



November 13, 2015

REPORT TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Mark McCaig, CAO

SUBJECT: Strategic Plan Initiative #6 – Town Revitalization

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Mayor and Council will recall that included within our current strategic plan, an initiative entitled “Revitalization and Beautification of the Town of Fort Frances” was adopted. Specifically this initiative stated that “The Town will examine the recommendations put forth from the Fort Frances Chamber of Commerce (FFCC) for the beautification and revitalization of the Town of Fort Frances”. A copy of the original listing from the FFCC is attached to this report. Within the strat plan, the lead responsibility for the review of this initiative is the Economic Development Advisory Committee.

At the September and October meetings of EDAC, the committee reviewed the 5 items advanced by the FFCC and is providing the following recommendations/observations to Mayor and Council:

- 1) **Project Petunia** – EDAC is recommending that the Town continue it’s involvement with Project Petunia and work with other local stakeholders, be they residents or local businesses, to fund the purchase, installation and removal of the hanging flower baskets. At the EDAC meetings, RRFDC representatives indicated that they would consult with the Town regarding the continuance of this program. The Operations and Facilities Executive Committee should arrange to meet with RRFDC at an upcoming meeting to discuss this matter further.
- 2) **Garbage Cleanup** – this item garnered the most attention and discussion at the EDAC meetings. Essentially the EDAC is recommending that the Town initiate and facilitate a prudently marketed campaign in the spring of 2016 to help eliminate blight within the community. EDAC consulted with the By-Law department regarding the various possibilities. EDAC envisions a campaign and a scheduled period where Town resources are allocated and commercial in-kind resources are solicited in the interests of cleaning up Fort Frances. Aspects such as the waiving of landfill tipping fees, the allocation of Town and commercial resources to help with neighbourhood cleanups, and the assistance to residents who do not have the suitable equipment to remove larger scrap items from their property. EDAC feels this initiative could help foster civic pride and maybe even become an annual event such as the school cleanups that occurred in years past. Suggested names for the campaign were “Fight the Blight” or “Bite the Blight”. Obviously this campaign would require a great deal of planning and consultation. EDAC recommends that the Town refer this discussion to all of its executive committees in consultation with the By-Law department who would serve as the lead facilitators of this event.



- 3) **Vacant Buildings** – the EDAC felt this item was not the responsibility of the Town and that business owners, the FFCC and the BIA monitor and consult regarding these instances among their members.
- 4) **Banners on Paper Mill Lap Building** – at the EDAC meeting, the RRFDC advised that there would be no action taken regarding the deteriorated banners until the status of the mill is verified. At that point RRFDC is committed to addressing the banners in a relevant manner.
- 5) **East and West Entrances to Town** – the EDAC identified that there are actually 4 entrances to Town with the international crossing to the south and the entry from the airport. By-Law advised that property standards are enforced when there are contraventions, but that many of the identified areas are not violating any by-laws. EDAC's recommendation regarding the entrances is that a more active and regular program of ditch cutting, is adopted by the Town. EDAC also recommended that previous Town studies regarding community entrances are revisited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark McCaig".

Mark McCaig  
CAO

MM/kl

**COUNCIL APPROVAL OF THIS REPORT** will forward the review of the Strategic Plan Initiative No. 6 – Town Revitalization by the Economic Development Advisory Committee to all Executive Committees for recommendation in consultation with the By-Law Department.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING INITIATIVE

Submitted from: The Chamber of Commerce Committee Representative, Wendy Brunetta

**INITIATIVE:** Beautification/Re-vitalization of the Town of Fort Frances.

**Purpose:** To promote tourism.

### **Action Items:**

**#1: Project Petunia**

The Chamber has been coordinating Project Petunia for the past few years. The last 2 years, the Chamber has had to subsidize the project due to a lack of donations or unpaid pledges. The Chamber, at their meeting on March 24, made a motion to not continue with this project.

Suggestion: Could the parks department grow extra flowers (in addition to those grown for the cemetery) and plant the planters?

**#2: Garbage Clean-up**

The issue of garbage littering our streets throughout the town was discussed. What measures can we put in place to control the excessive littering?

Suggestion:

- a) Additional garbage cans throughout the town?
- b) Publicity campaign around "Do Not Litter"?
- c) Involve schools in cleanup?

**#3: Vacant Buildings**

Can anything be done to ensure that the owners of vacant buildings do not let them become unsightly? (eg. former Bonnie Blue has mattresses stacked which are visible from the street, former Video store paint is peeling, etc.)

**#4: Banners on Lap Building**

The current banners have become faded and the paint is peeling off the building. This is the first impression that tourists have of our community. Can we look at applying for funding to replace them?

**#5: East and West entries to Town**

Can anything be done to improve the visual appearance of our two entry points? Could businesses be encouraged to build barriers/fences to make entries more visually attractive? (eg. Belluz Concrete, Lakeview Trailer Park, etc.).