



# Town Council's Strategic Priorities

Mid 2013 to End of 2014 (Updated February 1<sup>st</sup>, 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	General Intent	Why Do It?	Prescribed Milestone	Progress and Next Steps
Zoning Bylaw Amendments	Amend the zoning bylaw terms and conditions in the 9 <sup>th</sup> 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.	Terms of reference are underway.
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.	Completed. Now assessing final timelines and scope of any need for long term borrowing.
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.	Somewhat complete. Not saleable to Province. GAI ensuring ongoing operations, eventual renting of space.
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.	Complete. Joint funding for in-house delivery by town rejected by the regional district. No function at this time.
New Reserve Policy	Restructure the town's reserve accounts to meet legal requirements and align with council priorities.		Completion by September 2014	Underway.

## NEXT PRIORITIES

Project or Initiative	General Intent	Timeframe	Why Do It?
Utility User Fees	Determine appropriate residential utility fee rates.	By end of 2014.	Utilities 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.
Service Capacity Review	Determine under the current staffing regime how much is really possible to do.	By end of 2014.	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?
Permissive Tax Exemption Policy	Determine the rationale for giving certain tax exemptions – or not - in a revised policy.	Establish policy by June of 2014 prior to applications going out for 2015 exemptions.	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?
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.
Kicking Horse Culture Funding	Determine how funding for cultural services will be funded after 2014.	By mid 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.
Capital Priority Funding	Determine which infrastructure renewal projects are the highest priority and how they will be funded	By mid 2014.	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> .

# ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

Initiative	Why Consider It?
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>
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>
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>
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>