



CITY OF
FERNIE

2012-2016 RESORT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



March 19th, 2012

Fernie and Area Resort Municipality Initiative | City of Fernie

Contents

Background	2
Environmental Scan	4
Fernie SWOT Analysis	5
Stakeholder Engagement	6
Communications	7
Vision	8
Goals	8
Measuring and Monitoring Success	9
Capital and Program Projects	10
2012-2016 Resort Development Strategy 5-year Budget Summary	11
Project 1: Recreational Trails	12
Project 1a: Trail Maintenance	12
Project 1b: Trail network master plan	13
Project 3: Fernie Golf Course Improvements	15
Project 4: Cultural and Heritage Tourism Development and Festivals	16
Project 5: Downtown museum and information centre	17
Project 6: Tourism Signage	18
Project 7: Shuttle Service	19
Project 8: Tourism Incentives Investment Fund	20
Project 9: Project Gateway	21
Project 10: Communication and Stakeholder Engagement	23
Consistency Tests	24
Official Community Plan	24
Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan and Trails Master Plan	25
Trails Master Plan	26
Five Year Financial Plan	26
ICSP	26
Partnerships	28
Contingency Plans	28
Appendix A: Stakeholder Engagement Summary Document	29
Appendix B: Draft Terms of Reference for RDS Committee	30

Background

The City of Fernie is a community of approximately 5,000 residents geographically located in the Elk Valley in southeastern British Columbia, near the Alberta border. Fernie is located in Area A of the Regional District of East Kootenay.

Fernie is located on Highway #3 (The Crow's Nest Pass Highway), in an area renowned for its world class recreation and outstanding mountain environment. Fernie has deep roots in the coal mining industry and was incorporated as a municipality more than 100 years ago. It is a community shaped by tragedy and triumph, being devastated by fire on two occasions in the early 1900's and suffering several major mining disasters where many lives were lost. Despite these challenges, the community has persevered and is now poised for another renewal as a mountain resort economy emerges.

Situated three hours south-west of Calgary International Airport and one hour east of Canadian Rockies

International Airport (Cranbrook), Fernie has seen significant interest and investment in the area over the past several from within Canada and internationally from countries such as Australia, Europe and Great Britain. Despite the downturn in the global economy, Fernie continues to see strong tourism interest and visitation.

Traditionally mining, railway and forest sector based, the area is rapidly evolving into a more mature and diversified socio-economic region. While mining and forestry remain very important to the City, other growth sectors include food & beverage, accommodation, entertainment, recreation, retail, personal services, construction, government services and telecommuters.

Substantial new investments are currently accelerating planning and growth in the tourism-recreation and real estate sectors. A developer is currently working on plans to build a master planned golf resort community in the City with as many as 1484 residential units and associated commercial activities. The nearby *Fernie Alpine Resort* and *Island Lake Lodge* are world renowned for their powder skiing and draw many visitors and investors to the region. Mountain biking and dry fly fishing are both experiencing strong growth in Fernie. Many more outstanding recreational activities exist in the region and adventure tourism companies are growing to meet the increased demand for those activities in the region.



An Authentic Mountain Community

Fernie's mounting international popularity has a lot to do with it being an authentic Rocky Mountain community. Close proximity to international airports, large markets in Alberta, Montana and Washington and excellent outdoor recreation (e.g. world class trout fishing in the Elk River that winds through the City) serve it well. With incredible natural assets in the region such as Waterton National Park and Glacier International Peace Park, Mount Broadwood Nature Conservancy, the Flathead Valley and the remainder of the spectacular East Kootenay Region of BC, Fernie is well-positioned for continued growth and international investment.

Some of the key attractions and activities in or near Fernie include:

- World-class dry-fly trout fishing on the Elk River and its tributaries;
- Downhill skiing and mountain biking at Fernie Alpine Resort;
- Mountain biking throughout the region;
- Enjoying the more than 18 kilometers of recreational trails within the City of Fernie;
- Visiting one of the 11+ City parks and green spaces or the City's Aquatic Centre, Memorial Arena, Curling Club, Heritage Library, Downtown Museum or famous Courthouse;
- Touring the Historic Downtown;
- Wildlife viewing in one of North America's most intact eco-systems for large carnivores (grizzly bears, wolves, cougars and lynx);
- Golfing at the Par 72 18-hole Fernie Golf and Country Club in a spectacular alpine setting;
- Snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing;
- Enjoying one of the many fine dining establishments or nightclubs available in the community;
- Shopping in unique shops providing local crafted goods; and
- Waterskiing, canoeing, rafting, houseboating on one of the area's many lakes including Lake Koochanusa.

Finding ways to increase the occupancy rate of tourist accommodations and activities during the shoulder (spring and fall) seasons is a high priority. The Resort Development Strategy will work towards that goal through the expansion of infrastructure and services. There are a number of excellent opportunities for expanded services within the community, and through the implementation of this Strategy, and the associated stakeholder engagement, Fernie intends to continue to draw new and returning visitors.

Environmental Scan

Like many resort communities, Fernie is vulnerable to tourism trends locally, regionally and globally. Tourism trends are very much reflective of the economy and the perceived value for money spent. The year 2009 saw a significant decline in BC's tourism industry. According to BC Stats, 2009 saw a 2.7% downturn in the tourism sector, only to rebound with 4.3% expansion in 2010. Fernie has seen consistent growth in the number of visitors to the community in recent years. The following tables summarize the number of visitors at the two main visitor information centres in the community.

Visitor and Business Information Centre in Fernie on Hwy 3: Total visitor numbers for 2005-2011.

Year	Visitors
2005	9653
2006	6781
2007	10,017
2008	9,831
2009	10,224
2010	11,888
2011	11,341

Museum and Visitor Information Centre, Downtown Fernie: Total visitor numbers for 2005-2011 (note that the location of the visitors centre changed in 2010 to the Heritage BC Hydro building).

Year	Visitors
2005	8854
2006	8957
2007	9141
2008	8519
2009	7449
2010	11,575
2011	13,310

While the economy does influence the tourism in Fernie, the weather plays a role as well, particularly during winter months. A lack of snow, or a particularly good snow year, will result in a fluctuation in visitors that come for the purposes of skiing and/or snowmobiling. With much of the tourism economy based on outdoor recreational activities, tourism in Fernie is vulnerable to the impacts of poor weather conditions. As the SWOT analysis indicates below, a weakness in Fernie as a tourism destination may be the lack of an all-weather facility. The next section summarizes the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats with respect to Fernie as a tourism destination, as updated by stakeholders in 2012 engagement sessions.

Fernie SWOT Analysis

The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis that was completed in 2008 was reviewed and revised by stakeholders during two sessions (February 28th and March 1st, 2012). The SWOT analysis was updated so that the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats accurately reflected the current situation in Fernie. Changes in the economy, local industries, recreational opportunities and tourism organizations are reflected in the 2012 SWOT Analysis update.

S Strengths	W Weaknesses	O Opportunities	T Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International event destination • Terrain and natural surroundings • Specialty shops • Family-oriented community • Moderate winter climate • Economic base • Historical downtown • Golf course • Ski facilities – FAR, ILL, FWA • World class fishing • Strong industrial history • Proximity to AB & USA • 4 seasons • People are friendly, passionate and genuine • Arts & Culture • Infrastructure: Aquatic Centre, Arena, Hospital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility of trails to beginners and families • Soft tourism experiences (birdwatching, etc.) • Trail system connectivity • Coordination of events/activities • Indoor activity centre • Multi-use trails for varying demographics • Nordic skiing opportunities • Availability of rental accommodation • Camping facilities • Internet services: fibre network and access to WIFI • Transportation • Weather dependency • Not enough critical mass • Key primary attractions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convention centre, or equivalent indoor conference centre • All-weather recreational facility (squash, etc.) • Music festivals • Signage – within and outside of Fernie (i.e. Calgary, Cranbrook) • Whitewater play facility • Museum & public art • Transportation network • Upgrades to visitor centre/formation of Rocky Mountain Grizzly Centre • Revitalization of highway • Trail system – bike & walking • Sports training facility • Educational tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of living • Industrial development • Climate change • Erosion of trails due to overuse/poor maintenance • Affordability for tourists (strong CDN dollar) • Economy • Lack of and inconvenience of transportation • Demographics – must cater to all ages • Available workforce • Fuel costs

Stakeholder Engagement

The City of Fernie adopted a 5-year Strategy in February 2009. The Strategy was developed through several stakeholder engagement sessions, which took place in late 2008. As part of the updated 2012-2016 RDS, stakeholders were asked to attend a session to provide input and feedback on several components of the plan.

Stakeholder engagement sessions took place on February 28th and March 1st 2012 at College of the Rockies in Fernie. During these sessions, participants were asked to: provide feedback on the Vision and Goals; review the SWOT Analysis; review the proposed budget and project list, and provide input on implementation.

First Nations consultation is also required as part of the RMI agreement. Input has been requested from the Ktunaxa First Nation, specifically the Director of the Ktunaxa Traditional Knowledge and Language sector. As of the writing of this document, there has been no response to the requests for consultation. The City of Fernie will continue to engage the Ktunaxa Nation, and will accept input and feedback on the Strategy at any point in the process.

Over the 2 sessions, a total of 33 individuals attended, representing a wide range of tourism related businesses, organizations and services. In addition, a presentation was made to Council, providing an overview of the proposed budgets and projects for the 2012-2016 Update. The following organizations were represented at the engagement sessions:

Fernie Lodging Company	Chamber of Commerce
Fernie Golf and Country Club	IGS Group of Companies
Fernie Nordic Society	Fernie Properties
Regional District of East Kootenay	Island Lake Lodge
Fernie and District Historical Society	Fernie Alpine Resort
Fernie Central Reservations	Arts Station - Fernie Arts Council
Tourism Fernie	CP Catering
Fernie Trails Alliance	Shuttle Service
Best Western Fernie	Elk River Guides
Ghostrider Trading Company	Project Gateway
City of Fernie Council	Fernie Snowmobile Association
Parastone	Fernie Heritage Library

The results of the stakeholder engagement are attached as Appendix A. Perhaps the most important discussion of the sessions was that of the future implementation of the RDS, and the support that is available to ensure the RMI funding is used in the most effective manner, resulting in the achievement of the Goals and Vision of the RDS. There was essentially unanimous support for the creation of a 'Committee', 'Board' or 'Advisory Group' which would be formed to serve multiple purposes. The purpose of this group may include (as discussed by all groups in the stakeholder engagement sessions):

- Ensure timely and consistent reporting
- Address challenges to implementation
- Review projects and justify expenditures

- Ensure the projects that are funded are resulting in real increases in tourism
- Add a level of accountability to the funding process
- To review and assess applications to the Tourism Investment Fund
- Increase stakeholder engagement by offering a method of consistent and regular communication between the City and stakeholder groups

It was suggested by stakeholder engagement participants that representatives from different components of the tourism industry (recreation, accommodation, festivals/events, etc.) be represented, as well as City staff. The City of Fernie is committed to creating an RDS Advisory Working Group. The AWG will have the opportunity to review this Resort Development Strategy, and to assess the Vision, Goals and Projects to ensure they are appropriate and reflective of purpose of the RMI funding. The Draft Terms of Reference is provided in Appendix B.

In addition to the sessions that took place in 2012, stakeholder engagement was conducted throughout 2010, during the development of the City's Cultural and Heritage Tourism and Festivals Strategy. Twenty-seven individual stakeholder interviews were conducted and 2 focus group meetings were held to review and validate interview responses and identify strategic themes that informed the Strategy. Representatives of the following organizations were consulted and involved in development of the Strategy: City Council; Chamber of Commerce; Fernie Alpine Resort; Fernie & District Arts Council; Fernie & District Historical Society; Fernie Ghostriders; Fernie Heritage Cemetery Society; Fernie Heritage Library; Fernie Rod and Gun Club; Fernie Trails Alliance; Tourism Fernie; and various local service clubs and tourism operators. Continued partnership and collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders will be essential to effective implementation of the Strategy.

In 2011, the development of a Comprehensive Signage Strategy incorporated extensive stakeholder involvement to ensure that tourist directional and way-finding needs are addressed in an authentic, sustainable manner that improves the visual aesthetic, captures missed opportunities and creates lasting impressions.

COMMUNICATIONS

It is anticipated that through the development of the Advisory Working Group (AWG), there will be ongoing and regular communication between the City of Fernie, the stakeholders and the project delivery partners. The AWG will be formed by Spring 2012 and at that time the mechanisms for communication between all stakeholders and the City of Fernie will be established.

The Resort Municipality Initiative Annual Report to the Province will be the primary formal means of communicating results of investments designed to grow the tourism economy. The Annual Report will contain qualitative and quantitative measures and details on tourism investments and outcomes. Resort Development Strategy partners and stakeholders will be requested to provide annual performance measures and outcomes reporting for the Annual Report.

Physical infrastructure that was made possible by the Resort Municipality Initiative will be identified as such where appropriate with Provincially approved signage. News releases will be prepared with adequate time to allow comment and input from Provincial representatives prior to submission to the media. News releases will be used to

communicate project initiation phases, significant progress reports and project completion. Provincial representatives will be invited to significant events such as ground-breaking or project completion ceremonies.

Vision

Participants in the stakeholder engagements were asked to review the 2009 Vision, and to provide feedback on a revised draft version of a 2012 Vision. The 2012 Vision was drafted to reflect the local values of the community, and was based on the 'Provincial Guidelines' for the RDS. Integrating the comments from the stakeholders, the Vision for the 2012-2016 Resort Development Strategy is as follows:

Fernie is a world class destination that draws new and returning visitors, that encourages visitors to stay longer and spend more, and that provides tourism services and infrastructure which reflect the cultural, recreational, environmental and economic values of the community.

While focused on tourism and visitor experience, this statement is supported by the community-focused Vision of the City of Fernie:

"Fernie is an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable community where everyone has the opportunity to pursue an excellent quality of life."

Goals

The Goals for the 2012-2016 RDS Strategy are updated from the 2009 RDS based on the feedback from stakeholders, as well as the guidelines set out by the Province. The AWG will have the opportunity to refine and review these goals, and to develop goal-specific targets and baseline measures from which to monitor progress. It is possible that the goals may change over the course of the 5-year Strategy; the Strategy is meant to be dynamic and reflective of current priorities. The 2012-2016 Resort Development Strategy has the following 9 goals:

1. Increase visitor traffic in Fernie's historic downtown;
2. Increase commercial accommodation overnight stays and revenue;
3. Increase number of events and festivals;
4. Increase local tourism economy;
5. Increase private investment;
6. Expand recreational opportunities and accessibility for a wider demographic;
7. Increase visitor traffic from the business and professional sectors;
8. Improve recreational infrastructure and services;
9. Improve visitor infrastructure and services.

Measuring and Monitoring Success

There are several processes currently in place through the City of Fernie, Tourism Fernie, the Chamber of Commerce and the downtown Museum and Visitor Information Centre that collect and compile visitor statistics. Further, Tourism Fernie is engaging visitors in online surveys (on-the-ground with iPads). These existing processes of measuring tourism trends and statistics will be leveraged to develop a set of metrics that allow progress and success to be measured in a tangible way. The City of Fernie will be working with stakeholders throughout the implementation of the strategy to identify the best approaches to monitoring progress.

The following table provides the framework for the performance indicators that will be used to measure and monitor success. These indicators and the measurement tools that will be used will be further refined in collaboration with stakeholders and the AWG. It will be important for the AWG to consider the baseline from which the progress is measured and targets are based.

Desired Outcomes (5 years)	Performance Measurement
Effect on Visitors	
15% increase in visitors	Chamber of Commerce stats; # of visitors and origin Fernie Museum and Visitor Information Centre; Network Statistics Program; # of visitors, visitor origin, info requested, length of stay # Non-resident angler license Trails usage survey Truck count at snowmobile staging areas
20% increase in visitor satisfaction	Visitor survey through the Visitor Information Centre
20% increase in visitor return rate	Visitor survey through the Visitor Information Centre
Effect on Tourism Economy	
15% Increase in commercial accommodation occupancy	Hotel Room occupancy measures, MRDT revenue
15% Increase in Tourism Activity #'s	Activity participation numbers (i.e. snowmobile tours, fishing guide tours)
10% Increase in tourism businesses	Chamber of Commerce business surveys Net contribution of business class City tax revenue # of Business Licenses
Effect on Private Investment	
15% increase in private investment	Property taxes and addresses # non-resident property owners (TREND = visitor – property owner – resident)
Effect on Municipal Tax Revenue	
15% increase in municipal tax revenue	% Increase in property tax revenue (total dollars collected) # of new units created
Diversification of local tax base	Proportions of tax assessments by property class as compared to year one

Capital and Program Projects

Through the initial stakeholder engagement process, the following projects were identified for the Resort Development Strategy:

- Recreational Trails;
- Cultural and Heritage Tourism Development and Festivals;
- Downtown Museum and Information Centre;
- Tourism Signage;
- Shuttle Service;
- Tourism Incentives Investment Fund;
- Elk River access improvements;
- Fernie Golf Course improvements; and
- Project Gateway.

For Year 1 of the 2012-2016 Resort Development Strategy, these projects will be funded as allocated in the summary budget below, each as individual projects. Through the most recent stakeholder engagement, participants identified components of each project that they would like to see refined through further assessment and consideration. To that end, years 2-5 are allocated in such a way that allows further prioritization of projects, and more detailed planning to ensure funds are used most effectively in the community.

Year 1 will allow the City of Fernie and stakeholders to reflect on the effectiveness of projects with respect to the goals that have been set out in this Strategy. Projects for years 2-5 will be prioritized based on their ability to achieve the goals of the strategy in the most effective way. There are a number of small, ongoing projects that support continued events and services. It is recommended that these remain fixed through the 5 year strategy.

The AWG will oversee the project identification and refinement for years 2-5. The AWG will be comprised of City staff and stakeholders, representing the relevant and affected sectors of the community (see Appendix B for Draft Terms of Reference). The AWG will review the current projects and associated project plans, and will identify any gaps that exist, or opportunities that should be taken which would result in enhanced tourism services and infrastructure.

Projects will be identified by Fall 2012 and integrated into the Resort Development Strategy. The Province acknowledges the dynamic nature of tourism in British Columbia, and supports regular review of the projects to ensure their continued relevance to the Goals and purpose of the strategy.

The project areas for Year 1, and for consideration in Years 2-5 are described in more detail in the following pages. The following table summarizes the project budgets, and the proposed approach to the Years 2-5 allocations. Note that some projects show funding through to Year 5. These projects are considered good value, as there is significant funding leveraged through partner organizations to deliver the projects. Although included in the budget below, these projects will be reviewed by the AWG, again to ensure they are meeting the Goals of the RDS.

Note that **Year 1** is comprised of carry forward from the previous RDS allocations, and unspent 2009-2011 funds, and also includes the actual 2012 RMI Funding (\$439,000). Carry over is as follows:

- \$200,000 Project Gateway
- \$47,000 Cultural and Heritage Tourism
- \$180,000 Tourism Signage
- \$100,000 Elk River Access
- \$50,000 Golf Course improvements

2012-2016 Resort Development Strategy 5-year Budget Summary

Category	Project	Carry-Over Pre-2012 RDS	Year One (2012)	Year Two (2013)	Year Three (2014)	Year Four (2015)	Year Five (2016)	TOTAL
Outdoor Recreation	Project 1A: Trail Maintenance Winter Grooming / summer trails (FTA)		\$25,000 (grooming)	\$30,000 (grooming)	\$30,000 (grooming)	\$30,000 (grooming)	\$30,000 (grooming)	\$145,000
			\$39,000 (FTA)	Allocations to be determined by stakeholder group during Year 1.				\$578,475 (\$39,000 FTA + \$409,475 Project 1B + \$130,000 Project 2)
	Project 1B: Trails Network Master Plan		\$75,145					
	Project 2: Elk River Access	\$100,000						
Project 3: Fernie Golf Course improvements	\$50,000	\$40,000	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$90,000	
Culture and Heritage	Project 4: Cultural and Heritage Tourism Development & Festivals	\$32,145	\$99,855	Allocations and specific projects/activities to be determined by stakeholder group during Year 1.				\$621,500 (\$526,500 + \$95,000)
	(component of 4): Arts Council		\$15,000					\$15,000
	Project 5: Downtown Museum and Information Centre		\$15,000	\$15,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$90,000
Tourism Infrastructure	Project 6: Tourism Signage	\$180,000		Allocations and specific projects/activities to be determined by stakeholder group during Year 1.				\$606,170 (\$406,170 Project 6 + \$200,000 Project 7)
	Project 7: Shuttle Service		\$40,000					
	Project 8: Tourism Incentives Investment Fund		\$35,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$195,000
	Project 9: Project Gateway	\$200,000	\$50,000	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$250,000
Communication	Communication and Stakeholder Engagement		\$5,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$45,000
	TOTAL	\$562,145	\$439,000	\$405,000*	\$405,000*	\$405,000*	\$405,000*	\$2,621,145

NOTE: "TOTALS" are estimates only for years 2-5, indicated by a *

Project 1: Recreational Trails

PROJECT 1A: TRAIL MAINTENANCE

Project Title	Recreational Trails – Trail Maintenance: Summer Maintenance, Winter Grooming, Snowmobile and Nordic Facility Improvements	
Project description	In partnership with the City, Fernie Nordic Society and Fernie Snowmobile Club, Nordic and snow mobile trails will be groomed for use by visitors and residents alike. There is a small fee associated with the use of the trails to assist in offsetting the costs. A partnership with the Fernie Trails Alliance (FTA) will allocate funding for summer trail maintenance, continued work with landowners in the development of formal landuse agreements and expanded trail signage. Funds will also be used for facility improvements including warming huts, staging area infrastructure, signage and special events. Project budget below does not include the annual amount the City spends on winter grooming of the dyke trail system in the City.	
Milestones	Anticipated Start Date	Winter 2012
	Completion Date	Ongoing
	Operational Date	Ongoing
Goal(s) – Identify both the RDS goal(s) the project supports and the project goal(s)	Goal 1: Expand recreational opportunities for a wider demographic	
	Project Goal: Increased visitor and resident user numbers and satisfaction.	
	RDS Goal 2: Increase local tourism economy	
	Project Goal: Increased revenue to sustain the Nordic Society and Snowmobile Association, allow more activities.	
	RDS Goal 3: Improve accessibility to recreational opportunities	
Additional Benefits	Project Goal: Develop the infrastructure to support expanded winter trails usage.	
	Economic growth and development, enhanced visitor experience, improved health outcomes.	
Performance evaluation and monitoring technique(s) that will be used to evaluate outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of trail use passes and memberships • Kilometers of groomed trails • Number of special events and attendance at those events • Media exposure • User satisfaction surveys • Facility infrastructure investments 	
Funding sources	RMI Funding	\$184,000
	Municipal Funding	
	Other: Fernie Snowmobile Association, Fernie Nordic Society and FTA	\$175,000
Cost of project	\$320,000	
Project Manager	CAO / Director of Leisure Services	
Operating responsibilities	Organization	FSA, FNS and FTA
	Financing	User and membership fees, corporate donations, grant funding, special event revenues.

PROJECT 1B: TRAIL NETWORK MASTER PLAN

Project Title		Recreational Trails – Trails Network Master Plan	
Project description	<p>The municipal funding set out below will be used to undertake a comprehensive review of the City's Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan (2004) and for spatial planning in support of future development at the Aquatic Centre site. Activities will include mapping and inventory, assessment of construction standards for a comprehensive trail network and analysis of gaps in service delivery.</p> <p>Funding will also be allocated towards the continued development of the 'Centennial Trail' – a multi-use trail that connects the City of Fernie trail network to Fernie Alpine Resort, as well as to general improvements to existing trails to enhance user experience.</p>		
Milestones	Anticipated Start Date	Spring 2012	
	Completion Date	Fall/Winter 2016	
	Operational Date	Upon Completion	
Goal(s) – Identify both the RDS goal(s) the project supports and the project goal(s)	RDS Goal 1: Expand recreational opportunities for a wider demographic		
	Project Goal: Meet visitor and resident needs, provide a wide-range of trail types for all age groups and abilities.		
	RDS Goal 2: Improve recreational infrastructure and services.		
	Project Goal: Improved visitor satisfaction and health outcomes.		
	RDS Goal 3: Increase local tourism economy.		
Project Goal: Increased visitation and tourism expenditure, broader market knowledge and media exposure through increased events (e.g. Furious 3, TransRockies, etc.)			
Additional Benefits	Improved trail construction standards, resulting in longer lifespan for infrastructure. Identification of priority projects, and development of detailed operating and capital budgets for future investment. Improved community well-being and sustainability.		
Performance evaluation and monitoring technique(s) that will be used to evaluate outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in tourism • Trail use by recreation type • # of new events/recreation-based festivals 		
Funding sources		RMI Funding	\$409,475
		Municipal Funding	\$60,000
		Other: (identify)	
Cost of project			\$469,475
Project Manager	Director of Leisure Services		
Operating responsibilities	Organization	City of Fernie	
	Financing	Fees and charges, tax revenues	

PROJECT 2: ELK RIVER ACCESS

Project Title	Elk River Access	
Project description	<p>Fly fishing is one of Fernie's signature summer recreation experiences. Fly fishing is a growing part of the community's tourism economy, and the visitors that come to Fernie to fish contribute to the greater community through dollars spent on accommodations, food, retail and recreation/entertainment. Access to the Elk River is via a series of boat launches both within and outside the City boundaries. The overall condition of boat launches/take out points is poor and requires improvement to meet visitor expectations.</p> <p>In 2008 the City of Fernie made improvements to the Dogwood Park boat launch area by installing a permanent toilet facility. Further improvements are required there to service visitor and resident anglers, as well as casual users of the river area, including walkers, runners and boaters (non-motorized). Improvements must also be made to ensure the integrity of riparian areas.</p>	
Milestones	Anticipated Start Date	Summer 2012
	Completion Date	Fall 2014
	Operational Date	
Goal(s) – Identify both the RDS goal(s) the project supports and the project goal(s)	RDS Goal 1: Improve recreational infrastructure and services	
	Project Goal: Improve Dogwood Park boat launch	
	RDS Goal 2: Improve recreational infrastructure and services	
	Project Goal: Restore riparian areas around Dogwood Park boat launch	
	RDS Goal 3: Expand recreational opportunities and accessibility for a wider demographic	
	Project Goal: Provide facilities along Dogwood Park to enhance experience of trail and river users.	
Additional Benefits	Improved boat launch/take out areas will reduce the tendency for river users to use unsanctioned boat takeouts, where damage to riparian areas can be significant. Encouraging focused access points by providing quality facilities will ensure protection for riparian areas. Facilities such as lights, signage, washroom facilities and a boat ramp will be beneficial to all river and trail users.	
Performance evaluation and monitoring technique(s) that will be used to evaluate outcomes	<p>Completion of boat launch resurfacing</p> <p>Improvement of riparian area</p> <p>Improved signage/awareness at boat launch</p> <p>User satisfaction (surveys)</p>	
Funding sources	RMI Funding	\$130,000
	Municipal Funding	Installation, etc. – pending budget
	Other: (identify)	
Cost of project	\$130,000 + municipal	
Project Manager	CAO/Director of Operational Services	
Operating responsibilities	Organization	City of Fernie
	Financing	

PROJECT 3: FERNIE GOLF COURSE IMPROVEMENTS

Project Title	Golf Course Improvements	
Project description	<p>Due to course condition (poor drainage) and its elevation, the Fernie Golf and Country Club opens each season much later than other East Kootenay area courses. This later opening significantly reduces its revenue opportunities and ability to attract tourists to the area. Drainage improvements are anticipated to increase the operating season by two weeks per year (earlier opening day) and eliminate or greatly reduce the days when the course would be open but it is unplayable (averages 10-14 days/season).</p> <p>Investment in improvements are ongoing and include: Rebuilding and expanding tee boxes; Enhancing cart paths and course walkability; Replacing watercourse bridges; Enhancing water hazards; improving the practice facilities; and Upgrading the Clubhouse.</p>	
Milestones	Anticipated Start Date	Spring 2012
	Completion Date	December 2013
	Operational Date	On-going
Goal(s) – Identify both the RDS goal(s) the project supports and the project goal(s)	RDS Goal 1: Increase local tourism economy	
	Project Goal: Improve drainage to allow for an earlier opening day	
	RDS Goal 2: Increase commercial accommodation occupancy rate	
	Project Goal: Enhance facilities to attract visitors (i.e. non-members) to play at the Fernie Golf and Country Club.	
	RDS Goal 3: Improve recreational infrastructure and services	
	Project Goal: Enhance golf course pathways, Clubhouse, waterways and practice facilities to increase non-member use.	
Additional Benefits	Non-members that visit Fernie to play on a golf course with unmatched views will spend their vacation money not only on green fees, but on amenities in the community including: food and beverage; transportation; retail; and accommodation. Investing in the Clubhouse will improve the experience not only for golfers, but for groups or individuals who wish to rent the facility for weddings, conferences, galas, etc.	
Performance evaluation and monitoring technique(s) that will be used to evaluate outcomes	<p>Number of additional playable days</p> <p>Number of non-member users</p> <p>Number of new visitors using the Golf Course</p> <p>Number of additional hotel nights as a result of longer playing season</p>	
Funding sources	RMI Funding	\$90,000
	Municipal Funding	
	Other: (identify)	\$70,000
Cost of project	\$160,000	
Project Manager	Mel Dies, Ray Bryant/FGCC Board of Directors	
Operating responsibilities	Organization	City of Fernie
	Financing	Membership fees

PROJECT 4: CULTURAL AND HERITAGE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND FESTIVALS

Project Title	Cultural Heritage Tourism Development and Festivals	
Project description	<p>In recent years the number of festivals and events in Fernie has steadily increased, primarily through the efforts of dedicated volunteers and community organizations. In 2010 a Cultural and Heritage Tourism Strategy was developed to inform RMI investments, and address the barriers to effective event planning and organization. Identified areas of need include event coordination support, event infrastructure and the development of new event and festival opportunities.</p> <p>Some RMI funds will be allocated to supporting the Arts Council. A small investment in the Arts Council will lead to significant returns in cultural development and consequently greater offerings for residents and visitors to the community. Programs and offerings of the Fernie Arts Council encourage visitors to stay longer and spend more time and money in the downtown core – ultimately increasing business activity and achieving the objectives of the Resort Development Strategy.</p>	
Milestones	Anticipated Start Date	Spring 2012
	Completion Date	Ongoing
	Operational Date	
Goal(s) – Identify both the RDS goal(s) the project supports and the project goal(s)	RDS Goal 1: Increase commercial accommodation occupancy rate	
	Project Goal: Develop new events or festivals for spring and fall seasons	
	RDS Goal 2: Increase local tourism economy	
	Project Goal: Develop a toolkit to help events and programs grow and succeed in Fernie.	
	RDS Goal 3: Increase number of events and festivals	
Additional Benefits	Project Goal: Implement the Cultural and Heritage Tourism Strategy that is designed to guide investments in arts, culture and heritage.	
	Attracting tourists to Fernie through improved cultural, heritage and art opportunities will have numerous co-benefits including more hotel-nights, money spent at restaurants and retail stores, and other local attractions.	
Performance evaluation and monitoring technique(s) that will be used to evaluate outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of events and festivals • Event and festival attendance • Change in non-peak season overnight stay • # of new visitors drawn by event 	
Funding sources	RMI Funding	\$621,500
	Municipal Funding	
	Other: (identify)	To be identified
Cost of project	\$621,500	
Project Manager	City of Fernie	
Operating responsibilities	Organization	City of Fernie, Arts Council, Museum, Library
	Financing	

PROJECT 5: DOWNTOWN MUSEUM AND INFORMATION CENTRE

Project Title	Downtown Museum and Information Centre	
Project description	<p>During Fernie's Centennial year a temporary museum was established in rented space in downtown Fernie. The utility of this service was expanded to include a downtown visitor information centre in December 2004, a service that has proved very successful in serving visitors to Fernie, many of whom are predominantly on foot. This service augments the Visitor and Business Information Centre on Highway 3 that serves the drive-by market.</p> <p>In 2008, the City of Fernie acquired the Heritage Hydro building (formerly the Home Bank) in downtown Fernie for the purposes of a permanent home for a downtown museum and archives and tourist information centre. The acquisition of this significant heritage asset is seen as key to preserving and providing access to the rich fabric of human and environmental history in the Elk Valley. Capital renovation and repair costs are estimated to be approximately \$500,000. Over the past two years, the Downtown Museum and Visitor Information Centre has seen large increases in annual visitation.</p>	
Milestones	Anticipated Start Date	Ongoing
	Completion Date	Ongoing
	Operational Date	Ongoing
Goal(s) – Identify both the RDS goal(s) the project supports and the project goal(s)	RDS Goal 1: Increase visitor traffic in Fernie's historic downtown	
	Project Goal: Increase and improve on the number of exhibits showcasing Fernie's history	
	RDS Goal 2: Improve recreational infrastructure and services	
	Project Goal: Provide enhanced visitor services at a downtown location	
	RDS Goal 3: Increase number of events and festivals	
	Project Goal: Increase and improve on the number of exhibits	
Additional Benefits	The Fernie and District Historical Society provides not only an excellent source of tourist information and local history, but is a critical organization to preserving the stories of Fernie families. It provides a sense of place to families and residents who have called the Elk Valley home since the early 1900's.	
Performance evaluation and monitoring technique(s) that will be used to evaluate outcomes	<p>Number of visitors to the Information Centre and Museum</p> <p>Number of new exhibits/shows</p> <p>Number of events or special attractions hosted by the Museum</p>	
Funding sources	RMI Funding	\$90,000
	Municipal Funding	
	Other: (identify)	\$200,000
Cost of project	\$90,000	
Project Manager	Fernie and District Historical Society	
Operating responsibilities	Organization	Fernie and District Historical Society
	Financing	Matched funding through grants/donations

PROJECT 6: TOURISM SIGNAGE

Project Title	Tourism Signage	
Project description	<p>Signage has long been an identified need to advertise, promote and enhance the visitor experience in Fernie. Moving people effectively throughout the community enhances the visitor experience and helps maximize existing tourism investments by both the private and public sector. Existing signage creates some negative visual effects, is confusing, compromises visitor satisfaction and diminishes community pride.</p> <p>The development of a Comprehensive Signage Strategy has been completed. Implementation of the Signage Strategy will provide consistent, coherent identification of tourism amenities, parks and facilities, businesses and activities. A detailed 5-year implementation plan with an accompanying budget has been drafted.</p>	
Milestones	Anticipated Start Date	Summer 2012
	Completion Date	2016
	Operational Date	
Goal(s) – Identify both the RDS goal(s) the project supports and the project goal(s)	RDS Goal 1: Increase visitor traffic in Fernie’s historic downtown	
	Project Goal: Encourage visitors into Downtown Fernie with appropriate banners and signage along Highway 3	
	RDS Goal 2: Improve recreational infrastructure and services	
	Project Goal: Install consistently branded directional and interpretive trail signage	
	RDS Goal 3: Increase local tourism economy	
	Project Goal: Establish signage that supports local businesses, attractions and activities	
Additional Benefits	The Signage Strategy places great emphasis on the importance of instilling a sense of place through locally relevant signage. Interpretive signage weave in the important cultural, environmental and economic values of the community. The history of Fernie can be told throughout the community, providing an educational opportunity for visitors, and a method of preserving history for locals.	
Performance evaluation and monitoring technique(s) that will be used to evaluate outcomes	<p>% of annual signage strategy implemented</p> <p>Visitor numbers at downtown Museum and Visitor Information Centre</p> <p>Feedback from surveys, where appropriate</p>	
Funding sources	RMI Funding	\$406,170
	Municipal Funding	Installation – pending budget
	Other: (identify)	
Cost of project		\$406,170 + municipal
Project Manager	CAO/Director of Operational Services	
Operating responsibilities	Organization	City of Fernie
	Financing	City of Fernie

PROJECT 7: SHUTTLE SERVICE

Project Title	Shuttle Service	
Project description	For the past several years there has been a day-shuttle service running between the City of Fernie and Fernie Alpine Resort moving residents and visitors between the two for recreation, entertainment and employment. An evening shuttle was added to the service a number of years to improve movement of visitors between the City core and the Resort. The evening shuttle service has been a significant asset to the overall visitor experience, however it has always been a challenge to fund the service and it has been inconsistent and in constant danger of being discontinued. Core funding for the provision of a consistent, well-advertised and secure shuttle service is required as more and more visitors to resort regions have come to expect this service. It is anticipated that the Shuttle Service would have a modest fare component to assist with the costs of the service.	
Milestones	Anticipated Start Date	December 2011
	Completion Date	April 2016
	Operational Date	Every winter season 2012-2016
Goal(s) – Identify both the RDS goal(s) the project supports and the project goal(s)	RDS Goal 1: Increase visitor traffic in Fernie’s historic downtown	
	Project Goal: Implement a shuttle service that provides convenient transportation between the town of Fernie and Fernie Alpine Resort	
	RDS Goal 2: Increase local tourism economy	
	Project Goal: Implement a shuttle service that provides convenient transportation between the town of Fernie and Fernie Alpine Resort	
	RDS Goal 3: Improve recreational infrastructure and services	
	Project Goal: Provide infrastructure that encourages visitors to access downtown businesses and retailers	
Additional Benefits	The City of Fernie supports Provincial targets for emission reductions, and the provision of a shuttle services contributes to reduced vehicle use. The town-Resort shuttle provides convenient access to tourism amenities, food and beverage, retail and entertainment opportunities encouraging growth in the tourism economy and visitor expenditure.	
Performance evaluation and monitoring technique(s) that will be used to evaluate outcomes	Rate of ridership: staff vs visitors # of visitors to downtown Fernie (Visitor Information Centre) Ridership satisfaction (surveys)	
Funding sources	RMI Funding	\$200,000
	Municipal Funding	
	Other: (identify)	\$100,000
Cost of project		\$300,000
Project Manager	CAO	
Operating responsibilities	Organization	City of Fernie, Tourism Fernie, Operator
	Financing	

PROJECT 8: TOURISM INCENTIVES INVESTMENT FUND

Project Title	Tourism Incentives Investment Fund	
Project description	<p>There are potential enhancements to resort community infrastructure and services that are not fully developed or even conceived of at the time the Resort Development Strategy was created. To accommodate such potential projects and more importantly, to create incentives to bring further private and public resources to the table, Fernie has established a “Tourism Incentives Investment Fund”. This fund will allow Fernie and area to be responsive to new opportunities that present themselves to build our resort economy.</p> <p>It is anticipated the RMTTP funds would be leveraged or matched to take advantage of emerging opportunities. The annual stakeholder engagement and communication process could be used to vet potential investments and select those most likely to grow the tourism economy and achieve the goals of the RDS</p>	
Milestones	Anticipated Start Date	2012
	Completion Date	2016
	Operational Date	
Goal(s) – Identify both the RDS goal(s) the project supports and the project goal(s)	RDS Goal 1: Increase number of events and festivals	
	Project Goal: Support and expand special events and projects that attract new visitors to the community	
	RDS Goal 2: Increase commercial accommodation occupancy rate	
	Project Goal: Identify opportunities to support visitor traffic during off-seasons	
	RDS Goal 3: Increase private investment	
	Project Goal: Identify new and emerging opportunities to build the resort economy in Fernie	
Additional Benefits	The Tourism Incentives Investment Fund allows the flexibility to identify and/or receive ideas regarding events, projects or opportunities that may not have been considered in the planning of the Strategy. Small organizations and clubs in the community would have the opportunity to expand events and projects, encouraging the growth of their organization while providing improved services	
Performance evaluation and monitoring technique(s) that will be used to evaluate outcomes	Number of applicants to the Fund Number of events, projects or new opportunities funded Amount of matching funding Number of off-season visitors (Visitor Information Centres)	
Funding sources	RMI Funding	\$195,000
	Municipal Funding	
	Other: (identify)	\$185,000
Cost of project	\$380,000	
Project Manager	CAO	
Operating responsibilities	Organization	City of Fernie
	Financing	

PROJECT 9: PROJECT GATEWAY

Project Title	Project Gateway	
<p>Project description</p>	<p>A destination interpretive centre promoting Fernie’s heritage, the Ktunaxa nation, and a balanced community lifestyle. It is a focal point for providing education to the public on the regional flora and fauna especially the grizzly bear habitat and the environment. Gateway is to make residents proud of its past and present economic activities, under the premise of balance between the environment, human and economic activity.</p> <p>Project Gateway is to convert the existing Chamber of Commerce building and land into a destination attraction called the Fernie Legacy and Interpretation Centre (This is a proposed name only, the feasibility study will determine the final name). The centre will be made up of six components of the Fernie community. The components will be presented or interpreted using advanced audio-visual techniques and animation called “objects theatre”. These will be used to educate and inform visitors on the many aspects of Fernie’s Heritage, Environment, Business, and Community activities.</p> <p>Partnerships On September 29, 2008 the City of Fernie, Chamber of Commerce, Derrick Society and Rocky Mountain Grizzly Centre signed a letter of understanding regarding their commitment to facilitate a joint venture to produce a home for the Rocky Mountain Grizzly Centre, an upgraded derrick display and a re-invigorated visitor information centre providing enhanced tourism information and services. Additional partners are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fernie Chamber of Commerce; • Fernie Derrick Society; • Rocky Mountain Grizzly Centre; • Columbia Basin Trust; • East Kootenay Credit Union; • Province of BC; • The Schad Foundation; • The Wilburforce Foundation; • The Brainerd Foundation; • Fernie Alpine Resort; • Island Lake Lodge; • Wildsight. 	
<p>Milestones</p>	<p>Anticipated Start Date</p>	<p>2012</p>
	<p>Completion Date</p>	<p>Multi-year project</p>
	<p>Operational Date</p>	
<p>Goal(s) – Identify both the RDS goal(s) the project supports and the project goal(s)</p>	<p>RDS Goal 1: Improve visitor infrastructure and services</p> <p>Project Goal: Develop a “Gateway” to Fernie, providing interpretive displays, improved parking and access, enhanced visitor information, services and attractions and appropriate signage.</p> <p>RDS Goal 2: Increase private investment</p>	

	Project Goal: Partner with organizations, public and private to fund and implement the Centre.	
	RDS Goal 3: Increase visitor traffic from the business and professional sectors	
	Project Goal: Support the Rocky Mountain Grizzly Centre, providing learning and research opportunities for the grizzly bear.	
Additional Benefits	Highlighting the unique cultural, historical and natural features of Fernie develops a sense of place for not only visitors to the community, but for local residents as well. Showcasing all that Fernie has to offer in a collaborative and professional manner demonstrates community pride. Providing educational opportunities about the natural environment will foster a sense of responsibility among visitors. A comprehensive Interpretive Centre will promote Fernie as a community with a rich and diverse history, and a promising and sustainable future.	
Performance evaluation and monitoring technique(s) that will be used to evaluate outcomes	Number of Visitors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of visitors will be tracked at the Interpretive Centre • Expected increase from 10,000 to 30,000 Visitor Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity will be provided for visitor feedback through the provision of short surveys 	
Funding sources	RMI Funding	\$250,000*
	Municipal Funding	
	Other: (identify)	\$1,250,000
Cost of project		\$1,500,000
Project Manager	Andre Labine	
Operating responsibilities	Organization	Project Gateway Committee
	Financing	Public and private funders – currently in fundraising phase

PROJECT 10: COMMUNICATION AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Project Title	Communication and Stakeholder Engagement	
Project description	Communication and reporting are two very important components of the Resort Development Strategy. Both provide a level of accountability, and ensure that progress and successes of the Strategy are recognized and communicated. An Advisory Working Group will be formed by Spring 2012 which will be integral to the on-going communication between stakeholders, the City and the Province. Opportunities to implement creative opportunities for engagement and collaboration will be identified by the Advisory Working Group. Reporting will also be conducted with the support of the Advisory Working Group, and will require the collection and analysis of data through surveys, visitor trends and participation numbers where available. The City of Fernie acknowledges that there is great opportunity to enhance the communications and engagement component of the Resort Development Strategy.	
Milestones	Anticipated Start Date	2012
	Completion Date	2016
	Operational Date	On-going
Goal(s) – Identify both the RDS goal(s) the project supports and the project goal(s)	RDS Goal 1: Increase commercial accommodation overnight stays and revenue	
	Project Goal: Engage with accommodators to ensure projects result in increased overnight visitors to Fernie.	
	RDS Goal 2: Improve recreational infrastructure and services	
	Project Goal: Work with local recreational organizations to deliver projects that improve and enhance recreational infrastructure	
	RDS Goal 3: Increase local tourism economy	
	Project Goal: Collaborate with all tourism sectors to ensure successful implementation of the RDS.	
Additional Benefits	Engaging with stakeholders in the community ensures consistent and regular communication of the Resort Development Strategy progress. It also encourages stakeholders to take ownership in the Strategy, and ensure they are taking actions within their own businesses and organizations to offer the best possible experience for visitors.	
Performance evaluation and monitoring technique(s) that will be used to evaluate outcomes	Effective communication and engagement will be monitored through the AWG.	
Funding sources	RMI Funding	\$45,000
	Municipal Funding	Staff resources
	Other: (identify)	May be identified where appropriate
Cost of project	\$45,000	
Project Manager	Advisory Working Group	
Operating responsibilities	Organization	City of Fernie
	Financing	

Consistency Tests

The City of Fernie Resort Development Strategy is consistent with, and compliments, key policy documents such as the Official Community Plan (OCP), Annual Report, Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan, Trails Master Plan, Integrated Community Sustainability Plan, and Five Year Financial Plan.

The Vision for the Resort Development Strategy is designed to be compatible with the community's vision as articulated by City Council. That joint vision defines a preferred future state consistent with the Program's goals to grow the tourism economy, build sustainable communities, protect the environment and diversify and increase municipal revenues. Fernie's heritage and environment figure prominently in the vision but the community acknowledges the need to transition in a manner sensitive to the natural environment and community values to protect, preserve and enhance what makes Fernie special for residents and visitors.

Official Community Plan

Many of the OCP's objectives and policies support the City's Resort Development Strategy including the following:

Objectives:

- 9.1 (d) To promote and create awareness of arts and cultural activities in the community recognizing them as critical components of a healthy community
- 9.1 (e) to support the development and enhancement of the arts community as an economic and cultural development tool
- 10.2 (a) To actively participate in heritage conservation efforts in Fernie
- 10.2 (b) To promote Fernie's historic buildings
- 16.2 (c) To encourage economic diversification
- 16.2 (d) To support small business development
- 16.2 (e) To enhance the availability of visitor services, particularly in the Historic Downtown Core Area
- 16.2 (g) To collaborate with area interests to promote the recreational opportunities in Fernie and in the region
- 17.2 (b) To promote alternatives to vehicular travel as a means to protect the sensitive environment of the Elk Valley
- 17.2 (e) To support improvements and extensions to the City of Fernie's trail network as a means to increase pedestrian and bicycle traffic in the community
- 17.2 (f) To link key institutional, parks and open space and commercial uses with the City's trail network and the urban path system as a means to reduce reliance on single occupancy vehicle trips

Policies:

- 9.4 (a) Work with the local arts community to develop public art to be displayed in areas where it supports community design goals

- 9.4 (b) Participate actively in the preservation of arts and cultural facilities such as the Heritage Library and the Arts Station recognizing that this cultural infrastructure is a defining characteristic of the community
- 15.3 (f) Develop a signage strategy to promote existing recreation opportunities in and around the community
- 16.3 (e) Participate actively in the efforts to revitalize the Historic Downtown Core area...
- 16.3 (g) Work with residents, Fernie Alpine Resort, the Chamber of Commerce, and Fernie Tourism to actively promote the recreation opportunities in the community
- 16.3 (h) Develop a Cultural Tourism Strategy that is designed to guide future municipal investment in the local arts and culture community
- 17.7 (b) Work with Fernie Alpine Resort and community business interests to determine if there is a need for a community shuttle service between the City of Fernie and the Resort
- 17.7 (c) Continue to support the private provision of shuttle service between the City of Fernie and Fernie Alpine Resort
- 17.8 (a) Construct trails in accordance with the Trail Map included as Schedule E
- 17.8 (j) Work with the Regional District of East Kootenay to develop a trail that connects the City of Fernie with Fernie Alpine Resort

PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURE MASTER PLAN AND TRAILS MASTER PLAN

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan outlines the importance of preserving and promoting an understanding of Fernie's heritage and the need for permanent display (museum) space. It also notes the significant contribution that a vibrant arts and culture scene makes to a community and resort destination. The Plan confirms that recreation and parks are 'key economic generators' in the community and that parks, open spaces and natural areas are essential to ecological survival.

The Community Profile section of the Plan says the following:

Fernie's quality of life considerations, such as access to recreational and cultural opportunities, the availability of health and educational services, and environmental amenities such as parks, are important competitive factors for future business investment attraction and economic diversification

The tourism industry is highly seasonal focused on winter-based recreational activity. Fernie's growing stature as an international ski destination and increasing worldwide demand for quality outdoor recreational and cultural experiences suggest continued growth in the tourism industry and investment in recreational property, and related facilities and infrastructure.

In order to maximize Fernie's limited tax dollars for recreational product development and programming, it will be essential to build partnerships; foster a coordinated product development approach; and invest in technology.

The Plan has many recommendations for trail development and multi-season use including a pedestrian bridge across the Elk River, trail construction standards and signage and trailhead parking. The Plan also identifies needed upgrades to the boat launch at Dogwood Park to improve parking, launching and landing maneuverability as well as trail development, landscaping, toilet facilities and multi-season use.

TRAILS MASTER PLAN

The Trails Master Plan requires updating to be consistent with trail and community development, the City's OCP, Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan, the City's Sidewalk Plan and emerging trends and demand (multi-season, multi-modal use, Smart Growth, etc.).

FIVE YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN

The Resort Development Strategy goals and projects have been incorporated into the City's Five Year Financial Plan and are consistent with that. The Plan leverages Program funding with City and private investments to enhance and grow the tourism economy in a manner consistent with the joint vision for the community and Strategy.

ICSP

The City of Fernie recently completed an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan. Within that document, tourism is recognized as an important and significant component of Fernie's future.

Tourism is embedded in the 3 Priorities that were identified through the ICSP development process. Specifically, Priority 2: Ensuring Economic Viability, speaks to the integral role the tourism industry will play in Fernie's future:

Through ensuring economic viability, in the year 2030, Fernie's economy is diverse and mainly locally-based, with a diverse workforce. Businesses, institutions and other Community Partners work together to provide job mentoring and training programs to provide a skilled workforce. While the primary resource industry is still an important economic contributor, local resources are increasingly having value-added as finished products and Fernie is also a leader in clean and renewable technologies. These include businesses built on sustainability practices, such as recycling and deconstruction and a large proportion of local businesses are based on those technologies. Because the community has done such a good job at protecting the environment and natural areas, recreational and leisure opportunities are a big tourism driver. A strong tourism sector complements and supports the local economy, enhances the community's assets and includes a vibrant cultural tourism component. Educational opportunities also provide jobs as well as learning opportunities for creating a locally-based workforce. A larger proportion of the community's dollars is kept in the community through a "buy local" and "hire local" mindset. Fernie has a vibrant Downtown with a range of amenities and services that increasingly attract visitors as well as supports local businesses.

Through the ICSP process, ten strategy areas were identified, with a set of associated “Descriptions of Success”, which describe the community in 2030. “Economy and Work” is one of the ten strategy areas in the ICSP. Within that strategy area, the following Descriptions of Success speak to tourism:

- *Fernie’s economy is diversified and resilient, building on the existing base of sustainable recreation, tourism and natural resource industries*
- *Fernie is known for several national and international attractions*
- *Recreation, tourism and retirement living activities bring significant resources to the community*

Under the “Arts Culture and Heritage” strategy, the following Descriptions of Success align with the Vision and Goals of the RDS:

- *Fernie is recognized for annual national festivals, exhibitions and conferences that attract visitors from near and far*
- *A centralized tourism, activities and information centre with knowledgeable staff provides convenient and comprehensive access to services, accommodations and events in the community throughout the year for both residents and visitors*
- *Fernie’s cultural diversity and heritage is celebrated, provides a strong sense of place and supports the local economy*

And under the “Recreation and Leisure” strategy area, the following Descriptions of Success support the focus on trails and recreation in the RDS:

- *Facilities are designed to be inclusive and multi-generational, providing interactions between people of all ages and abilities*
- *The Elk River and other local water bodies support a range of compatible and low impact recreation activities*
- *Fernie is known as a four season recreation destination that respects and exists within the limits of the natural environment*

Partnerships

Complementary funding will be applied for from a variety of sources and partnerships and leveraging will be actively pursued. Some potential sources include: Local Motion, Towns for Tomorrow; BC Spirit Squares; BC Heritage Trust; the Real Estate Foundation of BC; Cycling Infrastructure Partnerships Program; Columbia Basin Trust; Ministry of Transportation; other foundations, organizations and community groups. In addition several local organizations will apply for funding to complement the Resort Municipality Tax Transfer Program. For example, the Downtown Museum and Info Centre project will be supported by at least \$150,000 from The Fernie and District Historical Society and the Fernie Gateway Project will seek contributions (\$1.25 M dollars) from many sources.

The Tourism Incentives Investment Fund is a unique program designed to leverage the Strategy funding to invest in projects that come forward throughout the 5-year Strategy that cannot be anticipated at the time of its writing. Program eligibility will be tied to the contribution of matching funds, in-kind contributions and revenue leveraging to ensure maximum impact from those investments.

Contingency Plans

If the amount of RMI funds is lower than projected in the spending program the expenditure for the future years will be reassessed and adjusted accordingly. RMI revenues will be monitored by City of Fernie staff on an ongoing basis. Additional revenue sources and funding opportunities will be continually evaluated and sought after to augment program goals or address funding shortfalls.

If there is excess revenue over expenditure plans during the term of the 2012 – 2016 Resort Development Strategy those excess funds will be carried forward and incorporated into a successor five-year resort development strategy.

In order to ensure that a project does not fall short in expected funding, percentage allocations of total revenue annually will be allocated for each project. During Year 1, the AWG will prioritize and identify appropriate percentage-based allocations of expected funding for years 2-5 of the Strategy.

Appendix A: Stakeholder Engagement Summary Document

<<see attachment>>

Appendix B: Draft Terms of Reference for RDS Committee

Fernie and Area Resort Development Strategy Advisory Working Group (the AWG)

A. Purpose

The City of Fernie anticipates the receipt of annual funding from the Province of BC under the Resort Municipality Initiative (RMI) program. RMI funding from the Province is contingent upon its approval of a five-year (2012-2016) resort development strategy (RDS) developed in compliance with Provincial guidelines and requirements. The RMI requires annual reporting to the Province and tourism industry stakeholders, including qualitative and quantitative measures and details on RMI expenditures and outcomes in comparison to identified RDS goals and objectives, and general information on the state of the tourism economy and outlook. The AWG will assist with the preparation of annual reports, including performance measures and outcomes, other RDS metrics, monitoring the tourism economy and communicating and engaging tourism industry stakeholders to promote understanding, awareness, participation and support for the RDS.

With respect to the 2013-2016 RDS projects, programs and services, the AWG will prioritize and fine-tune those projects based on priority and their ability to support or achieve the goals identified in the Strategy. The AWG will help define implementation strategies and timelines for priority projects, identify project partners and other funding opportunities and help to refine metrics to measure success and ensure continued stakeholder engagement and communication. The AWG will strive to complete this task by the end of September 2012. Going forward, the AWG members will be operational partners with the City of Fernie, leading or facilitating specific projects independently or in collaboration with the City.

On an ongoing basis, the AWG will promote awareness of the opportunities available under the Tourism Incentives Investment Fund program area and assess applications for funding to ensure that proposals are relevant, timely and support RDS goals and objectives. The AWG will make recommendations related to those applications to Council. The use of RMI funding is subject to the approval of Council and/or the City's Purchasing Policy and other applicable federal, provincial and local legislation, regulations and policies.

B. Advisory Working Group composition

The AWG will consist of nine members representing the following organizations and agencies:

- Fernie Chamber of Commerce (1)
- Tourism Fernie (1)
- Fernie Alpine Resort (1)
- Accommodation provider > 30 rooms with rental management (1)
- Accommodation provider > 30 rooms solely owned (1)
- Fernie Trails Alliance (1)
- Fernie and District Arts Council (1)
- City of Fernie staff (2)

The City of Fernie will send written notice to the applicable AWG organizations and agencies requesting them to nominate one of the members to the AWG for a two-year term. In the event of a vacancy occurring during a members' term the City will request the applicable organization or agency to nominate a replacement. A failure by an member organization or agency to nominate a member to the AWG or a vacancy or vacancies shall not invalidate or render non-functioning the AWG provided it consists of at least 5 members.

While not a council committee, the AWG will strive to adhere to the committee meeting guidelines set out in the *Council Procedure Bylaw*.