

2025 PONOKA COUNTY NEWSLETTER

Greetings from the staff and Council of Ponoka County. Each new year brings expectations and challenges. We face uncertainty together, with trade wars and inflation affecting households and businesses alike. Despite these difficulties, Ponoka County is committed to providing high-quality service to its ratepayers.

The Council has shown consistency in difficult times, effectively advocating for community interests. As Reeve and Division 4 Councillor, I am honoured to serve this rural Alberta community with a strategic and balanced approach. We aim to make decisions that reflect the will of residents while addressing challenges like broadband connectivity, responsible land use and stewardship.

Change is inevitable, but we remain dedicated to meeting the demands of growth and supporting the needs of our community. Our goal is to maintain the lowest tax rate among Alberta municipalities while meeting infrastructure demands. However, the decisions made by the Government of Alberta have significantly impacted our ability to meet your needs, and I want to ensure you understand how these choices are affecting you.

Firstly, your property taxes include \$813,394 of policing costs which has been downloaded from the province in recent years. Property tax is a highly inefficient method of income generation and is only truly effective for maintaining infrastructure like bridges and roads. Using property tax to fund police services exceeds the scope typically managed by municipalities. While the promised income tax cut from the 2025 budget may seem beneficial, please consider reviewing your property tax assessment to see how the education portion increased from the previous year to better understand where the funds were sourced for this cut. The education portion of property taxes is a direct transfer from Municipalities to the Provincial Government and Ponoka County's education tax assessment increased from \$8.4 million in 2024 to \$9.7 million in 2025.

Property tax is an imperfect mechanism for covering education expenses, and both the council and administration have been striving to minimize increases for as long as possible. We will continue to support the ratepayers of Ponoka and endeavor to provide the highest level of service possible.

Ponoka County is lucky to have such a dedicated management, administration and public works team that are dedicated to giving you the best possible service in an effective manner. It is indeed a gift to have the opportunity to work with such amazing people and thank you for allowing us to serve you.

Reeve Paul McLauchlin
Division 4 Councillor



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Or use this QR code to be taken directly to the sign up form



Property Taxes
Due June 30



4205 Hwy #2A
Ponoka, Alberta
T4J 1V9

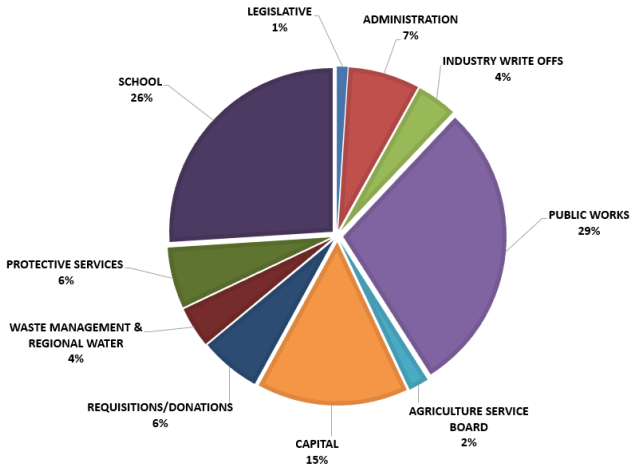
Phone: 403.783.3333

Fax: 403.783.6965

Email: ponokacounty@ponokacounty.com

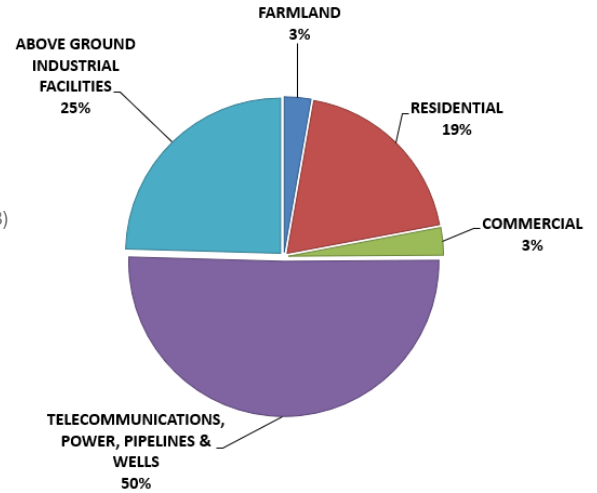
Financials

Percentage of where tax dollars are spent:



In 2024, the oil & gas sector contributed 75% (\$24,008,656.53) of the total property taxes levied (\$32,011,542.04) in our county.

Contribution by Property Type



You can view the complete audited financial statements for 2024 on our website <https://www.ponokacounty.com>

Have you ever wondered how property taxes in Ponoka County compare to surrounding municipalities? See below for a brief comparison. Ponoka County Council has always prioritized keeping taxes low while providing excellent service to the residents.

Residential Tax Comparison With Neighboring Counties Based on 2024 Rates

*ASFF - Alberta School Foundation Fund	Ponoka County	Clearwater County	Lacombe County	Leduc County	County of Wetaskiwin	Camrose County	Red Deer County	Flagstaff County	Stettler County
*ASFF Requisition Mill Rate	2.37626	2.3412	2.491	2.4428	2.3923	2.4911	2.4149	2.3399	2.4282
Residential Mill Rate	2.01	2.9207	2.8334	2.9956	3.5628	3.86141	4.3795	5.2417	5.4606
Total Mill Rate	4.38626	5.2619	5.3244	5.4384	5.9551	6.35251	6.7944	7.5816	7.8888
Property Value	\$ 350,000.00	\$ 350,000.00	\$ 350,000.00	\$ 350,000.00	\$ 350,000.00	\$ 350,000.00	\$ 350,000.00	\$ 350,000.00	\$ 350,000.00
ASFF Requisition	\$ 831.69	\$ 819.42	\$ 871.85	\$ 854.98	\$ 837.31	\$ 871.89	\$ 845.22	\$ 818.97	\$ 849.87
Residential	\$ 703.50	\$ 1,022.25	\$ 991.69	\$ 1,048.46	\$ 1,246.98	\$ 1,351.49	\$ 1,532.83	\$ 1,834.60	\$ 1,911.21
Total	\$ 1,535.19	\$ 1,841.67	\$ 1,863.54	\$ 1,903.44	\$ 2,084.29	\$ 2,223.38	\$ 2,378.04	\$ 2,653.56	\$ 2,761.08
Property Value	\$ 450,000.00	\$ 450,000.00	\$ 450,000.00	\$ 450,000.00	\$ 450,000.00	\$ 450,000.00	\$ 450,000.00	\$ 450,000.00	\$ 450,000.00
ASFF Requisition	\$ 1,069.32	\$ 1,053.54	\$ 1,120.95	\$ 1,099.26	\$ 1,076.54	\$ 1,121.00	\$ 1,086.71	\$ 1,052.96	\$ 1,092.69
Residential	\$ 904.50	\$ 1,314.32	\$ 1,275.03	\$ 1,348.02	\$ 1,603.26	\$ 1,737.63	\$ 1,970.78	\$ 2,358.77	\$ 2,457.27
Taxes	\$ 1,973.82	\$ 2,367.86	\$ 2,395.98	\$ 2,447.28	\$ 2,679.80	\$ 2,858.63	\$ 3,057.48	\$ 3,411.72	\$ 3,549.96
Property Value	\$ 600,000.00	\$ 600,000.00	\$ 600,000.00	\$ 600,000.00	\$ 600,000.00	\$ 600,000.00	\$ 600,000.00	\$ 600,000.00	\$ 600,000.00
ASFF Requisition	\$ 1,425.76	\$ 1,404.72	\$ 1,494.60	\$ 1,465.68	\$ 1,435.38	\$ 1,494.66	\$ 1,448.94	\$ 1,403.94	\$ 1,456.92
Residential	\$ 1,206.00	\$ 1,752.42	\$ 1,700.04	\$ 1,797.36	\$ 2,137.68	\$ 2,316.85	\$ 2,627.70	\$ 3,145.02	\$ 3,276.36
Taxes	\$ 2,631.76	\$ 3,157.14	\$ 3,194.64	\$ 3,263.04	\$ 3,573.06	\$ 3,811.51	\$ 4,076.64	\$ 4,548.96	\$ 4,733.28
Property Value	\$ 800,000.00	\$ 800,000.00	\$ 800,000.00	\$ 800,000.00	\$ 800,000.00	\$ 800,000.00	\$ 800,000.00	\$ 800,000.00	\$ 800,000.00
ASFF Requisition	\$ 1,901.01	\$ 1,872.96	\$ 1,992.80	\$ 1,954.24	\$ 1,913.84	\$ 1,992.88	\$ 1,931.92	\$ 1,871.92	\$ 1,942.56
Residential	\$ 1,608.00	\$ 2,336.56	\$ 2,266.72	\$ 2,396.48	\$ 2,850.24	\$ 3,089.13	\$ 3,503.60	\$ 4,193.36	\$ 4,368.48
Taxes	\$ 3,509.01	\$ 4,209.52	\$ 4,259.52	\$ 4,350.72	\$ 4,764.08	\$ 5,082.01	\$ 5,435.52	\$ 6,065.28	\$ 6,311.04

TIPPs (Tax Installment Pre-Payment Plan)

The TIPPs program is available to pay your property taxes in monthly payments throughout the year. Payments are withdrawn from your bank account on the 20th of each month. If you wish to join TIPPs, there are applications on our website or you may reach out at 403-783-3333.

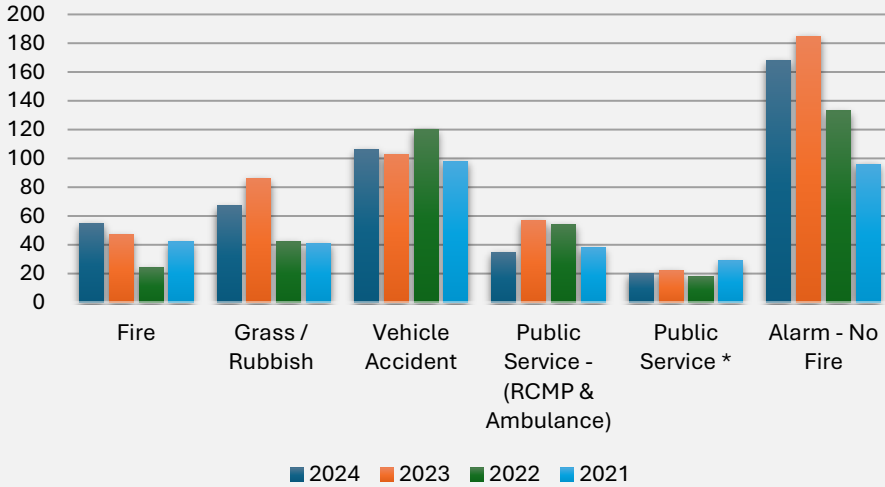
Please note, if you want to be on TIPPs your account must be at a **zero balance**.



Ponoka County Regional Fire Services

In 2024 our East & West District Fire Services logged a total of 8,538 hours of service responding to calls, practice and training. Our dedicated and selfless firefighters also logged a total of 1,803 community involvement hours. **Thank you for your service!**

East District Calls



2024 East District – 451 Calls

- Fire – 55
- Grass/Rubbish – 67
- Vehicle Accident – 106
- Public Service (RCMP & Ambulance) – 35
- Public Service – 20
- Alarm (No Fire) – 168

Total manhours 4,935.25

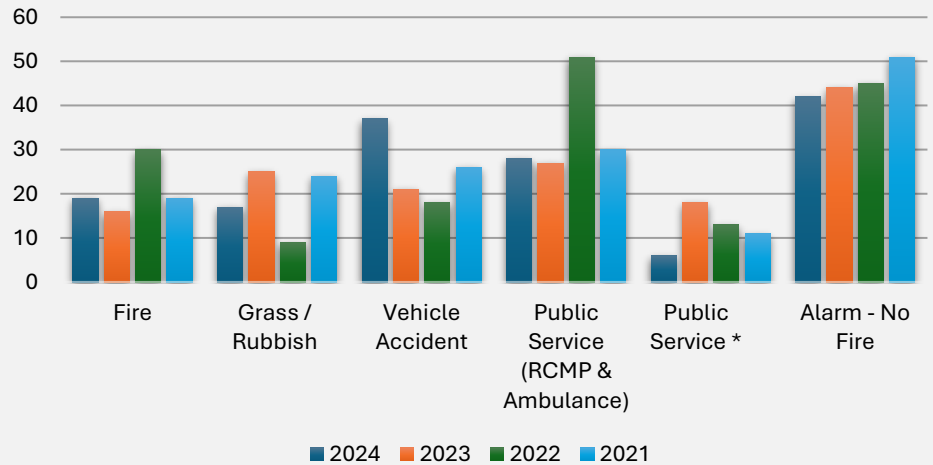


2024 West District – 149 Calls

- Fire – 19
- Grass/Rubbish – 17
- Vehicle Accident – 37
- Public Service (RCMP & Ambulance) – 28
- Public Service – 6
- Alarm (No Fire) – 42

Total manhours 1,445.5

West District Calls



Agricultural Service Board

Weed Highlight

Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens Glandulifera*)

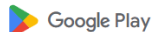
Himalayan Balsam is an invasive species in Alberta, listed as **Prohibited Noxious** under the Alberta Weed Control Act. Native to the Himalayas, it spreads rapidly along riverbanks and disturbed areas, outcompeting native plants and increasing erosion risks. This annual plant can grow up to 3 meters tall and is recognizable by its hollow stems, pink to purple flowers, and explosive seed pods. Its shallow, fibrous root system is less effective at stabilizing soil compared to deeper-rooted native plants, making erosion more likely, especially along waterways. Himalayan Balsam forms a dense, even-aged thicket that significantly threatens local ecosystems. Effective management strategies include manual removal before seeding, regular mowing, and herbicide use. **Sightings should be reported to Ponoka County Agricultural Services to support control efforts.**



Photo Credit: Sarah Schumacher from Wheatland County

Need help identifying a weed, plant, tree or insect?

Download the Ponoka County App and submit pictures to the Agricultural Services Department.



Just one click on the Ag Services icon takes you directly to a short form that can be filled out.



Scan the QR code for a direct link to our app

Shelterbelt Program – 2026 Planting

The Shakti by TELUS Advantage

The **shelterbelt program** helps landowners in the prairies design and plant shelterbelts to meet their needs. A variety of trees and shrubs are hand-planted based on landowner requirements. Trees and planting services for shelterbelt programs are financed by Shakti's partners and provided at **no cost to you.**

Shelterbelts provide wind protection, reduce soil erosion and drought effects, capture snow, enhance landscapes, support wildlife, and contribute to carbon sequestration. Funding is available, allowing these projects to be planted at no cost to landowners.

Shakti by TELUS specializes in designing planting projects that align with landowner, Indigenous, and government needs. Services include tree sourcing, restoration, surveys, and seed collection. A tech-forward approach optimizes for economic, environmental, and cultural benefits.

For more information, contact Head Forester, Brant Broome at **brant@shaktitrees.com** or **368-996-5170**.

Photo credit: Devon Lloyd from Ponoka County
Field Scabious

Agricultural Service Board

Ponoka County's Agricultural Service Board (ASB) is dedicated to supporting local agriculture through pest management, weed control, and sustainable farming practices. The ASB provides resources, education and programs to help farmers manage invasive species like clubroot as well as control noxious weeds and maintain soil health. It also oversees inspections, promotes environmental stewardship and works closely with residents to address agricultural challenges.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to the Agricultural Department with any of your weed, pest, soil, water or spraying questions.

Weed Inspections

In compliance with the *Weed Control Act*, Ponoka County conducts regular weed inspections to prevent the spread of invasive species and to ensure that landowners maintain their properties according to provincial standards. The purpose of these inspections is to identify and control or eradicate noxious and prohibited noxious species early, preventing them from spreading further. Additionally, weed inspections aim to educate landowners by providing information on proper weed management practices and compliance requirements. All inspectors will be wearing high-visibility clothing and driving a county vehicle with the Ponoka County logo for easy identification.

Residents are encouraged to report sightings of noxious and prohibited noxious weeds to the Agricultural Services Department to help protect local ecosystems and agricultural lands.



Pest Inspections

Ponoka County conducts regular pest inspections to manage and prevent the spread of agricultural pests that can threaten local crops and livestock. These inspections are carried out in compliance with the *Agricultural Pests Act* and focus on identifying and controlling pests such as grasshoppers (*insect*), fusarium (*fungal disease*), blackleg (*fungal disease*), and clubroot (*soil borne disease*). These pests can all greatly reduce crop yield and quality. All inspectors will be wearing high-visibility clothing and driving a county vehicle with the Ponoka County logo for easy identification.



Environmental Farm Plan

Ponoka County has an Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) Technician to assist local farmers in developing and implementing their **free** EFP. The technician provides guidance on managing soil health, water resources, and biodiversity while minimizing environmental risks. Through confidential one-on-one support, Ponoka County helps farmers identify potential environmental impacts on their operations and create action plans to enhance sustainability and compliance with best management practices. For more information on the Alberta Environmental Farm Plan, contact devonlloyd@ponokacounty.com or visit www.albertaefp.com.

Public Works

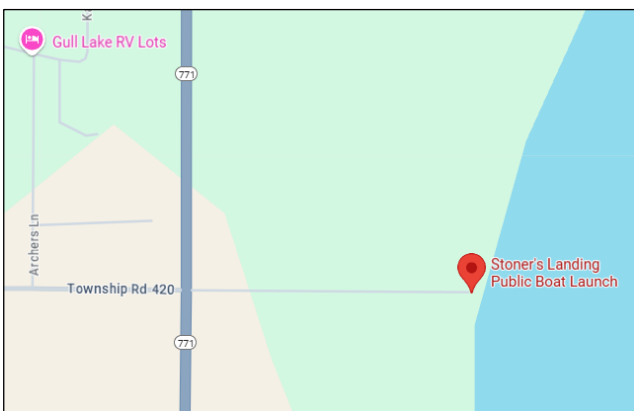
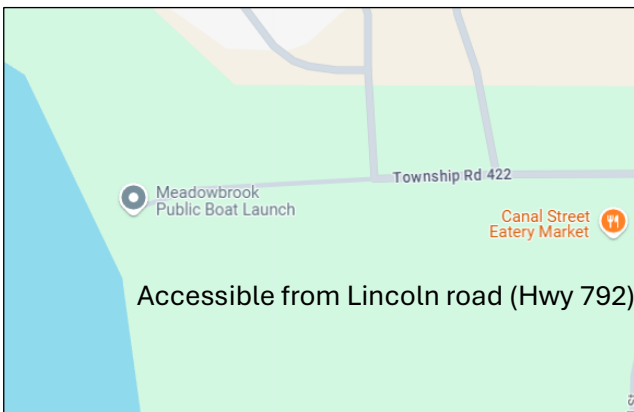


Dredging of Meadowbrook public boat launch

Gull Lake Public Boat Launches

Work began in February for the dredging of the Meadowbrook and Stoners Landing public boat launches to remove accumulated sediment. This will allow users to safely navigate the launch without scraping the bottom of their boat. This work was completed in compliance with Fisheries and Oceans Canada Routine Maintenance Dredging for Navigation Code of Practice.

Meadowbrook boat launch is located on the east side of Gull Lake (south of Raymond Shores) and Stoners Landing is located on the west side of Gull Lake (south of the Parkland Beach area).



Dust Control Program

Applications for the dust control program will be open from **April 1, 2025 to May 17, 2025** to have your request for dust control in.

The cost of calcium is \$1.40/ft plus GST with a minimum of 400'. The County subsidy is \$275.00 per residence. **The total cost of 400' to the residence will be \$299.25.**

Oil based dust control is \$10.73/ft with a rebate of \$2.00/ft. A minimum of 400' is required.

Please call the office at 403-783-3333 or email lornanorn@ponokacounty.com with your request for dust control by May 17, 2025

Development



DO I NEED A PERMIT?

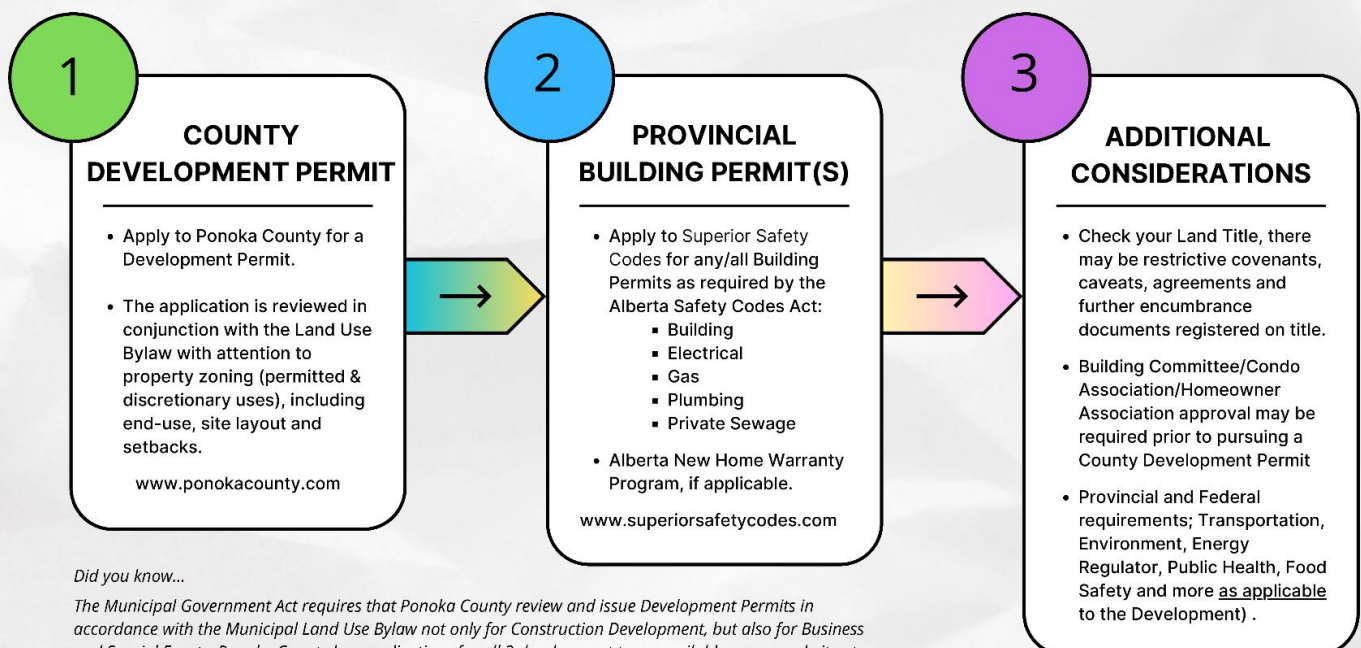
We are here to help you! A variety of permits are in place to protect your investment, public safety as well as County infrastructure. Also, to be noted many insurance companies require construction projects to be properly permitted to be eligible for coverage.

Whether you are building your dream home, having landscaping bricks delivered for a project, operating a home based business, setting off fireworks for a celebration, burning trees and yard waste after a good spring clean-up, hauling grain to the elevator, bringing in silage in for your cattle, hauling manure out, or adding new construction of any kind to your acreage/farm; please check if a permit is required.

Our website is a good place to start, and you can access all permit forms there. *On the go?* No problem, permits are also available on the Ponoka County App. As always you are also welcomed to stop into the office or give us a call. If you are not sure, ask! *Fire Permits & Road Permits are no charge.*

[Development Permit](#) | [Fire Permit](#) | [Road Permit](#) | [Business Permit](#)

Development in Ponoka County



Municipal Election

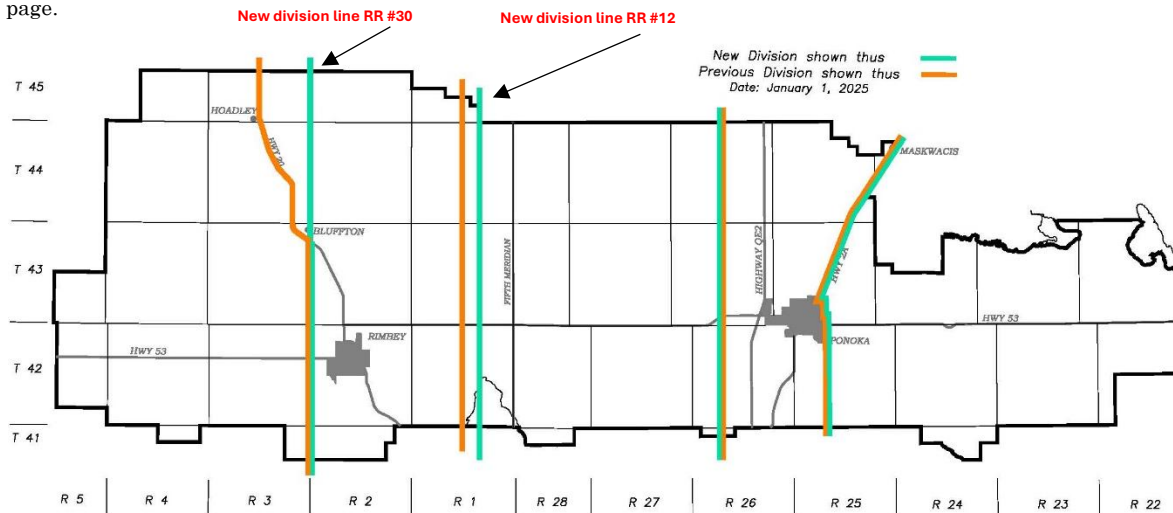
2025 is a Municipal Election year. If you're considering running for office, there are some important things you need to be aware of.

- Candidates elected in the 2025 Municipal Election will be elected for a four-year term (2025-2029)
- A person may be nominated as a candidate in Ponoka County's municipal election if on Nomination Day the person:
 - is eligible to vote in that election
 - is a Canadian citizen
 - has been a resident of Ponoka County and the division in which they intend to run for the six (6) consecutive months preceding Nomination Day
 - is not otherwise ineligible or disqualified
- Ponoka County's boundaries between Divisions 3, 4 and 5 were amended based on a population change reflected in the 2021 census (see map below). Please ensure that you know which division you are running in
- **NEW** for the 2025 election – Prospective candidates are required to file a Notice of Intent to run. The notice must be filed before accepting campaign contributions or incurring campaign expenses. Once the notice is processed, the individual's name will be added to the register of candidates on Ponoka County's website.

Nomination papers and a deposit of \$100 by cash, cheque money order or debit, as well as the Candidate Financial Information must be filed to the Returning Officer during regular office hours between January 2, 2025 and 12:00 PM (Noon) on September 22, 2025 at:

Ponoka County Office
4205 Hwy #2A
Ponoka Alberta

A candidate guide is available on our website. Please click the "More" tab at the top right of the website and then scroll down to the bottom of the next page.



The municipal election will be held on

Monday October 20, 2025.

Please keep an eye on our website and the local newspaper for polling locations as we get closer to Election Day



Photo Credit: Paige Kinnaird

Division 1 – **Bryce Liddle** | 403.963.2476
BryceLiddle@ponokacounty.com

Division 2 – **Mark Matejka** | 403.783.9857
MarkMatejka@ponokacounty.com [Deputy Reeve]

Division 3 – **Doug Weir** | 403.783.0394
DougWeir@ponokacounty.com

Division 4 – **Paul McLauchlin** | 780.995.7339
PaulMcLauchlin@ponokacounty.com [Reeve]

Division 5 – **Nancy Hartford** | 403.783.9895
NancyHartford@ponokacounty.com

CAO – **Peter Hall** | 403.783.3333
PeterHall@ponokacounty.com