

mpress has Artisans...

A plan for making this statement a Big Rural reality in Empress, Alberta!

Overlooking the forks of the Red Deer and South Saskatchewan River, in SE Alberta Canada, sits the small village of Empress. A neat juxtaposition of traditional rural community and artists' hub, this village is attractive and intriguing to residents and visitors.

It's a neat Rural place that fosters creative thinking and makes people curious. It has organically attracted a cluster of artisans and makers, and maintained its prairie agriculture roots and residents.

The Village Council and Administration have made it a priority to foster the Village's overall growth and sustainability goal of, *increasing the population and tax base of the community*, by focusing on growing the artisan community.

Growth in this sector has the potential to attract more tourists and visitors to the village and increase the tax base through new business development & residents.

The Big Dream:

Make the Village of Empress a place of choice for many artisans!

The Big Goal:

Increase the number of artisans living & creating in the Village of Empress.

To that end, a plan is outlined below to clarify goals and organize activities that serve to propel the village toward these aspirations.

Emphasis of the plan is on the following priorities:

- ❖ Support retention of the artisan community that exists
- ❖ Reinforce and build on the Empress has Artisans brand and theme
- ❖ Increase the number of artisans and makers living and working in the village
- ❖ Further position and define Empress as an arts and culture friendly community



THE PLAN ~ Empress has more artisans!

The Objective: attract new artisans and makers to become part of the community, to live (full-time or part-time) and exhibit & sell goods.

Strategy	Activities
Create a place for artisans of Empress & the public to connect online.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Create a “Mainstreet Artisans of Empress” FB page. Give all local artisans administrative rights to post and share what’s going on with their art and their businesses. ❖ Engage R2R and SAMDA to assist with page development and networking of this.
Get the word out that the Village is looking to recruit more artisans to community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Recruitment marketing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create a graphic image (can be used on FB and other social media)/and or lure card that communicates the message: We are recruiting new artisans to our community. ○ ‘We’re recruiting’ section on Village website ❖ Village marketing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Inform and engage public via social media on the plans to recruit new artisans to the community
Reinforce the Empress has artisans theme on Village marketing Materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Leverage Village Marketing Assets to get the word out & reinforce the Empress has Artisans theme/brand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Website: (villageofempress.com) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ add: Artisans Section - shares current inventory of artisans and makers ▪ add: Artisan Section to photo gallery - puts a visual and focus on artisans ○ Social Media: (facebook.com/villageofempress) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Add: Artisans folder on Facebook page ▪ Create: a hashtag related to Artisan Theme ▪ Post: information about artisans in the community – 1 per month ❖ Get the word out in general: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create village brochures that feature & tie in the theme/brand ○ Look at options for distribution ❖ Research arts and culture communities and ways to connect with this demographic.
Define Empress as an arts and culture friendly community & hub.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Update artisan inventory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work with SAMDA to update ○ Work with SAMDA to add an “artisans” listing category on takearuralroadtrip.ca that features Empress Artisans. ❖ Share examples and information on artisans and arts & culture events and activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create a two-sided 8.5 x 11 profile on the “Everything Artisans of Empress” - use the information and photos on the village website and social media. ❖ Share media outlet stories and news articles on FB and website. ❖ Better define what type of artisans are to be targeted, ex. potters, writers, singers, painters, et al

Short Term Outcomes:

- A municipal environment is created that proactively supports and encourages a thriving arts and culture economy, with specific focus on the Empress has Artisans theme, as a growth strategy for the Village.

Long term Outcomes:

- There are more artisans living and working in the Village.
- Tourism, arts and culture activities are recognized as major economic drivers in the Village.
- There is an environment in place that nurtures and promotes a successful artisan community.
- Increased tourism creates opportunity for more service industries i.e. specialty coffee/teas houses, sandwich shops, ice cream

PLAN CONSIDERATIONS AND FACTORS

The Village is looking to attract the following demographic:

- Artisans (skilled crafts worker or artist that creates works by hand to sell and exhibit)
- Makers (a person who makes things, using DIY skills and sells or exhibits)
- Retirement age – looking to fulfill their life’s passions; formal work careers are near or at completion
- Specific types of arts and culture themes: antiques, book stores, artists, DIY’ers, prairie and river enthusiasts

What makes Empress attractive to artisans and makers?

- Low cost of living, housing and land prices
- Inspiring, remote prairie location with river access and breathtaking views
- Eclectic population and existing artist community cluster
- Access to broadband internet

There is also, specific interest in the following attraction opportunities:

- Artist in residence experiences
- Increased Arts & culture events and experiences
- Capitalize on existing artisan population skills and networks
- Leverage of village and non-profit owned infrastructure, example: old hospital, train station, parks, river
- Leverage of relationships with Saskatchewan based artisans and makers nearby

Assets in place for strategy: (Find details below)

- ❖ Artisan, Maker and Prairie Culture Inventory
- ❖ Artisan and Prairie Culture Event Inventory
- ❖ Infrastructure Inventory

Artisan, Makers and Prairie Culture Inventory:

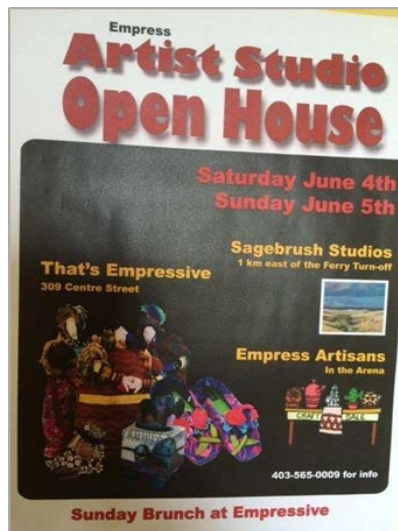
<p>Jazzy Socks - Sarah Chute Yarn Connoisseur and Sock Knitter Extraordinaire</p> <p>Online: www.woolbabysocks.com www.jazzysocks.com www.sockyarn.ca FB: https://www.facebook.com/Canadian-Country-Woman-163971320290361/ (403) 565-2407</p>	<p>Sweet Hots: Laurie Kelly</p> <p>Handmade Jams, Jellies and Salsa</p> <p>FB: https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=sweet%20hots%20-%20jams%20jellies%20preserves</p>
<p>Rustic Furniture – Yvonne Robertson</p> <p>Custom orders. (403) 703-3935</p>	<p>Funked Up Cowgirl</p> <p>Human and animal wearable accessories FB: https://www.facebook.com/search/str/funked%2Bup%2Bcowgirl/photos-keyword</p>
<p>Rustic Furniture – Yvonne Robertson</p> <p>Custom orders. (403) 703-3935</p>	<p>Joy Hensel Photography – Joy Hensel</p> <p>Photography and note cards nature and prairie inspired. Sold at That’s Empressive.</p>
<p>Sagebrush Studios & Art Galleries - Artists Dean Francis and Fran Francis</p> <p>Prairie inspired art and clay works.</p> <p>Art Gallery and Gardens open by appointment June, July, August & September www.deanfrancis.ca 1-877-565-2039 Location: 12 miles east of Empress.</p>	<p>Garden Hideaway - Bev Farnden</p> <p>Custom seeing and quilting, specializing in sewing doll clothing; international.</p> <p>Don Farnden – Woodworker</p> <p>Restoration of furniture and windows. Custom birdhouses and yard furniture, featuring repurposed lumber and custom cut lumber from his own sawmill.</p>
<p>That’s Empressive – Pat Donaldson</p> <p>(Ojibwa artist Nokomis) Featuring her own artwork, other top Canadian artists work, gift shop and restaurant. Open 6 am to 9 pm 7 days a week year round www.empressive.ca www.native-art-in-canada.com/ 403-565-0009 pat@empressive.ca</p>	<p>Forks Prairie Orchard – Cathy Cocks</p> <p>Organically grown saskatoons, raspberries, sour cherries, plums and apples. U-pick, Oyen farmers market and farm gate</p> <p>Open from July to October. Call ahead or take a chance. Quiet scenic location on the banks of the Red Deer River, FB: https://www.facebook.com/pages/Forks-Prairie-Orchard/118651934958455?fref=ts</p>
<p>Rusty Trucks – Gary Marshall</p> <p>Painter and "rusticator" of model trucks and cars</p>	<p>Archeology Interpreter & Guide – Rachel Booker</p> <p>Contact the Village Office: (403) 565-3938 for bookings.</p>
<p>The Cowboy Market – Dale & Jennifer Howe</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/groups/173578669373917/</p>	<p>William (Bill) Wardill</p> <p>Writer and Historian http://www.ourroots.ca/e/toc.aspx?id=6078</p>

Artisan & Prairie Culture Event Inventory:

Summer at the Station:



Artisan Open House:



17th Annual Art Show "Pure Prairie" Open House/Artist Reception

Saturday, June 3rd and Sunday, June 4th 2017, 10am – 5pm.

At Sagebrush Studio & Art Galleries, [20 km east of Empress, AB.](#)

[66 new paintings you can preview online](#)

Bob's Breakfast for campers & early birds

Live Music and Refreshments in Galleries

Mantario Lion's Wine Bar

Sweet Hots Jam, Jelly & Salsa

Bill Wardill's Books

Shef's Catering & Concession Stand

More in [Empress](#), [That's Expressive](#),

Cowboy Market 3D Barrel Racing Summer Series

From FB group: We take great pride in running "The Cowboy Market 3D Summer Barrel Racing Series". We have created a venue for competitor and spectator to come together and embrace our community and our western heritage. We have a laid back atmosphere that encourages positive traits in the competitors that attend. It has been a great place for the newest rider to the most competitive to share their love of Barrel Racing!

Village of Empress Facebook Photo Contest

A contest to engage locals and tourists photography activities via social media.

Media Assets | Stories

Calgary Sun Article:

<http://www.calgarysun.com/2016/08/26/the-prairie-just-keeps-rolling-on>

Canadian Badlands:

<https://www.facebook.com/CanBadlands/photos/a.129006400517064.34510.124224360995268/1085186401565721/?type=3&theater>

Infrastructure Assets:

The Old Empress Hospital	The Station:
<p>-2014 Engineered Assessment completed -requires significant upgrades -the following ideas have been proposed for use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Art Studio Space Artist In Residence❖ Archeology and Native History Interpretation❖ Meditation Centre Fashioned off of Alberta Vipassana Meditation Centre in Youngstown AB❖ Various health, seniors and recovery centre concepts	<p>-Empress & District Historical Society owned and operated -working to host arts and culture events</p>



Note:

Definition of Artisan:

Wikipedia Definition: **artisan** (from [French](#): *artisan*, [Italian](#): *artigiano*) is a [skilled craft worker](#) who makes or creates things by [hand](#) that may be [functional](#) or strictly [decorative](#), for example [furniture](#), [decorative arts](#), [sculptures](#), [clothing](#), [jewellery](#), household items and [tools](#) or even mechanical mechanisms such as the handmade clockwork [movement](#) of a [watchmaker](#). Artisans practice a [craft](#) and may through experience and [aptitude](#) reach the expressive levels of an [artist](#).