TARGET SECTOR STUDY & MARKETING PLAN

TOWN OF STONY PLAIN, ALBERTA

2015

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Mayor and Council of the Town of Stony Plain

The Growth and Commerce Task Force

Prepared by Place Dynamics LLC

www.placedynamics.com

2015

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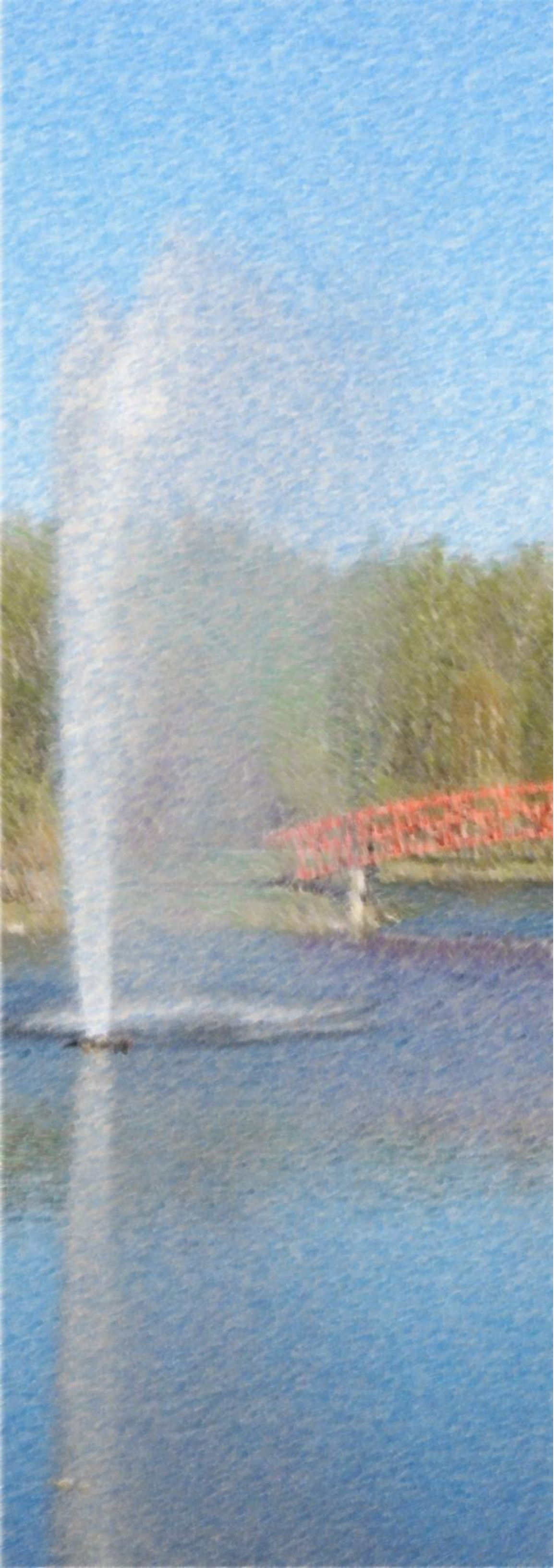


INTRODUCTION

The Town of Stony Plain is looking to its future with a renewed interest in nurturing a more diverse economy with new opportunities for local employment and business ownership, and increases in commercial valuation that can help to support local services that are critical to the community's outstanding quality of life.

The intent of this study is to examine Stony Plain's assets, industry base and workforce, competitive environment, liabilities, and other factors, leading to recommendations for targeted growth opportunities and a marketing strategy describing how they may be achieved.

Stony Plain has unique resources and qualities that can be leveraged to foster business development and investment across diverse economic sectors. The Town can establish a distinctive place within the market, appealing to home-grown and small businesses, and continuing its long-standing role as the place where rural and metropolitan commerce come together. As they are realized, many of these opportunities will create a synergy with each other, branding Stony Plain as a destination community for businesses, residents, and visitors.

Market forces will make it difficult for Stony Plain to grow in the same manner as neighbors like Acheson, which has developed a great concentration of industrial uses, or Spruce Grove, which has captured the large format and chain retail serving the western market. Stony Plain has instead largely grown through startups and expansion of businesses already in the community. The Town can make strategic investments to accelerate this trend and to be a magnet for similar businesses throughout the region.

Local Area Advantages

Stony Plain has an outstanding quality of life that is helping it to attract new residents who tend to be highly skilled workers in trades and professional occupations. These residents are a workforce that will be attractive to many companies, and are also a source of small business ownership. This workforce is shared with Spruce Grove, and the two communities really represent a single pool of workers. Businesses in the area report that wages are somewhat lower than elsewhere in the metropolitan area. Recruitment for some positions can be easier, as workers with families may elect to work close to home, as opposed to in the oilfields where wages can be significantly higher.

Like its neighbor, Stony Plain also shares some advantages in the cost of land. Until the last few years there was little available land for industrial development in either community. This changed with new business parks that opened in Spruce Grove in about 2010-11. Stony Plain now has business parks of its own. Speculative buildings are being constructed in each park, and lease rates are competitive compared to comparable space in the northwestern or southwestern parts of the Edmonton periphery.

While the town is not in a position to attract large retail uses, it can leverage key assets to develop a destination shopping and dining district. Those assets include physical spaces like the historic downtown, the Multicultural Heritage Center, and the Stony Plain and Parkland Pioneer Museum. There are a great many artists in the region, and the arts already have a presence in the downtown district. A nucleus of other specialty businesses in the district draw from well beyond the community's normal market.

In some ways, Stony Plain's greatest advantage may be in its historical role as the western gateway of the Edmonton metropolitan area. Stony Plain was established in the late 1800's and has long served as the market center for the rural hinterland. This role can continue with the town leveraging its connections for businesses in the metropolitan area that serve agricultural, mining, and oil and gas sectors in outlying areas. It may also serve as the entry point for small businesses in the rural area to access the Edmonton market.

An established presence will help Stony Plain to advance its brand, combining the elements of a small town feel, recognition as a distinct place (and not merely a bedroom community), a center for arts and culture, and the gateway to the west.

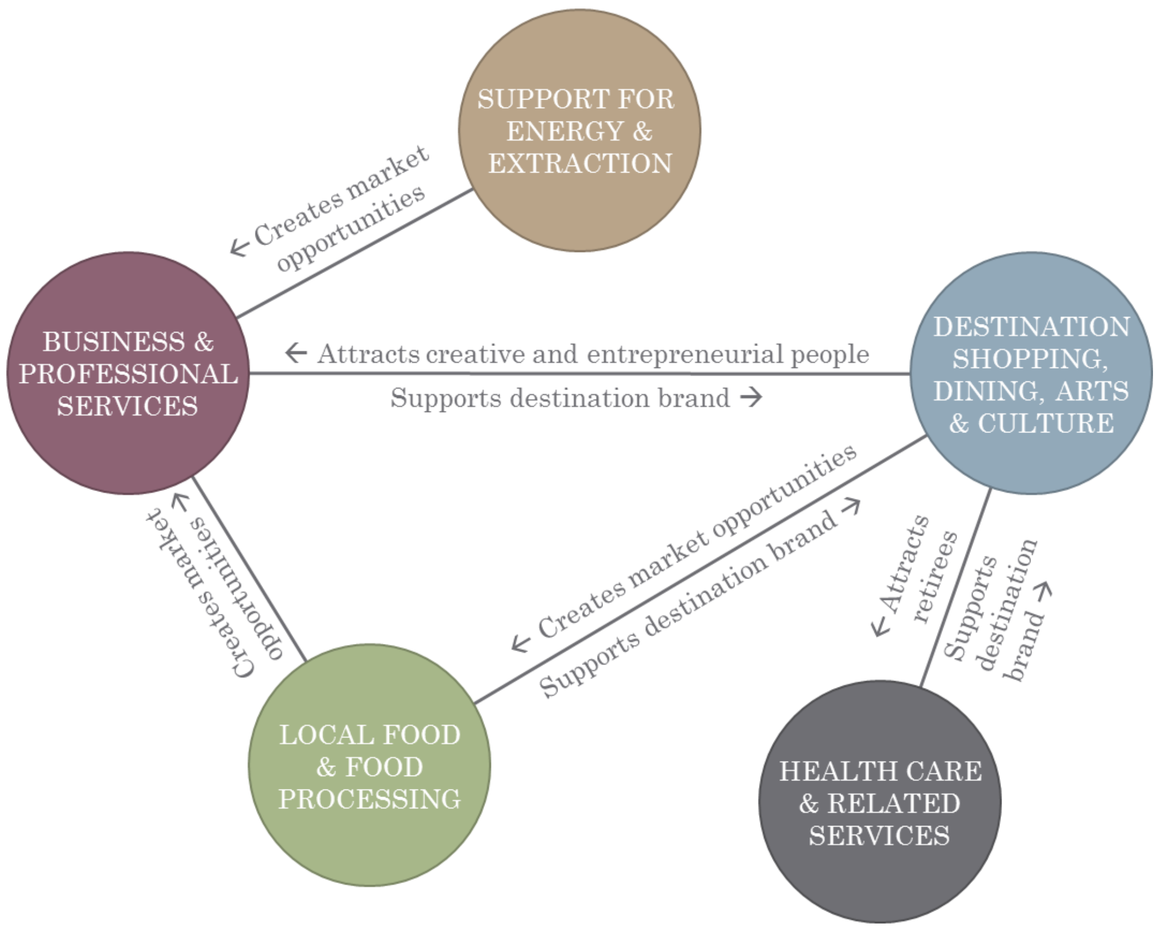
Recommended Targets

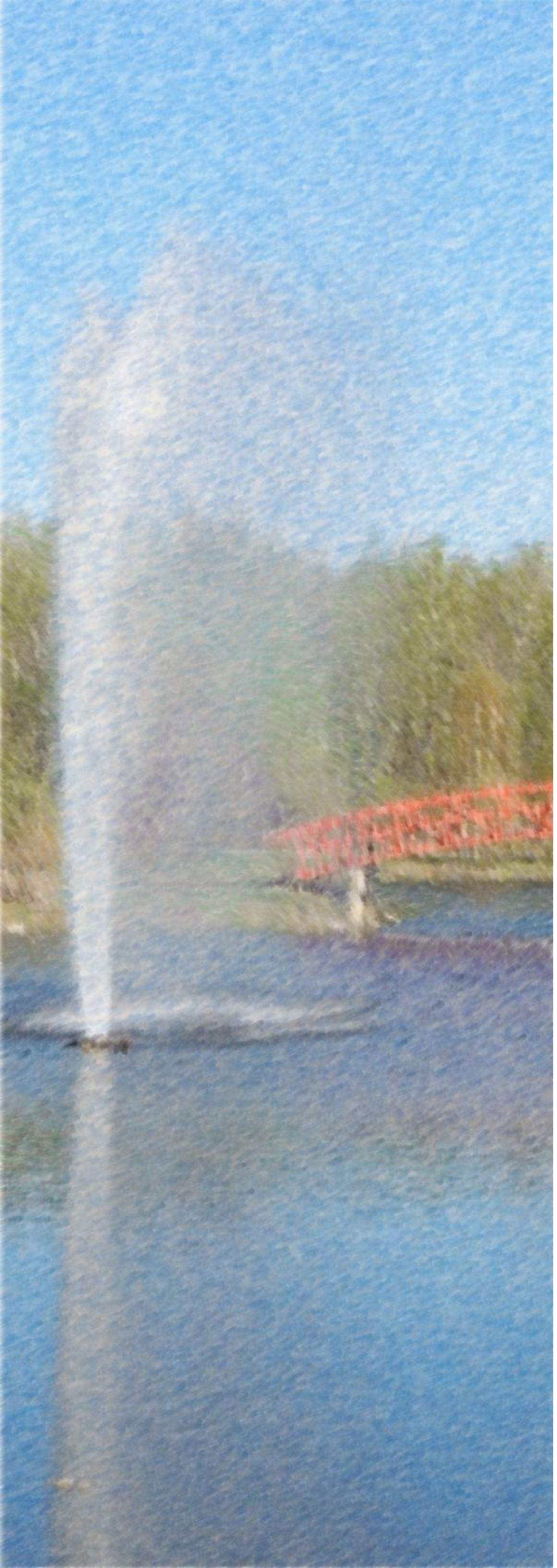
Five targets have been recommended based on the community assessment. These include:

- Support Services for Energy and Extraction – several industries across the business and professional services, manufacturing, and distribution sectors
- Business and Professional Services – small businesses and startups that draw upon local residents as a workforce
- Health Care and Related Services – expanded medical services and associated services such as alternative medicine, hospice care, and services for an aging population
- Local Food and Food Processing – small processors in niche sectors, along with local foods and other specialties
- Destination Shopping, Dining, Arts and Culture – a destination district centered on the downtown, with retail shops, galleries, high-end personal services, and dining

There are linkages between these targets, so that successful implementation of strategies to develop one target may enhance conditions that make the community attractive to other targets. This is particularly true of initiatives to develop a destination shopping, dining, arts and cultural district, which will help to create a market for artisanal and other specialty foods, and will help to raise the community's profile in the region, attract highly-skilled workers in business and professional services. Business growth, in general, will create a larger pool of potential clients for these service providers.

Some of these relationships are shown in the following diagram.





BACKGROUND ANALYSIS

Stony Plain shares many characteristics with its neighbors, but it is on its differences that it will need to compete for business investment. The Town's chief advantages are its quality of life and location. As a desirable place to live, the Town draws skilled workers and independent or small business owners. Several existing initiatives can be leveraged to spur new homegrown investment and attract small businesses from other parts of the Edmonton market. As the westernmost community in the metropolitan area the Town continues to serve as an interface between economic activity in the city and in the rural hinterland.

While long established as a service center for agriculture and the rural population, Stony Plain did not have the industrial lands ready for development as the Edmonton area rapidly grew over the past two decades. Significant concentrations of industrial employment will continue to draw the bulk of investment from outside of the region, and Stony Plain would find it difficult to compete for that market segment. But Stony Plain does have a thriving small business sector that can be grown, and it is a desirable expansion site for businesses elsewhere in the metropolitan area or surrounding rural communities.

The word cloud pictured here captures views expressed by participants in interviews conducted during the research process. While there is a great deal of agreement on issues like "small town feel", other topics can be more controversial. Whether land or lease rates are expensive or affordable, for example, is more likely a reflection of the experience of the person being interviewed, than any discrete analysis.

The value of the word cloud is that it helps to create a better understanding of how Stony Plain is perceived. These perceptions may be seen as opportunities, and in other cases can be issues that are addressed through programs or marketing.

COMMUNITY INSIGHT

Local stakeholders have a great deal of information to share concerning the community, its strengths and weaknesses, industry and the local economy, and viable prospects they see for economic growth. The views of local stakeholders are also important to ensure that the final industry targets are consistent with community visions for economic development.

During the research phase of this project the consultant team met with a large number of local officials, business and property owners, real estate brokers and developers, and others who shared their thoughts about the community. In addition, meetings were conducted with regional economic development partners – and competitors – to understand the broader context for business development in the Edmonton area.

The word cloud on the preceding page was developed from comments made by interview participants, and helps to visualize common themes emerging from the discussions. Some of these are further explained here.

- Comments related to "Small Town" are a continually recurring theme, in the context of Stony Plain having a small town feel or character. The sentiment expressed by this term is that Stony Plain has a presence, and is recognized as a distinctive place. This is sometimes related "as opposed to Spruce Grove".

  The Town has a history and a center, and is not merely an outgrowth of Edmonton. It is not seen as a bedroom community, at least by local residents. Its growth is purposeful and the Town seeks to retain that small town character. There is a strong quality of life component to this topic.

- Arts, culture, and related terms come up frequently. The area has a large population of artists. As an example, there are 65 artists in the Parkland Potters Guild with a waiting list for others to join. Arts and culture are already a focus of the Town and there is an effort under way to develop a shared studio/gallery space.

- Stony Plain does not have many large private sector employers (more than 50 employees), and most people do not expect to attract them. Many of the Town's businesses are small and there are thought to be a great number of solo and home based businesses in the community.

- The commercial real estate community, in particular, does not expect to be able to attract big box retail. These businesses will want to be close to the existing concentration in Spruce Grove.

- Comments about "Home" refer to the idea that people choose to work or have a business in Stony Plain because it is where they live. The Town offers a great quality of life that draws people, including a large number with advanced skills or higher education. Once living in the community, they then seek to locate their work nearby.

- With regard to workforce, availability has improved as the oil and gas industry growth has slowed. Still, business owners comment that the least valuable employees are the first to be let go, so the additional job candidates are not always the ideal quality. People want to work close to home, so many workers also live in the community. Those commuting from the east enjoy a low-congestion reverse commute.

  Stony Plain may also have an advantage in terms of labour costs. Anecdotally, area employers report that people are willing to accept somewhat lower wages in exchange for proximity to their home, or an easy reverse commute. This advantage is shared with Spruce Grove.

- Transit is an issue of concern raised by several interviewees. Spruce Grove has secured bus service from Edmonton, and a few participants suggested that Stony Plain piggy back on that service to remain competitive. Although the bus connects Spruce Grove to Edmonton, there is no public transit within the city, and Spruce Grove has recognized that same lack of service as a deficiency in that city.

- Soils are a concern for development on the Town's industrial land. There are differing opinions about the severity of this problem. Some members of the development community believe that the additional steps necessary to avoid problems with foundations and paving negate any cost differences between Stony Plain and elsewhere. Other developers believe it is still possible to enjoy lower costs with the pilings and geotextiles needed to develop the land.

- It is difficult to create large industrial yard spaces in Stony Plain. The Town would prefer to see its land more thoroughly developed in order to maximize value, but many of the businesses in heavy construction and oil and gas-related industries need to store heavy equipment and materials outdoors. Current policy may present challenges for a small number of businesses, but a majority of the people participating in interviews supported the Town's approach.
- Stony Plain serves as the gateway to/from the west. Many people in the western part of Alberta would prefer to conduct business in Stony Plain rather than continue further into Edmonton. Proximity, the lack of congestion, and habit (Stony Plain has long been the service center for the rural area) are cited as reasons for this preference. This is an advantage to businesses located in Stony Plain, that operate in the western region but want an Edmonton area presence.
- Medical offices are one of the primary sources of office space demand. WestView Health Centre is among the Town's larger employers, and serves most of Parkland County in addition to Stony Plain and Spruce Grove. Services related to an aging population will be in high demand. While there is a desire for expanded services, most funding is contingent upon the provincial government.

RECONNAISSANCE AND AREA DESCRIPTION

In the course of the analysis, the consultant team conducted a thorough reconnaissance of the community and the surrounding region. This section of the analysis documents observations concerning the area, along with relevant data supporting the conclusions.

Background Context

- Stony Plain is situated along either side of Highway 16A in Parkland County, in the Edmonton metropolitan region. The City of Spruce Grove lies immediately to the east, and there is little separation between the two communities. The western edge of the City of Edmonton is a twenty minute drive further east.
- Significant population growth is occurring throughout the Edmonton region, with rapid growth in both Stony Plain and Spruce Grove. Nearly all new housing is in suburban developments around the edge of the community. Lower housing costs are an attraction for the area, as is the general quality of life. Greenspace and trail amenities are being incorporated into new development, but it does not appear that these have been connected to the downtown and other business or employment centers. There is likely unmet demand for urban style apartment or condominium living, and senior housing.

  Moving forward, Stony Plain will continue to grapple with the question of how rapid growth impacts on the sense of place and small town living valued by residents, and potentially used as a point of differentiation for the community.
- Stony Plain has a young population, though this should not mask the fact that there is a growing population of older adults. Both of these groups can figure significantly into future economic opportunities in areas such as education, health care, and services to support families or aging residents.

  New Census data was released in August of 2015, showing that Stony Plain's population has growth to 16,127 persons.

ANNUAL GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT BY INDUSTRY - ALBERTA

NORTH AMERICAN INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM (NAICS)	2010	2014	CHANGE
Mining, quarrying, oil and gas extraction [21]	24.25	25.45	1.20
Construction [23]	9.63	10.82	1.19
Wholesale trade [41]	4.31	5.02	0.71
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting [11]	1.43	1.46	0.03
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services [56]	2.21	2.21	0.00
Accommodation and food services [72]	1.98	1.97	-0.01
Utilities [22]	1.61	1.58	-0.03
Other services (ex. public administration) [81]	1.95	1.92	-0.03
Transportation and warehousing [48-49]	4.17	4.11	-0.06
Arts, entertainment and recreation [71]	0.51	0.45	-0.06
Finance and insurance [52]	4.11	4.02	-0.09
Manufacturing [31-33]	7.01	6.87	-0.14
Management of companies and enterprises [55]	0.78	0.63	-0.15
Retail trade [44-45]	4.49	4.28	-0.21
Real estate and rental and leasing [53]	9.78	9.48	-0.30
Professional, scientific and technical services [54]	5.46	5.14	-0.32
Information and cultural industries [51]	2.56	2.22	-0.34
Health care and social assistance [62]	5.18	4.84	-0.34
Public administration [91]	4.69	4.26	-0.43
Educational services [61]	3.9	3.28	-0.62

Source: Statistics Canada

- Alberta's economy is driven to a large extent by extractive industries including oil and gas, mining, and agriculture. While much of the direct industry employment is in areas outside of the metropolitan region, Edmonton plays an important role as a service center for these industries. Manufacturing, transportation, back office functions, and professional or technical services tend to be located in the metropolitan region. Even many businesses providing onsite services (such as construction, waste management, or food services) are based in the area and send employees out to the places where extraction is occurring.
- Beginning in 2014 there has been a slow-down in production and investment in oil, gas, and other extractive industries due to lower commodity prices, with a noticeable impact on economic activity in the Edmonton area. In particular, oil prices have declined as oil fields in the United States now produce supplies that have returned the country to a status as a net exporter, and Middle Eastern producers have continued to produce high volumes in an effort to dampen investment in more expensive techniques, such as fracking or extracting oil from Alberta's oil sands. Still, this trend is a slow-down and not a reversal. These industries remain drivers of the economy and that is unlikely to change.
- Alberta companies and research organizations are developing technology and technical expertise that has the potential to be exported to other countries, particularly in Asian and Third World markets. Examples of this include the marketable production of oil from oil sands (Venezuela, Kazakhstan and Russia) and environmental remediation technologies (Asia and Eastern Europe).
- Coal mines and power plants operated by TransAlta west of Stony Plain represent the largest source of power generation in the province. In 2010 the company retired all the units of its Wabamun power plant, at the same time modernizing some of its plants at its Keephills site. In February 2011, TransAlta said it will cease operations at two Sundance coal-fired units because repairs would be too costly. The Sundance 1 and 2 units have been down since December 2010. In 2014 the company announced plans for a new 856 megawatt gas-fired plant that will be constructed at Wabamun, and is anticipated to come online in 2018. While the remaining coal power plants will eventually be closed, this is not expected to happen for a generation.

  The power plants have been important sources of employment and contract work with businesses in Stony Plain, Spruce Grove, and other communities. These plants contract with companies in the Edmonton area, and often far beyond, to provide routine as well as specialized services to keep the mines and power plants operating. TransAlta may work with Stony Plain to provide information about contractors, who could have an interest in locating offices or facilities in the Town's business parks.
- The Capital Region Board has prepared employment growth estimates for all municipalities in the metropolitan area. Stony Plain is projected to see annual employment growth ranging from 1.9 percent to 2.5 percent through 2044. This will bring total employment in the community from a current estimate of 5,800 jobs, to a range of 10,300 to 12,700 jobs. Job growth in Spruce Grove is expected to be greater, while slower growth is anticipated in Parkland County.

  It appears that these forecasts are closely tied to population growth estimates, and may not take into consideration factors such as the availability or desirability of buildings and development sites. These factors could have a significant bearing on the location of job growth west of Edmonton.

CURRENT AND PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT

		STONY PLAIN	SPRUCE GROVE	PARKLAND COUNTY
2014 Employment		5,800	11,200	8,100
2044 Employment (Projected)	*High*	12,700	22,800	11,000
	Low	10,300	17,200	9,500
Change in Employment	*High*	6,900	11,600	2,900
	Low	5,500	6,000	1,400

Source: Capital Region Board Forecasts

Public Resources

- Infrastructure and utilities are comparable to those in competing areas and do not pose a challenge to development. Business parks are well served by water, sewer, power, and telecommunications. The road network provides very good access to areas north and west that are where oil, gas, and mineral exploration and extraction are centered.
- NorQuest College operates a satellite campus in Stony Plain. The focus of their offerings is on technical training and skill upgrading. Many programs are offered using web-based instruction.
- The regional office of Community Futures is located in Stony Plain. Community Futures works with rural businesses to offer access to counseling and technical consulting, and to provide small business lending. They also partner with local economic development organizations to implement economic diversification or business development strategies.
- Stony Plain and the Chamber of Commerce maintain a visitor center in Rotary Park. Located at the entrance of the community from Highway 16A, the park is itself an attractive asset, with a small pavilion, pond, and walking path. The visitor center and park can help to draw travelers off the highway and into the community. The space could be used for large outdoor events.
- The Stony Plain and Parkland Pioneer Museum is housed in a combination of historic buildings and other structures containing extensive exhibits. The facility includes a popular seasonal tea house serving lunch, and well-known for its pies.
- The Multicultural Heritage Center is managed by the Heritage Agricultural Society, which provides educational programs related to farming in the region, including one in Organic Master Gardening. The facilities include a gym and meeting rooms, archives, a public art gallery, and restaurant.

Business Parks, Sites, and Buildings

- Access and visibility are issues for both of Stony Plain's industrial parks and general commercial areas. Access along 16A is regulated, forcing businesses to take access from side streets or back streets. It is not always immediately clear how to reach some businesses. Wayfinding signage can help in the short term, while over the long term the Town should consider taking over the highway to open up additional access points. This would necessitate a change from a town to a city form of government.

  The industrial parks are located behind a strip of commercial buildings and are not immediately visible from the highway. There is some signage indicating their location. A similar situation exists in Spruce Grove, however, Spruce Grove's access is further complicated by the need to cross the railroad, where frequent trains cause traffic back-ups.
- The North Industrial Park contains a mix of commercial and industrial uses. Commercial uses are generally found along Boulder Boulevard parallel to Highway 16A. Industrial uses are heavily oriented toward servicing the oil and gas industry, and include businesses in the transportation, construction, environmental services, equipment rental, and similar sectors. Several businesses serve other markets such as automotive services and residential construction. Omnisport, Inc. is a unique business with an international market for hockey scoreboards and backstops.
- The quality of new industrial buildings being constructed in Stony Plain is generally on par, or better than in Spruce Grove, and because a greater percentage of the Town's buildings will be new, the overall appearance is of a better quality business park (whereas Spruce Grove has older buildings and more service or storage yards). This may be a factor to some businesses desiring a better quality environment, particularly when clients will be visiting the building frequently. The greenways and path systems found elsewhere in the Town are being continued into the industrial parks, although there are currently some gaps in the network.
- Regional competition for industrial development is very strong. In 2014 Parkland County completed an *Employment and Industrial Lands Study* that documents current supply and projected demand for land in the County and beyond. Significant land inventories exist in places such as Edmonton, Leduc/Nisku, and St. Albert, and the total for the region is over 20,000 acres of available land. Demand across the entire

metropolitan area has averaged about 625 acres annually. Parkland County has a supply of 1,629 available acres.

- Spruce Grove dominates the retail sector west of Edmonton. All of the big box chains and smaller chain retailers have congregated along 16A. There is additional land available for commercial development in this area, and any future stores are likely to want to be in this vicinity. Big box development may be a long-term possibility for Stony Plain, but it is not likely to occur within a five to ten year horizon.
- There is a large undeveloped tract on the north side of Highway 16A, between Stony Plain and Spruce Grove. This is an area where large format retain could be accommodated. At present there is no demand for this types of use, however, the Town should preserve the site for opportunities that may arise several years from now as the community continues to grow. Although this is indicated in Town plans, a small number of persons interviewed for this study suggested more immediate development with smaller uses.
- Stony Plain has an advantage over Spruce Grove and Acheson with regard to office space. With a larger and more established downtown, in addition to its many smaller commercial strips and freestanding buildings, Stony Plain appears to have a wider selection of buildings that might be used to house professional office functions. In contrast, Spruce Grove's large commercial centers and the Acheson Industrial Area do not provide the right environment or size of lease spaces for these activities. A study prepared for Spruce Grove recommends establishing an office park along the Yellowhead Highway, but the City has made no moves to do so.

Downtown Business District

- Stony Plain's downtown has an eclectic mic of businesses, with several eating places, services, and retail establishments. Retailers include clothing stores, antique stores, arts and crafts stores, home décor, and other specialty shops. Several downtown businesses are well known regionally and will attract shoppers from the Edmonton area. The North Central Co-operative Association's food store and home center are important anchors drawing the local population into the district.

  Services found in the downtown include business and professional services (accounting and bookkeeping, legal, etc.), medical and dental offices, and personal services.
- Downtown design and wayfinding is somewhat lacking. The Town has done an excellent job of introducing art through its murals, but aside from this, the streetscape is not noteworthy. The Town has prepared a streetscape plan. While generally good, the plan should be reviewed in the context of planned uses for the district. For example, the Town will want to prepare designs that enable outdoor dining and merchandise displays. Distinctive unique and local elements need to be worked into the design, such as art created by local artists.
- Most existing buildings lack distinctive character. New construction, while often mixed use, has not consistently adopted a pedestrian-friendly design. It can be argued that the design is not even business-friendly. It is typical of the region, but not good enough to create a pedestrian-oriented destination district.
- Undeveloped or lightly developed property north and west of the historic core will present opportunities for redevelopment that add ground floor commercial space along 50 Street, and increase the density of residential uses in the core area. These uses, and an urban, walkable pattern, are consistent with the Town's adopted *Municipal Development Plan*.
- Gateways and wayfinding are needed to direct traffic to the downtown. People unfamiliar with the community may not even realize that there is a separate downtown district.
- Downtown should be the center of more activities and civic attractions. Prior planning has suggested creating a square across from Town Hall. This would be a very good location and could incorporate supportive uses that help to make the downtown a destination. The drawing power of the district can be enhanced by tying it into other destination activity centers such as the Multicultural Heritage Center, Stony Plain and Parkland Pioneer Museum, and Rotary Park.
- Visual arts are prominent in the downtown and occasionally elsewhere in the community, with an emphasis on ceramics, as well as murals. There are many artists in the region. Art can be used to establish an identity and

to draw people to the community. Arts may be a key tool used to set Stony Plain apart from other communities.

Parkland Potters Guild and its Crooked Pot Gallery are based in the downtown, across from the Town offices in a building owned by the Town.

- As is common, business hours are an issue at many independently-owned businesses. They are closed during the evening and weekend times when most people have the opportunity to shop.

Regional Collaboration – and Competition

- Communities and economic development organizations from throughout the Capital Region have begun to come together to jointly promote economic development activity. The Capital Region Board has organized an economic development initiative with 24 partners, with the draft of a 2015-2018 strategy currently under development.

  Marketing will be a primary focus of this collaboration. While the details are yet to be worked out, the concept is that the partners will work together to raise the profile of the Edmonton area and recruit prospects for investment, which may then be lured to any of the region's communities. This is the optimal arrangement under which Stony Plain will market outside of the region. Other likely areas of collaboration include promotion of infrastructure investments such as improvements to roadways and airports.

- The economic development relationship between communities in the area is a mixed one, with both competition and collaboration. Spruce Grove and Parkland County offer the best opportunities for collaboration on issues of mutual, local concern.

Web Presence

The role of the internet (and mobile devices) is becoming ever more important to all businesses and in economic development marketing. Internet searches are the dominant means by which customers find businesses, and online reviews have a great deal of influence on whether people will visit or make purchases from a business. The following observations were made concerning the presence of the Town and its businesses on the internet.

- Business site searches are increasingly being conducted on the web. A community may not even know that it is being considered unless it makes the cut, and contact is made with local economic development officials or commercial real estate professionals. It is therefore critical to understand how the community is represented on the web, and to manage its presence in a way that maximizes its visibility and directs traffic to preferred sites. Most searches do point the Town's web site and the economic development page on that site. There is a Town Facebook page, but with only 1,324 followers. The Town also utilizes Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, and Flickr.

- A review of web analytics detected the following keywords, which appear most frequently as search terms that are driving traffic to Stony Plain businesses:

  - Rig-up
  - Timber frame
  - Hockey lockers and dasher boards
  - Suspensions
  - Storage
  - Laboratory services
  - CNC machining
  - Machine shop services
  - Industrial services

  These words have been the key drivers of revenue producing searches for the area industrial and industrial support service businesses. It is interesting to note that the search terms do tend to support the selection of target industries.

- Two sites, www.stonyplain.com and www.stonyplainchamber.ca, are generating over 60.23% of the world searches for area business. Stony Plain should consider placing some of these key words into its website to continue the attraction. Area commercial realtors should also consider the same.

- The area has received significant web hits from the UK, Europe, China and other countries, with the largest number coming from inside Alberta and British Columbia. Economic development and business web designers need to be submitting URL's to the various crawlers in other countries, particularly the large engines, Google and Bing.
  - https://webmaster.yandex.com/addurl.xml?ncrnd=4290
  - http://www.baidu.com/
  - https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/submit-url?hl=en_uk
  - http://www.bing.com/toolbox/submit-site-url

To further support the potential for international business (or business from French-speaking parts of Canada) , companies should include Google Translator on their website, as does the Town of Stony Plain.

DEMOGRAPHICS, WORKFORCE, AND INDUSTRY

The west side of Edmonton is rapidly growing, and Stony Plain is no exception. Between 2001 and 2011 the Town added over 5,000 residents, or a 56.4 percent increase in its population. Spruce Grove recorded a similar percentage increase. Both communities have several residential subdivisions under development.

POPULATION

	2001	2006	2011	2015	Change 2001-11
Stony Plain	9,624	12,363	15,051	16,127	56.4%
Spruce Grove	15,983	19,496	26,171	29,526	63.7%
Parkland County	27,217	29,265	30,568	--	12.3%

Source: Statistics Canada, Town of Stony Plain, City of Spruce Grove

The median age ranges from a low of 34.3 years in Spruce Grove to 40.2 years in Parkland County. Stony Plain has a median age of 36.8 years. By comparison, the median ages for Alberta and Canada are 36.5 and 40.6, respectively. Alberta has the highest rate of growth in Canada, along with the youngest population.

Work Force

Rapid population growth and a young population combine to create favorable workforce conditions for businesses. Interestingly, Stony Plain has the lowest unemployment as well as the lowest participation rate, with a greater number of working age adults choosing not to work. This may be a reflection of a greater number of one-earner families in the community.

Stony Plain, Spruce Grove, and Parkland County have similar levels of educational attainment among persons from 15 to 64 years of age. This age bracket makes up the vast majority of the workforce. The three communities tend to have fewer people at the low and high ends of the attainment spectrum than Alberta as a whole, with a greater number of people in what might be considered skilled or semi-skilled positions.

Among those adults with a postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree, the greatest numbers are in architecture, engineering, and related technologies (7,990), business, management, and public administration (4,170), health, parks, recreation and fitness (3,640), and education (1,890). These figures have a bearing on the potential for self-employment or business formation, along with attraction of businesses who may employ these professions.

By occupation, the largest number of workers are in trades, transport and equipment operators, and related jobs. This is followed by sales and services, and business, finance, and administrative occupations.

AREA WORKFORCE

	STONY PLAIN		SPRUCE GROVE		PARKLAND COUNTY	
Total population 15 years and over	9,485		15,205		23,150	
In labour force	6,715	70.8%	11,575	76.1%	17,565	75.9%
Employed	6,500	68.5%	11,130	73.2%	16,935	73.2%
Unemployed	215	2.3%	440	2.9%	635	2.7%
Not in the labour force	2,770	29.2%	3,630	23.9%	5,580	24.1%

Source: Alberta Employment, 2014

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF THE AREA WORKFORCE

Total population aged 25 to 64	33,945	
No certificate, diploma or degree	5,260	15.5%
High school certificate or equivalent	8,645	25.5%
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	6,095	18.0%
College or other non-university certificate or diploma	8,275	24.4%
University certificate or diploma below the bachelor level	1,085	3.2%
University certificate, diploma or degree	4,600	13.6%

POSTSECONDARY CERTIFICATE, DIPLOMA, OR DEGREE

Architecture, engineering, and related technologies	7,990	16.7%
Business, management and public administration	4,170	8.7%
Health, parks, recreation and fitness	3,640	7.6%
Education	1,890	4.0%
Personal, protective and transportation services	1,480	3.1%
Social and behavioural sciences and law	1,250	2.6%
Humanities	695	1.5%
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	645	1.3%
Physical and life sciences and technologies	605	1.3%
Visual and performing arts, and communications tech	560	1.2%
Agriculture, natural resources and conservation	520	1.1%

Source for all tables: 2011 National Household Survey, Statistics Canada

Combined data for Parkland County, Spruce Grove, and Stony Plain

OCCUPATION OF THE EXPERIENCED WORKFORCE

Total experienced labour force 15 years and over	35,720	
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related	8,755	24.5%
Sales and service occupations	7,100	19.9%
Business, finance and administration occupations	6,475	18.1%
Management occupations	3,990	11.2%
Social science, education, government service and religion	2,150	6.0%
Occupations unique to primary industry	1,990	5.6%
Health occupations	1,880	5.3%
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	1,850	5.2%
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing, utilities	795	2.2%
Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	720	2.0%

PLACE OF WORK

Total employed labour force 15 years and over	34,560	
Worked at home	3,410	9.9%
Worked outside Canada	130	0.4%
No fixed workplace address	5,460	15.8%
Worked at usual place	25,560	74.0%
Worked in census subdivision (municipality) of residence	5,580	16.1%
Worked in a different census subdivision (municipality) within the census division (county) of residence	18,835	54.5%
Worked in a different census division (county)	995	2.9%
Worked in a different province	155	0.4%

Reflecting both the proximity of employment areas in Acheson, Spruce Grove, and Stony Plain, and the concentration of available jobs in those areas, about 70 percent of the area workforce is employed within the boundaries of Parkland County, while only 16 percent are employed in their community of residence.

Companies interviewed for this study did not express any significant difficulty finding qualified employees. The Alberta labour market has become more accommodating as the pace of growth has slowed. Employers do agree, however, that while they are seeing more candidates for available jobs than in the recent past, the quality of some of these workers may be lacking.

While many of the highest-paying oil field positions often require extended periods away from home, and working twelve-hour shifts for six or seven days a week, employment in Stony Plain lets workers return to their families every night. This is an attraction for many workers, and all of the companies participating in interviews indicated that the majority of their employees lived locally.

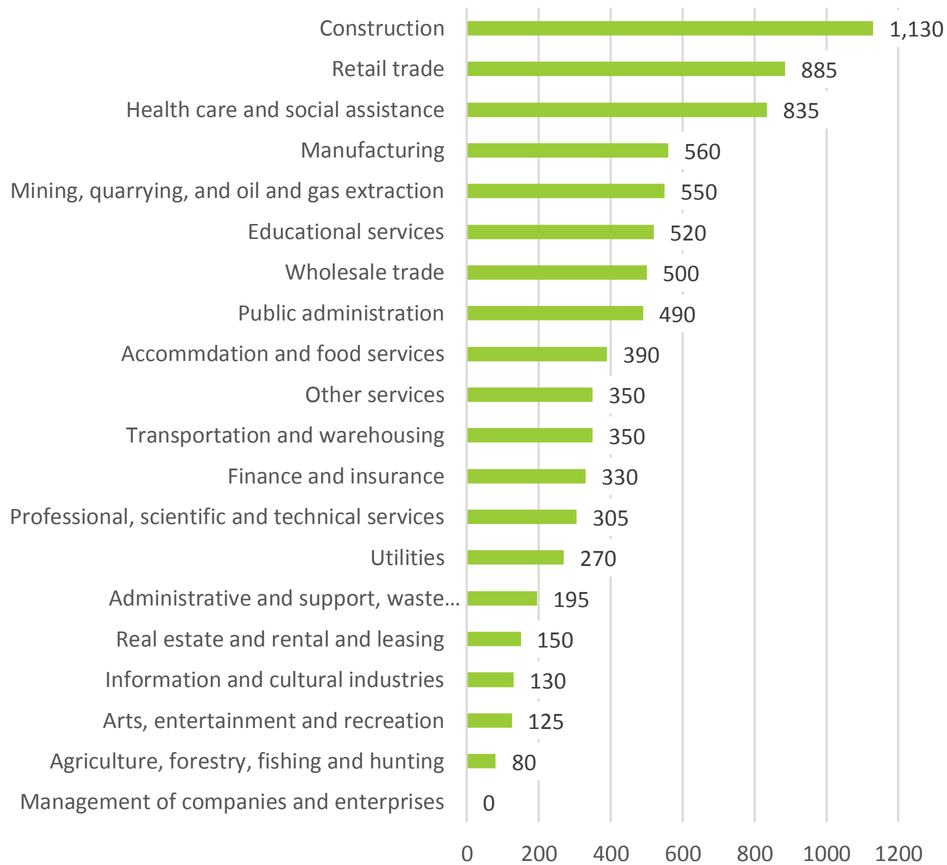
These is a common pattern among workers recruited for operations based in the area. Younger, entry-level workers can be easy to recruit. They may remain in their positions until completing an apprenticeship program or becoming credentialed, after which they are lured to the oil fields for the opportunity to make more money. Some will leave the oil fields due to the hours and stress. Older workers will also be more likely to leave the oil fields to be able to spend more time with their families. As a result, some local businesses have a workforce dominated by younger and older workers, with fewer workers in their middle years.

Workers appreciate the shorter commute within the western corridor. Some employers credit the distance as well as congestion in the Edmonton area, which can result in lengthy commutes, as a reason they were able to find employees more readily, at potentially lower wages, and retain them with low turnover.

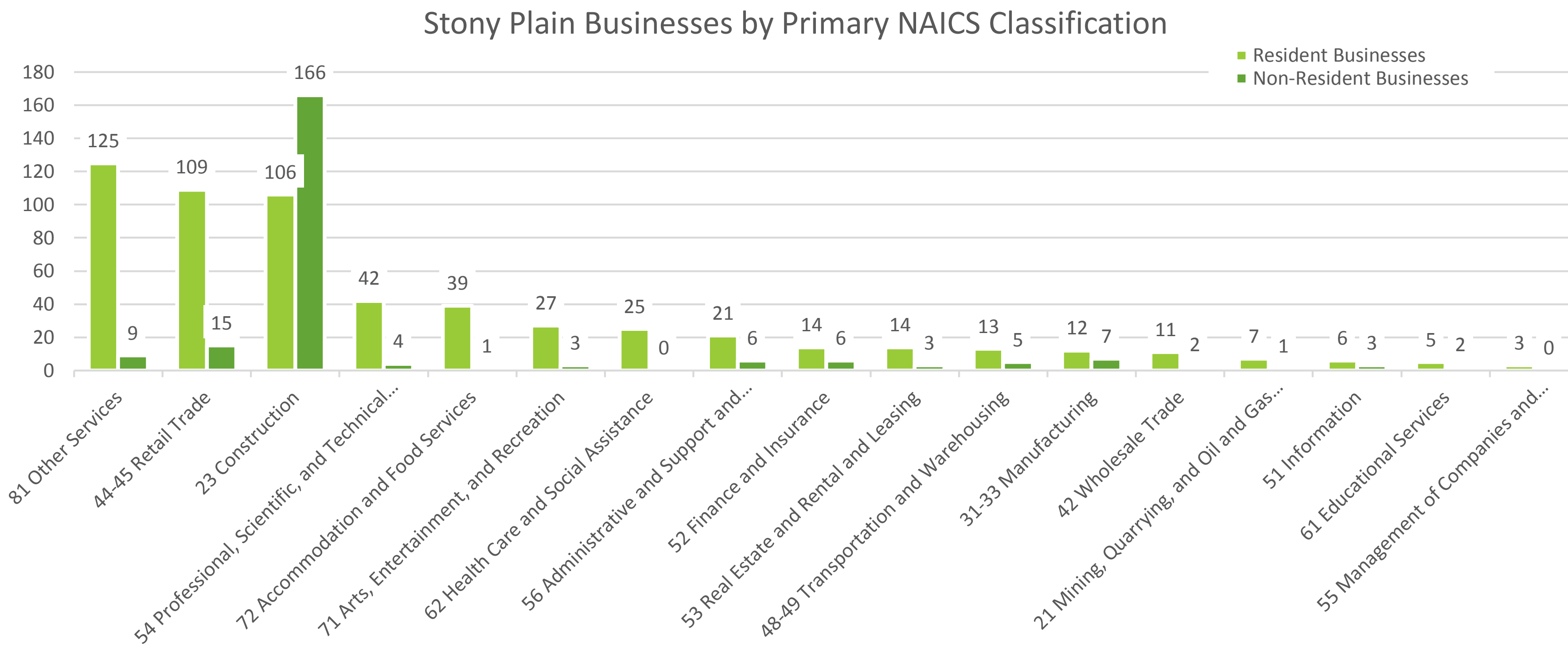
Business Mix

As of April of 2015 there were 812 active business licenses issued by Stony Plain. Of these, 233 were issued to businesses without a physical presence in the town (non-resident businesses) while 579 had an operation within the community (resident businesses). Just over 38 percent of these were self-identified as home-based. The total number of businesses and the number of people working from their home are likely under-counted. License requirements are often ignored, especially among self-employed persons who have not incorporated a business or whose clients are located elsewhere.

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY



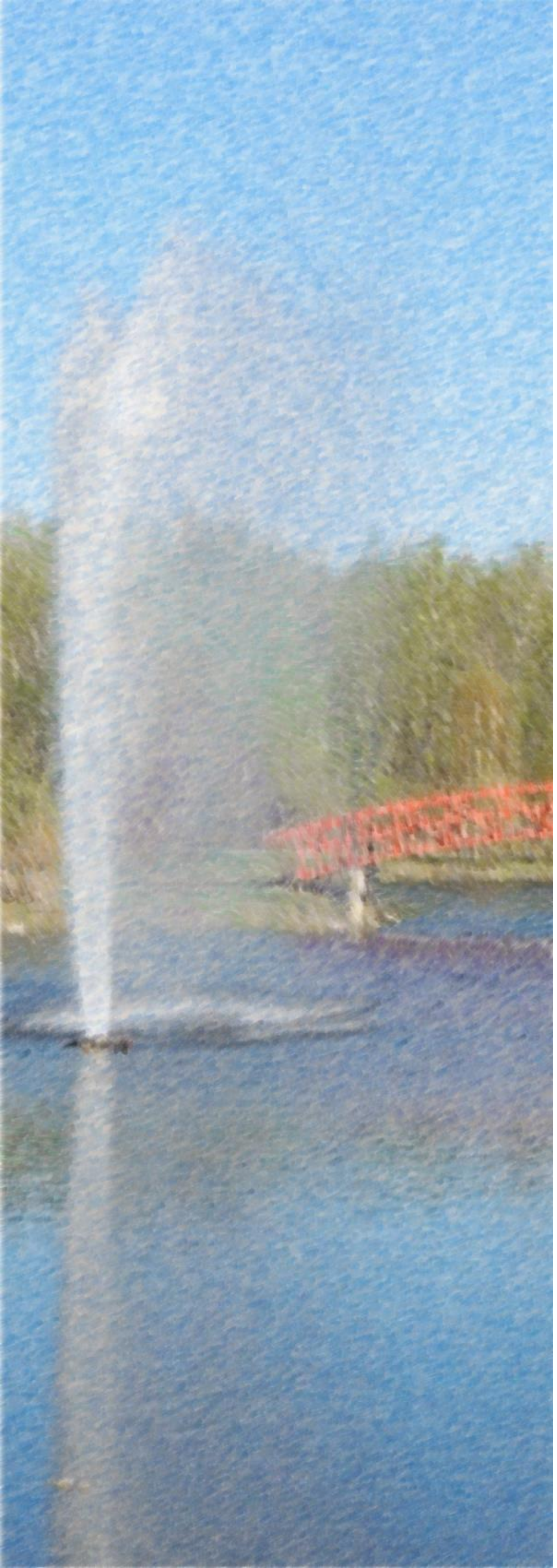
Source: 2011 National Household Survey, Statistics Canada



Compiled from April 2015 Stony Plain business license data

The largest number of resident establishments are in the "other services" category, a grouping primarily made up of repair and maintenance, and personal care services. This is followed closely by retail and construction. A diversity of trades are represented in this sector. Retail trade includes both store and non-store establishments There is a significant drop in `the number of establishments between the top three, and the remaining industries represented in the Town's economy.

Among non-resident businesses, the overwhelming majority are within the construction sector. This grouping includes general and specialty trade contractors such as electricians, plumbers, and HVAC contractors. The majority are headquartered in Edmonton.



INDUSTRY TARGETS

Five key development opportunities emerged from the analysis. In many cases these opportunities are related to each other and their development will serve to reinforce the assets or qualities that draw residents and businesses to the community. The five target opportunities include:

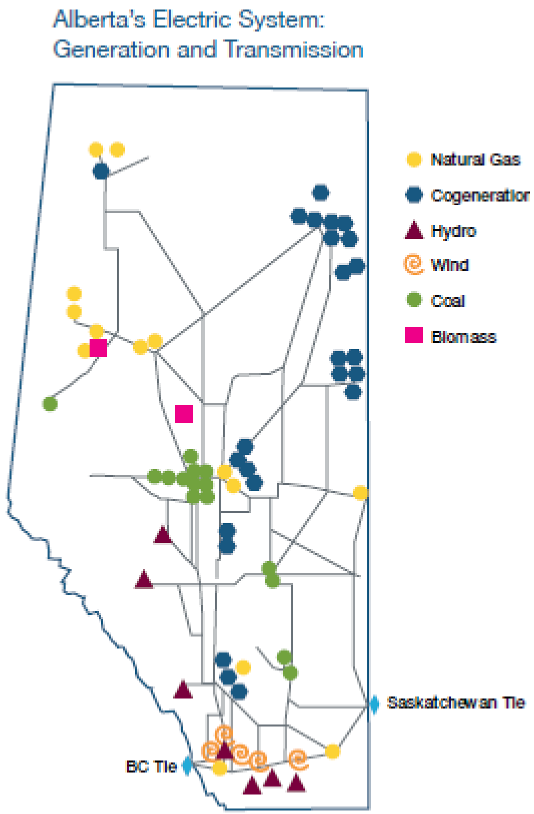
- Support Activities for Energy and Extraction
- Business and Professional Services
- Health Care and Related Services
- Local Food and Food Processing
- Destination Shopping, Dining, Arts and Culture

Each of these targets is an existing or emerging sector with both immediate and long term prospects for development. In each case, Stony Plain faces competition from places in close proximity (such as Spruce Grove) and/or more distant locations targeting similar niche opportunities, which needs to be considered in the approach.

This section of the study is dedicated to describing the targets, trends within the sectors, Stony Plain's comparative advantages and challenges as a location for investment, and the area with which the Town will compete. A comprehensive strategy has been prepared to guide the Town in developing and marketing each opportunity.

SUPPORT ACTIVITIES FOR ENERGY AND EXTRACTION

Resource extraction is the primary driver of Alberta's economy, including oil and gas fields along the eastern slope of the Rockies, oil sands to the north of Edmonton, and extensive mining operations in Alberta and the Northwest Territories. After several years of rapid development, investment has slowed due to the falling price of crude oil. Furthermore, long term issues of distribution must be resolved, as oil interests have yet been unsuccessful in securing regulatory approval for pipelines that would transport oil to refineries or ports in other parts of Canada or United States. Still, exploration, extraction, and processing of these resources is anticipated to continue for decades to come.



Alberta's Energy Industry: An Overview
Alberta Government, 2012

Energy production is a related activity. For Stony Plain, the most important producer lies a half hour to the west, where TransAlta has two coal mines and nine coal-fired power plants. This site represents the largest concentration of electrical power generation in Alberta.

Nearly every community in the Edmonton area is home to companies directly serving resource extractive industries. Some areas of specialization have evolved. Refining and related heavy industry is concentrated to the northeast, from Edmonton through Fort Saskatchewan. Fabrication has clustered in South Edmonton and Leduc-Nisku near the airport. Temporary housing and related camp service operations are found in Acheson and Spruce Grove.

Stony Plain's advantages with regard to support activities for energy and extraction are its orientation to the west and the ability to accommodate small users, primarily in new buildings or on development sites, at a cost that is lower than most other parts of the metropolitan area. It will also be a good expansion site for businesses already in the market. In many cases, the fast pace of oil industry investment has deprived companies of the time they need to evaluate their operations and consider expansion or relocation. The slowdown will provide some companies the opportunity they need to optimize their operations, leading to expansions, relocations, and branch facility prospects that Stony Plain may court.

The industries directly serving energy and extraction were determined by examining input-output accounts data. This data estimates the dollar value of commodities from each industry that are required to produce the output of a particular industry, at the national level. For example, the production of bakery goods would be broken out into inputs of contributing industries like flour milling, egg farming, baking machinery manufacturing, electrical power generation, etc.

For this analysis, the inputs for ten primary industries were considered. These include:

- Oil and gas extraction
- Coal mining
- Iron, gold, silver, and other metal ore mining
- Copper, nickel, lead, and zinc mining
- Stone mining and quarrying
- Other nonmetallic mineral mining and quarrying
- Drilling oil and gas wells

- Other support activities for mining
- Electric power generation, transmission, and distribution
- Natural gas distribution

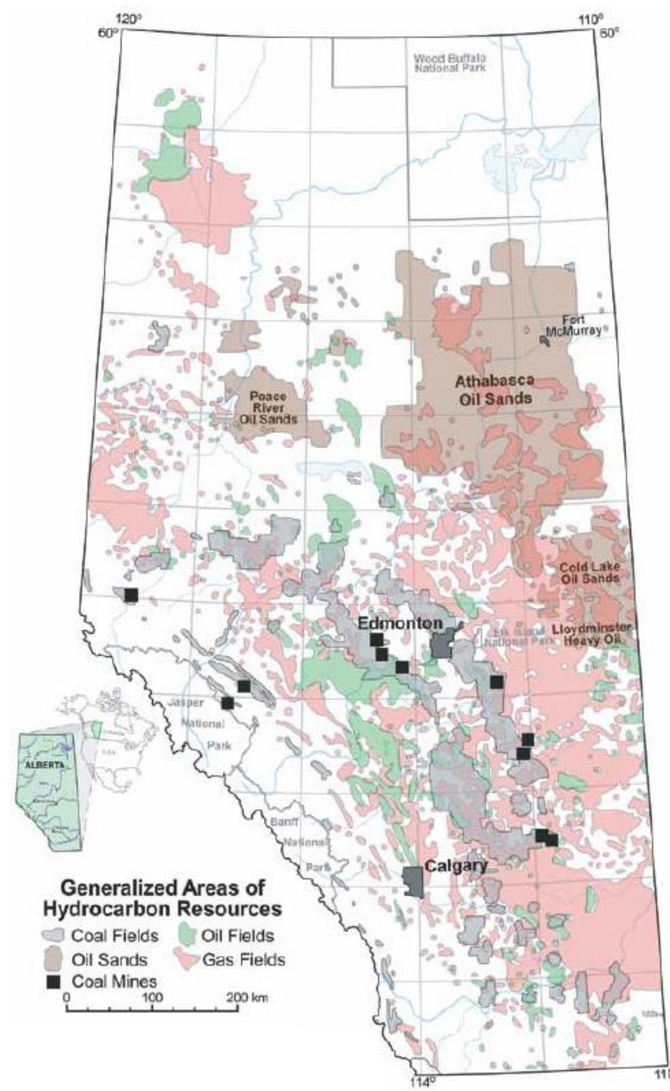
Oil and gas extraction, and petroleum refineries make up nearly half (44.98 percent) of the dollar volume of inputs for these ten industries. In fact, the industry output is one of the largest inputs into several of the industries examined.

The products of another 50 industries bring the total to 95 percent of the dollar volume of inputs into the ten primary industries. A complete list of these industries is included in Appendix B.

Obviously, not all of these industries will be suitable targets for Stony Plain. It is also interesting to note the overlap with another of the targets identified for the community, business and professional services. To avoid duplication, those industries will be discussed under that heading, while the focus of this section will be on activities more closely aligned with manufacturing, construction, rental and leasing, transportation, and warehousing and distribution.

In determining the industries that are best suited for Stony Plain, a number of factors were considered:

- Applicability – whether the activity is localized, such as to the presence of a resource. For example, coal mining will only occur where there are coal deposits.
- Suitability for the community – whether the industry is a good fit for the desired character of the community. For example, Stony Plain does not seek to recruit heavy industry such as petrochemical processing.
- Clustering and competitive forces – whether there are necessary agglomerations that form in particular sectors, that the west suburban market is not positioned to capture. Mining and oil and gas field machinery manufacturing is often a collaborative effort of multiple establishments located in close proximity. This concentration is well-developed from South Edmonton to Leduc.
- Workforce – Stony Plain's labour market helps it to compete for particular types of businesses.



Alberta's Energy Industry: An Overview
Alberta Government, 2012

Activities that are a best fit for Stony Plain's market advantages and desired character of development include the following groupings:

- Support services
  - Nonresidential maintenance and repair (maintenance, repair, and alteration of industrial buildings)
  - Services to buildings and dwellings (janitorial and pest control services)
  - Waste management and remediation services (collection, transportation, processing, and disposal of non-hazardous waste)
  - Scenic and sightseeing transportation and support activities for transportation (vehicle services, transportation arrangement, and preparing goods for transit)
  - Commercial and industrial machinery and equipment rental and leasing
- Other support activities for mining (such as mineral exploration, including geophysical services and surveying)
- Manufacturing and distribution
  - Cutting and machine tool accessory, rolling mill, and other metalworking machinery manufacturing
  - Material handling equipment manufacturing
  - Valve and fittings other than plumbing
  - Wholesale trade
  - Warehousing and storage

Industry Trends

The government of Alberta annually tracks investment in the province and forecasts investment for the coming year. Capital investment has been the single largest contributor to the provincial economy since the mid-1990's, with energy investment representing the largest share. Though energy investment peaked in 2014 at $55.8 million, it is anticipated to drop by roughly 20 percent in 2015, as the pace of investment in oil and gas exploration and extraction slows.

The price of oil has dropped considerably from just a few years ago, when it was over US$100 per barrel. At the end of August of 2015 it was trading at less than US$40 per barrel, which makes Alberta's oil sands, and in other places, fracking, less profitable. Most industry experts do not foresee reductions in output from the Mideast or the United States, or a significant increase in demand, which would cause oil prices to rise in the next few years. In fact, in the short term demand may be reduced as the economies of China and Europe slow, and new supplies could enter the market with the lifting of international sanctions on Iran. This is creating concerns about an oil glut, and recent analysis has suggested that there will be a surplus through the fourth quarter of 2016. Some industry analysts have questioned whether there is adequate worldwide storage capacity for the amount of oil expected to be produced.

Under these conditions it may seem counterintuitive to pursue this industry cluster, but other factors need to be considered:

- The oil and gas cluster remains Alberta's largest economic sector, representing the largest number of establishments and jobs.
- The slowdown will impact businesses, but it may also give them some "breathing room" to assess their current facilities and consider alternative locations that may offer additional, space, lower costs, or other features that their present location lacks.
- The oil and gas sector will eventually regain momentum. Current issues of supply and demand are temporary reflections of national economies and levels of production.
- Advancements in technology combined with improved transportation can impact the profitability of Alberta energy sources. In particular, continued efforts to push for new pipelines to take oil to market are eventually likely to succeed.
- Even if exploration and production are curtailed, some level of activity is necessary to prepare future supplies and maintain existing investments.

The provision of additional means to take oil to market is critical to the long term health of the oil sands industry. While oil can be moved through existing pipelines and by rail, as it currently is moved, pipeline connections will add, capacity, open new markets, and reduce transportation costs. Efforts are under way to develop new pipeline infrastructure to ports in British Columbia, from which oil might be shipped to international markets, and to reverse an existing pipeline to eastern Canada. The Keystone XL Pipeline would carry oil from Hardisty to storage facilities and refineries in the lower United States.

Most of the existing oil sand development has occurred within the Athabasca deposit in northeastern Alberta, but the Peace River deposits have drawn increased attention. Road patterns from these deposits pass through Stony Plain, Spruce Grove, and Parkland County before reaching Edmonton, and companies serving the Peace River may find it favorable to locate outside of Edmonton. Similarly, the same roads are used to service mining operations in the Northwest Territories.

As with energy, declining mineral prices have slowed some investment in mining operations in the Northwest Territories. Significant deposits of diamonds, gold, tungsten, zinc, and other metals are being mined or explored for development. The servicing for these operations often occurs in locations such as the Edmonton region, where there is better access to materials and labour to serve remote sites.

Closer to home, there is a large-scale coal mining operation, with associated energy production, at TransAlta's Keephills and Sundance sites twenty minutes west of Stony Plain. Trans Alta uses many contractors to supply its mines or build and maintain its mining and energy production operations. As the nearest community with available land and buildings, Stony Plain should be marketing itself as a location in which these contractors can set up operations.

A Note on Markets

Interviews with a large number of businesses in this sector reveal that establishments in the Edmonton region are largely serving the western Canada market. There is a great deal of interest in these services on a global scale. As an example, the Bakken formation in North Dakota could be served by Alberta companies, and is closer than current suppliers in the south-central United States. As another example, growing pressure to address environmental impacts is creating demand for environmental services in Asia and other less-developed parts of the world. It is beyond the scope of what Stony Plain should, or could tackle, but expanding the market of local companies could help to cushion the regional economy from cuts in Alberta production due to commodity price fluctuations.

Work Force Requirements

The targeted industries require a diverse set of workers. The following table compares wages for common industry cluster occupations across Alberta. While Stony Plain will most often be attracting businesses that already have a presence in the Edmonton area, the comparison to other places is helpful in developing an understanding of how wages compare in other areas, for those instances in which an outside company may be considering the community. As noted earlier in this analysis, local companies do report actual wage rates more favorable than the metropolitan area average.

These wages have been derived from the Alberta Wage and Salary Survey, which only reports eight regions covering the province. Local wage information is not available. Interviews with area employers, including employers in Spruce Grove, suggests that there is at least the perception that wages in the western part of the Edmonton metropolitan region are lower than in more heavily industrialized areas. This can be verified by conducting a local wage and salary survey. It may be useful to partner with Spruce Grove and even Parkland County on this recommendation, as a larger number of occupations will be represented in the results.

STARTING AND AVERAGE WAGES BY REGION

	EDMONTON	RED DEER	CALGARY	ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE	ATHABASCA – GRAND PRAIRIE	WOOD BUFFALO – COLD LAKE	CAMROSE – DRUMHELLER	LETHBRIDGE
Carpenters	26.33 30.08	24.46 28.50	28.51 31.60	25.68 30.48	21.40 27.94	31.37 38.11	23.75 28.07	22.54 26.80
Construction Managers	39.04 46.40	33.79 42.21	35.61 42.06	34.40 53.42	40.61 42.73	45.30 55.16	42.33 49.44	28.82 33.51
Office Clerks, General	19.97 24.10	18.95 22.56	20.40 24.58	18.89 23.71	19.87 22.86	23.18 25.86	20.33 23.97	19.01 22.05
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	22.94 28.21	18.66 21.59	21.72 26.55	18.01 23.49	17.43 22.77	22.50 27.14	17.70 22.39	18.86 23.40
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	28.74 34.68	-- 28.59	31.94 36.05	-- 26.88	26.96 32.60	36.96 40.16	22.74 29.07	22.73 27.62
Civil Engineers	38.60 44.06	35.54 46.31	37.12 47.59	38.79 40.98	27.42 35.72	-- --	-- --	34.54 42.93
Structural Iron and Steel Workers	23.34 32.17	-- --	24.66 28.24	-- --	-- --	-- --	-- --	-- 28.40
Concrete Finishers	22.89 26.94	19.71 23.71	22.00 25.21	-- --	-- --	-- --	-- --	-- --
Bookkeeping, Accting., and Auditing Clerks	20.18 25.20	20.60 24.19	20.70 25.52	17.49 24.18	21.19 24.92	20.22 29.75	18.96 22.23	17.93 21.94
Electricians	31.42 38.19	29.52 33.16	27.69 36.96	-- 35.14	32.85 37.73	47.64 49.70	24.70 29.74	23.55 28.76

	EDMONTON	RED DEER	CALGARY	ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE	ATHABASCA – GRAND PRAIRIE	WOOD BUFFALO – COLD LAKE	CAMROSE – DRUMHELLER	LETHBRIDGE
Welders, Cutters, Solder-ers, and Brazers	28.76 34.93	27.59 32.97	27.33 31.70	36.18 39.24	33.1 37.06	47.19 50.72	24.85 32.17	21.58 25.72
Painters and Coaters - Industrial	22.65 28.93	19.16 22.70	18.35 21.26	-- --	-- --	-- 34.82	-- --	16.07 20.14
Millwrights	28.50 32.84	27.26 35.18	27.97 36.00	35.31 35.56	33.91 36.77	49.07 50.39	24.59 32.02	24.47 30.02
Truck Drivers	23.05 27.49	23.22 26.31	21.32 23.95	24.99 29.17	27.15 31.62	24.97 28.69	23.58 28.07	25.83 33.40
Production Clerks	24.98 31.48	23.08 36.89	20.52 26.04	-- --	-- --	-- 41.13	18.28 26.03	16.88 22.26
Sheet Metal Workers	18.61 33.05	23.56 30.49	17.81 38.14	31.11 32.59	17.15 34.98	18.80 40.23	-- --	24.67 26.94
Sales Representatives	20.35 28.74	22.03 34.51	21.66 30.32	16.51 24.02	22.55 32.46	17.63 22.00	21.67 28.65	20.51 28.88
Heavy Duty Equipment Mechanics	29.96 35.45	26.99 33.99	29.43 33.60	29.24 34.44	28.61 34.65	47.07 48.51	27.60 31.22	21.92 31.20
Dispatchers	21.60 25.01	24.33 27.57	28.40 31.59	32.95 37.31	22.69 31.03	23.47 29.08	23.06 24.68	17.49 19.90
Laborers	18.44 22.41	17.93 20.49	16.91 19.51	-- --	15.99 21.62	-- --	18.29 20.73	16.08 19.29

SOURCE: Alberta Wage and Salary Survey, 2013

Value Proposition and Messaging

The energy and extraction cluster is so large in Alberta, and particularly within Edmonton, that few communities can ignore it in their economic development targeting. Stony Plain does not have the concentrated specialization of industries found in other communities, but it does have some advantages that can be used to market the community.

- The Town's position as the community closest to the TransAlta coal mines and power plants can be leveraged to market it as a location for contractors serving those facilities.
- Access to the north and northwest, without the need to pass through congestion in Edmonton, will be an inducement to some companies serving those markets.
- Lower costs for land or leased space, and potentially lower wages can provide cost savings to businesses needing to expand from other locations in the metropolitan region.
- Greater recognition of Stony Plain as a distinctive community will create a favorable impression that will help to attract businesses.

Rather than recruiting outside of the region, Stony Plain will have greater success positioning itself as an expansion site for businesses already in the area. This includes both established businesses that need to adjust their facility for their current operations (due to expansion or contraction) and small businesses graduating up to leased commercial space.

Target Development and Marketing Strategy

Financially, this sector should be able to attract an additional $18 million in sales over the next four years, based on prior years' growth rates. This would translate into absorption of 100,000 square feet of industrial space in the Edmonton area, at sales of $162 per square foot. This benchmark is based on Edmonton industrial space sales and two to three percent of revenues dedicated to occupancy or debt service as a proxy. The slowing oil sands economy was considered in these projections.

About ten percent of the market potential may be realized in the western region, including Acheson, Spruce Grove, and Stony Plain. Aside from industry expansion, additional opportunities for business recruitment may come through relocations and opening of satellite locations.

Several initiatives will help to position the Town to recruit new businesses in this targeted cluster. In general, the strategy seeks to raise awareness of Stony Plain as an attractive location for the targeted industries, and develop materials that the Town can use to respond effectively to business site search inquiries.

Business Visitation

Stony Plain already conducts a formal program of business visits that are used to identify concerns or opportunities related to that business, to keep a pulse on business perceptions of the community and relay that information to decision-makers, and to enlist the support of local businesses in identifying and recruiting new businesses. An important goal of these visits is to identify essential suppliers used by these businesses, and clients who may be recruited to Stony Plain. The business visitation program should be continued as part of the overall strategy for this target sector, and to support economic development efforts in general. Use of a tracking system such as Act! (www.act.com) or Synchronist (www.blanecanada.com) can help to generate a permanent record and track results. Synchronist was developed specifically for the economic development community.

Wage and Salary Survey

It is virtually impossible to obtain local wage information, except within a couple communities where local economic development organizations have compiled their own information through survey research. This is in many cases the most important information that Stony Plain could provide to a prospective business. A comprehensive workforce survey would ideally be conducted in partnership with Spruce Grove and Parkland County to provide a very detailed picture of worker availability, skills, and wages in the western region of the Edmonton market.

A committee of human resource professionals from area businesses should be assembled to guide the process and to help ensure widespread participation. This survey should consist of three parts:

- Resident Survey. Sent to a sample of residents living in the area, this survey is used to document skills and availability of persons living in the labourshed. Further questions can assess the conditions under which a person might accept a position, such as the chance to work closer to home, to earn more, or to enjoy particular benefits. The survey might also explore business ownership and entrepreneurship.

- Business Survey. Sent to business representatives in human resources and management, this survey should include general questions about work force availability, quality, work ethic, turnover, and other topics. It should collect starting and average wage data for common and critical occupations within the respective communities' targeted sectors. The number of workers living within each postal code can be mapped to define the area's labourshed, which may extend beyond the borders of Parkland County
- Worker Survey. These surveys are generally distributed through local businesses to their employees. They can explore a combination of topics related to employment and perceptions of the community.

This wage survey should be a priority, and after initially conducted, should be updated on a regular basis (approximately every two or three years).

Coordinated Metropolitan Area Marketing

A large number of economic development organizations in the Edmonton area have recently begun to explore opportunities to collaborate. Marketing has emerged as the most popular initiative in which this collaboration may occur. For all communities in the area, it is the "Edmonton" brand that outside investors will recognize. Working together, these economic development organizations can raise the area's national and international profile. Once businesses are interested in investing in the region, local communities can compete for that prospect based on their own distinct points of differentiation.

At this time it is not clear exactly how a joint marketing program may develop. It is likely to include a combination of advertising along with events such as call trips or attendance at trade fairs. Each of these activities should be evaluated based on cost and the likely return, as well as their relevance to the Town's targeted sectors, to determine the level of the participation. This may range from no participation, to providing marketing materials that can be distributed at the event, to commitments of time, personnel, and funding.

Independent Marketing Initiatives

Independent efforts to market Stony Plain should focus on a defined area including the Edmonton market and the rural areas west and north of the community, extending as far as the oil sands. This is tied to the concept of Stony Plain functioning as a gateway for goods and services passing to markets in either direction. Specific considerations for independent marketing include:

- Collateral Materials. Both the Town and the Chamber print information that is used to help market the community, though often to audiences other than business and investment prospects. Key economic development messaging can be incorporated into future editions of these documents.

  With regard to information assembled strictly to promote economic development, advances in printing technology and the need to provide prospects the most current information available will enable the Town to prepare high-quality electronic templates with information that can be updated by staff, and printed in-house on an as-needed basis. These templates should also be sued to create customized responses to inquiries by businesses.
- Cost Comparison Reports. These reports detail key operational costs such as land prices or lease rates, wages, taxes, and transportation costs, comparing Stony Plain to other places. They can help to make a case for businesses to enjoy cost savings in the community. Leduc/Nisku, South Edmonton, and St. Albert are some of the communities that might be compared.
- Print or Online Advertising. Print and online advertising should be focused on the target market area. This should include industry publications and websites dedicated to targeted sectors, and distributed widely in the region. Publications with high readership in the targeted industries include *Oil Sands Review* (print and web), *Alberta Construction Magazine* (print and web), *Alberta Oil* (print and web), *Oil Sands Magazine* (web), and *Oil and Gas Magazine* (print and web).

  Ranked among the other activities in this section, paid advertising should be considered a lower-priority, and generally undertaken when unique opportunities arise or after other aspects of the marketing program have been adequately addressed in annual budgets.

- Public Relations Media Placement. Media coverage is generally considered more effective than paid advertising. The Town should work with a public relations specialist to develop and place content (articles that paint a favorable impression of Stony Plain) with influential media outlets both within targeted sectors and reaching a general public.

  Placing two or three article each year, featuring Stony Plain, will help to create a favorable impression and raise awareness of the community among business site decision-makers. These articles should be placed in media targeting the energy and extraction industry.

- Social Media Strategy. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, blogs, and other sites are an effective means of communicating economic development news to residents and businesses. The should be part of a comprehensive approach to internal communication, building awareness and support for local economic development efforts. Establishing and maintaining this presence is time consuming and does require some expertise to generate a following. The Town can farm this work out to a specialist who will be accountable for developing readership and providing frequent content in consultation with economic development staff. This approach will enable Town economic development staff to focus more time on activities that directly support business development.

  A minimum of one original post per week should be made to social media sites, in addition to reposting stories relevant to economic development or target industries, and connected to Stony Plain. With quality content, it is reasonable to expect to reach 2,000 followers within one year.

- Trade Show Participation. Based on cost and relevance, the Town should consider attending or staffing a booth at several regional industry events. The most important of these is the Oil Sands Trade Show, which attracts businesses serving the industry in Alberta. This might also be an opportunity to partner with just Spruce Grove and Parkland County to represent the western Edmonton market.

Leverage Proximity to TransAlta

TransAlta's proximity is a unique advantage for the Town. Many companies are contracted on a revolving basis to perform work on the company's mines and power generation plants. These businesses often need a nearby location where they can conduct administrative functions, stage materials and equipment, or perform related work. Stony Plain has the opportunity to work with purchasing staff at Trans Alta to identify past and current contractors working on contracts, or bidders on future contracts, that the Town may convert to prospects for recruitment to its business parks.

BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Business and professional services are industries that are growing globally and within the Edmonton region. The majority of new business starts are found within these sectors, a fact that should be considered in Stony Plain's approach to developing this opportunity. Many of the persons interviewed for this study believe there to be a large number of solo and microbusinesses in the business and professional services industry located in Stony Plain. A large number of these may be home based. The Town's business list likely does not include all of these, especially where the individual may be operating independently, and not under a business name.

Town support of these businesses will help them increase profitability, grow, add employees, and occupy commercial space. As home-grown businesses they will be more closely tied to the community than others, especially branch establishments, that are more footloose. While there are many of these small businesses in virtually all economic sectors, the business and professional services category is more likely than most other sectors to produce higher incomes and trade regionally, if not globally.

In addition to business attraction aimed at established companies, strategies to promote these small and startup businesses should center on marketing and client development, closing the gap with regard to equipment or services these businesses need to be competitive, and providing technical assistance to help them grow. Coworking is a promising strategy to enhance networking and deliver business development services to these targets.

The analysis has identified several business and professional services tied to the oil and gas industry, including:

- Monetary authorities and depository credit intermediation
- Management of companies and enterprises
- Legal services
- Architectural, engineering, and related services
- Marketing research and all other miscellaneous professional, scientific, and technical services
- Other real estate activities (ex., property managers, appraisers)
- Employment services
- Advertising, public relations, and related services
- Accounting, tax preparation, bookkeeping, and payroll services
- Other financial investment activities
- Securities and commodity contracts intermediation and brokerage
- Insurance carriers (ex., third-party insurance underwriters, claims agents)
- Data processing, hosting, and related services
- Business support services
- Non-depository credit intermediation and related activities
- Other computer related services, including facilities management

Two other activities should be considered, as they frequently have significant back office operations (call centers, dispatching, financial processing centers, etc.) that may be targets for Stony Plain, even if the primary industry function is not viable. These are electric power generation, transmission, and distribution, and natural gas distribution.

The overall opportunity is much broader than just those industry groups tied to oil and gas. The following is a partial list of industries in the professional, scientific, and technical services, and the information and cultural industries, that are suitable targets for Stony Plain.

- Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
  - Legal Services
  - Accounting, Tax Preparation, Bookkeeping and Payroll Services
    - Accounting, Tax Preparation, Bookkeeping and Payroll Services
    - Offices of Accountants

        - Tax Preparation Services
        - Bookkeeping, Payroll and Related Services
    - Architectural, Engineering and Related Services
        - Architectural Services
        - Landscape Architectural Services
        - Engineering Services
        - Drafting Services
        - Building Inspection Services
        - Geophysical Surveying and Mapping Services
        - Surveying and Mapping (except Geophysical) Services
        - Testing Laboratories
    - Specialized Design Services
        - Interior Design Services
        - Industrial Design Services
        - Graphic Design Services
        - Other Specialized Design Services
    - Computer Systems Design and Related Services
    - Management, Scientific and Technical Consulting Services
        - Management Consulting Services
            - Administrative Management and General Management Consulting Services
            - Human Resources Consulting Services
            - Other Management Consulting Services
        - Environmental Consulting Services
        - Other Scientific and Technical Consulting Services
    - Scientific Research and Development Services
        - Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering and Life Sciences
        - Research and Development in the Social Sciences and Humanities
    - Advertising, Public Relations, and Related Services
    - Other Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
        - Marketing Research and Public Opinion Polling
        - Translation and Interpretation Services
- Information and Cultural Industries
    - Publishing Industries (except Internet)
        - Newspaper, Periodical, Book and Directory Publishers
        - Software Publishers
    - Motion Picture and Sound Recording Industries
        - Motion Picture and Video Industries
        - Sound Recording Industries
    - Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services
    - Other Information Services
        - Internet Publishing and Broadcasting, and Web Search Portals

Entrepreneurship, Small Business and Self-Employment

Small businesses with fewer than 50 employees make up 96 percent of all businesses in Alberta, and 63 percent of these have fewer than five employees. These businesses provide over one third of all jobs in the province, not including self-employed persons. Added to these are another 416,920 persons who are self-employed, whether in an incorporated business or as an individual.

Statistics Canada's 2010 Labour Force Survey reports self-employment in the Edmonton market. The data relevant to the Edmonton area demonstrate the highest levels of self-employment in the professional, scientific, and technical services, and the information and cultural industries. In fact, seven of the ten occupations with the greatest percentage of self-employed fall within these industries.

Canada's rate of entrepreneurship is the second highest among industrialized nations. Alberta continues to have the highest rate of entrepreneurship in Canada, according to the *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) Report*, and annual assessment of global entrepreneurial trends. The key indicator, total early stage entrepreneurship (TEA) which comprises people in active stages of preparing new ventures and those with new ventures under three-and-a-half years old, is 18.6 percent for Alberta and 12.2 percent nationally. Most entrepreneurship was focused on business-to-business services.

Self-employed people make up an estimated 18 percent of the work force, according to Statistics Canada's *2010 Labour Force Survey*, and this number is growing. Research by Intuit and other organizations suggest that by 2020, as much as a third of the workforce will be made up of persons who are self-employed or otherwise not regularly employed in a company. This "gig economy" includes contract workers, freelancers, and other independent workers. It is a sizeable market for potential business startups and for growing solo businesses into businesses with employees.

The State of Entrepreneurship in Canada, published by Statistics Canada (2010), draws some strong conclusions from the data, arguing that an increasingly diverse and better educated population is likely to fuel additional growth in self-employment. It does not touch on other factors that are recognized globally.

SELF-EMPLOYMENT IN SELECTED OCCUPATIONS IN THE EDMONTON AREA

OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTER	TOTAL EMPLOYMENT	EMPLOYED IN BUSINESSES	SELF-EMPLOYED	PERCENT SELF-EMPLOYED
Professional occupations in business and finance	19,940	16,800	3,135	15.72%
Professional occupations in natural and applied sciences	26,090	23,755	2,335	8.95%
Administrative and financial supervisors and administrative occupations	36,700	34,540	2,165	5.90%
Professional occupations in law and social, community and government services	16,695	14,575	2,120	12.70%
Professional occupations in art and culture	5,270	3,205	2,070	39.28%
Technical occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	9,735	7,960	1,775	18.23%
Paraprofessional occupations in legal, social, community and education services	12,000	10,330	1,670	13.92%
Finance, insurance and related business administrative occupations	7,880	6,375	1,500	19.04%
Technical occupations related to natural and applied sciences	23,935	22,435	1,495	6.25%
Senior management occupations	6,110	4,675	1,430	23.40%
Supervisors and tech occupations in natural resources, agriculture and related production	3,820	3,005	815	21.34%
Professional occupations in education services	25,950	25,645	300	1.16%
TOTALS	1,010,495	911,040	99,445	9.84%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2010 Labour force Survey

- One of the most striking employment trends is the tremendous growth of "independent" workers, a group made up of the self-employed, freelancers, independent consultants, and temporary workers. It is estimated that by 2020 these workers will comprise a third of all working adults.
- There is a growing desire among workers in their prime earning years to have the independence afforded by owning their own business. For some, the change may occur mid-career, while others will wait to establish a "second career" after retirement. These people often have a great deal of technical expertise, knowledge, and contacts that lead to higher rates of business success.

Most new entrepreneurs are in the 45 to 64 age bracket, followed by people in their 30's to mid-40's. The greatest growth has been among women from 25 to 54, and among men over 55. Survey research among younger populations is finding a great deal of interest in business ownership. Younger workers are entering the workplace with the thought that they will change jobs often, and many desire the chance to work for themselves at some point in their career.

The *2014 Entrepreneurial Communities* report from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) found that the Edmonton periphery is one of the best places in Canada in which to start a business. The report ranks 122 city regions across Canada on 14 characteristics, grouped into three categories.

- Presence is a representation of the scale and growth of business ownership.
- Perspective covers indicators associated with optimism and growth plans.
- Policy represents indicators associated with the actions local governments take with respect to business taxation and regulation.

The Edmonton periphery, including Stony Plain, ranks third, and took the top position in 2012 and 2013.

Industry Trends

Year-to-year, business, professional, and scientific services accounted for nearly half of all job growth in Alberta between 2013 and 2014. About two thirds of these jobs (23,000) were created in the Edmonton area. This was somewhat offset by declines in information and in finance, insurance, and real estate.

The professional, scientific and technical services sector is the core of what is often referred to as the "knowledge economy", in which intellect, rather than manual labour, is used to provide a service. Client work in this sector may be on a continuing basis, such as when an accountant or bookkeeper is retained to maintain a company's financial records, or on a project basis, such as when a civil engineer wins a contract to prepare the site design for a new Tim Horton's.

Technological breakthroughs in computing and telecommunications are making it increasingly easy for professionals in these occupations to establish a business and market even on a global scale, as electronic data, rather than a physical project, is usually the final output. Furthermore, demand for these services is intermittent, and insufficient within most of Alberta's small businesses (making up 96 percent of the total) to justify internal hiring for these tasks. This creates a strong demand for business-to-business services.

Employment in this industry is expected to increase by an average of 2 percent per year between 2013 and 2017, adding about 9,500 jobs during this period. Wages in this sector tend to perform above Alberta averages, according to *Alberta Occupational Demand Outlook, 2013-2023*, although job growth is expected to be below average.

With regard to startups, many new establishments face challenges with growth and survival. Industry Canada has estimated that 85 percent of startups survive one year, 70 percent survive through the second year, and 51 percent survive through their first five years.

Barriers to business formation and success include difficulty in acquiring high-quality workers, access to capital, and developing customers and markets. The issue of capital is an important one to understand correctly. While most economic development organizations develop programs to assist businesses in purchasing tangible assets, the real need of most businesses is working capital to maintain cash flow. In the case of most solo businesses and startups, this also includes adequate resources to address personal expenses. Rather than loan programs, targeted efforts to assist these businesses in acquiring clients is a more effective strategy to address the need for capital.

Work Force Requirements

The workforce needs of this industry cluster are diverse, but are characterized by general need for a better-educated population in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) and business specialties. These are represented by the occupations listed in the table at right.

Value Proposition and Messaging

Small businesses, the majority of them microbusinesses (under five employees) will make up the majority of prospects in this cluster. This will include a large number of startup businesses, and may include small branch establishments of larger firms. While many will serve a local market, the services they provide are highly transportable and individual businesses have the potential to reach a worldwide clientele.

Stony Plain will be attractive for the opportunity it gives to business owners and employees to work close to home. The attraction will be heightened over time if the Town is successful in developing its image through plans to turn the downtown into a specialty shopping and dining district and center for arts and culture. Doing so will help to attract additional professionals, technical specialists, and executive-level employees to the community.

Initial marketing should reach out to households in Stony Plain, Spruce Grove, and the surrounding area, communicating a message that Stony Plain is an excellent location for small business and for business startups. This can be expanded over time to other parts of the Edmonton area.

Target Development and Marketing Strategy

The following strategies form a "home-grown" approach to developing business opportunities in this sector. This is the approach thought to have the best prospects for success in the short term (three to five years). Building upon this success, the Town may expand its outside recruitment efforts as it develops its brand perception in the broader region.

WAGES FOR SELECTED TARGET SECTOR OCCUPATIONS

	STARTING WAGE	AVERAGE WAGE
Accountants and auditors	26.62	33.58
Bookkeeping and accounting clerks	20.18	25.20
Customer service representatives	16.03	19.15
Computer programmers	30.85	38.95
Computer network technicians	28.86	35.78
Software engineers and designers	31.72	34.99
Database administrators	30.85	37.24
Web designers and developers	24.26	34.24
Graphic designers and illustrators	22.78	26.69
Writers	31.55	37.95
Public relations specialists	30.82	37.71
Marketing researchers and consultants	32.56	38.14
Sales, marketing, advertising mgrs..	33.82	45.61
Administrative clerks	20.14	24.07
Data entry clerks	18.57	21.62
Industrial designers	31.32	40.05
Civil engineers	38.60	44.06
Geologists, geochemists and geophysicists	28.06	--
Human resource managers	31.82	49.76
Paralegal and related occupations	25.01	30.85

SOURCE: Alberta Wage and Salary Survey, 2013

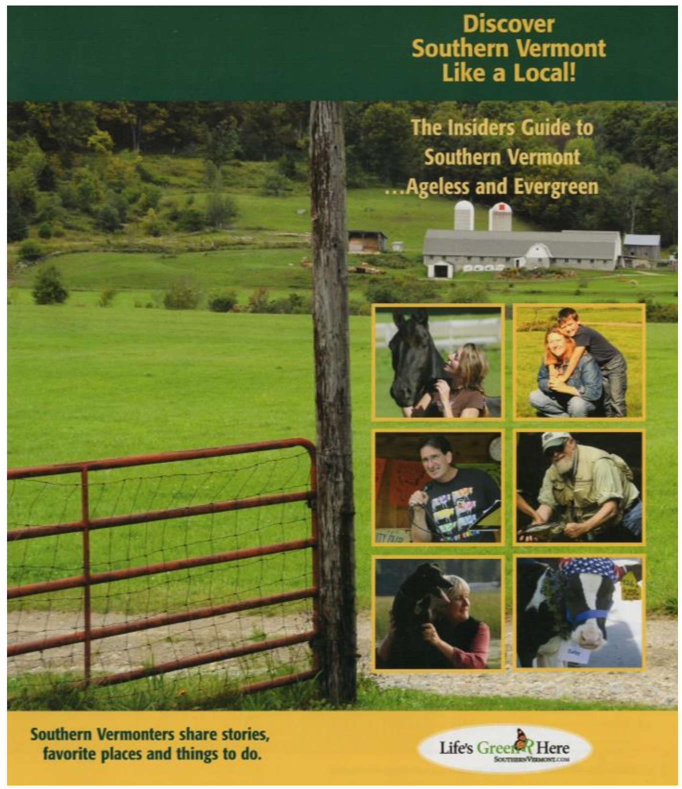
Business Networking Events

The first step in this strategy should be for the Town to encourage opportunities for informal business networking. An online search found surprisingly few community-initiated networking groups in Stony Plain or Spruce Grove. There are a significantly greater number in Edmonton.

These groups can be formal (such as Business Networking International, or BNI) or informal groups usually created by local businesspeople. They commonly use online resources such as Meetup, LinkedIn, and Eventbrite to find people interested in participating, and spread the word about future events. Startup Digest (https://www.startupdigest.com/digests/edmonton) will list some of these activities, particularly related to technology.

Small business owners attending networking functions report several possible advantages, including generating awareness of their business, finding opportunities to collaborate with other small business owners, learning from each other and speakers at the events, socializing with other business owners, and finding customers for their business. For the Town, it will be a good way to identify business of which it may not be aware, to learn what assistance the businesses may need to help them grow, and to identify potential clients for its business development programs or to recruit into the community.

Networking opportunities are provided by the Town and Chamber of Commerce, including CultureFWD, and Chamber general meetings and Lunch and Learn meetings. While important, these serve a different purpose than the networking that occurs organically among small businesses.



Example of a marketing piece that features stories of local people, designed to attract similar people to the area.

In addition to continuing to promote its own networking opportunities, the Town should identify new networking groups that form in the west suburban area, attend events, and offer support to the group and its member businesses. As there are currently few groups specifically within the western suburbs, the Town can benefit from attending Edmonton networking functions formed for participants in the Town's target sectors. Examples might include entrepreneurial or arts-related groups.

Branding Stony Plain as a Small Business Hot Spot

Many of the strategies recommended for Stony Plain's five targets are related. In this case, creating a widely recognized perception of Stony Plain as a desirable place to have a small business contributes to recruiting businesses beyond only those in the business and professional services grouping, and developing a destination downtown arts and shopping district that is known throughout the region will contribute to the perception of the Town as a desirable business setting.

- Brand strategy. Develop a brand strategy to promote the message that Stony Plain is a highly desirable location for small businesses in the business and professional services sector. The emphasis for this campaign should be to raise awareness among sector businesses in the broader Edmonton region.
- Small business success stories. Highlight interesting examples of solo practitioners and small businesses that have been successful based in Stony Plain. The examples should be carefully considered to represent targeted sectors and targeted demographics.

Entrepreneurial Development and Business Acceleration

Most of Stony Plain's businesses are home grown, and that is a trend that is likely to remain true will into the future. The Town should understand that its best prospects lie in expanding existing businesses and ensuring a pipeline of new businesses with the potential to grow. Research has shown that about five percent of these businesses will evolve into fast-growing local employers, but they are not distributed uniformly across a geographic area. Some places become the "hot spots" for break-out business growth. The challenge for Stony Plain will be to build on its current assets to create the kind of environment where these business can form and thrive.

The non-profit Corporation for Enterprise Development (CFED) identified two core elements in this environment: a pipeline of entrepreneurs and access to high-quality and comprehensive business development services. The pipeline of entrepreneurs is created through exposure to entrepreneurship education from kindergarten through post-secondary levels, and extensive entrepreneurial networks. Enhanced business services include entrepreneur-focused training and technical assistance.

The most effective strategy to promote successful entrepreneurship and small business growth will include entrepreneurial education, development of a collaborative workspace, and targeted technical assistance for businesses.

Entrepreneurial Education

In its analysis of entrepreneurial education, the U.S. Federal Reserve Bank states that "Entrepreneurs are mostly made, not born." and "Experiential entrepreneurship education trains students to examine their communities to discover unmet commercial needs and then develop business plans to meet those needs. Incorporating entrepreneurship education into the traditional school system normalizes self-employment as a life goal, while exposing youths and young adults to entrepreneurship education outside of the school system allows them to think creatively about the economic challenges and opportunities in their area."

Alberta's *Framework for Student Learning* does place a high importance on developing an entrepreneurial spirit through the development of core competencies in students at all levels. In recent years there have been a growing number of programs and students enrolled in entrepreneurial certificate and degree programs at both the technical and four-year college level. The Alberta Long Distance Learning Center offers a distance education program in entrepreneurship for high school students. At earlier levels, entrepreneurial education can be incorporated into classes or offered through outside programs. Existing programs offered in the community include Junior Achievement and a summer company program. Additional actions that the Town can take include:

- Begin a Lemonade Day Program. Lemonade Day is a program oriented toward grade school children, introducing them to entrepreneurship through the real world experience of starting their own lemonade stand. "By running their stand, they learn the business and life skills needed to set a goal, make a plan and work the plan to achieve their dreams… Lemonade Day is a strategic 14-step process that walks youth from a dream to a business plan, while teaching them the same principles required to start any big company." The nearest community with this program is Okotoks. http://okotoks.lemonadeday.org/
- Host a Startup Weekend. This can be done in partnership with other communities (like Spruce Grove) and organizations such as Community Futures. http://startupweekend.org/

  Startup Weekends are hands-on events where entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs can find out if startup ideas are viable. Up Global, the organization that developed the program, reports that on average, half of attendees have technical or design backgrounds, with most of the remainder coming from business fields. Activities help to promote networking, build a business idea, develop skills, and start a business.

Collaborative Workspace

Changes in the nature of work, in technology, and in the way younger generations prefer to work have brought about a great deal of innovation in where we work. In the entrepreneurial environment these changes have led to the emergence and rapid expansion of a "collaborative economy" in which businesses and entrepreneurs come together to share resources they all need to succeed, but which might have a considerably higher cost if purchased individually. Coworking centers and makerspaces, sometimes developed in tandem, are the most visible examples of this trend.

Coworking centers are shared office spaces where small businesses, footloose staff from larger businesses, entrepreneurs, freelancers, contract workers, and other individuals come together to work in a shared environment. These facilities will provide reserved and/or "open" desks for members, along with internet access, shared office equipment, meeting rooms, and other amenities. Membership terms are usually flexible, offering month-to-month or even daily rates.

Makerspaces are similar to coworking centers in that they provide a commonly used space and access to shared equipment. Makerspaces differ in that they emphasize production of some sort. Common orientations might include the arts, sound recording and video production, woodworking or metalworking, or electronic components. Tech-minded makerspaces often include resources for 3D printing, laser cutting, software development, or prototype development.

These shared space concepts have only emerged in the last decade. Some economic development organizations have been quick to realize their potential as a platform for business formation and growth acceleration. Many of these spaces are self-funded or operate with minimal subsidies. Entrepreneurs and small businesses have low costs of entry and are not obligated to enter into long-term contracts. They benefit directly by externalizing costs that they would otherwise need to bear alone, and by having a professional business environment that lends them credibility. Additional benefits come from networking and chance interactions with other people in the space.

Aside from financial support, economic developers add value to these spaces by introducing networking opportunities, business training programs, and targeted technical support.

These approaches are distinctly different from business incubators. A business incubator selects a small number of clients who commit to the program for a period of three to five years, during which staff from the incubator work with them to build a business that can successfully graduate to conventional commercial space. In reality, data shows that this seldom happens, with many incubators simply renting inexpensive space to businesses with few growth prospects, while the cost of assistance per business is substantial.

With coworking and makerspaces, the cost per business is low and a great number of businesses can receive assistance, although turnover among these businesses will be high. Survey research has shown that businesses that persist will tend to leave the shared space for their own space in about three years. Some coworking spaces have graduated leasing options, where a business may initially rent a single desk in a shared space, move to a private office as it grows, and even move into a small office suite before getting its own private space.

Coworking and/or a makerspace should be evaluated as a potential means of promoting business startups and helping existing small businesses to grow. This use could be evaluated as a component of the shared studio and gallery space for artists recommended in the *Cultural Master Plan*. One building might serve multiple, complementary purposes. Steps in examining this strategy include:

- Conduct a feasibility study. The feasibility study should refine the size of the market and survey target individuals or businesses to determine:
    - The potential number of workers who may want to consider membership. This is not only the number of businesses and their employees. Members could include people employed in regular jobs who have the ability to work outside of their regular office,

CHARACTERISTICS OF COWORKING SPACES

The majority of coworking spaces are developed as private, for-profit enterprises, though it is becoming more common for communities to partner with a private company to establish a coworking space that can serve as a business startup and growth platform. In these cases, the community may provide some initial financial support and continuing technical advice and programs for members of the coworking space.

55% of coworkers own or work for a company with employees

44% of coworkers are freelancers or solopreneurs

The average coworking center has US$58,000 in opening costs

72% of coworking centers are profitable after two years

Desks typically rent for $200 to $400 per month contract workers, freelancers and other individuals, and emerging entrepreneurs. This analysis will want to target business services, professional, scientific, and technical services, information and communications, and related occupations.

- Interest in membership. After understanding what a coworking or makerspace can provide, how many people might consider joining, and at what price? What inducements might be used to get people to try the space to determine if they want to become members?
- Features, resources, and programming. The analysis should recommend the configuration of space, including shared desks, dedicated desks, semi-private or private offices, meeting rooms, and common areas. It should also identify the assets that will be in demand, such as high-speed internet connections, large screen monitors, software, printers, scanners, and other equipment. Services will largely be the training and technical assistance provided through the facility, and will typically address topics like financial recordkeeping, marketing and client development, software training, etc.
- Facility design. The analysis should result in a recommendation for a facility, including the optimum size and allocation of floor area to different uses. It should describe the character of the space desired.
- Cost analysis. The feasibility study should identify the cost to develop the recommended facility and provide a cash flow analysis for the first five years of operation, including any debt service, costs to maintain the facility and its resources, staffing, and the costs to provide the recommended business assistance.
- Location. The feasibility study should recommend a location based on an analysis of both costs and preferences among potential members. The Town should give preference to a downtown location (or nearby) to create a synergy with other economic development efforts.

- Develop a business plan. The business plan should lay out a strategy for developing and operating the space. It should include project financing, marketing and member recruitment, fees for space and services, management structure and governance, and policies and procedures.
- Generate interest from the business community. Most successful coworking and makerspaces start first as a community of business owners, freelancers, and other members who come together before the physical space is even established. They often gather to network and perform work in a common environment such as a coffee shop. Having this group in place before the space is available helps to ensure that it will be populated from the start and that there is a base of users who can help to spread the word about the facility.

The coworking concept is barely a decade old and is still not well known within Alberta. To help gain a better understanding of coworking, its benefits, and the various models that have emerged, it will be helpful to attend the annual Global Coworking Unconference (http://gcuc.co/). In 2015 the organization began to host a conference specifically for the Canadian market.

Targeted Technical Assistance

Stony Plain will have partners in this initiative, such as Community Futures. Resources may also be pooled with Spruce Grove and Parkland County to defray costs and reach a wider audience. In many cases, it will be possible to recruit experts from the local business community at little or no cost. Many professionals who can provide advice to startups and growing businesses will have an interest in meeting with them or presenting in a seminar, in the hope that the businesses may choose to become paid clients.

In recent years there has been a great deal of research conducted into the needs of emerging and small businesses, from organizations including the Ewing M. Kauffman Foundation, the Edward T. Lowe Foundation, and others. These studies have identified critical needs including the following:

- Business planning and business basics training
- Technical assistance – management, legal, accounting, human resources, e-commerce, etc.
- Access to capital, or more accurately, cash flow management

- Market development – ensuring a regular stream of customers
- Manufacturing support
- Product development

The Edward T. Lowe Foundation notes differences in the needs of what it calls stage 1 and stage 2 businesses. Self-employed persons and stage 1 businesses (employing fewer than ten people) are focused on defining a market, developing a product or service, obtaining capital, and finding customers. Stage 2 businesses (with ten to 99 employees) have moved beyond the survival stage and need to adapt their management structure to continue to grow.

Businesses having the origins in research, sciences, and emerging technologies are a small portion of all start-ups. These businesses may have need for specialized assistance in areas such as:

- Technology licensing and commercialization
- Legal assistance related to intellectual property
- University research commercialization
- Prototyping and testing

Technical assistance can be provided in a class setting or individually. Class instruction or workshops are used to introduce basic concepts and information of a general nature. They may also provide targeted "how-to" instruction, such as to software programs, reporting generation, or regulatory compliance. One-on-one assistance is of a specific nature, pairing the business owner with someone qualified to answer technical questions and help them to understand what they need to do to grow their business.

Initial goals for this effort should be to develop a cadre of business professionals who are willing to provide one-on-one counseling to startup businesses, and to host a quarterly workshop for startup and small businesses.

Branch Office Recruitment

The long-term opportunity within this industry cluster is not limited to small businesses and startups, although these are expected to make up the bulk of prospects. Two possibilities for business attraction are possible:

- Sector businesses in Edmonton (or elsewhere) that will consider opening an office to have a presence closer to the growing west side market, and
- Large businesses in the region that may not be in the targeted sectors, but have back office functions for those activities, and may consider a remote location.

These opportunities are mentioned to provide a glimpse of the eventual market that is created by starting out to build a cluster of smaller businesses in this sector. This plan does not recommend expending effort on large-scale branch business attraction in the short term (five years or less).

Larger office uses will eventually be attracted by the concentration of small businesses. They will also be drawn to the community for its reputation and for the skilled workers who tend to live in or near vibrant, mixed-use neighborhoods. As this environment more fully develops, Stony Plain can begin to market itself to larger satellite and back office uses.

HEALTH CARE AND RELATED SERVICES

The Edmonton region's largest industry on an employment basis is health care and social assistance, at 12 percent of total metropolitan area employment in 2010. Health care and social assistance was also the region's fastest growing industry between 2006 and 2010, with an increase of over 17,000 employees. Across Alberta, the health care industry had the second-largest number of employees, though also the largest increase in jobs.

Continuing population growth in Stony Plain, Spruce Grove, and Parkland County, and a general increase in the number of older households, will create additional demand for health care services and supportive services, especially for the elderly. Stony Plain can leverage its location and the presence of Westview Health Centre to capture business development opportunities related to this growth.

Many aspects of the health care market are contingent upon government funding. This can be a constraining factor in Stony Plain's ability to grow anchor uses like the Westview Health Centre, but will have less impact on broader health-related activities such as home health services and services for the elderly. The election of a new provincial government in 2015 is anticipated to result in additional funding for health care.

Industry Overview

Most health care needs of Canadians are met by private organizations, though about 70 percent of the funding comes from government sources. Most prescription drugs, home care or long-term care, eye care or dental care is not covered by government programs, except for some low-income individuals, children, and seniors. About 75 percent of Canadians receive supplemental health insurance through their employers, which may cover a portion of these costs.

Primary Care

Primary health care is what many people think of when considering health care. It includes treatment of acute health care conditions along with chronic conditions, health maintenance, and prevention. It is made up of several different layers in the health care system including hospitals and clinics, diagnostic and other laboratories, doctors and other professionals, and social service providers. Many of these services are organized through primary care networks, such as WestView PCN, which serves Stony Plain. There are about 80,000 residents in its service territory.

Westview Health Centre is the westernmost health clinic in the Edmonton area. The facility delivers routine health care services, a 24-hour emergency clinic (though not a trauma center), day/outpatient surgery, rehabilitation, and mental health services. The centre has 20 acute care beds, four maternity beds, and 50 long-term care beds. Limited diagnostic imaging is available, with patients needing to travel into Edmonton for MRI or CT scans. Most lab services are also located in Edmonton.

In recent years the hospital has eliminated its maternity program, despite the fact that the bulk of the area's growth is comprised of young families. The lack of advanced natal care facilities was a factor in that decision. There are plans to expand the hospital to a 120 bed facility based on the availability of funding from the provincial government.

Further to the west, there are hospitals in Edson, Whitecourt, Drayton Valley, and Barrhead. These are generally comparable to Stony Plain in the level of services they provide. Spruce Grove has the Queen Street Clinic, also operated by Westview.

Despite the size of the market, the majority of doctors in the area are family physicians. Specialists have tended to concentrate in the major metropolitan cities, near hospitals and universities with medical research capabilities. Many specialists will have an affiliation with these anchors of the health care system. While that tether can make it difficult to recruit specialists to outlying places like Stony Plain, it is becoming more common for practicing specialists to maintain a secondary office where they may see patients one or two days out of the week. This may be a tactic suitable to Stony Plain, where the Town offers a location close to not only the western periphery, but also more convenient for patients in outlying communities.

Home Health Care

The Public Health Agency of Canada estimates that three out of five adults in Canada suffer from chronic diseases such as diabetes, cancer, mental illness, and cardiovascular diseases, and many more are at risk of developing chronic conditions. Services and medical devices to treat these conditions without hospitalization (in-home) make up the home health care market. A report issued in August of 2015, *The Canada Home Healthcare Market - Industry Analysis, Size, Share, Growth, Trends and Forecast 2014 – 2020*, asserts that

> *The home health care market offers lucrative business opportunities in Canada due to increased acceptance of home health care, technological advancements, and cost-effective alternatives compared to other modalities (i.e. hospital visits). Factors such as aging population and increasing number of people diagnosed with chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiac disorders, and respiratory diseases are driving the growth of the home health care market in Canada.*

Within Stony Plain, the home health opportunity can consist of outlets at which patients can purchase or lease supplies and devices, and service providers who offer varying levels of in-home health assistance.

Home health care supplies and devices might include monitoring devices like blood glucose monitors or sleep apnea monitors, mobility assistance devices, and therapeutic treatment devices such as CPAP devices. This market was valued at $10.4 million for all of Canada in 2013 and is expected to grow to $19.9 million by 2020, with an 8.9 percent compound annual growth rate.

Home health services are commonly categorized as rehabilitation services (physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech language pathology), respiratory therapy services, telehealth and telemedicine services, infusion therapy services, and unskilled home health care services. Unskilled home health care holds the largest share of this market, followed by rehabilitation services.

Needs of an Aging Population

Despite an influx of immigrants and younger workers attracted to high-paying jobs, the Edmonton area still has a large population of seniors who make up a growing percentage of the population. This is resulting in an increased need for services to provide care for the aged, including dementia care, respite care, caregivers, home health services, and general assistance such as housekeeping, grocery shopping, transportation, and delivery services. Albertans over 65 years of age make up less than 15 percent of the population, but use 45 percent of hospital patient days, 94 percent of long term care facility care days and make up 72 percent of home care clients.

Housing is one of the most basic of senior needs. Beginning around 2020 the number of persons aged 75 and over – the target market for senior housing – will experience a rapid increase as the Baby Boom generations continues to age. The problem is expected to grow acute as the Boomers reach 85, and demand for assisted living skyrockets.

One area in which there is a current perceived shortage of units is long-term care, with Edmonton's vacancy rate standing at 7.1 percent in 2014, down from 7.3 percent in 2013 and among the lowest in the country. Late in 2014 the provincial government announced $120 million in funding to construct an additional 1,200 seniors' care spaces around the province.

Targeted Opportunities

Opportunities for business development are found within four main groupings of businesses.

Primary Health Care Services

The initial contact with the health care system is usually referred to as primary care. In a broad context, this could include family care doctors, nurse practitioners, and other medical professionals such as dentists or optometrists, who perform routine examinations, diagnostics, and other procedures that do not require the expertise of a specialist. Primary care can also include emergency room visits, or health promotion and disease prevention. Local demand for this level of care will continue to growth as the population of the area expands and ages.

Secondary care (treatment by specialists to whom a patient has been referred) and tertiary care (complex procedures given in a health care center that has highly trained specialists and often advanced technology) are not immediate targets as these services are usually connected with large hospitals providing surgical facilities, and specialists are often associated with university medical programs, neither of which are near Stony Plain. The exception to this statement may be specialists with a significant number of clients in the western area, who may establish an office with limited hours, predominantly providing consultation, rather than more advanced services.

Senior Housing

As people age they tend to seek housing that requires less maintenance, and in some cases, provides some level of services such as communal meal services. The range of options extends from apartment or condominium units with design features oriented toward older and mobility-impaired seniors, through full-service nursing facilities.

The greatest share of the senior living facilities west of Edmonton are already located within Stony Plain. Development sites north and west of the downtown would be an ideal location for high-density, senior-oriented residential development. These sites would be within walking distance of businesses and amenities in the downtown.

Home Health Care Services

The home health care industry will see substantial growth as the population ages and people need support to remain in their homes. Importantly, it is often less expensive to provide health services in the home rather than in a hospital setting. It is similarly less expensive to enable older adults to age in their home instead of in a facility setting. These cost considerations will also encourage the growth of this sector.

Common occupations within this sector include nurses and home health aides, physical and occupational therapists, social workers, and dieticians. The largest segment of home care consists of licensed and unlicensed non-medical personnel who assist the individual daily tasks such as bathing, eating, cleaning the home and preparing meals.

Health-Related Services

This grouping of businesses is already well-represented in the community through many small and solo businesses, and unincorporated practitioners. Examples are personal trainers, dieticians and nutritionists, massage therapists, and other personal care service providers. Alternative health services are an important component of this target. Examples include aboriginal healing, chiropractic care, naturopathy, reiki, acupuncture, and reflexology.

The Public Health Agency of Canada reports that more than 70% of Canadians regularly use complementary and alternative health care therapies such as vitamins and minerals, herbal products, homeopathic medicines and other natural health products to stay healthy and improve their quality of life.

A handful of retail opportunities are related to the health sector, including uses such as pharmacies, home health care products stores, and alternative health and health supplement shops.

Work Force Requirements

Recent primary care business growth has been among family physicians with few specialists. Specialists often have relationships with area universities where they also teach or perform research, and will have a greater need to access the laboratory and imaging resources currently only available in Edmonton. Anecdotally, local health care industry professionals also see growth in home health care and supportive services.

Most of the current workers at area health service businesses live locally, in Stony Plain, Spruce Grove, or Parkland County. Depending on the position, a significant number of health care workers will need to work non-traditional hours, which may encourage them to live nearby.

Key positions and area wages (starting and average wages) in this sector are summarized in the following table.

WAGES FOR SELECTED TARGET SECTOR OCCUPATIONS

	STARTING WAGE	AVERAGE WAGE
Specialist Physicians	99.57	112.50
Head Nurses and Supervisors	32.18	57.33
Registered Nurses	32.73	52.89
Licensed Practical Nurses	24.33	31.81
Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists	39.49	52.74
Dieticians and nutritionists	35.29	43.19
Nurse Aides, Orderlies and Patient Svc. Associates	17.94	21.65
Medical Laboratory Technicians	21.49	26.69

	STARTING WAGE	AVERAGE WAGE
Medical Radiation Technologists	33.83	44.81
Occupational Therapists	35.81	48.10
Opticians	15.90	26.27
Cardiology Technologists	29.08	37.51
Pharmacists	44.42	52.42
Psychologists	44.48	61.59
Other Prof. Occ. in Health Diagnosing and Treating	36.24	46.05
Other Prof. Occ. in Therapy and Assessment	31.47	41.30
Other Technical Occ. in Therapy and Assessment	17.95	26.96
Medical Secretaries	22.93	31.98
Managers in Health Care	31.94	75.41
Dental Assistants	23.03	30.44
Dental Hygienists and Dental Therapists	44.70	54.53
Dental Technologists, Techs and Lab Workers	17.33	32.69
Social Workers	32.65	45.25
Community and Social Service Workers	18.47	23.92
Early Childhood Educators and Assistants	12.90	17.53
Light Duty Cleaners	13.76	16.43
Visiting Homemakers, Housekeepers and Related	15.92	19.51

SOURCE: Alberta Wage and Salary Survey, 2013

University of Alberta and McEwan University both have medical colleges with degree programs. NorQuest College offers several skill enhancement, certificate, and degree programs in health services fields, such as practical nurse and practical nurse prep and refresher courses, LPN continuing education, therapeutic recreation certificate and degree programs, and programs for health care aides, medical device reprocessing technicians, pharmacy technicians, and physical therapy assistants.

Value Proposition and Messaging

Stony Plain is the health care center for a market of 80,000 people, and as an alternative to Edmonton, offers improved access and convenience for patients in outlying areas. With the lion's share of senior housing in the western suburbs, the Town is central to the largest volume users of health care and related services.

Target Development and Marketing Strategy

If Stony Plain is growing at a pace of roughly 800 new residents each year, then the market for health-related services office space could range from 6,000 to 8,000 square feet per year. That estimate is based on an approximately equal distribution of demand in four segments: 1) primary medical care services; 2) home health care services; 3) health-related services including alternative health practitioners; and 4) dental, eye care, and related health services.

The estimates were prepared using an assumption of 70 percent market penetration and a $40 per month labor/employee productivity model, generating healthcare revenues of $268,800 within each of the four categories of use. This would create need for $400,000 of commercial real estate using six to seven percent of revenues for occupancy. At $200 of sales per square foot, each target may absorb up to 2,000 square feet of office space. These estimates are conservative, as there is the potential for Stony Plain to capture a portion of the market growth in both Stony Plain and Parkland County.

CBRE Group, Inc. estimates an 8.9 percent rate of market penetration for senior housing (age 65 and over) within Canada. Seniors currently make up 11.6 percent of the population within the Westview Clinic service area (according to Alberta Health, 2014). Between 2006 and 2011 the population over 65 grew by 29.2 percent. This is an annualized rate of 9.76 percent.

Aging of the existing population and the addition of new older residents will be the basis for increased demand for units across the spectrum of retirement housing. Stony Plain can capture demand from internal market growth and a significant portion of the demand generated in Spruce Grove, Parkland County, and rural communities that offer few viable alternatives for their aging residents. Using figures prepared by Alberta Health, which show a 2014 senior population of 6,648 persons, it can be projected that the region will add about 3,942 seniors between 2015 and 2019, creating demand for about 350 senior housing units during this period.

Health Services Advisory Committee

An initial step in developing this sector will be to engage with business representatives from a broad cross-section of the targeted industries, who can advise the Town concerning community health care needs, potential strategies to strengthen the Town's market position, and targets for recruitment. These industry experts can serve as a platform to advocate on issues of shared concern, such as increasing provincial funding for local health care services.

Senior Housing Development

To attract additional senior housing the Town will want to reinforce messaging that it has attracted the majority of senior housing already in the area, as it provides a continuum of care and aging services, along with proximity to shopping and other services. Additionally, development sites adjacent to the downtown are in a walkable neighborhood with several amenities nearby.

To develop the senior housing sector, the Town should take several steps to reach the development community with its message:

- Educate area commercial and multifamily realtors concerning the message and opportunities available. This should be done through direct contact with individual firms and brokers. The Town should provide information concerning the quality of life in Stony Plain, make clear that it is targeting opportunities for retirement housing, and recommend sites where the housing could be accommodated. Sites near the downtown should be given preference.
- Town representatives should participate in developer forums in the Edmonton market and develop relationships with those active in the senior market. As with brokers, the message should focus on the senior population in the community, quality of life for seniors, and available sites.
- Existing owners of senior housing should be alerted to the steady growth of the area's senior market, and the possibility to expand their real estate development offerings.
- In its planning, the town should identify specific areas where senior housing can be encouraged, in walkable neighborhoods close to shopping and services.

Business Expansion and Attraction

Development strategies in this sector should embrace both expansion of existing businesses and attracting new ones to the community.

- The simple act of hosting periodic health fairs and conducting outreach concerning general health services, and emerging health issues, can solidify the Town's position as the center of the health care industry west of Edmonton. These activities should create exposure for Stony Plain businesses, helping them to capture a greater market share.
- A relative handful of large companies provide extensive home care and home health care services in Alberta. Direct outreach to these companies will be an effective strategy to determine their interest in the western Edmonton market and to alert them to the Town's interest in expanding these services.

  Recruitment strategies should begin by identifying local and regional businesses serving the target population. Two approaches will identify a majority of these businesses: 1) confer with primary care providers to determine the businesses from outside of the area to which they make referrals; and 2) scan regional publications (such as those oriented to seniors, alternative health, or health and wellness) to identify advertisers and businesses mentioned in articles.

  These companies can be approached through traditional methods such as direct mail for distribution of general information, and scheduled appointments with management to determine their interest in serving the western market. Approaching six to eight companies per year, to include a face-to-face meeting with management, and an offer of a community tour, would be a reasonable goal.

- Alternative health care is a growing opportunity and is not tied to government funding. Stony Plain has many businesses and individual practitioners in these fields, which include specialties such as Eastern medicine, massage therapy, homeopathy, chiropractic care, and acupuncture. Many of these businesses will benefit from the same technical assistance and training contemplated as a strategy to grow the business and professional services sector.

LOCAL FOOD AND FOOD PROCESSING

Many Alberta communities are targeting food processing for industrial development and economic diversification. These competing sites can offer considerable advantages for large-scale and traditional food processing operations, such as proximity to commodities, large development sites with rail sidings, and a low-wage workforce. Stony Plain can target niche opportunities for success in this sector.

Consumer sensibilities around food are evolving. Whether real or only perceived, a growing segment of the market believes that organic, locally-produced, non-GMO, gluten-free, craft or artisanal products, and similar foods offer better taste, nutrition, or food safety. These market niches are the focus of many food industry startups, and are increasingly drawing the attention of large manufacturers.

Industry Trends

This is not a small market. Consider the case of organic foods. According to the Canada Organic Trade Association, the total 2012 value of Canadian organic sales is estimated at $3.531 billion, with the US market at $39 billion. A report by the firm Markets and Markets, *Global Organic Foods & Beverages Market Analysis by Products, Geography, Regulations, Pricing Trends, & Forecasts (2010 – 2015)* forecasts an estimated compound annual growth of 12.8 percent for the global organic food and beverages market. The market was estimated at $57.2 billion in 2010, and by the end of 2015 is anticipated to reach $104.50 billion. North American market growth is projected at an average of 11.9 percent from 2010 to 2015.

The niches available to Stony Plain go beyond organics, and include:

- Locally-grown and processed foods
- Artisanal or craft food products
- Nutraceuticals and functional foods
- Dietary food products
- Pet foods

A defining characteristics of all of these markets is that they tend to have strong opportunities for small-scale production and emerging businesses that are well matched to Stony Plain's character, location, business sites, and resources. Almost 90 percent of food manufacturers have fewer than 100 employees.

Site selection factors in this sector include work force, availability of materials, access to markets, and suitable buildings. This last issue may be the most critical, as food sold commercially must be prepared in a facility meeting provincial certification requirements. Building or retrofitting a space to these standards can be prohibitively expensive for many small businesses.

Access to markets will be a factor for some businesses in this sector, as many small food processing businesses tend to sell to a regional market before expanding to a larger scale. This is more of an issue among those producers catering to the local food movement.

Food processing can be labor intensive, and with many low- or semi-skilled occupations, tends to pay low wages. Sites that are close to a large workforce with targeted worker characteristics (such as a large immigrant population) will be preferred by large establishments. For this reason, it is recommended that Stony Plain concentrate its efforts on small-scale operations such as startups or those businesses transitioning from home or farm-based production to commercial space. These companies, while hiring fewer workers, will tend to offer wages higher than industry averages.

Organic Food

The Canada Organic Trade Association announced in 2013 that Canada now represents the world's fourth-largest market for organic products, with sales of totaling over $3.5 billion. The estimated value of organic food and beverage sales in 2012 was $2.9 billion, or 1.7 per cent of the market share, while organic alcohol sales reached $135 million, or 0.67 per cent of the market. Sales of organic pet food were $4.1 million. The market research firm, Packaged Facts, forecasts a compound annual growth rate of over 11 percent between 2014 and 2019 for natural and organic food and beverage sales in Canada, with millennials and South Asian and Chinese ethnic groups helping to spur growth.

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry identified 275 organic farms and 59 organic processors in the province in 2010. This is a relatively small portion of Canada's 3,914 organic farms and 870 processors, however, Alberta farms tend to be large in area. While the province ranks fifth in the number of farms, it ranks second in total land area in organic production, with 135,350 acres certified. This is primarily pasture land for cattle (of which there were 16,463 head) and there was a significant increase in the number of organic dairy cows between 2006 and 2008.

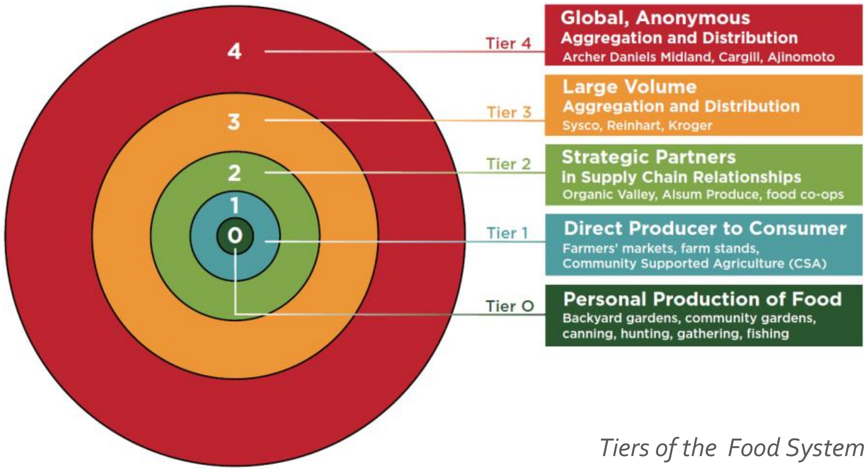
Local Food

Locally-grown and processed foods are typically distributed through direct farm sales (farm stands and u-pick operations), farmer's markets, community supported agriculture (CSA), restaurant sales, and local foods offered in traditional retail outlets. Food hubs are an emerging distribution channel defined by the US Department of Agriculture as "a centrally located facility with a business management structure facilitating the aggregation, storage, processing, distribution, and/or marketing of locally/regionally produced food products." Food hubs are providing wider access to institutional and retail markets for small to mid-sized producers, and increasing consumer access to fresh healthy food.

These distribution channels are represented by tiers one and two on the following diagram, representing an emerging understanding of the global food value chain.

There is strong demand for local food in Alberta, according to *Alternative Agricultural Markets in Alberta, 2012*, a report by Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development. Alberta expenditures in 2012 were estimated at $724 million at farmer's markets, $154 million for farm retail, and $374 in sales to restaurants. These numbers represent significant growth from 2008, particularly for farmer's markets, while farm retail declined. No estimates were provided for CSA programs, as they still make up a very small percentage of the total. Overall, 79 percent of households purchased food through at least one of these channels. Market penetration was highest in urban areas and among better-educated consumers, spanning most demographic segments.

When asked, 75 percent of consumers accepted "Alberta" as a definition of "locally grown", and 93 percent indicated that they had purchased Alberta-



Tiers of the Food System
A new way of thinking about local and regional food

grown food in the past year. A third said they expected to purchase more Alberta-grown products in the coming year. Most households made these purchases at a supermarket, followed by farmer's markets and specialty food stores.

Craft and Artisanal Foods

This market might be said to consist of premium products produced in small quantities. Examples can be found throughout the range of specialty foods such as coffee, wines and beer, condiments and dressings, baked goods, confectionary products, cheeses, meats, and prepared foods. This market segment will also include ethnic foods.

An article in Forbes Magazine (*Beyond Artisanal: How to Grow a Niche Food Business*, May 22, 2014) offers a very insightful description of the business development opportunity for Stony Plain:

> *Most cottage food businesses start essentially the same way: One person, hand-making a product. They source their ingredients from the farmers market or maybe even grow them themselves. They go door-to-door talking to restaurant owners and chefs, neighbors, and grocery store buyers. Maybe they do a Kickstarter campaign and raise enough money to buy jars and labels, to quit their day job, and hire an assistant. They keep at it and they grow.*

These days they grow faster than in the past. Inc Magazine recently listed specialty food as one of the top 8 industries for starting a business today, and the most recent IBISWorld report on the best industries for startups included four niche-food businesses in its top 10.

Consumers increasingly want to enjoy the experience of food and know more about their food: the cultural heritage of a dish, where it was sourced and how it was grown, and how it is prepared. Younger households show particular interest in these characteristics. Given that they are the most ethnically diverse generations, they also have the greatest interest in food from other cultures.

Craft beers are a well-documented example of this trend in production. Home brewing began to gain widespread interest about two decades ago. The growing number of hobbyists started to generate entrepreneurs who packaged their beers for sale. In many cases this meant opening a microbrewery restaurant, as there were few other distribution channels available. As the market has matured, there are now a greater number of options available to startups and other small producers. Large brewers have also entered the market with specialty beers.

Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development states that craft beers have been performing better than the beer category overall, and are expected to provide opportunities for further growth. These craft beers cater to consumer demand for quality and variety, and may also benefit from the trend toward local products. Craft breweries are increasing across Canada, with microbrewery beers from the U.S. and large players such as Molson Canada investing in craft breweries.

Ethnic foods are also experiencing noteworthy growth, estimated at 5 percent annually. Locally, the Alberta Food Processing Development Centre has stated that a significant number of the start-up food businesses with which they work are producing ethnic food products. As a resource, the Food Processing Development Centre has the potential to be a partner with Stony Plain in helping to develop and grow sector businesses, and may be a source of leads for recruitment prospects.

Nutraceuticals and Functional Foods

This market consists of functional foods and natural health products, and Canada has emerged as a global source of these products, in part due to its recognized certification standards, and partly to its biodiversity that enables production of many source ingredients. More than 750 Canadian companies in this industry have combined sales in excess of $11 billion. An aging population and interest in health maintenance along with alternative treatments is fueling increased spending on nutraceutical products.

Functional foods are defined as foods enhanced with ingredients that are proven to have specific health benefits. These products have been in the marketplace for decades. Commonly-known examples include milk fortified with vitamin D, sports drinks with added electrolytes, or whole grain bread for added fiber.

Natural health products are extracts with beneficial health effects, that are derived from natural sources. Examples include echinacea or fish oil supplements. They are sold in dosage form. Nutraceuticals World reports that 71% of Canadian adults reporting they using a natural health product, and 38% use one or more dietary supplements on a daily basis. The Canadian market is estimated at $3 billion. Overall, North America (at $142.1 billion in 2011) represents the second-largest market after Asia.

The University of Alberta has a Functional Food Centre of Excellence that seeks to further development of this agricultural niche.

Dietary-Based Food Products

Personal choice, religious laws, or health concerns are the primary reasons why people choose to eat (or refrain from eating) some foods. Vegan or vegetarian diets are an example of personal choice. Religious convictions are best represented by Halal or Kosher foods. Allergies and food intolerance lead people to eat gluten-free, lactose-free, and other "free-from" foods. All of these markets are experiencing continued strong growth.

- Globally, around 20% of consumers in a Datamonitor survey said that they avoid certain foods due to an allergy or intolerance most or all the time. A further 22% claimed to do this occasionally.
- The total North American market for food intolerance products in North America was over $3.6 billion in 2010.
- Packaged Facts, in its report, *Gluten-Free Foods in Canada*, estimates that the Canadian market for gluten-free products was US$450 million in

2012, growing at 26.6 percent per year between 2008 and 2012. It is projected to reach $811 million in 2017. The US market is roughly $4 billion.

- Euromonitor asserts that high-value bakery items will be among the products with the greatest increase in sales, either offering nutritional benefits or meeting particular dietary needs, such as being gluten-free.
- The global market for lactose-free products has grown to US$4.1 billion in 2012 from US$3.3 billion in 2007.
- Approximately four percent of Canadian adults follow a vegetarian diet. Alberta Agriculture and Forestry estimated 2006 demand for vegetarian food at $2.8 billion.
- The North American Halal food market is estimated at $12 billion and is growing at a rapid rate. The global market is thought to be worth $580 billion and could reach 20 percent of the global demand for food, as incomes in area with large Muslim populations increase.
- Demand for Kosher food has increased by about 15 percent each year over the past decade, with over $200 million in sales in North America.

Premium Pet Foods

Pet foods and pet treats are a comparatively small part of the food industry, yet show a similar pattern of having the greatest growth in specialized products. As they do for themselves, pet owners are demonstrating a strong interest in factors such as age, breed, and health maintenance. A growing number of pet owners have concerns about the sourcing of pet food ingredients, fueled by several high-profile product recalls due to contaminants such as industrial chemicals in ingredients from China. There is also an interest in raw food diets, grain-free pet foods, and alternative proteins such as bison or salmon.

It is estimated that 38.5 percent of Canadian households own a cat and 35.0 percent own a dog. Pet food sales are anticipated to increase by a compound average growth rate of 1.9 percent for cat food, and 2.2 percent for dog food. Although there may be fewer dogs, their owners spend roughly 1.5 times as much on pet food ($720 million versus 1.1 billion).

Regional Food Production

Food processing in the Edmonton area is currently concentrated in the southwest quadrant, extending to some extent into Spruce Grove and Stony Plain. Companies closer to Edmonton enjoy availability of a larger low-wage workforce served by public transit. Some food processing, particularly large-scale commodity processing, is located in outlying rural communities. More than 100 food product manufacturers are located in the Edmonton area, as identified in a food industry directory compiled by the Alberta Government.

Alberta farmers are continuing to diversify their crops and livestock operations, creating an opportunity for new products. Alternative crops and livestock, including bison, elk, and other animals, vegetables, fruits, and berries are being introduced to complement dominant outputs such as cattle, grains and oilseeds, potatoes, and honey. Several other crops are grown that fit within this concentration. Alberta is Canada's largest producer of hemp, with an estimated $100 million output. Hemp is an incredibly diverse crop used for its fibre, as a food source (hemp oil and seeds, which also have nutraceutical properties) and in industrial applications. Nutraceuticals, medicinal botanicals, and essential oils are the focus of provincial agricultural diversification efforts as well as research to identify commercial applications.

Local Assets

Stony Plain has some important assets that contribute to the potential of this target.

- North Central Co-Operative Association was established in 1946 and covers a region extending as far west as the border with British Columbia. The Co-op recently expanded to three grocery stores in in Stony Plain, Edmonton, and Sherwood Park. It has a total of over 20,000 members. The Co-op has the potential to be a partner in helping to identify prospective businesses with which the Town may seek to develop a relationship. It may also serve as a distribution channel for some of the products developed by new businesses in Stony Plain. Through its community engagement programs, it may help to develop educational programs in agriculture and food enterprises, which help to build a pipeline of emerging food businesses.

- Homegrown Foods is an important local retailer of natural and organic foods and body care products. Seasonal produce is sourced locally. Like the Co-op, Homegrown Foods has established relationships with farmers and producers in the region, which can be exploited to help develop business prospects. The store may also serve as an outlet for newly introduced products.
- Freson Bros is headquartered in Stony Plain. They operate a chain of 15 grocery stores, and the Stony Plain location is the only one in the Edmonton market, where they have plans to expand with new stores. There are opportunities for the Town to include them as a partner in product development and distribution.
- The Multicultural Heritage Centre conducts several programs that help to establish Stony Plain as a center for local, organic, and craft foods. Some of these include its demonstration farm, gardening classes including a Master Organic Gardener certification, the Farm School, community gardens, and edible landscape. A restaurant on the grounds, the seasonally operated Homesteader's Kitchen, uses fresh local foods. Though not limited to food items, the Maker's Market at the Centre will provide booth space in a retail store, in which regional artisans and makers can display and sell their products.

This strategy also recommends developing the downtown as a destination retail, dining, arts, and cultural district. Similar districts usually support specialty food stores and restaurants where locally-made, organic, and craft foods can be found. The relationship is a symbiotic one: the targeted food niche reinforces positioning of the downtown, and a destination district provides an outlet for specialty food products developed in the town.

Work Force Requirements

The work force for food production is generally not as highly skilled as many other manufacturing sectors, and is also not as highly paid. This can present a challenge to recruitment, particularly with establishments needing a large number of employees. With a small population base, Stony Plain would be at a disadvantage in this regard. It is partly for this reason that the target sector is made up of initially small firms with few employees (although these may grow over time).

Edmonton market wages for key positions in the food processing industry fall around average for Alberta. This was confirmed through discussions with food processors in Stony Plain and Spruce Grove. Much of the required training can be conducted on the job, mitigating the need for an experienced workforce.

WAGES FOR SELECTED TARGET SECTOR OCCUPATIONS

	STARTING WAGE	AVERAGE WAGE
Manufacturing managers	38.23	46.44
Supervisors, food and beverage processing	20.76	23.03
Dieticians and nutritionists	35.29	43.19
Testers and graders in food processing	16.96	18.53
Bakers	12.20	14.89
Machine operators in food processing	15.33	17.47
Laborers in food, and beverage processing	13.32	15.17

SOURCE: Alberta Wage and Salary Survey, 2013

Value Proposition and Messaging

Stony Plain is the place "where farm meets table". Historically, the town has served as the market center for the rural region for over a century, and the presence of organizations like the North Central Co-Operative Association and the Multicultural Heritage Centre's demonstration farm, agricultural programs, and Maker's Market reinforce that role. These are among the building blocks that help to position Stony Plain as the location of choice for small and emerging producers to take products to a larger market, and for people interested in niche or craft products to learn and to interact with the people making them.

Target Development and Marketing Strategy

Much of the basic infrastructure for Stony Plain to position itself as a preferred location for small scale specialty food production already exists.

Educational Programs

Among area educational institutions, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology has a culinary arts program. The University of Alberta is also a partner in the Alberta Food Processing Development Centre in Leduc. All three of these organizations may be sources of technical expertise and training programs that could be offered to food businesses in Stony Plain.

Commercial Kitchen

Community kitchens offer some of the most important advantages of a kitchen incubator with considerably less financial or staffing commitment. Rather than a permanent business space, a community kitchen is simply that, a licensed kitchen where specialty food processors and others can prepare foods. Kitchen clients are charged only for the time that they use the facility. Complementary programming on business formation, marketing, food preparation, and other topics can be offered through a virtual incubator.

There is existing space that might be converted to this use. The former school building owned by the Multicultural Heritage Center could be rehabilitated, with a portion of the space dedicated to creating a community kitchen. As a not-for-profit organization, the Center could receive donations of funding, equipment, and services to help in establishing the facility. The Multicultural Heritage Center has made its restaurant kitchen available for this purpose in the past, although the effort was hampered by scheduling difficulties.

Co-packing adds an expanded level of service. In the typical sense, a co-packer is a third-party manufacturer that processes and packages food for others, to their specifications. In the context of food business incubation, it commonly means having a facility and equipment for shared use by multiple emerging businesses who produce food in small batches. The use of shared space and equipment on a rental basis externalizes capital costs to reduce the financial burden on startups.

Food Hub

Food hubs are in the early stages of development in Edmonton. They are focused within small areas and none have yet become dominant. This leaves an opportunity open for Stony Plain to enter the market with a food hub, perhaps developed in partnership with the farmer's market and local institutions like the North Central Co-Operative Association and Homegrown Foods, which already have connections to growers throughout western Alberta.

Stony Plain's western location makes it easy to deliver products to a point where they can be stored, sorted, and shipped to retail outlets, restaurants, and other consumers across the metropolitan region.

Food Tourism and Food Events

Food tourism and food-related events are an effective means of branding the community and can be a source of leads for business development. Food tourism takes many forms, including direct farm marketing (farm stands, u-pick farms, and farmer's markets), culinary classes and demonstrations, or restaurant tours and dining marketing. Some of these are already pursued, particularly with programs at the Multicultural Heritage Centre. These also cross over into the realm of food-related events.

Additional marketing and food events will reinforce the Town's brand as the place where farm meets table. Examples might build off of the current interest in food and cooking contests, such as the "Food Network Star" or "Chopped" television shows. The following are some examples.

- Main Street Marshfield (Marshfield, Wisconsin) held a baking contest, inviting bakers to compete to win rent and technical assistance to help open a new downtown bakery. The winner opened 2½ Cups, a cupcake bakery and coffee shop that has since expanded into adjacent space where they host private parties and offer experiences such as cupcake decorating for children's events.
- The International Marketplace District in Indianapolis has compiled a directory of more than 60 mostly ethnic restaurants in the district, and is launching a campaign to help them develop their web presence to attract more customers. The District draws diners from a two to three hour radius.
- Many downtown districts have established a particular night during the summer months, in which restaurants and food vendors set up on streets and sidewalks to provide outdoor dining, food preparation and demonstrations, and live entertainment.

Discovering Opportunities for Recruitment

The food businesses Stony Plain is seeking to recruit are almost always going to be local (within one or two hours). They will not be found in directories, but through the places in which they network and distribute emerging products. The following are some of the sources that should be canvassed.

- Farmer's markets. Many growers are also small-scale food processors, making jams and other preserves, sauces and spreads, baked goods, candies, and other products. These are the businesses that need access to space, technical expertise, and distribution channels to grow from the home kitchen to commercial space.
- Specialty food stores and gift shops. Locally-made products found in these stores are coming from businesses that have made the first steps from direct-selling to distributing to local retail stores. These are businesses in a growth phase and are good targets to recruit to space within the Town.
- Restaurants and caterers. It is not uncommon for popular restaurants or caterers to want to move into manufacturing, packaging some of their most popular sauces, meals, or other products for distribution through retail outlets. Discussions with chefs and/or owners can help to identify such opportunities and alert them to Stony Plain's interest in working with these expanding businesses.
- Alberta Food Processing Development Centre. While the food incubator accepts a limited number of tenants into its building, it turns away a far larger number of prospects who might look to Stony Plain as an alternative. This may especially be true if the Town were to make a community commercial kitchen and co-packing site available.

DESTINATION SHOPPING, DINING, ARTS, AND CULTURE

More than 1.3 million people live in the Edmonton region, which has the second-fastest growth rate and third-highest median income among Canada's largest metropolitan areas. This creates a very large market for specialty retail, dining, arts, and culture; destination activities for which people will travel outside of their normal patterns. Stony Plain's unique resources can be leveraged to make the community a center for these uses.

Although Stony Plain will not be alone in pursuing this strategy, at present the Edmonton area has surprisingly few such districts. Whyte Avenue is the best-known of these, and St. Albert is also notable. Edmonton is attempting to infuse these uses into its downtown and near the new arena. Smaller communities such as Camrose may have long-established organizations to promote downtown vitality, but the mix of businesses is oriented to neighborhood and community-serving uses. Spruce Grove is presently engaged in a planning process for its downtown district.

Stony Plain has the nucleus of a destination district anchored by its historic downtown, Multicultural Centre, Pioneer Museum, Heritage Park, and Rotary Park. Already, there are several existing shops and galleries in the downtown core. These are drawing customers from far beyond the Town's regular trade area.

Understanding the Opportunity

The following tables compare the market potential for destination shopping goods, dining, and personal services in two trade area markets. The first is a local market defined as a 10-kilometer radius from the center of Stony Plain's downtown district. The second, which may be described as the destination district market, reaches out to a 100-kilometer radius.

A traditional business district will have limited opportunities for new business development as the local market is limited, with a great deal of competition for the more customary goods that often make up the bulk of retail market potential. A district with specialized businesses, capable of drawing from the broader region, can tap a much larger market in search of unique, often higher-priced items and services.

MARKET POTENTIAL BY RETAIL PRODUCT LINE

PRODUCT LINE	LOCAL MARKET	DESTINATION MARKET
Population Estimate	**29,869**	**1,152,531**
Food expenditures	$104,426,007	$4,029,402,047
Food purchased from stores	$72,780,797	$2,808,333,870
Bakery products	$6,475,599	$249,868,721
Cereal grains and cereal products	$4,599,826	$177,489,774
Fruit, fruit preparations and nuts	$9,012,473	$347,757,020
Vegetables and vegetable preparations	$8,004,892	$308,878,308
Dairy products and eggs	$11,218,796	$432,890,644
Meat	$12,931,286	$498,969,088
Fish and seafood	$2,094,813	$80,830,841
Non-alcoholic beverages and other food	$18,443,112	$711,649,475
Pet expenses	$9,092,124	$350,830,436
Pet food	$3,042,655	$117,404,491
Purchase of pets and pet-related goods	$1,593,013	$61,468,320
Garden supplies and services	$5,910,079	$228,047,467
Nursery and greenhouse stock, cut flowers, plants and seeds	$3,233,817	$124,780,690
Household furnishings and equipment	$31,242,974	$1,205,547,426
Household furnishings	$13,907,006	$536,618,434
Furniture	$8,980,613	$346,527,654
Rugs, mats and under-padding	$469,939	$18,133,154
Art, antiques and decorative ware	$1,612,926	$62,236,674
Linens	$1,596,996	$61,621,991
Other household furnishings (curtains, mirrors, picture frames)	$1,545,223	$59,624,270

Source: Estimates by Place Dynamics

MARKET POTENTIAL BY RETAIL PRODUCT LINE (CONT.)

PRODUCT LINE	LOCAL MARKET	DESTINATION MARKET
Clothing and accessories	$52,278,715	$2,017,236,592
Women's and girls' wear (aged 4 years and over)	$26,181,174	$1,010,231,839
Clothing (aged 4 years and over)	$15,926,151	$614,529,529
Footwear (aged 4 years and over)	$5,460,053	$210,682,667
Accessories (aged 4 years and over)	$1,628,856	$62,851,357
Watches and jewelry (aged 4 years and over)	$3,166,114	$122,168,286
Men's and boys' wear (aged 4 years and over)	$17,431,548	$672,617,092
Clothing (aged 4 years and over)	$11,537,399	$445,184,308
Footwear (aged 4 years and over)	$4,042,271	$155,975,862
Accessories (aged 4 years and over)	$987,668	$38,110,358
Watches and jewelry (aged 4 years and over)	$864,210	$33,346,564
Children's wear (under 4 years)	$1,234,585	$47,637,948
Clothing and cloth diapers (under 4 years)	$1,027,494	$39,647,066
Footwear (under 4 years)	$207,092	$7,990,882
Gifts of clothing for non-household members	$5,352,525	$206,533,555
Clothing fabric, yarn, thread, and other notions	$322,585	$12,447,335
Recreation	$59,833,581	$2,308,750,099
Recreation equipment and related services	$14,599,967	$563,357,153
Sports, athletic and recreation equipment	$3,703,756	$142,913,844
Children's toys	$1,784,175	$68,844,518
Art and craft materials	$573,485	$22,128,595
Collectors' items (e.g. stamps, coins)	$390,288	$15,059,738
Reading materials and other printed matter	$3,221,869	$124,319,677
Alcoholic beverages	$11,274,552	$435,042,035
Alcoholic beverages purchased from stores	$8,052,682	$310,722,358

Source: Estimates by Place Dynamics

RESTAURANT MARKET POTENTIAL

PRODUCT LINE	LOCAL MARKET	DESTINATION MARKET
Food purchased from restaurants	$31,645,210	$1,221,068,177
Restaurant meals	$28,088,808	$1,083,840,152
Restaurant snacks and beverages	$3,560,385	$137,381,695
Alcoholic beverages served on premises and in restaurants	$3,138,236	$121,092,590

Source: Estimates by Place Dynamics

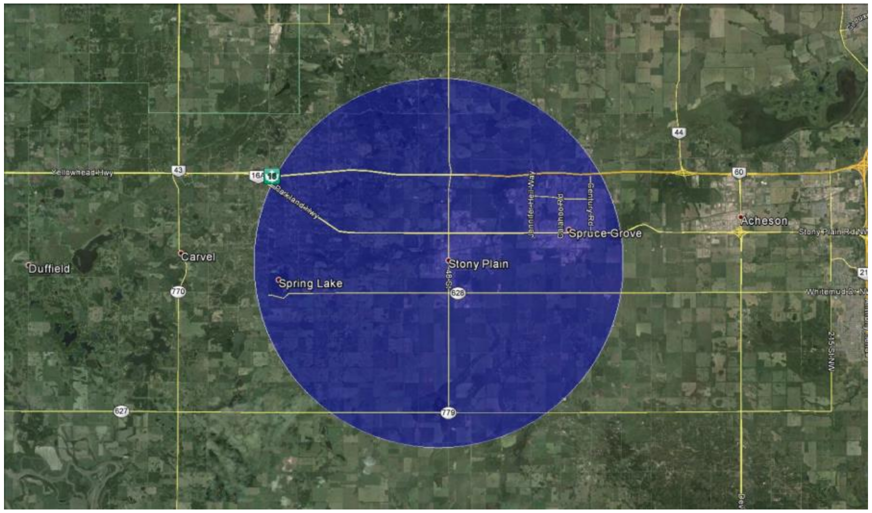
PERSONAL SERVICE MARKET POTENTIAL

PRODUCT LINE	LOCAL MARKET	DESTINATION MARKET
Personal care	$16,527,513	$637,733,820
Personal care products	$9,868,718	$380,796,242
Hair care products	$1,461,590	$56,397,184
Makeup, skin care, manicure and fragrance	$3,771,459	$145,526,248
Personal care services	$6,658,796	$256,937,578
Hair grooming services	$5,053,835	$195,008,245
Other personal care services	$1,608,943	$62,083,003

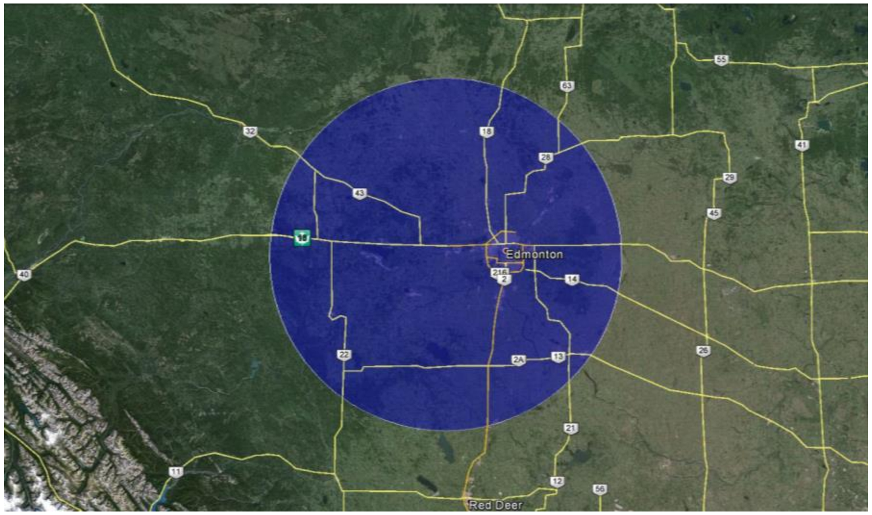
Source: Estimates by Place Dynamics

No one business can create a destination district, although it is not uncommon for one or more businesses to play a critical role in the formation and development of a district. For a district to become a successful destination, collaboration between businesses, property owners, organizations, and local government is essential. Success also requires a sustained effort over years, while the business mix evolves and the district becomes better known within its market.

10 KM RADIUS FROM DOWNTOWN STONY PLAIN



100 KM RADIUS FROM DOWNTOWN STONY PLAIN



Existing Anchors, Assets, and Plans

Significant components of what goes into making a successful destination shopping, dining, arts, and cultural district are already in place within Stony Plain, although they are not always coordinated.

The Vision for the Downtown Core

The Town's web site has already articulated a vision for the downtown that is very consistent with the opportunity to create a destination district:

> *The heart of Stony Plain is the downtown core; traditional lampposts and old-style shop-fronts pay homage to the community's past. But historic Main Street, and surrounding area, is not stuck in the yesteryear; the place is a hub of activity.*
>
> *Locals meet and chat on sidewalks. Friends connect in quaint cafés. Visitors stroll through town, enjoying glimpses of a bygone era. One-of-a-kind cafes, galleries, independent boutique stores and original, family-owned restaurants line the street, while fresh produce, home-made goodies and handmade crafts are sold at two busy farmers' markets.*
>
> *The place pulses with life. It's a perfect place to go for a leisurely stroll, taking in the sights and sounds around you, or to do some shopping. Aside from the fantastic selection of stores, customers rave about the friendly service and warm atmosphere that just cannot be found in big-city shopping centres.*

In fact, elements of this vision are already in place, at least to a sufficient degree that the vision is an achievable one. There is a strong presence of the arts in the district, whether represented by businesses such as the Parkland Potters Guild, or in public installations including the 36 outdoor murals adorning downtown buildings.

Municipal Development Plan

Stony Plain's Municipal Development Plan contains recommendations for the downtown that are consistent with the idea of creating a destination shopping, dining, arts, and cultural district. The plan describes the core downtown as Old Town, and advocates historic preservation, adaptive use, and investments in public infrastructure. The area north of the railroad tracks is called North Old Town, and is envisioned as a location for pedestrian-oriented mixed use development that expands the existing commercial district. Residential and mixed use development is also indicated for infill areas to the west of the district, and recommendations include improving the pedestrian connectivity between downtown, adjacent neighborhoods, and the Multicultural Heritage Centre.

Downtown Plan

In 2007 the Town of Stony Plain adopted a Master Plan prepared by Avi Friedman Consultants, Inc. That plan contained specific recommendations for the downtown area that remain a solid foundation for developing the district. The recommendations include:

- Expanding the present boundaries of the district.
- Adopting design guidelines.
- Developing a civic square, fronted by mixed-use development, across from the Town Hall on 51st Avenue.
- Developing a mixed-density and pedestrian-friendly neighbourhood (model neighbourhood) west of the downtown, helping to create a market for businesses.
- Creating a town entrance feature.

Downtown Streetscape Plan

Stony Plain has prepared a Downtown Streetscape Plan for the Old Town segment of 50 Street. This plan is mainly a design exercise. Two criticisms of the plan are that it does not give adequate consideration to how the public space will be utilized, and that it does not contain elements that reflect local community character. Given the large presence of local artists, created art can be installed throughout the district and can replace some of the standard fixtures found in the plan. Overall design should stress functionality for uses such as outdoor dining and merchandise displays through expanded sidewalks and buffering in key locations.

Multicultural Heritage Centre

The Multicultural Heritage Centre houses an art gallery displaying the works of Alberta artists. Rotating exhibitions feature ceramic works, mixed media, jewelry, fibre art, installations, paintings, drawings, photography and sculpture. Other features include a restaurant, recreation spaces, and classes where a variety of programs are offered. The Centre has plans for expansion, for which it is currently raising funds.

Given its proximity, the traffic it generates, and the complimentary role it plays to the establishment of arts and culture in the downtown, the Multicultural Centre should serve as a critical anchor of the district.

Stony Plain and Parkland County Pioneer Museum

The museum is another important cultural anchor for the district. Making the physical connection between the downtown and the museum is imperative. Ideally, there will be better access for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians as vacant property between downtown and the museum is developed. Forethought needs to go into how these connections will be made, so that incremental development does not occur in a manner that prevents these connections from being made.

Heritage Park

Heritage Park lies north of the downtown in close proximity to Rotary Park and the museum. The park's most notable asset is the Pavilion at Heritage Park, a large community and event center. Phase II of the project is completed and includes a 21,000 square foot facility with event space and theater. Phase III, an attached community centre, is under construction. The multi-use facility will accommodate conferences, banquets, meetings, weddings and other functions. Heritage Park also includes outdoor activity space and the rodeo grounds.

Rotary Park

Rotary Park serves an important role as a gateway to the community, and over time its role as a gateway to the downtown will be reinforced as the North Old town area is developed. The park includes the visitor center, from which people may be directed to the downtown district. It also has a large open space that can be used for events that are too large to accommodate in existing or new gathering space in the district's core.

Existing Businesses

Several downtown businesses will form the nucleus of a destination downtown district. Existing restaurants fit well into this niche. Other businesses sell gifts,

GOALS OF STONY PLAIN'S CULTURAL MASTER PLAN

GOAL 1: TOWN LEADERSHIP

1. Consider the Establishment of a New Cultural Development Officer Staff Position
2. Implement a Communications Strategy to Promote the Plan
3. Establish an Interdepartmental Culture Team
4. Convene a Staff Forum on the *Cultural Master Plan*
5. Integrate Culture into Town Planning and Decision-Making
6. Evolve the Creative Community Committee (CCC) to a Cultural Roundtable
7. Convene an Annual Cultural Summit
8. Hold Issue-Based Community Forums
9. Establish a Mayor's Award for Culture

GOAL 2: A DIVERSE AND DYNAMIC CULTURAL SECTOR

10. Establish a Stony Plain Cultural Network
11. Strengthen Regional Partnerships and Collaboration
12. Create a Coordinated Cultural Marketing Initiative
13. Establish a Community-Driven Calendar of Events
14. Sustain and Expand Cultural Mapping Efforts
15. Address Cultural Facility Needs
16. Address the Gaps in Cultural Facilities - Four cultural facility needs were identified during the planning process.
17. Establish a Youth Apprenticeship and Mentoring Program
18. Establish a Festival Created By and For Youth
19. Celebrate Diversity
20. Promote and Enhance Community Storytelling

GOAL 3: GROWING THE CULTURAL ECONOMY

21. Grow Creative Cultural Enterprises
22. Profile Local Success Stories
23. Creative Minds Events
24. Develop a Festivals Strategy

GOAL 4: A CULTURALLY VITAL DOWNTOWN

25. Develop an Integrated Public Art Policy and Program
26. Provide Spaces for Artists and Creative Enterprises in the Downtown
27. Establish a Shared Administrative Facility in the Downtown

jewelry, coins, women's clothing and accessories, antiques, yarn and fiber, and hobby supplies.

Cultural Master Plan

The Town adopted a Cultural Master Plan consisting of four goals and 27 recommended actions to achieve them. Many of these activities form the basis for recommendations related to arts and culture in this study. The intent here is to leverage actions already taking place or contemplated, making effective use of existing structures and minimizing the demand for additional resources.

Arts and Culture

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts cites several facts attesting to their drawing power and impact, many drawn from a 2011 *Survey of Albertans on Culture*.

- 90 percent of Albertans attended or participated in an arts event or activity in 2011.
- 91% of Albertans feel arts activities are important in contributing to the overall quality of life in their community.
- 53% of Albertans participated or performed in an arts activity or program at least once in 2011.
- In 2009-10, total attendance at arts events hosted by AFA funded organizations reached close to 7 million—around 3.5 million paid attendees and 3.5 million unpaid attendees.
- 94% of Albertans believe that having a wide variety of cultural activities and events makes Alberta a better please to live.

The 2008 study, *Consumer Spending on Culture in Canada, the Provinces and 12 Metropolitan Areas*, provides the most current examination of per capita spending on the arts. This spending was comprised of home-based entertainment, reading materials, art works and events, photographic materials and services, movie tickets, and art supplies and musical instruments.

Albertans spent more on the arts, per capita, than any other province. Spending averaged $963 per capita. The province also had the largest percentage growth in spending between 1997 and 2008, when it also ranked first in overall spending. The Edmonton metropolitan area was ranked third, nationally among the largest cities, in total consumer spending on the arts, spending $933 per capita on all arts and culture, and $124 per capita on art works and events.

Spending on arts and culture is more than double what they typical Canadian spends on sporting events.

To add some dimension to these statistics, as well as to present a more current picture of the market, this report estimates that more than $62 million in market potential for art, antiques and decorative ware exists within 100 kilometers of Stony Plain. More than $22 million in spending on art and craft materials is generated in the same area.

People employed a majority of their time in arts occupations make up a smaller portion of Alberta's work force than is typical across all of Canada. Overall, Alberta arts and cultural workers are proportionally older, better educated, and are more likely to be female than is found in the national profile. The number of artists represents 0.54 percent of Alberta's labour force. Within the Edmonton area there are 58 listed members of the Alberta Society of Artists, with 136 in the Calgary area and five around Lethbridge.

These numbers understate the true number of artists working within the area. For many people, creating art is pursued as a hobby or secondary income source. As an example, consider that the Parkland Potters Guild has 65 members.

Several important arts resources already exist to help anchor the district. In addition to the larger anchors already discussed, these include the Crooked Pot Gallery and Parkland Potters Guild, downtown murals covering the sides of several buildings in the district, and a small number of art installations such as the tiles covering the wall of the pavilion in Rotary Park.

The Town's Role in Revitalization

The Town of Stony Plain cannot create a destination district through its actions alone. Leadership will need to come from within the community, its business, and property owners, through their actions to bring about the vision. The Town's role will be to make people aware of the opportunity and encourage individual or collective efforts through planning, technical or logistical assistance, investments in infrastructure, and financial support.

THE MAIN STREET PROGRAM

Originating in the United States and now widely adopted in Canada, the Main Street Program is recognized as a very successful format for business district vitality. The program is centered on a four-point approach that includes economic restructuring, design, marketing and promotion, and organization.

Successful organization for downtown revitalization is led by advocates from within the community, its businesses, and property owners. Local government plays a supportive role, contributing its resources and regulatory authority.

http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/

Downtown Planning

The first action that must be taken to realize the vision of a destination downtown and arts and cultural district is to develop a plan. An area structure plan is being considered for the 2016 budget cycle. The downtown plan is first and foremost a business plan to be implemented, while design should be a secondary consideration, and respond to the uses that are identified for the district.

The downtown plan should build upon the business development initiatives recommended in this study. Incorporating additional analysis and input from stakeholders, it should lay out a comprehensive strategy that integrates the downtown with the Multicultural Heritage Centre and Rotary Park, as a single destination shopping, dining, arts and cultural district.

The plan should discuss the optimal arrangement of uses within the district, connectivity for multiple transportation modes, sites considered suitable for development or redevelopment, design guidelines for new and existing buildings, the location and programming for a town square, and wayfinding to guide people to and through the district.

Areas that needing particular attention include:

- The need for a centrally-located gathering place where events can be hosted in the central downtown area. Prior planning suggested the possibility of such a space across from the Town Hall.
- Additional wayfinding directing visitors from highways to the downtown district, and for gateway features to recognize entry to the district.

- Connectivity between the downtown and anchors of the broader cultural district; the Multicultural Heritage Centre, Pioneer Museum, and Rotary Park.
- Streetscape design that provides functional space for dining, merchandise displays, and small-area activities.
- Development and redevelopment area patterns, including uses and design. All uses along 50 Street should consist of ground-floor commercial space with residential units above. Secondary streets may have residential uses on the ground floor. Buildings should have a pedestrian orientation, with placement at the street edge, a transparent façade with frequent egress points, and parking and services located to the rear.

General Retail Recruitment

Stony Plain is at a disadvantage to Spruce Grove in efforts to recruit general retail and services. This is due to its location, smaller population, and the concentration of large retail anchors in Spruce Grove. Stony Plain may be attractive to neighborhood-serving and convenience businesses during the next several years. Over the long term the Town may re-evaluate market dynamics to determine if there has been enough change to warrant more intensive recruitment efforts. In the meantime, if the Town does want to pursue these targets, there are two initiatives it can take that will not strain its resources.

International Council of Shopping Centers

Membership in the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) is mainly comprised of retail chains, commercial real estate brokers and leasing agents, and commercial developers. The organization is by far the most important industry association for the retail sector. It holds regional events in major cities across the world, and hosts an annual convention in Las Vegas which is attended by over 50,000 industry professionals. Known as the "Leasing Mall", the event provides an opportunity for property owners and a growing number of communities to make a pitch to real estate decision-makers with nearly all of the major retail, dining, and personal service chains. Some regional events also include a leasing mall. There is no scheduled event in Alberta, however, there is an annual event in British Columbia.

Appointments should be scheduled in advance of either the regional events or the Las Vegas convention. It may not be cost effective to have a booth solely for Stony Plain, however, this would be a good event for regional collaboration among several communities in the Edmonton market. It is useful to note that many of the developers and REITs in attendance also have industrial property portfolios.

Support the Retail Recruitment Efforts of Property Owners

Owners of commercial property in the Town are carrying out their own efforts to recruit retail and services to their lease spaces. The Town should keep in regular contact with them and determine what steps it can take to support their recruitment efforts. Examples may include providing information concerning new development projects, actions to establish the destination downtown district, and population and demographic updates.

Specialty Business Development

Stony Plain will need to place an emphasis on developing its downtown business community, helping existing businesses to capture a greater market share, and attracting desirable businesses to the district.

Marketing and promotion

Current efforts to market downtown Stony Plain are largely associated with tourism publications. Alterations to existing messaging will better position the district to become the desired specialty shopping, dining, and arts and cultural center that has been envisioned. Beyond this, there is a tremendous need to make more effective use of web-based marketing, both collectively and through individual businesses.

Web management begins with sites people routinely visit to learn the "things to do" in an area. These include Google Maps, City Data, Wikipedia, and multiple review and ratings sites such as Yelp or TripAdvisor. Stony Plain's page on Wikipedia currently says this about the community:

> *Stony Plain is a town in the Edmonton Capital Region of Alberta, Canada within Parkland County. It is located west of Edmonton adjacent to the City of Spruce Grove.*
>
> *Economy*

The region is dominated by agricultural and other resource-based industry.

Arts and culture

Stony Plain is home to many colourful murals that depict important figures and events of local history. These murals have earned the town the nickname "The Town with the Painted Past." The Town held a mural project in 2006 where artists were selected through open competition to paint two murals. The Parkland Potters Guild & Crooked Pot Gallery is also located within Stony Plain.

Cultural institutions in the town include the Stony Plain Public Library and the Multicultural Heritage Centre.

Stony Plain celebrates Farmers' Days in the first week of June each year, complete with the Farmers' Days Parade, the Kinsmen rodeo, a pancake breakfast and fair grounds. The town also plays host to the Great White North Triathlon in the first week of July.

In the summer, Stony Plain hosts two major festivals — the Blueberry Bluegrass and Country Music Festival,[35] which is held in early August and is the largest bluegrass event in western Canada, and the Cowboy Poetry and Country Music Gathering[36] held in late August.

In December, the town sets up a large Christmas tree on Main Street and is lit throughout the Christmas season. To celebrate New Year's Eve, the town holds its Family Fest event at Rotary Park. Family Fest features ice skating on an outdoor pond, hot chocolate and fireworks.

Attractions

The Town of Stony Plain jointly owns and operates the TransAlta Tri Leisure Centre sports complex located within neighbouring Spruce Grove. The town is also home to the Multicultural Heritage Centre, the Pioneer Museum and has three major parks (Shikaoi, Whispering Waters and Rotary), a skate park, a BMX park and a green path system running through town.

TripAdvisor lists eight activities in Stony Plain. The top-ranked activity, and three others, are not even within the Town's boundaries. In ranked order, the activities are:

1. Get Hooked Fishing Adventures Ltd - Tours (48 reviews)
2. Stony Plain Golf Course (18 reviews)
3. Pegasus Stables (2 reviews)
4. Multicultural Heritage Centre (2 reviews)
5. Stony Plain and Parkland Pioneer Museum (1 review)
6. Gypsy Chicks (1 review)
7. Skydive Eden North (9 reviews)
8. Young Guns Paintball (no reviews)

One of the Town's most important attractions, the Crooked Pot Gallery, is not mentioned on any of these sites or listed on Google Maps. Similarly, the public galleries in the community do not show up or are not mentioned.

These sites need to be better managed to alert people to the attractions and activities, and businesses, that are available to visitors. Most allow users to add and manage content. Staff from the Town and Chamber need to take an active role in ensuring that their content on sites like Wikipedia is complete, well-written, positive, and populated with both images and links to local web sites.

Businesses also need to be well-represented on the web. Many people will discover the business through a search on Google Maps or similar site, and online reviews have become one of the most powerful influences on business visitation. As an example of current utilization, Google Maps shows only six restaurants in the downtown. Of these, only three have reviews, and only two list a web site.

With regard to tourism literature, publications should develop certain themes around clusters of related activities. Itineraries will give people ideas of how they may spend an afternoon or an entire day in the district. These themes might include food, specialty shopping, spa services, cultural activities, and history and heritage.

Organic media placement can play a pivotal role in helping to establish brand identity. People are much more likely to respond to a story in a magazine or newspaper, or coverage on radio or television, than they are to an advertisement or printed brochure. Media outlets should be contacted and encouraged to provide coverage of events, or pitched stories about the district's

TARGETS:
Existing businesses that may expand
Small businesses that may be recruited to open a new location
National chain businesses
Start-up businesses

PARTNERS:
Other organizations engaged in economic development
Commercial realtors
Building owners / landlords

transformation. Well-followed regional blogs should be included in that outreach.

Retail and dining recruitment

This sector is attracted in non-traditional ways. Recruitment for retail, restaurants, and arts and culture will be supported by creating a destination, brand, spending, and other activities that generate investor confidence. Basically, businesses want to be assured that there is a draw and that efforts to develop the district will be sustained by local government and the business community.

A real estate transaction is generally at the heart of any retention or recruitment effort. Real estate is purchased, sold, or leased. Marketing that real estate, then, is an essential element of the retention and recruitment effort. This is done both individually and collaboratively. The Town should work with area real estate owners, realtors, property owners in a match-making approach, helping to identify targets and point them to the most appropriate locations. Targeted recruitment for desired business types can occur by making direct visits to other communities to identify prospects among independent and small chain businesses. Realtors and property owners may be brought on these trips.

Economic development organizations may play different roles in recruitment, seeking to influence outcomes by presenting opportunities, or even taking a more aggressive role to control critical outcomes. They may provide marketing, act as a "deal maker" to recruit and bring tenants to the table, contribute resources and incentives, or take a comprehensive approach involving all of these actions. None of these strategies is exactly right, but communication of the cost, outcomes and approach is something to consider.

The following diagram can help to evaluate the community's preparedness to conduct a recruitment and retention program, and define an appropriate framework based on its current status. It is important to understand that the approach may evolve over time as capacity and resources change.

Targeting

A qualified lead is an existing chain or independent business in a targeted sector that is matched to the local market and has the capacity to relocate or open a new location. It may also be a viable start-up business. To be viable, a startup needs to have a good business plan, identifiable market, and the financial and technical capacity to carry it through the startup period (usually one to two years).

Before starting to prospect for businesses, the Town should evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the district and the needs of prospective businesses. Based on this evaluation, the recruitment partners can identify a package of potential incentives to bring to the table, that are tailored to each possible target. In-kind and technical support can be as important as financial contributions. For example, local professionals can donate technical assistance with marketing, merchandising, interior design, or other needs.

Siting

In order to attract tenants, available properties need to be in a presentable condition and more or less ready for occupancy. Tenants will expect to make some improvements, but these will be primarily cosmetic. Characteristics of marketable downtown real estate include:

- For retail businesses, a location within a viable retail district.
- An attractive façade that showcases the business within it.
- Reasonably updated building systems.
- Accurate information including a firm purchase price or lease rate.

Well managed malls and shopping plazas will have an overall leasing strategy identifying not only a preferred set of uses, but also where these will ideally be located. The intention is to generate cross traffic between businesses in the district. A leasing plan will cluster those kinds of uses that have a symbiotic relationship, and position them relative to anchors, so that visitors traveling between anchors may pass other businesses they are likely to patronize. Planning for the Old Town and North Old Town parts of the district should include development of a leasing plan to guide business location decisions.

Marketing

Marketing, as discussed here, refers to outreach efforts to recruit new businesses. The steps in this process include identifying targets, tailoring a message, and preparing quality collateral materials.

While some national or large regional chains that will consider downtown locations, it is more likely that the majority of businesses recruited to the downtown will be independent and small regional chain establishments. These are identified through research:

- Ask people where they shop or dine. Conduct a survey of trade area residents to ask them what out-of-town businesses they frequently patronize within the targeted sectors. Include online retail purchases in the survey.
- Identify targeted sector businesses within an area of about 100 kilometers from Stony Plain.
- Visit each business anonymously to observe its operation, merchandising, menu, customer traffic, and other factors that will help to determine if it is a qualified lead.
- Understand the potential motivations for these businesses to open a new location. A highly successful business may be motivated to expand by opening a new location. Similarly-sized or larger communities will often be the source of this type of business. Smaller communities may see less customer traffic. Businesses in these places may consider relocation as an alternative to opening a new store, in order to reach a broader customer base.

While personal interaction with each target is the most important part of recruitment, there is a need for high quality, targeted collateral material. This takes several formats and serves multiple purposes.

- The website is a resource for targeted businesses that may refer to it for additional information. It may also serve that role for other prospects who are considering the district. Market information, targeted opportunities, and available property should be featured on the site.
- Available properties should be listed with LoopNet and other listing services, and with local economic development organizations. The narrative for these sites should include information about the market and opportunities that have been identified.
- While a generic brochure may be needed, targets should be approached with a customized package of printed materials that speaks directly to their business and its needs to succeed in downtown Stony Plain. These businesses will also want to know what is being done to market the district.

Target Markets for Recruitment					
Target	**Information Need**	**Strategy**	**Real Estate**	**Potential**	**Community Benefits**
Existing Businesses	Underserved products or services	Provide and interpret market data	Expansion, renovation	Easiest target to recruit	Business stability and growth, reinvest in community
Regional Businesses	Market opportunity, locations	Provide data, site information, design guidance	Identify potential sites and buildings	Difficult, need to be sold on market and location	Fills market void, draws through reputation
National Chain Business	Market data and site information	Provide data, site information, competition and comparable markets	Identify potential sites and buildings using chain prototype design	Difficult, tend to have rigid site and market requirements	Fills market void, draws through name recognition, but not committed to community
Independent Businesses and Startups	Market data and technical support	Quantify market opportunity and provide assistance	Available sale and lease space	Requires considerable help and has high failure rate	Will be a local business and purchase locally
Real Estate Developers	Market data and the ability to make profit	Show market needs and real estate opportunity, design guidance	Identify viable sites and buildings, and concepts	May require effort and investment to assemble sites	Enhanced tax base, new tenant space, developer does recruitment

Recruiting

Regardless of the kind of business, the recruitment effort will be comprised of a few essential elements.

- Targets. Targets will have already been identified by qualified personnel (staff or outside experts).
- Recruitment Team. The recruitment team may be different for every business. It will typically consist of three or four individuals who can speak to different issues, and do not have a vested interest in the outcome. For example, the team should not include a direct competitor, or an individual who owns or represents a specific property that might be considered.
- Business Case and Messaging. Before approaching the prospect, the team will need to identify its strongest approach. This will usually mean making a business case for a downtown location. What is the market, what are the best available sites, what is the potential for profitability, and what can the community bring to the table to help the business open a new location?
- Initial Contact. An initial contact should be made in writing to the specific person at the target business who will make the location decision. It should be brief, explaining that Stony Plain has identified their business as one that fits a market opportunity, and requesting a meeting to present information to them. The letter should be followed within a few days by a phone call from a member of the recruitment team.
- In-Person Meeting. This meeting is where the recruitment team will present its case for the business to locate in downtown Stony Plain. The presentation should be made as a team, with each member of the team

providing expertise on a different part of the message. In addition to giving information about the district, the team should get to know the business as well as possible, and take note of concerns, questions, or ideas raised by the owner or representative. The initial meeting will usually occur at the business location.

- Follow-up. As soon as possible after the meeting, the team should provide a follow-up response to any questions or concerns raised by the business in the meeting. This should include an invitation to come to Stony Plain for a tour of the district.
- Community Visit. During the business's visit, it should be shown the district and specific sites that are considered best matched to that business's needs. This will also be an opportunity to see other businesses in the district that may be complimentary, or competitors.
- Learning. Each recruitment experience should be mined for insight on how to improve future prospect development. Questions raised by businesses will help the recruitment teams to anticipate and better plan for successive contacts.

Promoting

A marketing strategy must be put in place to capture additional area spending and to build awareness of the district as a desirable location to shop, dine, work, live, and locate a business. This campaign should have participation from organizations, property owners, and area businesses.

The typical business allocates two to three percent of revenue to marketing, while startup businesses range higher, at three to five percent. At the same time, the U.S. Small Business Administration recommends that businesses budget seven or eight percent of revenues to marketing. This includes a combination of media spending and content development, such as web design.

Building

Businesses will be attracted to places that draw people. If residents and visitors want to spend time in the district, businesses will see it as a good place to locate. This is true of offices nearly as much as retail and dining, as office business owners or their employees may want to work in place that offers shopping, dining, and amenities just outside of their doors.

Activities and attractions can reinforce a community's brand. Cawker City, Kansas is best known as the home of the World's Largest Ball of Twine. To celebrate its claim to fame, the city enlisted local artists to re-create famous masterpieces with a ball of twine included in the image – Mona Lisa knitting with a ball of twine or American Gothic with a ball of twine filling the background. These paintings were displayed in the windows of downtown buildings and a walking tour led from the ball of twine through the district to all of the paintings.

The components of an enhancement program should be thoroughly developed in the downtown plan, and include elements of design and amenities, business mix, public gathering spaces, arts and culture, and events. The most important elements are those that create permanent attractions to the district, as opposed to events that are one-time activities, and serve more to acquaint people who may not already regularly visit with the downtown.

Retaining

It is vitally important to know the businesses in the district and their intentions. By regularly visiting these businesses, it is possible to be alerted to problems or opportunities early, while there still may be an opportunity to provide assistance. Issues that the Town may expect to encounter are businesses that could expand, businesses being recruited to other space, and struggling businesses.

Monitoring online reviews can also help to paint a picture of how the business is perceived by the customer base. Complaints common to retail businesses include limited hours, customer service problems, and merchandise selection. By monitoring reviews for downtown retail businesses (and even others in the community), Stony Plain will be able to identify common issues, and respond by bringing in technical expertise or offering training to businesses.

Online sales are increasingly important and are an opportunity to expand the reach of a business to markets outside of the trade area. Especially within specialty retail sectors, online sales can make up a large part of a business's revenue. Many businesses in the Town have little to no online presence. Changing this should be a priority of the retention effort.

Arts and Culture

Stony Plain has a commitment, and is well known for its association with the arts, as evidenced by the murals. Those murals have created somewhat of a destination attraction and identity. Other opportunities exist for arts to be infused into the district by both local governments and private businesses.

Art Installations

Public art installations often include activities such as the murals, sculpture incorporated into the streetscape, and investments in performance venues. It is not uncommon for downtown districts to have an outdoor performance space that may be as simple as a platform, or may have elaborate stages, overhead canopies and backdrops, sound systems, and lighting. In some places, temporary exhibitions are used to continually refresh the experience of the place and encourage people to return to see something new. These may be organized as contests, such as sculpture walks where people are asked to vote on their favorites. The winner is often purchased to add to a permanent collection.

Communities are also organizing temporary exhibitions that enlist the support of private business owners. These are usually developed around a theme, and the art is usually produced locally, by community artists, the business, local students, or others.

Public art can even be interactive. Simply create chalkboards and provide chalk to encourage passers to contribute their talents to an evolving show.

Business and property owners should be encouraged to include art into their storefronts. This is a great use for display windows, particularly when the business inside does not contribute to the specialty retail and arts cluster. For example, an office use can fill a window with art to help create a sense that there are more arts uses in the district. Art can be incorporated into building design, and the Crooked Pot Gallery provides an example where art tiles have been incorporated into the building façade.

Events

Events play a critical role in developing the reputation of specialty retail, dining, and arts and cultural districts. While the events do have a direct impact on generating business sales, the most important benefit they bring is exposure to a larger market. People attend the event who would not normally visit the district. Once there, they will be exposed to the shops, restaurants, and amenities in the district, and may be encouraged to return once the event has passed. This effect is multiplied through media coverage, online reviews, and word-of-mouth marketing.

Artist Studios

Several ideas may be evaluated to bring artist studios and gallery space into the district.

- The Town is already contemplating creating shared studio and gallery space for artists. If this is done, it should be within the boundaries of the district.
- Some communities have created an artist-in-residence program, providing studio and living space for visiting artists who will, in turn, offer classes or demonstrations, provide a piece of work, or make some other contribution in trade for the opportunity.
- Live-work space for artists is a niche development opportunity. Essentially, it is a combination of living quarters, studio space, and individual or shared gallery space, typically developed in a multi-unit buildings. ArtSpace International (www.artspace.org) is a non-profit organization that has pioneered this approach.

These and other approaches should be evaluated for market feasibility as part of a plan for the district.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The following tables outline the major strategy recommendations in the plan. An estimated cost is attached to each initiative, noting whether is an annual, one-time, or periodically recurring cost. Initiatives are recommended in each of the next five years, recognizing the priority of the action and the need to phase implementation based on budgets and staffing capabilities.

TARGET SECTOR AND STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION SECTOR: SUPPORT ACTIVITIES FOR ENERGY AND EXTRACTION	**COST ESTIMATE**	**EXPENDITURE PERIOD**	**YEAR** **2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**
1. Implement a business visitation tracking program	$500	One-time	X	X	X	X	X
2. Conduct a workforce survey[1]	$30,000	Every 2-3 years	X			X	
3. Participate in coordinated metropolitan area marketing	$5,000	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
4. Develop collateral marketing materials (on-demand printing)	$5,000	One-time		X			
5. Prepare cost comparison reports	$5,000	Every 2-3 years		X		X	
6. Evaluate opportunities to conduct print and/or web advertising	$5,000	Annual			X	X	X
7. Execute a public relations campaign	$10,000	Annual		X	X	X	X
8. Carry out a social media strategy	$5,000	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
9. Evaluate opportunities for trade show participation	$5,000	Annual			X	X	X

[1] This task might be accomplished in partnership with Spruce Grove and Parkland County, reducing the Town's share of the cost.

TARGET SECTOR AND STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION SECTOR: BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	**COST ESTIMATE**	**EXPENDITURE PERIOD**	**YEAR** **2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**
1. Attend and support business networking groups and events	$500	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
2. Build brand awareness of Stony Plain as a small business "hot spot"	$10,000	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
3. Work with schools to expand entrepreneurial education at all levels	$500	Annual			X	X	X
4. a) Prepare a feasibility study for coworking or makerspace	$30,000	One-time		X			
4. b) If feasible, develop business plan for coworking or makerspace	$30,000	One-time		X			
4. c) if feasible, develop a coworking or makerspace	$25,000 to 75,000	One-time			X	X	X

TARGET SECTOR AND STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION SECTOR: HEALTH CARE AND RELATED SERVICES	**COST ESTIMATE**	**EXPENDITURE PERIOD**	**YEAR** **2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**
1. Work with the provincial government to expand health care services	TBD	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
2. Approach developers to consider senior housing development	$500	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
3. Recruit regional service providers to expand into Stony Plain	$500	Annual	X	X	X	X	X

TARGET SECTOR AND STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION SECTOR: LOCAL FOOD AND FOOD PROCESSING	**COST ESTIMATE**	**EXPENDITURE PERIOD**	**YEAR** **2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**
1. Expand food-related educational programs offered in Stony Plain	$5,000	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
2. Develop food tourism themes and food events in Stony Plain	$5,000	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
3. Prospect for emerging food businesses to recruit to Stony Plain	$500	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
4. Consider opportunities to market for food processing businesses	$2,500	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
5. a) Assess the feasibility of developing a food hub in Stony Plain	$30,000	One-time			X	X	X
5. b) If feasible, develop a business plan for a food hub in Stony Plain	$30,000	One-time			X	X	X
5. c) If feasible, develop a food hub in Stony Plain	TBD	--				X	X
6. a) Explore opportunities to offer a shared commercial kitchen	$20,000	One-time		X			
6. b) If feasible, offer a shared commercial kitchen	TBD	--			X	X	X

TARGET SECTOR AND STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION SECTOR: DESTINATION RETAIL, DINING, ARTS, AND CULTURE	**COST ESTIMATE**	**EXPENDITURE PERIOD**	**YEAR** **2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**
1. Prepare a downtown plan	$50,000 to 75,000	One-time	X				
2. Integrate the downtown, Multicultural Centre, and Rotary Park	TBD	--			X	X	X
3. Implement a marketing plan for the downtown district[2]	$20,000	Annual		X	X	X	X
4. Recruit specialty retail and dining establishments	$2,500	Annual		X	X	X	X
5. Carry out arts and cultural activities in the downtown	$10,000	Annual			X	X	X
6. Work with partners to create ongoing downtown events	$10,000	Annual			X	X	X

[2] This can be a joint effort of the Town and business and property owners.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – PERSONS INTERVIEWED DURING THE COURSE OF THE ANALYSIS

The following individuals were interviewed as part of the information-gathering process supporting the study.

James Schoepp, Homegrown Foods

Barbara McKenzie, Leduc-Nisku ECD

Maria deBruijn, Emerge Solutions

Cheryl McNeil, TransAlta

Brittany Kustra, Northern Alberta Business Incubator (NABi)

Ellen Billay, WestView Health Centre

Mike Klein, Stellar Homes

Murray Davison, Old Strathcona Business Association

Murray Kulak, Decker Properties

Laverne Pankratz, Pankratz Enterprises

Wes Erickson, Formula Alberta

Trevor Burant, Omnisport, Inc.

Ed Berney, North Central Co-Operative Association

Tracey Bartholomew, Village Fashions

Lee Smithson, Remax

Victor Moroz, Royal LaPage/ Camp n' Class RV Park

Scott Hawkings, Hawking Dumont LLP

Richelle Jomha, The Barn Owl

Scott Wnek, Multicultural Heritage Centre

APPENDIX B – INDUSTRIES LINKED TO ENERGY AND EXTRACTION

The following industries comprise 95 percent of the dollar value of inputs into the combined energy and extraction sectors. They are listed in order of their contribution, and a check indicates that they have been included as targets for Stony Plain.

INDUSTRY	ENERGY AND EXTRACTION TARGET	BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TARGET
Coal mining		
Nonresidential maintenance and repair	✓	
Monetary authorities and depository credit intermediation		
Management of companies and enterprises		
Legal services		✓
Scenic and sightseeing transportation and support activities for transportation	✓	
Other support activities for mining (such as mineral exploration)	✓	
Architectural, engineering, and related services		✓
Commercial and industrial machinery and equipment rental and leasing	✓	
Marketing research and all other miscellaneous professional, scientific, and technical services		✓
Mining and oil and gas field machinery manufacturing		
Petrochemical manufacturing		
Electric power generation, transmission, and distribution		
Other real estate		
Water, sewage and other systems		
Employment services		✓
Advertising, public relations, and related services		✓
Accounting, tax preparation, bookkeeping, and payroll services		✓
Lessors of nonfinancial intangible assets		
Full-service restaurants		
Other financial investment activities		
Construction machinery manufacturing		
All other chemical product and preparation manufacturing		
Cutting and machine tool accessory, rolling mill, and other metalworking machinery manufacturing	✓	
Natural gas distribution		

INDUSTRY	ENERGY AND EXTRACTION TARGET	BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TARGET
Material handling equipment manufacturing	✓	
Other basic organic chemical manufacturing		
Services to buildings and dwellings	✓	
Stone mining and quarrying		
Iron and steel mills and ferroalloy manufacturing		
Industrial gas manufacturing		
Securities and commodity contracts intermediation and brokerage		
Non-comparable imports (services produced and consumed abroad)		
Wholesale trade	✓	
Insurance carriers		
Data processing, hosting, and related services		✓
Other petroleum and coal products manufacturing		
Valve and fittings other than plumbing	✓	
Waste management and remediation services	✓	
Business support services		✓
Air transportation		
Tire manufacturing		
Non-depository credit intermediation and related activities		
Other computer related services, including facilities management		✓
Turbine and turbine generator set units manufacturing		
Limited-service restaurants		
Warehousing and storage	✓	
Other nonmetallic mineral mining and quarrying		
Accommodation		
Other basic inorganic chemical manufacturing		