

Town of Lake Cowichan



Strategic Plan 2021-2026

UPDATED 2025-03-28

BACKGROUND

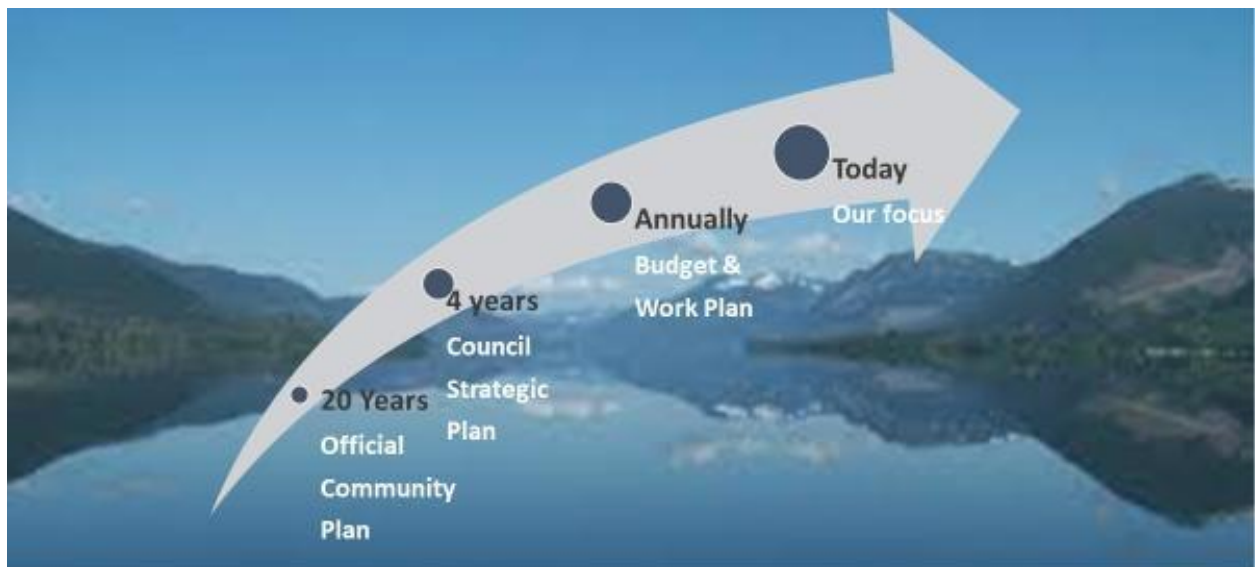
The Town of Lake Cowichan Strategic Plan outlines the priorities for council for the remainder of the 2018-2022 Council term and begins to lay a path for governance and services for the 2022-2026 Council term and beyond.

The Strategic Plan outlines for citizens and businesses:

- The Community's vision for the Town of lake Cowichan as expressed in the Official Community Plan;
- The Town of Lake Cowichan's mission;
- What the Town of Cowichan does on behalf of citizens; and
- What we are doing now and what we will be working on next.

The Plan is rooted in the Official Community (Plan 2019) which provides, "a road map for achieving long term, sustainable development goals that are consistent with community values and priorities."

The Official Community Plan (OCP) guides Council decision making and priority setting. As illustrated below the OCP guides the Strategic Plan which then drives annual work plans and ultimately the work being carried out each day by the Town.



COMMUNITY VISION

The Town of Lake Cowichan Official Community Plan expresses the community's vision for the future.

Our vision is to create a vibrant, healthy, sustainable community that exists in harmony with the natural environment, enjoys a balanced economy, supports all generations, and provides the opportunities to satisfy diverse social needs.

TOWN OF LAKE COWICHAN - WHAT WE DO

The Community Charter outlines the responsibilities of municipalities in BC:

The purposes of a municipality include:

- (a) providing for good government of its community,
- (b) providing for services, laws and other matters for community benefit,
- (c) providing for stewardship of the public assets of its community, and
- (d) fostering the economic, social and environmental well-being of its community.

CORE SERVICES

Cores services are the foundation of the work of the Town and are the focus of the vast majority of all the Town's human and financial resources.

The smooth delivery of these essential services generally goes unnoticed, but they are at the very heart of what the Town does on behalf of citizens.

The Strategic Plan does not detail the ongoing core work of the Town beyond a short description, but rather identifies key initiatives Council will focus on for the remainder of 2018-2022 term of office and begins to lay out the key initiatives this Council believes it should identify for the 2022-2026 Council and beyond.

The Strategic Plan is organized around eight key service areas:

- Finance
- Infrastructure
- Administration
- Community Planning
- Parks and Recreation
- Community Safety
- Cowichan Lake Education Centre (CLEC)
- Lakeview Park

This strategic plan details each of these key service areas highlighting what the Town provides, what it is working on currently and what it will be working on in the future.

Finance

What we do

The Town is responsible for the planning and management of the Town’s financial resources and expenditures including long term financial planning, accounting, billing, and reporting.

Why we do it

Responsible management of the Town’s financial resources is the foundation of all the Town does. Council and staff are committed to ensuring a secure and stable financial future for the Town and the services it provides to citizens and businesses.

BYLAW 1078-2022

<i>What are we</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Cost Charge Review 	In progress
<i>working on now</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset retirement obligations 	2021- 2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable financing for storm water infrastructure 	2021
<i>What we will be</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building asset management practices and reserves. • Review of fees and services 	
<i>working on next (beyond 2022)</i>		ongoing

Infrastructure

What we do

The Town is responsible for planning and maintenance of the Town public works and utilities including roads, water, and wastewater infrastructure. Council and staff are committed to ensuring Town infrastructure is planned wisely and infrastructure assets are maintained and managed efficiently and effectively.

Why we do it

Public works and utilities are vital Town services that protect public health and safety. Ensuring our infrastructure is wellmaintained and meets the needs of the future ensures we can provide the services residents expect and helps us to build our community consistent with the Official Community Plan.

What are we working on now

- Completion of the Town Hall project – grant application in stream awaiting decision Prior to Q3 2022
COMPLETED SEPT-2023
- Awaiting word on the grant application for a completion of sewage treatment facility upgrades– anticipated notification in Q2-3 2021, If grant application is successful, the project is estimated to be completed in 2024. Subject to grant approval
- Awaiting word on the grant application for phase 2 of the Centennial Park upgrade – timing for grant announcements is unknown. If the grant application is successful, the project is estimated to take approximately 1 year to complete. Subject to grant approval
- Extension of Town’s sewer system to Greendale proposed for 2022 2022 BYLAW NOT APPROVED BY RESIDENTS
- Active Transportation Plan implementation planning Prior to Q3 2022

What we will be working on next (Beyond 2022)

- Bus pullover and shelter Cowichan Lake Road (across from Country Grocer) Grant \$100,000 approved 2021
COMPLETED
- Implementation of the 10 year road upgrading plan (≈ \$200,000 ongoing annually.)
- Downtown revitalization improvements based on the 2005 Revitalization Plan Downtown
- Upgrades of 2 pedestrian bridges (grant dependent) realignment of water line
- Upgrading or relocation of the Public Works facility
- Storm water, water & sewer upgrades

Administration

What we do

Administration is responsible for the overall administration of the Town operations and Council support services.

Among Administration’s responsibilities are support for Council, leadership of Town staff, records management, internal and external relations, human resources, property management, subdivision approval, elections and Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy legislation.

Why we do it

Responsible administration is critical to the Town; it provides professional support and advice for Council decision making and leadership for staff operations.

<i>What are we</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoning bylaw update 	In progress
<i>working on now</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective bargaining 	In progress CONTRACT TO JUNE 14, 2028
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records management (digitizing) 	In progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess future staff needs. 	Prior to Q3 2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewal of Protocol Agreement with Lake Cowichan First Nation 	Prior to Q3 2022 COMPLETED 2025
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing for the 2022 municipal election 	2022 2026
<i>What we will be</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation of the new Council and review of the Strategic Plan 	2022 2026
<i>working on next</i>		• Staff succession planning
<i>(beyond 2022)</i>		

2025 -Community Based Health Clinic implementation in the West Cowichan Area to accommodate health needs of the Town and surrounding communities

Community Planning

What we do

The Town is responsible for community planning and building inspections.

Why we do it

Community planning, building services, and inspections enables the Town to develop and evolve in the way citizens have expressed through the Official Community Plan and to coordinate efficient and safe development and servicing within the community.

<i>What are we working on now</i>	• Zoning bylaw update	2021
	• Building bylaw update	2021
	• Streamlining develop application processes	2021
	• Revision of the subdivision bylaw & servicing standards	2022
	• Consideration and review of Poverty Reduction Strategy	Q1 2022

What we will be working on next (beyond 2022) • OCP update 2026-2027

From Brigid to APC – 2025 Work Plan

OCP Amendments

- Updates required related to recent zoning changes and Housing Needs Assessment (Bill 44). This must be completed by December 2025.

CMHC Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF)

- Climate adaptation/Resilience Planning with specific reference to rainwater/ stormwater management; interface wildfire adaptation. This work will also likely require amendments to the OCP, Subdivision Works and Services Bylaw and possibly the Zoning Bylaw. Proposed completion April 2026.
- Density Bonus Program – the OCP Section 5.2.1.5.4 and 5.2.1.6 provides guidance on the matter and Zoning Bylaw Schedule C identifies two developments where density bonuses were granted in exchange for the provision of additional units, i.e. density bonus. Recently adopted Provincial Bill 16 requires local governments proposing a new density bonus programs and for existing programs to comply with the new legislation by June 30, 2025. Proposed completion September 2026.
- Development Cost Charge incentives – This program needs to be advertised and a tracking system established. Proposed completion September 2026.
- Completion date for the program is January 2027

Regional Growth Strategy

- Initial Steering Committee was held on February 18, 2025.
- Proposed three year time frame.

Parks & Recreation

What we do

The Town with community partners, plans, and maintains Town Parks and greenway corridors.

Why we do it

The Town recognizes the importance of parks, recreation, open space, and greenway corridors as essential components of a socially and environmentally healthy community and will work towards ensuring the community is well serviced with parks and open space.

<i>What are we</i>	• Centennial Park upgrade – awaiting response to grant application	Subject to grant approval
<i>working on now</i>	<div style="text-align: center; color: red; font-weight: bold; font-size: small;">RIVERSIDE COMPLETED 2024</div> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground upgrades Riverside Park, Stone Park, Sahtlam Par k • Kasapi Park upgrades • North shore pathway construction 	<p>Prior to Q3 2022</p> <hr/> <p>Prior to Q3 2022 2024</p> <hr/> <p>Prior to Q3 2022</p>
<i>What we will be working on next</i>	• Weir construction (permitting)	2024 (<i>beyond 2022</i>)

Cowichan Lake Education Centre

What we do

The Cowichan Lake Outdoor Education and Conference Centre (CLEC) operated by the Town of Lake Cowichan is full-service conference facility that delivers events and custom-designed individual or group educational programs.

Why we do it

The Cowichan Lake Outdoor Education and Conference Centre is dedicated to helping visitors experience nature in a hands-on fashion, to develop an appreciation for the natural and cultural environment, and to understanding the need for wise management practices to retain these assets for the use of future generations.

What are we working on now

- Develop a long term business plan for CLEC (site visit & of preliminary options) 2021-2022 discussion

What we will be working on next (beyond 2022)

Lakeview Park Campground

What we do

Lakeview Park Campground is a public campground operated by the Town of Lake Cowichan.

Why we do it

The Town operates the Lakeview Campground as a service to the public and an economic driver for the Town and local businesses.

What are we working on now

- Develop a plan for improvements to Lakeview Park (grant dependent) Subject to grant approval

What we will be working on next (beyond 2022)

- Installation of Sani dump at Lakeview Park COMPLETED 2024
 - Lakeview Park improvements (possible partnership with Ts'ubaa-asatx)
 - From the OCP - Continue the expansion of the floating walkway and connecting land walkway.
 - Improve access and wayfinding information for public beach and to the trail connecting to Point Ideal.
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Community Safety

What we do

The Lake Cowichan Fire Department provides fire protection, inspections, community education (Fire Smart), bylaw enforcement, and emergency response services to the residents of Lake Cowichan and through **mutual aid agreements** the CVRD electoral areas adjacent to the Town.

A local RCMP detachment provides police services to the Town of lake Cowichan.

Why we do it

Lake Cowichan Fire Rescue Service provides an essential service that protects and assists citizens, businesses, and visitors.

<i>What are we</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implementation of the BC Fire Commissioner’s Playbook• Council to advocate for appropriate BC Ambulance service levels	Ongoing
<i>working on now</i>		Prior to Q3 2022 2021

What we will be • Assessment of apparatus and facility needs *working on next*
(Beyond 2022)