
2022 Minister's Awards for Municipal and Public Library Excellence



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Message from the Minister



Congratulations to the outstanding recipients of the 2022 Minister's Awards for Municipal and Public Library Excellence! These awards provide ministry and peer recognition for excellence in municipal and library services for Albertans. It is an honour and privilege to recognize your efforts, dedication and ingenuity – and, of course, the impressive work you do every day.

Municipalities, so often intrinsically involved in the daily lives of Albertans, provide important services and programs that help make our communities strong, prosperous and resilient. Each one of the winning initiatives highlights the very best in public service, from enhancing community safety and service delivery, fostering partnerships, cutting red tape, and building economic strength. Thank you all for your willingness to share your municipality's accomplishments, and I wish you continued success going forward.

In the age of information, public libraries play a necessary and ever-evolving role in our communities. No longer just a place to borrow books, public libraries provide critical community services that equip local residents with important life skills, all the while providing opportunities to learn, build relationships and inspire one another. Congratulations to this year's winners, and thank you for sharing your uplifting successes.

This year marks the first time the awards for municipalities and public libraries were brought together under one program, with 44 submissions from across Alberta. Thank you to every organization who took the time to submit their programs and initiatives for consideration. All of the submissions exemplify excellent public services and are a great way for municipalities and public libraries to learn from each other and share best practices.

The selection process relied on expert review committees made up of municipal and library representatives. For the municipal awards, thank you to representatives from Alberta Municipalities, Rural Municipalities of Alberta, the Local Government Administration Association, the Alberta Rural Municipal Administrators' Association and the Society of Local Government Managers. I would also like to thank our library award representatives from the Alberta Library Trustees Association and the Library Association of Alberta. We are all very fortunate to be able to benefit from your time and thoughtful contributions.

Once again, congratulations to this year's winners!

Ric McIver, Minister of Municipal Affairs

About the awards



Since 2002, the Minister's Awards for Municipal Excellence program has encouraged municipalities to share their successes by recognizing accomplishments in the provision of municipal services in Alberta. The Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Library Service were created in 2010. The two programs were combined in 2022 to ensure both municipalities and public libraries could be recognized for their work.

Each year, municipalities and public library boards submit successful initiatives to be considered for recognition. Submissions include new and unique approaches to issues, streamlined processes for existing practices, and creative community partnerships. Submissions must demonstrate the practice addressed a community need and has been in place for a sufficient length of time to produce verifiable results.

For 2022, submissions were received from municipalities in the categories of Building Economic Strength, Enhancing Community Safety, Partnership, Red Tape Reduction, Service

Delivery Enhancement, and Smaller Municipalities. Public library board submissions were considered in two categories - Public Library Services (serving under 10,000 population) and Public Library Services (serving over 10,000 population),

Municipal submissions were evaluated by a panel of municipal representatives from Alberta Municipalities, Rural Municipalities of Alberta, Local Government Administration Association, Society of Local Government Managers, and Alberta Rural Municipal Administrators' Association. Public library board submissions were evaluated by representatives from the Alberta Library Trustees Association and the Library Association of Alberta.

Review committee members considered how submitted initiatives demonstrated measurable and sustainable impacts, used innovative approaches to meet community challenges and needs, the transferability and applicability of the initiative for other municipalities to support learning and knowledge sharing, and the quality of the submission.

Award categories

Building Economic Strength Category



Businesses as a result of the Major Business Attraction Initiative in Parkland County

The Building Economic Strength award is given for an innovative initiative that builds the economic capacity and/or resiliency of the community and/or improves the attractiveness of the community to businesses, investors, and visitors.

2022 AWARD RECIPIENT

Parkland County: “Major Business Attraction”

Parkland County’s Major Business Attraction Program aims to attract investors and major industry to the area with a specialized and customized approach, with the goal of creating jobs, increasing tax revenue, and becoming a recognized leader in attracting innovation and investment to the region.

The program brings together a dedicated team of business development officers, planners, engineers, and other County administration staff to aid in the process of either building in

or relocating a major business to Parkland County from start to finish. The business applicant is assigned a dedicated project manager from the Economic Diversification team at the County, who works closely with the applicant through all stages of planning, development, engineering and marketing steps to ensure that the business can operate in the County in a timely and efficient manner. This program results in an expedited, collaborative, and efficient approval process, which under normal timelines would take two to three times longer and with significant uncertainty and cost to the business applicant.

BUILDING ECONOMIC STRENGTH: OTHER INITIATIVES

No other submissions received in this category.

Award categories

Enhancing Community Safety Category

The Enhancing Community Safety award is given for an innovative initiative that engages the community to address a safety issue. This could involve crime prevention, infrastructure enhancements, and community services initiatives.

2022 AWARD RECIPIENT

Strathcona County: “Violence, Trauma and Suicide Prevention Protocol”

The Violence, Trauma and Suicide Prevention Protocol (VTSP) is a commitment by community partners to collectively respond to instances or threats of violence, trauma, and suicide. This community approach was designed to mitigate and/or respond to trauma experienced from violent events such as school shootings, bombings, homicide-suicides, or high-profile suicides. The protocol outlines the interconnected nature of violence, trauma, and suicide, and offers a unified approach to holistically support the community. Through research, it is known that violence and trauma are fundamentally linked. Trauma can infiltrate a population, and by not taking an active role in supporting the community through violent and traumatic events, the “silence intensifies the impact of trauma, and trauma that goes unspoken, un-witnessed, and unclaimed too often “outs itself” as more violence to self or others”.

Built upon the foundational work of the North American Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response, the VTSP Protocol is a structure and commitment providing guidance on how the community and social ecosystem will come together in prevention of and response to violence and trauma in Strathcona County. The protocol was signed by 16 local and provincial organizations on March 16, 2022, and is the first of its kind in North America.

ENHANCING COMMUNITY SAFETY: OTHER INITIATIVES

City of Calgary: “Stephen Avenue Safety Hub”

The Stephen Avenue Safety Hub is a first of its kind facility in Canada, centrally located where officers from Calgary Community Standards (Bylaw Services), Calgary Transit and the Calgary Police Service work together to better serve the downtown community. The safety hub is not a traditional community station; rather, it allows officers to have a dedicated space for multi-service collaboration. The site supports the City of Calgary’s priority of safety by increasing the presence of uniformed officers and providing an enhanced sense of safety and security for citizens and businesses, which contributes to the vibrancy of the downtown core.



Violence, Trauma and Suicide Prevention Protocol Signatories: Back row; (left to right): Darrell Reid, Mark Snaterse, Ann Marie LePan, Clay Golden, Lereña Greig, Paul Corrigan, Kevin Cameron, Farah Albert, Kiara Warkentin, Karen Kadatz, Wade Gardiner
Front row (left to right): Mark Liguori, Mayor Rod Frank, Sharon Siga, Ty Roed, Dale Kendall

Award categories

Partnership Category



Mayor Jyoti Gondek and students working on the Calgary Minecraft Challenge

The Partnership award is given for an innovative initiative involving a local or regional partnership that achieves results that could not have otherwise been accomplished by the municipality alone. This could involve cooperation, coordination, and collaboration with other municipalities, businesses, Indigenous communities, non-profit organizations, community groups, and other orders of government to achieve a specific outcome.

2022 AWARD RECIPIENT

City of Calgary: “Level Up, Calgary Minecraft Challenge”

Partners: Calgary Board of Education and Microsoft Canada

The City of Calgary’s Downtown Strategy team is focused on leveraging the collective efforts of its public and private sector partners to respond to prolonged economic challenges, drive economic recovery, and revitalize and transform the downtown. The team collaborated with the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) and Microsoft Canada to launch Level Up, Calgary! This is the first student Minecraft: Education Edition design challenge of its kind in Canada.

CBE students from all grade levels accessed a custom world, including the heart of Calgary’s downtown core rendered in Minecraft. Students were asked to submit a design in response to the “design prompt”: “How might we reimagine our public spaces to enrich the lives of Calgarians and strengthen our community?” Students restructured and rebuilt Calgary’s downtown in the pixelated world of Minecraft to demonstrate creativity, collaboration, and problem solving.

The partnerships with the CBE enabled the City to engage and start conversations with Calgary’s youth to leverage ideas about revitalizing the downtown and to help shift the City’s thinking about the future of Calgary’s downtown. The technical and youth connection Microsoft was able to bring to the project made the project accessible to students. The key outcome is young people are now engaged in addressing vibrancy in the downtown; they understand they have a role to play in the success of the City; and they are learning how to become city builders to advance the City’s policy pillars of Live, Work, Place, and Connect.

This project was launched in September 2021 with student awards occurring in March 2022. Throughout 2022, awarded students will work with city planners and architects to inform downtown projects. This project is expected to expand on 2021/22 successes and be made available to all Calgary students.

PARTNERSHIP: OTHER INITIATIVES

City of Lacombe: “Intermunicipal Monitoring of Community Peace Officers for Safety and Compliance”

Partners: Lacombe Police Service, Lacombe County, Red Deer County, Clearwater County, Town of Innisfail, Kneehill County, Town of Sylvan Lake (Partnering Agencies).

The City of Lacombe has a municipal police force (the Lacombe Police Service), which includes a dispatch centre. Dispatchers receive 911 calls, allocate response units, and monitor officers 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. Recently, changes were made to the Peace Officer Program, requiring all employers to institute manned central communication systems for peace officers to inform where they are going and for what purpose. To assist other municipalities without this capacity, the City of Lacombe has extended these services (through contract) to nearly 30 community peace officers in Lacombe County, Red Deer County, Clearwater County, the Town of Innisfail, Kneehill County, and the Town of Sylvan Lake.

City of Lloydminster: “Lloydminster Public Library Relocation Project”

Partners: Lloydminster Public Library Board and Staff, and Lakeland Library Region

The project began in earnest in 2020 with a partnership between the City and Lloydminster Public Library (LPL). The LPL had outgrown its home in the downtown core and a modernized environment was needed to sustain and build usership. Working with limited capital, the parties sought leasing options, rather than purchasing or building new. Municipal services including Human Resources, Information Technology, Buildings, and Communications were utilized to move the project forward, and an Memorandum of Understanding was drafted to guide the development and operation of the new space.

Lac La Biche County: “PureFibre Broadband Project between Lac La Biche County and TELUS”

Partner: TELUS

This initiative is a collaboration between Lac La Biche County and TELUS that provided a connection to the fastest internet in the world with speeds up to 2.5 Gbps. There were over 1,100 premises connected with the success of the project. The project also served greater cellular tower coverage across the County.

Parkland County: “Tri-Municipal Regional Plan”

Partners: City of Spruce Grove and Town of Stony Plain

Parkland County, the City of Spruce Grove, and the Town of Stony Plain undertook a large-scale review to identify and prioritize opportunities for greater coordination and collaboration among the three municipalities. The goal of this work was to enhance governance, service delivery, fiscal capacity, and economic prosperity for the communities' citizens and businesses. In-depth strategies were developed related to economic development, infrastructure planning, and social development, and recommendations were reviewed and consolidated into a final Integrated Tri-Municipal Regional Plan in spring 2021. This initiative was enabled through the generous financial support of Prairies Economic Development Canada.

Town of Blackfalds: “Eagle Builders Centre”

Partners: Dual Ice Development Society, Eagle Builders, Lacombe County, Owner of the Jr. A Blackfalds Bulldogs, Town of Blackfald Library Board

The Eagle Builders Centre (EBC) is home ice to the Blackfalds Bulldogs Alberta Junior Hockey League club. The facility includes an additional hockey rink with over 1,400 seats, multi-purpose rooms, concession, retail spaces, and a mini-rink to accommodate our upcoming hockey stars. The Servus Credit Union Public Library is over 12,000 sq. ft., is considered one of the largest libraries in central Alberta and features two levels, a multi-purpose room, an extended outdoor patio, and other amenities. The EBC significantly impacts the Town's ability to provide multiple sports, recreation, arts, and culture opportunities to the community.

Yellowhead County: “School-Hosted Public Libraries in Yellowhead County”

Partners: Yellowhead County Library Board and Grande Yellowhead Public School Division

In partnership with one another since 1998, the Yellowhead County Public Library Board and the Grande Yellowhead Public School Division (GYPSD) have facilitated two community public libraries to locate within hamlet school buildings. This joint venture has ensured library patrons have enhanced library services and an opportunity for greater interaction with their local school; at the same time students and teachers benefitted from ready access to a comprehensive range of public library resources.

Award categories

Public Library Services Category (serving under 10,000 population)



A patron browses through some of the tools available in the Library of Things.

The Public Library Services (serving under 10,000 population) awards are given for two library service initiatives that demonstrate excellence and innovation. The initiatives should also demonstrate responsiveness to community needs and provide direct benefit to the public.

2022 AWARD RECIPIENTS

Town of Banff Library Board: “Library of Things”

Banff Public Library collaborated with Town of Banff Community Services and Resource Recovery to develop and implement an item lending program where all Banff Public Library patrons can borrow items that may be rarely used, hard to store, or expensive. The collection contains over 150 items including power tools, cooking gadgets, sewing machines, digital projectors, internet smart hubs, and much more. The “Library of Things” provides a resource for local families in a community where the cost-of-living is high and indoor space is often limited.

In addition to the economic benefits of being able to access expensive items free of charge, the lending program also has social and environmental benefits. The initiative supports the Town of Banff’s commitment to reducing community-wide waste and consumption while also contributing to social inclusion, accessibility, and affordability for all members of the community.

Since October 2021, the Library of Things has seen more than 400 circulations, popular items like the power drill, air fryer, and carpet cleaner are consistently on hold, and over 50 new library memberships have been created specifically to access the collection. Supported with programs (e.g., repair and ‘how-to’ workshops) and curated traditional materials (e.g., a cookbook to go along with the pasta maker), the Library of Things aims to encourage lifelong learning, facilitate knowledge sharing, and foster connections. The collection is ever expanding, too, and with input directly from patrons and local partners, the library plans to continually identify and acquire items that are of the most need in the community.

Town of Penhold Library Board: “Adventure Awaits Summer Reading Program”

Penhold and District Library reinvented the Summer Reading Program by taking it directly to children and families during the summer of 2021. A response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which restricted in-library programming, the “Adventure Awaits” Summer Reading Program saw library staff bringing stories, games, and crafts to front lawns throughout the Town of Penhold and Red Deer County. This innovative approach to program delivery ensured children could experience social connection and critical literacy development in a way that was convenient, safe, and fun.

Each week of the summer, library staff brought new adventure-themed activities to the outdoor spaces of individual family homes, day homes, and daycare facilities. Through stories and games, as well as song and dance,

kids had an opportunity to learn, explore, and have fun in a safe environment. Outside of the library visits, participants were encouraged to track their time spent reading using a lanyard and bead system. For every 20 minutes read, kids earned a bead to add to their lanyard which served as a visual representation of their summer reading journey. In total, library staff made over 600 visits and distributed more than 700 beads representing hundreds of hours of reading by local children.

While the primary goal of the Summer Reading Program is to build literacy skills, this iteration also focused on fostering social connection—something that was much needed at a time when so many families were overwhelmed and isolated by virtual realities. Feedback from parents, grandparents, and caregivers made it clear that the personal element of the library visits brought hope, joy, and a sense of togetherness during an otherwise difficult summer.

PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES (serving under 10,000 population): Shortlisted Initiatives

Town of Irricana Library Board: “Virtual Fall Fair”

Irricana and Rural Municipal Library celebrated Alberta Culture Days 2021 with a Virtual Fall Fair. Featuring a range of competition categories, the fair provided an opportunity

for community members of all ages to showcase their talents. Categories included story and essay writing, painting, sculpting, photography, handicraft, digital art, cake decorating, and flower arrangement. The library facilitated all elements of the fair in a virtual environment—a dedicated website was created to solicit and display submissions and a live prize ceremony was conducted over Facebook. Despite the learning curve with the virtual format, the community embraced the challenge and over 60 submissions were received.

Town of Sundre Library Board: “Take and Make for Mental Health”

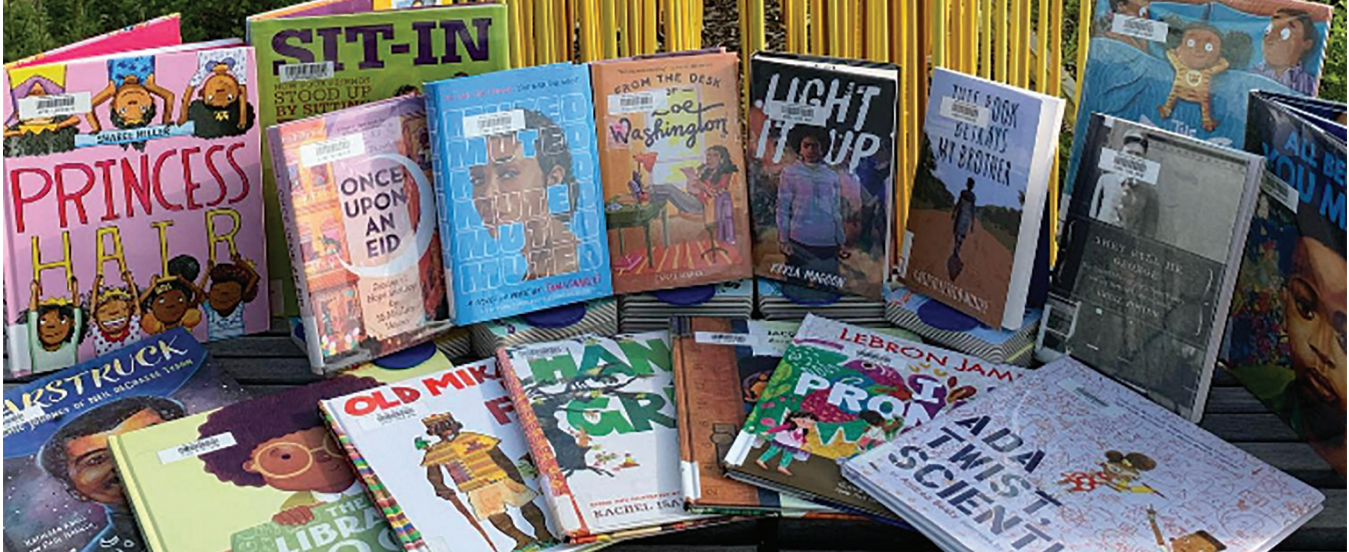
Sundre Municipal Library provided “take and make” kits designed to promote mental health and support isolated adults and seniors within its community. An evolution of the family activity kits that the library provided from the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, these kits for adults and seniors were developed specifically to combat the negative effects of stress and isolation. Each kit centered on a particular theme and bundled together activities, items, and library resources that promoted social connection, healthy living, self-care, and relaxation. The library also partnered with local businesses, family support organizations, and primary care networks to source materials and resources for various kits, further increasing the value for the community.



Three happy readers show off their crafts and reading progress lanyards.

Award categories

Public Library Services Category (serving over 10,000 population)



A small selection of the over 300 titles featured in the ACC Books in Colour literature guide.

Public Library Services (serving over 10,000 population) award is given for a library service initiative that demonstrates excellence and innovation. The initiative should also demonstrate responsiveness to community needs and provide direct benefit to the public.

2022 AWARD RECIPIENT

City of Edmonton Library Board: “African and Caribbean Canadian Books in Colour”

African and Caribbean Canadian (ACC) Books in Colour is a literature guide that celebrates the diversity of the Black Canadian experience. Developed by Edmonton Public Library, ACC Books in Colour features over 300 fiction and non-fiction titles that cover a wide range of topics and reflect diverse Black Canadian experiences in a sensitive and nuanced way. Whether readers see themselves reflected in the stories, or are being introduced to new perspectives and experiences, the guide contains something for everyone. Organized by reading level from Kindergarten to Grade 12, ACC Books in Colour is a fantastic resource for students, families, educators, and libraries of all kinds.

The impetus for the project was a local Edmonton educator, Dr. Jean Walrond, who keenly felt the absence of children’s books featuring Black characters when she found herself homeschooling her grandson during the COVID-19 pandemic. Representation matters and Dr. Walrond wanted to ensure her grandson had access to stories that celebrated people like him. She reached out to Edmonton Public Library and the ACC Books in Colour project was born.

The review team—which consisted of four passionate university students all personally affected by the Black diaspora—read through almost 500 titles and met weekly to debate, discuss, and ultimately choose the best of the best to be included in the guide. While there are increasingly more booklists and resource guides for Black American titles, ACC Books in Colour is among the first of its kind for the Canadian context.

Launched in February 2022, the guide has been downloaded hundreds of times and shared amongst various library and school networks. Beyond quantitative measures of success, it is the stories from librarians, educators, students, and families who have used the guide that truly demonstrate its significance. And with plans to support the guide with tie-in programming, book club kits, speaker series, and more, its reach and impact is only expected to grow.

PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES (serving over 10,000 population): Shortlisted Initiatives

City of Calgary Library Board: “Plan My Vote App”

In advance of the 2021 municipal election, Calgary Public Library launched the Plan My Vote app in partnership with Elections Calgary to ensure community members had access to accurate voting information from appropriate and reliable sources. The web-based app asked users a series of questions to determine four things: the date and time they intended to vote, the polling station available to them at that time, how they intended to get there, and the ID they would bring with them. The app then generated a personalized voting plan, including a map and directions to the polling station via the preferred transportation method, and provided links to all candidates’ information and referenda questions. The app also sent users a calendar invite so they would receive a reminder notification prior to their desired voting time.

City of Chestermere Library Board: “Parenting2Go”

Parenting2Go is a service developed by Chestermere Public Library and designed to support parents, caregivers, and adults in broaching difficult topics with younger children. Individuals can borrow from a series of backpacks that are each filled with resources addressing one of a wide range of topics, including divorce, death of a loved one, blended families, and much more. Backpacks are categorized by age group (either pre-school or school age) and include two picture books, a book for adults, and an activity to be completed by the adult and child together. The goal of Parenting2Go is to provide a neutral, informed, and accessible starting point for parents and caregivers to engage in important, but often challenging, conversations.

City of Grande Prairie Library Board: “GPPL Cares – Breaking Barriers & Healing Hearts”

Grande Prairie Public Library has made it a priority (called GPPL Cares) to develop and implement service initiatives that demonstrate empathy, compassion, and kindness while breaking barriers and responding to community needs. Examples of GPPL Cares initiatives include Project Full Stop, which sees free pads and tampons in all library washrooms; the Little Free Pantry, which offers free daily food to those experiencing food insecurity; and the Warming Wall, a seasonal project that provides free winter clothing to combat cold northern temperatures. These initiatives are among the first of their kind in Canadian libraries, positioning GPPL as a leader in creating safe, inclusive, and transformative community spaces.

City of St. Albert Library Board: “St. Albert Library Community Outreach Team”

St. Albert Public Library’s Community Outreach Team takes library services out of the building and into the community. Since 2016, the Outreach Team has been a crucial component of SAPL’s efforts to achieve equitable and barrier-free access to library resources and services. The Outreach Team contributes to achieving this goal with pop-up library locations, programs in parks and other community locations, regular school, preschool, and daycare visits, community bookshelves in high need areas, and much more. When the COVID-19 pandemic introduced new barriers to access, the Outreach Team responded with creativity and flexibility. Quickly adapting services to pandemic realities, the team created opportunities for the community to connect with each other and the library at a time when it was needed more than ever.

Award categories

Red Tape Reduction Category

The Red Tape Reduction award is given for an innovative initiative that improves a municipal program or service by saving time, money, and resources, or impacts municipal operations by reducing regulatory, policy, or process requirements.

2022 Award Recipient

City of Edmonton: “Permit and Licensing Improvement Initiative”

Launched in 2020, Edmonton continued the Permit and Licensing Improvement (PLI) initiative in 2021 to shorten timelines, improve consistency, and increase predictability to create more certainty for development proposals, and increase viability of private sector investments in Edmonton.

The goal of this initiative is to support quality of life for Edmontonians and economic vibrancy of the city by enabling efficient and effective permit and licensing services in collaboration with stakeholders. The objectives are to improve applicant experiences when interacting with the City of Edmonton’s permit and licensing services, increase city employee productivity, and enhance sustainability of the funding model.

PLI improvements implemented in 2020 and 2021 are estimated to have saved planning and development customers 260,933 days and \$4.6 million in delay costs annually based on demonstrated reductions in permit timelines. In 2022, timeline reductions through additional PLI improvements are estimated to save applicants an additional \$5.3 million and 67,600 days annually.

RED TAPE REDUCTION: Other Initiatives

City of Lacombe: “Temporary Patio Policy”

With provincial guidelines limiting dining to outdoor venues at times during the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a need to find quick solutions to support our local restaurants. Under standard policy guidelines, temporary patio structures are not permitted, and approval timelines can take six weeks. This program allowed on-site/same-day approvals, with most new temporary patios opening in 24-72 hours. The municipality also supplied parks equipment (picnic tables, pylons, and barricades) to aid the quick transition. The City also waived the typical application fee and refunded any applicants who had received prior approval for their patios.

City of St. Albert: “Streamlining Permitting and Business Licensing”

The City of St. Albert implemented online business licensing and permitting applications to allow businesses to start-up more efficiently in the City, effectively reducing red tape. By allowing applications to be accepted online, the City has been able to reduce wait times and streamline the application process for businesses. Further, St. Albert has maintained best in class approval times and brought significant developments into the City during the height of the pandemic.



Permit and Licensing Improvement foster faster process for businesses

Award categories

Service Delivery Enhancement Category

The Service Delivery Innovation award is given for an innovative initiative that improves, or presents a new approach to how a municipality can deliver a program or service.

2022 AWARD RECIPIENT

Brazeau County: “Hamlet of Violet Grove Lagoon Constructed Floating Wetlands”

The Constructed Floating Wetlands (CFWs) system consists of low-density polyethylene platforms that float on the lagoon surface which allow the wetland plants to grow and thrive in perforated baskets, enhancing wastewater quality. The root system of the plants grow into the wastewater, removing nutrients and providing surface area for bacteriological treatment.

This CFWs system is the first of its kind in Alberta; it is proven to enhance the treatment of domestic wastewater within a lagoon system. The primary goal of this initiative was to improve the effluent quality using an innovative and natural treatment process. Although wetlands are nature’s filtration system and have been tried in warmer climates for treating wastewater, another goal was to prove they will work in a cold climate to enhance the effluent quality.

SERVICE DELIVERY ENHANCEMENT: Other Initiatives

City of Edmonton: “Automated Home Improvement Permits”

Edmonton introduced automated permit reviews for common types of home improvement projects resulting in qualifying permits being issued instantly. This reduces red tape by supporting construction, investment, and residential real estate transactions. The online system automatically reviews applications for completeness and compliance with the Zoning Bylaw and applicable Building Safety Code requirements. Over 750 permits annually will benefit from the one day service, compared to a timeline of three to six weeks in peak summer months.

City of Red Deer: “Digital Transformation of Road Maintenance Using ROVER AI”

The City of Red Deer identified an opportunity to digitally transform its road maintenance program using an end-to-end artificial intelligence and cloud solution called ROVER. The City has replaced a pen and paper laborious process with automation of incident reporting and digitization of work management. The solution, by Visual Defence, uses a smartphone app deployed in the City’s road inspection vehicle, which uses AI to automatically report road deficiencies such as potholes, including high-resolution images. Staff are then dispatched with an integrated app, which guides repair crews to the incidents and provide digital records once resolved.



Constructing the Floating Wetlands: Andy Kwirant (left) and Blair Myrfield (right)

City of St. Albert: “St. Albert Freezeway”

In 2020, the City of St. Albert added a lighted, outdoor skating freezeway to Lions Park and then in 2021 at Rotary Park. A freezeway is a linear recreational skating trail that is flooded on land. These spaces offered spontaneous outdoor skating opportunities in the height of COVID-19 and have been well-received by the community.

County of Northern Lights: “Level of Service Road Classification Policy”

The County of Northern Lights, having already completed previous GIS initiatives such as MIMS, and benefiting from a functioning GIS database, placed its focus on Level of Service for the next step in its Asset Management process. The Council decided to focus on roads first as they are the County’s largest value asset category. The Council also determined during its 2019 Strategic Planning and budget discussions that there was a need to maintain the County’s existing road network within the confines of a declining assessment base. This project was to classify all the County’s roads and their use and create maintenance and service levels for each road classification. There was a heavy emphasis on public consultation through the determination of the policy and road classifications. Roads were split into four classifications: Field Access, Residential, Collector and Resource Roads. The classification of each road was based on current use, current development along it and its current construction geometry. This would also mean going forward there would be conditions placed on developments where they were located on field access roads.

Lac La Biche County: “Law Enforcement Training Program”

This initiative is a collaboration between Lac La Biche County, Portage College and Alberta Justice and Solicitor General to provide various types of law enforcement and other training to Peace and Police Officers and other first responders.

Strathcona County: “Drive-thru Voting for the 2021 General Municipal Election”

Strathcona County implemented a drive-thru vote opportunity for the first time in the 2021 general municipal election. The six-day drive-thru was a part of an initiative to expand the number of advance voting hours available to electors. The location of the drive-thru, Broadview Enviroservice Station, had been previously used by AHS as a COVID test site. The County was resourceful in adapting the AHS processes for the drive-thru voting. The drive-thru improved the accessibility of the election for those with mobility issues and was attractive for families with young children as they did not have to leave their vehicle to vote.

Award categories

Smaller Municipalities Category



Town of Sundre Wastewater Project

The Smaller Municipalities category is open to municipalities with populations less than 5,000. The award is given for a municipal initiative that demonstrates leadership, resourcefulness or innovation, or both, to better the community.

2022 AWARD RECIPIENT

Town of Sundre: “Town of Sundre Wastewater Project”

Many communities in Alberta currently use a traditional lagoon to treat their wastewater. While lagoons are reasonably inexpensive to operate, they take up a significant amount of land and up to 200 days to treat the wastewater. The advanced technology Sundre is deploying is efficient and designed specifically to outlast the lifespan of a lagoon. In comparison to a traditional lagoon, this technology has a significantly smaller footprint and the system treats raw sewage in less than 60 minutes.

SMALLER MUNICIPALITIES: OTHER INITIATIVES

Village of Longview: “Solar and Energy Conversation”

Over the past several years Longview has had three Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations installed, did studies and evaluations on Village owned property to attract a commercial solar project, constructed a 115 kW net zero solar project to cover village electricity costs, and ordered an EV pickup for public works.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2022 ALBERTA
MINISTER'S AWARDS FOR MUNICIPAL AND
PUBLIC LIBRARY EXCELLENCE RECIPIENTS!**
