

Wood Buffalo Social Sustainability

A Community Plan

For the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

June 2018



WOOD BUFFALO
SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Acknowledgements

The Wood Buffalo Social Sustainability Plan (SSP) represents the collective perspectives and input of many people and organizations across the region. Without their time, effort and expertise creating the plan would not have been possible.

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Financial Support

Canadian Red Cross Society

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Vital Connections

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Introduction

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo is committed to improving and sustaining quality of life for all residents in the region. The region identified a need to create a Social Sustainability Plan (SSP) to identify priorities and help guide decision-making, resource allocation and collaborative community action. By working together within their respective mandates, community agencies and organizations, the Municipality and other stakeholders can align resources and effort toward meeting a commonly-held set of priorities and goals. The region currently does not have an approved guiding framework for improving social wellness, increasing resiliency and ensuring collective social sustainability across the communities in the region. The need for an effective and comprehensive SSP became even more critical in the wake of the 2016 Horse River wildfire, given its impact on the region and on municipal and community priorities.

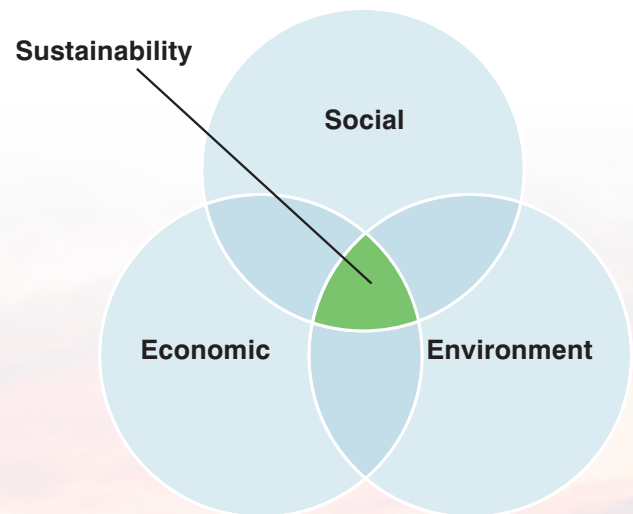
The communities of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo include:

- Anzac
- Conklin
- Draper
- Fort Chipewyan
- Fort Fitzgerald
- Fort McKay
- Fort McMurray
- Gregoire Lake Estates
- Janvier
- Sapræ Creek Estates

Engaging Wood Buffalo residents, elected officials, the education sector, health services, social profit, community organizations, business and industry, Indigenous and rural representatives, and other stakeholders in the region was key to the development of the SSP. Participants identified current and anticipated individual and community social development and wellness needs as well as current community capacities.

This high-level plan focuses on the linkages and inter-dependencies between the economy, the environment and social society. By working together, long-term prosperity and continued high-quality of life for current and future residents of the region can be achieved. The SSP will help to align and integrate Municipal and community social policy and strategy with economic and environmental plans and initiatives in the region.¹ The SSP ensures that the community's tenets of effective social sustainability are defined, developed and implemented as a critical component of the overall strategic, corporate and community planning and action frameworks.

The SSP provides a guide for the Municipality, community agencies and organizations and other stakeholders to anticipate and respond to the changing social needs and capacities the region will experience over the duration of the plan.



Project Description

Social sustainability is one of three elements of overall sustainability. Achieving overall sustainability depends on the inter-relating social, economic and environmental dimensions. For example, a strategy to increase food security in the region through supporting local and individual food producers, developing an effective regional distribution network and increasing education and awareness about healthy food choices and food preparation, would have positive impacts for the social and economic security of residents, improve the viability of the local food sector and reduce the environmental impacts from long distance food transportation.

The SSP identifies goals, priorities and proposes strategies, and actions to maintain and improve quality of life for current and future residents.

The goals of the plan are to:

- Define social sustainability in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo context;
- Increase the awareness and knowledge in the community about social sustainability and provide a framework for collaborative action;
- Determine social sustainability priorities, strategies and actions that community partners and stakeholders, including the Municipality, can use to align policies, effort and resources;
- Identify community leaders, partners and stakeholders to steward the SSP as it is implemented; and
- Identify high-level, meaningful community indicators to help measure the success of implementation and inform ongoing decision-making.

The plan development process included a comprehensive socio-demographic profile of the region and identification of community values and principles related to social wellness and sustainability. Implementation strategies, as well as a result and outcomes-based evaluation framework, were created with a focus on ongoing engagement and collaboration.

Achieving social sustainability cannot be accomplished by the Municipality alone. The planning process also helped ascertain the appropriate roles and responsibilities of community organizations, agencies and other stakeholders.



Methodology

The SSP Primary Project Team and the project consultants developed a comprehensive engagement and communications plan. An important consideration was the numerous reports and plans that had been previously completed—in particular, those associated with the 2016 Horse River Wildfire. It was evident residents were experiencing survey fatigue and that there were existing sources of information that could be incorporated and built upon.

Project Advisory Committee

Several community leaders were identified and asked to help develop terms of reference for a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) which helped guide and support the plan development process. Throughout the project, PAC members provided strategic guidance, advised on process options, and helped identify emerging issues and opportunities.

Municipal Administration and Council

A primary project team including Municipal Administration from Community Strategies, Communications and Stakeholder Relations, Neighbourhood and Community Development, Indigenous and Rural Relations as well as the Recovery Task Force worked closely with the consultants. In addition, all related Municipal departments were engaged to support the development of the various elements of the SSP, determine alignment with existing internal policies and plans, and provide strategic guidance. Five members of Regional Council participated in community engagement sessions.

Council was initially updated on the SSP project on August 11, 2017, and subsequently on October 27, 2017, and January 24, 2018. In January 2018, Council highlighted support for the Wood Buffalo SSP by approving a new Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Strategic Plan 2018–2021, which includes the SSP under strategy 1(i)—“Partnerships with Social Profits.”

Document Review

An initial list of more than 60 documents containing information relevant to the SSP was compiled for consideration. The consultants reviewed those resources and pinpointed consistent themes and priorities that were used to form the basis for stakeholder conversations and subsequent agency and organization working sessions. This allowed the project to capitalize on existing knowledge in the region, avoid duplication, reduce demands on resident and stakeholder time, and help determine a starting place for meaningful engagement.

Based on the review, a summary report was prepared, which became an important source for the consulting team as the engagement framework was developed, including areas for inquiry and questions for stakeholders and public consultation processes.

Social Demographic Profile

The consultants developed a comprehensive socio-demographic profile of the region using recent Statistics Canada data, local census information from the Municipality, details about existing agencies and organizations providing programs and services, and other sources. It includes community maps that identify concentrations of socio-demographic indicators, resources and capacities. The profile provides a framework to better understand priorities and potential strategies and stakeholders may find it useful for program and service planning and evaluating SSP implementation. The complete community profile has been produced as a separate document.

Interviews, Working Sessions and Open House Opportunities

A list of agencies, organizations and other stakeholders with an interest in the SSP was initiated by the Municipality and additions were made via conversations with stakeholders, the PAC, and references made during the working sessions.

The list was used during engagements to invite agencies and organizations to meetings and working sessions, and provide updates on the SSP process. Engagements in the Urban Service Area of Fort McMurray consisted primarily of interviews and small group working sessions. Engagements in the rural took place during existing community meetings to engage in more informal conversations about social sustainability. Project updates were also posted on the Municipality's website.

Several different engagement processes were used to ensure that there was a range of opportunities for agencies, organizations, communities and residents to connect, get information and share their perspectives. Public and stakeholder engagement included:

- Five working sessions for agencies and organizations were held December 4–6, 2017, in the Urban Service Area. Youth and agencies and organizations serving youth attended those sessions; as well, a separate working session specifically for youth was held in collaboration with the Mayor's Advisory Council on Youth and hosted by Justin Slade Youth Foundation. Altogether, 77 representatives from 52 organizations participated in the Urban Service Area working sessions.
- Five Municipal councillors attended working sessions or were part of community conversations.
- More than 50 individual interviews were conducted with stakeholders and Municipal staff including senior leadership.
- Approximately 130 people attended rural and indigenous community sessions in Anzac, Janvier, Conklin, Fort Chipewyan, Saprae Creek Estates and Fort McKay.
- Approximately 113 people attended public open house information sessions that were held April 13–14, 2018.



Engagement Activity Overview

Preliminary conversations with stakeholders during August and September 2017.

Broader engagements with agencies, organizations and the communities from August 2017 through March 2018.

Process updates provided to all participating agencies, organizations and stakeholders on November 22, 2017, January 31, 2018, and April 6, 2018.

Public Open House sessions held April 13–14, 2018.

SSP Drafts reviewed with Community Project Advisory Committee during May 2018.

Specific conversations and consultations with residents, Indigenous and rural communities, organizations, business and industry, the education sector, health services and social profit sectors, and other stakeholders in the region.

Ongoing review and discussion with the Municipal project team and the Community PAC.

SSP updates provided to Regional Council on:

- August 11 2017
- October 27 2017
- January 24 2018



Defining Social Sustainability

The leadership of the community and Municipality recognized that creating sustainability started with determining what social sustainability means to the region. While there are many potential definitions available in literature, there is not a common definition due to the differences relating to social challenges, opportunities and capacities inherent in various communities. Common elements in definitions of social sustainability include:

- The capacity of a community to anticipate risk, limit impact, and bounce back rapidly in the face of change;
- The ability to reduce vulnerabilities and facilitate adaptation;
- Individuals and communities working together to meet needs, provide opportunities to reach potential and create social, economic and environmental inter-relationships;
- A community that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs;
- Achievement of sustainability through community participation and the reconciliation of short- and long-term economic, social and ecological well-being; and
- Equitable, diverse, connected communities that provide a good quality of life.

Throughout the stakeholder conversations and working group sessions, participants were asked what social sustainability meant to them. The following statements resulted from those conversations and reflect the most common perceptions expressed by participants of what social sustainability means to the region of Wood Buffalo.

A Socially-Sustainable Wood Buffalo

Our community is sustainable when we are resilient and are engaged and supported to thrive physically, socially, mentally, spiritually, and economically.

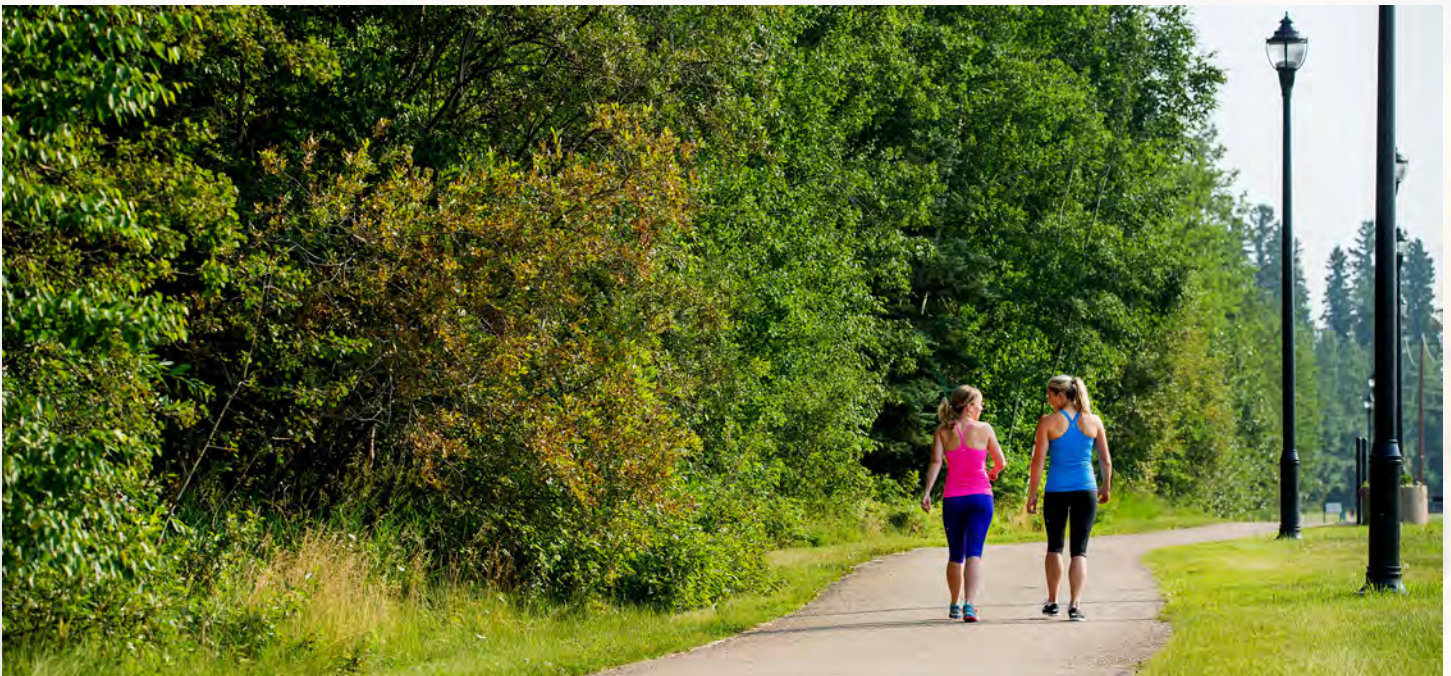
Our community builds and sustains the necessary community-based resources and partnerships to support working collectively to meet the basic needs and social wellness priorities of residents and continue to improve our quality of life.

Social sustainability is grounded in empathy and inclusivity and promotes connection and engagement in the community—one plan with many partners.

Vision of Social Sustainability for Wood Buffalo

A vision statement describes the region as it will be when the work of the SSP is completed. A vision statement is a powerful tool to help align goals and strategies and ensure that they work together to achieve the intended outcomes and results identified in the plan. All participants were asked to describe what the region would look like if it became socially-sustainable. Their responses have been summarized as:

Wood Buffalo is our home where residents share a sense of belonging, responsibility and work together to contribute to thriving communities.



Community Values That Support Social Sustainability

The following statements were gathered during the public conversations as participants reflected on the values needed to support social wellness and social sustainability for individuals and the community as a whole.

- A strong sense of belonging and the ability to contribute to their community;
- A friendly, welcoming and connected region where people are proud of their communities and act as ambassadors for Wood Buffalo;
- An inclusive, diverse region where gender, sexuality, age, race, religion backgrounds and abilities are respected, accepted and celebrated, and where each community is recognized and engaged;
- Working collectively to maintain and improve quality of life;
- Knowing about the complex social issues faced by residents and seek to engage, and act from and within, the community;
- Practicing active citizenship including personal and community self-reliance, responsibility and accountability;
- That our community leaders value individual and community social wellness as a priority along with economic and environmental development; and
- We recognize that all persons bring strengths and unique contributions to our community.



Principles and Practices That Work to Achieve Social Sustainability

Principles and practices describe the ways of working that support, and are consistent with, the vision and values in the SSP. Participants were asked to identify the principles and practices that needed to be in place to support the SSP implementation. The following summary statements will help to guide policy, practice and operational decisions.

Principles:

- Residents have access to the programs and services required to meet basic needs; food, shelter and clothing. They also can access opportunities for education, personal growth development, recreation, arts and culture, employment and career development.
- Investment in preventative services—invest now to prepare for our future;
- Communities in the region acknowledge a shared responsibility and accountability in working together to increase the quality of life and social wellness in the region; and
- Acknowledge and celebrate our history, our successes and achievements. Work together to build pride and a sense of belonging for residents in our region.

Practices:

- **Think and plan for the long term.** Sustainability is not only about planning for the immediate future but also about putting mechanisms and processes in place to anticipate and prepare for the longer-term community future;
- **Consider the whole region.** Responses from community members and stakeholders clearly indicated that sustainability is based on considering the social health and wellness of all people and the region itself and their relationship to the economy and environment.
- **Make connections.** Sustainability is about making connections and having positive relationships. These are critical to attaining and supporting sustainability. This includes relationships with and between agencies, between neighbourhoods and neighbours and between Municipal departments. It is essential to understand the connections and how we relate to each other and make decisions.

Understanding the Wood Buffalo Context

Wood Buffalo's Strengths

The Municipality has many strengths and key attributes that enrich its communities and contribute to social sustainability. Collectively, they provide the foundation and assets on which the region can build its social sustainability strategy.

Diverse and Well-Educated Population

At 66,361 square kilometres, Wood Buffalo is the second-largest municipality in Canada by area. According to Statistics Canada, the population in 2016 was 71,589. Indigenous peoples make up 10.5 percent and immigrants represent more than 11 percent.

Fort McMurray is the Urban Service Area, but within the Municipality's boundaries are the rural communities of Anzac, Conklin, Draper, Fort Chipewyan, Fort Fitzgerald, Fort McKay, Gregoire Lake Estates, Janvier, Saprae Creek Estates, and the reserves and traditional lands of five First Nations and several Métis groups. As well, there is a "shadow population" of temporary residents, many of whom come in and out of the Municipality to work in the oil sands industry—residing elsewhere but in the region to work.

There are four school districts as well as Keyano College, a post-secondary institution in Fort McMurray that offers academic, continuing education, trades and heavy industrial programs. The strong industrial sector attracts a highly-skilled and educated workforce from across Canada and the world.

Recreation, Sports and Community Services

There are a range of first-rate community facilities for various year-round sports, activities, programs and events. Examples include recreational complexes such as the Syncrude Sport and Wellness Centre, Syncrude Athletic Park and Clubhouse, Casman Centre, Fort Chipewyan Aquatic Centre, and MacDonald Island Park, home to the Suncor Community Leisure Centre, Miskanaw Golf Club and Shell Place. Add to that several community, youth and senior's centres, sports fields; outdoor ice rinks; areas for cross-country and downhill skiing. Several hamlets have local community and recreation facilities to support their residents.

There are opportunities to enjoy the outdoors throughout the seasons that include 400 hectares of parks, a 130-kilometre trail system, wilderness areas, lakes and streams, parks and green spaces, and the outdoor green gym. These recreation facilities and spaces provide opportunities for sports and recreation participation from the neighbourhood level through to national events, such as the 2015 Western Canada Summer Games and the 2018 Alberta Winter Games.

Wood Buffalo has a regional health centre plus the Primary Care Network, a team of healthcare providers led by a group of family physicians. There are many faiths represented in the region and numerous places of worship for a range of denominations.

Strong Social Profit Sector

More than 100 social profit agencies and organizations across the region offer programs and services for all ages, addressing a wide range of social needs. They not only support social wellness in the region but help develop community leadership, provide employment and volunteer opportunities, build resilience and capacity with clients, and attract funding for the community as a whole.

Opportunities for Culture and the Arts

There are many festivals and events that enrich the region throughout the year, examples include but are not limited to Alberta Culture Days; Canada Day Parade and celebration; Santa Claus Parade; National Aboriginal Day; Treaty Days; WinterPLAY; igNIGHT, and the Fort McMurray Urban Market. Culture opportunities include Art in Motion and Words in Motion; Artist in Residency, and the Street Banner and Public Art programs. The Keyano Theatre and Arts Centre presents concert, theatre, comedy, dance and film events. History can also be explored at the Fort McMurray Marine Park Museum, Heritage Village, Fort Chipewyan Bicentennial Museum, McMurray Experience, Oil Sands Discovery Centre and Syncrude Giants of Mining.

Industry and Business

Wood Buffalo is one of Canada's key economic drivers thanks to the energy sector—the oil sands industry and the many businesses that support it and the community at large. The oil sands are important not only to the region but the province and the nation. They provide employment for skilled workers from across the globe and help fund the region's social infrastructure. Other industries also play a role including forestry and tourism. Together, these sectors and others have created a unique local economy.

These strengths and many others develop and change over time. Collectively they provide the foundation and assets on which the region is able to build its social sustainability strategy.

Challenges to Social Sustainability

Municipalities across Canada are, and will continue to be, on the frontlines dealing with social concerns such as homelessness; housing affordability; a shortage of high-quality, affordable child and elder care; the high-risk behaviour of some individuals, and the availability of safe, healthy, local and affordable food. Wood Buffalo is not immune to these national and global trends, pressures and issues. There are also some more specific social challenges facing the region.

One of the purposes of the SSP is to determine priorities, based on the current context that will allow Wood Buffalo to continue to improve and sustain quality of life for residents, and to anticipate and prepare for a constantly evolving social environment. There are already many assets in place to address challenges and capitalize on opportunities, and the SSP proposes actions that can help the region further align and collaborate on the identified issues critical to creating social sustainability.

Some of the social issues and trends that Wood Buffalo will need to manage now and in the coming years include:

Increasing Diversity

The community is enriched and strengthened by diversity, but there are also challenges in settling and engaging newcomers, dealing with language barriers, providing culturally-sensitive and appropriate programs and services, and ensuring that appropriate and affordable housing is available.

Changing Economic Conditions

While Wood Buffalo is working to diversify its economy which has been volatile since the drop in global oil prices that started in 2014. Prices have been climbing modestly and worldwide demand is expected to continue to increase, but there are still concerns about the costs of production and an uncertain outlook. That has affected capital expenditures, expansion, exploration and development, and taken a toll on employment. This has had a ripple effect in the community and for other businesses and stakeholders. Response to and recovery from the 2016 Horse River wildfire only added to the economic pressures.

Changing Social Profit Environment

Social profit agencies and organizations faced significant challenges after the 2016 wildfire. In many cases, they stepped outside their core mandates and responded to residents who were and are dealing with new needs and issues. They have also had to cope with changes in funding and human resource pressures.

Adapting to Limited Financial Resources

The lingering economic downturn and the impact of the 2016 wildfire, has caused growth and development projections for the region to be reconsidered including service revenue that comes largely from the oil industry. Property and business revenue has also decreased as the population has declined. As well, after reviewing the *Municipal Government Act* in 2016, the Province is making changes to the tax ratio between the non-residential and residential tax classes, which will affect Wood Buffalo. Combined, these factors have contributed reduced funding available to the social profit sector and, as a result, lower income for a portion of the region's population.

These various challenges underscore the need for a SSP to assist the region and its communities in identifying priorities, supporting informed decision-making, prudently and strategically allocating resources, and engaging in collaborative community action.



Wood Buffalo Social Sustainability Priorities

Participants in the engagement and interview sessions responded to a common set of questions. The priorities that emerged were weighted according to the number of instances each was identified. The resulting top five priorities are:

1. Strengthening Social Infrastructure
2. Align and Support Community Capacity
3. Support to Families and Individuals
4. Further Develop Culture and Arts
5. Support Diversity

Challenges, strategies, opportunities, potential actions and suggested roles and responsibilities to address actions also emerged from the discussions. The challenges, strategies and opportunities are identified below and actions, suggested roles and responsibilities and anticipated outcomes can be found in Appendix 2.

1.0 Strengthening Social Infrastructure

Social infrastructure refers to the ways and means that residents in Wood Buffalo are able to assess basic social needs and to participate in the programs and services needed to ensure their individual and community social wellness.

Challenges

Wood Buffalo has many social wellness resources available to residents in the communities and the region including a wide range of social profit agencies, information and referral services and committed funders. However, in a service delivery area as vast and diverse as Wood Buffalo, the challenge to provide programs and services in each community is significant.

Participants in the SSP process identified social infrastructure challenges relating to affordable housing and the availability of a variety of housing options, poverty reduction related to food security, costs of housing, financial education and enhancing the positive perception of the region.

For rural communities, local program and service delivery is usually the preferred option. However, increasing the availability of transportation services to centralized programs is also a viable alternative. Participants in the engagement processes confirmed that a number of transportation alternatives have been tried and that they appreciated the willingness of the Municipality and other transport providers that seek to find alternatives and solutions.

The conversations identified needs for increasing information about, and access to, programs and services in the region. This included access to businesses, education institutions (high schools and Keyano College), to health services, social programs and services.

Strategies: Focus On

- Ongoing engagement with rural and Indigenous communities and residents concerning transportation needs, scheduling and accessibility;
- Consider access to social programs and services when undertaking transportation and transit planning;
- Discussions with youth in the region their needs around school and non-school transportation;
- Increasing subsidized housing across the region including appropriate housing for seniors;
- Poverty reduction, including but not limited to, food security and financial management skills;
- Increasing ease of access to public and community spaces;
- A barrier-free community—physical barriers;
- Engaged and connected neighbourhoods and communities; and
- Creating a positive image of the region.

Opportunities

Increase the ability of residents to access the programs and services that ensure their basic needs are met and that support their quality of life. This will result in a more connected community that is more resilient and better able to care for residents of the region.

Identification of options that balance the need for community-based programs and services with ones that can be delivered centrally and still be accessible to all residents in the region.

A variety of housing options in the region will enable residents to remain in their community and in the region as life stages and changes in the economic situations occur. This includes Wood Buffalo seniors not having to leave their communities to find the housing they may require.

A comprehensive social infrastructure creates economic benefits across a number of sectors in the region when resident's challenges are resolved.



2.0 Align and Support Community Capacity

Community capacity was defined by participants as the ability to anticipate challenges and opportunities, to recognize people needing support and resources, to provide effective and efficient programs and services that meet needs, and to build individual and family resilience.

Challenges

The challenges identified include the need to balance intervention programs and services with prevention activities, ensure residents have accurate and timely information on the available programs and services. Also, engaging social profits in the SSP priorities and supporting the priorities with resource options including but not limited to human and financial resources. Participants also identified a need to find additional means of creating a sense of community throughout the region.

The following potential strategies relating to community capacity were identified most often by participants during the engagement process:

Strategies: Focus On

- Prevention;
- Neighbourhood and community building;
- Effective education and awareness of programs, services and opportunities;
- Aligning agencies and organizations on social sustainability priorities;
- Identification of funding priorities and options based on priorities in the SSP;
- Evaluation and outcome-based planning; and
- Options to develop and support agency and organization administrations and boards.

Opportunities

There is a significant opportunity to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of current social programs and services by increasing awareness of mandates, areas of expertise and available resources. Most participating organizations identified a strong interest in increasing opportunities to collaborate in program and service planning and delivery. Agencies and organizations also expressed interest in developing a model of shared services, including facility space and equipment, human resources management, board development, and financial management. They also identified opportunities to strengthen agencies and organizations through education and training.



3.0 Support to Families and Individuals

The program and service priorities identified in this section are not intended to represent all of the needs of people in the region but rather those things that have most often been identified by participants in the engagement process as areas that may be underserved or represent current gaps.

Challenges

The SSP review process confirmed that a wide range of programs and services currently are available to residents in the region. The planning process also identified that the 2016 Horse River wildfire created a demand for programs and services that help people and communities deal with the resulting impacts. A number of agencies and organizations have been challenged by the need to operate in priority areas over the past two years that are different than they were addressing before the wildfire.

Wood Buffalo youth and agencies serving youth participated in all of the working sessions and in a separate session that engaged youth residents. The youth participants felt that they were highly invested in social sustainability as they would be the ones who benefit from the plan as young adults. They would also be the ones supporting the next generation to be engaged as youth community members. A number of challenges were identified including a lack of meaningful opportunities for youth engagement, participating in program and service design and career focussed education and employment opportunities.

In 2017, the Advisory Committee on Aging (ACOA) in Wood Buffalo undertook a seniors' needs assessment resulting in the Age-Friendly Needs Assessment Report¹. The assessment found that housing, community health and social inclusion are key challenges in the rural areas, and housing, communication civic participation, and employment are challenges in urban areas. Both rural and urban area participants identified community support and health services in their top four areas of greatest need.

Strategies: Focus On

- Accessibility to appropriate mental wellness supports for youth and young adults;
- Increasing access to parenting programs and supports particularly in rural areas;
- Increased number of child care spaces and options;
- Opportunities to build on existing programs and services for seniors as the senior population increases and as more housing options are available;
- Supporting the ACOA action plan to address the identified areas of highest need for seniors, including community support and health services, social inclusion, civic participation and employment;
- Support for persons experiencing abuse and family violence including abuse against seniors;
- Personal skill and interest development opportunities;
- Employment and job search skill development;
- Engaging youth in the planning and operation of programs, services and facilities intended for youth including finding and engaging sponsors and funding sources;
- Creating region-wide opportunities for recognition of youth contribution to the community;
- Increasing awareness of available opportunities through use of media preferred by youth; and
- Assisting youth in developing youth specific activities and events.

1 Rural Municipality of Wood Buffalo, Advisory Committee on Aging, Age-Friendly Needs Assessment; August 2017

Opportunities

The identification of common program and service priorities enables the effective use resources and effort through joint planning and collaborative actions. Agencies and organizations expressed a strong interest in working collaboratively on identified priorities to initiate and sustain social wellness and improve the quality of life for residents in the region.

Addressing the priorities and strategies identified will create meaningful opportunities for youth in the region to be engaged in the planning, development and operation of youth-focused activities and events. This work will also gain the perspectives and energy of youth with respect to current and future social challenges and opportunities and those in the future.

Focusing on the challenges and strategy areas identified in the SSP will begin to balance current and ongoing social needs related to the 2016 wildfire with the emerging needs and priorities of residents over the next three to seven years.

4.0 Further Support Culture and Arts

Arts and culture are an integral part of community life. There has been significant research into the connection between the arts and individual and collective well-being, including building resiliency, social inclusion, community health, rural revitalization, sustainable development and economic development.

In addition to showcasing artistic expression and providing entertainment, celebrating culture presents opportunities for participants to spend an enjoyable time with family and friends, celebrate their commonalities, explore their differences, experience new works of art, be intellectually stimulated, and respond emotionally to cultural presentations.¹

Challenges

During the SSP development, many of the conversations suggested that Wood Buffalo is perceived as a place where people come primarily to work. Comments were also made that people in the region have a wealth of personal and community arts and culture knowledge and experiences that they do not always have the opportunity or means to express. The region has gained recognition as an avid sports community, however, the multitude of arts and culture opportunities has not developed to a similar degree. The following potential areas for action have been identified by residents through the SSP process:

Strategies: Focus On

- Ensuring that there are broad opportunities for cultural expression and appreciation across the region;
- Creation of gathering places to support expression and celebration of arts and culture;
- Increase the opportunities for arts and culture learning and sharing experiences in the region; and
- Engaging youth in identifying and developing non-organized recreation and active living activities and opportunities in arts and culture.

Opportunities

Participants in the SSP process identified an opportunity to engage people in their local community and across the region who may not otherwise find ways to participate. The strategies will help to increase interpersonal and cross-community interactions and build a stronger sense of community by increasing awareness and appreciation for the rich culture knowledge and experience resources in the region.

1 Arts & Individual Wellbeing in Canada—2013; Canada Council for the Arts; Hill Strategies

5.0 Support Diversity in the Region

Wood Buffalo is composed of a group of diverse communities and individuals that make up the Municipality. There is a rich history of Indigenous communities in the region and recent population statistics show an increasing number of individuals from various ethnocultural backgrounds are choosing to make their homes in Wood Buffalo.

Challenges

There was strong interest among persons that participated in the SSP processes in continuing to find effective and appropriate ways to address the challenge of engaging the geographical and multi-cultural communities in the region. Social profit agencies and open house participants identified the need to reduce barriers that some people experience when accessing social programs and services.

Strategies: Focus on

- Connecting new residents from other cultures to the community;
- Engage multicultural perspectives in planning and implementing events, programs and services;
- Align action in the SSP with the Wood Buffalo Diversity and Inclusion Community Plan;¹
- Support the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action;²
- Explore designing visible features in all communities that express the region's values around diversity and inclusion.

Opportunities

The SSP and the Diversity and Inclusion Community Plan share several common findings and anticipated outcomes. Implementation of the SSP will contribute to achieving a number of the suggested strategies in the Diversity and Inclusion Community Plan.

Indigenous persons living in Wood Buffalo have a wealth of knowledge and experience living in the region and about how to connect the various communities in working collaboratively. People with different personal backgrounds have a diversity of experience and knowledge to share and contribute to the social fabric of the community.

Participants in the SSP process identified a benefit to the region by ensuring that a wide range of opportunities for immigrants to be welcomed and to become engaged in collectively contributing to the creation of social wellness and increasing quality of life across Wood Buffalo.

1 Wood Buffalo Diversity and Inclusion Community Plan, 2017

2 Wood Buffalo Report on the TRC Calls to Action, 2017

Implementation

A fundamental premise of the SSP is that social wellness and quality of life result from meaningful and effective collaboration involving the region, community and other stakeholders. The responsibility for implementation requires the collaboration of a wide range of partners working effectively together on common priorities to achieve shared goals. It is critical to the successful implementation of the plan that all stakeholders and interested parties be engaged from the beginning in contributing to the actions, results and successful outcomes.

Roles and Responsibilities

The strategies, potential actions and outcomes identified in the plan will be achieved through working with agencies, organizations and other stakeholders that are working to achieve common goals. Roles and responsibilities will vary depending on the positioning, current priorities, capacities and available resources of each potential partner.

Community-based planning, development and delivery assume the following primary roles:

- **Initiator role**—responsible for convening those who have an interest and capacity to undertake the work involved;
- **Primary role**—responsibility for development and implementation is undertaken by one party who is uniquely positioned to design and deliver the initiative;
- **Shared role**—participate as one of a number of stakeholders;
- **Supporting role**—other stakeholders hold most of the responsibility for the development and delivery of the initiative. Supporting participants have no formal mandate, however, they have some capacity to contribute to the work and to the results; and
- **Resource role**—primary contribution to the initiative is as a source of funding, human resources or other forms of resource support.

Stakeholders in the SSP play a variety of roles and take on differing responsibilities based on the implementation needs of each priority, potential action and outcome area. The suggested roles and responsibilities for the SSP can be found in the summary charts in appendix 2.0.



Implementation Recommendations

A summary of the recommended elements of the sustainability plan implementation include:

1. Formation of a SSP Stewardship Committee that will have responsibility for supporting the implementation of the plan and for providing oversight advice, over the long term, as the plan results are evaluated and revisions considered. The current Project Advisory Committee will remain in place to assist the development of the Stewardship Committee.
2. Develop and schedule a “Social Sustainability Launch” that will orient community agencies, organizations and stakeholders to the SSP and engage them in a comprehensive implementation process based on the SSP.
3. Encourage all social profit organizations, funders and other stakeholders to incorporate the SSP priorities into their strategic and annual operational plans as well as identify key indicators from their organizations’ perspective to measure progress toward achieving the priority outcomes.
4. Create an annual review process that engages all social agencies, organizations, funders, the Municipality and other stakeholders in reviewing the progress made on the priorities and collectively plan for the upcoming year.
5. Develop additional, ongoing methods of engaging residents in providing information about portions of the plan and/or specific strategy areas under consideration and development including an ongoing SSP page on the Municipal website.
6. Investigate opportunities for community funders including various levels of government to review funding allocation programs, processes and criteria and consider the priorities identified in the current and subsequent versions of the SSP. This could include funding criteria that align with the SSP vision, values and principles and that focus on advancing the current social wellness priorities and outcomes identified in the plan. One plan—many partners.



Overarching Result

Addressing the five priorities in the SSP will make a significant improvement to resident's sense of belonging to their community and ultimately contribute to achieving the vision statement.

The Canadian Index of Well-being survey and report¹ found that important factors affecting overall wellbeing include residents' sense of belonging to their community. For example, sense of belonging to one's community is strongly related to volunteering and whether people help their neighbours.

Research has shown that when people feel a sense of belonging:²

- **They are healthier.** Belonging to social groups and networks is as important to human health as diet, exercise and active living. People with strong support networks tend to have a lower prevalence of mental illness and better overall physical health;
- **Sustained employment improves.** Extensive support networks provide better opportunities for sustained and secure employment;
- **Social inclusion improves.** Belonging is a common indicator of how well someone has integrated into society and helps build social cohesion within a country [or region];
- **Neighbourhoods are safer.** As connectedness among people in communities increases, so does neighbourhood safety and a sense of community pride;
- **Life has more purpose.** When people have a stronger sense of belonging, they perceive life to be more meaningful;
- **Contributions of time and money increase.** People who feel they belong are more likely to volunteer, donate to the community, and be involved in community governance;
- **Children learn better.** Belonging is a key element for early childhood education across Canada;
- **Culture and identity flourish.** Diverse communities that have maintained their culture and self-governance feel more community continuity and individual identity;
- **Participation in society increases.** Belonging to a community, region or country influences identity and the extent to which citizens participate in society; and
- **Communities bounce back after emergencies.** Communities in which there are many social connections are more resilient during emergency events.

A Survey of well-being in the region has already been undertaken and levels benchmarked. Over the course of the implementation of the survey strategies and actions it is recommended that this survey be repeated to gauge the overall impact of the SSP on the sense of belonging of residents in the region.

1 Canadian Index of Well Being—Wood Buffalo Survey, 2016

2 Vital Signs, Edmonton, 2017

Evaluation Framework

A parallel process of evaluation and specifically outcome based evaluation of the SSP priorities, strategies and actions is essential to creating social sustainability.

Evaluation often takes the form of taking a snapshot of outcomes at the end of a program to prove to decision makers and funders that the program worked. However, evaluation can, and should, be used as an ongoing strategic and learning tool that improves the ability of a program or service to meet the intended change identified at the beginning of the planning process. This is particularly important when working in collaborative, multi-partner environments. Evaluation enables demonstration of a program or service's success or progress.

Outcome evaluations assess the effectiveness of a program or service in producing individual and community change.¹ Outcome evaluations focus on difficult questions that ask what happened to program participants and how much of a difference the program or service made for them and for the community in which they reside.

Outcome evaluation is effective in showcasing the effectiveness of a program to potential collaborative partners, to the community and funders and in building ongoing trust with clients, partners and community members.

Outcome based evaluation increases a program's ability to conduct a critical self-assessment and plan for the future by assessing "what works" and "what does not work".² Building the capacity for self-assessment early in the plan implementation allows for ongoing reflection and creates an evaluation and planning cycle that helps create a continuous learning environment which is essential to sustainability.

A high-level outcome evaluation framework has been developed for the SSP and can be found in Appendix 2. The framework is intended to provide a template for articulating the anticipated outcomes of the SSP priorities, potential actions and examples of measurement indicators, data sources and collection methods. The framework will be modified as specific actions are selected, detailed and implemented.



1 TSNE Mission Works; 2018

2 Child Trends, Publication #2007-31; October 2007

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Appendix 1.0 Glossary of Terms

Quality of Life

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines Quality of Life as an individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns. It is a broad ranging concept affected in a complex way by the person's physical health, psychological state, personal beliefs, social relationships and their relationship to salient features of their environment.

Overall Quality of Life and General Health (Domains):

- Physical Health
- Psychological
- Level of Independence
- Social Relations
- Environment
- Spirituality/Religion/Personal beliefs

Social Wellness

Social wellness is the ability to create, maintain and promote good relationship with others. It includes good communication skills, seeking opportunities to connect with others, developing healthy attachments and knowing how to cope with and improve unhealthy relationships, respect for oneself and others and performing social roles according to the need of relations:

Source: <http://www.lifemedwellcare.org/docs/social-wellness-lifestyle.pdf>



Resiliency

Resilience is defined as the ability to recover from setbacks, adapt well to change, and keep going in the face of adversity.

“Resilient people possess three characteristics—a staunch acceptance of reality; a deep belief, often buttressed by strongly held values, that life is meaningful; and an uncanny ability to improvise. You can bounce back from hardship with just one or two of these qualities, but you will only be truly resilient with all three.”

Source: <https://hbr.org/2015/01/what-resilience-means-and-why-it-matters> (Harvard Business Review)

Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress—such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems or workplace and financial stressors. It means “bouncing back” from difficult experiences.

Research has shown that resilience is ordinary, not extraordinary. People commonly demonstrate resilience. One example is the response of many Americans to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and individuals’ efforts to rebuild their lives.

Being resilient does not mean that a person doesn’t experience difficulty or distress. Emotional pain and sadness are common in people who have suffered major adversity or trauma in their lives. In fact, the road to resilience is likely to involve considerable emotional distress.

Resilience is not a trait that people either have or do not have. It involves behaviors, thoughts and actions that can be learned and developed in anyone.

Source: <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx> (American Psychological Association)

Culture and Arts

The theory and physical expression of creativity found in human societies and cultures. Major constituents of the arts include literature—including poetry, prose and drama, performing arts—among them music, dance, and theatre; and visual arts—including drawing, painting, photography, ceramics, sculpting, and architecture—the art of designing and constructing buildings. The application of the arts to the human environment (culture).

Multicultural

Incorporating the ideas and beliefs held by people from many different countries and cultural backgrounds.

Appendix 2.0 Priorities, Potential Actions, Proposed Roles, Responsibilities, Anticipated Outcomes and Evaluation Framework

Participants in the working sessions were asked to identify possible actions that could help to address the priority challenges and opportunities that had been raised to ensure successful outcomes. It is important to note that some actions will be more appropriate and effective in the urban service area and some were identified more specifically by participants from rural communities. The actions identified in this section are examples, as identified by the participants, of potential approaches that could be taken to achieve the anticipated outcomes noted. Each priority action chart is followed by a corresponding evaluation chart that identifies indicators and processes to measure progress and provide evidence and knowledge of outcomes achieved. This section of the report is intended to provide a basis of transition from **“what we heard”** through the various engagement activities to **“what we can do”** to work toward the anticipated outcomes of the SSP.

The SSP is intended to have 10-year duration with a comprehensive review in the fifth year. Given the timeframe for the Plan the near-term actions identified below are considered to be in the 1 to 3-year range and longer-term actions to be in the 3 to 5-year range and beyond. Near term strategies and actions have the following characteristics:

- Actions that can be done immediately;
- Actions where all the required information and best solutions are known;
- Partners and their respective roles are clear; and
- Actions that may require collaboration but that do not require policy or budget processes and approvals to be implemented.

Longer term strategies and actions require:

- Additional information and development of best solutions;
- Proposal development for policy and/or budget application or approval;
- A process to clarify the challenge at hand and the agencies and organizations required as partners; and
- Other strategies or actions to occur first before they can be implemented.

Priority 1.0—Strengthening Social Infrastructure

Potential Near-Term Actions	Potential Longer-Term Actions	Roles and Responsibilities	Anticipated Outcomes
• Build on the Community Plan to End Homelessness strategies as a way of helping people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness find and maintain appropriate housing. • Incorporate the housing needs identified in the SSP into the RMWB Municipal Development Plan and Area Structure Plans including housing for seniors, housing in rural communities and subsidized housing. • Continue to build food security in the region including incorporating community gardens, fruit-bearing trees and shrubs into neighbourhood and community design. • Engage community resources to provide financial management awareness and skill development. • Increase ease of access to public spaces for community gatherings and events. • Continue to engage with rural and Indigenous residents concerning transportation needs, scheduling and accessibility. • Review social services locations and bus routing information to assist those residents, who do not have personal transportation, to be able to access the programs and service that they require. • Discuss with youth in the region their needs around school and non-school transportation and challenges around scheduling and timeliness.	• Begin a shift from development of affordable housing to development of subsidized housing. • Continue to address transportation needs of the rural and Indigenous areas in accessing programs and services in neighbouring communities and in Fort McMurray. • Incorporate local gathering and event spaces in area design plan and construction. • Develop strategies for additional services, including municipal services, to be able to be provided in Rural and Indigenous communities. • Build a process to review any changes to the region's transportation system against the priorities identified in the SSP.	Initiator: • SSP Stewardship Committee. Shared: • RMWB. • Housing and Homelessness Serving Agencies. • Poverty Reduction Network. • School Districts. • Youth Organizations. • Rural and Indigenous Communities. • United Way. Supporting: • Faith Community. • Adult and Youth Serving Agencies. • Commuter Associations. • Transportation Organizations and Committees. • Social Service Agencies. Resource: • 7 Cities on Housing and Homelessness. • Homelessness Initiatives Strategic Committee (HISC). • Federal Government—Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS). • RMWB. • Provincial government—Outreach Support Services Initiatives (OSSI). • Organizations and Agencies. • Businesses. • Industry. • Alberta Health Services. • Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN).	A continuum of appropriate housing options is available in Wood Buffalo supporting youth through seniors. Residents of Wood Buffalo experience food security. Residents of Wood Buffalo live in a barrier-free community. Citizens have opportunities for meaningful engagement in their community. Citizens have easy access and use of public and community spaces. The Region of Wood Buffalo is portrayed accurately both within and outside the region. Wood Buffalo has an enhanced and innovative transit service that works to meet the needs of all residents and communities in the region.

Priority 1.0—Evaluation Framework

Outcome area	Indicators	Data Sources	Methods
Housing	- Reduction in homelessness. - Increase in appropriate housing availability. - Reduced waiting lists for housing options.	- Housing and homelessness serving agencies. - Affordable housing: municipal, provincial and federal governments. - Community housing: subsidized rental programs. - Supportive housing. - Other rent subsidy programs.	- Monitor continuum of housing options available in Wood Buffalo. - Waiting lists for housing options. - Bi-annual Point in Time Count and Annual Snapshot. - Planned 2018 Community Well-Being Survey .
Poverty reduction and food security	- Residents report their food security has improved. - Landfill diversion programs for food exist in the region. - Number and type of programs to increase food security within Wood Buffalo.	- Wood Buffalo Food Bank. - RMWB. - Programs addressing food security. - United Way. - Poverty Reduction Network.	- Surveys. - Results of landfill diversion programs. - Numbers served by programs addressing food security. - Planned 2018 Community Well-Being Survey.
Barrier-free community	- Residents report better access through the removal of barriers: physical, language, etc. - Identify specific barriers removed: physical, language, etc. - Numbers of each specific typed of barrier removed: physical, language, etc.	- RMWB. - Agencies and organizations that serve people facing barriers.	- Surveys of residents. - Surveys of agencies and organizations. - Planned 2018 Community Well-Being Survey.
Engaged and connected communities and neighbourhoods	- Citizens report opportunities for meaningful engagement exist. - Citizens report participating in meaningful engagement opportunities.	- Neighbourhood and community associations. - Cultural associations.	- Surveys of citizens. - Planned 2018 Community Well-Being Survey. - Percentage voting in municipal elections.
Accessible public and community spaces	- Residents report more public community spaces are available for their use. - Residents report easy access to these spaces.	- RMWB. - Keyano College. - Wood Buffalo communities.	Survey of residents.
Positive RMWB image	- Number of positive media reports and stories. - Number of citizens acting as ambassadors.	Media.	- Monitoring of media: local, regional, provincial. - Resident surveys and reports.
Community transportation systems and access	- Residents report that the transit services meet their needs. - Transit services change to meet changing needs of the communities.	- Residents. - Keyano College. - Rural communities. - Community Agencies. - Youth.	- Survey residents and specific target groups including youth, people with disabilities, etc. - Planned 2018 Community Well-Being Survey.

Priority 2.0—Align and Support Community Capacity

Potential Near-Term Actions	Potential Longer-Term Actions	Roles and Responsibilities:	Anticipated Outcomes
• Focus on prevention including mental health, suicide and other social challenges; emergency preparedness; personal and community safety and environmental protection. • Collaboration with and between community and neighbourhood associations, cultural associations and community agencies and organizations. • Create consistent and regular opportunities for the social profit sector, Municipality and other stakeholders to participate together in collaborative planning and strategy development. • Create an opportunity for all funding organizations to become aware of and plan around the priorities in the SSP. • Increase effective communication between community organizations and to residents concerning the program and service opportunities that are available. • Develop interagency practices for engaging and transferring people between programs and services. • Create opportunities to support social profit administration and board member education and development. • Use local resources such as the Business Resource Centre to help develop skills within non-profit sector.	• Collaboratively review the mandate and scope of community agencies and organizations to work toward ensuring residents in the region are receiving services efficiently and effectively. • Build a plan to help all areas of the region receive equitable programs, services and supports. • Focus some available funding on a results-based, outcomes funding model. • Review the impact and opportunities on social profit organizations of one time and operational funding models; • Investigate the feasibility of additional shared space and shared support services for social profit agencies and organizations. • Advocate for improved rural and Indigenous community internet connectivity.	Initiator: • SSP Stewardship Committee. Shared: • FuseSocial. • Alberta Health Services. • United Way. • Wood Buffalo Community Foundation. • RMWB Neighbourhood and Community Development Branch. • RMWB Regional Emergency Services. Supporting: • Keyano College. • Business. • Social serving agencies and organizations. Resource: • RMWB. • Alberta Health Services. • Keyano College. • Canadian Red Cross. • Industry. • Community funding organizations. • Wood Buffalo Economic Development Corporation.	Agencies and organizations are actively involved and working collaboratively in achieving the outcomes of the SSP. Earlier intervention in social issues reducing the need for crisis intervention. Service providers know what programs and services are available and how to best connect people with the appropriate resources. Collaborative planning between social profit organizations, RMWB and other stakeholders occurs on a regular and consistent basis. Residents know where to go to get the support(s) that they need.

Priority 2.0—Evaluation Framework

Outcome area	Indicators	Data Sources	Methods
Prevention	- The resources invested in prevention programs and services increases over time while crisis intervention resources decrease. - More residents become involved in prevention activities and require less crisis intervention supports.	- RMWB Family and Community Support Services. - Agency financial and annual reports.	- Collection of outcome data from social profit agencies and organizations. - Tracking of grants and other funding access by social profits.
Effective education and awareness of programs and services	- Residents report getting connected and referred to the services they need. - Service providers report having the necessary knowledge and skills to connect residents to needed services.	- Residents. - Service providers.	- Surveys of residents - Surveys of service providers - Planned 2018 Community Well-Being Survey.
Agencies and organizations	- Social profit organizations and agencies are working collectively on planning and implementing the priorities identified in the SSP. - Residents report they are getting services efficiently and effectively. - Develop a Wood Buffalo social profit administrator and board certification program and measure the number of completions.	- Agencies and organizations. - RMWB. - Alberta Health Services Public Health. - Federal government. - Business. - Industry. - Education institutions.	- Planned 2018 Community Well-Being Survey. - Track training and development completions.



Priority 3.0—Support to Individuals and Families

Potential Near-Term Actions	Potential Longer-Term Actions	Roles and Responsibilities:	Anticipated Outcomes
• Improve access to priority mental health supports including grief and loss counselling (rural community and culturally appropriate). • Enhance parenting education and support. • Increase the number of child care spaces available. • Opportunities for personal development including financial management, continuing education, personal interest courses and arts and culture opportunities. • Enhance age and culturally appropriate programs and services to prevent family and spousal abuse and violence. • Ongoing assessment of transportation services that assist rural and indigenous residents in accessing programs and services in Fort McMurray. • Program focus on youth specific activities and programs for young adults. • Engage youth in the planning and operation of programs, events and facilities intended for youth in the region. • Create region wide opportunities for recognition of youth contribution to the community. • Increase awareness of program, services and events opportunities through media preferred by youth. • Assist youth in developing youth specific activities and events including in schools and in the community. • Engage youth in identifying and developing opportunities in culture and arts • Work with youth to assist them in engaging sponsors and funding sources to help support their activities. • Identify work force gaps on an ongoing basis and work with education and training institutions to communicate and address the gap areas. • Support the ACOA action plan to address the identified area of highest need for seniors including community support and health services, social inclusion, civic participation and employment.	• Increase the availability of programs and services that are provided locally. • Through training and development opportunities increase the number of rural and indigenous community residents who are qualified to deliver needed social programs and services in the region. • Increase the professional resources (doctors, nurses and dentists) available to residents of the region in their home communities. • Plan for youth specific places and activities throughout the region and engage youth in planning, design and implementation, good examples include the Justin Slade Youth Foundation and YMCA. • Develop opportunities for youth participation in neighbourhood and community design and development processes. • Work with secondary, post-secondary education, business and industry to create work experience opportunities for youth that have career development potential. • Create opportunities for youth specific employments support including resume writing, job searches, student placements, job skills training. • Look at the feasibility of education grants to participate in education opportunities outside of the region and return to the region to work. • Create a youth led opportunity to engage youth in planning for future generations of youth in the region.	Initiator: • SSP Stewardship Committee. Primary: • RMWB FCSS. • Canadian Mental Health Association. • Alberta Health Services. • Parent Support Agencies. • United Way. • Daycare Agencies and Providers. • Advisory Committee on Aging. • RMWB Transportation. • Youth. • Youth serving agencies. • Mayor's Advisory Council on Youth. • Keyano College. Supporting: • Provincial Ministry of Community and Social Services. • RMWB. • School Districts. • Keyano College. • United Way. • Wood Buffalo Economic Development Corporation. Resource: • Provincial Ministry of Community and Social Services. • Community and Industry Funders. • Service Clubs. • Wood Buffalo Community Foundation.	Residents have improved opportunity to seek support for mental health challenges. Parents in the region have increased access to education and other supports including child care spaces. More residents are able to participate in personal development opportunities. Persons, including seniors, experiencing family violence and abuse can access appropriate support resources. Residents, particularly rural and indigenous residents have increased access to programs and services that meet their needs. Youth in the region are engaged in developing and operating specific programs and services for youth. Youth are active in identifying needs and developing youth specific solutions. Funding options are increasingly diversified.

Priority 3.0—Evaluation Framework

Outcome area	Indicators	Data Sources	Methods
Priority mental health support	- Options for providing priority mental health supports within Wood Buffalo are identified and implemented. - Residents report getting the mental health supports they need.	- Agencies providing mental health supports to residents of Wood Buffalo. - Residents.	- Records of service agencies. - Survey residents.
Enhance parenting programs and supports	Parenting: - Parents know how to parent positively. - Parents have social supports. - Parents receive supports when they need them. Children and youth: - Child/youth has at least one caring adult whom they can rely on (relative, mentor, etc.). - Children and youth are socially and emotionally competent. - Children and youth have positive school environments. - Children and youth report a positive community environment. Child Care - The number of trained and certified child care staff in the region increases. - The number of child care spaces increases.	- Survey of parents in parenting support programs. - Survey of children/youth. - Day care and child care statistics locally and from the provincial government.	- Demographics. - Surveys.
Support for persons experiencing abuse and family violence	Fewer incidents of abuse and family violence in Wood Buffalo.	- Demographics related to all types of abuse and family violence to monitor trends: RCMP, court cases, sexual assault centres. - Need to develop appropriate tracking of senior abuse.	- Demographics. - Surveys.
Youth engagement and participation	Youth report being engaged and participating in youth and community issues.	- Track opportunities for engagement of youth by type, and participation. - Track issues in which youth are engaged. - Youth.	- Municipal records for Fort McMurray, rural communities, indigenous communities. - Survey youth. - Planned 2018 Community Well-Being Survey.

Priority 4.0—Further Support Culture and Arts

Potential Near-Term Actions	Potential Longer-Term Actions	Roles and Responsibilities:	Anticipated Outcomes
• Work collectively to identify and promote the culture and art resources in each of the communities in the region. • Create opportunities for artisans and artists to exhibit and sell their works as well as provide information and training. • Develop programs and courses of culture and art enrichment and skill development. • Consider the SSP findings in the development of the Wood Buffalo Arts and Culture Master Plan.	• Develop a strategic plan to strengthen the arts and culture industry in the region.	Initiator: • SSP Stewardship Committee. Shared: • RMWB. • Keyano College. • Arts Council of Wood Buffalo. Supporting: • Rural Community Associations. • Indigenous communities. • School Districts. • Arts and Culture organizations. • Multicultural agencies and organizations. • United Way. Resource: • Industry. • Business. • Tourism. • Canadian Red Cross. • Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce.	Residents have increased opportunities to experience cultural opportunities in the region and increase their respective sense of belonging and pride. Increased culture and arts local entrepreneurial opportunities developed. Residents and visitors to the region have increased knowledge and participation in Wood Buffalo cultural resources.

Priority 4.0—Evaluation Framework

Outcome area	Indicators	Data Sources	Methods
Opportunities for skill development and personal enrichment.	Increased offerings of programs and events across culture and art disciplines in the region.	- Promotional information. - Tracking of programs and events.	- Monitor and collect information on culture and arts programs and events. - Track funding going to culture and arts programs and events.
Broad opportunities for culture and art experiences and appreciation.	- Residents with a variety of culture and arts experiences and knowledge reporting being able to connect and participate in activities and events. - Culture and arts entrepreneurs report they are able to find venues to display and sell their work.	- Culture and art organizations and agencies. - Residents. - Schools. - Keyano College.	- Surveys. - Planned 2018 Community Well-Being Survey.



Priority 5.0—Support Diversity in the Region

Potential Near-Term Actions	Potential Longer-Term Actions	Roles and Responsibilities:	Anticipated Outcomes
- Continue to build an active welcome, orientation and engagement plan and process for new residents coming from other cultures that can connect them to social and health programs and services. - Engage multi-cultural perspectives and resources in planning for and implementing regional events, programs and services. - Align work undertaken supporting the SSP with the <i>Diversity and Inclusion Community Plan</i>.	- Support the implementation and/or influencing of the 14 Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action as identified for administrative review by the Regional Council on November 8, 2016. - Create “gathering places” for people express and celebrate their culture and traditions. - Design features in all communities that express the region’s values around diversity and inclusion and provide tangible recognition of the diverse cultures and interests that exist in the region. - Develop and/or support multi-cultural workforce training in places of employment.	Initiator: - SSP Stewardship Committee. Shared: - Indigenous and Rural Communities. - Indigenous Serving Agencies and Organizations. - The Welcome Centre. - Newcomer Interagency Network. - Multi-culture Organizations and Agencies. - RMWB. - Regional Advisory Committee on Inclusion, Diversity and Equality (RACIDE). Support: - Provincial Community and Social Services. - Federal Government. - Indigenous Communities. - Indigenous Agencies. - Multicultural Agencies. - United Way. Resources: - Industry. - Business Organizations. - RMWB Indigenous Communities. - Multicultural Agencies and Organizations. - Provincial Community and Social Services. - Alberta Health Services. - Federal Government.	Newcomers are engaged and supported. The diverse cultures in the region are understood, respected and celebrated by residents. Residents are aware of the 14 TRC Calls to Action that the Municipality has determined it can influence or advocate for.

Priority 5.0—Evaluation Framework

Outcome area	Indicators	Data Sources	Methods
Create opportunities to understand, respect and celebrate diversity.	- Fewer incidents of discrimination. - Members of diverse cultures report feeling welcome and safe in Wood Buffalo. - Number of residents attending cultural events. - Number of cultural competency workshops that take place that help individuals increase their understanding of cultural diversity. - Number of residents attending cultural competency workshops.	- RCMP. - School Districts. - Keyano College. - Multicultural Association of Wood Buffalo. - Multi-culture agencies and organizations. - Residents.	- See Diversity and Inclusion Community Plan. - Planned 2018 Community Well-Being Survey. - Surveys of residents.
Active engagement of culturally diverse newcomers.	- Newcomers are welcomed to Wood Buffalo, receive an orientation and are matched with residents with similar interests/backgrounds/culture. - Newcomers report being welcomed, oriented and matched when arrive. - Newcomers report a sense of belonging in Wood Buffalo: call it home. - Employers are able to retain their workforce.	- Newcomers. - Residents welcome and orient newcomers and existing residents matched with newcomers.	- Number of welcoming orientations. - Surveys re welcoming orientations. - Planned 2018 Community Well-Being Survey.
Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action (TRC).	Residents are aware of the Calls to Action Strategies and actions undertaken through the SSP align and support the Calls to Action.	- RMWB. - Social profit agencies and organizations that are contributing to the TRC Calls to Action.	Support the evaluation methods for implementation and influence of the Calls to Action.





WOOD BUFFALO
SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY