



WHEATLAND COUNTY

Where There's Room to Grow



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



McSWEENEY

inspiring economic sustainability®

November 2018



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Prepared for Wheatland County | November 2018



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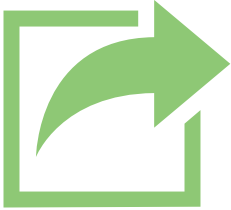
1. INTRODUCTION

Wheatland County is a municipality of 8,788 residents (2016). Located in south-central Alberta, the County is bordered on the west by Rocky View County, the south by Vulcan County and the Siksika First Nation, the east by the County of Newell and Special Area 2, on the north by Kneehill County, and the Town of Drumheller in the northeast corner of the County. Wheatland County is home to the villages of Hussar, Rockyford and Standard, as well as 9 hamlets. Its residents enjoy a good quality of life in a variety of possible settings from the rich crop land near Standard to the Badlands in the northeast or enjoying the Bow River in the south.

The County offers an ideal blend of rural and urban lifestyles enjoyed by generations of families who live and work there. The County is also next door to Calgary, one of the fastest growing, vibrant cities in Canada and has, within its boundaries, the Town of Strathmore that has a retail and service offering, but little industrial development and has grown rapidly as a bedroom community for Calgary. Earlier in 2018, Strathmore and a western portion of the County became part of the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board (CMRB) which is a provincially-mandated body that will oversee planning and development for the Region.

There was an existing Economic Development Strategy that was developed in 2016 but due to the rapidly changing economy, the downturn of the Alberta economy and changing priorities of County Council that saw a large turnover in 2017's election, an update of the current economic development strategy is necessary. Council has made economic development a top priority and accordingly, an updated strategy is required as well as an action plan that can be implemented by a new Economic Development Officer, to be hired in early 2019.





1.1. Purpose/Call to Action



The municipal election in October 2017 saw a large change in Wheatland's County Council. With that change came a Council calling for managed growth and economic development. The need for an updated economic development strategy was identified given the recent shift in Alberta's economy. This Strategy and Action Plan are intended to direct future economic development that support the County's current economic base and enable new opportunities for growth.

The Top 10 Priority Action Items are listed in Section 2. A more comprehensive list of action items, categorized by themes, can be found in Section 7. These themes are based on four separate, yet connected, streams that emerged from our consultations and observations:

- **Community Development;**
- **Investment Readiness;**
- **Industry Development; and**
- **Tourism.**





2. WHEATLAND COUNTY'S TOP 10 PRIORITY ACTIONS & TIMELINES

The **Top 10 Priority Actions** are focused on providing initiatives which are necessary to be carried out first and are the underlying actions required for preparing the County for investment. These initiatives are aimed at strengthening both the community and economy.

ACTION	SUGGESTED TIMING	LEAD / SUPPORT
1. Identify full time resources (staff) to guide and implement both the economic development and community development actions and initiatives. Ensure that person is qualified and experienced in rural development and rural-urban interfacing.	Immediate	CAO
2. Assess the water, waste water, electrical, gas and broadband capacity of the County to ensure that these utilities support and encourage progressive and growing businesses, investment and residential growth. Proactively budget infrastructure spending to facilitate growth.	Short-term	Infrastructure staff Utility firms serving Wheatland County Council Economic Development Officer
3. Create a priority setting and action-oriented plan to roll out broadband across the Municipality.	Short-term	CAO Wheatland County staff Council
4. Engage residents and business to create a Community Vision for Wheatland County (including individual separate visions for hamlets and settlements). Growth is going to happen in Wheatland County – now is the ideal timing for residents/businesses to determine what is important and what kind of community they want Wheatland County to be in the future.	Short-term	CAO Economic Development Officer Planning
5. Build on the Wheatland County community visual identity/brand and use the new identity on all community communications, marketing pieces and way-finding.	Short-term	Communications Economic Development Officer
6. Develop an online Business Directory that is searchable to aid in communication with key businesses and to help identify gaps in value chains that a new or existing business might fill. Potential investors will be curious about the types of businesses already in the County that they might work with either as suppliers or as users of their goods or services.	Immediate	Economic Development Officer Communications
7. Design and deliver a Business Retention and Expansion Process to initiate engagement with County businesses and establish an ongoing relationship that the new Economic Development Officer can build upon to stay abreast of issues facing businesses in the County.	Immediate (on-going)	Economic Development Officer



ACTION	SUGGESTED TIMING	LEAD / SUPPORT
8. Undertake an industrial land market study and a location analysis to understand competitive market conditions and the best location(s) to create "shovel-ready" lands.	Immediate	CAO Economic Development Officer
9. Work on measures to build Wheatland County's reputation as a business-friendly place including a "fast track" process for priority investments.	Immediate (on-going)	CAO Economic Development Officer Planning & Development County Management team
10. Work with existing organizations such as the Badlands and Siksika Nation to develop new tourism products – more reasons for tourists to stop and spend time and money in Wheatland County.	Short-term (on-going)	CAO Economic Development Officer Council

Immediate = 2019 | Short-term = before the end of 2020 |



3. PROCESS FOLLOWED

The process followed to create the 2018 Wheatland County Economic Development Strategy was comprised of a document review, statistical analysis and community consultation.

We began our study with a familiarization tour of the County and a municipal document review. We then developed a statistical analysis of Wheatland County's economy and demographics that yielded a current situational analysis report, after which we embarked upon a thorough consultation process that included:

- A 3-hour session with Council and the County's Economic Development Board;
- Three open house consultations in Gleichen, Carseland and Rosebud;
- A series of one-on-one interviews with businesses and stakeholders;
- An online survey that received over 80 responses; and
- A working session with key stakeholders.

Thus, the Economic Development Strategy was based on a comprehensive understanding of the County, its economy, businesses and stakeholders.





4. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

4.1. Strategic Plan Update Consultation Process

Approximately 220 stakeholders were consulted throughout this process. The consultations consisted of confidential one-on-one interviews, three open houses as well as an online survey open to the public and a 4-hour working session with targeted stakeholders.

4.1.1. Interviews & Community On-Line Survey

Interviews were undertaken with County businesses and other economic development stakeholders. The same seven open-ended questions were used to guide both the interviews and on-line survey. These questions probed into the major strengths and challenges of doing business in the County and looked forward to defining future opportunities, aspirations and results. Approximately 220 stakeholders provided feedback on these questions.



220 key stakeholders were consulted.



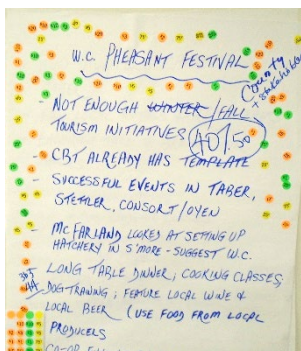
4.1.2. Working Session

The Working Session was held October 21st, 2018 and was attended by approximately 30 key community stakeholders which included representation from Council, the business community, regional and Provincial support agencies, the Strathmore and District Chamber of Commerce, Wheatland County staff, and a representative from the Town of Strathmore and Siksika Nation.

The purpose of the Summit was to bring together economic development, community and business leaders to review the project findings to date, to get confirmation on the themes that were derived from the research, and to begin strategizing and crafting action items for each of those themes that emerged from the consultation process as the most important to address. The themes that were brought forward to the presentation and discussed were:

- **Community Development;**
- **Investment Readiness;**
- **Industry Development; and**
- **Tourism.**

Working groups worked together to develop projects that would address the challenges and opportunities under each theme. They then presented their projects to the entire group in a "Dragon's Den"-type format. Everyone then voted with their 'money' to prioritise the various projects that varied from planning process improvements to a Pheasant Festival!





Informal Investment Readiness Review

McSweeney & Associates undertook an informal investment readiness assessment by reviewing the adequacy of the Municipality's tools and indicators including:

- Web Presence – Economic Development Site
- Economic/Community Profile
- Industrial and Commercial Land and Building Inventories
- Investment Marketing Tools
- Adequacy and Readiness of Employment Lands
- How Investment Inquiries/Requests are Handled

After assessing these basic elements required for investment readiness, it was determined that Wheatland County is missing key elements that should be undertaken in order to prepare the County for investment.

Web Presence: The County requires a comprehensive economic development page with all the essential information required by a site selector/investor (regional and local maps, community profile, workforce). Ideally, it should be a separate site as it has a different audience/target than the County site, but if a page on the County site, there should be link on the homepage. There should also be live links to the economic development strategy and pertinent reports.

Economic/Community Profile: There is currently no economic/community profile available.

Industrial and Commercial Land and Building Inventories: Requires an inventory of available land and buildings and all property including information on servicing, zoning, maps, etc.

Investment Marketing Tools: There are currently no marketing tools available.

Adequacy and Readiness of Employment Lands: Currently there is an inadequate supply of fully-serviced employment land available in the County.

How Investment Inquiries/Requests are Handled: To date the inquiries are dealt with by the CAO or planner on an ad hoc basis. There is no central contact or investment shepherding program.





5. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

5.1. Data Sources

Please note that every effort has been made to use the most current data available. There are four major sources of information for this document:

- The 2006, 2011, and 2016 Census data from Statistics Canada;
- EMSI Analyst Data; and
- Canadian Business Patterns from Statistics Canada.

Statistical analysis is partly based on 2017 data estimates of demographic variables. Estimates are different from data collected by Statistics Canada via Census every five years, which essentially counts the responses of those who answered the survey. The most recent Census was conducted in May 2016. There is normally one to two years' time lag between collecting and publishing Census data.





5.2. Statistical Analysis

A Snapshot of Wheatland County

Location, Location, Location

Wheatland County is ideally located. Ten minutes east of Calgary and the CANAMEX trade corridor (Highway 2) as well as being on the Trans-Canada Highway, a CN Rail line and a half hour from Calgary's International Airport (YYC), the County is poised to be one of Alberta's next growth hubs.

The County values its balance of rural lifestyle and business opportunity. Home to some of Canada's best farmland, beautiful countryside and the world-renowned Rosebud Theatre, both businesses and residents enjoy the great quality of life that Wheatland County offers.

ALBERTA POPULATION
4,067,175



MARKET ACCESS

84km	Calgary
284km	US Border (Sweetgrass)
349km	Edmonton
523km	Saskatoon
1069km	Vancouver

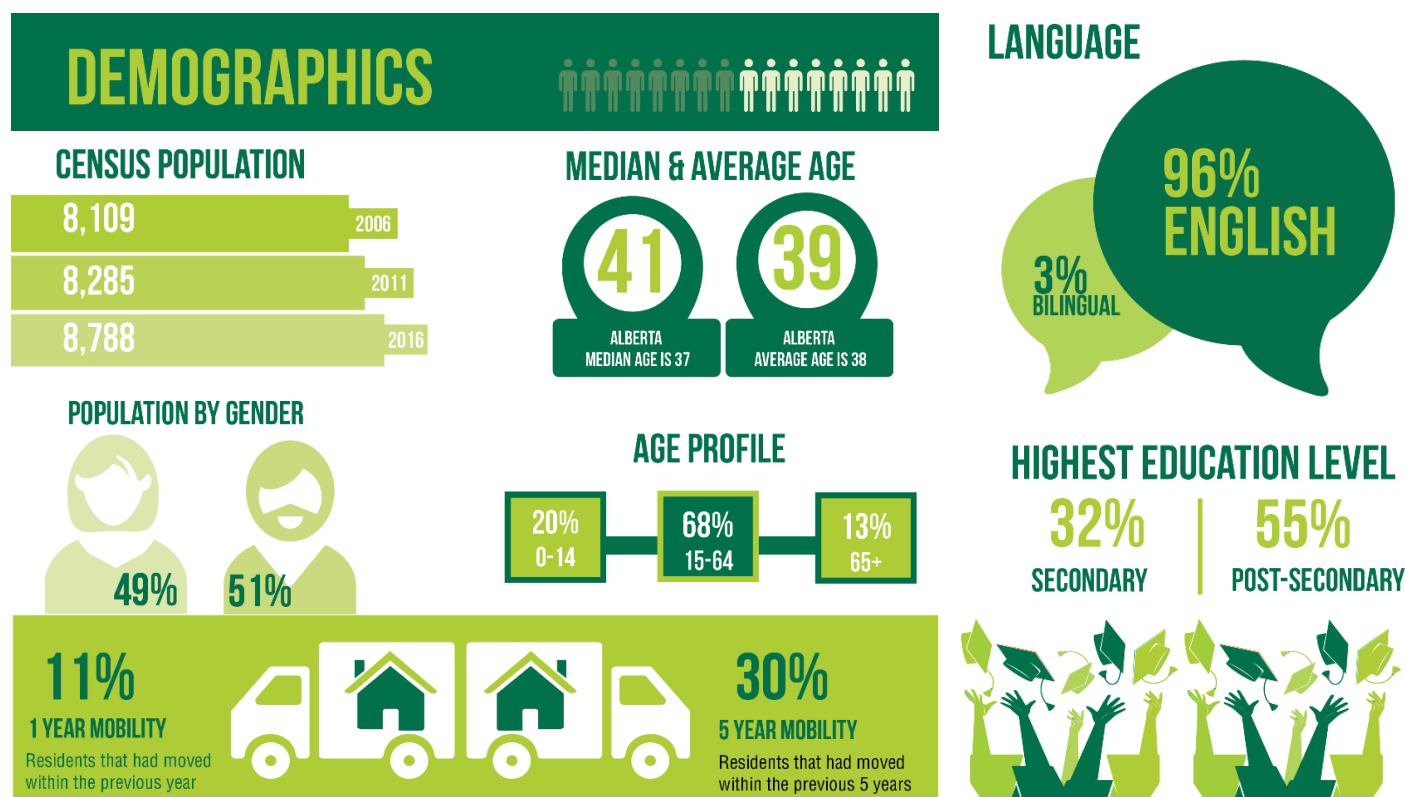


5.3. Statistical Overview

Please see the full Situational Analysis of Wheatland County for more detail.

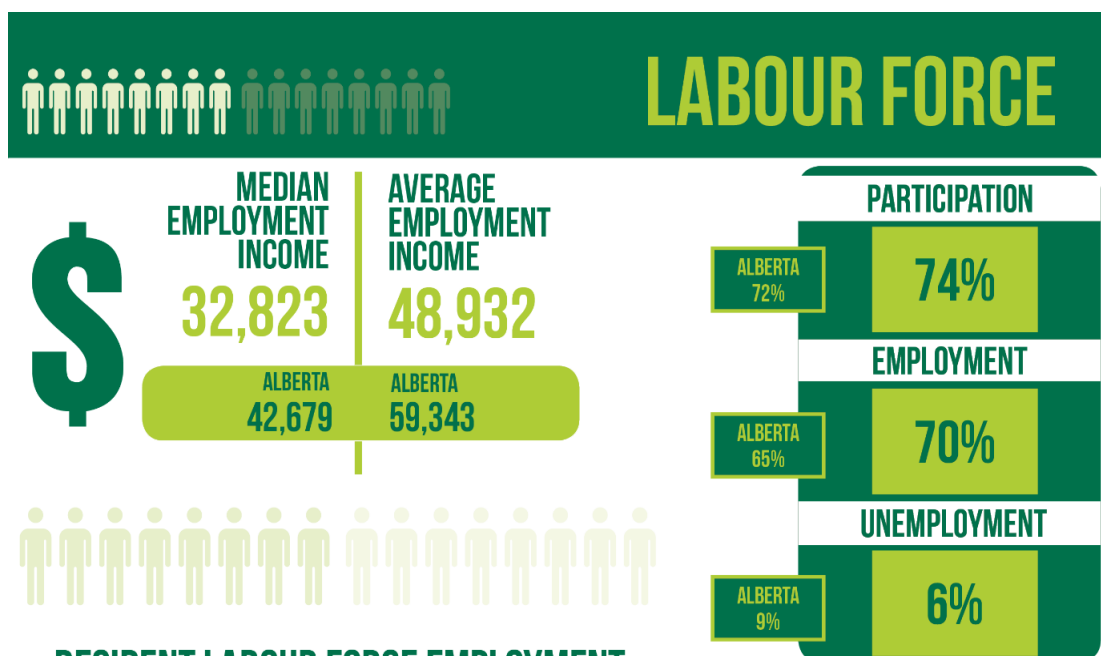
Demographics

- Wheatland County's **population grew** from 8,285 (in 2011) to 8,788 (in 2016) residents over the last census period for a total of 6% growth. The continued growth through the decline in oil and gas sector is a sign of underlying strength.
- Wheatland County's **population is slightly older** than the province (41 vs. 39); with 68% of residents between 15 and 65, indicating a strong working age population.



All data sourced from Statistics Canada Census 2016.





All data sourced from Statistics Canada Census 2016.



Export Sales (Sales Outside Wheatland County)

Largest Export Sales Industries	
Industry	Export (\$)
Pesticide, fertilizer and other agricultural chemical manufacturing	\$257,789,050
Farms	\$123,754,977
Other chemical product manufacturing	\$119,667,475
Other general-purpose machinery manufacturing	\$24,046,001
Farm product merchant wholesalers	\$9,844,572
Warehousing and storage	\$8,972,989
Performing arts companies	\$8,641,790
Sawmills and wood preservation	\$8,634,344
Other federal services (9112-9119)	\$6,323,346
Building finishing contractors	\$5,549,703
Civic and social organizations	\$5,054,696
Architectural, engineering and related services	\$4,399,282
Construction, forestry, mining, and industrial machinery, equipment and supplies merchant wholesalers	\$3,956,439
Other specialty trade contractors	\$3,803,564
Industrial machinery manufacturing	\$3,343,461
Promoters (presenters) of performing arts, sports and similar events	\$2,925,975
Agricultural, construction and mining machinery manufacturing	\$2,855,095
Meat product manufacturing	\$1,995,887

Source: EMSI Analyst economics modelling tool based on Statistics Canada's 2013 export tables.



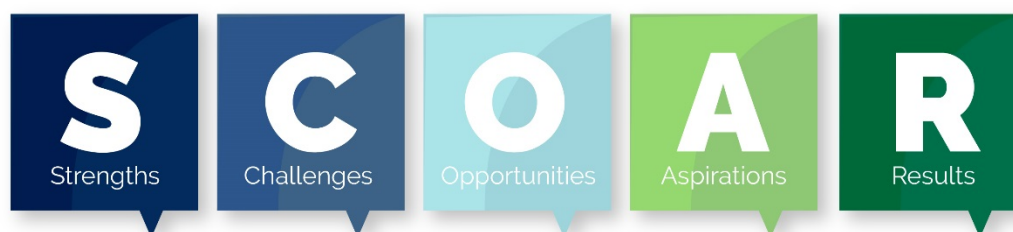
Business Counts by Industry, 2012-2017

Industries with the Largest Number of Businesses (1 or more employees)				
Description	2012 Total	2017 Total	2012- 2017 Change	2012- 2017 % Change
Farms	102	110	8	7.8%
Building equipment contractors	14	22	8	57.1%
Support activities for mining, and oil and gas extraction	26	21	(5)	-19.2%
Full-service restaurants and limited-service eating places	20	19	(1)	-5.0%
Management, scientific and technical consulting services	13	16	3	23.1%
Other specialty trade contractors	8	13	5	62.5%
Specialized freight trucking	21	13	(8)	-38.1%
Traveller accommodation	11	13	2	18.2%
General freight trucking	15	12	(3)	-20.0%
Religious organizations	12	12	0	0.0%
Oil and gas extraction	7	11	4	57.1%
Residential building construction	8	11	3	37.5%
Foundation, structure, and building exterior contractors	12	11	(1)	-8.3%
Commercial and industrial machinery and equipment (except automotive and electronic) repair and maintenance	15	11	(4)	-26.7%

Source: Canadian Business Patterns, Statistics Canada 2014 & 2017. Negative values are in red



6. STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES, ASPIRATIONS AND RESULTS (SCOAR™)



The following comprehensive SCOAR™ (Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) Analysis was prepared by analyzing the current stats and data, a document review plus the feedback from elected officials, staff, stakeholders and residents engaged in the consultation.



STRENGTHS

- Existing business community; good employers
- Access to urban centres yet living in a scenic rural setting
- The community with friendly people and small-town lifestyle
- Strong support of buy local whenever possible
- A rural county with a unique cultural/tourism offerings in the Rosebud Theatre, Dark Skies and agri-tourism
- Environmentally progressive with agricultural plastic recycling program and wastewater processing pilot in Rosebud
- Close to larger urban centres and markets
- Borders Siksika Nation with business/tourism assets and increasing mandate for economic development
- Reasonably priced housing
- Industrial and commercial land is lower cost than nearby communities
- Strong agricultural community
- Located on main highways and CN rail
- Strong CF Wild Rose with complementary community and economic development projects





CHALLENGES

- Lacking upgraded and new infrastructure to support growth in settlements
- Lack of proactive asset management and maintenance
- Few viable locations for investors (serviced land/buildings)
- Red tape/permitting processes difficult and lack consistency – 'Depends who you know'
- County perceived to be unfriendly towards new development/new businesses
- Perception of Council not involving community in decision-making on municipal planning and agricultural services boards
- Subdivision encroachment onto agricultural lands that reduces farm viability and increases potential conflict
- Downtowns and main streets require investment
- Lack of desirable housing stock within settlement areas (hamlets, villages) that would attract families with the talent that local businesses require
- County viewed as 'a place to go through' to get somewhere – need reasons to stop
- Broadband/Internet capacity poor and is essential for businesses
- Petty crime (theft, vandalism, drug trade)
- Competition from Calgary results in high levels of leakage
- Difficult to find qualified workforce locally
- Hard to attract new residents/workforce

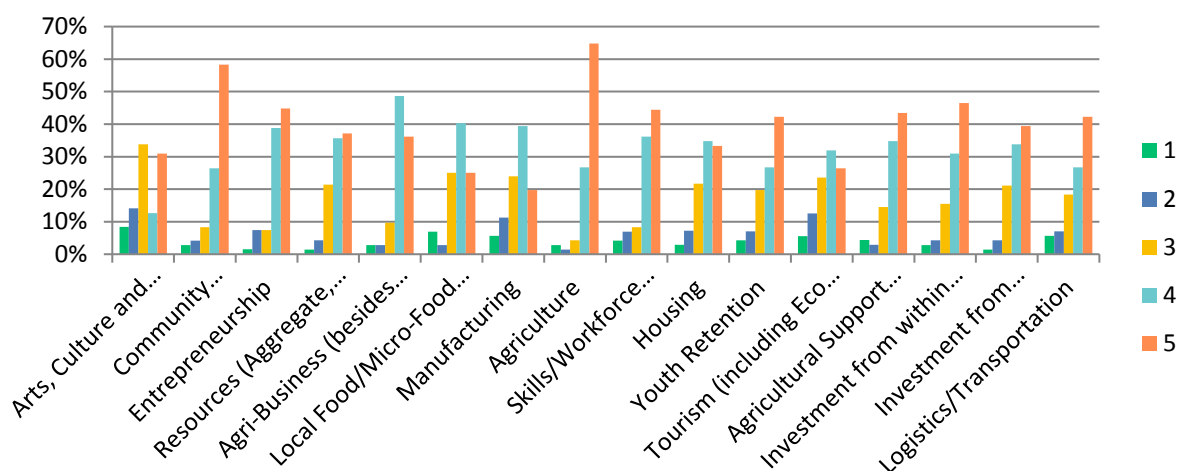




OPPORTUNITIES

- Community development
 - Arts & Culture, Tourism
 - Agri-tourism (CF Wild Rose project is ramping up)
 - Increase diversity of housing stock
 - Build a quality of place attractive to young people and families
 - Downtown/main street re-energizing
- Create opportunities to encourage economic development in downtown and main streets
- Development of industrial node east of Gleichen
- Value-added food processing (with Trans-Canada and rail for shipping)
- Marijuana operation / processing
- Greenhouses
- Logistics & transportation
- Year-round tourism development around Eagle Lake
- Campgrounds
- B&Bs/Dude Ranch concept
- First Nations partnerships and tourism
- Entrepreneurship/new businesses
- Investors/businesses attracted from Calgary

For Wheatland County, please rate the following from 1-5 (5 being highest) as to their importance to the County's economic future.





ASPIRATIONS

- Celebrating Wheatland County's uniqueness and rural/agricultural character
- Diversity of population including young families, retirees and young people
- Increased and diversified job opportunities
- Bustling villages/hamlets with successful businesses and interesting shops
- The County offering experiential holidays including agri-tourism, local culinary and cultural experiences
- Growth while retaining rural community lifestyle and values



RESULTS

- Sustainable, safe communities where people live, work and play
- Living a rural/small town lifestyle
- Recreational activities readily accessible
- Strong local foods, art, culture, entertainment and events
- Friendly, welcoming people living in Wheatland County
- Thriving economy, open for business growth
- Strong, diverse agricultural community



7. WHEATLAND COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN

Based on 4 separate, yet connected themes:

1. Community Development;
2. Investment Readiness;
3. Industry Development; and
4. Tourism.

The following actions are recommended as priorities for the Wheatland County community and economic development.





7.1. Theme 1 – Community Development

Community development directly impacts the positive growth of the economy.

The role of community development is, in part, one of the building blocks to support strong and vibrant communities. The assets and services helped to shape the community into what it is today and will, in part, dictate what it will be in the future.

1. **Identify full time resources (staff) to guide and implement** both the economic development and community development actions and initiatives.
 2. **Develop a plan to roll out broadband across the County.** Broadband is no longer a luxury; it is a business necessity, even for the County's leading industry, agriculture.
 3. **Review cellphone coverage across the County** to ensure all businesses have adequate service.
 4. **Engage residents and business to create a Community Vision for Wheatland County** (including individual separate visions for villages and hamlets). Growth is going to happen in Wheatland County – now is the ideal timing for residents/businesses to determine what's important and what kind of community they want Wheatland County to be in the future.
 5. **Develop Planning and Development Guidelines** that direct future growth and types of development that reflects the vision of the community. The Vision created in #3 is the aspiration of the community; the guidelines direct delivery of that vision.
 6. **Work with the RCMP** to do County crime audit and 'Design out crime' planning in downtowns. Consider funding additional officers that would implement deliverables for the County in strategic locations.
 7. **Complete an Asset Management Plan** including new or updated secondary plans for the hamlets to address plans and options for specific pieces of infrastructure missing in the communities or those that need improvement to align with the vision and to achieve desired economic opportunities. Invest proactively in infrastructure.
-



8. **Develop a community branded signage program** and link to tourism assets/attractions consistent with the image Wheatland County is marketing.
9. **Develop a Communications Plan** to collectively communicate the messages between government, businesses and residents.
10. **Attract affordable housing development to the County** to provide a range of housing options. For example, main street/downtown redevelopment might include incentives for housing spaces developed above street level resulting in both affordable housing and more residents/shoppers in core areas, 'feet on the street' and reduced vandalism. The Province's 'Attainable Housing' program could assist in providing for the family housing stock that is lacking in the County (<https://www.alberta.ca/affordable-housing-programs.aspx>) and there is an interested Calgary-based investor interested in doing this in the Gleichen area.



7.2. Theme 2 – Investment Readiness

When investors want to invest in an area they are looking for a strong, well-organized municipality with the capacity to meet their business needs. **The key to retaining existing and attracting new business is to undertake all the actions to be 'investment-ready' and 'business-friendly'.**

1. **That the County ensure a sufficient supply of appropriately sized, competitively priced, and strategically located industrial land is available** on the market at all times for businesses that wish to own, build, or lease their business premises. The first steps would be undertaking a market analysis (to provide competitive market information related to land in/around Wheatland) and a location analysis study (to determine the best locations for development of industrial lands).
2. Assess the water, waste water, electrical, gas and broadband capacity of the County to ensure that these utilities support and encourage progressive and growing businesses, investment and residential growth. **Proactively budget infrastructure spending to facilitate growth.**
3. **Concentrate development** around development nodes with best access to transportation (highway, rail, air), infrastructure and utilities. Consider development of shovel-ready industrial land east of Gleichen with access to Trans-Canada, rail and existing water/wastewater capacity. This could be a partnership with private sector or neighbouring Siksika Nation that would encourage job and residential growth in the area.



-
4. **Review policies and procedures, including process time, and any special policies, bylaws or procedures required to enable the desired level of control delivered in a user-friendly manner.** Benchmark process times against neighbouring and 'best in class' communities to deal with critics of process time required.

 5. **Use economic analysis that has been done** to understand sectors with those best suited to Wheatland County and focus efforts on those key sectors as attraction targets and probable sources of future growth.

 6. **Work on measures to build Wheatland County's business-friendliness and reputation for being business-friendly.** An example might be an investment "concierge" (usually the EDO) to work with developments above a certain threshold to guide them through the necessary steps to reach a successful outcome with no delays or unpleasant surprises.

 7. **Use the review of infrastructure, land, etc. to identify improvements that would make Wheatland County a good location for businesses to invest.** Consider a "Team Wheatland County" approach that includes a real estate agent who specializes in Industrial and Commercial properties to gain their expert opinions and advice.

 8. **Develop an Economic Development website** to highlight advantages and market opportunities in Wheatland County. Focus on information required by potential investors and to help direct them to available properties.
-





7.3. Theme 3 – Industry Development

Most future growth will be driven by people and businesses already in Wheatland County. The Economic Analysis identified leading industries and competitive advantages. Indicators can be used to guide the efforts of Wheatland County and provide a focus for Industry Development.

1. **Develop an online Business Directory** that is searchable to aid in communication with key businesses and to help identify gaps in value chains that a new or existing business might fill. Potential investors will be curious about the types of businesses already in the County that they might work with either as suppliers or as users of their goods or services. The Directory can serve an additional purpose in emergency response management and demonstrate good stewardship of Wheatland County businesses.
2. **Design and deliver a Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) Program** to initiate engagement with key businesses and establish an ongoing relationship that the new Economic Development Officer can build upon to stay abreast of issues facing businesses in the County. The ongoing engagement with businesses will support efforts to retain existing businesses as well as plan for both internal growth and attraction of key suppliers required by local businesses.
3. **Work with the existing agricultural businesses** to help them diversify into new or value-added products, new markets or new locations that build upon Wheatland County's economic base. Try to engage the many Hutterite businesses in the County, many having already diversified as well as the Siksika agricultural businesses and horse-use arenas and training facilities.
4. **Assess the water, waste water, electrical, gas and broadband capacity of the County** to be sure that these utilities support and encourage progressive and growing businesses. Needs differ from one sector to the next; business engagement through BR+E will identify the extent to which utility needs are being met.
5. **Assess the workforce needs and training requirements of businesses** to take advantage of opportunities that are available while meeting the needs to the business community as it grows, evolves and requires new technologies and workforce capabilities. Working relationships with colleges, universities and training institutions will assure timely and efficient responses to workforce needs and ongoing development.



6. Based on workforce needs, **ensure housing stock and amenities needed to attract the employees and talent to the area** that employers require.
7. **Develop Wheatland County's reputation as a green technology leader**, expanding the agricultural plastic waste program and showcasing Rosebud's Symbiotic water treatment system. This could include an 'eco-tourism' offer for tourists or students coming from Calgary high schools/SAIT/UofC to tour the Symbiotic plant, understanding its downstream products and experiencing a bit of agri-tourism at the same time.
8. **Assist Rosebud School of the Arts in obtaining Provincial post-secondary institution status** directly or in partnership with an established College such as Bow Valley or Olds College.



7.4. Theme 4 – Tourism

Tourism can be a major economic driver for Wheatland County's economy. The sector encompasses local/regional activities such as food and accommodations, retail, festivals and events, sporting activities, arts, culture and heritage. To achieve the best benefit from tourism, there needs to be a plan to ensure that it grows and develops consistent with the community's vision.

1. **Work closely with existing organizations to promote tourism for the County, including Travel Alberta, CF Wild Rose and Badlands.** Encourage collaboration and regular communication to avoid timing conflicts and to enable joint marketing
2. **Update the asset inventory** of attractions, cultural assets and supporting infrastructure and identify gaps.
3. Work with existing organizations such as the Badlands and Siksika Nation to **develop new tourism products and packages** – more reasons for tourists to stop and spend time and money in Wheatland County.
4. **Create and implement a Tourism Signage program** building upon community identity/brand and way-finding identified under the Community Development theme.



5. **Develop a sports tourism strategy** with enhanced programming to fully occupy the arenas, playing fields and other facilities during the year and attracting families to then experience the other tourism and agri-tourism assets while in the County.
 6. Work closely with Community Futures and farm organizations to **build on the growing momentum of Open Farm Days** to take advantage of associated value-added and business diversification opportunities.
 7. Rosebud Theatre, the Siksika First Nation, Blackfoot Crossing and community museums have **active culture programs and assets that can be bundled or co-marketed with other Wheatland County initiatives**.
 8. **Monitor developments at Eagle Lake** that could provide associated tourism opportunities and potential businesses that could be encouraged to develop and grow.
-



8. CONCLUSION

Wheatland County is at a crossroads. Given its enviable location and transportation, the County is poised for growth, but to realize its full potential while preserving its rural character, lifestyle and agricultural industry requires a number of actions:

- The County needs to be committed to managed growth to avoid the pitfalls that other municipalities have experienced with loss of viable farmland, failing settlements and climbing servicing costs for aging rural subdivisions.
- The economic development work requires the time and attention of an economic development professional to manage the process and assist in developing a culture of economic development awareness within the County.
- Growth nodes need to be clearly identified and appropriately serviced.
- A supply of shovel-ready land needs to be developed in each node to accommodate the different types of development appropriate for each location.
- The hamlets require individual plans for upgrading of infrastructure that will guide the types of improvement and growth appropriate for each location.
- A stronger relationship between the County and existing businesses needs to be developed as these businesses are highly likely to drive a major portion of future growth in the County's economy.
- Similarly, a strong working relationship with the Siksika Nation is needed as they represent significant spending power, workforce to support future growth and they can be strategic partners in the development of both industrial and culture & tourism development.
- The agricultural base of Wheatland County is a vital part of the economy and will continue to grow, evolve and diversify. Initiatives such as Open Farm Days and visitation with key businesses will position the County to benefit from a vibrant, resilient and diverse agricultural industry.
- Administratively, the County should build its capacity and reputation as being "business and development friendly", while directing growth to appropriate areas and with policies that balance growth with the preservation of a rural character that defines the County and is treasured by its residents.
- All staff and Councillors will need to see themselves as ambassadors of the County and be positive about development within the parameters they and their communities set.

Wheatland County is in an enviable place as it has not pursued an unbridled path towards development as some have, but can take a managed and sustainable approach that will result in an unequalled quality of life for generations to come, rooted in its strong economy.

