



Mayor's Report – August 8, 2023

With smoky skies and the Eagle Bluff fire burning to our south, it's an appropriate time for the District to update its Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA), which identifies climate related impacts on municipal assets, and its Hazard Risk and Vulnerability Analysis (HRVA), which assesses all kinds of risks to the whole community.

As part of the review process, our Sustainability Co-ordinator organized a two-day workshop on July 25 and 26 that I attended along with Councillor Betts, Councillor Peake, senior District staff, and representatives from several relevant community and regional organizations including the Chamber of Commerce, Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS), and Interior Health.

Together we considered various potential hazards and rated the consequences should they strike Summerland. We looked at wildfires, landslides, floods, drought, extreme heat, extreme cold, pandemics, cyber attacks, plane crashes – you name it.

When conducting an HRVA, it's important to not only consider the consequence but also the frequency or likelihood of a disaster happening. Even though a hazard is likely to occur, the consequences could be minimal. Or there could be a hazard that's unlikely to occur but if it did, the consequences would be devastating.

All the data from the workshop will be collated and charted to produce an updated HRVA, which will come to a future meeting of Council.

The HRVA, which is provincially mandated, is important for planning purposes and for establishing priorities to mitigate hazards and prepare for emergency response and recovery.

On July 27, the day after the Hazard Risk and Vulnerability workshop, I attended an RDOS training workshop on emergency management for senior officials. The training covered the legislated responsibilities of local government in an emergency as well as the role of an Emergency Operations Centre, when to declare a state of local emergency, and the need to work together as a region based on capability and capacity.

The Eagle Bluff fire is good example of the region working together, including the coordination of Emergency Support Services which is coming from Summerland, led by Bonnie Bordas.

Councillor Van Alphen and I attended the Regional District's regular board meeting on August 3, where the Board reviewed public feedback to revisions to the South Okanagan Regional Growth Strategy, which proposes to remove Greata Ranch, Willow Beach and Anarchist Mountain as Rural Growth Areas. The proposal was also to redesignate Naramata and Kaleden as "Village Centre" areas that would allow for some densification. However, following Board discussion, staff were directed to instead bring forward a bylaw amendment designating all of Naramata and all of Kaleden as "Rural Residential" areas.

On July 24, Deputy Mayor Trainer, CAO Statt and I met with senior management at the Summerland Research and Development Centre to discuss the facility's role and importance to the community, in particular in respect to public access to the Ornamental Gardens and the former Superintendent's Residence. We also provided an update on the

establishment of a Food Hub, and they in turn asked for our assistance speaking to the Province about traffic issues with the Research Centre intersection and Highway 97. A delegation from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTi) happened to be at the August 3 RDOS meeting so I was able to convey the concerns. I have also written to MLA Ashton in respect to highway safety through the length of Summerland.

Speaking of the Food Hub, on July 26, CAO Statt and I, along with Charles Cornell from Community Futures, met with Member of Parliament Tako van Popta, who is the Opposition Critic for PacifiCan, the federal agency responsible for economic development in British Columbia. I met with Mr. van Popta when I was in Ottawa at the end of May and he happened to be in the Okanagan so we met with him to further our discussion about the Food Hub and Community Future's grant application to PacifiCan.

Finally, on July 31, Councillor Barkwill and I attended the Chamber of Commerce annual general meeting and I had the pleasure of swearing in two young local businesspeople as new Chamber board members – Callan Power and Nelson Annable.

It's always encouraging to see the next generation taking on leadership roles and contributing to the community in positive ways.

Nine other Chamber board members have a year remaining in their terms and will be staying on, making it a very diverse and capable Chamber board. I am confident they will serve as a strong, unified voice for local business and a reliable partner for the District as we work together for the betterment of Summerland.

Doug Holmes
Mayor of Summerland