

**TOWN OF HARDISTY**

**2014 – 2017**

**STRATEGIC PLAN**

**January 13, 2014**

# **Town of Hardisty 2014 – 2017 Strategic Plan**

## **Introduction**

The following Strategic Plan was developed by the Hardisty Town Council as well as the Chief Administrative Officer and the Finance Manager on January 10 & 11, 2014. HR Group Management Consultants facilitated the two-day planning session. The prime objective of the session was to determine the major priorities for the Town's Council and administration so as to provide guidance and direction for their work over the next four years of Council's mandate.

## **Methodology**

All participants were asked, prior to the session, to initially submit their own ideas as to what they perceived to be the Town's and region's issues that required attention. At the start of the session, they were asked to identify the Town's and region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats – a SWOT analysis. Using this analysis as a background, the participants discussed the issues that they had initially submitted to determine their relevance and importance and to identify any new issues. Once all issues were identified, the objectives from the previous 2012 Strategic Plan were reviewed to ensure that all of them had also been covered. Lastly the participants determined what the priorities were and the required Action Plan.

## **SWOT Analysis**

N.B. The following items are not in any order of importance and were not ranked by the participants. They are also interrelated in many cases.

### **Strengths**

- Community spirit
- Location with booming industry
- Recreational amenities with lake, golf course, ski hill, rodeo, arena
- Economic opportunities
- Affordable living
- Hospital and school
- Beautiful landscape

## Weaknesses

- Location at edge of county and geographic containment
- Lack of required resources, i.e. financing, size of population, housing, water, rental accommodation, seniors housing, health care providers, child care providers
- Lack of businesses
- Many new staff
- Lack of staff on the part of churches to keep them open
- Inability to compete with salaries in oil and gas sector
- Too many run down properties and absentee landlords
- Lack of high speed internet
- Resistance to change

## Opportunities

- Knowledgeable and dedicated staff
- Continued regional collaboration and partnership and sharing
- Industrial expertise and possible partnerships
- Open for business and growth
- Critical infrastructure in place
- Marketing opportunities
- Aerodrome

## Threats

- Possible decline in funding from federal and provincial governments and local tax base
- Costs of increased government regulations such as environmental restrictions
- Costs of requirements for increased staff qualifications such as water and waste water treatment levels of staff certification
- Increase in interest rates
- Downloading of services from provincial government to municipalities
- Price of oil and political and economic changes
- Uncontrolled growth
- Community attitude and lack of initiative and participation and political interest on the part of many
- Potential loss of hospital or school
- Aging infrastructure and the required funds for repairs and replacement
- Lack of a vision and an action plan to achieve it
- Under utilization of existing facilities
- Transport of oil and gas and possible safety issues

## Initiatives identified

The participants identified the following initiatives requiring attention and in response to the SWOT analysis above.

- Town must “be louder” and market the strategic plan and vision of the town to all taxpayers and seek better community knowledge and engagement
- Look for partnerships with all neighboring municipalities and industry
- Increase communication between Town council and County council
- Establish greater Town council involvement with Hospital and School
- Marketing of community is required at a professional level
- Review and update of Land Use Bylaw and Municipal Development Plan
- Finish update of all bylaws and policies and establish online
- Examine potential to offer specialized health care such as dialysis and MRI
- Create a better housing mix
- Deal with run down properties through taxes, penalties, bylaw enforcement, other disincentives and possible demolition
- Talk with Telus regarding high speed internet
- Explore availability of daycare with Flagstaff Satellite Family Day Home Society
- Marketing to attract new businesses that are needed
- Explore options for seniors housing including upgrading of existing facilities and providing services to seniors in their own homes
- Establish better marketing of Town facilities to increase awareness and usage with better use of websites and technology
- Explore possible second review by consultant regarding use of aerodrome with potential stakeholders
- Establish Town beautification program with community involvement, use of volunteers and various incentives
- Prepare a cost benefit analysis of contracting out public works services and determine whether or not to build a new shop
- Decision to be made regarding renewal of contract with Loughheed / determine what is benefit to Hardisty / discuss possible merger of all services as a more efficient and cost effective alternative
- 48 street renewal is due as part of the approved multi-year capital plan and needs a complete review of the timing and financing options and the overall work to be done
- Administration to prepare a complete staffing plan that outlines the Town’s staffing requirements including appropriate succession planning
- The upcoming budget should include discussion of the need for an emergency generator and an electric pump for obtaining lake water when required

## Action Plan

The following action plan outlines the priorities of council and consolidates many of the issues described above. The initiatives are not in any order of priority as many are highly interrelated.

### **Regional collaboration**

All smaller municipalities throughout the province, such as the Town, are faced with a difficult dilemma. They require the same services and expertise as larger municipalities, although on a smaller scale, but they lack the financial and staff resources to provide these services. Many of the desired initiatives identified above, such as the need for extensive marketing and economic/community development, requires expertise and knowledge that the Town on its own cannot really afford and it cannot be done in isolation, as it is a regional concern. The development and marketing of facilities in the Town, such as senior's housing and recreational facilities, is of as much concern to the regional taxpayers as it is to the Town's taxpayers.

Ongoing and increased regional collaboration is vital to the economic well being of the Town and the region as a whole.

- Look for partnerships with all neighboring municipalities and industry – Ongoing initiative by Council.
- Increase communication between Town council and County council – Meeting of February 20, 2014 and ongoing by Council.
- Establish greater Town council involvement with Hospital and School – Council to establish contact and follow up in 2014.
- Decision to be made regarding renewal of contract with Lougheed / determine what is benefit to Hardisty / discuss possible merger of all services as a more efficient and cost effective alternative – Council to meet with Lougheed Council and decision is due October 2014.

### **Marketing and Economic/Community Development**

The Town requires qualified marketing and economic/community development services to coordinate the following issues and to provide a holistic approach.

- Town must “be louder” and market the strategic plan and vision of the town to all taxpayers and seek better community knowledge and engagement – Presentation by Council and Administration of Strategic Plan at Town Hall Meeting as soon as possible.
- Establish Town beautification program with community involvement, use of volunteers and various incentives – Council to lead this initiative with community representatives in the spring of 2014.

The following initiatives require contract services. Council to decide in upcoming budget discussions whether or not funds can be made available and whether or not assistance is available regionally. This will also form part of the discussion regarding the overall staffing plan to be submitted by administration.

- Explore options for seniors housing, including upgrading of existing facilities and providing services to seniors in their own homes
- Marketing of community is required at a professional level to include website and social media usage
- Examine potential to offer specialized health care such as dialysis and MRI
- Create a better housing mix
- Marketing to attract new businesses that are needed
- Establish better marketing of Town facilities to increase awareness and usage with better use of websites and technology

### **Administration**

- Administration to prepare a complete staffing plan that outlines the Town's staffing requirements including appropriate succession planning – CAO and Finance Manager to prepare in time for upcoming budget discussions.
- Talk with Telus regarding high speed internet – CAO to discuss alternatives with Telus as soon as possible.

### **Governance**

- Review and update of Land Use Bylaw and Municipal Development Plan – Administration to complete in 2014, dependent on staffing plan and budget.
- Finish update of all bylaws and policies and establish online – Administration to start as soon as possible dependent on staffing plan and budget.
- Deal with run down properties through taxes, penalties, bylaw enforcement, other disincentives and possible demolition – CAO to see how other municipalities deal with these issues and prepare report for Council by end of 2014.

### **Infrastructure**

- 48 street renewal is due as part of the approved multi-year capital plan and needs a complete review of the timing and financing options and the overall work to be done – review by Administration prior to spring of 2014
- Explore possible second review by consultant regarding use of aerodrome with potential stakeholders – Discussion by Council and Administration with County and potential industrial stakeholders in 2014.
- Prepare a cost benefit analysis of contracting out public works services and determine whether or not to build a new shop – CAO to prepare with Public Works as soon as possible.
- The upcoming budget should include discussion of the need for an emergency generator and an electric pump for obtaining lake water when required – item for 2014 budget.

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