



 DESTINATION  
**SILVER STAR**

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**DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2028**  
SUMMARY DOCUMENT

# ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



The Engagement Committee has reviewed and analyzed the Destination Development Plan 2028 in detail and puts forward the following commentary for consideration by the Destination Silver Star full Board.

## General

- The Plan is based on a considerable volume of wide-ranging research.
- Primary research was conducted with the key DSS stakeholders and provides a solid basis for ongoing planning that is “in tune” with the desires, requirements, and capabilities of these stakeholders.
- Secondary research was conducted by analyzing the Silver Star competitive set mainly aimed at understanding the competitive landscape in which the Resort operates in BC.
- Due to this solid research basis the Plan provides a valuable tool to help DSS set its strategic and tactical plans going forward. But equally important, is the fact that the Plan gives us a set of materials that we can share with key stakeholder (primarily the Mountain and other local businesses and the local community) so that we can develop and execute plans together in a coordinated way. This is important as DSS is resourced (both financially and in terms of people) more of being an “enabler” organization rather than a “doing” organization and our long term effectiveness will come from enabling and supporting other entities to achieve their desired outcomes and higher revenues.

## Observations

The key observations fall into 3 categories Strategic, Tactical and Basic Needs (meaning, some core things an association like ours needs to get right). The first and most important are:

### #1 STRATEGIC

- The fact that Silver Star (collectively) has not well articulated its competitive advantage over its main rivals means that the different marketing efforts of all the local enterprises (including DSS) lacks a coordinated focus and is thus less effective and does not build to sustainable (in the sense of maintainable) long-term economic growth
- The current (almost total) reliance on self-drive transport to and from the Mountain is a strategic disadvantage to widening the accessibility and appeal of the Mountain to a wider range of users and visitors. Better transport options need to be researched, scoped and implemented collectively.

### #2 TACTICAL

- Generally, at the tactical level, DSS is actively involved in hosting events, running programs and undertaking infrastructure projects. This is probably a good position for DSS in its early stages of life as it helps demonstrate we can get things done both financially and physically. However, we do not have the financial or staff resources to maintain this into the future. Therefore we should begin to position ourselves as an organization that seeds activities, helps in the planning, provides expertise including marketing supports, sources grant monies, aids in reporting and fulfillment obligations etc. In this way we can try and muster the resources of the wider community in achieving outcomes.

### #3 BASIC (CORE) NEEDS

- these fall under the areas of “getting our story out there”, having a comprehensive and shared community plan and honoring meaningful reconciliation with indigenous partners.



## Recommendations

The Engagement Committee recognizes there are a wide range of actions that could come out of the Plan. The following are the key initiatives that the Committee believes are of high importance and actionable within a short or medium time frame (ie up to 3 years).

Just as importantly, by focusing on these options DSS would achieve significant and tangible outcomes from the Plan. The recommendations fall under the same key headings of:

- Strategic
- Tactical
- Basic Needs.



## Strategic Planning

### Identifying and Agreeing On Our Competitive Advantage

That DSS host a workshop (professionally run) of key stakeholders (initially with the Mountain given its important position, but then expanded to all local businesses) that aims to collaboratively identify the key sustainable competitive advantage that can be used and promoted to make Silver Star stand out from its competitors.

This process is suggested in acknowledging that DSS does not have the mandate nor resources to independently identify and promote a identified competitive advantage (ie if the Mountain went in one direction and DSS decided to go in another then the Mountain would swamp our efforts BUT ALSO the Mountain would not benefit from the synergy of us adding to the promotional and marketing environment in a coordinated or sympathetic way.) Similarly, if all/more local businesses can promote themselves under an agreed, theme then we all benefit.



## Addressing the Transport Issues

That DSS continue its leading role in looking at what the needs are for local transport (both to and from the mountain and within the resort) and once an agreed plan has been developed, act as one of the lead lobbyists for getting action on the plan.

Please note: DSS has been advised that it will receive a grant to allow for the examination of transport issues and options and is working in partnership with TOTA (Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association) to augment the data and scope of this transit study in 2024.

## Tactical

### Sourcing Grant Funds

DSS is well-positioned and actively involved in sourcing grant funds for a range of initiatives and activities. It is showing strong success in its ability to apply for and receive grants. DSS should seek, wherever possible, to partner with local businesses, entities, and community groups to apply for funds, but on the basis that these partner groups would then play the major role in the application of the funds and implementation of the relevant program or project under DSS guidance.

Particularly at the community level, this positioning of DSS would enhance the capacity of the community to be involved and achieve desired outcomes. DSS does not have the staff or Director resources to be the “on the ground” party and is much better placed to concentrate on seeding programs and sourcing funds.



### Activities and Events

DSS has an ongoing timetable of events and activities to attract visitation and enhance the visitor experience. DSS is working on a collaborative event working group with the Mountain to meet bi-monthly and would like to establish a RACI model for events on an annual basis. DSS always seeks to partner with local businesses, entities, and community groups in the running of these activities and events.

As with the sourcing of grants, DSS does not have the resources to run these activities and events on a sustainable basis; rather we aim to provide funding and planning support for partners and third-party planners whose outcomes align with DSS goals, to oversee the event or activity.

### Consideration of a Community Support Fund

DSS currently budgets a significant amount for community support. Consideration should be given to creating more formality around this expenditure by creating a Community Support Fund (even if in name only). For example: commitment to an annual minimum amount being available from the fund, creation of simple application criteria and purposes and nomination of a sub-committee that can make timely funding decisions.

The rationale for this change is that it would allow DSS (the Executive Director, the Board and individual Directors) to promote its existence and purpose where appropriate. This enhances the perception of DSS being an active supporter of the local community.

It also empowers both individuals and community groups to develop and put forward proposals as they know there is capacity for DSS to help and they will be aware of the criteria we apply in the assessment. The existence of such a fund may be relevant in some grant applications as it demonstrates a pathway to enhanced community involvement.

Finally, and equally as important, it positions DSS as more of an “enabler” or “seeder” of events, activities, and projects rather than always drawing on our limited resources to be the creator, manager, and executor.



## ■ Basic (Core) Needs

### Developing a Wider DSS Profile and Advocacy efforts

DSS is well-positioned to be the non-commercial “voice” of Silver Star. As such we should actively seek opportunities to put ourselves in front of various levels of government, opinion leaders, relevant community and special interest groups and the press. In these interactions we should demonstrate how we are well positioned to be a partner in getting things to happen locally. But at the same time, we should be prepared to speak to the strategy we have in place to grow and enhance the Silver Star community and resort.



## ■ Advocacy and Involvement in a New Official Community Plan

For a small community, a widely agreed, succinct, up to date, and comprehensive Community Plan with achievable goals and understood pathways to achieving outcomes is a very powerful document. It sets a framework for setting priorities and acts as a rallying point for focusing individual and group effort.

RDNO Area C representative Shatzko has stated on several occasions that she would like to update the OCP for Silver Star. This framework can play an important role in the ongoing development of the Resort and planning policies that support positive economic, social and cultural, and environmental outcomes.

### Official Community Plans For Local Governments - Province Of British Columbia

DSS should begin and host a process for the development of an updated Silver Star community plan in partnership with the Regional District of the North Okanagan, SilverStar Mountain Resort, and Silver Star Property Owners Association.

## ■ Indigenous involvement

Involvement of local indigenous communities in activities and projects is a requirement but also an advantage to all parties when implemented most thoughtfully. DSS should begin a formal process to determine how meaningful involvement and active reconciliation should be facilitated and introduced.



# CONTACT

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We acknowledge that Destination Silver Star proudly conducts business on unceded First Nation lands, and does so with the utmost of respect for the elders that cared for it before our time.

