

Rossland Council Plan – Priorities for 2015

Introduction

In its first year, Rossland's newly elected City Council is keen to strengthen its leadership, governance, communication and direction-setting roles. It is also keen to increase public trust by, and accountability to, residents. Rossland should be a viable and sustainable city, with high quality services and the leadership needed to support a vibrant local and regional community.

This plan outlines strategic-level Council priorities for **its first year**. This isn't a long-term plan, although a three-year strategic plan will be in the works during the year. It also isn't a list of all the work done by the City on an ongoing basis. Day-to-day services for residents and businesses, legally required activities (like financial reports), and other important activities are imperative to the functioning of the City supported and valued by Council.

It's recognized that other issues or opportunities may arise over the year, which also require special attention.

This document also contains a short list of additional longer-term issues that are part of a draft list that is currently under development by City Council.

Development of the Strategic Priorities

These priorities were developed based on input received by Council members from Rossland residents during the election campaign, input received through the Thoughtexchange process undertaken by Kathy Moore as part of her campaign, and critical input from City Staff.

Council reviewed all of the ideas and information provided and developed the list of priorities outlined below. These are short-term priorities that Council felt were critical to start work on in 2015. Some of them have already been completed, others can be completed in a short period of time, and yet others will require a longer-term approach.

Developing a three-year strategic plan will require further community input regarding longer-term priorities vis a vis financial constraints and day-to-day operating requirements. The diagram on this page highlights the current planning process for 2015 leading to the development of a Rossland Strategic Plan for 2016-2018 that will guide planning in Rossland for the remainder of this Council's term. The Strategic Plan will be revisited annually to ensure that the direction it contains is still in line with key priorities.



Situation Analysis

The priorities were also based on the following situation analysis that highlights both the challenges and positives contained in key City reports.

CURRENT SITUATION – Challenges Conveyed in Reports

- Lack of City strategy plan: Need to drive the 5-year financial plan
- CTQ Infrastructure Plan & Asset Management Plan: Indicates an unfunded capital cap of \$ 18 million
- B.C. Auditor Generals Report: Identifies failures of both leadership and management
- Existing 5 Year Financial Plan: Identifies continued deterioration of infrastructure

CURRENT SITUATION – Positives Conveyed in Documents

- SSP: Outlined 11 valid focus areas to support a vibrant community
- Official Community Plan: Aligned with SSP
- Zoning: Aligned with OCP

Strategic Goal: Viable, well-governed & well-managed city

Strategic Priorities Overview:

This is the list of priorities Council will pay attention to and work to achieve in 2015. The priorities deemed most critical to address in 2015 are listed first, followed by those deemed important to address or start to address in 2015. Additional detail

with regard to each of the priorities, including key objectives, action steps, and other actions undertaken or in progress in association with the strategic priorities, is provided below.

Critical to Address in 2015

1. **Governance:** To ensure effective business, organizational and financial planning to meet fiduciary and good governance responsibilities is in place.
2. **Administration:** To implement the Municipal Auditor Letter of Recommendations and the Auditor General's recommendations for Rossland.
3. **Human Resources:** To resolve matters related to the Chief Administrative Officer position for the City of Rossland.
4. **Shared Recreation Services:** To provide access for all Rossland residents to the Trail Aquatic Centre at acceptable pricing.

Important to Address or Start in 2015

5. **City Services - Quality:** To ensure there is a continuous process of improvement in City Services – with residents increasingly pleased with both the quality of services they receive and with the cost to deliver those services.
6. **City Lands and Facilities:** To maximize the benefits of City land and building assets.
7. **Other Regional Services including Regional Fire and 911:** To resolve the escalating costs of Rossland's fire protection and 911 service, provided by Rossland and its six local government partners (Electoral Areas A & B, Warfield, Trail, Montrose and Fruitvale).

Strategic Priorities in Detail:

Critical to Address in 2015

Priority 1: Governance

To ensure effective business, organizational and financial planning to meet fiduciary and good governance responsibilities is in place.

Key Objectives for 2015 (Few key things to accomplish)	Action Steps (To move the objective forward)	Status
1.1 Create business plans for large municipal facilities, including arena, Miners Hall and pool.	· Analyze usage of facilities	In progress
	· Consider requirements for cost recovery approach	
	· Consider hours of operation	
	· Explore obstacles and impediments	
	· Explore savings and off-season and other revenue opportunities	
1.2 Address competitiveness of City costs and fees (against others in region and of similar size).	· Do a comparative analysis of Rossland costs and fees	Report on rec fees; In progress
	· Look at cost recovery as a goal	
	· Do a tax base analysis	
1.3 Address the asset management funding gap.	· Prepare a City Asset Management Plan with a higher level of accuracy and to be prepared for available grants	
	· Liaise with engineering firm	Done
	· Pursue grant funding	\$2.1m grant received. awaiting outcome of

Key Objectives for 2015 (Few key things to accomplish)	Action Steps (To move the objective forward)	Status
		others

Other Actions Taken or In Progress

Completed

- Active lobbying with other levels of government for grant funding for major infrastructure projects
- Preparation and implementation of a communications strategy to improve the City's two-way communication with the public regarding issues, priorities and change
- Improved communication with public through newsletters, visible public presence and social media
- Reduced speed limits in town in response to safety concerns and public complaints
- Broad public engagement on financial plan with Thoughtexchange
- Established welcoming atmosphere in Council Chambers with art displays and poetry readings
- Fewer in-camera meetings

In Progress

- Staff Management Plan for 2015
- Corporate Strategic Plan 2016-2018
- Staff Management Plan for 2016
- Business walk scheduled for Oct 20, 2015 to assess needs of businesses
- Requested recommendation from staff to improve bylaw enforcement

Priority 2: Administration

To implement the Municipal Auditor Letter of Recommendations and the Auditor General's recommendations for Rossland.

Key Objectives for 2015 (Few key things to accomplish)	Action Steps (To move the objective forward)	Status
2.1 Revise the City Procurement Bylaw.	• Work with BC Procurement Shared Services to put best practices in place for Rossland	In progress

Key Objectives for 2015 (Few key things to accomplish)	Action Steps (To move the objective forward)	Status
	· Involve managers to ensure procedures are realistic, achievable and align with software	
2.2 Improve project management reporting.	· Finalize the design of the reporting template	
	· Demonstrate it with a project in 2015 (Queen Street retaining wall)	Moved to 2016
2.3 Seek an external audit to verify compliance and improvement with key recommendations.	· Conduct a review of City's implementation of recommended improvements (consider adding to the scope of the 2016 City Audit)	

Other Actions Taken or in Progress

Completed

- Adopted improved Procedure Bylaw
- Approved service agreement with Tourism Rossland
- Streamlined management of Resort Municipality Initiative funds by agreement
- Revised expense policy to reduce costs
- Emergency training clinic for staff

In Progress

- Expand scope of audit for City Auditor
- Review of business licence categories
- Commit to strategic planning session in September 2015
- Begin next financial planning cycle in October 2015
- Create better, more efficient water pricing policy so utilities are self-supporting

Priority 3: Human Resources

To resolve matters related to the Chief Administrative Officer position for the City of Rossland.

Key Objectives for 2015 (Few key things to accomplish)	Action Steps (To move the objective forward)	Status
3.1 Resolve the CAO issue	· Resolve the CAO issue	Hired ICAO
3.2 Amend Delegation Bylaw	· Pass amendments to Delegation Bylaw	Done

Other Actions Taken or in Progress

Completed

- Reduced cost of senior staff contracts through negotiation and hiring of Interim CAO

In Progress

- Assess the capacity and qualifications of the management team via performance management

Priority 4: Shared Recreation Services

To provide access for all Rossland residents to the Trail Aquatic Centre at acceptable pricing.

Key Objectives for 2015 (Few key things to accomplish)	Action Steps (To move the objective forward)	Status
4.1 Develop an acceptable arrangement for Rossland residents to access recreation facilities.	· Participate in developing shared principles on regional recreation (with all parties in the negotiations)	In progress
	· Develop a draft agreement	In progress
	· Finalize and approve	In progress

Important to Address or Start in 2015

Priority 5: City Services - Quality

To ensure there is a continuous process of improvement in City Services – with residents increasingly pleased with both the quality of services they receive and with the cost to deliver those services.

Key Objectives for 2015 (Few key things to accomplish)	Action Steps (To move the objective forward)	Status
5.1 Undertake continuous process improvement projects of selected City services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate process improvement on selected processes (review customer/resident needs and satisfaction and efficiency in time and cost for process) 	In progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide coach / facilitator for Department Managers to practice and build into ongoing operations 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide simple report on processes reviewed and measurable impact 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare business case for LED streetlight conversion. Terms of reference to be discussed with Council. 	In progress

Other Actions Taken or in Progress

Completed

- City crews will no longer service private drives and roadways; resulting in savings
- Got CBT Watersmart grant to replace non-auto reader meters

In progress

- Working with CBBC to bring broadband Internet to downtown corridor
- Continuous improvement work with public works

Priority 6: City Lands and Facilities

To maximize the benefits from City land and building assets.

Key Objectives for 2015 (Few key things to accomplish)	Action Steps (To move the objective forward)	Status
6.1 Prepare a land strategy that can be used as the basis for decisions on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sale of assets • Acquisition of assets • Retention of assets • Development of assets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the current inventory of City assets <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake an analysis of the value of these assets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are they used for? ○ What could they be used for differently? ○ What are the costs associated with each? ○ What is the value of each? 	

Other Actions Taken or in Progress

Completed

- Applied for and receive grants for major infrastructure work on Washington Street, for the Miners Hall renovation and for the museum's renewal projects
- Approved land use projects that will strengthen our community: New hotel at Red, Red Arrow Station, rezoning applications
- Approved use of Miners Hall for Winter Market
- Giving serious attention to inflow and infiltration by conducting smoke testing and repairing leaks
- Held Design Guideline clinic with specialist to educate stakeholders on value of heritage
- Finalized 5 year contract with Lions Club for municipal campground
- Approved funding for installation of community sign at Columbia and St Paul
- Applied for and received grant for creating an energy plan

In progress

- Sale of land on Queen St.
- Redesign of Queen St retaining wall- more visually pleasing and less costly
- Commercial land strategy session for Lower Columbia scheduled in Fall 2015 with Min of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training
- Completing water, sewer and paving project in Pinewood

- Staff requested to present traffic calming suggestions
- Final design and tender package being prepared for Washington street and the Miners Hall projects

Priority 7: Other Regional Services including Regional Fire and 911

To resolve the escalating costs of Rossland’s fire protection and 911 service, provided by Rossland and its six local government partners (Electoral Areas A & B, Warfield, Trail, Montrose and Fruitvale).

Key Objectives for 2015 (Few key things to accomplish)	Action Steps (To move the objective forward)	Status
7.1 Determine and assess viable options for fire and 911 services for Rossland.	· Establish a Task Force of experts	Names have been collected
	· Review report on these services by former CAO	
	· Review RDKB fire service report	
	· Consult with other municipalities with local services (e.g. Castlegar)	
	· Consult with existing volunteer fire service in Rossland	
	· Provide options to City Council for review	

Other Actions Taken or in Progress

Completed

- Established new Advisory Committee for Liquid Waste Management Planning Stage 2
- Agreed upon location of improved wastewater treatment plant with regional partners
- Sewer pipe bridge agreement finalized (but now under review; cost increase is anticipated)

In progress

- Target completion of Liquid Waste Management Plan Stage 2 by December 2015

Strategic Targets:

In addition, Council set a number of strategic targets relating to property taxes, operating expenses and continuous process improvement for 2015 to help measure success. It is expected that similar targets will be set in future years as part of future annual Council Plans.

2015 Targets

- Property tax change = no more than 2% increase – achieved for 2015
- Transfer to reserve = create and follow reserve policy – achieved for 2015
- Continuous process improvement target = save \$100k – not achieved, but work in progress
- Aquatic centre access cost target = reach affordable agreement – in progress

Longer-Term Issues

The following is a list of longer term issues that Council and Staff feel should be addressed or start to be addressed over the next three years. Some already have more detailed objectives attached, while others do not. These issues are intended to be a starting point in moving toward a three-year strategic plan. This is not an exhaustive list of all issues identified, but rather those deemed most strategic and most important. Note that the issues are interrelated and thus some of the potential objectives are the same for more than one issue.

It is hoped that Rossland residents can also provide input into these strategic issues in advance of the development of a strategic plan.

External Issues

1. Improving the attractiveness of the City and creating a competitive climate to attract investment, new residents, increase the tax base, and ensure sustainability.

Potential Objectives:

- Put together a targeted marketing plan to attract new residents to improve economy of Rossland
- Ensure the appropriate facilities and services are in place to attract new residents and investment
- Adjust Rossland's taxes, fees, and charges to be competitive

- Ensure appropriate recreation amenities are developed and maintained and that residents have access to regional recreation amenities
 - Provide annual measurements of changes in the City
 - Prepare business case to City for its participation in broadband infrastructure that will support new tax generating and job creating commercial investment
 - Review the existing Revitalization Tax Exemption bylaw as a method of increasing tax revenues
2. Addressing changing demographics including an aging population and an increasing number of younger families through the provision of appropriate facilities.
- Potential Objectives:*
- Provide appropriate services and facilities to be a more “age friendly” community for seniors and young families
 - Provide support or favourable business climate for affordable housing
3. Ensuring that all potential new and existing revenue sources are explored and developed where appropriate.
- Potential Objectives:*
- Ensure all appropriate grants are pursued
 - Ensure that the City is “shovel” ready for various grant projects in order to fully take advantage of opportunities
 - Prepare business cases for energy projects that will generate new City revenue and/or reduce operating costs
 - Encourage new development, particularly infill development, development of underused lands, and smart light industrial and small lot development
4. Ensuring that user/customer satisfaction with City services, facilities and general performance is high.
- Potential Objectives:*
- Develop new ways to get feedback from citizens and measure customer satisfaction
 - Address bylaw enforcement issues
 - Develop an overall strategy to address perceptions that the City is difficult to do business with, both by changing practices and by better communicating constraints

5. Ensuring that City stakeholders (Museum, Library, Tourism Rossland, Sustainability Commission etc.) are supported and viable and have business plans and service agreements in place with the City.

Potential Objectives:

- Determine what can be done to support stakeholder projects and provide ongoing, but strategic, support for stakeholders
- Establish service agreements with community organizations outlining roles and expectations
- Require community organizations develop business plans so City can better understand their impact on City assets and operating budgets, and potential for capital improvements to increase the stakeholder's ability to increase revenue and reduce dependence

6. Addressing the potential impacts of climate change on winter tourism, water availability, wildfires, infrastructure, and community safety.

Potential Objectives:

- Diversify tourism offerings including increasing mountain biking and summer season tourist activities
- Ensure viability of both reservoirs, encourage water conservation, and potentially increase water storage capacity
- Increase wildfire prevention activities, continue fire interface project, and ensure emergency preparedness
- Implement adaptation strategies as directed in Climate Change Adaptation Plan

7. Improving communication with stakeholders, citizens, regional partners and people outside the region.

Potential Objectives:

- Improve opportunities for citizen feedback using a variety of mechanisms
- Serve as a liaison among key stakeholders to help them work together
- Communicate outside of the region to boost awareness of region, breaking negative myths about area, and attract new residents and businesses to area

8. Increasing service quality and reducing costs associated with services provided with regional partners

Potential Objectives:

- Support organizational review at the RDKB

Internal Issues

9. Addressing Rossland's aging infrastructure and requirement for new infrastructure and continuing to maintain existing infrastructure.

Potential Objectives:

- Fine tune asset management plan through grants to identify all capital needs and accurately estimates costs
- Fine tune infrastructure renewal plan and the financial plan to support it and ensure that the City is following an appropriate asset management strategy
- Resolve the estimated \$18 million capital renewal shortfall through grants, new sources of revenue and other creative solutions
- Consider reinstatement of DCC bylaw to offset infrastructure costs attributable to growth
- Ensure water and sewer utilities are self supporting with phasing in of new charges over time
- Continue or increase maintenance so that capital replacement can be deferred with less risk of failure
- Ensure that there is a long-term plan to address aging recreational infrastructure in a timely manner

10. Engaging in systematic process improvements and efficiencies in all City services.

Potential Objectives:

- Gear corporate culture towards customer service, efficiency and continuous improvement so City is always improving service, keeping costs in line and getting more value for resources
- Explore a variety of options to increase efficiency including moving more City services on-line, automating more services, and purchasing better equipment for Public Works
- Create a welcoming attitude for new ideas and reward employees for innovative and cost-saving ideas

11. Reducing the operating costs of the City and ensuring that budgeting is realistic.

Potential Objectives:

- Review all costs of services and fees and ensure that service delivery is tied to financial constraints
- Review staffing levels
- Undertake a comprehensive review of facility usage and maintenance costs and adjust user fees and times of operation and consider closing and selling facilities as necessary

- Review all services to ensure they still meet the needs of customers
 - Ensure water and sewer utilities will eventually be self supporting
 - Reduce the number of City Councillors
12. Providing new services and facilities where needed if they fall within budgetary constraints.
- Potential Objectives:*
- Explore the options for a municipal utility and wastewater treatment plant
 - Explore potential for the collection of organic waste
 - Determine gaps in facilities needed to provide programs
 - Enhance some recreational facilities and services where demand warrants
 - Examine the City Hall facility configuration and ensure that the public is well served
13. Improving City technology.
- Potential Objectives:*
- Improve computer technology within City Hall to reduce productivity losses
 - Move a greater number of everyday, frequently used services by public online
 - Ensure Broadband is pursued
 - Invest in new technologies that will reduce repetitive work, eliminate or reduce work by employees, eliminate tasks, change how certain work is done and enable employees to address tasks that they do not have time to do now
14. Addressing critical human resources issues including staffing, training, team building, leadership, and morale.
- Potential Objectives:*
- Ensure that appropriate CAO/CFO staffing is in place to lead the City into the next five years
 - Undertake a thorough human resources review to determine if new staffing is working, how configurations could be improved, and ensure that the City has employees with qualifications that match its needs
 - Review contracts, compensation, benefits and career path planning for employees to ensure that they are appropriate, fair and equitable for employees and citizens
 - Ensure CUPE negotiation is undertaken in fair and equitable manner
 - Work toward a more cohesive Council/Staff team working together towards common goals

- Work toward improving morale issues and honouring and acknowledging the achievements and contributions of employees
- Ensure that staff have access to training that relates directly to their responsibilities in the City and is required to ensure a safe and efficiently-run municipality
- Establish consistent leadership with a strong Council/Staff team, appropriate staffing and a positive organizational culture
- Clarify the roles of Council and Staff and work to respect those boundaries and establish stability and consistency

15. Addressing issues with internal communication.

Potential Objectives:

- Conduct a review to identify challenges with internal communication
- Clarify Staff and Council roles with regard to internal and external communication

16. Ensuring that City taxes, fees and service charges are competitive and appropriate and a long-term tax strategy is in place.

Potential Objectives:

- Undertake a comprehensive review of fees and charges for all facilities, services and permits compared to other municipalities and ensure that they are competitive and appropriate
- Increase fees for bylaw violations
- Align tax rates, fees and charges with goals and objectives for the City to incentivize desired results, and penalize undesired results
- Develop a long-term tax strategy based on competitive analysis