

# TOWN OF LADYSMITH



 **OPEN** for  
**BUSINESS**  
2019 Award Finalist

## TOWN OF LADYSMITH 2020-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

*Celebrate our Present. Embrace our Future. Honour our Past.*

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# MESSAGE FROM COUNCIL



On behalf of the Town of Ladysmith, Council is pleased to deliver our 2020-2023 Strategic Plan to the community.

We are excited about the future of Ladysmith, and, even more importantly, committed to this plan as a guide toward achieving our vision of a vibrant and sustainable West Coast town.

The actions described in Council's 2020-2023 Strategic Plan establish our high level of commitment to effectively delivering core services while also improving the lives of residents through a dynamic set of key priorities.

Council's progressive focus demonstrates action on important issues and opportunities such as infrastructure renewal, climate change, economic growth and affordability.

We also recognize that our success in achieving results for the benefit of all Ladysmith residents is strengthened through working together in partnership with others.

Our Strategic Plan strikes a balanced approach to fiscal management, advancing projects that are sustainable and manage future growth, while also preserving our community character and protecting our natural assets.

Under each of the priorities within this document you will find an overarching statement describing what we intend to do, followed by a list of core guiding principles that support our present and future objectives, together with highlights of key supporting projects.

The complete list of projects planned for the next four years is contained within the back pages of this document.

We invite you to review the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan and provide us with feedback. We look forward to sharing with you the results of our successes.

Celebrate our Present. Embrace our Future. Honour our Past.

# DEVELOPING THE PLAN

## ***2020–2023 Strategic Plan***

In early 2019, Council began a strategic planning process designed to set the vision and strategic path for the organization and the community that we will follow over the coming years.

Through this planning process, we confirmed our guiding principles (the values that underpin everything we do), laid out our vision for the future of our community, and determined the strategic priorities and supporting projects that will drive us.

Council then held several follow-up sessions to confirm the specific details of just how we will accomplish our Strategic Plan and steps to keep the community informed of our progress.

On the page opposite, you'll see highlights of the Ladysmith we envision and the core principles that helped drive our discussions.

### ***Major influences on our community's future:***

- ▶ Climate change
- ▶ Technological advances
- ▶ Aging infrastructure
- ▶ Changing demographics
- ▶ Population growth
- ▶ Food security
- ▶ Affordability and cost of living
- ▶ Relationship with First Nations
- ▶ Federal and provincial government policies



*Ladysmith is a charming small town with a thriving economy, vibrant downtown and picturesque waterfront, whose welcoming neighbourhoods reflect the quality of our citizens.*



**We envision Ladysmith as:**

- ▶ Friendly
- ▶ Vibrant
- ▶ Progressive
- ▶ Diverse
- ▶ Proud
- ▶ Resilient
- ▶ Thriving
- ▶ Safe
- ▶ Accessible
- ▶ Active
- ▶ Affordable
- ▶ Healthy

# VISION & MISSION



***Celebrate our Present.  
Embrace our Future.  
Honour our Past.***

***Vision:***

Ladysmith is a diverse and well-managed municipality that reflects the quality of its people, where we work together as stewards of our assets, environment and economy.

***Mission:***

A safe, caring and vibrant community.

***Our Past, Our Future:***

*Naut'sa Mawt* (Working Together). The land on which the Town of Ladysmith was founded in 1904 has been home to the Coast Salish people for more than five thousand years. We are committed to honouring the rich cultural history of our Stz'uminus First Nation neighbours while together creating a prosperous future for generations to come.

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guiding principles are the threads that weave through everything we do to build our community. They reflect and uphold our values and ensure we continually focus on addressing the critically important issues, within the scope of our responsibilities, which affect our residents and our town.

***In implementing our 2020–2023 Strategic Plan, Council and staff will:***

- ▶ Act decisively to mitigate the impacts of climate change
- ▶ Work in collaboration with community partners at every opportunity
- ▶ Diligently and responsibly manage public funds
- ▶ Live and work with Stz'uminus First Nation and achieve gains that benefit our shared communities
- ▶ Preserve, honour and share the ancient and the more recent history of this place we call home
- ▶ Facilitate effective two-way communication with our citizens and partners
- ▶ Lead by example and strive for excellence
- ▶ Build a community that is safe, affordable and accessible for all ages, incomes and abilities



# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



## *Infrastructure*

We will advance projects that address climate change, renew our infrastructure, protect natural and built assets and accommodate future growth.



## *Community*

We will employ strategies and actions which maintain a diverse, vibrant and affordable community, ensuring we do not pass undue burden onto future generations.





## *Waterfront*

We will implement our Waterfront Area Plan together with Stz'uminus First Nation, creating opportunities for economic prosperity, environmental restoration and cultural celebration.



## *Economy*

We will promote an environment that facilitates business development and job creation.

On the following pages, you will see the main goals that align beneath each strategic priority. The goals are HOW we will achieve our priorities. You will also find examples of some of the projects we have planned for the next four years. These are WHAT we will do to reach our goals and in turn achieve our priorities.

At the end of this document, you will find the full list of planned projects aligned to each strategic priority.

# INFRASTRUCTURE

We will advance projects that address climate change, renew our infrastructure, protect natural and built assets and accommodate future growth.

1. Ensure that the Town's water supply system meets the needs of current and future residents and the demands of climate change



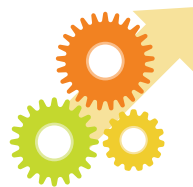
2. Maintain an effective and efficient waste water treatment system that meets the needs of the population and supports the long-term health of the Ladysmith Harbour



3. Implement an asset management plan to replace and maintain aging infrastructure



4. Improve overall service delivery through greater integration of departments



Major projects to help us achieve our strategic priorities under Infrastructure include:

- ▶ Increase the storage capacity of our water supply system at Holland Lake
- ▶ Upgrade the supply main from Stocking Lake to the balancing reservoir
- ▶ Examine options and costs for a new City Hall or other approaches to centralizing Town departments
- ▶ Upgrade 4th Avenue by repaving surfaces, replacing infrastructure and improving safety to support active transportation



## PROJECT HIGHLIGHT: *Increase Water Storage Capacity*

In the face of climate change and a growing population, Ladysmith is implementing a 50 year water supply strategy. The first step in this process is to increase our ability to store water in the Holland Lake Reservoir for use during drier summers.

The Town's long-term plan is based on extensive water modelling to ensure a sustainable supply of clean, safe drinking water for the coming decades.

According to the results of the modelling, the most practical water supply strategy for the Town involves the continued use of existing surface water sources in the Holland Creek and Stocking Creek watersheds, including increased use of Holland Lake as the community continues

to grow and as climate change affects precipitation.

By increasing our water storage capacity the Town will be able to capture the greater fall/winter precipitation.

The project involves raising the two existing dams and dredging portions of the Holland Lake bottom. Once complete, it will nearly double the Town's water storage capacity, ensuring that our growing municipality – and neighbouring partner communities of Stz'uminus First Nation and the Diamond Improvement District – have a sufficient supply for decades to come, even when the potential impacts of climate change are taken into consideration.

The actual work involves raising the existing earth fill embankments to allow for a water level increase in Holland Lake of 1.5 metres, dredging material from the shallow portion of the lake, construction of a new water intake through the east dam, and upgrades to the existing outlet pipe and spillway located on the west dam.

The other two major water supply system upgrades are the new Water Filtration Plant and a future Holland to Stocking Creek interconnect pipeline.

# COMMUNITY

We will employ strategies and actions which maintain a diverse, vibrant and affordable community, ensuring we do not pass undue burden onto future generations.

1. Strengthen communication and meaningful collaboration with key partners, including but not limited to Stz'uminus First Nation, School District 68, other levels of government and community service groups
2. Develop comprehensive affordability strategies that reflect the needs within our community
3. Support the Town vision by ensuring that appropriate short and long-term community plans are in place
4. Demonstrate Council's leadership and continued excellence in governance



Major projects to help us achieve our strategic priorities under Community include:

- ▶ Ongoing collaboration and reconciliation initiatives with Stz'uminus First Nation, including updating the Naut'sa Mawt Community Accord and Memorandum of Understanding and creating an economic framework for waterfront development
- ▶ Implement Ladysmith Youth Plan recommendations for a youth-friendly community
- ▶ Identify and act on opportunities for joint initiatives and shared facilities with School District 68
- ▶ Update the Official Community Plan (adopted in 2003) to set the vision and a road map to build the community we want over the next quarter-century
- ▶ Complete a Housing Needs Report to facilitate development of affordable housing





## PROJECT HIGHLIGHT: *Action on Climate Change*

Embracing our future means addressing the realities of a changing world, and specifically the certainty of climate change. We must act decisively not only to mitigate its impact, but most importantly to create a community that thrives in the face of a changing climate.

One of the most important steps we can take towards addressing climate change is to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

One project in this Strategic Plan aimed at shrinking our carbon footprint is updating our Official Community Plan to include emission reduction targets and plans on how to meet them. This can cover anything from neighbourhood design to building and linking more bike paths and walking trails –all aimed at promoting recreation and active forms of transportation.

In fact, our Community Plan update is an opportunity to bring in guidelines that address a great number of climate change issues, including renewable energy options for buildings, charging stations for electric vehicles, and protecting biodiversity.

Another Strategic Plan project is to bring in a new Ladysmith Building Bylaw to reflect the new BC Building Code, and to provide encouragement for building (or retrofitting) energy efficient buildings.

Also key for our community in facing climate change is to manage our water supply. The water supply projects in this plan are based on a 50-year strategy and reflect models for expected population growth, temperature increases and changing precipitation patterns.

We plan to increase our capacity to store the heavier rainfall in winters to provide adequate water during the drier summer months. We will also be exploring ways to better manage, or capture, storm water runoff in a new Storm Water Strategy.

Residents, too, can contribute to water management and conservation, and we will be looking at options to provide incentives for such things as installing water cisterns and permeable landscaping.

Climate change is a challenge for all communities, and Council cannot address the issue in isolation. We plan to work closely with our neighbours the Stz'uminus First Nation, with other local governments, with community partners and with our citizens to tackle this.

# WATERFRONT

We will implement our Waterfront Area Plan together with Stz'uminus First Nation, creating opportunities for economic prosperity, environmental restoration and cultural celebration.

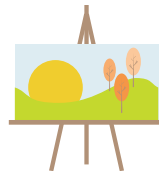
1. Prioritize realization of upland waterfront opportunities



2. Continue remediation of contaminated areas within Ladysmith Harbour



3. Develop a thriving Arts and Heritage Hub



4. Create cultural and recreational amenities to attract and engage residents and visitors alike



Major projects to help us achieve our strategic priorities under Waterfront include:

- ▶ Subdivision and development of the Town-owned waterfront uplands, guided by a business plan and communications strategy
- ▶ Work in collaboration with Stz'uminus First Nation and senior levels of government to secure funding to undertake restoration and remediation of Waterfront Plan areas, including Slack Point and the foreshore
- ▶ Ongoing development of the Arts and Heritage Hub, anchored by the recently upgraded Machine Shop





## PROJECT HIGHLIGHT: *Arts and Heritage Hub*

Arts, culture and our rich history all come alive in this new interactive community space we're creating on the waterfront.

Centred on the historic Machine Shop, the Arts and Heritage Hub is a key part of Ladysmith's Waterfront Area Plan and is identified as a priority project within the Ladysmith Economic Development Strategy.

The Arts and Heritage Hub will build on the cultural and heritage activities currently taking place in and around the Machine Shop and create even more of a gathering place.

Imagine walking along a raised boardwalk from the restored Machine Shop building while watching artists showcasing their craft in new studio spaces; enjoy sipping a beverage from a nearby café as you marvel at the size of a beautifully restored steam locomotive.

All of these ideas are wrapped up in the draft concept design plan for the Hub that resulted from several workshop sessions with key community stakeholders.

The vision includes new potential commercial uses for the Machine Shop,

and the surrounding industrial heritage buildings remain to complement and further enhance the character and creativity of current activities and structures.

The proposed first phase of the Arts and Heritage Hub Concept Plan is estimated at \$4.3 million and the overall vision will be carried out in multiple phases in future years as prioritized by Council.

Part of Phase I – the Machine Shop restoration – is already underway and expected to be completed in early 2020.

# ECONOMY

We will promote an environment that facilitates business development and job creation.

1. Pursue opportunities leading to economic development and job creation



2. Implement and support projects to maintain a vibrant downtown



3. Seek collaborative partnerships to enhance tourism attraction



Major projects to help us achieve our strategic priorities under Economy include:

- ▶ Continue to implement the Ladysmith Economic Development Strategy in partnership with community partners and regional governments
- ▶ Develop and implement a strategy to enhance and promote Ladysmith's trails for hiking and cycling
- ▶ Enhance the Town's commercial sectors, with an emphasis on downtown Ladysmith





## PROJECT HIGHLIGHT: *Ladysmith Economic Development Strategy*

The Ladysmith Economic Development Strategy was born out of a strong partnership among key stakeholders and led to the creation of a focused action plan for achieving immediate economic opportunities in our town and region.

In creating the Strategy, an extensive analysis of population, employment and labour force trends in Ladysmith and the surrounding area was completed, in addition to consultants speaking with local and regional businesses, governments and community stakeholders about challenges and opportunities facing Ladysmith.

The Town of Ladysmith, Stz'uminus First Nation, the Ladysmith Chamber of Commerce, the Nanaimo Airport, the Ladysmith Downtown Business Association and Community Futures Central Island all collaborated on the strategy with the support of Economic Development Cowichan and a grant from Island Coastal Economic Trust.

Included in the Economic Development Strategy are 17 key recommendations — short, medium and longterm — for growing local business, job creation, attracting new industry sectors and promoting tourism.

Ladysmith's natural and built assets are what make us unique and we are well positioned to attract these new industries and opportunities.

Among the recommendations in the Strategy is the creation of the Arts and Heritage Hub on the waterfront as a driver for tourism and future economic opportunities identified in the Waterfront Area Plan (WAP). Restoration of the historic Machine Shop on Oyster Bay Drive is underway as Phase 1 of that project.

Ladysmith Council supports the ongoing implementation of the WAP and has included it among the 2020-2023 Strategic Priorities.

Partnerships between the Town and other local governments, organizations and community groups continue to be a strong focus of Council and important to achieving our mutual goals for a better Ladysmith.

The Ladysmith Economic Development Strategy lends support to neighbouring Stz'uminus First Nation in the pursuit of economic opportunities which strengthen the local marine sector and create employment opportunities.

A short-term strategy involves the Town working in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce in promoting and managing new online attraction tools that promote tourism, as well as business development.

The Ladysmith Economic Development Strategy can help to achieve all this and more as we lay the groundwork for achieving our vision for a vibrant local economy.

# IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN



Now that Council has endorsed this Strategic Plan, it is time to put it into action.

The major projects we undertake over the coming years will all help to accomplish the larger plan. Our budgets and ongoing work plans will be guided by the Strategic Plan.

Council recognizes that a significant portion (up to 80 per cent) of the Town's resources – both financial and human – must go to the core services that keep our community running. These include roads, sidewalks, water supply, sewage

treatment, parks and trails, fire/rescue, policing and recreation programs.

Our 2020-2023 Strategic Plan is Council's vision for how best to invest the remaining resources to build the kind of community we envision for our citizens and future generations.

We welcome your feedback about the plan as we work to implement it. We encourage citizens to let us know what you think, and to engage family, friends and colleagues in discussions and actions that improve our community. Your input is vital as we work together to build our future.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

**Ensure that the Town's water supply system meets the needs of current and future residents and the demands of climate change**

- ▶ Increase the storage capacity of our water supply system at Holland Lake
- ▶ Build a new Holland Lake to Stocking Lake supply main
- ▶ Conduct a Stormwater Master Plan Review
- ▶ Ensure reliable, quality drinking water with completion of the new Water Filtration Plant
- ▶ Investigate the feasibility of a boundary expansion to the new Water Filtration Plant property
- ▶ Upgrade the supply main from Stocking Lake to the balancing reservoir

**Maintain an effective and efficient waste water treatment system that meets the needs of the population and supports the long-term health of the Ladysmith Harbour**


- ▶ Conduct an environmental impact study for the Waste Water Treatment Plant
- ▶ Implement a Sewer Source Control Program, including bylaws and public education
- ▶ Review post treatment disinfection options for the Waste Water Treatment Plant

**Implement an asset management plan to replace and maintain aging infrastructure**

- ▶ Protect and dedicate designated park lands
- ▶ Implement Stage II of the Geographic Information System (GIS) and mapping to prioritize infrastructure
- ▶ Replace cemetery fencing and gate
- ▶ Upgrade 4th Avenue by repaving surfaces, replacing infrastructure and improving safety to support active transportation

**Improve overall service delivery through greater integration of departments**

- ▶ Examine options and costs for a new City Hall or other approaches to centralizing Town departments

 = Action on Climate Change

## COMMUNITY

**Strengthen communication and meaningful collaboration with key partners, including but not limited to Stz'uminus First Nation, School District 68, other levels of government and community service groups**

- ▶ Identify and act on opportunities for joint initiatives and shared facilities with School District 68
- ▶ Ongoing collaboration and reconciliation initiatives with Stz'uminus First Nation, including updating the Naut'sa Mawt Community Accord and Memorandum of Understanding and creating an economic framework for waterfront development

**Develop comprehensive affordability strategies that reflect the needs within our community**

- ▶ Complete a Housing Needs Report to facilitate development of affordable housing
- ▶ Complete the regional child care space review and assessment

**Support the Town vision by ensuring that appropriate short and long-term community plans are in place**

- ▶ Conduct a review of the South Ladysmith Area Plan in collaboration with Stz'uminus First Nation
- ▶ Conduct an accessibility audit of Town properties, and implement recommendations as appropriate
- ▶ Ensure that the Ladysmith Small Craft Harbour (Fishermen's Wharf) long term plan is integrated with the Waterfront Area Plan
- ▶ Implement Ladysmith Youth Plan recommendations for a youth-friendly community
- ▶ Implement recommendations from Public Art Strategy
- ▶ Publish the final planning application guides and checklists as identified in the Development Application Review Process
- ▶ Begin improvements to Lot 108 (Forrest Field) site and explore grant opportunities for future amenities
- ▶ Update the Official Community Plan (adopted in 2003) to set the vision and a road map to build the community we want over the next quarter century

**Demonstrate Council's leadership and continued excellence in governance**

- ▶ Continue to enhance Council's performance by conducting bi-annual evaluations
- ▶ Develop and implement a new Council self-assessment policy
- ▶ Foster ongoing professional development through training, workshops and other opportunities

## WATERFRONT

**Prioritize realization of upland waterfront opportunities**

- ▶ Amend the Zoning Bylaw as appropriate to support implementation of the Waterfront Area Plan
- ▶ Commission a legal survey of development parcels
- ▶ Complete a Business Plan and Communications Strategy for the waterfront
- ▶ Complete a Geotechnical Study for road alignment
- ▶ Complete a Waterfront Servicing Study
- ▶ Complete subdivision of the Town-owned waterfront lands
- ▶ Conduct an Infrastructure Costing Study
- ▶ Determine storm drainage relocation
- ▶ Establish a Waterfront Area Plan Community Advisory Panel
- ▶ Implement a Comprehensive Development Agreement for the waterfront
- ▶ Determine the best approach to maximize the value of Town-owned waterfront property

**Continue remediation of contaminated areas within Ladysmith Harbour**

- ▶ Work with Stz'uminus First Nation to secure funding to complete foreshore remediation

**Develop a thriving Arts and Heritage Hub**

- ▶ Arts and Heritage Hub contract services
- ▶ Complete Machine Shop restoration and lease space in accordance with the Waterfront Area Plan

**Create cultural and recreational amenities to attract and engage residents and visitors alike**

- ▶ Boat ramp/float

## ECONOMY

**Pursue opportunities leading to economic development and job creation**

- ▶ Continue to implement the Ladysmith Economic Development Strategy in partnership with community partners and regional government
- ▶ Implement policies for the retail sale of cannabis in Ladysmith
- ▶ Prepare the Town's Churchill Place property for future opportunity

**Implement and support projects to maintain a vibrant downtown**

- ▶ Add more gathering places downtown
- ▶ Complete grating around all trees
- ▶ Enhance artifact and heritage building signage
- ▶ Ensure street trees are an appropriate size
- ▶ Install a welcome sign
- ▶ Refresh Town assets in downtown core
- ▶ Replace interlocking brick paving

**Seek collaborative partnerships to enhance tourism attraction**

- ▶ Develop and implement a strategy to enhance and promote Ladysmith's trails for hiking and cycling
- ▶ Finalize an agreement with the Ladysmith Chamber of Commerce for tourism services





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