

In the children's book *The Little Engine That Could*, a stranded train can't find an engine to take it over the mountain. Only the little engine is willing to try, and while repeating the mantra "I think I can, I think I can", overcomes the seemingly impossible. It's the story of Canal Flats, re-inventing itself economically and focused on quality of life enhancement for residents. Here's a recap of our 2021 success stories:

COMMUNITY MATTERS

Power to the People - Census Canada estimates 2020 population of 733 in Canal Flats, a 9.7% increase since 2016. This is a reversal of the 7% population decline following mill closure, is a recent growth rate comparable to other communities in the Columbia Valley, and is 3.8% higher than BC in same period.

Health To You - a Medical Clinic will be coming back to Canal Flats! Location: ground floor of the Village office. A commitment from the Interior Health Authority has been secured to provide physician and related services – including exam room, adult day services (services for folks who need help meeting basic needs), and a video telehealth portal. Council has approved use of \$156K from its COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant for Local Governments to renovate the space currently occupied by the Headwaters Arts Society. The Village is working with the Arts Society to find a new space. Anticipated service start: later 2022. More details to come.

Every Child Matters – the 2900 sq. ft., \$1.6M daycare building is anticipated to be complete in Spring, 2022. Capacity: 40 children. *Grant-funded on donated land.*

Home Sweet Home – the first three houses are being built in Painted Ridge. At build-out of 31 lots, the development is estimated to generate 1/3 of total current taxation in Canal Flats – which is extremely helpful in enhancing ability to pay for services and amenities for all residents.

For Art's Sake – The Portal – a first sculpture in Canal Flats is located in Portage Square. Artist: Paul Reimer, Cranbrook. Constructed of steel from the former sawmill, the structure's fluid form reflects the passage of time, the evolution of industry and technology, and the beauty and power of the waterbodies that surround the village (so says the story of *The Portal* on the stone adjacent to the installation). All art is subjective. We are better to have art than not. Creativity is the side of humanity that should have us ask questions, inspire, and be better for the experience. Whether we love artistic expressions or not, we can appreciate the value of having it present in our midst. *Grant funded.*



Happy Trails – the Village is actively seeking grant funding to continue to build the Shore to Shore pathway – what will someday be a 3.7 km paved, non-motorized multi-use pathway connecting the Kootenay River and Columbia Lake. The path will uniquely connect two major water bodies in the Columbia Valley, and the majority of it will be flat in an urban setting unlike most of the Columbia Valley trail network that is mountainous – making it accessible to more users. The path will enhance quality of life, and add a new summer tourism anchor that can support new business opportunities. See Parks, Recreation and Trails Strategy (<https://canalflats.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/293?preview=14753>) for more information about long term vision. Phase 1: 1.25 km gravel completed.



Fire Away - a new rescue truck was purchased for the Canal Flats Fire Rescue fleet.

Court Sport Meets It's a Dog's Life – a pickleball/tennis court has been constructed in Lion's Park, and a dog park is to be established in 2022 north of the Village office via grant funding from the Safe Restart Grant Program.

Home Sweet Home

- A first example of a new house/accessory dwelling unit was constructed. Canal Flats policy allows for up to 3 dwelling units on a property (residence + secondary suite attached to residence + accessory dwelling unit in backyard). In a BC/Canada desperate for affordable housing (and where most places allow for 1-2 units max. in residential zones), Canal Flats policy is rare in Canada, and enables a homeowner to move beyond a second unit “mortgage helper” to a third unit “property as investment.”
- A Housing Needs Assessment (<https://canalflats.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/293?preview=18736>) was prepared to better understand the current housing landscape in the Village and make projections about the types of housing required in future to meet resident needs. *Grant funded.*

Green Thumb - 40 deciduous trees were planted on the south portion of Grainger Road. Grant funded by the BC Hydro ReGreening program.

Coming of Age – Canal Flats adopted an Age Friendly Plan (<https://canalflats.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/19832?preview=19834>) that will work toward provision of supports for elder residents to be able to remain in Canal Flats and not have to move elsewhere. *Grant funded.*

Rest In Peace - two benches were placed, and four maple trees planted, at the Canal Flats Cemetery.

A River Runs Through Us - a Kootenay River Beach Feasibility Study (<https://canalflats.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/20048?preview=20049>) was completed to gauge community interest in modest riverside amenity for local enjoyment. *Village staff completion.*

Picture It – a Downtown Streetscape Beautification Plan (<https://canalflats.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/18008?preview=18009>) - with “mountain modern industrial” aesthetic, was completed for the Village core (portion of Grainger Rd. and Burns Ave.). *Plan-making grant funded, with some grant funds for modest Phase 1 implementation in 2022.*

Village Beautiful – with gentle “mountain modern industrial” encouragement from the Village, the TELUS property on Grainger is in the process of being enhanced. New fencing and a new roof were installed in 2021. New building siding will be installed in Spring, 2022.

Signs of the Times

- A new highway north entrance sign has been installed. This mountain modern industrial sign will age gracefully as the high-quality COR-TEN steel weathers into a modern industrial finish.
- A Columbia Valley and Canal Flats welcome sign has been designed and tendered, and is anticipated to be installed at the current location of the south sign in January, 2022. *Grant funded by Columbia Valley Community Economic Development.*



Give It A Lift - Sewer Lift Station #1 will be re-constructed in 2022, with a tender for contractor selection in early 2022. We know it’s expensive, but engineering analysis states this is a #1 asset re-investment priority, with significant risk without immediate re-investment.



Our Vision: We are the lifestyle-priced, family-friendly village building a new future in housing, quality of place, tourism, and a unique work-live downtown. We will be a key employment centre in a Columbia Valley that reconnects people to nature....and each other.



About Mountain Modern Industrial

“Mountain modern industrial” has been part of Canal Flats visualization of the future for several years – in plans (Canal Flats Design Guidelines, 2018 http://www.canalflats.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2018-11-21_Canal-Flats-Design-Guidelines.pdf, the Downtown Streetscape Beautification Plan, 2021 <https://canalflats.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/18008?preview=18009>) and first builds (daycare, The Portal public art installation, highway entrance sign). New home construction on Baillie Grohman also reflects this style. Materials encouraged (not mandatory) to be used reflect the mountains (rustic timber finishes, natural stone), and honouring of industrial history and continued presence (weathered steel). Additional elements include human scale, architectural detailing to strengthen visual, and celebration of outdoors in building (e.g. large windows) and site design (e.g. patios). It all comes together to reflect a community desire for Canal Flats to be unique in the Valley, and inspire for the future.

PLACEMAKING...

(Village beautiful) is increasingly important for investment attraction and retention in a world where more people are choosing to locate in lifestyle communities – with increased ability to work from anywhere. The Village of Canal Flats goal is 1000 residents – an important milestone we believe achieves significant progress in making sure the village remains a sustainable community now and into the future.



BIKE RACKS



WAYFINDING + INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE

- Wayfinding signage on one side
- Interpretive signage on back



BOLLARDS



BEAR PROOF BINS



BENCHES

- 2 Lengths
- Backed and backless versions: placed strategically
- Placement and direction to capitalize on significant views
- Incorporate The Village of Canal Flats branding elements
- Incorporate street names to improve wayfinding



BUSINESS MATTERS

Gypsum - your drywall could soon come from Canal Flats. CertainTeed (a subsidiary of Saint-Gobain, the world's leading producer of gypsum products) has secured another 50 years in the Valley with construction of a new gypsum mine 10 km NE of Canal Flats – including upgrading of the road from Canal Flats to the mine. The new mine will replace CertainTeed's Windermere Operations near Invermere. Jobs: 80 during construction period. 15 when fully operational by early 2022. Capacity: 400K tonnes/yr over 43 years. We can expect over time that some employees will choose to reside in Canal Flats.

Bitcoin - Iris Energy has expanded to 30MW (one of the largest in Canada and arguably by far the largest in a small community) and 25 employees. The Australian company is officially on the stock market as of November (NASDAQ: IREN). A green energy bitcoin mining company, the data centre infrastructure in Canal Flats is a window to the world of cloud-based services (for all our phone content), Internet of Things/edge computing (data attached to objects), blockchain (transaction management), artificial intelligence, and high-performance computing (e.g. visualization of engineering design). Infrastructure as important to the future as roads and water/sewer....

Incentive – The Revitalization Tax Incentive Bylaw was amended this year to include municipal tax rate reduction for any non-residential development in the Village. Commerce and industry is vital for all of us, with benefits including direct employment generation and enhanced ability to re-invest in basic infrastructure and pay for desired services and amenities.

Business in the Works – three Master Plans were approved by Council: 1) Mended Star (commercial agriculture); 2) 8855 Dunn Street (agrihood); 3) Pathfinder Kootenay River at Canal Flats (RV campground).

Tourism – a grant-funded digital kiosk with comprehensive Canal Flats and Columbia Valley tourism information has been installed in Canal Flats (arena vestibule).

Strategy – the Economic Development Strategy (2021-2025) has been updated and is focused on job creation and community amenity enhancement (<https://canalflats.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/18908?preview=18910>).

Resident Attraction – a grant-funded, 2-year program through early 2023 is under way. The program focuses on attracting independent entrepreneurs, digital/remote workers, creators, and professional services....important to reaching a more self-sustaining (a broad taxation base to re-invest in needed basic services/fund services and amenities, etc.) 1000-person population target.

Ponderosa Place – mixed-use commercial residential is complete and spaces are full. The Event Centre (former gym) is the latest renovation to come to life. A *Columbia Lake Technology Center project*.