

# Greenview's Strategic Plan

## A 2021 UPDATE



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# A MESSAGE

## FROM THE REEVE

The past few years in the Municipal District of Greenview have been very eventful, from the volatility in energy prices, to changing climate, and most recently, the incorporation of the former Town of Grande Cache into Greenview.

The addition of the oversight of Grande Cache and its citizens has meant a change in focus for Greenview. It has also meant a temporary change in the composition of our municipal council with the addition of two of the former town's council members to the Greenview Council. These changes have meant we need to revisit our existing long-term strategic plan and identify how the shifting environment affects us now and into the future.

To this end, your council met with Greenview management to work on defining this success by creating a revised strategic plan for Greenview. This is a high-level governance plan that provides direction for the next four years. It provides long-term direction for governance, the economy, our culture and social expression and our role in environmental stewardship. The strategic plan reflects the priorities of this council and will help ensure that future councils have the resources they need to set their own priorities and vision.

Greenview Council revisited and reconfirmed its vision & mission statements and the set of values that were developed and used in the 2017 strategic plan.

As we look to the rest of our council term and beyond, it is important that this document be reviewed and updated to ensure that the current priorities and interests of council continue to be reflected in the work of Greenview, and to ensure that Administration and Council are working towards a shared idea of success.

We believe this plan will help Greenview achieve our desired common future.

**Dale Smith, Reeve**

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## INTRODUCTION

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On January 1, 2019, Council inherited the former Town of Grande Cache by way of dissolution of the long struggling community. With the dissolution came approximately 80 staff, all residing within the former Town, situated 300 km away from Greenview's corporate head office. Two additional elected officials from the former town joined Greenview's council, making for a ten member governance team.

Early in January, Council decided a change in administrative leadership was warranted, and the Chief Administrative Officer was replaced with an interim CAO. In late March, contract negotiations commenced and the Interim CAO secured the permanent position with Greenview in early April.

Shortly after the role of Chief Administrative Officer was settled, the long standing Reeve announced that he was stepping down as the elected leader and would take his place at the table as a councillor. The position of reeve was decided by secret ballot, and Councillor Dale Smith was chosen to lead the municipality forward. Reeve Smith maintains his position as Reeve as he was acclaimed at the recent Organizational Meeting in late October, 2019.

In early February, Council and Administration had a two day strategic planning session that was crucial to improving the relationship between Council and the management team. Council and Administration established how the team was going to move forward and a renewed commitment to internal collaboration and teamwork was set in motion.

Council and Administration forged ahead to build the 2020 Capital and Operating Budget. Reasons to focus on a "home built" strategic plan became apparent. In late October, Council and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) met to establish the strategies and priorities for 2020 and beyond, and a high- level vision for Greenview is born in this document.



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## ESTABLISHED LEADERSHIP STATEMENTS

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Several years ago, Council worked to establish a Vision and Mission Statement. With the addition of two councillors from Grande Cache, it was important to review the statements to affirm their relevance and identify if any changes were required. A values system that is at the core of Administration's leadership is a developed and principled format that is embraced by the management team throughout the organization.

## VISION STATEMENT

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*The Municipal District of Greenview exemplifies sustainable, healthy and safe communities that enhance quality of life.*

## MISSION STATEMENT

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*Providing strong, transparent leadership and quality services that are responsive to our communities' needs.*

## VALUES

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These values are the guiding principles that help determine how Greenview will be administered – internally and externally.

### SAFETY

We provide a safe and respectful work environment for all staff, volunteers and citizens.

### TEAMWORK

We believe in the strength of shared expertise and effort.

### INTEGRITY

We do what we say we will do.

### LEADERSHIP

We model the attitudes and behaviours we expect in others.

### EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE

We are proud of the services and amenities we are able to deliver to those who need them.

## GOVERNANCE

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The foundational landscape of municipal government begins with Council's commitment to conducting the business of the municipality. Establishing a predictable set of principles that are threaded together by honesty, integrity, transparency and fairness, Greenview Council is steadfast in governing the municipality. Strong policies, sound fiscal management, and clear directives to administration compliment the goals and objectives from each council member to collectively form a strong municipal business group.

Council is headed towards 2020 with a solid understanding of the regional challenges and hardships facing our municipal neighbours, provincial government, and resident industries such as oil & gas, forestry and agriculture producers. Council acknowledges the linear assessment that is bestowed to Greenview and is committed to many valued-added initiatives.

## MUNICIPAL SERVICES

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Council has communicated to Administration that it is an unwavering priority to continue to invest back in infrastructure that will support industry and those that are generating the municipal tax base. In addition to the nearly \$15,000,000 in 2020 earmarked for the 175 km Forestry Trunk Road, block funding to maintain resource roads will support the necessary transportation system throughout the municipality. With a long range, ambitious goal to pave major stretches of the Forestry Trunk Road, Greenview has established reserve funding to address the financial commitments required.

Addressing the long neglected infrastructure in Grande Cache will be an ongoing financial commitment. Repairs and upgrades to the water and waste water distribution systems, buildings, equipment, training and community investment will require a heavy financial commitment over the next several years of several million dollars annually.

Providing ongoing, adequate support to all the communities throughout Greenview is important. Working in unison with our not-for-profit sector in all areas of the municipality confirms that improved quality of life for our residents is a priority for Council. Community halls, recreation groups, agricultural societies, programs and services, Council invests over \$8 Million annually through the Community Services Department.

Safety for our residents, those visiting and recreating, and the travelling public is becoming more of a municipal responsibility than ever before. Monitoring road use, weight and measures and speed and traffic safety helps to keep people safe and protects our infrastructure. In addition to the two enhanced RCMP officer positions in Grovedale and Valleyview, and the Bylaw Enforcement position in Grande Cache, Greenview has applied for and has entered into an agreement with the Solicitor General to develop a Community Peace Officer program. A new regional fire chief was recently hired and the focus of this position is to apply direct supports and efforts to invest and lead our individual fire departments and move them into a collective, regional department.

Recreation, Tourism and Economic Development all have priority seating at Council's table. Greenview heavily invests in recreation, thus having a direct, positive impact on residents, neighbouring communities and visitors. Outdoor recreation, recreation facilities as well as sporting events are all investments Council continues to generously fund. With full or partial ownership in indoor recreation facilities; Fox Creek, Valleyview and Grande Cache, Greenview has established a solid commitment in supporting a healthy lifestyle for residents and visitors in our communities.

Greenview is an ongoing participant in several economic development initiatives; Geothermal development and a Tri-Municipal Partnership with Grande Prairie County and the City of Grande Prairie to name a couple. Smaller, bite size projects include supporting the tourism information centre in Valleyview, and owning and operating the Interpretative Centre in Grande Cache.



The sustainability of the Town of Fox Creek and the Town of Valleyview are very important to Greenview. For several years now, Greenview has been providing each of the towns with upwards of \$3 Million each year to help with operating and capital projects, captured as Community Development Initiative (CDI) funding. Outside of the CDI funding, FCSS funding, fire services, cemeteries, airports, recreation and several other joint funded projects have been supported financially by Greenview.

Agricultural producers throughout Alberta have had challenges related to weather, world markets and other unforeseen barriers over the past couple of years. Greenview is very cognizant of the challenges facing our agricultural sector and is working to provide tools and resources to offset the trials of farming and ranching in today's world. Greenview continues to grow the fleet of useful rental equipment, providing affordable access to necessary implements. Vegetation management is confirmed as a priority throughout Greenview, supporting healthy and clean crop production throughout the region. Veterinary Services Incorporated (VSI) is a subsidized service governed by policy to assist in the recruitment and retention of available veterinary services, to enhance the productivity of the livestock industry and to promote Best Management Practices for improved animal health.

Improvements to our roads systems, expanding municipal water and waste water, repair & maintenance to our bridges, culverts and other infrastructure are all a continuum for Greenview. Solid waste is collected at several transfer stations throughout the municipality. A municipal landfill site in Grande Cache is the collection site for the



door to door pick up of residential and commercial waste in the hamlet. Greenview Regional Landfill is a partnership between the municipality and the towns of Valleyview and Fox Creek. Recycling bins throughout the municipality are provided in efforts to reduce the waste going into our landfills.

The ongoing and improved strategy of asset management for Greenview requires a focus on data management, operational improvements and ranking new build, repair and replacement of infrastructure. Roads, bridges, buildings, equipment, and utilities that include plants and pipes are some of the components included in our asset management.

Council recognizes the value in the staffing team. Maintaining it's reputation as an employer of choice, Greenview invests in the people that work for the municipality. Competitive wages, generous benefits and employer contributions, coupled with an investment in a comprehensive health and safety program, Greenview employees enjoy a substantially beneficial work environment. Improving knowledge and abilities of the employees through training and professional development is a worthy investment that Council recognizes and supports in budgeted dollars. Succession planning of key positions, capacity development and over all staffing level reviews are continuous in nature and remain soundly important to Greenview Council and Administration.

In order to continue to identify, improve and manage the ever changing demands of a municipality, and in an attempt to continue to address the established priorities, business continuity, function reviews, and feasibility studies are constantly adaptive efforts of Administration. Bringing forward accurate, timely and complete information for Council, so they may make informed decision is a connective partnership between Council and Administration.



## BEYOND OUR BORDERS

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Council is acutely aware of the financial challenges of those within Greenview and beyond our borders. It is an inherent value of the current Council that Greenview work to build capacity and support far reaching throughout the region. Efforts to partner with neighbouring municipalities to maximize programs and services is a key message solidified in actionable projects that we participate in whenever possible.

Initiatives outside the boundaries of Greenview are valuable and well supported by Council. Council has provided funding to the Wilmore Wilderness Foundation to help maintain trails in the Wilmore Wilderness Park. The Philip J. Currie Museum in Wembley receives \$150,000 to assist with operating expenses. Nitehawk Ski and Recreation area is in Grande Prairie County and funded in part by Greenview, and Smoky River Ski Area receives funding for operating and capital. All are assisted with Greenview funding on an annual basis. Support of services that benefit our ratepayers that are hosted outside of the corporate boundaries are significant and Council recognizes the duty to provide funding to them. Annually, STARS Air Ambulance receives \$200,000. Investment in several libraries is upwards of \$400,000 a year. Additionally, palliative care in Grande Prairie, food banks in urban centres including the City of Grande Prairie, and many other social programs and services receive funding support. Council recognizes that financial contributions to such services needs to be predictable and ongoing in order to achieve the collaborative, far reaching needs of these organizations.

Recognizing the advantages to aging in place and the value our seniors bring to our communities, Greenview generously supports senior's housing in several communities throughout the municipality. Working collaboratively with housing foundations, Greenview supports the efforts to address the many different demands of housing for our aging population.

Aware that the Province is facing critical financial decisions for programs and services, Greenview Council's mindset has evolved to provide overlap, gap contributions and services that may have once been the sole responsibility of provincial funders including childcare, senior's housing, and some secondary highway maintenance.

Council has recently established a priority to reach out to our neighbouring rural municipalities to further explore their financial and operational challenges. Greenview's established regional leadership will stretch beyond our borders and we will work to ensure that our tax base is a benefit to those in our region. In the coming months and over the next calendar year, Council and Administration are committed to stretching our tax dollars to create advantages in partnerships and collaboration.

## A MEASURE OF SUCCESS

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Not only is it important for Council to identify the priorities of the municipality, but it is crucial to be able to measure the success of those priorities.

- Accomplishing the projects identified in the Capital Budget, reducing the amount of carry-over from year to year will be a tangible measurement.
- Provide and encourage economic development with our adjoining municipal neighbours.
- Reducing the stressors of our struggling neighbours and municipal partners will be proven by action.
- The continued establishment of influence and support throughout the region will be gauged by the success of partnerships.
- Quality and timely service delivery of our programs and services will be measured by the public.
- Continued investment in the region will be reflected by the financial contributions outlined in Greenview's budget.
- Continuing to provide for the needs of today, while planning for the future, Greenview will continue to invest in reserves and savings that will benefit long into the future.

## CONCLUSION

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Greenview is an established, significant lead municipality in the region. It is important that we continue to provide support and confidence within our municipality and beyond. The truest form of success for Greenview will not be measured by wealth but by generosity cultivated with sincerity and purpose. On the innate premise that **"anything is bigger and better if it is shared"**, Greenview is committed to sharing in the responsibilities of our region to make life better for everyone.

## ADDENDUM - 2021 GREENVIEW PRIORITIES UPDATE

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Greenview Council and Senior Leadership Team met on September 30th, 2020 for a one-day Strategic Planning Session. Council provided Administration with an update of Councils' priorities which provides a useful guideline in bringing forward information that will lead to the accomplishments outlined in Greenview's 2021 Strategic Goals. Council and Administration work closely together to identify the challenges and opportunities facing Greenview. It is a straightforward declaration that 2020 has been a challenging year of epic proportions, not just for Greenview, or even regionally, but as an entire human race. 2020 tested the economic stability of the world's economy as well as the resilience of humanity. Greenview ratepayers, residents, staff and Council were not immune to the tribulations of 2020. In true Alberta fashion, Council and Administration acknowledged the unprecedented times we are living in, and collectively agreed to forge ahead with hope for good health, and prosperity.

Despite the challenges that 2020 came with, Greenview has remained strong and productive. Council has embraced the role as a regional leader and reaffirmed their commitment to working with their neighbours, not-for-profits, and other levels of government to continue to provide municipal support for vibrant, safe and progressive communities. Continuing to invest in critical infrastructure throughout Greenview, Council is committed to road construction and maintenance, water, wastewater and solid waste.

Amplified by unprecedented snow melt and precipitation, long-standing drainage concerns can no longer be delayed and has been identified as a critical concern throughout the municipality. Council has directed Administration that heavy investment in developing a strategy and applying solutions to the long standing and increasingly concerning drainage issues needs to begin to be addressed in 2021 and long into the future budgets. These multi-year projects will require the commitment of investment for many years to come.

Infrastructure for internet services including fibre optics has been identified as a critical need throughout the municipality and is far-reaching in who such investment stands to benefit. From children trying to participate virtually for schoolwork, to parents sequestered to work from home, homebased businesses, and agricultural producers' access to reliable internet has never been more necessary than it is now. Council has directed Administration to work on improved internet access throughout the municipality and recognizes that capital investment in infrastructure may be required for years to come.

Travel restrictions in 2020 due to the pandemic may have played in Greenview's favour. Canadians that vacationed in the Peace Region and along the Eastern Slopes were able to experience Greenview and the outdoor recreational opportunities we have throughout the municipality. Economic Development is directly complemented by tourism and outdoor recreation. One Councillor noted that "Grande Cache was discovered this year", reaffirming that the potential in Grande Cache as a destination for increased outdoor recreation is apparent. Working with stakeholders, recreational groups and other interested parties, Greenview will work to be a conduit to developing outdoor recreational opportunities in Grande Cache and throughout the municipality. With the Province moving away from operating certain parks and open spaces, Greenview will review the merits in taking some of those recreational areas on and what the costs and resources needed would be. In addition to provincial recreational sites, Greenview has a select few municipal recreational concepts to further explore.

Continuing to support the many recreational groups and not-for-profit organizations throughout Greenview will be balanced by the ability to maintain an acceptable level of taxation in the municipality while considering the value-added that these extension groups bring to the quality of life in the region.

Keeping our communities safe is a priority for everyone. Increasingly, rural crime has become prevalent throughout rural Alberta and that includes our neighbourhoods too. With RCMP being stretched beyond their own capacity, the health of the economy and the solitude of many of our homes and businesses, property crime and other criminal

activity has infiltrated our communities. Greenview will continue to challenge the Province on improving the policing program for rural Albertans. In addition to criminal code matters that are primarily the responsibility of the RCMP, a full compliment of officers in our Community Peace Officer program is a testament to Councils commitment to improving the safety on our roads and in our communities.

Strong support for our three (Regional) fire departments, as well as the financial support for the department in Valleyview, Fox Creek, and Search & Rescue Organizations, Greenview is proud of the level of fire and rescue protection our departments can provide. Continued training, capital purchases and operating support of our Fire & Rescue programs remains a standing priority for Council.

Diversification of the tax base weighs heavy on the minds of Council. Heavily reliant on tax revenue generated in oil & gas, Greenview is vulnerable to tax breaks provided to industry from the Province as well as the instability of world commodity prices. Noting the importance of broadening the tax base, diversification, economic development and development – friendly policies and bylaws are priorities of Council. Providing solution-driven assistance within Planning & Development will lend to the efforts to expand and diversify development throughout Greenview.

Improving the customer service emphasis, assisting business development, land use planning and collaborative approached based service delivery will all be focused goals for Greenview. Business attraction and retention will be cultivated within Greenview. One large project that Council continues to support is the industrial land development south east of the city of Grande Prairie. Value-added industrial development, clustered with existing oil & gas development will be a key initiative for Greenview’s efforts to expand the tax base.

Responsive, accurate communication is purposely highlighted as an expectation of Greenview. Keeping the public informed by providing summary highlights of Council decisions, promoting not for profit organizations, events and initiatives and relevant public service announcements continue to be key priorities of Council.

The COVID-19 Pandemic highlighted many demands for change on how municipalities do business in a health crisis. Greenview was not absolved in having to shift to conducting virtual meetings and remote workforces. Improving our internal Information Systems department has become imperative.



With the addition of an eleventh Councillor in the 2021 Municipal Election, Administration will be working to accommodate a better suited Council Chambers, increased computer and remote support and suitable new audio/visual equipment for governance and business needs.

The loss of revenue to Greenview due to the Provincial tax relief given to the Oil & Gas sector poses a significant challenge for the MD. The downturn in the economy, the ongoing capital infrastructure plans, the necessities of municipal services all require consideration and debate that leads to the final and approved yearly operating and capital budgets. Solid fiscal planning for today as well as into the future requires a measured approach fed by prudence and efficiency. Council and Administration are committed to working in concert to fund an affordable, sustainable annual business plan that will benefit Greenview residents, business & industry as well as the region beyond our municipal borders.

Collaboration between Council and Administration benefits the efforts of the municipality and all that we are charged to do. Continuing to develop a sound working relationship, governance and administration work in sync to create efficiencies, improve service delivery and maintain a healthy and vibrant municipality that is full of opportunity and prosperity for today and long into the future.

Greenview will continue to be a significant leader in the region, working collaboratively with our urban partners, our neighbours and all levels of government.







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