



JANUARY Project Updates:

1. **Lift Station**—Nearing completion, currently we have a supply chain interruption for electrical components. Contractors should be back on site mid February to see the project through to completion. Original budget of the grant funded project was 1.38 million, the project is currently under budget. The Village has requested to use remaining funds for other lift station work.
2. **North Ashcroft Drainage Study**— Nearing completion and should be before Council within the next two months.
3. **Water to AIB**— This project is ongoing but stalled, both governments are working within their parameters to move the project forward. Council resolved that the project must be net zero cost to Ashcroft's rate payers.
4. **Hot Tub**—I HA has recently approved the proposed plans for the new hot tub. This was the final approval needed prior to the contractor moving forward with installation later this spring. Hot tub should be operational at opening providing there are no supply chain issues.
5. **Fire Hall #2**— Preliminary design drawings were used to RFP the project. Ashcroft's architect and staff are reviewing proposals and working with the contractors to bring the project within budget. Approved grant funding is \$688,000
6. **Economic Development & Tourism**—The working group is finalizing plans for 2022 including grant application submissions. Promotion and advertising is ongoing and a Community Profile is under development.
7. **Heritage Park / Community Garden**— The working group is reviewing plans to update and repair the pond and area near the public washrooms. Many of the park's structures are showing their age and require refurbishing. Once a plan is determined, funding will have to be sourced. The community garden construction will resume when weather permits. The garden is scheduled to be open for planting in late spring.
8. **Trail Master Plan**—The Consultant is nearing completion of the draft plan. Once completed the plan will be presented to Council and the public for input.
9. **Emergency Plan Update**—The Village is developing a collaboration with the HUB to provide Emergency Support Services in Ashcroft. Funding application is submitted to UBCM. Wildfire protection planning is ongoing.

COUNCIL JANUARY HIGHLIGHTS:

- ⇒ Council has given third reading to the Fire Department Regulation Bylaw No. 848, 2022;
- ⇒ Council adopted the Outdoor Burning Bylaw No. 849, 2022;
- ⇒ Council adopted Policy No. A-01-2022, a policy to regulate Information Protection;
- ⇒ Council adopted Policy No. A-02-2022, a policy to regulate LED Sign usage;
- ⇒ Council directed staff to draft a resolution to reclassify tax assessments for rail property;
- ⇒ Council directed staff to draft a letter with Council's views of the 2021 Wildfire and ask BCWFS to work closely with stakeholders in the area that have knowledge of the land to aid in fire suppression and bring it back to Council for review.
- ⇒ The January 24, 2022 Council meeting was cancelled due to COVID exposure at the Village office and staff availability.

Village of Ashcroft

Mayor and Council:

Mayor:

Barbara Roden

Councillors:

Marilyn Anderson

Jonah Anstett

Nadine Davenport

Deb Tuohey

PROPERTY TAX SCAM

Targeting Seniors:

It has been brought to the Villages attention that there appears to be some scammer targeting seniors in the area threatening outstanding property taxes. Please be careful and remember if the Village has any property tax concerns with you or your property, you will receive a letter from the Village office. We would **never** call and threaten to take your property unless funds were paid immediately.

Please be diligent and help protect our seniors that may be targeted.

It's still winter, please continue to shovel the sidewalks!



2022—MUNICIPAL ELECTION YEAR

October 15, 2022 is the day British Columbians will elect Mayors, Councillors, School Board Trustees and Regional District Rural Directors to serve the public for a four (4) year term. If public service is something you have considered in the past, you might be interested in running for office in the October election.

Over the course of the next few weeks Council will review the Election Bylaw, appoint the Chief and Deputy Election Officers and staff will begin to coordinate all the preliminary work leading up to the election. A workshop for anyone considering running in the election will be hosted to answer any questions and provide information in regards to what is required of elected officials. Although the election is still 8.5 months away, time will fly and the election will be upon us. As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to call the office and staff will be happy to assist you.

COVID-19

Village staff strives to provide services to the residents of Ashcroft, if you are not feeling well, please do not come to the office, but feel free to call and we will do our best to assist you. The office is short staffed so please be patient if it takes us a few minutes to get to the phone or front counter.

Backyard Campfires in Ashcroft

The recent adoption of the Outdoor Burning Bylaw, allows campfires in the Village of Ashcroft. However, prior to cozying up to that warm fire, property owners/renters are required to construct the fire pit as described in the Bylaw, the fire pits must be inspected by the Bylaw Officer or designate and an annual permit is required from the Village office. The permit triggers Fire Department notification for fire protection purposes. You can find a copy of the Outdoor Burning Bylaw on the Village website at: <https://ashcroftbc.ca/wp-content/uploads/Bylaw-No.-849-2022-Outdoor-Burning-Combined.pdf>

Below in italics is an excerpt from Bylaw No. 849, 2022 regarding fire pit regulations.

- f) An outdoor campfire defined as an open fire that burns seasoned firewood in a fire pit. Fire size must be no larger than 0.5 m in height and 0.5 m in width and is used for recreational purposes, cooking or by a First Nation for a ceremonial purpose.*
- i) Fire pits shall be located no closer than 3 meters from a neighbouring property or combustible materials;*
 - ii) Fire pits shall be a ring made of non-combustible materials that must be at least three metres from any buildings, property lines and anything flammable, like trees, be less than 60 centimetres high, and one metre wide, have enclosed sides made of brick, concrete or heavy-gauge metal, have a mesh screen to stop sparks on top. Fire pits must be inspected and approved by the Bylaw Enforcement Officer, Fire Chief or designate.*
 - iii) Campfires are permitted all year around unless a campfire ban has been implemented by the Village or the Ministry of Forests.*
 - iv) The campfire pit must be on mineral soil and have a fuel break around the fire pit. This area must be cleared of debris and anything combustible. It needs to be wide enough to stop the spread of the fire. A rock ring around the*

How Property Tax Assessments Impact Property Taxes

Like many communities in BC, Ashcroft's property assessments marked a significant increase this year. Overall, property values in Ashcroft increased an average of 34%. This does not mean that your property taxes will increase by 34%! Local Governments must carry a balanced budget, we are not able to budget a deficit or surplus. Budget calculations are based on projected expenses for the year taking the previous years actual costs into consideration. Generally a minimal increase of 2-3% to accommodate inflation is required for a balanced budget. For 2022 our budgeted increase is estimated at 2.5%. This means tax payers should only see a 2.5% increase of the property tax amount owed last year, you wont see a 2.5% over and above the BC Assessment increase of your property value for 2022. When BC Assessment releases the assessed property values, each municipality adjusts its property tax rate (aka mill rate) up or down to reflect the marginal increase, in Ashcroft's budget this equals 2.5% this year.

Throughout the year staff strives to manage the budget, look for grant funding and other ways to offset both project and operational costs which at times leaves the village in a surplus position at year end, these funds are rolled into a reserve accounts for future needs. If you have any questions regarding property taxation, please do not hesitate to contact the Village office.

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2022 Events & Meetings

Council Meetings:

Meetings are Livestreamed on the HUB Online Network

Feb. 14—6:00 pm

Feb. 28—6:00 pm

