

2016 BUSINESS PLAN



CORE BUSINESS ONE: A responsible, cost effective and accountable local government

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the website for the Village of Empress. The browser's address bar shows the URL <http://villageofempress.com/>. The website features a collage of images and text:

- A wooden sign that reads "VILLAGE OF Empress".
- A black banner with white text: "Home Council Residents Business Visitors Gallery".
- A road sign for "ALBERTA SASKATCHEWAN".
- A central image of a golden field with a paper overlay containing the text: "The Village of Empress is situated on the West side of the Alberta/Saskatchewan border and serves as a center to the surrounding farming and ranching community of 1,500 people. It has been a focal point for many activities in the area. It is also at the geographical center of many large cities in Western Canada: Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon and Regina."
- A "News & Events" section with the subtext: "To keep up to date on the events happening in Empress, check this page on a regular basis."
- A "Our Partners" section featuring the "Canadian Badlands" logo.
- A news item titled "Village of Empress Open House" with the text: "POSTED ON DECEMBER 1, 2014 UNDER: COUNCIL NEWS. Council moved to hold an open house for Empress and area residents on December 8, 2014 at the Empress Community Hall from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Council will be reviewing their 2014 Business Plan and the 10 year Municipal Infrastructure Capital Plan. They are looking for the communities input on priority areas."

The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the system clock as 5:15 PM on 12/2/2014.

CORE BUSINESS ONE:

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Goal 1: Establish priorities that support the municipal service requirements of the majority of local residents

Strategies

- ❖ Ensure that the services the Village provides are reviewed annually.
- ❖ Ensure that the cost effectiveness of service delivery is a priority when making decisions on how services are to be delivered.
- ❖ Ensure the effective and regular communication of municipal objectives to staff for implementation.
- ❖ Ensure that municipal staff is able to effectively and efficiently deliver required municipal services.
- ❖ Ensure that municipal human resources needs are factored into decisions on what services are to be provided and how.

Key Actions 2016

- ❖ Ongoing review and update of bylaws and policies
- ❖ Ongoing review of current rates on all services to maintain cost recovery.
- ❖ Bimonthly staff meetings to review new bylaws, policies.
- ❖ Ensure equipment needs are identified and budgeted for to enable staff to meet priorities set by Council.

Accomplishments

CORE BUSINESS ONE:

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Goal 2: Engage in transparent and accountable decision making processes and actions

Strategies

- ❖ Use technology to expand/enhance the delivery of online services.
- ❖ Enhance communication between the government and its citizens.
- ❖ Educate the public about what is within and outside of the Villages direct control/sphere of influence.
- ❖ Increase the use of electronic communication to ensure that residents and business owners are aware of municipal opportunities and initiatives.
- ❖ Encourage the community to become more actively involved in civic affairs.
- ❖ Engage newcomers to the Village to participate in community activities and the municipal decision making process
- ❖ Encourage openness in the decision making process
- ❖ Enhance the customer service function to respond to the needs of the community

Key Actions 2016

- ❖ Keep website updated and enhanced
- ❖ Utilize facebook to communicate opportunities, initiatives and events
- ❖ Open house in November
- ❖ Host Summer Barbeque to welcome newcomers
- ❖ Facilitate local participation

Accomplishments

CORE BUSINESS ONE:

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Goal 3: Properly fund municipal services and community infrastructure through a combination of fiscally responsible operating budgets, capital budgets, effective reserves and reserve funding, and partnering

Strategies

- ❖ Ensure that fiscally responsible operating and capital budgets are established and maintained on a yearly basis.
- ❖ Ensure the maintenance and effective management of reserve funds
- ❖ Ensure the efficient management of capital assets and municipal services to meet existing and future demands
- ❖ Enhance communication and coordination with the region and other levels of government in the provision of services.
- ❖ Require that an annual report be prepared to provide an overview on how the municipality's objectives have been met and how funds were budgeted, allocated and spent.

Key Actions 2016

- ❖ Budget to actual report for Council at all Council meetings
- ❖ Financial statement placed on website and available in office
- ❖ Review & adjust 10 year Capital Infrastructure Plan
- ❖ Annual reporting at open house on business plan objectives
- ❖ Auditors meet with Council prior to and after year end.

Accomplishments

CORE BUSINESS ONE:

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Goal 4: Demonstrate leadership on matters that affect Empress

Strategies

- ❖ Participate fully in Region led exercises that are intended to maintain and enhance quality of life
- ❖ Engage other levels of government to ensure that the interests of Empress residents and business owners are known
- ❖ Ensure that Federal and Provincial programs that may benefit Empress are considered whenever possible.
- ❖ Ensure Empress's interests and needs are known at the Regional level.
- ❖ Continue local political and staff participation on Boards and Committees both within and outside the Empress Community.

Key Actions 2016

- ❖ Participate in SAMDA Economic Partnership meetings, AGM and initiatives.
- ❖ Participate in Palliser Economic Partnership meetings, AGM and initiatives
- ❖ Participate in Canadian Badlands AGM and initiatives.
- ❖ Participate in Palliser Regional Municipal Services for cost effective service delivery.
- ❖ Participate in Big Country Waste Management for cost effective service delivery
- ❖ Participate in Acadia Foundation for cost effective regional senior housing
- ❖ Participate in Big Country Medical/Dental Board for maintenance of cost effective essential services.
- ❖ Participate in Red Deer River Watershed Commission
- ❖ Participate in AUMA Convention to ensure we have an opportunity to speak with MLA's
- ❖ Participate in Regional Disaster Services exercises

Accomplishments

CORE BUSINESS TWO: Well managed growth, well planned spaces



CORE BUSINESS TWO: Well managed growth, well planned spaces

Goal 1: Encourage the provision and maintenance of an appropriate mix of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational uses.

Strategies

- ❖ Encourage the development of a range of uses that will support Empress as a place to live, work and play
- ❖ Create a sense of civic identity and pride through a high standard of urban design for all new development
- ❖ Encourage the provision of a full range of housing opportunities for present and future residents of all ages and incomes
- ❖ Encourage infilling and intensification in the existing urban area
- ❖ Encourage the development of home based businesses in the area
- ❖ Maintain a reasonable amount of commercial and industrial land for future expansion
- ❖ Assure appropriate recreational and cultural opportunities for residents and visitors.

Key Actions 2016

- ❖ Advertise serviced land for sale in Empress on website
- ❖ Promote SAMDA and PEP websites and opportunities on website
- ❖ Establish the first Empress & District Summer Musical Theater School
- ❖ Facilitate the monthly movie night @ hall
- ❖ Encourage residents to form a community hall committee
- ❖ Splash park project
- ❖ Complete Boat launch at old pump site
- ❖ Walking path and signs updated
- ❖ Investigate developing industrial park on Railway Avenue

Accomplishments

CORE BUSINESS TWO: Well managed growth, well planned spaces

Goal 2: Encourage cost effective and timely municipal/community infrastructure development.

Strategies

- ❖ Encourage the efficient use of land to make the best use of infrastructure and services.
- ❖ Ensure that the village demonstrates leadership in the future urban expansion to ensure that new development is as cost effective as possible
- ❖ Ensure that appropriate financial plans and infrastructure strategies are in place before development occurs.

Key Actions 2016

- ❖ New Firehall and Town Shop
- ❖ Finish RV site renovation
- ❖ Groom walking trails
- ❖ Boat Launch completed and promoted
- ❖ Signage for RV site and walking trails
- ❖ Splash park
- ❖ Continue to look for additional dollars for Water Distribution Pump Station

Accomplishments

CORE BUSINESS TWO: Well managed growth, well planned spaces

Goal 3: Encourage well timed service delivery.

Strategies

- ❖ Ensure that hard and soft service needs are identified up front and then appropriately prioritized and delivered either before or at the same time as new development.
- ❖ Encourage the development of public facilities in appropriate locations at the right time to meet the needs of present and future residents.
- ❖ Ensure that appropriate capital works forecasting/planning is done before the works are required.

Key Actions 2016

- ❖ Encourage local residents to form a community hall committee.
- ❖ Partner with local organizations and apply for grants to put in the splash park
- ❖ Look for additional funding for the Water distribution pump station project
- ❖ Investigate Industrial business park development on Railway Avenue
- ❖ Review and update 10 year capital infrastructure plan

Accomplishments

CORE BUSINESS THREE: A safe, livable and healthy community.



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Goal 1: Promote and facilitate active and healthy lifestyles and lifelong learning.

Strategies

- ❖ Encourage the establishments of a healthy community that is made up of an interconnected system of open spaces, walking trails, bicycle routes and natural heritage features.
- ❖ Facilitate involvement for people at different life cycle and physical stages and of varying social-economic status- including youth and senior oriented initiatives.
- ❖ Enhance leisure, cultural and educational opportunities/experiences that contribute to personal enjoyment, growth and development.
- ❖ Encourage the exploration of all partnership opportunities in the delivery of leisure/community/library services.
- ❖ Encourage the development of new partnerships and maintain existing partnerships and strategic alliances to encourage community ownership and responsibility
- ❖ Encourage residents to play an active role in the decision making process by participating on boards and committees.

Key Actions 2016

- ❖ Continue the partnership with Empress/Bindloss Ag. Society for delivery of recreational and educational opportunities
- ❖ Continue partnering with Marigold Library for library services and a local newsletter.
- ❖ Include residents on SAMDA Board, Library Board, FCSS Board, etc.
- ❖ Advertise all events on website.
- ❖ Advertise Train Museum, Peter Fidler Park walking trails, bird watching opportunities, and all events (i.e. art tour, apple festival, curling/sturling, ball, Canada day, Christmas event, etc.)
- ❖ Inaugural Empress & District Summer Musical Theatre School
- ❖ Encourage active lifestyles through exercise programs for different age groups.

Accomplishments

CORE BUSINESS THREE: A safe, livable and healthy community

Goal 2: Maximize community safety and security.

Strategies

- ❖ Encourage the development of fire service facilities that provide the maximum benefit to all residents/businesses
- ❖ Enhance relationships with regional emergency service providers in adjoining jurisdictions so that cost effective and timely emergency response and support functions are maintained
- ❖ Ensure the preparation and implementation of comprehensive emergency plans
- ❖ Encourage the establishment of public facilities and open spaces that are designed to be safe and which provide for appropriate emergency support services and/or equipment, lighting, visibility and for public surveillance/open sight lines.

Key Actions 2016

- ❖ RCMP attend at Council meeting.
- ❖ Partner with Special Areas on new firehall/townshop
- ❖ Purchase additional Fire equipment.
- ❖ Participate in any Regional Disaster Training Exercises
- ❖ Update Empress Emergency Management Plan

Accomplishments



CORE BUSINESS THREE: A safe, livable and healthy community

Goal 3: Protect and enhance our heritage, identity and character.

Strategies

- ❖ Respect and honor the Village's rich history
- ❖ Promote the development of strong arts and cultural community that builds upon local knowledge, history and experience.
- ❖ Protect, maintain and enhance the open space character of lands outside of the urban area for enjoyment by present and future generations
- ❖ Encourage key community events that help shape identity and contribute to community spirit
- ❖ Establish and maintain a community identity that sets Empress apart from others through the holding of community events, promotion and branding.
- ❖ Encourage the development of public spaces that foster community involvement and interaction
- ❖ Build on the strengths of our urban and rural character
- ❖ Foster civic pride by recognizing the contribution that cultural heritage resources make to the rural and urban fabric
- ❖ Encourage economic activities in the area that support the values and character of our region
- ❖ Recognize and value diversity

Key Actions 2016

- ❖ Inaugural Empress & District Summer musical theatre school
- ❖ Participate in the Special Areas Cultural Center Task Force
- ❖ Advertise all events on website, facebook, twitter etc.
- ❖ Develop section on website to promote hunting and fishing tourism – photo gallery
- ❖ Partner with area residents to promote the archeological aspects of our region.
- ❖ Develop one pager pdfs on opportunities for website

Accomplishments

CORE BUSINESS FOUR: A diverse and sustainable economy



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Goal 1: Attract and retain employers that provide a range of employment opportunities and assessment growth

Strategy

- ❖ Leverage Empress's high quality of life and community identity to attract investment
- ❖ Encourage the development of the business infrastructure required to attract uses that will contribute to the quality of life on the village.
- ❖ Work with other levels of government to encourage additional investment in Empress
- ❖ Work with existing businesses to establish initiatives to attract additional investment
- ❖ Continue to encourage the availability of an appropriate supply of land for future employment uses.

Key Actions 2016

- ❖ Update Website
- ❖ Participate in Eastern Alberta Trade Corridor
- ❖ Work with PEP and SAMDA to develop an up to date marketing strategy
- ❖ Work with a group of residents, Council and facilitator to identify opportunities for hospital and airport
- ❖ Develop business cases for opportunities for hospital and airport
- ❖ Investigate developing an industrial park on the south end of the Village

Accomplishments

CORE BUSINESS FOUR: A diverse and sustainable economy

Goal 2: Encourage the private sector to meet the retail needs of a growing population in a reasonable timely manner.

Strategy

- ❖ Encourage the further development of retail and service uses in the Downtown business core
- ❖ Provide opportunities for a wide range of retail uses in the village
- ❖ Encourage the development of home based business and e-commerce utilizing the high speed internet services available in the region
- ❖ Encourage the development of appropriate commercial and tourist uses in the region.

Key Actions 2016

- ❖ Promote the services available through SAMDA, PEP, Meridian Community Futures, EATC
- ❖ Participate in Canadian Badlands inventory/opportunity identification survey
- ❖ Promote businesses in village and region on website
- ❖ Identify all the home based businesses in the community and do some work with SAMDA to develop promo pieces for website on 2 or 3. Testimonials
- ❖ Develop business cases for opportunities examples: micro brewery, cheese factory, Alzheimer home,

Accomplishments

CORE BUSINESS FIVE: A thriving natural environment that is a valued community asset to be protected, maintained and enjoyed



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Goal 1: Protect and enhance natural features

Strategy

- ❖ Encourage the decision-making process to be supported by an understanding of the natural environment including values, opportunities, limits and constraints
- ❖ Protect and enhance significant natural heritage features and their associated ecological and hydrological functions
- ❖ Maintain, restore and where possible, enhance or improve the diversity and connectivity of natural heritage feature and ecological functions

Key Actions 2016

- ❖ Finish Boat Launch – promote both rivers on website with pictures
- ❖ Inventory bird sightings, and promote bird watching opportunities
- ❖ Inventory walking trails and create master plan
- ❖ Inventory and promote the hunting and fishing opportunities in the region use testimonials and pictures
- ❖ Work with interested land owners to promote tours of the archeological history in our region – reference book by

Accomplishments

CORE BUSINESS FIVE: A thriving natural environment that is a valued community asset to be protected, maintained and enjoyed

Goal 2: Promote the enjoyment and responsible use of natural areas

Strategy

- ❖ Encourage the integration of the parks and open space system with the natural heritage system wherever possible.
- ❖ Encourage through proper planning that the features and related functions of natural environment areas are not negatively impacted by public use.
- ❖ Educate the public on the benefits of the natural environment and the positive contribution the natural environment has on the village.

Key Actions 2016

- ❖ Promote responsible use of walking trails and RV sites
- ❖ Advertise on website
- ❖ Partner with SAMDA, PEP, EATC, and Canadian Badlands for promotion of Empress
- ❖ Promote river access and opportunities
- ❖ Promote flora and fauna in region
- ❖ Promote hunting and fishing opportunities

Accomplishments