

Saddle Hills County
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STRATEGIC PLAN

2018-2020

"The wilderness is our back yard."

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Message to Our Residents



INTRODUCTION

Saddle Hills County Council, for the first time in its new four-year term, has updated its Strategic Plan with the purpose of continuing to build upon the opportunities, address the challenges and mitigate potential risks for our residents and businesses. Without a plan, any municipality risks becoming occupied by only what is necessary “to keep the lights” on each day. Saddle Hills County residents deserve better than that. Therefore, Councillors are committed to be visionary leaders by planning ahead while keeping the viability of the County and its services in mind.

LOOKING AHEAD

Saddle Hills County Council understands that having a shared vision is a key way of enabling effective municipal governance. Through this Plan, Council confirms their commitment towards achieving:

- Saddle Hills County’s vision
- Saddle Hills County’s mission
- Saddle Hills County’s values

PRIORITY SETTING PROCESS

Council and staff used diagnostic methods, such as “what works well” and “what requires attention”, in evaluating our organization. This process involves discussing our internal perceptions, stakeholders’ views, and community perspectives from citizens and business, and the 2017 citizen surveys results. Through the strategic planning process, Council recognized and established the priorities to achieve the County’s vision for the benefit of residents and the community at large. The process focuses on the top critical priorities for the immediate future, and identifies those that will be acted upon in the future.

OUR COMMITMENT

Saddle Hills County Council is committed to being a transparent and accountable government. Through this Strategic Plan, we commit to do our Council duties and diligently work towards the best outcome for our ratepayers. We commit to providing regular updates by reporting to our ratepayers on our targets and performance through the Saddle Hills County Annual Report which was introduced to our residents in 2017.

Saddle Hills County Council:

December 12, 2017

Councillor John Moen

Councillor Lawrence Andruchiw

Councillor Ed Armagost

Councillor Ken Titford

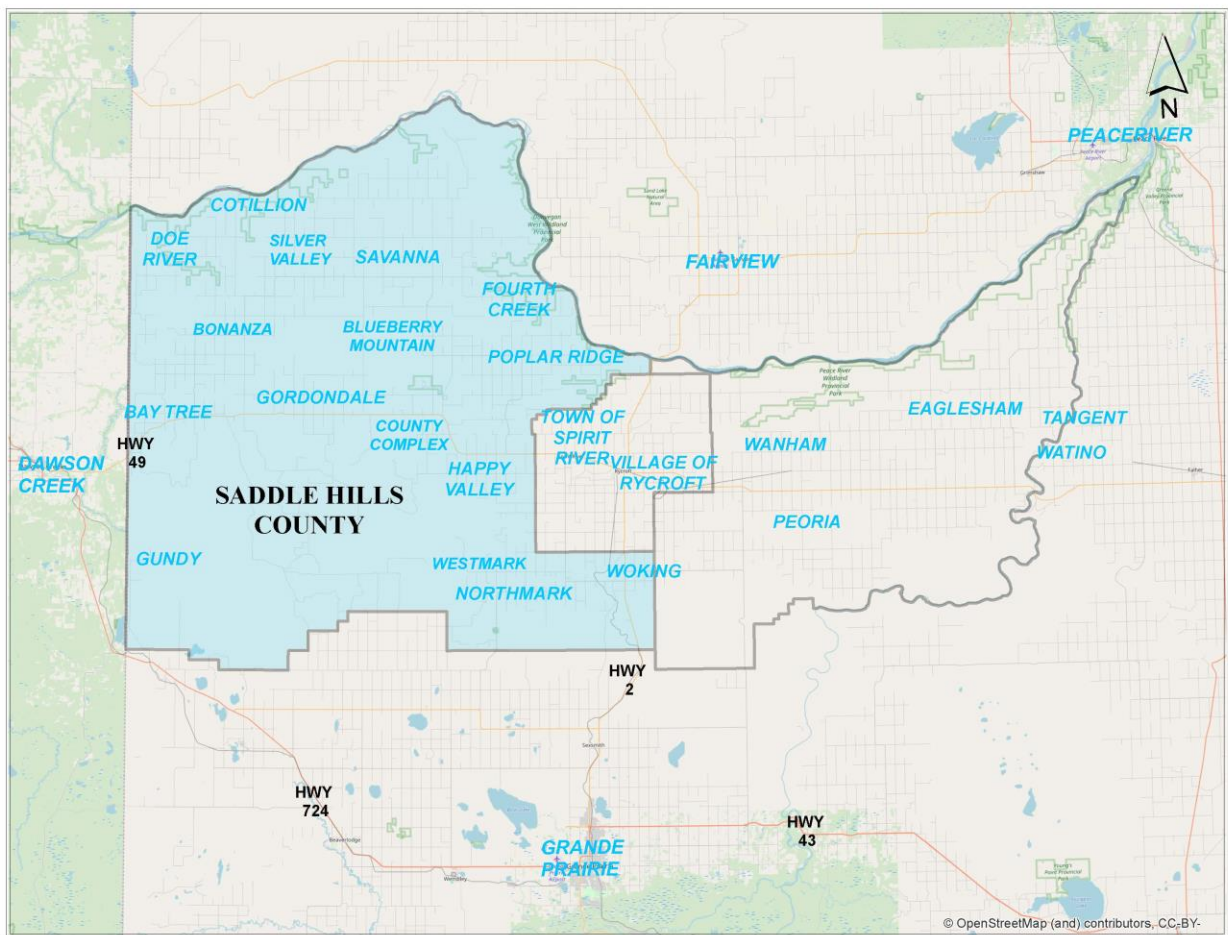
Councillor Willis Fitzsimmons

Deputy Reeve Kristen Smith

Reeve Alvin Hubert

Our County

Saddle Hills County is located in the Central Peace Region. The Central Peace Region is comprised of five municipalities: Saddle Hills County, Birch Hills County, MD of Spirit River, Village of Rycroft, and Town of Spirit River, sometimes referred to as the “G5”. Saddle Hills County has the Peace River on its northern boundary, British Columbia on its west border, the County of Grande Prairie on its south border, and the MD of Spirit River on its east border.



SADDLE HILLS COUNTY – 2018-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

OUR CHARACTERISTICS

Statistics Canada 2016 Census Profile	Saddle Hills County	Alberta
Population and dwellings		
Population; 2016	2,225	4,067,175
Population; 2011	2,288	3,645,257
Population percentage change; 2011 to 2016	- 3	12
Total private dwellings	978	1,654,129
Private dwellings occupied by usual residents	838	1,527,678
Population density per square kilometre	0	6
Land area in square kilometres	5,838	640,330
Population by Age Groups		
0 to 14 years	460	779,155
0 to 4 years	160	266,515
5 to 9 years	150	270,715
10 to 14 years	150	241,920
15 to 64 years	1,420	2,787,805
15 to 19 years	140	240,035
20 to 24 years	85	261,830
25 to 29 years	130	310,940
30 to 34 years	130	333,175
35 to 39 years	115	305,505
40 to 44 years	115	281,205
45 to 49 years	145	269,030
50 to 54 years	175	284,310
55 to 59 years	200	275,540
60 to 64 years	180	226,230
65 years and over	345	500,215
65 to 69 years	135	173,680
70 to 74 years	90	117,035
75 to 79 years	70	83,955
80 to 84 years	35	62,165
85 years and over	15	63,385
85 to 89 years	15	39,965
90 to 94 years	-	18,025
95 to 99 years	5	4,735
100 years and over	-	650
Average age of the population	40	38



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Marital status		
Married or living common law	1,310	1,969,300
Married	1,120	1,648,945
Living common law	185	320,350
Not married and not living common law	455	1,318,720
Never married	315	905,700
Separated	15	76,150
Divorced	60	195,850
Widowed	70	141,020
Families in private households		
2 persons	375	540,850
3 persons	110	235,245
4 persons	95	227,165
5 or more persons	95	111,330
Average size of census families	3	3
Total number of census families in private households	680	1,114,585
Couples in private households		
Couples without children	355	443,665
Couples with children	290	509,655
1 child	105	190,010
2 children	85	213,910
3 or more children	100	105,735
Total - Lone-parent census families in private households - 100% data	35	161,260
1 child	20	97,180
2 children	10	45,235
3 or more children	5	18,845



Vision, Mission & Values

OUR VISION

A thriving rural municipality with: a growing population; safe, active communities; and, a strong, sustainable, diverse economy.

OUR MISSION

To enhance our communities by providing and supporting quality services and regional initiatives.

OUR VALUES

Respect

To earn respect and be respectful while supporting each other; residents, council members, municipal employees and those working in the County.

Adaptable

To seize opportunities to grow in new directions, and approach change with creative solutions to overcome challenges.

Accountability

To deliver accountable and responsible governance through open, transparent and efficient delivery of programs and services that benefit our County.

Equality

To ensure our programs and services are delivered fairly and equitably throughout the County.

Excellence

To be innovative and creative; embracing opportunities, adapting to our environment, and leading with best practices and continuous improvement.

Collaboration

To create healthy relationships with regional communities, other levels of government and the private sector.

Community Spirit

To support programs, recreational and volunteer activities to improve the health, wellbeing and quality of life for our residents.



Core Activities & Directives

Saddle Hills County Council recognized the County’s core activities and corresponding directives as follows:



GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP

“The County will provide responsible and transparent leadership and governance.”



MUNICIPAL SERVICES & INFRASTRUCTURE

“The County will provide quality municipal services in an organized and timely manner.”



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

“The County will promote environmental stewardship through leadership and responsible planning.”



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

“The County will provide a framework for growth in population, business and industry.”

Top Priorities

SADDLE HILLS COUNTY COUNCIL IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING TOP PRIORITIES FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE (in order of priority):

- ↑↓ Road revitalization (*Municipal Services & Infrastructure*)
- ↑↓ Potable water (*Municipal Services & Infrastructure*)
- ↑↓ Modern communication (*Municipal Services & Infrastructure*)
- ↑↓ Emergency management (*Municipal Services & Infrastructure*)
- ↑↓ Seniors (*Community Development*)
- ↑↓ Wastewater (*Municipal Services & Infrastructure*)
- ↑↓ Landfills (*Municipal Services & Infrastructure*)
- ↑↓ Economic development (*Community Development*)
- ↑↓ Regional collaboration (*Government & Leadership*)
- ↑↓ Community groups supports (*Community Development*)

The following pages provide detailed explanations of the four Core Activities, associated strategic objectives, strategic priorities, and specific strategic actions for the top priorities.





Governance & Leadership

“The County will provide responsible and transparent leadership and governance.”

CORE OBJECTIVES

- The County will have a fiscally responsible program
- The County will have effective communications with our ratepayers
- The County will commit to transparency
- The County will commit to building an exemplary organizational culture
- The County will build healthy inter-municipal relationships

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (in order of priority)

- **Regional collaboration (inter-municipal collaboration framework) (2018)**
- Sustainability
- Focused long term planning
- Industry and business communications
- Municipal services capacity review
- Effective community input
- Public awareness programs



SADDLE HILLS COUNTY – 2018-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR 2018

PRIORITY & WHAT DOES OUR SUCCESS LOOK LIKE	STAKEHOLDERS	ACTIONS – WHO, HOW, WHAT, WHY	WHEN & \$\$
<p>Regional Collaboration</p> <p><i>Healthy inter-municipal relationships.</i></p>	<p>Council Municipal neighbors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory the existing inter-municipal agreements and identify topics for inter-municipal collaboration discussion (CAO & Directors) • Set direction for initiating inter-municipal discussions (Council) • Establish go-forward direction for expiring inter-municipal agreements with Town of Spirit River and Village of Rycroft (Council) • Inter-municipal collaboration framework agreements (Council & Administration) 	<p>March</p> <p>March</p> <p>March</p> <p>December</p>





Municipal Services & Infrastructure

“The County will provide quality municipal services in an organized and timely manner.”

CORE OBJECTIVES

- The County will provide and maintain quality road infrastructure for all users
- The County ratepayers will have access to potable water
- The County residents will have access to effective communications networks
- The County will provide effective services (e.g. waste management, protective services, agricultural services, recreation and culture)
- The County will provide efficient and respectful administrative services (Public Service Request system, planning and development services, access to information)

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (in order of priority)

- **Road revitalization (gravel road improvements, gravel sourcing, dust control) (2018)**
- **Potable water (water distribution lines, water from the Peace, watershed management) (2018)**
- **Emergency management (2018)**
- **Wastewater (2018)**
- **Landfills (2018)**
- Recreational programming
- Community Peace Officers
- Campground expansion
- Boat docks/launches
- Drainage
- Regional water reservoirs
- Communication towers



SADDLE HILLS COUNTY – 2018-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR 2018

PRIORITY & WHAT DOES OUR SUCCESS LOOK LIKE	STAKEHOLDERS	ACTIONS – WHO, HOW, WHAT, WHY	WHEN & \$\$
<p>Road revitalization <i>The County has quality roads.</i></p>	<p>Council Administration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey results – roads – communications to public (Council & Adm.) • Gravel road project – priorities (Council) • Grading service analysis (in-house vs. contract) (Council & Adm.) • Dust control options (Council & Adm.) • Gravel source management plan (Adm.) 	<p>January December/17 January January</p>
<p>Potable water <i>Building and sustaining our communities through fair and equitable access to potable water.</i></p>	<p>Council Administration Public</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water: Council direction (Council) • Easements for Bonanza to Bay Tree sub-phase & presentation to Council (Adm.) • Water: project priorities for 2018 based on Council direction Council at December 2017 meeting (Council & Adm.) - an integrated system with focus on: efficiency, growth, accessibility 	<p>December/17 December/17 January</p>

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PRIORITY & WHAT DOES OUR SUCCESS LOOK LIKE	STAKEHOLDERS	ACTIONS – WHO, HOW, WHAT, WHY	WHEN & \$\$
<p>Emergency management <i>“Improve awareness of the Regional Emergency Program and promote Personal Disaster Preparedness.”</i></p>	Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public preparedness and awareness campaign (Adm.) 	May
<p>Wastewater <i>A sustainable, self-sufficient, accessible wastewater management.</i></p>	Council Public Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer of the Wapiti School Division waste lagoons into municipal operations (Bonanza and Savanna) – establish agreements (Council & Adm.) • Wastewater function/strategy (demand, public awareness, staffing, costing, policies) (Council & Adm.) • Provincial lagoon by Moonshine Lake – transfer to the County and improvements (Adm.) 	May October 2018 Budget

SADDLE HILLS COUNTY – 2018-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

PRIORITY & WHAT DOES OUR SUCCESS LOOK LIKE	STAKEHOLDERS	ACTIONS – WHO, HOW, WHAT, WHY	WHEN & \$\$
<p>Landfills <i>A sustainable, self-sufficient, accessible solid waste management.</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application for a new landfill – obtain decision by the Province (Advocacy) • Existing waste disposal contract extension (Clairmont Landfill) • Landfill function (responsibilities, operation models, policies, costs, staff etc.) • Confirm reclamation responsibilities for the old landfill sites • Detailed engineering, tendering, construction for a new landfill (post-application process) 	<p>Feb</p> <p>May</p> <p>2019</p>





Environmental Stewardship

“The County will promote environmental stewardship through leadership and responsible planning.”

CORE OBJECTIVES

- The County will have effective communications with ratepayers
- The County will work with residents and industry to develop effective/relevant land use policies
- The County will develop policy that aligns with federal and provincial programs/ regulations
- The County will promote effective and responsible environmental stewardship
- The County will demonstrate commitment to environmental stewardship through our own operations

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (in order of priority)

- Agriculture Programming
- Invasive Species Management
- Inter-municipal Development Plans

STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR 2018

There are no specific strategic actions identified by Council for 2018. However, the County’s Planning & Development personnel is in the process of updating the County’s Municipal Development Plan and Land Use Bylaw. This is a large undertaking and through public open houses and a formal public hearing process, the Municipal Development Plan is expected to set a go-forward direction for the County for the next five years. The Municipal Development Plan is tentatively scheduled for approval by July 2018. Further, as a result of recent amendments to the Municipal Government Act, Inter-municipal *(see next page)*



Collaboration Frameworks (ICF) and Inter-municipal Development Plans (IDP) must be established with all neighboring municipalities by April 1, 2020. Therefore, commencement of these initiatives will begin in 2018 in order to meet the deadline.





Community Development

“The County will provide a framework for growth in population, business and industry.”

CORE OBJECTIVES

- The County will build family friendly communities
- The County will provide adequate recreational and cultural opportunities which will attract people
- The County will have effective means of ensuring our municipal services respond to the needs of our communities
- The County will support partnerships with industry and business
- The County will build partnerships with our municipal neighbors

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (IN ORDER OF PRIORITY)

- **Modern communications (cell, internet, communication towers) (2018)**
- **Economic development (2018)**
- **Seniors (housing, assisted living and programs) (2018)**
- **Community groups sustainability (2018)**
- Attraction study
- Development of settlement areas
- Tourism
- Improved health services
- County marketing
- Trail network
- Retention & growth
- Residential transportation
- Marijuana implications
- Isolationism
- Alternative industry
- The wilderness is our backyard
- Proposed dam
- Windfarms
- Highway improvements



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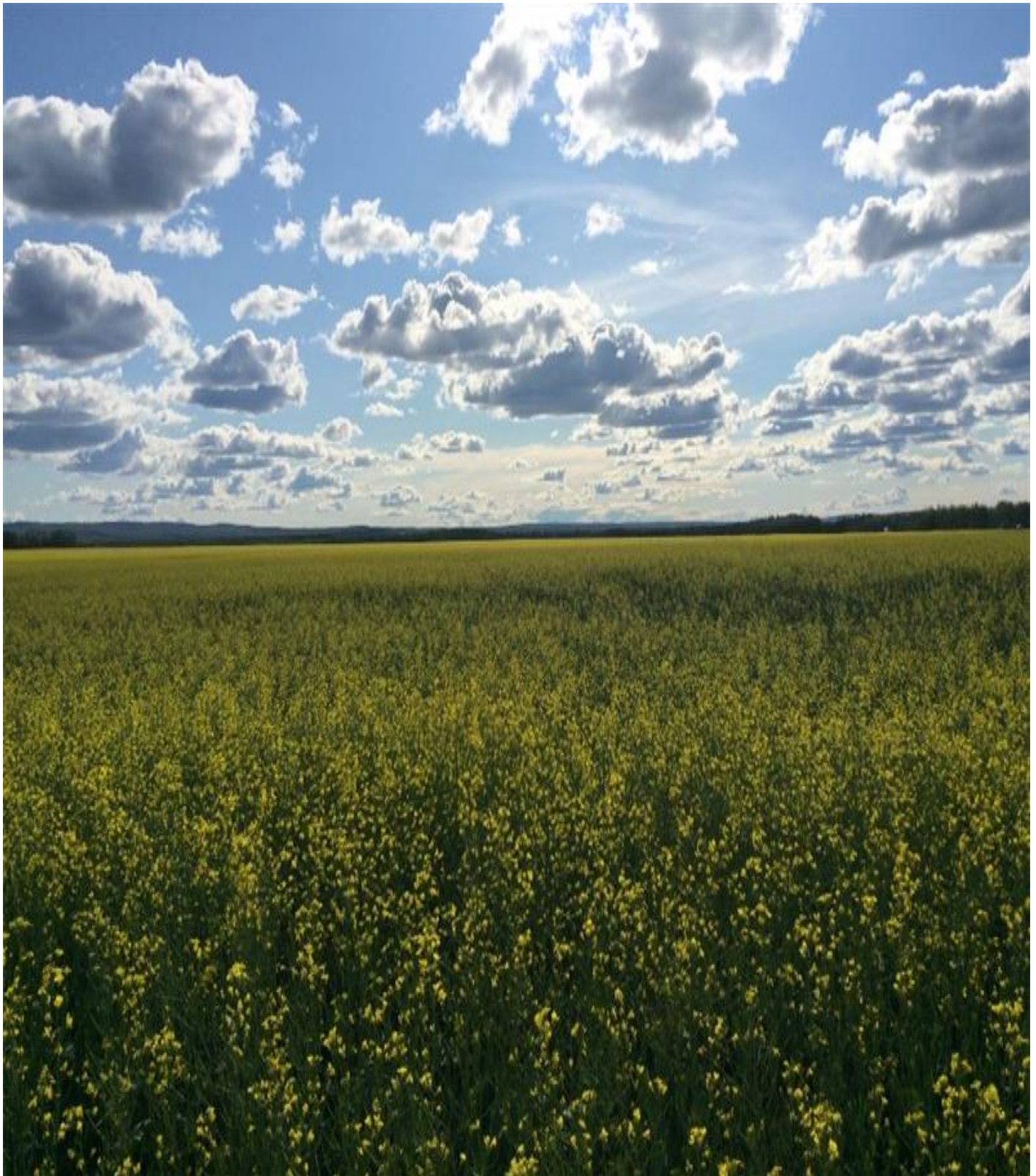
STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR 2018

PRIORITY & WHAT DOES OUR SUCCESS LOOK LIKE	STAKEHOLDERS	ACTIONS – WHO, HOW, WHAT, WHY	WHEN & \$\$
<p>Modern communications <i>Utilizing communication infrastructure, provide opportunities for quality high speed internet services, mobility services as well as maximizing value added services.</i></p>	<p>Council Public Industry Administration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobility – Telus project outcome assessment (Council & Adm.) • Overall County’s investment assessment (impact of investment, impact of continuing investment, current use) (Council & Adm.) • Consider additional capital investment (Council) 	<p>October October 2019 Budget</p>
<p>Economic development <i>Planning for the future – open for business.</i></p>	<p>Council Public Industry Administration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish County’s role (process, Council, Advisory Committee) • Develop Economic Development Strategy • Action Plan (scan opportunities, threats, industry needs, assets/utilities, establish broad goals/objectives, communication strategy, specific actions and targets) 	<p>February March August</p>

SADDLE HILLS COUNTY – 2018-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

PRIORITY & WHAT DOES OUR SUCCESS LOOK LIKE	STAKEHOLDERS	ACTIONS – WHO, HOW, WHAT, WHY	WHEN & \$\$
Seniors	Council Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with the Minister of Health, Minister of Housing and Seniors (Council & G5) • Develop next steps regarding assisted living services in the G5 Region (Council, G5, Adm.) 	December/17 January
Community groups sustainability	Council Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy – include feasibility study reference and process outline (Council & Adm.) 	January





Success is just ahead...

