

Moving Airdrie Forward: Council's 2015-2018 Strategic Plan

Vision

Airdrie is a vibrant, caring community rich in urban amenities and opportunities for everyone. We value a healthy, sustainable environment connecting people and places.

In 2008, the City engaged Airdrie residents in a public process to create a refreshed vision for our community that reflected the desires of Airdrie citizens. Council and administration set direction intended to move toward that vision.

Sustainability

AirdrieONE Sustainability Plan is a set of guiding principles for sustainability with goals, objectives and strategies to guide our actions over the next 5 to 10 years. Initiatives are tied to one or more of the three pillars of sustainability outlined in AirdrieONE, which is the City's overarching policy document in pursuit of the vision.

Creating a strategic plan

WHY?

The purpose for comprehensive strategic planning is to ensure that there is strong alignment throughout the organization, and that each area is focused on those key items that will support Council's priorities. Ultimately, that united focus will help make the community's vision a reality.

HOW?

Council's part: Council meets each spring to establish or refresh its strategic priorities for the following year. Some of the goals span more than one year. Council considers input from stakeholders, and looks at influencing factors that may impact the city.

DIFFICULT DECISIONS

- There are many competing items that are important to Council and residents at any given time.
- The goals selected are not an exhaustive list of the issues identified, but time and financial realities compel Council to make some difficult decisions about those that they feel are most important to focus on today.
- As those goals are achieved, some of those other items can move up in priority.
- Work on some key issues, such as 24-hour health care, is already well underway either through community initiatives or administration.

Staff's part: Council's goals guide a big part of administration's annual business planning process. Individual units will identify their roles in ensuring that the priorities are achieved and develop their business plans and budgets accordingly. Staff will then work to accomplish the priorities. The status of progress on Council's priorities is reported back to Council regularly throughout the year.

2018 Update

Council met on April 24th to review and refresh their priorities through 2018. This extension will provide direction for the 2018 budget preparation, provide continuity, and give the newly-elected Council an opportunity to learn and assess before establishing their own priorities for 2019 through 2022.

Discussion identified a desire generally to stay the course with those actions under way to advance Council's goals. Economic prosperity continues to be a priority. The need for a larger Library was also identified as a continued concern. Two new goals were established to address these items.

ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

Action: Advocate for post-secondary opportunities to locate in Airdrie.

ARTS & CULTURE

Goal: Address the library's space needs to provide a facility that will better meet the needs of the community.

Action: Advance the planning of a new library, and the possibility of incorporating it in a multi-use facility.

2015-2018 Strategic Priorities Summary

WELL-MANAGED GROWTH

Goal: To give Council options to best ready lands for industrial/commercial development, including investing in infrastructure and additional planning methods.

Actions:

Complete the northeast servicing study.
Complete northeast Community Area Structure Plan.
Work with regional neighbours on future growth strategies.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

Goal: Improve Highway 2 access through construction of another interchange.

Actions:

Increase Airdrie's presence at the legislature to advocate for improvements.
Engage developers in lobbying efforts.
Determine whether engaging a professional lobbyist could assist efforts.

ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

Goal: Aggressively pursue means to advance non-residential business development in order to more equitably distribute the tax base and to create local employment opportunities.

Actions:

Explore the use of strategies and/or incentives to attract targeted businesses and institutions.
Market the plan for the annexed lands, conveying that industrial business development is high priority for Council and Administration.
Investigate the potential for a business incubator project.

New Goal for 2018: Attract post-secondary institutions to Airdrie to create an educated workforce and create employment

Actions: Advocate for post-secondary institutions to locate in Airdrie

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Goal: Establish a fiscal sustainability framework.

Actions:

Determine key principles and approach to risk mitigation.
Review and update existing financial policies.
Identify and create any new policies required (e.g. tax stabilization policy).

ENVIRONMENT

Goal: To promote environmental stewardship through waste diversion and water conservation

Actions:

Provide direction on curbside recycling approach
Educate and implement water conservation initiatives

ARTS, CULTURE and RECREATION

Goal: Address the library's space needs to provide a facility that will better meet the needs of the community

Actions:

Advance the planning of a new library, and the possibility of incorporating it with a multi-use facility

Key Factors Influencing Decision-Making

Ensuring goals align with AirdrieONE

Impacts of sustained extraordinary population growth

The need for more non-residential development

High commuter population

Maintenance and replacement of current infrastructure and assets

Securing an agreement for long-term water supply

The need and demand for 24-hour health care

Planning for an aging population

Engaging youth in decision-making

Creating and strengthening a sense of community through public events

The current (2016) economic climate and its impact on our community

New provincial and federal governments

Changes to collaborative regional bodies

Well-Managed Growth



Goal S1/15: To give Council options to best ready lands for industrial/commercial development, including investing in infrastructure and additional planning methods.

Sustainable Transportation



Goal S2/15: Improve Highway 2 access through construction of another interchange

Economic Prosperity



Goal S3/15: Aggressively pursue means to advance industrial business development in order to more equitably distribute the tax base and to create local employment opportunities.

Goal S6/18: Attract post-secondary institutions to Airdrie to create an educated workforce and create employment

Fiscal Responsibility



Goal S4/15: Establish a fiscal sustainability framework.

Environment



Goal S5/17: To promote environmental stewardship through waste diversion and water conservation

Arts, Culture and Recreation



Goal S7/18: Address the Library's space needs to provide a facility that will better meet the needs of the community

Key Factors Influencing Decision-Making

Ensuring goals align with AirdrieONE

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New provincial and federal governments

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Note: These priorities are not Council's only goals for the community. They are deemed to be the areas of highest priority today that will best position Airdrie for the future.

Actions

Well-Managed Growth

- Complete the northeast servicing study.
- Complete northeast Community Area Structure Plan.
- Work with regional neighbours on future growth strategies

Sustainable Transportation

- Increase Airdrie's presence at the legislature to advocate for improvements.
- Engage developers in lobbying efforts.
- Determine whether engaging a professional lobbyist could assist efforts.

Economic Prosperity

- Explore the use of strategies and/or incentives to attract targeted businesses and institutions.
- Market the plan for the annexed lands, conveying that industrial business development is high priority for Council and Administration.
- Investigate the potential for a business incubator project in MainStreet Square.
- **New 2018:** Advocate for post-secondary institutions to locate in Airdrie

Fiscal Balance

- Determine key principles and approach to risk mitigation.
- Review and update existing financial policies.
- Identify and create any new policies required (e.g. tax stabilization policy).

Environment

- Provide direction on curbside recycling approach
- Educate on and implement water conservation initiatives

Arts, Culture and Recreation

- **New 2018:** Advance the planning of a new library, and the possibility of incorporating it with a multi-use facility.