

Evaluation Form

2014



2014 Evaluation Form



Community: Village of Cremona

Province: Alberta

Category: 1 - 500

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

Tidiness	112	/	150.00
Environmental Action	105.5	/	150.00
Heritage Conservation	97.5	/	150.00
Urban Forestry	115.5	/	175.00
Landscape	130.75	/	200.00
Floral Displays	120.5	/	175.00
	Total		681.75 / 1000.00

Percentage : 68%

Bloom rating: 3

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.

Mention : Incorporating the town postal code into rebranding of the town - TOM ORO (tomorrow).

Representative (s) of Community

Name: Alice Laing Function : Chair CiB Committee

Name: Sonia Temple Function : Councillor of Cremona

Name: Timothy Hagen Function : Mayor of Cremona

Judges

Name: Rose Carmichael Name: Sherry Cote

Evaluation date: July 28, 2014

2014 Evaluation Form

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, 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 & Service 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.

2014 Evaluation Form

GENERAL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Cremona is new to the Communities in Bloom program and is a most welcome addition. The first impression of the judges was of a clean and tidy community, nestled just shy of the foothills of western Alberta. The community is in an 'anything-is-possible' phase.

The current town council has much work to do in building trusting relationships within the community to move forward from the legacy of councils in recent history. In the short time, that the current council has been in place, much has been achieved, which is evident when compared to the recommendations in the Viability Review report completed by Alberta Municipal Affairs in May 2014. The demographics of the current council are reflective of a diverse representation of the community. Congratulations are extended to all.

The observed energy in the community will add to the success of initiatives and moving them forward. Caution is urged to pace the changes for two reasons; one to avoid burnout of those involved and the second is to have the community accept changes on a gradual basis, and feel they have a say in the changes that happen.

The gradual loss of a commercial base is a shared condition with many small communities in Alberta, and Cremona is encountering this challenge as well. To have the support of the Chamber of Commerce in creating a flower barrel program for the beautification of main street is applauded.

Cremona is a vibrant and energetic community and is working toward realizing its potential. The enthusiasm of the volunteers is evident all over the community. Tracking volunteer hours is essential for numerous reasons: 1) the data would benefit the municipality with the number of hours invested by volunteers, and 2) the in-kind contributions of the gifts provided to the Communities in Bloom Committee can all be assigned a financial value. This information can be used for grant applications and a variety of reports.

Congratulations Cremona you are engaging people, plants and pride to make your community bloom.

Potential resources:

Alberta Museums Association www.museums.ab.ca

Canada Summer Jobs - Federal Government wage subsidy program to hire summer students - apply in February online

Young Canada Works – wage subsidy program for hiring summer students to work in museums – apply in February online

Nature Conservancy Canada - <http://www.natureconservancy.ca>

Ducks Unlimited - www.ducks.org

Charity Village – resource for volunteers and funding information www.charityvillage.com

Tree Canada – grant opportunities for trees to plant in the community www.treecanada.ca

Home Depot Foundation – funding for projects <http://www.homedepot.ca/foundation>

Canadian Tree Fund – www.canadiantreefund.org

Alberta Community Cooperatives Association – Subsidized internship program for post-secondary graduates www.acca.coop

Evergreen - supports community greening, likes to work with school populations – www.evergreen.ca

Green Streets – www.green-street.ca

Communities in Bloom National office – Scott's fertilizer offers grants to support the development community gardens.

CN Railway offers funding in support of working with rail lands.

2014 Evaluation Form

TIDINESS		
<p>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 and vandalism programs.</p>		
	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Tidiness, order, cleanliness and first impressions	15	12.5
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	7.5
Cleanliness of public green infrastructure: parks, streetscapes (sidewalks, planters, etc.)	15	10.5
Condition of urban signage and furniture such as benches, litter and recycling containers	15	11
Business & Institutions		
Tidiness, order and cleanliness and first impressions	15	10
Condition of buildings (exterior maintenance), grounds, sidewalks and parking lots	15	10
Condition of urban furniture: benches, litter and recycling containers	5	3.5
Residential		
Tidiness, order and cleanliness	20	15
Condition of buildings, grounds and yards	15	12.5
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	7.5
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	112

2014 Evaluation Form

TIDINESS

Observations:

The extensive tour of the Village reflected the lack of graffiti, cigarette butts and free-range plastic bags.

The plans to relocate the recycle station to an open and public space in order to deter illegal dumping are applauded. Congratulations for having a recycle collection program with such success and providing support to a geographic area larger than the community itself.

Congratulations for providing the community with a current list of prohibited noxious and noxious weeds. It is recognized that within the framework of bylaws correct names must be used. Pass along compliments to those responsible for the maintenance of the school grounds and surrounding sports fields, they are well kept.

Recommendations:

In support of a better tool for teaching about the invasive plants list, a copy of the booklet that provides full colour photos and detailed descriptions would prove to be more effective. The book could be laminated and only available at the town office to keep costs at a minimum. The link to the invasive plant council's copy of the book could be added to the town website. A website that provides excellent photos and information on all of the plants on the invasive plants list is <http://www.abinvasives.ca>.

There is potential to offer public awareness workshops in support of identifying the noxious and prohibited noxious list. The Government of Alberta does have speakers who could be engaged to deliver a workshop. Workshops could be offered at different times of the day to accommodate different age groups and availabilities of the citizens in the community. The seniors in the community may be the primary target audience as they have probably had some the plants on the list and think they are just fine.

Regarding longer-term plans, Cremona is encouraged to include the placement of welcome signs on the highway announcing to travellers that they have arrived in a dynamic village. The signs within the village deserve to be exposed. Foliage from trees is covering the signs, and the addition of floral beds would show the welcome much better.

2014 Evaluation Form

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION		
<p>Environmental action includes the efforts and achievement of the community with respect to: policies, by-laws, programs and best practices, waste reduction and diversion rate to landfill, 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.</p>		
	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	14
Waste management programs: waste reduction to landfill and results (3-R : recycling, re-use, reduce), composting (backyard and municipal)), and including activities such as composting sites yard waste collections, shredding of Christmas trees, handling of hazardous waste including e-waste collection	15	11.5
Water conservation and use-reduction programs: efficient appliance incentives or promotion, efficient irrigation and use of non-potable water, water restriction policies, rainwater management	15	10.5
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	6.5
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	6
Business & Institutions 7		
Participation in the environmental effort : such as waste management (recycle, reuse, reduce), water conservation, energy conservation, brownfield management, eco-park	10	7
Corporate environmental innovation / stewardship, initiatives, activities (Ex. Environmental clean-up activities)	10	7
Residential		
Participation in the 3-R (recycle, reuse, reduce) initiatives and composting	20	15
Adoption of water conservation practices & policies including rainwater collection	15	11
Community Involvement 3		
Public participation in public forums and policy development on environmental issues	5	3
Public participation in community, neighbourhood or individual street environmental activities and programs (including, promotion, organization and evidence of taking ownership), etc.)	10	7
Support – financial and/or in-kind or participation by the Municipality, Businesses and Institutions in public environmental activities and programs	10	7
Environmental Action Total	150.00	105.5

2014 Evaluation Form

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Observations:

The intended site for the re- location of the recycle station has been well chosen.

Kudos to the new town council and town staff for their efforts in clearing the backlog of trash dumped around the town facilities. The decision to consciously work though the refuse and properly dispose of the items is applauded.

The inclusion of a site for the community to bring compostable materials for the development of compost is great.

Creating a rebate program for installing low-flush toilets in the community, is a proactive action and well timed.

Recommendations:

It is encouraged to include on council's 'To Do' list the goal of mapping the community and understanding and determining exactly what lands and easements belong to the municipality. This will be an essential tool when needing to use bylaws to determine responsibility for compliance of infractions.

Cremona is encouraged to create a vision of how to maintain and distribute the end product of the compost site. Observations on evaluation day lead the judges to believe that the compost site deserves more attention to advance the composting cycle.

2014 Evaluation Form

HERITAGE CONSERVATION		
<p>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.</p>		
	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	9.75
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	9.75
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	13
Activities and programs (year-round) for education and use of natural heritage sites for and by the public	15	9.75
New programs and initiatives to promote local heritage	10	6.5
Business & Institutions		
Conservation, restoration and reuse of heritage buildings and landscapes	15	9.75
Promotion of local heritage, including heritage gardens, native plants, and heritage trees	15	9.75
Residential		
Conservation / restoration and reuse of sites, buildings and heritage landscapes	10	6.5
Conservation of cultural and heritage elements pertaining to their own private lands and structures	5	3.25
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	13
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	6.5
Heritage Conservation Total	150.00	97.5

2014 Evaluation Form

HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Observations:

The depth of heritage and history is evident with the number of 100 year farms in the area.

The quilts and memorabilia displayed in the basement of the Gold and Silver club were mesmerizing and very reflective of the community, its families and the history created in Cremona.

The creation of the naturalized area where the train turn around was located, has been a long-term project and is now becoming fully ensconced as part of the community's natural areas. The visionaries are to be commended for the investment of energies and time to make this happen.

Recommendations:

The Cremona History Museum is encouraged to learn how to appropriately store and exhibit artifacts. An organization called the Alberta Museums Association which can provide resources to support the proper preservation and cataloguing of the precious pieces of Cremona cultural history.

The residents of Cremona live in an area full of natural history. The forest and wildlife in the area are unique to Cremona. Share all that Cremona has to offer, and include the stories of the experiences with nature.

Talk with the seniors of the community and gather their stories to create a historical walk within the community. Posting the stories on plaques and creating a map for visitors will offer an opportunity to walk through the community.

2014 Evaluation Form

URBAN FORESTRY		
<p>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.</p>		
	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Overall impact, benefit and first impression of the urban forest	10	7.5
Policies, regulations and tree by-laws, tree protection and planting on public and private lands	10	6.5
Urban forestry planning and design, including integration with overall landscape plan	10	6.5
Measures to preserve, protect, manage and expand overall tree inventory, including woodlots	15	9.75
Plan of action: procurement, species diversity (including native trees), selection of hardy species, recommended tree list	10	6.5
Integrated Pest Management (IPM) / Plant HealthCare (PHC): plan of action for invasive pest detection and control, information on current infestations and diseases	10	6.5
Public information program on good planting techniques and maintenance programs	10	6.5
Maintenance best practices and proven results	10	6.5
Qualified personnel and/or crew training	10	6.5
Business & Institutions		
Design and diversity including native and hardy species of trees in landscapes and for planting on properties	15	9.75
Maintenance programs and best practices: watering, pruning, IPM	10	6.5
Residential		
Design and diversity including native and hardy species of trees in landscapes and for planting on residential properties	15	10
Maintenance best practices	10	7
Community Involvement		
Public participation in tree planting and conservation programs such a Green Streets Canada, Arbour Day, Maple Leaf Day, and other tree planting and maintenance programs and activities on public lands (including promotion, organization etc.).	20	13
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	6.5
Urban Forestry Total	175.00	115.5

2014 Evaluation Form

URBAN FORESTRY

Observations:

Cremona is fortunate to be located where trees thrive and grow well. The composition of the soil limits (clay and rock) what can be grown but the forest did seem to be healthy and diverse. The hidden springs also add to the viability of the forest.

The care and attention of the existing green spaces should be continued. Further development could come in time once the mapping of the municipal area is complete.

Recommendations:

Once the municipality is able to complete the mapping process, it should be followed by a tree inventory. An inventory would provide documentation for insurance purposes for replacement value of the trees. Storms and floods have travelled through the community in recent history and the damage was extensive. Understanding the value of the forest is important to consider doing. The inventory will also help with the replacement plan of the forest.

Consider using bark mulch around the base of trees to prevent trimmer and lawn mower damage. Make a volcano shaped circle at least 30 cm out from the tree, and have the mulch away from the trunk of the tree. The mulch will need to be replaced regularly. Ignore the inclination to use rocks for mulch at the base of the trees. The weight of the rocks strangles the roots and speeds up the evaporation of moisture.

2014 Evaluation Form

LANDSCAPE		
<p>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.</p>		
	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Landscape Plan: integrated and implemented throughout the municipality	10	6.5
Turf management programs, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Plant Health Care (PHC), alternative solutions to diseases and infestations when appropriate, increased naturalization, adapted maintenance programs	10	6
First impressions of the community including gateway / entrance treatments	10	7
Landscape maintenance policies, standards, best practices and programs	10	6
Sustainable designs (seasonally adjusted year round): energy efficient, use of green materials, naturalization, xeriscaping, suitable plant varieties, traffic mitigation, bank stabilisation	10	6
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	6.5
Landscape maintained to appropriate standards and specifications	10	6.5
Demonstrated year-round opportunities and programs for education and use of parks and green spaces (parks and recreation programs, city festivals and events)	10	7
Qualified personnel (including seasonal staff) and/or training	5	3.25
Business & Institutions		
Sustainable designs (seasonally adjusted year round): energy efficient, use of green materials, naturalization, xeriscaping, alternate groundcovers, urban agriculture	10	6
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	9.75
Adequate ongoing life cycle management (ongoing maintenance, ground & asset management, rehabilitation & replacement) of all landscape elements	10	6
Residential		
Streetscape appeal of landscapes (year-round, seasonal, themed)	15	10.5
Maintenance of properties: lawn care and shrub maintenance	15	10.5
Selection of plant material (native, local, innovative, including edible gardening)	10	6.5
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	9.75
Recognition (by municipality and/or by volunteer groups) of volunteer efforts in all aspects of the Communities in Bloom Program including tidiness, environmental action, urban forestry, landscape, floral and natural & Cultural Heritage activities .	15	10
Support – financial and/or in-kind or participation by the Municipality, Businesses and Institutions for community landscape programs and activities	10	7
Landscape Total	200.00	130.75

2014 Evaluation Form

LANDSCAPE

Observations:

The geography of the area is predominantly clay and rock bed. The lack of sufficient top soil to have strong in ground gardens provides obvious challenges.

The professional development plan of the current parks staff is commended.

Pass on compliments from the judges as the school grounds were in tip top shape, and a great pleasure to see.

Kudos are extended to the ball club for raising funds and taking on the task of replacing all the fencing at the ball diamonds.

Recommendations:

Volunteer burn out can be devastating to a Communities in Bloom community. The investment of time and energy by the volunteers has value. Limited municipal budgets may not be able to continue to provide what the volunteers have been able to accomplish. Determine limits for the volunteers and the municipality.

Cremona does not appear to currently have a landscape plan for the community. It will be interesting for future judges to learn how Cremona will move forward.

Provide an opportunity for the residents to come together and share their visions for Cremona in the future. This action could also include the local AG Society, Gold Silver Club, the Lions and any other service club(s) in the area.

Anniversary Park seems to have been lost on the radar. Revisit what the intent of the park was and what it could become.

2014 Evaluation Form

FLORAL DISPLAYS		
<p>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.</p>		
	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Integration into overall landscape plan and distribution through community. Concept and design including sustainable design	15	10.5
Diversity of displays: flowerbeds, raised beds, planters, hanging baskets, window boxes, carpet bedding, mosaics	20	14
Diversity of plants: annuals, perennials, bulbs, grasses, woody plants, natural flora	10	6
Quality, maintenance to appropriate specifications and standards, best practices: watering, weeding, edging, dead heading, etc.	20	13.5
Qualified personnel (including seasonal staff) and/or training	10	6.5
Business & Institutions		
Concept and design (including arrangement, diversity, colour of display and plants) on grounds	15	10.5
Quality of planting and maintenance: watering, weeding, edging, dead heading, etc.	10	6.5
Contribution to, and integration with, overall community floral program	15	10.5
Residential		
Concept and design (including arrangement, diversity, colour of display and plants) on residential properties	15	10.5
Quality of planting and maintenance	15	10
Community Involvement		
Public participation in community projects, volunteer initiatives, outreach programs in floral displays (including promotion, organization, etc.).	15	11
Support – financial and/or in-kind or participation by the Municipality, Businesses and Institutions in community floral displays activities	15	11
Floral Displays Total	175.00	120.5

2014 Evaluation Form

FLORAL DISPLAYS

Observations:

Soil conditions do limit the planting of gardens and flower beds. Rich black soil is a true luxury in Cremona. We admire the determination of dedicated green thumbs to have and plant a garden.

The first efforts of the FCSS youth group in planting a raised bed garden looked to be a successful endeavour. Continue the program.

Recommendations:

Proper management of the compost collection area could provide the village with valuable soil to create new gardens or enhance soil in existing gardens and beds.

The use of annuals in planters and barrels is a good choice. Using perennials in beds and raised gardens will be more economical long term. Plant exchanges and sharing stock when dividing overgrown plants could be sources of acclimated stock.

2014 Evaluation Form



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