

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The vision, priorities and policies of this Plan align with the **Medicine Hat City Council Strategic Priorities, 2019-2022**. These priorities are:

- Fiscal Responsibility • Economic Vitality • Infrastructure Renewal • Community Safety and Vibrancy • Sunshine Hospitality • City Government

KEY POINTS

MAJOR POLICY SHIFTS FROM 2012 MDP

1 CHALLENGES FACED HEAD-ON

- Support and encourage diversification of industries to help offset impacts of downturn of oil and gas sector.
- Encourage newcomers to Medicine Hat to counteract an otherwise slowing of population growth, expected through 2050.
- Anticipate and prepare for altered needs in housing, mobility and city services due to shifting demographics.
- Ensure that aging city infrastructure is maintained & replaced while remaining fiscally responsible.
- Prepare for the impacts of climate shocks, including strain on water resources and potential increased overland flood events.
- Remain adaptable to emerging technological advancements to mitigate the unpredictable challenges that may result.

- Population growth projections now lower by about 15%.
- More emphasis on changing needs due to aging population.
- More specifics on local concerns such as drought and flooding.
- Acknowledgement of future disruptive technologies and the need to be adaptable.

2 CITY GROWTH THAT MAKES SENSE

- Establish strategic sequenced growth nodes to ensure an efficient and orderly greenfield growth.
- Encourage sensitive infill development strategically throughout the city, and direct more intense infill to urban villages.
- Apply urban transect model which matches service levels to needs.
- Plan city growth using sector-based approach to establish orderly, predictable and appropriate growth patterns, and which allows for separation of incompatible land uses.
- Acknowledge that both residential and especially commercial/industrial growth are essential for economic stability and sustainability.

- Infill strategies which include urban villages.
- Introduction of urban transect model.
- Utilization of a sector-based approach to city planning.
- More specific greenfield staging.
- Identification and protection of future employment areas.

3 DOWNTOWN REIMAGINED

- Establish a waterfront development district as a major destination, to act as a draw for residents, businesses and visitors.
- Encourage downtown developments which are higher density, urban in nature and offer a range of uses.
- Incentivize strategic residential and mixed use developments to help achieve a critical mass of population.
- Ensure a multi-modal transportation network, designed for context and needs of the Downtown.
- Implement a comprehensive parking strategy to address both the perception and actual shortage of parking.

- Promotes development of waterfront as major destination.
- More focus on supporting destination businesses.
- No specific residential population targets in Downtown.
- More emphasis on incentives for Downtown development.

KEY POINTS

MAJOR POLICY SHIFTS FROM 2012 MDP

4 WELL DESIGNED NEIGHBOURHOODS

- Build neighbourhoods with strategically placed services and amenities, providing highest benefit to the most residents.
- Support a market based approach to density and housing types.
- Place amenities at neighbourhood focal points.
- Build out neighbourhoods prior to beginning construction in new phases.
- Include central neighbourhood park and linear parks which encourage walking, link neighbourhoods, and provide green space.

- No minimum density levels for greenfield.
- Potentially, reduced service levels in new low density areas.
- Less specific rules on distance from amenities, built form and design.
- Utilization of best practices for general neighbourhood layout.

5 STRENGTHENED LOCAL ECONOMY

- Facilitate the attraction of new industrial operations and continued growth of existing businesses.
- Ensure a business-friendly environment within City government.
- Collaborate with industry and regional stakeholders towards maximizing economic opportunities.
- Establish the foundation for a network of urban digital infrastructure.
- Develop an economic development plan and an arts and culture plan.

- Employment sectors which focus on attracting and retaining specific industry types.
- Protection of industrial areas from encroaching incompatible land uses.
- Establishment the foundation for a network of digital infrastructure.

6 THINKING SMART AND LEAN

- Recognize the trend and efficiency of combining individual neighbourhood facilities into district or city-wide multi-purpose facilities.
- Emphasize fiscal responsibility and efficiency with implementation of the City's Asset Management Plan.
- Plan new major infrastructure with utmost efficiency and with the intent of delaying capital expenditures until required due to growth.
- Match design with level of usage in transportation network.
- Recalibrate transit system to optimize efficiency and focus on user needs.

- A "sliding scale" approach to road design, rather than universal design.
- Update parks and recreation plan to be lean and user-focused.
- Embrace creative solutions to evolve transit service and mobility.

7 PROTECTION OF GREEN SPACES

- Conserve sensitive environmental areas such as creek and river valleys, coulee slopes and natural wetlands.
- Establish increased setbacks for new development from river, creeks, coulees and significant slopes.
- Ensure resiliency and responsiveness to overland flooding.
- Use measures to conserve water and to improve the quality of storm water runoff.
- Reduce impact of solid waste and encourage energy efficiency.
- Expand and maintain the city's urban forest.

- Greater development setbacks from natural areas than previously.
- Clear guidelines regarding flood mitigation approach vs. stepping back approach.
- Policy regarding general reduction of solid waste.
- Less emphasis on specific initiatives such as LEED® and alternative energy projects.