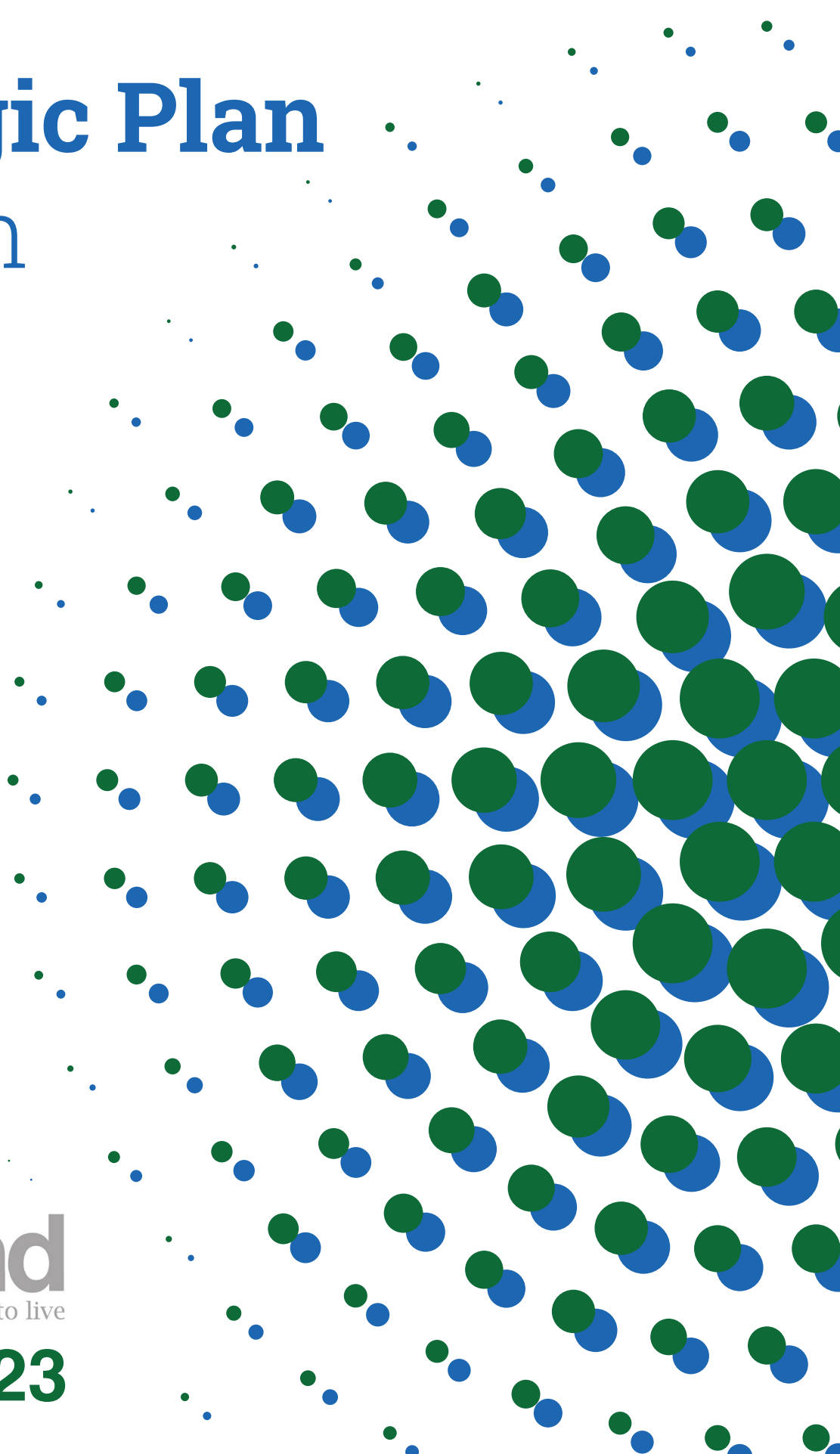


# Strategic Plan Refresh

**owen  
sound**  
where you *want* to live

**2021 - 2023**





## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The City of Owen Sound wishes to acknowledge the Territory of the Anishinabek Nation: The People of the Three Fires known as Ojibway, Odawa, and Pottawatomie Nations. And further gives thanks to the Chippewas of Saugeen, and the Chippewas of Nawash, now known as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, as the traditional keepers of this land.

## ABOUT OWEN SOUND

The City of Owen Sound is located on the southern shores of Georgian Bay along the Niagara Escarpment. Owen Sound has a beautiful harbour, winding rivers, tree-lined streets, colourful parks, lush hillsides, and ravines. The unique ecosystem is home to a wide variety of flora and fauna.

With a residential population of 21,000 and a daytime population of nearly double that, Owen Sound is the largest urban community in Grey and Bruce Counties. Owen Sound is the seat of the County of Grey municipal government and hosts several regional, provincial and federal government offices.

There is a selection of quality elementary, secondary, and private schools. Owen Sound also boasts a campus of Georgian College and a regional hospital.

With the downtown stores flanked by businesses and industries on the east and west hills, the economy is balanced and diversified. The downtown core has been enhanced in recent years and yet remains pleasantly reminiscent of the 1900s. The businesses on the east and west hills have established vibrant, arterial shopping centres.

Residents and tourists can enjoy a variety of recreation facilities including arenas, indoor and outdoor pools, skating rinks, and numerous sports fields. During the summer months, excellent boating and fishing are available on Georgian Bay, while during the winter months, Owen Sound is the hub for cross-country skiing, and thousands of kilometres of snowmobile trails.



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## THE IMPORTANCE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

Creating a strategic plan starts with a profound desire to do things well, to create a road map that effectively aligns effort and resources in a way that supports Owen Sound to be the best city it can be.

The strategic planning process builds on a clear understanding of the current state to chart the desired future course. This Strategic Plan will guide the City in how it operates and delivers its services. The refresh of the Strategic Plan determines where our organization is going over the next 24 months and how it will get there.

This project has been branded a 'Refresh' to bridge the previous Strategic Plan and create alignment with the current Term of Council.

The City will be developing a long-term strategic vision for the organization, which will provide continuity beyond each Term of Council. This will guide what Owen Sound will become over the next quarter-century. Each Term of Council, priorities will be identified in a four-year Strategic Plan to incrementally contribute towards the long-term vision and continue our long-term City and community-building efforts.

# MAYOR & COUNCIL



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# STRATEGIC PLAN REFRESH PROCESS

The 2015-2020 Strategic Plan was our road-map giving direction on how to move forward with Council-approved initiatives, strengthen communication between colleagues and further improve front-line customer services.

Between December 2014 and July 2015, residents, Council and staff provided significant engagement in developing the current strategic plan. 798 people provided input through community meetings, presentations at community events and facilities, an online survey, and comment cards. That public input was key in developing the vision, mission, values, and four focus areas that have stood the test of time and resonant today.

The process of updating the Strategic Plan is part of a broader transformation initiative. As 2020 is mid-term with this Term of Council, the refreshed Strategic Plan will have a

sunset date of mid-2023 to align with a new Term of Council.

Within that framework, Committee and staff assessed the previous Strategic Plan to understand how the City could utilize this opportunity to enhance the priorities' clarity for the next 24 months and reflect an organizational approach to project planning.

The previous Strategic Plan has served the City well, and the vision, mission, values, and pillars continue to resonant with the community and staff.

Through the utilization of appreciative analysis by using the Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results (SOAR) tool, each standing Committee and the Senior Leadership Team assessed the current goal statements within each pillar to



ensure that the identified actions will continue to impact our community positively. This analysis produced more than 1400 ideas of what the City is currently doing well, where it can improve, and how to measure the results.

Grouping the 1400+ ideas brought forward by public Committee members, Council, and senior staff, into themes helped define the Strategic Plan's overall direction and objectives. They identified the key

corporate and council priorities, which staff will focus on over the next 24 months.

Using this approach, the Strategic Plan Refresh outlined in this document will work to build on the 2015 – 2020 Strategic Plan and identify the objective of each, why it matters, and which pillar goal statement it works toward. The key results (KR) will measure our progress.



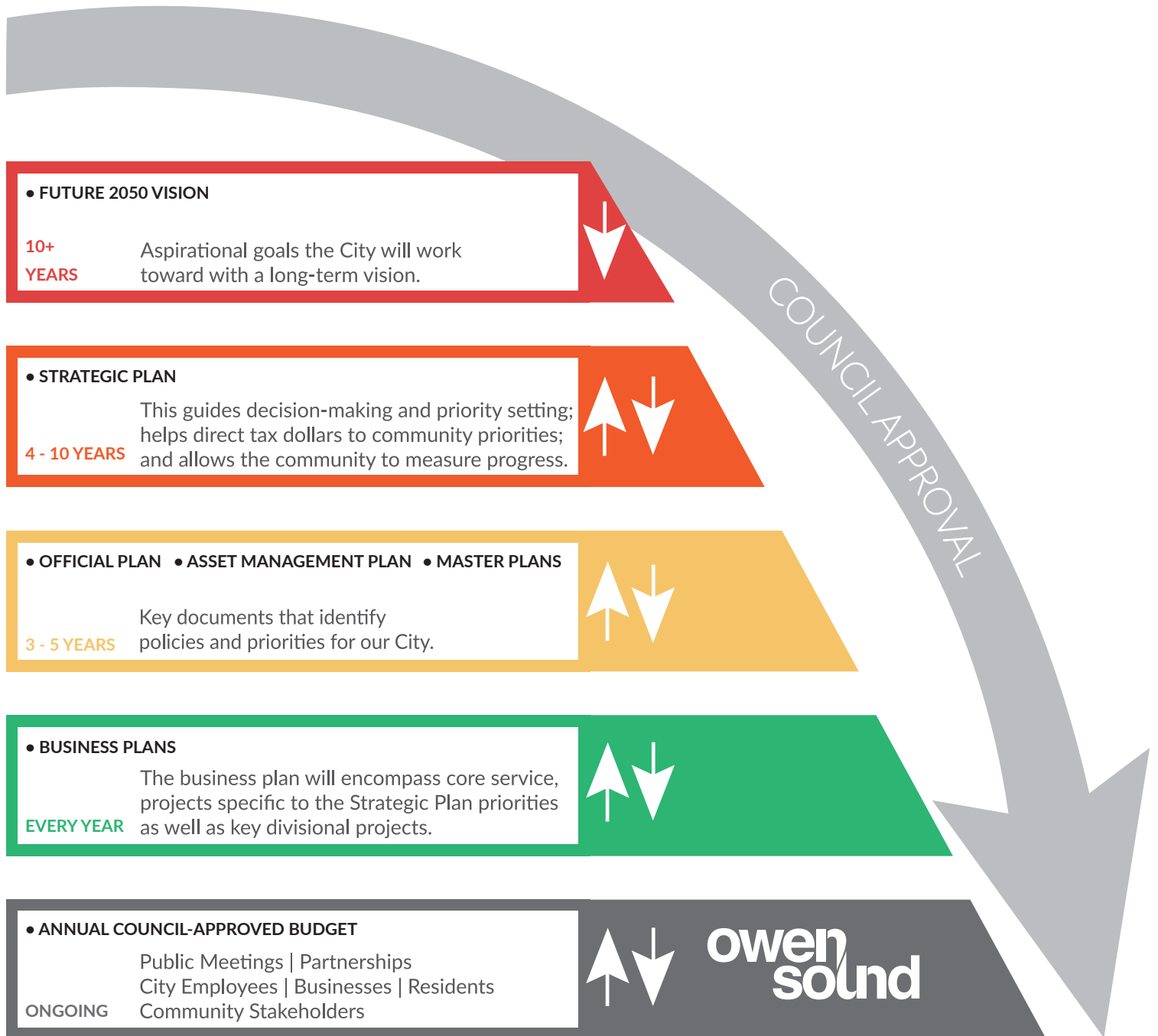
# CITY PLAN FRAMEWORK

The Strategic Plan sets the overall direction for the City. The illustration below depicts the relationships, components, and dependencies that make up the City Plan Framework.

The Asset Management Plan and the Official Plan are also key documents that identify policies and priorities for our City. These three

core documents are supported by several topic-specific master plans, management plans, and studies.

Each of these plans, studies, and projects is approved by Council, and by working together with all of our key stakeholders, they help achieve the City's vision.





# CITY'S VISION & MISSION



## Vision

The Vision is an aspiration statement that defines where Owen Sound is going.

Our City is a great place to live, work, and play, and we offer the small-town feel with big-city amenities. The vision statement reflects this and serves as an inspiration for our community.

- The City of Owen Sound: Where You *Want* to Live

## Mission

The mission statement's ultimate purpose is to strengthen our community and to make our City an attractive and prosperous place to live.

This will be accomplished through sound leadership and visionary and forward-looking direction at the municipal government level. Sound leadership is multi-faceted and means ultimately acting in the residents' best interests as we work towards shared goals.

- Strengthening our community through sound leadership

# CITY'S VALUES



## Values

Values are operating principles that guide decision-making while developing and implementing the Strategic Plan.

These values serve as the foundation of the Strategic Plan's framework and connect the vision, mission, and objectives while guiding decision-making moving forward.

### Caring

- We care about our community.
- We are a welcoming, inclusive, and age-friendly City.
- We strive for positive change and are committed to continue working in a collaborative fashion towards the City's vision of being "Where You Want To Live."

### Creativity

- We are a creative community that embraces innovation to find solutions with the greatest benefit for Owen Sound.
- As a City, we are resourceful and creative in order to thrive, regardless of external pressures.

### Integrity

- We demonstrate integrity by being open, transparent and communicative.
- We believe that continuing to communicate in an honest and informative way with residents will lead to more fruitful two-way conversations.

### Sustainability

- We demonstrate sustainability by acting in a financially, environmentally and socially responsible manner.

# STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK

## The Four Pillars

Four focus areas were established during the strategic planning process for the 2015 - 2020 Strategic Plan, and these pillars helped guide the development of this plan. Each pillar has a goal statement that describes where Owen Sound will be in our desired future.

### ECONOMY

**Goal Statement:**

We will strive to have a prosperous local economy that serves our community as well as Grey and Bruce Counties in our role as the regional centre. We will proactively attract new investment opportunities, enhance tourism opportunities and work with our businesses, industries and institutions in order to retain and expand our local businesses and job opportunities.

### ENVIRONMENT

**Goal Statement:**

We will continue to ensure environmental integrity is maintained in Owen Sound and the surrounding area by protecting our environment and natural assets. We will protect, preserve, maintain and enhance Owen Sound's scenic and natural heritage, and we will do so by using resources wisely, cooperating with adjoining communities and agencies, and taking responsibility for City actions.

### SOCIETY & CULTURE

**Goal Statement:**

We will continue the conservation and promotion of our heritage and will uphold Owen Sound's reputation as one of Canada's best places for arts and cultural activities. We will encourage lifelong learning opportunities and ensure a safe community that is welcoming, inclusive and age-friendly. And we will strive to foster pride of place for residents promoting the City as a great place to live – attracting people, tourists and entrepreneurs along the way.

### FINANCE

**Goal Statement:**

We will be a financially stable and responsible municipality, and will manage finances in a resilient and forward-thinking manner. We will address the infrastructure deficit by focusing on critical priorities first and approaching these issues one step at a time, with a view to long-term financial sustainability and prosperity.



# COUNCIL & CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Aligning staff and financial resources around key priorities enables a more focused effort toward achieving the goals for each pillar within the Strategic Plan. These priorities align with and support the desired outcomes of each of the four pillar focus areas.

**Council Priorities:** Success in these priorities will result in a more sustainable, safe, prosperous, collaborative, vibrant, and resilient city.

**Corporate Priorities:** Success in these priorities will result in a more effective organization, face challenges and seize opportunities while strengthening service to citizens.



## Council Priorities

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**SAFE CITY**



**PROSPEROUS CITY**



**GREEN CITY**



**A CITY THAT GROWS**



**A CITY THAT MOVES**



**CITY BUILDING**



**COLLABORATIVE CITY**

## Corporate Priorities

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**CLEAR DIRECTION**



**SERVICE EXCELLENCE**

# HOW TO READ THIS PLAN

On the following pages, each Term of Council priority or corporate priority is identified at the top of the page with a title, icon and coordinating colour scheme.

See example of Green City below:



**GREEN CITY** \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE

\_\_\_\_\_ ICON

\_\_\_\_\_ COLOUR SCHEME

## OBJECTIVES:

Outline what is to be achieved related to this priority.

### KR1

#### • Key Results:

Effective key results are specific and time-bound, aggressive yet realistic. Most of all, they are **quantifiable** or **verifiable** and will be **reported regularly** with current status updates. Staff identified key results to measure 'what matters' and measure our success and tied each priority to one or more of the four pillars; Economic, Finance, Society and Culture, and Environment.

#### • Pillars Supported:

Term of Council and corporate priorities are further anchored to one or more of the four pillars.





Owen Sound Fire Services dispatched to 844 emergency calls in 2020



# SAFE CITY

## Why This Matters

Safety is a concept concerned with achieving a positive state of well-being among people within social and physical environments. Not only is it about reducing and preventing injury and crime, but it is also about building strong, cohesive, vibrant, participatory communities. This means the perception of safety is as important as measuring injury and crime rates.

### OBJECTIVE:

Supporting inclusivity, diversity, and accessibility in our community and recognizing the importance of a safe and secure community.

#### KR1

- Police Services will respond to Priority 0, 1, and 2 emergency calls within 7.5 minutes

#### KR2

- Build or replace 1% of non-conforming sidewalks with accessible design guidelines

#### KR3

- Conduct fire safety inspections on 95% of all commercial occupancies throughout the City each year (including apartment buildings with five or more units)

#### KR4

- Create a comprehensive Corporate Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy by December 2022

#### KR5

- Measure Owen Sound's progress toward becoming a more sustainable, safe, and resilient City by adopting a globally recognized municipal benchmark (e.g., United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, World Council on City Data) in the 2023 Term of Council Priorities

- Pillars Supported:

**Society & Culture**



## 2020 construction values in Owen Sound surpassed \$66 million





# PROSPEROUS CITY

## Why This Matters

Owen Sound continues to diversify its economy and Council recognizes that more work is required to build a resilient local economy that offers residents better opportunities to grow, develop and support their families. The City will continue to encourage businesses to relocate to Owen Sound, support existing businesses and new business start-ups, and work to engage young people, entrepreneurs, innovators, and creative citizens in facilitating economic growth.

### OBJECTIVE:

Working towards a positive business environment and support initiatives that increase our competitive economic advantages.

#### KR1

- Reduce commercial vacancy in the River District by 10%

#### KR2

- Develop a framework to attract key industry sector(s) for economic growth and investment that are matched to Owen Sound's economic strengths

#### KR3

- Commit spending 90% of the community improvement program grant funding allocation through the façade, business start-up, landscape and accessibility programs each fiscal year

- Pillars Supported:

**Economy | Finance | Society & Culture**



# Owen Sound has 35 kilometres of trails throughout the City



# GREEN CITY

## Why This Matters

Focusing on climate action planning dependencies include public transportation, waste management, vehicle usage, infrastructure—and just about every other activity within the urban area of Owen Sound. A strategic balance among reducing energy usage, encouraging technological innovation, and changing behaviors lead to a healthier and more sustainable future.

### OBJECTIVE:

Enhancing the City's resiliency and capacity for mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change. Supporting and promoting healthy lifestyles.

#### KR1

- Offset 100 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year by annually planting 100 hardwood tree species

#### KR2

- Protect, repair, remediate 90% of the City's impacted shoreline from wave action and high water

#### KR3

- Increase tonnage collected at household hazardous waste days by 10%

#### KR4

- Develop a waste management strategy by June 2022

#### KR5

- Develop a climate mitigation plan as part of a Climate Action Strategy that incorporates the 2021 Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan

- Pillars Supported:

**Environment | Finance**



**Owen Sound is the hub of Grey County with a daytime population of 40,000**



# A CITY THAT GROWS

## Why This Matters

Growth is the gradual, deliberate development of a community to facilitate and meet the challenges associated with an increased number of residents and businesses. Improving municipal growth readiness requires a concerted effort by municipal leaders to provide appropriate public policy, the availability of land and housing, and infrastructure to support the growth.

### OBJECTIVE:

Achieving the population target for Owen Sound as set out in the Grey County Growth Management Plan.

#### KR1

- Undertake an Owen Sound 2050 Vision by July 2023

#### KR2

- Implement assessment based management

#### KR3

- Increase active employment gross floor area by 25,000 square feet each fiscal year

#### KR4

- 95% of site plan applications reviewed within four weeks

- Pillars Supported:

**Economy | Finance | Society & Culture**



**Owen Sound Transit had more than 190,000 riders in 2019**



# A CITY THAT MOVES

## Why This Matters

Owen Sound faces common challenges when it comes to a fundamental aspect of urban living: getting around. Council aims to be forward-thinking about mobility and the rising demand it puts on current infrastructure. The City aims to make getting around more flexible, more affordable, faster, safer, and with the natural environment in mind.

### OBJECTIVE:

Facilitating sustainable transportation options and creating community connectivity.

#### KR1

- Complete transit study by September 2021

#### KR2

- Develop and implement an active transportation plan by June 2022

#### KR3

- Increase the number of roads with a Pavement Condition Index (PCI) rating greater than 70 by 10%

#### KR4

- Develop cross-sections for the various road types that integrates active transportation, landscape, benches, with core infrastructure – road, utilities and lighting by December 2021

- Pillars Supported:

**Economy | Environment | Finance | Society & Culture**



**The TOM (Tom Thomson Art Gallery) had  
22,000 visitors in 2019**





# CITY BUILDING

## Why This Matters

To be successful, Owen Sound needs destinations that give an identity and image to our communities, destinations that help attract new residents, businesses, investment, and people. Building great places fosters successful social networks and benefits multiple stakeholders and initiatives at once.

### OBJECTIVE:

Planning community amenities that create great places and spaces for community living. Cultivating a vibrant and diverse arts, culture, and heritage environment throughout the city.

#### KR1

- Phase 2 of Downtown River Precinct 100% complete by December 2022

#### KR2

- Increase pedestrian counts in the River District by 10%

#### KR3

- Undertake a city-wide public art strategy by June 2022

#### KR4

- Complete adaptive re-uses of two heritage buildings that serve the public interest by April 2023

- Pillars Supported:

**Economy | Society & Culture | Finance**



**Owen Sound received more than  
\$6.8 million in grant funding in 2020**



# COLLABORATIVE CITY

## Why This Matters

Owen Sound continues to search for innovative, more effective ways to achieve and maintain a competitive advantage in the local and global economy while also understanding that the quality of life we enjoy, our social, environmental, and economic well-being are all inextricably linked.

### OBJECTIVE:

Maintaining and improving relationships through engagement.

#### KR1

- Leverage partnerships to improve or maintain delivery of targeted services without increasing tax levy

#### KR2

- Hold two meetings per year between Council and the Police Services Board to identify service levels and priorities

#### KR3

- Increase competitive grant funding dollars received annually

#### KR4

- Develop and implement an engagement framework policy and tool to increase public input on projects / initiatives by June 2022

- Pillars Supported:

**Economy | Society & Culture | Finance**



**City Council and Committees meet more than 70 times a year to make informed decisions on community projects and issues**



# CLEAR DIRECTION

## Why This Matters

A common understanding of the City's direction and goals at every level of the corporation enables a collaborative decision making process to maximize the organization's impact. A solid financial foundation and engaged workforce are key to sustainable service delivery.

### OBJECTIVE:

Cultivating an environment to support a common understanding of where the organization is going in the future.

#### KR1

- Implement a government relations plan by December 2021

#### KR2

- Align total municipal levy to Council's directed threshold each year while maintaining a capital increase of 1% annually

#### KR3

- Develop a Human Resources strategy that fosters a skilled, engaged, and diverse workforce that is grounded in the City's core values by September 2022

- Pillars Supported:

**Economy | Society & Culture | Finance | Environment**



**In 2020, the City received 64,000 phone calls with an average wait time of 10 seconds**



# SERVICE EXCELLENCE

## Why This Matters

Service Excellence identifies the areas where the City's administrative leadership will focus on ensuring we are a high-performance organization that delivers good value for money to our residents.

### OBJECTIVE:

Being a modern and efficient municipal government that makes citizens' lives better every day.

#### KR1

- Further develop a culture of learning, development, well-being and embrace new approaches to service provision

#### KR2

- Enhance our information, technology and digital capabilities to allow residents, businesses and visitors to interact with the City where, when and how they choose

#### KR3

- Optimize organizational structure

- Pillars Supported:

**Economy | Society & Culture | Finance | Environment**



Pictured left to right: Councillor Dodd, Councillor Koepke, Mayor Boddy, Councillor Thomas, Deputy Mayor O’Leary. Regrets: Councillor Greig, Councillor Hamley, Councillor Merton, Councillor Tamming.

## OUR COMMITMENT TO ACCOUNTABILITY

We are committed to being accountable to the community we serve. The responsibility of the Strategic Plan is shared between Council and staff.

While City staff will be responsible for the day-to-day work of implementing the Strategic Plan, bringing it to life will also require the support and leadership of the Council.

Implementing the Strategic Plan involves the systematic coordination and alignment of resources and activities grounded in the mission and vision, and values. Staff will achieve this alignment by developing an organizational business plan that will clarify core service, divisional and departmental initiatives that will include specific actions to advance Council priorities defined in the strategic plan.

Staff will measure and report on our progress to Council and the public throughout the life of this plan by increasing transparency

and pursue data-driven results.

We will share results (both our successes and challenges) with citizens.

The City’s Senior Leadership Team personally commits to being accountable for progress toward the strategic plan’s goals and regularly reporting on our progress.

Staff will provide updates in a progress report every six months for Council’s review and will implement a public citizen dashboard to enable citizens to access a visual metric of the city’s progress on the key results. Citizen dashboards promote accountability and transparency that the city will deliver on its targets. The progress report and dashboard will let us see where we stand on each priority’s key results.

Ultimately, the success of the Strategic Plan Refresh will be measured in its ability to activate the vision for our city.






# GLOSSARY

- **2050 Vision:**  
*A forward-looking plan to help attract and manage people, ideas and investment to and from the city.*
- **Active Employment Gross Floor Area:**  
*Total amount of square footage currently activated by operational retail, commercial or industrial businesses.*
- **Assessment Base:**  
*An annual list of all properties in a municipality, which includes assessment values. This is used by municipalities to levy taxes annually.*
- **Assessment Based Management (ABM):**  
*Steps taken to ensure the correctness of, and to prevent the erosion of the assessment roll as a whole for the municipality. ABM is a process in which the municipality works with Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC), the property owners and all stakeholders to ensure equity and timeliness in resolving assessment related issues.*
- **Community Improvement Program (CIP):**  
*A tool that allows a municipality to direct funds and implement policy initiatives toward a specifically defined project area, often intended to encourage revitalization initiatives and/or stimulate development and redevelopment.*
- **Downtown River Precinct:**  
*A Council-approved initiative that focuses on the Sydenham Riverside through downtown Owen Sound. It includes strengthening the link to the inner harbour through a continuous riverside trail, an accessible and inclusive urban environment, and updated infrastructure, among many other features.*
- **Engagement Framework:**  
*A framework to ensure a consistent approach to community engagement, providing guidance on when and how to undertake engagement activities and what steps and processes should be considered. Engagement includes sharing information, which is the foundation for an engaged community, to collaborating on decisions.*
- **Government Relations Plan:**  
*A plan to facilitate greater interaction – both qualitatively and quantitatively – between federal, provincial, local governments and the City – to ensure formalized, reliable engagement.*
- **Household Hazardous Waste:**  
*Materials that are corrosive, oxidizing, flammable or poisonous and can be harmful to people, animals and the environment if not disposed of properly.*
- **Municipal Levy:**  
*Property tax is a levy based on the assessed value of property. The rates for the municipal portion of the tax are established annually by the municipality.*
- **Pavement Condition Index (PCI):**  
*A standardized numerical index between 0 and 100, which is used to indicate the general condition of a pavement section (of road or sidewalk).*
- **Priority 0, 1 and 2 Emergency Calls:**  
*Police service calls that are classified as most catastrophic and emergency situations (Priority 0), potential for danger/injury (Priority 1), and events that require police attendance but there is no potential for danger or injury (Priority 2).*
- **River District:**  
*Formerly known as Owen Sound's Downtown area.*



**CITY OF OWEN SOUND**  
**Strategic Plan**  
Refresh

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