

# Town of Bassano

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## A Year at a Glance

As Mayor and Council, we have planned to make 2022 a year filled with public engagement and activities to support our long-term strategic objectives. Since the October election, we have invested many hours to orient ourselves with local governance, projects, and current priorities, this will continue for the next five months. Together, we are focused on a review of each municipal department (e.g. public works, administration, recreation and culture, utilities, economic development, social services) to understand how they function and their overall needs. Building this foundation is vital to our overall success as a council over the next four (4) years as we serve the community.

A Year at a Glance highlight some of the initial projects we are committed to in 2022:

- **Major Infrastructure**

First, we will see to the completion of the lagoon upgrade. We anticipated substantial completion by December 31, 2021. This date has been pushed into the spring/summer of 2022 as we await the delivery of valves and other materials (delayed since May of 2021). In December, we camera'd the sanitary main trunk line. Approximately 200 meters of sanitary trunkline will be replaced adjacent to the anerobic cells plus two manholes. This is a project scope change and will be completed this year pending access to materials. '

Second, various meetings will be scheduled to plan the next major infrastructure project (water, sewer, roads). We have advised for the past few years that the next major infrastructure project is coming and eagerly anticipated work in 2021. Of course, that did not happen as we were unable to start the lagoon upgrade until that time. The lagoon upgrade is the largest infrastructure project Bassano and possibly the region has ever had – it had to remain prioritized. As the project wraps up, this frees up our resources to move to the next project.

There are many challenges that must be addressed as part of these upgrades since upper levels of government have cut infrastructure grants up to 40 percent partly because of pandemic expenses. There has been an exponential increase in product costs, especially pipe. As a council with our team of professional advisors, we must come up with a creative plan that enables us to upgrade some undersized/deteriorated utilities in priority areas in alignment with material costs and potential grants. This will be done with great care, time, and attention. As we work through this process, there will be public updates.

- **Recreation & Leisure Master Plan – Implementation**

With the endorsement of the Master Plan from our partners, the County of Newell, we will focus on implementation of the over the next few years. There are three initial objectives to tackle, 1) meet with recreation and culture user groups to review existing lease agreements to ensure everyone's needs are being met; 2) find ways to lower operating costs and implement them throughout facilities; and 3) program underutilized facilities.

We will begin with an in-depth analysis of the Thrive Fitness Center to determine the facility's long-term viability. The facility operates at a deficit (loss) and has low usership. With input from the public, council will determine if the facility should remain status quo, be relocated to a larger facility, transitioned to a private entity, or closed. A public survey will be issued shortly to begin gathering information. This is a starting point – no decisions have been made – it is anticipated that council will make a decision in May regarding next steps.

## Recreation & Leisure Master Plan continued...

An operating master plan will be developed for the Bassano Outdoor Pool as it relates to youth leadership, programs, water safety, facility management, employee retention, and partnerships. The facility is subsidized on average \$100,000/annum through taxation. We must ensure the facility operates as efficiently as possible, with top quality services delivered to residents and patrons.

We aim to meet with two recreation user groups this year to review the operating agreements and negotiate updated terms where required.

We will complete the addressable fire alarm system upgrade at the Joint Use Facility (pool and arena).

**FUN NEW FAMILY EVENT ALERT** for 2022, the Town has been selected to host a BBQ competition. The event will be held between the campground and Community Hall on **June 3-5**. We could not be more excited to bring the smell of fresh BBQ to Bassano, to create some fun rivalries, enjoy live music, experience car shows and more. Event planning begins on January 9. Stay tuned for more information. We see this as the first of many!!

### ▪ Economic Enrichment Strategy – Implementation

An economic plan was approved in mid-2021 and implementation will begin this year. The first task requires council to develop a policy that defines growth objectives. More specifically, council will look at what growth means from assessment, development, to population. This is important because growth must be defined before it can be achieved.

Once growth objectives are defined, the Town can advance its plan to grow the existing economy using business retention and expansion tactics. This will include engagements with the local business community to develop an action plan that addresses communications, business needs, partnership opportunities, and growth/marketing options.

### ▪ Land Use Bylaw 921/21 – Implementation

With the passing of the new Land Use Bylaw (LUB) in October, implementation policies must be developed. This includes various development guides and marketing material to promote main street revitalization, the advantages of constructing accessory dwelling units (e.g. garden suites, carriage houses), home based business opportunities, and commercial/industrial opportunities.

### ▪ Beautify Bassano Initiative

We will continue to implement the Beautify Bassano Initiative (BBI). This includes but is not limited to public and private lands clean up, keeping green spaces well maintained, prioritizing road maintenance, and supporting volunteer projects. As a reminder, the BBI is a key operating plan for the public works department. At the back of the plan, there are various maps that highlight public works tasks from snow clearing, to crack filling – this plan influences the municipal budget.

### ▪ Bassano Continuing Care Campus

Council is serious about seeing the health centre project come to life through the Newell Housing Foundation. Deputy Mayor John Slomp has actively taken hold of this project to represent Bassano's interest to advance the project with the support of council. The Foundation merged in 2020 and then appointed a new CAO. With these tasks completed we anticipate the Foundation will realign their focus to continue to work on the project. We believe FAB Village Square remains a viable way to advance the project. Updates will be provided as they become available.

**Join us on this journey as we work together to complete these initiatives for Bassano and more in 2022!**

#### FRIENDLY REMINDERS FROM THE TOWN OFFICE – WE CAN HELP

- ✓ Renew your dog and cat licenses in January – they are due at the beginning of each year
- ✓ Renew your business license
- ✓ Join the property tax payment program by January 31 so that you can make monthly payments and avoid penalties

The former Stiles building (340 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue) is for sale – details can be found at [www.bassano.ca](http://www.bassano.ca). The building has been fully abated of hazardous material and we welcome a new main street business with residential living upstairs. List price: \$7,000 – see conditions. For more info, contact Amanda Davis, CAO at 403-641-3788 or [cao@bassano.ca](mailto:cao@bassano.ca).

We wish farewell to Cpl. Sebastian Andrews of the Bassano RCMP as he transitions into a new role of Sgt. in Spiritwood, SK. His leadership within our community has been well recognized and his desire to serve and protect will be missed.

Cpl. Josh Argue has been appointed as the interim detachment commander and will take on his leadership duties until a permanent replacement is found. Welcome Cpl. Argue to Bassano!