



# HEALTH SERVICES ACTION PLAN

April 2024

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Beaumont is experiencing continued growth. The city has grown 19.7% in the past five years and has the potential to see its population double by 2044. Simultaneously, the areas around Beaumont continue to grow at rapid rates.

To help fulfill Council's commitments to meeting the needs of Beaumont's current and future population, enhanced accessibility and continually looking for innovative solutions to support Beaumont's young and thriving community, Administration completed a Community Health Needs Assessment with MNP LLP and Alberta Health Services. A Health Needs Assessment is the first step of health planning with Alberta Health, which identified gaps in current health services and future needs as the community grows. The Health Services Action Plan represents the next step, which is a feasibility assessment of what is possible to achieve as a Municipality.

The Community Health Needs Assessment used the Population Health Needs Framework process to complete this work, which was developed by Alberta Health Services, the Alberta Medical Association and the Primary Care Networks. This framework helps to plan services based on what matters most to our communities and shifts the focus towards wellness (wellbeing) over the life course while improving population health outcomes and supporting health equity. This includes the physical, biological and mental health, built environment, social environment, natural environment, community adaptiveness and resilience, and the socioeconomic and political context. In other words, it involves the full spectrum of healthcare, including preventative community measures.

There was excellent participation from residents via survey responses (940 responses) and feedback provided in community group sessions (40 participants) – the most engagement we've seen on a City initiative. This sample size with a population of 23,000 gives us a high degree of confidence in this data, with a small margin of error. Residents consistently recognized the hard work frontline health professionals are providing to the community, despite growing demands on the healthcare system, increasing costs to run their clinics, and the difficulty in being able to recruit additional family physicians to their practices. While Beaumontians report being satisfied with their current health and wellness options, needs will increase as the community grows and enhanced options will be required to support Beaumont and the surrounding areas.

This Health Services Action Plan will focus on how this analysis will put City leadership in a good position to propose potential innovative health models, build upon partnerships with adjacent communities, and support information sharing among health and social service providers to enhance Beaumont's focus on being a safe and vibrant community.

Care was taken not to speculate on increasing healthcare access locally nor on specific service enhancements. Communications to the public are clear about the City's role and that healthcare service delivery is a provincial government responsibility.

# WHAT BEAUMONT DOES WELL

The Population Health Needs Assessment model, used by Alberta Health Services, identifies what matters most to the residents in our community and includes a focus on well-being in addition to medical needs. An important part of this assessment was to look at “what is working well” in this community and how to build on those strengths.

With that in mind, let’s begin with the highlights on what’s going well:

- ✓ Beaumont is above average across many social determinants of health, including income, social connectedness, and education.
- ✓ Residents’ overall health status is positive, with 87% of individuals being satisfied with their health and 89% feeling their quality of health is good, very good, or excellent.
- ✓ 82% of health needs assessment survey respondents reported having a family doctor, which is corroborated by the Alberta Community Health Survey done annually, which showed 86% have a family doctor.
- ✓ 100% of residents have reported feeling safe within the community.
- ✓ And more than 90% of respondents said there are affordable recreational opportunities and accessible walking paths and green spaces.

Beaumont has a range of amenities to offer residents within the city and surrounding communities which support the community’s overall health and well-being. These range from recreational facilities to outdoor trails, parks and skating rinks. This range of amenities includes both paid and free activities.

The community also boasts several services that were pointed to as supporting the health and wellness of residents, including:

- Family and Community Support Services (FCSS)
- Jef’s Café and inclusive employment opportunities
- Black Gold School Division’s inclusive educational programs
- The 50+ Club for seniors
- Beaumont Men’s Shed
- Level Up for mental health and wellness
- Chantal Berubé Youth Centre for low-cost youth programming
- Naturopathie Integrative Clinic
- Artists’ Association of Beaumont

Among many others.

# THE ASSESSMENT & THE PLAN

Fundamentally, the Community Health Needs Assessment highlighted that overall, Beaumont has good access to health services and is a healthy community, but there is room for improvement. The full analysis can be found in the complete Community Health Needs Assessment, completed by MNP LLP. For the purposes of this Health Services Action Plan, the key gaps will be summarized.

The key gaps in services included:

- After-Hours, Emergent, and Urgent care services;
- Primary care physicians and clinics with capacity for new patients;
- Accessible transit services;
- Social supports for seniors, people with disabilities and their caregivers, and 2SLGBTQIA+ children and youth

Based on the recommendations in the Community Health Needs Assessment, Administration has developed the following Action Plan, with timelines, resourcing and responsibility considerations. Actions were broken up into four time periods: Immediate (0-6 months), short-term (1-2 years), medium-term (3-5 years), and long-term (6-10 years).

The final report, as well as this Health Services Action Plan, meets the objectives laid out in Council’s Strategic Plan, including:



- Beaumont’s current health care needs are being addressed by senior levels of government, and they are aware of future needs as the community grows.
- Citizens are connected with existing pathways to healthcare.
- Citizens can access an array of services from a network of practitioners in the region.

The role of the municipality was considered using the following descriptors. Mayor and Council’s role will be included in the government relations activities.

Role	Descriptor
Leader/Owner	The City leads efforts to achieve the stated action.
Provider	The City directly delivers the stated action.
Broker	The City acts as a facilitator to bring together organizations and individuals.
Supporter	The City assists and builds capacity for other organizations.
Storyteller	The City shares stories that build an inclusive narrative.

# THE ASSESSMENT & THE PLAN

## After-hours, Emergent and Urgent care services

Urgent care services are for people who have unexpected but non-life-threatening health concerns that require same-day treatment. Some examples include broken bones, sprains, lacerations, asthma, dehydration, pain and infections. The assessment found there isn't an urgent care centre within a 15-kilometre radius of Beaumont, which encourages residents to use the nearest hospital for non-emergency care. While there are three walk-in clinics within a 15-kilometre radius to support non-urgent care services, hours of service (one clinic only accepts walk-ins from 9:00-11:00am, Monday-Friday), availability of service (walk-ins only accepted if the doctor's schedule has an opening), and long wait times (ranging from 2-5 hours on an ongoing basis) provides limited access for residents.

Semi-urgent and non-urgent emergency visits account for nearly 30% of all emergency visits for Beaumontians, indicating that over 3600 of all emergency visits in 1 year could have been addressed through a visit to a health provider or clinic located in Beaumont. This lack of availability will only be exacerbated as the community continues to grow. Additionally, the top 3 most utilized ERs by Beaumontians exceed the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's 85% threshold for occupancy.

## Action

### Regional and intergovernmental collaboration on improved capacity for urgent care

To address the growth in the region, as well as the over-utilization at the Grey Nuns Hospital and Leduc Community Hospital, Administration will begin conversations within the next 6 months with Beaumont's regional neighbours, as well as Alberta Health, to discuss gaps in urgent and semi-urgent care. These discussions will include, but not be limited to, what services could help reduce the over-capacity of these two hospitals, and if feasible, explore options (for example, public-private partnerships (P3s)) for planning a new facility within the next 10 years to address long-term regional growth. If it was decided that a new facility would be required, Alberta Health would typically be responsible for building the infrastructure, and staffing would be managed by one of the service delivery agencies.

## Details

*Municipal role:* Leader/Owner, Broker

*Lead department:* CAO Office

*Resourcing:* Existing

*Potential partners:* Alberta Health, Alberta Health Services leadership, including the Edmonton Zone medical staff association, Covenant Health, City of Leduc, Leduc County, Town of Devon, City of Edmonton

*Timeline:* Immediate to begin conversations, but improved capacity falls in the long-term

### Primary care physicians and clinics with capacity for new patients

The report found a demand for more access to primary health care team services and expanded capacity of services within the City, supported by a shortfall in primary care service capacity and travel patterns outside Beaumont identified through AHS administrative data. Beaumontians also visit their family physician roughly four (4) times per year, compared to the provincial average of a 1:1 ratio. Physicians in Beaumont see roughly 20 patients per day. This could be due to the pediatric needs of the community as well as a prevalence of chronic disease in the population (high blood pressure, diabetes, ischemic heart disease). The increased reliance on family physicians practicing in the Beaumont LGA has a significant impact on capacity as well.

Additional data received from the College of Physicians and Surgeons regarding physicians practicing in the Beaumont Local Geographic Area shows that: As of 2024, 13 physicians practice in Beaumont, which is a decrease of 4 physicians since 2023. Beaumont has seen a downward trend of physicians since 2022 (a 28% decrease – 18 to 13), despite an estimated 5% increase in population. 3 physicians estimate they will retire within 5 years, and another 3 estimate between 5-10 years.

As we plan for growth over the next 10-15 years, increasing primary care services, particularly those that offer models of care currently missing in the community (after-hours care, walk-in capacity, integration with social care services) will be critical.

Action	Details
<p><b>Attraction efforts for additional primary care services</b></p> <p>The assessment identified primary care physicians and clinics with capacity for new patients as a need. To address this need, Administration will utilize the final Community Health Needs Assessment report and meet with potential businesses or partners to explore opportunities to bring additional services to Beaumont, serving the growing population. Potential solutions could include a medical clinic with walk-in capacity or working to attract nurse practitioners to the community.</p>	<p><i>Municipal role:</i> Leader/Owner <i>Lead department:</i> Economic Development <i>Resourcing:</i> Additional <i>Potential partners:</i> Walk-in clinics, pharmacy clinics, Nurse Practitioner Association of Alberta, Alberta Primary Care Nurses Association, and others <i>Timeline:</i> Short-term to begin attraction efforts, but improved capacity estimated to fall in medium- to long-term</p>
<p><b>Incentivizing community-specific health needs</b></p> <p>To address the community-specific gaps noted in the community health needs assessment (after-hours care, walk-in capacity, semi-urgent care), Administration will explore potential incentives to encourage the specific services to support the needs of Beaumont residents. The key focus of incentivizing enhancements is for local clinics (existing or new) to provide services that resolve identified community needs, rather than incentivizing all services. It is recommended that a set of criteria be developed to assess proposals in this category. Incentives will need to be focused on enhancing access to healthcare services and fall within the legal mandate of the municipality.</p>	<p><i>Municipal role:</i> Leader/Owner <i>Lead department:</i> Economic Development <i>Resourcing:</i> Existing <i>Potential partners:</i> Internal <i>Timeline:</i> Short-term</p>
<p><b>Enhance recruitment of French-language physician services</b></p> <p>Beaumont is one of four bilingual communities in Alberta and we are served by only one bilingual part-time family physician. The 2021 Statistics Canada census showed that 735 (3.5% of the population) identified French as their first language. The federal government has provided funding to assist with the recruitment of bilingual physicians in the past and further research is required to determine if this funding still exists and whether Beaumont would qualify. This will also require working with one of the existing medical clinics to ensure adequate capacity exists.</p>	<p><i>Municipal role:</i> Leader <i>Lead department:</i> Community Services <i>Resourcing:</i> Additional <i>Potential partners:</i> Local medical clinic <i>Timeline:</i> Short-term</p>

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As we plan for growth over the next 10-15 years, increasing primary care services, particularly those that offer services currently missing in the community (after-hours care, walk-in capacity) will be critical.

Action	Details
<p><b>Encourage family physician residents and nurse practitioners to make Beaumont their home</b></p> <p>One way to encourage more family physicians to make Beaumont their home is to have their residency occur in the community. Administration will explore options for a “grant” that eligible family practice residents could receive to assist with student loan repayment if they practice in Beaumont for a determined period post-graduation. Further research is required to determine the adequate amount of funding and the details of the grant agreement, as well as connect with local medical clinics to work with their existing attraction efforts.</p>	<p><i>Municipal role:</i> Leader <i>Lead department:</i> Community Services <i>Resourcing:</i> Additional <i>Potential partners:</i> Local medical clinics <i>Timeline:</i> Short-term</p>
<p><b>Explore potential barriers to utilizing team-based care with the Primary Care Network</b></p> <p>The data provided by the Leduc-Beaumont-Devon Primary Care Network suggests an under-reliance on team-based care, with limited referrals being made by physicians in the PCN. Additionally, community engagement showed that residents do not know how to access PCN services or what is available to them. It would also be beneficial to explore what mental health services are or could be provided by the PCN team.</p>	<p><i>Municipal role:</i> Supporter <i>Lead department:</i> Community Services <i>Resourcing:</i> Additional <i>Potential partners:</i> Proposed multidisciplinary health network, Leduc-Beaumont-Devon PCN <i>Timeline:</i> Immediate</p>

## Accessible Transit Services

Data on the availability of transit services within Beaumont supports more availability and accessibility in transportation systems offered to Beaumontians. The lack of transportation hinders the ability for residents to access the services they need within and outside of city limits. Seniors and people with disabilities said City transit services were a considerable barrier to accessing the services needed to stay healthy and well. There is also a considerable afternoon scheduling gap, which is a key time needed to access services and appointments. This aligns with recommendations already included in the Social Master Plan and Age-Friendly Strategy.

### Action

#### Explore transportation options for residents struggling with accessibility

Accessibility challenges surfaced during the community meetings with seniors and people with disabilities and their caregivers. Administration explored the issue of accessing medical facilities prior to developing this Health Care Action Plan and were able to confirm all physicians' offices are in buildings which are physically accessible. Patients with limited mobility often need the assistance of a caregiver or office staff member. However, transit options to get to and from appointments within the community are limited. Administration will explore transportation options for individuals within the community.

### Details

*Municipal role:* Leader/Owner  
*Lead department:* Community Services  
*Resourcing:* Existing  
*Potential partners:* Internal  
*Timeline:* Medium-term

#### Explore a regional mobile health unit

To address transportation issues within the community, support aging in place initiatives, as well as reduce reliance on family medicine practitioners, Administration will explore a regional mobile health unit with the region that utilizes allied health professionals to monitor chronic/metabolic diseases at home and can assist residents with virtual care.

*Municipal role:* Leader/Owner, Broker  
*Lead department:* Community Services  
*Resourcing:* Additional  
*Potential partners:* Alberta Health, Alberta Health Services leadership, including the Edmonton Zone medical staff association, Covenant Health, City of Leduc, Leduc County, Town of Devon, City of Edmonton  
*Timeline:* Medium-term



## Social supports, including mental health, for seniors, people with disabilities and their caregivers, and 2SLGBTQIA+ children and youth

Respondents to the assessment survey identified isolation/loneliness as part of the top five non-medical social determinants of health they think most affect Beaumont. In addition, data from this report suggested a need for increased capacity within Beaumont's FCSS team. Asset mapping showed an absence of services dedicated to supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ children and youth within Beaumont. Additionally, data from the Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities points out the heightened expectation for FCSS to address diverse and complex needs beyond their mandate, and are increasingly encountering individuals requiring income, mental health, food, and shelter supports. The community group meetings brought to attention gaps in supports for families navigating parenting challenges; the isolation of people with disabilities; and the lack of knowledge among community members regarding the existing services.

Action	Details
<b>Hire an additional resource in the Community Services department</b> Action items included in this plan build on the work identified in the Social Master Plan, Age-Friendly Strategy, and the Affordable Housing Strategy. To accomplish this work, Administration will bring forward an additional FTE resource to the 2025 budget deliberations. This role would also include expanding efforts with Community Volunteer Organizations in Beaumont.	<i>Municipal role:</i> Provider <i>Lead department:</i> Community Services <i>Resourcing:</i> Additional <i>Potential partners:</i> N/A <i>Timeline:</i> Short-term
<b>Explore a multi-cultural resource with the Primary Care Network</b> Work with the Primary Care Network to explore Multicultural Health Brokers and Community Health Navigators to ensure newcomers and other growing communities do not experience barriers to services within the community.	<i>Municipal role:</i> Supporter <i>Lead department:</i> Community Services <i>Resourcing:</i> Additional <i>Potential partners:</i> N/A <i>Timeline:</i> Medium-term
<b>Creation of a more inclusive environment and additional supports for people to participate in current neighbourhood and community events</b> Administration will explore options to enhance accessibility in event planning, including options for a network of volunteers or event organizers that can assist individuals in participating.	<i>Municipal role:</i> Provider <i>Lead department:</i> Community Services <i>Resourcing:</i> Existing <i>Potential partners:</i> N/A <i>Timeline:</i> Medium-term

## Municipal engagement and advocacy efforts

To address gaps in service identified in the needs assessment, consistent advocacy and relationship building will be required with provincial agencies and neighbouring municipalities. The following actions identify the immediate priorities for engagement and advocacy.

Action	Details
<p><b>Engagement with health innovation agencies to explore opportunities</b></p> <p>Administration has met with health innovation agencies, including Health Cities and Alberta Innovates, to keep them apprised of the Community Health Needs Assessment and Administration's efforts to improve services in the community. Both organizations expressed interest in reconnecting once the project was complete to explore innovative solutions to the identified gaps.</p>	<p><i>Municipal role:</i> Leader/Owner, Broker <i>Lead department:</i> CAO Office <i>Resourcing:</i> Existing <i>Potential partners:</i> Alberta Innovates, Health Cities <i>Timeline:</i> Immediate</p>
<p><b>Continue engagement with Edmonton Zone leadership for Alberta Health Services and other health authorities</b></p> <p>Prior to beginning the needs assessment, Administration connected with the Edmonton medical zone with Alberta Health Services regarding this project. It is a priority to re-connect with this team and other health authorities to explore models of care to improve capacity and address gaps in service for the community. Exploring models of care with these service delivery agencies will allow for broader solutions to be developed.</p>	<p><i>Municipal role:</i> Broker, Supporter <i>Lead department:</i> CAO Office <i>Resourcing:</i> Existing <i>Potential partners:</i> Alberta Health Services, Covenant Health, Alberta Health, Covenant Health <i>Timeline:</i> Immediate</p>
<p><b>Update Beaumont's government advocacy plan</b></p> <p>With the Community Health Needs Assessment is complete and gaps in service identified and validated with data, work will begin with the team at Canadian Strategy Group to update the government advocacy plan. This advocacy plan will outline the steps needed to work with the provincial government and service delivery agencies as the new health structure unfolds, as well as continued advocacy on Primary Care Network funding allocations. This will allow Beaumont to remain front and centre during the structural changes and address challenges as they arise.</p>	<p><i>Municipal role:</i> Leader/Owner <i>Lead department:</i> CAO Office <i>Resourcing:</i> Existing <i>Potential partners:</i> Canadian Strategy Group (External Consultant) <i>Timeline:</i> Immediate</p>

### Community and Provider Knowledge and Awareness of Existing Key Health and Community-Based Social Services

A significant finding of the assessment was that there are a variety of health and social services available to Beaumontians; however, there exists a significant gap between what residents perceive to be available and what is available. As well, during the community group session with healthcare providers, this group also noted a lack of understanding among healthcare providers regarding available health and community-based social services offered within Beaumont. These gaps in communication and connection are significant barriers to access.

Action	Details
<p><b>Build awareness of health-related services in the community and within the 15-km radius</b></p> <p>The assessment found several instances where residents were not aware of services available to them within a short distance from the city centre. An online map of services should be embedded into the new City of Beaumont website, to complement a communications campaign to build awareness of these services.</p>	<p><i>Municipal role:</i> Provider <i>Lead department:</i> Communications <i>Resourcing:</i> Existing <i>Potential partners:</i> N/A <i>Timeline:</i> Immediate</p>
<p><b>Explore the feasibility of a multidisciplinary health network</b></p> <p>Engagement with healthcare workers throughout this process highlighted that there is very little information sharing occurring between providers in the community and providers have little knowledge of what allied health professionals and agencies are available for referrals. Given the chronic diseases and social needs identified, collaboration across health and social service providers has never been more important, as these conditions are best served by in-home supports and community supports rather than acute care services. Better coordination between providers in the community is expected to improve patient care by increasing the likelihood of a “warm handoff” of patients to other providers and increase frontline worker morale by building a community of support.</p>	<p><i>Municipal role:</i> Broker, Supporter <i>Lead department:</i> Community Services <i>Resourcing:</i> Existing <i>Potential partners:</i> Beaumont Interagency Group <i>Timeline:</i> Immediate</p>

# SUMMARY

Beaumont is continuing to grow and that growth puts pressure on the services that residents need. As more people choose to make this city their home, these services will need to adapt and change to serve a larger community. Beaumont's healthcare workers have served the community incredibly well for several years and continue to do so. Administration will work with the healthcare community and workers to ensure further actions support the efforts of those working here, rather than detract from those efforts.

As these enhancements and initiatives are launched, it will be important to communicate availability, share the good news, and encourage feedback. Looking at these initiatives from a strategic perspective, they do not have to be standalone promotions or campaigns. They could and should be tied to other initiatives that support the City's overall strategic goal to servicing the needs of residents, businesses and visitors. The CAO's office will work with Communications to build these cross promotions into communications strategies across program areas.