



News Release
February 15, 2017

Town Invites Public Input on Downtown Revitalization

'My Downtown Ponoka' Campaign Launched

(February 15, 2017 – Ponoka, Alberta) – The Town is launching a 'My Downtown Ponoka' campaign aimed at sparking a community-wide conversation about Downtown revitalization and to gather public input.

"We want to hear people's thoughts and ideas on what they value most about the Downtown, and what could be done to make Downtown Ponoka even better," says Tim Schmidt, Director of Planning for the Town of Ponoka. "The campaign invites residents and business representatives in the region to join that conversation at public open houses and by filling out a survey that asks people to share their vision on how to revitalize the Downtown," he says.

The 'My Downtown Ponoka' campaign marks the launch of the public input phase of Ponoka's Downtown Action Plan, a citizen-driven planning process that was approved by Town Council last fall. Throughout this public input phase, residents and businesses will be invited to participate in a visioning process to identify new ideas and review proposed plans from past studies. That public input will be used to help create a clear roadmap that will guide Downtown revitalization, which will be achieved through public and private sector investment.

Open Houses and Community Survey

"Our goal is to create a vibrant community hub that meets the community's needs and will be a catalyst for future economic growth, attracting more businesses and citizens to the Downtown area," says Greg Braat, Chair of the Heritage and Downtown Revitalization Committee, which is also the Steering Committee for the Downtown Action Plan project.

The Steering Committee encourages residents and businesses to get involved by doing the following:

- Go to the project website at **www.DowntownPonoka.ca** for regular progress updates and full details on the Downtown Action Plan, and to learn how you can 'have a say' during the planning process.
- Attend one of the **Public Open Houses on March 8 and 9** at the Kinsmen Community Centre. The Open Houses will feature a drop-in format with information displays about the Downtown Action Plan, comment forms, and small group discussions for sharing thoughts and ideas. Residents can drop in at any time between 1 p.m. and 8 p.m. on both days.
- Fill out a short **Community Survey** at www.DowntownPonoka.ca or pick up a paper copy at Town Hall or from participating Downtown businesses. The survey asks for your thoughts about



the Downtown. It will be available from February 15 until March 15, 2017. All survey participants can enter weekly prize draws.

'My Downtown Ponoka' Posters and Ads

The 'My Downtown Ponoka' campaign is being promoted through a series of posters and advertisements. Each one features a local business owner or resident commenting on what the Downtown means to them, and more importantly, what they feel it offers to the community. The posters and ads encourage people to experience all the Downtown has to offer already and to participate in the Downtown revitalization process.

The posters are being displayed in store windows throughout Ponoka, as well as online at www.DowntownPonoka.ca, on the project Facebook page @DowntownPonoka and on the Hometown Weekly News page of the local newspaper.

Residents and business owners are invited to add their voice and face to the 'My Downtown Ponoka' campaign to share what they value most about the Downtown. If you are interested, please contact the project team at info@downtownponoka.ca with your name, phone number and comments.

Defining and Setting Direction

"Downtowns are a vital part of a community and should be a source of community pride. That's why it's important that the whole community gets involved and adds their voice to this planning process," says Schmidt. "It allows residents and local business people the opportunity to help define the vision for Downtown revitalization."

Local community groups that would like to have a member of the project team deliver a presentation to their group about the Downtown revitalization process and Ponoka's Downtown Action Plan are welcome to contact Schmidt at 403-704-0267.

For more information:

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