



2021 UPDATED  
**STRATEGIC PLAN**



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# MESSAGE TO OUR RESIDENTS

Saddle Hills County Council originally developed its Strategic Plan to focus on the opportunities and needs of the County. Since the implementation of the 2019-2021 plan in 2019, we have made significant progress on many of our initiatives and have developed new projects to help us meet our goals.

## 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 business, as well as the 2018 citizen survey results. 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.



## COVID-19

Much like the rest of the world, Saddle Hills County has had to adapt and adjust to the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic. In April of 2020 Council adopted its final budget for the year with the current global, and resulting economic, conditions in mind. Council aims to use the same foresight when finalizing the budget for 2021, financial prudence and the wellbeing of the County's citizens being top priorities.



## 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, 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 on the east.





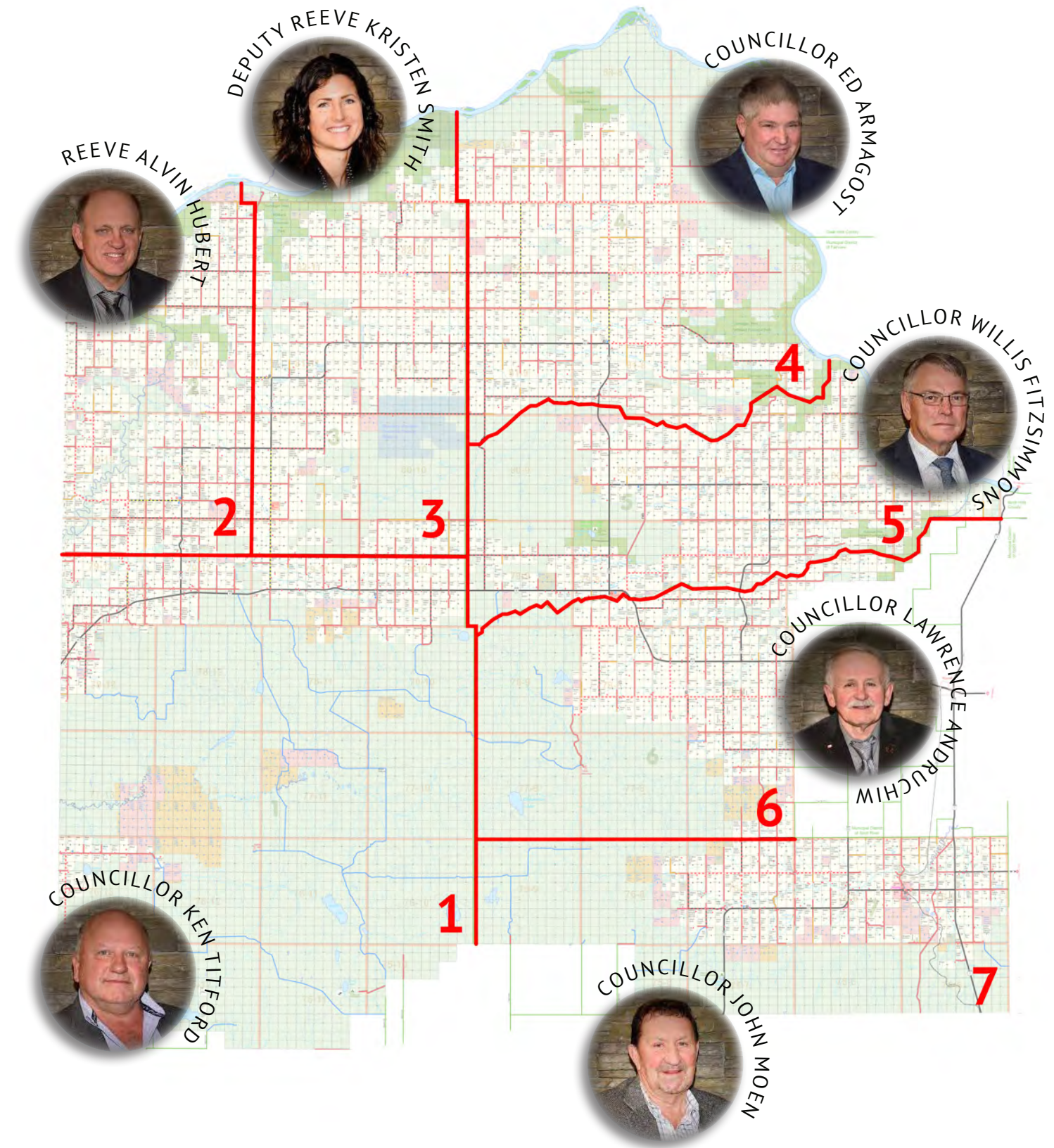
# OUR COMMITMENT



BACK L TO R: COUNCILLORS LAWRENCE ANDRUCHIW, WILLIS FITZSIMMONS, ED ARMAGOST, KEN TITFORD, JOHN MOEN  
FRONT, L TO R: DEPUTY REEVE KRISTEN SMITH, REEVE ALVIN HUBERT

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.

This Strategic Plan was approved by the above mentioned Council on 23 February, 2021.



# WARD MAP



# VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

A thriving rural municipality with a growing population, safe active communities and a strong, sustainable and diverse economy. To enhance our communities by providing and supporting quality services and regional initiatives.



## *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.



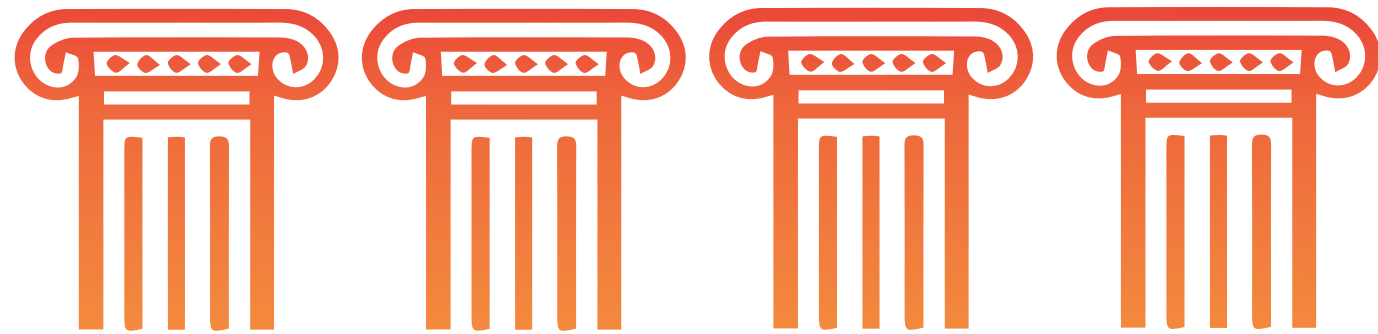
## *Community Spirit*

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





# OUR STRATEGIC PILLARS



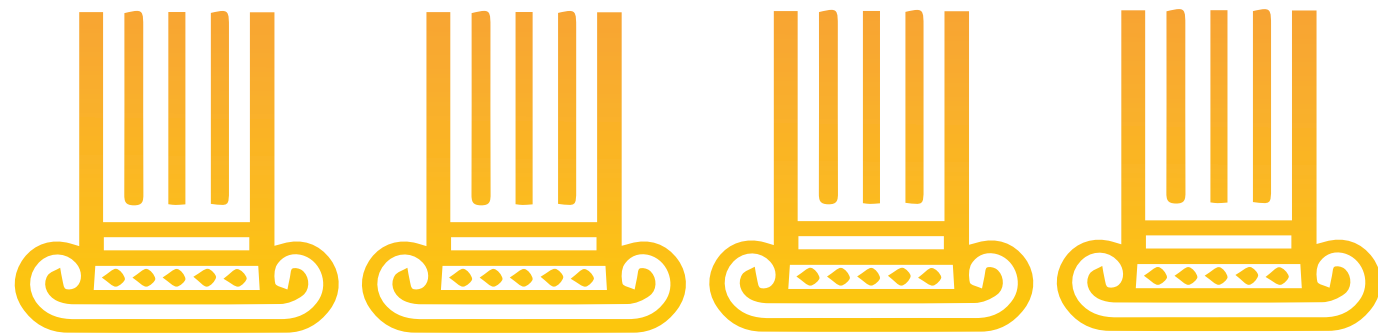
Saddle Hills County council recognized the county's strategic pillars as follows:

GOVERNANCE  
AND  
LEADERSHIP

COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL  
STEWARDSHIP

MUNICIPAL  
SERVICES AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE



## 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

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

## 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 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 neighbours



# STRATEGIC THEMES



## ROADS

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



## POTABLE WATER

Ensuring that our residents have clean potable water is the first step in making the county a place where community 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 i.e., rural internet, improved cell coverage, for businesses and homes within the county.

## RECREATION

Saddle Hills County is our home and 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 want to celebrate that. We want our beautiful county to be a place that visitors would want to call home.





# 2021 PRIORITIES



## SADDLE HILLS ADVANTAGE

- Work with current agricultural businesses to develop co-located secondary agriculture enterprises 2021
- Research and develop the Saddle Hills Advantage package. Make research available to investors 2021

## ROAD REHABILITATION AND UPGRADING

- Continuing ongoing maintenance Ongoing
- Review re-gravelling and road upgrading plans May, 2021
- Review road rehabilitation and road repair programs May, 2021
- Revisit major road projects (Gundy Connector, Northmark Road and Happy Valley Road) for potential upgrades TBD

## WATER SYSTEMS

- Complete annual Rural Waterline Project Annual
- Central Peace Regional Water Project (Phase 1 & 2) 2021 - 2024

## NATURAL GAS STRATEGY

- Collaborate with the Central Peace Natural Gas Co-op to identify areas that require additional natural gas volume 2021
- Advocate to other orders of government for funding to support regional economic development and business growth that require additional natural gas supplies 2021

## MODERN COMMUNICATIONS

- Complete Telus tower partnerships as per broadband strategy 2022
- Identify remaining cellular coverage gaps 2023
- Develop a broadband project and grant application to bring fibre to as many residents, businesses, industry and County facilities as possible March, 2021

## COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION

- Research community lighting options and community signage 2021

## HOUSING INCENTIVES

- Develop a strategy for families and individuals who want to live in the County and find attainable housing 2021

## RECREATION AND TOURISM

- Research seasonal properties on the banks of the Peace River 2021
- Work with private residents and business to increase the stock of accommodation for visitors 2021
- Complete the Cotillion recreation site improvements 2021

## SPLASH PARKS

- Assess feasibility of splash park(s) in collaboration with community groups 2021





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