



2021 Business Plan 108 Greenbelt (1548)

building communities together

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Working in partnership with communities large and small to offer local, sub-regional, and regional services to ensure that the Cariboo Chilcotin is a socially, economically, and environmentally desirable region.

Department/Function Services

The 108 Greenbelt Service was established through Bylaw No. 3120 (1996) and received boundary amendments by way of Bylaw No. 3960 (2007), Bylaw No. 4450 (2009) and Bylaw No. 4870 (2014). The service was created to provide for the management of the 108 Greenbelt lands, which cover approximately 575 hectares throughout the 108 Mile Ranch community and provide opportunities for public recreation. Bylaw No. 5184 (2018) regulates appropriate community use of the recreation lands, restricting activities such as motorized vehicle use, parking, camping, open fires and discharging firearms.

The 108 Greenbelt provides much the same function as a public green space in other communities. These lands, originally established by Block Bros. Realty at the conception of the 108 Mile Ranch development, generally encompass lakeshore, grasslands and forested lands located within and immediately adjacent to the community. The Greenbelt was established to provide property owners a joint interest in these lands for recreational use. Now held under title by the Cariboo Regional District, the lands continue to be utilized for the enjoyment of area residents with the intent to minimize interference with the lands' "natural" or existing states.

The requisition limit for this function is the greater of \$14,160 or \$0.13/\$1,000 of assessment. Collection is by parcel tax, which is applied equally to all lots within the local service area.

Under the direction and authority of the Cariboo Regional District Board, the property is managed by the 108 Greenbelt Commission whose members are appointed by the Board on recommendation of the Electoral Area G Director. The Commission conducts business and engages contractors as required for the maintenance and operation of the greenbelt.

As the Electoral Area G Director is the only stakeholder in this function, and the *Local Government Act* requires more than one vote, the entire Board is responsible for the governance of this service.

Business Plan Goals, Rationale & Strategies

2021 Goals

- 1. Goal:** Undertake additional fuel management in Greenbelt pockets inside the community to reduce the threat of a serious interface fire.

Rationale: Most of these areas were treated in the past decade but the Commission believes more work is needed now, especially where there has been significant beetle-kill in recent years.

Strategy: Consulting services were previously retained under the guidance of the Greenbelt Commission to identify priority areas. Some but likely not all resulting fuel reduction costs may be offset by commercial logging revenues. The Commission also received a significant grant to carry out a fuel management program in priority areas that cannot be logged commercially.

- 2. Goal:** Maintain the extensive trail system around the lakes, including the low mobility trails established in recent years.

Rationale: A 10-km multi-use trail system extends around 108 and Sepa Lake, most of which is now wheelchair accessible, including the availability of handicap outhouses at Main Beach and Sepa Lake. Other amenities available for the convenience of trail users include memorial benches, picnic tables, dog bag dispensers, additional outhouses, parking areas, etc.

Strategy: Much work has gone into bringing these trails to their current standard and they are well used and appreciated by residents of the community and tourists alike. These trails must be properly maintained so they can be enjoyed for years to come. We also will install informative signboards at the viewing stand near the Heritage Site. Further improvements will continue to be made if funding becomes available from grants or other sources. The CRD has applied for a grant to complete the portion of the lake trail that has not yet been fully upgraded to low mobility standards and to install related infrastructure. Trail maintenance also includes the emergency exit that has been established through the Greenbelt to Tatton Road, a multi-use trail in Walker Valley, numerous Greenbelt access trails, etc.

- 3. Goal:** Preserve the Greenbelt from invasive plants.

Rationale: The Greenbelt is continually attacked by a number of invasive plants, such as knapweed, burdock, thistle, orange hawkweed, meadow hawkweed, baby's breath, hoary alyssum, bladder campion, scentless chamomile, leafy spurge and sea buckthorn, which impact recreational and agricultural use of the lands.

- Strategy:** The Commission will work with the Invasive Plant Program of the Cariboo Regional District at reducing, controlling or eliminating wherever possible, invasive plants in an environmentally sound manner while respecting financial limitations. This is an ongoing project and will remain so for the foreseeable future. This task has become quite overwhelming. The Commissioner who volunteers his time to this important work will likely require the support of contract assistance in the years ahead.
4. **Goal:** Continue to upgrade pasture fences.
Rational: Repairs and fencing upgrades are an ongoing responsibility to keep horses and cattle in the various Greenbelt pastures and to keep ATVs and dirt bikes out of sensitive Greenbelt grasslands.
Strategy: Evaluate existing fences. Repair and upgrade as needed. This is an ongoing responsibility. Approximately 900 metres of Walker Valley fence below Block Drive must now be replaced.
5. **Goal:** Access forest health treatments relative to fir bark beetle and other infestations.
Rationale: Fir bark beetle attacks continue to impact Greenbelt forested areas. These trees increase the risk of fire as well as encourage the beetle spread to nearby healthy trees.
Strategy: Locate and aggressively treat beetle infestation. The treatments may include felling, bucking and burning of trees, and installation of pheromone bait traps. Removal and sale of logs will vary depending on the conditions at each site. The Commission also identifies and takes advantage of opportunities to educate the residents of the 108 and encourage them to tackle this issue if it exists on their properties.
6. **Goal:** Remove dead and dying trees in areas where they present a danger to residents and visitors.
Rationale: This is an ongoing responsibility, particularly with respect to beetle-killed fir trees and old, rotten aspens.
Strategy: Contract services will be retained to remove danger trees as required under the direction of the Commission.
7. **Goal:** Consider installing new infrastructure such as playground equipment and a fishing dock at Main Beach and/or replacement of the Main Beach change rooms.
Rationale: Projects such as these increase the use and enjoyment of the Greenbelt by the public; however up until now the capital budget has not been sufficient to undertake major projects and also maintain an appropriate reserve. Logging revenues from fire-hazard reduction work in recent years may now provide an opportunity to take on these infrastructure projects – a positive long-lasting legacy from devastating wildfires in 2017.

Strategy: If the Commission confirms there is a sufficient reserve to take on any of these projects it will work with appropriate stakeholders to design and install appropriate facilities.

Overall Financial Impact

The 2021 requisition is the same as the 2020 requisition at \$14,650 annually.

The parcel tax is augmented by revenue generated from pasture rental fees, which is retained by the Greenbelt Commission for day-to-day maintenance expenses, and from grants that become available from time to time. The Commission has been diligent in developing a practical approach to meeting its goals and objectives over the past few years while staying within budget limitations. Opportunities to obtain grants to further the Commission's work are aggressively pursued.

However, grants are becoming increasingly hard to find. As a result it may become impossible to maintain existing programs and undertake important new initiatives within the constraint of the existing parcel tax once the Commission's current reserve has been drawn down. As a result, the Commission at some point will need to discuss with the community increasing the amount of the parcel tax for basic operating costs.

Measuring Previous Year Performance

Goal: Undertake additional fuel management to reduce the threat of a serious interface fire.

- Completed. A major grant has been obtained and a program is being finalized to address a number of priority greenbelt pockets this fall-winter.

Goal: Complete the clean up and reseeded of two greenbelt triangles west of the tracks.

- Completed.

Goal: Maintain the extensive trail system around the lakes, including the low mobility trails established in recent years.

- Completed and ongoing. The trails continue to be maintained to a high standard. In 2020, the greenbelt parking lot on Tatton Station Road was graded and graveled and the Sepa Lake trail was resurfaced.

Goal: Preserve the Greenbelt from invasive plants.

- Completed and ongoing. The combination of COVID restrictions and very wet conditions in the early part of the summer somewhat limited what could be done this past year.

Goal: Continue to repair and upgrade pasture fences.

- Completed and ongoing.

Goal: Access forest health treatments relative to fir bark beetle infestations.

- Completed and ongoing.

Goal: Remove dead and dying trees in areas where they present a danger to residents and visitors.

- Completed and ongoing.

Goal: Consider the opportunity to install a couple of Greenbelt infrastructure projects.

- As with so many things during this time of COVID, discretionary projects have been deferred for the time being.

Accomplishments

As a result of the COVID 19 pandemic there were virtually no organized activities sponsored or supported by the Greenbelt Commission in 2020 – although there is a tentative plan for a lantern walk from the Heritage Site to Main Beach on October 30th.

In addition, the 108 Lions Club had intended to build a gazebo at Main Beach earlier this year for the benefit of the community. Very wet weather earlier this year resulted in this project being delayed but it may still be completed this fall.