

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: J. Zaffino, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: March 6, 2025

RE: **2025 Strategic Priorities**

Administrative Recommendation:

THAT the Board approve the 2025 strategic priorities work plan as recommended by staff

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with a list of the key outcomes from the December 12, 2024 strategic priorities meeting. The meeting focused on determining the 2025 Board priorities, and align the work plan with the long-term vision and goals of the Region.

The 2025 strategic priorities have been identified as follows:
5 Themes, 16 Priorities, and 196 Actions (comprised of 175 Staff Actions and 21 Board Actions).

The 2025 work plan includes a comprehensive list of action plans that aim at accomplishing the 2025 strategic priorities/work plan. Which will improve infrastructure, community services, and environmental sustainability and governance. The identified priorities resulted in 196 Actions plans which in turn require 35,353 hours of non-core work. Due to the number of action plans staff has identified that we will not be able to complete all the work as it is over our capacity due to resource constraints. Staff's objective is to complete all the action plans but move some of the work over to 2026.

The Strategic Progress Tracker 2025 provides a comprehensive framework for measuring and evaluating the planning and progress of strategic priorities and actions. This system ensures transparency, accountability, and data-driven decision-making by estimating full-time equivalent (FTE) hours allocated to strategic initiatives and core work across the organization.

Business Plan Objective:

4.1 To execute a well-defined strategic planning cycle.

Background:

New 2025 Actions:

The 2025 Strategic Priorities include 95 Staff Actions and 20 Board Actions. A number of Board Actions have been combined with Staff Actions with hours allocated to complete those projects.

2024 Carry Forwards:

There are 75 Actions considered 2024 Carry Forwards. The total estimated hours for the 2025 phase of carry forwards is 12,650 hours. Fifteen of these Actions are multi-year projects that will continue into 2026.

2026 Holding:

Staff have analyzed and recommended that 56 Actions moved to “2026 Holding”. As we present this two-year plan, 2026 already holds 11,240 hours (plus five Actions that have not had hours allocated to them due to scope and clarity). As capacity permits, 2026 Actions may be recommended to move back into 2025 for work to begin.

Themes and Priorities

The following 5 Themes and 16 Priorities have been developed by the Board of Directors for 2025:

1.0 Vibrant and Diverse Communities

1.1 Explore Economic Development

The RDOS will work with electoral areas and municipalities to explore the potential for economic development services and related initiatives aimed at attracting investment, creating jobs and building resilient local economies.

1.2 Create Connections

The RDOS will seek opportunities within existing parks and recreation services, and in collaboration with local festival and event coordinators, to create opportunities for connection within communities, and between communities.

1.3 Support Families

The RDOS will explore incentives to encourage housing development in small communities, and will advocate for investment in local schools, child care, recreation and other services needed by families.

1.4 Protect Character

At the regional, sub-regional and local levels, the RDOS will introduce new land-use measures (or strengthen existing measures) to direct density and urban development to defined areas, protect the unique character of rural communities, and promote year-round living.

2.0 Governance

2.1 Create Effective Board Committees

Under the authority of the Board Chair, the RDOS will create a set of standing committees to service as forums for groups of Directors, appointed by the Chair, to examine, discuss and make recommendations to the Board on specific types of services (e.g., local services) provided by the Regional District, and on topics that align with Board priorities.

2.2 Strengthen Board Staff Relations

The RDOS will clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Board and staff, and will ensure that clear reporting and communication policies are in place to strengthen Board-staff relations.

2.3 Engage Communities

To promote trust in the Regional District, and to bolster the principals of accountability and transparency, the RDOS will engage with communities across the OkanaganSimilkameen on services and service initiatives, strategic priorities, annual budgets and topics of concern to specific areas or jurisdictions.

3.0 Intergovernmental Action

3.1 Engage Indigenous Governments

At the sub-regional and regional levels, the RDOS will provide the strategic direction and resources necessary to nurture collaborative relationships with Indigenous Governments in the Okanagan and Similkameen, focused on matters of mutual interest and benefit.

3.2 Partner with Municipalities

The RDOS will explore cost-saving opportunities with member municipalities' relation to the joint use of assets, and the establishment of shared services to meet identified needs.

3.3 Influence Other Orders of Government

On its own and in collaboration with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, the Southern Interior Local Government Association, member municipalities and other regional districts, the RDOS will work to influence funding and policy decisions of the provincial and federal governments, including decisions related to the downloading - actual or potential - of service responsibilities to local governments.

4.0 Natural Environment and Resiliency

4.1 Secure Regulations and Funding

On its own and in collaboration with others, the RDOS will advocate for flexible approaches, enhanced authority, and the funding necessary to target major GHG emission sources and to protect the natural environment in the Okanagan-Similkameen.

4.2 Support Protective Services

RDOS will continue to refine, strengthen and support its regional protective services function.

4.3 Explore Traditional Indigenous Knowledge and Bio-Mitigation Measures

In collaboration with, and under the guidance of Indigenous government partners, RDOS will explore ways to incorporate Traditional Indigenous Knowledge and bio-mitigation measures into its efforts to protect ecosystems and landscapes from damage caused by wildfires, floods and other events.

5.0 Growth and Growth Management

5.1 Establish Regional Policy Framework

Through the completion of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), the RDOS will establish and implement the policy framework required for progressive growth management throughout the region.

5.2 Optimize Development Approval Function

The RDOS will ensure that its development approval function provides the land-use policies, land use regulations, incentives and processes necessary for responsible and sustainable development to occur, including in small communities.

5.3 Provide Infrastructure

Through advocacy, long-term capital planning, the use of development finance measures, and the application of the Board policy on private utilities, the RDOS will work to ensure that infrastructure is in place to support growth, and to address utility-related health and safety needs.

Analysis:

Key Statistics

- A total of 196 Actions are listed for 2025.

- Strategic Actions for 2025 have an allocated 105,180 hours of Core Work and 35,353 hours of Strategic Actions FTE hours.
- Departments and Divisions vary in their range and further calculations for 2026 will be taken into account.
- The overall average variance is -0.16%, which is within the 3% +/- range.
- For the two-year plan (2025-2026) 11,240 hours were moved to "2026 Holding," accounting for a total of 56 Actions.
- Included in the 2025 Actions is the possibility of the incorporation of Okanagan Falls. Staff have estimated 4,370 hours to support transition this year.

Process Overview

To develop the 2025-2026 Strategic Priorities list, staff were involved in the following:

- Staff were asked to add their Actions to the tracker with a title, a GL Code for expenses, a lead department/lead division, and a lead staff member.
- Each Action was prioritized using three criteria: Urgency, Impact, and Feasibility, with staff discussing and providing a rating of high or low.
- Each Action and each Department/Division allocated an estimated number of hours to complete each Action. This total is calculated for each action and by each division. The Department/Division totals are summarized on the Summary page.
- Using the three criteria, Low Feasibility Actions were moved to 2026 Holding.
- Low Urgency Actions were reviewed, and Actions moved to 2026 Holding.

What we've learned:

The process of identifying actions and estimating the FTE hours required for each was a highly collaborative exercise. Throughout two full-day sessions, it became clear that many of the actions added to the Strategic Progress Tracker required support from multiple divisions across the organization. In addition to the lead division responsible for specific actions, various supporting departments and staff members also played a role in contributing their expertise and resources. This cross-departmental involvement highlighted the interconnected nature of the work and emphasized the importance of collaboration in successfully implementing these initiatives.

Next Steps:

As we approach the implementation phase of the strategic plan, it is crucial to ensure that the action plans for 2025 and 2026 are aligned with the Boards goals and staff resources.

We request the Board to review the current allocation of these action plans and provide recommendations for any changes. Specifically, we seek guidance on the following:

- Validation of Current Allocation: Are the current priorities for 2025 and 2026 aligned with our strategic goals and resource availability?
- Potential Reallocation: If any 2026 project is deemed critical and needs to be advanced to 2025, please identify which 2025 project should be deferred to 2026 to maintain balance and resource allocation.

Given the full capacity of the 2025 work plan, any new priority can only be added by the Board of Directors. To accommodate a new priority, the Board must identify an existing action plan to be deferred to 2026. This approach ensures that our resources are effectively managed and that staff maintain a balanced workload.

Recommended Process for Reallocation

Board Review: The Board will review the proposed new priority and assess its alignment with the strategic goals.

Identification of Deferred Action Plan: The Board will identify which existing 2025 Actions should be moved to 2026 to make room for the new priority.

Resource Assessment: An assessment will be conducted to ensure that the necessary resources are available for the reallocated projects.

By following this process, we can ensure that our strategic priorities are met without overextending our resources.

Communication Strategy:

Staff will provide printed and electronic access to the Strategic Progress Tracker to the Board. Regular updates will be provided to the Board on the overall progress of core work and Strategic Actions for 2025. The cumulative progress totals of Actions will provide insight into the overall progress of individual Priorities and Themes.

Alternate Recommendation

THAT the Board approve the 2025 strategic priorities work plan as amended at the March 6th Board meeting.

Respectfully submitted:

"Jim Zaffino"

J. Zaffino, Chief Administrative Officer

"Matt Hatch"

M. Hatch, Executive Assistant

Attachments:

Appendix A – 2025 Strategic Actions with OK Falls Incorporation

Appendix B – 2025 Strategic Actions without Ok Falls Incorporations