

# Smith Creek ASP Workshop Notes

## October 17, 2015

### General Comments and Questions

Process: There is still a degree of cynicism in the community with regard to the planning process. People just don't believe in the process or that we will come to resolution. There is a lot of history and baggage.

Wildlife: Canmore should really leave the wildlife corridor decision to the province and the scientists. The majority of residents in the Town are not qualified.

There is a complete lack of trust with government and the process of decision-making.

We are dealing with movement corridors and in some areas we are restricting that movement. We want animals to move through to habitat areas not stay within the corridors. Wildlife will adapt to what we throw at them.

We need to stipulate corridors and get on with the planning. There is a concern about analysis paralysis. The real problem is that animals like the same areas that humans do – so we have a conflict.

The focus should really be on mitigation and the edges and buffers to the corridors and what happens after the corridors are defined – we need to deal with human use of corridors.

Affordability: We need to ensure that we address the needs of poorer families in the valley. This development has the opportunity to address some of that.

Vision: What is the Town's future vision? This is not clearly articulated and all plans that come forward whether land development and/or economic development should align with that vision for the future.

This will help define what the most productive uses are within the development and how the development can support the future vision, goals and objective of the Town.

It will also help define how the Smith Creek area supports adjacent areas.

### Group Discussions

#### *Group One*

Economic Development: The development needs to include jobs to create demand for housing (don't build opportunities for second homes) – we need to have residents living and contributing to the Town.

The more land there is to develop the greater attraction for commercial developers – there has to be an analysis – it has to work for everyone. The development really needs to look at economic viability – how do we know people would be interested in buying larger lots, what

types of business are interested in settling in Canmore and the Smith Creek area? What are the incentives if any, to encourage economic development?

There is a need for an overall vision of the land – What are the Town and community goals for the broader Town and how can this development support and enhance those goals?

Affordable housing should be on most affordable (least desirable land) – this is reality.

A business/industrial park something similar to Elk Run light industrial and a business park (maybe a business campus) with learning opportunities rolled in.

Continuity/Balance: Need to see how this fits into adjacent lands (Resort Centre, Stewart Creek, Dead Mans Flats) – Smith Creek needs to be viewed as part of a bigger whole. Wildlife and economics may not be balanced – they may not be equal.

Wildlife Corridors: What about the interface between the Wildlife Corridor and the development – consensus was to see a soft edge rather than a hard edge

- Buffer at the edge of the corridor and a fence would site in the park – linear park outside the fence – that way the trails would be established and there would be less opportunity for people to use the corridor
- The idea of a fence is sometimes problematic – seems like it should increase developable land and allows flexibility in other areas but the fence constrains the corridors and it is a harsh transition
- Who would maintain the fence? The Town would end up maintaining the fence. That may not be the case – HOA could be established for the sole purpose of maintaining the fence
- Large lots (potentially with an environmental easement) should be explored – not sure about the market but people are less likely to trespass on private land than lands held by the province through conservation easement
- Also, large lots are likely to see owners who likely are not there full time
- Large lots may also allow the economics of affordable housing to work better
- What about the powerlines? An industrial interface likely doesn't provide enough of a barrier or edge
- Could the Wildlife Corridor crossing be a tunnel?
- Continuity of the corridors should be considered. There is a disconnect the way it is proposed in previous decisions

The Smith Creek ASP should address the following key points:

1. Viability of the development is critical – what roles do the Town and developer play?
2. Macro – larger view of the ASP – what attracts people to Canmore? What is the developers responsibility vs that of the Town?
3. Widen Corridor – use logic, look at landscape/terrain, determine line based on best practice
4. Hard or soft edge – soft edge preferred no fence.
5. Commercial on the east by the interchange and think about mixed use – some residential including affordable (keep in mind that people don't always want to live where they work)
6. Move the Corridor crossing where the animals are going – steep creek areas
7. Look seriously at educational use as an attractant to the Town

## Group Two

Transportation: Dead Mans Flat overpass – there will be an increase in traffic through the hamlet as a result of Smith Creek. Need to make sure that transit is available to connect affordable housing to work areas. This will account for the potential reduction in walking distance.

Wildlife Corridors: What about swapping corridor and development area – corridor down lower and development up higher?

No fences please – it constricts the corridors.

Be careful of useable widths lost by actual creek areas – wildlife functioning should be paramount use and not be defined by widths.

Recreation: Can we incent people to recreate in the right locations by providing options that keep people out of the areas for wildlife. Focus on the carrots!

Make great trails in more developed areas to keep use out of the corridors. Most people will follow trails, especially if the experience is good (challenge and variety). What about in Grassi lakes/Quarry lakes areas? Perhaps old Pigeon Mountain ski hill for a mountain bike park (some concerns for wildlife could be mitigated)?

We need to ensure multiple surfaces and levels of experience for the trails – shale, pavement, dirt all provide different experiences. Variety is the key.

Would shuttles help to access trails and provide better opportunities for maintenance?

Involve the community in trail design particularly along commuter routes or residential connections. Small jumps, skinnies, rollies, fun small features for kids – really engage young people in trail design and use as part of education to keep them out of corridors.

The entire area must be connected with walking pathway – not only for recreation but for connectivity to areas of work.

Land Uses: How do different uses compare with each other in relation to areas adjacent to Wildlife Corridors? Light industrial is best – few people, less access, no lighting. Residential development particularly multifamily is problematic as there is 24 hour use (dogs, BBQs, humans, etc.)

We need to ensure the look and feel of a commercial area is consistent with Canmore – this is the entrance to the Bow Valley and it can't look like trailers.

Large lots may be another option but soft edges encourage animals into human areas so this has to be considered.

Can we find more developable lands between Site 3 and Stewart Creek? It seems to be good land and could balance the Town and developer needs.

Can we have one focal point for commercial areas – perhaps by Pigeon Creek with access via DMF interchange? What about a focal point for the commercial area being a post-secondary

institution – research centre, Technology Park - multiple uses with a focus on creating sustainable industry.

Thunderstone Quarry area could host an attraction of some kind – planetarium perhaps or some form of interpretive centre – this would create an entrance to the Bow Valley.

We had affordable housing at one point – that was the trailer park and now it's gone. What about modular homes or land pads but on government land not private land?