



Strategic Plan 2024 - 2026

ABOUT US

Ashcroft is a picturesque oasis nestled along the riverbank of the mighty Thompson River that boasts an abundance of clean air, fresh water, ample hiking trails and locally produced foods. We celebrate four distinct seasons and as Canada's only true desert we are often the hotspot for BC and Canada during the summer months.

As a member municipality of the Thompson Nicola Regional District, with a population of 1670 residents, services delivered by Ashcroft include fire protection, potable water, sewer system, garbage collection, parks and recreation, roads and infrastructure maintenance, governance, financial and asset management, and administration.

"We ensure that we are building a community that is inclusive, transparent, and fiscally responsible, and which responds to the needs and wants of those who live, work, and play here."

Mayor Barbara Roden

PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The strategic planning process is crucial for the Village of Ashcroft as it provides a structured approach to setting priorities, managing limited resources, directing staff efforts, and communicating with citizens. By engaging in strategic planning, the village can effectively address current challenges, capitalize on opportunities, and work towards its long-term vision.

This Strategic Plan serves as a tool to identify specific new areas of focus and prioritize ongoing work that the Council has deemed essential during its term in office. While it outlines new initiatives and key priorities, it also acknowledges the importance of ongoing core functions and services provided by the Village, which are not detailed extensively in the plan.

Regular review and monitoring of the Strategic Plan are emphasized to ensure its effectiveness. By conducting annual reviews, the village can assess the progress made towards achieving its goals, identify any necessary adjustments or updates to priorities, and ensure alignment with evolving circumstances and community needs.

In summary, the strategic planning process enables the Village of Ashcroft to make informed decisions, allocate resources wisely, and effectively address the needs of the community while working towards its overarching objectives.

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

This Strategic Plan serves as a roadmap for where the Village of Ashcroft would like to be as a community, and what services, amenities, and objectives staff and council will focus on over the next 2.5 years and beyond.

It was developed after extensive input from staff, council, and community members. The wide range of items identified in the plan are by no means the only things the Village will be working towards implementing, but they reflect what is uppermost in people's minds.

A Strategic Plan is not a document that sits on a shelf; it is a living document, which guides the Village. By ensuring that the items in the plan correspond with core values of the Village of Ashcroft, we ensure that we are building a community that is inclusive, transparent, and fiscally responsible, and which responds to the needs and wants of those who live, work, and play here.



*Standing: Councillor: Jonah Anstett, Doreen Lambert, Jessica Clement, Nadine Davenport
Seated: Mayor Barbara Roden*

Council is dedicated to aligning its actions with the principles and objectives outlined in the Vision and Mission statement, as well as the priorities delineated in the 2024-2026 Strategic Plan. Throughout 2023, Council's primary focus was on fulfilling the objectives established in the preceding strategic plan. In the fall of 2023, the Strategic Planning process was finalized, involving consultations with Council members, staff, and the public. This comprehensive plan provides a roadmap of the projects and priorities to be addressed throughout the duration of Council's term in office. Committed to realizing this plan, Council pledges to provide transparent updates to the community on progress made. Ultimately, the overarching aim is to foster Ashcroft's development into a sustainable community, offering an unparalleled quality of life for all its residents.

VISION STATEMENT

A vision statement describes the Village's Aspirations, new and for the future.

The Village of Ashcroft is a welcoming, safe, and attractive community characterized by an exceptional climate and a strong sense of history."

MISSION STATEMENT

A mission statement describes the fundamental Purpose of the Village as an organization.

"As stewards of the community, Village Council is committed to providing accountable leadership by addressing our fiscal reality through strategic planning and building effective relationships."

CORE SERVICES

Core services serve as the cornerstone of the Villages' operations, absorbing the bulk (80%-90%) of its human and financial resources. While the effective provision of these critical services often goes unheralded, they constitute the essence of the Village's efforts on behalf of its citizens. The Village of Ashcroft endeavors to excel in six primary service areas:

- Effective governance, community & inter-governmental engagement.
- Safety and protection.
- Community Planning & the natural built environment.
- Managing infrastructure, and assets.
- Enhancing parks, recreation, arts, and cultural amenities.
- Upholding fiscal responsibility and promoting transparency.
- Excellence in service delivery.

VALUES AND OPERATING PHILOSOPHY

The values and operating philosophy encompass long-standing, shared beliefs that steer the actions of both Council and staff. Council and staff uphold and pledge to:

- Deliver responsive and accountable services.
- Foster an open, inclusive, and transparent local government.
- Ensure financial sustainability.
- Champion community sustainability and environmental stewardship.
- Integrate meaningful public engagement into all major Village endeavors.
- Foster collaboration with neighbouring local governments.
- Enhance relations with neighbouring First Nations.
- Uphold stewardship of public assets.
- Provide accountable leadership and balanced decision making.



GOAL 1: GOVERNANCE, PUBLIC & INTER-GOVERNMENTAL ENGAGEMENT

We will foster a robust foundation for governance through inclusive public participation and intergovernmental engagement, thereby enhancing trust, responsiveness, and effectiveness in meeting the needs of our municipality both presently and for generations to come.

Strategic Priorities and Actions	Proposed Start Date	Proposed Completion
Review and Update of OCP and Zoning Bylaws <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Legislative changes ○ Increased density ○ Fire Resistant material ○ Other 	Q 2	
Initiate Branding Exercise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Working Group • Engage with community • Review existing brand • Review other designs used in community promotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Oasis in the Desert, Prickly Pear Cactus, Historic Ashcroft ○ Determine if the existing brands can be amalgamated • Bring report to Council documenting the community's direction for consideration • Implement required action 	Q 2	
Establish Policy Review Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of existing policies • Recommend revisions, deletions, or development of policies. 	Q 1	
Water to Ashcroft Indian Reserve (AIB) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop fee structure and policies Next steps, Finance officers and consultant to meet and discuss volume and actual cost of water delivery	Q 1	

Apart from the elements outlined in the aforementioned table, our governance entails a range of ongoing activities aimed at bolstering our relationships with First Nations communities, fostering collaborative initiatives with other governmental bodies to provide shared services, expanding engagement through additional Town Hall and Budget meetings, leveraging social media platforms for direct interaction with residents, disseminating monthly newsletters to keep the community informed about Council decisions, and advocating for our municipality's interests at higher levels of

government. These efforts collectively reinforce transparency, responsiveness, and inclusivity in our governance approach, ensuring effective representation and service delivery for all stakeholders.

GOAL 2: ENHANCING PARKS, RECREATION, ARTS & CULTURE AMENITIES

We will enhance community well-being and quality of life by providing accessible, diverse, and sustainable parks, trails, recreational facilities, as well as vibrant arts and cultural opportunities that promote physical activity, social interaction, and creativity for all residents."

Strategic Priorities and Actions	Proposed Start Date	Proposed Completion
<p>Review all Parks and Trail Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Group will: • Assess all parks develop Parks master plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Implement front end redesign of Heritage Park if approved for grant funding ○ Implement Mesa Park revitalization if approved for grant funding • Review finalize and adopt Trail Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop downtown trail - accessible walking path 	Q 2	
<p>Recreation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Working Group • Develop Recreation Facilities Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assess facilities ○ Determine necessary improvements and potential funding sources ○ Determine additional improvements (wish list) and potential funding sources 	Q 2	
<p>Old Fire Hall & Museum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update exterior of the Museum • Install storyboards at Old Fire Hall <p>Determine what should be done with old Fire Department related artifacts</p>	Q 2	

Additional ongoing initiatives within this core service area involve the comprehensive redesign and submission of grant applications for Mesa Park, with the objective of transforming it into a fully inclusive and accessible park and playground. Furthermore, efforts are underway to revamp the front end of Heritage Park, coupled with the submission of grant applications to support this endeavor. Additionally, enhancements are being made to the Museum through the installation of new displays, and a new art walk map is in development to enrich the cultural experience within our community. These endeavors collectively contribute to the enhancement of recreational facilities, historical

preservation, and cultural enrichment, reinforcing our commitment to providing diverse and accessible amenities for all residents and visitors alike.

GOAL 3: SAFETY & PROTECTION

We are committed to ensuring community safety and protection through proactive measures, collaborative partnerships, and comprehensive strategies aimed at safeguarding the well-being of all residents and fostering a safe and secure environment.

Strategic Priorities and Actions	Proposed Start Date	Proposed Completion
<p>Street Speed, Safety & Parking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish working group • Assess speed limits throughout the Village • Assess parking issues throughout the Village • Identify areas of concern for public safety • Update Traffic Bylaw 	Q 1	
<p>FireSmart</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish working group to act as a steering committee for the FireSmart coordinator • Apply for funding • Hire FireSmart Coordinator • Develop Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) • FireSmart Public Education • Engage with AIB re: best practices 	Q 2	

Additional ongoing initiatives encompass the revision of the Emergency Preparedness Plan to align with newly enacted legislative mandates. Furthermore, regular annual reviews are conducted on the Heat Alert and Response Plan to ensure its effectiveness in mitigating heat-related risks. We maintain close collaboration with various organizations, including the RCMP, Ministry of Transportation, Emergency Management and Climate Readiness, and the TNRD Emergency Management team, to collectively safeguard the community. Through these concerted efforts, we aim to enhance our preparedness and response capabilities, effectively addressing emergent challenges and ensuring the resilience of our community in the face of various hazards and threats.

GOAL 4: MANAGING INFRASTRUCTURE & ASSETS

We are dedicated to effectively managing our infrastructure and assets to ensure their longevity, reliability, and optimal performance. Through strategic planning, proactive maintenance, and prudent investment, we aim to enhance the resilience and sustainability of our community's essential systems, thereby supporting continued growth and prosperity.

Strategic Priorities and Actions	Proposed Start Date	Proposed Completion
<p>North Ashcroft Reservoir</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize land purchase • Develop Plans for second reservoir • Source funding <p>Construct twin reservoir to increase the water supply in North Ashcroft.</p>	Q 3	

Continual efforts are being made to address climate change and ensure reliable, sustainable water distribution to our community. This involves ongoing planning initiatives aimed at implementing measures to mitigate the impacts of climate change. Furthermore, reserve funds have been established to provide the village with the necessary resources to effectively repair and maintain critical infrastructure such as water and sewer lines, roads, equipment, and public facilities. These proactive measures not only enhance the resilience of our infrastructure but also contribute to the long-term well-being and quality of life for our residents.

GOAL 5: COMMUNITY PLANNING & THE NATURAL BUILT ENVIRONMENT

We are committed to being environmental stewards by implementing sustainable practices, minimizing our environmental footprint, and integrating community planning efforts to ensure a healthier, more resilient community for generations to come.

Strategic Priorities and Actions	Proposed Start Date	Proposed Completion
Water Conservation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Xeriscape strategy • Develop Native Species plant list • Review water conservation Bylaw • Explore options for water conservation 	Q 2	
Herbicide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review application processes and risk to the public 		

The village is actively pursuing water conservation strategies through research and updating bylaws to promote eco-friendly construction and establishing higher density zones. Operational improvements, such as transitioning to LED lighting and integrating solar panels, and fleet electrification aim to reduce the village's carbon footprint. These efforts demonstrate a commitment to environmental stewardship and building a resilient, eco-conscious community for present and future generations.

The Core Values listed below have not been assigned specific priorities by Council. Nevertheless, maintaining fiscal responsibility, promoting transparency, and delivering service excellence represent fundamental values pursued by both the Council and Staff in their daily endeavors. Additionally, the Strategic Plan undergoes an annual review, allowing for potential updates and additions. Council retains the discretion to set priorities in accordance with these Core Values as circumstances dictate.

UPHOLDING FISCAL RESPONSIBILITIES & PROMOTING TRANSPARENCY

We prioritize fiscal responsibility and transparency to ensure the effective management of public resources. By maintaining prudent financial practices, fostering accountability, and promoting transparency in decision-making processes, we aim to build trust, uphold integrity, and maximize the value of taxpayer dollars for the benefit of our community.

Strategic Priorities and Actions	Proposed Start Date	Proposed Completion
TBD		

The Village is committed to maintaining transparency in all financial operations, ensuring that the community is informed and engaged. To achieve this, quarterly financial updates are presented to the Council in open meetings. Furthermore, beyond the legislated public budget sessions, additional public meetings are organized during budget development to encourage community input and feedback. Moreover, our staff remains accessible throughout the workweek to provide clarification and address any queries from both Council members and the public concerning financial matters. This proactive approach underscores our dedication to accountability and transparency fostering trust within the community.

EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE DELIVERY

We are dedicated to achieving excellence in service delivery by consistently striving to meet and exceed the expectations of our community. Through innovation, continuous improvement, and a commitment to customer satisfaction, we aim to provide efficient, responsive, and high-quality services that enhance the well-being and satisfaction of all residents.

Strategic Priorities and Actions	Proposed Start Date	Proposed Completion
TBD		

As dedicated public servants, the Village staff uphold a commitment to excellence across all facets of our operations, spanning from administration to public works. We take great pride in our daily responsibilities and the prompt resolution of issues, ensuring seamless service delivery even in emergent situations. Embracing a culture of continuous improvement, our staff actively engage in ongoing training to adeptly operate facilities and equipment, thus contributing to the vibrancy of our community. Whether it's collecting service fees or managing waste disposal, we operate as a cohesive team, driven by a shared goal of serving our community to the utmost of our capabilities.