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Conducted as part of Brandon University's Masters of Arts in Rural Development
Other students supporting the project included Dada & Logan

Introduction / Background

- This project served as practicum for the summer period of 2025 for students reading Masters of Arts in Rural Development.
- Asset mapping is about looking at what a community already has, the people, places, culture, and resources. It helps see the community's strengths in one document so it can build on them together. It's really just a way of saying: here's what makes Riverdale strong and unique, and here's how it can use it for its future.
- Asset mapping was initiated to document and visualize resources, foster community development, and support Riverdale's strategic planning priorities.
- This project is a partnership between the Rural Development Institute (RDI) and Riverdale Community Development Corporation (RCDC) with a focus on community engagement and cultural/tourism development.

What is this project trying to achieve?

- Determine Riverdale's key assets across human, natural/environmental, built, social, cultural, economic, and political categories?
- Determine how cultural resources and tourism contribute to Riverdale's identity and development potential?
- Determine how the asset map can reinforce community identity, support informed decision-making, and align with broader well-being and capacity-building frameworks?



The map of Manitoba above shows River's proximity to Brandon. About a 30 minutes drive from Brandon should take you there

How Did We Do It?

- Students visited RCDC to discuss the asset mapping process with leaders
- Secondary Research - students did not collect data but instead looked into existing statistics and documents about the RM
- Explored AI as a possible asset mapping tools
- Created initial asset map inventory highlighting key areas



Highlighted Key Findings

Asset Category	Resources in Riverdale
Natural / Environmental	Little Saskatchewan River, The Rivers Wetland Centre of Excellence, Lake Wahtopannah, Rivers Provincial Park and Rivers Game & Fish Ranges etc.
Cultural	Heritage buildings- Chapman Museum, Rolling into Rivers Festival of Arts etc. Indigenous community presence enriches cultural diversity
Social	Prairie Crocus Library, The Riverdale Golf and Country Club, Strong volunteerism and community organizations, Churches etc.
Built / Physical	Ambulance Service and a Health Centre, PTH 25 and PR 250 highways, Schools, Community centres, recreation facilities etc.
Economic / Financial	Local businesses and services (pharmacy, groceries, hardware, etc.), Agriculture remains a major economic driver.
Political / Leadership	Active Municipal Leadership, RCDC leadership, Riverdale Strategic Plan, Civic Institutions (RCMP, council, CAO office) etc.
Human	Skilled farmers, Teachers, Paramedics, Hip and Knee Rehab Specialist, Volunteers etc.



Discussion / Conclusion

- Riverdale has many strengths and resources, and the community can make the most of its cultural and tourism opportunities.
- If Riverdale connects its local assets (like history, culture, and natural places) to tourism, it can bring in visitors, support local businesses, protect our heritage, and build community pride.
- Asset mapping is a useful tool because it shows clearly what Riverdale have in terms of resources, helps guide planning, and brings different groups together to work on shared goals.

"This work is vital to continue moving our community forward and marketing it to others. Showing them what we have here. That it is a great place to live, raise a family and become part of a "we can do anything", community".

Donna Morken (Vice Chair RCDC) – Refer to blog post in references



Rivers Provincial Campground



Lake Wahtopannah

Drafted Recommendations / Next Steps

- Create a cultural & tourism plan – Use Riverdale's history, culture, and natural spaces to attract visitors and build pride.
- Build simple maps & tools – Digital and printed maps to showcase local assets.
- Start small with events – Try festivals, walking tours, and local markets to highlight Riverdale's strengths.
- Promote Riverdale – Share the community's story through marketing and outreach.
- Keep listening to the community – Gather feedback through meetings.
- Update & validate asset map report – Validate categories with local stakeholders.
- Project progress report - Other students can use as a guide to continue the project.

References

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