

June 22, 2004

## **Funding paves the way for smoother landings at Coronation airport**

Coronation... Smoother landings are ahead for Coronation airport users. The province is providing \$270,000 for major crack repair and paving to rehabilitate the runway. The Town of Coronation is contributing \$12,000 for paving markings.

"Community airports are an important part of Alberta's transportation network," said Ed Stelmach, Minister of Transportation. "Through the Community Airport Program, municipalities are able to improve and enhance their local airports which benefit area residents and all Albertans."

Runway improvements are expected to begin in late June and be complete by the end of July. During construction, the airport will be closed. Runway improvements will be synchronized with nearby work on Highway 36 and other paving projects in Consort and the County of Paintearth. It's expected that by combining numerous projects under one large paving contract, the result will be savings for both the province and area municipalities.

"Improvements to the Coronation airport are much needed as the airport serves medi-vac operations, benefits the local economy and provides general aviation operations," said Doug Griffiths, MLA for Wainwright and Co-Chair of the Rural Development Initiative MLA Steering Committee. This committee identified community infrastructure and economic growth as two pillars for rural sustainability. "The airport is important for rural development and ensures that residents and businesses are connected to the rest of the province."

Through the Community Airport Program the Alberta government provides funding to community-owned, public-use airports for rehabilitation and construction of aircraft operating areas such as runways, aprons, and taxiways. Typical projects include pavement rehabilitation and overlays. Projects may be cost-shared with the municipality. Runway extensions are also eligible if a solid business case exists, funds are available, and beneficiaries make significant financial contributions.

The Coronation airport was constructed in 1974. The proposed improvements will add about 20 years of life to the runway. Alberta has 72 community airports with paved runways.

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