Evaluation Form

2015

Town of Hanna
Alberta

Communities in Bloom
Collectivites en fleurs

2015 Evaluation Form

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Community: Town of Hanna

Province: Alberta

Category: 1,001 to 4,500

The evaluation is based on 8 criteria, divided into the 6 following sections, assessing 4 sectors of the community:

Tidiness	119.00	/	150.00
Environmental Action	115.50	/	150.00
Heritage Conservation	123.00	/	150.00
Urban Forestry	139.50	/	175.00
Landscape	163.50	/	200.00
Floral Displays	144.50	/	175.00
Total	805.00	/	1000.00

Percentage : 80.50%

Bloom rating: 4 Blooms

Bloom rating: Up to 55%: 1 bloom. 56% to 63%: 2 blooms. 64% to 72%: 3 blooms 73% to 81%: 4 blooms. >82%: 5 blooms.

***New in 2015:**
There will be four (4) levels of 5 Blooms exclusive to the National and International Edition, for evaluated communities only.
82 to 83.9%: 5 Blooms. 84 to 86.9%: 5 Blooms (Bronze). 87 to 89.9%: 5 Blooms (Silver). 90% and over: 5 Blooms (Gold).

- A community does not have to be entered in a competitive category, but will need to be evaluated.
- With the introduction of this enhanced higher award standards, the marking of scores will be more critical.

Mention : "Blooms to You" Program

Representative (s) of Community

Name:	Gwen Snell	Function :	Director of Community Services
Name:	Lou Lallier	Function :	Chair, Hanna in Bloom
Name:	Jason Smith	Function :	Councillor, Town of Hanna

Judges

Name:	Berta Briggs	Name:	Rachelle George-Bernard

Evaluation date: July 29, 2015

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IMPORTANT NOTES:

Evaluation is adjusted to the climate and environmental conditions of the community.

Some aspects of the evaluation might not be applicable: scoring will be prorated.

The score will vary from the previous year based on the facts that the evaluation form is subject to modifications each year and that the evaluation is based on the perception of the current judges.

SECTORS OF EVALUATION

Municipal:

- Municipal properties, parks and green spaces, streets, streetscapes
- Properties owned and run by municipality such as museums, historical sites

Business and Institutions:

Properties owned and managed by

- **Business :** commercial sector, shopping centres, commercial streets, industrial parks, manufacturing plants
- **Institutions:** schools, universities, churches, hospitals, service and community organization buildings (such as YMCA, Legion), private museums, government and crown corporations buildings (such as Canada Post)
- **Tourism bureaus and Chamber of Commerce offices**
- **Farms :** in rural communities, farms can be considered in this section

Residential:

- Citizens and citizen groups acting within their own properties
- Residential property owners, rate payer groups

Community Involvement:

The principle of community involvement is so fundamental to the program that it is considered in each segment of the evaluation.

- Individuals, community organizations and citizen groups – all contributing to various aspects of community improvement
- Organized clubs such as horticultural societies, garden clubs, community associations
- Service clubs such as Rotary, Lions, Optimist

Participation (financial and/or in-kind or employee participation) by the municipality, businesses and institutions.

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GENERAL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Hanna has been an active participant in Communities in Bloom for a number of years. Congratulations on achieving 5 Blooms in the Provincial Edition and welcome to the National Edition of Communities in Bloom!

It appears that the centennial celebrations drew the community together with growing pride and optimism being voiced by many of the people we met with. It created an impetus to forge ahead to prepare for growth. The Strategic Plan for Infrastructure seems very doable.

Hanna in Bloom has a much respected standing in the Community. You have done an admirable job of creating an atmosphere of cooperation. The event we had the pleasure of attending on the final night of our visit to celebrate your winning in your category of Alberta Communities in Bloom drew people from all sectors of the community. It was clear that Hanna is a community that enjoys each other's company and enjoys working together. Volunteer input is both important and commendable.

Communication in Hanna between the Town and the residents is comprehensive. The kiosk screens strategically placed throughout the community is constantly feeding local information. Newsletters are regularly distributed and the Town has a website and is on Facebook. The Town Council believes in being very open and transparent thus citizens feel engaged in most Town activities.

The functioning of the Fire Hall mirrors the way the entire community works; an example being the way all the emergency services work together and how they fit in with the surrounding smaller towns and special regions.

The local Home Hardware is deserving of special mention. Their support of the community and every volunteer activity is outstanding.

Youth is supported and encouraged. The Epic Adventures program and the Leaders in Training are both good programs especially for a small community.

Your Profile Book is concise yet contains all the necessary information we required for our evaluation. Well done! It would be useful another year to try to send it to the judges in advance, it gives us a context to start learning more about your community. The evaluation tour was well planned and allowed us to see and learn all that was necessary to address all criteria. We appreciated meeting with Council and key personnel in the morning and it was useful to meet volunteers along the way.

Your strong 4 Bloom standing in the first year in the National program is very commendable. As you well understand each point represents a lot of hard work. You have made giant strides since I first evaluated Hanna in 2008. Good job!

Thank you for continuing to participate in Communities in Bloom and thank you for sharing your community with us. Hanna in Bloom is definitely helping to grow a beautiful, vibrant and sustainable community.

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TIDINESS		
Tidiness includes an overall tidiness effort by the municipality, businesses, institutions and the residents throughout the community. Elements for evaluation are parks and green spaces, medians, boulevards, sidewalks, streets; municipal, commercial, institutional and residential properties; ditches, road shoulders, vacant lots, signs and buildings; weed control, litter clean-up (including cigarette butts and gum), graffiti prevention/removal and vandalism deterrent programs.		
	Max	**Actual**
Municipal		
Tidiness, order, cleanliness and first impressions	15	12
Community anti-litter awareness programs	5	4
Effective bylaws, programs and policies and enforcement; litter control, graffiti prevention and eradication, graffiti removal kits to residents	10	8
Cleanliness of public green infrastructure: parks, streetscapes (sidewalks, planters, etc.)	15	12.5
Condition of urban signage and furniture such as benches, litter and recycling containers	15	12
Business & Institutions		
Tidiness, order and cleanliness and first impressions	15	11.5
Condition of buildings (exterior maintenance), grounds, sidewalks and parking lots	15	11.5
Condition of urban furniture: benches, litter and recycling containers	5	3.5
Residential		
Tidiness, order and cleanliness	20	16
Condition of buildings, grounds and yards	15	12
Community Involvement		
Public participation in community, neighbourhood or individual street tidiness, clean-up programs, activities and annual maintenance (including promotion, organization, innovations involving youth and seniors, etc.)	10	8
Support – financial and/or in-kind or participation by the municipality, businesses and institutions for community clean-up programs	10	8
Tidiness Total	150.00	119.00

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TIDINESS

Observations:

Upon entering Town, visitors are greeted with a beautifully landscaped welcome sign that leaves a positive first impression of Hanna. The Visitor Information Center is inviting and well maintained. This attractive space seems to be well-used visitors and locals alike.

The uniform banners throughout Town add to the street appeal. The railway post fences are an attractive and memorable feature in most public spaces; they reflect a consistent theme.

The Town is placing infrastructure as a priority which will automatically help with curb appeal.

The red shale trail is an outstanding feature that winds through the community. It is a striking path that looks neat and tidy.

Litter and graffiti seem to be at a minimum within the community. Waste receptacles and dog droppings bags are available in various key points thus helping to prevent litter.

The cleanup programs with the youth of the community are commendable and it is great to hear that the Town Councilors participate alongside the kids.

Recommendations:

Upon entering Hanna, the derelict service station is an unfortunate first impression. Although there is not much the Town can do about a private property perhaps an agreement to add trees, pots or informational panels would help the situation. The Chamber of Commerce sign is very busy, distracting and these signs are a bit outdated for the times, perhaps the removal of the sign or a digital sign with advertisements would be more appropriate.

Upon entering the Town from the highway, there is no WOW factor that lures the visitor to seek out more. Perhaps oversized train themed planter pots on the corner of the highway or other such visual attraction would provide the WOW. Once inside the downtown core the appeal is bountiful.

In the downtown core the old ALTA Gas edifice has fliers/notices on an outside window that distracts from the attractiveness of the other buildings. There pieces of fliers pieces or debris left on some poles downtown. Removing these items would freshen up the area immediately. The Town should continue to enforce bylaws for unsightly properties throughout residential and commercial areas.

Empty buildings in the downtown core are not welcoming so perhaps asking those owners if a local organization could use their storefront window as a display case might be a win/win for all.

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Several murals add a historic flavor to the downtown core, however one mural looks like it is falling into disrepair. Perhaps in the future when a mural is erected or other art piece or hardscape item that is painted you should consider a maintenance plan and exit strategy.

At Memorial Park the back entrance is missing a sign naming the park and the front entrance arch could use a fresh coat of paint. The informative plaques around the fountain are in need of being replaced. The updated memorial benches with maintenance free materials are being installed as time and budget permit. However the current benches in the park are falling into disrepair, so in the meantime, sanding down the old benches in Memorial park and other parks throughout Town and giving them a fresh paint of coat would increase the tidiness of those areas.

Updating or repainting several areas throughout Town is recommended. At the Hector King Park the covers for the outdoor lights and the bird feeder hose/pole need a fresh coat of paint. At the ball diamond there are a few baseball themed signs at the fields that need to be refreshed. The flag pole at visitor center needs to be repainted.

In general, strategic placing of dumpster bins so they are somehow shielded from public view would aid in the overall tidiness. It is commendable that the Transfer Site has large bins in key locations for the public, but like the commercial dumpsters, they are not the most attractive hardscape in the area. If they are shielded or painted (perhaps even with a mural or theme), it might help the overall look of the area.

The businesses that are invested in curb side appeal do a remarkable job – the challenge is how to get the other commercial enterprises to follow suit. Perhaps a Clean Sweep program or other friendly competition targeting businesses might encourage some businesses to follow suit.

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ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Environmental action includes the efforts and achievements of the community with respect to: policies, by-laws, programs and best practices, waste reduction and landfill diversion rate, composting sites, landfill sites, hazardous waste collections, water conservation, naturalization, and environmental stewardship activities under the guiding principles of sustainable development pertaining to green spaces.

	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Sustainable development strategy: policies, programs, guidelines, long-term planning / vision; effective bylaws / policies and their enforcement; and public education programs and activities	20	15
Waste management programs: waste reduction to landfill and results (3-R : reduce, reuse and recycle), composting (backyard and municipal), including activities such as composting sites yard waste collections, shredding of Christmas trees and handling of hazardous waste including e-waste collection	15	11.5
Water conservation and use-reduction programs: efficient appliance incentives or promotions, efficient irrigation, use of non-potable water, water restriction policies and rainwater management	15	11.5
Energy conservation programs such as alternate forms of energy (ex. geothermal, biomass, wind, solar), and initiatives such as, shielding for night skies issues, efficient street lighting and energy audits	10	8
Environmental initiatives, innovations and actions such as: Protection of sensitive habitats Development and expansion of sustainable mobility and active transportation network such as bike lanes and multi-used pathways Phytotechnology practices such as green roofs, green walls, green lanes, living fences, buffer zones; re-use of sites; engineered wetlands, bio-swales and permeable surfaces Brownfield redevelopment, remediation, land reclamation Air quality programs such as anti-idling, reduction of greenhouse gas emission	10	7.5
Business & Institutions		
Participation in the environmental effort : such as waste management (reduce, reuse and recycle), water conservation, energy conservation, brownfield management, eco-park	10	7.5
Corporate environmental innovation / stewardship, initiatives, activities (ex. environmental clean-up activities)	10	7.5
Residential		
Participation in the 3-R (reduce, reuse and recycle) initiatives and composting	20	15
Adoption of water conservation practices & policies including rainwater collection	15	12
Community Involvement		
Public participation in public forums and policy development on environmental issues	5	4
Public participation in community, neighbourhood or individual street environmental activities and programs (including promotion, organization and evidence of taking ownership), etc.)	10	8
Support – financial and/or in-kind or participation by the municipality, businesses and institutions in public environmental activities and programs	10	8
Environmental Action Total	150.00	115.50

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Observations:

The Pitch in Week seems like a great community effort towards cleaning up the community and an awareness campaign on littering.

The HUGE Rummage Sale has become a community tradition and it serves to allow residents to de-clutter and have their items either re-used or recycled. Good job!

The Waste Transfer Station is a clean and organized site where residents can depose of bulky items and recycle other items. The changes in the governance of the waste management system have greatly improved practices in dealing with waste.

It is interesting that the Hanna Young Lions' Club initiated the first recycle project in the province.

The Town is invested in several environmental actions including mulching on site, switching light bulbs to energy efficiency ones and utilizing the solar power for crosswalks and electric boxes around Town.

Recommendations:

An increased awareness of cigarette butts as litter throughout the community would be a great step forward in an anti-litter campaign. Perhaps encouraging/supplying businesses and institutions with proper ashtrays for cigarette disposal would help decrease the amount of butts on the ground. The Home Hardware had a nice cigarette ashtray next to the garbage can, perhaps an adjacent anti-litter sign would help educate the public.

Very few recycle bins were noticed throughout the Town. The judges saw one bin at the Fire Hall but other prominent institutions and businesses do not appear to be engaged in promoting recycling. Perhaps an awareness campaign on recycling led by both the municipality and businesses would be appropriate. Since several years back, the Hanna Young Lions were the first to initiate recycling in Alberta, it would be amazing to keep that eco-legacy alive and well.

Modeling sustainable behaviours at all municipal events and meetings through reducing, reusing & recycling could also help spur residents into action; eg. Use of biodegradable utensils/dishes or use of real utensils/dishes, recycling, composting and having educational signage to point out these easy eco-friendly actions. Perhaps the town can provide backyard compost bins and rain barrels at a reduced price to kick start tangible environmental initiatives.

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Town Hall could model the use of biodegradable detergents and soaps. Various easy, at home environmental initiatives could be promoted through the Town website, information kiosks and newsletter. Another item to discuss with residents, perhaps on Earth day or again through a Town newsletter, is: 'What happens to Hanna's garbage and recycling once it leaves a resident's home?' This educational campaign could outline why reduction and composting is important. The community garden is an amazing space and perhaps this might also be a great area to see an active compost practice to educate the public.

The Waste Transfer site is extremely well organized and there are several items that residents would like to reuse. Is there any interest in having a share shed at the site where residents could place or take usable items. This would, of course, require monitoring so only appropriate items are accepted and only for a specific period before they go on to the correct bin.

Currently the Town irrigates all turf and floral displays with treated water. Perhaps the Town might consider purchasing or building their own cistern to collect rain off the roof of the new Town Hall. This rainwater could be used by Pam and Lou to water their plants. This would provide a great model to the residents and promote the purchase of rain barrels. There does not seem to be any water restriction policies and perhaps this should be reviewed given the occurrence of drought conditions in the area. While the judges were informed that Town irrigation occurs only at night and as needed, the sprinklers were on at Hector King Park during the evaluation tour.

Perhaps in the future, when reviewing the replacement or purchase of Town vehicles, carefully consider the function and usage of the particular vehicle. It may be possible in some cases to use more environmentally friendly vehicles that trucks. Some towns use cars, smart cars, or hybrid cars to model to their citizens that they are being both energy efficient and fiscally prudent

The yellow storm drains are already a visible marking throughout Town; perhaps it would be an opportune time for an environmental campaign with regards to the importance of not contaminating storm water. The Yellow Fish project, whereby students paint fish outlines on the drains, reminds people not to place any toxic or foreign substances in the storm water sewage system.

Many communities are voluntarily moving away from pesticides and herbicides altogether. Alberta is one of the few provinces who have not banned herbicides for cosmetic use. The time will come when everyone is forced to find alternatives to chemical herbicides. Perhaps a sensibility campaign with regards to weed control through correct management techniques rather than spraying would prepare Hanna residents for a pesticide free future.

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Heritage conservation includes efforts to preserve natural heritage within the community with focus on the integration of landscape and streetscapes in built heritage: preservation of natural heritage pertaining to monuments, memorials, artifacts, museums and history, archives, traditions, customs, festivals and celebrations in relation to parks and green spaces in the community. The participation of groups such as historical societies and conservation groups are considered.

	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Heritage policies, by-laws and their enforcement and effective programs with focus on the relationships of the landscape to the built heritage	15	13
Natural and cultural heritage management plan and preservation initiatives: including cultural landscapes, use of native plants, heritage gardens, heritage trees, cemeteries, museums, heritage sites	15	12.5
Management and promotion of heritage (through communications, information and support programs, economic development / tourism) including natural and cultural heritage initiatives throughout the year including festivals and celebrations along with preservation of traditions and customs	20	16.5
Activities and programs (year-round) for education and use of natural heritage sites for and by the public	15	12.5
New programs and initiatives to promote local heritage	10	8.5
Business & Institutions		
Conservation, restoration and reuse of heritage buildings and landscapes	15	12
Promotion of local heritage, including heritage gardens, native plants, and heritage trees	15	11.5
Residential		
Conservation / restoration and reuse of sites, buildings and heritage landscapes	10	8
Conservation of cultural and heritage elements pertaining to their own private lands and structures	5	4
Community Involvement		
Public participation in community, neighbourhood or individual in cultural and natural heritage programs including year-round heritage community events/activities, festivals and celebrations along with preservation of traditions and customs	20	16.5
Support – financial and/or in-kind or participation by the municipality, businesses and institutions (including historical societies) in community initiated, natural and cultural heritage activities and programs including cultural festivals & celebrations throughout the year and preservation of traditions and customs	10	8
Heritage Conservation Total	150.00	123.00

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Observations:

Cultural heritage conservation and promotion is particularly strong in Hanna. The Pioneer Museum is an impressive collection of heritage buildings, historical items and passionate volunteers that make the Museum work. The Hanna Ghost Walk is an entertaining and educational activity for both young and old to enjoy. The use of this historic setting for the Fair will be exciting indeed!

The Fire Hall museum is also impressive and the goal to have it affiliated with the Pioneer museum is very appropriate. The Round-Up Center is an exceptional heritage site with large pictures depicting early settlers and significant historical events and practices is a fitting tribute to the Centers' original and current function. The use of this historic space for a weekly farmer's market is brilliant. The booklet available at the Visitor Information Center that accompanies the pictures is a welcome addition to enhance this unique experience.

The cemetery has a beautiful Gazebo that houses a site plan. This makes finding the grave sites of loved ones or searching for ancestry accessible at any time.

The Canadian Northern Railway Roundhouse is an exceptional heritage piece within the community and the efforts to restore and preserve such an important part of Hanna's past are remarkable. Even in its present state, the roundhouse has an outstanding presence in the community and it was interesting to hear that a CN reunion will be held in the space. Bravo!

The shadow sculpture seen at night on the side of the Centennial Center depicting a young family standing in a field of wheat with the steam train and the grain elevators in the distant is a poignant celebration of the agricultural roots of the community. During the day, the sculpture pays tribute to the railroad and farmers through the ingenious use of cultivator shovels and railroad spikes that it is created from.

Recommendations:

The historic murals throughout Hanna are beautiful and a great visual reminder of days long ago. However, they should be properly labeled so that the historical significance can be understood by all.

The Pioneer Museum is extraordinary and perhaps incorporating a heritage vegetable garden, in addition to the flowerbed, emulating one the pioneers would have grown would be an appropriate addition to the Museum. The Museum did have a section that paid tribute to the natural history of the area and the First Nations people. Perhaps it would be fitting to further highlight these two very important cultural and natural heritage components of Hanna.

The marsh near the Visitor Information Center would be a prime location for further education to the public on the natural heritage of the area. Perhaps an interpretive board which identifies and explains the flora and fauna of the marsh would be appropriate. This could also be tied into how important such wetland areas with their unique plants, birds, animals and reptiles have been important in the history of both the First Nations people and European settlers.

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URBAN FORESTRY

Urban Forestry includes the efforts of the municipality, businesses, institutions and citizens with regards to written policies, by-laws, standards for tree management (selection, planting, and maintenance), long and short-term management plans, tree replacement policies, tree inventory, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), heritage, memorial and commemorative trees.

	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Overall impact, benefit and first impression of the urban forest	10	8.5
Policies, regulations and tree by-laws, tree protection and planting on public and private lands	10	8
Urban forestry planning and design, including integration with overall landscape plan	10	8
Measures to preserve, protect, manage and expand overall tree inventory, including woodlots	15	13
Plan of action: procurement, species diversity (including native trees), selection of hardy species and recommended tree list	10	8
Integrated Pest Management (IPM) / Plant HealthCare (PHC): plan of action for invasive pest detection and control, information on current infestations and diseases	10	8
Public information program on good planting techniques and maintenance programs	10	8
Maintenance best practices and proven results	10	8
Qualified personnel and/or crew training	10	8
Business & Institutions		
Design and diversity including native and hardy species of trees in landscapes and for planting on properties	15	12
Maintenance programs and best practices: watering, pruning, IPM	10	7.5
Residential		
Design and diversity including native and hardy species of trees in landscapes and for planting on residential properties	15	12
Maintenance best practices	10	7.5
Community Involvement		
Public participation in tree planting and conservation programs such as Green Streets Canada, Arbor Day, Maple Leaf Day, and other tree planting and maintenance programs and activities on public lands (including promotion, organization etc.)	20	15
Support – financial and/or in-kind or participation or promotion by the municipality, businesses and institutions for community tree planting and conservation programs on public lands	10	8
Urban Forestry Total	175.00	139.50

URBAN FORESTRY

Observations:

Being a true prairie town, every tree growing in Hanna has been planted. It is a testament to the early settlers that they truly valued trees and they worked hard to plant many, many trees. The legacy is a nicely treed town on the streets and in the parks. Sadly, many of these very large trees (mostly poplars) were downed in a storm in 2012. The following year 50 trees of a diversity of species were planted and each year since some trees have been planted to try to replace the loss.

Hanna is planting succession trees in the parks as budget allows. It is good to see that attention is paid to selecting a diversity of hardy and recommended trees. Tree health is monitored and the condition and care of the trees is generally very good.

The Town trains its' park staff on tree pruning and maintenance. Also, ATCO works with the Town on the pruning and tree removal of trees under power lines. ATCO offers vouchers for residents to replace removed trees; they can use the voucher themselves or turn it over to the Town to use for trees on public property. ATCO also provides a list of trees that are well suited to the region.

Recommendations:

The tree loss from the storm was a reminder of the importance of trees to Hanna. Now may be the time to develop a long term tree strategy for the Town. Part of this would be a proper tree inventory that would serve as a tool to monitor, protect and grow the urban forest. Another element of the strategy would be to have a landscape clause that mandates that tree planting requirements be part of every building permit for both residential and commercial developments.

Many of the trees that provide a gracious canopy on the older streets are reaching the end of their natural life. It will be important to plant succession trees soon to retain that lovely canopy.

Residents generally have nice trees in their landscape but some have few or none and others have trees that need attention. Some pollarded trees were seen on residential properties plus there is one at Parkview Manor – this is not a recommended practice. In one of the yards visited by the judges there was a border of young tower poplars that are planted much too close to be able to mature in a healthy manner. To assist residents with tree concerns try offering workshops on tree selection, planting instructions, and ongoing care and pruning – post course outlines and handouts on-line. A number of homes had dead trees, try to inform them on when the professionals are in Town to have the dead trees safely removed.

Mass tree plantings grow to be valuable woodlots. Scouts or other youth groups often have access to programs that provide seedlings for such plantings. Assure there is a variety of species to avoid loss in the future to disease or pests that are particular to a single species.

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LANDSCAPE

Landscape includes planning, design, construction and maintenance of parks and green spaces suitable for the intended use and location on a year-round basis. Elements for evaluation include: native and introduced materials; balance of plants, materials and constructed elements; appropriate integration of hard surfaces and art elements, use of turf and groundcovers. Landscape design should harmonize the interests of all sectors of the community. Standards of execution and maintenance should demonstrate best practices, including quality of naturalization, use of groundcovers and wildflowers along with turf management.

	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Landscape Plan: integrated and implemented throughout the municipality	10	8.5
Turf management programs, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Plant Health Care (PHC), alternative solutions to diseases and infestations when appropriate, increased naturalization and adapted maintenance programs	10	7.5
First impressions of the community including gateway / entrance treatments	10	8
Landscape maintenance policies, standards, best practices and programs	10	8.5
Sustainable designs (seasonally adjusted year round): energy efficient, use of green materials, naturalization, xeriscaping, suitable plant varieties, traffic mitigation, bank stabilisation	10	8.5
Urban and civic design standards for streetscape and public places: flags, banners, public art, fountains, site furnishings, signage, seasonal design and décor, walkways and paving materials	10	8
Landscape maintained to appropriate standards and specifications	10	8.5
Demonstrated year-round opportunities and programs for education and use of parks and green spaces (parks and recreation programs, city festivals and events)	10	8.5
Qualified personnel (including seasonal staff) and/or training	5	4
Business & Institutions		
Sustainable designs (seasonally adjusted year round): energy efficient, use of green materials, naturalization, xeriscaping, alternate groundcovers, urban agriculture	10	7.5
Contribution to urban and civic design and public green spaces above requirements: such as public art, streetscape, site furniture, fountains & innovation in concept & design	15	12
Adequate ongoing life cycle management (ongoing maintenance, ground & asset management, rehabilitation & replacement) of all landscape elements	10	7.5
Residential		
Streetscape appeal of landscapes (year-round, seasonal, themed)	15	12.5
Maintenance of properties: lawn care and shrub maintenance	15	12.5
Selection of plant material (native, local, innovative, including edible gardening)	10	8
Community Involvement		
Public participation in community programs such as: community gardens, "yard of the week", volunteer park maintenance, holiday illumination & decoration (promotion, organization, etc.)	15	12.5
Recognition (by municipality and/or by volunteer groups) of volunteer efforts in all aspects of the Communities in Bloom Program including activities in all evaluated criteria	15	13
Support – financial and/or in-kind or participation by the municipality, businesses and institutions - for community landscape programs and activities	10	8
Landscape Total	200.00	163.50

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LANDSCAPE

Observations:

Hanna boasts 10 parks! With these beautiful parks and playgrounds, Hanna is like a mecca for miles around for people to come to spend time enjoying them. Every park is designed to meet needs – some are relaxing passive parks, some lend themselves to functions, while others are busy places with play structures. A red shale walking trail is linking most parts of the Town as well as extending beyond for the very ambitious.

The parks staff is working very hard to mulch most of the trees and perennial/shrub beds in the parks. Being such a dry climate this helps to keep the root zone evenly moist and cool; and, more importantly reduces grass and weed growth so lawn mowers and weed whippers don't damage the base.

Park usage is monitored and plans are made accordingly, eg. Kin Park was downsized to half its' size to better serve that particular neighbourhood.

Urban art is a particular feature of Hanna. Most outstanding is the Legacy Sculpture, commissioned for the centennial, of an interesting form of rusted old farm machinery parts by day, but by night it is backlit to form a huge silhouette on a wall to depict a farm family. Outstanding! Tribute is paid to the favourite sons, Nickelback, by featuring large murals displaying their album covers on the arena. There are 2 huge geese and attractive fountains. Smaller artistic features are flags and steel banners. There are memorial benches placed in appropriate places with purchasers able to choose from 2 specific designs.

Two initiatives that have successfully reduced vandalism is the trimming of trees to improve sight lines and the installation of cameras.

The Town is working with 2 themes: "All Aboard" and "Worth the Drive" and it seems to be working.

The "Bloom to You" recognition program for both residential and business properties is creating a buzz and encourages property owners to continue to do better. Well done!

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Recommendations:

Signs at the parks could be improved – for the stranger it is difficult to see which park is which. The wooden sign at Hector King Hunter Park is difficult to read; some signs are close to the playground rather than at the entrance.

Winkler Park is particularly well used with the rocket play structure. It is difficult to mow with so many mature trees. Consider creating islands of trees using mulch to reduce mowing. It is good to see many succession trees planted and mulched in this park.

Only one of the two entry signs is landscaped, consider making them match. The judges learned that the Chamber of Commerce sign is being moved; it is felt that this sign is very busy and not particularly attractive. With most people now getting the information on this sign off the web, consider whether moving the sign is worth it.

Turf is in generally good condition and mowed to an appropriate height. Most turf is irrigated using treated water. Due to the heavy use of herbicides there is little evidence of weeds. It may be time to start using management techniques rather than pesticides to control weeds as it is inevitable that, like most of the other provinces, there will be a ban on the cosmetic use of herbicides. Also, it was noted that the turf adjacent to the community garden had been treated with a herbicide – be careful so close to food crops.

Sprinklers were on mid day at Hector King Park. It is always recommended that public areas be irrigated early in the morning in order to conserve water due to less evaporation as well as for the comfort of park visitors.

The red shale walking trails are very impressive in Hanna – consider creating a trail from the Visitor Information Centre through the wetlands to the Roundhouse. This would provide a little trip through both built history and natural history.

Downtown businesses are really making an effort to provide a landscape feature on their property. It would be nice to get the Superfoods and Mall up to the standards set by downtown businesses.

The skateboard structure is in a nice central location. It could be more comfortable for spectators to sit and watch awhile if there were benches and some shade. A bulletin board in this area may also be well received.

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FLORAL DISPLAYS

Floral displays evaluates efforts of the municipality, businesses, institutions and citizens to design, plan, execute, and maintain floral displays of high quality standards. Evaluation includes the design and arrangements of flowers and plants (annuals, perennials, bulbs, ornamental grasses) in the context of originality, distribution, location, diversity and balance, colour, and harmony. This pertains to flowerbeds, carpet bedding, containers, baskets and window boxes.

	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Integration into overall landscape plan and distribution through community. Concept and design including sustainable design	15	13
Diversity of displays: flowerbeds, raised beds, planters, hanging baskets, window boxes, carpet bedding, mosaics	20	16
Diversity of plants: annuals, perennials, bulbs, grasses, woody plants, natural flora	10	8.5
Quality, maintenance to appropriate specifications and standards, best practices: watering, weeding, edging, dead heading, etc.	20	16.5
Qualified personnel (including seasonal staff) and/or training	10	8.5
Business & Institutions		
Concept and design (including arrangement, diversity, colour of display and plants) on grounds	15	12
Quality of planting and maintenance: watering, weeding, edging, dead heading, etc.	10	8
Contribution to, and integration with, overall community floral program	15	12.5
Residential		
Concept and design (including arrangement, diversity, colour of display and plants) on residential properties	15	12.5
Quality of planting and maintenance	15	12
Community Involvement		
Public participation in community projects, volunteer initiatives, outreach programs in floral displays (including promotion, organization, etc.)	15	12.5
Support – financial and/or in-kind or participation by the municipality, businesses and institutions for community floral displays activities	15	12.5
Floral Displays Total	175.00	144.50

FLORAL DISPLAYS

Observations:

There is a very good distribution of high quality floral displays throughout Hanna. The Town gardeners, Pam and Lou, do an exceptional job of designing, planting and caring for the many displays. Also, they trial and track both annuals and perennials to determine best choices for Hanna. The displays offer a great model to inspire and educate residents.

There are exceptional flowerbeds in a number of locations including both front and back of the Town office, at the Visitor Information and the Caboose and in many of the parks. It is good to see that perennials and shrubs are being incorporated into many beds along with careful use of mulch to reduce maintenance and costs without sacrificing beauty. There are very nice hanging baskets at Memorial Park.

The barrels that were first introduced to have 100 barrels for the centennial have offered continued beauty by being collected each fall and placed each spring to selected locations. Placing barrels together in certain spots creates a nice impact.

The xeriscape garden at the RBC is attractive and demonstrates that beautiful gardens don't have to be high maintenance.

The Senior's Lodge has very colorful and well cared for gardens. The residents enjoy helping with the gardening and have even incorporated some vegetables.

"Blooms to You" appears to be inspiring many to play with and enjoy flowers.

For the purposes of this evaluation the Community Garden is placed under Floral Displays; after all, what is more beautiful than a healthy, lush vegetable garden. The garden is obviously very successful and will soon have to be expanded or replicated to meet demand. It is centrally located and the raised strawberry bed for easy access by people in wheelchairs from the nearby senior's home is a nice plus.

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Recommendations:

Continue to encourage the business and commercial sector to learn the value of landscape and flowers. There are many testimonials from business owners who have traded advertising dollars for landscape features – attractive florals send the message that the business is successful, clean, and vibrant. For example, the judges were told that the food at the restaurant of a particular motel is very good but the exterior is less than inviting and would not lure a stranger in.

The Community Garden could be kicked up a notch with some flowers to attract bees and butterflies as pollinators as well as for their beauty. The decorative birdhouses on the fence posts are whimsical; perhaps they could be functional.

Old and faded plastic flowers detract from the beautiful flowers and vegetables in the gardens of Parkview Manor.

As gardeners dig and divide their heritage perennials, they could perhaps be shared with the Museum. There is an attractive annual flower bed using varieties that would have been used back in the day, so maybe a perennial bed could be similarly designed. The Museum could be an appropriate site for another community vegetable garden.

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR INVOLVEMENT

"Within the context of climate change and environmental concerns, communities involved in the Communities in Bloom program can be proud of their efforts, which provide real and meaningful environmental solutions and benefit all of society."

COMMUNITIES IN BLOOM IS MADE POSSIBLE BY

The commitment of local, provincial and national volunteers.

The support of elected officials and of staff in municipalities.

The dedication of our judges, staff and organizations.

The contributions of our sponsors and partners.