

Village of Innisfree

Viability Plan

June 2018

A report concerning the viability of the Village of Innisfree
Drafted by the Innisfree Viability Review Team

Village of Innisfree Viability Review Team
Village of Innisfree Viability Review
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Executive Summary

The Village of Innisfree is a rural community of 223 (2017 municipal census) in the County of Minburn (county). The village is located just off Highway 16, mid-way between the towns of Vegreville and Vermillion.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs initiated a Viability Review of the Village of Innisfree following a valid petition of electors and significant Municipal Affairs involvement from 2009-2014. A dissolution study conducted in 2009-2010 resulted in a vote of 24 ballots (18%) in favour of dissolution and 109 ballots (82%) opposed to dissolution.

The Minister will decide on the next steps to be taken based on this viability plan and input to be provided by residents, property owners, and council.

A Viability Review Team (VRT) was established in 2017 by the Minister to analyze the Village of Innisfree and to develop a plan to address the factors contributing to uncertainty for the long-term viability of the village. Specific factors addressed by the VRT include:

- A lack of administrative capacity to meet operational requirements of the village;
- Aging infrastructure that requires significant repairs or replacement; and
- Insufficient and declining tax assessment base to help fund required infrastructure repairs and replacement.

The development of the *Village of Innisfree Viability Plan* included consultation with council, staff, residents, businesses and the county. During this time, the VRT considered a number of factors including:

- the village's finances,
- municipal services,
- long-term planning of services and infrastructure needs,
- the current state of municipal infrastructure,
- community demographics,
- economic development and activity,
- municipal structure, and
- the village's relationship with the county.

The Viability Plan identifies two options for consideration:

Option 1: Innisfree remains the incorporated Village of Innisfree and implements changes identified through the viability review to maintain viability.

This option would allow Innisfree to continue as a village, subject to governance and operational changes based on the recommendations in the viability plan. These changes, issued as Ministerial directives, may impact village services, utility rates and other user fees, as well as property taxes.

OPTION 2: Innisfree dissolves and becomes a part of the County of Minburn.

This option would see the orderly dissolution and wind-down of village operations. Village council would be dissolved and village residents would be represented by the county councillor in Division 2. Municipal

services in Innisfree would be delivered by the county. All of the village's assets, liabilities, functions and obligations would be transferred to the county.

The *Village of Innisfree Viability Plan* provides a detailed analysis of each option and its implications for council, residents, business, and property owners.

Next Steps

A community information meeting will be held on June 27, 2018 in the village to review the *Village of Innisfree Viability Plan* and its options and recommendations, as well as answer questions on the two options. Public input on the viability plan will be received for 30 days following the information meeting, after which the input will be submitted to the Minister for a decision to either maintain village status with Ministerial directives or to hold a vote of electors on the viability plan options.

If the Minister decides to conduct a vote of local electors (residents), and if the result of a vote supports dissolution, the Minister must recommend to the provincial Cabinet that the Village of Innisfree be dissolved to become a part of the County of Minburn. Cabinet will determine if the village should dissolve.

Village of Innisfree Viability Plan

Background

Innisfree is a rural community with a population of 223 (2017) (220 in 2011) 145 kilometers east of Edmonton and 45 kilometres east of Vegreville along Highway 16. The 2017 population breakdown shows:

- ages 0-19 13%
- ages 20-64 48%
- ages 65 and up 39%.

Community amenities include a day-use park, campground, seniors' drop-in centre, public library, and museum.

Area economic activity revolves around the agricultural and oil and gas sectors.

A sufficient petition of electors was submitted to the Minister of Municipal Affairs in December 2015, requesting a viability review. Within the context of previous ministry involvement through a dissolution study (2009/10), appointment of an Official Administrator (2012-2013), and a municipal inspection (2013-2014), the Minister initiated a viability review of the Village of Innisfree. A viability review involves a detailed examination and analysis of a municipality's governance, finances, infrastructure and services to determine what changes to the municipality are necessary for the community to remain viable.

The viability review process includes the following:

- **Self-assessment questionnaire**, by the municipalities to self-assess and enhance its viability by assisting it to identify where and how it could improve;
- A **Viability Review Team** that examines the finances and governance of the municipality, as well as the programs and services that are currently provided. Broad community engagement is conducted through open houses and invitation to provide input.

- **Public engagement**, listening to the concerns and comments expressed at community meetings and in writing;
- A **viability plan** that identifies options and recommendations for the municipality to maintain or achieve viability.

The village received a grant to undertake a comprehensive infrastructure study of the village's above and below ground infrastructure to better understand the community needs going forward. The *Infrastructure Master Plan* was submitted to Innisfree Council in November 2016, and included a prioritized list of capital maintenance and upgrading items requiring attention over the next ten years.

A Viability Review Team was formed in 2017 at the Minister's invitation, with elected and administrative representatives of the village and county, as well as representatives from the Rural Municipalities of Alberta, Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, Alberta Rural Municipal Administrators Association, and the Local Government Administration Association. The review is led by Alberta Municipal Affairs.

The Minister gave the Village of Innisfree Viability Review Team the mandate to collaboratively:

- evaluate the viability of the Village of Innisfree;
- lead public engagement of local residents, property owners, and other stakeholders in the affected municipalities (village and county);
- develop a viability plan for Innisfree that focuses on partnerships between neighbouring municipalities, municipal associations, and Alberta Municipal Affairs; and
- provide feedback to Alberta Municipal Affairs on the municipal viability review process.

Assessing Viability

The Municipal Sustainability Strategy specifies eight broad areas in which a municipality's viability may be assessed. The eight broad areas form the foundation from which the viability review process and the self-assessment questionnaire were developed.

The Viability Review uses these eight broad areas to assess the viability of a municipality:

- **Sustainable governance** addresses topics such as council practices and procedures, compliance with legislation, citizen engagement, and strategic planning.
- **Regional co-operation** addresses the municipality's approach to collaborating with neighbours for the benefit of local and regional residents.
- **Operational and administrative capacity** addresses the capacity of the municipality to operate on a daily basis and support council decisions.
- **Financial stability** addresses the municipality's capacity to generate and manage revenues sufficient to provide necessary infrastructure and services to the public.
- **Infrastructure** addresses the municipality's capacity to effectively and efficiently manage public infrastructure on behalf of residents.
- **Service delivery** addresses the capacity of the municipality to provide essential services that meet residents' expectations and any appropriate standards.
- **Community well-being** addresses local community characteristics that contribute to the vitality of the community and the long-term viability of the municipality.
- **Risk management** addresses the capacity of the municipality to identify and manage key risks on behalf of residents.

Viability Review Outcome

The Viability Review Team has developed the following two options for consideration:

Option 1.

Innisfree remains the incorporated Village of Innisfree and implements changes identified through the viability review to maintain viability.

Potential Benefits of Remaining a Village

- Autonomy over local decisions and service levels will be maintained, based on the priorities of residents.
- The village would be able to use the information gained through the viability review to improve municipal operations for village residents.
- The strong relationship with the County of Minburn will aid in the development of an Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework (ICF).

Potential drawbacks of Remaining a Village

- Maintaining current service levels and undertaking infrastructure projects may require increasing property taxes, and/or utility charges.
- Limited non-residential property will have an impact on future municipal tax rates.
- Attracting and retaining qualified staff may be difficult in the long term.

Option 2.

Innisfree dissolves and becomes a part of the County of Minburn.

Potential Benefits of Dissolving

- There may be cost savings from economies of scale and elimination of service duplication.
- The County would be eligible for additional resources including one-time funding for transitional costs and priority infrastructure projects within Innisfree.
- The county has more administrative capacity through its number of staff, equipment, etc.

Potential Drawbacks of Dissolving

- Loss of autonomy over local decisions as governance decisions about funding, services, and capital projects will be made by county council, with representation by a councillor.
- Special taxes, local improvement charges or fees could be levied by the County to pay for infrastructure projects in Innisfree.
- Residents will experience service level changes, such as the end of household garbage removal.

Viability Factors

The VRT identified viability factors that would need to be addressed for the Village of Innisfree to be viable.

- A) Staffing needs to be increased to support council decisions and comply with increasing administrative requirements of *the Municipal Government Act (MGA)* for operating a municipality.

- B) Aging infrastructure will require significant repairs and replacement.
- C) The residential and non-residential assessment tax base is insufficient to provide revenue for required infrastructure projects without large tax or utility rate increases.

Recommendations for the Long-Term Viability of Innisfree

The Village of Innisfree Viability Review Team has made nine recommendations to the village council and administration for the long-term viability of the Village of Innisfree. The recommendations can be seen in Appendix A.

Community Engagement

Integral to success of the viability review process is the involvement of residents to both inform the Viability Review Team and for residents to understand the details of the review. Residents and property owners were invited to provide input at an open house held March 16, 2017. Participation included 60 residents/owners from the village and 19 residents from the county. 78 participants completed surveys. The survey results are found in Appendix E.

Residents are generally satisfied with the services provided by the village, and ranked water and wastewater, fire and emergency management, and road and sidewalk maintenance as most important to them.

Overall, comments followed one of two perspectives:

- a) *“Lower taxes will arise from corporate dissolution”;*
Or,
- b) *“Everything is fine as it is, but dissolution will negatively impact the sense of community.”*

Some respondents identified that the costs of infrastructure are significant for a village population to manage. Residents expressed the expectation that current service levels would be maintained under either option. Survey results do indicate a preference for having the municipal office within the community.

Residents will have an opportunity to provide additional comments when the viability plan is presented to the community.

Impacts to Residents

The viability review demonstrates that changes are required for the community to be viable into the future. Both Option 1 and Option 2 of the Viability Plan will have impacts to residents and property owners as steps are taken to ensure the viability of Innisfree. The following pages present a brief summary of the Village of Innisfree at this time, as well as what residents can expect under Options 1 and 2.

1. Sustainable Governance

The *Municipal Government Act (MGA)* is the legislation that defines how Alberta's municipalities are governed, function, develop land, raise funds for services, and more.

The *Municipal Government Act* states that the purposes of a municipality are: *to provide good government; to foster the well-being of the environment; to provide services, facilities or other things that, in the opinion of council, are necessary or desirable for all or a part of the municipality; to develop and maintain safe and viable communities; and to work collaboratively with neighbouring municipalities to*

plan, deliver and fund intermunicipal services. In order to do all of this, governance is required. Governance includes who makes decisions, what matters are to be decided, how others make their voice heard to the decision makers, and how decision-makers are held to account.

Innisfree Today

The Village of Innisfree is governed by a municipal council consisting of a mayor and two councillors (reduced from 4 councillors in 2017). All council positions are elected at-large by the electors of the village. The mayor is chosen from amongst the councillors at the annual organizational meeting in October. Innisfree has historically had more candidates than positions, requiring elections to be held (no acclamations).

The village council holds regular council meetings on the third Tuesday of each month at the Village of Innisfree municipal office. Council governs through the establishment of bylaws and policies, giving direction to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) by policy and council resolutions.

Village residents can address their concerns through council members, attendance at open houses and public meetings, and by presentation at council meetings.

A business plan for 2018 and beyond is in development, as of April 2018.

Council is in compliance with newly established *MGA* requirements for:

- Municipal Development Plan (MDP) – In process
- Councillor training - Completed
- Creation of a code of conduct - Completed
- Establishment of a public participation policy – In process

OPTION 1: IF INNISFREE REMAINED A VILLAGE

- Council would continue to govern in compliance with the *MGA*.

Recommendations for Long-Term Viability

- Council should undertake a strategic planning process, with resident participation, to develop a three-year strategic plan that incorporates a service levels assessment, an operational needs assessment, and an infrastructure/capital plan.
- The village should engage residents in the development of the operational and capital budgets.

OPTION 2: IF INNISFREE BECAME A PART OF THE COUNTY OF MINBURN

- The County of Minburn is divided into seven wards. Innisfree (population 223) is located within Ward 2 (population 460). A review of electoral boundaries may be required to be undertaken prior to the 2021 municipal election.
- The county would review its hamlet policy to determine if revision is required.
- Innisfree residents could address their concerns through their council member and open houses.
- Innisfree residents would be eligible to run for county council.
- Residents and delegations are eligible to make presentations at council meetings.

2. Regional Co-operation

Innisfree Today

The Village of Innisfree has working intermunicipal relationships with the County of Minburn and the Village of Mannville. The three municipalities collaborate on the following:

- MD of Minburn Foundation (Housing)
- Emergency Services Mutual Aid Agreement
- Regional Assessment Review Board
- Minburn, Mannville, Innisfree Family and Community Support Services
- East Regional Transfer Station Authority/Joint Landfill

The county provides gravel and grader work at cost to the village.

Innisfree is a part of the Northeast Alberta Information Hub.

The Village of Innisfree has an arrangement with the Town of Vegreville for water and wastewater systems (operations), as well as with the Alberta Central East (ACE) Water Corporation for the provision of treated drinking water to the village.

The village is a member of the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA), an association which represents and advocates the interests of all members to both the provincial and federal governments as well as other provincial and federal organizations, and the Alberta Municipal Services Corporation, which is a subsidiary of AUMA providing services to its members.

The Village of Innisfree is a member of the Northern Lights Library System, Library Board, East Central 911 Call Answer Society, and School Parents Advisory Council.

OPTION 1: IF INNISFREE REMAINED A VILLAGE

- The village would continue to work with the county and neighbouring communities, including developing an Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework (ICF) as mandated by the *MGA*.
- The village will need to develop, jointly with the county, an Inter-Municipal Development Plan (IDP).

OPTION 2: IF INNISFREE BECAME A PART OF THE COUNTY OF MINBURN

- The county is currently a member of most of the same boards and committees, and would otherwise review participation on a case-by-case basis.

3. Operational and Administrative Capacity

Activities related to the administration of a municipality include: general administration, supporting council business, implementing bylaws and policies, property assessment and taxation, records management, municipal census-taking, budget development, accounting, payables, utility billing, audit, legal functions, public relations, and election processes.

The role of the CAO requires diverse and specialized knowledge to provide support to council and carry out the duties of the position.

Innisfree Today

The village has a full-time CAO who is responsible for all aspects of village administration. The village is facing workload challenges related to clerical functions and increasing municipal administrative requirements.

The village had a full-time administrative assistant prior to 2014, but the position was not filled when it became vacant, contributing to the workload concerns now experienced by the CAO.

The village has a public works foreman whose duties include managing the water distribution system and other municipal works, road and grounds maintenance, etc. A seasonal employee is contracted to manage the campground. The village contracts with external contractors to provide other services such as assessment services and water system operations.

The village has an administrative office, newer public works building, former public works building, and campground facility. The village owns the museum and the Senior's Centre.

OPTION 1: IF INNISFREE REMAINED A VILLAGE

- The village's CAO would continue to be responsible for the management and day-to-day operations of the village.
- As part of the annual budget process, the village would continue to determine if staffing is at an appropriate level for the administrative requirements and services the village provides.
- The village would need to ensure the CAO position is resourced appropriately for training and compensation.

Recommendations for Long-Term Viability

- The village should assess the administrative requirements to determine staffing needs to address the operational requirements as established by council and the MGA.
- Council should budget for staffing increases based on the results of the needs assessment.

OPTION 2: IF INNISFREE BECAME A PART OF THE COUNTY OF MINBURN

- The county's CAO is responsible for the management of the county. County staff and contractors would provide municipal services.
- The county has 43 full time staff.
- Administration and public works would be provided from the county office in Vegreville.
- The county has a hamlet policy, which describes services and delivery within the hamlets of Lavoy, Minburn and Ranfurly.
- The municipal office and public works buildings in Innisfree would be closed, and may be sold, with the proceeds from the sale of property being applied to Innisfree projects.
- The museum, library, seniors centre, and campground would continue to operate on a full cost recovery basis.

4. Financial Stability

Financial stability is an integral aspect of viability, and is the responsibility of the local government and the village residents. Annual financial reporting allows for specific performance indicators signaling stability or areas for examination.

The *MGA* stipulates that a municipality must have annual council-approved, multi-year operating and capital budgets. Revenue may come from property, local improvement, special or business taxes; charges; user fees; franchise fees; accumulated surpluses; or grants. Every year the revenues must be sufficient to cover the expenditures.

Grants

Municipalities in Alberta are eligible for a number of government transfer programs. The Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) Capital and the Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) Operating programs include funding from the Basic Transportation Grant. A Federal Gas Tax grant is also available.

MSI funding must be directed towards four support areas:

- Initiatives that promote the viability and long-term sustainability of municipalities;
- The maintenance of safe, healthy, and vibrant communities;
- The development and maintenance of municipal infrastructure to meet existing and changing municipal needs.

The Government of Alberta provides a number of other project-based grant programs, and the village may be eligible for these based on specific program eligibility and projects.

Innisfree Today

In 2016, the village had reported an accumulated surplus, net of tangible capital assets, of \$268,746 (of which \$212,246 is unrestricted and \$55,500 is restricted for capital projects). Council established reserves for capital projects and equipment replacements, with allocations beginning in 2015. As of December 2016, the village had \$252,416 in deferred grant revenue for use in future capital projects.

The Village of Innisfree uses MSI Capital funding for major repair and replacement infrastructure projects. Recent upgrades to the public works building, the purchase of a utility vehicle, road paving, and a chlorine analyzer were funded with 2016 and 2017 MSI capital funds. The balance of project costs is funded by property taxes. The village's MSI Capital allocation over the period of 2012-2016 was \$709,810.

Five-year operating and capital financial plans are being developed in 2018. The village has no long-term debt and a debt limit of \$1.19 million, as authorized by the *MGA*.

**OPTION 1: IF INNISFREE
REMAINED A VILLAGE**

- Repairs and replacement of critical infrastructure may require a combination of borrowing and tax increases.

**OPTION 2: IF INNISFREE BECAME
A PART OF THE COUNTY OF MINBURN**

- The county would assume the assets, liabilities, rights, duties, functions and obligations of the village upon dissolution.
- Any money transferred from the village to the county and any monies received from the sale of village assets (including but not limited to, cash, investments, reserves, buildings, infrastructure, vehicles, machinery, and equipment) must be used to reduce village liabilities or for projects specific to Innisfree.
- Any unexpended grant funding paid to the Village of Innisfree is transferred to the county to be spent in accordance with the approved grant guidelines.
- The county is eligible to receive grant funding to assist with costs associated with the dissolution of the village, subject to the conditions of the grant guidelines.
- Additional one-time funding is also available to the county to assist with major infrastructure projects in Innisfree.
- The county will receive the village's rights to revenues on the date of dissolution, including taxes.
- The county may levy additional taxes or local improvement levies in Innisfree in addition to the county-wide mill rate, to cover the costs of providing services in Innisfree.
- Future repairs and replacement of infrastructure may require borrowing and tax increases.

Taxation and Assessment

Property taxes are the primary method of funding village operations and infrastructure. Through an established legislated process, property value is determined, which in turn determines how much of the overall municipal property tax requirement will be borne by each property.

Each year, village council determines the services that are required and the amount of money needed to operate the village. After all other revenues (e.g., grants, fees, permits, business tax, etc.) are subtracted, the remainder is the amount of money the municipality needs to raise through property taxes in order to

provide services for the year. This revenue requirement is then used to calculate the tax rate. This revenue requirement is then used to calculate the tax rate to be applied to the assessed value of each property in the municipality. A municipality may adjust its tax rate on a yearly basis depending on its revenue requirement. The tax rate a municipality chooses to set depends on the assessment base in the municipality and the amount of money it needs to generate using the property tax.

If council requires more revenue to run the municipality, and the assessment base in the municipality has remained the same or has gone down, council will have to increase its tax rate to generate the required revenue. If the assessment base in a municipality increases, and the tax rate remains the same, more tax dollars will be collected compared to the previous year. To collect the same amount of revenue, council would reduce its tax rate to reflect the increased assessment base.

Property taxes are used to finance local programs and services such as road construction and maintenance, parks and leisure facilities, and fire protection.

Property taxes may not be the only financial cost that would change. Utility rates could change, and additional fees may be considered for services that the county does not provide elsewhere.

In addition to collecting taxes for municipal purposes, municipalities also collect taxes for provincial-funded education and may collect for the provision of local seniors' housing, again allocated based on the assessed property value.

Innisfree Today

Innisfree's property assessment growth of 6.7% over the 2013-2017 period is consistent with the rate of inflation, and represents little actual growth or new development.

In 2017, an individual with a residential property valued at \$100,000 could expect to pay \$1,761 in property taxes including education property taxes and other requisitions; a commercial property owner with a similarly assessed property could expect to pay \$2,737 in property taxes including education property taxes and other requisitions.

The 2017 minimum municipal property tax amount is \$750.

The village follows the tax recovery process outlined in the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)* for unpaid taxes. Unpaid utility fees are transferred to the municipal tax roll after six months. To assist residents with tax payments, the village allows for a monthly payment plan when the account is current.

Unpaid property taxes at their respective year ends were:

2014	17.9%
2015	21.6%
2016	30.4%

The 2017 property assessments for the Village of Innisfree were:

- Residential: \$ 9,888,010
- Non-Residential: \$ 1,731,850
- Machinery and Equipment \$ 49,100
- Linear: \$ 1,053,220

o Total: \$12,722,180

The tax rates (per \$1,000 of assessment) for the Village of Innisfree 2013-2017 were as follows:

Year	Residential	Non-Residential	Minimum Tax	Annual Property Taxes
2017	17.608352	27.374682	\$750	\$254,444
2016	18.588330	29.101110	\$750	\$267,377
2015	19.561091	24.360392	\$800	\$270,623
2014	23.904000	25.403000	\$575	\$239,775
2013	28.610000	30.250000	\$575	\$325,300

Note: Includes Alberta School Foundation and Seniors Foundation Requisitions

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2017 Tax Rate Comparison – Village of Innisfree and County of Minburn

	Innisfree		County of Minburn	
	Tax Rate	Total Tax Levy	Tax Rate	Total Tax Levy would be
Residential/Farmland	17.608352	\$174,112	7.5372	\$ 74,528
Non-Residential	27.374682	\$ 47,409	25.7493	\$ 44,594
Machinery and Equipment	23.926748	\$ 1,175	21.7237	\$ 1,068
Linear	27.374682	\$ 28,832	25.7493	\$ 27,112
Minimum Tax	\$750	\$ 39,197	---	---
TOTAL		\$290,725		\$147,302

The village anticipates maintaining the minimum tax at \$750 for 2018.

OPTION 1: IF INNISFREE REMAINED A VILLAGE

Recommendations for Long-Term Viability

- The village should examine the use of debt to address the infrastructure needs identified in the infrastructure study.

OPTION 2: IF INNISFREE BECAME A PART OF THE COUNTY OF MINBURN

- The property tax rates are the same throughout the County.
- Local improvement taxes may be applied for projects benefiting a specific area including a hamlet.
- User fees or levies may be established by the county to pay for services specific to Innisfree.

5. Infrastructure

Municipal infrastructure consists of all the built assets involved in providing services to the community, including buildings, parks, roads and sidewalks, water, wastewater and storm water systems, and significant equipment used to service the assets.

Regular maintenance and replacement of infrastructure assets is required to ensure service is provided. In particular, properly functioning water and wastewater systems are critical for the health and well-being of residents.

Residents of a municipality are responsible for the cost of infrastructure repairs and replacement. Provincial and federal grants may be available to offset the costs.

Innisfree Today

An infrastructure study was conducted by Amec Foster Wheeler in 2016 as part of the viability review. It assessed condition and identified necessary major repairs and replacement costing \$8.5 million over a ten-year period, recommending \$4.6 million for upgrading or replacement within the next five years (2018-2023).

The costings within the infrastructure study are for stand-alone projects. It is anticipated that reduced costs could be realized through management of different projects to maximize use of resources (i.e., coordinate projects involving digging up the same roadway at the same time).

Some projects in the infrastructure study are already in process (i.e., sidewalk rehabilitation, repair of the heating system in the village office, and the replacement of lift station and pumps).

The village uses grants from the provincial and federal governments to fund infrastructure projects. In 2017, grant allocations were \$198,000. Projects are completed based on the highest priority.

Water Distribution:

The water distribution system requires upgrades to primarily address pipe size for firefighting purposes, anticipated at a cost of \$2.4 million over the next five years (2018-2023), and \$3.1 million in the following five year period (2023-2028).

Wastewater:

Immediate major maintenance required for the village sanitary system is estimated at \$1,127,500, and includes the repair of several broken pipes, upgrades to the lift station, and addressing concerns related to the function of the sewage lagoon.

Roadways and Sidewalks:

Roadway and sidewalk conditions range from good to poor. Ongoing roadway and sidewalk rehabilitation and improving sidewalk street connections is projected at \$1.4 million.

Municipal Buildings:

All village buildings are fire protected (smoke and CO2 alarms, emergency lighting, and fire extinguishers). Costs for the demolition of the old public works building and maintenance at the Birch Lake site are estimated at \$123,000. Fire hall repairs and shingle and foundation repairs at the Seniors' Drop-in Centre identified in the Infrastructure study have been completed.

Prairie Bank Museum

The boiler and radiators are beyond their life expectancy, requiring budgeting for replacement. The exterior is deteriorating, and the brick chimney requires repair to remain safe. Restoration of the museum is estimated to be \$337,000, not including any structural deficiencies that may be evident upon deeper evaluation. Grant applications have been submitted for the museum work.

**OPTION 1: IF INNISFREE
REMAINED A VILLAGE**

- The village would use the infrastructure study to

**OPTION 2: IF INNISFREE BECAME
A PART OF THE COUNTY OF MINBURN**

- According to the 2016 Municipal Sustainability Initiative

decide on the infrastructure spending priorities for 2018 and beyond. The effective coordination of projects is expected to reduce total projects costs.

- Projects would be prioritized based on the health and safety of residents.
- Non-critical projects may be not be completed, impacting their future operation (i.e., museum, seniors' centre, campground)

Recommendations for Long-Term Viability

- The village should annually discuss its capital projects with neighbouring municipalities to identify potential collaborative Request For Proposals (RFP) that provide cost-efficiencies.
- The village should look at long-term debt, special levies, and other funding opportunities for capital projects.

(MSI) Capital program guidelines, restructuring will not affect MSI capital funding allocations to municipalities for five years following dissolution.

- Infrastructure projects would use MSI Capital funding allocated for Innisfree following dissolution, along with infrastructure grants offered through the Alberta Community Partnership program.
- The county could impose special taxes or local improvement levies on Innisfree residents to fund capital costs in excess of grant funding.
- Critical infrastructure repairs or replacements required following dissolution may be eligible for grants to fund these projects.
- Infrastructure spending priorities in Innisfree will be based on the village's infrastructure study. Innisfree infrastructure projects will be considered in conjunction with all county infrastructure needs and priorities. The ~~county's~~ operations department would make recommendations to council regarding the highest priorities and available grants and funding.
- Non-critical projects may be not be completed, impacting future operation. (i.e., museum, seniors' centre, campground)

6. Service Delivery and Risk Management

The purposes of a municipality include the provision of services and facilities that are necessary for residents and to develop and maintain safe and viable communities. The most basic of services are the provision of roads, water and waste water systems, and emergency services.

Other services include FCSS, library, parks, and recreation facilities and programs.

<i>Innisfree Today</i>
<p>Village of Innisfree Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of roads and sidewalks • Snow removal occurs immediately following a snowfall; the village may assist with residential snow removal upon request at the municipality's convenience; sidewalks are cleared of snow • Street lighting • Water services includes: the source, treatment, transmission, and distribution of the water, along with the maintenance of facilities and water lines • Wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal includes: sanitary sewers, storm water collection, lagoons, manholes, lift-stations, and the removal and treatment of sludge from lagoons; • Waste management includes the collection of garbage and other waste materials, including recycling initiatives; costs associated with waste management include those for the operation

- of transfer and landfill sites and the equipment used for collection and disposal of waste
- Weekly solid waste (garbage) pick-up for residential properties and commercial properties is provided by the village
- Land use planning and development, development control, subdivision approval
- Building standards and inspection
- Bylaw enforcement is managed by the CAO, and
- Fire and emergency services.

The village has transitioned to providing utility services (water, waste water and garbage removal) on a full cost-recovery basis beginning in 2017. The 2016 utilities operating and capital deficit was \$53,000.

Utility Operations Balances	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	5-Year Change
ALL UTILITIES - Operating Revenues	\$302,562	\$329,582	\$160,994	\$187,709	\$210,720	(\$91,842)
ALL UTILITIES - Operating Expenses	\$199,823	\$232,575	\$370,408	\$264,084	\$264,083	\$64,260
ALL UTILITIES - NET	\$102,739	\$97,007	-\$209,414	-\$76,375	-\$53,363	(\$156,102)
ALL UTILITIES - Operations Subsidy (from General Revenue)	\$0	\$0	\$209,414	\$76,375	\$53,363	n/a
ALL UTILITIES - Operations Subsidy as Mill Rate	0.00	0.00	18.47	5.95	4.12	n/a

OPTION 1: IF INNISFREE REMAINED A VILLAGE

- The 2016 infrastructure study has identified a number of concerns regarding the village's infrastructure that will need addressing in the future. How the village chooses to proceed could reduce the village's level of liability and exposure to risk.
- Curb-side garbage collection will continue.
- Utility fees would increase as full cost recovery is implemented.

Recommendations for Long-Term Viability

- Utility rates should continue to be reviewed annually to ensure full cost recovery is maintained.
- The village should develop a campground surplus reserve policy to offset years when campground operating deficits result.

OPTION 2: IF INNISFREE BECAME A PART OF THE COUNTY OF MINBURN

- Utility fees would increase as full cost recovery is implemented.
- Snow clearing would typically be completed within two to five days. Priorities include residential access, bus routes, and emergency services. The county does not remove snow from sidewalks.
- Residents and businesses would take garbage to a large bin located in Innisfree.

Residential Utility Fee Comparison

	Innisfree	County of Minburn (Hamlet of Lavoy Rates)
Water – Monthly connection	\$47/month (non-metered) 25.50/month (metered) (Includes ACE Reserve Fund allocation)	\$64.30

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Water - Consumption Fee	\$3.95/m3 (metered only)	\$3.38/m3
Waste Water	\$21.50/month (residential)	\$15.00
Garbage Collection	\$38.25/month (residential) (Includes Joint Landfill Remediation Project)	\$25.50/month

7. Community Well-being

“Community” speaks to the characteristics of individuals, groups, institutions, and local businesses that contribute to vitality quality of life of residents. The spirit of a community is demonstrated through programs and services, volunteerism, and how the public engage with each other. Community identity arises from the perceptions of individuals in a specific setting or location.

Innisfree Today

The community hosts a number of vibrant volunteer groups: Innisfree and District Agricultural Society, Recreation and Cultural Society, two 4-H Clubs, Library board and Friends of the Library Society, curling club, Innisfree and District Fish and Game Club, Seniors’ Society and a Ukrainian dance club.

Local groups collaborate to host Innisfree Fair Day.

The Delnorte-Innisfree School serves 85 students through grades 1-12.

OPTION 1: IF INNISFREE REMAINED A VILLAGE

- The village would continue to support community organizations and events.
- The village would need to consider the future viability of maintaining/operating community amenities, library, seniors centre, etc.

OPTION 2: IF INNISFREE BECAME A PART OF THE COUNTY OF MINBURN

- The county is a member of the Northern Lights Library System.
- The Innisfree Library Board would be dissolved and the library closed prior to the village’s dissolution. Alternately, prior to dissolution, the Mannville Library Board could be asked to consider operating a branch library in Innisfree.
- ~~Existing community~~Existing community facilities would continue to be used and maintained on a full cost recovery basis.
- Groups would be invited to assume operational responsibility with financial support from the county.
- The county would invite a community group to operate the campground.

Appendices

Appendix A: Recommendations for Long-Term Viability

1. Council should undertake a strategic planning process, with resident participation, to develop a three-year strategic plan that incorporates a service levels assessment, an operational needs assessment, and an infrastructure/capital plan.
2. The village should assess the administrative requirements to determine staffing needs to address the operational requirements as established by council and the MGA.
3. Council should budget for staffing increases based on the results of the needs assessment.
4. The village should develop a 10-year capital plan to address items in the Infrastructure Study.
5. The village should engage residents in the development of the operational and capital budgets.
6. The village should annually discuss its capital projects with neighbouring municipalities to identify potential collaborative Request for Proposals (RFP) that provide cost-efficiencies.
7. The village should look at long-term debt, special levies, and other funding opportunities for capital projects.
8. Utility rates should continue to be reviewed annually to ensure full cost recovery is maintained.
9. The village should develop a campground surplus reserve policy to offset years when campground operating deficits result.

Appendix B: Financial Information 2012 – 2016

FINANCIAL POSITION

FINANCIAL ASSETS	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	5-Year Change
Cash and Temporary Investments	\$146,608	\$288,090	\$348,054	\$284,135	\$368,627	\$222,019
Taxes and Grants in Place of Taxes Receivables	\$109,420	\$64,866	\$140,224	\$259,743	\$301,650	\$192,230
Other Receivables	\$15,164	\$25,213	\$38,771	\$33,072	\$55,532	\$40,348
TOTAL FINANCIAL ASSETS	\$271,212	\$378,189	\$527,069	\$576,950	\$725,809	\$454,597
LIABILITIES						
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	\$84,728	\$17,592	\$26,708	\$30,318	\$67,773	(\$16,955)
Deferred Revenue	\$216,773	\$224,410	\$335,135	\$290,475	\$252,416	\$35,643
Long Term Debt	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Liabilities	\$0	\$99,567	\$140,331	\$140,331	\$140,331	\$140,331
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$301,501	\$341,569	\$502,174	\$461,124	\$460,520	\$159,019
NET FINANCIAL ASSETS (NET DEBT)	(\$30,289)	\$36,620	\$24,895	\$115,826	\$265,289	\$295,578
NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS						
Tangible Capital Assets	\$3,421,255	\$3,461,661	\$3,402,418	\$3,479,300	\$3,525,602	\$104,347
Prepaid Expenses	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,970	\$3,457	\$3,457
Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS	\$3,421,255	\$3,461,661	\$3,402,418	\$3,482,270	\$3,529,059	\$107,804

ACCUMULATED SURPLUS

ACCUMULATED SURPLUS	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	5-Year Change
Unrestricted Surplus	(\$30,289)	\$36,620	\$24,895	\$87,796	\$213,246	\$243,535
Restricted Surplus	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$31,000	\$55,500	\$55,500
Equity in Tangible Capital Assets (non-cash)	\$3,421,255	\$3,461,661	\$3,402,418	\$3,479,300	\$3,525,602	\$104,347
TOTAL ACCUMULATED SURPLUS	\$3,390,966	\$3,498,281	\$3,427,313	\$3,598,096	\$3,794,348	\$403,382

FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES BY FUNCTION (REVENUES AND EXPENSES)

FUNCTION (REVENUE)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	5-Year Change
General (Not Function Specific)	\$338,538	\$344,206	\$331,540	\$348,564	\$358,977	\$20,439
General Government	\$12,292	\$32,014	\$19,311	\$9,061	\$164,784	\$152,492
Protective Services	\$22,268	\$14,034	\$31,847	\$30,517	\$36,565	\$14,297
Transportation	\$43,666	\$1,948	\$85,898	\$230,654	\$251,988	\$208,322
Environmental Use and Protection	\$302,562	\$329,582	\$160,994	\$187,709	\$210,720	(\$91,842)
Public Health and Welfare	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,160	\$1,000	\$1,000
Planning and Development	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Recreation and Culture	\$138,996	\$38,491	\$46,146	\$26,945	\$23,029	(\$115,967)
Other Utilities	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL REVENUE	\$858,322	\$760,275	\$675,736	\$834,610	\$1,047,063	\$188,741
FUNCTION (EXPENSES)						
General Government	\$193,979	\$176,723	\$137,252	\$156,403	\$302,733	\$108,754
Protective Services	\$40,174	\$33,256	\$35,093	\$31,580	\$40,549	\$375
Transportation	\$151,021	\$168,152	\$160,890	\$153,355	\$192,215	\$41,194
Environmental Use and Protection	\$199,823	\$232,575	\$370,408	\$264,084	\$264,083	\$64,260
Public Health and Welfare	\$1,531	\$3,447	\$2,311	\$1,808	\$2,912	\$1,381
Planning and Development	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10,000	\$2,855	\$2,855
Recreation and Culture	\$57,527	\$38,807	\$40,750	\$46,597	\$45,464	(\$12,063)
Other Utilities	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$644,055	\$652,960	\$746,704	\$663,827	\$850,811	\$206,756
NET REVENUE/EXPENSE	\$214,267	\$107,315	(\$70,968)	\$170,783	\$196,252	(\$18,015)

Appendix C: Infrastructure 10-Year Plan

The following tables provide an overview of the projected annual costs of the recommended projects as listed in the *Village of Innisfree Infrastructure Study*.

Year	Asset	Assessment	Budget
Immediate	Wastewater Collection System Repairs	Several broken pipes, manhole repairs, lift station upgrades	\$1,127,500
	Storm Water Drainage System	Ditch repair, CCTV inspection, swale survey and remediation, new catch basins	\$ 65,000
	Roadways	Rehabilitation	\$ 158,000
	Sidewalks	Rehabilitation	\$ 206,400
	Municipal Buildings	Grading and fire protection at all buildings, administrative office exterior remediation, firehall repairs, Seniors' Drop-In Centre shingles and foundation	\$ 78,000
		Sub-Total	\$1,634,900
Two to Five Years	Water Distribution System	Upgrades and looping	\$2,373,000
	Fire Hydrants	Install additional to increase coverage	\$ 50,000
	CRF Restorative Seal	Rehabilitation	\$ 112,000
	Sidewalk Connections	Curb ramps and street connections	\$ 42,400
	Municipal Buildings	Old PW building demolition, Birch Lake items	\$ 44,500
	Prairie Bank Museum	Restoration	\$ 337,000
	Sub-Total	\$2,958,900	
Six To Ten Years	Additional Water Storage	New storage and connections to accommodate community size	\$3,000,000
	Roadway Chip Seal Coat	Rehabilitation	\$ 870,000
		Sub-Total	\$3,870,000
		Ten-Year Total	\$8,463,800

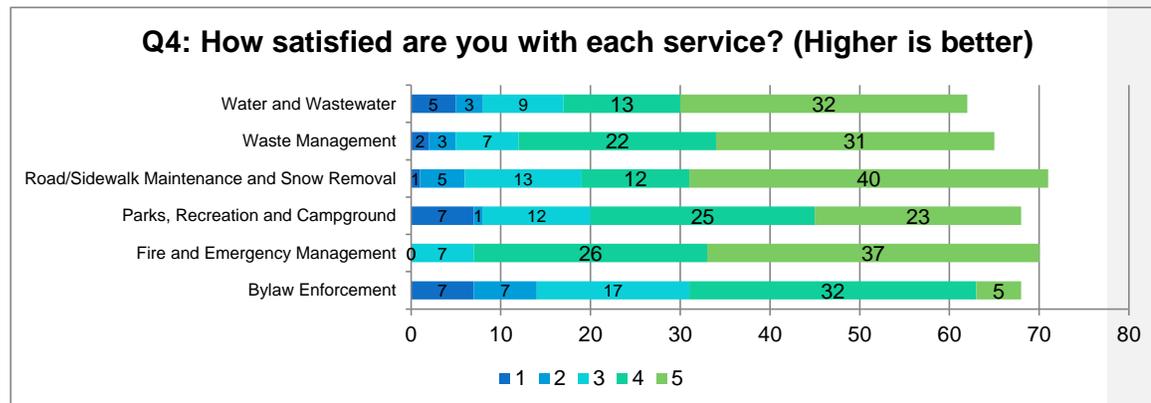
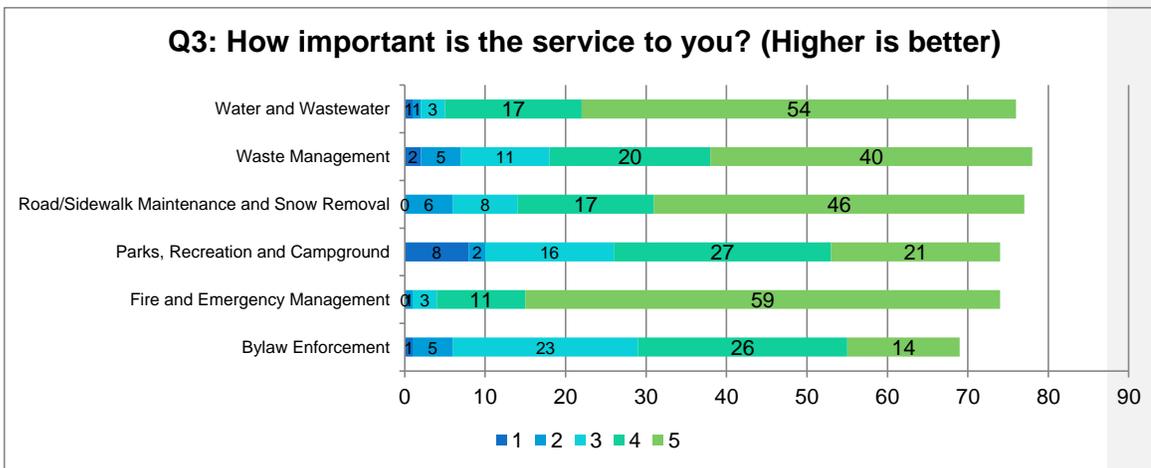
Appendix D: Utility Revenues and Expenses

Municipal Utility	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Water - Operating Revenues	\$101,572	\$236,438	\$79,873	\$99,995	\$105,332
Water - Operating Expenses	\$115,535	\$122,812	\$158,047	\$157,964	\$154,848
Water - Subtotal	-\$13,963	\$113,626	-\$78,174	-\$57,969	-\$49,516
Water - Operations Subsidy (from Property Taxes)	\$13,963	\$0	\$78,174	\$57,969	\$49,516
Water - Operations Subsidy as Mill Rate	1.18	0.00	6.90	4.51	3.82
Water - Operations Subsidy as Percentage of Property Tax Revenues	6.35%	0.00%	29.94%	21.91%	18.63%
Water - Operations Subsidy as Percentage of Total Revenues	1.63%	0.00%	11.57%	6.95%	4.73%
Wastewater - Operating Revenues	\$140,476	\$31,300	\$41,666	\$34,438	\$36,469
Wastewater - Operating Expenses	\$53,937	\$51,583	\$64,938	\$55,682	\$53,903
Wastewater - Subtotal	\$86,539	-\$20,283	-\$23,272	-\$21,244	-\$17,434
Wastewater - Operations Subsidy (from Property Taxes)	\$0	\$20,283	\$23,272	\$21,244	\$17,434
Wastewater - Operations Subsidy as Mill Rate	0.00	1.69	2.05	1.65	1.35
Wastewater - Operations Subsidy as Percentage of Property Tax Revenues	0.00%	7.96%	8.91%	8.03%	6.56%
Wastewater - Operations Subsidy as Percentage of Total Revenues	0.00%	2.67%	3.44%	2.55%	1.67%
Waste Management - Operating Revenues	\$60,514	\$61,844	\$39,455	\$53,276	\$68,919
Waste Management - Operating Expenses	\$30,351	\$58,180	\$147,423	\$50,438	\$55,332
Waste Management - Subtotal	\$30,163	\$3,664	-\$107,968	\$2,838	\$13,587
Waste Management - Operations Subsidy (from Property Taxes)	\$0	\$0	\$107,968	\$0	\$0
Waste Management - Operations Subsidy as Mill Rate	0.00	0.00	9.52	0.00	0.00
Waste Management - Operations Subsidy as Percentage of Property Tax Revenues	0.00%	0.00%	41.35%	0.00%	0.00%
Waste Management - Operations Subsidy as Percentage of Total Revenues	0.00%	0.00%	15.98%	0.00%	0.00%
ALL UTILITIES - Operating Revenues	\$302,562	\$329,582	\$160,994	\$187,709	\$210,720
ALL UTILITIES - Operating Expenses	\$199,823	\$232,575	\$370,408	\$264,084	\$264,083
ALL UTILITIES - TOTAL	\$102,739	\$97,007	-\$209,414	-\$76,375	-\$53,363
ALL UTILITIES - Operations Subsidy (from Property Taxes)	\$0	\$0	\$209,414	\$76,375	\$53,363
ALL UTILITIES - Operations Subsidy as Mill Rate	0.00	0.00	18.47	5.95	4.12
ALL UTILITIES - Operations Subsidy as Percentage of Property Tax Revenues	0.00%	0.00%	80.20%	28.86%	20.08%
ALL UTILITIES - Operations Subsidy as Percentage of Total Revenues	0.00%	0.00%	30.99%	9.15%	5.10%

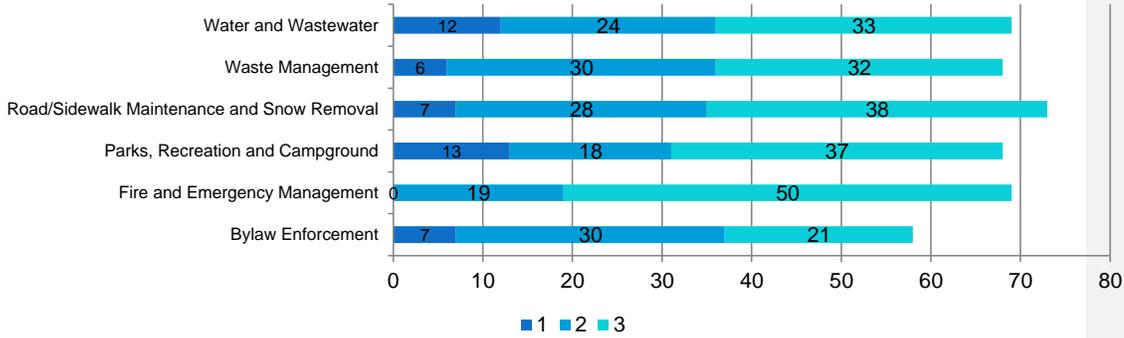
Appendix E: Community Survey Results

Village of Innisfree Viability Review Community Survey Results – March 16, 2017

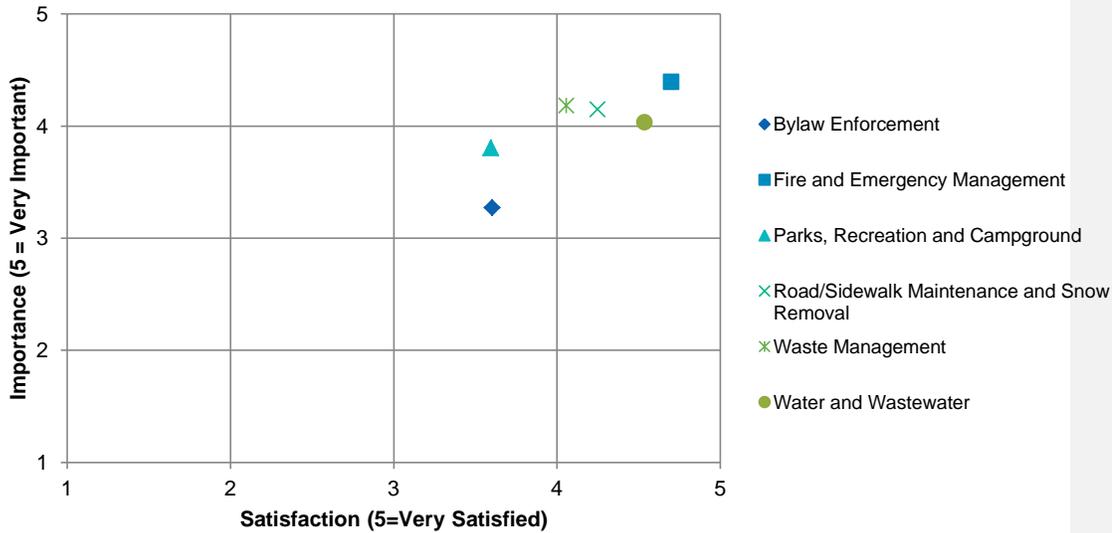
The following chart shows the results of the rating questions (Q3, Q4 and Q5) from the community survey:



Q5: Has the service improved in the past 3 years? (Higher is better)



Questions 3 & 4, combined view



Verbatim Comments:

Question 1: What is important to you about Innisfree as a community?

- Not important. Slowly declining.
- Sense of community, quiet and peaceful.
- Comm_(?)___ in the village/the fire department, library and school.
- Involvement in so many organizations with volunteers from the surrounding area and the village - very vibrant community.
- The sidewalks, streets and alleys, are all well taken care of. An excellent modern school from K-12, a quiet, friendly place to call home. Don't want Innisfree to change.
- Since the last election, Innisfree is slowly declining. We have very few services and no industry.
- Maintenance of streets, sidewalks, fire protection in the village. Hopefully in the future if we go county, fire hall remains in village or else my property insurance will go up. Keep all the organizations (Rec Centre, Curling Rink, Hockey Arena) operational.
- I am new to this area was the quaintness of the area, the people seemed friendly, small, quiet, clean. All your basic needs are here. Definitely a life change. People keep to themselves.
- I feel the community is vital. Ambitious dedicated to the people and its affairs.
- To remain a village and continue to make their own decisions.
- I attended this meeting. As a community Innisfree is very friendly, good services, enjoy living in this village.
- It is important to keep Innisfree as a community.
- Not important.
- To keep it as a community.
- The community spirit is alive and well and we have facilities available for our use.
- This community is very quiet and safe to live in.
- Quiet safe community to live in. Keep the great services we enjoy now.
- We have many modern facilities operated mostly by volunteers and organizations, also a K-12 modern school. I cannot see this all disintegrate into the county.
- To have control and see where our taxes are used.
- This a safe community where everyone is known to one another. Where residents will give a smile or a friendly hand when needed. Where people respected one another.

Question 2: Where do you see the future of Innisfree?

- No future. Always increasing taxes.
- Working together the people of the village can change _____ things including the price of electricity by conserving and learning how to use what you have in a more sustainable way.
- Staying the same and moving forward.
- Tourism is a great possibility as well as having potential for future movie productions.
- I don't see no future. I have read the engineers report and it is impossible for council to come up with two million dollars.

- Hopefully stay the same. If we go county, I can see streets and back alley snow removal not as quick as current.
- I see Innisfree remaining a vital community because the drive and motivation.
- To remain a strong viable village.
- Innisfree to stay as a village. The spirit of this village is great. Hope it stays this way.
- Eventually, it would probably become a hamlet, but hopefully not for a long time.
- There is no future. The four years that council was elected were the worse. Never improved anything. Very materialistic.
- Staying the same.
- I see the community staying as it but we could have good growth if we focused on spin off Hi Way 16 (Park, Business)
- Given the opportunity Innisfree is going to be able to grow economically as well as develop tourism with the beautiful recreation park.
- Hopefully Innisfree will prosper and grow in the future.
- Remain a small community.
- Where? I'm not sure but I would like to see it about 10-12 years back the way it was.

Question 22: If the Village of Innisfree is not dissolved in the future, what are your expectations of the Village of Innisfree and are there any changes that you would like to see at the Village of Innisfree?

- Residents are worried about costs of utilities. If you want to hire someone who has knowledge of how to best use the resources you have in the most economical way possible. Things such as phantom power use, replacement of older electrical appliances, use of LED bulbs, etc. The village can dissolve or grow. It all depends on the residents.
- I think the village is doing okay as is.
- Perhaps 3 councillors instead of five.
- I expect more community events i.e. Canada Day, museum events Family Day, Info meeting, open meetings.
- I would like the village to carry on as they have been doing basically. There is always room for improvement any where, but I believe they are doing a good job.
- Because our population is slowly declining, I cannot see any improvements. Upon reading the engineers report, I cannot see any improvements. Since the election four years ago, nothing has been done here.
- Expect village to be run as is now. Maintenance of streets and sidewalks to remain the same. Snow removal to be kept up as is. Drop number of councillors down to 3 from present 5.
- I feel the council is a hardworking energetic group and interest of the community is very strong with many hands making it a delightful place.
- As far as I see it, the village is run very well.
- Will not survive.
- The village will go to hell.

- Upon reading the engineers report, I cannot see how Innisfree can survive as a village. The last four years council has not improved anything in this village. With a small population, why do we need two CAOs to administer our affairs?
- Keep up the good job.
- Continue as we are with the excellent services.
- Taxes are too high - if village is to improve, more taxes - no way.
- I feel that the village is operating quite smoothly and should remain this way. I do not agree with ATB Financial operating in the village office. There is no privacy at all.
- I would strongly like to see our village council spending time in areas of improving our village instead of, for the last few years, trying to please a handful of people (that some don't live in the village), some move here, spend most of there time away.
- Being that we are located centrally between Vegreville and Vermilion we are in a good position to grow.
- Remain a clean and tidy village.
- I love Innisfree!! Since 1952. Always will. This review should never have happened. What are these people thinking?
- Change into a county.

Question 23: If the Village of Innisfree is dissolved in the future, it would become a hamlet in the County of Minburn. What are your expectations of the County of Minburn should dissolution occur?

- No comment. I served on the County of Minburn as an elected official for three years. I am aware of what would happen. The services would still be there.
- Provide support services in a timely and efficient way. Make available experts in the fields of electrical construction, efficiency and use of the most modern and technically efficient ways to reduce use of utilities while still enjoying the use of the best of all things. Best to provide and _____.
- I am in the county - I feel it would affect property value if there is no village. I feel a lot of our youth groups, library, museum would be lost.
- All the services we get now - snow plowed, etc., etc., etc.
- Lesser services. Taxation at varying amounts to upgrade infrastructure.
- It would be terrible if the village became a hamlet. We would be going backwards, when many have volunteered and worked hard to have the facilities we have such as a recreation centre, curling rink, skating arena, public library, etc. If it did go to a hamlet, I would expect the county to keep up our facilities, streets, etc. just as they are now.
- I already have knowledge that we would be served well.
- Keep Rec Centre, hockey arena, curling rink, parking lots as clean and as fast as they get cleaned now. Keep streets and especially back alleys (a lot of residences only have back alley access to their garages) clean after snow falls as cleans as they are today.
- I don't think the county will extend any input or interest in the community.
- Lower taxes, road maintenance.
- Nothing will be done in the village.
- Have knowledge that the County of Minburn will serve us well.

- Do not want - for we will not get the services we have today.
- Same as it is now.
- I wish to see all the services we presently have remain the same.
- I truly believe that the village should still have input wither by a voted member or councillor that can represent our village (should live in village).
- I have lived here for 93 years and have no intention of seeing it dissolved. I expect the services will greatly deteriorate. We have 3 perfect examples of this now to the east and to the west of us.
- Well maintained and all services provided.
- I do not want to be a hamlet in the County of Minburn!

Question 24: Do you have any other comments that you would like to share with the Viability Review Team that is guiding the Village of Innisfree viability review?

- I was very disappointed in the Mar. 16/17 meeting. Why were the residents not informed in the findings of the engineering report? Why did it take one resident to print the report off of the website and then make it public? When I approached council (the mayor) she said it would be too expensive to print copies. I feel this meeting was a waste of time.
- Q6- We are not full time residents so not fair to answer question. Taxes are far too high. Almost \$1500 for 33' lot is higher than the city. Q8-No sidewalks. Our sidewalks was removed when new sewer was installed. Sidewalk was not replaced. Q24-Our taxes have risen almost 300% since purchasing our property. We enjoy coming out and spending time in this lovely little village. Our neighbours are friendly and we enjoy the quiet. However, we are paying almost \$2500 in taxes each year. We don't have garbage pickup, no snow clearing as the small amount of sidewalk we have and without a community newspaper it is hard to know what is happening. I may sound angry. I am not - just concerned.
- As a county resident, I spend lots of volunteer hours in the village especially at the library. I am extremely concerned that young families locate in Innisfree to ensure the future of the school, library, community groups, such as dance, 4H, private kindergarten, quilting group, etc.
- Having lived under the municipal government for over 50 years on the farm, other on an acreage, I had to pay for everything - bringing natural gas to in \$ thousands, water system, sewage system, garbage disposal and all this was in the tens of thousands. Now for the past years I moved into the village and what a relief - monthly payments instead of thousands at a time for upgrades - WHAT A RELIEF. Villagers do not understand that these services are so taken for granted by them. They want to be subsidized by the county resident??
- Another public meeting to share information discovery by the Viability Review. Municipal Access Fee - \$65 Jan. 2016 400.00, County of Minburn - No charge. Minimum Tax \$50.00 \$750.00. Attack on my property rights.
- The fellows who took around the petition are people who have moved to Innisfree in recent years, do not take part in the community of any sort, only cause trouble. Many of we residents didn't see the petition at all, they went to a select few, telling them their taxes would be lowered if in the county. We have lived here in the village and farmed in the area for over 60 years. Have taken part and volunteered for a great deal in the community, so are very anxious for Innisfree to stay a village.
- I feel that council is not knowledgeable enough to handle the affairs of the village. Property taxes are constantly on the rise and no improvements have been made. In the "2013" report recommendations, _____ made that council share at least one meeting a year for input from the residents. We have never had a meeting. We are also kept in the dark. I also feel that council wages are ridiculous for the amount of work they do, especially the CAO.

- In future if anyone sells vacant lot - make a village bylaw that new owner must develop on that lot within two years. Consider dropping the number of councillors from 5 to 3 councillors.
- Not a resident of the village, not totally aware of all areas. I understand the taxes will never be lowered if joining the county nor any debts written off. I understand there is no advantage to joining the county. I feel this viability study is just a personal grudge on behalf of one village resident and encouraged followers. The community population is very supportive, organizations, people doing the utmost to ent___ over residents and he is very offensive. We have been a very viable community. We do not need anyone to hold our hand to maintain our village. Some naysayers just got all excited as far as I can see. Our community has so many assets. Positives to NOT BE A HAMLET. Enough industry commerce to maintain ourselves.
- For Innisfree to stay as a village.
- I want Innisfree to stay as a village. Good services.
- Let it stay the same.
- With a population of 193 residents and not much knowledge from the CAO and councillors and no industry in this village, I strongly feel the village should be dissolved.
- County will not clean town streets promptly like our services provide now as they will clean back roads for emergencies and bus routes first. We have great services now as our community works together we have lots to offer even through we are a small community. Leave it run as it is.
- The person who started this review should pay for the cost. Many people signed who did not what they were signing.
- Our sense of community is very important to us. I feel that many community members are happy to volunteer and contribute within the community. If dissolved, I feel that some of that will be lost. I like to have input in my community decisions. I also have concern for people who are employed by the town and do a great job and are wonderful to deal with. We are not just a number as we will feel if dissolution happens.
- Taxes too high.
- I feel the village has enough funds to maintain the present services we enjoy. I also think it is sad that this study is required as one resident goes around the village convincing our seniors to sign his petition, by giving false information.
- The village is well maintained. I'm satisfied with all the services as they are.
- We have had issues in our village that were caused by people that only live here a short time, then leave, they prey on people that can be easily swayed (come here sign this your taxes will go down). This happens over and over. This has to stop. It must cost the government thousands of dollars for these processes, studies, reviews, we will never progress as long as council has this problem to be concerned with instead of positive progress.
- I am very disappointed that this has happened again, because of a few disgruntled newcomers that have no idea what it takes to live in a small community and be a part of it. We are very concerned about the cost this study to taxpayers. We would like to see a financial statement of the cost of this study sent to the Village of Innisfree.
- I would like the people to know that before all this started, we were better off without petitions confusing original residents, the people who started these petitions are not original residents, had moved in from elsewhere and do not live here anymore!!! Are they on to more distraction?
- The five year grant if village is county 3.5 million to equipment sold, should cover infrastructure revitalization. New town shop should be paye*id* by county If sold to some industry or company to get money back.