

## **BOWDA 2019 Presentation – January 10, 2019**

Before I get into an overview of what's ahead for 2019, I'd like to take a glance back at the past year, and as always I'll focus on Council's priority areas:

### **Additions to Affordable Housing**

Affordable housing has been a priority for many years, and Hawks Bend, the CCHC project at 17 Street and 11 Avenue, is now nearing completion. With 17 units occupied at this time, the remainder of the 49 units will be occupied in phases over the next several months.

Over the past year the CCHC Board worked with the Town and the Mountain Havens Cooperative to acquire 17 rental units at the co-op across from McArthur Place in the Three Sisters area. CCHC and Mountain Havens are now in the process of converting the entire project from a cooperative to a condominium association. When the process is complete, all 44 units will be managed under the same eligibility criteria as CCHC's Perpetually Affordable Housing (PAH) program.

These two properties will have secured 93 units of controlled affordable housing to help meet the demands within our community.

On the Palliser lands, The Peaks in Canmore opened in the fall of 2018 with 140 long-term market rentals, and 8 – 5 bedroom employee housing units. Through the agreement signed with the developer, 40 of the units will be managed under the same criteria as the PAH housing in town.

As well, a market rental development on Kananaskis Way received final approvals last year, and may be in the ground this spring, which will provide another 159 market rentals to the town inventory – and the Coast Hotel 89 unit apartment project was started last fall.

### **Short Term Rentals**

In 2018, the Town ramped up enforcement of illegal short term rentals, in an effort to reduce the erosion of long term rental availabilities. The most effective component of the initiative was not the enforcement itself but the publicity and awareness it has created about the regulations. While there remain over 1000 active Airbnb and VRBO listings in Canmore, only about a dozen appear to be active illegal tourist homes in residential areas. Over 95% of the listings are permitted Bed & Breakfasts or in districts that allow for tourist homes, such as the Bow Valley Trail/Railway Avenue corridor and Town Centre.

Further community consultation will occur later this year to inform recommendations to update the Land Use Bylaw to address short term rentals.

## **Relationships and cultural connections with the Stoney Nakoda Nation**

We have continued to build and strengthen good relations with the Stoney Nakoda Nation. In 2018 the National Indigenous People's Day event was expanded to include programming in Centennial Park after the parade. As well, four Town staff attended Right Relations training at the Banff Centre.

## **Transit**

Ridership on Roam in 2018 increased almost 60% over 2017. As one factor of this increase, there was more than twice as many riders during the summer months with the fare-free transit that was offered in July and August

In 2018, Roam added an expanded On-It Calgary-Canmore-Banff regional service, new Banff-Lake Louise regional service, and new Banff Centre and Lake Minnewanka routes. These expanded services have resulted in a much greater connectivity throughout the Bow Valley with positive impacts on Canmore's local service.

In 2018, a total of 10 bus stops were improved with a variety of enhancements, including three bus stops with digital next bus signs, two with new shelters, four with solar lighting, as well as improvements to pavement and curbs.

## **Lifecycle replacement project at the Canmore Recreation Centre**

Phase one of the Canmore Rec Centre lifecycle project will open in stages, with the new ice plant already operational. The second floor is expected to be complete by early March and the lobby area opening mid-March. Phase two of the project has started, which includes the first floor area on the gymnastics side. The Peaks of Grassi Gym will start once the new multi-purpose room from phase one is open.

## **Continue FireSmart vegetation management and update FireSmart mitigation strategy and wildfire preparedness plan**

The Wildfire Mitigation Strategy was updated for 2018-2022, and an internal tactical wildfire preparedness guide was produced for firefighters. We received a provincial grant to further assist with fuel reduction work and to help protect community assets. As well, there was an opportunity for Fire & Protective Services to run a training exercise to learn about using fire sprinkler lines as a first line of defense in the event of a wild fire.

## **Address traffic congestion and parking in downtown core**

The Integrated Transportation Plan was updated, and presented to council in June of 2018. As recommended in the 2018 Parking Management Plan, council included evaluating the implementation of paid parking downtown to fund free local transit services as a priority in the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan.

## **Human Wildlife Coexistence in the Bow Valley**

After eight months of meetings, a comprehensive report was released by the Technical Working Group established by the Roundtable on Human-Wildlife Coexistence. The Working group was comprised of more than a dozen people - both governmental and NGO's - who have expertise in wildlife management. The Technical Report provides 28 recommendations to reduce conflict between wildlife and humans in the Bow Valley, and will help inform various management organizations in the Bow Valley as a guide to enhance human-wildlife coexistence.

## **2026 Winter Olympics**

As you know, with the results of Calgary's plebiscite on November 13, the possibility of the Town of Canmore co-hosting the 2026 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games was quashed. This opportunity allowed us to dream big and there were a number of learnings gained that we will hold on to for future planning discussions - particularly in regards to the future potential of the Palliser lands for development of affordable housing options, as well as opportunities for improving community accessibility and cultural celebrations.

## **2018 Development Permits**

Now, as a final bit of the 2018 review, I'll give some detail on development numbers over the past year - which I know is of interest to some.

Building values this past year have topped out just over \$125M, up from \$116 in 2017. The brunt of this development was in residential, at \$93M, and there was \$32M of commercial building. This represents the third highest level of development ever in Canmore only behind 2007 and 2008 (which had over \$200M each).

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## **2019**

Having reviewed some of the highlights from 2018, I'll touch now on some of the things that might be fueling conversations over the coming year.

Firstly, I'll start by reviewing the 2019-2020 Budget, which was approved at the last meeting in December.

Council approved a \$52 million operating budget for 2019, and a \$17 million capital budget. Much of the operating budget reflects the costs required to provide status quo services - that is, providing no increased service delivery.

It is important to note that in order to accomplish a limited budget increase, a number of belt tightening initiatives needed to be undertaken, and a number of priorities were not included after applying financial and workload lenses.

However, the Budget **will** fund an increased focus on priorities and goals associated to environmental sustainability, wildlife coexistence, organizational efficiencies, the downtown enhancement plan, and continued work on affordability and the availability of housing in the community.

The 2019 Budget will result in a municipal property tax increase for the average residential unit - which has an assessed value of about \$600,000 - of approximately \$70 in 2019, or \$6 per month.

To use my personal situation as an example – our condo in Mountain Shadows is assessed at \$500,000. My municipal tax payments last year were just about \$1,200, or \$100 per month – which is less than I pay for TV & Internet. I believe that I get great value for my tax dollars – considering all of the services and facilities that they support.

It is always important when considering your own tax notices to remember that approximately 50% of the total collected is the Alberta Education requisition that the Town is obliged to collect for the Province. We have no influence over the monies collected that go directly to Edmonton, which effectively doubles most tax bills.

### **Facilities & Services**

Of course, it is important that as a Town we balance the competing interests, needs, and wants of the community – which is no easy task. Many of the facilities and services that have been added or expanded over the last seven years – Elevation Place, artsPlace, the Rec Centre, local and regional bus services, a new Materials Recycling Facility, the Legacy Trail, Affordable Housing, Beyond Curbside enhanced recycling, and many other initiatives - have all contributed to an increase in town expenses. It could be argued that all of these new services were wants rather than needs, but it could also be argued that it's these very amenities that create the kind of community that people want to live in and visit.

We strive as an organization to balance these competing interests in a fiscally prudent manner. Canmore remains an exceptional community in which to live and work - with a full spectrum of services provided to residents and visitors alike. However, we are not a small town anymore and we need to enhance our ability to serve our community effectively today, while at the same time, prepare for the future and long-term sustainable growth.

The full budget can be viewed on our website at [www.canmore.ca/budgets](http://www.canmore.ca/budgets) but I'll speak briefly now about several projects of note in the budget:

### **Organizational Review**

A recent organizational review highlighted that the Town has reached the limit of its current administrative model. As we can no longer operate as a small town, some of what is in this budget reflects a need to scale our model to more accurately reflect the true cost of delivering services to the community. In the past, tax increases were kept low by using revenues from growth and development, combined with organizational cutbacks - and not increasing resources to accommodate the growth and increased demands of the community.

### **Fire Sprinkler**

The capital budget approved the acquisition of a Sprinkler Protection Unit so that our local fire services can set up a first line of defense against wildfire risks, until the Province can respond with more resources. A sprinkler protection unit is a trailer that contains a selection of water sprinkler heads, hoses, pumps and associated tools and equipment - which can create a 600-1,000 meter defensive water line.

**Fire Hall**

When the fire hall was built in 1986, the population of Canmore was approximately 4,000, and Canmore was still in the early stages of transition from a mining town into a visitor destination. Today the population is approximately 15,000 with over 10,000 visitors daily during peak seasons for an effective population of around 25,000. The current facility is currently operating at or beyond capacity. The amount and size of equipment used by the Fire-Rescue Department has also increased significantly since the time of original construction. Based on recommendations from the Fire Hall Study that will be brought to council early this year, we will begin the planning for a new fire hall in 2019.

**Downtown Parking**

As many of you know, Council has also identified a strategic priority around creating intercept parking and evaluating the implementation of paid parking in prime areas during the busy season to fund free local transit services. We plan to assess paid parking technologies to convert a portion of the highest demand Town Centre parking stock and investigate a residential parking pass system to address potential spillover impacts.

**Three Sisters Information**

In 2018, Three Sisters Mountain Village initiated its community engagement plan related to the Area Structure Plans for Three Sisters Village and Smith Creek. Their team attended a range of community events to seek broad input on their Draft Vision and Principles. They have reported to Council a very comprehensive *What We Heard* report. TSMV is continuing to work with the province on the Smith Creek wildlife corridor.

**CHAP**

This year, we will be updating the Community Housing Action Plan (CHAP), which was last revised in 2011 in consultation with the Canmore Community Housing Corporation. The results from the housing needs survey conducted over the past year will inform the update.

**Environment**

As part of our commitment to the environment, we will be installing solar voltaic systems on Elevation Place, artsPlace, Seniors Centre, the Roundhouse, and the waste management centre over the next two years. The Town has also received a grant to hire a climate change specialist for a two-year term to assist in decreasing our greenhouse gas emissions.

As well, we will begin the implementation of a food waste organics diversion program, to include both commercial collection and a residential program. We will be installing five community collection containers in key locations, with 100 roll carts for commercial collection and 2,000 small food waste containers for residents. Food waste diversion will significantly assist the Town in reaching its 2020 Environmental Sustainability Action Plan goal of 0.45 Tonnes per person, per year.

### **Wildlife Coexistence**

Canmore made a commitment to implementing the recommendations of the Roundtable, and identified it as a strategic Council priority. This includes our ongoing efforts to address fruit trees as a food attractant, and to continue to conduct public education campaigns.

However, the main focus of the work in 2019 will be to address safety concerns identified by Provincial wildlife officers that are frequently called to respond to the Lawrence Grassi Middle School / Centennial Park greenspace where elk congregate. As recommended by the Human Wildlife Coexistence report, this project proposes a 2.4 metre fence to be installed around the site with gates providing access. This is similar to fences installed in Banff and Jasper to deter wildlife from urban greenspace.

### **Transit Stop Improvements**

Over the next two years, we are installing and improving our bus stops within Canmore on both Local and Regional routes. Watch for new concrete pads and pedestrian facilities, benches, bike racks, garbage and recycling containers, and signage. A few stops will also receive NextBus signs, lighting, and shelters.

### **Palliser Trail Improvements**

With a growing population and new development within this corridor, there is a need to provide improved connectivity for active modes, and better access to transit infrastructure. This project will add a physically separated pathway for walking and cycling between Palliser Trail and Benchlands Trail and then on down to Bow Valley Trail. Find out more about this initiative at our open house at the Holiday Inn on January 22.

### **Bow Valley Trail Pathway Improvements**

Similar to what was recently completed near the CPR crossing, this project will involve the completion of boulevard-separated, shared-use pathways on the west side of Bow Valley Trail between Old Canmore Road and 17th Street over the next two years. The project will provide grass landscaping adjacent to existing development, and a grass or treed boulevard between the travel lanes and pathway.

### **Railway Ave & Bow Valley Trail Intersection Improvements**

Over the next two years, we will be developing a convenient and welcoming transit infrastructure along Railway Avenue, improve the intersection of Bow Valley Trail and Railway Avenue, and investigate park and ride locations to serve the downtown core.

### **Economic Development**

Economic development and diversification remains a strategic priority for Council. With our in-house department (which is funded entirely through business registry fees) we will be developing a new Economic Development Strategic Plan to provide direction for activities engaged in by the Town of Canmore that aligns with the Town of Canmore's vision. As well, we will continue to work towards Broadband delivery with a Broadband Planning Study to provide options for a potential fiber network in Canmore.

### **Culture and Celebration**

In 2019, we will also be embarking on the development of a new Cultural Masterplan for the Community. Culture and celebration opportunities are what bring our community to life and are constantly identified as one of the most valued attributes of Canmore life. The new masterplan will articulate a sustainable, authentic, and long-term vision for Canmore's cultural vitality and creative sector development.

### **Public Engagement**

We are updating our community engagement policy to provide residents with a consistent approach to public participation. This will give clear information about the opportunities to provide feedback and about the public participation process for each issue. Access to information is being increased with video streaming of Canmore Planning Commission meetings and Subdivision Appeal Board meetings.

### **Lions Park Playground & Tennis**

We are replacing the 1998 playground at Lions Park, and the surface of the playground at Eagle Terrace. Discussions in early 2019 will determine how the playground replacement project will proceed.

In Lions Park, the project to replace and move the playground will be completed in conjunction with a proposed tennis court expansion. The tennis court expansion project is currently approved with a 50% contribution from the Town's Municipal Sustainability grant funding, with our funding conditional on the Tennis Club receiving a \$500K CFEP grant from the Province.

### **Online initiatives and efficiencies**

Self-service functionality is becoming increasingly sought after by citizens. Currently, the Town provides limited self-service functionality to residents and the public via the Internet. The goal of this project is to consolidate and expand the number of services the Town can offer online. We will continue to focus on finding efficiencies by implementing additional electronic service delivery such as: electronic notices for taxes and assessment notices, and a paperless work flow for accounts payable.

As well, we will streamline our off-site levy process with new software to create a model that can be easily maintained by Town of Canmore staff.

## Land Use Bylaw Updates

A new Land Use Bylaw has been drafted and approved at 1<sup>st</sup> Reading – this in response to changes in the *Municipal Government Act*, guidance from the Municipal Development Plan, community feedback from engagement activities done through May and June 2018, and information received from the defeated LUB amendment in 2017. Although the entire bylaw is not being changed, the changes are significant enough to warrant a complete rewrite of the LUB rather than a large-scale amendment.

The current update to the Land Use Bylaw proposes a number of changes, such as:

- Allowing accessory dwelling units in all low density residential neighbourhoods
- requirements for new hotels and hostels along Bow Valley Trail to provide onsite employee housing.
- Greater flexibility in building height calculations to allow more flexible designs
- Updated Signage regulations
- Reduced Parking requirements
- Revisiting Firesmart regulations

Council approved 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of the new bylaw in the fall of 2018, with a Public Hearing scheduled for February 5<sup>th</sup> at 5 p.m. We hope you take the time to learn more by coming to the open house on January 22, and attending the Public Hearing to give us your feedback on this important work.

Once we have finalized these changes and the new bylaw has been approved at 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading, a second phase of the land use bylaw update is planned for later this year, This will include consideration of

- a comprehensive review of short term visitor accommodation in Canmore
- Teepee Town Area Redevelopment Plan and LUB revisions
- Employee Housing

That concludes our very lengthy list of upcoming projects. You can always find out more information on our website at [www.canmore.ca/projects](http://www.canmore.ca/projects)