

2017

TOWN OF OKOTOKS

COMMUNITY REPORT



**THE TOWN OF OKOTOKS IS PLEASED
TO SHARE THE 2017 COMMUNITY
REPORT. THIS PUBLICATION IS A
CONCISE WAY FOR THE TOWN TO
REPORT BACK TO RESIDENTS ON
PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS
TOWARDS KEY STRATEGIC
DIRECTIONS IDENTIFIED IN THE
2014-2017 BUSINESS PLAN.**

VISION

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.

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OKOTOKS
MANAGING
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A STRONG
OKOTOKS
PROVIDING QUALITY
COMMUNITY
INFRASTRUCTURE





A SUSTAINABLE
OKOTOKS
PROMOTING
ENVIRONMENTAL
STEWARDSHIP



A VITAL OKOTOKS
FACILITATING A HEALTHY AND
SAFE COMMUNITY







AN EFFECTIVE
EFFICIENT
OKOTOKS
PROVIDING STRONG
GOVERNANCE



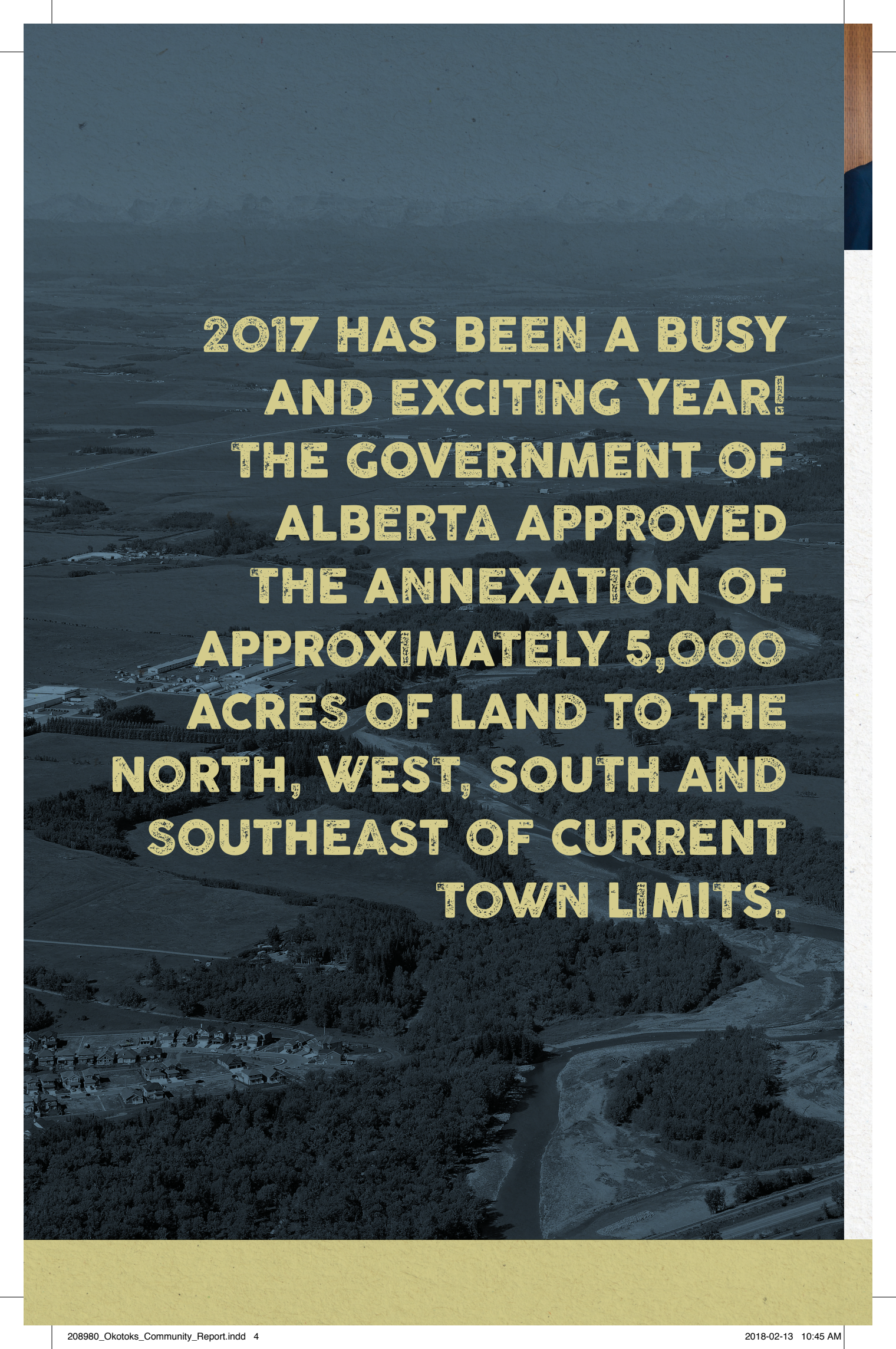
A GROWING OKOTOKS
PLANNING FOR
THE FUTURE





A SUCCESSFUL
OKOTOKS
MAINTAINING
ORGANIZATIONAL
EXCELLENCE



An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there's a dense forest. A river flows through the middle ground. To the left, there's a small town or village with several buildings. The background shows rolling hills and fields under a clear sky. The text is overlaid on the upper half of the image.

**2017 HAS BEEN A BUSY
AND EXCITING YEAR!
THE GOVERNMENT OF
ALBERTA APPROVED
THE ANNEXATION OF
APPROXIMATELY 5,000
ACRES OF LAND TO THE
NORTH, WEST, SOUTH AND
SOUTHEAST OF CURRENT
TOWN LIMITS.**



MESSAGE FROM OKOTOKS COUNCIL

The completion of some major projects this past year, including the Operations Centre and Eco Centre, the Veterans Way Pedestrian Corridor and the Salute to Our Veterans Memorial Wall had a positive impact on Okotoks.

Undertaking the Pason Centennial Arena Expansion project, continuing the Water Main Upgrade/Replacement program and developing the Okotoks Community Campus land will further meet the community's needs in coming years.

Okotoks is a desirable place to live and visit, with a high quality of life and value of service. The Town continues to successfully host many

popular annual events such as the Parade and Children's Festival, Taste of Okotoks, and Light Up Okotoks. In 2017, the Town also hosted Canada 150 festivities and offered new events like the Oktober Food Fest.

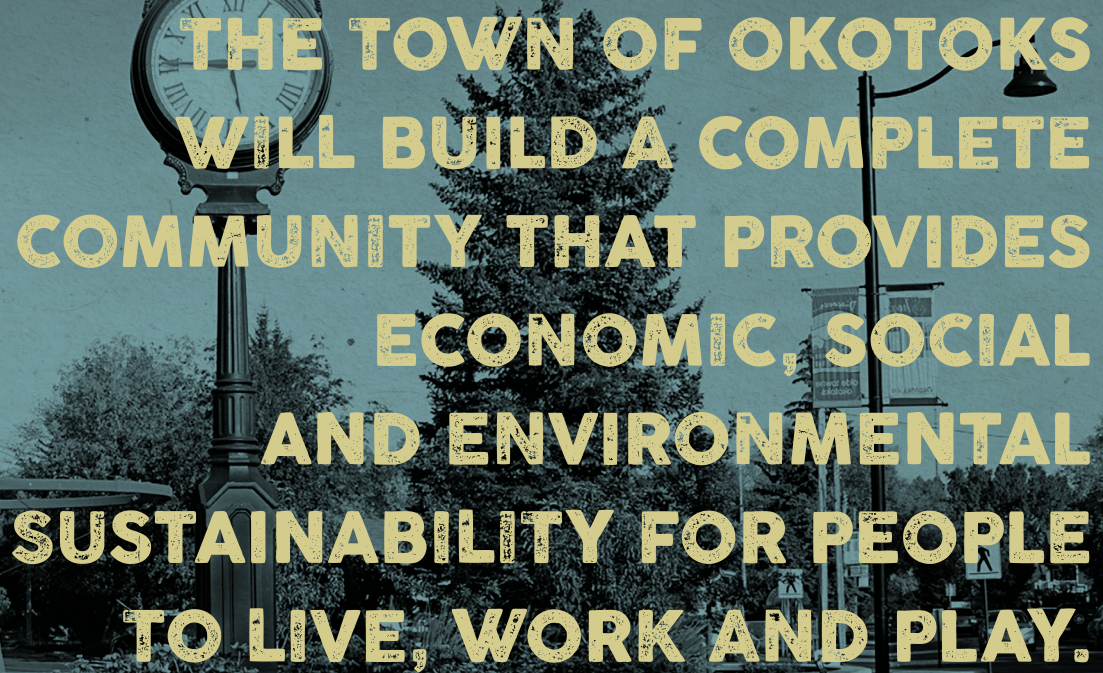
In 2017, the Town received several notable awards including the Project of the Year Award for the new Operations Centre from the Alberta Public Works Association, a Silver Summit Creative award for the Okotoks tourism campaign, and a Choosewell Award for developing healthy policies.

Okotoks Council and Administration are dedicated to managing growth so we can maintain a welcoming, connected, sustainable and safe community as well as encouraging and supporting residents and businesses to live and work here. The Town would like to sincerely thank the community for your continued input and for working with us to make Okotoks the best it can be!

Sincerely,

Mayor Bill Robertson





THE TOWN OF OKOTOKS WILL BUILD A COMPLETE COMMUNITY THAT PROVIDES ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY FOR PEOPLE TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY.

The following long-range community planning documents and tools, introduced in 2017, establish a foundation to guide the community's future. To properly manage growth in Okotoks, the Town is committed to seeking public feedback on how the community should change moving forward. The Town encourages resident engagement and welcomes the opportunity to obtain the public's input.

Recreation, Parks & Leisure Master Plan

The Recreation, Parks, & Leisure Master Plan was approved by Council in May. The plan identifies future requirements for facilities, programs, services, and anticipated facility costs, and will serve as a guideline for decision making for the next 20 years. Residents and community groups provided input through a mail-out survey, which received 1,200 responses. Key stakeholders also provided input on needs and recreational opportunities. Stakeholders represented sport associations, facility and park users, recreation clubs,

schools, health organizations, and community advocacy groups.

Downtown Urban Design Master Plan

The draft Downtown Urban Design Master Plan, was completed in October and presented to Council. The plan was designed to provide bold ideas to consider for the future growth of downtown. It embraces environmentally-friendly infrastructure, inviting public spaces, active streetscapes, and architectural innovation, while maintaining historical character.

A DYNAMIC OKOTOKS MANAGING COMMUNITY GROWTH

Through various public engagement opportunities, feedback was gathered from 647 residents and stakeholders. Additional public engagement activities included in-class sessions with high school students, a public open house and design charrette, an online survey and a drop-in booth at the Taste of Okotoks.

Responses identified a number of opportunities and considerations that shaped the plan's framework, including the need to protect historical buildings while also supporting contemporary design. The final plan will be presented to Council in 2018.

Culture & Heritage Master Plan

Engagement for the Okotoks Culture and Heritage Master Plan began in July and was designed to gain an understanding of the community's perspectives on heritage and culture. This plan is an update of the Culture, Heritage and Arts Master Plan completed in 2009, to reflect the Town's new growth model.

Residents shared their views through an online survey, workshops, interviews, as well as engaging with staff at community events. Some of the key findings from the 438 participants were:

- Building community, as well as connecting with and supporting each other, was considered the most important outcome of the new plan
- Informal community events draw more people than formal performances
- Lack of time and awareness are the biggest reasons more people do not participate
- The community is becoming more diverse. New residents are not necessarily represented by the current culture and heritage programming





Environmental Master Plan

This long-term community plan identifies, prioritizes and sets specific goals and targets for key environmental initiatives for the Town and the community. It will encompass all aspects of the environment, from developing new land, to sustainable practices for energy, water, waste, emissions, urban forests, construction, and transportation networks.

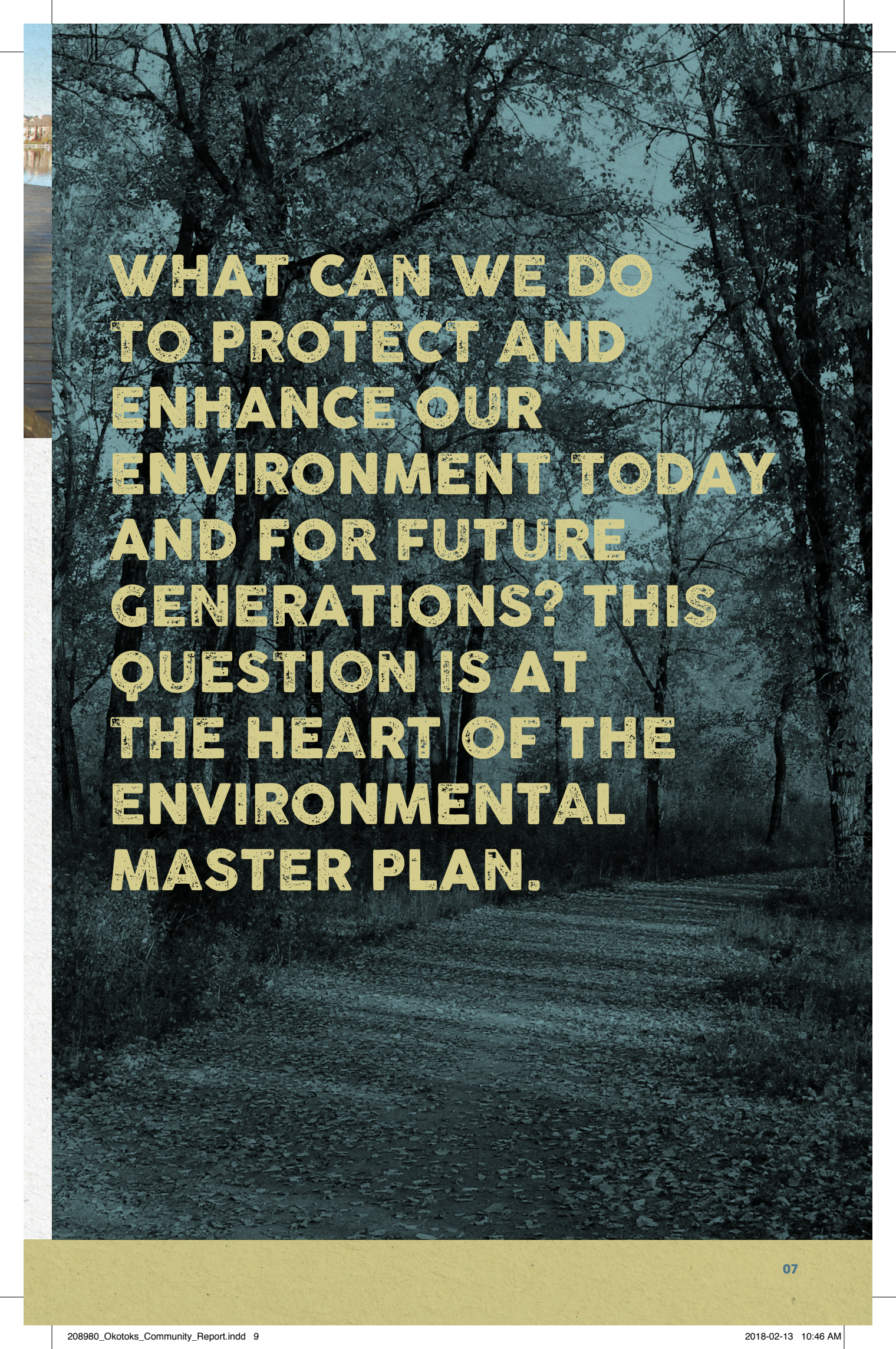
Some initial feedback received from the first phase of engagement includes:

- Reducing the need for cars and developing a safe and accessible transit system
- Reducing water consumption by capturing and reusing grey, rain and storm water
- Lowering energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions
- Staying on track to becoming a zero-waste community and viewing waste as a valuable resource
- Connecting through vibrant, multi-purpose green spaces, and committing to local food production

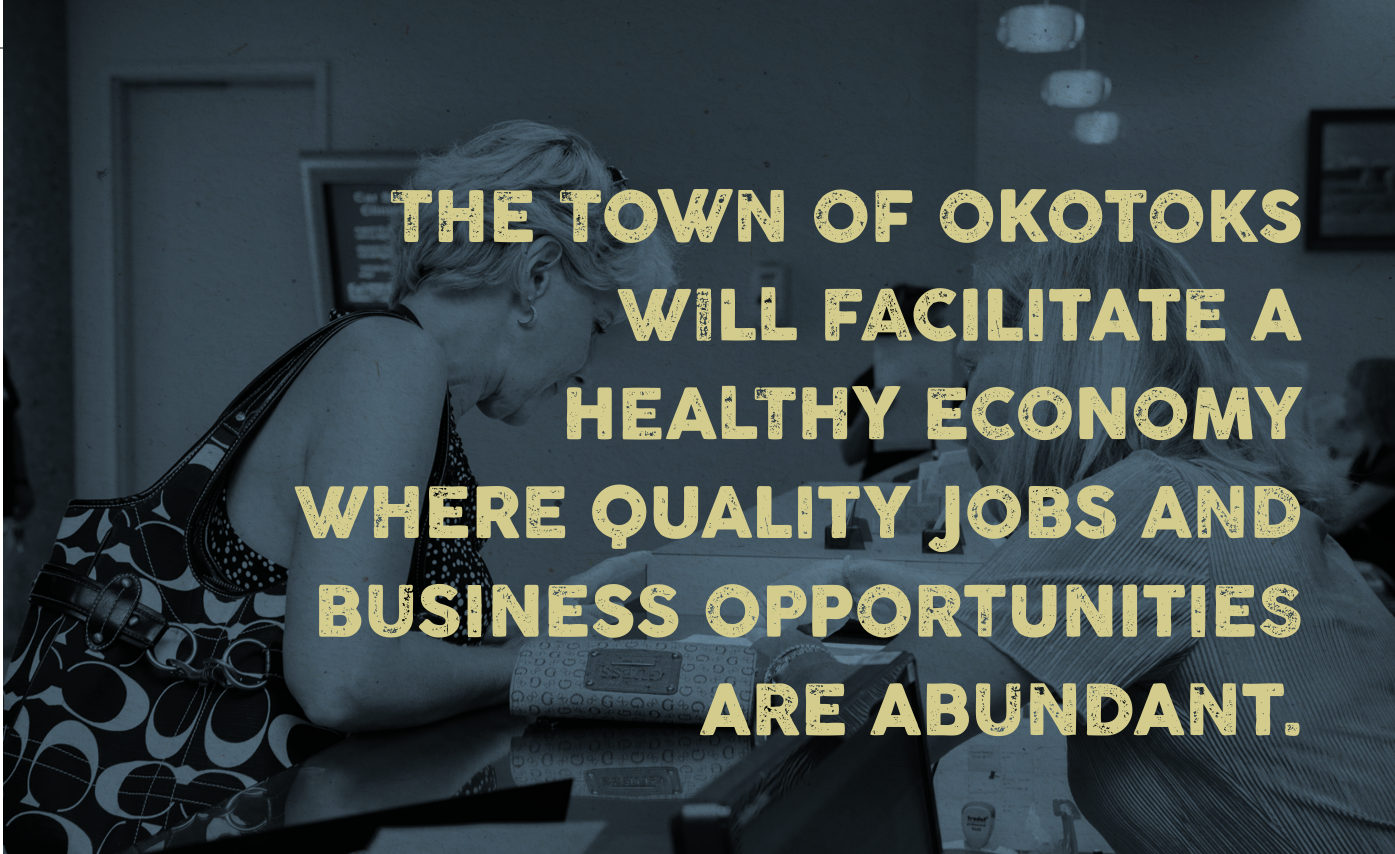
The goal of annexation is to provide more opportunities for Okotokians to live and work in town.

Annexation Approved

Annexation of 1,950 (4,900 acres) of land was approved by the Municipal Government Board in July. The land will accommodate expected growth of Okotoks for the next 60 years or to a projected population of 86,000 people. This means that much of this land will remain undeveloped for many years.

A photograph of a dirt path winding through a forest. The path is covered in fallen leaves and leads towards a body of water in the distance, surrounded by trees. The image has a blueish tint.

**WHAT CAN WE DO
TO PROTECT AND
ENHANCE OUR
ENVIRONMENT TODAY
AND FOR FUTURE
GENERATIONS? THIS
QUESTION IS AT
THE HEART OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL
MASTER PLAN.**



THE TOWN OF OKOTOKS WILL FACILITATE A HEALTHY ECONOMY WHERE QUALITY JOBS AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES ARE ABUNDANT.

Okotoks continued to experience increased business activity in 2017. There was a 6% increase in the number of storefront businesses and a 2% increase in the number of home-based.

It was a busy year implementing new tools for business retention and attraction. For business retention, the Biz Link group, a collaboration between the Town of Okotoks, Chamber of Commerce, Community Futures, McBride Career Group and Bow Valley College, created a resources and educational opportunities guide for businesses. For business, investment and visitor attraction, numerous tools were developed including:

- Four tourism & economic development videos
- A micro website for economic development
- A tourism website featuring itineraries to meet specific interests
- A business & investment guide
- The Visitor & Activities Guide

Elma Street flourished in 2017 as an up and coming area, with 36 businesses; seven more than last year.

100
BUSINESS
RELATED
INQUIRIES

100%
FROM
2016

CHECK OUT THE
NEW ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
WEBSITE AT
OKOTOKS.ECDEV.ORG

A THRIVING OKOTOKS FOSTERING ECONOMIC VITALITY



645

STOREFRONTS



715

HOME BASED

NEARLY **450**
NEW JOBS CREATED



NEARLY
2000

BUSINESS LICENSES
ISSUED

\$101
MILLION

INVESTED IN
CONSTRUCTION
DEVELOPMENT
IN 2017



\$38

MILLION

INSTITUTIONAL, INDUSTRIAL &
COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION

\$54
MILLION



RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION



OVER **4200**

PERMIT INSPECTIONS
CONDUCTED



A STRONG OKOTOKS PROVIDING QUALITY COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Water Supply - Planning, Outdoor Use & Distribution Initiatives

Okotoks has a population approaching 30,000 and the Sheep River is the town's water source. The Town withdraws its water supply through wells which is treated at the Water Treatment Plant to become potable (suitable for drinking). On an average summer day, the Water Treatment Plant produces 12.5ML/day of potable water. Approximately 80% of the wastewater is collected and transferred to the Wastewater Treatment Plant where it is cleaned and returned to the river.

Planning

Growth pressure from proposed developments required the Town to annex land around Okotoks' border. This has given the Town the ability to control growth while aligning future developments to the sustainable community vision. The annexed land forecasts 60 years of growth; therefore, much of this land will remain undeveloped for many years. Under the Water Allocation Policy, the Town does not grant land use approvals until a water license (provided by the developer) is approved by Alberta Environment and transferred to the Town for the planned lands. To secure a water license, the developer has to first meet the requirements of the Water Allocation Policy. The policy states that the Town's available water resources

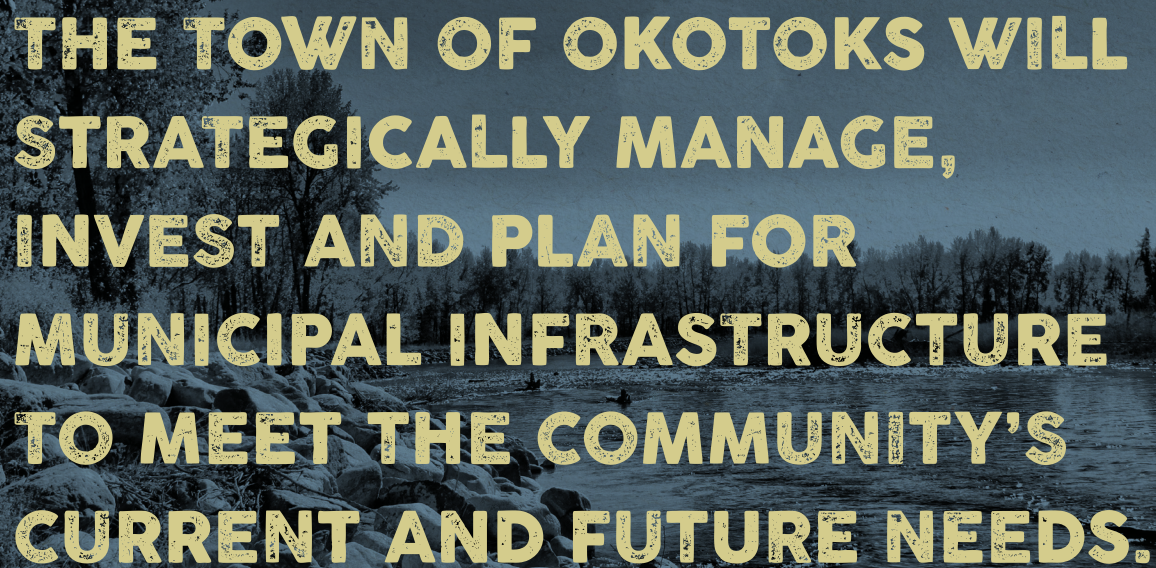
are distributed in a fair and efficient manner and applies only to planning applications for greenfield lands (unserved).

The Town's existing water licenses provide sufficient water for current development (approximately within the old town boundary) and population. Additional water license capacity must be secured in order to support the increased population expected for a newly developed area. In 2017, the Town received the transfer of four water licenses, which are anticipated to accommodate another four to five years of growth. This allowed for land use designation to be granted for D'Arcy Phases 1 and 1A and Wind Walk Phase 1 to receive land use designation.

Since new communities are restricted until new water licenses and new water infrastructure are in place, future water usage does **not** impact current water use.

The water licensing process is the short-term solution to allow continued growth until the Town secures a water pipeline that will provide supplementary water to support the water system as needed.





THE TOWN OF OKOTOKS WILL STRATEGICALLY MANAGE, INVEST AND PLAN FOR MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE TO MEET THE COMMUNITY'S CURRENT AND FUTURE NEEDS.

Summer Outdoor Water Use & Drought Conditions

Historically, Sheep River water volumes are at their lowest in mid to late August. During the summer months, outdoor watering increases water consumption up to 50% over winter usage.

Due to a record breaking hot, dry summer, water levels were exceptionally low in early July. Then, in late July and early August, outdoor water demand reached 15.5 million litres of treated water/day on scheduled outdoor watering days.

The drought conditions had reduced the Town's water production capacity to approximately 11 million litres/day, creating a four million litre/day deficit. This deficit was supplemented from reservoirs, which decreased their storage levels. To ensure enough potable water was available for essential use and to replenish reservoir supplies, water consumption had to be decreased. This led to a temporary outdoor watering ban. Watering restrictions were eased once conditions improved and Administration was confident reservoirs could be sustainably maintained.

Water Supply, Distribution Initiatives

Over the next couple of years, the Town will employ the following short-term initiatives to assist with the current water supply until a long-term solution is reached:

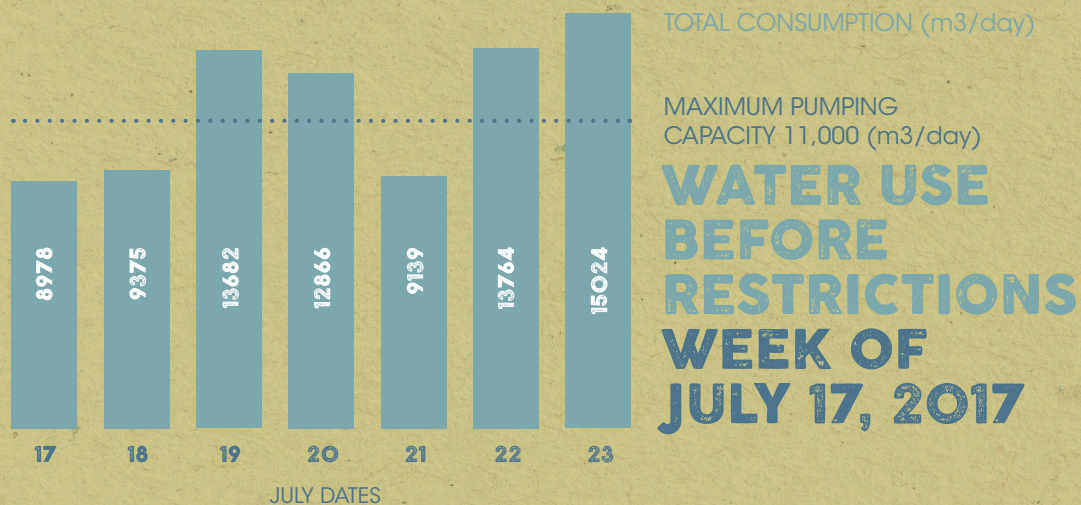
- **Outdoor Watering Schedule Changes**

The current outdoor watering schedule is under review. This may result in implementing updates prior to the next outdoor watering season to determine if improved balancing across the community will assist with production, peak demand and recovery.

- **Reservoirs**

Planning/detailed design of a new treated 10,000 m³ underground reservoir in the annexed lands west of the Westridge neighbourhood will begin in 2018. This means a reliable water supply and enhanced fire protection for south Okotoks. Construction is expected in 2019.

The Tower Hill reservoir will undergo maintenance as well as making it "pipeline ready" to receive potable water from an external source (i.e. Okotoks-Calgary pipeline). Construction is expected to begin in 2018 with completion in 2019.



• **Water Meter Upgrade/Replacement Program**

In 2017 95% of residential and commercial water metres were replaced or upgraded. This program uses new technology for water meter data gathering, as well as providing a customer portal that gives residents and businesses the ability to monitor and manage their water consumption.

• **Wastewater Treatment Plant**

A preliminary design for future expansion of the Wastewater Treatment Plant, to accommodate a growing population, is expected in 2018.

New Neighbourhood Updates

To prepare for future growth, outline plans were approved for the new neighbourhoods of Wedderburn and D’Arcy. The first phase of D’Arcy construction was started with initial housing to be completed in 2018. Wedderburn neighbourhood construction is expected to commence in 2018.

Veterans Way Pedestrian Corridor

This completed project established Veterans Way as a pedestrian-oriented corridor which creates strong pedestrian connections to the downtown, encourages alternative

modes of transportation, and enhances pedestrian safety.

Community Campus Update

The Town purchased 40 acres of land in 2015 to develop a future educational, cultural, and recreational hub. The first phase of this project was completed in 2017 including site servicing, grading, and surface improvements to support site development. School construction is expected to begin in February with the school anticipated to open in the fall of 2019.

Water Treatment Plant Bridge

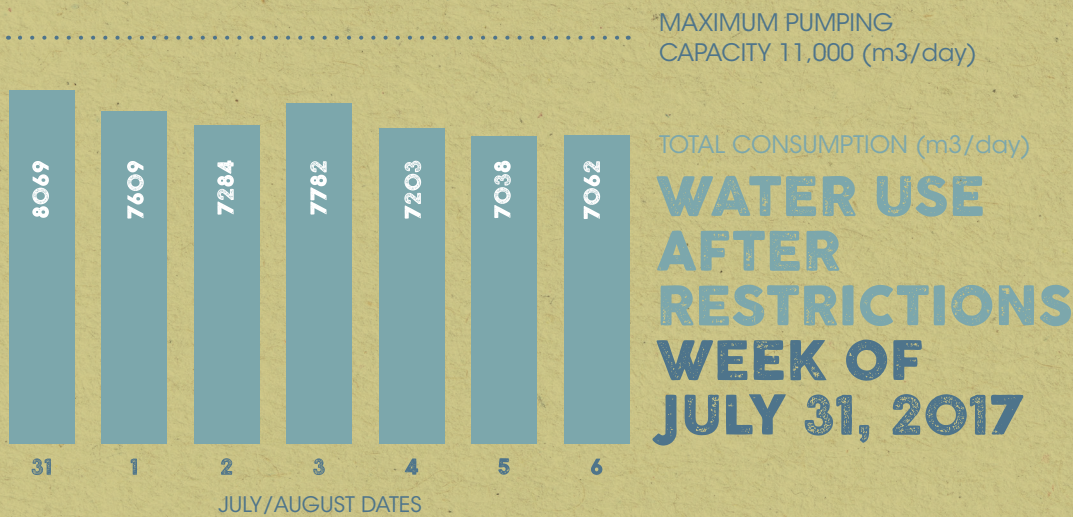
The Town received a grant to build a bridge to the Water Treatment Plant to ensure staff

TELUS PureFibre

TELUS has announced the “PureFibre” project to upgrade their infrastructure to fibre optics. Providing high-speed internet to residents and businesses in Okotoks will enhance customer service and business attraction. Construction is expected to start in spring 2018, with completion by late summer 2019.

Milligan Drive/48 Street Road Connection

This connection forms part of the Drake Landing subdivision and allows better access for the east side of Okotoks. Water, storm, and sanitary utilities plus surface work were completed. Shallow utilities, including streetlights, will follow in 2018.



access isn’t compromised during severe flood events. The project is expected to be completed in late summer 2018.

Stormwater Evaluation and Storm Surface Improvements

New catch basins and pipe were installed at Poplar Avenue/McRae Street and Okotoks Drive near École Percy Pegler School. Remaining improvements at the lane between Milligan Drive and Lock Crescent, Cimarron Boulevard and Cimarron Drive/Park and Westmount Circle will be done in 2018.

Laudan Park Bridge

This bridge has created a pedestrian link between the new ball diamond in Laudan Park and the pathways at the Mountainview stormwater pond.

Champion Park

Acquired as a gift from the Knowlton family in 2016, it includes a lake, restored CPR railway station, a 1960’s era locomotive, rail cars, artifacts and more. A comprehensive study will be undertaken in 2018 to identify options on how the park should operate as a public facility.



Pason Centennial Arena Expansion

Construction of the \$15 million expansion started in October 2016 and is now open to the public. The expansion, enabling a larger variety of events, includes one NHL-sized ice surface and a leisure ice surface for public skating that accommodates 75 people.

Riverside Drive West & North Railway Street Sanitary Mains

As part of deep utility upgrades, sanitary mains were improved at these locations which will alleviate capacity issues as additional properties are serviced in the future.

Water for Future Developments

Dedicated water mains are required to service lands south of Highway 7 for the proposed Wind Walk and Gold Medal development residential communities (residential and commercial). Designs were completed in 2017 and construction is scheduled for 2018.

Okotoks Recreation Centre

The Piper Arena had a complete overhaul of its rink board system. The previous boards had been in place since original construction of the arena. Some additional work at the Recreation Centre included LED lighting and new flooring.

Operations & EPCOR Environmental Education Centres

The Centres, built to LEED® standards, had their grand openings in June; building highlights include:

- The Operations Centre runs off 100% wind power, is 32% more energy efficient than most buildings its size, and features a living wall made entirely of plants to oxygenate the building
- The EPCOR Environmental Education Centre offers a visual exploration of Okotoks' water system, water shed, green infrastructure and provides a classroom for environmentally-focused events and multi-age lectures

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) certification process began in 2017 and it is expected to be completed in 2018.

Cimarron Traffic Calming

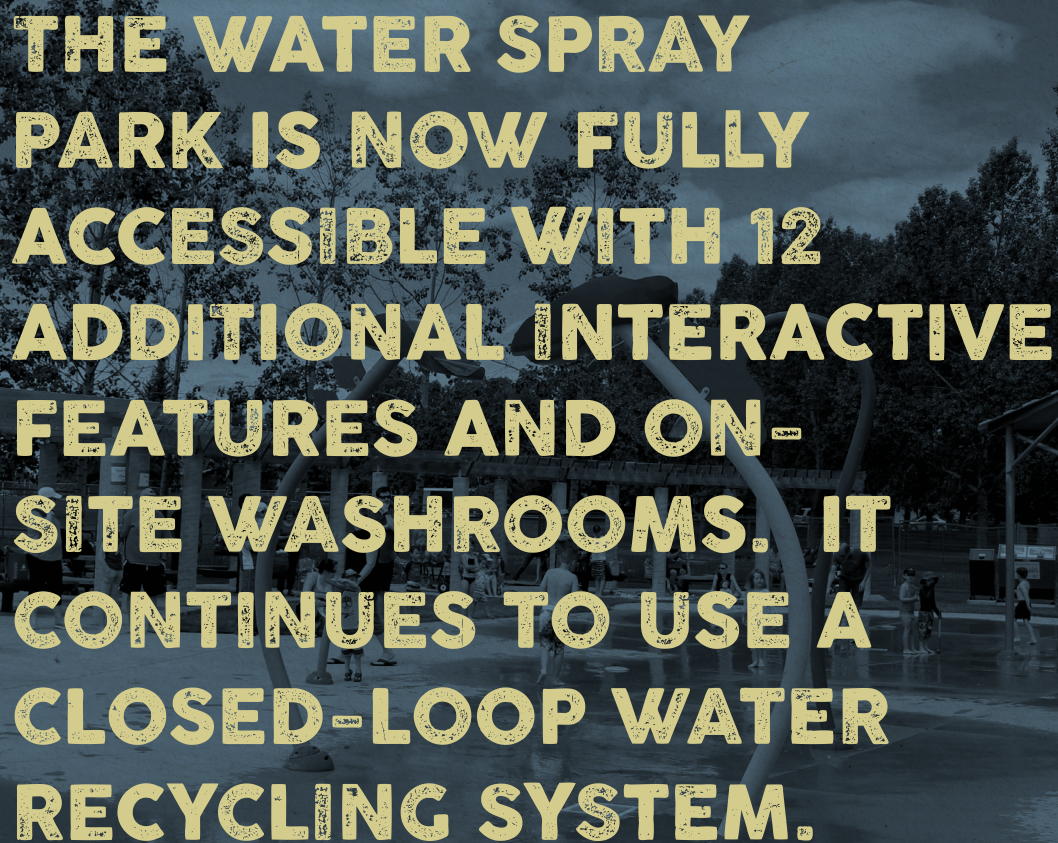
Rapid-flash beacons, located on roadsides and activated by pedestrians, were installed for the west crosswalk at the Cimarron Boulevard / Cimarron Drive intersection. The beacons also provide breaks in traffic flow in the area. Raised crosswalks and warning signage were installed at four locations in Cimarron Estates. Crosswalks and markings will be completed in 2018.

Parks

There have been many initiatives that have enhanced our community including:

- Introducing alternative landscaping on medians. The use of ornamental plants and other perennials increases water conservation and habitat for pollinators and reduces maintenance and the need for herbicides
- The manicured urban forest, planted along boulevards and in manicured parks, has grown to approximately 15,000 trees
- Expanding the community garden to include plots for the Okotoks Food Bank
- Cemetery upgrades including a new columbarium of various sizes, a scattering garden, a gathering space and enhanced landscaping
- Two new sports fields: Air Ranch soccer field and Laudan Park baseball diamond at Mountainview

To provide additional recreational opportunities, cross-country ski trails have been introduced at Laudan Park (Mountainview) and additional multi-use (e.g. snow-shoeing, mountain biking, nature walking) single track trails have been developed behind Cimarron Estates.



THE WATER SPRAY PARK IS NOW FULLY ACCESSIBLE WITH 12 ADDITIONAL INTERACTIVE FEATURES AND ON-SITE WASHROOMS. IT CONTINUES TO USE A CLOSED-LOOP WATER RECYCLING SYSTEM.

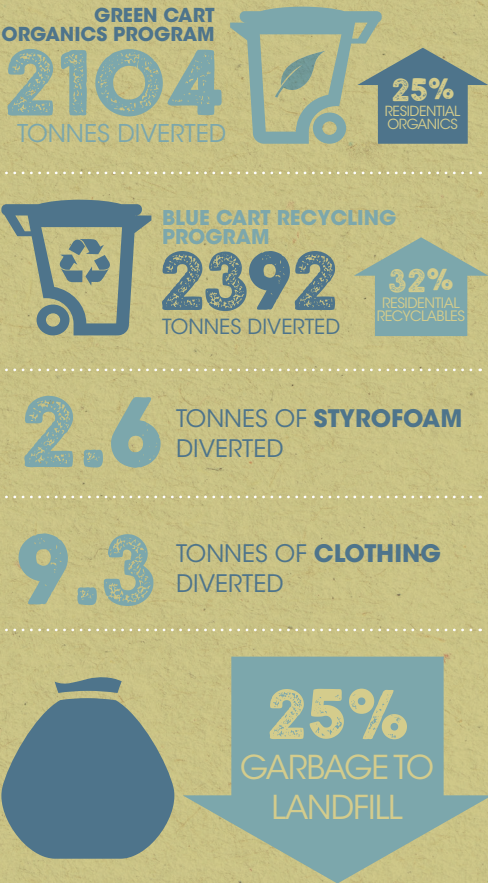


THE TOWN OF OKOTOKS WILL BE A LEADER IN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION.

Waste Diversion

Through the Universal Waste Management Program and the Okotoks Eco Centre, residents continue to reduce waste sent to the landfill. The community collectively diverted annual tonnage by 1,252 tonnes, a 9% increase over 2016. In 2017, the Eco Centre started collecting Styrofoam and used clothing, shoes and household linens, further reducing items being sent to the landfill. A recycling program for multi-family dwellings began in 2017 and a required organics program will be implemented in 2018.

Town events are green! At 18 events this year, 684kg of organics and recycling were diverted from the landfill.



SUSTAINABLE OKOTOKS PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

D-I-Y Energy Audit Kits

Since its launch in April, the kits and extra radon detector have been booked 120 times!

Living Soils Filtration Demonstration Project

This project is a partnership with the University of Calgary (U of C), the Bow River Basin Council (BRBC), the City of Calgary and Source 2 Source Environmental Design and Engineering. The project began last year at the Okotoks Operations Centre, with U of C research at the site continuing for the next ten years.

This project is also a demonstration site, where excess water runoff from storm events is slowed and processed through interactions between soil particles, plant roots, microorganisms, insects, and animals. This improves the quality and quantity of the water. The research being done aims to discover how these processes relate to one another and how they specifically benefit stormwater management.

EPCOR Environmental Education Centre

Since opening in June, a total of 282 students have visited, including grade 4/5 children from Okotoks and Black Diamond. Ten classes have come for the Water and Waste Water Treatment presentation and eight classes for the Waste Management presentation. The Centre is located within the Okotoks Operations Centre and is open to the public Monday - Friday from 8 am - 4 pm.

Drake Landing

The Drake Landing Solar Community celebrated its 10-year anniversary. Natural Resources Canada is looking into upgrading the development, which could make it a net zero facility. This means the total amount of energy used by the building on an annual basis is roughly equal to the amount of renewable energy created on the site.

Water Conservation Rebate Program

The program's \$40,000 budget was fully distributed with 421 rebates issued. The average rebate per household was \$105 with water efficient toilets being the most popular of items purchased.

Conservation Education Program

This program increases awareness, understanding and participation in achieving environmental stewardship targets. The program had four summer students promoting water conservation, waste and pest management, the water meter replacement program and energy efficiency through household and school visits and by attending over 15 summer events.

 **1200+**
RESIDENTS REACHED
AT EVENTS

1250+
STUDENTS EDUCATED 

A VITAL OKOTOKS FACILITATING A HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITY

Fire Services

Okotoks Fire Services has 19 full time and 24 community volunteer firefighters as well as two administrative staff who provide fire and rescue services to Okotoks and area.

High risk sectors (e.g. seniors, people with a disability or special needs) continue to be a focus of the home inspection program where fire hazards and properly installed smoke/ carbon monoxide detectors are checked for. 35 homes and 690 businesses were inspected.



Municipal Enforcement

Municipal Enforcement works to educate the public, raise awareness and gain compliance on Town bylaws and Provincial Acts and Regulations. Okotoks Municipal Enforcement consists of six full-time Peace Officers, one casual Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE)/school resource officer and seven practicum students.

drug trafficking, liquor matters and prolific offenders.

Municipal Enforcement and RCMP work together on community, policing initiatives such as Victim Services, Citizens on Patrol and public education initiatives such as DARE, Anti-Bullying, Internet safety, block/ neighbourhood watch, and more.

RCMP

The Okotoks detachment provides 24-hour policing and has 25 RCMP officers, three officers in the Plain Clothes section and eight municipal support staff. The General Investigation/Crime Reduction Unit work together proactively on issues such as

Okotoks continues to be one of the safest communities in Alberta. To foster a safe community residents are encouraged to get involved and get to know your neighbours!



THE TOWN OF OKOTOKS WILL STRENGTHEN OUR SOCIAL FABRIC AND ENHANCE THE SAFETY OF OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH PUBLIC SAFETY, CULTURE AND RECREATION.



6900

NUMBER OF CALLS RCMP
OFFICERS RESPONDED TO



1880

HOURS SERVICE FROM 7
PRACTICUM STUDENTS
(MUNICIPAL ENFORCEMENT)



3060

TICKETS ISSUED IN 2017



1582

NUMBER OF CALLS PEACE
OFFICERS RESPONDED TO

Culture & Heritage

The Town's cultural offerings continued to be popular this year. In the 118 programs offered, 2,474 students and 478 parent volunteers participated.

Culture & Heritage completed some major projects this year including the Salute to Our Veterans memorial wall along Veterans Way.

With the Canada 150 Mural Mosaic Project, 864 tiles were painted by participants to create the mural which will be permanently installed at the Pason Centennial Arena in 2018.

IN-SCHOOL EDUCATION
PROGRAMS GREW
**FROM 122 TO
441 STUDENTS**

261%
INCREASE!



Community Events & Sponsorships

There were 20 events in Okotoks this year including the Parade, BuskersFest, Taste of Okotoks and Light Up Okotoks. They drew an estimated 72,000 residents and visitors from around the region.

The CP Holiday Train event had 5000+ attendees & raised over \$10K & 2600 lbs in food donations.

There were also new events including the Okotober Food Fest, the first major event geared toward adults, which had nearly 1,000 in attendance.

The Town provided assistance to community group events, run by volunteers, including Show and Shine and the Wizarding World of Okotoks.

Event sponsorship was at an all-time high with businesses generously donating almost \$25,000. A big thank you to the business community!

Indoor & Outdoor Recreation/Community Programs

Inclusion swimming lessons were successfully introduced with 27 individuals participating. The lessons provide a meaningful experience for a whole new group of swimmers. The Town hosted an instructor course in January 2018 to meet the anticipated needs of the program.

In support of the Social Wellness Framework, free, affordable and discount drop-in activities continued to be offered.

CHILDREN & STAFF SPENT OVER
25,000
HOURS OUTSIDE IN ALL
SEASONS IN THE SCHOOL
AGE CARE PROGRAM

19,000
KMS AS PART OF THE WALKING
BUS TO/FROM SCHOOL

6845 PEOPLE REGISTERED
FOR 800+
PROGRAMS

2418 YOUTH VISITS TO
TWEEN TIME & FRIDAY
TEEN NIGHT

28,000
PEOPLE WHO
ENJOYED FREE AND/OR
DISCOUNTED SKATES & SWIMS

41,000 NUMBER OF TIMES
TRACK ACCESSED

9256 PUBLIC AND SCHOOL
SWIM LESSON
PARTICIPANTS



Family & Community Support Services (FCSS)

FCSS provided \$280K in grants to 15 social service agencies that deliver preventative social services to enhance the well-being of individuals, families and the community. Nearly \$47K was provided in Innovation Funding for pilot projects that meet the FCSS mandate.

The Town continues to offer eligible residents subsidized taxi service through the Community Access Program, which helps seniors and disabled residents remain active community participants.

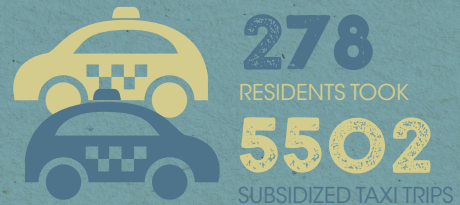
The Foothills Elder Abuse Coordinated Community Response (CCR) strategy was completed. Using the expertise of multiple organizations including the RCMP and FCSS to create a model that will be more effective in preventing and addressing elder abuse in the region.

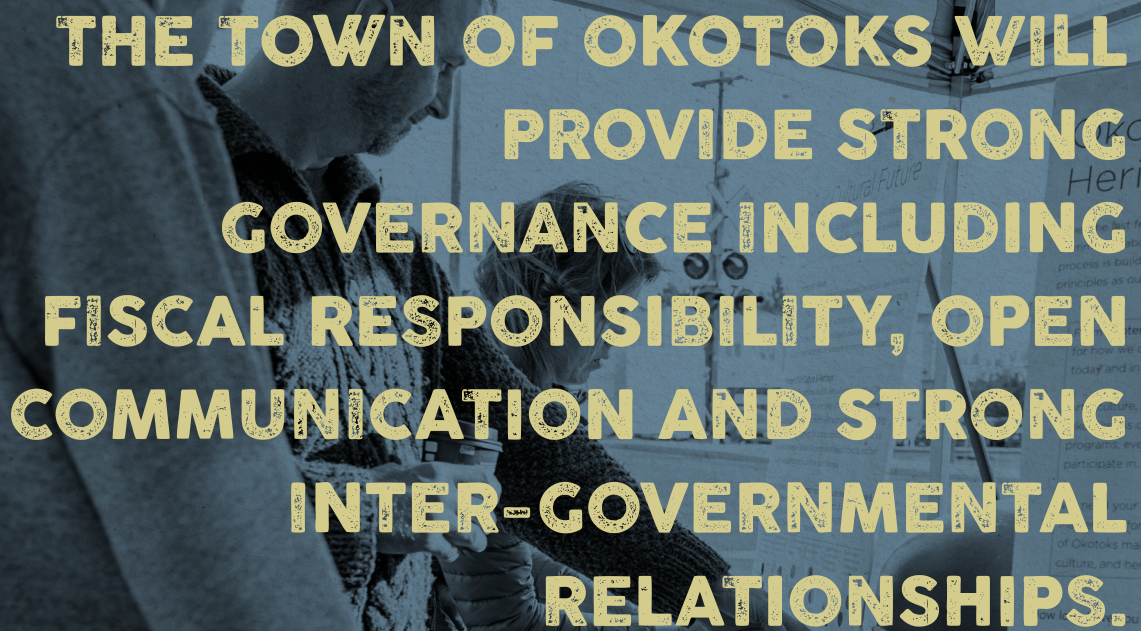
Volunteer Services

Okotoks continues to be a generous, caring community with 328 adult and youth registered as volunteers. 2017 was the 22nd year for the Annual Leadership Awards, where those who make this community stronger through volunteerism were highlighted and appreciated. More volunteers are always needed.

Okotoks Family Resource Centre (OFRC)

OFRC handled over 4,350 inquiries, supporting and connecting residents with available resources and social services and making referrals. OFRC's social programs and services directly supported over 1,520 residents in need, with an increase from 2016 in most programs.





THE TOWN OF OKOTOKS WILL PROVIDE STRONG GOVERNANCE INCLUDING FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY, OPEN COMMUNICATION AND STRONG INTER-GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS.

Public Engagement & Communications

The Town encourages all residents to get involved and participate in as many public engagement opportunities as possible to learn more and help shape the community. Resident feedback is instrumental in developing plans that are referenced regularly. These provide direction and guide decisions as the Town continues to grow and evolve.

In 2017, there were 15 opportunities for residents to provide feedback on current issues and projects through a combination of public open houses, workshops and online surveys. Occasions for sharing information and collecting input included the Land Use Bylaw amendment, Public Participation Strategy, 2018 budget process, the Downtown Urban Design, Culture and Heritage and Environmental Master Plans as well as various sustainability, conservation and cultural initiatives.

Let's Talk Budget 2018

The Town launched an interactive online tool, Citizen Budget, for residents to participate in the 2018 budget process. The information gathered through this engagement was included in budget preparation along with changes. The public will again be invited to participate in the 2019 budget preparation process, so be sure to check for feedback opportunities in the spring.

Thank you to everyone who provided their input over the past year! 2018 will be another busy year of engaging the community, with many opportunities for residents to get involved.

AN EFFECTIVE, EFFICIENT OKOTOKS PROVIDING STRONG GOVERNANCE



Public Participation Policy, Strategy, & Toolkit

The Town works diligently to communicate with and involve its residents. Over the past decade, care has been taken to recognize the growing demand for open and two-way communication, particularly as it pertains to listening to citizens, gathering feedback and the expanding influence of technology in accessing information. The development of a formalized Public Participation Policy, Strategy and Toolkit will continue to strengthen and guide future community interaction with stakeholders and the public about policies, projects, programs, and services as the population of Okotoks grows and changes. What we've learned is that people would prefer to participate on weekday evenings.

Preferred methods of engagement include online surveys, questionnaires or interactive tools available on the Town's website and secondly by visiting an open house. The topics people most want to provide input on include:

- Transportation (roads, transit, bike lanes, pathways)
- Recreation Programs & Culture (events, Performing Arts Centre, Culture and Heritage Master Plan, public art)
- Annual Budget
- Development of annexed lands (e.g. Municipal Development Plan)
- Engineering Projects (e.g. replacement of the Laurie Boyd Pedestrian Bridge)
- Waste program/service changes

Social Media

Social media continues to play a significant role in customer-centred engagement. The Town website, Facebook and Twitter profiles continue to increase in traffic and engagement.

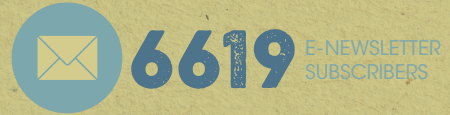
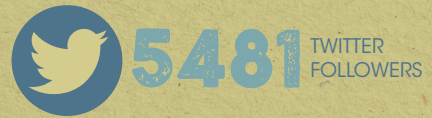
Okotoks Waste App

Residents can check garbage and recycling schedules, find out what goes in each cart, and receive weekly reminders. The search feature also shows residents where to place products that do not go in the carts.

Safe Communities Alert Network

This mass emergency alert notification system helps residents stay safe and informed during crisis events such as floods.

Residents subscribe and can choose methods for receiving notifications, including phone, email, text message, and/or the mobile app.



686 MOBILE APP INSTALLS
9959 DESKTOP VIEWS
700 SERVICE ALERT CONTACTS

9645 SAFE COMMUNITIES
ALERT NETWORK
SUBSCRIPTIONS



Council Boards & Committees

Dedicated community members generously volunteer their time to provide input to Council on a large variety of topics.

Financial Management

Okotoks' tax rates are lower than most municipalities in Alberta between the populations of 10,000 and 100,000 as confirmed in the annual financial indicator graphs prepared by Municipal Affairs (both residential and non-residential).

Requisitions

Taxes levied by the Town represent approximately 36% of the total tax bill. These include amounts collected on behalf of other organizations:

- Alberta School Foundation Fund
- Okotoks Public Library Board
- Foothills Foundation

Rate Supported Services

The following services are not supported through taxes:

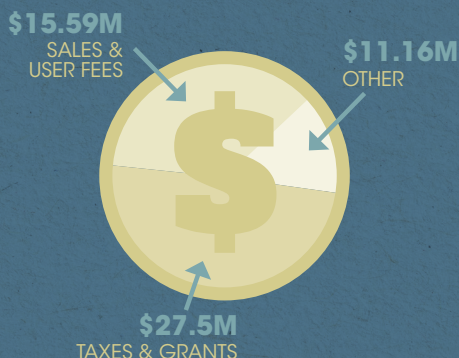
- Water and sewer services
- Stormwater utility
- Weekly waste collection

Council

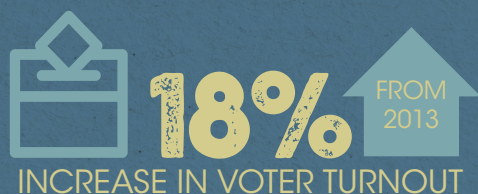
In November, the Town started live-streaming Council meetings on okotoks.ca enhancing the Town's transparency, providing accessibility to residents who aren't able to attend in person and offering the flexibility to select only specific segments of the meeting to view once the meeting has concluded.



2017 BUDGET \$54.1M WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM



2017 BUDGET \$54.1M WHERE THE MONEY WENT



THE TOWN OF OKOTOKS IS EXCITED ABOUT 2018 AND THE MANY UPCOMING PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES. WE CONTINUOUSLY STRIVE FOR NEW WAYS TO IMPROVE OUR PROCESSES AND SERVICES TO HELP KEEP OKOTOKS AN INVITING AND PROGRESSIVE COMMUNITY.

2018 Budget

Council approved a budget that achieves a balance between maintaining current service levels and preparing for anticipated growth. This includes covering inflationary pressures of new facility operating costs, utilities and protective services.

To ensure continued cost recovery and for future utility infrastructure enhancements and upgrades, overall utility rates will increase by 4.24%. Council also approved a 10-year Capital Financial Plan, as a planning tool to help establish a long-term strategy to prepare for future funding requirements.

Highlights of the \$34.6 Million Capital Budget:

- Water, storm water & solid waste improvements
- Parks/Recreation enhancements
- Wastewater Treatment Plant improvements
- Okotoks Community Campus play field development

\$56.3
MILLION
OPERATING BUDGET



3%
MUNICIPAL TAXES



A TYPICAL HOME
WILL PAY

\$68
MORE IN 2018

WHICH WORKS OUT TO

\$5.63

PER MONTH

A GROWING OKOTOKS PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Highlights of the \$56.3 Million Operating Budget:

- Pason Centennial Arena expansion operating costs
- Laurie Boyd Pedestrian Bridge replacement to increase width for easier access
- Improvements to growth areas (south, southwest and northwest)
- Local transit pilot project (study of on-demand future service)
- Enhanced snow and ice control (downtown area on weekends)
- Pathway clearing 7 days/week
- South Fire Hall opening to accommodate growth

2018 Initiatives:

- Creation of new Municipal Development Plan to guide future growth
- Development of the Okotoks Future Growth Strategy
- Development of the Okotoks Climate Change Action Plan
- Citizens Household Survey
- Land Use Bylaw Amendments

**The Town will be looking
for your feedback on these
upcoming 2018 initiatives!**

Adapting to Provincial Change

Municipalities are responsible for providing resources to implement these changes. Therefore, there is a cost for these new requirements.

Growth Management Boards Update

The province has recognized that ongoing growth in metropolitan regions will generate increased demand for services and infrastructure, put pressure on natural and built environments, and create opportunities for economic prosperity. To help ensure regional collaboration and coordinated decision-making, growth management boards have been established for the Calgary and Edmonton regions. The Calgary Metropolitan Regional Board (the Town of Okotoks is a member) was officially established in January 2018. The mandate of the boards include:

- Promoting long-term sustainability of region
- Ensuring environmentally responsible land-use planning, growth management and efficient use of land
- Developing policies for the coordination of regional infrastructure investment and service delivery
- Promoting economic well-being and competitiveness of the region





Municipal Government Act (MGA) Amendments

The Government of Alberta passed new legislation and regulations to update the MGA. Some of the most relevant changes affecting Okotoks are:

- Creating a new Municipal Development Plan
- Adopting a public participation policy
- Introducing a new advertising bylaw that requires electronic public notification for bylaws, resolutions, meetings, and public hearings
- Mandatory training for Council and Sub-division and Development Board members/ clerks

Cannabis Legislation

In July 2018, the sale, possession and consumption of recreational cannabis, and some related products, will become legal. Both the Federal and Provincial governments have introduced legislation that will regulate how citizens buy, possess and consume cannabis. The Government of Alberta will provide further regulations so that municipalities are prepared for the legalization. Medical cannabis will continue to be controlled by federal regulations currently in place.

The Town is reviewing current bylaws and business licensing processes in anticipation of upcoming provincial regulations. This will assist Council in determining if any further bylaws are necessary to control recreational cannabis sales, possession or consumption.

Technological Efficiencies

Over the last several years, the Town has streamlined processes by introducing more online options for residents. Some examples include:

- Water meter upgrade project that uses new technology for water meter data gathering and gives residents/businesses the ability to monitor and manage their water consumption
- Interactive online drop-in recreation schedule
- Online Recreation Fee assistance application form
- Bi-monthly water utility pre-authorized payment form and emailing utility bill
- Tax Installment Payment Plan (TIPP) application form
- Showpass online ticketing system
- Online volunteer application forms

These initiatives aim to improve efficiencies in alignment with the Town's priorities. Please visit okotoks.ca for more information.

A SUCCESSFUL OKOTOKS MAINTAINING ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

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

Operations Centre Project of the Year Award

The Town's Operations Centre won the Alberta Public Works Association's Project of the Year Award for effective construction management techniques, LEED certification, using sustainability to manage the storm water on site, as well as the energy-efficient and smart technologies associated with the building.

Choosewell Award

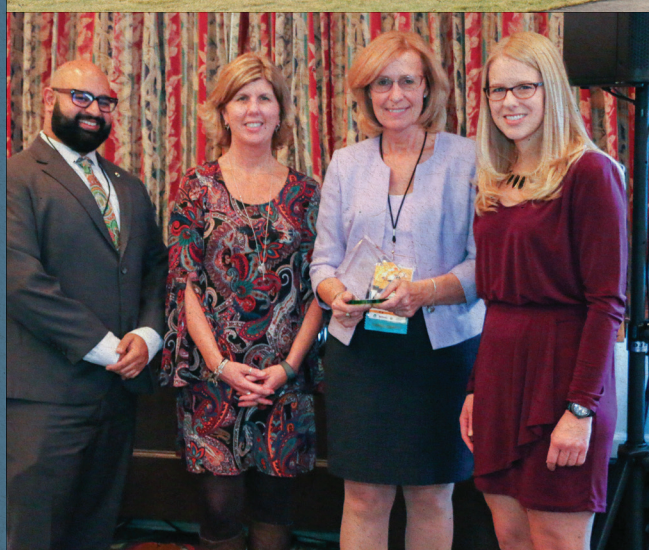
The Town was awarded the Communities Choosewell Award for developing healthy policies. This includes management and decision-making practices, rules, procedures, and policies at all levels and settings in a community that affect health and well-being.

Okotoks Tourism Summit Creative Award

AdMaki Creative won a silver in 2017 Summit Creative Award competition for the 2016 Okotoks Tourism campaign that saw Okotoks advertised throughout Calgary and the surrounding region.

Okotoks Tourism Website dotCOMM Platinum Award

UpanUp Studios won a dotCOMM Platinum Award in the Travel Website category, for their design of the new Okotoks Tourism website, okotokstourism.ca.





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The Town of Okotoks, PO Box 20, Station Main,
5 Elizabeth Street, Okotoks, AB T1S 1K1
403-938-4404 | OKOTOKS.CA



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