



Setting a budget is about setting priorities, and this year is no exception. In 2008, Council has again striven to provide a balanced, responsible budget that is both fiscally prudent, and yet is reflective of the priorities of the people of Mountain View County.

As a Council, our top priority is obvious- it is the same priority we've heard from ratepayers at numerous County events and forums throughout the year- keep the County road network at a high standard. Starting in 2007, we shifted our Operational Service away from construction, back to road maintenance. We also finalized the designation of the County Collector Network, and worked with administration to develop a 10-year road plan for Mountain View County. In 2008, Council will continue to keep the focus on County roads, with over 60 per cent of our total budget expenditure allocation going towards road maintenance and projects- a reflection of our commitment towards maintaining and improving County infrastructure.

Building on the success of last year's Municipal Development Plan review, the County is moving ahead with a comprehensive review and update of our Land Use Bylaw in 2008, as well as an update of Commercial / Industrial Design Guidelines. We are also in the process of formulating a Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan, which will act as a guide for all public parks, recreation and cultural facilities operated by Mountain View County.

As Mountain View County continues to grow, we'll need policies that facilitate development in a

progressive manner, while preserving our natural areas for future generations. In 2008, we'll be working with residents in the Water Valley and Sundre areas to develop area structure plans, which will incorporate the aspirations of each community into a plan for long-term development.

Mountain View County is not an island, and development cannot occur without the cooperation of our urban partners. Council has identified the tremendous value in forging inter-governmental relationships, and we will continue to work with our neighbors through the Municipal Area Partnership, the South Central Rural Alliance, and numerous municipal advocacy groups as an active partner in a prosperous central Alberta. Our development at Netook Crossing is one example of how a collaborative approach with the Town of Olds will provide long-term benefit for ratepayers in both communities.

As our region, and our province, is transformed by the current economic boom, we mustn't lose sight of rural communities and western heritage that have made Mountain View County a great place to work, live and play. We have renewed our commitment to our rural base in 2008 through our Rural Community and Community Hall grant programs, and we will continue to take an active role in maintaining sustainable rural communities throughout Mountain View County.

On behalf of Council, I thank you for your support over the past year, and we look forward to working together with you, for you, in the year to come.

Al Kemmere  
Reeve,  
Mountain View County



Growth provides a broader tax base for Mountain View County, but it also means that as market values increase so do property assessments. The challenge for Mountain View County in 2008 is how we manage this growth and the 2008 Operating and Capital Budget shows how this will be accomplished. At the beginning of the development of the 2008 Budget, Council set a target that the 2008 Budget was to be presented with no more than an average increase of 5.00% in property tax bills. This has been accomplished; meaning the average increase of the tax bill on a residential property from 2007 to 2008 will be \$100.00. At the same time, we continue to improve services to our ratepayers, and improve our financial position.

In 2008, increasing property values and new growth resulted in an increase in total assessment of \$700 million across the County, except for farmland. Growth resulted in an additional 200 residences on our tax rolls, and with increasing property values residential assessment rose by just under \$500 million.

In order to achieve the target of an average increase of 5.00% in property tax bills in 2008, Council has held farmland tax rates steady for the third consecutive year, and has decreased other tax rates by up to 24.5 per cent, as is the case with the residential tax rate. With this 5.00% increase and the growth experienced in the County over the past year, municipal tax revenues for 2008 are up by \$2.4 million - a 12.8 per cent increase over 2007.

This additional revenue has been utilized in a number of ways. In 2008 the County will spend over 60% of its budget on our road infrastructure- this includes both maintenance and improvements. It was recognized in 2005 that Mountain View County had reduced its road maintenance budgets below

sustainable levels. The plan, endorsed by Council, to increase the road maintenance budgets by \$1,000,000 in 2007- and to add an additional increase of \$1,000,000 in 2008- has been achieved, and is now part of the ongoing expenditures of the County.

In order to restore reserves to the levels that were in place prior to the construction of the new County Office, the 2006, 2007 and 2008 Budgets have all taken a portion of the revenue from the growth of our assessment base and used that to increase reserves. Operating reserve funds in Mountain View County have nearly doubled in the last three years. However, in 2008, growth has required us to draw on these reserves, and our cash, on a temporary basis. Utilizing reserves allows us to undertake the expenses related to growth without increasing property tax bills, and future revenues from growth will benefit everyone in the County. Costs for planning studies and a number of related projects will be charged to developers and will be recovered over future years.

As Mountain View County grows, our organization must evolve to address the many challenges associated with growth. We have added 15 positions in 2008 to various departments, with a focus on meeting the impact of increasing development on our Planning and Development Services, and Operational Services Departments; and to meet the requirements for fiscal accountability coming from the Alberta government. Whether it be completing one of our rural paving or road rehabilitation projects, or keeping our commitment to chip seal 75 km of road a year, we can't do any of it without the right people for the job. We have the right people and look forward to continuing to improve the service we provide to our residents and businesses through 2008.

Doug Plamping  
Chief Administrative Officer  
Mountain View County



**Vision Statement**

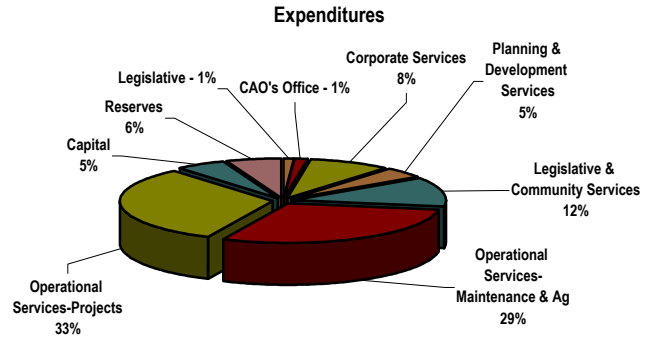
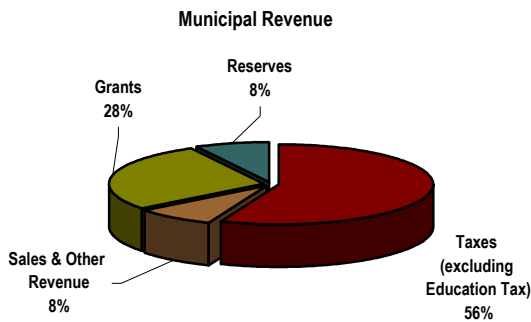
**A progressive rural community in which to safely live, work and play.**

**HIGHLIGHTS**

Presented here are the highlights of Mountain View County's 2008 Operating and Capital Budget. The Budget puts into concrete terms Council's direction to County staff and allocates the resources necessary to execute Council's plans.

**Taxes**

Municipal tax revenue is up 12.8%, or \$2.4 million, in 2008. This is due to a combination of new properties added to the assessment base, market value increases in assessment, and tax rate changes. With market value increases partially offset by the combined municipal tax rate decrease, the average rate payer could expect the taxes they pay for their residence to increase by 5%. This means that a County ratepayer with a house that was assessed a value of \$300,000 in 2007 and has the 2008 assessed value increase by 38% (the average market value increase) would have paid \$2,127 in taxes in 2007 but can expect to pay \$2,227 in 2008.



Municipal Revenues & Expenditures	2007 Budget	2008 Budget	Change	% Change
<b>Revenues</b>				
Taxes (excluding Education Tax)	18,843,893	21,262,124	2,418,231	12.8%
Sales & Other Revenue	3,335,306	3,206,579	(128,727)	(3.9%)
Grants	7,634,804	10,481,802	2,846,998	37.3%
Reserves	4,034,203	2,958,075	(1,076,128)	(26.7%)
	<b>33,848,206</b>	<b>37,908,580</b>	<b>4,060,374</b>	<b>12.0%</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>				
Council	427,450	449,710	22,260	5.2%
CAO's Office	456,498	536,150	79,652	17.4%
Corporate Services	2,678,814	3,186,564	507,750	19.0%
Planning & Development Services	1,388,300	1,767,600	379,300	27.3%
Legislative & Community Services	1,883,723	2,313,237	429,514	22.8%
Third Party Services	2,275,528	2,222,033	(53,495)	(2.4%)
Operational Services-Maintenance	8,898,958	10,343,300	1,444,342	16.2%
Operational Services-Projects	8,822,076	12,056,936	3,234,860	36.7%
Agriculture & Parks	784,859	818,300	33,441	4.3%
Capital	2,441,200	2,055,550	(385,650)	(15.8%)
Reserves	3,790,800	2,159,200	(1,631,600)	(43.0%)
	<b>33,848,206</b>	<b>37,908,580</b>	<b>4,060,374</b>	<b>12.0%</b>

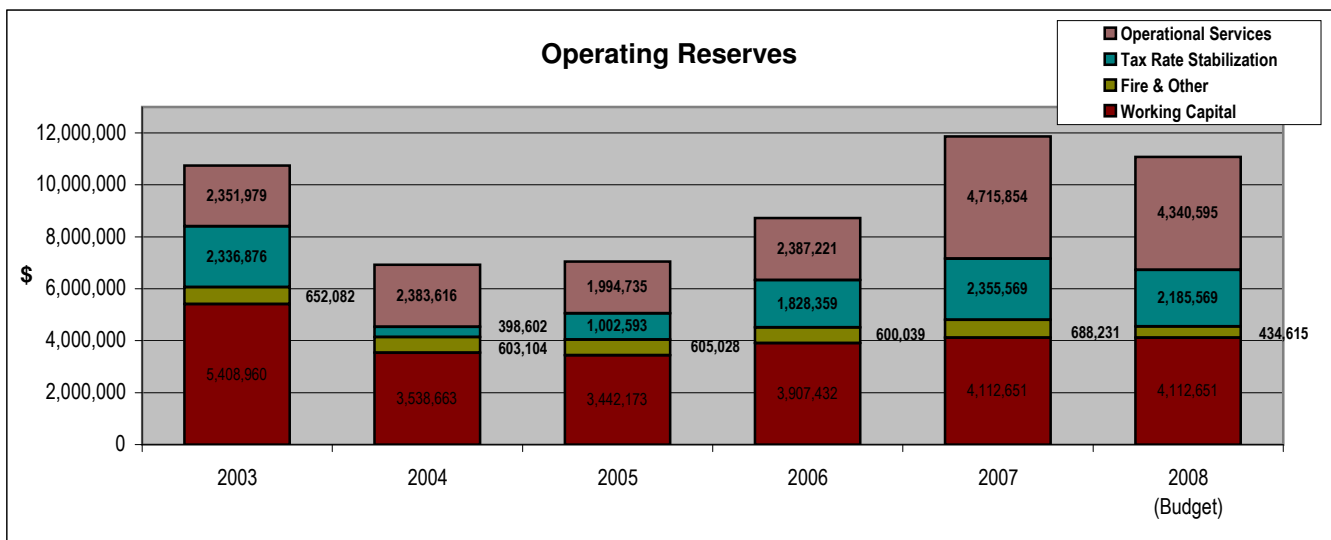


**Reserves**

In 2008 reserves overall are expected to decrease by \$800,000.

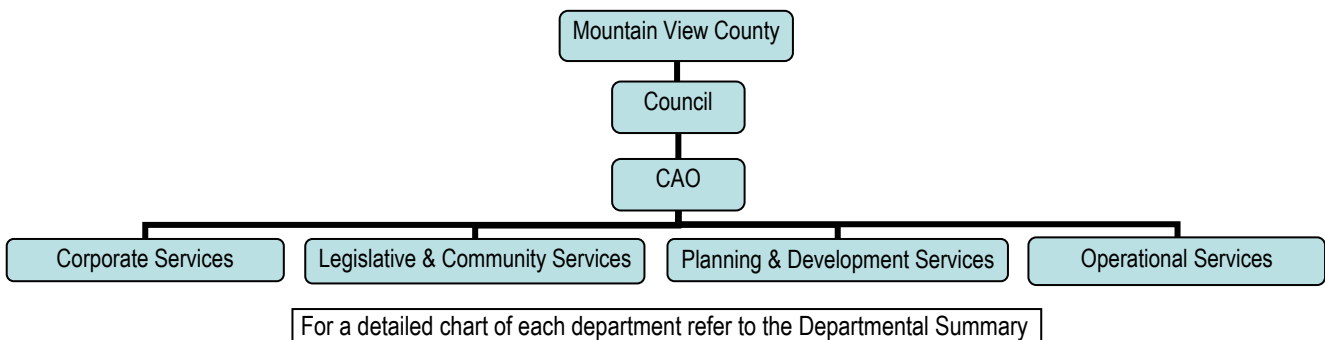
The main contributing items are a decrease in the Fire Equipment reserves to make planned purchases, a decrease in the Operational Services Project reserve to complete road projects, and a decrease in the Tax Rate Stabilization reserve to fund a number of projects. The projects funded by the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve include \$180,000 planned for revising the Land Use Bylaw, new software to assist planning at a cost of \$200,000, a Regional Recreational Plan at a cost of \$70,000 and a review of environmentally sensitive areas at a cost of \$100,000.

Offsetting the draws from reserves are the addition of \$550,000 in tax revenue, which can be attributed to increased oil production in the County. The increased revenue started in 2007 with the spike in oil prices and continues in 2008. As well the County continues to add to the Road Network reserve to set aside funds for the development of the County Collector Road Network. The amount contributed has dropped from \$760,000 in 2007 to \$480,000 in 2008.



**Personnel Costs**

Last year the County experienced significant pressure from raising wage costs. Although still a factor in 2008 the more significant impact in 2008 comes from increased staffing necessary to address the many challenges associated with growth in the County. In 2008 fifteen new positions have been added throughout the various County departments. The combined increase in staffing costs is \$1.4 million.





**Operational Services**

Road infrastructure maintenance and projects are where the County plans to spend over 60% of its 2008 budget. In 2008 an additional \$1 million more has been allocated to road maintenance. As well with the help of increased infrastructure funding from the Provincial and Federal Governments, the County is planning \$12 million in road improvements. Two of the more significant projects planned for 2008 are the completion of paving range road 20 between Didsbury and secondary highway 580 and the beginning of the rehabilitation of range road 23 north of highway 27.

**Tax Rates**

	2005	2006	2007	2008	% Change
<b>Residential</b>					
Municipal	3.49	3.89	3.35	2.68	
A.S.F.F. (School)	4.48	4.09	3.40	2.45	
Mountain View Seniors' Housing	0.15	0.14	0.13	0.10	
Mountain View Waste Management	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.06	
EMS Services			0.12	0.09	
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.21</b>	<b>8.21</b>	<b>7.09</b>	<b>5.38</b>	<b>-24.1%</b>
<b>Farmland</b>					
Municipal	5.41	5.41	5.99	7.03	
A.S.F.F. (School)	4.48	4.09	3.40	2.45	
Mountain View Seniors' Housing	0.15	0.14	0.13	0.10	
Mountain View Waste Management	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.06	
EMS Services			0.12	0.09	
<b>Total</b>	<b>10.13</b>	<b>9.73</b>	<b>9.73</b>	<b>9.73</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
<b>Commercial/Industrial/Linear</b>					
Municipal	7.63	8.82	8.93	9.00	
A.S.F.F. (School)	6.93	5.75	4.76	4.25	
Mountain View Seniors' Housing	0.15	0.14	0.13	0.10	
Mountain View Waste Management	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.06	
EMS Services			0.12	0.09	
<b>Total</b>	<b>14.80</b>	<b>14.80</b>	<b>14.03</b>	<b>13.50</b>	<b>-3.8%</b>
<b>Machinery &amp; Equipment</b>					
Municipal	7.63	8.82	8.93	9.00	
Mountain View Seniors' Housing	0.15	0.14	0.13	0.10	
Mountain View Waste Management	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.06	
EMS Services			0.12	0.09	
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.87</b>	<b>9.05</b>	<b>9.27</b>	<b>9.25</b>	<b>-0.2%</b>

**COUNCIL GOALS**

1. Set standards for road building and maintenance and develop a long range plan for road infrastructure.
2. To write the MDP and other Planning documents to reflect a response to growth in a progressive and environmentally responsible and sensitive way.
3. Develop a stronger relationship with municipal, provincial and federal governments.
4. Support individual rural communities through policy and grants to revive community identity and to enhance and sustain the rural culture.
5. Continue regional and community cooperation, collaboration and communication for long term prosperity.
6. To bring communal water and sewer to the more intensive residential and commercially developed areas.
7. Encourage ecologically friendly development through incentives to developers and builders who use water and sewer systems with minimal or no environmental impact.
8. To review the contracting of construction, maintenance, consulting and other services delivered by the County.
9. Develop a policy which will lead to controlled, carefully planned industrial/commercial park developments that visually fit into our rural setting.