

# Appendix 7

## Strategic Directions Summary



### Strategic Directions Plan

For 2011 Council established a short term strategic directions plan in November of 2010 shortly after the municipal election. This was the primary plan that drove activities in 2011 and has continued through 2012.

The short term strategic directions plan established objectives in six areas:

1. Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) recruitment
2. Assessment of the organizations and processes of the Planning and Development Services and Operational Services departments
3. Municipal Development Plan (MDP) review
4. Development of an effective public participation program
5. Staff issues action plan
6. Establishment of realistic benchmarks for service

Most of these goals have been achieved or are well underway including the hiring of the Chief Administrative Officer who has taken primary responsibility for the execution of this plan.

In April of 2012 Council established Strategic Goals. These goals were established after the 2012 budget was passed so they weren't directly factored into the creation of the 2012 budget. However, these goals will influence the execution of the budget programs. These Strategic Goals will play a role in the creation of the 2013 budget.

The areas of focus in the previous Strategic Directions plan still remain relevant so for the purposes of the 2012 budget the previous plan is used as a framework. The strategic directions fall under 6 main categories: Rural Communities, Protection of Agriculture, Sustainable Growth, Transportation, Environment and an Equal Partner.

The following summarizes how the 2012 budget supports the framework of the strategic plan. For further details on how specific initiatives support the strategic plan please refer to the project sheets.

### Rural Communities

Council's strategies to help maintain and support rural communities are largely carried out by Community Services which provides funding in a number of areas including community halls, libraries, recreational facilities, social services and fire services. Community Services also helps provide safe communities through community peace officers for traffic and bylaw enforcement. The County also supports education, solid waste collection and recycling, and senior's housing through funds which are requisitioned by these agencies.





## Strategic Directions Summary

## 2012 Budget

Along with ongoing activities, the County is reviewing fire agreements and fire protection service levels along with our urban partners. In 2012 Council has continued to support rural communities with funding increases to support fire, recreation and libraries.

The County's tag line is "Building Rural Better". Therefore initiatives under all the other categories of the Strategic Plan also have a rural focus.

In total the County dedicates over \$3.6 million directly to these initiatives and indirectly provides almost \$11.6 million in the form of requisitions to support education, senior's housing and solid waste management.

### Protection of Agriculture

Agricultural strategies are carried out by the Agricultural Services Board (ASB) and the Agricultural Services department. These activities largely entail road right of way management, invasive plant and pest control and providing educational resources to the agricultural community. Along with the Agriculture activities Planning and Development helps support agriculture through planning policies.

Besides these annual recurring programs the County will continue additional weed education initiatives and riparian protection projects. In 2009 a system to better map and then track areas of weed infestation between years was established. This mapping will continue in 2012.

The Operational Services department also helps to ensure the viability of agriculture in Mountain View County by considering agricultural needs in road network development projects.

In 2012 the County plans to spend \$1 million in this area.

### Sustainable Growth

The County's activities which support Sustainable Growth are largely managed by Planning and Development Services. These activities are focused around the development approval process. In 2011 activities were focused on revisions to the Municipal Development Plan and these revisions are continuing into 2012.

In total, the County will spend \$2 million in this area.





### Transportation

Operational Services provides the services which support Council's strategies for transportation. As part of the 2012 budget process the County continued to develop long range plans for the renewal of the Counties infrastructure. Plans are now in place for the major asset categories.

In 2012 a \$5.4 million re-paving project is planned. This project is a joint project between the County, the Municipal District of Big Horn, Shell and the Province. As well local road projects worth \$2.9 million are plan and these include the re-surfacing of Twp Rd 334 and the re-construction of RR 12. In addition the replace of the Big Prairie bridge is planned at a cost of \$2.7 million.

In 2012 the County plans to spend \$18.5 million on road maintenance activities and \$15.7 million on road capital improvements.

### Environment

The environmental strategies are closely linked to both the Agricultural and Sustainable Development strategies. The programs that run under each of these areas are structured to be environmentally sound.

### An Equal Partner

Support of the strategies developed to achieve recognition as an equal partner is provided by Council, with assistance from CAO Services and Legislative Services. Efforts in this area included the development of an Inter-governmental Relations Committee in 2009 along with the ongoing support of the Municipal Area Partnership (MAP) - a committee consisting of representatives from Mountain View County and the five urban partners within its boundaries. The MAP partners have developed:

- Memorandum of Agreement and Inter-municipal Development Plan templates, which form the basis of a funding agreement between Mountain View County and the five urban partners for the provision of urban services for County residents; and
- Revenue sharing for developments in the County that will be connected to Urban Municipalities' water and/or wastewater services.

These innovative templates were recognized in 2009 by both the Government of Alberta and the Central Alberta Economic Partnership (CAEP) as MAP was named recipient of both the Ministers Award for Municipal Excellence- Outstanding Award and the CAEP Annual Achievement Award for Collaboration /Partnership.

Work continues in this area with the primary focus being the review of fire agreements with our urban partners.





## **Mountain View C O U N T Y**

---

December 2, 2010

### **Action Plans for Mountain View County**

#### **Chief Administrative Officer**

*By the spring of 2011, Mountain View County will have a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) in place.*

1. Request for decision for direction on CAO recruitment will be presented to council for December 1, 2010 Regular Council Meeting.
2. Colby Group Consulting and Council will be responsible for this.

#### **Assessing Organization and Processes**

*Staff and council have completed first steps in assessing the organizations and processes.*

1. By next Chief Administrative Officer team meeting, CAO will schedule meetings with Councillors. Human Resources and CAO will be meeting with staff
2. CAO will get Council's issues as a whole.
3. Evaluation of issues and a plan to address them.
4. Draft Terms of Reference for Request for Proposal for consultant goes to Council on December 1, 2010.

#### **Municipal Development Plan**

*Council direction on scope, process and budget for Municipal Development Plan (MDP) review has been given.*

1. All councillors do some homework: - Identify what you like; what you don't agree to; what you need more understanding on; expectation of public participation.
2. Director of Planning and Development to prepare an example of a plain language section for the MDP
3. Council to attend full-day session on key concepts of MDP. (Half-day on presentation, review in small groups, the discussion and decision on direction to Planning and Development Department).
4. From the session, Director of Planning and Development will then prepare work plan, by January 15, 2011.
5. At December 1, 2010 council meeting, Director of Planning and Development will recommend Area Structure Plans be postponed until a specific date re the MDP process.

#### **Public Participation**

*Mountain View County has developed an effective public participation program*

1. Assess what has already been done in house
2. Organization to resource Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties Public Engagement Toolkit
3. Chief Administrative Officer to prepare a community engagement plan for Council by mid-January 2011.
4. To be included within County's communication strategy as formulated by external communication consultant.
5. Municipal Development Plan review is part of this process.

#### **Staff Issues**

*Staff issues have been addressed and there is a plan in place for addressing them.*

1. Staff CAO/HR meetings are on-going
2. Coordinate this process with the organization assessment
3. Identify issues.
4. Create plan for addressing issues.

5. Staff meeting to be held December 1, 2010 to present the results of this workshop.

### **Realistic Benchmarks**

*Realistic benchmarks for service are set. A plan for evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of services is established.*

1. Directors of Operational Services and Corporate Services to gather relevant information.
2. Reports and information to be presented at January 2011 Policies and Priorities Committee meeting
3. Council/operations workshop early February 2011 to advance on this initiative.

A yellow road grader is paving a gravel road in a rural landscape. The road is wide and stretches into the distance. The background shows a clear blue sky, green trees, and a red building in the distance.

# Strategic Directions Plan 2011



**Mountain View**  
C O U N T Y

Building Rural Better

## Vision

*“Building Rural Better”*

**Building** - Through Council’s leadership, building and diversifying Mountain View County’s rural economy and strengthening the County’s role as a leader of rural municipalities.

**Rural** - Maintaining the rural landscape in Mountain View County by protecting agricultural resources and significant natural environments for future generations.

**Better** - Striving for sustainability in Mountain View County by setting the stage for continued innovation, education, and diversification.

## Overall Mission Statement

*“Mountain View County aims to provide a high quality rural lifestyle, while providing opportunities for education, innovation, and economic diversification. We are proud of our County’s past, and will go forward by leading in a sustainable manner.”*





# Principles Supporting Our Mission

Leadership is imperative to achieving our goals. Mountain View County is mindful of being progressive in our governance, adapting to changes, and planning for the future. We will implement policies and initiatives that work to enhance and protect our rural lifestyle.

We're proud of the quality of life offered in Mountain View County. We want to support our communities in the best place to live, work and grow in Alberta. We intend to accomplish this by providing the required governance and resources. Mountain View County will continue to be an innovative agricultural community. We will encourage ongoing agricultural innovation in the County by creating an environment in which sustainable agricultural practices are developed and implemented. We will protect agricultural lands.

The County's environment includes farms and ranches in the prairies and foothills, natural landscapes, picturesque communities, and views of the Rocky Mountains. We're committed to protecting most of the County for agriculture and will preserve the rural beauty of cowboy country. Our location is convenient to major centers but is far enough away to protect our rural lifestyle. We will explore how we can use our location to our advantage.

Education was important to our founders and continues to play an important role in innovation. We will support a greater diversity of education options in the County. We will also promote the use of advanced communication technologies. We recognize that a well educated community will bring economic prosperity.

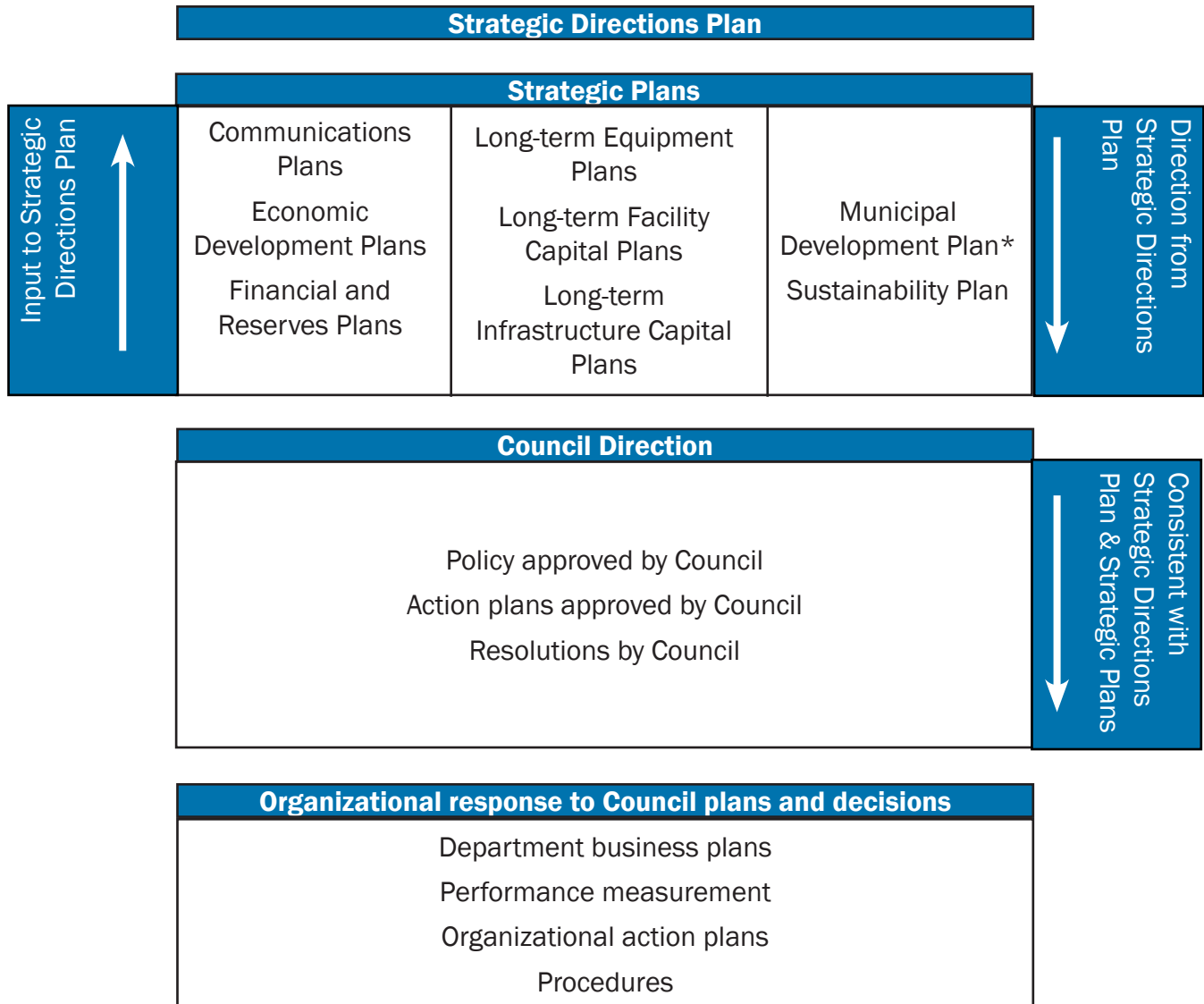
Existing businesses of all sizes in the agricultural, oil and gas sectors and others provide the basis of our local economy and are the foundation for entrepreneurial opportunities in Mountain View County. We will continue to support existing business and encourage new business to find a home in Mountain View County.

## Coordination with other Strategic Plans

The Strategic Directions Plan is the document used by Council to provide information to the

public on its long term strategies and goals, and provides direction to the organization on the annual development of operating and capital budgets. Changes in the Strategic Directions Plan may also result in changes to other strategic plans approved by Council.

The Strategic Directions Plan provides direction to other strategic plans of the County, with exception of the Municipal Development Plan, and this system of plans works as shown in the following diagram:



*\* Note - In the development of the Municipal Development Plan, the long term strategies and goals of the Strategic Directions Plan are submitted to the public as information at the beginning of the process.*

# Rural Communities

Mountain View County places a high priority on preserving and building our rural communities. Our 12,570 residents are all members of our historic rural communities, which are the foundation of our rural Prairie culture. Whether they are the fifth generation living on a celebrated Century farm, or acreage owners who moved to the County in 2009, each resident comprises an essential part of our greater rural community.

## ***Strategy - R1 – Maintain and Support Rural Communities***

Goal R1(a) - Support the viability of community organizations (Council)

Goal R1(b) - Support the increase of community protection and emergency services (Council)

Goal R1(c) - Enhance volunteerism in rural communities (Council)

Goal R1(d) - Support rural business development and retention



# Enhancement of Agriculture

The 2007 Municipal Development Plan for Mountain View County reduces the number of subdivisions across the County, decreases the sizes of residential lots, and concentrates growth in areas around urban or rural centres. These changes will preserve 94 per cent of land in Mountain View County for agriculture over the next 100 years.

## ***Strategy - P1 – Reduce the impact of the loss and fragmentation of agricultural land***

Goal P1(a) – Focus multi-lot residential and commercial/industrial developments within restricted growth areas (IDPs, ASPs, MOAs)

Goal P1(b) - Adopt policies that integrate new subdivisions into the agricultural community (ASPs, LUB, Assessment Policy)

## ***Strategy - P2 - Design municipal programs and services to support the agricultural industry***

Goal P2(a) - Provide agriculture with year-round access to ban free roads (County Road Network Policy)

Goal P2(b) - Implement policies that will reduce the demand on the water aquifer by residential, commercial and industrial developments, thereby preserving the water aquifer for agricultural uses (LUB, Development Standards, Plumbing Bylaw)

Goal P2(c) - Investigate inclusion of agricultural lands within a land trust, and other methods of ensuring farming continuity (Council)

Goal P2(d) - Implement the transfer of development credits under provincial legislation

## ***Strategy - P3 - Alberta's Right to Farm Legislation***

Goal P3(a) - Lobby for the creation of right to farm legislation in Alberta (Council)

# Sustainable Growth

In this region of Alberta, the oil and gas industry provides a significant part of municipal tax revenue. Linear assessment (mostly pipelines, but also power distribution and commercial gas lines) and Machinery & Equipment (mostly wellheads and oil & gas production equipment) currently provide 59 per cent of municipal taxes. This revenue has a large impact on keeping residential and commercial property taxes lower.

The 2007 ERCB Annual Report provided the following figures and forecasts on the oil and gas industry that impact Mountain View County.

- Alberta's crude oil reserves declined 3.8 per cent, and natural gas reserves declined 4.1 per cent from the previous year.
- Within Mountain View County 11% - 6% of the established conventional crude oil reserves remain.
- Alberta conventional marketable gas production is forecast to decline.
- Within Mountain View County 23% - 14% of the established natural gas reserves remain.
- Alberta coalbed methane production (CBM) was forecast in 2006 to increase.

Mountain View County lies within a major coalbed methane production area, but individual CBM well production is expected to decline significantly after the initial flows, resulting in only a short term boost to Mountain View County revenues

Property tax revenues from oil and gas are related to production, as production declines so will revenues. If the forecasted decline of property tax revenue from oil and gas related sources is not offset by increased revenues from other sectors, such as industrial and commercial development, then residential and commercial municipal taxes could ultimately be 2.4 times today's amounts, plus inflation, or be offset by significant reductions in service levels, or a combination of those impacts.

Mountain View County has seen a steady and increasing number of applications for subdivisions, many motivated by the need for those in the agricultural industry to maintain their operations or to provide for retirement.

There is additional demand for multi-lot residential, commercial and industrial subdivisions that currently exceeds the supply within the Edmonton-Calgary Corridor. Change in policy on subdivisions is designed to respond to the current demand and direct the location of those subdivisions to suitable areas. Reflecting the need for employees in new commercial and

industrial developments, County policies will need to balance housing requirements for those employees.

Mountain View County has seen a steady and increasing number of applications for subdivisions, many motivated by the need for those in the agricultural industry to maintain their operations or to provide for retirement.

There is additional demand for multi-lot residential, commercial and industrial subdivisions that currently exceeds the supply within the Edmonton-Calgary Corridor. Change in policy on subdivisions is designed to respond to the current demand and direct the location of those subdivisions to suitable areas. Reflecting the need for employees in new commercial and industrial developments, County policies will need to balance housing requirements for those employees.

***Strategy - S1 – Encourage development of business parks to provide a sustainable tax base***

Goal S1(a) – Concentrate industrial and commercial development within business parks (LUB)

Goal S1(b) - Increase local employment opportunities to Mountain View County residents (Council, ASP, LUB)

Goal S1(c) - Improve the appearance and quality of business parks (Council, LUB)

***Strategy - S2 – Encourage residential growth in areas ultimately serviceable by water and sewer services***

Goal S2(a) – Develop a County Water and Wastewater Strategic Plan (Council)

Goal S2(b) – Provide for access to regional water and sewer services (Council, MOA)

***Strategy - S3 - Plan housing needs to reflect future demand***

Goal S3(a) – Plan residential growth based on smart growth principles, conservation design, and other sustainable development principles (ASPs, LUB)

Goal S3(b) - Encourage the development of sustainable building standards

***Strategy - S4 - Develop an Economic Development Agency***

Goal S4(a) - Continue regional economic development cooperation (Council)

Goal S4(b) - Establish a County Economic Development Committee

Goal S4(c) - Support the regional marketing of local farm products (Council)

**Strategy - S5 - Parks and Open Space**

Goal S5(a) - Complete a policy on the development and use of parks and open space (Council)



# Transportation

The road weight limit restrictions (bans) have a significant impact on the following industries that operate within Mountain View County:

- Agricultural industry, both farming and ranching.
- Oil and gas industry, drilling and maintenance activities.
- Forestry industry, mainly in the hauling of unprocessed lumber.
- Resource extraction industry, mainly in the hauling of gravel.
- Construction industry, for residential, commercial and industrial projects.

Current chipseal roads have been effective in controlling dust but have been found to be expensive in the areas of maintenance and regular overlay requirements. Delays in providing overlays have resulted in increased maintenance costs. Chipseal roads have been banned each Spring to protect this infrastructure, but this has had a significant impact on industries that use these roads.

The County Collector Network (CCN) is one element of this strategy, working with other elements of the strategy as shown on the previous page. Policies on the road network, together with policies on clustering of residential or development, create land areas where the impact of growth on agriculture will be minimized.

## ***Strategy - T1 – Provide a County Collector Network of ban-free roads***

Goal T1(a) – Develop funding sources for the County Collector Network incorporating contributions from new traffic originating developments

Goal T1(b) - Focus traffic movement towards and onto the County Road Network

## ***Strategy - T2 - Provide a Sustainable Local Road Network***

Goal T2(a) - Develop a long-term policy on road surface treatments such as asphalt, chipseal, calcium, and watering (Council)

Goal T2(b) - Develop policy on the upgrading and development of local roads (Council)

## ***Strategy - T3 - Seek a viable Provincial Highway Network within Mountain View County***

Goal T3(a) - Lobby for adequate maintenance and future planning of Provincial Highways



(Council)

Goal T3(b) - Develop a position on the local Provincial transportation network, including high speed rail (Council)

**Strategy - T4 - Coordinate road development at urban and rural municipal boundaries**

Goal T4(a) - Regularly discuss road development issues with all municipal neighbours (Council)

Goal T4(b) - Seek a coordinated position between municipalities on the development and improvement of Provincial Highways in the region (Council)



# Sustainable Communities

For most current and prospective residents the environment within Mountain View County is a significant part of the attraction to living within this region. Preservation of the natural environment will need to be recognized across all activities of the County.

## ***Strategy - E1 – To mitigate the impact of new developments on the environment***

Goal E1(a) – Locate clustered multi-lot residential subdivisions along the County Collector Network to increase the ability of Mountain View County to provide water and wastewater services, and to decrease the costs of servicing (Council, MPC)

Goal E1(b) - Reduce the draw on the water aquifer by all users through measures designed to reduce consumption through conservation, education and standards

Goal E1(c) - Implement measures to reduce the impact of sewage disposal on the environment (LUB, Development Standards, Plumbing Bylaw)

Goal E1(d) - Lobby the Alberta Government to update regulations on sewage disposal to allow use of modern and innovative systems (Council)

## ***Strategy - E2 – To preserve the natural environment within Mountain View County***

Goal E2(a) - Develop standards on the environmental and sustainability targets for County buildings (Council)

Goal E2(b) - Reduce fuel consumption by the County vehicle and maintenance equipment fleet (Council)

Goal E2(c) - Identify riparian areas on County owned lands and provide for their protection (Council)

Goal E2(d) - Encouraging the use of bio-fuels

## ***Strategy - E3 - Develop educational resources on sustainability issues***

Goal E3(a) - Develop an education resource on sustainable issues faced by the County (Council)

Goal E3(b) - Provide resources to the public on sustainable construction methods and products (Council)

Goal E3(c) - Provide information to the public on water and septic installations and their maintenance (Council)

Goal E3(d) - Continue to explore use of alternative energy sources (Council)

# An Equal Partner

In the past Counties, at least in Alberta, were not expected to develop except in the areas of agriculture and industry that were not suitable for urban centres. This was not the pattern of development in some other parts of Canada, or the Commonwealth. Over time this has resulted in rules and program funding which discriminate against Counties in favour of urban municipalities.

If the County is to have a secure future it needs a balanced tax base to offset the forecast reductions in revenues from the oil and gas industry.

As part of an ongoing process to strengthen inter-municipal communication, the Councils of Mountain View County, Carstairs, Cremona, Didsbury, Olds and Sundre have committed to a cooperative relationship to ensure that the interests of both rural and urban citizens are addressed.

Together, Mountain View County and the urban municipalities have agreed to support an Inter-municipal Development Plan process that benefits all parties and shortens the time needed to process individual annexation requests. The status of this process is:

- Mountain View County has Inter-municipal Development Plans (IDPs) with all five of its urban neighbours. The IDPs have supported the annexation of land sufficient to include 20 years of growth within each municipality, plus a fringe area around each urban centre protecting an additional 20 years of growth. Mountain View County's growth close to the urban centres will occur outside of these areas.
- Memorandums of Agreements (MOAs) have been signed with all five of its urban neighbours. These agreements provide for a number of areas of cooperation including: tax sharing where developments are supported by municipal water and sewer services, funding by Mountain View County of its share of the operations of recreation and culture facilities, cooperation on road networks, cooperation on weed control, etc.
- Currently under negotiation are amendments to the MOAs that will provide for review processes and funding formulas on the capital costs for new and replacement recreation and culture facilities, both for local facilities in the urban centres, and for regional facilities located in an urban centre or the County.

**Strategy - A1 – Reinforce the position that all municipalities are equals**

Goal A1(a) – Lobby the Alberta Government to provide equal access to grants and funding for both urban and rural municipalities (Council)

**Strategy - A2 - Ensure the County has the same opportunities as our urban neighbours**

Goal A2(a) - That Mountain View County participate in the Land Use Framework process (Council)

Goal A2(b) - To seek ways to enhance relationships between municipalities (Council)

