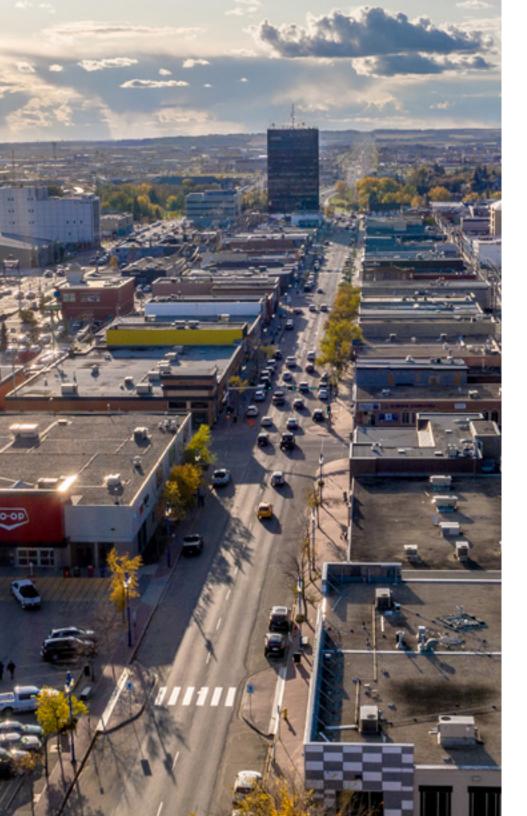


City of Grande Prairie's 2020 Annual Report



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### Introduction

Welcome to the City of Grande Prairie's 2020 Annual Report.

Our goal with this report is to share our achievements and highlights over the past year.

We're excited for you to read and learn more about how we're supporting and developing the community across all our service areas and departments day-in and day-out.

The report is categorized based on each of Council's strategic objectives to showcase how we're working everyday to support Council's vision of a vibrant, connected and inclusive community with a resourceful spirit by leveraging diversity and seizing our growing opportunities by embracing challenges. In addition, we've included information at the end to view our consolidated financial statements from 2020 online as part of our efforts in transparency and accountability in the budgeting processes.

We hope you find the information we've provided valuable and informative. Thank you for reading today and being engaged and involved in City matters.

It is through community involvement by readers like yourself that we are able to understand more about what matters to our residents and reflect that in our City operations.

## Message from Council

### Hello Grande Prairie,

Our community's reputation for innovation and resiliency saw no greater test than it did in 2020.

We thank each and every one of our residents, friends, neighbours, business owners, trade workers, non-profits, and front-line workers for their steadfastness through the immeasurable challenges of COVID-19.

The success of our ongoing pandemic response is a community responsibility, and we have been humbled to see the dedication, commitment and creativity across all sectors in responding to this call.

At the City of Grande Prairie, we have strived over the past year to remain connected and responsive to all of our community members, which has taken a similar dose of creativity and innovation.

Although our operations and priorities have somewhat shifted, we aimed to remain people-focused and service-based.

Whether it was our GP Grows program in March where we saw 11 departments working together to deliver 1816 at-home gardening kits to 1078 families, or lending our facilities for an overflow shelter to support vulnerable populations, or partnering on the joint Business Resiliency Taskforce, our priority has been to continue to support and develop the community no matter the circumstance.

Reflecting on the past year and the highlights throughout this report, we are proud of what has been accomplished throughout 2020 in the face of great challenge.

This annual report is a selection of highlights of how our organization has shifted priorities to support the community and develop opportunities for growth and connection while in the midst of adversity.

Our goal is to help you better understand City operations, how we adapt to be responsive to community need, and to show you just how much community engagement matters to us.

Although 2020 was challenging, we are encouraged by our community and look forward to building a strong recovery in 2021, investing in future growth for all.

## Message from the CAO

2020 saw us dealing with many challenging circumstances and as a result, making some very difficult decisions.

Above all of the uncertainty, one thing we did remain certain of was our commitment to supporting and developing the community.

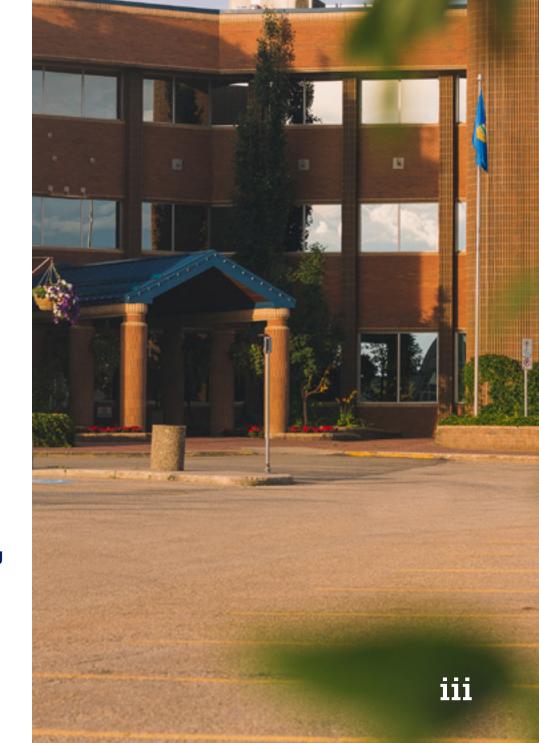
Our organization has worked tirelessly the past year to keep the community safe and healthy, support the local economy, assist our non-profit sector, and connect our residents with the everyday services they rely on from snow removal to recreation opportunities.

This annual report is a unique opportunity to learn more about the highlights of the many strategic efforts, events and initiatives the City has been working on to improve efficiencies and enhance how we serve you.

We hope this report is valuable for our readers in understanding more about the City's operations and how we're here to serve you.

While the pandemic has left us with many new and significant challenges, we know through our community connections and collaborations we are stronger together in our recovery.

Horacio Galanti, P. Eng



City of Grande Prairie's 2020 Annual Report

## Message from the CFO

In the face of unpredictability and uncertainty, the City of Grande Prairie remained focused throughout 2020 on providing stability for our residents and business community.

Finance's focus remains on transparency, responsible budgeting and long-term stability as we provide Council the information they need to make their decisions on supporting the community year-round whether it be through providing tax relief for property owners, or the numerous grant and funding opportunities for businesses and community groups to stimulate the local economy and support the non-profit sector.

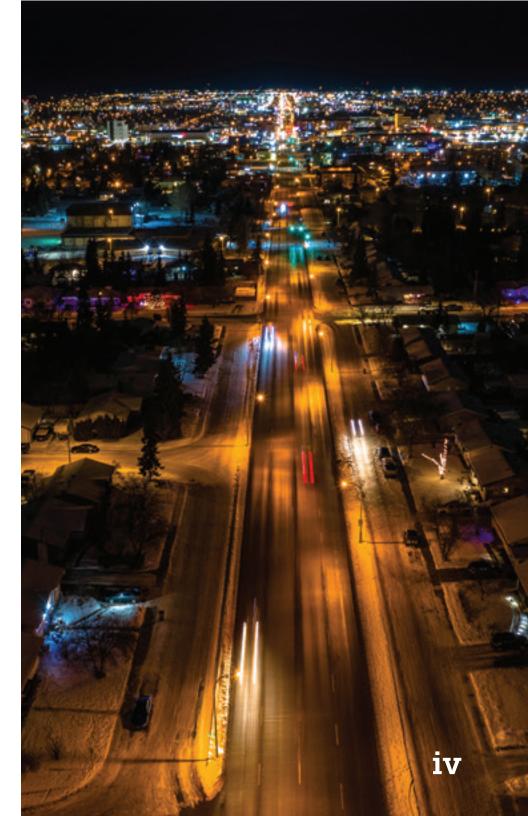
I encourage everyone to explore this document to learn more about the highlights and successes of this year, and take time to visit: <a href="mailto:cityofgp.com/financialreports">cityofgp.com/financialreports</a> to review and get a better understanding of our financial statements.

For more opportunities to learn more and get involved in the City's finances, visit the Open Budget Data portal at <u>cityofgp.com</u> or the Budget Engagement pages on <u>engage.cityofgp.com</u>

Our continued strategic approach to financial management is key to Grande Prairie's recovery, stimulating the local economy and keeping people working.

**Danielle Whiteway CPA, CA** 





City of Grande Prairie's 2020 Annual Report





## Strategic Objective: Community

**Value Statement:** Foster connections among people through socially inclusive community programs and services with a diverse offering of cultural and recreational opportunities.

In a year where we had to seek new, unique and innovative ways to connect, Council's objective of Community remained at the forefront of City operations. Staying connected and continuing to support and develop relationships and wellness in the community was more important this year than ever before.

As we navigated new and fluctuating health regulations including contact limitations and facility closures, our goal was to continue to deliver cultural and recreational programs and services that meet the social needs of the community while embracing diversity and inclusivity.

# Achieving Council's Objective of Community in 2020:



The **GP Grows** project provided the community with a fun and free activity to do safely with their cohorts during the early stages of the pandemic. Both recreational and educational, it provided seeds, pellets and soil through a curbside pick-up or delivery model for people to grow their own garden right at home.

Use of the hashtag **#GPGrows** encouraged people to share their progress and join in on the discussion, and to maintain community connection at a distance.

The project also included the planting of the The Learning Garden at Coca Cola Centre, where Parks staff and Council members filmed regular how-to videos and shared their knowledge to support participants.

Grande Prairie Enforcement Services revived the **Positive Ticket Program** as part of their goal of community building during the summer. Peace Officers issued a total of **29** "Positive Tickets" to children and youth within the community participating in positive community building activities. The tickets were then redeemed for prizes and for a chance to win the grand prize at the end of the Summer.

The program was so well received that there is consideration for conducting it again during 2021.





The **Muskoseepi Wayfinding Signage Project** included the installation of **54 wayfinding signs** throughout the Muskoseepi Park corridor, helping people enjoy outdoor recreation year-round. The design, site selection, and installation were all completed in-house, **reducing the budget by \$50,000**.

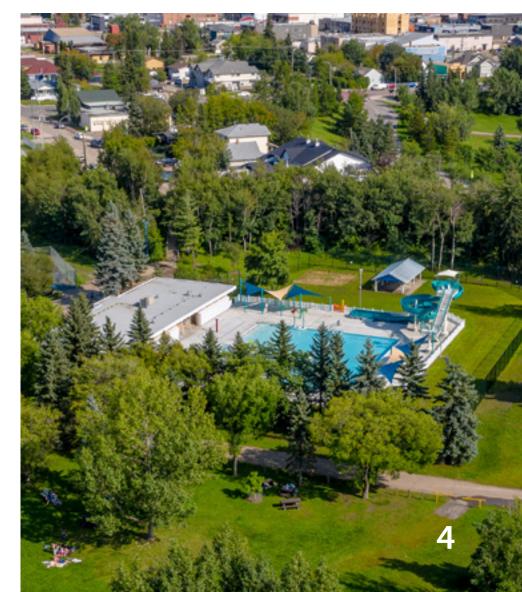
This project reflected Council's strategic direction to enhance safe, accessible parks and trails, as well showcasing creativity, innovation and adaptability in service delivery.



**The illumination of the Centre 2000 sundial** was a collaborative project with the Centre 2000 Board and the City of Grande Prairie. The illumination of the sundial now provides high visibility colored lighting that promotes, shows support for and brings awareness to everything from local events to international initiatives.

The Centre 2000 Board funded the project, with the City of Grande Prairie responsible for project management, making it a successful collaboration to support the many efforts of our non-profits and community groups and build awareness with our residents of meaningful events and initiatives.

The newly renovated **Grande Prairie Outdoor Pool** officially opened in the summer. Thanks to a partnership with the Grande Prairie Big Brothers Big Sisters Club we were able to utilize the Don Gillies Legacy Fund and offer over **1200 youth free access to the pool.** The partnership was a great success in ensuring the opportunity to enjoy the outdoor amenity was accessible for all during the season.



City of Grande Prairie's 2020 Annual Report

The **Curve Community Art Installation** at the Art Gallery of Grande Prairie exhibited local artists expressing their thoughts and feelings of the pandemic through art. Four artists were commissioned to produce original content, which created an artistic archive of COVID-19 in the Peace Country. Revolution Place was instrumental in cultivating the music side of the exhibit and commissioning an original song from Zachary Kay from the Northbloods band. The Art Gallery of Grande Prairie was one of the few museums in the province to open with an exhibit in response to the pandemic.

It featured 192 artist submissions, 2,425 visitors and 33,765 web and social media views that all contributed to this historical community collective.

A community grant funding framework was developed with stakeholder engagement and input, including new forms and a streamlined process. This included combining several previous grants into a single Community Improvement Grant, as well as the creation of an Emergency Community Group funding application to provide immediate support for community groups during the pandemic. It has been a fundamental shift in improving service delivery to better support the needs of the community.

In the fall, the Community Knowledge Campus accommodated the requirements of community school gyms that remained closed. The campus was able to schedule bookings for 30 school gyms into the Field House during the evenings and weekends using modified operational hours. It was a great example of community-centred innovative service delivery to ensure recreational opportunities were still available and community groups could continue to be supported throughout various closures and restrictions.



## Strategic Objective: Economy

**Value Statement:** Contribute to a healthy economy and ensure that revenues are sufficient to meet the community's service expectations.

Advancing economic growth while supporting affordability for residents is a key balance and priority for Council. The City works strategically to facilitate business and community development to stimulate economic growth and create jobs today and into the future, while also maintaining fiscal responsibility between property taxes and user fees. To achieve this, the City focuses on supporting infrastructure development, energy management, and a variety of incentives, resources and partnerships for businesses.



# Achieving Council's Objective of Economy in 2020:



Our Economic Development department completed the **Industrial Attraction Strategy** and welcomed a new Economic Development Officer position, focused on industrial investment attraction. The Industrial Attraction Strategy sets priorities for operational improvements and identified nine target sectors for investment attraction. It is a key component of supporting and developing the economy as we look to the future in 2021 and beyond.

The City received a **Municipal Energy Manager** grant from the Municipal Climate Change Action Centre (MCCAC) which has been used for streamlining processes for collecting consumption data; monitoring and paying utility invoices; and creating profiles for cityowned facilities in an energy modelling software program. Additional funding from MCCAC has been used for the Eastlink Combined Heat and Power project to proceed with the installation of two 333 kW turbines reducing electricity costs and greenhouse gas emissions.

By improving our energy monitoring, the City is able to identify and adopt efficiencies for cost-savings to operations and taxpayers.





**The Community Knowledge Campus identified and adopted several key efficiencies** while navigating evolving provincial health orders throughout 2020. The facility experienced several mandated closures, but re-opened multiple times with a phased approached to continue to serve members, user groups and vendors as much as possible while balancing health and safety with financial responsibility. With new measures in place, they were able to provide bookings for the aquatics area, dryland, fieldhouse and Fitness Centre and saw a total of **58,460** visits to the Eastlink Centre.



Use of the **GovDeals** platform for the City's surplus assets significantly expanded in 2020, seeing considerable cost recoveries using an open and transparent process. This past year, GovDeals was utilized for Enforcement Services annual bike auction, and generated the highest revenue to date. It has also been used to sell items from the former School Board building and the Leisure Centre, helping to vacate the buildings prior to demolition and preventing the items from reaching landfills. The cost savings and efficiencies of this venture include: **\$250,097** in revenue, **8436** square feet in recovered space, no longer needing items to be moved to auction sites, and a reduced commission rate for fleet related auction from **25**% using previous platforms to an average of **4.5**% using GovDeals.

The City implemented a **0% wage plateau** for 2021 Out of Scope staff. The decision was made in 2020 to have no wage increases in 2021 on the recommendation of Human Resources to remain in alignment with other sectors.

The estimated cost avoidance for Out of Scope salary increases due to this decision totals **\$389,000** based on a 1% wage increase.

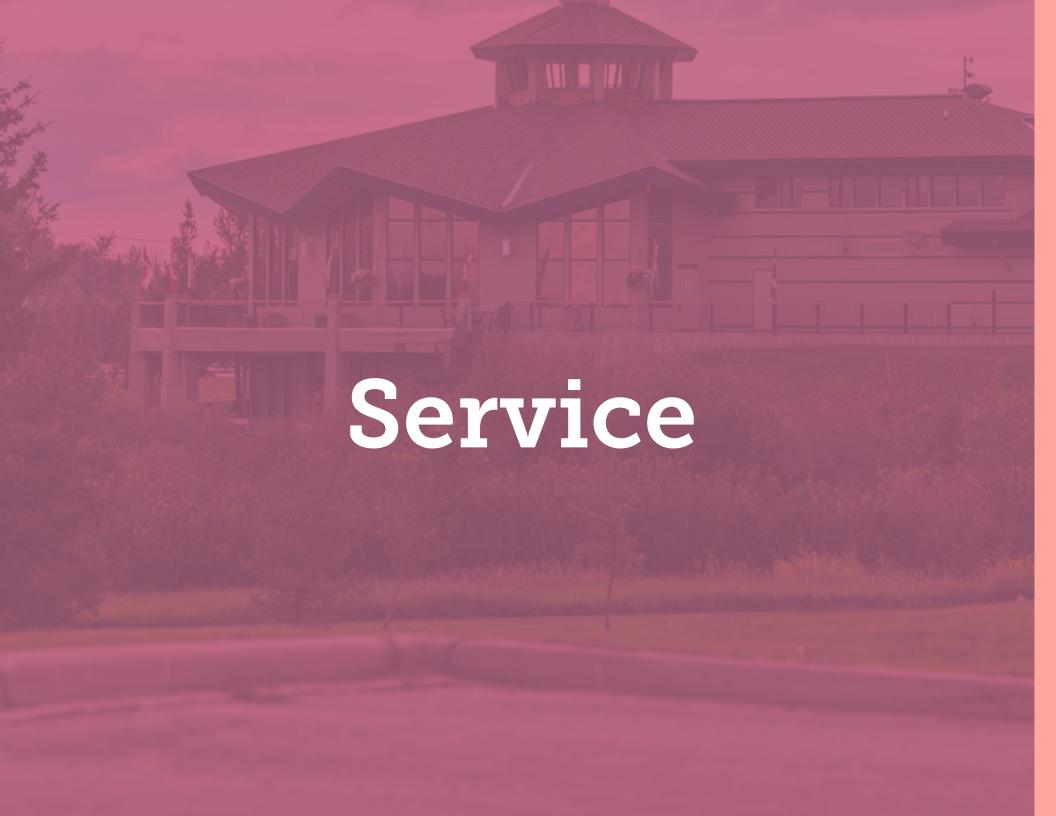
The 2021 Budget Engagement ran in phases with a modified approach from June 25- October 13. The engagement focused on better identifying and understanding which City services and initiatives residents value the most to guide the City's investment of tax dollars. **Featuring a variety of online resources and feedback tools** as well as targeted stakeholder sessions, it was an avenue for the City to connect with residents on the budget and future of the economy.

Additionally, it included an educational component to increase knowledge and understanding of the complexities of budget development in a transparent and accountable way.

Transit's **on-demand pilot project** saved nearly **\$50,000** in operational costs in 2020. In response to decreased ridership during COVID-19, Transit ended all fixed-route transit service one hour earlier during the week and two hours earlier on Saturdays and replaced it with an on-demand service to continue to support riders who rely on transit in a more efficient manner.

This service has resulted in utilizing only one bus instead of six.







## **Strategic Objective: Service**

**Value Statement:** Foster a system and culture that encourages and honours excellence in customer service.

At the City of Grande Prairie, we aim to be continuously improving as a high-performing, professional organization that strives for a culture of excellence in service delivery, performance effectiveness, and industry best practices through a commitment to professional development, and the utilization of successful technologies. Through this, we believe we can better engage residents and stakeholders in decision making through enhancing trust, transparency and adaptability by ensuring accountability, integrity, efficiency, best practices and innovation in all operations.

## Achieving Council's Objective of Service in 2020:



The City's **Business Retention & Expansion Strategy** was built out in 2020, ensuring an increased emphasis on engaging with existing local businesses and providing support in accessing a variety of information and services.

Within the Business Retention & Expansion Strategy, a few key initiatives were introduced, including a formal Business Visitation Program, a Business Walk event as part of Small Business Week and a process for dropping off Thank You and Congratulations cards to new businesses or those celebrating major milestones or achievements. It's a personal and meaningful way for us to build relationships and show support for those investing in Grande Prairie, so we can build a stronger, dynamic community together.

**Re-opening supports for businesses** were offered in a variety of ways to assist with finding information about COVID and reopening regulations; and securing masks, gloves or hand sanitizer to facilitate reopenings. This included efforts such as PPE4Biz program, virtual information sessions on the provincial business re-opening plans, and signage and resources for businesses to use to support their customers. The targeted, relationship-focused strategy helped us stay connected and supportive of the many businesses investing in Grande Prairie, and drive the community responsibility of keeping all residents safe and healthy during COVID-19.



Enforcement Services moved their Animal Renewal Notices online to improve customer service, accessibility and convenience for residents to do business with the City. It's made it easier to renew 4400 licences annually and resulted in positive feedback from the community.



Residential Assessors created a process to allow home owners to **submit property information online.** A detailed survey and passkey were mailed to select property owners for them to complete the survey online. This process allowed flexibility for property owners and improved efficiencies for Assessors to complete the number of re-inspections they do in a year.

The creation of a **joint permit application package** has been a major success in creating efficiencies and improvements in our customer service processes. It resulted in the streamlining of applications from **7 legal size pages**, **129 fields and 97 checkboxes to 3 letter size pages**, **30 fields and 31 checkboxes.** The use of this package allows applicants to apply for and receive all the permits required to build a single-family dwelling, while only completing and submitting one application. It has made the application process simpler and easier for applicants, so we can better serve and support their development efforts in the community.



A new Open Data Hub was created for the local and regional business community and residents to access many of the spatial and operational city datasets. Included in this is an Open Budget Hub for residents to review and visualize the City's budget. This new Hub Site was built using GIS technology in a non-traditional spatial approach which allowed for a very easy to use and visual display of the Budget data.

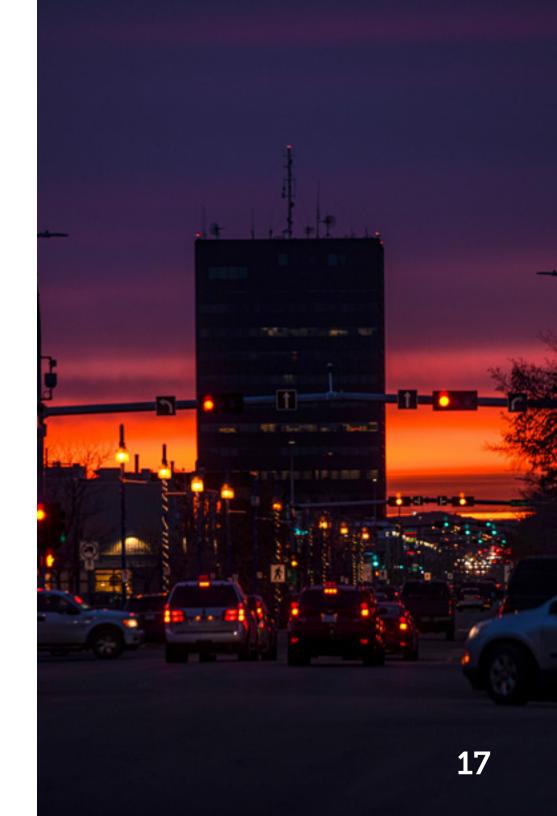
It was completed entirely in-house, not only introducing operational efficiency with the maintenance of the datasets but **saving the City \$32,000 annually.** Using this platform built further on the Open Data concept and enhanced our customer service in supporting multiple sectors in the community by improving access to information while decreasing costs to taxpayers.



Early in 2020, the City launched a **new online registration platform** for culture and recreation bookings, programs and memberships. This enterprise-level solution modernized the old outdated application, introducing an online aspect to improve customer service, enhance the user experience and realize cost savings by removing redundancy in other service areas. The successful rollout is more efficient than our previous recreation management system, and has been integral for the phased re-openings of our recreation facilities during COVID-19.

Procurement implemented a **digital contract platform** in 2020 which eliminated the requirement for paper bound contracts. Previously, five sets of contracts were issued as a result of a competitive bid which were then sent via courier to the awarded vendor then back to the City for execution.

Based on an annual average of processing contracts for **90 projects**, this has resulted in hard cost savings of approximately **\$6,750** through the elimination of paper, binding supplies, postage and courier costs, and **180 hours** of staff time per year.







## Strategic Objective: Infrastructure

**Value Statement:** *Ensure existing and new infrastructure meets the future needs of the community.* 

Taking care of the roads we drive on everyday, the trails we run and play on, and the storm water drainage systems that protect our property is more than just a day-to-day operation at the City, it is essential for supporting our residents and developing for future growth. Investing in the design and development of safe, well-maintained and accessible transportation networks, open spaces, parks, trails and recreational and cultural facilities is a key priority for Council to support community needs and provide essential services, and set Grande Prairie for forecasted future growth.

## Achieving Council's Objective of Infrastructure in 2020:



**Layout drawings for playground replacement projects** were completed in house by engineering staff rather than hiring an external consultant. The cost savings from this allowed for more of the allocated funds to go to the construction, resulting in more playground upgrades than originally anticipated, and more opportunity for families to play and grow together in their own neighbourhoods.

Conducting **in-house slope monitoring** at two large sites along Bear River not only minimized costs but have now reduced response times in caring for critical infrastructure.

1.8 kms of pathways

9 kms of sidewalk

A total of 23.2 centerline kms of road, 9 kms of sidewalks, and 1.8 kms of pathways were rehabilitated over 2020, keeping our community connected and ready for growth.

### 23.2 kms of road



A cross-departmental collaboration to work on construction and planning for maintenance and repairs of the inherited 65 lane kilometres of the **Old Highway 43 Bypass** over a 3+ year lifecycle, is allowing us to provide a greater level of service to the roadway. As a key transportation coordinator facilitating the flow of a significant amount of goods, the bypass is a critical connector not only for the everyday lives of our residents, but for the many industries that drive the economic engine of our region.

**25 of 53** City owned facilities were selected for a **Facility Condition Assessment** to improve the level of detail available for capital planning and as a key component in facility asset management planning. An industry standard asset management tool — the Facility Condition Index (FCI) — which measures a constructed asset's condition at a specific point in time was used to classify the visually inspected facilities. This information allows for prioritization of timely repairs and renewal activities which will lower the cost of ownership over a 25 year period, creating cost savings for tax payers. Additionally, the reports will be used to provide appropriate annual re-investment considerations specific to facility infrastructure funding and budget development to support long-term growth and development.





### **Strategic Objective: Safety**

**Value Statement:** Undertake proactive measures to promptly respond and protect the community from harm and to provide a safe and comfortable living standard.

As Grande Prairie dealt with the global COVID-19 pandemic alongside the rest of the world, community safety and emergency services were the top priority for the City in 2020. To serve and care for the needs of all of our residents, including our most vulnerable and especially during such a tumultuous period, requires a timely and well-equipped response. Supporting community safety also includes a huge focus on the development and provision of educational programs focusing on proactive prevention, intervention and strategic partnerships to create shared responsibility for personal safety and well-being.

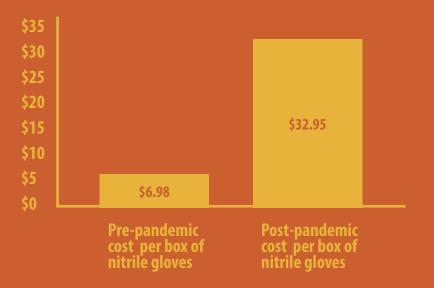
# Achieving Council's Objective of Safety in 2020:



The City implemented **COVID-19 Service Updates** as soon as municipal operations were impacted in early March to provide real-time updates to residents on operational changes and supports related to the pandemic. The updates were posted around-the-clock to keep residents and businesses informed of the City's COVID-19 response, and available to subscribe to for people to get them delivered right to their inbox. Additionally, the landing page <u>cityofgp.com/covid19</u> was created to house all of the City's pandemic response information from facility closures to business supports and recreation updates and everything in between in one easy-to-access, central location.

Forecasting global demand and shortage, the City worked proactively to procure a **6-8 month supply** of critical items from fleet parts to personal protective equipment (PPE) ahead of the impacts of the pandemic. A central inventory of critical safety supplies was created in advance including cleaning/disinfecting supplies, disposable gloves, masks, paper supplies, PPE, hand sanitizer etc. This implementation was instrumental in the success of the Grande Prairie Regional Emergency Partnership (*GPREP*) activation in supporting neighbouring municipalities, businesses and non-profit organizations.

Not only was this move critical in the City's pandemic response, it also saw significant cost savings as items were procured at a rate that is much less than today's market value e.g. nitrile gloves were \$6.98 per box, today these gloves are \$32.95 per box.



Enforcement Services implemented of a **four-member bike unit** over the spring and summer, targeting the City core, parks and greenspaces. It was a simple and straightforward way to support community safety on the front-lines with a community-centered approach. The success of this bike patrol was widespread, and preparations are underway to repeat and grow this initiative in 2021.



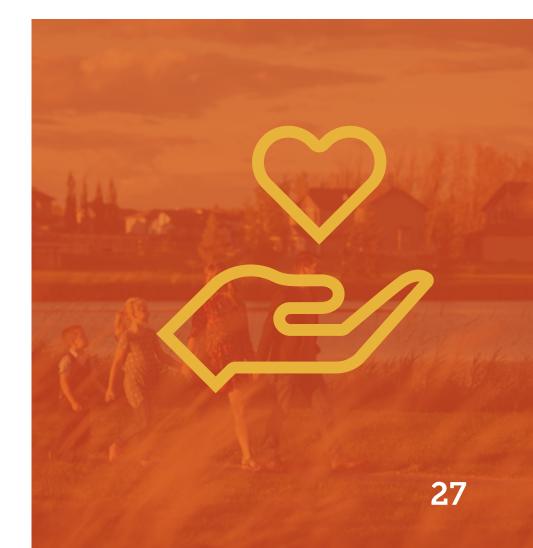
The City of Grande Prairie received a grade of 100% on its Health and Safety Audit. Such a high score is extremely rare and a reflection of how far the health and safety program has come and our organization's commitment to these values.

Pandemic response for vulnerable populations has been a major focus across 2020 and into 2021. The City mobilized quickly and was able to support the operations so that those experiencing homelessness are safe and community concerns were addressed through the overflow shelter sites and isolation program. Included in this response has also been extensive liaising with Alberta Health Services and the provincial and federal government to manage funding contracts, data collection and reporting and co-ordinated response; ensuring agencies had proper PPE; and facilitating virtual sessions among non-profits to share advice and develop community capacity.



The Fire Department completed **radio console upgrades** as the first step in a major technology upgrade in the GP-911 Center. Radio Console upgrades were required to take full advantage of the Alberta First Responders Radio Communications System (AFRRCS). The upgrade allows first responders to access better communication options with each other and with dispatch, enhancing the safety of all responders and ensuring an efficient assignment of resources. The upgrade allows for the GP-911 customers to access the features offered by AFRRCS and ensures the longevity of the dispatch center to be able to support our community into the future.

The **Community Care Program** was established by GPREP to ensure that individuals isolating at home due to COVID without access to any other services or supports, were provided with a food hamper and their medication as needed. 90 individuals or families were supported through the program. Applicants who were not eligible for the program were referred to other services to get the relevant supports they needed. This program was a key component of ensuring our pandemic responsive was inclusive and accessible for all members of the community.



2020 was a challenging year on multiple fronts where Grande Prairie RCMP strategic responses had to rapidly evolve to meet the needs of the community. A strategic response to operationally meet the needs of a rising trend of domestic violence and sexual assaults in the community became a priority for the Grande Prairie Detachment.

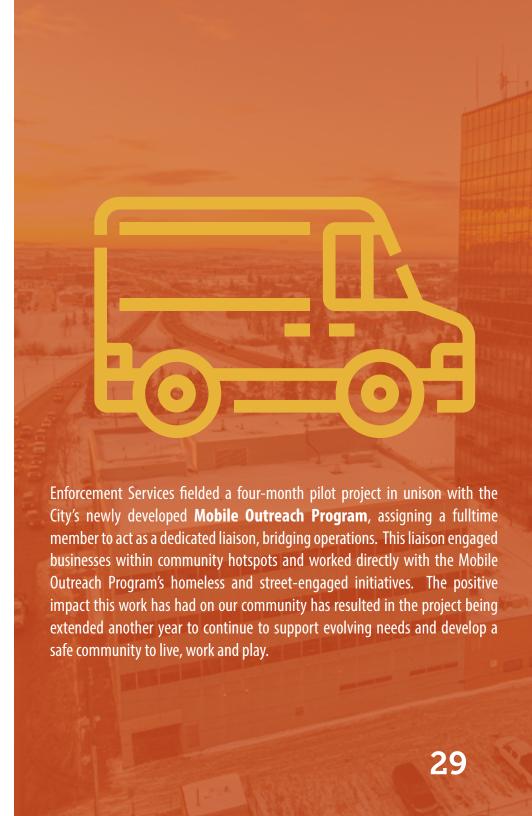
In September 2020, the Grande Prairie Detachment proudly launched the **Specialized Investigative Unit (SIU)** one-year pilot project to focus on these areas of crime. The SIU has received numerous accolades from our clients, partner agencies and Crown Counsel's Office citing a noticeable increase in quality of investigations and client satisfaction. It is a strong highlight of how the City is working pro-actively to assess current crime trends and accurately apply them to current social and demographic challenges to support our localized community safety needs.





Recognizing the value of intelligence led policing, in 2020 the Grande Prairie Detachment created, implemented and solidified the use of a **Daily Occurrence Report (DOR)** within each watch. The DOR proved to be an innovative and invaluable tool where vital information pertaining to prisoners, COVID-19 response, violent offences, officer safety alerts, missing persons, curfew checks and high-risk files are documented. It has become an information sharing platform for police intelligence to identify where trends area rising in the community and region.

Additionally, it has transitioned into a valuable risk assessment tool for senior management in the Grande Prairie Detachment and Western Alberta District. The DOR is a prime example of how the City is working proactively to support not only the residents of Grande Prairie but neighbouring areas from harm and develop safer communities.



## Governance



### **Strategic Objective: Governance**

**Value Statement:** *Provide leadership that develops constructive relationships.* 

Providing accountable and strategic community leadership through policy and our internal and external relationships is a top priority for all of Council. Included within this is the work the City does to foster connections and advocate to various other levels of government, as well as seek out opportunities and partnerships to further advance the community. All of this is done in an effort to sustainably align the City's long-term strategy and financial management with Council's objectives and the priorities of our residents.

## Achieving Council's Objective of Governance in 2020:



A **Bylaw and Policy Review Policy** was passed to establish a standing committee agenda item for the timely and consistent review of all bylaws and policies over a four-year period. This new approach to the reviews is conducted more efficiently and with less administrative costs than the Bylaw and Policy Review Committee it replaced, while still ensuring critical reviews are conducted to keep legislation timely and relevant to the community.

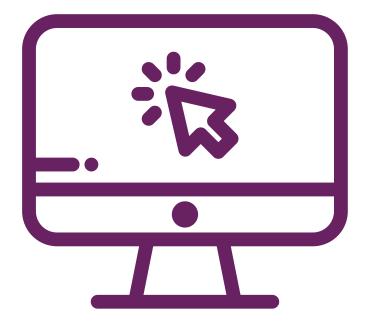


Procurement shifted to an **electronic bidding system** in 2020 to create efficiencies for both internal departments and external bidders. By moving to digital bonding for infrastructure projects, the time to obtain bonds has been reduced from 10-14 days to less than five days.

All of these efficiencies have contributed to the reduction in our time to award, allowing vendors to mobilize to site quicker, improving relations with the City and stakeholders, and creating more opportunity for community and regional development.

A **New Business License Bylaw** was drafted and adopted by Council, with consultation and engagement from members of the business community. Through this bylaw, the City is able to support business and industry development by knowing what types of businesses operate in the City and respond to business needs while diversifying the economy. Having the licenses enables the City to focus on business retention and expansion by better understanding local supply chains and supporting efficiency improvements to attract investment.

Additionally, the licenses provide vital information during emergency response as the City can directly contact businesses to procure urgent resources or to offer support.





Council Chambers were outfitted with COVID-19 barriers to maintain in-person Council meetings during the pandemic. An internal team developed, built and installed a barrier system that matched the existing wood finish of the chamber desk, met both the provincial and building code requirements, and provided clear sight lines for all Council members, specifically for the video cameras and those watching at home online. It was an innovative and flexible solution to keep Council connected together safely and demonstrate leadership and good governance in the community.



Council's **meeting management software** was upgraded, replacing outdated software for the management of Council and Committee meetings and agendas. The upgrade improved quality and increased user-friendly functionality for Administration, members of Council and members of the public resulting in increasing accessibility of information supporting transparent government.



The City successfully renegotiated a **land swap** with the province to identify different and more appropriate land for the construction of the new high school. Through our intergovernmental relations and advocacy efforts, the City was able to champion community needs and secure the resources to best support our development priorities.



## Strategic Objective: Innovative and high-performing collaborative organization

**Value Statement:** The City of Grande Prairie strives to foster management and organizational excellence with a spirit of innovation, clarity of vision and effective change management practices while realizing the best and highest use of resources to leverage existing expertise in the organization and community.

This is realized by attracting and retaining quality employees dedicated to excellent customer service, fostering a culture of continuous improvement, financial and risk management excellence and year-round community engagement to sustain and strengthen community involvement, engage stakeholders, showcase our community and tell our stories.



Achieving Council's Objective of an Innovative and High-**Performing Collaborative** Organization in 2020:

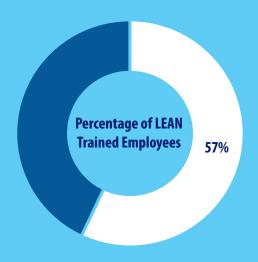


In response to the pandemic, our Corporate Leadership Team moved from weekly meetings to daily meetings to determine the best course of action to ensure that the City of Grande Prairie as an organization and the community were healthy and safe. Ensuring provincial regulations were being followed, and mitigating financial impacts to the community were at the forefront of discussion. Additionally, the Finance and Human Resources departments worked side by side to minimize the effects the closures would have on the organization's finances and redeploy as many impacted employees as possible.

Although many tough decisions were made with significant impacts on the budget of the City, the goal was to help avoid a deficit and manage fiscal responsibility for the organization.



2020 saw the transition to a centralized **Corporate Asset Management** model for the City. The Corporate Efficiency Team is now responsible for coordinating and embedding sound asset management principles, practices and initiatives across the organization while also implementing systems and processes to ensure longevity and sustainability of municipal assets. Additionally, they are responsible for ensuring that asset management activities are consistent throughout the organization and aligned with the organizational strategic plan. This new model is designed to create a transparent, evidence-based framework that will consolidate capital investment priorities for each asset service category into an overall corporate-wide plan for senior decision makers to make informed decisions during the annual capital budget deliberations.



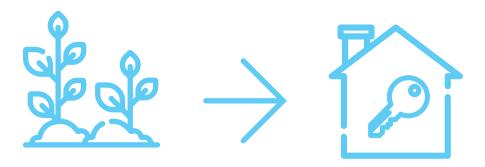
Our Corporate Efficiency team has been providing training in **LEAN methodology** to all permanent employees at every level as a way to encourage thinking critically about how work is completed, solving problems with residents in mind, taking ownership of results, and driving a culture of continuous improvement. At the end of 2020, **57%** of all full-time employees were trained with the majority of those participating in a one-hour virtual Lean orientation session. The goal is to train all employees, at the appropriate levels of knowledge, by the end of 2021.



A digital app was rolled out for the organization that enabled the submissions of continuous improvements by staff across all departments. A total of **720** improvements were captured in 2020 with verified improvements resulting in approximately **\$1.86** million in cost savings and cost avoidance and optimization of **18,964** hours in staff time.



In 2020, a **Corporate Customer Service Strategy** was launched, inclusive of several initiatives aimed at streamlining our internal processes to enhance both our operational efficiency and the citizen's experience. The Citizen Contact Centre completed the establishment of a knowledge base that enables timely, consistent responses to citizen requests, add secured approval for the implementation of **311** which will be formally launched in April 2021, funneling all service requests through a central point of contact that is familiar to residents. The goal of the project is to build internal capacity to manage service requests and enhance self-serve options for citizens.



The **Canola to Key** project is a start to finish review of the City's role in land development, from a canola field to a key in the door of a fully built development. It involves extensive stakeholder consultation to identify how the City can reduce timelines and costs, and improve the clarity and transparency for applicants and the public. In total, ten key areas for process reviews were identified through extensive stakeholder engagement. Five reviews were completed in 2020, and work will continue on this initiative in 2021.

# Financial Summary

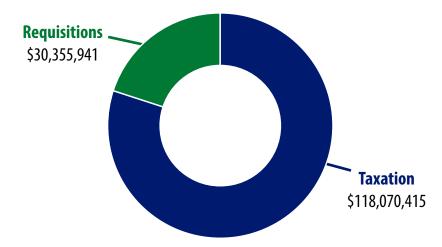
### Financial Discussion & Analysis

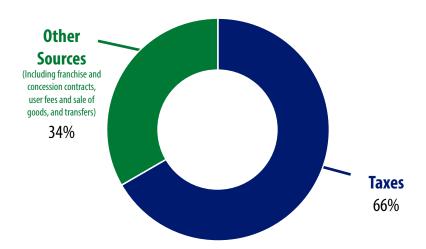
The following information has been derived from the City's Audited Consolidated Financial Statements for the year ending December 31, 2020. Readers are encouraged to also look at the detailed financial statements in conjunction with the summary information being provided. The 2020 Consolidated Audited Financial Statements can be found at *cityofgp.com/financialreports* 

### Revenue

To provide the multitude of services residents use each day, the City collects revenue from a number of sources; the largest being taxes. For 2020, a total of \$148M was collected, with \$30M requisitioned for other organizations, such as the Public and Catholic School Boards, and the remaining \$118M collected to provide services to residents.

Other revenue sources include transfers from government, user fees, sales of goods, franchise fees and concession contracts, as well as interest and investment income and more. Of the \$179M of revenue collected in 2020, \$118M was from property taxes, with the remainder from other sources.



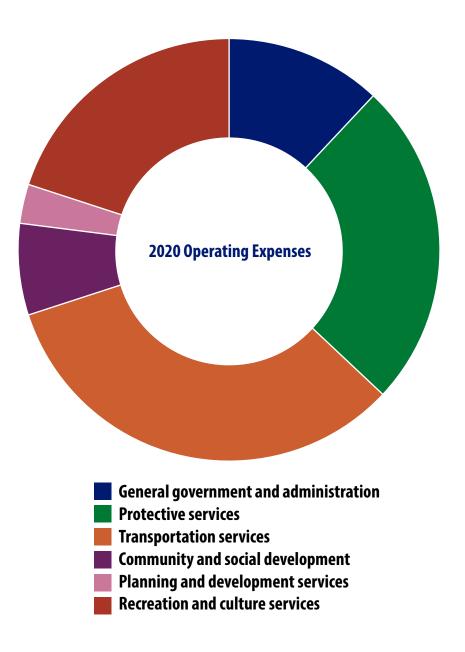


In 2020 revenue was both less than budgeted and lower than prior years, predominantly due to COVID-19 and the closure of facilities. Transit services had to be reduced for social distancing, as well as most programs and events postponed, cancelled or provided at limited capacity. Additionally, Council approved extra time for taxes to be paid by residents by way of cancelling multiple penalty dates, while also providing a one-time tax rebate for all tax payers on their 2020 property tax bill.

### **Operating Expenses**

The cost to provide services for the 2020 year totaled \$185M, for provision of a multitude of City services, including recreation, community development, road repair and maintenance, snow removal and sanding, parks maintenance and improvements, fire and enforcement services and more. This also includes the Grande Prairie Airport and Library.

COVID-19 also affected the City's expenses during 2020. In addition to revenue decreases, costs to provide services were less than the prior year. With COVID-19 came additional costs for support, predominantly for the City's vulnerable population, however salary savings and reduced operating costs were seen due to facility closures and program cancellations. The City redeployed many staff where possible to support other City services unaffected by restrictions such as road maintenance and parks operations.

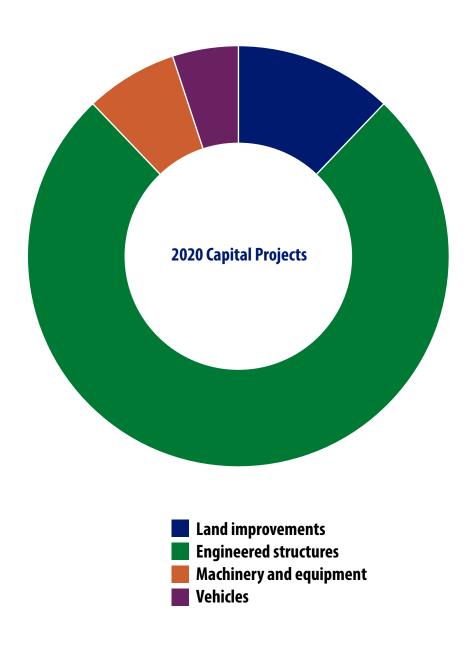


### **Capital Projects**

Each year the City undergoes numerous capital projects. For 2020, the City saw one of its largest capital plans with additional funding support to create local stimulus provided by the provincial and federal government. The City completed **\$45.9M** of capital projects, including road rehab, overlay and resurfacing of 84th Avenue, 108th Street, Canfor crossing and 116th Street, as well as 116th Avenue and Westpointe and Patterson Avenues. A new snow dump liner was completed, which reduces environmental impacts of snow collected during the winter, as well as a pickleball court and the City of Grande Prairie new entrance features.

Overall, the City fared well in 2020, despite the many variables and unknowns throughout COVID-19, tough decisions were made to keep costs down while revenues declined. The year ended with a slight surplus and City Council decided to use this surplus to cover costs to once again waive July tax penalties in 2021, fund some additional capital costs and save for future unforeseen needs.

Long-term financial plans have the City well positioned going forward, with adequate reserves, manageable debt capacity, and strategies to ensure capital requirements can be met and funded.





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