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## **Planning studies for health facilities in Fort Saskatchewan and Sherwood Park announced**

Edmonton... Capital Health has received approval from the Alberta government to conduct programming studies for potential health capital projects in Fort Saskatchewan and the Sherwood Park area. The region will use dollars allocated as part of the 2004-07 Capital Plan to fund the studies.

The programming study in Fort Saskatchewan will update a study done in 1999-2000 by the former Lakeland Regional Health Authority. It will describe the services and space required for a replacement hospital.

Capital Health will also study the health care needs in the Sherwood Park area and determine the best way to provide residents with improved access to services. A programming study will determine the kind and size of facilities that may be needed and identify the costs.

"Needs assessments and programming studies help us decide which projects are needed, and the priority those projects should receive," said Infrastructure Minister Ty Lund. "Capital Health told us they believe there is a need for expanded facilities in their region and we gave them approval to put together the plans."

"Getting the facts is the first step to improve access for Albertans. We need to base our decisions on the best information. These studies will show which new services and facilities will provide the most benefit for Fort Saskatchewan, Sherwood Park, and the rest of Strathcona County," said Gary Mar, Minister of Health and Wellness.

Programming studies outline the scope and cost of capital projects and ensure multi-phase projects are coordinated. The studies are one of the first steps in planning for future capital projects. The exact amount of funding will be determined through a Request for Proposal.

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