



Town of

# Athabasca

Gateway to the Great New North

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## Acknowledging First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples

After being recommended by Town Councillor Edie Yuill and research and recommendations by a Council sub-committee, the Town now has an official Land Acknowledgement statement to properly acknowledge First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples.

The acknowledgement will be included on the Town website and social media accounts and will be recited with due respect prior to all Council meetings and official gatherings. The acknowledgement says:

*The Town of Athabasca respectfully acknowledges that we are meeting on Treaty 6 and Treaty 8 territory, home to the First People living on Turtle Island, and we honour all of the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples who have lived, traveled, and gathered on these lands for thousands of years. We commit to sharing a path forward of respect, learning, and opportunity.*



Members of the Athabasca Fire Department in attendance at the Council Community Appreciation Dinner on Sept. 15. (L-R) Lt. Cody Shalapay, Captain Adam Koons, Deputy Chief Jason Sturrock, Retired Chief Denis Mathieu, Fire Chief Travis Shalapay, Lt. Liam Orr, FF Chelsea Kirby, FF Abigail Hiebert  
Photo credit: Erica Shalapay

## Healthcare Attraction Committee

Last year, the Athabasca Regional Healthcare Attraction and Retention Committee was established to begin a determined search for doctors and other healthcare professionals for the Athabasca region. Town Council is grateful for the effort put in so far by each of the committee members, in particular, the public members who freely contribute their time and attention.

The committee comprises support and representation from the Town of Athabasca, Athabasca County, Village of Boyle, MD of Opportunity, Buffalo Lake Metis Settlement, health care representatives, public members and others. Council is pleased to note that the efforts of the committee are showing results! Doctor Paras Shrestha began practice in Athabasca in August and another new doctor is expected to arrive early in January 2023.

With the purpose of the committee being to “develop and support a sustainable system for health care provider attraction and retention that will ensure ongoing health care services to the community,” finding new doctors was the first priority, to be followed up with a focus on filling other healthcare positions where needed.

Beyond the immediate need, the committee realizes that it’s not only the doctors who must be attracted to the community, but their families must also be interested and may benefit from supports and assistance to help them feel more engaged and connected to the community.

With communities throughout the province equally engaged in attraction and retention efforts, members of the Athabasca committee have their work cut out for them! Their efforts to date are to be commended and are very much appreciated.

## Council Community Appreciation

Members of Athabasca Town Council hosted an appreciation dinner on Sept. 15 to acknowledge and thank many of the individuals, groups and organizations in the community who contribute so much to the betterment of the town and the region. To those acknowledged at the dinner and to the numerous others in the community who may not have been mentioned, Council extends a very sincere *Thank You* for your volunteer efforts and your contributions. *You are appreciated!*

### Groups Acknowledged:

- Athabasca Heritage Society
- Rotary Club of Athabasca
- Athabasca Lions Club
- Communications Committee
- Assessment Review Board
- Alice B. Donahue Library and Archives
- Athabasca Fire Department
- Athabasca County Reeve and County CAO
- Village of Boyle Mayor and Village CAO
- Town Office Staff
- Town Public Works
- Regional Municipal Climate Action Committee
- Subdivision and Development Appeal Board
- Brick School Sub Committee
- Athabasca Regional Multiplex Staff
- Riverfront Design Review Committee
- Family and Community Support Services
- Regional Health Care Attraction and Retention Committee
- Tourism and Economic Development Committee
- Athabasca and District Chamber of Commerce

### Awards Presented

#### Town Staff Recognition for Long-Term Service:

2020 – Rachel Ramey – 15 Years  
Gerry Richards – 15 Years

2021 – Kurtis Katona – 5 Years

2022 – Terry Kosinski – 15 Years  
Martin Silkie – 10 Years

#### Fire Department Dedicated Service Awards:

2020 – John Martel – 5 Years

2021 – Cody Shalapay – 10 Years  
Silvio Kohlschmidt – 5 Yrs

2022 – Kyle McDonald – 5 Years



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[www.athabasca.ca](http://www.athabasca.ca)

4705 - 49 Avenue, Athabasca, AB T9S 1B7  
Tel: 780-675-2063 – Fax: 780-675-4242  
E-mail: [town@athabasca.ca](mailto:town@athabasca.ca)

## Town Strategic Plan 2022-2032

Many factors were taken into consideration when drafting the Town's long-term strategic plan to ensure that the Town continues to prosper over the next 10 years. Four strategic goals were established, each one highlighting a different aspect of life in the Town. Ranking goals provides Town administration with clarity on where the most value exists when building business plans and budgets. The goals are designed to encompass future developments or opportunities.

### Four Strategic Goals:

- 1) Infrastructure:** We will plan and prioritize long-term infrastructure decision-making.
- Have an asset management plan.
  - Decisions are made using evidence & subject matter expertise.
  - Community has confidence in our infrastructure.
  - Our assets enhance community beautification.

Investing in assets for the community is a critical job of Council. As such, we place an emphasis on acquiring infrastructure that aligns with what our citizens see as important. We must also keep a keen eye on what the future holds for communities. We will attempt to secure grant dollars to maximize value and continue to move towards responsible energy management.

- 2) Well-Being:** Our role as stewards in championing community well-being is easily recognized.
- Our financial reserves are healthy.
  - We are an attractive community for business, residents, visitors.
  - Our citizens have a sense of safety.

When we were strategic planning, we started by asking ourselves why does a municipality exist. For Council, our job is to provide the best long-term well-being for our community and its citizens. We are determined to have a great conversation with the community about how we are doing in this regard.

- 3) Leadership:** We are committed to strong governance through building community leadership.
- Clarity in council roles and responsibilities.
  - Assessment growth.
  - Population growth.
  - Proactive agreements with other orders of government.
  - The community feels they've had an opportunity to contribute.

Elected officials are chosen to represent their community. A big part of demonstrating leadership is to work with all stakeholders to grow the community. Our critical relationships moving forward continue to be with community and regional partners. We see tremendous opportunities that will achieve mutual benefit. All of this comes with being deliberate about transparency and embracing the role we can play as the governing body.

- 4) Community:** We have an engaged and inclusive community rich in partnerships, agencies, organizations and volunteers.
- Enhance our success in community building.
  - Our community is proud to live here.
  - We have numerous welcoming community events.

We work together to leverage our strong relationships throughout the community. The pride shown in this community will be an anchor for building the community of the future.

This strategic plan is a living document. If opportunities or challenges arise that change the focus or priority of these goals, they can be adjusted. The complete [Town of Athabasca 2022-2032 Strategic Plan](#) can be viewed on the Town website.

## Clean Energy Improvement Program Launching in Athabasca

Soon to be available to Town residents, a different kind of financing for renovations that make a difference.

The *Clean Energy Improvement Program* (CEIP) is a new way to finance energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades. Repayment is made conveniently through your regular property tax bill and interest rates are competitive. What's more, repayment is tied to the property, not the owner—so you can invest in money saving upgrades now, without worrying about what happens when the property sells.

The [CEIP website](#) notes that, "This innovative financing approach, also known as *Property Assessed Clean Energy* (PACE), is garnering successful results across North America. This is the first such program in Alberta and is available now in select municipalities."

Renovations that may qualify include adding insulation, replacing furnaces and hot water heaters, upgrading doors and windows, and adding solar photovoltaic systems.

Benefits include lower utility bills, higher property value because of the upgrades, and jobs in the community.

The program launches for Town of Athabasca residents on October 19, 2022. Learn more at: [myCEIP.ca/](http://myCEIP.ca/)

## Thank You for Your Support!

The Town of Athabasca expresses many thanks and much gratitude to everybody who contributed to the success of the *Appreciation BBQ for Healthcare Workers* held this past June at the Riverfront in Athabasca. Thank you to all who supported the event in any way, especially to those who came out to show appreciation for the healthcare professionals and workers in our community. *Great community support, everyone!*

## Town of Athabasca Christmas Decorating Contest



The Town Christmas Decorating Contest is back for another season – but with a few changes to the *Non-Residential* category.

- Participants in the *Residential* category are invited to decorate the exterior of their buildings for the Christmas holidays and submit photos to the Town Office. Watch for details of when judging will take place and winner announced.
- Participants in the *Non-Residential* category can submit indoor *and* outdoor photos and the winner will be announced in conjunction with *Athabasca and District Chamber of Commerce 'Tis the Season'* events on December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Prizes will be awarded for Best Residential and Best Non-Residential. The winner of each category will receive a \$100 gift card for a local business.

To enter, please email your photo(s) along with your address and description(s) of your entries to [town@athabasca.ca](mailto:town@athabasca.ca).

It's never too early to start planning – put your festive thinking caps on and prepare to WOW! us with your decorating talents!