

## City of Wetaskiwin Participates in Smart Cities Challenge



The City of Wetaskiwin has submitted an application to the Smart Cities Challenge. The Smart Cities Challenge is a competition open to all municipalities, local or regional governments, and Indigenous communities (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis) across Canada.

This Challenge empowers communities across the country to address local issues their residents face through new partnerships, using a smart cities approach. A smart cities approach means achieving meaningful outcomes for residents through the use of data and connected technology. This approach can be adopted by any community, big or small.

Finalists will receive support to develop their smart cities proposals. Winning communities will be awarded with prize money to help implement them. In order to meet the Smart Cities Challenge goal of openness and transparency and to encourage dialogue with residents and stakeholders, we have posted our application online (see below).

### Applicant information

#### Question 1

Please provide information on the community that is submitting this application. If this application is being submitted by a group of communities, add each community separately using the button. If this application is being submitted by a regional entity, please include the name of the regional entity with each individual community (e.g. City of Dunn/Smith Region). Do not include the regional entity as a separate, stand-alone community.

#### Community (City of Wetaskiwin)

**Name of community** City of Wetaskiwin  
**Province or Territory** Alberta  
**Population based on** 12655  
**Indigenous community** No

#### Question 2

Please select a prize category.

\$5 million (population under 30,000 residents)

### Problem definition

### Question 3

Please define your Challenge Statement in a single sentence that guides your preliminary proposal. It should describe the outcome (or outcomes) you hope to achieve.

The city of Wetaskiwin is dedicated in helping its residence live in a safe and active community by being innovative and inclusive to all, access to autonomous transportation is a great opportunity to allow residents continued success in work rest and play

### Question 4

Please describe the outcome (or outcomes) your proposal seeks to achieve by elaborating on your Challenge Statement.

This section should include:

- Specific goals you hope to achieve by implementing your proposal, justifying both the level of ambition and the achievability of the outcome (or outcomes) sought.
- Baseline data and evidence to establish the current state with respect to the metrics used in your Challenge Statement, and context around the outcome (or outcomes) sought.
- Evidence to support the selection of this/these outcome (or outcomes) over others, in reference to the needs of the community.
- Rationale for applying a smart city approach to achieving the identified outcome (or outcomes).
- Strategy for measuring progress toward outcome (or outcomes) and achievement of outcome (or outcomes).

The city of Wetaskiwin currently operates an assisted handi-van service for residence within and surrounding our community. As autonomous transportation continues to build and grow we are very excited for the opportunity to expand on our current transit system with an autonomous mass transit system.

An autonomous mass transit system will not only able to move about the community easily but will do so affordably. An autonomous transit system has the potential to operate 24 hours a day 7 days per week if needed with no additional cost. An autonomous transit system will run weekends and holidays without the concern of interrupting an operators family time.

The city of Wetaskiwin has conducted several surveys over the past five years with all of them indicating transportation and food storage as a top priority within the community. As the cost of owning a vehicle increases we are seeing fewer residence wanting to take on that burden of owning a vehicle.

The city of Wetaskiwin does have traditional taxi services available, we are often reminded that they do not come at a cost most cannot afford for daily transportation.

An autonomous transit system is the answer and the future for mass transit needs with a fixed cost of operation and the ability to offer lower rates per ride over a traditional taxi or ride-share service. It also has the ability to

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|  | <p>offer safety and security to those riding with monitored cameras both within the vehicle and externally. These external cameras can assist city departments with faster response to road repairs as well as public safety as suspicious activity could be detected while the vehicle travels the transit routes.</p> <p>As we move towards autonomous transit, communication between city departments and community members will be key. Our success with this program will be somewhat dependent on the speed of technology as this will be the first of its kind in Canada.</p> <p>Measurements of this success will be ongoing through market analyses and rider feedback. we will also be learning as we move forward just where if any limitations may occur as we are operating in a winter city. It may impact the way we traditionally operate our winter roads crew with the transit route being maintained as a top priority.</p> |
| <p><b>Question 5</b></p> <p>Please describe how your community residents have shaped your Challenge Statement. Describe your plans for continuing to engage and involve them in your final proposal going forward.</p> <p>This section should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Descriptions of previous engagement with residents, businesses, organizations, and other stakeholders on topics related to the Challenge Statement.</li> <li>• Descriptions of feedback that came to light through past engagement processes.</li> <li>• Links between the Challenge Statement and engagement feedback.</li> <li>• Evidence of efforts made to be inclusive and to represent the community's diversity.</li> </ul> | <p>As mentioned the city of Wetaskiwin has engaged its residents to a series of workshops, surveys and assessments.</p> <p>One of our most memorable was a simulation brought into the city from United Way called poverty simulation. It was here that participants what the cost of a loaf of bread really was. Someone with a vehicle typically didn't think twice of driving to the store and purchasing that loaf of bread for \$3. For someone without a vehicle and where the store was too far to walk that loaf of bread between \$25 and \$30 by the time they paid for transportation.</p> <p>We had also learned that food storage was a major concern for some of our community members. Again, without a vehicle, they need to pay for their transportation which essentially means they can't put as much food in their cupboard when they do shop.</p>   |

- Plans to sustain engagement through the development and implementation of the final proposal.

We have listened to what I residents have told us through the surveys and workshops. We have developed a community Solutions committee that is made up of members of the business community, health services, schools, protective services with support from the provincial and municipal governments. It is through this committee the we are embarking on a community friendship center to service the residence of Wetaskiwin and surrounding area. We have heard again through the community solutions committee that transportation is a huge obstacle for residence.

During our last election form (October 2017) a question was proposed from the audience, "Will you support a mass transit system for the city of Wetaskiwin" All those on the panel agreed that a mass transit system in Wetaskiwin should be looked into.

During the fall of 2016 The city of Wetaskiwin became the first city on Alberta to fly the Treaty Six flag in perpetuity at City hall. A gathering of community members from the city of Wetaskiwin and surrounding area, city Council joined by the Chiefs and Council from Maskwacis four bands, Sampson, Louie Bull, Montana and Erminskin First Nations, the Reeve and County of Wetaskiwin Council. With several hundred people present we celebrated in ceremony and shared bannock bread. Since that time we have celebrated with several businesses raising the flag and recognizing the peoples of Treaty Six in recognition of their teaching and stewardship of this land for all to call home.

Working closely with our community we will continue to be engaged and inform through public gatherings and information seasons. We will continually update through social media and make our findings easily accessible through a variety of media options. Signage throughout the community with communications that will be shared locally,

provincially and nationally with the promise of trans-parity in hopes that others will engage and share.

## Preliminary proposal details

### Question 6

Please describe your preliminary proposal and its activities or projects.

This section should include:

- Planned activities or projects to achieve the outcome (or outcomes) set out in the Challenge Statement.
- Clear links from the identified projects to the attainment of the outcome (or outcomes).
- Scope and size of each planned project in your preliminary proposal, describing how it is feasible and suitable for achieving the outcome (or outcomes) in a manner that is impactful for the community, ambitious, and transformative.
- Measures put in place to 1) make the proposal open, interoperable, scalable, and replicable or a description of your plan to do so going forward for the benefit of your own community and other communities in Canada; and 2) enable other uses of the technology, innovation, and data in your proposal.

As the city of Wetaskiwin has already done the research and has defined mass transit I need for the community, an autonomous transit system would seem to be a fantastic solution.

This project would be showcased at our City of Wetaskiwin open house this September. This is a venue that is open to the public and showcases with different city departments are working on. It is here we would launch our project forward into the community. We would be able to show the community what a typical route could look like, the hours of operation, the safety standards that we would meet. All while collecting feedback from the community.

It is difficult to indicate the potential challenges with a project of this magnitude simply because it's one of the first in the world. Canada is a country full of pioneers and the city of Wetaskiwin is no different. The traditional transit system is one that contains variable costs, substantial environmental footprint and the seemingly never-ending call for increase service. The autonomous transit system is one that offers a fixed rate for service substantially less environmental impact and routes that can be added to or subtracted from with very little deviation of cost. This will allow any community to offer mass transit service without the fear of the unknown variable cost.

The city of Wetaskiwin hopes to create the plan for a road-map if you will that will allow autonomous mass transit into communities not only in Canada around the world. We feel

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|   | <p>that the city of Wetaskiwin is the perfect size to pilot a project such as this. We are a city that is home to a diverse population made up of several cultures, religions and beliefs. It will be our goal to document this journey the successes and the not so successful portions of this project for everyone to learn from. We will be able to learn what routes for autonomous transit look like, roadways, terrain and the challenges put forth from maned vehicles mixing with autonomous and how to navigate this. We will learn how an autonomous vehicle traveling through the community can help in safety of a community. We will learn how people riding in an autonomous vehicle and become in need of medical assistance, medical assistance can be automatically dispatched to the vehicle or the vehicle rerouted to the nearest health center.</p> |
| <p><b>Question 7</b></p> <p>Please describe the ways in which your preliminary proposal supports your community's medium and long-term goals, strategies, and plans.</p> <p>To supplement your response, please upload any relevant documents and make clear linkages and references.</p> | <p>The smart cities challenge is almost tailor-made for the city of Wetaskiwin 2015-2018 strategic plan a blueprint for a shared future. Within our strategic plan it's stated</p> <p>Our vision - a safe, strong and proud community<br/> Our mission - a progressive organization celebrating community, providing excellent customer service, building our future<br/> Our values - integrity; respect; sustainability; excellence; progressive</p> <p>A sustainable community that responsibly manages its infrastructure, finances and environment.<br/> A growing community that promotes economic development.<br/> An organization dedicated to achieving excellence.</p> <p>Implement a multi-year plan to address "welcoming and inclusive" issues including identifying barriers and looking at funding opportunities.</p>                                     |

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|   | <p>The city encourage citizens to reduce their environmental footprint, and is leading by example.<br/> Evaluate and Implement programs to reduce environmental footprint of City operations.<br/> The city has a climate of innovation.</p> <p>The city of Wetaskiwin current strategic plan states that one of our actions is to implement a multi-year plan to address welcoming and inclusive issues including identifying barriers and looking at funding opportunities. Over the last three years the city has committed to seeking the community's assistance in finding the issues that matter to them most. A big part of being welcoming and inclusive is ensuring the we are servicing our entire community and not just certain pockets. The city of Wetaskiwin passed an international Charter on walkability and continues to make Wetaskiwin is safer and more accessible community upgrades and sidewalks in LED lighting. Well all these things are fantastic achievements we must realize that we are a winter city and transportation during our winter months can be challenging on foot. Has it also states with an art strategic plan the city has a climate of innovation. While we continue to innovate a lot of our City's systems and software and buildings an autonomous mass transit system would not only be a first in Wetaskiwin but the first in Canada.</p> <p>City of Wetaskiwin Strategic Plan (1).pdf<br/> (628.58kb)<br/> City of Wetaskiwin Strategic Plan.pdf<br/> (628.58kb)</p> |
| <p><b>Question 8</b></p> <p>Please describe your community's readiness and ability to implement your proposal successfully.</p> | <p>One of my most recent complex projects was the building of a 22.6 million dollar Rec Center. During the design phase of the project we also implemented a capital campaign in which we went to the community to raise 2.5 million for the project. The capital campaign was so successful we ended at 3.2</p>  |

This section should include:

- Experience with implementing complex projects (i.e. multi-stakeholder, multi-dimensional) that span multiple business lines and functional units.
- Structures, processes, and practices in place or planned for managing and implementing complex projects that span multiple business lines and functional units.
- Organizational strengths and potential weaknesses for managing and implementing a smart city proposal, and plans to address weaknesses to ensure successful proposal management and implementation.

million in capital contribution from local and non-local businesses and private residence. Six months in to a 24 month project our project manager left the project due to relocation. I soon found myself a project manager for the duration of the build as well as the liaison between the capital campaign coordinator and the community. While the capital campaign was a huge success it did not end at the completion of the build. A large portion of our contributors require a 10-year commitment to secure total funds. These are relationships that you do not take for granted. When the city of Wetaskiwin partners with an organization it is more than just a partnership it's almost like a marriage. A marriage that has great understanding for one another, a respect that allows challenges learning and growth.

The city of Wetaskiwin has a very fluid organizational team. Our Administration has a great working relationship with Council and Council has great respect for the organizational team. As a team we work very hard to eliminate silos within departments and share information freely between the directors and respective departments. We have spoken about the what happens next should we be successful at this challenge everyone is excited to see a project this Innovative and exciting to become reality in Wetaskiwin.

We have identified that should we be successful with the challenge application, additional support in IT will be needed. There may also be additional support needed in the maintenance of vehicles. We have worked with development as per pick-up and drop-off locations as well as signage in the community. The city of Wetaskiwin communication department is at the ready to deliver information throughout the community from the project team. They will also be a huge asset when it comes to provincial and National media outlets seeking information

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|  | about the project.  |
| <p><b>Question 9</b></p> <p>Describe your plan for using the \$250,000 grant, should you be selected as a finalist. Provide a high-level breakdown of spending categories and an accompanying rationale.</p>   | <p>The initial 250,000 will be used to secure the companies chosen to move forward on the 5 million dollar Grant. Autonomous transit is fairly new to the world some great things happening in Europe and Japan. Our first challenge will be to secure a company that will be able to build and deliver an autonomous bus system built for our climate. Our second challenge will be sourcing the correct software development that will communicate with the autonomous bus again in our climate and a network. We will also be seeking legal advice for the operation of a driverless vehicle ensuring that and everyone else's safety is upheld. Also look into added insurance and liabilities that the municipality will need to take into consideration when the project is implemented.</p>  |
| <p><b>Question 10</b></p> <p>Describe the partners that are or will be involved in your proposal. Where partners are not yet determined, describe the process for selecting them.</p> <p>This section should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A description of existing partners (what type of organization, what they do, etc.), their relevance, and expected contribution to the outcome (or outcomes).</li> <li>• Where partners are not yet determined or where it is anticipated that additional partners are required, describe the process for selecting them.</li> </ul> | <p>As we are looking at a mass transit system that historically does not turn a profit I am suggesting that the federal and provincial governments would be a partner with the local municipal government. I say this as I feel this is just the start of a change in mass transit as we know it. Rural transportation in Alberta has been an issue for many years and continues to be a struggle as our population ages many families left rural Alberta centers. Small agricultural communities with the changing business model of Greyhound bus lines have been left with no option but to move to a larger Center for health care and personal safety concerns. I see this project as a benefit to the city of Wetaskiwin, we see this project being able to benefit all of Alberta, all of Canada. The autonomous vehicle is not something that we only see in the movies, the autonomous vehicle is soon to be a part of our everyday life. I stated before, the city of Wetaskiwin stands at the ready to take initiative and the</p> |

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|  | innovation to make it work here and<br>anywhere. |
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