

Mayerthorpe Municipal Sustainability Plan

Vision

We are committed to creating a sustainable, viable community, embracing new ideas with a strong belief in Mayerthorpe's future growth.

In our future...

Mayerthorpe will embrace cultural diversity while respecting our heritage and celebrating our identity;

Mayerthorpe will be a well-planned community fostering economic growth and innovation by continuously pursuing opportunities and supporting our businesses;

Mayerthorpe will use sound environmental practices to minimize its ecological footprint, and to enhance our safe, healthy, and welcoming community;

Mayerthorpe will be led by individuals who are representative of and accountable to the entire community while practicing ethical and transparent decision-making;

Mayerthorpe will provide a stable, positive environment in which people feel a sense of community and are proud to call Mayerthorpe home.

Strategy Areas

1. Community Design

Community design refers to the ways in which Mayerthorpe as a community develops and renews its buildings, transportation networks, neighbourhoods, and facilities that will contribute to making Mayerthorpe unique, liveable, and sustainable. Community design also refers to the planning and development and how it impacts the availability and affordability of housing in the community.

Areas include: Affordability, Built Environment, Transportation

2. Arts and Recreation

Arts and recreation refers to the arts, culture, and recreation found within the community and how such activities should be supported, enhanced and delivered, and how they will stimulate and support the transition to sustainability in Mayerthorpe. Community heritage is also included in the arts and recreation strategy area.

Areas include: Arts, Culture and Heritage, Natural Areas/Environment, Recreation & Leisure

3. Infrastructure

Infrastructure refers to the physical infrastructures that provide essential services that meet the basic water, energy, waste and communication needs for the community. These basic services include, but are not limited to water and wastewater, electricity, telecommunications, waste, and food supply systems.

Areas include: Energy, Food, Materials and Solid Waste, Water

4. Social Services

Social services refer to facilities, programs and services that fulfill the educational, health, and social needs of the community.

Areas include: Health and Social, Learning

5. Leadership and Prosperity

Leadership and prosperity refers to the how the community is governed, how a strong, local economy can be developed and maintained, and how cooperation and collaboration between governments, businesses, community groups, and residents can be used toward achieving common goals.

Areas include: Economic Development, Government and Partnerships

DESCRIPTIONS OF SUCCESS

AFFORDABILITY

GOALS:

Our residents are able to afford the products and services that the community has to offer that will enable them to enjoy their chosen lifestyle.

- Decent and affordable accommodations for permanent and temporary residents
- Access to affordable goods and services that meet their needs
- Diverse and affordable opportunities for recreation, leisure, arts, and culture
- A “Buy Local” initiative that encourages business growth and the proliferation of leisure and cultural activities

OUR CURRENT REALITY:

Accommodations:

- A shortage of decent and affordable rental accommodations
 - A few neglected properties, both private and commercial
 - Approximately 600 detached houses
 - Average price for a decent 3-bedroom bungalow is between \$160,000 & \$170,000.00
 - One 12-suite and one 6-suite apartment, four 4-plexes, six duplexes, one 4-unit condo
 - One 26-room motel
 - Numerous and varied seniors’ accommodations, including two 12-unit apartments, a 40-bed lodge, a 50-bed nursing home, and a 30-bed Auxiliary hospital
- The nursing home and the lodge are both old and out-dated by today’s standards and the wants and needs of today’s residents. A new lodge is currently being built.
- No major hotel, complete with amenities like a swimming pool, restaurant

Business Sector:

- 7 restaurants and fast-food establishments
- Professional services—lawyers, accountants, massage therapists
- 4 automotive service industries, 3 filling stations, and 1 carwash
- 2 financial institutions
- Personal service industries—licensing, insurance, registries, hair and nail care, animal grooming
- Trades—electrical, plumbing, carpentry, welding

- 2 farm dealerships
- 16 retail outlets
- Many and varied home-based businesses

- Many people shop elsewhere for goods and services that are available in Mayerthorpe
- Few light industries that would employ a larger number of people

Other:

- 2 years of tax-incentives (municipal taxes forgiven) for infilling lots in older sectors of town, both residential & commercial

ACTION STEPS NEEDED TO ACHIEVE OUR GOALS:

- Bed and Breakfast facilities
- Temporary accommodations for professionals (doctors, nurses, RCMP, etc)
Eg. A “Professional Housing Building” consisting of about 6 suites.
RCMP and healthcare facilities can work together to rent space and to sign a contract with the home/building owner.
- High standard rental accommodation availability
- Major hotel
- Secondary suites (basement development)
- Revitalized and well-maintained rental, residential, and commercial buildings
- Theme-based (traditional or historical) developments
Developers should be challenged to come up with a ‘Canadian’ theme.
- Comprehensive plan for commercial development
- Utilize the “Main Street Alberta” grant

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOALS:

Our economy will respect ecological constraints and will provide a quality of life that attracts and retains community members.

--opportunities for achieving competitive return on invested capital

--“closed loop” process for products and services, ie, **shop local**

--a healthy mix of franchises and locally owned and operated businesses

--long-term partnerships between the business community and its social, cultural, and environmental goals

--a skilled workforce and a local economy that support each other

--effective partnerships with government and other organizations that support economic health eg. GAER (Grande Alberta Economic Region)

--communication networks, roads, airports, schools, and social networks attract and support work and investment

--the size of the economy and the level of employment have both increased

--increased real median household income of the residents

--the economy successfully adapts to external factors

OUR CURRENT REALITY:

--recession is taking its toll on local businesses

--few opportunities for people with post-secondary education to find jobs in their area of expertise

--a good variety of locally-owned and home-based businesses

--businesses support, both financially and with merchandise, local service clubs and sports teams

--a lot of gravel roads

--partnerships exist with the Grande Alberta Economic Region, The Cowboy Trail, Community Futures, Regional Library

--financial assistance available through Community Futures to assist with business development

--land available for expansion, including residential, commercial, and light industrial

ACTION STEPS NEEDED TO ACHIEVE OUR GOALS:

--consumers educated to shop local

--businesses encouraged to train staff to provide good customer service

--financing made available to entrepreneurs

--businesses and residents encouraged to decrease their ecological footprint

--development of light industries, for example, satellite hubs, a commercial laundry service

--increase in the number of buildings available for housing and business development

--increase number of home-based and internet-based businesses

--increase competition in the retail sector

LEARNING/EDUCATION

GOALS:

Our community has developed and facilitated a variety of learning opportunities that enable personal and professional development.

--diverse and affordable lifelong learning opportunities exist to meet the community's needs

--a learning culture is nurtured and promoted locally and regionally

--a high-quality kindergarten through post-secondary system offers a diversity of programs to meet the needs of the community

--opportunities exist for people to learn about the natural environment

--learning opportunities contribute to the local economy

OUR CURRENT REALITY:

--an excellent K-6 school that has been recognized provincially for its achievements. School population is 299 and projected to remain relatively constant. Students are offered no options...curriculum is set for each grade level.

--a junior-senior high school that offers the basic courses but few options at the high school level. School population is 138 at the junior high level and 120 at the senior high level and is projected to drop slightly over the next 5 years. Graduation rates are above the provincial average.

Junior High options include sports, drama, industrial arts, fitness, outdoor education, media arts, home economics, computers, science discovery, hunter training, scrap-booking, art, & sports performance & skill development.

Senior High options include foods, cosmetology, work experience, drama, Phys. Ed 20-30, and fashion studies.

--some apprenticeship programs available through local businesses

--courses available on-line through Athabasca University and through NorQuest College

--on-the-job training for para-medical personnel (Personal Care Aides, etc)

ACTION STEPS NEEDED TO ACHIEVE OUR GOALS:

--make use of existing and future technologies to foster advanced education

--provide early intervention programs for special needs children

--provide opportunities for early acceleration of education

--increase and promote more satellite education

--establish a specialized program at the high school. For example, a trade program that provides credits, hockey and/or rodeo component, a health-care aide program

--partner with NAIT to integrate a trade program into the high school that would equal a first-year apprenticeship program (eg. 2 summer jobs plus 1 semester at the high school)

--establish video partnering with other schools

NATURAL AREAS/ENVIRONMENT

GOALS:

Our community protects and, where possible, restores ecosystem integrity and biodiversity in all critical natural areas.

--an ecologically functioning and viable network of critical natural areas is protected and, where possible, restored

--use of sensitive natural areas is avoided and use of surrounding areas is limited to ensure ecosystem integrity

--indigenous biodiversity is maintained

--developed and recreation areas are designed and managed to protect as much of the natural environment within and around them as possible and to preserve natural habitat as much as possible

- community members and visitors act as stewards of the natural environment
- continual learning about natural areas and species informs appropriate restoration and protection efforts
- good air quality is important and pollution is minimized
- fewer street lights will be installed and will cause less diffusion (ie. A dark sky community)
- pesticide and herbicide use will be minimized, if not totally eliminated
- riparian areas and wetlands will be protected and, where possible, restored
- neighbouring communities are encouraged to adopt similar “Descriptions of Success”
- natural areas in and around Mayerthorpe are identified

OUR CURRENT REALITY:

- natural areas are neither identified nor accessible
- some destruction to natural areas has occurred
- no active management of natural areas

ACTION STEPS NEEDED TO ACHIEVE OUR GOALS:

WATER

GOALS:

Water resources provide a dependable supply of healthy water to meet the long-term needs of people and nature. In the future, potable water supply systems deliver water of excellent quality, meeting or exceeding all relevant health standards and benchmarks for aesthetic standards whenever possible.

- water supply is distributed reliably, equitably, and affordably and is managed proactively, with other municipalities, within the context of effective and efficient emergency preparedness
- residents and visitors are educated about and encouraged to protect and conserve natural water resources