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To safely meet
the ***needs of
the present***
without
compromising
the ***needs of
the future...***

CULTURE
ENVIRONMENT
SOCIAL
Sustainability
ECONOMIC
GOVERNANCE

FOREWARD

The City of Grande Prairie has developed this Municipal Sustainability Plan as a beginning document. The intent is to review it on a regular basis and update as needed to ensure alignment with the definition of sustainability: “To safely meet the needs of the present without compromising the needs of the future ...”

The process in which this plan was developed was as follows:

- Creation of an internal committee to determine the process
- Review of current plans within the organization
- Council’s Strategic Plan (2009)
- Municipal Development Plan
- Muskoseepi Park Master Plan
- Social Sustainability Framework
- Transit Master Plan
- Transportation Master Plan
- The Brand Initiative
- Surveys via Survey Monkey and at the 2009 Christmas Farmers’ Market asking residents what sustainability means to them, what they would like to change, as well as how they think the community will have embraced sustainability in 20 years.
- Two focus groups – participants covered a broad range in the community – asking where the municipality is at and what they would like to change
- Internal Committee reviewed a rough draft
- Rough Draft was presented to the public
- Changes made to the Draft creating Final Document

- Final Draft presented to the Environment Committee for recommendation to Council
- Council acceptance at the March 22, 2010 Council meeting

A campaign on the Municipal Sustainability process included information in the City’s Recreation and Leisure Guide, and a full-page ad in the local newspaper focusing on sustainable resolutions for 2010.

The information found during this process will form part of the Regional Sustainability Plan.

The Internal Team utilized Council’s 2009 Strategic Plan as the guideline for the goals and objectives for this plan.

Included in this document,

- Appendix A – a reflection of the current reality in the City of Grande Prairie as determined by the Internal Team after a review of all the information that was gathered.
- Appendix B – comments gathered from the public throughout the process

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Message from Mayor Logan

The Grande Prairie Sustainability Plan is an overarching document that gives Councils going forward the ability to look at sustainability for the future in terms of five focus areas – social, governance, economic, environment, and culture.

It provides accountability in each of these areas by describing a preferred future and the steps that will be undertaken to achieve them.

Our plan has taken other planning documents within the city into account when looking at sustainability.

Council's intent is to review this document every three years prior to business planning sessions reaffirming the commitment to our preferred future.

It is pleasing to see this document move forward. This document will help ensure we are walking the talk in providing quality of life for citizens and visitors today in the years to come.

I look forward to our municipality engaging residents with this document and seeing it make a difference.



Message from City Manager, Greg Scerbak

Development of the Grande Prairie Municipal Sustainability Plan was an 18-month process.

Employees from across the organization were appointed to the Internal Team in addition to their regular duties. This broad involvement ensured that the final product is reflective of all areas of the municipality.

Members of Administration will utilize this plan when developing each work unit's multi-year plan.

I would like to thank and recognize the Internal Team members for their commitment and dedication:

Bevan Shervey
Jennifer Langille (Aquatera)
Felix Seiler
Kim Clayton
Gail Littleton
Mitra Zarei
Greg Scerbak
Michael MacIntyre
Jane Cada-Sharp
Trenton Perrott

SOCIAL



Implementing, monitoring and revising plans:

- Council's Strategic
- Affordable Housing Master Plan
- Multiyear Plan to End Homelessness
- Social Sustainability Framework

Our Preferred Future

We are a welcoming community that encourages healthy lifestyles, social interaction and have a sustainable framework for social programs. Utilizing safe growth principles, our community is engaged and active. We have a regional hospital that has attracted qualified health professionals.

We achieve Our Preferred Future by:

- Lobbying the provincial government for increased services in health care
- Supporting and assisting the multicultural community including the Canadian Municipalities Against Racism initiative
- Supporting schools participating in the Safe Routes to Schools program
- Engaging youth in community and social projects
- Promoting the social development of children and families
- Building community and leadership capacity in the nonprofit sector
- Enhancing the quality of life for seniors
- Supporting and maintaining relationships with all levels of government to support housing initiatives
- Developing healthy walkable safe neighbourhoods with a sense of place that integrates uses, increases densities providing a range of housing choices, and applies compact subdivisions and building designs
- Monitoring available resources for social housing

GOVERNANCE

Our Preferred Future

Our Council continues to engage in strategic planning. We have a progressive and sustainable urban environment. Our citizens are engaged and vote in municipal elections. We have fulltime members of Council who interact with our youth on a regular basis. Council continues transparent decision making processes.

We achieve Our Preferred Future by:

- Educating and engaging the community in the planning processes
- Encouraging community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions and making development decisions predictable, fair and cost-effective
- Cooperating with our rural and urban partners to build a stronger region
- Hosting regular Town Hall meetings
- Assisting neighbourhoods in forming Community Associations
- Advocating for a different sustainable funding formula that curbs offloading and downloading of essential programs and services to municipalities
- Engaging youth in schools and public sessions
- Increasing awareness of Councils activities and issues through utilization of current communication tools
- Researching online voting
- Creating a plan to increase voter turnout to meet national average over ten years
- Creating a Speaker's Corner to bring concerns/challenges/issues to Council
- Implementing Advisory Councils in our high schools
- Educating community about fees and services
- Educating leadership on best practices and new trends
- Utilizing technology to reach a broader audience and engaging the community (including live broadcasts)
- Updating Land Use bylaws to be in line with 2010 Municipal Development Plan



Implementing, monitoring and revising plans:

- Municipal Development Plan
- Intermunicipal Development Plan
- Regular Quality of Life/Customer Satisfaction Surveys



ECONOMIC

Our Preferred Future

We are a community that provides opportunities through innovation. The strength and independence of our residents has cultivated an innovative and diverse environment by encouraging sustainable economic development. Our commercial and industrial sectors are diverse and able to meet the needs of the region.

We achieve Our Preferred Future by:

- Ensuring the cost of business in our area is competitive
- Capitalizing on the entrepreneurial spirit and knowledge of the region by working with organizations such as Grande Prairie Regional College, the Centre for Research & Innovation, Chamber of Commerce and the DownTown Association
- Assessing the needs of the business community
- Ensuring that the City of Grande Prairie and partners' practices and processes are business friendly
- Advocating for opportunities to complete degrees locally
- Supporting and encouraging the development and expansion of post secondary educational opportunities in the community
- Managing our growth and infrastructure to support a sustainable balance between residential, commercial and industrial uses
- Establishing and implementing a plan to retain young people in the city

- Encouraging community and business participation in groups such as Aboriginal Workplace Participation Initiative
- Simplifying processes for permitting and licensing processes (ie. Bizpal)
- Supporting tourism development with projects such as River of Death and Discovery Centre
- Addressing current and forecasting future workforce needs

Implementing, monitoring and revising plans:

- Economic Development Strategic Plan
- Quality



ENVIRONMENT

Our Preferred Future

We are a beautiful and sustainable community that provides an exceptional quality of life to its residents and is the core of a prosperous and dynamic region. Our residents are connected to the environment and are aware of the environmental impact of their decisions. Our parks and open spaces enhance the quality of life for all.

We achieve Our Preferred Future by:

- Formalizing the internal Conservation Stewardship Initiative (CSI) Team to research, educate and implement programs within all City Departments
- Developing and implementing policies on new green building programs
- Developing and implementing a sustainable procurement policy
- Implementing and monitoring of a Waste Diversion program
- Ensuring every new development is accessible by alternative methods of transportation
- Increasing communication from the City on initiatives, programs and education
- Utilizing education rather than legislation programs on issues such as litter and idling
- Leading initiatives and monitoring best practices on environmental stewardship and protection, preservation and development of green areas
- Strengthening policies to maximize the development and conservation of parks, recreation areas, walking paths, green spaces and wetlands

- Promoting environmental sustainability and progressive land use with strong consideration for environment, transit, parking concerns, housing density, etc
- Maintaining and enhancing remaining natural landscapes
- Developing plans, policies and systems that adopt practices utilizing renewable energy



Implementing, monitoring and revising plans:

- Muskoseepi Park Master Plan
- Tree Master Plan
- Transit Master Plan
- Parks Master Plan
- Transportation Master Plan

CULTURE

Our Preferred Future

We are a community that supports volunteers and the organizations that they serve. We have a broad range of cultural facilities that are accessible to all. We are a multilingual community that utilizes welcoming strategies and we have strong multicultural programs.

We achieve Our Preferred Future by:

- Increasing cultural events
 - More art festivals versus just annually
 - Street performers
 - Winter festivals
- Developing the Montrose Cultural Site
- Completing, adopting, and implementing the Cultural Master Plan
- Completing the Aquatics and Wellness Multiplex
- Increasing awareness, educating and implementing the Safe Harbour program
- Facilitating Human Rights Workshops
- Advocating for sustainable provincial/federal funding for community and voluntary sector organizations,
- Facilitating voluntary sector organizations with their human infrastructure volunteer needs including governance and leadership training
- Completing the rebuilding of the Prairie Art Gallery



Implementing, monitoring and revising plans:

- Recreation Master Plan
- Municipal Heritage Management Plan

APPENDIX A

Social

Council has:

- Taken a proactive approach on reducing crime through the implementation of a crime prevention program
- Developed and implemented a Community Housing Plan
- Ensure that programs, services and facilities address the needs of the underserved
- Acted as advocates for citizen and community issues such as health care, seniors' needs, housing, etc.
- Strategy of a welcoming and inclusive community
- Continued to update Master Plans including:
 - Transportation has undertaken updating the Transportation Master Plan which identifies transportation demand, management strategies, and associated planning and design guidelines. This allows for implementation in an orderly and cost-effective manner. The guidelines will also include recommendations for community outreach programs raising awareness about the value and role of alternative transportation choices such as walking, cycling and transit.
 - FCSS has undertaken the development of a Social Sustainability Framework to assess the needs of the community and assist with planning. Consultation will occur with local stakeholders in identifying gaps and best practices. The framework will develop long term goals and a strategic plan to achieve the goals.

Community has:

- Implemented the Safe Routes to Schools program
- Started the process of developing Neighbourhood Associations.
- Actively engaged in programs facilitated by Crime Prevention.
- Lobbied all levels of government for senior's housing needs.

Governance

Council has:

- The City of Grande Prairie adopted a Municipal Development Plan (MDP) in January 2010. Area Structure Plans and Area Redevelopment Plans must be consistent with the MDP. Council and development and subdivision authorities must consider the MDP when making decisions.
- The MDP refers to fiscal, social, and environmental sustainability, utilizing smart growth principles. Smart growth is a collection of land use and development principles that aim to enhance quality of life, preserve the natural environment, and save money over time.
- The MDP addresses most ideas and concerns raised during the public consultation process.
- Regular Town Hall meetings
- IDP
- Community Associations are starting
- Awareness/Education
- City/County Partnerships
- Transparency
- Communication
- Engage Youth
- Electronic Agenda Initiative

Economic

Council has:

- adapted a three year budget cycle
- implemented a strong economic development plan include goals
- participates in Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA), Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to obtain new revenue sources
- ensured development, maintenance and replacement of infrastructure in a timely manner
- Intermunicipality Development Plan

APPENDIX A

Environment

Council has:

- GIS:
 - 1. Paper product reduction
 - Ensure digital versions of all maps are available and encourage their use
 - Ensure outdated paper maps are recycled or returned for recycling
- 2. Power off equipment whenever possible
- 3. Promote use of workplace recycling bins
- Community Services:
 - 1. LEED equivalent building, recycle building material, efficient lighting etc
 - 2. Change of lighting in Arenas to T5, energy savings and more efficient
 - 3. Hybrid Vehicles for Parks
 - 4. Facility recycling program re: office, programming, events and exhibit materials.
 - 5. Tree management plan
- Transportation
 - Transit Master Plan
- Conservation, Stewardship Initiative (CSI GP)
 - This internal team of employees dedicated to working towards environmental sustainability for the organization. The team is working on
 - Terms of Reference
 - Business planning
 - Education
 - Internal programs
- Waste and Waste Diversion
 - Council is working towards sustainability in our waste processes in the region by;
 - Participating on and funding a Regional Recycling Task Force
 - Participating in and funding a Regional Waste Study
- Implemented the Environment Committee

Culture

Council has:

- A cultural master plan is underway – completion expected December 2010 and will have a component of multiculturalism in it. City facilitates for multicultural community.
- The City of Grande Prairie has excellent facilities for public use. With the recent addition of the Montrose Cultural Centre, the current rebuilding of the Prairie Art Gallery and the renovating of the Centre for Creative Arts, the arts are strongly supported by the community.
- The Aquatics Multiplex is eagerly anticipated by many members of the region.
- Multiplex opening issues
- Safe Harbour program – staff will be trained on
- Human Rights workshops
- Completion of a paved walking path in Heritage Village
- Programming for seniors and multi-cultural groups

Community has:

- Farmers' Market – active, strong,
- Heritage Day – celebrate diversity
- Volunteerism

APPENDIX B

Social

- Ensure that appropriate social supports that are predictable and sustainable (ie not based on local/current economics), increase in priority with respect to decisions that council makes (eg. Seniors support, new Canadians, NFP and voluntary sector, affordable housing, etc)
- Access for all (buildings, sidewalks, support services)
- Senior facilities
- Safety
- inclusion (sense of community) and access for all
- Health (wellness, doctors, preventative, assisted living, programs)

Governance

- Move to a regional governance system
- City government advocate for a different sustainable funding formula that curbs offloading and downloading of essential programs and services to municipalities
- Engagement (Youth, education – Council interaction (rapport), in schools and public sessions
 - What is the benefit of being engaged (facts, explain why)
- Ward system for Alderman

Economic

- Retain young people
 - Trades, University
- High taxes and utility rates
- Economic Development – Open for Business
 - Change perception
 - Education
- City/County collaboration on services facilities and user fees
- develop true regional economic development based on revenue generated in area (BC Fair Share program)
- establish a plan to retain young people in the city and work closer to support GPRC to have funding to offer appropriate training
- Diversify (with community needs, medical technical) sustainable in all economic situations

- Education / training (college, small business, schools)
 - Implement programs
 - Support and promote
 - Lobbying province for funding

Other notes:

- Perception that we are an isolated community – that needs to go
 - Everything we need is here
 - access

Environment

- Drive everywhere
- Conflicting information about the environment – Need Simple Solutions
- Sidewalks
- Education/Communication about City led environment initiatives
- Litter
- Participation
- Attitude Shift (ex. Smoking restrictions)
- take the initiative with environmental stewardship and protection, preservation and development of green areas;
- strengthen policies to maximize the development and conservation of parks, recreation areas, walking paths, green spaces and wetlands and to promote environmental sustainability and progressive land use with strong consideration for environment, transit, parking concerns, housing density, etc (not just economic development)
- in land use decisions maintain and enhance remaining natural landscapes
- develop plans, policies and systems that adopt practices of linear use of resources (especially non-renewable)
- Education
 - Recycling – how do you keep up to recycling without a vehicle (bus stop, curb side)
- Landfill
 - Accessibility (limited hours/ no vehicle)
 - Expensive (ends up being dumped in County/green spaces)
- City (organization) as a Role Model
 - Communicate initiatives

Culture

- Great gallery/library, college, sports facilities, theatre, parkway
- Problem – aging volunteers and fewer volunteers equals burnout! Too much work expected, too little input and power given back
- Human infrastructure (related to volunteer cultural organizations) is waning and is a constant struggle, limiting the services that can be provided
- Financial capacity is constantly a challenge (educational, awareness programs will never be cost recovery)
- Sustainable(predictable) funding is not available
- City provides theatre at no cost for GPLT (a good thing)
- Losing contracts to Dawson Creek
- We are in a good geographical spot to be a centre for culture
- Very strong arts community
- Strong sports recreation
- Expanding infrastructure
- Under resourced – high demand
- Multicultural supportive community
- City support of festivals
- plays a role in advocating for sustainable provincial/federal funding for community and voluntary sector organizations,
- assists voluntary sector organizations with their human infrastructure volunteer needs including governance and leadership training
- Funding
- Accessibility to arts/culture (multicultural)
 - Educate parents through kids
 - Communicate
- Where or what are the facilities?
 - Need for orientation to the facilities and what they provide
- The opportunities lie in sustainable funding and strength in volunteers
- Sustainable Funding for programs
- Dawson Creek's Concerts
- Acoustically sound facility for theatre, film, local artists

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Mayor Dwight Logan
In 2010, I want to see environmental initiatives supported by the City become more numerous and have more impact. In particular, I want to see our new Standing Committee on the Environment get a record of some real successes.



Alderman Helen A Rice
To continue to be part of the negotiating team to get a stable MSI funding agreement in place.



Alderman Bill Given
I resolve to help make Grande Prairie a cleaner city by picking up litter when I see it, even if it isn't mine.



Alderman Alex Gustafson
I resolve to work towards financial stability in creating economic prosperity by developing opportunities through innovation.



Alderman Yad Minhas
To work together, as a region, with the County of Grande Prairie, GPRC, Alberta Health Services and both the provincial and federal governments towards sustainable funding for our community.



Alderman Lorne Radbourne
I resolve to complete the change from incandescent lights to LED, including my Christmas decorations.



Alderman Dan Wong
I resolve to help investigate the most efficient and effective way for residents of this region to recycle and to help create an environmental stewardship program to preserve the natural beauty of the land surrounding Grande Prairie against those who are illegally dumping garbage.



Don Gnatiuk, President and CEO, Grande Prairie Regional College
Our institution resolves to take steps this coming year toward reducing the carbon footprint of our campus, joining City Hall in its leadership of our citizens on this important issue. It is our ultimate goal that our campus will one day be carbon neutral.



Tracey Vavrek, Executive Director Community Foundation of Greater Grande Prairie
Building a sustainable community includes support of health, education, environment, youth, recreation and arts and cultural areas. I resolve to continue working with community groups who fit into these areas to help build a sustainable future.



Debbie Reid, President Arctic Winter Games Host Society
To enjoy my family, friends and all the new people I will have a chance to get to know as we host the 2010 Arctic Winter Games.



Chris Warkentin, MP Peace River
I am resolved to continue to fight for a brighter, safer and more prosperous future for Peace Country families.



Wayne Drysdale, MLA Grande Prairie – Wapiti
I resolve to continue working on our government's plan for economic recovery that will bolster growth and prosperity in 2010, and sustain a healthy and vibrant future for Albertans.



Mel Knight, MLA Grande Prairie – Smoky
I will continue to support efforts to increase the amount of alternate and renewable energy connected to our utility system in 2010 and beyond.



Gladys Blackmore, President and Executive Director Grande Prairie and Region United Way
We all want to live in a safe, caring and helpful community, this can only happen because we choose to make it. I resolve to facilitate choice.



Nan Swanston
To celebrate Image Design's 10th anniversary, we look forward to thanking the community for contributing to our success by donating design services to ten Grande Prairie non-profit organizations in the new year.



Lisa Tkachuk, Deli Manager Safeway Northside
My pledge is that my deli staff recycles all tin, cardboard, glass and plastics. (#1,2,4,5) Also, my pledge is to reduce the amount of paper that is used in our department and in our store.



Crystal Rhyno
Use social media (Facebook, Twitter etc) to share my opinions and concerns. I want to bring people up to speed on what is happening in the planet. By sharing the latest research/articles with others in a professional way, I can help make a difference.