



The TOWNSHIP of
NORTH DUMFRIES

Downtown Ayr: Strategic Action Plan for Revitalization

**DRAFT #3
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Prepared By: North Dumfries Economic Development Advisory Committee
Economic Development Division, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

The ease of vehicular access into the Core Area and the provision of parking are effectively promoted to enhance the visit to area businesses and cultural / entertainment venues.

Adjacent Centennial Park, Watson Pond, the urban plaza at the Cenotaph, “Ice House Park” with Nith River access, all with its community and themed events, and, cultural and leisure pursuits and their interconnected walkway network, reinforces the role of the Core Area as a meeting place and focal Township destination.

The Downtown’s first priority is to serve its community with retail stores, businesses, recreation and entertainment opportunities that support, and are supported by, the residents of the village of Ayr and North Dumfries. These activities will be combined with quaint and attractive stores, cafes, cultural and entertainment amenities that draw visitors from across Waterloo and southwestern Ontario to enjoy what we have here in North Dumfries.

The revitalization of Downtown Ayr will be achieved through a consistent and long-term organizational structure that ensures effective action, monitoring and open dialogue. Support for the Plan must come from a committed Township Council and staff, merchants and business owners, property owners and the community-at-large.

A. Establishing a Strong Foundation

To establish a strong foundation, Downtown Ayr needs to take stock of what currently exists. This inventory can include but is not limited to on and off-street parking, vacant retail space, vacant land, existing signage, landscapes and streetscapes.

Objective A1

Undertake an inventory of existing on and off-street parking capacity, utilization rates and assess the potential to increase parking opportunities.

Lead:	Planning Division
Partners:	Downtown Landowners, Public Works Division
Timing:	2017
Approval:	None
Funding:	Not Required

Goal: Identify where necessary and appropriate improvements required to facilitate additional parking, including 24-hour access, disabled and delivery / courier parking opportunities.



B. Promotion and Marketing of Downtown Ayr

A key deliverable to revitalize the Downtown is to encourage people to visit, shop and dine on a frequent basis.

The objective should be to increase the patronage of the area and extend the time spent in the Downtown. A robust coordinated promotion and marketing for the Downtown will be a key component to the success of attracting visitors to the Downtown district.

Objective B1

Develop a dedicated page on the Township's Website that identifies, markets and promotes Downtown Ayr as a destination.

Lead:	Corporate Services
Partners:	EDAC, merchants and business owners, Heritage
Timing:	2017 and on-going
Approval:	None
Funding:	Already Funded

Goal: By creating a dedicate page, Downtown Ayr will create an online presence for potential visitors and businesses and highlight features of the area.

Objective B2

Develop a social media presence that highlights activities and events occurring in the Downtown for programs or services affiliated with the Municipality.

Lead:	Recreation Division
Partners:	EDAC, Heritage, Trails, Community Groups, business owners and merchants
Timing:	2017 and on-going
Approval:	None
Funding:	None

Goal: Social media presence will give Downtown Ayr an online voice to promote activities and encourage patrons, visitors and the community-at-large to come Downtown.

Goal: By getting business owners and merchants to talk to each other, a business association can be established, cross-selling opportunities can be created that encourages visitors to spend more time Downtown.

Objective B6

Explore partnership opportunities with the eco-tourism and agri-business sectors to cross-market and link Downtown Ayr to these other business ventures.

Lead: Merchants and Business Owners
Partners: Local Media Outlets, Waterloo Region Tourism & Marketing Corp.,
Heritage, Trails
Timing: 2018 and on-going
Approval: None
Funding: To be Determined

Goal: Partnering with events across the Township, the Downtown has an opportunity to leverage exposure and add capacity to these day trip activities.

Objective B7

In partnership with the North Dumfries Heritage Advisory Committee, establish a historic walking tour(s) for properties and buildings in and around the Downtown. The tour(s) could be in the form of a guided tour (such as Jane's Walk, Culture Days, etc) or self-guided tours with brochures or downloaded apps.

Lead: North Dumfries Heritage Advisory Committee
Partners: EDAC, Local Media Outlets, Waterloo Region Tourism & Marketing Corp.
Timing: 2018 and on-going
Approval: None
Funding: To be Determined

Goal: Establishing heritage and cultural events and activities will create awareness about Ayr's historical features and encourage visitors and the community to reconnect with the past.

Objective C1

In consultation with the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA), the Township should determine development and redevelopment standards as it relates to renovations, additions and new construction applicable to the flood fringe areas of the Nith River.

Lead: Planning Division
Partners: Property Owners, EDAC, Council, GRCA
Timing: 2017 / 2018
Approval: Council
Funding: To be Determined

Goal: To develop, where possible, relaxed zone standards and regulations within the flood fringe areas through a two zone context, and, to clarify and confirm regulations governing existing buildings within the flood zone.

Objective C2

The Township should update the Zone classifications and standards to regulate land use activity and the massing of buildings within the Downtown. Specific consideration should be given to parking standards, promoting mixed use buildings, identifying single purpose buildings, and, the establishment of professional services on the ground floor along Stanley Street and portions of Northumberland Street.

Lead: Planning Division
Partners: Merchants and Business Owners, EDAC, Council, Community-at-large
Timing: 2017 / 2018
Approval: Council
Funding: To be Determined

Goal: To modernize the Zone provisions in the Downtown so that they are not a barrier to development, and, to introduce a hierarchy of zone classifications that respond to strategic properties within the Downtown.



Goal: This plan will help offset the costs or provide Grants for building owners to make improvements. This assistance will help with the establishment of an overall uniform streetscape in the Downtown

Objective C6

The Township should prepare urban design guidelines to assist in establishing parameters and objectives in support of building façade projects and/or new development and intensification projects.

Lead: Planning Division
Partners: EDAC, Council, North Dumfries Heritage Advisory Committee,
Community-at-Large, Property Owners
Timing: 2019
Approval: Council
Funding: To be Determined

Goal: This plan will provide guidance and assist owners and investors in making improvements or advancing redevelopment proposals. The intent is to assist in developing an overall uniform streetscape in the Downtown

D. Improving the Downtown Physical Environment – Pedestrian First Scale of Development

The built environment, in terms of height, massing, ‘public spaces’ and orientation to the Street, all assist in promoting a pedestrian friendly scale of development

Objective D1

Centennial Park and its immediate environs represent a focal public space in the Downtown both as a view corridor and as a meeting place. The Township should provide the appropriate pedestrian scale lighting and four seasons maintenance along the walkway network north of Watson Pond, linking Northumberland Street to the Gibson Street Municipal Parking Lot, and, across the pedestrian bridge through to Stanley Street. Additional electrical outlets to support lit displays and activities should be incorporated into the light standards.

Lead: Recreation Division
Partners: Ayr Horticultural Society, Council, Heritage
Timing: 2017
Approval: Council
Funding: \$35,700

Lead: Planning Division
Partners: Region of Waterloo, Community-at-Large, Council, EDAC, Merchants & business owners, property owners, Heritage Advisory Committee
Timing: 2017 Design
2018/19 Construction
Approval: Council and Regional Council
Funding: 2017 Budget Design \$ 24,000
Construction \$125,000

Goal: An urban plaza will create open space in the Downtown and reinforce the pedestrian scale of activity.

Objective D5

In partnership with the Ayr Horticultural Society, develop and implement a program to provide four seasons landscaping, baskets, displays, etc along the Stanley Street, Northumberland Street, Gibson Street and Swan Street corridors in the Downtown Area.

Lead: Recreation Division
Partners: Region of Waterloo, Community-at-Large, Council, Heritage
Timing: 2017 / 18
Approval: Council
Funding: To be Determined

Goal: Year round landscaping will help to beautify the Downtown and encourage visitors. The program will reinforce the pedestrian scale of activity.

Objective D6

The Township should assess the redevelopment opportunities for 26 Northumberland Street, including the potential of a cantilevered boardwalk.

Lead: Recreation Division
Partners: Grand River Conservation Authority, Community-at-Large, Council, EDAC, Heritage, Trails
Timing: 2018 / 19
Approval: Council and Grand River Conservation Authority
Funding: To be Determined

Goal: Accessibility to different areas of the Downtown are important and walking paths provide visitors with easy access to unique features. Reinforces the pedestrian scale of scale of activity.

