



STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2025

(Revision #1, approved on April 27, 2023, Council Motion #565-23)

PRIORITIES PROGRESS

As of January 2024

1. **Grow Employment Opportunities** - Council is committed to lobby for the re-instatement of healthcare services in the region, the re-opening of the courthouse, and supporting growth in all industries, including agricultural business and producers to stimulate population growth in the region. To attain this priority, Council recognizes the following tasks will be required to be undertaken:

- 1.1. Lobby efforts to the Provincial and/or Federal Governments – The Council will utilize their lobby efforts, along with other local and regional municipal partners, to jointly advocate to the various levels of government. This may include the retaining of registered professional lobbyist firm(s) as deemed necessary. This may require the adoption of an advocacy plan by the Council to assist in this role.

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Lobbying is taking place through the group formerly known as the “Northern Mayor’s & Reeve Caucus” now known as the “Northeast Alberta Alliance for Growth and Opportunities (NAAGO)” formed in 2023 comprised of 40 member municipalities and Indigenous communities that are working together to identify common issues and advocate for investment into our region, representing more than 137,000 residents.

- 1.2. Collaboration with Municipalities and Healthcare Providers – The County will need to form collaborative relationships with municipalities within and surrounding our boundaries, as well as explore relationships and/or partnerships within the Provincial Government.

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

January 11, 2024, County Council Motion 252-24: recommended the Town of Smoky Lake, as managing partner of the Physicians & Health Care Professionals Committee, and as part of the said Committee’s mandate, implement a letter writing campaign involving members of the public, community stakeholders, businesses, Smoky Lake Region Municipalities, Settlements, Reserves, and anyone, to urge the Provincial Government and Regional Health Authority in taking action to remove the red tape hindering the attraction and retention of physicians affecting the George McDougall Health Care Centre’s Emergency Room Services and Medical Clinics in the Smoky Lake Region.

- 1.3. Examine recreation opportunities and new facilities – The County will review the Smoky Lake Regional Recreation Master Plan, dated March 2013, in the context of 2023 and develop a program for the public to provide input respecting facility improvements and desired programs.

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

January 11, 2024, County Council Motion 258-24: received approval of funding from the Alberta Community Partnership (ACP) 2023-24 grant to Village of Waskatenau, as the managing partner, in partnership with Smoky Lake County, Town of Smoky Lake, and Village of Vilna, under the Intermunicipal Collaboration Stream, in the amount of \$200,000.00, in support of the Smoky Lake Regional Recreation Services Strategy project.



STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2025

(Revision #1, approved on April 27, 2023, Council Motion #565-23)

PRIORITIES PROGRESS

As of January 2024

- 1.4. Examine Incentive Initiatives – The County will examine the possibility of introducing incentives and/or partnership opportunities to foster the growth of business and industry development in the region.

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION: In Progress

- 1.5. Proactivity in Development – Council is committed to the development of policy and programming to foster a proactive approach to land development within our region.

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

August 23, 2023, County Council Meeting Motion #818-23: Adopted Policy Statement No. 61-08-01: Regional Engineering Design Standards (REDS), to establish a minimum acceptable Regional design standards and criteria for the preparation and submission of plans and specifications for the orderly and satisfactory development of subdivisions and other municipal services within the County.

- 1.6. Sell land to raise revenues for development initiatives – The County will review potential opportunities for highest and best use of Municipal property currently vacant and dispose of the lands at fair market value. Some land may be sold on condition to assist in the undertaking development within a specified timeframe.

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

March 16, 2023, County Council Meeting: created a list of County-Owned lands.

April 13, 2023, County Council Meeting: agreed to sell River Lot 10 for \$80,000+GST

September 28, 2023, County Council Meeting: agreed to sell Plan 716CL, Block 1, Lot 9, Warspite for \$9,000+GST

September 28, 2023, County Council Meeting: approved to offer the following land for sale:

NW 2-59-12-W4M (13.57 acres) - Reserve Bid = \$45,000.00

NE 29-59-12-W4M (2.02 acres) - Reserve Bid = \$13,000.00

SW 21-60-13-W4M (1.0 acres) - Reserve Bid = \$12,000.00

SE 9-58-15-W4M (22.04 acres) - Reserve Bid = \$50,000.00

SW 35-S9-15-W4M (0.5 acres) - Reserve Bid = \$500.00

Plan 8120163, Lot 1 (20.16 acres) - Reserve Bid = \$70,000.00

Plan 3329ET (1.0 acres) - Reserve Bid = \$15,000.00

Plan 1955CL, Block 1, Lot 3, (3,900 sq. ft.) - Reserve Bid = \$2,000.00

Plan 1955CL, Block 1, Lot 18, (6,222 sq. ft.) - Reserve Bid = \$2,300.00

Plan 1039CL, Block 4, Lots 12-14 (13,637 sq. ft.) - Reserve Bid = \$1,800.00

Plan 1039CL, Block 4, Lots, 15 & 16 (12,803 sq. ft.) - Reserve Bid = \$1,200.00

Plan 716CL, Block 2, Lot 1 (3,900 sq. ft.) - Reserve Bid = \$ 9,000.00

Plan 0425044, Block H, Lot 10A (12,800 sq. ft.) - Reserve Bid = \$12,000.00

Plan 0425044, Block H, Lot 11A (10,000 sq. ft.) - Reserve Bid = \$11,800.00

October 12, 2023, County Council Meeting: approved to offer the following land for sale:

NE 23-60-13-W4M (136.30 ACRES) – Reserve Bid = \$126,000.00

SW 34-61-13-W4M (127.60 ACRES) – Reserve Bid = \$91,000.00

NE 32-59-14-W4M (160.0 ACRES) – Reserve Bid = \$126,000.00



STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2025

(Revision #1, approved on April 27, 2023, Council Motion #565-23)

PRIORITIES PROGRESS

As of January 2024

- 1.7. Review existing policy framework – The County will review its existing policy statements across all departments to ensure that they remain relevant and effective.

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION: In Progress

- 1.8. Market Evaluation – The County will undertake an evaluation of market conditions to determine what conditions, economic constraints, impediments, catalysts, and stimulus may be beneficial in the proactive promotion of land development in the region.

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION: In Progress

- 1.9. Lobby efforts to the Provincial and/or Federal Governments – The Council will utilize their lobby efforts, along with other local and regional municipal partners, to jointly advocate to the various levels of government. This may include the retaining of registered professional lobbyist firm(s) as deemed necessary. This may require the adoption of an advocacy plan by the Council to assist in this role

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION: In Progress

2. **Proactive Preliminary Planning** – The Council will undertake a review of the existing Land Use Bylaw (LUB) and Municipal Development Plan (MDP) which are both nearly a decade old, and replace or update them with modern language, uses, and provisions that balance economic development with the municipalities' role as a regulator and trustee of the environment and public good. This may also include review/update of older existing, or adoption of new, Area Structure Plans (ASPs) and other tools under the MGA.

- 2.1. Effective Geographic Information Systems (GIS) - Smoky Lake County's GIS promotes and supports the County Strategic Plan with the use of technology to enable an efficient, effective business process and support decision makers at all levels with access to the most accurate information.

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION: In Progress

- 2.2. Housing Diversity – The County will undertake a marketing analysis to determine the needs of the region. The Council will also consider options to promote the construction of diverse housing through the use of specific policy frameworks, investment, partnership, and possible subsidization to achieve this goal.

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

February 2023, Needs & Demand Assessment for the Region of Smoky Lake: prepared by The Sustainable Housing Initiative at the Rural Development Network, through ACP Grant Funding with Vilna as the managing partner of the project.

August 9, 2023, ICC Meeting Motion ICC11-23: Established an ad-hoc working group committee for "Housing Opportunities and Initiatives".

January 16, 2024, Ad-Hoc Working Group Motion: Recommendation to review each respective municipality's Strategic Plan and Land Use Bylaw's permitted use, to regionally align the reduction of red tape to aim to be development ready and developer ready and attract housing investment to the region.



STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2025

(Revision #1, approved on April 27, 2023, Council Motion #565-23)

PRIORITIES PROGRESS

As of January 2024

- 2.3. Agriculture – The Council will seek opportunities to enhance the agricultural culture of the region through new and innovative partnerships that prioritize landowner needs, sustainable local foods.

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION: In Progress

- 2.4. Environment – The Council will pursue necessary advocacy, technical studies, and policy and bylaw amendments to appropriately steward our environmental landscape.

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION: In Progress

3. **Emergency Services** – Council is committed to ensure that all County residents have access to full-service Police, Fire and EMS services.

- 3.1. Lobby efforts to the Provincial and/or Federal Governments – The Council will utilize their lobby efforts, along with other local and regional municipal partners, to jointly advocate to the various levels of government. This may include the retaining of registered professional lobbyist firm(s) as deemed necessary. This may require the adoption of an advocacy plan by the Council to assist in this role.

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

November 7, 2023: Met with RCMP K-Division, Deputy Commissioner Curtis Zablocki to discuss:

- Enhancing Service Delivery: Ensuring service delivery models and strategies effectively meet the policing needs of our communities (KMOS Operations & after-hours response times)
- Crime Reduction: Understanding the drivers of crime and focusing on priority offenders to increase community safety.
- Enhancing Engagement and Communication with Communities and Stakeholders: Engaging with our communities to collectively develop policing priorities that are community-led and enhancing communication about matters related to local policing services.

November 9, 2023: Met with Mike Ellis, Deputy Premier & Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services to discuss Regional Emergency Services and Volunteer Firefighters:

- Increased tax incentives for volunteers and employers
- Funding support for regional fire services
- Funding for paid firefighters
- Lack of EMS services
- Crime reduction
- Firefighter burnout due to attending ALL calls including medical, thus having extra training such as Primary Care Paramedics

January 11, 2024, County Council Meeting Motion #240-24: approved to submit an application to the Alberta Indigenous & Municipal Policing Transition Grant Program, for potential funding up to the amount of \$30,000.00, towards the proposed project titled: Smoky Lake County Crime Strategy Study.



STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2025

(Revision #1, approved on April 27, 2023, Council Motion #565-23)

PRIORITIES PROGRESS

As of January 2024

January 26, 2024, RMA District 5 Meeting: brought forward a resolution for the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) to advocate to the Government of Alberta to collaborate with the Federal Government and Fire Underwriters Survey for the purpose of assisting municipalities to retain fire services by recruiting firefighters and addressing the declining Fire Department Services across Rural Alberta.

- 3.2. Explore the possibility of Partnership/Investment Opportunities – The County will explore opportunities for possible partnerships and/or investment to attain full-service emergency services.

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION: In Progress

- 4. **Education** – Council is committed to ensuring that educational opportunities for County residents continue to grow.

- 4.1. Create and enhance Partnerships – The County will continue to forge partnerships with primary and post-secondary education providers (Portage College, Lakeland College, Aspen View Schools, Lakeland Catholic) to provide continuing programming required by residents of the County.

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Aspen View Public School Division and Lakeland Roman Catholic Separate School Division are invited to attend all Joint Municipalities Meetings as delegations.

January 29, 2024, Joint Municipalities Meeting: Portage College representatives: Nancy Broadbent, MBA, President & CEO, and Joanne Metchooayah, Associate Dean of Ec. Dev. & Sustainability, provided an update and.....

- 4.2. Lobby efforts to the Provincial and/or Federal Governments – The Council will utilize their lobby efforts, along with other local and regional municipal partners, to jointly advocate to the various levels of government. This may include the retaining of registered professional lobbyist firm(s) as deemed necessary. This may require the adoption of an advocacy plan by the Council to assist in this role.

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION: In Progress

- 4.3. Explore the possibility of Partnership/Investment Opportunities – The County will explore opportunities for possible partnerships and/or investment to attain goals such as additional dual credit education programs.

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION: In Progress

- 5. **Cultural Diversity** – Council is committed to ensuring that the County is recognized as being a Culturally Diverse Community.

- 5.1. Apply to Provincial Government to become a Designated Community – Council is committed to researching and successfully applying to the province to become a Rural Renewal Stream Designated Community.

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION:



STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2025

(Revision #1, approved on April 27, 2023, Council Motion #565-23)

PRIORITIES PROGRESS

As of January 2024

May 11, 2023, County Council Motion #596-23: That Smoky Lake County research the applicable grant funding for, and the feasibility of, becoming a regionally designated community under their Rural Renewal Stream, of the Alberta Advantage Immigration Program (AAIP), to be responsible for:

- identifying and working with community employers that have permanent (minimum of 12 months, full-time, non-seasonal) jobs that need to be filled;
- connecting with a settlement providing organizations to identify and plan for some of the settlement needs within the community;
- developing additional criteria (optional) to recruit foreign nationals, this could include narrowing down the occupations that the community is interested in recruiting;
- responding to foreign national inquiries while community is actively recruiting;
- collaborating with employers on selecting and endorsing the foreign national; and
- developing and implementing a plan for welcoming and settling foreign national(s) to the community;

and, bring the information forward to a Joint Municipalities Meeting to determine the desire of the Smoky Lake Regions' Municipalities, to pursue the said proposal regionally.

June 12, 2023, Joint Municipalities Meeting Motion #JMM-280-23: That the Joint Municipalities Committee recommend each respective municipality support regional participation in the Rural Renewal Stream for the Alberta Advantage Immigration Program.

June 19, 2023, Town of Smoky Lake Motion 337-2023: MOVED by Deputy Mayor Morton that Town of Smoky Lake advise Smoky Lake County that the Town is interested in pursuing the Rural Renewal Stream with the Region; in reference to the motion made at the Joint Municipalities meeting held on June 12, 2023.

July 13, 2023, RMA Meeting: "various committees spoke about their participation in the program, which included challenges with the approval process, an unforeseen drain on time and resources, and mass amounts of communication from interested parties."

August 10, 2023, Athabasca County: recommended they be removed from the list of approved communities in the Rural Renewal Stream, and also send a letter to the agency responsible for the program documenting their issues with the process.

No Further Action has been taken to this priority due to the program's problematic process and experiences by other Municipalities, as well as due to there being no County staff capacity to fulfill the responsibilities of a designated community which as:

- identifying and working with community employers that have permanent (minimum of 12 months, full-time, non-seasonal) jobs that need to be filled;
- connecting with a settlement providing organizations to identify and plan for some of the settlement needs within the community;
- developing additional criteria (optional) to recruit foreign nationals;
- this could include narrowing down the occupations that the community is interested in recruiting;
- responding to foreign national inquiries while community is actively recruiting;
- collaborating with employers on selecting and endorsing the foreign national; and
- developing and implementing a plan for welcoming and settling foreign national(s) to the community.



STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2025

(Revision #1, approved on April 27, 2023, Council Motion #565-23)

PRIORITIES PROGRESS

As of January 2024

- 5.2. Create Policy Statements – The Council is committed to creating policy statements ratifying the County’s commitment to be viewed by peers as a Culturally Diverse Community and welcoming people from all cultural backgrounds.

ACTIONS TAKEN & SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

March 16, 2023, Council Motion 427-23: That Smoky Lake County Policy Statement No. 01-35-02: Flag Protocol & Half Mast, was amended to include Ukrainian Flag and Treaty 6 Flag.

December 14, 2023, County Council Motion #193-23: That Smoky Lake County Policy Statement No. 01-53-02: Treaty 6 and Indigenous Acknowledgement, was amended with updates and added definitions.