

## 2009 – 2012 Strategic plan

### 1. What is a strategic plan?

The City's Strategic Plan guides us along a path and provides focus and purpose to all that we do. It is our most important plan as it shapes our organization, the municipal programs and services we provide to the citizens of Red Deer. The activity of strategic planning is ongoing and does not end when a strategic plan is developed.

### 2. What is the purpose of a strategic plan?

Strategic planning is used to determine long-term vision and goals, and to develop the action plan to achieve those goals. It is also a good method for the municipality to communicate strategic priorities to staff and citizens. This provides direction for internal departments to align their service delivery with these priorities.

The Strategic Plan is the document – strategic planning is a process and something we as an organization will continue to work on as we move forward.

### 3. Who is on the strategic plan committee and what departments are represented?

Staff committee members were recommended by their Director and chosen by the City Manager to be part of the Strategic Plan Committee. Members of Council were appointed by City Council on October 29.

The Committee members are:

- Scott Cameron, Social Planning Manager
- Craig Curtis, City Manager
- Cindy Jefferies, Councillor
- Pam Vust, Environmental Initiatives Coordinator
- Kelly Kloss, City Clerk
- Bart Rowland, Deputy Fire Chief Communications
- Ron Soehn, Production Systems Supervisor
- Kristy Svoboda, Human Resources Consultant
- Sara Alaric, Strategic Planning Advisor
- Tara Veer, Councillor

Shelly Gagnon, one of the representatives from Community Services is no longer on the committee as she has left the organization. The committee appreciates very much her contribution and wishes her well. Community Services will continue to be represented by Scott Cameron and Chris Lust.

The plan development has been facilitated by:

- Julia Harvie-Shemko, Communications & Strategic Planning Manager
- Lisa Perkins, Strategic Initiatives Planner, Corporate Services
- Chris Lust, Strategic Initiatives Planner, Community Services

### 4. Where are we in the planning process?

The first step in the process was to get a sense of where we are today. The committee broke into sub-committee groups and worked on gathering current data about our employees, our citizens, our departments, government and current situation. Once we had a sense of what was going on in our organization and outside, we gathered for a two-day intense workshop to develop the vision, mission and goals.

In May, the committee came back to you, the employees, with the draft Vision, Mission and Goals. We wanted to get a sense from the employees that we were headed in the right direction, that what we were saying inspired you and made you feel excited about your future with The City of Red Deer. We also went back to meet with Citizens and Council to see if what we had put together reflected their comments and concerns.

What we heard was very positive. Employees were pleased with the direction we were taking, excited by some of the new challenges we were placing on the organization and eager to see the next pieces of the plan and how they

fit into it. The committee also brought this back to our senior managers, directors, council members, citizens and government partners and the response was very similar. A new draft was sent out to all employees in July asking you to "Chew on this" as well as provide us your stories of how you see yourself fitting into the Strategic Plan.

Throughout the summer, the facilitators Julia, Lisa and Chris, began working on developing the next phases of the strategic plan.

#### **5. What are the three phases of the strategic plan?**

**First phase, Strategic Direction:** Strategic direction provides the direction for The City. It includes the vision, mission and goals. It is essential the strategic direction is clear, understood and 2009 – 2011 Strategic Plan shared so all aspects of the organization are moving in the same direction and are using the same roadmap. The strategic direction was approved by Council on December 1, 2008.

**Phase two, Strategic Bridge:** Strategic bridge connects between the direction and the implementation. It includes the objectives and corporate priorities.

**Phase three, Strategic Implementation:** Without action a plan is only as good as the paper it is written on. Strategic implementation ensures the strategic plan is put into action. Implementation includes identifying critical success factors and barriers, and identifying strategies and actions that work

#### **6. How has the strategic direction been used so far?**

Before budget began, our strategic planning facilitators worked with department heads and Financial Services to make some changes to our service planning and budgeting procedure to align with the strategic direction. Only some changes will be made this year. Next year, with the completion of the full strategic plan, we may see additional changes.

#### **7. What are goals and how are they different from strategies?**

Goal statements are broad, long-term aims that define accomplishment of the mission, while strategies are activities required to achieve an objective or overcome a barrier. Objectives are the specific targets that measure the accomplishment of a goal over a specific period. Objectives, or success indicators, help us to know that the work we are doing (strategies) are helping us to achieve our goal.

Using the Canadian Cancer Society as an example, one goal they might have would be "Prevention - encourage Canadians to choose healthy lifestyles and advocate for healthy environments to support them in their choices" while one of their strategies might be to "develop a marketing campaign aimed at educating Canadians on how to reduce their risk of cancer."

#### **9. Where do our RISE principles fit into the new strategic plan?**

The Committee reviewed the RISE principles and felt that they should remain the same and be part of the new strategic plan. They are well understood and honoured by the organization.

#### **13. How does this link to the work I do everyday?**

The next phase of the strategic planning process involves developing objectives in conjunction with departments - this is called the Strategic Bridge. These objectives will be the way we measure our success so we can share them with others and make adjustments to our plans. These objectives will be used next year by departments as part of the service planning process to develop strategies that will move the organization towards success in the goals. Your work plan will then include the action to make the strategies happen. Every piece links together and helps the organization move forward in making the vision a reality.

#### **14. Where do the services we provide to the community fit into the strategic plan?**

We recognize that the work many of us do everyday delivering essential services to the community of Red Deer is a huge part of our business and we don't want to lose that. Our essential services will be a part of the strategic plan in a separate section. This section will describe what we do both as external and internal service providers.