



Council Strategic Plan
2015-2018
2016 Update



Summary

The process of building a resilient, responsive, open and thriving city is a perpetual work in progress. Fundamental to this is a comprehensive strategic vision and action plan that communicates this possibility clearly and with purpose. Capturing and articulating the hope of a community is the challenge and opportunity for the elected officials and staff at the District of Squamish so that Squamish citizens old and new; entrepreneur and employee; family, youth and elder; can all thrive, learn and find optimism for the future. It is a responsibility we all take to heart so that we can leave a successful legacy for generations to come.

The task of building a community of the future is in constant flux; a never-ending process of evaluation, change and betterment which makes this strategic action plan a living document. It started with a Council-driven strategic planning exercise at the very beginning of the 2014-2018 term that was further refined and ground-truthed by Council in early 2016 with input from senior staff. The plan will drive the District's strategic initiatives, guide yearly work plans and allow for creative transformation.

Our strategic plan is future-focused; at once specific and philosophical, pragmatic and aspirational. It provides clear direction while allowing for nimbleness to respond to emerging needs and opportunities. It envisions a world-class oceanfront community with a vibrant downtown and inclusive neighbourhoods that honours its natural dynamic environment. It aims to create an accessible, affordable, interesting, innovative, energetic, safe, walkable Squamish that attracts pioneering businesses and energizes its residents.

This will be accomplished through an open, enterprising and accessible government, and by tapping into the collaborative power of the collective community because government alone cannot deliver on this promise. In fact, it is the concerted efforts of an entire community that is the secret ingredient to this strategic action plan. There is no limit to what we can achieve together for our town.

[Handwritten signatures]
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K. Elliott C.C.D.
Peter H. Hux

Strategic and business cycle



2016 - 2018 Strategic Priority Focus Areas

Community Vision

We are a spectacular seaside mountain community where people come to live, learn, work and play in harmony. We are multicultural, compassionate, vibrant and diverse. We are leaders in fostering social integrity, economic development, and environmental sustainability.

Official Community Plan



We are an enterprising Government that provides open and transparent leadership. We achieve this through:

- Actively engaging the community in decision making
- Continual improvement
- Embracing innovation
- Leading a forward thinking and responsive corporation

Squamish is a vibrant, healthy, and socially inclusive community. The District supports achieving this by focusing on:

- Prioritizing public safety
- Valuing diversity
- Requiring accessibility
- Promoting physical health
- Ensuring equality
- Supporting arts and culture
- Creating gathering spaces

The District builds a balanced and resilient economy by focusing on:

- Encouraging diverse well paid jobs
- Reducing the need to commute
- Growing business opportunities and supporting hubs for entrepreneurs

The District leads the protection of our natural environment by focusing on:

- Minimizing our collective impact as we grow
- Becoming a community that adapts to and mitigates climate change
- Protecting and where possible enhancing natural spaces
- Future focused stewardship

Guiding principles

Council developed the following principles to guide decision making and prioritization of implementation of our strategic plan.

Forward-Thinking and Responsive Corporation

- Our citizens' goals and aspirations lead us. Each interaction reflects our understanding of their needs.
- Policies and processes reflect current community needs and anticipate our future needs.
- Council and staff work collaboratively and respectfully to achieve success.
- Community collaboration is supported and fostered.
- Our Corporate Culture fosters innovation, progressive planning, and organizational targets and measures.
- Our customer's experience is enhanced.
- Council and Staff create a culture that fosters innovation and collaboration.

Balanced and Resilient Economy

- The community is supported to enable a strong hub of entrepreneurial activity.
- Job creation and the long-term health of our economy are considered in land use decisions.
- A diversity of businesses that create long-term sustainable jobs for our citizens are attracted to and remain in Squamish.
- The tax structure is diverse and supports our community.
- Success is measured by the triple bottom line: economic, environment, and social measures.

Maximize Built Environment

- SMART growth principles are prioritized in land use decisions.
- The use of existing infrastructure is maximized.
- A diversity of housing, for all stages of life and income levels, is encouraged and planned for.
- The community events we currently enjoy are expanded.
- Arts, culture, recreation, and sport are celebrated and equally valued.
- The built environment, including public and gathering spaces, contributes to the health and well-being of our citizens.
- Urban design fosters a higher level of livability.

Connected Community

- Citizens and visitors have a choice of transportation options.
- Tourism assets, commercial districts, and neighbourhoods are connected by transit and trails.
- Active transportation is foundational in all infrastructure decisions.
- Social inclusion and connectivity is promoted.

Future-Focused Environmental Stewardship

- Air quality, water quality, the environment and land are valued and protected.
- Policies and infrastructure will support the community's reduction of GHG emissions and transition towards the use of renewable energies.
- Community-wide energy reduction, waste reduction, and water conservation will be a major focus.
- Wildlife and sensitive habitat are integral parts of what makes Squamish unique and are protected.
- Minimizing our collective impact on climate change is considered through adaptation and mitigation strategies.



OPEN AND ENTERPRISING GOVERNMENT

We are an enterprising government that provides open and transparent leadership. We achieve this through:

- Actively engaging the community in decision making
- Continual improvement
- Embracing innovation
- Leading a forward thinking and responsive corporation

Goals

- Collaborate and engage with citizens, youth, partners and other governments.
- Inspire youth to be globally aware and active participants in democracy.
- Foster strategic and financial partnerships.
- Customer service is solution / outreach driven.
- Technology is deployed to streamline and enhance service.
- Proactively communicate and engage with the community.
- Recognize and honour the traditions, wisdom and lands of First Nations to build trust and resilient communities.
- Monitor, report and respond to introspective benchmarking and evaluation – Continuous improvement.

Strategic Actions

2015 Completed

Amend the Council Procedure Bylaw to include the acknowledgement that Council meetings occur on Squamish Nation traditional territory. Enable Council to address big decisions as early in agenda as possible.

Implement the IAP2 Framework for public participation.

Foster strategic and collaborative partnerships with the Squamish Nation, the Provincial Government, BC Transit, Health and Social Service agencies, and the Sea to Sky School District through regular meetings and proactive engagement.

Expand use of IAP2 framework for public participation by Council and all departments.

Distribute each Council agenda in “plain language” summary to the public.

Implement a Council debrief following Council meetings for continuous process improvement.

Review the Procedure Bylaw annually to determine effectiveness and ensure ongoing transparency.

Scope technology to provide agenda item specific reference on archived Council meeting video.

Complete municipal hall space planning and construction to incorporate interim space requirements.

Clearly defined service objectives for all services.

Create formal process to communicate Council successes both in council meetings and by leveraging District communication tools.

Enhance customer service program to further engage employees in delivering outstanding service.

Redesign development notices and sign requirements to provide plain language and visual descriptions.

Design and complete construction of the Squamish Legacy Project (Canoe Shed) in the Xwu'nekw Park on the Mamquam Blind Channel.



2016 - 2018 - In Progress

Schedule Council hosted meetings in locations outside of Council Chambers each quarter.	2016
An annual community survey is conducted to measure citizen satisfaction with the District's services and governance.	2016
Municipal Hall/Civic services building redevelopment plan complete.	2016
Implement Technology Upgrades and tools to support customer services (Technology Transformation Project).	2016 - 2019
Electronic document management implementation.	2017
Complete a real estate and municipal facilities strategy & action plan.	2017
Implement mail-in ballot option.	2018
Identify alternate revenue generating opportunities.	2018
Benchmarking program is completed to report measurable data and achieve continuous improvement.	2018
All long term financial plan policies are incorporated into the budget process and 5-year financial plan.	2018
Develop strategy to increase voter turnout of greater than 50% in the 2018 municipal election.	2018

On Deck *Completion contingent on outside agency cooperation and/or scope requires time beyond 2018.*

Develop a Corporate Social Responsibility Policy to consider with the OCP.

Develop a basic municipal census.

Lobby UBCM to allow electronic ballots for voters in the 2018 municipal election.

UBCM did not support this initiative.

Considerations

Parameters to be applied and requirements for completion of the strategic actions

- Engagement requires public participation at varying degrees, open dialogue, involvement of many community stakeholder groups including specifically targeted groups such as youth, and time.
- Collaborative partnerships must provide benefits for all partnering agencies.
- Provincial legislation changes would be required to support electronic ballots.
- Youth will need to be involved in developing voter turnout strategy.
- Amendments to the Procedure Bylaw must at a minimum conform with the Community Charter.
- It will take a few years to implement all the technology changes, to train employees, and to educate the public on using the systems, as the District has many service areas.
- With a new Civic Services Building being considered, changes to the customer service interface at the Municipal Hall should be at minimal cost.
- Developing a meaningful benchmarking program requires a coordinated approach with all departments, which will take time to develop.
- Benchmarking information needs to be comparable to a baseline, whether internal or external, to be relevant for decision making and informative for the public.
- Infrastructure renewal should be supported by reserves, that are established and planned for infrastructure replacement.
- Continuing to develop the skill and ability for staff to monitor and actively apply for grants is required.
- Measuring and reporting on strategic actions should be designed.

Resources

Budget dollars, staffing and/or increased technology required to implement the strategic actions

- Basic IAP2 training is complete; implementation can be managed within existing resources; conducting more engagement will require additional resources.
- Additional funding is required for engagement processes – meetings, on-line tools, staffing.
- Financial, human, and technology resources are required to support technology, and customer services.
- Implementation of the benchmarking program will require technology and human resources to manage the program.
- Communications processes to be supported through increased human resources.
- Accumulation of reserves and increases in direct funding sources for capital program are needed to support the long term financial plan policies.
- Increases in human resources to various areas require an increase in human resource department support and resources.
- Implementing more robust reporting systems will require investment in technology to support the reporting and information gathering, and an initial need for additional human resources to design and implement the information gathering processes. Additional resources need will be scoped for future budget years.
- Financial planning policy achievement will require a functioning asset management system.





HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Squamish is a vibrant, healthy, and socially inclusive community. The District supports achieving this by focusing on:

- Prioritizing safety
- Valuing diversity
- Requiring accessibility
- Promoting physical health
- Ensuring equality
- Supporting arts and culture
- Creating gathering spaces

Goals

- Increase transportation choices and minimize our impact on the environment.
- Active transportation networks better connect neighbourhoods, tourism hubs and gathering spaces and improves health.
- Squamish is an adaptable and resilient community considering food, agriculture, water, built environment, employment and energy.
- The housing spectrum supports all the needs of citizens.
- Arts, culture and recreation programs and services keep pace with the growth, needs and interests of the community.

Strategic Actions

2015 Completed

Establish a Housing Task force including Terms of reference and determine membership and hold the first meeting.

2016 - 2018 - In Progress

Adopt a comprehensive Squamish youth engagement strategy.	2016
Develop a Safe Routes Schools program.	2016
Complete an action plan for Safe Routes to Schools.	2016
Active Transportation Plan / (Complete Street Plan).	2016
Incorporate into the Official Community Plan update to be completed December 31, 2016:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Downtown Transformation vision, including incorporation of the Cleveland Ave. plan, parking solutions and active transportation. • A Healthy Communities Index • Transit oriented development • An urban farming, agriculture and food security plan • A Healthy community focus • Smart Growth principles • Livable urban design principles • A Climate Change adaptation and mitigation focus 	2016
Sanitary Sewer Master Plan.	2016
Building Bylaw Rewrite.	2016
Recreation Fees & Charges update.	2016
Water Master Plan.	2016
Children's Charter.	2016
Smoke Bluffs Park Management Plan.	2016
Adopt an action plan to address housing affordability.	2018
Plan for funding an improved and expanded Brennan Park Recreation Centre and its programs.	2018
Develop strategy to increase youth participation in the 2018 election.	2018
Sponsorship and community partnership policy for Arts, Recreation and Cultural Services is in place.	During term



On Deck *Completion contingent on outside agency cooperation and/or scope requires time beyond 2018.*

Develop a joint agriculture and food security plan with SLRD Area D.

Engage with regional partners and governments to develop a regional transportation plan.

A framework to measure the health of the community is developed for the OCP.

Develop a growth plan for District and regional transit services in collaboration with BC Transit and regional partners.

Brennan Park Recreation Centre is renovated and expanded to meet the growing community needs, e.g., potential need for second ice sheet

Sea-to-Sky EM Training Project- the Emergency Programs within the corridor are working together to build a corridor wide EM training plan

Heritage Policy.

BC Hydro Community Evacuation Maps.

Considerations

Parameters to be applied and requirements for completion of the strategic actions

- The Safe Routes to School program requires collaboration with the School District.
- Squamish enjoys significant recreation opportunities provided by many community organizations and expanding recreation opportunities will require significant collaboration.
- There are significant opportunities to expand Squamish Nation Art and culture in Squamish.
- The District could encourage arts and culture programming through the Community Enhancement Grants or the Permissive Tax Exemption program.

Resources

Budget dollars, staffing and/or increased technology required to implement the strategic actions

- The OCP review and Housing task force can be completed with minimal external resources.
- The Safe Routes to School program will require financial resources to implement improvement.
- Expanding the arts program will require additional financial resources.



ECONOMY

The District builds a balanced and resilient economy by focusing on:

- Encouraging diverse well paid jobs
- Reducing the need to commute
- Growing business opportunities and supporting hubs for entrepreneurship

Goals

- Diversified tax base
- Increased median income
- Increase number and spectrum of jobs
- Create an investment friendly environment that is competitive and future focused

Strategic Actions

2015 Completed

Squamish Oceanfront is sold.

Amend District Zoning Bylaw to achieve the community vision while streamlining processes in order to facilitate economic development.

Zoning Bylaw Emergency Amendments.

Update Development Services Fees & Charges Bylaw.

2016 - 2018 - In Progress

Adopt a Grant in Aid Policy that includes criteria for applicants to demonstrate collaboration with one another.	2016
Mobile lights and speakers for use at the O'Siyam Pavilion, Brennan Park and off-site Public Meetings.	2016
Complete a comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.	2016
Determine the most effective Economic Development structure.	2016
Complete a Squamish Digital Strategy in collaboration with a Digital Strategy Task Force.	2016
Complete Squamish wayfinding plan that encompasses branding.	2016
Design and construct Squamish entrance sign on Highway 99.	2016
Cheekye Fan Mitigation Alternatives.	2016
Cleveland Avenue Capital Improvements	2016
Voluntary Community Amenity Guidelines.	2016
Business License Bylaw rewrite.	2016
Branding Action Plan key elements actioned each year.	2016 - 2018
Marijuana Regulations.	2017
Action key elements of the wayfinding program.	2018



On Deck *Completion contingent on outside agency cooperation and/or scope requires time beyond 2018.*

Complete the second phase of the Marine Strategy.	Requires other agencies
Turtle Trail Implementation Plan.	Requires other agencies
Airport Long Term Lease.	Hazard considerations
Downtown Revitalization (Specific projects ongoing, e.g., Cleveland Avenue upgrade).	

Considerations

Parameters to be applied and requirements for completion of the strategic actions

- Strong economic development strategies include collaboration with community stakeholders.
- The Wayfinding plan is an integral part of the branding action plan.
- Land use planning decisions need to be carefully considered, as they can positively or negatively impact business growth.
- The Employment Lands Strategy needs to be factored into decisions.

Resources

Budget dollars, staffing and/or increased technology required to implement the strategic actions

- Implementing a Digital Strategy may require additional resources that are not currently budgeted.
- Current development activity may restrict the Development Service department's ability to realign zoning to support business growth.
- Additional resources may be required to complete the policy work, considering that development and growth are stretching existing resources.



ENVIRONMENT

The District leads the protection of our natural environment by focusing on:

- Minimizing our collective impact as we grow
- Becoming a community that adapts to and mitigates climate change
- Protecting and where possible enhancing natural spaces
- Future Focused Stewardship

Goals

- Municipal bylaws and policies protect natural places, and supports responsible public access to wild natural places.
- Every neighbourhood has access to natural places within a 10 minute walk.
- Municipal bylaws and goals include climate action policies that facilitate climate change adaptation and mitigation actions.

Strategic Actions

2015 Completed

Food Waste Program Implementation Costs.

2016 - 2018 - In Progress

Adopt Neighbourhood Energy Utility bylaw.	2016
Complete zero waste strategy.	2016
The Squamish Estuary Management Plan is reviewed and implemented into the OCP.	2016
Greening Subdivision and Control Bylaw.	2016
Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP).	2018
Downtown Initiative Parking Strategy.	2016
Develop a policy that moves the District of Squamish towards carbon neutrality by 2018.	2016 - 2017
Site Alteration Bylaw Rewrite/Environmental Protection Bylaw.	2018
Complete sensitive habitat and riparian area mapping to inform the Official Community Plan review.	During term
Develop Green Building Policies to provide incentives to reduce environmental impacts.	During term

Considerations

Parameters to be applied and requirements for completion of the strategic actions

- Access to sensitive natural places may compromise their sustainability

Resources

Budget dollars, staffing and/or increased technology required to implement the strategic actions

- The sensitive habitat and corresponding OCP updates can be completed with existing budgeted resources.



SQUAMISH

HARDWIRED *for* ADVENTURE

District of Squamish

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