



39/20 Alliance  
Strategic Plan 2014 - 2015

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## Situational Review

The 39/20 Alliance is an innovative collaboration of the communities of Thorsby, Breton, Calmar and Warburg, that recognizes the value of working together to promote growth, reduce costs, and increase efficiency for residents and businesses.

Formed in 2008, the Alliance represents a population of 4,206 and an area of almost 13 square kilometres. Located south and west of Alberta's Capital Region, the Alliance's economy is based in agriculture, manufacturing, oil and gas, and tourism.

The Alliance is governed by a board of directors comprised of the Mayor and one other elected official from each of the four member communities. Each community's Chief Administrative Officer is also an ex-officio board member. This dynamic and committed board values authenticity, fiscal responsibility, transparency, openness, and equality.

The Alliance finds itself among larger, more urban municipalities that are experiencing rapid growth. As such, both ongoing annexation discussions and opportunities for economic development abound.

Seeking to better represent its own interests in this changing landscape, the Alliance, with the financial support of the Regional Collaboration Program grant, has adopted this strategic plan to:

- ... enhance economic development activities
- ... build organizational sustainability

Specifically, the Alliance's goals include:

- ... choosing a regional economic development model
- ... implementing a sound, measurable, regional economic development plan
- ... developing a business directory, web site, and other economic development information for investment attraction and business expansion
- ... identifying efficiencies achieved through regional government and service delivery
- ... providing for ongoing financial sustainability for the organization
- ... promoting the Alliance and its advantages internally and externally
- ... partnering with other communities facing similar challenges and opportunities

The 39/20 Alliance is committed to success and has adopted this strategic plan to provide direction in achieving its vision.

## Vision

By merging regionally, the 39/20 Alliance is an economic leader, providing increased levels of service while realizing the cost-benefits achieved through partnership.

## Values

The 39/20 Alliance conducts all of its work according to these values:

### **Authenticity**

The 39/20 Alliance members act in the best interest of the Alliance and its residents in a genuine effort to make improvements.

### **Fiscal Responsibility**

Alliance members take the spending of public dollars with great responsibility and strive to achieve the greatest return for dollars spent.

### **Transparency**

The Alliance understands the need for communicating its activities and their results, and for ongoing dialogue with stakeholders.

### **Openness**

The Alliance values honesty and openness in the conduct of its activities.

### **Equality**

All Alliance members are equal in the decision-making process.

## Economic Development

One of the primary aims of the Alliance is to promote economic development opportunities within the region and to provide support to the existing business community in order to create wealth and improve quality of life for the region's residents.

### Goals

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1. Create a business directory for the 39/20 Alliance communities by March 31, 2015.
2. Investigate the feasibility of regional business licences by December 31, 2014.
3. Using RCP funding, complete a regional economic development strategy that defines economic development, provides funding options for ongoing regional economic development work, and inventories the region's strengths and advantages by May 31, 2015.
4. Complete a Collaborative Regional Economic Development Models study by July 31, 2014.
5. Choose a regional economic development model that best suits the Alliance's needs and is fiscally sustainable by October 31, 2014.
6. Develop a cohesive marketing strategy and approaches for industrial and commercial developers by September 30, 2015.
7. Provide economic development information, including an available land inventory and business directory, to site selection decision-makers using the Alliance's web site and social media tools by July 31, 2015.
8. Align standard development information such as land use definitions and building codes to simplify economic development efforts by April 1, 2015.

### Outcomes

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- 1.1 A regional business directory will promote business to business opportunities while also raising the profile of the region's businesses externally.
- 2.1 Regional business licences may provide a source of revenue for the Alliance's economic development efforts and will increase inter-community business opportunities.

- 3.1 An economic development strategy will provide the Alliance with a clear path to follow in its economic development efforts and will promote accountability and efficiency.
- 4.1 The Collaborative Regional Economic Development Models Study will assist the Alliance in choosing a suitable and sustainable model for regional economic development.
- 5.1 A sustainable and appropriate regional economic development model will ensure the Alliance can effectively carry out economic development work for the long term.
- 6.1 Cohesive marketing materials will allow the Alliance communities to gain the attention of, and compete for investment from, major developers used to looking for opportunities in other more prominent centres.
- 7.1 Having readily-available economic development information will assist the Alliance in both its investment attraction and business retention and expansion efforts.
- 8.1 Standardized development information will make it easier for developers to understand the development process and thus locate within the 39/20 Alliance region's communities.

## Organizational Sustainability

The 39/20 Alliance undertakes important work and values transparency and fiscal responsibility. As such, it is committed to ongoing organizational development and sustainability.

### Goals

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9. Review the 39/20 Alliance Structure and Operations manual annually and ensure it is being adhered to by having board members sign agreements by January 31 of each year.
10. Create a board orientation manual to provide relevant information to existing and new board members by January 31, 2015.
11. Pursue grant funding opportunities wherever possible to leverage Alliance resources.
12. Examine member-based funding options to support the organization's governance needs before June 30, 2015.
13. With the help of consultants and using RCP funding, explore shared service, staff, and equipment opportunities to create cost-effective solutions to constrained resources, prior to September 30, 2015.
14. Apply for Municipal Internship Program funding from Alberta Municipal Affairs at the next intake opportunity.
15. Using a consultant and RCP funding, create a communication strategy for internal audiences that communicates the value and efficiency of the 39/20 Alliance as well as the benefits of a regional, merged municipal government by November 30, 2014.
16. With RCP funding, create a 39/20 Alliance web site and social media presence to educate stakeholders about the Alliance's ongoing work and its advantages by December 31, 2014.
17. Create long term member agreements related to core services provided by the 39/20 Alliance prior to December 31, 2015.
18. Work closely with external stakeholders including neighboring municipalities, the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, the Capital Region Board, and others, to gather information and identify opportunities to collaborate with communities facing similar challenges and opportunities.

## Outcomes

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- 9.1 Ensuring proper adherence to the organization's operations and procedures manual will foster accountability and transparency for the Alliance and increase trust and support.
- 10.1 Having an up to date and complete orientation manual will assist with supporting new board members transition onto the board and provide current board members with a comprehensive source of information.
- 11.1 Securing grants, where possible, will provide financial sustainability to the organization.
- 12.1 Examining options for member-based funding will allow the Alliance to choose the most appropriate form of revenue generation for its activities while ensuring long term financial support.
- 13.1 A plan for transitioning to shared staff, services, and equipment, will allow the Alliance to better utilise its existing resources and better leverage public dollars.
- 14.1 A municipal intern will increase the resources available for the Alliance to undertake its work.
- 15.1 A strategy for communicating with internal and external audiences will help the Alliance foster understanding of its work, its goals, and the benefits it offers.
- 16.1 The use of a web site and social media presence will allow the Alliance to efficiently communicate with its target audiences.
- 17.1 Long term agreements for core service delivery will allow the Alliance the time needed to demonstrate results and ensure members are committed to working together for long term gain and not only immediate benefit.
- 18.1 Partnering with external stakeholders will help the Alliance better understand changes and trends in municipal development, and working with communities facing similar challenges and opportunities will assist the Alliance in addressing those changes.

### Strategic Plan Milestones

