

2016



TOWN OF BLACKFALDS COMMUNITY BUSINESS PROFILE



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OVERVIEW

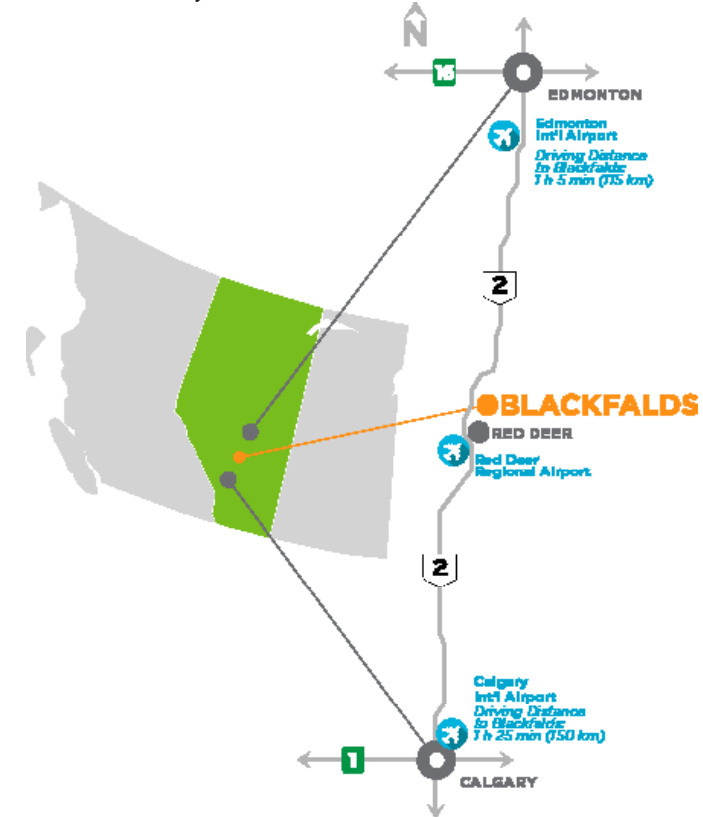
The [Town of Blackfalds](#) offers promising growth prospects to existing companies, a supportive network for budding entrepreneurs and partnership opportunities for new investors across a diverse range of industries.

Blackfalds is a vibrant and entrepreneurial community that is home to many well educated and young families, who are a critical factor in encouraging business prosperity.

Choose Blackfalds for your business because:

- **Entrepreneurs Welcome:** We provide the support you need to start or grow your firm whether large or small we have market opportunities and expert advice
- **Low Cost Advantages:** Among the most competitive tax environments in North America and no additional municipal business tax
- **Hub of Enterprise:** Many large firms are already here creating a staging place for the development of massive projects here and further North in Alberta and beyond
- **Ideal Location:** High visibility, access to 2.5 million people within a 2-hour drive along the CANAMEX Highway 2 and situated on a section of Highway 2A with high traffic volume counts to major capital projects
- **Impressive Growth:** As one of the fastest growing communities in Canada, Blackfalds has a projected high growth population rate of 9,510 in 2016 to 24,927 in 2030

- **Young, Active and Skilled Workforce:** where almost 50% of the workforce, primarily between the ages of 19 and 40, hold a university degree or post-secondary diploma.
- **High Recreational Quality of Life:** The [Abbey Centre](#), an award winning recreational and cultural facility is the heart of this dynamic community



HISTORY

The Town of Blackfalds is a young and vibrant community, strategically located in Central Alberta on Highway 2A, one kilometre from Alberta's major north-south thoroughfare connecting Edmonton and Calgary.

The town is the closest urban centre to the Joffre area petrochemical plants and is within minutes of the spectacular Sylvan and Gull Lakes. It sits due North of the City of Red Deer and offers a small town experience on the doorstep of a major city.

Blackfalds has boasted impressive growth rates year after year, expanding 101% in the past decade. It is one of Alberta's fastest growing communities with a population of 9,510 in 2016. Coupled with a young and skilled population of whom over 75% are 40 years of age or under, ample opportunity exists for businesses to invest and expand in this bustling municipality.

Originally named 'Waghorn' after the first postmaster in the area, Blackfalds quickly grew owing to its proximity to the C&E trail and the railway. Settlers poured in from eastern Canada, Europe and the USA making it "a thriving little town rich in a rich agriculture and ranching district overlooking the junction of the Blindman and Red Deer Rivers."

Blackfalds is unique in its commitment to improving the quality of life for its citizens. Its residents place great importance on an active and healthy lifestyle, enhanced through numerous recreational facilities and regional parks and trail systems.

The community prides itself on its family-focused, small town feel and puts an emphasis on building and fostering the business landscape.



ACCESS TO MARKET

Blackfalds' location provides local companies a competitive advantage on the regional and global stage. The surrounding trade area comprises over 250,000 people, and there is the ability to distribute to 2.5 million within a 2-hour drive. The town also boasts the quickest commute in Alberta to a city centre, a short 10-minute, 7 km, drive to Red Deer.

Blackfalds is a hub for the oil and gas industry. A variety of companies use the community as a staging area. Many employers in the area are firms servicing the infrastructure development of oil and gas projects within the region and further north in the province.

Air

- Just over an hour drive to the Calgary International Airport, Canada's third largest. This airport serves as a major cargo hub for western Canada and major U.S. cities.
- Only an hour an hour drive to the Edmonton International Airport, Canada's fastest growing major airport over the last 10 years and the major air link to Northern Canada
- Central Alberta's regional airport in Red Deer has service 3 times per day, 7 days a week to Calgary through Air Canada with easy connections to many of Alberta, Canada, and 185 worldwide destinations

Rail

- Both the Canadian Pacific railway and the Canadian National Railway operate in Central Alberta managing the shipment of products across Canada and into the United States, and connecting to ports on both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

Highways

- Highway 2: Situated on the CANAMEX trade corridor linking Alberta to Mexico, an economic pipeline for business; just 150 km south to Calgary or north to Edmonton
- Highway 2A : Running through Blackfalds, sections of this highway see traffic counts of over 8,000 vehicles per day
- [BOLT Regional Transit](#) providing public transportation between the Town of Blackfalds and the cities of Lacombe and Red Deer
- Blackfalds is located just north of the Highway 2 and Highway 11 overpass, a height restricted overpass that limits the transportation of some large products



ECONOMY

Blackfalds energetic and competitive economic climate is made up of 290 companies, focused primarily in agriculture, natural resources, petrochemicals, construction, manufacturing and business services.

Given the area's resounding year over year population growth, construction is a pillar of the economy. Year 2014 was Blackfalds strongest to date, with an increase of 17% in building permits totaling \$116 million across commercial, residential and public projects.

Currently underway and noteworthy is the construction of the new K-9 Catholic school, [St. Gregory the Great](#), which began in spring 2016 and will open in fall 2017. This is predicted to be a \$14.5 million project.

With growth projected to continue, and a downtown revitalization project underway, demand will grow to serve the community, as will opportunities in retail, business services and building construction.



The below table illustrates the increase in building permits and new investment dollar value between 2013 - 2015 with over \$ 248 million in new investment in the most recent three years.

Building Permit Comparison 2013 - 2015						
	2013		2014		2015	
	# of Permits	Dollar Value	# of Permits	Dollar Value	# of Permits	Dollar Value
Residential						
SFD	218	\$ 51,316,884.37	270	\$ 65,130,418.86	114	\$ 26,980,663.60
Duplexes	16	\$ 2,580,000.00	10	\$ 1,940,000.00	0	\$ -
Manufactured 8-plex	0	\$ -	6	\$ 809,025.00	11	\$ 1,440,394.60
Townhouses	0	\$ -	1	\$ 3,000,000.00	2	\$ 6,000,000.00
Garage	48	\$ 7,857,000.00	20	\$ 14,451,000.00	1	\$ 1,432,918.00
Deck	35	\$ 631,097.46	44	\$ 900,400.00	24	\$ 472,775.00
Basement Reno	23	\$ 88,350.00	21	\$ 69,848.00	18	\$ 40,770.00
Addition	97	\$ 1,518,760.00	118	\$ 2,264,239.00	69	\$ 1,120,060.00
Accessory Suite	0	\$ -	0	\$ -	0	\$ -
SFD w/Accessory	10	\$ 133,000.00	7	\$ 58,000.00	5	\$ -
Other	4	\$ 1,253,440.00	3	\$ 759,500.00	3	\$ 965,000.00
	47	\$ 448,700.00	63	\$ 1,812,630.00	72	\$ 1,297,900.00
Commercial	17	\$ 3,262,450.00	31	\$ 9,443,100.00	24	\$ 823,947.00
Industrial	3	\$ 6,305,000.00	9	\$ 6,206,490.00	13	\$ 134,663.76
Institutional	0	\$ -	4	\$ 9,530,000.00	0	\$ -
Agricultural	0	\$ -	0	\$ -	1	\$ 200,000.00
Public Facility	2	\$ 205,000.00	2	\$ 135,822.00	4	\$ 15,244,474.00
TOTALS	520	\$ 75,599,681.83	609	\$ 116,510,472.8	361	\$ 56,153,565.9

BUSINESS COSTS

Alberta offers one of the most competitive tax environments in North America. Uncommon in Canada and the United States, Alberta has no provincial retail sales tax, provincial capital or payroll taxes, machinery or equipment tax.

Small business make up 96% of the economic landscape within the province and Alberta provides many resources that assist innovative and entrepreneurial businesses to thrive.

- Provincial corporate income tax rate of 12% for general business and 2% for small business (effective 2017)
- Among the most economical fuel rates across Canada
- Publicly funded health care system
- Value of Canadian dollar offers a lower cost of production

The local business community in Blackfalds benefits from:

- No additional municipal business tax
- Non-residential property tax rate is considerably lower than that of Red Deer
- A much lower average price per square foot housing cost than major cities, such as Calgary
- Low utility rates compared to others in the region
- A strong business network and partnership rooted in the value of buying local

Mill Rate Comparison (2014)

	Non-Residential	Residential/ Farmland
City of Lacombe (0194)	12.3639	9.7864
City of Red Deer (0262)	15.7672	8.3867
Lacombe County (0195)	8.3381	4.8281
Red Deer County (0263)	14.6319	6.2286
Town of Blackfalds (0031)	12.2072	10.4183

Commercial | Industrial Lot Prices in the Region

Price per acre (on average)	Blackfalds	Lacombe County	Lacombe	Red Deer	Red Deer County
Town Boundaries and Highway Commercial	\$200,000 to \$300,000				
Aspenland South Highway Access Industrial Park	\$250,000 to \$300,000* per acre				
Wildrose Business Park, Highway 22 with Hwy 2 access		\$144,000* plus an acre			
Iron Rail Industrial Park			\$180,000 an acre		
Queen's Industrial Park, South side of Highway 11				\$510,000* plus an acre	
City of Red Deer Land Sale site, Chiles Industrial Park, and Blindman Industrial Park				\$530,000* plus an acre	
County of Red Deer: Petrolia Park and Piper Creek Business/Clean Industrial Park					\$350,000- \$375,000* an acre

* Offsite levies are paid

**Wildrose Development, Highway Access and purchaser provides water well and septic system

Average Offsite Levy Comparison (2014)

Community	Off-Site Levies Rates (\$/Ha)
Town of Blackfalds	\$91,000/Ha (2015)
Town of Devon	\$98,687/Ha (2014)
City of Lacombe	\$18,874 to \$123,485 / Ha ** (2014)
Town of Sylvan Lake	~\$133,000/Ha (2007)*
Lacombe County Joint Economic Area	~\$80,000 / Ha (Wat & San Only) (2014)
City of Red Deer	\$197,379 / Ha (2013)
City of Camrose	\$61,997 / Ha (2008)
Town of Rocky Mountain House	Residential \$33,631 / Ha Commercial \$28,855 / Ha
Town of Penhold	~\$65,000/Ha (2012)
City of Wetaskiwin	~\$30,510 / Ha (2005)*
Town of Blackfalds	\$66,446.38/Ha (2013)
Town of Blackfalds	\$51,236/Ha (2008)

**City of Lacombe numbers are a weighted average and voted to implement the off-site levies in 2014 at 70%, 2015 at 60% and 2016 onwards at 100%.

Blackfalds rates have been proposed, but not adopted at time of this publication

KEY INDUSTRIES

Petrochemicals

Central Alberta houses a thriving petrochemical cluster, with approximately 36 chemical and petrochemical manufacturers benefiting from the area's steady supply of feedstock. The sector employs over 1,600 skilled workers and, according to Statistics Canada, each job in the industry creates an additional 2.5 jobs in the local economy.

Alberta is a leading petrochemical province with an annual production capacity of 8.6 billion pounds. Near Blackfalds is one of the world's largest ethylene plants; Nova Chemical Corporation at Joffre.

Also in close proximity to Blackfalds is the Prentiss facility, a Dow Canada polyethylene plant. It is linked to two world-scale ethylene glycol plants operated by MEGlobal, a joint venture operation between Petrochemical Industries Company of Kuwait and the Dow Chemical Company, which manufactures and markets ethylene glycol worldwide. Dow's Prentiss site employs over 200 employees and contractors and supports the local economy through the purchase of products, services, technology and labour.

Regional opportunities are not limited to the use of natural resources in the petrochemical industry. The emerging biochemical sector in Alberta and the province's thriving canola, grains, livestock and forestry industries, also make the use of biomass as an alternative lower valued feedstock, a viable business option.

Innovations in improving conversion processes, increasing production capacity and developing new technologies and products

are encouraged through a number of incentive and funded programs:

- [Scientific Research & Experimental Development Tax Incentive](#)
- [Industrial Research Assistance Program \(IRAP\)](#)
- [Western Innovation Initiative \(WINN\)](#)
- [The Climate Change and Emissions Management Corp.\(CCEMC\)](#)



Agri-food

Alberta's agri-food businesses hold an international reputation for quality owing to the province's high standards. In 2014, Alberta businesses represented 20% (9.7B) of Canada's total agri-food exports. The manufacturing industry also strongly supports this sector, primarily focusing on meat production, grain and oilseed milling.

In Central Alberta, the landscape is comprised of livestock, plant and food processing. The area's favourable climate, ample land and operating cost advantage of 3.1% (2013) to the U.S. make it an ideal location. Over 300 agricultural processors operate in the region including Canadian Premium Meats, RAHR Malting, Permolex and Olymel.

Companies can access provincial programs to support their growth and expansion. [Growing Forward 2](#) helps the agriculture and agri-food industry with innovation, competitiveness and market development.

The nearby [Lacombe Research Centre](#), operated by Agriculture and Agri-food Canada, develops integrated meat science and production systems, microbiological safety and storage stability of meats. Partnership opportunities exist for new investors focused on research and development in these specialties.

See [Alberta Agriculture & Forestry](#) for related programs and services.



TOURISM

The Town of Blackfalds and surrounding area offer a number of recreational and historical tourist attractions.

Three well maintained campgrounds can be found near Blackfalds where visitors enjoy hiking, fishing, canoeing and modern on-site facilities. The Blackfalds Community, [Burbank](#) and [Watipi](#) campgrounds provide vistas to soak in the beautiful landscape, rivers and lakes of the region. In the winter, tourists enjoy the nearby Canyon Ski Area, Alberta's largest non-mountain ski resort.

Recreational Tourism

Especially attractive to the many young families in the region, the [Abbey Master Builder Centre](#) is an award winning multi- recreational, social and cultural facility offering everything from an outdoor water park to gymnasium and fitness facility. The \$17 million centre is located on the famous Trans Canada Trail and houses the only indoor section of the trail in the country.

In addition to the many leisure activities in Blackfalds, the town hosts a number of community events contributing to its small town charm. Each summer, local businesses, farmers and artisans gather at the Blackfalds Community Market where there is something for everyone. Popular annual celebrations include Blackfalds Days, Canada Day, and Winterfest. A complete listing is available at blackfalds.com/events.

The Government of Canada recently announced, under its '150 Community Infrastructure Program', the investment of over \$162,000 to restore the Wadey Heritage House and transform it by 2017 into a

visitor information centre, which will also house the [Blackfalds & District Chamber of Commerce](#) and the displays and archives of the [Blackfalds & Area Historical Society](#).



LIFESTYLE

The Town of Blackfalds is exceptional in its active citizen involvement and engagement creating an enviable community in which to live and work. It is a community which encourages entrepreneurs and businesses to thrive and grow. Home based businesses flourish here as the market for many products and services is on our doorstep. The area boasts a high quality of life thanks to its community feel, strong values in a healthy and active lifestyle, and excellent reputation for education and health and wellness providers.



Recreation

The area boasts a remarkable recreational landscape, with an abundance of natural parks and trails and new and well appointed facilities. The Town's residents display their value of recreation and culture by annually spending an average of \$429.00 per capita, an amount higher than comparative municipalities in the region and in Alberta.

Blackfalds is in close proximity to several lakes, including Sylvan Lake and Gull Lake, where residents and visitors enjoy canoeing, fishing, water sports, hiking and camping.

The area also hosts the Trans Canada Trail and a linked system of regional walking paths. Nearby are a variety of golf courses to enjoy during the summer months and in the winter, Alberta's largest non-mountain resort, [Canyon Ski Resort](#).

Local [community parks](#) and [facilities](#) for hosting events, include:

- Skate Park: new facility to open in Spring 2017
- Spray Park: interactive outdoor water park open in the summer
- All Star Park: Baseball diamonds, soccer field , and camping
- [Multi Plex](#): home to the ice arena and banquet and meeting rooms
- Abbey Centre: award winning recreation and cultural venue
- Community Hall: with full kitchen and capacity for 300 people



Community Organizations

Blackfalds is home to a number of churches including: the United Church, Community Fellowship, Faith Community, Pentecostal, and Seventh Day Adventist. Other community organizations include the Blackfalds & District Chamber of Commerce, Blackfalds & Area Historical Society, the Optimist Club of Blackfalds, the [Blackfalds & District Agricultural Society](#), and numerous sports and youth clubs.

Education

The three [public schools](#) (elementary, intermediate, & junior) have an impressive reputation for academic excellence. Lacombe Composite High School, a short 10 minute bus-ride from Blackfalds, is one of the top secondary schools in Alberta.

Construction of a K-9 [Catholic school](#) commenced in Spring 2016 and is slated to open in Fall 2017.



Internationally recognized post secondary institutions, [Red Deer College](#) and [Burman University](#) in Lacombe, offer degrees, diplomas, apprenticeship programs and continuing education. [Olds College](#), which is a 45-minute commute south on Highway 2, offers specialized agriculture, hospitality and tourism, and entrepreneurship training.

Health & Wellness



Blackfalds is home to two medical clinics, where walk-ins and appointments are welcome. Eye doctors, dentists, massage therapists and chiropractors also call the community home and provide their services to local residents. The Lacombe Hospital and Care Centre and the Red Deer Regional Hospital are both close to the town.

[Family and Community Support Services](#) (FCSS) provides local social programs and services that meet the personal needs of individuals and families in the community. The newly renovated FCSS building is a hub where community members can access information, referrals and assistance.

Catering to seniors, [Tower Manor](#) in Blackfalds offers independent living options and a variety of amenities and services.

FACT SHEET

Population: 9,510 (2016)

Demographics: 75% of residents are aged 40 or under

Dwelling Units: 4,095

Growth since 2006: 101%

Number of businesses: 290 (2016)

Unemployment rate: 5% (2015)

Annual Household Disposable Income: \$ 94,792.00 (2016)

Annual Household Discretionary Income: \$ 50,301.00 (2015)

Trade population: 250,000

Land area: 16.36 square km

Land Zoned for Industrial Use: 600 acres (2016)

Average house price: \$319,000 (2016)

Primary language: English (94.46%)

Primary Occupational groups: Trade, Transport & Equipment Operators;

Sales & Service; Business, Finance & Administration

Primary Industries: Construction, Petrochemicals, Agri-foods, Business Services & Manufacturing

Major Employers:

- [Wolf Creek School Division](#) - approx 800 employees
- [Eagle Builders](#) - approx 200 employees
- [Nova Chemicals](#) - 700+ employees
- [Pidherney's](#) - approx 165 employees
- [Worley Parsons Cord](#) - 400+ employees
- [Dow Canada - Prentiss](#) - 200+ employees
- [Town of Blackfalds](#) - approx 135 employees



Contact Information

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