



Strategic Plan 2021-2031



TABLE OF CONTENTS

STARLAND COUNTY	3
FOREWORD	3
STARLAND 2021-2031 COMMUNITY VISION PLAN	4
Core Values	5
Bloom Municipal Scan	6
Priority Focus Areas	7
Priority Focus Area #1:	8
Priority Focus Area #2:	9
Priority Focus Area #3:	10
Priority Focus Area #4:	11
Priority Focus Area #5:	12
Priority Focus Area #6:	13
Priority Focus Area #7:	14



STARLAND COUNTY

STARLAND COUNTY IS LOCATED IN SOUTHERN ALBERTA, APPROXIMATELY 2 HOURS NORTHEAST OF CALGARY.

Rich in agricultural and oil and gas economic history, Starland County is made up of five divisions which include several villages and hamlets. Surrounded by natural beauty in the scenic Red Deer River Valley, Starland County's community offers incredible terrain, archaeological history, and ample opportunity for outdoor recreation.

Starland County Council is made up of five councilors, one representing each division of the County. Council is led by a Reeve and Deputy Reeve who are elected by Council each fall. The Reeve and Deputy Reeve are essentially the elected chief and vice-chief executives of the County. Council is also supported by a number of Council Committee Members who hold annual appointments for specific projects and interests of the County. With more than 2,000 residents, Starland County is a small but tight-knit community of passionate and hard-working people.

STARLAND COUNTY DEPARTMENTS

- Council
- Agricultural Services
- Administration & Finance
- Municipal Services
- Protective Services
- Public Works
- Cemeteries
- Family and Community Support Services
- Recreation



FOREWORD



Council's Message

As County Council, we work individually and collectively to represent the citizens of Starland County. We do this with one goal in mind: support the quality of life of citizens. Reflecting on our current strengths and challenges, we embarked on a strategic planning process. The resulting strategic plan and community vision identify values and priorities in support of our County's future success and long-term sustainability.

This strategic plan is not a beginning or an end but a bridge to our long-term vision and the tangible actions required to reach that vision.

As we work towards a better tomorrow for our community, we as Council will use this strategic plan to lead, direct, and make decisions. Our next step is to consider action plans developed by administration in the pursuit of our seven priority focus areas: economic growth, leadership, communication, community pride, service excellence, financial sustainability, and sustained infrastructure.

We are immensely proud as your Council to be delivering this *Starland Strategic Plan 2021 -2031* to you, the citizens of Starland County.



STARLAND COUNTY 2021-2031 COMMUNITY VISION PLAN CORE VALUES



INTEGRITY

Starland County approaches governance with transparency, honesty, and consideration of residents' values.



RESPONSIBILITY

Starland County provides high-quality, efficient, and effective services using best practices and a commitment to constant improvement.



COOPERATION

Starland County works well with regional neighbours, community groups, and other levels of government.



COMMUNITY

Starland County strives to be a safe, beautiful, and sustainable home that fosters a sense of community.



RESPECT

Starland County exemplifies respect within the workplace and the community.



BLOOM MUNICIPAL SCAN

EXTERNAL CHALLENGES

- Economic downturn
- Pipeline cancellation
- Provincial downloading
- Grant reductions and uncertainty

POPULATION

- Population growth is stagnant
- Starland County has excellent community pride
- Positively engaged community groups

CAPITAL GROWTH AND MAINTENANCE

- Infrastructure is in relatively good shape
- Road maintenance is a priority

SOCIAL NEEDS AND ISSUES

- Economic downturn has resulted in increased crime
- Positive FCSS partnerships with other municipalities
- There is community pride and very active community groups
- Community events are positively attended

SERVICE EXPECTATIONS

- Cemetery, weed control, road grading, campsites, recreation areas – all are subject to high expectations
- Fire support is a priority
- Rural internet is a priority
- Good tax elasticity to meet service demands

RESOURCE AVAILABILITY

- Economic challenge has created numerous financial difficulties
- Loss of industrial assessment – loss of linear assessment (significant increase in bad debts)
- Provincial grants have been reduced (MSI)
- There are some possible upswings on the horizon (seed cleaning plant, wind farm, solar farm, oil rebound)
- No current municipal debt

TECHNOLOGY

- The need for automation creates pressure
- Lack of time and proper plans to implement automations
- Strong IT personnel is supporting the organization
- Require modernization of systems and software

Priority Focus Areas

COUNCIL IDENTIFIED SEVEN PRIORITY FOCUS AREAS FOR STARLAND COUNTY.

Council and Administration will work together to support projects and specific funding allocations that align with Starland County's desire to focus on bolstering economic growth, promoting leadership, enhancing communication, enhancing our culture of community pride, providing service delivery excellence, showcasing fiscal sustainability, and ensuring the sustainability of our infrastructure.



ECONOMIC GROWTH



LEADERSHIP



COMMUNICATION



COMMUNITY PRIDE



SERVICE EXCELLENCE



FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY



SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE



BROAD OBJECTIVES

We will:

- Explore opportunities to diversify the Starland County economy while considering the need for large-scale industry and commercial partners
- Focus on relationship development with the business community to support and retain established business
- Pursue opportunities related to agricultural business and campgrounds
- Review the County's current position in relation to attractiveness for business location. Develop a thorough understanding on how to incentivize to solicit business interest
- Develop a County economic and community profile highlighting the positive benefits of locating business in Starland County
- Develop our understanding of municipal business attraction competitiveness. Develop our core competencies to support business attraction success
- Review infrastructure in relation to business attraction and consider investment where a business case proves positive for the community
- Work with regional neighbours and partners to develop an integrated economic development strategy focused on shared benefits

Priority Focus Area #1



ECONOMIC GROWTH

Goal Statement

We support economic growth through a welcoming attitude towards business and proactive actions that support our current business community and attract new business.





Priority Focus Area #2



LEADERSHIP

Goal Statement

We embrace positive leadership providing a positive work environment, strong relationships and achievement of high-quality service and long-term strategic goals.

BROAD OBJECTIVES

We will:

- Embrace leadership with the goal of having an ambitious, clear, and attainable community vision
- Work collaboratively as a Council, respecting democracy, and good legislative practices
- Lead in accordance with our core values displaying integrity, cooperation, and accountability
- Foster a positive environment of leadership with clear direction delivered by Council to Administration with a focus on priorities
- Develop our leadership abilities, fostering a culture of trust, accountability, and an organizational commitment to a unified vision
- Develop our leadership communication ability internally and with the public to ensure our vision is translated with clarity
- Clearly define Council and Administration’s leadership responsibilities and cooperate to ensure staff fully understand the vision for the community
- We will become an employer of choice enhancing our ability to attract and retain high quality staff





BROAD OBJECTIVES

We will:

- Embrace communication as a critical tool that supports positive relationships and strategic goals
- Develop a comprehensive communication plan that will serve as a foundation for communication competency to strengthen our communicative abilities
- Foster a culture of positive communication as a Council, between Council and Administration, with our neighbors and other levels of government
- Embrace public engagement focusing on what matters to the citizens, educating, and sharing the value of everyday Starland County services
- Focus on the improvement of our communication platforms including our website, media releases and open houses
- Develop a municipal newsletter, providing a forum for communication with Starland citizens to communicate important municipal news, updates on services and sharing our successes
- Focus on communicating value for taxes and the importance municipal services has on the quality of life of our citizens

Priority Focus Area #3



COMMUNICATION

Goal Statement

We are focused on using and improving our communicative ability to support relationships, enhance our community’s identity and strengthen our bond with our citizens.





Priority Focus Area #4



Goal Statement

We cherish the community of Starland County with its rich heritage, history, and culture, with a focus on fostering community pride within our citizens today and tomorrow.

BROAD OBJECTIVES

We will:

- Foster our community identity and pride through conscious and thoughtful efforts
- Consider our identity and document the key positive aspects of our history, community profile, culture, citizens, business, and community groups
- Develop a positive presence at community events and develop positive relationships with community groups, societies, and our neighbours
- Create a culture of pride within our administration leading to positive outcomes for our citizens
- Commit to proactive and positive messaging relaying the message of the importance of our community and our commitment to serving the community





BROAD OBJECTIVES

We will:

- Commit to positive communication that delivers clear direction to administration on Council service level expectations
- Commit to a culture of improvement and service excellence which will include investigating best practices and new delivery methods
- Continually identify which services matter the most to residents and which contribute to daily quality of life in the County
- Focus on the identification of service priorities through priority-based driven budgeting processes
- Focus on efficiency and effectiveness to deliver well-run and well-managed services
- Align staff, financial, and capital resources with identified service priorities with the understanding of the challenge of limited resources
- Regularly recognize and communicate our service accomplishments to Starland County residents
- Have a “customer first focus” with all services that we deliver

Priority Focus Area #5



SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Goal Statement

We focus on delivering and improving high-value essential and value-add services every day to support the quality of life of residents.





Priority Focus Area #6



FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Goal Statement

We will continually develop short- and long-term financial strategies in support of the Community Vision Plan’s objectives and the County’s future financial sustainability.

BROAD OBJECTIVES

We will:

- Enhance our financial processes to become more strategic and ensure our ability to meet current and future resource challenges
- Develop a long-term tax strategy aligned with the municipality’s financial resource requirements
- Review and support our short-term and long-term reserve requirements
- Enhance our long-term capital planning to better understand future resource requirements
- Enhance our financial and analytical processes to support evidence-based decision- making
- Develop enhanced communication to support our resident’s understanding of the value they receive for taxes, rates, and charges





BROAD OBJECTIVES

We will:

- Strengthen our understanding of capital priorities to influence evidence-based decision-making for capital projects
- Develop a comprehensive long-term capital plan identifying maintenance, growth, value add and strategic capital requirements
- Prioritize capital projects to allow for tangible action to be taken on short- and long- term large-scale initiatives:
 - road maintenance improvements
 - bridge improvements
 - water needs
- Consider capital plan initiatives that can foster economic growth, and attract and support industry
- Consider capital projects that support Starland County tourism/camping/fishing initiatives
- Develop sustainable financial plans that support a capital plan that meets the diverse needs of the County

Priority Focus Area #7



SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal Statement

We will use best practices to ensure existing and future infrastructure and capital assets within the County are maintained and sustained in a strategic manner to support the needs and economic vitality of the region.

