

Town of Cobourg Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 and Beyond

Appendix A: Community Engagement Report
November 6, 2023

Index:

Communications and Community Education Initiatives	Page 2 - 3
Community Engagement Efforts	Page 4
Survey Responses	Page 5 - 28
Community Pop-up Sessions – Key Themes	Page 29 - 30

Communications and Community Education Initiatives:

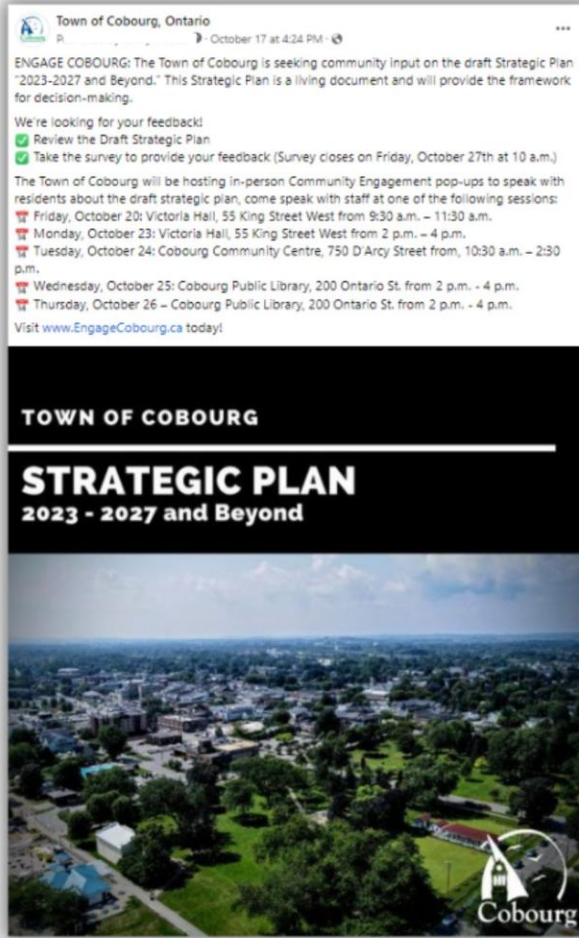
Following the endorsement of Council at the Monday, October 16, Committee of the Whole meeting, the Communications Department initiated a Community Engagement program seeking community feedback on the draft Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 and Beyond. The Communications Department employed the following tactics to connect with members of the community and seek their feedback:

- Public Notice issued Tuesday, October 17, 2023
- Social Media campaign – Facebook, X and Instagram
- Radio Campaign – Daily Radio ads on Classic Rock, 107.9 from October 18 until October 27
- Hello Cobourg! – Town of Cobourg eNewsletter
- In-person engagement opportunities:

Town of Cobourg staff hosted the following pop-up engagement opportunities to speak with residents about the draft strategic plan:

- Friday, October 20: Victoria Hall, 55 King Street West from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
- Monday, October 23: Victoria Hall, 55 King Street West from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
- Tuesday, October 24: Cobourg Community Centre, 750 D’Arcy Street from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, October 25: Cobourg Public Library, 200 Ontario St. from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
- Thursday, October 26 – Cobourg Public Library, 200 Ontario St. from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Facebook Post



Instagram Post



X Post



Community Engagement at a Glance

The following is a visitor summary to the Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 and Beyond community engagement project page on EngageCobourg.ca.

Please note, the Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 and Beyond project on EngageCobourg.ca was only open to Cobourg residents. Only registered users with a Cobourg mailing address were permitted to submit feedback on this survey.

Total Site Visits:

322 Cobourg residents visited EngageCobourg.ca. These are individuals who saw our communications and clicked through or logged onto EngageCobourg.ca.

Aware Visitors:

257 Cobourg residents visited the Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 and Beyond project page on EngageCobourg.ca.

Informed Visitors:

188 Cobourg residents reviewed the content on the project page and attached background information.

Engaged Visitors:

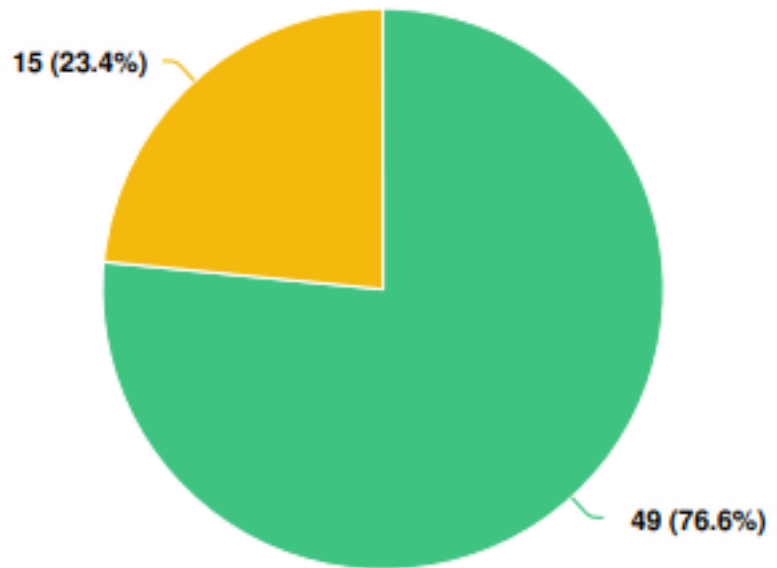
64 Cobourg residents participated in the survey.

New Registrations:

The draft strategic plan community engagement project inspired four new registrations to the Engage Cobourg platform. The Town of Cobourg now has 3,337 registered users on EngageCobourg.ca.

Survey Responses

Question #1: Have you read and reviewed the draft Cobourg Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 and Beyond?



Question options

● Yes ● No

Strategic Priorities

For the following questions, respondents were asked to rank their preferences. The number that is provided is the average ranking, meaning, the lower the number, the more preferred the option.

Question #2: The Town of Cobourg draft Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027 and Beyond is made up of three Strategic Priorities.

Please rank these priorities in level of importance to you.



1 Thriving Community - A thriving community has the services and amenities that promote community well-being, employment opportunities and a wide array of housing options that create economic prosperity.
(Rank = 1.66)



2 Sustainability - Sustainability means fulfilling the needs of our current generations without compromising the needs of future generations, while ensuring a balance between financial stability, environmental care and social well-being.
(Rank = 1.90)



3 Service Excellence - Service excellence means letting our residents know that they are valued and understood. It also means ensuring our staff know that they are important and need to be engaged.
(Rank = 2.42)

Strategic Actions

Question #3: Thriving Community

There are four strategic actions listed under the "Thriving Community" strategic priority. Please rank the following strategic actions in order of what is most important to you.



Provide the physical infrastructure to support a healthy community that will enable each of us to flourish and reach our full potential.
(Rank = 1.89)



Institute development policies that promote the provision of a mixture of housing options that support the community.
(Rank = 2.46)



Invest in programs and services that encourage active lifestyles for all age groups
(Rank = 2.70)



Maintain resiliency and competitiveness through investments in people and resources in collaboration with other public sector agencies and levels of government.
(Rank = 2.95)

Strategic Actions

Question #4: Service Excellence

There are four strategic actions listed under the "Service Excellence" strategic priority. Please rank the following strategic actions in order of what is most important to you.



Assess points of contact with customers to identify ways to streamline communications, increase stakeholder engagement, demonstrate user friendliness, and provide optimal service.
(Rank = 2.28)



Develop and implement Key Performance Indicators and Continuous Improvement Plans for municipal programs and services to measure Customer Satisfaction, Community Impact and Efficiency.
(Rank = 2.37)



Embrace new technologies that will improve customer service and increase efficiency and accessibility.
(Rank = 2.42)



Ensure that human resources policies and practices make Cobourg the employer of choice to attract and retain the best talent.
(Rank = 2.93)

Strategic Actions

Question #5: Sustainability

There are four strategic actions listed under the "Sustainability" strategic priority. Please rank the following strategic actions in order of what is most important to you.



Protect Cobourg's harbour and waterfront for use and enjoyment by residents, visitors and future generations.
(Rank = 1.87)



Take a community approach to making the future of Cobourg equitable, resilient, and sustainable in response to our ever-changing natural environment, including efforts to address climate change.
(Rank = 2.48)



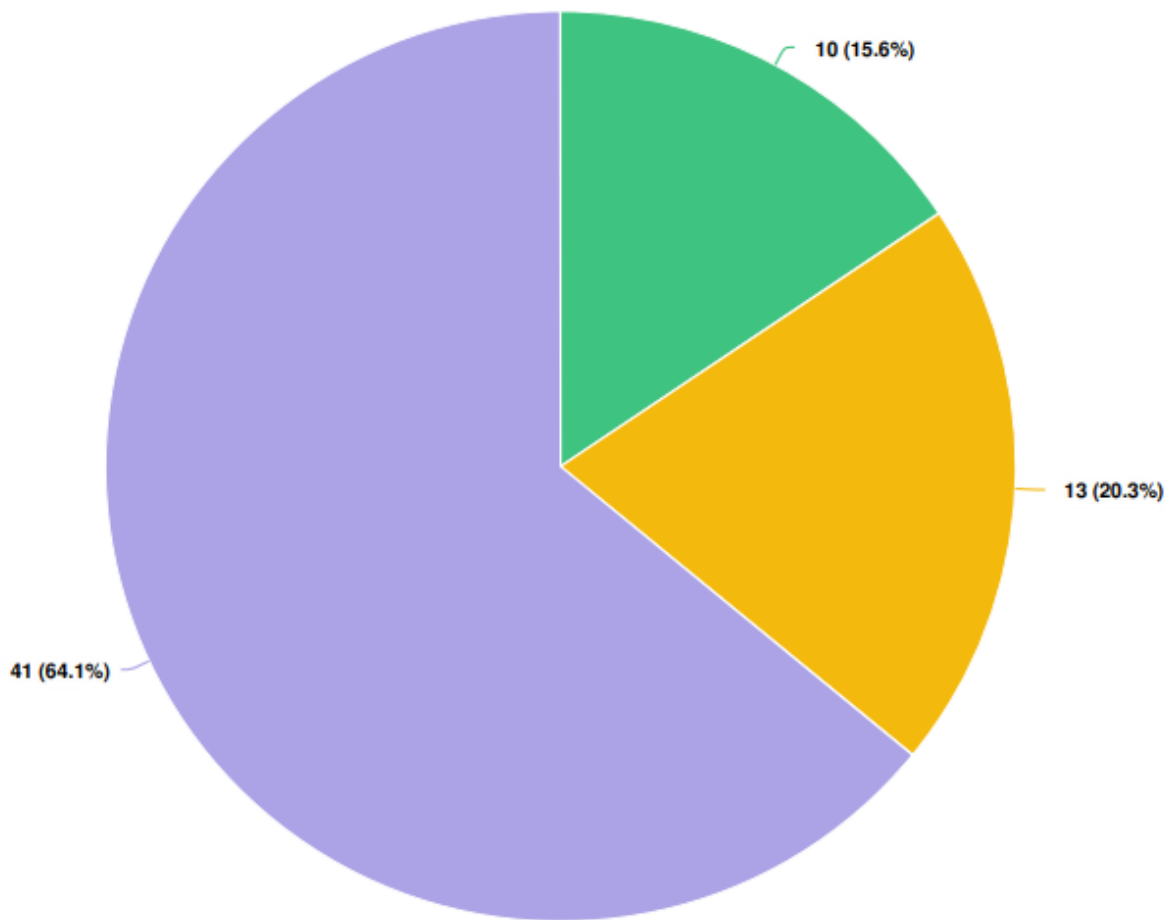
Enhance our Financial and Asset Management Plans to provide appropriate levels of services and ensure long-term sustainability.
(Rank = 2.78)



Preserve and promote the heritage, history and culture of Cobourg to sustain it as a vibrant and appealing destination.
(Rank = 2.87)

Question #7: Cobourg’s strategic plan 2018-2022 had five “pillars” and for each pillar there were five to seven strategic actions. It was agreed that this plan was too ambitious and too operational. It was also noted that Cobourg already has numerous projects underway and studies that recommend more projects but lacks the capacity to do everything that is proposed.

In comparison with the previous Strategic Plan, do you believe the draft Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027 and Beyond provides a clear framework to assist staff achieve Council’s vision?

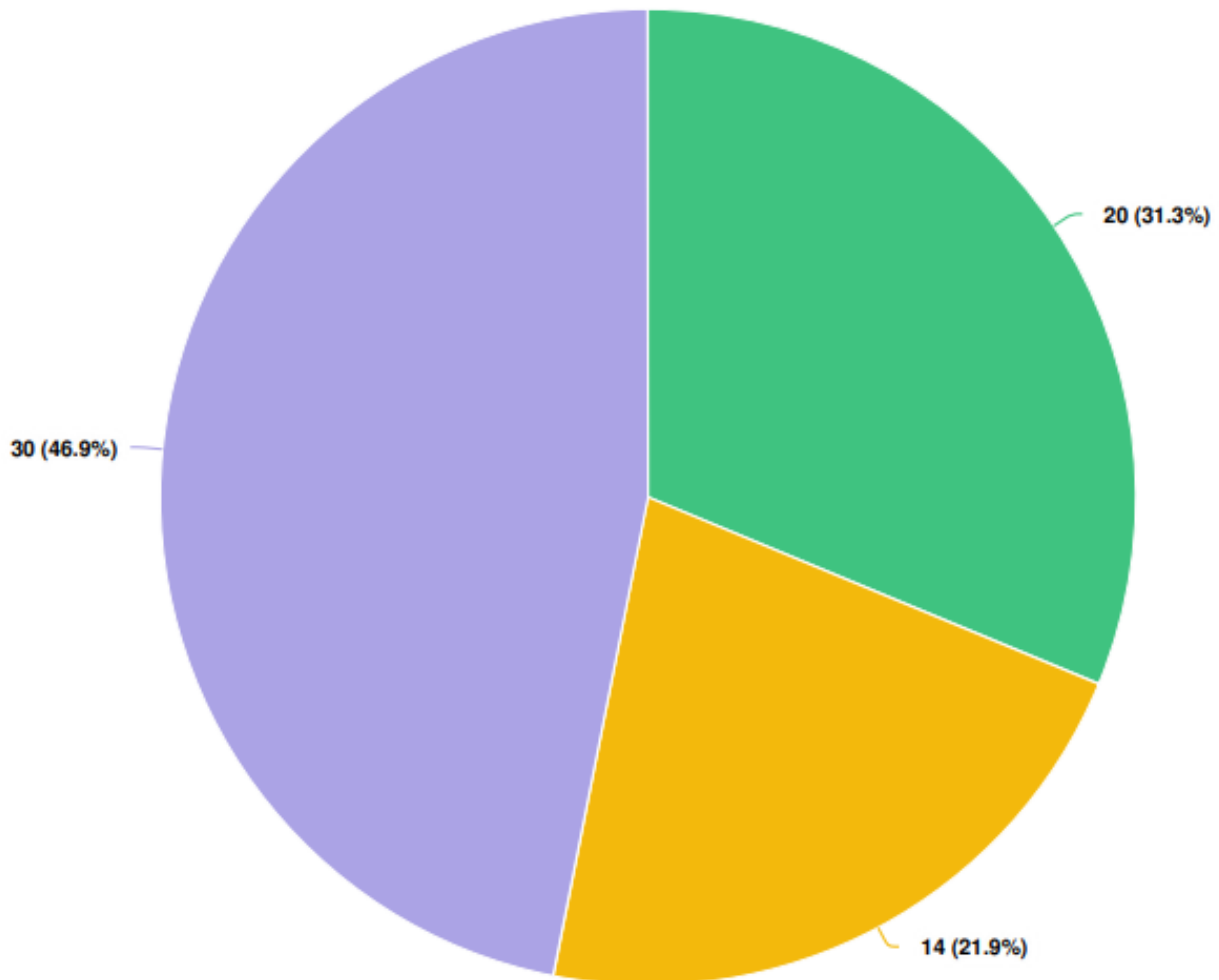


Question options

- Yes
- No
- Unsure - Need to wait and see

Question #8: The goal of the draft Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 and Beyond was to develop a plan that was clear, concise and actionable.

In comparison to the previous Strategic Plan, do you believe that the 2023 – 2027 and Beyond plan will allow for more transparent reporting and status updates?

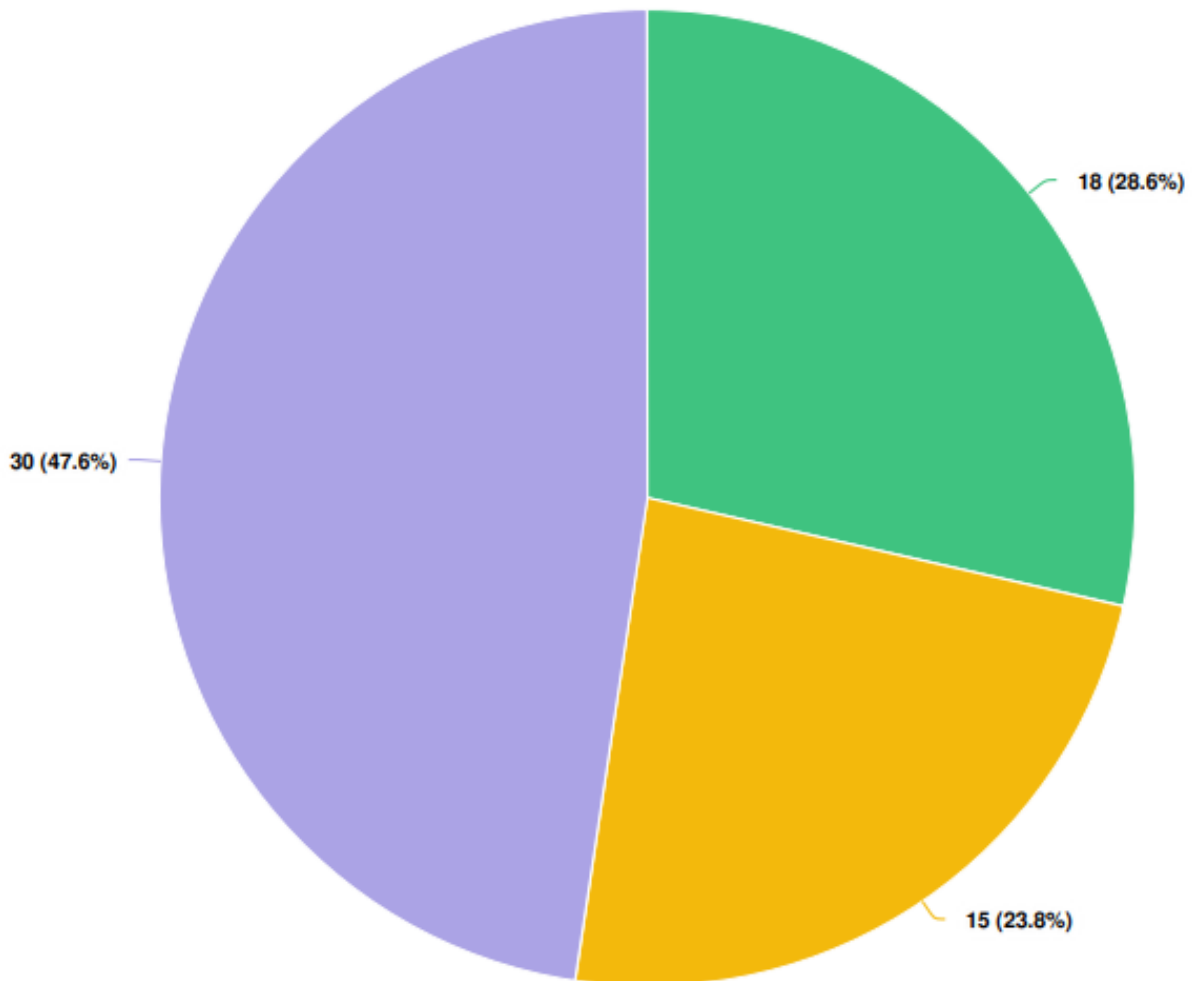


Question options

- Yes
- No
- Unsure - Need to wait and see

Question #9: The Town of Cobourg draft Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 and Beyond has three strategic priorities, each with strategic actions followed by a set of Strategic Questions.

Do you believe these Strategic Questions will be an effective tool in aligning future Operational Plans and budgets to meet Council’s vision as set out in this plan?



Question options

- Yes
- No
- Unsure - Need to wait and see

Vision Statement:

During the Strategic Planning session, Council discussed what elements make for a good Vision Statement. Following this discussion, Council worked with Senior Staff to redevelop Cobourg's Vision Statement.

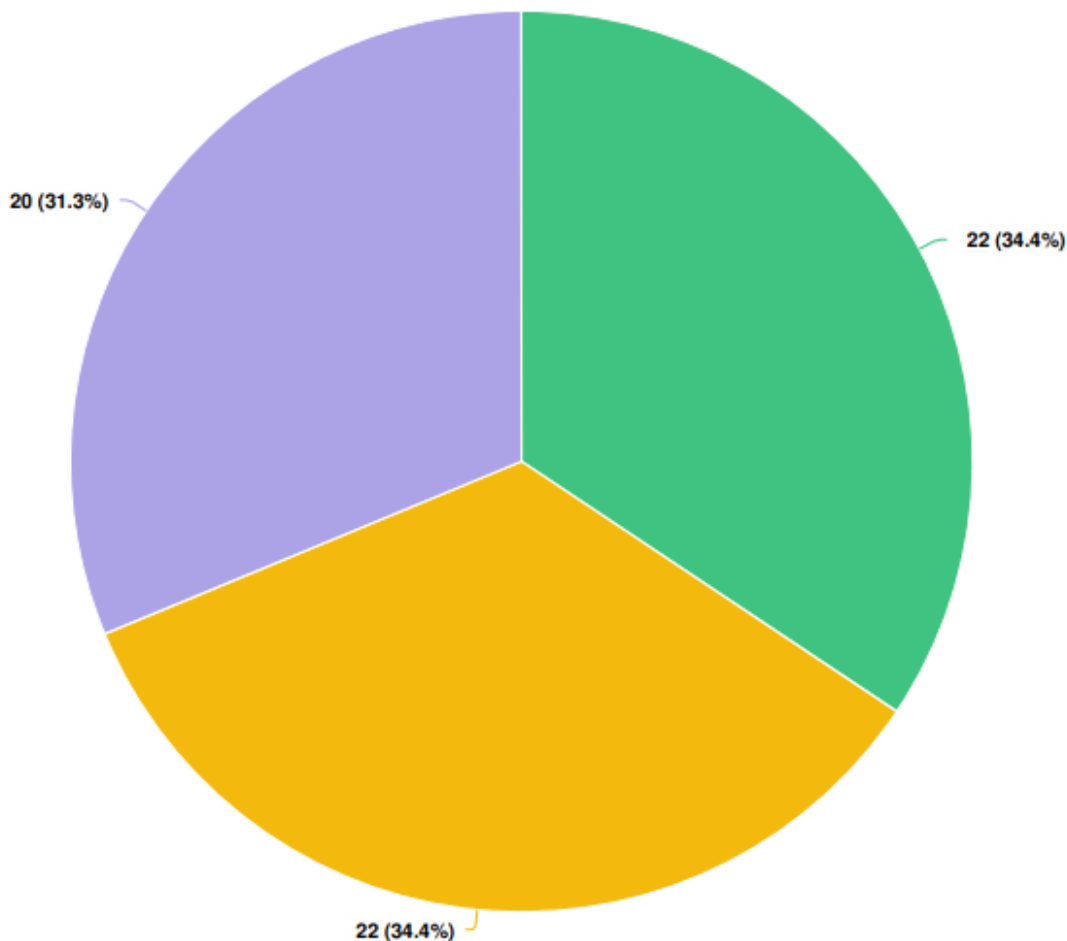
Old Vision Statement:

Cobourg...a vibrant inclusive community where everyone has access to meaningful opportunities and experiences.

New Vision Statement:

Welcoming community; thriving town.

Question #10: Do you agree with the new Vision Statement for Cobourg?



Question options

● Yes ● No ● Somewhat

Question # 11: What words would you use to describe your vision for Cobourg?

"A safe place with a clear understanding of what the citizens need and the town is capable of providing."

"Safe and caring"

"Sustainable on all levels"

"Welcoming, friendly & until recently safe"

"Best place to live (services, safety, stability)"

"Cobourg: an inclusive community"

"Safe and secure"

"Cobourg, A Lakeshore Town That Has All You Need"

"Living, breathing and we"

"maintain & care for what makes Cobourg special and the town will thrive into the future"

"A town where municipal government focuses on nuts and bolts like policing, fire, EMS, garbage collection and filling potholes. No more mission creep. Let the Feds deal with Global warming."

"I preferred the previous vision statement."

"A community that follows with Actions not words for the whole community"

"a place where young people want to live"

"An environmentally safe and socially just operating space for all residents"

"forward thinking"

"Hometown, home proud. Safe community. Sustained Heritage"

"graduated from the past. Focussed on our future"

"Safe, welcoming, inclusive and thriving"

"A self-sustaining community that wants a green future."

"crime free and not the homeless capital of Northumberland"

"A safe, sustainable, prosperous community that is welcoming and inclusive"

"Cobourg is a vibrant community responsible for the needs of everyone, including all age groups"

"Cobourg - a vibrant and diverse community where we value history, innovation & education."

"Inviting, unique, clean, safe, vibrant, inclusive, thriving, welcoming"

"political transparency, equity amongst neighbourhoods, embrace the existing natural beauty that exists within the town boundaries - especially in the Pebble Beach area!"

"Welcoming community; thriving lakeside town"

"Get on with it"

"Welcoming, thriving, safe"

"Progressing"

"Equitable, supportive, aligned with neighbouring municipalities"

"a Town that invites and incentivizes Commercial, Industrial and Housing development"

"good place to live, work and play"

"more inclusive, less obstructive to visitors, less rules i.e. beach and parking"

"In the last couple of years I would say overpriced waist of space"

"It's a bit late to ask this now...which of course is part of the problem here. However, for me, just one voice, I want to feel welcome, included and part of something special and unique. It is a place where all are welcome, celebrated, part of the future"

"Cobourg...a vibrant community where everyone has access to meaningful opportunities and experiences. i.e. The previous vision statement that actually states a vision. The new one is just minimal motherhood that is not the least bit inspiring."

"Affordable and welcoming"

"A place for all. A place to grow and community togetherness."

"Weaving Legacy into Economic Success or, Nurturing Heritage, Fueling Growth - There's nothing thriving about the town, and while it's a vision statement, it's a stretch until the core is cleaned up"

"An inclusive community that celebrates its past but embraces the future."

"Not a feel good town anymore"

"Gradual decline."

"Closed-off community lacking a sufficient number of homes for community members"

Mission Statement

During the Strategic Planning session, Council discussed what elements make for a good Mission Statement. Following this discussion, Council worked with Senior Staff to redevelop Cobourg’s Mission Statement.

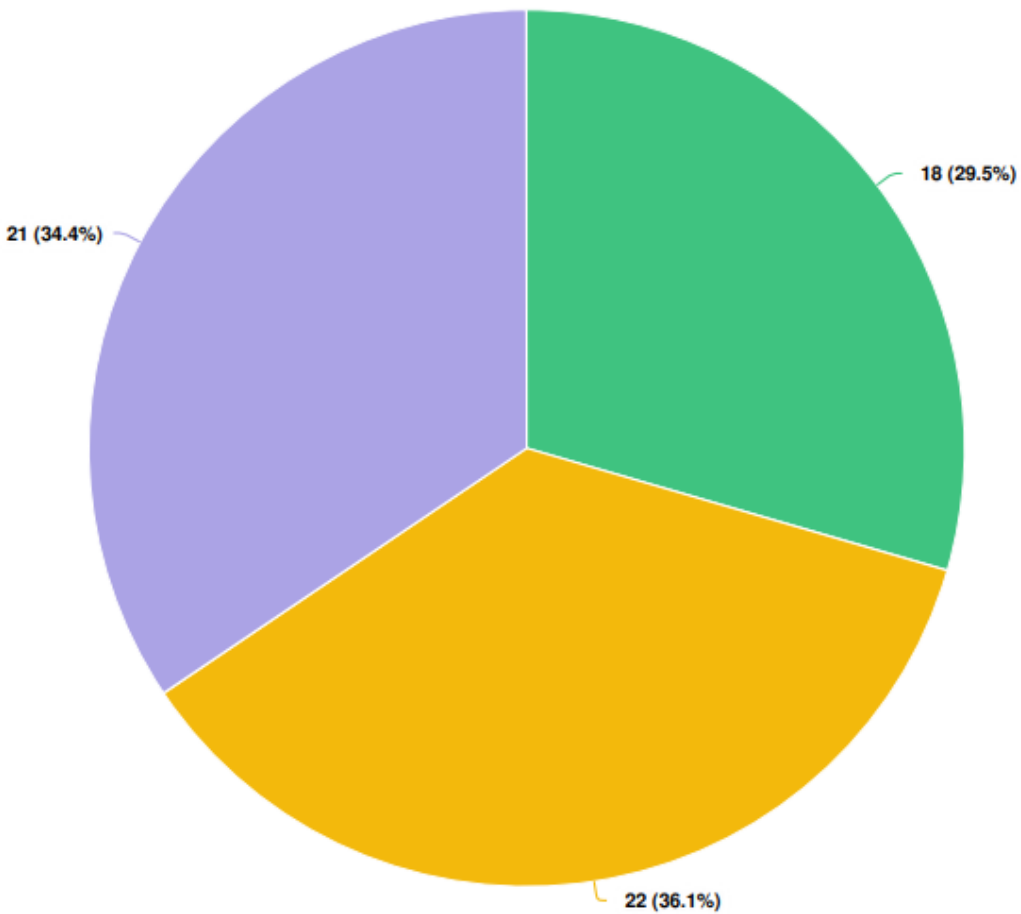
Old Mission Statement:

The Town of Cobourg is committed to open and accountable governance and the provision of quality, accessible programs, and services in a sustainable manner.

New Mission Statement:

Exceeding expectations through quality experiences

Question #12: Do you agree with the new Mission Statement for Cobourg?



Question options

- Yes
- No
- Somewhat

Question #13: What words would you use for Cobourg's Mission Statement?

- “Embracing opportunity, experience and joy for those here and those soon to visit.”
- “Exceeding expectations through excellence”
- “Optimistic.”
- “The words accountable and transparent need to be included”
- “Meeting expectations through a quality lifestyle”
- “Cobourg, a town to supply all your needs.”
- “I agree with it but I'll be quite curious to see how it goes.”
- “Actions that exceed commitments made to the residents of Cobourg.”
- “Exceeding whose expectations through what kind of quality experiences?”
- “Engage and articulate long term vision.”
- “Safe and friendly home town proud. (We need to lose the Feel good town logo. Have a contest for a new logo”
- “New one is too vague.”
- “The Town supports whole community involvement and democratic participation by all citizens.”
- “Transparency, accountability, ease of access”
- “Vague and not directly describing anything substantial”
- “The old one is more realistic.”
- “In Cobourg we strategically prioritize anti-racism, engagement, learning and stewardship.” I would further Elton what each of those qualities mean, where appropriate.”
- “Providing services that enhance the lifestyle and well-being of it's multi-generational residents.”
- “Achieving resident and strategic priority expectations through high quality, sustainable programs.”
- “Get on with it”

- "Like what you came up with."
- "Committed to improving life experiences and safety of its' residents and encourage tourism"
- "Transparent, accountable, fiscally responsible"
- "Open and Accountable Government that provides sustainable quality programs that are accessible to all."
- "To be accountable on projects as well as being accountable on distinct facilities like the Marina and Campground."
- "Your mission should be making this town a better place to live"
- "Wouldn't it have been wonderful if you could say in "after consulting with all of our stakeholders, and citizens, we have listened to you, and as a result of created this Vision/Mission/Values. Build PEOPLE into the process before, not after. Inclusive."
- "Use the old mission statement. The new one is just babble and means nothing."
- "Committed."
- "Commitment to equality and community development."
- "Dedicated to excellence, committed to you. - No one is asking the town to exceed our expectations; we're asking you to manage our expectations in a timely and transparent format"
- "Serving citizens through transparent governance, excellent service and a variety of programs."
- "Keep the old Mission Statement."
- "Attack the poor"
- "For such a small town, we have a lot of big problems."

Question #6: Please provide any further feedback on Municipal Council's Strategic Plan and priorities moving forward.

<p>"I don't really think it says anything of real substance. I find myself asking "but...what does that mean?" after every statement."</p>
<p>"We simply have to find a way to deal with the homeless and the drugs, crime, mental health & related issues that are plaguing our community. It is the number one issue affecting residents.</p> <p>We realize that this is not just a Cobourg problem, but a societal issue that must be dealt with."</p>
<p>"lofty goals. Implementation process and details are important, as are the costs of implementation. Safety and security for residents during extreme weather is not listed but will become increasingly important"</p>
<p>"A commitment for the town to supply all needs. Self sufficient town. Services, Hospital, Medical, Education, Social, Emergency, Police, Retail, Entertainment, Sports & Recreation, Waterfront Excellence"</p>
<p>"I agree with town staff being friendlier but what we need is for them to listen and follow through with what residents want. (I e. The accessible dock.)</p> <p>Also, all of these actions are much to philosophical ideals and not actions that are easily measured. You need to have practical actions that are then easy to assess."</p>
<p>"Just do it! Plans have been made for years but most of the plans are just that!"</p>
<p>"Keep the small-town feel."</p>
<p>"We need a tiny home community far outside of the downtown core where homeless people can live and thrive."</p>
<p>"I think you will need a specific mention and actions to strategic adaptation to Climate change. Those action and adaptation should be integral to your plan as extreme weather conditions are likely to become the norm and the population will need to know what plans you have in place to protect them and keep the infrastructure operational."</p>

" First, I must say 80% of the people wouldn't have continued reading this. It's very repetitive and sounds like a bunch of corporate mambo jumbo. Employers use this same way of speaking in documents and most of those present tune out instantly. Also don't use anagrams, we don't know what they stand for. My attitude when it comes to my home town is maintain the history and what we currently have. Electronic accessibility is also necessary to keep up with the future. Housing in the area is an issue but we also need to stop people from buying up homes and splitting them in half when the narrow streets cannot accommodate the vehicles. I currently have people who aren't living in this area parking here and walking out of the neighborhood to their home. It's going to be a problem come winter. You n the topic of housing. Obviously no one wants the tiny cabins in their neighborhood as it we lower the value of the homes in that neighborhood. With the economy the way it is right now I'd say maintain what we have, fix what you have to (harbour), put more thought into new neighborhoods being built. Widen the streets stop homes from becoming duplex's and build some low cost housing such as town houses. I may sound like an uneducated oaf but I really do not like the new ways of corporations etc. mission statements and continuous improvement and so only. You lose your audience or a good piece of it. Point form gets to the point across and that's all I need to know like many. Dealing with the homeless and the drug issues should be the top of the list right now. Towns and cities need to push the government and court systems to deal with law breakers. No more coddling. And one area that could use more support and manpower is our police force. I'm afraid the way we are going we aren't going to have young people wanting to be a police officer. A great place to start.

"Lots of words but nothing really of substance. Nothing addresses the major drug problem plaguing our town and the fact that residents are not safe at night (and sometimes during the day) in many areas of town - not just the downtown core."

"The Plan could better address emergency planning and preparedness, hazards mitigation, and emergency response by the whole community. It's unclear if the Town has a comprehensive integrated plan to protect citizens in the event of disaster on any scale.

Darlington is but one significant example of a potential threat to Cobourg. Catastrophic weather events are another."

"we need a pool at the CCC to provide services to our growing community and retrofit the Centennial pool as a year round facility."

<p>“Cobourg must protect it's green spaces - especially the areas that also include wetlands and endangered species! There are also very few parks and multi sport facilities to get people outside being active. Empty business spaces could be turned into sport facilities e.g. the mall could become an indoor skateboarding space or something like a Sky Zone or a climbing facility”</p>
<p>“Typical wordy marketing B.S...Strategic priorities and action plans are too general in nature. Also, what is the supporting rationale for these 3 priorities??</p> <p>Each priority lacks specific action plans with achievable KPI s to measure progress. Also 4 action plans per priority are excessive. reduce to 2 or 3 to improve focus and attainability for new council”</p>
<p>“Concise and clear in language and content. The criteria questions under each section will streamline the decision-making process as different proposals are presented in the future. Well done!”</p>
<p>“This plan looks like it was written by a forth year university student the night before it was due. It has little real analysis and it looks like it could be copy and pasted to any town. The SWAT analysis is at such a high level its completely useless and it fails to identify any true strengths and weaknesses but rather lists buzz words that mean nothing.”</p>
<p>“development of the trailer park (move it); + development of the waterfront boat storage area (move it). We need a waterfront Hotel Complex.”</p>
<p>“Cobourg’s Senior Management Team will be responsible for developing the operational plan each year. The operational plan will be brought to Council for approval and will form the basis for regular reports to Council, and the public, on the progress that is being achieved.</p> <p>This should be “Cobourg’s Senior Management Team will be responsible for developing the operational plan (BASED ON INPUT FROM COUNCIL) each year. The operational plan will be brought to Council for FINAL approval and will form the basis for regular reports to Council, and the public, on the progress that is being achieved.</p> <p>Also, it wasn’t clear but my ranking was based on highest number being most important.”</p>
<p>“stop the outrageous parking fees”</p>

"Strategic Plan 2023-27

Oct 19, 2023

General Comments

First, it was an improvement to see that the term Accountability, which was predominant in past Plans, has been removed. Our Town has never been accountable, nor had it ever made any effort to be accountable.

Examples:

The CCC canteen upgrade of 2017:- budgeted for \$181K plus a \$9K contingency, but came in at \$220K, - no accountability from Town to explain this overrun

In 2009 a consultant recommended the purchase of a dredger for \$633K because the Town could make \$122K per year in (renting) dredging to other harbors. What is the current annual profit? – no idea – the Town does not know!

Will we ever know the "net" profit for 2022 from the new parking system? Probably never. "Accountability" would expect an answer being published!

Council passes a budget item (estimate) and if there is an overrun – taxes go up.

Possible solution: staff keeps more accurate project hours – very simple today with a mobile phone app

Unfortunately accountability is the best way to facilitate trust by resident.

Secondly, I looked through this 7 page plan to see how this plan differed from "any town" in Ontario. It is a generic plan with the only "Cobourg specific": reference being on page 6, with the mention of a harbor

This report seems a generic boiler plate, which has little meaning.

From Google:

Strategic planning is a must for every business, big and small. It's a process to figure out where your company is going and how to get there—but it's also so much more.

A strategic plan defines who you are as a business and lists concrete actions to achieve your goals. When the unexpected occurs, a strategic plan helps your business survive and find new opportunities while staying true to your values and mission

Specific Comments

Under Thriving Community on page 4 Section 2 "a mixture of housing options"

What is being built?

There are monstrous house-building projects now happening in Cobourg. Drive through the development at Elgin East, on the north side. Every home is large, multi-story with 3 bedrooms plus

What developers are bringing to Cobourg, are full size homes (for the nuclear family) starting at \$750K to sell to Toronto people. (Like me)

What we want:

According to this new Plan we want a. "mixture of housing options" Page 4

I assume that "mixed" does not mean a three bedroom condo, townhouse or home, all at the same price of \$ 750 – I assume our Plans use of the word "mixed" means a variety of sizes and prices

Cobourg's current and future housing need is some smaller starter homes for young couples and small bungalows that older residents can downsize to (like the white quads up on Dinsmore St. with no basement and fully accessible)

A solution is that the Town itself designs what is needed, with the help of the resident's roster and approach developers. There are local developers who would love to have the town's "help" in this project with a guarantee of sale price under \$400K. If the Town is not proactive we must accept what developers build!

As Jane Jacobs says "Historically, solutions to city problems have very seldom come from the top. People have to insist on government trying things their way"

Under Service Excellence on page 5 section 1 states "increase stakeholder engagement

The Town's main effort in public engagement is to referring to "public delegations" and "Engage Cobourg" Both of these has severe limitations. Meaningful engagement would provide an opportunity to assemble a group of interested residents to study the single issue thoroughly from the very beginning and generate a report to council. I have previously suggested a "public roster" of interested residents to facilitate this. Until we have a better mechanism, public input will be minimized and kept as an afterthought!

Please let me clarify:

Town of Cobourg basic services are as good as anywhere, maybe better.

We have great staff!

These services require very little public engagement and very little Council time.

A few examples are:

Road quality and winter snow clearing

Clean water supply

Planning and development assoc. services

Flood mediation and control

Beach grooming

Keeping storm drains clean

Parks maintenance

Week-end festivals

However, there are issues that require public engagement

Sidewalk installations - yes or no

User fees for Town facilities (CCC, Pool etc.)

Parking costs

Budget spending

Use of our Outer Harbor

Lifeguards for the beach - yes or no

Beach regulations and food trucks

Parking fines

Keeping Centennial Pool open - yes or no

Most of these require some degree of public engagement (i.e. public support). Some require more than others!!

The Town currently has no effective mechanism to determine what residents want, except for individual surveys which do not provide enough details. Town staff work as a team to get best results, but residents are expected to respond alone on sometimes complicated issues”

“I am looking forward to seeing more about local actions to combat climate change and implement climate change adaptation strategies. Though it is only covered in one bullet under the Sustainability Strategic Actions, I feel that investing in this is a key to our future success as a municipality.”

“The opioid and unhoused crises do not seem to be directly addressed in this plan and that is a shocking omission.”

“stop the outrageous parking fees”

“Minimize the use of consultants in implementing the strategic actions and development of KPI's and CPI's. Use the talents, experience and knowledge of staff.”

“The strategic plan and council priorities should reflect how Cobourg will mitigate and adapt to a changing climate, increase energy efficiency of buildings, educate residents on the importance of environmental sustainability (while clearly defining what sustainability means) as well as provide social supports and excellent service to its citizens.”

“This is all rhetoric. There is nothing meaningful for the priorities of the local residents, businesses, and tourists. Stop with the smoke and mirrors and provide something concrete.”

Congrats on an amazing start!

Possible noticing's, as places of even further enhancement:

- Missing: the boutique and arts atmosphere (a draw for both innovative creative forward-thinking young adults and also retired seniors)
- I note a conceptual skew in the language of service that positions the citizen as customer and the town as deliverer... this puts an us/them slant... i.e., the governed and governing vs. an "in-it-together" atmosphere of collaborative input... the latter making for greater trust
- Caution on ambiguous wording (see specifics on attached ppt)
- Sustainability piece is weak, lacks a sense of forward/future-thinking feel. (I say this recognizing that setting matters in stone is ill-advised at this stage. That said, intentions seem too vague in this domain. I really don't know what you are imagining when you use the word sustainability. Might you provide a little more clarity? Questions that come to mind:
- How will we decrease our biological footprint and promote/reward those who do?
- Might sustainability be a visible well-articulated component in every initiative? It currently has the feel of an afterthought/intention that has not been fleshed out to the level of the other priorities. For example: How do we encourage sustainably oriented entrepreneurship?

"I read every word of your Strategic Plan and I am disappointed. There were spelling mistakes, and one diagram lists us as French River. That speaks to a Strat Plan Template, which is disappointing. Also noting that Cobourg has a much higher than average rate of seniors living here, the comment that attracting more desirable people is something to work on, baffles me. Then putting a chart below this detailing numbers of each race living here feels uncomfortable to me. (Did no one see this and think it could be interpreted as racism, even if it was not meant that way?) Please tell us who you want living here? People come here to retire...that's a fact. Why not lean into this? These folks have money to spend and love volunteerism because they have the time and pay taxes.

The fact that a proper meaningful Vision Mission, and Values could not be decided on speaks to lack of leadership. Sorry folks I did this for a living and wow...that fact alone is startling. Zero consensus from the team other than words they liked. If you were looking for a Gold Standard Strat Plan comparator, try Northumberland Hills Hospital. Their Vision, People First is exemplary. Plus their values using the anachronism CARE has a rubric which is reported on and operated as a template for decision making at every turn. That is a terrific Strat Plan, with built in checks and balances...plus I will never forget their Vision. People First. I love Cobourg, have the greatest respect for our elected officials who work so hard, truly. However (and as a consultant who did this for many private and public sector organizations) this document makes me think your leadership team lacks cohesion. Not coming out of a retreat with clear consensus on a Vision including the words is just not getting the job done. In over 20 years never did this happen once. If you all can't agree with a Vision for our town then how will we become a "Thriving Community". I really hope this Vision gets revisited and clarified. What exactly is a thriving community and how does that guide you? I'll bet you would get as many definitions as the number of people you asked. People First. Clear, concise, memorable. I can tell you one thing, despite mentioning it in the beginning deliberations, accessibility (think people with disabilities) was left out of the Strategic Plan. That is NOT a Thriving Community. I chose a ranking as you printed above because it was mandatory in order to submit this feedback. I don't see myself or my family in any of these choices sadly. If you asked folks in the street what is important to them I doubt they would have responded with the items you ask us to rank. Most would talk of safety, affordability, transportation and the like. A Vision should be a picture of your preferred future. A good place to start."

Community Pop-Up Sessions

From October 20 to 26, town staff held a series of community engagement pop-up sessions to speak with members of the community about the draft Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 and Beyond. The following are key themes that developed from those discussions.

Sustainability

- Request for more focus on sustainability efforts across all strategic pillars. Sustainability plays an important role in all future progress of the Town, across all departments and the work we do.
- The Strategic plan should be aligned with the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan actions and timelines.
- Operational benefits to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The reduction of energy would shrink our carbon footprint and lower our operating expenses.

Housing

- Our industries and organizations are struggling with workforce housing. Employers are hiring out of area staff because they cannot afford housing locally.
- The town needs to ensure there is mixed development. Housing for single families, multi-generational homes and smaller units for seniors or singles.
- We need more units to help control the competition that is driving the market up.
- We also need to do what we can to ensure homes are made using efficient products so that they are sustainable in terms of affordability and will survive for generations to come.

Clear Actions Within Operating Plans

- Residents are eager to see more detailed action plans set out in the annual operational plans.
- The strategic priorities feel siloed. It would be good to develop a shared compass for decision making. The Town should develop a "Shared Vision Statement" that further articulates the key priority areas.
- How is this strategic plan going to honour the current plans that the Town of Cobourg has already endorsed?
- Residents appreciate the use of clear language when communicating strategic plans and tactics.
- Eager to see the development of KPI's to measure progress.