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Pump track feature at the Whitecourt Mountain Bike Park is now open



After years of hard work, serious sweat equity and boundless determination, the volunteers of the Whitecourt Mountain Bike Park Association recently unveiled their sprawling four-phase bike park to the public, including an expansive pump track and features for all skill levels. Pictured is a senior rider showing off a big jump as a group watches in awe. See story page 6.



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Advancing obesity prevention and management in Alberta

| Press Release

Primary Care Alberta (PCA) and Obesity Canada have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to jointly pursue obesity prevention and management initiatives within Alberta's primary healthcare system.

"Recognizing obesity as a chronic disease means ensuring Albertans have access to respectful, evidence-informed care closer to home. This partnership will help strengthen prevention and management in primary care, support healthcare teams with the tools they need, and improve health outcomes for Albertans and their families."

Justin Wright, Minister of Primary and Preventative Health Services

The collaboration will support implementation of PCA's Chronic Disease Prevention and Management priorities and strengthen the capacity of Alberta's primary and community care teams to deliver integrated, team-based obesity prevention and care. Helping Albertans manage obesity can create opportunities to reduce impacts on other areas of the health

system.

"No single organization can address the growing impact of chronic disease alone. By bringing together provincial leadership and national expertise, this partnership reflects a shared commitment to improving obesity prevention and management and supporting better health for Albertans."

Kim Simmonds, CEO for Primary Care Alberta

Nearly one in three Canadians is living with obesity, a chronic disease associated with more than 200 downstream conditions. The economic cost of inaction in treating obesity in Canada reached \$27.6 billion in 2023, including healthcare costs and impacts on employment, productivity and income.

"People living with obesity have faced healthcare systems that do not consistently recognize or treat obesity like other chronic diseases. This collaboration is an opportunity to change that in Alberta by helping primary care teams put evidence into practice, build more connected pathways to care, and create experiences where people are

treated with dignity and without weight bias."

Lisa Schaffer, Executive Director for Obesity Canada

The MOU was signed in April 2026 and outlines six areas for potential collaboration:

- Provincial obesity prevention and management alignment
- Development and implementation of primary care pathways
- Workforce education and capacity building
- Clinical practice guidelines and knowledge translation resources and supports
- Healthy weight gain in pregnancy
- Stigma reduction and rights-based care approaches

Through the collaboration, Obesity Canada will bring expertise,

evidence-informed resources and education to support obesity prevention and management across Alberta's primary healthcare system, including support for integrating principles from the Canadian Adult Obesity Clinical Practice Guidelines into primary care.

The agreement marks an important step in strengthening collaboration on one of Alberta's most significant chronic health challenges, with a shared focus on improving health outcomes for Albertans through evidence-informed prevention and care. The agreement builds on the province's continued leadership in treating obesity. In March 2025, Alberta became the first Canadian province to recognize obesity as a chronic disease.

Over the coming months, PCA and Obesity Canada will work together to advance the priorities identified in the MOU through the Obesity Care Partnership Steering Committee, including development of provincial care pathways, workforce education initiatives, clinical guidance and approaches that support stigma-free, evidence-informed obesity prevention and management.

Work is already underway. PCA is developing a Chronic Disease Prevention and Management action plan, with obesity included as a focus area. The first meeting of the Obesity Care Partnership Steering Committee will take place on August 26, 2026.

Care is a lifelong commitment for Pri-

mary Care Alberta. We plan, fund and support primary healthcare across the province, improving access to care providers and offering front-line services through Health Link 811 and public health teams. Throughout the health journey, we are by your side – managing, preventing and reducing illness. Along with our partners, we nurture the connections our communities need to thrive and strengthen the health of all Albertans.

Obesity Canada is a national registered health charity and Canada's leading voice on obesity. We connect science, lived experience, and advocacy to change the way Canada sees, supports, and understands people affected by obesity. As steward of the Canadian Adult Obesity Clinical Practice Guidelines, we help translate evidence into education, resources, and better care. Our work drives progress in healthcare, policy, and public understanding — and is made possible by the support of donors, partners, and funders who share our vision for a healthier, more equitable future.



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by PETER MARINACCI

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A look at the local weather		Wed., Sep. 2	Thu., Sep. 3	Fri., Sep. 4	Sat., Sep. 5	Sun., Sep. 6
		Chance of shower	Mainly sunny	Cloudy	Mainly sunny	Sunny
P.O.P.		20%	20%	20%	30%	10%
High		19°C	15°C	17°C	17°C	17°C
Low		9°C	9°C	8°C	9°C	9°C
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24-Hr Rain / Snow		<1mm	<1mm	-	-	-

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Whitecourt asks residents to weigh in on winter maintenance changes



**By Haylee
Winger**

Whitecourt residents are being asked to weigh in on proposed changes to the Town's winter maintenance policy following an exceptional amount of snowfall.

Whitecourt Town Council has reviewed a draft Winter Maintenance Policy and is seeking public feedback before deciding whether to adopt the proposed changes.

According to the Town of Whitecourt, crews hauled 7,000 truckloads of snow during the 2025/2026 winter season, compared with 2,000 truck-

loads the year before.

"Last winter, Whitecourt received an exceptional amount of snow. Our crew hauled 7,000 truckloads of snow over the 2025/2026 season compared to 2,000 truckloads the year before," said Mayor Ray Hilts.

Hilts said the amount of snow was exceptional, but the experience also prompted the Town to look at whether its existing policies and procedures will continue to meet the community's changing needs.

Several changes are being proposed, including a new road-priority system. The number of priority levels would be reduced from five to four, with residential

streets moving to Priority 3.

The proposed policy would also provide clearer service levels and benchmarks for winter maintenance, including ice control and plowing/removal. Those details are outlined in the new Winter Maintenance Guidelines.

The Town is also planning to improve communication with residents. A new on-line reporting system will allow community members to report winter maintenance issues directly through the Town's website or app.

"Whitecourt Town Council had the opportunity to review current priorities and practices, and changes have been

proposed to our priority categories, communications with the public, and benchmarks for service," Hilts said. "We are now looking to community members for their constructive feedback on the proposed changes."

Residents can review the draft Winter Maintenance Policy and new Winter Maintenance Guidelines on the Town of Whitecourt website before submitting their comments through the online feedback form.

Residents have until 4 p.m. Friday, September 4, 2026, to submit their feedback on the proposed changes. Council will review the comments and information collected from the public in September.

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September 17, 2026
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Anselmo Hall,
565077 Range Road 102

BLUE RIDGE

September 16, 2026
5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Blue Ridge & District Community League,
304 2 Avenue, Blue Ridge

WHITECOURT

September 18, 2026
4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Woodlands County Municipal Building (Council Chambers), #1 Woodlands Lane, Whitecourt

These are come-and-go events, so residents are welcome to attend at any time during the advertised hours. Attend one open house and provide input on all three topics. Your feedback will help Council understand community priorities and make informed decisions for Woodlands County.



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Tim, big brother Steven and Kay, bonus mom and dad and bonus little sisters Amiela and Macey, all your nieces and nephews and the rest of your family and friends that miss you as much as we do.



Jaymee Feist photo

Young hockey players take to the ice during the Whitecourt Wolverines Hockey School, which got underway with U7 and U9 groups participating in on-ice sessions.

BECOME A MEMBER-AT-LARGE

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Community Services Committee is seeking two (2) members-at-large and 1 (one) youth (ages 16-24) member-at-large to help shape Family & Community Support Services, Recreation, Arts, and Culture Programs in Woodlands County.

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Mike Braun speaking at the grand opening.

Pump track feature at the Whitecourt Mountain Bike Park is now open

| By Serena Lapointe

Eleven years ago, when Tyson Nakucyj got involved with the Whitecourt Mountain Bike Park Association at fifteen years of age, he never could've imagined what his teenage dream from the early days of the park would transform into by 2026 and where it would lead him within the club's leadership group.

When construction on the park began in 2017, led by renowned bike park designer and builder Jay Hoots, Nakucyj said he was in awe. "As a seventeen-year-old kid, it was pretty late in my life to discover the passion for this, but I'm all for it now. My vision is to keep this going and to give the park to the kids, as something I never had. That's my goal," said Nakucyj.

After a brief break from the club, Nakucyj reconnected in 2023 with a different vision, taking on the role of Trail Coordinator. With a passionate group ready to push boundaries and reach for the stars, the team got to work and successfully secured significant funding in 2025. "I took a big jump into the boots-on-the-ground work and made sure everything was here. It wasn't just me, though. Mitch Warken, our Trail Boss, and Kyle Strebchuk, Dan Michaud, Martin Bauerschmidt and obviously the Braun Family, are all part of this club with

boots on the ground in this facility," said Nakucyj.

Years of dedication and passion for the sport have resulted in one of the area's newest gems, which has enthusiasts not just here or in the immediate area but far outside of it, even coming up from southern Alberta, biting at the bit to enjoy the fruits of the club's labour-intensive projects at the park.

"This is way more than I could have possibly ever hoped for. Every day, I'm just happy to ride my bike. We have progression jumps, anything from green, blue, black and double black. There are lots of jumps and opportunities for riders of all levels," said Nakucyj. There are wooden features, trails through the surrounding forest, and even an area for newbies, where they can practice at a comfortable, low-to-the-ground level with low impact. As they progress, they can then try out harder features, building on their own comfort level.

One of the most recent additions is a huge pump track, the park's fourth phase with Team Hoots. "It is a fully encapsulated asphalt track. It is one of the only ones like it in the area. From the youth and parents, they love our pump track. They think it's amazing, and they can't believe every time they come down here that this is here. They had

no idea it was here," smiled Nakucyj.

One of the neat things about the pump track is that it gives riders somewhere to go when the ground in the rest of the park is too saturated, protecting dirt features from being rutted. That means there's always something to do. "It's been a really good asset to our park. We had to keep the public out of this area as much as we could while we built it to preserve the skeleton of the track. It's built on a gravel base. Now, we can officially leave this place open in hopes that people ride this when the rest of the park is wet."

Other features at the Whitecourt Mountain Bike Park include the North Star Area in the back behind the pump track, which tests riders on many of the skills they've learned at the park. "You can take all those features, crumple them in a ball and try them all at once, doing bridges, teeter totters and tight corners," added Nakucyj.

On Saturday, August 22, the park had its official grand opening, un-

veiling the pump track and the rest of the park in all its glory. The area was packed with riders of all ages, with a free BBQ, competitions and what must've been an overarching sense of accomplishment for the crew that pulled it all together.

For Nakucyj, now president of the Whitecourt Mountain Bike Park Association, the dream is real. "The park was the fullest I've ever seen it. Lots of laughs and smiles, and the weather cooperated. It was a great day," he said, giving kudos to the small group who pulled the celebration together. "Everything worked out great. I don't think there was one piece that didn't work out!"

The road and parking lot, which were both jam-packed on Saturday, are two big parts of the park's success and took a lot of time to see through to fruition. "They are huge, huge milestones in our club's progression. We successfully leased the land and built a road on it with the Town of Whitecourt's contribu-

tion," explained Nakucyj.

Whitecourt Mayor Ray Hiltz was joined by MLA, Minister of Infrastructure Martin Long, and Mike Braun, one of the club's key spokespeople, and leading members, to officially open the park. "I think there's been times when we wondered, 'Why the heck are we doing this,'" laughed Braun in his speech. "But the last two years were incredible with the amount of development in the area, and we need to give a shout-out to Jay Hoots and his team."

Braun also highlighted the volunteers and the impact of countless hours donated to the cause. "This isn't just for us in Whitecourt. This is for our friends in Woodlands County, for the region and the greater region. We have riders coming from Red Deer, and all over the place. This is about community, volunteers and a lot of work. Digging trails by hand, just sweat equity."

He thanked ANC, Millar Western, Canfor and West Fraser

for sponsoring the park through the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta, which they accessed grant dollars from. They also received dollars from the Community Facility Enhancement Program, which all told enabled them to complete the four phases in the park plan from 2016. "So, here we are. It's done. But I have to say, I think we're not done," smiled Braun. "This is just a foundation for what's going to come next."

Nakucyj hopes the community checks out the facility and enjoys it. "What our park has to offer is something like no one else has for sure," he said, with a sense of pride. "I can promise you that it is much better than you think it is." Follow the Whitecourt Mountain Bike Park Association on Facebook and Instagram to stay up to date. The park is located on Riverside Road, on the right-hand side, just before the main entrance to Brooke's Creek Campground. Signs are posted.



A rider enjoying the new pump track.

Volunteers and sponsorships continue to make Eastlink Park viable

| By Serena Lapointe

This year, Eastlink Park is entering its eleventh year of operations in the community, having opened its doors for the first time on December 5, 2015. Running as a non-profit, the hill is operated by the Whitecourt Woodlands Winter Recreation Park Society. Part of how it operates is through sponsorships and contracts, including one with Woodlands County.

On August 13, staff and board members presented their request for a new three-year contract with the municipality, sharing some of their data from the last few years. Diana Livingston, board member and bookkeeper, led the presentation.

In the past six seasons that the park has been open, Eastlink Park has welcomed an average of 15,000 annual skier visits, with roughly 800 of those yearly visits being from students who attend with their schools. "Eastlink Park utilizes a lot of volunteers on school days. Volunteers inside help get the kids geared up, others are outside directing kids to the right place, and more are providing lessons so that no one feels alone or overwhelmed on our hill. Last year we netted 326 volunteer hours for school groups," explained Livingston.

"We see users coming from surrounding areas such as Swan Hills, Fox Creek, Edson, Hinton, Stony Plain, Spruce Grove, and even Edmonton. Visitors from the city have told us they love the pace of our hill. They don't have to wait in a long line for the lift, and they can ski more runs at our hill in a day than they can in the city." She added that last season, almost 50 percent of season pass holders were residents of Woodlands County and approximately 25 percent of daily users were also County residents.

On a personal note, Livingston said that a school visit attended by her daughter is what

got the pair involved with the hill. "I came to ski at the hill with my school," explained her daughter, Jill. "I had so much fun that I kept coming back to ski, and I really improved my skills. As soon as I was old enough, I started working as a Liftie and later in Guest Services and Admin. I worked at the hill all my high school years and am currently working on my Ski Patrol certification. All this because of a ski visit with school."

Livingston said that, just like her daughter, many students have enjoyed employment at the hill. "The majority of our staff at Eastlink Park are part-time youth. We hire around 40 students each season. All from Whitecourt or Woodlands County. Many staff came first as school group visitors, like my daughter, then returning with family or friends, then looking for a job when they turned 15," she explained. Adding that many staff choose to return to the hill as instructors, helping the next generation.

On top of the troop of part-time staff, Livingston explained that the board members also volunteer their time for events throughout the season. "We utilize volunteers as often as possible to help keep costs down. Board members were parking attendants on New Year's Eve and serving hot dogs at the Slush Cup." The Slush Cup is an end-of-season event where participants race down the hill and attempt to make it across an open pool of water to the landing spot on the other side. Volunteers in the water help get stragglers back to the side where they quickly wrap up in a towel as the crowd cheers.

Livingston said the goal of the park is to remain affordable. "Our goal is to keep prices affordable for families, and in recent years the cost of living has increased significantly. Our operating costs have also increased. We strive to collect a reasonable rate from

users to remain affordable and rely on sponsors for the rest. The six-year average annual operating revenue is \$200,000, and expenses are \$400,000. We rely on sponsors and donations to fill the gap." She said that occasionally, a business covers the cost of the lifts and rentals for everyone so that Eastlink Park can offer a free night of fun. "For some families, this is the only time they can enjoy the park," said Livingston.

The highest cost output for the park is wages, coming in at \$180,000. The next biggest annual cost is utilities, at \$50,000, and then insurance, costing just under \$30,000 yearly. They also spend roughly \$10,000 per year on Snowmax, an additive added to the water going through the snow guns, which produces a lighter snow that lasts longer than natural snow, allowing the park to open earlier in the fall and stay open longer into the spring.

Livingston explained that they also invest in the hill each year by keeping their equipment current and safe, which adds to their costs. Some bigger purchases include \$5,000 in new tubes, \$25,000 in new skis in 2024/2025, and \$10,000 in new helmets last year. She said that helmets need to be replaced every five years and that skis need to pass a Torq test every year to stay within the rental fleet.

"In the past few years we've bought two previously owned quads, with tracks, and one new quad. We were also able to purchase additional used snow guns," said Livingston. They expect to replace some bigger pieces of equipment soon too, including their snowcat, which is from the 90s.

She mentioned that they had the engine replaced already and that they replaced the computer, which was not as easy as it sounds. "You can't get a new one. It has to be a still-functioning replacement reclaimed from a snow-

cat from that era. There aren't many computers from the mid-90s out there still operational," said Livingston.

To replace a snowcat, the Whitecourt Woodlands Winter Recreation Park Society is facing a bill of \$500,000 for a new one or upwards of \$280,000 for a used model from 2019. Livingston said the group is constantly looking at grant opportunities and additional funding to help them accumulate capital funds to replace aging equipment, including the possibility of doing a casino event. Following the presentation, Livingston said the society was requesting a three-year sponsorship funding contract from Woodlands County for \$35,000 for 2026, and \$40,000 each in 2027 and 2028.

Councillor Alan Deane thanked the group for all they do. "It truly is a cool place to go for families and young people," he said. Councillor McNeil joined her colleague in giving kudos. "My granddaughter worked there the last few years, so I love the program," she said, smiling.

She then asked if the board had ever looked into KidSport or Jumpstart, two programs that can help make accessing sports, like the ski hill, more financially possible. Councillor McNeil wondered if it could help snag annual passes for some local residents. Livingston said it was a great idea and mentioned that they would look into it.

Reeve Dave Kusch said his family use the hill often and agreed it was a fantastic hill. "I do support, for myself anyways, reviewing a contract with you guys and trying to do what we can to keep this hill here and running as long as we can." Woodlands County Council will discuss the ask during its budget deliberations early this fall.



Photos by Eastlink Park

During a recent Woodlands County Council meeting, staff and board members from the Whitecourt Woodlands Winter Recreation Park Society presented on the park, including user rates for county residents, recent equipment replacements and some big purchases on the horizon as they requested a new three-year contract from the municipality.



Mrs. Petch tests out a new sensory resource as Pat Hardy School prepares to welcome students back for another school year. Petch will support students in her role as Inclusive Education and PUF Facilitator.

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Dollar Values as of September 2, 2026

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2026 – 4:00 PM

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSION: Monday, September 14, 2026 – 3:30 PM, Forest Interpretive Centre, 3002 – 33 Street, Whitecourt, AB

Pursuant to the provisions of the Municipal Government Act, the Town of Whitecourt has received an application to amend:

- Land Use Bylaw 1577

Land Use Bylaw 1577-7

Proposes to add Government Service as a discretionary use in the C-2 Service Commercial land use district.

“GOVERNMENT SERVICE” means development providing Crown Corporation, municipal, provincial or federal government services directly to the public. Typical uses include but are not limited to municipal offices, taxation offices, courthouses, postal stations, staffing and employment offices, school board offices, First Nation services, health authority offices, and social service offices, which result in significant client visitation. It does not include essential public services, correctional centres and schools.



Public Information Session – 3:30 pm Monday, September 14, 2026, in the Forest Interpretive Centre. This is an in-person session only. It provides an opportunity to learn more about the proposed changes and ask questions in an interactive setting.

Public Hearing – 4:00 p.m. Monday, September 14, 2026, in the Town Council Chambers. This is a formal opportunity to make presentations for or against the proposed application. All comments are directly to Council, and form part of the public record. The Public Hearing will be available both in person and electronically. **All presentations are limited to five minutes each and must include the presenter's name and address.**

Written Submissions:

Individuals or organizations wishing to make a submission for the Public Hearing are encouraged to provide their comments in writing **prior to noon on Thursday, September 10, 2026. Written submissions must include the name and address of the submitter.** They can be emailed to stephanieschaffner@whitecourt.ca, dropped off at the Town Office 5004 – 52 Avenue, or mailed to Box 509, Whitecourt, AB, T7S 1N6 with attention to Stephanie Schaffner. **Please note the following:**

- Written submissions to include name and address.
- If mailing a written submission, please ensure that it is mailed sufficiently in advance to allow enough time for it to be received prior to the above noted deadline.
- If emailing a written submission, please note that any attachments greater than 5MB or sent as a .zip file will NOT be accepted by the Town of Whitecourt email server.

Electronic Presentations:

Individuals or organizations who wish to make a presentation by electronic means must **pre-register with the Legislative Manager by emailing a request to administration@whitecourt.ca prior to noon on Thursday, September 10, 2026**

All written comments and pre-registration emails must clearly state your full name, municipal address, daytime phone number, and your support or opposition to the proposed amendments. It is also recommended to confirm receipt of all written submissions or email pre-registration requests.

A copy of all related documents can be viewed in person at the Town Office 5004 - 52 Avenue, Planning Desk, during regular business hours prior to the Public Hearing. The proposed amendments can be found on the Town of Whitecourt website at www.whitecourt.ca or viewed using the following QR code:



The Public Hearing will be livestreamed via the Town of Whitecourt YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/@WhitecourtTown>

Questions on the process or the Public Hearing should be directed to Stephanie Schaffner, Planner, at 780-778-2273, e-mailed to stephanieschaffner@whitecourt.ca, or mailed to Box 509, Whitecourt, AB, T7S 1N6.

The Press

A locally owned and family operated newspaper serving Whitecourt

PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY

Contact

Valerie Winger at 780-706-1858
Email: wctpress@telus.net



Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association

The Press is printed on high quality newsprint using vegetable based ink. We encourage you to share, save, reuse, rehash & recycle.

Letter to the Editor policy

The Press welcomes readers to write letters to the Editor. A maximum of 300 words is preferred but not necessary. Letters must carry a first name or two initials with surname and include an address and daytime telephone number. All letters are subject to editing. Please email letters to wctpress@gmail.com.



Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association



A group of Spruce View Lodge residents enjoyed an outing last week, touring St. Mary Meade Farm & Wool Mill and the Rochfort Bridge Pioneer Museum before stopping for lunch at the Trading Post.



Spruce View Lodge photos



COMMUNITY WELLNESS CORNER

If your life is in danger,
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988

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HOPE FOR WELLNESS

Indigenous crisis support



PUTTING A FACE ON SUICIDE

Samuel Bryce Southern

Age 16

Every 40 seconds, somewhere in the world, someone dies by suicide. Behind every number is a name, a family, a community that felt the loss. This week we remember one of our own.

THIS WEEK'S TIPS

TIP #1

POSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS TIP

Notice effort,
not just results.

COMMUNITY WISDOM SERIES

TIP #2

CONFLICT RESOLUTION TIP

Don't bring up old
arguments that have
already been settled.

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Canada strikes back: Implications of the proposed counter-tariffs

| By Siddhartha Bhattacharya and Mark Parsons, ATB Economics

Canada strikes back: Implications of the proposed counter-tariffs

Key points

- The federal government announced last week that it is implementing "dollar-for-dollar" Canadian counter-tariffs in response to U.S. Section 338 tariffs to take effect starting September 8.
- The counter-tariffs will put upward pressure on inflation, but this will be partially mitigated by efforts to switch to Canadian and overseas suppliers.
- The impact of U.S. tariffs and counter-tariffs will be felt unevenly across sectors and businesses. Trade uncertainty has a larger effect than tariffs themselves, and the main risk comes from an escalation in the trade war.

The federal government is imposing "dollar-for-dollar" counter-tariffs ranging from 15% to 50% on a list of over 700 specific U.S. goods starting on September 8. This is being done in response to the new set of U.S. tariffs on Canadian goods that went into effect on August 22.

It's estimated that \$27.6 billion worth of Canadian goods are subject to the new U.S. tariffs, so Ottawa is imposing counter-tariffs on \$27.6 billion worth of U.S. goods.

Canada imported \$362 billion worth of products from the U.S. last year, so that \$27.6 billion works out to 7.6% of Canada's total imports from the U.S.

In response to the U.S. tariffs, the federal government has announced a new \$7.5 billion support package for Canadian workers and businesses. The package includes liquidity support for businesses; greater access to the Business Development Bank of Canada's tariff-related programs; \$2 billion for the Canada Strong Diversification Fund; \$3.5 billion for Employment Insurance and training.

By raising import costs, the counter-tariffs will have a dampening effect on economic activity, partly mitigated by new business supports and a shift (where possible) to non-U.S. suppliers. Overall, we expect that the new U.S. Section 338 tariffs, when combined with Canadian counter-tariffs and support programs, will result in roughly a half a percentage point reduction in Canadian GDP growth, with the largest impact in 2027.

An important distinction needs to be made when describing the impacts. While the macroeconomic effects of the tariffs are estimated to be moderate, the microeconomic effects on impacted businesses and consumers will be significant.

For example, the new 50% U.S. tariff on Canadian honey could be

catastrophic to Canadian honey producers who rely heavily on U.S. sales. Similarly, the 50% Canadian tariff on U.S. drill pipe could cost Canadian companies that import it a lot of extra money if they cannot find a non-U.S. supplier.

Inflationary impact

The Canadian counter-tariffs on things like U.S. food products, clothing, and household appliances will put upward pressure on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Part of the impact will be mitigated by the ability of Canadians to substitute similar products from non-U.S. sources, though these prices might also increase due to the rise in demand.

A Bank of Canada study of the counter-tariffs imposed in 2025 found that the prices of the affected products increased by 6%, or roughly one-quarter of the 25% counter-tariff rate. If a similar impact is observed, we estimate the impact on Canadian inflation will be roughly 0.2-0.3 percentage points.

We anticipate the Bank of Canada will look past a short-term inflation bump from counter-tariffs and not raise its policy rate. As such, in the absence of further escalation, we retain our view that the Bank of Canada will stay on hold through 2026.

What U.S. products are being tariffed by Canada?

The federal govern-

ment says that it selected the products to tariff based on what the U.S. had previously tariffed (known as Section 232 tariffs—steel, aluminum, copper, autos, etc.) and the new tariffs it imposed over the weekend (known as Section 338 tariffs). Minister of Industry Melanie Joly told reporters that the products were also selected to generate political pressure within specific states.

The list of products with new and increased tariff rates is long at 893 and includes everything from frozen salmon and coils of steel to plywood and dishwashers.

The counter-tariffs fall under three tiers:

1. 50% - Driven primarily by U.S. primary steel and aluminum, which were bumped from 25% to 50% to match U.S. rates. Also covers consumer electronics, furniture, and apparel.
2. 25% - Bulk commodity groups including dairy and cheese, agricultural machinery, major home appliances, wood/paper products, and steel/aluminum derivatives.
3. 15% - Secondary commercial items, including electric equipment, power tools, and commercial lighting.

Our estimates of the value of the new counter-tariffs, organized by major product category and tariff rate, are shown in the chart below.

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WOODLANDS COUNTY

BYLAW SURVEY

Share your feedback on the proposed Community Standards Bylaw and the proposed Special Events Bylaw.

Deadline: September 24

Scan the QR code,

or visit: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SJPKND8>



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
THE PROPOSED BYLAWS

Scan the QR code or visit:
woodlands.ab.ca/p/bylaw-public-engagement



WOODLANDS.AB.CA 780-778-8400

BLUE RIDGE AREA STRUCTURE PLAN OPEN HOUSE

Tuesday, September 15, Woodlands County is hosting a third Open House for the Blue Ridge Area Structure Plan (ASP).

Attend to learn more and share your thoughts on the future of the community!

Tuesday, Sept 15, 2026

5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Blue Ridge Community Hall & Community League, 304 2 Ave, Blue Ridge, AB

- Key highlights will include future land use concept, new neighbourhood plans
- Development phasing
- Policy

This will be a drop-in session, and all Blue Ridge residents are encouraged to attend.

Learn more about the Blue Ridge Area Structure Plan Project:
woodlands.ab.ca/p/blue-ridge-area-structure-plan

Contact the Planning Department by calling 780-778-8400 or emailing planning@woodlands.ab.ca



ROADWAY PROJECT UPDATES

For the latest information, scan the QR code or visit:
woodlands.ab.ca/p/roadway-projects



RECREATION GRANT APPLICATION 2026

Applications for Recreation Programming Grants are being accepted until Friday, September 11, 2026.

Organizations that apply must be non-profit and demonstrate other fundraising efforts and funding sources. Priority will be given to programs that serve children and youth.

Applications, full policy, and all other supporting documents can be:

- Downloaded from our website: woodlands.ab.ca
- Or, picked up at either of the Whitecourt or Fort Assiniboine offices

3 ways to submit your completed applications!

- Drop off in-person at either the Whitecourt or Fort Assiniboine offices
- Mailed to: Woodlands County, Attn: Community Services, Box 60, #1 Woodlands Lane, Whitecourt, AB T7S 1N3
- Emailed to: communityservices@woodlands.ab.ca

For more information, contact Woodlands County Community Services at 780-778-8400, or communityservices@woodlands.ab.ca

LABOUR DAY OFFICE CLOSURES & SERVICE INTERRUPTIONS:

Monday, September 7, both municipal offices will be closed. They'll reopen Tuesday, September 8, for regular hours.

Fort Assiniboine garbage collection will be deferred to Tuesday, September 8.

FREE FAMILY FUN

FREE!

BLUE RIDGE FAMILY FUN DAY

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2026 12PM - 4PM

- Bouncy castles & obstacles
- Canoes
- Indigenous storytelling
- Horse-drawn carriage Rides
- Environmental Learning
- Roving Performers
- Face Paint
- ... and MORE!

FREE HOT DOGS

Blue Ridge Recreation Area

5km north of Blue Ridge, east off of Highway 658

WOODLANDS COUNTY

UPCOMING COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- Regular Council Meeting – September 10 at 9:30 a.m.
- Agriculture Service Board Meeting – September 15 at 10:00 a.m. at the County Regional Municipal Office in Fort Assiniboine.
- Airport Advisory Committee Meeting – September 16
- Economic Development Committee Meeting – September 22 at 1:00 p.m.
- Regular Council Meeting – September 24 at 9:30 a.m.
- Community Services Committee Meeting – September 24 at 5:30 p.m.

JOIN US! All Council and Committee Meetings are open to the public. All meetings are held at the Woodlands County Administration Building at #1 Woodlands Lane, Whitecourt, unless otherwise posted.

Access meeting schedules, agenda packages, minutes, and more by scanning the QR Code or going to our CivicWeb Portal: woodlands.civicweb.net/Portal/



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