

Appendix B  
Town of Strathmore SWOT  
Analysis and Review of Emerging  
Opportunities, May 1, 2019

# **Town of Strathmore SWOT Analysis & Review of Emerging Opportunities**

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Submitted to:  
The Town of Strathmore

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# Town of Strathmore SWOT Analysis & Review of Emerging Opportunities

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# 1.0 Introduction

The Town of Strathmore is situated approximately 40 km east of Calgary on the TransCanada highway. The location provides good connectivity to the Calgary airport, industrial areas and intermodal terminals on the east side of Calgary. Strathmore's location on Highway 1 and Highway 817 also ensures strong connectivity to the surrounding rural area and nearby communities. The Town's setting is also connected to its agricultural identity. Encircled by rich agricultural land, Strathmore has been a natural hub for servicing the nearby agricultural community and offering a small town lifestyle with most of the amenities and services of a larger centre.

Like many other municipalities in Alberta, the Town of Strathmore is influenced by global trends, particularly in the energy industry, and the broader dynamics of Alberta's economy. As such, Strathmore has benefited from growth and also experienced volatility given these market forces. The time is right to consider opportunities that will deliver a stronger and more diverse economy, and therefore resilient community. To that end, the Town of Strathmore intends to develop a better understanding of the current opportunities and challenges to growth, and the ways it can take a more active role in stimulating development opportunities.

This report focuses on the outcomes of a SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats). The analysis was identified as a first step in developing a better understanding of the factors influencing local growth and development, with a focus on elements the Town can influence. A targeted stakeholder group comprised of representatives of the real estate and development industry was identified by the Town to facilitate the analysis by providing their perspectives on the Town's assets, opportunities and challenges (whether real or perceived) that may impact growth.

## 1.1 Purpose

This report establishes the context for broader dialogue about growth and development as the Town begins the process of updating the Municipal Development Plan and creating a new economic development strategy. It also provides preliminary background for enhanced partnerships with business, other governments, educational institutions and the local community when defining the future of the Town.

The SWOT Analysis provides insight into the internal factors which the Town can control, and the external factors that are beyond their control but could take advantage of when the situation arises.

The purpose of the project, and specifically the SWOT Analysis, is to identify:

- The main strengths and opportunities that the Town can build on to further its growth and development objectives;
- Potential weaknesses that should be addressed and obstacles that the Town may not be able to influence but could compensate for in other ways; and
- The issues shaping the Town's future growth and development.

## 1.2 Approach

Work associated with this project was organized into four (4) phases:

1. Baseline Data Analysis;
2. Review of Planning Policies and Infrastructure;
3. SWOT Analysis based on key stakeholder engagement and research from previous phases; and
4. Synthesis and Documentation of the information collected throughout the process.

The purpose of Phase 1: **Baseline Data Analysis** is to gain a better understanding of the demographic profile of the Town and key socio-economic characteristics. These factors may help identify the conditions and opportunities to develop Strathmore's comparative advantage in the region.

The goal of Phase 2: **Review of Planning Policies & Infrastructure** is to conduct a high level review of the Town's planning framework and infrastructure environment based on input from stakeholders and Town Administration. The purpose is to identify any aspects of the current framework that may impact development and growth. If there are weaknesses in this area, then the goal is to ascertain the extent of the perceived issue relative to growth in the short or long term.

Often the best way to determine whether a factor is a strength or a weakness is to compare these factors across communities. As a result, Phase 3: **SWOT Analysis | Key Stakeholder Engagement** involves preparing an assessment of "peer" communities to help determine Strathmore's relative competitiveness based on certain metrics (for example: location, access to markets, transportation, workforce, housing prices, land values, employment, etc.). This assessment will provide insight into the Town's comparative advantages and disadvantages in terms of growth and investment.

Finally, Phase 4: **Documentation** involves synthesizing information collected from earlier phases and documenting in the findings in a final report.

## 2.0 Background Review

This section provides a high level overview of the key planning documents and municipal infrastructure impacting growth.

### 2.1 Planning Policies

#### Municipal Development Plan

Strathmore's Municipal Development Plan (MDP) is a foundational document that provides direction on long-term growth and development, and identifies how to achieve the community's vision of the future. More specifically, it is used by Town Council and staff to make decisions about land use, infrastructure investment and other community service priorities.

The current MDP was adopted in April 2014 and articulates the community vision as follows:

*"Strathmore is a community of history and space. A community in which responsible development is balanced with smart, well planned parks, wetlands and open space. As a regional service centre, Strathmore provides a strong environment for families to grow while still recognizing connections to the past. Strathmore is a community where quality of life is a way of life." – Strathmore's MDP, 2014.*

This vision is founded on four (4) values:

- History – where the Town has come from to create the place it is today;
- Space – an emphasis on parks, open space, wetlands and other assets that give the Town a sense of openness, complimentary to the surrounding agricultural landscape;
- Family – the importance of family within the Town;
- Recreation – incorporating amenities that promote activity and healthy lifestyles.

Aligning with the community vision and core values, the MDP should help future planning decisions by asking some key questions such as:

- What type of housing do current and future residents need?
- Where should new development be located and what form should it take?
- How can we create more local jobs?
- How can we create quality public spaces that reflect the Town's identity, and are safe, comfortable and accessible to citizens of all ages and abilities?

Since local government has a significant role to play in nurturing the economic, social and environmental conditions necessary for a community to thrive, it is important that the tools at their disposal support the conditions they aspire to. The MDP is one of the tools to facilitate the desired outcome while engaging the public in conversations related to the questions noted above. When Strathmore embarks on updating the Town's MDP, consideration may be given to:

- Confirmation of values and vision with consideration given to community resilience in terms of social, economic, environmental and cultural aspirations.
- Revisiting the future land use plan to:
  - ensure it aligns with population growth and specific economic development initiatives, i.e. the MDP should identify where industries can locate through the land use concept, and where infrastructure is needed to support new industries.
  - consider accommodating institutional uses such as post-secondary/ instructional facilities, and identify where these facilities should be located in the Town.
  - allow for the expansion and diversification of the agricultural sector.
- Within the Town's planning framework, consider approaches to including more detail on community design; for example, require developers provide concept plans/outline plans that provide specific direction on streetscapes and the architectural style of new communities. Ensure requirements are clear and avoid onerous or redundant information that may already be in the ASP or MDP.
- Parks and open space policy that emphasizes barrier free design to maximize accessibility for all ages, physical abilities and family types.
- Making the document more accessible or user friendly; for example, using modernized language and providing web-based version of the MDP that contains hyperlinks to facilitate navigation of the document on-line.
- Inclusive and responsive engagement that aims to create a sense of ownership of the plan.
- Identifying a measurable means by which to monitor plan progress, i.e. a system for evaluating progress towards the desired objectives.

## Area Structure Plans

Area Structure Plans (ASPs) represent a conceptual framework for land use redesignations, subdivision and/or development, and these plans should include more detail than what is present in the MDP. In Strathmore, ASPs are created by developers with direction from the Town. ASPs are statutory plans that should be prepared from the Town's perspective, and should contain sufficient policy statements to allow the Town to review and evaluate a specific development proposal against the Town's MDP and provincial standards. The Town requested a high level review of the most recent ASPs which include:

- Lakewood Meadows ASP (adopted 2012, amended November 2018)
- Wildflower Ranch ASP (adopted 2010, most recent consolidation March 2017)
- Edgefield ASP (adopted 2012, most recent consolidation October 2015)

A review of these plans indicate they contain the necessary land use, site servicing and phasing/implementation information, as per ASP requirements in the Municipal Government Act. The recent ASPs also state how the plan aligns with the objectives of the MDP. While these plans are comprehensive and meet the necessary requirements

for ASPs, the Town may benefit from additional details whether provided in an ASP or a separate non-statutory plan.

The next level of detail that may facilitate the Town's review of new land use and/or development permit applications while ensuring high quality community design is the requirement for a concept plan. A concept plan could illustrate the specific design characteristics that will achieve the vision articulated in the ASP. A concept plan may include urban design principles and guidelines to help the Town determine the quality of the public realm. Street cross sections and imagery depicting the character of the community and style of architecture may facilitate the review process (note: some of this imagery is included in The Prairies' ASP). Additional policies or guidelines including plans and graphics associated with public spaces like parks and trails could help the Town understand the quality and potential operations/maintenance considerations of municipal reserves. This becomes another tool the Town can use, even if the land changes ownership, to ensure a high standard is met at the implementation stage.

## 2.2 Infrastructure

This section provides a brief high level overview of the current state of municipal infrastructure, as a factor influencing future growth.

### Water Servicing

Construction of the 45 km East Calgary Regional Waterline in 2009 brought treated water to Strathmore from Calgary. The purpose was to meet the future water demands of Strathmore and Chestermere until the year 2031 (reference Master Servicing Study Update 2012). Strathmore's share of the water supply amounted to 201 L/s which in 2012, was estimated to be sufficient to meet the demand of the projected 2022 population of approximately 26,000 based on water conservation and projected demand at the time (Master Servicing Study 2012 Update, AECOM).

Based on conversations with the Town and high level review of existing servicing studies, there are no pressing concerns associated with the Town's water supply, storage, pumping, transmission and distribution systems. In other words, the current system is expected to accommodate a population  $\pm 30,000$ .

### Wastewater (Sanitary Sewerage System)

In 2006, the Town first completed the treated wastewater effluent pipeline and outfall. This 21 km pipeline was constructed from the waste water treatment plant to a secondary channel of the Bow River; however, in 2011 Alberta Environment required the effluent discharge point to be relocated to a new location on the main stem of the Bow River. In 2010, the Town's waste water treatment plant was upgraded to increase the capacity of the system to serve a population of  $\pm 30,000$  people (Master Servicing Study 2017 Update – Sanitary System, Allnorth Consultants Limited).

Given these infrastructure upgrades, the Town's wastewater system can accommodate growth without significant or costly upgrades. The only issue identified by the Town is the central trunk Highway 1 crossing which needs to be upgraded. Based on conversations with the Town's engineering department, the crossing can handle  $\pm 900$  units before it reaches capacity which is estimated to occur in 2-3 years.

### Stormwater System

Most of the Town's existing and future drainage systems drain into the Western Irrigation District (WID) irrigation system. As a result, much of the criteria for the Town's Stormwater Master Drainage Plan is provided by the WID. Based on conversations with town staff, and review of the Master Servicing Update – Stormwater (July 2018), the following concerns have been identified:

- Meeting CSMI recommendations on maximum stormwater discharge rates, for example:
  - a maximum allowable unit area release rate of 0.8 L/s/ha for annexed lands;
  - an average annual runoff volume of 40 mm for lands that drain into the Serviceberry Drainage area; and

- an average annual runoff volume of 20 mm for annexed lands that drain into the Eagle Lake drainage system.
- Computer modelling indicates the Town's stormwater management system does not meet the criteria of maximum stormwater release rates into the Eagle Lake Ditch, WID 'A' Canal and WID 'A' Canal North. Maximum release rates into these areas are significantly higher than the criteria.

Release Rate Criteria	Computer Modelling of Existing Condition
1,700 L/s to Eagle Lake Ditch	4,935 L/s
1,415 L/s to WID 'A' Canal	4,793 L/s
141 L/s to WID 'A' North Canal	1,766 L/s

#### Municipal Infrastructure: Impact on Growth

The Town's water and wastewater systems have the capacity to support significant growth. This is an asset to the Town and attractive to developers, and growing the population.

A review of the existing information indicates the weakness in infrastructure lies in the stormwater management system. The current criterion for stormwater release rates could impact long-term growth if the status quo persists. This issue is recognized by the Town and is also a concern to the development industry as noted in subsequent sections of this report. Resolving this issue may be necessary to support long-term growth.

## 3.0 Baseline Data: Demographic & Socio Economic Profile

### 3.1 Strathmore at a Glance

ICON	<b>Steady population growth.</b> In 2001, the population was 7,425 compared to 12,911 in 2016. Over this period the population increased by 73.9% at an average rate of 3.8% per year.
ICON	<b>Housing is relatively affordable.</b> Overall, 80% of households in Strathmore are spending less than 30% of their income on housing. (2016)
ICON	<b>Household income is similar to Alberta as a whole.</b> The total median income of households in Strathmore is \$88,500 which is slightly less than the Alberta median. (2016)
ICON	<b>Residents are likely to own a home.</b> 79% of Strathmore residents own their own home. (2016)
ICON	<b>The majority of residents live in a detached house.</b> About 60% of residents live in a single detached home. (2016)
ICON	<b>There is a variety of housing types in the town.</b> While 60% of dwellings are single detached, approximately 13% are semi-detached or duplexes and 23% are multi-residential buildings. (2016)
ICON	<b>Residents are likely to work within a 45 minute commute of home.</b> About 72% of Town residents work within a 45 minute commute of their home. Of these residents, 43% work within 15 minutes of their home, and 29% work between 15 and 45 minutes from home. (2016)



<b>ICON</b>	<b>Strathmore is a regional hub.</b> The Town's population is approximately 12,911 but it serves about 35,000 people from the surrounding area. (2016)
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## 3.2 Demographic & Socio-Economic Profile

The following is an overview of key demographic and socio-economic statistics gleaned from the most recent Canadian census data (2016). The purpose is to provide a snapshot of the Town as demographics help to inform planning for development including the economy's growth potential.

### Demographics

#### Population Growth

While there have been some fluctuations in population growth over the years, between 2001 and 2016, the population of Strathmore has increased 3.8% per year on average.

**Insert Graphic**

#### Age Structure

Overall, Strathmore's age structure is similar to Alberta as a whole. Variation occurs in the 65+ age bracket which comprises 16% of Strathmore's population compared to 12% at the provincial level. Also, Strathmore's 20-64 year age cohort makes up 58% of the local population compared to 63% across Alberta.

**Insert Graphic**

### Housing

#### Type of Dwellings

Compared to other nearby communities, Strathmore has more variation in housing type. For example, 60% of the housing stock in Strathmore are detached homes while 13% are semi-detached or duplexes and 23% are multi-residential buildings. Other nearby municipalities tend to have significantly more detached housing in comparison to Strathmore.

**Insert Graphic**

#### Median Value of Housing

Over the last several years, housing values have shifted in Alberta due to economic instability across much of the province.

In 2016, census data indicated that the median value of housing in Strathmore was approximately \$325,000. Median housing values in the first four months of 2019 are somewhat different, and this data seems to vary depending on the source. For example, the year-to-date median housing price in Strathmore at the end of April was \$286,900 according to CREB data (Reference: [https://www.creb.com/Housing\\_Statistics/](https://www.creb.com/Housing_Statistics/)). This is the median sold price based on 50 sales in the first 4 months of 2019. Median price means that 50% of properties sold for less than \$286,900 and the other 50% sold for more than this price. The advantage of using the median rather than the average price is that the median is not adversely influenced by extreme numbers, and therefore provides a better reflection of the market in terms of prices. Generally, a minimum of 30 transactions are required to provide a valid measure of property market values.

**Insert Graphic**

#### Housing Tenure

The renter population tends to be somewhat higher in Strathmore than in other nearby communities; however, the vast majority (79%) of residents in Strathmore still own their own home.

**Insert Graphic**

## Income & Wealth

### Median Income

The median total household income before taxes in Strathmore was \$88,500.

The median total individual income for people aged 15 years and over was \$40,700.

Insert Graphic

### Housing Expenditure

Monthly housing costs are comparatively reasonable in Strathmore. Owners tend to spend \$1400 per month on housing compared to renters who spend approximately \$1200 per month.

Overall about 80% of Strathmore residents spend less than 30% of their income on housing. In Canada, housing is considered affordable if it costs less than 30% of a household's before tax income.

Insert Graphic

## Economy

### Employment Sectors

Approximately 23% of the population in Strathmore is employed in sales and service sector, and 21% are employed in the trades, transport and equipment operation. The next highest employment sector is business, finance and administration which employs about 14% of the population.

Insert Graphic

## 4.0 Stakeholder Engagement: SWOT Analysis

This section presents the SWOT analysis based on key stakeholder engagement that involved representatives from the real estate and development industry. It contains a description of who was involved, how they were engaged and what the outcomes were of the events described in a SWOT format.

### 4.1 Description of Stakeholder Engagement

Over the course of eight (8) weeks, thirteen (13) Key Stakeholders and two (2) Calgary Developers were solicited to provide feedback on the Town of Strathmore in the context of growth and development. Stakeholders were made aware that this engagement was a precursor to the Town's upcoming initiative to update the Municipal Development Plan.

The Stakeholder group was defined by Town Administration, and included representatives from the local real estate and development industry. This group is active in the local market and could provide significant insight into development opportunities and constraints within the Town. Two Calgary area developers were selected to provide an outside perspective. These developers are currently active in Calgary and other smaller municipalities in the Calgary region; however, they are not currently doing business in Strathmore. The purpose of consulting this group was to gain insight into the factors they consider when looking for new development opportunities, and to learn about their perspectives on Strathmore.

Stakeholders were invited to complete a questionnaire and participate in meetings to facilitate dialogue and solicit feedback to share with the Town to help shape and inform future discussions.

The Key Stakeholders (local real estate and development industry) included:

- Crista Aleman, Michelle Northcut, Hayley Poirier, and Carey Rose (The REPs Group);
- Bill Greene, Steve Lister, and Ken Struss (Cancorp);
- Barry Nephin (Aquila Homes);

- Eve Renaud (Rencor Developments);
- Neal Colter (Skyscape Management Inc.);
- Matt Haasen (Blue-Con Excavating Ltd.); and
- Bill Maher (Lee Maher Engineering Associates Ltd) on behalf of Bill Turnbull (Pollyco Group of Companies).

The Calgary area developers included:

- George Trutina, President (Truman Homes)
- Asad Niazi, President (Canopy Lands)

Overall, stakeholders were very appreciative that they were invited to participate. They expressed optimism and were hopeful that this would be an opportunity for all parties to begin working together to facilitate growth and be part of the Town's next chapter.

## Questionnaire

Each stakeholder was emailed a Questionnaire to complete in preparation of the stakeholders meeting. The Questionnaire was divided into six main themes in order to facilitate a conversation and to solicit their input, as follows:

1. Community Amenities and Lifestyle
2. Political Environment
3. Town Administration / Planning & Development
4. Municipal Infrastructure
5. Housing and Land Development
6. Industry and Employment

Questionnaires completed by the Key Stakeholders are appended to this document for reference (see **Appendix A: Completed Key Stakeholder Questionnaires**).

Summary Notes of the Completed Key Stakeholders Questionnaires were appended to this document for reference (see **Appendix B: Key Stakeholder Questionnaire Summary Notes**).

## Key Stakeholders Meetings

At each of the Key Stakeholders Meetings, participants were provided with a quick overview and introduction of how the meeting was going to proceed. Each stakeholder was provided an opportunity to contribute by sharing their own perspectives, opinions, and understanding in a mutual and respectful manner. The level of participation was excellent and very professional.

Points raised and discussed at the meetings were recorded and appended to this document for reference (see **Appendix C: Key Stakeholder Meetings Notes**).

## 4.2 SWOT Analysis

The Key Stakeholders Meetings involved a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) Analysis, which was employed to help facilitate the discussion around the six main themes. The SWOT analysis provided the framework to help identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that the Town of Strathmore is or will face in reaching their growth objective (both internally and externally), while acknowledging that the Town can position itself to promote and encourage sustainable growth.

The following SWOT analysis highlights the top five points that were raised in the Key Stakeholders Meetings in each of the four categories:

## SWOT Analysis – Top-Five (5)

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civic Amenities – hospital, schools, field house, indoor pool, and ice rinks.</li> <li>• Secure water supply from The City of Calgary.</li> <li>• Sanitary upgrades can accommodate a population of 40,000 people.</li> <li>• Easy commute with the sun at your back when commuting to Calgary.</li> <li>• Small town lifestyle that is still relatively affordable</li> </ul>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The lack of a full-time fire department has created an uneven playing field among developers/builders, as a result of the 10 minute response time.</li> <li>• No upgrades on storm water management and no strategy for addressing this impending issue that will stop development.</li> <li>• There were ±300 housing starts in 2007 compared to only 25 housing starts in 2018.</li> <li>• Economic development is needed, since the Town is not perceived as being open for business or business friendly.</li> <li>• No new industry and no new jobs to support growth in the Town</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create jobs/opportunities by providing incentives to attract commercial businesses that generate jobs (eg. defer payments for off-site levies, business taxes, property taxes).</li> <li>• Collaborate with Wheatland County on shared fire station and full time firefighters to address fire protection issues.</li> <li>• Agricultural base should be strengthened and diversified to support other Agri-Industries, such as Agricultural based businesses, food security, food processing, hydroponics, etc.</li> <li>• Town of Strathmore should market/provide information to potential retailers so they understand that the Town of Strathmore has a regional draw of 25,000 population.</li> <li>• Discharge storm water to Serviceberry Creek in order to address storm water issues in the Town of Strathmore, while providing valuable water downstream for the Cattle Industry.</li> </ul>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Town has been negotiating with WID since 2009, with no progress and no solution. Town needs to find a solution to address the storm water issue.</li> <li>• New national mortgage qualification requirements impact all areas of the economy, not just residential development.</li> <li>• No growth and increased fees is a growing burden and deterrent for attracting new investment in the Town of Strathmore.</li> <li>• Big Corporate/National Retailers tend to look at the population of the Town rather than the actual regional draw. Town of Strathmore is currently lumped in with the City of Chestermere, as a single market catchment area.</li> <li>• The City of Calgary (Enmax) determines the water hook-up fees and utility rates in the Town of Strathmore</li> </ul>

## Calgary Developer Meetings

The meetings held with the Calgary Developers were held in a conversational style format in order to solicit perspectives and opinions regarding the Town. Topics of discussion included the challenges that these two developers face in today's economic climate in Alberta, since the Calgary developers are active in multiple markets. Points raised and discussed at these meetings were recorded and appended to this document for reference (see **Appendix D: Calgary Developer Meeting Notes**).

### 4.3 Key Outcomes from Stakeholder Engagement

Overall, the perspectives and opinions from the Calgary developers and the Key Stakeholders are similar and overlap, even though two different approaches were taken to solicit input and information.

The key messages from the local real estate and development stakeholder group are as follows:

1. There is a need to capitalize on existing amenities and promote/market the Town more effectively. People are unaware of the significant amenities and quality of life that Strathmore offers.
2. Outside Strathmore, the Town is not widely perceived as a destination or a great place to live yet it has many amenities.
3. Economic development is needed to provide more local employment opportunities and encourage working age people to stay in Strathmore.
4. The Town could be more proactive in advertising that it is “open for business”.
5. Even though the Town trades to 25,000 to 30,000 people, some national retailers are unaware of the extent of the Town’s regional draw. Economic development strategies could focus more on communicating the actual extent of the regional draw to attract new business and employment.
6. The current (2018) absorption rate of approximately 25 lots per year must increase if the Town is to grow significantly in the next 20 years. If this rate remains constant, the population will grow by about 1,250 people over the next 20 years based on 2.5 people per household.
7. Stormwater management requirements are a significant impediment to growth. The amount of land required for evaporation ponds is an inefficient use of developable land and will ultimately make projects economically unfeasible.
8. A full-time Fire Department may help the Town attract new home buyers and investors.
9. Beautification and directional signage may help improve the Town’s overall image and visitor experience, especially along the TransCanada Highway.
10. New national lending/mortgage qualification requirements have negatively impacted home and business sales.
11. Offering a greater diversity of housing types and mix (including secondary suites) may attract a variety of homeowners and renters.
12. A Truck Stop will improve safety and create a destination for truckers on the TransCanada Highway.
13. The availability of industrial land is key to jobs and growth.
14. Public transit may facilitate growth and encourage more people to relocate to Strathmore.
15. Fibre optic telecommunications may help attract businesses/entrepreneurs, and people who work remotely from home.
16. Better communication and more collaboration between the Town and business community could help market the Town to people looking for a small town lifestyle with all the amenities and services offered in a bigger city.
17. Significant capital investment has been made in water and sanitary servicing upgrades in recent years, which is advantageous; however, there is also fear that lack of growth may lead to higher fees and a growing burden on developers, and general deterrent to attracting new investment in the Town.
18. There are concerns with increasing property taxes, budgets and spending with no clear agenda for tackling municipal issues.
19. Incentives would help attract growth and investment in Strathmore. The Town could provide tax abatement on vacant lots and undeveloped land. Since these parcels are not using municipal services, the abatement can be justified.

The key messages from the Calgary developers are as follows:

1. There is a high unemployment rate and overall lack of confidence within Alberta.

2. The new national mortgage stress-test is making it harder for Albertans to buy homes.
3. Current and future oversupply of housing products in Calgary will impact the regional market and drive prices down in Calgary and the surrounding region.
4. Municipalities should utilize business-based decisions and expert advice that understands the market and its existing population.
5. Implement multi-generational planning initiatives.
6. Focus on differentiation and the value perspectives.
7. There is a need to attract and retain young people with jobs and activity – they need reasons to stay.
8. Encourage a mix of housing to accommodate a variety of socio-economic households.
9. Engage in visioning, branding, and marketing with input and support from a broad range of stakeholders.
10. Innovation will distinguish one community from the next.
11. Development has become very costly, anything the municipality can do to fast-track the approval process and reduce costs will help mitigate the inherent risks for all stakeholders.

In conclusion, there is a clear consensus that all stakeholders are passionate and interested in continuing to invest in the Town of Strathmore. Each of the Key Stakeholders offered unique perspectives and provided valuable insight into how the Town of Strathmore could become even better in all aspects of life.

Overall, stakeholders were very appreciative that they were invited to participate and are hopeful that this is an opportunity for all parties to begin working together and are excited to be part of the Town of Strathmore's next chapter.

## 5.0 The Strathmore Advantage

This section describes Strathmore's assets based on preliminary research and stakeholder input. The intent of this section is to provide a foundation for further discussion with a broader stakeholder group, Town Administration and Council on the Town's value proposition and potential marketing initiatives.

**Strathmore is a complete community.** People live, work, shop and play here. Instead of being a bedroom community to Calgary, Strathmore has all the amenities and services residents need within the Town boundary. A variety of housing, schools, health services, parks and recreation amenities, plus a variety of shopping experiences are attractive to people looking to escape a bigger city and experience a small town lifestyle with the key advantages of a big city. A complete community has the potential to attract business and support a skilled labour force when targeting new industries to locate in the Town.

**Strathmore offers a variety of recreation and cultural events.** Parks, trails and indoor facilities in the Town can accommodate almost every interest, sport and recreational desire including indoor and outdoor skating rinks, curling, aquatics, field house athletics, a splash park, and bocce courts just to name a few.

**Strathmore has affordable and varied housing options.** Housing is more affordable in Strathmore than in other nearby cities, towns and hamlets. The Town also offers more choice in housing type (single detached, semi-detached, townhouses, apartments and seniors housing) than other nearby communities.

**Strathmore is a place for all ages.** The Town's broad age demographic indicates it is a place for families and seniors providing the necessary ingredients for intergenerational community building.

**Strathmore is connected.** The Town has infrastructure, geographic location and assets that can facilitate a strong economic position. There is good access to transportation infrastructure for finished products and raw materials. Also, the availability of agricultural inputs including but not limited to meat and agricultural produce such as grains, oilseeds, and vegetables provide opportunities for the expansion of the agricultural sector in town.

**Strathmore is a strong regional retail centre.** With a draw of about 35,000 people from the surrounding rural areas, this sector provides jobs and a range of shopping experiences from large format retail (Walmart) to small format, main street retail.

**Strathmore offers important health services to residents of the town and region.** The hospital and related health services are key assets to the region with the potential to attract additional growth. The availability of these services attract a range of new residents but in particular these services help attract a growing seniors population looking to relocate from the surrounding rural areas to the Town so they may age in place with comfort and confidence that their needs will be addressed.

## 6.0 Emerging Opportunities

*“When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe”. – John Muir.*

The opportunities described in this section emerged from background research and ideas identified at the stakeholder engagement meetings for the SWOT Analysis. This is intended to identify initial directions to consider and to provoke further research and exploration with a more robust stakeholder group. The opportunities emerging from the stakeholders involved in this project are organized into the following theme areas:

1. Community, Recreation + Culture
2. Governance
3. Municipal Infrastructure
4. Commerce, Industry + Employment
5. Housing + Development
6. Social + Emergency Services

It is recognized that feedback did not cover all aspects of the community including features that may appear in Strathmore's MDP. For example, Environmental Management and Heritage Preservation did not emerge as key topics for this stakeholder group. As a result, additional consultations with other community groups and the public during the MDP process may provide a broader view and other priorities. In addition, more consultation for both the MDP and future economic development work should instigate more focused research, and confirm growth objectives and the main target markets for economic development. One of the keys to success will be forming and maintaining strong partnerships between the Town, business owners, investors and many organizations and institutions that support the community.



## Community, Recreation + Culture

*Create and foster a strong community identity to facilitate social cohesion and promote the town to newcomers.*

### ESTABLISHING + MARKETING A UNIQUE IDENTITY

There is a strong sense of belonging in the Town of Strathmore. This coupled with a strong interest in growth and change, especially change that builds on the Town's strengths and focuses on resiliency. Interest in transformation presents an opportunity to define or enhance existing values and build a strong Town identity that focuses on differentiation while fostering a sense of belonging.

Stakeholders suggested the Town's image could be strengthened by a coordinated approach to defining and articulating the Town's uniqueness. There is a need to capitalize on existing amenities and promote/market the Town more effectively. This suggests there is an opportunity to engage in visioning, branding, and marketing with input and support from a broad range of stakeholders. This cooperative approach can help minimize costs while ensuring a consistent message about Strathmore's identity and advantage is conveyed to the public.

The TransCanada Highway is the primary gateway to the town. Stakeholders indicated that this gateway could be improved to enhance the Town's image and visitor experience. A plan for beautification and directional signage may help draw visitors into the heart of the community and to popular recreation facilities and areas.

### PARKS, RECREATION + COMMUNITY DESIGN

Strathmore has a significant residential land base. New residential development provides opportunities for the Town to play an active role in creating new vibrant, healthy communities through early collaboration with developers. Ensuring new sustainable community design includes a range of well-connected recreation spaces, and thoughtful linkages to surrounding amenities and commercial activity centres will help foster more livable, active communities. The current MDP identifies three outdoor recreation priorities for residents: comprehensive trail system, open spaces and sports fields. An update of the MDP should determine if these areas remain the priority or if there are new needs in the community.

Ensure there is a program for forecasting future park and recreation facility requirements as recreation is a key component of the quality of life in Strathmore.

### CULTURAL EVENTS + OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGING CITIZENS

Cultural events and programming throughout the seasons provide opportunities to bring the community together and draw visitors to the Town. These events also provide the Town with the opportunity to use these events for pop-up engagement on a variety of initiatives (e.g. setting up booths or sounding boards to solicit feedback on specific issues or initiatives). The Get to Know Your Neighbour Festival, and the Strathmore Heritage Days and Rodeo event are examples of the types of community and cultural events that build community while providing the Town access to a significant number of residents for engagement on issues or simply to provide information about services, etc.

## Governance

*Success results from collaboration and implementation.*

### TRANSPARENCY

Open transparent governance is key to building trust with citizens. Stakeholders indicated the importance of local government engaging with a variety of stakeholders in long-term strategic planning for growth and development. This engagement adds credibility to the process and the outcomes, and builds trust with stakeholders and citizens. The knowledge and experience of stakeholders and those who will help realize the vision of future growth, will help ensure the key directions/action areas can be implemented.



There are concerns with increasing property taxes, budgets and spending and the perception is that there is no clear agenda for tackling municipal issues. This may be perception rather than reality; however, it may be worth advertising (or making information more easy to access) that outlines the Town's plan to address key municipal issues.

#### **ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Information that will facilitate doing business in Strathmore and providing services to residents should be easily accessible to a variety of groups. Ensure information is easily accessible to residents and developers. In the digital age, ensuring websites are easy to navigate and offer key information for a range of users (residents, visitors, businesses, developers, etc.) is critical.

#### **INTER-MUNICIPAL COOPERATION**

With a focus on economic development, there is an opportunity for enhanced inter-municipal cooperation on economic development initiatives as well as continued cooperation on recreational resources, emergency and protective services and other social services. This may help reduce costs of service provision and ensure there is no direct overlap in target markets for economic growth; rather, a complementary focus that could enhance economic advantage throughout the region.

#### **DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES**

The development industry suggests development is becoming more costly, but it is more difficult to pass on costs to consumers. Municipal incentives may help attract growth and investment in Strathmore. For example, the Town could provide tax abatement on vacant lots and undeveloped land. Since these parcels are not using municipal services, the abatement may be defensible.

### **Municipal Infrastructure**

*Responsible growth management is a key component of sustainability.*

#### **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT**

In recent years, Strathmore has made significant capital investment in water and sanitary servicing upgrades, which facilitates growth over the long-term. However, current stormwater management requirements may become a significant impediment to growth in the near future as the amount of land required for evaporation ponds could make projects economically unfeasible.

Innovative local solutions may be required to address stormwater management issues. There is an opportunity for consultation and collaboration with the development industry, land owners and consultants to help identify short and long term solutions. There may be opportunities to pool resources and provide additional pressure on regulatory bodies to help resolve the current stormwater management situation.

Water recovery, reclamation, reuse and recycle programs may help harness wastewater and reduce overall usage. This can reduce stormwater runoff as there is less water usage that would otherwise become runoff. While such programs will not solve the issue, they represent small steps towards a larger resolution.

Collaborations could involve working with consultants and developers to explore requirements for low impact development and how it can be applied to new developments, redevelopment or as retrofits to older developments in order to reduce runoff volumes, pollutant loadings and the overall impact of developments on receiving waters.

## GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Part of the appeal of smaller towns is that they are legible – there is a definitive main street, highway commercial corridor and a clear distinction between town and countryside. When town and country start to intermix and development is not contiguous, the town becomes less readable and financial inefficiencies emerge as municipal infrastructure extends to peripheral areas when other areas adjacent to existing development remain undeveloped. Growth management initiatives can help avoid this situation. Some suggestions include:

- Maintain an inventory of vacant land and intensification opportunities that can be utilized by buildings and development interests looking for sites. Make known the opportunities, if any, in existing neighbourhoods.
- Ensure growth is happening in the right locations, and is staged appropriately to support existing infrastructure to avoid extra costs. Development should be paced with the ability to provide and maintain municipal infrastructure. This could link to a growth management plan.

## Commerce, Industry + Employment

### *A diversified economy is a resilient economy.*

Strathmore is a regional centre for commerce east of Calgary. With a regional draw of about 35,000 people, there is a range of large and small format retail as well as personal service, banking, restaurants and hotels in the Town. This is an important asset and base for attracting growth and development as residents of the town and the region can access the majority of required services without leaving the area.

There is a need to enhance and encourage local economic activity to provide a municipal tax base capable of supporting the facilities, amenities and activities desired by residents. More economic activity creates stability by attracting jobs that will retain and attract new population growth. This starts with more focused work on economic development and the Town being proactive in advertising that it is open for business. The following identifies some opportunities that were discussed with stakeholders and build on Strathmore's strengths.

## ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION + RESILIENCE

In terms of industrial development, traditionally this type of development in the Town has focused on oil and gas, and agriculture. In recent years, the volatility of the oil and gas sector has created uncertainty throughout Alberta and heightened the need for better economic resiliency through diversification in Strathmore and across the province.

Opportunities for diversification and employment generation in Strathmore could involve the alternative energy industry and agri-business which is already apparent; however, the focus could be on accelerating this sector.

## Alternative Energy

Strathmore has the opportunity to capitalize on emerging technology and the alternative energy industry (solar, wind and geothermal energy sources). The proposed solar farm by Solar Krafte Utilities Inc. could kick-start initiatives in this area. This project has the potential to attract widespread attention and interest in Strathmore. The solar farm would be situated on 320 acres in the south eastern portion of the town adjacent to the existing sub-station. Reports indicate the solar farm has the ability to generate enough power for more than 10,000 homes. Strathmore's location was attractive to this business as it offered the capacity and ability to easily connect to the power grid for distribution. If the project is approved by the Alberta Utilities Commission, the Town can leverage this project to attract compatible/complementary industries and businesses to generate local jobs. Understanding the needs of the industry and their infrastructure requirements will be the key to a successful marketing strategy.

### Agri-business

In addition to the alternative energy sector, Strathmore should continue to take advantage of the strong agricultural base surrounding the town. There is an opportunity to further develop agri-business in the town. Research will be required to understand market demand, availability of agricultural inputs and local capacity for specific operations; however, an emphasis on agri-business continues to be an opportunity for economic diversification in the area. There is an increasing consciousness of the environment and health benefits in purchasing locally produced, organic, traceable and ethically produced food products. A successful local example of this trend is the Origin Malting & Brewing Co. and their local “Barley to Beer” story. This is another possible catalyst for development offering an opportunity to showcase local success, and examine the potential for other spin-off operations that support rather than compete with existing businesses.

Strathmore has good access to transportation infrastructure enabling efficient distribution of inputs and finished products. The town’s proximity to raw agricultural inputs coupled with its easy access to major transportation/distribution channels, presents opportunities to identify and strengthen spin-offs from the agricultural sector. Some potential value added industries associated with agriculture include: food and plant production; and food and beverage processing (as noted above).

Food and/or plant production can be in the form of hydroponics, green house growers, and honey production just to name a few examples. Food and beverage processing opportunities could involve manufactured food products such as meat, malt, canola oil, processed potatoes, dairy and bakery products, as well as the much-loved local craft beer business and distillers.

Success factors that should be considered when targeting specific agri-business include but are not limited to the following:

- Access to markets in need of the product;
- Business climate that supports companies and encourages investment;
- Regulatory environment that can respond to industry needs and supports innovation;
- Access to interconnected transportation system; and
- A labour force that meets the skills and experience required in the industry.

Developing a greater understanding of these factors relative to specific economic development pursuits, may help evaluate the potential for certain activities in Strathmore.

### Logistics + Distribution Centres

The logistics and distribution centre industry is another opportunity that may be suited to Strathmore and worthy of further research. Technology and the way customers interact with suppliers has created a need for modern distribution centres that can respond to customer requirements quickly and efficiently. These centres must be equipped with the latest technology for order processing, warehouse management and transportation management. The availability of industrial land on the south side of the Town with easy access to the TransCanada may be an attractive feature to businesses in this industry. Companies may also be swayed to locate in Strathmore given the current demographic, affordable housing relative to other markets plus all the amenities and services that make the town a complete community and attractive to workers.

Overall, strategizing for economic development presents an opportunity to bolster regional cooperation. Effective economic development strategies evolve from cooperation and partnerships among communities. Pooling resources and identifying actions/initiatives that facilitate development in both Strathmore and Wheatland County facilitates mutual success.

**PUT THIS IN A BOX** *The opportunities offered by new industries may spur expansion of the Town’s educational sector. This will likely require collaboration with different levels of government and private sector to strengthen education to support or expand industries. Greater resilience requires the working age population to stay and grow*

*their families. In order to do this, post-secondary training should be accessible and the jobs should match the skills of the population.*

## **Housing + Development**

### *Housing choice contributes to diverse communities.*

The town is well-positioned to capture a population that enjoys living in a smaller centre that has all the necessary amenities and services, but is still relatively close to a major urban centre. Strathmore's advantage is that it is a complete community rather than a bedroom community offering a quality affordable lifestyle. Although a significant portion of the population commutes outside the Town for work, there is a strong desire and need to support residential growth by increasing employment opportunities which involves more commercial and industrial development.

#### **DIVERSE HOUSING + AFFORDABILITY**

It is important for the Town to manage the rate, type and direction of future growth and development in a way that is compatible with the character of Strathmore, enhances the sense of community and is within the financial capacity of the Town.

One of Strathmore's strengths is the mixed demographic of its residents. As a result, the Town's planning documents should facilitate a balanced range of housing opportunities that support the needs and preferences of all household types and income levels. These documents could consider multi-generational planning initiatives, and continue to encourage diverse housing types including secondary suites in order to attract a variety of homeowners and renters. Overall, enabling and encouraging housing choice, and more affordable housing options can facilitate population growth.

#### **COMMERCIAL + INDUSTRIAL LAND BASE**

Retention and expansion of existing industrial development should be a priority. Aligning economic development objectives with the commercial and industrial land base is important to attracting new industries and business.

#### **PUBLIC TRANSIT**

Organizing public transit may facilitate growth and encourage more people to relocate to Strathmore. This may involve more study to determine where people work, and if/how a public transit system could get them close to where they need to go or connect to another public transit system that will take them to where they need to go in an efficient and cost effective manner.

## **Social + Emergency Services**

### *Collaborate and seize opportunities to create efficiencies while delivering quality services to citizens.*

#### **FIRE SERVICES**

As the town grows, establishing a full-time fire department has the potential to facilitate new development while improving safety, property protection and overall confidence within the community. The lack of a full-time fire department in Strathmore has added costs to some developments as builders are required to incorporate fire suppression measures (e.g., residential sprinkler systems and on-site water storage tanks) into residential development. These costs are, in turn, passed on to consumers. Home buyers may also be faced with higher insurance costs, which could deter growth in certain areas particularly when there is significant housing supply and lower demand.

Establishing a full-time fire service has benefits to the Town overall. It may improve personal safety and property protection. It is recognized that this service may require a significant financial investment by the Town. As such, consideration may be given to regional cooperation and cost sharing if feasible.

#### **CO-LOCATION + MULTIPLE USE FACILITIES**

Planning documents should support a range of public and private health and social services to meet community needs. Planning policy should also accommodate the development of facilities that can incorporate a variety of social, health and community services such as child care. These facilities can provide the greatest community benefit when located in major activity areas while accommodating multiple uses and facilitating access to all ages and abilities.

As Strathmore grows, opportunities for the co-location of compatible uses and services such as fire, emergency and protective services can create operational efficiencies and more effective service delivery to the community. Seeking ways to reduce and avoid costs while ensuring effective service delivery to residents should be incorporated into short and long term strategic planning of civic service facilities.

#### **Summary**

In summary, a range of ideas emerged from the stakeholder consultations covering a variety of theme areas:

1. Community, Recreation & Lifestyle,
2. Governance,
3. Municipal Infrastructure
4. Commerce Industry & Employment
5. Housing & Development
6. Fire & Emergency Services.

Stakeholder feedback helped to identify emergent sectors in the local economy including: Alternative Energy; Agri-business; and Logistics and Distribution Centres. In addition to ideas related to economic development, other ideas emerged that could enhance Strathmore's assets and address weaknesses. For example, enhancing partnerships and collaboration was a reoccurring suggestion from stakeholders – first to ensure a shared vision of community identity and the assets, and second to apply this shared vision to more cooperative marketing efforts. These partnerships could also be leveraged to resolve the stormwater management issue.

## **7.0 Recommendations**

This section provides a summary of recommendations based on the research and stakeholder feedback. These recommendations are arranged according to the theme areas described above.

<b>1.0 COMMUNITY, RECREATION + CULTURE – Potential Actions</b>	
<b>1.1</b>	Prepare a targeted marketing plan to promote the Town to priority markets. Consider collaborating with the businesses including the local real estate and development industry to align marketing efforts and reach a broader audience.
<b>1.2</b>	Enhance residents' and visitors' experience entering the Town from Hwy. 1. Consider urban design improvements along the highway and at the east and west gateways to the Town to promote a greater sense of place. In addition, enhanced wayfinding/directional signage may help visitors navigate the Town and direct them towards key destinations and events.
<b>1.3</b>	Create and host a major events calendar to facilitate local and visitor interest with economic spin-offs.

<b>1.4</b>	Continue to support community and civic events and celebrations. These include: music shows, lifestyle and arts events, exhibitions, outdoor film festivals, Canada Day, Heritage Days, etc.
<b>1.5</b>	Use events to communicate with citizens about a variety of initiatives. In addition to gaining critical feedback from citizens, this can help build relationships and trust between citizens and the Town.
<b>1.6</b>	Through the planning framework, emphasize new community design with a focus on sustainability and the health and wellness of residents. This will continue to support Strathmore's commitment to recreation and quality of life.

## **2.0 GOVERNANCE – Potential Actions**

<b>2.1</b>	Establish regular dialogue with development industry to enhance understanding and improve lines of communication; A forum for developing ideas and strategies to facilitate mutual objectives and break down barriers.
<b>2.2</b>	Consider updating the website to promote the community and make demographic data, mapping, and statistical information available online.
<b>2.3</b>	Through the MDP process, re-visit the Town's vision and confirm strategies that will help achieve the vision (e.g. big picture, long term goals). Establish a list of priorities for public input and feedback prior to embarking on updates to the new MDP.
<b>2.4</b>	Expand the scope of engagement in subsequent discussions on the MDP and economic development strategy to include a broad range of stakeholders in order to capture input and perspectives from other groups and agencies within the Town.
<b>2.5</b>	Investigate potential incentives to attract growth and investment within the Town.
<b>2.6</b>	Consider the opportunity and impact of deferring payments for off-site levies, business taxes, property taxes during the economic downturn.
<b>2.7</b>	Plan for the location of specific industries identified in an economic development strategy including appropriate land use, incentives framework, and coordinated business attraction strategy.
<b>2.8</b>	Develop or strengthen partnering frameworks to formalize opportunities for the Town and industry stakeholders to partner effectively and efficiently on economic development initiatives.
<b>2.9</b>	Investigate more cost effective and efficient ways to deliver services and utilities to businesses and residents. This may be part of an overall strategy to promote a positive business climate – setting and managing the conditions for economic growth.

## **3.0 MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE – Potential Actions**

<b>3.1</b>	Explore innovative local solutions to stormwater management issues within the Town. Consult and collaborate with experts and the development industry to determine an approach to resolving issues and creating solutions within the Town that may be less dependent on regional cooperation.
<b>3.2</b>	Investigate the potential value of installing fibre optics (high speed telecommunications) to attract and support more businesses/entrepreneurs, and people working remotely.
<b>3.3</b>	A definitive growth management strategy – the efficient use of land and infrastructure has significant fiscal advantage to the Town.

## **4.0 COMMERCE, INDUSTRY + EMPLOYMENT – Potential Actions**

<b>4.1</b>	Develop and implement a strategic Economic Development and Marketing Plan.
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4.2	Promote the Town's small town lifestyle and many great amenities through focused marketing.
4.3	Explore the potential for a more collaborative approach to marketing and partnerships with the local business community as well as the real estate and development industry.
4.4	Apply business-based decision-making to attract investment and build confidence in the market place.
4.5	To facilitate the expansion of the retail sector, consider participation in trade shows and in developing partnerships with trade/economic development organizations as and Franchise Trade Organizations.
4.6	Examine the potential for emergent sectors such as: Alternative Energy, Agri-business, Logistics and Distribution.
4.7	Investigate opportunities for the expansion of the educational sector to correspond with skills required in the local economy/workforce. For example, consider opportunities for vocational learning, the co-location of learning, research and business.

#### 5.0 HOUSING + DEVELOPMENT – Potential Actions

5.1	Ensure the planning framework creates opportunity for housing diversity and intergenerational communities.
5.2	Explore the feasibility of providing transit service from Strathmore to key employment and service destinations in the region.

#### 6.0 SOCIAL + EMERGENCY SERVICES – Potential Actions

6.1	Examine the potential for collaborating with Wheatland County on the provision of shared full-time fire services.
6.2	Planning policy should also accommodate the development of facilities that can incorporate a variety of social, health and community services such as child care.

## 8.0 Conclusion

Population growth and development may depend on key factors such as:

- People's preference for small town living;
- The availability of affordable housing relative to other opportunities in the region;
- The level of services and amenities that contribute to a high quality of life in the community;
- Economic and employment opportunities in the town and the region within commuting distance; and
- The available recreation and leisure opportunities in the town.

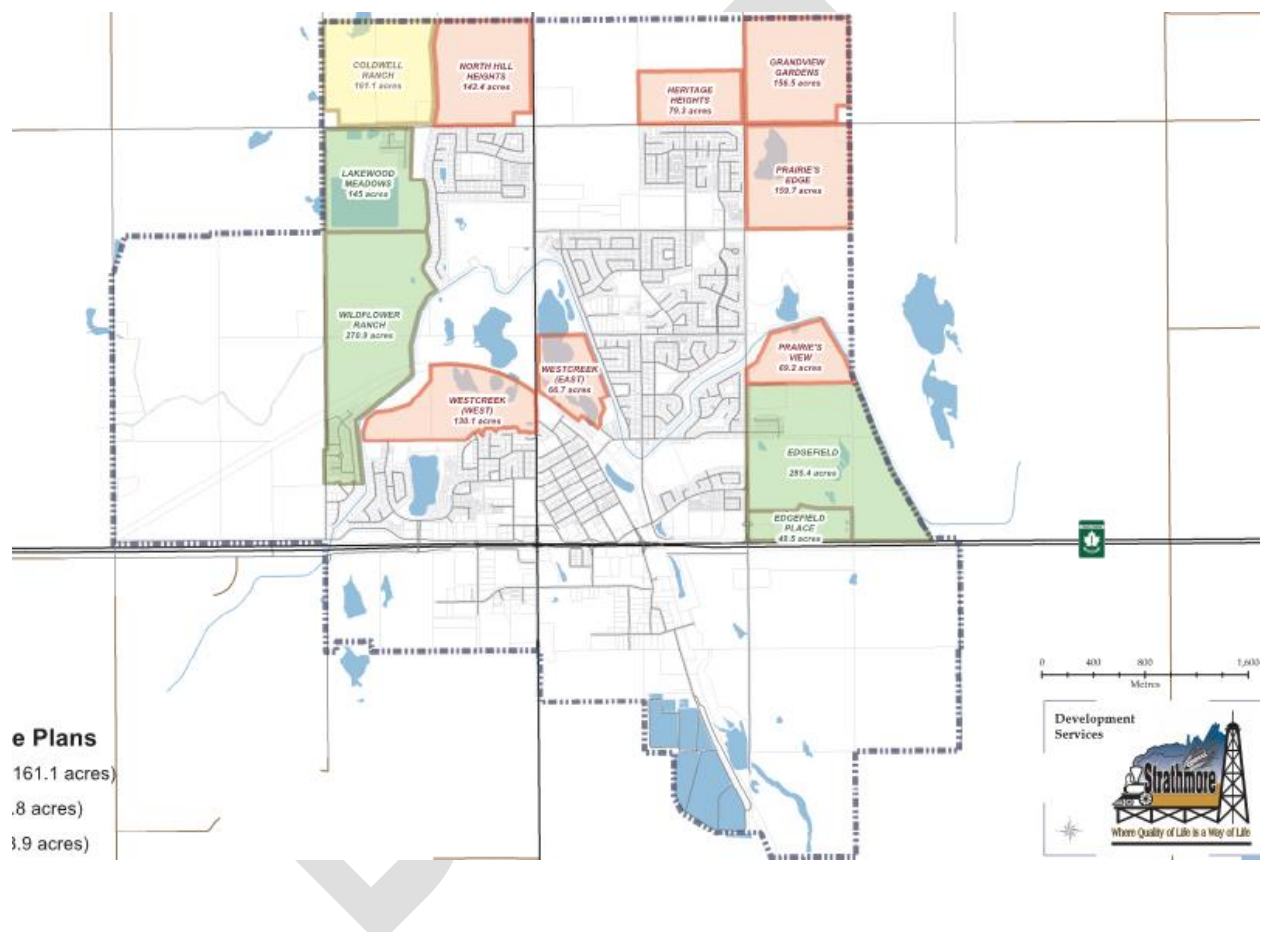
Research and stakeholder feedback reveal that Strathmore has many assets that should be embraced and promoted. For example, the Town is a true complete community with varied housing stock – new and old, offering a variety of affordable housing options. Residents have a strong sense of belonging and social cohesion, and recreational opportunities are easy to find in the Town. Given these assets and others mentioned in section 5.0 of the report, the Town has the potential to attract newcomers looking for a small town lifestyle in close proximity to a major urban centre.

A significant amount of approved land for residential development means the Town is poised to accommodate growth. Attracting investment in industry to grow local employment opportunities will be one of the keys to



stabilizing growth and greater community resilience in the future. In addition, stormwater management issues will need to be resolved to accommodate growth in the long-term; however, other infrastructure is in place to support more than double the current population.

Part of the understanding around the Town's current challenges with limited growth relates to the development barriers arising from land ownership and the reluctance of owners to move forward with development or to sell lands at a market price. This results in holding pattern that the Town has little control over. Any discussions about opening new lands to development should consider the question, or highlight the issue of the significant amount of suitable, vacant land in Strathmore that has gone through the ASP process but has resulted in relatively slow development. While this situation is a product of supply and demand, and market forces the Town may not control, it is important to understand the issue and consider it in light of growth management – ensuring a contiguous pattern of growth and the efficient, cost effective expansion of infrastructure.



This report is intended to establish the context for broader dialogue, advocacy and partnerships with business, other governments, the development industry and the local community. Managing growth and building community resilience can benefit from a systems approach to understanding complex inter-related issues, and how communities can adapt through changing circumstances. This can be reflected in the Town's Municipal Development Plan (MDP) by addressing social, economic, environmental and cultural aspects of the community moving forward. Achieving the Town's vision identified in the MDP will require a commitment to the implementation of guiding principles and policies that interconnect and are confirmed through the MDP planning process.



A more in-depth analysis should be performed as part of a comprehensive approach to economic development in the town. This work should also include contributions from local businesses, Town Administration and Council. In some situations, the ideas presented in this report may be used to trigger and frame further dialogue and research on specific issues.

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