



TOWNSHIP of/CANTON de

NORTH STORMONT NORD

A good place to grow
Ou on cultive la croissance

December 14, 2023

CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF NORTH STORMONT STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2028

Executive Summary

On October 18, 2023, a strategy session (Think Tank) was held to develop the major elements of a strategic plan for the next four years. The group consisted of Members of Council, Department Heads and Township Staff. The group began by defining a desired future state for the Township, conducted a state analysis by identifying key opportunities, threats and trends. Based on this, six priorities were agreed upon and objectives were created for each priority. A vision statement was also developed as the guiding policy for enacting the priorities over the next four years.

Vision

Our Township is known as a thriving and healthy community with a strong municipal government providing cost effective services and infrastructure. Our long-term objectives are:

- ✓ Staff engagement: happy, healthy, work/life balance, retention.
- ✓ Asset Management Plan (AMP): increase in reserve balances to finance upcoming asset renewals/replacements.
- ✓ Ensure that long term capital goals are met by the municipality.
- ✓ Population and housing growth continues to exceed the County and Provincial average, creating availability of a wide range of housing types.
- ✓ Ensure continued strong customer service with clear procedures and tools.
- ✓ Create an environment that assures that local businesses are successful and feel supported by the municipality.

Priorities in the next four years (2024-2028)

1. Economic Development
2. Infrastructure
3. Recreation programming
4. People and Culture, including staff well-being
5. Long range financial plan
6. Modernization of service delivery.

Objectives by Priority

Priority	Objectives by end of 2028
Economic Development	1. Establish a Community Improvement Program and coordinate with Counties Regional Incentive Program (RIP) 2. Establish Economic Development web/social presence to support new and existing businesses and tourism. 3. Support our agricultural community through the Agricultural Committee, supporting Agri-tourism.
Infrastructure	1. Create an infrastructure road map: Identify roads and bridges priorities and funding required. 2. Implement the Water and Sewer Master plan recommendations and investigate funding opportunities at the Provincial level. 3. Update a realistic Asset Management Plan and Policy. 4. Building condition assessment.
Recreation Programming	1. Update the 2006 Recreation Master Plan prioritizing funding. 2. Hire a Recreation Director.
People and Culture	1. Staffing workload/role assessment (see organizational review recommendations). 2. Training plans in place for 100% of staff. 3. Succession plans in place for key roles.
Long Range Financial Plan	1. Complete Long-Range Financial Plan, proceed to request for proposal for consultation services to update plan. 2. Development Charges - Consider completing a study, pass by-law and establish parameters for use. 3. Strategy for end of contract funding with EDP and GFL.
Modernization of Service Delivery	1. Create digital strategy and financing. 2. Make website more user friendly, mobile devices usable, improve public communications. 3. Establish service level targets for both office and public works minimum maintenance standards.

Key Threats

The critical risks, threats and challenges that must be considered when planning for the future are:

- Staff shortages creating a lack of continuity at critical times in planning strategically and in day-to-day operations.
- Overcapacity of municipal services and infrastructure, coping with projected population growth.
- Need for major water and sewer upgrades without adequate funding support.
- Current level of funding and capacity does not meet all goals and challenges in the plan related to public works capital expenditures. New revenue streams must be investigated to replace time limited revenue streams (GFL, EDP).
- Lack of public trust in public institutions, customer service, liability issues.

Developments and Trends

The emerging developments, trends and patterns in our communities, in the region and provincially that must be considered when planning for the future are:

- Rising costs of construction, labour and equipment.
- Staff retention.
- Migration from urban centres to rural settings in search of affordability but expecting the same essential services that are available in major urban centres.
- Ability to maintain working capital reserves at or above dollar levels of municipal receivables in order to maintain a level playing field.
- Overall decline in volunteers and increased expectations for municipal staff.
- National/provincial and regional housing crisis.
- Work/life balance trends e.g., condensed work week, flexible work hours, work from home.
- Artificial intelligence (AI) - are there opportunities for the Township re: forecasting, planning, decision-making and service planning.

Opportunities

The most important opportunities that must be pursued are:

- Shared staffing arrangements with other public agencies, e.g. Counties. Take advantage of training opportunities, including cross-training among Township staff.

- The housing market in North Stormont is booming, we must keep developers interested with available land to develop, great communities and incentives to build more homes.
- Take advantage of all funding opportunities, e.g. grants for green infrastructure, green house gas reduction, building enhancements, road, bridge and water and sewer construction.
- Agri-tourism is a growing possibility in our rural municipality.
- Embrace technological advances (Sharepoint) to encourage paperless efforts.

Implementation 2024-2028

The following priorities have been established and Council should consider these when planning for the future and during budget sessions:

- Complete transition to digital applications, forms, filing system, maintenance system and complaint system.
- Identify infrastructure gaps in roads and bridges, find funding and complete major programs for essential projects. Establish service level targets for the public for both office and roads and bridges minimum maintenance standards.
- Implement water and sewer Master Plan recommendations. Take advantage of all funding announcements from the Province for these types of projects.
- Update the Asset Management Plan, implement the policy and decide how to fund it.
- Update the 2006 Recreation Master Plan, make a cohesive Township-wide recreation programming plan and hire a Recreation Director
- Encompass within the 2024 budget a Long-Range Financial Plan and proceed to RFP for consulting services to prepare the plan. This plan should then be used for decision making and identifying shortfalls. As part of this plan, Council should consider a Development Charges Study due to accelerated development in North Stormont. A strategy should also be developed for end of contract with outside funding sources such as GFL and EDP to gradually reduce dependency on these funds to keep the tax rates artificially low and rather use portions of these funds to increase reserve funds.
- Develop a plan for training and cross-training 100% of staff and plan yearly for adequate training funding. A review of staffing workload and roles should also be considered. Succession planning is also essential.
- A building condition assessment should be completed and reviewed every year to ensure adequate maintenance levels of this vital infrastructure.
- Continue to work with the Counties and locally for Community Improvements Funds and Regional Incentives Program. Develop Terms of Reference for a Community Grant Program, establish a Community Fund

- Committee through the Recreation Department.
- Develop and establish Economic Development web/social media presence to support and encourage new and existing businesses, tourism, Agri-tourism.

Review and Reporting

Once a year, Department Heads shall review the Strategic Plan and report to Council the progress made on the strategic initiatives affecting their operations. This report should also reflect whether or not the department experienced any roadblocks to progress and suggest ways to alleviate the problem. This report shall be due by December each year.

Respectfully submitted:

Mary McCuaig,
Acting CAO/Clerk