



Village of Burns Lake

Three Year Strategy

2024– 2025 – 2026

The three-year planning document is forward-looking. The objectives and statements in this document are for discussion purposes only and do not represent commitments by the municipality until they are confirmed as publicly stated annual municipal objectives.



Document Purpose

This document provides a three-year outlook for the Village of Burns Lake. The purpose of this document is to:

- ▶ Provide Council with a longer planning horizon (i.e. longer than one year),
- ▶ Enable Council to align and set objectives and initiatives across multiple years,
- ▶ Serve as a starting point for planning discussion in future years.

Section	Content	Page
1. Current Performance	A review of Village performance strengths and areas for improvement.	3
2. Situational Analysis	A review of the Village's opportunities and threats over the next three years.	6
3. Three Year Strategic Priorities	A description of the things the Village wants to achieve over the next three years.	9
4. Three Year Strategic Plan	A plan that describes key Village initiatives and objectives over the next three years.	10
5. Village Scorecard	A summary of Village Goals and Measures for the initiatives and objectives planned.	14

Advocacy and Partnerships:

To achieve our goals, we need to support and engage in partnerships with First Nations and advocate for solutions for our community. Advocacy and partnerships are a priority for Council. Over the next three years, we will focus on:

- Advocacy with Northern Health Authority for improved health services focused on maternity, ultrasound, endoscopy, perinatal services, and addiction services.
- Support responsible resource management and development with all levels of government and with our community forests.
- Support reconciliation with First Nations.
- Engage in partnerships with local First Nations for mutual benefit in all strategic areas.
- Advocacy with post-secondary institutions to promote access to skills training and education in Burns Lake.
- Advocate for improved connectivity and hydroelectric power with telecommunications and utility companies.
- Participate in the Resource Benefits Alliance.
- Support the development of The Foundry youth centre.



1. Current Performance – Strengths and Weakness Analysis

The Village prepared a three-year SWOT Analysis for Burns Lake that summarizes the main internal strengths & weaknesses:

Council and **staff** combine to form a good team that generates synergies.

Village **public works** services were commended as effective and efficient.

Recreation services provided valued opportunities for Village residents. Other community groups expand and enhance recreational opportunities.

Economic Development is working on the economic and community development strategy. Economic Development will work towards increased economic activity.

Protection Services provide fire protection, animal control services and bylaw enforcement services that are effective.

Finance & Village Administration provides excellent communication, public engagement, and front counter services. They also provide reliable and usable financial information for the Village. There is a continued need to find creative funding for infrastructure replacement and new development.



Summary of Strengths

<p>Municipal Team</p>	<p>Excellent internal relations Municipal employees work well together, Council works well together, and elected official/staff relations are positive, mutually supportive, and respectful.</p> <p>There are good internal communications and a broad knowledge base.</p> <p>Municipal staff have demonstrated the ability to secure grant funding and complete projects in timely, efficient ways to better the community.</p> <p>Staff and Council are resilient and adaptable, and progressive.</p>
<p>Economic Development Planning</p>	<p>‘Chart the Course’ Economic Diversification and Community Development Strategy and Tourism Plan</p> <p>These are great planning tools that prioritize practical actions, measurables and accountability.</p>
<p>Great Employees</p>	<p>Operational strengths</p> <p>The Public Works Department completes projects in-house, resulting in cost reductions. The core infrastructure is well-managed.</p> <p>The Recreation Department collaborates with community groups to expand and enhance recreational opportunities.</p> <p>The Fire Department’s Staff and 32 volunteers collaborate to provide exceptional emergency services for the community.</p>
<p>Communications</p>	<p>Public Relations</p> <p>The Village continues to improve communication with the public to provide transparency and de-mystify the budget and the work the municipality is doing.</p> <p>Providing accessible information and clear messaging surrounding the values of the Village are key areas to work on.</p>



Summary of Areas to Improve

<p>Insufficient Funds</p>	<p>Lack of internal financial resources The Village does not have sufficient funds for the required infrastructure renewal, for new development, and to meet service expectations.</p>
<p>Infrastructure Deficit</p>	<p>Lack of Reserve Funds and internal financial capacity Proceeding from the lack of internal financial resources, the Village has made progress with reserve funds. Still, demand for infrastructure renewal exceeds the Village’s capacity to fund from reserves and generate new revenue. Creative options, including partnerships, can be explored to innovate funding options.</p> <p>Asset Management While the asset management plan has been started, it will not be an effective tool for staff use until fully developed. In the meantime, asset management will continue to be a weak spot.</p>
<p>Capacity</p>	<p>Office staff capacity The staff team is at capacity regarding the number of projects on the go. New projects and initiatives will require something else to be put off for a future date or a creative solution to increase staff capacity.</p>



2. Situational Analysis – Opportunities & Threats

The SWOT Analysis for Burns Lake also examined opportunities the Village should seek to capitalize on, and the main threats to the Village.

The local economy continues to feature prominently for both opportunities and threats. The Village faces several increasing threats to the local economy, including declines in primary and secondary industries.

A decline in the local economy will also impact the local population, business and residential tax base, and opportunities available to the residents of Burns Lake and surrounding areas.

The Village's municipal infrastructure and insufficient funds to build out this infrastructure were cited as weaknesses. Municipalities across North America face a common challenge known as the infrastructure deficit. An infrastructure deficit is a gap between available funding and the estimated necessary infrastructure maintenance and replacement cost. Most municipalities have sizeable deficits. Burns Lake is working on completing its asset management plan, which will help to quantify the state of its assets and estimate the replacement costs for future planning. Burns Lake is in a similar position to many municipalities: it is not clear how the Village can responsibly fund necessary infrastructure replacement and continue to work to leverage grants and partnerships to fulfill the requirements.

Non-municipal infrastructure, including residential housing stock, represents a growing threat.

The review of opportunities and threats for the Village demonstrates why the many Village Objectives for 2024-2026 will be focused on economic development, infrastructure management, and fiscal responsibility.



Summary of Village Opportunities

Opportunity	Opportunity Description
Economy	<p>Chart the Course Economic Diversification & Community Development Plan The plan was developed to make Burns Lake a better place to live with a more robust economy with local jobs, a thriving business community and a government with adequate funds to provide services.</p>
	<p>Attract New Businesses & Retain Existing The Village has taken the lead in engaging community members and regional partners to expand understanding and broaden the range of opportunities. We can support residential development by proceeding with Village Heights and support industrial development by beginning the process of providing water and sewer servicing. We can support businesses and residences by working to improve connectivity with partnerships and creative solutions.</p>
	<p>Tourism We can improve our economy by increasing our support for tourism, and the implementation of the tourism plan will support the local economy.</p>
	<p>Development The Village supports opportunities to increase housing stock, including Village Heights, strata development, seniors housing, and supportive/subsidized housing. Funding has been secured to complete the intersection on Hwy 16 and Richmond Loop. This will access 22 acres of commercial property. The purchase of 1675 Gowan Road will create development opportunities for the community. Fire hall replacement funding has been secured. Work will be completed 2024.</p>
Partnerships	<p>Strengthen Partnerships Opportunities exist to strengthen the community and achieve mutual goals through partnerships, including the area’s six First Nations, local businesses, volunteers, community groups, and other economic opportunities. Burns Lake is a part of the Northwest Resource Benefits Alliance, formed to seek a share of the revenue generated in northwest BC. The Village seeks opportunities to improve connectivity within the municipality.</p>

Summary of Village Threats

Threat	Threat Description
Economy	<p>Forestry Dependence/Need for Diversification The expected reduction in the Annual Allowable Cut will negatively affect the community. A high degree of dependence on forestry and lumber manufacturing results in economic impacts at times of reduced harvest. Further diversification through the 'Chart the Course' Plan will mitigate this risk.</p> <p>Changes in the Retail Sector Consumers have more options on how and where to make purchases. Local businesses need to reconsider how they market and sell merchandise and may need to consider electronic options in addition to bricks and mortar.</p> <p>Completion of CGL Pipeline Project: Reduced presence of pipeline workers accessing businesses, services, and rental properties will impact the economy.</p> <p>Workforce Issues Lack of workforce in skilled and entry-level positions threatens business viability.</p>
Infrastructure	<p>Revenue Constraints Government funding does not meet renewal and improvement requirements.</p>
Municipal Revenue	<p>Limited Village Funding Mechanisms The Village has limited funding mechanisms of its own, relying heavily on property taxation, user fees, and grants. Legislative constraints limit other forms of revenue.</p> <p>A lack of investment opportunities limits the number of new businesses looking to set up in Burns Lake that would expand the commercial and industrial tax base.</p>
Housing	<p>Housing Inventory There is a need for greater variety and supply of several housing types, including increased seniors, subsidized, and 'new construction' residential options.</p> <p>Inflation uncertainty, increasing construction costs, lack of skilled labour and housing prices are barriers to growth.</p> <p>The next steps include identifying housing incentive programs and the creation of a 'renovation incentive' to improve older housing stock.</p>
Healthcare Service	<p>BC Ambulance staffing issues have created additional pressures for the fire dept.</p> <p>Community healthcare services are threatened due to a lack of providers.</p> <p>Concerns of increased centralization to larger centres.</p>

3. Three Year Strategic Priorities

The Village has identified several priorities to work on through 2026. These priorities will guide objective setting for 2024, 2025 and 2026

Notional Objective	Description
Economic Development	<p>By 2026 the Village will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ Update the ‘Chart the Course’ Economic Diversification and Community Development Strategy. ▸ Support the tourism sector by implementing actions recommended in the tourism plan. ▸ Implement Village Heights Subdivision Master Plan as funding permits. ▸ Create a plan for Gowan Road Property. ▸
Invest in Infrastructure	<p>By 2026 the Village will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ Leverage grant funding and forge partnerships to expand water/sewer infrastructure. ▸ Proceed with paving projects on a priority basis. ▸ Proceed with sidewalks and storm drains as funding permits. ▸ Update the Downtown Revitalization Phase 3 plan. Implementation of the plan as funding permits.
Social Responsibility	<p>By 2026 the Village will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ Promote and encourage an increase in the availability of residential housing stock to address demand across the spectrum, including seniors, market value and subsidized housing. ▸ Continue to support the development of the Foundry youth center. ▸ Hold annual Community to Community forum with First Nations partners. ▸ Explore and implement options for improved bylaw enforcement. ▸ Implement initiatives of the Recreation and Parks Master Plan.
Environmental Stewardship	<p>By 2026 the Village will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ Reduce the wildfire risk through wildfire mitigation. ▸ Identify climate action priorities and partnerships and implement steps towards meeting goals. ▸ Lobby the province for responsible forest management in the local area.

4. Village of Burns Lake 3 Year Strategic Plan

The three-year strategic plan identifies initiatives and objectives for the Village for each of the next three years. The objectives are subject to change as new priorities emerge.

Strategic Priority	2024 Initiatives and Objectives	2025 Initiatives and Objectives	2026 Initiatives and Objectives
<p>Economic Development</p> <p><i>The Village will undertake initiatives that support the development of a strong and diverse economy, including industry, commerce, tourism, and a vibrant downtown.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and update the ‘Chart the Course’ economic diversification plan. • Implement next steps in the development of Village Heights, focus on marketing to developers. • Review and update Tourism Plan. • Support events for recreation. • Support developers and businesses to increase commercial-space. • Create and distribute the ‘Invest in Burns Lake’ package. • Develop Richmond Loop Subdivision to create commercial opportunities. • Collaborate with First Nations and the community to develop a plan for Gowan Road Property. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the ‘Chart the Course’ economic diversification plan. • Implement next steps in the development of Village Heights, focus on marketing to developers. • Implement the Tourism Plan. • Support events for recreation. • Support developers and businesses to increase commercial-space. • Distribute the ‘Invest in Burns Lake’ package 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the ‘Chart the Course’ economic diversification plan. • Implement next steps in the development of Village Heights, focus on marketing to developers. • Implement Tourism Plan. • Support events for recreation. • Support developers and businesses to increase commercial-space. • Update and distribute the ‘Invest in Burns Lake’ package

Strategic Priority	2024 Initiatives and Objectives	2025 Initiatives and Objectives	2026 Initiatives and Objectives
<p>Infrastructure</p> <p><i>The Village will engage in good government that is financially sustainable and invests in infrastructure to service the community.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with Wastewater Treatment Plant and sewer lagoons (grant dependent.) • Continue water and sewer projects on a priority basis. • Continue work on the Anglican Church. • Priority paving projects ~\$400k • Next phase of Active Transportation sidewalk and storm drain on 9th Ave. • Construct fire hall • Practice good communication with the public through social media, being approachable, accountable, and transparent; provide ‘highlights’ to the public. • Support infrastructure developments that encourage diversity and promote Burns Lake as a welcoming community. • Pursue community partnerships to develop tourism infrastructure. • Implementation of fibre optic infrastructure. • Downtown Revitalization Phase 3 redesign – funding dependant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with Wastewater Treatment Plant and sewer lagoons (grant dependent;.) • Continue water and sewer projects on a priority basis. • Complete work on the Anglican Church. • Priority paving projects ~\$400k • Continue to apply for next phase of Active Transportation sidewalk and storm drain funding dependant. • Practice good communication with the public through social media, being approachable, accountable, and transparent; provide ‘highlights’ to the public. • Support infrastructure developments that encourage diversity and promote Burns Lake as a welcoming community. • Downtown Revitalization Phase 3 redesign – funding dependant • Pursue community partnerships to develop tourism infrastructure. • Promote fibre optic network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue water and sewer projects on a priority basis. • Priority paving projects ~\$400k • Next phase of Active Transportation sidewalk and storm drain funding dependant. • Practice good communication with the public through social media, being approachable, accountable, and transparent; provide ‘highlights’ to the public. • Support infrastructure developments that encourage diversity and promote Burns Lake as a welcoming community. • Downtown Revitalization Phase 3 redesign – funding dependant. • Pursue community partnerships to develop tourism infrastructure. • Promote fibre optic network.

Strategic Priority	2024 Initiatives and Objectives	2025 Initiatives and Objectives	2026 Initiatives and Objectives
<p>Social Responsibility</p> <p><i>The Village will exercise social responsibility by supporting housing inventory for the community's diverse population, and recreational opportunities that improve quality of life.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make continuous efforts at reconciliation and respectful dialogue; collaborate, communicate, seek and provide input. • Support developers & not-for-profit organizations with new housing for market and subsidized multi-family dwellings; investigate local government incentive tools and partnerships. • Continue work with The Foundry youth centre committee. • Respond to youth priorities. • Explore opportunities with seniors. • Annual C2C forum – determine topic jointly with First Nations. Continue to improve communication and engagement with the public. • Implement the recreation and parks master plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make continuous efforts at reconciliation and respectful dialogue; collaborate, communicate, seek and provide input. • Support developers & not-for-profit organizations with new housing for market and subsidized multi-family dwellings; investigate local government incentive tools and partnerships. • Continue work with The Foundry youth centre committee. • Explore youth advisory opportunities. • Respond to youth priorities. • Explore opportunities with seniors. • Annual C2C forum – determine topic jointly with First Nations. • Continue to improve communication and engagement with the public. • Implement the recreation and parks master plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make continuous efforts at reconciliation and respectful dialogue; collaborate, communicate, seek and provide input. • Support developers & not-for-profit organizations with new housing for market and subsidized multi-family dwellings; investigate local government incentive tools and partnerships. • Explore youth advisory opportunities. • Respond to youth priorities. • Explore opportunities with seniors. • Explore youth advisory opportunities. • Annual C2C forum – determine topic jointly with First Nations. • Continue to improve communication and engagement with the public. • Implement the recreation and parks master plan.

Strategic Priority	2024 Initiatives and Objectives	2025 Initiatives and Objectives	2026 Initiatives and Objectives
<p>Environment</p> <p><i>The Village will provide responsible environmental stewardship and mitigate wildfire risk.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize and implement Community Wildfire Protection Plan actions to keep our community safe. • Support the Regional FireSmart Committee, encourage citizen participation and consider resources to do so. • Encourage recycling. • Explore opportunities to continue towards climate action goals – i.e. investigate E-bike pilot program. • Explore options for flood mitigation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize and implement Community Wildfire Protection Plan actions to keep our community safe. • Support the Regional FireSmart Committee, encourage citizen participation and consider resources to do so. • Encourage recycling. • Explore opportunities to continue towards climate action goals. • Explore options for flood mitigation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize and implement Community Wildfire Protection Plan actions to keep our community safe. • Support the Regional FireSmart Committee, encourage citizen participation and consider resources to do so. • Encourage recycling. • Explore opportunities to continue towards climate action goals. • Explore options for flood mitigation.



5. Measure of Success for 2024 Objectives

Measures of success have been identified for the 2024 strategic initiatives and objectives identified for the Village to assess the outcome.

Area	Action 2024	Measure of Success
Economic Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and update the 'Chart the Course' economic diversification plan. 2. Implement next steps in the development of Village Heights, focus on marketing to developers. 3. Review and update Tourism Plan. 4. Support events for recreation. 5. Support developers and businesses to increase commercial-space. 6. Create and distribute the 'Invest in Burns Lake' package. 7. Develop Richmond Loop Subdivision to create commercial opportunities. 8. Collaborate with First Nations and the community to develop a plan for Gowan Road Property. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Source funds to update the "Chart the Course" economic diversification plan. 2. Develop a business case and plan for development. 3. Source funds to update the Tourism Plan. 4. Provide a list of events annually. 5. Continue efforts to support developers. 6. Develop and distribute the 'Invest Burns Lake' package. 7. Complete construction of Richmond Loop Subdivision. 8. Set up meetings to discuss and create a plan for Gowan Road Property.

Area	Action 2024	Measure of Success
<p>Infrastructure</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue with Wastewater Treatment Plant and sewer lagoons (grant dependent.) 2. Continue water and sewer projects on a priority basis. 3. Continue work on the Anglican Church. 4. Priority paving projects ~\$400k 5. Next phase of Active Transportation sidewalk and storm drain on 9th Ave. 6. Construct fire hall 7. Practice good communication with the public through social media, being approachable, accountable, and transparent; provide 'highlights' to the public. 8. Support infrastructure developments that encourage diversity and promote Burns Lake as a welcoming community. 9. Pursue community partnerships to develop tourism infrastructure. 10. Implementation of fibre optic infrastructure. 11. Downtown Revitalization Phase 3 redesign – funding dependant. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wastewater treatment plant and sewer lagoons moved forward as funding permits. 2. Continue with water and sewer infrastructure projects. 3. Continue with the Anglican Church renovation project. 4. Annual paving projects complete. 5. 9th Ave Sidewalk and storm drains are complete. 6. Construction of fire hall is complete 7. Continue to improve communications channels. 8. Infrastructure projects completed. 9. Continue to develop partnerships to build tourism infrastructure. 10. Continue to promote commercial fibre optic infrastructure. 11. Apply for grant funds to update Phase 3 of the Downtown Revitalization Project.

Area	Action 2024	Measure of Success
Social Responsibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make continuous efforts at reconciliation and respectful dialogue; collaborate, communicate, seek and provide input. 2. Support developers & not-for-profit organizations with new housing for market and subsidized multi-family dwellings; investigate local government incentive tools and partnerships. 3. Continue work with The Foundry youth centre committee. 4. Respond to youth priorities. 5. Explore opportunities with seniors. 6. Annual C2C forum – determine topic jointly with First Nations. 7. Implement the recreation and parks master plan. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Two-way communication with First Nations in support of reconciliation and collaboration. 2. New Housing projects supported. 3. Support and dialogue with The Foundry committee. 4. Engagement and involvement of youth. 5. Engagement and involvement with seniors. 6. C2C Forum is held. 7. Recommendations from the master plan are implemented.
Environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prioritize and implement Community Wildfire Protection Plan actions to keep our community safe. 2. Support the Regional FireSmart Committee, encourage citizen participation and consider resources to do so. 3. Encourage recycling. 4. Explore opportunities to continue towards climate action goals – i.e. investigate E-bike pilot program. 5. Explore options for flood mitigation. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Priorities were determined and implemented with collaboration from Comfor. 2. Regional FireSmart Committee engaged and communicating with the public. 3. Recycling is encouraged by sharing information. 4. Report viability of E-bike program. 5. Develop a flood mitigation strategy.