

Strategic Governance Plan

2025 – 2029 Council Term

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo





Executive Summary

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Four-Year Strategic Governance Plan (2025–2029) establishes a disciplined governance framework that defines Council's strategic direction, oversight responsibilities, fiscal expectations, and accountability approach for the current Council term. The document reinforces the distinction between governance and administration by positioning Council as the body responsible for setting policy direction, defining strategic priorities, overseeing risk, and ensuring transparency, while Administration is responsible for implementation and operational execution.

The Plan is grounded in a mission to build a strong and opportunity-rich region through reliable core services, responsible stewardship of public resources, ethical governance, and collaborative regional relationships that support sustainable economic growth and quality of life across all communities. Its vision emphasizes resilient infrastructure, dependable municipal services, financial sustainability, public trust, and a region positioned for long-term prosperity.

Framework



The framework is organized around four integrated strategic themes

Economic Development & Competitiveness

Focused on strengthening investment attraction, improving regulatory competitiveness, supporting business retention and rural development, advancing workforce sustainability, and diversifying the regional economy. Council commits to establishing policies and governance structures that encourage long-term investment, economic resilience, and sustainable regional growth.

Governance Excellence & Organizational Effectiveness

Establishes expectations for ethical governance, financial sustainability, organizational resilience, and disciplined asset management. The Plan reinforces governance accountability through long-term financial planning, risk oversight, clear Council–Administration role delineation, and a commitment to maintaining a respectful and high-performing organizational culture.

Intergovernmental & Nation Relations

Commits Council to principled engagement with Indigenous Nations and senior levels of government through reconciliation-informed governance, Nation-to-Nation relationship development, coordinated advocacy, and strategic partnerships that advance regional priorities and strengthen long-term collaboration.

Community Services & Well-Being

Prioritizes community safety, emergency preparedness, recreation and cultural services, accessibility, and reliable municipal service delivery. The Plan emphasizes resilient infrastructure, inclusive communities, environmental preparedness, and the enhancement of public spaces and quality of life across the region.

The document also establishes a formal accountability and reporting framework intended to ensure disciplined governance oversight, transparent public reporting, and continuous alignment with long-term regional objectives. Council commits to regular strategic reviews and ongoing monitoring of financial sustainability, infrastructure resilience, organizational health, reconciliation progress, and community well-being.

Supporting the Strategic Governance Plan are a set of Council values and guiding governance principles intended to shape decision-making, leadership conduct, and organizational culture throughout the Council term. The values — Integrity, Selfless Service, Humility, Unity, and Fairness — emphasize ethical leadership, transparency, collaboration, accountability, and community-focused governance.

The accompanying guiding principles further reinforce expectations for fiscal prudence, professionalism, consistency, respectful discourse, accessibility, preparedness, accountability, equity, and informed decision-making. Together, these principles establish a governance culture focused on responsible stewardship, transparency, inclusive engagement, and long-term sustainability for the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.





Purpose & Governance Discipline

PURPOSE

This Strategic Governance Plan establishes Council's direction for the 2025–2029 term.

It defines:

- Desired community outcomes
- Policy priorities and governance guardrails
- Risk tolerance and fiscal discipline
- Oversight and reporting expectations

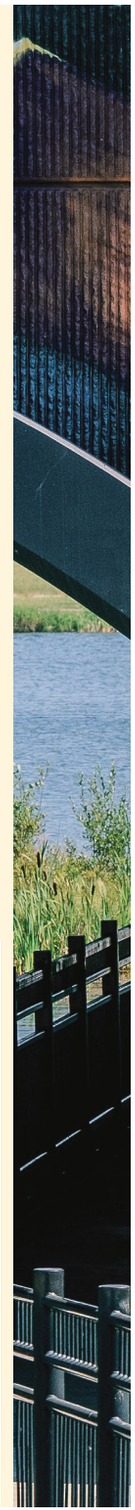
Administration will be required to develop aligned business plans and operational strategies to implement this direction.

Council governs through policy, performance expectations, risk oversight, and accountability.

GOVERNANCE DISCIPLINE

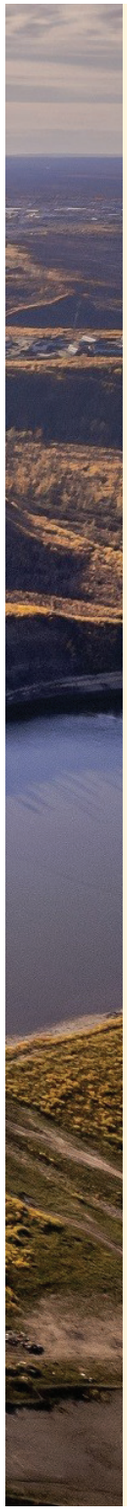
- Council sets direction
- Administration implements strategy
- Performance is measured
- Risk is managed
- The community is informed











Mission & Vision

MISSION

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Council will build a strong region enriched with abundant opportunity — delivering reliable core services, governing with integrity, stewarding public resources with discipline, using unified regional relationships that enable sustainable economic growth and elevated quality of life in every community.

VISION

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo will be a region where municipal services are reliable and responsive, infrastructure is renewed and resilient, and long-term financial stability is firmly in place.

Across our diverse region, residents will experience confident emergency readiness, reliable service delivery, inviting public spaces, expanded recreation access, and transparent decision-making. RMWB will be positioned for sustained economic growth and enduring prosperity.











Strategic Themes & Priorities

Summary of the Four Strategic Themes • 2025–2029 Council Term







1 Economic Development & Competitiveness

Key Priorities Include:

- Investment attraction and regulatory competitiveness
- Business retention, rural development, and sector growth
- Workforce sustainability and talent attraction

2 Governance Excellence & Organizational Effectiveness

Key Priorities Include:

- Governance and Ethical Leadership
- Long-term financial sustainability and fiscal stress testing
- Organizational culture and workforce resilience

3 Intergovernmental & Nation Relations

Key Priorities Include:

- Intergovernmental Advocacy and Funding Alignment
- Nation-to-Nation and Regional partnership development
- Reconciliation Informed Governance

4 Community Services & Well-Being

Key Priorities Include:

- Community safety and emergency preparedness
- Recreation, culture, and Community Identity
- Reliable core municipal services and service-level governance



1

Economic Development & Competitiveness



1.1 Investment Attraction & Regulatory Competitiveness

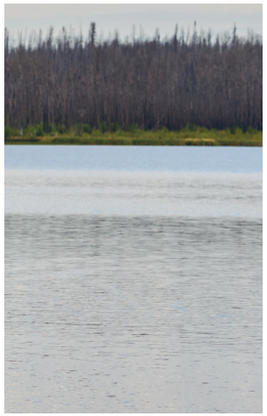
Council Will:

- Establish and approve an Investment Attraction & Competitiveness Policy aligned with RMWB's energy leadership and diversification objectives.
- Define priority sectors, including petrochemicals, innovation, tourism, logistics, and rural enterprise.
- Adopt a Public Investment Evaluation Policy with ROI expectations and fiscal safeguards.
- Establish red tape reduction and development approval performance standards.
- Require annual reporting on capital investment, non-residential assessment growth, diversification metrics, and regulatory efficiency.

1.2 Business Retention, Rural Development & Sector Growth

Council Will:

- Establish expectations for a formal Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) framework.
- Support rural and northern economic competitiveness initiatives across all communities within the region.
- Maintain structured industry advisory engagement.
- Monitor workforce localization, productivity, and supply chain resilience indicators.
- Require annual reporting on local business conditions and employment trends.





1.3 Workforce & Talent Sustainability

Council Will:

- Define workforce localization and top talent attraction priorities.
- Align housing, transportation, and community planning with labour sustainability.
- Monitor demographic trends, workforce participation rates, and long-term employment sustainability.
- Support collaboration with educational institutions and training partners.



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Government Excellence & Organizational Effectiveness



2.1 Governance & Ethical Leadership

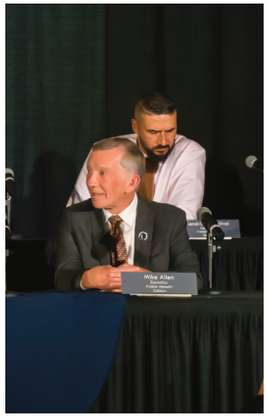
Council Will:

- Maintain clear Council–Administration role delineation.
- Reinforce ethical governance standards and Code of Conduct expectations.
- Undertake independent governance benchmarking during the term.
- Apply a regional equity lens to major service and infrastructure decisions.

2.2 Long-Term Financial Sustainability

Council Will:

- Align capital planning with lifecycle and risk-based asset management.
- Monitor infrastructure liabilities and long-term funding adequacy.
- Require fiscal stress testing for major capital and operational projects and expenditures.
- Monitor long-term fiscal sustainability indicators.
- Maintain long-term financial planning discipline against the reality of annual budgets for capital and operational expenditures.





2.3 Organizational Culture & Workforce Resilience

Council Will:

- Establish expectations for a respectful, ethical, and high-performance workplace culture.
- Monitor workforce sustainability, engagement, and morale indicators.
- Oversee labour relations governance at a policy level.



3

Intergovernmental & Nation Relations

Strategic Intent

To lead principled, coordinated, and strategic engagement with Indigenous Nations, the Province of Alberta, and the Government of Canada to advance regional priorities.

3.1 Reconciliation-Informed Governance

Council Will:

- Continue to integrate reconciliation considerations into major policy and capital decisions where necessary and aligned with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.
- Require annual reporting on reconciliation progress.
- Undertake TRC review yearly.

3.2 Nation-to-Nation & Regional Partnerships

Council Will:

- Maintain and enforce Council's formal Nation-to-Nation engagement protocols.
- Oversee shared infrastructure, economic, and social initiatives.
- Monitor partnership outcomes and associated risks.

3.3 Intergovernmental Advocacy & Funding Alignment

Council Will:

- Approve annual Provincial and Federal Advocacy Plans.
- Define funding alignment strategies and project readiness standards for grant opportunities.
- Require annual legislative and regulatory risk scans.
- Advocate for regional infrastructure strength, transportation connectivity, and sustainable funding frameworks.








NO MORE STOLEN S
NO JUSTICE
Taya Rae Anne Sinclair
1997-2022
In Loving Memory
MMIWG2S+
NEVER
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Community Service & Well-Being

4.1 Community Safety & Emergency Preparedness

Council Will:

- Maintain and enhance community safety & well-being direction.
- Monitor the strength of critical infrastructure, including water, transportation, and emergency response systems.
- Ensure environmental and industrial risk preparedness remains a governance priority.
- Advance accessibility, inclusion & belonging while strengthening supports for vulnerable communities.

4.2 Recreation, Culture & Community Identity

Council Will:

- Define service level standards for recreation and cultural programming.
- Align capital prioritization with lifecycle sustainability.
- Promote regional pride, northern identity, and Indigenous cultural recognition.
- Monitor participation and accessibility indicators.

4.3 Reliable Core Municipal Services

Council Will:

- Establish a Core Service Level Standards Governance Policy.
- Monitor service performance benchmarks.
- Align service delivery with fiscal sustainability and regional growth.








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Accountability & Reporting Framework

Disciplined governance requires clear performance measurement, transparent reporting, and regular strategic review. The Accountability & Reporting Framework ensures Council maintains oversight of progress, monitors risk, and evaluates outcomes against the priorities set in this Strategic Governance Plan. Through structured annual reporting and a mid-term strategic review, Council will assess financial sustainability, economic performance, infrastructure resilience, reconciliation progress, organizational health, and community well-being — ensuring informed decision-making and continuous alignment with long-term regional objectives.

To ensure disciplined governance oversight, Council will require:

- Annual Strategic Plan Progress Report
- Annual Economic & Competitiveness Dashboard
- Annual Financial Sustainability & Fiscal Stress Report
- Annual Infrastructure Condition & Resilience Report
- Annual Reconciliation & Intergovernmental Relations Report
- Annual Community Well-Being Indicators Report
- Annual Workforce & Organizational Culture Report
- Mid-Term Strategic Review (Year 2)




REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
OF WOOD BUFFALO
Sandy Bowman
Mayor
Hayahrila K'aldhër
Okimâw

Council Values

Integrity
Acts within legislation and policies; adheres to policy; communicates honestly, accurately and transparently with the public and colleagues, in the best interests of the region.

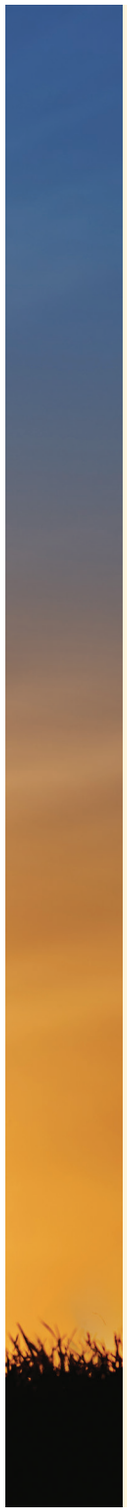
Selfless Service
Prioritizes long-term municipal interests; makes decisions based on community impact and sustainability, not popularity.

Humility
Seeks diverse perspectives before forming conclusions; acknowledges mistakes openly; engages respectfully with residents and colleagues.

Unity
Supports Council decisions once made; works collaboratively with councillors and administration; addresses disagreements constructively, focusing on issues.

Fairness
Always applies policies without favoritism; ensures all have the opportunity to be heard; bases decisions on evidence and community need.





Guiding Principles

Follow Through
Ensures decisions and strategic priorities are acted upon, monitored for progress, and adjusted when necessary to maintain alignment with approved plans.

Trust in Confidentiality
Protects confidential and in-camera information per legislation; maintains discretion to preserve public trust, legal integrity, and effective governance.

Fiscal Prudence
Manages public resources responsibly; evaluates expenditures based on strategic value; considers financial risk, asset management, and intergenerational impacts.

Consistency
Applies bylaws and policies fairly and aligns decisions with approved strategic plans to maintain predictable, principled governance.

Accessible
Promotes meaningful public access to information, meetings, and decision-making; communicates clearly; seeks to reduce barriers that limit engagement.

Respectful Discourse
Fosters constructive dialogue grounded in professionalism and mutual respect; debates issues thoughtfully; encourages active listening and exchange of differing perspectives.

Prepared & Informed
Reviews materials in advance; asks well-considered questions; bases decisions on evidence, legislation, expert advice, and community input; considers risks and long-term implications.

Respect for Diverse Perspectives
Recognizes a range of community, cultural, and stakeholder perspectives; ensures deliberations reflect awareness of varied impacts across the municipality.

Professionalism
Upholds the integrity and credibility of public office; respects the distinct roles of governance and administration; demonstrates impartiality and ethical conduct.

Accountability
Takes responsibility for decisions; communicates outcomes transparently; monitors performance against strategic objectives and reports progress publicly.

Equitable
Considers fairness and inclusion in policy development and resource allocation; ensures municipal services are accessible to all; evaluates decisions through the lens of community-wide impact.


Regional Municipality
of Wood Buffalo