

Community Engagement Event Results

2015MAR23

THE CITY OF GRAND FORKS SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY PLAN (SCP)

Open invitation to all -
78 participants responded

"Thanks to staff and council for all their hard work!"

Panel 1

Sustainable Community Plan ... "is a plan that is built by the community, for the community ...and assists in preparing the community for the future."

Vision "Grand Forks is recognized as a self-sufficient community that incorporates sustainable principles – social, economic, environmental and cultural – into its decision-making process

What does this mean to you?

- GF is so unique – let's keep it that way
- Mix all abilities and all income levels in new development
- Place a high value on all city waterfront as tourism, recreation, mixed residential and "arty retail"
- No commercial development on River Frontage, e.g., Reuse Store
- Plan for transition housing, homeless housing, LBGTQ facilities, diversity, and inclusion in all new development
- Get youth involved with planning?
 - o Survey monkey
 - o Go into the schools
 - o Facebook
 - o Invitations to youth leaders, coaches, teachers with a reminder they are wanted
- Stick with long-term planning and don't cave to pressure or special-interest groups
- Develop heritage areas - Heritage walk identifying heritage houses with plaque date built
- Better hospital facilities
- Support Phoenix Ski hill
- Support local recreation and ensure viability of local Recreation Centre and Curling Rink
- Support Phoenix Foundation
- Support local airport services

What else is important to you?

- Manage our tax money considering that people who retire to interior communities don't have deep pockets
- Funding for Economic Development dedicated to promoting business growth in our community
- Community plan to grow and encourage business to stay
- Hire a business development officer to promote the city
- Grand Forks is a great place to raise kids, but we lose our young adults 18-28 year-olds due to limited opportunities for professional work (University grad) and recreation – we need them!
- Our web page needs current: arts and culture, services, amenities and all recreation, e.g., basketball, biking, trails, softball facilities, etc. with contact info.
- Jobs for individuals who have been given community hours to beautify our city
- Increase marketing - promote our trails wetlands and hiking, swimming on Tourism BC
- Convince CPR to give up land s behind Station Pub
- Question business license applicants more thoroughly to ensure appropriate for city
- Assess carbon footprint on all projects

APPLY “SMART GROWTH” PRINCIPLES – Panel 2

What does this mean to you?

Encourage a wide range of housing styles

- Consider design with respect to history & sustainability – town identity should have intention
- Look at the “chi” overall when considering development, i.e., How does new ‘X’ relate to the whole?
- Small accommodation plan, i.e., Carriage house concept/back alley infill
- Study the possibility of alternative housing (yurt, solar power, rammed earth, etc.)
- Grand Forks could become a vanguard

Encourage higher density and affordable housing

- Not at expense of neighborhoods!
- 42 lots are too small for contemporary residences without appropriate design guidelines to minimize building footprint on lot - buildings that occupy entire width of lot quickly become unfixable blights on landscape
- Need more affordable, alternate housing options – yay tiny houses
- Humanly-scaled housing and large lots - no “stack and pack”

Provide infill opportunities in residential & commercial

- Need creative vitality in downtown core, i.e., open for business
- Encourage diverse, mixed-use for downtown and down-town residential
- Facilitate subdividing of the large acre+ lots within the city, but not small 30’ lots
- Infill development program should focus on the job of crafting complete, well-functioning neighborhoods
- SMART GROWTH means building our city so that all people have waterfront access through green space

Encourage redevelopment of existing commercial before developing new commercial

- Not at the expense of new development
- Working in closer collaboration with other community partners
- Offer small-business incentives (SME’s)
- Use existing buildings before building new ones - GF looks better with occupied buildings in town

Create walkable neighborhoods

- Keep riverside for common use - let’s have some parks other than just down town
- A walkway system that connects neighborhoods and offers access to food and services by foot
- Integrate with the existing uses and development types as well as with existing road and service infrastructure
- Deer are an issue for safe walking in neighborhoods (especially with pets)
- Need continuous sidewalks in the downtown core, e.g., walking from the CU to the Post office is dangerous

What else is important to you?

- Live up to the GF local government “Community First” agreement commitment
- Government partnerships with potential businesses to hire workers
- No theme park please
- One set of rules for businesses – applying for business licenses in GF
- Ensure all buildings are up to code and new building have permits
- Identify specific plan for waterfront development, e.g., Riverside
- Keep existing housing tidy and neat please! So many disasters in town detracts from beauty of our city

HERITAGE, ARTS AND CULTURE – Panel 3

What does this mean to you?

Promote the heritage revitalization theme of Grand Forks

- Balance our heritage with new growth and business and employment in order to encourage more young people and families - equals wider tax base – Nelson is a great example of a city with small town feel, retains/promotes its heritage, yet open to new business, franchises and resources, i.e., sports, arts and recreation
- Promote the heritage buildings

Encourage adaptive reuse of Heritage Corridor properties

- Promote the Doukhobor heritage - Integrate historical themes into planning objectives
- Focus on building a coherent city identity – what is local “culture”? How does the city drive this?
- Tax incentives for heritage corridor - Develop permit area of downtown – its heritage, let’s keep it
- Specific long-term plan for Gallery 2?
- City purchase of arts and culture venues – like Gem Theatre – which is for sale
- Provide funding to enhance the high school theatre - on cooperative basis with School District

Promote and encourage the sale of products created by the arts and culture community

- GF has the potential to be a model city of the future -let’s make it so with arts/culture/environment (solar and local food/thriving agriculture)

Collaborate to provide a blend of attractions, seasonal fairs, etc.

- Support Fall Fair by providing a place to hold it
- We need more cultural events down town – buskers and/or a “street walker” well versed in city history
- Attraction should not include environmental disasters – like car shows
- Keep attraction-getters, like car show

Pursue funding & support for a multi-purpose, performing arts center

- A community Centre is long overdue - include educational opportunities - demonstration gardens/agriculture
- Yes to multi-purpose Performing Arts Centre - arts programs are all in Nelson, Castlegar and Trail
- in collaboration with other stakeholders, like area D,

Beautify the City Centre

- Continue with beautification projects – focus on downtown core – avoid ‘Theme Park’ look
- Ask downtown business to keep alleys and laneways free of garbage
- Tax incentives for down-town property improvements, e.g., encourage stores to plant trees in their parking lots
- Beautify side streets before City Centre gets beautified again - fix up in city – not flowers
- Doing a good job – incentive now is to trickle down to businesses – carrying the concept into their business plan
- Encourage owners of vacant buildings to keep them clean/presentable
- Do whatever is necessary to keep the down town core alive
- Keep our planters and boulevard on Central going – people are attracted to GF with beauty/life We need more

What else is important to you?

- That all citizens of the city feel welcome in public spaces

PROTECT THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT – Panel 4

What does this mean to you?

Encourage & promote the implementation of BC's Climate Action Charter to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect the natural environment

- Are we not nearing 5 years into this implementation of BC's Climate Action Charter?
- Brand Grand Forks as a clean-energy community
- Develop intellectual equity of area in concert with improving environmental practices

Preserve and protect natural areas for environmental, aesthetic, recreational and economic values

- Restart environment committee – industry will participate and so will area D
- Keep motor power boats off rivers
- Start acquiring land in support, develop priorities critical sites for acquisition
- Preserve and promote the remaining natural land along the rivers in down town of GF
- Acquire land along riverfronts and develop parks and boardwalks

Encourage and implement the Air Quality Management Plan

- Yes to Air Quality reports – make them public
- Include solar and/or wind-farming in strategic plan for energy production
- Adopt a policy of anti-idling
- Thanks Colleen for remembering the emissions that would accompany the car show and bravely oppose this
- Stop outdoor burning and enforce in Grand Forks – Fire Dept. should be proactive
- Boundaries – you need to work with Area D surrounding city to implement
- Air quality in Grand Forks is horrible. Roxul is the big problem – this must be corrected

Protect identified natural wildlife corridors, wetland and slough and environmentally sensitive areas as Development Permit Areas

- Integrate and protect wetland, river corridor and natural areas into the planning process.
- Changing existing habitat into something not compatible with the neighborhood is problematic, e.g., Wet land cover into playground and man-made features
- Clean water and river management plan

What else is important to you?

- Promote organic agriculture because it protects our aquifer
- City Deer issues
 - o Enforce bylaws pertaining to the feeding of deer – develop feeding stations
 - o Control the deer/Cull the deer/Let the deer be
 - o Provide stats about deer in GF – what are the challenges and how big they are
- Look at town plan that was done a number of years ago and consider uses
- Encourage clean-up of unsightly premises
- Reduce consumption where possible at city events
- Promote sustainable energy options for residential as well as city hall/city works
- The ReStore keeps tons of products out of the land fill and should be built ASAP

SUSTAINABLE MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE - Panel 5

What does this mean to you?

Ensure long-term, sustainable infrastructure practices

- The planning process sets the foundation for determining infrastructure improvements
- Don't go beyond the historical population of our area - over 5000 too many new costs
- Have the engineering companies include a life-cycle analysis of the different options for new projects
- Put monies into old infrastructure (water and sewer lines) repair/replacement first
- We need roads and sidewalks fixed

Enhance the city's transportation system to be inclusive

- Promote/create "health connections" transportation system - develop partnerships with BC transit and MOH
- At least one charging station for cars in town – put them in parking lots advertise it!
- Measure progress against Vital Signs work - 2 buses
- Utilize airport more

Encourage the use of BC Green Building Code in new developments

- Don't over-police or micromanage new building code developments – this discourages
- Green building code = unaffordable buildings
- Definitely encourage use of BC building code – but what does "green" mean?

Ensure any new infrastructure is sized for future development

- Airport development – look at the provinces 10-year infrastructure plan
- We struggle to maintain existing infrastructure, why are we adding more infrastructure
- Water and sewer extended to all city of GF properties (Johnson Flats)
- Work to get necessary funding partners for infrastructure

Maximize conservation and metering of water supply

- Purchase high-capacity rain barrels (200-500 gallons) for resident whole-sale purchase
- Along with water/sewer meters an incentive program for using water efficient fixtures
- Education/awareness about conservation – along with metering
- Do not get derailed from Water Meters by ignorance and fear-mongering
- Enforce sprinkling regulations
- Keep food-growing affordable for residents – don't make water too expensive

What else is important to you?

- Put a priority on making GF water clean, tasty
- Make the sunshine capital of BC into a model for solar energy - develop and implement a local solar grid
Consider waving DCC for certified green projects
- Promote energy rebates Set standards for LEED, e.g., gold, silver, etc. –
- No eco-assets or privatization of the aquifer
- Should we have another reservoir? More water – no meters
- When will we see action on net-metering?
- Consider training opportunities that arise from conservation and metering of water supply

Water Meter Concerns

- Will insurance cover any damage the water meter might do?
- Participation at water rate comm. Should be restricted to residents of the city
- In the vital Signs survey – residents were concerned about the increasing gap between the rich and the poor
- Don't support water meters, we will lose control of our natural resources down the road – taxes will double and triple
- Test industrial water meters for accuracy, as was recommended in the 2010 engineering study
- Residential water meters go against the GF sustainable Community Plan because they make GF more expensive to large families which we wish to attract
- Do you want us to use less water? Means less income for city – higher rates for us suckers
- Water conservation and water metering are opposite – we needed to do conservation to avoid meters/didn't happen – now water conservation means less income for city
- People should not be forced for financially cornered to install a water meter in their home – it is not socially sustainable
- Installing water meters where they are not necessary contributes to pollution because it is excess consumption
- Will metering really ensure conservation? Only high rates will!
- Protect the rights and responsibilities of GF citizens from the asset-grabbing, New World Order which is deceiving Canadians working through the local arm of the UN's world control group and specifically protect GF citizens from the surreptitious "Universal Metering" scheme to take control of all the new "blue gold" by controlling all the world water use and directing it for the use of large industry and away from the people

LINKED RECREATIONAL - Panel 6

What does this mean to you?

Connect the Trans-Canada Trail with existing and future trails, pathways and sidewalks

- Do everything we can to get paved trail to Christina Lake – great for tourism
- More identifiable walkways and bike trails
- Partner on paving a tourism path between GF and CL
- Keep up the good work on trails - integrate with planning and new development
- Stop paving pathways and use funds to pave hospital street
- Paving provides access to seniors and disabled – it is also an economic strategy?
- More trails/connections to make bike/foot travel even more of a viable mode of transportation

Explore recreational buffer zones between rivers and commercial/residential developments

- Create a walk along both rivers
- Save our waterfront for relaxation, recreation and pedestrian paths – common use
- Walkable path by rivers – boardwalk
- Keep riverfront pathways for common use not buildings
- Greenspace on waterfront please

Promote the development of a regionally-based conventional transit system

- Have RDKB (areas C & D) contribute to these kinds of projects - too heavy tax burden for city residents to pay for everything, especially considering cost of existing infrastructure maintenance
- Public transit system requires cost-benefit analysis

Continue to establish a linear park, multi-use pathway system and pedestrian/cycling networks

- Awesome work to date! Linear park is a huge plus for GF
- excellent area to focus on for tourism
- Create a fund to develop/maintain bike trails
- The pathways are great, expanding them will benefit young and old
- Create walkway under Hwy #3 to join existing paths
- No money spent on paving trails – not environmentally friendly or healthy for feet and knees
- More identifiable walkways and bike trails with safe parking

What else is important to you?

- Frisbee golf course – excellent, affordable exercise and recreation
- Sidewalks need improvement – especially for moms with small children and seniors
- Need sidewalks between Buy-low Foods , Post Office and Credit Union
- Fix Trans-Canada Trail from black train bridge to City Park - currently corner is unsafe for biking.
- Signage directing cyclists to use 68th Ave and get them off highways –
- Signage with directions to get from community garden to trail by Roxul – not currently linked by trails
- Unpaved paths lead so spread of weeds
- Allow motorized use of Trans-Canada Trail through town
- Bikes, medic-chairs and foot traffic rely heavily on paved paths

SUPPORT A DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY - Panel 7

What does this mean to you?

Support the retention of existing commercial and industrial enterprise

- SME incentives
- Take steps to have one municipality for the GF area
- City to encourage local shopping as much as possible

Encourage growth and diversification of the business sector

- Build on what is offered by Selkirk College - let's use Selkirk College for a Travel School or Learning Centre
- Promote tourism
 - o Create tourist attraction – waterslide

Develop incentives and technology to attract locally-owned business

- More incentives needed for small and home-based businesses
- Appropriate technology
- Green technology – green enterprises maybe – eco tourism
- Put more fiber-optics in (faster, safer and less risk than wireless)
- Graduated tax structure for new commercial
 - o 1st year 20%, 2nd year 40%, 3rd year 60%, 4th year 80%, 5th year 100%
- The ReStore will help with economic growth by bringing shoppers from all over the boundary region
- City needs full-time development office
- Work regionally on economic development - One local government and one force

Support and encourage agriculture as vital to the local economy

- Local agriculture – new business and vital to us
- Develop incentives for SB – huge, huge potential for agriculture in the valley
- Make GF a GMO-free zone, like Richmond
- Support the learning garden
- Support back-yard veggie gardens, lower water rates
- Develop agriculture in the valley and connect to local retailers – make it easy
- Promote agriculture – always! Growing food – food sharing – food security - grow food not lawn
- Support local first

Develop and promote an easy-access 'Gateway' to City Center

- Support regional chamber and downtown business associations
- Develop signage on highway directing traffic to the City Center
- The city is not positioned geographically to do this – surrounded by Area D

What else is important to you?

- Make GF the Centre of the Boundary Region

STRENGTHEN OUR SOCIAL FABRIC - Panel 8

What does this mean to you?

Improve and foster an environment of learning, tolerance and growth, creating a balance of harmony and responsibility

- start with city council – act professionally and with respect
- encourage a diverse and inclusive city (integrate all abilities and needs)
- city to support Grass-Roots initiatives to shorten the gap between the rich and the poor

Integrate a social perspective into overall city planning

- create a community-based foundation alongside Phoenix
- let's create a well-defined facilitated, decision-making process, that is transparent, ensures accountability and allows the community to weigh out the consequences of the decisions
- consider a feasibility stand on governance

Collaborate with RDKB on appropriate regional services

- ensure that the city communicates with the hospital – we can't afford to lose this in our town
- support resource sharing (admin services, grant writing , office space, etc. that local non-profit can share)

Encourage and support universal access

- challenge everyone to create inclusive community spaces in our downtown core to meet the needs of all citizens
- sidewalks between key services , e.g., post office, credit union and mini-mall with Buy-Low Foods
- provide free LGBTQ washrooms and showers downtown – no barrier

Work with appropriate community agencies to identify and address the health and social needs of the area

- encourage second-stage housing for those in need
- offer benches that become shelters for those in need
- water-meter health must be addressed

What else is important to you?

- Multi-Agency Accommodation Project (MAAP) and Habitat ReStore
 - o For
 - MAAP needs to be supported
 - City has already spent a fortune preparing MAAP-land for ReStore for Habitat. Please don't waste tax payer's money - proceed with project on that site. Find a way to resolve complaints.
 - Support Habitat's Community Housing – they are a developer
 - Expand services related to Whispers of Hope, B.E.T.H.s, Habitat, the needy deserve our best
 - Habitat ReStore should be part of downtown core – will bring people from other communities
 - The ReStore will be a good addition to the commercial Centre and perfect fit for our community
 - o Against
 - Habitat should be able to move into an old building – how about next to the bottle depot?
 - ReStore is perfect, just not on the waterfront – put it in the industrial area where it belongs

COMMENTS ON 2014 PROJECTS

- Awesome keep going with trails
- Thank you, this trail is used all year long. Thanks to Roxul and the city for sharing the vision
- As many as we can get
- Support the volunteers, they are critical to our community
- Trails are an economic force – congrats GF ATV
- Great work on promotional materials
- ‘Open for business’ sounds like a desperate plea for help
- Mayor and council should wear name tags at community functions so we know who they are
- Excellent upgrade for local and tourist use
- Thank you – this is so well used
- Well done! Do something like this for all put-in/take-out points
- Nice changes – done quickly – very nice improvement
- Some alleys need cleaning up – such as the alley behind renovation wear house – all the way behind the hawk shop to vet’s office - eyesore walking down from Lordco along the main highway and glancing down that alley
- Start to address unsightly properties
- I think the city does a super job with flowers, etc. in the summertime
- Was the outdoor exercise area really necessary – it’s never in use
- Stop doing spot zoning