



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2025

(Revision #1, Apr. 27, 2023, Motion #565-23)

## Priorities Progress Update as of December 31<sup>st</sup> 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
 

**Ongoing**, lobbying is taking place through 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
 

**January 2024**, implemented a letter writing campaign implemented through the Physicians & Health Care Professionals Committee 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.

**February 2024**, letters were written from the NAAGO to 22 Ministers and the Premier bringing attention to concerns regarding prolonged health care challenges including recruitment and retention of doctors and nurses and enhancing our EMS.
  - 1.3. Examine recreation opportunities and new facilities
 

**In 2023 & 2024**, partnered with the Town of Smoky Lake & Villages of Vilna & Waskatenau to conduct a Smoky Lake Regional Recreation Services Strategy funded through an Alberta Community Partnership (ACP) 2023-24 grant. Public feedback is expected to be engaged in early 2025 and the final report is expected to be received in December 2026.

**In 2024**, partnered with Village of Waskatenau for grant funding to complete the Waskatenau Creek Corridor Restoration and Trail Concept study.
  - 1.4. Examine Incentive Initiatives
 

**In 2024** Gave 1<sup>ST</sup> & 2<sup>ND</sup> Reading to Bylaw No. 1464-24: Non-Residential Development Municipal Tax Incentive, for the purpose of providing a Municipal Property Tax Exemption for Non-Residential Development or Expansions (3<sup>rd</sup> reading will be considered in January 2025).
  
2. **Proactivity in Development** – Council is committed to the development of policy and programming to foster a proactive approach to land development within our region:
  - 2.1. Sell land to raise revenues for development initiatives
 

**In 2023:**  
 Sold River Lot 10 for \$80,000  
 Sold Plan 716CL, Block 1, Lot 9, in Warspite for \$9,000

**In 2024:**  
 Sold PT. SE-09-58-15-4W (20.04 acres) for \$50,000.00  
 Sold NE 23-60-13-W4M (136.30 acres) through CLHBid.com for \$210,655.30 profit  
 Sold SW 34-61-13-W4M (127.60 acres) through CLHBid.com for \$266,148.55 profit  
 Sold NE 32-59-14-W4M (160.0 acres) through CLHBid.com for \$224,394.64 profit  
 Sold PT. NW-2-59-12-W4M (13.57 acres) for \$4,500  
 Sold PT. SW-21-60-13-W4M (1 acre) for \$1,000  
 Sold PT. SW-35-59-15-W4M (0.5 acre) for \$500  
 Sold PLAN 8120163, LOT 1 (20.16 acres) for \$40,000  
 Sold PLAN 1955CL, BLOCK 1, LOT 3 (3,900 sq ft) for \$1,600  
 Sold PLAN 1039CL, BLOCK 4, LOTS 12-14 (13,660 sq ft) for \$1,800  
 Sold PLAN 1039CL, BLOCK 4, LOTS 15-16 (12,785 sq ft) for \$1,200  
 Sold PLAN 0425044, BLOCK H, LOT 11A (10,000 sq ft) for \$5,000



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### 2.2. Review existing policy framework

**August 2023**, Policy Statement No. 61-08-01: Regional Engineering Design Standards (REDS), was adopted 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.

**April 2024**, Policy Statement No. 61-03-07: Application for Development Permit, was amended to align with other County policies and bylaws.

**April 2024**, Policy Statement No. 61-02-03: Resource Extraction Development Permit Application, was rescinded because it was made redundant by updating Policy Statement No. 61-03-07.

### 2.3. Market Evaluation

**September 2024**, the Investment Attraction Strategy, was completed as a project funded through the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) Microgrant program, to identify growth opportunities.

Also, there is market data available through the Alberta HUB website:

<https://albertahub.com/smoky-lake-county/>

### 2.4. Lobby efforts to the Provincial and/or Federal Governments

No opportunities have been available.

### 2.5. Proactive Preliminary Planning

**April 2024**, Bylaw No. 1453-23 was passed, to redistrict River Lot 15, Victoria Settlement, to Direct Control (DC2) District and to add provisions relating to Supportive Living Facilities.

**October 2024**, Council approve to issue Development Permit DP 024-24, for a Supportive Living Facility, on River Lot 15, Victoria Settlement, subject to conditions.

### 2.6. Effective Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

**December 12, 2024**, Policy Statement No. 01-45-02: Geographic Information Systems (GIS), was amended to clearly outline responsibilities to ensure the GIS database is updated regularly and ensure accurate data is provided to stakeholders.

### 2.7. Housing Diversity

**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**, aimed 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.

### 2.8. Agriculture

**December 2024**, 1<sup>st</sup> Reading was given to Bylaw 1467-24, to amend Land Use Bylaw to Redistrict Plan 9121735, Lot A, Pt. NE-33-58-18-W4M from AG to M2 and Amend Municipal Development Plan Bylaw 1249-12 to Reclassify Plan 9121735, Lot A, Pt. NE-33-58-18-W4M from Agriculture Area to Industrial Area.

### 2.9. Environment

**June 2023** passed Bylaw No. 1436-23: Major Alternative Energy, and Lake, Watershed, and Regional Planning Bylaw, Amending Land Use Bylaw No. 1272-14 and Municipal Development Plan Bylaw No. 1249-12, to address provisions for dealing with major alternative energy developments.

**2024**, the Waskatenau Creek Corridor Restoration and Trail Concept study was completed and will be utilized should funding become available for development.

### Rural investment attract strategy

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



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- 3.1. Lobby efforts to the Provincial and/or Federal Governments
  - November 2023**, Met with RCMP K-Division, Deputy Commissioner Curtis Zablocki to discuss: Enhancing Service Delivery, Crime Reduction, & Enhancing Engagement and Communication with Communities and Stakeholders. Met with Mike Ellis, Deputy Premier & Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services to discuss Regional Emergency Services and Volunteer Firefighters.
  - January 2024**, applied to the Alberta Indigenous & Municipal Policing Transition Grant Program, to fund a project titled: Smoky Lake County Crime Strategy Study.
  - January 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.
  - November 2024**, met with the Deputy Premier / Minister of Public Safety & Emergency Services to discuss the need for funding towards community safety, and increased policing to mitigation rural armed / violent property crimes in Smoky Lake County. Met with the Minister of Justice to discuss repeated offenders and lack of consequences for charges laid – catch and release, and the need for a plan to achieve safe, crime free communities.
- 3.2. Explore the possibility of Partnership/Investment Opportunities
  - The County's Community Peace Officer works closely with the Smoky Lake RCMP Detachment Member to assist where possible.
4. **Education** - Council is committed to ensuring that educational opportunities for County residents continue to grow:
  - 4.1. Create and enhance Partnerships
    - Aspen View Public School Division and Lakeland Roman Catholic Separate School Division are invited to attend Joint Municipalities Meetings as delegations to provide updates.
    - The County continues to participate in employing high school students through Alberta's Registered Apprenticeship Program.
  - 4.2. Lobby efforts to the Provincial and/or Federal Governments
    - No opportunities have been available:
  - 4.3. Explore the possibility of Partnership/Investment Opportunities
    - January 2024**, invited Portage College President & CEO, and Associate Dean of Economic Development & Sustainability, to the Joint Municipalities Meeting to provide an update open the door to and explore opportunities.
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
    - September 9, 2024**, Smoky Lake Region was approved for participation in the Rural Renewal Stream (RRS) which empowers rural communities to recruit and retain foreign nationals to live, work and settle in their communities. This approval includes Smoky Lake County, Town of Smoky Lake, Village of Waskatenau, Village of Vilna. The Smoky Lake Region is now officially a Designated Community for this.
  - 5.2. Create Policy Statements
    - January 26, 2023**, Policy Statement No. 07-09-01: Alberta Bilingual Municipalities Association (ABMA) – Liaison Committee Terms of Reference, was adopted to allow for representation to the
    - March 16, 2023**, Policy Statement No. 01-35-02: Flag Protocol & Half Mast, was amended to include Ukrainian Flag and Treaty 6 Flag.
    - December 14, 2023**, Policy Statement No. 01-53-02: Treaty 6 and Indigenous Acknowledgement, was amended with updates and added definitions.