Strategic Priorities 2023-2026



COURTENAY.CA

The City of Courtenay respectfully acknowledges that the lands to which these strategic priorities apply are on the Unceded territory of the K'ómoks First Nation, the traditional keepers of this land.



WHY WE MAKE LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Acknowledging human relationships to place is an ancient Indigenous practice that continues today. In the spirit of reconciliation, the City of Courtenay makes this land acknowledgment to raise awareness of ongoing Indigenous presence and land rights in the territory that includes and encompasses Courtenay. It invites us – a settler government – to reflect on how we might be perpetuating colonial processes that are ongoing and from which we have benefited, as well as the changes we will make to honour the Indigenous peoples and their lands that we inhabit.

2023-2026 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Message from Courtenay Council

Council is pleased to present the 2023-2026 Strategic Priorities for the City of Courtenay.

This plan was developed over several months following the fall 2022 municipal election by our new Council working closely with City of Courtenay staff.

The plan is purposefully aligned with the new City of Courtenay Official Community Plan and its four cardinal directions: climate action, reconciliation, equity, and community well-being.

The Strategic Priorities are structured around the OCP cardinal directions and eight themes to ensure the priorities Council sets are aligned with the community's vision and aspirations for the City.

This plan is Council's commitment to implementing the OCP. It's also the City's road map to ensure we are delivering the services and programs our residents want and expect.

Council looks forward to working on behalf of Courtenay residents over the next four years to deliver services and shape the future of this amazing city.

City of Courtenay Council



Mayor Bob Wells (Center Front)

Councilors (Left to Right, Back to Front) Wendy Morin, Will Cole-Hamilton, Doug Hillian, Melanie McCollum, David Frisch, Evan Jolicoeur



Role of the Strategic Priorities



Shaped by extensive public input, the City of Courtenay has developed numerous guiding documents that, together, provide the foundation for the delivery of all City services and programs and set the long-term path for the community, including the recently completed Official Community Plan (OCP).

The plan translates the vision of the OCP into a clear framework of projects and initiatives for City staff.

From the numerous policies and actions contained within, Council sets strategic priorities for their term contained within the guiding documents, Council sets direct department work plans, the five-year financial plan, and annual budgets. Outcomes are reported annually in the City of Courtenay's annual report, which offers an opportunity for evaluation and further work plan refinement each year.

The diagram shows the connections between the OCP, Council's Strategic Priorities, department work plans, five-year financial plan, and the annual report.

Working together, the work of Council and staff will be coordinated and focused on the community's vision for the City of Courtenay.



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Courtenay is responsible for the future, supporting high quality of life, with a low-carbon footprint for all.

The following vision describes what we want Courtenay to be in the future. It embodies the values, priorities, and aspirations of the community. It charts the course for development of policies, guidelines, and actions, and is strengthened by the "cardinal directions" and goals described elsewhere in Part A of this plan.



WE ARE A CITY FOR ALL PEOPLE, created for and by residents with diverse identities, experiences, and aspirations. We are a city for being together in community.

WE ARE ALSO A CITY OF CHOICE, in which residents have options across the city for homes, amenities, destinations, jobs and business, transportation, and spaces for gathering with friends, families, neighbours, and people not yet known to us.

WE WILL REACH NET-ZERO EMISSIONS BY 2050, doing our part to address the climate crisis head-on, while also preparing for its impacts. Our commitment to a safe climate is not just an environmental one; by taking action on and preparing for climate change we achieve many co-benefits that make Courtenay all great community to call home.

COURTENAY WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FUTURE by being more thoughtful, strategic, and efficient in all resources that we use whether it be land, energy, or public infrastructure, to ensure that actions deliver on multiple goals of fiscal responsibility, economic resilience, social equity, and ecological health.



Land Is Valued as a Precious Resource Housing Choices for All Strong Neighbourhoods **Functional Transportation Choices** More Space For and Time in Nature Love for Local Culture and Places A City for Everyone **Economic Success Emerges from Community Values and Place** Investing in Relationships



Council Initiatives

Council priorities sorted along OCP Themes with additional categories for: Good Governance, Organizational Well-being and Sustainability, Public Safety, and Financial Sustainability

Streets and Transportation

Prioritizing walking, wheeling, cycling, and transit modes of transportation – and integrating them with land use and urban form – are the greatest steps Courtenay can take to supporting mobility in the community and reducing the amount of energy used in the transportation system, the greatest source of Courtenay's GHG emissions.



Traffic calming plans

i ramic calming plans				
 Develop traffic calming plans, related policies, and specific implementation when and where, speed limits, school zones, cycling education/awareness. 	2023			
 Implementation of traffic calming plans. 		2024	2025	2026 & beyond
Update cycling network plan and implementation strategy	2023			
Advocate for work with Ministry of Transport Infrastructure on bypass and 17th intersection congestion & improvements.	2023			
 Review City's approach to parking standards downtown Parking restrictions and ticketing Bylaw Enforcement Policy review and update 	2023			
Dingwall stairs construction: pedestrian and cycling network improvement	2023			

Streets and Transportation Con't



6th Street Bridge • Design and funding	2023		
Construction		2024	
Implement new bylaw adjudication program		2024	2025
Improve Cliffe Avenue and 5th Street intersection pedestrian facilities		2024	2025
Plan and implement bike parking and secure storage		2024	2025



Buildings and Landscape

As existing buildings are renovated or redeveloped, and new buildings meet efficiency and performance standards, Courtenay's buildings will become increasingly accessible, electric, healthy, and affordable to operate, while reflecting Courtenay's character, identity, and sense of place.



Update Subdivision Bylaw, including offsite frontage improvements	2023	2024		
Update Development Cost Charges (DCC) Bylaw	2023	2024		
Develop a short-term rental policy	2023	2024		
Update Zoning Bylaw - review maximum building heights	2023	2024	2025	
Support investment and redevelopment in downtown core: Review and evaluate Downtown development incentives e.g. fast tracking/density bonuses/DCC		2024	2025	
Develop a local area plan for Harmston Avenue Civic Precinct		2024	2025	
Implement Duncan Commons/Downtown Courtenay Playbook, 5th Street staging/phasing			2025	2026 & beyond
Review and update land use regulations and bylaws for consistency with OCP	ONGOING			



2023-2026 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Affordable Housing

More than a roof over one's head, adequate housing is a fundamental human right in Canada, and an important social determinant of health. It impacts the community's ability to attract and retain employees and sustain a vibrant economy. Explore approaches to develop affordable housing

- Clarify municipal role in housing affordability
- Develop strategy for housing amenity fund
- Review potential of city property for housing partnerships with BC Housing

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Explore creation of a housing authority (non-market housing & Co-op housing)

2023	2024	2025	
2023	2024	2025	
2023	2024	2025	
2023	2024	2025	
	2024	2025	





Natural Environment

Nature-based solutions in the form of protecting, restoring, and managing natural and semi-natural ecosystems to slow and adapt to climate change is at the heart of Courtenay's approach to the caring for the natural environment.

Develop and implement a strategy for parkland acquisition	2023	2024		
Promote and communicate the Urban Forest Strategy & Tree Protection Bylaw and review Bylaw		2024	2025	
Integrate climate change commitment into our governance work	2023	2024	2025	
 Include climate change lens in staff reports Update Corporate Climate Action Plan 	2023			
 Include carbon budget in municipal operations and purchasing 		2024	2025	



Parks and Recreation

The parks, trails and recreational system of programs and indoor and outdoor facilities is at its heart an opportunity for connectivity, whether that be to each other, the natural world, K'ómoks First Nation history and practices, in how we get around, or through the ecosystems across the city and region.



Provision of public amenities through development (requirements for parks, trees, accessible benches, and public art)	2023			
Advocate to the Province for new DCC eligibility for recreation and emergency services	2023			
Optimize active public spaces to respond to density increases and increased park use		2024	2025	
Evaluate impact of Leisure for Everyone Accessibility Program (LEAP)		2024	2025	
Complete recreation facilities need assessments and capital improvements		ONG	OING	
 Florence Filberg Centre Courtenay & District Memorial Outdoor Pool 		2024	2025	
• Lewis Centre				2026 & BEYOND
Review recreation programs and engage with community on current and future needs, changing demographics		ONG	OING	



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Municipal Infrastructure

While traditional municipal infrastructure – such as underground pipes and treatment facilities – is often hidden from public view, it's a complex system that forms a vital part of Courtenay's urban system contributing to health, sustainability, and fiscal success of Courtenay.

Continued regional collaboration:

- Regional Growth Strategy
- Liquid Waste Management Plan
- South Sewer Conveyance
- Organics/solid waste
- Air quality
 - Regional parks

ONGOING

2025

2025

Complete accessibility audit of public facilities and develop implementation policy for capital improvements. 2024 2023 Continue implementing water conservation measures; Review and update Watersmart Action Plan. 2024





Social Infrastructure

Social infrastructure is made up of foundational services and networks that support local quality of life. They are provided in response to the basic needs of communities and to provide more equity, stability, and social well-being.



• Implementation plan for delivery of social infrastructure



Arts, Culture, and Heritage

Culture is the representation of who we are. It speaks to our values from the past and present, our traditions, and our expressions. Arts, culture, and heritage help re-frame and engage on important social topics such as climate change, reconciliation and equity, and provide for creative and safe opportunities to explore our complex and changing world. Strategic Cultural Plan

- Complete Strategic Cultural Plan
- Implement Strategic Cultural Plan.





2023-2026 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Food Systems

A food secure community is one in which everyone has access to food that is affordable, culturally preferable, nutritious, and safe.

Engage with Agricultural Community and Food Policy Council to identify needs and support relevant OCP policies.	2023			
Identify roles for the City in the delivery of food security as outlined in the OCP.		2024	2025	
Develop a policy for community gardens and other small scale food production spaces, identify community partners to support community garden projects.		2024	2025	



2023-2026 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Local Economy

The City of Courtenay is committed to creating the physical conditions for high quality of life and economic success. Attractive communities attract businesses. The most attractive places for the next generation of workers must have a thriving downtown core, inclusive neighbourhoods with a strong sense of place, a wide range of housing and recreational options, a vibrant arts and culture scene, and an openness and celebration of cultural and population diversity.

Explore a business attraction and retention service.	2023				
Identify appropriate roles and responsibilities for the City in the delivery of economic development services in the region.	2023	2024			
Review City processes that may be barriers to economic development.	2023	2024			
Identify actions Courtenay is taking to attract new industries into the community.		2024	2025		
Complete a Community Economic Development Analysis, including community engagement and review of land availability.		2024	2025	2026 & BEYOND	





Good Governance

Good governance is at the very heart of the work of the City of Courtenay ensuring public engagement, transparency, equity and inclusion, effectiveness and efficiency and accountability.



Develop an assignment and tracking system for public enquiries	2023			
Establish an OCP Implementation Townhall Forum	2023			
Explore procurement practices to include a social equity lens, reconciliation for contracted services, and climate change factors.	2023			
Hold Council open houses in community locations.	2023			
Increase community engagement for all segments of the community: complete communication strategy, community survey, and community engagement strategy.	2023	2024		
Review operations and terms of reference for City committees	2023	2024		
Develop a land strategy for acquisition, devolution, and disposal of property, including inventory of all City folios over 400 m2	2023	2024		



Good Governance *Con't*





Review and streamline development process and set targets for application processing times	2023	2024		
Develop a Reconciliation Framework.		ONG	OING	
Continue building partnerships with key agencies		ONG	OING	
 Strengthen relationship with the RCMP and enhance police and crime data reporting 	2023			
 Establish regular meetings for Council with the development community 	2023			
 Explore and establish a partnership approach with School District No. 71 on topics of mutual interest such as active school travel planning, traffic planning, community use of schools, shared facilities, climate action, reconciliation, child 	2023	2024	2025	2026 & beyond
 care and youth engagement. Hold regular City and School District trustee meeting(s) for partnerships and shared interests/goals 		ONG	OING	
 Include School District No. 71, 19 Wing Comox, and other significant Comox Valley employers in housing discussions 		ONG	OING	



2023-2026 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Public Safety

Public safety allows citizens and businesses to perceive the city as a safe place to work, live and play. It also means the City and citizens are prepared for emergencies and resilient in the face of them.

East Side Fire Hall • Update design and consider potential partnerships	2023			
Construction			2025	
Long term staffing plan for Fire Services	2023	2024	2025	
Hold a conversation about developing a broad view of community safety to include protective services, RCMP, fire services, bylaw enforcement, pedestrian safety, traffic planning.		2024		
Build Capacity for Emergency Planning and local response.		2024	2025	



2023-2026 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Organizational Well-Being and Sustainability

The City of Courtenay organization must be strong and sustainable to deliver the services and programs Courtenay citizens and businesses expect. It must be an employer of choice attracting top talent in the sector.

Ensure capacity to accommodate big change resulting from direct and indirect impacts to our community.	2023	
Research and consult on Speculation Tax.	2023	





Financial Sustainability

The long-term financial health of the City is central to ensuring services, facilities and infrastructure will be secure for current and future generations. Long term asset management and financial planning are essential to the financial sustainability of the City.

Ensure capacity to accommodate big change.	ONGOING			
Advocate for review of small business taxes and differentiated tax rate.	2023			
Review City Financial processes Review the Terms of Reference for the Finance Select Committee 		2024	2025	
 Review Fees, Charges and Fines Develop and implement a budget engagement plan 				