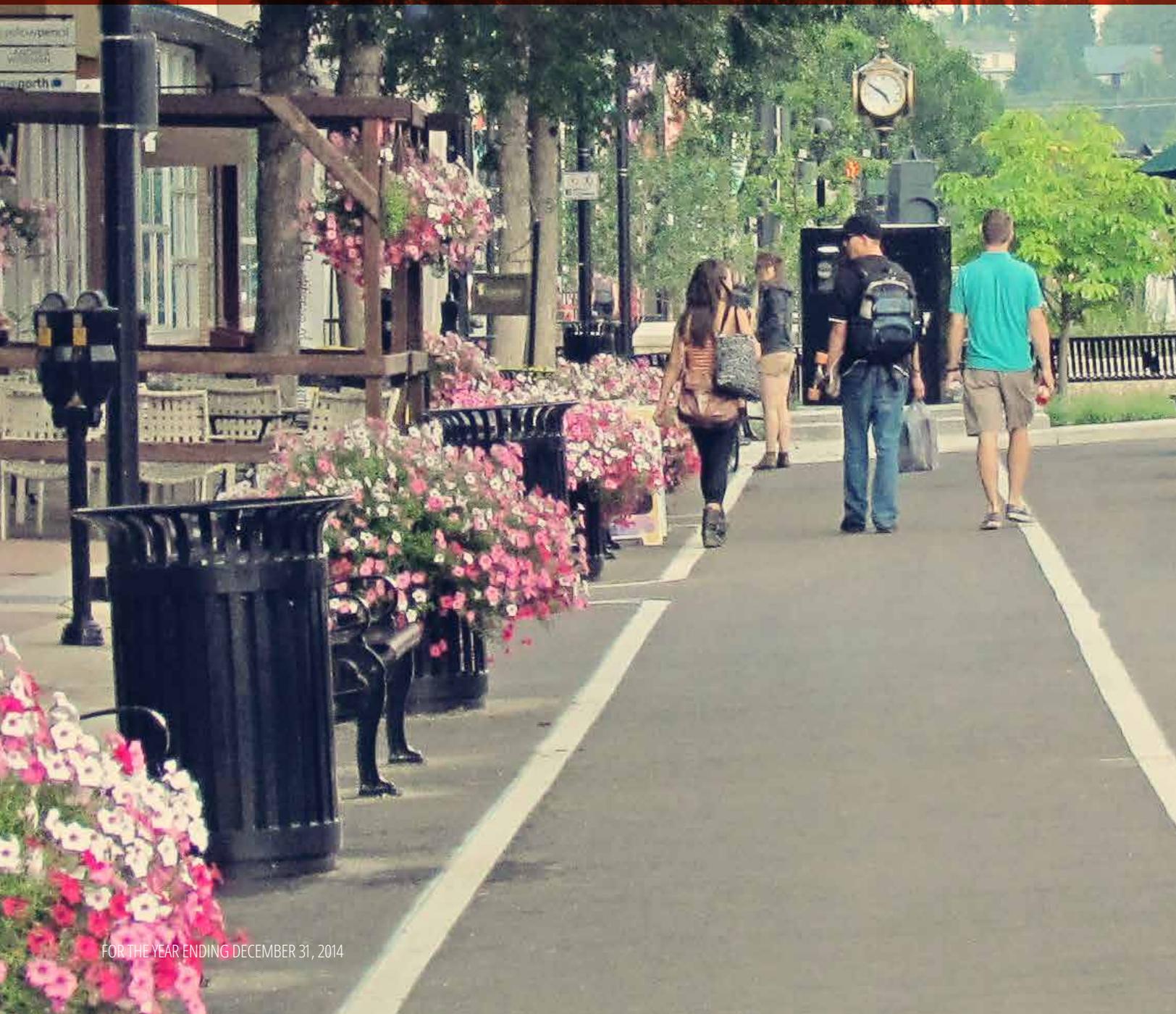


# ANNUAL REPORT

YEAR OF **2014**



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# CITY COUNCIL

IN 2014



## CITY COUNCIL

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## RED DEER HAD SEVERAL MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2014, SUCH AS:

### 2014

WAS THE FIRST FULL YEAR

for the new City Council, and proved to be an exciting one.

WINNING THE BID

FOR 2019 CANADA WINTER GAMES

COMMUNITY AMENITIES

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROJECT

DEVELOPING A NEW

FOUR YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Personal Notes

MAYOR'S MESSAGE  
Tara Veer



Red Deer is Alberta's emerging city, and 2014 was a defining year. As a community, we came together to overcome challenges, leverage unique opportunities and celebrate some significant achievements that reflect our citizen's civic pride and community spirit. This annual report offers a look at what we accomplished in 2014 and will give you a glimpse into what lies ahead for 2015. In 2014, City Council unanimously adopted a new strategic direction that identifies three focus areas - dialogue, community amenities and financial leadership. City Council's work plan is grounded in its commitment to engage with the community, build a sustainable financial foundation, and to plan for great spaces and places as Red Deer continues to grow and develop. One of the most exciting accomplishments we celebrated in 2014 was our successful



MAYOR'S MESSAGE

bid to host the 2019 Canada Winter Games - an achievement that demonstrates Red Deer is ready. This milestone marked the culmination of months of hard work from community volunteers and Red Deerians who banded together to make Red Deer's bid successful. As a host city, we will now have opportunities to leverage provincial and federal dollars that can be used to build our community as we prepare for the 2019 Winter Games and beyond. What we do in advance of the Games will extend far beyond 2019, benefiting our community for years to come. I am so proud of Red Deer, and I look forward to celebrating the athleticism, camaraderie and spirit that comes with hosting the Canada Winter Games. In 2014, we also overcame some challenges, which included the securing of Red Deer's ambulance dispatch and keeping

the Michener Centre open. With a strong advocacy effort on the part of our Red Deer City Council, our community and City administration, the provincial government reversed both decisions, acknowledging the needs of the local and regional citizens we serve. Red Deer is one of Canada's fastest growing cities, and with this comes the need to be adaptable and responsive all while striving for progress. In 2014, we made progress in the areas of safety, movement, dialogue and design, but we will continue to explore avenues for progress in all these areas as we move into 2015. Thank you, Red Deer, for making my first full year as your mayor exciting, challenging and successful. Two thousand and fourteen was a defining year for our city, and I have no doubt, that in 2015, we will continue set ourselves apart as Alberta's next big city. ●

2014

CITY MANAGER'S MESSAGE  
Craig Curtis



On behalf of The City of Red Deer, I am pleased to present the 2014 Annual Report, which highlights some of our accomplishments over the last year as well as a snapshot of the 2014 financial picture. Red Deer's wellness is founded on a balanced, proactive, and responsive approach to environmental health, and social well-being - our pillars of sustainability as outlined in Council's Strategic Direction, 2012 to 2014. As a City we continue to weigh and balance the needs of our residents while providing the services needed for our growing community. Two thousand and fourteen marked an important accomplishment with Red Deer successfully bidding to host the 2019 Canada Winter Games. Red Deerians and central Albertans came together to show that Red Deer is, in fact, ready to host an event of this magnitude.

This bid means thousands of athletes and spectators coming to our community. It also means updating, replacing and building new amenities that will be used by our citizens long after the games have come and gone. This is an opportunity to showcase Red Deer in a new way, and I look forward to welcoming the rest of Canada into our community in 2019. But that's not all we did in 2014. I invite you to explore the breadth of projects and initiatives highlighted within this annual report. They represent the strategic direction of City Council as we look to the future and plan for the ever changing and growing needs of our community. We, as a city, have a vision about where we want to go. We have a vision about what we want to develop. Being flexible and adaptable as we implement that vision is the key to our success.

CITY MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Wayne Gretzky said, "A good hockey player plays where the puck is. A great hockey player plays where the puck is going to be." This is also true for how we plan our city. We have to consider future growth and where we see ourselves in several years, not simply where we are right now. I am proud to say that administration continues to work with City Council's direction to continually improve life for all Red Deerians. Red Deer is an exciting place to live, work and play, and we're excited to share a look at the life in Red Deer through this year's annual report. ●

The 2015-18 Strategic Plan has laid out Red Deer's direction for the next three years

# RED DEER'S ROADMAP



The City's Strategic Plan is like our GPS; it is our Siri, our roadmap from point A to B, and Red Deerians are the ones who help City Council chart that course.

In 2014, The City made significant progress on many of the themes outlined within City Council's 2012 - 2014 Strategic Direction - movement, dialogue, identity, safety, design and economy. These themes represent the priorities that drive how we change, grow and adapt to life as a city of nearly 100,000 and to position us for our shared future. They are the things that citizens told City Council matter most to them; they are the things Red Deerians want and the things Red Deer needs to be a great community, a prosperous community, a healthy community.

“AT ITS CORE, THE STRATEGIC PLAN IS ABOUT DOING THE RIGHT THINGS, AT THE RIGHT TIME, FOR THE RIGHT REASONS,” SAID LISA PERKINS, DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE TRANSFORMATION. “IT IS HOW WE TAKE THE COMMUNITY'S VISION AND PUT IT INTO ACTION.”

### MOVEMENT

The City continues to explore new ways to make it easy for citizens to get where they need to be, when they need to be there and by whatever means they choose.

- » In 2014, transit ridership increased by 5.6 per cent over 2013. The City continuously enhances and modernizes the transit system with new features being introduced such as Google Maps and the small bus pilot program.
- » In 2014, The City expanded its transit service to Lacombe and Blackfalds in an effort to meet increased demand for regional transportation.
- » The network of trails and pathways throughout the city increased by 6 kilometres over 2013, making our community even more walkable and interconnected than ever before. These trails are used year round as The City clears the snow throughout the winter.
- » Work began to support the construction of the 67 Street and 30 Avenue roundabout, which will smooth traffic flow, reduce travel time, reduce construction and maintenance costs and reduce environmental impact.
- » In 2014, 66 per cent of citizens stated they are satisfied to very satisfied with The City's traffic management, including traffic calming and improving the flow of traffic. This improved 11 per cent over 2013, according to the Ipsos Reid Citizen Satisfaction Survey.
- » In 2014, the snow and ice policy was revised to enhance services to the community to ensure continued movement throughout the city

during the winter months.

- » In 2014, 14,621 potholes were filled. The annual pothole repair program is an essential part of keeping traffic moving safely and efficiently through the city.

### DIALOGUE

Being a citizen focused government is a priority for City Council; this is the crux of the dialogue charter. It is about conducting meaningful public participation that enables and helps citizens influence municipal decision making in impactful ways.

- » 2014 saw the development of a public participation toolbox to guide dialogue with citizens.
- » Broad informal opportunities, such as Let's Talk and the Budget Open House, were re-evaluated to ensure they enabled citizens to express their opinions and desires for their community.
- » In 2014, citizens indicated that their top priority for communication included municipal taxes, property taxes and budget, according to the 2014 Ipsos Reid Citizen Satisfaction Survey.
- » In 2014, the new www.reddeer.ca was launched. The new site incorporates new technology that allows our users to easily access it from any device, the content is now written and organized based on how Red Deerians want to access information rather than The City's organizational structure, and the search function allows information to be accessed easily.

### IDENTITY

Civic pride, community spirit and promoting our Red Deer identity is about connecting people with each other and the place they live. Identity is about embracing who we are so that we have a community story we are proud to share, a community story that sets us apart and allows us to leverage economic development, tourism and growth opportunities now and in the future.

- » In 2013, over 1,500 citizens participated in the creation of Red Deer's identity through surveys, focus groups and community conversations.
- » In 2014, over 200 citizens were surveyed to validate what we heard through our initial consultation. Stakeholders such as Red Deer College, Red Deer Tourism, Chamber of Commerce, Westerner Park, Downtown Business Association and the Red Deer Regional Airport also participated in this consultation.
- » In 2015, The City will launch Red Deer's identity.
- » Community pride increased in 2014 with 87 per cent of citizens stating they are proud to be

a resident of Red Deer from 83 per cent in 2013.

- » In 2014, citizens indicated that their top priority for communication included municipal taxes, property taxes and budget, according to the 2014 Ipsos Reid Citizen Satisfaction Survey.

**SAFETY**

Red Deer is a safe community, and City Council continues to invest in community policing and crime prevention to respond to any identified areas of citizen concern. This includes everything from getting residents to participate in crime prevention to understanding the role of relationships in addictions, homelessness and crime.

- » In 2014, The City formed a Community Safety Ad Hoc Committee that will develop a strategic plan for crime prevention and community safety, a funding model and distribution process for community safety projects, and a governance structure for community based crime prevention and community safety model.
- » Development of the Social Policy Framework, which allows The City to apply a social lens to all that it does, began in 2014 with a draft version sent out for stakeholder feedback. A final version of the framework is set to be released mid-2015.
- » In 2013, The RCMP and Primary Care network developed a Police and Crisis Team (PACT), which consists of a Registered Psychiatric Nurse and an RCMP officer. The team responds to calls involving individuals / families experiencing a mental health, addiction, or psychological crisis, especially when they are a danger to themselves or the public.
- » The Alberta Law Enforcement Response Team (ALERT) formed in 2013 continued to make headway in 2014. The team includes RCMP members who work together to investigate serious crimes such as drug trafficking and gang operations.
- » In 2014, a Drug and Alcohol Strategy for a Healthy Community was developed. It is now being implemented by community organizations. The strategy is a made-in-Red-Deer response to the impacts of substance use in our community
- » In 2014, stakeholders, businesses and the Downtown Business Association (DBA) came together and developed the Downtown Community Development Committee to develop a strategy that responds to social issues downtown, engages key stakeholders to resolve issues, enhances relationships among businesses, social agencies, residents and the general public, and maps resources to assist in resolving issues.

» In 2014, violent crime decreased by 1.2% over 2013.

**DESIGN**

Designing and planning for a future Red Deer that reflects who we are and what matters most to us is a priority for City Council.

- » In 2013, City Council approved new standards that guided the creation of the first multi-neighbourhood plan in section 26 of the northeast corner of Red Deer.
- » In 2014, The City continues to implement new design guidelines to facilitate new housing types such as live/work homes, carriage homes, wide shallow lots, park fronting homes, and housing within commercial developments. The first of these will be built in 2015.

**ECONOMY**

A stable economy, increases in local business and job opportunities matter to Red Deer citizens. In 2014, 70 per cent of citizens identified economic development as one of their top five priorities, according to the 2014 Ipsos Reid Citizen Satisfaction Survey.

- » In 2014, Red Deer successfully bid on the 2019 Canada Winter Games, which will see more than 25,000 athletes and spectators come to Red Deer for the event.
- » In 2014, the old Civic Yards buildings in the Riverlands area were demolished to make way for redevelopment in the Riverlands area as it relates to the Greater Downtown Action Plan.
- » In 2014, work got underway to prepare for future development in northeast and northwest Red Deer for potential future economic development.

It takes a coordinated effort to move things forward in each of the charter areas. There are plans, strategies and measurements associated with each one, and The City's corporate leadership team is responsible for reporting back to council on how the City is progressing and where it's been able to incorporate activities, processes and actions associated with each charter into its core business. Most importantly, The City aims to do this with the principles of citizen focused service, accessible and welcoming community and strategically oriented leadership in mind.

"Throughout each year, The City conducts a number of public participation exercises that contribute to Council's strategic direction - the roadmap for implementing a shared community vision," said Mayor Veer. "City Council considers what we hear from citizens at events like Let's

Talk, the budget open house, and the annual Ipsos Reid Citizen Satisfaction Survey and balances that with cultural, economic, social and environmental considerations to determine what we need to focus on for the next three years."

Today, we have established our 2015 - 2018 Strategic Plan, but implementation of the 2012 - 2014 Strategic Plan still continues. Council's 2015-2018 Strategic Plan builds upon our foundation of safety, design, identity and economy, and prioritizes the new strategic direction in:

**DIALOGUE**

Engaging our community and enhancing our relationships so we are working together in planning for our city's future and creating a vibrant Red Deer.

**COMMUNITY AMENITIES**

Planning great spaces and places for community living that provide Red Deerians with opportunities to be active, learn, connect and grow.

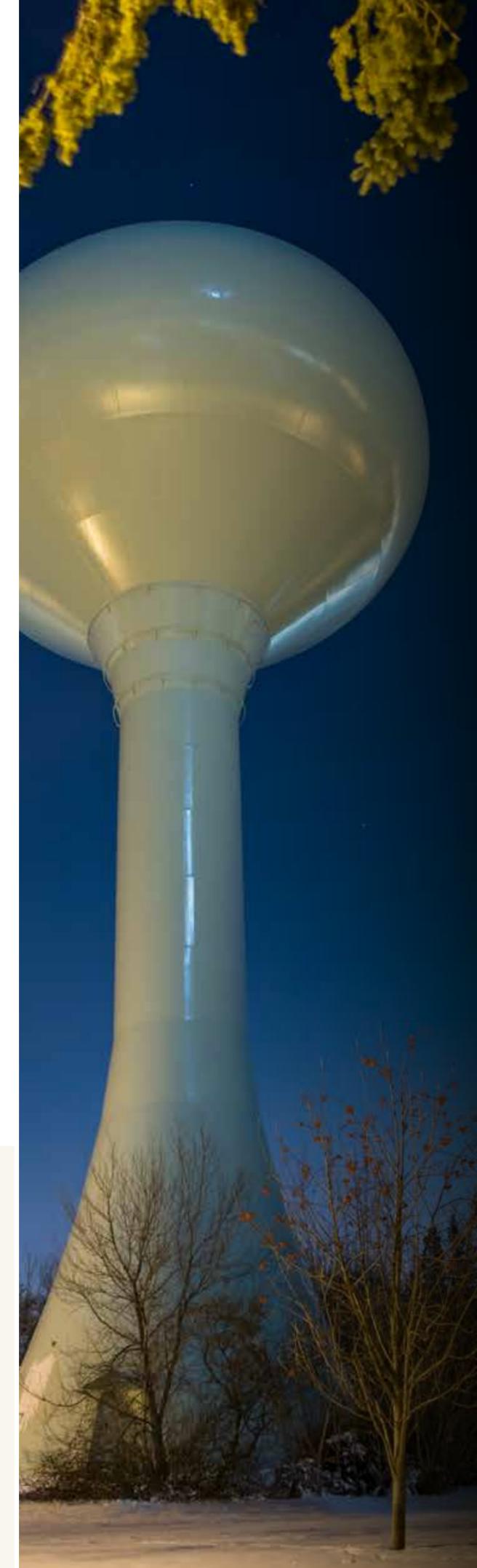
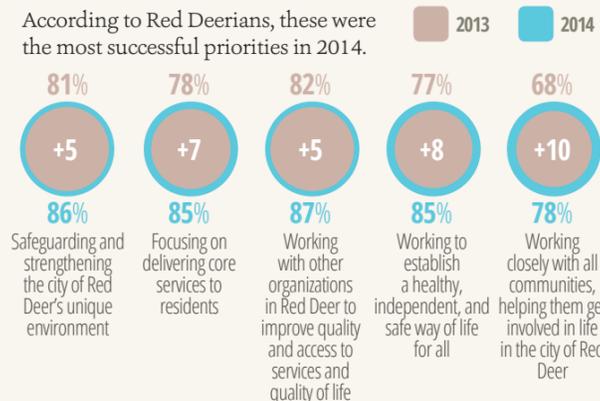
**FINANCIAL LEADERSHIP**

Creating a sustainable financial foundation by developing and implementing a leading municipal financial framework for current services and future community investment.

Thomas Edison once said that "good fortune is what happens when opportunity meets with planning". As a City of nearly 100,000, located on the QEII corridor, we have invaluable opportunities - and right now, The City is turning those opportunities into good fortune through the continued implementation of past strategic plans and the development of the 2015 - 2018 Strategic Plan.

Together, with the citizens of Red Deer, The City continues to set out its roadmap, and work towards a shared community vision. ●

**MOST SUCCESSFUL PRIORITIES**



# HOW SATISFIED WERE RED DEERIANS IN 2014

The Citizen Satisfaction Survey was undertaken by Ipsos Reid in September 2014. It was conducted by telephone to a randomly selected sample of residents aged 18 years or older. This is the eighth consecutive year The City participated in the survey.

## OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE



**98%**

of Red Deerians say they have a very good / good quality of life.

**80%**

say quality of life has improved or stayed the same in the last three years.

## REASONS WHY IT'S IMPROVED



## TOP PRIORITIES

### TOP 3 PRIORITIES RED DEERIANS WANT TO SEE IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

## VALUE FOR TAXES

**84%**

of Red Deerians say they get good value for their taxes.

## BALANCING TAXATION AND SERVICE LEVEL DELIVERIES

## SIXTY PERCENT

Said to: Increase taxes to maintain service levels and/or enhance/expand service level.

## THIRTY PERCENT

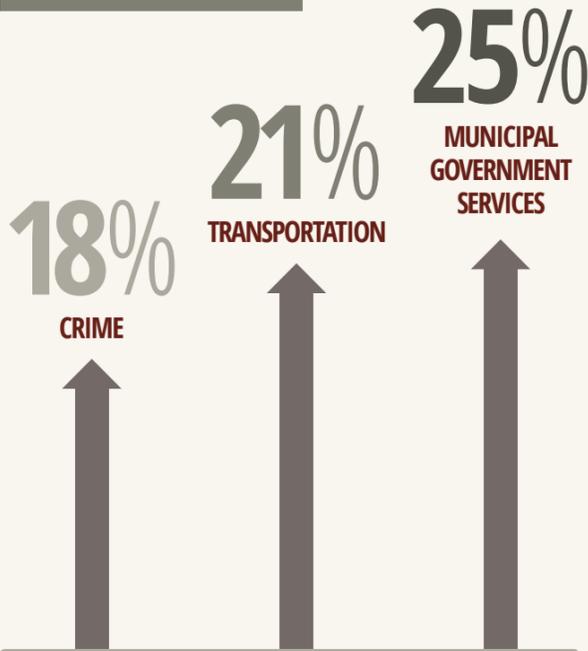
Said to: Cut services to maintain current taxes and/or reduce taxes.

60%

INCREASE TAXES

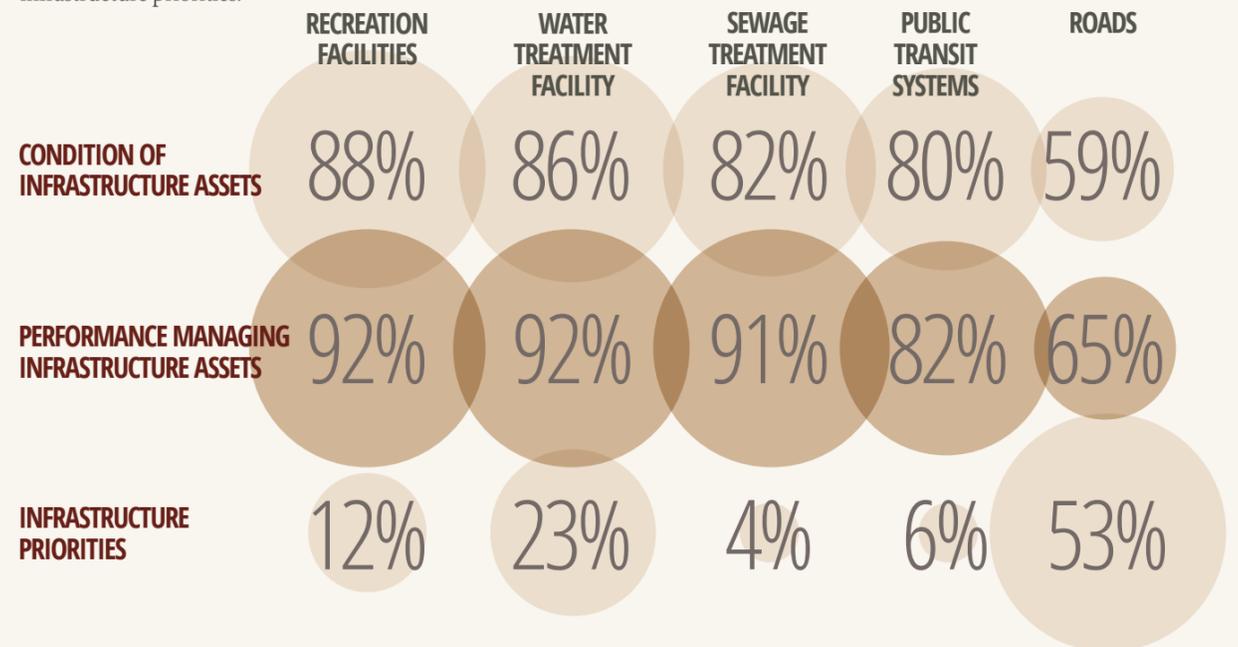
30%

CUT SERVICES



## INFRASTRUCTURE

Percentages of how successful the condition is, how good of job is done managing assets and what are the infrastructure priorities.



# RED DEER IS READY!

RED DEER'S DREAM TO HOST THE CANADA WINTER GAMES WAS 20 YEARS IN THE MAKING

After two decades of waiting—and plenty of hard work—Red Deer is getting ready to welcome the nation into our community, after successfully bidding to host the 2019 Canada Winter Games.

“The Games move from province to province, and the last time Alberta hosted the Canada Winter Games was in 1995. So the opportunity to bid on the Games doesn’t come around very often,” said Shelley Gagnon, Manager of Recreation, Parks, and Culture for The City of Red Deer. “It’s something that the community has been working up to for quite some time.”

In September 2014, the Canada Games Council announced that Red Deer was successful in its bid to host the 2019 Canada Winter Games.

But a lot of work went on behind the scenes to make sure Red Deer was ready for the challenge.

“Each city had to demonstrate that they had the venues to meet the technical expectations for the sports in the Winter Games, as well as the athletes’ village and all of the ancillary services,” said Gagnon. “We also had to demonstrate that, as a community, we could support these Games over and above the technical requirements.”



A HOST SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL ENGAGE

MORE THAN **200** KEY PLANNING VOLUNTEERS

ALONGSIDE **75** HOST STAFF

WITH MORE THAN **4,500** VOLUNTEERS



RED DEER SECURED THE WINNING BID FOR THE 2019 CANADA WINTER GAMES IN SEPTEMBER 2014.

CHAIR LYN RADFORD AND MAYOR TARA VEER



After working through a feasibility study and inventory of local facilities, the 2019 Canada Winter Games bid committee felt confident that Red Deer could host an event of this size.

Red Deer’s bid committee also had to demonstrate that the community supported the bid—and a visit from the Canada Winter Games bid evaluation committee on August 22 did just that.

“The bid evaluation committee really wanted to come to the community and get a sense of whether the community had really bought into the Games,” said Gagnon.

And they weren’t disappointed.

“Through the two year process of developing a strong bid, I was fortunate to come across so much encouragement from the community that the games were wanted here,” said Lyn Radford, Chair of the 2019 Canada Winter Games. “But there wasn’t any stronger sign than the one given by the presence of so many Red Deerians at the Rally,”

THE COMMUNITY RALLY DREW THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE TO DOWNTOWN RED DEER, WHERE GAMES, LIVE ENTERTAINMENT, AND FAMILY-FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES SHOWCASED WHAT RED DEER HAS TO OFFER.

HONORARY CHAIR RON MACLEAN



“When the bid evaluation committee turned the corner on Ross Street in their horse-drawn wagon, they had no idea they would see such a sea of red in front of them,” said Mayor Tara Veer. “For them, it was a clear demonstration of community spirit to show that Red Deer was ready for the Games.”

And over the next four years, Red Deer will need to keep working to upgrade facilities, engage citizens, and train volunteers to make the 2019 Canada Winter Games a success.

A Host Society Board of Directors was appointed in early 2015. This Board will develop the business plan to operationalize the Games.

“Over the next couple years, the Board will engage more than 200 key planning volunteers that will work alongside over 75 dedicated Host Society staff,” said Gagnon. “And at peak volunteer time just prior to

and during the Games, we’ll have another 4,500 volunteers doing everything from driving athletes around to getting the venues ready. This is a very significant undertaking over the next four years.”

But all the work will be well worth it in the end, she said.

“For Red Deer to host any type of event, there’s always the lasting benefits that are left over,” she said, adding that the 2011 Canada Winter Games in Halifax brought in over \$100 million in economic benefit to the city.

“The Games will do for Red Deer what the 88 Olympics did for Calgary and we must make the most of all the legacy opportunities we will have,” said Radford.

The “physical legacy” of improving facilities or systems is one obvious benefit, Gagnon said, but “the social legacy is what will create a huge ripple effect that extends far beyond the actual sporting event.”

“It’s an opportunity for people to become engaged in their community, meet one another, and develop stronger communities because these relationships exist,” she said. “We’re developing our future leaders.”

By opening our doors to Canada in 2019, Red Deer will have the chance to show all of Canada that it’s “an emerging city” in one of the best locations across the prairies—right smack-dab in the middle of Alberta.

“The City of Red Deer and Central Alberta region as a whole, will benefit from being able to welcome Canada to our community for the 2019 Canada Winter Games,” said Gagnon. ●

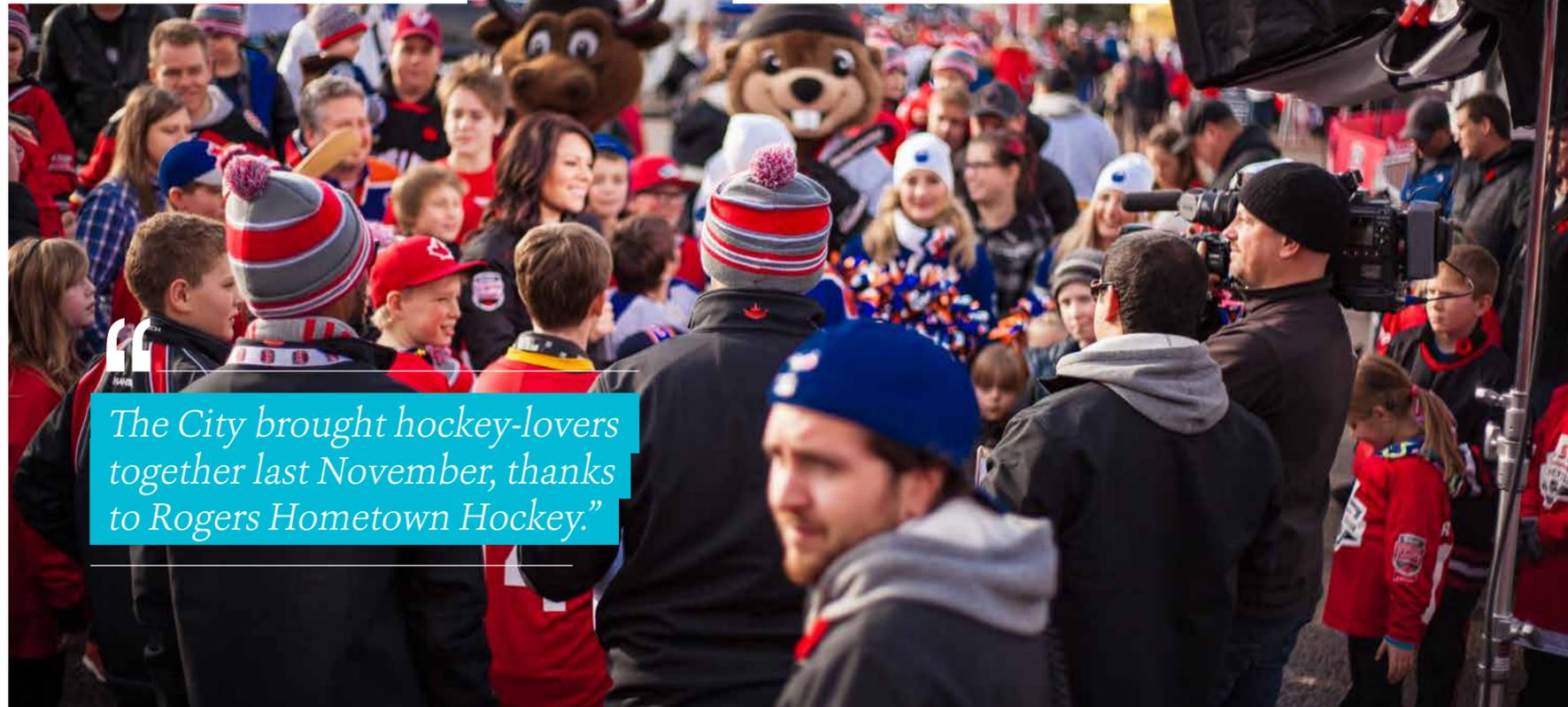
CITY MANAGER - CRAIG CURTIS, RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURE MANAGER - SHELLEY GAGNON, AND MAYOR - TARA VEER.



# HOMETOWN HOCKEY

From coast to coast to coast, hockey lovers are some of the most passionate people in the country, as The City quickly learned when it hosted Rogers Hometown Hockey on November 1 and 2, 2014.

“We had close to 3,000 people there for the two days. It was definitely a very festive atmosphere,” said Peter McGee, Special Events Programmer at The City of Red Deer. “Everything was hockey. The entire parking lot in front of the Red Deer arena was filled with different booths, local musicians, and entertainment pieces—everything from hockey skills challenges to photo ops with NHL alumni and local hockey heroes.”



*The City brought hockey-lovers together last November, thanks to Rogers Hometown Hockey.”*

Rogers Hometown Hockey was a cross-Canada series of free events held in 25 cities throughout the entire hockey season, complete with a live NHL broadcast by Ron MacLean. Red Deer was one of the lucky cities chosen to play host to this fun-filled outdoor hockey festival.

“These types of events give people the opportunity to come out and celebrate, whether we’re talking about Alberta Culture Days to celebrate culture or Rogers Hometown Hockey to celebrate hockey,” said McGee. “Events like Hometown Hockey are all about people connecting with each other, and with their community.”

Hosting events of this size also comes with some economic benefits to the community. But it isn’t just Red Deerians who came out to enjoy Hometown Hockey.

“We saw people from all over Central Alberta, which benefits our community not only socially, but also economically,” he said.

But perhaps most importantly, events like Rogers Hometown Hockey give Red Deer a chance to shine on the national stage.

“THIS EVENT GAVE US A CHANCE TO SHOWCASE WHAT RED DEER IS ABOUT NATIONALLY BY SHOWCASING LOCAL STORIES,” SAID MCGEE. “IT REALLY GAVE US A CHANCE TO HIGHLIGHT THE SUCCESSES WE HAVE HERE IN RED DEER AND SHOW THEM TO THE COUNTRY.”

# 2016 MEMORIAL CUP

*Red Deer will play host to the 2016 MasterCard Memorial Cup from May 19 to 29, 2016*

For the first time in 40 years, the Canadian Hockey League’s national championship will be hosted right here in Alberta, and central Alberta hockey lovers won’t have to venture very far from home to take in the festivities.

“We’re thrilled that the Memorial Cup Bid Committee was successful in their bid to host the 2016 MasterCard Memorial Cup,” said Sarah Cockerill, Director of Community Services for The City of Red Deer. “We know that our community will create an event that won’t soon be forgotten.”

In 2014, The City of Red Deer supported the bid by committing a cash contribution of \$200,000, as well as a further \$200,000 if additional funding is required. The City hopes to continue partnering with the Memorial Cup organizers as they prepare to host the event.



“We support local community events as much as we can,” Cockerill said. “At a national level, these events are few and far between, and we certainly wanted to be part of it to support our Rebels.”

In addition to being a good celebration for our community to enjoy, the Memorial Cup will also provide Red Deer’s sport community with some event-hosting experience prior to the 2019 Canada Winter Games.

“Red Deer was awarded the 2019 Canada Winter Games, and this type of event held in 2016 will help us prepare our community for the volunteer and hosting responsibilities,” she said. “It allows for training and capacity-building for our volunteers, promotion for our local businesses, and a boost to our local economy.”

By hosting the 2016 Memorial Cup, Red Deer will also have another opportunity to showcase what our community has to offer to the country, by putting the city in the national spotlight.

“National events like the Memorial Cup give the city a chance to get national exposure while also bringing that calibre of sporting event to our community for our citizens to be exposed to,” Cockerill said. “Events like the Memorial Cup support and celebrate community connections, and we couldn’t be more excited that Red Deer will play host to this event in 2016.”

*National events like the Memorial Cup provide the city the chance to get national exposure while also bringing that calibre of sporting event to our community for our citizens to be exposed to.”*



## UP, UP, AND AWAY!

### RED DEER'S AIRPORT IS GROWING, AND WITH THAT GROWTH COMES GREATER INVESTMENT IN OUR COMMUNITY

The Red Deer Airport is helping our community go places—in more ways than one.

“An airport is one of those components of a community that elevates a city’s image,” said John Sennema, Land & Economic Development Manager at The City of Red Deer. “The Red Deer Airport helps us position ourselves as a prime geographic location that can serve 2.9 million Albertans—or over 80 per cent of the population.”

With nearly 30,000 passengers and more than 46,000 aircraft operations in 2014 alone, the Red Deer Airport is one of the busiest regional airports in Canada and it continues to grow. But those figures are peanuts compared to the economic benefits the airport brings to the community.

“The airport provides \$99 million in direct and indirect economic development to the region,” Sennema said. “Because it increases the area’s

connectivity and influence, our airport is a vital economic driver - one that brings both businesses and people to our city.”

“AVIATION IS CRITICAL TO GROWING THE RED DEER ECONOMY, SUPPORTING JOBS, ENABLING INVESTMENT AND FACILITATING TRADE,” SAID RJ STEENSTRA, CEO OF THE RED DEER AIRPORT AUTHORITY.

The airport and related businesses employ around 225 people in a wide range of positions—everything from baggage handlers to maintenance workers and mechanics. And with regular scheduled flights through Air Canada Express, the Red Deer Airport is starting to become the airport of choice for travellers from Red Deer and beyond.

The reason for the Red Deer Airport’s success is the convenience of flying through a smaller airport.

“Parking at the airport is free, the cost of flying is generally lower, and security clearance times are much shorter than at an international airport,” Sennema says. “It’s a huge advantage for travellers, whether



30K  
PASSENGERS



46K  
AIRCRAFT  
OPERATIONS IN  
2014

ONE OF THE  
BUSIEST  
REGIONAL  
AIRPORTS IN  
CANADA

they are connecting to an international airport or flying north for work.”

And the Red Deer Airport plans to keep expanding to capitalize on this growing interest. One of the expansions is to the airport’s primary runway which will accommodate larger aircraft.

“The larger the plane that can land in Red Deer, the greater the number of travellers we’ll see through the Red Deer Airport,” said Sennema. “The economic spin-off from that could be tremendous.”

“Expanded air services offers our economy a low cost, low risk, high reward way to grow and diversify, allowing us to reach our full community potential,” said Steenstra.

Ultra low-cost carriers have also approached the Red Deer Airport about setting up shop.

“We have lower fees for the airlines, which is a huge draw for ultra low-cost carriers,” Sennema said. “And if these carriers come to Red Deer, we have the potential to draw people from Edmonton and Calgary who are looking for cheap airfares.”

As Red Deer grows, an airport that can support that growth will be critical in helping the city attract new people, businesses, and investments, said Sennema. “The Red Deer Regional Airport is an important part of what makes Red Deer an ideal place to do business and to call home.”



IMAGE CREDIT: RED DEER AIRPORT

## CREATING CONNECTIONS AT THE TIMBERLANDS LIBRARY

### A NEW BRANCH OF RED DEER'S PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM IN THE CITY'S NORTHEAST OFFERS RED DEERIANS A PLACE TO CONNECT

Northeast Red Deer is growing, and with it comes new amenities for Red Deerians to enjoy—amenities like the new Timberlands Branch of the Red Deer Public Library.

“As the community keeps growing, there’s more and more residential development occurring on the east side of the city,” said Sarah Cockerill, Director of Community Services for The City of Red Deer. “Because of that growth, Timberlands was a logical spot to put another library branch and create another community space.”

The City of Red Deer has partnered with Red Deer Public Schools and the Red Deer Public Library Board to open the library at École Barrie Wilson Elementary School in Timberlands, similar to that at the GH Dawe.

The library, which officially opened in September of 2014, has all the amenities Red Deerians have come to expect from Red Deer’s public libraries, including books, magazines, movies, music, library programs, Wifi, and computer terminals.



IMAGE CREDITS: VERONICA MOORE FROM VMOORE PHOTOGRAPHY



*As the community keeps growing, there is more and more residential development occurring on the east side of the city.”*



But this library has something special that sets it apart from Red Deer’s other library branches.

“Thanks to the partnership with The City and public school board, what was originally planned as an elementary school library was able to be expanded into a branch of Red Deer Public Library, located in a thriving new part of the City,” said Christina Wilson, CEO, Red Deer Public Library. “In keeping with the neighbourhood, everything about the Branch is new, from the mobile shelving, to the specially designed desk, the ergonomic furniture and the brand new collections of materials. It’s an inviting and imaginative use of community space, able to be open the same hours as the Dawe Branch, due to supportive partners.”

The extended hours and additional space available helps our city build strong neighbourhoods.

“What’s interesting about the new Timberlands library is that there’s a lot of community space in there, which offers the ability to host public meetings. It increases the hours of opportunity to access the library, which is traditionally used for the kids during school-time. The public can access that space into the evenings,” said Cockerill. “Spaces like this will help us to build our cultural experience in the northeast, and hopefully, the neighbourhoods around there become more socially interconnected as a result.”

# OUTDOOR RINKS IN RED DEER



Winter weather can throw Red Deerians a few challenges, but most take it in stride, embrace the cold and lace up for a brisk skate on one of our community’s many outdoor ice rinks.

With a selection of 75 ice surfaces, Red Deerians have lots of choice. The Parks department maintains approximately 30 acres of ice surface throughout the season.

“When you look at the number of ice surfaces that we maintain, indoor and outdoor, we are likely second to none for population,” says John Eastwood, Parks Amenities Supervisor. “We have school kids out every day; families out on the weekends with little kids learning to skate on the snowbank rinks. We have recreational hockey players out having fun, and our pond hockey league learning the fundamentals. It’s a sought-after commodity within the community.”

Red Deer has more rinks per capita than Edmonton, Calgary, Thunder Bay and Windsor. The work that goes into setting up those rinks and maintaining them throughout the season is a testament to our community’s passion for hockey and outdoor activity.

The work starts in October, when staff set up boards for the hockey rinks. When temperatures reach the freezing point, crews start to pack snow and flood surfaces. The rinks are typically ready by mid-December - in time for the holiday season - and are then regularly maintained until the season ends in early March.

That’s where Mother Nature steps in to say, the puck stops here.

“You can’t make ice when it’s plus 5 or 10 degrees and we want to make sure the ice conditions are as safe as possible. There are a lot of variables that go into making the ice and we do our best to ensure the public can use the surfaces at optimal times,” says Eastwood.

And with a wide variety of residents using those surfaces, Parks staffers hear kudos when a major outdoor event goes off without a hitch and queries when a rink hasn’t opened yet. The effort is a labour of love - for everyone involved.

“YOU LOOK AT HOW PASSIONATE PEOPLE ARE ABOUT SKATING AND BEING OUTDOORS AND WHAT OUR PARK SYSTEMS PROVIDE THE PUBLIC, AND RESIDENTS CAN SEE THEIR TAX DOLLARS AT WORK,” SAYS EASTWOOD.

QUANTITY OF OUTDOOR RINKS

 **75**

ICE SURFACE AREA

 **30 ACRES**



# LOOKING TO THE PAST & BUILDING A FUTURE

NOVA CHEMICALS IMAGINATION GROVE GRAND OPENING.



“

*Now, the exhibits are bright and colourful, they're more interactive, and it's much more warm and inviting.*

”

Just as renovation involves reinterpreting the old to create something fresh, construction can be very much about repurposing and looking to the past.

With 2014's Fort Normandeau upgrades and the building of Nova Chemicals Imagination Grove at the Kerry Wood Nature Centre, both have landed on something new and exciting, also proving that we work better together.

The City supported Waskasoo Environmental Education Society (WEES) in undertaking both projects.

Fort Normandeau is a unique asset to the community, and now a renewed resource. The Fort reopened after a revamp and refresh of exhibits that had become tired and uninspired. The historic site still tells the stories of First Nations, Metis, and European cultures and their interaction with the site as a crossing point along the Red Deer River, but tells the stories in a better, more exciting way.

“Before the upgrades, the exhibits were nearly 30 years old; they were a bit dark; and, few people were going into the interpretive centre,” said Jim Robertson, Executive Director of WEES. “Now, the exhibits are bright and colourful, they are more interactive, and it's much more warm and inviting.”

The Fort's new features include gates at the entrance fashioned after a proper palisade made of steel with large cut outs and representative images, a replica stopping house, a small theatre and historic movie, and a new covered picnic shelter.

“The scenery is beautiful, and we already have people putting their rafts and canoes

on the river, so the challenge now, is to appeal to those visitors and entice them to stay awhile, have a picnic and learn more about our area history,” said Janet Pennington, Heritage Community Development Coordinator.

Recent history is also part of the inspiration for the new Nova Chemicals Imagination Grove playground at the Kerry Wood Nature Centre which had its official opening in October 2014.

“Many parents today remember their outdoor experiences growing up, whether it was camping, riding bikes or interacting with nature. Somewhere along the way that was supplanted by organized activities, too much screen time, and a fear of the outdoors,” said Todd Nivens, Programs Coordinator, Waskasoo Environmental Education Society. “The intent of this playground is to provide access to unstructured, outdoor, nature-based play in a safe environment.”

Nivens has already heard rave reviews about the playground and outdoor classroom. He has watched kids build forts, discover bugs, and slide with abandon.

And as those children interact with the wood features - largely sourced from local trees already harvested to make way for City growth projects - they are enjoying playtime in a place that values the repurposing of resources.

“Research tells us that children who engage in unstructured nature-based play will be better stewards of the environment,” said Nivens. “This playground can serve as a bridge to further natural experiences and being more eco-literate.” ●



FORT NORMANDEAU INTERPRETIVE CENTRE REOPENING.

# LIFEGUARD KEEPS GIRL'S LOVE OF SWIMMING ALIVE

Casey Zubot loves to swim, always has and always will. This past January she celebrated her birthday with a swimming pool party, which was no small feat after Casey had a frightening experience in the pool at the G.H. Dawe Community Centre just months before.

On Friday, July 25, 2014, eight year old Casey Zubot was excited about her last day at a summer camp offered through the Dawe Centre. The best part of the camp, according to Casey, was the swimming. But this particular swim was one Casey will never forget.

Casey suffered a seizure while in the water, but thanks to the quick thinking lifeguards on duty that day there is a happy ending to this story.

Jesse Epps, a lifeguard on duty at the Dawe Centre that afternoon, remembers seeing Casey in the shallow end of the lane pool as she walked past on her regular route. Something about the way Casey was acting made her go back and check on her.

“

“THAT LIFEGUARD INSTINCT KICKED IN, I KNEW SOMETHING WAS WRONG AND I NEEDED TO GO BACK AND CHECK ON HER,” SAID JESSE.

”

When Jesse got back to Casey, her instincts proved right and Casey was at the bottom of the pool. Jesse jumped into action and pulled her from the water. Along with Jesse, lifeguards performed CPR and got Casey breathing again. Another lifeguard called 911 and Casey was quickly taken to the hospital.

“I couldn't have asked for anything better when it comes to the response of the lifeguards. They honestly saved her life,” said Erin Zubot, Casey's mother.

Like all lifeguards, City of Red Deer lifeguards are highly trained in lifesaving and emergency response. They maintain numerous certifications, and complete eight mandatory in-house service training sessions each year which help to keep their skills fresh and stay updated on facility safety procedures. This ongoing training prepares staff to fulfill their lifeguarding roles as professional facilitators of safe, enjoyable fun.

“We are proud of the lifeguards we have on staff, and the critical skills they hold and continue to develop,” said Barb McKee, Recreation Superintendent of The City of Red Deer.

“The City maintains a very high level of training and standards for its lifeguards and in our facilities. We invest significantly to ensure our aquatics staff are properly trained and feel prepared to respond to emergency situations like this one. Calm, cool and collected takes a lot of practice,” continued McKee.

Lifeguard safety plays an important role in preventing drowning in Alberta. Less than one per cent of all drowning occurs under lifeguard supervision.

Jesse and Casey recently got to meet for the first time since this past summer, and Casey will continue to swim without reservation, thanks to Jesse and her coworkers. ●



## LIFEGUARDS

are highly trained in lifesaving and emergency response. They maintain numerous certifications, and complete eight mandatory in-house service training sessions each year which help to keep their skills fresh and stay updated on facility safety procedures.

The City employs approximately **75 LIFEGUARDS** to work at our pools.



BACK ROW, L-R: MIKE WILKINSON, CALE ZUBOT AND DARREN ZUBOT  
FRONT ROW, L-R: JESSE EPPS, CASEY ZUBOT AND ERIN ZUBOT

LIFEGUARDS MIKE WILKINSON AND JESSE EPPS WITH CASEY ZUBOT.



# SNOW & ICE PROGRAM

*The success of the program depended on people knowing their Snow Zone and Route, how to check the schedule.*

This winter brought with it a new vocabulary for snow plowing including words like snow zone, route, snowpack, triggers and targets. This change in language was the result of a new snow and ice policy that changed how and when residential streets are plowed in Red Deer.

The new policy came after a record-breaking snowfall in 2013 that left many Red Deerians cursing Mother Nature as well as the need to keep pace with the growing surface area of Red Deer. The unprecedented winter brought over 200 cm of snow, almost twice the average for a typical winter. This put The City's former snow and ice policy to the test and it was apparent a more adaptable and responsive snow plowing program was needed to ensure Red Deer remains accessible under normal, elevated and extreme snowfall conditions.

With safety, mobility and accessibility in mind, a new snow and ice policy was developed and implemented in the fall of 2014. City Council approved a one-time \$1.9 million capital budget increase in 2014 to purchase new snow removal equipment, and an operating budget increase of \$855,000 in both 2014 and 2015.

Under the new program collector and residential roadways are plowed sooner, faster and more often. Major program changes include:

#### SNOW ZONE AND COLOUR ROUTE SYSTEM

To replace the old priority system, Red Deer was divided into 11 Snow Zones identified by letters A to K, with residents living primarily on either a Green or Grey Route. Green Routes represent a collector or bus route, and Grey Routes represent a residential side street.

#### NEW TRIGGERS FOR RESIDENTIAL PLOWING

In previous years the trigger to plow residential streets was discretionary. Under the new policy, both Green and Grey Routes are triggered once a 10cm snowpack is reached, approximately 30-40cm of accumulated snowfall.

#### TARGETS TO COMPLETE PLOWING

The target for completing Grey Routes is 15 days, and 20 days for Green Routes. In the past this would take 40 to 60 days to complete.

#### WINDROWS

In order to provide quicker service, residential streets are plowed to a 5 cm snowpack with dual windrows on Grey Routes. This was a change from previous years when windrows were placed on alternating sides of the street. By leaving dual windrows that residents are responsible for clearing, crews are able to plow residential streets much quicker and more often. Dual windrows are a tradeoff to increasing the plow rate on Grey (Residential) Routes.

#### AMENDED THE USE-OF-STREETS BYLAW

After the amendment, private contractors are permitted to clear windrows from driveways.

#### CHANGE IN SIGNAGE

The City no longer signs every individual street but instead, large signs are positioned at the entrances to neighbourhoods for Grey Routes, and sandwich board signs are used on Green Routes.

"With these significant changes, it was basically a brand new program compared to how residential plowing happened in previous years," said Greg Sikora, Manager of Public Works. "The success of the program depended on people knowing their Snow Zone and Route, how to check the schedule and moving their vehicle when plowing occurs on their street."

#### CHANGE IN NOTIFICATION

The City developed a communications campaign to ensure residents were aware of the new program and the self-service tools that were developed. This included:

- information packages delivered to all households,
- new webpages, and web tools, snow zone specific email alerts, social media updates, and a snow zone hotline.

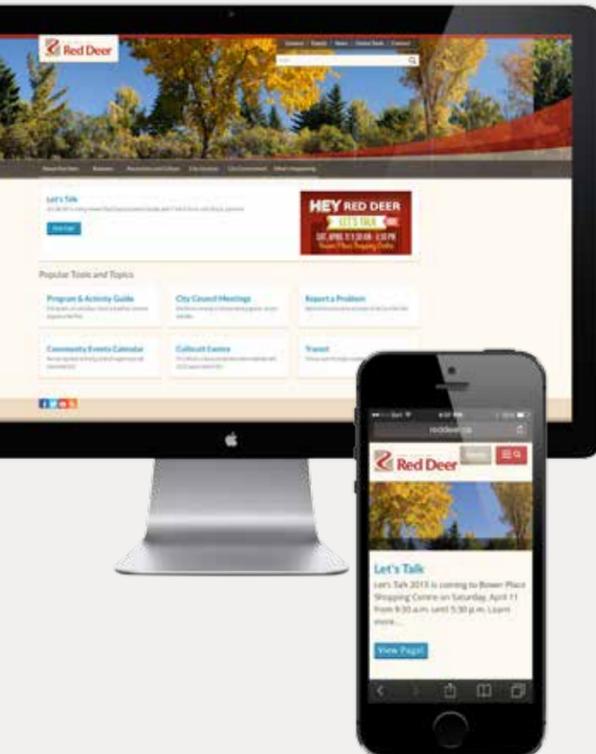
The program was not just new to residents, but was also new to Public Works which involved crews learning how to use new equipment, plowing differently, and scheduling to fit with the new Snow Zone and Route approach.

"It made us more flexible and adaptive as we needed to ensure we were ready to go once the trigger tripped. We carefully monitored weather forecasts and began assembling crews as we were getting close to launching a residential plow," Sikora said.

With less snowfall than last year, residential plowing was triggered twice over the course of this winter. As with all new programs, there were some learnings along with way, but overall the program unrolled as planned. The City is evaluating the program, including feedback received from residents, to fine-tune the program for next year as we work to ensure that roads remain safe and accessible during winter snow events. ●



## YOUR CITY. ONLINE.



Last June, The City launched its new website, making it easier to share information and connect with Red Deerians. Accessibility was one of the key factors taken into consideration when building the new site. With the ever-changing technology, people want to access information quickly and easily.

“When we first started working on the new website, our goal was to create a website that would be responsive, functional, and for the user,” said Dan Newton, Information Technology Services Manager for The City of Red Deer. “The process took approximately two years from start to launch, and it involved every department within The City.”

The old website’s technology was more than 10 years old and didn’t support the ever-changing needs of our users. When researching for the new site, it was found that nearly 50 per cent of the site’s users are accessing it with a mobile device. The outdated technology was making it difficult for mobile users to access information.

“WE WANTED A WEBSITE THAT ANYONE COULD ACCESS ANYWHERE, ANYTIME, FROM ANY DEVICE; THAT WAS A KEY GOAL,” SAID NEWTON. “WHETHER YOU’RE USING A SMART PHONE, TABLET, OR SITTING AT A DESKTOP COMPUTER, THE SITE WILL RESPOND AND ADJUST TO THE DEVICE YOU’RE USING.”

This new software has given The City a better framework for developing new applications and new content, and allows us to stay on top of emerging trends in technology.

One of the features of that was significantly enhanced is the search function. This function allows users to easily find the information they are looking for.

“The search function works great because of our new content,” said

Angela Kaczmar, Coordinator of Database and Application Architecture. “We reviewed and rewrote all of our content, cutting the number of pages on our site in half and developed a new structure. Content is no longer grouped based on The City’s organizational structure, but rather on how users want to access the information they’re looking for.”

Along with making content easily accessible through the internal search engine, the structure and content also makes it easier for people to access what they are looking for when using a general search engine on the internet.

“How we’ve structured the new site allows us to continually add new features. We’ve incorporated content written for the user, social media and mapping systems into the site, and we now offer email alerts users can sign up for,” said Kaczmar. “The email alert option was brought online several months after the new site was launched. We originally only offered RSS feeds, but told us that alerts worked better for them, so we responded. Red Deerians really wanted to be able to keep up to date with City news, road closures, Land Use Bylaw amendments, and snow and ice control.”

Although it’s been nearly a year since the launch, the website is continually updated on a daily basis and The City is finding new technology to incorporate into the system. Coming in late 2015, there are several new applications that will be launched in an effort to make conducting business with The City quick and easy. Paying bills, applying for permits and obtaining tax certificates are just a handful of the online options that residents will be able to use when the new systems come online. The City will be letting Red Deerians know when each new feature goes live on the website. ●



## RED DEER TRANSIT REVS UP INNOVATION

Red Deer Transit knows it can’t stay idle when innovation and responsiveness must take the driver’s seat to meet changing customer needs.

The department was in high gear in 2014, introducing Red Deer Transit on Google Maps, the small bus pilot, and partnering with Lacombe and Blackfalds to launch BOLT Transit.

“There have been some very open minds as to what we need to do in Transit, and acceptance that we can’t just be status quo if we want to change people’s options to use Transit,” says Transit Manager George Penny. “We have to keep making our service more effective, efficient and friendly.”

The inclusion of Red Deer Transit information on Google Maps makes finding bus routes, stops, and schedules more user friendly. With a smart phone, trip planning is now in the palm of your hand.

BOLT Transit, a regional transit service connecting Lacombe, Blackfalds and Red Deer, launched in August 2014. The accessible, energy efficient, NOVA

buses promote the environment with a commute that allows riders to dispense with fuel and parking costs – and take their bike along for the ride, thanks to front dual bike racks.

The buses come equipped with Wi-Fi for the convenience of riders. In fact, riders continue to play a big role in shaping what the service looks like.

“We established stop locations for the convenience of riders,” says Steve Parkin, Transit Operations Superintendent. “The changes and adjustments we make now are the result of feedback from the community.”

It’s that kind of responsiveness that took the small bus pilot onto the open road.

The department is experimenting with different models of small buses to service areas a regular-sized bus cannot reach. The small buses also provide more flexibility with routes and scheduling, by using them at off-peak times and in areas that can feed higher-volume routes.

“2014 was very successful for Transit, but we need to continue building on that; we can’t let the momentum stop,” says Penny. “We have a number of good projects for 2015 such as looking at alternative fuel options, and implementing mobile data terminals and the new electronic fare collection system, which will be very positive boost for us as a city.” ●

IN 2014  
TRANSIT RIDERSHIP INCREASED  
**5.6%**  
OVER 2013

# SAFE & SOUND

*The City of Red Deer is creating a safer city through its newly formed Community Safety Ad Hoc Committee*

A 'made-in-Red Deer' approach to community safety is in the works, with a little help from some safety-minded community members.

The City of Red Deer continues to work with Red Deer RCMP along with community partners such as the Crime Prevention Centre, Social Support Services and the Downtown Business Association. Our shared vision of a safe community encompasses enforcement, intervention, prevention and education strategies.

"A healthy community is a safe community, and City Council has a vision for promoting a safe community through active citizen participation in crime prevention," said City Manager Craig Curtis. "This prevention happens across our city, in many ways. It comes in the form of eyes on the street, whether that's at the downtown Ross Street Patio or as part of neighbourhood watch programs in our residential areas. Safe places are places where there are people - places where Red Deerians work, play and live."

In 2014, Red Deer City Council directed the formation of an Ad

Hoc Safety Committee to focus on community safety.

"This two-year ad hoc committee was struck to develop an approach to community safety that is truly made in Red Deer—a strategy that matters to Red Deerians and accomplishes their goals," said Sarah Cockerill, Director of Community Services for The City of Red Deer.

Throughout 2015 and 2016, the Community Safety Ad Hoc Committee will work on a strategic plan, funding model, and governance framework that will shape Red Deer's approach to keeping city streets safer for Red Deerians.

IT'S A BIG JOB TO UNDERSTAND WHAT ALL IS HAPPENING IN THE COMMUNITY, WHERE THE GAPS ARE, AND HOW WE MIGHT MOVE FORWARD IN ADDRESSING THOSE GAPS, BUT THE GROUP SEEMS VERY KEEN AND VERY ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT DOING THAT, COCKERILL SAID.

The committee is made up of ten citizen representatives and one member of City Council. Citizen representatives bring a diverse background and knowledge to the committee, including people with experience in areas such as health, governance, finance and not for profit.

"As Chairperson of this committee, I am honored to collaborate with a diverse group of citizens, who represent people with a wide variety of backgrounds, giving a diverse knowledge base on developing knowledge, understanding, and action for our framework," said Bettylyn Baker, Chair of the Safety Ad Hoc Committee. "This collaboration allows for compassion, strength, education and future direction.



ART ALLEY.

Jean Vanier once said 'One of the marvelous things about community, is that it enables us to welcome and help those people in a way we couldn't as individuals. When we pool our strength, and share the work and responsibility, we can welcome many people, even those in deep distress, and perhaps help them find self-confidence and inner healing.' I believe social innovation and connectedness in the community will bring a safe and sound Red Deer."

Even though the work of the ad hoc committee will end in 2016, the strategy created by the group will continue to keep safety top-of-mind for Red Deerians well into the future.

"Whenever we do a survey, safety is in the top three priorities for residents, and this Council certainly is committed to making changes in that area," Cockerill said.

There's ongoing community dialogue with our community safety network, broken down into the four pillars of safety—prevention, education, intervention, and enforcement. There are many groups that do great work already in Red Deer, and they will all be engaged over the next two years.

"I think Red Deerians will start seeing a lot of positive change in the areas of prevention, intervention, and enforcement through the work of the Community Safety Ad Hoc Committee," Said Cockerill. ●

# GROW ON

Red Deer's northeast is taking shape, as The City moves into full swing on three major projects that will support growth as Red Deer's population fast approaches 100,000.

WE ARE SEEING A GREAT DEAL OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE NORTHEAST, SAID WAYNE GUSTAFSON, ENGINEERING SERVICES MANAGER FOR THE CITY OF RED DEER. WE ALREADY HAVE SERVICES IN THE GROUND AND LAND READILY AVAILABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT.

But new houses and residential development are just one piece of the puzzle. A new two-lane roundabout at the intersection of 30 Avenue and 67 Street, continued development of the North Highway Connector that will eventually connect north and south Red Deer, as well as the construction

of a new high school site, are all needed to support the growth in northeast Red Deer and across the community.

With 30,000 vehicles travelling through the current 30 Avenue and 67 Street interchange per day, construction of a roundabout is needed to ensure The City can accommodate future access to the newly developed areas north and east of 30 Avenue and 67 Street.

"We are building out this intersection with safety, movement and accessibility in mind. A roundabout efficiently handles increased traffic as the area continues to grow," said Gustafson.

The City began laying the groundwork for the roundabout in the summer of 2014, putting utilities along 30 Avenue toward the intersection. To facilitate construction of the roundabout, 30 Avenue will be extended 2 km north and 67 Street will be extended 1 km east. Construction is expected to wrap up in the fall of 2016; however, work on the North Highway Connector (NHC) will continue, eventually linking up to the new roundabout, which is the first leg of construction on that connector roadway.

"Upon completion, the NHC will connect the intersections of Gaetz Avenue and Highway 11A through to the intersection of 19 Street and 20 Avenue. With funding from the province and the federal government, this is a multi-year project that is part of a long-term transportation plan for The City of Red Deer," said Gustafson.

Without question, roadways and infrastructure are needed to support growth in Red Deer. But the real cornerstone of The City's development in Red Deer's northeast will be the joint high school and recreation site.

"A few years ago, the school boards identified that they had an interest in a new joint site to be developed in the northeast part of the city," said Sarah Cockerill, Director of Community Services. "The public, catholic and francophone school boards all came together to partner with The City and develop a unique site that recognizes the value of integrating education, recreation and shared spaces that will benefit the whole community."

Located north of 67 street and 30 avenue, this 55 acre site is the future home of three high schools—one public, one catholic, and one francophone—as well as sports fields and facilities.

Work on the site began in 2013, with a joint planning session between The City and each of the school boards.

"We all participated in a joint planning session, which included considerable engagement from the school boards, teachers, and even students," said Cockerill. "The plan was adopted by all three school boards and City Council in September 2014, and now The City's Engineering department is working to service the site in preparation for the construction of the catholic high school."

Development of the northeast high school site will be phased in over the next 10 years with the catholic school board expected to start construction as early as this summer.

The work completed in 2014 enabled The City to lay the foundation for growth in Red Deer's northeast. Red Deerians will continue to see changes in the northeast as all three projects start to take shape in 2015. ●



TRAFFIC ON 55TH STREET AT NIGHT.

# DEVELOPING RED DEER'S RIVERLANDS

Nestled along the Red Deer River in the heart of downtown, Riverlands will be a unique neighbourhood with something for everyone. Once complete, Red Deer's newest riverfront community will be a one of a kind place for Red Deerians to live, work and play.

"Riverlands will be an exciting new neighbourhood," said Charity Dyke, Riverlands Project Manager for The City of Red Deer.

WE ARE AIMING TO REVITALIZE RIVERLANDS INTO A VIBRANT, MIXED-USED NEIGHBOURHOOD, MUCH LIKE YOU MIGHT HAVE SEEN IN URBAN DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS IN OTHER CITIES.

Formerly the site of The City's civic operations, Riverlands will seamlessly blend the area's natural features with living spaces, shopping, restaurants and gathering spaces—all in the heart of downtown Red Deer.

"On any given day in Riverlands, Red Deerians will be able to walk along the river, shop at their

favourite store, enjoy a meal with friends, or take in a special event or festival," said Dyke. "Riverlands also provides a great opportunity for people to live in a downtown neighbourhood with easy access to amenities."

And work in Riverlands is already underway. One of the projects The City will be embarking on in 2015 is the design of the Riverwalk, a public space that will run along the river.

But what that will look like is up to Red Deerians, she said.

WE WANT TO WORK WITH THE COMMUNITY IN THE UPCOMING YEAR TO ASK THEM WHAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE FROM A RIVERWALK IN A DOWNTOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD. WE WANT RESIDENTS TO BE EXCITED ABOUT USING THIS SPACE AND VISITING OR LIVING IN THE RIVERLANDS NEIGHBOURHOOD.



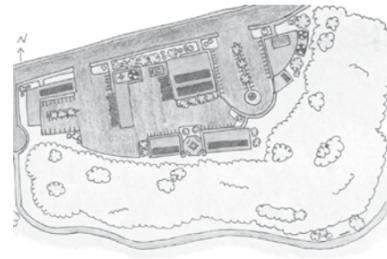
The City will also continue construction to Taylor Drive in 2015 to develop one of the main access points into Riverlands.

"Getting in and out of Riverlands for vehicles and people is necessary," said Dyke. "We'll be creating the new intersection into Riverlands at Alexander Way and Taylor Drive to support the development as more people move into the area," said Dyke.

A great deal of work needs to be done on the land and the planning before residential and commercial development begins in Riverlands, but The City is working to get "a shovel in the ground in 2017," said Dyke.

Until then, Red Deerians will have the opportunity to help shape Riverlands into a unique and welcoming neighbourhood for citizens and visitors alike, she said.

"This gives us a great opportunity to create a space that the whole community can enjoy."



# GOING GREEN IN INDUSTRIAL PARK



The City of Red Deer is going green, thanks to a new eco-industrial park located west of Highway 2 in the Queens Business Park.

"The concept of Red Deer's first eco-industrial park is about co-locating businesses that all have a similar mindset – economic and environmental sustainability," said Dayna Facca, Planner at The City of Red Deer. "By co-locating like-minded businesses, spontaneous conversations can happen and the concept to grow organically."

Environmental sustainability has been top-of-mind for citizens and businesses alike over the past five years.

"Council adopted the Environmental Master Plan in 2011, and that's been a major tool for guiding how we operate as a city and what we want to achieve," Facca said. "And one of those things is being environmentally sustainable and conscious in how we develop and grow."

Red Deer's new eco-industrial park is one of the ways The City is doing that.

The City is giving Red Deer Businesses a chance to improve their environmental footprints through its new eco-industrial park.

"By introducing this type of development into the community, The City is both working to protect our resources today and creating a legacy of sustainability for future generations. The ultimate goal is to promote, nurture, and cultivate environmentally friendly innovation," said Facca.

The businesses in the eco-industrial park can do that in several different ways, by sharing resources with their neighbours, using building design elements that promote sustainability, or simply increasing efficiency within their own operations.

"It's really up to the business to decide how they want to go about achieving sustainability in their own way," said Facca, adding that improved walkability, environmentally friendly landscaping, and better

waste management practices are must-haves for businesses in the eco-industrial park.

Right now, the area is zoned light-industrial, which means that the area can accommodate things like manufacturing operations, trade schools, industrial support services, or even restaurants.

The City has also made it easier for other businesses to set up shop in the eco-industrial park.

"We've added uses to the eco-industrial areas, which are not permitted in other light industrial areas, to facilitate collaboration. An example being greenhouses," said Facca. "There are also other benefits, such as gained economic value for waste products or by-products, increased efficiency and access to materials using by-product synergies, and reduced costs associated with disposing waste, which are endorsing the eco-industrial concept."

So far, one lot in the eco-industrial park is sold, and The City is seeing plenty of other interest in the area.

"We don't have anything on the ground yet, but there is definitely interest," Facca said.

Facca attributes the interest to the growing awareness about environmental sustainability in the community.

SOMETHING THAT'S IMPORTANT TO THE CITY AND ITS CITIZENS IS IMPROVING OUR ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT," SHE SAID. "THE ECO-INDUSTRIAL PARK IS ANOTHER STEP IN THAT DIRECTION."

The eco-industrial park could improve Red Deer's economic sustainability as well.

"This is something new and different that our competitors don't necessarily have at this point," said Facca. "Red Deer is unique in that it has an eco-industrial park specific for businesses that want to work towards environmental sustainability. It's an opportunity to improve our economic viability."

And because other nearby cities have yet to develop eco-industrial areas, Red Deer's eco-industrial park could put Red Deer on the map as a location of choice for businesses looking to improve their environmental footprints.

# FIRE SAFE CITY



“We have a checklist for making sure smoke alarms and other safety items are operating in the house, and we also educate people on the causes of fire.”

”

The City of Red Deer believes that the best way to fight fires is to stop them before they get a chance to start, through the Home Safety Program.

“The Home Safety Program began in Red Deer 10 years ago to help lower the incidence of fire and injury in the city,” said Shane Dussault, Fire Prevention Officer for The City of Red Deer. “Every year, our fire crews visit 10 per cent of the houses in the city. We have a checklist for making sure smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors and other safety items are operating in the house, and we also educate people on the causes of fire.”

Since 2005, Red Deer Emergency Services has visited 32,783 residences—2669 in 2014 alone—and installed 6,928 smoke alarms in Red Deer homes.

In 2005, the number of fires in the city averaged 0.97 fires per 1,000 citizens, and that number has been steadily dropping to a low of 0.66 fires per 1,000 citizens in 2013.

“

WE’VE BEEN DOING THE HOME SAFETY PROGRAM FOR 10 YEARS NOW, AND WE ARE SUBSTANTIALLY LOWER THAN THE PROVINCIAL AVERAGE FOR FIRES AND FIRE INJURIES, SAID DUSSAULT, ADDING THAT THE PROVINCIAL AVERAGE IS 1.4 FIRES PER 1,000 PEOPLE.

”

Part of the success of the program, he said, lies in the home safety checks. During the home visit, Red Deer Emergency Services shares that a checklist of home safety hazards and ways homeowners can prevent fires. Home safety checks can be as simple or as thorough as each homeowner wants, said Dussault.

“Some people just want to stand at the front door and spend a couple minutes going through the list and answering questions,” he said. “Or we can go through the house and take 10 to 15 minutes to actually do an inspection of it. It’s all up to the homeowner.”

Education is another key component of the program—one that goes a long way toward preventing fires, said Dussault.

“People don’t realize, for instance, that unattended cooking is the leading cause of fires in the home,” he said. “People don’t understand how quickly fires will grow.”

And for people who have experienced such an incident close to home, The City has launched a new program called After the Fire, which is designed to help neighbourhoods following a fire. As part of the After the Fire program, which launched in the summer of 2014, Red Deer Emergency Services will

visit a neighbourhood where a fire has occurred to speak about the incident and offer tips on how to prevent fires in the future.

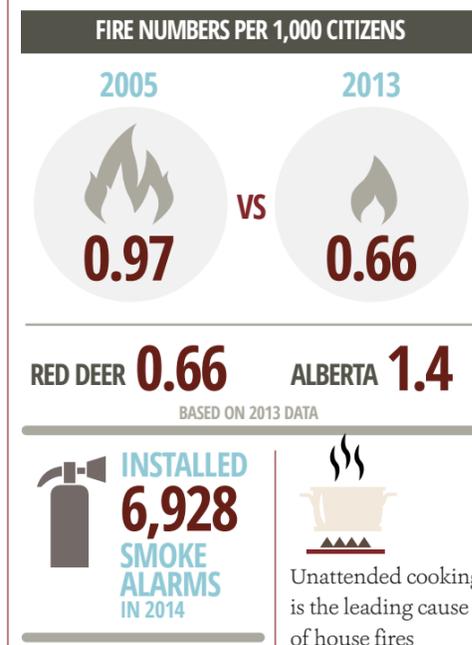
“We’ll go in after there is a substantial residential fire, when the neighbourhood still has questions about what happened,” said Dussault. “In the After the Fire program, we do the same home checks we do with the Home Safety Program, but we also focus on answering questions about the fire that occurred. That way, we can educate the neighbours on what happened so they can prevent it in their own homes.”

So far, Red Deer Emergency Services has visited three neighbourhoods as part of the After the Fire program, and the program was well received.

“The last time we visited a neighbourhood, we had nearly everyone near the home speak with the crews for a significant amount of time, giving us time to educate them,” he said.

By educating Red Deerians about the cause of fires—both before a fire occurs, through the Home Safety Program, and following a fire, with the After the Fire Program—Red Deer Emergency Services is able to stop fires before they start and make the community a little safer every day.

“It’s important for the City to invest in programs like the Home Safety Program and After the Fire Program so that residents are aware of the fire and injury hazards in their homes and have the knowledge to lessen or remove the hazards to make their homes and families safe.”



# Financial Notes

## CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER'S MESSAGE

Dean Krejci



It has been a busy year of projects, process reviews and initiatives for The City of Red Deer. Locally, we had two major items from a financial perspective, the first being the 2014 capital budget passed in November 2013. The major projects approved were the 30 Avenue and 67 Street roundabout and adjacent roads, roads rehabilitation, and an Electric Light & Power substation.

The second was the 2014 operating budget passed in January 2014. The main initiatives approved were funding for additional RCMP resources and funding for roads and parks due to growth.

On the Provincial front we also dealt with the reduction in operating budget funding from the Municipal Sustainability Initiative grant and finalized negotiations on both the dispatch and ambulance contracts.

In preparation for the 2015 budgets, public consultation occurred through the Let's Talk event, the Budget Open House and the Community Amenities review. All three events were well attended and provided great information as we created the 2015 budgets.

As part of our financial sustainability initiative, work continued on both the reserves review and the fees and charges review. The reserves work resulted in a consolidation of many reserves which Council approved in July. Several workshops were held with Council regarding the fees and charges process and a Council policy was created for approval in 2015.

August saw the awarding of the Canada Winter Games. We were able to provide support to the Bid Committee leading up to and subsequent to the award of the Games. Council has approved the capital budget requirements and the organization will be busy with various facility upgrades, enhancements and rebuilds over the next four years.

Work continues to occur in support of the redevelopment of the Riverlands area. The Ross Street and Taylor Drive intersection was completed and work started on the demolition of City buildings in the area.

The first asset management plan for The City was completed in the roads area. The plan shows the need for continued investment in the replacement and rehabilitation of roads to ensure service levels are met.

The City entered into an agreement to install a combined heat and power unit at the Collicutt Centre. The unit is intended to generate power locally which will reduce demand on the provincial grid and lower overall electricity costs for the City.

Overall the City remains in excellent financial shape. Debt is at 44% of the provincially prescribed debt limit and debt servicing is at 30% of the permitted debt servicing limit. While net debt increased by \$15.7 M in 2014 it is still less than the amount in 2011. Reserves are down slightly from 2013 levels from \$221.8 M to \$215.3 and the reserves to debt ratio is 98%. The net book value of City assets grew by \$101.8 M in 2014.

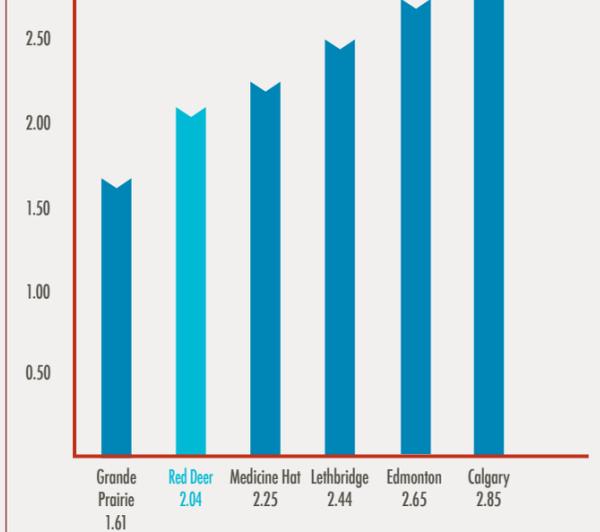
We will continue to monitor the current economic environment, the input from citizens and The City's financial health as we chart our course forward.

To view the full 2014 City of Red Deer Financial Report, visit [www.reddeer.ca/budget](http://www.reddeer.ca/budget).

## CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL POSITION

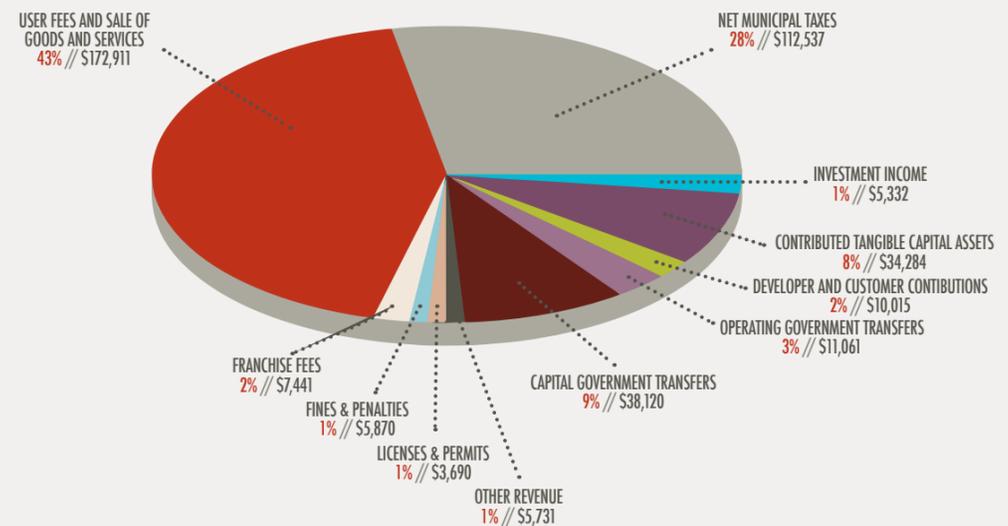


## 2014 RESIDENTIAL TO COMMERCIAL TAX RATIOS

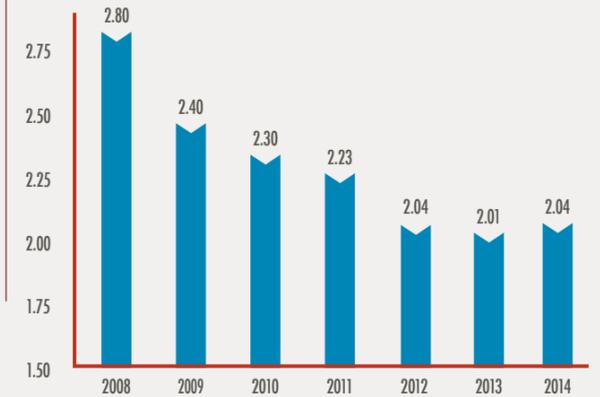


## REVENUE BY SOURCES

This chart illustrates all of the City's revenue sources, both operating and capital including utilities.

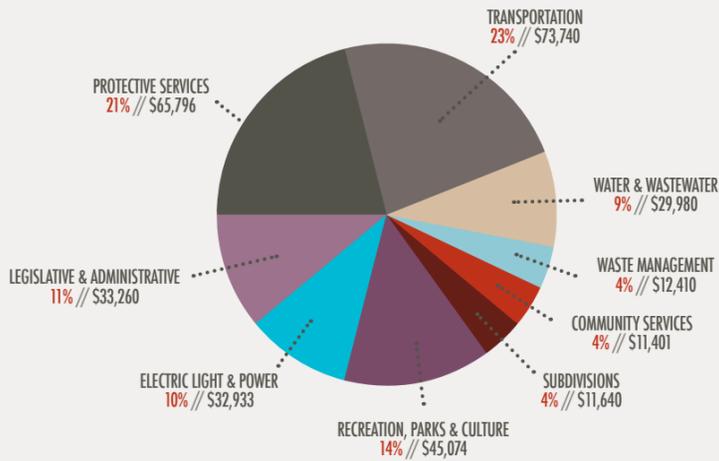


## CITY OF RED DEER'S RESIDENTIAL TO COMMERCIAL TAX RATE RATIO

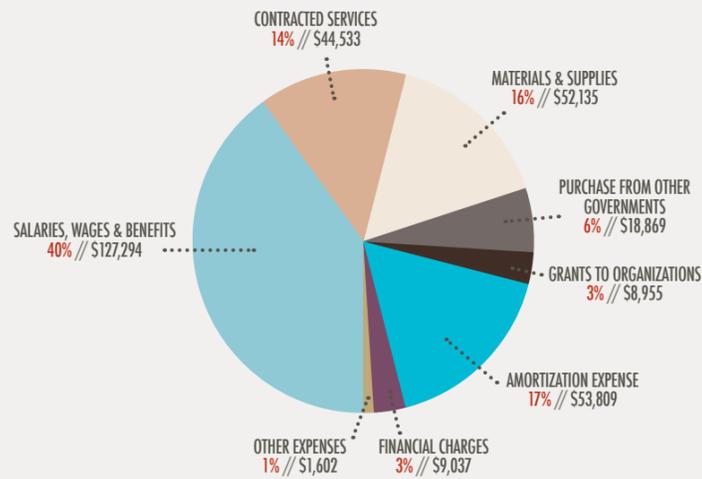


### EXPENSES BY FUNCTION

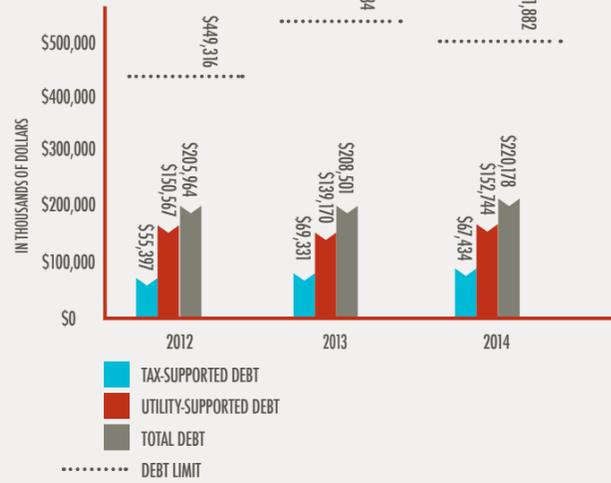
Expenses by segments details the amount of expense for functional segments for the organization for 2014 in the operating budget. These segments are not the same structure as the management structure of the organization.



### EXPENSES BY TYPE



### LONG-TERM DEBT

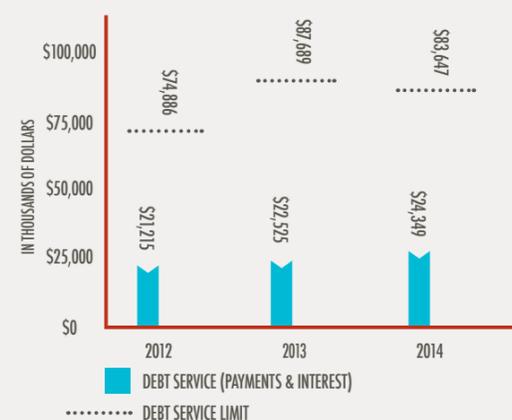


### TOTAL DEBT TO ASSETS VALUES

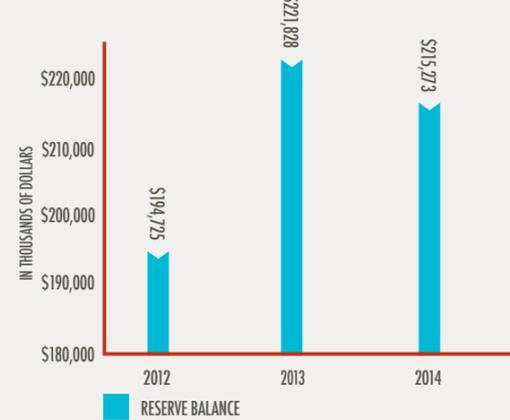
A comparison of debt balance increases to Net Book Value of Tangible Capital Assets shows that while asset value increased by \$309.4 million, debt balances increased by only \$35.4 million. This indicates that the City uses as many other kinds of financing to acquire assets as possible, and that debt is only one of a set of tools used to finance the purchase of assets.



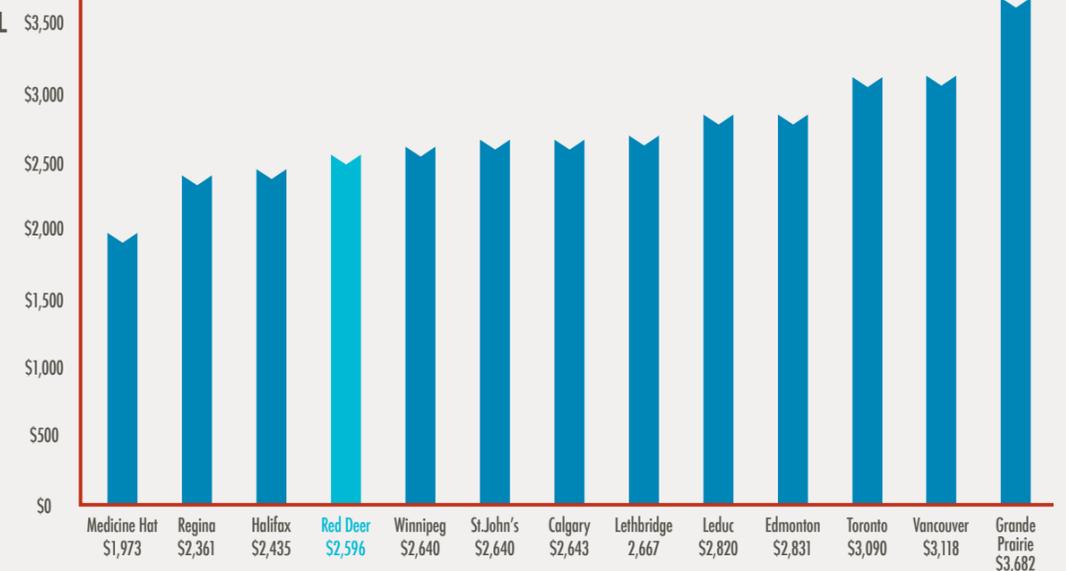
### DEBT SERVICE AND DEBT LIMIT



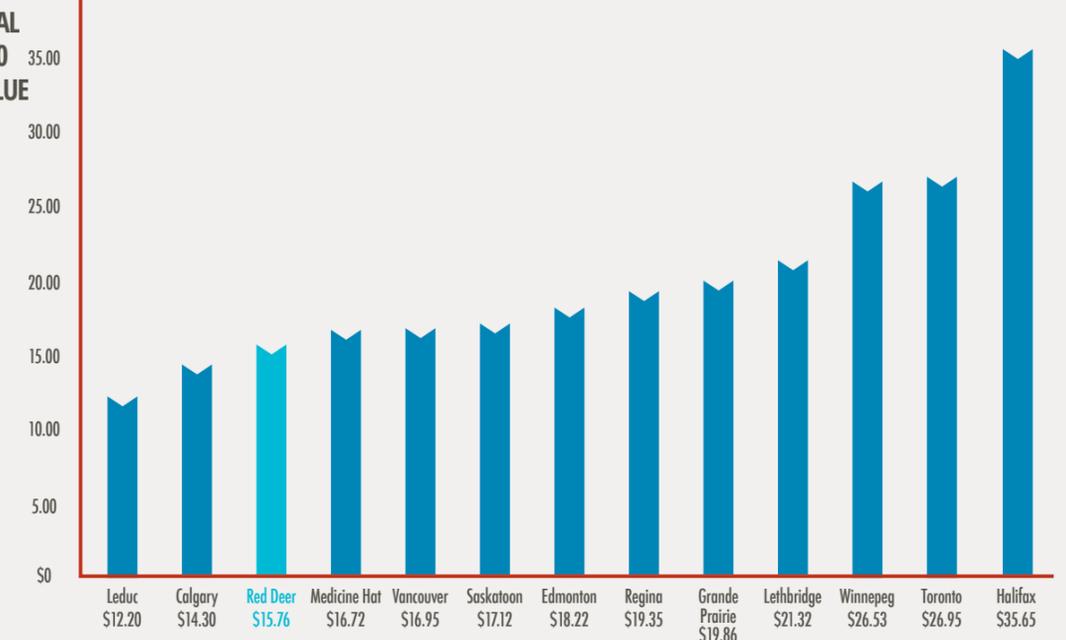
### RESERVE BALANCES



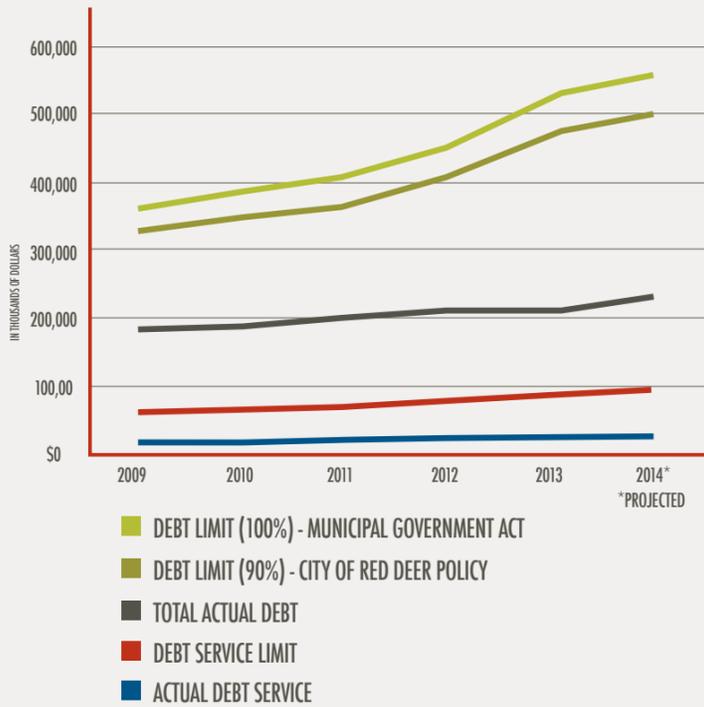
### NET RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY TAX (AFTER GRANTS) INCLUDING MUNICIPAL & PROVINCIAL REQUISITIONS



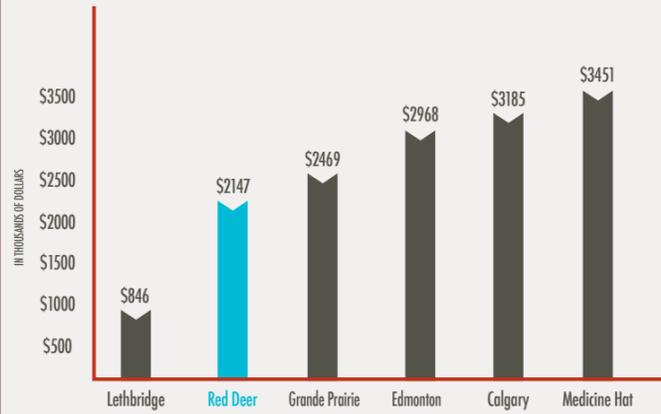
### NON-RESIDENTIAL TAXES PER \$1,000 OF ASSESSED VALUE



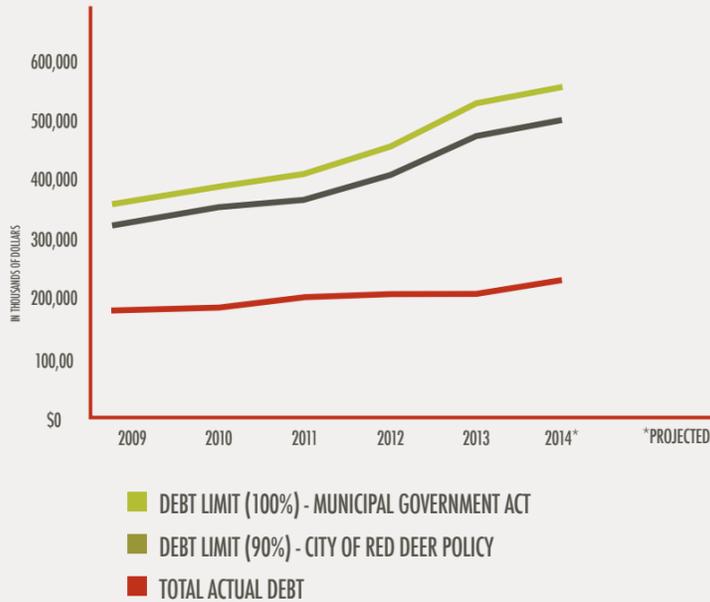
**SUMMARY OF ACTUAL DEBT, DEBT LIMIT (MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT), DEBT LIMIT (CITY POLICY), ACTUAL DEBT SERVICE AMOUNT, AND DEBT SERVICE LIMIT (MGA)**



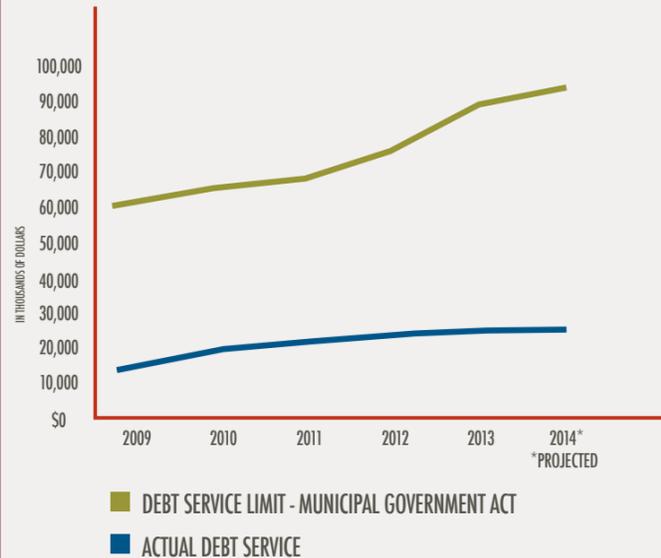
**HOW DOES RED DEER COMPARE (Debt per capita 2013)**



**LONG-TERM DEBT LIMIT, TOTAL DEBT**



**LONG-TERM DEBT SERVICING LIMIT (MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT), SERVICE LIMIT ON DEBT LIMIT**



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