

*Municipal
Sustainability Plan
Update 2017-2018*

Town of Thorsby 2017-2018





Thorsby Chamber
Of Commerce
"Business Building Communities"



We're Planning Sustainability Forward

Thorsby Alberta adopted the Municipal Sustainability Plan in 2014. The plan emerged from resident engagement and Thorsby's desire to focus on using limited resources wisely in delivering the programs, services, and infrastructure that a Village requires within the five (5) pillars of sustainability.

Since then, Thorsby has become a Town in January 2017, and with that designation comes larger and more strategic responsibilities to maintain Town status. Thorsby still maintains its chosen definition of sustainability, that being,

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (adopted from the report of the Brundtland Commission, adopted by the United Nations in 1987)

In other words, smart sustainability cannot burden future Council's or residents with unattainable debts or inappropriate decisions. It also must create opportunities for Thorsby to thrive and survive as a Town.

For Thorsby to keep track of the progress decided within the sustainability Pillars it will be important to identify them once again within this document and determine if the progress is sustainable, ongoing, or requires further discussion with respect to timelines.

In 2016, Thorsby adopted a new mission, vision, and strategic plan. The Strategic Plan has a current scorecard to help Council and Administration see the progress the Town has made, and it is significantly positive.

It is our regional leadership and our understanding of collaboration that will mobilize, engage and responsibly sustain the change we envision.

This update is our commitment for that change.

Building an **ACTIVE** Community

THORSBY



Sustainability Pillars

Plans begin with a vision. Plans are our public declaration that we intend to achieve it. They also are our practical statement to our residents and our businesses that we have a plan to get there. We also declare that we are on a journey as a community team to continue to build and enhance our wonderful community.

We acknowledge that our goal is to plan within the pillars and to measure within the pillars.

Governance:

- Policy, Leadership;
- Growth Management;
- Resource planning, financial, human;
- Inter-municipal initiatives;
- Communication.

Culture:

- Community identity;
- Recreation, arts, culture, library;
- Diversity Inclusion.

Social:

- Community well-being with succession planning in all activities;
- FCSS;
- Education and health.

Economy:

- Business and industry mix;
- Economic Development, Choose Local Strategy;
- Community opportunity for a secure financial life;
- Infrastructure – Police/Fire/EMS/Public Works/Emergency Management.

Environment:

- Land Use Planning;
- Agriculture as it pertains to Agriculture operations;
- Green spaces

Our Mission, Vision and Good Practices

Vision

Striving together for a better community!

Mission

Building a sustainable community where everyone can live, work and play!

Good Practices

Good practices are more achievable than best practices. The Town of Thorsby has taken an approach that good practices leave room for improvement, innovation and growth. This makes sense for Thorsby as ‘best practices’ imply a finality and no room for individual municipal thought.

In 2017, Thorsby has completed its new Land Use Bylaw, the Municipal Development Plan, Strategic Plan (2016), (updated scorecard 2017) and the Municipal Sustainability Plan (updated scorecard 2017)

Our children’s future depends on our planning and attention to that strategic thinking and Thorsby is invested in this practice.





Pillar One

Governance

Recognizing our mission that we are *“building a sustainable community where everyone can live, work and play,”* depends on our partnerships with our region, our ability to share services and our innate drive to be more.

It means keeping the town status that Thorsby worked so hard to achieve by being in tune with solid and planned governance, keeping the current momentum achieved moving forward.

It means keeping the engagement systems open with our residents and businesses and building strong links through those relationships.

It means reviewing our legislated documents, policies, bylaws, and providing updating and communication to businesses.



To be Reviewed for further improvement:

- Creation of 3-year operating and funded 5-year capital budgets;
- Continue with resident stakeholder group participation in budgeting;
- Consult with residents using many methods, not just surveys regarding budget development;
- Continue with policy updates with priority defaulting to Land Use and Bylaw;

Outcome One – Policy Leadership and Sustainability Planning

Achievements:

- Moved the engagement with other orders of Government to the strategic plan;
- Town status achieved;
- Building the 39/20 Alliance;
- Re-engaging with the Leduc EDA;
- Municipal Development Plan passed through the Capital Region Board, reviewed by STANTEC with no changes or challenges.
- Moved the Town transparency and performance measures to the strategic plan for action. Performance measures (a-e) has been significantly improved

Outcome Two – Resource Planning Financial /Internal

Achievements:

- Professional development for staff moved to strategic plan and is being achieved;
- Residents learning through new Bylaw staff, Emergency Management discussion, more resident engagement achieved through the Land Use Bylaw, Municipal Development Plan and Community Standards Bylaw;
- Professional staff recruited for Public Works;
- Service levels completed and are now the basis of the annual operational and capital budget;
- Policy development moved to Strategic Plan for better performance measure.

Outcome Three – Intermunicipal Initiatives and Communication

Achievements:

- Communication moved to the Strategic Plan;
- Improvements made to local information and services through the Target and Town Face Book page.
- Communication is more assertive and includes Town alerts and bulletins.
- Working more with surrounding municipalities
- Using technology to improve engagement.





Pillar Two

Culture

Culture and heritage are two different concepts for Thorsby. Thorsby was founded on a Scandinavian heritage and has advanced its culture to be inclusive to many seeking an opportunity within the Town.

Community identity is usually identified in facilities, the “symbol” of the community, and the heritage. It also takes into consideration:

- Community identity;
- Recreation, arts, culture, library;
- Diversity inclusion

In keeping with the strategic plan, the Municipal Sustainability Plan takes a high-level approach to Culture. It seeks to identify the opportunities and the Strategic Plan operationalizes them.

To be Reviewed for further improvement:

- Business case for the future of the Community Hall;
- Continue to measure student enrollment and work with the Black Gold School Division for improvements;
- Capital Plan for future development of the Arctic Spas Recreation Centre;
- Continued cooperation between Visual and performing arts groups.
- Continue to develop culture and support heritage.



Outcome One – Community Identity

Achievements:

- New Logo to market Thorsby developed;
- Branding, colours, esthetics all developed to support the new logo;
- **This Goal complete in its entirety within the MSP.**

Outcome Two – Recreation, Arts, Culture, Library

Achievements:

- Thunder Days developed in June 2017 and is currently developing and growing to embrace the heritage of the community;
- Recreation is developing better statistics gathering for integrated and useful financial management;
- **Recreation program management and programming moved to Strategic Plan for better monitoring;**
- Senior Centre ground breaking in 2017 and completed in 2018;
- New Elementary School built, and relationship is strong with Black Gold School Division;
- Library actively participates in the Strategic Planning with the Town and is growing at a steady rate, offering targeted programming for users;





Pillar Three

Social

A sense of community is not just it's buildings and roads, it is its people!

The Social pillar takes into consideration land use policies and legislated documents to make sure those that wish to live in Thorsby have choices and opportunities not only for the Town but choices where they wish to purchase or build homes and businesses.

The Social pillar in a Municipal Sustainability plan is measured not by its growth and largess, but rather by the amount of independence that is achieved by those seeking help.

Thorsby has a robust FCSS and community health program which reaches out to all the agencies within Thorsby and through partnerships with the region.

Thorsby will have a sense of community built on strong connections and choice.



To Be Reviewed for Further Improvement

- Continue to engage with residents to evaluate and build community capacity for social responsibility;
- Continue to promote and provide community safety;
- Continue to promote to health practitioners the advantages of practicing in Thorsby.

Outcome One – Community Well Being and Residential Diversification

Achievements:

- The Town has achieved over 1000 people in 2016;
- The new 2017 Land Use Bylaw indicates diverse residential and commercial land use;
- The new 2017 Municipal Development Plan and the 2017 Land Use Bylaw have identified new residential growth and policies have been developed for green space and light commercial;
- The Town has contracted services of a Master Planner to aid the Town's development officer to ensure permits are timely;

Outcome Two – Community Safety

Achievements:

- Improving each year through infrastructure planning, the look of streets, buildings, neighbourhoods including new FORTS dark sky compliant LED street lights;
- Maintain a clean and vigilant community through education, community involvement and enforcement.
- New Bylaw team hired.
- Public invited to emergency management discussion in late 2017;
- Fire Service changed in 2014 to be managed by Leduc County.

Outcome Three – FCSS and Community Health

Achievements:

- **Despite not being mentioned in the original 2014 Municipal Sustainability Plan document FCSS has taken significant steps in establishing itself as a community social and health builder.**
- Full time FCSS Coordinator hired in 2016;
- Initiated community change through resident engagement and community initiated mobilization;
- Initiate community change through dialogue and exchange of ideas;





Pillar Four

Economy

Thorsby's economy not only depends on those traveling through and by on the highways but on those requiring services as they reside in Pigeon Lake for the summer. It also depends on "Choose Local" strategies that must be developed, nurtured, and strengthened.

Part of the economy is the availability of Infrastructure to help residents and visitors be safe, have uninterrupted services, and manage emergencies when they arise. Municipal infrastructure encompasses:

- Police/Fire/EMS;
- Public Works;
- Emergency Management.

Without this infrastructure, Thorsby cannot survive and won't be a place to do business or live. Currently, Thorsby has an exemplary infrastructure team.



To Be Reviewed for Further Improvement

- Market the water treatment plant;
- Continue the Choose Local Strategy;
- Continue to enhance the 39/20 Alliance;
- Continue to promote Thorsby's festivals and consider a professional social media firm to move it forward on a more professional level.

Outcome One – Business and Industry Mix

Achievements:

- The 2014 document does not discuss this clearly, but alludes to it in the beginning pages of the document;
- What has taken place to discuss the business and industry mix is the Land Use Bylaw, Land Use Policies and Municipal Development Plan, all completed in 2017;

Outcome Two – Economic Development, Choose local Strategy

Achievements:

- A Choose Local Strategy was commissioned by the 2016 Council. It is a starting point document to be completed at the direction of Administration;
- The Town continues to expand and enhance the 39/20 Alliance strategy;





Pillar Five

Environment

In 2017 the Thorsby Council made a deliberate and focused effort to have the proper legislated documents completed. These documents guide developers, and residents in land use planning and planning policies. It was important also to have a strategic plan and a review of the plan in keeping with the Municipal Sustainability Plan required. They also separated the strategic plan from the Municipal Sustainability Plan and commissioned this scorecard for the MSP.

Thorsby believes in a focused and reasonable resource management strategy. Less waste and more attention to the surroundings that sustain us is the genesis of that philosophy.

Wise management requires Thorsby to use our budgets wisely and responsibly. It involves better ways of keeping our community green through consultation. It involves encouragement and support for more energy efficient homes and civic buildings.

It includes stronger connections between the food we eat, those who grow it, goods we consume, the water we use, and waste we produce and dispose of.

To Be Reviewed for Further Improvement



- Continue to review and develop the budget based on service levels;
- Continue the road improvement strategy;
- Continue to enhance the Chamber’s involvement with the Town;
- Continue with resident engagement.

Outcome One – Land Use Planning/Recreational Spaces

Achievements:

- A park space policy was developed with grass cutting levels and service levels developed;
- Trails are marketed more robustly, and more maintenance is being conducted by volunteers;
- All zoning was reviewed and amended with the new Land Use Bylaw in 2017;

Outcome Two- Urban Environment Attractiveness

Achievements:

- Communities in Bloom has enhanced the Town landscape and continues to be a viable group in Town;
- A new Business Directory sign was installed in 2017;
- Public works continues to be cognizant of repairs and the level of disruption that may exist.

THORSBY’S VALUES

WORKING AND STANDING TOGETHER

Town Council and all staff will work as a team to provide the best service, in the best interests of you and the Town.

DEPENDABILITY

You can depend on us to provide the most professional service and if we don’t have the answer, we will use our resources to get you the best answer.

ACCURACY

Our administration team will provide accuracy in our dealings with you and if we have made a mistake we will do our utmost to work it out with you.

DEDICATION

Our service to you is our dedication to our municipal profession. We are interested in our careers, which is helping you by providing the best service we can.

FAIRNESS

We will be fair to your situation. and fair to the legislation we serve.