



*building communities together*

## **2022 Business Plan Planning Services (1005)**

*Nigel Whitehead, Manager of Planning Services*

***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***

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### **Department/Function Services Overview**

The Planning Services Department is involved with two divisions of planning: current and long-range planning.

Current planning involves responding to inquiries for current zoning information; current Official Community Plan designations; information respecting Agricultural Land Reserve status, policies and applications; information regarding subdivision and development of private lands; and Crown land referrals and database maintenance. Current planning also involves applications to amend Official Community Plans and/or zoning/rural land use bylaws, applications for temporary land use permits, development permits or development variance permits and applications under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.

Long-range planning consists of the preparation, implementation, amendment and administration of land use policies to guide future growth and development over an expanse of land. Generally, long-range planning pertains to the Official Community Plans (OCP). Long range planning also involves special planning projects that might include neighbourhood plans, land use policy development, housing needs assessments, and agricultural planning.

Statutory Authority for Planning Services was originally provided to the Regional District by way of a Supplementary Letters Patent No. 5 in 1969.

All Electoral Area Directors are responsible for the governance of this service.

## Significant Issues & Trends

The Planning Services Department achieved full staffing in Summer of 2021, and with the close of the 2021 wildfire season, the department is reaching full work capacity, which is a significant and welcome occurrence. The department had been previously working below full staffing for various reasons since February 2019.

Work continues on streamlining and modernizing department procedures and will ultimately result in a much more automated application process, where applicants will have the option to fully submit application documents digitally through a user-friendly online interface.

Regulatory changes continue at the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). Most recently in late 2020 through 2021 we have been working through the results of Provincial legislation extinguishing a landowner's right to make application to exclude their property from the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). On Jan 1, 2022, new regulations around second dwellings within the ALR come into effect. In some aspects, this will provide flexibility and a reduction in restrictions on second dwellings, however, it will also result in additional ALC permitting requirements around the import of fill onto the property (i.e. gravel for foundation, driveway, etc.). Staff will continue to monitor and analyze the changes, providing information and advice to landowners and the Board as necessary.

The impacts of climate change are becoming more evident, leading to wildfires, drought, flooding, landslides, etc. Staff are acutely aware of the resulting impacts on existing and future public and private infrastructure. This is a complex and evolving area combining risk management, land use planning, protective services, and landscape-level mitigation projects. Planning staff will continue to collaborate with Protective Services in developing proactive procedures and policies with respect to landscape-level hazards. This further involves ongoing monitoring of, and planning for, future obligations under the BC *Emergency Program Act* modernization.

## Business Plan Goals, Rationale & Strategies

### Year 2022 - Goals

- 1. Goal:** Geotechnical/Landslide Hazard Regulatory Review  
**Rationale:** As the 2020 Spring Freshet event transitioned into a geohazard (landslide) event, it became evident to staff of the need for a coordinated approach to risk management, land use regulation, and emergency operations decision making with respect to landslide risk, particularly to private residential land. This is a coordinated multi-department project involving Planning Services, Protective Services, and Corporate Administration departments. It includes seeking legal

advice/review of existing regulations, best practices research, and harmonization of land use regulations in geotechnically hazardous areas across the CRD.

This project falls under Tactical Plan item 2.4.2, under Strategic Objective 2.4 (“Incorporate emergency management requirement in OCP updates/revisions”).

**Strategy:** This is an ongoing project with 2022 activities anticipated to include refinement of OCP hazard area boundaries based on recent aerial lidar surveys, strengthened building and development permitting policies and procedures, and continued development of public-facing hazard information. *(2021 Goal – Ongoing)*

**2. Goal:** Floodplain Mapping – Flood Construction Level and Scenario Mapping – Bridge Creek

**Rationale:** This is the ongoing next step in comprehensive flood risk assessments and mapping within the CRD. Grant funding of \$150,000 for this project was approved by UBCM in September 2021. This project will result in detailed flood hazard scenario inundation maps and 200 year return flood construction levels for built up areas, and base-level scenario maps for areas of lower development within the Bridge Creek floodplain.

This project falls under Tactical Plan item 2.4.2, under Strategic Objective 2.4 (“Incorporate emergency management requirement in OCP updates/revisions”).

**Strategy:** A professional consultant will continue building on the work completed over the past few years on establishing floodplain mapping within the CRD. This project will be co-coordinated between the Planning Services and Protective Services departments.

**3. Goal:** Agricultural Area Plan

**Rationale:** The CRD received a grant from the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC to develop a region-wide Agricultural Area Plan. The Agricultural Area Plan aims to produce a comprehensive agricultural area planning document that will include an economic focus, consider climate change adaptations, broad land use objectives, and analyze ALR boundaries. This will help in increasing economic diversity of the regional agricultural sector, help inform and guide all regional Official Community Plan (OCP) updates, focus on climate change adaptation to embed resiliency in the agricultural sector, investigate and inform current Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) boundaries, and strengthen the sector by guiding agricultural-related decision making within the CRD.

**Strategy:** CRD staff will create an RFP and select a consultant to work on this project. Staff will provide ongoing project management oversight and support the consultant as necessary. The IAFBC grant supports 50% of eligible project costs, up to a maximum \$40,000. The remaining \$40,000 will be funded by the Planning Service’s accumulated operating surplus.

**4. Goal:** Complete the Bouchie-Milburn Neighbourhood Plan

**Rationale:** This is a pilot project to develop a detailed long-range land use plan tailored to the neighbourhood level. Neighbourhood plans may be formed as a

subset of an existing OCP or as a stand-alone document where an OCP is not in place. The plan will provide a framework for future development and quality of life improvements desired by the community.

**Strategy:** This project has been held at draft stage since late 2020. Community input was gathered throughout 2019 and into early 2020. Final community engagement steps were held off due to public meeting restrictions. A public open house is tentatively scheduled for late 2021 with completion anticipated for early 2022. *(2019 Goal - Ongoing)*

**5. Goal:** Improve and streamline development processes

**Rationale:** Continuous improvement of permitting processes helps to ensure an efficient development community and good customer service. This goal falls under tactical plan item 2.4.1, under strategic objective 2.4, to “Improve development approval process to serve needs to development applicants.”

**Strategy:** This is an ongoing project, started in 2020. Inconsistencies with zoning language are tracked on an ongoing basis for the next housekeeping amendments. Substantial updates to the department’s digitized application processing system (CityView) have been completed, with ongoing improvements expected to continue through 2021 and 2022. Planning and Building Services will work together on fulfilling Information Technology’s (IT) business plan goal to upgrade CityView to permit online, digital building and planning application submissions. This will significantly improve application processing, particularly for regular applicants, such as landowner agents and building contractors. *(2020 Goal – Ongoing)*

**6. Goal:** Shipping Container Regulations

**Rationale:** Based on Board direction, staff will undertake development of regulating the placement of shipping containers within the CRD.

**Strategy:** Regulations will be drafted for Board review. They will be referred to Advisory Planning Commissions and the general public for feedback. Subsequent amendments to the zoning and rural land use bylaws will then be undertaken. *(2021 Goal – Delayed)*

**7. Goal:** Temporary Use Permit Policy for RVs Implementation - OCP Harmonization

**Rationale:** As discussed at the June 18, 2020 Committee of the Whole Meeting, although a Temporary Use Permit Policy for seasonal RV use was endorsed by the Board in 2015, permissive OCP language to allow Board consideration of such permits is not universal throughout the CRD. Accordingly, staff will work to harmonize TUP enabling language within the OCPs and RLUBs.

**Strategy:** Policy amendments will be drafted for Board review. They will be referred to Advisory Planning Commissions and the general public for feedback. Subsequent amendments to the OCPs and RLUBs will then be undertaken. *(2021 Goal – Delayed)*

- 8. Goal:** South Cariboo OCP Implementation Amendments  
**Rationale:** Comprehensive long-range documents such as OCPs can result in unforeseen issues once implementation and full utilization of the document begins. Staff have found some inconsistencies and challenges with some sections of the South Cariboo OCP (adopted in February 2019), and plan to bring some proposed amendments to the Board.  
**Strategy:** Implementation challenges have been tracked by staff. Proposed OCP amendments will be brought to the Board for consideration. Amendments would then be run through a public consultation process and back to the Board for adoption, as required.
- 9. Goal:** Planning Policies Review & Update  
**Rationale:** There are a number of old and outdated Board Policies with respect to the Planning Services function. Some of the policies are beginning to challenge staff in conducting day to day business in the department.  
**Strategy:** Review policies and bring forward recommendations to Policy Committee.
- 10. Goal:** Board Orientation of Planning Department  
**Rationale:** With local government elections in October 2022, Board orientation will include in-depth review of the planning department's activities and responsibilities.  
**Strategy:** Depending on the amount of turn-over at the Board table, this activity will be tailored to the overall experience-level of the elected Board members.

### **Future Years' Business Planning Goals**

Future business plan goals are provided below to assist the Board in anticipating future projects. Background research and preparation for undertaking these goals will be conducted as time and resources permit. This background research will inform the development of a strategy in prioritizing and completing the goals. Future goals may be further refined or replaced in the lead-up to the following year's business plan.

- 1. Future Goal:** Zoning and Rural Land Use Bylaw Harmonization/Consolidation  
**Rationale:** With six zoning and rural land use bylaws across the region, sharing relatively common language, there is potential value in harmonizing and/or consolidating these into fewer bylaws. Zoning Bylaw consolidation is a leading practice at some regional districts elsewhere in the province. It would allow for common zoning regulation across the region, significantly streamlining customer service and overall bylaw maintenance.
- 2. Future Goal:** OCP Harmonization/Consolidation.  
**Rationale:** Regional planners elsewhere in the province are also finding value in harmonizing and consolidating OCPs across their jurisdictions. For example, much

of the regulatory language and broad policy statements are very similar across the CRD's seven OCPs, and between the three RLUBs. Maintaining uniform regulation in relation to best practices or changes in provincial legislation becomes unwieldy when having to simultaneously amend seven bylaws, each with their own public consultation requirements.

Staff recognize the importance of ensuring community identities and development visions remain unique to each area of the region. Staff will carefully assess the results of the Bouchie-Milburn Neighbourhood Planning process, as that may represent a better strategy in supporting the unique identities of individual communities, while housing broader policy that is applicable region-wide under fewer, larger OCPs.

- 3. Goal:** Development Variance Permit Analysis.  
**Rationale:** The Board requested an analysis of DVP applications, in order to determine if zoning and rural land use bylaw regulations are reasonable. Staff will bring an analysis of broader considerations regarding issuance of DVPs (i.e. legalization) for existing non-conforming structures, as well as structures built without permits. This was an incomplete 2021 goal and is reduced in priority to a future goal as the number of DVPs processed annually has remained relatively consistent.  
**Strategy:** Conduct research of past years' permits, analyze data, present to Board, consider refinements to zoning and rural land use bylaws.
- 4. Future Goal:** Interlakes OCP Review.  
**Rationale:** The Interlakes Area Official Community Plan (OCP) is now the oldest OCP within the region, completed in 2004. In preparation for a future review, background land use analysis was completed in 2016. Although this OCP is ready for review, it was the last one completed with in-house planning staff and has stood up well to the test of time.
- 5. Future Goal:** Zoning Bylaw Updates – Post-Bouchie-Milburn Neighbourhood Plan.  
**Rationale:** Upon completion of the Bouchie-Milburn Neighbourhood Plan (BMNP) comprehensive zoning bylaw amendments are recommended to align current zoning with the plan's vision.
- 6. Future Goal:** Short Term Rental (STR) Monitoring.  
**Rationale:** Staff will continue to monitor public complaints and impacts of unlawful short-term rental accommodations throughout the Cariboo. This future goal earmarks a broader project to be undertaken if concerns surrounding this land use increase.

## Overall Financial Impact

The 2022 taxation requisition shows an increase of 1.8% when compared to the previous year 2021. This accounts for inflationary costs, plus an increase of \$10,000 for ongoing consulting work, anticipated for subject matter expertise in dealing with ongoing natural hazard (i.e. landslide, floodplain, wildfire) regulatory work.

A further one-time budget item of \$40,000 is included for 2022 in anticipation of OCP hazard area boundary and regulatory development work. A further \$40,000 is budgeted for the Agricultural Area Plan development. The department has a healthy accumulated operating surplus which will fund these two projects. Also included in the budget is the \$150,000 grant received from UBCM for further flood mapping work. The Planning Services budget overall is stable and projected to return to inflationary tax requisition increases in year 2023.

A total of 70 development applications were received from September 2020 to August 2021, an increase of 67% when compared to 42 applications from September 2019 to August 2020. This increase is attributed to a building rebound from a COVID-19 related downturn throughout much of 2020.

## Measuring Previous Years' Performance

### 1. **Project:** Flood hazard mapping. *(2019 Goal – Ongoing)*

Flood hazard mapping is an ongoing project, presently based on the availability of grant funding through federal and provincial governments. Consecutive projects build upon each other, prioritizing detailed level flood mapping of built-up areas.

<b>CRD Flood Hazard Mapping Progress</b>		
<b>Project/Task</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
Risk Prioritization Modelling	Thompson River Watershed (i.e. Bridge Creek, Anim River)	March 2019
Base-level mapping	Bridge Creek	April 2020
Risk Prioritization Modelling	Region-wide	Sept 2020
Risk Prioritization – Data Update	Region-wide	June 2021
Base-level mapping	Bridge Creek (update data), Chimney Creek, Fraser River, Cottonwood River,	June 2021

	Baker Creek, Horsefly River, Nazko River, Lac La Hache	
Flood Construction level and Scenario Mapping	Bridge Creek and Little Bridge Creek	Anticipated 2022
Public Online Interface and Regulatory Development	Region-wide	Anticipated 2023

2. **Project:** Geotechnical/Landslide Hazard Regulatory Review. *(2021 Goal – Ongoing)*  
This project is an ongoing collaboration between Planning Services, Protective Services, and Administrative Services. The following tasks were completed in 2021:
  - Project framework developed.
  - Legal exposure review underway.
  - Legal review and update of geotechnical covenant language completed.
  - Increased geotechnical reporting standards implemented.
  - New lidar and change analysis report underway.
  - Communications planning and municipal coordination underway.
  
3. **Project:** Bouchie Lake Neighbourhood Plan. *(2019 Goal - Ongoing)*  
This project is ongoing and nearing completion. Final community engagement steps were held off due to public meeting restrictions. A public open house is tentatively scheduled for late 2021 with completion anticipated for early 2022.
  
4. **Project:** City of Williams Lake and Central Cariboo Housing Needs Assessment. *(2020 Goal – Completed)*  
This project had an anticipated completion of December 2020 but was delayed by COVID-19 constraints. It was completed in early Summer 2021 and the final report was received by the Board in Fall 2021.
  
5. **Project:** Improve and streamline development process. *(2020 Goal – Ongoing)*  
This is an ongoing project. Completed tasks in 2021 are listed below:
  - Reinforcement of consistency and accuracy during staff training.
  - Ongoing tracking of bylaw wording inconsistencies.
  - Ongoing digitization of planning procedures.
  - Ongoing automation of planning form letters.
  - Automating integration of property and permitting management software (CityView) with records management software (Laserfiche).
  
6. **Goal:** South Cariboo / District of 100 Mile Housing Needs Assessment *(2021 Goal – On-track; anticipated completion late 2021)*



This project was undertaken in collaboration with the District of 100 Mile House staff for the District of 100 Mile House, and Electoral Areas G, H and L.

- 7. Goal:** Shipping Containers Regulations *(2021 Goal – Delayed)*  
This project was delayed due to staff shortages. It is currently underway and anticipated for completion in 2022.
- 8. Goal:** Temporary Use Permit Policy for RVs Implementation - OCP Harmonization. *(2021 Goal – Delayed)*  
This project was delayed due to staff shortages. It is anticipated for 2022 completion.