

District of Barriere

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Request for Decision

Date: January 13, 2025	File: 530.20/Rpts
To: Council	From: Chief Administrative Officer
Re: Strategic Plan 2025-2026	
Recommendation: THAT Council adopts the Strategic Plan 2025-2026 as attached.	

Purpose

For Council to consider adopting their Strategic Plan for 2025-2026 as attached.

Background

At the Strategic Planning workshop on November 22 and 23, 2024, Council reviewed the 2020 Strategic Plan. As part of the workshop, Council and staff reviewed each of the goals identified in the 2020 plan, discussed progress to date, determined if the goal had been met; and if not met, discussed whether the particular goal would remain a priority for the next two years of Council's term.

Equally, Council reviewed current challenges that impact the organization and community and projects that are a "must do", such as the Wastewater Treatment Project through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP). As part of the workshop, Council also reviewed the Mission, Vision, and Values that were updated in 2023.

After wholesome discussions over a span of two days, Council determined four overarching strategies that are critical over the next two years for the long-term sustainability of the community. Each Priority has three main Goals with clear results that Council would like to achieve over the next two years. Below is a high-level summary of those Priorities and Goals. More details can be found in the Draft Strategic Plan document which is attached.

Priority 1 - Implement an Organizational Asset Management Program

- Goal 1. – Assess Current Practices and State of Our Assets
- Goal 2. – Develop Asset Management Policies
- Goal 3. – Communication of Asset Management Program to Public

Priority 2 - Fiscally Responsible Operations

- Goal 1. – Develop a District Facilities Roadmap
- Goal 2. – Develop a Strategy to mitigate cost increases and downloading pressures
- Goal 3. – Financial Confidence and Oversight are Rebuilt

Priority 3. - Create Opportunities for Community Growth

Goal 1. – Complete Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Project and SCADA System

Goal 2. – Support Developments to Increase our Tax Base

Goal 3. – Complete critical Utility Bylaw and Utility Master Plan revisions

Priority 4. - General Governance and Community Engagement

Goal 1. – Increase Partnership with Simpcw First Nation

Goal 2. – Bylaws and legislated reports are complete

Goal 3. – Enhanced Engagement with the Community and our Partners

At the in-camera meeting on December 16, 2024, Council reviewed these Priorities, Goals, and the Results Council envisions. Staff also proposed corresponding Actions to achieve the envisioned Results. Council agreed that the proposed Strategic Plan meets the desires of Council.

Summary

The final version of Council's Strategic Plan 2025-2026 is now presented for Council approval.

Benefits or Impact

General

Upon review, the 2025-2026 priorities set by Council, and as presented, can largely be accommodated within the workplans. However, events that are outside the District's control can impact the workplans considerably at times. This includes for example environmental events or human resources challenges.

Finances

Upon review, the 2025-2026 priorities set by Council, and as presented, are consistent with and can largely be accommodated within the Financial Plan. Some projects may require additional funding (for example for engineering consultants on a wastewater masterplan update), and Council would be presented with opportunities during the budget process to determine if the projects should receive funding. In addition, Council is aware of some of the human resources challenges and the need to attract and retain qualified talent for critical roles. Also, if new items are added to the plan throughout the year, the expectations change, or Council commits to additional funding, the Financial Plan will need to be adjusted accordingly.

Strategic Impact

If approved, the 2025-2026 Strategic Plan will replace the 2020 plan.

Risk Assessment

Compliance: Council adopted Strategic Plan for the organization.

Risk Impact: medium

Internal Control Process: Continuous updates will be provided to Council.

Next Steps / Communication

- If adopted, Staff will begin work to update workplans (as needed) and align District budgets (as needed) to meet these goals
 - Staff will provide regular updates to Council on the activities of the Strategic Plan
 - Staff will plan a workshop for November 2025 to review the progress on the plan in more details and to determine any emerging challenges that may need to be added.
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Attachments

- 2025-2026 Strategic Plan – Final - DRAFT

Recommendation

THAT Council adopts the 2025-2026 Strategic Plan as attached.

Alternative Options

1. Council could choose not to adopt the plan and continue with the 2020 plan instead.
2. Council could choose to amend items on the attached plan before providing approval.

Prepared by:

D. Drexler, Chief Administrative Officer

The District of Barriere - 2025/26 Strategic Plan

Priority #1: Implement an Organizational Asset Management Program

Goal 1. – Assess Current Practices and State of Our Assets

Actions to get us there:

- a. Finalize a review of current practices and policies in place.
- b. Apply for Asset Management funding from UBCM (up to \$25,000) to assist with developing a long-term financial needs forecast.
- c. Consolidate the information and present at a Council meeting.

The Results We Want to See:

- a. Complete review of Current Practices and make recommendations on how to address any gaps by the end of 2025.
- b. Provide a review of our Assets and long-term annual investment needs for Council and Public Information by the end of 2025.

Goal 2. – Develop Asset Management Policies

Actions to get us there:

- a. Develop or amend Asset Management Program Policies
- b. Develop an Asset Management Investment Plan (AMIP)
- c. Develop Asset Management Financial Investment Policy

The Results We Want to See:

- a. Present Asset Management Framework Policies and Plans for Council consideration, including:
 - a. Tangible Capital Assets Policy
 - b. Asset Management Policy
 - c. Asset Management Framework/Strategy
 - d. Asset Management Investment Plan (AMIP)
 - e. Asset Management Financial Investment Policy
- b. In the Policies and Plans, consider the current State of Our Assets (from Goal 1.) and Asset Deficits.
- c. Provide a list of immediate critical renewal needs as part of the annual budget with a 5 year forecast.

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Goal 3. – Communication of Asset Management Program to Public

Actions to get us there:

- a. Develop a Communications Strategy and budget to assist with informing the public about the Asset Management needs of the community.
- b. Provide continuous information to the public in a variety of ways throughout 2025 and 2026

The Results We Want to See:

- a. Present a budget for enhanced communication on Asset Management as part of the 2025 budget.
- b. Information is readily available to the public through various channels.
- c. At least one Open House on Asset Management has been held before the end of 2026.
- d. Reasonable efforts have been made to educate the public on the purpose of Asset Management.

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Priority #2: Fiscally Responsible Operations

Goal 1. – Develop a District Facilities Roadmap

Actions to get us there:

- a. Review current key facilities for long- and short-term use (Facility Assessments):
 - a. Town Hall / SD73 partnership
 - b. Fire Hall
 - c. Works Yard
 - d. BBC
 - e. Lions Hall
 - f. Old Chamber Building
 - g. Solar Aquatics
- b. Develop a plan that would allow for operational cost savings to fund additional contributions to reserve which will enable us to replace/upgrade our facilities.

The Results We Want to See:

- a. Present a short-term facilities strategy for Council consideration that aligns with the needs of the organization and are financially achievable in 2025/26.
- b. Begin implementation of approved short-term components.
- c. Include long term facilities needs in Asset Management plans.

Goal 2. – Develop a Strategy to mitigate cost increases and downloading pressures.

Actions to get us there:

- a. Seek opportunities to increase efficiencies, for example:
 - a. Procedure Bylaw – Meeting dates and times, other efficiencies
 - b. Opening Hours for Town Hall
- b. Seek opportunities to increase Staff development, capacity, and growth, to align with the current needs of the organization, for example:
 - a. Roads Department (all year)
 - b. Organizational Structure review that enables and supports transparency, communications, community growth, and community livability, while ensuring that our statutory obligations are met.

The Results We Want to See:

- a. Present an updated Procedure Bylaw that focuses on efficiencies for Council consideration.
- b. Collect Statistics for visitations to Town Hall and present in 2026.
- c. Present a business case for a fulltime roads department for Council consideration.
- d. Business cases to align current and future operational needs to increase efficiencies and capacity is presented for Council consideration.

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Goal 3. – Financial Confidence and Oversight are Rebuilt

Actions to get us there:

- a. Enhancing Financial Procedures and Processes
 - a. The Annual Operational Budget is Program Based (not line by line), Variances are clearly highlighted.
 - b. The Annual Capital Program and Special Projects are separate from the Operational Budget.
 - c. Workflows, signoff, and other processes are evaluated and enhanced where feasible.
 - d. All Financial Policies are reviewed, and possibly new Policies are established, to align with the needs of our growing organization, including:
 - i. Procurement Policy
 - ii. Credit Card Policy
 - iii. Budget Transfer Authority
 - iv. Payroll and Expense Review Policy
 - v. Travel and Expense Policy
- b. Budget processes are enhanced and communicated to the public in a simple format (brochure)
- c. Quarterly budget reporting is re-established in 2025.
- d. Review Financial Software and options to determine a best strategy going forward

The Results We Want to See:

- a. The annual budgets are presented on a Program Based Budget (not line by line), highlighting variances in all programs.
- b. An effective mechanism for quarterly budget reporting is established and quarterly high-level financial updates are presented to Council.
- c. Financial Policies are presented for Council consideration.
- d. The 2026 audit is on time.
- e. Financial software options are considered once the Thompson Nicola Regional District (TNRD) has made a decision on their products and potential sharing of resources.

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Priority #3: Create Opportunities for Community Growth

Goal 1. – Complete Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Project and SCADA System

Actions to get us there:

- a. Receive approval from the Province for the design of the WWTP in 2025.
- b. Tender the works in 2025.
- c. Implement necessary upgrades for the Water and Wastewater sites to communicate with a centralized Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system.
- d. Complete construction in 2026

The Results We Want to See:

- a. The new WWTP is operational by end of 2026.
- b. Include a budget for the SCADA system in the 2025 annual budget for Council consideration.
- c. If SCADA budget is approved, all Water and Wastewater systems are connected to a centralized system (SCADA) by summer 2026.

Goal 2. – Support Developments to Increase our Tax Base

Actions to get us there:

- a. Summers Road Water and Sewer Expansion to support future growth and to limit lingering health advisories:
 - a. Rural Economic Development and Infrastructure Program (REDIP) funding is provided by the Province.
 - b. Work with the three property owners along Summers Road to negotiate agreements that would support the development of a water and wastewater infrastructure to reduce health advisories.
 - c. Consider options for right of way and other land trades to allow for placement of critical infrastructure and active transportation opportunities.
- b. Assess opportunities to enhance Active Transportation and Utility Right of Way corridors.
- c. Review potential funding sources to develop, or redevelop, our infrastructure.

The Results We Want to See:

- a. Development is enabled as much as possible for the 3 large parcels north of the Highway Bridge along the Highway 5 Corridor. Ideally both, water and wastewater, are available.
 - a. If REDIP grant is not received, provide Council with options to fund the project (or part of the project) without any grant support
 - b. Council is presented with options for land swaps or right of way agreements with property owners if the project proceeds
- b. Active Transportation and Utility Right of Way corridors are established where feasible.
- c. Continuously review grant opportunities that would allow infrastructure expansion to underutilized areas, to allow for growth or to reduce operating costs.

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Goal 3. – Complete critical Utility Bylaw and Utility Master Plan revisions

Actions to get us there:

- a. Develop a new Wastewater Regulations Bylaw.
- b. Update the Water Regulations Bylaw to include provisions that address mobile home parks and other emerging items.
- c. Review the current Wastewater Master Plan for long range feasibility, practicality, and capacity considering recent developments and expansions in the community.
- d. Review the current Water Master Plan for long range capacity and community growth.

The Results We Want to See:

- a. Present a Wastewater Bylaw for Council consideration in 2025.
- b. Present a Water Bylaw update for Council consideration in 2025.
- c. Wastewater Master plan update is started by end of 2026, funding dependent.
- d. Water Master Plan update is started by end of 2026, funding dependent.

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Priority #4: General Governance and Community Engagement

Goal 1. – Increase Partnership with Simpcw First Nation

Actions to get us there:

- a. Continue to work on the MOU and Protocol agreement.
- b. Continue to work on a joint Crown Tenure Application.
- c. Continuously review opportunities to enhance our level of partnership, including:
 - a. Simpcw Resources Group development partnerships
 - b. Wayfinding Signage
 - c. Emergency Services departments

The Results We Want to See:

- a. Present a final version of the MOU and Protocol agreement for Council consideration.
- b. Present an application for the Crown Land Tenure to both Councils for consideration.
- c. If opportunities arise, present them to Council for consideration.

Goal 2. – Bylaws and legislated reports are complete

Actions to get us there:

- a. Continue to work in house and with external resources where appropriate on various governance documents that are necessary to be updated to meet Council and provincial objectives.

The Results We Want to See:

- a. The Housing Needs Assessment is complete.
- b. The OCP is updated and presented to Council for consideration by end of 2025.
- c. The Zoning Bylaw is updated and presented to Council for consideration by end of 2026.
- d. Development Approvals Bylaw is updated and presented to Council for consideration by end of 2025.
- e. Development Cost Charges Bylaw is updated and presented to Council for consideration by end of 2025.
- f. Parks Bylaw is updated and presented to Council for consideration by end of 2025.
- g. Fire Bylaw is updated and presented to Council for consideration by end of 2025.
- h. Accessibility requirements are met.

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Goal 3. – Enhanced Engagement with the Community and our Partners

Actions to get us there:

- a. Work with CN Rail to negotiate a fair agreement for ongoing maintenance at the Hall Road crossing.
 - a. Utilize this opportunity to further enhance our relationship with CN (FireSmart, etc.)
- b. Develop a plan that would enhance and broaden District communications to enable sharing of critical information on budgets, asset management, and other critical information.
- c. Consider options to enable Community Partners, to provide a larger benefit to the community, for example, the Chamber -> Downtown building renovations.
- d. Review options to allow the Youth in our community to have a more direct input to Council, and present those options to Council

The Results We Want to See:

- a. An agreement with CN rail is complete regarding the Hall Road crossing and presented to Council for consideration in 2025.
- b. Communications regarding District projects are enhanced on the platforms that our citizens are wanting to be engaged on.
- c. Support our local community partners and enable them to provide a benefit to the community on behalf of the District
- d. Establish a mechanism to solicit input from the Youth in our community.

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Mission

To provide municipal services that meet the growing needs and enrich the quality of life within our community.

Vision

To be an inclusive, sustainable, and proud rural community with a progressive economy that provides purposeful services and a vibrant lifestyle.

Value Statements

- Conducting the business of the community with integrity, accountability and transparency.
- Inclusive and welcoming to raise a family where everyone wants to live, work and play in a safe active lifestyle.
- Strong, accepting and friendly rural community where families live and grow together.
- A location that provides purposeful services that meet the needs of residents and business.
- Excellence in community involvement with events and activities for all ages.
- Supportive community that provides a vibrant lifestyle that enhances both our quality of life and wellbeing for families and residents.
- Leadership in rural community lifestyle by showcasing our resilience, engagement and achievements together.
- Stand on our own as an emerging vibrant community as an Independent sustainable rural community,
- Protecting our families and residents to the highest possible level.
- Embraces change while respecting our natural environment, rich traditional heritage and recognize that families want a healthy balanced lifestyle and prosperous economy.