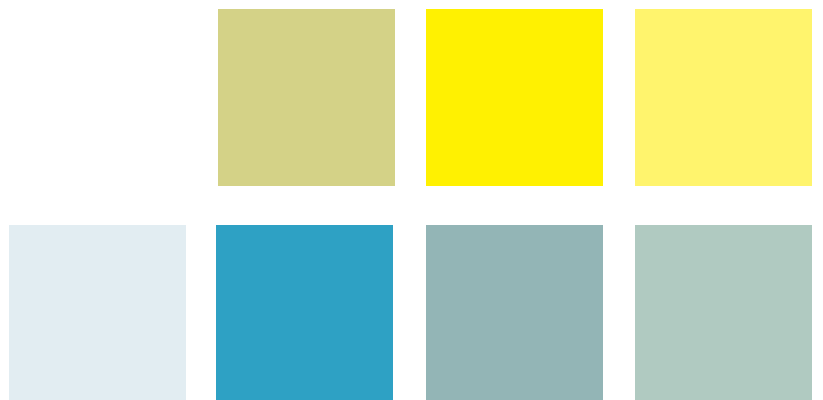


ANNUAL REPORT

2020



2017-2021 Council



Town of Olds Council consists of a Mayor and six Councillors who are elected by the citizens of Olds every four years. Together they are responsible for establishing corporate policy and setting strategic priorities. The current Council was officially elected and began its four year term on Monday, October 23, 2017.

A By-Election was called by Council at its regular Council Meeting on October 28, 2019, following the resignation of a Town of Olds Council member. The By-Election was held on January 20, 2020. Donald Mitchel (Mitch) Thomson was declared the winner.

Pictured left to right (back row) Councillors Mitch Thomson; Debbie Benneft, Mary Jane Harper and Mary Anne Overwater. (Front Row - left to right) Councillor Wanda Blatz, Mayor Michael Muzychka and Councillor Heather Ryan.



Mayor's Message

This was an incredibly difficult year for all of us as residents of Olds, Alberta, and Canada, as we navigated ourselves through COVID-19 and the hardships that it placed on us from a health, safety, and a fiscal perspective. Our Council found new ways in meeting, we continued to engage the public on a number of issues from budget priorities to asking for your input of allowing chickens to be raised in the town.

We also had a By-election this year and saw Mr. Mitch Thomson join our Council in February. Council had to adjust several times on how and when we could meet as we went to electronic meetings, returned to in-person for a short while with additional COVID-19 protections in place, and then resumed the electronic format, without missing but one meeting early on in the pandemic.

We went above to deliver a balanced budget for the 2020 year with a zero percent tax rate increase to both our residential and non residential taxpayers. And, despite the many uncertainties we faced with the slow down in our economy, we ended the 2020 fiscal year with a surplus. We also offered incentives and programs to our

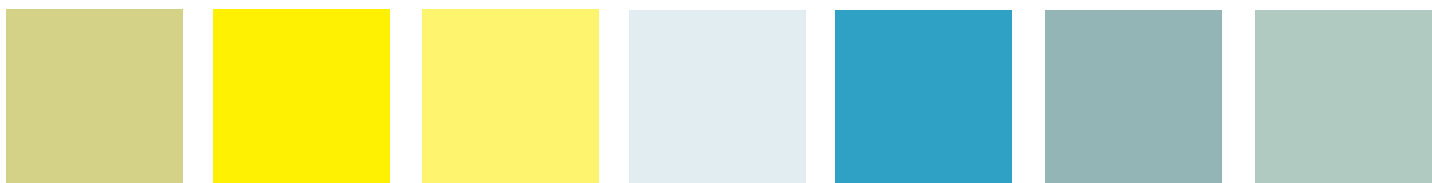
community by way of a start-up grant for business reopenings, a deferral of utility payments, and moving back the date of when property taxes were due. Our Economic Development Secretariat worked with the Chamber of Commerce and Olds Institute to create a Task Force to assist in helping our business community through COVID-19.

We continued to deliver our capital programs and our roads projects were completed on schedule, the Rotary Park was completed with a virtual opening and hopefully, will follow with a live grand opening in 2021. Construction was also started on the much needed new Operations Centre.

I want to thank all our Administration for the work that they performed over the past year and I want to thank you – the great people of the Town of Olds for your support, patience, advice, and resiliency throughout the year.

***“I want to thank you -
the great people of the Town
of Olds for your support,
patience, advice and
resiliency throughout
the year.”***

- Michael Muzychka
Mayor



CAO'S Message

There is so much to reflect upon in 2020 as our Town, Province, and Country had to deal with a worldwide pandemic that has impacted us for most of the year. The year started on a positive note with the joint signing of the Inter-municipal Collaboration Framework with Mountain View County in January. In February, the Town held a By-election to replace long-term Town Councillor Wade Bearchell, and Mitch Thomson was elected from a slate of seven candidates. In March, our world changed and our Town needed to address the first pandemic in 100 years. This meant some municipal facilities were closed, new procedural protocols were put into place, new initiatives to help our residents and businesses were implemented, and we changed how Council meetings were held. Throughout this, we continued to meet virtually, we balanced our budget and ended with a surplus, and we kept our Incident Command Post active throughout most of the year.

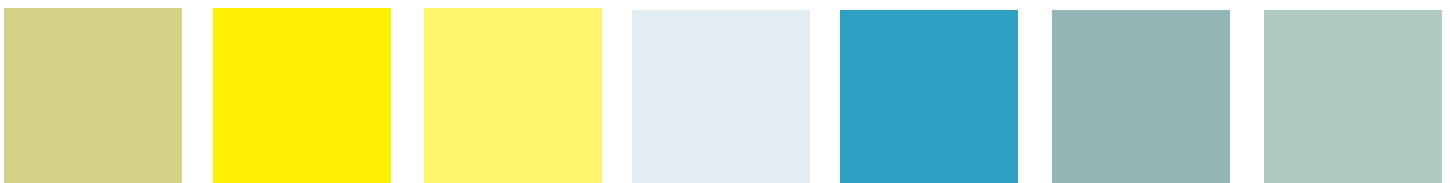
We were fortunate enough to develop a new Inter-municipal Development Plan with Mountain View County, saw the construction start on our new Operations Centre, completed our state-of-the-art Rotary Park and received over \$4 Million in provincial funding to assist in the construction on Highway 2A off 68th Street and to construct a new intersection off 70th Avenue to make access to our new Rotary Park and Operations Centre safer and easily accessible.

I want to thank my staff in the Town of Olds for their hard work, dedication, and commitment that they have demonstrated throughout the year. COVID-19 meant that they had to adjust to new workplace protocols, ensure the changing restrictions were adhered to for routine to complex processes, and look at new ways to deliver services to our residents.



***“In March 2020, our world changed and
the Town needed to address the first
pandemic in 100 years.”***

- Michael Merritt
CAO



Operations - 2020 Capital Projects

Operations Centre

The design for this project was finalized during the winter/spring of 2020, with construction beginning in June of 2020. The Operations Centre is a 52,000 square foot building that includes a heated shop, two cold storage bays, and administration offices that will facilitate Town growth for the next 50 years.



Municipal Improvement Program

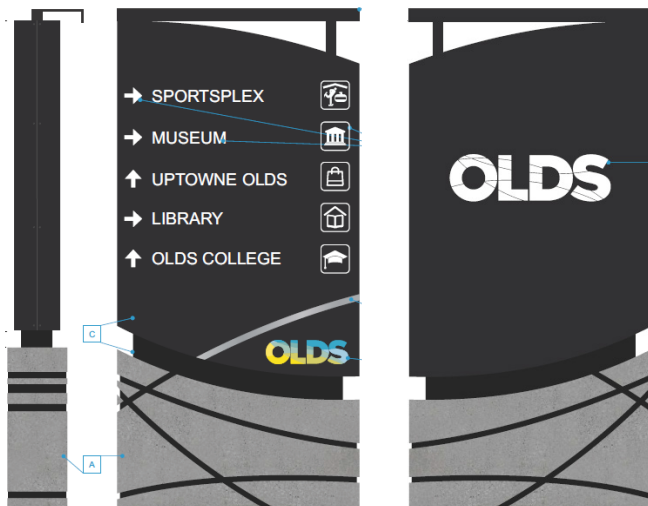
The Municipal Improvement Program (MIP) was focused on road surface repairs in 2020. Streets that were revitalized were:

- 70 Avenue south of Highway 27: 1,600 meters of road was overlaid with new asphalt.
- 50 Avenue & 54 Street: Drainage improvements were made to this intersection, and asphalt overlay to create a smoother transition.
- 65 Avenue on the North side of Highway 27: mill and overlay completed to improve worn asphalt surface.
- 52 Avenue & Highway 27 intersection (south side of highway). This intersection had been previously closed with concrete barriers but was not aesthetically pleasing. The Town completed curb and gutter, sidewalk, and boulevard work to complete the road closure and beautify the intersection.
- 57 Avenue from 60 Street to southern boundary of Town. Spot repairs and an asphalt overlay was completed on this road to restore the asphalt surface.

Sanitary Relining

This project utilizes a CIPP (Cured In Place Pipe) process that revitalizes older clay tile wastewater lines with a product very similar to a pvc product.

The Town completed 1,100 meters of re-lining in Town. The re-lining of wastewater mains is done without having to dig up the road which provides additional service life to the main lines.



Wayfinding Signage

The Town implemented phase 1 of a sign installation project with 11 signs erected in 2020 including 4 civic amenity marker signs located at the Administration Office, Aquatic Centre, Off-leash Dog Park, and Rotary Athletic Park, 1 neighbourhood identifier sign at Rotary Athletic Park, and 6 vehicle directional signs along Highways 27 and 2A. The Town's goal is to eventually establish a community-wide public signage program that effectively, attractively, and consistently directs, informs and educates both the traveler and residents through Olds streets and the pathways network.

Operations - Planning & Development

The Planning and Development Department had many obstacles to tackle during 2020. This included transitioning to on-line permitting for development, building, and business licensing, which required creative thinking by the department and local businesses who worked together and adjusted their “game plan” to the ever-changing health guidelines. 2020 was a year of many changes thanks to COVID, however, this did not stop the community who showed resilience pushing forward to a post pandemic future for their community’s development.

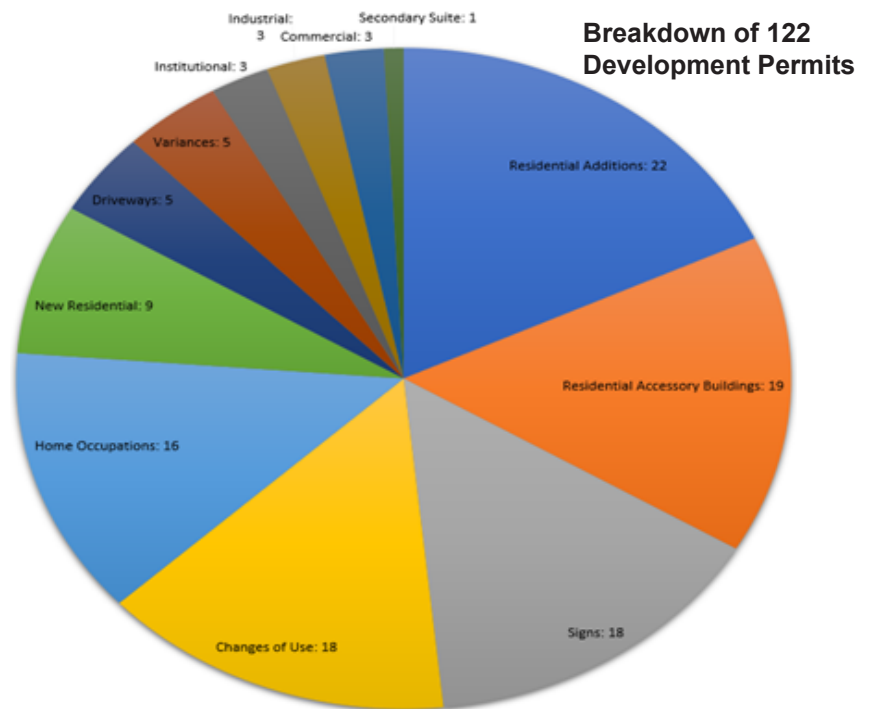


Building

The Town of Olds provides building inspection services to ensure Safety Codes are met when assisting residents, professional home builders, commercial contractors, and professional engineers and architects. Inspections and permitting processes adapted to the pandemic to allow some inspections to be completed virtually. 89 building permits were issued for various types of projects. See the 2020 statistics chart below:

Development

The Town of Olds provides development services to ensure that all development on residential, commercial, and industrial properties complies with the Town’s Land Use Bylaw. Throughout 2020 development services and permitting were faced with some challenges but it did not stop the growth and development of our community. See chart for a breakdown.



2020 BUILDING PERMIT STATISTICS

	Residential										Commercial		Industrial		Institutional		TOTALS	
	Detached Dwelling		Duplex			Multi-Unit			Acc. Bldg/Other									
	#	Value	#	Units	Value	#	Units	Value	#	Value	#	Value	#	Value	#	Value	#	Value
Jan											2	\$216,000.00			1	\$200,000.00	3	\$416,000.00
Feb									1	\$16,000.00	4	\$153,000.00					5	\$169,000.00
Mar	1	\$410,000.00							1	\$6,000.00	3	\$11,730.00					5	\$427,730.00
Apr									5	\$89,278.00	2	\$138,000.00			1	\$400,000.00	8	\$627,278.00
May									5	\$51,900.00	2	\$8,500.00	1	\$4,000.00			8	\$64,400.00
Jun	1	\$450,000.00							3	\$31,552.25							4	\$481,552.25
Jul	1	\$500,000.00	1	2	\$900,000.00				16	\$244,274.95	1	\$500.00					19	\$1,644,774.95
Aug			1	2	\$477,000.00				3	\$32,500.00	1	\$7,500.00			2	\$550,000.00	7	\$1,067,000.00
Sep			1	2	\$440,000.00				4	\$172,500.00							5	\$612,500.00
Oct									12	\$159,563.45	1	\$240,000.00	1	\$100,000.00			14	\$499,563.45
Nov	1	\$370,000.00							2	\$121,000.00	3	\$220,000.00	2	\$110,000.00	3	\$23,975,000.00	11	\$24,796,000.00
Dec									1	\$14,165.96	2	\$20,000.00					3	\$34,165.96
	4	\$1,730,000.00	3	6	\$1,817,000.00	0	0	\$0.00	53	\$938,734.61	21	\$1,015,230.00	4	\$214,000.00	7	\$25,125,000.00	92	\$30,839,964.61

Operations - Planning & Development

Inter-Municipal Development Plan (IDP)

The Town and Mountain View County signed an Inter-Municipal Development Plan (IDP) in November of 2020. This plan included several citizen engagements over the past couple of years which included a session with impacted landowners. This plan is legislated and sets the framework for how land uses will be assigned and how development will be managed for decades into the future. This plan also included an annexation request for three quarter sections in the North East area of the Town. Both municipalities have agreed to move forward on the annexation. The Town will be submitting an annexation report to the Province in 2021.

Municipal Development Plan (MDP)

The Town is also in the final stages of approving their Municipal Development Plan with approval likely to occur in early 2021.

The MDP legislated, and must comply with provisions of the IDP which is an over-arching (higher level) plan. As the Town was working on both plans simultaneously, the plans are in sync without conflicts between the two plans. The MDP sets out how the Town plans to grow over the next 30 years. The plan also highlights primary developments in the Northeast area of Town will be commercial and industrial.



2020 Capital Projects - Rotary Athletic Park of Olds

The main construction of Rotary Athletic Park of Olds was completed in June of 2020. This top notch facility consists of: ten horseshoe pits (constructed for national level tournaments), 2 slowpitch/softball diamonds, 2 baseball diamonds, batting cage, 2 major league sized soccer fields designed for play for 4 minor league fields fitting perpendicular within the 2 major fields, washroom structure, and 2.97 km of paved trails. All baseball diamonds and soccer fields have underground irrigation systems. The pandemic interrupted the full utilization of the park, however the park will serve Olds and area for decades to come.

Community Services

As we know COVID has had an impact on everything that Community Services offers. There was a lot of transitioning to COVID friendly activities as well as Emergency Services offerings. Our department transitioned into Emergency Social Services and part of our jobs was to connect regularly with different businesses and community groups. There was real sense of community and many relationships built in the process.

Arts

September 2020 – Alberta Culture Days and Month of the Artist in Alberta! “Arts-tember!” promotion online and print media highlighting public art in Olds with information and online activities (i.e. word searches, scavenger hunts, etc.). A month-long celebration and promotion of the art and creativity found in our community, made accessible in these Covid-times through virtual programming.

Culture

Continued support for community efforts in developing a creative, welcoming, and inclusive community including:

- Truth and Reconciliation through collaboration with Mountain View Moccasin House Society and Olds Indigenous Connections in their planning of National Indigenous Peoples Day and other initiatives
- KAIROS Blanket Exercises
- Orange Shirt Day proclamation
- Recognized and promoted Métis Week
- Support for UBUNTU Mobilizing Central Alberta and their request for a proclamation of Black History Month in Olds in February, 2021
- International Women’s Day Proclamation March 8th
- Support for Olds and District Hospice Society including proclaiming Hospice Palliative Care Week

All in support of our efforts towards increased awareness and celebration of the spectrum of diversity in our community.



Community Programmer

It was certainly a challenge to come up with creative ways to offer COVID friendly programming. The following are some highlights of what programs were implemented:

- Two Virtual Escape Rooms were held - Legends of Blackstone Witches; & Frostbite Winter Escape. Both received positive feedback.
- Created a Christmas Light Tour & Map for Olds with over 50 addresses submitted to the tour.
- Partnered with staff from the Youth Empowerment & Support to create a Home Town Hunt around Town.
- Hunt for Oliver throughout the trail system and post a photo to social media.

Nu2U

Even being shut down for a couple of months, Nu2U was still able to grant \$10,000 back to the community for a total of \$314,421 given out to date.



Community Services



Events

• Canada Day 2020 was a learning experience. COVID 19 brought challenges on how to celebrate Canada Day while keeping everyone safe. With the support of community members in the music industry, the Town was able to pull together a Canada Day Virtual Concert. There was representation from different cultures in our country as well, a variety of age groups participated making the virtual concert a success.

• Olds Fashioned Christmas – Merry Motorcade and Family Event. Again with brainstorming with an incredible group of volunteers on the OFC committee, we were able to offer some Christmas Cheer to our community. On November 21, we kicked off Christmas with the Merry Motorcade. This involved two motorcade groups of Christmas light themed parade floats that toured the Town, complete with Santa and Mrs. Claus. The family event was also drastically changed with Alberta Health Service regulations. Over 300 people attended and enjoyed the Christmas themed stations.



Great Neighbours Program

Successful transition implementing Emergency Social Services programs.

- Celebration Drive By's
- Isolation Check in Services
- Neighbour Help Card
- Volunteer Bank
- Grocery and Prescription delivery information

Sportsplex

This was an area that was especially challenging with the ever-changing government restrictions. The Town adapted well and partnered with surrounding communities to leverage ice and floor times.

Aquatic Centre

The pool transitioned with the government regulations offering what could be done in a COVID safe manner. There were numerous household rentals and many lessons given throughout the year. OAC hosted Pool operators 1 and 2 with 5 local staff completing the courses.

Splashpark

Splashpark opened and staff checked hourly for maintenance and cleaning.

Public Engagement ‘THIS AFFECTS YOU’

Engagement is about gathering ideas, opinions, and input from those who could be impacted. Residents and local businesses provide elected officials and policy makers a variety of perspectives, which is valuable for policy development and decision making. In 2020, in-person public consultations were limited due to public health restrictions, but key engagement processes were conducted virtually.

Budget

In September 2020, the Town of Olds ran an online budget engagement campaign. The purpose was to learn about the priorities of residents and business owners and give them a say on where they would cut or increase spending, and how they would raise or lower taxes. Participants were tasked with increasing, decreasing or maintaining their property tax funding for different budget categories, with the added constraint of staying within a balanced budget. They were also asked to rank their top five areas of focus for future Town priorities.

The process both educated the population on the various town services, while asking them to make trade-offs in the same way elected officials must do to stay within budget. Valuable data was collected and taken into consideration for the 2021 Budget.

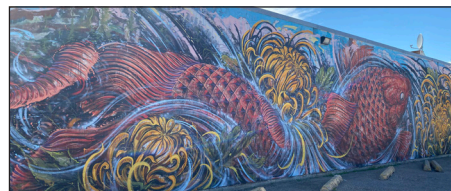
Intermunicipal Development Plan

A public ‘virtual’ Open House was held August 27, 2020 to discuss development and proposed Annexation. A open comment period was held on our website through to September 4, 2020.

The Intermunicipal Development plan was passed by Council

Supergraphics/ Murals

A survey was available online or in print version from August 5 to September 15, 2020. 456 responses were received. Town of Olds staff met with the Uptowne Committee for additional feedback.



74% of respondents indicated that murals should require an application and review by a community-based Advisory Committee to provide recommendations to Council. 42% indicated they were not in support of municipal revenues going towards funding mural development and maintenance. Although there were diverse opinions about the content and imagery, most respondents (90%) indicated that Olds should have more murals.

Feedback from the survey was presented to Council at the October 5, 2020 Policies and Procedures meeting and the Land Use Bylaw was amended March 22, 2021 to clarify development process of obtaining a mural and long-term responsibilities of creating one.



Animal Control Beyond Cats & Dogs

A survey was available online, print version from August 5 to September 15, 2020. 660 responses were received, and 100 phone interviews were conducted.

Over two-thirds of the people who completed the survey were supportive of allowing chickens and bees in the Town of Olds. Most respondents requested regulations including prohibiting roosters, setting limits on the number of birds allowed per household and that potential noise and odour issues would be addressed. If chickens were allowed, municipal regulations around cleanliness and adequate housing for animals should be developed.

Most respondents did not support having larger animals in Olds. Survey participants strongly supported a user-pay principle and did not support increases in municipal taxes to support a person's decision to have animals.



Feedback from the survey was presented to Council at the October 5, 2020 Policies and Procedures meeting and the Land Use Bylaw and Community Standards Bylaws were amended on April 26, 2021 allowing urban chickens within Olds as outlined in the bylaws.

Protective Services

This joint task force will assist the Town of Olds in being proactive with community education and safety with all branches of protection.

Some highlights of this new group include:

- Firefighters volunteered their time to create and maintain the Outdoor ice-skating surfaces pilot project.
- Hiring of a Full Time Deputy Fire Chief.
- Municipal Enforcement providing services such as “drive

by celebrations’ as part of the Great Neighbours program.

- The Positive Ticket program which is geared towards youth that are “caught” showcasing being active and leading by example with traffic safety in the community.
- RCMP Community Resource Officer connecting with the local schools to build positive relationships with the students and faculty.



- Completed an entire inspection cycle of all inspectable occupancies within the Town of Olds.
- Purchase of Drager System 64: Portable Exterior Live Fire Trainer which allows the Fire Department to have the flexibility to conduct live fire training scenarios with interchangeable props virtually anywhere.

Economic Development

In 2020, the Economic Development Secretariat had an extremely busy year, especially in regard to addressing COVID-19’s impact on our business community.

Within weeks of COVID-19 being identified as a serious threat to our health and our businesses, the Economic Development Secretariat formed a Task Force to inform and assist our business community.

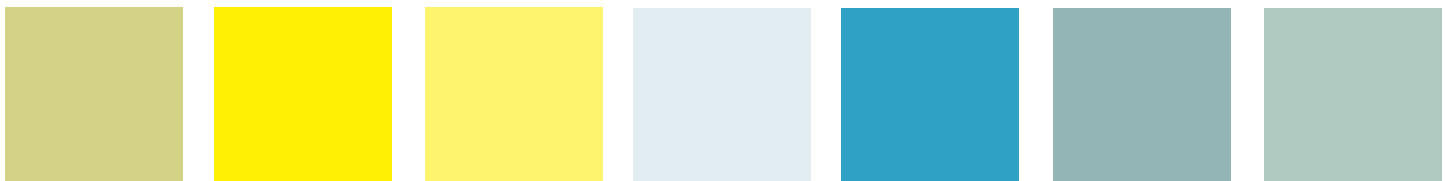
The Task Force worked with our Emergency Management Team and Town Administration to develop an action plan to address the unprecedented situation. They were involved in the Reopening Grant as offered by the Town, in informing businesses of assistance and funding programs available to them, and with tax and utility deferrals.

The Economic Development Secretariat met regularly with Central Alberta Economic Partnership (CAEP), Economic Developers Alberta (EDA), and the Province of Alberta to advocate for our business community and to also share

good news stories.

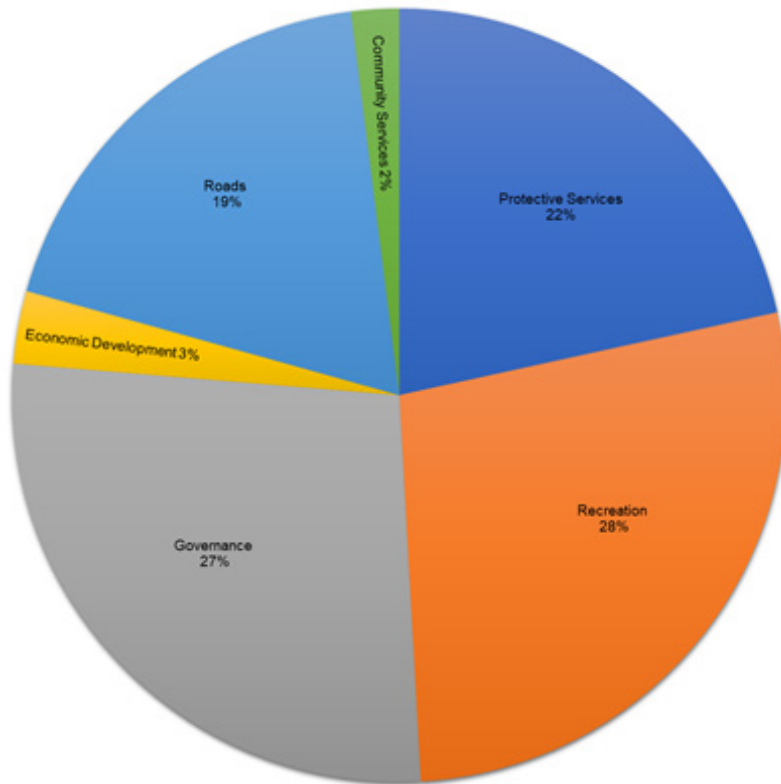
In regards to development, the Town once again saw \$30.8 Million in business permits, with 25.1 Million of that representative of Institutional.

Additionally, our Town maintained a 76/24 assessment split.



Finance

Where your 2020 Tax Dollars were spent



What you get for your Tax Dollars

- 24-hr police & fire service
- Over 100 kms of roadways, streetlights, pedestrian crosswalks and safety signage and traffic signals
- Year-round street cleaning, street maintenance & snow removal
- Indoor recreation facilities
 - * Olds Aquatic Centre (5 lane - 25 metre lap pool, tot pool, hot tub and waterslide).
 - * Olds Sportsplex (2 ice surfaces)
- Outdoor Recreation
 - * Rotary Athletic Park (4 ball diamonds, 2 soccer pitches, horseshoe pits)
 - * OR Hedges Ball Diamonds (3 ball diamonds)
 - * More than 20 kms of snow-cleared, primary pathway system.
 - * 15 parks, 16 playgrounds and over 300 acres of greenspace
 - * Off Leash Dog Park (16 acres)
 - * Skatepark
 - * Splashpark
 - * Outdoor Skating rinks (6 new in 2020).

Financial Impacts of COVID-19

The Town of Olds recorded COVID-19 related expenses and lost revenues of approximately \$750,000 in 2020 (this amount does not include regular staffing hours that were spent on various COVID-19 activities which includes such things as the Emergency Management Team, Cleaning of Facilities, etc.)

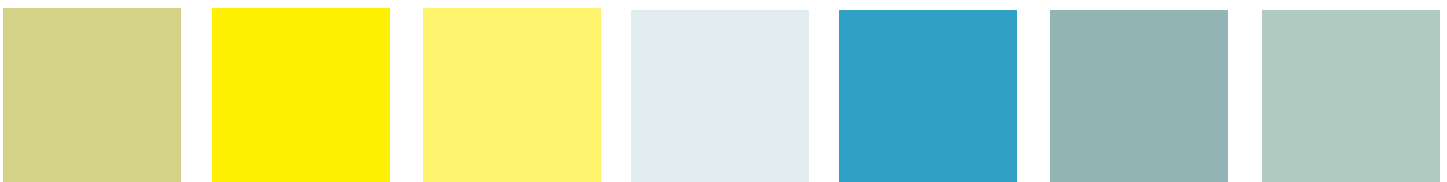
While there were increased costs associated with Direct COVID expenses. Many steps were implemented to reduce expenses during this period:

- Staffing:
 - Reduced summer staff for the 2020 summer season
 - Postponed hiring of any non-emergent staff vacancies
- Direct expense reductions to areas such as conferences, training, fire inspections, facility utilities costs and good and supplies
- Capital plan was modified to ensure cash flow would remain stable.
- Initiatives implemented in 2020 to support residents and local businesses included:
 - 90-day utility payment deferral program
 - Extended property tax due date to August 31
 - Cancelled penalties on accounts receivable accounts for a 90-day period
 - Business re-opening grant program

In September, 2020 the Government of Alberta announced two programs to help support municipalities, the Town of Olds was allocated:

\$934,963 through the Municipal Operating Support Transfer (MOST). This program was to cover operating costs such as lost revenues, PPE, cleaning, and staffing costs. It is to be used in entirety by March 31, 2021.

\$1,091,694 through the Municipal Stimulus Program (MSP) this program was to provide additional capital infrastructure funding. This is funding the 70 Avenue intersection improvements.



Finance

Grants

The Town of Olds has seen significant increases to grant dollars since hiring a grant administrator. This position also lends a hand local service groups, non-profits and societies trying to secure as much funding for the Community of Olds as possible.

YEAR	2018	2019	2020
# of Grants Applied For	12	23	22
# of Grants Received	12	17	17
\$\$ Value of Grants Received	\$3,283,046	\$4,849,925	\$8,472,775*

* Includes COVID-19 funding of \$2,026,657.

Accumulated Surplus

YEAR	2018	2019	2020
Unrestricted Surplus (Reserves)	\$1,422,655	\$1,422,655	\$4,274,480
Restricted Surplus (Reserves)	\$9,106,357	\$8,999,594	\$9,637,053
Equity in TCA	\$75,361,962	\$79,702,790	\$78,218,191
TOTAL ACCUMULATED SURPLUS	\$85,890,974	\$90,125,039	\$92,129,724

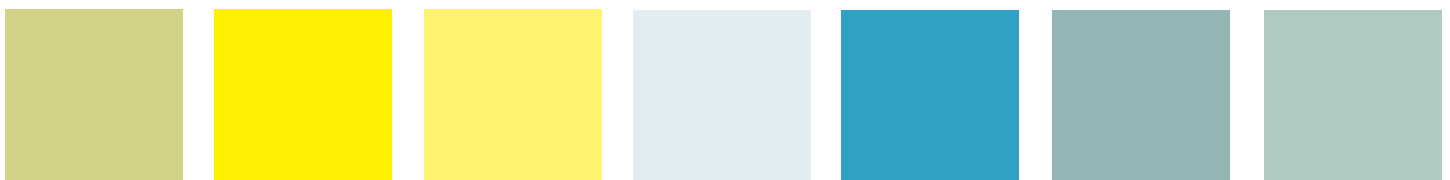
Unrestricted Reserves are best described as an emergency savings account held by a municipality to use for unexpected expenses incurred at a later date.

Restricted Reserves are funds set aside by a municipality for a specific future project, or as a contingency for excess costs in a specific area.

Utility E-Billing

In 2020 the percentage of customers signed up for e-billing grew to **36%** (up from 30% in 2019).

The Town of Olds spends **\$33,000** on postage annually.



Emergency Management

Uncertainty, unprecedented public health restrictions coupled with public discord, created challenges never seen before in our community. The Town of Olds has managed challenges associated with COVID-19 pandemic with support from its Emergency Management team and partners.

Working with community stakeholders, we have provided the support and assistance to help keep the community safe. Town priorities included public health, maintaining essential services, adjusting facilities and services based on public health orders, supporting local business and communication.

Awareness and coordination have been key in managing Covid-19 in our community. The Emergency Management team hosted weekly Situation Meetings to ensure local emergency management partners and stakeholders were on the same page and supporting to residents.



A testament to the quality of our Emergency Management program was a request from the Alberta Emergency Management Agency to use the Town of Olds Emergency Response Plan, COVID-19 Incident Action Plans and other in-house tools as model for other municipalities to use.

The Town made several commitments to assist businesses and residents regarding the impact on COVID-19. Some highlights include:



- Business Re-opening Program.
- Utility and Tax deferrals for residents and businesses.
- Town staff working with nonprofit and service sector volunteer groups.
- The Great Neighbours program resident check-ins and birthday/anniversary celebrations.
- Municipal Enforcement helped to ensure public health orders are being adhered to within our community through the Alberta Health Services protocol.
- New developments continually communicated to the public through Social Media channels and the Town of Olds website www.olds.ca
- Outdoor ice-skating surfaces will be maintained throughout Town neighbourhoods as a COVID-19 pilot project.
- Assist the province where necessary in effectively managing supplies and distributions of materials such as personal protective equipment etc.
- Ensure Town facilities such as Sportsplex, Aquatic Center are safe for public use and following COVID regulations.

Grow OLDS with us!
Support Your Hometown - Shop Local!

Dedicated, Helpful & Knowledgeable



Town of Olds staff faced a year like no other, full of numerous challenges, yet every staff member took on the responsibility to keep our public sector safe and functioning as normal. Many aspects of work changed due to physical distancing restrictions, safety precautions, and of course some staff were working from home via phone calls and video conferences. Staff remained positive, resilient and in no time at all made the transition to this new 'normal' appear seamless.

"The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new."

- Socrates

"Life doesn't get easier or more forgiving, we get stronger and more resilient."

- Steve Maraboli



The Washington Post asked readers to describe the year 2020 in one word - Here is a list of the top ten:

1. Exhausting
2. Lost
3. Chaotic
4. Relentless
5. Surreal
6. Limbo
7. Fallow
8. Heartbreaking
9. Nightmore
10. Broken Dreams

Describe 2020 in 3 words or less:
You're on Mute!



Tribute



It was with heavy hearts that we bid farewell to a most valued member of the Town of Olds team.

Following a very brief illness, Elizabeth Jane Archer passed away November 17, 2020.

Jane worked in the Planning and Development Department for over 15 years.

Thank you Jane for all your years of service and your kindness. You are gravely missed.

A planting of trees will be made in Jane's memory within the Town of Olds park system.



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