

“Incredible Community – Boundless Opportunity”



Town of Fort Frances
Strategic Plan – June 2015





Table of Contents

Fort Frances Town Council	3
Message from the Mayor	4
Message from the CAO	5
Mission, Vision & Values	6
Methodology	7
Challenges & Opportunities	8 – 9
Listings of Activities & Services	10 – 13
Economic & Community Development	14 – 16
Essential Services	17
Quality of Life Services	18 – 19
Governance & Corporate Initiatives	20 – 23
Timelines	24 – 26
Community Profile	27
Boundless Glory	28



Fort Frances Town Council 2014 – 2018



Mayor Roy Avis

Councillor Paul Ryan

Councillor Doug Kitowski

Councillor June Caul

Councillor Wendy Brunetta

Councillor John Albanese

Councillor Ken Perry

Message from Mayor Roy Avis

In my message that prefaced the last strategic plan, I noted that as a community we were “facing an era of change that will undoubtedly prove to be a significant milestone in the long and rich history of Fort Frances.” At this time, we are deep in the throes of that change with a path ahead of us that is lined with opportunities that we must be prepared to seize.

Over the last few years, the Town and its stakeholders undertook an important branding exercise whereby we defined our community as ‘Boundless’. The adoption of this new brand is a powerful means for pursuing a strategic direction for the community. In light of the downturn in the forestry sector over the past number of years, it was important that we looked beyond our traditional definition of a “mill town”.

We are looking forward to the road ahead. Mining activity in the western end of the district is beginning to have a marked impact on our local economy. We will continue to support any potential restart of the local papermill and work together with area First Nations and municipalities for an equitable and effective management of the Cross-route Forest.

We present to you ‘Incredible Community – Boundless Opportunity’. Mayor, Council and Administration cannot do this alone. We have utilized the resources of all our committees and solicited public input. We plan on utilizing all our stakeholders in the consideration and implementation of many of the strategic initiatives within this plan. I encourage everyone in our community to participate in your local government by exercising your right to provide feedback to Mayor, Council and Administration.

I want to acknowledge the efforts and passion of all citizens, politicians and staff who worked on this important project. Lets make this a successful initiative. Remember, we are ‘Boundless’ and our potential has no limits!

Sincerely,



Roy Avis
Mayor



Message from Chief Administrative Officer Mark McCaig

I believe strategic planning is one of the more important initiatives a municipality undertakes. Without a plan, a community is essentially in a reactive posture, and quite often, ill-prepared to seize on opportunities. During this process we have been very deliberate in identifying where our community and organization is at in this moment in time.

Challenges, opportunities, weaknesses and threats were all important considerations in the development of this plan.

During the term of the current council, there will be unforeseen circumstances and new opportunities that will arise. As a community and organization, we must be able to quickly respond to whatever comes our way. I am confident that as an organization we have the resiliency to face challenges and the flexibility to seize opportunity, all while following the blueprint that 'Incredible Community – Boundless Opportunity' provides.

I am excited by this new plan and fully commit all administrative resources necessary to facilitate its undertaking. As staff, we promise to work in a diligent and engaged manner with Mayor, Council and the entire community on all aspects of the plan.

We always ask our citizens to participate in their local government and we thank them for their input to this plan. Without the meaningful participation of volunteers on Town committees, the business of the corporation cannot be completed in the most effective fashion. We are grateful for all people and groups that care enough to provide feedback and participate in our initiatives. I also would like to thank Mayor, Council and staff for making the Town an enjoyable and enriching career experience.

Regards,



Mark McCaig
Chief Administrative Officer





Mission, Vision & Values

Vision

"A community with boundless opportunities"

Mission Statement

"Together we will create a safe, sustainable and attractive community that improves our quality of life and promotes economic growth and prosperity"

Values

Vision & Innovation

Integrity

Fiscal Responsibility

Sustainability & Stewardship

Quality of Life

Transparency

Community Engagement

Responsible Leadership

Partnerships

Inclusivity



Methodology

Strategic planning is an iterative process which unites public opinion with managerial expertise and executive oversight. It examines our strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the context of our changing social, technological, economic, political, and demographic environment.

Since the Town's first strategic plan in 2008, each adopted plan has built upon the previous goals of Council.

In preparation for this process, Council had the opportunity to review the strategic goals selected by previous terms of Council. The Executive Committees of Council were tasked with identifying relevant issues of strategic importance to the Town of Fort Frances. The Town reached out to stakeholder groups and corporate committees to better understand these issues, encouraged public input from our citizens, and provided an opportunity to submit written recommendations. Each initiative was thoroughly examined during a full-day planning session with Council and Administration.

The results of the strategic planning session were reviewed by management. Responsibilities and timelines were then brought forward for further Council input and approval. This document is the culmination of this exercise.

Strategic planning is of great importance to local government. The transparency of our process speaks to inclusiveness, a value we have strived for in the development of our updated strategic plan for this term of Council. These goals serve as important performance indicators for our organization.

Challenges & Opportunities

1. Economic Development

- Mill closure
- Mine start-up
- Property tax shift
- Industrial park sales
- Increased rail traffic
- International exchange rate
- Private sector impact on costs
- Slow growth in residential starts
- Supporting local skilled trades community
- Quality of life to attract and retain professionals
- Broadband initiatives and emerging technologies

2. Cross-route Forest

- Future management of Cross-route forest

3. Demographic Changes

- Aging population
- Workforce retention
- Population homogeneity
- Diminishment of skilled workforce
- Shortage of skilled trades professionals

4. Environmental

- Green initiatives
- Impact of climate change on infrastructure

5. Health Care Delivery

- Physician shortages

6. Infrastructure

- Widening funding gap
- Supporting local trades community
- Broadband initiatives and emerging technologies

Challenges & Opportunities

7. Partnerships

- First Nations partnerships
- Upcoming labour negotiations
- Service provision within the district
- Encouraging public-private partnerships

8. Political Landscape

- Provincial downloading
- Upcoming federal election
- Self-sufficiency of local government
- Protection of 1905 power agreement
- Trust issues with other orders of government





Economic & Community Development

Listing of Activities & Services

- Tourism
- Construction
- Sponsorships
- Health Services
- Land Use Planning
- Business Licensing
- Business Retention
- Land Management
- Community Services
- Economic Incentive Plan
- Subdivision Development
- Condominium Development
- Fort Frances Power Corporation
- Industrial & Commercial Development
- Economic Development Advisory Committee
- Rainy River Future Development Corporation

Quality of Life Services

Listing of Activities & Services

- Health Care
- Senior Services
- Marriage Services
- Recreational Trails
- Sorting Gap Marina
- Parks & Cemeteries
- Sports & Recreation
- Townshend Theatre
- By-law Enforcement
- Fort Frances Museum
- Active Transportation
- La Verendrye Parkway
- Physician Recruitment
- Accessible Transportation
- Planning and Development
- Daycare & Resource Centre
- Public Library & Technology Centre

Essential Services

Listing of Activities & Services

- Airport
- Utilities
 - Municipal Sewer & Water
 - Fort Frances Power Corporation
- Infrastructure
 - Roads
 - Landfill
 - Recycling
 - Public Works
 - Water Treatment
 - Waste Management
- Protective Services
 - Emergency 911
 - Fire & Rescue Service
 - Ontario Provincial Police
 - Emergency Medical Services
- By-law Enforcement

Governance & Corporate Initiatives

Listing of Activities & Services

- Budgeting
- Partnerships
- Legal Services
- Mayor & Council
- Community Clinic
- Financial Planning
- Human Resources
- Land Use Planning
- Regional Initiatives
- Service Agreements
- Succession Planning
- By-law Enforcement
- Lobbying & Advocacy
- Executive Committees
- First Nations Relations
- Information Technology
- Administration & Finance
- District Social Services Administration Board

Economic & Community Development

1. Explore First Nations business partnership opportunities

✓ Ongoing Initiative

The Town will actively engage and support all area First Nation communities regarding all potential business partnership opportunities.

2. Forest management structure

✓ Ongoing Initiative

The Town will continue its advocacy efforts to ensure an effective management of the Cross-route forest to ensure that access to affordable fibre is available for all existing and future forestry enterprises in the district.

3. Potential acquisition and utilization of vacated mill properties

✓ Ongoing Initiative

The Town will conduct an examination of any properties that the current or future mill owners may want to divest themselves of for potential use by the Town.

4. Industrial park strategy

✓ October 2015

The Town will examine the current policies regarding the marketing of the industrial park lots and make possible amendments.

5. Working with the private sector to repurpose the mill

✓ October 2015

The Town will continue its ongoing efforts, working with Resolute Forest Products and the private sector, to identify possible purchasers of the existing mill facility.

Economic & Community Development

6. Revitalization and beautification of the Town of Fort Frances

✓ November 2015

The town will examine the recommendations put forth from the Fort Frances Chamber of Commerce regarding the beautification and revitalization of the Town of Fort Frances.

7. Directional signage

✓ May 2016

The Town will implement new directional signage that incorporates the Town's branding within the community.

8. Condo initiative review

✓ June 2016

The Town will re-examine the progress made to date with the condo initiative, make alterations to the project where required, and seek out a potential developer.

9. Parking in the downtown core

✓ June 2016

The Town will examine matters of parking within the downtown core and consult with all relevant stakeholders to ensure the most efficient and effective utilization of public parking spaces in conjunction with the creation of a Market Square.

10. Rainy Lake Market Square

✓ September 2016

The Town will undertake a demolition of the former Rainy Lake Hotel and rehabilitate the site into a Market Square concept development.

Economic & Community Development

11. Sports tourism initiative

✓ September 2016

The Town will examine all aspects and potential opportunities related to sports tourism within the community, including the potential for expansion of existing services and event offerings.

12. Investigate the expansion of free Wi-Fi offerings

✓ March 2017

The Town will investigate the viability of expanding free Wi-Fi offerings in the community.

13. Review of residential development

✓ May 2017

The Town will conduct an examination of potential subdivision development of town owned properties.

14. Casino development

✓ September 2017

The Town will explore opportunities related to a casino development within the area.

15. Investigation of enhancements of information infrastructure

✓ February 2018

The Town will investigate the potential enhancement of broadband infrastructure, potentially considering the installation of an enhanced fibre optic network within the community.

Essential Services

16. Investigation of accelerating infrastructure renewal program

✓ September 2016

The degradation of the Town's infrastructure necessitates an investigation into its asset renewal program.

17. Future of health care services

✓ October 2016

The Town will work towards forming a committee with Riverside Health Care, the Fort Frances Community Clinic and the Physician Recruitment Committee to examine the challenges and opportunities regarding the delivery of health care in Fort Frances.

18. Expansion of existing landfill site

✓ March 2017

The Town will develop a *Request for Proposal* package for a consulting service to expand upon the existing landfill site.



Quality of Life Services

19. Support assisted living initiative

- ✓ Ongoing Initiative

Council will support the initiative undertaken by the *Assisted Living Action Group*,—through consultation and the provision of assistance that is within the Town’s capabilities and in conjunction with other local authorities, such as Riverside Health Care and the Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board.

20. Sister Kennedy Centre operational review

- ✓ October 2015

The Town will conduct an operational review of activities and management of the Sister Kennedy Centre facility, in conjunction with its volunteer workforce.

21. Review of daycare services

- ✓ May 2016

The Town will review expansion opportunities into infant and toddler programs to address the growing waiting list for licensed child care services in the community.

22. Tennis court development

- ✓ May 2016

The Town will examine its role in supporting the construction, design, and ongoing maintenance of the future tennis court development.

23. Investigate public-private partnership options for transportation

- ✓ October 2017

The Town will investigate public-private partnership options for transportation to enhance the dial-a-ride service and transportation services for individuals in the community whose mobility may be limited by functional disabilities.

Quality of Life Services

24. Support endorsement of an Age Friendly community designation

✓ November 2016

The Town will strive toward attaining the *Age Friendly Community* designation, to realize funding opportunities which support the health and wellness of older adults in our community.

25. Kiwanis Sunny Cove Camp

✓ November 2016

The Town will investigate the long-term use and potential of the camp for youth programming and economic development opportunities.

26. Active Transportation Plan

✓ November 2017

The Town will present the recommendations of Phase II of the Active Transportation Plan to Council and implement any direction received in this regard.



Governance & Corporate Initiatives

27. Accessibility Act compliance

✓ Ongoing Initiative

The Town will ensure full compliance with all aspects of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* by meeting its legislated requirements during the implementation process and contributing toward a fully Accessible Ontario by the year 2025.

28. Examine current marketing of Huffman Court subdivision

✓ September 2015

The Town will re-examine the marketing of the vacant lots within Huffman subdivision and will also reconsider the current development conditions pertaining to the purchase of vacant lots.

29. Website re-design and maintenance

✓ September 2015

The Town is currently undergoing a total redesign of the website and will complete a report for the protocol regarding ongoing maintenance and updates.

30. Finalization of signed sewer and water agreement with Couchiching First Nation

✓ December 2015

The Town will work towards completing a formalized agreement with Couchiching First Nation for the provision of sewer and water services.

31. Organizational succession planning and training

✓ December 2015

The Town will examine the composition of its current workforce to anticipate future recruiting needs and developmental opportunities for the purpose of succession planning.

Governance & Corporate Initiatives

32. Investigation of long-term corporate financial software needs

✓ December 2015

The Town will investigate software options which may offer electronic billing and related services to our customers.

The Town will investigate innovative, integrated municipal financial, asset and utility management software to enhance customer service and administrative efficiencies.

33. Review of museum services

✓ January 2016

The Town will examine its museum operations and the current levels of service.

34. Updated inventory of municipal land

✓ February 2016

The Town will update its existing inventory of all classes of municipally-owned land (industrial, residential, commercial) and provide a detailed listing thereof.

35. Update of Establishing and Regulating Bylaw for Fire Services

✓ February 2016

The Town will complete an update of its establishing and regulating bylaw, taking into account the changing face of the community and its needs and services.

36. Development of complete terms of reference for Boards and Committees

✓ April 2016

The Town will undertake a review and develop an updated terms of reference and modernize the application process for Boards and Committees.



Governance & Corporate Initiatives

37. Negotiations with CUPE and its Local 65

✓ June 2016

To complete contract negotiations between the Town and CUPE and its Local 65 taking into account the expiration of the current collective agreement on December 31, 2015.

38. Negotiations with the Fort Frances Professional Fire Fighters Association

✓ June 2016

To complete contract negotiations between the Town and the Fort Frances Professional Fire Fighters Association, taking into account the expiration of the current collective agreement on December 31, 2015; and considering the need for responsiveness to the criteria identified in the establishing and regulating bylaw, as well as the economic circumstances of the community.

39. Full community-wide implementation of Town's 'Boundless' brand

✓ October 2016

The Town will ensure that a complete and effective implementation of the Town's recent branding initiative is implemented throughout the Community and its operations.

40. Feasibility of a Fire/Medic model for the Town of Fort Frances and the district (partnership)

✓ February 2017

The Town will complete a feasibility study of a fire/medic model for the community and surrounding Rainy River district, taking into account efficiency gains, cost center considerations, and the ability to operate effectively across multiple jurisdictions.

41. Examination of alternative voting for the 2018 municipal election

✓ March 2017

The Town will perform a thorough examination of alternative voting opportunities for the 2018 municipal election – in the interest of cost savings, and ease of use for voters.

Governance & Corporate Initiatives

42. Investigation of Green Space Plan

✓ March 2018

The Town will explore the use of existing green space and examine its impact on operational resources.

43. Sustainable Community Plan

✓ March 2018

The Town will engage the services of a consultant to complete a community plan for the Town of Fort Frances that addresses environmental, social and economic sustainability strategies to ensure long-term community sustainability.



Description	Lead Responsibility	Target Date	Item Number
First Nations Partnerships	First Nations Relations Advisory Committee, RRFDC	Ongoing	1
Forest Management Structure	Council, CAO, RRFDC	Ongoing	2
Vacant Mill Properties	Mayor, Council, CAO	Ongoing	3
Assisted Living Initiative	Council, CAO	Ongoing	19
Accessibility Act	Human Resources	Ongoing	27
Huffman Court Subdivision	Planning & Development	September 2015	28
Website Redesign	IT Manager, Community Services Manager	September 2015	29
Industrial Park Strategy	Municipal Planner, RRFDC, EDAC	October 2015	4
Repurposing of Mill	Mayor, CAO, RRFDC	October 2015	5
Sister Kennedy Centre Operational Review	Community Services, Sister Kennedy Centre Board	October 2015	20
Town Revitalization	EDAC	November 2015	6
Couchiching Sewer & Water Agreement	CAO, First Nations Relations Advisory Committee	December 2015	30
Succession Planning	Human Resources, Administration & Finance	December 2015	31
Corporate Financial Software	Treasurer, Administration & Finance	December 2015	32
Review of Museum Services	Community Services	January 2016	33
Inventory of Municipal Land	Municipal Planner, Planning & Development	February 2016	34
Updated Fire Services Bylaw	Fire Chief	February 2016	35

Description	Lead Responsibility	Target Date	Item Number
Terms of Reference for Boards and Committees	Municipal Clerk	April 2016	36
Directional Signage	RRFDC	May 2016	7
Daycare Expansion	Community Services	May 2016	21
Tennis Court Development	Operations & Facilities, Community Services	May 2016	22
Condo Initiative Review	CAO, RRFDC	June 2016	8
Downtown Parking	Planning & Development, FFCC, BIA	June 2016	9
Collective Agreement with CUPE and its Local 65	Human Resources, Senior Management	June 2016	37
Collective Agreement with Fort Frances Professional Fire Fighters Association	Human Resources, CAO, Fire Chief	June 2016	38
Rainy Lake Market Square	CAO, RRFDC, Chief Building Official	September 2016	10
Sports Tourism	Community Services, EDAC, FFCC	September 2016	11
Infrastructure Renewal	Operations & Facilities	September 2016	16
Health Care Services	Council, CAO, Stakeholder Groups	October 2016	17
'Boundless' Branding	All Divisions, EDAC, RRFDC	October 2016	39
Age Friendly Community	Community Services, Sister Kennedy Centre Board	November 2016	24
Kiwanis Sunny Cove Camp	Community Services, EDAC, SCAC	November 2016	25
Fire/Medic Model Partnerships	Fire Chief	February 2017	40

Description	Lead Responsibility	Target Date	Item Number
WiFi Expansion	IT Manager, EDAC	March 2017	12
Landfill Expansion	Operations & Facilities	March 2017	18
Alternative Voting Opportunities	Municipal Clerk	March 2017	41
Residential Development Review	Council, All Divisions	May 2017	13
Casino Development	RRFDC, First Nations Relations Advisory Committee	September 2017	14
Transportation Services	Community Services	October 2017	23
Active Transportation Plan	Community Services	November 2017	26
Enhancing Information Infrastructure	RRFDC, Fort Frances Network Services	February 2018	15
Green Space Plan	Operations & Facilities	March 2018	42
Sustainable Community Plan	Chief Building Official, Contracted Consultant	March 2018	43

Legend

CAO: Chief Administrative Officer
RRFDC: Rainy River Future Development Corporation
FNRAC: First Nations Relations Advisory Committee
FFCC: Fort Frances Chamber of Commerce
BIA: Business Improvement Association
IT: Information Technology
EDAC: Economic Development Advisory Committee
SCAC: Kiwanis Sunny Cove Advisory Committee

Community Profile

<http://www.fort-frances.com>

<https://vimeo.com/136541417>

Population

Statistics Canada 2011 Census

Town of Fort Frances 7,952
Rainy River District 20,370
Province of Ontario 12,851,820

Median After-Tax Family Income

Statistics Canada 2011 NHS

Town of Fort Frances \$71,109
Rainy River District \$62,668
Province of Ontario \$71,128

Unemployment Rate

Statistics Canada 2011 NHS

Town of Fort Frances 7.6%
Rainy River District 9.0%
Province of Ontario 8.3%



