

Mayor's Message - 2025 Year in Review



This has been a year of steady, often challenging, but important work in Olds. Together, we have focused on rebuilding our financial health, planning for responsible growth, and taking care of the services and spaces the public rely on every day.

This year also marked an important shift in how the Town plans and delivers its work. Council's Strategic Plan sets the long-term direction, while the Corporate Plan turns that direction into action. Together, they guide decisions, align resources, and keep the Town focused on what matters most to the people of Olds.

Sincerely,

Mayor Dan Daley & the Town Council of Olds

Plans and Reports

This year, continuing to put a strong emphasis on planning and transparency, Council received and approved several key documents, including the first ever [Housing Strategy](#), the [2025 Financial Report](#), the [O-NET Financial Closure Report](#), the Corporate Plan, [Marketing Plan](#), and our updated [Strategic Plan](#). We also asked residents to help shape the [2026 Budget](#) through a survey and online engagement tools.

This review highlights where Olds is today and where we are going.

Olds Municipal Centre – Town Office Relocation

A major milestone this year was the [relocation of the Town Office](#) to the Olds Municipal Centre, a move that reduces costs, improves efficiency, and brings Town services and Council Chambers together in one accessible, modern space. The sale of the former Town Office to Westview Co-op created new tax revenue and helped keep a major employer in Olds.

2025 Municipal Election

In October, voters elected a new Council to serve the community through 2029. [We saw 2,032 residents cast a ballot, representing 28 per cent of eligible voters](#). We are grateful to have such an engaged community and thankful to everyone who put their name forward and to everyone who took the time to vote. The new Council brings a mix of returning and new voices and are eager to connect with the community and commence their own strategic planning process in the new year.

Financial Picture

Over the past year, Olds continued to work through the [financial impacts of the O-NET sale](#), the loss of a major taxpayer (Sundial), as well as the pressures of aging infrastructure. The [2025 Financial Report](#) highlights these challenges and the steps the Town is taking to address them.

The 2025 tax bills reflected this reality, with a modest municipal tax increase to support core infrastructure. However, this was amplified by a significant increase in the provincial education portion of property tax bills, which are beyond our control. We know any increase is difficult, and we remain committed to careful spending, clear communication, and long-term stability.

Economic Development and Growth

Olds serves a trade area of roughly 45,000 to 50,000 people. This positions the community as a [key retail and service hub for the region](#). In 2025, the Town of Olds made meaningful progress in strengthening the local economy by collaborating with local businesses, solidifying data into direction, and providing practical support. Through the [BREWD](#) (Business Retention Expansion and Workforce Development) initiative, business owners across Central Alberta shared clear insights into challenges, opportunities, and priorities, creating a stronger foundation for future economic planning. A comprehensive [Retail Gap Analysis confirmed Olds' strong commercial potential](#) and identified realistic opportunities for business attraction and expansion. At the

same time, support and promotion through the [Regional Business Support Network helped local businesses](#) access advice, resources, and visibility. Together, this work positions Olds well for 2026, with clearer direction, stronger partnerships, and increased confidence to support sustainable business growth and investment.

Housing

The [Housing Strategy](#) is already turning into real projects on the ground. New rental housing, mixed-use developments, and a broader mix of home types are taking shape across town. Several new developments are underway to fulfill the needs uncovered in the assessment. Both 2024 and 2025 broke records in housing starts for the Town, and we plan on keeping this momentum in 2026.

Partnership Properties and Community Spaces

Unlocking the [potential of Town-owned properties](#) that are of value to the community was a significant priority.

The former Fire Hall is being repurposed as a [community service hub](#), supporting several non-profit groups, while the former Public Works Shop will house the Men's Shed and Community Arts Hub. At the former sand and salt shed site, the Town is exploring a partnership with Masterbuilt Projects Ltd. to build a mixed-use building that [brings new housing, commercial space, and tax revenue](#) to East Olds.

By aligning underused spaces with real community needs, we strengthen our social fabric and support neighbourhood renewal.

Health Care

This year, we took an important step forward with the announcement of the [Care First Medical Clinic opening in Olds](#). The addition of a new clinic and new physicians will help reduce waitlists and make it easier for residents to receive care close to home.

The Town also confirmed the investment by the Government of Alberta for a [\\$21 million expansion to the dialysis unit](#) at the Olds hospital, expected to open in 2030.

Infrastructure Services: Water, Wastewater and Waste Reduction

Behind the scenes, some of our most important work this year has been on core infrastructure. We continued to tackle water loss and inflow and infiltration in our sewer system, with measurable progress. Water loss has fallen steadily over the past three years, and I&I is trending down despite higher precipitation. These are not flashy projects, but they are critical to financial sustainability and environmental responsibility.

The Town has [successfully reduced water loss](#) by 7.56 percentage point, [from 28.12% in 2024](#) to 20.56% in 2025, while infiltration and inflow (I&I) dropped 8.07 percentage points, from 39.63% to 31.56%

The [Water Meter Replacement Program](#) moved into its next phase, installing smart meters that improve billing accuracy, help detect leaks early, and give both residents and staff better insight into water use. These upgrades support fairer billing and more efficient system management.

Public Safety & Bylaw Enforcement

Our RCMP detachment reported a [20 per cent decrease](#) in the Crime Severity Index, reflecting fewer serious offences and stronger collaboration among RCMP, Municipal Enforcement, and the Town. At the same time, RCMP continued to warn residents about scams, fraud, and online risks, with special attention to seniors.

And with added resources, Municipal Enforcement shifted toward a more proactive model, focusing on yard care, parking, and animal concerns during the busy summer months.

Mountain View Power and Community Investment

Mountain View Power continued to demonstrate how a local utility can drive local impact, introducing a new brand and logo that reflect its commitment to optimism, community, and keeping profits in the region. Since 2023, [MVP has reinvested over \\$350,000](#) through its grant program, as well as \$20,000 for the [Uptowne Storefront Beautification Grant](#), which helped local businesses improve their storefronts and strengthen the Uptowne core.

[Every customer who chooses MVP](#) is, in essence, choosing to invest in Olds. That model of “neighbours supporting neighbours” continues to pay dividends in the quality of life we enjoy.

Public Art and Culture

Public art took a major step forward this year with the [Cornerstone Art Commons refresh](#) led by [PACO \(the Public Art Collective of Olds\)](#). A community art contest brought new, bold panels that highlight unity, roots, and growth, while the previous artwork is being repurposed in Town facilities to extend its life and reach. This project shows how local art can transform public spaces and how volunteers, clubs, and the Town can work together to create a stronger sense of place.

Parks, Recreation and Facilities

The Town continued to invest carefully in recreation facilities, with a focus on extending the life of the [Olds Sportsplex](#) through a long-term renewal plan guided by public input and [detailed assessments](#). Early work is underway, with mechanical and accessibility upgrades planned first and a major electrical upgrade set for 2026, helping avoid the much higher cost of replacing the facility. Smaller improvements also enhanced everyday use of other spaces, including a [new sauna at the Aquatic Centre](#).

Engagement and Public Participation

Here are the ways the [public was invited to participate](#) with our key decisions in 2025:

- [2026 Budget Survey](#)
- [Housing Needs Assessment](#)
- [Land Use Bylaw and Municipal Development Plan](#)
- [Coffee with Council](#) events at the Olds Farmer's Market created informal spaces for conversation and feedback.

Communications and Staying Connected

This year we improved how the Town shares information. The new Town website improved access to information, while the bi-weekly [Amplifier e-newsletter](#) continues to grow as a trusted source of local updates. [Voyent Alert](#) remains a key tool for emergency and service notices, helping ensure residents receive clear, timely information when it matters most.

Looking Forward to 2026

This has been a year of hard work and honest conversations. We have not shied away from the difficult realities we face — from aging infrastructure and past financial decisions to growth pressures and changing community needs. At the same time, we have seen clear signs of progress: new housing projects, a stronger retail outlook, positive safety trends, renewed facilities, and deep community investment through programs like Mountain View Power.

On behalf of Council, thank you for your patience, your feedback, and your continued belief in Olds. We will keep listening, planning, and acting with care, so that our community remains a place where people of all ages can live, work, learn, and belong.



Left to Right: Councillor Chad Taylor, Councillor Darren Wilson, Councillor Mary Anne Overwater, Mayor Dan Daley, Councillor Wanda Blatz, Councillor Curtis Cook, Councillor Ben Chrusch