TOWN OF BLACKFALDS
STANDING COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL
Civic Cultural Centre - 5018 Waghorn Street
Monday March 20, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order**

2. **Land Acknowledgement**
   2.1 Treaty Six Land Acknowledgement - Blackfalds Town Council acknowledges that we are on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional meeting ground, gathering place, and travelling route to the Cree, Saulteaux (So-toe), Blackfoot, Métis, Dene (De-nay) and Nakota Sioux (Sue). We acknowledge all the many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit whose footsteps have marked these lands for centuries.

3. **Adoption of Agenda**
   3.1 Agenda for March 20, 2023

4. **Delegation**
   4.1 Blackfalds Social Needs Assessment – *Moorhouse & Associates*

5. **Public Hearing**
   None

6. **Business Arising from Minutes**
   None

7. **Business**
   7.1 Request for Direction, 2022 Social Needs Assessment - *Draft*
   7.2 Request for Direction, Bylaw 1280.23 Election Sign Bylaw – *Draft*
   7.3 Request for Direction, Policy 169.29 Policy Governance Framework
   7.4 Request for Direction, Plaza Wall Structure
   7.5 Request for Direction, Westwood Drive Parkway

8. **Action Correspondence**
   None

9. **Information**
   9.1 Report for Committee, Bolt Capacity Modifications and Scheduling Changes

10. **Round Table Discussion**
    None

11. **Adoption of Minutes**
    None

12. **Notices of Motion**
    None

13. **Business for the Good of Council**
    None

14. **Confidential**
    None

15. **Adjournment**

Future Meetings/Events:

- *Regular Council Meeting - March 28, 2023*
- *Standing Committee of Council – April 17, 2023*

Blackfalds Social Needs Assessment

Final Report

March 2023

Overview

Five key items are summarized in this presentation.

1. Project Summary
2. Social Priorities and Recommended Strategies
3. FCSS Staff Development and Expansion
4. Implementation Plan

Project Summary

- In early 2022 the Town of Blackfalds Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) sought the support of a consulting team to conduct a Social Needs Assessment for the Town of Blackfalds.

- The purpose of this project was to determine the preventative social needs of the residents of the Town of Blackfalds and the level to which their needs are presently being met.

- Prior to this project, the Town of Blackfalds' previous Social Needs Assessment was completed in 2016.

- The consulting team utilized a mixed-method approach that consisted of both quantitative and qualitative strategies to gather, analyze, and interpret data from multiple sources.

- Nearly 500 individuals (residents, youth, professionals) provided input into the assessment.

Social Priorities

- The information assembled during this assessment was summarized into findings and key themes.
- These findings and key themes suggested that a significant number of social needs within Blackfalds can be addressed if the following nine priority areas are attended to.

1. Mental health
2. Bullying and abuse
3. Isolation and loneliness
4. Substance use and addictions
5. Basic needs
6. Seniors supports
7. Affordable housing
8. Connections and collaborations amongst local agencies
9. Communications

- Please note, priorities are ordered by relative importance.

Social Priorities and Recommended Strategies

Social Priority #1:

Mental Health

Recommended Strategies:

- Collaborate with mental health providers and organizations in the community to seek additional funding for mental health program and services. Any additional funds secured should be used to create low-cost mental health services for all age groups. Building mental health services that are accessible in the evenings and on weekends would be of great benefit to the community.

- Encourage organizations that offer mental health programs and services to review and adjust the eligibility criteria for their programs and services. The goal of this review and these adjustments should be to eliminate restrictions and barriers to programs and services, increasing the likelihood that those in need of mental health supports will obtain access to these supports.

- Facilitate the development of a community-based helpline to enable easier navigation of existing mental health programs and services. By providing people with an initial contact point, they will be better positioned to self-refer or support others when mental health issues arise, and programs and services are needed.

- Develop and implement a communications campaign to raise awareness of mental health issues within the community. This campaign should focus on normalizing the occurrence of mental health issues. This campaign should stress that anyone, regardless of their social or financial circumstances can be confronted by mental health issues at some point in their lifetime. It would be crucial for this campaign to promote relevant mental health programs, services, and resources available in the town or other nearby geographic areas.

Social Priorities and Recommended Strategies

Social Priority #2:

Bullying and Abuse

Recommended Strategies:

- Facilitate community conversations about the harm that bullying and abuse cause within the Town. Invite adults of all ages as well as children and youth to participate. Emphasis should be placed on helping adults understand how their behaviour has the capacity to positively or negatively impact the children and youth that they interact with daily.
- Develop community-based value statements and messaging on violence and bullying and include information on accessing a community-based help line. Linking these values statements to existing statements on family and domestic violence is also advised.
- Continue to support the existing work in the community, schools, workplaces, clubs, and organizations on informing people what violence and bullying is and what possible actions and support resources may be helpful and available.
- Support educators and those who interact with children, youth, and families so they are equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to quickly identify incidents of bullying and other forms of abuse. Help these professionals build their expertise so they can aid those in need.
- Source and promote provincial bullying prevention resources and training while also promoting the provincial bullying helpline.
- Establish linkages with existing bullying, abuse, and family and domestic violence collaboratives within the province to obtain and promote resources.

Social Priorities and Recommended Strategies

Social Priority #3:

Isolation and Loneliness

Recommended Strategies:

- Make a concerted effort to create inclusive social events that provide all members of the community with opportunities to mix, mingle, socialize, and build relationships. Acknowledgement that people's level of comfort with in-person social events may vary post-pandemic is crucial to ensure strong, positive uptake and participation.
- Consider local events including opportunities for arts and cultural expression and activities, information on programs, services and businesses that are open to all residents and include support systems such as transportation, childcare, etc.
- Support agencies and organizations as they work to socialize the programs and services that they offer and invite people to participate in new activities.
- Consider ways to ensure welcoming and engaging practices that consider language, culture, and other real or perceived barriers to people who would want to get involved.
- Explore the possibility of conducting an annual community engagement survey or study to assess people's level of interactivity and to determine what types of events they wish to see planned and offered to residents. Delving deep into the specific needs of all age groups will be important to ensure that adults, seniors, children, and youth are all provided with meaningful opportunities to connect with each other.
- Consider undertaking a process to develop a diversity and inclusion plan.

Social Priorities and Recommended Strategies

Social Priority #4:

Substance Abuse and Addictions

Recommended Strategies:

- Develop resources that shed light on the negative impacts of substance abuse. These resources should also incorporate information that dispels the notion that substance abuse is an individual issue that should be managed discreetly without support.
- Collaborate with social agencies and health organizations in the community to seek opportunities to secure resources that would allow substance abuse and addictions programs and services to be offered in the Town.
- Identify and distribute information that will help all members of the community prevent the onset of substance use and addictions issues.
- Stimulate the development of follow up services and supports for those who are post substance abuse treatment to ensure that people can safely reintegrate into community life, without stigma or judgment.

Social Priorities and Recommended Strategies

Social Priority #5:

Basic Needs

Recommended Strategies:

- Educate members of the community about what basic needs are and make it the norm that anyone who is struggling can reach out to agencies that provide basic needs support for help.
- Encourage agencies that provide basic needs supports to operate using non-traditional hours, increasing accessibility for persons needing the services and supports on evenings and weekends in the process.
- Campaign for community members to consider basic need donations (e.g., food, clothing, etc.) outside of peak donation times (e.g., traditional holiday times)
- Continue to build food security in the Town including incorporating community gardens, fruit bearing trees, and shrubs into neighbourhood and community design. Educate community members about how to use things like community gardens responsibly (e.g., only taking what is needed, cleaning up after use, etc.)
- Encourage the distribution of excess food from restaurants, food stores, school lunch programs.
- Facilitate the development cooking and nutrition programs for community members that include social opportunities (e.g., community kitchens - one meal for many families) and other life skills information and resources.

Social Priorities and Recommended Strategies

Social Priority #6:

Seniors Supports

Recommended Strategies:

- Support agencies that offer programs and services for seniors with varying levels of need. Advocate for seniors so they can access services that suit their needs is essential to safe, comfortable, independent living.
- Actively engage seniors in community social life. Find ways to bring seniors together with different generations, including children and youth, to support intergenerational connections and diminish feelings of social isolation.
- Monitor the volume of seniors in the community and actively engage these seniors in discussions about their needs and what they believe should be built to meet their needs. Providing seniors with opportunities to share their input and perspectives in settings that they find comfortable is a key consideration.

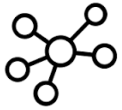
Social Priorities and Recommended Strategies

Social Priority #7: Affordable Housing

Recommended Strategies:

- Support the evaluation of current housing levels in the Town and assist in determining what proportion of existing housing is affordable for those who meet or are below a living wage.
- Continue to conduct periodic, systematic homelessness counts to help understand the degree to which homelessness continues to be an issue and the specific needs that people who are homeless are facing in the Town.
- Consider a housing planning group that would further define the needs of persons and families experiencing difficulties finding affordable housing or are facing homelessness and look for short and longer-term options.
- Consider options for emergency and/or transitional housing including emergency housing for residents and youth in the community. Special attention should also be paid to seniors' housing needs
- Encourage the development of housing options are accompanied by programs and services that foster the development of basic life skills and financial management.
- Investigate the suitability of a housing support program for the Town that adopts a "Housing First" model or approach.

Social Priorities and Recommended Strategies



Social Priority #8:

Connections and Collaborations Amongst Agencies

Recommended Strategies:

- Ensure that organizations are provided with an opportunity to engage in regular discussions at an interagency table. Shared services and join problem identification and problem-solving will emerge from this table.
- Facilitate movement to a case-based interagency service model for individuals and families who require programs, services, and supports from multiple agencies.
- Create annual or semi-annual opportunities for joint action planning around shared social wellness issues, particularly as it relates to the priorities in the SNA.
- Create a process (s) for recipients of social programs and services to be part of the ongoing joint action planning processes.
- Enlist community leaders to champion social development in the Town (i.e., a Social Development Council).

Social Priorities and Recommended Strategies

Social Priority #9:

Communication

Recommended Strategies:

- Facilitate the development of a multipronged" approach to communication. This approach should consist of opportunities for agencies to meet and discuss their programs and services as well as distribution of information using both traditional print methods as well as social media.

- Foster a culture of continuous open communication. Without this type of communication social needs are overlooked and people in the community lose sight of those who are impacted by social issues. Bringing attention to social issues and the programs and services that are in place to address these issues will have a positive impact on multiple level. Further, it will reduce the burden on the individuals in the social sector who have assumed responsibility for communications and create a more sustainable approach to move forward.

FCSS Staff Development and Expansion

- The social priorities identified during the SNA are complex and will require dedicated attention across the entire community to adequately address in the months and years ahead.
- As an established, trusted, and well-respected entity in the Town, Blackfalds FCSS is well-positioned to stimulate efforts to address these social priorities. In some circumstances, Blackfalds FCSS may also be able to develop programs, services, and resources that address these social priorities.
- However, as a small team it would be unfair to place additional responsibilities on Blackfalds FCSS. Additional resources would need to be invested into this team to ensure that it has adequate capacity to lead and support the work necessary to address these social priorities.
- It is recommended that a portion of these resources be allocated to education and training to growth the knowledge, skills, and experiences of the existing team.
- It is further recommended that the remainder of these additional resources be allocated to new staff roles. Multiple roles designed to facilitate community engagement and development activities are required to optimize the uptake and follow through of the recommendations associated with each social priority.
- One specific role that would be beneficial in the Blackfalds FCSS team would a dedicated role to provide outreach supports.

Implementation Plan

1. Hosting of a “launch,” information and implementation planning session for all SNA stakeholders in the Town to increase awareness and knowledge of the SNA results to develop collaborative immediate, mid- term and long-term strategies and actions and strategies for long term engagement in the SNA.

2. Formation of a SNA implementation Committee that will have responsibility for supporting the implementation of the plan and for providing oversight advice, over the long term, as the plan results are evaluated, and revisions considered. The current Advisory Committee will remain in place to assist the development of the Implementation Committee.

3. Encourage all social profit organizations, funders, and other stakeholders to incorporate the SNA priorities into their strategic and annual operational plans as well as identify key indicators from their organizations’ perspective to measure progress toward achieving the priority outcomes.

4. Create an annual review process that engages all non-profit agencies, organizations, funders, the municipalities, and other stakeholders in reviewing the progress made on the priorities and collectively plan for the upcoming year, based on the results achieved.

5. Provide an annual progress report to the FCSS Board and Town Council as well as to all agencies and organization so that they can update their respective boards and committees about the status of the plan and their respective current anticipated contributions.

6. Develop additional, ongoing methods of engaging residents in providing information about portions of the plan and/or specific strategy areas under consideration and development, including an ongoing SNA page on the Town’s website.

7. Plan and budget for a three and five-year review of the plan and process to update the document based on current changes in the social, economic, and environmental environment in the Town.

Blackfalds Social Needs Assessment

Questions?

MEETING DATE: March 20, 2023

PREPARED BY: Sue Bornn, FCSS Manager

PRESENTED BY: Sue Bornn, FCSS Manager

SUBJECT: **2022 Social Needs Assessment**

BACKGROUND

Request for Proposals were sent out in early 2022 for the Social Needs Assessment. Moorhouse and Associates were awarded the project and have been working on it over the last 10 months. They have collected information through household and online surveys, stakeholder interviews, community conversations, public events, and consultation with Administration and the FCSS Board.

This Social Needs Assessment will provide a point of reference upon which decisions and priorities related to preventative social services and initiatives can be made by Council, the FCSS Board and Administration through 2027.

DISCUSSION

At the FCSS Board meeting held on March 9 the Board participated in a discussion about the Social Needs Assessment. As a result of that discussion:

08/23 Member Gilchrist moved that the Board accept the 2022 Social Needs Assessment as presented and forward the document to Council.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Social Needs Assessment was paid for out of Capital Projects as assigned during budget deliberations for 2022.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

1. That Standing Committee of Council recommends to Council to adopt the FCSS Board recommendation to accept 2022 Social Needs Assessment and Master Plan as presented.

ALTERNATIVES

a) That Standing Committee of Council does not recommend to Council the FCSS Board recommendation to accept the 2022 Social Needs Assessment and Master Plan as presented.

b) That Standing Committee of Council recommends amendments to the FCSS Board.

ATTACHMENTS

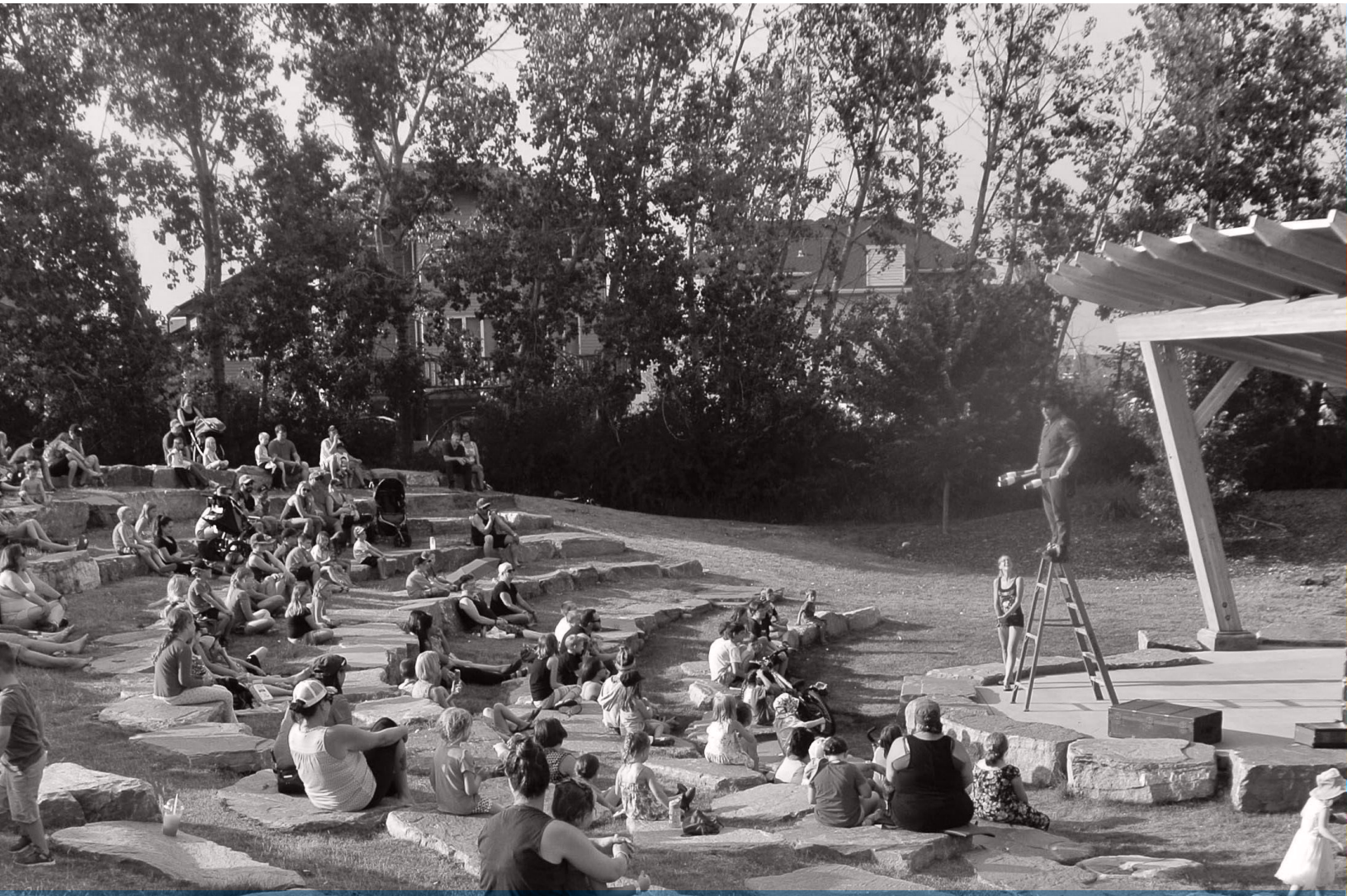
- *2022 FCSS Social Needs Assessment*

APPROVALS

CAO Myron Thompson	Department Director/Author

BLACKFALDS

SOCIAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PROJECT SUPPORT TEAM

SUE BORNN – MANAGER, TOWN OF BLACKFALDS FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

SUE PENNER – ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, TOWN OF BLACKFALDS FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

CONSULTING SUPPORT TEAM

MOORHOUSE & ASSOCIATES CONSULTING INC.

OBJECTIVE RESEARCH AND EVALUATION INC.

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Executive Summary

A social needs assessment was carried out in an effort to determine the social needs of residents and youth in the Town of Blackfalds. This assessment involved the development of a community profile, a review of key documents, and the collection of data through a comprehensive engagement process consisting of resident surveys, working sessions, and in-depth interviews.

The information assembled during this assessment was summarized into findings and key themes. These findings and key themes suggested that a significant number of social needs within Blackfalds can be addressed if the following nine priority areas are attended to. Priorities are ordered by relative importance.

1. Mental health
2. Bullying and abuse
3. Isolation and loneliness
4. Substance use and addictions
5. Basic needs
6. Seniors supports
7. Affordable housing
8. Connections and collaborations amongst local agencies
9. Communications

The results of this process were used to generate a Social Needs Assessment (SNA). This SNA can be used to improve the social wellness of Blackfalds and improve the quality of life of residents. For this SNA to realize its potential effective collaboration involving the municipalities, non-profit agencies, organizations, and other stakeholders is necessary. It is recommended that all partners unite their efforts and work as a collective to carry out the following seven implementation strategies.

1. Host a "launch", information, and implementation planning session for all SNA stakeholders in Blackfalds to increase awareness and knowledge of the SNA.
2. Form a SNA implementation Committee that will have responsibility for supporting the implementation of the plan and for providing oversight advice, over the long term, as the plan results are evaluated, and revisions considered.
3. Encourage all non-profit agencies, organizations, funders, and other stakeholders to incorporate the SNA priorities into their strategic and annual operational plans and identify key indicators from their organizations' perspective to measure progress toward priority outcomes.
4. Create an annual review process that engages all non-profit agencies, organizations, funders, the municipality, and other stakeholders in reviewing the progress made on the priorities and collectively plan for the upcoming year based on the results achieved.
5. Provide an annual progress report to the Family & Community Support Services (FCSS) Board and Town Council as well as to all agencies and organization so that they can update their respective boards and committees about the status of the plan and their respective current and anticipated contributions.
6. Develop additional, ongoing methods of engaging residents in providing information about portions of the plan and/or specific strategy areas under consideration and development including an ongoing SNA page on the Town's website.

7. Plan and budget for a review of the plan and process to update the document based on current changes in the social, economic, and environmental environment in Blackfalds.

As an established, trusted, and well-respected entity in the Town, Blackfalds FCSS is well-positioned to stimulate efforts to address the nine social priority areas. In some circumstances, Blackfalds FCSS may also be able to facilitate the development of services and resources that address these social priority areas.

However, as a small team it would be unfair to place undue additional responsibilities on Blackfalds FCSS. Additional resources would need to be invested into this team to ensure that it has adequate capacity to lead and support the work necessary to address these social priorities. It is recommended that a portion of these resources be allocated to education and training to growth the knowledge, skills, and experiences of the existing team. It is also recommended that the remainder of these additional resources be allocated to new staff roles. Multiple roles designed to facilitate community engagement and development activities are required to optimize the uptake and follow through of the recommendations associated with each social priority. One specific role that would be beneficial in the Blackfalds FCSS team would a dedicated role to provide outreach supports.

It is important to note, when considering the context of the social priorities identified in the report, that when survey respondents were asked to identify the strengths that they felt currently existed in Blackfalds their top ranked responses included.

- Living close to a large city (i.e., Red Deer) (76%)
- The small-town atmosphere (69%)
- The variety of recreation and social opportunities (48%)
- The safety of the community (47%)
- The community spirit and pride in the Town (27%)

In addition, most respondents (87%) and nearly three quarters (68%) youth who participated in the surveys reported they were happy or very happy with their quality of life living in Blackfalds.

Project Description

In early 2022 the Town of Blackfalds FCSS sought the support of a consulting team to conduct a Social Needs Assessment (SNA) for the Town of Blackfalds. The purpose of this project was to determine the preventative social needs of the residents of the Town of Blackfalds and the level to which their needs are presently being met. Prior to this project, the Town of Blackfalds' previous Social Needs Assessment was completed in 2016.

The key deliverable of the project was a SNA that the Town of Blackfalds FCSS, in conjunction with key partners within the community, can utilize to address identified social needs in a thoughtful and strategic way. The consulting team assembled this SNA by carrying out the following key activities.

- Assessing the demographic and societal trends as they apply to the Town of Blackfalds and creating a community profile.
- Reviewing key documents and resources provided by the Town of Blackfalds.
- Implementing an engagement process which included resident surveys and in-depth interviews with representatives from human service and non-profit agencies.
- Identifying opportunities for collective impact and strategic partnerships to initiate the development and implementation of new services and resources.
- Exploring potential improvement relating to existing services and resources, volunteer and leadership development, staffing needs, and a suggested long-range timeline for future consideration.
- Evaluating existing social needs and gaps in programs and services aimed at addressing these existing social needs.

VALUES AND PRINCIPLES GUIDING THE PROCESS

The consulting team adopted a core set of guiding values and principles to guide its efforts in the completion of the study. These values and principles were rooted in the team's previous experience developing and implementing needs assessments and social policy reviews. At a fundamental level, the team believed the project success would be driven by the following.

- Co-creating an approach, with the target sector, which builds an ongoing process to provide meaningful opportunities for engagement across a wide cross section in participating in the planning and engagement activities and that enables all parties to share ownership of the recommendations and directions.
- Integrating and building on principles, goals and strategies associated with social development found in existing strategic frameworks in the Town of Blackfalds.
- Using evidence-based information, strategies, and recommendations to identify issues and their root causes as well as provide a foundation on which to build sustainable options and direction for consideration.
- Ensuring that the work of the project contributes to the ability to anticipate future issues and build capacity to both prevent and address issues and opportunities effectively and efficiently.

Further, the consulting team operated in accordance with the following principles:

- The definition of "preventive social services" was consistent with the definition set out in the FCSS Act and Regulation.

- Inclusion and diversity were supported by seeking to engage broadly with rural and urban residents, agencies, and organizations; and
- Deliverables and results would be co-created by sharing knowledge, providing education, and creating understanding of the information with residents, agencies, and organizations.

Finally, the consulting team believed that any policies, strategies, and recommendations that emerged from the project must lead to concreate, tangible, change-oriented action to have value and be effective. It is hoped that the results of this project will leave a legacy of community engagement and increase social wellness and well-being. The energy and resources that all parties who contributed to this project will have been well invested if this goal is achieved.

Methodology

The consulting team utilized a mixed method approach that consisted of both quantitative and qualitative strategies to gather, analyze, and interpret data from multiple sources. The specific strategies utilized for each component of the project are outlined below.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Data from Statistics Canada was used to construct a comprehensive community profile that accurately describes salient characteristics of the population that resides within the boundaries of the Town of Blackfalds (e.g., size, age, ethnicity, family status).

DOCUMENT AND RESOURCE REVIEW

The Town of Blackfalds provided four key documents and resources to review. The text, figures, and charts within these documents and resources were carefully scrutinized, and pertinent information related to social needs was extracted. This information was then themed and summarized to generate a clear summary of learnings and to formulate priorities for action.

ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The engagement process consisted of semi-structured stakeholder interviews, an agency and community organization working session, and online surveys.

Two types of interviews were carried out: introductory, scoping interviews and in-depth interviews with representatives from human service and non-profit agencies within the Town of Blackfalds and its surround jurisdictions. Seven scoping interviews were carried out and twelve in-depth interviews with representatives from human service and non-profit agencies in the Town of Blackfalds as well as Town administration and Council members were carried out.

Two online surveys were administered: a resident household survey and a youth survey. To maximize response rates, postcards with URLs and QR codes directing residents and youth to the surveys were distributed. A total of 285 responses to the resident surveys were received and 168 responses to the youth survey were received. Overall, 453 unique individuals shared their input through a survey.

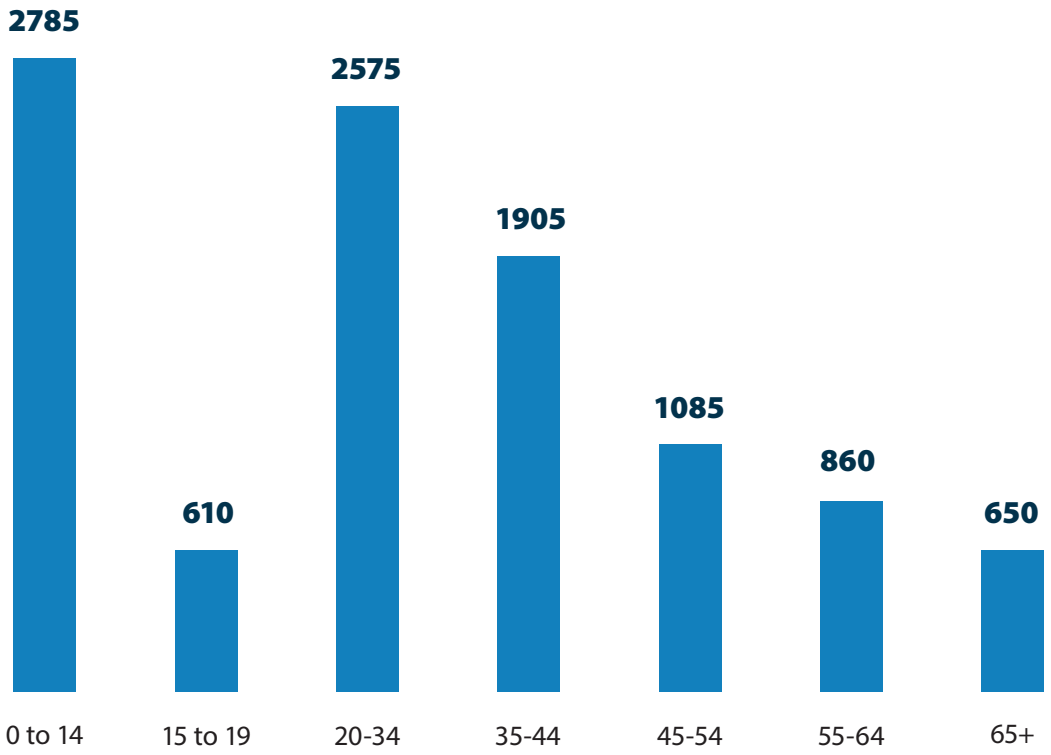
NEEDS, GAPS AND OPPORTUNITIES ANALYSIS

The data and qualitative information generated from the document and resource review, interviews and surveys were collated and summarized into findings, key themes, and priorities. The resulting list of priorities from each review and engagement activity were analysed based on their respective rankings and additional qualitative information, resulting in identification of program and service priority areas. These areas represent the social wellness needs, gaps, and opportunities in the in the Town of Blackfalds.

Town of Blackfalds Community Profile

The Town of Blackfalds is a municipality in central Alberta. Blackfalds is located approximately 14 kilometers north of Red Deer, Alberta. According to the 2021 Federal Census the population of Blackfalds is 11,025. The proportion of males and females in this population is nearly even with 49% of the population identifying as male and 51% of the population identifying as female. The population of Blackfalds has grown by 12.2 percent since the 2016 Federal Census when the population was 9,328.

The age distribution of the population within Blackfalds can be found in the table below. Significant proportion of the population are children and youth. Older adults and seniors also comprise another large proportion of the population.



Source: Statistics Canada (2021)

Identified in the following chart are selected population and demographic characteristics from the 2021 Federal Census comparing Blackfalds to Provincial figures and trends.

CHARACTERISTIC	BLACKFALDS	PROVINCE OF ALBERTA
Indigenous Population	9%	16%
Visible Minority	4%	11%
Average Age	32	38
Married or Living Common Law	64%	59%
Not Married or Living Common Law	36%	41%
Household Size	2.8	2.6
Couple Families	83%	84%
Lone Parent Families	17%	16%
Median After-Tax Income of Families	$89,000	$99,000
Unemployment Rate	12.7%	5.5%
Education – No Certificate, Diploma, or Degree	22%	21%
Education – Secondary School Diploma or Equivalent	39%	30%
Education – Post-Secondary Certificate, Diploma, Degree	39%	49%

Source: Statistics Canada (2021)

Document and Resource Review

Four foundational documents were reviewed as part of the Social Needs Assessment process. The documents were:

- Town of Blackfalds Social Needs Assessment Master Plan – 2016
- Blackfalds Municipal Sustainability Plan -2020
- Town of Blackfalds Report to the Community 2019-2020
- Town of Blackfalds Economic Development and Tourism Strategy - 2021

A detailed summary of the Document and Resource review can be found in Appendix 1.

PRIORITIES AND ALIGNMENT IDENTIFIED FROM DOCUMENT AND RESOURCE REVIEW

There are several priorities and opportunities for alignment that are evident based on the review of the aforementioned documents. They include:

- Continue to build and support ongoing community engagement
- Build awareness of FCSS program, services, and results and how to access
- Increase community pride and identity
- Focus on community safety
- Engage and support newcomer residents
- Expand transport support for residents to attend social programs and services
- Build and sustain community partnerships and collaboration
- Shared positive quality of life findings
- Increase access to local health providers particularly mental health across all ages
- Increase affordable housing options
- Increase housing options for older residents

Program and Service Inventory

There are numerous programs and services available to residents of Blackfalds to address their social needs. The following table presents an inventory of these services at is structured according to Town and FCSS services, and other services available, and finally those provided by Lacombe and District FCSS.

SERVICE PROVIDER	ORGANIZATION	MISSION/ PURPOSE	ACTIVITIES/ PROGRAMS	TARGET MARKET/ MARKET SERVED	FACILITY UTILIZED
The Town of Blackfalds and Blackfalds FCSS	Community Gardens	Providing space for people to plant and tend their own gardens	30 garden plots available	Individuals and families	Aspen Community Garden
	Blackfalds FCSS	Assistance with school supplies so children can attend school with all the resources they need to be successful	Provision of school supplies	Children and youth	Various
	Blackfalds FCSS	Provision of winter coats for eligible children	Provision of winter coats and winter clothing	Children and youth	Various
	Volunteer Program	Partnership between Blackfalds FCSS, and Town of Blackfalds	Volunteer coordination and management services Volunteer recognition and referrals to volunteer opportunities	Volunteer organizations/ individuals operating in Blackfalds	Various

SERVICE PROVIDER	ORGANIZATION	MISSION/ PURPOSE	ACTIVITIES/ PROGRAMS	TARGET MARKET/ MARKET SERVED	FACILITY UTILIZED
The Town of Blackfalds and Blackfalds FCSS (Continued)	Youth Programming	Youth supports Free drop-in after school programs for youth grades 4 to 6 and evening programs for youth grades 7 to 12 Activities provide opportunities to build upon social skills, positive values, and self-esteem	Blackfalds Youth Crew, providing barrier free youth programs afterschool on Monday, Tuesday LGBTQ2S+ Youth Group offering peer-based social support Youth Week, Youth Recognition Awards Night	Blackfalds youth in grades 4 to 12	Various Municipal Facilities
	Annual Youth Recognition	Recognizing students who have made outstanding contributions to Blackfalds through volunteerism	Leaders of Tomorrow and Dylan Stork Youth Ambassador Awards	Blackfalds youth	Various
	Blackfalds FCSS (Partnerships with all schools)	International bereavement support program designed to support children experiencing significant loss or painful transition	Rainbows Program	Blackfalds children and youth	Various
	Employment Support	Provide employment supports to adults in the community	Job board and resume assistance	Adults	FCSS office
	Blackfalds FCSS (In partnership with the Food Bank Society)	Providing "hands-on" learning while gaining knowledge of food and nutrition, how to grow food	One Seed at a Time Garden	Individuals and families in need	Various

SERVICE PROVIDER	ORGANIZATION	MISSION/ PURPOSE	ACTIVITIES/ PROGRAMS	TARGET MARKET/ MARKET SERVED	FACILITY UTILIZED
The Town of Blackfalds and Blackfalds FCSS (Continued)	Blackfalds FCSS Snow Angel Program	A volunteer service by people who can commit to remove snow from Blackfalds residents' homes	Snow removal from seniors' driveways	Seniors	Various
	Blackfalds FCSS Seniors Active Programming	Engaging seniors and supporting them to participate in a variety of activities that help them stay active and engaged	Various	Seniors	Various
	TOB Abbey Centre Red Cross Babysitting Certification Program	Helping youth gain the knowledge and skills they require to provide safe care to infants and children while babysitting	Multi-day hands on training, experiential learning activities	Children and youth	Abbey Centre 2x annually
	Camp Curious & Camp Curious Mini's	Providing children and youth recreational opportunities outside of school hours and during summer holidays	No school PD camps for children 6-11 Summer day camps for children 3-11	Children and youth	Various
	Blackfalds FCSS Christmas Bureau in partnership with the Beyond Food Community Hub/ Food Bank and Fire Department	Helps eligible Blackfalds families and residents celebrate and enjoy holidays	Distribution of Christmas hampers	Low-income eligible residents	Various

SERVICE PROVIDER	ORGANIZATION	MISSION/ PURPOSE	ACTIVITIES/ PROGRAMS	TARGET MARKET/ MARKET SERVED	FACILITY UTILIZED
Other Organizations	Blackfalds Cheemo Seniors' Club	Providing activities and social gatherings for seniors in the Blackfalds area	Lunch Floor curling Carpet bowling Host celebrations, outings Participation in community events Monthly card night	Residents 50 years and older	Community Centre
	Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lacombe & District	Provides positive adult mentoring to children in school and in the community BBBS strives to provide positive one on one adult mentors to children in need and that any child who could benefit from a mentor will have a mentor	In School Mentoring program In community mentoring Summer camps: Go Girls, Kids and Kops Adopt a Family at Christmas Traditional Big Brothers Big Sisters	Children aged 6 to 17	All local schools
	Anam Rural Youth Association	Offering support to youth, young adults, and families in need	One on one support for youth ages 13+ and young adults Mental health supports Assistance for parents in conflict, high conflict divorce Bullying, inappropriate social media	Children, youth, and families	Anam Rural Youth Association

SERVICE PROVIDER	ORGANIZATION	MISSION/ PURPOSE	ACTIVITIES/ PROGRAMS	TARGET MARKET/ MARKET SERVED	FACILITY UTILIZED
Other Organizations (continued)	Blackfalds Public Library	Providing library services to all residents of Blackfalds and the surrounding area	Children and youth programming (e.g., book/reading club, afterschool programs (e.g., LEGO club) Parenting programs Large variety of online/ in person afterschool programs	Entire community	Public Library
	Beyond Food Community Hub & Food Bank Society	Provides food to families and individuals	Provides food to town residents; one hamper per month; also supplies food to schools for lunches Affordable Market Weekly Lunchbox Program (pandemic response program with FCSS) serving families with children in Blackfalds & area Grad Dress Program MEGlobal Community Kitchen	45 to 60 families per month	Food Bank

SERVICE PROVIDER	ORGANIZATION	MISSION/ PURPOSE	ACTIVITIES/ PROGRAMS	TARGET MARKET/ MARKET SERVED	FACILITY UTILIZED
Other Organizations (Continued)	Blackfalds On Demand Local Transit (BOLT)	Regional public transit providing service to Blackfalds, Lacombe, and Red Deer	Regularly scheduled and on demand services throughout the community with two stops in Red Deer (North end, Red Deer Polytechnic) and one in Lacombe County (Aspelund)	Residents of Blackfalds and Lacombe	Various
	Golden Circle Seniors Resource Centre	A vibrant hub for seniors to meet, build community and enjoy the company and support of their peers	A variety of programs, activities, information, resources, and outreach including Community Volunteer Income Tax Program 2022/23 Outreach Pilot Project offering information & referral, home maintenance & housekeeping, assistance accessing support programs, rides for medical appointments, grocery delivery	Older adults, their families, and care givers in Red Deer area	Own facility in Red Deer & outreach services to Blackfalds residents
	Kids Konnection	Licensed Family Day Home	Placement of children into childcare programs and day homes; 24-day homes	Young children	Day homes
	Taking Off Pounds Sensibly	Weight management support	Weekly community support group	Adults	Various
	Alcoholics Anonymous	Peer support to overcome alcoholism	Peer support group	Adults	Various

SERVICE PROVIDER	ORGANIZATION	MISSION/ PURPOSE	ACTIVITIES/ PROGRAMS	TARGET MARKET/ MARKET SERVED	FACILITY UTILIZED
Other Organizations (Continued)	Alberta Health Services	Providing health services to the community	Adult counselling, youth counselling youth health promotion, tobacco cessations, addictions support, and counselling, trauma support Children's Mental Health Therapist, in-person treatment in Blackfalds every second week for 1 day	Blackfalds residents	FCSS offices (youth counselling only) Other programs in Lacombe
	Optimist Club	Friends of youth in the community	Local non-profit that fundraises to provide financial assistance for youth and projects of interest to youth Specifically skatepark, inclusive playground, mini rink in Eagle Builder Centre, school playgrounds	Blackfalds youth	Various
	Little Star Playschool and Out of School Care	Instill self-esteem and self-worth; child development and childcare	Playschool, before and after school care, out of school programs, kindercare, and summer care programs	Playschool for ages 3 to 5 years; afterschool care for children ages 5 to 12	Little Star Playschool
	Kids3 Day Care	Provide day care services	Day care not out of school care	Children too young for school	Kids3 Day Care

SERVICE PROVIDER	ORGANIZATION	MISSION/ PURPOSE	ACTIVITIES/ PROGRAMS	TARGET MARKET/ MARKET SERVED	FACILITY UTILIZED
Other Organizations (Continued)	Vantage Community Services (previously Parkland Youth Services)	To build capacity in people by creating opportunities and instilling hope and confidence	Counselling, transitional housing for youth, life skills training, mental health support, and youth outreach	Youth, adults, and families in central Alberta	Various including own facility in Red Deer
	The Outreach Centre (previously Women's Outreach)	Working to end family violence and poverty by supporting people in their pursuit of a safer, healthier more secure life	Supporting women and families experiencing domestic abuse/ violence, difficulties in meeting their basic needs and identifying barriers to reaching their personal goals Outreach programs Domestic violence Housing support Suicide prevention Children & youth trauma support programs Legal information	Women and their children	Own facility in Red Deer
	RCMP School Resource Officer	Increasing youth awareness and influencing youth behaviour through behaviour modeling, mentoring, active learning, and engaging youth to positively influence their peers, school, and community	Dedicated RCMP officer assigned to a school, building healthy relationships serves as key contact for youth, parents, and teachers Focus on domestic violence, drugs, alcohol, bullying, child pornography	Blackfalds youth, their families, and the school community	Blackfalds schools

SERVICE PROVIDER	ORGANIZATION	MISSION/ PURPOSE	ACTIVITIES/ PROGRAMS	TARGET MARKET/ MARKET SERVED	FACILITY UTILIZED
Other Organizations (Continued)	Iron Ridge Schools Elementary Campus, Intermediate Campus, Junior Campus & Secondary Campus (opening in 2024)	School Social Worker Program	School Social Worker seeks to create healthy families Counseling services can cover many areas including social skills development, relationship and friendship issues, family violence, family conflict, suicide prevention, sexual abuse, substance abuse, self-esteem issues	Pre-K through Grades 9. Secondary Campus (grades 10-12 opening in 2024)	Iron Ridge Elementary Campus (preK-3), Irone Ridge Intermediate Campus (4-6), Iron Ridge Junior Campus (7-9), Iron Ridge Secondary Campus (10-12)
	Catholic School Services	Counselling support and mental health services	Various forms of counselling and mental health support Counselling and mental health support for those with disabilities Domestic abuse support Elder abuse support Family capacity building Foster care program Immigrant and refugee support Addiction recovery support Family support Spiritual care	All individuals	Various

SERVICE PROVIDER	ORGANIZATION	MISSION/ PURPOSE	ACTIVITIES/ PROGRAMS	TARGET MARKET/ MARKET SERVED	FACILITY UTILIZED
Other Organizations (Continued)	Care for Newcomers (previously Central Alberta Refugee Effort)	Helping new immigrants and refugees adjust to their new life in Central Alberta	English as a second language Settlement support in schools Translation and interpretation Information and referral Engage Immigrant Youth program, Immigrant men's and Various women's support groups, focused on different topics and needs	New immigrants and refugees	Various, but based in Red Deer
	Central Alberta Immigrant Women's Association	Support for immigrant women and their families during the settlement process	Youth and family programming Employment and skills training for immigrants	Immigrant women and their families	Various
	Central Alberta Victim and Witness Support Society	Support for individuals in crisis after witnessing crime and tragedy	Crisis support Court support Information referrals for victims and witnesses of crime and tragedy	All individuals	Various
	Shining Mountains Living Community Services	Provides a range of community services for people at risk for and who are living with HIV/ AIDS and/or HCV, homelessness, domestic violence, and addictions	Cooking and nutrition skills, housing, counselling, referrals, networking, HIV/AIDS programming	Anyone whether or not they are First Nations, Metis, Inuit, or status from anywhere in the Red Deer area	Own facility in Red Deer

SERVICE PROVIDER	ORGANIZATION	MISSION/ PURPOSE	ACTIVITIES/ PROGRAMS	TARGET MARKET/ MARKET SERVED	FACILITY UTILIZED
Other Organizations (Continued)	Kidsport	Grant funding to support eligible Lacombe County (including Blackfalds) youth to cover sport registration fees	Youth sport registration fees	Children and youth	Various
	Lacombe and District FCSS	Provide activities for youth	LA Youth Friday night drop-in	Youth 10 to 15 years old	Youth Unlimited Building
	Lacombe and District FCSS	Light housekeeping, occasional meal prep, assistance with groceries	Home Support (Contracted and paid for through Blackfalds FCSS)	Light housekeeping services due to age, disability, hospital discharge or illness	Various
	The Lacombe Foundation serving all of Lacombe County	Provides safe and affordable housing to seniors and families	Operates affordable housing units in Lacombe, community housing in Lacombe, lodge living in Eckville and Lacombe, and apartment living in Blackfalds and other communities	Seniors and families in Lacombe County	Tower Manor in Blackfalds (4 suites; wheelchair accessible; 16 affordable housing units)
	Lacombe & Area Family Resource Network (McMan Central)	Offering a variety of prevention and early intervention services for families with children 0-18 years of age	Early child development Child and youth development Parent education Family support and home visitation	Children, youth, and families	Blackfalds Community Centre

Engagment Findings - What We Heard

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

INTRODUCTION

A total of 12 in depth interviews were carried out with representatives from human service and non-profit agencies across the Town of Blackfalds and the surrounding jurisdiction. These interviews were carried out over the duration of the project. Representatives interviewed included a diverse array of individuals with leadership, management, and front-line program and service delivery experience. These individuals possessed a high degree of experience developing and implementing programs and services aimed at addressing social needs within the Town.

During the interviews individuals were asked to share their views on the strengths and assets that exist within the Town of Blackfalds. They were also asked to describe how these strengths and assets could be leveraged to address social needs. The individuals were then asked to identify and comment on the issues, challenges, and barriers that they see in relation to social needs. Program and service gaps were explored. And finally, these individuals were asked to provide recommended course of action that the Town of Blackfalds can take to overcome issues, challenges, and barriers and fill program and service gaps in the future.

FINDINGS

The information collected during interviews was analyzed using a ground theory approach. This approach allowed themes to emerge from the results without undue bias from a preconceived set of theories or expectations. A summary and set of recommendations for each of these themes is presented below. Specific comments from the individuals who participated in interviews are in Appendix 2.

Themes from Interview Participants

Strengths

- The spirit of connectivity in the community
- FCSS does great work and has a great reputation
- Actively connecting people in the community
- Events held in the Town bring people together

Program and Service Priorities

- Engage people with lower income levels in appropriate supports and services
- Increase programs and activities for children and youth including in arts and culture
- Children and youth support for positive relationships and positive communication
- Increased programs and services for families who have children with disabilities
- Increased support for parenting
- Need for local mental health psychologists and counsellors
- Programs and service for seniors

Opportunity Priorities

- Repurpose available spaces for social programs and services
- Engage the new high school in social supports for students
- Increase regional collaboration

Agency and Community Organization Working Session

INTRODUCTION

One working session involving agency and community organization staff and volunteers was held in Blackfalds. In total five individuals attended and actively participated in the working session.

Participants worked through five question areas including identifying strengths, agency and organization challenges, social issues and opportunities, prioritization, and identification of high-level success indicators. The participants also discussed possible strategies and actions that may work to help resolve the identified social issues and take advantage of the potential opportunities. The summarized and themed findings included below are to be viewed in context with the other streams of engagement leading up the social needs assessment. Specific comments from the individuals who participated in working session can be found in Appendix 3.

FINDINGS

Strengths

- In-home supports
- Rural outreach
- Working relationships with schools
- Businesses support to events

PROGRAM AND SERVICE THEMES

Children and youth

- Bullying, online and face to face
- Adult role models and community leaders
- Community safety
- Support for children and youth with disabilities
- Intergenerational opportunities

Families

- Parenting supports and early years parenting courses
- Support for families when one parent is away working
- Positive family dynamics
- Increased affordable childcare options
- Affordable housing
- Events that provide opportunities for families
- Recreation facilities including Abbey Centre, parks, and community spaces
- Town administration and Council open to listening and to ideas

OPPORTUNITY THEMES

Communication

- Increase awareness of existing social programs and services
- Target communication to reduce volume
- Option to online communication

Volunteers

- Build the pool of volunteers
- Volunteering as community engagement

Schools

- Engage new high school in SNA implementation

Faith Communities

- Faith communities to connect on social priorities

Community Identity

- Community is struggling with identity due to high growth
- Increased population diversity and proximity to major centres driving identity struggles

Resident Survey

INTRODUCTION

A survey was fielded with households in the Town of Blackfalds. Through consultation with the Town of Blackfalds FCSS, the questionnaire was finalized and programmed into an online platform. While the primary means of fielding was online, a hardcopy version was also developed.

To promote the survey, one thousand postcards were produced and distributed to residents within Blackfalds during various project engagement activities (e.g., interviews, working groups). Further, the survey was promoted heavily through the Town's website and social media accounts. Agencies throughout Blackfalds also supported survey promotion by directing clients and other key stakeholders to the survey online.

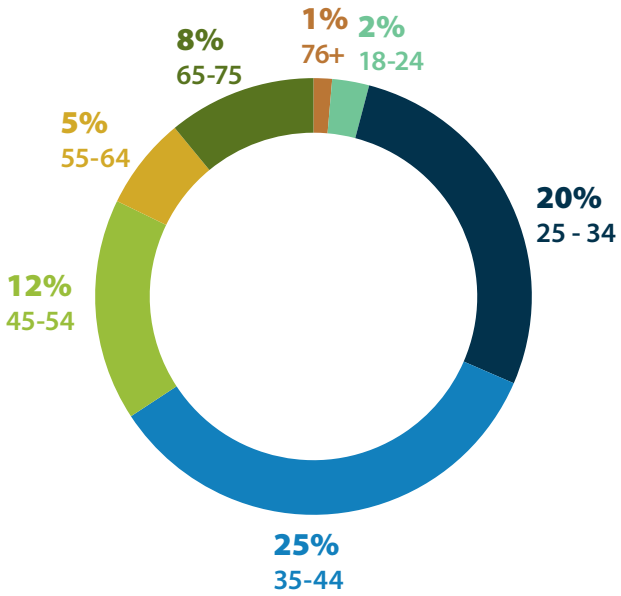
In total 285 full and partial responses were gathering during the fielding window of June 15, 2022 and October 1, 2022. The findings are presented below in the order they were asked in the survey. The percentages shown are based upon the number of respondents who provided an answer.

FINDINGS

The demographic characteristics of the respondents who completed the resident survey are presented in the charts below.

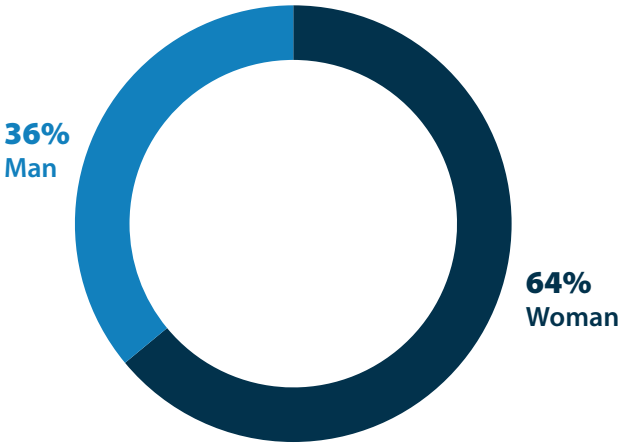
More than a third (37%) of respondents were between 45 and 64 years of age. A fifth (20%) of respondents were between 25 and 34 years of age. Nearly 10% of respondents were greater than 65 years of age.

RESPONDENTS' AGES



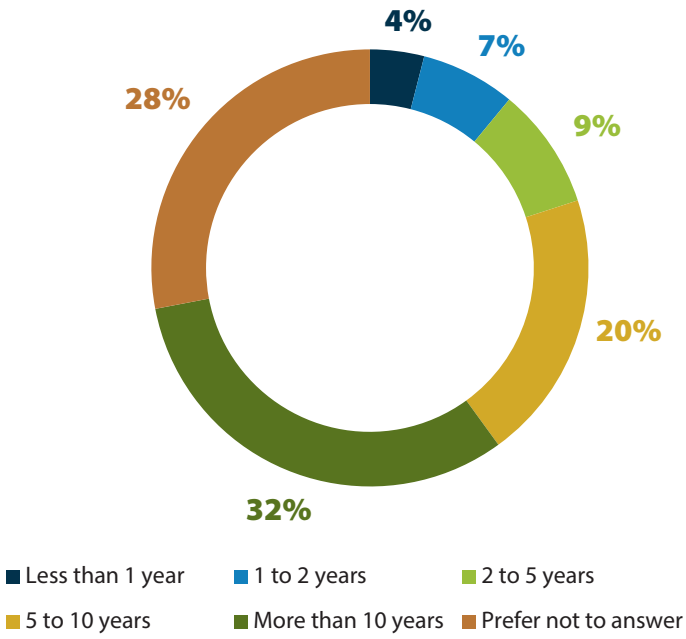
Nearly two thirds (64%) of respondents were female. The remaining respondents (36%) were male. No respondents identified as transgender, non-binary, or two-spirit.

RESPONDENTS' GENDER



Nearly a third (32%) of respondents have lived in Blackfalds for more than 10 years. Nearly another third (28%) of respondents preferred not to answer this question. One fifth (20%) of respondents have lived in Blackfalds for five to 10 years.

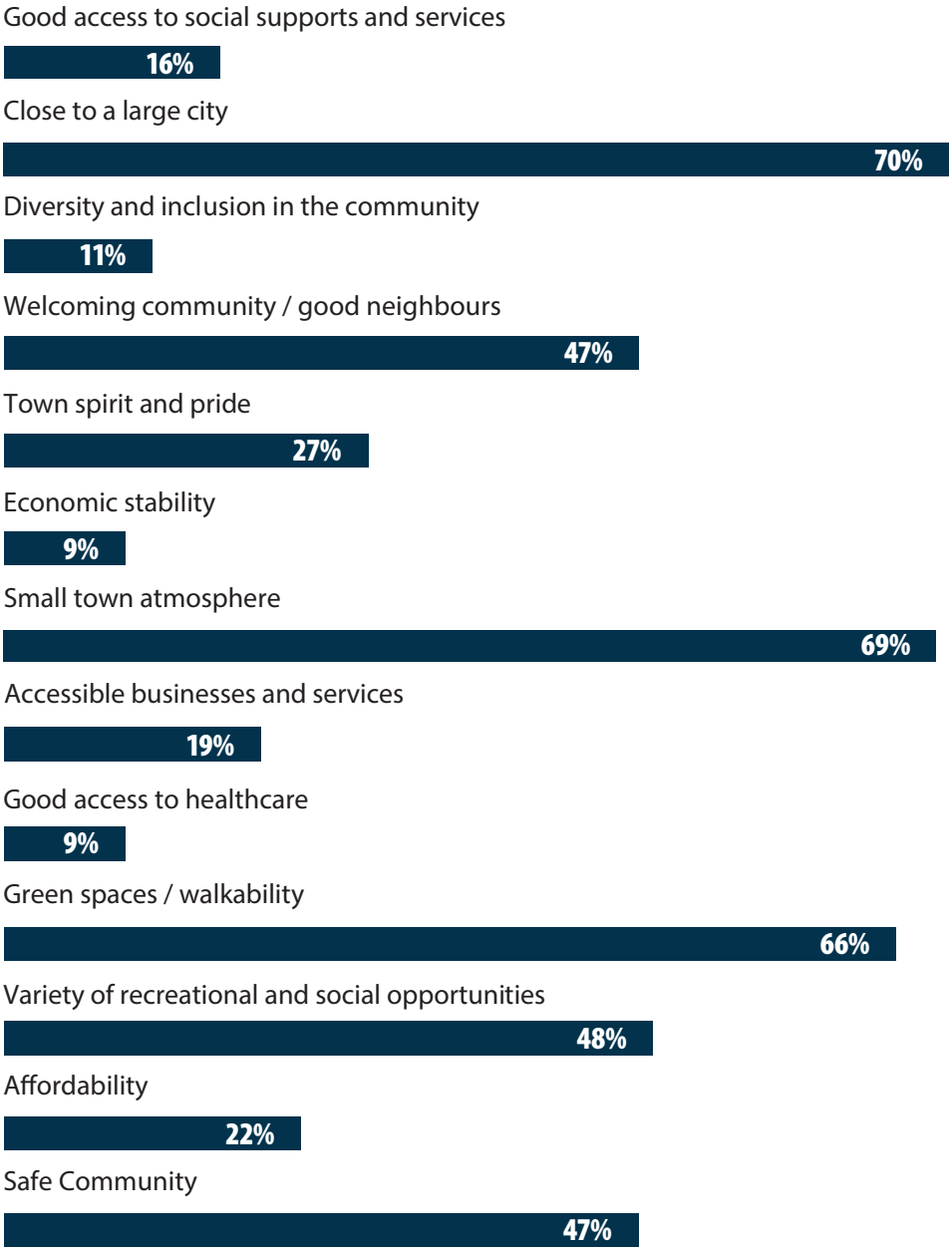
HOW LONG RESPONDENTS HAVE LIVED IN BLACKFALDS



LIVING IN BLACKFALDS

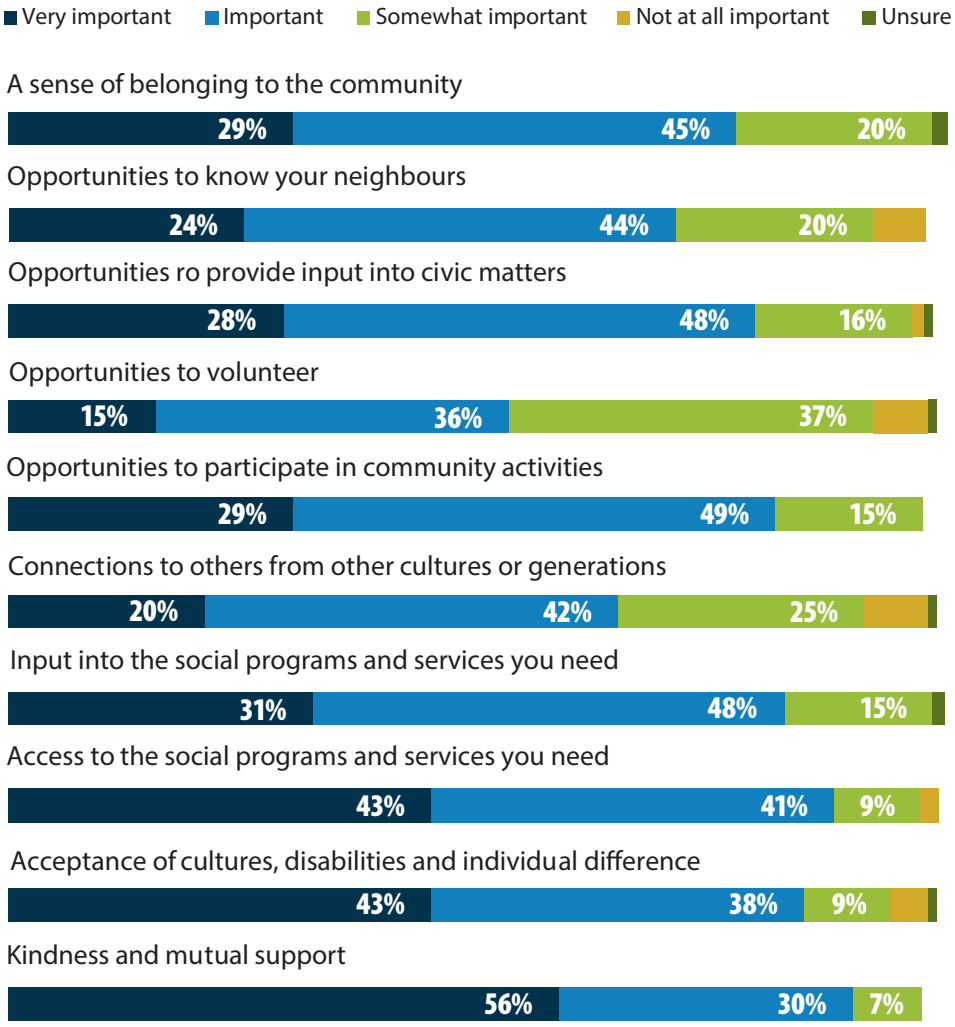
To begin, respondents were asked to identify the strengths of living in Blackfalds. As illustrated in the accompanying graph, nearly three-quarters (70%) of respondents said that living close to a large city (i.e., Red Deer) is a strength of life in Blackfalds. The small-town atmosphere (69%), greenspaces and walkability (66%), and the variety of recreational and social opportunities (48%) were the next most frequently identified strengths.

STRENGTHS OF LIFE IN BLACKFALDS



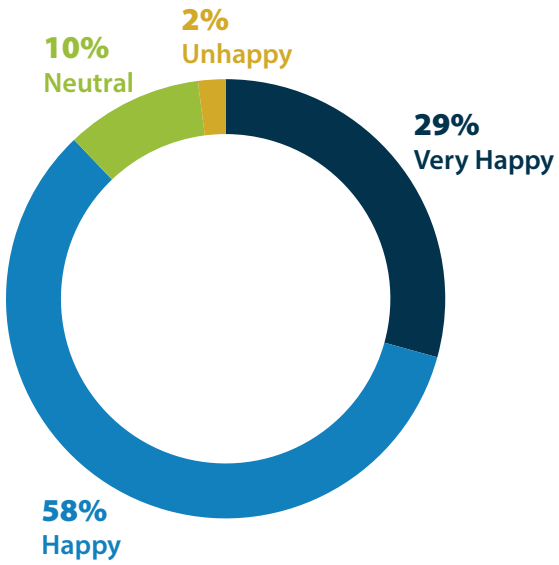
Nearly 90% of respondents indicated that kindness and mutual support are items of high importance to them when it comes to social life in Blackfalds. Access to needed social programs and services (84%), and acceptance of cultures, disabilities, and individual differences (81%) were also items of high importance to respondents when it comes to social life in Blackfalds.

HOW IMPORTANT DIFFERENT ITEMS ARE TO BLACKFALD RESIDENTS



The vast majority (87%) of respondents indicated that they are happy living in Blackfalds. Only 2% of respondents indicated that they are unhappy living in Blackfalds.

BLACKFALDS RESIDENTS' HAPPINESS

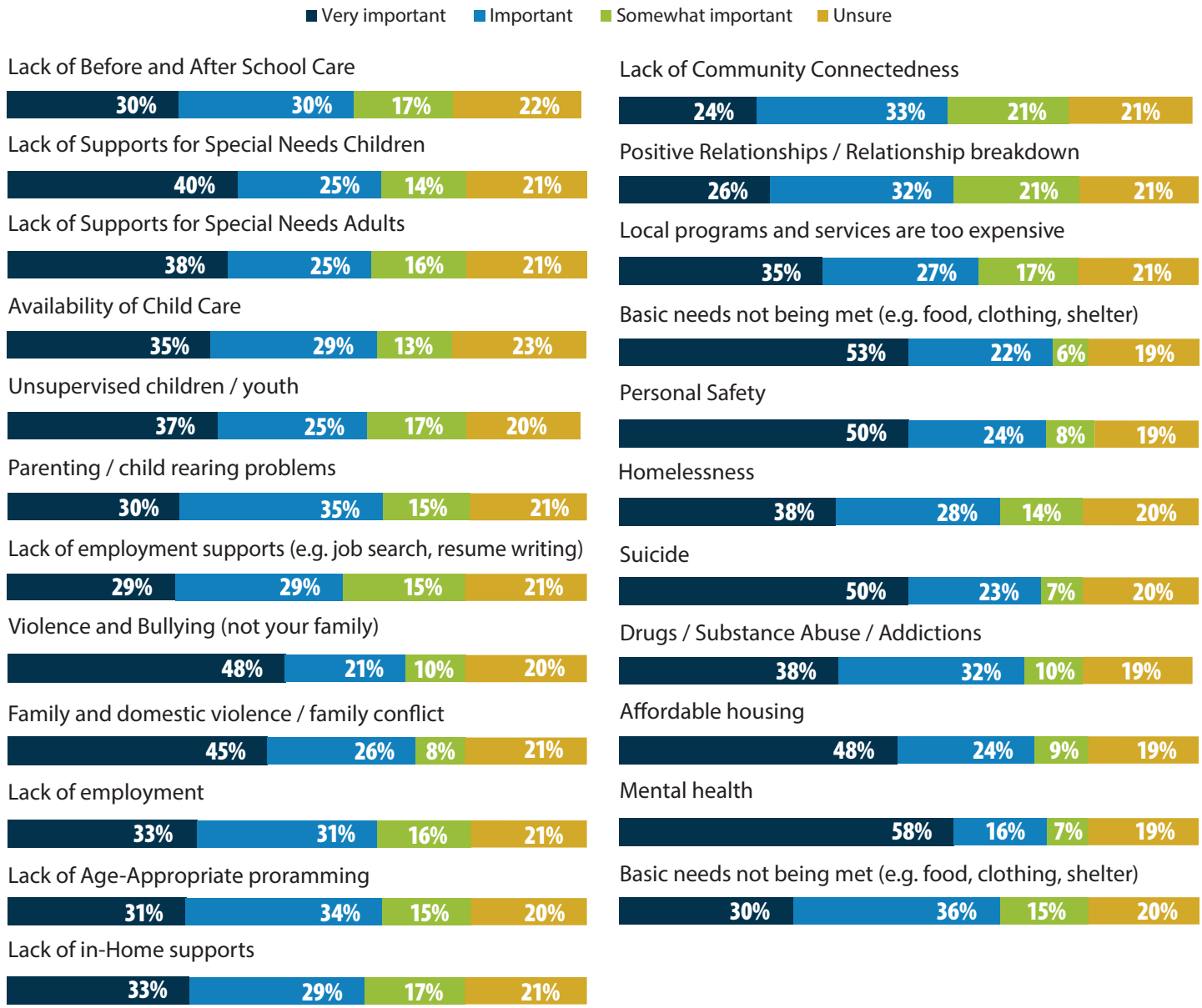


SOCIAL ISSUES IN BLACKFALDS

Respondents were asked to express their views on how important it is to have different social issues address in Blackfalds.

Nearly three quarters (74%) of respondents indicated that having issues related to personal safety in Blackfalds addressed is of high importance. Mental health (74%), affordable housing (72%), and drugs / substance use / addictions (70%) were also identified as issues of high importance to address in the Town.

IMPORTANCE OF HAVING SOCIAL ISSUES ADDRESSED



Respondents demonstrated a high level of awareness of the social issues that children and youth, adults and families, and seniors face in Blackfalds. The top five social issues identified for each age group are presented below.

Children and Youth

1. Mental health
2. Violence and bullying, not in the child or youth's family
3. Unsupervised children and youth
4. Drugs, substance abuse, addictions
5. Isolation and loneliness

Adults and Families

1. Mental health
2. Affordable housing
3. Drugs, substance use, and addictions
4. Isolation and loneliness
5. Basic needs not being met

Seniors

1. Isolation and loneliness
2. Mental health
3. Affordable housing
4. Basic needs not being met
5. Lack of in-home supports

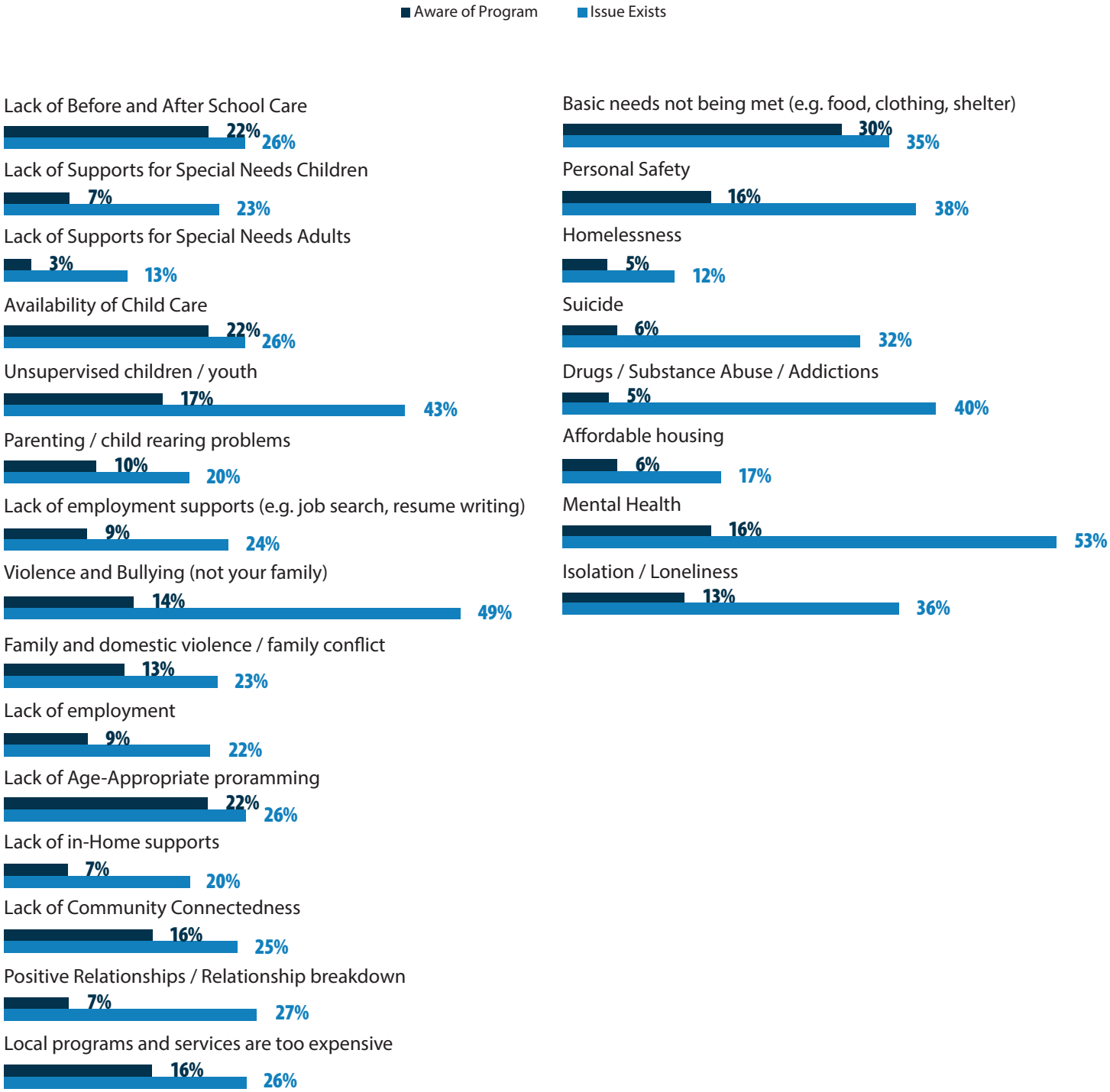
The top five issues identified for each age group are representative of the issues that respondents would like to see address in Blackfalds in the next five years.

Respondents were provided with a list of social issues and asked if the issues exist within Blackfalds. Specifically, they were asked if the issue exists within the children and youth, adults and families, and seniors of Blackfalds. Secondly respondents were asked if they are aware of local programs and services to address the issues for each population group.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

As illustrated in the graph below more than half (53%) of respondents said that the mental health issues are experienced by children and youth in Blackfalds. A similar amount or respondents said that children and youth experience violence and bullying outside of their families (49%) and that the number of children and youth without appropriate supervision is an issue (43%). However, only a small minority of respondents indicated that they are aware of programs that exist to address these issues.

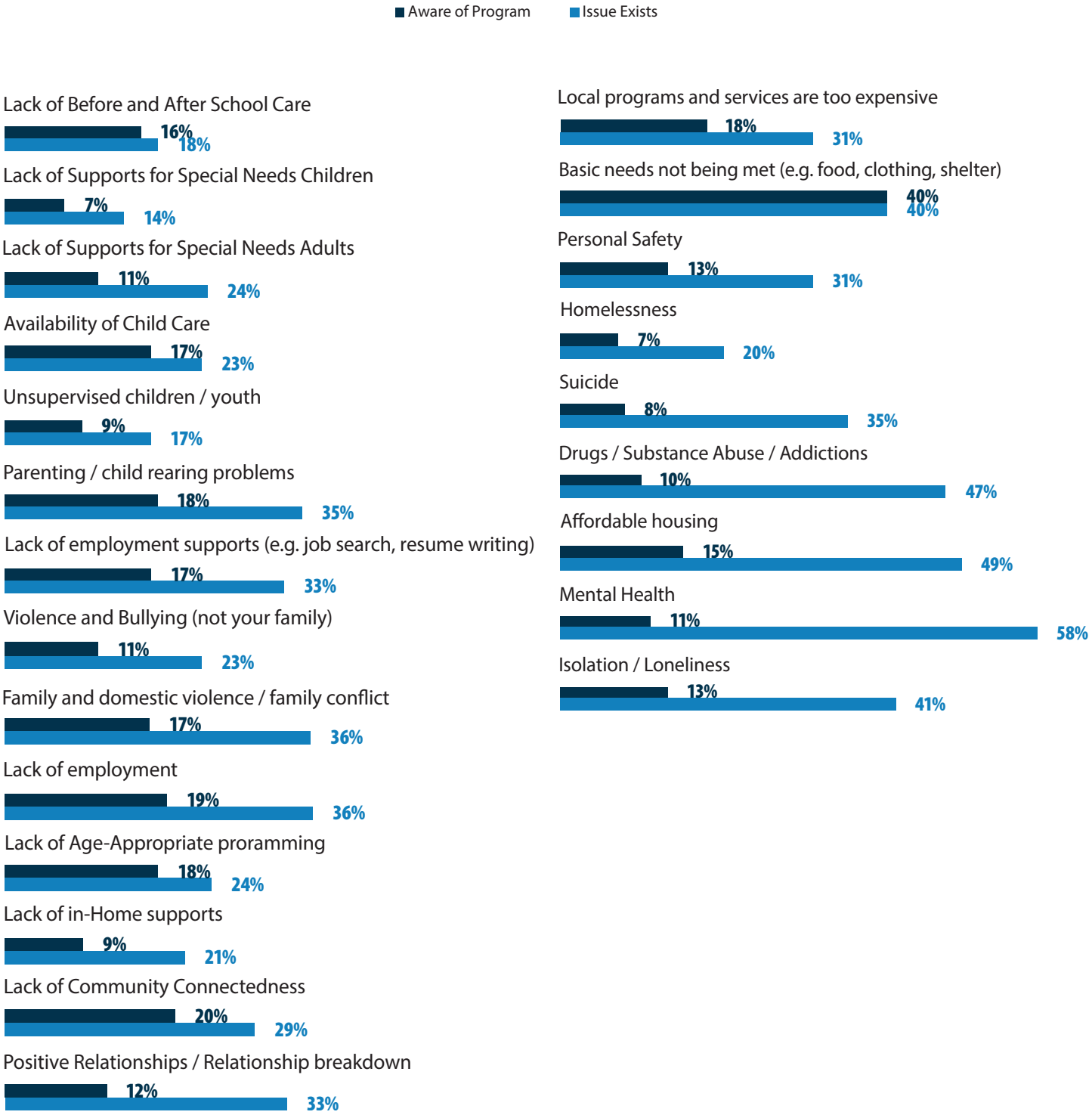
SOCIAL ISSUES EXPERIENCED BY CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN BLACKFALDS AND RESIDENTS' AWARENESS OF PROGRAMS



ADULTS AND FAMILIES

As illustrated in the graph below more than half (58%) of respondents said that mental health issues are experienced by adults and families in Blackfalds. Nearly half of respondents said that the lack of affordable housing is an issue for adults and families (49%) and that drugs, substance abuse, and additions are an issue for adults and families (47%). However, only a small minority of respondents indicated that they are aware of programs that exist to address these issues.

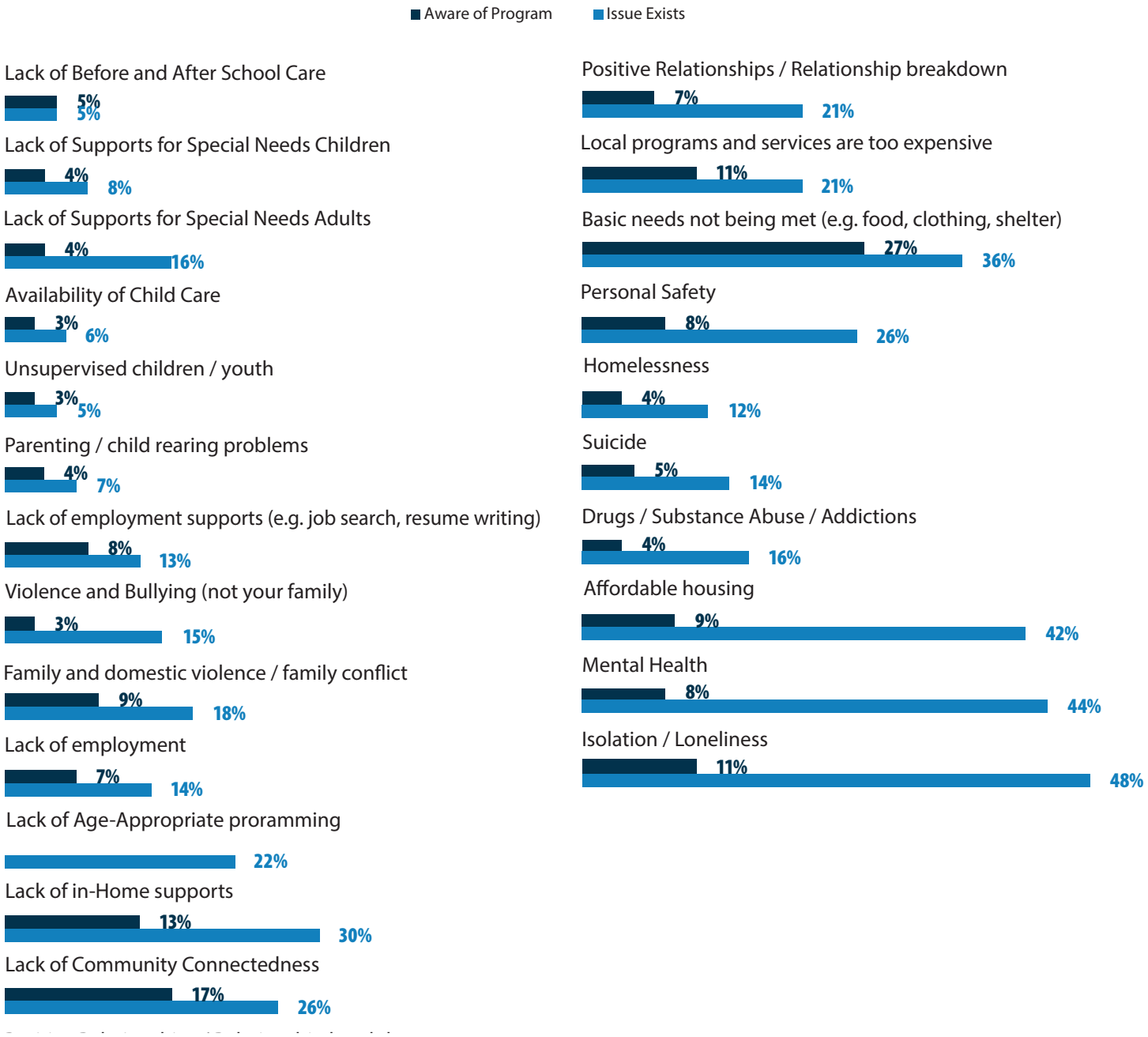
SOCIAL ISSUES EXPERIENCED BY ADULTS AND FAMILIES IN BLACKFALDS AND RESIDENTS' AWARENESS OF PROGRAMS



SENIORS

As illustrated in the graph nearly half (48%) of respondents said that isolation and loneliness are issues experienced by seniors in Blackfalds. Nearly half also said that mental health issues are experienced by seniors (44%) and that securing affordable housing is an issue for seniors (42%). However, only a small minority of respondents indicated that they are aware of programs that exist to address these issues.

SOCIAL ISSUES EXPERIENCED BY SENIORS IN BLACKFALDS AND RESIDENTS' AWARENESS OF PROGRAMS

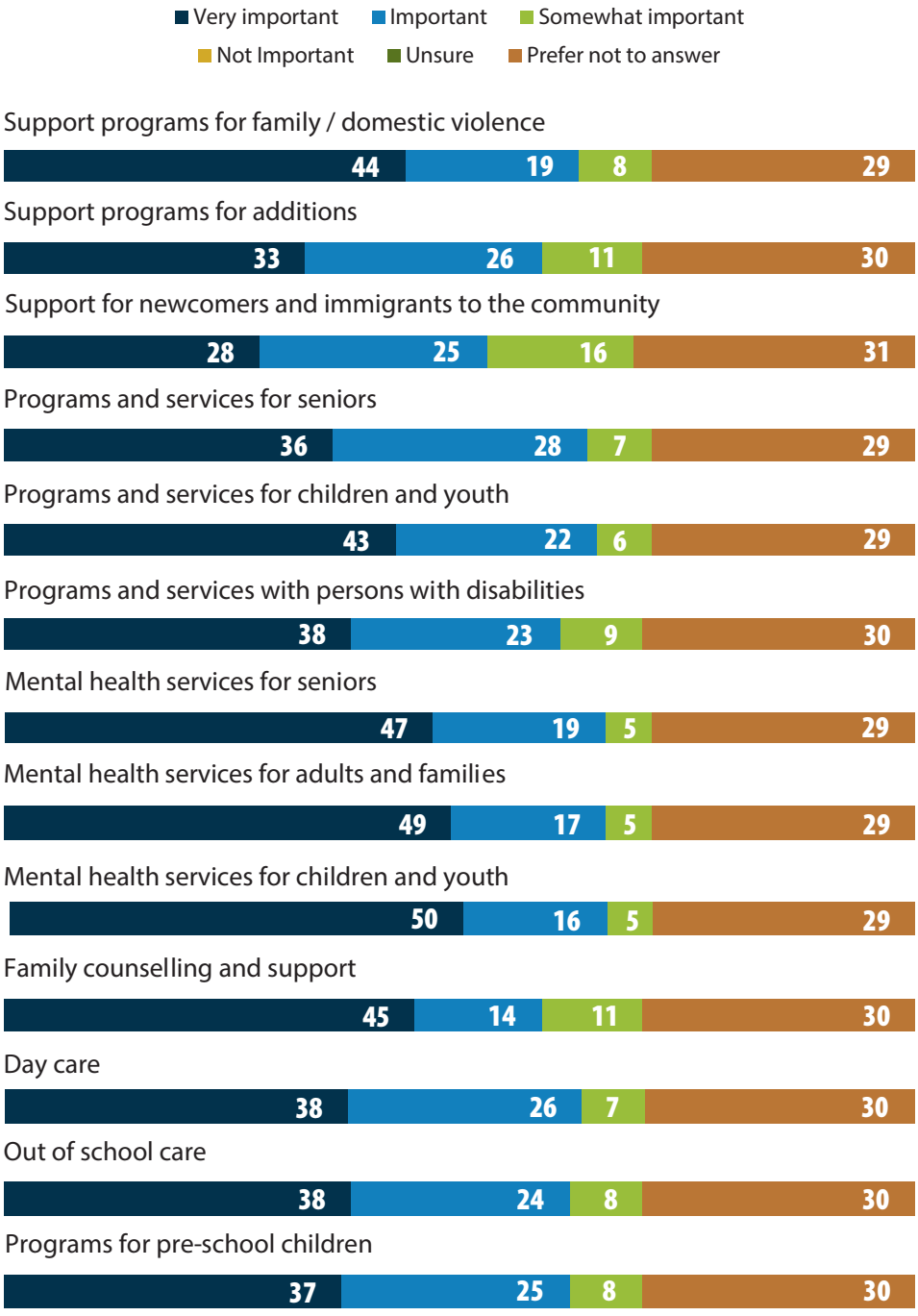


Respondents were asked to indicate the importance of providing various social programs and services in Blackfalds. The top five social programs and services that respondents wish to see offered in Blackfalds were as follows.

1. Support programs for family and domestic violence
2. Support programs for those with addictions
3. Support for newcomers and immigrants
4. Programs and services for seniors
5. Programs and services for those with disabilities

The graph below illustrates how respondents view the importance of all social programs and services.

IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING EACH PROGRAM AND SERVICE IN BLACKFALDS

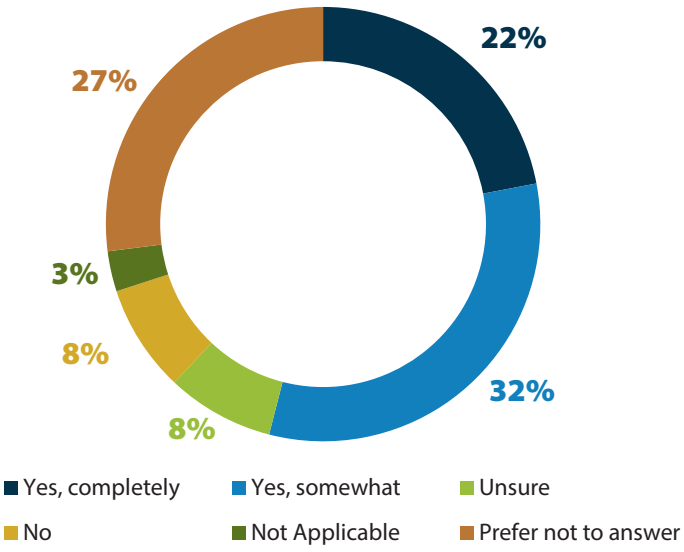


Respondents were asked to highlight program and service providers in Blackfalds that they believe do a good job of addressing social needs. Respondents cited the following agencies.

- Anam Rural Youth Association
- Food Bank and Beyond Food Community Hub
- Blackfalds Public Library
- Little Stars Playschool
- Family and Community Support Services (FCSS)

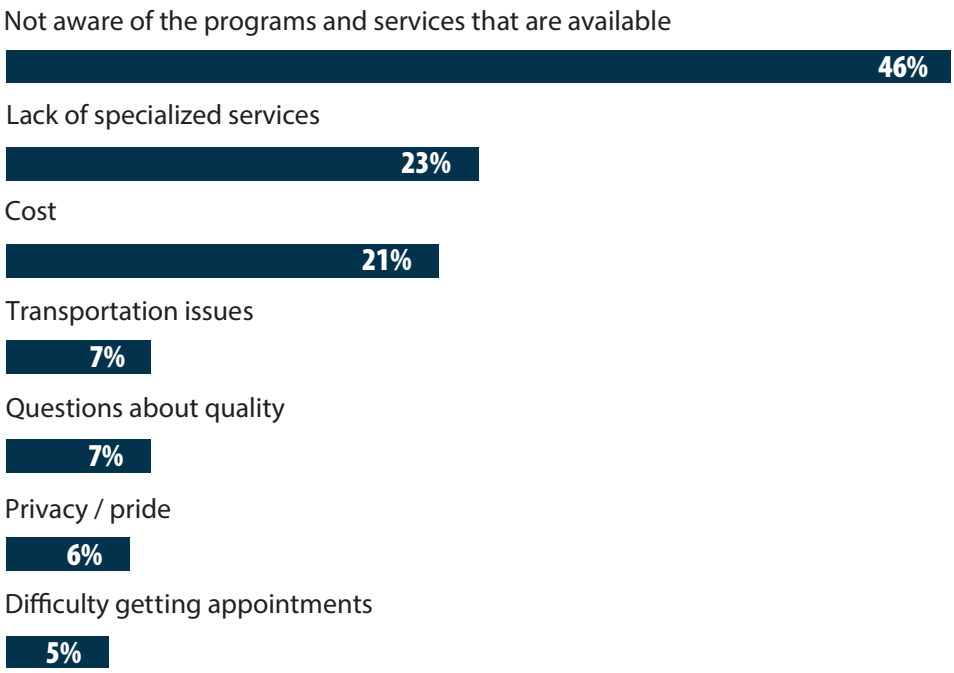
More than half (54%) of respondents indicated that they are able to access programs and services when needed in Blackfalds. Less than 10% of respondents indicated that they are unable to access programs and services when needed in Blackfalds. Nearly a third of respondents (27%) preferred not to answer this question.

WHETHER RESIDENTS ARE ABLE TO ACCESS PROGRAMS AND SERVICES IN BLACKFALDS



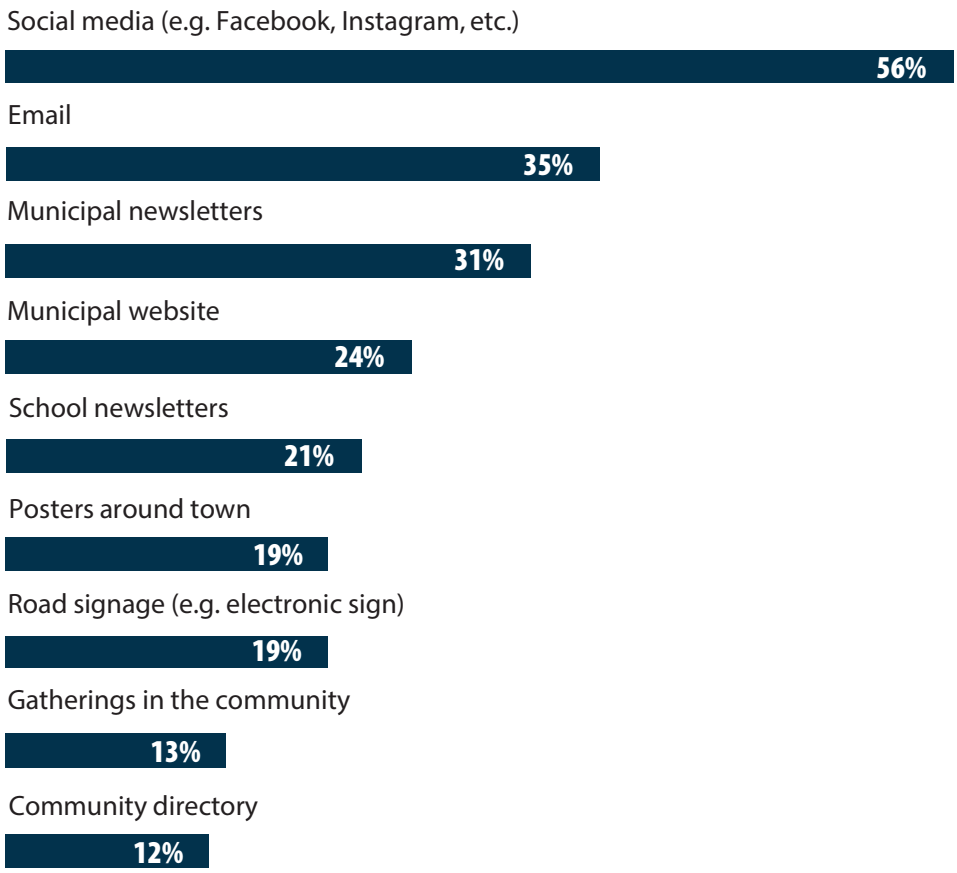
Nearly half of respondents (46%) indicated that lack of awareness of programs and services available in Blackfalds was a factor in them not accessing programs and services when need. Nearly a quarter of respondents (23%) indicated that the lack of specialized services tailored to their individual needs was a barrier to access. Slightly more than a fifth of respondents (21%) indicated that high cost prevented them from accessing programs and services when needed.

FACTORS THAT PREVENT RESIDENTS FROM ACCESSING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES IN BLACKFALDS



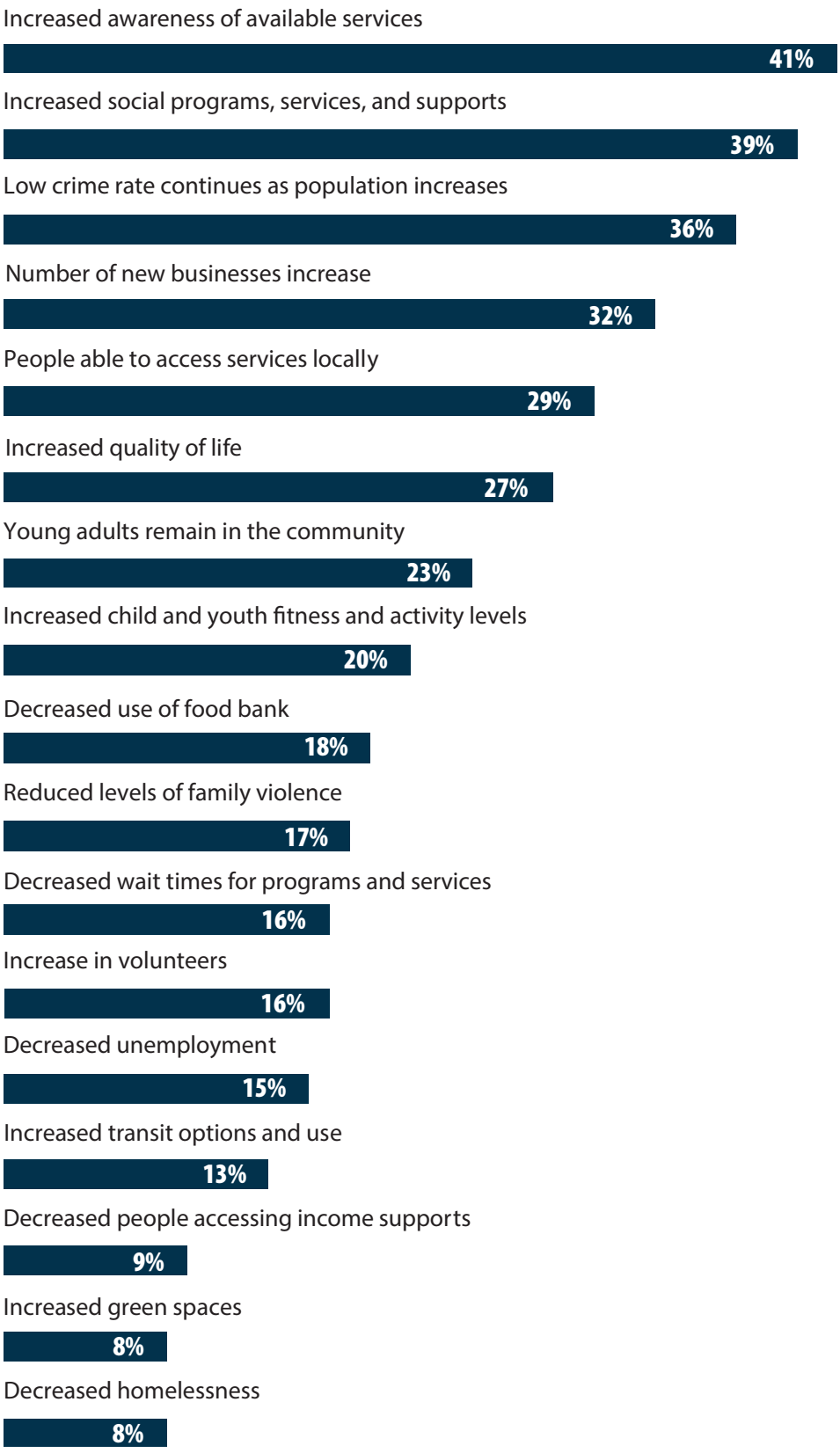
More than half of respondents (56%) indicated that social media postings through media like Facebook and Instagram are their preferred methods to receive information about existing social programs and services in Blackfalds. More than a third of respondents (35%) email would be an effective way to share information about programs and services. Nearly a third of respondents (31%) indicated that municipal newsletters are also a preferred way to receive this information.

RESIDENT'S PREFERRED METHODS TO RECEIVE INFORMATION ABOUT EXISTING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES



Close to the conclusion of the resident survey respondents were asked to identify what they believe would constitute success and progress in Blackfalds, post social needs assessment. Nearly half of respondents (41%) indicated that increased awareness of social programs and services amongst residents would demonstrate success. More than a third of respondents (39%) believed that an increase in the volume of social programs and services available to residents would be success and that residents being able to access to these programs and services locally would also be success.

WHAT RESPONDANTS BELIEVE WOULD BE INDICATORS OF IMPROVEMENT OF QUALITY OF LIFE IN BLACKFALDS



Youth Survey

INTRODUCTION

To gain insight into the social needs of youth in the Town of Blackfalds, an online survey was fielded directly with youth. The questionnaire was programmed and fielded online; youth in the Town were invited to participate through youth serving agencies, local schools, and engagement at other community venues (e.g., the Town Expo, the local skateboarding park). In total 168 responses were gathered between June 15, 2022 and October 1, 2022. A synopsis of the survey findings is presented below.

FINDINGS

LIVING IN THE TOWN OF BLACKFALDS

Youth were asked to identify what the best things about living in Blackfalds are. The following themes emerged from responses.

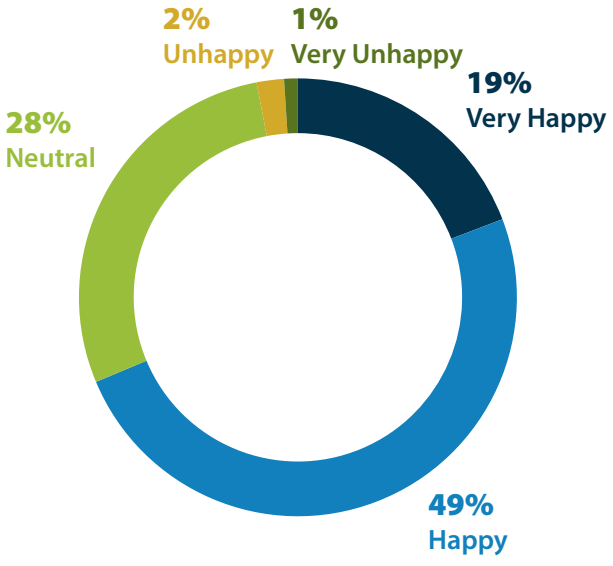
- The recreational facilities (i.e., Abbey Centre, skateboarding park, hockey rink, parks)
- The people and close relationships with friends and neighbours
- The fact that everything in town is just a short walk or bike ride away
- The variety of restaurants and places to eat

The majority of youth (68%) indicated that they are happy living in Blackfalds. Only a small proportion of youth (3%) indicated that they were not happy living in Blackfalds.

Youth were asked to identify what could be done to improve their quality of life. A wide variety of responses were provided. However, the following themes consistently emerged.

- More amenities and services on the west side of town
- Outdoor basketball courts
- An indoor swimming pool
- A climbing wall
- More STEM activities
- Sun covering for the skateboarding park
- A mall and movie theatre
- More place for youth to hangout and socialize
- Better streetlights
- Supports for people who are being bullied or abused

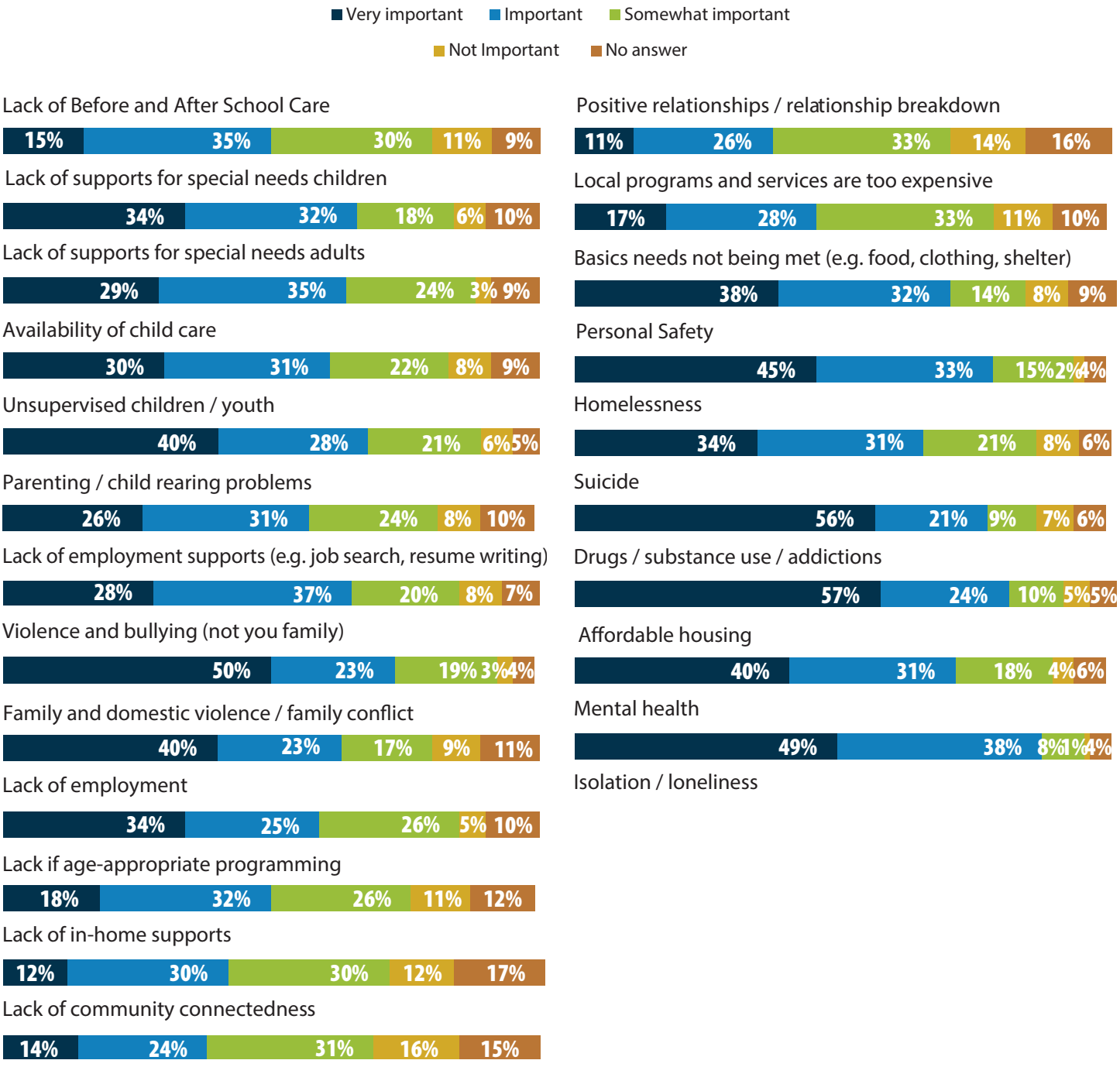
BLACKFALDS YOUTH HAPPINESS



SOCIAL ISSUES IN THE TOWN OF BLACKFALDS

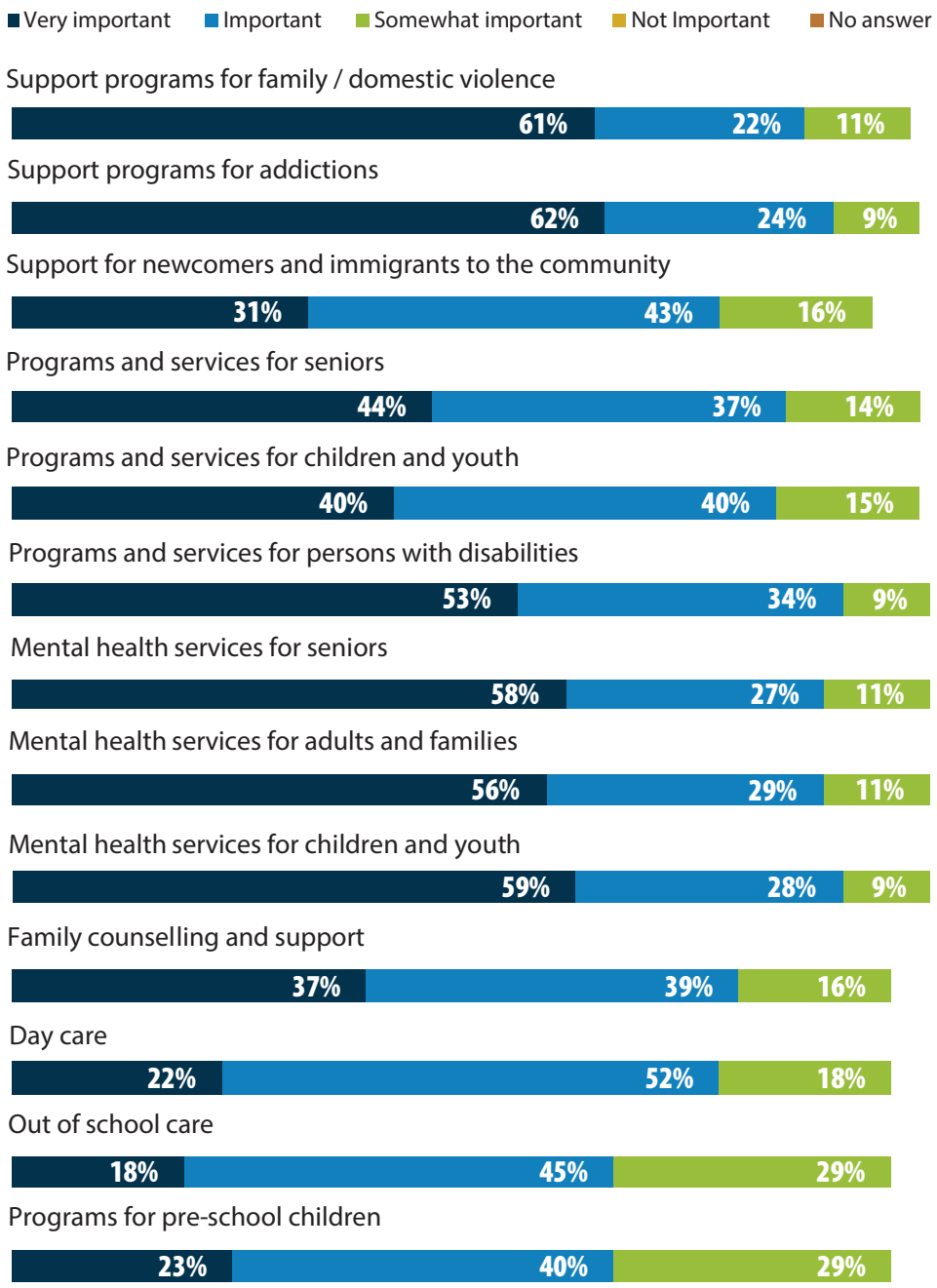
Youth were asked to express their views on how important it is to have different social issues address in Blackfalds.

IMPORTANCE OF HAVING SOCIAL ISSUES ADDRESSED



The top three social issues that youth believe are mental health issues, drugs / substance use / addictions, and suicide. Additionally, youth believe that affordable housing, personal safety, and violence and bullying in the community are also important social issues to address.

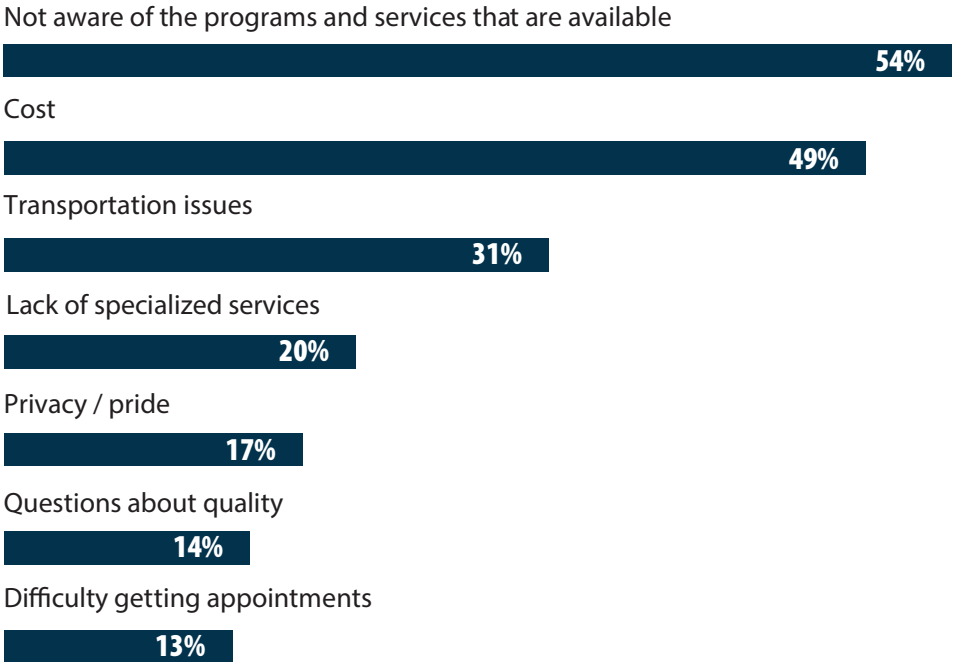
IMPORTANCE OF HAVING ACCESS TO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES IN BLACKFALDS



Youth were also asked to identify programs and services that they believe are important to have access to in Blackfalds. Programs and services that support people of all ages with mental health issues and addictions were of the greatest importance to youth. Youth also believe that programs and services that support seniors are important.

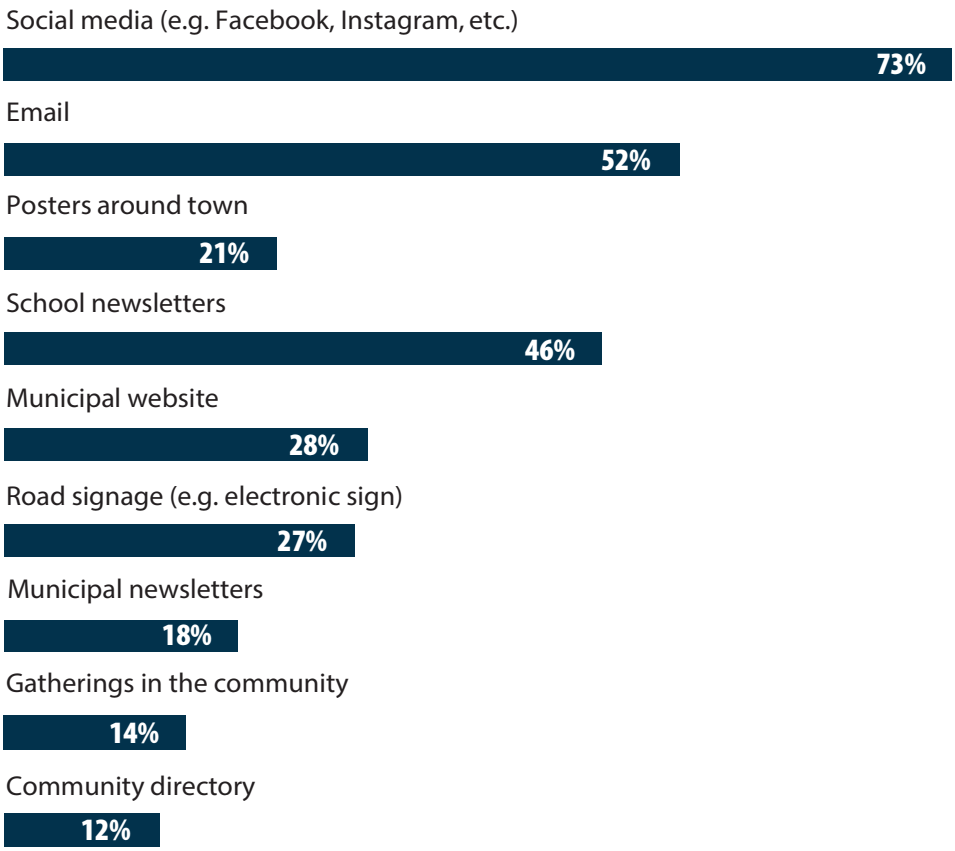
More than half of youth (54%) indicated that lack of awareness of programs and services available in Blackfalds was a factor in them not accessing programs and services when needed. Nearly half of youth (49%) indicated that cost was a factor that prevented them from access programs and services when needed. Nearly a third of youth (31%) indicated that having to leave the community to access programs and services was a barrier to access. An associated barrier for youth was the lack of transportation to attend programs and services.

FACTORS THAT PREVENT YOUTH FROM ACCESSING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES IN BLACKFALDS



Nearly three quarters of youth (73%) indicated that social media postings through media like Facebook and Instagram are their preferred methods to receive information about existing social programs and services in Blackfalds. More than half of youth (52%) indicated that email and posters around town are also a preferred way to receive this information. For nearly half of youth (46%) indicated that their school newsletters would be an effective way to share information about programs and services too.

YOUTH PREFERRED METHODS TO RECEIVE INFORMATION ABOUT EXISTING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES



Vision, Values and Principles

The vision, value and principle statements in this section are summarized from information collected during the engagement interviews, surveys and from the document and resource reviews.

VISION OF SOCIAL WELLNESS FOR THE TOWN OF BLACKFALDS

Vision statements describe the Town of Blackfalds as it will be when the work of the SNA is completed. A vision statement is a powerful tool to help align goals and strategies and ensure that they work together to achieve the intended outcomes and results identified in the Plan. The vision "elements" have been summarized as:

- The Town achieves inter-dependent social, economic, and environmental wellness
- Residents have access to education and employment opportunities, housing, transportation, and have barrier free access to programs and services designed to address key social needs

COMMUNITY VALUES THAT SUPPORT SOCIAL WELLNESS

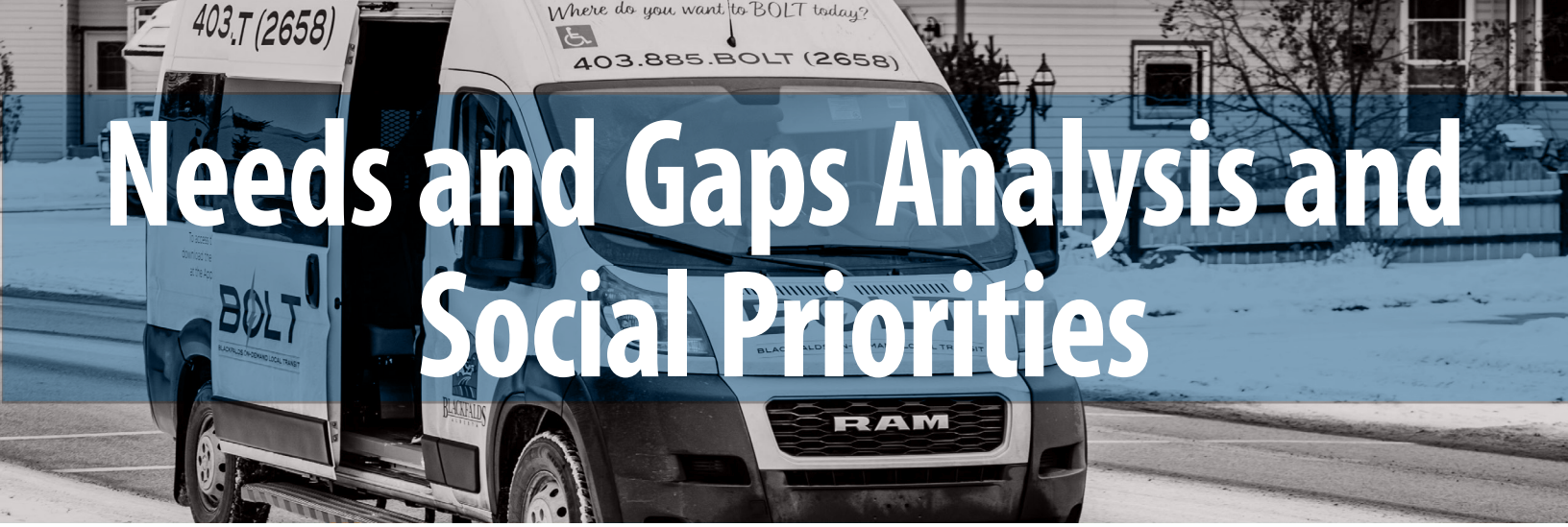
The following statements were gathered throughout the various engagement activities and reflect the participant's sense of the values needed to support social wellness for individuals, communities, and the Town.

- The Town values citizen engagement, community building, collaborative and collective action, health and well-being of community residents, advocacy, and alignment between social, economic, and environmental development factors
- Diversity is recognized, acknowledged, and capitalized on
- All individuals deserve to be treated fairly and equally and be provided with the opportunities to utilize their unique strengths and abilities

PRINCIPLES THAT WORK TO ACHIEVE SOCIAL WELLNESS

Principles help to describe the ways of working that support, and are consistent with, the vision and values reflected in the SNA. The principles listed below were identified by participants as needing to be in place and practice to support implementation of the SNA and to help guide policy, practice, and operational decisions.

- Strength comes from true collaboration and shared accountability within the community and Town (i.e., stronger together)
- Communication is the bedrock for meaningful resident engagement
- Volunteers play a crucial role in addressing social needs
- All parties advocate for a safe, healthy, and sustainable community
- Agency leadership must work to interact, collaborate, and jointly address existing social needs
- No resident should confront barriers to programs and services due to financial deficits
- All residents who can work should have access to employment opportunities that provide a fair, living wage



Needs and Gaps Analysis and Social Priorities

The needs and gaps identified during the SNA were identified by reviewing all data sources. A summary table containing the results of this identification process can be found in Appendix 4.

SOCIAL PRIORITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Participants in the various engagement activities (i.e., interviews, working sessions, surveys) responded to all or part of a common set of questions. The data resulting from these engagement activities has been systematically analyzed to identify key social priorities within the Town of Blackfalds.

The social priorities identified in this section are not intended to represent all the issues that require attention in the Town of Blackfalds. Rather, these priorities represent the things that have most often been identified by residents and youth during the engagement process that if addressed, lead to the greatest positive social impact, and change in the community.

Nine social priorities were identified. These nine priorities are as follows. Priorities are ordered by relative importance.

1. Mental health
2. Bullying and abuse
3. Isolation and loneliness
4. Substance use and addictions
5. Basic needs
6. Seniors supports
7. Affordable housing
8. Connections and collaborations amongst local agencies
9. Communications

Each of these priorities are further described below and recommendations strategies to attend to each priority are provided as well.

SOCIAL PRIORITY #1: MENTAL HEALTH

Description:

Needs for mental health services were identified across all forms of engagement for the needs assessment. People indicated that while there is a reasonable level of services available for the size of the community, there still are several significant gaps in mental health supports. Long wait times and uncertainty about access to an availability of qualified mental health providers were noted as significant concerns. Many respondents also noted that other social needs such as housing, education, parenting, and the development positive interpersonal relationships need to have the mental health issues resolved first before success in the other areas can be achieved. It was further noted by many respondents that mental health needs (e.g., anxiety, depression, difficulties with social situations) for individuals of all ages have soared due to the COVID-19 pandemic, making this a key priority area to address going forward.

Recommended Strategies:

- Collaborate with mental health providers and organizations in the community to seek additional funding for mental health program and services. Any additional funds secured should be used to create low-cost mental health services for all age groups. Building mental health services that are accessible in the evenings and on weekends would be of great benefit to the community.
- Encourage organizations that offer mental health programs and services to review and adjust the eligibility criteria for their programs and services. The goal of this review and these adjustments should be to eliminate restrictions and barriers to programs and services, increasing the likelihood that those in need of mental health supports will obtain access to these supports.
- Facilitate the development of a community-based helpline to enable easier navigation of existing mental health programs and services. By providing people with an initial contact point, they will be better positioned to self-refer or support others when mental health issues arise, and programs and services are needed.
- Develop and implement a communications campaign to raise awareness of mental health issues within the community. This campaign should focus on normalizing the occurrence of mental health issues. This campaign should stress that anyone, regardless of their social or financial circumstances can be confronted by mental health issues at some point in their lifetime. It would be crucial for this campaign to promote relevant mental health programs, services, and resources available in the Town or other nearby geographic areas.

SOCIAL PRIORITY #2: BULLYING AND ABUSE

Description:

Violence and bullying are most often discussed in relation to children and youth. However, the information generated through the needs assessment process includes all ages of people from children through to seniors. The types of violence and bullying cited in the response include physical, emotional, financial, and gender based. During discussions of bullying and abuse, family and domestic violence concerns were also raised. Further, significant concerns were raised about parents modeling bullying behaviour or condoning their children when they bully others. Many individuals who participated in the engagement process believe that a negative intergenerational cycle that reinforces and encourages bullying and abuse has taken hold within the Town. Strategies to address this collective set of issues should be multifaceted and responsive to all forms of abuse.

Recommended Strategies:

- Facilitate community conversations about the harm that bullying and abuse cause within the Town. Invite adults of all ages as well as children and youth to participate. Emphasis should be placed on helping adults understand how their behaviour has the capacity to positively or negatively impact the children and youth that they interact with daily.
- Develop community-based value statements and messaging on violence and bullying and include information on accessing a community-based help line. Linking these values statements to existing statements on family and domestic violence is also advised.
- Continue to support the existing work in the community, schools, workplaces, clubs, and organizations on informing people what violence and bullying is and what possible actions and support resources may be helpful and available.
- Support educators and those who interact with children, youth, and families so they are equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to quickly identify incidents of bullying and other forms of abuse. Help these professionals build their expertise so they can aid those in need.
- Source and promote provincial bullying prevention resources and training while also promoting the provincial bullying helpline.
- Establish linkages with existing bullying, abuse, and family and domestic violence collaboratives within the province to obtain and promote resources.

SOCIAL PRIORITY #3: ISOLATION AND LONELINESS

Description:

Issues related to isolation and loneliness were identified as a significant concern to adults, seniors, children, youth, and families by almost half of the individuals involved in the engagement process. Many of these individuals indicated that this has always been an issue in the community due to its rural location. However, the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically exacerbated and complicated the issue for many people. As people start to emerge from the pandemic attention must be paid to this issue. Re-building social ties and the fabric of the community depends on a strong and consistent effort to bring all members of the community together. Through these efforts new ways of living and socializing will emerge and people can start to heal and mend relationships with their friends, family, and neighbours after such a lengthy time apart.

Recommended Strategies:

- Make a concerted effort to create inclusive social events that provide all members of the community with opportunities to mix, mingle, socialize, and build relationships. Acknowledgement that people's level of comfort with in-person social events may vary post-pandemic is crucial to ensure strong, positive uptake and participation.
- Consider local events including opportunities for arts and cultural expression and activities, information on programs, services and businesses that are open to all residents and include support systems such as transportation, childcare, etc.
- Support agencies and organizations as they work to socialize the programs and services that they offer and invite people to participate in new activities.
- Consider ways to ensure welcoming and engaging practices that consider language, culture, and other real or perceived barriers to people who would want to get involved.
- Explore the possibility of conducting an annual community engagement survey or study to assess people's level of interactivity and to determine what types of events they wish to see planned and offered to residents. Delving deep into the specific needs of all age groups will be important to ensure that adults, seniors, children, and youth are all provided with meaningful opportunities to connect with each other.
- Consider undertaking a process to develop a diversity and inclusion plan.

SOCIAL PRIORITY #4: SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND ADDICTIONS

Description:

Substance abuse and addictions are a concern within the Town. However, there is limited knowledge in the community as to the degree of the issue because the issue is seldom discussed openly and there is a prevailing belief that people with substance abuse issues should take care of themselves without intervention or support. As a result, a limited number of resources are invested on programs and services to support persons struggling with substance abuse, which prevents the community from effectively addressing the issue.

Recommended Strategies:

- Develop resources that shed light on the negative impacts of substance abuse. These resources should also incorporate information that dispels the notion that substance abuse is an individual issue that should be managed discreetly without support.
- Collaborate with social agencies and health organizations in the community to seek opportunities to secure resources that would allow substance abuse and addictions programs and services to be offered in the Town.
- Identify and distribute information that will help all members of the community prevent the onset of substance use and addictions issues.
- Stimulate the development of follow up services and supports for those who are post substance abuse treatment to ensure that people can safely reintegrate into community life, without stigma or judgment.

SOCIAL PRIORITY #5: BASIC NEEDS

Description:

This priority refers to the ways and means that residents in the Town can access items that support their basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, health care, and education. These basic needs are building blocks upon which all strong, healthy, and vibrant communities are built and can grow. Respondents indicated that there are large number of individuals and families in the community that struggle to have their basic needs met. This is even the case for individuals and families with financial resources. Breaking the myths that only those who are economically disadvantaged have basic needs issues is a crucial priority for the Town to address.

Recommended Strategies:

- Educate members of the community about what basic needs are and make it the norm that anyone who is struggling can reach out to agencies that provide basic needs support for help.
- Encourage agencies that provide basic needs supports to operate using non-traditional hours, increasing accessibility for persons needing the services and supports on evenings and weekends in the process.
- Campaign for community members to consider basic need donations (e.g., food, clothing, etc.) outside of peak donation times (e.g., traditional holiday times).
- Continue to build food security in the Town including incorporating community gardens, fruit bearing trees, and shrubs into neighbourhood and community design. Educate community members about how to use things like community gardens responsibly (e.g., only taking what is needed, cleaning up after use, etc.)
- Encourage the distribution of excess food from restaurants, food stores, school lunch programs.
- Facilitate the development cooking and nutrition programs for community members that include social opportunities (e.g., community kitchens - one meal for many families) and other life skills information and resources.

SOCIAL PRIORITY #6: SENIORS SUPPORTS

Description

Individuals who participated in the engagement process and completed surveys expressed concerns about seniors and their capacity to safely live as comfortably and independently as possible in the community. While there are programs and services for seniors in the Town a large proportion of these programs and services are aimed at low-income seniors and seniors who are isolated or have difficulties leaving their homes. Programs and services need to be tailors to meet the unique needs of all seniors, not just those with complex, high-need circumstances.

Recommended Strategies:

- Support agencies that offer programs and services for seniors with varying levels of need. Advocate for seniors so they can access services that suit their needs is essential to safe, comfortable, independent living.
- Actively engage seniors in community social life. Find ways to bring seniors together with different generations, including children and youth, to support intergenerational connections and diminish feelings of social isolation.
- Monitor the volume of seniors in the community and actively engage these seniors in discussions about their needs and what they believe should be built to meet their needs. Providing seniors with opportunities to share their input and perspectives in settings that they find comfortable is a key consideration.

SOCIAL PRIORITY #7: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Description:

A significant number of interview participants and survey respondents indicated that housing and homelessness are important issues facing residents of all ages. Young people and newcomers to the community were two groups identified to have some of the most significant challenges in this area. Additionally, some respondents noted that seniors looking to relocate from their homes to a supported living environment also face challenges. For all ages, finding suitable housing that is both affordable and sustainable in the Town are difficult. For those facing this reality the risk of either moving away to where suitable, affordable housing exists is a common outcome.

Recommended Strategies:

- Support the evaluation of current housing levels in the Town and assist in determining what proportion of existing housing is affordable for those who meet or are below a living wage.
- Continue to conduct periodic, systematic homelessness counts to help understand the degree to which homelessness continues to be an issue and the specific needs that people who are homeless are facing in the Town.
- Consider a housing planning group that would further define the needs of persons and families experiencing difficulties finding affordable housing or are facing homelessness and look for short and longer-term options.
- Consider options for emergency and/or transitional housing including emergency housing for residents and youth in the community. Special attention should also be paid to seniors' housing needs.
- Encourage the development of housing options are accompanied by programs and services that foster the development of basic life skills and financial management.
- Investigate the suitability of a housing support program for the Town that adopts a "Housing First" model or approach.

SOCIAL PRIORITY #8: CONNECTIONS AND COLLABORATIONS AMONGST AGENCIES

Description:

The data collected throughout the needs assessment process indicates that agencies and organizations in the Town are committed to interacting and collaborating with each other. This has been noted as a strength of both organizations and the individuals involved. The value and principles of working collaboratively are well supported by the municipality and FCSS.

Recommended Strategies:

- Facilitate the development of an interagency table that provides organizations with an opportunity to engage in regular discussions about their successes and challenges. Through active, open, and consistent dialogue at the table shared services and joint problem-solving will occur, facilitating opportunities to collectively address social needs.
- Facilitate movement to a case-based interagency service model for individuals and families who require programs, services, and supports from multiple agencies.
- Create semi-annual or annual opportunities for joint action planning in relation to the priorities in the SNA and any other emerging issues in the community.
- Simulate the development of a process for those who access social programs and services to be part of the ongoing joint action planning processes.
- Actively enlist current and future community leaders to champion social development in the Town (i.e., a Social Development Council).

SOCIAL PRIORITY #9: COMMUNICATION

Description:

A significant number of individuals who participated in the engagement process believed that there is room to improve both the quantity and quality of the communication about programs services. At present the mechanisms in place for agencies to share information about what programs and services they offer are limited. Technological deficits and the lack of a coordinated social media strategy were noted as being problematic. Further, the limited number of opportunities for agencies to connect with each other and discuss how they are working to address identified social needs was identified as a significant issue to overcome.

Recommended Strategies:

- Facilitate the development of a multipronged" approach to communication. This approach should consist of opportunities for agencies to meet and discuss their programs and services as well as distribution of information using both traditional print methods as well as social media.
- Foster a culture of continuous open communication. Without this type of communication social needs are overlooked and people in the community lose sight of those who are impacted by social issues. Bringing attention to social issues and the programs and services that are in place to address these issues will have a positive impact on multiple level. Further, it will reduce the burden on the individuals in the social sector who have assumed responsibility for communications and create a more sustainable approach to move forward.

FCSS Staff and Development and Expansion

The social priorities identified during the SNA are complex and will require dedicated attention across the entire community to adequately address in the months and years ahead. As an established, trusted, and well-respected entity in the Town, Blackfalds FCSS is well-positioned to stimulate efforts to address these social priorities. In some circumstances, Blackfalds FCSS may also be able to facilitate the development of services and resources that address these social priority areas.

However, as a small team it would be unfair to place undue additional responsibilities on Blackfalds FCSS. Additional resources would need to be invested into this team to ensure that it has adequate capacity to lead and support the work necessary to address these social priorities. It is recommended that a portion of these resources be allocated to education and training to growth the knowledge, skills, and experiences of the existing team. It is also recommended that the remainder of these additional resources be allocated to new staff roles. Multiple roles designed to facilitate community engagement and development activities are required to optimize the uptake and follow through of the recommendations associated with each social priority. One specific role that would be beneficial in the Blackfalds FCSS team would a dedicated role to provide outreach supports.

Implementation Plan

A fundamental premise of the SNA is that social wellness and improved quality of life result from meaningful and effective collaboration involving the municipalities, agencies and organizations, community, and other stakeholders. The responsibility for implementation requires the collaboration of a wide range of partners working effectively together on common priorities to achieve shared goals. It is critical to the successful implementation of the plan that all stakeholders and interested parties be engaged from the beginning in contributing to the actions, results, and successful outcomes.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The strategies, potential actions and outcomes identified in the plan will be achieved through working with agencies, organizations, and other stakeholders collectively to achieve common goals. Roles and responsibilities will vary depending on the positioning, current priorities, capacities, and available resources of each potential partner.

Community-based planning, development and delivery assume the following primary roles:

Initiator role—responsible for convening those who have an interest and capacity to undertake the work involved.

Primary role—responsibility for development and implementation is undertaken by one party who is uniquely positioned to design and deliver the initiative.

Shared role—participate as one of a number of stakeholders.

Supporting role—other stakeholders hold most of the responsibility for the development and delivery of the initiative. Supporting participants have no formal mandate, however, they have some capacity to contribute to the work and to the results; and

Resource role—primary contribution to the initiative is as a source of funding, human resources, or other forms of resource support.

Stakeholders in the SNA play a variety of roles and take on differing responsibilities based on the implementation needs of each priority, potential action, and outcome area.

Participants in the engagement activities were asked to identify possible actions that could help to address the priority challenges and opportunities that had been raised to ensure successful outcomes.

Near term strategies and actions have the following characteristics:

- Actions that can be done immediately
- Actions where all the required information and best solutions are known
- Partners and their respective roles are clear
- Actions that may require collaboration but that do not require policy or budget processes and approvals to be implemented

Longer term strategies and actions require:

- Additional information and development of best solutions
- Proposal development for policy and/or budget application or approval
- A process to clarify the challenge at hand and the agencies and organizations required as partners
- Other strategies or actions need to occur first before they can be implemented

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

A summary of the recommended elements of the SNA implementation include:

1. Hosting of a "launch," information and implementation planning session for all SNA stakeholders in the Town to increase awareness and knowledge of the SNA results to develop collaborative immediate, mid- term and long-term strategies and actions and strategies for long term engagement in the SNA.
2. Formation of a SNA implementation Committee that will have responsibility for supporting the implementation of the plan and for providing oversight advice, over the long term, as the plan results are evaluated, and revisions considered. The current Advisory Committee will remain in place to assist the development of the Implementation Committee.
3. Encourage all social profit organizations, funders, and other stakeholders to incorporate the SNA priorities into their strategic and annual operational plans as well as identify key indicators from their organizations' perspective to measure progress toward achieving the priority outcomes.
4. Create an annual review process that engages all non-profit agencies, organizations, funders, the municipalities, and other stakeholders in reviewing the progress made on the priorities and collectively plan for the upcoming year, based on the results achieved.
5. Provide an annual progress report to the FCSS Board and Town Council as well as to all agencies and organization so that they can update their respective boards and committees about the status of the plan and their respective current anticipated contributions.
6. Develop additional, ongoing methods of engaging residents in providing information about portions of the plan and/or specific strategy areas under consideration and development, including an ongoing SNA page on the Town's website.
7. Plan and budget for a three and five-year review of the plan and process to update the document based on current changes in the social, economic, and environmental environment in the Town.

Results / Evaluation Framework

A parallel process of evaluation and specifically outcome-based evaluation of the SNA priorities, strategies and actions is essential to creating social change and quality of life improvements.

Evaluation often takes the form of taking a snapshot of outcomes at the end of a program to prove to decision makers and funders that the program worked. However, evaluation can, and should, be used as an ongoing strategic and learning tool that improves the ability of a program or service to meet the intended change identified at the beginning of the planning process. This is particularly important when working in collaborative, multi-partner environments. Evaluation enables demonstration of a program or service's success or progress.

Outcome evaluations assess the effectiveness of a program or service in producing individual and community change. Outcome evaluations focus on difficult questions that ask what happened to program participants and how much of a difference the program or service made for them and for the community in which they reside.

Outcome evaluation is effective in showcasing the effectiveness of a program to potential collaborative partners, to the community and funders and in building ongoing trust with clients, partners, and community members.

Outcome based evaluation increases a program's ability to conduct a critical self-assessment and plan for the future by assessing "what works" and "what does not work." Building the capacity for self-assessment early in the plan implementation allows for ongoing reflection and creates an evaluation and planning cycle that helps create a continuous learning environment which is essential to sustainability.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 - DOCUMENT AND RESOURCE REVIEW

SUMMARY OF DOCUMENT AND RESOURCE REVIEW

SOURCE	KEY POINTS	LEARNINGS FOR 2022 SOCIAL PLAN
Town of Blackfalds Social Needs Assessment Master Plan - 2016	87% were happy with their quality of life in Blackfalds Top 5 issues impacting youth are: • Bullying • Drug/substance abuse/additions • Alcohol abuse • Violence in the community • Mental health Approximately two-thirds of students identified drugs/ substance abuse/addictions (66%) and bullying (62%) as priority areas to address. Top 5 issues impacting adults/families are: • Alcohol abuse • Drug/substance abuse/addictions • Affordable housing • Violence in the community • Relationship breakdown and mental health Top 5 issues impacting seniors are: • Mental health • Poverty • Affordable housing • Lack of housing • Isolation/loneliness Of residents responding: • 76% were unaware of programs and services available in Blackfalds • 73% have heard of FCSS • 28% of households had volunteered in Blackfalds in the past year Youth Survey	In 2016 the top 5 issues identified to address were identified as: • Drug/substance abuse/addictions • Unsafe neighbourhoods and streets • Unsupervised children/youth • Bullying • Violence in the community 16 Recommendations were identified including: **1.** Redevelop FCSS as Blackfalds FCSS and Community Social Development (or similar) **2.** Develop and implement a performance measurement system **3.** Tie FCSS annual plans into the Town's strategic plans **4.** Develop programs to address the following priority areas: » Bullying/conflict resolution » Child and youth safety » Mental health supports » Parenting » Relationship support » Family and domestic violence support » Substance abuse » Intergenerational programming **5.** Develop and/or support a feasibility study on community space **6.** Provide additional staff resources focussed on community events and community capacity building **7.** Develop a low-income subsidy policy and program for residents of Blackfalds **8.** Establish a program of short term supports **9.** Develop a program of employment supports **10.** Support the launch of the Parent Link Centre in Blackfalds and continue to provide support to parents who face barriers to participation/ integration **11.** Provide funding to assist community agencies and organizations to locate in Blackfalds **12.** Facilitate discussions/meetings to develop a plan to increase childcare options and capacities **13.** Facilitate discussions regarding the type and quality of affordable housing needed **14.** Facilitate discussions to Identify potential transportation supports for people wanting to attend social programs and services **15.** Enhance promotion and communication of social wellness supports. **16.** Develop an annual report to the community.

Blackfalds Municipal Sustainability Plan -2020	Critical Steps Include related to the Social Needs Assessment findings include: • Develop a plan to bring health services and health professionals to Blackfalds • Develop an Arts & Cultural Strategic Assessment • Develop an Affordable Housing Plan • Pursue strategies to increase seniors housing • Maintain an effective and efficient on-demand transit service for Blackfalds • Develop a Community Engagement Action Strategy • Develop a resident feedback survey	Social Needs Assessment alignment with respect to: • Local access to mental health services • Programming options for children and youth • Affordable housing • Transportation to social programs and services • Ongoing community engagement • Ongoing resident feedback
Town of Blackfalds Report to the Community 2019-2020	Information on social needs and results in Blackfalds includes: • Subsidized programming • Lunchbox program • Volunteerism	Investigate the opportunity to support the Social Needs Assessment by including: • Brief information on FCSS • Highlight one or two achievements from the plan • Include statistics from the SNA engagement • Highlight resident feedback on social strengths in Blackfalds
Town of Blackfalds Economic Development and Tourism Strategy - 2021	Information on social needs and results in Blackfalds includes: • Subsidized programming • Lunchbox program • Volunteerism Town of Blackfalds Vision: Blackfalds is an active family community full of pride, commitment and opportunities reflecting an economically sustainable, self sufficient, and safe living environment, with a balanced range of municipal services provided through innovation and proactive community partnerships. Assets to the Town of Blackfalds: • A strong sense of community • Small-town feel • A great place to live & raise a family • Diverse and unique • A rural setting not affected by urban sprawl • Friendly, generous, and helpful people • A healthy mix of long-time residents and newcomers • An enthusiastic community spirit Strengths include safety in the community and a superior quality of life Weaknesses include a lack of health practitioners and facilities and limited diversity and multiculturalism Threats identified include loss of the older population due to lack of housing and provincial supports and local transit system does not offer regional services Goals relevant to the SNA Attract: • Health services and wellness facilities • Childcare providers • Affordable housing • Aging in place accommodation Build community capacity to attract, welcome, integrate and retain newcomer residents Support expansion of the BOLT regional public transportation system	Alignments: • Vision especially with respect to community pride, families, safety, and community partnerships • Residents' perceptions of community assets • Quality of life findings from SNA survey and engagement • Need for increased health services, increased affordable housing and seniors housing, expanded transportation support, increased childcare providers and options • Need to engage and support newcomer residents

APPENDIX 2 – INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT COMMENTS AND SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF SOCIAL STRENGTHS AND ISSUE / OPPORTUNITY PRIORITY THEMES

STRENGTHS	
• The spirit of connectivity in the community • FCSS does great work and has a great reputation	• Actively connecting people in the community • Events held in the Town bring people together
Program and Service Priorities	Opportunity Priorities
Engagement • Need to engage with people who do not see themselves as needing supports • Find ways to engage people earning a lower income as they do not usually have a "voice" Programs and activities • Need to increase arts and culture program opportunities for children and youth • Program space is an issue Influx of young families with higher needs • Recent increase in supports for autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) • Need for increase parenting support programs and services Mental health supports and services • No local psychotherapy or counselling for families, youth, adults, and seniors • Huge area of need and very few truly local resources Seniors • Programs and services for seniors even though they are a smaller percentage of the population Children and youth • The social/emotional gap caused by covid is starting to show up. Increased emphasis on socialization, positive relationships and communication required Transportation • Transportation options to programs and services (appointments) Support to persons living with lower incomes • Covid made challenging situations even more difficult • Challenges with food security and meeting other basic needs • Employment supports and local/regional employment opportunities • Flexibility needed as people's situations change according to economic changes i.e., resource industries	• Possibly repurposing the current FCSS Office space for programs, activities, agencies, etc. • The new high school will bring new resources to the community and youth will not have to travel outside the community for school • Begin to develop ways to operate regionally but keep FCSS and agency/organization independence

APPENDIX 3 – WORKING SESSION PARTICIPANT COMMENTS AND SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF SOCIAL STRENGTHS AND ISSUE / OPPORTUNITY THEMES

STRENGTHS

- In-home supports
- Rural outreach
- Working relationships with schools
- Businesses support to events
- Events that provide opportunities for families
- Recreation facilities including Abbey Centre, parks, and community spaces
- Town administration and Council open to listening and to ideas

Program and Service Priorities

Children

- Bullying on-line and face to face
- Support to parents in dealing with children who have been bullied and are bullying
- Need to increase awareness of bullying and the consequences to children and youth
- Need leaders in the community to be anti-bullying role models. Role models in general
- Children and youth need connection with healthy adults
- Safety for children to go places alone i.e., the Park
- Need for intergenerational opportunities. Benefits to children, youth, and seniors

Social Interaction

- Disrespectful behaviour on social media, all ages

Connecting the Community

- Significant disconnect between newer and longer-term residents. Families do not know how to connect, engage, and participate

Families

- Single parents while the other parent/partner is away for work for extended periods
- Programs and services to help build positive family dynamics

Child Care

- After school care and day care options (2)
- Children are alone a lot as parents are working a lot
- Affordability

Health Services

- Greater local access to psychologists, psychiatrists, and family physicians
- Increase access to mental health service and supports (all ages)
- Space for mental health programs and services
- Support people all ages and families to find ways to reduce stress i.e., financial, food, relationship, bullying
- Positive messaging to reduce stigma of participating in mental health programs and services

Local minor crime

- Respect for public and private property
- Lack of respect for authority. A need for everyone to communicate and demonstrate a common value

Opportunity Priorities

Faith Communities

- All faith communities to connect across denominations to provide non- faith-based programs, services and supports

New High School

- Tremendous benefit for the community. Build the school into the community fabric from the beginning

FCSS

- Increase awareness to FCSS, what they are able to do and create as a first point of contact when needed
- Communicate role in helping to coordinate needed programs and services

Communication

- People are not aware of the programs and services that are available and/or not aware that they are for them
- People who do not have children in school have less communication options
- Some sources of information i.e., municipal website can be overwhelming to find what you need
- Newsletters delivered online do not work for some people, often the people who need the information
- Need even greater “plain language”

Community Identity

- The community is struggling with our identity due to high growth, increased population diversity and proximity to major centres. There is an opportunity to bring the community together around a process to develop strategies for community identity.

Schools • Create opportunities to bring junior high students and intermediate student as role models and support Early Childhood • McMan has replaced the Parent Link Centre. Need greater emphasis on early childhood programming (0-6 years) • Parenting courses for the early years Adults • Increase opportunities for adults to engage and interact. Particularly new people to the community • Adult bullying on social media Volunteers • Find ways to build the volunteer pool as it not only supports programs and services but also brings people (all ages) together for a positive, common purpose Persons with disabilities • Need more resources. (Bring people together to determine what would be most useful) Affordable housing • Determine how the municipality can lead in this area • Rental assistance benefit	

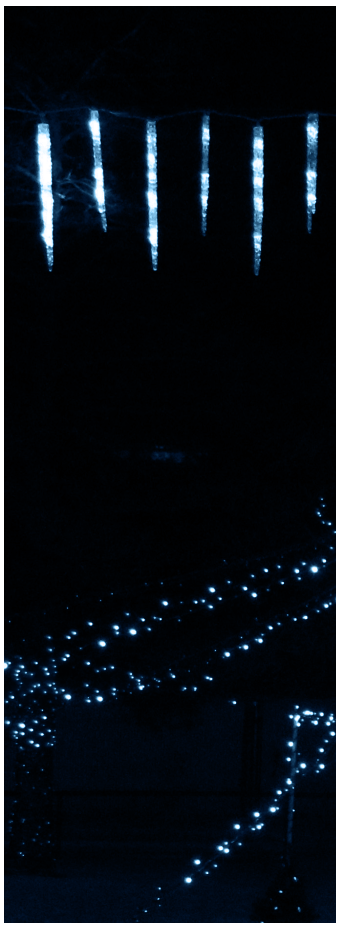
APPENDIX 4 – NEEDS AND GAPS ANALYSIS

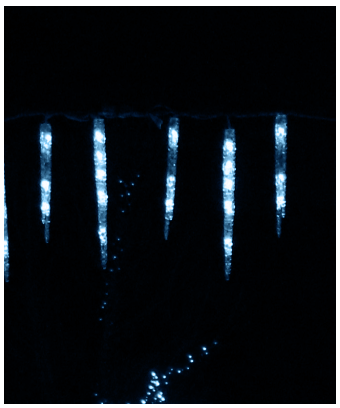
THE TABLE BELOW CONTAINS A BREAKDOWN OF THE NEEDS AND GAPS, BY THEME. ANY DATA SOURCE WHERE THE NEED OR GAP WAS IDENTIFIED WAS FLAGGED WITH AN "X".

NEEDS AND GAPS	INTERCEPT SURVEYS	INTERVIEWS	SURVEY DATA	DOCUMENT REVIEW	WORKING SESSIONS
CHILDREN AND YOUTH					
Bullying and inappropriate behaviour at school, at the skatepark on social media	X		X		X
Feeling safe in the community					X
Drug substance abuse and addiction issues in schools	X		X		
Support for children and youth with disabilities	X		X		
Unsupervised children and youth			X		
Transportation challenges	X			X	
MENTAL HEALTH					
Supports for youth experiencing anxiety and depression and those considering suicide		X	X		X
Positive Family dynamics and relationships		X	X		
Reducing depression, anxiety and stress from food insecurity, relationships, financial challenges				X	
Programs and services dealing with substance abuse and additions			X	X	
Local psychologists and counsellors		X		X	X
PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES					
Some programs and services cost prohibitive			X	X	
Potential regional collaborations		X			

NEEDS AND GAPS	INTERCEPT SURVEYS	INTERVIEWS	SURVEY DATA	DOCUMENT REVIEW	WORKING SESSIONS
SUPPORT TO FAMILIES					
Affordable childcare options including for children and youth with disabilities	X	X		X	
Parenting programs and supports including early childhood	X	X			X
Affordable housing options			X	X	X
Relationship support		X	X		X
Parenting support while one parent is away for extended periods					X
Transportation to programs, services, appointments, etc.			X	X	
SUPPORT TO SENIORS					
Affordable and supportive housing			X	X	X
Community support so older residents can remain in the community – in home support	X	X	X	X	
Local mental health services		X			X
BASIC NEEDS AND FOOD SECURITY					
Need to Expand the food Hub operation- basic needs	X		X		
Accommodate changing family and individual circumstances		X			
Continue lunch box program				X	
INCREASE COMMUNICATION AND AWARENESS OF SOCIAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES					
Maximize participation in existing programs and services	X		X		X
Increase visibility of FCSS		X	X		X
Options to social media	X				
FCSS communications resource					X

NEEDS AND GAPS	INTERCEPT SURVEYS	INTERVIEWS	SURVEY DATA	DOCUMENT REVIEW	WORKING SESSIONS
ENGAGING AND CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY					
Engage and support newer residents	X			X	X
Acknowledge and celebrate what cultural differences bring to the community			X	X	
Support for persons with disabilities including access and specific programs and services	X		X		
Community events and activities bring people together	X			X	
Dealing with isolation and loneliness			X		
Build and support community identity					X
ISSUES RELATED TO LOCAL MINOR CRIME					
Personal and property crime	X				X
Respect for persons and property	X				
VOLUNTEERS					
Need to broaden and diversify the pool of volunteers				X	X
Design volunteer opportunities to build community engagement					X
COMMUNITY USE SPACES					
Spaces for programs and services and Childcare		X			
High School		X			





RALEIGH

PEACE
OFFICER

BLACKFALDS
ALBERTA

TOWN OF BLACKFALDS
STANDING COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL
REQUEST FOR DIRECTION

MEETING DATE: March 20, 2023

PREPARED BY: Jolene Tejkl, Planning & Development Manager

PRESENTED BY: Jolene Tejkl, Planning & Development Manager

SUBJECT: **Bylaw 1280.23 - Election Sign Bylaw**

BACKGROUND

Election signs for federal, provincial, municipal, and school boards are commonly placed on private property to express candidate/party support and road right-of-ways to ensure good visibility for the travelling public. Any development on private property, including the placement of election signs, is regulated through the Land Use Bylaw (LUB), however, signs on road right-of-ways are outside of the regulatory jurisdiction of a LUB. Because of that, it was determined during the recent comprehensive review of our LUB that the election sign regulations for road right-of-ways should be severed from the LUB and placed into its own standalone Bylaw, that being the proposed Bylaw 1280.23.

DISCUSSION

The Election Sign Bylaw presented before the Standing Committee of Council pertains specifically to candidate signs that are placed on road right-of-ways and identifies suitable locations that have previously been determined by Administration.

The proposed Bylaw does not require any sort of permissions from the Town prior to the installation of an election sign. Instead, the Bylaw outlines specific siting requirements (i.e., distances from intersections and other candidate signs), maximum sign sizes, along with dates they may be installed and when they're expected to be removed.

Having this Bylaw in place prior to the upcoming Provincial election will provide candidates with valuable election sign siting and sizing requirements and will enable the Town to enforce any election signs in road right-of-ways that have not been placed in accordance with the Bylaw.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

1. That Standing Committee of Council recommend to Council to adopt Bylaw 1280.23.

ALTERNATIVES

a) That Standing Committee of Council recommend to Council to adopt Bylaw 1280.23 as amended.

b) That Standing Committee of Council does not recommend to Council to adopt Bylaw 1280.23.

ATTACHMENTS

- *Bylaw 1280.23, Election Sign Bylaw*
- *Schedule "A"*

APPROVALS

Myron Thompson, CAO

Department Director/Author

BEING A BYLAW OF THE TOWN OF BLACKFALDS IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA TO ENCOURAGE THE EFFECTIVE USE OF ELECTION SIGNS AS A MEANS OF COMMUNICATION IN A MANNER THAT ENSURES SAFETY AND AESTHETICS AND THAT WILL BE EQUITABLY APPLIED AND ENFORCED.

A Bylaw of the Town of Blackfalds, in the Province of Alberta, pursuant to the provisions of the *Municipal Government Act*, being Chapter M 26.1 of the Revised Statutes of Alberta, 2000 and amendments thereto, for the purpose of regulating the placement of Election Signs within the Town of Blackfalds.

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 7 of the MGA, RSA 2000, Chapter M-26 and amendments thereto, authorizes Council to pass Bylaws for the safety, health, and welfare of people, and the protection of people and property, as well as for people, activities, and things in, on or near a public place or place that is open to the public;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 8 of the MGA, RSA 2000, Chapter M-26 and amendments thereto, Council is authorized to regulate and prohibit, as well as to impose fines and penalties for infractions;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 18 of the MGA, RSA 2000, Chapter M-26 and amendments thereto, a municipality has the direction, control, and management of all roads within the municipality;

AND WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 13 of the *Traffic Safety Act*, Council is authorized to make Bylaws with respect to a highway under its direction, control, and management; and

NOW THEREFORE the Municipal Council of the Town of Blackfalds, duly assembled hereby enacts:

PART 1 – TITLE

1.1 That this Bylaw shall be cited as the “Election Sign Bylaw”.

PART 2 – DEFINITIONS

2.1 In this Bylaw:

(a) **“Advance Vote”** means a vote taken in advance of Election day.

(b) **“Candidate”** means an individual who has been officially nominated to run for Election in a municipal, provincial, federal, or school board Election.

(c) **“Council”** means the duly elected Council of Town of Blackfalds and includes the Mayor, and all Councillors.

(d) **“Town”** means the Town of Blackfalds.

(e) **“Court”** means a Court of competent jurisdiction in the Province of Alberta.

(f) **“Education Act”** means the *Education Act,* RSA 2000, c E-0.3, as amended or replaced from time to time.

(g) **“Election”** means a general election, by-election, and a vote on a Bylaw or question as administered by the Town of Blackfalds under the *Local Authorities Election Act,* school board elections under the *Education Act*, and any other elections administered by Elections Alberta and Elections Canada within the municipal boundaries of the Town of Blackfalds.

(h) “**Election Sign”** means a sign:

a. Used to promote a Candidate or party for an Election administered by the Town under the *Local Authorities Election Act*, school board Elections under the *Education Act*, and any Elections administered by Elections Alberta and Elections Canada within the municipal boundaries of the Town;
b. With a maximum sign face dimensions not exceeding 1.2 m (4.0 ft.) by 1.2 m (4.0 ft.);
c. That is not illuminated; and

d. That indicates the name of a nominated Candidate or Registered Third Party.

(i) **"Enforcement Officer"** means a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), a Community Peace Officer appointed by the Solicitor General of Alberta in accordance with the *Peace Officers Act*, and a Bylaw Enforcement Officer employed by the Town in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act*.

(j) **"Land Use Bylaw"** means the Town of Blackfalds Land Use Bylaw currently in force, as amended or replaced from time to time.

(k) **"Local Authorities Election Act"** means the *Local Authorities Election Act*, RSA 2000, c L-21, as amended or replaced from time to time.

(l) **"Municipal Government Act"** means the *Municipal Government Act*, RSA 2000, c M-26, as amended or replaced from time to time.

(m) **"Person"** means a natural person or a corporate body and includes a partnership or a group of persons acting in concert or an association.

(n) **"Registered Third Party"** means a third party that has been registered with the Town or the provincial registrar for third party advertising referred to in section 163 of the *Local Authorities Election Act.*

(o) **"Roadway"** means the portion of the Road Right-of-Way intended for use by vehicular traffic, pedestrians, cyclists, or other modes of transportation, and includes paved or gravel shoulders, medians, traffic circles, and roadway structures, including but not limited to bridges, guardrails, retaining walls, or concrete barriers.

(p) **"Road Right-of-Way"** means land that is under the direction, control, and management of the Town and is:

a. Shown as a road on a plan of survey that has been filed or registered in a land titles office; or
b. Used as a public road and includes a bridge forming part of the public road, together with any structure incidental to the public road or road allowances including, but not limited to, boulevards, ditches, swales, fences, retaining walls, sidewalks, pathways, trails, streetlights, traffic control devices, and traffic control signals, and which may or may not contain a developed road.

(q) **"Town"** means the Town of Blackfalds as a municipal corporation and the geographical area within its jurisdictional boundaries, as the context requires.

(r) **"Sign Owner"** means a Person who is indicated on an Election Sign, who created an Election Sign, who installed the Election Sign, who is in lawful control of the Election Sign or who is the subject of or otherwise benefits from the message of the Election Sign; for the purposes of this Bylaw, there may be more than one Sign Owner.

(s) **"Traffic Safety Act"** means the *Traffic Safety Act,* RSA 2000, c T-6 as amended from time to time.

(t) **"Violation Ticket"** means a ticket issued pursuant to Part 2 of the *Provincial Offences Procedure Act,* RSA 2000, c P-34, as amended from time to time.

(u) **"Voting Station"** means the entire building where Election voting will occur, and the property associated with the building; also known as a polling place, polling station, or voting place.

PART 3 – ELECTION SIGN INSTALLATION AND ERECTION GUIDELINES ON PUBLIC LANDS

3.1 Election Signs may be placed on Town owned property provided they are placed only in the following pre-determined locations, as shown on Schedule "A":

3.1.1 East side of Broadway Avenue in front of water reservoir only.

3.1.2 Along the west side of Grigg Street.
3.1.3 South Street east of the Leung Road intersection, on either side of South Street up until the Bark Park vehicular access point.
3.1.4 Along the west side of Vista Trail from the intersection with South Street north to the northern property line of 4308 South Street, approximately 228.0 m (748.03 ft.) from the intersection.
3.1.5 Along the east side of Vista Trail from the intersection with South Street north until the intersection with Womacks Road.
3.1.6 Along either side of Blackfalds Crossing Way, setback a minimum of 30.0 m (98.43 ft.) away from Highway 2A.
3.1.7 South of Park Street adjacent to the Town of Blackfalds location signage.
3.1.8 West side of Parkwood Road north of Panorama Drive, setback a minimum of 30.0 m (98.43 ft.) away from Highway 2A east asphalt edge.
3.1.9 West side of Parkwood Road and C&E Trail extending 30.0 m (98.43 ft.) each direction from the intersection with Cottonwood Drive.

3.2 Election Signs shall not be placed in a manner that obstructs Election Signs placed by other Candidates.

3.3 Election Signs shall not be placed within 20.0 m (65.62 ft.) of another Election Sign from the same Candidate.

3.4 Election Signs shall not be placed within 2.0 m (6.56 ft.) from the edge of Roadway pavement.

3.5 Election Signs shall be a maximum of 1.2 m (3.94 ft.) x 1.2 m (3.94 ft.) in size and shall not be illuminated.

3.6 Enforcement Officers employed by the Town may remove any Election Signs which have been erected, affixed, posted, or placed on any Town property in contravention of this Bylaw.

3.7 Election Signs shall be placed outside of the 6.0 m (19.69 ft.) sight triangles at intersections, as shown in Schedule “B”.

3.8 The Sign Owner is responsible for ensuring all Election Signs are kept free from damage and disrepair. Sign Owners are responsible to remove any damaged or vandalized Election Signs immediately.

PART 4 – ELECTION SIGN INSTALLATION AND ERECTION GUIDELINES ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

4.1 An Election Sign may only be placed on private property with the consent of the property owner.

4.2 An Election Sign placed on private property shall have a maximum sign face of 1.2 m (3.94 ft.) x 1.2 m (3.94 ft.).

4.3 Election Signs shall be placed outside of the 6.0 m (19.69 ft.) sight triangles at intersections, as shown in Schedule “B”.

4.4 Notwithstanding section 4.1 of this Bylaw, all other forms of signage on private property are subject to the requirements of the *Land Use Bylaw*.

4.5 An Election Sign placed on private property pursuant to this Bylaw does not require a development permit.

PART 5 – ELECTION SIGN ERECTION AND REMOVAL TIMES

5.1 Election Signs may be erected at any time starting:

5.1.1 45 days prior to a municipal general Election;
5.1.2 After nomination day for a municipal by-Election; or
5.1.3 From the issuance of the writ and ending after the close of polls for a provincial or federal Election.

5.2 Election Signs shall be removed within 72 hours after the close of the Voting Station or polls on Election day.

5.3 Subject to 5.1 of this Bylaw, Election Signs on private property that are not removed will no longer be deemed an Election Sign under this Bylaw and will be subject to enforcement provisions under the *Land Use Bylaw.*

PART 6 – OTHER GUIDELINES

6.1 An Election Sign shall not be erected at a Voting Station or within the boundaries of the land on which a building used for a Voting Station is located on Election day or an Advance Vote.

6.2 An Election Sign shall not be erected in any place that may obstruct or impede any exit routes, escape routes, or the free access of emergency vehicles.

6.3 No Person shall use or display the Town of Blackfalds logo or brand, in whole or in part, on any Election Sign.

6.4 Nothing in this Bylaw relieves a Person from complying with any federal or provincial legislation or regulation, other municipal Bylaws, or requirement of any lawful permit, order, or license.

6.5 Specific references to legislation in this Bylaw are meant to refer to the current laws applicable within the Province of Alberta at the time this Bylaw was enacted, as they are amended from time to time, including any successor legislation.

6.6 Where any provision regulating an Election Sign under this Bylaw conflicts with any other federal or provincial Election legislation, the federal or provincial legislation prevails to the extent of the conflict.

PART 7 – ENFORCEMENT

7.1 Any Election Sign that impedes or interferes with the work of the Town operations may be removed by an Enforcement Officer or any other Town employees without providing notice to the Sign Owner.

7.2 Any Election Sign that poses a public safety risk may be removed by an Enforcement Officer or any other Town employee without providing notice to the Sign Owner.

7.3 Any Election Sign that an Enforcement Officer finds in breach of this Bylaw may be removed and impounded without prior notice to the Sign Owner.

7.4 Any Election Sign impounded for a period of 30-days that has not been claimed by the Sign Owner may be destroyed by the Town without compensation to the Sign Owner.

7.5 A Sign Owner is liable for any and all damage, loss, and expense caused by or arising from the erection, maintenance, removal, or destruction of the Election Sign.

PART 8 – PROSECUTIONS AND PENALTIES

8.1 Where an Enforcement Officer has reasonable grounds to believe that a Person has contravened any provision of this Bylaw, they may serve upon the Person:

8.1.1 A municipal ticket, allowing a voluntary payment of the penalty for the offence to the Town, which shall be accepted by the Town in lieu of prosecution for the offence if payment is received by the Town within 21 days of service of the municipal ticket; or

8.1.2 A Violation Ticket, allowing voluntary payment of the specified penalty for the offence, or, requiring a Person to appear in Court without the alternative of making a voluntary payment, and the recording of the payment of a penalty made to the Town or the Provincial Court of Alberta shall constitute an acceptance of a guilty plea and conviction for the offence.

8.2 When an Enforcement Officer issues a Person a Violation Ticket in accordance with this Bylaw, the Enforcement Officer may either:

8.2.1 Allow the Person to pay the specified penalty established by this Bylaw for the offence by including such specified penalty in the Violation Ticket; or

8.2.2 Require a Court appearance of the Person when the Enforcement Officer believes that such an appearance is in the public interest pursuant to the

provisions of Part 2 of the *Provincial Offences Procedure Act.*

8.3 Any Person that violates any provisions of this Bylaw is guilty of an offence and is liable, upon conviction, to a maximum fine of $10,000.00, or, in default of payment of the fine, to imprisonment for a period of not exceeding one year, or to both fine and imprisonment in such amounts.

8.4 Any Person who contravenes any section of this Bylaw is guilty of an offence and is liable upon conviction to a minimum specified penalty of $100.00.

8.5 No provision of this Bylaw, nor any action taken pursuant to any provision of this Bylaw, shall in any way restrict, limit, prevent, or preclude the Town from pursuing any other remedy in relation to an offence as may be provided by the *Municipal Government Act* or any other law of the Province of Alberta.

PART 9 – SEVERABILITY

9.1 Each provision of this Bylaw is independent of all other provisions. If any provision of this Bylaw is declared invalid for any reason by a Court, all other provisions of this Bylaw remain valid and enforceable.

PART 10 – DATE OF FORCE

10.1 That this Bylaw shall come into effect, upon the date on which it is finally read and passed.

READ for the first time this _____ day of_____, A.D. 20__.

(**RES.**)

MAYOR JAMIE HOOVER

CAO MYRON THOMPSON

READ for the second time this _____ day of_____, A.D. 20__.

(**RES**.)

MAYOR JAMIE HOOVER

CAO MYRON THOMPSON

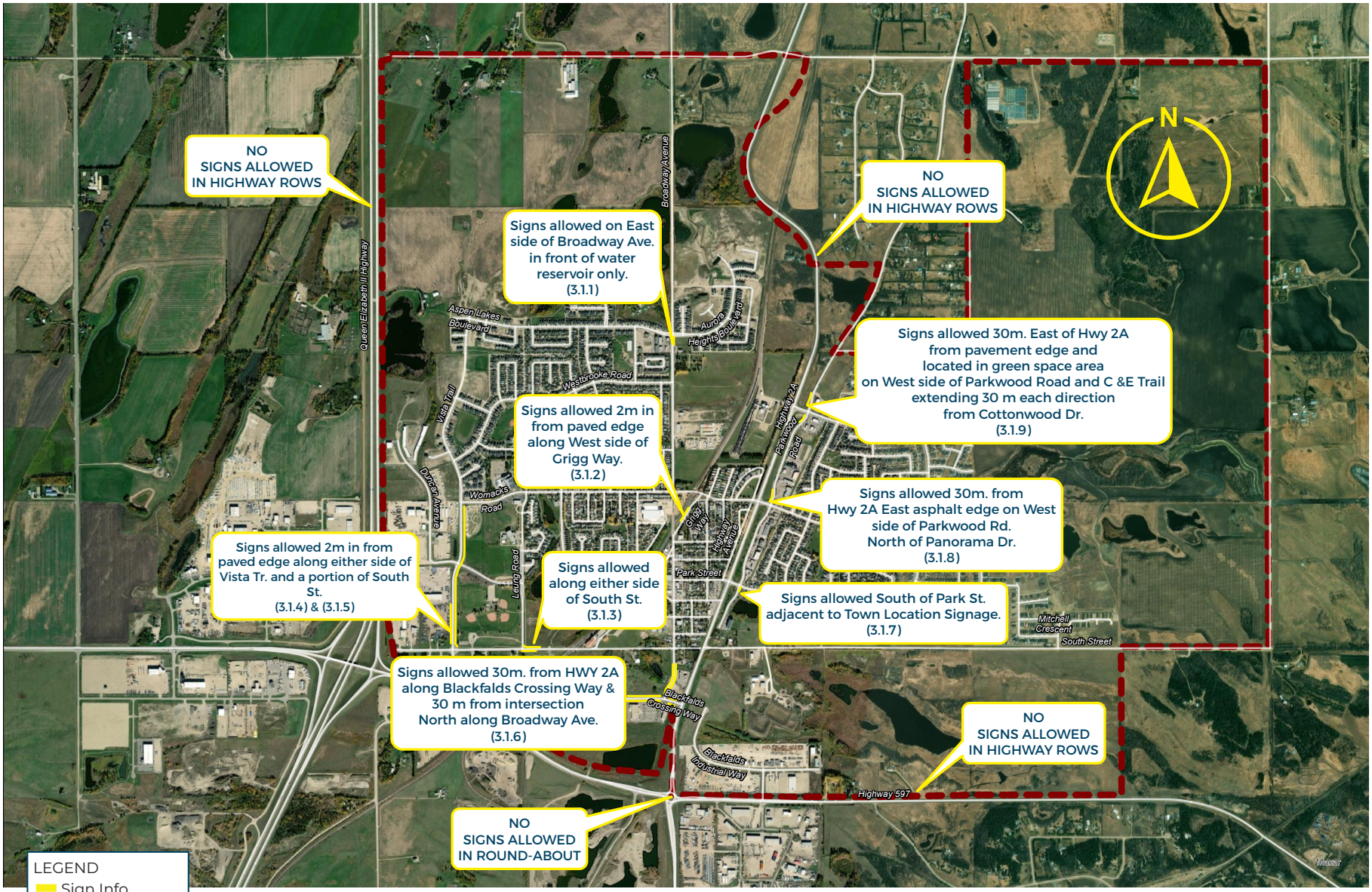
READ for the third and final time this _____ day of_____, A.D. 20__.

(**RES**.)

MAYOR JAMIE HOOVER

CAO MYRON THOMPSON

ELECTION SIGN BYLAW 1280.23 SCHEDULE "A"



DATE: 14/03/2023

BLACKFALDS
ALBERTA

MEETING DATE: March 20th, 2023

PREPARED BY: Danielle Nealon, Executive & Legislative Coordinator

PRESENTED BY: Myron Thompson, Chief Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: **Policy 169.23, Policy Governance Framework**

BACKGROUND

Policies are created to set out a standard of performance or to address a discretionary duty the Town will or will not meet. They address recurrent issues to provide broad guidelines setting out the level and manner of service to which the Town will perform. Well-defined reporting relationships are achieved by having clearly defined policies, bylaws, procedures, and organizational charts. In an effort to increase efficiency in terms of ongoing communication and in minimizing the potential for misunderstanding and conflict, Administration must develop acceptable protocols to create consistency and best practices that, in turn, will increase levels of service of immediate response times and create the potential to cut red tape internally.

DISCUSSION

Currently, the Town of Blackfalds does not have a general framework for developing and characterizing policies. Having the Policy Governance Framework Policy will enable the Town to differentiate specifically which Council Policies fall within the Council's purview and which Administrative Policies fall within the Chief Administrative Officer's purview as referred to in Section 10. (a) (iv) and (vi) the CAO's Bylaw 1170/14, attached hereto.

The proposed Governance Framework Policy identifies and distinguishes the following policy titles:

Council Policies are policies approved by Council. Council Policies state what the Town intends to achieve and gives high-level direction on how to achieve it. They are necessary when additional guidance is required to achieve strategic goals and direction. Through these policies, Council exercises their governance powers to set discretionary duties or standards of performance for the Town or for themselves.

Administrative Policies are policies approved by the Chief Administrative Officer and outline the duties and standards for the operational performance of Administration. They are inward facing, focusing on how Administration conducts its business and internal work processes and generally affect staff only. However, there are exceptions where an Administrative Policy may directly affect the public.

The Executive & Legislative Coordinator has reviewed how we prepare and adopt policies and has compared this to surrounding comparable municipalities (e.g., City of Lacombe, Town of Banff, and City of Spruce Grove) and with the CAO's Bylaw. Arising from this work, Administration has developed a proposed policy framework presented for Council's consideration that will define the ideal hierarchy of policies in municipal governance and, in turn, create well-defined reporting

relationships and consistency among municipal staff operations and ensure that municipal best practices are being utilized and increase levels of service of immediate response times.

The Policy Governance Framework Policy was created in alignment with the structure and naming convention of the vast majority of other municipalities and delegated Administrative powers of the CAO in the CAO's Bylaw 1170/14.

Upon adoption of the proposed Policy 169.23, Policy Governance Framework, Administration will begin reviewing and updating policy templates and documents accordingly in small batches, which will be presented for Council consideration upon review.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

1. That Standing Committee of Council adopts this report and recommends that Council consider formally adopting Policy 169.23, Policy Governance Framework.

ALTERNATIVES

a) That Standing Committee of Council provides strategic direction to the implementation of Policy 169.23, Policy Governance Framework.

a) That Standing Committee of Council recommends amendments to Policy 169.23, Policy Governance Framework.

ATTACHMENTS

- *Draft Policy 169.23, Policy Governance Framework*
- *Bylaw 1170/14, CAO's Bylaw*

APPROVALS

Myron Thompson, CAO

Department Director/Author

Policy No.:	**169.23**	**Council Approval**
Policy Title:	**Policy Governance Framework**	**Resolution No.:**
Department:	Office of the CAO	**Date:**
Reviewed:		
Revised:		
Supersedes Policy/Bylaw:		

1. Policy Statement

1.1 Policies are created to set out a standard of performance or to address a discretionary duty the Town will or will not meet. They address recurrent issues to provide broad guidelines setting out the level and manner of service to which the Town will perform. The Town of Blackfalds Policies will be developed and approved using two (2) separate tiers of authority as set out in the CAO's Bylaw 1170/14.

2. Reason for Policy

2.1 To establish and provide a framework for developing and classifying Town Policies into either Council Policies or Administrative Policies.

3. Related Information

3.1 This Policy applies to Council, CAO, and all Town of Blackfalds employees.

3.2 All Policies and Procedures shall be consistent with relevant federal and provincial government legislation and related regulations, as well as Town Bylaws and Policies.

3.3 Policies and Procedures shall be drafted in a consistent format acceptable to the CAO.

3.4 This Policy was created in reference to comparable municipalities' policy framework and development.

4. Definitions

4.1 "**Administrative Policy**" means a Policy that is written direction of the CAO that focuses on how the Town does business within its own operations: These Policies:

4.1.1 Are inward facing and internal in nature.
4.1.2 Deal strictly with administrative matters.
4.1.3 Relate directly to the operations of the Town.
4.1.4 Are a guide of principles that are applied when making administrative decisions.
4.1.5 Generally impact only Town employees.
4.1.6 Are approved by the Chief Administrative Officer.

4.2 "**Administrative Procedure**" means specific written processes that support a policy. Procedures that are created, amended or made obsolete require the approval of the CAO.

DRAFT

4.2 "**Council Policy**" means a Policy that by resolution focuses on Town residents, business and the public and their relation to the Town or Town facilities or standards Council sets for itself. These Policies:

4.2.1 Relate to areas of governance.
4.2.2 Outline services and/or programs performed by the Town.
4.2.3 Set long-term visions for the organization.
4.2.4 Provide strategic direction.
4.2.5 Generally impact the Town as a whole.
4.2.6 Are approved by Council.

4.3 "**Management**" means the CAO, Directors, and Managers.

4.4 "**Policy**" means a document that dictates a specific position and related course of action for the Town to follow. Policies provide a framework for the delegation of decision-making authority and a clear direction and a consistent approach to making those decisions.

4. "**Town**" means the municipal corporation of the Town of Blackfalds in the Province of Alberta.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Municipal Council:

4.1.1 Must approve by resolution this Policy and any amendments.

4.1.2 Must approve Council Policies by resolution that addresses issues within the realm of governance.

4.1.3 Must provide directions for carrying out Council's strategic plan, priorities, and the goals of the Blackfalds Municipal Sustainability Plan.

4.1.4 May provide direction to the Chief Administrative Officer for the development or amendment of Council Policies.

5.2 Chief Administrative Officer must:

5.2.1 Recommend proposed Council Policies to Council.

5.2.2 Recommend proposed amendments to Council Policies to Council.

5.2.3 Circulate Council Policies to the Management team for input prior to submission to Council.

5.2.4 Ensure all approved Council Policies are implemented and adhered to by staff.

5.2.5 Ensure all approved Council Policies are communicated to the public.

5.2.6 Develop, approve and implement Administrative Policies and Procedures dealing with administrative and operational matters and internal administration.

DRAFT

5.2.7 Circulate Administration Policies and Procedures to the Management team for input prior to CAO approval.

5.2.8 Ensure all approved Administrative Policies and Procedures are implemented and adhered to by staff.

5.2.9 Act as the final authority to designate a policy as either a Council Policy or an Administrative Policy.

5.2.10 Ensure Council and Administrative Policies are reviewed and reported on accordingly with the review date.

6. Exclusions

N/A

7. Special Situations

7.1 Development of Policies may include consultation and participation of other departments, staff, affected groups, committees, and/or the public, depending on the scope and number of areas impacted by the policy. In the event of an emergent or other situation where it is in the best interest of the Town to do so, the CAO may take immediate action on a policy matter in the absence of any specific policy that precisely addresses the particular situation.

7.2 Council Policies will be posted on the Town of Blackfalds website and otherwise be routinely available to the public on request.

7.3 Administrative Policies and Procedures will be made available to Council upon request to the CAO.

8. Appendix

8.1 Appendix A - CAO's Bylaw 1170/14

9. End of Policy

10. Approval

Mayor	Chief Administrative Officer
Date	Date

DRAFT

TOWN OF BLACKFALDS
BYLAW 1170/14

A BYLAW OF THE TOWN OF BLACKFALDS TO ESTABLISH AND DEFINE THE DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER AND PROVIDE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER AS A DESIGNATED OFFICER.

A Bylaw of the Town of Blackfalds, in the Province of Alberta, pursuant to the provisions of the Municipal Government Act being chapter M-26.203 of the Revised Statutes of Alberta 1994 and amendments thereto, to rescind Bylaw 717/92 establishing the position of the Chief Administrative Officer.

WHEREAS:

1. Section 205(1) of the Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000, Chapter M-26, as amended (hereinafter referred to as the "Act") allows a Council to establish by by-law a position of chief administrative officer;

2. Section 205(2) of the Act, every council must appoint one or more persons to carry out the powers, duties and functions of the position of chief administrative officer;

3. Municipal Council deems it necessary and expedient to rescind Bylaw 717/92.

NOW THEREFORE the Municipal Council of the Town of Blackfalds, duly assembled, enacts as follows:

1. SEVERABILITY

If any provision of this bylaw is declared invalid because of any word, phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section of this bylaw or any documents which form part of the bylaw or an application thereof to any person or circumstance is declared invalid, the remaining provisions shall not be affected thereby, but shall remain in force.

2. DEFINITIONS

In this Bylaw:

(a) "Act" means the Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000, Chapter M-26 as may be amended from time to time or any legislation which replaces the Act and includes any regulation to the Act or to any replacement legislation;

(b) "CAO" means the Chief Administrative Officer;

(c) "Council" means the Council of the Town of Blackfalds;

(d) "Director" means those positions in the second line level as set out in the current organizational chart;

(e) "Town" means the municipal corporation known as the Town of Blackfalds.

3. TITLE

This Bylaw may be referred to as the "CAO's Bylaw".

4. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE POSITION OF CAO

(a) Pursuant to the provisions of Section 205 of the Act, Council hereby establishes the position of Chief Administrative Officer;

(b) Council by Bylaw shall appoint a person to carry out the powers, duties and functions of the position of Chief Administrative Officer.

5. APPOINTMENT

(a) There shall be for the Municipality, a CAO who shall be appointed by bylaw of Council, and who shall carry out any and all of the administrative duties and other duties as Council has the power to delegate as set out in the Act and such other

administrative duties as may have priority to this Bylaw or hereafter from time to time be vested, conferred, or delegated in, upon and to the CAO by Bylaw of Council;

(b) The Council may, by Bylaw, appoint an acting CAO, and prescribe the duties, who shall act during illness, absence or other incapacity that may prevent the CAO from performing the duties of his or her office;

(c) The CAO shall designate an Acting CAO in planned absences from the office for any period longer than one day and equal to or less than 30 days.

6. RESPONSIBILITY/AUTHORITY

(a) The CAO is responsible to the Council for the overall administration of municipality in accordance with objectives, policies and plans approved by Council. In carrying out these responsibilities, the CAO shall work in close liaison with the Mayor and supervise administrative personnel in the performance of their duties. He or she shall direct, control, and coordinate the activities of the various departments.

7. PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

(a) Responsibilities and Criteria in the Hiring Process

a. The Chief Administrative Officer will be responsible for coordinating the advertising of job positions in the organization;

b. Oversee the final screening of applications for municipal competitions and be part of the final screening of those applications for which he/she is responsible;

c. All employees of the Municipality shall be appointed or engaged for employment on the basis of qualifications, experience and merit.

(b) Responsibilities Relating to Discipline and Discharge

a. The Chief Administrative Officer is responsible for the direction, coordination and administration of all matters pertaining to personnel in accordance with the personnel policy provisions adopted by council;

b. The Chief Administrative Officer will discipline and discharge Employees under his/her supervision in accordance with the Discipline and Discharge provision in the Municipalities Personnel Policy. In any event, the CAO will have the power to recommend the termination of Department Heads to Council. Council must ratify such recommendations.

8. DELEGATION OF CAO

(a) It is expressly implied that Council authorizes the CAO to delegate such responsibility as herein assigned to his or her office for the purpose of establishing an efficient and workable administrative structure. The delegation of authority shall be Directors, Managers, and officials of the municipality provided that it is in keeping with provisions of this Bylaw, and is not inconsistent with the Act or any other Act of the Province of Alberta. In all instances, Council shall hold the CAO responsible for his or her duties;

(b) To the extent that it is necessary to bring to bear on a given subject several disciplines, the CAO is hereby authorized to establish committees of employees for the proper and efficient administration of the municipal business. Such committees may be used for coordination of daily operations as well as for the furnishing of full information to Council upon inquiry.

9. ORGANIZATION

(a) The organization chart, as approved by Council from time to time, shall indicate the reporting and responsibility structure of the municipality;

(b) Except for the purpose of official inquiry, and emergency, the Council shall deal with and control the administrative service through the CAO and the Council shall as normal practice require that its directives be carried out through the offices of the CAO.

10. POWERS AND DUTIES

(a) Without limiting the Administrative powers of the CAO, the CAO shall:

(i) hire as per approved budget, appoint, promote, suspend, demote or remove any employee from any position in the Town with notice to Council (preferably prior notice);

(ii) determine salaries, benefits, hours of work and other working conditions of Town employees;

(iii) ensure that performance reviews are completed for all employees on an annual basis;

(iv) develop and recommend, for Councils' approval, bylaws and policies dealing with non-administrative matters as directed by Council;

(v) implement all policies and programs of the Town;

(vi) develop, approve, and implement policies, procedures, and practices dealing with administrative matters;

(vii) prepare and submit to Council, draft budgets for annual operating and capital programs, after working with department heads in order to meet his or her understanding of Council guidelines;

(viii) monitor and report on the operating and capital budgets;

(ix) advise and inform Council or Council Committees on the operation and affairs of the Town, through direct communication;

(x) prepare and submit such reports and recommendations as may be required by Council or Council committees;

(xi) subject to Council approval;

(a) create or eliminate any Town departments

(b) negotiate any collective agreements or similar documents

(xii) provide quasi or initial legal advice within areas of expertise; and/or hire or retain legal counsel on behalf of the Town;

(xiii) participate as a prominent member of the team for economic development within the Town;

(xiv) provide public relations and generally promote the image of the municipality with the public and industry, including but not limited to dealing with the press and ensuring a positive image is presented by all employees;

(xv) Act as the Head of the Local Public Body for the purposes of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, RSA 2000, Chapter F-25 and amendments thereto.

(b) The CAO or delegate shall attend all meetings of Council and Council Committees as required, or those that are considered advisable to attend, unless excused there from;

(c) The CAO shall perform such other duties and functions and exercise such other powers as may be required for the effective administration of the Town including but not limited to entering into all contracts, agreements and transactions required for the effective operation of the Town provided that no action requires an expenditure of money that has not been included in an approved operating or capital budget or otherwise authorized by Council. Any reallocation, reassignment or adjustment of dollars from the operating or capital budget must be taken back to Council for approval;

(d) Unless otherwise specified in a bylaw creating a position of Designated Officer, the CAO shall be deemed to be appointed a designated officer under any statute or bylaw which permits or requires the Town to appoint a designated officer. The CAO may delegate any of the powers, duties, or functions given to the CAO position by Bylaw, the Act, or any other enactment to any employee of the Town. The CAO is responsible to ensure that any re-delegation of power, duty or function is properly exercised and carried out;

(e) The CAO may take whatever actions or measures are necessary to respond to an emergency.

This Bylaw shall come into effect upon the date on which it is finally read and passed.

READ for a First time this 30th day of JANUARY, A.D., 20 14.

(RES NO. 15/14)

Mayor Melodie Stol

Acting CAO Sean Barnes

READ for a Second time this 30th day of JANUARY, A.D., 20 14.

(RES NO. 16/14)

Mayor Melodie Stol

Acting CAO Sean Barnes

READ for a Third and Final time this 30th day of JANUARY, A.D., 20 14.

(RES NO. 18/14)

Mayor Melodie Stol

Acting CAO Sean Barnes

BLACKFALDS
ALBERTA

TOWN OF BLACKFALDS
STANDING COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL
REQUEST FOR DIRECTION

MEETING DATE: March 20, 2023

PREPARED BY: Rick Kreklewich, Director of Community Services

PRESENTED BY: Rick Kreklewich, Director of Community Services

SUBJECT: **Plaza Wall Structure**

BACKGROUND

At the June 14th, 2022 Regular Council Meeting, a motion was passed by Council to provide a metal perforated screening wall for the Border Paving Plaza. Upon further discussions with the supplier, Administration found that the metal perforated screening wall limited the types of images we could display at the Plaza as it significantly affected the details of the images. Administration discussed this with the Recreation, Culture and Parks Board at the November 2nd, 2022, December 5th, 2022 and January 4th, 2023 Board Meetings where it was determined to look into other options for the Plaza wall structure.

DISCUSSION

Understanding the need to find an alternative to the metal perforated screening wall, Administration researched alternative panel materials and determined aluminum composite was the best option for the Plaza application. Administration had Stantec develop a modified concept design for the Plaza wall structure that would be durable and allow for more detailed imagery. Stantec provided the wall structure concept design attached.

The imagery style would be similar to the mural inside the Eagle Builders Centre, but instead of a historical timeline the images would follow more of a seasonal theme. Marketing and Communications provided a concept of the imagery attached. The intention of Administration would be to put this out for Request for Proposal for installation this Spring.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost estimate for the structure as per the revised design is estimated to cost between $70,000 to $90,000 which is less than what was originally approved in June of 2022 ($119,125.00) due to a change in materials.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

1. That Standing Committee of Council recommend to Council to direct Administration to proceed with sending out the Request for Proposal for the Plaza wall structure.

ALTERNATIVES

a) That Standing Committee of Council does not recommend to Council to direct Administration to proceed with sending out the Request for Proposal for the Plaza wall structure.

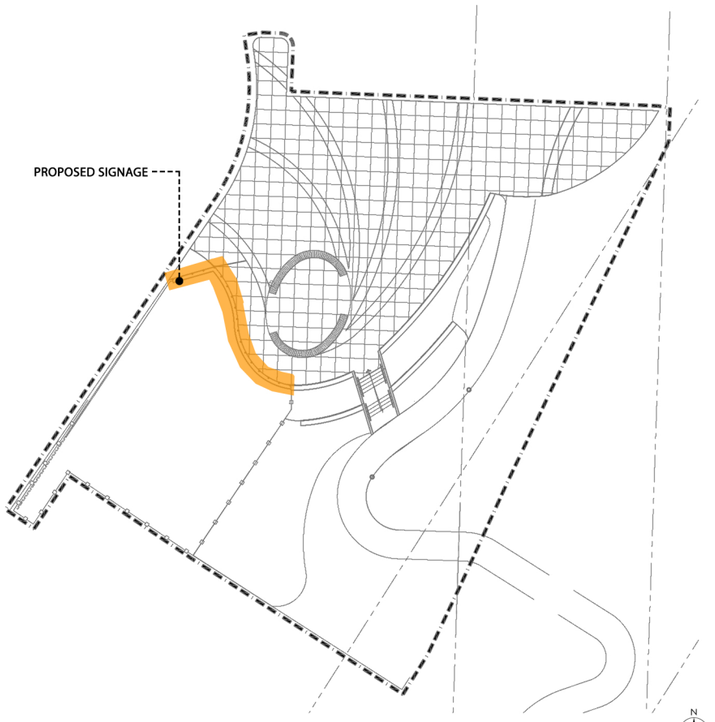
ATTACHMENTS

- *Border Paving Plaza – Signage Board Concept*
- *Plaza Wall Image Concept*

APPROVALS

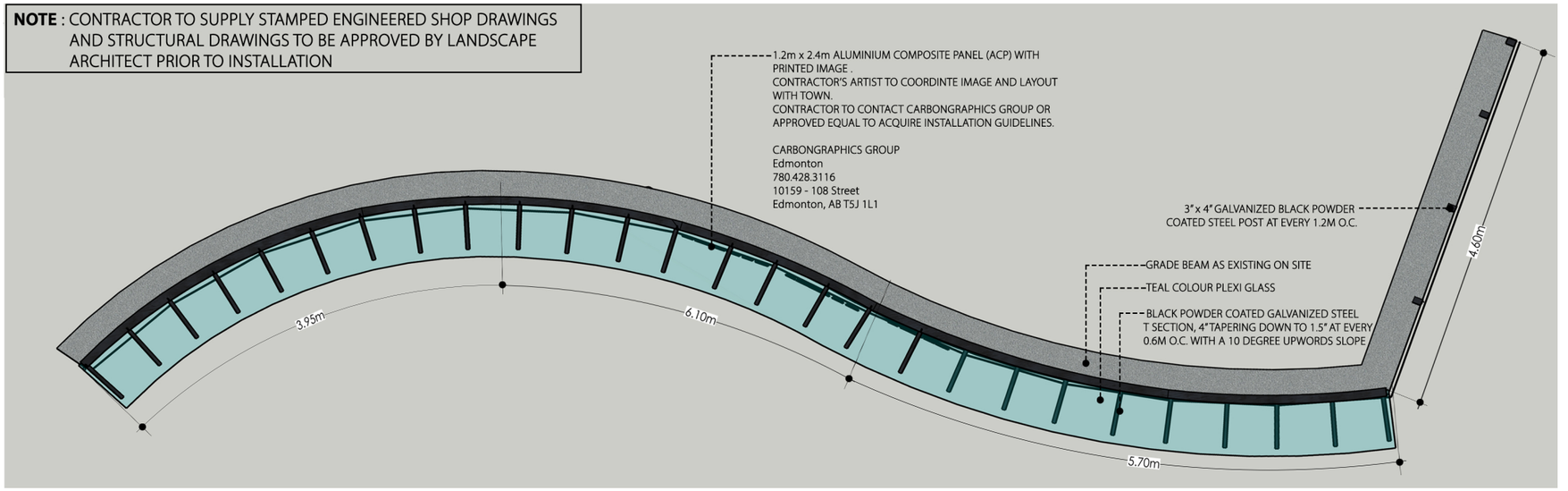
Myron Thompson, CAO

Department Director/Author



KEYPLAN

NOTE : CONTRACTOR TO SUPPLY STAMPED ENGINEERED SHOP DRAWINGS AND STRUCTURAL DRAWINGS TO BE APPROVED BY LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT PRIOR TO INSTALLATION

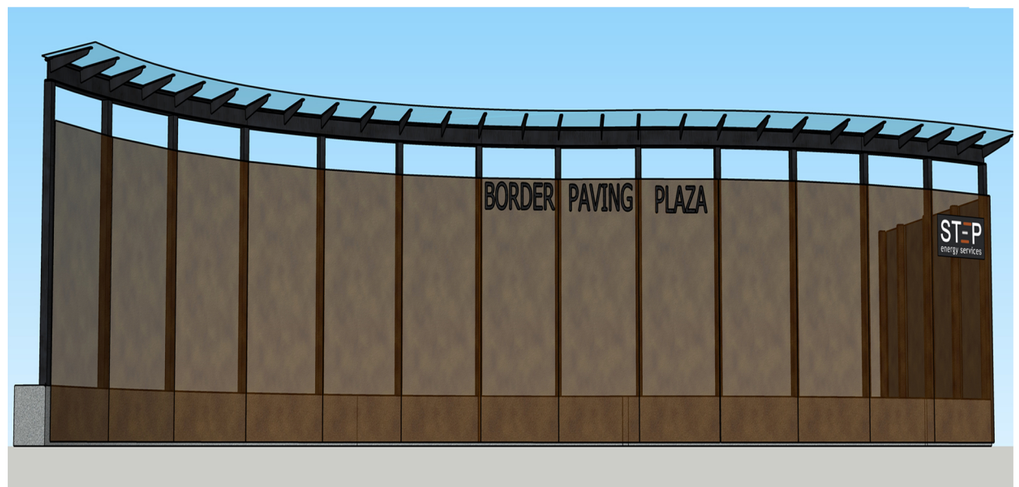


PROPOSED SIGNAGE BOARD PLAN - CONCEPT

SCALE: NTS

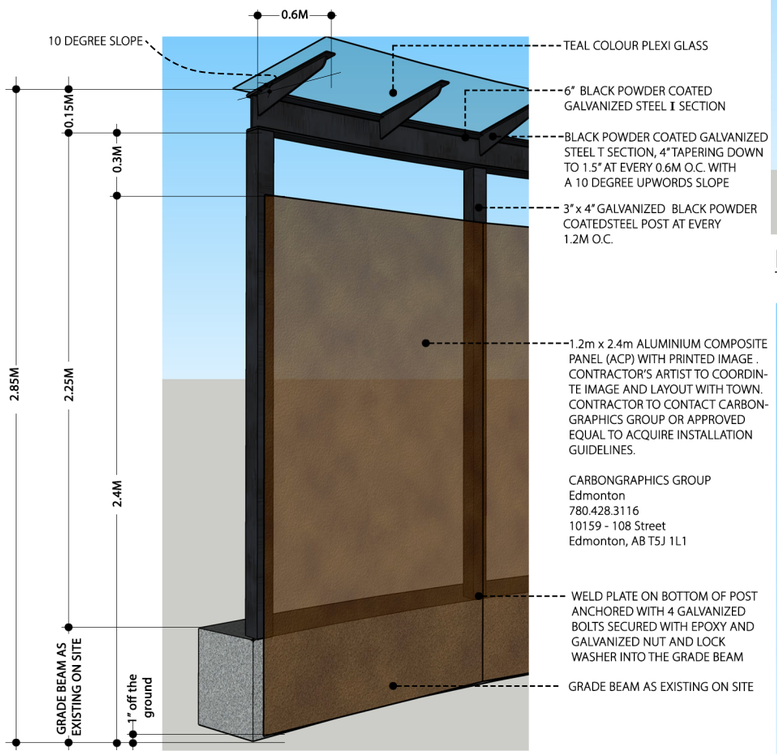
PROPOSED SIGNAGE BOARD ELEVATION - CONCEPT

SCALE: NTS



PROPOSED SIGNAGE BOARD VIEWS - CONCEPT

SCALE: NTS



DETAIL OF SIGNAGE BOARD

BORDER PAVING PLAZA - SIGNAGE BOARD CONCEPT

Stantec

EAGLE BUILDERS
CENTRE

MEETING DATE: March 20, 2023

PREPARED BY: Myron Thompson, CAO

PRESENTED BY: Rick Kreklewich, Director of Community Services

SUBJECT: **Westwood Drive Parkway**

BACKGROUND

In 2014, the Town of Blackfalds offered to purchase land at 5101 Westwood Drive for the purpose of providing parking for a future arena expansion. Upon acquiring the land, the Town demolished the mobile home located near the corner of the Westwood Drive and Lansdowne Avenue.

At the June 11, 2018 Council Workshop, parking capacity at the multiplex site was discussed as part of the Civic Facilities Master Plan. Some internal concept renderings had been developed for the narrow strip of land now owned by the Town for discussion purposes that Administration shared with the previous Council. The concept plan at that time included a parking lot on the east side of Westwood Drive that would support the future sports complex and a needed pedestrian corridor connection from the downtown core to sport and cultural facilities in the southwest part of the community that contains the future high school, junior high, dog park and sports fields.

When looking at initial parking stall requirements for the Eagle Builders Centre (EBC) parking lot this area was utilized in the total number calculations. As initial design work progressed with the EBC and parking requirements determined that matter was once again reviewed. A decision was made to look at some other parking options available which included the Beyond Food Hub site and the FCSS facility site as there were initial considerations in either demolishing or having the structures removed from the site which would allow development of approximately 65 -75 stalls. The Town had since made the decision to repurpose the building of which is now the Beyond Food Hub and as well as the FCSS building which is now the Support Services Centre.

DISCUSSION

Administration is once again looking at the Town owned lot to provide increased parking and to provide a vital north/south trail corridor. A concept design has been produced and provided in this package to assist in determining available additional parking, landscape opportunities as well as alignments and connectivity of the trail system. A total of 104 parking stalls could be accommodated within the lineal space with the stalls being 45 degree angle parking on both sides with a one way (south) driving lane exiting out and onto Lansdowne Avenue. There would also be significant landscaping including a treed buffer on either side of the parking lot as well as a 2.5 m paved trail adjacent to Westwood Drive.

As the trail extends southward there is an option to tie into the 1.5 m concrete side along the east curb line of Lansdowne or develop a new paved trail to the east on the berm. As the trail extends southward it would take a meandering path through the wooded section immediately west of the rail

line ROW, then turn and extend westward along the north side of South Street tying into the existing paved trail across Leung Road adjacent to the campground and into the paved trail going north on the east side of Leung.

The project if it proceeds can take place in 2 phases, with the lineal parking space being the first phase and the trail extension as the second phase.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Project cost is estimated to be in the range of $1.6 Million, with $1.2 Million of the cost for the parking lot and the remainder for the trail network system. This project has not been included in the current year capital works program but could be considered in subsequent years. Funds could be derived from the Land Reserve, MSI Capital funding, as well as anticipated land developer contribution. More detailed costing and funding would be provided if the project was to go ahead.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

1. That Standing Committee of Council recommend to Council that Administration be directed to finalize concepts and include the phased project in the Town's capital works program.

ALTERNATIVES

a) That Standing Committee of Council does not recommend to Council that Administration be directed to finalize concepts and include the phased project in the Town's capital works program.

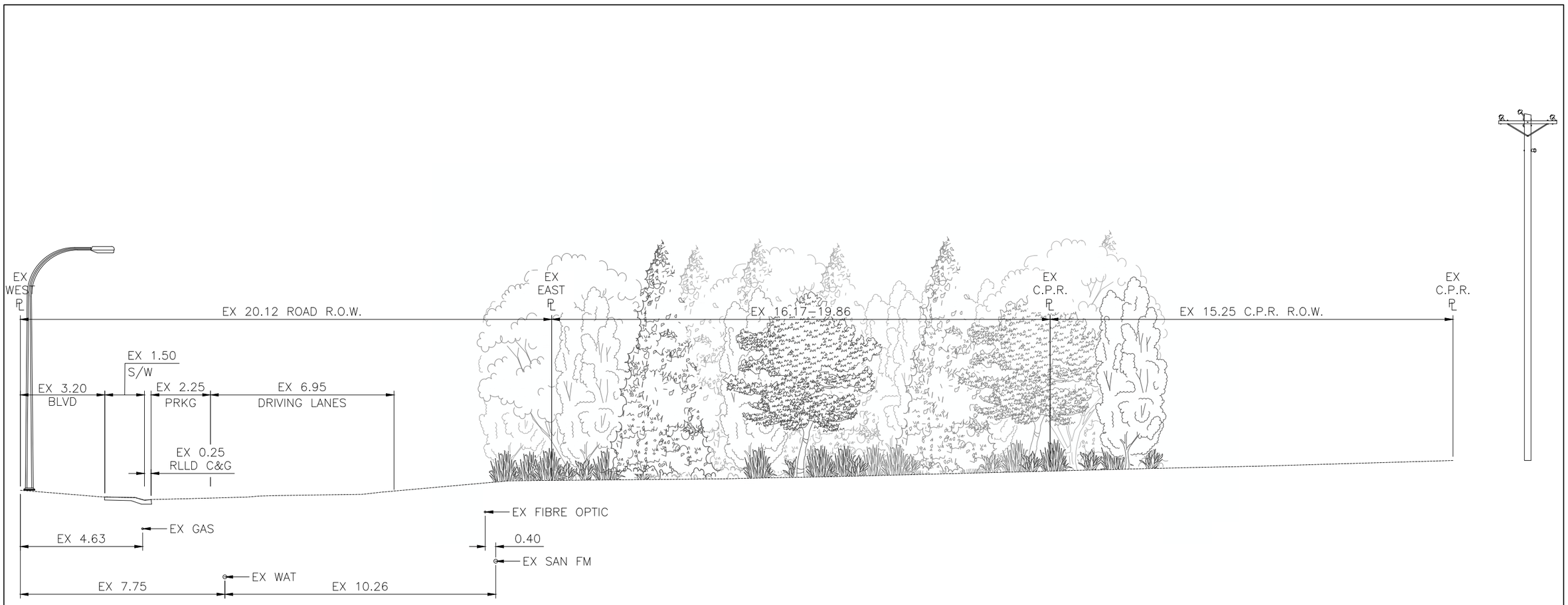
ATTACHMENTS

- *Westwood Drive Parkway Concept Drawings – Draft*

APPROVALS

Myron Thompson, CAO

Department Director/Author



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MARCH 2023
113678524

Legend

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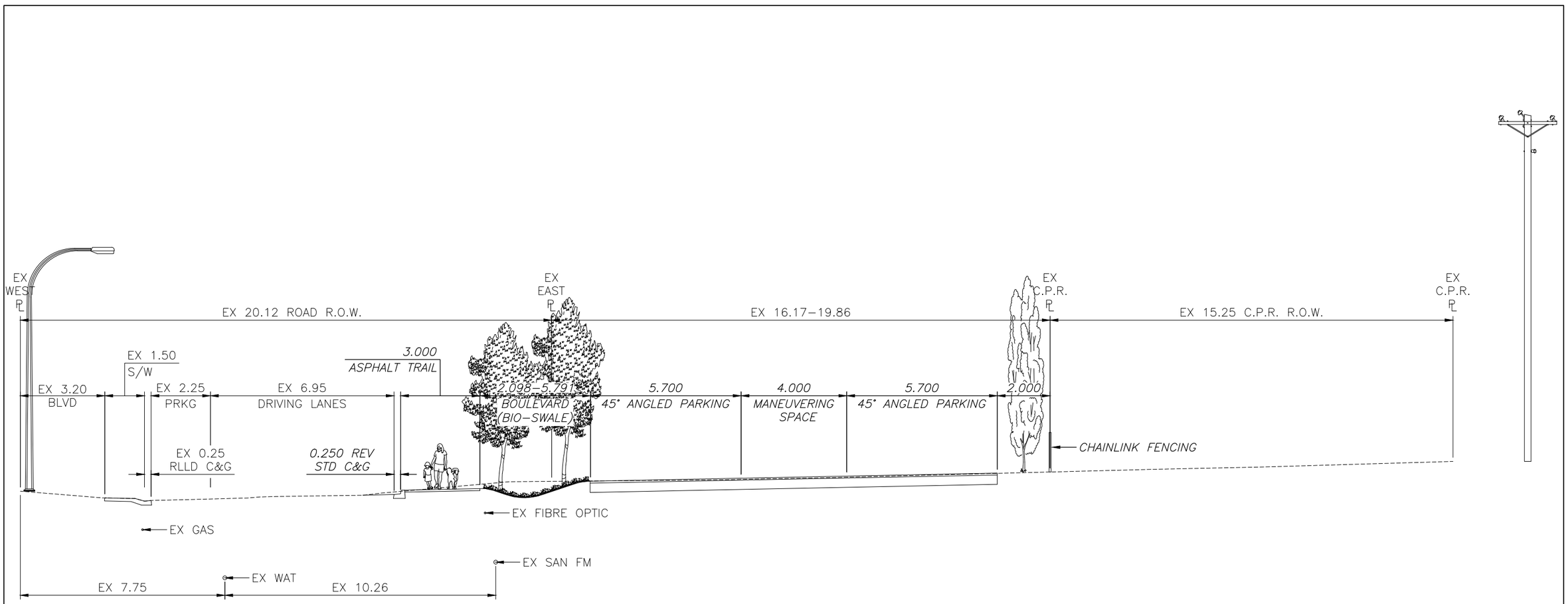
Stantec
1100 - 4900 50th Street
Red Deer AB Canada T4N 1X7
www.stantec.com

Client/Project
TOWN OF BLACKFALDS
WESTWOOD DRIVE PARKING LOT

Figure No.
1

Title
WESTWOOD DRIVE EXISTING CONDITIONS CROSS SECTION



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Client/Project
TOWN OF BLACKFALDS
WESTWOOD DRIVE PARKING LOT

Figure No.
2

Title
WESTWOOD DRIVE PARKING LOT CROSS SECTION

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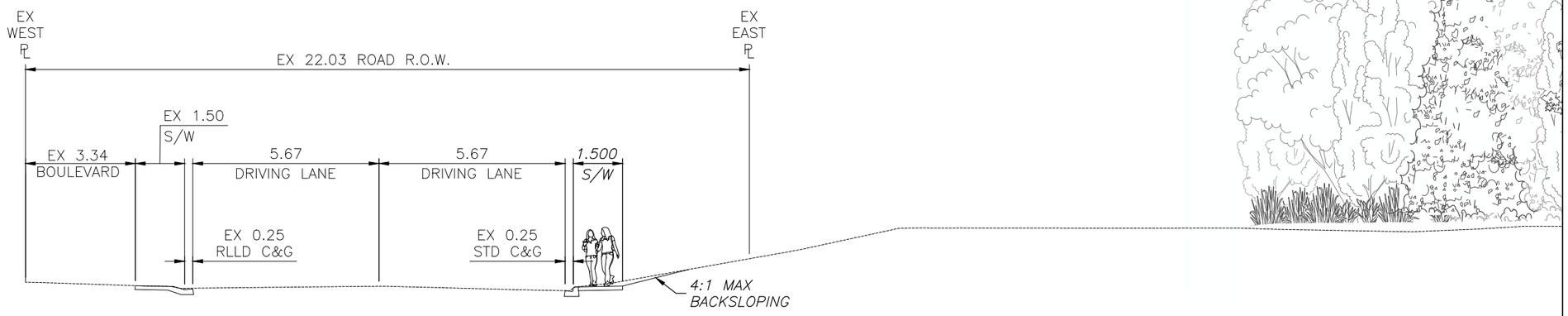

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Red Deer AB Canada T4N 1X7
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Legend

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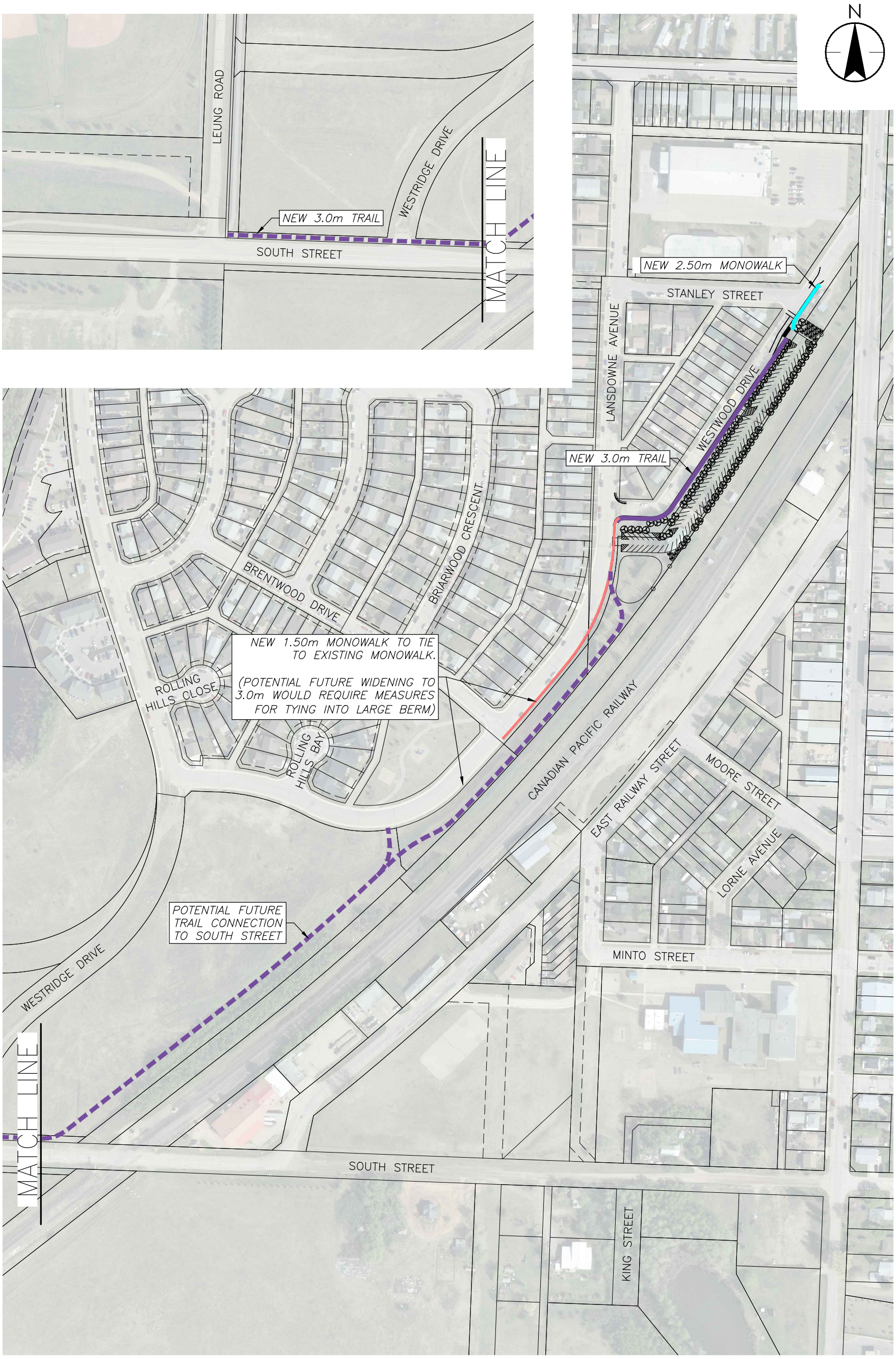
Client/Project
TOWN OF BLACKFALDS
WESTWOOD DRIVE PARKING LOT

Figure No.
3

Title
LANSDOWNE AVENUE CROSS SECTION



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MARCH 2023
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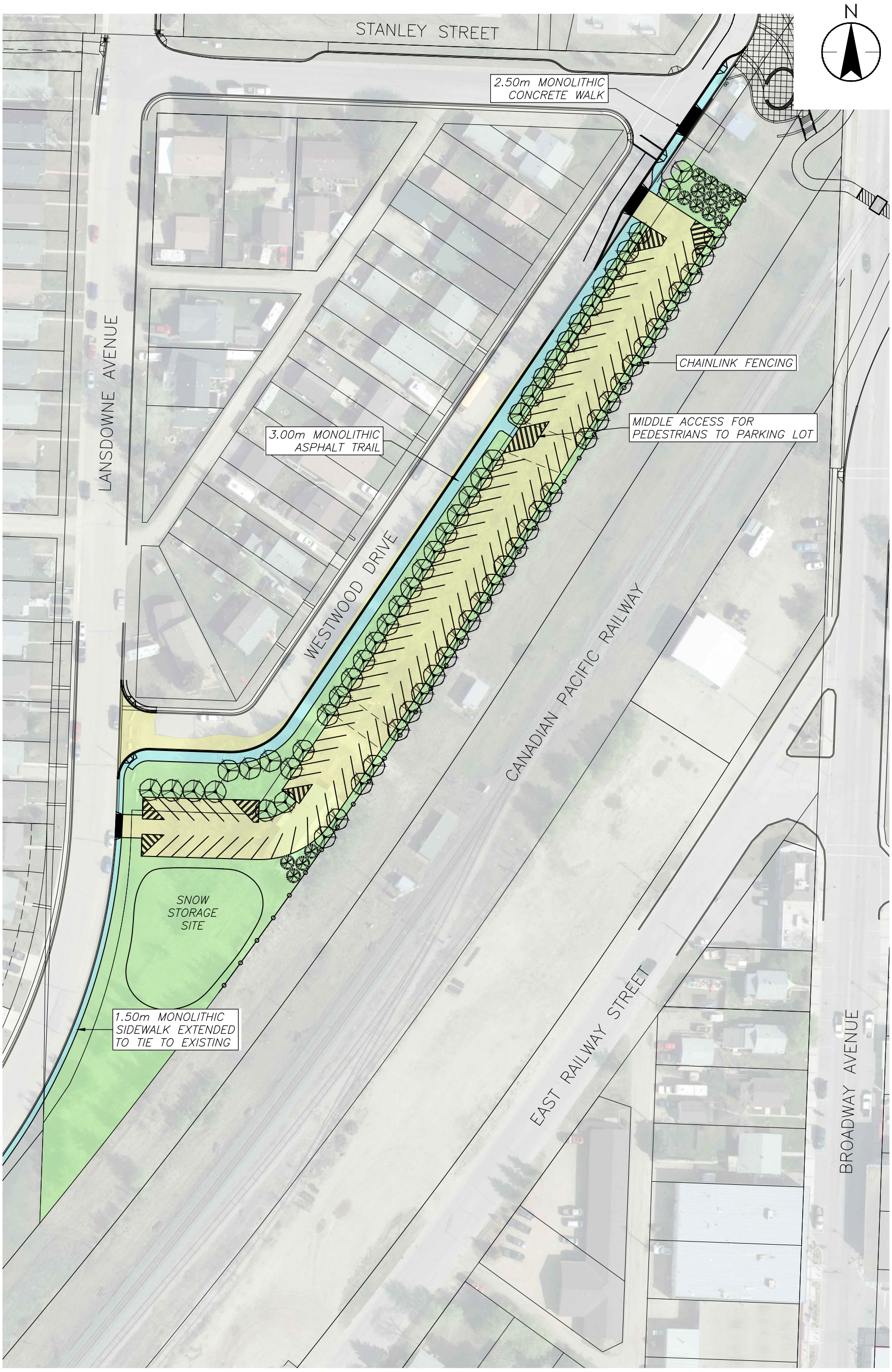
Client/Project
TOWN OF BLACKFALDS
WESTWOOD DRIVE PARKING LOT

Figure No.
4

Title
PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY



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MARCH 2023
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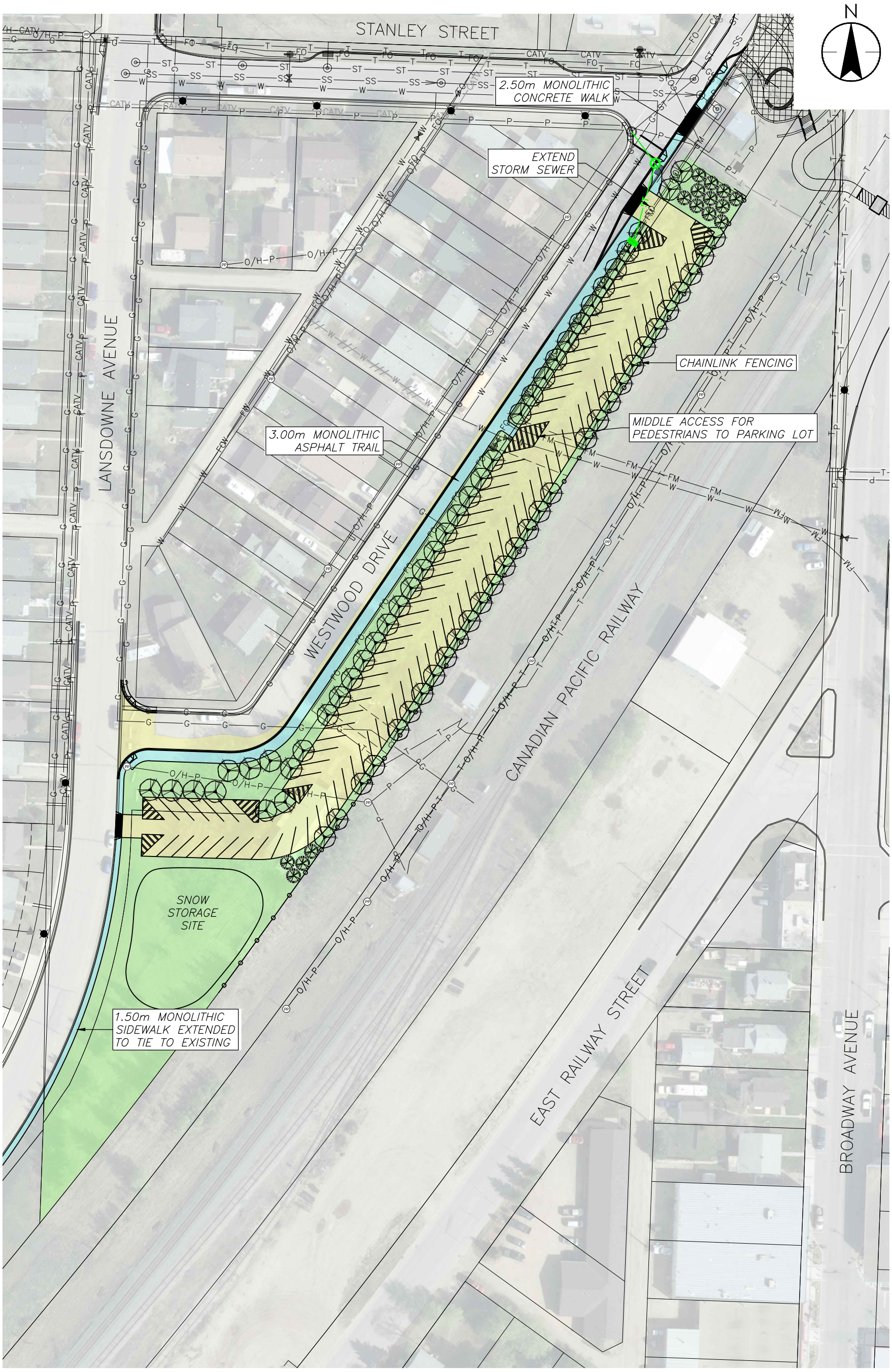
Client/Project
TOWN OF BLACKFALDS
WESTWOOD DRIVE PARKING LOT

Figure No.
5A

Title
WESTWOOD DRIVE PARKING LOT LAYOUT



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2023/03/15 2:40 PM By: Campbell, Scott

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Client/Project
TOWN OF BLACKFALDS
WESTWOOD DRIVE PARKING LOT

Figure No.
5B

Title
WESTWOOD DRIVE PARKING LOT LAYOUT WITH UTILITIES

MEETING DATE: March 20, 2023

PREPARED BY: Preston Weran, Director of Infrastructure and Property Services

PRESENTED BY: Preston Weran, Director of Infrastructure and Property Services

SUBJECT: **Bolt Capacity Modifications and Scheduling Changes**

BACKGROUND

Since September 1, 2020, the Town of Blackfalds has been operating the new BOLT 2.0 service as an on-demand digital community commuter service. Our new service provider, application, schedule, ticket procurement and service stop maps have been working well over the course of this new service model. Council has extended the pilot program by another year until August 31, 2023. There will be a report provided in summer to determine if the program will continue beyond this pilot end date.

DISCUSSION

When Council approved the year extension, we brought forward options to add specific regional transit stops in Lacombe County (Eagle Builders Shop) and Red Deer Polytechnic. The Red Deer Polytechnic stop has been a large growth node and with a single van, we have since developed a capacity limit. Recently, we have had a number of complaints from our riders not being able to book the commuter service into Red Deer at AM and sometimes PM peak riding times. This seems to be a problem only during school days.

Through December and into January, our van experienced mechanical issues and the service provider utilized the larger capacity unmarked white bus to complete this service. Once the van was fixed, this unit was removed from service. The capacity complaints started in January with this larger vehicle, but through investigation and discussions, we realized that the booking application needed to be updated with additional seats programed, as the original van capacity in the app was limiting bookings. The remainder of the time that the large bus was in service, we were meeting booking demands until we switched back to the smaller van recently.

We are pleased that this is the type of issue being presented, as that means we are seeing more demand for the service. Ridership numbers in February were again the highest (680 passengers) since the start of the new BOLT service in September 2021. The Town has seen a steady usage in overall ridership with the Red Deer Polytechnic stop at 49 pickups, and 39 drop-offs last month. The Red Deer Polytechnic stop is now the second most requested stop for the BOLT service, second to the Regional Hub stop in north Red Deer.

Since the beginning of the year, Administration has received 3 or 4 complaints from riders each week using this commuter service indicating that they cannot get a ride as scheduled since the smaller bus returned into service. There are also some concerns with riders booking the service and then cancelling an hour before the ride occurs because they realize this is the only way to secure a rider if the van is full.

In discussions with the service provider to look for a solution, they indicated they would be willing to put the larger bus into service to investigate if the larger capacity bus would fix this capacity limit and maybe draw in more riders. We hope that by running this larger bus during the AM and PM peaks,

for a maximum of 6 hours per day, we will improve this capacity issue or at least provide some insight as to these failed rider searches under the attached *Daily KPI Report highlighted _2023-03-14* and if they are potential riders or only perceived.

The 2-week trial will start March 20th to March 24th and then run again from April 3rd to the 6th as there are non-school days at the end of March for teacher training and further days off for Easter Friday and Monday. After Easter, Red Deer Polytechnic will be moving into finals with irregular class schedules, so this trial period is the only feasible time to do this.

The service provider will also be looking at adjusting the commuter service to add another Red Deer to Blackfalds pick up at the North end for 1:30 pm and at Red Deer Polytechnic at 6:15 pm, to further help alleviate these high use times while still providing local service to residents. These two additional routes will allow other riders better options to return to Blackfalds and hopefully further reduce these AM and PM peak issues seen at these two locations.

The inclusion of enhanced service with another unit during peak transit service times will provide valuable information that will further assist Administration in the overall review of this service that will be brought before Council this summer.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost between the normal van and the large bus service is a difference of $21.80/hour which would equate to $130.80 per day or a total of $1177.20 for the 9 days planned (approximately 2 weeks). The larger bus will be used for approximately 6 hours per day during AM and PM peak times. The service provider will pay for half of this cost while the Town will be responsible to pay the other half. Therefore, the financial implications for the Town are approximately $589. The 2023 operating budget has sufficient funds to support this extra cost.

ATTACHMENT

- *Daily KPI Report highlighted 2023-03-14*

APPROVALS

Myron Thompson, CAO

Department Director/Author

Program	Week Of	Day	Total Searches	User Conversion Rate	Failed Searches Due to High Demand	Failed Searches Due to High Demand (%)	Valid Searches with Wait Times Above Threshold	Valid Searches with Wait Times Above Threshold (%)	Users with Valid Search Wait Times Above Threshold	Users with Valid Search Wait Times Above Threshold (%)	Users That Experienced Failed Searches Due to High Demand	Users That Experienced Failed Searches Due to High Demand (%)	Users That Experienced Failed Searches and Did Not Book	Users That Experienced Failed Searches and Did Not Book (%)	Users That Experienced Failed Searches with No Valid Search	Users That Experienced Failed Searches with No Valid Search (%)	Avg Search Delay (min)	Avg Origin Stop Distance (m)	Avg Destination Stop Distance (m)	Avg Requested Trip Distance (km)
Blackfalds	Week of 2023-03-12 to 2023-03-18	Total	291	-	100	34.4%	83	28.5%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	36.78	124	222	9.8
		2023-03-14	173	82%	60	34.7%	64	37.0%	21	63.6%	16	48.5%	3	9.1%	1	3.0%	41.05	166	292	10.1
		2023-03-13	118	93%	40	33.9%	19	16.1%	13	48.1%	16	59.3%	2	7.4%	1	3.7%	28.82	46	91	9.5
	Week of 2023-03-05 to 2023-03-11	Total	412	-	71	17.2%	95	23.1%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	23.14	98	143	9.6
		2023-03-10	74	86%	7	9.5%	29	39.2%	18	64.3%	4	14.3%	1	3.6%	1	3.6%	25.39	108	192	10.1
		2023-03-09	87	100%	11	12.6%	20	23.0%	9	32.1%	7	25.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	22.45	66	135	9.6
		2023-03-08	78	81%	15	19.2%	14	17.9%	9	33.3%	6	22.2%	1	3.7%	0	0.0%	26.33	164	72	9.1
		2023-03-07	99	81%	17	17.2%	19	19.2%	16	50.0%	9	28.1%	1	3.1%	0	0.0%	18.02	79	90	9.1
		2023-03-06	74	92%	21	28.4%	13	17.6%	10	40.0%	8	32.0%	1	4.0%	0	0.0%	27.08	105	248	10.4
	Week of 2023-02-26 to 2023-03-04	Total	436	-	92	21.1%	123	28.2%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24.29	76	78	9.5
		2023-03-03	62	80%	3	4.8%	19	30.6%	13	52.0%	2	8.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	17.55	82	70	8.7
		2023-03-02	68	88%	2	2.9%	27	39.7%	13	50.0%	2	7.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	23.16	42	36	9.4
		2023-03-01	87	86%	19	21.8%	18	20.7%	11	50.0%	5	22.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	27.07	88	67	10.0
		2023-02-28	72	92%	7	9.7%	21	29.2%	13	52.0%	5	20.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	22.28	74	143	9.5
		2023-02-27	147	89%	61	41.5%	38	25.9%	14	50.0%	12	42.9%	2	7.1%	1	3.6%	30.48	93	78	9.6
	Week of 2023-02-19 to 2023-02-25	Total	334	-	80	24.0%	114	34.1%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	32.59	333	327	12.9
		2023-02-24	67	50%	14	20.9%	30	44.8%	10	71.4%	3	21.4%	2	14.3%	0	0.0%	41.02	102	401	12.8
		2023-02-23	56	74%	11	19.6%	17	30.4%	11	47.8%	8	34.8%	5	21.7%	3	13.0%	22.56	240	413	12.3
		2023-02-22	66	76%	16	24.2%	24	36.4%	7	41.2%	3	17.6%	1	5.9%	1	5.9%	51.53	152	241	12.0
		2023-02-21	145	88%	39	26.9%	43	29.7%	14	56.0%	9	36.0%	2	8.0%	1	4.0%	25.77	560	285	13.6
	Week of 2023-02-12 to 2023-02-18	Total	553	-	157	28.4%	155	28.0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29.22	135	133	10.6
		2023-02-17	75	73%	17	22.7%	28	37.3%	14	63.6%	6	27.3%	1	4.5%	0	0.0%	24.73	305	357	10.8
		2023-02-16	125	96%	42	33.6%	33	26.4%	11	45.8%	10	41.7%	1	4.2%	1	4.2%	26.93	141	43	10.7
		2023-02-15	118	84%	28	23.7%	34	28.8%	15	60.0%	8	32.0%	2	8.0%	0	0.0%	34.06	94	142	10.0
		2023-02-14	103	90%	21	20.4%	22	21.4%	10	34.5%	5	17.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	23.33	89	64	10.0
		2023-02-13	132	85%	49	37.1%	38	28.8%	13	50.0%	9	34.6%	3	11.5%	1	3.8%	36.37	67	75	11.6