

## **Budget Feedback Themes from Feb 20 Public Information meeting (Council Meet & Greet):**

Presentation of budget generally (via display boards):

- On the capital plan sheet it would be good to tally the one year AND the 5 year on the sheet so people can quickly see how much of the 5 year plan we are accomplishing.

Staff Follow Up:

- SAR representative inquired about using the DeBecks radio tower for a repeater for their group. She was directed to IT.
- Activity Hub suggestions from SORCA (Public Works to follow up).
- Report that Bridge Pond is not functioning properly due to the low amount of rainfall. A crew will inspect the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave gates this week (Public Works).
- Hours of operation at the Community Policing Office – not communicated transparently.
- Want to know more about the Marine Action Strategy and Estuary Plan, generally.

Strategic Plan:

- Concise format of Strategic plan presentation appreciated.
- Where is SP available for download?
  - Answer is: <https://squamish.ca/yourgovernment/strategic-plan/>
- Important for “Increase year round utilization of our ... public spaces” goal: How to encourage, facilitate and recognize volunteer contributions in trails and other outdoor recreation and public realm maintenance work?
- Where is the neighbourhood planning Strategic Plan priority reflected in the budget, and how/which neighbourhood plans will be prioritized.

Affordable Housing

- Question about how market rental rates are determined (in relation to Strategic Plan)
- Question – where is affordable housing reflected in the budget?
- Support for affordable housing goals, but concern that current and potential social housing projects are located in environmentally sensitive areas. Less ability to invest in environmental protection and benefits?

Environment:

- Concerns about the new development north of the SK8 park. (Prime environmental values)
- Concern about maintaining animal corridors through Squamish in light of the development pressures:
  - Concerns/questions about whether we're doing enough to protect critical habitat (and although some put a priority on wildlife connectivity, and bigger animals some of the concern is about habitat for smaller animals regardless of connectivity). The diversity and importance of the valley floor in particular was highlighted

- Demolition deconstruction came up so that we require developers to reduce waste and help create a circular economy for used building materials.
- Desire for more EV charging, and car-sharing vehicles/infrastructure
  - This came with a desire for private/public partnerships – e.g. creating a public private partnership to electrify Squamish to ensure we’re capturing travellers who need to stop and charge
  - “Brennan Park, with people typically spending 1-2 hours there, is an obvious space to install a charging station. Is this in the plans?”
- Attendee spoke to his efforts to bring a compost processing facility to Squamish.
- Another attendee spoke to his efforts to reuse wood waste that would otherwise have gone either into the landfill or ground up and turned into soil.

#### Transit

- Transit to Whistler from Squamish is needed.
- Encouraging BC Transit to promote the HandiDart bus as a way to take people to Alice Lake or Murrin during the summer. This is possible but it is apparently not promoted by BC Transit. There are health benefits for everyone in spending time in the great outdoors.

#### Infrastructure/Municipal Services:

- Need for a sani dump/flush as soon as possible
- Concern about illegal camping and associated camper abandonment associated with said camping.
- Strong desire for a boat launch - upgrade the existing boat ramp or build a new one somewhere else. Present launch can definitely be upgraded. Skeptical that Darrell Bay is a good option for a recreational motor boat launch (various reasons), but OK for light craft.
- Suggestion to create a different trucking route through downtown to connect Squamish Terminals to the rail yard area because one of the event attendees believes Loggers Lane is now a poor route due to the new residential development along the Mamquam Blind Channel.
- Concerns about lack of parking spaces in the Downtown, and parking generally.
- Concern regarding parking and safety issues at the corner of Vancouver and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. along Squamish Terminals truck route.
- Budget: Concern over Blind Channel dredging planning being postponed.
- Need for traffic calming in Garibaldi Highlands.

#### Community Projects

- Heard apprehension around the Squamish Canyon project
- More activities for youth i.e. a bowling alley or other good places to "hang out". The youth centre is boring (according to one young teen).
- Perception from one person that Council is holding up the WLNG project, and we should stop doing that.
- Concern over loss of views from Downtown streets and “gateways”.
- Theatre group desperately needs stage set storage space.

- Need for additional arts programming space and continued commitment from Arts Council on planning for this along with other District planning processes (e.g. Real Estate and Facilities master plan).

## Economy

- Green demolition company looking for a space for collecting, sorting and processing.
- Organic wastes business proposal needs location for collecting raw materials and a processing plant. Company has identified others with similar land needs.
- Perception: "There will probably be a lot of underutilized commercial space in the Downtown area resulting from current construction and planned construction – too much for the market to absorb. What to do with this space?"
- Support for employment lands priority under "Economy and Local Jobs" (Strategic Plan)
- Concern that new large scale cannabis grow ops in BCR Yards are leading to increased lease rates for everyone by landlord - being forced to leave BCR Yards.
- A discussion about how to encourage businesses downtown to stay open later and how/when will the densification of downtown start to support the local downtown businesses.

## Staffing

- The District needs more staff to accomplish what is needed.
- Avoiding bureaucratic "bloat" is important. (sense was that this leaned more towards a general attitude towards *government* and less about specific things Squamish isn't doing well)

## Comment cards – Feb 20 only (word-for-word citizen feedback):

1. How does the 2019 budget capture the priorities you are most interested in/concerned about?
  - Lots of planning. Doing a great job.
  - So far so good. But we need more action on installing Level 2 and Level 3 electric vehicle chargers and increase mode car share vehicles to add more EVs.
2. Of the many services delivered by the District of Squamish, where should we be enhancing our levels of service?
  - Transit options:
    - i. Within Squamish, i.e. Uber
    - ii. Regional – between Squamish and Whistler/Vancouver
  - Affordable Housing – tax Airbnb and use these funds for local business to subsidize rent for low income employees.
  - Communications to public to ensure that people clearly feature their house numbers on their homes for emergency purposes.
  - EV Service – solar chargers

2.a. Given your interest in enhancing this level of service, are there any services you believe we could scale back to help make this happen?

- A lot being spent on CN Rail. This is an old agreement and a large sum. Can this be re-negotiated, offset, improvement from CN Rail on service to Whistler?
- (Relating to EV Service comment in #2) - Not necessary if we orchestrate corporate/public for profit facility for EVs and car share vehicles, working with developers on the latter.

3. What resonates with you in the Strategic Plan?

- Climate change – can this be more measurable?
- Economy and Local Jobs – how can we attract businesses to provide local jobs?
- Moving forward into the green economy to create more local employment.
- We need WAY more EV car chargers and the Brennan Park Rec Centre needs at least 4 EV chargers, as all Rec Centres have in the Lower Mainland.

4. What do you currently love about living in Squamish?

- Outdoors, great community, well-managed by engaged Council and staff, lots of recreation.
- Community feel. Natural spaces and trails to enjoy them. Community engagement. Accessibility of DOS – staff and Council.
- Outdoor emphasis, friends, activities such as S2S Gondola.

5. What do you currently NOT love about living in Squamish?

- Lack of transit options in Squamish and forward thinking. More bike tracks or buses does not help to go out in evening or get people A to B. Uber? This adds flexible transit and jobs?
- Busy-ness and rapid development. The fact that habitat protection isn't part of the conversation in development planning.
- WLNG
- That we still, after 60 years of community theatre, don't have a proper building to house all the aspects needed to put on fantastic plays!! A huge struggle for set-building. The old firehall (bldg. by Municipal Hall, or another building?)

6. Do you have any additional comments about the budget and/or strategic plan?

- Interested in options for finding affordable housing to enable business to employ locals and for ways to attract local business to generate will-paid jobs.
- I would like to see timelines and targets for habitat protection included in the strategic plan. I'd like to see an annual budget line item so that we can get there.
- Look into feasibility study for pneumatic waste collection system.
- Let's talk about more EV friendly policies.
- Parking downtown is another big issue. Not nearly enough.