

RECOVERY TASK FORCE

Final Report

August 2021



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1.0 Acknowledgements

The COVID-19 pandemic affected St. Albert, the province, the country and the world in ways no one could have predicted. It has challenged our community and tested our resiliency in the face of rapid change and disruption, all the while inflicting unprecedented social and economic hardship on many.

By April 2020, it became evident to St. Albert City Council that the path through this crisis and toward recovery was going to require new ways of thinking and creative solutions. Through this realization and through their shared desire to respond effectively to the evolving circumstances of the pandemic, Council approved, as part of its comprehensive Recovery Conceptual Plan, the formation of the COVID-19 Recovery Task Force in May 2020.

The Task Force was formed to act as an advisory board for Council on how best to recover from the ongoing community and business impacts of COVID-19. It brought together members of Council and some of the brightest minds in the community, with a broad cross-section of experience in diverse areas like business, development, government, social profit and consulting.

Over the past 16 months, Task Force members have met regularly to explore ideas and generate strategies aimed at assisting residents, businesses, and not-for-profit organizations in recovering from the economic and social impacts of the pandemic. The Task Force consulted with subject matter experts, community leaders and City staff to learn more about the impacts of the pandemic, while gaining insight into how the City could best respond to the crisis. Throughout their tenure, they considered challenging and diverse topics like which incentives would be needed to help local businesses adapt and innovate in the post-pandemic world, and which opportunities could be identified to increase inclusion and community connectedness in St. Albert.

This Final Report presents the result of many hours of work and dedication by Task Force members, as well as thoughtful feedback and input from stakeholders. It outlines how St. Albert can effectively transition from a state of pandemic response to one of recovery. The focus and commitment of all involved was to ensure St. Albert can move forward together, focused on rebuilding small businesses and strengthening community, and those recommendations are set forth here.

One thing that COVID-19 has shown us is that we are better together. By working together, we can emerge as an even stronger, more resilient city and community going forward. Recovery is a process that will continue to require thoughtful leadership and community engagement long after the Task Force's work is over. I am confident that just as St. Albertans have overcome the adversities of the pandemic, so too will we overcome any new challenges faced along the way if we work together towards our shared vision of recovery from this unprecedented event.

Respectfully,

Cathy Heron

Mayor, City of St. Albert

Recovery Task Force Members



Mayor
Cathy Heron



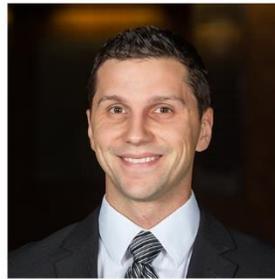
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2.0 Executive Summary

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on all facets of life across the globe. In the City of St. Albert, businesses, residents, and community partners have needed to be adaptive and resilient. At the onset of the pandemic, City Council saw the need to be proactive in planning for recovery from the effects of the pandemic, including the need to find innovative and efficient solutions that could help expedite the community's recovery post pandemic. As a result, Council delivered a mandate and struck the COVID-19 Recovery Task Force¹ in April 2020.

The Recovery Task Force is an advisory committee to City Council that brings together Council members and community leaders to recommend solutions to these complex issues.

While the mandate for the Recovery Task Force was post-pandemic recovery, due to the protracted nature of the pandemic, the Task Force supported some of the City's response efforts to issues arising during the pandemic, as well.

Through a series of facilitated workshops and meetings from May 2020 to August 2021, the Task Force developed several strategies for Council's consideration, intended to achieve the following desired outcomes:

1. **Accessible Services and Programs:** improved access to, and awareness of, business and community support services and programs offered by the City and partner organizations.
2. **Accelerate Growth, Investment and Financial Diversification:** an economic environment that supports business growth, attracts new investment, promotes revenue diversification and ensures a business-friendly culture.
3. **Social Profit and Business Resiliency:** enhanced ability of businesses and social profits to adapt to a COVID-altered business and economic environment.
4. **Community Connectedness, Vibrancy, Pride and Sense of Belonging:** St. Albert is a welcoming and inclusive city, where all residents feel a sense of belonging and those in need are supported.

The Recommended Strategies to achieve these desired outcomes are summarized within the [Interim Report](#) that was presented to City Council in December 2020.

For each strategy, the Recovery Task Force identified initiatives that support the desired outcomes. Some of these initiatives align with existing core services and ongoing work, included in the 2020-2021 [City of St. Albert Corporate Business Plan](#). These initiatives are detailed in Appendix 2.

¹ Throughout this report, the name Recovery Task Force and Task Force are used interchangeably.

The Task Force also identified several new initiatives for the City the broader St. Albert community. These initiatives, and the potential new opportunities associated with them, will require additional resources. As such, the COVID-19 Recovery Task Force is providing this report to St. Albert City Council as information, and for use in future strategic planning and budgeting conversations.

The desired outcomes and strategies presented here in the Final Report reflect the collective knowledge and input of both Task Force members and the St. Albert community on how the City and community can “build back better” from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Recovery Task Force also recognizes that recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic will need to be a community commitment. It will require engagement from the business community, social profit sector, residents and City Council to ensure that St. Albert continues to be a great place to live, work and play.



3.0 Introduction

3.1 Purpose

The Recovery Task Force is an advisory Council Committee that was established in April 2020 and is a key component of implementing the City’s Recovery Conceptual Plan (Appendix 1). The Task Force was mandated with developing a report and recommendations focused on ways the City can assist residents, community partners and businesses in recovering from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic over an 18 to 24-month period.

On April 6, 2020, Council passed motion CM-20-013, which requested Administration provide a conceptual plan for COVID-19 Recovery in St. Albert. On April 20, 2020, Council approved the conceptual plan and passed Bylaw 24/2020, forming the Recovery Task Force.

The Recovery Task Force established the following **Vision** to guide its work:

Acting as a catalyst for economic and social resiliency, by supporting innovative approaches that enhance community connection and sustainability, towards a future where all St. Albert residents and businesses can thrive.

3.2 Process Overview

The Task Force met from May 2020 to August 2021 to identify options to help the community recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over this period, the Task Force explored the key social and economic impacts the pandemic was having on City residents and businesses. Some of the themes from these discussions included:

- **increasing levels of loneliness and isolation,**
- **economic impacts across all areas of community life** and
- the realization that the **impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic will be felt for months or years to come.**

In addition to their experience and networks, Task Force members were provided with subject matter experts and support from City Administration. The Task Force used a strategic framework to identify key opportunities and challenges, develop problem statements, identify options and recommendations to address these issues, and map a path forward. Responding to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and supporting community and business recovery was the focus of these discussions.

The Recovery Task Force developed four problem statements to frame the analysis, discussions and recommendations:

1. What new policies or incentives are needed to help businesses adapt and innovate to ensure a resilient and sustainable local economy?
2. In a post-COVID-19 pandemic world, how do we ensure people continue to choose St. Albert as a place to live, work and play?
3. How might we provide opportunities that increase inclusion and community connectedness within St. Albert, especially for the most vulnerable populations?
4. How might we enhance the ability of residents, organizations and business to become more resilient and thrive?

In developing its recommendations, the Recovery Task Force was mindful that the pandemic was having a disproportionate impact on vulnerable populations.² The lengthy and ongoing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic has led to unstable employment, social isolation, food and housing insecurity, and disrupted access to medical and mental health supports. As a result, more and different demographics have become vulnerable, not just to contracting and spreading COVID-19, but to a variety of detrimental and severe indirect impacts.



² See Appendix 3 for the definition of vulnerable populations for the purpose of this report.

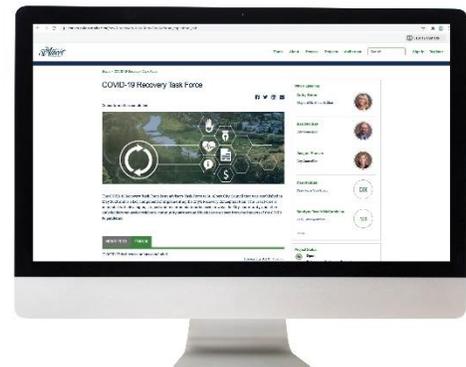
4.0 What We Heard

The Recovery Task Force engaged with key stakeholders and residents through Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 to ensure that the strategies and initiatives being developed would meet the needs and expectations of the community.



In November 2020, the Recovery Task Force opened an online forum in the City’s “Cultivate the Conversation” tool to engage the community. The Task Force asked the public to respond to the following questions:

- What do you think should be done within the community to **support local businesses and social profits?**
- What do you think should be done within the community to support the **overall St. Albert Community?**
- What do you think should be done within the community to support **residents?**



Thirty-one responses were received, and this feedback was incorporated into the interim report, presented to Council in December 2020.

A second round of engagement was held in early 2021. Using an online meeting platform, the Task Force met with representatives from several Council committees, representing a broad range of community voices, to solicit feedback on the Interim Report. A list of engaged organizations and the summary of these engagement sessions, as well as the Fall 2020 Cultivate the Conversation engagement, can be found in the [“What We Heard Report.”](#)

Engagement session participants were asked the following questions:

- What are some of the impacts or concerns that your organization/stakeholders have experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?
- What issue or strategy was not addressed or included in the Interim Report that you feel should be?
- What do you feel is the single most important factor impacting post-pandemic recovery for businesses, community and residents?
- How best can the business community, non-profit sector and municipal government support post-pandemic recovery in St. Albert?

Feedback across all engagement sessions was supportive of the recommended strategies and initiatives included in the interim report. Some common themes included:

- **the wide-spread nature of mental health impacts across all sectors and demographics;**
- how **the pandemic disproportionately impacted vulnerable populations**, including previously unrecognized groups such as part-time employees, women and youth; and
- **the pandemic accelerated the rate of adoption of online business models and changed the way that many businesses and non-profits deliver services to clients.**

The Task Force also heard about:

- **the importance of incorporating a youth perspective,**
- **acknowledging the important role arts and culture can play in recovery,** and
- **including a clear definition for vulnerable populations.**

This feedback is reflected throughout this document, the Final Report of the Recovery Task Force.

5.0 Actions in 2020-2021

Early in its mandate, the Recovery Task Force received presentations from St. Albert Administration related to **development bonds**, a potential **solar farm project** and the City's creation of a new **Municipal Development Plan**. Each of these initiatives are anticipated to enable economic diversification and stimulate economic growth.

In the case of development bonds, the Recovery Task Force recommended to Council that the City include the use of development bonds as a form of security from developers to reduce the red tape for development. This was quickly adopted by Council, making the City of St. Albert one of the first municipalities in Alberta to adopt such a practice.

Members of the Recovery Task Force identified opportunities to support businesses through the expedited approval of outdoor patios and this was initiated with the approval of Bylaw 30/2020 and the establishment of a streamlined process to set up minor patios and sidewalk retail pop-ups on City-owned lands. This Bylaw was extended for the 2021 season to accommodate ongoing COVID-19 health orders.

THINGS ACCOMPLISHED IN 2020-21

- Development Bonds
- Outdoor Patios
- Mobile Testing Site
- Vaccination Advocacy
- Driveway Fire Pits
- Freezeway
- Business Resiliency Program



The Recovery Task Force also recommended that Council advocate to the Government of Alberta for the establishment of symptomatic and asymptomatic testing sites in St. Albert. Shortly after this, the Province unveiled asymptomatic testing sites at local pharmacies and in November 2020, established a mobile testing centre at Servus Credit Union Place.



When the provincial vaccination program was announced in early 2021, the Recovery Task Force supported a request for the Province to set up a vaccination site in the City so residents would not need to travel to Edmonton to be vaccinated. The Task Force also called on fellow eligible St. Albertans to get vaccinated as quickly as possible, and St. Albert soon became one of the most vaccinated populations in Alberta.

In the Interim Report, the Recovery Task Force also identified four priority strategies for Council to consider as part of its annual Strategic Planning session in February 2021:

- 1.3: **Increase community awareness** of the programs and supports available through both the City and partner organizations to assist those in need.
- 2.4: Explore options for **business incentive programs**.
- 3.3: Reimagine the City's **relationship with partner organizations** that provide social services to residents.
- 4.2: Enable smaller, **spontaneous use activities** that encourage residents to participate in year-round outdoor activities (e.g., pop-up fire pits).

This resulted in the addition of a new corporate initiative, “explore options for business incentive programs” in the 2021 Corporate Business Plan. Further, Council added a seventh priority to the St. Albert Strategic Plan, “Community Recovery Post Covid-19.”

The City supported spontaneous use activities throughout the winter, including the St. Albert Driveway Fire Pit Program and the Freezeway at Lions Park. In May 2021, Council made the Fire Pit Program permanent.



In April 2021, Council also approved a Business Resiliency Program to support local COVID-19 recovery efforts by helping businesses develop and/or improve their marketing and digital presence. To date, 60 grant applications have been processed and \$49,148.50 has been allocated to support St. Albert local businesses.

Progress on all recovery initiatives to date are included in the Recovery Task Force Q2 Quarterly Report.



6.0 Recommendations

6.1 Business Sector

KEY THEMES

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on St. Albert businesses. From repeated shutdowns, to changing consumer purchasing behaviours and the costs associated with meeting new health and safety measures, businesses were under increasing pressure to adapt processes and adjust to the ever-changing “new normal.”



The Recovery Task Force identified several areas where businesses would benefit from enhanced support to successfully pivot in a post-COVID-19 environment:

- Streamlining and adapting business service delivery (on-line, e-commerce).
- Providing incentives for new development and growth initiatives.
- Creating opportunities for mentorship programs.
- Enhancing the City’s incubation ecosystem.
- Leveraging existing advantages in technology infrastructure.
- Developing partnerships to drive innovation and development.

6.2 Community

KEY THEMES

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of connection, to both community and one another, as a cornerstone of mental and social well-being. Supporting programs and organizations that build community connection will be an essential part of St. Albert's recovery effort.

Community organizations, including arts and culture, and the social profits play a key role in community building and support. These organizations are facing many of the same challenges businesses face, with diminished fundraising opportunities and revenue. The pandemic has also placed an increased demand on their services and supports, creating additional pressures for organizations to do more with less. A thriving business and social profit sector are necessary for ensuring a sustained and widespread recovery from the pandemic.

The past several months have also highlighted that St. Albert is a great place to live, work and play. The river valley, green spaces and trail system provided residents with excellent opportunities to stay safe and healthy while enjoying the best the city has to offer, even under pandemic restrictions. The need to extend these types of spontaneous use activities into the winter months was identified as an opportunity to be explored.



The Recovery Task Force also recognized the opportunity to revisit and reimagine St. Albert's marketing strategy. In addition to its many physical attributes, St. Albert residents and businesses enjoy the benefits of a safe community, modern infrastructure and a business-positive environment.

6.3 Residents

KEY THEMES

The scope of the psychosocial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on individuals and families has been immediate and far-reaching. Communities across the province have recorded increases in the incidence of domestic violence, alcohol and drug abuse, and calls to crisis counselling.

The combined impacts of social isolation, increased financial pressures, remote work pressures and in some cases, home schooling, have resulted in increased reports of exhaustion, burnout and anxiety. These impacts are not felt equally, with vulnerable populations being more at risk for negative outcomes. Recent studies on the psychosocial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic show that women, seniors or residents living alone, residents suffering from homelessness, mental illness or addictions, and marginalized residents, including the LBGTQ2S+ community, have been disproportionately impacted.



The Recovery Task Force recognized that ensuring St. Albert residents are aware of and have access to needed supports and services must be a priority. The City has a role to play as a “bridge builder” to help residents connect to the supports and services available in the community.

7.0 Desired Outcomes and Strategies

With these key themes in mind, and with the intent of solving the following problem statements:

1. What new policies or incentives are needed to help businesses adapt and innovate to ensure a resilient and sustainable local economy?
2. In a post-COVID world, how do we ensure people continue to choose St. Albert as a place to live, work and play?
3. How might we provide opportunities to increase inclusion and community connectedness within City of St. Albert, especially for the most vulnerable populations?
4. How might we enhance the ability of residents, organizations and businesses to become more resilient and thrive?

The Recovery Task Force has identified the following desired outcomes and recommended strategies to St. Albert City Council to assist with recovery efforts.



**DESIRED OUTCOME 1:
Accessible Services and Programs**

Improved access to and awareness of business and community support services and programs offered by the City and partner organizations.

Strategy 1.1

Increase on-line delivery of City services in a streamlined manner to residents, businesses and social profits.

Strategy 1.2

Assess the City's procurement policies to identify opportunities to support local and regional businesses.

Strategy 1.3

Increase community awareness of the programs and supports available through both the City and partner organizations to assist those in need.

**DESIRED OUTCOME 2:
Accelerate Growth, Investment and Financial Diversification**

An economic environment that supports business growth, attracts new investment, promotes revenue diversification and ensures a business-friendly culture.

Strategy 2.1

Facilitate partnerships and collaborations with local and regional partners to generate revenue opportunities.

Strategy 2.2

Attract investment in key sectors that align with existing and growing strengths (e.g., logistics, Artificial Intelligence or natural green spaces).

Strategy 2.3

Continue to promote a culture of excellent customer service, including e-platforms, to support business investment and growth.

Strategy 2.4

Explore options for business and social profit incentive programs.

Strategy 2.5

Ensure St. Albert's levies and fees are regionally competitive for investment and development.

Strategy 2.6

Develop an external marketing campaign to promote St. Albert as investment-ready, and as a city to live, work and play.

**DESIRED OUTCOME 3:
Social Profit and Business Resiliency**

Enhanced ability of businesses and social profits to adapt to a COVID-altered business and economic environment.

Strategy 3.1

Create opportunities to connect community mentors and/or support networks with businesses and social profits needing additional management support.

Strategy 3.2

Identify opportunities to enhance and innovate business and social profit incubation in St. Albert.

Strategy 3.3

Reimagine and strengthen the City's relationship with partner organizations that provide social services to residents and facilitate connections between social profit organizations, looking to increase efficiencies and reduce costs through a shared service model.

**DESIRED OUTCOME 4:
Community Connectedness, Vibrancy, Pride and Sense of Belonging**

St. Albert is a welcoming and inclusive city, where all residents feel a sense of belonging and those in need are supported.

Strategy 4.1

Expand opportunities to increase neighbourhood and community connection.

Strategy 4.2

Enable smaller, spontaneous use activities that encourage residents to participate in year-round outdoor activities (e.g., pop-up fire pits).

Strategy 4.3

Enable volunteer-led projects that foster healthy, engaged communities (e.g., community gardens, block parties).

Strategy 4.4

Develop an internal marketing campaign, accessible to businesses, social profits and residents, that celebrates St. Albert's unique attributes (e.g., Tool Kit for residents)

8.0 Potential New Initiatives and Opportunities

The table below provides a high-level overview of new actions that could be taken by the City of St. Albert and throughout the community. These strategies, and the potential new opportunities associated with them, will likely require additional resources and are being provided to St. Albert City Council for planning considerations in 2022.

DESIRED OUTCOME 1: Accessible Services and Programs			
Strategy	Opportunities	Impacted Focus Area	Timing
1.1 Increase on-line delivery of City services in a streamlined manner to residents, businesses and social profits.	Develop a suite of services for social profits with an online component.	Community	Mid-term
	Streamline in-person access to services utilizing a hybrid approach for accessing services in-person, online or by phone.	Business/ Residents	Mid-term
	Identify opportunities to provide City services at different locations, such as Servus Credit Union Place, kiosks, etc.	Business/ Residents	Mid-term
1.3 Increase community awareness of the programs and supports available through both the City and partner organizations to assist those in need.	Enhance promotion of City and community partner/non-profit programs and services. Enhancements in this area will ensure residents who need them are aware of what is available and where they can be accessed.	Community/ Residents	Short-term
	Identify new ways of connecting with our most in need populations through enhanced partnerships and communications with community partner organizations.	Community/ Residents	Short-term
	Enhance partnerships with stakeholders to provide business support services to St. Albert's businesses (e.g., Export Development Canada, Business Development Bank of Canada, Business Link, etc.).	Business	Short-term

	Leverage existing network of recreation, sport and community partners who deliver programs and services to the community. These organizations often have means to subsidize access to programs and services that are not always widely communicated.	Community/ Residents	Short-term
	Create one central information hub for community organizations to share their information and build awareness.	Community/ Residents	Short-term

**DESIRED OUTCOME 2:
Accelerate Growth, Investment and Financial Diversification**

Strategy	Opportunities	Impacted Focus Area	Timing
2.3 Continue to promote a culture of excellent customer service, including e-platforms, to support business investment and growth.	Develop a concierge service model that provides a single point of access for City businesses to access services and information.	Business	Mid-term
2.4 Explore options for business and social profit incentive programs.	Develop targeted incentive programs, such as Downtown revitalization, to address emergent business needs	Business	Short-term

**DESIRED OUTCOME 3:
Social Profit and Business Resiliency**

Strategy	Opportunities	Impacted Focus Area	Timing
3.1 Create opportunities to connect community mentors and/or support networks with businesses and social profits needing additional management support.	Use existing networks to facilitate conversations and identify specific needs in this area.	Community/ Business	Mid-term
3.2 Identify opportunities to enhance and innovate business and social profit incubation in St. Albert.	Complete a Gap Analysis of the existing business incubation environment within St. Albert and develop recommendations for next steps.	Business	Mid-term
3.3 Reimagine the City's relationship with partner organizations that provide social services to residents.	Further engage with the social profits to build understanding of specific needs (e.g., predictable funding, support/expertise in areas such as HR, IT, Strategic Planning).	Community	Short-term

**DESIRED OUTCOME 4:
Community Connectedness, Vibrancy, Pride and Sense of Belonging**

Strategy	Opportunities	Impacted Focus Area	Timing
4.1 Expand opportunities to increase neighbourhood and community connection.	Utilize Bang the Table platform as an engaging landing space for community groups (e.g., Spruce Grove)	Community/ Residents	Mid-term
	Explore the feasibility of community/neighbourhood associations within the municipality that are responsible for volunteer-led recreation and neighbourhood events.	Community/ Residents	Mid-term

	Identify options for the community to recognize grief and loss as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.	Community/ Residents	Short-term
4.2 Enable smaller, spontaneous-use activities that encourage residents to participate in year-round outdoor activities (e.g., pop-up fire pits)	Planning and Development can look at enabling more permanent flexibility in options that enhance walkability and outdoor use.	Residents	Short-term
4.3 Enable volunteer-led projects that foster healthy, engaged communities (e.g., community gardens, block parties).	Pursue a post-COVID community event that looks to leverage existing strengths in grassroots organizations and volunteers.	Community	Short-term
	Examine internal policies/practices that may impede these activities moving into the future.	Community	Mid-term
4.4 Develop an internal marketing campaign, accessible to businesses, social profits and residents, that celebrates St. Albert's unique attributes.	Develop a marketing campaign and tool kit that reinforces St. Albert's well-known strengths, and challenges existing negative perceptions (i.e., "sleepy", "expensive", "unfriendly to private sector"). Quality of life is the bare minimum in this competitive environment; any marketing campaign needs to be about much more.	Community	Long-term
	Enhance resident engagement to inspire involvement (e.g., through online photo submissions) and on Bang the Table platform.	Residents	Mid-term

	<p>Tap into existing groups, including volunteers and Council Committees (such as Youth Advisory Committee, Seniors' Advisory Committee, BAM, Neighbourhood Connectors or Natural Helpers), to amplify and build community recovery and resilience through a shared recovery/resilience Communications Strategy.</p>	<p>Community Residents</p>	<p>Mid-term</p>
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9.0 Conclusion

The COVID-19 global pandemic has challenged the City of St. Albert in unprecedented ways. Recognizing the need to respond proactively to both the challenges and opportunities created by the pandemic, Council appointed the COVID-19 Recovery Task Force to map a path towards social and economic recovery.

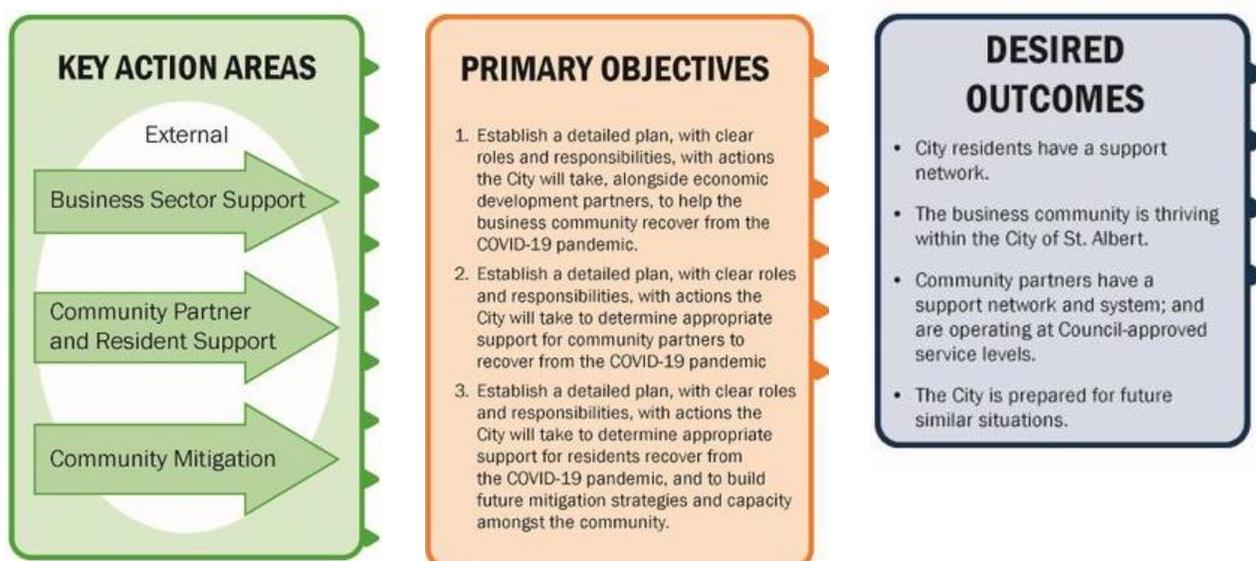
The Task Force was mandated to provide recommendations to Council focusing on ways the City can assist residents, community partners and businesses recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through thoughtful dialogue and engagement with City Administration, subject matter experts, residents and stakeholders, the Recovery Task Force identified four desired outcomes and supporting strategies to build economic and social resiliency, while enhancing community connection and sustainability towards a future where all St. Albert residents and businesses can thrive.

The aftershocks of the COVID-19 pandemic will be felt for years to come. Sustained recovery needs to be a community wide effort and will require residents, businesses, and community partners to continue to support one another and work together to build back better. The Task Force calls upon fellow St. Albertans to support one another in this work ahead.

10.0 Appendix 1: Recovery Framework

The conceptual plan identifies three Key External Action Areas and four Key Internal Action Areas. The work of the Recovery Task Force focused on the external action areas: Business Sector Support, Community Partner and Resident Support, and Community Mitigation.



Recovery Task Force Mandate

According to the Conceptual Plan, the desired end state for the City of St. Albert recovery efforts and the work of the Recovery Task Force is:

- The City of St. Albert has fully recovered from the COVID-19 pandemic, is operating sustainably and we are recognized as one of the best communities in Canada to live in.
- The City adopts new ways of service delivery that contribute to long-term recovery and future sustainability, reflecting a post-COVID-19 pandemic operating environment.

The Task Force's Mandate, per its Terms of Reference, is to be an Advisory Committee that focuses on, and makes recommendations to, City Council as a key component of the City's Recovery Concept Plan.

11.0 Appendix 2: Current Recovery Initiatives

Alignment with City of St. Albert Strategic and Administrative Priorities

The City of St. Albert has several core services and corporate initiatives planned for 2021 that will help execute Recovery Outcomes and Strategies. The Task Force was engaged to apply a recovery lens to this work in 2021.

As a champion, the Recovery Task Force has acted as ambassadors to bring additional attention and awareness to this work within the St. Albert community. As a sounding board, the Recovery Task Force provided strategic advice to City Administration as work progressed to assist in expediting recovery.



**DESIRED OUTCOME 1:
Accessible Services and Programs**

Strategy	Current Initiatives	Potential Task Force Role	Impacted Focus Area	Lead	Expected Completion
1.1 Increase on-line delivery of City services in a streamlined manner to residents, businesses and social profits.	Economic Development will be providing on-line access to business licencing.	Champion	Business	Economic Development	Q4 2020
	Planning and Development is transitioning to more online service delivery and will utilize the Recovery Task Force to promote this work as it progresses.	Champion	Business/ Residents	Planning and Development	2021
1.2 Assess the City's procurement policies to identify opportunities to support local and regional businesses.	The City will implement the findings of the Procurement Review and will be seeking innovative procurement opportunities.	N/A	Business	Finance	Ongoing Core Service
1.3 Increase community awareness of the programs and supports available through both the City and partner organizations to assist those in need.	The City will continue to promote distress lines, local services and city counselling services through a variety of communication strategies. (e.g., Gazette ads and street signs) as well as adding enhanced strategies such as advertising in City recreation facilities.	N/A	Community/ Residents	Community Services	Q4 2021

**DESIRED OUTCOME 2:
Accelerate Growth, Investment and Financial Diversification**

Strategy	Current Initiatives	Potential Task Force Role	Impacted Focus Area	Lead	Expected Completion
2.1 Facilitate partnerships and collaborations with local and regional partners to generate revenue opportunities.	The City will identify and recommend opportunities for investment in long-term revenue generating infrastructure.	N/A	Business/ Community/ Residents	CAO Office	Ongoing Core Service
2.2 Attract investment in key sectors that align with existing and growing strengths (e.g., logistics, Artificial Intelligence and natural green spaces).	Work on developing a corporate promotion strategy will begin in early 2021. The strategy will include tools to position St. Albert as a place for growth, development and investment. The strategy will also include the use of “non-traditional” channels (e.g., brokerage outreach, BILD Alberta engagement, online data toolkit).	Sounding Board	Business/ Community/ Residents	Economic Development Strategic Services	Ongoing Core Service
	Engage St. Albert’s business and thought leaders, including the Recovery Task Force, as community ambassadors to further promote the City’s competitive advantages by leveraging their existing networks and expertise.	Sounding Board	Business/ Community/ Residents	Economic Development	Ongoing Core Service
	The City is working to implement the long-term planning framework which stresses the need to incorporate Smart City strategies across the corporation and will continue to support the recognition of St. Albert as a Smart City.	N/A	Business/ Community	Strategic Services	Q4 2021

<p>2.3 Continue to promote a culture of excellent customer service, including e-platforms, to support business investment and growth.</p>	<p>The City recently completed a Competitive Analysis and work has started on implementation.</p> <p>The report can be shared with the Recovery Task Force and as implementation occurs, the Task Force can be utilized as a sounding board and champion through 2021.</p>	<p>Sounding Board</p>	<p>Business</p>	<p>Planning and Engineering</p>	<p>Q4 2021</p>
<p>2.4 Explore options for business incentive programs.</p>	<p>The City is engaged in the initial stages of exploring opportunities arising from Bill 7. Additional work has started regarding non-tax-based incentives.</p>	<p>Sounding Board</p>	<p>Business</p>	<p>Economic Development</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>2.5 Ensure St. Albert's levies and fees are regionally competitive for investment and development.</p>	<p>The City is currently exploring ways the current cost estimates for off-site levy projects can be reduced. The City is also exploring alternate ways of funding growth projects. In the recently completed Competitive Analysis, the City's off-site levy rates were comparable within the region.</p>	<p>Champion</p>	<p>Business</p>	<p>Engineering</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>2.6 Develop an external marketing campaign to promote St. Albert as investment ready and as a city to live, work and play.</p>	<p>Develop marketing tools focussed on St. Albert's competitive advantages to attract identified key sectors.</p>	<p>Sounding Board</p> <p>Champion</p>	<p>Business</p>	<p>Strategic Services</p> <p>Economic Development</p>	<p>Q4 2021</p>
	<p>Adjust the current marketing approach to better focus on a city-wide approach to promotion that highlights St. Albert's investment readiness.</p>	<p>Sounding Board</p> <p>Champion</p>	<p>Business</p>	<p>Strategic Services</p> <p>Economic Development</p>	<p>Q4 2021</p>

	Look at ways to package St. Albert's investment case with taxes, infrastructure, fast access, etc. to incent private sector investment. Incorporate testimonials from businesses highlighting St. Albert's business positive environment.	Sounding Board Champion	Business	Economic Development	Q4 2021
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**DESIRED OUTCOME 3:
Social Profit and Business Resiliency**

Strategy	Current Initiatives	Potential Task Force Role	Impacted Focus Area	Lead	Expected Completion
3.1 Create opportunities to connect community mentors and/or support networks with businesses and social profits needing additional management support.	Economic Development is looking at starting a business mentorship program in January 2021. The Recovery Task Force could act as a champion for the program.	Champion	Business	Economic Development	Q1 2021
3.2 Identify opportunities to enhance and innovate business incubation in St. Albert.	Economic Development is working to develop and implement a foundational program with key regional partners that fosters entrepreneurship and assists with innovation and commercialization for local business stakeholders.	N/A	Business/ Community	Economic Development	Q3 2021
3.3 Reimagine the City's relationship with partner organizations that provide social services to residents and facilitate connections between social profit organizations, looking to increase efficiencies and reduce costs through a shared service model.	The City will implement recommendations from the Social Programming for Synergistic Opportunities report that identifies ways to better support social profits and support collaboration.	Sounding Board	Community	Community Services	Q4 2020
	Capitalize on opportunities for collaboration emerging from the monthly meetings between the social profits and Community Services.	N/A	Community	Community Services	Ongoing Core Service

**DESIRED OUTCOME 4:
Community Connectedness, Vibrancy, Pride and Sense of Belonging**

Strategy	Current Initiatives	Potential Task Force Role	Impacted Focus Area	Lead	Expected Completion
4.1 Expand opportunities to increase neighbourhood and community connection.	Community Services delivers this as part of its ongoing core operations (i.e., virtual mental wellness workshops for neighbourhoods).	Champion	Community	Community Services	Ongoing Core Service
4.2 Enable smaller, spontaneous use activities that encourage residents to participate in year-round outdoor activities (e.g., pop-up fire pits).	Outdoor recreation amenities such as playgrounds, trails, parks, outdoor rinks, picnic sites, tennis etc. provide an opportunity for residents to take part in free recreation activities. These are all seasonally available. More promotion of these amenities could be done.	Champion	Community	Parks and Recreation	Ongoing Core Service
	Continue the Roaming Recreation Crews that were active during summer 2020 to promote year-round activities.	Champion	Community	Parks and Recreation	Ongoing Core Service
4.3 Enable volunteer led projects that foster healthy, engaged communities (e.g., community gardens, block parties).	Community Services supports these initiatives as part of its ongoing core operations. The Recovery Task Force could champion a winter block party proposal.	Champion	Community	Community Services	Ongoing Core Service

12.0 Appendix 3:

Definition of Vulnerable Population

According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, some Canadians with certain health, social and economic circumstances are more at risk of contracting COVID-19, developing severe symptoms and/or spreading COVID-19. These vulnerable populations include anyone who is:

- An older adult
- At risk due to underlying medical conditions (i.e., heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, cancer)
- At risk due to compromised immune system from a medical condition or treatment (i.e., chemotherapy)

Additionally, vulnerable populations include anyone who has:

- Difficulty reading, speaking, understanding or communicating
- Difficulty accessing medical care or health advice
- Difficulty doing preventative activities like frequent hand washing and masking
- Ongoing specialized medical care or needs specific medical supplies
- Ongoing supervision needs or support for maintaining independence
- Difficulty accessing transportation
- Economic barriers
- Unstable employment or inflexible working conditions
- Social or geographic isolation, like in remote and isolated communities
- Insecure, inadequate or nonexistent housing conditions.

The lengthy and ongoing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic has led to unstable employment, social isolation, food and housing insecurity, and disrupted access to medical and mental health supports. As a result, many more people have become vulnerable, not just to contracting and spreading COVID-19, but also to a variety of detrimental and severe impacts. Community Services further identifies the following St. Albert populations as vulnerable:

- Homeless persons and those at risk of being homeless
- Seniors or other residents who live alone and/or have no family
- Residents with diminishing resources and income
- Residents with mental illness and addictions
- Front line support workers
- Women who have disproportionately shouldered the social and economic impacts of COVID-19. For more info: [UN Women](#)
- Marginalized residents including the LBGQTQ2S+ community
- Residents having to self-isolate and in need of medications and/or food

13.0 Implementation Process Map

