

Communities in Bloom

TOWN OF SEXSMITH

2024 COMMUNITY PROFILE





2024 COMMUNITIES IN BLOOM POPULATION CATEGORY – FRIENDS EVALUATED

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MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS AND STAFF

TOWN COUNCIL (in photo):

Back Row: Councillors Clint Froehlick, Dennis Stredulinsky, Jonathan Siggelkow, Ken Hildebrand, and Bruce Black

Seated: CAO Rachel Wueschner, Mayor Kate Potter, and Councillor Daycie Bohning



TOWN STAFF:

Public Works Superintendent Alan Gordey

Assistant CAO Hasan Akhtar

FCSS Director Naomi Robinson

Wellness Coordinator Melody Sample

MESSAGE FROM THE SEXSMITH COMMUNITIES IN BLOOM COMMITTEE

Welcome to Sexsmith, a town steeped in history and natural beauty! As the volunteer committee organizing Communities in Bloom, we are thrilled to have the esteemed judges visiting our charming town in early August. With its fascinating past, Sexsmith, once known as Benville, proudly held the title of the "grain capital of the British Empire," shipping the highest volume of grain across its ports.

Our main street, adorned with captivating historical buildings, train station, gazebo, and green space, showcases the heritage of a bygone era. Immerse yourself in the wonders of our remarkable historical museum, featuring a blacksmith shop, an old barn, and a lovingly restored farmstead home. Beyond our rich history, Sexsmith embraces sustainability, evident in our solar field powering the town. Explore our scenic walking trails, relax at the dog park, or enjoy fishing in our stocked pond. Don't miss the grand sight of our restored grain elevator, a towering tribute to our agricultural legacy.

During your visit, indulge in a day filled with delectable snacks, engaging tours, vibrant flower displays, and glimpses into our historical buildings. We express our heartfelt gratitude for joining us on this memorable occasion and look forward to creating cherished moments in Sexsmith.

Warmest regards,

Sexsmith Communities in Bloom



2024 COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Karen Schmit, Community Member

Jeff Peters, Community Member

Jason Peters, Community Member

Tera Duech, Community Member

Ken Hildebranch, Sexsmith Town Councillor

Melody Sample, Wellness Coordinator, Town of Sexsmith



INTRODUCTION

Sexsmith, a great place to live, work, and raise a family! Sexsmith is a friendly, affordable, and progressive community with over 2600 people with an attractive small-town lifestyle. Formerly known as Benville when settled in 1911, Sexsmith boasts a rich history. Once hailed as the "grain capital of the British Empire," the town played a pivotal role in shaping the grain industry, shipping the highest volume of grain among all ports in the empire. Our historic downtown includes retail shops, restaurants, and one of our most cherished attractions, the restored grain elevator, a landmark that stands tall downtown, an homage to our agricultural heritage.

Visitors can enjoy many Town amenities such as the skateboard park, splash park, fish pond, numerous playgrounds, parks, and walking trails throughout the Town. Newly constructed walking paths along the berm on the north end of the town, bordering on a wetland natural area, are open for the 2024 season. Last year also saw the opening of the off-leash dog park, located by the campground. For winter, there is a curling rink, arena, four outdoor rinks, a Crokicurl rink, and three sledding hills, one of which was added recently with the new berm area construction.

The Sexsmith Wellness Coalition has created and facilitates fitness classes and events, drop-in programs like pickleball, seniors' community kitchen, youth programs, cooking workshops and more. They also oversee the community garden and teach others how to garden!

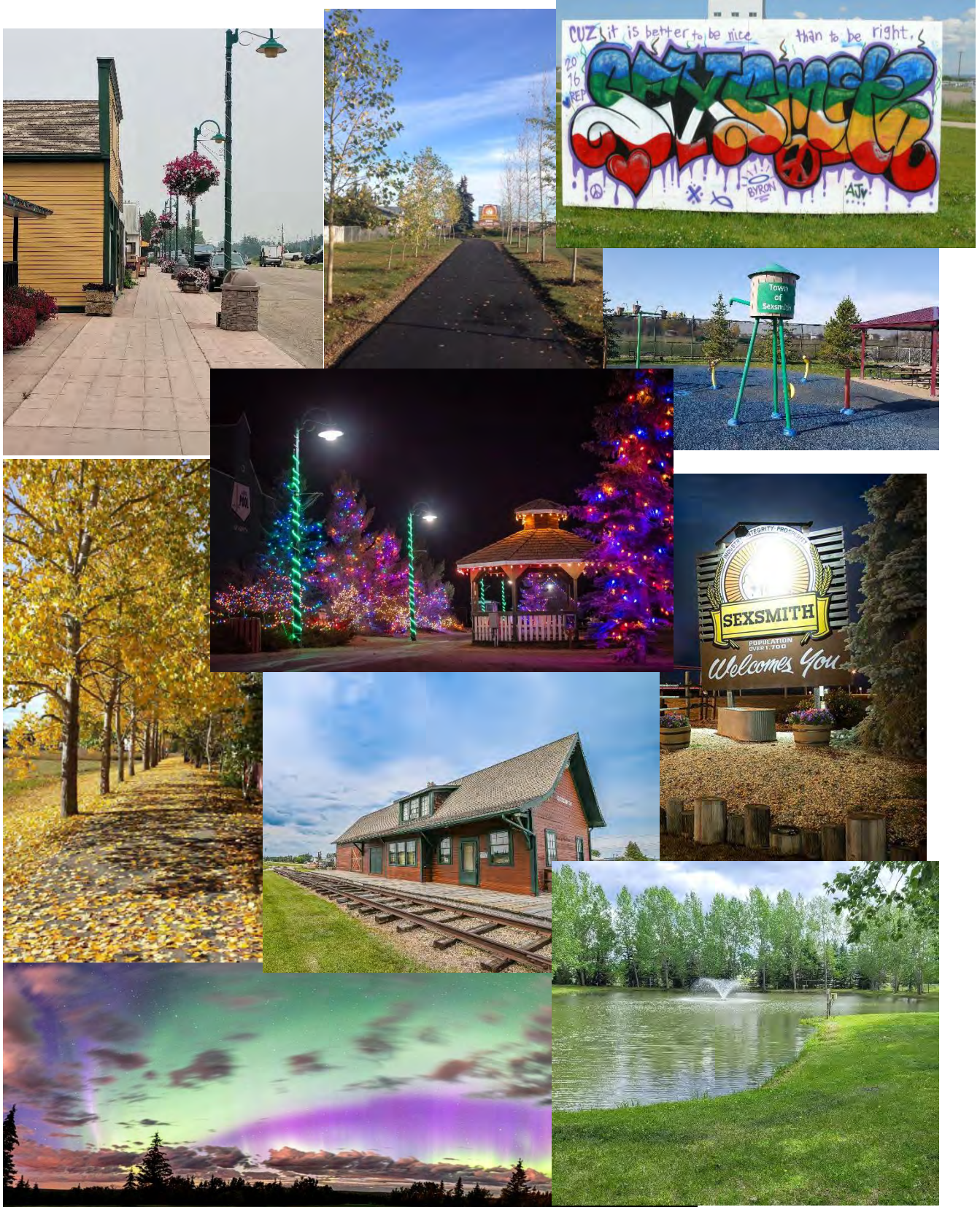
Sexsmith also has a robust Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) Program, which is based on the belief that self-help contributes to a sense of integrity, self-worth, and independence. FCSS helps the residents by building capacity and improving the quality of life.

The Sexsmith and District Museum Society has filled their upcoming season with new exhibits and redesigned buildings, which offer the historical relevance of not only Sexsmith but also the Peace Country. The Alberta Wheat Pool Elevator is nearing the final phase of preservation. This multi-year project will transport you back in time to the handling of grain in the 20th century. You can explore the Anderson Hall Museum that includes the Greek Orthodox Church, Paszkowski House (a farmstead home), the blacksmith shop, the barn, and the old fire hall. A dining car is being transported to Sexsmith this year and will round out the historical train collection. In 2024, the local historical Anglican Church was moved to its final home with the museum buildings.

Each year the Town of Sexsmith holds events like Chautauqua Day in June. This event has been held for 75+ years and is an old-fashioned community celebration inspired by the traveling entertainers who first came to the prairies. In November, the community comes together for Christmas in Sexsmith, a newer annual event that has fun activities for the whole family and retail options for holiday shopping like the Sexsmith Farmers' Market. Kicking off the event is Town Light Up which celebrates the turning on of the Christmas lights, festively lighting up the downtown core and other areas around Sexsmith. This event has been dubbed a "Hallmark Christmas movie scene", which accurately represents the spirit of Christmas in Sexsmith.

Come out to Sexsmith for the seasonal Farmers' Market on Tuesdays at the Sexsmith Curling Rink from 4pm-7pm June through September. It's a fun, family-friendly community market. Each week features a food truck, kid's activities and a variety of homemade and homegrown vendors!

Welcome to Sexsmith, where history, beauty, and community intertwine harmoniously. We invite you to visit our community and hope you experience the full charm and heritage that makes Sexsmith a truly remarkable destination.



MUNICIPAL INFORMATION

Town of Sexsmith Population is 2,620.

Municipal Budget \$4,690,977.

Communities in Bloom 2024 Budget is \$3800. Sexsmith Town Council has made it part of the annual budget and has added a special contribution to enhance flower beds with an extra \$1300 to contribute a total \$3,300 for 2024.

Parks Budget as a percentage of Municipal Budget: Approximately 7%. Total Area: 1,315 hectares.
Parks & Green Spaces % of Total Area: 7%.

The Structure of our CiB Committee: Volunteer Committee with a Councillor representative and Staff administrator.

Contact Information

Town of Sexsmith: www.sexsmith.ca, PH 780-568-3681, 9921 100 Street, Sexsmith

Communities in Bloom: www.sexsmith.ca/p/sexsmithcib



COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

Sexsmith is a charming town, known for its picturesque community appearance. Public Works takes great pride in the Town's appearance, evident in the number of flower beds, hanging baskets, and landscaped greenspaces. The hanging baskets and planters have been replaced in recent years to have water reservoirs, helping the flowers to fare better in hot and windy weather and cut back on the watering needed. The town boasts beautifully restored heritage buildings, such as the Sexsmith Historical Museum, which includes the Train Station and Grain Elevator, adding character and charm to the town's appearance.

Sexsmith is renowned in the area for its clean and tidy streets. Public Works plays a significant role in maintaining the town's appearance, ensuring that streets and pathways are regularly swept and maintained, and public parks are manicured. The summer crew is kept busy all season caring for the parks, green spaces, campground, roads, and more. In the winter, snow removal is priority for both streets and pathways, including main walking paths for schools. The Town offers free sidewalk sand to residents.

One of the recent initiatives is to enhance the treed areas and will be planting seedling trees around the community in 2024. Grants are being applied for trees to replace winterkill and increase the number of trees.

Graffiti had been a previous issue and a few years ago Public Works installed blank signage for residents to graffiti. Surprisingly, we have ended up with some meaningful and artistic graffiti since then. Along all our pathways you'll find garbage cans, dog waste bags, and benches, located in convenient places for residents to use.

Each year, Sexsmith hosts Town Clean Up Day on the second Saturday in May where many community groups and residents along with Public Works will clean up the town. The town also offers a curbside pickup program on this day for all the residents to put garbage out on their curbs to be picked up. This is a free program.

One of the most recent issues has been owners not cleaning up after pets in public spaces, so together with gentle reminders to clean up after pets, Public Works has also hired a service to clean up annually once the snow is gone.



ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

The Town of Sexsmith has taken significant environmental actions to promote sustainability and protect its natural surroundings.

The town has implemented a comprehensive recycling program that encourages residents to reduce waste and recycle materials effectively. This initiative includes a weekly curbside recycling program for residents. With the annual Town Clean Up Day, residents can bring hazardous waste to Public Works to dispose of properly. By prioritizing waste reduction and recycling, Sexsmith is actively working towards minimizing its impact on the environment.

An idling bylaw limits the areas that vehicles can idle in, especially in the downtown core that protects the nearby businesses from the exhaust fumes. LED lights have been installed in all town-owned buildings, streetlamps, and Christmas lights, therefore reducing energy costs.

Sexsmith has embraced renewable energy sources as part of its commitment to a greener future. In 2020, the Town of Sexsmith installed a solar power system on the former Town landfill site to offset the electricity consumption and to reduce overall Green House Gas (GHG) emissions. After one year of continuous service, the solar power system is performing as designed and has had a positive impact both financially and environmentally. Financially the Town of Sexsmith had a net positive cash flow of just over \$20,500.00 after lease payments. The system is producing 817,449 KWHs of electricity using renewable generation. As a result, GHG emissions have been reduced by 466 tonnes/CO₂E in the first twelve months of operations.



In 2023, the four-year construction project for the flood mitigation berm concluded and has created a new natural walking trail and recreation area with bird-watching lookouts. This berm borders a natural wetlands area that has been preserved as part of this project.



The Sexsmith Community Garden is working towards a sustainable food future for residents. The garden, cared for by volunteers, is open to all residents to pick from and hosts classes on topics like learning how to garden. A volunteer group plants and cares for the garden through the growing season.



HERITAGE CONSERVATION

One of the standout features of Sexsmith's community appearance is its commitment to preserving its historical heritage. The town boasts several beautifully restored heritage buildings, such as the Sexsmith Historical Museum that includes the barn, blacksmith shop, Paszkowski House, the Greek Orthodox Church, Anglican Church, train station, and grain elevator. These heritage structures add character and charm to the town's appearance, transporting visitors and residents alike back in time. The careful preservation of these buildings demonstrates the community's dedication to honoring its history and maintaining a unique sense of identity. By maintaining and promoting the museum, Sexsmith actively preserves its heritage for present and future generations.

In addition to the museum, Sexsmith has taken steps to protect its historic buildings and landmarks. The town has implemented aesthetic regulations for downtown structures that helps ensure the preservation of the unique character and charm.



Sexsmith organizes heritage-themed events, such as Chautauqua Day and Christmas in Sexsmith, to celebrate and share its history with residents and visitors. These initiatives foster a sense of pride and appreciation for Sexsmith's heritage, encouraging community involvement. Chautauqua Day and the new September Indigenous celebration both celebrate our local area's Indigenous heritage through song, dance, stories, and engaging activities. Partnering with schools and local groups helps to bring these celebrations to life and makes the heritage conservation more meaningful.



TREE MANAGEMENT

Tree management is important for maintaining natural beauty and environmental sustainability and is taken care of by the Public Works department. They work with local suppliers to replace and plant trees as needed in Sexsmith and have an annual management program for the landscape and plants in the town. Over the years many older trees have had to be removed from public spaces and new trees have been planted specifically in neighbourhoods to create an appealing and natural element.

When Arbor Park was installed, it was created as a memorial park and individuals or groups can purchase trees in memoriam of a person. Arbor Park honours former Mayor Claude Lagace, who passed away but left a legacy of supporting green spaces in Sexsmith.

Public Works uses recycled water from the splash park and storm ponds to water our trees and greenery. They also have installed water bags on newly planted trees in the new recreation area by the berm.



Along pathways and in the community garden, hardy fruiting trees have been installed over the past ten years, enhancing the town’s aesthetics and food sustainability. Unfortunately, a fire in a grain elevator scorched some of those fruit trees and some have had to be taken down. The Wellness Coalition has plans to add more fruiting trees and shrubs to create an orchard in the community garden with the idea to educate residents on how to care for fruiting trees and shrubs. There will be trees planted in 2024 to start filling in areas of town that need new trees. Each year the town puts out information on care and management of trees, best practices. Seedy Saturday, a new initiative by Sexsmith Wellness, held a session on Black Knot, educating residents about the tree disease.



LANDSCAPE

The planning, design, construction, and maintenance of parks and green spaces in Sexsmith is organized by the Public Works department. The Wellness Coordinator will work with that department on projects occasionally that requires a team approach. One example of this is the new sledding hill in the flood mitigation berm recreation area. The project benefitted from input by various people and project stakeholders. The result is a naturalized, treed green space that will benefit residents in the years to come.

The new dog park installed at the campground is a good use of the space that was not used. Shade from the well-established trees is a benefit to the dogs and owners and makes for a very pleasant space to let them run in. Public Works maintains this space and has added picnic tables for people to rest at and reinforced the fence well for safety of the pets visiting.

There are two places in Sexsmith you'll find the government flags waving and both are a result of the effort put in by Public Works. They're located at the new fire hall and the downtown green space at the cenotaph.

Included in the many varieties of trees downtown are hardy fruiting trees that are available to the public to harvest from and low maintenance shrubs that form a safety barrier for the public from the train track nearby.



PLANT AND FLORAL DISPLAYS

Downtown floral displays bring beauty and charm, enhancing the atmosphere, and creating a welcoming environment. These thoughtfully arranged flower planters, hanging baskets, and garden beds add vibrant colors and natural beauty to public spaces. Public Works plants and maintains these garden beds, baskets, and planters scattered throughout the town all season long. You'll find them at the front entrance, campground, downtown, pathways, library, fire hall, green spaces, parks and more. The community garden gets in the spirit and plants edible flowers among the vegetables.

In 2023, the town had already ordered the flowers when the Communities in Bloom committee started, but the local greenhouse was able to provide a fantastic variety of blooms in the colour purple, the colour of the year.

Town Council will hand out flowers to residents again this year, an initiative that was started during the recent pandemic to brighten the spirits of the community. They will have lots of orange blooms to hand out to the community.

In June 2023, a young Sexsmith resident started a rock snake along a pathway downtown. Public Works trimmed the grass around the growing stony serpent to keep it looking tidy through the season. This snake reached 70 metres by the end of summer!



Thank you for your interest
in learning about our
flourishing community.

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