



TOWN OF WHITECOURT QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT



NOVEMBER 2023

CONTENTS

Financial Summary2

Quarterly Operating Report3

Variance Highlights - Revenue.....5

Variance Highlights - Expenditures6

2022/2023 Revenue Comparison Graph.....8

2022/2023 Expenditure Comparison Graph.....9

Key Accomplishments.....10

Innovations and Efficiencies.....14

Unforeseen Events and Emergencies15

Granting/Sponsorship Opportunities16

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

TOWN OF WHITECOURT Financial Summary

for the month ended Sept 30, 2023

CASH POSITION	Bank		
	Savings	General	Total
Previous Balance	\$ 5,253,911.74	\$ 51,244,200.00	\$ 56,498,111.74
Receipts	-	1,940,973.93	1,940,973.93
Disbursements	-	(4,468,921.70)	(4,468,921.70)
Transfer from Investments	-	-	-
Transfer to Investments	-	-	-
Net Ledger Balance	\$ 5,253,911.74	\$ 48,716,252.23	\$ 53,970,163.97

CURRENT SHORT TERM RECEIVABLES		
	Current	Arrears
General Receivables	\$ 290,818	\$ 1,280,486
Utility Receivables	\$ 779,761	\$ 17,227

ASSESSMENT INFORMATION			
	Current Taxable Assessment	\$ 1,860,921,560	
	2022 Supplemental Assessment	\$ 1,961,908	
	Levy	% Collected	Outstanding
Arrears Jan 1/23	\$ 702,374	49.83%	\$ 352,390
Current Year Municipal	14,120,750 *	91.27%	1,232,248
Payment Plan	7,467,548	73.83%	1,953,980

* includes Jan 1 Penalty

QUARTERLY OPERATING REPORT

TOWN OF WHITECOURT OPERATING REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	Variance	Budget Spent	2022 Budget	2022 Actual
	\$	\$	\$	%	\$	\$
REVENUES						
Operational Revenues						
Property Taxes	21,448,750	21,656,165	207,415	101.0%	20,589,337	20,575,971
Less: Education Requisition	(5,062,818)	(3,776,390)	1,286,428	74.6%	(5,169,498)	(3,919,233)
Less: Seniors Requisition	(399,284)	(398,995)	289	99.9%	(406,794)	(305,451)
Less: Industrial Property Requisition	(21,011)	(21,038)	(27)	100.1%	(19,266)	(19,636)
Net Municipal Taxes	15,965,637	17,459,742	1,494,105	109.4%	14,993,779	16,331,650
Sales and User Charges	10,481,326	6,897,501	(3,583,825)	65.8%	10,234,797	6,718,083
Licenses and Permits	833,130	420,037	(413,093)	50.4%	769,320	532,064
Government Transfers	5,824,845	884,183	(4,940,662)	15.2%	4,926,007	646,937
Penalties and Costs on Taxes	215,344	306,403	91,059	142.3%	213,094	333,717
Franchise and Concession Contracts	1,794,413	1,122,564	(671,849)	62.6%	1,650,752	1,137,844
Investments Income	1,370,000	1,927,435	557,435	140.7%	235,000	710,661
Rentals	501,458	364,029	(137,429)	72.6%	488,932	303,286
Other Revenues	234,611	276,870	42,259	118.0%	223,698	120,016
Net Operational Revenues	37,220,764	29,658,764	(7,562,001)	79.7%	33,735,379	26,834,258
Non-operational Revenues						
Plus Transfers from reserves	3,620,744	256,862	(3,363,883)	7.1%	4,231,173	123,650
TOTAL REVENUES	40,841,509	29,915,625	(10,925,883)	73.2%	37,966,552	26,957,908

**TOWN OF WHITECOURT
OPERATING REPORT
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2023**

EXPENDITURES

Operational Expenditures						
Legislative	498,828	293,633	(205,195)	58.9%	485,600	308,699
General Government Administration	2,241,212	1,488,657	(752,555)	66.4%	2,166,599	1,454,737
Other General Government Services	645,007	402,353	(242,654)	62.4%	648,804	356,100
Police Protection	3,052,781	1,145,953	(1,906,827)	37.5%	2,525,071	1,073,711
Fire Protection	1,508,754	847,993	(660,760)	56.2%	1,439,857	753,790
Disaster	387,254	514,893	127,639	133.0%	231,397	76,940
By-law Enforcement/Animal Control	401,475	268,631	(132,843)	66.9%	374,725	206,077
Common Services	808,143	832,315	24,173	103.0%	551,220	771,780
Road Transport	4,562,283	2,183,497	(2,378,786)	47.9%	4,247,386	2,738,814
Airport	43,457	-	(43,457)	0.0%	41,616	-
Transit	638,230	471,040	(167,189)	73.8%	583,958	414,774
Storm Sewers	274,057	196,829	(77,228)	71.8%	230,692	131,778
Water Supply and Distribution	2,626,548	1,826,199	(800,349)	69.5%	2,377,216	1,681,119
Wastewater Treatment and Disposal	1,999,122	1,357,119	(642,003)	67.9%	1,981,308	1,279,199
Waste Management	1,648,628	283,246	(1,365,382)	17.2%	1,788,628	380,331
F.C.S.S	1,350,179	831,319	(518,861)	61.6%	1,293,063	775,007
Cemetery	70,359	55,744	(14,616)	79.2%	77,132	56,097
Planning and Development	977,284	488,309	(488,975)	50.0%	821,580	386,960
Economic Development	863,463	417,386	(446,078)	48.3%	795,305	387,531
Land Sales & Rental Revenue	384,136	111,334	(272,802)	29.0%	434,505	187,791
Parks and Recreation	7,674,660	5,132,978	(2,541,682)	66.9%	6,781,020	4,572,531
Library	889,208	722,019	(167,189)	81.2%	869,497	728,877
Total Operational Expenditures	33,545,067	19,871,447	(13,673,620)	59.2%	30,746,179	18,722,641
Non-operational Expenditures						
Debt Repayment (Principal)	710,128	404,745	(305,383)	57.0%	1,004,518	549,151
Transfers to Reserves	6,586,313	2,067,520	(4,518,790)	31.4%	6,215,855	2,005,250
Total Non-operational Expenditures	7,296,441	2,472,265	(4,824,173)	33.9%	7,220,373	2,554,401
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	40,841,509	22,343,712	(18,497,794)	54.7%	37,966,552	21,277,042
NET SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)		7,571,914				5,680,866

VARIANCE HIGHLIGHTS - REVENUE

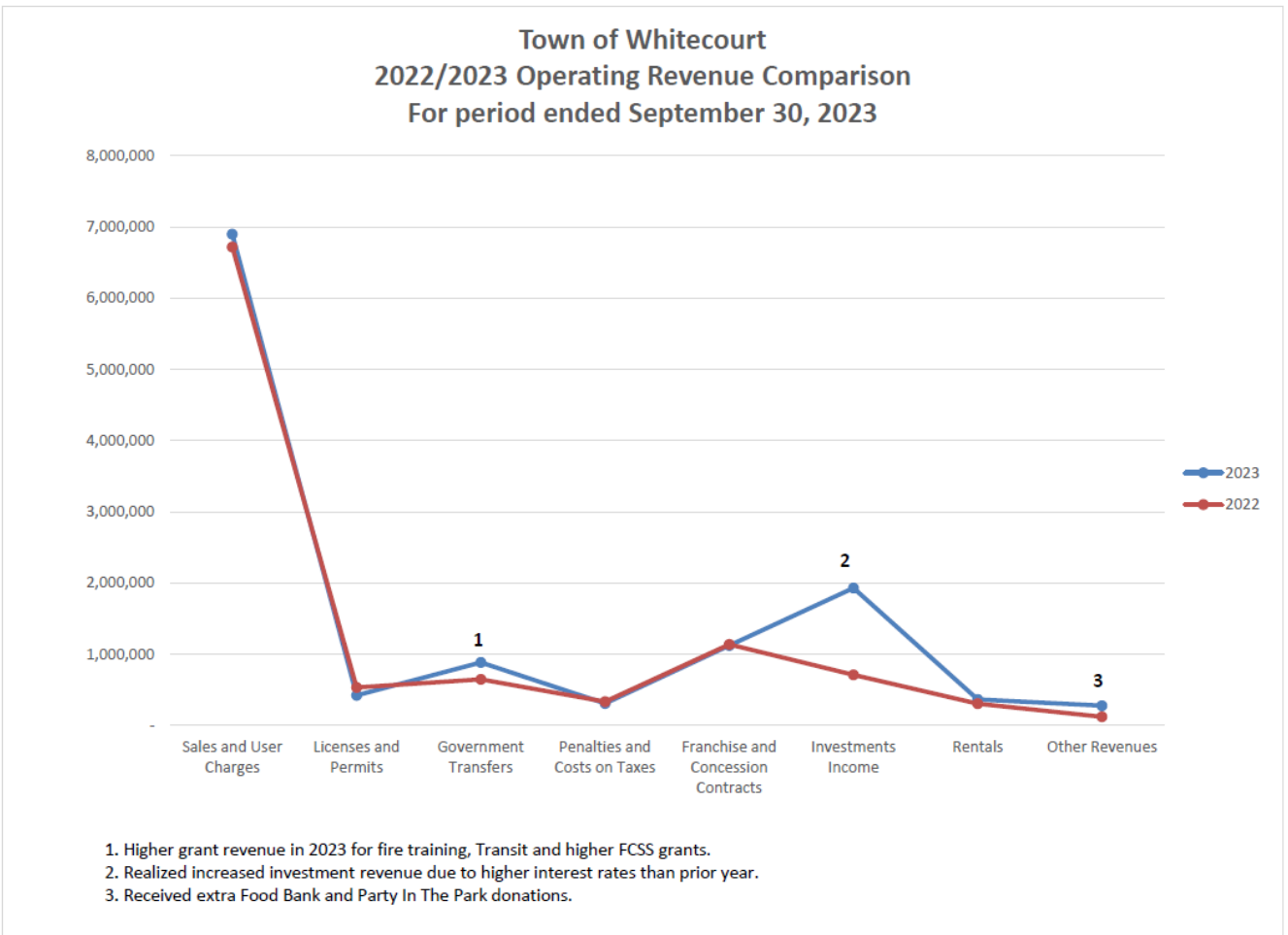
Net Municipal Taxes (109.4%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taxes have been levied for 2023, less four quarterly foundation requisitions, three quarterly school requisitions, and two separate school requisitions.
Sales and User Charges (65.8%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water and Sewer sales amounts are anticipated to be lower than budget by approximately \$100,000 which will be offset by reduced expenditures and contributions to the Sustainability Reserve. Bulk sales are anticipated to be lower by approximately \$75,000 due to less commercial activity than anticipated. Waste disposal sales are forecasted to be down \$75,000 that will be offset by some operational savings. Additional revenues received for Fire Department deployment for providing wildfire assistance outside of the community. Land Sales for \$1.0 million have not been realized by the end of September. Recreation memberships and fitness program revenue lower than budget offset partially by increased admissions and pool revenue.
Licenses, Permits and Fines (50.4%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police and photo radar fines reflect eight months of revenue and are anticipated to be lower than budget by approximately \$80,000 and \$40,000 respectively for the year. The reduction in revenue is partially offset by a reduction in contracting fees for photo radar.
Government Transfers (15.2%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government grants for the Street Improvement Program, Policing and County cost share are recorded as part of the year end process.
Penalties and Costs on Taxes (142.3%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Penalties are higher than budget due to an increase in January 1 penalty revenue for outstanding taxes at the end of 2022.
Franchise Revenue (62.6%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Franchise Fee revenue reflects eight months of revenue and is anticipated to be lower than budget for the gas franchise by approximately \$110,000 and lower for power franchise by approximately \$48,000.
Investment Income (140.7%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interest revenue is anticipated to be higher than budget by \$325,540 due to increasing interest rate for total revenue of \$1,695,540. Interest revenue is reduced at year end for an allocation of interest (34.0% estimated at \$873,460) to prepaid grants and reserves.
Rentals (72.6%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rental revenue is comparable to budget.
Other Revenues (118.0%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donations are anticipated to be higher than budget. Food Bank and Party In The Park donations more than anticipated.
Reserve Transfers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most reserve transfers are generally completed at year end.

VARIANCE HIGHLIGHTS - EXPENDITURES

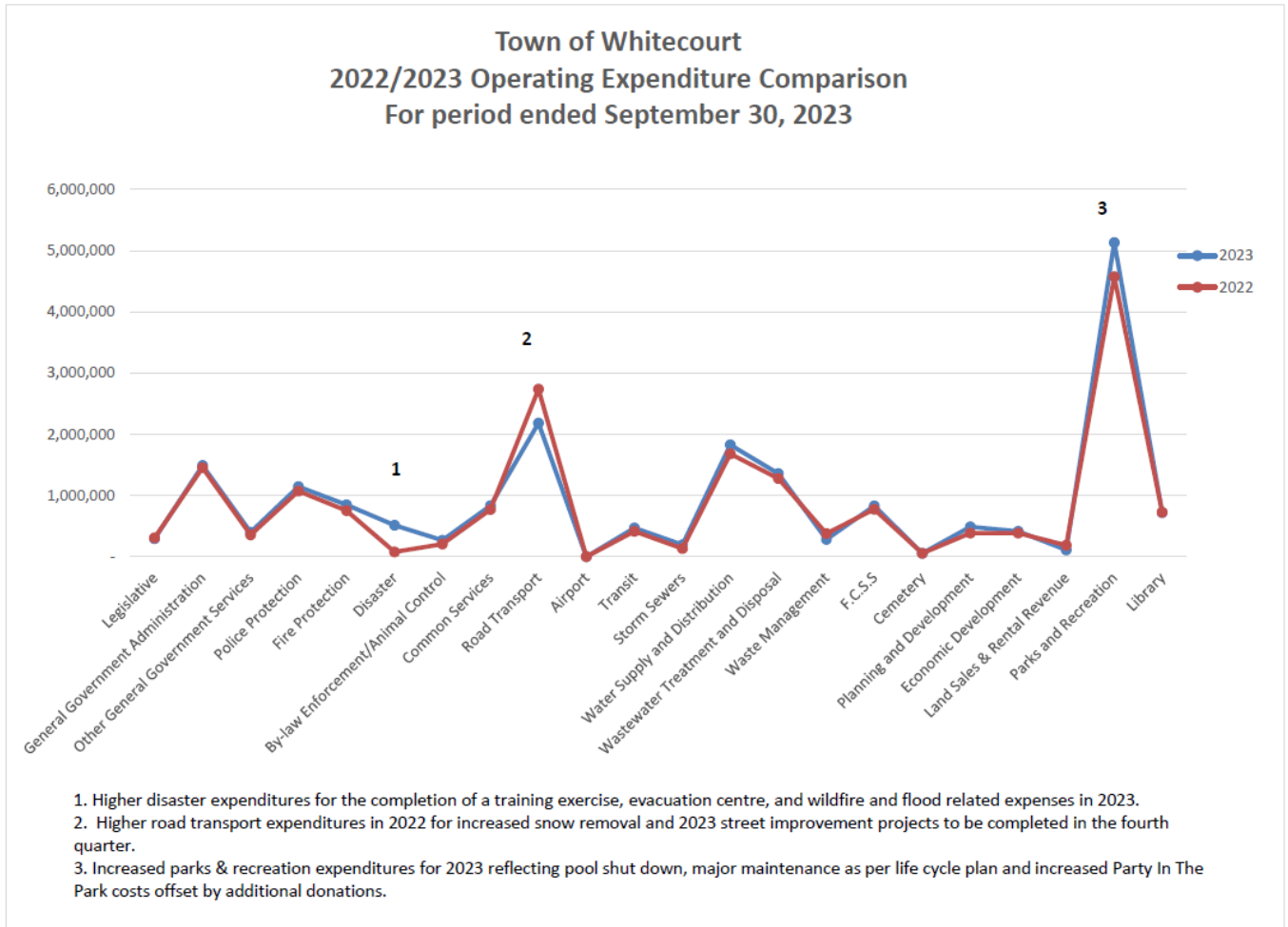
Legislative (58.9%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council did not attend FCM in May due to wildfires. Expenses for Alberta Municipalities conference will be recognized by year end.
Other General Government (62.4%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget software – capital module project carry forward to 2024. Bad debt and employer/councillors expenses recorded at year end.
Police Protection (37.5%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal contract costs lower as only one quarterly invoice has been processed to date, and the Victim Services grant will be paid by year end. Contracting fees for photo radar anticipated to be lower due to lower revenue for the year.
Fire Protection (56.2%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expenditures for the annual award banquet and the volunteer fire fighter honorariums occur in the fall and for year end respectively. Summer student crew and fire master plan deferred to 2024 awaiting grant funding.
Disaster (133.0%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency plan updated and emergency management tabletop exercise complete. Spur rock replacement, safety manual update and spur signage to be completed in 2024. Wildfire and flood expenditures totalling \$404,079 to be recovered from grants and other municipalities.
Common Services (103.0%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs higher for unplanned vehicle and equipment repairs to date. Nine months credit for equipment charges are included.
Road Transport (47.9%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Street Improvement Program of (\$1.91 million) for various projects are anticipated to be completed by the end of the year or deferred to 2024. Annual road maintenance, curbs and sidewalks, snow removal, and Christmas lights expenditures are anticipated by year end.
Airport (0.0%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual grant of \$43,457 to be recorded by year end.
Waste Management (17.2%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only eight months of garbage collection contract recorded and green initiative deferred to 2024. The annual requisition for operation of the Regional Landfill Authority for \$1.17 million is completed at year end and contributes to the variance.
FCSS (61.6%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less senior trips and programming in first half of year due to participation levels. Youth Development staff position vacancy in first part of year now filled.
Planning and Development (50.0%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced costs due to LUB/MDP review and Vitalization grants to be completed by year end. Major Offsite Levy Bylaw review to be completed in 2024.
Economic Development (48.3%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospice and Habitat for Humanity Grants (\$90,000) developer and external committee driven. Economic Development grants to be issued before year end. Business support projects underway for 2023 to be completed by year end.

Land Sales and Development (29.0%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No cost incurred for sale of land to date.• Geotech, Resource Plan and 33rd Street Extension Upgrade deferred to 2024.
Debt Repayment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Debenture payments on track.
Reserve Transfers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most reserve transfers completed at year end once projects have been finalized.

2022/2023 REVENUE COMPARISON GRAPH



2022/2023 EXPENDITURE COMPARISON GRAPH



KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ✓ Annual performance assessment review of the Council Committee Bylaw 1570 was completed for the efficiency and effectiveness of all Council Committees.
- ✓ A review of Council comments on Policy 11-006 - Honorariums and Council Per Diem Compensation, Benefits and Allowances was completed by the Council Compensation Committee.
- ✓ As per policy, Administration completed its annual review of the Town of Whitecourt Policy Manual that serves as an operating guideline for Council, staff and the public for municipality to serve the community efficiently and effectively.
- ✓ Successfully hosted several Family Support Programs in July and September:
 - Beat the Heat: 30 adults, 47 children
 - Park Adventures: 24 adults, 43 children
 - Kids in Action: 35 adults, 49 children, 1 youth.
 - Family Frenzy: 7 adults, 7 children, 5 youth.
 - Musical Munchkins: 17 adults, 16 children.
 - Creative Chaos: 20 adults, 35 children.
 - Touring Tots: 3 adults, 4 children, 7 seniors
- ✓ The Mountain Pine Beetle project was completed with 72 trees on Town property being controlled; and three trees controlled on private properties.
- ✓ Canada Day, held on July 1 at Festival Park, was well received by the community with approximately 1,800 in attendance.
- ✓ Highlights of recreational programs offered in the summer include:
 - Outdoor Pickle Ball net was utilized almost every day during the summer months.
 - Swimming lessons ran with higher numbers in July compared to previous years.
 - Child Mind's evening numbers were higher throughout the summer than seen in years.
 - The hot tub was fixed and re-opened to the public on August 25.
 - The Rotary Club of Whitecourt sponsored Summer Unplugged and 2.0 programs which continued to be well attended. Programs ran at an average of 90% full over the summer.
 - A permanent dehumidifier was installed at JDA Place in September.
 - The Community Connections event was held on September 7, with 15 vendors and approximately 100 participants.
 - Pick Your Fit was offered September 6-9, providing an opportunity for community members to try out new fitness classes for free before registering. 141 guests tried out the 22 classes that were offered that week.
 - The 15th Anniversary Membership Sale at the Allan & Jean Millar Centre generated \$16,313.83 in revenue.
 - Coaches Appreciation Week held in September went well, with 78 nominations from throughout the community. An online nomination form was utilized this year to increase accessibility for nominations.
 - The Enchanted Forest Walk received over 110 entries.

- Adult soccer drop-in nights have been busy; and if it continues, the full fieldhouse may be booked to accommodate the extra players.
- Installation of Jumbo Jumper was completed and the new feature has become a highlight for Festival Park visitors.
- ✓ The Summer Street Fest event welcomed an estimated 2,000 attendees. The event provided an opportunity to bring the community together through various activities, music, and dance and to collaborate with local businesses to showcase unique offerings and services. The event effectively increased foot traffic, and increased awareness and revenue generation for the local business community.
- ✓ Three representatives from Whitecourt's sister community, Yubetsu, Japan, visited Whitecourt to have discussions on restarting the student exchange program between the two towns. The Town of Yubetsu would like to resume the exchange program in the fall of 2024 by sending students to Whitecourt, with Whitecourt's students to resume visiting Yubetsu at a later date that is to be determined.
- ✓ The Whitecourt Food Bank all-time record for clients served in one day was broken this September with a total of 81 people across 15 families being served in three hours.
- ✓ The Community Services Department hosted Fall Fest, a free event for the community that incorporates an Alberta Culture Days component. Various partners helped make the event a success, including the Family Support Program, the Whitecourt & District Public Library, Alberta Culture Days, and Microtel. An estimated 150 people attended the event.
- ✓ Efforts continue on the review of the Town's Municipal Development Plan and Land Use Bylaw, as well as the completion of the North Flats Area Structure Plan. A second open house and public survey was completed to help gather input on specific topics of public interest and concern. Compilation of the final draft documents is now underway.
- ✓ The Whitecourt & Woodlands Performing Arts Society hosted Jimmy Rankin Trio at the St. Joseph Parish Hall on September 29. 265 tickets were issued for the concert. Great feedback was received about the concert from attendees.
- ✓ The What's Out There event was hosted for adults on Thursday, September 14. This event was hosted at the Allan & Jean Millar Centre, and focused on showcasing different recreational opportunities for adults in Whitecourt. 12 organizations attended, each with an interactive component for attendees. There was a total of 44 attendees this year (compared to 26 last year). Overall feedback from the event was positive, with suggestions for improvement and growth in 2024.
- ✓ Marketing for the Allan & Jean Millar Centre continues to be a priority project with staff goals and incentives, partnerships with a local restaurant, billboard implementation, promotional videos at the local theatre and attention to social media information and interactions. Daily admission revenue is on track to meet budget goals.
- ✓ As per the replacement plan, the selectorized machines and Smith machine in the Pembina Fitness Centre has been replaced. In response to member feedback, a half rack and deadlifting platform were also purchased and have been installed.
- ✓ The Asset Management Implementation Plan was completed. This Plan provides a long term strategy and framework for the Town to enhance existing practices, and develop a more comprehensive asset management program for all asset classes. A four-year implementation

schedule has been identified and planning for the next phase of the project is underway for 2024 budget considerations.

- ✓ Road Closure Bylaw 1567 was approved by the Minister of Transportation and adopted by Council on August 22, 2023. The closure of this road plan will allow for the area to be consolidated with adjacent Town owned lots within Festival Park.
- ✓ The sewer flushing program is being undertaken by staff with assistance from a contractor to clean out debris in the 30-inch main sewage trunk line from the CN Railway track to the Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- ✓ New cladding/insulation is being installed on the Water Treatment Plant outside walls.
- ✓ The Wastewater Treatment Plant Study is at the feasibility stage and the final report is to be submitted by end of November.
- ✓ Five manholes have been rehabilitated. Three of the manholes have had the sidewalls coated with polyurethane, and the other two have had the concrete at the bottom of manhole (benching) upgraded.
- ✓ As part of the investment attraction program, key industry outreach was established to support projects and initiatives that will diversify the economy, support new investment and enhance viability of existing businesses. Whitecourt has been working with a number of investors and developers including Moraine Initiatives, which is a wholly owned subsidiary of the General Electric Company, on a power generation carbon capture project in our area. This project will mark a new milestone in the energy sector by being the first of its kind in the region.
- ✓ The Whitecourt Launch Program provided an opportunity for highly motivated entrepreneurs to access financial support through a competitive application process and a “pitch” presentation to compete for grant funding to help scale their business. The program was fully subscribed and six eligible proposals were received. Candidates worked closely with Administration and were supported by Community Futures Yellowhead East for additional business mentorship, business plan guidance, and pitch presentation assistance. TimberChic Design was successful in receiving funds through program.
- ✓ The Health Professionals Attraction and Retention Committee has been actively engaging with potential doctors, nurses, medical students, and various other healthcare professionals and their families. The Committee hosted a family barbeque for health professionals with over 120 participating from various health sectors. Whitecourt has seen three new doctors and two nurses choose Whitecourt as their place of practice. Community tours, Allan & Jean Millar Centre passes, and welcome information were provided to four medical students working and living in the community over the past three months.
- ✓ The #ExploreWhitecourt marketing campaign was launched to further enhance regional awareness of the tourism sector with a focus on the art and culture scene and highlighting Whitecourt as a destination. New videos, photos, storytelling and social media content were created.
- ✓ The Business Directory is a valuable tool that provides new and established businesses with the opportunity to connect, increase awareness and build business presence. There are currently 654 business participating and active on the directory.
- ✓ A Downtown Working Group has formed a collaborative approach to identify actions and responsibilities as we work together to enhance the downtown and create new energy. A

successful networking event was held with 25 downtown business owners and managers coming together to identify synergies and next steps to support the downtown business sector.

- ✓ The Wastewater Treatment Plant annual lagoon sludge clean out and land application haul project is complete.
- ✓ New underground water and sewer lines entering Festival Park have been installed by the contractor and are currently being pressure tested.
- ✓ The water leak detection equipment was purchased and utilities staff have trained by the manufacturer to use. The staff were successful in detecting the location of a leak at the Allan & Jean Millar Centre hot tub.
- ✓ Awarded Automatic Traffic Enforcement contract to Conduent Business Solutions, effective 2024.
- ✓ Awarded Health & Safety Program contract to Artis Inc. to update the Town's safety manual.
- ✓ Fire Training Grounds Phase 1 has been paved and the landscaping completed at the Fire Hall.
- ✓ Staff attended the Pembina Emergency Management Exercise that will provide more opportunities for partnerships in the future.
- ✓ A Side by Side to replace the aging Argo Unit was purchased and delivered. The unit is expected to go into service once outfitting is complete.
- ✓ The Whitecourt FireSmart Working Group hosted an Appreciation BBQ for emergency services and Town Staff in September.
- ✓ The FireSmart Home Assessment Grant Program concluded in September with 72 home assessments completed and fifteen cheques handed out to residents for qualifying FireSmart upgrades. The program was funded from a grant.
- ✓ Highlights for Whitecourt Fire Department members include:
 - Six members of the Fire Department completed 1001 Level 2.
 - An Oath Ceremony for nine new Fire Department members was held.
 - A temporary Fire Services Operator was hired to assist with department operations and covering for staff leave.
- ✓ All School Action for Emergencies (SAFE) Plans were updated for the new school year including the new École St. Anne School.
- ✓ The Town's Community Assisted Policing Through the Use of Recorded Evidence (CAPTURE) Program was migrated over to the provincial program. Moving this program provincially expands the database to reach a larger audience. This program has the goal to reduce the amount of time it would take an investigator to locate potential video evidence.
- ✓ Installation of a memorial bench and new winter banners was completed at Festival Park.
- ✓ Phase one of the Sump Pit Materials Testing Incentive Program was completed. It is a partnership program with industrial and commercial property owners which aims to reduce prohibited substances entering the wastewater system.
- ✓ Construction drawings for the Culture & Events Centre project were prepared, and updated costing came in \$10 million more than the anticipated \$59 million previously presented during the public education campaign. Through public consultation processes, Council heard from the residents that affordability was a priority. Administration presented modified concept plans to Council at recent workshops, which have resulted in a cost reduction for the project.
- ✓ Worked with Alberta Transportation to remove a retaining wall which had deteriorated beyond repair on the Highway 43 pathway at the intersection of 51 Street and Highway 43. The area now

features a gradual slope which is safer for pedestrians using the nearby path, and will make it easier for staff to clear the pathway in the winter.

- ✓ School zone signs were set up and a radar sign was installed prior to the École St. Anne School opening, along with the new “No Parking Zone”.
- ✓ Assisted Heritage Society to clean up the metal waste at the Forest Interpretive Centre and installed a longer vent pipe at the lift station to mitigate the odour/smell issues.
- ✓ Council approved entering into an amending agreement with Alberta Municipalities Power+ Program for a six-year period effective January 1, 2024 that will provide for budget stability, pricing certainty, economies of scale, and access to wholesale markets.
- ✓ Whitecourt hosted the Career and Education Expo & Job Fair at the at the Allan & Jean Millar Centre with 70 businesses, industry and post-secondary exhibitors participating. There were 1200 students in attendance from Northern Gateway, Living Waters, and Pembina Hills School Divisions. An estimated 346 attended from the general public and 148 resumes were directly received by local business and industry. Planning partners included Whitecourt; Woodlands County; Northern Gateway Public School Division; Living Waters Catholic School Division; Community Futures; CAREERS, Government of Alberta - Alberta Jobs, Economy, and Trade; and two new planning partners joined this year were Town of Mayerthorpe, and the Whitecourt & District Chamber of Commerce.
- ✓ Several infrastructure contracts were awarded during the summer that included:
 - Westcore Contracting to complete the portion of work to ensure the newly-installed infrastructure for the Water System Upgrades Project is accessible for operations and maintenance.
 - Pembina West Co-op to supply fuel.
 - Concrete Crushers Inc. to crush the concrete stockpile. Concrete will be re-purposed in place of gravel with a portion to be used in the Water System Upgrades access road project and the remainder on future infrastructure projects.

INNOVATIONS AND EFFICIENCIES

- ✓ As a designated community under the Alberta Advantage Immigration Program (AAIP), the Economic Development Committee has supported 65 local businesses to date in attracting employees under the AAIP Program; 35 of those businesses have met their recruitment needs. 61 candidates are living and working in Whitecourt within 26 established businesses.
- ✓ Due to one of the Transit buses being down in August for repairs, the Dial-A-Bus was reallocated as an extra transit unit to help maintain service levels.
- ✓ Due to the lack of interest in recent isolation reducing excursions, the bus trip planned to Fort Edmonton Park was converted into an intergenerational excursion. This allowed both youth from the Rotary Unplugged program and interested seniors to share the cost of the bus. This program was a huge success with 20 seniors and 25 youth participating in the excursion.
- ✓ The Municipal Enforcement team has moved to e-ticketing to improve efficiencies and to innovate the way that ticketing is done.

- ✓ Controlling invasive weed (Himalayan Balsam) earlier than usual this year made it easier and safer for staff.
- ✓ A new method to winterize the Splash Park was undertaken utilizing a local company to push RV antifreeze from the header to each element. It is anticipated that this will prevent line breaks.
- ✓ Crushing of the concrete stockpile was completed so that the material can be recycled as a value-added road base material.
- ✓ The installation of a French drain (catch basin) on the alley between Sunset Boulevard and McLeod Drive has improved the water drainage in the back alley.
- ✓ Two portable gates were built in-house for Graham Acres and at the bottom of 49 Street and Dahl Drive.
- ✓ A grader blade was purchased from a company that went out of business which created a savings of over 50% on the purchase.
- ✓ The Whitecourt Communities in Bloom Committee investigated graffiti removal programs for businesses and residences in other communities resulting in the purchase of two types of recommended graffiti removal kits. The kits provided an affordable, tested, all-in-one kit with everything needed to remove tagging and graffiti for residents and businesses that will reduce barriers and hopefully increase the action taken in our community to counteract property destruction and vandalism.

UNFORESEEN EVENTS AND EMERGENCIES

- ✓ Due to wildfire smoke causing poor air quality in the region, Relay for Life was held at the JDA Place instead of at Festival Park on June 10.
- ✓ Between mid-August and mid-September, Whitecourt hosted evacuees from many regions of the Northwest Territories displaced due to wildfire. A reception centre was established at the Allan & Jean Millar Centre to provide support to evacuees.
- ✓ The hot tub at the Pembina Gas Infrastructure Aquatic Centre had frequent line breaks, causing the hot tub to be shut down for a long period of time. It was difficult to find a contractor with leak detection equipment.
- ✓ The July and August Park Parties were cancelled due to inclement weather.
- ✓ During August and September, the Whitecourt Fire Department deployed crews and equipment to the Northwest Territories to provide wildfire assistance.
- ✓ ICS-200 training was cancelled due to wildfires in the Northwest Territories and was rescheduled for October.
- ✓ A new fence and hazing activities worked well to control the goose population in Festival Park early in the season. Unfortunately, the flood brought geese up the creek and over the fences. A permit to relocate the geese was obtained and the geese were relocated at the end of July without

any problems. Next year, staff will apply for an expanded permit at the beginning of the year so that if additional goose control is required all necessary permitting will be in place.

- ✓ Due to damage caused by flooding at Riverboat Park, the playground has been closed. The playground will remain closed until the spring of 2024 when the new playground equipment will be delivered and installed.
- ✓ Removal of football posts and swings in Southland Park was required due to the wet, soggy ground and movement of the posts.
- ✓ Crews responded to four beaver dams which affected drainage in the Athabasca Flats East region and one beaver dam from west end drainage system going to Riverboat Park. Once beavers were safely trapped and relocated, vegetation clearing and drainage efforts ensured the area's natural drainage could be re-established.
- ✓ Security measures were installed, including bear traps and signage, after four bears were spotted in or near Festival Park over the summer months.
- ✓ Fire Department members, with assistance from the Public Works staff, attended an incident when a fuel tanker truck collided with a diesel engine at Highway 43 rail crossing. Community Services set up a reception centre for travelling public on either side of the crossing.
- ✓ The new sewer flush truck purchase has been delayed until February 2024.

GRANTING/SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

- ✓ In June, the Whitecourt Food Bank received additional 'After the Bell' food kits, which supported kids through the Food Bank's lunch program throughout July and August.
- ✓ École St. Mary School donated earnings from the school's carnival that was held in June to the Whitecourt Food Bank.
- ✓ Whitecourt Transport and Trimline became official supporters of the Whitecourt Food Bank.
- ✓ The Whitecourt Twin Arenas received new sponsorship from JDA Oilfield Hauling. The facility is now named 'JDA Place'.
- ✓ Whitecourt Transport renewed its sponsorship of one of the JDA Place Change Rooms.
- ✓ The Whitecourt Food Bank received donations from Innisfail Food Bank and Champion X in July.
- ✓ The Whitecourt Food Bank received eight free pallets from Alberta Food Banks to assist evacuees. Whitecourt Transport delivered the pallets for free.
- ✓ Two food drives were completed on behalf of the Whitecourt Food Bank.
- ✓ The Food Bank applied for multiple grants in August that included:
 - \$10,000 TELUS Grant.
 - \$5000 Red Cross Fire Relief Grant.
 - After the Bell Grant.

- ✓ An application was submitted to the Government of Canada Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund for projects that could be undertaken to protect critical municipal infrastructure in a flood event.
- ✓ An application to the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (FRIAA) to provide funding for a FireSmart Coordinator two-year position that will be the FireSmart champion overseeing public education, home assessments, and future FireSmart initiatives.
- ✓ An application was submitted to the Disaster Recovery Program to recover costs incurred responding to the June 2023 flood event, and for recovery of costs to repair damages to Town infrastructure.
- ✓ An application was submitted to the Fire Training Grant to support the cost of annual training courses that are part of the core competency requirements for firefighters to provide a basic level of service to members of our community and the general public who are traveling through our area.
- ✓ United Way Northwest Territories provided funding to purchase gift cards for displaced Northwest Territories residents impacted by wildfire.
- ✓ An application was submitted to the Housing Accelerator Fund for a grant that will provide incentive funding to local governments encouraging initiatives aimed at increasing housing supply. It also supports the development of complete, low-carbon and climate-resilient communities that are affordable, inclusive, equitable and diverse.
- ✓ An application was submitted to the Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program for a grant for the Athabasca River bank vegetation restoration that will include restorative planting of 4500+/- square metres of bank and bars with Willow whips or live stakes. This will address more than 30% of the area affected along the south shore of the Athabasca in Whitecourt.
- ✓ The Town was awarded grant funding for a two-year term from the United Way and Healthy Aging Alberta to provide Social Prescribing for seniors in Whitecourt and area. This framework is being used to guide efforts to increase senior's capacity to age safely in place. The grant provides funding to support one full-time contract Seniors Resource Lead position to serve and meet the needs of older adults accessing the Social Prescribing Program.
- ✓ Kidsport received a donation of \$2,600 a year for three years from New Venture Safety Services Ltd.
- ✓ Staff assisted the Whitecourt Seniors Circle with its New Horizon Grant application for \$25,000 to provide funding for painting of the interior walls and ceiling at the facility.