Monthly Review JANUARY 2026

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

Council met on January 8th and 26th—below are some highlights from these meetings:

- ◊ Council gave first and second readings to the Water Regulations Bylaw No. 881, 2026.
- ◊ Council gave first and second readings to the Fees and Charges Amendment Bylaw No. 882, 2026 (Water, Sewer, and Solid Waste)
- ◊ Council gave first and second readings to the Notice of Enforcement Amendment Bylaw
- ◊ Council reviewed the Council Annual Remuneration Policy and directed no changes at this time.
- ◊ Council approved the CAO's attendance at the 2026 CAO Forum and authorized related expenses.
- ◊ Council approved the destruction of 2025 Local By-Election materials in accordance with legislation.
- ◊ Council approved proceeding with the Mesa Vista Park playground replacement and directed staff to pursue grant funding opportunities.
- ◊ Council supported submission of a $50,000 Economic Development Capacity Building grant application to Northern Development Initiative Trust
- ◊ Council waived the ice rental fee for the January 31, 2026 Guns and Hoses fundraising game.
- ◊ Council Approved the Farmers Market request to relocate to the Pool Park.
- ◊ Council Proclaimed February 15-22, 2026 as Heritage Week

Village of Ashcroft

Mayor and Council:
Mayor:
Barbara Roden
Councillors:
Jonah Anstett
Jessica Clement
Nadine Davenport
Cam Tedford

2026
Council Meetings
Feb. 9th — 6 pm
Feb. 23rd — 6 pm
Public Meeting to Discuss OCP/Zoning Bylaws & Water Meter Updates
Feb. 24th
5:30—7:30
Community Hall

MESA PARK GETS PLAYGROUND UP-GRADE

Exciting improvements are coming to Mesa Park! Council has approved the plan and funding to replace the aging playground equipment, marking the first phase of revitalizing this much-loved neighbourhood park.

The new playground will be designed as inclusive play, creating a welcoming space for children of all abilities. Planned features include a rubber compound safety surface, shade structures, and new, modern playground equipment that encourages active, imaginative play.

This upgrade has been a long time in coming and is a well-deserved investment for the Mesa subdivision. Public Works crews will begin dismantling the existing playground equipment in the coming weeks, followed by ground preparation in anticipation of installation later this spring.

During construction, the playground area of Mesa Park will be closed to the public to ensure safety. While timelines are still being finalized, the Village anticipates the new playground will be open for use no later than end of June.

Looking ahead, tree replacement remains on the project list, but is expected to be addressed as part of a second phase of revitalizing Mesa Park, following completion of the playground upgrade.

Council looks forward to seeing Mesa Park refreshed and enjoyed by families for years to come — stay tuned for more updates as the project moves forward!

Below is an aerial image of the actual playground design

VILLAGE BUYS FIRST ELECTRIC FLEET VEHICLE!

Using remaining carbon neutral (LGCAP) funding from the province, the Village purchased its first electric vehicle. The KIA EV9 will be used by council and staff to attend meetings, training, conferences and other village business. We look forward to showcasing it to the community and reducing our carbon footprint!

WATER METER PROJECT UPDATE:

The Village has finalized the contract for the Water Meter Project and installation work will begin soon. Public Works crews are preparing by locating water shut-offs and updating infrastructure mapping. Council has also introduced updates to the Water Regulations Bylaw and related bylaws to support the project. More information will be shared as timelines are confirmed.

In preparation of scheduling water meter installations efficiently, the Village kindly asks residents to contact the Village Office and provide their preferred contact information (phone number or email). This will allow staff and the contactor to coordinate an installation time that works best for everyone.—THANK YOU!

JANUARY 2026

GRANT IN AID APPLICATION NOW OPEN—DEADLINE FEBRUARY 28th

The Village of Ashcroft invites local non-profit organizations and community groups to apply for **Grant in Aid (GIA) funding** to support one-time projects and events that benefit the community.

Council considers applications **twice per year** (March and September). For the **spring intake**, $2,500 is available, with grants of up to **$500 per applicant** (maximum 25% of project costs).

Key Dates

- **Spring Intake:** Apply by **February 28, 2026** | Council review **March 9, 2026**
- **Fall Intake:** Apply by **August 31, 2026** | Council review **September 8, 2026**

Note: Final reports from previous GIA recipients must be submitted to remain eligible.

Applications are available at the Village Office or online at **www.ashcroftbc.ca/forms**. Application support is available through the **Grant Writer at The HUB**.

Council looks forward to supporting initiatives that enhance community life in Ashcroft.

COUNCIL CORNER—Reflections on Leadership and Public Service

During my university days, as part of my Political Science Minor Degree studies, I wrote a paper on the President Jimmy Carter. He was perceived to have been largely ineffective in his role, much like Biden has been portrayed recently.

When I wrote that paper, I took a different approach. I looked at his achievements and his effective silent leadership, during his term. Among his accomplishments, were the Camp David Accord (Israel/Egypt peace); establishment of the Department of Education and the Department of Energy, in consultation with Canada and trading partners. He went on to hold famed and respected diplomatic status all over the world. As a teacher and mentor of humanity, in 2002 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for his human rights work.

Being in our local government, has given me time to reflect and look at my way forward, as a small town northwest Councillor. (Or has many have addressed me - Alderman). I believe that if I or anyone interested in becoming a representative of our community family of Ashcroft, is inclined to be a small time version of one of the most iconic politicians of our time - we welcome you.

Yes, the wheels turn slowly, but none of us gray quickly … and that is because the wisdom to get things done correctly, takes time.

Respectfully—Councillor Cam Tedford

2025 YEAR-END FINANCE REVIEW

CFO Bhalla advised Council at the January 26 Regular Meeting that the Village ended the year in a strong financial position, thanks to careful budgeting and steady long-term planning by Council and staff. Several important projects were completed during the year, including equipment and technology upgrades, while funds were also set aside for future needs such as roads, emergency operations, and fleet replacement. Tax increases remained modest, helping keep services affordable for residents while still covering the real cost of delivering those services. A year-end surplus and solid investment returns have strengthened the Village's financial position, providing flexibility and supporting long-term sustainability as Council plans for upcoming priorities in an uncertain economic climate.

SLIGHT UTILITY INCREASE IN 2026

Over the past year, Council has been open about the financial pressures facing essential municipal services. Utility rate adjustments were discussed at public meetings throughout 2025 and again during preliminary budget discussions in November and December. Council has now given first and second reading to the Fees and Charges Bylaw to implement a 5% increase to water, sewer, and solid waste (garbage) fees for 2026.

Water and solid waste (garbage) fees have remained unchanged since 2020, and sewer fees since 2021. After several years without adjustments, this increase helps cover the rising cost of providing these services, including increases in chemicals, hydro, natural gas, tipping fees, and other inflationary pressures. Council and staff continue to work to keep increases as low as possible while remaining fiscally responsible. For a typical single-family home, the combined increase is about $5 per month ($60.20 per year). Utility bills will be mailed toward the end of February, and the early payment discount deadline is March 31.

SPRING CLEAN UP

Mark your calendars for **April 20 – 23**! This year, **FireSmart** is partnering with the **Village** to bring a **chipper (Apr. 20-22)** to the community to help residents remove combustible materials and reduce wildfire risk.

The **Public Works Department** will also be on hand to collect any branches the chipper doesn't get, along with other items included on the approved pick-up list on **(Apr. 22-23).** More details—including preparation guidelines and the approved materials list—will be shared soon. **Stay tuned!**

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