

City of
NELSON

2015-2018 Strategic Plan

A YEAR IN REVIEW... 2017

A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

The City of Nelson’s Strategic Plan for 2015-18 clearly sets out this Council’s priorities until the end of the term in October. The goal of the strategic plan is to provide direction and a solid framework to staff to ensure operations are run in an efficient and sustainable manner.



Mayor
Deb Kozak

2017 was another very busy and exciting year for Nelson. We saw strong growth, with more young people moving here to raise their families, grandparents following their grandkids and new business start-ups. Popularity also brings challenges. Affordable housing continues to be a high priority in our community and as leaders we continue to move forward with projects and initiatives to create

housing that will keep our population diverse.

In the past year, Council implemented a further 25% reduction to water and sewer costs for secondary suites, approved new laneway housing developments and implemented a new bylaw to limit short-term rentals. Excellent progress was made in 2017 on these and other priorities and Council is moving forward to fulfill its priority setting goals in 2018. Our community continues to progress and prosper and remains one of the most desirable places to live in British Columbia.

Mayor Deb Kozak

STRENGTHEN NEIGHBOURHOODS

Well Connected Neighbourhoods

Council received the *Downtown Urban Design Strategy* which identifies a number of actions that Council will consider when underground utilities need to be replaced starting in approximately 5 years. This pre-planning will allow the City to apply for grants and partner with others to make downtown improvements. Two early projects are the *Lanes Alive* program (international mural festival) and a possible new transit exchange where grants would cover 80% of the costs.

nelson international
MURAL FESTIVAL
2018

Staff have been preparing amendments to the Zoning Bylaw as well as various other bylaws to reflect and implement the vision for the Railtown District. These amendments were brought to Council in early 2018.

Suitable Mix of Housing

2017 was an extremely busy year in Nelson’s Development Services department, where they processed 188 building permits; 16 subdivision applications; 3 zoning applications and 84 development permits, that resulted in \$18.5m in new building permits for 75 housing units. This added 25 legal secondary suites, 3 laneway houses, 33 multi-family units and 14 single family homes to our housing stock. It was also encouraging to see that two of these projects will add 18 purpose built rental units to our housing stock. We also are seeing innovative housing solution being built such as a 10 unit small lot housing development and 3 laneway houses. Two affordable housing projects that would add over 80 units of housing are proceeding through the development process. Staff also reviewed progress being made on the *Affordable Housing Strategy* and researched best practices to add affordable housing units in Nelson.

Affordable housing development on Falls St.

SUSTAINABILITY OF CITY SERVICES

Safe and Adequate Water Supply



An update of the City’s 2006 Water Master Plan was completed. It highlighted significant progress made over the past 10 years, including the replacement of all of the primary pressure reducing valve (PRV) stations and 24.4km or 34% of old water mains. It reaffirmed that Five Mile Creek is the best source of water for the city and identified another option for a secondary source. Significant progress was also made on securing an emergency source by pumping treated water out of Kootenay Lake directly into our lower zone distribution system. The results have been impressive. Even with a growing population, the amount of monthly peak water use has dropped by 53% since 1996.

Energy Efficient Community



The Community Solar Garden was completed and is generating credits for our investors. The EcoSave program is still one of the strongest programs in the country and with new rebates launched, is once again helping us reduce our energy use, our green house gases (GHGs) and saving homeowners’ money. We will be doing an infrared heat mapping survey of Nelson to identify those houses that are losing the most energy, so we can best assist them under the energy retrofit program. A new Electric Vehicle (EV) charging station has been installed at the CP Stationhouse and a second one will be installed in 2018.

Emergency Management

A comprehensive review of the City’s *Emergency Management Program* was completed in 2017 and the report made eleven recommendations. Council is moving forward in implementing these recommendations by developing its own *Emergency Management Program* with a City of Nelson Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) and by training City staff on emergency management. The City also updated its *Community Wildfire Protection Plan* and is moving forward on the 33 recommendations contained in the plan.

Aging Infrastructure

In addition to the 24.4 km of water mains that have been replaced over the last 10 years the City has also replaced or re-lined 23.7 km or 34% of the city’s sanitary sewer mains. Both of these programs are being delivered at up to 50% less cost than had been identified by our consultants in the master plans – delivering tremendous value to the community. With the on-going impact of major storms events, the City has turned its attention to the improving our storm drainage. The first major project is on Hall Street where the storm handling capacity will be increased 10 fold. Additional storm water improvements will happen between Hall and Cedar Streets when Highway 3A is resurfaced starting in 2019. Nelson Hydro continues to renew its assets in a very cost effective manner. The new substation added recently, coupled with voltage conversion work, has allowed Nelson Hydro to finally retire the old downtown substation at the Kootenay School

of Arts. The Bonnington Falls Generating Station was also fully drained and critical repairs made. This is the first time in 20+ years that this has been done.

Replacement of forebay head gates



EXPAND LOCAL JOBS PROSPERITY

Strategy: Leverage Community Assets

The City continues to expand its fibre in the downtown and lakefront areas of the city. Fibre will be expanded down Hall Street to support the new development at 205 Hall Street and the West Arm Plaza. There are currently 50+ fibre customers that include private businesses, RDCK, Selkirk Colleges, SD8 and the Provincial Government. In 2018, Council will be supporting the expansion of the City’s co-location room as it is busting at the seams and more and more businesses are asking to locate their equipment there. Nelson was named as a one of the world’s Smart21 Community in 2017 and has received great insight into our strengths and gaps. Nelson will be reapplying for 2019. Nelson is also exploring a *Nelson Innovation Centre (NIC)* with the business plan and strategy

nearing completion. The NAEDP has applied for funding to establish the NIC in 2018. Nelson is now a *Start-Up* community. The Tech & Knowledge workers group has grown to 618 members; the screen based industry group has grown to 169 members, and the Nelson and District Youth Centre is now hosting the Tech Club.

Tech Club



Strategy: Enhance Community Vibrancy through Sport, Culture and Recreation

Finishing touches to the first Phase of the Hall Street project were completed this summer, with the on-street washroom (Portland Loo) and completion of enhancements to I.O.D.E. park. (See photo right) A new plaza was developed for Cottonwood Park and the footings put in place for the stage which is expected to be completed in spring 2018.



Strategy: Support Retention and Attraction of New Businesses

The City is an active member of the Nelson and Area Economic Development Partnership (NAEDP) and supported the recent manufactures study. The *Business Retention and Expansion* program is a key priority and Nelson remains the busiest community in the Basin-wide investment and workforce attraction program - *Imagine Kootenay*.

Strategy: Encourage Development in Downtown and Waterfront

We saw continued interest in development with a new mixed-used commercial and rental housing building under construction in the east waterfront

area. Council agreed to sell 205 Hall Street which will be a site for a mixed-use commercial / residential building. Council has partnered with a local non-profit to apply for grant funding to add rental housing above the Nelson and District Youth Centre. This development will include affordable work-force housing.

Mixed commercial/residential development on 7th Street



ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE IN CITY GOVERNANCE

Strategy: Encourage Citizen & Neighbourhood Engagement

The City launched its new webpage at www.nelson.ca which includes a number of features that allow the community to interact with staff and Council. Our Facebook page continues to be popular and we now have 5000+ followers. A number of public engagement opportunities are in the works including cannabis regulations, laneway housing and parking. The public engagement process to develop the short-term rental regulations were well attended. Council is now live-streaming its council meetings. These are also available to view after each meeting on the City’s website and YouTube.

Strategy: Support, Encourage and Empower City Employees

The City of Nelson values and supports employee development. Our employees are encouraged to further develop their skills and expertise through training and educational programming provided by the City. Council recognized its long serving employees at a recent Council meeting and presented 12 employees with recognition of 20+ years of service.

Steve Donald (centre) receives his 25 year long service award



Strategy: Develop and Implement Prudent Financial Management Policies

The *Water Master Plan* was updated and Council is on track with its implementation as well as to build reserves over time for the future replacement of assets. An initial review of roads was completed and the funding doubled to \$1,100,000 annually. Council received the facility review report and it identified the investment needed to maintain facilities is substantial - up to \$2,000,000 annually. Council has been able to develop a funding strategy that starts to get us to that target.

