

STAFF REPORT

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF COBOURG



Report to:	Mayor and Council Members	Priority:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low
Submitted by:	Tracey Vaughan Chief Administrative Officer Kara Euale Communications Manager	Meeting Type:	Open Session <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Closed Session <input type="checkbox"/>
Meeting Date:	October 16, 2020		
Report No.:	Office of the CAO-031-23		
Submit comments to Council			

Subject/Title: Draft 2023 – 2027 Strategic Plan Final Report

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council receive this report for information purposes; and

FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to initiate a community engagement program starting Tuesday, October 17, 2023 to receive feedback from the public on the draft Strategic Plan 2023-2027 and Beyond; and

FURTHER THAT Council authorize Staff to summarize the public submissions following the community engagement period, including bringing forward the final draft Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 and Beyond for Council review, consideration and approval for the November 6, 2023, Committee of the Whole meeting.

1. STRATEGIC PLAN

This report will inform the Strategic Plan for 2023-2027.

2. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

This report has been circulated to the public 10 days in advance of the Committee of the Whole meeting.

If provided Council's approval, the Communications Department will initiate a community education and engagement program through the Town of Cobourg

community engagement platform, EngageCobourg.ca. Additional communications tactics will include:

- Public Notice
- Social Media campaign
- Digital Advertising through local news outlets
- In-person engagement opportunities – Staff to host information sessions at the Cobourg Community Centre, Cobourg Public Library and main lobby of Victoria Hall

3. PURPOSE

Every newly elected Council has the opportunity to come together to create a guiding document for senior staff and Council which clearly articulates the community's vision and key priorities over the Council term. The Town of Cobourg Strategic Plan guides the Town's corporate priorities and decision-making process.

The purpose of this final report is to:

- Summarize the findings from the review of background materials and research.
- Provide an analysis of the stakeholder consultation data.
- Identify six Strategic Plans from similar municipalities that were used to identify best practices (and practices to avoid).
- Document the discussions at a two-day planning session with Councillors and Senior Staff.
- Describe the processes used to develop a new Mission Statement, new Vision Statement, Strategic Priorities and Strategic Actions for the next four years and beyond.

4. ORIGIN AND LEGISLATION

The Town of Cobourg's Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 and Beyond will guide the Town's corporate priorities and decision-making processes. The primary purpose of the Strategic Plan is to communicate the community priorities and to focus the Corporation of the Town of Cobourg's resources along with those of the Municipal Council.

5. BACKGROUND

Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027

The Town of Cobourg had been following the blueprint set out in their Strategic Plan 2019-2022. It was time to develop a new Strategic Plan that would clearly articulate a vision for the municipality and define the priorities of Council for the remainder of the current term of Council, as well as setting longer term goals.

Through an RFP process, the Town selected Capital Park Consulting Inc. to assist in the development of the new plan by providing the following services:

- Carrying out an examination of matters relating to the future success of the Town.

- Reviewing the input received from residents and other stakeholders through the Engage Cobourg platform and other sources.
- Reviewing additional background materials.
- Researching Strategic Plan precedents.
- Conducting a SWOT analysis to identify the Town’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- Coordinating and facilitating a consultation process to obtain input from Council and municipal staff.
- Preparing a draft plan based on information gathered from the consultations for Council to review and approve.
- Presenting the draft Strategic Plan to Council and senior staff.
- Amending the Strategic Plan as required and issuance of the final version.

The desired outcomes of the project were to:

- Provide a clear vision for the organization, its mission, core values and guiding principles that will inform strategic initiatives and actions.
- Develop a concise, virtually appealing strategic planning document that articulates the Town’s strategic directives.
- Establish specific objectives which are realistic and achievable.

Vision, Mission and Values Statements

During the Council Strategic planning sessions, Council and senior Staff also reviewed the Town of Cobourg Mission and Vision statements. Participants reviewed best practices for Vision, Mission and Value Statements, examined examples of strong statements and evaluated the current statements in Cobourg’s most recent strategic plan to see how the wording aligned with the new aspirations communicated by Council.

6. ANALYSIS

Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027

Attached to this report is the Capital Park Consulting, Town of Cobourg Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 and Beyond Final Report. The Consultants have provided an overview of the document review and research findings used to guide Council discussions. The report also includes an overview of the two-day council strategic planning session held on June 27 and 28, 2023. A summary of comments provided by members of Council and senior Staff collected prior to the planning meetings is outlined within the report. Council offered feedback and insights they have received from members of the community regarding current strengths and gaps in service.

Collectively, Council and senior Staff conducted a SWOT Analysis and SOAR Analysis as an opportunity to analyze where the organization currently lies and how we can use our strengths and opportunities to achieve our goals.

Cobourg’s current strategic plan has five “pillars” and for each pillar there are 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. It is essential to become more focused to be more effective. It was agreed to modernize the strategic plan for 2023 – 2027 to include clear and achievable strategic priorities that the community can endorse, and staff can champion.

The draft Strategic Priorities developed at the June planning sessions were confirmed as:

- Thriving Community
- Service Excellence
- Sustainability

Each of these priorities was expanded to include Strategic Actions and Strategic Questions. The Strategic Questions were designed to assist staff, and Council, to evaluate projects to ensure that they are consistent with the direction set out in the Strategic Plan.

Key Performance Indicators:

There was a consensus that the Town needs Key Performance Indicators to measure performance and progress on their strategic plan. However, based on the considerable time and effort required to develop KPIs for Cobourg the KPIs themselves cannot be included in the new plan, but a commitment to develop them during the timeframe of the plan should be included.

New Vision and Mission Statements

During the strategic planning sessions, individual members of Council paired with senior Staff to develop recommendations for new vision and mission statements. Each group's statements were then shared and discussed as a group. The following statements were further refined by Capital Park Consulting based on the top selected statements:

OUR VISION

Welcoming community; thriving town

OUR MISSION

Exceeding expectations through quality experiences

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/BUDGET IMPACTS

The Strategic Plan project was brought before Council, and the public during the 2023 Budget Process. Council approved \$20,000 from the 2023 Council Operating budget to be put towards the Council Strategic planning process.

The Capital Park Consulting facilitation costs will total \$26,000, with \$20,000 coming from the Council Operating budget and the additional \$6,000 taken from the 2023 transfer to the Election Reserve account as approved at the May 23, 2023, Regular Council Meeting.

8. CONCLUSION

THAT Council receive this report for information purposes; and

FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to initiate a community engagement program starting Tuesday, October 17, 2023 to receive feedback from the public on the draft Strategic Plan 2023-2027 and Beyond; and

FURTHER THAT Council authorize Staff to summarize the public submissions following the community engagement period, including bringing forward the final draft Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 and Beyond for Council review, consideration and approval for the November 6, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting.