

## **Village of Empress 2015 business plan**



**OVERVIEW:**

The Village of Empress is committed to preserving its independence and providing its residents with the best services it can, while maintaining its low cost of living.

**Company Vision and Mission:**

Vision: Empress: engaging, balanced, connected

Mission: To seek opportunities to ensure Empress reaches its full potential;  
Provide guidance to ensure balanced and sustainable growth; and  
Promote Empress as an opportune place to live work and play.

**CORE BUSINESS OVERVIEW:**

**Core Business 1: A responsible, cost effective and accountable local government**

**Core Business 2: Well managed growth, well planned spaces**

**Core Business 3: A safe, livable and healthy community**

**Core Business 4: A diverse and sustainable economy**

**Core Business 5: A thriving natural environment**

**PLAN DEVELOPMENT, ALIGNMENT AND DELIVERY**

The following document sets out the key directions and components of the Village of Empress 2014 Business plan. In developing this Action plan, the strategic planning sessions, council's capital 5 year plan, and the adopted 2014 capital and operating budgets were taken into consideration

## CORE BUSINESS ONE:

### A responsible, cost effective and accountable local government

<b>Goal 1: <i>Establish priorities that support the municipal service requirements of the majority of local residents</i></b>	
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Ensure that the services the Village provides are reviewed annually.</li><li>❖ Ensure that the cost effectiveness of service delivery is a priority when making decisions on how services are to be delivered.</li><li>❖ Ensure the effective and regular communication of municipal objectives to staff for implementation.</li><li>❖ Ensure that municipal staff is able to effectively and efficiently deliver required municipal services.</li><li>❖ Ensure that municipal human resources needs are factored into decisions on what services are to be provided and how.</li></ul>
Key Actions 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Ongoing review of all bylaws and policies currently in practice</li><li>❖ Ongoing review of current rates on all service.</li><li>❖ Bimonthly staff meetings to review new bylaws, policies.</li><li>❖ Ensure equipment needs are identified and budgeted for to enable staff to meet priorities set by Council</li></ul>
Accomplishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖</li></ul>

<b>Goal 2: Engage in transparent and accountable decision making processes and actions</b>	
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Use technology to expand/enhance the delivery of online services.</li> <li>❖ Enhance communication between the government and its citizens.</li> <li>❖ Educate the public about what is within and outside of the Villages direct control/sphere of influence.</li> <li>❖ Increase the use of electronic communication to ensure that residents and business owners are aware of municipal opportunities and initiatives.</li> <li>❖ Encourage the community to become more actively involved in civic affairs.</li> <li>❖ Engage newcomers to the Village to participate in community activities and the municipal decision making process</li> <li>❖ Encourage openness in the decision making process</li> <li>❖ Enhance the customer service function to respond to the needs of the community</li> </ul>
Key Actions 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Keep website up to date</li> <li>❖ Open house in November</li> <li>❖ Host Summer Barbeque to welcome newcomers</li> <li>❖ Facilitate local participation</li> </ul>
Accomplishments	❖

<b>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</b>	
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Ensure that fiscally responsible operating and capital budgets are established and maintained on a yearly basis.</li> <li>❖ Ensure the maintenance and effective management of reserve funds</li> <li>❖ Ensure the efficient management of capital assets and municipal services to meet existing and future demands</li> <li>❖ Enhance communication and coordination with the region and other levels of government in the provision of services.</li> <li>❖ 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.</li> </ul>
Key Actions 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Budget developed and reviewed in December</li> <li>❖ Budget to actual report for Council at all Council meetings</li> <li>❖ Financial statement placed on website</li> <li>❖ Develop new 10 year municipal capital infrastructure plan</li> </ul>
Accomplishments	❖

<b>Goal 4: <i>Demonstrate leadership on matters that affect Empress</i></b>	
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Participate fully in Region led exercises that are intended to maintain and enhance quality of life</li> <li>❖ Engage other levels of government to ensure that the interests of Empress residents and business owners are known</li> <li>❖ Ensure that Federal and Provincial programs that may benefit Empress are considered whenever possible.</li> <li>❖ Ensure Empress's interests and needs are known at the Regional level.</li> <li>❖ Continue local political and staff participation on Boards and Committees both within and outside the Empress Community.</li> </ul>
Key Actions 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Participate in SAMDA Economic Partnership meetings, AGM and initiatives.</li> <li>❖ Participate in Palliser Economic Partnership meetings, AGM and initiatives</li> <li>❖ Participate in Canadian Badlands AGM and initiatives.</li> <li>❖ Participate in Palliser Regional Municipal Services for cost effective service delivery.</li> <li>❖ Participate in Big Country Waste Management for cost effective service delivery</li> <li>❖ Participate in Acadia Foundation for cost effective regional senior housing</li> <li>❖ Participate in Big Country Medical/Dental Board for maintenance of cost effective essential services.</li> <li>❖ Participate in Red Deer River Watershed Alliance</li> <li>❖ Participate in the AUMA convention to ensure we have the opportunity to speak with MLA's</li> <li>❖ Participate in Regional Disaster Services exercises</li> </ul>
Accomplishments	❖

## CORE BUSINESS TWO: Well managed growth, well planned spaces

<b>Goal 1: <i>Encourage the provision and maintenance of an appropriate mix of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational uses.</i></b>	
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Encourage the development of a range of uses that will support Empress as a place to live, work and play</li> <li>❖ Create a sense of civic identity and pride through a high standard of urban design for all new development</li> <li>❖ Encourage the provision of a full range of housing opportunities for present and future residents of all ages and incomes</li> <li>❖ Encourage infilling and intensification in the existing urban area</li> <li>❖ Encourage the development of home based businesses in the area</li> <li>❖ Maintain a reasonable amount of commercial and industrial land for future expansion</li> <li>❖ Assure appropriate recreational and cultural opportunities for residents and visitors.</li> </ul>
Key Actions 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Establish the first Empress &amp; District Summer Musical Theatre School</li> <li>❖ Facilitate the monthly movie night @ hall</li> <li>❖ Encourage residents to form a community hall group</li> <li>❖ Advertise serviced land for sale in Empress on website</li> <li>❖ Promote SAMDA and PEP websites and opportunities on website</li> <li>❖ Review current facilities and forge partnerships with community organizations</li> <li>❖ Develop Boat Launch at old pump site</li> </ul>
Accomplishments	❖

<b>Goal 2: <i>Encourage cost effective and timely municipal/community infrastructure development.</i></b>	
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Encourage the efficient use of land to make the best use of infrastructure and services.</li> <li>❖ Ensure that the village demonstrates leadership in the future urban expansion to ensure that new development is as cost effective as possible</li> <li>❖ Ensure that appropriate financial plans and infrastructure strategies are in place before development occurs.</li> </ul>
Key Actions 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ New Firehall and Town Shop</li> <li>❖ Continue work on Peter Fidler Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Finish RV site renovation</li> <li>➤ Groom Walking trails</li> <li>➤ Boat Launch</li> <li>➤ Signage for RV site and walking trails</li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ Remove wading pool in Centennial Park</li> <li>❖ Adopt new 10 year Municipal Capital Infrastructure Plan</li> </ul>
Accomplishments	❖



<b>Goal 3: <i>Encourage well timed service delivery.</i></b>	
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 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.</li> <li>❖ Encourage the development of public facilities in appropriate locations at the right time to meet the needs of present and future residents.</li> <li>❖ Ensure that appropriate capital works forecasting/planning is done before the works are required.</li> </ul>
Key Actions 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Partner with local organizations, and apply for grants to upgrade Community Hall</li> <li>❖ Partner with local organizations, and apply for grants to put in a splash park</li> <li>❖ Apply for Building Canada Fund for water tower</li> <li>❖ Partner with ATB for Financial Services for Empress and Region</li> </ul>
Accomplishments	❖

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

<b>Goal 1: <i>Promote and facilitate active and healthy lifestyles and lifelong learning.</i></b>	
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 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.</li> <li>❖ Facilitate involvement for people at different life cycle and physical stages and of varying social-economic status- including youth and senior oriented initiatives.</li> <li>❖ Enhance leisure, cultural and educational opportunities/experiences that contribute to personal enjoyment, growth and development.</li> <li>❖ Encourage the exploration of all partnership opportunities in the delivery of leisure/community/library services.</li> <li>❖ Encourage the development of new partnerships and maintain existing partnerships and strategic alliances to encourage community ownership and responsibility</li> <li>❖ Encourage residents to play an active role in the decision making process by participating on boards and committees.</li> </ul>
Key Actions 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Continue the partnership with Empress/Bindloss Ag. Society for delivery of recreational and educational opportunities</li> <li>❖ Continue partnering with Marigold Library for library services.</li> <li>❖ Advertise all events on website.</li> <li>❖ Include residents on SAMDA Board, Library Board, FCSS Board, Cemetery Board</li> <li>❖ Advertise Train Museum, Peter Fidler Park walking trails, bird watching opportunities, and all events (i.e. art tour, apple festival, curling/stirling, ball, Canada day, Christmas event, etc.)</li> <li>❖ Inaugural Empress &amp; District Summer Musical Theatre School</li> <li>❖ Include hunting and fishing section on website photo gallery</li> </ul>
Accomplishments	❖

<b>Goal 2: <i>Maximize community safety and security.</i></b>	
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Encourage the development of fire service facilities that provide the maximum benefit to all residents/businesses</li> <li>❖ Enhance relationships with regional emergency service providers in adjoining jurisdictions so that cost effective and timely emergency response and support functions are maintained</li> <li>❖ Ensure the preparation and implementation of comprehensive emergency plans</li> <li>❖ 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.</li> </ul>
Key Actions 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ RCMP attend at Council meeting.</li> <li>❖ Partner with Special Areas on new Fire Hall</li> <li>❖ Purchase additional Fire equipment.</li> <li>❖ Participate in Regional Disaster Training Exercise</li> </ul>
Accomplishments	❖

<b>Goal 3: <i>Protect and enhance our heritage, identity and character.</i></b>	
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Respect and honor the Village's rich history</li> <li>❖ Promote the development of strong arts and cultural community that builds upon local knowledge, history and experience.</li> <li>❖ Protect, maintain and enhance the open space character of lands outside of the urban area for enjoyment by present and future generations</li> <li>❖ Encourage key community events that help shape identity and contribute to community spirit</li> <li>❖ Establish and maintain a community identity that sets Empress apart from others through the holding of community events, promotion and branding.</li> <li>❖ Encourage the development of public spaces that foster community involvement and interaction</li> <li>❖ Build on the strengths of our urban and rural character</li> <li>❖ Foster civic pride by recognizing the contribution that cultural heritage resources make to the rural and urban fabric</li> <li>❖ Encourage economic activities in the area that support the values and character of our region</li> <li>❖ Recognize and value diversity</li> </ul>
Key Actions 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Participate in the Special Areas Cultural Center task force</li> <li>❖ Inaugural Empress &amp; District Summer Musical Theatre School</li> <li>❖ Section on website photo gallery to promote the hunting and fishing opportunities in the area</li> <li>❖ Partner with area residents to promote the archeological aspects of our region</li> <li>❖ Develop a community brand, logo and facebook page</li> <li>❖ Advertise all events on website, facebook, twitter etc.</li> </ul>
Accomplishments	❖

## CORE BUSINESS FOUR: A diverse and sustainable economy

<b>Goal 1:</b> <i>Attract and retain employers that provide a range of employment opportunities and assessment growth</i>	
Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Leverage Empress's high quality of life and community identity to attract investment</li><li>❖ Encourage the development of the business infrastructure required to attract uses that will contribute to the quality of life on the village.</li><li>❖ Work with other levels of government to encourage additional investment in Empress</li><li>❖ Work with existing businesses to establish initiatives to attract additional investment</li><li>❖ Continue to encourage the availability of an appropriate supply of land for future employment uses.</li></ul>
Key Actions 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Update Website</li><li>❖ Participate in Eastern Alberta Trade Corridor</li><li>❖ Work with PEP &amp; SAMDA to develop an up to date marketing strategy</li></ul>
Accomplishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖</li></ul>

<b>Goal 2: <i>Encourage the private sector to meet the retail needs of a growing population in a reasonable timely manner.</i></b>	
Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Encourage the further development of retail and service uses in the Downtown business core</li> <li>❖ Provide opportunities for a wide range of retail uses in the village</li> <li>❖ Encourage the development of home based business and e-commerce utilizing the high speed internet services available in the region</li> <li>❖ Encourage the development of appropriate commercial and tourist uses in the region.</li> </ul>
Key Actions 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Promote the services available through SAMDA, PEP, Meridian Community Futures, EATC</li> <li>❖ Investigate gaps and identify opportunities for business development</li> <li>❖ Sign contract with ATB Financial Services for an Agency in Empress</li> <li>❖ Promote businesses in village and region on website</li> </ul>
Accomplishments	❖

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

<b>Goal 1: <i>Protect and enhance natural features</i></b>	
Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Encourage the decision-making process to be supported by an understanding of the natural environment including values, opportunities, limits and constraints</li> <li>❖ Protect and enhance significant natural heritage features and their associated ecological and hydrological functions</li> <li>❖ Maintain, restore and where possible, enhance or improve the diversity and connectivity of natural heritage feature and ecological functions</li> </ul>
Key Actions 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Continue to upgrade Peter Fidler RV Park</li> <li>❖ Inventory bird sightings, and promote bird watching opportunities</li> <li>❖ Walking trails refurbished, signed, and promoted</li> <li>❖ Boat launch</li> <li>❖ Inventory and promote the hunting and fishing opportunities in the region</li> <li>❖ Work with interested land owners to promote tours of the archeological history in our region</li> </ul>
Accomplishments	❖

<b>Goal 2: <i>Promote the enjoyment and responsible use of natural areas</i></b>	
Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Encourage the integration of the parks and open space system with the natural heritage system wherever possible.</li> <li>❖ Encourage through proper planning that the features and related functions of natural environment areas are not negatively impacted by public use.</li> <li>❖ Educate the public on the benefits of the natural environment and the positive contribution the natural environment has on the village.</li> </ul>
Key Actions 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Promote responsible use of walking trails and RV sites</li> <li>❖ Advertise on website</li> <li>❖ Partner with PRMS, SAMDA and Canadian Badlands for promotion of Empress</li> </ul>
Accomplishments	❖