



Municipality of North Perth Strategic Plan 2019-2022

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Summary

Why A Strategic Plan?

Strategic plans are the most important documents that municipalities produce. They define the future direction of the municipality and guide its progress in getting there. Strategic plans are about change, and realizing the desired future of the organization. They identify what is important, and provide a basis for making decisions and choices about what to do, and about what not to do.

This strategic plan has been developed to provide a strategic direction for North Perth for the 2019-2022 period. It defines the direction for the municipality, and links with the strategic plans of the other member municipalities and Perth County.

Where It Came From

This is the second time that strategic plans have been developed by all of the municipalities within Perth County. The first set of strategic plans were developed for the period of 2012-2017. Development of this strategic plan was initiated in 2018 to define a long-term vision for the municipality, and to focus the strategic priorities of the municipality in the coming term.

Perth County and the four member municipalities chose to continue with a collaborative approach to strategic planning. This allows each municipality to set its own direction. It also allows creation of opportunities for collaboration, sharing and partnership opportunities between municipalities and within the County as a whole.

How It Was Built



These strategic plans were built based on a great deal of consultation and input. This included interviews, workshops and engagement sessions with in each municipality, including with:

- The public, businesses and community and service groups (online and in person).
- Outgoing and current Councils.
- Leadership teams and staff.

The content of each strategic plan is developed based on this input. This strategic plan reflects the aspirations and desires of the community, the political direction of Council and the needs of each corporation.

What It Contains

This strategic plan is intended to be an accessible, understandable and complete picture of the strategic priorities of North Perth. On the coming pages, you will find the following sections:

- **Municipal Overview.** An overview of the municipality, its structure and the services it provides, along with how those services align with other levels of government serving the community.
- **Strategic Priorities.** The enduring priorities of the municipality, including the mission, vision, community values and corporate values that define North Perth.
- **Strategic Plan.** A discussion of the overall goals—and the corresponding priorities and actions—that are of particular focus in the coming years.
- **Outcomes.** A summary of what will have changed for residents, businesses, the community as a whole and the corporation as a result of this strategic plan.
- **Getting It All Done.** An overview of how the work of the strategic plan will be done, and how progress against the plan will be assessed and reported.

Municipal Overview

About

The Municipality of North Perth is a lower-tier municipality within Perth County, located in south-western Ontario. The municipality has a population of 13,130 and is 493 square kilometres in size.

Our Structure

The municipality is governed by a Mayor, Deputy Mayor and eight councillors. Councillors are elected to represent one of three wards within the municipality: Elma, Listowel and Wallace. The current Council was elected to office in October 2018.

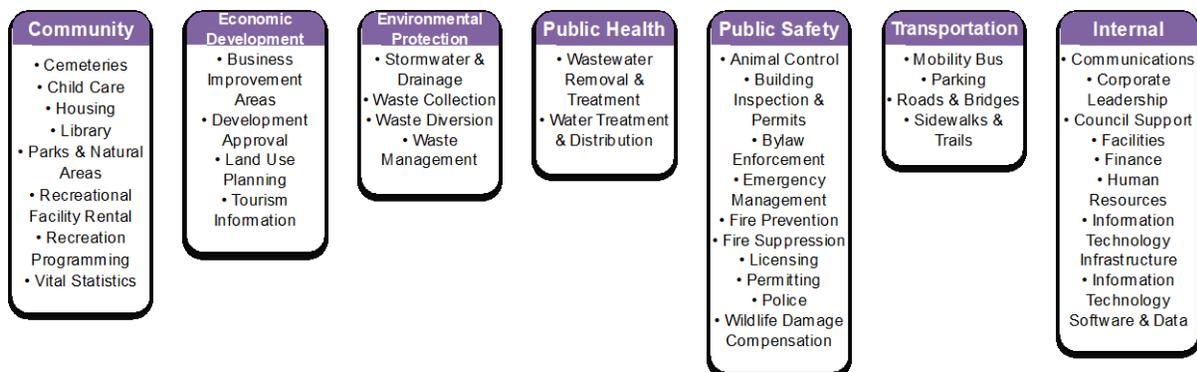
Municipal staff are responsible for running the corporation and delivering the services of the municipality in support of the direction of Council. The municipality is led by a CAO and leadership team, and consists of the following departments.

- Administration
- Building and Planning Services
- Clerk's Department
- Child Care
- Environmental Services
- Finance
- Fire Services
- Library
- Parks & Recreation
- Public Works

Our Services

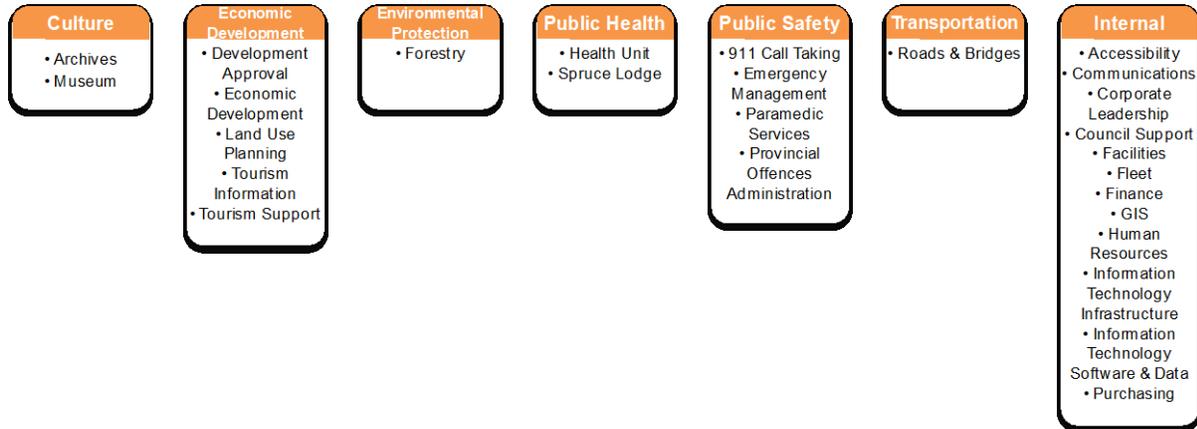
Services That We Deliver

Services delivered directly by North Perth for the benefit of residents are outlined in the following chart:



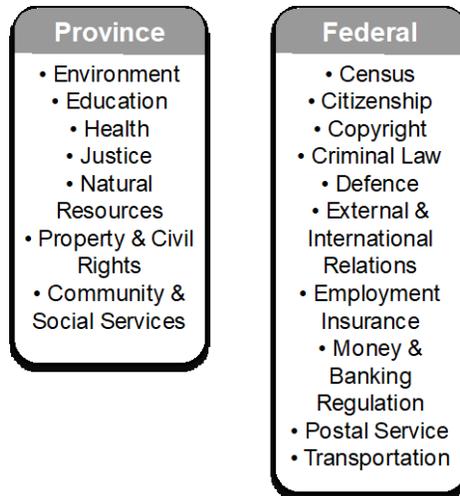
Services From Perth County

Services delivered by Perth County and provided for the benefit of all municipalities and residents within the County are outlined in the following chart:



Services From Other Levels Of Government

Services that are provided at the provincial and federal level include:



Our Strategic Priorities

Mission

North Perth is a responsible, safe and family-oriented community of character. The community integrates rural living and urban experiences, providing exceptional amenities and programs that enable an extraordinary quality of life for citizens of all ages and needs. North Perth is an entrepreneurial, progressive and thriving municipality that is a growing home to successful businesses while retaining productive agriculture and agribusiness operations. The community attracts and welcomes people that are actively involved, committed to service and value close and meaningful interaction with their neighbors.

Vision

We are first and foremost striving to retain who we are and the feel of the community that we have. We are working to build and enhance connections and connectivity within the community. This includes physical transportation networks and technological communication networks. All of these are designed to emphasize and support the responsible growth of our community, continuing to ensure our relevance and viability while making sure we don't outstrip our capacity to sustain services and service delivery.

Sustaining our community involves celebrating and keeping what we have while recognizing the need for continued, carefully managed growth. Doing this successfully means promoting inclusivity and enhancing the diversity of our community, welcoming others and helping them to understand and embrace what it means to be a resident of North Perth.

We will continue to support and enhance our services. In particular, we recognize the need to continue to enhance social infrastructure, including child care, senior care, health care services and the promotion of healthy living. Doing this will require help; they are services that we cannot successfully deliver on our own, and we will strive to broaden partnerships and take a regional partnership in delivering these successfully.

What we are contemplating involves change, and represents a shift in how we think about our facilities, our services and our community. Not only will we need to shift perspectives and evolve how we think about our services, we will need to clearly signal the kind of community we are striving to become.

All of this is focussed on our vision for growth and the means that are required to sustain the community. We need to encourage a variety of housing, promoting different density, affordability and accessibility. We need to preserve as much as possible not just our agricultural identity but our productive agricultural land. We need to diversify our commercial and industrial growth; while we need to celebrate our agricultural capabilities, we also need a base of business that goes beyond agriculture and agribusiness. Above all, we need to attract and retain a skilled workforce that meets the needs of employers.

Community Values

Community values highlighted during the strategic planning engagement process are:

- Supportive. We are a close-knit community that is willing to help, where people step-up and provide support where it is needed.
- Friendly. We are a friendly, close and welcoming community where people care to take the time to get involved and interact.
- Sense of Belonging. We are a community that feels like home; where it is easy to build and sustain long-term relationships and friendships.
- Volunteerism. We are blessed with vibrant groups and service clubs that are actively involved in shaping and supporting the community.
- Progressive. We are a community that is creative, visionary and forward-thinking. We embrace growth and are welcoming of the need to change and evolve.
- Sustainability. We are a responsible community that is environmentally conscious and recognizes the need for sustainability in our actions.
- Prosperous. We are a vibrant and prosperous community where it is possible to build a business and thrive in a career.
- Safety. We are a safe and clean community where people are comfortable. We are a great place to raise kids and build a family.
- Location. We are ideally situated near other urban centres. We are a hub between cities and cottage country.

Corporate Values

Corporate values highlighted during the strategic planning process are:

- Well Run. We have a progressive and well-run corporation that effectively supports the municipality.
- Fiscally Responsible. We are a financially stable and cost-effective municipality that manages its finances well.
- Responsive. We have capable, knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff who care about the community that they serve.
- Service-Oriented. We provide effective and well-run services and great customer service.
- Forward thinking. We are innovative, progressive and value planning and forward thinking in evaluating opportunities and delivering projects.
- Collaborative. We recognize the value of collaboration and communication. We are open to feedback, seek input from others and are transparent in our communications.
- Supportive. We maintain a positive and collaborative work environment where people support each other and recognize the value of teamwork.
- Friendly. We have friendly, cheerful, dedicated and enthusiastic staff that enjoy working with each other and interacting with the public.

Our Strategic Plan

Overall Goals

The overall goals of the strategic plan for North Perth are:

- Growth & Economic Development
- Service Effectiveness
- Community Planning
- Community Development
- Corporate Sustainability

These are explored further in the following sections.

Goal 1 – Growth & Economic Development

What We Heard

Community residents recognize and value the need for the community to grow and evolve, and the need for not just new commercial and industrial development but also the growth of the community.

There is a strong desire within the community to make sure that growth is balanced and diverse, with a range of industries and organizations.

There is a significant identified need for greater access to transportation within and outside of the community. The community has identified a desire for more flexible and affordable transportation options to commute, travel to school and access services and amenities.

Residents identified a strong desire to provide support for those who want to work, including skill development and apprenticeship opportunities. Flexible education and skill development programs, vocational programs and general skill building opportunities were all identified as desirable.

What The Data Are Saying

North Perth continues to grow, with an average growth rate of 2.9% over the last 15 years.

Provincial growth projections anticipate growth of nearly 11% in Perth County by 2026.

The unemployment rate in 2016 was 3.6%, creating significant challenges for employers seeking qualified employees.

Average household income increased from \$57K in 2001 to \$85.8K in 2016. This compares with \$85.2K in Perth County and \$97.8K for the province of Ontario.

Why It Is Important

Responsible growth is critical to ensuring the on-going viability of North Perth as a municipality. This means finding the right balance of commercial, industrial and residential growth to sustain the ability to deliver services and service levels.

Community growth is necessary to attract and keep employers in the municipality. This means having a sufficient level of qualified and skilled prospective employees within the community.

On-going skills development is critical in building a qualified, skilled workforce. This means ensuring appropriate educational opportunities for youth as well as promoting the on-going education and skills enhancement for residents throughout their careers.

While we promote growth, we cannot do so at the expense of our agricultural community. We enjoy some of the best agricultural land in the province, and retaining and maintaining the viability of productive agricultural lands is critical.

Finally, overall growth of the community also requires development of corresponding transportation opportunities. We need to ensure there are affordable and accessible transportation options to move within and between communities for work, school and access to services, shopping and entertainment.

What We Are Doing

Priorities	Actions
North Perth Has Robust & Diverse Commercial and Industrial Sectors	<p>Promote the attraction and retention of diverse corporations</p> <p>Promote North Perth as an agricultural and technology hub</p>
Employers Have Access To A Skilled Workforce	<p>Attract and retain a skilled labour pool</p> <p>Increase percentage of people living and working in North Perth</p>
People Have Access To Life-Long Skills Development Opportunities	<p>Encourage collaboration between employers and educational institutions</p> <p>Promote availability of local educational opportunities</p> <p>Support the growth of cooperative, apprenticeship and mentoring opportunities</p>
Quality Agricultural Lands Are Preserved And Sustained	<p>Support preservation and sustainment of productive agricultural lands</p> <p>Promote development of on-farm incubators and farm-gate sales</p> <p>Encourage transition of on-farm incubators to commercial and industrial properties as they succeed and grow</p>
There Is A Healthy Culture Of Innovation And Entrepreneurship	<p>Create a climate that supports growth of entrepreneurial start-ups in North Perth</p>



	Develop public and co-working space to promote collaboration and sharing
North Perth Grows At A Responsible Pace	Update and implement a master growth plan for the municipality Implement the labour market master plan Sustain the viability and quality of life of the community Support and welcome newcomers to North Perth
Resources Are Sustainably Managed	Promote greenhouse gas reduction by the community and the municipality Promote recycling, waste diversion and reduction of resource consumption by residents and businesses
There Are Diverse Transportation Options	Establish an alternative transportation corridor for commercial truck traffic Collaborate in development of the County transportation network Support the development of flexible transportation options throughout south-western Ontario

Goal 2 – Service Effectiveness

What We Heard

The community strongly values maintaining North Perth as its own municipality, and keeping the identity and sense of community that exists.

There is a need to address and resolve issues of service duplication and to identify efficiencies that can allow services to continue to be delivered reasonably and cost effectively.

Services need to be delivered consistently to all areas and people within the community. Greater equity in accessing and delivering services is strongly desired. Ensure the availability of services where they are needed.

Residents expressed concerns about the ability to access services, and the need to ensure continued local availability of services, rather than travelling to other municipalities and areas. Support for the development of a community hub for social services was reinforced.

What The Data Are Saying

40% of residents agree or strongly agree that they are satisfied with the efficiency of service delivery. 44% of residents agree or strongly agree with the effectiveness of service delivery.

54% of residents view developing strategies to more efficiently deliver services as very desirable or essential.

Improvement of service levels and the quality of service delivery is perceived as very desirable or essential by 50% of residents.

86% of residents support increasing the collaboration with other municipalities in how services are delivered, with 47% of residents seeing this as very desirable or essential.

50% of residents are very concerned or extremely concerned about increases in costs required to sustain service levels.

Why It Is Important

Continuing to find effective service delivery strategies is essential to ensure the viability of the municipality.

There is pressure and demand to increase the service levels and quality of services that are provided. There are also current stresses and challenges in meeting existing service levels.

We need to find new strategies to cooperate and collaborate in delivering services and reducing duplication and redundancy of service delivery with other neighbouring municipalities.



What We Are Doing

Priorities	Actions
There Is A Clear Definition Of Services And Service Levels Delivered To The Community	Clarify and define services and service levels provided by the municipality Proactively communicate committed services and service levels to new and existing residents
Services Are Delivered Efficiently And Cost Effectively	Explore opportunities to optimize the delivery of committed services Develop and enhance the ability to access services online Identify and establish partnerships to ensure efficient and effective delivery of services Support opportunities within the County to collaboratively realize service efficiencies

Goal 3 – Community Planning

What We Heard

There is a strong need to address affordability of housing and increase the diversity of housing options within the municipality. This is particularly seen as a concern in ensuring there are available and appropriate housing options for youth and young families, as well as seniors.

Residents expressed a desire for greater diversity and availability of arts and culture opportunities. This included provision of additional recreational and cultural opportunities for residents to attend and participate in.

There is a need to build more amenities that will attract and retain youth in North Perth, rather than to surrounding urban centres. In particular, there is a need for more—and more diverse—entertaining, dining and shopping options within North Perth.

Continue to support and enhance the role of the library in the community. The libraries in North Perth were repeatedly identified by participants as significant and important resources. There is a strong desire to sustain and enhance library services within the community, recognizing the range of services that are provided and the broad cross-section of the community that libraries support.

There is a desire to enhance recreational opportunities. Recreation is strongly valued within North Perth, and the access to outdoor spaces—including parks, green spaces and trails.

There is a desire for more green space, as well as to protect the forest. Continuing to build and enhance—and improve connectivity within—the trail system is also desired.

What The Data Are Saying

73.5% of housing units within the municipality are currently single-detached homes.

94% of residents value improving the quality of existing community programs, with 50% of residents seeing this as very desirable or essential.

91% of residents desire enhancements to community facilities and amenities, and to improving the accessibility and local delivery of programs. 53% of residents see these improvements as very desirable or essential.

50% of residents are very concerned or extremely concerned about adequate availability of services and programs for seniors.

Why It Is Important

While our services, programs and amenities are valued, we are facing increased demands for them every day. We have a growing population, and evolving perceptions of what amenities are required.

There is a desire for more services to be available locally, and to ensure that there is access to those services throughout the municipality.

Meeting the expectations and needs of the community is essential in attracting residents and building the community that we aspire to become.

Addressing the affordability and accessibility of housing, and providing more diverse housing options, is also vital. Our ability to attract youth and young families cannot happen if there is not housing available that they can afford.

What We Are Doing

Priorities	Actions
<p>North Perth Offers Robust Recreational Facilities And Programming To Residents</p>	<p>Develop facilities that support multiple uses and allow them to evolve and be repurposed as the community evolves</p> <p>Connect and promote the trail system through North Perth</p> <p>Ensure accessibility and AODA compliance of all municipal facilities</p>
<p>Amenities Exist That Optimize Quality Of Life For Residents Of All Ages</p>	<p>Provide and promote vibrant social and community spaces</p> <p>Support development of a community hub for social services</p> <p>Develop and support events and activities throughout the municipality</p> <p>Promote and attract restaurants, shops and entertainment</p>
<p>North Perth Has Diverse Housing Options And Improved Housing Density</p>	<p>Support County in the development of a modern, flexible and relevant Official Plan</p> <p>Promote and encourage a range of housing options in new developments</p> <p>Establish policies that encourage and incent development of attainable housing and increases housing density in the municipality</p> <p>Lead in the development of desired housing options through development of municipal lands</p>

Goal 4 – Community Development

What We Heard

Residents spoke of a number of strengths that exist in the community, and a desire to continue to build on the successes the municipality has already enjoyed. Embrace the community as a whole, and work to discourage the perception and perpetuation of us-and-them mindsets in smaller communities.

There is a strong desire to continue to encourage and reinforce involvement in the community. A need to encourage youth to be involved and contribute to the community was a particular emphasis.

The need to support and invest in youth is seen as vital to the on-going success of the municipality. This included promoting and demonstrating the potential opportunities and careers that are available in the community.

Concern was expressed about the widespread reinforcement that youth need to leave North Perth to find success. Help youth to identify and build the skills for careers and jobs that are needed, and actively demonstrate the opportunity for meaningful career opportunities here.

Residents spoke of the need for greater access to internet services within the municipality. This includes enhancing the availability of high-speed internet services. There is also a strong desire for free and flexible Wi-Fi access throughout the municipality.

What The Data Are Saying

While the overall population has grown, youth population numbers (less than 20 years) have remained essentially flat at approximately 3,500 since 2001.

All other age sectors have experience growth. Adult population (20-65 years) has increased by 8.9% and seniors population (> 65 years) has grown by nearly 28% in the same time period.

77% of residents see it as very desirable or essential to attract and retain youth in the community, and 82% perceive it very desirable or essential to promote the availability of skilled and valuable jobs in the community to youth.

70% of residents are very concerned or extremely concerned about the availability of services and programs for youth.

An average of 54% of residents are very concerned or extremely concerned about the ability to retain youth or attract them to return to the community.

While 80% of residents support enhancing the diversity of residents in the community, only 27% view this as very desirable or essential.

Why It Is Important

While we aspire to growth and diversity, we are not yet there. We need to create an environment that attracts residents and reflects who we are as a community.

We need to continue to develop the amenities that allow an excellent quality of life for people of all ages within our municipality.

Investing in technology not only improves our attractiveness, it also enhances our competitiveness. Business and residents will be in a position to thrive in the new economy. As a municipality, we will be able to further enhance how services are delivered and experienced.

Investing in attracting and retaining youth and encouraging young families to move here is critical. Even keeping the youth who grow up here will not support our growth requirements. We need to expand the populations that we welcome and encourage.

What We Are Doing

Priorities	Actions
<p>North Perth Is A Progressive And Desirable Community</p>	<p>Preserve and promote a vibrant and attractive downtown</p> <p>Promote and maintain the small-town feel and character of North Perth</p> <p>Support and promote North Perth as a Community of Character</p> <p>Develop and implement a volunteer strategy to maintain volunteerism and community participation</p>
<p>North Perth Is A Desirable Community For Youth And Young Families To Call Home</p>	<p>Implement and sustain the Perth4Youth strategy</p> <p>Expand and enhance availability of early childhood development programs</p>
<p>North Perth Is A Recognized Smart Community</p>	<p>Promote improvement of internet connectivity in the community</p> <p>Embrace and encourage technology enhancements in delivery of services and programs</p> <p>Encourage and embrace change and innovation in the community and the municipality</p>
<p>North Perth Is A Diverse And Inclusive Community</p>	<p>Broadly promote and support diversity in the community</p> <p>Promote and ensure community programs are relevant to residents with differing needs</p>

Goal 5 – Corporate Sustainability

What We Heard

There is a desire to build on what's already here. Residents want to continue to build on the successes the municipality has already enjoyed. Continue to promote and value North Perth as a community.

Residents want to maintain the current municipal identity. There is a desire to ensure that the municipality retains its local identity as North Perth. Embrace the community as a whole, and work to discourage the perception and perpetuation of us-and-them mindsets in smaller communities.

There is a desire to ensure a strong level of representation locally, and that local voices are heard. Participants also strongly reinforced the need to consult with and ensure continued participation of the community in decision making processes.

Residents value the services that they receive from the municipality, and the ability to be able to access them locally. There is a desire for greater local presence of service delivery, rather than needing to travel to other municipalities.

What The Data Are Saying

95% of residents support development of strategies to more efficiently deliver services, and 91% of residents support improving service levels and the quality of service delivery.

89% of residents support improving collaboration with other municipalities in how services are delivered, with 51% viewing this as very desirable or essential.

78% of residents are concerned about the ability to maintain municipal infrastructure, and 36% identify themselves as very concerned or extremely concerned.

67% of residents are concerned about the loss of qualified staff from the municipality, with 35% identifying themselves as very concerned or extremely concerned.

Why It Is Important

The staff of North Perth strive to deliver exceptional service every day. Current workloads and wearing multiple hats can make that a challenging goal to reach every day. We need to invest in the capabilities and resources that allow staff to be successful in their roles.

We live in a challenging economic time, where both employers and the municipality find it difficult to attract and retain qualified staff. Many of our staff are long serving, and will be in a position to retire soon, particularly in senior positions. It is critical that we have succession management plans and resource strategies in place.

Technology solutions will help us to be more efficient and collaborative in our work, and create opportunities to more effectively deliver services, both online and on the ground.

We need to continue to proactively invest in repairs, maintenance and upkeep of our facilities and assets to avoid significantly higher costs down the road.

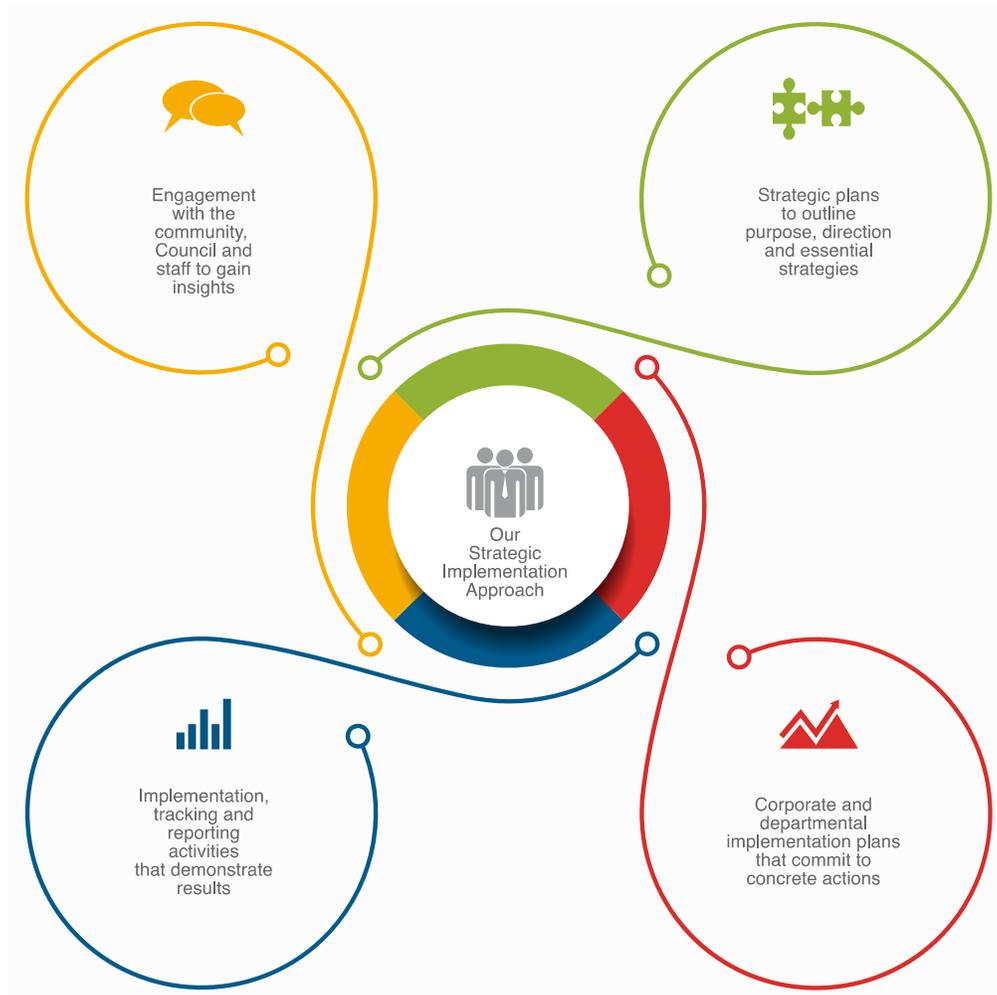


What We Are Doing

Priorities	Actions
North Perth Staff Are Engaged And Successful	Develop and implement an HR strategy and staffing plan to sustain service levels Ensure appropriate and relevant organizational structure, roles and responsibilities are in place Develop and implement a succession plan for the municipality
Technology Solutions Support Efficient And Effective Service Delivery	Identify and implement relevant financial software for the municipality Develop and implement an information technology master plan Investigate and invest in technology solutions to more effectively and efficiently support service delivery within the municipality
Municipal Infrastructure Is Robust And Sustainable	Develop and implement a comprehensive asset management plan and relevant systems Invest and enhance use of GIS information in the municipality Assess and evolve municipal facilities to efficiently deliver municipal services

Getting It All Done

How We Plan To Deliver



This strategic plan sets the direction for the municipality. There are two related planning documents that define how we will take action:

- **Corporate Implementation Plan.** The corporate implementation plan is an annual plan for the municipality that defines our actions in implementing this strategic plan for each year. It defines the immediate priorities to be addressed for the community and corporation for the year.
- **Department Plans.** Department plans define the work of each department for the year. This includes how each department supports the corporate implementation plan (and in turn the strategic plan). It also includes any planned improvements within the department, and the service delivery plan of how the department's services are delivered. These plans feed into the development of the annual budget for the municipality. They also firmly connect the work of each employee to the overall priorities of the organization.

How This Relates To Other Plans

In addition to the strategic plan, there are many other plans within municipalities. There are master plans, asset management plans, economic development plans, official plans and feasibility studies.

Each of these documents looks at some aspect of the municipality, and defines priorities and direction for its area of focus. An asset management plan, for example, defines the infrastructure assets in the municipality, their condition and the maintenance, rehabilitation and replacement plans for each. This is a schedule of the optimal process of maintaining each asset.

While plans may lay out an optimal schedule, that doesn't mean the municipality needs to proceed based on that schedule. Investments can be accelerated, and they can also be deferred. There is risk in doing either, and that risk needs to be understood. But there can also be good reasons to make those choices.

Subsidiary plans set out the optimal approach for what they are focused on. The strategic plan is where those choices are ultimately made. Every other plan in the municipality is an input to the strategic planning process. The strategic plan and its related implementation plan define the committed priorities of the organization. It is where the actual choices are made of what will be done and when.

How We Will Partner

Any strategic plan results in a great deal of work to be done. It is work that the organization cannot do alone. Successful realization of the planned results will involve the effort and contribution of many people, and many other organizations.

In implementing the strategies and actions in this strategic plan, the municipality will partner with a number of organizations, including:

- **Member municipalities.** This strategic plan has been deliberately developed in collaboration with the member municipalities in Perth County. We have worked with the other municipalities in the County to identify opportunities for cooperation, collaboration and sharing of services and resources between municipalities.
- **The County.** In addition to the member municipalities, we have also identified strategies to work with the County to better deliver on municipal priorities. We have explored where there are collaboration opportunities that can streamline services and improve service delivery to our residents and across the County.
- **Other municipalities.** We are committed to partnering with other municipalities that can help us to better ensure effective and affordable service delivery. That includes looking at opportunities to collaborate and work with Stratford, St. Marys and municipalities outside of the County.
- **Volunteer and service groups.** This is a strategic plan for the municipality as a whole. Some of the work will be delivered by the corporation. There are also opportunities for the community as a whole, and the volunteer and service groups that play such a vital role in North Perth, to contribute to the realization of the goals contained here.



- **Businesses and business groups.** Businesses and business groups within the municipality also have opportunities to contribute. This is particularly true in areas of economic development. We will work with business to promote the health and viability of the municipality, and promote the development of jobs and economic opportunities.

How We Will Keep Track

Plans are important. Results from those plans are even more important. We will continue to monitor the results of the plan—and report those results to Council and to the community on a regular basis. Tracking and reporting will involve two important perspectives:

- **Attainment of the plan.** This answers the question, are we doing the things we said we would do? We will monitor and ensure that each of the actions that were identified in the plan have been undertaken, and that they have delivered on their intended results.
- **Attainment of results.** This answers the question, is what we are doing making a difference? The purpose of the strategic plan is to make meaningful change for the community. Part of our evaluation will be ensuring that the changes that were desired are actually occurring.