



MUNICIPAL SUSTAINABILITY PLAN



2014

Prepared by:



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Guide to Readers.....	1
Acknowledgements.....	2
Introduction.....	3
Lacombe: A Brief History and Profile	10
Current Situation: Global and Local Challenges.....	11
Sustainability Defined.....	12
Our Sustainability Objectives.....	13
Lacombe's Priority Goals	14
Build a strong, local and diverse economy	15
Preserve and enhance heritage and culture.....	16
Promote a healthy, connected, and active community.....	17
Protect our natural environment	18
Provide high quality services and infrastructure	19
Strategy Areas	21
Current Reality	22
Desired Outcome Statements.....	22
Key Directions.....	22
Our Buildings and Sites	23
Who We Are: Culture, Education and Leisure	24
Our Community Well-Being: Health, Connections and Safety	25
Our Economy: Work and Skills Training	26
How We Eat: Food and Agriculture.....	27
Where We Live and Work: Our Homes and Neighbourhoods	28
Our Infrastructure and Resources: Energy, Water and Waste.....	29
Our Natural Environment: Air, Water and Wildlife.....	30
How We Get Around: Transportation and Mobility.....	31
Glossary of Terms.....	33
Appendices.....	36
Appendix A: Recommended Indicators.....	A1
Appendix B: Recommended Actions.....	B1
Appendix C: Current Reality Description.....	C1
Appendix D: Decision Tool	D1
Appendix E: Next Steps and Implementation.....	E1
Appendix F: Other Actions Considered by the CSAT	F1
Appendix G: The Natural Step Framework.....	G1
Appendix H: Summary of Public Engagement	H1

**The future is not something we enter.
The future is something we create.**

– Leonard Sweet,
Author/Futurist



GUIDE TO READERS

The Imagine Lacombe Municipal Sustainability Plan (MSP) is the vision for guiding the community towards greater sustainability in the year 2040. This document is not rigid in how we achieve the vision, and acknowledges that opportunities and challenges change over time. These opportunities may require short-term tradeoffs, but this document provides the framework to ensure that over the longer term, the vision is achieved.

This plan can be used by anyone interested in contributing to the success and sustainability of the community: a tool is included in Appendix D: Decision Tool, that translates the MSP framework into strategic questions to inform decisions at any level and anywhere – from purchasing decisions at home to strategic planning at work.

The Imagine Lacombe Framework



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Imagine Lacombe was developed with significant input from the community. Over 1,200 citizens provided their ideas for their vision of what they wanted the future of Lacombe to be. The City of Lacombe acknowledges and thanks all those who participated in the process through surveys, workshops, worksheets, focus groups, open houses and other ways.

Community Sustainability Advisory Team (CSAT)

The CSAT was the advisory committee for the project, the “eyes and ears” of Lacombe, and its members represented the community’s interests in the project. The CSAT provided input on public engagement opportunities, and assisted in the development of Lacombe’s Priority Goals, desired outcome

statements, key directions, current reality, and recommended priority actions.

Thanks to the team members for all their hard work, time and commitment to the future of the City of Lacombe. The Imagine Lacombe CSAT members are:

- Councillor Grant Creasey
- Councillor Outi Kite
- Dawn Parent
- Matt Schultz
- Tracey Oliver-Forbes
- Ronda Ziakris
- Wayne Armishaw
- Guy Lapointe (staff)
- Jennifer Kirchner (staff)
- Lyla Peter (staff)
- Josh de Jong (staff)



INTRODUCTION

What is Imagine Lacombe?

Imagine Lacombe articulates the community's shared vision for a successful and sustainable future. It includes actions and practical tools for implementation and a monitoring system to track progress. Imagine Lacombe is the community's guiding policy – with a practical decision-making framework that can be applied to all levels of decisions and all types of other plans, policies and programs. Imagine Lacombe provides guidance to all City operations so that planning and decision-making can be aligned to help achieve the identified goals (desired outcomes).

Imagine Lacombe includes:

- the articulation of the community's vision for success and sustainability in the future;
- Priority Goals and key directions for planning and action;
- recommended actions to help move the community towards the desired future;
- indicators to monitor progress; and
- a recommended annual process and tools for ongoing implementation, alignment and continuous improvement.

Why create a community-wide vision for Lacombe?

Creating the shared, long-term vision in Imagine Lacombe engaged over 1,200 citizens. This shared vision will guide planning and decision-making within the community towards the desired future.

The creation of a community vision helps Lacombe to prepare for a changing economic future, attract new residents and businesses to diversify the local economy, as well as retain and motivate municipal

talent. Lacombe's local economies can plan for greater resilience and are better prepared for rising energy prices. Community members build stronger networks to maintain quality of life in the face of demographic shifts and other social challenges. The City of Lacombe can potentially save significant money over time through reduced energy and waste management costs. Finally, Imagine Lacombe can help Lacombe to become a local part of global solutions for a host of environmental, social and economic issues.

The vision for Imagine Lacombe is written in a non-prescriptive and outcome-oriented way, so that the picture of our desired future is clear, but the way we get there is up to us and can change over time as our needs and strategies change. This is beneficial because it provides decision-makers with the flexibility to choose the best path forward for the community.

Another benefit of the long-term, non-prescriptive approach is that as we recognize the need for tradeoffs along the way, we can manage them while keeping the long-term vision and outcomes in mind. Tradeoffs occur when progress toward some aspects of success or sustainability means no progress or even backward movement in other areas. So while tradeoffs are bound to occur, they should be short-term stepping stones, and there should always be a longer-term plan on how to continue moving toward Lacombe's vision for the future.

Furthermore, Imagine Lacombe is comprehensive: it covers all aspects of the community at a high level. It is also scalable: it can be applied to all types of decisions, from strategic decisions to daily purchasing choices. Therefore, it provides decision-makers with one high-level lens that can be consistently applied for planning and decision-making.

Why success and sustainability?

Achieving ongoing success and sustainability will be a long-term journey – not something that can be accomplished overnight. While we may need to focus on growing our local economy now, we still need to address other long-term needs; in fact, increasingly aligning our economic system with the objectives for sustainability will help us get there.

Experience has shown that a major barrier to people's commitment to sustainability is their concern that sustainability will negatively impact the economy and the quality of their lives. While sustainability will require less resource consumption and waste, the goal is also to be successful – to have

a strong, healthy economy as well as to enable a high quality of life for everyone.

The Imagine Lacombe process is about envisioning a successful and sustainable future for our community and making it happen together. Success has been defined by our community and reflects our community's desires for what the social, economic and environmental aspects of Lacombe will look, feel and be like in the future. Sustainability then, is about ensuring that the desired future for Lacombe can continue forever within the constraints imposed on our planet and its finite resources.

Benefits of a sustainability approach to long-range planning and innovation in Lacombe

- Helps us to avoid economic development pitfalls and to identify economic development opportunities within today's major societal trends.
- Helps to ensure that activities to support our local environmental, social and economic values are conceived and implemented.
- Identifies strategies to protect our natural systems that will keep supporting us in the long term.
- Helps identify cost savings and new revenue streams for the City of Lacombe, community groups, individuals and businesses.
- Helps to attract people to Lacombe and to instill an even greater sense of purpose.
- Allows the City of Lacombe to access more funding opportunities for infrastructure and services.


Public Engagement



Over 1,200 community members contributed to the development of Lacombe's vision and desired outcomes. Through surveys, postcards, focus groups, workbooks, and ideas walls, Lacombe residents described their desired vision of their community, their hopes and dreams, and ideas for reaching the vision. See Appendix H for a summary of public engagement.

What are your hopes & dreams for the future of Lacombe?

focus
Downtown business growth
cultural diversity Transportation
Better More Education
Fine Arts Facility
Strong Community Bonds traffic flow
trails collaboration future
Big Box/No Box
multi-use recreation facility
City leadership water
more jobs creating green spaces
affordable housing
seniors care facilities taxes
emergency services agriculture

 **imagine LACOMBE**

What are your hopes and dreams for the future of Lacombe?


Imagine Lacombe is a process to engage all the residents of Lacombe in creating a shared vision for our community's future. This vision will help shape what Lacombe will look like in the future, and will help guide our community planning and decision-making.

To help us create this vision, we ask you to answer 3 questions:


1. What do you value most about Lacombe?
2. What changes would you like to see?
3. How can we all help make it happen?

If you would like to keep in touch we will send e-mail updates.

Name: _____
E-Mail: _____
Your contact information will be kept confidential and will not be used for any other purposes or communications.

Answer On-Line:


For more information or to speak with someone about getting involved with the Imagine Lacombe project contact:
Jennifer Kirchner
403-782-1264, ext. 228
jkirchner@lacombe.ca

 **LACOMBE**
www.lacombe.ca

 **imagine LACOMBE**

To all the young people...

SPEAK UP!

Let us know what matters to you.

Imagine Lacombe is a community-wide conversation to build our vision for tomorrow. Your input will be used to develop an action plan for our city's future.

Scan here
to have your say today.



The future is made by those who speak up.

business growth agriculture
cultural diversity Regional Transportation
Better More Education Maintaining Downtown
Fine Arts Facility Big Box/No Box taxes
Strong Community Bonds traffic flow arts
trails collaboration beautiful

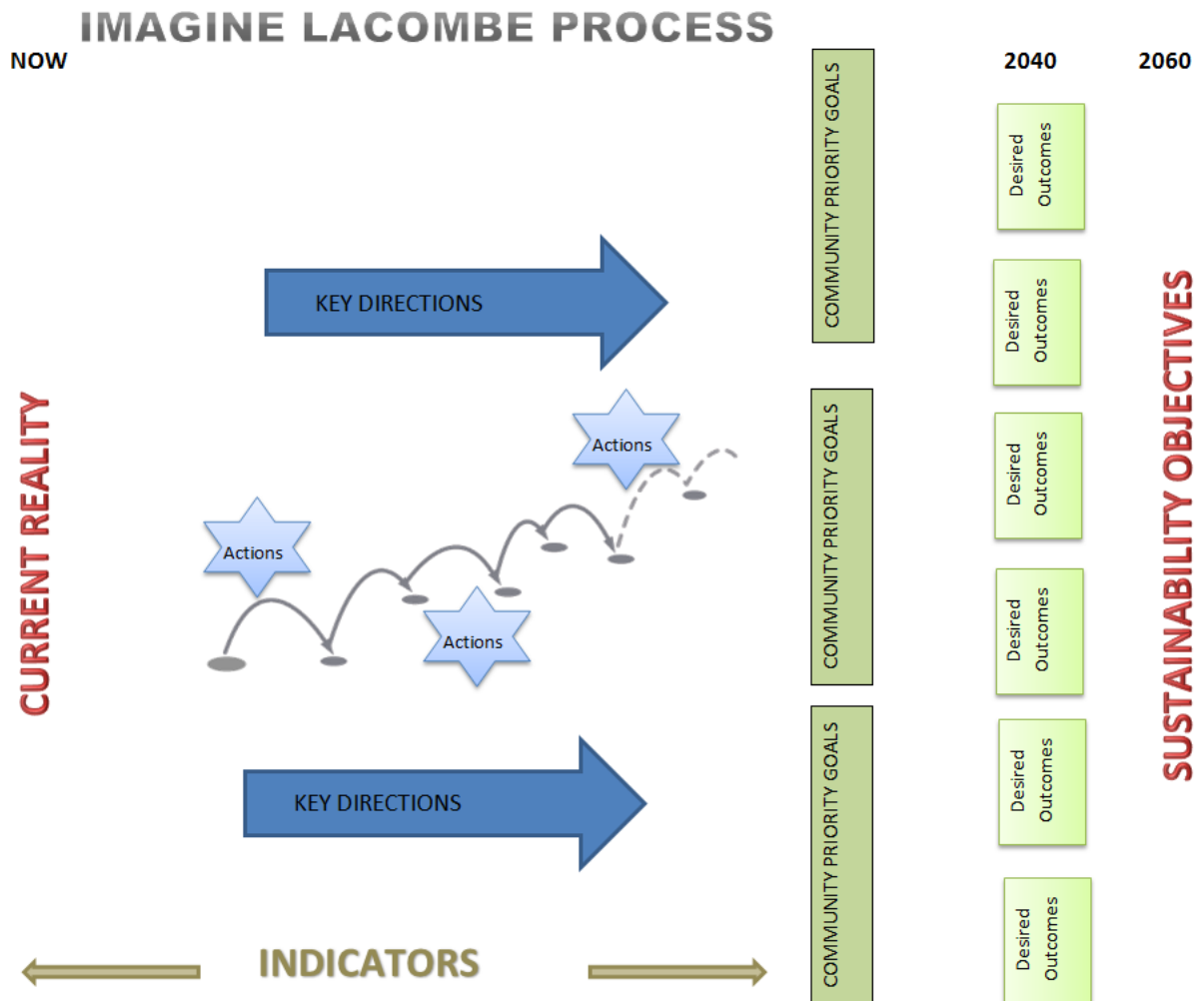
For more information contact:
Jennifer Kirchner
403-782-1264 ext. 228 | jkirchner@lacombe.ca

 **LACOMBE**
www.lacombe.ca

How were the components of Imagine Lacombe developed?

- **A Community Sustainability Advisory Team (CSAT)** of selected community, Lacombe Council and staff members was created to work closely with the City and consultant on developing Imagine Lacombe.
- **Community Priority Goals** are the high-level goals for community success that were identified through community input and current priorities of the City.
- **Strategy Areas** describe the community's systems and how they are inter-related. For Lacombe, nine strategy areas were used for the development of the plan.
- **Desired Outcome Statements (DOS)** are outcome-based goals for each strategy area of Imagine Lacombe. They were developed with public input through an online survey, focus groups, public workshops, worksheets, a review of background documents, and best practices. An iterative review and refinement process with the CSAT finalized their development.
- A **Current Reality** was researched and written to describe the current situation in Lacombe in each strategy area in relation to the desired future outcomes.
- **Key directions** are the high level directions for the City to focus on in each of the strategy areas. They were identified from the main opportunities described in the current reality, the DOS, and community input, and confirmed by the CSAT.
- **Action** ideas were gathered from the public through surveys, worksheets and various workshops as suggestions for the City (and partners) to move forward with. These ideas were compiled and presented to the CSAT, and a number of community volunteers, for consideration. The CSAT then met to prioritize a recommended set of actions to start moving Lacombe in the key directions.
- **Indicators** to measure performance related to the Priority Goals and Key Directions were developed, taking into account the availability and ease of collecting the data. The indicators were then reviewed by City of Lacombe staff.
- A **planning and decision tool** was developed, and next steps for ongoing implementation and continuous improvement were identified.





IMAGINE LACOMBE STRUCTURE

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES



PRIORITY GOALS

Build a Strong, Local and Diverse Economy

Preserve and Enhance Heritage and Culture

Promote a Healthy, Connected and Active Community

Protect our Natural Environment

Provide High Quality Services and Infrastructure

INDICATORS

STRATEGY AREAS



DESIRED OUTCOME STATEMENTS

CURRENT REALITY DESCRIPTIONS



Who is responsible for Imagine Lacombe?

Everyone in the community is encouraged to get involved and contribute to Imagine Lacombe. Achieving continued success and long-term sustainability for Lacombe will require commitment and contributions from the City of Lacombe, its citizens, community organizations and partners.

After reading this document, consider what can be done at home or work to help achieve Lacombe's vision. When planning processes or decisions are being made in the community, this document can be used to assess how well a process or decision fits with the vision described in Imagine Lacombe, or how it can be improved to help better achieve the vision.



LACOMBE: A BRIEF HISTORY AND PROFILE

Lacombe is located on Hwy 2 in Alberta, between Edmonton and Calgary. Prior to the arrival of Europeans, the area had been inhabited exclusively by First Nations communities. By the time of the fur trade, the Plains and Woodland Cree began to populate the region and contribute to its economic development by providing valuable pelts and supplies to European traders.

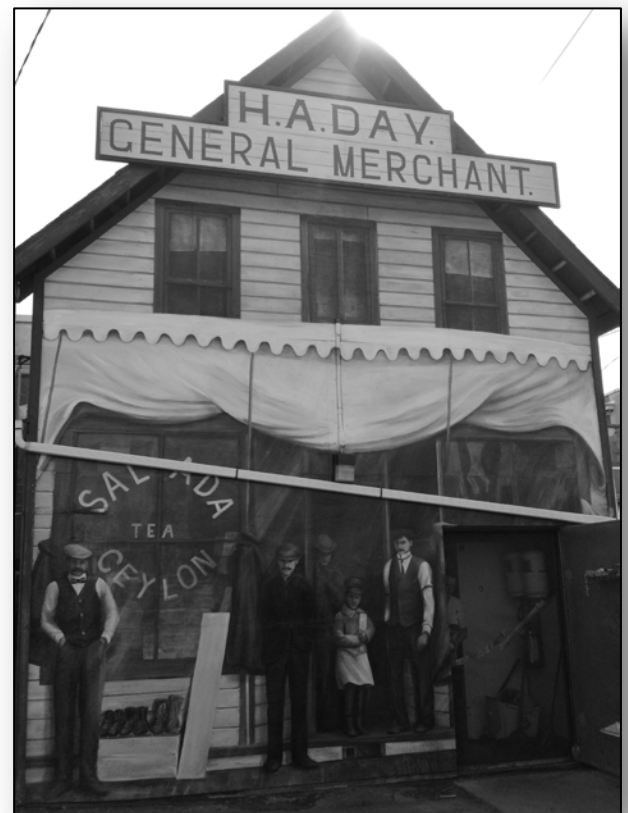
The community is named after Father Lacombe, a French-Canadian Roman Catholic missionary who lived among the Cree and Blackfoot First Nations. Its first permanent non-native settler was Ed Barnett, a retired member of the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP), who arrived in 1883. He established a 'stopping house,' known as Barnett's Siding, for travelers along the Calgary-Edmonton trail. In the years leading up to his arrival, Barnett had built a cabin along Red Deer River with Robert McLelland and Bill Buchanan, who had previously worked as government surveyors in the area. Eventually, Barnett was encouraged to head further north and took up squatters' rights in what is now present day Lacombe. Barnett's family and friends moved out from Ontario, along with other settlers, and the community began to grow.

In 1891, the Canadian Pacific Railway arrived, which provided better access to the area and new opportunities for settlement. The arrival of the train signaled an increase in popularity of the community, and by 1893 it had grown to a population of 25 residents. The community was granted Village status in 1896 and Town status in 1902. By the turn of the 20th century Lacombe was blossoming into one of the most attractive and prosperous towns in the region. Barnett's Siding was renamed as Lacombe and the first forms of Edwardian architecture began

emerging on the main street. In 1901, Merchants Bank, the town's first financial institution, was created. In 1904, it moved to a new permanent headquarters at the Flat Iron building, one of Lacombe's oldest and most historic buildings that is still in existence.

Lacombe slowly grew into an agricultural hub for Central Alberta. In 1902, the town's first blacksmith shop was built and became a vital resource for local farmers. In 1907, the federal government set up an experimental farm to research grain and livestock production.

Currently, Lacombe's population is close to 12,000 (2011 Census).



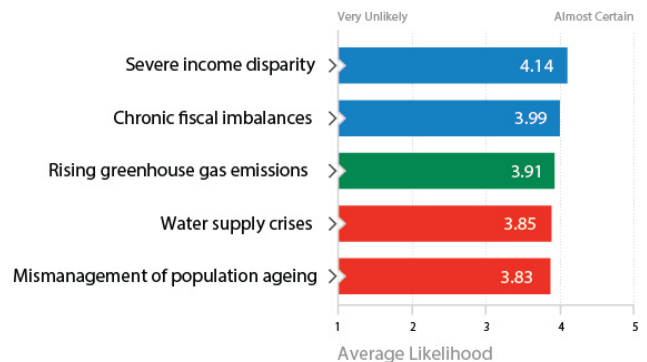
CURRENT SITUATION: GLOBAL AND LOCAL CHALLENGES

Lacombe, like all communities, is influenced by its history as well as by global, regional and local challenges and opportunities. From an initial survey during the Imagine Lacombe process, current challenges and opportunities affecting Lacombe's future that were identified included:

- a need for a stronger and more diversified local economy,
- environmental degradation,
- aging infrastructure and funding shortages,
- traffic,
- need for better recycling facilities, and
- lack of affordable housing, in particular for seniors.

Along with local challenges, global trends, including a struggling global economy, new global trading partners, climate change, technology innovations, resource scarcity and rising fuel costs, also have impacts, and present both challenges and opportunities to Lacombe and all communities.

The World Economic Forum's Global Risks 2013 report presents the views of more than 1,000 experts from industry, government, academia and civil society who were asked to review a landscape of 50 global risks. The top five global risks that respondents rated most likely to manifest over the next 10 years are presented below.



There were also many opportunities identified in the survey and in the current reality descriptions (Appendix C). Some of these opportunities included:

- more retail options and diversity in local businesses
- growing arts, culture and recreation
- revitalization of downtown core and maintaining the small town character

However, trying to address challenges and take advantage of opportunities without vision and collaboration is in itself a challenge that this plan seeks to address. Lacombe's Priority Goals and desired outcomes form the vision for the future, providing a roadmap to enable Lacombe to improve its resiliency and likelihood of success.

As global and local challenges and opportunities shift, this plan and others should be reviewed and revised accordingly to ensure continued relevance and guidance into the future.

See Appendix E: Next Steps and Implementation for more information about keeping Imagine Lacombe current.

SUSTAINABILITY DEFINED

By identifying challenges facing Lacombe, actions can be established to help meet and address those challenges. However, the purpose of Imagine Lacombe is to ensure that in implementing those actions, we are not creating further problems, or creating too large of a trade-off to address a challenge. Instead, Imagine Lacombe helps to create a framework of actions that help Lacombe become more 'sustainable'.

Sustainability, or sustainable development, has been defined in many different ways. The United Nations Brundtland Commission, in the 1987 report, *Our Common Future*, introduced the term sustainable development as:

"development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

This definition helped achieve global consensus that meeting the needs of current and future generations is absolutely dependent upon the health and viability of three completely interconnected systems:

1. the natural environment, which provides the services and finite resources that enable society and the economy to function, including air to breathe, water to drink and soil to grow food;
2. society, which is sustained by the life-providing services of the natural environment and serves to support us as individuals, families and communities; and
3. the economy, which is governed by the rules of the other two systems and is dependent upon human labour and natural resources to thrive.

The Brundtland definition is certainly compelling, and it articulates the overall intent of the concept of sustainability; however additional detail is needed to more concretely identify the ultimate objectives that must be achieved to create a sustainable future.

See Our Sustainability Objectives in the next section to learn more about how Lacombe will move toward a future that is sustainable.

For more about sustainability, including what it means, why it's important and what is necessary to achieve it, please see Appendix G: The Natural Step Framework.

Can we afford to think about sustainability? Should we not concentrate our efforts on more pressing economic challenges?

Sustainability planning and action is not about choosing between economic, environmental and social needs. Rather, it is about making smart decisions today to achieve all three in the future. Sustainability includes short and long-term economic success, which is essential to achieve our social and environmental objectives.

We cannot afford to lose sight of environmental or social issues. Our futures are intricately tied to the ability of natural systems to continue to function, and to the health of our society.

OUR SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES

Lacombe’s Sustainability Objectives are based on the Natural Step principles, which help to shift the concept of sustainability from something abstract that we want, to something concrete that we can plan for and manage. They can then be used as a filter or lens to guide planning and decision-making, whether for internal, day-to-day decisions, or longer-term strategic direction.





These objectives are based on a scientific approach to sustainability. They are concrete and non-overlapping to simplify strategic planning, focus on root causes of issues, and are specific, yet non-prescriptive. Taken together they describe the four basic directions for any organization, community or activity to operate in a sustainable manner.

The Natural Step principles have been in use for about 20 years, during which time governments, corporations and individuals around the world have used the principles to quickly create a shared language and integrate it into visions and actions.

The four Sustainability Objectives below can effectively guide us through a world of multi-dimensional environmental, social and economic issues that can affect our success.

Not every action toward a desirable successful community will meet all four sustainability objectives today, but over time, we need to create conditions where they ultimately do. Imagine Lacombe provides a framework and lens for guiding planning and actions toward meeting these sustainability objectives.

Lacombe’s Sustainability Objectives are to reduce and eventually eliminate our contribution to:

 <p>Socio-cultural and economic conditions that undermine people’s ability to meet their basic needs.</p>	 <p>The ongoing physical degradation of nature.</p>
<p>This generally means favouring activities that support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe, vibrant working and living conditions. • Inclusive and transparent decision-making. • Political freedoms. • Affordable products and services; sufficient resources for livelihood. 	<p>This generally means favouring activities that support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using materials and energy from well-managed ecosystems. • Use of re-usable, recyclable and recycled content. • Using fast-growing crops (e.g. bamboo). • Use of previously developed lands.
 <p>The ongoing build-up of synthetic materials produced by society.</p>	 <p>The ongoing build-up of materials extracted from the earth’s crust.</p>
<p>This generally means favouring activities that support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using natural, biodegradable materials (e.g. wood, cotton, water-based). • Using materials that are managed in tight technical cycles. • Using organically grown, untreated materials. • Use of re-usable, recyclable and recycled content materials. 	<p>This generally means favouring activities that support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy efficiency. • Renewable energy. • Using metals that are plentiful (e.g. aluminum, iron) rather than rare. • Using recycled content materials. • Using natural, biodegradable materials. • Using materials that are managed in tight technical cycles. • Use of re-usable, recyclable materials.

LACOMBE'S PRIORITY GOALS

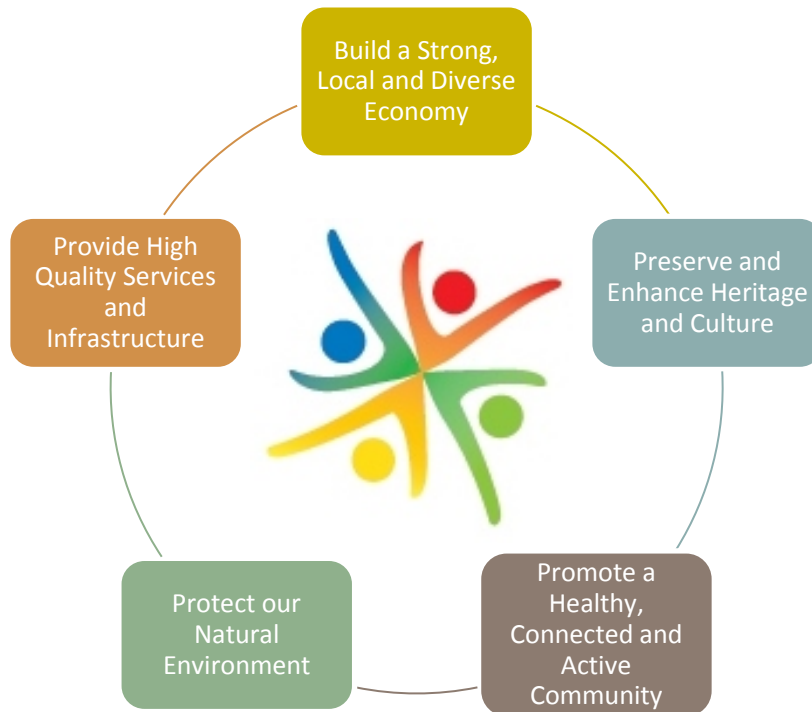
The Priority Goals provide a high-level focus on what must be achieved to create a successful future for our community. These Goals, unique to Lacombe, were developed from a summary of the main challenges, opportunities and desired outcomes identified by the community. Within each of the Priority Goals (described in the following section), more detailed statements – derived from more specific desired outcomes within the strategy areas – provide further clarification of what must be achieved.

All Priority Goals are equally important and interdependent, and all that we do should ultimately support all five Goals. While short-term tradeoffs may

sometimes be necessary, they should ultimately be avoided completely in the long-term (see more about tradeoffs below).

As with all aspects of the Imagine Lacombe plan and process, the Priorities are framed by our Sustainability Objectives, which define what must be achieved if society is to be successful into the future.

On the following pages, each of Lacombe's Priority Goals is identified, and the desired outcomes for each Goal are described. The strategy areas for each Goal are included, as well as the indicators for monitoring progress toward the achievement of the Goals.



Tradeoffs are bound to occur as we move toward achieving Imagine Lacombe. Tradeoffs occur when progress toward some aspects of success or sustainability means no progress or even backward movement in other areas. If a tradeoff is necessary, it is important to keep the longer term objective in mind and to have a strategy in place for the next steps that will help get the project or process back on track. So while tradeoffs are bound to occur, they should be short-term stepping stones, and there should always be a longer-term plan on how to continue moving toward the vision.

PRIORITY GOAL

BUILD A STRONG, LOCAL AND DIVERSE ECONOMY

This means that by 2040...

- Lacombe's economy is healthy and strong, regionally and globally competitive, and attracts and retains significant employers.
- The local economy is increasingly built on sustainability-based enterprises.
- Downtown is vibrant, attractive and well-used, commercial areas provide services and facilities to meet the needs of residents, and there are opportunities for future development.
- Lacombe's workforce has opportunities to reach their potential.
- Lacombe is a self-reliant and prosperous community, yet affordable for all to have a high quality of life.
- An effective and equitable municipal tax system and broad tax base contributes to fiscal stability.



Related Indicators	Median Income	Business Licenses	Career / Job Opportunities	Commercial Services Access	Economic Dependency Ratio	Economic Diversity	Educational Attainment
Related Strategy Areas	Our Buildings and Sites	Our Community Well-Being	Our Economy	Our Homes and Neighbourhoods	How We Get Around		

The related indicators and strategy areas can be referenced in Appendix A and on pages 23-31 respectively.

PRIORITY GOAL

PRESERVE AND ENHANCE HERITAGE AND CULTURE

This means that by 2040...

- Historic and heritage homes, buildings and art works are preserved, enhanced and protected.
- Lacombe has retained its small town character and feel, friendliness and connectedness.
- Arts, culture and heritage contribute to Lacombe's identity and tourism economy.
- Diverse and numerous arts, cultural and entertainment opportunities encourage participation by all ages.



Related Indicators	Historic / Heritage Sites Protected		Number of Events		Arts, Culture, Heritage Opportunities
Related Strategy Areas	Our Buildings and Sites	Culture, Education and Leisure	Our Community Well-Being	Our Homes and Neighbourhoods	

The related indicators and strategy areas can be referenced in Appendix A and on pages 23-31 respectively.

PRIORITY GOAL

PROMOTE A HEALTHY, CONNECTED, AND ACTIVE COMMUNITY

This means that by 2040...

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for year-round, affordable leisure and recreation, indoors and outdoors, are enjoyed by everyone. • Lacombe is a connected, walkable and bikeable community. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy local food is affordable and accessible to everyone, local farming and gardens are supported, and farming is transitioning towards sustainable practices. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational services are diverse and accessible for all ages. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community and multi-use facilities are accessible, energy efficient and built sustainably. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacombe is a safe, inclusive and supportive community where citizens are happy and engaged, and participate in community activities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents have access to quality health care, support and services that foster healthy living for all ages. |
|---|---|---|--|--|---|



Related Indicators	Housing Affordability	Recreation Opportunities	Health Services	Learning Opportunities	Quality of Life	Sense of Belonging	Local Food	Commuting Mode	
Related Strategy Areas	Culture, Education and Leisure		Our Community Well-Being		Food and Agriculture		Our Homes and Neighbourhoods		How We Get Around

The related indicators and strategy areas can be referenced in Appendix A and on pages 23-31 respectively.

PRIORITY GOAL

PROTECT OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

This means that by 2040...

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhoods are compactly designed, preserving open spaces and water features. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is abundant green space, trails, trees and parks throughout the community. • Biodiversity and functioning ecosystems are maintained. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacombe residents and visitors are stewards of the natural environment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacombe is free of litter and pollution. • Landscaping is toxin-free. |
|---|---|---|--|



Related Indicators	Green Space		Protected Areas	
Related Strategy Areas	Our Homes and Neighbourhoods	Our Natural Environment		How We Get Around

The related indicators and strategy areas can be referenced in Appendix A and on pages 23-31 respectively.

PRIORITY GOAL

PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

This means that by 2040...

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings, homes and neighbourhoods are sustainably built, and energy and water are used efficiently. Energy is used efficiently, and largely comes from local renewable energy sources. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lacombe is moving quickly towards zero waste. Drinking water is safe and accessible to all. Wastewater and stormwater are managed naturally. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lacombe's transportation system is more sustainable, and uses more local, renewable energy. Transportation is safe and convenient, regionally connected, and provides a range of options. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lacombe is well connected through communications infrastructure. Municipal services and infrastructure are efficient, safe and affordable. Lacombe is prepared for any unexpected hazards. |
|---|--|--|--|



Related Indicators	Energy Consumption	Solid Waste	Water Use	Wastewater Treatment or Water Quality	Public Transportation	Highway 2 Safety	Greenhouse Gas Emissions
Related Strategy Areas	Our Buildings and Sites		Our Homes and Neighbourhoods		Our Infrastructure and Resources		Transportation and Mobility

The related indicators and strategy areas can be referenced in Appendix A and on pages 23-31 respectively.

"Sustainable development is a dynamic process which enables people to realise their potential and improve their quality of life in ways which simultaneously protect and enhance the earth's life support systems."

(Forum for the Future)



STRATEGY AREAS

There are a number of ways to understand and conceptualize community and community issues. While it is important for Imagine Lacombe to address relevant community issues such as economic diversification, transportation issues, affordability and climate change, the plan doesn't need to be structured by every issue to do that. In fact, a plan structured by issues would likely be unruly and resource intensive to manage due to the sheer number and variety of issues that exist.

The manner in which Imagine Lacombe is organized seeks to address the opportunities and challenges from all the important issues across a handful of relatively constant community systems. While we don't always think of our community as made up of an energy system, leisure system, health system, economic system, etc., we can all intuitively understand that they exist and will continue to exist into the future. All community systems are interconnected to some

extent, and they are all inextricably linked to the three aspects of sustainability – economic, social and environmental.

For example, a community's energy system encompasses the way various organizations, infrastructure and people collaborate to meet the community's energy needs, and it has impacts on air quality, climate change, water ecology, the cost of doing business, etc. Working comprehensively to address the social, economic and environmental impacts will facilitate system-wide solutions that are long lasting and avoid the creation of unforeseen problems in other areas.

For Lacombe, nine strategy areas were identified that broadly cover and address our community-wide systems and the wide range of issues within them. These strategy areas describe in detail the specific desired outcomes to reach by addressing Lacombe's five Priority Goals.

Our Strategy Areas:

1. Our Buildings and Sites
2. Who We Are: Culture, Education and Leisure
3. Our Community Well-Being: Health, Connections and Safety
4. Our Economy: Work and Skills Training
5. How We Eat: Food and Agriculture
6. Where We Live and Work: Our Homes and Neighbourhoods
7. Our Infrastructure and Resources: Energy, Water and Waste
8. Our Natural Environment: Air, Water and Wildlife
9. How We Get Around: Transportation and Mobility

CURRENT REALITY

Current Reality is a description of the current situation in Lacombe within each strategy area. It is not a comprehensive description of the community, but is meant to provide a snapshot of the community in relation to its described desired outcomes, and to identify main assets as well as some gaps or areas for focusing planning. A summary of the current reality description for each strategy area is attached as Appendix C.

DESIRED OUTCOME STATEMENTS

The Desired Outcome Statements (DOS) within each Strategy Area describe what success and sustainability will look like in Lacombe by the year 2040. The DOS provide specific yet flexible outcomes or goals that should be used to provide direction for more detailed planning and decision making.

For example, the DOS from the Who We Are and Our Natural Environment Strategy Areas can be used

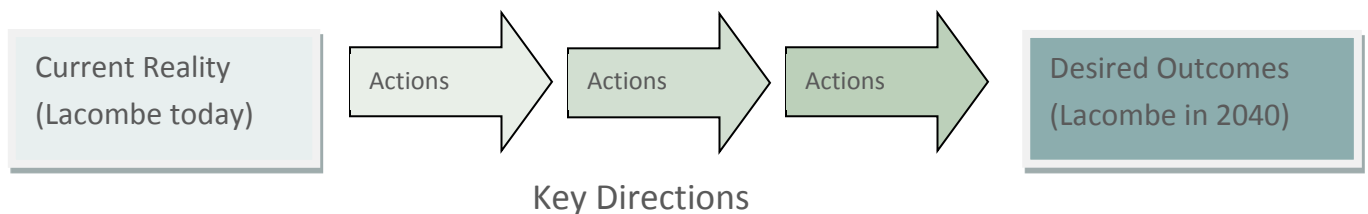
as the goals to guide the development of a more detailed recreation and culture master plan.

The DOS can also be used for more on-the-ground decision making to evaluate different options, such as what type of trail should be used and where best to locate it.

Together with the Priority Goals and Sustainability Objectives, the DOS should be used to ensure the plans and decisions made for the community align with Lacombe's vision of success and sustainability. The collection of desired outcomes will be how Lacombe achieves the five overarching Goals we have set for ourselves for more sustainable development.

KEY DIRECTIONS

Key directions are high level strategies for achieving the desired outcomes. They can remain constant for years, or can change depending on the current situation each year. Key directions, which are composed of many actions, are the guide to reaching the desired outcomes.



OUR BUILDINGS AND SITES



The Building and Sites strategy addresses the physical characteristics of buildings and sites. It includes residential dwellings, commercial, institutional and industrial buildings as well as their surrounding natural landscape, manicured landscape and paved areas. It deals with infrastructure, materials and practices related directly to the building or site.

Summary of 2013 Current Reality

The City of Lacombe has taken numerous strides to preserve its heritage sites and buildings, showcasing the City's humble beginnings and development from a small township to a vibrant urban centre, yet maintaining its small town feel. In collaboration with the Alberta Main Street Program, the City restored and beautified over twenty sites, published a Municipal Heritage Inventory, and developed guidelines and regulations in the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan to protect heritage spaces. The City has made some progress towards green building design with the development of the Lacombe Memorial Centre, a LEED certified building.

Key Directions

- Preserve and enhance historic buildings, heritage and artworks
- Ensure that buildings complement their surroundings and are integrated and linked to the natural environment
- Develop multi-use buildings that are accessible to the community

DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR 2040

1. Buildings and displays of art are preserved and enhanced to celebrate the community's heritage.
2. Community facilities are family-oriented and accessible to all users.
3. Buildings, signage and outdoor spaces are attractive and promote the Lacombe character.
4. Lacombe retains its small town feel through the character of its buildings and neighbourhoods, yet offers attractive development opportunities for growth.
5. All properties and sites, including back lanes and parking lots, are beautifully landscaped and maintained without the use of toxins.
6. Buildings are beautiful, sustainably built using natural and quality building materials, and utilize renewable energy systems.
7. There is an affordable supply of industrial and commercial property.

WHO WE ARE: CULTURE, EDUCATION AND LEISURE



The Culture, Education and Leisure Strategy Area addresses arts and leisure activities including culture, recreation, and education-related activities. It also addresses conditions required to make it accessible, inclusive and more diverse with a low environmental impact.

Summary of 2013 Current Reality

Culture, education and leisure activities are very important to Lacombe residents, and there are a variety of facilities and programs to cater to residents' needs and interests. Over 200 community organizations provide sports, religion, and arts and crafts activities. The Lacombe Memorial Centre, the Lacombe Sports and Leisure complex, Michener Recreation Park and numerous outdoor parks and venues provide space for recreation and other activities. Artistic attractions and music festivals are becoming increasingly popular events for residents and tourists alike. There is a mix of public and private schools, as well as a post-secondary institution, providing quality education for all ages. As the community grows, it will need to ensure that cultural and educational offerings meet an increasingly diverse population, continue to be affordable and accessible, and meet the needs of youth as well as seniors. Furthermore, as the community's trails are a highly valued asset, the City needs to ensure that Lacombe's trail system continues to be maintained and expanded into the future.

Key Directions

- Ensure affordability and accessibility of recreation and leisure programs
- Expand and promote arts, culture and heritage offerings
- Maintain and expand Lacombe's trail system

DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR 2040

1. Opportunities for year-round recreation and leisure are provided by Lacombe's natural assets, along with well-maintained facilities and trails.
2. Affordable and accessible leisure and recreational programs, services and facilities are enjoyed by everyone in the community.
3. Diverse and accessible educational services provide quality education for all ages, interests and needs.
4. Arts, culture and heritage offerings contribute to Lacombe's identity and tourism economy, and are prominently showcased through public art, vibrant outdoor spaces, and thriving performing arts and festivals.
5. Numerous and diverse arts, cultural and entertainment opportunities encourage participation by all ages and are widely supported in the community, contributing to a more culturally diverse and connected community.
6. Multi-use facilities provide space for a diversity of activities including recreation, leisure and culture, and are energy-efficient and built sustainably.

OUR COMMUNITY WELL-BEING: HEALTH, CONNECTIONS AND SAFETY



The Community Well-being Strategy Area is concerned with meeting residents' physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health through services, programs, infrastructure, interactions, relationships and a strong community fabric.

Summary of 2013 Current Reality

Residents value the small town feel of Lacombe, and its inclusive and welcoming nature. Lacombe maintains its own municipal police force, has its own full-service hospital, and provides 24/7 paramedic services. The Lacombe and District Family and Community Support Services provide outreach and social services to the community. With a growing population and a desire to grow and diversify the economy, Lacombe needs to ensure that the community retains its small town feel of inclusiveness, support and citizen engagement. It will also need to ensure it will continue to provide medical, housing, transportation and other services, including services to allow residents to age in place.

Key Directions

- Provide services and facilities for citizens to age-in-place
- Provide quality health care and support services to foster healthy living
- Increase programs and opportunities for community engagement
- Ensure Lacombe maintains its small town feel

DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR 2040

1. Lacombe has retained its charming small town feel, friendliness, quietness, connectedness, caring and sense of place.
2. Community members are happy, engaged and participate in community activities.
3. Lacombe is an inclusive and supportive community where diversity is respected and everyone is welcome.
4. Lacombe promotes collaboration and leadership, open communications, engagement of residents, and a shared long-term vision for the community.
5. Lacombe is a safe community with low crime, where citizens and our protective services work collaboratively.
6. All residents have access to quality health care, support services, and community amenities and services that foster healthy and active living, and the ability to age in place.
7. Lacombe is a self-reliant and prosperous community, yet affordable for all to have a high quality of life, regardless of income level.

OUR ECONOMY: WORK AND SKILLS TRAINING



The Economy Strategy Area focuses on bringing in sufficient dollars into the community, and optimizing the impact of dollars within, as well as increased economic diversification in order to help support local services and attractive livelihoods. It also addresses opportunities for meaningful and varied employment, and creating a positive climate for local businesses.

Summary of 2013 Current Reality

Lacombe is one of Canada's fastest growing cities due to a strong economic base largely established by several key industries: agriculture, finance, oil and gas, education, tourism, public administration and the service sector. A number of large employers has also secured Lacombe's presence as an economic competitor in the region. Lacombe also boasts an attractive small business community with a very active Chamber of Commerce. However, there is a strong desire by the community to have greater diversity of local businesses, in particular for retail and restaurant options, so that there is less need to travel outside the community to meet personal shopping requirements. There is also potential to explore tourism and sustainability-based enterprises and that help meet Lacombe's goals and contribute to the local economy.

Key Directions

- Support and grow local businesses and jobs
- Develop tourism products and opportunities
- Support and enable sustainability-based enterprises
- Ensure a stable and equitable municipal tax base

DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR 2040

1. Lacombe businesses meet the shopping and dining needs of residents.
2. Lacombe has a robust, diverse local economy, which continues to provide opportunities for small independent and self-reliant business development.
3. Lacombe's economy is healthy and strong, regionally and globally competitive, and attracts and retains significant employers.
4. There is an effective and equitable municipal tax system and broad tax base, understood by community members, which contributes to fiscal stability.
5. The local economy is increasingly built on sustainability-based enterprises, including renewable energy sources and waste to resource opportunities, which contribute to the economy.
6. Lacombe's workforce has opportunities to reach their potential through skills training and development, safe working environments, and employee support systems.
7. Opportunities exist for everyone to earn a good living and to enjoy a high quality of life.
8. Lacombe supports and preserves its agricultural economy.

HOW WE EAT: FOOD AND AGRICULTURE



The Food and Agriculture Strategy Area addresses how the community supports an affordable and reliable food system that nourishes residents' appetites, celebrations and culture. The strategy maintains the integrity of the land and agricultural industry while moving toward a more sustainable system. It deals with food systems from farm to fork to disposal.

Summary of 2013 Current Reality

The City and County of Lacombe have a long and proud history of agriculture with a long lineage of farming traditions being passed down from generation to generation, and Lacombe is a recognized leader in agriculture and food production. Farmers' markets contribute to the ability of residents to access fresh and local produce throughout the year. Transitioning to more organically grown produce and sustainable farming practices are important needs to address, as is ensuring farmland is protected while the population grows. Supporting farming practices, and providing access to more community garden spaces, will be integral to ensuring continued local food sources.

Key Directions

- Support more opportunities for growing, buying (and selling) locally produced food
- Increase local dining options
- Protect farmland for food production

DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR 2040

1. Lacombe residents have access to locally grown food year-round through farmers' markets, communal gardens and local farming practices.
2. Quality, healthy food is affordable and accessible to everyone in the community.
3. A variety of restaurants provide diverse dining options.
4. Farmland is protected for food production, and support for farming ensures a viable agricultural economy.
5. Lacombe supports and promotes organic farming and is a significant source of food knowledge.
6. Farming is transitioning toward sustainable and pesticide-free practices, utilizes available water efficiently, and all farming and food waste is used as a resource.

WHERE WE LIVE AND WORK: OUR HOMES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS



The Homes and Neighbourhoods Strategy Area addresses residential buildings and neighbourhoods. It includes commercial, industrial and institutional neighbourhoods and the types of land uses, as well as the amount and timing of development.

Summary of 2013 Current Reality

Lacombe homes comprise a mixture of ownership and rental housing types, including multi-family, single-detached and semi-detached homes, with single-detached the predominant form of housing. The Lacombe Foundation works to provide safe, adequate and affordable housing to seniors and low to medium income families throughout the County. While the older part of the community remains relatively compact, walkable and close to the downtown core, the newer neighbourhoods are more spread out, requiring greater driving distances to shops, schools and recreation. There remains a need for increased diversity in affordable housing options and more assisted living spaces for seniors. As the City continues to grow, ensuring that it creates compact, walkable neighbourhoods and protects green/open spaces will be important, as will be creating a vibrant and well-used downtown. Furthermore, incorporating renewable energy systems and water and energy-efficient infrastructure in homes will be key in building more sustainable neighbourhoods.

Key Directions

- Encourage the creation of more diverse and affordable housing options
- Protect historic and heritage homes and neighbourhoods
- Enhance downtown to increase vibrancy and usage
- Ensure neighbourhoods are compact and connected, and land is used efficiently
- Protect and maintain open spaces and water features

DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR 2040

1. Lacombe residents have a diverse range of housing choices that meet the needs of all income levels and life stages.
2. Historic and heritage homes and neighbourhoods are protected and contribute to the character of the community.
3. Lacombe is a connected, walkable and bikeable community, and facilities and services are accessible to all.
4. Each neighbourhood has open spaces, water features and access to trails for all to use.
5. The community is well-planned and compact, ensuring existing neighbourhoods are used more efficiently, and agricultural land is protected.
6. Neighbourhood greenspace is preserved through increased densification and infill practices.
7. New homes and neighbourhoods are built green, incorporating renewable energy systems and using energy and water efficiently.
8. Commercial areas provide services and facilities to meet the needs of residents.
9. The downtown is vibrant, attractive and well-used.
10. There are opportunities available for future development.

OUR INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES: ENERGY, WATER AND WASTE



The Infrastructure Strategy Area is concerned with meeting energy, water and waste needs in an affordable, reliable and sustainable way and includes management and infrastructure. Communications and connectivity, and financing structures, are included in this Strategy Area.

Summary of 2013 Current Reality

The City of Lacombe effectively serves the community through its public works and utilities. It has a recycling depot as well as municipal compost site, and hosts annual collections of hazardous materials. Water quality is high, and rainwater capture is increasing as part of a City water conservation strategy. There is a desire from the community for greater recycling services and depots; however, the more important challenge will be increased reduction and reuse of materials in order to reach a goal of 'zero waste.' Currently there is little development in the way of renewable energy; renewable energy systems can create efficiencies, economic development opportunities and cost savings, and help meet the need for more reliable and affordable energy sources for the community. Continuing to expand and improve communications and connectivity infrastructure and services will provide citizens with better communications opportunities, also important for economic development.

Key Directions

- Expand and improve recycling and composting facilities and services
- Increase use of renewable and sustainable energy sources
- Design and utilize sustainable materials and systems in infrastructure
- Improve communications and connectivity infrastructure
- Ensure systems are in place for hazard management

DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR 2040

1. Residents are actively engaged in best practices around waste reduction, diversion and management, helping Lacombe to quickly move towards zero waste.
2. Municipal services and infrastructure are efficient and effective at consistently providing safe, affordable and reliable services, while ensuring the City's financial viability.
3. Energy sources are reliable, energy is used efficiently, and renewable, local energy sources and sustainable energy systems meet an increasing proportion of Lacombe's energy and fuel needs.
4. Environmental impacts from Lacombe's infrastructure systems are being minimized through more sustainable management practices and the transition to more sustainable materials.
5. Good planning, infrastructure and services ensure that Lacombe is well prepared to manage any unexpected hazards.
6. Drinking water is safe, clean, abundant, accessible to all, and used efficiently.
7. Wastewater and stormwater are assimilated back into nature through green infrastructure systems and wetlands.
8. Connectivity infrastructure is widely accessible in Lacombe, enabling effective and affordable communications within the city and outside.

OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT: AIR, WATER AND WILDLIFE



The Natural Environment Strategy Area addresses how the community will protect, and attempt to restore, ecosystem integrity and biodiversity throughout the area and region, and protect and maintain the health of air and water systems.

Summary of 2013 Current Reality

Lacombe is renowned for its natural beauty, including a collection of lakes and natural areas. The city currently boasts an impressive network of over 20 km of trails, 147 hectares of ponds and lakes, and over 190 hectares of greenspace. Residents tremendously value their access to greenspaces, open areas and trails, and the City will need to ensure continued access and protection of natural areas and ecosystems as the community grows. The importance of stewardship and the use of more natural and non-toxic strategies and substances to maintain greenspaces and parks will help to create greener and healthier environments for all.

Key Directions

- Implement strategies and policies to protect natural areas and ecosystems
- Minimize use of pesticides and toxins
- Increase greenspace and trees throughout the community

DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR 2040

1. Lacombe is known and valued for its abundant greenspace and trees and the accessibility of parks.
2. Natural areas, water bodies and wildlife corridors are protected, maintaining biodiversity and functioning ecosystems.
3. Natural and non-toxic biological controls are used to manage parks and greenspaces.
4. Lacombe residents and visitors act as stewards of the natural environment.
5. Lacombe is free of litter and pollution, providing a pleasant and healthy environment for all to enjoy.

HOW WE GET AROUND: TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY



The Transportation and Mobility Strategy Area addresses the ability of residents to access their daily needs, as well as the movement of materials to, from and within the community in a more efficient and sustainable manner. It includes all modes of local and regional transportation and focuses on vehicles, roads, trails, lighting, mass transit and supportive technologies.

Summary of 2013 Current Reality

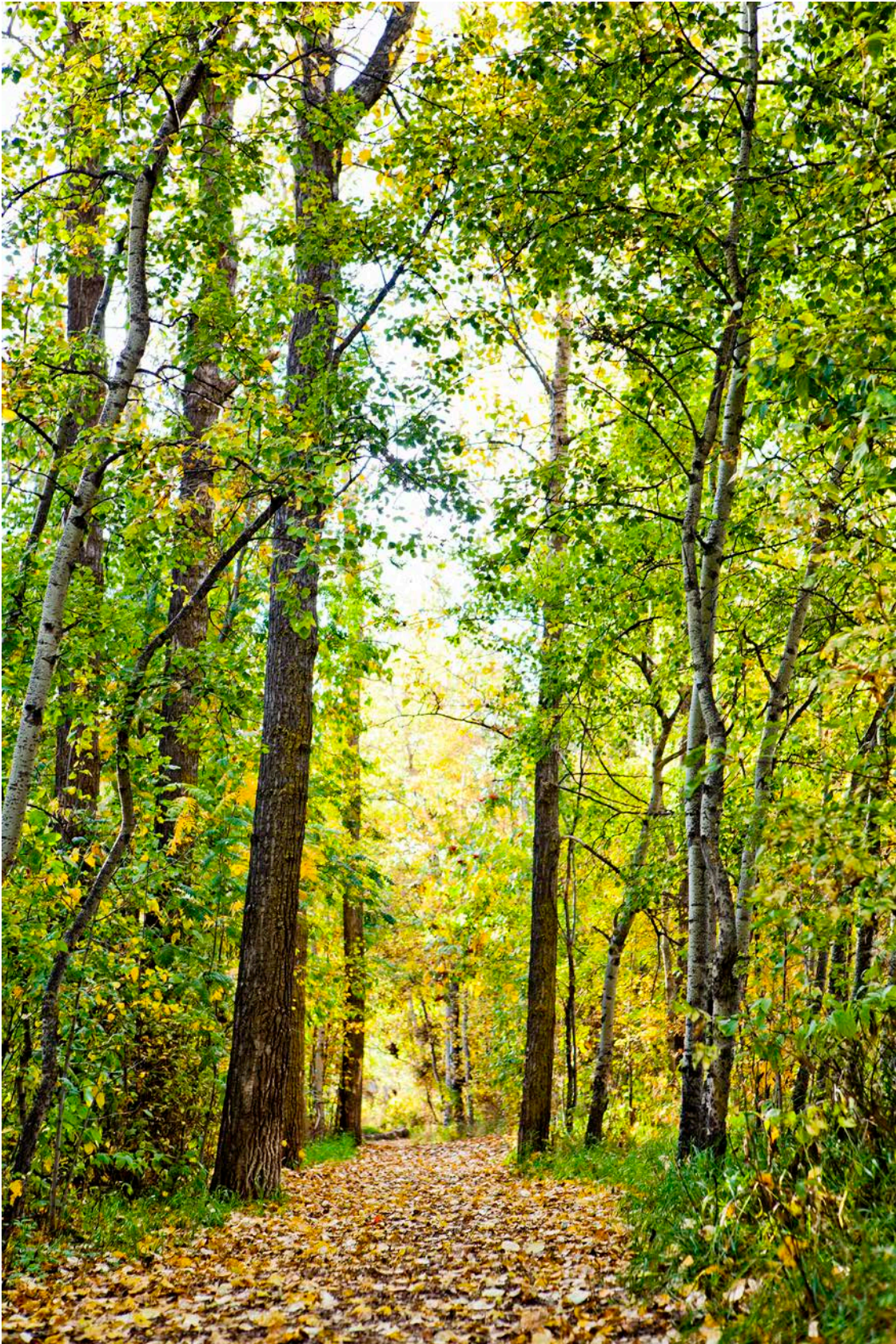
The City of Lacombe is in the centre of a major transportation corridor with three highways (Hwy 12, 2 and 2A) providing access to the community and connections to neighbouring communities. This access also positions Lacombe in the midst of a major truck route, causing concerns around traffic, noise and safety. The most common mode of transportation to and from work is by private automobile, with fewer than 500 residents walking or biking to destinations. However, the community has extensive sidewalks (70 km) found throughout the community. Connex is a handivan service providing transportation to seniors and people with limited mobility options. Making the community more walkable and less car-dependent as well as providing safer highway connections for motorists are issues that need to be addressed. While there are currently discussions between the City of Lacombe and the Town of Blackfalds for a shared regional public transit system, there is a demand for public transit within the city of Lacombe itself. Greater opportunities for live/work spaces and reducing the need for travel and commuting could be explored. More sustainable and energy efficient transportation systems would reduce pollution and greenhouse gases, and have less impact on the environment.

Key Directions

- Increase public transportation options
- Improve biking and walking infrastructure and connectivity
- Explore renewable and sustainable energy for transportation systems
- Improve safety for all users along highway 12

DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR 2040

1. Lacombe's transportation system provides a range of options, including a reliable and well-used public transport system, resulting in less reliance on vehicles and in reduced traffic.
2. Increased live/work, telecommuting and local job opportunities reduce commuting distance and needs for many residents.
3. The transportation system in Lacombe is safe, convenient, accessible and affordable for all users, and provides efficient local and regional connections.
4. Lacombe is a pedestrian and bike-friendly community.
5. Goods and services move efficiently through Lacombe, and truck traffic is reduced within the city core.
6. Lacombe's transportation system is more sustainable, and is transitioning toward more local, renewable energy sources.
7. Local and regional transportation minimizes impact on green spaces and natural areas.



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Accessible: Accessible is a general term used to describe the degree to which a product, device, service, or environment is available to as many people as possible. It is also used to focus on people with disabilities or special needs and their right of access to entities, often through use of assistive technology or design.

Actions: These are the initiatives that should be undertaken to move Lacombe from where it is today toward success and sustainability in the future. Actions can include everything from basic operational activities to the development of policies and strategic plans.

Backcasting: A basic planning approach where one begins with a vision of success in the future (in this case, a sustainable society) and then uses the question “what do we need to do to move from where we are today toward our vision?” to identify strategic actions.

Biodiversity: The diversity of plants, animals, and other living organisms in all their forms and levels of organization, including genes, species, ecosystems, and the evolutionary and functional processes that link them.

Clean energy: Clean energy, also referred to as green energy, is defined here as non-polluting energy from renewable sources.

Climate change: A change in the state of climate properties that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. Any one climate change event may be due to natural earth processes, non-earth events, or to ongoing human caused changes in the makeup of the atmosphere or in land use. In this context, we are mainly talking about reducing human contributions and adapting to the changes in climate and associated events.

Community Member: Either a resident (full time) or part-time resident who lives in the community.

Critical natural areas: These areas incorporate unique and sensitive habitats such as streams, lakes, wetlands, old growth forests, alluvial forests, riparian areas, and the corridors connecting them.

Current Reality: The Current Reality is the “current situation,” or baseline of where the community currently exists with regard to the vision for the future in the defined strategy areas. The current reality for each strategy area would include the current context, existing assets and potential issues.

Desired Outcome Statements: These describe Lacombe’s desired future for the year 2040 in more detail within each strategy area.

District energy: A locally-based energy system from renewable sources that supplies a group of buildings located in close proximity to share infrastructure.

Economic diversification: The characteristic of business variety in the economy both across and within individual business sectors.

Ecosystem: A functional unit of any size consisting of all the living organisms (i.e., plants, animals, and microbes) in a given area, and all the non-living physical and chemical factors of their environment, linked together through nutrient cycling and energy flow.

Ecosystem management: A holistic approach to managing our environment and making land-use decisions. It meshes human purposes with natural systems, always asserting the protection of ecological integrity as its foremost environmental priority.

Environmentally sensitive areas: These areas incorporate unique and sensitive habitats such as streams, lakes, wetlands, old growth forests, alluvial forests, riparian areas, and the corridors connecting them. These areas are the focus for protection from development due to their fragile and rare nature.

Food security: A community enjoys food security when all people, at all times, have access to nutritious, safe, personally acceptable and culturally appropriate foods, produced in ways that are environmentally sound and socially just.

Food system: The food system represents all the entities, individuals and resources used to grow, harvest, produce, deliver, consume and dispose of food.

Indicators: These are used to measure performance at moving toward (or away) from Lacombe's vision of the future.

Lifelong learning: All learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, meaning, skills and competences for pursuing a better quality of life within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective.

Locally-generated energy sources: Energy generated within the community, generally from renewable sources, for example, geothermal, wind or solar.

Low- impact: Technologies, supplies, fuels, etc, that produce little pollution (air, water, waste) or environmental impact (e.g. climate change).

Mixed-use: Developments that combine residential and commercial space in the same building or development. Residences above shops and live-work residences are examples of mixed-use developments. Mixed-use developments enable people to live close to work and amenities.

Municipal Development Plan (MDP): A bylaw adopted by Council that establishes land use, subdivision, and development policies on a municipal-wide basis (Municipal Government Act).

Priority Goals: The Priority Goals provide a high-level focus on what must be achieved to create a successful future for our community.

Resident: Generally someone who takes up their primary residence in the Lacombe and lives there for most of the year.

Renewable energy: Energy from sources that produce electricity or thermal energy without depleting resources. Renewable energy includes solar, wind, water, earth and biomass power, and energy from waste.

Stakeholder: All individuals, groups, and interests that are affected by and/or affect Lacombe and its activities. This includes the natural environment and future generations.

Strategy Areas: These cover the high level community systems that must be managed now and into the future. They help to frame the MSP.

Sustainability Objectives: These frame the plan and define the concrete outcomes necessary to achieve a sustainable society in the long-term, roughly 2060. They are derived from the Natural Step framework and sustainability principles. Visit www.thenaturalstep.org/canada

The Natural Step framework: A strategic planning framework for and definition of sustainability. See www.thenaturalstep.org/canada

Transportation alternatives: Commonly referred to as modes of transportation other than single-occupant gas or diesel powered vehicles.

Value-added: The enhancement given to a product or service before offering it to the market.

Vision: This term is used to encapsulate the picture of the future for Lacombe in 2040, as articulated by the Priority Goals, Sustainability Objectives and Desired Outcome Statements.

Visitor: Generally someone whose primary residence is outside of Lacombe and who visits Lacombe for less than 28 consecutive days.

Wildlife corridors: Linear habitat embedded in unsuitable habitat, which connects two or more larger blocks of suitable habitat. It is generally proposed for conservation in order to enhance or maintain the viability of wildlife populations in the habitat blocks.

Zero waste: “Zero Waste is a concept that embraces social, economic, and environmental considerations. When it is achieved, Zero Waste relieves pressure on the natural environment, reduces the financial burden placed on local taxpayers, as well as decreases the amount of liability shouldered by local governments. Zero Waste promotes moving beyond the traditional five R’s hierarchy and instead adopts a more holistic approach to the traditional linear flow of resources. Zero Waste encourages the full integration of raw materials with the aim of eliminating the idea that waste is a necessary part of the economic formula. Zero Waste represents closing the loop on the manufacturing process by eliminating the production of residual materials, as well as promoting a reduction in overall material consumption. In essence, Zero Waste exemplifies a complete shift away from the traditional societal ideology which embraces a disposable lifestyle as well as the continuous production of residual products. Zero Waste represents the recycling of all materials back into the marketplace or natural environment and in a manner that protects human and ecological health”. (As adapted from Zero Waste America in the RDCK Resource Recovery Plan March 2011.)

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Recommended Indicators

Appendix B: Recommended Actions

Appendix C: Current Reality Description

Appendix D: Decision Tool

Appendix E: Next Steps and Implementation

Appendix F: Other Actions Considered by the CSAT

Appendix G: The Natural Step Framework

Appendix H: Summary of Public Engagement

APPENDIX A: RECOMMENDED INDICATORS

Main Priority Goal	Outcome Measure Short Name	Long Name - What is being Measured	Why Measure This?
Overall indicators	Population	Total Population	Total population tells us about the size of the community and whether the community is changing in size. Diverse communities provide more opportunities for intergenerational interaction help to measure whether communities are attractive to a range of ages. Related to: Economy and Healthy Community.
Overall indicators	Median income	Real taxfiler/census median employment	Median individual income can help reflect a community's overall economic wellbeing. As a proxy of purchasing power, it is also one measure contributing to individual quality of life. Median income is a commonly measured indicator and is readily comparable across communities. Related to: Economy and Healthy Community.
Overall indicators	Housing affordability	Ratio of median income to the median assessed home value	Housing costs are a significant indicator in determining whether residents choose to live in the community. The proportion of gross income spent on housing is a standard measure of housing affordability. Related to: Economy and Healthy Community.
Overall indicators	Quality of life	Proportion of residents stating a very good to excellent quality of life in Lacombe	This is a very high level indicator that takes all aspects of the community into account. Related to: Economy, Healthy Community, and some relation to Heritage and Culture.
Building a strong, local and diverse economy	Business licenses	Number and mix of business licenses	A healthy investment climate can be reflected in the total number of new businesses forming, continuing operations and closing. Tracking new business licenses, renewals of licenses and non-renewals provides a proxy for these categories.
Building a strong, local and diverse economy	Career/Job opportunities	Proportion of residents very satisfied with job and career opportunities	Satisfaction with job and career opportunities indicates a robust and diverse economy. Greater satisfaction usually translates into tendency to stay longer in and contribute to the community.
Building a strong, local and diverse economy	Commercial services access	Proportion of residents very satisfied with access to commercial and retail services	Satisfaction with access to commercial and retail services indicates choice and diversity in the economy. Greater satisfaction usually translates into tendency to stay longer in and contribute to the community.
Building a strong, local and diverse economy	Economic dependency ratio	Ratio of community income transfers such as E.I, social assistance, etc., to total community income	Economic dependence is an indicator of economic health as well as of general societal health. A high number of people on EI generally indicates lack of employment and often relates to decreased individual and family wellbeing and reduced ability to purchase goods and services. Related to: Healthy Community.
Building a strong, local and diverse economy	Economic diversity	Labour force breakdown by export industry (tourism, forestry, education, recreation, etc.)	A diverse economy is one strategy that can help to build a more resilient economy that over time is less impacted by events that might target one sector of the economy.

Main Priority Goal	Outcome Measure Short Name	Long Name - What is being Measured	Why Measure This?
Building a strong, local and diverse economy	Educational attainment	Proportion of residents completing formal post secondary education/university certificate, diploma or degree	Individuals' prosperity, economic opportunity, inclusion, health and sense of wellbeing is often tied to education. Education also generally contributes to a skilled and productive workforce, and helps communities to address opportunities and challenges as they arise. Related to: Healthy community.
Preserving and enhancing heritage and culture	Historic/heritage sites protected	Number of buildings that are provincially designated; number of buildings that are municipally designated	A consistency or an increase in number of protected sites indicates a commitment to historic/heritage protection.
Preserving and enhancing heritage and culture	Heritage protection	Total amount of funding for heritage protection	A consistency or an increase in amount of funding for protected sites indicates a commitment to historic/heritage protection.
Preserving and enhancing heritage and culture	Number of events	Total number of community wide events and festivals with an open invitation to all community members	Events and festivals are a demonstration of heritage and culture celebration and preservation.
Preserving and enhancing heritage and culture	Arts, Cultural, Heritage opportunities	Proportion of community very satisfied with cultural programs and services	This indicator measures people's satisfaction with opportunities for cultural programs and services.
Promoting a healthy, connected and active community	Recreation opportunities	Proportion of residents very satisfied with recreation programs and services	Recreation and healthy lifestyles are important values for residents. Managed recreation facilities, parks and fields play an important role in facilitating recreation activities, social gathering, team activities and celebrations.
Promoting a healthy, connected and active community	Physicians	Ratio of physicians to residential population	This is a measure of the quality of health care available in the community.
Promoting a healthy, connected and active community	Health services	Proportion of residents very satisfied with the quality and access of health services	This indicator measures people's satisfaction with the level and quality of health services available. Satisfaction with health services is increasingly important with an aging population.
Promoting a healthy, connected and active community	Learning opportunities	Proportion of residents very satisfied with learning opportunities	Satisfaction with learning opportunities indicates a healthy and vibrant community. Greater satisfaction usually translates into tendency to stay longer in and contribute to the community.
Promoting a healthy, connected and active community	Sense of belonging	Proportion of residents stating that Lacombe is a good place to live long term (>20 years)	A sense of desire to live in the community long term is the basis for sound mental health and for commitment to place. It is the foundation of good civic behaviour, accountability to the community and is a pre-requisite for local inclusive relationship building, community development and volunteerism.

Main Priority Goal	Outcome Measure Short Name	Long Name - What is being Measured	Why Measure This?
Promoting a healthy, connected and active community	Commuting mode	Proportion of workers commuting via non-motorized/self-propelled transport	Commuting to work constitutes a large proportion of residents' transportation trips and transportation in single occupancy vehicles (SOV) is generally more resource intensive and polluting than other modes. Commuting times (including dropping kids off at school) also coincide with peak traffic volumes. The regularity of work commuting may also make it one of the easier trips to shift from single occupancy vehicle (SOV) to alternative transportation such as carpooling, transit, biking or walking. Related to: Natural Environment, Healthy Community.
Protecting our natural environment	Green Space	Total area of green space, trails, water features and parks throughout the community	Accessible landscaped park areas are used by a wide variety of people and they enrich community life. Urban parks facilitate interaction amongst all demographic groups in individual neighbourhoods and in the community as a whole. Related to: Healthy Community.
Protecting our natural environment	Protected areas	Total area of protected environmental reserves	One of our greatest assets is the abundance of healthy and intact natural ecosystems. Due to past habitat losses the current extent of permanent natural areas should be maintained or enlarged. Failure to do so may contribute to the fragmentation and degradation of this critical environment.
Protecting our natural environment	Energy consumption	Total annual energy consumption	Energy is a critical input to certain aspects of day to day life. At the same time, non-renewable energy use has an impact on future energy supplies as well as ecosystem and human health locally and abroad. Even large renewable projects such as hydroelectric dams have significant impacts on land and aquatic ecosystems. An ability to reduce dependence on energy resources may help the community better adapt to future price shocks, reduce overall environmental impact and avoid associated negative health issues.
Protecting our natural environment	Solid waste	Total annual solid waste (recycling, landfilled waste, other)	Maintaining resident lifestyles and needs and offering visitor services currently requires significant quantities of various materials, which in turn can quickly produce 'waste'. Landfilled waste represents materials that are often unnecessary or may have been used for something more purposeful such as composting, recycling or potentially energy use. Solid landfilled waste also takes up land space, emits greenhouse gases and among other things can leach harmful materials into the surrounding environment. Even with increased diversion, increasing material flow indicates higher rates of consumption, which include embodied energy and GHG in production and transportation of goods.

Main Priority Goal	Outcome Measure Short Name	Long Name - What is being Measured	Why Measure This?
Protecting our natural environment	Water use	Total annual water use	Water is one of our important assets, supporting natural areas, wildlife and residents. Using water resources wisely is fundamental to an environmentally-responsible approach to living. This issue relates not only to the availability of the resource; it is also a municipal infrastructure priority that can translate into millions of dollars spent or saved. This indicator provides an important snapshot of whether demand management of water resources are resulting in overall resource conservation.
Protecting our natural environment	Greenhouse gas emissions	Total annual GHG emissions	Scientists agree that greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) are contributing to global climate change. This changing climate will impact the local economy, community life, visitor experiences as well as directly on the local natural environment. Climate change and GHG emissions are global and local issues that require solutions at all levels and reducing the community's contribution is an important aspect of our commitment to stewardship of the natural environment, environmental responsibility and long-term sustainability. Related to: Healthy Community.
Providing high quality services and infrastructure	Wastewater treatment OR water quality	Total number of incidents where operating agreement levels are exceeded	Wastewater is a potential pressure on local and regional water bodies.
Providing high quality services and infrastructure	Public transportation	Total number of people using Connex transportation	This measures availability of a public transportation service for seniors and those who are mobility challenged. Related to Healthy Community.
Providing high quality services and infrastructure	Public transportation	Total number of people using public transportation	This indicator measures the availability of public transportation in the region. Increase in public transportation use can mean a decrease in private automobile use, which has environmental and reduced energy consumption benefits. Related to: Healthy Community, Natural Environment.
Providing high quality services and infrastructure	Highway 12 safety	Proportion of residents feeling that Hwy 12 corridor is safe	Many Lacombe residents indicated that they didn't feel that Hwy 12 was safe. This indicator measures the perception of safety improvements to the highway. Related to: Healthy Community.
Providing high quality services and infrastructure	Recycling services	Proportion of residents feeling satisfied with the available recycling options in the City of Lacombe	Availability of recycling was a key issue in the community survey. Satisfaction with recycling options gives an indication of the level of recycling services available in the city. Related to: Natural Environment.
Providing high quality services and infrastructure	Communications	Effectiveness of the City of Lacombe's efforts to communicate information about City programs, services and facilities	Community survey results indicated that there needs to be greater leadership and communication from the City to the community.

APPENDIX B: RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Imagine Lacombe - Recommended Actions for 2014 Phase 1

Action	Lead organization	Partner organization(s)
Implement a salvage program for all demolitions, prioritizing historical buildings.	Historical Society	
Develop and offer a downtown market and use it as an opportunity to educate individuals on local food options (local producers, local caterers, etc).	City of Lacombe	
Expand food options at the Harvest and Culture Festival, with the intent of creating a local food festival in future years.	Harvest and Culture Festival	
Identify and create a free hot spot in the downtown, sponsored by the City and the Chamber of Commerce.	City of Lacombe	Chamber of Commerce
Develop a corporate and community energy and emissions reduction plan.	City of Lacombe	
Identify a community green space, and enhance and animate it with recreational activities, stage, park, etc.	Rotary Club	City of Lacombe
Develop a policy for the use of wetlands and water bodies within the city for stormwater management, environmental protection, and public use.	City of Lacombe	
Seek funding to implement the Lacombe-Blackfalds-Red Deer transit service.	City of Lacombe	Town of Blackfalds; City of Red Deer
Conduct a sidewalk review and implement a replacement program starting with the downtown core.	City of Lacombe	
Identify members and develop an advisory group, similar to the Olds Institute, with a mandate to foster business growth and initiatives.	City of Lacombe	Chamber of Commerce
Develop a business case for a business incubation program (a cooperative or a for-profit) to increase business and shopping opportunities.	City of Lacombe	Chamber of Commerce
Meet with the Province of Alberta and community groups to discuss the health needs of Lacombe residents in order to identify those services that will meet and adapt to those needs.	City of Lacombe Council	
Develop a program to provide recreation passes for lower-income residents.	City of Lacombe	
Determine the budget to repair and improve the lighting system on the Cranna Lake trail system.	City of Lacombe	
Identify additional community and recreational programming, which can be provided by the City, to meet resident needs.	City of Lacombe	
Develop and implement a communications and education strategy to inform residents of the results of the housing needs assessment.	City of Lacombe	

APPENDIX C: CURRENT REALITY DESCRIPTION

Introduction: What is a Current Reality?

The City of Lacombe is currently in the process of developing a Municipal Sustainability Plan (MSP). The MSP will help shape and guide future policy in the city and work to ensure the environmental, economic and social sustainability of local residents. The purpose of this current reality document is to provide a current snapshot of key assets, programs, policies and challenges present in each strategy area. It assists in the development of the MSP by identifying what is currently being done in the City and also what improvements or changes can be made to help align the City with its set of desired outcomes. Below is a diagram highlighting each of the strategy areas that were developed by the community:



In the following chapters, the strategy areas will be examined in an effort to explore current strengths and opportunities. As a starting point, the current reality serves as a benchmark, pinpointing where the City is today and what changes could be made to make Imagine Lacombe a more tangible reality.

Buildings and Sites

Lacombe is rich with history. Since its inception in the late 1800s, the City has grown and blossomed into a celebrated cultural centre with a collection of illustrious heritage sites and architectural buildings, yet has managed to retain its small town feel that is so valued by residents. In addition to capturing the distinct styles and techniques of the time, these important buildings and sites showcase the City's humble beginnings and development from a small township to a vibrant urban centre. The City has currently taken numerous strides to preserve these facilities over time.

In 1988, the Town of Lacombe in collaboration with the Alberta Main Street Program, embarked on a five-year plan to restore and beautify over twenty sites resulting in one of the most preserved historic districts in the province.¹



Lacombe, July 13, 1938



In 2012, the City of Lacombe published a Municipal Heritage Inventory. Some of the more noteworthy heritage sites in the downtown include the Flatiron Building, the Blacksmith Shop Museum and the Michener House Museum. These sites serve as

education resources with interactive exhibits that allow viewers the opportunity to understand the history of the City as well as its growth over the last century. They also serve as tourist attractions. In the Downtown Area Redevelopment and Urban Design Plan the City has implemented guidelines and regulations that seek to protect its heritage spaces. Policies include limitations on height and density and adjustments to the streetscape to make heritage areas more accessible and pedestrian friendly. Making sure heritage sites are safe to use and integrating them into the existing urban fabric requires a great deal of dedication and creativity on behalf of the City. Furthermore, one of the benefits of heritage preservation is that it is more sustainable to retrofit an existing building rather than constructing new facilities.

Lacombe has also made a progress in the way of "green" building design. The Lacombe Memorial Centre (LMC) is a LEED certified building, which includes underground storage tanks to capture rainwater for flushing toilets and landscaping, rooftop solar tubes to preheat domestic water, low emission paints and materials, and 10% of new building materials were manufactured regionally.² Continued effort to use green building technology, and ensuring that all facilities are family-oriented and accessible to all users will help ensure buildings are more sustainable in the future.



Who We Are: Culture, Education and Leisure

With a population of close to 12,000 people, Lacombe currently offers a variety of recreational, cultural and educational facilities to cater to the needs and interests of its residents. As of today, there are over 200 community groups active in Lacombe, focusing on sports, religion and arts and crafts among other interests.³ In conjunction with the City, these organizations host and take part in numerous events every year, allowing tremendous opportunities for interaction. The Lacombe Memorial Centre (LMC) serves as an important multi-use facility for the City and these organizations, providing rooms and space for banquets, meetings and club activities. The LMC also houses the Mary C. Moore Public Library.⁴ The City has also entered into shared use agreements with some of its schools to enable the use of school facilities by community groups.

When it comes to indoor recreation, the Lacombe Sports and Leisure complex remains the current hub for fun and exercise. Home to a six-lane pool, two hockey rinks and a curling club, the Lacombe Sports and Leisure Club is a great place for young and old.⁵ For those passionate about the outdoors, the



Michener Recreation Park can accommodate numerous outdoor sporting events. The recently constructed Skateboard Park has also been instrumental in providing more activities for youths and teens.

Lacombe's artistic attractions are continuing to blossom. The Lacombe Arts Endowment fund has been a great success and is working to encourage and fund the development of the arts in the community. Presently, the City's public art collection possesses an extensive assortment of acclaimed pieces.⁶ City streets are also decorated with numerous outdoor public murals making it the "Mural Capital of Alberta."⁷ The Lacombe Art & Exhibit Sale and the Lacombe & District Music Festival continue to be popular events in years past and have contributed to the burgeoning arts scene in the community.

The City is also recognized for its educational institutions. At the elementary and middle school level, there is a mix of private and public schools for residents to choose from, which offer academic as well as trades-oriented courses. For those interested in pursuing a post-secondary degree, Lacombe is also home to the Canadian University College, which offers bachelor degrees in science, art, music, and education as well as other disciplines.⁸

According to most recent statistics, Lacombe's population is continuing to grow by roughly 3% each year. As Canada's cities become increasingly more diverse and multicultural, encouraging the development of ethnically unique places is important in order to reflect the needs of a changing population. Similarly, making sure old and new recreational facilities are affordable, accessible and age-friendly, and that there is year-round arts and culture programming is important to the community. Students have also expressed an interest in more teen friendly spaces, another ice rink and possibly a performing arts centre.

Our Community Well-Being: Health, Connections and Safety

In Lacombe, community health and safety are of the utmost importance to maintaining a high quality of life. Part of the benefit of living in a smaller city is the ability to connect and access services with relative ease. Residents value the small town feel, the inclusiveness and welcoming nature of the community.



Founded by a former member of the North West Mounted Police (N.W.M.P.), Lacombe has always had a strong community police presence. For over 100 years, the City has maintained its own municipal police force.⁹ Not only has this been instrumental in providing a safe and secure atmosphere but helped foster a sense of local autonomy. There is also a well trained and fully active volunteer City fire department.¹⁰

Lacombe offers a diverse range of medical services within walking distance of local neighbourhoods. In addition to medical walk-in clinics, dental and optometrist services Lacombe has its own full-service hospital with acute care and long-term care beds. 24hour/7day a week paramedic services are also provided to the residents of Lacombe and surrounding County area.

Devoted to strengthening and enriching community life, the Lacombe and District Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) provide outreach support to the community. Within the FCSS, the Small Wonders Family Day Homes affords parents the option of receiving in-home daycare for their children. There is a chapter of Big Brothers and Big Sisters in Lacombe that provides one-on-one peer support.¹¹

Making sure there is a wide array of services that meet the needs of residents is important in a growing city. As Lacombe continues to grow, encouraging the development of ethnically unique places is important in order to reflect the needs of a changing population. Providing sufficient support to seniors and individuals with special needs is critical to maintaining the social sustainability of community members. As the baby-boom generation continues to grow older, the need to expand current medical services, housing, transportation and other services will be required to allow residents to age in place. In addition, increasing numbers of youth in Lacombe could also encourage tax dollars to be directed to more resources for children to tackle important social issues.

Our Economy: Work and Skills Training

Maintaining a healthy and robust local economy is fundamental to ensuring the sustainability of any city. Currently, the City of Lacombe's strong economic base has served as a key and defining feature of its overall success and title as one of Canada's fastest growing cities. In 2013, *MoneySense* – Canada's leading personal finance magazine and website – declared Lacombe the 8th most livable city in the country.¹² Much of this achievement can be attributed to Lacombe's stable yet diverse economic landscape, which offers a mix of different employment opportunities across several different industries including agriculture, finance, oil and gas, education, tourism, public administration and the service sector.¹³ This steady rate of employment coupled with low taxes and modest business incentives has contributed to an active and growing workforce of over 5,500 individuals (a slight increase from the 2006 census of 5,300).¹⁴

"We've always had a stable economic sector with federal and provincial government employers, educational institutions, and a mix of industrial and agricultural."

Guy Lapointe, Community and
Economic Development Manager,
City of Lacombe

The existence of several large scale businesses and employers such as Nova, Dow, Canadian University College and the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation – a crown corporation that offers commercial lending support and insurance to regional farmers – has also secured Lacombe's presence as an economic competitor in the region and helped distinguish it from neighbouring Edmonton and Red Deer.¹⁵

Although a significant portion of the workforce is employed in the service sector, agriculture and industry remain the key economic drivers. The availability of certain natural resources and the City's proximity to major petrochemical factories has ideally positioned Lacombe within the petroleum industry.¹⁶ This has also spearheaded the development of more light and heavy industrially zoned lands. In addition to being a desirable location for big business, Lacombe also boasts an attractive small business community with a very active Chamber of Commerce. Boutiques, craft stores and specialty shops are increasing, but there continues to be a demand for more diversity to provide more local shopping options. Over the years, the Chamber formed a strategic alliance with Regional Tourism and the City's Economic Development Office to better promote local businesses and enhance the economic vitality of the community.¹⁷

During the Imagine Lacombe community engagement process there was a strong sentiment around the need for more shopping options (i.e. clothing, groceries, restaurants and specialty shops) in the City to prevent residents from having to travel to Red Deer to get what they need. Tourism and renewable energy opportunities are areas to further explore and expand to continue to strengthen and diversify Lacombe's economy.

How We Eat: Food and Agriculture

The City and County of Lacombe have a long and proud history of agriculture with a long lineage of farming traditions being passed down from generation to generation. Being situated in some of the province's most fertile land, Lacombe is a recognized leader in agriculture and food production. For this reason, City residents are able to access and purchase local produce at different times throughout the year.



Starting the May long weekend and running until Thanksgiving weekend, the outdoor farmers' market can be found in Lacombe. There are approximately four or five winter markets from mid-November to mid-December, and one Easter market. A food security group Backyard Friends, facilitated by the Family and Community Services Society, provides support to community suppers and gardens.

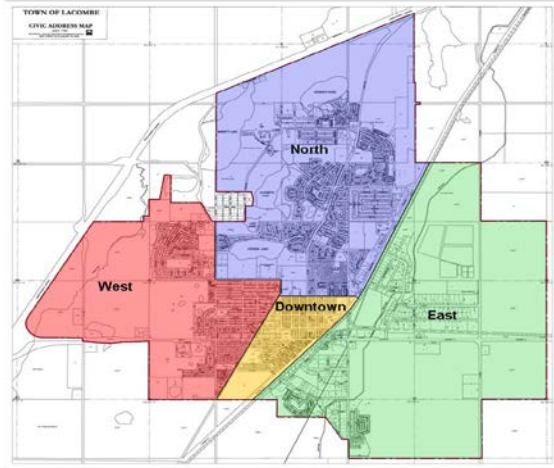
Providing a more diverse selection of restaurants, quick and convenient food outlets, farmers' markets in the fall and winter, and sufficient year-round access to local food are top priorities for the public and areas for improvement in the City. Encouraging the growing of affordable high-quality organic produce, and of more sustainable farming practices, are equally as important when addressing the issue of how we eat. With forms of agritourism on the rise in the County, there is no shortage in demand for local food products. However, increased urban expansion and forms of environmental degradation could weigh heavily on agrarian production.



In the Municipal Development Plan (MDP), efforts to protect prime and fertile lands while simultaneously allowing for future population growth are addressed.¹⁸ Striking a balance between these two needs, as well as ensuring support for farming, is integral to ensuring that residents have access to a sustainable local food source in the future. Access to community gardening spaces can also be successful in providing access to fresh food while still living in a busy urban centre.

Where We Live and Work: Our Homes and Neighbourhoods

The residential population of Lacombe is continuing to increase. As of 2011, land use figures indicate that 21% (921.08 acres) of the City's land is used for residential neighbourhoods.¹⁹ Currently, there is a diversity of ownership and rental housing types in the city, including multi-family units (apartments,



duplexes and townhouses), single-detached homes and semi-detached models, with single-family detached homes the most common form and costing on average \$331,000.²⁰ In 2008, the City, in conjunction with the Province, introduced the Secondary Suite Initiative Grant Program to help single-family detached homeowners renovate and build secondary suites, adding to housing choice and greater affordability for renters and homeowners alike.²¹

As with almost every city in Canada, affordability and the price of housing is a top concern. The Lacombe

Foundation strives to become the best housing provider in the province, and has the motto "everyone needs a home," works to provide safe, adequate and affordable housing to seniors and low to medium income families throughout the County. The Lacombe Senior Citizens Lodge and the Eckville Manor House (Lacombe County) are two facilities that work in connection with the Lacombe Foundation to offer supportive living facilities for the City's elderly population.²²

The older part of the community remains relatively compact, walkable and close to the downtown core; however, the newer neighbourhoods are more spread out, requiring greater driving distances to shops, schools and recreation.

There remains a need for increased diversity in affordable housing options and more assisted living spaces for seniors. Tools such as government subsidies, public-private partnerships and land-use zoning ordinances to build a varied housing stock can support more affordable housing.

As the City continues to grow, ensuring that it creates compact, walkable neighbourhoods and protects green spaces will be important, as will be creating a vibrant and well-use downtown. Furthermore, incorporating renewable energy systems and water and energy-efficient infrastructure in homes will be key in building more sustainable neighbourhoods.

Our Infrastructure and Resources: Energy, Water and Waste

A city's infrastructure is dependent upon a collection of well-maintained and up to date services. These include water, waste management, sewage treatment and energy supply. Currently, Lacombe has the necessary public works and utilities in place to service the community. However, as the population

increases so does the demand for these services to run smoothly and efficiently. Keeping them affordable while still providing the same high quality level of service has prompted many cities such as Lacombe to explore more cost-effective, energy efficient and environmentally friendly strategies.



The City of Lacombe is highly dedicated to recycling as a part of its waste management policy. The public recycling depot accepts tin, cardboard, plastics/plastic bags, newspaper and glass, and there is a municipal compost site next to the recycling depot.²³ In order to

ensure the proper disposal of toxic waste and refuse, the City hosts annual collections of hazardous materials and conducts community clean up campaigns.²⁴ In Autumn 2013, the City approved plans to deliver blue box recycling to its residents, which should help improve recycling opportunities.

Water quality is good in the community. The City receives its water from the Red Deer Treatment Plant through a regional water line that services Lacombe and adjacent communities. The water that exits the treatment facility is very high quality. For companies and large scale businesses, the City also provides a bulk water station at Wolf Creek Recycle Depot. The use of barrels to capture rainwater is growing in Lacombe and is an important element in the City's water conservation strategy.²⁵



While residents have expressed an interest for greater recycling and composting services and infrastructure, reducing and reusing materials is far more sustainable and necessary if Lacombe wishes to reach a goal of "zero-waste." Re-use, composting and recycling also has the opportunity to become profitable enterprises. Other important issues raised by the public include more natural storm water management systems, and greater energy efficiency and development of renewable energy sources. In cities across Canada, green roofs are a popular trend and have served as catalysts in the development of sustainable infrastructure.

Our Natural Environment: Air, Water and Wildlife

Lacombe is renowned for its natural beauty. Its collection of lakes and natural areas that support a diverse range of species and wildlife is integral to Lacombe's reputation as an ecologically friendly city. Protecting basic human needs such as the air we breathe and water we drink as well as the sensitive areas that supply them will guarantee a high quality of life.

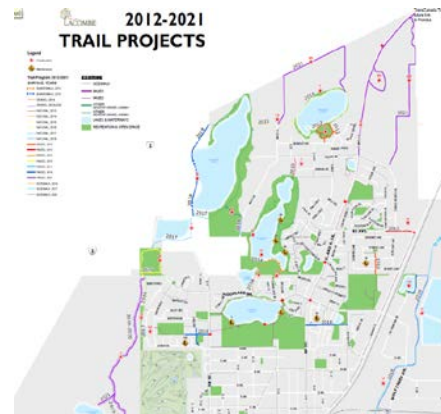


In 2002, council adopted the Natural Space Management Plan to help monitor the development of green spaces. Currently, the city boasts an impressive network of over 20 kms of trails, 1.47 kms of ponds and lakes and over 467 acres of green space.²⁶ Cranna Lake and Elizabeth Lake are among the most popular areas and offer scenic trails for cyclists and pedestrians. Cranna Lake also

transforms into a public outdoor ice rink during colder months. Just North of Cranna Lake is Elizabeth Lake, which offers breathtaking views and a maintained wood-chip trail, and connects to the Canadian University College.²⁷

Pet owners also now have a place to call their own. A designated off-leash dog area was created at Michener Park where pets can roam freely, causing little disruption to natural habitats or the rest of the community.

In the City's growth strategy, connections to the natural environment are identified as an intrinsic part of human life. As climate change and global warming continue to threaten these areas, policies that protect green spaces in the City and surrounding region will become increasingly important. Finding the appropriate balance that satisfies the interests of the economy with those of the environment will be a challenge for future generations and require careful thought and consultation between the City and community members.



During the public consultation process, residents identified close connections to the natural environment as one of the best features in Lacombe, including the need for more trees and green space in local neighbourhoods. The importance of stewardship and more natural and non-toxic strategies and substances to maintain green spaces and parks would help to create greener and healthier environments for all.

How We Get Around: Transportation and Mobility

The City of Lacombe is in the centre of a major transportation corridor with three highways (Hwy 12, 2 and 2A) providing access to the community and connections to neighbouring communities. This access also positions the community in the midst of a major truck route, causing concerns around traffic, noise and safety.



For seniors and people with limited mobility options, Lacombe offers a handivan service. In Partnership with the District of Lacombe, F.C.S.S and the City, Connex works to service residents in Lacombe and the surrounding County by providing transportation to and from community amenities such as schools, doctor's appointments, places of employment and shopping. Reservations are usually required 24 hours in advance.²⁸

Being a relatively small city, discussions regarding a transit strategy for the general public are still in their infancy but have garnered significant attention as of late. In Autumn 2013, the City and the Town of Blackfalds approved a plan to enter into a shared regional public transit service that would connect the two areas as well as provide stops in Red Deer. Together, the two communities will split the cost of building the network (50/50), and are working together to acquire funding through the Province's Alberta Green Transit Incentive Program (TRIP) – a onetime capital funding grant for transit programs.²⁹



According to modal shift figures, the most common mode of transportation to and from work is by private automobile. An overwhelming majority (over 4,000 residents) travel by car, truck or van to their places of employment, with fewer than 500 residents walking or biking to destinations.³⁰ There are currently over 70 km of sidewalk throughout the city. Making the community more walkable and less car-dependent as well as providing safer highway connections for motorists are issues that need to be addressed. Greater opportunities for live/work spaces, reducing the need for travel and commuting, could be explored. More sustainable and energy efficient transportation systems would reduce pollution and greenhouse gases, and have less impact on the environment.

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- ¹ Town of Lacombe, Alberta, Canada. *Living Lacombe*. N.p.: Town of Lacombe, Alberta, Canada, n.d. Print, pg 6.
- ² "Did You Know? A Green Building for Tomorrow's Lacombe." City of Lacombe, n.d.
- ³ "City of Lacombe's Community Contact List." N.p., n.d.
Web:<http://www.lacombe.ca/images/stories/62/Community%20Contact%20List%20Nov.%202012.pdf>
- ⁴ City of Lacombe, Alberta, Canada. *Community Profile: Business Ready, Family Ready*. Lacombe: City of Lacombe, Alberta, Canada, n.d. Print, pg, 10.
- ⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶ Ibid
- ⁷ Town of Lacombe, Alberta, Canada. *Living Lacombe*. N.p.: Town of Lacombe, Alberta, Canada, n.d. Print, pg, 24.
- ⁸ City of Lacombe, Alberta, Canada. *Community Profile: Business Ready, Family Ready*. Lacombe: City of Lacombe, Alberta, Canada, n.d. Print, pg, 10.
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- ¹⁰ Town of Lacombe, Alberta, Canada. *Living Lacombe*. N.p.: Town of Lacombe, Alberta, Canada, n.d. Print, pg, 33.
- ¹¹ "Lacombe & District Family and Community Support Services." *Lacombe & District Family and Community Support Services*. N.p., n.d. Web. <http://www.lacombecss.net/>
- ¹² "City of Lacombe Ranked 8th Best Place to Live in Canada." N.p., n.d. Web:
<http://www.lacombechamber.ca/news/159-lacombe-8-best-place-to-live-canada.html>
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- ¹⁷ "Lacombe Chamber of Commerce." *Lacombe and District Chamber of Commerce*. N.p. Web:
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- ²¹ City of Lacombe, Alberta, Canada. Secondary Suites Initiative – General Information.
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- ²² "Lacombe Foundation." *Lacombe Foundation*. N.p., n.d. Web: <http://www.lacombefoundation.ca/>
- ²³ Town of Lacombe, Alberta, Canada. *Living Lacombe*. N.p.: Town of Lacombe, Alberta, Canada, n.d. Print, pg 16.
- ²⁴ City of Lacombe. "Community CleanUp." N.p., n.d. Web: <http://www.lacombe.ca/living/infrastructure-services/solid-waste/community-events/community-clean-up-campaign>
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- ²⁶ City of Lacombe, Alberta, Canada. *Community Profile: Business Ready, Family Ready*. Lacombe: City of Lacombe, Alberta, Canada, n.d. Print, pg, 2.
- ²⁷ Town of Lacombe, Alberta, Canada. *Living Lacombe*. N.p.: Town of Lacombe, Alberta, Canada, n.d. Print, pg 16
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- ²⁹ Regional Public Transit Initiative." N.p., n.d. Web.
<http://www.lacombe.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2082&Itemid=369
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APPENDIX D: DECISION TOOL

Imagine Lacombe's Planning and Assessment Tool



Our shared community vision for success and sustainability is implemented through decision-making – from daily purchasing decisions to high-level strategic planning decisions. This tool outlines four strategic questions to help you evaluate any type of decision or action, including plans, policies, projects, purchases, practices, etc.

Other Imagine Lacombe's tools will help you with planning and assessment decisions and should be used for the projects and purchases listed below.

LACOMBE DECISION TOOL: An Excel tool that will enable you to plan and assess projects like this or in more detail using the Desired Outcome Statements (DOS) from the Imagine Lacombe strategy areas.

Use this for:

- MDP amendments/rezoning
- Major development proposals
- Other community-wide planning and infrastructure decisions
- Actions requiring an investment of resources greater than \$XX,000 (or equivalent staff time)

SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING GUIDE

Use this tool for purchases that are:

- Large volume over the year (e.g. paper)

For planning: Tools should be used at the start of projects to guide the planning/design and/or consideration of options.

For assessments: Tools can also be used to flag potential positive and negative impacts of whatever is being proposed and help you innovate ways to leverage the positives and avoid the negatives.

For choosing among alternatives: It can also be used to flag potential benefits and negative impacts of various alternatives to help you identify ways to avoid or minimize them and ultimately decide among the final options.

CONCEPT /PROPOSAL/PROJECT/ACTION NAME:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

1. TOWARD SUCCESS?





Does it support or conflict with our Priority Goals?	Conflicts	Neutral	Partially supports	Strongly supports
BUILD A STRONG, LOCAL AND DIVERSE ECONOMY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Lacombe's economy is healthy and strong, regionally and globally competitive, and attracts and retains significant employers. <input type="checkbox"/> The local economy is increasingly built on sustainability-based enterprises. <input type="checkbox"/> Downtown is vibrant, attractive and well-used, commercial areas provide services and facilities to meet the needs of residents, and there are opportunities for future development. <input type="checkbox"/> Lacombe's workforce has opportunities to reach their potential. <input type="checkbox"/> Lacombe is a self-reliant and prosperous community, yet affordable for all to have a high quality of life. <input type="checkbox"/> An effective and equitable municipal tax system and broad tax base contributes to fiscal stability.				
PRESERVE AND ENHANCE HERITAGE AND CULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic and heritage homes, buildings and art works are preserved, enhanced and protected. <input type="checkbox"/> Lacombe has retained its small town character and feel, friendliness and connectedness. <input type="checkbox"/> Arts, culture and heritage contribute to Lacombe's identity and tourism economy. <input type="checkbox"/> Diverse and numerous arts, cultural and entertainment opportunities encourage participation by all ages.				
PROMOTE A HEALTHY, CONNECTED AND ACTIVE COMMUNITY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for year-round, affordable leisure and recreation, indoors and outdoors, are enjoyed by everyone. <input type="checkbox"/> Lacombe is a connected, walkable and bikeable community. <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy local food is affordable and accessible to everyone, local farming and gardens are supported, and farming is transitioning towards sustainable practices. <input type="checkbox"/> Educational services are diverse and accessible for all ages. <input type="checkbox"/> Community and multi-use facilities are accessible, energy efficient and built sustainably. <input type="checkbox"/> Lacombe is a safe, inclusive and supportive community where citizens are happy and engaged, and participate in community activities. <input type="checkbox"/> Residents have access to quality health care, support and services that foster healthy living for all ages.				
PROTECT OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Neighbourhoods are compactly designed, preserving open spaces and water features. <input type="checkbox"/> There is abundant green space, trails, trees and parks throughout the community. <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity and functioning ecosystems are maintained. <input type="checkbox"/> Lacombe residents and visitors are stewards of the natural environment. <input type="checkbox"/> Lacombe is free of litter and pollution. <input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping is toxin-free.				
PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Buildings, homes and neighbourhoods are sustainably built, and energy and water are used efficiently. <input type="checkbox"/> Energy is used efficiently, and largely comes from local renewable energy sources. <input type="checkbox"/> Lacombe is moving quickly towards zero waste. <input type="checkbox"/> Drinking water is safe and accessible to all. <input type="checkbox"/> Wastewater and stormwater are managed naturally. <input type="checkbox"/> Lacombe's transportation system is more sustainable, and uses more local, renewable energy. <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation is safe and convenient, regionally connected, and provides a range of options. <input type="checkbox"/> Lacombe is well connected through communications infrastructure. <input type="checkbox"/> Municipal services and infrastructure are efficient, safe and affordable. <input type="checkbox"/> Lacombe is prepared for any unexpected hazards.				

CREATIVITY SPACE:

If the action CONFLICTS, how can you avoid or minimize this? How can you make it SUPPORT? If it is NEUTRAL or PARTLY SUPPORTS, how can you make it stronger?

2. TOWARD SUSTAINABILITY?

Making a minor product/ purchasing decision? Refer to the Sustainable Purchasing Guide

Does it move us toward our Sustainability Objectives?	...in favour of these approaches?	AWAY	Neutral?	TOWARD
 <p>To eliminate our contribution to creating socio-cultural/economic conditions that undermine people's ability to meet their basic needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe, vibrant working and living conditions • Inclusive and transparent decision-making • Political and speech freedoms • Affordable products and services; sufficient resources for livelihood 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 <p>To eliminate our contribution to the ongoing physical degradation of nature.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using energy and materials efficiently • Materials and energy from well-managed ecosystems • Use of previously developed lands • Re-usable, recyclable and recycled content • Fast-growing crops (hemp, bamboo etc...) 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 <p>To eliminate our contribution to the ongoing build-up of persistent synthetic materials produced by society.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using synthetic materials efficiently • Natural, biodegradable materials (wood, cotton, water-based etc.) • Synthetic materials kept out of nature from creation to use • Organically grown, untreated • Using re-usable, recyclable and recycled content materials 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 <p>To eliminate our contribution to the ongoing build-up of materials that are drawn out from the Earth's crust.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy efficiency and energy from renewable sources • Metals that are plentiful and used efficiently • Re-usable, recyclable and, recycled content materials • Natural, biodegradable materials • Extracted materials kept out of nature from extraction to use 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

CREATIVITY SPACE: If it is AWAY, how can you **avoid or minimize** this? How can you make it TOWARD? If it is NEUTRAL, how can you make it support?

3. FLEXIBLE PLATFORM?

In general, most initiatives will have some tradeoffs or conflicts with elements of the priority goals or sustainability objectives. Flexible approaches and technologies will help ensure we are not faced with unacceptable costs and do not limit our ability to adapt. Instead, flexible approaches avoid tradeoffs and enable the next steps to achieve more success for our community in the future.

FAVOUR

- Efficiency measures (e.g. reduced consumption, energy efficiency)
- Approaches that are adaptable, modular, scalable
- Things that build stronger community/stakeholder support for your initiatives
- Pilot investments where you can test results and unintended consequences before scaling up
- Approaches that fit in with how things will work in the future
- Can be improved upon quite easily in the future

AVOID

- Things that tie you into using current technologies for a long time
- Partial solutions that cannot be further improved upon (i.e. dead-ends with many tradeoffs)
- Significant investments that lock you into a single way of doing things
- Things that tie up too much resources (time/money) in partial solutions
- Things that do not align with new ecological/economic/social standards

Explain how the action is a flexible platform.

CREATIVITY SPACE: Explain how the action might have some of these characteristics and what can be done to avoid them.

4. GOOD RETURN ON YOUR INVESTMENT?

Ensuring that you spend the community's money most wisely and effectively will always be an important part of decision-making. However, saving money in the short term is not always the best solution, nor is making a large investment with too long of a payback period.

Notes:

- If an action is something that must be done for regulatory reasons, the return on the Investment may not be relevant; however, you may use be able to consider different ways to fulfil the regulatory requirement.
- If someone else is bearing the brunt of the costs (e.g. a developer), then this section may be irrelevant for the municipality, but you may want to consider if the costs passed down to others is acceptable.

	By Year 1	By Year 3	By Year 5	By Year 10	By Year 20
A: Capital Cost: \$ _____	- \$	-\$	- \$	-\$	-\$
B: Operating/Financing costs/per year:					
C: Estimated annual savings from BAU (i.e. increased staff productivity, reduced operating or maintenance costs (\$))	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
D: Estimated revenue streams (increases in annual user fees, DCCs, grants, or acceptable new tax revenue streams (\$))	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
SIMPLE PAYBACK = A/(B+C+D) ____ years Shorter payback is less risky					

Explain the simple payback on fixed investments and the nature of the return on investment over the lifetime of the project through cost savings or other acceptable revenue streams.

CREATIVITY SPACE: If the payback is long or negative, or the financial support weak, the vision benefits may still outweigh the costs. Can you transfer money from somewhere else in the budget?

SUMMARY

Strengths

Based on the four questions...what benefits/value does the project deliver that makes it worthy of the time or financial investment?

Weaknesses

Based on the four questions...what must be addressed moving forward to ensure the project's critical weaknesses are avoided or minimized?

Conclusion/Recommendation:

APPENDIX E: NEXT STEPS AND IMPLEMENTATION

Next Steps and Implementation

Developing the Imagine Lacombe MSP is just one step of many in Lacombe's journey toward its vision for success and sustainability. Imagine Lacombe articulates a shared vision for the future success and sustainability of the community, and outlines a process for continuing along the journey towards that vision. It will require ongoing commitment towards implementation: alignment of decision-making, and proactive action planning. It also requires annual monitoring and reporting on progress, and continued development and implementation of actions and initiatives. This appendix outlines the main areas for building on Imagine Lacombe and creating an ongoing process for embedding sustainability in the community.

Align Decision-Making

The ultimate goal for Imagine Lacombe implementation is that decisions are aligned with Imagine Lacombe, which includes the formal decisions made by the Council on policies, plans and procedures, as well as the day to day decisions made by staff and community partners on projects, practices and purchasing.

There are two factors critical for successful alignment: training and tools. Decision-makers should understand the Imagine Lacombe framework and how to apply it to their decision-making processes. Further, they will likely benefit from decision-informing tools, such as the ones included in the Imagine Lacombe MSP, to assist them through the process.

Partner with Community Stakeholders on Implementation

Since Imagine Lacombe is a long-term plan for the whole community, it is imperative that community stakeholders participate as partners with the City of Lacombe in the development and ongoing implementation of the plan. Community partners can participate in collective annual action planning, accept actions for implementation, or undertake their own annual action planning process, potentially as part of their annual strategic or business planning process.

To ensure that roles and responsibilities of community partners are clear, a partnership agreement signed between the municipality and the community partner is a useful tool. The partnership agreement should articulate a commitment to the shared vision and desired outcomes articulated in Imagine Lacombe, as well as some principles for community partnerships (e.g. collaboration, transparency). Content for a sample Partnership Agreement is included at the end of Appendix E.

While it is ideal that community partners come on board during the development of Imagine Lacombe, they can come on board at any time, as long as they are provided an understanding of the process and the benefits – to them and to the broader community – of participating in a long-term sustainability journey.

Expand the CSAT and Consider Task Forces

The Imagine Lacombe Community Sustainability Advisory Team (CSAT) played an instrumental role leading up to and including the development of Imagine Lacombe MSP. It would be ideal if the CSAT members continued to play a role in the Imagine Lacombe process through annual action planning as well as implementation of actions in their respective organizations. It is recommended that the CSAT be expanded to include more community organization representatives and stakeholders so that actions can be determined and accepted for implementation by a broader range of organizations.

Alternatively, a number of task forces can be created, each comprising community partners and each addressing specific strategy areas. The benefits of creating multiple task forces is that it increases the number of community members actively engaged in the process, shares the workload, and helps to broaden the perspectives and expertise brought to the table, thereby strengthening the outcomes overall. These benefits should be weighed against the resources it will take to convene multiple groups into the future. Three suggestions are offered for task force structure:

1. Each strategy has its own task force: In this option, there is one task force for each of the Imagine Lacombe strategy areas, i.e. nine task forces in total. However, the task forces do not necessarily need to be convened all at the same time or even in the same year: a rotating schedule could be created such that the most important strategy areas are prioritized first and those task forces meet in year one.
2. Groups of strategies share one task force: Here, related strategies are grouped together and one task force is convened for each grouping. For example, the following strategy areas could be grouped, therefore requiring only three task forces, rather than nine as with the above option. For example:
 - a. Buildings and Sites + Our Homes and Neighbourhoods + Our Natural Environment
 - b. Community Well-Being + Culture, Education and Leisure + How we Eat
 - c. Our Economy + Infrastructure and Resources + Transportation and Mobility
3. Create five Task Forces, each aligning with a Community Priority:
 - a. Building a strong, local and diverse economy
 - b. Preserve and enhance heritage and culture
 - c. Promote a healthy, connected and active community
 - d. Protect our natural environment
 - e. Provide high quality services and infrastructure

As Imagine Lacombe continues to be implemented over the next number of years, the strategy areas may be combined, separated, or revised – that is all part of an ongoing community sustainability planning process.

Annual Action Planning

Regardless of whether the Imagine Lacombe CSAT continues or new/separate task forces are created, one or the other should be engaged in annual action planning to ensure that the Imagine Lacombe MSP continues to be a living process and, most importantly, that it creates on-the-ground action and results.

The action planning process should continue in a manner similar to what occurred during the action planning process in the development of Imagine Lacombe and the initial set of actions. Below is a high-level summary of the process.

The CSAT/task force(s): reviews the results of past and new recommended actions or action ideas from public, the other actions not recommended (from previous Imagine Lacombe action planning as well as from other plans and documents); evaluates the most current indicator data; assesses local and regional opportunities; reviews Lacombe’s vision for the future; identifies potential actions for implementation; prioritizes them and presents a recommended set of actions for the following year.

The prioritized actions are recommended to potential implementing organizations throughout the community, not just to the City, reinforcing that Imagine Lacombe is owned and implemented by a wide range of community partners.

Ongoing Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring and reporting progress toward (or away from) Imagine Lacombe’s vision is essential to provide transparency, inform decision-making and enable continuous improvement. Ongoing, consistent and reliable monitoring provides the community with a number of essential functions and benefits, including:

- Informing decision-making throughout the community;

- Informing task force action planning;
- Ensuring transparency and accountability to community stakeholders;
- Engaging businesses, residents and visitors in the journey toward the vision by providing meaningful and timely information in an interactive way.

Communicating indicator results will build excitement and support for increased engagement and innovative action planning, and therefore data collection, analysis and reporting should line up with a community engagement cycle. For example, reporting can kick-off a second or third round of MSP planning or the municipal budget process. If it isn't absolutely critical to your engagement process, don't be concerned that the latest data isn't available; simply use the most recent information that is. Different data providers provide results at different times of the year and some only every five years, so it is highly likely that you may not have all the most current information all the time.

The most efficient method of reporting back to the community on a continuous basis is likely is through a website. Publically-accessible, easy to understand, and easily updated, a web-based platform is fast, efficient, and effective for communicating results. Reporting in the same format and using the same metrics year after year will allow for identifying trends and systematic updating. If access to more specific data is available, it is a good idea to add supporting indicators to the initial set of perhaps more high-level indicators. For example, total energy used is an initial indicator; to delve further with more specific data, energy use can be reported by sector and by energy type as well.

The initial set of indicators provided with the Imagine Lacombe MSP is based on the type of data currently available, and on what Lacombe initially identified as important indicators. If additional or different indicators are desired, they can typically be selected through dialogue with data users, data providers and the Task Force members. It's important to keep in mind that an indicator is not going to be very useful if there is no way to collect the data necessary to inform it, or if tremendous resources would be required.

Indicator assessment criteria usually include:

- Validity – to measure progress toward the desired outcomes or priorities
- Reliability – to provide consistently measured data over time
- Resource intensity (including information availability) – to achieve a balance of good data for good value
- Comparability – to benchmark against other communities where possible

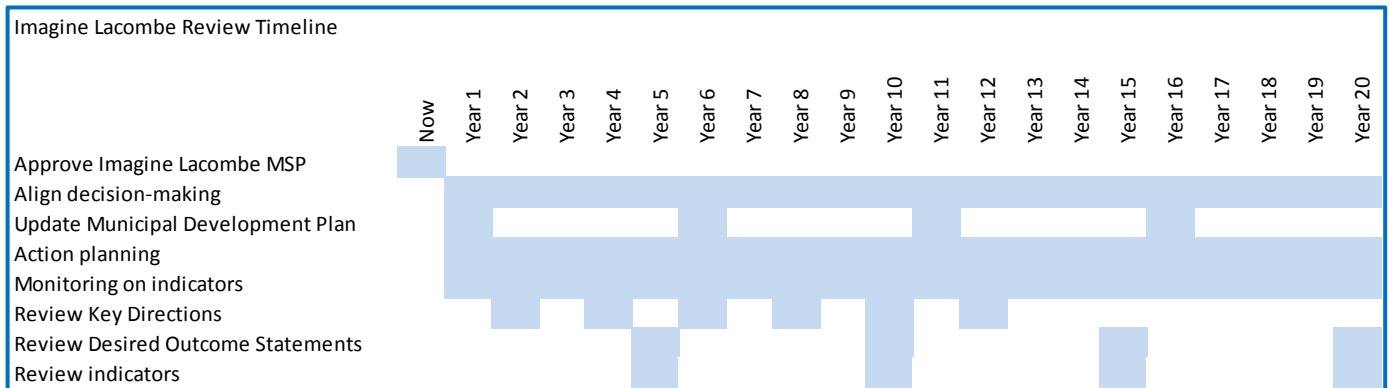
Over time, indicators will evolve as further learning and increased capacity develops for useful reporting and monitoring. Common existing data sources include organizations such as the Alberta Office of Statistical Information, Alberta Canada, Atco Gas and Electric, and Statistics Canada, and in some communities, community surveys, which are a great way of collecting unique information for your community. New data collection tools and sources may come on stream in the future and should be included in the monitoring system to make indicator results more robust and reliable.

One of the most important, yet often forgotten, steps in the monitoring and reporting process is celebrating successes - big or small. Celebrating successes is one of the most impactful things that can be done to maintain enthusiasm and strengthen buy-in for Imagine Lacombe. The monitoring process provides the evidence for celebrating achievements by providing a clear reflection of the community's movement along its path towards the vision. Make community achievements public by posting on the City's and partners' websites, advertising in the local newspaper, and presenting at local gatherings. Increased presence in the public eye will result in an increased interest in Imagine Lacombe, and in turn, more support and input from the community.

Periodic Review and Refinement of Imagine Lacombe

Keeping Imagine Lacombe current and ensuring that it continues to connect with community values is another important factor to attend to moving forward. While action planning should occur on an annual basis, other elements of the plan should be held more constant so that they can effectively guide decision-making and action planning. However, the need for constancy should not outweigh the importance of reflecting the community's changing vision for the future. The one thing that will remain unchanged is the set of long-term sustainability objectives that guide the vision for sustainability in the future. The other elements of Imagine Lacombe and suggestions for the frequency and method for updating them in the future are provided below.

- **Vision and Community Priority Goals:** The vision and Priority Goals should be reviewed and refined every five to ten years through a process that includes the whole community.
- **Desired Outcome Statements:** These should be reviewed and refined about every five years and be done by a team representing key community partners and stakeholders or by the Task Forces.
- **Indicators:** The recommended indicators (based on the Priority Goals and key directions) should be kept as constant as possible so that trends can be monitored and performance evaluated over time. However, transitioning to new and improved indicators as they become available should be considered annually so that decision-makers are armed with the best possible information.



Sample Partnership Agreement

Lacombe is a unique community blessed with an abundance of green space and trails, vibrant arts, culture and heritage, and a strong economy. Residents are proud of our community assets and culture, which is friendly, proud, entrepreneurial, and collaborative. Together we can continue to build Lacombe's success through sustainability.

As Partners, we share the Imagine Lacombe vision, as articulated by the Priority Goals, Sustainability Objectives and Desired Outcomes.

As Partners, we commit to participating in Lacombe's ongoing sustainability journey by:

- Participating in or conducting annual action planning processes;
- Implementing actions assigned to us that are within our means;
- Adopting our community's shared vision and desired outcomes as a guide in the areas that we impact through our work; and
- Incorporating sustainability planning and implementation strategies in the way we do business.

As Partners, we are guided by our Partnership Principles:

Collaboration	Integrity
Inclusive engagement	Transparency
Innovation	Effective and open communication

APPENDIX F: OTHER ACTIONS CONSIDERED BY THE CSAT

These actions were not prioritized as recommended actions for immediate implementation by the CSAT, but this does not mean they are not important actions for implementation at some point. They should be reconsidered in future action planning processes.

Strategy Areas	Action
Buildings & Sites	Choose to designate the Heritage Management Plan as historical.
How We Eat: Food & Agriculture	Build relationships with rural citizens through education farm visits to educate on the need to protect farmland.
Our Natural Environment: Air, Water and Wildlife	Educate the community on pesticide impact and ways to reduce usage.
Our Economy: Work & Skills Training	Build a fair and equitable incentive system to encourage business development.
Community Well-Being: Health, Connections and Safety	Meet with hospital administration to determine and develop action plan/long term goals for health provision.
Community Well-Being: Health, Connections and Safety	Develop an advisory group to take a look at community & individual health (e.g. Olds Institute).
Community Well-Being: Health, Connections and Safety	Utilize multimedia to communicate hazard updates.
Who We Are: Culture, Education and Leisure	Investigate opportunities to upgrade the trail system.
Who We Are: Culture, Education and Leisure	Develop the recreation and culture master plan to identify key community priorities for the 2014 budget.
Who We Are: Culture, Education and Leisure	Maintain and develop the Lake Elizabeth trail system by 2015.
Where We Live and Work: Our Homes and Neighbourhoods	Develop wayfinding infrastructure (both physical and virtual).
Where We Live and Work: Our Homes and Neighbourhoods	Update the land use bylaw and MDP to identify greenspace and options for delivery.
Where We Live and Work: Our Homes and Neighbourhoods	Heritage management plan - now passed and owners can now choose to designate it as historical.
Where We Live and Work: Our Homes and Neighbourhoods	Implement and facilitate DARP (downtown area redevelopment plan) and educate public by advertising/mailouts/website
Where We Live and Work: Our Homes and Neighbourhoods	Update the land use bylaw by 2015 to ensure appropriate uses and support for a variety of opportunities.

APPENDIX G: THE NATURAL STEP FRAMEWORK

The Natural Step Framework

The Natural Step Framework addresses the need for a systematic way of understanding and planning toward sustainability. It is a methodology for planning that provides an elegant, rigorous, science-based understanding of sustainability together with a tested planning approach to translate that understanding into practice.

By focusing planners and decision-makers on that which can be agreed upon, it helps create a common perspective and language for sustainability. It defines sustainability at the principle level, which enables organizations to create optimal strategies for dealing with the present-day situation and to move strategically toward sustainability. It is unique in its function as a tool to bring disparate stakeholders and individuals together as intellectual partners to discuss the path forward to sustainability in a mutual exploration.

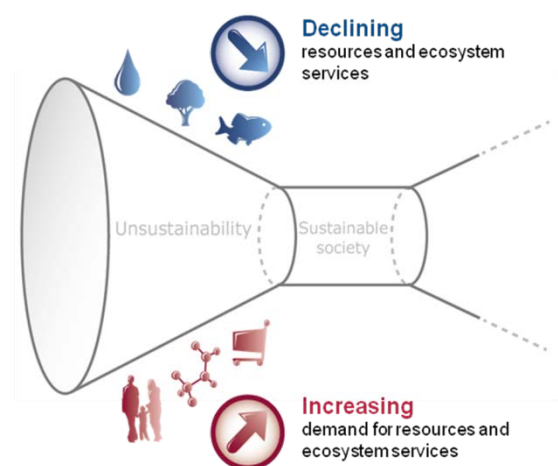
The Natural Step Framework has the following main components:

- The Funnel as a Metaphor
- The System Conditions for a Sustainable Society
- Backcasting from Principles
- A Four-stage “ABCD strategic planning process

The Funnel as a Metaphor

In the quest for good health, welfare and economic prosperity, we are systematically destroying the system that we, as humans, are completely dependent upon -- nature. Life-sustaining natural resources, such as clean air and clean water, are subject to increasing deterioration due to human activity. Forests are being lost and species extinction is gathering pace. At the same time, nature's long-term productive capacity is being degraded in fields, forests and oceans. The reason for nature's reduced productive potential is that we are polluting and displacing nature in various ways. Renewable resources are being used up at such a rate that nature does not have time to build new ones.

At the same time, there are more and more people on earth in need of these resources, and per-capita consumption is increasing. It's as if all of civilization is moving deeper into a funnel whose narrowing walls demonstrate that there is less and less room to manoeuvre, in order to avoid “hitting the wall.”



The Natural Step's Four System Conditions

The earth is a sustainable system. Scientists agree that human society is capable of damaging nature and altering life-supporting ecological structures and functions in only three major ways. Based on this scientific understanding, The Natural Step has defined three basic system conditions for maintaining essential ecological processes. In addition, The Natural Step recognizes that social and economic dynamics fundamentally drive the actions that lead to ecosystem changes. Therefore, the fourth system condition focuses on socio-economic dynamics and affirms that meeting human needs worldwide is an integral and essential part of sustainability.

Backcasting from Principles

The Natural Step Framework uses a planning approach called “backcasting from principles.” *Backcasting* is a methodology for planning that involves starting from a description of a successful outcome, then linking today with that successful outcome in a strategic way and asking: what shall we do today to get there?

The Natural Step Framework uses the scientifically rigorous system conditions described above as the basis for its definition of success from which to backcast. It translates the system conditions for a sustainable society into ultimate *sustainability objectives* for an organization or community, namely to:

- Eliminate our contribution to systematic increases in concentrations of substances extracted from the Earth's crust.
- Eliminate our contribution to systematic increases in concentrations of substances produced by society.
- Eliminate our contribution to systematic physical degradation of nature through over-harvesting, introductions and other forms of modification.
- Eliminate our contribution to conditions that undermine people's capacity to meet their needs.

In a sustainable society, nature is not subject to systematically increasing...



...concentrations of substances extracted from the Earth's crust,



...concentrations of substances produced by society,



...degradation by physical means,

and, in that society...



...people are not subject to conditions that systematically undermine their capacity to meet their needs.

The ABCD Planning Process

The System Conditions describe the basic requirements that must be met in a sustainable society. How can these System Conditions be applied to an organization's everyday operations? Each individual organization must draw its own conclusions from the sustainability objectives as regards to problems, solutions, and goals. The Natural Step has developed and tested an approach to help organizations incorporate sustainability into their core strategies. The four-step "A-B-C-D" process provides a systematic way of guiding this process:

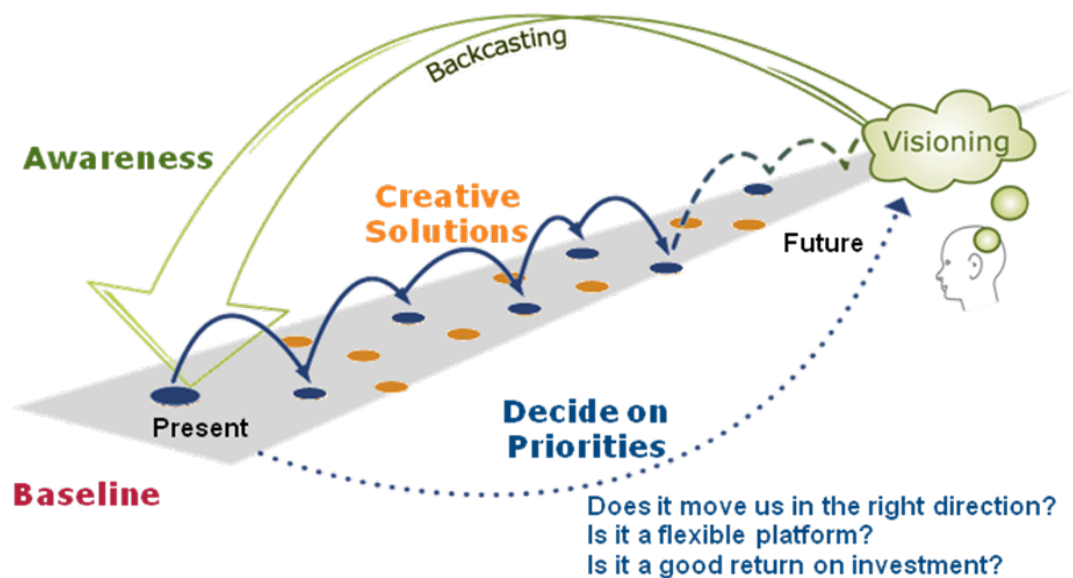
(A)WARENESS: Understanding sustainability and the TNS Framework as a shared mental model.

(B)ASELINE: An assessment of "today" is conducted by listing all current flows and practices that are contributions to violations of the four System Conditions, as well as considering all the assets that are in place to deal with the problems.

(C)OMPELLING VISION - OPPORTUNITIES FOR INNOVATION: Possible solutions and innovations for the future are generated and listed by applying the constraints of the System Conditions to trigger creativity and scrutinize the suggested solutions.

(D)OWN TO ACTION: Priorities from the C-list are made, and smart early moves and concrete programs for change are launched. Innovative actions are prioritized by screening them through the following three questions:

1. Does it move us in the right direction with regards to our definition of sustainability (i.e., meeting the four System Conditions)?
2. Is it a flexible platform, i.e. a stepping stone toward future improvements?
3. Does it provide an adequate return on investment to seed future investments?



For more information on The Natural Step Framework, please visit our website at www.thenaturalstep.org/canada.

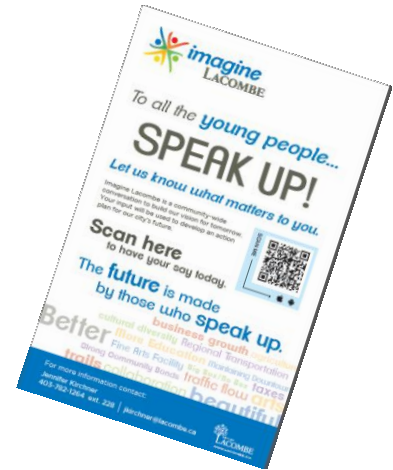
APPENDIX H: SUMMARY OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



IMAGINE LACOMBE SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INPUT

OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC INPUT OPPORTUNITIES

Imagine Lacombe is a community-wide conversation to build our vision for tomorrow. Input was sought from the community through an on-line survey, post-card questionnaires, focus groups, presentations, strategy area worksheets, four Ideas Walls, and a half-day workshop with the Community Sustainability Action Team (CSAT). Public input opportunities were publicized through advertisements in the movie theatre, newspapers, and posters, as well as on the City of Lacombe website and Facebook page. CSAT members distributed information about the opportunities through their individual networks, and articles were also published in the Chamber of Commerce and City newsletters. All of the input will inform the vision and desired outcomes, as well as ideas for actions, that will create the Municipal Sustainability Plan (MSP).



ON-LINE SURVEY

Two on-line surveys were conducted. The first one was conducted in the summer of 2012, and comprised 12 questions including: sense of shared direction, top issues, most important qualities for Lacombe to maintain or enhance, and understanding and importance of sustainability. 169 people responded to the survey (with 89 people responding to all the questions).

The second survey was conducted from January to March 2013 in order to solicit additional input and to aim for 1200 community responses into the Imagine Lacombe process. The second survey comprised three questions: What do you value most about Lacombe? What changes would you like to see? How can we all make it happen? There were 143 responses to this survey, and all respondents answered all three questions. It was evident that the third question was a bit too specific to be answered via survey or postcard in most cases, as the majority of the responses to question three were similar to the responses offered in question two.

*What are your
hopes & dreams
for the future of
Lacombe?*

focus
Downtown business growth
cultural diversity Transportation
Better More Education
Fine Arts Facility
Strong Community Bonds Traffic flow
trails collaboration future
Big Box/Big Box multi-use recreation facility
City leadership water
more jobs creating green spaces
affordable housing
seniors care facilities taxes
emergency services agriculture



*What are your hopes and dreams
for the future of Lacombe?*

Imagine Lacombe is a process to engage all the residents of Lacombe in creating a shared vision for our community's future. This vision will help shape what Lacombe will look like in the future, and will help guide our community planning and decision-making.

To help us create this vision, we ask you to answer 3 questions:

1. What do you value most about Lacombe?
2. What changes would you like to see?
3. How can we all help make it happen?

If you would like to keep in touch
we will send e-mail updates.

Name: _____
E-mail: _____
This information will be kept confidential and will not be used
for any other purpose.
For more information or to speak with
someone about getting involved with
the Imagine Lacombe project contact:
Jennifer Kirchner
403-763-0264 ext. 228
jkirchner@lacombe.ca



POSTCARDS

Postcards were printed with the same three questions on the back side as in the on-line survey and distributed through City Hall, the CSAT members, at major employers in town, at the focus groups, and at the three school presentations. A total of 738 postcards were filled in and collected.

IDEAS WALL

A wall-size poster, called an 'Ideas Wall' was developed and placed in the three schools and in the hall of the Lacombe Memorial Centre. Everyone was invited to write, doodle or draw their ideas about Lacombe using the same three questions in the postcard and survey #2. The size and the aesthetic appeal of the poster made it very enticing for people stop and add their thoughts.



STRATEGY AREAS WORKSHEET

An 11x17" worksheet was used at the focus group sessions to solicit more specific input into the nine strategy areas of the Imagine Lacombe MSP.



SPEAK UP!

What do you value most about Lacombe now? 	What changes would you like to see? 	How can we all make it happen? 
<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;"> <p>Did you Know?</p>  <p>is a community-wide conversation to build our vision for tomorrow. Your input will be used to develop an action plan for our city's future.</p> <p>For more information please visit: www.lacombe.ca/msp or email: lacombemsp@whistlercentre.ca</p> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Our Economy: Work and Training</p> <div style="height: 50px;"></div> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Our Energy, Water + Waste Systems</p> <div style="height: 50px;"></div> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Our Culture, Education + Leisure</p> <div style="height: 50px;"></div> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Our Natural Environment: Air, Water + Wildlife</p> <div style="height: 50px;"></div> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Our Community Health + Safety</p> <div style="height: 50px;"></div> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">How we get Around</p> <div style="height: 50px;"></div> </div>
	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Our Homes + Neighbourhoods</p> <div style="height: 50px;"></div> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">How we Eat: Food and Agriculture</p> <div style="height: 50px;"></div> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Our Buildings and Sites</p> <div style="height: 50px;"></div> </div>	

PRESENTATIONS AND FOCUS GROUPS

An Imagine Lacombe presentation was delivered to three Lacombe schools (Lacombe Upper Elementary, Lacombe Composite High School, and Father Lacombe School), the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation, and the Lacombe Research Centre. While the large venue format of the high school presentation was not ideal for discussion, a large number of postcard responses were received from the students. The other venues were more conducive for some discussion and questions and answers. Approximately 382 students participated from the



three schools and filled in the post cards. Two focus groups were conducted with: the Family and Community Support Services (8 participants) and the Canadian University College (14 participants).



Father Lacombe School



Lacombe Composite High School

CSAT AND STAFF WORKSHOP

In September, a half-day workshop was held with the Community Sustainability Advisory Team (CSAT) members and City of Lacombe staff to solicit their input into the desired vision of the future for Lacombe. They addressed all nine strategy areas and described their vision for Lacombe in the year 2040.

OTHER INPUT

Input also came from a few other sources such as worksheets and compilations of group conversations.

WHAT WE HEARD CONSISTENTLY FROM ALL INPUT OPPORTUNITIES

SURVEYS, GENERAL POSTCARDS AND IDEAS WALL

The most common responses received were:

What do you value most about Lacombe?

- Small town feel
- Everything close together
- Green spaces and trails
- Family-oriented
- Recreation and leisure opportunities
- Arts and culture events and activities
- Safety, friendliness
- Heritage
- Schools
- Central location; close to Red Deer
- Availability of community health services
- Sense of community/place





What changes would you like to see?

By far, the most common responses were: more local shopping/stores, restaurants and businesses in the community; better recycling services and a composting service/system; more public transportation; increased recreation opportunities. Other comments included:

- Better long-range planning and a clear vision
- Sustainability
- More sustainable infrastructure systems (e.g. renewable energy, stormwater)
- A performing arts centre or multiplex
- Greater support services for families, children, seniors, people with disabilities
- More affordable housing
- Truck bypass on Highway 2 / road safety
- More local food, ongoing farmers' market, community gardens

SPECIFIC GROUP INPUT

SCHOOLS

The students indicated they value: recreation facilities and opportunities (arena, pool, soccer fields, parks) – this was the most common response; the schools; the small-town community feel; the natural areas.

The most commonly expressed changes that students would like to see were: more shopping opportunities, different stores and fast-food type restaurants (by far most common sentiment); more trails and sports facilities (e.g. another rink); and generally more things for teenagers to do. Other changes included: better recycling facilities and services; cleaner streets and safer highway crossing; and planting more trees.

FOCUS GROUPS

The focus group participants generally provided similar input to the survey and postcard responses. In delving deeper into some of the topics, specific comments were:

- There is a need for a greater diversity of affordable housing, including assisted living facilities for seniors
- Everyone appreciates the number and quality of schools
- There is a need for greater economic diversity, including shopping options so that residents don't need to go to Red Deer
- Some people really would like to see some big box retail such as Walmart, whereas others were adamantly opposed to big box; the common sentiment was that everyone felt a need for more shopping options
- There is a strong need to build a stronger local economy
- People would like to see the downtown core strengthened and animated to make it more vibrant and attractive

CSAT AND STAFF WORKSHOP

The vision themes that arose from the workshop within each strategy area were:

Our Economy: Work & Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism amenities • Arts and culture strong part of local economy and tourism attractions • Local food and farmers market • Economic opportunities from preventative health care • Incubation site for small business training, education and protective services • Trade school and training facilities • Medical business model including preventative health care • Energy sources contribute to economy • Own power generation 	Our Natural Environment: Air, Water & Wildlife <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trail interconnectivity • Natural areas maintained sustainably • Air is clean • Wildlife corridors maintained • Abundant trees 	Our Homes & Neighbourhoods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbished, vibrant downtown core • Each neighbourhood has greenspace, water feature and trails • Existing neighbourhoods used more efficiently • Walkable and bikeable • Multi-family housing choices • Affordable housing options • Housing is green
Our Energy, Water & Waste Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model recycling community • Efficient use of water and wastewater • Self-sufficient energy systems • World-class wetlands • Renewable, local energy • Zero waste 	Our Community Health & Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventative health care • Multi-purpose recreation infrastructure • Aging in place facilities • Culture of healthy living • Inclusive community • Top-notch protective facilities and services 	How we Eat: Food & Agriculture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locally grown food • Year-round farmers market • Community gardens in all neighbourhoods • Access to food for everyone • Organic farming capital
Our Culture, Education & Leisure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thriving performing arts • Arts and culture part of community identity • Thriving festivals • More culturally diverse community • Year round facilities and trails for recreation • Diverse educational opportunities • Art prominent in downtown 	How we Get Around <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convenient, easy to access, safe • Accessibility/mobility for all users • Interconnectivity locally and regionally • Preservation of natural systems • Local, renewable energy sources • Less reliant on personal vehicles 	Our Buildings & Sites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical architecture preserved • Natural building materials used • Wheelchair accessible • Sustainably built • Municipal gardens have native species

IDEAS WALL

The Ideas Wall was placed in the Lacombe Memorial Centre (LMC - 56 responses), the Lacombe Upper Elementary (55 responses), Lacombe Composite High School (23 responses), and Father Lacombe School (31 responses).

For the LMC, input included:

What do you value most?	What changes would you like to see?	How can we make it all happen?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trees, nature, ponds, trails Heritage buildings Recreation facilities and infrastructure Community buildings (library, LMC) People and community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More arts programs and facilities Highway 12 bypass No malls More activities for teens Revitalization of downtown More shopping (malls, stores) More recreational facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minibuses Collaboration No/fewer taxes Raise \$

Additional input from the schools that was not indicated in the postcard feedback described above includes:

What do you value most?	What changes would you like to see?	How can we make it all happen?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awesome teachers French immersion Safety for kids on bus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No more teenagers smoking and doing drugs Hotel upgrades A zoo Anti-bullying bylaw More places for teens to hang out Less diversity in religion More art activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get some tourist attractions Raise \$ Development plan for more park space Signs about dangers of smoking Promote local business Visioning Invite new companies to build here



SPEAK UP LACOMBE!



What would you like Lacombe to be like in the future – say in the year 2040?

