

THIS AFFECTS YOU!



Public Comments

Transparency is a guiding principle of an engagement process. Please note comments are presented as submitted by respondents. Comments were not consolidated, so comments or sentiments may be repeated several times.

As per Town of Olds Social Media Policy 111C the Town of Olds has the right to redact comments that could identify a specific individual(s), is slanderous or defamatory, contains obscene language, sexual content or promotes fosters or perpetuates discrimination for presentation in this report. Comments that were completed unrelated or off topic to the subject matter may have also been removed.

This survey included a live blog feature where people could comment on other submissions. Some comments are a direct response to another submission.

Based on your current satisfaction level for Operations, how would you adjust your property tax funding for this particular area? Comments:

Manage overtime and limit to truly emergent work. Challenge the operations group to find efficiencies and do more with less. Reduce seasonal hires. Perhaps the standard of service in some areas, such as green space maintenance, doesn't necessarily have to be "platinum level"....Council, administration and residents need to adjust expectations relative to what is an acceptable And AFFORDABLE level of service. With respect to snow clearing, continue to Adjust and revise, communicate and emphasize the priority snow clearing Route plan; Its Canada and we live in a snow belt so ensure your vehicle is equipped with proper winter tires.

As a resident on Shannon Drive, snow removal and icy conditions at intersections on Shannon Drive during winter months in 2019/2020 was a big concern and hazard. I was disappointed in the above last winter as this is not only used by residents but as a bypass road. Snow was pushed to the side of the road making it difficult to back out from driveway. The dip in the road near Sierra Close needs repair, s pavement is breaking away.

Keep up on the annual road and utilities work, even if it is small pieces each year we need to maintain the core infrastructure. The 3 bin program is positive, we need to continue to lead with compost, recycling, and garbage (waste diversion/mitigation).

With the coming addition of the new operations centre, how will the employee breaks be controlled, ie. Will employees be travelling back to the centre from where ever they are working for all of their breaks?

Snow can be stock piled in large parking lots but snow should be removed from roads. I am going to guess that the people saying that snow removal should be cut drive trucks and have four wheel drive. Not everyone drives a four wheeler and I know a few essential workers who drive cars and depend on their vehicle to get to work. Homeowners and Renters should have to shovel the sidewalks in front of their houses Senior Homes being the only exception.

This is a false statement. We recycle everything that can be recycled and everything biodegradable goes to compost. Our black bin sits full for long periods of time. We have a larger household and 3 weeks is a long time allowing Birds and cats to rip open our Garbage bags. We do not need the green bin as much during the winter months because our yard waste doesn't get put in there till spring.

That's a terrible idea...
Don't base snow removal on the budget amount remaining in the account. Only remove when it is necessary. Save when you can.
Green bin pick up doesn't need to be so often in the winter months. Have the snow plow truck plow the residential areas more instead of plowing already plowed roads leading out of down town. Sidewalks along 50 st west of the Mountain View Seniors Lodge in desperate need of repair on both sides of the street.
There should be constant vigilance of determining whether it is prudent to purchase low use equipment or contract work out.
Black bin needs a biweekly pick up!
I agree, black bin garbage should be picked up every second week. Especially in the summer the smell gets disgusting....also no doubt a health hazard.
Black pin pick up should be every other week. Recycling is great, if there is a Market for it but for a lot of it there isn't and goes into the landfill anyway. People with young families shouldn't have to put up with 3 weeks of dirty diapers in their bin. It's a health hazard as well as Putting up with the smell especially during the summer months. Pick-up for garbage should have never been changed to go that long.
Decrease snow removal in all areas. The taxpayers are paying for an excess service not required. Contract out services for hauling snow and get rid of owning/leasing so much equipment. In low snow years the cost will be saved money for next year's budget when snowfall is higher. Decrease the number of town employees and layers of management, all other areas of government have been majorly downsizing, yet we seem to continually be hiring. The Town Council need to understand the magnitude of this recession and start thinking about what is essential services and where can we cut? Peace Officers driving around looking for infractions is a waste of money. Town should not be in business that competes with private sector ie: vac truck
Black pin pickup every 3 weeks is barely enough. Green bin pickup could halt for the winter months.
We don't need green bin picked up in the winter months as often. Increase the black bin pick up. Get rid of the peace officers it is a waste of money.
Please reduce black bin pick-ups to once a month and increase blue bin pickup to every other week. The remaining week each month is for compost bin pick up. We're a busy family of four and we never fill our garbage bin, we require more frequent recycling pickup...plus that would force the lazy to deal with their recycling. Any household requiring more than one garbage bin pickup a month can pay an additional fee.
Black bin pickup should be every second week and green bin and blue bin should alternate every first week. Especially in winter. The town stinks. We can take recycling and yard refuse to convent locations in Olds. We don't have that option with garbage.
I would like to see walking trails around Imperial and new diamonds cleaned in winter
willing to see some decreased snow removal on paths and streets
increase enforcement regarding unsightly premises
Snow removal is very poor. Would like to see the snow plow truck actually lower his blade while traveling the streets to smooth out ruts while the truck is graveling intersections.
Would be willing to see decreased service level (snow clearing ect) considering economic climate.
Would the increase come from another budget or planning on increasing already high tax rates? Would a decrease in the budget be reallocated to another department like community services?
Better maintenance upkeep of greenspace walking paths. Grass over grown in summer and no snow removal in winter. Winter use on some walking paths impossible.
Increase black bin pick up. Not frequent enough for some families.
Better snow cleaning of streets. High lows spots are ridiculous and going to wreck cars. Better enforcement of yard maintenance. If homeowner has a front yard looking like a jungle or junk yard need to look at fines or changing property owners with clean fees.
Snow removal in areas more than 1x a season

Based on how much snow removal we receive alone I would decrease the rate
Owners of property must be required to keep their property in decent shape, weeds and bags and tree scraps littering the yard. It is rather a contrast to the many attempts to beautify the Highway 27. I'm afraid I have no idea what the Arts Common is all about - looks like a waste of money to me
Living on 57st near the Catholic school, the snow plowing was outstanding this past winter, very grateful.
Town Bylaw and Peace Officers needs to be cut, waste of money.
Maybe reduce the amount spent on them and yes, increase outdoor activity spaces like more at the skate park, bike trails, bike jump area, walking trails out of town.
I agree with increase in black bin pickup in summer and less green bin pickup in winter.
The green areas have never been so poorly looked after as they have this year.
Revitalization of Uptowne/downtown Olds needs to continue beyond 50th. Sewer, water lines and decor on the adjoining streets are old, failing and need attention. Many empty buildings in the core forcing a devaluation of properties -- and artificially low lease rates in some cases to fill vacant spaces. Uptowne needs a concerted effort to help it thrive especially during Covid-19 -- reduce the tax burden, offer incentives and perhaps implement a BRZ-like approach.
Snow removal was terrible this past winter
That's really, really, really expensive.
Repave roads by 51 Ave – 50 Street.
Add sidewalk snow removal of all areas to the services.
Infrastructure must be maintained or improved. If not it will only cost us more in the longer run.
I agree with increase black bin pick-up and decrease green bin. Invest in trails - people love them and use them. Make Highway 27 running through town more attractive.
Increase black bin pickup in the summer (bins smell like rotting corpses) and reduce green bin pickup in the winter (not much for organic waste for at least 5 months). Should be able to balance the cost over the year.
More snow removal please. Our street was not done last winter. More trails that are not on a busy roadway .
Get rid of the Town Bylaw and Peace Officers, they are a waste of money. Build more trails and outdoor activity places.
It is frustrating knowing what needs to be done yet there never seems to be no one giving staff proper direction for effective time management
Please consider putting lights for crossing at the 4 way stop on 54th street. It's very dangerous for little ones to cross. More than once I have seen very close mishaps. It could even be the similar light they used further down the street heading south.
Invest in more sidewalks along highway 27 in East olds! And upgrade the ones that are at 27 and 2a !!! Cut back cutting grass and flower upkeep in the parks. This year was particularly bad!
Important to maintain these services and plan ahead.

Based on your current satisfaction level for Protective Services, how would you adjust your property tax funding for this particular area? Comments:

Continue with public awareness and education programs. Neighbourhood watch/ vigilance and citizens on patrol or similar initiatives. Steady as she goes until the town resumes growth and expansion.
--

<p>Bylaw appears to be out doing more, hope this isn't just a COVID thing, but they appear to be more active and interacting well with residents. What will it take to have Bylaw on more for speeding late at night and on weekends, and for animal concerns especially to deal with dogs? People are more likely to be home at night to track down and activity in parks and recreation facilities in the evening and on weekends. I hate to admit it but I think we need more Bylaw. Fire seems excellent. Police cover what they can. Overall Olds is a safe community - thank you.</p>
<p>Is there an initiative to provide public education for persons on bicycles, or mobility scooters, and the laws of using them on public roads, ie. travelling on the against the flow of traffic?</p>
<p>Peace officers are not needed unless they work nights and early mornings when night prowler go through vehicles and people speed out of town going 140km. RCMP officers are good at what they do let them do it. The last thing we need is a Town full of citizens who either hate or are afraid of Cops.</p>
<p>I would rather see funding go toward RCMP than peace officers. I still think we need one, but I don't think we need two.</p>
<p>I would defund Peace Officers.</p>
<p>There needs to be significant reconsideration regarding the necessity of multiple bylaw officers in our town. I would much rather see bylaw officers enforcing the maintenance of people's lawns and sidewalks</p>
<p>I would particularly cut funding to Peace Officers for Olds. We did not need to add an additional peace officer.</p>
<p>There does not need to be 2 Bylaw Officers, and if there is they should be cross trained in fire. The fire department does not need 4 full time employees. The call volume has not increased but the staffing has. Also, we do not need Cadillac trucks when Chevy would do the job.</p>
<p>Evaluate the effectiveness of bylaw enforcement. Is it doing what we want it to do or is it just issuing tickets to justify its existence.</p>
<p>By law officers are a waste of funds. I don't see how they actually contribute to a better & safer community. Would rather see the funds spent elsewhere.</p>
<p>I think a bylaw officer position for a town our size could either be shared with some surrounding towns or other duties incorporated to the position.</p>
<p>There should be more patrolling done at night and early morning, that's when most break-ins take place.</p>
<p>More Police presence at night.</p>
<p>Would be nice to see an increased police presence in town.</p>
<p>More police presence is needed during the night and early morning hours as that's when break-ins occur.</p>
<p>We should better communicate just how safe we are and help those filled with fear of the mostly nonexistent boogeyman of crime. We live in the safest time ever in one of the safest places on our planet. Breathe deep, find contentment and enjoy your luck at being able to live in Canada. RCMP can and will find many inventive and ingenious ways to deal with a slight decrease in funding. Households deal with budgetary shortages, so can those who serve and protect.</p>
<p>We should have a highly visible patrol vehicle driving around Olds at night to reduce crime at businesses and residential areas. I rarely see the RCMP driving only around Olds at night when most crime occurs most likely because they don't have sufficient resources. Reduce bylaw to help fund it.</p>
<p>Rcmp - yes bylaw and peace officer - wasteful. What do they really do? Do the tickets they give warrant the salary? Give their salary to the RCMP instead.</p>
<p>I find that bylaw officers and sheriffs enforcing town bylaws are more concerned about giving tickets than walking up to someones front door with a warning for 1st time minor infractions.</p>
<p>Adjust the budget based on what your departments are saying they need.</p>
<p>Bylaw officers seem a waste of funds. Previous town lived in had a part time bylaw officer and after a year of review the position was terminated as nothing was done. Seems to be the same in this community. May need to review this position of the next year to determine if this position is really worth the money.</p>

Bylaw seems pointless. The biggest bylaw problem in town is late night noise, especially backyard parties. Bylaw does not solve this.
Glad Olds has a well run Fire Department, voted for an increase last year, glad the Town listened. Appreciated Covid information and efforts.
Town bylaw officer is not needed full time.
I am all for Protective Service but there has to be some justification. Police and Fire are a given. I'm not sure what our Bylaw Officers are doing? I still see people talking on their phones while driving every day in Olds. Maybe post weekly or monthly stats of the Bylaw Officers so we can see what they do and see if they are required. I support the police but rarely see an RCMP car in Olds (other than leaving town or going back to their office) and don't recall seeing one ever stop anyone.
The town is growing each year and protective services must keep pace with growth.
Bylaws and peace officer are a drain on our tax dollars. Put our taxes to better use.
Get rid of Bylaw and Peace officers, they are a waste of money.
It would be nice to see a greater police presence at night other than at the local TH when was the last time anyone saw a RCMP patrol at night, and the bylaw officers seem to do not much and to have two on staff seems to be a waste of tax money
the bylaws I asked to be enforced have never been done
I would be interested in knowing how much of the 1.9 goes to the RCMP and Sherrifs. I have no doubt its gross and I would love to see that money better delignated into programs to support the community to its highest potential. Let Olds be an example of strength that way.
The police and bylaw officers have done a good job every time we have needed them. Idiots will be idiots and unless we want a nanny state we will have to put up with some. We can't police everything. Thank you.
RCMP should pull up their socks and fine yokel speeding...3% increase on these services is essential and justified. They serve us but we need more Bylaw action and punctuality during quiet hours hence the increase - please more effective action oriented Bylaw. Motivate RCMP more please to help and take charge of Bylaw too. Support it.

Based on your current satisfaction level for Community Services, how would you adjust your property tax funding for this particular area? Comments:

Challenge this department to look for efficiencies and improvements. As a minimum....hold spend flat and increased spend should be tied to population growth for the town.
Olds boasts many great community things. Though Community Services is not an "essential" core service, it is very important. Parks, culture, sport, recreation, seniors centre, museum, library and community events don't just magically happen it takes a dedicated effort to foster community. Community development is a delicate combination of community volunteer initiative and Town initiative. I hope we can continue to resource Community Services to work with and support the community. Our economic growth is tied to these things. Olds is a great community to raise a family, it is not just the Town, but the Town needs to continue to have an active role in developing our cultural fabric.
Has consideration been given to install a permanent beautification element, rather than the extremely large flower containers on the highway 27 concrete median by Cornerstone?
Is there an initiative to provide a more inclusive connection of the various walking/cycling paths throughout town?
I like the Volunteered events and would love to see more! The splash park and skate park were great ideas. However we need more things to do in the winter months when things get depressing.

<p>Having community services is especially essential right now when the ability to travel outside of town is harder. Also, we want to keep people in our community instead of making it more desirable to go to the city for these amenities. This will have a positive effect on businesses in town as well, especially if we can attract people from outside our community and outside areas. Services like libraries, rec facilities, and other activities that make Olds a "nice place to live" will only have a long lasting positive effect on the overall health of our community. We need to have more attention and focus given to activities and services that are attractive to the young professionals or new adults to attract and keep them too!</p>
<p>Add an outdoor rink to the recreation facilities in Olds!</p>
<p>Public healthcare doesn't quite seem fair when I do not use the services nearly as much as some. You not being an engaged member of the community doesn't warrant diminishing recreational facilities.</p>
<p>Supporting the community nets a stronger community. Watch out that you aren't just spending money on public relations and excess advertising in a time when the dollars are really needed to keep things running in this time when operational expenses are up due to COVID. Ask if this is necessary before authorizing the spending.</p>
<p>Shrink the budget, focus the spending on where we see value, and eliminate the waste.</p>
<p>Our services, and recreational facilities are what draw people to our community. We need to keep our facilities clean & in good work order to attract people.</p>
<p>Make it clear to taxpayers that pools, libraries and arenas lose money and it will likely always be this way. Albertans who claim to despise socialism don't realize these public places wouldn't be possible at all (same for hospitals and roads) if not for taxpayer covering the red ink on the books. I'm more than happy to pay a little bit more for this to be honest.</p>
<p>This could be reduced to only essential services. Perhaps looking at arena staffing levels to only have multiple staff at peak times. The sunshine Bus is really nice for seniors and raising the prices would potentially put a strain on the seniors. The Thrift store could be managed through another business in town or funded through private tax deductible donations. Recreational facilities could be better founded through private fundraisers golf tournaments, raffles ect which would allow citizens to support what they are using.</p>
<p>Careful with the funding of recreational facilities. Increasing tax rates seems unfair when some people do not use all or any. Or when tax dollars in the rural areas do not always contribute and those in the rural areas use the facilities as well. User fees, fundraising, volunteer hours or donations can be looked at when it comes to operational and some maintenance costs of these facilities.</p>
<p>Please, don't raise the Sunshine Bus rates more than \$5 a one way trip, so many that use this service are on a fixed income.</p>
<p>Love Nu2U, fireworks and Events</p>
<p>The Town does NOT fund ORE! OI, O-Net and Mountain View Power are outcomes of community engagement, volunteerism and provide uniqueness and opportunity for Olds. Municipalities do NOT need to compete with not for profit, service organizations in event production. The Town needs to focus on providing roads, services and let volunteer driven initiatives like Olds Fashioned Christmas endure and flourish. Stay in your lane Town of Olds!</p>
<p>One of the things I love about Olds is the sense of community. Feels like a small town with all the amenities of a city. One of the Soccer fields at Rotary Park should have been artificial turf. With our wet springs (which sometimes have snow still coming) and short falls (snow sometimes falling in September) an artificial turf field is essential. Last two falls we have had to rent an artificial turf field in Lacombe in late September as we had snow and would have destroyed any fields in Olds.</p>
<p>A major upgrade at the Sportsplex is desperately needed the bandage fixes are no longer adequate! quite funding OI, ONet, ORE, and put the money into a new community hall the new sports field and ball diamonds are a great addition 40 years in the making!!</p>
<p>Some outdoor skating rinks would be great!</p>
<p>Instead of more less wasting all the money on the ball diamonds and splash park that can be used by 1% for 3-4 months of the year. There should have been a hill put in so families can go tobogganing in the winter which is 9 to10 months of the year!</p>

Recreation in this Town is fabulous and need to be built out and strengthened. Please continue in this area. The winters are long and cold and we need more indoor activity areas - a long course pool would be nice....

Based on your current satisfaction level for the Towns parks and trail pathways, how would you adjust your property tax funding for this particular area?

Comments:

Limit spend to essential maintenance and repair that is tied to user safety. Hold the line on flower baskets and planters.....reduce frequency of maintenance and update of planters and reduce seasonal hires.
I like the sculptures along the hiway they add some pizzazz! I like the trails system, playgrounds, and flowers. It all makes our town look nice and be an enjoyable place to live. I am proud to take visiting friends and family out for walks in town.
NOT important
The dog park is great, but what about a smaller dog run in town too, like Hartman Green on the west end lots of unused green space that a small fenced area could be an off-leash run - it appears to be used that way by many anyway. I like the sculptures, great idea to be high profile spot and different not your usual kind of thing, I hope the Town promotes this lots, it really is a reason to make the trip here and stop for a walk. The trails are nice, a bit disjointed though, maybe some more work on connecting it better and having signage, maps, and more garbage's. Missed having the portable washrooms along the path this year (nice enclosures btw) - developing trails and park takes time so please continue with small improvements each year.
Good job with the statues, supporting the arts is important!
I like the planters they give the town a great feeling. I see how well maintained they are and don't want them to discontinue. The statues however were a waste of money and they are an eyesore. There should be Trees that will eventually grow large were those status are giving that area shade for people on the trail.
This is a great idea. Having a trail from Olds to Didsbury and golf course I would also include Bowden With a few public washrooms along the way.
It's very important to have working and maintained trails. I wish we had more trees in our parks and around trails, and perhaps we could have a longer treed trail running from the edge of town to the golf course or to Didsbury for the promotion of active lifestyles. I love the flowers and beautification we've seen making Olds attractive to visit.
For the amount of money (approx. \$30,000) the town spends on flowers lining the windy highway every summer, I would like to see more long-term investments made into the usability of our town. Council seems to be increasingly preoccupied with the "beautification" of our town, so they install the most ridiculous-looking statues possible in an area of town that is not even usable to the majority of residents. Connecting the countless areas of activity around town so that one could walk in between them seems like such a better investment than flowers that will not even be adequately maintained.
Please maintain the shrub beds bordering the foundation at the Olds Library as well as the shrub beds planted in the vicinity of Winter Lake. They have various weeds going to seed!
No need to spend money on flowers on every light post in downtown or all along the median on 27 fix the sidewalks more fee for use of sports fields etc.
Planters and hanging baskets improve the overall appearance of the town.
Cut down on the number of flower planters in the meridian and roadways and bring back trimming along fences
Our pathways are disjointed and poorly connected and not long enough. Olds is not a very walkable community in terms of public trails and pathways. Pathways encourage healthy lifestyles and activity. Also, our pathways are not well lit in the early hours of the morning when the solar lights no longer work and with the days getting shorter, they are not usable early in the morning or safe. They also need more garbage cans to deter litter and people not picking up after their pets.

Construct a connecting trail parallel to the east-west portion of Lake Ridge Rd. that would connect the trail behind Harrison Green with 62 Ave. At present, many portions of Lake Ridge Rd. are continually very icy in the winter and it is necessary to walk on the street to avoid all the hazards on the sidewalk. A pathway bordering the field behind the houses on the south side of Lake Ridge would result in a very long, continuous system with only two little sidewalk portions--ideal.
Plant more trees around new Rotary Park. Fix paving on the trail along 65 Ave up to No Frills.
The flowers along highway 27 are beautiful! Would like to see them spread out a little more along the highway. Outdoor farmers market in the Centennial park would be nice. Business contests for best decorated themes along hwy 27 or 2A (scarecrow, Christmas tree, Cowboy/Rodeo, or create an event) for community involvement.
The flowers on Hwy 27 are way overdone. Take better care of the trails and parks and forget the attempt to impress those driving through town. Distribute some flowers to other areas of town where residents pay taxes. Between the flowers and statues etc. Hwy 27 looks like we're having a garage sale. It is too cluttered to be attractive.
We don't need more trails, flowers or benches that no one ever uses. Maintain what we have, we are fortunate to have what we have, let's keep it in good condition.
While the flowers on highway 27 are nice I feel there has been overkill on the amount placed. Some enforcement of dogs on walking trails would be nice. Have never seen any.
The Town doesn't need a full-time staff member to oversee Rotary Park...all you need is a summer student in the summer and you don't need anyone in the winter, just regular staff that can oversee it.
I agree there should be more island beds and less pots on 27
More island beds on 27 instead of so many boulevard pots. Will look more attractive as well as less staff is required to maintain them and doesn't have to be replaced every year. Water is like gold in this town so doing more island beds gives an attractive look all year round instead of only for a few months. Taxpayers will save money on water as well as trucks, equipment and staff working in the middle of the highway. What we have now is a total waste of money and is dangerous! Other pots around town also need to be reduced where savings can be put toward essential services during these economic times.
Excessive amounts of flower pots. What is the total cost of that alone? Town Employees spend countless hours deadheading and weeding. Again get back to basics and look where you can cut services not add.
Would like to see more green spaces and trail systems as the population grows. The annuals are lovely but could do away with most of them in favour of more trees in the boulevards.
A new In town off leash dog park that people can get to by walking. The out of town one is great but you always have to drive to it which can be irritating. We have so many parks in town why can't one be converted into an off leash dog friendly park??
Olds should be planting perennials not annuals in the flower containers around olds. More environmentally friendly and less costly. There was a drastic reduction in mowing of green spaces this year and there should be money left over in the budget that could be used.
More connecting pathways to current pathways. Some dead ends do not make sense. More nature/community trails, rather than along the highway.
Town of Olds has a great walking trail setup. I find that there are too many flowers and money could be better spent on snow removal.
I think gardens should be temporarily cultivated as purchasing flowers for all the planters and parks and pathways only maintained to a minimum standard for the next few years. Having a large budget for flowers along hi-way 27 doesn't make sense in an economic downturn.
More natural habitat walking trails, less landscaped tree planting and no need for all the flowers especially down highway 27.
Please look after your own noxious weeds. I sure appreciate the hanging baskets and pots, although the pots would be so much nicer without the callas.
Funding could be better allocated - no need for over spending on huge flower pots with tropical species that look bad after the first wind storm anyways. Put that money into more trees, pathways.

Olds needs an in town, small dog off leash area. Somewhere central that people can walk too. The out of town area is really for large dogs.
My family & I are heavy users of the pathways, parks & playgrounds. More pathways are a great idea. Hwy 27 flowers pots could be converted to Alberta specific wildflowers, more initial cost, much less upkeep and watering going forward. Planning more tree adds personality to the town, avoiding short lived species like the Swedish Aspen. Any thoughts on Saskatoon bushes, native species and close to indestructible.
The amount of \$\$ spent on those huge pots that line the roads with plants is crazy. Cost to water, maintain. Put that \$\$ to more outdoor stuff. add onto skate park, bike jumps, outdoor work out activities, playground at centennial park. Trails in and out of town.
More trees, less flowers. Town flags are really faded, and should be replaced.
better used
Way too many flowers on hwy 27 and the statues are a waste of money. Time used by staff to look after them could be better used. I like the trails, parks and sports fields.
Outstanding flowers! Olds requires more bike and walking trails. Future development plans do not have trails and I am talking about the old Miller property along 57 Ave. This property is a ready made park with mature trees, water and wild life.
Love parks and trails. Flowers are over done!
Love how many playgrounds there are in Olds. It makes for a special community. More natural trails would be great.
With the aging population our healthcare would benefit with more and longer walking trails around our town.
100% agree with this.
I agree! Connecting and long trails which are not along a busy highway (27). Although it's a nice pathway it's not in nature at all!
More trails and outdoor activity facilities. Less statues and Bylaw enforcers.
The flowers along Hiway 27 were much better than in past years
A lot of money wasted on statues, flowers,

The Town of Olds allocating franchise fees to fund to the Library, Comments:

Library offers good educational and community support programs and is a foundation for learning and advancement.
Wow a half million for library, still I think that's worth it. I didn't know where the gas franchise fee went, good to know it supports these things. As times get tougher we need to still put money in these areas of arts and culture it is one of the things that makes Olds different than other small towns.
Franchise Fees are just another kind of tax. Regardless, it is nice to know Council has prioritized a way to have this funded. Maybe some of the community services stuff can be funded this way too.
I support the Library, but the franchise fees on Utility bills feels like extortion.
Regarding the Library. I agree it was a good call. The budget is good when it comes to books and education.
I disagree with any franchise fees. It is just disguising our taxes actually paid. If there needs to be additional dollars for services increase taxes not hide it as franchise fees. So easy to increase franchise fees without anyone knowing, raise taxes and everyone knows.
When people have lost jobs and the town spends \$100,000.00 on flowers and statues, what ridiculous and atrocious decisions being made with tax payer money.
Spending \$100,000.00 on statues and flowers is a significant waste of money. This does not include the wage and equipment required to maintain the flowers.

Programs for kids at the library especially during the winter months are essential. We used to get a list of courses being offered for adults and kids, many run by private individuals, whatever happened to that?
More money put towards more outdoor recreation opportunities during COVID.
Most of these areas are affected by COvid, so put more into outside activities for free use, and increase user pay amounts to compensate these businesses. Ice rink outside! Playground at centennial park, dirt jumps, trails, more skate park.
Two things seem out-of-place. The library card fee is non-existent. The library gets a healthy portion of funding through a fee tacked on to the atco bill.
Public libraries are important. I feel this should actually be a free service for community members. Saskatchewan has a free model and is important
I'm so thankful for our local library!!!

The Town of Olds allocating franchise fees to fund to the Museum, Comments:

Perhaps museum funding needs to be part of a broader strategy And discussion relative to promoting tourism to the area, along with the rock sculptures. Leverage this attraction not only for the benefit of local area residents but also as a broader initiative and program to promote olds and area
Appears underutilized. I did not realize the museum was run by the Town, they should up their game with the resources they have.
Preserving the past is important, however the current venue for the Olds museum is archaic and uninviting. Suggest if further money is going to be given to the museum it is for a revision plan, but not if the thought is to remain status quo.
I have only been to the Museum one when I was in the Deer Meadow School. There is no Advertising to let people know that this place even exists. I told my 12 year old Daughter about the museum and she literally said "There's a Museum in Olds?" That definitely says something.
The sculptures are distasteful and cheesy.....really cheesy.
The sculptures are not what the majority of people consider as their preferred choice of art so why does the town keep adding more? My understanding is the town bought 3 for \$40,000 and the rest are on loan, but the town paid for all the lighting, pads, signage, insurance and transportation as well as all the set-up! Does Council not think it prudent to engage with taxpayers first on controversial and unnecessary projects like this before passing it in Council or did they feel taxpayer's couldn't be trusted to make the decision they wanted?

The Town of Olds allocating franchise fees to fund to Heritage, Arts and Culture, Comments:

This is a core area if any community is to be vibrant and attract people, families and business. Going forward community engagement via the surveys will be key to ensuring resident voice is heard and avoid "surprises" as to how and where these dollars are being spent.
The sculptures are an awesome idea. Unique. If promoted properly it is more than just art, it is an attraction. Glad Olds didn't do the "world's biggest whatever" - seems like everyone has one of those gimmicks. Also Olds appears to have lots going on culturally, so if this has anything to do with some Town support please maintain it.
I see some local art at the college and on the Olds Liquor store wall and Culture in Centennial Park (The Bell and the WW2 monument) and Heritage throughout Olds. But to call the Statues on the main highway Art, Culture or Heritage is shameful. If you scattered these Statues around Olds in every park that might be a better idea then all together along the highway making everyone cringe while passing them.

The beautification efforts of town council are actually laughable. "Heritage, Arts and Culture" are NOT going to be demonstrated when you are outsourcing for hideous art. Why not showcase some of the incredibly talented local artists by commissioning them to create art that is representative of our community?? Give your head a shake.
If this covers the statues along the highway and the arts common on the west end, please stop spending money like this. It does nothing to attract business or residents to town that provide additional taxpaying dollars.
We have far more pressing issues than statues and murals.
We do need to have these in our community and would like to see that whatever art is chosen that it has been done by someone within our community instead of paying somebody who doesn't live here that doesn't support our community. Yes, we all don't agree on all art projects but it is an important that we support it.
Rocks in the time of austerity...hmmm. Somebody has too much money and does not know what to do with it in order to ensure basic services.
My understanding is the Town paid \$40,000 for three of these rocks along with absorbing all costs for the pads, lighting, signage, insurance and for transportation as well as set-up with the rest being on loan. Also, I have no idea why another rock was just recently brought in when these rocks are already so controversial? The majority of people don't like them or enjoy them and some find them downright tacky and embarrassing? I also question why Council knowing how controversial this would be wouldn't consult taxpayers first to get their opinion? Maybe, because it would have been rejected? Or, Council thought they were better at choosing artworks for us because they felt we were not qualified enough to give an opinion on modern art.
The public art sculptures on 27 are disgusting. Why was Alberta artists not used?
Invest in services, don't invest in overpriced artwork from foreign artists (assuming this is where the budget for this comes from). Happy to pay less for local art. City council needs to get a grip on this at the best of times, but particularly during a depressed economy!!
The public art along hi-way 27 is an eye sore. If people want statues, get together, have a fundraiser and donate them to the community like US municipalities do, not force all tax payers to pay for them. Large scale art projects and community art projects should be the first to go in tough economic times as they are not critical spending. If people had the choice between the arena keeping its lights on or seniors to be able to use the sunshine bus or us getting art the choice would be very simple. How much of the money spent stays in this section stays in Olds?
I appreciate the statues and arts common
Public art is fantastic, please keep supporting it.
Not a huge fan artistically of the statues but I do appreciate how they liven up Hwy 27.They have gotten people talking! Not town related but I really enjoy the murals downtown.
Love Olds Public art, it helps make the community desirable, would like to see more unique lighting features i.e. in the Uptowne area at night
If the statues are part of this budget then I am opposed to finding them along with about half the flowers on hwy 27.

The Town of Olds allocating franchise fees to fund to the Evergreen Centre, Comments:

Good thing I know what the Evergreen Centre is, does everyone taking this survey. A small penance to pay is that all the Town puts into the seniors centre.
Many of our seniors invested into the community for years, would it hurt to pay it forward and make it more inviting for them to spend their retirement years in a comfortable and affordable facility to socialize?
Only \$4,500 for Seniors? Seems cheap. If it works for our seniors in Town I am all for it.
Never knew what this place was until now. But if it is being used by seniors and they are happy I am happy

The small amount of this budget is a good expenditure representing the seniors who built our community.
This is a user pay facility, but the cost of maintaining it just doesn't cover the amount times it is rented out. This is a Seniors facility a place where they can gather and should be supported by the community.
This is low but should be a user pay facility.
This should be a user pay facility.
Not a senior but this seems very low, important to have good supports for this demographic.

The Town of Olds allocating franchise fees to fund to Special Events, Comments:

With the town reducing financial support to olds institute perhaps some of those dollars can be directed to promoting, supporting and enticing events That will Promote olds, attract visitors and bring a vibrancy to the area.
I don't know what this money is spent on to say one way or the other.
What does this cover? On one hand 26G doesn't go far, on the other hand maybe a little injection of funding here and there goes a long way. Tough to give an opinion without asking a lot of questions. I assume Canada Day - it seems big and I think the Town does that, is it this budget? Is the Christmas stuff in Centennial Park and the parade the Town or not? Is this the trailer in the park Be A Good Neighbour thing? (Which is a cool thing btw - you even did one during COVID) I guess I need to be more conscious of who puts stuff on.
I remember when we had the Fair come through Olds and we had live bands, Art from locals, Dances in the main Arena and a Wrestling ring one year with amateur wrestlers which was still entertaining to watch, or when Nazareth played at the Grand Stands. These are special events that no longer exist. The only special event we have nowadays are the Santa Clause parade and the Christmas tree light ups, fireworks in July and Few other events that take place in the Cow Palace and Midnight Madness. I am all for special events but I would like them to be like the way they were.
I would like to see more offered at these events for people who are between the ages of 20 and 40 and don't necessarily have families.
What is this spent on?
It would be good to have some idea of what this budget amount covers so we could decide in a more informed manner.
More information!!
Totally depends on what special events are does it benefit a lot of the tax payers or just a few?
What are these special events?
Without listing the events I would think everyone should oppose. If it's these events Fair Trade Community, supporting the UNESCO conference and Diversity Days at the Olds High School, as well as working with other cultural groups in the community to realize initiatives such as National Indigenous Peoples Day. I think these are all things people should be able to choose to donate to or not.
I have the same thought
What events?

Based on your current satisfaction level for Planning and Development, how would you adjust your property tax funding for this particular area? Comments:

Challenge this group to do more with less. And in talking to various folks, this seems to be a group/area where there is perhaps an opportunity for a culture shift in how this group interacts with stake holders and generally conducts business. Olds needs growth....the community needs to be seen as promoting,

supporting and actively encouraging carefully planned that is going to bring business and young families and work force to the area.
Seem overstaffed for our size of community, but maybe I don't understand what all needs done. I have not dealt with this department only heard about it being a barrier to progress.
Some of the developments in Olds are questionable. Mainly the barricaded road from the Lights at the BMO bank intersection to No Frills. Why is this blocked off?
YES!
Trying to revitalize Uptown is a hard. Suggestion, what about making downtown a residential neighborhood with the old buildings made into living quarters but still keep the old look. Give the owners of these buildings a tax incentive to create multifamily dwellings maybe have a convince store or two for the area.
I believe that the highway 27 access into Tim Hortons should be closed as the plan was a few years ago or at least it should be an exit to the west only
After speaking with some developers they told me other municipalities are "eating our lunch" when it comes to development. Other Municipalities Planning dept. are helpful, friendly, and knowledgeable, gets things done quickly and is proactive. Olds the complete opposite....is unfriendly, and reactive! This could be one of the reasons why there has been very little activity over the last few years regarding town growth partly due to developers that just don't like dealing with them. If they can go elsewhere, they will! Admin. and Council know about this but have done absolutely nothing about it.
From what realtors are saying other municipalities are eating our lunch! Their development dept is proactive, helpful and pleasant to deal with as well as they get things done in a timely manner.....Olds planning dept has been known for years to be reactive, unpleasant, unhelpful and takes It takes forever to get anything moving forward.. Council and Administration have been made aware of this for years and have done absolutely nothing about it and probably wonder why there is very little development? Until there is a shake-up in that dept nothing is going to change and Olds is already known through developers and entrepreneurs that it's a hassle to do business here.
The planning department has the "no" attitude, no you can't do that, no not that either. The planning department needs a makeover to be proactive in helping developers. This may be an extension of administration as they are complaint based reaction orientated.
Fees are exorbitant: offsite levies, development permits have skyrocketed. How much development has there been in the last few years. That should indicate how the recession is affecting growth and the people in the Town of Olds.
Planning is non-existent. This is simply a rubber stamp application process. Staff ignore future repercussions or real impacts to adjacent parcels.
The town made changes in this in late 2019 or early 2020 that I believe have already reduced departmental spending relative to the reduction in building. The current staff seem much more open to business and willing to assist in any way they can to get projects going. However in working in other municipalities our development permitting costs are still very high. Considering how all money is collected that funds our budget additional development is critical to the long term sustainability of Olds. If we truly wanted to encourage development we need to look at providing incentives to businesses to come here and people to develop homes in town. Easiest way to do that is to make the cost to develop cheaper (lower permitting costs).
Not seeing much in this area happening, where is the \$\$ going?
Need to be business friendly. Think a small home development would be good in our community
Town planning dept. requires upgrading and innovation. Future development on 57 ave looks like it came out of a cheap civic planning download.
Like all towns attracting businesses and manufacturers is hard, yet I see other towns doing a much better job then Olds one must ask why and who has been leading this as they are not doing a very good job. OI, ONet have and are doing very LITTLE for the investment the town has in them

Planning and development??? Lol! Do they still call it that? Need I say sundial. Totally disaster. We need decent jobs in this town. Where is the planning and development to attract decent employers to this town?

Planning staff do great work here and in County and collaborate well - we need them so please make sure they have enough staff.

Based on your current satisfaction level for Economic Development, how would you adjust your property tax funding for this particular area? Comments:

Redirect funds previously supporting olds institute to carefully planned and thought out economic development initiatives. Relative to commerce, business and industry, olds needs to be proactive and aggressive in leveraging the existing infrastructure and amenities including high speed broadband fibre to attract Growth. A key aspect to growth is having a young, educated work force. Olds needs to move the needle and attract business and industry and give young families a reason to live in olds

Need to make opening a small business more attractive here. Raise taxes on buildings that are empty more than 10 months. Motivate landlords to reduce their lease rates to what businesses can actually afford.

Economic Development - isn't that Everything Olds? 375G?? Really what does that go toward? Explanation above is vague compared to other budget explanations (other than special events it was vague too).

I love small businesses and support it all the way. I always wanted more in residential areas which could help the town grow larger.

I feel like it's very important to find some way to revitalize the Uptowne and fill the spaces that are open.

I would be in favour of incenting entrepreneurs with a one-time, one-year partial (suggest maybe a 50%) tax break to draw them into the downtown core. We have lots of empty spaces that could be filled up with some strategic planning.

Give the little business a cut so they can stay in business and promote them to use up the vacant spaces along highway 27 and the plaza by Smittys.

Promote a small business friendly environment and give the small guys some breaks so they can afford to stay in business. Let's fill up some of the store frontage on Main street and along Highway 27. Make it more attractive for people to open a business which will bring people here to spend their money.

I feel the chamber and the town needs to get more active in promoting the town and its businesses.

I have seen very little growth other than the pot plants that have come and have no idea if that was due to throwing over \$300,000 on ED or they were coming here anyway. Why haven't we experienced much growth over the last five years?

Overall, Olds has a great track record of economic development, and the results to show for it. However, we need to continue to progress and evolve our view on ED to keep pace with an increasingly digital economy. With increases in remote working, many knowledge based workers will be increasingly looking to get away from urban centres and looking for rural settings with great telecommunications (makes the investment in a fiber network look pretty good, right about now) and a safe and vibrant community. Let's invest in protection services and continue to develop services that appeal to young families. Attract the people, and the economic benefits will follow.

Attracting pot plants was to be a huge success for employment and increasing the tax base. I do not believe this has happened and I would be surprised if they survive. What it did add is an awful odor and a poor reputation.

We need to make it easier for mom and pop businesses to open and remain open. They are vital to our community and keep the money in our community.

An easy and cost effective way to do that would be to put removable signs on hooks and a map at the main entrances to Olds showing their locations and rotate the signs throughout the year. Uses removable adhesive dots for locations and names of businesses to make updating easy and cover with plexiglass to avoid tampering. We have a large number of people driving to Olds for the big box stores

and though Olds and we should use that traffic to increase small business visibility. They are already here. Let them know what we have. This should be a free service for small businesses.
Easiest way to encourage business is to provide incentives to be here. Lower business taxes for buildings, consider a new home incentive, buy a newly developed home get a one or two year property tax break (then town sees taxes for next 100 years on that home), incentives would draw more people here and grow community to a big enough size that it could sustain all of the amenities people want.
Perhaps they need to make it easier and more attractive for people to start-up businesses in the town. They have made it very difficult, cost prohibitive, and near impossible. Not to mention many rules, and costs are not publicly accessible or made known from the get go, but rather added on once the project is started and it's too late as a substantial investment has already been made.
Can any successes be directly attributed to this money being spent? It's an area that would make sense to spend money on but every other Town, County, Province does the same, which makes Olds indistinguishable from any other community.
Need to draw mom and pop business, give incentives for that not big box stores!!
This is the area to focus on this year. We need to support existing and bring business and jobs to Olds. With fate of OI in question Olds needs to have a very solid plan and expertise to guide on how to move forward. Chamber of Commerce does not seem to have the capacity either. Fresh ideas, innovation required.
OI does a great job supporting small business.
What economic development! I have not witnessed true development in Olds for years, Thankfully we have Olds Auction Mart that continues to draw people from all over central Alberta to shop and bank in Olds
We need economics development there is none!! The Olds economy is stuck in a perpetual layoff cycle from sundial, OSG, to Westeel and Proall.
ED is a phantom of small municipalities which requires extra output - support local businesses and contractors and the Town will grow on its own unique market principles.

Do you agree with providing property tax dollars to financially support non-profit organizations? Comments:

This is very program specific. Nu2u is a great example of an initiative that generates many benefits for the community.
Neutral - this all depends on which non-profit and what they are doing - What program? Service? Project?
It all depends on what the non-profit is doing and if it relates to work and support of Town objectives. The Boys and Girls Club is an FCSS thing -ok. What does Nu2U Store have to do with this question? I PUT NEUTRAL BECAUSE THIS QUESTION IS WEIRD AND UNCLEAR.
I know that the Food Bank is included in this non-profit organization but how does the town involve themselves with them. If you supported the Food Bank as much as the citizens do a lot of people with low income would at least have food in their house. Nu2u is great for people with low income but I think we should have more businesses like this in Olds.
Some examples would help me make an informed decision, otherwise I am responding without information.
Again, more information.
Totally depends on what the non-profit is... will it help the community?
ORE is not funded by the Town of Olds
This is a each needs to be judged on its own merit and always an area of controversy

Tax payers in Olds seem to be the private bank for the Olds Regional Exhibition. Nu2U should be self-supporting.
ORE must justify their request as it appears high.
And ORE (Olds Regional Exhibition) wants a \$100,000.00 a year from the town.
What department do the Boys and Girls Club come under? This is a wonderful service for inexpensive child care and totally needed!
Need to know specifically which organizations we are talking about?
Names of organizations (other than Nu2U) and specific examples of what services provides by FCSS? How much funds are we talking about? I was under impression that Nu2U recovers most of their costs and donates money to community. Nu2U is a great initiative and uses under-utilized uptown real estate.
Non-profit organizations can be funded in other ways, where people decide directly what to donate to. Community tax money should not be used to support them.
What's being asked? Not specific at all.
Nu2U is an absolute gem in our town for those both wishing to donate and those looking for a deal!
This question is really vague. In general, in-kind support should be given to non-profits but not tax dollars (help them find, support grants process)
Nu 2 you is an awesome store and keeps money in our community and reduces potential waste. Definitely keep it going!
Charitous quality-of-life organizations should be first-supported by the goodwill of supporters, not the necessity of the taxpayer.
Non-profit organizations can be funded in other ways tax money should not unfortunately be used to support them, Sorry!
Must be within budget means.