



2014 Town of
Okotoks
COMMUNITY REPORT

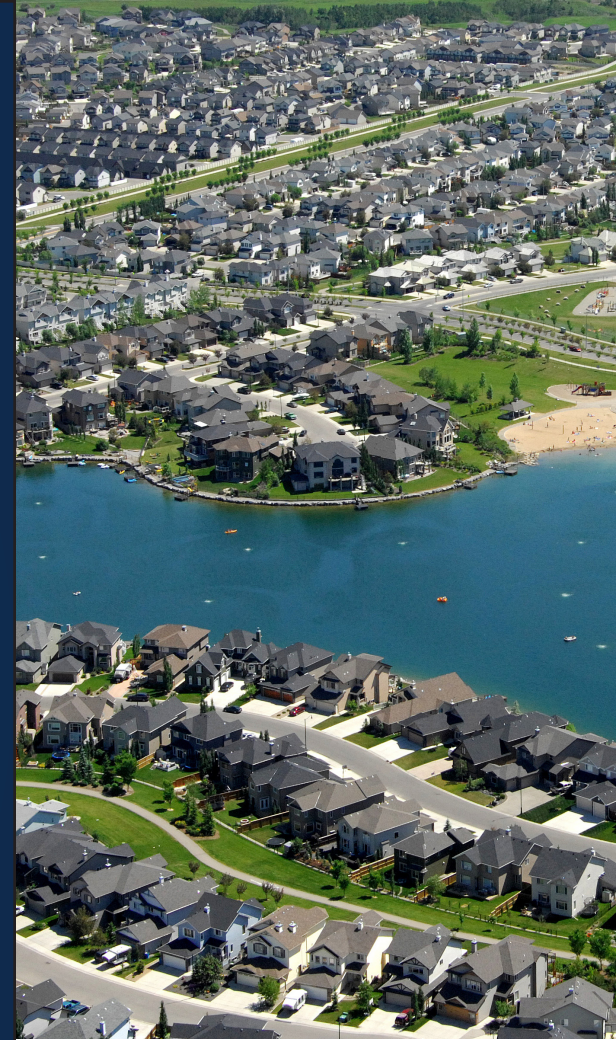


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2014 Town of
Okotoks
COMMUNITY REPORT

Introduction

The Town of Okotoks is pleased to share with you the 2014 Community Report. For our residents, this report serves to showcase Town progress and achievements identified in the 2014-2017 Town Business Plan.

Vision

In the year 2030, Okotoks is a leader in sustainability, driven by an involved, connected and creative community. Through visionary leadership citizens are engaged in maintaining a safe, caring and vital community that honours our culture, heritage and environment.



Did you know in 2014...?

- Annexation negotiation/mediation & formal application to the Municipal Gov't Board Oct. 2014
- Southside Community Programs Centre open for business as of 2014 and provided care for 50 elementary-aged students from Percy Reglan, Dr. Morris Gibson, Ecole Beausoliel and Good Shepherd schools
- Total estimated attendance at 2014 Community Events was 78,000.
- 2013 Flood Restoration - Over 1300m of pathway restored, re-vegetation of riprap areas, rehabilitation of Sheep River Park.
- Selected by Lifesaving Society to Test and Pilot revised Swim for Life Program.
- Anne Resek Swim for Life Award - highest number of participants in a population under 100,000.
- New space was negotiated and obtained for Parent Link in Okotoks allowing the programming time for families to double (100% increase!).
- Silver Award for Excellence, Innovation & Wellness June 2014 from Excellence Canada
- Choosewell Communities Award for Most Significant Change Community.
- Pubble People Mosaic Tile Mural 576 residents painted 4"x4" tiles to complete mural.
- RPAC - Increased its attendance numbers and daily bookings by 73%



Message from Council



2014 was an eventful year, but more importantly, a year in which town residents, employees and Council could stand proud.

Okotoks continues to be a magnet for new residents. Our town continues to grow meaning we have to expand our boundaries and our infrastructure.

Our annexation talks have gone well - though there are still a small number of sticking points. This past year, both the MD of Foothills and the Town of Okotoks gladly entered into an agreement which brought in a mediator to help both sides get over the last few hurdles and cross the finish line.

We applied for a provincial grant to cover 90% of the cost to bring a water pipeline down from Calgary. Council, employees and residents are proud of our award winning environmental

stewardship. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities recognized Okotoks with its Sustainable Community Award for initiatives that greatly lowered the consumption of water in our Town. We launched a great new website and the feedback has been great! We take great pride that many of our special events have become regional successes.

Last year we saw come to fruition a great example of collaboration between our Town and the MD of Foothills, The Legacy Regional Field House. This multipurpose sports facility is truly something to behold. Able to accommodate soccer, rugby, volleyball, lacrosse, football and so much more, this facility was built with the MD and Okotoks sharing costs and sharing expertise. Like any good team, we focussed on what had to be done and reached our goal. Our residents and our youth will benefit from this great facility for years to come!

Business continues to be attracted to Okotoks. In the past two years we've added 119 to our town. New residential developments brought \$67-million in construction to town last year due in part to our Economic Development department actively market and promote numerous business development and investment opportunities by facilitating referrals between interested businesses and the development community.

Finally, our thanks to the residents and businesses of Okotoks for contributing so much valuable information to our Town Visioning process. Thanks to your ideas, we now have a clearer picture of what Okotoks could look like in the future - our neighborhoods, our open spaces, our downtown, and our mindset as a growing community. You wanted to ensure we were Caring, Complete (by meeting the needs of all residents), Connected, Active, Inclusive & Diverse, Green and Resilient. All core values we can be proud of now, and into the future.

Manage Community Growth

The Town of Okotoks will build a complete community that provides economic, social, and environmental sustainability for people to live, work and play.

Annexation Update

In September 2013 Council initiated a proposed annexation, part of a 60 year land supply to accommodate residential, commercial and industrial long-term growth needs. The Town is seeking to annex 33 quarter sections of land. Annexation allows the Town to accommodate its projected long-term growth and to comprehensively plan for the orderly and economic development of lands. It is necessary to help the Town strengthen its tax base, expand opportunities for business development, and have a balanced mixture of land uses. This will ensure that Okotoks remains sustainable in the delivery of services to its residents and businesses.

The annexation proposal is based on a comprehensive Growth Study that projected long term land requirements for growth. Principles that continue to guide the plan for growth include prioritizing locations, ensuring proper infrastructure is in place, and retaining a compact, connected and integrated community that builds on the existing major road network.

Extensive landowner and public consultation has been undertaken with three public meetings and several meetings with land owners in relation to the proposed annexation to ensure that landowners, stakeholders and members of the public.

Annexation talks between the Town of Okotoks and the MD of Foothills have gone into mediation to resolve outstanding issues after months of discussions. The first mediation session took place on Feb. 9, 2015.

Water Supply Update

Through a formal application, the Town of Okotoks has asked the Province of Alberta to cover 90% of a proposed \$40-million water pipeline from Calgary. Okotoks has secured interim water licences to ensure an ample supply of water until the completion of the water pipeline.





Foster Economic Vitality

Just over 51% of new licenses issued in 2014 were for businesses physically located in Okotoks. 2014 net new business licence growth (all categories) was 4.8% over 2013. There were 60 new storefront (physically located) business licenses issued and 114 new home-based business licenses issued in 2014.

The Town of Okotoks will facilitate a healthy economy where quality jobs and business opportunities are abundant.

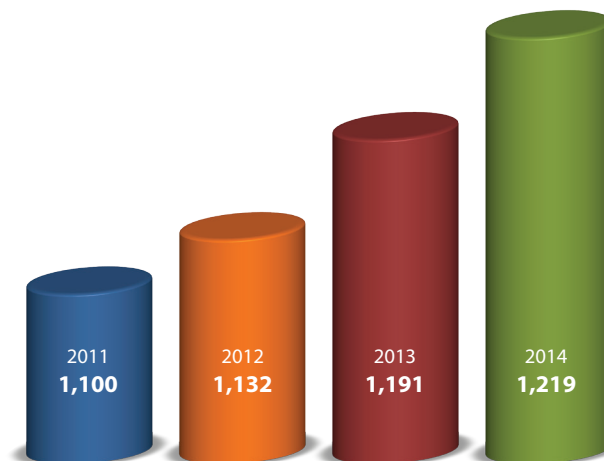


Commercial Development

2014 there were 1,219 Okotoks' based businesses. Of those, there were 564 storefront businesses - a growth of 4.1% in 2014. There were also 656 home-based businesses - an increase of 0.9% in 2014.

Overall, the Town of Okotoks saw a 2.3% increase in businesses operating in 2014 over 2013. Since 2007 there has been a 32% increase in new businesses physically located in Okotoks.

Total number of businesses in Okotoks



Economic Development

Approximately 424 jobs were created in Okotoks based on declarations received by business owners on new business license applications. Economic Development Services facilitated and assisted in the start-up of many of these businesses.

Nurturing Economic Vitality

For the past three years housing starts have been in the range of 200-250 per year. Overall 2014 construction is valued at \$97.5 million. There were:

- 26% commercial/industrial/Institutional permits
- 69% residential permits
- 5% miscellaneous permits

209 single family dwellings were built this past year for a total construction value of \$67.2 million. There were 16 industrial permits issued in 2014, 47 commercial permits and 5 institutional permits.

Economic Development continues to consistently promote the private light industrial lands in the Southbank Business Park as well as the Okotoks Business Park. Facilitating additional employment opportunities and assisting in adding to the non- residential property assessment base continues to be a core mandate of Economic Development.

Economic Development actively markets and promotes numerous business development and investment opportunities by facilitating referrals between interested businesses and the development community, while undertaking presentations to various groups. The department responded to an estimated 450 inquiries in 2014 ranging from demographic requests, business start-up questions, business licensing, real estate ideas, and general economic development questions. Of this amount, approximately 85 major inquiries required various levels of staff time to research, respond and follow up.





Providing Quality Community Infrastructure

The Town of Okotoks will strategically manage, invest and plan for municipal infrastructure to meet the community's current and future needs.

Flood Remediation Projects

Many flood remediation projects were completed in 2014, with the approximate cost being \$4 million. They included the pathway east of Library; Lion's Campground; Rich's Playground (Sheep River Park); bank erosion at various areas including east of Library, Woodhaven siphon crossing, 32nd Street guide bank and west well field. Other project included:

- Well #1 (a second well will be drilled to increase capacity to pre-flood capacity pending Alberta Environment approval)
- Water Treatment Plant armouring
- Storm sewer outfall structures (in progress)

The Town applied for mitigation programs under the Flood Recovery Erosion Control (FREC) program. The approximate cost of the flood mitigation projects is \$4 million. The status of each project is as follows:

- Gravel Bar Mining (downstream of Laurie Boyd pedestrian bridge) is complete.
- CPR Track Protection (Spring Creek bridge: crosses under CPR tracks at Hwy 549) is complete.

Elizabeth Street - Surface Improvements

This project to mitigate tripping hazards due to the settling and heaving paving stones along Elizabeth Street was completed in winter 2014. Tree grates were installed to manage heaving due to root intrusion.

Street and Road Maintenance

2014 saw some significant snow events occur in January, September and November. As with any snow event, the Transportation team along with the applicable resources and equipment responded accordingly by mobilizing on call and after hours staff to deal with snow removal and icy road conditions (sanding operations). During a typical snow

event, and for several days following the event, all routes in Town are monitored closely by Transportation crews normally working 24 hour shifts. Their main focus is initially directed towards the maintenance & snow removal of primary and secondary routes.

Other ongoing maintenance includes: asphalt, traffic signs, pathways, streets & sidewalks; lane, boulevard & street cleaning; line & crosswalk painting, crack filling and pothole patching.

Skateboard Park Upgrades

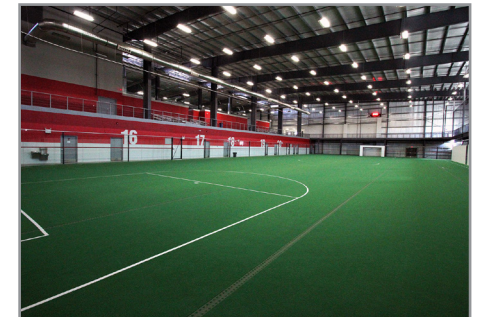
Okotoks Skate Park was professionally upgraded and expanded to 1115 square meters in October 2014. The park contains predominantly “street skating” elements as prioritized by park users during the participatory design workshops held in the spring/summer of 2014 prior to construction. Features include: banks, ledges, rails, a slappy feature, a mani pad/stair/hubba feature, a pump bump, and two quarter pipes.

Legacy Regional Field House

The Legacy Regional Field House is a model for collaborative partnerships. The M.D. of Foothills and the Town of Okotoks have come together to build this much needed facility to provide recreation such as soccer, lacrosse, rugby, volleyball and running for the entire region. The 130,000 square foot indoor field house opened in August 2015. It is a multi-use facility accommodating many activities for children, youth and adults. It is easily accessible, allows for future expansion and is financially sustainable.

Wylie Park Pathway Project

A new pathway connection was completed in the fall of 2015. This pathway runs through the natural drainage channel and links the Okotoks Recreation Centre to the bottom of Crescent Road East. Additional linkages to the Skatepark, Athletic track, Downey Road, Percy Pegler School and Okotoks Junior High School were also constructed as a part of this project.





Promote Environmental Stewardship

The Town of Okotoks will be a leader in environmental protection and preservation.

Water Consumption

In 2014, the Town of Okotoks was honoured by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) as one of nine municipal winners of the 2015 FCM Sustainable Communities Award for its Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity (CEP) Plan. The Town is being recognized for innovation and excellence in municipal sustainable development within the Water Category. The 2014 Residential Water Conservation Rebate Program was once again a huge success, with 307 household rebates issued over a 15 week period! Of the total 379 water conservation items, the top three purchases were mulch (34%), low-flow toilets (34%) and rain barrels (10%).

proper
blue box picture

Waste Diversion

Okotoks continues to experience notable success with our environmental initiatives. Through the Town's various collection programs, we diverted approximately 2,500 tonnes of recyclable material from the landfill in 2014!

Blue Cart Recycling Program (Curb It)

By the end of 2014, the Town's recycling collection service was subscribed to by over 4,450 households (59% of the Town's single family residences). The Program diverted over 1,000 metric tonnes of material from the landfill over the year.

Food Waste Composting Program

The Town implemented a new Organics Food Waste Drop-Off Program in the winter of 2014. Since the Programs implementation, 2,603 Kg of food waste has been diverted from landfill. Residents have welcomed this initiative resulting in an increase in the number of food waste collection containers currently available at the Recycle Centre. The collected material will be composted and turned into fertilizer.



Electronics Recycling

The Town began accepting electronics at the Recycling Centre in late 2013 and the program continued to be extremely successful throughout 2014. A total of 16 metric tonnes of electronics collected we collected and recycled in 2014.

Provide Strong Governance

The Town of Okotoks will provide strong governance including fiscal responsibility, open communication and strong inter-governmental relationships.

Public Input & Communication

Public open houses, workshops and online surveys were held throughout the year to provide information and seek feedback on current issues. Examples include: Annexation, Community Visioning, Economic Development initiatives such as Commercial and Industrial Lease workshop, Roger Brooks Community Assessment of Okotoks, and Engineering projects such as Water Main Twinning Phase 2 and the Elizabeth Street paving stone repair and tree grate installation.

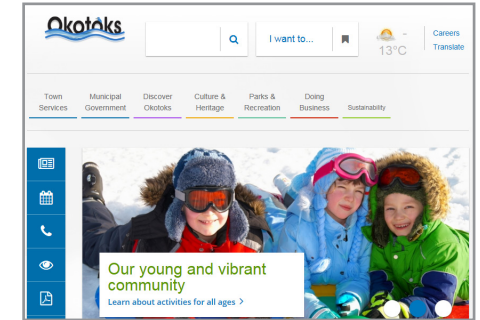
The Town Economic Development, Culture and Recreation e-Newsletters continue to be quite popular, with almost 2,300 subscribers in total. To subscribe to any of our e-Newsletters visit okotoks.ca.

On December 22, the Town of Okotoks launched the new okotoks.ca website that reflects substantial changes in navigation and technical capabilities. In short, we're giving residents more and making it easier to use. The new site was built with consideration for future enhancements, technologies and growth, currently receiving over 900,000 pageviews per year.

The Town of Okotoks is committed to sharing information in an open and transparent manner, and ensuring that citizen engagement informs and aligns with strategic plans. Use of social media was a key strategy in 2014 providing transparency and accessibility with the use of the Town Facebook and Twitter profiles. Our Facebook page is reaching 3,000 likes (users) and Twitter has close to 4,000 followers. This has allowed for timely interaction and feedback with residents through discussions and comments.

Council Boards & Committees

Over 70 citizens serve on 13 Committees of Council. These dedicated people generously volunteer their time to provide input to Council on topics concerning our community, such as planning, finance, economic development, recreation and culture, policing, family and community support, the library and the river valley. If you are interested in joining a committee or want to view meeting agenda packages, please visit okotoks.ca.





Financial Management

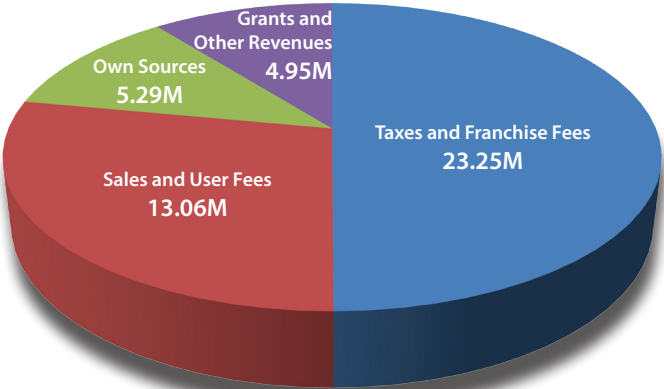
Financial Management Principles

Key principles underlying the Town`s long-term financial sustainability include:

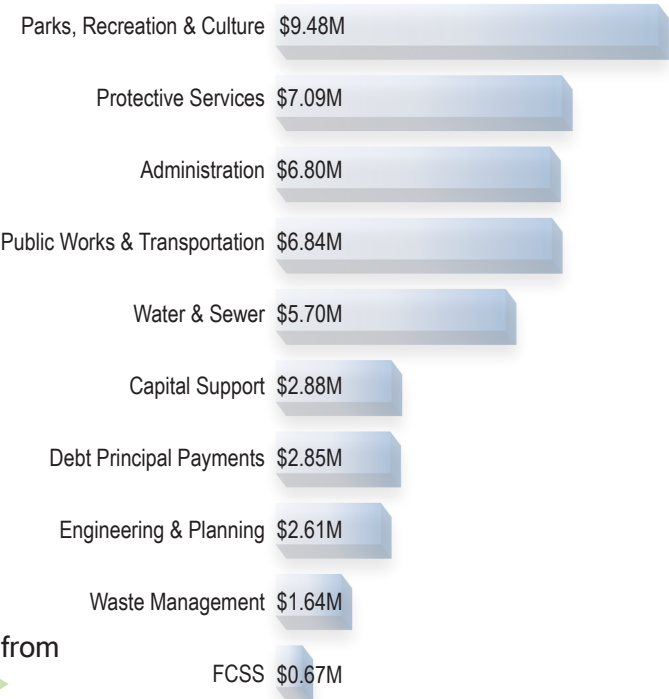
- Strategic financing of new capital requirements
- Annual contributions to reserves for replacement of current infrastructure
- User pay approach to provision of utilities (water, sewer, stormwater, garbage and recycling)
- User fees for recreational services that target 65% cost recovery



Okotok`s tax rates continue to be lower than almost all municipalities in Alberta between the populations of 10,000 and 100,000, as confirmed in the annual financial indicator graphs prepared by Municipal Affairs.

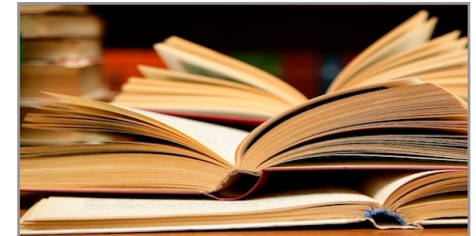


Where the money comes from
Where the money goes



What you get for your tax dollars

- 24-hour Police and Fire Services (includes 911 & Fire dispatch)
- 79 kms of pathway system (which includes 25km of sidewalks), of which 60 kms are interconnected and cleared of snow
- Year-round street cleaning and winter snow removal on priority roads
- 96 parks; 48 playgrounds
- 14 ball diamonds; 2 football/rugby fields
- 15 soccer pitches; 5 tennis courts
- Outdoor fitness trail
- BMX track
- various outdoor skating rinks and toboggan hills
- Recreation Centre with 2 arenas, 6 curling sheets, 6-lane competitive swimming pool, family leisure pool, 40-person hot tub, fitness area, gymnasium and youth centre
- 1500-seat Pason Centennial Arena (multi-use, year round facility with a walking track)
- 2700-seat Seaman Stadium
- Skateboard park
- Water spray park
- Off-leash dog park (15 hectares)
- Wildlife reserve/bird sanctuary
- 210 hectares of naturalized areas (including River Valley)
- Art Gallery at the Station, Okotoks Museum & Archives and the Rotary Performing Arts Centre
- Okotoks Public Library
- Foothills Centennial Centre
- Cemetery
- A transportation system with 147 kms of roadways, street lights, traffic controls, 2 bridges and a railway overpass





Culture and Heritage

Culture and Heritage buildings saw 22,400 people through the doors in the Rotary Performing Arts Centre (RPAC), Okotoks Museum and Archives (OMA), and Okotoks Art Gallery (OAG). During the same period, the Town's population grew by about 18%. As the community grows, the general population visiting these facilities has increased with Cultural and Historical Services becoming more pertinent to our community.

OAG

The Okotoks Art Gallery featured 12 exhibits in it's two galleries. Each exhibit included an opening night event.

OMA

OMA's attendance in 2014 was in excess of 6300 people.

Public Art

In collaboration with the Okotoks Arts Council and Alberta Culture Days, 450 members of the community painted a tile to create the Pubble People mural which was mounted in the Okotoks Recreation Centre. In addition, we put up six Art in the Hall exhibits at the Recreation Centre and six at the Municipal Centre.

Rotary Performing Arts Centre

Of the 6528 hours booked in the past 3 years, 44% (2947) have come in 2014. In 2014, based on a 12 hour day, and only on days available for booking (maintenance or holidays) the building was booked 71% of the hours available. When using the same criterion and looking at only prime booking days - Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays - the building was available for booking 1764 hours. It was booked a total of 1624 of those hours, or 91% of the available time.

Over 7300 people attended events in RPAC in 2014 as opposed to 5062 in 2013, a 44% increase.



Pubble People
mural

Water Management Strategies

Several key strategies and actions are ongoing to deal with our long-term water issues:

- Nearly a year after Okotoks Council decided to pursue the development of a regional water system via Calgary to meet future growth needs, the City of Calgary is prepared to provide treated water to Okotoks
- Administration has been directed to continue to work closely with the Government of Alberta and the City of Calgary in 2015 to establish agreements that would outline responsibilities of each party, funding and timelines to secure future water.
- Development of a regional water pipeline is a multiyear process and therefore continuation of short term water capacity solutions is necessary to accommodate growth over 30,000 people. Okotoks population is 27,331.
- The Town of Okotoks has applied to the provincial government in an effort to cover 90% of the cost for a new pipeline from the City of Calgary. If successful, the Province's Water for Life program would put forth approximately \$36-million of the estimated \$40-million bill.
- The Town has been successful with interim water solutions such as water license transfers and will continue in this regard. In August 2014, the Town acquired two additional water licenses totaling 115,055 cubic metres. These licenses were formerly used for irrigation, making them available on a seasonal basis from May to September.





Healthy and Safe Community

The Town of Okotoks will strengthen our social fabric and enhance the safety of our residents.

Community Policing

Peace Officers generally spend about 75% of their time maintaining a safe community (i.e. enforcing speed limits, community security patrols, monitoring school zones), with the remainder spent handling provincial statute/bylaw complaints, school programs and public education. Peace Officers responded to over 1,700 calls for service in 2014 and issued over 5,400 tickets. Of those, 2026 were for speeding.

Okotoks Municipal Enforcement, in partnership with the RCMP, continues to work towards a safer community. An initiative that continues to support this is the Mount Royal University practicum program - 4 students volunteered 1200 hours to patrolling the Sheep River Valley and community parks.

In 2014, the RCMP responded to over 7720 calls for service, in consultation with the Okotoks Public Safety and Security Committee the focus of the Detachment Performance Plan was Traffic Safety, Property Crimes and Youth. The Okotoks RCMP consists of 20 RCMP officers and 6 support staff. The positions are financed through local property tax support. The Detachment has 2 plain clothes positions, one in the General Investigation Section and one in the Crime Reduction Unit. Both work together conducting pro-active work on community issues, including drug trafficking and liquor matters. In 2015, 2 additional RCMP officers and 2 support staff will be added to the existing establishment.

Public Education

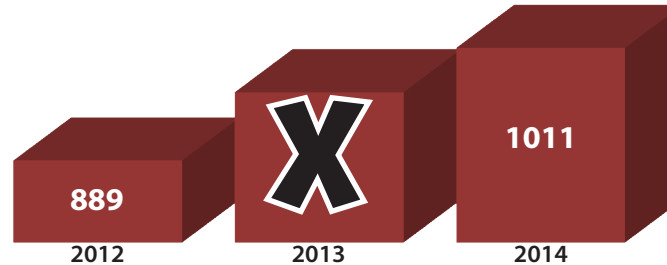
Peace Officer and RCMP public education initiatives continue with presentations on topics such as: DARE (Drug & Alcohol Resistance Education), anti-bullying, internet safety, crosswalk safety, block watch, anti-graffiti and animal safety.

Fire Services

Fire Services crews attended a record number of calls for service in 2014 at **1011** responses, reflecting the activity and growth of the community. Innovative service delivery models included utilizing community fire fighters in a paid on call manner to supplement the career crews.

Firefighters visit each business, apartment building and institution in the community annually to assist with fire prevention. Disaster preparedness in Okotoks was enhanced by the acquisition of a readiness grant for flood mitigation equipment and information dissemination.

Fire Service Calls On The Rise



Active Transportation

The long-term goal of an Active Transportation Plan is to transform a vehicle-reliant community to a place where all citizens - including walkers, motorists, cyclists and other users - share a common vision and goal for future transportation needs. Substantial research indicated there are numerous reasons why active transportation is an important investment for a community. They can be categorized into four main areas: health, environmental, quality of life, and economics.

The Vision:

Creating a culture for a healthy and active community, Okotoks will plan and develop local capacity and support for multiple modes of sustainable, safe, accessible active choices connecting people to neighbourhoods, open spaces, recreation, schools and businesses through:

- Developing opportunities and partnerships to enhance active transportation infrastructure and facilities
- Advising on the design, development, delivery and maintenance of policies, programs and facilities
- Educating the public on the benefits, necessities and safety aspects of active transportation
- Promoting and enhancing a continuous, integrated pedestrian and bicycle network (ex. Pathways, sidewalks, bicycle lanes) within Okotoks, including future network connections from outside the Town boundaries





Maintain Organizational Excellence

The Town of Okotoks will be recognized as leaders in public service.

Excellence Canada Silver Certification Awarded to the Town of Okotoks

Since 2012, the Town of Okotoks has been working diligently to achieve silver certification through Excellence Canada's Excellence, Innovation and Wellness program. This world-class program evaluates organizational excellence through a multi-year process consisting of four levels of achievement: bronze, silver, gold & platinum. Achieving this status means that the Town has succeeded in enhancing the areas of Leadership & Governance, Strategy & Planning, Process & Project Management, Customer Experience, Partners & Suppliers and People Engagement.



2015 FCM Sustainable Communities Award Winner

On November 14, 2014, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) announced the winners of its 2015 Sustainable Communities Awards, recognizing innovation and excellence in municipal sustainable development in six categories: brownfields, energy, neighbourhood development, transportation, waste and water. The Town of Okotoks has been honoured as an award winner within the water category, for its Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity Programs and formally accepted the award in London, Ontario on February 11.



Town wins ChooseWell Challenge Award

The Town's Community Programs team has been recognized for the healthy eating and active living programs and initiatives, that have been introduced in the past year. Administration was delighted to hear that the submission was selected for the Most Significant Change Community. The award was presented at the 2014 Alberta Recreation and Parks Association conference in October. Okotoks also won the Overall High Achiever award in 2012, and was recognized for reducing barriers to healthy living in 2013.



■ Family & Community Support Services

In 2014 \$137,000 was provided in grants to social agencies for 13 funded programs serving residents of Okotoks.

The Community Access Program provides subsidized taxi service, allowing seniors and disabled residents to remain active in the community. 2014 saw another year of increases in the number of trips taken; with an overall increase in trips of 20.4% over the previous year.

Okotoks continues to be an engaged and caring community with 160 youth and 138 adult registered volunteers who assist the Town with resident needs like Snow Angels as well as other programs coordinated at OFRC.

A brand new logo was introduced along with the shorter name, Okotoks Family Resource Centre (OFRC).

The Stats:

- There was a 14% increase in client contacts over the previous year
- The Community Volunteer Income Tax Program grew again with an increase of 100% in the number of clients over 2013
- Recreation Fee Assistance costs increased by 24%
- The annual School Supply Program is funded solely by community donations and saw an increase in requests of 87%; 114 families registered for assistance
- Requests for 440 volunteer drives were received; an increase of 20%

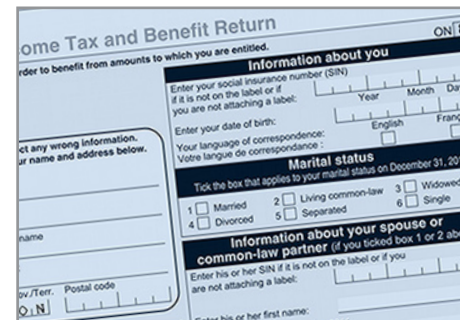
■ Okotoks Family Resource Centre

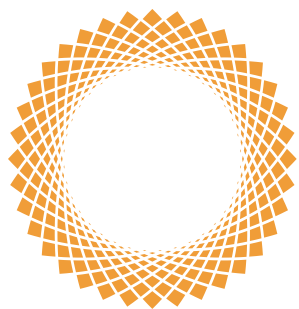
Staff at the centre link residents up with available resources and social services, provide print information, make referrals, assist with applications and provide support and problem-solving assistance to the community.

Families with limited means can access programs such as recreation fee assistance, Christmas support (Holiday Helpers), and an infant formula and diaper bank. In 2014, OHFRC handled over 3,000 inquiries.

OFRC provides front line support for times of stress or crisis, limited financial help, and connection and referral to appropriate community services.

- OFRC continues to see increasing complexity of needs and had a 14% increase in client contacts over the previous year.
- The Community Volunteer Income Tax Program grew again with an increase of 100% in the number of clients over 2013.
- Recreation Fee Assistance costs increased by 24%. In 2014, 196 people registered requiring \$29,103 in subsidy approvals.
- The Volunteer Driver program demand increased again this year. Requests for 440 volunteer drives were received; an increase of 20%. We are lucky to have 18 Drivers to help out these residents. There were 50 clients served and approximately 10,000 km driven.





OKOTOKS COMMUNITY VISIONING 2014

After extensive public consultation, Town Council used the Visioning feedback to approve six core values and fourteen major themes.

Livable Okotoks

People make Okotoks the caring, safe and welcoming place that it is. Public spaces are cherished, natural features are valued, and community needs are met. An appropriate mix of land uses, mobility options, infrastructure and accessible, affordable and equitable services provide the foundation for sustainable growth. High-quality education opportunities support life-long learning. The transportation network is multi-modal, allowing for the environmentally responsible and cost-effective movement of people and goods.

Inclusive Neighbourhoods

Neighbourhoods are connected, fostering a sense of community among residents. Housing is flexible, affordable and desirable, and meets the needs of residents of all ages, income levels and family types. Design and architecture create places that reflect neighbourhood culture. Community gathering spaces are animated and anchor neighbourhoods. Streets are lively and engaging places, where people can move around in a safe and inclusive environment. New communities are permeable and connected to encourage active transportation.

The Town of Okotoks is resilient, where people, businesses, ideas and sense of community thrive. Grounded by the Sheep River valley and supported by thoughtful planning and design, a strong local economy and a vibrant civic culture, Okotoks offers exceptional quality of life at every stage of life. Respect for each other and the natural environment makes Okotoks home.

Sustainable Design

The places and spaces that make up Okotoks are designed with the environment in mind. Energy, air quality, land and water conservation are critical elements integrated in all planning and development projects. Okotoks is a leader in low-impact, environmentally conscious design. Creative resources, advanced technologies and respect for nature create a unique sense of place based on environmental stewardship. Regional and local transit provide efficient transportation alternatives and reduce vehicle use.

Vibrant Civic Culture

Residents joyfully embrace Okotoks, and cultivate a rich quality of life. Okotoks provides access to a wide range of cultural resources, fostering audiences, participants and creators who contribute to community building and economic development. The strong tradition of community events is a hallmark of living in Okotoks. Residents are engaged in civic life, and Town Council and administration promote open dialogue.

Active Lifestyle

Residents enjoy an active lifestyle that nurtures community well-being. Health and wellness facilities support the needs of residents at every stage of life. Opportunities for sport and play are accessible in high-quality recreation facilities, multi-use civic buildings and a complete parks and open space network. These public spaces strengthen the bond between residents, and to the places they share.

Strong Local Economy

Okotoks-based employment and businesses strengthen the economy. Okotoks takes a collaborative approach to economic growth, creating new opportunities that complement the region. Okotoks promotes innovation and attracts businesses and industries. A thriving downtown supports economic development. Okotoks is a place to live, work and play, where local employment encourages residents to actively engage in their community.



VALUES

Six core community values were distilled from the fourteen major themes. Values are the building blocks for the vision and principles, and are a collective expression of what is most important to the Town.

CARING

- People are friendly
- People look out for one another
- People take pride in their Town
- People thrive

COMPLETE

- A range of housing, jobs, educational opportunities, services, recreation and culture are provided in the community
- The needs of all residents, regardless of income or age, are equitably met

CONNECTED

- People can easily access community services
- Mobility emphasizes walking, cycling and transit use
- Integrated design links the built, social and natural environments

ACTIVE, INCLUSIVE + DIVERSE

- Healthy, balanced lifestyle for all
- Strong participation in civic culture / community events
- Accessible heritage, cultural, creative, play-based and sporting resources

GREEN

- Respect and conserve the natural environment
- Become leaders in climate change adaptation, energy reduction and renewable resources
- People are mindful of their actions and impacts

RESILIENT

- Strong leadership
- Enduring commitment
- Affordable services
- Adaptive management
- People and municipal government strive for innovative and creative solutions

THEMES

Fourteen major themes that imagine what Okotoks could become in the future have been identified and refined during the OCV process.



SOCIAL CAPITAL (PEOPLE)

- People are the most highly valued community asset
- Sense of knowing others, sense of community, friendliness, and coming together at community events are the foundation of the "small town feel"
- Okotoks needs more places for people to gather (plazas, markets, creative centres)
- "We give each other that Okotokian acknowledgement of smiling, waving 'thanks' for stopping to let us cross the roads or allowing each other into lanes on busy roads"
- "I run into people I know about Town"



PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

- The river valley landscape and mountain views are key natural features to celebrate and protect
- The sense of being close to nature contributes to the "small town feel"
- Pathways and trails connect people to the natural environment, and link-up neighbourhoods
- Preserve and expand the pathways and open space system as the community grows to nurture this asset



DOWNTOWN

- Downtown should be a more active, vibrant place where there are things to see and do throughout the day and into the evening
- As a central gathering place, downtown requires attention, investment and some re-thinking
- Design, programming and services should reflect the people who make Okotoks great
- Need to address design and mix of commercial / restaurant uses



MOBILITY

- Transit (local and regional) is a defining feature of Okotoks in the future
- People choose active transportation options such as walking, biking or other people-powered modes over personal vehicle use
- Streets are safe, with high-quality infrastructure for all transportation modes



CULTURE

- Okotoks is a cultural village where residents have access to a range of cultural opportunities
- Heritage, cultural and creative resources contribute to a thriving economy and residents' quality of life
- Cultural resources should be valued through community investment and support



RECREATION

- Recreation facilities (eg. swimming pool, ice space, outdoor space) meet the needs of a healthy, active and engaged population
- Indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities are equitable, accessible and affordable
- Recreation contributes to a healthy lifestyle



DESIGN / BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- The built environment is beautiful, reflects pride in the natural landscape, is well-connected, and supports the creation of an active and healthy lifestyle
- Housing is affordable, flexible and more diverse, and meets the needs of all residents young and old
- Develop a distinctive style beyond the "suburban" aesthetic



GOVERNANCE

- Continue to invest in community events, high-quality provision of services, emphasis on relationships with people
- Model a "culture of yes" to promote innovation
- Regional focus to promote collaboration and cooperation
- Balance provision of services with affordability



ECONOMY

- Locally-based
- Attract a range of professional and "living wage" jobs to improve affordability and reduce number of people who need to commute
- Market attractiveness of living in a complete community to attract small and medium-sized businesses
- Tourism is a component of economic development



EDUCATION

- School spaces keep pace with population growth
- High-quality opportunities for continuing education, including a potential post-secondary campus
- Schools are multi-purpose community hubs



HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- Promote a healthy and active lifestyle through recreation opportunities, cultural outlets and resident participation
- Facilities and services are inclusive, and help people stay healthy throughout every stage of their life
- Embrace an outlook that allows people to thrive in Okotoks throughout their entire lives



NEIGHBOURHOODS

- Neighbourhoods are focal points of community activity
- Design is inclusive, environmentally responsible, compact and complete
- Spaces such as parks, community centres and small-scale commercial services create places for people to gather and socialize



ENVIRONMENT

- The Town is a leader in the provision of environmentally responsible services (recycling, composting, waste management)
- Focus on renewable energy and eco-innovation (solar power, district heating)
- Reduce waste, reduce energy use, preserve the river valley
- Create affordable environmental solutions



COMMERCIAL / RETAIL SERVICES

- A full range of commercial and entertainment services reduces commuting to Calgary, and helps "complete" the community
- Ensure that shopping and restaurants are balanced north and south of the river
- Neighbourhood-level services animate community nodes that can be easily accessed by walking, cycling or other active modes



Planning for the Future

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2015 OPERATING BUDGET

- Enhanced Policing Services with RCMP adding two officers for a total of 23 members
- Enhanced recreational opportunities with full year operation of the Legacy Regional Fieldhouse
- On-going contribution to MD of Foothills for the operation of Scott Seaman Sports Rink to enhance recreational opportunities
- Full year of Community Programs Centre in south Okotoks
- Continued provision of wheelchair accessible transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities through the Town's subsidized taxi transportation program
- Major operating projects total \$5.0 million for lifecycle maintenance and infrastructure replacements.
- Compulsory residential recycling for new account holders will commence in early 2015
- Water and Sewer utilities that are 100% self-funded through utility rates

Did you know...

The Okotoks
Public Library:
By the Numbers!

17,280
memberships

76
volunteers

3259
hours donated
by volunteers

346,596
items circulated

INITIATIVES

Centre Avenue Pedestrian Corridor Concept Design Development: This project will be designed to improve pedestrian access into the downtown core.

Recreation Facilities: Pason Centennial Arena twinning planning to begin.

Economic Development: Develop Downtown Action Plan and begin implementation of items.

Engineering: Update sanitary sewer master plan and develop sanitary serving strategy for existing and annexation lands;

Planning: Ongoing annexation consultations and completion of report to MGB.

Facilities Management: Continue with progressive strategies to reduce energy footprint at Town facilities

Recreation Clients Services: Implement year round ice schedule at Pason Centennial Arena.

Parks: Park development consultation and design for Business Park.

Transportation: Substantial completion of new Operations Centre (occupancy expected in spring/summer 2016).

Legislative & Policy Services: Board & Committee review for Council

Community Programs & Events: Community Initiative - Working with Okotoks Network & the Primary Care Network implement the Neighbourhood Connector Program

Programs: Expand OSAC Southside program; continue to work on accreditation of child care excellence and implement Critical Hours Programming.

Resource Recovery: Develop universal/mandatory curbside recycling collection program.

Safety Codes: New Operations Centre project management team design and construction.



OPS CENTRE
CONCEPTUAL DESIGN





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