

2014/ 2015 Beautification Survey Results

Edson Beautification Committee

April 15, 2015

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This document was produced by Community Futures West Yellowhead for the Edson Beautification Committee. For more information on this survey or the beautification strategy, please contact Wendy Holuboch, Chairperson of the Edson Community Beautification Committee by emailing: edsonchamber@gmail.com .

Thank you to all volunteers, board members and partnering organizations of the 2014/ 2015 Edson Beautification Committee.

Disclaimer:

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Purpose:

The 2014 / 2015 Beautification Survey was created in partnership between the Edson Chamber of Commerce, Community Futures West Yellowhead, the Town of Edson, The Edson Recycling Depot and several engaged citizens. Through public feedback, the Beautification Committee compiled a comprehensive list of priority areas, then designed a survey to further phone the public responses.

Public Engagement:

This Chamber led committee distributed the survey in September of 2014 at a number of local events, including but not limited to the Edson Awards Gala, Edson Business Support Network, and various committee meetings. The survey distribution was meant to capture a variety of demographics from within the Edson community. In January 2015, through the use of Survey Monkey, the Edson Beautification Survey was made available online on various websites and through the use of social media. As of April 15th 2015, 128 responses have been recorded in this format.

Reporting:

The results from the Survey have been compiled and analyzed by Community Futures West Yellowhead to assist the Beautification Committee formed by the Edson and District Chamber of Commerce. Every effort has been made to assure the accuracy of the recorded information.

“The people of Edson are what make it a beautiful community“

- Edson Resident

Key Findings and Themes:

Clean is beautiful

50 % of respondents said that they appreciate clean businesses in the community and suggested that more could be done. Some suggested community wide clean ups and community civic pride days to encourage a cleaner vision for Edson.

Main Street is a main priority

47 % of respondents feel that beautification energy would be best used on 50th Avenue. Suggestions of new planters, bike racks and aesthetically pleasing art installments topped Edson's list of ideas.

Edson values trees and landscaping

27% of all surveyed listed an increase in the number of trees, shrubs, and annual / perennial plantings as their top request for creating a more beautiful Edson.

Edson takes notice of business with pride

The top identified beautiful businesses take pride in their buildings and landscaping, and it shows. 120 people commented on what they felt were the most beautiful businesses in Edson.

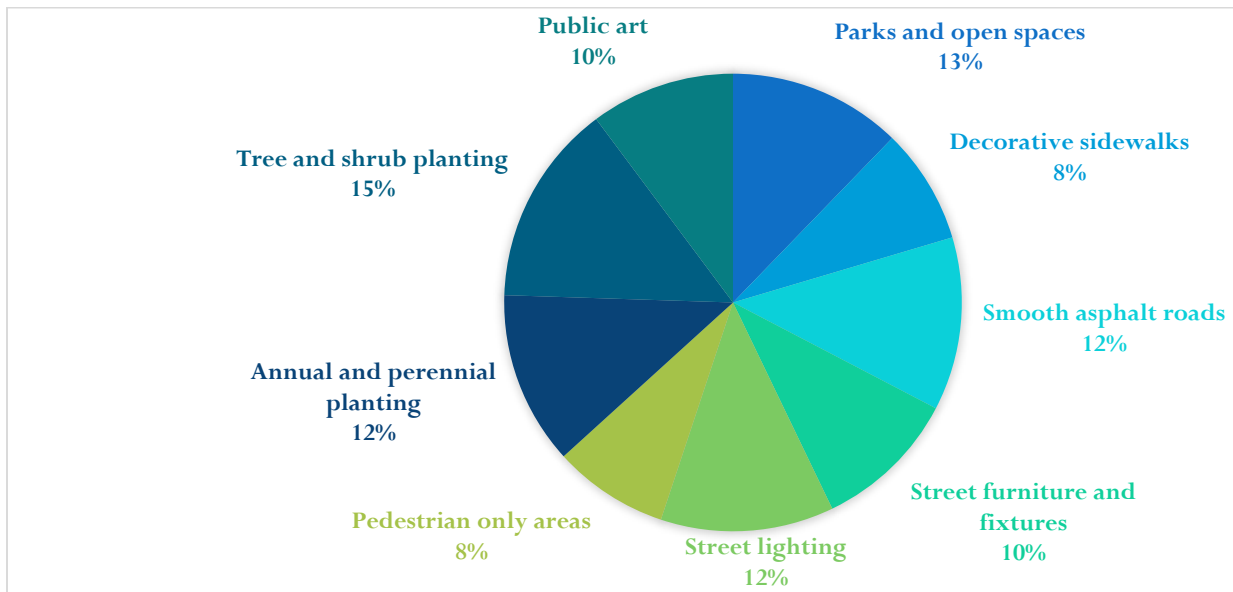
Edson is looking for beautification incentives

77 % of respondents identified money restraints as being the main obstacle preventing them from beautifying their own properties. 44% felt that Edson needed more grant opportunities to assist with beautifying their homes and businesses.

In your opinion what makes a beautiful town?

As you will see from figure 1, Edson survey participant's value tree and shrub planting as being the most important aspect of a beautiful town. Followed closely by annual and perennial planting, street lighting, smooth asphalt roads, and parks and open spaces.

Figure 1. In your opinion what makes a beautiful town?



Other comments:

(Numbers in brackets next to the comment indicate the number of similar comments received)

- Edson needs more colour (4)
- Not having industrial areas zoned on main highways and if they are, having appearance standards that are properly enforced (2)
- Walkable and clean (4)
- Get rid of the lower case “e”s. It makes no sense.
- Paint the Town Office and Edson should be Garbage FREE!
- Town needs color and do something with the buildings that aren't rented. It looks like a ghost town when we are an oil town. Go after the business that aren't rented with a beautification application so they can upgrade their store fronts and make the town look clean looking
- Updated / Renovated Store Fronts, Main Street buildings need a facelift (5)
- Decorate store fronts perhaps themed like Kimberly BC and a small cobblestone park on or near Main Street.
- Clean streets, prompt snow removal, newer / clean business signage. Streets are so dirty and dusty. (2)
- Nice Layout
- A beautiful town is well cared for not dirty and dusty, lots of trees! No junky looking signs, certain hotels look like something from a horror movie. Beer land bottle depot sign looks trashy.
- Annual and perennial planting is broken off and replaced way too often

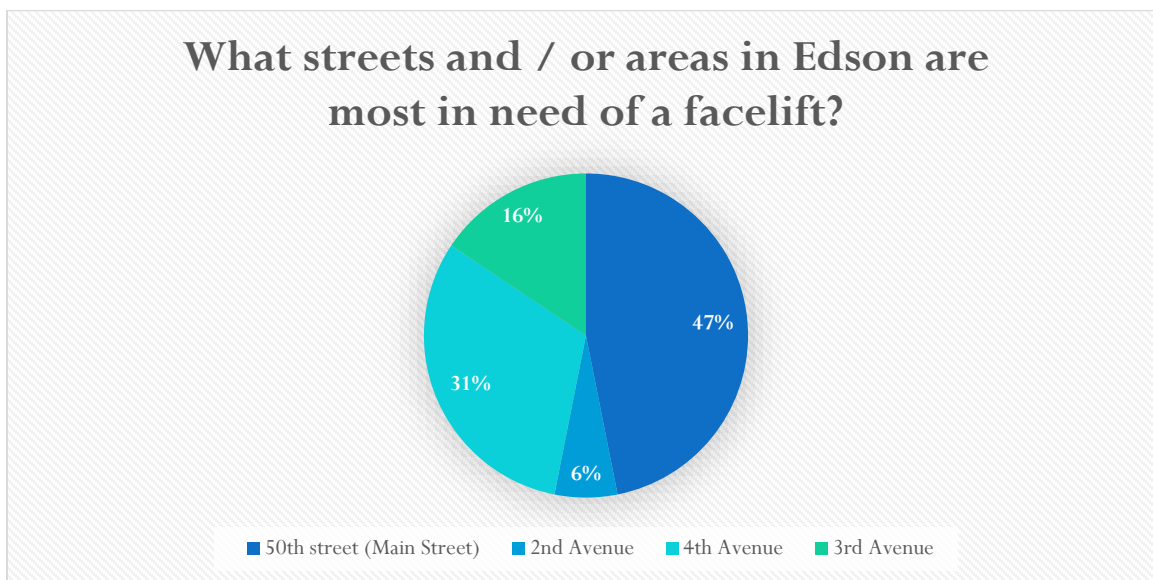
What streets or areas in Edson are most in need of a facelift?

As you will see from figure 2, 47% felt that 50th Street, Also known as Main Street, was the street or area that was most in need of a facelift.

Top 3 Priority areas:

1. 50th Street (Main Street)
2. 4th Avenue
3. 2nd Avenue

Figure 2.



Other comments:

- 56 Street
- 1st Avenue
- 2nd and 3rd streets have some neglected looking places
- Edson Drive. Main traffic route that must be maintained and beautified.
- Parallel parking on 50th would create more parking spaces for customers. Bank staff should not be allowed to park on Main Street in front of any business for the entire duration of their shift.
- Get rid of the lower case e's.
- Edson drive
- Some tree grates need replacing, some of them are broken and if you walk near them you could break your ankle if you were to fall in
- Main Street is a very sad looking street

Top Identified Beautiful Edson Businesses

The most beautiful businesses in Edson (as identified by the survey) are listed below. The number in parentheses next to the business name indicates the number of similar responses.



Galloway Museum and Chamber of Commerce (21)

- Park like setting
- Clean new building
- Modern colours and style



Boisvert Law Office (15)

- Modern exterior
- Well kept property
- Good use of colour and strong attention to detail



Centennial Park (14)

- Well kept greenery
- Airplane statue
- Lunch tables



Edson Chiropractic (12)

- Clean well kept landscaping
- Good use of exterior colour and materials



Mountain Pizza (9)

- Well kept- genuine pride in ownership
- Unique building shape and theme
- Court yard



Stattin and Co (8)

- Good use of trees and outdoor landscaping
- Neat and tidy
- Pride in ownership

Other Identified Beautiful Businesses:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Library (5)• Chiropractic on 4th Ave (5)• The Olive Tree (4)• The Red Brick (4)• Thymes Two (3)• Leisure Centre (1)• Parks (1)• Jensen's (1)• GM Bannister (1)• Central Auto (1)• Switzers (1)• Timberjack Home Hardware (1)• Provincial Building (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aurait Used Car (1)• Old McLeod Building (1)• Evergreen School (1)• Day Care Society (1)• Food Stores (1)• Kinsmen Park (1)• Husky Oil (1)• Computer Place (1)• Totem Motel (1)• Yellowhead County Building (1)• Edson Entrance (1)• Hotels in town who decorate with flowers and Christmas items (1)
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“A beautiful town, is a well-cared for town”

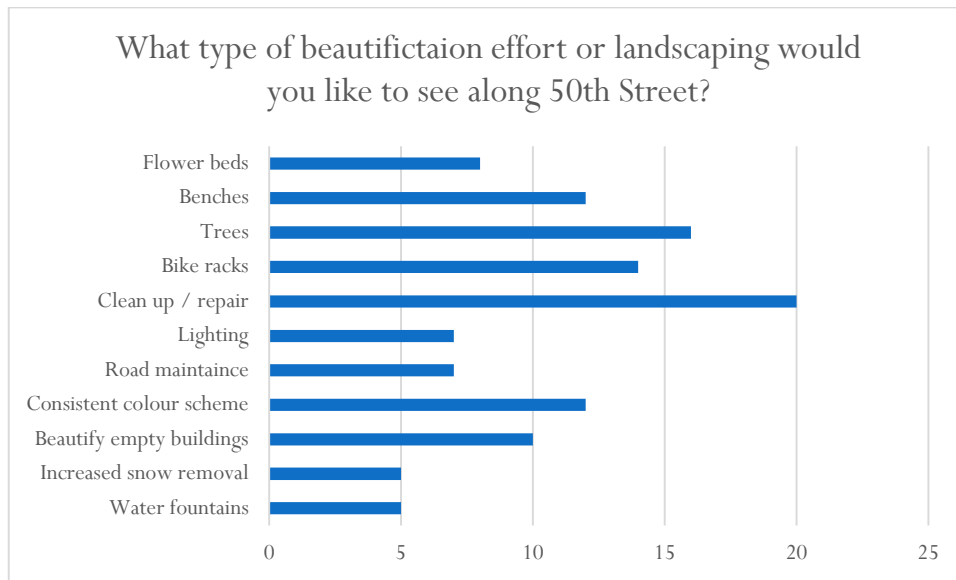
- Edson Resident

What type of beautification effort or landscaping would you like to see along the following streets?

50th Street (Main Street) – Potential Improvements

The highest identified need for 50th Street is generalized clean up and repair of existing store front properties (17%). Followed by planting additional trees on the main street (14%), installing bike racks (12%) and constant colour scheme or theme and increasing the number of benches tied at 10%.

Figure 3.



Other comments for 50th street improvements included:

Adding parallel parking, modern statues, security cameras and increasing downtown pride.



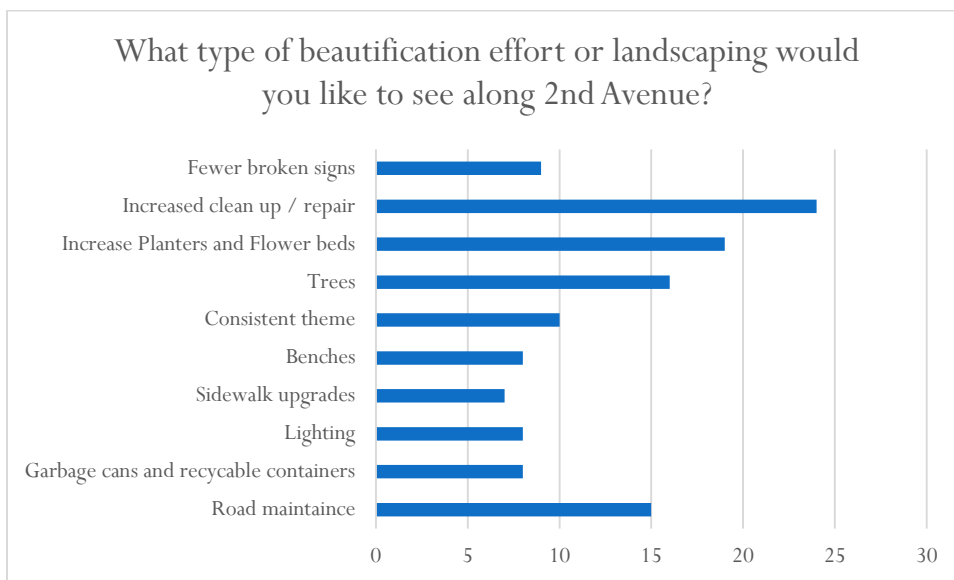
2nd Avenue

Survey respondents stated that clean up and repair of the existing buildings and parking lots are their biggest concern (19%). Other main priorities for 2nd Avenue include planting more flower beds and increasing the number of stationed planters (15%), increased numbers of trees (13%) and road upgrades at 12%.

Two respondents felt that no improvements were required on 2nd Avenue, citing that there are presently flowers in the spring and summer and snow-flakes in the winter.



Figure 4.



“Encourage community gardens, give community groups grants and tools to volunteer to do the work. Encourage our youth and schools to do town garbage clean up days”

- Edson Resident

4th Avenue

The highest identified need for 4th Avenue was to clean and repair existing infrastructure including buildings and parking lots (17%). Flowers and planters were the next highest priority at 15.5% followed by more tree plantings along both sides of the Avenue (14%) and road repairs at 13%.

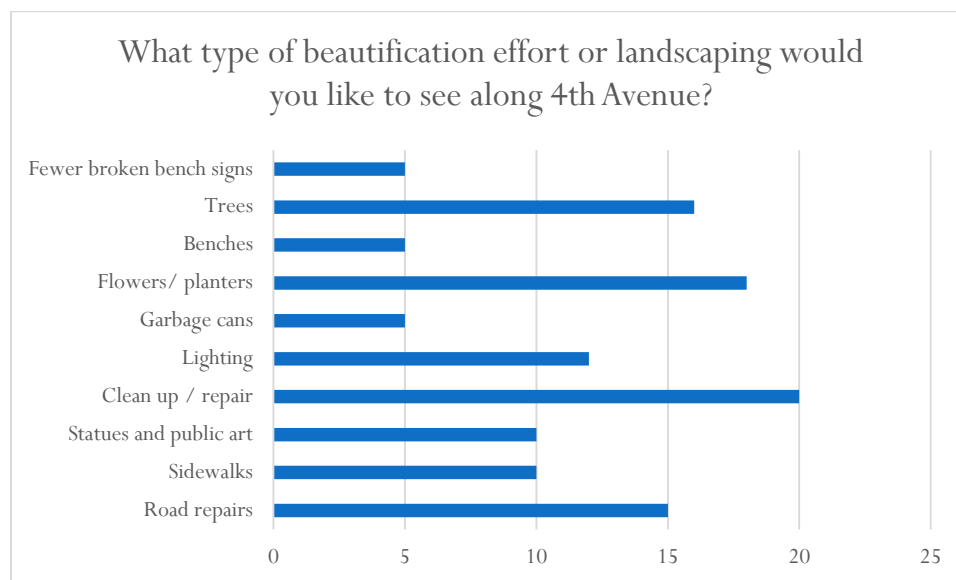
Notable comments also included that there are too many bench signs along this Avenue, many of which are in need of repair and poorly placed for public benches.

Themed building fronts were also suggested to be of a rock facade with natural or stone front themed components.



Town Hall, Edson Alberta

Figure 5.



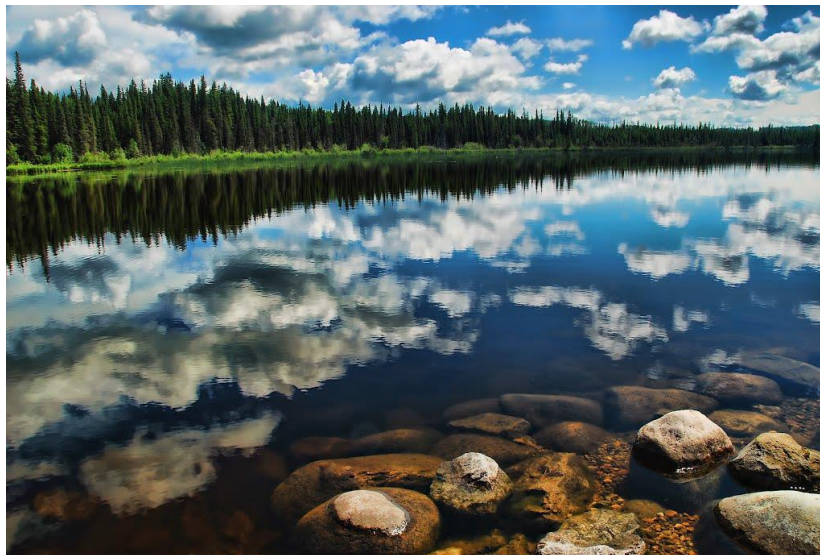
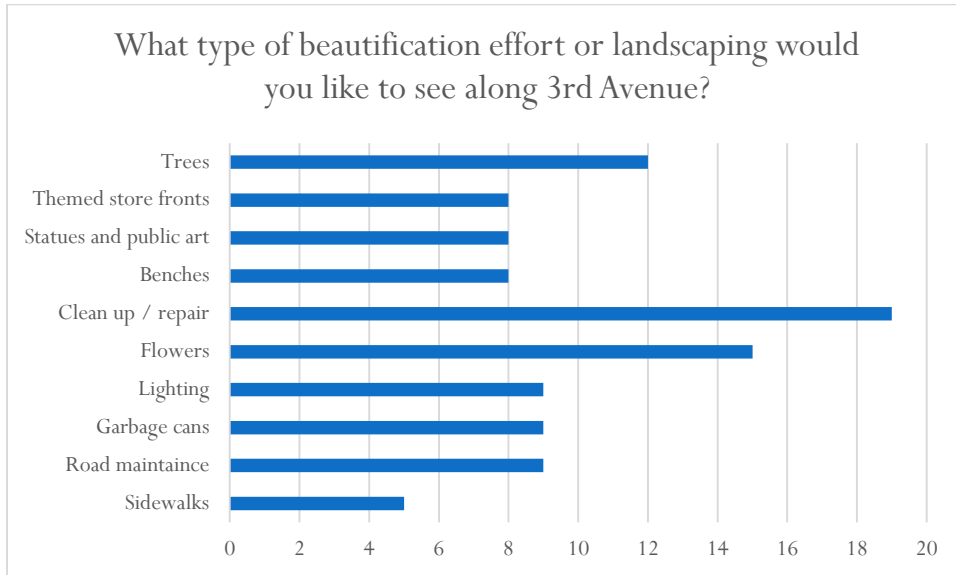
“Create a welcoming feeling with trees and flowers, buildings that are fresh clean and rented”

- Edson Resident

3rd Avenue

Consistent with several other of the main streets in Edson, clean up and repair was the top priority (19%). Shrubs and flowers were selected as the second highest priority (15%). Planting shrubs or new trees on both sides of the road rounded out the top three desirable improvements (12%).

Figure 6.



Fickle Lake, Edson Alberta

Does Edson support public art in outdoor green spaces and along streets?

YES!

- The response was overwhelmingly positive. Not only do 97 % support public art, 79 % think it should be part of the beautification strategy.
- Surveys mentioned that they wanted more traditional pieces that are “tasteful” One response went so far as to say that they did not want art resembling the “shiny silver multi ball sculpture in Edmonton”.
- More traditional items were mentioned, including bike rack art, murals and decorative garbage cans and telephone exchange boxes.
- Other comments included references to cleaning up Edson’s streets, and holding business owners more accountable for their public image.
- Some comments were made that existing murals are fading and peeling and will need to be redone in the near future.



Members of the public posing with an outdoor mural in Macleod Alberta

Public Beautification Strategies

What do Edson residents think other communities are doing well in beautification?

Respondents were asked what they liked about other communities and how Edson could incorporate those ideas into the beautification plan. Edson residents suggested the following communities and ideas as potentials for the community of Edson.

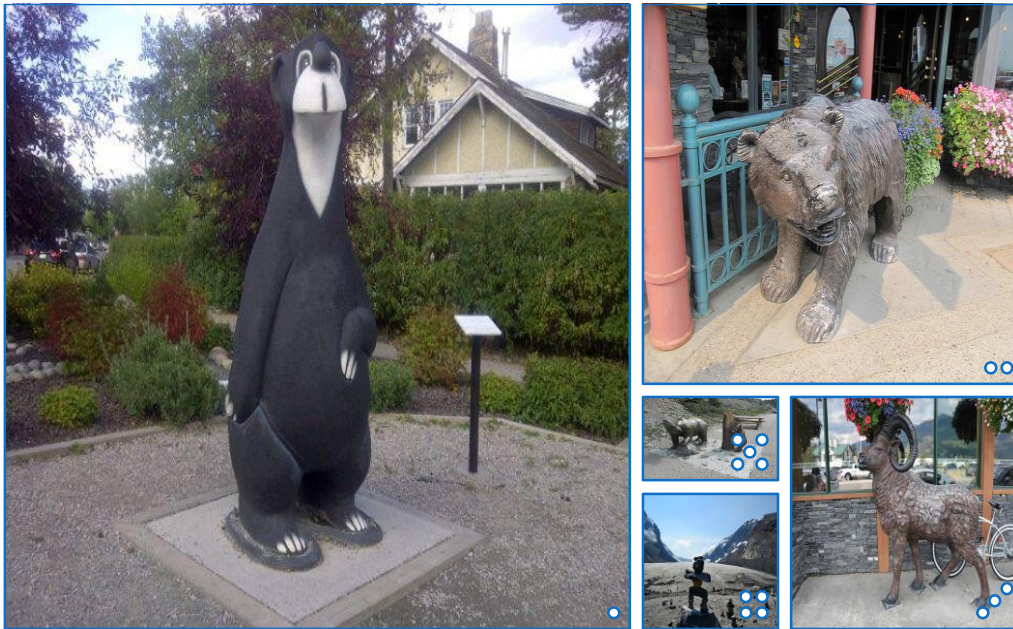


Image credit: The Town of Kimberly, BC

Kimberly, BC- Several responses concentrated on the community of Kimberly, BC. Survey respondents suggested Edson have more of a European flair similar to the approach in Kimberly. Stone store fronts and wood accents, brick paved walking trails and sidewalks, with business signs on lampposts.

“More Green areas in prominent locations, restored and well maintained buildings and art facilities in prominent locations”

- Edson Resident



○ Jasper the Bear ○○ Sidewalk placement ○○○ Fun street art ○○○ Inukshuk ○○○ Interactive statues

Image credit: The Municipality of Jasper, AB

Jasper AB- Jasper was praised for their creative use of statues and how they are incorporated into walking trails and sidewalks. Respondents felt that by having these statues, it helped to strengthen Jasper’s community brand. Some stated that they hope to see more statues similar to those currently found in Centennial Square, emphasizing Edson’s unique heritage.

“More clean-up is needed in Edson. Make every business accountable for cleaning up in front of their business and / or parking lot”

- Edson Resident



Combined art and landscaping

 Unique flower beds

 Lush Planters

 Low maintenance plantings

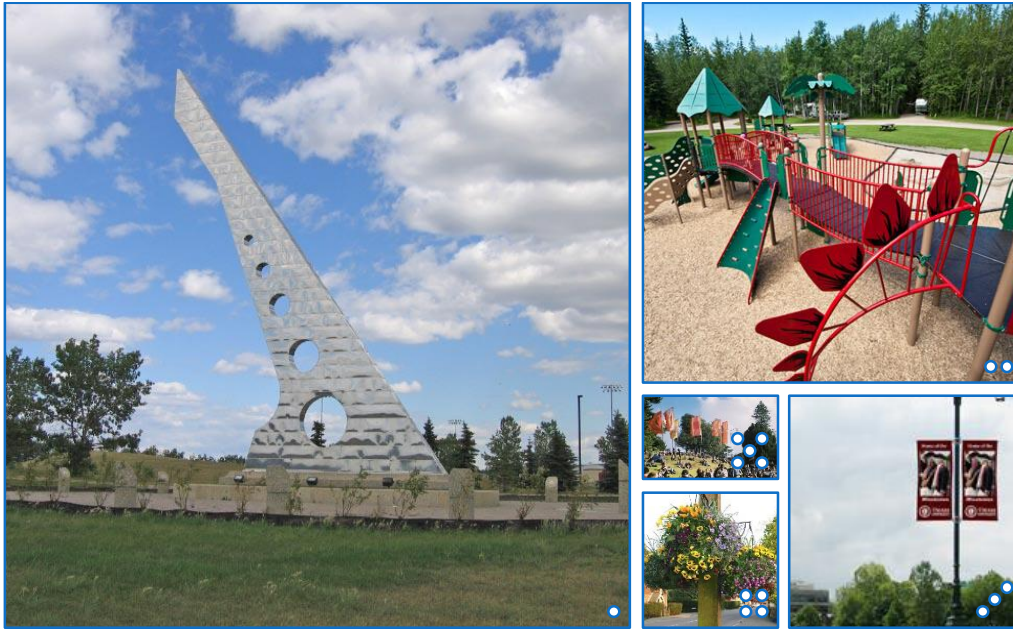
 River front parks

Image credit: The City of Leduc, AB

Leduc, AB- The City of Leduc was mentioned for their creative use of flowers and shrubs in eye catching ways throughout their streets. Their unique formation and placement caught Edson resident’s eyes.

“Centennial Park is a beautiful place for families, it would be good to see more of that in Edson”

- Edson Resident



○ Sundial in GP ○ Themed childrens playgrounds ○ Colourful banners on lampposts ○ Multiple hanging baskets ○ Vibrant flags in public parks

Image credit: The City of Grande Prairie, AB

Grande Prairie, AB- The city of Grande Prairie was complimented on their impressive Sun Dial and its connection to the heart of the community. Comments also included the community’s use of decorative flags on lamp-posts and strategically placed in public parks.

“Edson needs more colour. Colourful flags hanging from lamp posts, lots of well-tendered green space, and trees- it would defiantly improve the towns appearance and community pride”

- Edson Resident

Other themes suggested by survey responses:

Revisit First Impressions of Edson

Residents realize that entrances are very important. Comments suggested that while the town of Edson signs are standalone features, the space between the entrance signs and the first town structures need work. Suggestions including more landscaping including perennials, annuals and strategically placed trees. Old and broken signage should be removed and when possible industry should be placed further back from the main road.

Suggestions of artistic railings on over passes and seasonally changed flags / banners came up from several surveys.

Store Front Consistency and Themes

Consistent use of similar colours and styles were among the top suggestions. Treed streets and trails were suggested by residents for major and residential streets. Well-kept and repaired buildings, with stone or natural looking store fronts.

Community Giving Back

Painted dumpsters and fire hydrants were suggested. One respondent suggested that Edson make use of the school board art program and have students complete a large art installment, perhaps for a graduating class.

Green Spaces

New styles of playgrounds and park areas including benches and tables appropriately placed to view the space. Cyclist's paths and clean walk ways for those who wish to bike to work or school.

Cleanliness

Many comments arose from the survey with regards to community wide clean up. Suggestions of increased garbage and recycling bins on all Edson streets came out of the survey. Butt stops at common rest point areas were also suggested. Some respondents suggested fresh paint on public buildings as well as the municipality cracking down on business and building owners for having unclean store fronts.

Lighting

Edson residents felt that parks and walking trails would benefit from more overhead lighting, and thus increased use. Some suggested lighting be placed around landscaped areas to encourage evening use. One resident suggested that more of a priority should be to place effective lighting and possibly a pedway across the highway intersections to improve pedestrian safety.

Economical Suggestions for Edson Beautification:

The following suggestions have been pulled directly from the survey and have only been edited for grammatical errors and multiple responses.

Edson residents were asked to provide low cost or economical suggestions for beautifying the community of Edson, these are their responses:

- Getting rid of the sign benches in town. They are falling apart, placed in locations that no one would ever even use them. Simple benches with a garbage can near it in practical locations would be great.
- Start fining businesses / companies for unsightly parking lots, garbage, broken equipment
- Grad benches- get grad class of 2015 to sign and donate, memorial benches
- Trees along streets perimeters, school murals and sculptures
- Nice greenery, benches, statues
- Use self-seeding plants and perennials
- Concrete is low maintenance
- Community Flower beds with Rotary Interact to maintain smaller projects, fresh paint where needed
- Talk with people about getting plants from them rather than buying. Many people need to split plants each year- plant more around town that will grow each year.
- At least keep green spaces clean and the grass cut. Maybe put some sculptures or murals
- More clean up. Making every business accountable for cleaning up in front of their business and or parking lot.
- Park areas and bike park s (nature trails) with flowering shrubs planted along them
- More garbage cans and recycling bins, keeping the dog park "cleaned" up (more the public's responsibility)
- More pedestrian walkways across the highways - overpass / underpass?
- Clean up garbage on land and ditches / clean, garbage free
- Fresh coats of paint, shutters around windows
- Community Gardens
- Clean up all the creeks - remove garbage in the water as well as fallen trees etc.; request that all work vehicles covered with clumps of mud be washed in a timely manner.
- Community volunteer days to pick up garbage and plant flowers in public places
- Encourage community gardens, give community groups grants and tools to volunteer to do the work. Encourage our youth and schools to do town garbage clean up days
- Promote the idea of businesses adopting spaces for beautification purposes
- Just because town buildings may be old, doesn't mean they don't deserve a fresh coat of paint
- Tax break for local businesses to maintain and beautify land Higher taxes for businesses that do not maintain their buildings and lots
- More community Garden space if it is feasible following pilot projects at pine grove school field

What would make it easier for you to improve your home or business?

- 77% of respondents felt that financial issues stood in their way to improving their home or business.
- 44% felt that Edson needed more grant opportunities to beautify their homes and businesses.
- Others cited generalized clean up, community clean up days, reductions in theft and destruction, and more accessible construction contractors.

Some comments from this section include:

“Grants for beautification. We recently painted and updated the exterior of our business and the cost was substantial. some relief would be greatly appreciated.”

“Encourage contests and competitions”

“Revised plan on how we plow snow. Also how we waste time and money watering plants every day. Parallel parking on main to improve retail parking. Downtown staff need to not park on main blocking retail business parking.”

“A longer growing season for Edson!”

“Discounts on trees and plants- Yellowhead County has discounted trees (seedlings) for residents to buy, this would be a great idea for the town to do as well. It would also be good to include flowers and other plants that residents could order through the town for their flowerbeds.”

“Partnering dollars for businesses that improve their facade appearances to meet a specification laid out by the town. The town needs to have a design prospectus in place. Similar to Hinton/Jasper/Banff.”

“Edson needs a positive attitude.. If we all get onboard we feel sense of togetherness. Low cost plants and shrub program...”

“Incentive programs or the town could buy materials in bulk then offer it back to the community at discounts compared to retail. Many things are cost prohibitive!”

“I would love to place flower pots outside my store but worried they will be vandalized.”

For more information on the Edson Beautification Committee and the 2014/ 2015 Beautification Survey please contact Chairperson Wendy Holuboch of the Edson Chamber of Commerce by emailing: edsonchamber@gmail.com