Sylvan Lake's Weekend Warriors

September 28, 2026

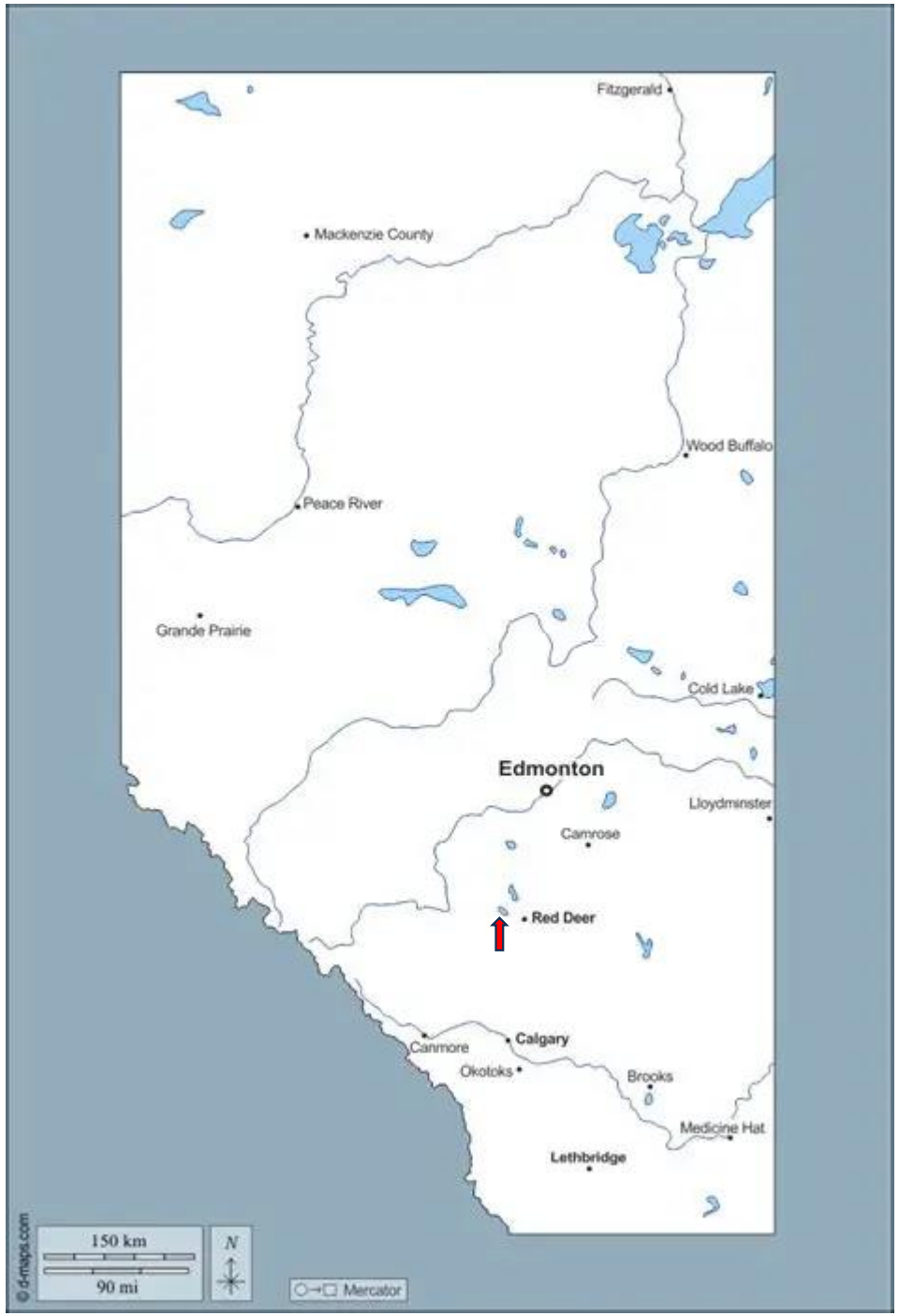
Presented by: Ron Lebsack – Town of Sylvan Lake

Where Parking & Mobility Intersect MONTRÉAL 2026 CPA ACS

Presentation Outline

1. Where It All Started
2. And Then The Crowds …
3. Early Transitions
4. Sylvan Lake Provincial Park
5. Provincial Lands AND Town Lands
6. Improvements + COVID = Explosion
7. ReDevelopment
8. Impacts of Tourism
9. Special Events
10. Changes To Operations
11. Creative Communications
12. Enhanced Enforcement & Safety
13. Approved Departmental Miscellaneous Lease
14. How Do We Fund This???





Proximity to Alberta's 3 Largest Cities

Edmonton – 1.2 million
165km or 1hr 50 min

Calgary – 1.6 million
140km or 1hr 36 min

Red Deer – 115,000
24km or 26 min

Sylvan Lake – 18,236

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Where it all started



Boat House and Pier

Original Pier





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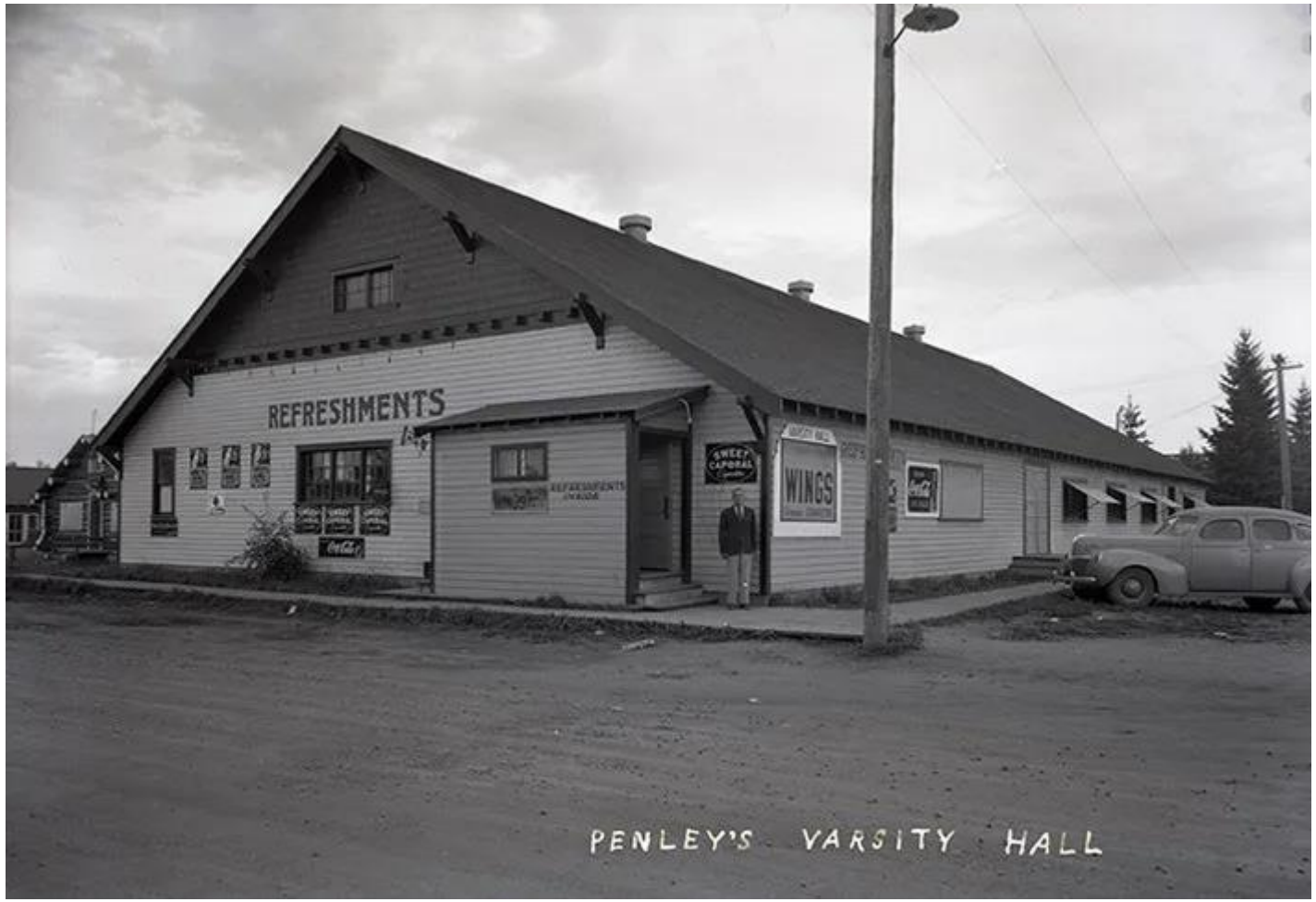
And then the Crowds…



Mid 1920's to 1979 were the days of the Dance Halls

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Early Transition

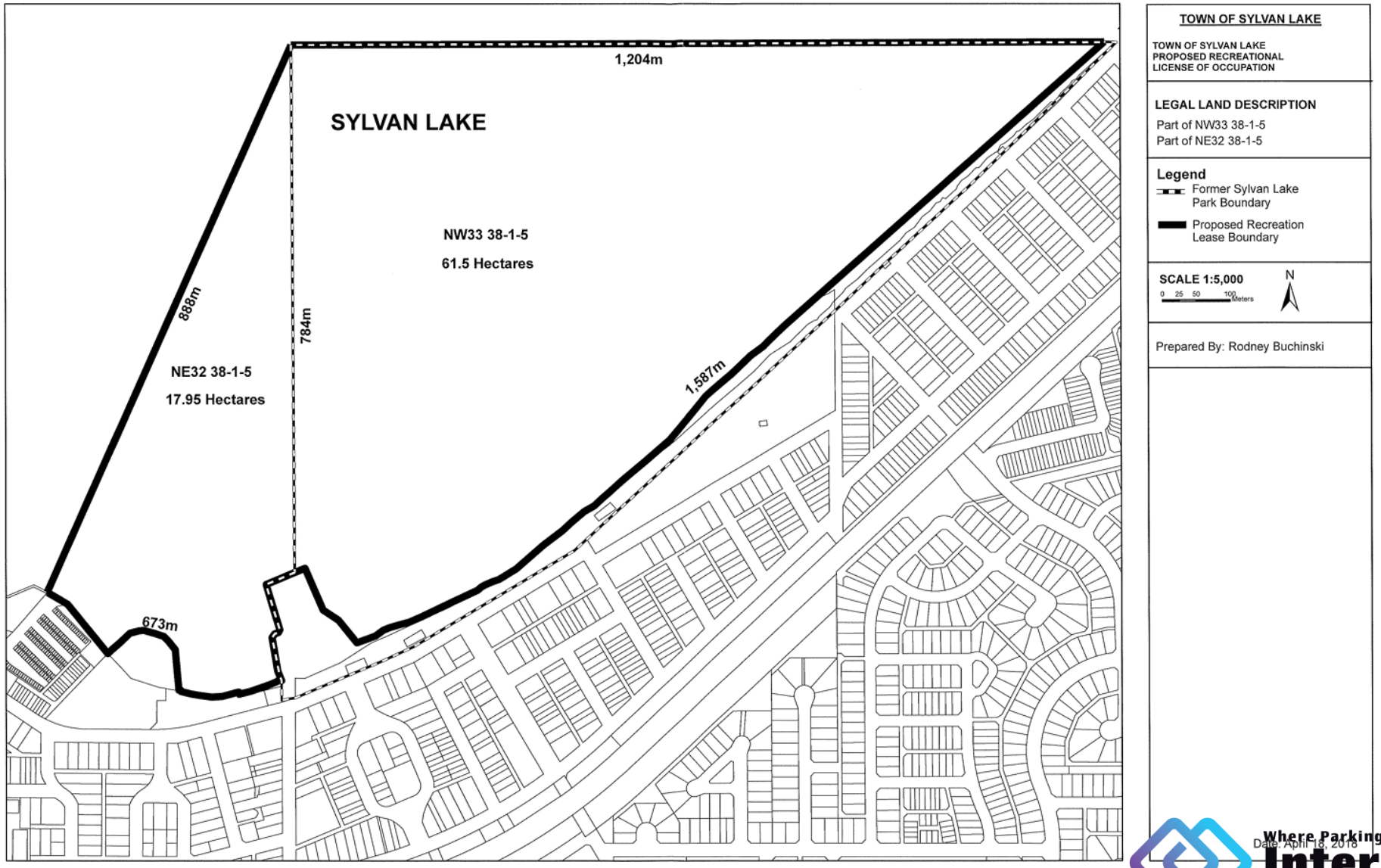








Sylvan Lake Provincial Park



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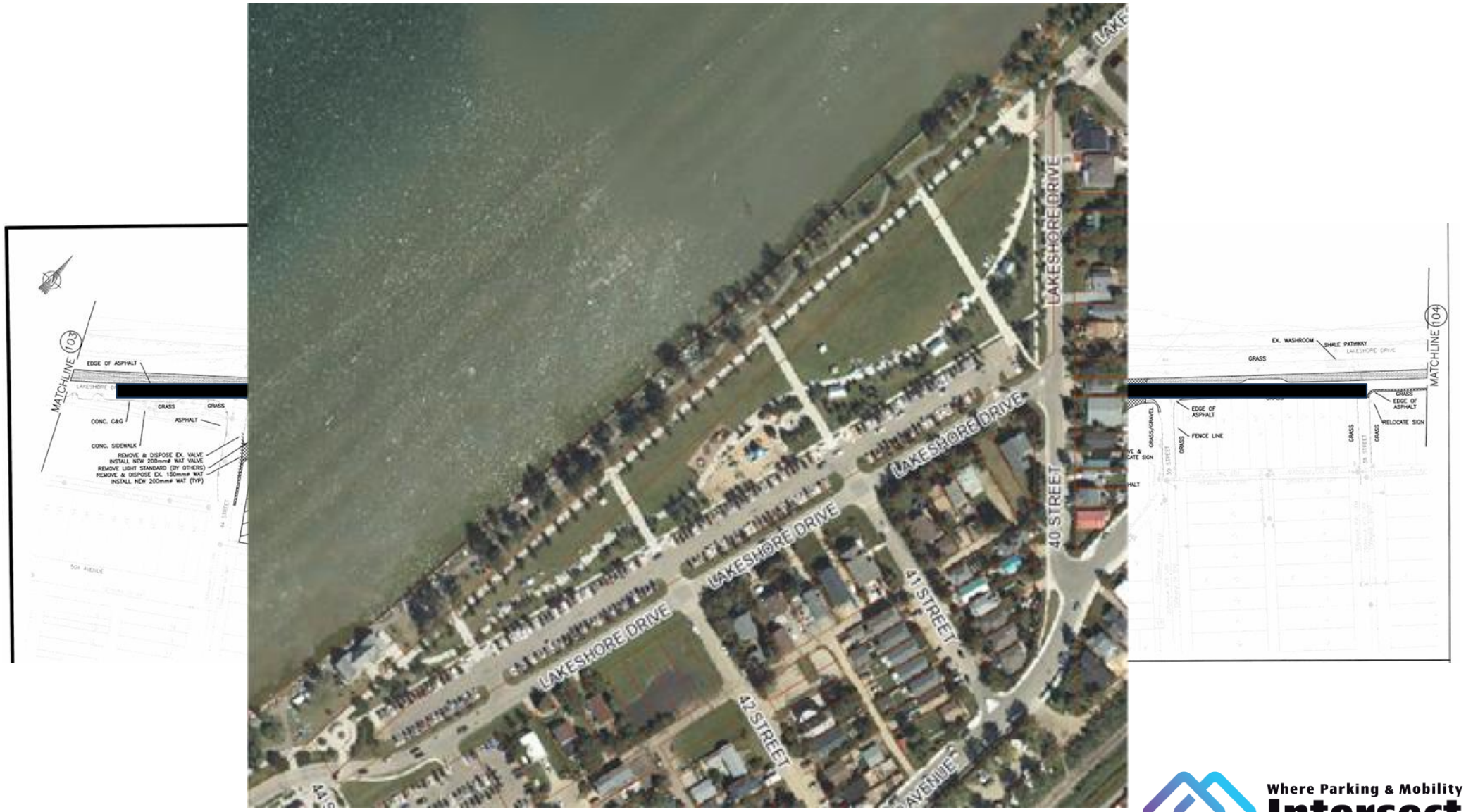
Town Lands & Provincial Lands



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Improvements + Covid = Explosion



1965



1984

2023



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CTV NEWS

Edmonton | News

Town of Sylvan Lake responds to crowded beach concerns

By Kelsey Dyer

Published: July 13, 2020 at 3:07PM EDT

Global NEWS

HEALTH

Alberta lake communities clamp down on beach crowds amid COVID-19

By Demi Knight • Global News

Posted July 17, 2020 12:43 pm · Updated July 17, 2020 11:15 pm · 3 min read

Edmonton

Sylvan Lake to clamp down on beach crowds with increased enforcement

'Visitors must be more vigilant,' town officials say

CBC News · Posted: Jul 17, 2020 10:45 AM MDT | Last Updated: July 17, 2020

CBC

Edmonton

Sylvan Lake asks province for help with COVID-19 crowd control, urges rule-breakers to stay away

'Controlling social behaviour is tremendously difficult' says town CAO

Wallis Snowdon · CBC News · Posted: Jul 13, 2020 2:57 PM MDT | Last Updated: July 15, 2020

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Impact of the Tourism

Can have up to 50,000 people in the downtown on a busy summer weekend



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Special Events











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How do we fund this?

Study from 2016 showed that the average tourist spend per visit was less than $100 per trip

In 2017 we implemented the Visitor Pay Parking Program







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Information Used to Create the Visitor Pay Parking Program

- Preliminary results of **Chamber of Commerce Business Visitation in the Waterfront Commercial District** (Oct. 13, 2015 Council Report)
- Economic Development presentation to Administration on **Roger Brooks' Parking Is Not Just For Lovers**
- Economic Development presentation to Council on **Roger Brooks' 20 Ingredients to an Outstanding Downtown** (Nov. 3, 2015)
- **Wayfinding Signage Project** as part of the Visitor Friendly Program Project Work Plan (adopted by Council Jan 11, 2016)
- **Transportation Master Plan** and the sections on paid parking (adopted by Council Jan. 25, 2016)
- **Waterfront Commercial District Business Visitation Report** (adopted by Council Feb. 8, 2016)

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Although the Lakeshore Dr and Centennial Park lots were over-capacity, the parking occupancy level for all public parking facilities in the downtown on the busy July 4, 2015 weekend was less than 50%.

Given the close proximity of our downtown residential and the cabin district to the lakefront, it was confirmed that visitors to the lake were parking in the residential area and not the 1-2 blocks distance to the parking lots.



When we started talking about paid parking with our residents the two main concerns were:

1. Residents should not have to pay
2. Visitors should not be taking all the street parking in the residential districts

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Initial Start Up

The **Visitor Pay Parking Program** was introduced in the Town of Sylvan Lake to improve parking availability within the downtown commercial district, and generate revenue to help with the downtown enforcement, along with the downtown and lakefront parks upkeep and maintenance.

Residents are able to park for FREE in the lakefront parking lots, the downtown commercial on-street locations and all residential streets, while Visitors are now required to pay for parking within Sylvan Lake's waterfront district.

Initial projection was a 5-year payback on the initial investment of equipment, service contract, program implementation and staffing.

- Actual payback ended up being 2.5 years

Visitor Pay Parking Program

A Visitor Pay Parking Program was developed where all downtown parking was included in the Visitor Pay Parking Program in three distinct categories:

- Parking Lots (all day)
- On-Street Parking (2 Hour Max)
- Residential Streets (Residents only)
  - Residents provided 4 parking permits per household and that allowed residents to park anywhere for free
  - Seasonal Pass for Summer Village or County residents

The Visitor Pay Parking Program ran seasonally from May 15th to September 15th each year

All accessible parking spaces are No Charge



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Visitor Pay Parking Program over the Years

Town Council reviews the Visitor Pay Parking Program each fall and makes changes to the Program as they see necessary.

- Rates over time:

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
On Street	$2/hr	$2/hr	$2/hr	$2/hr	$2/hr	$3/hr	$3/hr	$3/hr	$3/hr	$2/hr
Lots	$10/day	$10/day	$10/day	$10/day	$10/day	$15/day	$20/day	$25/day	$30/day	$40/day
Season Pass	$126.50	$126.50	$126.50	$126.50	$126.50	$126.50	$126.50	$126.50	$126.50	$250.00

2025 the Program expanded to included 50th Ave as the visitor parking continued to expand further into the community

Gross Revenue from $237,500 in first year to $1.4M in 2026.

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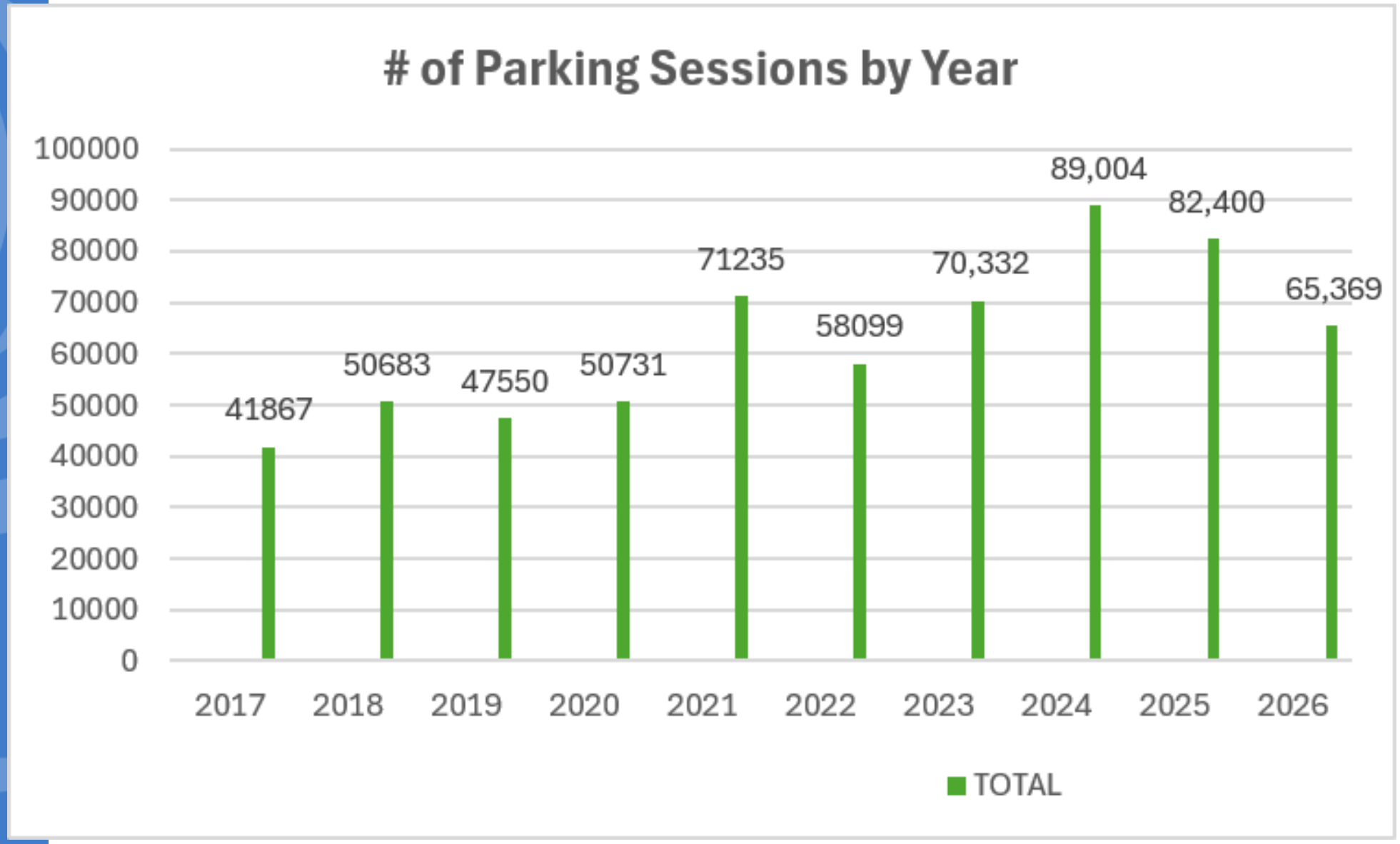

Parking Sessions for 854 parking spaces

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Visitor Pay Parking Program

pays for operational and maintenance expenses along the lakefront;

pays for enhanced enforcement in the downtown during the summer;

and maintains a dedicated reserve balance of $250,000.



What the Visitor Pay Parking Program pays for

Staffing

Pay Parking Administrator
1 FTE Community Peace Officer
4 FTE Bylaw Officers
8 Seasonal Bylaw Officers
0.5 FTE Parks Administration
1 FTE Parks Operator
16 Seasonal Parks Operators

Operational Projects

Lakefront Litter & Engagement Strategy
Lakefront Garbage Collection Strategy



Equipment & Parks Upgrades

UTV's for Bylaw (2) and Parks (4)
Parks Furnishings – benches, garbage receptacles, picnic tables, signage
Tree Replacement and Planting Program
Woodchipper
Beach Groomer and Tractor
Lakefront Washroom Upgrades and Repairs

THANK YOU

