Request for Decision – To Council

Meeting Date: July 28, 2015

SUBJECT: BLACKFOOT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN – MOTION REQUIRED

Recommendation: THAT the County of Vermilion River accept the Blackfoot Community Development Plan as the working document for long term community development within the Hamlet of Blackfoot.

Background: The Planning & Development department has been working with Blackfoot residents to create a Community Development Plan that will identify, prioritize and propose implementation of projects for the hamlet over a 1 year, 5 year and 10 year span. Projects include beautification, community involvement and parks/recreation. The Community Development Plan will be a working, guiding document, based on community engagement, that will allow Blackfoot to work together and with the County of Vermilion River to grow and develop to be a sustainable, vibrant and diversified community. Having a current plan in place will create smoother decision making, open up opportunities for funding applications, and allow the County and the community to work collaboratively on project plans.

Attachment(s): Blackfoot Community Development Plan

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Director of Planning & Development

Endorsed by: Rhonda King, CLGM
Chief Administrative Officer

Date: July 21/15

Date: July 22/15
BLACKFOOT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Making Blackfoot a Community ................................................................. 2
2. Blackfoot Profile ..................................................................................... 2
3. What do we value? ................................................................................. 3
4. SWOT Analysis ......................................................................................... 4
5. Areas OF Focus ....................................................................................... 6
6. PROJECT PLAN ....................................................................................... 7
7. IMPLEMENTATION .................................................................................. 8
8. CONCLUSION .......................................................................................... 8
9. APPENDIX A: HOUSEHOLD USAGE of ACTIVITIES .............................. 9
1 Making Blackfoot a Community

Over the years, the community has taken on many initiatives to enhance the hamlet and improve the quality of life for its residents. As time marches on, it is important to step back and set some objective long-term goals that can rejuvenate the community spirit, engage residents to participate and keep the circle of progress rotating. This community strategy will build a long-term plan that will provide alignment, improve communications and create engagement with a changing and growing base of residents.

Enhancing the sense of “community” leads to a more attractive, more involved, and happier hamlet.

Active people lead healthier lives and have stronger connections to their communities. So why should we be investing in our communities?
* For Healthy Active People * For Social Engagement * For Community Spirit * For Environmental Responsibility * For the Economy

Solutions need to be developed through collaborative, community-based approaches that involve local leadership, input from a wide variety of stakeholders and active involvement by residents.

2 Blackfoot Profile

The Hamlet of Blackfoot is located in Division 5 in the East Central area of the County of Vermilion River. It is a rapidly growing community that could see another significant size increase with the development of additional residential lots over the next couple of years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>POPULATION CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>420 (2015 census)</td>
<td>56% increase since 2011 (more than doubled size since 2006 when population was just 159)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

28% under age of 18 and 35% ages 19-34 = a very young community

Blackfoot has seen much development over the past decade with 40 new homes constructed, a new storm water pond to support the water system plus additional capacity being added in 2015/2016, and a larger park/recreation area.

Community

- **Education:** students are bussed to Kitscoty Elementary (K-6) and Kitscoty Junior/Senior High (7-12) schools where there are approximately 259 elementary students and 240 students in grades 7-12. The schools are part of the Buffalo Trails School Division.
- **Transportation:** Blackfoot is conveniently located along major Highway 16, allowing for excellent travel and transportation access for both residents and any commercial/industrial ventures
- **Services:** residents and businesses are serviced with municipal water and sewer infrastructure with upgrades in 2015; and have road maintenance monitored and managed by the County. Volunteer fire and emergency services located in Blackfoot respond to 911 calls.
- **Recreation:** Blackfoot is home to a community hall, a seniors centre, park/playground with rugby field being developed, toboggan hill and outdoor skating rink. In nearby Kitscoty there are ball diamonds, hockey arena, curling rink, and golfing. In Lloydminster there is access to further recreation facilities such as multi-plex center, swimming pools, ball diamonds, soccer fields, fitness centers, library, movie theatre, bowling alley and more.
Groups & Support: community based groups in Blackfoot including an active Lions Club and Seniors Club, as well as a Ladies Club.

BUSINESS & EMPLOYMENT

- Primary industries are agriculture, and oil and gas. There are several businesses based in and around Blackfoot including Vertex (oil & gas), McAllister Water Drilling (oil & gas) as well as numerous companies within 2 km (Tingley Harvest Centre (agriculture), Rec Tech Power Products (retail), Thorpe Recovery Centre (health), Beretta Industries (oil & gas), D&D Rentals (oil & gas), Hobblestone Enterprises (manufacturing))
- Larger urban centers nearby include the City of Lloydminster (8 km) and the Town of Vermilion (56 km). These centers are home to many more key service providers and potential employers/employees
- There is land available for development in the Hamlet and region for light commercial/industrial and residential

3 WHAT DO WE VALUE?

Through a collaborative process of surveys, public meetings and ongoing dialogue, Blackfoot has identified a set of values. They asked themselves the following questions:

What do we value? We need to determine our community values while considering the following questions: What do we stand for? What are the ideal values that guide us? What behaviors reflect these values? How do we want to be seen by our community? How do we treat our members and community partners?

VALUE SET:
4  SWOT ANALYSIS

The next step was to complete a SWOT analysis to better understand the Blackfoot community.

A) **STRENGTHS** (characteristics of Blackfoot that give it an advantage over others)
   
   All the identified STRENGTHS fell into 6 concepts/categories in this order of most selected:

   - **QUIET**
     - Minimal traffic/activity
     - Peaceful
     - Serene
   - **SENSE of COMMUNITY**
     - Close knit
     - Awareness
     - Trust
     - Neighbors
   - **FAMILY FRIENDLY**
     - Young families
     - Safe for children
   - **SIZE**
     - Small town
   - **LOCATION**
     - Near larger centre
     - Short commute
   - **SNOW REMOVAL**

B) **WEAKNESSES** (characteristics that place Blackfoot at a disadvantage relative to others)
   
   All the identified WEAKNESSES fell into 4 concepts/categories in this order of most selected:

   - **INFRASTRUCTURE**
     - Poor road quality
     - No turning lane/lighting at west entrance
     - General infrastructure inadequate
     - Lack of sidewalks
     - Taxes high for services
   - **AMENITIES**
     - No stores, gas stations, food services etc
   - **ENFORCEMENT**
     - Lack of by-law enforcement
     - Unsightly properties
     - No consistent property development standards
     - Lack of County support
   - **RECREATION**
     - Outdated overgrown park
     - Lack of walking paths
     - Limited recreation facilities
C) Opportunities (external chances)

All the identified OPPORTUNITIES fell into 4 concepts/categories in this order of most selected:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMERCIAL GROWTH</th>
<th>RESIDENTIAL GROWTH</th>
<th>GENERAL IDEAS</th>
<th>RECREATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small businesses such as gas station, convenience store, coffee shop, general retail Commercial developments (no camps)</td>
<td>Close knit community if there was something more to bring community together Take advantage of being close to Lloyd Develop better communications with County and residents Kindergarten school Seniors Home Have long term development plans in place to take advantage of the land/space we have County needs to invest in community</td>
<td>Build attractive green spaces before further residential development as an attraction Sports facilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D) Threats (external elements in the environment that could cause trouble for Blackfoot)

All the identified THREATS fell into 4 concepts/categories in this order of most selected:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROADS &amp; ACCESS</th>
<th>INFRASTRUCTURE</th>
<th>INDUSTRIAL GROWTH</th>
<th>GENERAL IDEAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of roads creates pot holes and vehicle damage Tar roads make a mess on hot days (children, pets, vehicles) Access of Hwy 16 is poor (no turn lane, no lights)</td>
<td>Is our current infrastructure ready to handle growth? Weak water system Heavy frost on power lines causes problems Tax dollars not re-invested in community</td>
<td>Industries close by that could harm environment, disrupt residents Ton Limit trucking route through town for businesses Temporary worker camps</td>
<td>Growth of Lloyd encroaching on Blackfoot Close proximity of railroad and trains Poor communication with County</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5 AREAS OF FOCUS

Based on the results of the strategic planning, the primary areas to focus on could be categorized as Sporting/Recreation; Beautification; and Community Development.

SPORTING & RECREATION

- Existing facilities need improvement, in particular, the park/playground, outdoor skating rink
- Addition of amenities like walking trails would be well-used
- The expected population growth from the new residential lots will place even more pressure on existing facilities beginning in the next two – three years
- Appendix A: Household Usage of Activities shows results from the survey and covers numbers of households and people that would participate in activities

BEAUTIFICATION

- Many concerns with overall appearance of hamlet, untidy properties, lack of trees and green space
- The negative impact a lack of beautification will have when it comes time to “sell” the community to potential new residents
- Initiatives for beautification will enhance community spirit and pride. The graphic below highlights the identified primary opportunities for beautification projects

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Engaging newer residents to become active participants is a priority but requires improved communications and education from long-time residents and organizations
- Enhancing the communication between the community organizations and working more closely to support and coordinate
- Improving overall commitment and participation in initiating projects, volunteering, and supporting the community

[Diagram showing beautification initiatives: Enhance the existing park area to be the center of the community, Develop natural areas (pond, natural habitats, trees etc.), Develop a Community Garden & a Community Orchard area, Initiate a community & household “clean-up” or beautification program, Enforce cleaning of unsightly properties, Maintain proper mowing of general areas]
6 PROJECT PLAN

The community identified and prioritized One Year, Three to Five Year and Ten Year issues, goals and projects to undertake.

10 YEAR
- Develop pond area (make more attractive, stock with fish, walking trail around)
- Proper paved roadways through entire town and railway ave
- School: currently 160 kids from Blackfoot go to Kitscoty schools
- Maintain size (including Phase 3 & 4)

3-5 YEAR
- Walking paths
- Ball Diamond (further research needed to determine adequate space and potential usage)
- Splash Park
- Work with Rugby plans

1 YEAR:

COMMUNITY
- Events: dances, family functions, community picnics, ladies night fundraiser, home business parties, community garage sale
- Improve communication within the community: recruit members to Lions/ Ladies clubs; share existing plans that groups have; volunteer recruitment; involvement in activities; educate everyone on things that need to be done

BEAUTIFICATION
- Communities in Bloom type program: plant flowers, general paint/staining work bees, community cleanup day
- Community Garden and Orchard (possibly at Seniors Centre)
- Tree cleanup and yard repairs at seniors centre
- Clean up properties before beautifying
- Managing pet waste in public areas
- General littering issues

PARK, SPORTS, RECREATION
- Benches at park
- BBQ pits at park
- Playground area for 2-5 year olds to play on (existing structure is good for older kids). Lions Club has traditionally been the lead on the playground.
- Improvements and repairs to playground (ie. sand base)
- More welcoming space at park for whole family to hang out
- Covered gazebo
- Trees & shrubs
- Repair pad for outdoor ice rink and build shed (Lions Club)
- Public Washroom at Park

Blackfoot
Together CVR and the community will need to work collaboratively to accomplish effective strategic planning and implement appropriate community projects. CVR is the governing body for the Hamlet of Blackfoot and would like to encourage the growth and engagement of the community. As a whole, the community is willing to be active participants in the long-term Community Development Plan. The strategy for moving forward with implementation includes several components:

a. Finalizing and accepting Community Development Plan by the community and CVR.

b. Creation of Community Committees to tackle specific projects in each of the identified categories: Sporting/Recreation; Beautification; Community Engagement. Each committee would identify the specific projects they will be focused on for the year. They should create an action plan that identifies scope of the project; project budget; funding sources; volunteer versus paid contractor work; impact on community; community involvement.

c. Working with existing organizations (ie. Seniors Club and Lions Club) to provide support for completing projects.

d. Working closely with CVR on projects, keep lines of communication open and determine areas of support required from CVR. CVR will need to monitor any construction, renovations, structure development in terms of safety and appropriate development requirements. In the long-term, CVR will need to be diligent in providing guidance and support where needed to ensure the sustainability of on-going projects and solid fundamental planning.

e. As a community, there will be an annual review of projects, progress made, changes in scope or function, and to ensure goals in the Community Development Plan are still accurate.

8 CONCLUSION

Growing, enhancing and improving Blackfoot will build a genuine community that residents will continue to invest in. There will be many opportunities to come together as a community to make a difference, engage neighbors and live active, healthy lifestyles. The first steps have been taken and it will be an exciting adventurous journey.
## APPENDIX A: HOUSEHOLD USAGE OF ACTIVITIES

Summary of the number of households that would participate in the SPORTING activity, the number of people that would participate in that activity and the average total number of hours per week people would participate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPORTING ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>TOTAL NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS (out of 12) THAT WOULD PARTICIPATE IN A WEEK</th>
<th>NUMBER of People that WOULD participate in a WEEK</th>
<th>AVERAGE NUMBER of HOURS per WEEK a household WOULD participate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walking paths – granular/natural</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>8.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playground (existing)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking paths - paved</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike Paths</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playground (new)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6.625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobogganing</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Skating/Hockey Rink</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spray Park</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis Court</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATV trails</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running track</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseshoe pits</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini Golf</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Splash Pad</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skidoo trails</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green/Park space for play</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawn Bowling</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach Volleyball</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skateboard park</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMX Track</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball court</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rugby/Football Field</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer Field</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: ping pong</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: badminton</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: pool table</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: darts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: indoor swimming</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: weights (body building)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: treadmills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: floor hockey</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: indoor soccer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: indoor basketball</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Blackfoot
Comments:

We have no children living at home, however, feel the need for a skating area and ball diamond are very much needed in Blackfoot. We pay enough taxes and feel the County is neglectful in providing activity areas, especially since the community has grown with new young families.

Indoor winter activities are needed.

Spray park is a great idea (NOTE: there are certain limitations to a project such as a spray park as it would depend on the additional usage/strain on infrastructure)

Summary of the number of households that would participate in the RECREATION activity, the number of people that would participate in that activity and the average total number of hours per week people would participate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECREATION ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>TOTAL NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS (out of 12) THAT WOULD PARTICIPATE IN A WEEK</th>
<th>NUMBER of People that WOULD participate in a WEEK</th>
<th>AVERAGE NUMBER of HOURS per WEEK a household WOULD participate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Winter Event</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Garden</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Orchard</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnic Area</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Summer Event</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog Park</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campground</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>As much as possible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>