



Integrated Community Sustainability Plan

Town of Turner Valley

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CURRENT SITUATION:

The Town of Turner Valley is located in the Municipal District of Foothills No. 31, approximately 60 km southwest of Calgary at the junction of Highway 7 and Highway 22. Turner Valley is located within easy access to the thriving economy of the Calgary Region. With a population of 2,022, community residents enjoy a less stressful environment in a cottage country-like atmosphere with stunning views of the foothills and mountains.

Turner Valley is 3 kms from the Town of Black Diamond, together they share many services and cultural initiatives, that improve the lives of its 4,000 citizens. These two communities have a regional trade area of 15,000 people. And both benefit from the estimated 14,000 vehicles that travel through the communities daily on a summer weekend. Discussions are ongoing between the two councils to explore a more integrate, cost effective, service delivery model.

The area was once an economic powerhouse for the British Empire as the largest oil producer in the mid 1900 war years. Today through enforced and ongoing initiatives Turner Valley is reclaiming much of its environmental integrity and vitality.

With over thirty community organizations, annual events, and diverse religious denominations, the area offers a number of outdoor recreational activities such as hiking, fishing, cross-country skiing, skating, horseback riding, picnicking, wildlife photography, golfing, camping, cycling, swimming, kayaking, and events such as: Bar U Ranch National Historic Site, Spruce Meadows Equestrian Centre, Cowboy Trail, Calgary Polo Club, Diamond Valley Christmas Concert; Millarville Rodeo, Farmers Market and Priddis and Millarville Fair.

The Town has embarked upon a plan to revitalize its downtown and central business district with a commitment to green spaces and historical preservation with an Alberta "ranch style" feel.

In December 2008, the Town of Turner Valley entered into agreement with IBI Group to conduct a Recreation Master Plan for the area. This plan will include: an inventory of existing recreational services and facilities, a community needs assessment, community consultation via open houses and interviews, identify funding sources, a description of future facilities, and recommendations for funding sources and allocations. This plan is included as a major part of this sustainability plan.

ECONOMIC BASE:

Turner Valley's economy has evolved and diversified from its early beginnings as primarily an oil and gas industrial town. Known as the birthplace of Alberta's oil boom, it is now served by oil and gas, agriculture, tourism, construction, and commercial services.

The community is well served by a variety of commercial, home-based and professional services. A vibrant assortment of unique specialty shops, restaurants form the majority of retail businesses within the downtown area.

INTEGRATED VIEW:

According to the 2008 census data, the Town of Turner Valley has a population of 2,022 residents, an increase of 6% from 2007.

It is estimated that 33% of residents work in Turner Valley and Black Diamond and 32% in Calgary, and 23% work in other areas in Alberta. Of the people who reported to be employed in Turner Valley and Black Diamond, one hundred thirty-six people reported home based business.

The primary economic activities in the Town of Turner Valley include a variety of commercial, home based and professional services, A vibrant assortment of unique specialty shops and restaurants, many in heritage buildings for the majority of retail businesses within the downtown area. In addition Turner Valley has targeted Main Street development, warehousing, distribution and tourism for future development.

Building and development is a good indicator of growth in our town, Residential development accounts for most of the recent development, however, commercial development adds the most equity to the town per project. The Town includes several ongoing developments such as Everwood Estates, Seclusion Valley Estates, and Schmaus Meadows and Bailey Ridge.

At public consultations earlier this year residents indicated there were several challenges facing the area. Residents identified a number of challenges and opportunities and consultants compiled the following:

Challenges include:

- Buildings on west side of Main Street are small and many need extensive renovations.
- restricted development on the east side of Main Street due to oil company and municipal ownership of lands as well as underground pipelines along this side of the street.
- Shortage of large commercial lands.
- Shortage of buildings suitable for many business interests.
- Some businesses struggle to remain viable, this could be either due to the lack of sufficient shoppers in the area or due to offering services or products that are not viable.
- There are no incentives for many existing businesses owners to renovate their buildings.
- Single-sided main street makes it difficult to create the atmosphere and character often seen in vibrant small town centres.
- The changing economy in late 2008 has significantly stunted residential as well as commercial growth within the town.
- lack of multi-use space and lack of initiatives to attract tourists and main street development.

Opportunities include:

- “Undevelopable” lands on the east side of Main Street offer a unique opportunity for open space use such as landscaping, street furniture, and an outdoor parks and market area.
- Developers are looking for suitable business and tenants for the land on the east side of Main Street.
- The area is pedestrian friendly and this can be developed by putting in “traffic calming measures” and cobble-stoned crosswalks, lighting on the east side and additional vegetation and landscaping.
- Pockets of larger commercial lands can be developed on the periphery of downtown.
- There is an opportunity to make Main Street an extension of the Friendship Trail. A direct continuation of the trail would encourage more pedestrian traffic.



Town of Turner Valley

- The is an opportunity to reinforce Turner Valley's reputation as "Gateway to the Kananaskis" and to establish the town as a destination point for outdoor enthusiasts.
- There is an opportunity to reinforce Turner Valley's historical significance in the birth of the oil and gas industry.
- There is an opportunity to establish Turner Valley's reputation as a vibrant destination town at the doorstep of the Kananaskis with a historical relevance and an environmentally sustainable future.

Residents further identified a number of core values that should remain the centre of whatever is incorporated into the Town of Turner Valley sustainability.

- Honour the history of Turner Valley and foster awareness of Aboriginals, early settlers, ranching and the oil industry.
- Establish environmentally friendly ways for future growth and development. To establish sustainable ways and strategies to building and development. Showcase environmental reclamation efforts; and establish a new reputation as the Guardians/Protectors of the Kananaskis"
- Pursue healthy lifestyle, outdoor recreation, and cultural opportunities such as: outdoor recreation, environmental stewardship, simple lifestyle, strong family values, and family events, artistic culture, musical culture and cowboy culture.
- Distinguish Turner Valley's character and image from Black Diamond or Okotoks: Showcase Turner Valley's unique identity as the "Gateway to Kanasaskis", as an environmental friendly town, as a town with historical significance such as ranching and oil industry. Capture and enhance historical identity in future development of Main Street. As a town with significant cultural pursuits/interests; facilitate opportunities to showcase and celebrate Turner Valley's artistic and musical culture, simple family-oriented lifestyle, cowboy culture and outdoor pursuits.

VISION:

The beauty and tranquility of Turner Valley offers a lifestyle that blends its unique shops, scenic landscape and values of a small town atmosphere with well-planned community and economic growth.

Turner Valley is committed to families, culture, recreation, tourism and business within a strong social and environmental context.

THE PROCESS:

After providing resources to the sustainability community process, the Council and community have adopted sustainability principals and engaged citizens to develop a shared understanding through a dialogue about the community's vision, core values, and goals it has for the communities social cultural environmental economic and governance components of the municipality.

It is a generally accepted practice to incorporate a number of common elements within our Integrated Community Sustainability Plan.

- The Town of Turner Valley Council has expressed and demonstrated political will to implement a plan accompanied with the financial and personnel resources to implement such a plan.
- The process is vision led and will generate enthusiasm and gives purpose and meaning to inspire the contribution of time and effort.
- The process we used is based on the ability to view the desired outcome without looking at the existing situation. When the desired outcome has been established, then we prepare the existing situation and finally action steps to connect the existing situation with the desired outcome. This process will always contain the time line and the person responsible for follow up on the action step.
- We have identified a number of goals that can provide developmental diversity and early success can be measured and celebrated.

- At the heart of this plan is a commitment to a process that engages citizens, staff, committees and the town council. We also acknowledge that this is the first step in a larger process. This has been staff initiated, however, the town council is committed to extend this process further including hiring an external consultant to lead the community sustainability process to allow planning and action plans and steps to occur directly from the process.

Goals

Goal A: Develop a Cooperation Agreement with the Town of Black Diamond with respect to integrated service delivery.

The Town of Turner Valley is committed to providing all citizens with efficient and cost effective programs and services.

Strategy # 1 Formally address the recommendations in the Pitman Report as follows:

With funding assistance from the Minister of Municipal Affairs the Towns of Turner Valley and Black Diamond retained the services of Glen Pitman, an independent consultant, to examine which services, if any, may be combined between the towns.

In his final report Mr. Pitman concluded that “most, if not all, services being provided by the two towns can be combined under one general administration”. Mr. Pitman also advised that in order for services to be combined, “a great deal of planning will be required to ensure a smooth transition. A smooth transition would be required not only by staff and council, but also by the two communities”.

Mr. Pitman concluded “the success of combining municipal services within the two towns will depend on a number of factors; those being, council’s ability to work cooperatively together, staff within the respective service areas having the ability to anticipate change and identifying its challenges and opportunities, and the people within each community being made aware of the opportunities within the decision to combine service delivery for greater efficiency and effectiveness”.

Strategy # 1

When both town councils have unconditionally accepted the recommendations of the Pitman Report the Town of Turner Valley, on behalf of both towns will apply for additional funding from the Minister of Municipal Affairs to begin the next phase of development. This phase will focus on hiring another independent consultant to facilitate the combining process.

As recommended by Mr. Pitman this could take up to two years, however Council may want to address this time table to gain 8-10 strategic advantage.

Goal B: 5 year Municipal Development Plan

The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) is the primary planning document for use at the municipal level, to ensure that future growth occurs in an orderly and cost effective manner so a high quality of life can be maintained for its residents.

The Town of Turner Valley MDP was written in 2004, and to ensure that the document remains current and responsive to change a new document is scheduled for completion in 2009.

- To encourage, enhance and maintain the community's small town quality of life and its safe living environment.
- To encourage residential development, ensuring that it occurs in a manner, which is consistent with a responsible and sustainable growth strategy.
- To encourage expansion of the range of goods and services which are offered within the Town of Turner Valley.
- To strengthen the Town's primary business area and to ensure that it is maintained as the focal point for retail goods, business services and the social and civic centre of Town activities.
- To initiate economic development initiatives which strengthen the community's economic development and employment base through the encouragement of new light industrial and commercial development.
- To provide and maintain a range of community recreational, cultural and tourism opportunities in the Town of Turner Valley.

- To explore and capitalize on funding opportunities which will maintain and enhance the community's municipal infrastructure.
- To continue to enhance the community's relationship with neighbouring municipalities on matters of mutual concern.
- To promote community spirit and to maintain and preserve the friendly atmosphere which exists within the community.

The Municipal Development Plan will address the:

- future land use within the municipality,
- manner of the proposals for future development plans,
- the coordination of land use, future growth patterns and other infrastructure with adjacent municipalities if there is no inter-municipal development,
- the provision of required transportation systems, either generally or specifically, within the municipality and in relation to adjacent municipalities, and
- the provision of municipal services and facilities either generally or specifically.

In 2009 there are plans to integrate the contents of the Municipal Sustainability Plan and the Municipal Development Plan incorporating all aspects of municipal planning into one document so the next document will also address:

- proposals for the financing and programming of municipal infrastructure, the coordination of municipal programs relating to physical, social and economic development of the municipality,
- environmental matters within the municipality,
- the financial resources of the municipality,
- the economic development of the municipality, and
- any other matter relating to the physical, social or economic development of the municipality.

We anticipate the plan will contain:

- statements regarding the municipality's development constraints, including the results of any development studies and impact analysis, and goals, objectives, targets, planning policies and corporate strategies.

- policies compatible with the subdivision and development regulations to provide guidance on the type and development regulations to provide guidance on the type and location of land uses adjacent to sour gas facilities and,
- policies respecting the provision of municipal, school or municipal and school reserves including but not limited to the need for amount of and allocation of those reserves and the identification of school requirements in consultation with affected school authorities.
- strategies that will ensure future growth of the Town of Turner Valley will be based on managed and sustainable growth. Growth will be monitored through the establishment of benchmarks and ensuring infrastructure can meet growth needs.
- related plans, planning values and the vision for the Town of Turner Valley, growth management, development constraints and environmental constraints such as: Environmental protection policies, watercourses and flood risk policies, and environmental enhancement policies; residential, commercial and industrial development; heritage preservation; open space, park and municipal reserve; community and emergency services; transportation and utilities; regional cooperation; Boards, Commissions and Committees, Governance and other key determinants of health necessary for Population Health Promotion

Strategy 1:

The Town of Turner Valley Council has committed to the creation of development of a plan in 2009. We are in the process of drafting a budget and reviewing options with Alberta partnerships to prepare the report.

We anticipate this project will take one year to complete and the CAO will assume responsibility to ensure this project is completed in a strategic and timely manner.

Goal C – Recreation Master Plan

In order to meet the economic development and tourism needs as identified earlier in this report, the town of Turner Valley Council approved funding to retain the services of an independent facilitator to create a Recreation Master Plan. This Master Plan will compliment the Municipal Development Plan that will be prepared in 2009. The facilitator will conduct and open house and staff, resident and committee interviews to conduct and inventory of programs, services and facilities, a needs assessment, location and facility, funding sources and other relevant recommendations.

It is estimated the process will be complete in approximately by May, 2009.