



STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2025

as of February 12, 2025

INSIDE

Message to Our Residents	4
Our Commitment	4
Our County	5
Ward Map	6
Vision, Mission and Values	7
Our Strategic Pillars	8
Governance and Leadership	
Municipal Services and Infrastructure	
Environmental Stewardship	
Community Development	
Strategic Themes	10
High Priority Strategies and Goals	12



MESSAGE TO OUR RESIDENTS

The pages of Saddle Hills County's 2022-2025 Strategic Plan provide a roadmap that was developed by the County's elected officials and senior administration. It is important that both Council and administration work together to achieve the priorities that are outlined in this plan. Also important is the recognition that the environment in which the County operates is always shifting. In response, the County's plans also must change to remain relevant. As with any plan, this one must be used, reviewed, and updated on a regular basis.

LOOKING AHEAD

Saddle Hills County 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, mission, and 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, stakeholder's views and community perspectives from citizens and businesses. Through the strategic planning process Council has recognized and established priorities to achieve the County's vision for the benefit of residents and the community at large. This process focuses on our top critical priorities and identifies those that may be acted upon in the future.

OUR COMMITMENT

Saddle Hills County is committed to being a transparent and accountable government. We commit to perform our duties diligently while working towards the best outcome for our ratepayers. We will continue providing regular updates by reporting to our ratepayers through the Saddle Hills County Annual Report and the County Living Newsletter, which was introduced in 2018.

The Strategic Plan was approved by Council on February 12, 2025.

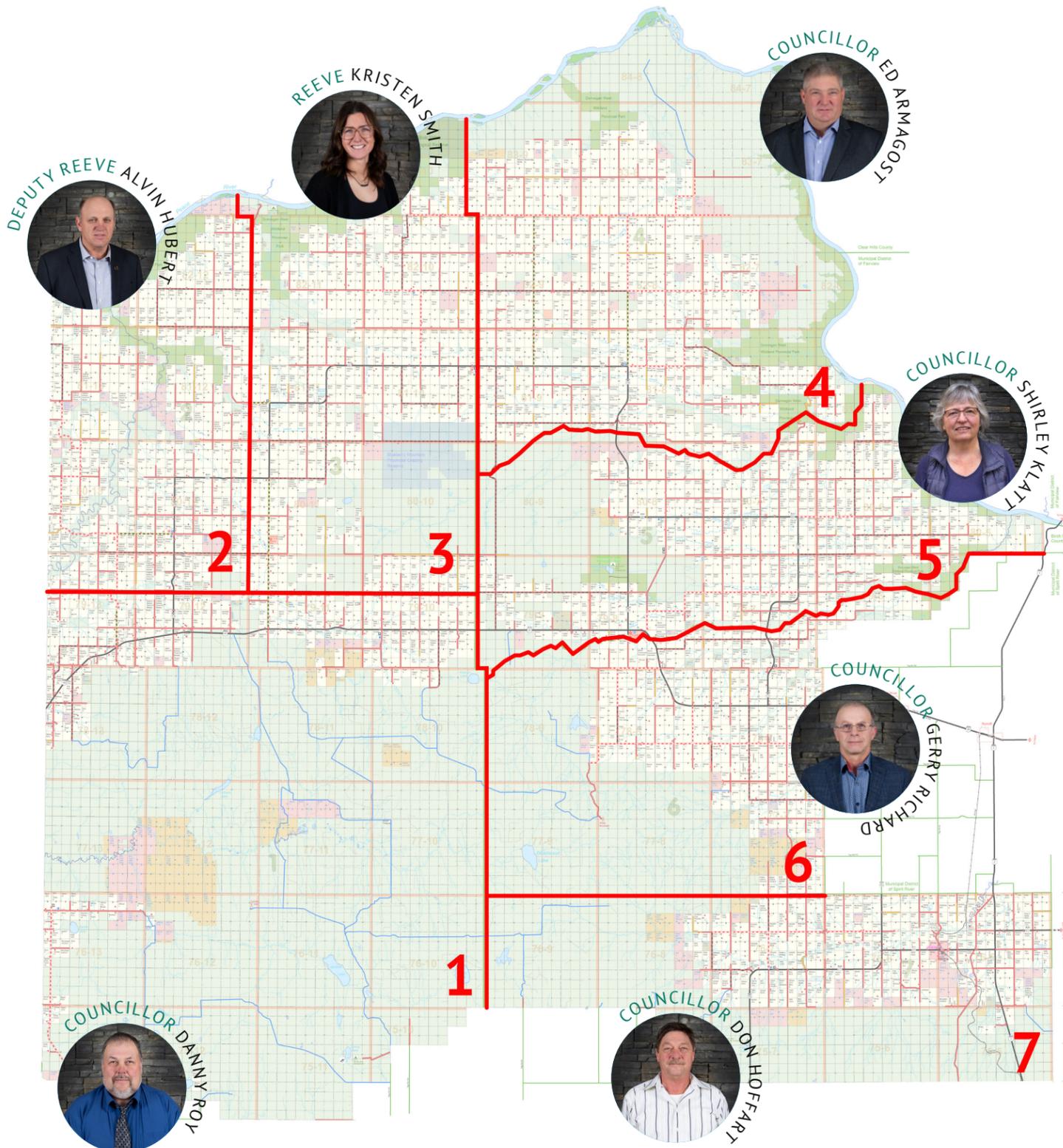


OUR COUNTY

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, the Municipal District of Spirit River No. 133, Village of Rycroft and Town of Spirit River, sometimes referred to as the G5. Saddle Hills County is bordered by the Peace River to the north, British Columbia to the west, the County of Grande Prairie to the south, and the MD of Spirit River No. 133 to the east.



2025 WARD MAP



VISION, MISSION & VALUES

VISION

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

MISSION

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

VALUES



Respect: To earn respect and be respectful while supporting each other - residents, Council members, municipal employees, and those working in the county.



Adaptability: 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, leading with best practices and continued improvement.

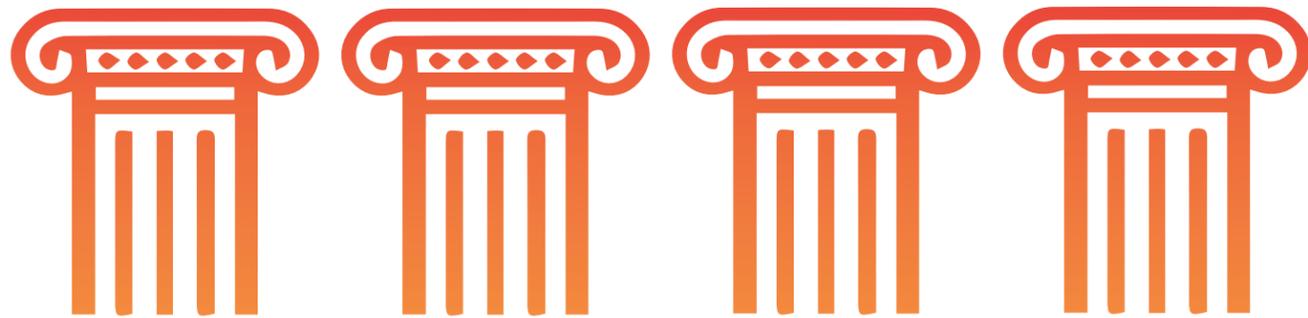


Collaboration: To create healthy relationships with regional communities, other levels of government, and the private sector.



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

OUR STRATEGIC PILLARS



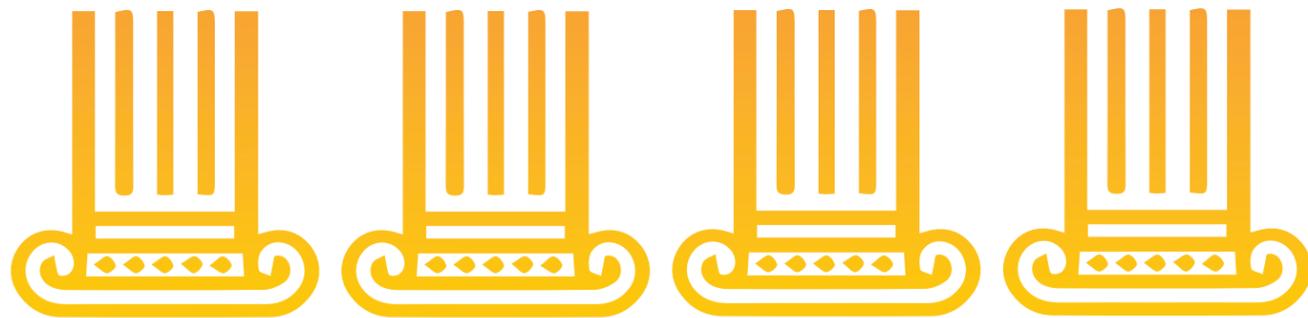
Saddle Hills County Council recognized the County's strategic pillars as follows:

**GOVERNANCE
AND
LEADERSHIP**

**MUNICIPAL
SERVICES AND
INFRASTRUCTURE**

**ENVIRONMENTAL
STEWARDSHIP**

**COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT**



GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Guiding Principle: 'The County will provide responsible and transparent leadership and governance'

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.
- The County will work with residents and industry to develop effective and relevant land use policies.

MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Guiding Principle: 'The County will provide quality municipal services in an organized and timely manner'

Objectives:

- The County will provide and maintain quality road infrastructure.
- The County will provide access to potable water.
- The County will provide access to effective communications networks.
- The County will provide effective services (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).

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Guiding Principle: 'The County will promote environmental stewardship through leadership and responsible planning'

Objectives:

- The County will promote effective and responsible environmental stewardship.
- The County will demonstrate commitment to environmental stewardship.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Guiding Principle: 'The County will provide a framework for growth in population, business and industry'

Objectives:

- The County will build family friendly communities.
- The County will promote recreational and cultural opportunities.
- The County will ensure our municipal services respond to the needs of our communities.
- The County will promote partnerships with industry and business.

STRATEGIC THEMES



ROADS

Our roads are vital to life and work in the County. The regular maintenance and improvement of our roads is Council's top priority.



POTABLE WATER

Ensuring that our residents have clean potable water is the first step in making the County a place where communities can grow. This opens the door for new residents and new businesses to join our community.

CONNECTIVITY

We strive to provide communication opportunities through our utility communication network which can provide a range of third party services ie. rural internet, fibre optics, and improved cell coverage for businesses and homes within the county.

RECREATION

Saddle Hills County is our home. Play is just as important to a healthy community as life and work. We want the County to be a place that residents and visitors alike want to explore.



COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION

The County is a place that we are all proud to call home and we celebrate that. We want our beautiful County to be a place that visitors would want to call home.





HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES

Within the full list of strategies that appear on the following pages, Council has created a subset of six 'high' ranked strategies. The items on this list reflect the priorities that Council saw as both important and timely.

Many other strategies are identified as priorities, meaning they will be worked on as resources allow or deadlines near. It is expected that the high priority strategy list will change over time as some high priority items near completion and new priorities emerge for the County.

GOAL	STRATEGY
Citizen Attraction	Encourage the development of residential land (ref. 5.1a)
Citizen Attraction	Promote Saddle Hills County to existing and prospective residents, commercial investors, and business owners (ref. 5.1b)
Quality of Life	Promote and expand outdoor recreational opportunities for residents and visitors (ref. 5.2a)
Economic Diversification	Consider an innovation and research centre for agricultural sector advancement (ref. 5.3a)
Infrastructure	Strive to provide all residents and businesses to have access to broadband internet (ref. 5.4a)
Infrastructure	Provide access to treated water to all residences and businesses (ref. 5.4b)

The following contains the full list of goals identified by Saddle Hills County Council. Within each goal are a series of strategies, or actions, that will contribute to the advancement of the relevant goal. Where possible within each goal, the high priority strategies are listed first, The approximate time frame for achievement of the goals is listed with each goal.

5.1 - CITIZEN ATTRACTION

GOAL: TO ATTRACT PEOPLE AND FAMILIES TO SADDLE HILLS COUNTY

STRATEGIES - We will:

- a. Encourage the development of residential land (2022 - 2025)
- b. Promote Saddle Hills County to existing and prospective residents, commercial investors and business owners (Ongoing)
- c. Market Saddle Hills County widely (Ongoing)
- d. Continue with community beautification efforts (2022 - Ongoing)

5.2 - QUALITY OF LIFE

GOAL: TO MAXIMIZE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR SADDLE HILLS COUNTY RESIDENTS

STRATEGIES - We will:

- a. Promote and expand outdoor recreational opportunities for residents and visitors (2022 - Ongoing)
- b. Create new gathering places for people and families (2022 - Ongoing)
- c. Host county programs that support safety and quality of life (2023 - Ongoing)
- d. Partner with community groups to provide increased quality of life (2022 - Ongoing)
- e. Continue with seasonal recreation site improvements (Ongoing)

5.3 - ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

GOAL: TO DIVERSIFY SADDLE HILLS COUNTY'S ECONOMY WITH A FOCUS ON THE AGRICULTURAL AND PETROCHEMICAL SECTORS

STRATEGIES - We will:

- a. Consider an innovation and research centre for agricultural sector advancement (2022 - 2025)
- b. Explore, promote, and partner in the growth of secondary agriculture and petrochemical opportunities (2022 - Ongoing)
- c. Continue to seek out learning opportunities to advance the development of innovative agricultural development (Ongoing)
- d. Learn from community partners through community gatherings, such as conferences and symposiums (Ongoing)
- e. Support safe and reliable environmental solutions (2022 - Ongoing)

5.4 - INFRASTRUCTURE

GOAL: ENSURE THAT INFRASTRUCTURE MEETS THE NEEDS OF A GROWING COUNTY
STRATEGIES - We will:

- a. **Strive to provide all residents and businesses to have access to broadband internet (2022 - 2025)**
- b. **Provide access to treated water to all residences and businesses (Ongoing)**
- c. Support access to natural gas to all residents and businesses at an affordable rate **(2022 - Ongoing)**
- d. Look for regional and private sector collaboration opportunities to provide infrastructure using economies of scale **(Ongoing)**
- e. Maintain a high-quality and safe road network (paving, gravel, signage, lighting) **(Ongoing)**

5.5 - RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT

GOAL: TO UNDERSTAND AND RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF COUNTY RESIDENTS AND
BUSINESSES

STRATEGIES - We will:

- a. Council reviews applicable bylaws and all policies on a regular basis **(Ongoing)**
- b. Consider adding the role of concierge or navigator to assist applicants through county processes **(2022 - Ongoing)**
- c. Ensure that County permitting, licensing, and business processes meet the needs of a growing population (ie. subdivision process) **(2022 - 2023)**
- d. Meet residents, business owners, and community groups, where they are, through innovative and regular engagement efforts **(Ongoing)**



Junction of Highway 49 and Highway 725, RR 1, Spirit River, Alberta, Canada, T0H 3G0

Phone: (780) 864-3760 | Fax: (780) 864-3904 | Toll Free: 1 (888) 864-3760

Monday to Friday 8:15 AM to 4:30 PM



www.saddlehills.ab.ca



@saddlehillscounty



@saddlehillsab