

MINUTES
REGULAR COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING
MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF PINCHER CREEK NO. 9
Tuesday, September 8, 2026
11:00 am
Council Chambers

Present: Reeve Rick Lemire, Deputy Reeve Tony Bruder, Councillors John MacGarva, Jim Welsch, and Dave Cox.

Staff: CAO Roland Milligan, Acting Director of Corporate Services Brendan Schlossberger, Utilities & Infrastructure Manager David Desabrais, Public Works Manager Alan McRae, Development Officer Laura McKinnon and Executive Assistant Jessica McClelland.

Reeve Rick Lemire called the meeting to order, the time being 11:00 am.

1. Approval of Agenda

Councillor Tony Bruder

Moved that the agenda for September 8, 2026, be approved as presented.

Carried

2. Delegations

a) South Canadian Rockies Tourism Association (Destination Management)

Senior Board Advisor Sacha Anderson and Executive Director Erin Fairhurst attended the meeting to provide an overview of the South Canadian Rockies Tourism Association (SCRTA).

SCRTA is seeking municipal funding from the MD of Pincher Creek for 2026/2027 to support regional destination management and marketing efforts. This funding aligns with local tourism priorities, helps secure additional partner funding, and supports visible tourism projects without overburdening municipal staff. SCRTA will raise the amount as an 80/20 ask to the Province, with the Town, MD, and ID #4 making up the 20%.

SCRTA overviewed their partnership priorities:

1. Resident Sentiment Campaigns - SCRTA would develop simple resident-focused communications and engagement activities that help local people understand tourism, share feedback, and see the value tourism brings to the area.

Benefits to the MD of Pincher Creek:

- Rural residents, landowners, and community members have a clear way to raise concerns and help shape how tourism grows in the MD.

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- Build support for tourism by showing the connection between visitors and local benefits such as business/accommodations revenue, jobs, community events, and investment in amenities.
- Reduce conflict by encouraging early communication about visitor behaviour, busy locations, access concerns, and changing tourism pressures.

2. SCRTA has started developing a new, detailed inventory of tourism assets throughout the MD. This includes attractions, recreation sites, events, accommodations, short-term rentals, visitor services, and noting gaps or deficiencies. The inventory process is currently underway.

Benefits to the MD of Pincher Creek:

- The MD will have a clearer picture of what tourism assets already exist across its large rural area and where opportunities or service gaps may be emerging.
- Identify practical needs such as signage, parking, washrooms, trail connections, wayfinding, visitor information, seasonal services, or infrastructure pressure points.
- A current inventory supports better municipal planning, grant applications, investment decisions, emergency planning, and conversations with developers or tourism operators.
- Help to understand the growing role of short-term rentals and events in rural areas, including their economic potential and possible community impacts.

3. SCRTA would organize regional public-awareness campaigns focusing on Leave No Trace principles, promoting sustainable tourism, responsible recreation, safety guidelines, and establishing “no-go zones”.

Benefits to the MD of Pincher Creek:

- Rural areas often experience direct visitor impacts on roads, trailheads, Crown-land access points, agricultural land, waterways, and natural areas. Clear visitor messaging can reduce littering, illegal parking, trespass, wildlife disturbance, and fire risk, and direct visitors to appropriate sites.
- Regional campaigns make it easier for the MD to communicate consistent expectations to visitors without having to create, fund, and manage its own standalone campaigns.
- Responsible-travel messaging protects the landscapes, working lands, recreation areas, and rural character that make the MD attractive to visitors in the first place.

4. Regional Advocacy and Infrastructure - SCRTA advocates for regional tourism development through partnerships with municipalities, tourism operators, recreation organizations, and provincial entities. Its main focus areas are transportation, signage, trails, parking, visitor services, cellular coverage, recreation access, and public facilities. Forming a formal partnership with the MD improves chances for external infrastructure funding and allows the region to seek future capital investments as destination management funds become accessible.

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Benefits to the MD of Pincher Creek:

- Using a regional voice, SCRTA/RTAC can help connect municipal priorities with broader corridor, regional, and provincial tourism-development strategies. The Highway 3 tourism-corridor work, for example, has included local governments, regional DMOs, Indigenous communities, government agencies, tourism businesses, and funding bodies.
- SCRTA is exploring the potential for destination marketing fee collection. This model would require local discussion, industry participation, and municipal consideration—beginning the conversation/collaboration now helps the MD understand its options rather than react later.
- This collaborative approach creates a stronger foundation for future grant applications, partnership requests, infrastructure advocacy, and budget decisions because priorities will be documented and supported by regional evidence.

SCRTA is requesting a municipal contribution of \$12,500 to support continued destination promotion and the delivery of approved tourism projects benefiting the MD of Pincher Creek in 2027. Council will discuss at the Council meeting on September 22, 2026. SCRTA requested who the main point of contact should be for the Municipality; it was confirmed that the Development Officer should be the main point of contact.

Sacha Anderson and Erin Fairhurst left the meeting at 11:22 am.

b) Pincher Creek Food Centre

Davina Brown, Board Chair, attended the meeting to review the Pincher Creek Food Centre. Other board members also attended. The Pincher Creek and District Community Food Centre aims to combat hunger by ensuring community members in need within the Town and Municipal District of Pincher Creek can access nutritious food.

Founded in 2020, the Food Centre assists individuals and families facing food insecurity throughout the Town of Pincher Creek and nearby communities such as Pincher Station, Beaver Mines, Lundbreck, Twin Butte, Castle Mountain, and Cowley. In-town recipients have delivery days, whereas rural residents pick up at the location in Town.

The Food Centre is open Monday to Thursday and closed during the holiday season. Clients can call or text to place orders, with a limit of one delivery per month. Hamper size depends on household size. Access to food hampers is determined by a means test and provided free of charge. A team of volunteers also manages the Food Centre's vegetable garden.

A Year in Review

- Clients served
 - 427 people May 2025 – April 2026 (412 in 2024-25, 197 in 2023-24)
 - 282 existing clients, 145 new

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- On average, 77 households per month (range: 70 in Aug'25 / 92 in Mar'26)
- 785 deliveries, 140 pickups (clients pick up hampers at the Food Centre)
- Accredited by Food Banks Canada
- Completed a financial review (compilation) by a certified accountant; new annual requirement
- to maintain accreditation by Food Banks Canada (formal review every 5 years)
- Outreach to the Community – trade show, town and MD council presentations, town
- volunteer appreciation event, chamber awards of excellence, holiday postcard fundraising
- campaign
- Approved a 3-year Strategic Plan
- Undertook a Board Performance Evaluation

Davina reviewed the Strategic Priorities and Outcomes, as well as specifics for the Food Hamper Program and the Financial Summary. From May 2025 to April 2026, income was \$392,314, and expenses were \$341,895.

Community Support and Funding:

- Food / Financial Donations – CPKC Holiday Train event, Loblaw (No Frills) Feed More Families Holiday Food Drive, Walmart Fight Hunger Spark Change campaign, and Tim Hortons Smile Cookie campaign. Local businesses, churches and individual community members, including local food drives (e.g., Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, annual Car Show).
- Food Donations – Walmart, No Frills, Co-op food bin, Back Country Butchering, Interfaith Food Bank Society of Lethbridge, and Canada Bread. Fruits and vegetables from the Pincher Creek Hutterite Colony and many local gardeners!
- Grant Funding – Town/MD Joint Council, Food Banks Canada, Alberta Food Banks, Community Foundation Southwestern Alberta, United Way and TC Energy.

Council suggested promoting the program, which allows ranchers to donate beef and receive a tax receipt, helping support the food bank. The MD can help spread the word about this initiative. Council asked if there's a link between "Meals on Wheels" and the food hamper program; currently, no connection exists, but future discussions are possible. They also inquired why the figures don't include the Piikani Reserve, noting that it falls outside the food centre's boundaries and has its own community program.

Food Bank representatives left the meeting at 11:45 am.

3. Closed Session

Councillor Dave Cox

Moved that Council move into closed session to discuss the following, the time being 11:47 am.

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- a) 2027 Budget Direction – ATIA Sec. 29.1
- b) Recycling Services – October 1 Changes Update – ATIA Sec. 19.1
- c) CUPE Negotiations – ATIA Sec. 29.1
- d) License of Occupation Discussion – ATIA Sec. 29.1

Carried

Councillor Jim Welsch

Moved that Council move out of closed session, the time being 2:06 pm.

Carried

5. 2026 RMA Fall Convention & Tradeshow

Council confirmed with administration the following schedule for RMA Convention:

- Conference and Elected Officials Course – Budget & Finance
 - Councillor Dave Cox
 - Councillor John MacGarva
- Remaining Councillors, CAO and Public Works Manager attending the conference only.

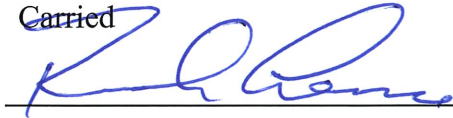
6. Round Table

7. Adjournment

Councillor John MacGarva

Moved that the committee meeting adjourn at 2:11 pm.

Carried



REEVE



CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER