

Memo



TO: Chair, Strategic Planning Committee

FROM: Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: February 5, 2021

SUBJECT: Strategic Planning for the Town of Lake Cowichan

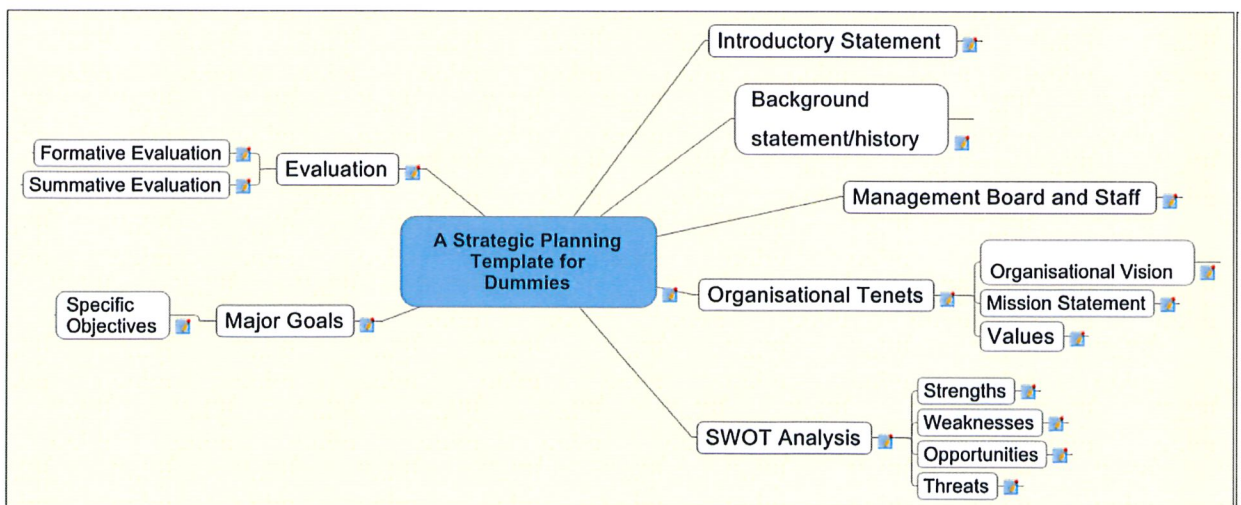
The Town of Lake Cowichan has in the past conducted in-house strategic meetings which gave it a rough blueprint of the direction it was to take over the next number of years. However, if we are to grow and be successful as a community, we need to gather our collective thoughts in focusing on longer-term plans. To better accomplish this, we need to broaden our horizon and include our residents, businesses, community groups, Town staff and members of Council in that process, something not previously done.

“Strategic Planning” is among the most widely used and perhaps among the most misunderstood management terminology. Without a formal written strategic plan, the Town can be unreasonably pulled from all sides by different stakeholders and special interest groups.

It may be prudent to look at least a 10-year plan that allows each in-coming council to review and amend the plan at appropriate intervals. The Strategic Plan should be a living document that is periodically updated. A Strategic Plan is a road map to the future. It is a document that should have the involvement of community partners at least at the initial stage so we may actively shape the future of the Town.

The following template taken from a rather well-intentioned document summarizes the requirements in arriving at the final planning strategic document.

A Strategic Planning Template for Dummies



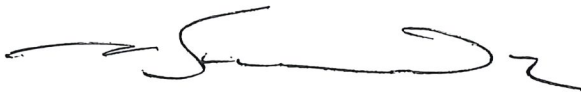
A well thought out initial strategic planning exercise should not be conducted in one or two days or even a week. Municipalities in other provincial jurisdictions have taken longer while still others have completed their strategic plans in mere days.

The suggested time frame to complete the strategic planning exercise is 3 to 6 months and is suggested:

- 1 month for written public input through responses to a questionnaire dealing with their vision – it is currently underway currently;
- 1 month or more for evaluating and sieving through the public input;
- 1 or 2 weeks for council and staff to undertake a similar exercise with assistance of a professional, as council has recommended; and
- A written report to articulate the appropriate strategic roadmap which should reflect the conditions existing today and may only require modification as a new council takes office and determines that conditions have changed.

Update

On the basis of the committee's direction, the adjacent municipalities were contacted to find out the names of consultants used. In the meantime, the consultants have reached out and are seeking additional information. The proposals can be evaluated at the next meeting.



Joseph A. Fernandez