

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

2021

Lac La Biche County Council has approved the 2021 budget, with the goal of laying the foundation for the future of the region.

With \$28,314,034 in approved capital spending, several projects that will improve the lives of County residents will be completed in 2021, and some larger, multi-year projects will begin to take shape as well.

The projects range in focus from recreation, to economic revitalization, to infrastructure improvement and replacement, and fall upon the five pillars of Council's strategic plan: Economic development, recreation and culture, social wellness, tourism, and environment. Some of the highlights of this year's budget include:

**Aquatics Centre: \$15,000,000
(multi-year project)**

This multi-year project will see the construction of a brand-new aquatics centre that will feature a swimming pool, waterslide, children's pool, hot tub, viewing gallery, reception area, and other features.

**Main Street Revitalization: \$19,694,000
(multi-year project)**

This multi-year project along Main Street of the hamlet of Lac La Biche will see the replacement of water and sewer lines originally installed in 1953, eliminating frequent water and sewer line breaks, and decreasing the annual cost of repairs. Revitalization will also improve the look and feel of the downtown business core, encouraging shoppers to spend more time in the area.

Bold Center Sports Fields, Final Phase: \$5,400,000

The Bold Center sports fields final phase will see the addition of new features and completion of a high-quality outdoor sports facility. When finished it will include a multi-use artificial turf sports field, an eight-lane running track with other track and field amenities, four baseball diamonds, a grandstand, change rooms, and concession stand.

**Five Bridge Replacements across Lac La Biche County: \$2,729,000
(73 per cent grant-funded)**

The County will replace bridges or culverts on Gold River, Nashim Drive, Old

46, Missawawi Creek, and Campsite Road. These bridges are primarily funded by a provincial Municipal Stimulus Program grant, which was introduced to help communities recover from the economic challenges of the pandemic.

Plamondon Lift Stations: \$2,035,264

The project will see the design and construction of a new lift station in Plamondon and another closer to Lac La Biche to pump waste water.

Reserves set aside for replacement and new infrastructure: \$5,950,000

A large reserve has been set aside this year, which will help the County fund future projects to replace and build new infrastructure as the need arises.

These only scratch the surface of the projects and initiatives approved in this year's Capital Budget.

The full budget document will be available on www.laclabichecounty.com soon.

Environmental Reserve Bylaw and consultation

Lac La Biche County has prepared a draft Bylaw to regulate environmental reserve lands.

What are environmental reserve (ER) lands? ER lands are intended to protect the natural environment, protect people and property from hazardous conditions (such as flooding or erosion) and provide public access to or along lakes and rivers. Designated environmental reserve lands can be found all over the County, and are not exclusive to lakefront owners.

The *Municipal Government Act* (MGA), section 671 (1) states that environmental reserve must be left in its natural state or be used as a public park. Lac La Biche County's Land Use Bylaw (LUB) 17-004, section C1.13 currently states that no encroachments are permitted on environmental reserve land. However, increasingly, unauthorized private development has been occurring on municipally-owned environmental reserve lands. This includes the removal of trees, shrubs and other vegetation, as well as the construction of various types of private structures. The main concerns are that these unauthorized private developments are contradictory to the MGA and the LUB, and may cause environmental degradation or increased erosion. At the same time, we have heard from residents that they also wish to enjoy environmental reserves near lakefront and riverside properties.

That is why Lac La Biche County aims to draft an Environmental Reserve Bylaw that balances environmental protection while also allowing residents to use ERs for enjoyment, under certain conditions. This is a right that private residents did not previously have under provincial and County regulations.

Since 2018, Administration has completed multiple public engagement sessions and held discussions with Council regarding the use of ER lands. On December 8, 2020,



Council approved the new draft version of Bylaw 20-036, Lac La Biche County's Environmental Reserve Bylaw. The new draft bylaw is a balance of the feedback received through public consultation, provincial regulations and the County's environmental and land management goals.

Before granting first reading to Bylaw 20-036, Council has directed Administration to conduct public engagement. Administration will hold open house sessions in the new year that comply with COVID-19 regulations and protocols.

Meanwhile, if you wish to obtain a copy of the draft Bylaw, or provide feedback, please email draftbylaw@laclabichecounty.com or call 1-780-623-6775.

A copy of the draft Bylaw is also available on the County's website: www.laclabichecounty.com.

**For information about
Lac La Biche County
Facilities, Programs, and Services
during COVID-19,
visit www.laclabichecounty.com**

FCSS Wellness Workshops

Lac La Biche County Family and Community Support Services is hosting a series of Wellness Workshops featuring Carrie Lecuyer.

In the Building a Vibrant Future workshops, Carrie will help participants create vision boards to unlock the power of your subconscious thinking. These workshops will take place on January 21 (5-8 pm) and January 22 (11 am-2 pm). The registration deadline for the January 21 session is January 19, and the registration deadline for the January 22 session is January 20.

To register, call (780) 623-6365.

Christmas Tree Recycling Program Taking Trees This Month



If your New Year's resolution is to recycle more, you can start by recycling your Christmas tree. From January 4-15, residents with curbside pickup service can call (780) 623-6739 to have their trees taken away and recycled. If you live in a rural area, or if you miss the deadline, you can bring your tree to any landfill or transfer station at no charge.

Only natural trees will be accepted for recycling, and trees must not have any decorations left on them. If you have an artificial tree that you don't want anymore, consider leaving it in a Reuse Centre for someone else to take home. Reuse Centres, which are currently closed due to COVID-19, can be found at all local landfills and transfer stations. Please hold on to your artificial trees until they reopen. For every tree that we recycle, a new one will be planted in a local park.



UPCOMING FCSS PROGRAMS

Due to COVID-19, participants must preregister for all programs. Please call 780-623-6745 to sign up.

Wellness Workshop

Thursday, Jan 21
5-8 pm
Registration deadline: Tuesday, Jan. 19

Wellness Workshop

Friday, Jan. 22
11 am-2 pm
Registration deadline: Wednesday, Jan. 21

The FCSS team is excited to see what 2021 has in store! In whatever format we can, there will be programs for young children, youth, teens, adults, families and seniors. Community and connection will help us all during these times. We wish everyone the best in the New Year!

For more programs, follow FCSS on Facebook!

TALK BOX TIP

Talk Box is a parent's guide to creating language-rich environments.



Remember to...

- Follow your child's lead;
- Add new words and ideas; and
- Repeat new words over and over.





Dates to Remember

January 31

Disaster Recovery Program Deadline
Visit www.laclabichcounty.com for more information.

Check the Community Events Calendar at laclabichcounty.com for more local events.

Due to COVID-19 regulations, changes have been made to Lac La Biche County facilities, programming and services. Visit laclabichcounty.com to learn more.

Your County in Touch is produced by Lac La Biche County and is available to every resident.

An electronic version of this newsletter is available. All you need to do is call (780) 623-1747 or provide your e-mail address to intouch@laclabichcounty.com.

Use the same contact information for any address changes, additional copies or to unsubscribe.



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welcoming by nature.



Canadian Publication Agreement
#41492052

Virtual Fitness & Recreation Programs

Registration opens January 11

Register online at
boldcenter.ca/active1lbc

Virtual fitness classes begin January 25



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