

Business Plan

2023-2025

Wetaskiwin & Area Lodge Authority



Wetaskiwin
&
Area
Lodge
Authority



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The top priority of the Wetaskiwin and Area Lodge Authority is:

1. That the Wetaskiwin and Area Lodge Authority receives capital investment from the Province of Alberta to improve the West Pine Lodge, which may include the completion of a Housing Needs Assessment in collaboration with the participating municipalities to assist the Province in their decision-making.
2. Peace Hills Lodge will achieve 95% average occupancy (pre-pandemic level).

ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

This Business Plan was prepared under the direction of the Board of Directors of the Wetaskiwin and Area Lodge Authority in accordance with legislation and associated ministerial guidelines, and in consideration of all policy decisions and material, economic or fiscal implications of which the Board is aware. This business plan was approved by the Board of Directors on June 29, 2022.

WETASKIWIN AND AREA LODGE AUTHORITY

The Wetaskiwin and Area Lodge Authority operates pursuant to the Alberta Housing Act under the purpose to enable the efficient provision of a basic level of housing accommodations for persons, who because of financial, social or other circumstances require assistance to obtain or maintain housing accommodation.

- Member Municipalities are the City of Wetaskiwin, the County of Wetaskiwin, and the Town of Millet.
- Housing Accommodations under operations are:
 - a) 79 Unit Peace Hills Senior Citizens Lodge in Wetaskiwin, owned by the Wetaskiwin and Area Lodge Authority.
 - b) 37-unit West Pine Lodge in the Hamlet of Winfield, owned by the Province of Alberta through the Alberta Social Housing Corporation.
- The Bethany Group has a contract with Alberta Health Services for the delivery of Home Care Services to residents of the West Pine Lodge.
- The Bethany Group has a contract with Alberta Health Services for the delivery of Home Care Services to the community of Wetaskiwin including the residents of the Peace Hill Lodge.
- Resident Profile and Waiting Lists - Current Average Age of 87 at the Peace Hills Lodge and 78 at West Pine Lodge. Average stay is 4 years at Peace Hills Lodge and 3 Years at the West Pine Lodge. The Peace Hills Lodge is operating at 90% capacity and the West Pine Lodge operates at 40% capacity.

- Staffing Profile and Organizational Structure - Staffing for operations are through The Bethany Group, including 34 permanent working directly at the Lodges. The Bethany Group acts as the Chief Executive Officer per the Ministerial Order; working with local resources to provide support to the Board of Directors and in any of the following areas: Business Planning, Management & Administration, IT Systems, Financial Services, Property Assessment & Management, Payroll, Workplace Health & Safety, Human Resources and Education.
- Financial Profile and Budgets - The annual consolidated expenses for the Wetaskiwin and Area Lodge Authority are \$3.8 million, including debt service payment on the Peace Hills Lodge. Revenues include accommodation and rental recoveries of \$1.7 million, LAP Grant funding from the Provincial Government of \$411,000 and Municipal contributions to the Lodge operations from member municipalities through requisition totaling \$975,000. Local annual payroll is \$1.8 million.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

The Wetaskiwin and Area Lodge Authority enjoys a positive relationship with the Bethany Group and the other Housing Management Bodies that use the Bethany Group as CEO. WALA is a member of the Alberta Seniors and Community Housing Association. WALA is participating in the local FCSS sponsored interagency meetings in Wetaskiwin in order to build relationships and identify opportunities with community-based organizations in the catchment area.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Activities undertaken by the Board in the development of this plan:

- > Board Business Planning session May 11, 2022
- > West Pine Lodge Survey, July 2021

Member communities provide the following documents and plans in support of local affordable housing initiatives:

- > City of Wetaskiwin Social Needs Assessment January 2015

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The primary impacts on the strategic environment are:

- > Recovery from the Covid 19 pandemic (Organizationally and the community at large)
- > 2021 Stronger Foundations Affordable Housing Strategy
- > Participation in the ASCHA Affordable Housing Strategy Task Force
- > 2021 Facility Based Continuing Care review
- > Participation in the FBCC review/Continuing Care Alliance

- > Bill 11 Continuing Care Act 2022
- > Availability of Affordable Housing
- > Inflationary Pressures on organizations and individuals
- > Household Income and Housing Affordability
- > Market Housing Conditions
- > Recovering Provincial Economy
- > 2017 Federal Housing Strategy
- > Aging population and home care shift
- > Local Demographic Information
- > Provincial Election 2023

STRATEGIC RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The primary impacts on the strategic environment for Wetaskiwin and Area Lodge Authority are:

- > Significant drop in occupancy levels related to Covid-19. Outbreaks have impacted move-ins throughout the pandemic and site restrictions have created some hesitancy in choosing the lodge as home.
- > High vacancies at West Pine Lodge due in part to room size and overall facility condition
- > Growing demand for services that support Age in Place philosophies demonstrated by the high number of Lodge residents receiving home care. Individuals are delaying entry into the lodge environment resulting in residents of more advanced age and higher degrees of frailty.
- > West Pine Lodge has a solid staffing model with home care services embedded in the lodge.
- > Investment by Alberta Seniors and Housing in 2018 for sprinkler and alarm systems have made the West Pine Lodge safer and more feasible to invest in additional improvements.
- > Desire from some residents of the County of Wetaskiwin to remain in a farming community close to family.
- > Impacts on Lodge operations due to increases in Home Care assistance for seniors to remain in their homes. Individuals are delaying entry into the lodge environment resulting in residents of more advanced age and higher degrees of frailty.
- > The Bethany Group currently has a contract to provide Adult Day Support Programming using space at Peace Hills Lodge. This was impacted during COVID, but was re-developed with virtual options and has now seen growth in program participation since COVID restrictions have diminished.
- > Growing demand to provide accommodations that support Age in Place philosophies.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Wetaskiwin and Area Lodge Authority has identified the following strategic priority areas:

1. Investing Now and For the Future
2. Integrated Housing and Supports
3. Successful Transitions and Aging in Community

4. Fair and Flexible
5. A Sustainable System

This business plan is developed in keeping within the Purpose of the Alberta Housing Act and the obligations of the Board of Directors of the Wetaskiwin and Area Lodge Authority pursuant to the Management Body Operations and Administration Regulation.

OUTCOMES, KEY STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Outcome One: INVESTING NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

Housing Accommodations operated by the Wetaskiwin and Area Lodge Authority will meet or exceed minimum housing standards and options to meet demands for new housing supply will be explored.

Key Strategies:

- 1.1 Increase the Supply of Affordable Housing
- 1.2 Improve and Maintain the condition of existing affordable housing

Performance Measures and Indicators

- The Wetaskiwin and Area Lodge Authority receives funding approval from the Province of Alberta in the amount of \$806,250 for the West Pine Lodge for maintenance and renewal to result in larger rooms, safer bathrooms with tubs converted to showers and replacement of worn out building components (Appendix E), and \$538,450 is for priority Capital Maintenance (Appendix D).
- All capital projects are completed in accordance with approved standards, scope and specifications; on time; and on budget.

Outcome Two: INTEGRATED HOUSING AND SUPPORTS

Residents of Housing Accommodations and services offered by the Wetaskiwin and Area Lodge Authority have the tools they need to enable successful occupancies and to live independently with or without community-based services.

Key Strategies:

- 2.1 Enhance Integration with Community Support Services

Performance Measures and Indicators

- The Wetaskiwin and Area Lodge Authority participates in social services/FCSS based interagency meetings and activities in the service area.
- WALA will engage with and survey residents to identify improvement opportunities and to identify successes.
- WALA will participate in Quality Improvement Initiatives, such as Meal Time Experience.
- WALA will participate in the areas Seniors Wellness conference.

Outcome Three: SUCCESSFUL TRANSITIONS AND AGING IN COMMUNITY

The operations of the housing accommodations and support programs offered by the Wetaskiwin and Area Lodge Authority enable residents to easily access services that enable them to be affordably and safely housed, as well as successfully transition out of the system when necessary or able.

Key Strategies:

- 3.1 Enable transitions through the continuum of housing and supports
- 3.2 Support the desire of Albertans to age in their community

Performance Measures and Indicators

- WALA will explore options for West Pine Lodge in Winfield and Peace Hills Lodge in Wetaskiwin to act as a community hub in line with the recommendations of the Facility Based Continuing Care review.
- WALA will work on re-establishing the lodge volunteer programs.

Outcome Four: FAIR AND FLEXIBLE

The operations of the housing accommodations and support service programs are flexible and responsive to meet resident needs.

Key Strategies:

- 4.1 Modernize the regulatory framework to support equitable treatment and housing stability
- 4.2 Improve System access and navigation
- 4.3 Promote enhanced understanding of and coordinated response to rural and urban needs

Performance Measures and Indicators

- Implement the changes to the Alberta Housing regulations updated April 1, 2022.

- Wetaskiwin and Area Lodge Authority will evaluate costs related to inflationary pressures and will maximize revenues and stabilize expenses where possible.
- WALA will actively participate in the Lodge Program review, currently forecast to occur in 2023.

Outcome Five: A Sustainable System

The Governance model of Wetaskiwin and Area Lodge Authority is sustainable based on competency and collaboration. The financial operations of the Wetaskiwin and Area Lodge Authority are sustainable based on predictable funding, stewardship and innovative funding models.

Key Strategies:

- 5.1 Support operational and environmental sustainability of affordable housing projects
- 5.2 Partner with other governments to support a sustainable system and meet the housing and support needs of Albertans
- 5.3 Improve the knowledge of the housing and support needs of Albertans

Performance Measures and Indicators

- WALA will improve occupancy levels at Peace Hills Lodge, targeting the pre-pandemic average of 95%.
- WALA will collaborate with all orders of government to explore innovation in the operation of West Pine Lodge in order to meet local resident needs.??? – thoughts on this comment?
- WALA will develop a plan to meet the Competency Based Boards requirement, including educational supports for board members.
- WALA will collaborate and support with any municipalities or organizations that are leading a community needs assessment process to develop a business case for new local affordable housing or supportive living projects.
- WALA will advocate for changes to the Lodge Assistance Grant program to be more consistent and predictable and to better reflect the needs of rural lodges.
- Administrative costs for WALA will be at or below provincial benchmarks.

APPENDICES

- **Appendix A - Housing Management Body Corporate Profile**
- **Appendix B - Property Profile**
- **Appendix C - Financial Budgets and Forecasts**
- **Appendix D - Capital Maintenance and Renewal**
- **Appendix E - Capital Priorities**
- **Appendix F - Asset Management (no submission)**
- **Appendix G - Capital Assets Business Plan**