



Public Invited to Grand Opening of New Ponoka Civic Building on May 24

(May 10, 2019 – Ponoka, Alberta) – The public is invited to the grand opening of the new Ponoka Civic Building on Friday, May 24. The event will begin with a formal grand opening ceremony at 2:30 p.m. followed by a free community BBQ, facility tours and information displays.

The Ponoka Civic Building is home to the new Ponoka Jubilee Library which shares space on the main floor with the new Ponoka Learning Centre operated by Campus Alberta Central (CAC) in partnership with the Ponoka & Rimbey Adult Learning Society. CAC is a joint venture between Red Deer College (RDC) and Olds College, which offers access to post-secondary education programs and courses to youth and adult learners in more than 20 central Alberta communities, including Ponoka at the new Learning Centre.

The upper two floors of the Ponoka Civic Building house the Town of Ponoka Council Chambers and Administrative Offices. There is additional lease space on the third floor for the building owner to lease to other tenants. The Town leases about 28,000 square feet of space in the Ponoka Civic Building, including the space occupied by the Library. The Town subleases about 5,000 square feet of space on the main floor to CAC for the Ponoka Learning Centre.

“Campus Alberta Central is pleased to partner with the Town of Ponoka in the opening of our newest Learning Centre. Working with regional partners to identify potential programs that meet the specific needs of the Ponoka area will provide many new opportunities for learners in the region,” says Joel Ward, President and CEO of RDC and Chair of CAC.

Heavy Equipment Operator & Health Care Aide Programs Coming to Ponoka

CAC plans to offer a Heavy Equipment Operator Certificate Program at the Ponoka Learning Centre in September 2019. A Health Care Aide Certificate Program is scheduled to be offered in Ponoka in February 2020. “Health care and agricultural programming are two areas that have been identified by the community and our First Nations partners for early consideration at the Ponoka Learning Centre,” says Stuart Cullum, President and CEO of Olds College and Vice Chair of CAC.

Cullum notes CAC is currently inviting Ponoka-area citizens to fill out a Learning Needs Survey to determine what other types of programs it should consider offering at the Ponoka Learning Centre in the future. The survey is available online at www.ponokarimbeyalc.com/cac-programs-in-ponoka. Paper copies are also available at the Ponoka Learning Centre which is located inside the Ponoka Jubilee Library at 5604-50 St.



Significant Growth in Library Usage

Ponoka Jubilee Library Manager Dan Galway says the library has seen significant growth in daily library usage, program attendance and circulation of materials since opening its new location at the Ponoka Civic Building last fall. “We expect this upward trend to continue. Thanks to our partnership with CAC and the Adult Learning Society, we are now able to provide program opportunities and services that had been impossible in our previous location. We are now offering a more robust set of programs that address many types of literacy that extend beyond the traditional library service model,” says Galway. “We are excited to see what the future holds and the new possibilities that our new location will continue to bring.”

Important and Active Community Hub

Ponoka Mayor Rick Bonnett says having the library, the Ponoka Learning Centre and Town Hall all in one building is what makes the Ponoka Civic Building such an important and active community hub. “The computers at the library are always full. The art gallery and gathering space in the main entrance attract people throughout the day with tutoring sessions after school and citizens gather in the sitting area to read books, play cards and explore the library’s magazine racks.”

Mayor Bonnett adds, “Having access to CAC post-secondary programs right here in Ponoka is a major benefit for our community. Once the one-acre park space in the southwest corner of the site is developed, and the Ponoka Civic Building becomes fully operational with a coffee shop on the main floor and the CAC Learning Centre programs are in full swing, the building will become an even more dynamic community gathering place that generates a positive economic impact for our community over the long term.”

Garry Wetsch, a representative for the building owner, Landrex, says the company is proud to have been the catalyst that brought all of the partners together in the Ponoka Civic Building to create such a vital community hub. “Through our redevelopment of the old hospital site and construction of this iconic new building, we’re pleased to have facilitated all of these community partners coming together to create this vibrant gathering place for local citizens to enjoy for years to come,” says Wetsch.

The Ponoka Civic Building Grand Opening event is being jointly hosted and sponsored by Campus Alberta Central, the Ponoka Jubilee Library, the Ponoka & Rimbey Adult Learning Society, the Town of Ponoka and the building owner, Landrex Inc.

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