



# Council's Strategic Plan **2015 - 2018**







# Mayor's Message

City Council fulfils many important roles. We connect residents to the services provided by their government. We bring the priorities of citizens to day-to-day decision making. We are stewards of the public purse, ensuring that tax dollars are spent wisely.

We act as sounding boards and, from time to time, serve as the voice of the community on important provincial, national or international issues. We work to engage residents and highlight the key role they can play in building a better community.

As vital as all these roles are in our democratic system, I believe there is something that is even more fundamental. As elected officials, we are charged with trying to improve our community so that our children and grandchildren might inherit a place better than it is today.

To do that, Council must develop and express a collective vision of what we want our community to be in the future. We also have to identify the key actions that have to be taken in order to move our community forward.

City Council does all that through its Strategic Plan.

This document is the starting point in an interdependent set of processes that enable a municipality to function: Council's plan sets the direction for our organization. Administration responds by developing business plans aligned with the direction Council has provided. Those business plans are, in turn, used to build the budget that Council will review and approve in the fall of 2014. And, that budget will fund the work that happens between 2015 and 2018.

Grande Prairie is a community of pioneers, builders, innovators and risk-takers. In this Strategic Plan, Council has expressed a desire to take bold steps toward the future of our community by focusing on: Exploring New Directions, Capitalizing on Growth, Strengthening Our Core, and Optimizing Existing Services. In all these, I believe Council is reflecting the spirit of our community.

The directions set out in this plan are meant to be both practical and visionary. At first those two descriptors may seem at odds, but I believe that any great journey has to start with the practicality of first gathering one's courage and then, simply, taking one step forward.

# Our Guiding Principles

## Advocacy

We are proactive and advocate on behalf of our citizens to the other orders of government.

## Diverse Economy

We are focused on improving the vitality and diversity of our economy.

## Engaged Citizens

We strive to be transparent, clear, accurate, and timely. We encourage residents to take an active role in their community.

## Exceptional Service

We are citizen-centered and use a customer-focused approach to provide services.

## Family Focused

We are a family-friendly community and our services reflect our demographics.

## Fiscally Responsible

We are accountable and strive to be sustainable.

## Healthy Environment

We consider the impact of our actions on the environment and lead by example.

## Informed

We make informed decisions based on reliable evidence.

## Innovative

We are an incubator of excellence and encourage entrepreneurial thinking in an innovative culture.

## Partnerships

We encourage partnerships to get things done. We are effective in utilizing collaboration and co-ordination.

## Winter City

We are flexible and adapt our policies and guidelines to be reflective of our northern climate.







Top Row: Councillor Kevin O'Toole, Councillor Rory Tarant, Mayor Bill Given, Councillor Kevin McLean, Councillor Dwight Logan  
Bottom Row: Councillor Jackie Clayton, Councillor Lorne Radbourne, Councillor Chris Thiessen, Councillor Helen Rice

## The Strategic Planning Process

At the strategic business planning session held January 22-24, City Council began with identifying trends and issues that influence our city. They then established a list of strategic directions and consolidated them into the four focus areas described in the next few pages.

City Council concluded the strategic business planning session with the development of guidelines that will assist staff in formulating comprehensive business plans and budgets for 2015 - 2018.

Council held a service level workshop subsequent to the business planning session in order to examine organizational capacity and service delivery. Council identified areas of success as well as areas that could be enhanced.

# Focus Area: Optimizing Existing Services

## Preferred Future

The City of Grande Prairie meets community needs by providing well-integrated services that efficiently and effectively maximize the use of our resources. We have undertaken a community needs assessment to better understand those community needs. We continually refine how we provide services and strive for best practices. We leverage performance through the use of a well-educated and informed staff.

## City Council's Strategic Directions

- Explore opportunities to partner in municipal service delivery
- Partner with community groups
- Explore issues around affordability
- Enhance tourism

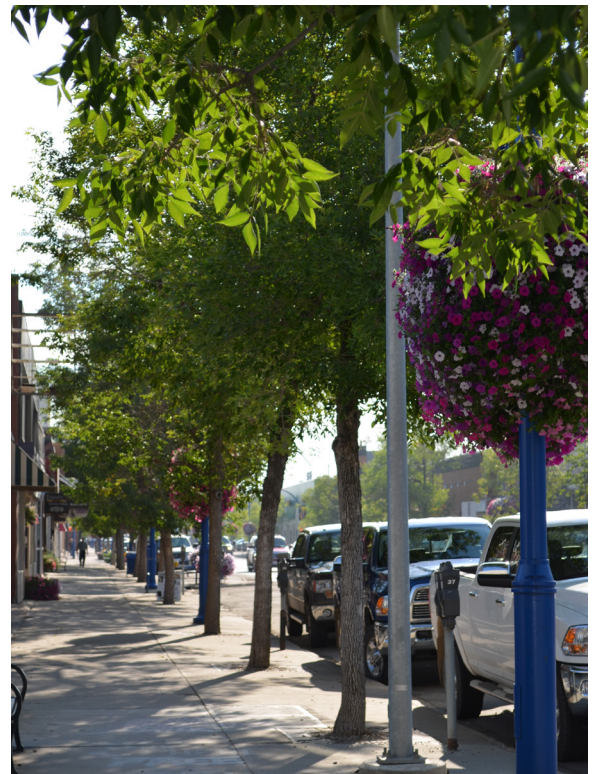
# Focus Area: Strengthening Our Core

## Preferred Future

Grande Prairie has a vibrant urban core that meets the needs of residents and visitors. As an all-season, multi-purpose neighbourhood, our downtown is a defining element of the city. It is a pedestrian friendly, accessible gathering place, well served by transit. Downtown is an active, attractive and inclusive focal point for the community. Our city centre is a place where people live, work and play.

## City Council's Strategic Directions

- Develop a vision and plan for an energetic downtown
- Enhance community mobility
- Promote residential development
- Explore alternative models of land development





# Focus Area: Exploring New Directions

## Preferred Future

We are an innovative centre of excellence and a hub for business incubation. We continually seek out best practices. We understand the evolution of our region and are willing to take risks in order to find solutions that will benefit the residents of our communities. We maximize the use of land through creative design strategies.

## City Council's Strategic Directions

- Explore alternate governance models
- Explore best practices and models
- Balance residential and non-residential development
- Develop residential infill strategies



# Focus Area: Capitalizing on Growth

## Preferred Future

We are adaptable to growth and change. We take advantage of trends and build on the current momentum to attract development. We have a well-developed small business and retail base. Residents realize value for their taxes. We have a young diverse community that is engaged in creating the city that people choose to live in. Infrastructure is well maintained and meets the needs of the community. Opportunities for education allow students to remain in the city. Growth maximizes infrastructure and reduces the impact on the environment.

## City Council's Strategic Directions

- Ensure planning considers full spectrum of services provided by the City
- Use best practice models to take advantage of industry trends
- Invest in infrastructure to meet burgeoning demand and future needs
- Increase the length and depth of our planning documents in order to better prepare for the future

# GRANDE

prairie CANADA



Photo by Rhonda Figel