

Council’s Strategic Plan and How the Majority Failed to Deliver

Early in their term, the current council prepared a Strategic Plan that supposedly outlined their priorities and objectives for governing Rocky View. If they had actually delivered on those commitments, the last four years would have been dramatically different. Unfortunately, the council majority forgot about their commitments almost before the ink was dry.

Here’s a comparison of what they promised and what we got instead.

Strategic Plan Promises	What the majority delivered
Strategic Plan “Values”	
Foster a culture of honesty, openness, trust, and respect	Sanctions and politically motivated disqualification charges Systemic bullying
Courage to take personal responsibility to do the right thing	Rarely explain reasons for decisions – creates a lack of trust Majority never took responsibility for wasting County resources on frivolous court case against Wright – thrown out as a political vendetta – or on pursuing their appeal of the sanctions case
Strategic Plan “Mission”	
To preserve Rocky View’s diverse landscape, lifestyle, and economic opportunities	Proposed radical changes through major high density residential and commercial / industrial development – Ascension, Springbank ASPs, Glenmore East ASP, Highway 1 East ASP
Strategic Plan Themes	
<i>Service excellence</i> – ensure that customers can easily navigate processes	Complicated permitting process with goal posts that keep changing
<i>Financial health</i> – fully transparent financial decision-making	Purchased two utilities with minimal public disclosure supporting purchase based on unrealistic growth projections
<i>Financial health</i> – share how to mitigate economic risk	Issue has never been addressed in any council decision
<i>Financial health</i> – find ways to manage and recover costs	Approved new off-site levies that are insufficient to recover costs, meaning that ratepayers are subsidizing new development

Strategic Plan Promises (cont'd)	What the majority delivered (cont'd)
<i>Financial health</i> – find ways to manage and recover costs	Failed to create levy for \$9.6 million extension of piped services to West Balzac
<i>Responsible growth</i> – have a vision for growth and a clear understanding of how decisions impact County finances, infrastructure, and environment	<p>The only vision the majority had was to say “yes” to whatever applicants bring forward – with no plan supporting them</p> <p>Impact of proposals on County finances or infrastructure rarely, if ever, discussed and attempts to do so are shut down by the majority</p> <p>Approved a revised Municipal Development Plan with significantly expanded growth areas and virtually no enforceable rules</p>
<i>Responsible growth</i> – provide effective process for community input	<p>Severely curtailed public participation in Area Structure Plan development</p> <p>Eliminated newspaper advertising which limits number of people who know changes are being proposed</p> <p>Reduced amount of time for groups to speak at public hearings</p> <p>Unable/unwilling to permit remote public participation in public hearings during Covid, even though many municipalities provided this option</p>
<i>Responsible growth</i> – communicate why we make the decisions we do	Majority seldom provides an explanation for their decisions. The only councillors who do are Hanson, Kissel, and Wright. No official explanations on County website.
Strategic Objectives	
<i>Create a culture of customer service</i>	Enormous number of requests for late tax payment penalty cancellations indicate a real failing in communications

Strategic Plan Promises (cont'd)	What the majority delivered (cont'd)
<i>Enhance transparency and communication</i> – important for residents and businesses to easily access information about the County’s governance and day-to-day operations	County website is difficult to navigate and not user-friendly. Freedom of Information (FOIP) requests have soared because of increasing difficulty accessing otherwise public information
<i>Enhance transparency and communication</i> – improve how we communicate using a variety of communications channels that reflect the diversity of resident preferences	Stopped all newspaper advertising and restricted communications to the RVC website and Facebook page
<i>Embrace partnerships</i> – work collectively with other jurisdictions	Ongoing fight with the CMRB – hired a lobbyist and launched advertising campaign against the CMRB
<i>Strengthen financial resiliency</i> – develop comprehensive cost-recovery policies	Approved off-site levy rates lower than required to recover costs
<i>Increase awareness of the county’s financial risk tolerance</i> – ensure ratepayers understand the county’s use of debt	Increased use of Tax Stabilization Reserve as a substitute for external borrowing, which obscures actual debt utilization
<i>Guide the County’s growth pattern</i> – provide a vision that aligns with the regional plan and is supported by public engagement of residents	Pushed through the revised Municipal Development Plan, Springbank ASPs, Qualico’s Old Banff Coach Road, Ascension – all against virtually unanimous opposition from residents
<i>Guide the County’s growth pattern</i> – match growth to infrastructure development	Proposed commercial / industrial ASPs in areas not serviced by piped water / wastewater or well serviced by road networks Frequently approved development without considering necessary upgrades – approach to infrastructure is reactive rather than proactive

Residents need a council that will actually carry out these promises – not more of the same failure to deliver with the same or different names.

Prepared by:
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