondents also frequently requested **better trails connecting to the community and parks** (13 mentions) as well as improved or added **swimming/beach areas** (13 mentions). This reflects a need for easy and inclusive lake access for a variety of recreational activities.
- **Accessible paths and infrastructure** (10 mentions) and **restrooms/change rooms** (10 mentions) are also highly requested features, underscoring the value of inclusivity and family-friendly amenities. The relatively high mention of **garbage disposal facilities** (11 mentions) suggests growing concern for environmental health and cleanliness,
- More **picnic/campfire areas** (9 mentions), **nature/wildlife viewing** (8 mentions) opportunities reveal interest in a welcoming, nature-friendly and socially vibrant site.
- More **community gathering/event spaces safety lighting/signage, non-motorized boat rentals, and additional parking** suggest the improvements, vividly illustrating the diverse interests and practical needs of Buffalo View Estates’ users.

INTERPRETATION

There is a clear desire for Buffalo View Estates to be an accessible and well-equipped destination capable of supporting recreation, social gathering, and the enjoyment of natural beauty. Prioritizing upgrades to boat launches, connectivity, basic amenities, and environmental services will likely yield the greatest improvements in user experience.

Section Three - Open Ended Questions

Question 15: *What do you believe is the most important priority for improving the public access sites at Buffalo Lake?*

Key Priority Themes Identified

1. **Improved Boat Launch/Ramp Facilities** - Most common theme: Many respondents specifically cited the need for new, deeper, more functional, accessible, or better-maintained boat launches. Several mentioned challenges with lake water levels and the need for designs that account for fluctuating conditions.

- **Suggested specifics:** Permanent solutions for variable water levels, capacity for boats of varying sizes, strategic upgrades in a few locations versus dispersing resources too widely.
- 2. Maintaining/Improving Beaches & Water Access**
 - Groomed, safe, and accessible beaches, especially for families and young children, came up multiple times.
 - Some comments highlighted a need to focus resources on a few high-use areas rather than broad expansion.
 - 3. Balancing Public Access and Local Resident Concerns**
 - Several respondents, notably local property owners, expressed opposition to increasing or enhancing public access within residential areas, citing concerns over:
 - Increased traffic, noise, crime, and vandalism
 - Impacts on community aesthetics and wildlife
 - Preference for placing public facilities away from private residences and relying on existing provincial parks.
 - 4. Restrooms, Garbage, and Other Core Amenities**
 - Some interest in upgraded/restroom facilities, garbage and recycling, and trails with brief mention of organic waste and maintenance of current trails.
 - 5. Lake Water Levels** - A few respondents noted that the basic functionality of access sites depends on water levels and suggested that addressing or adapting to low water conditions is a major concern.
 - 6. Other Suggestions**
 - Enhanced management and enforcement
 - Creation and maintenance of natural areas/vegetation, tree planting, art, and community gathering places.
 - Improved roads to access sites and respect for landowners' use and enjoyment of their own property.
 - 7. Keeping Current Status / No Further Enhancement**
 - Some participants do not want further investment in new public access (especially through private/residential subdivisions), preferring maintenance or use of existing provincial facilities and better awareness rather than new development.

INTERPRETATION

It is clear that, while a significant portion of respondents see improved *boat launch/ramp facilities* as the top priority (especially launches that accommodate low water levels and a variety of boat types), there is a notable opposing flow from some property owners and residents who have serious concerns about *expanding/ Enhancement public access* especially within or adjacent to established residential communities.

The ideal priorities for improvement, from the public's perspective, sit at the intersection of enhancement public accessibility and respect for the existing residential/wildlife character of Buffalo Lake. Supporting infrastructure, beaches, restrooms, trash collection are valued, but many suggest they should be focused where community consensus exists or outside residential clusters.

Additionally, support for naturalization, community beautification and road/trail improvements reflect a broader vision for high-quality, sustainable public access but always with sensitivity to local concerns.

Question 16: *Would you like to share any other comments or suggestions with us?*

Major Themes Identified:

1. Community Maintenance, Pride, and Responsibility

- Several respondents spoke passionately about the pride private communities at Buffalo Lake take in maintaining their own parks and beaches, often relying on volunteer work and resident fees to keep areas clean, organized, and safe.
- Concerns were raised that increasing public access would weaken this sense of responsibility, leading to more refuse, less care, and potential strain on community-led initiatives.

2. Opposition and Disagreement Toward Expanded Public Access

- There is strong opposition among some residents to enhancing and/or expanding public access points, especially within private or residential neighborhoods.
- Key worries include increased traffic, garbage, noise and crime, disrespect of private property, and a loss of the “charm” that currently defines Buffalo Lake.
- Multiple suggestions to concentrate improvements at existing provincial parks or to focus on raising awareness about current public access rather than creating new ones.
- Some respondents do **not** believe major improvements or further expansion are necessary, emphasizing current facilities are sufficient and sometimes underutilized.

3. Specific Suggestions for Improvement

- Where improvements were supported, a few practical ideas included:
 - More benches and picnic tables along beaches and walking areas, with designs that protect against wind and wildlife
 - More and better garbage receptacles and timely maintenance
 - Enhanced bylaw/police presence to support rules (speed limits, drinking and driving, etc.)
 - Additional amenities like accessible features, a convenience store, and programming for all ages and abilities
- Some support for paving local roads, better safety signage, and trail connections between communities

4. Physical and Ecological Constraints

- Several pointed out real geological and hydrological limitations—such as shallow water and unstable ice movement making new boat launches or expanded use impractical in certain communities.

5. Positive Community Feedback

- Appreciation was expressed for county staff’s accessibility, open communications, and involvement in community initiatives (e.g., AGM attendance, sports court partnerships).

6. Requests for Engagement and Input

- Calls for all property owners’ input and concerns to be respected, not just those seeking more recreational development; some noted that the survey did not adequately offer space for voices opposed to more lake development.

INTERPRETATION

This final round of feedback emphasizes both the value residents place on community-driven stewardship of Buffalo Lake’s amenities and their serious reservations about enhancing public access within established neighborhoods. Many see the current level of access, particularly through provincial park sites, as adequate or even more than sufficient.

The practical suggestions for additional benches, better garbage containment, safety, and maintenance reflect a willingness to modestly improve existing facilities rather than invest in large-scale new infrastructure.

Responses also underscore a desire for county policymakers to prioritize collaboration with residents, respect local stewardship traditions, and thoughtfully consider the unique challenges and values of Buffalo Lake’s communities in future planning.

Ultimately, the responses signal that any project to enhance public access or amenities must be balanced against maintaining community character, respecting property rights, and environmental limits, and should involve robust, ongoing dialogue with all stakeholders.

Summary and Key Findings

1. Overall Community Context & Respondent Profile

- The majority of respondents are **permanent or seasonal residents** , with only a small portion being visitors/tourists. This means the survey primarily reflects the views of people with a long-term stake in the local area.
- Public engagement is relatively high, but there is a clear divide in viewpoints between those seeking enhanced public access and those concerned about impacts on private community character.

2. General Use Patterns and Priorities

- Most people visit public access sites **weekly or seasonally** , with swimming, boating (motorized & non-motorized), hiking/walking, and nature watching being the most popular activities.
- Many respondents use more than one access site, showing that improvements to a single site can have wide benefit.
- Across all sites, key priorities for improvement are:
 - Upgraded boat launches
 - Better trails & connections
 - Enhanced restrooms/change rooms
 - More and better picnic/campfire areas
 - Accessibility, garbage management, parking , and beaches

3. Shared and Divergent Community Opinions

- **Support for improvements** is strongest around fundamental needs: safe, functional boat launching (but at the “right” sites), trails for connecting communities, core amenities (restrooms, garbage disposal), and accessible, clean beaches.
- **Concerns/Opposition** were voiced most strongly regarding:
 - Expansion of access within residential neighborhoods
 - Increased potential for crime, garbage, crowding, and loss of tranquility/natural aesthetics
 - Equity for residents who already pay for and maintain community spaces
- **Sufficient Development:** Some residents feel the present distribution of public access mainly via provincial parks or existing developed sites is sufficient or already underutilized .

- **Suggested approach:** Concentrate significant investments at locations where technical feasibility and community support are strongest (primarily Buffalo View Estates and select shared-access points), while limiting the “footprint” of public access enhancements in residential clusters.
- **Governance:** Calls for transparent, responsive planning and respect for community stewardship roles.

4. Site-Specific Insights

A) Scenic Sands

- **Usage data:** Scenic Sands site sees regular use but, like Meadows, faces physical/geological challenges that make extensive investment (like boat launches) difficult or impractical. Residents report poor results from earlier boat launch attempts due to shallow water and winter ice.
- **Priorities:** Modest, nature-compatible improvements (benches, walking trails, signage, and well-managed trash/recycling stations) are likely to garner the most acceptance.
- **Insight:** Maintain the area’s quiet and natural character, avoid actions that draw large volumes of non-resident visitors to the core of the community.

B) Buffalo Lake Meadows

- **Top improvement themes:** Trails to other communities/parks, accessible paths, garbage disposal, restrooms, and some interest in picnic/campfire areas.
- **Boat launch concerns:** Many Meadows residents do not support a boat launch here, citing technical challenges (shallow water), maintenance history, and concerns about attracting excessive public use to residential areas.
- **Community pride:** Meadow’s residents show strong local stewardship, with ongoing maintenance by volunteers and fees.
- **Insight:** Improvements should focus on maintaining local infrastructure, supporting existing stewardship, modest upgrades (benches, bins, trail grooming), and not expanding lake access beyond current levels.
- **Opposition:** Clear themes of concern regarding increased traffic, noise, and risks of increased crime/vandalism if access expands.

C) Buffalo View Estates

- **Top improvement themes:** Improved boat launch/ramp facilities, trails/connection to parks and communities, swimming/beach areas, accessible paths, restrooms, and garbage management.
- **Boat launch as priority:** This site is widely seen as key for boaters, with calls for launches that handle both low water and larger boats and can serve as a main south-shore access point.

- **Interest in social and safety features:** Community gathering/event spaces, safety lighting/signage, and picnic areas frequently requested.
- **Environmental concern:** Calls for more garbage bins, wildlife viewing areas, and a strong emphasis on not over-developing or harming nature.

Recommendations

Based on the comprehensive analysis of community input and usage patterns detailed in the preceding sections, this section presents targeted recommendations aimed at enhancing public access and community amenities while respecting the unique character and concerns of local residents.

The survey results reveal a nuanced landscape of opinions, highlighting a strong desire for improvements in key areas such as boat launches, trails, and essential facilities, coupled with significant apprehension regarding the potential impacts on residential neighborhoods and natural aesthetics.

Our recommendations, therefore, strive to balance these diverse viewpoints by prioritizing sustainable investments in infrastructure where community support is robust, ensuring that enhancements cater to the needs of both residents and visitors alike. By fostering meaningful engagement with local stakeholders and focusing on targeted, low-impact improvements, these recommendations aim to promote a harmonious coexistence of public access and community integrity.

- **Facilitate Engagement:** Engage deeply with individual local communities before finalizing improvements tailor enhancements to each site’s unique geography and stakeholder engagement.
- **Prioritize:** Prioritize boat launches and infrastructure upgrades only where sustainable and feasible (mainly Buffalo View Estates). Enhance trails and connectivity, focus on accessibility and universal design for all users.
- **Identify Targeted Investment:** Focus major upgrades at sites with strong support/need (especially Buffalo View Estates), and limit interventions elsewhere. Invest in practical, low-impact and low maintenance amenities
- **Balance:** Seek to enhance public amenities without undermining community character, security, or natural values.
- **Address Site Specific Facility Needs:** Especially for boat launches, restrooms, trails, and environmental stewardship infrastructure.

Attachment A – The Questionnaire

Buffalo Lake Public Enhancement Plan Questionnaire – Community Survey June 2025

Purpose:

The County of Stettler is planning to enhance three public access sites on the south shore of Buffalo Lake. We aim to balance sustainable development, environmental protection, and recreational enhancements. By sharing your thoughts, you can help us create amenities and facilities that truly cater to our community's needs. Your collaboration is key in shaping the future of these sites, ensuring they effectively serve everyone. Please take a moment to share your ideas and priorities.

Buffalo Lake Public Access Sites in the County of Stettler:

1. Scenic Sands
2. Buffalo Lake Meadows
3. Buffalo View Estates



Section 1: About You

What is your connection to Buffalo Lake? (Check all that apply)	How often do you visit or use public access sites at Buffalo Lake?	Which public access site(s) do you typically use at Buffalo Lake?
<input type="checkbox"/> Permanent resident	<input type="checkbox"/> Daily	<input type="checkbox"/> Site 1: Scenic Sands
<input type="checkbox"/> Seasonal resident	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekly	<input type="checkbox"/> Site 2: Buffalo Lake Meadows
<input type="checkbox"/> Visitor / Tourist	<input type="checkbox"/> Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/> Site 3: Buffalo View Estates
<input type="checkbox"/> Business owner	<input type="checkbox"/> Seasonally	<input type="checkbox"/> I'm not sure / Non of those
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Rarely	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

Section 2: Access and Facilities

1. What activities do you most frequently engage in at Buffalo Lake? (Check all that apply)

- Swimming
- Boating (motorized)
- Boating (non-motorized: kayak, canoe, paddle board)
- Fishing
- Picnicking
- Ice skating
- Hiking / Walking
- Cycling
- Camping
- Nature watching / Photography
- Other: _____

2. How would you rate the current quality of the following at Buffalo Lake?

Feature	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Not Sure
Boat launch facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parking availability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trail connections	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restrooms / change rooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Picnic / gathering spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Playground / recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accessibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Generally, what improvements would you most like to see at Buffalo Lake’s public access sites? (Choose up to 5)

- Improved boat launch/ramp facilities
- More vehicle/trailer parking
- Trails connecting to communities/parks
- More picnic/campfire areas
- Accessible paths and infrastructure
- Swimming or beach areas
- Community gathering/event spaces
- Non-motorized boat rentals
- Garbage disposal facilities
- Nature and wildlife viewing
- Safety lighting and signage
- Restrooms / change rooms
- Other: _____

4. Specifically, what improvements would you most like to see at each Buffalo Lake’s public access sites? (Choose up to 5 for each site)

Feature	Scenic Sands	Buffalo Lake Meadows	Buffalo View Estates	Comment
Improved boat launch/ramp facilities				
More vehicle/trailer parking				
Trails connecting to communities/parks				
More picnic/campfire areas				
Accessible paths and infrastructure				
Swimming or beach areas				
Community gathering/event spaces				
Non-motorized boat rentals				
Garbage disposal facilities				
Nature and wildlife viewing				
Safety lighting and signage				
Restrooms / change rooms				
Other				

Section 3: Final Thoughts

- 5. What do you believe is the most important priority for improving the public access sites at Buffalo Lake?

- 6. Would you like to share any other comments or suggestions with us?

Thank you for your collaboration! Please check back on the project website for future engagement opportunities.



Memo

TO: Council

FROM: Andrew Brysiuk, Director of Municipal Services

DATE: February 25, 2026

SUBJECT: Request for Joint Advocacy

The Summer Village of White Sands has submitted the attached letter requesting that the County participate in a joint advocacy effort to the Government of Alberta regarding the future of Township Road 40-4. Their request proposes that both municipalities ask Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors to consider adding Township Road 40-4 to the Provincial Road Network as an Urban Approach Road.

Township Road 40-4 functions as the primary access route to the Summer Village and experiences traffic volumes and usage patterns that differ from typical rural township roads. Seasonal population surges, recreational traffic associated with Buffalo Lake, septic haulage, construction traffic, and the need for reliable emergency access all contribute to higher service expectations and maintenance demands.

In 2023, the County and the Summer Village entered into a Road Maintenance Agreement to resolve differing expectations for service levels and to support the increased maintenance required on the road. Under that agreement, the Summer Village contributes annually to the County's maintenance program for Township Road 40-4 and Range Road 20-2. That agreement remains in effect and is attached to this memo for Council's reference.

The Summer Village's current request reflects the regional nature of the road and that the Province may be better positioned to assume responsibility for its long-term maintenance, regulation, and potential upgrades such as pavement.

If the Province were to assume responsibility for the road in the future, maintenance and regulatory oversight would shift from the County to the Province. This would also eliminate the need for the Summer Village's annual contribution under the 2023 Road Maintenance Agreement. At this stage, however, the request is strictly advocacy-focused and does not involve any immediate operational or financial changes

Opportunities

RMA Spring Conference

The County submitted a request to meet with the Minister of Transportation and Economic Corridors at the upcoming RMA Spring Conference, however that request was declined.

Although a ministerial meeting was not granted, the County was offered the opportunity to request to meet with departmental officials from the Ministry's Red Deer regional office. These meetings would likely offer a more practical early exploration of the process that would be necessary.

Even without a ministerial meeting at the Spring RMA, the conference still provides opportunities to engage informally with MLAs and ministry staff, raise awareness of the issue, and position the matter for future ministerial meetings or constituency-level engagement.

Joint Letter of Support

A typical start to joint advocacy would be a jointly signed letter from both municipalities, formalizing a shared position to provide ministry staff and politicians with a clear, unified advocacy message.

Next Steps

Administration is looking for formal direction from Council to initiate any official joint advocacy which would include agreeing to concede the direction, control, and management of Township Road 40-4 from Highway 56 to the Summer Village of White Sands.



Box 119
Stettler, AB T0C 2L0
Phone (403) 740-1572
Fax (587) 854 - 3176
Website: www.whitesandsab.ca
Email: cao@whitesandsab.ca

February 17, 2026

Reeve Clarke & County of Stettler Council Members
Box 1270
6602-44 Ave
Stettler, AB T0C 2L0

Dear Reeve Clarke & County of Stettler Council Members;

RE: JOINT ADVOCACY WITH COUNTY OF STETTLER – TOWNSHIP ROAD 40-4 (URBAN APPROACH ROAD CONSIDERATION)

On behalf of Council for the Summer Village of White Sands, thank you for the continued cooperation and support the County provides to our community.

As Council is aware, the Summer Village of White Sands is one of the few municipalities in Alberta without an upgraded provincial access road. The community relies entirely on County-maintained roads, including Township Road 40-4, as the primary access route. This roadway provides essential access not only for residents, but also for the broader Buffalo Lake region. Upgrading this route to a provincially designated secondary paved road would significantly improve regional connectivity and safety and would allow the project to be considered for provincial funding support.

Council believes there is an opportunity for our municipalities to work together on a joint advocacy initiative with the province. Accordingly, Council respectfully requests that the County of Stettler and the Summer Village of White Sands collaborate to advocate to the Minister of Transportation and Economic Corridors for consideration of Township Road 40-4 being adopted into the Provincial Road network as an Urban Approach Road.

Provincial recognition of this corridor would support key regional objectives, including:

- Public safety and emergency access;
- Seasonal and recreational traffic demands;
- Tourism and regional economic activity; and
- Long-term transportation planning objectives.

A coordinated request from both Councils would demonstrate strong regional alignment and support the County in bringing this matter forward in discussions or meetings with provincial representatives.

This request is intended as cooperative advocacy only, and Council recognizes the County's ongoing jurisdiction and role in maintaining Township Road 40-4. The Summer Village's goal is to work in partnership with the County to seek appropriate provincial recognition of this important access corridor.

Thank you for your consideration. The Summer Village of White Sands looks forward to working collaboratively with the County on next steps.

Sincerely,

Dan Zembal
Mayor
Summer Village of White Sands

CC: CAO, County of Stettler No. 6

THIS AGREEMENT made effective this 1 day of April, 2023
BETWEEN:

COUNTY OF STETTLER NO. 6
(the "County")

- and -

SUMMER VILLAGE OF WHITE SANDS
(the "Summer Village")

ROAD MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT

WHEREAS:

- A. The County and Summer Village are signatories to an Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework dated April, 2020 ("ICF"), which includes contemplation of the parties entering into a shared road maintenance agreement.
- B. The County has direction, control and management of Township Road 40-4 and Range Road 20-2 (the "Roads"), which are public roadways located within the County's municipal boundaries. Maintenance and servicing of the Roads is required to allow for access to the Summer Village;
- C. The County and Summer Village recognize the value of maintained public roadways for the benefit of the region, and that doing so requires an allocation of resources, notably during May to September annually when usage of the Roads tends to increase ("**Shared Maintenance Period**");
- D. The Summer Village is willing to share the cost of maintaining and servicing the Roads with the County within the designated Service Area to mitigate against the effects of possible road bans and road degradation in the Service Area during the Shared Maintenance Period;
- E. The County is willing to attend to the maintenance requirements for the Roads upon and subject to the terms, covenants and conditions contained within this Agreement.

NOW THEREFORE in consideration of the grants and the mutual covenants contained within this Agreement, the parties hereby agree as follows:

- 1. **Term and Renewal.** The Term of this Agreement shall begin on the date first written above and shall continue until March 31, 2026, and provided neither party is in breach of the Agreement, shall automatically renew for successive terms of four years each (the "Term"), unless terminated in writing by one of the parties one hundred and twenty (120) days before the applicable termination date. Absent said written notice of termination, the terms of the Agreement during the renewal term shall be as set out herein, unless amended in writing by both parties, before or after the renewal term commences.

- 2. **Cost.** The Summer Village shall pay forty thousand (\$40,000) dollars, inclusive of any applicable GST, to the County in the first year Wednesday, February 25, 2026. The cost shall 112

be increased by a percent equal to the annual Consumer Price Index as reported by Statistics Canada, or 2%, whichever is great on an annual basis during the Term of this Agreement, which payment shall be due no later than April 1st of each year this Agreement is in effect.

3. **Reporting.** The County shall provide the Summer Village with an annual accounting for the Service Area during the Shared Maintenance Period, the following:
 - a. all amounts paid by the Summer Village in relation thereto; not later than October 31st in each that the Agreement is in effect.
4. **Service Area.** The County shall provide the maintenance set out in section 5 and 6 of this Agreement to Township Road 40-4 from Highway 56 to the municipal boundary of the Summer Village, and to Range Road 20-2 from Highway 601 to Township Road 40-4 (the “**Service Area**”).
5. **Maintenance Standards.** Notwithstanding any County road standards which would otherwise apply to the Service Area, the County shall be responsible for maintaining the Roads in accordance with the maintenance standards set out in County policies and procedures, in place from time to time, and in accordance with all applicable laws (the “**Applicable Standards**”).
6. **Maintenance.** The County’s maintenance obligations shall be limited to include:
 - a. grading the Roads within the Service Area every seven (7) to ten (10) days commencing the Saturday of the Victoria Day long weekend in May and ending the Sunday of the Labour Day long weekend in September (the “**Summer Grading Period**”); and
 - b. outside of the Summer Grading Period, grading the Roads within the Service Area as required, in the discretion of the County, acting reasonably and at no additional cost to the Summer Village;

all in accordance with the Applicable Standards.

7. **Gravel.** The County shall gravel the Roads in accordance with the County’s gravel rotation schedule. The cost of any spot gravel that is required on the Roads in the Service Area outside of the County’s gravel rotation schedule will be considered for cost sharing, in good faith, by the County and the Summer Village, prior to work occurring.
8. **Road Bans.** The following road bans will apply to the Roads:
 - a. The road ban on Township Road 40-4 and Range Road 20-2 shall be a seasonal road ban. The road ban shall be removed annually by the Victoria Day long weekend in May unless ground conditions require it remain. In such circumstance, the road ban shall be removed as soon as ground conditions permit.
 - b. Permanent road bans will remain on:
 - i. Township Road 40-2 from Highway 835 to Range Road 20-4;
 - ii. Range Road 20-4 from Township Road 40-2 to Township Road 40-4; and
 - iii. Bay View Street,but may be removed at the discretion of the County, acting reasonably.

9. **Development.** The Summer Village shall consider the implications that any proposed development within its jurisdiction may have on the Roads in the Service Area in

accordance with its commitments to any applicable Intermunicipal Development Plans including with the County, and sound municipal planning principles. The Summer Village shall advise development applicants of the County of Stettler's General Traffic Bylaw and the requirements under the bylaw for obtaining Road Use Agreements.

- 10. Independent Contractor.** The County is an independent contractor for the purpose of this Agreement and shall not be deemed to be a servant, employee, or agent of the Summer Village in the provision of maintenance to the Roads, including within the Service Area. Each party shall be responsible for their own administration costs in relation to meeting their respective obligations under this Agreement.
- 11. Indemnity.** Each party shall indemnify and hold harmless the other party together with its employees, agents, officers, representatives, elected officials and insurers from and against any and all claims, including but not limited to penalties, fines and other liabilities, damages, costs (including, without restriction, all legal and other professional costs on a solicitor and his own client full indemnity basis), losses, expenses, actions and suits of every kind and nature caused by, or arising directly or indirectly out of any breach of this Agreement by the indemnifying party, willful misconduct by the indemnifying party, or negligent performance by the indemnifying party of its obligations under the terms of this Agreement including anything done, permitted or omitted to be done by the indemnifying party, its officers, agents, employees and subcontractors, whether occasioned by negligence or otherwise. The indemnity obligations herein shall survive the termination of this Agreement for any reason whatsoever and shall remain binding upon the parties until all such obligations are satisfied in full.
- 12. Default.** If either party undertakes or permits any activity whatsoever within the Service Area which is outside of the permitted uses contemplated herein, or which may be a nuisance or cause damage, or if either party is in default of any of the terms, covenants or conditions of this Agreement, the other party may, in its absolute discretion:

 - a. give the said defaulting party ten (10) days written notice to: (a) rectify or remedy any such nuisance, improper activity or default, or (b) object and invoke the dispute resolution process outlined in Clause 14 herein, failing which the rights herein conferred upon the said defaulting party shall automatically terminate. In such event, the said defaulting party shall remain responsible for any costs owing to the other party, which costs shall be payable forthwith; or
 - b. give the said defaulting party ten (10) days written notice to: (a) rectify or remedy any such nuisance, improper activity, or default, or (b) object and invoke the dispute resolution process outlined in Clause 14 herein, failing which the other party shall have the right, but not be obligated, to take such action as is reasonably necessary to perform such obligations. In such event, the said defaulting party shall be responsible for the payment of all costs incurred by the other party forthwith to the said other party.
- 13. Dispute Resolution.** In the event of a dispute in relation to the interpretation or application of this Agreement, including whether or not a default has occurred, the parties agree to invoke the dispute resolution process outlined in Appendix "A" of the ICF, as amended from time to time, including adhering to the timelines outlined therein.

14. **Termination.** Either party may terminate this Agreement by providing at least one hundred twenty (120) days' written notice to the other party. Such notice of termination shall not relieve either party of their obligations under Agreement.
15. **Force Majeure.** If the Parties fail to meet their respective obligations hereunder within the respective time provided, and such failure is directly caused or materially contributed to by Force Majeure, such failure shall be deemed not to be a breach of the obligation of such party, provided that, in such event such party shall use its commercially reasonable efforts to put itself in a position to carry out its obligations hereunder as soon as reasonably possible, to the extent that it is within its power.
16. **Complaints.** All complaints regarding the Roads received by the Summer Village in relation to the Service Area shall be addressed in accordance with its policies and processes, and the Summer Village shall provide generalized summaries of any complaints relating to the Service Area to the County as required. The Summer Village shall not refer complainants directly to the County.
17. **Notice.** Any notice or other communication required or permitted to be given under this Agreement shall be in writing and shall be given by email or facsimile, to the applicable addresses below:
 - County: Box 1270
Stettler AB T0C 2L0
cao@stettlercounty.ca
Attention: Chief Administrative Officer
 - Summer Village: Box 119
Stettler AB T0C 2L0
cao@whitesandsab.ca
Attention: Chief Administrative Officer
18. **Amendment.** This Agreement may only be amended by an instrument in writing that is signed by a duly authorized representative of each of the parties.
19. **Preamble.** The preamble is incorporated into and forms a part of this Agreement.
20. **Waiver.** No indulgence or forbearance by any party shall be deemed to constitute a party giving up its rights to insist on performance in full and in a timely manner of all covenants of the other party and any such waiver must be expressed in writing and signed by such party and then such waiver shall only be effective in the specific instance and for the specific purpose for which it is given.
21. **Severability.** If any provision of this Agreement is determined by a Court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unenforceable, that provision shall be severed from the Agreement and the remainder of the Agreement shall continue in full force and effect.
22. **Assignment.** This Agreement is not assignable, either in whole or in part.

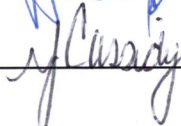
termination or expiry of this Agreement, the County and the Summer Village acknowledge that all information and records compiled or created under this Agreement are subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, RSA 2000, c F-25. If a request from the other party (the requesting party) is received for any of this information or records which remain in the custody of the party to whom the request is made, that party shall forward the information and records to the requesting party within five (5) calendar days of receipt of the request.

- 24. **Further Assurances.** Each of the parties shall execute and deliver all such further documents and do all such other things as the other party may reasonably request to give full effect to, better evidence of, or perfect the full intent and meaning of this Agreement.
- 25. **Counterparts.** This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts, where the signature of each party is on a separate signature page, each of which will be deemed to be an original, and all of which taken together will be deemed to constitute one and the same instrument. Delivery of an executed signature page to this Agreement by any party by electronic transmission will be as effective as delivery of a manually executed copy thereof by such party.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the Parties hereto have executed this Agreement effective the date specified above.

COUNTY OF STETTLE NO. 6

Per:  _____

Per:  _____

SUMMER VILLAGE OF WHITE SANDS

Per:  _____

Per: _____

AGWA Donation Request 2026 AGM and Hockey Tournament



To whom it may concern,

The Alberta Game Warden Association will be holding its annual hockey tournament in conjunction with its annual general meeting and banquet dinner in Camrose, Alberta from March 20th – 22nd, 2026. This year will mark the 53rd anniversary of our Association. Fish and Wildlife Officers, friends and families from across Alberta will be in attendance to celebrate our proud history.

If you have never heard of our association, here is some of our background information:

The Alberta Game Warden Association (AGWA) is a non-profit organization registered under the Societies Act of Alberta. Its membership is made up of field Fish and Wildlife Officers (Regular members), Officers that have transitioned into management (Associate members), and retired Officers and certain individuals with special recommendation, (Honorary veteran members). AGWA, initially named the Alberta Fish and Wildlife Officers Association, was established in 1973 and over 50 years later, boasts a membership of more than 60 active Alberta Fish and Wildlife Officers plus additional veteran and honorary members. Throughout our history we have undertaken many initiatives and can boast many successes including:

- Our commitment to the resource and officers throughout the continent resulted in our Association being one of the “founding” members which assisted in creating the North American Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association (NAWEOA) in 1980. NAWEOA now has a membership

of more than 8,000 members consisting entirely of wildlife enforcement officers.

- Warden's for Wishes benevolent program where AGWA collected proceeds from the sale of its Warden's for Wishes Calendar which were donated to The Children's Wish Foundation of Canada to the sum of \$46 000.00.
- Creation of the Alberta Game Warden Magazine which allowed our association to educate the public regarding the issues facing resource law enforcement, the management of natural resources, and/or health of the environment. The first issue was published in 1986 and continued until 2008 (22 years). In 2008, AGWA helped create a partnership with the other Western Canadian Provinces to create the Western Canadian Game Warden Magazine where we continue to educate the public. The magazine prints 50, 000 copies each year reaching thousands of devoted readers. Over the years our names and working titles have changed, but one constant has always remained and that is our dedication and commitment to the protection of some of the world's most valued fish and wildlife resources.

Every year during our annual banquet dinner, we organize fundraising activities and silent auction. All money raised is donated to several initiatives including the AGWA memorial fund, AGWA annual scholarship, sending kids to camp initiative etc...Due to the very limited revenue of our non-profit Association, we occasionally request assistance from our supporters in making our events successful. We were hoping that you might be willing to offer raffle prizes or, if more convenient for yourselves, a cash donation, which would allow us to purchase a prize to raffle. Any donation item or financial support would be greatly appreciated.

We very much welcome any support. As a token of our appreciation, AGWA will commit to the following:

- All contributors' names will be mentioned and thanked at our banquet, and;
- Promoted on our website until March 2027 as a proud supporter of AGWA (including a link to your business website and logo.)

We hope that you will be able to support us in this way and we look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you for your time.

Morgan Rosadiuk

Fundraising Chair,

On behalf of the Alberta Game Warden Association

agwafundraisingchair@gmail.com

<https://agwa.nationbuilder.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/AlbertaGameWardenAssociation/>

From: Maryanne King
Sent: February 18, 2026 10:18 AM
To: info
Cc: Larry Clarke
Subject: National Police Federation | Contract Policing Commitment

Dear Reeve Clarke,

On behalf of the National Police Federation (NPF), we are pleased to share that the Federal Minister of Public Safety has confirmed once again the Government of Canada's ongoing commitment to RCMP contract policing in provinces and municipalities beyond 2032.

Please see a [statement from the NPF](#) highlighting the significance of this confirmation and the certainty it provides to contract partners for public safety planning purposes going forward.

The NPF has been actively working with all levels of government to demonstrate our Members' world-class policing service and to seek clarity on the future of contract policing beyond 2032. This confirmation is welcome news, verifying the expert local policing services the RCMP provides which provinces and municipalities can continue to rely on in the years ahead.

Should you have any questions or like additional information, please feel free to contact the NPF at GVTRelations@npf-fpn.com.

Sincerely,

Maryanne King
Advisor, Government Relations | Conseiller, relations gouvernementales
Pronouns: She/Her

National Police Federation | Fédération de la Police Nationale

npf-fpn.com

**NATIONAL
POLICE
FEDERATION**



**FÉDÉRA
DE LA P
NATION**



The mission of the National Police Federation is to provide strong, professional, fair and progressive representation to protect the rights of RCMP Members. La mission de la Fédération de la police nationale est de fournir une représentation forte, professionnelle et progressive afin de promouvoir et faire avancer les droits des Membres de la GRC.

This email may contain PRIVILEGED AND/OR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION intended only for the use of the addressee. If you are not the addressee or the person responsible for delivering it to the person to whom it was addressed, you may not copy or deliver it. If you receive this email by mistake, please immediately notify us.

Ce courriel peut contenir des informations CONFIDENTIELLES ET/OU PRIVILÉGIÉES exclusivement restreintes à l'usage du destinataire. Si vous n'êtes ni le/la destinataire, ni la personne responsable pour la livraison au/à la destinataire, il ne vous est pas permis d'acheminer ceci à toute autre personne. Si vous avez reçu ce courriel par erreur, nous vous serions reconnaissants de bien vouloir en faire part par téléphone ou courriel immédiatement.





2026-02-12

Staff Sergeant Christian Lafleur
Detachment Commander
Drumheller, Alberta

Dear Reeve and Council,

Please find attached the quarterly Community Policing Report for the Drumheller detachment. It outlines staffing, financial information, and crime trends for the Drumheller detachment and supports our commitment to transparency and ongoing collaboration with our community partners.

Through both provincial and municipal policing contracts, the RCMP serves roughly 40% of Albertans across 95% of the province, including your community. That is why it is so important that our work is centered on people — the frontline members serving your community, the support teams behind the scenes, and the Albertans who rely on us every day.

The Government of Alberta's Police Funding Model (PFM) has strengthened our ability to meet those needs. With your contributions, we have added 279 police officers, 136 directly to detachments, along with 242 civilian staff, including 77 supporting detachment operations. These investments have also enabled the development of a Real-Time Operations Centre to support frontline officers, the expansion of our drone program, enhanced investigative capacity, and the addition of a third specialized Emergency Response Team.

These resources, along with the dedication of our employees and the support of your community, have helped bring Alberta's crime rates to their lowest point in five years — and we are committed to building on this progress together.

I welcome continued conversations about your community's policing priorities and any ideas that can help us strengthen our service. Working collaboratively is essential to maintaining this forward progress, and I encourage you to reach out at any time with questions, concerns, or suggestions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Lafleur', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Staff Sergeant Christian Lafleur
Detachment Commander
Drumheller, Alberta

Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Commanding Officer
Alberta



Gendarmerie royale du Canada

Commandant
de l'Alberta

February 4, 2026

Good day,

As we begin a new year, I would like to take the opportunity to share an update on the work the Alberta RCMP is doing to support safe, resilient communities across the province.

Like you, and the communities you serve, crime remains a primary concern for the Alberta RCMP. We recognize the significant impacts crime has on residents, businesses, and overall community well-being. Policing in Alberta presents unique and real challenges, including vast geographic areas, long response distances, and a relatively small number of repeat offenders who cause a disproportionate amount of harm. Addressing these challenges requires responses that are intelligence-led, fiscally responsible, and built on strong partnerships.

We remain focused on addressing crime through continual reassessment of operational approaches, responsible deployment of resources, and close collaboration with municipal and community partners. We also recognize the significant cost of policing for communities and remain committed to ensuring available resources are deployed strategically and efficiently to deliver effective policing services to Albertans.

As part of this commitment, we are investing in modernization initiatives, including the development of the Real-Time Operations Centre, the expansion of the Emergency Response Team, increased investigative capacity and resources focused on working in partnership with communities and government on prevention initiatives and address the root causes of crime.

I want to highlight for you some of the initiatives we have underway, some of the results we've realized and some of the opportunities we remain focused on.

Despite fiscal pressures, we continue to focus resources where they will have the greatest impact. One of our key strategies is concentrating on the relatively small number of offenders responsible for the greatest harm across the province through tracking and prioritizing the Top 100 offenders. Using data compiled from RCMP and municipal police services across Alberta our Strategic Research and Analysis Unit, has assessed nearly 100,000 unique offenders and ranked them to identify those causing the most significant harm. This intelligence directly informs the work of Crime Reduction Units located across the province that can be deployed where and when emerging crime trends demand to target those offenders causing the most harm. These units work in close coordination with local detachments and partner agencies, including municipal police services and Alberta Sheriffs.

We have countless examples of successful operations targeting property crime offenders across Alberta where significant seizures of stolen property including vehicles, ATV's heavy construction equipment, and copper wire, have been recovered and offenders have been arrested to face prosecution. This includes well coordinated investigations involving teams of investigators located strategically throughout the four districts working in concert and utilizing sophisticated investigative techniques and tools including the leveraging of cutting-edge surveillance assets from our federal RCMP partners.

We know that addiction to illicit drugs is a huge driver of the types of crime that victimize Albertans. To that end, we have also utilized enhanced investigative resources to compliment local detachments in combatting the drug trade in communities across the province. We have made significant seizures of fentanyl, methamphetamines, cocaine and illegal firearms in numerous investigations across the province. These successes impact the availability of these harmful drugs through disruption of supply and act as a deterrent by holding accountable those who are profiting from the distribution of substances that deprive Albertans of their safety and security.

We are embracing technology to make policing more effective, efficient, and safer for both the public and police. The policing landscape is changing; yesterday's solutions won't solve today's challenges. As such, modern policing requires that frontline officers be supported by layers of expertise, coordination, and technology. The Real-Time Operations Centre does exactly that and is a critical component of police modernization. Operating twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, the Real-Time Operations Centre provides operational support to every Alberta RCMP officer in the province. It enhances officer and public safety, coordinates specialized resources, and ensures informed decision-making during complex and evolving incidents. For our officers, the Real-Time Operations Centre ensures they are never working alone, regardless of location. For Alberta communities, this means every officer on their street is supported by a robust network of specialized units ready to respond at any moment. Ratepayers aren't funding just one uniformed member, but a comprehensive system of expertise and technology working behind that officer to keep their community safe.

Advanced investigative resources and practices represent another essential component of modernized policing as do resources such as the Emergency Response Teams. Emergency Response Teams are teams of highly skilled and trained individuals, bringing together experienced members, specialized tactics, advanced technology, and trained negotiators as a complete operational package, essentially bringing the right resource to the most volatile and dangerous calls. Their role is to safely resolve high-risk incidents involving armed or barricaded individuals, hostage situations and high-risk arrests. By deploying the appropriate expertise, equipment, and techniques, Emergency Response Teams have consistently led to safer outcomes for community members, suspects, and police officers. Demand for these specialized responses has increased significantly, with a sixty-one per cent increase in calls requiring Emergency Response Team involvement over the past four years. In response we have increased our capacity in this area enhancing overall public safety throughout the province. These specialized units place the Alberta RCMP on the leading edge of modern policing in Canada and directly support community safety. Combined with the dedication of our employees and the partnership of the communities we serve, these efforts have helped reduce crime rates in Alberta to the lowest in five years.

We recognize that police visibility and staffing levels remain key concerns for our clients and stakeholders. We continue to focus on recruiting Albertans to serve Albertans, strengthening experienced police officer recruitment. Since April 1, 2024, we have seen 5,450 applications in Alberta and 22 Experienced Police Officers have joined the Alberta RCMP since April 1, 2025. While these recruiting numbers are encouraging, we recognize the ongoing urgency to fill vacancies which is why we continually look inward at our hiring processes to remove barriers, find efficiencies and ensure the most qualified applicants are finding their way to service in communities across Alberta as quickly as possible.

Like all police services, we experience short-term human resource pressures at frontline detachments and have developed several strategies that enable a flexible response to these pressures. We have established a Relief Team based out of Leduc and Cochrane that is comprised of 30 members who

support detachments throughout the province. Since the start of 2026, the Relief Team has deployed 34 times to various detachments in the province. In addition, we currently have 33 Reservists who are retired police officers available as and when required to deploy where the greatest needs are. This provides another option of flexible deployment of highly experienced resources.

We are continually assessing our service delivery models to ensure our resources are deployed in the most effective and efficient way. This includes assessing resource levels at detachments, monitoring our response times, reviewing and adapting our policies and piloting initiatives to improve member visibility in communities. Just recently, we approved a pilot project that leverages technology to reduce the administrative burden placed on our front-line members, so that they can spend more time engaged in proactive patrolling and community engagement.

We continually engage in consultation with our community partners and stakeholders to identify whether changes to service delivery are needed. We assess and discuss impacts with our stakeholders and prioritize flexibility to ensure we are responsive to community priorities and needs.

Municipal leadership plays a critical role in advocating for safer communities. Your collective voice—grounded in firsthand knowledge of how crime affects residents, businesses, and community well-being—is essential in advancing meaningful change related to bail practices and court capacity.

I would like to highlight some of the broader challenges we encounter in this space.

First, let me share an example of a single prolific offender whose repeated releases resulted in significant harm across multiple communities:

- In February 2025, he committed a firearm-related robbery and stole a vehicle containing a one-year-old child, receiving a 90-day sentence.
- In June 2025, he was sentenced to 21 days time served after being located in a stolen vehicle.
- In July 2025, he was arrested again in a stolen vehicle, charged with 11 offences, and released on bail with conditions.
- In September 2025, he pled guilty to theft under \$5,000 and served 30 days.
- In November 2025, he rammed an unmarked police vehicle with a stolen vehicle and was taken into custody.
- He now faces 11 charges, including failure to comply and assaulting a police officer with a weapon, and remains in custody.

This individual committed offences across Stony Plain, Spruce Grove, Parkland County, Lac Ste. Anne County, and Sturgeon County. His apprehension was the result of coordinated efforts between the Central Alberta District Crime Reduction Unit, a Community Response Team, and Parkland Detachment resources.

Examples such as this are not isolated. They demonstrate how a single prolific offender, repeatedly released back into the community, can cause significant harm to multiple municipalities in a short period of time. These cases underscore rural Albertans' concerns around repeat offending, bail, and court capacity.

We work closely with Crown Prosecutors to address repeat offending by ensuring priority offenders are supported by comprehensive bail packages that clearly outline criminal history, risk to public safety, and the broader community impacts of continued release. We also actively support the use of Community

Impact Statements, which allow communities and municipal leaders to articulate the cumulative harm crime causes beyond individual victims.

We remain compassionate toward individuals experiencing mental health challenges, addictions, and social vulnerability, and we continue to support partnerships that improve access to treatment and recovery services. This requires that adequate treatment be available and accessible. At the same time, there *are* individuals whose repeated, violent, or high-risk behaviour necessitates incarceration. Some people simply need to go to jail in order to protect the public and prevent further victimization.

Court capacity remains a significant challenge across the province, especially in rural Alberta. Limited court time, shortages of judges and clerks, and resulting delays undermine the effectiveness of the justice system. We will continue to advocate for improvements through multiple forums, consistently raising the impacts these pressures have on victims, communities, and frontline policing.

When policing data, operational experience, and municipal advocacy align, they provide a powerful foundation for justice system reform. Effective crime reduction cannot be achieved by policing alone. Long-term success depends on strong partnerships with municipalities, community organizations, government, and social service providers. We value our relationship with you and those you represent and recognize the essential role you play in shaping community safety priorities.

Modernization, fiscal responsibility, and collaboration will continue to guide our efforts. We are committed to leveraging technology, applying best practices, and deploying the right resources in the right places to support shared public safety goals.

Effective policing depends on strong partnerships, and I want to assure you that we remain committed to working closely with elected officials, municipal administrators, and community leaders to ensure policing services align with local priorities and needs. That is why I encourage you to reach out to your local Detachment Commander to discuss your policing services and explore opportunities to strengthen collaboration in support of your community priorities.

Sincerely,



Trevor Daroux
Deputy Commissioner
Commanding Officer Alberta RCMP

111140 - 109 Street
Edmonton, AB T5G 2T4

Telephone: 780-412-5444
Fax: 780-412-5445



Alberta RCMP - Municipal Policing Report

Detachment Information

Detachment Name

Drumheller Detachment

Detachment Commander

Staff Sergeant Christian Lafleur

Report Date

February 12, 2026

Fiscal Year

2025-26

Quarter

Q3 (October - December)

Community Priorities

Priority #1: Crime Reduction and Prevention

Updates and Comments:

Drumheller members have been actively performing compliance checks on our offenders. During this period Drumheller detachment completed roughly 250 compliance checks on offenders with curfews. These compliance checks resulted in numerous offenders being breached and charged for their actions. Offenders have been arrested, charged, and compelled to court as well as some being put to warrant. There have been no fraud presentations, property crime initiatives, and the operation street sweep that was scheduled for this period had to be cancelled due to severe cold weather.

Priority #2: Public Engagement, Transparency and Visibility

Updates and Comments:

There have been no town hall meetings completed during this quarter. Multiple town hall meetings are scheduled for January now that a new commander is in place.

Drumheller has completed many media releases this quarter. Drumheller RCMP in partnership with the town of Drumheller communication officer have completed many public awareness posts as well as crime prevention tips on the Town of Drumheller Facebook page. Additionally, the new detachment commander has created a partnership with the local newspaper for weekly articles featuring police activities as well as education pieces on emerging crime trends.

Drumheller members attended the Remembrance Day Ceremony in red serge in multiple communities this year and took part in a cram the cruiser event that helped collect toys and food for needy families.





Drumheller held a 1 coffee with a cop in December in town and 1 with the rural Hutterite community. However, several impromptu coffee interactions were successfully conducted

Priority #3: Reduce Substance Abuse

Updates and Comments:

Due to staffing shortages and the Drumheller GIS unit being down to one officer, there have not been any large scale drug enforcement operations during this period. Drumheller GIS continues to be active in the Drumheller Federal Institution and investigated 21 cases of drug possession or trafficking. There are several ongoing projects. Once completed, details will be published. As well, the GIS supervisor has begun the long process to become a court-recognized drug expert.

There have not been any drug awareness or high risk awareness presentations this quarter.

Priority #4: Enhance Road Safety

Updates and Comments:

Drumheller RCMP were able to successfully remove 5 impaired drivers from the roads during this period.

Members also completed 4 check stops during this period, which resulted in 1 impaired driver being caught and charged in addition to the other 5 impaired drivers.

37 traffic tickets and 4 written Warning Notices were issued in this quarter.



Community Consultations

Consultation #1

Date

December 5, 2025

Meeting Type

Community Connection

Topics Discussed

Youths

Notes/Comments:

Members attended the Greentree Elementary School's grade 4 and 5's Hot Chocolate drive-thru as well as bake sale. Students were given familiarisation tours of the police vehicles and an ad hoc questions and answers session was held where police answered questions from the students.

Consultation #2

Date

October 7, 2025

Meeting Type

Meeting with Stakeholders

Topics Discussed

Regular reporting / Information sharing

Notes/Comments:

Acting det. commander attended Carbon and met with the CAO. Discussed ongoing issues within Carbon, Drumheller RCMP status and challenges, and other topics.





Consultation #3

Date	Meeting Type
October 6, 2025	Meeting with Elected Officials
Topics Discussed	
Policing Report Q1 presentation	
Notes/Comments:	
Acting det. commander attended the Drumheller town and council meeting to report on quarterly stats. Mayor and council were updated on staffing situations, files of interest, and other noteworthy successes.	



Municipal Operations: Human Resources Overview

Staffing Category	Established Positions	Working	Special Leave	Hard Vacancies
Regular Members	11	8	1	2
Detachment Support	4	3	2	0

Notes:

1. Data extracted on December 31, 2025 and is subject to change.
2. Once Regular Members are placed on "Special Leave" (e.g., Maternity/Paternity leave, medical leave more than 30 days, leave without pay, graduated return to work), they are not included in the FTE count and their pay is not charged directly to each location. However, any salary expenditures associated with these employees while on leave is included as an "indirect cost" and billed within the Divisional Administration rate, charged to all contracts.
3. Hard Vacancies reflect positions that do not have an employee attached and need to be filled.

Comments:

Police Officers: Of the 11 established positions, eight officers are currently working. There is one officer on special leave (Parental Leave). There are two hard vacancies at this time. A Detachment Support person is currently working at the detachment on a casual contract basis.

A new commander took over Drumheller detachment in December, which should help improve the shortcomings of the Drumheller detachment. Drumheller detachment remains committed to providing a quality service to the Town of Drumheller. As such, decision was made to focus on uniformed duties, with the plain clothes member contributing to this. Going forward, the situation will improve as we are expecting a member transferring in to Drumheller from another detachment, an experience officer joining us from the Calgary Police Service and our two members returning from parental leave.



Municipal Operations: Financial Overview

Municipal Overview	Fiscal Year-to-Date	Revised Plan at Q3	2025-26 Financial Plan
Detachment Working FTE Levels	7.82 FTE	8.50 FTE	11.00 FTE
Divisionally Pooled Costs (at 100%)	\$ 51,408,504	\$ 73,701,856	\$ 79,216,319
Per Capita Rate (at 100%)	\$ 179,331	\$ 244,370	\$ 246,857
Partner Share of Pooled Costs (at 70%)	\$ 982,101	\$ 1,453,999	\$ 1,900,797
Location-Specific Costs	\$ 78,452	\$ 114,500	\$ 139,000
Total Costs after Final Adjustments (at applicable contract share)	\$ 1,060,554	\$ 1,568,499	\$ 2,039,797

Note: For detailed explanations of the terms and types of costs that are included above, please visit the definitions section on the next page.

Comments:

As of Q3, the annual plan for Drumheller Municipal Detachment is based on 8.50 working members.

The Alberta RCMP will continue to provide your community with monthly enhanced reporting to support ongoing forecast adjustments and potential invoice revisions, to ensure projections are as accurate as possible. This increased reporting will support ongoing management of policing budgets, while also enhancing transparency and engagement with our partners.

Quarter 3 invoice for the 2025/26 fiscal year was distributed on January 16th ,2026.



Definitions

Municipal Operations: Human Resources Overview

Term	Definition
FTE Utilization	A full-time equivalent (FTE) employee is defined by the number of months in a fiscal year that a position is filled. The FTE utilization level refers to the total months filled for all positions within the Detachment/unit.
2025-26 FTE Utilization Plan	Reflects the number of working FTEs planned to be in-place for the current fiscal year.
Revised Plan at Q3	This reflects any adjustments to the planned number of working FTEs, which may vary as hard and soft vacancies fluctuate throughout the year.

Municipal Operations: Financial Overview

Term	Definition
Fiscal Year-to-Date (YTD)	Reflect the actual expenditures that have been processed or working FTE levels to-date. This does not include any financial or human resource transactions that have not yet been processed.
Revised Plan at Q3	Reflects any adjustments to the forecasted spending plan for the relevant category, to better align with realized expenditures throughout the year.
2025-26 Financial Plan	Reflects the initial financial plan set for each category of expenditure for the current fiscal year.
Detachment Working FTE Levels	Reflects the number of working Regular Members (i.e., police officers) anticipated to be in-place for the current fiscal year.
Divisionally Pooled Costs	<p>Reflects the total of all divisionally pooled costs for Alberta municipalities with a population below 15,000. It includes both direct and indirect costs, including but not limited to the cost categories below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Costs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Member Pay, including pay for Regular Members, planned and retroactive pay increases, and overtime pay; ○ Operational equipment, including member equipment, informatics, vehicles, and vehicle fit-up; and/or ○ Unit operations, including fuel costs, training, secret expenses, and other operations and maintenance costs. • Indirect Costs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employee Benefits (i.e., Superannuation, Canada Pension Plan, and Employment Insurance); ○ Recruiting operations, Cadet training (at Depot Division), and the Police Dog Service Training Centre;



Term	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Common IT services, including management of the Police Records and Occurrence System; ○ Complaints and accountability mechanisms through the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP, the RCMP External Review Committee, and enhanced reliability and accountability programs; and/or ○ Other divisional and regional administration services.
Per Capita Rate	This is an average cost per member rate determined by pooling applicable costs for Alberta municipalities with a population below 15,000 and dividing the total by the combined working FTE level for those same municipalities.
Partner Share of Pooled Costs	Reflects the portion of the pooled costs that the Contract Partner pays.
Location-Specific Costs	<p>Reflects costs that are specific to location and are not included in the pooled per capita rate. These costs may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation-related costs, for space occupied in RCMP-owned buildings; • Overtime pay; • Guarding costs (e.g., with the Corps of Commissionaires); • Isolated Post Allowances; and/or • Public Service Employee pay.
Total Costs after Final Adjustments	Reflects the total costs of all expenditure categories including any cost adjustments.



Drumheller Provincial Detachment Crime Statistics (Actual) October - December: 2021 - 2025

All categories contain "Attempted" and/or "Completed"

January 13, 2026

CATEGORY	Trend	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	% Change 2021 - 2025	% Change 2024 - 2025	Avg File +/- per Year
Offences Related to Death		0	0	0	0	1	N/A	N/A	0.2
Robbery		1	0	0	0	0	-100%	N/A	-0.2
Sexual Assaults		5	1	0	1	0	-100%	-100%	-1.0
Other Sexual Offences		0	0	2	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Assault		7	2	6	7	7	0%	0%	0.5
Kidnapping/Hostage/Abduction		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Extortion		0	0	0	1	2	N/A	100%	0.5
Criminal Harassment		2	2	1	6	2	0%	-67%	0.4
Uttering Threats		2	2	4	2	3	50%	50%	0.2
TOTAL PERSONS		17	7	13	17	15	-12%	-12%	0.6
Break & Enter		4	16	4	10	3	-25%	-70%	-0.8
Theft of Motor Vehicle		2	6	1	2	0	-100%	-100%	-0.8
Theft Over \$5,000		3	0	0	3	1	-67%	-67%	-0.1
Theft Under \$5,000		11	5	6	2	1	-91%	-50%	-2.3
Possn Stn Goods		0	1	5	1	0	N/A	-100%	0.0
Fraud		5	5	5	2	3	-40%	50%	-0.7
Arson		1	0	1	0	0	-100%	N/A	-0.2
Mischief - Damage To Property		10	5	4	2	2	-80%	0%	-1.9
Mischief - Other		7	2	1	1	3	-57%	200%	-0.9
TOTAL PROPERTY		43	40	27	23	13	-70%	-43%	-7.7
Offensive Weapons		1	0	4	0	0	-100%	N/A	-0.2
Disturbing the peace		1	0	1	0	4	300%	N/A	0.6
Fail to Comply & Breaches		7	1	3	1	2	-71%	100%	-1.0
OTHER CRIMINAL CODE		8	1	4	1	3	-63%	200%	-1.0
TOTAL OTHER CRIMINAL CODE		17	2	12	2	9	-47%	350%	-1.6
TOTAL CRIMINAL CODE		77	49	52	42	37	-52%	-12%	-8.7



Drumheller Provincial Detachment Crime Statistics (Actual) October - December: 2021 - 2025

All categories contain "Attempted" and/or "Completed"

January 13, 2026

CATEGORY	Trend	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	% Change 2021 - 2025	% Change 2024 - 2025	Avg File +/- per Year
Drug Enforcement - Production		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Drug Enforcement - Possession		2	0	1	0	0	-100%	N/A	-0.4
Drug Enforcement - Trafficking		1	1	3	0	0	-100%	N/A	-0.3
Drug Enforcement - Other		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Total Drugs		3	1	4	0	0	-100%	N/A	-0.7
Cannabis Enforcement		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Federal - General		3	0	1	0	0	-100%	N/A	-0.6
TOTAL FEDERAL		6	1	5	0	0	-100%	N/A	-1.3
Liquor Act		2	0	0	0	0	-100%	N/A	-0.4
Cannabis Act		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Mental Health Act		4	4	7	7	12	200%	71%	1.9
Other Provincial Stats		8	10	7	7	13	63%	86%	0.7
Total Provincial Stats		14	14	14	14	25	79%	79%	2.2
Municipal By-laws Traffic		1	0	0	0	0	-100%	N/A	-0.2
Municipal By-laws		0	0	2	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Total Municipal		1	0	2	0	0	-100%	N/A	-0.2
Fatals		0	0	0	1	0	N/A	-100%	0.1
Injury MVC		1	0	1	0	3	200%	N/A	0.4
Property Damage MVC (Reportable)		45	66	62	28	22	-51%	-21%	-8.4
Property Damage MVC (Non Reportable)		2	12	9	10	6	200%	-40%	0.6
TOTAL MVC		48	78	72	39	31	-35%	-21%	-7.3
Roadside Suspension - Alcohol (Prov)		2	0	2	1	0	-100%	-100%	-0.3
Roadside Suspension - Drugs (Prov)		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Total Provincial Traffic		260	255	204	109	54	-79%	-50%	-55.8
Other Traffic		0	1	1	2	0	N/A	-100%	0.1
Criminal Code Traffic		3	1	3	5	4	33%	-20%	0.6
Common Police Activities									
False Alarms		4	1	6	2	2	-50%	0%	-0.3
False/Abandoned 911 Call and 911 Act		6	6	4	8	5	-17%	-38%	0.0
Suspicious Person/Vehicle/Property		9	7	17	7	7	-22%	0%	-0.4
Persons Reported Missing		3	0	0	1	0	-100%	-100%	-0.5
Search Warrants		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Spousal Abuse - Survey Code (Reported)		18	6	5	3	3	-83%	0%	-3.3
Form 10 (MHA) (Reported)		0	1	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	-0.1

Community Priorities Plan Leadership Invitation Letter

February 12, 2026

Dear Reeve and Council,

As Alberta’s provincial police service, the RCMP is continually working to modernize and strengthen the way we partner with communities to address local public safety needs. This letter is being shared to provide early awareness of an upcoming change to the community priority planning process and to support timely engagement with local leadership ahead of the next planning cycle.

Beginning in February 2026, Alberta RCMP detachments will be transitioning to a new Community Priorities Plan (CPP) for the 2026–2027 cycle. This updated approach replaces the previous Annual Performance Plan (APP) and is intended to serve as the primary framework for identifying and tracking policing priorities at the community level.

The CPP is intentionally community-led. It was developed to strengthen collaboration with municipal and Indigenous leadership and to ensure that the priorities of your police service are directly informed by the communities we serve. The CPP is designed to support meaningful dialogue, shared understanding, and clear, achievable priorities that reflect local realities.

This early communication is intended to allow community leaders sufficient time to begin considering local priorities and engaging with constituents before formal planning begins.

Community Priorities Plan Overview

Step One: Preparation and Consultation (February 2026)

Community leaders consult with their constituents in advance of meeting with the RCMP to gather ideas, concerns, and objectives related to community safety. This initial consultation is the first of two points of engagement and is an important step in ensuring that policing priorities are built with the community, not for the community.

Should community leaders wish to involve their Detachment Commander in these early community discussions, requests can be made directly to the detachment and support will be provided.

The purpose of this stage is to develop a clear understanding of community-specific concerns and objectives to inform upcoming discussions.

Step Two: Engagement Meeting (March 2026)

An engagement meeting is held between community representatives and the Detachment Commander. This meeting provides an opportunity for community representatives to share feedback gathered during consultations and to discuss community perspectives openly.

All relevant concerns, ideas, and objectives are welcome for discussion at this stage. These conversations help build a shared understanding between the community and the detachment and support alignment as priorities begin to take shape.

Following this initial engagement meeting, the Detachment Commander will take the identified community priorities and meet with their leadership team to develop an operational plan outlining how the RCMP will work to deliver on those priorities.

Step Three: Finalizing Priorities

A subsequent meeting will be held between community representatives and the Detachment Commander where possible, during which the proposed plan will be presented to the community for review. This meeting will provide an opportunity for community leaders to offer feedback, seek clarification, and confirm alignment before priorities are finalized.

Following engagement and discussion, the Community Priorities Plan is finalized. The goal of this stage is to confirm a consolidated list of up to three community policing priorities that accurately reflects and encompasses the concerns and objectives raised through earlier engagement.

Once confirmed, the plan is endorsed by the Detachment Commander and community leadership. Progress will be monitored through regular reporting, with adjustments made as required to ensure priorities remain responsive and aligned over time.

Detachments Serving Multiple Communities

For detachments that serve multiple municipalities, this CPP process will be conducted with each community group. Engagement, consultation, and feedback will be gathered independently to ensure each community's unique needs and perspectives are understood. Overall, detachment priorities will then be developed based on the totality of feedback received across all participating communities.

Next Steps - Community Consultation and Engagement

As part of the CPP process, community leaders are encouraged to begin consulting with their constituents to gather input on local safety concerns, emerging issues, and opportunities for collaboration. Community leaders may choose the consultation methods that best suit their communities, such as surveys, town halls, meetings, or other engagement activities. Detachment Commanders may be invited to attend these conversations where appropriate, or consultations may be conducted independently, with feedback shared at a later stage.

This early engagement will help inform discussions with your Detachment Commander as CPP development progresses. Your partnership is essential to ensuring policing priorities reflect the unique needs of your community. Further information and guidance will be provided by your local detachment as the CPP process moves forward.

Thank you for your continued partnership and leadership in supporting community safety.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Lafleur', written in a cursive style.

Staff Sergeant Christian Lafleur

Detachment Commander

Drumheller RCMP



February 13, 2026

Staff Sergeant Cam Russell
Detachment Commander
Stettler, Alberta

Dear Mayors, Reeve, Councillors and CAO's,

Please find attached the quarterly Community Policing Report for October 1st to December 31st, 2025. It outlines staffing, financial information, and crime trends for the Stettler RCMP Detachment, and supports our commitment to transparency and ongoing collaboration with our community partners.

Through both provincial and municipal policing contracts, the RCMP serves roughly 40% of Albertans across 95% of the province, including your community. That is why it is so important that our work is centered on people — the frontline members serving your community, the support teams behind the scenes, and the Albertans who rely on us every day.

The Government of Alberta's Police Funding Model (PFM) has strengthened our ability to meet those needs. With your contributions, we have added 279 police officers, 136 directly to detachments, along with 242 civilian staff, including 77 supporting detachment operations. These investments have also enabled the development of a Real-Time Operations Centre to support frontline officers, the expansion of our drone program, enhanced investigative capacity, and the addition of a third specialized Emergency Response Team.

These resources, along with the dedication of our employees and the support of your community, have helped bring Alberta's crime rates to their lowest point in five years — and we are committed to building on this progress together.

I welcome continued conversations about your community's policing priorities and any ideas that can help us strengthen our service. Working collaboratively is essential to maintaining this forward progress, and I encourage you to reach out at any time with questions, concerns, or suggestions.

Sincerely,

S/Sgt. Cam Russell
Detachment Commander
Stettler RCMP

Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Commanding Officer
Alberta



Gendarmerie royale du Canada

Commandant
de l'Alberta

February 4, 2026

Good day,

As we begin a new year, I would like to take the opportunity to share an update on the work the Alberta RCMP is doing to support safe, resilient communities across the province.

Like you, and the communities you serve, crime remains a primary concern for the Alberta RCMP. We recognize the significant impacts crime has on residents, businesses, and overall community well-being. Policing in Alberta presents unique and real challenges, including vast geographic areas, long response distances, and a relatively small number of repeat offenders who cause a disproportionate amount of harm. Addressing these challenges requires responses that are intelligence-led, fiscally responsible, and built on strong partnerships.

We remain focused on addressing crime through continual reassessment of operational approaches, responsible deployment of resources, and close collaboration with municipal and community partners. We also recognize the significant cost of policing for communities and remain committed to ensuring available resources are deployed strategically and efficiently to deliver effective policing services to Albertans.

As part of this commitment, we are investing in modernization initiatives, including the development of the Real-Time Operations Centre, the expansion of the Emergency Response Team, increased investigative capacity and resources focused on working in partnership with communities and government on prevention initiatives and address the root causes of crime.

I want to highlight for you some of the initiatives we have underway, some of the results we've realized and some of the opportunities we remain focused on.

Despite fiscal pressures, we continue to focus resources where they will have the greatest impact. One of our key strategies is concentrating on the relatively small number of offenders responsible for the greatest harm across the province through tracking and prioritizing the Top 100 offenders. Using data compiled from RCMP and municipal police services across Alberta our Strategic Research and Analysis Unit, has assessed nearly 100,000 unique offenders and ranked them to identify those causing the most significant harm. This intelligence directly informs the work of Crime Reduction Units located across the province that can be deployed where and when emerging crime trends demand to target those offenders causing the most harm. These units work in close coordination with local detachments and partner agencies, including municipal police services and Alberta Sheriffs.

We have countless examples of successful operations targeting property crime offenders across Alberta where significant seizures of stolen property including vehicles, ATV's heavy construction equipment, and copper wire, have been recovered and offenders have been arrested to face prosecution. This includes well coordinated investigations involving teams of investigators located strategically throughout the four districts working in concert and utilizing sophisticated investigative techniques and tools including the leveraging of cutting-edge surveillance assets from our federal RCMP partners.

Canada

We know that addiction to illicit drugs is a huge driver of the types of crime that victimize Albertans. To that end, we have also utilized enhanced investigative resources to compliment local detachments in combatting the drug trade in communities across the province. We have made significant seizures of fentanyl, methamphetamines, cocaine and illegal firearms in numerous investigations across the province. These successes impact the availability of these harmful drugs through disruption of supply and act as a deterrent by holding accountable those who are profiting from the distribution of substances that deprive Albertans of their safety and security.

We are embracing technology to make policing more effective, efficient, and safer for both the public and police. The policing landscape is changing; yesterday's solutions won't solve today's challenges. As such, modern policing requires that frontline officers be supported by layers of expertise, coordination, and technology. The Real-Time Operations Centre does exactly that and is a critical component of police modernization. Operating twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, the Real-Time Operations Centre provides operational support to every Alberta RCMP officer in the province. It enhances officer and public safety, coordinates specialized resources, and ensures informed decision-making during complex and evolving incidents. For our officers, the Real-Time Operations Centre ensures they are never working alone, regardless of location. For Alberta communities, this means every officer on their street is supported by a robust network of specialized units ready to respond at any moment. Ratepayers aren't funding just one uniformed member, but a comprehensive system of expertise and technology working behind that officer to keep their community safe.

Advanced investigative resources and practices represent another essential component of modernized policing as do resources such as the Emergency Response Teams. Emergency Response Teams are teams of highly skilled and trained individuals, bringing together experienced members, specialized tactics, advanced technology, and trained negotiators as a complete operational package, essentially bringing the right resource to the most volatile and dangerous calls. Their role is to safely resolve high-risk incidents involving armed or barricaded individuals, hostage situations and high-risk arrests. By deploying the appropriate expertise, equipment, and techniques, Emergency Response Teams have consistently led to safer outcomes for community members, suspects, and police officers. Demand for these specialized responses has increased significantly, with a sixty-one per cent increase in calls requiring Emergency Response Team involvement over the past four years. In response we have increased our capacity in this area enhancing overall public safety throughout the province. These specialized units place the Alberta RCMP on the leading edge of modern policing in Canada and directly support community safety. Combined with the dedication of our employees and the partnership of the communities we serve, these efforts have helped reduce crime rates in Alberta to the lowest in five years.

We recognize that police visibility and staffing levels remain key concerns for our clients and stakeholders. We continue to focus on recruiting Albertans to serve Albertans, strengthening experienced police officer recruitment. Since April 1, 2024, we have seen 5,450 applications in Alberta and 22 Experienced Police Officers have joined the Alberta RCMP since April 1, 2025. While these recruiting numbers are encouraging, we recognize the ongoing urgency to fill vacancies which is why we continually look inward at our hiring processes to remove barriers, find efficiencies and ensure the most qualified applicants are finding their way to service in communities across Alberta as quickly as possible.

Like all police services, we experience short-term human resource pressures at frontline detachments and have developed several strategies that enable a flexible response to these pressures. We have established a Relief Team based out of Leduc and Cochrane that is comprised of 30 members who

support detachments throughout the province. Since the start of 2026, the Relief Team has deployed 34 times to various detachments in the province. In addition, we currently have 33 Reservists who are retired police officers available as and when required to deploy where the greatest needs are. This provides another option of flexible deployment of highly experienced resources.

We are continually assessing our service delivery models to ensure our resources are deployed in the most effective and efficient way. This includes assessing resource levels at detachments, monitoring our response times, reviewing and adapting our policies and piloting initiatives to improve member visibility in communities. Just recently, we approved a pilot project that leverages technology to reduce the administrative burden placed on our front-line members, so that they can spend more time engaged in proactive patrolling and community engagement.

We continually engage in consultation with our community partners and stakeholders to identify whether changes to service delivery are needed. We assess and discuss impacts with our stakeholders and prioritize flexibility to ensure we are responsive to community priorities and needs.

Municipal leadership plays a critical role in advocating for safer communities. Your collective voice—grounded in firsthand knowledge of how crime affects residents, businesses, and community well-being—is essential in advancing meaningful change related to bail practices and court capacity.

I would like to highlight some of the broader challenges we encounter in this space.

First, let me share an example of a single prolific offender whose repeated releases resulted in significant harm across multiple communities:

- In February 2025, he committed a firearm-related robbery and stole a vehicle containing a one-year-old child, receiving a 90-day sentence.
- In June 2025, he was sentenced to 21 days time served after being located in a stolen vehicle.
- In July 2025, he was arrested again in a stolen vehicle, charged with 11 offences, and released on bail with conditions.
- In September 2025, he pled guilty to theft under \$5,000 and served 30 days.
- In November 2025, he rammed an unmarked police vehicle with a stolen vehicle and was taken into custody.
- He now faces 11 charges, including failure to comply and assaulting a police officer with a weapon, and remains in custody.

This individual committed offences across Stony Plain, Spruce Grove, Parkland County, Lac Ste. Anne County, and Sturgeon County. His apprehension was the result of coordinated efforts between the Central Alberta District Crime Reduction Unit, a Community Response Team, and Parkland Detachment resources.

Examples such as this are not isolated. They demonstrate how a single prolific offender, repeatedly released back into the community, can cause significant harm to multiple municipalities in a short period of time. These cases underscore rural Albertans' concerns around repeat offending, bail, and court capacity.

We work closely with Crown Prosecutors to address repeat offending by ensuring priority offenders are supported by comprehensive bail packages that clearly outline criminal history, risk to public safety, and the broader community impacts of continued release. We also actively support the use of Community

Impact Statements, which allow communities and municipal leaders to articulate the cumulative harm crime causes beyond individual victims.

We remain compassionate toward individuals experiencing mental health challenges, addictions, and social vulnerability, and we continue to support partnerships that improve access to treatment and recovery services. This requires that adequate treatment be available and accessible. At the same time, there *are* individuals whose repeated, violent, or high-risk behaviour necessitates incarceration. Some people simply need to go to jail in order to protect the public and prevent further victimization.

Court capacity remains a significant challenge across the province, especially in rural Alberta. Limited court time, shortages of judges and clerks, and resulting delays undermine the effectiveness of the justice system. We will continue to advocate for improvements through multiple forums, consistently raising the impacts these pressures have on victims, communities, and frontline policing.

When policing data, operational experience, and municipal advocacy align, they provide a powerful foundation for justice system reform. Effective crime reduction cannot be achieved by policing alone. Long-term success depends on strong partnerships with municipalities, community organizations, government, and social service providers. We value our relationship with you and those you represent and recognize the essential role you play in shaping community safety priorities.

Modernization, fiscal responsibility, and collaboration will continue to guide our efforts. We are committed to leveraging technology, applying best practices, and deploying the right resources in the right places to support shared public safety goals.

Effective policing depends on strong partnerships, and I want to assure you that we remain committed to working closely with elected officials, municipal administrators, and community leaders to ensure policing services align with local priorities and needs. That is why I encourage you to reach out to your local Detachment Commander to discuss your policing services and explore opportunities to strengthen collaboration in support of your community priorities.

Sincerely,



Trevor Daroux
Deputy Commissioner
Commanding Officer Alberta RCMP

111140 - 109 Street
Edmonton, AB T5G 2T4

Telephone: 780-412-5444
Fax: 780-412-5445



Stettler Municipal Detachment Crime Statistics (Actual) October - December: 2021 - 2025

All categories contain "Attempted" and/or "Completed"

January 13, 2026

CATEGORY	Trend	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	% Change 2021 - 2025	% Change 2024 - 2025	Avg File +/- per Year
Offences Related to Death		1	0	0	0	0	-100%	N/A	-0.2
Robbery		3	1	0	0	0	-100%	N/A	-0.7
Sexual Assaults		4	0	2	4	0	-100%	-100%	-0.4
Other Sexual Offences		1	0	1	0	0	-100%	N/A	-0.2
Assault		23	7	12	15	11	-52%	-27%	-1.6
Kidnapping/Hostage/Abduction		0	1	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	-0.1
Extortion		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Criminal Harassment		7	6	6	3	5	-29%	67%	-0.7
Uttering Threats		6	7	5	7	6	0%	-14%	0.0
TOTAL PERSONS		45	22	26	29	22	-51%	-24%	-3.9
Break & Enter		18	7	5	10	5	-72%	-50%	-2.3
Theft of Motor Vehicle		9	8	7	6	7	-22%	17%	-0.6
Theft Over \$5,000		2	2	1	3	2	0%	-33%	0.1
Theft Under \$5,000		30	28	16	15	34	13%	127%	-0.5
Possn Stn Goods		4	4	3	1	5	25%	400%	-0.1
Fraud		7	15	9	9	11	57%	22%	0.2
Arson		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Mischief - Damage To Property		16	16	9	13	10	-38%	-23%	-1.5
Mischief - Other		6	13	10	19	21	250%	11%	3.6
TOTAL PROPERTY		92	93	60	76	95	3%	25%	-1.1
Offensive Weapons		1	4	4	1	0	-100%	-100%	-0.5
Disturbing the peace		11	15	12	19	22	100%	16%	2.6
Fail to Comply & Breaches		14	6	10	9	7	-50%	-22%	-1.1
OTHER CRIMINAL CODE		10	5	10	7	8	-20%	14%	-0.2
TOTAL OTHER CRIMINAL CODE		36	30	36	36	37	3%	3%	0.8
TOTAL CRIMINAL CODE		173	145	122	141	154	-11%	9%	-4.2



Stettler Municipal Detachment Crime Statistics (Actual) October - December: 2021 - 2025

All categories contain "Attempted" and/or "Completed"

January 13, 2026

CATEGORY	Trend	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	% Change 2021 - 2025	% Change 2024 - 2025	Avg File +/- per Year
Drug Enforcement - Production		0	0	1	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Drug Enforcement - Possession		1	5	6	0	1	0%	N/A	-0.5
Drug Enforcement - Trafficking		0	2	4	0	2	N/A	N/A	0.2
Drug Enforcement - Other		0	1	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	-0.1
Total Drugs		1	8	11	0	3	200%	N/A	-0.4
Cannabis Enforcement		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Federal - General		0	2	1	0	1	N/A	N/A	0.0
TOTAL FEDERAL		1	10	12	0	4	300%	N/A	-0.4
Liquor Act		2	2	8	2	2	0%	0%	0.0
Cannabis Act		0	1	1	0	0	N/A	N/A	-0.1
Mental Health Act		21	22	10	30	18	-14%	-40%	0.2
Other Provincial Stats		22	25	30	32	20	-9%	-38%	0.3
Total Provincial Stats		45	50	49	64	40	-11%	-38%	0.4
Municipal By-laws Traffic		0	2	0	0	2	N/A	N/A	0.2
Municipal By-laws		2	2	0	3	8	300%	167%	1.3
Total Municipal		2	4	0	3	10	400%	233%	1.5
Fatals		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Injury MVC		3	3	2	0	4	33%	N/A	-0.1
Property Damage MVC (Reportable)		51	36	38	19	24	-53%	26%	-7.1
Property Damage MVC (Non Reportable)		8	5	4	4	8	0%	100%	-0.1
TOTAL MVC		62	44	44	23	36	-42%	57%	-7.3
Roadside Suspension - Alcohol (Prov)		1	3	5	3	0	-100%	-100%	-0.2
Roadside Suspension - Drugs (Prov)		1	1	1	0	0	-100%	N/A	-0.3
Total Provincial Traffic		158	177	217	83	98	-38%	18%	-21.4
Other Traffic		3	1	1	0	0	-100%	N/A	-0.7
Criminal Code Traffic		11	9	15	5	1	-91%	-80%	-2.4
Common Police Activities									
False Alarms		10	12	13	11	12	20%	9%	0.3
False/Abandoned 911 Call and 911 Act		2	3	3	5	8	300%	60%	1.4
Suspicious Person/Vehicle/Property		53	42	16	26	20	-62%	-23%	-8.2
Persons Reported Missing		2	0	3	5	0	-100%	-100%	0.1
Search Warrants		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Spousal Abuse - Survey Code (Reported)		12	13	17	23	18	50%	-22%	2.2
Form 10 (MHA) (Reported)		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0



Alberta RCMP - Municipal Policing Report

Detachment Information

Detachment Name

Stettler Detachment

Detachment Commander

S/Sgt. Cam Russell

Report Date

February 13, 2026

Fiscal Year

2025-26

Quarter

Q3 (October - December)

Community Priorities

Priority #1: Crime Reduction**Updates and Comments:**

The 3rd quarter saw some change in the detachment area, with the lengthy teachers strike it allowed for the School Resource Officer to once again focus on general duty matters and being more visible in the community. Any and all prolific offenders in the area continue to be a priority for all detachment members who work along with Probation and Parole to ensure that they adhere to any conditions they are bound by.

Priority #2: Enhanced Public Confidence and Community Engagement**Updates and Comments:**

With the election being held during the 3rd quarter, very few meetings were planned with elected officials to allow for new members on council to address priority issues and become familiarized with process and procedure. The 4th quarter will focus on getting to council meetings to ensure all new council members are familiar with their police and for any matters to be addressed in a timely manner. Continued efforts will be made to facilitate and attend more town hall meetings in the detachment area.





Community Consultations

Consultation #1

Date	Meeting Type
December 15, 2025	Meeting with Elected Officials
Topics Discussed	
General Consultation	
Notes/Comments:	
NCO i/c met with White Sands Mayor and Council, introductions complete and discussion on the success of the golf cart bylaw. No issues with policing identified during the meeting, advised Mayor and Council on upcoming OCC tour invite.	





Municipal Operations: Human Resources Overview

Staffing Category	Established Positions	Working	Special Leave	Hard Vacancies
Regular Members	8	6	0	2
Detachment Support	#	#	#	#

Notes:

1. Data extracted on December 31, 2025 and is subject to change.
2. Once Regular Members are placed on "Special Leave" (e.g., Maternity/Paternity leave, medical leave more than 30 days, leave without pay, graduated return to work), they are not included in the FTE count and their pay is not charged directly to each location. However, any salary expenditures associated with these employees while on leave is included as an "indirect cost" and billed within the Divisional Administration rate, charged to all contracts.
3. Hard Vacancies reflect positions that do not have an employee attached and need to be filled.

Comments:

Police Officers: Of the eight established positions, six officers are currently working. There are two hard vacancies at this time.





Municipal Operations: Financial Overview

Municipal Overview	Fiscal Year-to-Date	Revised Plan at Q3	2025-26 Financial Plan
Detachment Working FTE Levels	6.16 FTE	6.50 FTE	7.00 FTE
Divisionally Pooled Costs (at 100%)	\$ 51,408,504	\$ 73,701,856	\$ 79,216,319
Per Capita Rate (at 100%)	\$ 179,331	\$ 244,370	\$ 246,857
Partner Share of Pooled Costs (at 70%)	\$ 772,784	\$ 1,111,881	\$ 1,209,598
Location-Specific Costs	\$ 86,533	\$ 193,000	\$ 287,500
Total Costs after Final Adjustments (at applicable contract share)	\$ 859,317	\$ 1,349,264	\$ 1,541,481

Note: For detailed explanations of the terms and types of costs that are included above, please visit the definitions section on the next page.

Comments:

As of Q3, the annual plan for Stettler Municipal Detachment is based on 6.50 working members.

The Alberta RCMP will continue to provide your community with monthly enhanced reporting to support ongoing forecast adjustments and potential invoice revisions, to ensure projections are as accurate as possible. This increased reporting will support ongoing management of policing budgets, while also enhancing transparency and engagement with our partners.

Quarter 3 invoice for the 2025/26 fiscal year was distributed on January 16th, 2026.





Definitions

Municipal Operations: Human Resources Overview

Term	Definition
FTE Utilization	A full-time equivalent (FTE) employee is defined by the number of months in a fiscal year that a position is filled. The FTE utilization level refers to the total months filled for all positions within the Detachment/unit.
2025-26 FTE Utilization Plan	Reflects the number of working FTEs planned to be in-place for the current fiscal year.
Revised Plan at Q3	This reflects any adjustments to the planned number of working FTEs, which may vary as hard and soft vacancies fluctuate throughout the year.

Municipal Operations: Financial Overview

Term	Definition
Fiscal Year-to-Date (YTD)	Reflect the actual expenditures that have been processed or working FTE levels to-date. This does not include any financial or human resource transactions that have not yet been processed.
Revised Plan at Q3	Reflects any adjustments to the forecasted spending plan for the relevant category, to better align with realized expenditures throughout the year.
2025-26 Financial Plan	Reflects the initial financial plan set for each category of expenditure for the current fiscal year.
Detachment Working FTE Levels	Reflects the number of working Regular Members (i.e., police officers) anticipated to be in-place for the current fiscal year.
Divisionally Pooled Costs	<p>Reflects the total of all divisionally pooled costs for Alberta municipalities with a population below 15,000. It includes both direct and indirect costs, including but not limited to the cost categories below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Costs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Member Pay, including pay for Regular Members, planned and retroactive pay increases, and overtime pay; ○ Operational equipment, including member equipment, informatics, vehicles, and vehicle fit-up; and/or ○ Unit operations, including fuel costs, training, secret expenses, and other operations and maintenance costs. • Indirect Costs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employee Benefits (i.e., Superannuation, Canada Pension Plan, and Employment Insurance); ○ Recruiting operations, Cadet training (at Depot Division), and the Police Dog Service Training Centre;





Term	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Common IT services, including management of the Police Records and Occurrence System; ○ Complaints and accountability mechanisms through the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP, the RCMP External Review Committee, and enhanced reliability and accountability programs; and/or ○ Other divisional and regional administration services.
Per Capita Rate	This is an average cost per member rate determined by pooling applicable costs for Alberta municipalities with a population below 15,000 and dividing the total by the combined working FTE level for those same municipalities.
Partner Share of Pooled Costs	Reflects the portion of the pooled costs that the Contract Partner pays.
Location-Specific Costs	Reflects costs that are specific to location and are not included in the pooled per capita rate. These costs may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accommodation-related costs, for space occupied in RCMP-owned buildings; ● Overtime pay; ● Guarding costs (e.g., with the Corps of Commissionaires); ● Isolated Post Allowances; and/or ● Public Service Employee pay.
Total Costs after Final Adjustments	Reflects the total costs of all expenditure categories including any cost adjustments.





Stettler Provincial Detachment Crime Statistics (Actual)

October - December: 2021 - 2025

All categories contain "Attempted" and/or "Completed"

January 13, 2026

CATEGORY	Trend	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	% Change 2021 - 2025	% Change 2024 - 2025	Avg File +/- per Year
Offences Related to Death		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Robbery		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Sexual Assaults		0	0	0	2	1	N/A	-50%	0.4
Other Sexual Offences		2	1	0	0	2	0%	N/A	-0.1
Assault		4	6	5	7	6	50%	-14%	0.5
Kidnapping/Hostage/Abduction		0	0	0	0	1	N/A	N/A	0.2
Extortion		0	0	0	1	1	N/A	0%	0.3
Criminal Harassment		1	2	1	1	1	0%	0%	-0.1
Uttering Threats		1	3	3	1	7	600%	600%	1.0
TOTAL PERSONS		8	12	9	12	19	138%	58%	2.2
Break & Enter		8	5	7	6	4	-50%	-33%	-0.7
Theft of Motor Vehicle		10	1	5	1	1	-90%	0%	-1.8
Theft Over \$5,000		3	0	2	4	3	0%	-25%	0.4
Theft Under \$5,000		10	7	7	11	8	-20%	-27%	0.0
Possn Stn Goods		5	1	7	4	0	-100%	-100%	-0.7
Fraud		2	5	3	8	6	200%	-25%	1.1
Arson		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Mischief - Damage To Property		5	3	2	9	4	-20%	-56%	0.4
Mischief - Other		2	3	6	1	4	100%	300%	0.2
TOTAL PROPERTY		45	25	39	44	30	-33%	-32%	-1.1
Offensive Weapons		3	0	0	2	0	-100%	-100%	-0.4
Disturbing the peace		3	2	0	4	2	-33%	-50%	0.0
Fail to Comply & Breaches		1	4	5	2	2	100%	0%	0.0
OTHER CRIMINAL CODE		1	2	11	3	5	400%	67%	0.9
TOTAL OTHER CRIMINAL CODE		8	8	16	11	9	13%	-18%	0.5
TOTAL CRIMINAL CODE		61	45	64	67	58	-5%	-13%	1.6



Stettler Provincial Detachment Crime Statistics (Actual) October - December: 2021 - 2025

All categories contain "Attempted" and/or "Completed"

January 13, 2026

CATEGORY	Trend	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	% Change 2021 - 2025	% Change 2024 - 2025	Avg File +/- per Year
Drug Enforcement - Production		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Drug Enforcement - Possession		0	0	1	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Drug Enforcement - Trafficking		0	0	2	1	0	N/A	-100%	0.1
Drug Enforcement - Other		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Total Drugs		0	0	3	1	0	N/A	-100%	0.1
Cannabis Enforcement		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Federal - General		0	0	0	1	0	N/A	-100%	0.1
TOTAL FEDERAL		0	0	3	2	0	N/A	-100%	0.2
Liquor Act		0	1	3	3	0	N/A	-100%	0.2
Cannabis Act		0	1	1	1	0	N/A	-100%	0.0
Mental Health Act		2	6	8	6	5	150%	-17%	0.6
Other Provincial Stats		11	9	17	26	11	0%	-58%	1.7
Total Provincial Stats		13	17	29	36	16	23%	-56%	2.5
Municipal By-laws Traffic		0	1	1	0	0	N/A	N/A	-0.1
Municipal By-laws		0	0	0	1	0	N/A	-100%	0.1
Total Municipal		0	1	1	1	0	N/A	-100%	0.0
Fatals		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Injury MVC		4	6	7	2	6	50%	200%	0.0
Property Damage MVC (Reportable)		100	85	89	44	52	-48%	18%	-13.7
Property Damage MVC (Non Reportable)		4	3	3	6	6	50%	0%	0.7
TOTAL MVC		108	94	99	52	64	-41%	23%	-13.0
Roadside Suspension - Alcohol (Prov)		3	7	3	2	1	-67%	-50%	-0.9
Roadside Suspension - Drugs (Prov)		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Total Provincial Traffic		115	94	219	151	101	-12%	-33%	2.9
Other Traffic		1	0	0	1	0	-100%	-100%	-0.1
Criminal Code Traffic		7	8	5	10	5	-29%	-50%	-0.2
Common Police Activities									
False Alarms		8	2	4	5	0	-100%	-100%	-1.3
False/Abandoned 911 Call and 911 Act		2	3	1	3	4	100%	33%	0.4
Suspicious Person/Vehicle/Property		27	14	24	15	8	-70%	-47%	-3.7
Persons Reported Missing		1	1	1	0	1	0%	N/A	-0.1
Search Warrants		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Spousal Abuse - Survey Code (Reported)		2	0	3	6	13	550%	117%	2.8
Form 10 (MHA) (Reported)		0	1	2	0	1	N/A	N/A	0.1



48TH ANNUAL

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

**JOIN US IN CELEBRATING THE
OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS IN
THE COUNTY**

**THURSDAY
MARCH 5, 2026**

**HOSTED BY THE
WESTWOODS COMMUNITY
CENTRE**

**DOORS OPEN AT 5:30 PM
DINNER & AWARDS TO FOLLOW**

**TICKETS ARE \$25.00
AVAILABLE TO PURCHASE
AT THE COUNTY
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, OR
CALL (403) 742-4441**

