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TOWN OF BLACKFALDS

2024 - 2026

MID-TERM STRATEGIC PLAN

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Civic Excellence

Strategy proposed
01/16/2024

BLACKFALDS
ALBERTA

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Land Acknowledgement

The Town of Blackfalds acknowledges that we are on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional meeting grounds, gathering place, and travelling route to the Cree, Saulteaux (So-toe), Blackfoot, Metis, Dene (De-nay) and Nakota Sioux (Sue). We acknowledge all the many First Nations, Metis, and Inuit whose footsteps have marked these lands for centuries.

Vision Statement

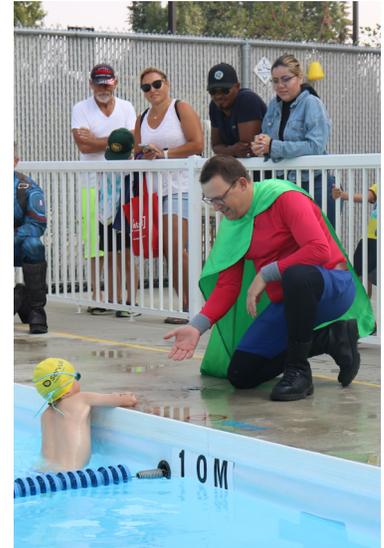
Blackfalds is an active, family community full of pride, commitment and opportunities reflecting an economically sustainable, self-sufficient, and safe living environment, with a balanced range of municipal services provided through innovation and proactive community partnerships.

Mission Statement

To provide excellence in the area of Municipal Service to make available the highest possible quality of life to the residents of Blackfalds.

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

This 2024 Strategic Plan has been developed over a period of several months as part of a priority of this current Council at the mid-point of the current term in to refocus the direction of the municipality for the remaining 2 years of this election cycle. The first 2 years of the cycle saw significant changes in senior administration, including the retirement of the previous CAO, and the addition of the current CAO who brings her own vision and priorities for the future of Blackfalds. Since the last strategic plan was released, significant changes and milestones have been reached, and that progress means that there will be a great benefit to how the community will be steered, through this mid-term revision.



Through a comprehensive discussion and workshop process the previous Strategic Plan has been reviewed through the lens of simplifying and streamlining. Council looked at what changes have occurred in the past few years; What achievements have been made, in some cases faster than expected, as well what aspects of the previous plan are less applicable today, or what priorities are no longer as apparent as they were only a few years ago. In particular, having weathered more of the economic downturn, seeing the changes that the community and the world experienced due to the COVID19 pandemic, experiencing changes in direction from other levels of government, and continued growth in the population in our municipality were only some of the factors that contributed to this plan revision.

The end result of this Strategic Plan is a simpler and more measurable document. It recognizes and celebrates the many accomplishments that have occurred to bring Blackfalds to this point, and it sets a more clear, directed path for the next 2-3 years; It better supports the efforts of our administration and staff, and provides the next Council more ability to measure and plan their next term. The groundwork is being set for better, more focused advocacy for our residents, and through this plan this Council looks ahead to an even more successful, resilient, and sustainable future in Blackfalds.



Jamie Hoover
MAYOR JAMIE HOOVER

BLACKFALDS COUNCIL

2021 - 2025



Mayor Jamie Hoover



**Councillor
Marina Appel**



**Councillor
Edna Coulter**



**Councillor
Brenda Dennis**



**Councillor
Jim Sands**



**Councillor
Rebecca Stendie**



**Councillor
Laura Svab**

ABOUT BLACKFALDS

Centrally located between Red Deer and Lacombe, the Town of Blackfalds is one of Canada's fastest growing communities. Blackfalds' first growth spurt was a result of the historic Calgary and Edmonton trail, and the establishment of the railway line in 1891 - long before the Town's incorporation in 1904.

Blackfalds was known as a small bedroom community in between the two growing cities of Lacombe and Red Deer. However, in recent years, more young families moved to Blackfalds due to its central location within the province and its small-town, safe and inviting feel.

Due to a growing population, Town Administration and Council, with resident input and recommendations from volunteer boards and committees, worked towards providing more amenities for its residents.

This commitment resulted in the creation of the Eagle Builders Centre (formally known as the Multi-Plex), multiple themed playgrounds, open green spaces, parks, the Abbey Centre, Vesta Energy Bike Skills Park, Sterling Industries Sports Parks, the renovated Community Centre, and much more.

As the Town continues to grow, more and more amenities are being added to the community including health services, personal services, unique restaurants and local businesses and the first high school in the Town's history.



WHAT WE ARE MOST PROUD OF!

- Family-focused and modern recreational facilities
- Walkability
- Outdoor lifestyle
- Friendly, generous and helpful people
- Services and infrastructure
- Safe community
- Themed and inclusive playgrounds
- Small town feel with urban facilities
- Growth and future growth
- Location in the province
- Regional Partnerships
- Young population
- Beautiful and natural trail and water systems



TOP PRIORITIES

1. Our Town connects residents to services and services to residents

- Expand upon BOLT option
- Continue to advocate for local autonomy for physician recruitment

2. Invest in the safety of our residents through pedestrian safety and advocacy for highway improvements

- Consider pedestrians first and focus on safe pedestrian crossings throughout the town
- Highway 2A safety improvements

3. The Town has a diverse range of housing to meet the needs of the residents

- Consider land subsidies to promote development of affordable rental housing
- Conduct a housing needs assessment

4. Our Town can clearly articulate the competitive advantage and the benefits of Blackfalds

- Development of Place Branding for the Town

5. The Town has adequate resources to provide the services to its residents

- Introductory Municipal Service Level Inventory
- Employee Engagement Survey

6. We have open and transparent governance

- Public Engagement Policy
- Council Committee Structure



TOP ADVOCACY

- Allow municipalities to hire physicians at the local level
- Safety improvements to Highway 2A
- Replacement of Iron Ridge Elementary School
- Provincial funding for housing-first model
- Development of second approach to Highway 2
- Legislative change to allow Licenced Practitioners to operate clinics

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Community Life

The everyday life of a resident in Blackfalds is characterized by the community. This includes both social and cultural elements such as a sense of belonging, mental and physical health, education, safety, and inclusivity, among others.

AREAS OF FOCUS

- Ensure that all residents have access to the services that the Town provides
- Connect and provide recreational facilities and services to residents
- Provide opportunities for residents to connect to enhance community spirit and volunteerism
- Ensure that the safety of our residents is paramount to decision making
- Promote options for housing diversity

Economy

A sustainable economy in Blackfalds includes a good ratio of residential to non-residential and a diversity of businesses and industries that include both local and national companies. There is a healthy balance of tax revenue between residential, commercial, and industrial businesses.

AREAS OF FOCUS

- Create an attractive environment for industrial and commercial growth.
- Grow and develop business retention and expansion initiatives including business visits, surveys and provision of business information and support in order to ensure regular communication, monitoring and updating the business community's needs and issues.
- Attend targeted trade shows that allow promotion of development opportunities and provide access to major retail companies and institutional investors.
- Contribute to Planning and Development Documents to create clear policy and regulations for businesses.
- Plan, support, invest and build tourism efforts to grow Blackfalds as an attractive destination for visitors and residents.
- Clearly message the Town's benefits and the competitive advantage.



Leadership & Engagement

Leadership & Engagement are crucial to keep Blackfalds moving towards our goals. This can be supported through an ongoing dialogue with the community, local organizations, neighbouring municipalities, and other levels of government. This ensures that residents and community leaders are informed, connected and able to provide feedback. This will result in the best possible decisions for everyone.



AREAS OF FOCUS

- The Town of Blackfalds provides leadership and collaboration with citizens to enable community sustainability.
- The community builds future leaders, while pursuing strategies for the enhancement of Blackfalds in the future.
- Community involvement is built into Council decision-making.
- The Town will be fiscally responsible while meeting the needs of citizens.
- Town communication will use widely-distributed means of engagement such as social media, in addition to existing dialogue streams.
- The Town pursues provincial, county, and regional funding opportunities, relationships and partnerships.
- The Town advocates for community champions from a variety of demographics and interest groups.
- The Town will invest to ensure adequate staffing and processes are established.

DECISION-MAKING LENSES

The natural environment contributes to a high quality of life. As part of Council's decision making process the preservation of natural environment and promote a culture to improve environmental performance.



Infrastructure and building investments for the Town should focus on improving the safety, and quality of life for the community members. Thoughtful acquisitions and maintenance of assets that will improve service levels for residents and non-residents will be part of Council's decision making process.



EXECUTING THE PLAN



STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1

Community Life

AREA OF FOCUS	SUPPORTING PROJECTS & INITIATIVES
Ensure that all residents have access to the services that the Town provides.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOLT Transit
Connect residents to services and services to residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOLT Transit • Trans Canada Trail • Electrical vehicle charging stations • Online service options • Advocate for Alberta Registry services • Increase services provided by Canada Post
Provide opportunities for residents to connect to enhance community spirit and volunteerism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Events (Blackfalds Days, Winterfest, etc) • Volunteer appointments to Council Committees • Volunteer Coordination • Volunteer Appreciation
Ensure that the safety of our residents is paramount to decision making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policing Committee • Traffic Safety Plan • Emergency Management Preparedness
Promote options for housing diversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Use Bylaw • Land subsidies for development • Land designated and set aside for Senior Housing Options

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2

Economy

AREA OF FOCUS	SUPPORTING PROJECTS & INITIATIVES
<p>Create an attractive environment for industrial and commercial growth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long and short term planning (Master Plans) • Explore development incentives • Census • Regional Tourism Boards
<p>Grow and develop business retention and expansion initiatives including business visits, surveys and provision of business information and support in order to ensure regular communication, monitoring and updating business community needs and issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development Committee • Funding and partnership with Chamber of Commerce • Business and Developer Surveys • Business and Development Page on Website
<p>Attend targeted trade shows that allow promotion of development opportunities and provide access to major retail companies and institutional investors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red Deer Home Show • Explore additional options for Trade Show attendance and site selector shows
<p>Contribute to Planning & Development documents to create clear policy and regulations for businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Use Bylaw amendments as needed • Planning policy amendments as needed • Bylaw amendments as needed
<p>Plan, support, invest and build tourism efforts to grow Blackfalds as an attractive destination for visitors and residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with sports organizations and other cultural organizations to create events • Attract and grow current relationships to be the premier destination for activity and sport/recreation hosting
<p>Clearly message the Town's benefits and the competitive advantage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotional videos • Marketing brochures • Blackfalds business, investment, and intelligence tool

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3

Leadership & Engagement

AREA OF FOCUS	SUPPORTING PROJECTS & INITIATIVES
The community builds future leaders, while pursuing strategies for the enhancement of Blackfalds in the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Committees • Recreation Master Plan, Transportation Master Plan, etc.
Community involvement is built into Council decision-making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Engagement Policy • Resident surveys and customer feedback • Open Houses • Council Committees
The Town will be fiscally responsible while meeting the needs of citizens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational and Capital Budget Planning • Budget Surveys • Asset Management • Annual Report
Town communication will use widely-distributed means of engagement such as social media, in addition to existing dialogue streams.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website improvements and user driven metrics - Blackfalds Connect • Digital Signage • Program & Activity Guide • Public Participation Policy
The Town pursues provincial, county, and regional funding opportunities, relationships and partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intermunicipal Collaborative Framework Agreements • Intermunicipal Development Plans • Regional Grant Collaboration
The Town advocates for community champions from a variety of demographics and interest groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding support for community Not-for-profits • School resource officer funding
The Town will ensure adequate staffing and processes are established.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal Service Level Inventory • Employee Engagement Survey • Develop Employee Training Profiles • Development of Succession Plan • COR Audit



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