



*The TOWNSHIP of*  
**NORTH DUMFRIES**

# **CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN**

## **2024 - 2026**

**February 2024**

**Inspire. Lead. Transform.**

2022

## **North Dumfries - Today, Tomorrow, Our Future Together ...**

**The Township of North Dumfries has developed this new Strategic Plan to recognize opportunities for growth and development that is balanced through the lens of future economic, financial, social and environmental sustainability of the Municipality. This Strategic Plan emphasizes the leveraging of local assets which capitalize on the many strengths and opportunities in the area.**

The Township's Corporate Strategic Plan is a long-term planning document that describes the Vision for North Dumfries for a time period fifteen to twenty years in the future.

In order to fulfill this Vision, Township Council for the time period 2024 – 2026 has established a series of goals, related objectives and priorities that further describe and implement the broader vision. The Vision, goals, objectives and priorities provide long term direction to inform future decision making. The actions undertaken over the 2024 – 2026 time period represent the Township's current detailed plan working towards achieving the Vision.

This Plan will be utilized to inform Department Business Plans, the annual Budget process and other municipal planning documents using established performance measures to ensure that resources are allocated appropriately and reported annually to identify progress, measure success and establish future goals.

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## Why develop a Corporate Strategic Plan ?

North Dumfries' Council has confirmed the need for a long-term vision for the entire community. There are many benefits to developing and adopting a Strategic Plan, including:

- ✓ **Understanding and responding** to community needs and expectations (social, economic and environmental);
- ✓ Developing a renewed sense of purpose / **future** direction;
- ✓ Establishing short, medium, long term goals, objectives and **priorities** that are integrated toward achieving the Township's Vision;
- ✓ Identifying and **enhancing** the ability to manage change by embracing the principle that **change is continuous**;
- ✓ Mitigating potential risk through **integrated planning** and **thoughtful analysis**;
- ✓ **Improving** decision making and effective Corporate management;
- ✓ Enhancing **communication** between Council, Staff and members of the Public, and, Council and Staff;
- ✓ Strengthening and integrating the **coordination of activities** and **purpose** between Departments;
- ✓ Defining responsibilities, **accountability** and measuring success



## Strategic Plan Framework ...

The structure of this Plan is as follows:

Vision Statement	•The Vision is a general statement that presents a timeless inspirational view for the ideal future of the Township.
Mission Statement	•The core purpose and focus of the organization. Communicates the intended direction of the Township.
Guiding Principles	•The parameters that inform the way the Township conducts its business and operations.
Goals	•Goals are qualitative statements that highlight key issues raised during the Council led collaborative process which adds depth to the Vision Statement and charts the direction for the Plan.
Objectives	•Objectives are more specific statements of the general goals and describe how the goals will be achieved. Each goal may have multiple objectives.
Priorities	•The priorities refer to specific actions that need to be undertaken during the 2023-2026 term of Council and will be reflected in annual Operating & Capital Budgets, and, Department Business Plans.
Implementation	•The implementation section includes the steps necessary to ensure that the proposed priorities are implemented by the Township and our partners, and, progress is measured and reported annually to Council.





## Vision Statement



North Dumfries' Vision for the future recognizes a rural community rich with heritage and comprised of a series of settlement areas entwined by significant natural features and active agricultural enterprises.

Council understands the importance of establishing our future by building upon the foundation of the community's strengths. Located in the heart of southwestern Ontario, adjacent the large economic centres of the three cities of Waterloo region, North Dumfries' ideal location and proximity to the Highway 401 corridor that bisects the community makes it the ideal destination to work, live, play and invest. North Dumfries has a stable and thriving economy that includes a mix of small and large businesses, proximity to three award winning post secondary institutions, and, ease of access to a diverse range of cultural and entertainment venues to enhance the quality of life opportunities for our residents.

The Township's natural beauty, extensive environmental features, diverse settlement areas including Ayr, rolling countryside and sense of community is what attracts residents to North Dumfries.

## Mission Statement

*Serving our community to enhance the quality of life in North Dumfries.*

Council will achieve the Mission Statement by:

- Making responsible and timely decisions to meet the needs in the present time period without compromising the long-term opportunities and Vision of the community;
- Municipal service delivery and programs that will support the needs of the community;
- Committing to good governance by embracing our core values;
- Fostering positive relationships;
- Establishing partnerships to serve North Dumfries;
- Recognizing and embracing the diversity of the Township; and,
- Promoting North Dumfries' strengths and leveraging sustainable opportunities.

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## Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles represent the framework to enact the Vision. The Principles listed below articulate the standards by which the Township makes decisions and conducts its activities. The Corporate Strategic Plan is framed by the following Principles:

- **Commitment to the Strategic Plan as a long-term planning document;**
- **Broad outreach and engagement with partners, businesses, community groups and residents to ensure an inclusive community;**
- **Recognition and encouragement of community contributions and volunteerism;**
- **Leverage partnerships;**
- **Dignity, integrity and respect in terms of our actions, deliverables and decisions;**
- **Leadership in Corporate management;**
- **Progressive Corporate excellence and continuous improvement;**
- **Commitment to on-going training and the investment in the professional development of Council and Staff**

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## Corporate Core Values and Behaviour

The Corporate Core Values and Behaviours guide Council, Staff and our Volunteers when interacting with each other, and, when providing services and when communicating with members of the public. Township representatives will be professional and be transparent in our work. We value and seek to understand all positions. We strive to be open minded and fair to all. We are at our best when we work together.

The Corporation of the Township of North Dumfries is committed to:

### **RESPECT**

We will ...

Have mutual and fair understanding of the wants, needs and expectations of others.  
Practice open, honest and sincere communication.

### **INTEGRITY**

We will ...

Conduct ourselves in a professional manner with an emphasis on effective & constructive communication, accountability for actions, and a strong moral compass.  
Be committed to maintaining a safe, trusting, and supportive environment.  
Demonstrate professionalism, good judgement, and personal leadership.





## **SERVICE**

We will ...

Strive to provide timely, respectful and knowledgeable responses focussing on communicating information in a friendly and accessible manner to all.  
Seek feedback and use it to enhance and continually improve our services and programs.  
Demonstrate hard work and dedication in an effort to enhance community pride.

## **INCLUSIVENESS**

We will ...

Commit to welcome, listen, learn and understand.  
Foster an environment of respect and a sense of belonging for all.

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## **Pillars to Success – Key Strategies**

### **Community Growth & Economic Prosperity**

**A vibrant community where residents and businesses have a dynamic role in the success of the community and shaping the quality of life attributes. A culture and environment that fosters entrepreneurship, stimulates opportunity, and, enhances the community's attractiveness for investment.**

#### **Goal 1      Economic Readiness**

##### **Objectives**

- a. Create and implement an Economic Development Strategy in coordination with the Waterloo Economic Development Corporation
- b. Explore opportunities through the Township's partnership in the Waterloo Economic Development Corporation to elevate business support services such as a concierge service for non-residential development approvals
- c. Work with community partners to promote employment practices / opportunities for local businesses and residents, including home based businesses and live / work opportunities
- d. Update policies and standards that focus on business attraction, retention and expansion for advanced manufacturing, logistics, agri-business ventures and the agricultural sector
- e. Assess the need for additional employment lands designed to provide a suitable inventory of vacant land to accommodate a mixture of business activities and to appropriately respond to the economic demands of the area



- f. Work with regional, provincial and national partners to promote North Dumfries as a preferred location for business investment

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## Goal 2      Downtown Ayr

### Objectives

- a. Update the Downtown Ayr: Strategic Plan of Action for Revitalization
- b. Prepare a master plan for the Ayr Ice House Precinct to ensure a coordinated vision for the Municipal land holdings adjacent the Nith River that promotes public space and accessibility.
- c. Promote opportunities for mixed use development, and, strategically located purpose built residential development
- d. Invest in public realm improvements and accessibility



### **Goal 3      Tourism**

#### **Objectives**

- a. Create and implement a Tourism Strategy tailored and building upon on the initial work completed by the Waterloo Region Tourism & Marketing Corporation
  - b. Explore opportunities for events and attractions that will elevate North Dumfries as a destination within Waterloo region
  - c. Leverage and promote the four season recreational opportunities of the GRCA Forest Blocks and area trail network
  - d. Leverage and promote the opportunities to be realized through Cycling Tourism
  - e. Update and enhance a walking tour through Downtown Ayr and the adjacent residential neighbourhoods in a form that can be posted on the Township website and an app for mobile devices
  - f. Leverage and grow the Township's capacity in the Waterloo Region Tourism & Marketing Corporation
  - g. Enhance the Corporate website to profile and promote tourism opportunities within the Township
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### **Goal 4      Develop Complete Neighbourhoods**

#### **Objectives**

- a. Collaborate with residents and the development community to ensure future growth includes a mixture of housing opportunities to meet the requirements of a diverse population



- b. Elevate the importance and principle of attainable housing when considering new development whether it be in the form of infill / intensification, redevelopment or new greenfield areas
- c. Work with residents and the development community to achieve intensification targets to 2051 in the Township's Official Plan that respects the character of long established neighbourhoods
- d. In Ayr promote new development that embraces the principle of the 15 minute neighbourhood
- e. Identify and implement an integrated on and off-road trail network that promotes cycling and walking in neighbourhoods and connections to other key areas of the community
- f. Establish a hierarchy of parks and open space to meet the future needs and requirements of a growing community. Parks and open space should be viewed in the context of both recreational opportunities, and, as a meeting place designed to accommodate people of all ages and abilities
- g. Incorporate traffic calming measures into the emerging residential neighbourhoods, and assess where practical, the opportunity to establish new traffic calming measures within established neighbourhoods or settlement areas



## **Goal 5      Rural Transit**

### **Objectives**

- a. To work in collaboration with the Region of Waterloo to establish an alternative transit delivery model as a pilot project that facilitates the ability of residents to migrate between their residence to areas of shopping, professional services, education, and, employment. This program would be designed and tailored to service both the urban and rural areas of the community
  - b. In collaboration with the Province and the Region of Waterloo identify opportunities for inter-municipal connections for transit with adjacent communities in Brantford / Brant County; Hamilton; Oxford County and Guelph / Wellington
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## **Goal 6      Sustainable Health Care**

### **Objectives**

- a. In partnership with the Cambridge & North Dumfries Ontario Health Team identify opportunities locally for sustainable community health services that are designed to serve residents through all stages of life
- b. Be an advocate with a strong voice towards Senior Levels of Government to keep healthcare facilities viable and services accessible
- c. Support a coordinated community focussed approach to physician and healthcare provider recruitment and retention
- d. Promote the principles of healthy and active living in our community, and where possible, incorporate features into our parks and facilities
- e. Be an advocate with the private sector to facilitate and develop an Age in Place community





## Pillars to Success – Key Strategies Leisure & Community Services

**To support a healthy and active community. The Township places great value on a rounded lifestyle that is respectful to the varying needs of our residents.**



### Goal 1 Trail Development

#### Objectives

- Update the 2014 Trails Master Plan with the objective of identifying core trail systems (on and off-road) to be developed by the Municipality on a priority rating basis and/or where partnerships or leases to access lands to facilitate priority trail connections could be pursued
- Confirm and identify trail networks (on and off-road) developed and maintained by area partners, and, to promote these trail facilities via the Corporate website and broader promotional campaigns
- Map the trail network (on and off-road) throughout the Township in a form that can be displayed on the Township's website and an app for mobile devices
- Assess opportunities to develop partnerships or leases to access lands to facilitate priority trail connections

## Goal 2 Recreation Program Delivery

### Objectives

- a. Implement the Leisure Master Plan (June 2022) with a specific emphasis on recreation programming to be delivered by the Township, both within Ayr and the rural settlement areas. Programming opportunities should promote active and healthy initiatives that are tailored to respond to the needs of children and youth, adults, and seniors
- b. Where appropriate, the Township will consider entering into programming partnerships to deliver components of the recreational / leisure programming needs



### Goal 3 Park Development and Enhancements

#### Objectives

- a. As recommended by the Leisure Master Plan (June 2022), a priority will be to enhance outdoor programming activities and amenities within the four (4) rural parks in Branchton, Clyde, Roseville and Brown's Subdivision.
- b. New parks or the redevelopment of existing parks will be designed in a such a fashion so as to promote a neighbourhood destination / sense of place, where there is the opportunity for healthy living, socialization and interaction. All parks will be designed to serve all ages and all abilities





## Goal 4 Library Services

### Objective

- a. Promote new opportunities that would facilitate and enhance the integration of services / programs offered through the Ayr Library Branch and other partners such as EarlyOn, Seniors Clubs and associations, and, Township delivered recreation & leisure programming
- b. In consultation with our partners in the other Waterloo Region Townships, assess the opportunities to restructure the delivery model for Library programming and services, including governance



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## Goal 5 Higher Order Recreational Activities – Partnerships

### Objective

- a. Explore the opportunity to develop partnerships with adjacent Municipalities with respect to Township resident's access to higher order recreational facilities such as an indoor pool



## Pillars to Success – Key Strategies Environment & Sustainability

**The Grand River and the Nith River are defining features within our community. Extensive forested areas, wetlands and other key natural features dominant the Township’s landscape and provides for a wonderful habitat for wildlife. The Township recognizes the importance of these elements and their long term protection, and where possible, the enhancement of these features.**

### Goal 1      Climate Change

#### Objectives

- a. Continue with the roll out and implementation of the CimateActionWR initiative as adopted by Council and the area municipalities within Waterloo region. This “call to action” identifies initiatives to be employed by the Township to provide responsive and progressive deliverables responding to Climate Change (including reduction in GHG emissions), and, how the Municipality as a Corporate Leader will implement programs, public education & outreach, and, direct delivery change in terms of business activities associated with Township facilities, fleet, etc.
- b. In cooperation with partners, identify opportunities for area wide public education and outreach to improve community awareness on Climate Change and the principle of “think globally act locally”
- c. Assess the linear infrastructure network and determine what changes may be required to accommodate / mitigate against risk arising from the influences of Climate Change



- d. In cooperation with partners identify revised engineering standards to inform the future infrastructure network to mitigate against risk arising from the influences of Climate Change
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## **Goal 2      Protection and Enhancement of Key Natural Heritage Features**

### **Objectives**

- a. As part of the next update to the Township's Official Plan, undertake a comprehensive review of current land use policies and strategies that are designed to recognize and protect key natural heritage features such as woodlots, wetlands and areas of habitat. Where possible, existing features should be enhanced





- b. Develop policies and strategies that are designed to promote and enhance the protection of groundwater resources and baseflow contribution to the Grand River and Nith River
  - c. Improve key natural heritage features through new approaches when designing stormwater management facilities, roads and bridges, etc that will promote and improve the resiliency of these environmental sensitive areas. This focus should be on both new infrastructure and when replacing aging infrastructure
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## Pillars to Success – Key Strategies

### Governance & Financial Strategy

The success of the Township depends upon public trust and confidence. The relationship with our residents and businesses will be achieved through open, transparent and fair decision making, responsible financial management, responsive customer service delivery, and, meaningful public engagement and communication.

Infrastructure represents the foundation of any community. Ensuring that the necessary structures, facilities, services and systems are well established and maintained all contribute to increased capacity and resiliency, and in turn, support growth and investment.

#### Goal 1      Fiscal Responsibility

##### Objectives

- a. Update and maintain the Township's Asset Management Plan and associated funding strategy with a minimum ten-year forecast. The objective is to ensure that the Township's linear infrastructure network, facilities, parks and open space network are maintained in a state of good repair
- b. Establish a Debt Management Policy
- c. Establish a Fleet Management Policy
- d. Ensure balanced consideration of social, economic and environmental factors when making fiscal decisions / policies for new programs and services, and / or, enhancements to existing service levels



## **Goal 2      Community Engagement & Communication**

### **Objectives**

- a. Acknowledging the rural / urban interface of the Township, undertake the development of a comprehensive Public Communication Strategy with multiple outreach channels
  - b. Build relationships with key stakeholders and community collaborators
  - c. Reinvigorate volunteerism within the community by building their capacity through facilitation and training
- 

## **Goal 3      Strong Corporate Culture**

### **Objectives**

- a. Develop and implement a comprehensive Succession & Retention Strategy focussed on attracting and retaining high value talent to support Municipal operations
- b. As a Corporate culture recognize that continuous improvement and the need to embrace change are guiding principles
- c. Leverage changes in technology to improve operational efficiency
- d. Invest on an annual basis to ensure appropriate Council and Staff training, including the professional and leadership development of Staff and Council
- e. Identify and promote opportunities for partnerships, joint initiatives and similar programs to deliver programs and services with area municipalities, both within and adjacent to Waterloo region



- f. Develop a Branding Strategy for the Township
  - g. As a Corporate culture, embrace the principle of belonging and accessibility for all of our residents
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## Projects established by Council as Priorities: 2024 – 2026

The development and implementation of the 2024 – 2026 Corporate Strategic Plan will in time accrue significant benefits for the Township of North Dumfries. Council recognizes that this document identifies key steps that build upon the strengths and opportunities of the Township. The Corporate Strategic Plan will also assist in improving co-ordination and integration between Departments by promoting a shared vision and organizational culture.

While it is recognized that Council has established Goals and Objectives that are captured within four Key Strategy Areas, Council has also identified eight (8) projects that are deemed to be Priorities to be completed during this term of Office (2023 – 2026). These Priorities include:



- ***Asset Management Plan & Funding Strategy*** – maintain a robust document built upon technical information related to the status of the Township’s linear infrastructure network, buildings and fleet, and, developing a sound financial strategy to fund the future life cycle replacements of these assets thereby keeping them in a state of good repair
- ***Employment Lands Strategy*** – expand the inventory and ready supply of a mixture of employment land use activities that responds to and aligns with the locational attributes and demands of the area
- ***Advocacy*** – strong and consistent advocacy with our partners designed to leverage opportunities to enhance programs and services for matters such as high-speed broadband connectivity, natural gas service extension in the rural areas, proactive aggregate land use activity, provision of health care and rural transit



- **Conservation & Environment** – adapting to Climate Change and outlining the changes to be undertaken by the Municipality as a Corporate Leader in terms of business and operational practices
- **Training & Professional Development of Council / Staff** – the investment on an annual basis so as to strengthen the Township and provide the tools / capacity to respond to continuous improvement and change
- **Attainable Housing** – focussing on land use policies and strategies that are designed to broaden the inventory of housing available to meet the needs of our residents, both existing and future
- **Implementation of the Leisure Master Plan** – focussing on the urban / rural interface and the need to deliver forward-looking recreation and leisure programs that will respond to the changing requirements and needs of Township residents
- **Promoting an Inclusive and Caring Community** – the Township is experiencing significant residential growth. With this new growth the composition of the community is also undergoing significant change. Through our actions and the development of new programs, we will welcome, listen, learn and understand so as to promote and foster an environment of respect and a sense of belonging for all

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