














**Town of Fort Smith**  
**Community Services Committee**  
Tuesday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 7:00 pm  
Town Hall Council Chambers

**AGENDA**

1. Call to Order
2. Declaration of Financial Interest
  - a. Statement of Disclosure of Interest
3. Delegations
  - a. Wally's Drugstore Blister Pack Update
  - b. CLI Group
4. Review
  - a. Agenda
  - b. Minutes
  - c. Visions and Values
  - d. Community Services Master Plan
  - e. Economic Development Plan
5. Directors Report
  - a. CRC Statistics – April 2023
  - b. Mary Kaeser Library
    - i. Library Statistics April 2023
    - ii. Library Patron and Circulation Statistics April 2023
6. Economic Development
  - a. Economic Development Report – May 2023
7. Advisory Boards
  - a. Community Services Advisory Board
    - i. CSAB Reappointment
  - b. Economic Development Advisory Board
    - i. EDAB Minutes April 27, 2023
    - ii. EDAB Reappointments
  - c. Fort Smith Housing Plan Advisory Board
  - d. Climate Adaptation Advisory Board
8. Bylaw/Policy Review and Development
9. Administration
10. Other Business
11. Excusing of Councilors
12. Date of Next Meeting
13. Adjournment

| Attached Documents   |  |
|--|--|
| <div><br/>Statement of<br/>Disclosure of Interest</div>     |  |
| <div><br/>Community Services<br/>Minutes April 11, 20</div> | <div><br/>Vision and<br/>Values.pdf</div>   |
| <div><br/>Community Services<br/>Master Plan 2020.pd</div>  | <div><br/>Economic<br/>Development Plan.p</div>   |
| <div><br/>CRC Stats - April<br/>2023</div>                | <div><div><br/>Library Statistics<br/>April 2023</div><div><br/>EDR - May 2023</div></div>           |
| <div><br/>CSAB<br/>Reappointment.pdf</div>                | <div><div><br/>EDAB Minutes April<br/>27, 2023</div><div><br/>EDAB<br/>Reappointments.pd</div></div> |
|  |  |



Town of Fort Smith  
*Code of Conduct for Council Members*

ATTACHMENT A

**STATEMENT OF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Name of Council Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Disclosure: \_\_\_\_\_

Council Meeting or

Committee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Agenda Item: \_\_\_\_\_

Agenda Item Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of type and nature of Interest (i.e., Interest or Conflict of Interest)

Interest:                      Personal                      ☐

   Pecuniary                      ☐

Conflict of Interest:                      ☐

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Councillor: \_\_\_\_\_

**Office Use Only:**

Recorded by \_\_\_\_\_ at: \_\_\_\_\_

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Town of Fort Smith  
Community Services Standing Committee  
Tuesday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 7:00 pm  
Town Hall Council Chambers

Chairperson: Cr. Tuckey  
Members Present: Mayor Daniels, D/M Macdonald, Cr. Couvrette (Conference Call),  
Cr. Pischinger, Cr. Beaulieu  
Regrets: Cr. Korol, Cr. Campbell, Cr. Fergusson  
Staff Present: Cynthia White, Senior Administrative Officer  
Katie Reid, Executive Secretary  
Guests:

1. Call to Order

Mayor Daniels called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and gave his condolences to the McSwain and Shott families. He handed the Chair to Cr. Tuckey.

Cr. Tuckey read the acknowledgement of First Nations.

2. Declaration of Financial Interest

- a. Statement of Disclosure of Financial Interest – There were no disclosures of financial interest.

3. Delegation

- a. FSDEA Town of Fort Smith Representative, Hilary Turko – Hilary Turko, FSDEA Town of Fort Smith Representative, gave an update on what has been discussed in meetings.

Ms. Turko responded to a question from Council about JBT Elementary School Friday STIP days and PWK High School aligning their schedules. She advised that the principal's develop their schedules to work best for them while abiding with the Union and ECE. She noted that they develop their calendars together and the FSDEA reviews the calendars and approves them, but that ultimately the schools determine the days off. She advised that teenagers do better with a later start time at PWK and that they work their schedule around departmental exams. She advised that JBT STIP days allow teachers with more time to prepare, and they work to align their schedule with PWKs schedule.

Ms. Turko advised that there hasn't been a FSDEA meeting since February as there wasn't quorum for the March meeting. She noted that the next meeting is scheduled for April 20<sup>th</sup>. She noted that they have been discussing reinstating lunch-hours at JBT, and how to accomplish this. She advised that there is a staffing shortage and teachers are required a lunchbreak as per the Union. She continued that they are reviewing what other schools are doing to accomplish this and suggested parent volunteers as a possibility. Additionally, she advised that both schools need to hire several teachers for next year and they have already begun the interview process.

Ms. Turko asked if there were any questions, and she would bring them to the next FSDEA meeting. D/M Macdonald thanked Ms. Turko for attending and asked if there is a timeline being considered to reinstate lunch-hours at JBT. Ms. Turko didn't have a timeline and advised that there are not enough teachers at the school, but it is being reviewed to determine how they can make it work. She advised that Hay River and Yellowknife students stay over lunch hour and Fort Smith is a similar sized school not implementing this.

Cr. Pischinger thanked Ms. Turko for attending. She advised that PWK students stay for lunch and sometimes offer a hot lunch to buy or for free. She advised that the principals can place staff on lunch hour duties by allocating staggered lunches and suggested starting a lunch program at JBT as well.

Cr. Pischinger advised that most or all classes in JBT this year are split grades. She asked why not have dedicated classes for grade levels with the odd split class. She noted that schools in the north are behind grade levels and thinks split classes are harder on the teachers and to keep students at grade level. She asked how student will be kept at grade level if split classes continue. Ms. Turko replied that she would bring this forward to the next meeting and advised this has been a topic of discussion at past meetings. She believes that placement is based on the Principal and Vice Principal review of how well students and teachers work together.

Cr. Pischinger asked in consideration that there hasn't been a FSDEA meeting since February, and as the schools run on a March 31<sup>st</sup> fiscal year, if the school calendars/assignments have been finalized. Ms. Turko replied that the staffing and calendars have been signed off/approved.

Administration advised that a report was created by the GNWT Director of Finance indicating new SSDEC jobs and thinks there were only two new jobs and other positions were filled to indeterminate. She asked what the long-term plan is to sustain externally funded positions, such as through Jordan's Principle, and how the FSDEA is addressing this with the ECE. Administration thinks it is important to determine a long-term plan to ensure the positions remain in the school system. Ms. Turko advised that she would bring the question to the meeting.

Ms. Turko provided an update on the French Immersion Program. She advised that a parent delegate group presented at the last FSDEA meeting regarding future students and concerns with the enrollment in the program dropping. She advised that they asked questions such as what the program would like next year and, in the future, and that the parent group has been meeting with the Principal as well. Ms. Turko advised that there is currently an intake for Grade 1 French Immersion, and she stated that they hope to see the program continue.

D/M Macdonald advised that he attended a meeting with the Director of the FSDEA and they indicated that there were discussions about the future of the French Immersion program. He asked if there were components of the French Immersion program that were not filled at that time and that are filled now. Ms. Turko replied that she was unsure if the teachers have the program's teaching assignments for next year and that there may be a Grade 1/2/3/4 split again. She advised that it comes down to student enrollment if the program is to be successful. Ms. Turko advised that they would like to build the program by finding additional funding to create more positions and opportunities and that they are working with the Francophone Association to look for additional funding.

Cr. Pischinger advised that she sat on the FSDEA when the French Immersion program started, and that there was input from the Francophone Association and the parents looked for funding from other sources. She felt that the French Immersion program is a great program and hopes it continues.

Cr. Pischinger asked in consideration of classes being assigned, how many split classes there would be in the upcoming school year. Ms. Turko advised that she would follow up with his information.

D/M Macdonald noted declining numbers with the French Immersion program and asked if external factors have been considered such as COVID-19. He asked if there is a strategy to revive the program. Ms. Turko confirmed this and thinks COVID-19 did impact the program. She hopes that with a strong parent group and meetings with new perspectives will increase numbers in the program.

Cr. Tuckey asked if the Cree/Chipewyan programs are experiencing the same decline in enrollment. Ms. Turko advised that she would follow up with more information on this program but thinks cultural programs are doing well and advised that JBT is making good use of the outdoor cultural space. She believes enrollment is steady and the programs are doing great at both schools.

Mayor Daniels asked when hiring teachers if locals are considered first. Ms. Turko confirmed that priority hiring is in place given they pass the interview process.

Mayor and Council thanked Ms. Turko for the delegation.

4. Review

- a. Agenda – The agenda was reviewed. Administration requested adding Canada Day planning, a Mill Rate Briefing Note, and appointment of an EDAB Council Representative to the agenda.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Moved by: D/M Macdonald**

**Seconded by: Cr. Beaulieu**

**That the agenda be adopted as amended to include Canada Day planning, a Mill Rate Briefing Note, and appointment of an EDAB Councillor representative.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

- b. Minutes – The Community Services Standing Committee Minutes of March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, were reviewed and adopted at the Regular Meeting of Council on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023.
- c. Vision and Values – The Vision and Values were reviewed.
- d. Community Services Master Plan – The Community Services Master Plan was reviewed.
- e. Economic Development Plan – The Economic Development Plan was reviewed.

5. Directors Report

- a. CRC Statistics March 2023 – The CRC Statistics for March 2023 were reviewed. Administration advised that there is steady usage at the CRC. She advised that Curling Rink and Arena ice plants were decommissioned the first week of April and that there was a skating carnival and mixed tournament prior.
- b. Mary Kaeser Library
  - i. Library Statistics March 2023 – The Library statistics for March 2023 were reviewed.

- ii. Library Activity Report March 2023 – The Library Activity Report for March 2023 were reviewed. Administration advised that the library has seen incredible usage in March with over 2,000 visitors. She doesn't think library usage has ever been this high and noted that usage has been steadily increasing since moving the Library to the CRC in November 2022. Additionally, Administration was pleased to see regular youth users of the Library utilizing the gymnasium and being more physically active.

6. Economic Development

- a. Economic Development Report – Administration advised that instead of providing a report the EDO provided information on two big projects.
  - i. Youth Entrepreneurship Showcase – Administration advised that the Mayor was one of the guest speakers for the Youth Entrepreneurship event and advised that each of the Grade 7/8's had to create a product to develop, market, and sell. She noted that this was an incredible opportunity for them to learn entrepreneurship and how to be a businessperson. She noted that most sold out of their products at the showcase event and that they made pocket money and donated portion to either the Food Bank or Animal Society.
  - ii. South Slave Tourism Development Workshops – Administration advised that the Town has partnered with the SRFN, ITI and the Town of Hay River on the South Slave Tourism Development Workshops to bring individuals to the community to help guide potential tourism operators and further promote the tourism industry.

7. Advisory Boards

- a. Economic Development Advisory Board
  - i. EDAB Minutes March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023 – The EDAB minutes from March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023, were reviewed. Cr. Couvrette advised that he attended the last EDAB meeting and that the board has put forward recommendations regarding the revision of the Business License Bylaw. Administration advised that she has the recommendations and will be reviewing how to incorporate them into the bylaw while ensuring there is no conflict with other legislation before they are brought to the Bylaw Review Committee.

Cr. Couvrette advised that he hasn't officially been appointed to EDAB but has been in discussion with the Cr. Fergusson, EDAB Council Representative, and felt that he would be better to sit as the representative due to conflicting scheduling.

- b. Fort Smith Housing Plan Advisory Board
  - i. Fort Smith Housing Plan Advisory Board Minutes January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023 – The Fort Smith Housing Plan Advisory Board minutes from January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023, were reviewed. Administration advised that the board would be having another meeting soon. She added that they have released a community survey and are planning consultations at the Trade Show.

Mayor Daniels asked what will be done with the housing strategy once completed. Administration advised that Housing NWT will help prepare the document followed by an action plan to the address housing needs identified.

D/M Macdonald asked for a timeline for completion and noted that the future success and expansion of Fort Smith is impacted by the housing situation. He asked that the strategy be shared with Community Leadership once completed. Administration anticipates a draft document in the fall and completion later this year and doesn't think completion precludes the Town from dealing with housing issues now.

Administration advised the project is funded by Housing NWT and would provide concrete data. She thinks Mayor and Council are already addressing items that would result from the action plan. She continued that the data resulting from the strategy would support funding applications and preparedness.

D/M Macdonald felt the housing situation is time sensitive with summer approaching and in consideration that the board hasn't met since January. Administration will follow up regarding this.

8. Administration

- a. Briefing Note Slave River Paddlefest Donation Request – The briefing note was reviewed.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Moved by: D/M Macdonald**

**Seconded by: Cr. Pischinger**

**That Council approve the South Slave Paddlefest's Donation Request for \$2,500.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

- b. Briefing Note Fort Smith Ski Club Donation Request – The briefing note was reviewed. D/M Macdonald was pleased to see community organizations follow the process to ensure they receive funding and for accountability.

Mayor Daniels valued community organizations efforts in bringing people to the community and promoting economic development through their events.

Administration advised that there is a \$1,500 budget for non-profit groups wishing to participate in spring clean-up and that they would be assigned a portion of the community.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Moved by: D/M Macdonald**

**Seconded by: Cr. Pischinger**

**That Council approve the Fort Smith Ski Club Donation Request for \$5,000.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

- c. Canada Day Planning – Administration requested direction on the level of planning required for Canada Day and noted that \$7,500 in funding is received from the federal government for the event. She asked if the event should be scaled down or request support from community groups. She noted that \$25-30k was budgeted in the past for Canada Day. She noted that the fist for the fish fry tends to cost approximately \$3,500 and has likely increased and has been challenging to get to Fort Smith from Hay River in past years.

D/M Macdonald suggested reaching out to indigenous governments for their input on Canada Day celebrations. He suggested engaging with Community Leadership at an upcoming meeting to see if there is opportunity to work together. Cr. Pischinger agreed to collaborate with different organizations.



Cr. Couvrette suggested requesting support from groups who receive Town funding for partnership and suggested also contacting the Francophone Association. Mayor Daniels suggested working with Community Leadership to support Aboriginal Day.

Administration will follow up after the Community Leadership meeting. She noted that other countries do not celebrate these days besides Canada and the United States and thinks Canada Day celebrations have decreased in consideration of reconciliation. She added that SRFN is planning a large Treaty Day this year and there may be opportunity to partner.

Cr. Beaulieu advised that in her experience, Canada Day celebration events are for younger generations and Aboriginal Day for adults. Administration replied that SRFN held more youth games at their last event and that the Town could collaborate to assist.

- d. Briefing Note Mill Rate Bylaw – The briefing note was reviewed. Administration advised that Council approved a 2.5% property tax revenue increase to support a \$3.8 million in the approved 2023 Budget. She noted that there wasn't a significant increase in the total assessed value as per the Certified Assessment Roll.

Administration advised that the Mill Rate weighted to increase undeveloped, telecommunications, and institutional properties. She advised that Council may wish to weight properties again to increase the burden on some while reducing the burden on others.

Cr. Couvrette advocated for increasing residential undeveloped properties in consideration of housing issues in Fort Smith and noted that the amount of private land held is substantial and suggested incentivizing landholders to develop or sell.

Cr. Macdonald noted that the proposed rates are slightly under 2.5% and supports comments to encourage landholders to move property to allow for development. Additionally, he suggested increasing the Mill Rate for institutional and telecommunications properties and as a means to address the GNWT funding gap.

Cr. Macdonald asked if the school tax levy at 2.77% is based on annual projections. Administration replied that MACA provides the school tax levy amount.

Administration advised that an underused housing tax could be applied, separate from the Mill Rate, as incentive for government agencies to maintain/utilize vacant housing. D/M Macdonald suggested further discussion and that he doesn't want to negatively impact private citizens.

Administration advised that she would make weighting adjustments to institutional developed and undeveloped, and telecommunications properties.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Moved by: D/M Macdonald**

**Seconded by: Cr. Pischinger**

**That the 2023 Mill Rate Bylaw be approved pending updating and weighting of Institutional Developed, Institutional Undeveloped, and Telecommunications by Administration and pending review by Council.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**



- e. EDAB Council Representative Appointment – Administration advised that due to conflicting schedules Cr. Fergusson has agreed stepdown as the Councillor representative on EDAB as Cr. Couvrette would like to be considered for the position. She suggested doing a call for interest amongst Council.

Cr. Tuckey did a call for interest for a Councillor to sit as the EDAB representative. Cr. Couvrette advised that he would like to be considered for the position.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Moved by: D/M Macdonald**

**Seconded by: Cr. Pischinger**

**That Cr. Couvrette replace Cr. Fergusson as the Council Representative on the Economic Development Advisory Board.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Administration advised that she has a list of board appointments that she would circulate to Council incase there was interest in switching committees/boards/chairs.

9. Excusing of Councillors

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Moved by: D/M Macdonald**

**Seconded by: Cr. Pischinger**

**That Cr. Campbell, Cr. Korol, and Cr. Fergusson be excused of the Community Services Standing Committee meeting on April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next Community Services Standing Committee meeting will be held on May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

11. Adjournment

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Moved by: Cr. Pischinger**

**Seconded by: D/M Macdonald**

**That the meeting be adjourned at 818 pm.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

# Vision

The vision statement outlines what our community wants to be. Our vision statement provides a basis for future decision-making and activities.

**The Town of Fort Smith will work with our partners to enhance our excellent quality of life by respecting values, traditions, and healthy lifestyles. We will continue to advance as a unified, active and prosperous community.**

# Values

The mission defines how the Town will operate; it represents what is fundamentally important to us in how we work with each other and represent the citizens of Fort Smith.

- **Welcoming** – we are a friendly community which embraces our visitors, students and residents alike.
- **Innovative** – we take on new challenges in the pursuit of excellence.
- **Sustainable** – we are committed to sustainability in our Town's operations and development.
- **Unified** – we work with Indigenous governments and our partners to implement our plans and achieve our goals.
- **Committed** – we operate professionally and to the highest ethical standards.

WELCOMING | INNOVATIVE | SUSTAINABLE | UNIFIED | COMMITTED





Town of Fort Smith | July 2020

# COMMUNITY SERVICES MASTER PLAN



DNA







## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Town of Fort Smith is a vibrant, active, and engaged community. It has a remarkable array of facilities and program offerings to engage its citizens in the pursuit of healthy lifestyles. The Community Services Department is responsible for providing, maintaining, and coordinating the spaces, facilities and programs for culture and recreation activities offered by the Town including local parks, the Fort Smith Community and Recreation Centre, the Centennial Arena and the Mary Kaeser Library.

Fort Smith also has a significant number of other facilities and programs, operated by community partners. These are places where residents and visitors can participate in a range of recreation, culture, and other social interactions. They are vital to the community through their promotion of community health and social connections.

The 2020 Community Services Master Plan (the CSMP) considers the programs and services offered by the Town to the community, as they relate to recreation and culture. The general intent of the Plan is to provide the Town with strategic direction to :

- Ensure residents enjoy the highest quality of life
- Maximize appeal of the community to potential new residents
- Draw visitors to the community

This CSMP is an important step toward achieving the Town's strategic goal to be the *healthiest community in the Northwest Territories*<sup>1</sup>. A robust engagement strategy, which included the Indigenous Governments, multiple community partners, and the community, is at the core of this document.

The Vision and Mission statements, which emerged through this process, provide overall direction to the CSMP and its implementation. The Vision describes the preferred future as:

***A place to live, work, play, create and connect - Fort Smith is the healthiest community in the Northwest Territories.***

The Mission describes how the Community Services Department can work toward achieving the Vision:

***The Community Services Department encourages residents to embrace healthy lifestyles by offering leading and relevant recreation and culture programs, services, and facilities.***

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<sup>1</sup> Town of Fort Smith Strategic Plan, 2018



## TOWN OF FORT SMITH COMMUNITY SERVICES MASTER PLAN

In support of the Vision and Mission, the CSMP presents a *Success Framework* including actions, implementation timeframes, and performance measures, organized according to the following 8 interrelated strategies:

### **Increase awareness of available programs and services**

Communication is key to maintaining and increasing community-wide participation in culture and recreation activities. The intent of this strategy is to ensure there is a range of communication tools that provide appropriate messaging that reach all segments of the community.

### **Enhance intergovernmental collaboration**

Fort Smith has the unique identity of being a community that is 60% Indigenous. Steps can be taken to work together with the three Indigenous Governments to plan and deliver local recreation and culture programs and services. Further collaboration with Indigenous Governments presents a unique opportunity to identify and pursue efforts toward reconciliation. The intent of this strategy is to ensure that the relationship between the Town and the Indigenous Governments is strengthened as they work together to meet the recreation and culture needs of the whole community.

### **Maximize use of existing facilities and outdoor recreation infrastructure**

It is generally recognized that Fort Smith is well served when it comes to facilities and infrastructure related to recreation and culture. Co-location of spaces and services that offer opportunities for both programmed and unprogrammed activities can lead to increased participation in recreation and culture activities and programs and, in turn, increased social interaction and community vitality. The intent of this strategy is to ensure that current facilities are used as efficiently and effectively as possible.

### **Ensure services and activities are inclusive of all age groups, incomes, and abilities**

The Town of Fort Smith is committed to providing recreation and culture services to all members of the community. Many ideas for new programs and services were expressed throughout the community engagement process. The intent of this strategy is to ensure that the Town continues to work with the community and its partners to identify and address those needs and, in turn, ensure equitable access to meaningful culture and recreation opportunities to all segments of the population.

### **Encourage greater participation through use of technology**

Technology is changing behaviour and the way individuals participate in recreation activities and pursue healthy lifestyles. It is being used more and more to increase engagement in active participation. The intent of this strategy is to ensure the Town utilizes technology to engage community members in their pursuit of wellness.



## TOWN OF FORT SMITH COMMUNITY SERVICES MASTER PLAN

### Develop and maintain partnerships with community partners to meet community needs

Building new partnerships and strengthening existing ones with community partners and like-minded agencies can be a way to provide a range of innovative services in Fort Smith. In many respects, this is already underway, and these partnerships have been formed. The intent of this strategy is for the Town to work collaboratively with partners to avoid duplication of services and identify ways the Town can support their delivery.

### Maintain and expand the active volunteer base

Volunteers are the most important resource community and event organizers have. Having experienced, skilled volunteers who are willing to donate their time will help ensure the success of many future community programs and events. The intent of this strategy is to ensure there are resources available to maintain and enhance the local base of volunteers.

### Enhance data collection and user tracking techniques

It is important to measure the current use of facilities and participation in recreation and culture activities and services. Tracking the uptake of services over time can be used to determine whether activities should be maintained or changed; help to ensure the Town is meeting its targets and can aid in accessing funding.

*The 2020 CSMP was shaped by the community context, extensive engagement, and the current trends and innovations in culture and recreation services. It supports the Vision and Mission and ultimately the pursuit of the Town's strategic priority to be the healthiest community in the NWT.*







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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION





## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Plan Purpose

The Community Services Department is responsible for providing spaces, facilities and programming for culture and recreation activities in Fort Smith including local parks, the Fort Smith Community and Recreation Centre, the Centennial Arena, and the Mary Kaeser Library. Fort Smith also has an array of other facilities and programs, operated by community partners. These are all places where residents and visitors can participate in range of recreation, culture, and other social interactions. They are vital to the community through their promotion of community health and social connection.

The 2020 Community Services Master Plan (the CSMP) considers the programs and services offered by the Town to the community as they relate to recreation, sport, art, and culture. The general intent is to provide the Town with strategic direction to :

- Ensure residents enjoy the highest quality of life
- Maximize appeal of the community to potential new residents
- Draw visitors to the community

### 1.2 Planning Process

This CSMP process was initiated in November 2019 and included the following:

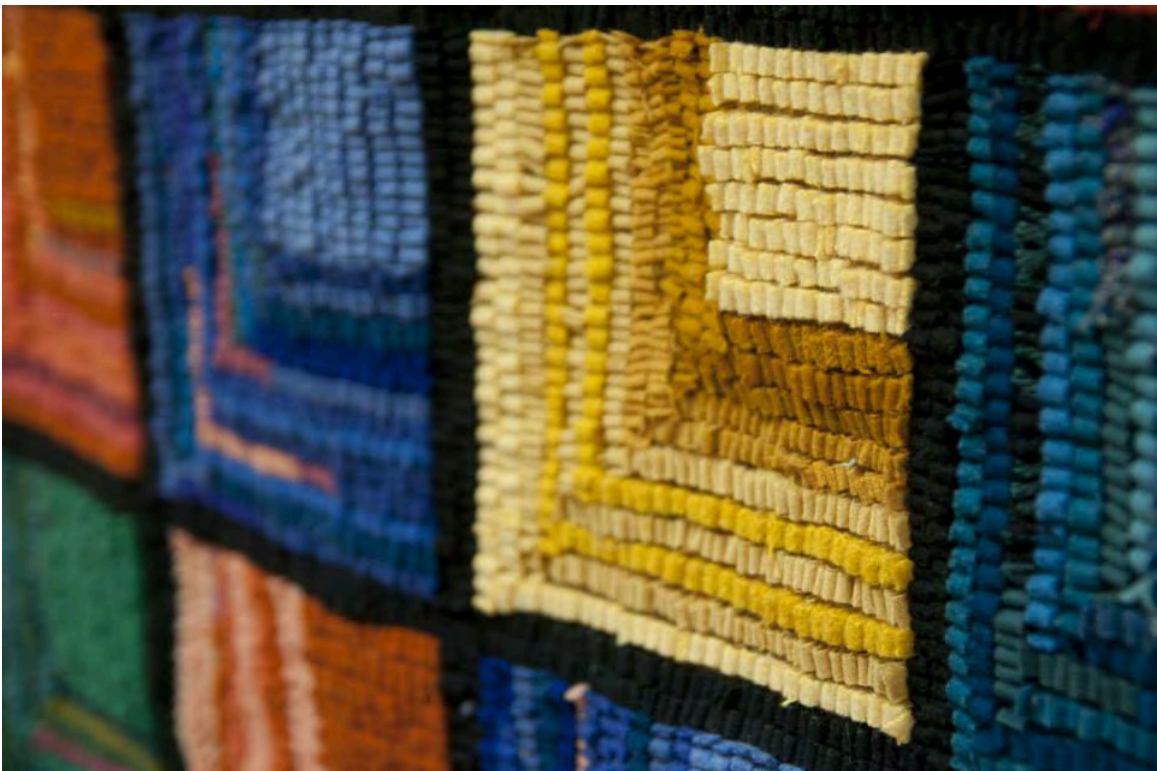
- An inclusive community engagement process to identify community perspectives and needs with:
  - a community-wide survey
  - stakeholder focus groups
  - community pop-up events
- Discussions with Town Council, Staff, and the Recreation Advisory Board (RAB)
- An inventory of facilities and programs
- An overview of community demographics
- A review of relevant trends and innovations in recreation and culture services
- A review of other Town of Fort Smith planning documents
- Development of relevant strategies, actions, and performance measures



### 1.3 Community Services Master Plan Organization

The Community Services Master Plan is organized into the following sections:

- 1.0 **Introduction (this section)** describes the CSMP's purpose, overview of planning process and report organization.
- 2.0 **Plan Framework** presents the Vision for the Community Services Master Plan – the preferred future. It also includes a Mission statement, which describes how to get there.
- 3.0 **Community Services Master Plan Foundations** documents the information that was gathered to support the development of the Community Services Master Plan including community demographics, the planning context, current facilities and programs offered in Fort Smith, and current trends and innovations.
- 4.0 **Success Framework** presents the overall approach in pursuit of the Vision and Mission for recreation and culture services in Fort Smith. It identifies the strategies to enhance these services and the associated actions the Town can take to meet the needs of residents. It also identifies ways to track the implementation of the strategies and ultimately the success of achieving healthier lifestyles among the Town's citizens.





## 2.0 PLAN FRAMEWORK



## 2.0 PLAN FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 Vision and Mission Statement

Fort Smith residents value the recreation and culture services and programs offered in their community. These services and programs contribute to stronger, healthier individuals and community. Maximizing participation in recreation and culture services offered by the Town and by its community partners is also key to achieving the Town's 2018 Strategic Plan goal to be the *healthiest community in the Northwest Territories*<sup>2</sup>.

Based on the themes that emerged through the Master Plan process, the Vision is:

*A place to live, work, play, create and connect - Fort Smith is the healthiest community in the Northwest Territories.*

The Mission Statement describes how the Community Services Department can work toward achieving this Vision:

*The Community Services Department encourages residents to embrace healthy lifestyles by offering leading and relevant recreation and culture programs, services, and facilities.*



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<sup>2</sup> Town of Fort Smith Strategic Plan, 2018



An aerial photograph showing a river with several meanders flowing through a dense forest. The river is a dark blue color, contrasting with the green of the trees. The surrounding land is a mix of green forest and brownish, rocky terrain. At the top of the image, there is a large, flat, rocky plateau with sparse vegetation. A semi-transparent dark grey banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the section header text.

## **3.0 COMMUNITY SERVICES MASTER PLAN FOUNDATIONS**



### 3.0 COMMUNITY SERVICES MASTER PLAN FOUNDATIONS

The following presents a blend of information that was gathered to develop the Community Services Master Plan. It includes an overview of demographics, an inventory of recreation and culture facilities and programs, facility user statistics, an overview of relevant planning documents, and a summary of the community engagement process.

#### 3.1 Community Demographics

The following demographics are based on the NWT Summary of Community Statistics (2019) and Statistics Canada Census Profile.

##### **Population**

- The population of Fort Smith is 2,709 people. Overall, the Town has experienced positive population growth of 1% per year from 2009-2019 but has seen a decrease of about half a percent per year since 2016.
- The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) projects that the slight decline will continue. The population of Fort Smith is anticipated to be 2,629 by 2035.

*Since the community size is anticipated to remain relatively stable, the Town will need to consider the age structure and changing preferences over time with respect to the provision of recreation and culture services.*



## **Age**

- The age structure of a community helps to define what types of programs and services to provide.
- At an average age of 36.1 (2016), Fort Smith has a relatively youthful population, compared to the rest of Canada with an average age of 41.2 years.

*In a youthful community such as Fort Smith, active pursuits tend to be in high demand and can place pressures on existing facilities, programs, and services. Continued programming to engage community members at all stages of life will continue to be important.*

## **Household Size and Composition**

- On average there are 2.6 people per household.
- Most households (60%) are comprised of 1 or 2 people, with the remaining 40% comprised of 3 or more members.
- There are 135 (24%) lone parent families in private households.

*Households with children, especially lone-parent households, will have implications for the type and amount of recreation and culture activities parents can participate in. In turn, these numbers may affect the possible demand for childcare services for both parents and children to achieve the required daily amount of physical health and wellness.*

## **Indigenous Population**

- About 60% of the population in Fort Smith is Indigenous.
- There are three Indigenous Governments in Fort Smith: Fort Smith Métis Council, Salt River First Nation and Smiths Landing First Nation.

*With such a high proportion of Indigenous residents, represented by three First Nation Governments, the Town of Fort Smith is in a unique position to partner on recreation and culture programs and services that support reconciliation efforts and meet the needs of the whole community.*



### **Education, Employment, and Income**

- 74.1% of the population has a “high school diploma or more”. This number has increased consistently over the past 10 years and is slightly higher than the NWT at 72.6%.
- In recent years, the unemployment rate has experienced an upward trend, from 6.8% in 2011 to 12.4% in 2016.
- The average family income in Fort Smith is \$125,250 (2017) which is about \$9,000 lower than the NWT. About 13% of households earn less than \$30,000 per year.

*The unemployment rate and lower incomes have implications for individuals’ and families’ abilities to afford recreation and culture activities. It is recommended the Town recognize the variable income levels and ensure affordability is not a barrier to participation.*

### **General Health**

- Statistics on health are gathered at the territorial level. In 2014, 35,538 residents of the NWT over the age of 12 were surveyed.
- Almost half of survey respondents said they do not have chronic conditions/did not specify.
- Of those who did, the most common issues were arthritis/rheumatism (16%) and high blood pressure (13%), followed by asthma (9%), diabetes (7%) and mood disorder (8%).
- The 2010 NWT Health Status Report identifies chronic diseases as a major concern. Key findings include:
  - 63% of NWT residents are overweight or obese compared to 51% of other Canadians.
  - Between 2005 and 2007, the leading cause of death in the NWT were cancers and cardiovascular diseases followed by injuries and respiratory diseases.
  - In the NWT 70% of all deaths and more than 50% of the number of days spent in hospital were related to chronic conditions.
  - Approximately 200 new cases of diabetes are diagnosed each year in the NWT.
  - In the NWT 64% of the population rated their mental health as excellent or very good compared to 74% of Canadians.

*The type of health concerns faced in a community will have implications for recreation and culture programs and services.*



## 3.2 Planning Documents

The following documents were reviewed during the development of the CSMP. The following presents an overview of each document and its relevance. It should be noted that all Town decisions are based on the *2018 Town of Fort Smith Strategic Plan*.

| DOCUMENT  | SUMMARY  | RELEVANCE   |
|---|--|---|
| Tourism/Visitor Services Branding and Marketing Strategy (2011) | Marketing materials and campaigns that target specific audiences that can be implemented by the Town of Fort Smith. Five campaigns were prepared based on general touring, outdoor adventure, visiting friends and relatives (VFR), the sports and recreation field and business travel. | Identifies community tours that highlight local historical and cultural significance. Many of these value-added services are related to culture, recreation, and arts. It identifies both existing products and potential new products that could enhance what the Town offers in terms of recreation and culture     |
| Community Services Master Plan (2012)                           | Developed to guide decision-making with regard to future community services including parks, recreation and culture facilities and programs.   | Recommendations were summarized into two initiatives: to support and enhance service delivery and initiatives dealing directly with indoor and outdoor infrastructure.  |
| Town of Fort Smith General Plan and Zoning Bylaw (2014)         | The purpose is to regulate and control the use and development of land and buildings within the Town of Fort Smith in a balanced and responsible manner.   | The bylaw provides the relevant zoning that allows for recreation uses in the Town including for Parks, Institutional, Future Urban (which allows for trails), Environmental Reserve which allows for a variety of unstructured recreational uses.  |
| Community Services Department Review (2015)                     | Provides a review of the programs currently being offered by the Community Services Department. The document identifies programs being offered, identifies community partners, available resources and on-going needs, and the sectors of the community being targeted by programs.      | The review identifies recreation facilities and programs in the Town of Fort Smith and, based on the review, presents recommendations for future programs, services, training, and partnerships.  |
| Economic Development Strategy (2017)                            | Three main elements identified in the Strategy: business development, resident attraction, and tourism.  | 9 goals were identified in the Strategy. Goal #5: Enhance Livability; Goal # 7: Champion and Assist with Tourism Product Development and; Goal #8: Increase number of Festivals, sporting events and conferences hosted in Fort Smith, are all related to recreation and culture programs and services in Fort Smith. |



TOWN OF FORT SMITH COMMUNITY SERVICES MASTER PLAN

| DOCUMENT                                      | SUMMARY  | RELEVANCE   |
|---|--|---|
| Town of Fort Smith Strategic Plan (2018)      | The Plan establishes the goals and direction for Mayor and Council. This Plan is the foundation for all decision made by Town Council.                                 | One of the 6 goals identified in the Strategic Plan is: <i>to be the healthiest community in the Northwest Territories.</i>   |
| Fort Smith Open Space Enhancement (2018)      | The Plan provides preliminary conceptual design options for selected areas of town.  | The report provides an analysis of each of the sites of interest and preliminary future designs and costing. The enhancements will be phased over time. The current priority is to upgrade Conibear Park. The intent is for it to be developed as a small outdoor venue for concert, recitals, plays and theatre. |
| Fort Smith Citizen Satisfaction Survey (2019) | There were 215 surveys completed. Topics included demographics, quality of life, community issues, communication, satisfaction with services and programs and taxation | Residents provided feedback on their level of satisfaction with recreation and culture services delivered by the Town including library service, parks and playgrounds, recreation and fitness programs, community events and cultural and arts programs.   |

3.3 Fort Smith Recreation and Culture Facilities and Programs

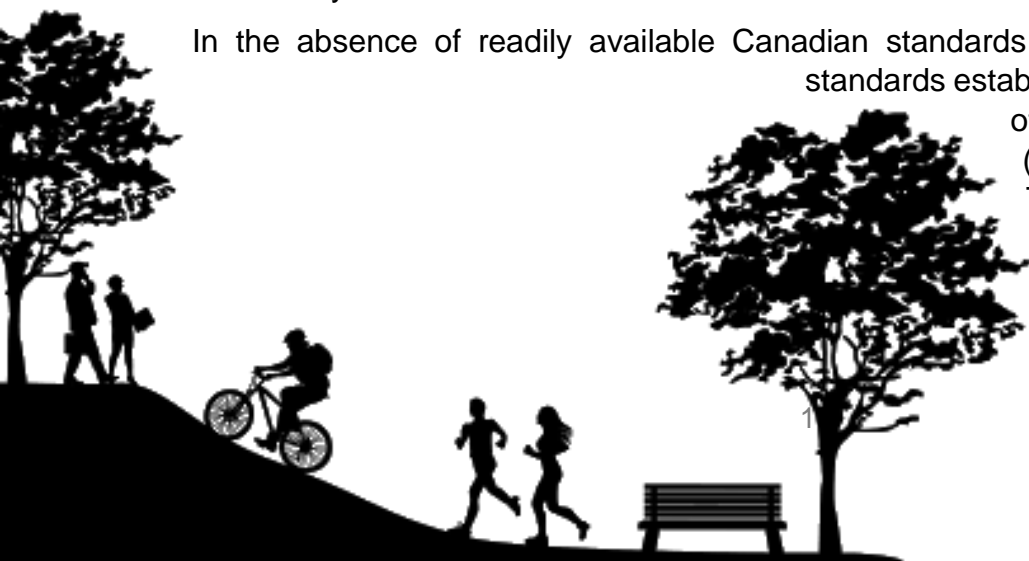
Recreation facilities and amenities are ideally designed to serve the community at every scale, from the smaller neighbourhoods to the community as a whole.

Neighbourhood assets are generally accessible by walking 5 to 10 minutes and serve the local neighbourhood. They include local parks and playgrounds, with ‘tot’ parks (children’s play areas) one of the most common features of neighbourhood parks.

Community-wide assets are accessible by walking, biking, or driving 10 minutes, serve the entire community, include multi-purpose facilities, and are connected to walking and cycling trails.

Although a detailed assessment was not a component of the CSMP process, it was found that the Town of Fort Smith is well served regarding both its neighbourhood and community-wide recreation facilities.

In the absence of readily available Canadian standards for recreation facilities, the standards established by the Ontario Ministry of Culture and Recreation (OMCR) are commonly used. The OMCR standards consider the number of facilities per 10,000 people.



## TOWN OF FORT SMITH COMMUNITY SERVICES MASTER PLAN

This following table underscores how well the Town is served when it comes to its recreation facilities - comparable to communities four times the size of Fort Smith.

| Facility type                    | OMCR Standard<br># per 10,000 people | Fort Smith<br>Population 2,709  |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Arena (Hockey Rink)</b>       | 0.5                                  | 1   |
| <b>Baseball Field/Softball</b>   | 2                                    | 2 adults; 1 youth   |
| <b>Basketball Court</b>          | 2                                    | 4 indoor <sup>3</sup> ; 1 outdoor   |
| <b>Beach Volleyball</b>          | 2                                    | 2   |
| <b>Boat Launch</b>               | Unknown                              | 1   |
| <b>Bowling</b>                   | 4 lanes                              | 0   |
| <b>Community room</b>            | 0.5                                  | 10 to 15 <sup>4</sup>   |
| <b>Fitness Centre</b>            | Unknown                              | 1   |
| <b>Marina</b>                    | 1 per region                         | 0   |
| <b>Outdoor Swimming</b>          | 2                                    | 2+ river/ pine lake   |
| <b>Multi-purpose paved court</b> | 2                                    | 0 multi-purpose but 2 tennis courts   |
| <b>Playground</b>                | 12                                   | 7 <sup>5</sup>  |
| <b>Skateboard Park (outdoor)</b> | Unknown                              | 1   |
| <b>Soccer Field</b>              | 2                                    | 1 <sup>6</sup> at track/ 2 at JBT   |
| <b>Splash Pad</b>                | 2                                    | 1 moveable splash pad   |
| <b>Tennis Court</b>              | 2                                    | 2   |
| <b>Toboggan slope</b>            | 1                                    | 5+  |
| <b>Walking Trails</b>            | Unknown                              | 20+km <sup>7</sup>  |
| <b>Youth Centre</b>              | 0.5                                  | Youth nights @ Community Recreation Centre; no dedicated space <sup>8</sup> |
| <b>Badminton Court</b>           | 2                                    | 6 <sup>9</sup>  |
| <b>Curling Rink</b>              | 6 sheets                             | 3 sheets  |
| <b>Horseshoe Pitch</b>           | 2                                    | 3   |
| <b>Indoor Pool</b>               | 1                                    | 1   |

<sup>3</sup> One at the Community Recreation Centre that is available all day, one at the Elementary School that is available 5-10pm, one at the High School that is available form 5-10pm, 1 at Uncle Gabe's Friendship Centre.

<sup>4</sup> Located at the Community Recreation Centre and other Town locations such as the Roaring Rapids Hall, Salt River Business and Conference Centre, Uncle Gabe's Friendship Centre

<sup>5</sup> This includes the 2 playgrounds at JBT Elementary. There is shared gym space and playground space at both the JBT Elementary and PWK Highschool

<sup>6</sup> 1 is located at the track; 2 are located at JBT Elementary School

<sup>7</sup> Refers to trails within the municipal boundaries developed and includes those developed by the Town (about 8km) and community members

<sup>8</sup> Uncle Gabe's Friendship Centre has a youth program which is run based on available funding

<sup>9</sup> 2 at Community Recreation Centre; 2 available at JBT Elementary School; 2 available at PWK High School



## TOWN OF FORT SMITH COMMUNITY SERVICES MASTER PLAN

The diagram below presents the inventory of Town of Fort Smith recreation and culture facilities and programs. The diagram identifies additional facilities such as a running track, cross country skiing trails, a golf course, and a snowboard park. The Town of Fort Smith's facilities surpass the standards presented in the above table.



background photo courtesy of [www.fortsmith.ca](http://www.fortsmith.ca)

**DNA**  
David Nelson & Associates



## TOWN OF FORT SMITH COMMUNITY SERVICES MASTER PLAN

According to the available information, the Town of Fort Smith offers approximately 37 structured programs and activities. The table below presents the proportion of program offerings by age group. Please note the program offerings includes only those offered by the Town, not by its partners or other organizations in the Town.

| Age of Population | % Total Population* | % Programs Available by Age Group** |
|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 0-4               | 7%                  | 38%                                 |
| 5-9               | 8%                  | 51%                                 |
| 10-14             | 6%                  | 57%                                 |
| 15-19             | 6%                  | 57%                                 |
| 20-24             | 8%                  | 49%                                 |
| 25-29             | 8%                  | 49%                                 |
| 30-34             | 7%                  | 49%                                 |
| 35-39             | 6%                  | 49%                                 |
| 40-44             | 7%                  | 49%                                 |
| 45-49             | 7%                  | 49%                                 |
| 50-54             | 6%                  | 59%                                 |
| 55-59             | 6%                  | 59%                                 |
| 60+               | 16%                 | 59%                                 |



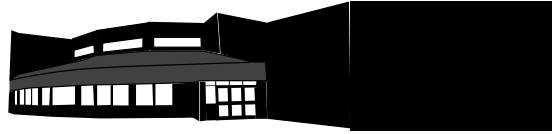
\*total population by age group from Statistics Canada

\*\*% 'age of programs is greater than 100% as many programs are available to different age groups

### 3.4 Facility Usage

The Town collects information on the general use of the Community and Recreation Centre, pool, and library. However, statistics were not available for Centennial Arena or for specific programs, activities, or events. The following presents the available user statistics.

#### **Community Recreation Centre**



- Over the past two years, the Fort Smith Community and Recreation Centre has been visited a total of 80,234 times – or about 15 visits per capita per year. *This is higher than the 12 visits per capita, per year, which is a generally accepted indicator of good use of a facility.*
- The busiest month in 2018 was April and the busiest time of 2019 was in October.
- The Recreation Community Centre is least busy over the month of June. Less usage over the warmer, summer months indicates a preference for outdoor activities among residents.

#### **Pool**

- Over the past two years, the pool in Fort Smith has been visited 24,404 times or about 5 visits per capita per year. *By comparison, 4 to 8 swims per capita, per year is a generally accepted benchmark.*
- In 2018, the busiest month was May and in 2019 it was July.
- For both 2018 and 2019, the slowest time of the year was September.<sup>10</sup>



#### **Mary Kaesar Library**

- In 2018, Mary Kaeser Library was visited 15,223 times – an average of about 6 visits per capita. *This is in-line with the benchmark of 6 visits per year.* 53% of visits have been by adults and 47% by children.
- The busiest month of the year was in August and the slowest month was in November.



<sup>10</sup> These lower numbers are result of the scheduled closure of the pool from mid-August to mid-September

### 3.5 Community Engagement

The planning process for the CSMP included a rigorous community engagement process with a blend of Town Council and stakeholder meetings, a community survey and community pop-up discussions. This multi-faceted process provided the Town with an opportunity to truly engage with a cross-section of residents. Materials and detailed results from the community engagement process are presented in the Appendix.

#### **Mayor, Council and Administration and Recreation Advisory Board (RAB) Meetings**

The meetings with Mayor and Council, Administration and Staff, and RAB generally focused on overall project direction. The discussions also included strengths and challenges related to the delivery of recreation and culture programs and services in Fort Smith.

#### **Community Survey**

The Town administered a community survey over a 7-week period from mid-December 2019 to January 31, 2020. The intent of the survey was to gauge residents' perspectives on and participation in culture and recreation programs and services. The survey was available on-line as well as at various public locations around Town – 182 people responded (See Appendix A for a detailed summary).

#### **Stakeholder Focus Groups**

The stakeholder meetings included 68 participants representative of a variety of community service providers including (See Appendix B for the summary):

- Recreation Staff
- Indigenous Governments
- Parks Canada
- JBT Student Leadership
- Seniors' Society
- Interagency Committee
- Northern Life Museum and Cultural Centre Board





The discussions focused on the types of recreation and/or culture services each group provides; whether there are other services they would like to see; and, how the Town of Fort Smith could support them to deliver those services.

### **Community Pop-Up Displays**

The intent of the community pop-up displays was to meet people where they are. The pop-ups included visually appealing boards (refer to Appendix B) which presented the survey results and provided opportunity for participants to make suggestions related to expanded services and communication methods. In total, 11 pop-up events were hosted at various locations throughout Town. A total of 196 residents were engaged through the pop-ups:

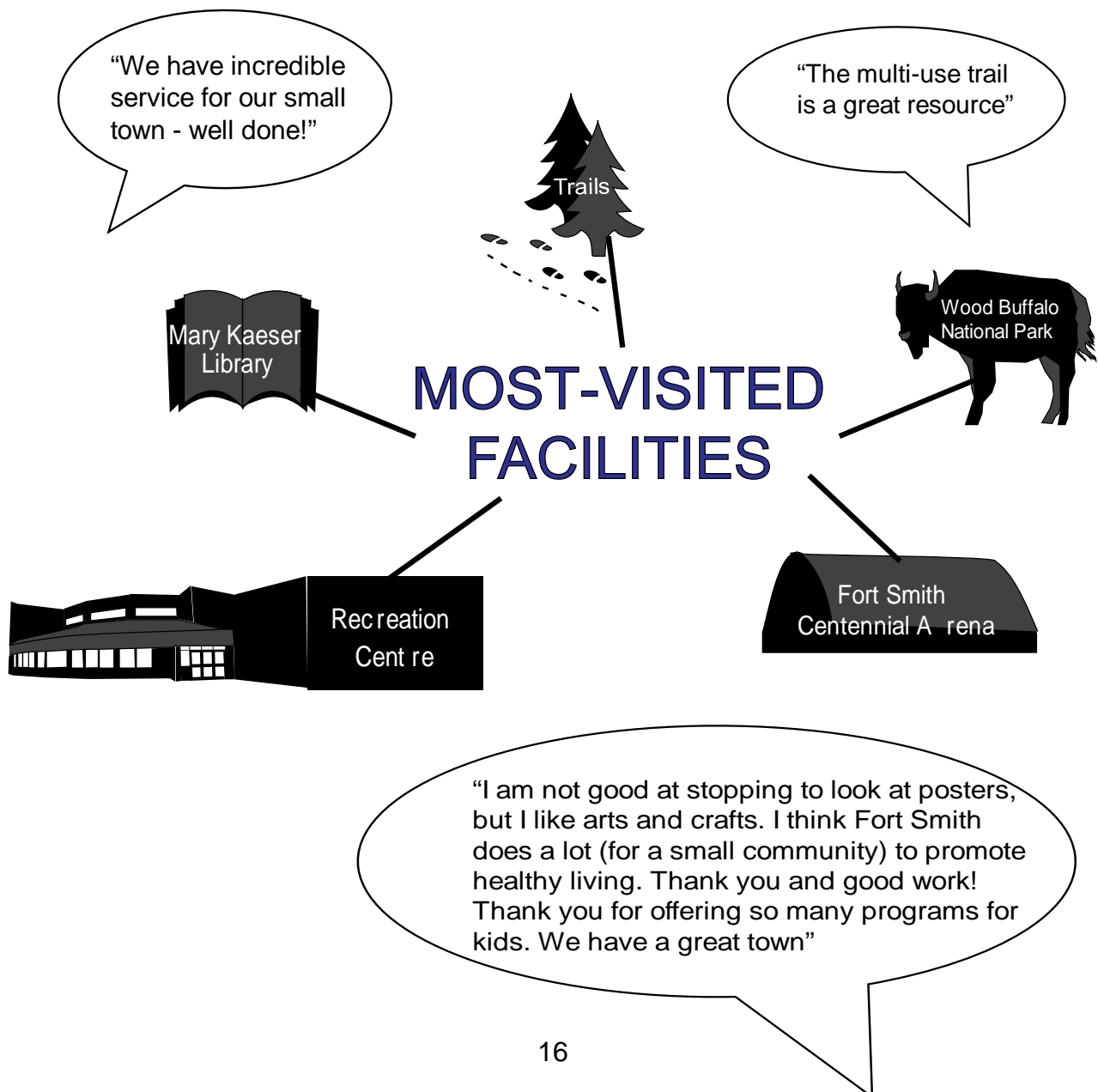
- Kaeser's Grocery Store (x2)
- Northern Store
- Aurora College Foyer
- Post Natal Parents Group (CRC Foyer)
- Youth Night (RCC Foyer)
- Parents and Tots (RCC Foyer)
- PWK Foyer
- Centennial Arena
- Library
- Food Bank



## Engagement Results

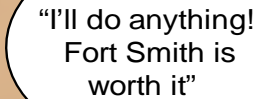
The detailed engagement results are presented in the Appendix and have been highlighted and integrated throughout this document. Highlights include:

- Residents of Fort Smith are generally satisfied with facilities and the level of culture and recreation services provided in the community. Participants in the engagement process provided a range of additional structured and unstructured activities that they would like to see offered in the community.
- The recreation and culture facilities used most often include the Fort Smith Community Recreation Centre, Fort Smith Centennial Arena, hiking trails around the area, Wood Buffalo National Park and Mary Kaeser Library.





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# PLEASE TELL US

What recreational &/or cultural activities would you like to see in Fort Smith?

## WHAT'S GOING ON?

The Town of Fort Smith is working with David Naimo & Associates Ltd (DNA) to develop a Community Services Master Plan that will identify our Community needs & priorities related to RECREATION, ARTS & CULTURE Services.

## HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

- ☐ Come out to a workshop!
- ☐ Respond to a survey!
- ☐ Talk to us!

[illegible]

**“Use a gamification approach to healthy activities – leaderboards, badges, loyalty points (prizes for high points, like a free book on active living or a free annual pass!)”**

### 3.6 Trends and Innovations in Recreation and Culture Services

To support directions for the Town of Fort Smith's recreation and culture planning, it is important to understand the overall landscape for long term planning. The following presents trends in recreation and culture gathered from a variety of resources. Many of these trends have been unfolding over many years, such as the growth of chronic disease due to lifestyle choices, while others have hit the mainstream more recently, such as activities that support reconciliation.

#### Reconciliation

The adoption of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) by the Federal Government, and the impacts on all levels of community is a major change in the socio-cultural landscape of Canada. The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) included Calls to Action with direct pertinence to the delivery of recreation and related services including:

- We call upon the federal government, in consultation with Aboriginal peoples, to establish measurable goals to identify and close the gaps in health outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities, and to publish annual progress reports and assess long-term trends. Such efforts would focus on indicators such as: infant mortality, maternal health, suicide, mental health, addictions, life expectancy, birth rates, infant and child health issues, chronic diseases, illness and injury incidence, and the availability of appropriate health services. (Call to Action #19)
- We call upon the federal government to amend the Physical Activity and Sport Act to support reconciliation by ensuring that policies to promote physical activity as a fundamental element of health and well-being, reduce barriers to sports participation, increase the pursuit of excellence in sport, and build capacity in the Canadian sport system, are inclusive of Aboriginal peoples. (Call to Action #89)







- We call upon the federal government to ensure that national sports policies, programs, and initiatives are inclusive of Aboriginal peoples, including, but not limited to, establishing:
  - In collaboration with provincial and territorial governments, stable funding for, and access to, community sports programs that reflect the diverse cultures and traditional sporting activities of Aboriginal peoples.
  - An elite athlete development program for Aboriginal athletes.
  - Programs for coaches, trainers, and sports officials that are culturally relevant for Aboriginal peoples.
  - Anti-racism awareness and training programs. (Call to Action #90)
- We call upon the officials and host countries of international sporting events such as the Olympics, Pan Am, and Commonwealth games to ensure that Indigenous peoples' territorial protocols are respected, and local Indigenous communities are engaged in all aspects of planning and participating in such events. (Call to Action #91)

60% of the Fort Smith population is Indigenous and includes members of the Fort Smith Métis Council, Salt River First Nation, and Smith's Landing First Nation. The Town is in a unique position to work with the Indigenous governments to identify community needs and partner in the delivery of programs. Indigenous community members were well represented through the community survey - 50% of survey respondents self-identified as Indigenous

### **Relationship and Partner Building**

Funding expectations, the difficulty in getting people's attention, the splintering of the market, and maximizing the use of community resources have all led to a focus on partnership building for delivery of community services. This may require a shift in understanding in terms of 'ownership' and autonomy for service delivery. There are many community-based organizations currently offering recreation and culture services in Fort Smith.



### **Social Value of Recreation and Culture**

The growing recognition of mental health and social isolation has also led to a recognition of the role of recreation and culture to combat these issues. For communities, libraries are more and more becoming places not for silent contemplation but for gathering and meeting, as well as providing warmth and shelter. Recreation is being developed for more marginalized populations to re-engage them with community. These services need to be accessible to all segments of the population by providing equitable access to meaningful culture and recreation opportunities to vulnerable community members. And newcomers can connect with their new homes through cultural events and recreation activities.

Festivals, such as Frolics was identified as the most popular cultural activity by survey participants (66%), this was followed by going out on the land (55%) and art shows, such as art in the park and museum art extravaganza (40%).

### **The Rise of Technology**

Probably the greatest impact to physical and social health is occurring due to the prolific use of technology, especially among young people. Screen time is now a common phrase, and a common issue facing parents who want their children to make healthier choices. However, parents too are spending a lot of time dedicated to their electronic devices and losing connection with others. This can result in more sedentary lifestyles and is creating concerns for long-term health impacts. However, technology can be used to encourage recreation activities. For example, through the engagement process, suggestions for gamification, where challenges could be set up using available technology, were made.

### **Unstructured Activities**

Values have shifted, resulting in increased segmented demands for recreation and culture activities. People are choosing activities that can be done at personally convenient times and places. The number of children in organized sport has decreased. People are looking for services that meet their individual needs, that can be accessed any time of the day or week, that are unstructured, and involve less time and commitment. Facilities are increasingly being designed to balance programmable and non-programmable spaces to allow for both structured and unstructured activities.

Survey respondents' top recreation activities in the past year included unstructured activities such as summer outdoor activities at 71% (i.e. walking, running, mountain biking), recreational swimming at 56% and winter outdoor activities (i.e. cross country skiing, snowboarding, snowmobiling, tobogganing) at 51%.

### **Experience-Based Activities**

People are looking for experiences. Younger people will look for extreme activities and older people will seek safer versions of adventure activities. Participation in experience-based activities will continue to grow, although there will be a switch to less strenuous





activities by aging Baby Boomers. Physical activity can be coupled with a cultural activity to maximize the public’s interest – i.e. hiking trips along scenic, historical routes; outdoor activities and environmental learning; cultural learning and ecotourism; and physical activity as rehabilitation.

**The Value of Placemaking**

As part of the trend toward ‘experience’ based activity, ‘placemaking’ has become a notable trend that involves both culture and recreation. The idea behind placemaking is to make a site or venue an overall experience. Placemaking for a town such as Fort Smith focuses on what makes the community unique, and how it can highlight and celebrate that uniqueness. For example, consistent trail signage in a design that is specific to Fort Smith can be part of an overall placemaking strategy and could contribute significantly to the experience of unstructured recreation along the trails.

**Volunteerism**

In the NWT, Culture and Recreation are where the greatest number of volunteer hours are dedicated.<sup>11</sup> While the greatest number of volunteers are youth (15-24), seniors (65+) provide the greatest number of volunteer hours. Sport, recreation, and culture have historically depended on the role of volunteers to make them succeed – from kids’ sports team coaches to festival ticket takers. The Town of Fort Smith has a strong base of volunteers. Among survey respondents, 45% have actively volunteered in the past year and 53% said they were interested in volunteering.



<sup>11</sup><https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3610061801&pickMembers%5B0%5D=1.13>





**Lack of Free Time**

A lack of free time, largely due to busy lifestyles has traditionally been the number one barrier to participation in recreation and culture activities for youth and adults. Surveys conducted across the country suggest that a 'lack of free time' is the primary barrier to participation, including in Fort Smith where 49% of survey respondents reported “too busy” as a barrier to participation. A lack of time for physical activity has contributed to increases in rates of obesity and chronic disease, a desire for more flexible and convenient program options, and decreasing levels of volunteerism.

**Wellness and Chronic Disease**

There is a growing awareness of the health benefits of physical activity and healthy eating. The proportion of Canadian adults who are active has increased significantly over time, although activity levels continue to drop with age. Physical activity has been clearly recognized as a major factor in chronic disease prevention and management.

**Multi-Use Facilities**

There is a continuing and growing demand for facilities that contain something for everybody, rather than those designed for singular uses. Co-location of complementary facility components (i.e. youth spaces with gymnasiums, cultural spaces with libraries, etc.) can create convenient centralized activity centres for residents and generate operating efficiencies for the Town.

**Communication**

Communication is a key to ensuring that all residents have an opportunity to participate in the programs and services offered by the Community Services Department so that those programs and services remain relevant. In the survey, 36% of respondents said a barrier to participation is “not aware of opportunities”. Due to the inter-generational nature of recreation and culture services there is a need for multiple platforms. During the stakeholder workshops and community pop-up engagement, participants had many ideas as to how the Town can improve communications related to recreation and culture services.

“Prioritize Indigenous cultural and educational activities. Schedule reading and storytelling and visiting activities for all ages (evenings and weekends)”

“I work at Aurora College and it would help to have more events that students and their families can attend”

## 4.0 SUCCESS FRAMEWORK



## 4.0 SUCCESS FRAMEWORK

The Town of Fort Smith has a remarkable array of facilities and program offerings to engage its citizens in the pursuit of healthy lifestyles. Current participation rates in programs and services and the positive feedback received through community engagement process are solid indicators of the Community Services Department's success in delivering programs and services.

This Success Framework identifies strategies and actions to maximize engagement in recreation and culture programs in the Town of Fort Smith. It has been shaped by the community context, extensive engagement, and the current trends and innovations in culture and recreation services. The Framework supports the Community Service's Department's Vision and Mission and ultimately the pursuit of the Town's strategic priority *to be the healthiest community in the NWT*.

The Framework is organized around 8 interrelated strategies. These strategies include associated actions and ways to measure their successful implementation. Timeframes have been included for each of the actions a general reference as follows: short (1 to 3 years); medium (3 to 5 years); long (5+ years).

*It is recommended that the Plan is reviewed at year 5 of its implementation to determine if new actions should be considered, based on new and emerging trends, potential new recreation and culture funding sources and, to determine overall relevance of actions.*





#### 4.1 Increase awareness of available programs and services

Communication is key to maintaining and increasing community-wide participation in culture and recreation activities. The intent of this strategy is to ensure there is a range of communication tools that provide appropriate messaging that reach all segments of the community.

| ACTION  | SHORT | MED | LONG |
|---|-------|-----|------|
| Continue to hold social media competitions to promote participation within the community. For example, to participate, citizens are asked to post a photo while at an activity held by the Community Services Department using the hashtag such as <b>#LifeinFortSmith</b> . Participants can be entered into draws for free passes to the Community Recreation Centre or other prizes. | ✓     |     |      |
| Facilitate free activity days at indoor and outdoor facilities in Fort Smith such as free art classes, an open house at the Community Recreation Centre or outdoor activities such as snowboarding or Nordic skiing with available equipment and instruction.   | ✓     |     |      |
| Develop a social media campaign utilizing platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to increase awareness of classes and services offered by the Community Services Department. For example, stream live video of popular events and activities on Instagram and Facebook.   | ✓     | ✓   |      |
| Continue to utilize existing communication techniques including consistent updates to the Community Recreation Centre calendar, the Recreation Guide and posters/flyers and signage at the Community Recreation Centre and other locations throughout Fort Smith.   | ✓     | ✓   | ✓    |
| Meet residents “where they are” by facilitating pop-up fitness and culture opportunities at various locations and events in Fort Smith such as the College, schools, parks, and other places where people gather.   |       | ✓   | ✓    |

#### METRICS

- ☐ Number of ‘Followers’ on IG and FB (quarterly social media audit)
- ☐ Number of likes, posts, reposts on IG and FB (quarterly social media audit)
- ☐ Participants in Live Streams
- ☐ Participants at pop up events
- ☐ Overall registration at Community Recreation Centre programs

## 4.2 Enhance intergovernmental collaboration

Fort Smith has the unique identity of being a community that is 60% Indigenous. Steps can be taken to work together with the three Indigenous Governments to plan and deliver local recreation and culture programs and services. Further collaboration with Indigenous Governments presents a unique opportunity to identify and pursue efforts toward reconciliation. The intent of this strategy is to ensure that the relationship between the Town and the Indigenous Governments is strengthened as they work together to meet the recreation and culture needs of the whole community.

| ACTION   | SHORT | MED | LONG |
|--|-------|-----|------|
| Work with Indigenous Governments to include local Indigenous languages on signage in the Community and Recreation Centre and other sites in Fort Smith.  |       | ✓   |      |
| Facilitate quarterly recreation and culture services planning meetings with Fort Smith Métis Council, Smith Landing First Nation and Salt River First Nation to identify and coordinate activities, determine potential space needs and to identify other ways to support each other's activities. | ✓     | ✓   | ✓    |
| Collaborate with Indigenous Governments in planning and communicating events and activities through social media platforms, websites, print media, and other forms of communication.   | ✓     | ✓   | ✓    |
| Partner with Indigenous Governments to support Indigenous culture activities. The Town can work with Indigenous Governments to identify appropriate ways to support cultural activities and events.  | ✓     | ✓   | ✓    |

### METRICS

- ☐ Meetings held
- ☐ Signage installation
- ☐ Events developed and promoted in partnership



### 4.3 Maximize use of existing facilities and outdoor recreation infrastructure

It is generally recognized that Fort Smith is well served when it comes to facilities and infrastructure related to recreation and culture. Co-location of spaces and services that offer opportunities for both programmed and unprogrammed activities can lead to increased participation in recreation and culture activities and programs and, in turn, increased social interaction and community vitality. The intent of this strategy is to ensure that current facilities are used as efficiently and effectively as possible.

| ACTION   | SHORT | MED | LONG |
|--|-------|-----|------|
| Ensure that 50% of Community Recreation Centre spaces are adaptable and flexible to accommodate the diversity of recreation and culture program and service needs within the Town of Fort Smith. Ensure facilities are barrier free, environmentally sound and meet current and future technology needs of users, such as Wi-Fi access and projection screens. | ✓     |     |      |
| Maximize the use of existing community facility space in town. Work with residents, partners, and community stakeholders to reconfigure the Community and Recreation Centre to ensure efficient and inclusive use of space within the facility. Explore options to include, for example, the library and childcare space in the Community Recreation Centre.   | ✓     |     |      |
| Improve access to the local trail system by providing infrastructure (such as garbage cans, benches, and signage) along local trails. Promote active transportation through the utilization of existing trail and transportation systems.  |       | ✓   |      |
| Take activities and programs outside by making use of parks and trail systems for organized culture activities, such as painting in the park and recreation programming, such as bootcamps and trail running.  |       | ✓   |      |
| Explore including data collected by the library in annual reports of the Community Services Department   | ✓     | ✓   | ✓    |

#### METRICS

- ☐ % of Community Recreation Centre spaces that are flexible for programmed and unprogrammed use
- ☐ % of programs offered and outdoors
- ☐ % of time Community Recreation Centre rooms and facilities are booked for programs or for rentals to establish the efficient use of facilities
- ☐ % of time outdoor recreation facilities are booked (i.e. soccer and baseball/softball fields)



#### 4.4 Ensure services and activities are inclusive of all age groups, incomes, and abilities

The Town of Fort Smith is committed to providing recreation and culture services to all members of the community. Many ideas for new programs and services were expressed throughout the community engagement process. The intent of this strategy is to ensure that the Town continues to work with the community and its partners to identify and address those needs and, in turn, ensure equitable access to meaningful culture and recreation opportunities to all segments of the population.

| ACTION   | SHORT | MED | LONG |
|--|-------|-----|------|
| Facilitate opportunities for vulnerable, low-income community members to participate in no-cost and low-cost programs, to ensure the recreation system remains open and accessible to all residents such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Free access pack (i.e. 12 visit punch card to Community Recreation Centre)</li> <li>Free access to sports equipment (e.g. skate rentals)</li> <li>Free lessons through an annual budget allocation for lower income residents<sup>12</sup> (i.e. swimming, skating, snowboarding, art)</li> <li>Free transportation options (such as a vanpool, shared carpool)</li> </ul> | ✓     |     |      |
| Consider a policy that requires recreation, sports and culture groups that are subsidized by the Town to offer community outreach and subsidized/no cost registration for residents of low-income backgrounds.   | ✓     |     |      |
| Develop a regular and on-going presence in the schools for relationship building and support for children and youth. Profile recreation and culture activities at the schools through, for example, demonstrations both in-class and as part of school assemblies.   | ✓     |     |      |
| Provide opportunities for feedback and new ideas for recreation and culture services in Fort Smith through an annual community satisfaction survey, comment boxes and tracking of user feedback.   |       | ✓   |      |
| Develop and maintain partnerships with health, social service agencies and other service providers in the community. Reach out directly to their clientele and work together on culture, sport, and recreation needs.  |       | ✓   |      |

<sup>12</sup> Some communities offer lower income residents a certain amount of money toward courses (i.e. \$200/year toward recreation courses for a family).



TOWN OF FORT SMITH COMMUNITY SERVICES MASTER PLAN

| ACTION  | SHORT | MED | LONG |
|---|-------|-----|------|
| Provide on-site, drop-in childcare options for parents to give them the opportunity to pursue their health and wellness goals.  |       | ✓   |      |
| Facilitate free activity days at indoor and outdoor facilities in Fort Smith such as free art classes, an open house at the Community Recreation Centre or outdoor activities such as snowboarding or Nordic skiing with available equipment and instruction.   |       | ✓   |      |
| Engage students through leadership groups to identify gaps in programs and activities for children and youth in Fort Smith. Establish an annual youth forum to identify gaps in programming, discuss opportunities to improve culture and recreation opportunities and other relevant areas related to youth. |       | ✓   |      |

METRICS

- ☐ Number of low-income residents participating in town and partner recreation and culture activities
- ☐ Number of families using drop-in childcare
- ☐ Number of residents participating in “free activity” days
- ☐ Number of youths engaged in the forum



#### 4.5 Encourage greater participation through use of technology

Technology is changing behaviour and the way individuals participate in recreation activities and pursue healthy lifestyles. It is being used more and more to increase engagement in active participation. The intent of this strategy is to ensure the Town utilizes technology to engage community members in their pursuit of wellness.

| ACTION  | SHORT | MED | LONG |
|---|-------|-----|------|
| Consider using existing software and apps (i.e. Strava, Run Keeper) to facilitate fitness challenges. Provide incentives for participation such as draw prizes, free recreation passes, etc.  | ✓     |     |      |
| Provide access to equipment and on-line classes and space at the Community Recreation Centre and partner organizations, including the library, to allow for flexibility in type of culture and recreation programs and activities offered to Fort Smith residents. These could include, for example, fitness classes such as spin, cooking classes, art classes, etc. |       | ✓   |      |
| Provide a forum for staff to review on-line fitness and other classes and make these reviews available to residents on social media platforms and/or the Town's website.  |       | ✓   |      |

#### METRICS

- ☐ Number of participants in challenges
- ☐ Number of participants in classes streamed
- ☐ Number of classes streamed at Community Recreation Centre
- ☐ Number of reviews by Community Recreation Centre staff







**4.6 Develop and maintain partnerships with community partners to meet community needs**

Building new partnerships and strengthening existing ones with community partners and like-minded agencies can be a way to provide a range of innovative services in Fort Smith. In many respects, this is already underway, and these partnerships have been formed. The intent of this strategy is for the Town to work collaboratively with partners to avoid duplication of services and identify ways the Town can support their delivery.

| ACTION   | SHORT | MED | LONG |
|--|-------|-----|------|
| Convene a forum of service agencies within Fort Smith to determine priorities and common needs, and to identify efficiencies and resource sharing opportunities. | ✓     |     |      |
| Utilize existing communication techniques to promote the programs and services offered by partner organizations  |       | ✓   |      |

METRICS

- ☐ Number of meetings with partner organizations

#### 4.7 Maintain and expand the active volunteer base

Volunteers are the most important resource community and event organizers have. Having experienced, skilled volunteers who are willing to donate their time will help ensure the success of many future community programs and events. The intent of this strategy is to ensure there are resources available to maintain and enhance the local base of volunteers.

| ACTION   | SHORT | MED | LONG |
|--|-------|-----|------|
| Allocate a staff member to coordinate volunteer activities to ensure that volunteerism is tracked and managed in a coordinated effort.   | ✓     |     |      |
| Recruit volunteers to assist in areas specific to their interests and skills. Define roles with clear expectations, timelines, and deliverables. Host an annual or bi-annual volunteer “job fair” to provide information on available opportunities. |       | ✓   |      |
| Recognize volunteers and coordinate an annual volunteer appreciation event and through incentives such as passes to the Community Recreation Centre and draw prizes.   | ✓     |     |      |
| Partner with the schools to develop leadership and volunteer programming as part of the curriculum.  |       | ✓   |      |

#### METRICS

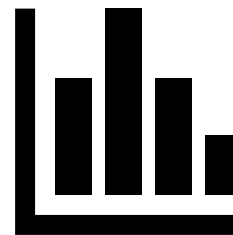
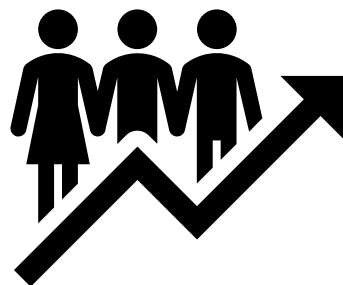
- ☐ Number of volunteers



#### 4.8 Enhance data collection and user tracking techniques

It is important to measure the current use of facilities and participation in recreation and culture activities and services. Tracking the uptake of services over time can be used to determine whether activities should be maintained or changed; help to ensure the Town is meeting its targets; and, can aid in accessing funding.

| ACTION   | SHORT | MED | LONG |
|--|-------|-----|------|
| Investigate and acquire a software package to assist staff in tracking the use of Town's culture and recreation programs and activities.   | ✓     |     |      |
| Develop a consistent method for community organizations that receive Town funding to report on user numbers, volunteer numbers and participant demographics, such as festivals and sporting events | ✓     |     |      |
| Utilize data for reporting on success, identifying gaps and future planning.   | ✓     |     |      |
| Include data related to % of time facilities (indoor and outdoor) are booked for use.  | ✓     |     |      |
| Incorporate library data that meaningfully reflects this aspect the cultural programming of the Town (e.g. programs offered at the library)  | ✓     |     |      |
| Collect data for structured and spontaneous use of recreation and culture services. For example, install trail counters at key locations around Fort Smith.  |       | ✓   |      |
| Explore opportunities and formats for collecting volunteer numbers and volunteer hours for community-based programs, events, and activities.   |       | ✓   |      |





## **PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS**

*Cover Photo (left to right): Town of Fort Smith Facebook Page (SSDEC/Sarah Pruys, Pierre-Emmanuel Photography), Northern Life Museum & Cultural Centre Facebook Page, Town of Fort Smith website ([www.fortsmith.ca](http://www.fortsmith.ca)), Louis Brockner*

*Introduction – Karl Johnston*

*p.2 - Northern Life Museum & Cultural Centre Facebook Page*

*Plan Framework – Town of Fort Smith Facebook Page (Wood Buffalo Frolics Group)*

*Community Services Master Plan Foundations – Outpost Magazine*

*p.6 – Town of Fort Smith Instagram Account (@fortsmithnwt); participants in the Mad Bison Mud Run, August 2018*

*p. 7 - Town of Fort Smith Instagram Account (@fortsmithnwt); November 2017*

*p 20 - Town of Fort Smith Instagram Account (@fortsmithnwt); 2019 Pine Lake Picnic, July 2019*

*Success Framework – Town of Fort Smith Website ([www.fortsmith.ca](http://www.fortsmith.ca))*

*p. 24 - Town of Fort Smith Website ([www.fortsmith.ca](http://www.fortsmith.ca))*

*p.26 - Town of Fort Smith Website ([www.fortsmith.ca](http://www.fortsmith.ca))*

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## **APPENDIX A – Survey Results**





**Town of Fort Smith**  
**Community Services Master Plan**  
**SURVEY SUMMARY**

February 2020

David Nairne + Associates Ltd.



|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>  | <b>3</b>  |
| 1. Do you and/or members of your household participate in recreation activities (such as swimming, skating, or fitness classes) and/or cultural activities (such as art classes and education programs at the museum)? ..... | 3         |
| 2. Which recreational and/or cultural facilities do you and your family use most often? .....  | 3         |
| 3. In the past 12 months, what types of recreational activities have you or anyone in your household participated in, in Fort Smith? Please check all that apply.....  | 4         |
| 4. Are you and members of your household able to participate in recreational activities as often as you would like? .....  | 5         |
| 5. In the past 12 months, what types of cultural events and activities have you or anyone in your household participated in?.....  | 5         |
| 6. Are you and members of your household able to participate in cultural activities as often as you would like? .....  | 5         |
| 7. What limits your ability to participate in recreational and/or cultural activities as often as you would like? (check all that apply) .....   | 5         |
| 8. What recreational and/or cultural activities would you like to see offered in Fort Smith? (open ended questions).....   | 6         |
| 9. How would you rate your level of satisfaction with the recreational activities in Fort Smith for the following age groups? AND.....   | 7         |
| 10. How would you rate your level of satisfaction with the cultural activities in Fort Smith for the following age groups? .....   | 7         |
| 11. In the past 12 months did you volunteer in a recreational and/or cultural activity in Fort Smith in some way? If yes, what did you do?.....  | 7         |
| 12. Are you interested in volunteering? What are you interested in doing? .....  | 8         |
| 13. Fort Smith wants to be the healthiest community in the NWT. What could we do to make that happen?.....   | 9         |
| <b>DEMOGRAPHICS.....</b>   | <b>10</b> |
| 14. How many people in your household are in the following age categories? .....   | 10        |
| 15. Where did you get this survey? .....   | 10        |
| <b>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS .....</b>   | <b>10</b> |

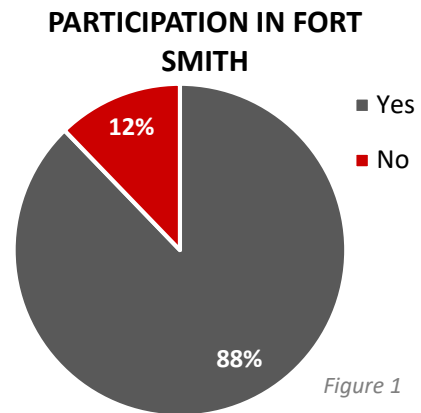


## INTRODUCTION

The Town of Fort Smith (the Town) is developing a Community Services Master Plan to guide recreation and culture programs and services. As part of the project, the Town administered a community survey over a 7-week period from mid December 2019 to January 31, 2020. The intent of the survey was to gauge residents' perspectives on and participation in cultural and recreation programs and services. The survey was available on-line as well as at various public locations around Town - 182 people responded. This document presents a summary of the results.

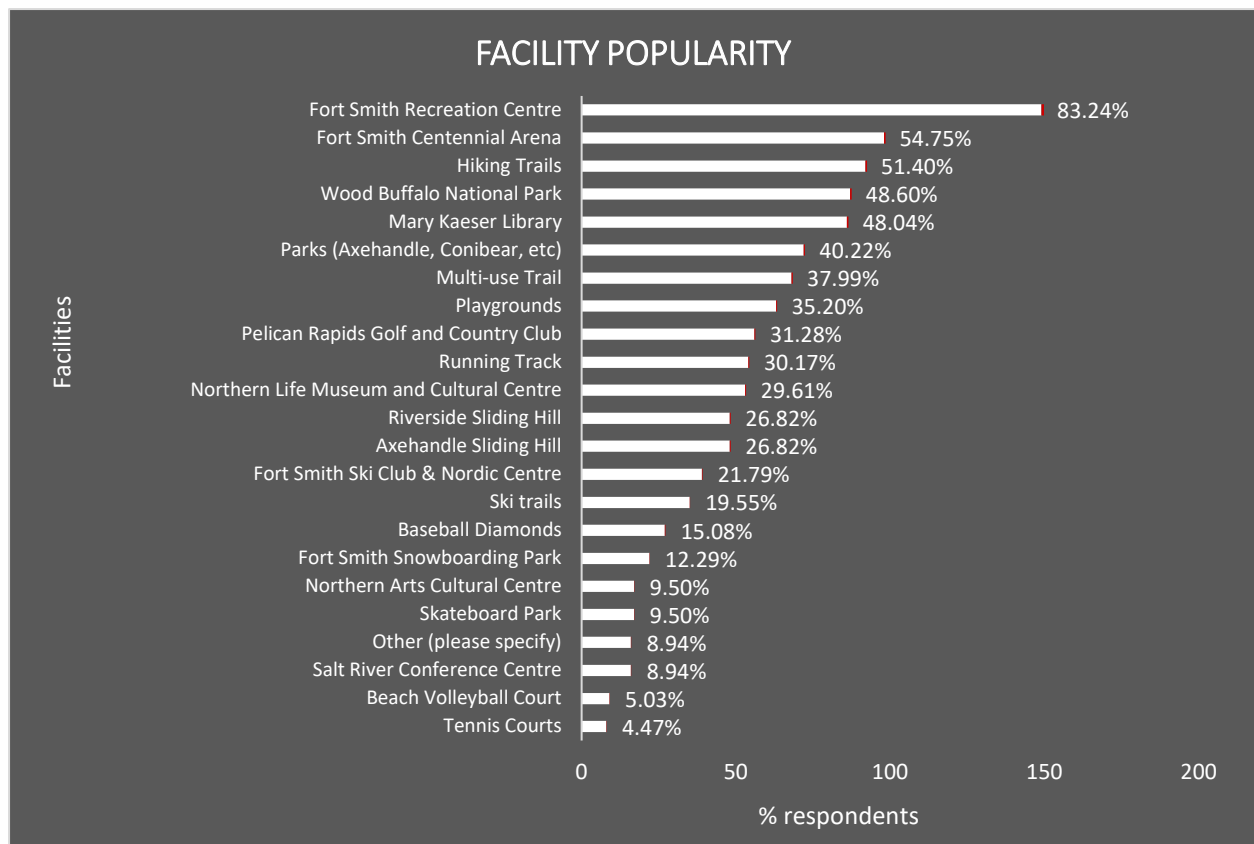
**1. Do you and/or members of your household participate in recreation activities (such as swimming, skating, or fitness classes) and/or cultural activities (such as art classes and education programs at the museum)?**

- Overall, 88% of respondents said they or their household members participate in various ways, such as art classes, education programs at the museum, swimming, skating or fitness classes and many more (Figure 1, right).



**2. Which recreational and/or cultural facilities do you and your family use most often?**

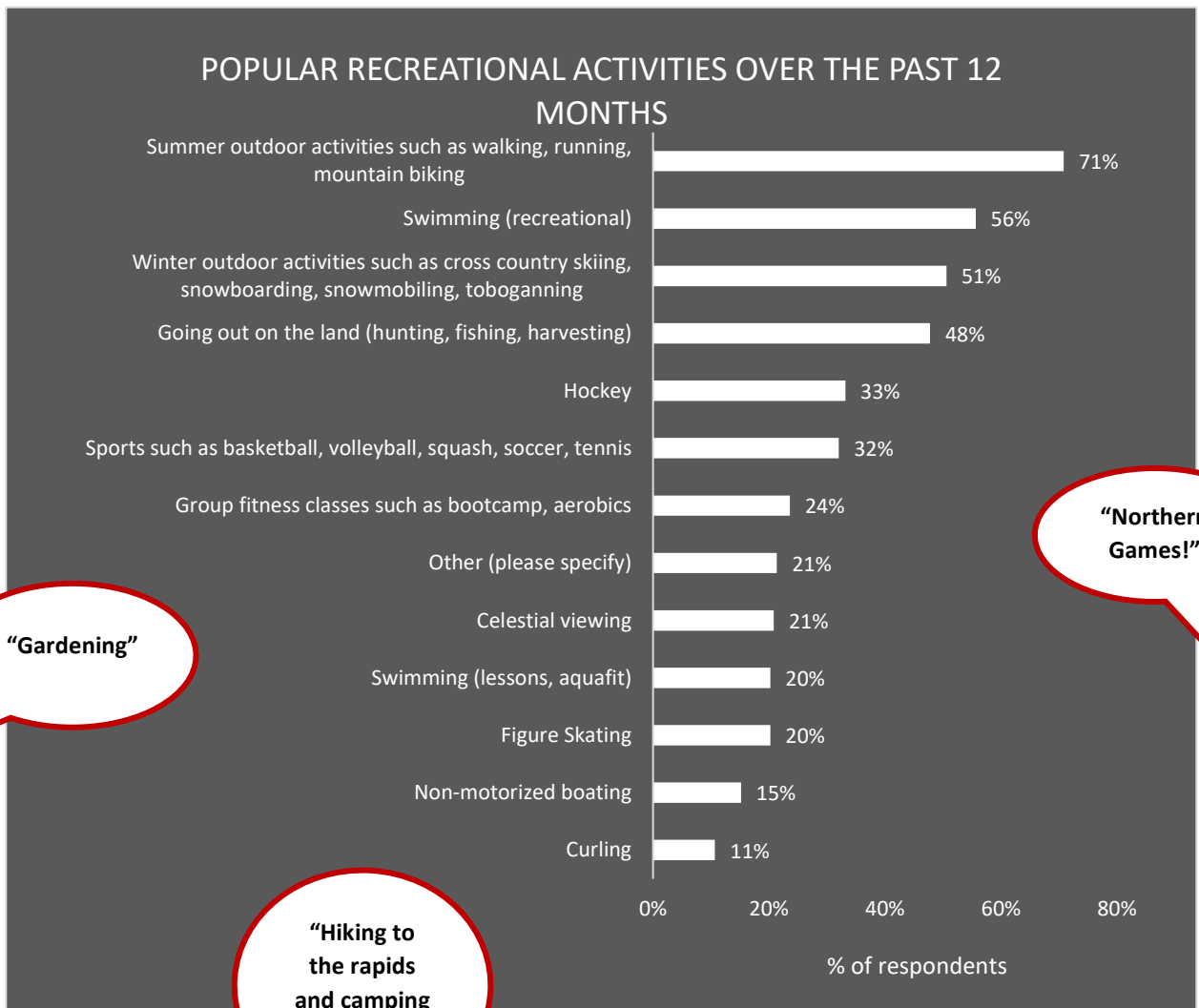
- The recreational and cultural facilities used most often include the Fort Smith Recreation Centre, Fort Smith Centennial Arena, hiking trails around the area, Wood Buffalo National Park and Mary Kaeser Library (Figure 2, below).





**3. In the past 12 months, what types of recreational activities have you or anyone in your household participated in, in Fort Smith? Please check all that apply.**

- Over the past year, survey respondents mostly participated in summer outdoor activities such as walking, running and mountain biking.
- In the winter, they participated in cross country skiing, snowboarding, snowmobiling and other winter sports.
- Swimming is popular all year round.
- Going out on the land for hunting, fishing, and harvesting is also a common activity.
- The least-common activities over the past year include curling and non-motorized boating.
- Just over one-fifth (21%) of respondents mentioned other activities that were not listed in the survey, such as Pete's Gym, ATVing, camping, archery, golf, shooting, pickleball and kayaking/canoeing.



**4. Are you and members of your household able to participate in recreational activities as often as you would like?**

- The ability to participate in recreational activities was almost equally divided among respondents – 55% of respondents said they can participate as often as they would like, while 45% said they are unable to.

**5. In the past 12 months, what types of cultural events and activities have you or anyone in your household participated in?**

- The most popular cultural activity was festivals (such as Frolics), with two-thirds of respondents picking this activity.
- Many respondents also mentioned going out on the land (hunting, fishing, harvesting) and Art shows (such as Art in the Park and Art Extravaganza).
- Respondents noted other activities that were not listed on the survey, such as Spring Stock, movie nights, school-related activities, education programs at the college, beading and author readings.

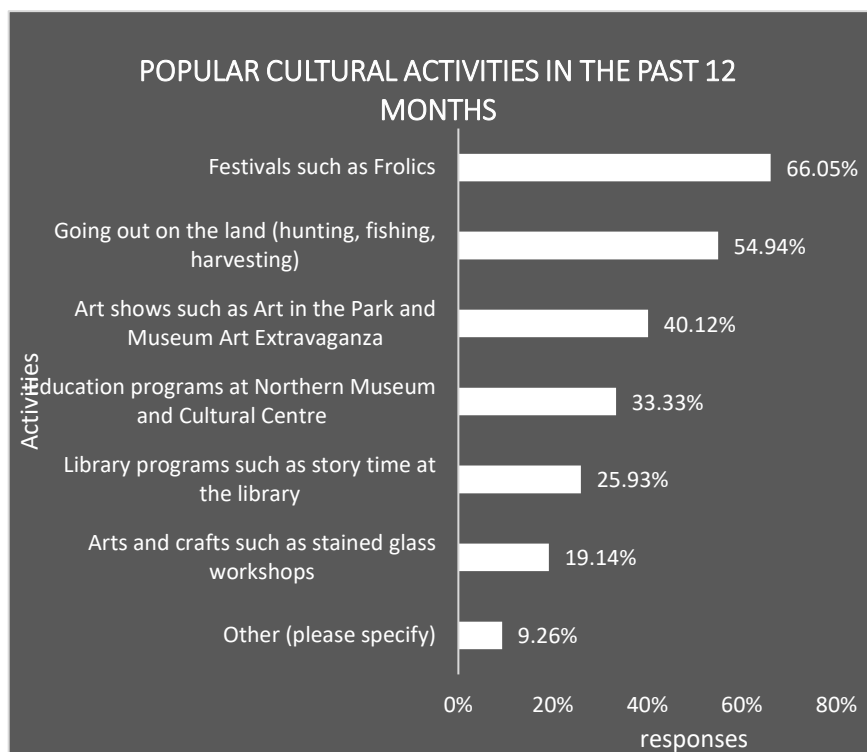


Figure 4

**6. Are you and members of your household able to participate in cultural activities as often as you would like?**

- The responses to this question, were divided almost equally with 52% yes and 48% no.

**7. What limits your ability to participate in recreational and/or cultural activities as often as you would like? (check all that apply)**

- Nearly half (49%) of people said they are too busy.
- Just over one-third (36%) said they are not aware of opportunities.
- Another third (32%) said the hours are inconvenient.
- One-quarter (25%) believe there is a lack of desired facilities or programs.

- Open-ended responses mentioned cold weather, conflict with schedules, lack of equipment and workshop spots filling up quickly as other factors that act as barriers in accessing programming (Figure 5).

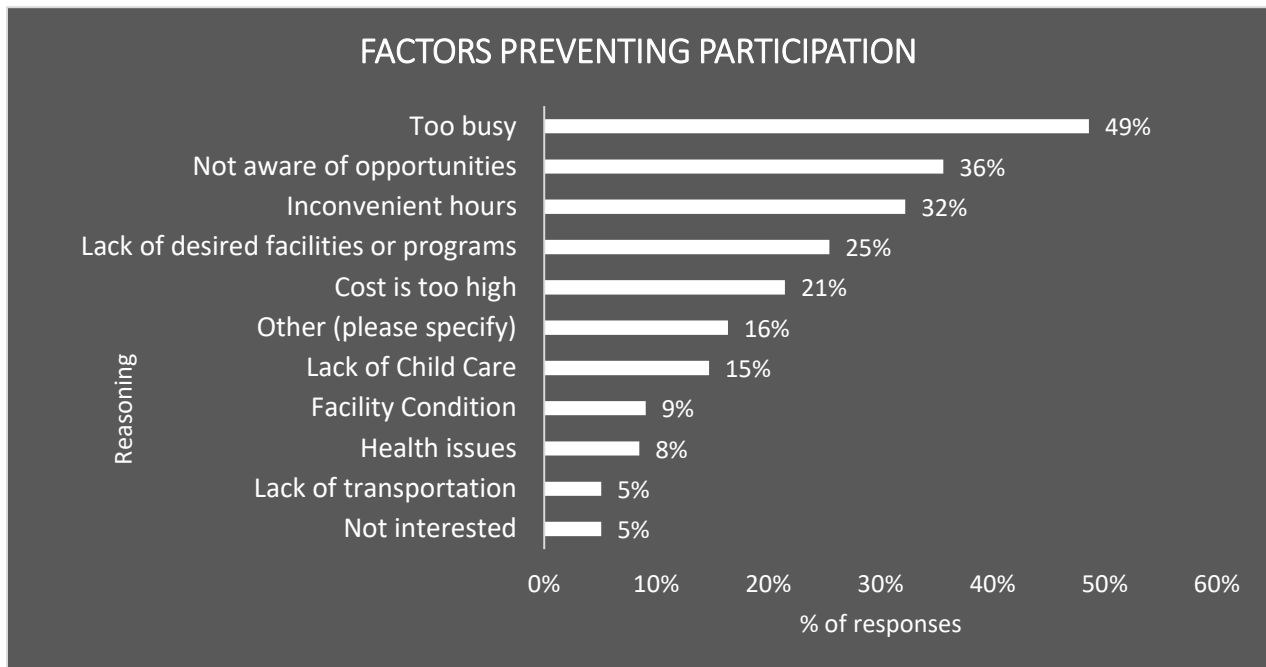


Figure 5

**8. What recreational and/or cultural activities would you like to see offered in Fort Smith? (open ended questions)**

- The responses to the is question have been compiled in figure 6 below, with the most common answers appearing in larger letters.
- Respondents said they would like to see new opportunities such as martial arts, gymnastics, dance classes and traditional teachings.
- Respondents also said they would like an extension to program hours to include evenings and statutory holidays.
- Specific classes for young kids and seniors were also mentioned.



Figure 6



9. How would you rate your level of satisfaction with the recreational activities in Fort Smith for the following age groups? AND

10. How would you rate your level of satisfaction with the cultural activities in Fort Smith for the following age groups?

Figure 7 below presents the average level of satisfaction with recreation and cultural activities in Fort Smith on a scale of 1 to 5:

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 1. Very Dissatisfied | • For recreational activities, people are most satisfied with programming for school age children (6 to 12 years), and least satisfied with programming for teens (13 to 18 years). |
| 2. Dissatisfied      |   |
| 3. Neutral           |   |
| 4. Satisfied         | • For cultural activities, people are most satisfied with programming for school age children, and least satisfied with programming for young children (0 to 5 years).              |
| 5. Very Satisfied    |   |
- Overall, people are more satisfied with recreational activities - the weighted average for recreational programming was higher in every age group compared to cultural programming.

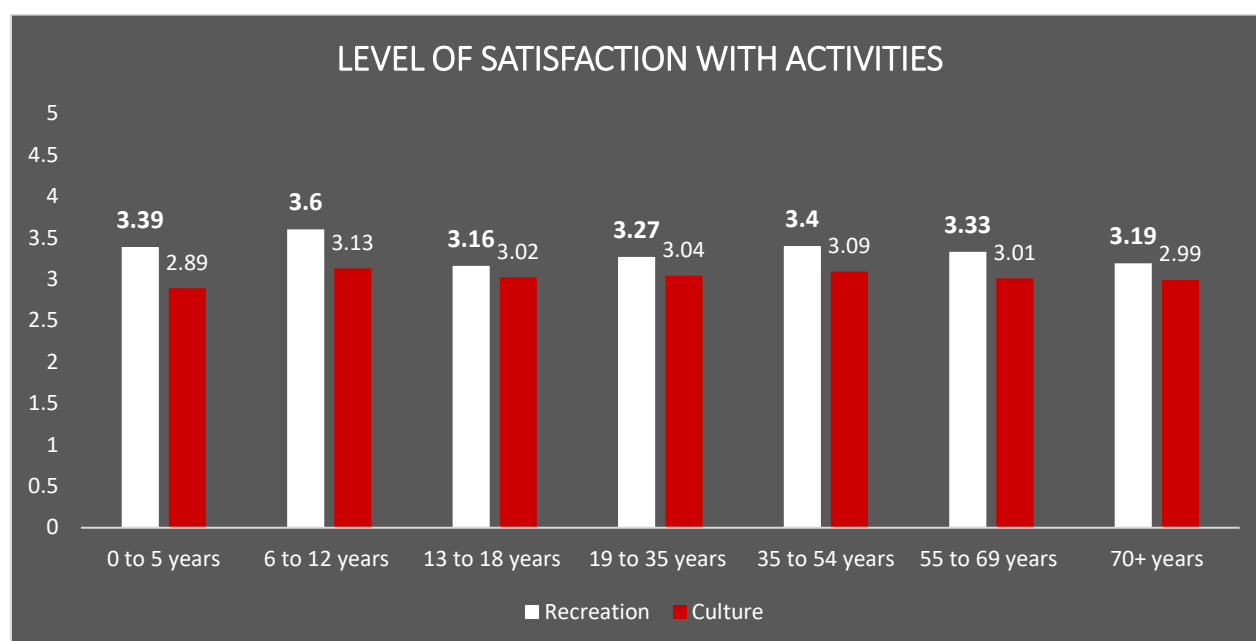


Figure 7

11. In the past 12 months did you volunteer in a recreational and/or cultural activity in Fort Smith in some way? If yes, what did you do?

- Just under half (45%) of respondents have actively volunteered in the community over the past year in various volunteer positions.
- The most popular volunteer activities included seasonal events such as Santa Sleigh, Arctic Winter Games and Paddlefest, while others gave their time at recreational tournaments and events.

- Serving as a board member, teaching various skills and coaching as favourable ways respondents donate their time.



Figure 8

**12. Are you interested in volunteering? What are you interested in doing?**

- 53% of respondents said that they were interested in volunteering. Figure 9 presents the most popular responses.



Figure 9

### 13. Fort Smith wants to be the healthiest community in the NWT. What could we do to make that happen?

As shown in Figure 10 below, the responses to this question fell into ten different categories: affordability, incentives, mental health, facility upgrades, food, program suggestions, climate, accessibility, movement, and all ages.

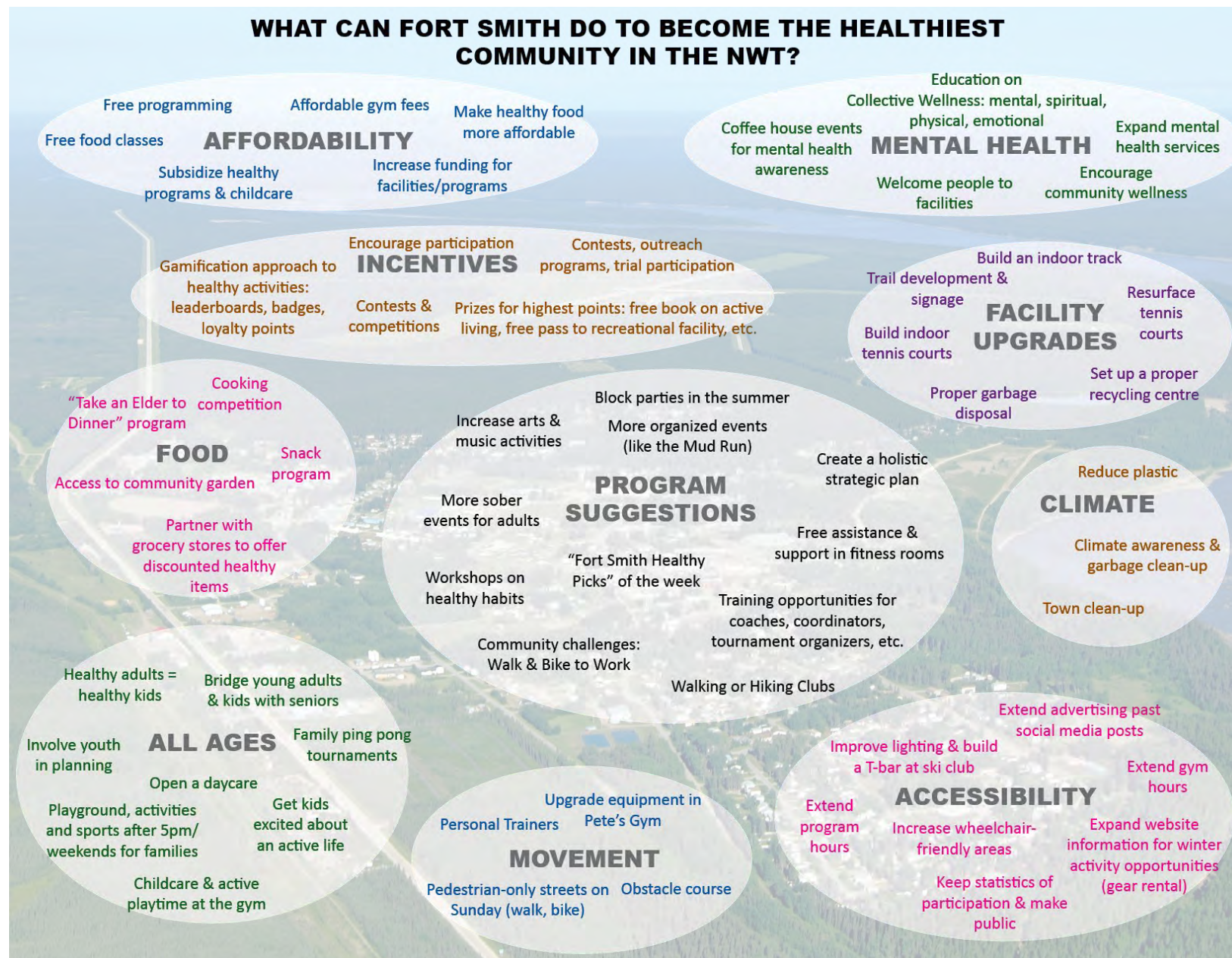


Figure 10



## DEMOGRAPHICS

### 14. How many people in your household are in the following age categories?

- The survey population is mostly middle-aged, with one-quarter (25%) between the ages of 36 to 54 years old, and just over one-fifth (21%) is between 18 to 35. Seniors over the age of 70 are the smallest age group at 5% (Figure 11).

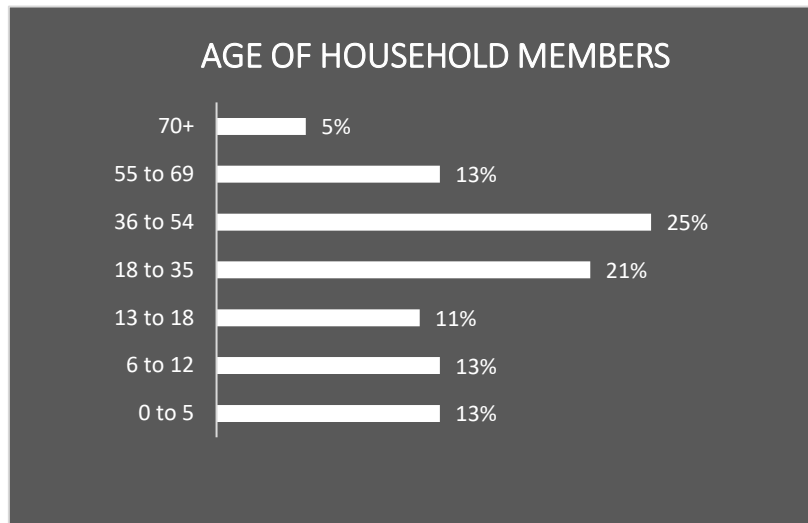


Figure 11

97% of people who took this survey indicated they are from Fort Smith, and 3% are not. A large majority (72%) who are from Fort Smith have lived there for over 10 years (Figure 12).

Nearly half (49%) are Indigenous (either First Nations, Metis, Inuit or multiple identities) (Figure 13).

### 15. Where did you get this survey?

40% of people said they filled it out online, while an additional 31% picked up a copy at the Recreation Centre. Others found copies at the Mary Kaeser Library, Aurora College, the Arena or at the Museum and Cultural Centre. Nobody filled out a survey from the grocery store, PWK Highschool or JBT Elementary.

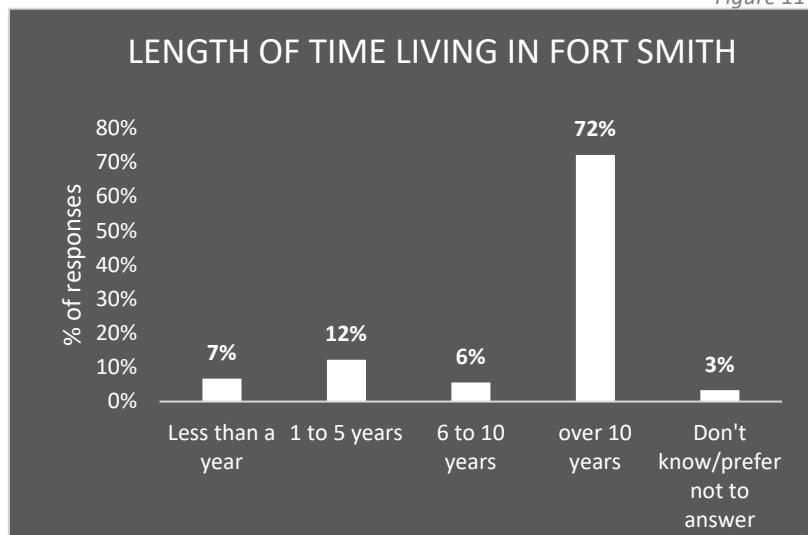


Figure 12

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Most responses throughout this survey were very engaging, offering ideas and additional comments to any open-ended questions while filling out the bubbled answers accordingly. Very few people skipped questions. Some final comments that people offered at the end of the survey include the following:

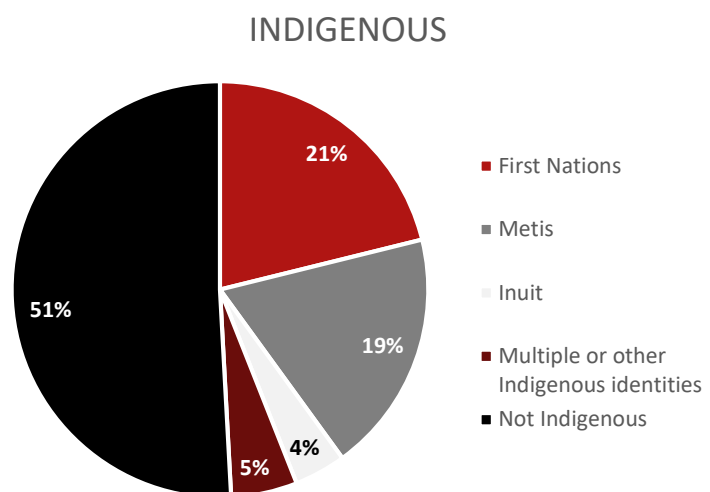


Figure 13

"I work at Aurora College and it would help to have more events that students and their families can attend without any costs."

"Great job! Keep it up :)"

"I am not good at stopping to look at posters, but I like arts and crafts. I think Fort Smith does a lot (for a small community) to promote healthy living. Thank you and good work! Thank you for offering so many programs for kids. We have a great town."

"The multi-use trail is a great resource, but needs continued maintenance, especially the graveled section."

"I feel that there are a lot of activities for youth (which is important) but I wish there was more for adults. I am doing my best within my expertise, but I am not sure how much of an impact I am doing."

"Lower the drop-in fees & increase the pool hours."

"If Pete's gym is going to the basement, please make the floor concrete. It would be unsafe not to do so."

"As youth I think that we should be able to come to the Rec centre to play sports and improve K sports. I think that there should be like sport coaches for some or all sports. Maybe not for drop in but like if there were certain like practices with coaches."

**"Don't forget Ft. Smith has a shooting range. For some reason, Ft. Smith residents are less likely to walk or bike instead of driving than many other communities in the NWT or in the south, whether to and from work, school or around town. Try to get people to spend more time outdoors instead of going from heated building to idling vehicle to heated building."**

**"Prioritize Indigenous cultural and educational activities. Schedule reading and storytelling and visiting activities for all ages evenings and weekends."**

**"Thank you for the free swim day! Pete's gym machines need to be kept in good repair and replaced as needed to keep this at the level it should be for the price of a membership."**

**"work on beautification with residents like gardens, flowers, community gardens, full recycling program, full composting program including worm composting in winter, dog parks, playgrounds, x country track set the oval at the school and close to town for those without transportation out to the ski club."**

**"PLEASE do some work in Pete's Gym. The gym is not maintained equipment breaks and is not replaced even when front desk staff our asked. over the past few years kettle bells have been removed multiple pieces of cardio equipment have been removed (at least 5 pieces that I can recall) Attachments for the machines have broken and not replaced. Also, look at the bench in the gym. If people hang out their coats the bench is useless, May as well just take it out. you can't sit on it and put on your shoes."**

**"One other thing that would be great to see would be a dog park so owners can take pets there to run around and play."**



## **APPENDIX B – Stakeholder and Pop-Up Engagement Summary**



Town of Fort Smith  
Community Services Master Plan

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WEEK

February 17-23, 2020  
David Nairne + Associates Ltd.



## INTRODUCTION

The Town of Fort Smith (the Town) is developing a Community Services Master Plan to guide recreation and culture programs and services. As part of the project, the Town facilitated an engagement process with residents during the week of February 17 to 23, 2020. This included meetings with community partners and community “pop-ups”.

The stakeholder meetings included 68 participants representative of a variety of community service providers including:

- Recreation Staff
- Recreation Advisory Board
- Town Council
- Indigenous Governments
- Parks Canada
- JBT Student Leadership
- Seniors’ Society
- Interagency Committee
- Northern Life Museum and Cultural Centre Board

The discussions focused on the types of recreation/cultural services each group provides; whether there are other services they would like to see; and, how the Town of Fort Smith could support them to deliver those services.

The intent of the community pop-ups was to meet people where they are. The pop-ups included visually appealing boards (refer to Appendix A) which presented the survey results and provided opportunity for participants to make suggestions related to expanded services and communication methods. In total, 11 pop-up events were hosted at various locations throughout Town including. A total of 196 residents were engaged through the pop-ups:

- Kaesar’s Grocery Store (x2)
- Northern Store
- Aurora College Foyer
- Post Natal Parents Group (CRC Foyer)
- Youth Night (CRC Foyer)
- Parents and Tots (RCC Foyer)
- PWK Foyer
- Centennial Arena
- Mary Kaesar Library
- Food Bank

The outcomes are presented below. Please refer to Appendix A for the engagement materials.



## FOCUS GROUP MEETING NOTES

---

### **Town Council – 6 participants**

Members of Fort Smith Town Council met to review the results of the community survey (available in appendix A). and the review the schedule and engagement materials. They suggested additional focus groups and pop-ups including the Food Bank and meeting with the Seniors at Kaesars.

### **Community Partners Meetings**

As part of the engagement process, the Town facilitated workshops with 7 community partners. Each meeting included an overview of the purpose of the Community Services Master Plan project and a presentation of the survey results. The discussions tended to be organic in nature, but the following questions generally framed the meetings.

- What cultural/recreation programs/services does your organization offer
- Is there anything else you would like to see offered?
- Who / what organization should take the lead?
- How can the Town of Fort Smith help? (ie. facilities, funding proposals, assisting with events)
- How can the Town better communication cultural/recreation programs/services/activities?

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### **Parks Canada – 15 participants**

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The following are the outcomes/ideas discussed and recorded during the discussions with Parks Canada staff.

#### **Communications**

- Newspaper
- Bulletin Board
- Email out a monthly schedule
- Info board: central location info
- Town needs to take lead on communication and centralize
- Able to call town/rec centre - find out what's going on/ Staff around know what's going on
- time overlaps: different times
- provide outreach to people to do different programs
- Signage is important
- Monthly bulletin

#### **Volunteerism**

- volunteer – dedicated – hard to recruit others to help – make the community better – community pride – individual interests
- better organization by the Town – database for volunteers
- Volunteer fair
- Could have a volunteer trade show
- Multigenerational volunteers
- How to encourage youth to be involved
- Some of the volunteer opportunities perhaps aren't aware of

#### **Tourism**

- Tourism Strategy: help cross-market (need to know what's going on)
- What makes the Town unique in the territory: help promote the Town
- Have lots of services and need them packaged up
- If Town is an attractive place to live makes it easier for people to move here for work
- Link up with the Town – partnering agreement
- Guide hikes, etc

#### **How can the Town of Fort Smith help?**

- Town needs to work more closely to help the infrastructure
- Rapids make us a unique community
- better connection, infrastructure.
- Garbage cans need to be emptied
- Complications due to slide area
- There needs to be a greater community core
- Concern with moving everything into the Rec Centre
- How to develop a walking tour? What do we need to do, how does it fit, connect the modes of activity

- Integration of lands
- Signage through the town; what is the history of the town; celebrate history and culture in the community itself.
- Move as a facilitator a partner in the process
- Better if hiking club in community and parks can support it
- Organize volunteers; data collection, birds, surveys
- Provide info to guide
- volunteer contact person: PR person; coordinator that knows what's happening in Town
- Spread the word/schedule a bit better
- Website can be difficult to navigate
- Create a destination
- Insurance and space available
- \*\*\*Childcare is very important
- Needed for retaining and attracting staff
- 65 to 70 kids per year; only 1 licensed dayhome
- Trail signage: wayfinding
- Climbing wall

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### **Health Centre – 5 participants**

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#### **General**

- Used to have Nordic Walking, Biggest Loser (needs to be offered after 5)
- Used to offer babysitting courses
- Overtime limitations

#### **Barriers**

- Volunteers
- Childcare
- Housing

#### **Favourites**

- Museum performances
- Hockey
- Beading

- Yoga/Bootcamp
- Limitation: overtime

#### **Additional Activities**

- Biggest Loser
- Nordic Walking
- Babysitting courses
- Need for childcare during adult activities
- Evening classes offered through college
- Indoor walking park
- Waterpark/splash park
- Classes geared toward youth
- More structured, pool tables
- More supervision
- Family dance; partner with town

- Youth dance
- Gymnastics, dance, drama
- Art camps/theatre
- Music lessons
- Cooking circle; culinary arts (partner with college to teach)

#### **Communications**

- Town Facebook Group rather than page

- Info sign on Town Hall
- Central location for info
- Post and update monthly schedule on Town website
- One-off events on Calendar
- Other groups post on Calendar
- Town of Fort Smith app
- Mechanism to add events to the calendar and remove

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### **Recreation Advisory Board – 5 participants**

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#### **General**

- Activities taking place; town insurance
- Provide facilities
- Challenge – who's in town
- Haven't had swim team for a couple of years
- Kids not in the pool so much (insurance, space)
- Town may need to stop trying to be the everything to everybody
- What about events ie/ walking to TUK
- Bike to work; active transport
- Close a road down for events
- Are there barriers to active transport?
- Bike to work/school
- Bike repairs/team kids
- Team activities missing; evenings and weekends
- There is programming here for kids
- Youth night Friday/Saturday

#### **Insurance for the Ski Club**

- Can't get insurance through Town because is in Alberta
- Facility insurance is crippling

#### **Multi-use trail**

- confusion around tenure of lands
- Signage – need to foster a relationship with department of lands so work in best interest
- Lobby GNWT to print signage on the lands
- Unstable lands
- Needs to be better maintained
- Better base and is there a way around that
- Need to pave it to make it safe
- Is there a way around that
- Need to pave it to make it safe and easier to walk on Calder Avenue

#### **Other**

- Obstacle course
- Mud run; 5km + 6.5 km
- Need for better coordination
- Cultural Events – weaving classes at the college
- Carpentry
- College changed rules around opening hours and overtime staff
- Museum; weekend workshops
- \*\*Partnerships with Town for one-off events



## Seniors Society – 7 Participants

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- 2 areas are underutilized – Conibear Park, Track
- Building programs into Conibear
- Used to have music festival
- Canada Day
- Access is good
- Parking can be an issue
- Track is better for seniors; town has no programs; walking program @ the track
- Track could be promoted better in the Town
- Relay for life was held there one year
- 
- Lots of Rec activities
- Good at responding to the 'ask'; good at coming through with suggestions
- Seniors; accessibility is very important.
- Culture services for seniors
- Friendship Centre; crafts
- Cree lessons, crafts, etc.

### Communications

- Facebook is not good
- Posters
- Monthly mail-out available around town; insert into water bill
- Therapeutic session in pool; physiotherapy in the pool
- Lots of seniors would go who would normally go to lane swim.
- Dedicated person doing the calendar
- Community channel
- People miss the community newspaper

### Museum Hours

- 8 to 5; the hours are too restrictive
- Offer crafts and art projects
- Can be costly

### Library

- After school structured reading for older kids?
- Book clubs for kids at the after school
- Drama club; plays at Conibear Park
- Choir
- Space for children could go to have a choir
- Readers theatre
- Plays in Conibear Park
- Unstructured activities for kids
- How to get kids involved in play?
- Last few years – soccer coaching – well-received among the kids
- Library can be challenging; downstairs

### Other

- Sewing groups in town
- Fashion show for local fashions
- Room at the college for crafting but just for the students
- don't bring storytellers from elsewhere, use locals
- People need to be aware
- Food security: gardening workshops
- Chemical free!

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## Integrated Health – 5 participants

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### Communication

- Facebook Page
- Town crier
- Radio
- Sandwich board at 4-way stop

### Childcare

- Big need in community
- Lots of ideas about collaboration

### **Restorative Justice Program Offerings**

- Restorative Justice – connection and relationships
- Program to bring people to land
- Community justice; transfer community services hours to new hours
- Duke of Edinburgh Award; service hours
- Fiddle and ukulele lessons
- DJ equipment through Duke of Edinburgh award
- Online lessons

### **Parking, Trails, Other**

- Parking lot Timber; leads to Queen E; empty lot – new lot
- Markings on some of the trails; better signage
- Figuring out where to park
- Random patrol; to make sure that rules are being adhered to; random pop-in to make sure everything is okay
- Town is good about clearing trails
- Town should have Remote Control club

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### **Indigenous Governments – 11 Participants**

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- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Volunteerism; have a central location</li><li>• Central repository for volunteers</li><li>• Calendar with all the activities</li><li>• Culture camps; have a main calendar of activities</li><li>• Phone around and find out what is happening</li><li>• Come to board map and talk to them</li><li>• COMMUNICATION</li><li>• Ask for input</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work better together; get involved</li><li>• Provide some financial backing to the events offered by other????</li><li>• Perception that only certain groups get the backing</li><li>• Representative on Rec Advisory Board</li><li>• Community Calendar</li><li>• Put a newspaper out twice a month</li><li>• Identify boards and who is in them</li><li>• Snow sculpture contest</li></ul> |
|---|--|
- 

### **Museum Board – 4 Participants**

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#### **Collaboration**

- Town celebration – programming with day camp
- Santa parade - museum was the location previously for the hot chocolate
- Big push for Arts programming; need to ensure there is no duplication
- Collaboration for scheduling; communication
- Formalize talking to staff; to the programmers
- Share summer maintenance workers
- Town could advocate for cultural funding
- Advisory Boards both Rec, Art and Culture; write policy so there is a balance between the Rec, Arts and Culture representative
- Collaboration with programming

#### **Barriers**

- Have limits to staff; can't run weekend workshops every weekend
- Programmers need to engage more
- More regular meetings
- Flexible funding would be helpful

#### **Community Spaces**

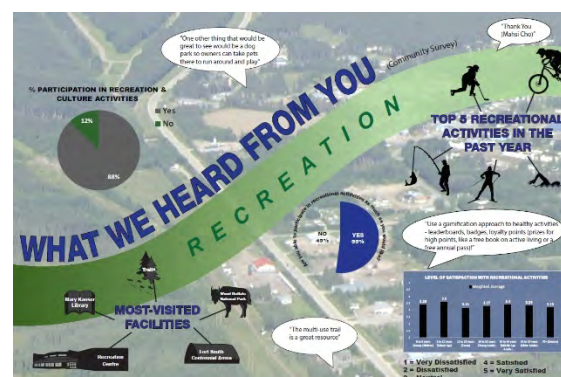
- Need to provide more than one place for people to physically gather
- Need more than facility for people to feel safe.
- Need for quiet place that encourages quiet contemplation.
- More than one accessible place for people to go
- Keep bringing the Town together

## POP-UP WORKSHOPS NOTES

As discussed previously, the pop-workshops were held at various locations around the Town of Fort Smith. Information about the Community Services Master Plan process along with survey results were presented on poster boards. A total of 196 people participated in the pop-up workshops. Participants were asked to respond to the following questions:

1. How should we get the message out about recreation and culture activities in Fort Smith?
2. In terms of recreation and culture programs and services, what should the town:
  - a. Do more of
  - b. Do less of
  - c. Stop doing

For the most part, participants responded to questions 1 and 2a. The following reports on the responses, organized by theme.



*Posters from the pop-up workshops describing the CSMP process and community survey results*

**1. How should we get the message out about recreation and culture activities in Fort Smith?**

- Need a schedule
- Town guides to show visitors
- Use screen at rec centre for more than just rec activities

- Facebook, Instagram
- Fall/summer/winter rec printed guides
- Ensure all staff Pool/RCC/Arena know what happening at each/other venues
- Website/Facebook
- TV Bingo announcement
- Rec Guide updated monthly
- Update website more often
- Social Media (Websites)
- News/New paper/ flyers
- Bulletin Boards (everywhere)
- Announcements through intercoms/phones/people
- Community bulletin board
- Town website
- Monthly calendar of activities
- Maybe a community notice board in front of the town hall where posters and announcements can be displayed – this could be duplicated at the Rec Centre
- Library Arena
- Facebook community page!
- Flyers and electronic sign advertising/promoting activities
- Specialized website/Facebook pages tailored to each rec service ie/ rec, town, library
- MORE OF THIS!! (Engagement posters)
- Go to schools
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Social Media
- Flyers in mailboxes
- Face to face conversations (classrooms)
- Community Board
- Buy-Sell Trade?
- Youth Night
- Meetings
- Community meetings
- Presentations!!!
- More posters

## 2. In terms of recreation and culture programs and services, what should the town **do more of?**

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### **Recreation Activities**

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- Basketball
- Bingo
- Boxing/martial arts club
- Childcare (infant)
- Children and family activities
- Continue play groups
- Dance play
- Gymnastics
- Highschool to use rec centre more (gym)
- HIIT classes, Pilates; greater variety of classes at a different time
- Lower prices at rec centre
- More recreation
- More recreational activities
- More squash support (courts, coaches)
- More to do for 1 to 3 ages
- Ball hockey
- Music group
- Personal trainer
- Pete's gym – more equipment, programming
- Play group on Sunday (small kids in gym) in winter
- Programs, group play for special needs children (need for trained staff)
- Running group
- Sensory bins in the gym for children
- Spin class and bikes
- Sports should be free!
- Tae Kwan Do or Martial Arts classes
- Timing of classes challenging; 7 to 8 would be better
- Tournaments
- Women-specific programs (weight-lifting)



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## Outdoor Recreation

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- Trails
- Trail maps (brochure for community)
- Trail signs
- Bike park/trails axe handle
- Trails to 4 worldly rapids to see
- Turn “dead spaces” into high level extreme sports ie/ Whistler style bike trails
- More walking/biking trails (by river, etc)
- New park and water park
- Improve maintenance of the parks (summer students?)
- Trails are great! Continue winter access to trails
- Biathlon programs (skiing)
- More walking/biking trails (by river, etc)
- Canoeing
- Support dog mushing
- More outdoor activities
- Canoeing
- Biathlon programs (skiing)
- Bike park
- Mountain bike park
- Support dog mushing
- More outdoor activities
- More community-wide events

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## Cultural

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- Storytelling by Elders
- Dene games
- Hide Camp
- Traditional games in the evenings/weekends (not just handgames)
- Workshops (different ages, skills, art, carving)
- Workshops (interpersonal skills, On the Land)
- Elder available to listen
- Round Dance for each season
- Wednesday night healing circle
- Dance lessons
- Rabbit snaring
- Dene games
- Storytelling by Elders

- Hand games
- Art program

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## Youth

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- More activities for teens
- Youth activities
- Recreation activities for Teenagers (weekdays and weekends)
- Elders and Kids coming together. Interacting
- Arts and crafts at youth night
- More things at youth night (art, beading)
- There should be free swimming at youth night
- Mental health courses for youth
- More youth nights
- Food at youth night
- Workshops (acting, art, science, robotics)
- Movies bro
- More video games

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## Food

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- More gluten free food (access, cheaper....)
- Community kitchen (Healthy Families); need space to do program. Challenge: staffing
- More food options

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## Volunteerism

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- For all the sports, burnout is a big factor!
- Support the clubs and volunteer organizations that are there now. The same people volunteer
- Mentoring programs throughout all facilities

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## Mental Health

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- We need more programs on Drugs and Alcohol
- Need programs on Grieving, Suicide, Addictions

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## Museum

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- Weekend or evening hours for museum
- Museum Winter program for kids in the Museum

- Children’s science and play area in Museum

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### **Facility**

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- Outdoor rink with lights
- UPGRADE GYM: AC in summer, new mirrors, upgraded equipment
- Smoothie/drink shop by gym
- Need a space where people can get together to play games, have a coffee, TALK
- Need more benches around town
- Fix the telescope at the look out
- Benches
- Splash Park
- Playroom for toddlers
- Mountain bike park
- Water fountain at Arena
- More/new water fountains ear squash courts and in arena

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### **Snowboard Park**

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- Snowboard rope system
- Tow rope at snowboard park

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### **Library**

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- Longer library hours
- More computers at Library
- Library needs upgrades to meet needs of technology
- Library – program room

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### **Swimming**

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- More pool programming; extended hours
- Basketball
- Pool open later (adult swim)
- Swim programming for families on weekends
- Swim themed programming; more from pool

- Renewed swimming program (seems to have fallen to the wayside)
- Swim lessons for adults
- More swim lessons
- Adult lane swim time in the evenings
- Swim team! Get your lifeguards running swim team
- Junior lifeguard programming more often
- Swim team
- Pool open later (adult swim)
- More pool programming; extended hours

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### **Childcare**

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- Childcare while parents work out
- Day care
- Childcare
- Childcare for college students
- Support daycare/childcare
- Childcare while parents work out
- Drop in childcare so parents can work out

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### **Music / Arts**

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- Music and Art for children
- Dance lessons for adults
- Local music, culture society be given funding for Music events in Fort Smith
- Dance
- Paint night

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### **Reconciliation**

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- More education re: colonialism
- More info on indigenous history and culture

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### **Astronomy**

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- Astronomy class or workshop (explore the Night Sky)

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### **Internet**

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- Better and cheaper internet
- Better internet access in Town

## APPENDIX A



**Town of Fort Smith  
Community Services Master Plan  
ENGAGEMENT MATERIALS**

Week of February 17, 2020  
David Nairne + Associates Ltd.





## **Contents**

- Community Engagement Schedule (as of Feb 12, 2020)
- Focus Group Questions
- Presentation Boards
- Community Survey Summary

| Day/Time                     | Stakeholders  | Location                |
|------------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| <b>Monday February 17</b>    |   |                         |
| 12pm – 1pm                   | Mayor and Council                                     | Council Chambers        |
| 4pm – 6pm                    | Community Pop Up                                      | Kaesers Store           |
| 7pm – 8pm                    |   |                         |
| <b>Tuesday February 18</b>   |   |                         |
| 10am – 12:30pm               | Aurora College Staff and Students                     | Foyer of Aurora College |
| 1:30pm – 2:30pm              | Parks Canada  | Parks building          |
| 3pm – 4pm                    | PWK students and staff                                | PWK Foyer               |
| <b>Wednesday February 19</b> |   |                         |
| 10:30am – 12pm               | Parents and Tots/Post Natal parent group              | Rec centre foyer        |
| 12pm – 12:30pm               | JBT Student Leadership                                | JBT School              |
| 1:30pm - 2:30pm              | NTHSSA – Fort Smith Region                            | Council Chambers        |
| 5:30 to 6:30                 | Community Pop Up                                      | Arena                   |
| 7:00 pm – 8:00pm             | Recreation Advisory Board                             | Council Chambers        |
| <b>Thursday February 20</b>  |   |                         |
| 10:30am -11:30am             | Seniors' Society                                      |                         |
| 12pm – 1pm                   | Interagency Committee                                 | Council Chambers        |
| <del>1:30pm – 2:30pm</del>   | <del>Uncle Gabe's Staff and Board</del>               | <del>Uncle Gabe's</del> |
| 3:30pm – 6pm                 | Library Users – Children and Adults                   | Library                 |
|                              |   |                         |
| <b>Friday February 21</b>    |   |                         |
| 10am – 11:30am               | Community Pop Up                                      | Kaesers                 |
| 12pm – 1:15pm                | Indigenous Governments                                | Council Chambers        |
| 4pm – 6pm                    | Community Pop up                                      | Northern Store          |
| 7pm – 8pm                    | Museum  | Museum                  |
| 8pm – 10pm                   | Youth Night   | Recreation Centre Foyer |
| <b>Saturday February 22</b>  |   |                         |
| 10am – 12pm                  | Rec Centre Pop up (parents and tots and swim lessons) | Rec centre foyer        |
| 1pm – 3 pm                   | Food Bank   | Church                  |
| Total                        |   |                         |

**FOCUS GROUPS**

| <b>Audience</b>               | <b>Agenda</b>  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>Mayor and Council</b>      | <p>Overview Survey results</p> <p>Review draft Vision/ Mission</p> <p>Review schedule, materials, focus group questions, general logistics for the week</p> <p>Questions: (matrix up on screen to fill in)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What other cultural/recreation programs/services do you think should be offered?</li> <li>• Who / what organization should take the lead?</li> <li>• How can the Town help? (ie. facilities, funding proposals, assisting with events)</li> </ul>                                |
| <b>Interagency</b>            | <p>Overview Survey results</p> <p>Questions: (<i>Group work or matrix depending on size of group</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you offer any cultural/recreation programs/services?</li> <li>• Are there other programs/services that your clients have talked about?</li> <li>• Is there anything else you'd like to see offered?</li> <li>• Who / what organization should take the lead?</li> <li>• How can the Town of Fort Smith help? (ie. facilities, funding proposals, assisting with events)</li> </ul> |
| <b>Indigenous Governments</b> | <p>Overview survey results</p> <p>Questions: (flip charts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What cultural/recreation programs/services do you currently offer?</li> <li>• What are your members asking for?</li> <li>• Is there anything else you would like to offer?</li> <li>• How can the Town of Fort Smith help (ie. facilities, funding proposals, assisting with events)?</li> </ul>   |

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Museum Board and Staff</b>       | <p>Overview survey results</p> <p>Questions: (flip charts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What cultural/recreation programs/services do you currently offer?</li> <li>• What are your members asking for?</li> <li>• Is there anything else you would like to offer?</li> <li>• How can the Town of Fort Smith help? (ie. facilities, funding proposals, assisting with events)?</li> </ul> |
| <b>Senior's society</b>             | <p>Overview Survey results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions: (matrix up on screen to fill in)</li> <li>• What other cultural/recreation programs/services do you think should be offered?</li> <li>• Who / which organization should be the lead?</li> <li>• How can the Town of Fort Smith help? (ie. facilities, funding proposals, assisting with events)</li> </ul>             |
| <b>NTHSSA – Fort Smith Region</b>   | <p>Overview Survey results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What cultural/recreation programs/services do you currently offer?</li> <li>• Is there anything else you would like to offer?</li> <li>• How can the Town of Fort Smith help? ie. facilities, funding proposals, assisting with events)</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Recreation Advisory Board</b>    | <p>Overview Survey results</p> <p>Questions: (matrix up on screen to fill in)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What other cultural/recreation programs/services do you think should be offered?</li> <li>• Who / which organization should be the lead?</li> <li>• How can the Town of Fort Smith help? (ie. facilities, funding proposals, assisting with events)</li> </ul>                 |
| <b>Uncle Gabe's Staff and Board</b> | <p>Overview Survey results</p> <p>Questions: (flip chart)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What cultural/recreation programs/services do you currently offer?</li> <li>• Is there anything else you would like to offer?</li> <li>• How can the Town of Fort Smith help? ie. facilities, funding proposals, assisting with events)</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Parks</b>                        | <p>Overview Survey results</p> <p>Questions: (flip chart)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What cultural/recreation programs/services do you currently offer?</li> <li>• Is there anything else you would like to offer?</li> <li>• How can the Town of Fort Smith help? ie. facilities, funding proposals, assisting with events)</li> </ul>   |



|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>Youth</b>    | <p>Poll everywhere Question options:</p> <p><i>Why do you come to the recreation centre/what do you do here?</i></p> <p><i>Are there any other activities that you think would be fun but aren't available in town?</i></p> <p>post it notes – see the pop-up board below... what should the town do more of, do less of, stop doing – for rec and culture</p> |
| <b>Children</b> | <p>Student leadership – grade 4 to 6 students – half an hour at lunch one day<br/>What should the town do more of... do less of... stop doing... - for rec and culture</p> <p>After school at library -<br/>Mapping their community</p>  |



# THE TOWN OF FORT SMITH COMMUNITY SERVICES MASTER PLAN

The Community Services Master Plan will identify community needs and priorities related to recreation, arts and culture services and recommend how these services should be addressed and delivered in the next 10 years.

The goal of the Plan is to provide Mayor and Council, Administration and the Advisory Boards with strategic direction for service provision to:

- Ensure residents enjoy the highest quality of life
- Maximize the appeal of the town to potential new residents
- Draw visitors to the town



Snowboard Park



Northern Museum Life & Cultural



PW Kaeser Highschool



Ski & Nordic Club



Fort Smith Centennial Arena



Recreation Centre

## PROJECT SCHEDULE



The Community Services Master Plan is on track to be completed by April 2020!

★ We are here!

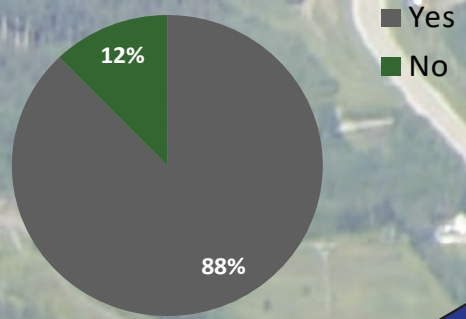


# WHAT WE HEARD FROM YOU

## RECREATION

(Community Survey)

% PARTICIPATION IN RECREATION & CULTURE ACTIVITIES



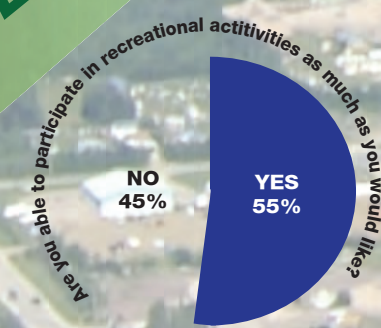
"One other thing that would be great to see would be a dog park so owners can take pets there to run around and play"

"Thank You (Mahsi Cho)"

### TOP 5 RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN THE PAST YEAR



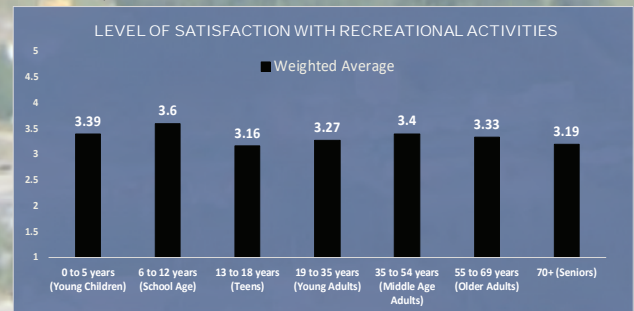
"Use a gamification approach to healthy activities - leaderboards, badges, loyalty points (prizes for high points, like a free book on active living or a free annual pass)!"



### MOST-VISITED FACILITIES



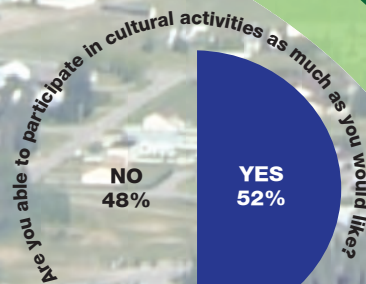
"The multi-use trail is a great resource"



1 = Very Dissatisfied    4 = Satisfied  
 2 = Dissatisfied        5 = Very Satisfied  
 3 = Neutral



# CULTURE



"We have incredible service for our small town - well done!"

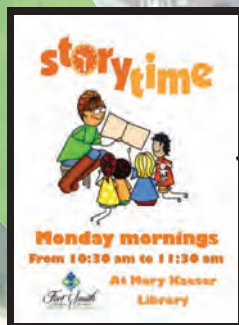
"I am not good at stopping to look at posters, but I like arts and crafts. I think Fort Smith does a lot (for a small community) to promote healthy living. Thank you and good work! Thank you for offering so many programs for kids. We have a great town"

"As youth I think that we should be able to come to the Rec centre to play sports and improve sports. I think that there should be like sport coaches for some or all sports. Maybe not for drop in but like if their were certain like practices with coaches"



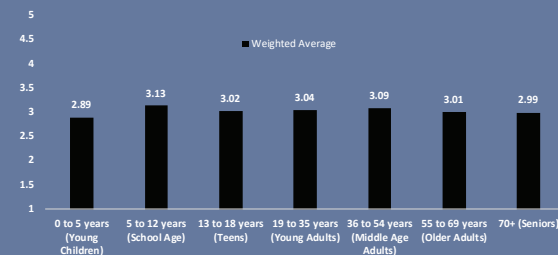
On the Land  
(hunting, fishing,  
harvesting, etc.)

## TOP 5 CULTURAL ACTIVITIES IN THE PAST YEAR



"Prioritize Indigenous cultural and educational activities. Schedule reading and storytelling and visiting activities for all ages (evenings and weekends)"

LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH CULTURAL ACTIVITIES



1 = Very Dissatisfied 4 = Satisfied  
2 = Dissatisfied 5 = Very Satisfied  
3 = Neutral



## PROGRAMS YOU SAID YOU WANT TO SEE IN FORT SMITH\*:

\*The bigger the word, the more people who mentioned wanting to see it as a program

Organized adult sport leagues

Indoor Walking Track Dance class Adult gym events  
Paint workshops Personal trainer (certified)  
Traditional Events Lifeguard training  
Group hiking Music Festival  
Ice fishing guides Ballet/Dance Community Events  
Evening classes Art class Drum Dances  
Traditional crafts Self Defense Classes Senior Activities  
Free activities Hiking/camping club Indoor playground  
Language Classes Games nights at the library  
Off leash dog park Gymnastics Canoe trips  
More for the kids Affordable Childcare  
Northern games

"I feel that there are a lot of activities for youth (which is important) but I wish there was more for adults. I am doing my best within my expertise, but I am not sure how much of an impact I am having"

# THANK YOU!

"I would like to volunteer with Cultural Activities"

"I have a lot of ideas on mobility and health issues, but am not very active. I could help with technology"

"I'll do anything! Fort Smith is worth it"

"I would like to help at anything with animals"

"I volunteered at the arena"

"Whatever needs a volunteer I am usually there"

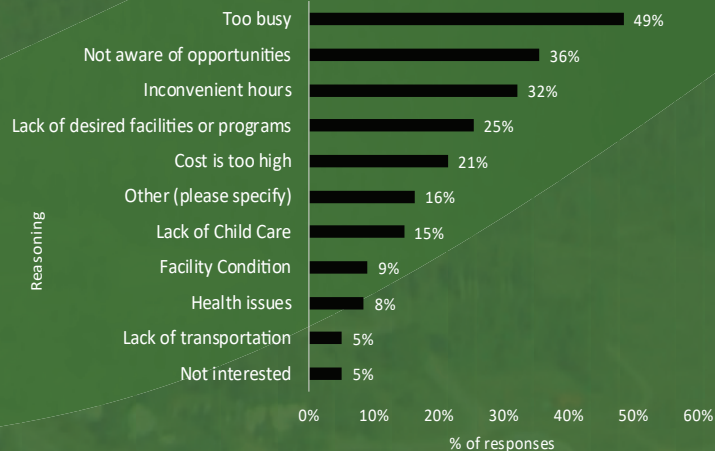
"I taught people how to fish in the river"

"I worked at the book sale and I did the book blanket at the market for the library every Sunday"

"I help coach Minor Hockey"

**45% OF YOU SAID YOU ARE OR HAVE BEEN A VOLUNTEER** **53% OF YOU SAID YOU ARE INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING**

### FACTORS PREVENTING PARTICIPATION





# WHAT CAN FORT SMITH DO TO BECOME THE HEALTHIEST COMMUNITY IN THE NWT? (Community Survey)

Free programming  
Free food classes  
AFFORDABILITY  
Subsidize healthy programs & childcare  
Affordable gym fees  
Increase funding for facilities/programs  
Make healthy food more affordable

Education on  
Collective Wellness: mental, spiritual, physical, emotional  
Coffee house events for mental health awareness  
MENTAL HEALTH  
Expand mental health services  
Encourage community wellness  
Welcome people to facilities

Gamification approach to healthy activities: leaderboards, badges, loyalty points  
Encourage participation  
INCENTIVES  
Contests & competitions  
Contests, outreach programs, trial participation  
Prizes for highest points: free book on active living, free pass to recreational facility, etc.

Build an indoor track  
Trail development & signage  
Build indoor tennis courts  
FACILITY UPGRADES  
Resurface tennis courts  
Set up a proper recycling centre  
Proper garbage disposal

"Take an Elder to Dinner" program  
Cooking competition  
FOOD  
Snack program  
Access to community garden  
Partner with grocery stores to offer discounted healthy items

Block parties in the summer  
More organized events (like the Mud Run)  
Increase arts & music activities  
PROGRAM SUGGESTIONS  
More sober events for adults  
Create a holistic strategic plan  
Workshops on healthy habits  
"Fort Smith Healthy Picks" of the week  
Free assistance & support in fitness rooms  
Community challenges: Walk & Bike to Work  
Training opportunities for coaches, coordinators, tournament organizers, etc.  
Walking or Hiking Clubs

Reduce plastic  
CLIMATE  
Climate awareness & garbage clean-up  
Town clean-up

Healthy adults = healthy kids  
Bridge young adults & kids with seniors  
Involve youth in planning  
ALL AGES  
Open a daycare  
Playground, activities and sports after 5pm/  
Family ping pong tournaments  
Get kids excited about an active life  
Childcare & active play-time at the gym

Upgrade equipment in Pete's Gym  
Personal Trainers  
MOVEMENT  
Pedestrian-only streets on Sunday (walk, bike)  
Obstacle course

Extend advertising past social media posts  
Extend gym hours  
Improve lighting & build a T-bar at ski club  
ACCESSIBILITY  
Increase wheelchair-friendly areas  
Expand website information for winter activity opportunities (gear rental)  
Keep statistics of participation & make public



# HOW SHOULD WE GET THE MESSAGE OUT ABOUT RECREATION & CULTURE ACTIVITIES IN FORT SMITH?





IN TERMS OF RECREATION & CULTURE  
PROGRAMS & SERVICES, WHAT SHOULD  
THE TOWN...

DO MORE OF...

DO LESS OF...

STOP DOING...



# TOWN OF FORT SMITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2018 – 2022



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## Executive Summary

The Economic Development Strategy for the Town of Fort Smith is set in the context of the community's vision, values and goals. We will seek to work with all possible partners to ensure success and development for everyone in our community and region. The Town of Fort Smith Vision, Values and Goals are as follows:

### Vision

“The Town of Fort Smith will work with its partners to enhance our excellent quality of life by respecting values, traditions, and healthy lifestyles. We will continue to advance as a unified, active and prosperous community.”

### Values

- We value an open, transparent, effective government.
- We value our natural environment.
- We value a safe and hospitable community for our residents and visitors.
- We value education.
- We value the use of sustainable energy sources.
- We value active living, health and wellness.
- We value effective communication.
- We value community unity through partnerships.
- We value the passion and commitment of our volunteers

### Goals

- Operate an open, transparent and effective government
- Operate the Town of Fort Smith in a fiscally responsible manner.
- Provide excellent municipal programs and services to the citizens.
- Continue as a responsible employer
- Preserve, advocate and enhance the natural environment in the Town.
- Maintain a safe community.
- Support all educational opportunities within the community.
- Be a leader in sustainable environmental practices in our community.
- Foster a strong cohesive community spirit.
- Maintain a healthy, active community
- Grow our residential and business community
- Promote Fort Smith as a desirable destination



## Economic Development Strategy Planning Process

The three main elements of economic development in Fort Smith:



The draft strategy required community feedback and input. It was handed out at the Thebacha Trade Show, emailed to all business license holders, and displayed on the main page of the Town of Fort Smith website and Facebook pages with links to the actual document. Requests for feedback were also made directly via emails and phone calls to key individuals or organizations who have been actively involved in the business community of Fort Smith.

The feedback form was provided in a way for submissions to be anonymous. Individuals providing feedback did not grant permission for the names to be used in any public document.

Feedback was provided by local business owners from a variety of business areas, former politicians, employees from government agencies and members of the municipal advisory boards. See Appendix A, for a copy of the Feedback Summary.

In creating this strategy, a literature review was completed of the following documents:

- Town of Fort Smith Community Plan, Bylaw 935
- Town of Fort Smith Community Services Master Plan
- Town of Fort Smith's Sustainability Plan
- Town of Fort Smith's Tourism Branding & Marketing Strategy
- Smith Landing First Nation Environmental Scan Report
- Smith Landing First Nation Economic Survey Results
- The Town of Hay River's Integrated Sustainability Plan
- GNWT Tourism 2020 Plan
- GNWT Economic Opportunities Strategy
- Yellowknife 2014-2019 Economic Strategy
- Community Economic Development Strategy – City of Whitehorse

## Economic Development Strategic Plan — Introduction

The role of Municipal Government in Economic Development is to influence the atmosphere of the community to make it conducive for growth. The Town of Fort Smith will focus on areas of greatest possible growth and opportunities which may include areas of manufacturing, agriculture, biomass, and harvesting. Factors such as land availability, cost of living, territorial and federal legislation as well as local and global economies will also play an important role in the Fort Smith economy.

The items and actions outlined in this document will serve as the foundation on which the Town of Fort Smith will base our Economic Development activity. The lead partners and scheduling of tasks are dependant upon the availability and approval of partners and outside organizations.

The funding for many of the projects described in this document will be solicited from the department of Industry, Tourism and Investment with the Government of the Northwest Territories. The Town of Fort Smith contribution will be funded through the Operations and Maintenance budget and funds outside of these contributions will be by request from the Town of Fort Smith reserves.

It is important to be aware that the nature of Economic Development and Community Development is ever-evolving. This document will be a living document and referenced often but remain a dynamic piece which can be updated as needs and opportunities require.

# Town of Fort Smith - Economic Development Strategic Goals

## Goal # 1

Foster and Encourage  
business and job creation  
and retention

## Goal # 2

Increase Communication  
with and within the  
Business Community

Goal #3 - Diversify the  
Local Economy

Goal #4 - Attract  
residents to live in Fort  
Smith

Goal #5 - Enhance  
Liveability

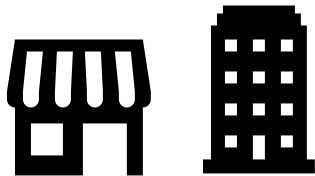
Goal #6 - Attract  
shoppers & visitors from  
the region into our  
community

Goal #7 - Champion and  
Assist with Tourism product  
development and  
packaging

Goal #8 - Increase  
number of Festivals,  
sporting events and  
conferences hosted in Fort  
Smith

Goal #9 - Work with  
regional partners to  
market Fort Smith: Hay  
River, Fort McMurray,  
Yellowknife and Edmonton)

## Goal # 1: Foster and Encourage Business and Job Creation and Retention



# Strategies

- A. Opportunities Assessment
- B. Develop Land & Business Inventory
- C. Gather input from Business Community
- D. Identify Investment Objectives & Strategies
- E. Implement Investment Strategy
- F. Strengthen Government Positions in Fort Smith



## A. Opportunities Assessment

**Purpose:** Taking stock of our current situation allows for better planning. This step helps us gather information and list the assets available to us.

**Possible Lead/Partners:** Economic Development Officer, GNWT - Industry, Tourism, and Investment.

**Activities:**

- Do an opportunities assessment of all current business license holders in Fort Smith.
- Identify gaps where services or goods are not available in Fort Smith but potentially could be.
- Compare 3-5 other regional communities of similar size.
- Business interviews: What new services/ stores would increase their spending? Are they seeking partners? Does their business need a complimentary business or service? Are they looking to retire soon? What are the plans to grow or maintain business?
- Complete a SWOT Analysis – Identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats including areas of business, manufacturing, industry and tourism.

**Inputs/Budget:**

- 20-40 hours staff time

**Outputs:** Develop a shortlist of 10-15 investment attraction opportunities

**Desired Outcomes:** Establish a clear vision of current business conditions.

**Metric:**

- List of potential opportunities/investments

**Description:** This list will identify what has worked well in Fort Smith and areas that can be targeted as opportunities to investigate. What new stores, industries, or manufacturing would benefit the Fort Smith economy? Ensure input from local business owners and government agencies to work collaboratively with the community.

**Priority:** High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## B. Develop Land and Business Inventory

Purpose: Taking stock of our current situation allows for better planning. This step helps us gather information and list the assets available to us.

Possible Lead/Partners: Economic Development Officer

### Activities:

- Identify and list land and businesses that are available for purchase as commercial/ retail space.
- Interview current land owners regarding their interest in subdividing land to use/create office/retail space. Do they have current plans for vacant land (especially those located in Town Centre zone)? What would be an incentive for them to build on that land?
- Explore options for land availability or residential development.

### Inputs/Budget:

- 20 – 60 hours staff time

Outputs: Clearly defined investment locations in Fort Smith. Up to date list of zoned and serviced commercial and industrial lands and buildings, readily accessible on the Town of Fort Smith website.

Desired Outcomes: Establish a clear vision of current business conditions.

Metric: Inventory list of available commercial/retail space, with updated information on price, size, buildings, etc.

Description: If investors or potential business owners are looking for an ideal space for their organization where do they go to seek that information? The Town of Fort Smith wants to be ready to help people find an area quickly and easily with all the information at our finger tips.

Priority: Medium - High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## C. Gather input from Business Community

**Purpose:** Taking stock of our current situation allows for better planning. This step helps us gather information and list the assets available to us.

**Possible Lead/Partners:** Economic Development Officer, Chamber of Commerce, GNWT - Industry, Tourism and Investment

**Activities:**

- Survey all business license holders to assess what are the impediments and opportunities to doing business in Fort Smith (including home occupation businesses).
- What incentives would help them to consider new investment opportunities, for example: reduced power costs.

**Inputs/Budget:**

- 40 – 80 hours staff time.

**Outputs:** List of barriers and opportunities identified by the business community.

**Desired Outcomes:** To have excellent communication with the business community. Gain practical ideas to assist with growth in the business community to ensure Fort Smith is a business-friendly community.

**Metric:** Survey report.

**Description:** By forming an integrated approach to community economic development and engaging stakeholders, we will hope to build relationships and maximize value of economic development information that can be utilized by the business community.

**Priority:** High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## D. Identify Investment Objectives and Strategies

Purpose: Identify investment objectives.

Possible Lead/Partners: Economic Development Officer, GNWT - Industry, Tourism and Investment, Chamber of Commerce.

Activities:

- Identify target sector (from Opportunities Assessment).
- Define number of new businesses and/or number of employees Fort Smith would like to attract within a set time frame.
- Define opportunities for development or expansion in the community.
- Use above information to create an investment strategy.

Inputs/Budget:

- 40 – 100 hours staff time
- \$5000 professional services for studies (potential opportunities to leverage funds)

Outputs:

- Report and Studies that evaluate potential opportunities.
- Investment Strategy created.

Desired Outcomes: To understand better the opportunities for business and potential industry development in Fort Smith, and to use that data to promote investment in Fort Smith.

Metric: Various reports, studies, report to SAO/council, investment strategy.

Description: The reports, feasibility studies and investment strategy will evaluate the opportunities for potential business and industry development in Fort Smith such as agriculture, biomass, wild game and plant harvesting, and ideas for manufacturing. The information will be available not only locally, but at various networking events. The reports and studies will be a valuable tool to economic development in Fort Smith.

Priority: High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |



## E. Implement Investment Strategy

Purpose: To assist with the development of business and growth in Fort Smith.

Possible Lead/Partners: Economic Development Officer, Tourism and Trade Advisory Board, Chamber of Commerce, GNWT – Industry, Tourism and Investment, Aurora College.

Activities:

- Speak to potential partners.
- Regular meetings to create and implement investment strategy.

Inputs/Budget:

- 100 - 200 hours staff time

Outputs: Investment Strategy

Desired Outcomes:

- Identify number of new businesses and/or number of new employees Fort Smith would like to attract over a set time.
- Strategy implementation.

Metric:

- Number of businesses licenses.
- Number of new employees/jobs.

Description: The strategy will clearly identify what are the areas for growth in the community and steps that can be taken to encourage that development. The Town will investigate the appetite for a committee to form and implement this strategy. The investment strategy will be a valuable tool for economic development in Fort Smith.

Priority: High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## F. Strengthen Government Positions in Fort Smith

**Purpose:** Identify current staffing for all government employees in Fort Smith including Federal, Territorial and Municipal. Establish strategies to strengthen positions and departments in Fort Smith.

**Possible Lead/Partners:** Senior Administration Officer, Mayor, Council, Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Officer, Aurora College, GNWT - Industry, Tourism and Investment.

**Activities:**

- Inventory current government positions.
- Advocate to maintain positions in Fort Smith.
- Research past levels and where positions went.

**Inputs/Budget:**  
TBD

**Outputs:** List of government positions and strategies to maintain them.

**Desired Outcomes:** Work with government organizations to encourage and strengthen government positions and labour force in Fort Smith.

**Metric:**

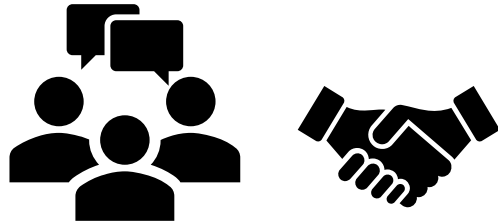
- Inventory of Government positions
- Report on past and current positions
- Number of actions taken to advocate for government jobs in Fort Smith

**Description:** The Government of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories play an important role in the economy of Fort Smith. The Town would like to investigate ways to support, maintain and/or grow the government labour force in Fort Smith. This goal attempts to ensure that the Town is actively participating in, and advocating for the continued role these employers play in the Fort Smith economy.

**Priority:** High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## Goal # 2: Increase Communication with and within the Business Community



# Strategies

- A. Assess Local Business Climate
- B. Provide Educational & Networking Opportunities
- C. Regular Communication with Business Community
- D. Support Chamber of Commerce with Shop Local Campaign

## A. Assess Local Business Climate

Purpose: To ensure that communication is open, transparent and responsive.

Possible Lead/Partners: Economic Development Officer, Chamber of Commerce, GNWT - Industry, Tourism and Investment.

Activities:

- Host "Business Walks" - Quarterly meetings to businesses asking 3-5 questions.

Inputs/Budget:

- 10-20 hours staff time, annually

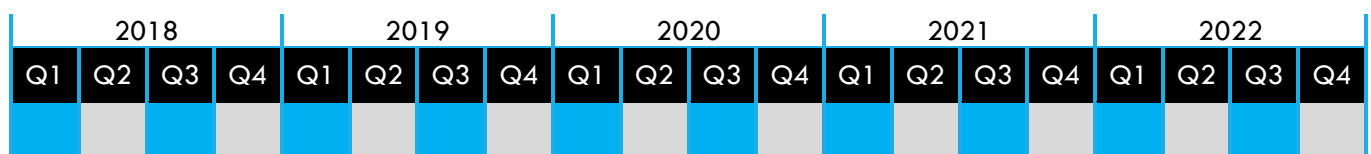
Outputs: Survey Report.

Desired Outcomes: To be informed of emerging opportunities and be responsive to business needs.

Metric: Quarterly reports based on surveys.

Description: To improve communication between the local business community and local leadership, we will reach out to local businesses. As the local business environment is varied, this initiative will assist in the collection and distribution of information to all types of businesses. It will also allow the Town of Fort Smith and local government agencies to better understand the needs of the business community.

Priority: Medium





## B. Provide Educational & Networking Opportunities

Purpose: Increased collaboration to address business opportunities and threats.

Possible Lead/Partners: Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Officer, Trade & Tourism Advisory Board, Aurora College

Activities:

- Host business education series (i.e.: Business After Hours, Business Breakfast, or Lunch & Learn, on relevant topics such as marketing, Lunch with the Mayor, social media, financing, etc.).

Inputs/Budget:

- 10-20 hours staff time

Outputs: TBD

Desired Outcomes: To have a strong, creative and growing business community.

Metric:

- Events attended/created.
- Number of interactions with Business Community.
- Business Satisfaction Survey.

Description: Supporting each other starts here, with businesses and organizations getting to know each other and making sure all organizations and businesses are supporting each other.

Priority: Medium

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## C. Regular Communication with Business Community

Purpose: To ensure consistent avenues of communication that are open, transparent, and responsive.

Possible Lead/Partners: Economic Development Officer, Chamber of Commerce

Activities:

- Town of Fort Smith representative to regularly attend Chamber of Commerce meetings.
- Designate a lead person or system to communicate the Town's capital plans and local investments with the business community, ex.: business newsletter.

Inputs/Budget:

- 20 – 40 hours staff time

Outputs:

- Improved communication of capital plans to business community.
- Focus on communicating Town expenditures as investments in the local economy.

Desired Outcomes: To have excellent communication and a productive relationship with the business community.

Metric:

- Increase in joint projects between Town of Fort Smith and Chamber of Commerce
- Quarterly e-newsletter to the business community.

Description: Regular communication is key to developing a long-term business relationship, in line with the Town of Fort Smith communication plan.

Priority: High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## D. Support Chamber of Commerce with Shop Local Campaign

**Purpose:** To ensure residents, businesses and government agencies understand the significance of buying locally and its impact on the community's economy.

**Possible Lead/Partners:** Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Officer.

**Activities:**

- Offer coordinated events, promotions and activities for local shopping by consumers and local purchasing by organizations.
- Create coordinated marketing and educational content.

**Inputs/Budget:**

- \$500 - \$1000/ year

**Outputs:** Annual Campaign and Review of internal spending of Government agencies in October/November

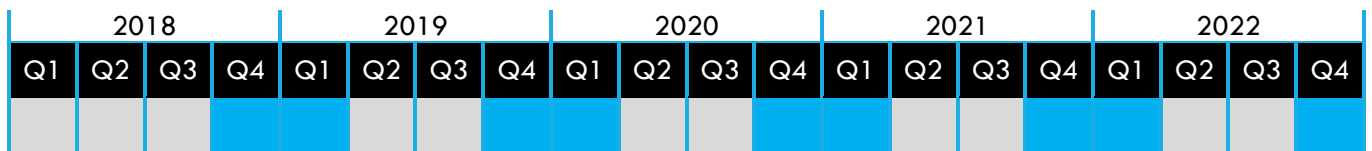
**Desired Outcomes:** To have a strong local economy based on supporting local businesses. To have residents and organizations understand the value of potentially paying a little more to have their dollars go farther in our community.

**Metric:**

- Survey businesses on effects of campaign.

**Description:** A “buy local” campaign that engages the local businesses, government agencies and citizens can be a powerful tool to help sustain small businesses. Working with the Chamber of Commerce to send out a strong message that we support and strongly encourage local spending can help to ensure the message reaches all citizens, businesses and all levels of government.

**Priority:** Medium



## Goal # 3: Diversify the Local Economy



# Strategies

- A. Create a Cooperative Planning Strategy with Community and Regional Partners
- B. Identify Areas of Economic "Leakage".
- C. Encourage Youth Entrepreneurs



## A. Create a Cooperative Planning Strategy with Community and Regional Partners

Purpose: Create local action to address common regional goals and issues, working together with local First Nations, and other regional governments.

Possible Lead/Partners: Leadership representatives of First Nations and Municipalities

### Activities:

- Investigate the possibility of a "Stronger Together" initiative through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. What are our common goals? How can we work together?
- Meet with regional governments (including other municipalities) to investigate ways to determine and work towards common goals.
- Host regular leadership meetings: Ministers, Town of Fort Smith, Fort Smith Metis Council, Smith Landing First Nation, Salt River First Nation, Thebacha Chamber of Commerce, and all major leadership, to find common ground and have a united front when voicing issues for the community and the region.

### Inputs/Budget:

TBD

### Outputs:

TBD

### Desired Outcomes:

To begin discussion on how a stronger united voice can:

- Engage businesses and other governments.
- Increase access to funding.
- Save on joint programs.
- Increase opportunities for local business development and job creation.
- Develop opportunities for coordinated planning efforts.

Metric: Cooperative Strategy Created.

Description: Many municipalities and First Nations, and even neighbouring municipalities want to collaborate but do not know where to start. There may be big differences in the communities' demographics, cultures, and how they govern themselves. The *Stronger Together* Toolkit offers step-by-step suggestions on how to bridge differences, so partners can find new ways to work together for mutual prosperity.

Priority: Medium

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## B. Identify Areas of Economic Leakage and Areas to Recapture Spending

Purpose: Strengthen the local economy by capturing more local spending.

Possible Lead/Partners: EDO, Chamber of Commerce

Activities: Conduct an Economic Leakage Study: outlining areas where money is leaving the community.

Inputs/Budget:

- \$5000 hire outside contractor (Potential opportunity to leverage funds).
- Request assistance from Statistics NWT.
- Develop action plan to recapture spending.

Outputs:

- Community Economic Spending report.
- Strategy to recapture spending.

Desired Outcomes: To maximize local spending.

Metric:

- Report outlining specific spending habits of local households, businesses & government agencies.
- Percentage or amount of money spent outside of Fort Smith.
- Value of economic spending by households, businesses and government agencies.

Description: With easy access to online shopping, and large super stores available to people when they travel south, the opportunity for residents to spend money outside of Fort Smith is high. Identifying the main areas of spending outside the community will assist with creating a campaign to capture more of that spending locally.

Priority: High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## C. Encourage Youth Entrepreneurs

**Purpose:** To support initiatives that give young people a chance to explore entrepreneurship in a fun and exciting way.

**Possible Lead/Partners:** Economic Development Officer, GNWT ITI, Chamber of Commerce, Aurora College, PWK High School, JBT Elementary School, Thebacha Business Development Services.

**Activities:** Create, organize, promote and host event.

**Inputs/Budget:**

- 10-20 hours of staff time.
- \$2,500 project fund (potential opportunities to leverage funds).

**Outputs:** Assist with creating, organizing, promoting and hosting an event.

**Desired Outcomes:** To get youth thinking about business.

**Metric:**

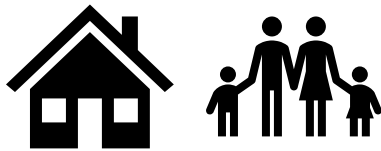
- Participation rate.
- Feedback via survey.

**Description:** Hosting an event of well recognized programs such as “Junior Achievement” and “Lemonade Day” or participating in a youth business challenge, introduces the concept of entrepreneurship at a young age. The goal is to get youth thinking about business.

**Priority:** High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## Goal # 4: Attract and Retain Residents to live in Fort Smith



# Strategies

- A. Identify the Current Situation
- B. Define Key Target Markets, Messaging & Strategy
- C. Develop a Marketing Strategy
- D. Increase Housing Options
- E. Create a Resident Ambassador Program



## A. Identify the Current Situation

**Purpose:** Taking stock of our current housing situation allows for better planning. This step helps us gather information and list the assets available to us.

**Possible Lead/Partners:** Economic Development Officer.

**Activities:** Assess and inventory available housing, rental properties, land and future housing possibilities.

**Inputs/Budget:**

- 40 - 60 hours staff time.

**Outputs:**

- Up to date list of available houses for sale and rent, with prices.
- Up to date list of available lots for sale, with prices.

**Desired Outcomes:** Establish clear outlook of housing market.

**Metric:**

- List and descriptions of available lots, houses, rental properties and costs, readily accessible on the Town of Fort Smith website

**Description:** Attracting new employees and businesses to our community means having available and affordable housing for them. Without a strong real estate presence, it is important to have a good understanding of the housing market to asses where and how we can grow.

**Priority:** High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## B. Define Target Markets

**Purpose:** To attract and retain residents who will contribute to the economic growth and diversification of Fort Smith.

**Possible Lead/Partners:** Economic Development Officer, GNWT – Industry, Tourism and Investment, Chamber of Commerce, Aurora College.

**Activities:**

- Identify current and targeted demographics – Age, gender, income, education, occupation.
- Identify employers hiring in Fort Smith and the NWT.
- Compare cost of living to other NWT communities.
- Identify Fort Smith's "story" or "brand" and how it fits with the type of people who are currently living in Fort Smith and how it can help identify a target market for Fort Smith.

**Inputs/Budget:**

- 40 -60 hrs of staff time

**Outputs:**

- Report defining target markets

**Desired Outcomes:** To define Fort Smith's story or brand and ideal target markets.

**Metric:**

- Report identifying key markets

**Description:** The Town of Fort Smith has an important role to play in the promotion of Fort Smith as a community in which to live, work and play. Fort Smith offers a variety of recreational, educational, cultural and economic opportunities and we will seek to promote these attributes to grow our population. Fort Smith also looks to retain the current population such as university aged students returning from school, and retiring long-term workers.

**Priority:** Medium

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## C. Develop Marketing Strategy

Purpose: To attract residents who will contribute to the economic growth and diversification of Fort Smith

Possible Lead/Partners: Economic Development Officer, Tourism and Trade Advisory Board, Aurora College, Thebacha Chamber of Commerce.

Activities:

- Create marketing strategy.

Inputs/Budget:

- 40 – 100 hours staff time.
- \$2500 for professional photos (Possibility to leverage funds).
- \$2500 for printed material (Possibility to leverage funds).

Outputs:

- Community Marketing Strategy.

Desired Outcomes: To create a marketing strategy with a strong focus on the digital component that targets key markets (mine workers, young families, seniors, etc.) to come and visit, live, work and play in Fort Smith!

Metric:

- Market Strategy
- Number of residents
- Number of houses
- Digital Metrics report

Description: A marketing strategy is important to provide focus and step-by-step actions on the how and why of attracting new people into our community. An important aspect to the Marketing Plan will be marketing the community digitally. With so many people on computers, phones and tablets as well as social media sites, digital marketing is key to Fort Smith's success in attracting people to live, work and play.

Priority: Medium

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## D. Increase Housing Options

Purpose: Ensure growth through available and affordable housing.

Possible Lead/Partners: Sustainable Development Advisory Board, Director of Municipal Services, Economic Development Officer, Salt River First Nation, Smith Landing First Nation, Fort Smith Metis Council, Aurora College, Local developers.

Activities:

- Work with landowners to develop affordable housing through programs and policies.
- Location and design guidelines for different housing types and densities
- An affordable housing strategy
- A public information campaign about building requirements for secondary suites, and the benefits of infill housing and residential intensification

Inputs/Budget:

- 20 – 40 hours staff time.

Outputs:

- TBD

Desired Outcomes: Strong and affordable housing market in Fort Smith.

Metric:

- Number of homes available for rent or sale.

Description: A key factor in a good quality of life, is living in good neighbourhoods with affordable housing. Attracting new employees and businesses to our community means having housing that suits their needs whether they are seniors, young professionals, or families.

Priority: High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |



## E. Create a Resident Ambassador Program

Purpose: Improve visitor experience with exceptional service and knowledge of community.

Possible Lead/Partners: Chamber of Commerce, GNWT- Industry, Tourism and Investment, Thebacha Chamber of Commerce, Aurora College, Economic Development Officer.

### Activities:

- Train community members as Community Ambassadors with the Northern Most Host program especially:
  - All front-line Town of Fort Smith staff.
  - Front line retail staff as hosts of the community.
  - All employees / service providers involved in the Tourism sector.

### Inputs/Budget:

- 40-80 hours staff time.

### Outputs:

- Organize training events.

Desired Outcomes: Fort Smith business and tourism sectors recognized for their outstanding service and attention to their clients. Fort Smith recognized as a great place to live and do business.

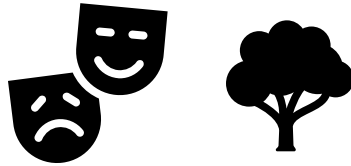
Metric: Number of employees that have completed the program.

Description: Fort Smith is already viewed as a welcoming community. The Northern Most Host program provides them with a few more tools and broader understanding of the types of visitors that come to Fort Smith and why it is important to exceed their expectations.

Priority: Medium - High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## Goal # 5: Enhance Liveability



# Strategies

- A. Identify Areas Needing Improvement
- B. Strengthen Public Engagement
- C. Community Improvement Plan/Guidelines
- D. Create Municipal Funding Program
- E. Identify Transportation Concerns
- F. Grow Culture and Arts Sector

## A. Identify Areas Needing Improvement

Purpose: To attract residents who will contribute to economic growth and diversification.

Possible Lead/Partners: Economic Development Officer, Trade & Tourism Advisory Board, Thebacha Chamber of Commerce, GNWT ITI, Wood Buffalo National Park, Fort Smith Seniors Society, Smith Landing First Nation, Salt River First Nation, Fort Smith Metis Council, Aurora College, Northwestern Air Lease

Activities:

- Community Survey: Identify community infrastructure (buildings, commercial, residential) that need improvement or are lacking in some capacity.

Inputs/Budget:

- 60 – 100 hours staff time.

Outputs:

- Community Survey.
- Survey Report.

Desired Outcomes: To ensure that current residents and visitors' first and/or current impressions of Fort Smith are extremely positive.

Metric:

- Survey report.

Description:

The economic infrastructure of Fort Smith can be defined as the facilities and infrastructure of the community that make business activity possible. This goal attempts to ensure that the Town is actively participating in, and advocating for the continued development of this infrastructure.

Priority: High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## B. Strengthen Public Engagement

**Purpose:** To attract residents who will contribute to economic growth and diversification.

**Possible Lead/Partners:** Economic Development Officer, Trade & Tourism Advisory Board, Thebacha Chamber of Commerce, GNWT ITI, Wood Buffalo National Park, Fort Smith Seniors Society, Smith Landing First Nation, Salt River First Nation, Fort Smith Metis Council, Aurora College, Northwestern Air Lease.

**Activities:**

- Develop an internal communications plan (Town of Fort Smith – How to communicate internally and to the public).
- Identify external communication options – How local news is reported directly to the citizens of Fort Smith focusing on the people, places and things that make Fort Smith unique and special.

**Inputs/Budget:**

- TBD

**Outputs:**

- Communications Strategy.

**Desired Outcomes:** To ensure all citizens feel informed about policies, bylaws and decisions being made and have the opportunity and a forum to voice their opinions.

**Metric:**

- Communications Strategy.
- Communication Report.

**Description:** When residents become involved and informed with community decision making, they begin to see themselves as having an influence to create the kind of community they want to live in, and to shape and change the future. The residents of Fort Smith are key to informing policy makers on what is important to them and through engagement people often are more supportive and help strengthen decisions and policies that have been made.

**Priority:** Medium

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |



## C. Create a Community Improvement Plan/Program

Purpose: To stimulate investment in the downtown core.

Possible Lead/Partners: Economic Development Officer, Senior Administrative Officer, Director of Municipal Services, Sustainable Advisory Board, Trade and Tourism Advisory Board, Chamber of Commerce, GNWT Industry, Tourism and Investment.

Activities:

- Create overall plan for downtown development.

Inputs/Budget:

- 100 – 150 hours staff time

Outputs:

- Set framework for areas identified in need of revitalization, redevelopment or renewal in Fort Smith's downtown core. Specify areas that would be most beneficial for economic development.

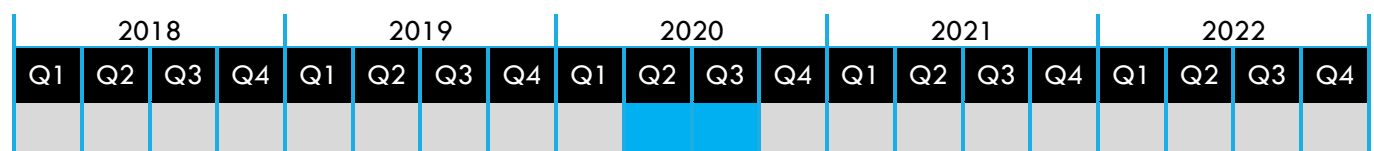
Desired Outcomes:

- To have a visually pleasing and compact Town Centre that reflects Fort Smith's scenic small-town character.
- To reduce the number of vacant lots and buildings in the Town Centre zone.

Metric: Community Improvement Program (CIP).

- Description: The character and quality of the community is partially reflected in the aesthetic appeal of the main street and downtown area. The buildings and landscape which front onto McDougal Road and the river side trails are key components to the character of Fort Smith. A Community Improvement Program is intended to improve the appearance of commercial and residential buildings to improve the overall aesthetics and character of the community. Development in the Town Centre contributes to its role as the Town's central hub of activity.

Priority: High



## D. Create Municipal Funding Program

Purpose: To stimulate investment in the downtown core.

Possible Lead/Partners: Economic Development Officer, SAO, Director of Municipal Services, Sustainable Advisory Board, Trade and Tourism Advisory Board, Chamber of Commerce.

Activities:

- Create a funding program for businesses to improve the look of their business, based on Community Improvement Plan, for example: landscaping, building façade, building signage, etc.

Inputs/Budget:

- \$10,000 – \$30,000 (potential opportunity to leverage funds).

Outputs:

- Municipal Funding Programs.

Desired Outcomes: Increase attention to areas in the downtown core in need of repair or redevelopment. Private sector and government investment in the downtown core.

Metric: Stimulate private sector investments through municipal incentives.

Description:

The format of a municipal funding program could consist of either a grant or loan for a portion of the defined eligible costs. Eligible improvements could include restoration of architectural details, window and door repair, building façade, entryway modifications, lighting, sign improvements, landscaping etc.

Priority: High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## E. Identify Transportation Concerns

**Purpose:** To facilitate easy access for travel to northern and southern destinations and present Fort Smith as a desirable and affordable place to live.

**Possible Lead/Partners:** Economic Development Officer, GNWT ITI, Chamber of Commerce, Northwestern Air Lease, transportation companies.

**Activities:**

- Identify opportunities for reduced rate travel.

**Inputs/Budget:**

- 20 – 40 hours staff time.

**Outputs:** Report on travel and transportation options.

**Desired Outcomes:** Begin the discussion of reduced rate travel that supports local businesses while benefitting residents.

**Metric:** Reduced Rate Travel options identified.

**Description:** Fort Smith's location as a remote northern community means that transportation in and out of the community involves long drives to reach southern destinations or flights, which are more expensive because of the smaller market. Are there creative ways to reduce costs of travel while still supporting important transport businesses?

**Priority:** High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## F. Grow Culture and Arts Sector

**Purpose:** To support the arts and cultural sector and create a venue for fun, dynamic arts and entertainment.

**Possible Lead/Partners:** Smith's Landing First Nation, Salt River First Nation, Fort Smith Metis Council, Northern Life Museum & Cultural Centre, Advisory Board on Culture, Trade and Tourism Advisory Board, Aurora College, Economic Development Officer

**Activities:**

- Identify: user groups, costs, community support.

**Inputs/Budget:**

- TBD

**Outputs:**

- Admin Report.
- "What was heard" discussion report.

**Desired Outcomes:** To have a thriving arts and culture sector which is fundamental to a diverse, interesting and vibrant community.

**Metric:**

- Report NWT Arts Facility – user groups, plans, funding options.
- Number of arts performances, workshops, and training programs.

**Description:**

Focusing a sector of the Fort Smith downtown area to the Arts will bring people together and foster a sense of community. The Town will seek to work with everyone to create a place where people can gather, learn and have fun.

**Priority:** High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |



## Goal # 6: Attract Shoppers and Visitors from the Region into our Community



# Strategies

A. Direct Marketing Campaign

B. Improve Visitor Experience

## A. Direct Marketing Campaign

Purpose: Capture a larger segment of the regional tourist market

Possible Lead/Partners: Economic Development Officer, Chamber of Commerce, Trade and Tourism Advisory Board, Wood Buffalo National Park, Northwestern Air Lease.

### Activities:

- Identify key marketing strategies (activities, events, festivals, etc.) for each region/community.
- Employ marketing strategy for Yellowknife, Fort McMurray, Fort Chipewyan, Fort Resolution, Hay River, High Level and Peace River regarding events, festivals, and seasonal shopping.
- Test use of shopping passport, discount coupons and coupon booklets.

### Inputs/Budget:

- 50 – 80 hours staff time.

### Outputs:

- Visitor Surveys.
- Direct Marketing Strategy.

Desired Outcomes: Develop a clearly defined market strategy with a heavy emphasis on digital marketing

### Metric:

- Number of regional visitors – measured by Visitor Information Centre, hotels, coupons.

Description: The largest number of visitors to Fort Smith are from Alberta and the NWT. How can Fort Smith attract a larger segment of this market? What activities or experiences do they look for? What can Fort Smith offer that others in our region can't get or do in their own community? Why should they make the trip?

Priority: High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## B. Improve Visitor Experience

**Purpose:** To attract visitors and residents by providing an excellent customer experience in all aspects of business and tourism.

**Possible Lead/Partners:** Economic Development Officer, GNWT ITI, Wood Buffalo National Park, Northwestern Air Lease, Thebacha Chamber of Commerce

**Activities:**

- Identify points of contact for visitors.
- Identify if improvements are needed through visitor surveys at key areas i.e.: airport, restaurants, VIC, hotels, museum, rec. centre, trails, etc.
- Ensure strong customer service skills through the Northern Most Host program.
- Provide support for front-line staff to become familiar with local tourism products.
- Review existing models of service delivery at tourism related organizations and support service improvements.

**Inputs/Budget:**

- 60 – 80 hours staff time.
- Printed materials - \$1500.

**Outputs:** Visitor satisfaction survey.

**Desired Outcomes:** Fort Smith tourism and service sector exceed visitor expectations.

**Metric:**

- Visitor satisfaction survey.
- Number of participants in Northern Most Host.

**Description:** Word of mouth advertising is still the most valuable type of advertising, especially in the digital age. People are considerably more likely to listen to the advice of a friend than that of an advertisement. Great attention to customer experience and customer service will create a large group of people championing our community. How do we want people to feel when they think of our community?

**Priority:** High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## Goal # 7: Champion and Assist with Tourism Product Development



# Strategies

- A. Champion New Development
- B. Identify the Barriers to Tourism Development
- C. Encourage Cultural Aspects to Tourism Development



## A. Champion New Development

Purpose: Grow tourism opportunities in Fort Smith.

Possible Lead/Partners: GNWT ITI, Wood Buffalo National Park, Fort Smith Metis Council, Smith's Landing First Nation, Salt River First Nation, Economic Development Officer, Aurora College, Chamber of Commerce, Northwestern Air Lease.

Activities:

- Research protentional areas of growth in tourism.
- Identify opportunities for tourism operators and First Nations organizations to partner with museums, NWT Territorial Parks and Parks Canada to deliver guided tours and programs.
- Encourage the development of tours that showcase the culture, land, people and services in the region.

Inputs/Budget:

60 – 100 hours staff time.

Outputs:

- TBD

Desired Outcomes: New tourism products identified.

Metric:

- New Tourism Product opportunities outlined.
- Strategies to develop new tourism products.

Description: The Fort Smith tourism sector has great potential and opportunities to grow over the next five years with Baby Boomers moving into retirement and more youth travelling globally. Both tourism sectors have an interest in active adventure and cultural experiences, ideal for Fort Smith's setting.

Priority: Medium

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## B. Identify the Barriers to Tourism Development

**Purpose:** Grow tourism opportunities in Fort Smith, especially for guides and outfitters

**Possible Lead/Partners:** GNWT ITI, Economic Development Officer, Tourism and Trade Advisory Board, Thebacha Chamber of Commerce, Wood Buffalo National Park, Northwestern Air Lease.

**Activities:** Work with local tourism organizations, individuals and tourism agencies to review tourism product/operator process.

**Inputs/Budget:**

- 40 – 60 hours staff time.

**Outputs:**

- Report for Town of Fort Smith administration.

**Desired Outcomes:** Fort Smith is a popular tourism destination with a choice of guides and outfitters who provide high quality experiences

**Metric:**

- Report of barriers and possible solutions identified.

**Description:** Licensed tourism operators and local guides are extremely limited in Fort Smith. Identifying some of the barriers associated will help encourage operators to develop new tourism opportunities. What are the associated costs and licencing requirements to operate a tourism business in Fort Smith? Are the steps challenging to navigate? Can the Town of Fort Smith or other local organizations help to facilitate the process?

**Priority:** High (as it relates to guides and outfitters)

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## C. Encourage Cultural Aspects of Tourism Products

Purpose: Grow tourism opportunities in Fort Smith

Possible Lead/Partners: Smith Landing First Nation, Salt River First Nation, Fort Smith Metis Council, Cree Language Program, Chamber of Commerce, Northern Life Museum & Cultural Centre, Wood Buffalo National Park, GNWT ITI, Trade and Tourism Advisory Board, Economic Development Officer, Northwestern Air Lease.

Activities: Work with local First Nations and tourism/business operators to respectfully incorporate traditional languages into their operations. Investigate other opportunities to respectfully incorporate local culture into business/tourist experiences.

Inputs/Budget: TBD

Outputs: Report to Town of Fort Smith administration.

Desired Outcomes: Increase in the development, expansion, celebration and support of authentic Indigenous tourism experiences.

Metric: Report outlining unique cultural components that can be a part of Fort Smith business and Tourism products or experiences.

Description: Tourists are seeking authentic cultural experiences. Cultural events such as hand games, drumming, jigging, and hide tanning workshops are often held during large events and celebrations that bring people together. When visitors are invited to take part in these cultural events they experience and appreciate the rich history, traditions and people of the area. Whether it is exposure to some of the traditional languages or a fully immersed experience, visitors value first hand interaction with local culture.

Priority: High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## Goal # 8: Increase number of Festivals, Sporting Events and Conferences held in Fort Smith

# Strategies



A. Create and Maintain Active Volunteer Base

B. Collaborate with Local Organizations to Host and Market Events

## A. Create/Maintain Active Volunteer Base

**Purpose:** To ensure events in Fort Smith are successful based on experienced and knowledgeable volunteers.

**Possible Lead/Partners:** Arctic Winter Games Society, Town of Fort Smith Recreation Coordinator, Economic Development Officer, Aurora College, Visitor Information Centre Staff, local sports clubs, Northern Life Museum & Cultural Centre, Northwestern Air Lease.

**Activities:**

- Attain volunteer list.
- Work with Arctic Winter Games Society in development of volunteer base in key sectors and volunteer programs.
- Provide volunteers with skills training opportunities.

**Inputs/Budget:**

- 10 – 20 hours

**Outputs:** Volunteer list

**Desired Outcomes:** Detailed database of experienced volunteers that can be called upon to ensure the organization of successful events in sports, tourism programs, conferences and festivals.

**Metric:** Detailed volunteer list outlining areas of experience and expertise.

**Description:** Volunteers are the most important resource community and event organizers have. The ability to have a list of experienced, skilled volunteers who are willing to donate their time will help ensure the success of many future community events.

**Priority:** Low

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |



## B. Collaborate with Local Organizations to Host and Market Events

Purpose: Grow tourism opportunities in Fort Smith.

Possible Lead/Partners: Tourism and Trade Advisory Board, Chamber of Commerce, GNWT ITI, Smith Landing First Nation, Salt River First Nation, Fort Smith Metis Council, Wood Buffalo National Park, Northwestern Air Lease, Aurora College, Local Festival Organizations, Local Sports Organizations, Regional sport and cultural organizations.

### Activities:

- Identify events with most potential.
- Create a one-page list of sports facilities in Fort Smith and relevant information for marketing.
- Modify and implement the Good Sports Campaign, in the Fort Smith Tourism & Marketing Plan.
- Assist in hosting sporting events, training camps, tournaments, conferences and festivals.

### Inputs/Budget:

- 60-150 hours staff time.
- \$10,000 (potential to leverage funds).

### Outputs:

- One-page facility outline brochure
- Good Sports Campaign overview

Desired Outcomes: Fort Smith recognized as a desirable location to host and attend sporting events and training, smaller conferences, and regional meetings.

### Metric:

- Number of events hosted.
- Number of participants.

### Description:

The draw for sports can be for both competition and coaching/training seminars. Having attracted enthusiasts of sports that can be played in many places, we will structure programs to expose them to the facilities in Fort Smith, as well as other unique offerings of the region.

Priority: High

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## Goal # 9: Work with Regional Partners to Market Fort Smith (Hay River, Fort McMurray, Yellowknife, Edmonton)

# Strategies



A. Market Fort Smith regionally, nationally and internationally

## A. Market Fort Smith Regionally, Nationally and Internationally

Purpose: Grow tourism in Fort Smith.

Possible Lead/Partners: Economic Development Officer, Trade & Tourism Advisory Board, Chamber of Commerce, Wood Buffalo National Park, GNWT ITI.

Activities: Update Tourism Marketing Strategy. Prioritize and implement marketing campaigns.

Inputs/Budget:

- 40 – 60 hours staff time.

Outputs: Updated tourism marketing strategy.

Desired Outcomes: To create a marketing strategy that targets regional areas, as well as national and international visitors.

Metric: Based on Visitor Survey, VIC stats, retail survey

- Number of visitors.
- Type of travel.
- Length of stay.
- Average amount of money spent.

Description: Most visitors to Fort Smith come from Alberta and the Northwest Territories, for this reason there will be a stronger emphasis on attracting regional visitors, while still leveraging marketing opportunities to international markets. International visitors to the Northwest Territories tend to stay longer and spend more money than regional visitors, so looking at opportunities to invite international audiences is crucial.

Priority: Medium

| 2018 |    |    |    | 2019 |    |    |    | 2020 |    |    |    | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |

## Appendix A: Feedback Summary Results

### DRAFT Economic Development Strategy Feedback Summary



## Overview

The DRAFT copy of the Fort Smith Economic Development Strategy was completed in April 2017, and presented to numerous groups, organizations and to the public at community events. The draft format requested community feedback and input. It was also handed out at the Thebacha Trade Show, emailed to all business license holders, and displayed on the main page of the Town of Fort Smith website and Facebook pages with links to the actual document. Requests for feedback were also made directly via emails and phone calls to key individuals or organizations who have been actively involved in the business community of Fort Smith.

The feedback form was provided in a way for submissions to be anonymous. Individuals providing feedback did not grant permission for the names to be used in any a public document.

Feedback was provided by local business owners from a variety of business areas, former politicians, employees from government agencies and members of the municipal advisory boards.

The feedback overview is outlined based on the sectors that have the highest amount of comments. The sectors include:

- General Feedback
- Events, Conferences, Festivals
- Local Buying
- Chamber of Commerce
- Tourism
- Business Development and Job Creation
- Attract Residents

## General Comments

- The plan lacks focus on where it is we are and where we can best position ourselves. Be specific, what are the actions that need to be taken.
- Each sector needs to have more specific goals: are we a town of young professionals, families, or seniors? Ask this for each sector (Business, Tourism, Residents). We need diversity but with a core majority to focus on.
- What is Fort Smith's uniqueness? What can we offer that is different from other small Northern communities? Why should someone move here?
- Add to Mayor & Council Goals – "Supporting the development of indigenous land owners – to encourage and build good relationships with First Nation Governments"
- Don't make items too broad – be specific, define the action that needs to be taken. People can get behind focused action items
- Look to work with partners who have the expertise in areas we are seeking. The Town cannot do it all nor should it. A community works best when it works together.
- Add regular leadership meetings: ministers, ToFS, Metis, SLFN, SRFN, Chamber of Commerce, and all major leadership to find common ground, have a united front when voicing issues for the



community/region, “stop the bleeding” out of the community with loss of jobs. Decipher the GNWT plan, is it for Hay River to become the regional centre for all departments?

## Events / Conferences / Festivals

- Bring teams in with funding programs such as Mackenzie Recreation Association.
- Provide a package for athletes that can be given to the host organizations to send out when sending out invitations: Where to stay, what to do, where to eat, get gas, etc.
- Town needs to allocate staff to assist with the development and advertising of hosting sporting events, and hosting participants while they are here. How much do we spend on Rec Staff payroll? Are the Town Rec staff being used to their best capacity?
- How do we attract teams from YK, HR, High Level to come to an event in Fort Smith when the more efficient use of their dollars (more competition, bigger centre for shopping opportunities, etc.) are down south? Competing with return flights YK to Calgary for \$400.
- Form a multi-sports society representing: soccer, track, cross-country running and baseball. To leverage greater volunteer power for events and training.
- Make bids to host Territorial AGM's and conferences – e.g. NWT Associations of Communities, NWT Tourism, etc.
- Conference retreats – no cell phones, just focus on meeting on a specific topic, intense focus, away from distractions, immersed in nature but still have every day luxuries. Identify facilities available and capacity.
- The Track is an unused resource: Olympic quality. How can we work with Hay River for Track & Field competitions? What kind of training programs and courses can we provide.
- Host NWT Associations of Communities, NWT Tourism, ask if we can use Aurora College for extra accommodations.
- Create a meeting/conference package outlining what Fort Smith has to offer.

## Local Buying

- Ensure all government agencies have and enforce a local purchasing policy.
- Assist local businesses to make it easy for government to shop with them.
- Review policies to ensure local businesses are at the forefront (e.g. for new development needing supplies and equipment, ask local suppliers first).
- Government departments need to review their spending budgets and see if more items can be purchased locally.

- How can local businesses and government agencies all support the local businesses? How can we support each other? (Business to business).

## Chamber of Commerce

- Chamber needs support from the Town and the Chamber needs to support all businesses and prioritize what is best for Fort Smith
- Facilitate a stronger Chamber, ask NWT Chamber to come and help develop policies and direction, and set goals with the Chamber. Define common goals for the business community?
- Chamber (or Town) should create a commercial website and/or FB page where local businesses can post flyers, sales, ads, etc. Also include a site or page that keeps business owners up to date on community initiatives, training, youth business, etc. (as opposed to quarterly meetings).
- Work with Chamber to host a Town of Fort Smith AGM, State of Address from the Mayor. Open to the public and allows all citizens to have their say with an open mic.

## Tourism

- Fund a position like a Tourist Broker, who will create and sell packages and tourism products, take bookings and make necessary arrangements for clients amongst inter-agencies.
- Signage: Raise profile of Fort Smith along the highway, especially at Buffalo Junction. Have one or two large signs somewhere between Edmonton and 60<sup>th</sup> parallel.
- Work with Hay River to promote a trip/itinerary from Hay River to Fort Smith, which would benefit both communities.
- Promote highway upgrades. Could tie this in with a homecoming event. "Drive to Fort Smith on the beautiful new highway!"
- Work with Alberta Tourism to promote Fort Smith
- Aurora / Northern Lights Tours – Fort Smith is in the centre of the Auroral Arc. We have the clearest nights in the world of aurora destinations.
- Whooping Crane Visitation – WBNP was willing to do it, how can we begin to proceed with that possibility and with proper consultation.
- Use of coupons is a way to measure visitors and sales
- Analyze current tourism events/festivals for SWOT – how can we nurture current products before we develop new ones.
- Artist workshops – create a list of artists willing and able to provide half-day or full day workshops to visitors – can be an addition to a current festival

- Work with Parks Canada and ITI to develop itinerary packages for travellers
- What are some strategies to encourage more knowledgeable tourism champions in the community? Can we do more during Tourism Week?
- Develop a strategy for destination awareness
- Develop some trip planning tools that make it easier for people to get here, take some of the work out of arranging your trip if itineraries are already planned.
- Tourism needs regional representation
- Northern Most Host – Currently run by ITI, need to ensure it is offered at convenient times for businesses. ToFS could ensure its staff have completed the course.
- Truck Rodeo with Aurora College Heavy Equipment Operators
- Road Rally
- Spa using Slave River Clay

## Business Development and Job Creation

- Need a newspaper source providing information for Fort Smith or something equally or more efficient at communicating issues that face the community.
- GNWT MACA School of Community Government – Should be attached to Aurora College. Currently the program is very limited
- Biomass – combine fire prevention with biomass harvesting. Create a Forest Management Strategy that could be run by a local business versus GNWT, to encourage long term efforts for the program
- Have a portable saw mill for a micro business to process wood on site as it is cut
- Morel mushroom picking
- Climate Change should be on everyone's mind. Install electric charging spots so residents could run electric cars - ToFS should buy an electric car
- Aurora College programming – programs for tourism guiding, interpretation and outfitting – working with WBNP and ITI – could add these as courses to the ENRTP course. It opens up job options.
- Lobby government and NTPC to supply reasonable cost power to the businesses and residences in Fort Smith
- Include partner champions with areas of responsibility, implementation strategies and deadlines.
- Aurora College could be the Centre for Excellence for Water. Territory wide program for water quality, water governance, water use and water resources/ecology. (May need to choose between an NWT Arts Centre or NWT Water Centre to invest in).
- Aurora College only outsource of income, increase number of college students from 300 to 600
- College needs to remain the regional centre. Who is the community voice for advising the College?
- Bring in foreign workers who are already trained (outside money coming in)
- Sell Leather from hides taken by local hunters
- Water from across the river that is pure and can be sent south?
- Drift wood furniture, or drift wood processed and sent south

- Barge items to Fort Chip?
- Diamond Willow – collect and sell, or make furniture to sell
- Bulk food supply of hard to get items – partner with trucking company
- More funding for Adult Education opportunities – look at demographics in a realistic way to decipher needs of the community

## Attract Residents

- Focus on attracting professionals who have clients that live in all parts of the country or professionals who can do their job and live anywhere: Mining, engineering, technology based. They will be attracted by low cost of living, good lifestyle, and good services.
- GNWT staffing: Ensure employees designated to live in Fort Smith are living in Fort Smith.
- Need permanent doctors
- Need a bus for transporting seniors
- Need good low-cost housing
- Need more rental accommodations – condo style with good security, bottom level commercial – close to downtown
- People would use electricity for heat, a sustainable fuel, if affordable. We need to do our share to market it positively.
- Need 500 – 1000 more people to build a new business that is sustainable
- New residents welcome package: This should include new babies, find out how they heard about Fort Smith.

## Town of Fort Smith Community and Recreation Centre Stats

Apr-2023

| Fort Smith Commuity and Recreation Centre   | March Sessions          | March Participants    | April Sessions          | April Participants   |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Squash                                      | Operational for 31 days | 39                    | Operational for 28 days | 27                   |
| Pete's Gym                                  | Operational for 31 days | 1186                  | Operational for 28 days | 963                  |
| Senior Lane Swim                            | 9 of 13                 | 49                    | 6 of 8                  | 39                   |
| Public Swim                                 | 14 of 16                | 243                   | 8 of 8                  | 103                  |
| Family Swim                                 | No Family Swims         | -                     | No Family Swims         | -                    |
| Public Lane Swim                            | 16 of 22                | 29                    | 8 of 10                 | 28                   |
| Parents & Tots Swim                         | 9 of 13                 | 11 Parents; 10 Tots   | 6 of 8                  | 9 Parents; 11 Tots   |
| Daycare Swim                                | 5 of 9                  | 59                    | 5 of 7                  | 70                   |
| Summer Camp Swim                            | -                       | -                     | -                       | -                    |
| Lifeguard Training                          | -                       | -                     | -                       | -                    |
| ASCP Swim                                   | 4                       | 118                   | 5 of 6                  | 136                  |
| JBT Swim                                    | -                       | -                     | -                       | -                    |
| PWK Swim                                    | -                       | -                     | -                       | -                    |
| Pool Rentals                                | No Pool Rentals         | -                     | No Pool Rentals         | -                    |
| Swim Lessons                                | No Swimming Lessons     | -                     | No Swimming Lessons     | -                    |
| Frolics: Kids Carnival, Youth Outdoor Games | 2                       | 456                   | -                       | -                    |
| Fort Smith Soccer Club                      | 4                       | 162                   | over for indoor season  | 0                    |
| Drop-in Soccer                              | 4                       | 73                    | 3                       | 27                   |
| Drop-in Volleyball                          | 6                       | 104                   | 4                       | 51                   |
| Drop-in Badminton                           | 3 of 4                  | 12                    | 5                       | 11                   |
| Drop-in Sports                              | 13 of 14                | 163                   | 10                      | 71                   |
| Drop-in Basketball                          | 3                       | 36                    | 3                       | 34                   |
| Family Drop-in Sports                       | 4                       | 20                    | 5                       | 29                   |
| Parents & Tots Gym                          | 27                      | 146 Parents; 414 Tots | 15                      | 61 Parents; 128 Tots |
| Gym Rentals                                 | 18 of 24                | 409                   | 18 of 30                | 351                  |
| Pickleball                                  | 9 of 10                 | 107                   | 7 of 11                 | 49                   |
| Coding Camp Spring Break (Hilary Turko)     | -                       | -                     | 8                       | 76                   |
| Youth Night                                 | 9                       | 162                   | 8                       | 162                  |
| Boot Camp (fitness room)                    | -                       | -                     | -                       | -                    |
| Zumba (fitness room)                        | 9                       | 64                    | 4                       | 40                   |
| PWK Fire Drill                              | -                       | -                     | -                       | -                    |
| Archery                                     | 12                      | 24                    | 6                       | 12                   |
| Girl Guides (curling Lounge)                | 12                      | 131                   | 6                       | 74                   |

Comments: .

| Fort Smith Centennial Arena  | March Sessions | March Participants       | April Sessions        | April Participants |
|------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Rec Hockey                   | 7              | 391 on-ice, 294 off-ice  | Arena Closed for Year |                    |
| Womens Hockey                | 5              | 109 on-ice, 56 off-ice   |                       |                    |
| Old Timers Hockey            | 8              | 144 on-ice, 19 off-ice   |                       |                    |
| Public Skate                 | 6              | 39 on-ice, 16 off-ice    |                       |                    |
| Family Skate                 | 4              | 8 on-ice, 2 off-ice      |                       |                    |
| Rentals                      | 7              | 44 on-ice, 23 off-ice    |                       |                    |
| Minor Hockey                 | 45             | 1085 on-ice, 858 off-ice |                       |                    |
| Figure Skating               | 56             | 695 on-ice, 993 off-ice  |                       |                    |
| Youth Shiny                  | 2              | 8 on-ice, 20 off-ice     |                       |                    |
| Parents N Tots               | 2              | 5 on-ice, 5 off-ice      |                       |                    |
| Minor Hockey Tournagment U13 | 7              | 297 on-ice, 206 off-ice  |                       |                    |
| Frolics Hockey Tournament    | 10             | 173 on-ice, 181 off-ice  |                       |                    |
| Skating Carnival             | 6              | 200 on-ice, 466 off-ice  |                       |                    |
| Mixed Final Tournament       | 13             | 295 on-ice, 175 off-ice  |                       |                    |
| Trade Show                   | -              | -                        | 3                     | approx 860         |

Comments: .

| Fort Smith Child Care | March Sessions              | March Participants              | April Sessions              | April Participants              |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ASCP                  | 23                          | 550/690; 43 Drop-ins(HD)        | 18                          | 457/540; 35 Drop-ins(HD)        |
| Daycare               | 23                          | 15FT, 2HT, 2FTI; 9 Drop-ins(HD) | 18                          | 16FT, 2HT, 3FTI; 2 Drop-ins(HD) |
| Comments: .           | FTI is for Full Time Infant |                                 | FTI is for Full Time Infant |                                 |

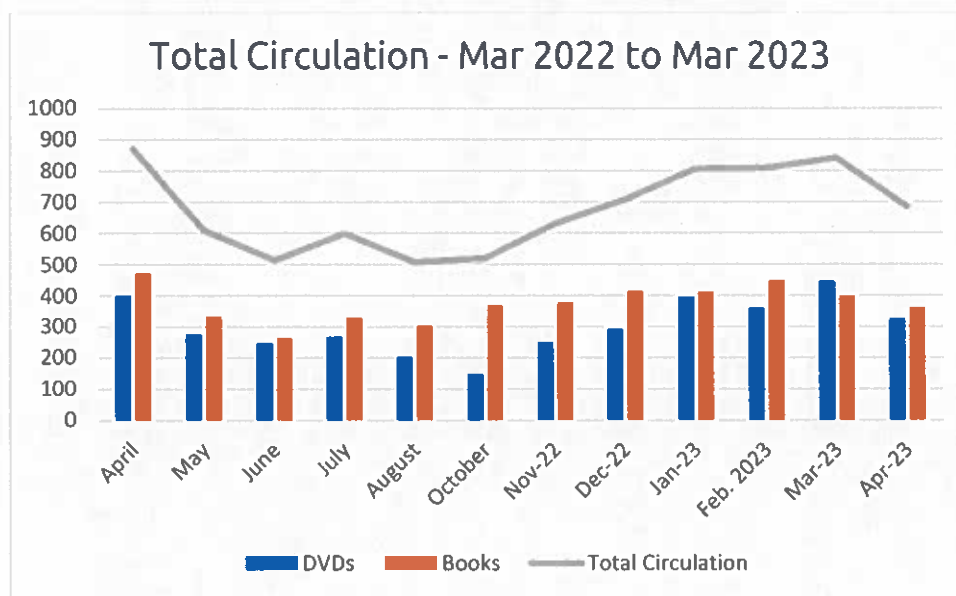
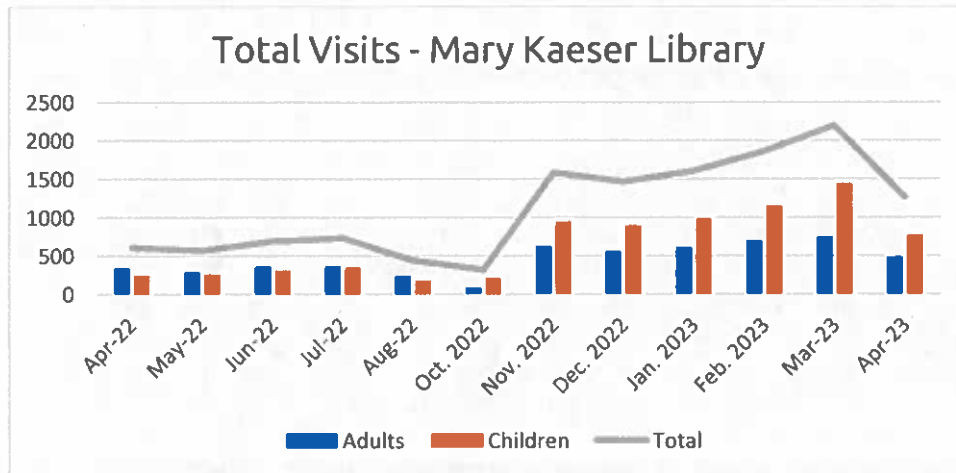


Mary Kaeser Library  
April 2022

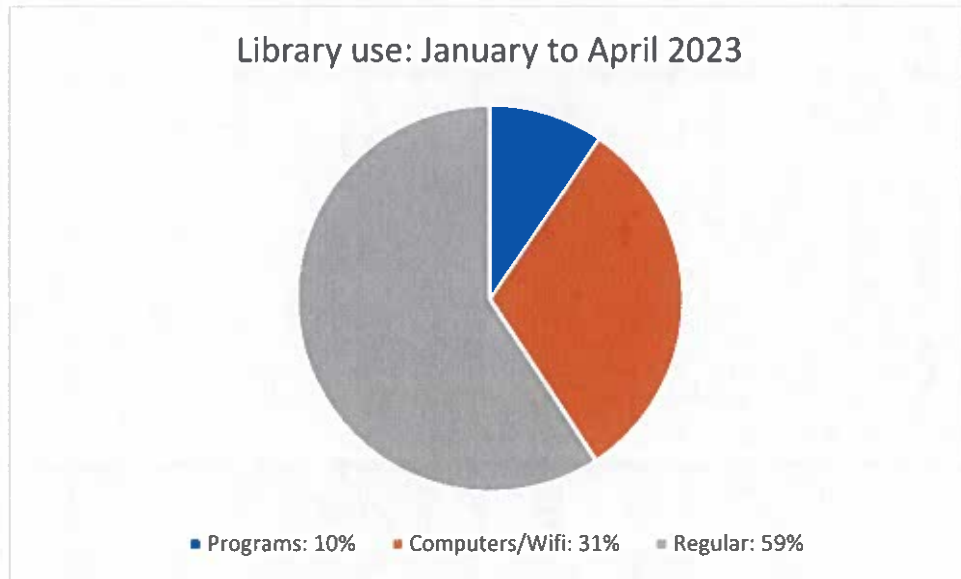
| Attendance           | 1      | 2   | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7 | 8   | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15  | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23  | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29  | 30  | Total |      |
|----------------------|--------|-----|----|----|----|----|---|-----|---|----|----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-------|------|
| Adults               | 14     | 11  | 29 | 16 | 19 | 23 |   | 14  | 1 |    | 27 | 23 | 26 | 7  | 12  | 8  | 19 | 26 | 19 | 26 | 33 | 6  | 2   | 30 | 32 | 17 | 21 | 9  | 14  | 5   |       | 489  |
| Children             | 27     | 13  | 32 | 28 | 39 | 38 |   | 20  | 3 |    | 29 | 45 | 27 | 20 | 24  | 10 | 39 | 39 | 37 | 31 | 61 | 15 | 5   | 32 | 34 | 43 | 44 | 34 | 3   | 6   |       | 778  |
| Total attendance     | 41     | 24  | 61 | 44 | 58 | 61 | 0 | 34  | 4 | 0  | 56 | 68 | 53 | 27 | 36  | 18 | 58 | 65 | 56 | 57 | 94 | 21 | 7   | 62 | 66 | 60 | 65 | 43 | 17  | 11  |       | 1267 |
| Computer/Wifi        |        |     |    |    |    |    |   |     |   |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |       |      |
| Computer Users       | 9      | 6   | 16 | 19 | 10 | 13 |   | 5   | 3 |    | 13 | 12 | 11 | 9  | 3   | 6  | 20 | 14 | 13 | 11 | 16 | 8  | 3   | 11 | 15 | 12 | 11 | 17 | 2   | 3   |       | 291  |
| Computer time (hrs)  | 13     | 6.5 | 26 | 14 | 15 | 12 |   | 5.3 | 5 |    | 13 | 17 | 13 | 11 | 5.5 | 13 | 21 | 17 | 10 | 12 | 20 | 14 | 3.8 | 12 | 14 | 13 | 14 | 30 | 0.8 | 10  |       | 357  |
| Wifi users           | 7      | 6   | 7  | 10 | 8  | 6  |   | 3   | 2 |    | 7  | 11 | 8  | 7  | 5   | 8  | 9  | 18 | 9  | 5  | 12 | 2  | 0   | 5  | 7  | 11 | 6  | 6  | 0   | 3   |       | 188  |
| Programs             |        |     |    |    |    |    |   |     |   |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |       |      |
| Friday activities    |        |     |    |    |    |    |   |     |   |    | 24 |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |    | 2  |    |    |    |     |     |       | 26   |
| Spring break         | 7 8 11 |     |    |    |    |    |   |     |   |    | 6  | 7  | 8  |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |     | 47    |      |
| Bring your own craft |        |     |    |    |    |    |   |     |   |    | 3  |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |     | 3     |      |
| Program Attendance   |        |     |    |    |    |    |   |     |   |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |     | 76    |      |
| Other                |        |     |    |    |    |    |   |     |   |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |       |      |
| Circulation stats    |        |     |    |    |    |    |   |     |   |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |     | 685   |      |
| Interlibrary Loan    |        |     |    |    |    |    |   |     |   |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |     | 8     |      |
| Requests - from MKL  |        |     |    |    |    |    |   |     |   |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |       |      |
| Interlibrary Loan    |        |     |    |    |    |    |   |     |   |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |     | 10    |      |
| Requests - from NWT  |        |     |    |    |    |    |   |     |   |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |       |      |
| Reference            | 1      | 2   | 5  |    | 4  | 6  |   | 5   |   |    | 5  | 4  |    | 1  | 1   | 2  | 4  | 2  | 4  | 3  | 1  | 3  |     | 0  | 5  | 2  | 5  | 0  | 1   | 4   | 3     | 73   |
| Operational Hrs      | 6      | 4   | 9  | 7  | 9  | 7  | 0 | 6   | 4 | 0  | 7  | 9  | 7  | 7  | 6   | 4  | 9  | 7  | 9  | 7  | 7  | 6  | 2   | 9  | 7  | 9  | 7  | 7  | 6   | 4   | 188   |      |
| Extra program hours: | 2      |     |    |    |    |    |   |     |   |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     | 190 |       |      |

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## Mary Kaeser Library April 2023 Stats



## Mary Kaeser Library April 2023 Stats



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

## MAY 2023

### 1. Business Development and Tourism Attraction

**Goal: Grow Tourism and Business Opportunities in Fort Smith**

<https://www.thefirecircle.ca/sstdw>

The inaugural South Slave Tourism Development Workshops took place on April 20-22, 2023 in Fort Smith, NWT. The event was hosted at and in partnership with the Salt River First Nation, along with the Town of Hay River and contributions from GNWT Industry Tourism & Investment.



The event was spearheaded by Town of Fort Smith economic development staff and promoted cooperatively between all organizations who hold stakes in the field of tourism in the South Slave region.

The South Slave Tourism Development Workshops started as an idea for a tourism incubator, a place to grow and support new business ideas, as well as an opportunity to bring a number of established and new businesses together from across the region to increase collaboration and develop a South Slave brand.

The success of these workshops made it clear that tourism is a vital contributor to the economic growth of our region. Everyone who attended walked away with new insights, new connections, and a deeper understanding creating a thriving tourism business.

The workshops attracted 40 people from the private business sector and government, who were eager to learn from experts in the field. Most attendees hailed from Fort Smith or Hay River but did include residents of K'at'l'odeeche and Fort Chipewyan.

The content of the workshops was developed and facilitated by Firecircle, a company with 30 years of experience helping new and existing rural and remote entrepreneurs develop sustainable business models. Facilitator Deneen Allen, the founder and CEO of Firecircle led the discussions, which revolved around topics such as destination branding, marketing, pricing, partnerships and packaging.

Local entrepreneur Brenda Dragon provided an inspiring talk on the journey she's had while creating Aurora Heat, an internationally recognized brand selling reusable beaver fur warmers that started out of the Thebacha region.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

## MAY 2023

Additionally, Chief Marketing Officer for NWT Tourism, Joel Walton, spoke about the Spectacular NWT brand and marketing in the Northwest Territories. Discussion revolved around where the South Slave fits into the NWT Tourism brand and how local businesses can be supported by the organization.

Participants were given the chance to experience tourism offerings in the Fort Smith area, such as visiting Wood Buffalo National Park, the Flat World Alpaca Farm, and doing an art project at the Northern Life Museum & Cultural Centre.

The 2.5-day workshops were developed with the goal to inspire future tourism operators to develop their business plan and engage in initiatives that showcase the untouched beauty of the South Slave region.

## 2. Fort Smith Housing Plan

**Goal: Create a community-led plan for strategic investment in housing by various levels of government, local businesses, and other organizations.**

Increasing access to affordable housing, particularly smaller rental units for singles and couples, is critical to improving the attractiveness of Fort Smith to prospective permanent and temporary residents (including remote workers and digital nomads).

The Town of Fort Smith along with Housing NWT and input from the Housing Advisory Board created a survey to supplement the current housing data we have with additional indicators from a broad spectrum of the community.

We had over 206 people complete the survey and will work with Housing NWT to analyze the data and present the information for discussion with the advisory board.

A review of current housing will involve looking the existing mix of housing, the current and projected housing demand, factors slowing the rate of new home construction, and potential strategies. The Town will then collaborate with developers, builders, and other stakeholders to accelerate construction

- Next steps will be a Fort Smith Housing Advisory board meeting to review the data. The board will then discuss and analyze goals, strategies and action items based on the survey information and housing research that has been completed.



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

## MAY 2023

### 3. Thebacha Trade Show

**Goal: To promote the Town of Fort Smith's programs, projects and departments to local residents.**

Trade shows are a key part of marketing for the Town of Fort Smith. The Thebacha Trade Show provides the Town with an opportunity to speak directly to residents about important programs, projects and Town developments. As residents learn about and share the benefits of the work the Town is doing with friends and family this helps promote the community beyond our borders.

The Thebacha Trade Show is the largest event in Fort Smith with over 860 visitors in one day. Attending the trade show allows for important opportunities for both staff and council members to network, promote their projects and staffing opportunities, and invite participation in Town events.

Attending the trade show is also one of the best places for the Town to collect data. This year we had a booth dedicated to the Fort Smith Housing Plan, talking with residents on this important issue.

The Town also had a large booth with staff representatives for the Mary Kaeser Library, the Fort Smith Daycare, Protective Services, and mayor and council. This is an important way for staff and council to educate residents about the work they do, the value of the work and why it matters in making our community a better place to live. It is also an opportunity to learn more about the needs of local community members.

Networking was a key factor in the importance of the Town's presence at the trade show by connecting with other vendors including the Town of High Level, the Mackenzie Frontier Tourist Association, the Dene National Assembly, and other key organizations in the region.

The trade show helps residents put a face (or faces) to the Town as an organization, establish rapport with people and help raise awareness about the important work that Town staff and councillors are doing.



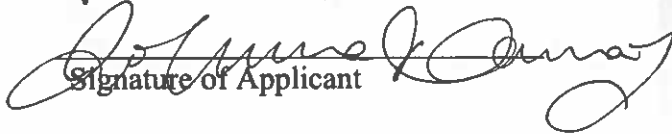
## Town of Fort Smith Expression of Interest

Date: February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023  
Name: Rohma Khurram Nawaz

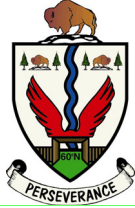
I am interested in sitting on the: Community Services Advisory Board  
Advisory Board/Working Group/Focus Group

Please provide qualifications/experience/local knowledge to aid Town Council in the review of this application.

- Extensive experience with event planning/coordination
- 1+ year experience on CSAB. Currently <sup>programming</sup> secretary.
- Experience working with many different local organizations and local governments through both work and volunteer experience.
- Knowledgeable regarding the cultural plurality in Fort Smith.
- Hoping to represent the immigrant community in Fort Smith.
- Passionate about community planning & connection building.

  
Signature of Applicant

rohma.k.nawaz@gmail.com



## **Town of Fort Smith Economic Development Advisory Board Minutes April 27, 2023**

Regular Meeting – CRC Curling Room

**Attendees:**

Alyssa Etsell  
Kevin Antoniak  
Mike Keizer  
Jim Heidema  
Pierre Emmanuel-Chaillon

**Regrets:**

Cr. Mike Couvrette  
Linda Martin  
Helena Katz

**Administration:**

Diane Seals, EDO  
Emily Prescott,  
Economic Development Assistant  
Katie Reid, Executive Secretary

**A. Call to Order**

Kevin Antoniak called the meeting to order at 12:02 pm.

**B. Approval of Agenda**

***MOTION***

**Moved by: Jim Heidema**

**Seconded by: Pierre Emmanuel-Chaillon**

**That the agenda be adopted as presented.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**C. Approval of Minutes**

***MOTION***

**Moved by: Jim Heidema**

**Seconded by: Pierre Emmanuel-Chaillon**

**That the EDAB notes of March 16, 2023 be adopted as presented.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**D. New Business**

- a. Town of Fort Smith Branding Guide – Diane gave a presentation on the new Brand Style Guide and reviewed how to be champions of the brand.

Mike would like to incorporate indigenous content/experience into the brand. He noted that when the brand was first created there were no indigenous members on EDAB, and they felt this input was important from indigenous peoples. Diane replied that signage would be in indigenous languages.

Diane reviewed phrases to expand on the “Unexpected, Unforgettable” tagline and advised that they are using the tagline as hashtags on Town posts.

Diane advised that products are the backbone to the brand and drive economy. She included First Nations, businesses, and other groups logos to fit into the brand and she would like local organizations to own and drive the brand. She elaborated that they could support the brand by creating experiences, services, and products that support the brand.

Diane advised that the Town is looking at ideas such as pole banners, flags, benches, etc. to support the brand and make it more noticeable. She noted that the Town worked with Outcrop Consultants on the rebranding.

EDAB was pleased with the rebranding. Diane advised that the intention is to drive the economics beyond the logo. She asked if members would be interested in presenting the brand to organizations.

The board didn't think the Chamber of Commerce has been meeting. Diane suggested EDAB advocate for the Chamber to meet. Jim advised that he would give the presentation to the management team at NWAL and stated that he would like the brand on an NWAL aircraft. Mike added that EDAB had decorated the airport years ago.

The board discussed Fort Smith being a dark sky destination and asked how this fits into branding. They discussed changing lighting in town to gentle lighting and the security impacts with reduced lighting. Mike advised that there are no overhead lights in WBNP and that it is the largest dark sky reserve in Canada.

Alyssa suggested determining what is needed to develop the brand. Diane asked how the brand could tie into Council plans, such as the transportation plan.

- b. Home Occupation Businesses – Diane provided links to other jurisdictions bylaws for review. Pierre asked what the concerns are. Diane replied that concerns include traffic and encouraging startup in commercial rather than residential. Alyssa replied that some businesses do not want to be commercial, and individuals have home occupations as side businesses. She added that the three commercial restaurants were closed over spring break and that there were visitors/professionals in the community during that time with no where to eat.

Diane thinks competition is good for business. Alyssa added that there is none or limited commercial space available in the community and felt that home-based businesses should be supported. She noted that three restaurants are servicing 2,500 people and thinks there is room for healthy competition.

Pierre advised that he started as a home occupation and expanded. He noted that he supports home occupation businesses.

**E. Excusing of Members**

EDAB excused Linda Martin and Helena Katz from the meeting.

**F. Date of Next Meeting**

The next EDAB meeting will be on Thursday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 12:00pm in Council Chambers.

Jim advised that he would be moving and this would be his last meeting.

**G. Adjournment**

***MOTION***

**Moved by: Jim Heidema**

**Seconded by: Pierre Emmanuel-Chaillon**

**The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**





## Town of Fort Smith

### Expression of Interest

Date:

April 25

Name:

Kevin Atkinson

I am interested in sitting on the:

EDAB

Please provide qualifications/experience/local knowledge to aid Town Council in the review of this application.

local tourism operator & long  
serving member of EDAB

Signature of Applicant



## Town of Fort Smith

### Expression of Interest

Date:

27 of April 2023

Name:

Chaillon Pierre-Emmanuel

I am interested in sitting on the:

CDPO

Please provide qualifications/experience/local knowledge to aid Town Council in the review of this application.

Same as Jim!

Local Business owner

Photographer

Signature of Applicant



## Town of Fort Smith

### Expression of Interest

Date:

April 27/2

Name:

Michael Keizer

I am interested in sitting on the:

EDAB

Please provide qualifications/experience/local knowledge to aid Town Council in the review of this application.

Have served on EDAB for many, many

years

Signature of Applicant



## Town of Fort Smith

### Expression of Interest

Date:

April 27, 2023

Name:

Alyssa M Etzell

I am interested in sitting on the:

Economic Development Advisory  
Board

Please provide qualifications/experience/local knowledge to aid Town Council in the review of this application.

Currently, Promotion Officer for Parks Canada, degree in Marketing/advertising, previous experience working in municipal govt in economic development and provincial govt PMO in tourism.

Signature of Applicant