

MAYERTHORPE SUSTAINABILITY PLAN UP-DATE ON PROGRESS

On May 23, the “Citizens Advisory Group” met to review the Mayerthorpe Sustainability Plan which had been adopted by Town Council in August, 2010.

The purpose of the review is to ensure that the recommendations that were made during numerous public meetings and by the group itself are actually being implemented. The results were astounding!

These are the highlights of the progress that the Town has made in the past 20 months.

In the area of:

Community Design: the development of a hotel has been actively pursued; unsightly premises are being demolished or refurbished; the Exhibition Centre and the outdoor swimming pool meet high environmental standards; the Paddle River bank has been stabilized; native trees has been planted in public areas; and at least 26 people have ‘adopted’ their block or a public area of Town.

Culture and Recreation: tourism is being promoted in various ways; benches, hanging flower baskets, and “Way-Finding” signs are located throughout Town; the Exhibition Centre has been completed at a cost of \$6.3M; “Friends of the Mayerthorpe Public Library” and the “Mayerthorpe & Area Recreation Society” have been incorporated; the outdoor swimming pool will open this summer at a cost of \$1.9M to build; an ‘off-leash dog park’ is located at the sports grounds; the walking trail has been expanded; and the ‘unplugged’ recreation program for children (getting them away from electronic devices and getting them physically active) has been initiated.

Infrastructure: a long-term infrastructure plan has been completed (includes upgrades to the lift station, water treatment plant, storm water mains, & sanitary sewer mains); a household hazardous waste pick-up is held in September; an infrastructure fee has been implemented; a communication tower has been constructed near Town; and negotiations are on-going with Whitecourt and the Provincial Government to build a water pipeline between our municipalities in the future.

Leadership & Prosperity: various brochures and pamphlets promoting the Town have been produced and distributed; a Tourism Grant has been created; the Town is trying to improve communications via its website, newsletters, newspaper articles, etc; elected officials receive pre and post election training; and effective governance and sustainability practices have been integrated into the 25-year plan.

Social Services: programs such as DARE (Drug & Alcohol Resistance Education), PARTY (Prevent Alcohol and Risk-related Trauma in Youth), COOL Camp (remaining chaste and saying ‘NO!’ to drugs, alcohol, and abusive relationships), and the “40 developmental assets” are held and promoted; an ‘Early Childhood Development’

mapping initiative has been allocated grant dollars; and, at the High School, there are more distance learning courses and more options offered, and a “Registered Apprenticeship Program” and the “Alberta Green Certificate Program” offered.

The Citizens Advisory Group was impressed with the progress made to date and recommended that some of the future priorities include the development of a family-friendly hotel, ensuring an adequate and safe drinking water supply, developing the trestle look-out park and completing the grain elevator as tourist attractions, and having large bins available for residents to drop off larger household items and increasing the number of times hazardous waste is picked up.