MOUNTAIN VIEW COUNTY

Strategic Plan 2021 - 2022

Reviewed and approved by council on June 21, 2021

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1. Situation Assessment

Context and Background

PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

This Strategic Plan articulates the strategic direction and supporting activities of Mountain View County (MVC) for the four-year period, 2021-2024.

MOUNTAIN VIEW COUNTY HISTORY

Mountain View County was established on January 1, 1961, as the Municipal District of Mountain View No. 49. The newly formed county chose Didsbury as the location of its municipal office, and in October 1962, a new administration building was opened to house both the county administration and the school board. This building would serve the county until a new office was built in 2005, near the Olds-Didsbury Airport along Highway 2A. On January 21, 1998, the County of Mountain View No. 17 officially changed its name to Mountain View County.

MOUNTAIN VIEW COUNTY DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

In the 2016 Census of Population conducted by Statistics Canada, Mountain View County recorded a population of 13,074 living in 5,025 of its 5,666 total private dwellings, a 5.8% change from its 2011 population of 12,359. With a land area of 3,782.64 km2 (1,460.49 sq mi), it had a population density of 3.5/km2 (9.0/sq mi) in 2016. This percent change is significantly lower than the Alberta average at 11.6%.

Mountain View County had six percent population growth from 2011 to 2016 with the median age increased from 43.9 to 45.2 over the five-year period. The majority of residents are married or living common law, and the majority of those who are common law or married do not have a child living at home. The average after-tax income of MVC residents is $93,789 and the median income is $75,952. Over 61% of residents have some level of post-secondary education or training, which is a slightly larger share then surrounding counties.

Mountain View County has a high share of part-time and/or season employees. The majority of residents work in a fixed location less than 30-minutes from their home, own their homes, and have not moved in the last five years.

Council Preferences

The Council is dedicated to promoting sustainability through balancing economic, social, and environmental concerns. As trade-offs and implications emerge and must be managed on key issues, five areas of preference emerged for Council to guide the Senior Management Team in addressing issues over the next four years.

1. **Build the County from Within**
    Council has a stated preference that internal plans be prepared for areas that may be involved in collaborative plans in advance of the collaborative planning decisions. The Council would prioritize the growth of current businesses and the creation of new businesses within the County over the attraction of businesses outside of the County. New/external businesses should be assessed for how well they 'fit' with the current communities, strategies, and citizens of the County rather than appraised purely on the net growth implications.

2. Expect Return on County Investments

    The County is an attractive place for businesses and has developed several resources over the last several years (e.g., water access). With the high desirability and access to resource, the County is able to be selective over what businesses they will attract/support. As such, the County will maintain the policy that developers must pay for development, though flexible terms (e.g., payment timing) may be possible for desired development. In addition, the County expects to be compensated for use of the resources that County investments were used to secure.

3. Policies Clearly Articulate Strategy and Direction

    The Senior Management Team of the County leverages policy to guide day-to-day operations and have the primary role in enforcement. Council has stated that they prefer to only make exceptions to policy in exceptional cases. If a shift occurs that leads to policy being less relevant (e.g., several exceptions required), Council expects the Senior Management Team to support them in identifying the issue/decision, articulating the implications, and laying out the options that Council can consider.

4. High Alignment on Social and Environmental Issues

    In the issues that have been reviewed by Council, there is high level alignment on social and environmental issues as they tie directly to strategic implications and outcomes.

5. Budget Allocations to Key Areas

    There are a large number of competing initiatives and services to allocate resources to. To ensure that all areas get sufficient support, Council has decided that spending should be allocated at a high-level (e.g., share of funds for recreation). A budgeting and reporting system to reflect these allocations to be reported when directed.

Strategic Priorities

In assessing the key issues and trends that are within the span of control that MVC can address, three strategic priorities have been identified for action over the next 24 months (see Chapter 3 for Implementation Plans of these priorities):

1. Statutory and Policy Framework

    County policy will drive Council deliberations and the actions of the Senior Management Team. Council, supported by the Senior Management Team, will continue to review and update policies as required and ensure that the Statutory and Policy Framework remains relevant and supportive to the County. Immediate areas for focus are land use, collaboration, and current interconnected issues.

2. Asset Management

    In order to make informed long-term decisions for the County, Council is prioritizing having full knowledge of current significant assets and ensuring long-term asset management plans are in place to ensure the resources and capital necessary to meet expected service levels will be in place long-term.

3. Economic Development

    In order to identify high-level objectives and themes for economic development in the County, an expanded understanding of businesses within the County and a clear strategy for future development is required. This strategy was approved by Council September 26, 2018.

4. **Communications and Public Engagement**

In order to ensure that Council's direction, policies and programs are appropriately communicated, and that the public has appropriate opportunity for feedback and participation in alignment with Council's recently approved Public Participation Policy, Council has prioritized a review of the existing Communications Strategy. The revised Strategy will work towards achieving Council's vision of having an engaged rural community.

2. Strategic Framework

Values

Values are fundamental principles and beliefs that serve as implicit criteria guiding all actions and decision-making done by Council for the County.

- Ethical
- Fair-Minded
- Respectful; still firm on decisions made

Vision

The vision articulates the desired future direction of the County:

An engaged rural and agricultural community inspired by the unique and diverse qualities of our people and environment.

Mission

The County's distinctive identity.

Provide high quality services in support of a healthy, safe, and vibrant rural community.

Goals

Goals are ideal states to be achieved through services, policy and advocacy.

Agricultural
1. Support traditional, innovative, and value-added agriculture industry.

Community / Quality of Life
1. Promote safe communities.
2. Provide and support cultural and recreational opportunities.
3. Foster an environment for people to age in their communities.
4. Promote a vibrant, rural culture in Mountain View County.

Economy / Financial Health
1. Enable business diversification and retention.
2. Ensure adequate resources to meet Council approved service levels.
3. Programs and services are delivered efficiently and fairly within a fiscally responsible framework.

Environment

1. Protect and preserve the natural environment through programs, education and collaboration.

Governance
1. Adhere to a culture of open communication and responsive effective governance.
2. Engage in respectful, positive and productive relationships while maintaining our local autonomy.

Infrastructure
1. Provide and maintain sustainable infrastructure efficiently, effectively and in an environmentally responsible way in our rural neighbourhoods.

2021/2022 Organizational Priorities Plan

Action plans are developed for each strategic priority identified.

Table 1 - Strategic Priority #1 - Statutory and Policy Framework

Action	Start Date	End Date	Lead
1. Statutory and Policy Framework			
1.1 Municipal Development Plan Review	January 2019	June 2020	Planning and Development Department
1.2 Collaboration IDP Reviews - Town of Carstairs - Village of Cremona - Town of Didsbury - Town of Olds - Town of Sundre ICF/IDP Development - MD Bighorn - Clearwater County - Kneehill County - Red Deer County - Rocky View County	 2019 2018 2019 2018 2019 2018 TBD TBD TBD July 2018	 April 2020 August 2019 April 2020 April 2020 April 2020 June 2019 TBD TBD TBD Aug/Sept 2019	Planning and Development Department
1.3 Area Structure Plan (ASP) - Review Eagle Valley ASP	2017	August 2020	Planning and Development Department

Table 2 - Strategic Priority #2 - Asset Management

Action	Start Date	End Date	Lead
2. Asset Management			
2.1 Policy Development	May 2018	December 2018	Corporate Services Department
2.2 Asset Management Working Group Creation	May 2018	September 2019	Corporate Services Department
2.3 Achieving Level 3 of FCM Asset Management Readiness Scale	January 2017	September 2019	Corporate Services Department

Table 3 - Strategic Priority #3 - Economic Development Strategy

Action	Start Date	End Date	Lead
3. Economic Development			
3.1 Creation of Economic Development Workplan to implement Economic Development Strategy	January 2019	July 2019	Legislative, Community and Agricultural Services Dept.
3.2 Implementation of Economic Development Workplan Objective: Business Growth Potential	January 2019	August 2019	Legislative, Community and Agricultural Services Dept.
Preparation for MDP Growth Center Discussion and on-going participation in MDP Review	January 2019	July 2020	
3.3 Implementation of Economic Development Workplan Objective: Business Retention and Expansion	September 2019	On-Going	Legislative, Community and Agricultural Services Dept.
3.4 Implementation of Economic Development Workplan Objective: Business Attraction	September 2019	On-Going	Legislative, Community and Agricultural Services Dept.
3.5 Implementation of Economic Development Workplan Objective: Building Relationships	September 2019	On-Going	Legislative, Community and Agricultural Services Dept.
3.6 Council Review of Economic Development Strategy Progress	September 2019	Annually	Legislative, Community and Agricultural Services Dept.

Table 4 - Strategic Priority #4 – Communications Strategy Review

Action	Start Date	End Date	Lead
4. Communications Strategy Review			
4.1 Review of existing Communication's Strategy to identify areas for improvement/efficiency	March 2019	May 2019	Legislative, Community and Agricultural Services Dept.
4.2 Development of Public Participation Campaign to Consult Council and Public on the review of MVC's Communication Strategy	June 2019	June 2019	Legislative, Community and Agricultural Services Dept.
4.3 Communication of Public Participation Campaign a) Newspaper b) MVC Internal Sources (Social Media/Website etc.)	June 2019	July 2019	Legislative, Community and Agricultural Services Dept.
4.4 Deadline for feedback		July 2019	Legislative, Community and Agricultural Services Dept.
4.5 Adoption of feedback into Communications Strategy / Identification of areas for further Council Feedback	August 2019	September 2019	Legislative, Community and Agricultural Services Dept.
4.6 Return of 1st Draft of Communications Strategy to Council for feedback		October 2019	Legislative, Community and Agricultural Services Dept.
4.7 Return of Final Draft of Communications Strategy to Council for feedback		November 2019	Legislative, Community and Agricultural Services Dept.

Key Success Factors

Key Success Factors (KSFs) are conditions that when properly maintained or managed significantly impact the entity's ability to achieve its vision. MVC has identified four Key Success Factors.

1. Effective relationships
2. Fiscal responsibility
3. Strong policies and programs
4. Informed public

Strategic Plan Implementation Reporting

Council has identified key items for reporting to ensure that the Strategic Plan is implemented and effective. (see Table 5).

Key Success Factors (KSF)/ Strategic Priorities (SP) are conditions, that when properly maintained and managed, will significantly support the organization in achieving its vision.

Table 5 – Key Items for Reporting

Key Items	KSF /SPs	Monitoring Mechanisms	Review
1. Financial Metrics	KSF2; KSF3/ SP2	• Variance reports • Project-based reporting comparable to budget matrix – with forecast and percentage of completion • Grant reporting	Quarterly
2. Strategic Alignment	KSF2; SF3/ SP1	• 3-year operating and 5-year capital budgets • MDP Monitoring Report • Council Strategic Planning Review • Report to Council regarding Governance Review Quarterly Committee progress on policy and bylaw review	Annually
3. Public Engagement	KSF1; KSF4/SP1	• Community participation in County Committees • Number of opportunities to participate (open house, surveys) • Maintain a social media profile and traditional communication methods (newspaper, radio, and mail) • Number of FOIP requests	Quarterly
4. Operational Excellence	KSF3; KSF4/ SP1; SP2	• Annual audit reporting; financial, health and safety; safety codes; assessment • Quarterly Service Request/Complaint volume and outcome • Time between complaint and response • Time between application and response • Annual Departmental service level report	As indicated
5. Economic Growth	KSF2; KSF3/ SP1; SP3	• Tax base mix - Annually • Development permit (new business and business expansions - Quarterly • Building permits (including estimated value) – Quarterly	As indicated
6. Safe Communities	KSF1; KSF3/ SP1; SP3	• Trends in provision of Emergency Services • Crime statistics (occurrences and clearances) • Local road motor vehicle offences • Annual consultation with Police/Fire Chiefs	Annually
7. Collaboration	KSF1; KSF2; KSF3/ SP1	• Quarterly status of outstanding collaboration agreements • Quarterly compliance with existing collaboration agreements	As indicated
8. Sustainability	KSF2; KSF3/ SP2	• Asset Management Plan - Quarterly • Annual Municipal Affairs - 13 Municipal Indicators - Annually	As indicated

3. Governance Overview

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

High alignment exists between Council and the Senior Management Team on the roles that Councillors play.

High-Performing Organizations require strategic alignment to link individual actions to high-level plans.

- **Council:** Has direct engagement with citizens and focused in development and monitoring of performance metrics.
- **Senior Management Team:** Responsible for high level strategy development to strive for operational excellence.

- **Senior Staff:** Responsible for aggregating and managing teams when executing strategy.
- **General Staff:** Responsible for observation and implementation of strategic objectives.

Strategic priorities require a high-level of discipline to maintain focus; however, issues and trends will emerge that impact the relevance and priority of these strategic priorities. When new issues/priorities arise, Council has a stated preference for the Senior Management Team to identify and describe the issue, articulate implications, and outline the options to be considered by Council.