



Annual Report

Годовой отчет



FLIP ME OVER FOR OUR CITYPULSE SUMMER EDITION!

Connected to you

As a City, we are committed to staying connected with you – our residents – and listening to your feedback. You are at the heart of everything we do, so please get, and stay, in touch.

Here are some ways you can connect with us:

City Hall: 315 Jespersen Ave.

Phone: 780-962-2611
(from 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.)

Web: www.sprucegrove.org

Email: info@sprucegrove.org

CityPulse: www.sprucegrove.org/citypulse

Twitter: @CitySpruceGrove

Facebook: www.facebook.com/sprucegrove



Table of contents

- 3 **Mayor's message**
- 4 **We asked, you answered!**
- 5 **Garage sale program a hit**
- 5 **Get social**
- 5 **It's party time!**
- 6 **Work begins on new Public Works facility**
- 7 **Century Road gets a facelift**
- 8 **Here we grow!**
- 9 **Building and development permits, housing starts**
- 10 **Eco Centre recognized by recycling authority**
- 11 **Trim that trash!**
- 12 **Let's play!**
- 13 **Horizon Stage launches new website**
- 14 **Remembering RCMP Cpl. Jim Galloway**
- 15 **Calls received by Spruce Grove Fire Services (SGFS) in 2013**
- 16 **City launches new program registration system**
- 17 **We mean business!**
- 18 **2013 Financial Summary**



Mayor's message

On behalf of Spruce Grove City Council, I am pleased to present the City of Spruce Grove's annual report for 2013.

It was an exciting year as we enjoyed exceptional growth, welcomed new businesses and neighbourhoods, and continued to enhance the many programs and services that make Spruce Grove an ideal place to live, work and play.

Of particular note, the City had a record breaking year for building permit values and industrial permit and improvement values, demonstrating the strength of our local economy. Housing starts, and in particular townhouse construction, remained strong, highlighting the community's appeal to younger, first-time homebuyers and families. It was also a positive year for economic development with commercial and industrial growth and expansion in all corners of Spruce Grove.

We continued to enhance community development through our annual block party program, which encourages neighbours to meet and make connections, and with the installation of new playground equipment throughout Spruce Grove.

Work started on the City's new \$18.6 million Public Works Facility, which will accommodate an estimated 25 years of growth in Spruce Grove and allow staff to continue providing the quality and level of services our residents have come to expect from us, and council approved the development of a new sports and recreation facility that will include a sports museum, multi-purpose flex space, non-profit office and program space, and will be home to the Aerials Gymnastics Club.

We also conducted a resident satisfaction survey to check in with our residents and I am pleased to say that 94 per cent would recommend Spruce Grove as a place to live.

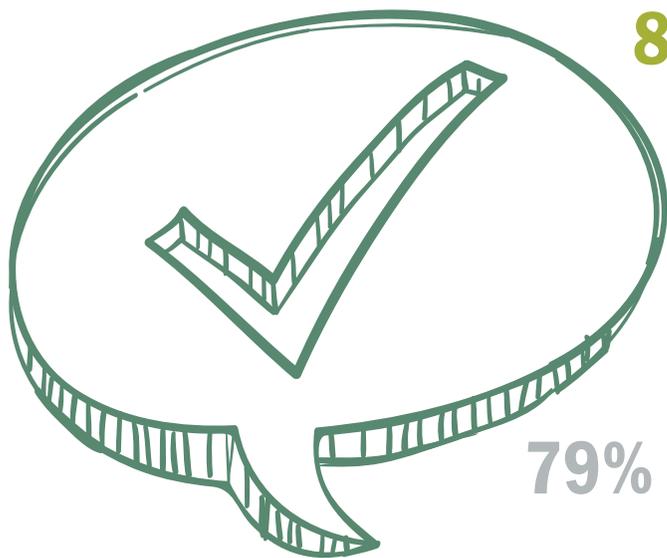
This annual report highlights these, and many other ways, we are growing and thriving as a community. I am truly looking forward to working with city council, administration and our many partners to ensure we continue to make Spruce Grove a successful, sustainable and vibrant place we are all proud to call home.

Mayor Stuart Houston

We asked, you answered!

Satisfaction survey provides opportunity to check in with residents

Last year the City of Spruce Grove commissioned a resident satisfaction survey. The survey was conducted by Banister Research and Consulting Inc. and involved 400 telephone interviews with citizens, ages 18 and older, between March 18-21, 2013.



80% of respondents rated the overall quality of life in Spruce Grove as good or excellent

94% of respondents would recommend Spruce Grove to others as a place to live

66% of respondents are somewhat or very satisfied with communications from the City

79% of respondents are somewhat or very satisfied with service provided by the City employee they last contacted

88% of respondents are somewhat or very satisfied overall with the City's programs, services and facilities, including:

- 92% are somewhat or very satisfied with trails, parks and open spaces
- 87% are somewhat or very satisfied with recycling services
- 84% are somewhat or very satisfied with garbage collection services
- 80% are somewhat or very satisfied with City-sponsored events

The survey results, which assist council and administration in future planning, were presented during the Sept. 16, 2013, Committee of the Whole meeting. The complete presentation is available on the City's website.

Garage sale program a hit



Started in 2010, the City's garage sale advertising program has proven to be a hit with residents. Run in partnership with The Grove Examiner newspaper, the program lets Spruce Grove residents advertise their garage sales for free on the City's website and in the weekly newspaper. Each year the program has grown in popularity and last year was no exception!

2010	256 garage sales	2012	436 garage sales
2011	392 garage sales	2013	452 garage sales

Get social!

We regularly use social media to share Spruce Grove-related news and events and by the end of 2013, the City had:

- **2,712 Facebook "likes"**
- **2,518 Twitter followers**

So if you haven't already, be sure to join our online communities and let's start talking!

You can find us at:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/sprucegrove

Twitter: @CitySpruceGrove



It's party time!

Spruce Grove residents are rocking the block party! This fun summer program continues to be popular with residents, which means more neighbours are meeting each other and building community spirit across Spruce Grove!

Thanks to everyone who has participated in the City's block party program. You are helping to make Spruce Grove a welcoming, safe and friendly community!

2013	26 block parties
2012	23 block parties
2011	20 block parties



Work begins on new Public Works facility

Building will meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) silver standards

The dirt has been moved and the walls are going up on the City's new Public Works facility.

Construction on the new \$18.6 million project started in 2013 and the building, which will enable staff to work more efficiently and accommodate an estimated 25 years of growth in the community, is expected to be complete in fall 2014.

The 179,560 square foot facility is incorporating natural light, efficient layout and a design that focuses on making the workspace more efficient for administration space, fleet vehicles, shop areas and employee work spaces.

The building will also meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) silver standards. "Green" features include:

- a geothermal heat pump system;
- a solar hot water system;
- using collected rainwater in the wash bay to clean vehicles and equipment; and
- low flow plumbing fixtures.

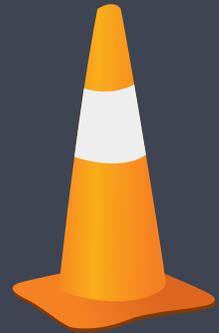
LEED elements will also be used in the building's interior finishes, including eco-friendly ceramic tile, recycled glass and bamboo features.

The City received more than \$13 million in Municipal Sustainability Initiative funding from the Government of Alberta to pay for the facility. The remaining amount was borrowed by the City.



Century Road gets a facelift

Significant improvements made in 2013



PHASE 1*

As a major entry and exit point in Spruce Grove, Century Road received some significant improvements in 2013.

These upgrades helped improve traffic flow and enhanced traffic safety at the Century Road and Highway 16 overpass and along Century Road.

The work was completed in three phases:

HIGHWAY 16 AND CENTURY ROAD OVERPASS

- The westbound overpass off-ramp was widened to include a second lane and both lanes now have left-hand turn lanes to facilitate southbound traffic into Spruce Grove on Century Road.
- The overpass bridge was widened to accommodate two southbound lanes.

*Work on this phase will conclude in 2014

PHASE 2

CENTURY ROAD/GROVE DRIVE INTERSECTION

- The northwest Hilldowns corner was widened and medians were relocated on the south side of the intersection to allow left turning and straight-through traffic in all directions. There are also two straight-through lanes heading north and south.
- The east side of Century Road was widened between Vanderbilt Common and the highway overpass.
- A road was constructed north of Vanderbilt Common.

PHASE 3

CENTURY ROAD, FROM GROVE DRIVE TO HIGHWAY 16A

- The majority of Century Road, from Grove Drive to Highway 16A, was resurfaced.

As Spruce Grove continues to grow, maintaining and enhancing roads, water and sewer systems, is a top priority for City staff. A proactive approach is used to plan construction projects, like the Century Road improvements, to preserve the integrity of the City's infrastructure and ensure maintenance is done on a regular basis.

Here we grow!

Record breaking industrial permit values in 2013

Spruce Grove welcomed significant development to the city in 2013 with commercial and industrial development in various sectors and areas of the community.



CENTURY CROSSING

Currently the largest recent retail area in Spruce Grove, the \$75 million Century Crossing development welcomed several new businesses last year, including Mucho Burrito, Cobs Bread, The Chopped Leaf, Michael's, ATB Financial and State & Main. Located on the southeast corner of Spruce Grove, Century Crossing has a prime location immediately north of Highway 16A and is a shopping destination for both residents and visitors to the city.

TRI LEISURE VILLAGE

On the west end of Spruce Grove, construction started on the new 130-room Holiday Inn Express & Suites in the Tri Leisure Village development. This \$50 million development will eventually include restaurants, shops, a professional building and a new City-owned sports and recreation facility.

WESTGROVE COMMON

The Westgrove Common area grew in 2013 with the official opening of the Nelson Centre complex. Located between Highway 16A and McLeod Avenue, new businesses that opened include a car wash, Menchie's, Red Chili Leaf, AMEC and Planet Beach.

WESTWIND CENTRE

Residential development started last year in Westwind Centre, Spruce Grove's newest mixed-use development area. Situated on the City's northeast corner, it will be Spruce Grove's only commercial development on the Yellowhead Highway and, once completed, this commercial and residential development will occupy more than 120 acres.

INDUSTRIAL PARKS

Last year saw a record breaking \$10.7 million in industrial permit and improvement values in Spruce Grove. Companies who finished or relocated to new buildings in the Spruce Grove Industrial Park and the Campsite Business Park include Compass Compression and Precise Crossings. There was also construction on the new Premier Garage Condos site and the new Thompson Bros. office and shop.

RECREATION AND LEISURE

Spruce Grove welcomed the opening of the new Diamond Grove RV Campground on the City's southeast side. The park provides campers with fully serviced stalls and a sani-dump facility. Just down the road from there on Century Road is the new South Century Driving Range, which also opened its doors in 2013. This dedicated driving range is a welcome addition for local golfers who are looking to relax or work on their skills.



Building permits – 2013

Spruce Grove issued 1,114 building permits in 2013, a 21 per cent increase over permit activity in 2012, and a 43 per cent increase over 2011. In fact, 2013 was the busiest year in the City’s history in terms of building permit issuance. The total value of all building permits last year was \$194 million.

OF PERMITS

INSTITUTIONAL

# OF PERMITS	PERMIT VALUE*
4 Institutional improvements	\$1.6 million
1 Institutional	\$10.4 million

INDUSTRIAL

14 Industrial improvements	\$1.3 million
7 Industrial	\$9.5 million

COMMERCIAL

52 Commercial improvements	\$6.1 million
5 Commercial	\$13.6 million

RESIDENTIAL

131 Garages	\$2.4 million
327 Residential improvements	\$3.7 million
133 Multi-family residential	\$28.7 million
164 Semi-detached residential	\$35.4 million
276 Single-detached residential	\$81.5 million

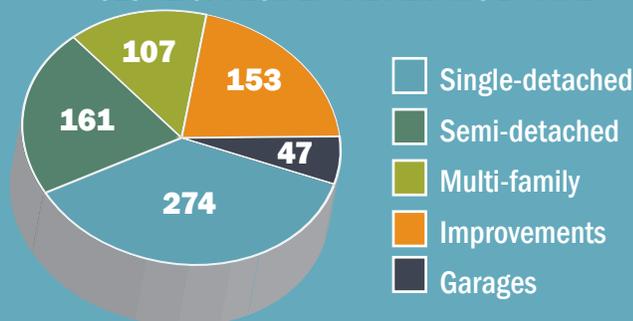
PERMIT VALUE* - rounded to the nearest 100,000

Development permits – 2013

Residential

Residential development permits remained consistent in 2013 with a focus on single detached dwellings and improvements, which is typical of Spruce Grove.

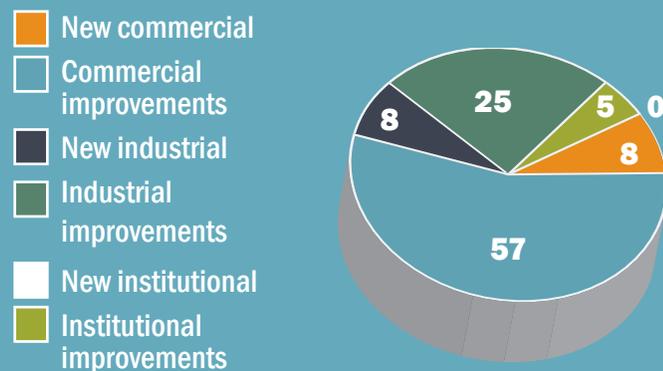
VOLUME OF RESIDENTIAL PERMITS BY TYPE



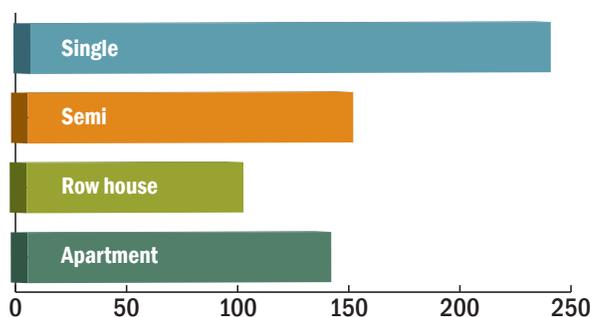
Non-residential

Non-residential development permits also remained strong in 2013. Commercial improvements make up the largest percentage, which is largely due to tenant improvements.

VOLUME OF NON-RESIDENTIAL PERMITS BY TYPE



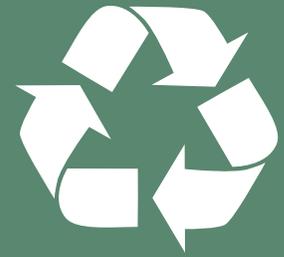
STARTS BY MARKET AND DWELLING TYPE



Housing starts – 2013

Housing starts in Spruce Grove from last year show a good balance of diversity in housing options in the community. Semi-detached homes, apartment units and townhomes are becoming increasingly popular in Spruce Grove, making up 9.5 per cent of the City’s housing inventory. Last year was a record-breaking year for townhouse development with 132 units constructed and the the total building permit value of multi-family housing was \$29 million, which is approximately 20 per cent of the City’s total residential building permit value for 2013.

Eco Centre recognized by recycling authority



Last year the City's Eco Centre was recognized with the 2013 Collection Site Award of Excellence by the Alberta Recycling Management Authority.

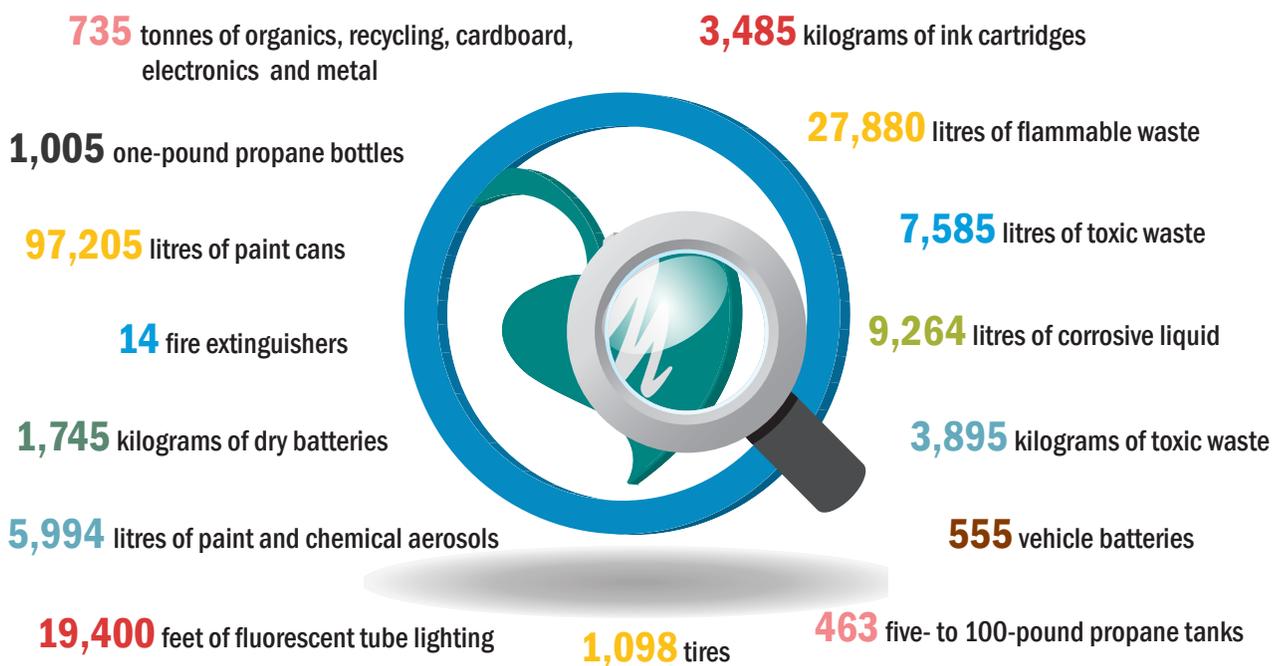
Facilities that receive the award are judged on a number of criteria, including site cleanliness, site security and design, on site processing and sorting, staff knowledge and community involvement. The City's award was for collection sites that serve communities with more than 25,000 people.

The Eco Centre, located at 50 Diamond Ave., accepts organics and blue bag recyclables as well as tires, electronics, paint, and other household hazardous waste.

The Eco Centre is open Monday, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Thursday from noon to 8 p.m. It is closed on Wednesdays, Sundays and statutory holidays.

Waste by numbers

Ever wonder how much waste is diverted through the Eco Centre on an annual basis? Check out some of the things that were diverted in 2013 and thanks for doing your part to keep these materials out of our landfills!



Trim that trash!

Online guide helps residents properly dispose of waste

Spruce Grove residents who are unsure of how to properly dispose of a waste item are now able to turn to the City's website for answers.

Last year in May the City launched Trim Your Trash – Spruce Grove's Ultimate Guide to What Goes Where, which is an online guide that allows residents to search for a specific waste item to find out how to properly dispose of it. The guide can be accessed online at www.sprucegrove.org/TrimYourTrash.

Depending on the waste item, the guide will tell residents if it can go in their blue bag, green organics cart or black garbage cart, or if it should be taken to the Eco Centre or Public Works facility.

Not only does this help ensure waste is placed in the proper collection stream, which reduces the risks and costs associated with contamination, it also helps reduce the amount of garbage that ends up in landfills.

The Trim Your Trash guide gives people the option to browse or search for an item. If residents can't find what they are looking for, there is also the ability to submit an item to be added to the guide.



Whatcha lookin' for?

By the end of last year, the Trim Your Trash guide was searched 2,069 times (from May to December), or an average of 258 searches per month!

The most popular items searched during that timeframe were:

- furniture
- sod
- paint
- scrap metal
- branches

Do your own search today to find out what goes where at www.sprucegrove.org/TrimYourTrash.

Let's play!

New playground equipment installed in our community

New equipment was installed at four Spruce Grove playgrounds last summer:

- The Marlboro Park playground was replaced with two new structures and swings.
- Swings were replaced at the Beechmont Park playground.
- The equipment at Heatherglen Park was completely replaced with a new structure designed for children ages two to 12.
- The play structure in the north playground pod at Lindsay Park playground was replaced with a rotating net climb, a two-person bouncer and a climbing structure for small children.



Refurbished playground equipment sent to Vietnam

Playground equipment that brought smiles to the faces of Spruce Grove children is now doing the same for kids in Vietnam.

The equipment from the playgrounds on McLeod Avenue and Westbend Park was replaced in 2012 through the City's lifecycle program.

Last year, the Castle Downs Recreation Society International group refurbished the equipment and sent it to Da Nang, Vietnam. Volunteers from the group also went to Vietnam in March 2013 to install the equipment for local children to enjoy.



Volunteers removed equipment from the playgrounds on McLeod Avenue and Westbend Park to refurbish and send to Vietnam.

Horizon Stage launches new website

Features updated design and other enhancements

To celebrate its 30th birthday last year, Horizon Stage gave itself a gift that will benefit not only the theatre, but area theatre enthusiasts as well – a new website.

The updated website, which launched in December 2013 and can be visited at www.horizonstage.com, includes several new features that make the site more attractive and user-friendly.

“The old site served us well for several years, but it was definitely time for an update,” said Brandi Wurtz, theatre manager. “When we started planning the new site, we wanted something that had a fresh look and feel, but was also very functional for our visitors.”

Features of the new website include:

- Updated navigation, making it easier for people to find what they are looking for
- A more modern, sleek design
- A designated “News” section on the homepage
- More prominent links to Horizon Stage’s social media accounts
- A new search box
- The ability to add videos to the website and link artist photos to their information

The new website is also mobile-friendly and, from an administrative point of view, is easier for staff to maintain and update.



“We are thrilled with the end result,” said Wurtz. “Now the website is a true reflection of the theatre and does a superb job of showcasing the many performers and other events that are happening at Horizon Stage.”

Remembering RCMP Cpl. Jim Galloway

Off leash area named after fallen officer and dog handler

Laughter, tears and memories were shared by family, friends, colleagues and even complete strangers who came together at a special event last fall to remember an RCMP officer who died in the line of duty in Spruce Grove.

The dedication and naming ceremony at the Cpl. Jim Galloway Memorial Off Leash Area was attended by many who came to honour Cpl. Galloway and his work as an RCMP dog handler.

Located at 51 Century Close, the off leash area is now home to a new sign and commemorative plaque that pay tribute to Cpl. Galloway, who died in the line of duty on Feb. 28, 2004, when he was fatally shot while working with the Edmonton RCMP Emergency Response Team during an armed stand-off in Spruce Grove.

Cpl. Galloway joined the RCMP in 1969 and always had a keen interest in dogs. In 1977 he was promoted to corporal and transferred to the “K” Division (Alberta) where he was posted as a dog handler for 26 years. His canine partners were Klia, Shep, Max, Danko and Cito.

He also managed the RCMP Civilian Search Dog Association program in Alberta and served as a member of the Edmonton RCMP Emergency Response Team and provided assistance as a designated dog handler.



Calls received by Spruce Grove Fire Services (SGFS) in 2013



Spruce Grove Fire Services received a total of 3,530 calls in 2013. Of those calls, 1,767 calls were within the city of Spruce Grove.



Spruce Grove Fire Services also has a mutual aid agreement with several other municipalities in Alberta. In 2013, they responded to 6 mutual aid requests.

City launches new program registration system



It's now easier than ever to sign up for one of the City's programs with the launch of a new online registration system.

The system, which went live in December 2013, allows residents to register for City-run programs as well as view City facility availability. It can be accessed at www.sprucegrove.org/onlinereg.

Highlights of the new system include:

- The ability to register for programs immediately after setting up an account.
- Households can have a family account with multiple logins, allowing different family members to register individually using their own passwords.
- A wish list feature. Before registration officially opens, log in, browse and save the program(s) that interest you. When registration opens, simply select your wish list programs and register!
- A Facebook widget. This allows you to let your friends on Facebook know that you have registered in a program and would like them to join you.

Here are some of the programs you can register for:

Programs for adults and seniors

- Pre-retirement planning
- Budget basics
- Creating healthy relationships
- Travel options for seniors

Programs for children and youth

- Babysitter training
- Bullyproofing
- Junior Gourmets
- Home Alone and First Aid

Programs for families

- Moving to the Music
- Toddler Time
- Positive discipline
- Mom's Morning Out



We mean business!



New bylaw streamlines business licence renewal process

Spruce Grove business licence holders are now able to enjoy a streamlined renewal process thanks to the City's new Business Licence bylaw.

When renewal notices are sent out near the end of the year, resident businesses now have the option to update their information online. Those who do so before the renewal deadline will not have to pay a renewal fee. Non-resident businesses are still required to pay the yearly renewal fee.

Resident business licence holders who renew their licence online are also now able to immediately print their certificate for the following year.

The new bylaw, which was approved last year, also has fewer categories and will continue to require all businesses to have a business licence, including home offices and direct sales representatives or companies.

Businesses still have the option to get a Tri-Municipal licence, which allows them to do business in Stony Plain or Parkland County as well as Spruce Grove. Temporary business licences are also available for individuals or companies who will conduct business for 72 hours or less, typically for a one-time event or short project.



2013 Financial Summary

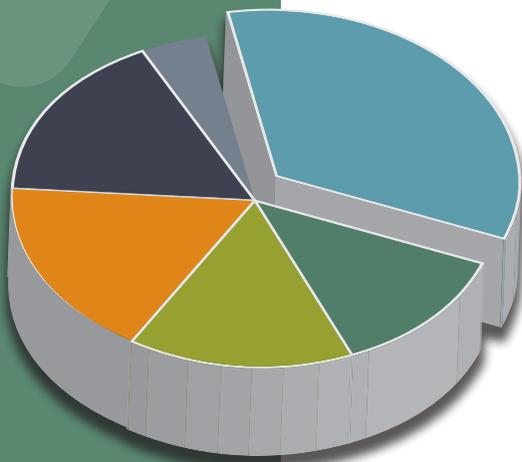
This financial summary is intended to assist with understanding the management of the City of Spruce Grove's resources. It provides an overview and highlights of the 2013 financial statements, including the operations of the municipality, the Spruce Grove Public Library and a share of the TransAlta Tri Leisure Centre.

A full version of the City's 2013 Consolidated Financial Statements is available on the City's website at www.sprucegrove.org.



How was the money spent?

The City of Spruce Grove collects municipal property taxes from all property owners within city limits. These tax dollars, along with grants and user fees, fund the City's projects and services. The 2013 financial statements include \$66.6 million in expenses, as outlined in the chart below.



2013 EXPENSES (\$ MILLIONS)

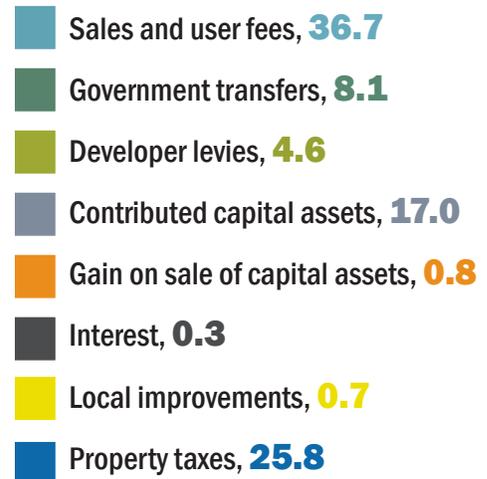
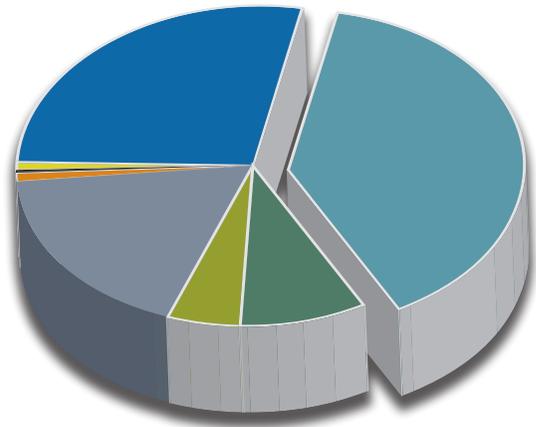
- Parks and roads, **22.7**
- Staff and administration, **8.4**
- Programs, events and recreation, **10**
- Emergency and enforcement services, **11.5**
- Utilities, **11.2**
- Facilities and equipment, **2.8**

City revenue sources

The City of Spruce Grove's revenue comes from a variety of sources:

- **Property taxes:** Paid by Spruce Grove residents and businesses to help cover the costs of the municipal services they use.
- **Sales and user fees:** Includes utility charges, fines, permits and facility rentals.
- **Government transfers:** Funds the City receives from the provincial and federal governments, as well as neighbouring municipalities.
- **Developers:** Includes contributed tangible capital assets and levies. Contributed tangible capital assets are items like roads and sewers that are put in by developers and then handed over to the City to own and manage. Levies are funds developers pay directly to the City.
- **Requisitions:** Collected on behalf of the Province of Alberta for education and on behalf of the Meridian Foundation for local seniors housing. The City does not set or control these levies and passes this revenue directly to both the Province and the Meridian Foundation. This amount is included in property tax revenue.

2013 REVENUE (\$ MILLIONS)



Financial summary

The annual consolidated financial statements provide important information about the financial position and activities of the City of Spruce Grove. Administration is responsible for the quality of the financial statements. The City's auditors have expressed their opinion that the financial statements are fairly stated.

The 2013 Consolidated Financial Statements are prepared in a prescribed format, using standard accounting terms and applying detailed accounting rules. The following summary is a condensed version of the City's financial statements.



Financial position

The financial position of the City improved for the fifth consecutive year. At the end of 2013, financial assets of \$18 million were available to finance future projects as set out in the approved corporate plan.

Surplus funds have accumulated over the history of the City to \$385 million. Virtually all surplus funds (\$367 million) have been used to build or buy roads, utilities, buildings and other capital assets used to deliver municipal services.

Financial position (\$ millions)	2013	2012
Financial assets	60	54
Financial liabilities	42	39
Net financial assets	18	15
Non-financial assets	367	343
Accumulated surplus	385	358

Financial activities (\$ millions)	Budget	2013	2012
Revenue	95	94	72
Expenses	71	67	59
Annual surplus	24	27	13
Capital assets	(36)	(34)	(13)
Amortization	10	10	9
Net financial assets			
Change	(2)	3	9
Opening	11	15	6
Closing	9	18	15

Financial activities

The City's financial activities include revenue, operating expenses and capital projects.

The result of 2013 operations is a surplus of \$27 million, of which \$24 million was used in the acquisition and amortization of capital assets. The final result saw \$18 million of net financial assets set aside for planned future capital projects.

The budget tries to predict actual results as accurately as possible and most of the operations and projects in 2013 were very close to budget.