

**Town of Bowden - Regular Council Meeting**  
**AGENDA**

A Regular Council Meeting of the Town of Bowden  
to be held in Council Chambers, at 2101 – 20 Avenue, Bowden,  
on **Monday 25 August 2025, 7:00pm.**

**Deputy Mayor to preside meeting**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA & ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**
- 3. ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**  
3.a August 11, 2025, Regular Council Meeting.
- 4. URGENT BUSINESS**  
4.a Chief Elected Official – Appointment of Mayor by Council  
4.b Oath of Office Mayor

**Mayor to preside meeting**

- 4.c Appointment of Deputy Mayor (if required)
- 4.d Oath of Office Deputy Mayor (if required)
- 4.e Appointment to Committees
- 5. PUBLIC HEARING**  
None scheduled.
- 6. DELEGATION**  
None scheduled.
- 7. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**  
7.a Council Resolutions Follow Up Action.  
7.b Key Dates.
- 8. BYLAWS & POLICIES**  
No agenda item.
- 9. NEW BUSINESS**  
9.a Appointments to Public Library Board
- 10. FINANCIAL**  
No agenda item.
- 11. CORRESPONDENCE**  
As per content
- 12. REPORTS**  
12.a CAO's Report.  
12.b Council Committee Reports.  
12.c Society & Other Reports.
- 13. MEETING ADJOURNMENT**



**Town of Bowden – Regular Council Meeting  
held on Monday August 11, 2025  
at Town of Bowden Council Chambers.**

**MINUTES (unapproved)**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Robb Stuart called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**PRESENT**

Mayor  
Councillor  
Councillor  
Councillor  
Councillor

Robb Stuart  
Paul Webb  
Wayne Milaney  
Deb Coombes  
Randy Brown

**ABSENT**

Councillor

Sandy Gamble

**ADMINISTRATION**

CAO

Arno Glover

**2. ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA & ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

**Motion 2.a**

Moved by Councillor Randy Brown that Council adopts the agenda as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**3. ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

**Motion 3.a.**

Moved by Councillor Deb Coombes that Council adopts the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of July 28, 2025, as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**4. PUBLIC HEARING**

There was no public hearing.

**5. DELEGATION**

There was no delegation.

**6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

**Agenda item 6.a Council Resolutions Requiring Follow Up Action**

Administration provided Council with a summary of Council resolutions that remain as work in progress / ongoing.

**Motion 6.a**

Moved by Councillor Randy Brown that Council accepts the Resolutions Follow Up Action Report as information.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Agenda item 6.b Key Dates**

Administration provided Council with forthcoming key dates.

**Motion 6.b**

Moved by Councillor Randy Brown that Council accepts agenda item 6.b as information.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**7. BYLAWS & POLICIES**

There was no agenda item.

**8. NEW BUSINESS****8.a MGA Chief Elected Official (Elected) Vacancy**

In view of the announcement made that Mayor Robb Stuart intends to resign his position as Mayor, Administration provided Council with a copy of the regulation contained within section 163 of the Municipal Government Act.

**Motion 6.a**

Moved by Councillor Paul Webb that Council accepts agenda item 8.a as information.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**9. FINANCIAL**

There was no agenda item.

**10. CORRESPONDENCE**

**Agenda item 10.a Red Deer County Protective Services (July Enforcement Contract)**

**Agenda item 10.b Municipal Affairs – Municipal Accountability Program Schedule**

**Agenda item 10.c Alberta RCMP (Olds Detachment) 2024 Crime Severity Index**

**Agenda item 10.d Ministry of Agriculture & Irrigation re: Land Annexation**

**Agenda item 10.e Alberta Municipalities re: Rules for Recall of Elected Officials**

**Motion 10.a**

Moved by Councillor Randy Brown that Council accepts the items of correspondence as information.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**11. REPORTS****Agenda item 11.a CAO's Report**

CAO Arno Glover provided Council with an overview (and update) on the items included within the CAO's report.

**Motion 11.a**

Moved by Councillor Deb Coombes that Council accepts the submitted CAO report as information.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Agenda item 11.b Council Committee Reports**

There were no reports submitted

**Agenda item 11.c Society & Other Reports**

- i. Mountain View Regional Water Services Commission (meeting of July 9, 2025)
- ii. FCSS Report for July 2025
- iii. Alberta Counsel News July 2025

**Motion 11.c**

Moved by Councillor Paul Webb that Council accepts the society & other reports as information.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**12. MEETING ADJOURNMENT****Motion 12.a**

Moved by Councillor Randy Brown at 7:45 pm to adjourn the meeting.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Minutes signed by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor  
Robb Stuart

\_\_\_\_\_  
CAO  
Arno Glover

<b>Regular Council Meeting:</b> August 25, 2025.	<b>Agenda Item:</b> 4.a / 4.b
<b>Prepared by:</b> Arno Glover	<b>Approved by:</b> Deputy Mayor Randy Brown
<b>Report Type:</b> RFD	<b>Attachment(s):</b> 1 Mayor Official Oath of Office

#### **4.a Chief Elected Official (Elected) Vacancy (Mayor)**

##### **4.a.i**

The CAO received notification from Mayor Robb Stuart on Wednesday August 20, 2025, of his decision to resign his position as Mayor of the Town of Bowden.

##### **4.a.ii**

Section 163 of the Municipal Government Act states:

**163** *If the chief elected official is elected by a vote of the electors of the whole municipality and the office becomes vacant, the vacancy must be filled*

*(a) if on the date the vacancy occurs there are 12 months or more before a general election, by a by-election, or*

*(b) if on the date the vacancy occurs there are less than 12 months before a general election, either by a by-election or by council appointing at the next council meeting one or more councillors as chief elected official so that*

*(i) only one councillor holds that office at any one time, and*

*(ii) the office is filled all the time.*

The position of Mayor is an elected position by vote of the electors within the community. Council is therefore required to appoint a new Mayor.

##### **4.a.iii**

Section 9 (Term of Office) of the Local Authorities Election Act states:

**9(1)** *A person elected under this Act, unless otherwise disqualified from remaining in office, holds office from the beginning of the organizational meeting of the elected authority following the general election to immediately before the beginning of the organizational meeting of the elected authority after the next general election.*

**(2)** *A person elected to an elected authority to fill a vacancy caused other than by the passage of time holds office from when the person takes the oath of office for the remainder of the period the person's predecessor would have held office had that predecessor continued in office.*

The newly appointed Mayor will hold that position until the next Organizational Meeting of Council scheduled for Monday October 27, 2025.

##### **4.a.iv**

Administration requests that Council appoint a new Mayor.

#### **Recommended Motion**

Moved by Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ that Council appoint by resolution \_\_\_\_\_ to be Mayor of the Town of Bowden with immediate effect ending at 6:30pm on Monday October 27, 2025.

**4.b Chief Elected Official Oath of Office**

Administration requests that the new Mayor swears the Official Oath of Office.



# OFFICIAL OATH OF OFFICE

## Town of Bowden

### Mayor

August 25, 2025 – October 27, 2025

I, \_\_\_\_\_, swear that I will diligently, faithfully and to the best of my ability execute according to law the office of Mayor for the Town of Bowden. So Help Me God.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

Sworn before me at the Town of Bowden in the Province of Alberta this 25th day of August, 2025

\_\_\_\_\_  
Councillor Town of Bowden  
Term Expires October 27, 2025

# BOWDEN

<b>Regular Council Meeting:</b> August 25, 2025.	<b>Agenda Item:</b> 4.c / 4.d
<b>Prepared by:</b> Arno Glover	<b>Approved by:</b> Deputy Mayor Randy Brown
<b>Report Type:</b> RFD	<b>Attachment(s):</b> 1 Deputy Mayor Official Oath of Office

**Content:****4.c Appointment of Deputy Mayor (if required)**

In the event that the Deputy Mayor is appointed as Mayor, Administration requests that Council appoint a new Deputy Mayor with immediate effect until the Organizational Meeting of Council scheduled for Monday October 27, 2025.

**Recommended Motion**

Moved by Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ that Council appoint by resolution \_\_\_\_\_ to be Deputy Mayor of the Town of Bowden with immediate effect ending at 6:30pm on Monday October 27, 2025.

**4.d Official Oath of Office Deputy Mayor (if required)**

Administration requests that the Deputy Mayor swears the Official Oath of Office.



# OFFICIAL OATH OF OFFICE

## Town of Bowden

### Deputy Mayor

August 25, 2025 – October 27, 2025

I, \_\_\_\_\_, swear that I will diligently, faithfully and to the best of my ability execute according to law the office of Deputy Mayor for the Town of Bowden. So Help Me God.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

Sworn before me at the Town of Bowden in the Province of Alberta this 25th day of August, 2025

\_\_\_\_\_  
Councillor Town of Bowden  
Term Expires October 27, 2025

# BOWDEN

<b>Regular Council Meeting:</b> August 25, 2025.	<b>Agenda Item:</b> 4.e
<b>Prepared by:</b> Arno Glover	<b>Approved by:</b> Deputy Mayor Randy Brown
	<b>Attachment(s):</b> 1 List of Council Committee Appointments

#### **4.e Appointments to Council Committees**

##### **4.e.i Inter Municipal Development Committee**

Administration requests that Council appoint a new member to the Inter Municipal Development Committee to replace appointed member Robb Stuart.

##### **Recommended Motions**

Moved by Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ that Council appoint by resolution \_\_\_\_\_ to be the third Council member of the Inter Municipal Development Committee effective immediately, ending at the date of the next Organizational Meeting of Council scheduled for Monday October 27, 2025.

In addition:

Moved by Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ that Council by resolution appoint as Chair of the Inter Municipal Development Committee \_\_\_\_\_ effective immediately, ending at the date of the next Organizational Meeting of Council scheduled for Monday October 27, 2025.

##### **4.e.ii Bowden & District Agricultural Society**

Administration requests that Council appoint a new alternate member to the Bowden & District Agricultural Society to replace alternate Robb Stuart.

##### **Recommended Motion**

Moved by Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ that Council appoint by resolution \_\_\_\_\_ to be the alternate member of the Bowden & District Agricultural Society effective immediately, ending at the date of the next Organizational Meeting of Council scheduled for Monday October 27, 2025.

##### **4.e.iii Mountain View Regional Water Services Commission**

Administration requests that Council appoint a new regular board representative to the Mountain View Regional Water Services Commission.

##### **Recommended Motion**

Moved by Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ that Council appoint by resolution \_\_\_\_\_ to be the regular representative to the Mountain View Regional Water Services Commission effective immediately, ending at the date of the next Organizational Meeting of Council scheduled for Monday October 27, 2025.

If required:

**Recommended Motion**

Moved by Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ that Council appoint by resolution \_\_\_\_\_ to be the alternate representative to the Mountain View Regional Water Services Commission effective immediately, ending at the date of the next Organizational Meeting of Council scheduled for Monday October 27, 2025.



**2025**  
**Revised List of:**  
**Council Committee & Appointments**  
**&**

**Appointment of Elected Officials to other Bodies & Organizations**

(as approved during the October 28, 2024, Organizational Meeting of Council),

(\* and as amended during the July 14, 2025, Regular Council Meeting).

(\*\* and as amended during the July 28, 2025, Regular Council Meeting).

Council Committees	Chairperson	Appointed Members		
Municipal Planning Commission (MPC)	Paul Webb	All Council Members		
Emergency Advisory Committee	Mayor	All Council Members		
Special Events & Cultural Committee	Mayor	All Council Members		
Weed Control Act – Appeals Committee	Mayor	All Council Members		
Intermunicipal Development Committee (3 Councillors)	Robb Stuart	Robb Stuart	Randy Brown	Paul Webb
Public Library Board (2 Councillors)	Appointed by Board	Randy Brown	Deb Coombes	Term of Office 1 Year
Bowden & District Cemetery Association (1 Councillor & 1 Alternate Councillor)	Appointed by Board	Wayne Milaney	Deb Coombes	n/a

**Other Bodies & Organizations**

	Regular	Alternate
Bowden & District Agricultural Society	Paul Webb	Robb Stuart
Bowden Grandview School Council	Deb Coombes	Wayne Milaney
Central Alberta Economic Partnership (CAEP)	Paul Webb	Randy Brown
Central Alberta Regional Waste Management Commission	Sandy Gamble	Wayne Milaney
Expanding Horizons Cultural Enhancement Society	Sandy Gamble*	Deb Coombes**
Mountain View Regional Water Services Commission	Robb Stuart	Deb Coombes
South Red Deer Regional Wastewater Commission	Randy Brown	Wayne Milaney
Parkland Foundation Management Body	Sandy Gamble	Deb Coombes
Parkland Regional Library Board	Deb Coombes	Paul Webb
Red Deer & District Family and Community Support Services	Sandy Gamble	Marie Flowers
Bowden Friendship Club	Wayne Milaney*	Paul Webb**

<b>Regular Council Meeting:</b> August 25, 2025.	<b>Agenda Item:</b> 7.a
<b>Prepared by:</b> Arno Glover	<b>Approved by:</b> Deputy Mayor Randy Brown
<b>Report Type:</b> Information	<b>Attachment(s):</b> 1 Council Resolutions Follow Up Action Report

Matters arising from past minutes.

### **7.a Council Resolutions Requiring Follow Up Action Report**

A summary of past Council resolutions that require follow up action is attached.



## Town of Bowden

### COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS REQUIRING FOLLOW UP ACTION

(updated comments in red - updated 19 August 2025)

Meeting Date	Resolution	Action By Whom	Date back to Council
24 Apr 23	<b>Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework</b> Motion 8.a ICF to be delayed for 2 years pending Provincial Government guidelines Municipal Services Agreement (planning services) with RDC expires 31 December 2025 ICF changes to be introduced into the MGA reference Bill 50. Current ICF expired in December 2022 – the provincial government 2-year moratorium expired in December 2024. Email sent to CAO of RDC to commence planning / discussions. No response to date.	Council / CAO	progress
9 July 2025	Latest MGA is now published dated May 15, 2025. The requirement for an ICF is now a relevant statute.		
26 Aug 24	<b>Firehall Flag Poles</b> Motion 8.c Administration to liaise with RDC Protective Services This may form part of the future discussion on firehall building updates.	CAO	progress
23 June 25	<b>Role of the Chief Administrative Officer</b> Motion 8.g Revision of Council Procedural Bylaw No progress to date This will also include amendments that are required following the repeal of the FOIP Act.	CAO	progress

**Agenda item 7.a Council Resolutions Follow Up Action Report (continued)****Recommended Motion:**

Motion by Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ that Council accepts the Council Resolutions Follow Up Action Report as information.

<b>Regular Council Meeting:</b> August 25, 2025.	<b>Agenda Item:</b> 7.b
<b>Prepared by:</b> Arno Glover	<b>Approved by:</b> Deputy Mayor Randy Brown
<b>Report Type:</b> Information	<b>Attachment(s):</b> 1 Town of Penhold Fall Festival Letter

## 7.b Key Dates *(for information)*

### AUGUST

August 28 MVRWSC Annual Golf Tournament (Registration 1:30pm)

### SEPTEMBER

September 6 Penhold Fall Festival Parade (refer to attached letter for details)

September 8 Regular Council Meeting 7:00pm Council Chambers

September 17 Bowden Community Showcase 5:00pm to 7:00pm Bowden Grandview School

September 22 Nomination Day - Municipal Election (12 noon deadline)  
(last day for submission of candidate nomination forms)

### OCTOBER

October 20 Municipal General Election

October 27 Organizational Meeting of Council 6:30pm Council Chambers  
Regular Council Meeting 7:00pm Council Chambers

October 28 Elected Officials Education Program  
Regional Orientation Session hosted by Town of Blackfalds with George Cuff

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November 12 Alberta Municipalities Convention and Trade Show  
November 14 (Calgary TELUS Convention Centre)

**Hotel reservations have been made for 7 Councillors for the nights of Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November to Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> November (3 nights) Hyatt Regency Calgary**

**ABMunis registrations have been made for 7 elected officials.**

December 12 Christmas Special Event Igloo Arena (tbc)



## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

1 Waskasoo Avenue

P.O. Box 10

Penhold, AB T0M 1R0

PHONE: 403.886.4567

FAX: 403.886.4039

EMAIL: [info@townofpenhold.ca](mailto:info@townofpenhold.ca)

[www.townofpenhold.ca](http://www.townofpenhold.ca)

Mayor Robb Stuart  
Town of Bowden  
PO Box 338  
Bowden, AB T0M 0K0

July 31, 2025

### RE: Town of Penhold Fall Festival September 5 & 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Dear Robb,

We are thrilled to be organizing the Town of Penhold's annual Fall Festival, taking place on Friday, September 5<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025. I warmly invite you to join us in celebrating this much-anticipated community event.

Friday evening will feature a variety of festivities including the Mayor's Mini-Marathon, Craft Beer Night, live entertainment, fireworks, and midway rides—a perfect kickoff to the weekend! On Saturday, we invite you to represent your municipality in our "Timeless Toys, Endless Joys" themed parade. This year's theme reflects both nostalgia and celebration, as we mark a significant transition in our community: the closing of Penhold Elementary School and the opening of the new Penhold Waskasoo Middle School.

In recognition of the generations of students and educators who have shaped our town, we are proud to announce that the Honourary Parade Marshals will be the teachers and students of Penhold's schools: Jessie Duncan School, Penhold Waskasoo Middle School, and Penhold Crossing Secondary School.

As in previous years, you are welcome to join myself and Council on the Dignitary Float, or you may choose to bring your own vehicle for the parade. Please let Bonnie know your preference to ensure appropriate space is reserved in the parade lineup.

All dignitaries will receive:

- Two tickets to the Community T.I.E.S. Pancake Breakfast, now held at the Drop-In Centre (3001 Minto Street)
- A small token of appreciation from the Town of Penhold

The parade will begin at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, September 6<sup>th</sup>. We kindly ask that all dignitaries arrive between 9:30 and 10:00 a.m. The dignitary lineup will be along Newton Drive (please see the attached map for details).

To confirm your participation in the parade and/or the Pancake Breakfast, please contact Bonnie directly at 403-886-3281 or via email at [bstearns@townofpenhold.ca](mailto:bstearns@townofpenhold.ca) by Monday, August 25th, 2025.

Should you have any questions, feel free to reach out to Bonnie directly. We look forward to celebrating with you at this year's Fall Festival!

Warm regards



Mayor Mike Yargeau



**Recommended Motion:**

Motion by Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ that Council accepts agenda item 7.b as information.

<b>Regular Council Meeting:</b> August 25, 2025.	<b>Agenda Item:</b> 9.a
<b>Prepared by:</b> Arno Glover	<b>Approved by:</b> Deputy Mayor Randy Brown
<b>Report Type:</b> RFD	<b>Attachment(s):</b>

## 9 Appointments to Library Board

### 9.a.i Background (2023)

In the RCM of May 2023 Administration presented Council with a list of Public Library Board Appointments and their respective terms of office.

This was in response to a request received from the Government of Alberta requesting confirmation by Council resolution of the appointment of all members to the Public Library Board but to specifically include the provision of specific term of office end dates.

Administration therefore provided Council with the following table as a request for decision.

Board Member	Name	Position	Expiry Date
1	Marie Flowers	Councillor	October 23, 2023
2	Deb Coombes	Councillor	October 23, 2023
3	Leanna Pillon	Secretary	October 31, 2023
4	Shawna MacDonald	Chairperson	October 31, 2024
5	Justina Klassen-Fehr	Member	October 31, 2024
6	Marietta Tuckwell	Member	October 31, 2025
7	Caroline Furman	Member	October 31, 2025

A motion was passed by Council as follows:

*Motion 9.b by Councillor Marie Flowers that the Town of Bowden Public Library Board appointments and their respective term of office end dates are approved by Council as presented.*

### 9.a.ii

There has been no resolution by Council to extend the term of office for Shawna MacDonald and Justina Klassen-Fehr beyond October 31, 2024.

### 9.a.iii

However, a request was submitted by the Public Library Board in June 2025 for Council to appoint Shawna MacDonald and Justina Klassen-Fehr to the Public Library Board for a new 2-year term effective 1 November 2025.

The Council minutes recording that resolution were submitted to the Alberta Public Library Services Branch, Government of Alberta as required.

Subsequent analysis by Library Legislative Advisor (Ken Allan) raised a query with regard to the appointment and resolution required for the period from 1 November 2024 to 1 November 2025.

**9.a.iv**

Administration has via telephone conversation with Ken Allan sought clarification as to what is required in order to rectify the matter.

Town Council is requested by resolution to appoint the 2 members to the Public Library for the remaining period of their term of office, that is from 25<sup>th</sup> August 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025.

A back dated "retrospective" resolution is not required.

**Recommended Motion**

Moved by Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ that Council appoints Shawna MacDonald and Justina Klassen-Fehr to the Town of Bowden Public Library Board for a 10-week term effective August 25, 2025, until October 31, 2025.

**9.a.v**

Administration presents a summary below of the terms of office for the remaining Library Board members and their expiry date.

This information has been provided to the Library Manager.

Board Member	Position	Appointed	Term	Expiry Date
Marietta Tuckwell	Member	January 9, 2023	<3 years	October 31, 2025
Caroline Furman	Member	January 23, 2023	<3 years	October 31, 2025
Tina Von Hatten	Member	September 25, 2023	2 years, 1 month	October 31, 2025

<b>Regular Council Meeting:</b> August 11, 2025.	<b>Agenda Item:</b> 11.a / b / c
<b>Prepared by:</b> Arno Glover	<b>Approved by:</b> Deputy Mayor Randy Brown
<b>Report Type:</b> Information	<b>Attachment(s):</b> as per content

**Agenda item 11****Content:**

- 11.a    Municipal Affairs – Canada Community Building Fund letter**
- 11.b    Municipal Affairs Engagement Team re: AB Munis meeting with Minister of Municipal Affairs**
- 11.c    Canadian Pacific Kansas City correspondence re: Rail Safety Week**



ALBERTA  
MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

*Office of the Minister  
MLA, Peace River*

AR119711

August 8, 2025

His Worship Robb Stuart  
Mayor  
Town of Bowden  
PO Box 338  
Bowden AB T0M 0K0

Dear Mayor Stuart:

I am pleased to confirm your allocation for the 2025-26 Canada Community-Building Fund (CCBF). In 2025, Canada allocated Alberta \$276 million; this partnership between the province and the federal government will help ensure local governments in Alberta can continue to make needed investments in local infrastructure.

For the Town of Bowden, your 2025 CCBF allocation is \$127,743.

Both the CCBF and Local Government Fiscal Framework (LGFF) funding amounts for all municipalities and Metis Settlements are posted on the Government of Alberta website at <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/canada-community-building-fund-allocations>.

I look forward to working together with you to support your local infrastructure needs, and building strong, vibrant communities across Alberta.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Williams'.

Dan Williams, ECA  
Minister of Municipal Affairs

cc: Arno Glover, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Bowden



**CAO**

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**From:** MA Engagement Team <ma.engagement@gov.ab.ca>  
**Sent:** August 13, 2025 8:53 AM  
**To:** MA Engagement Team  
**Cc:** Ijeoma Okolo  
**Subject:** Invitation to meet with Minister Dan Williams  
**Attachments:** 2025 ABmunis Meeting Template.xlsx

Dear Chief Administrative Officer:

I am writing to inform you of a potential opportunity for municipal councils to meet with the Honourable Dan Williams, Minister of Municipal Affairs, at the 2025 Alberta Municipalities (ABmunis) Fall Convention, scheduled to take place at the Calgary TELUS Convention Centre from November 12-14, 2025. These meetings will be in person at the convention centre, as scheduling permits.

Should your council want to meet with Minister Williams during the convention, please submit a request by email with three potential topics for discussion to [ma.engagement@gov.ab.ca](mailto:ma.engagement@gov.ab.ca) **no later than September 12, 2025**. The meeting request template is attached.

We generally receive more requests than can be reasonably accommodated over the course of the convention. Requests meeting the following criteria will be given priority for meetings during the convention:

- Municipalities that identify up to three discussion topics related to policies or issues directly relevant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and the department.
  - Please ensure details on the discussion topics are provided.
- Priority will be given to requests from municipalities at a distance from Edmonton and to municipalities that Minister Williams has not yet had an opportunity to meet with.

Meeting requests received after the deadline will not be considered for the convention.

Meeting times with the Minister are scheduled for approximately 15 minutes. This allows the Minister to engage with as many councils as possible. All municipalities that submit meeting requests will be notified at least two weeks prior to the convention as to the status of their request.

Municipal Affairs will make every effort to find alternative meeting opportunities throughout the remainder of the year for municipalities the Minister is unable to accommodate during the convention.

Thank you.

**Engagement Team**  
**Municipal Services Division**  
**Municipal Affairs**

Classification: Protected A

## Meeting Request: Alberta Municipalities Fall 2025 Convention

If you have questions, require support and to submit form, please email:

[ma.engagement@gov.ab.ca](mailto:ma.engagement@gov.ab.ca)

### Municipal Information

Municipality Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Meeting Topics

Please provide additional details about the topic for discussion

Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3

### Meeting Participants

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Mayor/Reeve
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_ Chief Administrator
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_ Councillor
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_ Councillor
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_ Councillor
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_ Councillor
- 7 \_\_\_\_\_ Councillor
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_ Councillor
- 9 \_\_\_\_\_ Councillor

**Mayor**

**From:** Mark Piciacchia <Mark.Piciacchia@cpkcr.com>  
**Sent:** August 19, 2025 12:52 PM  
**To:** Mayor  
**Subject:** CPKC - Rail Safety Week 2025

August 19, 2025

Mayor Robb Stuart  
 Town of Bowden  
 PO Box 338  
 Bowden AB T0M 0K0

via email: [mayor@bowden.ca](mailto:mayor@bowden.ca)

Dear Mayor Stuart,

**RE: Rail Safety Week 2025**

Canadian Pacific Kansas City ("CPKC") is asking for your assistance during Rail Safety Week, September 15 to 21, 2025, to help reduce railway-related incidents and make rail safety a priority in your community.

**How your community can participate:**

- Engage on CPKC's social channels by liking, sharing, or retweeting our rail safety posts starting September 15 on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn or X.
- Encourage families to play CPKC's interactive [rail safety video game](#) for young children, designed to teach safe behaviour around tracks and trains.
- Use and share this Operation Lifesaver ("OL") Canada [toolkit](#) for municipalities to promote rail safety locally.
- Invite your local police service to declare Rail Safety Week on social media and register for [Operation Clear Track](#), North America's largest rail-safety law enforcement initiative.
- Share OL's [#STOPTrackTragedies](#) videos, which tell personal stories of those impacted by rail incidents, to remind Canadians "it's not worth the risk."

**Why your support matters**

One incident is too many. CPKC proudly supports [OL Canada](#) to help stop track tragedies. Your commitment to rail safety raises awareness, and helps to reduce avoidable accidents, injuries and damage caused by collisions between trains and vehicles or pedestrians.

**What CPKC is doing**

The CPKC Police Service will conduct rail safety campaigns in communities across our network, alongside other police agencies and schools, to educate motorists, pedestrians and the public on the shared responsibility for rail safety.

"Rail safety is a daily priority at CPKC, and we remain focused on educating the public across our network on how to stay safe around tracks and trains," said Dale Ruzycki, CPKC Chief of Police Canada. "Our goal is that everyone has the knowledge to make safe choices and get home safe each day."

Together, we can make Canada's rail network even safer.

Should you have any questions or need further information, please contact me at 403 803-9166 or [mark.piciacchia@cpkcr.com](mailto:mark.piciacchia@cpkcr.com).

In the event of a rail emergency, call the CPKC Public Safety Communications Centre at 800-716-9132.

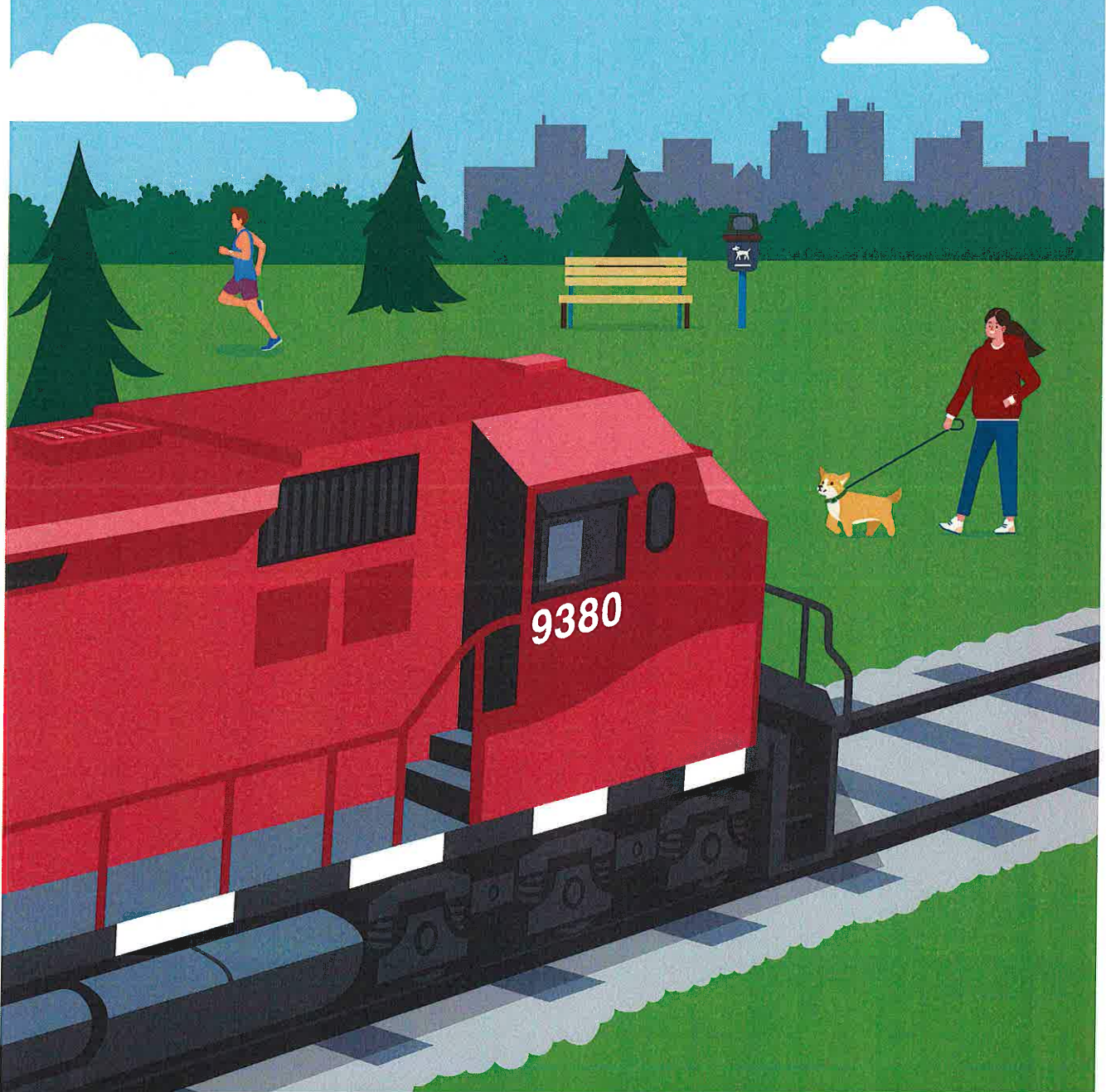
Sincerely,



**Mark Piciacchia**  
Manager, Indigenous Relations &  
Government Affairs  
C 403-803-9166  
Building 1  
7550 Ogden Dale Rd. SE  
Calgary, Alta. T2C 4X9



# SHORT LEASH LONG LIFE





**Agenda item 11 (continued)****Alternative Motions:**

Motion by Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ that Council accepts the submitted items of correspondence as information.

<b>Regular Council Meeting:</b> August 25, 2025.	<b>Agenda Item:</b> 12.a
<b>Prepared by:</b> Arno Glover	<b>Approved by:</b> Deputy Mayor Randy Brown
<b>Report Type:</b> Information	<b>Attachment(s)</b> 1 CAO's Report

**Content:****Agenda item 12.a (CAO's Report)**

<b>Regular Council Meeting:</b> August 25, 2025	<b>Agenda Item:</b> 12.a
<b>Prepared by:</b> Arno Glover	<b>Approved by:</b> Deputy Mayor Randy Brown
<b>Report Type:</b> Information	<b>Attachment(s):</b>

## **CAO's Report**

Many projects remain ongoing and are currently work in progress.

More details will be provided in a future CAO's report as projects are completed and / or significant progress is made.

The following provides a brief update on matters.

### **1 Municipal Elections Update**

The Returning Officer registered for the three Election Database Training sessions to be provided by Alberta Municipal Affairs throughout August, September and October.

The August training session was completed on August 21, 2025.

### **2 Capital Projects Update**

#### **2.1 Wastewater Infrastructure**

Work to replace the damage wastewater pipes is complete.

The paving contractor has back filled those areas where the open trench work took place with subbase material in preparation for asphalt resurfacing which is scheduled to be done by the end of this week / early next week.

In September the appointed contractor will commence with the Cured-In-Place Pipe (CIPP) relining work on: 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue / 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue / 21<sup>st</sup> Street / 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue

#### **2.2 Arena Roof Resistograph Testing**

ISL Engineering completed the on site resistograph testing this week.

A report will follow in due course.

As a deliverable ISL will provide:

- i. a report on the condition of the roof trusses,
- ii. a Conceptual Development Plan (CDP).

#### **2.3 Picnic Shelter / Gazebo**

Work on the construction of the concrete slab foundation has commenced.

**3 Community Gardens**

The Community Gardens situated close by the FCSS building were subject to an act of vandalism earlier this week.

The gardeners were contacted, and a clean up operation and attempt to harvest those items that were damaged has taken place.

This is the first time since 2018 that this kind of activity has occurred.

Administration suspect that this is the result of youth acting in a misguided way.

The matter was notified to the RCMP, but a formal report was not submitted.

The community gardens provide an essential community service that provide not just food but actively promote community engagement and friendship for those residents who garden there.

**4 Firehall**

The fire hall proposal has been submitted as a capital project by Red Deer County Protective Services.

This now requires approval by Administration before submission to Council as part of the capital budgeting process.

**Agenda item 12.a CAO's Report (continued)**

**Recommended Motion:**

Motion by Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ that Council accepts the submitted CAO Report as information.

<b>Regular Council Meeting:</b> August 25, 2025.	<b>Agenda Item:</b> 12.b / 12.c
<b>Prepared by:</b> Arno Glover	<b>Approved by:</b> Deputy Mayor Randy Brown
<b>Report Type:</b> Information	<b>Attachment(s):</b> As per content

**Agenda Item 12.b / 12.c****Content:****Council Committee Reports**

No reports submitted

**Society & Other Reports**

12.c

- i. Red Deer & District FCSS Report (Trends in Review 2025)  
*(report submitted by CAO Arno Glover)*
- ii. Alberta Counsel News (August 2025)  
*(report submitted by CAO Arno Glover)*

**Note:**

All meeting minutes submitted should be assumed to be "unapproved".



# Trends In Review 2025:

A Review of Social Trends in the Red Deer and District Area



## Executive Summary

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The Red Deer & District Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) partnership is undertaking its regular priority setting process to identify funding priorities for the 2027-2029 funding cycle. This report is a compilation of current trends in health and social wellbeing within the Red Deer & District FCSS partnership boundaries and is meant to help inform priority selection. Various databases, literature, research papers, and websites were reviewed for data from the catchment area and Alberta generally. The literature review and the participatory compilation led to the following six themes, each of which must be considered in both the rural and urban context of this FCSS region.

**Connectivity & Isolation:** The Covid-19 pandemic has often been linked to increased loneliness and isolation. Now five years after the onset of the pandemic, data continues to show limited social interaction, desire for more connection, and the impacts of loneliness on health.

**Cost of Living:** Impacts of inflation are seen across Central Alberta. In 2024, the Social Diversion Team responded to over 9 calls per day, with at least one of those calls specific to a lack of access to basic needs. This puts demand and strain on local services, particularly food banks and supportive housing.

**Youth Well-Being:** While trends in youth data are reflective of trends in the general population. However, the social positioning of youths impacts possible solutions for the issues observed. Youth show indications of low social connection, increased substance use, and poor mental health.

**Mental Health & Addictions:** Also significantly impacted by the pandemic, data indicates a continuous decline in mental health in Central Alberta. Dispensation rates of anti-anxiety and antidepressants continue to increase, as does the use of illicit and illegal substances. This has knock-on effects on the health and justice systems.

**Healthy Living:** Data indicates that the expected lifespan of Central Albertans is 1.48 years shorter than the general Albertan. Adverse health outcomes such as diabetes and hypertension rising, while access to health care becomes more challenging. Healthier options may be limited by increased cost of living.

**Safety & Violence:** Despite drops in most crime categories, many people rate crime and safety as a top concern. Central Alberta had nearly 3000 requests for support from children and youth who had experienced victimization between 2020 and 2023. Long-term impacts of COVID-19 lockdowns on domestic violence remain to be seen.

## Table of Contents

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Executive Summary .....	1
Red Deer & District .....	4
Introduction and Objective .....	4
Process and Approach .....	4
Regional Demographics.....	6
Regional Population.....	6
Age Distribution .....	7
Connectivity & Isolation .....	8
Cost of Living .....	10
Youth Well-Being.....	12
Mental Health & Addictions .....	14
Healthy Living .....	15
Family & Sexual Violence.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

## Red Deer & District

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The Red Deer & District FCSS partnership catchment is in Central Alberta, the approximate midpoint between Calgary and Edmonton. The partnership consists of six municipalities: the City of Red Deer, Red Deer County, the Town of Bowden, the Village of Delburne, the Village of Elnora, and the Town of Penhold. This region serves key industries, including Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, Construction, Manufacturing, Accommodation and Food Services, Oil and Gas, and Educational Services<sup>1</sup>.

This region is the historic and current homeland of many Indigenous Peoples. The land on which the Red Deer & District FCSS partnership resides is the traditional land of Treaty 6 First Nations (the Cree, Dene, Blackfoot, Saulteaux, and Nakota Sioux), Treaty 7 First Nations (the Blackfoot Confederacy, Kainai, Piikani, Siksika, T'suut'ina, and Stoney Nakoda), and Métis ancestral lands.

## Introduction and Objective

---

The 2025 Trends in Review report is a compilation of current social trends of wellbeing in Alberta, with a specific focus on the catchment area of the Red Deer & District FCSS partnership. This report includes data and information available since 2016 to the most recent available year, which varies by data source. The 2025 Trends in Review report aims to provide background information to stakeholders in the FCSS 2027-2029 funding priority setting process.

## Process and Approach

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The creation of this report started with a literature review and compilation of relevant data on the general wellbeing trends in Central Alberta, or Alberta generally where more specific information was not available. The FCSS Research and Evaluation Team (R&E) looked for data that was relevant to community wellbeing, timely in its availability, and publicly available.

To further organize this data, FCSS staff (FCSS community facilitators, workers, navigators, and project leaders from each region in the FCSS district) were engaged in meaning making using an approach called card sorting. Visuals were created using the available data, then cut into separate pieces (the "cards") and provided as a set to teams of FCSS staff. The teams were then asked to use this data to build the story of the region over the past three years.

These cards were launching points to discuss local trends based on the wellbeing FCSS staff see in their communities. Participants were also asked to identify any missing or additional data needed to paint a more accurate picture of their communities, as well as any data they felt was irrelevant and could be removed.

At the end of the activity, each team had identified significant themes and created several groupings and visuals based on what they had discussed. Secondary analysis of the results was done by R&E to identify major themes, connecting points, and differences across groups. This information was used to create the final version of this report.

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<sup>1</sup> The City of Red Deer. Key Industries. <https://www.reddeer.ca/business/business-environment/key-industries/>

The participatory approach of card sorting worked to ensure that the experiences of front-line workers in the Red Deer & District FCSS Partnership area were reflected in the understanding and presentation of the available data. FCSS community workers and facilitators have first-hand experience of working with our communities and have an on-the-ground understanding of community assets and needs.

## Community-Based Assets

For the first time, priority setting for this funding cycle included a community-based asset inventory exercise. During the consultation, FCSS staff were asked to create cards listing different assets, which community they serve, and up to three of the 2026 Family and Community Support Services Association of Alberta (FCSSAA) Accountability Framework Provincial Prevention Strategies the asset most aligns with. Following the card sort, they were asked to place their asset cards on the theme that the asset would be most beneficial to.

Between four groups, 65 community-based assets were listed, ranging from physical spaces, citizen attitudes, support resources, and partnerships. Some overlap existed where the same kind of asset was listed for multiple different communities (e.g. schools). While this exercise was brief and an extended version of it could be its own source of rich information, the data gathered provides some interesting insights.

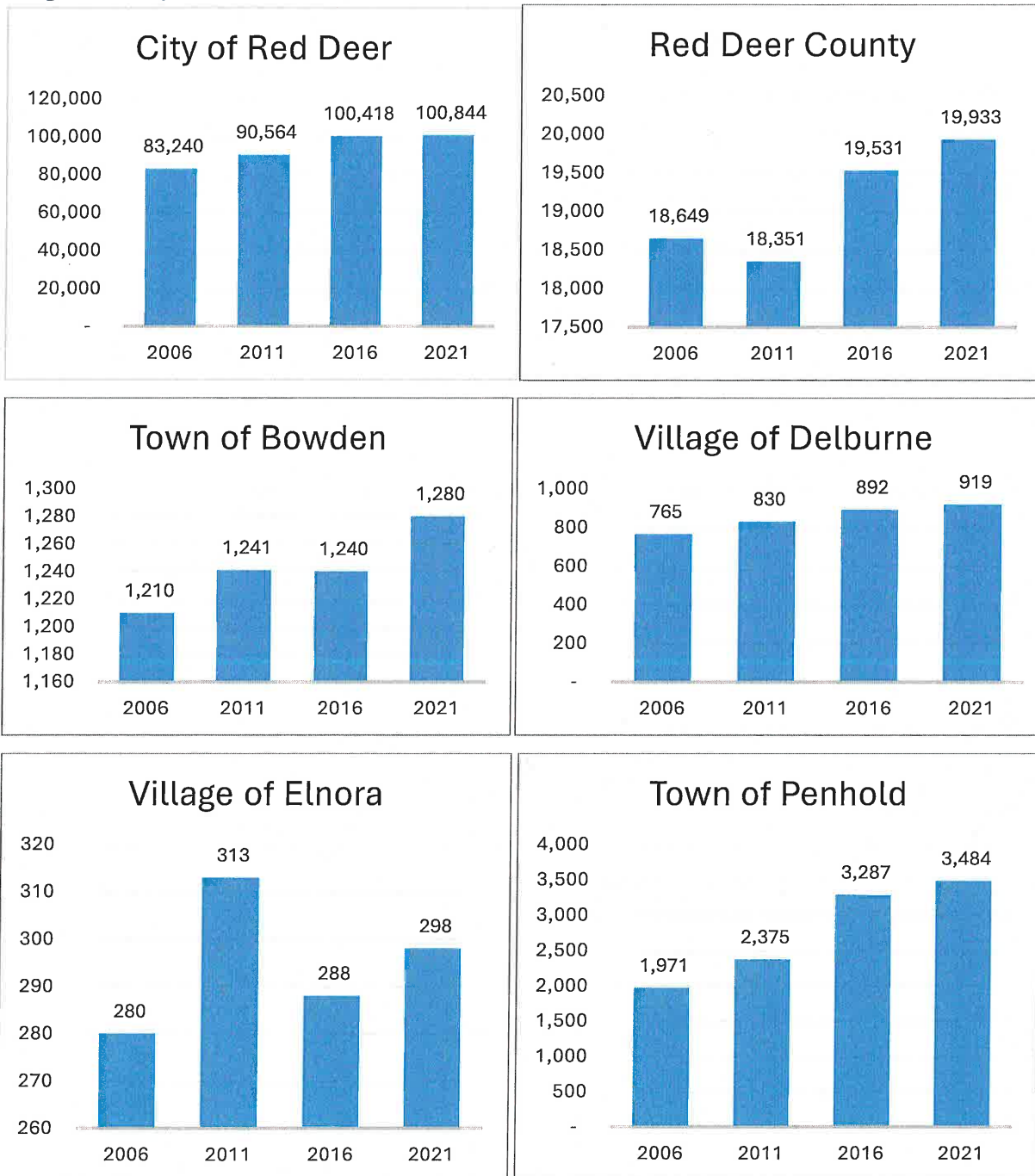
The 2026 FCSSAA Accountability Framework outlines six main prevention strategies:

- I. Promote and encourage active engagement in the community
- II. Foster a sense of belonging
- III. Promote social inclusion
- IV. Develop and maintain healthy relationships
- V. Enhance access to social support
- VI. Develop and strengthen skills that build resilience.

From the assets identified, fostering a sense of belonging was the most frequently listed strategy (n=35) followed by promoting and encouraging active engagement in the community (n=25), and promoting social inclusion (n=22).

## Regional Demographics

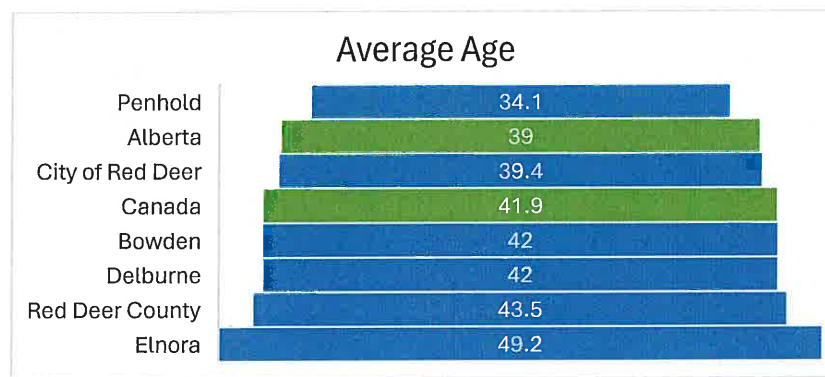
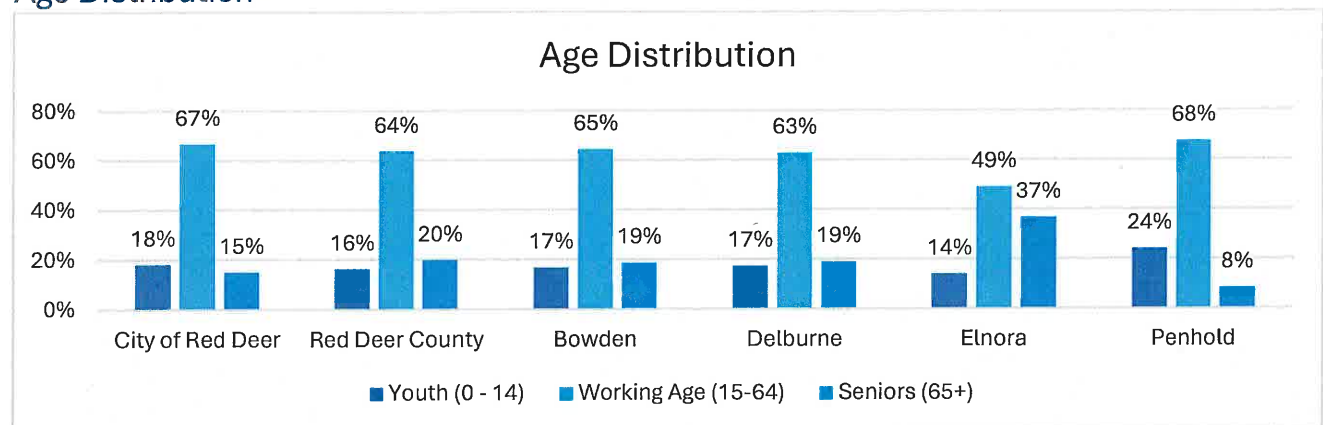
### Regional Population<sup>2</sup>



<sup>2</sup> Statistics Canada. Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census of Population.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/as-sa/fogs-spg/index.cfm?Lang=E>



Age Distribution<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Statistics Canada. Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census of Population.  
<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/as-sa/fogs-spg/index.cfm?Lang=E>.

## Connectivity & Isolation

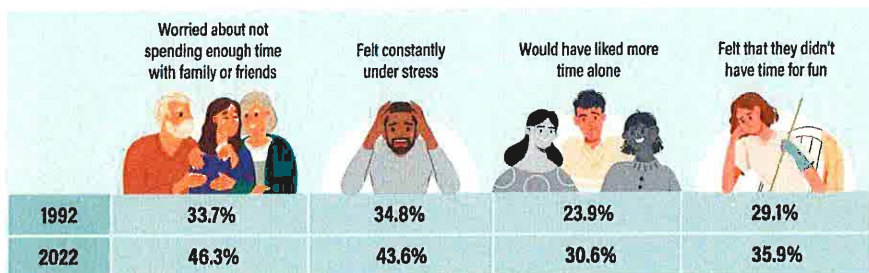
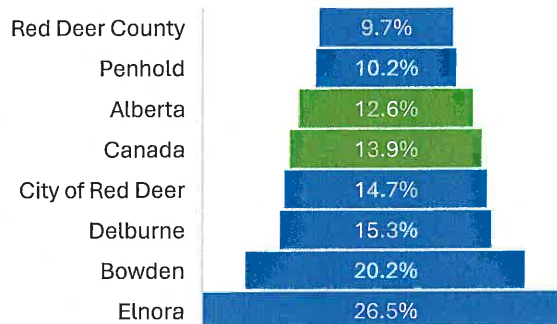
The ways we connect and interact with others in our communities have changed following the Covid-19 pandemic. More than 10% of Canadians aged 15 and older reported often or always feeling lonely<sup>4</sup>. Social isolation and loneliness have been linked to serious impacts on physical and mental health, quality of life, and longevity. This is increasingly being recognized as a priority public health problem<sup>5</sup>.

With the exceptions of Red Deer County and Penhold, all communities in the Red Deer & District FCSS area have more people living alone than the provincial and national averages<sup>6</sup>. About one in four people living alone reported often or always feeling lonely, double that of those who live with others in their household<sup>7</sup>.

Canadians report feeling a lack of time, specifically noting that they worry about not spending enough time with family or friends, while also wanting more alone time<sup>8</sup>.

The International Federation on Ageing states that “the number one emerging issue facing seniors in Canada is keeping older people socially connected and active”. In 2013, Seniors made up about 15% of the Canadian population. By 2036, this group is expected to be between 23-25%. By 2038, there will be two seniors for every five working-age adults<sup>9</sup>.

### People Living Alone (as % of Census Families)



Currently, one in five Canadian seniors report experiencing loneliness, with women more likely to report being lonely than men<sup>10</sup>.

Red Deer & District FCSS volunteer rates decreased

significantly due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In the years since, rates have steadily increased, though

<sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada. Canadian Social Survey: Loneliness in Canada. Released November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/211124/dq211124e-eng.htm>

<sup>5</sup> World Health Organizations. Social isolation and loneliness. 2025. <https://www.who.int/teams/social-determinants-of-health/demographic-change-and-healthy-ageing/social-isolation-and-loneliness>

<sup>6</sup> Statistics Canada. Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census of Population.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/as-sa/fogs-spg/index.cfm?Lang=E>

<sup>7</sup> Statistics Canada. Canadian Social Survey: Loneliness in Canada. Released November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

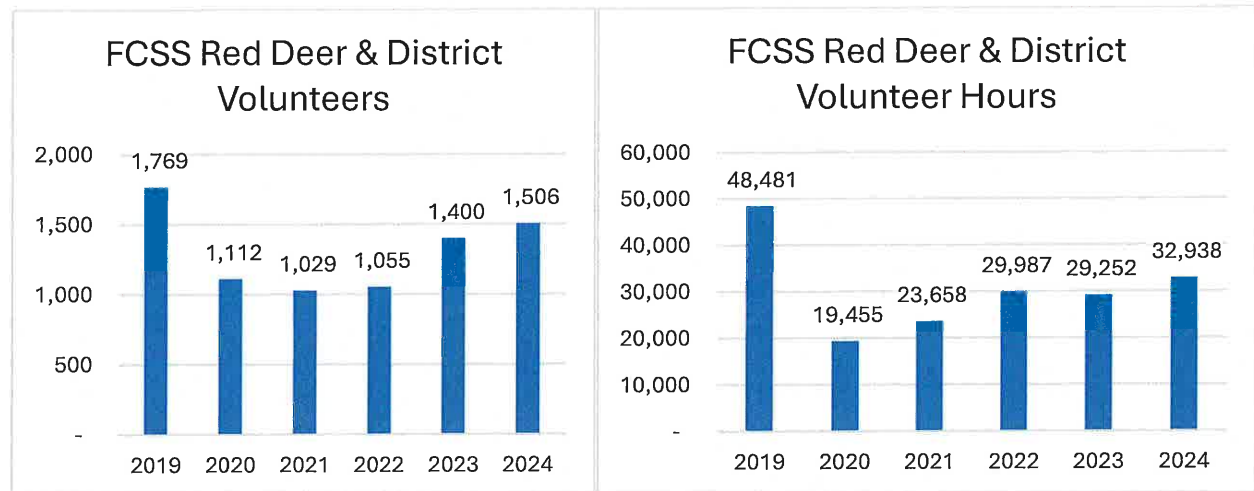
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<sup>8</sup> Statistics Canada. Pressed for time. Released June 17, 2025. [https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2025043-eng.htm?utm\\_source=lnkn&utm\\_medium=smo&utm\\_campaign=statcan-general](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2025043-eng.htm?utm_source=lnkn&utm_medium=smo&utm_campaign=statcan-general)

<sup>9</sup> Statistics Canada. Report on the Social Isolation of Seniors, 2014. <https://www.canada.ca/en/national-seniors-council/programs/publications-reports/2014/social-isolation-seniors/page05.html>

<sup>10</sup> Statistics Canada. A look at loneliness among seniors. November 6, 2023. <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/o1/en/plus/4881-look-loneliness-among-seniors>

they remain below 2019 rates<sup>11</sup>. This is consistent with national trends, with the percentage of people volunteering decreasing 6% between 2018 and 2023<sup>12</sup>.



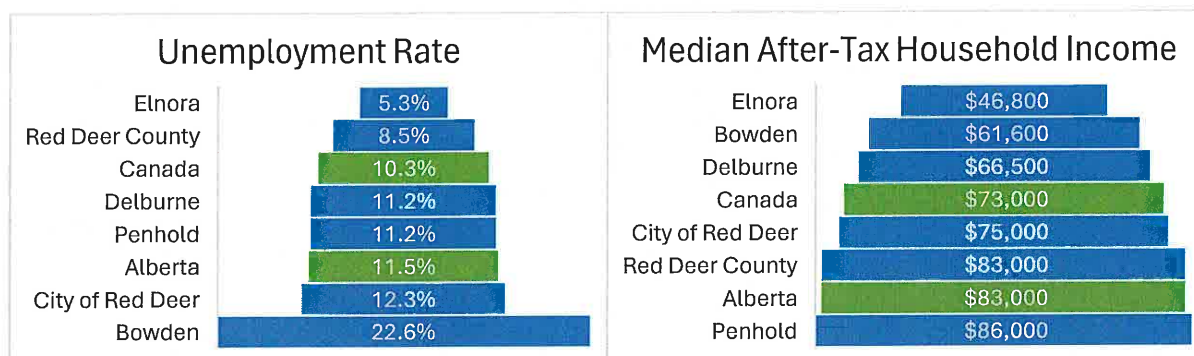
<sup>11</sup> FCSS Community Reports, 2019 - 2024

<sup>12</sup> Statistics Canada. Volunteering and charitable giving in Canada, 2018 to 2023. Released June 23, 2025.

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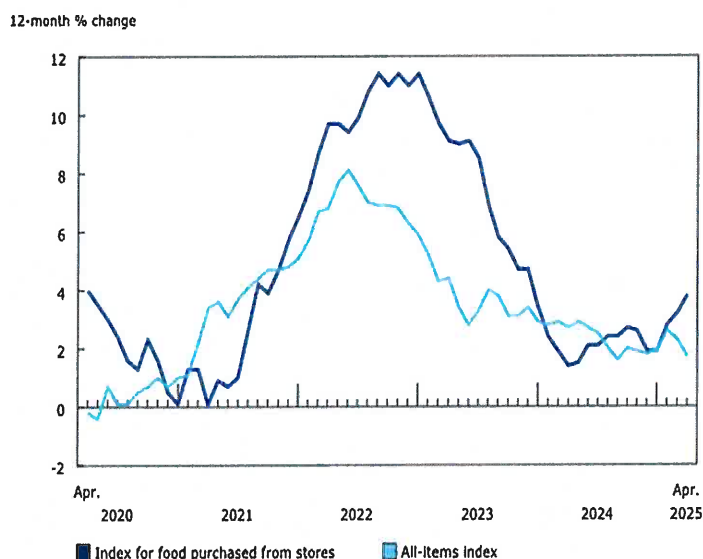
## Cost of Living

Between January 2024 and January 2025, unemployment rates remained stable, dropping by 0.2% in the Red Deer region, with a rate of 7.9% in 2025<sup>13</sup>. This rate is higher than both the provincial (6.7%) and national (6.6%) unemployment rates. However, this rate is nearly half of its high of 15.0% in July 2020<sup>14</sup>, when unemployment rates spiked across the country due to the Covid-19 pandemic.



The Alberta Living Wage Network<sup>15</sup> suggests that Red Deer's minimum wage needs to be \$18.90/hour to ensure people can "thrive, participate in their communities, and manage unforeseen expenses." In 2024, the Red Deer Social Diversion Team responded to 3,311 events, 11% (364) were for basic needs requests like food or warm clothing<sup>16</sup>. This is equivalent to one call each day for basic needs. A quarter of the calls made to 211 from Red Deer were also for support with basic needs, most being housing-related<sup>17</sup>.

While most products have been subject to high rates of inflation, the inflation of food products has been felt by many families in Central Alberta. As of April 2025, food purchased from stores has seen a 3.8% year-over-year increase, consistently increasing faster than the all-items index. Fresh or frozen beef (+16.2%), coffee and



<sup>13</sup> Government of Alberta. Economic Dashboard, Unemployment Rate. Updated June 6, 2025.

<https://economicdashboard.alberta.ca/dashboard/unemployment-rate/#section7>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

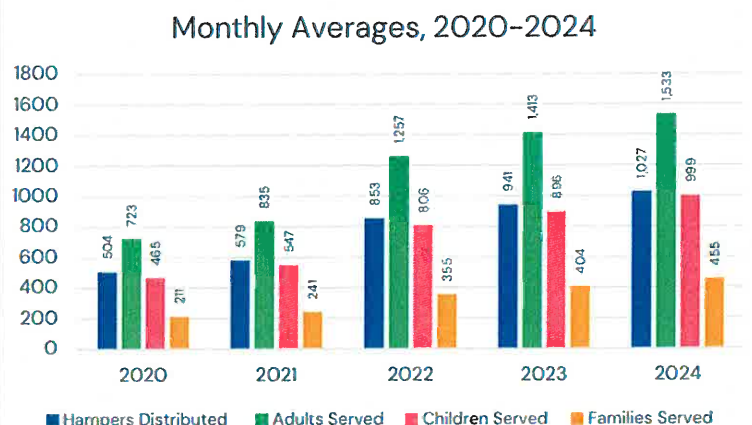
<sup>15</sup> Alberta Living Wage Network (ALWN). Alberta living wage network releases 2024 living wage rates in partnership with 21 communities. <https://www.livingwagealberta.ca/news/alberta-living-wage-network-releases-2024-living-wage-rates-in-partnership-with-21-communities>

<sup>16</sup> City of Red Deer. 2024 Social Diversion Report.

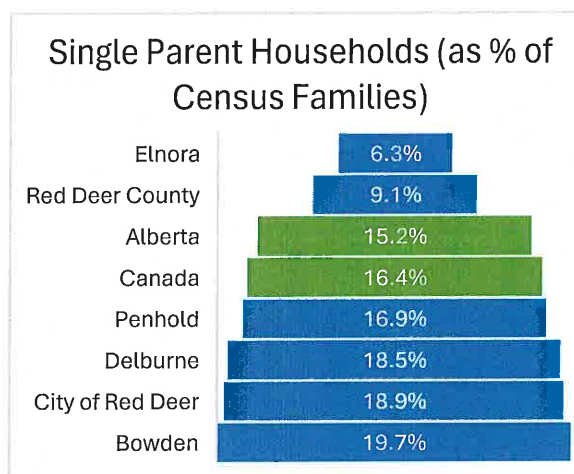
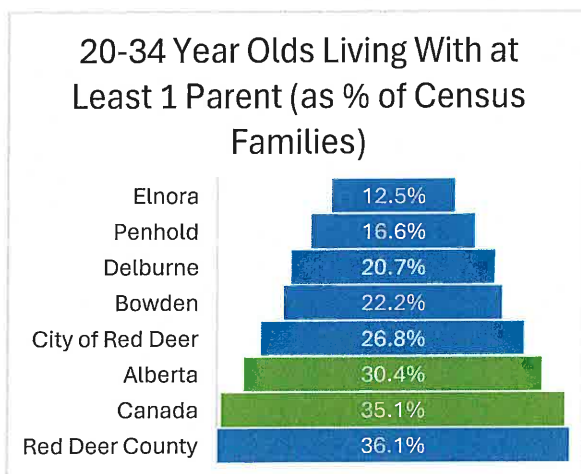
<sup>17</sup> 211 Alberta. 211 Alberta Data Dashboard. <https://ab.211.ca/how-we-help/211-data/>

tea (+13.4%) were the largest contributors to year-over-year acceleration<sup>18</sup>.

The increase in food prices is felt by emergency food providers, like the Red Deer Food Bank. Located in the City of Red Deer, the Food Bank assists with nearly 40 additional helping organizations in Central Alberta, with a service area of 22,000km<sup>2</sup>(19). A \$100 emergency food hamper made in 2020 would cost the Food Bank \$122.5 at the end of 2024<sup>20</sup>. In the same period, the Food Bank saw an increase in demand of over 80%.



The increase in the cost of living has also been felt through an increase in people experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. Between 2022 and 2024, the City of Red Deer saw a 235% increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness<sup>21</sup>. With increased house and rent prices, more new adults live with at least one parent. Such costs may cause additional strain on single parent households. The Red Deer & District area generally has more single parent households and fewer 20–34-year-olds living with at least one parent than provincial and national averages<sup>22</sup>.



<sup>18</sup> Statistics Canada. Consumer Price Index, April 2025. Released May 20, 2025.

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/250520/dq250520a-eng.htm?indid=3665-2&indgeo=0>

<sup>19</sup> Red Deer Food Bank. FAQs. <https://www.reddeerfoodbank.com/faqs>

<sup>20</sup> Red Deer Food Bank. 2023-2024 Annual Report.

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/62702b7285aa176752f339d6/t/67feb82b7defa649a3aa95e5/1744746556952/2023-24+AR\\_FULL+REPORT.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/62702b7285aa176752f339d6/t/67feb82b7defa649a3aa95e5/1744746556952/2023-24+AR_FULL+REPORT.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> 2024 City of Red Deer Point in Time Homelessness Count Report – Forthcoming

<sup>22</sup> Statistics Canada. Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census of Population.

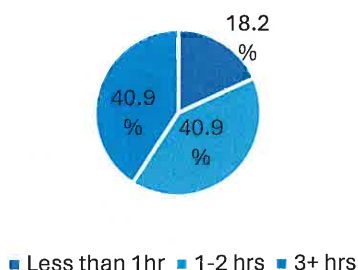
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## Youth Well-Being

Many of the trends seen among youth are reflective of greater trends. With many different issues affecting local youth, youth well-being has been identified as its own theme, though different trends are tied to other themes explored in this document.

Youth - Daily Social Media Time

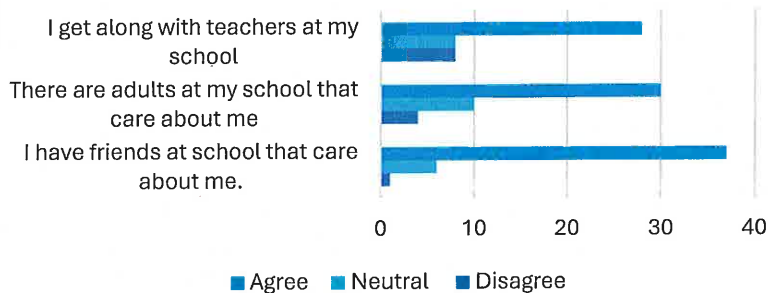


Two in five Red Deer youth report using social media for more than three hours each day, with an additional two in five spending one to two hours per day. Only 18% reported using social media for less than one hour each day. Two-thirds of the same group of youths reported having experienced bullying online<sup>23</sup>.

Regarding connections, 23% of youth aged 15 to 24 report feeling often or always lonely. Reported loneliness decreased as age category increased, indicating youths are the most likely to feel lonely<sup>24</sup>. Red Deer youth were asked about their connections at school. Most youth agreed that they had friends (84%) or adults (68%) at school that cared about them. Fewer reported getting along with teachers at their school (64%), while about one in five reported that they do not get along with teachers at their school<sup>25</sup>.

Alcohol is the most widely used substance used by youths in grades 7 – 12, with 22% using in the past 30 days. This is followed by vapes (15%) and cannabis (12%)<sup>26</sup>. Nearly two-thirds of Canadian youths in grades 10-12 report that cannabis is easy or very easy to obtain, with males first using at 16.8 years old and females at 17.2 years old<sup>27</sup>.

School Connections



<sup>23</sup>Red Deer Youth in Facilities Survey, 2024

<sup>24</sup>Statistics Canada. Canadian Social Survey: Loneliness in Canada. Released November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/211124/dq211124e-eng.htm>

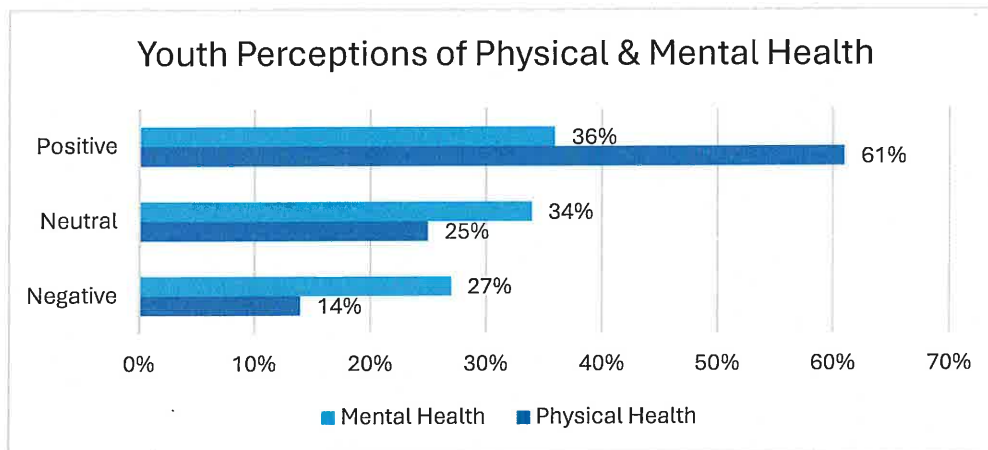
<sup>25</sup>Red Deer Youth in Facilities Survey, 2024

<sup>26</sup>Government of Canada. Alcohol and drug use among students in Canada, 2023-2024. Key findings from the Canadian student alcohol and drug survey. <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/canadian-student-tobacco-alcohol-drugs-survey/2023-2024-key-findings.html>

<sup>27</sup>Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addictions. Provincial patterns and trends in cannabis use among youth: Alberta. February 26, 2020. <https://www.ccsa.ca/en/provincial-patterns-and-trends-cannabis-use-among-youth-alberta>



Three in five (61%) of Red Deer youth report having a positive perception of their physical health, while only one in three (36%) report the same for their mental health. Over a quarter of youth (27%) negatively perceive their mental health, compared to only 14% for physical health<sup>28</sup>. Emergency department visits for self-inflicted injuries are highest among those 15–19 years old, at a rate of 1049 per 100,000, nearly double the next highest age group (20–24)<sup>29</sup>.



<sup>28</sup> Red Deer Youth in Facilities Survey.

<sup>29</sup> Government of Canada. Mental health in Canada dashboard. Last updated June 20, 2024. <https://health-infobase.canada.ca/mental-health/indicators/explore.html>

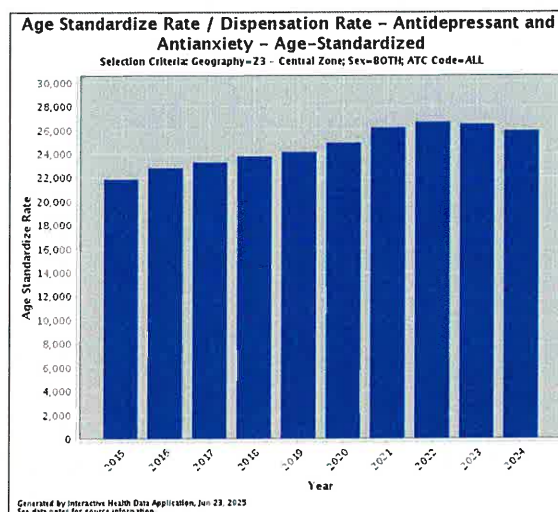
## Mental Health & Addictions

The Covid-19 pandemic has been linked to an overall decline in mental health, with the World Health Organization reporting a 25% increase in the prevalence of anxiety and depression worldwide in the first year of the pandemic<sup>30</sup>. Now five years after the onset of the pandemic, mental health impacts continue to be felt in Central Alberta.

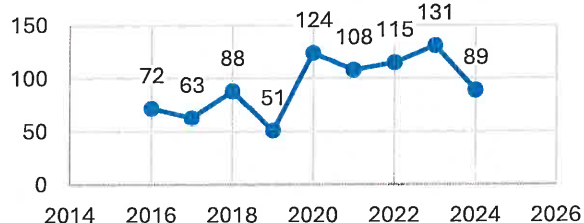
Despite a decrease in dispensation rates of antidepressant and antianxiety medications since 2022, rates remain above pre-pandemic rates<sup>31</sup>. Of those that received mental health care in the previous year, 44% reported that their needs were not fully met<sup>32</sup>. In 2020, one in four Canadians reported not being happy and interested in life<sup>33</sup>.

Suicide rates in Alberta are 14.3 deaths per 100,000, higher than the national average of 10.9/100,000. Suicide rates are higher among First Nations and rural communities with limited access to mental health care and supports<sup>34</sup>.

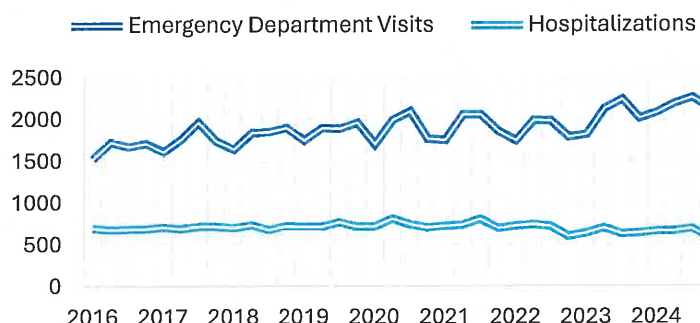
Though rates dropped between 2023 and 2024, the overall trend of overdose deaths continue to climb<sup>35</sup>, as do substance use related emergency department visits<sup>36</sup>.



**Counts of Drug Poisoning Deaths, Central Region**



**SUBSTANCE USE RELATED EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS AND HOSPITALIZATIONS, CENTRAL REGION**



<sup>30</sup> World Health Organization. COVID-19 pandemic triggers 25% increase in prevalence of anxiety and depression worldwide. March 2, 2022. <https://www.who.int/news/item/02-03-2022-covid-19-pandemic-triggers-25-increase-in-prevalence-of-anxiety-and-depression-worldwide>

<sup>31</sup> Government of Alberta. Interactive Health Data Application.

[http://www.ahw.gov.ab.ca/IHDA\\_Retrieval/selectSubCategoryParameters.do#](http://www.ahw.gov.ab.ca/IHDA_Retrieval/selectSubCategoryParameters.do#)

<sup>32</sup> Government of Canada. Mental health in Canada dashboard. Last updated June 20, 2024. <https://health-infobase.canada.ca/mental-health/indicators/explore.html>

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Canadian Mental Health Association. The state of mental health in Canada 2024: Alberta profile.

<https://cmha.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/State-of-Mental-Health-profile-Alberta.pdf>

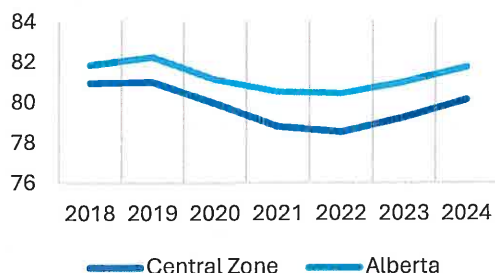
<sup>35</sup> Government of Alberta. Alberta Substance Use Surveillance System (Updated June 2025).

<https://www.alberta.ca/substance-use-surveillance-data#jumplinks-0>

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

## Healthy Living

### Life Expectancy at Birth



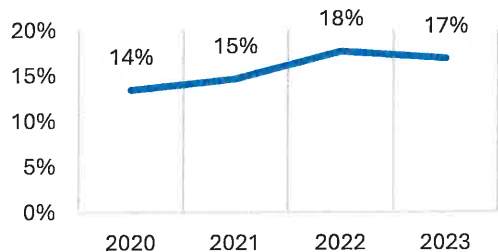
On average, the life expectancy at birth is 1.48 years shorter for Central Albertans than for Albertans generally<sup>37</sup>.

In both 2022 and 2023, 75% of Albertans reported not receiving health care when they felt it was needed<sup>38</sup>. In 2023, 17% of Central Albertans did not have a family doctor. Though there was a one-percent decrease from the previous year, the number of people with a family doctor is trending upwards.

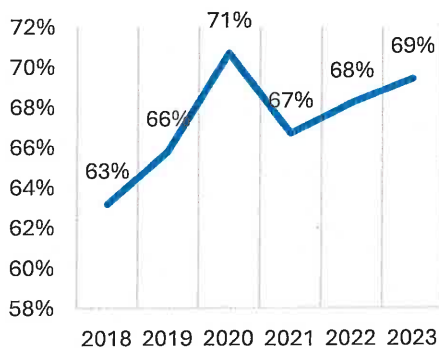
Between 2018 and 2023, the proportion of overweight Central Albertans rose from 63%, from 63% to 69%, with a high of 71% in 2020<sup>39</sup>. At the same time, the number of Central Albertans reporting that they consume the daily recommended amount of fruits and vegetables has steadily decreased from 43% in 2018 to 35% in 2023<sup>40</sup>. With the impact of inflation (see “Cost of Living” above) prices may factor into decreased consumption of produce.

Rates of other adverse health outcomes, such as diabetes and hypertension have been consistently increasing since the early 2000s<sup>41</sup>.

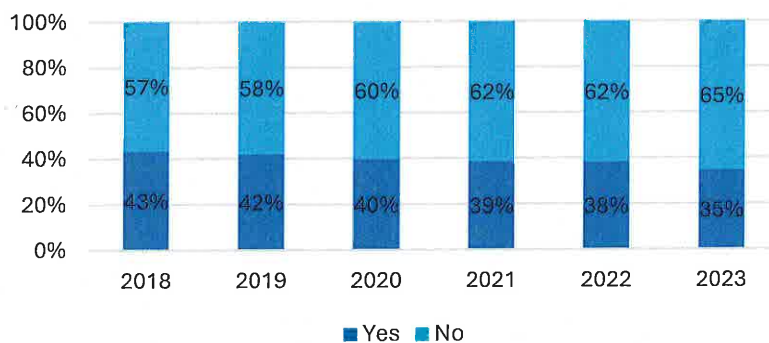
### Central Albertans Without a Family Doctor



### Overweight Rates, Central Alberta



### Consumes the Daily Recommended Amount of Fruits/Vegetables, Central Alberta



<sup>37</sup> Government of Alberta. Interactive Health Data Application.

[http://www.ahw.gov.ab.ca/IHDA\\_Retrieval/selectSubCategoryParameters.do#](http://www.ahw.gov.ab.ca/IHDA_Retrieval/selectSubCategoryParameters.do#)

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

## Safety & Violence

Between 2023 and 2024, overall crime rates have dropped in the Central Alberta region<sup>42,43</sup>. Despite this, one in five people in Red Deer listed crime and safety as a major challenge to living in the area<sup>44</sup>. In the same survey, 37% thought of Red Deer as “somewhat less safe than other communities”, 12% found it “very unsafe”, and 59% felt that feelings of safety have decreased in the previous two years.

When asked about experiences of discrimination, 27.9% of those identify as part of a visible minority, 27.3% of Indigenous people, and 18.8% of those with activity limitations had experienced discrimination<sup>45</sup>. Referring to the previous 12 months, 37% of Red Deer citizens (or a member of their family) had been the victim of a reportable crime. Of those that were victimized, 32% chose not to report the crime to the police<sup>46</sup>.

Alberta has the second-highest rate of maltreatment (experience of or exposure to physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect) in the country, with 67.5% reporting experiencing such treatment before age 15. The Canadian average is 59.7%<sup>47</sup>. Between 2020 and 2023, 2,769 children and youth sought support from the Central Alberta Children’s Advocacy Centre abuse experiences<sup>48</sup>. Red Deer children made up 35% of these cases, indicating the broad spread of this issue across the area.

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was estimated that about 1.5 million survivors of sexual abuse and 325,000 survivors of child sexual abuse live in Alberta<sup>49</sup>. Early into the pandemic, one in ten Canadian women reported being “very or extremely concerned about the



<sup>42</sup> RCMP – Data – Red Deer Municipal Detachment. Retrieved July 2025. <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ab/criminal-statistics-statistiques-criminelles/red-deer-eng.htm>

<sup>43</sup> Government of Alberta. Alberta Justice Dashboard. <https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-justice-dashboards>

<sup>44</sup> The City of Red Deer. What we heard report: 2024-2026 Community consultations. Released May 2024. [https://www.reddeer.ca/media/reddeer.ca/city-services/police-rcmp/DMPROD-3312352-v1-2024-26\\_APP\\_-\\_What\\_We\\_Heard\\_Report\\_-\\_delivered\\_May\\_2024\).pdf](https://www.reddeer.ca/media/reddeer.ca/city-services/police-rcmp/DMPROD-3312352-v1-2024-26_APP_-_What_We_Heard_Report_-_delivered_May_2024).pdf)

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Statistics Canada. Economic and social reports: What do we know about physical and non-physical childhood maltreatment in Canada? Released January 25, 2023. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/36-28-0001/2023001/article/00001-eng.pdf?st=5UyoMZNh>

<sup>48</sup> Central Alberta Child Advocacy Centre. State of child wellbeing in central Alberta. 2024 Community report. <https://www.centralalbertacac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/CACAC-Community-Report-State-of-Child-Wellbeing-2024.pdf>

<sup>49</sup> Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services (AASAS). Summary of key findings: Prevalence of sexual assault and childhood sexual abuse in Alberta. January 29, 2020. [https://aasas.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Prevalence-of-Sexual-Assault-Childhood-Sexual-Abuse-Summary-of-Key-Findings\\_FINAL.pdf](https://aasas.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Prevalence-of-Sexual-Assault-Childhood-Sexual-Abuse-Summary-of-Key-Findings_FINAL.pdf)

possibility of violence in their home”<sup>50</sup>. By May, one in five Indigenous women had experienced domestic violence since the pandemic began<sup>51</sup>. Many shelters for victims of abuse saw increases in demand for their services through the pandemic<sup>52</sup>. Long-term data on the impact of lockdowns on domestic violence remains to be seen.

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<sup>50</sup> Canadian Labour Congress. COVID-19 and the increase of domestic violence against women. June 24, 2020. <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/canada-3-labour-congress.pdf>

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Statistics Canada. Many shelters for victims of abuse see increases in crisis calls and demand for external supports in the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. Released May 12, 2022. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220412/dq220412b-eng.htm>





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## CLARITY OR CHAOS: ALBERTA'S BID TO GO ITS OWN WAY

Benazeer Panhwer

The question of whether a Canadian province can go its own way is not new, but it is back in the headlines, and this time, Alberta is in the spotlight. Recent legislative changes by the province may have made it significantly easier for citizens to trigger an independence referendum, reviving debates that most Canadians associate with Quebec's past.

At the heart of this discussion is the *Clarity Act*, federal legislation passed in 2000, codifying the Supreme Court of Canada's landmark decision in *Reference re Secession of Quebec*. The Act sets strict conditions that must be met before the federal government will negotiate with any province seeking to leave Canada: the referendum question must be clear and unambiguous, and the result must show a clear majority in favour of secession.

As Alberta teeters on the idea of charting its own course, the tension between provincial political maneuvering and the constitutional safeguards of the *Clarity Act* raises a fundamental question: Will this be a moment of clarity, or the start of constitutional chaos?

### What is the Clarity Act?

Following the landmark *Reference re Secession of Quebec* decision, the federal government introduced legislation to give effect to the Supreme Court of Canada's guidance on the need for clarity in any provincial bid for independence. This legislation, known as the *Clarity Act*, enshrines into law the Court's position that both the question posed in a referendum and the result it produces must be unequivocal before Ottawa will enter into negotiations on secession.

Passed in 2000, the *Clarity Act* establishes the precise conditions under which the federal government would engage with a province seeking to leave Canada. This piece of legislation places legal guardrails around one of the most consequential decisions a province could ever make.

### History

On October 30, 1995, Quebec held a referendum asking its citizens a monumental question: Do you agree that Quebec should become sovereign, after having formally offered Canada a new economic and political partnership under the bill respecting the future of Quebec and the agreement signed on June 12, 1995? The result was razor-thin, and independence was rejected by the narrowest of margins, precisely 50.58% voting against sovereignty.

Two years later, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled on the constitutionality of Quebec's attempt at unilateral secession. The question before the Court was whether the Canadian Constitution allowed for Quebec to unilaterally secede from Canada. The Court's answer was an unequivocal no. Unilateral secession would be unconstitutional. Any legitimate path to independence would require constitutional amendments, which in turn demand negotiation among all parties to Confederation.

The Court emphasised that if a future referendum were free of ambiguity in both the wording of the question, the strength of support, and if a clear majority voted in favour of independence, this would trigger a reciprocal obligation on all governments in Canada to negotiate the terms of separation. However, without meeting these conditions, Quebec could not legally declare independence within the framework of the Canadian Constitution.

This landmark ruling directly led to the creation of the *Clarity Act* in 2000, a federal law designed to formalise the decision and define the conditions under which the federal government would negotiate with a province seeking to leave Canada.

### Clarity Act and Its Provisions

The *Clarity Act* begins with a preamble outlining the overarching purpose and intent of the law. This preamble reiterates what the Supreme Court of Canada confirmed in the *Reference re Secession of Quebec*, namely, there is no right under the Canadian Constitution for a province to unilaterally separate from Canada.

It further stresses the necessity for any independence referendum to present a clear and unambiguous question to voters. The result must also demonstrate a clear majority in favour of secession. A simple majority of 50% plus one will not suffice. Since the Constitution does not contemplate secession at all, let alone unilaterally, any move toward independence must be





**BENAZEER  
PAHNWER**  
Student-at-Law

During her time at the University of Saskatchewan College of Law, where she earned her JD with Distinction, Benazeer championed diversity, mentored law students, and supported access-to-justice programs in the community. She also holds dual bachelor's degrees in Psychology and Business Economics and Law from the University of Alberta.

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achieved through negotiations involving all affected parties within Confederation.

### Question Proposed to the Province's Citizens

Under the Clarity Act, once a provincial government releases the secession referendum question it intends to put to voters, the House of Commons must review it and decide whether it meets the standard of clarity required in the legislation. In making this determination, the House considers the views of all political parties represented in the provincial legislature of the province seeking secession.

The central question for the House is whether the proposed wording will produce a clear and unambiguous expression of the province's will on whether it should become independent. The question must directly address the issue of independence so that voters' intentions cannot be misinterpreted.

If the House of Commons concludes that the question is unclear, the Government of Canada will refuse to conduct any negotiations on secession. This makes the wording of a referendum question critically important: it must be capable of yielding an unambiguous, definitive answer from the province's voters on whether it should remain a part of Canada or strike out on its own.

### What Constitutes a "Clear Will?"

If the referendum question is approved by the House of Commons and the vote proceeds, the next step is for the House to determine whether the results demonstrate a "clear will" to secede.

At this stage, the House of Commons assesses whether there is a clear majority in favour of independence. While the term "clear majority" is undefined in the legislation, it requires that several factors be taken into account, including:

1. The size of the majority of valid votes supporting secession;
2. Voter turnout, measured as the percentage of eligible voters who participated; and
3. Any other relevant considerations that may impact the interpretation of the result.

In addition, the House will consider the positions of all political parties in the province, as well as formal statements or resolutions from the government or legislative assemblies of all other provinces and territories, the Senate, and representatives of Indigenous peoples of Canada, with special attention to those residing in the province seeking separation.

If, after weighing these factors, the House of Commons concludes that there is no clear will for independence, the federal government will not enter into negotiations on secession, effectively halting the process.

### Implications for Alberta

In April 2025, Alberta Premier Danielle Smith introduced Bill 54, the *Election Statutes Amendment Act, 2025*. It was designed to lower the threshold for initiating constitutional referendums. The Bill received Royal Assent in June 2025, formally becoming provincial law. Under this Act, the signature requirement for citizen-initiated constitutional referendum proposals was reduced from 20% of all registered Alberta voters to 10% of the number of voters who cast a ballot in the most recent general election.

The legislation quickly drew criticism from multiple parties. The New Democratic Party, Alberta's official opposition, accused Premier Smith of using electoral reform as a cover for advancing her separatist agenda. They argued that while the Bill was presented as a democratic improvement, it was a political maneuver to open the door to a provincial independence vote.

Opposition to the Bill extended well beyond party lines. Indigenous leaders from across Alberta strongly condemned the legislation, insisting that any discussion of separation must include meaningful consultation with Indigenous peoples. They argue that such consultation has been absent from this process. Several First Nations groups have further contended that the Bill violates the province's treaty obligations and undermines efforts to maintain a meaningful relationship between Alberta and its Indigenous communities.

As the Preamble to the Clarity Act makes certain, determining a "clear majority" is not a matter of hitting a fixed numerical target; it is a complex assessment based on multiple factors, including voter turnout, margin of victory, and broader political context. In short, while Alberta's legislative change may streamline the process for referendums on a range of provincial issues, it will not in itself pave a direct or easy path to independence.

### Conclusion

Alberta's recent changes to its referendum laws attempt to lower the bar for initiating an independence vote, but the *Clarity Act* stands as a constitutional gatekeeper. The federal legislation demands more than just political will or a burst of provincial populism. Any move toward separation must survive intense federal scrutiny, prove overwhelming public support, and navigate the complex legal terrain set out in the Clarity Act.

For some Albertans, the new rules represent an empowering tool for democratic expression. For others, they risk inviting political turbulence without offering a realistic path to independence. Whether these developments mark the beginning of a clear and decisive conversation about Alberta's future will depend on how the province and, ultimately, the country choose to answer the question at the heart of it all.



Photo Credit: Brendan Brown

## POLITICAL EVENTS

### UCP – Breakfast with Danielle Smith

**Friday, August 15th @ 9:00AM**

Location: Slave Lake Legacy Centre

- Join Danielle Smith for a light breakfast event with a chance to ask questions.
- Tix: \$50 ([unitedconservative.ca/events](https://unitedconservative.ca/events))

### UCP AGM

**November 28th – 30th, 2025**

Location: Edmonton Expo Centre

- Join the United Conservative Party for their annual general meeting.
- Tix: \$119-\$999 ([unitedconservative.ca/events](https://unitedconservative.ca/events))

### NDP – Ask Me Anything Townhall

**September 25th @ 7:15PM**

Location: Arbour Lake Residents Association

- Join Court Ellingson for a free townhall event.
- Tix: Free ([albertandpcaucus.ca/events](https://albertandpcaucus.ca/events))

THE NEWS<sup>54</sup>  
from ALBERTA COUNSEL



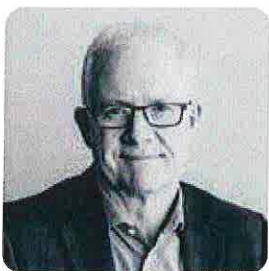
**SCOTT RATCH**  
Grant Writing Associate

Scott has recently completed a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science at the University of Alberta. While at university, he completed a co-op term as a Student Policy Analyst with the Government of Canada and served as an editor for the Political Science Undergraduate Review (PSUR).

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Source: LinkedIn

### KEY INFLUENCER PROFILE

## GORD JOHNSTON

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER FOR ASSISTED LIVING ALBERTA

### Scott Ratch

Gord Johnston was recently appointed as the first Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for Assisted Living Alberta. This newly established health agency will launch in the fall, supporting older adults and vulnerable Albertans in accessing care. As CEO, Johnston will lead Assisted Living Alberta's efforts to build a more integrated, person-centered health care system across the province.

Johnston is an experienced public servant and affordable housing executive. Most recently, he served as the CEO of Civida, the largest provider of affordable housing in northern Alberta. Johnston has also held various executive positions with the Government of Alberta. This includes serving as Chief Strategy Officer for the Ministry of Human Services and as Assistant Deputy Minister of both Child and Family Services and Advanced Education.

Committed to community service, Johnston has served on the Board of Directors for several organizations, including the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association. His contributions to the province of Alberta have been recognized with the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal in 2022 and the King Charles III Coronation Medal in 2025.

Johnston was born and raised in Saskatchewan. He holds two master's degrees, one in Speech Language Pathology and the other in Health Services Administration.



## AT A GLANCE

### In the Media



#### PASCAL RYFFEL

VP of Corporate  
Development and  
Government Relations

After completing his MA in Media and International Development, Pascal spent four years with the Alberta NDP Caucus. Pascal has been directly involved in Alberta politics for almost two decades, including as a candidate in 2008, and has a deep and current knowledge of Alberta politics. Pascal has been with Alberta Counsel since 2015.

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#### **Alberta Invests in Energy Innovation Projects**

Alberta is investing up to \$12.7 million from the industry-funded Technology Innovation and Emissions Reduction (TIER) program into three energy innovation projects. These initiatives harness the province's underground geological formations – such as natural caves – to enhance electricity grid resilience, safely store carbon dioxide, and extract critical battery metals. These projects aim to boost the economy, create well-paying jobs, and strengthen Alberta's global competitiveness in energy innovation.

"These three projects will help tap into the massive potential of Alberta's unique underground resources. By helping support these new technologies, we are showing how our unique geology can help grow the energy sector, strengthen the grid and create more high-paying jobs for Albertans for decades to come," stated Minister of Environment and Protected Areas, Rebecca Schulz.

#### **Reduced Regulations in the Agricultural Sector**

The Government of Alberta is eliminating 28.5 per cent of the regulations governing agricultural marketing boards and commissions, including 20 redundant rules, allowing producers to devote more time to food production and business growth. This regulatory streamlining empowers the province's 19 marketing boards and commissions to better serve producers, promoting competitiveness, innovation, productivity, and efficiency in Alberta's agricultural sector.

"Alberta is the best place to do business, and we are the best province in Canada at reducing red tape to promote economic growth. We want to continue to be a leader in this space, and that's why we're getting out of the way of our producers so they can continue to put food on tables in Alberta and around the world," commented Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation, R.J. Sigurdson.

#### **Continued Support for Innovative Research at Alberta's Universities**

The Government of Alberta is awarding over \$8.4 million in Small Equipment Grants through the Research Capacity Program to support 35 research laboratories at the University of Calgary and the University of Alberta. This funding supports high-impact fields including health innovation, advanced manufacturing, artificial intelligence, quantum science, energy, and wildfire management.

"Our province has a strong history of being on the leading edge of science. Programs like the Small Equipment Grant help ensure Alberta's world-class institutions and their researchers can continue to make groundbreaking discoveries, commercialize their work for the benefit of all Albertans and Canadians, and compete for talent on the world stage," commented Minister of Technology and Innovation, Nate Glubish.

#### **Alberta Holds Consultations on Fuel Tax Rules**

The provincial government is inviting feedback through a public consultation on a proposal to shift the provincial fuel tax exemption from marked fuel to clear fuel. Currently, marked fuel qualifies for a reduced tax rate of four cents per litre for eligible users. While the tax rate remains unchanged, transitioning to clear fuel could simplify the system and reduce costs for eligible consumers and fuel sellers. Industry input gathered this summer will inform recommendations presented to the government this fall.

The President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance, Nate Horner, commented: "We're committed to supporting Alberta's agricultural and resource sectors with practical, cost-saving solutions. This proposal could reduce red tape and put more money back into producers' pockets. We are looking forward to hearing directly from industry through this engagement."



**QUINN HEFFRON**  
Associate

Quinn is a public policy professional with experience supporting elected officials at all levels of government and contributing to policy development in Canada's energy sector. He holds a Master of Public Policy from the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy.

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# TO BUILD OR NOT TO BUILD? TRANS MOUNTAIN'S CASE FOR WHAT COMES NEXT

56

Quinn Heffron

With a new Liberal government in Ottawa pledging to "Build Big, Build Bold, Build Now", Ottawa has opened the door to new oil pipelines being included in its 'nation-building' projects list. However, the messaging has shifted over the past few months – leaving industry watching for a clear signal.

It started with early hesitancy back in May – with Prime Minister Mark Carney offering only conditional support – coupling his government's approval of pipelines with requirements of environmental investments like carbon capture and garnering the support of all affected provinces. In June, the Liberals passed Bill C-5, the One Canadian Economy Act, giving him and his Cabinet new powers to fast-track projects deemed in the national interest. Then in July, during scrums with reporters at Stampede, Carney said it is "highly likely" that a pipeline project would be supported under the new legislative regime.

The absence of a consistent and clear narrative from the Liberals towards private business has, to date, prevented any energy industry proponent from coming forward to build a new inter-provincial pipeline. This contrasts with the Alberta government's persistent advocacy for increased oil production, export capacity, market diversification, and the removal of perceived regulatory and legislative barriers preventing more projects from being built. Many companies have spoken out in support of Bill C-5 as a good first step, but the existing regulatory and legislative environment still prevents them from making large investments.

This is where a *recent report* by Alberta Central, a financial group, might sway the debate. The report builds an economic case that could persuade Carney and his Natural Resources Minister, Tim Hodgson, as to what projects get the green light. The report captures the significant economic benefits of the Trans Mountain Pipeline (TMX) and why more pipelines might be part of the fiscal solution to funding Carney's ambitious spending plans.

In its first year of full operation, the expanded Trans Mountain Pipeline has delivered significant economic benefits to Alberta and Canada as a whole. The report's findings show an impressive uptick in export diversification, a narrower oil price discount, and roughly CAD\$13 billion in additional revenue. To put that into perspective, just one year of the pipeline's impact to government revenues has paid off almost half of its ballooned \$34 billion project cost.

## Highlights from the Report's Analysis

- Export diversification soared, with the share of oil exports to non U.S. markets tripling and shipments to U.S. West Coast refineries rose by nearly 40%.
- The price differential between Western Canada Select (WCS) and West Texas Intermediate (WTI) narrowed by roughly US\$8 per barrel, far tighter than historical norms.
- The fiscal windfall includes about CAD\$4.4 billion in added oil royalty revenues for Alberta, with expectations of CAD\$5.3 billion in royalties next year – offsetting weaker WTI prices and a stronger Canadian dollar.
- Corporate tax revenues from oil producers are also up, with estimated tax revenues at CAD\$2 billion federally and CAD\$1 billion for the Alberta government.

## Other Aspects to Consider

While the figures from the Alberta Central report show strong fiscal gains, new oil infrastructure also brings environmental and policy challenges. Any proposal would, under the current regulatory and legislative frameworks, need to fit Canada's legislated net-zero targets, address lifecycle emissions, and compete for investment in a world rapidly shifting energy sources. In addition, it has to be reasoned that any new pipeline(s) could have a lower economic return on investment than TMX as changes in WCS and WTI price differentials could be less evident. Not to mention, the foreign policy impacts of diversifying Canada's oil exports could lead to 'more cards in hand' during negotiations with Trump and the upcoming Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA) review happening in 2026.

## What Comes Next?

TMX's results present a clear fiscal case for additional pipeline capacity – but made clear through Carney's calculated choice of words – his and his government's decisions hinge on more than economics.

For Ottawa, the challenge has become weighing immediate fiscal gains against their long-term environmental and policy commitments. This is compounded by the reality of Ottawa having to compete against lower risk (and arguably higher reward) jurisdictions elsewhere for private investment and human capital. At the same time, proponents will need to address Indigenous rights, local environmental impacts on land and water, and opportunities for co-ownership or benefit-sharing agreements that strengthen community support.

The broader balancing act remains. The question for the Carney government is whether to double down on proven revenue generators like TMX, or to pursue other projects that more closely match its climate objectives and energy strategy.

**Agenda item 12 (continued)**

**Recommended Motion:**

Motion by Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ that Council accepts the submitted reports as information.