



Vulcan County Strategic Plan 2022 - 2026

Advancing Successes



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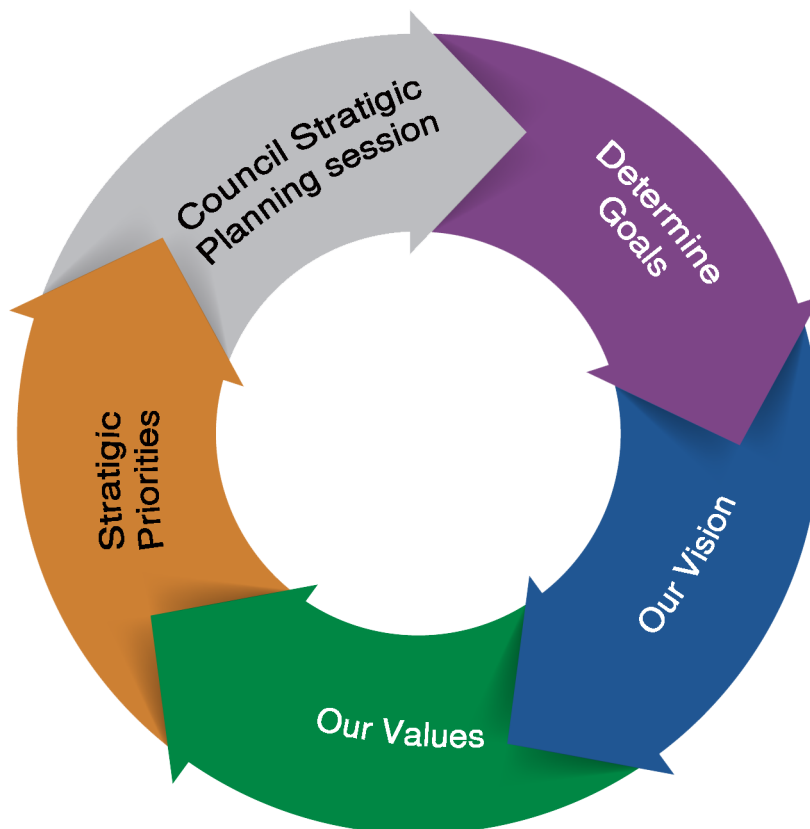
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Introduction

A strategic plan is essential to fostering the organizational culture of the municipality. For Vulcan County, it ensures that Council, Administration, staff and the public-at-large have a common vision for focusing discussion on the business of the municipality and its communities. It is a tool that helps ensure Council and Administration are aligned on the mission and measurable milestones to be achieved over the next four years and beyond. Work done by previous Councils and Administrations are built upon with the interests of key stakeholders in mind. The planning of these priorities is especially important given future challenges and opportunities that await this organization. ***Vulcan County remains focused on a balancing the interests of agricultural producers, with a diverse range of residential, recreational, and business opportunities in our communities.***

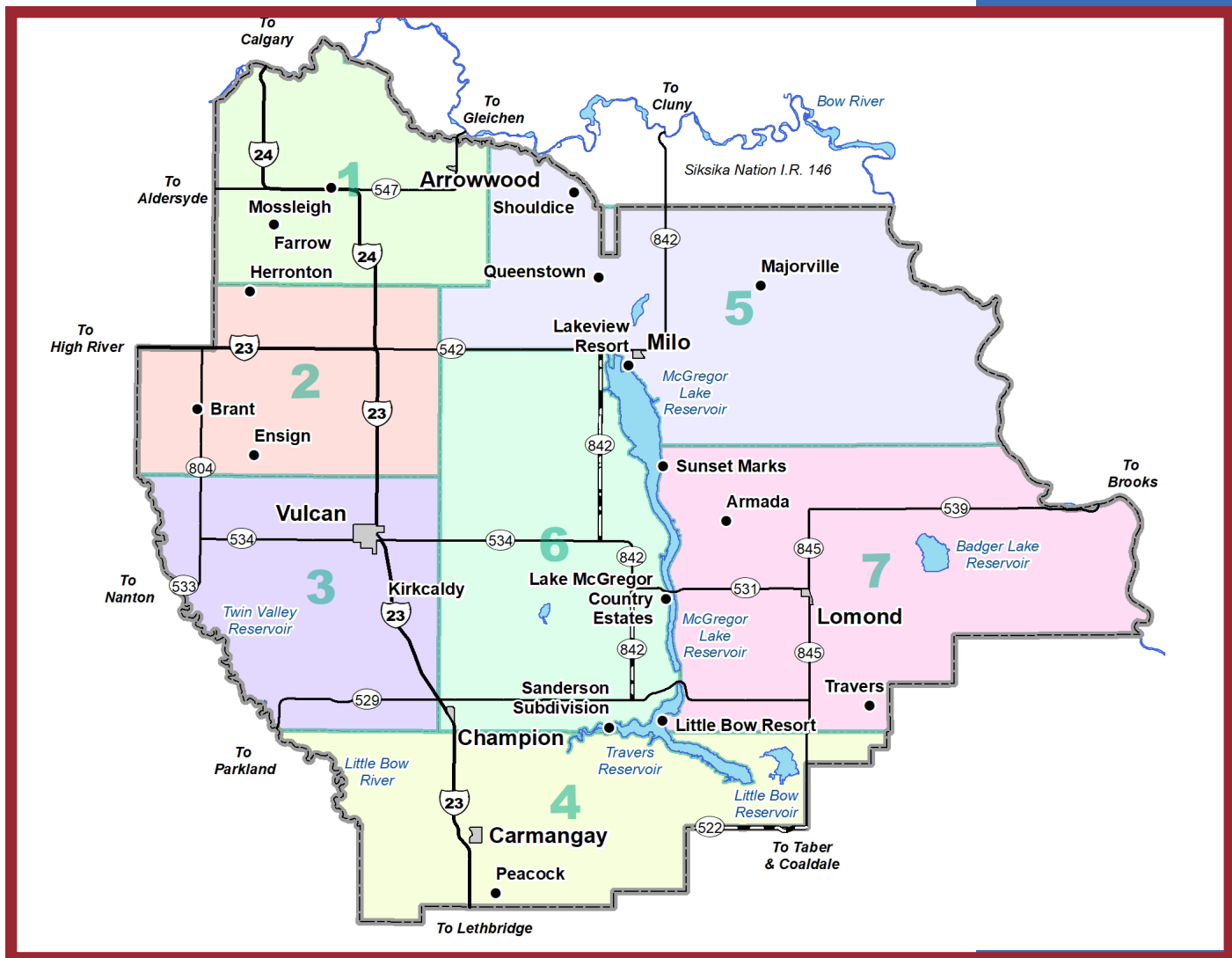
Our Strategic Plan (2022-2026) Advancing Successes is designed to provide residents, businesses, volunteer organizations, and various other partners and stakeholders with an overview of the County’s vision, values, and strategic priorities. It is a document that outlines the organizational culture being sought by Vulcan County Council. The guiding principles that form this strategic plan are:

- An organizational culture that fosters transparent local government that is fair, reasonable, accountable, and effective
- A diligent Council and Administration that seeks the best long-term outcome for our ratepayers
- Sound fiscal decisions that ensure the sustainability of the County into the future



Our County

Vulcan County is comprised of approximately 1.3 million acres of diverse landscapes and farmland. The County and its 4,098 residents share borders with twelve other municipalities and First Nations lands. Over the past century, our agricultural sector has served as the primary industry for our communities. Innovations in technology and power generation in recent years have made Vulcan County home to the largest renewable energy projects in Canada.



Our Vision



*Realizing
opportunity and
growth through
collaborative
leadership and
accessible
administration.*



A Vision Statement is a description of what the community should be a generation from now. The Municipal Corporation comprised of the Council and Administration is not the only entity responsible for making the vision become a reality. It takes all elements of the community contributing and working together. As such, the Vision Statement is intended to be shared with the whole of the community and may be adopted by any other organization

Our Purpose



Through proactive municipal leadership and partnerships, we will balance traditional planning with innovation to realize economic development and community growth for future prosperity.



A Purpose Statement is meant to identify how the organization will contribute towards the Vision Statement. Each organization within the community may articulate its own purpose and the contribution it will make to supporting a successful community. In this case, the Purpose Statement articulates the overall strategy Vulcan County will deploy towards realizing the Vision Statement.

Our Values

Vulcan County has the following core values which it undertakes to incorporate in all properties of its activities and operations:

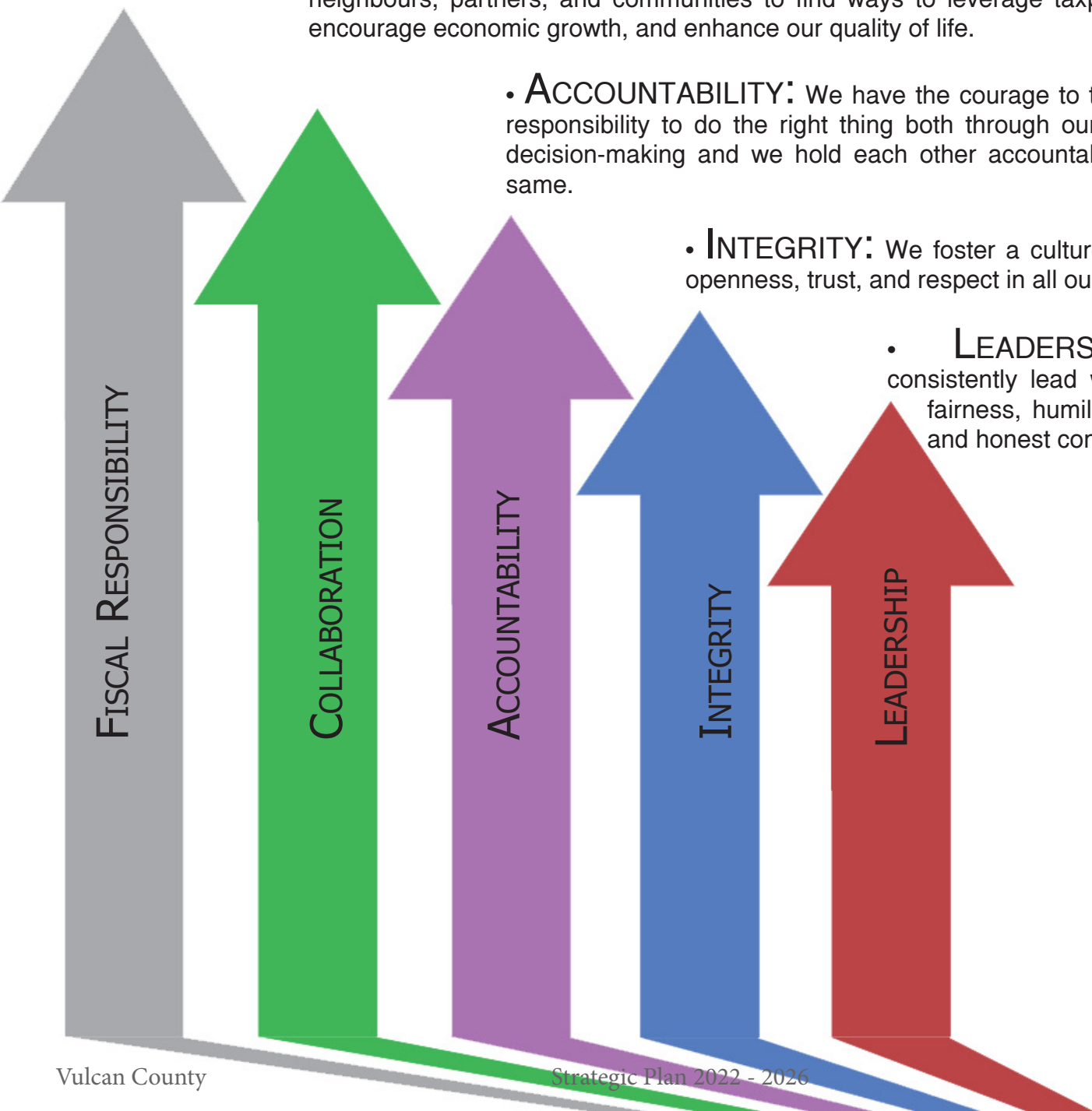
- **FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY:** We will be transparent in our financial decision-making and share how we mitigate economic risk. Council and Administration will work to find ways to manage and recover costs, while saving for our County's future needs and continue to utilize taxpayer dollars efficiently and effectively.

- **COLLABORATION:** Council and Administration will collaborate with our neighbours, partners, and communities to find ways to leverage taxpayer dollars, encourage economic growth, and enhance our quality of life.

- **ACCOUNTABILITY:** We have the courage to take personal responsibility to do the right thing both through our actions and decision-making and we hold each other accountable to do the same.

- **INTEGRITY:** We foster a culture of honesty, openness, trust, and respect in all our interactions.

- **LEADERSHIP:** To consistently lead with integrity, fairness, humility, and clear and honest communication.



County Services

Vulcan County provides a variety of services to its residents, either directly or jointly with other municipalities and commissions. These services include the following (partners are in brackets):

• AGRICULTURAL SERVICES

Weed and pest control, agricultural equipment rentals, management of municipal lands, and other general agricultural services (with producers and industry specific associations).

• COMMUNITY SERVICES

Supporting Family and Community Social Services, county-wide facilities, recreation districts (with Vulcan rural, and the villages of Arrowwood, Carmangay, Champion, Lomond, and Milo), and partnership with the Town of Vulcan.

• ENGINEERING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Oversees the engineering of the County's infrastructure and review of engineered drawings of development applications (with independent firms contracted by County Council).

• GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Municipal administration, legislative services, and correspondence with the Government of Alberta, Government of Canada, and regulatory agencies (with designated assessors, appointed auditors, affiliated memberships and organizations).

County Services

• PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Development permits, zoning, subdivision and land-use bylaws, and statutory planning (with Oldman River Regional Services Commission and the Safety Codes Council).

• PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Fire protection, bylaw enforcement, safety codes inspections, and regional emergency management (with the Town of Vulcan and the villages of Arrowwood, Carmangay, Champion, Lomond, and Milo).

• OPERATIONS

Road maintenance, fleet repairs and construction of roads and bridges (with Government of Alberta, Government of Canada, and irrigation districts).

• UTILITY SERVICES

Garbage disposal (with the Vulcan and District Waste Commission), water services (with Twin Valley Regional Water Commission, as well as the Mossleigh Water Coop and other water co-operatives), and wastewater services (with Town of Vulcan).

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Strategic Priorities

The following strategic priorities were identified through our strategic planning process. The implementation of these priorities will assist in moving the County closer to realizing our vision of growth and opportunity.

Key Success Measures

Stakeholder Satisfaction

- Reduced complaints
- Timely response times to complaints and requests for service
- Healthy relationships with neighbouring municipalities, communities, and our citizens
- Improved external communications

Council Satisfaction

- Effective communications with CAO
- Policy development, implementation & evaluation
- Public consultation

Employee Satisfaction

- Low levels of absenteeism
- High levels of staff retention
- Elevated performance
- Improved internal communications
- Professional growth

Sustainability

- New and existing municipal services and infrastructure are maintainable and provide benefits for the future
- Negative impacts from external stakeholder projects are reviewed and mitigated to the best of our ability

Process and Systems Improvements

- Approval and acceptance of innovative ideas and approaches
- Investment in innovative technologies
- Updated regulatory documents and processes

Financial Viability

- Diversification and strengthening of the assessment base
- Reasonable taxation and fee levels
- Prudent reserve levels
- High quality and well-maintained infrastructure
- Successfully working within budget

Strategic Priorities #1 Economic Resiliency

Vulcan County is still and will continue to be open for business. We will strive to provide an atmosphere to foster economic growth and development so long as the development will be a positive contribution to the financial and/or social wellbeing of the County. We will actively pursue opportunities to diversify our assessment base to support the services we provide to our residents. To realize this goal, Vulcan County Council has committed to:

Key Action Item	Lead Role	Initiated	Status	Key Measures
Provide County staff with the resources and training to develop programs and initiatives conducive to economic growth.	CAO & Department Heads	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Council Satisfaction ✓ Sustainability ✓ Employee Satisfaction
Rewrite of the Vulcan County Municipal Development Plan, to ensure good planning process and consistency with other statutory documents and legislative requirements.	Development Services	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Process and System Improvements
Rewrite the Wyndham Carseland Area Structure Plan	Development Services	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Process and System Improvements
Rewrite the Mossleigh Area Structure Plan	Development Services	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Process and System Improvements
Complete and promote the Vulcan County Industrial Park build and explore other opportunities for similar developments.	Engineering & Operations Development CAO	2018-2022	Ongoing with revisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Council Satisfaction ✓ Financial Viability
Continue to encourage businesses to register in the Vulcan County business directory. Create and maintain an online business directory.	Development Services	2018-2022 with revisions	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Process and System Improvements ✓ Financial Viability
Develop online education page for development permit applications to assist applicants and free up staffing resources. Ensure proper development policies are approved and are accessible to the public (re: MGA) (i.e., Municipal Reserve & Environmental policy, Subdivision Endorsement Policy, Compliance Letter Policy, Private Sewage Disposal Policy)	Development Services	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Process and System Improvements
Standardized requirements of what is considered a complete development application.	Development Services	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Process and System Improvements
Continue to explore Marina Development on MacGregor Reservoir.	Engineering and Infrastructure Council	NEW Not officially in last plan.	Ongoing with revisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction
Procure additional water licencing through water allocation transfers to support economic growth.	CAO & Engineering	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sustainability ✓ Financial Viability

Strategic Priorities #2 Continued

Collaboration with Regional Partners

Vulcan County is committed to seeking opportunities that enhance the relationships and are of mutual benefit with our rural and urban neighbors, and other area stakeholders. We recognise that we cannot action all our objectives alone. To realize these goals Vulcan County has begun undertaking the following measures:

Key Action Item	Lead Role	Initiated	Status	Key Measures
Review of Intermunicipal Development Plans and Intermunicipal Collaborative Frameworks with municipal neighbours.	CAO Development Services	2022-2026	New	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction
Reinstitute annual meetings with the Bow River Irrigation District to review capital projects and maintenance priorities to determine if there are cost saving opportunities through partnerships.	CAO Agriculture Services	2018-2022	Initiated	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction
Review and establish cost sharing formulas for funding that are equitable to all parties.	CAO Corporate Services	2018-2022	Ongoing with revisions	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Financial Viability
Institute annual meetings with the Siksika Nation to investigate opportunities for partnerships.	CAO Legislative Services	2018-2022	Initiated	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction
Explore opportunities and options with the Vulcan District Waste Commission which will allow for cost savings and stable requisitions.	CAO Operations	2022-2026	New	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Sustainability ✓ Financial Viability
Build Upon community relationships and have more of a non-emergency presence at events.	Protective Services	2022-2026	New	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Council Satisfaction ✓ Employee Satisfaction
In collaboration with Siksika Nation, Arrowwood and Wheatland County, continue to pressure for bridge improvements on HWY's 547 & 842.	Council CAO	2018-2022	Initiated	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Sustainability ✓ Financial Viability
Seek joint development areas with urban neighbors.	CAO Engineering and Infrastructure Development Services	2022-2026	New	✓ Council Satisfaction ✓ Sustainability ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Financial Viability

Strategic Priorities #3 Continued Investment into Infrastructure and Required Equipment

As a County, the majority of municipal activities typically relate to road and bridge infrastructure. Transportation Services represents approximately 43% of Vulcan County expenditures. Through the continued development and maintenance of municipal infrastructure, Vulcan County will be able to support agricultural, residential, and industrial growth. To achieve these goals Vulcan County will continue to:

Key Action Item	Lead Role	Initiated	Status	Key Measures
Continued refinement and review of the 5 and 20 year capital plans for equipment and infrastructure construction and replacement.	Department Heads Corporate Services	2014-2017	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Sustainability ✓ Financial Viability
Review and approval of a 4-year road and bridge construction program that recognizes efficiencies in engineering, construction, and project tendering.	Engineering & Infrastructure Operations	2014-2017	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sustainability ✓ Financial Viability
Continued capital equipment replacement based on life cycle asset management that ensures a balance between maintenance costs and down time and allows for a good overall service level.	Department Heads Corporate Services	2014-2017	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Financial Viability
As capital equipment is replaced, considerations shall be given to future projects which may require larger equipment to undertake these projects. (i.e., bridge projects)	Operations	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sustainability ✓ Financial Viability
Further investigate potential new aggregate sources within the County to secure surfacing gravel requirements. A strategically located aggregate supply will reduce transportation cost associated with the gravelling program.	Engineering and Infrastructure	2018-2022	Initiated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sustainability
Create interactive mapping which provides information and grading and graveling programs.	Corporate Services	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Council Satisfaction
Undertake cost analysis for replacement of County building infrastructure.	Corporate Services CAO Engineering and Infrastructure	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sustainability ✓ Employee Satisfaction ✓ Financial Viability
Lobby the Provincial Government for increased infrastructure funding.	Council CAO	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sustainability ✓ Financial Viability
Provide some minimal maintenance on undeveloped road allowances in support of farming operations based on budget availability and staff capacity.	Operations	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction

Strategic Priorities # 4 Responsible and Transparent Leadership and Governance

Vulcan County will continue to endeavor to be a municipality which operates in a transparent and responsible manner, with long term sustainability being a guiding factor. Key objectives to advance this priority are:

Key Action Item	Lead Role	Initiated	Status	Key Measures
Provide levels of service that balance ratepayer needs with organizational capacity.	CAO Department Heads	2018-2022	Ongoing	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Council Satisfaction
Build community confidence through responsible governance for long term sustainability.	CAO Department Heads	2014-2017	Ongoing	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction
Continue to promote excellence through the production and submission of Annual Budget Reports and Annual Financial Reports to the Government Finance Officers Association Canadian Award for Financial and Budget Reporting.	Corporate Services	2018-2022	Ongoing	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Council Satisfaction ✓ Financial Viability
Improve public communications through our website, social media accounts, and print media. Review our meeting access options such as livestream and recorded options.	Legislative Services Department Heads	2018-2022	Ongoing with revisions	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Council Satisfaction
Continued review of taxation rates as to remain competitive with our rural neighbours and explore tax guideline options.	Corporate Services	2018-2022	Ongoing	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Financial Viability
Maintain our COR (Certificate of Recognition) certification which was achieved in 2020.	Department Heads	2022-2026	New	✓ Employee Satisfaction ✓ Process and System Improvements
Modernize the County website, allowing for easier navigation, updated content and a fresh look.	Corporate Services	2022-2026	New	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Process and System Improvements
Develop Environmental and Municipal Reserve Policy	Development Services	2022-2026	New	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Process and System Improvements
Improved communication from Council regarding the ongoings of committees and boards on which they are appointed to.	Legislative Services	2022-2026	Reinstituted	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction

Strategic Priorities # 5 Continued Support of Our Agricultural Industry

As a County, we recognize that our main industry within our borders is Agriculture. As such, Vulcan County is committed to supporting this industry not only through well maintained infrastructure, but programs and services through our Agricultural Service Board. Over the next four years, the following initiatives will be undertaken:

Key Action Item	Lead Role	Initiated	Status	Key Measures
Vulcan County will continue to have an active an engaged Agricultural Service Board that reviews and investigates new programing and services which are of benefit to our Agricultural Industry.	Ag Services	2018-2022	Ongoing	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Sustainability
Marginal Land Recovery Grant This program will help landowners with seeding marginal lands to grass and forages.	Rural Conservation Technician	2022-2026	New	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Process and System Improvements
Investigate and purchase specialized agricultural equipment for our ratepayers that would not be available for rent or feasible to purchase.	Ag Services		Ongoing	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction
Work with Alberta Agriculture to assist them with the annual field scouting and inspection of various crop disease and insects.	Ag Services		Ongoing	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction
Work with companies wishing to bring business to Vulcan County to ensure their projects are a long-term benefit and that they have protocols in place to protect the land, with clear expectations of what is required.	Ag Services Development Services	2022-2026	New	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Council Satisfaction ✓ Process and System Improvements
Continue to enforce the Weed Act of Alberta, Soil Conservation Act, and the Agricultural Pests Act, while increasing weed control measures and awareness throughout Vulcan County.	Ag Services	2018-2022	Ongoing	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction
Develop and maintain a digital weed database for Vulcan County.	Ag Services GIS	2018-2022	Initiated	✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction

Strategic Priorities # 6 Safe Communities

As a rural community, Vulcan County can be faced with emergencies that rely on both volunteer and professional resources. Protection of our community is accomplished by six fire departments (Northwest, Milo, Lomond, Carmangay, Champion and Vulcan Fire), four RCMP detachments (Vulcan, Vauxhall, High River, and Strathmore), and the Vulcan County Community Peace Officer Program. To continue to provide protected communities, Vulcan County will undertake the following objectives:

Key Action Item	Lead Role	Initiated	Status	Key Measures
Continue with education as a primary value in regard to enforcement.	Protective Services	2018-2022	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Council Satisfaction
Training and exercises through the Vulcan County Regional Emergency Response Partnership.	CAO – RDEM Protective Services	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Council Satisfaction
Engage RCMP on comprehensive policing and crime prevention strategy for the County.	Protective Services Council	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Council Satisfaction
Continue to pressure the Province for better rural ambulance servicing in our region.	Council CAO Protective Services	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Employee Satisfaction ✓ Sustainability ✓ Process and System Improvements
Continue to be fully compliant with the NFPA standards to operate at the service levels identified in the Bylaw.	Protective Services	2014-2017	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Employee Satisfaction ✓ Sustainability ✓ Process and System Improvements
Explore Firefighter recruitment incentives to ensure sufficient staffing at all fire halls.	Protective Services CAO	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Employee Satisfaction ✓ Sustainability
Increase the delivery of prevention, and preparedness amongst our aging population.	Protective Services	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Process and System Improvements
Build out the investigation program by purchasing equipment that will speed up the process and provide for in-depth reports. The camera's that the realtors use to give 360-degree views or walk-through pictures, drones for aerial assessment.	Protective Services	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Process and System Improvements
Develop Council awareness of the Incident Command System, as well as Council awareness of obligations regarding emergency management in legislation.	CAO RDEM Council	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder Satisfaction ✓ Council Satisfaction

Strategic Priorities #7 Attract, Engage, and Retain New and Existing Employees

As work forces age, and transitions occur, it is important for Vulcan County to be positioned as an employer of choice. To ensure there is staff talent and capacity to provide the services the municipality is accustomed too, Vulcan County will undertake the following objectives to recruit and retain staff:

Key Action Item	Lead Role	Initiated	Status	Key Measures
Provide appropriate cross-training opportunities which will benefit staffing capacity and succession planning.	CAO Department Heads	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Employee Satisfaction ✓ Sustainability ✓ Process and System Improvements
Enhance the performance review tools for supervisors.	CAO	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Employee Satisfaction ✓ Process and System Improvements
Undertake compensation reviews to ensure Vulcan County is competitive within the market.	CAO Third Party	2018-2022	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Employee Satisfaction ✓ Sustainability ✓ Council Satisfaction
Ensure adequate staffing to provide appropriate levels of service	CAO Department Heads Council	2022-2026	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Employee Satisfaction ✓ Sustainability ✓ Council Satisfaction

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Advancing Successes

Despite a number of hurdles over the past four years, Vulcan County had many achievements through priorities put forward in the last strategic plan. The 2022-2026 Strategic Plan Advancing Successes is a roadmap to the future and sets the direction for Administration to build work plans that will reach the fundamental vision as set by Vulcan County Council. This plan sets the priorities and direction for the County while balancing the needs of infrastructure requirements, community growth and service provisions. The accomplishments of this plan will be measured on an annual basis through review of executed items, realized agreements and budgetary/financial impacts. By Council's adoption of this plan, we commit to conscientiously work towards the best outcome for our ratepayers and community.