



TOWN OF BLACKFALDS

# REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

# 2021

**BLACKFALDS**  
A I R P O R T A



Town Staff  
Appreciation BBQ |  
August 2021

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# MAYOR'S MESSAGE

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*2021 is another year to put in Blackfalds' record books. Despite various setbacks, facility closures, and fatigued staff, we persevered, got through it together, and were able to complete multiple projects, host virtual and scaled-back events, improve services such as welcoming a new medical clinic, and grow community programs.*

One of the most exciting things that took place this past year was the 2021 Fall Election and the impressive number of voters that turned up to have their say on who they would like to represent them. I am excited to start my first term as Mayor, and I'm happy to welcome, and welcome back, new members of Council.

I want to thank everyone who has reached out and shared their thoughts and concerns with me. As Mayor and Council, we are here to serve you and hope to continue on past successes, learn from our mistakes, and grow community pride.

As we look forward to the next four years, we hope for life to return to normal and enjoy visits with our neighbours and friends, meet and eat at our exceptional local restaurants, and have fun at many community events.

The opening of the Eagle Builders Centre will bring many opportunities for community gatherings and is an excellent venue for tradeshow, entertainment, and cultural events that will contribute to Blackfalds' spirit, economy, the standard of living and maintain our reputation of being a great place to live, work and play!



*Mayor of Blackfalds*  
**Jamie Hoover**

*Jamie Hoover*

# CAO's MESSAGE

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***It was another challenging year as we began the year with new hope and the reality of yet another wave of the pandemic drew us back to a cautionary tale.***

COVID-19 continued to play a dominant role in our lives in 2021, with variants pushing positive case numbers up to record levels as the year concluded.

This impacted several facilities, services and staff, particularly the Abbey Centre as operations were severely impacted for the first half of the year.

As a municipality, we continued to work together in protecting the health and wellbeing of all staff and residents. Even though we were diligent in our efforts, we experienced a number of COVID positive cases among staff. This

led to a shortage of employees in many areas of the Town, with most departments being affected in some way.

Staff and management have done a tremendous job in maintaining our operations by working together and taking on extra duties to ensure the most crucial duties were completed.

The Town of Blackfalds continues to ensure we are all following restrictions put in place by the Province. I am proud to report that staff are adapting and continue to ensure that operations are functioning smoothly while providing essential services within these restrictions.



Myron Thompson, CAO  
Town of Blackfalds



***Myron Thompson, Town of Blackfalds Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) has been serving the Blackfalds community for the last 8 years with over 30 years of experience in municipal administration.***

***He enjoys the challenges and variety of projects that come with the municipal sector and is proud of the many accomplishments the Town of Blackfalds has achieved.***



**EAGLE BUILDERS  
CENTRE**

# 2021

We celebrated a number of milestones in 2021. Let's look back at some of the highlights of the year.

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# THE OPENING OF THE **EAGLE BUILDERS CENTRE**

*On Nov.19, 2021 following some minor delays due to supply chain issues the Eagle Builders Centre (EBC) welcomed the public and the inaugural season for Blackfalds very own Junior A hockey club the “Blackfalds Bulldogs”.*

The EBC serves as an important community hub providing a much needed second ice surface and a new expanded library,

The new arena seats 1,400 and includes regular seating and various unique seating options.

The facility boasts a grand lobby entrance, multiple meeting rooms, retail spaces, and easy access to the second ice surface and library.

The lower bowl is the perfect venue for hosting the winter season’s junior hockey games but also multi-seasonal events such as concerts,

trade shows, and other large scale events. The grand lobby area includes the box office, Bulldogs merchandise retail and a holistic clinic.

On the second floor you will find the concession plus various bars and pop up concession areas. Its family friendly atmosphere is complimented with the Optimist Club of Blackfalds’ mini rink where future hockey players can try out their hockey skills.

If you haven’t had a chance to visit this amazing facility, you are missing out!

Visit the website

**[blackfalds.ca/EBC](https://blackfalds.ca/EBC)**

for more information.



# THE NEW SERVUS CREDIT UNION PUBLIC LIBRARY

*The Servus Credit Union Public Library, is a 12,000 sq. ft. bright and welcoming space that will support the community's growing arts and culture industry.*

The new space boasts two levels, multiple meeting rooms, added youth programming and kids areas and a highly anticipated outdoor learning centre which will open in 2022.

After outgrowing its old location, the new library now meets the necessary square footage needed for its growing population.

One of the largest in central Alberta, the library is a member of the Parkland Regional Libraries, a cooperative of 50 libraries.

For more information or to get a free membership, visit the website at [www.blackfaldslibrary.ca](http://www.blackfaldslibrary.ca).

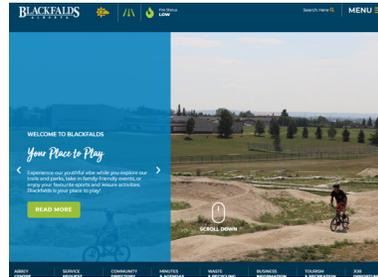


# POPULATION HITS NEW HIGH



The Town of Blackfalds continues to be a destination for young families and the young at heart, as is demonstrated in the most recent Municipal Census conducted, resulting in an updated population of 11,015.

The increase of 890 is an 8.8% increase over the last three years; an average of 2.93% annually.



# THE LAUNCH OF A NEW WEBSITE

After a year of research, hard work and dedication, the Town officially launched a new website in summer of 2021.

With a new vibrant and fresh interface, the website is the prime information source for the Town and aims to increase public engagement and raise awareness of Town programs, events, and services.

For anything Town-related, be sure to visit [www.blackfalds.ca](http://www.blackfalds.ca).

# OPENING OF NEW HEALTH CENTRE



Due to the exceptional work and commitment of the Blackfalds Health Professionals Attraction & Retention Committee (BHPARC), the community welcomed Dr. Kauchali and his team at the opening of the new Apollo Health Centre.

The clinic is located in the Aspen Aurora Centre on Broadway Ave. and their staff are ready to serve you. New patients are welcome!

# 2021 OPERATING BUDGET

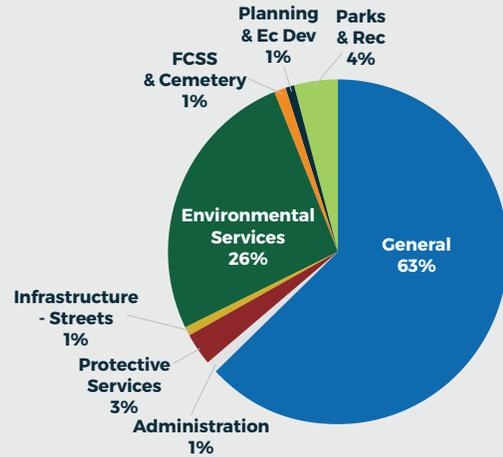
*In compliance with the Municipal Government Act (MGA), Administration provided a three-year operational budget projection to Council in November of 2020.*

Despite the challenges of an uncertain economic climate and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the municipality remains in a good financial position to advance capital projects that continue to stimulate the economy.

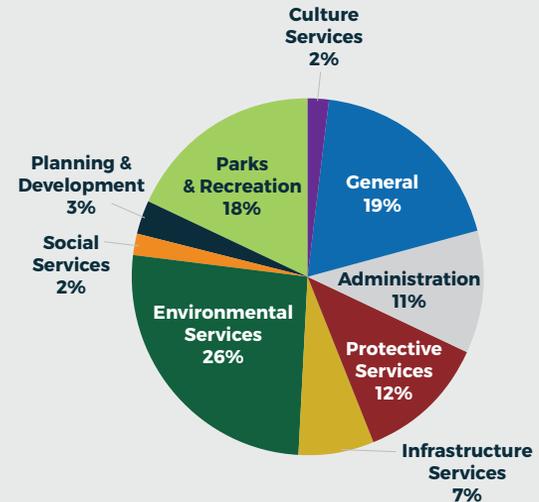
The Town continues to maintain capital reserves, pay down debt, and maximize investments. By maintaining an updated 10-year funded capital plan will help ensure that capital plans remain practical and sustainable and remain fiscally responsible when planning new developments.

**The 2021 Operating Budget totalled \$27,728,620, a decrease of \$917,370 in 2020.**

# 2021 Operating Revenue



# 2021 Operating Expenses



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

*Despite the economic challenges in 2021, the business community continued a growth trajectory with the addition of 76 new business licenses.*

We welcome recent startups such as Lehma Massage and Wellness, Pharmasave Blackfalds, The Pizza Boxx, Mullets Barbershop, and Phoenix Event Management.

The Town of Blackfalds is also pleased to welcome the addition of Apollo Health Centre located in the Aspen Aurora Centre.

The Blackfalds Summer Market returned with successful attendance by both vendors and visitors.



Economic Development launched its Tourism and Business newsletter, and is an added tool to keep business and residents up to date on all economic development and tourism initiatives in Town. You can also visit the website [www.blackfalds.ca/business](http://www.blackfalds.ca/business).

*Town Council formally adopted the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy, a strategic plan that outlines the vision of economic development and tourism sustainability for the Town of Blackfalds over the next decade.*



# PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

***2021 brought some significant staffing changes to the Planning and Development department as two senior positions were vacated.***

We welcomed our new Planning & Development Manager in late September, and two current staff were promoted to more senior positions.

A comprehensive update of the Town's Land Use Bylaw, the primary tool to regulate all uses and development standards within the Town of Blackfalds was developed, and the updated Land Use Bylaw will be presented to Council for adoption in 2022.

The department generated some positive initiatives that created confidence in our local economy despite the overall provincial and national economic conditions:

- The annexation initiated by the land owner of the parcel that surrounds and includes the Mary & Cliff Soper Natural Area.
- Continued dialogue between Town staff and local developers to create new and ancillary area structure plans.
- 234 permits were processed in 2021 with a total value of 21.917M.
- Staff are consulting with both the Public and Catholic school boards as plans for two new schools were announced.



# INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

## *Infrastructure Services*

***Department is comprised of the public works' Environmental Services and Transportation Services Department, asset management and GIS, engineering, and environmental management.***

Services include maintaining roads, sidewalks, water, sewer, stormwater, environmental, and regulatory management.

Out of **4,500 TONS OF WASTE** collected, the Town diverted **700 TONS OF RECYCLING AND YARD WASTE** from the landfill in 2021.



Milestones of 2021 include:

- Completion of the Environmental Stewardship Strategy
- Spring/Fall Clean Up program and electronic recycling roundup
- Advancement of asset data collection with development of various asset class condition assessment templates
- The implementation of the Enterprise Asset Management Software Program which includes Citywide Asset Manager, Maintenance Manager and Citizen Request Portal technology
- AM Summer Student field data collection and GIS/AM desktop support is ongoing for next year
- The former landfill site was surveyed and monitored to help mitigate environmental impacts of the site



# INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES CONT..

Projects completed in 2021 include:

- The Duncan Avenue extension and Leung Road Phase 1 upgrades where completed.
- The Womacks/Gregg Street re-alignment project including underground improvements and servicing, and mobile home park acquisitions. Remaining work will be completed in 2022 with the closure of the Broadway Avenue railway crossing, completion of the parking lot, resurfacing of Gregg Street, intersection improvements at Highway 2A & Gregg Street, and opening the new Womacks Road railway crossing to traffic.
- Asphalt overlays and sidewalk improvements along Lawton Avenue.
- Pedestrian improvements including a new sidewalk on Parkwood Rd (in front of FasGas) including the installation of flashing pedestrian lights.
- The BOLT local transit on-demand system that services Blackfalds to North Red Deer continues to be a valuable service, which is reflected by the continuous growth in ridership
- The new RV Dump Station at All Star Park operated for a first full year.
- The Blackfalds Operations facility was upgraded with Town water and sewer services.
- Phases 2A and 3 construction of the East Area stormwater management project continues into 2022.
- The completion of the Northwest stormwater appeal process awaits a decision from the Environmental Minister in 2022.
- A new motor grader, tandem truck with sander and plow, and three new fleet trucks were purchased.



# PROTECTIVE SERVICES

## Municipal Enforcement

*2021 was a year of change for Municipal Enforcement as we welcomed the addition of two new peace officers and said goodbye to two of our veteran officers.*

Since December, the department has been fully staffed with four officers. We also added a third vehicle to our fleet.

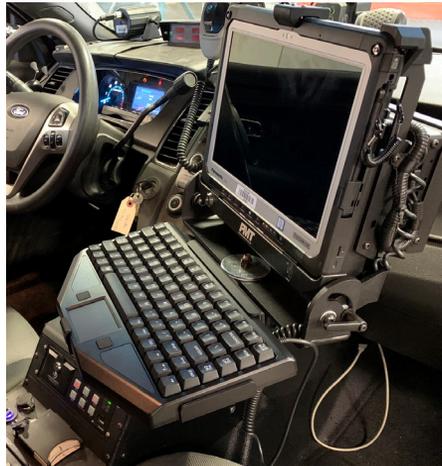
Due to the ongoing pandemic and health restrictions put in place by the province, officers were not able to organize the Bike Rodeo, and organizers of Kids and Kops also cancelled their event.

Officers patrolled neighbourhoods on their mountain bikes throughout the summer and worked with the RCMP school resource officer on various initiatives. They also participated in the annual Victim Services Charity Check Stop.

In the past year, there were **1,176 INVESTIGATIONS.**

We installed E-ticketing systems in all enforcement vehicles, which cut down the time officers spent on traffic stops. This improved efficiencies as tickets are immediately sent to the courts.

A total of **653 VIOLATION TICKETS** were issued in 2021.



## PROTECTIVE SERVICES CONT...

### RCMP

In 2021, the Blackfalds RCMP detachment received funding for a significant staff increase by adding two provincially funded officers and one additional officer funded by the municipality.

This provided the detachment with 26 officers overall; nine positions, including a school resource officer funded by the Town of Blackfalds, one position funded by Lacombe County, another by Red Deer County and 15 officers funded by the province.

COVID 19 continued to change the way the RCMP conducted business, procedures were put in place to ensure the safety of officers and the public.



Blackfalds experienced a decrease of **21%** in **BREAK AND ENTER OFFENSES** in comparison to the previous year.

There was a **15%** decrease in **MOTOR VEHICLE THEFTS**, which is 7 less thefts than in 2020.

**THEFT UNDER \$5,000** decreased by **32%** (37 less thefts).

In total **PROPERTY CRIME** was down **15%**.

Other **CRIMINAL** related files were down **26%**.

We did experience a **7%** increase in **CRIMES AGAINST THE PERSON**.

**MOTOR VEHICLE COLLISIONS** increased by **34%**, an increase of 44 from the previous year.

**11 INJURY COLLISIONS** and **163 PROPERTY DAMAGE COLLISIONS** were recorded.

# PROTECTIVE SERVICES CONT...

## Fire Department

The Blackfalds Fire Department had a roster of 26 members in 2021 and is actively recruiting for paid per call members.

In 2021, we focused on providing members with NFPA 1001 Level I and Level II standards training that included vehicle extrication and first aid. Training also included Hazardous Goods Training to meet the NFPA 472 Standards.

We hosted the NFPA 1001 Level 1, Vehicle Extrication, Hazmat, and Pump training from January to October.

When provincial health restrictions were lifted in October, the first Open House was held during Fire Prevention Week which attracted a great turnout. The annual Santa Run was a huge success with Santa coming to town over two nights.

Donations exceeded expectations with an overwhelming **4,393 POUNDS OF FOOD** collected and **\$870** in **CASH DONATIONS**.

Thank you for all your generosity, Blackfalds!

During 2021, the Fire Department responded to **184 EMERGENCY INCIDENTS**. **62** of these took place in **LACOMBE COUNTY**. **38%** of these incidents were **ALARM RESPONSES** followed by **20%** of **MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS**. Responses for **MEDICAL CALLS** were up **45%** in 2021.

*Dealing with false alarms continues to be an issue.*

*Most false alarms are a result of poor or lack of maintenance, expired devices, cooking with grease, or not notifying the alarm monitoring company.*



# COMMUNITY SERVICES

## Parks & Facilities

*The community of Blackfalds is a leader in building and maintaining award-winning parks and facilities.*



With 17% of the total Town budget, parks and facilities continues to impress as it pushes its Recreation and Facilities Master plan forward.

In 2021 alone, the department undertook many projects that enhanced and enriched the community.

- Planting and care of annuals, shrubs and trees
- Turf maintenance
- Installation of lights at Tayles Park
- 200m Ashpalt south of Centennial pond, Eastpoint Dr to McKay Ranch new trail development
- Employed 10 summer students
- Prepare and maintained community gardens
- Installation of new playground at Aurora Heights
- Downtown gardens produced carrots, lettuce, Swiss chard, and cucumbers
- Tree planting, pruning and replacement
- Repair weather damage and ongoing maintenance at Bike Skills Park
- Installed fabric and limestone at Abbey Centre memorial
- Painting of wood park furniture
- Inspection and maintenance of 12 playgrounds
- Mulch application

## COMMUNITY SERVICES Parks & Facilities CONT...

Blackfalds facilities are renowned for their awe-inspiring designs and 2021 was no exception with the completion and the opening of its newest recreational and cultural hub, the Eagle Builders Centre (EBC).

Housing the Blackfalds Bulldogs AJHL hockey club, the new Servus Credit Union Public Library and various meeting and retail spaces, the EBC will be the site of many hockey games and other sport tournaments, community events, concerts, and tradeshows.

The facility generated several projects for Town staff including:

- Two F/T facility operator positions for Eagle Builders Centre operations
- Ice preparation for Arena 1 & 2 at Eagle Builders Centre
- First ice bookings for Arenas 1 & 2
- Acquired and operated new Zamboni 526

The work continued for various other parks and recreation sites:

- All-Star Park hosted six events plus an outdoor drive-in double feature as part of Culture Days
- Minor Soccer and Minor Ball used the soccer fields and ball diamonds this season
- Teamed up with Public Works for the Leung Rd and Lawton Ave tree removal project
- Coordinated the removal of the workshop on Gregg St
- Completed Pine Crescent skateboard park repairs and sound proofing



# COMMUNITY SERVICES Abbey Centre

After a 6-month closure due to ongoing pandemic restrictions, the Abbey Centre reopened its doors on June 10.

During the closure and throughout the summer, the Abbey implemented its new program registration system and facility booking software which was launched in October.

Despite the closure, staff were able to successfully run summer programs after opening the facility.

The McKay Ranch outdoor aquatic centre was open from June to early Sept, and experienced a busy season.



## **87% SWIM LESSONS**

registration (554 participants)

## **90% ENROLLMENT**

in Camp Curious Summer Camps (286 participants)

## **2,600 ATTENDEES**

at Summer Culture Series

**16 SLO-PITCH TEAMS** competed in the league with a year-end tournament in the Fall

## **26,211 GUESTS**

dropped in to the Abbey Centre over the summer

## **18,369 MEMBER**

visits

## **444 ANNUAL MEMBERS**

## **338 MONTHLY MEMBERS**

## **1,920 PUNCH PASSES**



The facility was closed from January until June 10 when the province relaxed mandates for the summer.

Masks were provincially mandated again in September, 2021, when operations ran at 1/3 capacity.

In November, the facility changed to the Restrictions Exemptions Program (REP) allowing programs to start up and permitting facility bookings.

In keeping with COVID-19 restrictions to serve buffet style an alternative to Breakfast and Lunch with Santa, the Abbey offered 'Snacks with Santa' and handed out individually boxed meals to kids and parents.



# COMMUNITY SERVICES

## Family & Community Support Services

*The Town of Blackfalds recognizes and celebrates volunteerism and awards individuals and groups who display outstanding service to their community and those in need.*

In 2021, **151 VOLUNTEERS** stepped up and worked a total of **1,646 HOURS**.

Out of a total of **34 NOMINEES**, we recognized the work of these amazing volunteers and honoured them with the following awards during volunteer week:

**Carol Simpson Volunteer of the Year:**  
Dena Thomas

**Gloria House Mentor:** Carolyn Cota

**Outstanding Group (Adult category):**  
Friends of Iron Ridge Elementary Society

**Outstanding Group (Youth category):**  
Blackfalds Youth Crew (BYC)

**Dylan Stork Youth Ambassador:** Santera Ogles

**Leaders of Tomorrow (Elementary):**

Coen Bonnett

**Leaders of Tomorrow (Junior High):**

Dylan Beaver

**Leaders of Tomorrow (High School):**

Janek-Justin Loos & Vivien Reschke

Heartfelt thanks to the **GENEROUS DONATION** of **\$3,000** from our friends at ME Global and received **\$1,250** from the Volunteer Alberta grant.



We introduced new programs to connect those who may feel isolated during the pandemic or whose opportunities to socialize are limited:

the **INTERGENERATIONAL PEN PAL PROGRAM** and the **FRIENDLY CALLER PROGRAM**.

**22** residents accessed the **SNOW ANGEL PROGRAM** which assist those who may be impeded or incapable to keep their sidewalks and driveways clear after a snowfall.

For more information or to get involved, please visit [blackfalds.ca/volunteer](https://blackfalds.ca/volunteer).

# COMMUNITY SERVICES

## Family & Community Support Services CONT...

For some of 2021, the FCSS was the only accessible office serving the public and received **2,130 VISITORS**.

Of those visits, **226** used **FAX SERVICES**, **205** used **PRINTING SERVICES**, and **234** accessed **SUBSIDIZED PROGRAMS**.

### WINTER COATS FOR KIDS

We fundraised **\$2,600** that benefited **83 KIDS**.

A special thanks to our partners at **MOUNTAIN WAREHOUSE**, who offered special pricing of almost half the cost of a brand-new winter jacket.

With the generous time and yummy goodness from several local bakeries, we successfully raised **\$2,350** with the **ONLINE DESSERT AUCTION**.

### CHRISTMAS BUREAU

**90 FAMILIES, 222 CHILDREN** and **33 SENIORS/SINGLES** accessed the Christmas Bureau.

**\$35,321** was raised including a generous donation from STEP Energy of **\$20,000**.



### TOOLS FOR SCHOOL

Partnering with Staples Canada, **107** children were able to access the program. **\$1,148** was raised!

# COMMUNITY SERVICES

## Family & Community Support Services CONT...

### LUNCH BOX PROGRAM

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Lunch Box program was started in March of 2020, and we were fortunate to receive donations from many generous community partners who made the program a success well into 2021.

In total **3,361** families and **8,074** children accessed the program.

The program used **936 VOLUNTEER HOURS** and the cost for 2021 totalled **\$56,000** equalling **\$7/child/week** for breakfasts & lunches.



Ongoing support from generous donors and successful grant applications will enable the program to continue well into 2022.

**\$23,500** FCSS grant funding was allocated to:

- Iron Ridge Elementary
- Iron Ridge Intermediate
- Anam Rural Youth Association
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lacombe & District

### YOUTH PROGRAMMING

#### **Blackfalds Youth Crew**

Online activities offered in February & March bi weekly during the summer and weekly September - December.

**Child Safe Canada At Home Alone** 6 courses facilitated in person, 1 online.

#### **February School Break Sessions**

2 workshops offered online.

#### **Fresh Air Art**

Weekly July & August.

#### **National Youth Week**

May 1 - 7, 2 sessions offered online, 3 in person.

**Blackfalds Culture Days Sessions** 4 sessions offered in person in September.

#### **Inspired Virtues Sessions**

3 sessions offered in person.

#### **Red Cross Babysitters Courses**

3 offered in person.

#### **Youth Yoga**

6 sessions offered in person March, offered weekly July & August.



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