



2023 Q1 PROGRESS REPORT

COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2025



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
OF **WOOD BUFFALO**



MESSAGE FROM CAO PAUL THORKELSSON

I'm pleased to present the 2023, first quarter report detailing Administration's progress on Council's 2022-2025 Strategic Plan. The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo has had an active few months with many exciting projects and initiatives that aligned closely to Council's Plan. Here are a few highlights:

WinterPLAY 2023

Our annual winter festival was a great success thanks to the various community and corporate partners, staff and event organizers who came together to deliver an action-packed week of fun for everyone. Ice sculptures, Indigenous storytelling, dog sled rides and of course, "Shoot Out on the Snye", were a few of the fun activities available to the public.

Collaborating with Indigenous communities

In February, Council signed a Municipal Services Agreement with the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, marking a significant step towards the creation of the first urban reserve in Alberta.

The Municipality has also worked to implement the Calls to Action and incorporate truth and reconciliation into its organizational structure in collaboration with Indigenous communities and organizations. It's still early in our journey to reconciliation and we will continue to move forward on these important commitments.

Our people; our greatest asset

When I look at all that has been accomplished so far, I am humbled to work alongside Council, my colleagues in Administration and the various municipal departments. Earlier this year, we received Alberta's Top 75 Employer Award which is a testament to the caliber of employees that show up every day to deliver the programs and services residents need.

Council's Strategic Plan is Administration's guiding document and the progress towards the milestones and actions that we have achieved so far are foundational to our future as a region. I am proud of what we have accomplished by working together.

Sincerely,
Paul Thorkelsson, Chief Administrative Officer

WE VALUE FISCAL MANAGEMENT (FM)

COUNCIL'S PLAN IN ACTION HIGHLIGHT(S)

FM1b: Invest in the Health and Safety of our Employees

- Named one of Alberta's Top 75 Employers in 2023. The Municipality received top marks for its support of wellness in the workplace.
- Two Joint Health and Safety Committees were established.
- Winter Wellness Ambassadors supported drop-in wellness events for staff at seven (7) different office locations and one via virtual session.
- Training options have continued to expand beyond traditional classroom style learning to include virtual, online, self-directed, and brief learning opportunities that can be completed in 15 minutes or less.

ADDITIONAL WORK THAT IS ALIGNED TO COUNCIL'S VALUES

- An Internal Audit Charter that defines the Internal Audit's purpose, authority, responsibility, and position within the organization was approved along with the 2023-2024 Internal Audit Plan.

Our world is changing. The revenue we enjoy to provide services will not last forever. It is critical that we build our community and its future upon policies and investments that are fiscally, environmentally, and socially sustainable and enduring. Developing a long-term fiscal budget and strategy will ensure sustainable growth and high-level quality services.



Members of our transit operations team proudly display Alberta's Top 75 Employers award.

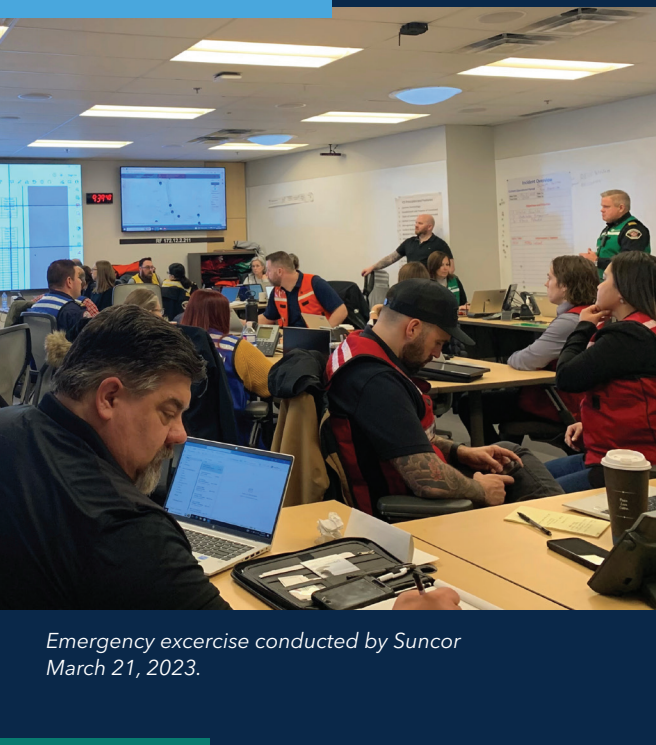
Q1 2023 OVERALL FM TASK PROGRESS

■ Completed (3%) ■ In Progress (30%) ■ Not Started (67%)



WE VALUE BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS (BP)

We recognize there is value in working together. We welcome insight and appreciate collaboration from all groups and stakeholders in order to bring together elements that will help ensure communities continue to grow into the homes we love and homes which welcome others.



Emergency exercise conducted by Suncor
March 21, 2023.

COUNCIL'S PLAN IN ACTION HIGHLIGHT(S)

BP1: Host or attend regular meetings throughout the Region

- Administration continued to further refine the standard process for consistently monitoring, measuring, and reporting meeting data. Meeting categories were identified to allow for shared understanding and additional detail for future reporting.

BP4: Actively work together with large industry to share information, focus on regional priorities, develop infrastructure and cultural project partnerships

- The Regional Emergency Coordination Centre was put into action as municipal staff joined provincial and industry representatives in an emergency exercise conducted by Suncor.

BP6: Support opportunities and community partnerships that help promote a positive image of Wood Buffalo

- The Municipality provided four million dollars for the Arctic Winter Games Host Society and supported shared services. Two Council members volunteered as board directors and staff participated as volunteers.
- The Heritage Resources Management Plan was approved by Council.
- Council approved \$92,100 in funding from the Emerging Issues Reserve to Fort McMurray Heritage Society for its 2023 Sustaining Grant to fund a Blueberry Festival and Christmas in the Village event.

ADDITIONAL WORK THAT IS ALIGNED TO COUNCIL'S VALUES

- Mayor Bowman proclaimed March 21, 2023, as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in the Region.

Q1 2023 OVERALL BP TASK PROGRESS

■ Completed (0%) ■ In Progress (27%) ■ Not Started (73%)



WE VALUE RURAL AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES AND RELATIONSHIPS (RI)

Our future cannot be separated from our past. As we grow communities into sustainable prosperity we need to learn from and work with local Indigenous partners and communities who have lived in a sustainable way with nature and the environment since time immemorial, as well as forge new relationships that make us leaders in building kinder, more supportive, and more understanding communities.



Honour & Remember display in the lobby of Jubilee Building.

COUNCIL'S PLAN IN ACTION HIGHLIGHT(S)

RI2: Continue to advance the Municipality's response to Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit People (MMIWG2S+) and Missing or Murdered and Exploited Indigenous Peoples (MMEIP)

- Truth and Reconciliation Champions have been identified across the organization and will meet quarterly to identify ways to work together to further advance the municipal response to truth and reconciliation.
- One additional Protocol Agreement was signed, bringing the total number of protocol agreements signed to 10.
- Administration supported a red dress educational art gallery during the Arctic Winter Games. Individuals learned about MMEIP from local experts and the MMEIP taskforce.
- The art exhibition, Honour and Remember, located on the main floor of the Jubilee Building was curated by Jes Croucher of Pawâmiw Creative. Honour and Remember tells the story of Missing or Murdered and Exploited Indigenous Peoples from an Indigenous perspective.

ADDITIONAL WORK THAT IS ALIGNED TO COUNCIL'S VALUES

- Administration partnered with Mikisew Cree First Nation for National Indigenous Languages Day by supplying language resources that emphasize the importance of strengthening and revitalizing Cree and Dene.

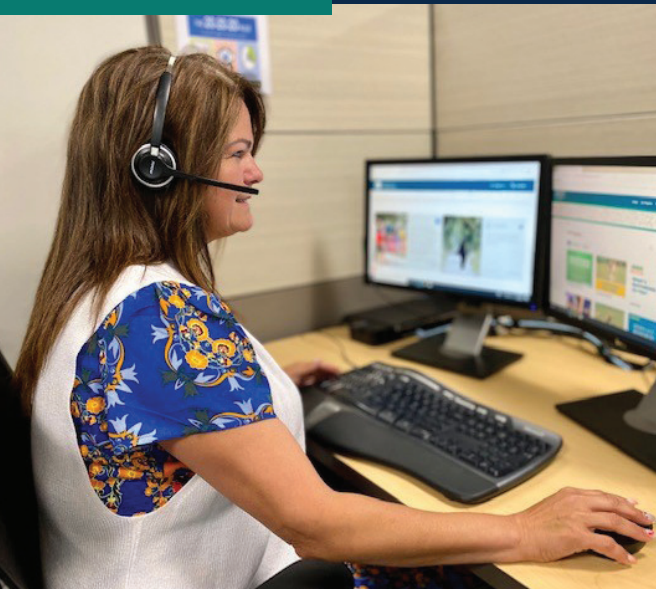
Q1 2023 OVERALL RI TASK PROGRESS

■ Completed (6%) ■ In Progress (26%) ■ Not Started (68%)



WE VALUE LOCAL ECONOMY (LE)

We have the potential to make the region a destination of choice for economic development and quality of life by supporting growth of the local business community and to improve services to residents.



In Q1 2023, the Pulse team responded to over 14 000 calls.

COUNCIL'S PLAN IN ACTION HIGHLIGHT(S)

LE1: Establish reporting metrics for economic development and tourism to ensure maximum accountability, transparency and clarity for Council and taxpayers

- Reporting metrics and key performance indicators were incorporated into the 2023 grant funding agreement. Progress reports from Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo Economic Development and Tourism have been received by Administration. Council also received a quarterly update and presentation.

LE3: Establish a Business Advisory Committee

- Council appointed members to the newly established Wood Buffalo Pro-Business Advisory Committee. The new committee met in January and March.

LE4: Advocate and partner with all levels of government to deliver consistent and accessible broadband services

- Administration worked with TELUS through the Rural Broadband - Southern Hamlets capital projects delivery timeline to ensure successful completion of broadband services in Southern Hamlets and Indigenous communities.

ADDITIONAL WORK THAT IS ALIGNED TO COUNCIL'S VALUES

- The Supply Chain Management Department partnered with the Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce, Fort McMurray Construction Association and the Northeastern Alberta Aboriginal Business Association to host and provide an overview of the Municipality's 2023 Capital Program. This overview provided high-level project details, inclusive of the planned procurement strategy, budget range and anticipated posting quarter for Engineering Services, Environmental Services and Public Works capital projects.

Q1 2023 OVERALL LE TASK PROGRESS

■ Completed (39%) ■ In Progress (33%) ■ Not Started (28%)



WE VALUE DOWNTOWN VISUALIZATION (DV)

The downtown has struggled over time with indecisions, rapid changes in decision, and natural disasters for too long. It is time to choose what downtown will be, and lay out a plan for redevelopment and disaster mitigation, and carry on with implementation.



Spices Indian Restaurant, recipient of a downtown revitalization Patio Grant.

COUNCIL'S PLAN IN ACTION HIGHLIGHT(S)

DV2: Ensure a review and update of the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan is completed

- A revised Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan is complete and is currently being reviewed internally and via public engagement.

DV4: Approve, enhance, and enforce bylaws and beautification standards

- The Community Standards Bylaw assists Bylaw Enforcement officers to address nuisance property and other community standards concerns. Bylaw Services dealt with 38 case files during the first quarter and all 38 properties came into compliance through either education or enforcement.

DV5: Incentivize private investment in the downtown

- A total of 15 Downtown Revitalization Incentive Program applications were received in the first quarter of 2023, \$147,575 was committed to five applications with \$173,084 paid to nine applicants who finished their renovations.

DV7: Complete waterfront beautification

- In response to Council direction, the current design for the waterfront project was reviewed through two workshops with the Wood Buffalo Waterfront Advisory Committee. The waterfront committee continues to meet monthly.

ADDITIONAL WORK THAT IS ALIGNED TO COUNCIL'S VALUES

- Council passed a motion for the Municipality to dispose of 20 and 24 Riedel Street to the Fort McMurray Boys' and Girls' Club.

Q1 2023 OVERALL DV TASK PROGRESS

■ Completed (8%) ■ In Progress (32%) ■ Not Started (60%)



APPENDIX 1 - ADDITIONAL WORK THAT IS ALIGNED TO COUNCIL'S VALUES

FISCAL MANAGEMENT (FM)

FM1b: Invest in the health and safety of our employees

- Mandatory training for municipal employees has been enhanced in 2023 through a partnership with Keyano College. The Municipality has expanded training for Supervisors and Managers to include a Management and Supervision Certificate.

FM5: Ensure government grants are fully utilized

- Council endorsed the Alberta Community Partnership grant application to fund the four phases of the Unlocking the Full Potential of Alberta's Midsized Cities Initiative.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS (BP)

BP1: Host or attend regular meetings throughout the region. Below are the details:

- Council was invited to attend 65 meetings
- Council was scheduled to host 39 meetings
- There was a total of 104 meetings in the Council's calendar
 - Community Events/Engagement - 33
 - Conferences/Conventions/Symposiums - 3
 - Council/Committee Meetings - 14
 - Cultural Events - 8
 - Government Engagements (other levels of govt) - 20
 - Networking Events/Fundraisers - 10
 - Stakeholders/Industry Engagements - 5
 - Political Functions - 0
 - Training - 11
 - Of the 104 meetings included in Council's calendar, nine (9) were Indigenous focused.

BP3: Establish an anti-racism bylaw and policy

- Members of Council and Administration participated in a community engagement session hosted by ACI Argyle Communications on behalf of the Government of Alberta. Experiences and ideas were shared on how issues of racism and discrimination might best be addressed.
- The Community and Protective Services department established a scope of work for the Equity and Inclusion Framework. This framework is intended to inform the development of an anti-racism policy and bylaw.
- Inclusion coach consultants were selected to work with local businesses and organizations to assist them in becoming more equitable and inclusive employers. The consultants are funded through a grant from the Government of Alberta.
- Over 30 municipal staff took part in Inclusive Leadership Training. Other training offered internally include sessions about Unconscious Bias, Age Friendly and Accessibility Awareness, and Accessibility 101.

- In support of International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Municipality hosted a movie screening Discrimination, the Municipality hosted a movie screening of the film “Get Out” followed by a panel discussion about racism and the impacts on the wellbeing of those targeted.
- The Municipality hosted a youth anti-racism working group to support collaborative efforts to address racism.
- Staff attended Government of Alberta focus groups and engagements on hate incidents, hate crimes, anti-racism and also participated in the Alberta Hate Crimes Committee Symposium.

BP6: Support opportunities and community partnerships that help promote a positive image of Wood Buffalo

- Council’s Excellence Awards were presented for Citizen of the Year, Everyday Hero, Indigenous Advocate and Youth. These residents were celebrated for their significant contributions to the region.
- More than 250 residents participated in public engagement events hosted in a dozen urban neighbourhoods and most rural communities in the region. The online engagement portal, Participate Wood Buffalo received over 12,000 visits, with approximately 1,500 people participating in one of five different projects.
- Artists across Canada were invited to lead projects for the 2023 igNIGHT public art exhibition
- The 2023-2024 Policing Priorities were identified through community feedback in February. Each year the Municipality partners with Wood Buffalo RCMP to help align policing priorities with people who live, work and play in the region.
- The Municipality partnered with Wood Buffalo RCMP for a new engagement initiative, Ask a Cop a Question intended to continue building positive relationships between youth and officers. Panel discussions were co-hosted by grades seven and eight students and questions were answered by local officers. There were 10 schools that participated in the series, including three from rural communities.
- Mayor Bowman proclaimed March 27, 2023, as World Theatre Day in the region.
- Mayor Bowman proclaimed March as Alberta Francophonie month in the region.
- Council accepted the 2023 Public Artwork Plan as information. The Work Plan supports a variety of program areas and projects that aim to build artist capacity and increase opportunities for regional artists.
- A celebration was hosted for the completion and formal presentation of Call of the Wild, the Saprae Creek Estates Public Art Bench located at the skatepark on the premise of Vista Ridge. The event was a formal showcasing of the art bench with the artist Amy Keller-Rempp.
- Pulse is our direct link to residents. With over 14,000 inquiries to date in 2023, this service provide the RMWB with real time information on key topics that are important to the community. The information also helped Administration prioritize areas of concern and respond accordingly.
- Mayor Bowman proclaimed March 31, 2023, as Transgender Day of Visibility in the region.
- Council approved the 2023 Sustaining and Capital Grant requests totaling \$1M for the Rotary Club of Fort McMurray with conditions. Funding will support operations of the Rotary Links Golf Course.
- Point in Time (PiT) Count 2022 results were published on www.rmwb.ca. There were 162 individuals experiencing homelessness when the count was conducted on September 26-27, 2022. This is a 19% reduction since 2018, when the last PiT Count was conducted.
- A Directors’ Table and Managers’ Table consisting of staff were formed to integrate anti-racism and diversity, equity and inclusion efforts more broadly across the organization.

RURAL AND INDIGENOUS RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNITIES (RI)

RI2: Continue to advance the Municipality's response to Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit People (MMIWG2S+) and Missing or Murdered and Exploited Indigenous Peoples (MMEIP)

- Administration presented an update on the response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action. The update reported on progress made in 2022 and shared the results of a third-party benchmarking report on the RMWB's commitment. Out of the 57 Canadian municipalities examined, the RMWB had identified the most TRC Calls to Action for a population of its size.
- A flag raising ceremony was hosted at the front of the Jubilee Building. It featured an Indigenous honour song, followed by singing of the national anthem in Cree and English as five flags representing Canada, Alberta, RMWB, Treaty 8 and Métis were raised.
- A partnership was in place to facilitate two Elders participation for the WinterPLAY opening ceremonies. Elder Robert Cree provided a prayer and honor song, and Elder Horace Adams sang the National Anthem in Dene. Fort McKay First Nation provided Dene game demonstrations for the public. The RMWB Tipi was on display throughout the event, with support from Tapway Contracting Inc.
- Ribbon skirt programs were hosted in Janvier and Conklin, whereby residents could sign up to learn the art of ribbon skirt making.
- Administration participated in Cultural Awareness Training hosted by Indigenous Tourism Alberta. Indigenous Hand Games were demonstrated and enjoyed by the participants.
- MMEIP gatherings took place in Janvier, Fort McMurray 468 First Nation, Fort Chipewyan and Fort McKay.
- Administration attended a press conference with the MMEIP Taskforce in Edmonton to support raising awareness.

RI4: Honour, acknowledge and commemorate residential school confirmations of gravesites, survivors, and their families.

- Administration supported the installation of a visual residential schools display during the 2023 Arctic Winter Games. The display reflected a 100-year timeline on the creation and implementation of the residential school system in Canada. Attendees were welcome to explore the installation then participate in a hands on learning and reflection opportunity.

LOCAL ECONOMY (LE)

LE2: Support development of a rural tourism engagement strategy

- A representative from Administration travelled to Fort Chipewyan to participate with Indigenous Tourism Alberta and Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo Economic Development and Tourism to increase tourism awareness in the region. The Municipal Tipi was erected and highlighted during the visit.

LE5: Deliver a pro-business environment for businesses with attention to excellence in customer service (red tape reduction)

- Council held a public hearing and approved Bylaw No. 23/003, to amend the Land Use Bylaw and the Timberlea Area Structure Plan to allow a commercial development at 110 Prospect Drive. The municipality is committed to supporting the local economy and local business development and growth, and this step facilitates this in a responsible, community-oriented way.
- Council passed a resolution directing Administration to review the design from 2016 for the Northside Twin Arena at Abraham's Landing.
- The Planning and Development process review implementation plan is underway. Initial implementation focused on re-organizing permit types within the departments system to help improve the customer experience. Changes included; moving permit conditions to the top of the application, adjusted language on the e-permitting website and an improved fee schedule.
- Council approved the establishment of transit service in the Quarry Ridge subdivision in Fort McMurray and they also approved \$200,000 to be allocated from the Capital Infrastructure Reserve to fund upgrades to Quarry Ridge Drive to accommodate the service.

DOWNTOWN VISUALIZATION (DV)

DV1: Support the creation of a strategy for downtown that identifies and coordinates municipal investment and improvements

- The Wood Buffalo Downtown Revitalization Advisory Committee presented their Annual Report as information to Council.
- The ribbon was cut and regional flags were raised at Kiyām Community Park! Community leaders and more than 100 people were in attendance to celebrate the official opening of the park and raising of the flags. Public Art is reflected around the park. In the heart of Kiyām Community Park are two unique benches. The benches are sister benches from ones in Anzac and Sapræ Creek Estates.
- Council adopted the Wood Buffalo Wayfinding Strategy which provides an approach for developing wayfinding plans, including directional signage in the neighborhoods and communities within the region.

DV6: Conclude flood mitigation infrastructure investments

- Council held a special meeting on Monday, January 23 and residents had the opportunity to provide their input on proposed plans for flood mitigation in Draper. Council approved Flood Accommodation as the flood mitigation option for the community of Draper.
- Temporary workspace agreements and permanent easements with property owners continue to be put in place to support both the temporary/seasonal flood mitigation measures and permanent flood measures.



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