

THE CITY OF RED DEER

STRATEGIC PLAN

July 1999

Our Strategic Plan

What it is.....

The City of Red Deer's Strategic Plan is our "*Mother of all Plans*". It guides The City along its path. It provides purpose and guiding principles for all we do and focuses on the areas of Community Development, Economic Development, Organization Development, and Financial Development.

How it influences us.....

Our Strategic Plan reflects the *collective values* of Council and Staff. These values communicate how we will treat each other, what we expect from ourselves, why we are here, and what we strive to achieve.

Our Strategic Plan provides *the guiding principles* for how we do things. It helps us focus on, and communicate to others, the things we will always do.

Our Strategic Plan forms the *base for all of our planning*. The details which support our Strategic Plan are found in a number of long-range plans which focus on specific areas of our operation. These documents, which are regularly updated, include:

Area Redevelopment Plans	Intermunicipal Development Plan
Communication and Customer Service Plan	Major Area Structure Plans
Community Services Master Plan	Municipal Development Plan
Cultural Policy	Municipal Integration Strategy
Downtown Concept Plan	Solid Waste Master Plan
Emergency Services Master Plan	Tourism Action Plan
Environmental Action Plan	Various Transportation Studies
Growth Study	Various Infrastructure Studies

Using our Strategic Plan and the other long-range plans as appropriate, each City department develops a three-year business plan that sets out what the department will do and how it will be done to fulfil our vision and purpose. From this, employees develop individual work plans which focus on key areas of the work they do to help us succeed as an organization.

The Strategic Plan also serves as the guiding document for many partner agencies in the development of their own business plans.

How it stays relevant

The City of Red Deer's Strategic Plan was adopted by City Council on July 05, 1999. Our Strategic Plan is an evolving document which is monitored regularly throughout the year and updated every three years to reflect changing demographics, community needs, opportunities, and expectations. Changes are made with the value of input from Council, staff, our partners, and the community.

What success will look like

Our performance will reflect our vision, our cornerstone values, our guiding principles, and our goals and strategies.

Our Cornerstone Values

The fundamental underlying values which guide us as an organization.

Respect: We will treat others the way we would want them to treat us.

Integrity: We will be honest, responsible, and trustworthy.

Service: We have a strong commitment to serving our community.

Excellence: We strive for the highest quality in all that we do.

Our Vision

A clear picture of our organization's preferred future.

People committed to service, opportunity, and a quality life for all with the spirit to make it happen!

Our Purpose

The function we will fulfil as an organization, including what we will do, for whom, and how we will do it.

To provide an effective and accessible municipal government that responds to community needs using skilled leadership and a progressive and balanced approach.

Table of Contents

Definitions	1
Our Guiding Principles	3
Customer Service	3
Human Resource Management	3
Financial and Physical Resource Management	4
Leadership/Governance	4
Communication	4
Long-term Goals and Strategies By Focus Area	6
1. Community Development	6
1.1 Quality of Life	6
1.2 Environment	7
1.3 Social Responsibility	7
1.4 Community and Land Use Planning	8
1.5 Protective and Emergency Services	8
1.6 The City of Red Deer's Role in the Region	9
2. Economic Development	10
2.1 Promotion and Marketing	10
2.2 Tourism	10
2.3 Land Development	11
2.4 Municipal Infrastructure	12
3. Organization Development	13
3.1 Accountability to the Public	13
3.2 Effective Communication	13
3.3 Organization Environment	14
3.4 Service Delivery	14
3.5 Training and Development	15
3.6 Staffing	15
3.7 Technology Development	16
3.8 Volunteerism	16
4. Financial Development	18
4.1 Financial Responsibility	18
4.2 Debt Management	18
4.3 Budget and Accounting	19
Community Vision	20
Our Thanks!	21

Definitions

Accessible	includes the removal of physical, mental, and financial barriers for programs and services for which The City is responsible
Balanced Approach	fair consideration given to all sides of the picture before making the decision
Basic	those things which might be described as at an entry level to a program, activity or service, as opposed to more elite or professional levels. The cost of providing that program or service is also a determining factor and "basic" is intended to be accessible to the majority
Culture	includes art in all forms and those who produce, consume, promote, perform, distribute, and appreciate it. It involves supporting the development and vitality of the arts thereby enhancing the quality of life for local citizens
Demographics	the study of statistics such as births, deaths, family composition, ethnic background, child and adult poverty, aging, etc., to help understand the past and forecast the future
Focus Area	a major area of responsibility where we will concentrate our effort (we usually have a maximum of 3-5 focus areas)
Guiding Principles	a set of parameters for organizational and administrative behaviour that define how we do things
Infill	development on a vacant, underused or deteriorated site
Infrastructure	is defined as all capital assets required to create and maintain a safe and secure community. Infrastructure includes but is not limited to transportation (e.g. roads, bridges, public transit); environmental services (e.g. water, sewer, landfills); protective service (e.g. police, fire, ambulance, flood mitigation); parks, recreation, and cultural facilities (e.g. arenas, playgrounds, pools, trails, libraries, community and art centres) (Source - Alberta Urban Municipalities Association '98)
Long-term Goal	a statement of what we will have achieved in a focus area when we have been successful in the longer term (3-5 years)
Organization Environment	the total of the factors (e.g. physical surroundings, conditions, circumstances) that influence people working in or dealing with an organization
Quality of Life	those things which make Red Deer a desirable place to live
Renewal	restoration of an existing building or site to allow a sustainable use
Revitalization	an improvement in the physical, social, and environmental well-being of a neighbourhood, and may include infill and/or renewal
Strategic Plan	the roadmap to take us from where we are to where we want to be in the longer term
Strategy	a statement of how we will meet our long-term goal

**Sustainable
Development**

continuing maintenance, adaptation, renewal, and development of a city's physical structure and systems, and its economic base, in such a way as to enable it to provide a satisfactory human environment with minimal demands on resources, and minimal adverse effects on the natural environment.

(Source - Municipal Development Plan '98)

Our Guiding Principles

Customer Service

- Basic municipal services will be accessible to all residents.
- Services and programs will be based on community needs.
- Services will be given priority based on what they contribute to a safe, healthy, and attractive community environment.
- Feedback on the quality of City services and programs will be asked for and valued.
- The needs of staff and/or departments and our customers will be important to us.
- The organization will maintain a *human face*.

Human Resource Management

- The contributions of employees and volunteers will be recognized and valued.
- Staff will clearly understand what is expected of them by the organization.
- Authority and accountability will be delegated to front-line staff to the extent practical.
- Employees will have opportunities to provide input on the major decisions that affect them (e.g. career direction), City services, the future direction of The City, and other challenges.
- Work environments will be healthy and safe.
- The City will encourage volunteerism by employees and the public.
- Volunteers involved in the delivery of City programs and services will be developed and supported.
- Fair and objective systems used to plan and review work will be an opportunity for communication and will be used to recognize strengths and identify areas for improvement.
- Training and development opportunities will be provided to ensure an innovative and skilled workforce.
- We will work together to create an environment for wellness in the workplace.

Financial and Physical Resource Management

- The City's infrastructure will be managed as a long-term investment.
- "Pay as you go" will be The City's primary goal, with debt used as a last resort to meet long-term capital needs.
- Conservation and preservation of the natural environment will be a fundamental consideration in all City operations.
- Budget allocations will be matched appropriately to The City's strategic goals.
- Results achieved will be evaluated in relation to the resources used.
- Appropriate use will be made of technology to support effective and efficient operations.
- Finances will be managed responsibly to provide a predictable impact on the ratepayer.

Leadership/Governance

- The Strategic Plan is the basis of all City planning and will be used to focus resources toward the achievement of goals and strategies.
- Strategic directions and other major decisions impacting the future of The City will be made with the benefit of consultation and input from stakeholders.
- When appropriate, The City will assume a *leader of equals* role in Central Alberta for coordination and development of partnerships.
- Decisions, based upon reasonable research and analysis, will be made in a timely fashion.
- Municipal government regulation and intervention will be used with discretion.
- Employees will be encouraged and supported to take leadership roles in their work, within the organization, and in the community.
- Appropriate use will be made of consultation and joint problem solving as management tools.
- Innovation, creative problem solving, and reasonable risk taking will be supported and encouraged.

Communication

- Input from staff, the community, and all of our partners will be valued.
- The public and various partners will have opportunities to provide input on the quality of City services and programs and major decisions that impact the future of The City.
- Employees will have timely access to appropriate information so they can make decisions, communicate with the public, provide input, and do their jobs well.

- Community members and various partners will have access to the information they need to take advantage of City services, provide input, and make decisions.
- All members of the organization will have a responsibility in communicating with the public and promoting a positive image for The City.
- The City will take the initiative to communicate strategic direction and goals to the public.

Long-term Goals and Strategies by Focus Area

1. Community Development

All citizens should have the opportunity to live in a caring community with a high quality of life in a unique and attractive environment.

1.1 Quality of Life

Quality of life in the Strategic Plan is defined as those things that make Red Deer a desirable place to live. This includes a broad range of services from those that ensure a clean and safe environment to opportunities for people to participate in programs and decision making.

Long-term Goal: To ensure opportunities are available for all citizens to enjoy a high quality of life.

Strategies:

- 1.1.1 Set program priorities, standards, and service levels taking into account demographic trends, the impact on quality of life, as well as financial considerations.
- 1.1.2 Maintain an effective public transportation system to respond to the needs of the community.
- 1.1.3 Maintain a commitment to offer basic recreational and cultural programs, services and opportunities.
- 1.1.4 Support and facilitate community groups and agencies in their development and delivery of cultural, recreational, and parks programming.
- 1.1.5 Support initiatives in the community and surrounding area which are consistent with our vision, values, and goals.
- 1.1.6 Support and maintain The City's Municipal Integration Strategy regarding access for persons with disabilities.
- 1.1.7 Ensure that the Community Services Master Plan is updated to reflect current needs and trends.
- 1.1.8 Support the cultural community in identifying and addressing the cultural needs in the broader community through a planning process that results in a long-term vision and plan.

1.2 Environment

Conservation and preservation of the environment is a high priority with our residents and Red Deer has already been recognized for its leadership in this regard. The City must continue to achieve a balance between environmental conservation and preservation concerns and the need to provide a climate for growth in the business community.

Long-term Goal: To ensure that Red Deer develops and maintains an attractive, clean and ecologically sound natural and built environment.

Strategies:

- 1.2.1 Meet the spirit and letter of the law with respect to environmental laws, regulations, and agreements.
- 1.2.2 Establish and maintain environmental standards for all municipal infrastructure and services such as waste management, weed and pest control, and park management.
- 1.2.3 Ensure the provision of environmentally sound utility systems and their safe, efficient, and reliable operation.
- 1.2.4 Preserve escarpments and natural areas and ensure as much green space as possible throughout the community.
- 1.2.5 Support programs and initiatives that increase awareness and public involvement in environmental management, conservation, and enjoyment (e.g. programs related to parks, recycling, energy).
- 1.2.6 Work with neighbouring municipalities, provincial agencies, and community groups to manage and conserve the natural environment.

1.3 Social Responsibility

The Province has the primary responsibility for social programs and their funding. Rather than provide programs directly, The City has chosen to actively encourage the provision of social programs through partnerships with the Province, community agencies, and others.

Long-term Goal: To facilitate planning, development, and delivery of social programs that support and enhance individuals, families, and a healthy community.

Strategies:

- 1.3.1 Maintain a commitment to preventive social programs.
- 1.3.2 Continue to provide social services through community agencies rather than a direct service delivery role.
- 1.3.3 Facilitate/encourage inter-agency and community awareness and cooperation in the delivery of social programs.
- 1.3.4 Identify social needs in partnership with the community, and establish priorities accordingly.

- 1.3.5 Work in partnership with others to address housing needs and related support services in the community, acknowledging that The City will not build housing units.

1.4 Community and Land Use Planning

The City has four roles in land use planning and development. The first role is to ensure neighbourhoods are planned to provide for a range of housing, recreation, and park amenities and in some areas, neighbourhood commercial and office use. The second role is to ensure that city-wide planning emphasizes the preservation of the natural environment, the beauty of the city, clear and effective development guidelines, a simple development process, and a long-range vision focused on quality of life and growth management. The third role is to work with the community to sustain the City's economic base through the provision of a variety of business/employment locations, including the downtown, and to enhance opportunities for social interaction and personal growth through the provision of sites for a range of education, recreation, and culture facilities. The fourth role is to work with neighbouring communities in a coordinated and cooperative approach to land use planning in the area surrounding Red Deer.

Long-term Goal: To ensure that land use planning policies, development guidelines, and procedures support sustainable development while reflecting the long-term interests of the community.

Strategies:

- 1.4.1 Ensure that land use planning provides for an appropriate mix of parks (including natural areas) and residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional land use.
- 1.4.2 Support the development of the downtown as a vibrant and attractive focal point of the community, through extensive planning, public participation, and partnerships.
- 1.4.3 Ensure that environmentally significant areas, historic resources, and other significant features are preserved and maintained for future generations.
- 1.4.4 Work at an elected and administrative level with the County of Red Deer to ensure a coordinated and cooperative approach to land use planning in the area surrounding the city of Red Deer.
- 1.4.5 Ensure that social impacts are taken into consideration in land use planning.
- 1.4.6 Ensure policies and guidelines are in place to support revitalization of existing areas, including infill and renewal.

1.5 Protective and Emergency Services

Services that protect people and property are fundamental to the mandate of any municipal government. These services usually include fire prevention and suppression, police, ambulance, E911 call answering and dispatch, inspections (building, gas, plumbing, electrical, etc.), and disaster services. In the provision of these services, The City's strategic thrust continues to be toward prevention.

Long-term Goal: To provide the citizens of Red Deer with a safe and healthy living environment through the cooperative efforts of The City's protective and emergency service providers.

Strategies:

- 1.5.1 Continue to support the community-based policing philosophy as an effective way to address the law enforcement and crime prevention needs of the community.
- 1.5.2 Ensure that the Emergency Services Master Plan is updated to reflect the current needs and trends.
- 1.5.3 Continue to develop and implement public education and prevention programs in all areas of protective and emergency services.
- 1.5.4 Work with surrounding municipalities, communities, and agencies at an elected and administrative level to ensure the coordinated delivery of protective and emergency services.
- 1.5.5 Ensure that the Disaster Services Plan is updated regularly and included as an identifiable item in the Emergency Services Three Year Business Plan and Budget on an annual basis.
- 1.5.6 Encourage all areas of The City's protective and emergency services to cooperate in service design and delivery.
- 1.5.7 Encourage innovative and creative ways of doing business within protective and emergency services departments and through departmental and regional partnerships.

1.6 The City of Red Deer's Role in the Region

Cooperation and communication among the municipalities in Central Alberta (urban and rural) is very important to the success of our region and our own city. We will seek ways to work together effectively so that all will benefit.

Long-term Goal: To develop and participate in strong, mutually-respectful, and productive partnerships with municipalities in Central Alberta in order to achieve more together than we could individually.

Strategies:

- 1.6.1 Develop and maintain effective communication links with Central Alberta municipalities.
 - 1.6.2 Coordinate or lead joint projects or submissions to other levels of government where that leadership would benefit the region.
 - 1.6.3 Make City of Red Deer resources, including expertise, available to Central Alberta municipalities where feasible, and look for opportunities to use the resources and expertise of other municipalities.
 - 1.6.4 Seek opportunities for cost-effective cooperation with other communities in the region in the provision of municipal services.
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2. Economic Development

All citizens should have opportunities to succeed in a community that values sustainable growth and protection of the environment.

2.1 Promotion and Marketing

Economic development functions are coordinated through The City's Land and Economic Development department. The City works with other groups to market the many advantages of Red Deer and Central Alberta, as well as to recommend strategies for addressing future challenges.

Long-term Goal: To foster local growth opportunities and attract a more diverse range of business development by working with appropriate stakeholders and encouraging a coordinated approach to the marketing and promotion of Red Deer and Central Alberta.

Strategies:

- 2.1.1 Continue efforts to develop partnerships with the business community and other organizations to pursue new economic development initiatives.
- 2.1.2 Continue to develop partnerships across the region to pursue new cooperative economic development initiatives.
- 2.1.3 Identify businesses and industries with high potential to locate in this area, and aggressively pursue their location in the Red Deer region.
- 2.1.4 Continue to assess development regulations, protocols, and practices to identify existing barriers to development and reduce these to the extent possible and practical.
- 2.1.5 Ensure a strong focus on downtown development through the cooperative development of a vision, appropriate concept plans, and implementation strategies.
- 2.1.6 Promote the amenities, including recreation facilities, parks, heritage, culture, and other attractions in Red Deer and Central Alberta as assets to a lifestyle and quality of life that stimulates economic development.

2.2 Tourism

The City of Red Deer recognizes the great potential contribution of the visitor industry to our community. The City's tourism promotion is managed by the Red Deer Visitor and Convention Bureau, an independent society established to coordinate tourism development and promotion for Red Deer and area. The Bureau's functions include tourism promotion, visitor information services, and targeted marketing.

Long-term Goal: To aggressively promote tourism as a key component of economic development in Red Deer and the region.

Strategies:

- 2.2.1** Continue to support the Visitor and Convention Bureau in fulfilling its role in coordination and promotion of tourism.
- 2.2.2** Encourage and support effective partnerships with various stakeholders, including private sector, to market Red Deer’s wide range of facilities, amenities, and opportunities to key tourist markets, including the trade and convention markets.
- 2.2.3** Continue to encourage and participate in the hosting of major events, with due consideration to the capacity of the organization and the community to support them.

2.3 Land Development

Land development is one of the key elements affecting economic development in Red Deer. The City of Red Deer has a significant role in residential land development and is the primary supplier of serviced industrial lots. Preliminary work in exploring The City’s role in land development as part of the major review of our Strategic Plan has identified the need for a complete and thorough review of land development options and implications. The strategies in this section of our Plan reflect this “work in progress”.

Long-term Goal: To ensure timely availability of a supply of reasonably priced, serviced residential, commercial and industrial land required to support the achievement of Red Deer’s economic development goals.

Strategies:

- 2.3.1** Review—with the benefit of a broad consultative process—The City’s role in land development and servicing (commercial, industrial, and residential). The outcome will be direction from Council on The City’s future in land development and servicing.
- 2.3.2** The current policies on land development will continue to guide the organization until the review identified in 2.3.1 is completed and The City’s future direction in land development and servicing is approved by Council. These policies are:
 - maintain The City’s market share of residential lot sales at 25% and actively encourage private sector participation in the development, marketing, and sale of commercial/industrial land.
 - sell City land at market value and, where appropriate, make land available to developers in accordance with approved land use plans.
- 2.3.3** Work with appropriate stakeholders to encourage the development of housing within the downtown core.
- 2.3.4** Work cooperatively with surrounding municipalities to ensure short and longer-term infrastructure compatibility.
- 2.3.5** Work with the County of Red Deer to reach agreement on mutually acceptable growth patterns including infrastructure compatibility and staged annexation.

2.4 Municipal Infrastructure

Economic growth is facilitated by the existence of a well-developed and maintained City infrastructure. This requires careful planning and the adequate allocation of financial resources to support both development and maintenance.

Long-term Goal: To ensure that plans and resources are in place that result in an adequate and well-maintained City infrastructure.

Strategies:

- 2.4.1 Ensure departments continue to update and implement their long-term infrastructure development, maintenance, and replacement plans, with a focus on maintaining existing infrastructure.
- 2.4.2 Ensure the impacts of major development are considered as part of infrastructure planning.
- 2.4.3 Establish budget priorities based upon the premise that investment in infrastructure maintenance is a necessary annual investment rather than a discretionary cost.
- 2.4.4 Work with other partners in the Red Deer Regional Airport Authority to ensure the Red Deer Regional Airport continues to be efficient, effective, and an asset to the region.

See Strategy 2.3.4 (which also relates to infrastructure)



3. Organization Development

The organization must be responsive and accountable to the community through cooperation, communication, innovation, flexibility, and training.

3.1 Accountability to the Public

Our organization exists to serve the citizens of Red Deer. That means we continually need to determine the needs of the public and evaluate our services, programs, and facilities to ensure they are meeting those needs.

Long-term Goal: To determine public priorities and satisfaction with services, facilities, and programs.

Strategies:

- 3.1.1 Use a variety of ways to determine public priorities on facilities, programs, and services, and gather information on how well The City is doing its job.
- 3.1.2 Use the information gathered on our performance and from public consultation to help determine what facilities, services, and programs The City should provide, the best way to provide them, and to help develop our strategic plan.

3.2 Effective Communication

Effective communication involves asking, listening, and considering others' opinions and ideas and providing feedback to those who share their thoughts with us. It also involves providing people with the information they need to make informed decisions. Effective communication is vital to building trust within and outside the organization, and to our ability to do our jobs well.

Long-term Goal: To ask for, listen to, and consider others' ideas and opinions in the decisions we make; and, to provide the information Council, staff, media, community-at-large, and various partners need to make informed decisions about city services and initiatives.

Strategies:

- 3.2.1 Enhance the communication support, training, and resources the organization needs to communicate effectively with staff and the public.
- 3.2.2 Promote effective communication within the organization, with contract agencies, and with groups supported by The City.
- 3.2.3 Implement The City's Communication and Customer Service Plan, and update it regularly to help ensure effective communication with our employees, the media, and the community-at-large.

3.3 Organization Environment

Our reason for being is to provide the citizens of Red Deer with the best possible service. The City needs to be organized in a way that helps us deliver this quality service.

Long-term Goal: To provide a supportive work environment that helps staff achieve The City's strategic goals and deliver quality services.

Strategies:

- 3.3.1 Review The City's strategic goals, communicate the results we wish to achieve, and monitor and measure our progress on an ongoing basis to ensure we are achieving those goals.
- 3.3.2 Ensure The City's organization structure and how we do things supports our strategic direction.
- 3.3.3 Provide staff with the authority, responsibility, resources, and support necessary to do an effective job.
- 3.3.4 Regularly conduct an organizational climate survey to seek employees' views about the organization, and use the results to make appropriate change.

3.4 Service Delivery

The public wants The City to respond to their needs and provide quality service as economically as possible. To meet these expectations, The City must continue to emphasize customer service, staff development, and creativity and it must continue to find the most effective ways to deliver programs and services. When planning our services, we must be aware of changing demographics.

Long-term Goal: To ensure The City of Red Deer is doing the right thing, doing it well, and doing it as economically as possible.

Strategies:

- 3.4.1 Choose the most effective way of providing a service by considering the following options:
 - facilitate others to provide the service directly
 - enter into partnerships or contracts
 - provide the service ourselves.
- 3.4.2 Review, through the business planning process, the services offered and supported by The City to ensure they reflect changing demographics and community needs.
- 3.4.3 Establish, review, and maintain adequate service standards for the services provided directly by The City. Recognize that the services needed in one area of our community may not be the same services needed in another area.
- 3.4.4 Work with contracted agencies, and other groups supported by The City to achieve high standards of service.

- 3.4.5 Collect public input on how well The City, contracted agencies, and other groups supported by The City are providing services, and use this information to improve service.
- 3.4.6 Encourage employees to continue to identify efficiencies as well as improvements in service.
- 3.4.7 Continue to review and simplify internal operating procedures to improve efficiency and reduce costs.

3.5 Training and Development

Our most valuable resources are the people who work here. Rapid change, a high rate of impending retirement, and new technologies make it increasingly important to invest in the ongoing training and development of our staff.

Long-term Goal: To provide opportunities for employees to continually develop their skills, knowledge, and attitudes, both in their current jobs and for future opportunities within the organization.

Strategies:

- 3.5.1 Ensure Departments have a staff training and development plan for their employees that reflects The City's strategic plan priorities, departmental priorities, and individual employee needs and career goals.
- 3.5.2 Review periodically the training needs of The City and implement training that addresses these needs.

3.6 Staffing

Having the right person in the right job at the right time is a critical part of making an organization successful. With the number of retirements increasing, as well as normal turnover, we need to focus clearly on filling jobs with people that can contribute effectively to The City's success.

Long-term Goal: To ensure the organization is able to place quality candidates in the jobs that need to be filled.

Strategies:

- 3.6.1 Maintain The City's succession plan to ensure the long-term leadership needs of The City will be met.
- 3.6.2 Ensure The City provides a compensation package, working conditions, and the organizational character to attract and retain employees.

3.6.3 Develop partnerships and relationships with the schools and colleges, primarily in Central Alberta, that over the long-term will help The City be considered an “employer of choice” by graduates.

3.6.4 Look for opportunities to market The City of Red Deer as “the” place to work and the community as “the” place to live.

3.7 Technology Development

Technology helps us share, organize, and produce information. It also allows us to carry out many of our services. Everything from e-mail and telephones to our transit buses and water treatment systems are part of The City’s technology inventory. To get the most from our technology, The City needs to ensure new technology “fits” with existing technology and does not duplicate that used by other departments.

Long-term Goal: To make appropriate use of technology so that it supports the businesses we are in and helps us share and produce information in a timely manner.

Strategies:

3.7.1 Invest in and support the technology and technology research required to do our jobs well.

3.7.2 Focus on technology that has been adequately tested and proven sound while keeping the leading edge in sight.

3.7.3 Develop a technology master plan to define the scope, coordination, and future direction of The City’s technology using a cross-departmental team.

3.8 Volunteerism

Red Deer is recognized for its outstanding volunteer commitment. Within our organization we have two focuses—one being our City employees as volunteers in the community, and the other our unique relationship with volunteers who help us deliver City programs and services. These volunteers represent seniors to youths in our community and the region. Because volunteers have a significant impact on the quality of life in our community, it is important that their volunteer experience is meaningful, and that we acknowledge their contribution.

Long-term Goal: To explore ways to encourage volunteerism in all aspects of our organization.

Strategies:

3.8.1 Look for opportunities to appropriately recognize the volunteer work of our own staff.

3.8.2 Provide meaningful opportunities for citizens to volunteer in City supported programs and services, and acknowledge their contributions.

3.8.3 Train, where appropriate, the volunteers that help us serve the community.

3.8.4 Be sensitive to the increased demand on volunteers, and the capacity of our community to support the demand, based on the impact of demographic trends.



4. Financial Development

Reliable, sustainable funding for ongoing services is essential for the long-term success of the organization.

4.1 Financial Responsibility

The City prides itself on being fiscally responsible. The challenges over the next few years will be rapid growth of the city, potential loss of revenue due to provincial deregulation of the electrical industry, and increased citizen demand for new capital projects and expanded services. We are committed to ensuring that the citizens of Red Deer get the best value for their tax dollar.

Long-term Goal: To ensure adequate funds are available to support the program and service delivery levels established by Council.

Strategies:

- 4.1.1 Continue to work with the Provincial and Federal governments to define responsibility for programs and services, and refuse to fund any that are not included in The City's Three Year Business Plan and Budget.
- 4.1.2 Take a pro-active and persistent approach to senior levels of government to encourage and maintain financial partnerships.
- 4.1.3 Encourage City departments and agencies with whom the City partners to explore new ways to reduce costs and generate revenues.
- 4.1.4 Develop a long-term revenue management plan that will provide an overview of revenue options and sources, provide future direction, and work together with the cost management tools provided through the business planning and budget guidelines.

4.2 Debt Management

In order to pay for the demands of growth and the higher service level expectations of the citizens of Red Deer, The City may need to start using debt as a financing tool by 2002. The City has incurred no additional debt since 1991.

Long-term Goal: To maintain appropriate debt levels, recognizing the capital needs, financial resources available, and long-term implications for the taxpayers.

Strategies:

- 4.2.1 Develop a debt management policy.
- 4.2.2 The City will not incur additional long-term debt until at least 2002.

4.3 Budget and Accounting

The City continues to be faced with the challenge of developing effective and efficient budgeting systems that are results driven. Council's focus is on establishing priorities and determining the measurable results to be achieved. Departments are given the flexibility to allocate available resources and are held accountable for the results to be achieved.

Long-term Goal: Budgets will reflect our strategic direction.

Strategies:

- 4.3.1** Review results achieved in our programs and services to help establish priorities and budgets.
- 4.3.2** Identify annual operating costs for major capital projects when significant additional operating costs are expected, including the impact on other projects.
- 4.3.3** Focus Council's review of the budget on high level policy decisions, including results to be achieved, programs and services to be funded, and service levels to be maintained.
- 4.3.4** Prepare The City's Three-year Business Plan and Budget based on predictable tax levels that do not vary widely from year to year.



Community Vision

The Vision 2020 program, referring to the year 2020, was created by the Provincial Government to encourage municipalities, as communities, to set long-range objectives. The program encouraged the creation of a plan with a 30-year horizon. In Red Deer, the process began in May, 1989, with a strong commitment to public participation including public meetings, questionnaires and letters. Input from City staff was also sought.

In August, 1991, City Council adopted Red Deer's Vision 2020 which presented direction for the community of Red Deer in general. It focuses on Red Deer as a city of opportunity with a strong emphasis on the quality of life in the community through:

- a preserved unique natural environment enhanced by careful community planning;
- a high standard in terms of quality of life;
- a strong volunteer ethic; and,
- a wide range of opportunities for employment, education and recreation.

There are seven planning principles related to this community vision:

- The provision of an effective and accessible municipal government committed to active public participation in decision making.
- The preservation of Red Deer's unique natural environment and the demonstration of leadership in environmental management.
- The promotion of economic growth to ensure an increasing range of business and employment opportunities.
- The development of a well-planned and healthy community based upon the protection and enhancement of the residential neighbourhood unit and the provision of high quality industrial and commercial areas.
- The provision of a balanced and diverse range of social, education, health, recreational, and cultural opportunities.
- The provision of an effective transportation and transit system serving all sectors of the community.
- The provision of safe, efficient, reliable utility systems which are environmentally responsible.

Vision 2020 was reviewed in 1999 to ensure that it remains relevant and that the planning principles are appropriately reflected in our Strategic Plan.

Our Thanks!

Members of City Council recognize that a great deal of effort went into developing The City's Strategic Plan. Many of you helped generate the thoughts and ideas that have been included in this document, while others provided excellent feedback on the draft plan. To all of you—staff, City boards and committees, partner agencies, municipal leaders in Central Alberta, educators, community organizations and groups, and interested citizens—we thank you for contributing so generously of your time and talents. You helped us a lot!

Our special thanks to the 1999 Strategic Plan Review Committee that managed the review process. Each of you brought your own talents, energy and sense of humour to the table on a regular basis. As a team, you remained enthusiastic and committed over the nine month period of the review. The result—a plan to guide us confidently into the new millennium.

Members of the 1999 Strategic Plan Review Committee are:

Stacey Davey, Communications and Customer Service Coordinator
Kerry Dawson, Culture Development Superintendent
Grant Howell, Personnel Manager
Bev Hughes, City Councillor
Colleen Jensen, Social Planning Manager (Committee Chair)
Randy Judson, Captain, Emergency Services
Dean Krejci, Disbursements Administrator
Dennis Moffat, City Councillor
Pat Shaw, Corporate Planning Coordinator
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