

# **Wood Buffalo Downtown Revitalization Advisory Committee 2022-2026 Recommendations**



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
OF **WOOD BUFFALO**

# Wood Buffalo Downtown Revitalization Advisory Committee

Priorities, recommended infrastructure and enhancement actions within the downtown boundary and along key corridor roadways connected to downtown and the waterfront.

## Overarching Priorities

1. Beautification
2. Placemaking
3. Neighborhood Safety
4. Pedestrian Friendliness

## Short Term (0-1 Year)

- Review existing bylaws, policies, plans, standards, administrative directives and update as required to support proactive and further enhanced year-round maintenance and cleaning standards of government, private sector assets/lands and existing areas of beautification and placemaking including but not limited:
  - Enforce mandatory snow removal with consideration of costs plus safety and community cleanliness (i.e. clearing sidewalks, removal of snow piles in public and private sector parking lots).
  - Priority street sweeping during the earliest possible time in spring.
  - Expediated graffiti removal.

Implement enhanced standards, bylaws and policies consistently and review outcomes via audits and inspections.

- Continue to explore ideas for enhanced low maintenance and high impact beautification; continue to identify synergies with the Public Art Committee and the Mayors Advisory Committee on Youth and others where possible.
- Identify and recommend ways to update existing placemaking and beautification through continued focus on visual and physical design alignment with the Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo Economic Development and Tourism Regional Place Brand. Ensure a coherent and consistent look and feel downtown.

- Monitor the results of the current Downtown Revitalization Incentives Program and consider opportunities to review and support program enhancements that align with Municipal priorities (i.e. Phase III of the Downtown Revitalization Incentives Program). Where possible, encourage opportunities for business incentives that support neighborhood safety.
- Seek opportunities to partner with the businesses, community organizations, municipal administration and Council committees and the Government of Alberta to support revitalization of provincially owned assets such as:
  - Graffiti abatement mural(s) on roadway underpasses
  - Floral beautification along HWY 63
  - Removal of unused barricades along HWY 63
  - Early and ongoing clean-up of HWY 63 (along the boundary of downtown)
- Initiate and complete a wayfinding strategy and plan that includes consideration of regional connections to and from downtown, pedestrian friendliness and connections to and from the waterfront. Begin plan implementation:
  - Initiate design and construction of a downtown sign(s) at key entry points.
  - Support alignments between the waterfront and downtown initiatives and align where possible with Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo Economic Development and Tourism initiatives that support revitalization efforts.
- Maintain a focus on updating the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan and support progress monitoring through the Wood Buffalo Downtown Revitalization Committee or designate.
- Continue to identify requirements that align with pedestrian and safety priorities at the forefront. In key locations:
  - Modify, enhance or add lighting;
  - Make crosswalk improvements (i.e. Main Street, areas around Keyano College along King Street/Franklin Avenue and corridors to and from the waterfront)
  - Consider current standards and existing lighting designs (i.e. lights are often one sided) through work with ATCO
- Design and construct pedestrian friendly and safety related improvements between Downtown and the waterfront. Continue to focus on all corridor streets in the short, medium and long term. For example:
  - Complete design(s) and initiate construction improvements along Main Street and King Street (i.e. area(s) surrounding Keyano College)

- Support completion of a Municipal accessibility audit and support barrier free design. Continue to seek alignment opportunities with the Advisory Committee on Aging.
- Work with the RCMP and support year-round community policing presence within the downtown core including seasonal bike and/or foot patrols.
- Encourage and/or support ongoing coordinated efforts among businesses and, where possible, seek to support organizations and committees that monitor and track safety related improvements.
- Support ongoing investment in flood mitigation.
- Immediately develop a long-term public communication and engagement plan that supports a wide range of focused and consistent year-round messaging to encourage maximized use of public park spaces within the downtown core. Initial topics to begin communication about immediately includes but should not be limited to safety and what's currently happening and planned.
- Identify and implement ways to support maximized use of public spaces with the core, through Municipal administration and community partnerships (i.e. expediated permit and Planning and Development related approvals, deliver municipal events/programs and encourage and support community event hosting etc.).
- Consistently implement and improve Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) standards and best practices as part of designing and constructing downtown. Require this type of design within construction and/or service standards where they are not already included.
- Explore ways to support groups, organizations, corporations and committees that are contributing to revitalization by working to bring new business to the downtown or drive initiatives that support businesses (i.e. housing developments).

Notes:

- Some multi-year initiatives that start in the short-term may carry over to the medium-term for completion.
- Many initiatives that may be started in the short-term could and should also remain relevant in the medium and long terms too. Ongoing monitoring and identification of short-term actions that should be carried forward is recommended.

**Medium-Term (2-3 Years)**

- Enforce ongoing maintenance of Municipal and private sector vacant land year-round as an ongoing annual standard.

- Initiate and create a parking plan for downtown.
- Encourage connections and alignments between downtown planning, transit master planning and infrastructure development.
- Encourage pedestrian friendliness, active transportation and neighborhood safety as ongoing priorities within all downtown municipal projects and plans.
- Revisit and evaluate implementation and improvements of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) standards and practices downtown.

#### **Long-Term (4-5 Years)**

- Consistently implement Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan(s).
- Explore and make suggestions for the next (future) Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan to proactively identify and improve opportunities that support growth initiatives downtown (i.e. develop design guidelines and support initiatives that encourage development).