

VILLAGE OF INNISFREE

2023 - 2025

STRATEGIC PLAN



Approved on: June 20, 2023

Motion No.: 2023-06-20/10

OVERVIEW

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Executive Summary

In May of 2023, the Interim CAO facilitated a workshop with Council and a few residents to review the Village of Innisfree’s Strategic Plan and the direction they wished to take for the next few years.

Innisfree’s Vision / Mission / Values stayed the same.

Previous strategic plans were done annually. It was recommended that plans be completed for a 3-year cycle with annual review. A Strategic Plan is a living document and should be reviewed annually prior to the annual Budget cycle to ensure greater success. When staff and Council go through the budgeting process, a Strategic Plan helps to ensure they keep in line with their overall goals.

Note - Some of the priorities in this document may be accomplished earlier than anticipated, cancelled, or delayed depending on changing circumstances.

INTRODUCTION

Innisfree is a friendly, community driven Village, nestled in the heart of Kalyna Country. Innisfree is sometimes called “The Hidden Village”, as it is tucked away on the side of a ridge, north of the Yellowhead Highway (Highway 16). Located 1 hour, 15 minutes east of Edmonton and 1 hour west of Lloydminster, Innisfree is perfect for a daytrip or weekend retreat, a leisurely break while enroute on the yellowhead Highway or a memorable holiday in a distinctive part of the Canadian Prairies. 100 years strong, Innisfree is a community rich with history and pride. Innisfree has a rural district population of 1250, a Village population of 187 and economic activity that revolves around the agriculture and oil and gas industries.

VISION

“Innisfree is a safe and healthy place to establish roots, promotes sustainable development and active lifestyles.”

MISSION

“Innisfree, a progressive community supported by local partnerships – committed to better living”

VALUES			
<p>TRUST <i>is our mutual goal.</i></p>	<p>EFFICIENCY <i>is the best use of our resources.</i></p>	<p>COLLABORATION <i>is working together for a common goal.</i></p>	<p>INTEGRITY <i>is acting with honesty.</i></p>

S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS - Workshop on May 2nd, 2023, results as follows:

STRENGTHS

- Ability to react quickly to issues
- Active seniors club
- Active & strong community groups
- Campground (great location & good sites)
- Close to other town centers
- Curling rink
- Friendly community / people
- High Speed internet
- Housing availability
- Mature trees
- Library
- Millennial Building
- Museum
- Post Office
- Recreation Centre
- School (K-12)
- Small town feel / sense of community
- Transportation core (rail & near Hwy 16)
- Walkability of village

WEAKNESSES

- Aging Infrastructure
- Dwindling population
- Feral cats
- Low or No Employment opportunities
- No shopping available for essential items
- Public perception of Village
- Vacant / abandoned buildings
- Few residents interested in Council position
- Small population
- Few serviced lots / usable commercial
- Lack of businesses
- High property taxes (not affordable)
- No downtown or Village “personality”
- No medical or health practitioners
- Unsightly properties
- Lack of resident knowledge / communication
- No Fibre Optic internet

OPPORTUNITIES

- Business development possible along main transportation hub (Highway 16 access)
- Promote to new residents the housing and small village but close to town ideas
- Improve village aesthetic and resident communication
- Leverage our campground & our village as a destination
- Volunteer programs to support individuals
- Property access for playground besides school
- Low cost of housing
- Dog walking park
- Add more services in campground
- Grow our population
- Improved internet coming
- Community Outreach

THREATS

- Possible school closure
- Viability Review (Minister prompted)
- Decreasing government grant funding
- Aging infrastructure
- High property taxes leaving homes vacant
- Negative public attitude / same repeat complainants
- Aging population
- Loss of residents (death and leaving)
- Youth retention
- Apathy

Strategic Priorities

The workshop on May 2nd, 2023 used various methods (goals, projects and issues) to identify the top priorities and some strategies to implement them.

Strategic Priority #1 – Economic Development / Signage / Promotion of the Community

1. Develop a “welcome” package / pamphlet for newcomers. Welcome Bags should have more information rather than promotional items.
2. Update or move current signage at Village entrance to draw visitors into downtown area. Additional / new signage in Village and along Highway 16.
3. Further development and improvements of Community Garden
4. Add new and regular community events (Farmer’s Market) to draw people in from other areas.
5. Attract families to Innisfree. Appeal to “city” transplants.
6. Attract new businesses into the Village. i.e. coffee shop
7. Help current businesses to succeed. Promote local businesses by getting residents to buy / shop locally.
8. Develop Economic Development programs. Business Incentive Program.
9. Revitalize downtown area. Tear down old grocery store. Seasonal pole banners for downtown area.
10. Village beautification.

Strategic Priority #2 - Enforcement of Bylaws

1. Unsightly properties cleaned up, including Village owned properties.
2. Animal Control. Catch and remove feral cats. Dogs barking all hours throughout the Village. Dogs running at large.
3. Get a dedicated Bylaw Officer to enforce especially above Bylaws.

Strategic Priority #3 – Communications

1. Bring back an outdoor bulletin board to post community events.
2. Enhance / Broaden resident’s knowledge.
3. Community bulletin board.
4. Let the public know about major projects being planned within the community.
5. For emergency situations, have a plan in place to let residents know what is happening immediately.

Strategic Priority #4 – Infrastructure

1. Utilize grants for more capital projects.
2. Repaving of problem spots in the Village.
3. Waterline looping project.
4. Add new and repair old fire hydrants.
5. Add new and repair old sidewalks.
6. Paving of 50th street east.
7. Upgrade waterline on 50th street west.

Other Strategic Priorities identified in 2023:

- **Resident engagement**
- **Safety**
- **Lower Property Taxes**

plus many more.

- offer incentives for residents to improve their neighbourhood
- water barrel program
- encourage solar incentives, etc.
- camera surveillance
- encourage more public participation
- community activities for youth
- more police presence
- Lakeland College partnering
- increase community services to families
- dog walking park
- weeds

Prior years' Strategic Priorities reviewed and extended

1. Partnerships and Collaboration

- Continue partnership with regional partners including the County of Minburn #27, Town of Vegreville and Village of Mannville.
- Collaborate and show support for local organizations within the community (Ag Society, Ukrainian Dance, Library, Etc.)
- Continue to collaborate with our Local FCSS for events and activities.

2. Safe, Healthy and Fun Community

- Appeal for more patrols and better visibility in Innisfree by the RCMP.
- Council to host events that promote the Village, but also involve the community (Canada Day, Pizza Nights, Etc.)
- Promote use of the Community Garden and get it fenced.
- Council to continue to be an active member of the Yellowhead Health Advisory Council.

3. Ensure Viability

- Update Municipal Viability Review reports including:
 - the 10-30 Year Capital Plan that outlines Infrastructure remediation requirements (as per the 2016 AMEC/Foster Infrastructure Audit); and
 - continue to follow up with Municipal Affairs on June 1st of each year, (2019 – 2023), to report task status per the timeline set out in Ministerial Order No. MSL:095/18 (attached).
- Seek and secure Trading Programs/Partners that will minimize/reduce Capital & Operating Expenditures for the Municipality (i.e. RMA, County of Minburn, Etc.) for purchases, capital projects and service delivery.
- Install new water meters for better control of water sale revenues.
- Succession planning for Village staff.

4. Resident Communication and Engagement

- Hold at least one Public Meeting annually (preferably in June or November) to coincide with the previous year’s annual audit.
- Ensure all social media is current and up to date (i.e. Website and Facebook)
- Promote monthly Council meeting highlights in the monthly Innisfree Informer Newsletter, Monthly Utility Newsletter as well as all social media sources in recognition of the Village’s Public Participation and Public Engagement Policies.
- Welcome Bags should have more information rather than promotional items.
- Let the public know about major projects being planned within the community.
- For emergency situations, have a plan in place to let residents know what is happening immediately.

5. Promotion of the Community

- Ensure the Birch Lake Campground & Innisfree Recreation Park has adequately trained staff in place to properly maintain the site and to ensure it remains a viable resource for our community and is welcoming to tourists.
- Ensure Tax Forfeiture Properties are advertised and offered for sale, to improve the Village of Innisfree’s property assessment values and to encourage future economic development.
- Cooperate and coordinate with business development and promote the Village’s Business Incentive Policy which is not being utilized.
- To ensure Innisfree Museum is properly maintained to ensure it remains a viable resource for our community and is welcoming to tourists.



OBJECTIVES BY YEAR

2023

- Economic Development **brochure** promoting Village of Innisfree as part of marketing plan.
- Install new water meters. Grant funding.
- Create a plan for emergency situations to let residents know what is happening immediately.
- Improve sidewalks as part of street improvements (ongoing). Paid by FGTF/ CCBF grant.
- Fence the community garden. Paid by MSI grant. Add dirt every year.
- Waterline upgrade on 50th street west
- Get street banner hardware for poles along main street and banners with first theme chosen by Council (Canada Day??). This is to make the main street / downtown more attractive. Operating budget annually.
- Get a dedicated Bylaw Officer to enforce especially the Unsightly & Animal Control Bylaws.
- Get an outdoor bulletin board to post community events.
- Repave problem spots in the Village. (ongoing annually)
- Street sweeping / roadside cleanup (ongoing annually)
- Land development – recreational, commercial & residential. Village owned unsightly properties cleaned up and/or demolition of unsafe properties. (ongoing)
- Attend Trade Shows to promote community (ongoing)
- Business Attraction (ongoing)

2024

- Economic Development marketing plan
- Pamphlet for newcomers.
- Succession Planning for Administration positions
- Get additional street banner hardware for more poles on main street and banners for second theme chosen by Council (Village Logo??).
- Update or move current signage at Village entrance to draw visitors into downtown area. Additional / new signage in Village and along Highway 16.
- Signage for the community garden. Paid by MSI grant. Add dirt every year.
- Repave problem spots in the Village. (ongoing annually)
- Street sweeping / roadside cleanup (ongoing annually)
- Land development – recreational, commercial & residential. Village owned unsightly properties cleaned up and/or demolition of unsafe properties. (ongoing)
- Paving of 50th street east of tracks. Grant funding.
- Attend Trade Shows to promote community (ongoing)
- Business Attraction (ongoing)

2025

- Get more street banners for third theme chosen by Council (Remembrance Day??).
- Repave problem spots in the Village. (ongoing annually)
- Street sweeping / roadside cleanup (ongoing annually)
- Land development – recreational, commercial & residential. Village owned unsightly properties cleaned up and/or demolition of unsafe properties. (ongoing)
- Attend Trade Shows to promote community (ongoing)
- Business Attraction (ongoing)

ACTION PLAN

The projects and/or capital purchases identified in the Strategic Plan are a first priority. They are to be incorporated into both the Operating and Capital budgets. Changes for future years can be made as new information or funding is received. In an emergency situation, it may be necessary to get a project or purchase completed sooner than originally planned.

► Planning Phase

- Research details for capital purchase as to probable brand, model, size, etc.
- Get estimated costs for projects and/or capital purchases.
- As required for large construction projects, get engineering involved.
- Decide on preferred timelines for project and/or capital purchases.

(This may change subject to funding or emergencies)

- Discuss projects and/or capital purchases with applicable department staff.

► Funding

- Identify appropriate funding sources for projects and/or capital purchases.
- Find new grants if possible.
- Apply for grants after getting Council approval to proceed.
- Get Council approval if necessary for other sources of funding such as reserves.
- Look into sponsorship as an alternative source of money.

► Implementation

- Tender out project and/or capital purchase if necessary.
- Alternatively, get quotes from three sources.
- When possible, try to get lower bids than currently paying for annual projects.

► **Get purchase or project done!!**

See attached:

Schedule “A” – Tactical Plan

Schedule “B” – Ministerial Order

Schedule “C” – 2023 Operating and 2024-2027 Budget Forecast

Schedule “D” – 2023 Capital Budget

Schedule “E” - 2022 Financial Statements



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