

# Budget Information Requests

2023 Budget

*As of November 15, 2022*



## Completed

### **BIR-2023-001**

Requested by Councillor McLennan on 10/31/2022

---

#### Requests:

(a) Analysis of business investment in Sturgeon County vs our peers and competitors relative to our tax rate(s). Has business investment improved vs our peers during the period of time that Sturgeon county tax rates have been coming down ( approximate time scale) since 2017, 5 year period)

(b) Analysis of residential permit growth and population growth vs our neighbours, competitors and peers. Likewise have we seen population growth, permit growth etc. increase relative to our competitors/neighbours during the corresponding period of low to no tax increases.

We need to know what effect, if any, our tax policy had to business, resident, attraction/retention.

#### Qualitative Outcomes

Variety of metrics possible. if non are already in place criteria can be established

#### Quantitative

Business permit applications, tax assesment values, population growth or decline \*\*\*we must have corresponding data from our peers/competitors to measure ourselves against \*\*\*

#### **Response:**

- Sturgeon County's population growth has largely remained constant (flat) during the reference period. The development of Sturgeon Valley, and the speed at which it is developed, is likely to be the single largest determinant of residential population growth in the county for the foreseeable future. The projected population of the Sturgeon Valley at full potential build out would exceed 60,000 residents.
- Regional development and building permit trends are provided below – however a larger trend and correlation between taxation levels, development and building permit values, assessment growth, and population growth is not currently available.
  - Statistical correlation between taxes and growth measures (development and business permit applications, assessment values, population growth or decline) would require information from neighbouring jurisdictions and third-party analysis. If Council desires such via motion, Administration will advise of response timelines from other organizations. Administration has also attached available current year comparative information to this response, for consideration.
- While tax rate (policy) does affect business and resident location decisions, it is one among a multitude of factors. Administration is not aware of Sturgeon's tax rates being cited as a reason for not proceeding with an investment, especially considering municipal taxes are the lowest share of total taxes when compared to federal and provincial tax rates.
- Many jurisdictions in Alberta and Canada have higher municipal taxation rates, or business and personal income tax rates, yet see similar or higher growth rates. Business location decisions are

often made based on proximity to suppliers, customers, critical inputs, regulatory certainty, and/or infrastructure sufficiency.

- While investors may ask for taxation incentives, they often cite higher capital expenditures, and higher labour costs, as the main factors for these. Lower/higher taxes affect corporate operating expenditures, not capital or labour expenditures.

The various analyses, notes, charts and graphs (below) were provided by Sturgeon County Administration:

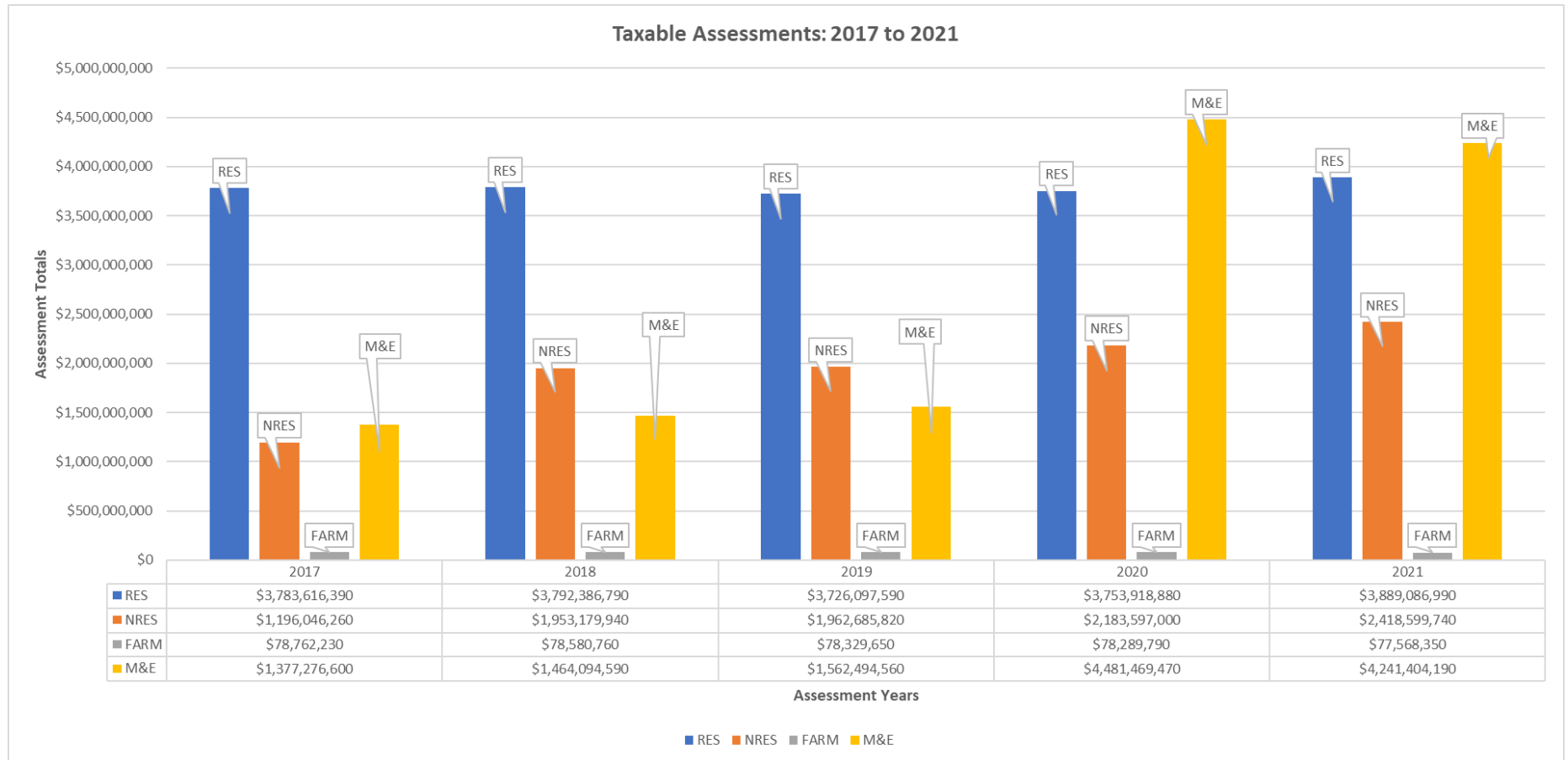
<b>Sturgeon County: Development &amp; Building Permit Totals and Construction Values (2017 - 2021)</b>					
	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Development & Building Permits Volume (Consolidated)	734	674	587	597	737
Development Permit Value	\$ 248,649,924	\$ 232,546,847	\$ 4,630,300,863	\$ 67,204,376	\$ 216,221,514
			<b>CKPC</b>	<b>COVID</b>	<b>RECOVERY</b>

<b>Investment Inquiries and Qualified Leads (Annual)</b>					
<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
23	18	23	21	60	80

- **NOTE:** Administration tracks both non-qualified investment inquiries, and more serious inquiries, which we denote as “qualified” leads. Investment and development interest in Sturgeon County, and department activity related to these requests has seen substantial growth in the last two years due to more focused investor targeting, expanded marketing programs and more collaboration and coordination with investment attraction partners.

**See additional information on following pages.**

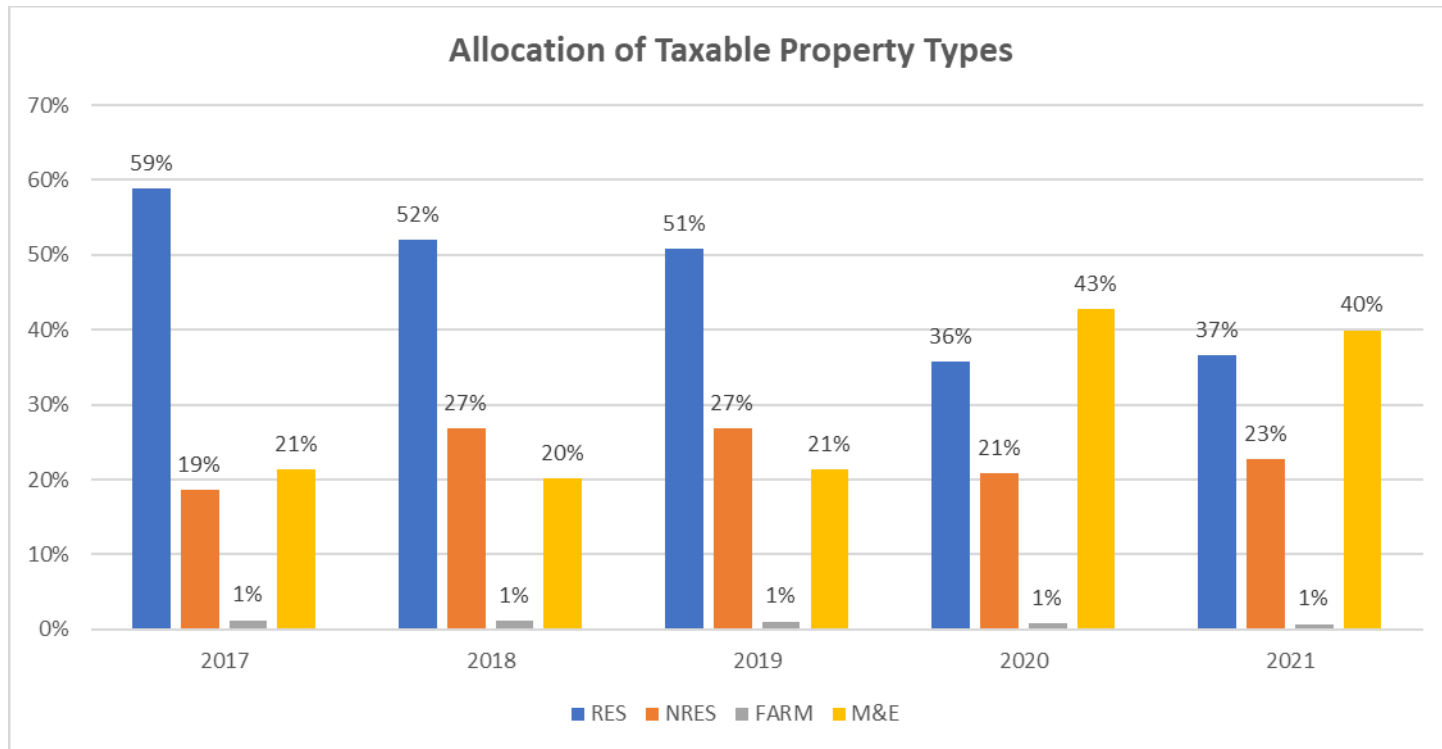
### Tax Assessment Values of Taxable Accounts (2017 - 2021)



- **NOTE:** Tax Assessment values over the historical period in the residential (RES), non-residential (NRES), farm (FARM), and machinery and equipment (M&E) assessment classes.
- While there was significant growth in non-residential, and machinery and equipment assessment totals over the five-year period, this growth was primarily driven by major projects becoming operational in our portion of the Heartland (NWR).
- Assessment growth is highly concentrated in one development area and construction for these projects started much earlier than the period under analysis

Year to Year Value and Pct Change											
Asmt Yr	RES	%Chg	NRES	%Chg	FARM	%Chg	M&E	%Chg	TOTAL	%Chg	2017 to 2021
2017	\$3,783,616,390		\$1,196,046,260		\$78,762,230		\$1,377,276,600		\$6,435,701,480		
2018	\$3,792,386,790	0.23%	\$1,953,179,940	63.30%	\$78,580,760	-0.23%	\$1,464,094,590	6.30%	\$7,288,242,080	13.25%	
2019	\$3,726,097,590	-1.75%	\$1,962,685,820	0.49%	\$78,329,650	-0.32%	\$1,562,494,560	6.72%	\$7,329,607,620	0.57%	
2020	\$3,753,918,880	0.75%	\$2,183,597,000	11.26%	\$78,289,790	-0.05%	\$4,481,469,470	186.82%	\$10,497,275,140	43.22%	
2021	\$3,889,086,990	3.60%	\$2,418,599,740	10.76%	\$77,568,350	-0.92%	\$4,241,404,190	-5.36%	\$10,626,659,270	1.23%	65.12%

- **NOTE:** Shows year-to-year value and percentage changes in assessment classes.



- **NOTE:** Shows allocation (percentage share of total) of the residential (RES), non-residential (NRES), farm (FARM), and machinery and equipment (M&E) taxable property types.
- Significant growth in machinery and equipment assessment totals over the five-year period was primarily driven by major projects becoming operational in our portion of the Heartland (NWR).

## Regional Comparison – Development & Building Permit Totals and Development Permit Value

- Data taken from: [Municipal Financial and Statistical Data - Open Government \(alberta.ca\)](https://open.alberta.ca/municipal-financial-and-statistical-data)
- **NOTE:** The online source does not provide a correlation between tax rates and investment, but it does show where investments were made in this period. Not all municipalities report consistently, and this data is unaudited.

Year	Municipality	Development & Building Permits	Development Permit Value
2018	EDMONTON	22,526	\$ 4,558,711,785
2018	FORT SASKATCHEWAN	1,120	\$ 61,555,747
2018	SPRUCE GROVE	1,550	\$ 136,255,426
2018	ST. ALBERT	2,145	\$ 152,073,538
2018	STRATHCONA COUNTY	2,324	\$ 347,192,307
2018	LEDUC COUNTY	685	\$ 243,110,724
2018	PARKLAND COUNTY	806	\$ 104,007,503
2018	STURGEON COUNTY	674	\$ 92,925,430

- **NOTE:** discrepancy between online source and internal reported values for 2018.

Year	Municipality	Development & Building Permits	Development Permit Value
2019	EDMONTON	15,017	\$ 2,597,965,443
2019	FORT SASKATCHEWAN	1,115	\$ 64,863,309
2019	SPRUCE GROVE	1,372	\$ 103,079,186
2019	ST. ALBERT	1,917	\$ 143,254,827
2019	STRATHCONA COUNTY	2,213	\$ 298,555,093
2019	LEDUC COUNTY	569	\$ 128,016,879
2019	PARKLAND COUNTY	951	\$ 90,969,540
2019	STURGEON COUNTY	584	\$ 4,667,467,436

Year	Municipality	Development & Building Permits	Development Permit Value
2020	EDMONTON	19,734	\$ 2,570,800,000
2020	FORT SASKATCHEWAN	1,029	\$ 58,354,948
2020	SPRUCE GROVE	1,273	\$ 80,363,248
2020	ST. ALBERT	2,031	\$ 201,323,657
2020	STRATHCONA COUNTY	1,881	\$ 191,163,937
2020	LEDUC COUNTY	479	\$ 82,591,886
2020	PARKLAND COUNTY	874	\$ 71,925,250
2020	STURGEON COUNTY	593	\$ 66,810,376

Year	Municipality	Development & Building Permits	Development Permit Value
2021	EDMONTON	31,201	\$ 3,195,608,141
2021	FORT SASKATCHEWAN	924	\$ 159,520,792
2021	SPRUCE GROVE	1,677	\$ 220,633,521
2021	ST. ALBERT	2,378	\$ 215,553,314
2021	STRATHCONA COUNTY	2,080	\$ 270,491,987
2021	LEDUC COUNTY	738	\$ 129,995,204
2021	PARKLAND COUNTY	1,051	\$ 468,134,251
2021	STURGEON COUNTY	737	\$ 214,836,189



**BIR-2023-002**

Requested by Councillor Comeau on 11/02/2022

How does our farmland mill rate compare to other municipalities?

**Response:**

Municipality ----->	Sturgeon County 2021			Westlock Coutny 2021			Thorhild County 2021			Barrhead County 2021		
Year	Assessment	Mill Rate	Municipal Tax	Assessment	Mill Rate	Municipal Tax	Assessment	Mill Rate	Municipal Tax	Assessment	Mill Rate	Municipal Tax
Farmland	\$78,269,420	0.00947	\$741,211	100,377,790	0.028	2,810,578	\$47,702,800	0.0184127	\$878,337	\$61,058,500	0.0167949	\$1,025,471
Residential-Fam	-	-	-	287,653,140	0.0063359	1,822,551	-	-	-	-	-	-
Residential	\$3,672,140,050	0.0036449	\$13,384,583	441,704,310	0.0051928	2,293,692	\$366,301,110	0.0046617	\$1,707,598	\$703,810,020	0.0060823	\$4,280,783
Residential Vacant Reduced	\$9,485,160	0.0036449	\$34,572	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Residential Vacant	\$73,996,960	0.0059596	\$440,992	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non- Residential	\$6,591,751,120	0.0102808	\$67,768,475	35,921,500	0.0286087	1,027,666	\$24,281,020	0.0240819	\$584,733	\$41,711,570	0.0173375	\$723,174
Non- Residential SB	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$6,801,310	0.0180872	\$123,017	-	-	-
DIP- M & E	-	-	-	13,665,040	0.0286087	390,653	\$31,685,450	0.0240819	\$763,045	-	-	-
Pipe & Power	-	-	-	112,095,820	0.0286087	3,206,910	\$295,478,030	0.0240819	\$7,115,667	\$124,152,540	0.0173375	\$2,152,495
M & E	-	-	-	1908010	0.0286087	54,586	\$1,188,790	0.0240819	\$28,628	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10,425,642,710</b>		<b>\$82,369,833</b>	<b>993,315,610</b>		<b>11,606,635</b>	<b>\$773,438,510</b>		<b>\$11,201,025</b>	<b>\$966,629,510</b>		<b>\$8,804,285</b>
Municipality ----->	Sturgeon County 2022			Westlock Coutny 2022			Thorhild County 2022			Barrhead County 2022		
Year	Assessment	Mill Rate	Municipal Tax	Assessment	Mill Rate	Municipal Tax	Assessment	Mill Rate	Municipal Tax	Assessment	Mill Rate	Municipal Tax
Farmland	\$77,566,820	0.0096405	\$747,783	100,378,560	0.028	2,810,600	\$47,648,700	0.0184127	\$877,341	\$61,072,800	0.0169628	\$1,035,966
Residential-Fam	-	-	-	288,614,460	0.0063359	1,828,632	-	-	-	-	-	-
Residential	\$3,812,127,960	0.0037105	\$14,144,901	459,205,400	0.0051928	2,384,561	\$373,793,960	0.004617	\$1,742,515	\$722,739,050	0.0061431	\$4,439,858
Residential Vacant Reduced	\$990,130	0.0037105	\$3,674	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Residential Vacant	\$76,344,840	0.0060669	\$463,177	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non- Residential	\$6,661,128,100	0.0104659	\$69,714,701	36,031,410	0.0286087	1,030,812	\$25,038,810	0.0233084	\$583,614	\$42,500,800	0.0175109	\$744,227
Non-Residential -Campground	-	-	-	1,963,180	0.0202912	39,835	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non- Residential SB	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$7,521,980	0.0175062	\$131,682	-	-	-
DIP- M & E	-	-	-	15,976,780	0.0286087	457,075	\$46,799,920	0.0233084	\$1,090,831	-	-	-
Pipe & Power	-	-	-	110,489,350	0.0286087	3,160,957	\$298,807,240	0.0233084	\$6,964,712	\$118,937,350	0.0175109	\$2,082,700
M & E	-	-	-	103,269,920	0.0286087	55,730	\$1,209,080	0.0233084	\$28,182	\$37,160,350	0.0175109	\$650,711
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10,628,157,850</b>		<b>\$85,074,236</b>	<b>1,014,607,150</b>		<b>11,768,203</b>	<b>\$11,418,877</b>		<b>\$14,355,886</b>	<b>\$982,410,350</b>		<b>\$8,953,462</b>

**BIR-2023-006**

Requested by Mayor Hnatiw on 11/02/2022

---

Could Administration provide “near-term” information (timeline) regarding the implementation of the regional Victim Services model in the province? It is understood that the change to a more regional approach and crime focus to victim services may have an impact on the services provided to Sturgeon County including Victim Services in Sturgeon County, Redwater and Fort Saskatchewan. Consideration in budget 2023 may not be required but there may be a need in future budgets to consider how to support County residents experiencing crisis through FCSS.

**Response:**

Input from Executive Director (ED) of Victim Services – Sturgeon County:

- The ED received confirmation in October that their existing funding will be in place until March 31, 2024.
- The province is intending to fully move to the zone model by April 1, 2024.
- There are still many details to be worked out regarding what this new model will look like and the ED Victim Services Sturgeon County has been added to the Advisory Group that will be providing input on the changes.

JSG Ministry Follow-up:

- Administration did reach out to the Justice Ministry, and they indicated the following:  
  
The Victim Services redesign and implementation team and this government understand that the provision of support systems for people traumatized during non-criminal events is vitally important to Albertans. In that spirit, Justice and Solicitor General Victim Services continues to engage in collaborative and strategic conversations with our RCMP partners, adjacent GOA Ministries not bound by the victims of crime legislation, and external community partners on a response model for non-criminal events that does not involve the Victims of Crime and Public Safety Fund. We are confident in the refining and completion of an innovative solution that has already moved beyond consideration and is now in the initial stages of development.
- JSG has indicated that there is no scenario currently under consideration that would see the provision of support services for people traumatized during non-criminal events downloaded to any municipality served by the new RCMP-based Victim Service Unit Regional Governance Model.

Administration will continue to follow-up with the Ministry and ED Victim Services Sturgeon County to monitor timelines and impacts of the new proposed model, implementation approach and timelines.

**BIR-2023-007**

Requested by Mayor Hnatiw on 11/02/2022

---

Does Emergency Services, that currently support Sturgeon Victim Services, have room in their budget to support the other Victim Services i.e.: Thorhild, that support a portion of our residents. The catchment area of Sturgeon County served should be considered in relation to the amount donated.

**Response:**

Presently, we provide \$6,778 per year to Sturgeon Victim Services (Morinville) based on a request that came to Council in 2020. While we do have three units in the area, the extent to which they serve Sturgeon varies as per the stats below:

VSU Statistics for 2021			
Fort Saskatchewan VSU			
	Sturgeon County	Total	% Sturgeon County
2021-01-01 to 2021-12-31	4	463	0.86%
Redwater VSU Stats			
	Sturgeon County	Total	% of Sturgeon County
2021-01-01 to 2021-12-31	105	133	78.95%
Sturgeon VSU Stats			
	Sturgeon County	Total	% of Sturgeon County
2021-01-01 to 2021-12-31	226	600	37.67%

So, as you can see, Redwater provides services largely to Sturgeon residents, while Fort Saskatchewan serves very few clients from Sturgeon. Any increase to the funding made to the other units would require a motion as the existing agreement (Morinville) was done as a contract and there is no specific budget line with room to accommodate the others.

As of right now, the details have not been finalized about when the new regional service model will roll out, so it is difficult to say how the funding we currently provide to Morinville would be affected when the regional model starts. We'll likely have a better sense as to the impact of the changes by this time next year and could address potential impacts in the 2024 Budget. The results of the May 2023 provincial election may also have an impact on how, or whether, the regional rollout goes ahead.

**BIR-2023-008**

Requested by Councillor Toms on 10/27/2022

---

Can you provide clarity regarding how Animal Control logs incidents?

**Response:**

If a file is open by Animal Control, and additional complaints are received while the file is open, the complaints are added to the original file (counted as the same incident). If a file is closed and a new complaint is received in the future (for example a week or two later), a new file (incident) would be created.

**BIR-2023-009**

Requested by Councillor Derouin on 10/27/2022

---

Would it be feasible for Sturgeon County to work with the Towns regarding Animal Control services?

**Response:**

Sturgeon County currently provides Animal Control Services under contract for the towns of Bon Accord and Legal enforcing their respective town bylaws. Morinville Enforcement Staff provides enforcement services to the Town of Morinville and through contract to Gibbons. The Town of Morinville has an Enforcement area and animal control is a duty done by all Peace Officers as there is no dedicated Animal Control Officer. Often urban animal control needs are different than that of rural and given this is the case and given our departments current capacity limitations it may not be feasible at this time to collaborate with the towns of Morinville and Gibbons in relation to animal control services.

**BIR-2023-011**

Requested by Councillor Derouin on 10/27/2022

---

Could Administration provide department feedback on the need for additional Peace Officers in Sturgeon County taking into account succession planning and service continuity?

**Response:**

- Sturgeon County has nine full-time Enforcement staff:
  - 1 Enforcement Supervisor
  - 1 Deputy Enforcement Supervisor
  - 6 Peace Officers
  - 1 Animal Control Officer
- Peace Officer Services are provided
  - Monday to Friday from 6:00am to 11:00pm
  - Weekend shifts cover 7:30am to 9:00pm
- Animal Control Officer provides services Monday to Friday 8:30-4:30 with Peace Officers addressing Animal Control concerns outside of these hours.

- The County also provides enforcement and animal control services to Bon Accord and Legal for a combined total of 7 hours per week.
- A Peace Officer mid range salary with benefits is approximately \$105,500 annually.
- To offset vacation and training, Peace Officers are allowed to work overtime. A review of overtime for the last three years is as follows:

Year	Peace Officer OT Costs
2019	<b>\$28,731</b>
2020	<b>\$27,321</b>
2021	<b>\$33,469</b>

- A review of staffing indicates that there may be 1-2 anticipated retirements over the next 5 years.
- A service enhancement has been submitted for budget 2023 requesting an additional Animal Control Officer to expand Animal Control services including expanded hours.
- A service enhancement was also submitted to support bylaw enforcement working directly to support land development enforcement issues
- Two Peace Officers were approved in 2019.

## In Progress

### **BIR-2023-003**

Requested by Councillor Comeau on 11/03/2022

---

Could Administration provide an overtime report for mechanics?

### **BIR-2023-004**

Requested by Councillor Comeau on 11/02/2022

---

Could Administration perform a deeper dive on public feedback with regard to mowing?

### **BIR-2023-005**

Requested by Councillor Comeau on 11/02/2022

---

Could Administration provide potential funding options for the Riviere Qui Barre Agricultural Society?  
(This is in regard to the renos on the school being amalgamated in with the AG society.)

### **BIR-2023-010**

Requested by Councillor Derouin on 10/27/2022

---

How is statutory holiday pay handled for mowing staff?