



Town Council's Strategic Priorities

Mid 2013 to End of 2014 (Updated August 12th, 2014)

In September 2013 Town Council and senior staff developed a list of projects and initiatives that represented Council's chief Strategic Priorities for the next year to set the stage for the future of the corporation, while addressing some critical issues of political, policy, and operational natures. It was important that the projects were do-able and reasonable. And as should be the case in local government, while politics can and do play a role in any setting of priorities, ensuring corporate continuity, essential service to residents, and just good government policy are often the base reasons for identifying many of them.



Establishing a list of Strategic Priorities is a shift by council in moving away from trying to develop recurring strategic "plans" which can be unnecessarily complicated and tough to deliver upon. At some risk of actually being less strategic and more operational, Strategic Priorities are otherwise more task oriented, understandable, and measurable. While they are politically and policy driven, they are also logical, administrative goals for the corporation.

Although Council's Strategic Priorities are high ranking in the annual corporate work plan, they actually represent less than 20% of the corporation's annual activities! Continual public works and recreational services; higher level government reporting; development services; program management; communications; ongoing contracts and project implementation; permitting, licensing, collecting; and internal management take up the majority of our work. The Strategic Priorities do however represent key policy based tactics that fit into an overall directional shift or theme for the organization.



NOW

These are projects and initiatives of highest priority with fixed dates for milestones which Council would like to see completed in 2014.



NEXT

These Priorities are ideally meant to be undertaken as the NOW Priorities are completed, thereby moving them up to NOW status accordingly. That said, some of the NEXT Priorities are already underway, and there are inherent milestones that must be met in the 2014 year for all of them.



ADVOCACY

These are Council-only political lobbying initiatives with other entities and levels of government to achieve strategic positioning for the community on economic and equity grounds.

NOW PRIORITIES



Project or Initiative <small>(** indicates a former NEXT Priority)</small>	General Intent	Why Do It?	Council Prescribed Milestone	Est. Completion Progress and Next Steps
Zoning Bylaw Amendments	Amend the zoning bylaw terms and conditions in the 9 th Street North Area	Clear discontent in neighbourhood for current zoning criteria. Inconsistent and debatable zoning criteria for current uses. Opportunity for area specific planning process including proposed street upgrades.	Begin process January 2014.	25% Focus engineering currently working on traffic plan and road reconstruction plan. Individual stakeholder contacts initiated; larger engagement planned in September.
New Reserve Policy	Restructure the town's reserve accounts to meet legal requirements and align with council priorities.	The town's current assemblage of reserves needs review in number, purpose, deposit and withdrawal standards, and consistent use. A complete restructuring will provide much needed alignment with Council priorities and assurance in annual budgetary planning.	Completion by September 2014	20% Staff has begun informal discussions to date to meet milestone.
*Utility User Fees	Determine appropriate residential utility fee rates.	Utilities (water and sewer) should ideally be "self liquidating" – with fees balancing the cost of their service. Annual rates should cover all operational costs, debt servicing, and future renewal project costs. Ours do not. So taxes subsidize them. Our current rate bylaw expires at the end of 2014.	Provide options for adequate fee adjustments for bylaw changes by December 2014.	80% Gap analysis complete; Council to discuss and determine new rate regime this fall.
*Service Capacity Review	Determine under the current staffing regime how much is really possible to do.	Local governments continually struggle to define their role within a community and how expansive it should be. Ultimately this is controlled by the number of people that can do the work. How much can we do? What is our limit?	By end of 2014.	40% CAO will present to Council budget proposition for 2015 staff levels in September.

NEXT PRIORITIES



Project or Initiative	General Intent	Timeframe	Why Do It?
Recreation Cost Recovery	Determine fair pricing for recreation services based upon the level of recovery targeted to operate facilities and provide programming.	By end of 2014 have the ability to begin such discussions as better user stats will be forthcoming.	Setting the pricing for public programs and facilities use is a bit of black magic – based on traditional pricing, what other communities charge, encouraging use, yet trying to get some payback on the cost of operations. Council would eventually like to formally establish certain recreation services and with them a reasonable level of cost recovery to rationalize the fee for service and by how much general taxation subsidizes them.
Long Term Financial Plan	Begin knowledge and data accumulation to plan for decades.	Begin the preparation for a plan by end of 2014.	Legislation requires municipalities to annually approve a 5-year financial plan, but it is becoming increasingly clear that plans as much as 4 times this term are needed to fully prepare for future infrastructure renewal and plan for long term community visions.

ADVOCACY (Council Implemented) PRIORITIES



Initiative	Why Consider It?	Progress Report
Regional Collaboration	<p>The population between Golden and Area “A” of the CSRD is split roughly 50/50. The municipality logically provides a host of services and amenities for the residents of both jurisdictions. One would expect therefore that taxpayers from both jurisdictions would support their provision. And they do with the arena, the cemetery, emergency program, operating the airport, and (formerly) with economic development and cultural services.</p> <p>What the taxpayers of Area “A” pay nothing for is in the operation of the pool, the spray park, Rec Plex, ball and soccer fields, skate park, Civic Centre, and capital projects at the airport as examples. Council feels it would like to change this arrangement.</p>	<p>Council has submitted a letter of intent to the CSRD board indicating that a discussion concerning the scope and nature of shared services is a priority.</p> <p>Staff have prepared a preliminary assessment of all pertinent facilities and services to aid in this discussion, including long term asset values, depreciation, and operating costs.</p>
Destination Marketing	<p>Promoting our community to its full potential to include all we are and maximize partnerships is important to Council, and it plans on ensuring important collaboration between all stakeholders involved in this occurs.</p>	<p>No substantial activity has been undertaken at this time.</p>
Trans Canada Twinning	<p>A Council and community economic development priority for decades, the work in our area is far from over and Council will continue to lobby the Province and the Federal Government to commit funding toward Highway 1 in four laning its length from the Alberta border west.</p>	<p>Letters to the Federal and Provincial governments have been sent, complimenting recent announcements and encouraging continued improvements to the highway within our immediate region. Council will again address this topic at UBCM in September</p>
Highway 95 Bridge	<p>Built in 1952, the aged highway bridge over Gould’s Island has been on Council’s radar for years, pressuring the Province to not only replace and redesign it, but straighten the crossing. Doing so would help traffic flow, improve safety, and could potentially change the face of our downtown in opening up more pedestrian based planning by realigning the highway corridor.</p>	<p>Council met directly with the Premier and Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure at the 2013 UBCM convention in part to solicit the Province’s continued consideration of this initiative and will do so again at the 2014 UBCM.</p>

ORIGINAL NOW PRIORITIES FULLY OR SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLETE

Project or Initiative	General Intent	Why Do It?	Prescribed Milestone	Completion Summary
Future Capital Project Planning and Funding	Determine number, cost, and potential timing of infrastructure renewal projects for inclusion in grant applications.	Asset Management Analysis has revealed areas in town in need of utility and road renewals to maintain long term services. A new federal infrastructure grant program is anticipated to be announced in 2014 with application criteria. We need to be ready and clear on what we need to apply for and how we will pay for it.	Provide to Council by November 2013.	100% Per staff recommendations and Council priorities a firm list of projects have been identified for application to the <i>New Canada Building Fund</i> .
British Columbia Visitor Centre Options	Determine fate (ownership/operation) of building.	With Golden Area Initiatives no longer receiving funding and with no managerial presence, its singular role is now to maintain the building it owns. Ownership and management of the building must be determined over the short and long term.	Options to consider by December 2013.	100% with ongoing implications. GAI has restructured and simplified, now being only a building owner/manager. The CAO is also the administrative authority and through third party assistance will maintain rental agreements and building management for the time being.
Economic Development Service Delivery Options	Determine a new model for delivery other than the past 10 years.	The town and regional district determined such services through a third party delivery model would be terminated. Council believes the service still valuable and wishes to continue a funding and accountability partnership with the regional district. Service delivery through this partnership by other means needs investigation and a proposal by Council to follow.	Decision by November 2013.	100% Following 6 months of select committee work and reporting, negotiations for joint service continuation with the CSRD failed and no specific service now exists. Limited default activity now lies with staff.
Capital Priority Funding	Determine which infrastructure renewal projects are the highest priority and how they will be funded	Linked to one of the NOW projects, this priority assumes this process will continue throughout the year as Council determines what it can afford, where the money will come from, a timeline for completion, and what gets approved through the upcoming <i>New Canada Building Fund</i> .	No original milestone identified.	100% with caveats. While Council has approved projects for planning and implementation for application to the NCBF, program parameters may affect the scope and nature of applicability, and require reshuffling of project priorities and their components. Staff is awaiting program standards to determine this.

Project or Initiative	General Intent	Why Do It?	Prescribed Milestone	Completion Summary
Permissive Tax Exemption Policy	Determine the rationale for giving certain tax exemptions – or not - in a revised policy.	Where permitted by law, Council has always 100% exempted places of worship and other non-profit owned or operated properties from taxation. It was about \$60,000 in 2013 – about 1.5% of annual tax revenue. Should this continue? Should it stop? Should it be something in between?	Establish policy by June of 2014 prior to applications going out for 2015 exemptions.	100% Policy adopted. Application adjudication currently underway.
Kicking Horse Culture Funding	Determine how funding for cultural services will be funded after 2014.	For nearly the past decade, cultural services have been annually funded jointly between the town and regional district (\$60,000 each per year). This year it's funded through EOF (non taxation) monies which may not be a long term solution. At stake – whether a continuing partnership with the CSRD will remain, whether cultural services funding will continue and in what form, and where the money will come from.	Make determination by mid 2014.	100% Staff submitted reports and letters to initiate the process. CSRD Board endorsed Council recommendation to commit 3 years of EOF funding toward cultural services.