



From the Ground Up: Supporting Rocky View Farmer Mental Health

Our Story So Far

From before first light until after dark on those long Alberta summer days, farming is not just a job that you clock out of, it's a way of life. But farm life can bring unique challenges that are hard to talk about, especially when it comes to mental health and wellbeing. In Rocky View County, distance, changing community structures, and a fast-evolving rural landscape have made it harder for farmers and their families to find the support they need. Many feel isolated, misunderstood, or left behind by systems built for urban life. The *From the Ground Up* project began with a simple question: **What would it take for farmers in Rocky View County to feel truly supported in their mental health and daily wellbeing?**

Between 2024 and 2026, our team from the University of Alberta's Rehabilitation Robotics Lab; Wooliams Farms Ltd.; Airdrie Health Foundation; Rural Heart Foundation; Agwell Alberta; and the Faculty of Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences worked alongside farmers and their families, local organizations, and experts to listen, learn, and design solutions together. This collaborative process was made possible through Wooliams Farms Ltd.

Research Steps

- ♥ Project Branding & Community Awareness
Establish project values and goals
- ♥ Barrier Identification
Ask the right questions
- ♥ Ethnographic Field Research
Connect with community and representatives
- ♥ Community Description
Identify gaps in research findings
- ♥ Friends Session
Seek industry insight into the problems identified
- ♥ Community Engagement
Understand needs, wants, & expectations
- ♥ Community Workshops
Focus on Community-first research topics
- ♥ Research Survey
Survey questions to help fill in gaps identified

The Challenge

Rocky View County spans from north of Airdrie, to south of Calgary, and west of Cochrane to east of Chestermere. Given its size and the variety of communities within it, Rocky View can at times feel **dispersed**, with **distance** and **diversity** contributing to a sense of fragmentation. While there are a number of health and service facilities around and throughout Rocky View, many residents report uncertainty about where, when, and how to access care.



Five Key Community Asks



75+ community members

5 community events

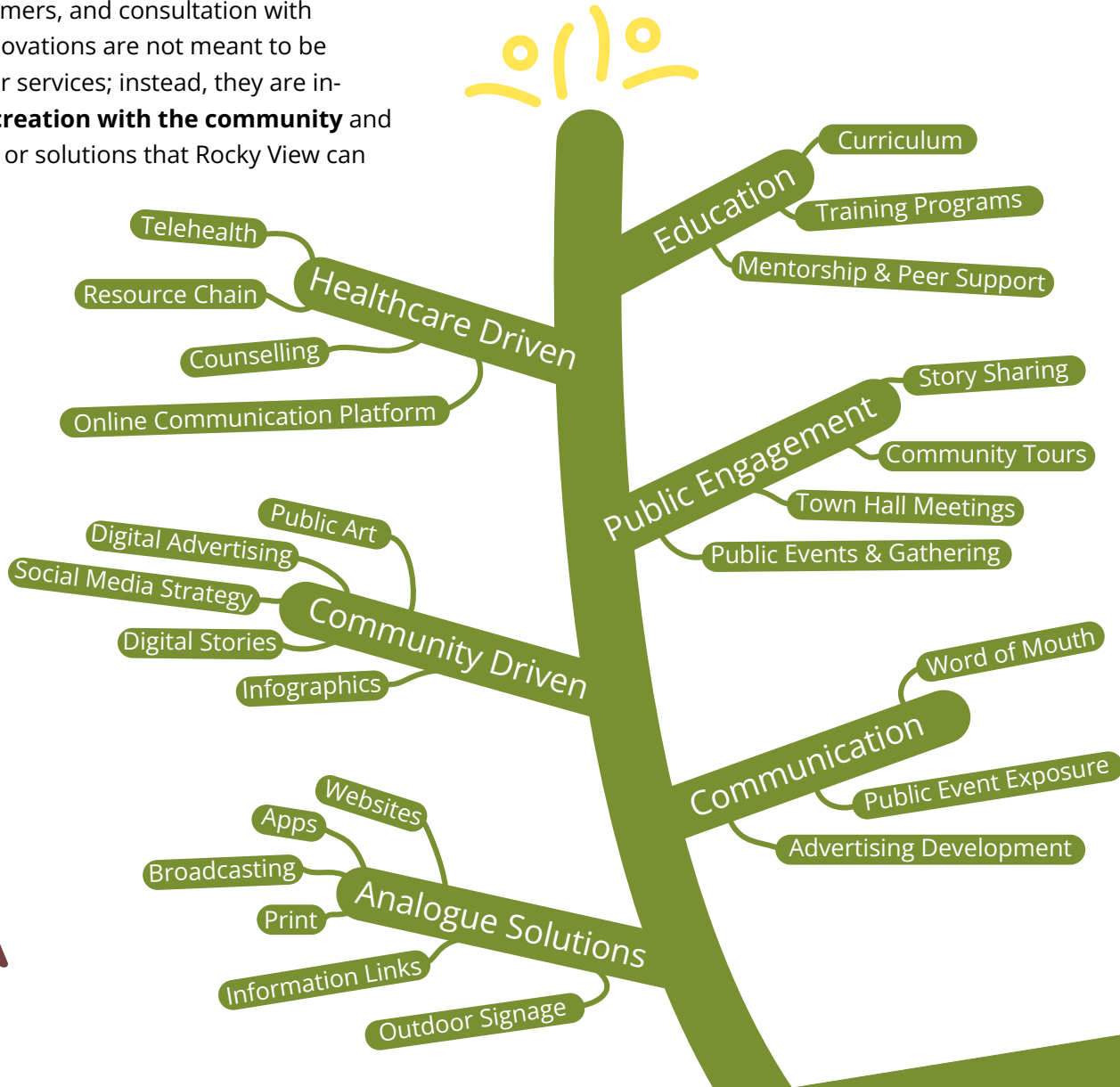
800+ kilometers of driving

11 reports + conferences

18 experts

Possible Solutions

Suggested innovations are from research with the Rocky View community, farmers, and consultation with experts. Possible innovations are not meant to be definitive products or services; instead, they are inroads to further **co-creation with the community** and the focus of services or solutions that Rocky View can spearhead.



From the Ground Up
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