

RDC 2020: A LEARNER-CENTRED FUTURE

Strategic Plan 2017/18 to 2019/20





message from the president

In 2012 over 800 faculty, staff and community members contributed to the creation of *RDC 2017: A Learner-Centred Future*, our five year Strategic Plan and bold new vision for serving learners and communities through leadership, excellence and innovation. The decision to extend this plan to 2020 is a testament to the enduring value of their work.

Alberta continues to grow, central Alberta continues to grow and RDC will match that growth through innovative programs and imaginative facilities.

Access to degrees in central Alberta is a priority for RDC. Growth in degree completion opportunities by becoming a Polytechnic University continues as the path to degree granting status for RDC.

The vision for the Gary W. Harris Canada Games Centre/Centre des Jeux du Canada Gary W. Harris is to create a world-class facility that integrates education and learning with sport and training that is inclusive and multi-generational. Promoting healthy lifestyle development at all stages of life will be a hallmark of this new facility as we connect our health programs and students to unique opportunities to learn and serve.

The School of Trades and Technologies and our Centre for Innovation in Manufacturing will continue to develop new programs and projects designed to help business and industry innovate and grow.

The commercialization of technology and business start-ups and growth remain a key priority for RDC. Our success in helping companies over the years is evidence of our increasing capacity to aid in the economic growth of Alberta. As the third largest apprenticeship trainer in the province, RDC will continue to train the workforce needed for an Integrated Resource System which ensures growth that is environmentally and economically sustainable for Alberta.

RDC will no longer be Alberta's "best kept secret."

We will explore opportunities provincially, nationally and internationally ensuring our learners, our partners, faculty, and staff share their expertise and benefit from collaborations with other jurisdictions.

RDC's success in achieving our plan is dependent on faculty, staff, administration, and partners who believe that the promise of the future is achieved through hard work and dedication today. This Strategic Plan extension is the result of their work and that belief.

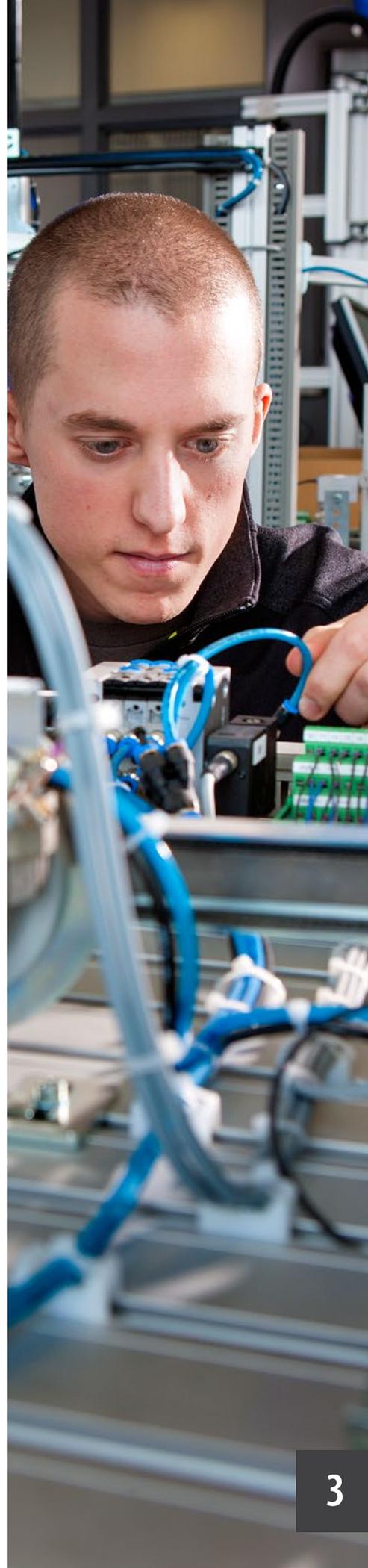
Joel Ward
President & CEO, Red Deer College

continuing the path toward a learner-centred future

The Red Deer College Strategic Plan *RDC 2017: A Learner-Centred Future* provided an extensive and ambitious set of goals for the College to achieve over a five-year period. All the goals identified in the Plan continue to be relevant and remain as guiding principles for planning and decision-making, and five of the goals have been identified as priorities for RDC. There has been significant progress toward achieving the goals of the Strategic Plan over the past five years, and these efforts will continue with an extension of the Strategic Plan to 2020.

Six strategic themes served as the basis for developing the goals of the Strategic Plan and remain relevant for visualizing the College's future in 2020:

- The Student Experience
- Programs
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Program and Service Delivery
- Image and Identity
- Resources and Sustainability



RDC vision, mission & values

VALUES

Learning is at the heart of Red Deer College. Six key values reflect both the reality and the aspirations of the organization.

Exploration

The College is open to new ways of doing, being, and thinking. We foster a spirit of adventure and inquiry. We honour our past while focusing on our future and encouraging innovation and risk-taking.

Inclusiveness

The College creates welcoming environments, making our programs and services accessible to diverse learners. We offer a range of choices in what and how people can learn. Our curricula, processes, and people honour diversity.

Excellence

The College offers high quality learning experiences. Our staff demonstrate subject area expertise. We work to improve our processes, services, and learning opportunities. We celebrate achievement.

Integrity

Communication at the College is honest, open, and timely. We follow fair and equitable processes. We treat people with respect and encourage individuals to take personal responsibility.

Community

A sense of community is fostered within the College. We offer rich social, cultural, intellectual and recreational environments. We collaborate effectively with partners and we involve ourselves in our local, regional, and global communities.

Accountability

The College's programs and services meet learners' needs. We are responsive to the needs of our learning communities and business partners. We regularly evaluate our effectiveness and efficiency.

VISION

To be the post-secondary institution of choice serving learners and communities through leadership, excellence, and innovation.

MISSION

Because of Red Deer College:
The intellectual, economic, cultural and social development of Central Alberta is strengthened and enriched while demonstrating good stewardship.



priority strategic goals

1 RDC will build a learner-centred culture.

The College is committed to the learner in all programs and services. A greater awareness and expectation of learner-centred service will be developed through rigorous selection of new faculty and staff, and strong, vibrant orientation processes that promote a learner-centred culture. Such a culture will infuse program development and renewal, and performance review of faculty, staff, programs, and services throughout the College.

2 RDC will increase the participation of Aboriginal learners and underrepresented groups through increased engagement and support.

RDC will develop and maintain a supportive, welcoming, and inclusive learning and social environment. We will implement strategies to increase participation of Aboriginal learners and other groups facing challenges related to post-secondary access and success; such as newcomers to Canada, and persons with disabilities. Greater commitment to diversity will also be evident in our complement of faculty and staff. RDC will be known as an organization that welcomes, values and supports the uniqueness and diversity of all learners.

3 RDC will promote a bold new image that portrays academic excellence and practical, enriching learning experiences for students.

The College's instructor and staff achievements, challenging programs, excellence in instruction, and student success will be widely recognized by traditional and non-traditional learners in the region and beyond. RDC will be nationally known for its comprehensive programming and leading-edge, practical learning experiences. The College's academic reputation will be ranked among the top post-secondary institutions in Alberta.

4 RDC will assert its commitment to comprehensive programming:

- adult upgrading
- apprenticeship
- certificates and diplomas
- continuing education
- degrees

Alberta needs graduates from a variety of programs and credentials. New and renewed programs will contribute to the breadth and depth of our comprehensive program mix. The College will enhance the comprehensiveness of our programming by intentionally pursuing degree-granting status. Increased control over the outcomes and curriculum of degree programs will provide a superior learning experience for students.

5 The College will develop a stable resource base.

Strategies for the development of more resources to support the College mandate will include advocacy for greater government investment in post-secondary education. The College will also seek innovative ways to leverage current assets to increase private investment in the College. RDC will continue to adopt an entrepreneurial approach where feasible, seeking partners and collaborations to launch new initiatives in a cost-effective way.



ongoing strategic goals

6 Every student will find “their community” at RDC.

Students will be encouraged to build personal learning networks and to take ownership of their own success. Student engagement will be characterized by student effort and faculty commitment, active and collaborative learning, student-faculty interaction, academic challenge, and support for learners. The College will be innovative, consistently developing new ways to better meet the needs of all learners.

7 RDC will adapt in response to reduced government financial support for public post-secondary education.

Viability and sustainability of all current and new programs and services will be carefully assessed and monitored in order to provide the best possible value to our learners. Results-based budgeting and transparent and consistent communication are essential components of these processes. Social and environmental responsibility will accompany economic responsibility as criteria for evaluating programs and services.

8 RDC will identify and expand clear learner pathways and career maps.

RDC will clearly articulate flexible pathways to completion and transfer routes that increase choice and help learners complete their education in a timely, cost-effective way. The College will identify enhanced pathways for credit and non-credit career laddering, streaming, bundling, post-program certification and laddering to degrees. Recognition of prior learning and work experience will contribute to successful pathways, especially for learners re-entering the post-secondary system after time in the workforce.

9 RDC programs will provide students with current, practical, and innovative learning experiences.

The hallmark of RDC programs will be the engagement of students in relevant, leading-edge learning experiences that bridge in-class theory with contemporary real-world practice. The College will develop approaches that link innovative programs to enterprise needs, public service, cultural development, and social responsibility in the region, the province, the country, and beyond.

10 Student access to programs and services will be maximized through flexible and responsive options.

Program and service delivery will demonstrate experimentation, innovation, and accountability. Program and service outcomes will be clearly articulated to the needs of learners. The College will increase resources for program, faculty, and staff development. In recognition of the increasing prevalence of online learning, all programs at RDC will provide opportunities for students to participate in a course delivered online. Stakeholder engagement, a strong learner-centred focus, and timely response will characterize the delivery of new programs and services.

11 RDC will engage stakeholders through a College-wide strategy that intentionally connects RDC to its communities.

RDC will establish mutually beneficial collaborations with stakeholders. The College will actively develop and sustain relationships through an effective, selective, and systematic approach. RDC will capitalize on emerging technologies such as social media to enhance relationships and communication.

12 RDC will develop a strong college-wide marketing and communications strategy that asserts the College's new identity.

RDC will ensure the new image is communicated to a wide audience. The College will develop the appropriate marketing and communications strategies needed to promote RDC's new identity, considering the resources required, the return on investment, and the impact on financial sustainability for particular programs and the College as a whole. The College will establish processes that enable each department, faculty member, and staff member to convey consistent messaging that reflects the quality of RDC programs, services, and successful learner outcomes.

13 RDC will continue to develop three priority areas in applied research: innovation in manufacturing, environment and ecology, and rural health, wellness and community development.

The College's applied research and innovation activities will provide practical solutions to social issues and technological challenges. Faculty, staff, and students will apply knowledge in practical settings and increase knowledge transfer. Supporting businesses during the commercialization process will lead to increased economic competitiveness and diversity.

14 RDC will develop facilities that support teaching, learning and the student experience.

RDC will create new facilities that are learner-centred and are available for community use. Land development will be environmentally sustainable. Existing facilities will be optimized to provide flexible space that is easily configured in response to the needs of learners.

RDC is proud of the people who make our institution a vibrant space where teaching and learning thrive.

All photographs used in this document are from RDC's collection of photos, showcasing our people, facilities and connections to the communities we serve.



visualizing RDC 2020

In 2020, Red Deer College is established as a Polytechnic University with an expanded program mix that includes degree programming. Our intentionally comprehensive set of programs is recognized for academic excellence and practical, enriching learning experiences. This has positioned us among the top post-secondary institutions in the province. Our identity is characterized by a learner-centered culture where programs and services engage in continuous improvement processes to ensure the needs of learners and stakeholders are met.

Students are attracted to our institution by the high quality programming, flexible learner pathways, laddering, and career opportunities that result from leading-edge, innovative and applied learning experiences. The communications and messaging of these characteristics are consistent across all faculty and staff when they engage students, stakeholders, and the community. We have also established mutually beneficial collaborations with stakeholders including students, alumni, employees, schools, other post-secondary institutions, government (federal, provincial, municipal), industry and business, community, and public service.

We have a supportive, welcoming, and inclusive learning and social environment. Students benefit from positive interactions and feel a sense of connection with other students, faculty, and staff

in the personal learning networks and share in the responsibility for their learning outcomes. We are responsive to the diverse needs of people, organizations, and businesses in the region. Our applied research facilities provide individuals and businesses with practical and innovative solutions to social issues and technological problems.

The Gary W. Harris Canada Games Centre/Centre des Jeux du Canada Gary W. Harris is a testament to the commitment we have for developing new facilities with a focus on enhancing the experience of learners in an environmentally sustainable manner. Our institutional financial stability is maintained with a balance of support from government funding, tuition revenue, central Alberta businesses and other stakeholder contributions. We have implemented an organizational structure that maximizes the potential for engaging business, industry, and the community to develop new programs that are in demand and provide a good return on investment. We are efficient in adapting to an environment of reduced government funding while continuing to be responsive to the needs of the Central Alberta Region.



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