



TOWN OF COLLINGWOOD
Special Council Agenda
Thursday, May 9, 2024

“Collingwood is a responsible, sustainable, and accessible community that leverages its core strengths: a vibrant downtown, a setting within the natural environment, and an extensive waterfront. This offers a healthy, affordable, and four-season lifestyle to all residents, businesses, and visitors.”

A special meeting of Council will be held Thursday, May 9, 2024 at the Council Chambers, 97 Hurontario St. and by Videoconference commencing at 3:00 p.m. This meeting will be provided in an in-person meeting format only and the public is welcome to observe.

***Location change:** The meeting has been moved from the Collingwood Curling Club to the Council Chambers, 97 Hurontario St. and by Videoconference commencing at 3:00 p.m. The meeting can be viewed on the [Town of Collingwood - Municipal Meeting YouTube channel](#) for those not able to attend in person.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Page

1. Call of Council to Order

For more than 15,000 years, the First Nations walked upon, and cared for, the lands we now call home. Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Ojibwe, and many others who were families, friends, and communities, the way we are today. The Town of Collingwood acknowledges the Lake Simcoe-Nottawasaga Treaty of 1818 and the relationship it establishes with the original inhabitants of Turtle Island. We acknowledge the reality of our shared history, and the current contributions of Indigenous people within our community. We seek to continue empowering expressions of pride amongst all of the diverse stakeholders in this area. We seek to do better, and to continue to recognize, learn, and grow, in friendship and community, Nation-to-Nation.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

2.1. Motion to adopt agenda

Recommendation: THAT the content of the Special Council Agenda for May 9, 2024 be adopted as amended:

- Item 4.3 Strategic Plan Workshop Discussion attachment added

3. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

Note: In accordance with the Council Code of Conflict, Procedural By-law and the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, Council members must file with the Clerk a written statement of the conflict, for inclusion on the Conflict of Interest Registry.

4. Strategic Planning Workshop

Workshop discussion will be facilitated by the Strategic Plan Consultants, Strategy Corp

4.1. Introductions and Background

4.2. Community Profile and Key Findings

[Town of Collingwood - Findings Report - May 2024](#)

4.3. Strategic Plan Workshop Discussion

 [Collingwood Council Workshop - Facilitation Material - May 9 2024](#)

4.4. Next Steps

5. Adjournment



Town of Collingwood – 2024-2028 Community Based Strategic Plan & Downtown Visioning Master Plan

Findings Report

May 2024

 CREATING CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

©STRATEGYCORN 2023

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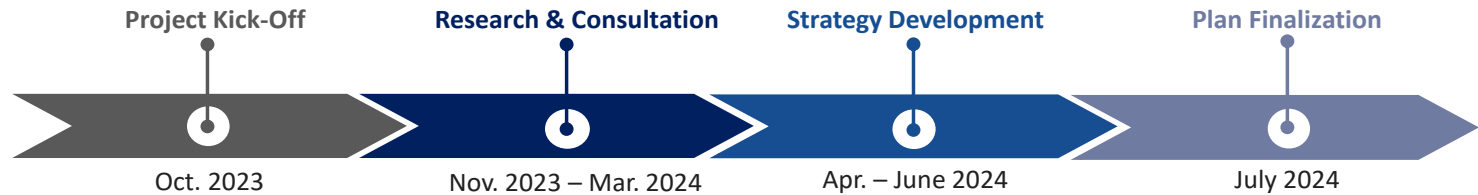
Section 1 | Introduction

Project Overview

The Town of Collingwood has retained StrategyCorp to update its Community Based Strategic Plan (“CBSP”) for 2024 – 2028 (Phase 1) and to develop a new Downtown Visioning Master Plan (Phase 2) as part of the new term of Council. The Community Based Strategic Plan will be completed by the summer of 2024, with the Downtown Visioning Master Plan to follow. The strategic planning process includes:

- Conducting an environmental scan to understand current trends and issues impacting the community;
- Revisiting the Town’s Strategic Vision and developing values and a mission statement, as desired;
- Consulting with the Collingwood community, Mayor and Council, the Steering Committee, Town staff, and others; and
- Identifying realistic and attainable goals, actions to support realization of those goals, and performance measures to track and monitor progress.

Phase 1 | Strategic Planning Process



Purpose of this Initial Findings Report

The purpose of this Initial Findings Report is to provide deeper context and insight into the key internal and external trends and issues that the Town of Collingwood will need to consider as it updates its Community Based Strategic Plan for 2024-2028 and develops a Downtown Visioning Master Plan.

This report has been informed by data and documentation provided by the Town, desktop research, and stakeholder and community engagement completed between November 2023 - April 2024.

This document includes:

- A high-level overview of the current state of the Corporation of the Town of Collingwood, including recent achievements and considerations as part of the strategic planning process;
- A profile of the community of Collingwood and key trends and issues that will need to be considered as part of the development of the CBSP and Downtown Visioning Master Plan; and,
- A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis, synthesizing the key insights collected.

This report is primarily focused on the key issues that are critical to the future of the Town of Collingwood – both the corporation and the community. It is intended to guide the development of the Community Based Strategic Plan, while also providing insights relevant to the forthcoming work on the Downtown Visioning Master Plan.

Methodology and Approach

To enable a 360° analysis of the Town of Collingwood’s internal and external environments, the following activities were undertaken:



Data & Document Review

Identified and reviewed relevant internal and external data and documents to assess key issues, priorities, and trends as well as the overall profiles of the community and Corporation.



Interviews

Conducted 24 1:1 initial interviews with members of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, members of Council and Town Department Heads to understand their key priorities and how they wish to see the Town evolve.



Pop-Ups

Facilitated 6 community pop-ups in Town and engaged 250 residents to understand perspectives on top priorities, what they would like the Town to focus on over the next five years, and their broad vision for the downtown.



Focused Discussions

Presented to 9 Town Committees, Boards, Task Forces, and community partners to deep dive into key issues. matter experts. Facilitated two community focused sessions with community partners/agencies and sports and culture groups.



Surveys

Disseminated a digital survey to all Town staff (90 respondents) to gather input. Forum Research facilitated a Market Research Survey for the community (400 phone responses, 481 online responses).

Section 2 | Current State of the Corporation of the Town of Collingwood

Overview

The Corporation of the Town of Collingwood provides programs and services to approximately 26,563 residents, businesses, and visitors in a rapidly growing, four-season community.

Over the last several years, the Town administration has continued to evolve and mature its organizational capacity and capability to respond to the demands of growth and evolving community needs. It has developed an integrated corporate planning framework that enables the Town's community vision to be translated into budget requests, work plan items and individual performance plans.

In addition, the organization continues to focus on continuous improvement in its delivery of programs and services to residents and businesses— starting by defining those programs and services.

The Corporation has also made important strides to improve the transparency and accountability of local government in response to the recommendations from the Judicial Inquiry.

The Town has a number of significant major projects recently completed, ongoing or planned. These include*:

- Arts Centre – Next Steps
- Affordable Housing Master Plan
- Asset Management Plan – Phase 2 – All Assets
- Official Plan Review and Update
- Community Climate Action Plan
- Community Engagement Action Plan
- Multi-use Recreation Centre – Initial Planning
- Taxi Licensing & Ride Sharing Policy Update
- Grain Terminals Redevelopment
- Short Term Accommodation in the Community (Update)
- Poplar Regional Health Wellness Village MZO

The many master plans and large-scale projects underway or planned are testament to the Collingwood's ambition and the expectations and aspirations of its community. However, moving from planning to implementation will require prioritization, resources, and funding to support the Town in realizing the opportunities before it.

Reflecting on the Collingwood's 2020-2023 Community Based Strategic Plan

The [Community Based Strategic Plan](#) (CBSP) is a guiding document for the Town that sets out a community vision for the future and the transformational changes required to achieve it:

- ✓ Serves as a priority-setting document that identifies those areas and issues the Town should focus attention and action on;
- ✓ Guides Council decisions about where and how to allocate resources, including through the annual budget process;
- ✓ Informs staff's operational planning; and,
- ✓ Communicates to the public that the Town understands and is making progress on community priorities.



What We Heard

- While many stakeholders are satisfied with the existing strategic plan, there is excitement with the prospect of a longer, building-block approach to the development of the updated strategic plan.
- Community engagement is critical – similar to the 2020-2023 CBSP, the updated plan should be reflective of and responsive to the community's wants and needs.
- Many of the broad priorities in the previous plan still resonate and there may be goals and initiatives that should carry forward to the 2024-2028 CBSP.

Enhancing corporate strategic alignment and systems to support appropriate resource allocation to Council-approved priorities will continue to be key in the face of an uncertain and unpredictable external environment, which is further outlined below.

The Town's strategic framework: Translating the vision into action

The Town has developed a strategic framework with the key steps required, starting from the bottom up, to achieve the vision in the Community Based Strategic Plan.



Continuing to build a strong linkage between the CBSP and Town's operating plan and annual budget is critical to successful implementation of the CBSP – it turns words on a page into key activities with accountabilities.

In March 2021, Town staff introduced an **Operational Plan** to help drive key priorities and projects.*

- A single repository of information on key projects and priorities.
- Coordination and collaboration across departments, reducing silos, duplication and bottlenecks.
- Improved ability to monitor delivery and respond to challenges/issues as they arise.
- Ability to transparently communicate progress to Council and the community.
- Mechanism to support prioritization of resources and capacity.
- Advance planning for Committee agendas and meetings.

The Operating Plan has supported staff in annual work planning, aligning capacity to priorities, and providing Council with insight into key activities through quarterly reporting.

Inventorying programs and services...an ongoing work in progress

Understanding what programs and services the Town delivers

As part of the strategic framework on slide 10 and in alignment with the creation of the Operational Plan, the Town has undertaken an inventory and review of all current programs and services and sub-services, as appropriate. This included a third-party [Service Delivery Review](#) in 2020-21, which included 91 improvement opportunities.

This work of defining the Town's programs and services is a leading-edge practice that will help Council and the administration better understand the capacity and resources required for service delivery. It will support continuous improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of how these programs and services are delivered.

The Town's various Master Plans and strategies will then guide future delivery of the defined programs and services, including potential service level enhancements or adjustments.

		PROGRAMS & SERVICES							
		Development & Growth	Environmental Management, Conservation & Sustainability	Community Standards & Safety	Community Health & Well-being	Arts, Culture & Heritage	Community Access & Mobility	Municipal Governance & Civic Engagement	Corporate Services
PROGRAMS		Plan and deliver a physically complete community, and support economic success	Manage, mitigate and improve environmental impacts today and for the future	Set community standards so all can enjoy the community and enhance the safety of individuals and property within the community	Improve and support the physical and mental well-being of all people our community through inclusive opportunities that a sense of place and belonging	Recognize and strengthen job, culture and built heritage within the community	Integrated, safe and accessible movement of people and goods across multiple modes of transportation (e.g., active transit, cars, etc.)	Effective, responsible and accountable governance and two-way engagement of residents, businesses and visitors	Excellence in the administration of the Municipal government
	SERVICES	Growth Planning* Land Use Parks, Recreation & Culture Parks, Rec & Culture Planning & Administration Strategic Planning & Leadership Watermaster "Chief" Water Development Officer	Climate Change Action Climate Action Plans Energy Mgmt Wastewater Non-hazard & Treatment Operations & Maintenance Pump Stations Third Party Services Non-Leak Asset Management Odour Management Non-Linear Capital Projects Sewer Stormwater Management Asset Mgt & Civil Risk Operations & Maintenance Environmental Containment	Community Standards* New Development & Enforcement Public Enforcement Animal Control Business Licensing Property Bylaw Admin	Parks, Trails & Amenities Trails, Trails and Amenities Marina & In-Water Services Nature Services Mgt Urban Forestry Tree Canopy Protection Community Recreation Spaces* Community Gathering Space (Library) Community Recreation Activities* Library Community Activities Building Community Well-being & Inclusion Water Treatment & Distribution Asset Mgt Planning Capital Project Delivery Operations & Maintenance Operations Third Party Services Backlog Reduction	Conservation & Preservation of Heritage & Culture* Battleford Cemetery Cultural Diversity & Inclusion Heritage Services Heritage Committee Community Arts & Culture Built Arts & Culture Capacity Public Art Programs & Initiatives Museum Activities Community & Public Events Circulation & Curator of Library Materials	Roads & Active Transportation* Asset Mgt Capital & In-Cycle Capital Projects Delivery Operations & Maintenance ROW Permits and Licenses Parking Permits & Enforcement County Guards Transit HR Operations Compliance, Health & Safety Talent Management Succession Planning Labour Relations Compensation & Benefits Short-Term Initiatives Employee Experience Other Engineering Services*	Governance Support* Parliamentary Procedures & Accountability Council Relations & Support Communications Internal Communications External Communications Public Commissions* Vital Statistics* Municipal Elections Support* Records* Records Management FOI Council Representation Corp Facilities Mgmt Capital Asset Mgt Cust. Facilities Mgt Short-Term Initiatives Municipal Law Enforcement* Customer Service* Call Centre Support	Strategic Planning & Leadership (CAO) Strategic Planning & Leadership (Library CEO) Legal* Legal Advice & City Agreements Land Needs, Acquisition & Disposal By-Law Appeals and Municipal & Provincial Proceedings Risk Mgmt* Enterprise Risk Management Insurance Procurement Support* Corporate Finance Financial Reporting & Planning Financial Accounting & Reporting Cost Mgmt Debt Mgmt Asset Management Information Technology Network Infrastructure Maintenance & Support Business Applications GIS and Data Telecommunications Support End User Technology Support Asset Lifecycle and Data

Service based budgeting

Leveraging this inventory, the Town is in the process of shifting to a service-based budgeting model, which can enable Council to make more focused budgetary decisions, enhance transparency in the allocation of public dollars, and improve resource allocation and operational effectiveness.

Continuous improvement and transformation

As part of its ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and in line with the refinement of internal planning and processes, the Town has advanced several initiatives since the last CBSP to improve the functioning of local government and outcomes for residents, businesses, and visitors. These initiatives include:

Enhanced Customer Service & Responsiveness

In spring 2023, the Town launched the [Service Collingwood Portal](#) to make it easier for residents, businesses, and visitors to request service or report an issue. This one-window system will make it easier for the Town to track and monitor issues and ensure timely resolution for residents. Some stakeholders, however, continue to want to ensure that there are clear lines of communication and accountability to make sure resident concerns are addressed.

Strengthened Transparency & Accountability

In 2020, Collingwood's Lobbyist Registry came into effect to support increased transparency and trust by requiring individuals and organizations that meet or communicate with Town Council and staff outside of the typical public process to disclose their activities.

Improved Digital Services

In 2021, the Town launched a new service enabling residents to check their property tax accounts and make online payments. The same year the Town also opened the CityView Public Portal, which allows individuals to submit and pay for building permits, development applications and dog tags as well as submit by-law complaints. Many municipalities, with provincial support, are implementing digital permitting and application systems to help standardize and streamline internal and external processes.

There is a desire among stakeholders that the Town continue to “punch above its weight” in terms of leading others in the sector on new policy initiatives or service delivery models.

The Town is in a strong financial position, but there are pressures...

The Town is currently in a strong financial position, with Council and staff focused over the last several years on identifying efficiencies while continuing to deliver high quality services and meet the expectations of a highly engaged community – per the market research survey, 3 out of 4 think they receive an overall good value for their tax dollars.

However, as stated in the approved [2024 Budget](#), the Town and its residents and businesses continue to face an uncertain economic climate. The Town is advancing a “back to basics” approach that aims to meet current service levels while keeping tax increases affordable. However, this approach is not risk-neutral and may limit investments in defined priorities for Council and the community, including asset management.

Long-term financial planning is key.

Town staff have been developing a Strategic Financial Plan that will identify and prioritize the resources needed to achieve the Town’s strategic objectives. Long-term financial planning is critical to enabling informed decision-making, and Council and staff will need to be realistic about current and anticipated financial pressures. As in many municipalities, there are likely some difficult decisions ahead about what to prioritize and what to defer, particularly given significant capital projects on the horizon.

Key Budget Pressures

- Downloading and legislative changes from senior governments;
- Higher inflation and borrowing rates;
- Supply chain pressures;
- Increasing cost of some services (e.g., policing);
- Declining revenues in some areas (e.g., OCIF funding decreases);
- Cost pressures related to the maintenance of aging infrastructure; and
- Significant planned / required capital projects (e.g., water treatment plant).

These pressures are further exacerbated by **increasing community expectations** for new and enhanced services/service levels and demands to **limit property tax and user fee increases**.

Collingwood faces a significant infrastructure backlog

Public infrastructure provides the foundation for a community's quality of life, economic prosperity, cultural vibrancy, and overall reputation.

Collingwood currently faces a significant infrastructure gap.

- The Town's Core Asset Management Plan estimates the current replacement value of its core assets is \$667.3 million (2021 dollars).
- The future sustainability of these core assets requires an annual investment of \$10.1 million annually.
- In view of current funding strategies, the Town has a gap of over \$800,000 for its tax-supported and rate-supported assets.
- The Town also experiences increasing cost pressures on an annual basis resulting from lifecycle maintenance requirements due to the age of existing assets.

Looking ahead, it is likely that the infrastructure backlog and financial gap will continue to grow as non-core assets are included in the Asset Management Plan.



Collingwood is not alone in its infrastructure deficit.

In 2021, the Financial Accountability Office estimated that 45% of Ontario municipal infrastructure is not in a state of good repair. The total infrastructure backlog of Ontario municipalities was \$52B, with roads and bridges in the worst shape of all. Municipalities need to invest in their assets more than ever before and look at new revenue sources to pay for capital.

The Town is also planning or considering several significant and expensive capital projects, some of which are vital to Collingwood's ability to meet the demands of growth and provincial housing goals. These projects include:

- A new water treatment plant (where cost estimates have doubled);
- A new wastewater plant;
- A multi-use recreation centre; and
- An arts centre.

Looking Ahead: Key Considerations for the Corporation

The Corporation is on the right track: The Town has made significant progress on transforming the organization through more formalized operational planning and a focus on continuous improvement, resulting in increased transparency and accountability, more efficient services, and better customer service for residents. This journey of organizational transformation should continue, particularly as the Town continues to grow and service delivery demands increase.

The importance of prioritization and alignment of resources: As the Town sets the vision and goals for the 2024-2028 planning horizon, it is critical to identify those key priorities upon which the Town intends to focus its available resources and capacity. The Town cannot do everything or be all things to all people, and the strategic plan can act as the guiding document that enables Council and staff to say “yes”...and “no” or “not yet” as appropriate.

The question of organizational capacity: There is wide consensus that Town staff are highly qualified and committed to serving in the best interests of the community. However, there is a tension regarding staff capacity, with some arguing that there is existing capacity within the organization that could be better optimized to meet key priorities while others argue that Town staff are already overburdened. Addressing this question is critical to building the organizational alignment required to successfully achieve the Town’s vision.

Future financial sustainability: The Town has an overall solid financial position, although it faces significant capital budget pressures both due to the need to renew existing assets and invest in new assets to meet the demands of growth. These pressures will also need to be balanced against the dualling expectations of residents and businesses for enhanced services and limited increases to property taxes and user fees.

Section 3 | Community Profile and Key Issues

Collingwood continues to experience rapid growth

Collingwood is one of Ontario’s fastest growing communities. As a vibrant, four-seasons destination, the community has consistently attracted new residents from across the province, while also serving as a major centre for Simcoe and Grey counties.

Growth Trends

- Between 2016 and 2021, the Town recorded a **13.8% population increase**, well above Ontario’s average of 5.8%.
- Collingwood is forecasted to grow from the roughly 26,500 permanent residents in 2023 to well **over 32,000 by 2033** (over 20% growth rate).
- With strong growth prior, the Town experienced an influx of new residents during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, Georgian Bay saw **real estate sales increase by 26%** over 2019.

Official Plan

- On December 11, 2023, Council approved the updated [Official Plan](#) (OP) that sets out the vision that will guide Collingwood’s growth to 2051. The new OP outlines 12 priorities for land use planning, such as protecting natural heritage and promoting intensification, among others.
- Council made some amendments to the OP, including retaining the building height limits in the downtown at the current 12-metre limit (~3-4 stories) and prohibiting new offices on the main floor of Hurontario Street buildings.



What We’ve Heard

- Most stakeholders and community members support growth, but there is a concern about *how* and *where* this growth should occur and what it looks like.
- Many want to find a balance that will enable Collingwood to grow and support economic vitality and retain the “small town feel” that is part of the Town’s identity.

A changing community

The community is evolving in step with Collingwood’s growth. The Town will need to continue to be responsive to shifting demographics and changing community needs as these will have direct impacts on municipal programs, services, and infrastructure.

A Community for Everyone

Reflecting the Town as a destination community, Collingwood has an older age profile compared to the rest of the province, which has a median age of 41. In addition, the Town retains a lower proportion aged 14 years and below than the rest of Ontario (13.3% vs. 15.8%). This demographic shift potentially raises service delivery impacts over the longer-term to be considered. In recent years, the Town has prioritized youth engagement, launching a survey in 2022 to hear directly from local youth on the issues they face, barriers to their participation, and what the Town can do to assist. Moving forward, the Town will want to ensure it continues to be a community for all ages, abilities and backgrounds, which will support several priorities, including workforce development, diversity, and cultural vibrancy.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

While the town is becoming more diverse, there is a lower proportion (7% vs. 34%) of visible minorities than the rest of Ontario. Advancing DEI is a priority for the Town, which is working with Unity Collective to promote inclusion, equity, and accessibility.

Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

Located on Treaty 18 lands, Collingwood has a rich Indigenous history. The Town has developed strong relationships with Indigenous communities and undertaken initiatives (e.g., land acknowledgement, waterfront gathering place) in support of reconciliation and relationship-building.

At a Glance

- **Median Age:** 50 years
- **Income:** \$83k median household income
- **Education:** 64% with post-secondary education

Assessing community needs will be critical as the Town makes decisions about programs and services, new or enhanced infrastructure and other investments.

Addressing the housing supply and affordability crisis

Like many municipalities, Collingwood faces a lack of affordable and attainable housing, both rental and ownership. In the market research survey, residents ranked affordable housing as the single-most important issue facing the Town at 31%, followed by homelessness at 11%. The Town recently approved its [Affordable Housing Master Plan](#) (AFMP) including immediate investments that will guide the Town's efforts in the affordable housing space, with a focus on moderate income households.*

Key Challenges

- There is an acute shortage of rental housing and rent prices have increased rapidly since 2017 (~5% per year).
- The lack of available, attainable housing is impacting the local workforce and economy— if people can't live where they work, they may choose to work elsewhere.
- Cost of ownership housing continues to be high, even in a softening market, with house prices up roughly 45% in just over three years (2020-2023).
- Land for new development is limited, which will impact key policy decisions around housing (e.g., densification) and limit the ability of the Town to use public-owned land for affordable housing.

1,300

is Collingwood's deficit of affordable housing units, mostly for lower-income households. If no action is taken, this deficit is expected to nearly double by 2051.

In 2022, the average resale home price in Collingwood was \$926,622, higher than the Ontario average of \$836,300.



2022 saw the construction of 562 purpose-built rental units, down from a high of 782 in 1991.

New supply is arriving, and the Town is set to meet its 2023 housing target set by the County. Collingwood recorded 629 new housing starts in 2022, of which over half were apartment units. There are also several active condominium and low-rise housing projects in the pipeline.



Fostering a community where all can thrive

The social determinants of health are the collective set of personal, social, economic and environmental factors that determine a person's health. Although Collingwood is a vibrant and active community, not all community members experience the Town in the same manner, with a growing number facing homelessness, poverty, addictions and mental health challenges, and food insecurity.

- Increasing numbers of community members are relying on food banks. The Salvation Army is assisting approximately 100 more Collingwood families every month.
- Homelessness is on the rise in south Georgian Bay – Community Connection noted 174 of individuals that called them for support were experiencing homelessness, while 453 were at risk of homelessness.
- The Collingwood/Blue Mountains OPP mental health response unit has seen a 25% increase in mental health calls in 2022 compared to 2021, and another 12-15% increase in 2023 over 2022 figures.

The Town continues to take action to address social challenges in Collingwood and support the health and well-being of at-risk members.

- ✓ Supporting implementation of the **South Georgian Bay & Springwater Community Safety and Well Being Plan 2021-2025**, with City leaders and community agencies in 2019. This plan has three main areas of focus: mental health and addictions, housing, and access services.
- ✓ **Partnerships with community and not-for-profit agencies and organizations**, including Community Connection, Home Horizon, the Busby Centre, Salvation Army, Society of St Vincent de Paul – Collingwood, and others.

During and now after the COVID-19 emergency, many municipalities stepped up to meet increased demands for social services. However, these services are not squarely located within a local municipality's jurisdiction and capacity to deliver, and funding continues to be an ongoing concern. Continued advocacy to the County, province, and federal government to support the Town and its partners meet community needs will continue to be a priority.

A thriving economy with significant opportunities ahead

While Collingwood has several attributes that make it a great place to do business, the Town will need to continue its focus on supporting economic development and business success while addressing interrelated issues such as housing affordability.

Collingwood's Value Proposition

Historic, bustling downtown: Collingwood's downtown is a major attraction and offers a variety of shops, restaurants, and services, bolstered by an intimate, heritage-focused character.

Thriving businesses: the Town and BIA provide extensive support to entrepreneurs and businesses guided by the Town's [2020-2025 Economic Development Action Plan](#). The Town has been recognized by the CFIB as the top community for entrepreneurs in Ontario, and sixth across Canada.

Diversified economy: Tourism remains a critical industry, but the Town also boasts strong manufacturing, healthcare, professional services and 'green' sectors. Collingwood's knowledge-based economy is expected to grow with the planned Poplar Health and Wellness Village.

Four-season lifestyle: Collingwood offers an active lifestyle that continues to attract new residents and businesses.

Looking Ahead in 2024 and Beyond

- **Downtown visioning:** Following completion of the CBSP, the Town will focus on developing a vision and master plan to guide the long-term evolution of the downtown (to 2051).
- **Labour shortage:** Like many regions, Collingwood faces a chronic labour shortage, with many employers, particularly in the hospitality, food services, arts and entertainment and recreational sectors, which are critical to the local economy.
- **Local jobs:** Although the majority of Town residents do not commute outside Collingwood for work, creating more local well-paying, stable jobs could also support the Collingwood's community sustainability goals of vibrant, connected towns where you can live, work and play.
- **Connected priorities:** The Town will need to continue to address issues like housing affordability, transit, and infrastructure investment to support workforce development.

A strong focus on sustainability in the community and administration

The Corporation and community of Collingwood have a demonstrated commitment to sustainability and fostering resilient communities. There is an opportunity to leverage, and build on, this commitment in the Town's updated vision for the future.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

Collingwood has been deeply engaged in collaborating with partners, including the Urban Economic Forum and UN-Habitat, to promote and enhance the achievement of the UN's SDG goals, and notably [SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities](#).

With its partners, the Town has hosted three World Summits, which strive to advocate and advance the role of small cities and towns as drivers of local, regional and national sustainability and all of its social, economic, cultural and environmental facets.

The Town established the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Task Force, including members of Council, Town staff, and community members to advance these priorities. The Task Force continues to be active in adjacent projects, including the development of the updated CBSP and Downtown Visioning Master Plan.

Taking Action on Climate Change

- Council declared a [Climate Crisis](#) in October 2019.
- Collingwood joined [The Partners for Climate Protection \(PCP\) program](#), which provides a framework to guide municipalities in reducing emissions. The Town has achieved [Corporate Milestone 1](#) and [Community Milestone 1](#) to date.
- In 2023, Council approved the [Greener Collingwood Corporate Climate Change Action](#) and incorporation of a climate change and sustainability lens into boards and committees.
- The Town has a range of [ongoing initiatives to support natural heritage](#), including the tree canopy and urban forest, water and energy conservation, and continuing work with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority.
- The [Collingwood Climate Action Team](#), a non-profit and volunteer organization, is an active player in driving community sustainability efforts.

Looking Ahead: Key Trends and Issues

Addressing housing affordability: Like most municipalities, the lack of affordable and attainable housing in Collingwood is a challenge. Advancing implementation of the Town's Affordable Housing Plan is critical, as is ongoing collaboration with the County on social housing to meet the range of local housing needs.

Promoting economic opportunities: Collingwood has a strong local economy with more opportunity ahead. To fully realize its economic ambitions, it will also need to address interrelated priorities around transit, housing, and workforce development.

Aligning services with changing wants and needs: As Collingwood evolves, so too will the community. The Town will need to be attentive to shifting demographics to ensure that its programs and services are responsive to needs in the community. There may also be a role for the Town to play in fostering inclusivity and belonging for all who call Collingwood home.

Growth management remains a priority: Collingwood has experienced massive growth over the past decade and future growth is expected to remain strong. While growth brings new opportunities, there are also concerns about the nature of this growth and how it will impact the existing community and its sense of identity.

Building a community for everyone: Although Collingwood is a relatively affluent community, a growing number of residents are facing challenges such as homelessness, poverty, addictions and mental health, and food insecurity. The Town will need to continue to work with its partners to support the safety and well-being of all community members.

The lens of sustainability: The Corporation and community have demonstrated a strong commitment to creating sustainable communities. This may present a framework or lens through which to consider what the municipality should prioritize and focus on in the years ahead and how it can measure success.

Section 4 | Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analysis

Introduction to the SWOT

A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) framework is a useful tool in strategic planning, as it pulls together information about the internal and external factors and realities that must be considered as part of the strategy development and prioritization process. At the same time, however, it is not a perfect categorization – sometimes, there is a factor that is both a strength and a weaknesses, for example.

SWOT Definitions

INTERNAL

Strengths: Attributes, resources, and factors that contribute to Collingwood’s success as a community and Corporation and can be leveraged as it looks to the future.

Weaknesses: Limitations, attributes, or factors that require improvement or are areas of concern that require attention.

EXTERNAL

Opportunities: Favourable trends, resources, or factors that can support Collingwood in achieving its goals.

Threats: Risks or factors that could adversely impact the community and organization that should be considered or addressed in future planning.

The following slides present insights using the SWOT framework. These insights have emerged through the research and consultation activities undertaken over the past several months. It is important to note that this is not an exhaustive list of everything we heard from stakeholders. Rather, the SWOT analysis aggregates the input shared with us to date and presents key themes for consideration.

Strengths of the community (1/2)

- **Civic pride:** We heard from many community members – both longstanding and new residents – who are proud to live in Collingwood and who demonstrate a strong attachment to the community and an interest in its collective future.
- **Engaged community:** Residents are highly engaged and are eager to collaborate with the Town and provide input on key projects and plans. They act as a resource for the Town, given their professional and educational backgrounds and expertise.
- **Strategic location:** The Town is the urban node of the South Georgian Bay region, serving many smaller communities in Simcoe and Grey counties but also located within a short drive to Barrie and around 90 minutes to the Greater Toronto Area. This makes Collingwood an attractive location for those who want access to more urban amenities and opportunities but in a stunning, more intimate environment. Some have called Collingwood a “city in a town.”
- **A growing community:** Due to its strategic location and abundant amenities, Collingwood is a fast-growing community and is considered a highly desirable place to live for all ages, including retirees and young families. The Town has seen incredible growth in the past few years and is expected to grow by another 20% or more in the next 10 years, which brings both challenges and opportunities including increased tax revenues, and continuing community vibrancy and diversity.
- **Exciting, vibrant downtown:** Collingwood’s downtown serves as a major attraction for residents and visitors alike. The Town’s vibrant downtown core is characterized by its heritage buildings, intimate feel, and a variety of independent shops, restaurants, and services. The downtown and nearby waterfront are also home to many successful events that draw in residents and visitors.
- **“Small town feel”:** While the Town continues to grow and evolve, Collingwood retains its small town-charm, neighbourliness, and sense of intimacy and community spirit. Many new residents are attracted to Collingwood from larger urban centres due to the Town’s perceived quieter pace of life, sense of community, attractive downtown, and many natural amenities.

Strengths of the community (2/2)

- **Local business and economic development:** With a supportive business environment, entrepreneurial spirit, and a fast-growing population, Collingwood is a top location for opening and operating a business.
- **Active lifestyle:** Many residents of Collingwood live a healthy, active lifestyle. The Town has several multi-use trails and provides a range of recreational programming that is well utilized by local community members, especially for young families (e.g., pool).
- **Four-seasons destination:** Collingwood is a year-round destination for tourists and visitors alike, offering a mix of some of Ontario's best summer and winter outdoor amenities, further bolstering the local hospitality and retail sectors. Many tourists and visitors choose to eventually settle in Collingwood full-time to take advantage of these year-round amenities.
- **Natural environment:** Collingwood's natural surroundings, including the Niagara Escarpment, Southern Georgian Bay, woodlands, trails and greenspaces are an essential part of community identity and quality of life and a key reason people want to live in and visit Collingwood. In the market research survey, residents identified the quality of the Town's parks/greenspaces as the top strength that makes Collingwood a vibrant place to live.
- **Healthcare:** Residents are generally pleased with the provision of healthcare services in town and show an appreciation for the dedication and level of service that healthcare professionals provide, although there is concern about the future replacement and expansion of Collingwood General and Marine Hospital, which is required to meet the needs of the community.
- **Arts and culture:** Collingwood offers a vibrant arts and culture scene with an active and engaged arts community. The Town is currently working through Phase 3 of the Arts Centre Feasibility Study, which will eventually support Council in their decision-making on the potential development of a new arts and culture centre.
- **Post-secondary:** The Town hosts a Georgian College location that provides access to education and training and there may be opportunity to attract more educational institutions, which in turn can support the attraction and retention of young people.

Strengths of the corporation (1/2)

- **Committed staff:** Town staff are dedicated and knowledgeable and are driven to make a meaningful impact on the community. The management team provides strong leadership within the organization and front-line staff are recognized by residents for being responsive and delivering quality programs and services – more than 4 in 5 residents reported being satisfied with the overall level and quality of services provided by the Town of Collingwood in the market research survey.
- **Satisfaction with Government:** The market research survey demonstrated that 3 in 4 residents are satisfied with the Town’s government, particularly for those who are newer to the community.
- **Council-staff relations:** Council and staff generally have a collaborative and respectful working relationship and are in overall alignment regarding their distinct roles and responsibilities, though this relationship is always a work in progress.
- **Effective financial management:** The Town is in a strong financial position and the majority of residents believe there is value-for-money in Town services (according to the market research survey). However, there is concern about the current level of investment in asset management and some significant “big ticket” investments that will need to be made in the near-term.
- **Corporate planning and management:** Senior leadership has made strides in transforming internal planning, processes and communications to help build organizational alignment on key priorities, understand and allocate resources and capacity, and communicate progress and successes to Council and the community. The Operational Plan is considered an important internal achievement in this regard.
- **Strategic, proactive planning for the future of the community:** The Town has completed or has underway a number of integrated and interconnected projects to support future planning for the community, including the updated CBSP and Downtown Visioning Master Plan, Official Plan, Affordable Housing Master Plan, Climate Change Action Plan, and Arts Centre Feasibility Study, among others. This focus on planning will then shift to implementation in the next few years.

Strengths of the corporation (2/2)

- **The Town does not work in isolation:** There is spirit of collaboration in Collingwood and the Town works with a range of community groups, NGOs, private sector companies to support the delivery of programs, services and events and provide expertise on community initiatives.
- **Emphasis on community engagement:** Council and staff place a strong emphasis on hearing from diverse perspectives and engaging with a variety of community members to inform the policymaking process, and the Town's commitment in this regard appreciated by the community. Through the creation of the Community Engagement Action Plan, the Town is also working to ensure its engagement strategies, tools and tactics meet community needs and are in line with leading practices.

Weaknesses of the community (1/2)

- **Concerns about growth:** While most residents and stakeholders are aligned that the Town can, should, and will continue to grow, there is apprehension in what this growth might bring (e.g., Collingwood no longer feeling like a small town), what form this growth should occur, and what the costs on the municipality will be (e.g., adding pressure to the existing infrastructure deficit). In particular, there are concerns about the appropriate height of buildings and the level of densification in the downtown as well as increased traffic and availability of parking.
- **Housing supply and affordability:** Like many other municipalities, Collingwood is struggling with a lack of housing supply. In the market research survey, residents identified housing as the most important priority facing the Town. There is also a concern that increasing housing costs are pushing out longstanding residents, limiting the ability for the younger generation to stay in Collingwood, and adversely impacting the ability of existing and potential new businesses to attract employees (due to limited availability and affordability of housing). The Town has recently developed and approved an Affordable Housing Master Plan focused on the housing needs of moderate-income households but will need to work closely with other levels of government to improve housing across the continuum.
- **Some tensions in the community:** Collingwood is a welcoming community, but as the Town has grown, there are some tensions between longstanding residents who were “born and raised” in the Town and those who are newcomers. Many newcomers to the community are bringing a different set of priorities or aspirations for the future of Collingwood that will impact how the community can/should move forward with key projects and priorities.

Weaknesses of the community (2/2)

- **Social challenges:** Due to the current housing crisis, visible homelessness and encampments along with mental health and substance use challenges are now a reality in Collingwood. The presence of visible homelessness can have a multitude of impacts to municipalities, from increased use of emergency services and social services, impact on municipal spaces (e.g., library, community centre), healthcare costs, perceptions of community safety, etc.
- **Car dependency:** Collingwood remains predominantly car-dependent. While acknowledging that vehicle access is important for businesses and tourism, some residents seek more active transportation modes and better public transit options and are calling for improved local infrastructure (e.g., widened/protected bike lanes) to enhance mobility and safety when navigating the Town. Some even recommend closing off some downtown streets to vehicles to allow for pedestrian corridors and animated streets, although not all are in agreement, particularly when it comes to location (such as Huronontario Street). There are also concerns about inadequate parking, parking fees (particularly in the downtown), and pedestrian safety on side streets with speed limits often not respected.
- **Inadequate community infrastructure:** Many community assets have not properly scaled as the community has grown. In particular, many community members are eager for a new hospital complex, new or expanded schools, a multi-use recreation complex, and an arts centre, with the current facilities that exist being built long before Collingwood's rapid population growth.
- **Healthcare services and professionals:** There is a need for a new or expanded hospital in Collingwood to replace the aging facility. The lack of family physicians in the community is also a top-of-mind issue for residents.
- **Labour supply:** Collingwood faces a significant labour shortage which is impacting the ability of local employers to fully staff businesses, particularly for those in the tourism, retail, and hospitality sectors.

Weaknesses of the corporation

- **Infrastructure and asset management:** The Town has a significant state-of-good repair backlog with costly major projects in the pipeline, (e.g., water treatment plant, wastewater treatment plant, arts centre, multi-use recreation centre). Notably, water/wastewater infrastructure emerged as the third most important issue in the market research survey. In addition, the Town needs to maintain its existing assets (e.g., roads, bridges, etc.), with many residents reportedly not satisfied with Town services related to roads and active transportation.
- **Customer service:** Although the Town has made important strides in improving customer service, notably through the centralization of customer service via Service Collingwood, there are some service areas that may need continued focus, along with continuing to improve inquiry and issue response timelines.
- **Alignment on priorities:** Staff seek better guidance from Council on where to prioritize given organizational realities and capacity constraints. There is also a desire for greater overall alignment on approved priorities to mitigate against more items being added to the list that may be in response to more operational matters or requests from residents.
- **Long-term financial planning:** There are concerns about the the need for a new Strategic Financial Plan for the Town, which existed in the past. and can help the Corporation to understand its long-term financial picture and to maintain its strong financial position.
- **Staff complement and capacity:** There are dualling perceptions regarding staff capacity, with one side believing that the Town may be overstaffed, particularly at the management level, and the other believing that the Town's existing staff are at capacity and that additional positions are needed to deliver on Town priorities and commitments, as defined by Council.

Threats to address / prepare for / mitigate (1/2)

- **Housing supply and affordability:** Elevated home prices and rental costs are making it difficult for people of all ages to buy or rent a home in Collingwood and leading to an increase in visible homelessness in the downtown core. There is also a lack of diversity in housing stock to accommodate different demographic needs (renters, seniors, families, singles, low income, etc.) in the community. This can harm future economic development if employers cannot find suitable housing for their employees and can also have other adverse impacts on the community (e.g., increased homelessness deterring visitors to the downtown, pressure on related supports and services).
- **Increasing resident expectations and priorities:** As Collingwood has grown, so too have the expectations of residents, particularly amongst newcomers from larger urban centres who seek enhanced services and increased levels of services (such as recreation programming, snow plowing, etc.). At the same time, there is external pressure to keep property taxes low to ensure affordability for residents. This places increased pressure on the Town to “do more with less or the same.”
- **Changing provincial mandates and legislation:** Provincial legislation continues to have direct implications on municipal service delivery, including land use planning and finances resulting from significant changes to the *Planning Act* and others. There is also ongoing uncertainty around regional restructuring.
- **Current economic climate:** Inflation, higher interest rates, and the increasing cost of living has made everyday life more difficult for many residents. Municipalities are also feeling the pinch of increased operating and capital costs and are constantly having to balance the need for increased revenue to maintain current and/or enhance service levels with the ability of residents to pay higher taxes or user fees in the current economic climate.

Threats to address / prepare for / mitigate (2/2)

- **“Gap filling” for other governments:** Residents are increasingly looking to municipalities to step in, fill gaps, and address challenges in areas outside of municipal jurisdiction, such as human and social services, healthcare, etc. Looking ahead, Collingwood will need to further define its role in areas that are technically the purview of the other governments but are of top priority for the community.
- **Climate change:** Given its unique geography and location on Georgian Bay, the Town – both the community and the municipal administration – will continue to be impacted by the effects and costs of climate change and extreme weather events. Climate change is also expected to impact winter tourism across the South Georgian Bay region, and there is a concern that the Town is not moving fast enough on this front.
- **Economic shifts:** Collingwood has a diversified economy with a growing entrepreneurial base, but the community will need to continue its focus on supporting local businesses and preparing for a changing economy (e.g., movement towards a knowledge-based economy).
- **Impacts of tourism:** While acknowledging that tourism is an economic strength for the community, it can and will continue to bring certain challenges that need to be planned for such as increased traffic volumes and pressure on the existing housing supply.
- **Erosion of public trust in government:** As demonstrated by lower voter turnout in recent elections at all orders of government (including in Collingwood) and the increasing vitriol of social media, there is an increasing sense of apathy and distrust toward government among some members of the public.

Opportunities for the future (1/3)

- **Leverage and build on the Collingwood’s reputation:** While Collingwood and the wider region saw a population boom aided by the pandemic and resulting exodus from urban cores, the main features that attracted new residents to Collingwood remain in the post-pandemic world. Collingwood should continue to leverage its momentum as a desirable destination for individuals, families, entrepreneurs and businesses to support its ongoing success and distinguish itself as a vibrant, innovative community.
- **Managing growth:** Growth is one of the most top-of-mind issues for residents and stakeholders. The recently approved [Official Plan](#) sets out the overall vision for the growth, but the Town is at a juncture in defining what the community will look like in the years ahead, with a number of exciting projects on the horizon, including the redevelopment of the Grain Terminals and the Poplar Regional Health and Wellness Village. At the same time, the Town will need to ensure that it is making the appropriate investments in infrastructure and services to support this growth (e.g., transit expansion, facility upgrades or new projects, etc.).
- **Addressing the housing crisis:** Related to growth, housing is another top priority for residents and stakeholders. The Town has been proactive in articulating its role in supporting more affordable and attainable housing options (vs other actors, such as the County) through the creation of the [Affordable Housing Master Plan](#). The next step, however, will be to ensure successful implementation of the Plan through the allocation of sufficient resources and funding to deliver on the recommendations.
- **Building a diverse and age-friendly community:** Although Collingwood has a slightly older population currently, it will be important for the Town to ensure that it not only a retirement destination but affordable for residents of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities, particularly younger families. This diversity will support the overall vibrancy and richness of the community.
- **Fostering economic development:** Collingwood is recognized for strong local businesses, and the Town has made investments to attract, support, and grow businesses. Continuing to support existing businesses while also advancing entrepreneurialism, innovation, and investment attraction remain an important part of the Town’s role in fostering a prosperous local economy.

Opportunities for the future (2/3)

- **Leveraging Collingwood’s Downtown:** While many municipalities saw their downtowns struggle during the pandemic and are now focused on revitalization, Collingwood’s downtown is a success story. The upcoming Downtown Visioning Master Plan is an opportunity to consider what the future of the downtown should be as the Town grows and what enablers are needed to ensure its continued success. A few priorities that emerged from the market research study to ensure the downtown remains successful and vibrant include better access to the waterfront, better pedestrian access, and more events.
- **Regional collaboration and planning:** The Town sees value in engaging with other municipalities South Georgian Bay area and there may be an opportunity to increase collaboration with neighbouring municipalities in Simcoe and Grey Counties (e.g., The Blue Mountains, Wasaga Beach) in terms of shared services, programs, facilities, and tourism. This approach, which recognizes that municipal borders are fluid for residents, can support efficiencies in service delivery and costs and allow for more effective long-term planning for infrastructure investments.
- **Intergovernmental Advocacy:** The Town will need to continue to advocate to other orders of governments on issues and challenges outside its jurisdiction in terms of what it delivers, regulates, or invests in (e.g., new hospital, physician recruitment, community safety and well-being, core infrastructure to support growth and new housing, etc.).
- **Continuing to engage – and leverage – the community:** As noted, residents of Collingwood are highly engaged and are eager to collaborate with the Town and provide their expertise on key projects and plans, as evidenced by the success of the Town’s advisory committees and task forces, including the SDG Task Force. In addition, the Town is also on a path of continuous improvement to increase resident engagement in and awareness about what the Town is doing and the role of the Town, what services it delivers and how it funds those services to make local government more accessible and, potentially, increase civic dialogue and engagement.

Opportunities for the future (3/3)

- **Focus on sustainability:** The Town and community have demonstrated a commitment to sustainability through their participation in the UN’s Social Development Goals and the ongoing work of the Task Force. This may be a useful framework for the Town in terms of setting priorities and measuring success for the 2024-2028 planning cycle, but it will also need to be mindful of organizational realities, such as resources, funding, and jurisdiction.
- **Continue to foster a collaborative Council-staff relationship:** Council-staff relations are always a work in progress, and there should be continued focus on ensuring clear lines of communication and appropriate understanding of and respect for the distinct roles and responsibilities of each in terms of who “steers” and who “rows”.
- **Build organizational alignment:** Given the transformation that lies ahead for Collingwood, it will be important that Town staff and Council are aligned on the key priorities that should be advanced through the Town’s operating plans and budget process. The Strategic Plan should act as the guiding document to cultivate that alignment, as long as all parties feel a sense of fidelity to and ownership over it. There will also be a need to ensure that the Town has the capacity, resources and expertise required to deliver on the priorities on the plan.
- **Performance measurement:** There is an opportunity, as part of this strategic planning process, to review how the Town measures success and progress in terms of delivering on community priorities. Some have suggested looking to key community indicators, such as the SDG indicators, to understand whether the Town is achieving its goals as opposed to more standard corporate performance measures, which tend to be more focused on outputs and performance than on outcomes in the community.

Appendix I – PESTLE Inputs

Introduction to the PESTLE Framework

A PESTEL analysis focuses on 6 key factors to better understand and identify key trends, issues and concerns in the macroenvironment that should be considered as input is gathered for the Strategic Plan. These factors were considered in the exploration and analysis of the key themes outlined above.

P	Political	Assesses the influence and impacts of <u>governments/policy</u>
E	Economical	Assesses the impact of <u>economic trends and shifts</u>
S	Social	Examines <u>social trends and the societal environment</u> , including demographic factors
T	Technological	Assesses how <u>technology and innovation</u> may impact service delivery
L	Legal	Assesses how <u>legal changes and liabilities</u> can have an impact
E	Environmental	Assesses how the <u>climate and environment</u> may impact activities

Political Factors

- Focus on transparency and accountability through policies and processes (e.g., Lobbyist Registry, Codes of Conduct, etc.).
- Council-staff relations are on a positive trajectory but are always a work in progress.
- Staff capacity – staff feel constrained in their ability to implement Council’s direction and advance its priorities, but there is also a perception that the organization may not be optimally structured to maximize existing staff capacity.
- The need to prioritize – priorities of Council seem to shift, sometimes based on feedback or requests from residents. This makes it difficult to focus on approved priorities as more gets added to the list and creates confusion on what the longer-term priorities for the Town are.
- Increasing resident expectations for enhanced services and service levels but often without a willingness to accept increased property taxes or user fees.
- Concern that special interest groups / individuals may or could have an overweighted influence on decision-makers.
- Opportunity for more regional cooperation (with County, but also with neighbouring municipalities in Grey and Simcoe counties) on key issues/priorities: hospital, water treatment plant, multi-use recreation centre, etc.
- Ongoing advocacy to support and advance Town priorities on healthcare and other issues – e.g., attendance at AMO, ROMA; meetings with Ministers, etc.
- Potential future expansion of Strong Mayor powers and housing targets by the province and potential impacts on the budget, hiring of management staff, etc.
- Shifting provincial priorities and legislative/policy impact on Collingwood (e.g., Bill 23).

Economic Factors

- Four-season destination with a robust tourist economy – the Town’s economic development department is planning to develop a Tourism Master Plan by September 2024 to help guide future activities over the next 3-5 years.
- Vibrant and active downtown core that attracts residents and visitors and is supported by a strong, engaged Downtown BIA.
- Ability to both live and work in the Town, which increases its attractiveness (~65% of individuals who live in Collingwood also work in the Town).
- Strong entrepreneurial spirit in Collingwood, and the Town provides a range of supports to businesses and related organizations (e.g., South Georgian Bay Business Development Centre, Georgian Bay Accelerator)
- Town is in a good financial position currently, but asset management is a major concern given the scale of the investment required to maintain existing infrastructure in a state-of-good-repair.
- Ongoing uncertain economic climate with impacts on the community and administration due to rising inflation, continuing supply chain issues, higher interest rates, and the continued risk of a recession.
- Impacts of provincial limits on growth funding tools (development charges, community benefits charges, s. 42 Parkland Charges) on infrastructure to meet expected growth.
- Significant state-of-good repair backlog and annual investment allocated through the budget is insufficient.
- Lack of available land for new housing, employment, or municipal uses, which may adversely impact economic development and investment attraction initiatives.
- Presence of Georgian College satellite location with state-of-the-art facilities that could be leveraged and potentially expanded to support economic development.

Social Factors (1/2)

- Strong civic pride in the community – the Town’s quality of life and “small town feel” is highly valued.
- Highly engaged community with high levels of expertise who care about the future of the Town and want to be involved.
- Residents highly value the Town’s many community amenities and opportunities that support a healthy and active lifestyle.
- Some tensions are evident between those “born and raised” in Collingwood and those who moved in from larger urban areas.
- Concern about growth and especially intensification in the downtown and impacts on the “small town feel” of Collingwood.
 - There is also concern about NIMBYism and the risk of being able to move forward with affordable housing.
- Community need for more affordable and social housing – social housing is facilitated by Simcoe County and the Town recently completed an Affordable Housing Master Plan to support moderate-income households.
- Increase in cost of living and affordability concerns in the community (e.g., food prices, interest rates, rents, etc.).
- Shifting demographics – the Town has an aging population that can lead to impacts on service demands, infrastructure, etc.
- Mental health and addictions crisis and interrelationship with other needs (e.g., housing, food, counselling, health care, etc.)
- Impact of social pressures on the downtown (e.g., unhoused individuals) and small businesses.
- There is a lack of physicians in the community, although the hospital, which many would like to see upgraded and expanded, is an asset.
- Many community members are also eager for new or expanded schools in Collingwood, particularly as neighbouring communities (e.g., Wasaga Beach) open new facilities that may divert students away.

Social Factors (2/2)

- Growing diversity of community, and the need for policies that focus on DEI, both in the organization and in the community.
- Town has focused on building relationships with Indigenous communities and advancing reconciliation, but this remains an ongoing priority.
- Desire to engage and retain youth in the Town and get them more involved in local government– youth engagement was identified in the 2020-2023 CBSP and continues to be top-of-mind for many.

Technological Factors

- Town has made advancement in expanding digital services and modernization initiatives within the Corporation in recent years (Service Collingwood Portal, CityView, Virtual Town Hall) but there may be opportunities to go further.
- Impact of remote/hybrid work both in the community and in the administration – both an opportunity (attracting remote workers) and a concern (are Town staff providing the same level of customer service in a hybrid setting?).
- Strong internet connectivity, which enables business growth and new industries.
 - Interest in bringing wifi to the entire downtown.
- Impact of artificial intelligence (AI) – the Town will need to proactively plan for the disruption and opportunities that will accompany the expansion of AI.
- Continuing cybersecurity threats to municipal infrastructure.

Legal Factors

- Legacy of Judicial Inquiry, and continuing focus of the Town on ensuring transparency and accountability through policies, processes and procedures.
- Risk management.
- Changes to provincial tribunals and administrative legal bodies like the Ontario Land Tribunal, stemming from provincial governance and land use planning changes.
- Changes to human resource processes if the province's strong mayor powers are expanded to Collingwood in the future.

Environmental Factors

- Town has a strong focus on sustainability, as demonstrated through its participation in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and particularly SDG-11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities. The SDG Task Force continues to be actively engaged with the Town, including on the CBSP and Downtown Visioning Master Plan.
- Collingwood’s natural environment, location on Georgian Bay, and four-season outdoor amenities are a major part of why people want to live, work, and visit the Town.
 - However, there are concerns about losing these natural heritage features as growth continues (e.g., loss of mature tree canopy, wetlands, woodlots, and forests).
- There are concerns about the impacts of climate change, including more extreme weather events, on Town infrastructure as well as on residents and businesses involved in winter tourism.
- The Town has taken a number of steps to respond to the impacts of climate change.
 - Most recently, in 2023, Council approved the Greener Collingwood Corporate Climate Change Action and incorporated a climate change and sustainability lens into the Town’s boards and committees.
- Many in the community are eager to see improved transit and active transportation options to support climate action and sustainability in the community.
 - Improved transit to surrounding areas (e.g., The Blue Mountains) and to urban centres including Barrie and Toronto.

Appendix II – Sources Consulted

Sources Consulted

The following sources were consulted as part of the development of this report. Additional data and information was also provided by the Town directly and is not listed below as it is not publicly available.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. [Housing Market Information Portal](#). 2023.

Collingwood Today.

- [Council approves new Official Plan, here's what's changing](#). December 12, 2023.
- [New homes on deck help Collingwood measure up to housing targets](#). September 27, 2023
- [On the front lines of the mental health crisis](#). September 7, 2023.

Deloitte. [Town of Collingwood – Service Delivery Review Final Report](#). February 24, 2021.

Financial Accountability Office of Ontario. [A Review of Ontario's Municipal Infrastructure and an Assessment of the State of Good Repair](#). 2021.

Live More Now (Collingwood Economic Development). [Sector Profiles](#). 2023.

Simcoe.com.

- [‘People are desperate for help’: Collingwood agencies continue efforts to combat the homelessness crisis](#). June 13, 2023
- [‘They can’t make ends meet’: Rising mortgage rates, food costs mean more Collingwood residents using food bank](#). August 9, 2023.

South Georgian Bay Tourism Industry. [Labour Supply Task Force - Presentation to Town](#). 2018.

Statistics Canada. [Census Profile. 2021 Census of Population \(2023\)](#).

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- [Affordable Housing Master Plan / Housing Needs Assessment](#). 2023.
- [Asset Management Plan – Core Assets](#). 2022.
- [Awen' Gathering Place](#). 2023.
- [Business & Economic Development](#). 2023.
- [Community Based Strategic Plan 2020-2023](#).
- [Community Profile](#). 2023.
- [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#). 2023.
- [Economic Development Action Plan](#). 2020.
- [Greener Collingwood](#).
- [Greener Collingwood Corporate Climate Change Action Plan](#). 2023.
- [News Release - Youth Engagement Survey Launch](#). 2022.
- [Official Plan Update](#). 2023.
- [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDG\) Task Force](#).
- [2024 Proposed Municipal Budget – Draft 2](#). November 1, 2023.

United Nations. [Social Development Goals](#).



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Town of Collingwood Community-Based Strategic Plan

Council Workshop

May 9, 2024

[strategycorp.com](https://www.strategycorp.com) ↗

Today's Agenda

Item	Time
1 Welcome and Introduction	3:00 – 3:10
2 Where Are We Today? Review and validate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analysis	3:10 – 4:00
BREAK	
3 Where Do We Go From Here? Review and refine initial draft of high-level Strategic Framework (pillars and goals)	4:15 – 5:10
4 Visioning Reflect on the Town's Strategic Vision and consider ideas for a mission statement and values	5:10 – 5:55
5 Next Steps	5:55 – 6:00

Where are we in the strategic planning process?



Summary of engagement activities



1:1 Interviews

Conducted 24 interviews with Steering Committee members, members of Council, and Town Department Heads.



Pop-Ups

Facilitated 6 community pop-ups at various Town locations and events and directly engaged 250+ residents.



Focused Discussions

Presented to 9 Town Committees, Boards, Task Forces. Facilitated 2 community-focused sessions – with community partners / agencies and sports and arts groups.



Surveys

Disseminated a staff survey (90 responses) and Forum Research facilitated a Market Research Survey (400 phone responses, 481 online responses).

Why We Do Strategic Planning

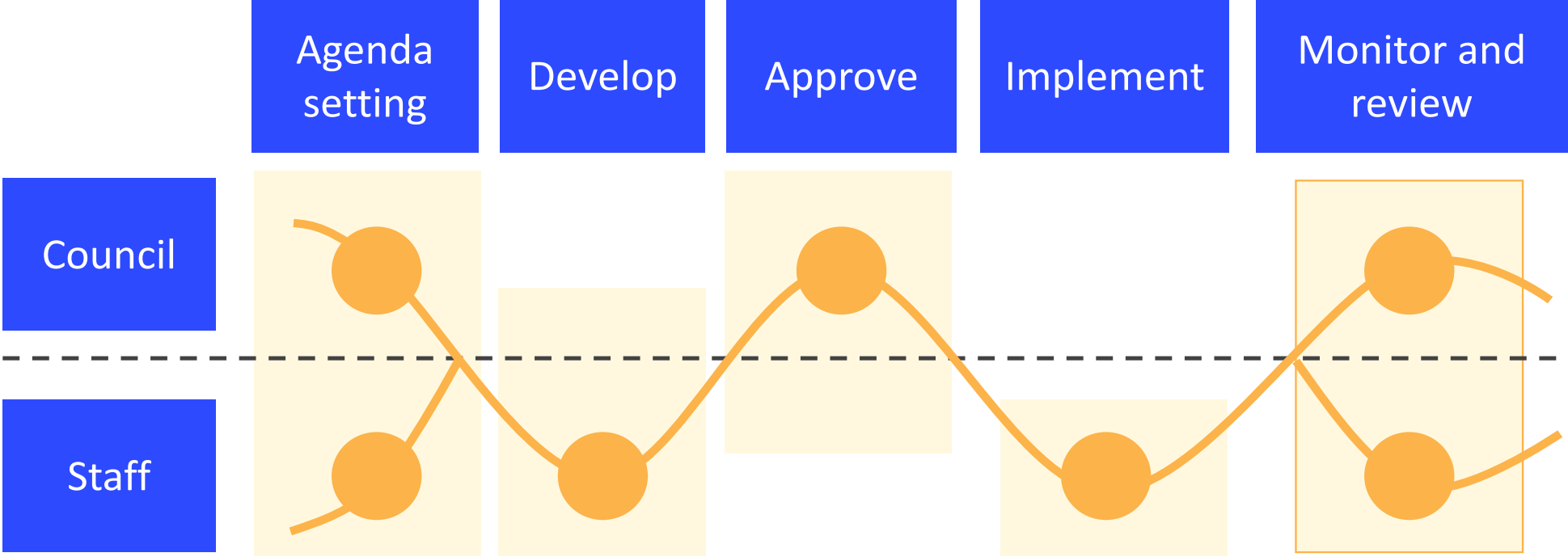


What is a strategic plan?

- Practically speaking, a strategic plan is the overarching plan that...
 - Guides **Council decision-making** over the lifespan of the plan;
 - **Communicates** the Town's priorities to the community;
 - Informs the Town's **work plans** and the **annual budget**; and
 - Builds **unity and collaboration** among Council, staff, and the community as all work together to achieve a shared vision.



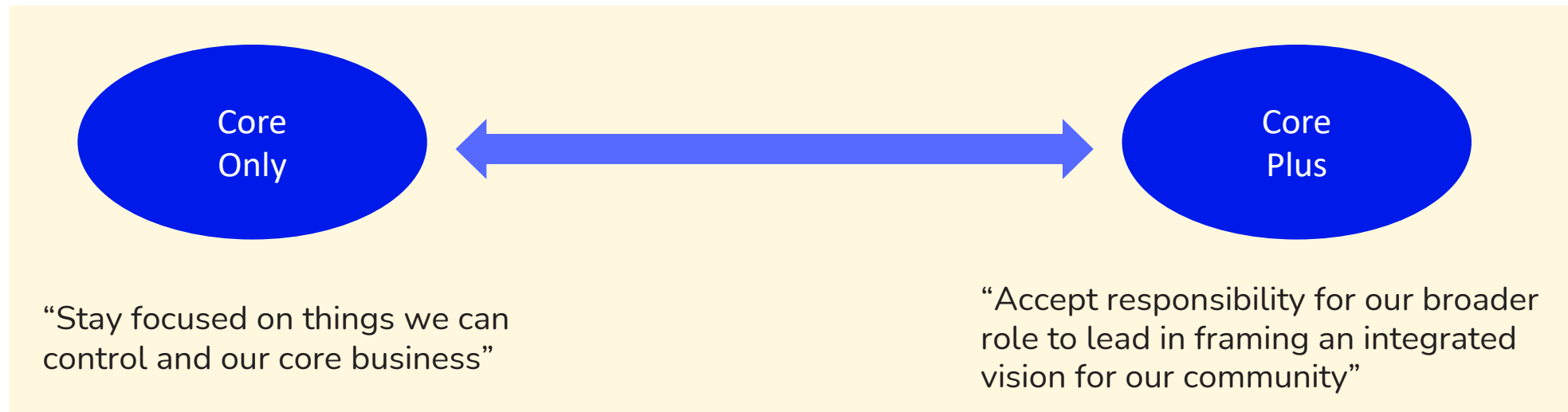
Strategic planning is one important part of the overall decision-making cycle



Plan Scope: Corporate Strategic Plan vs. the Community-Based Strategic Plan

A plan for the core operations and administration of the Corporation

A plan to guide the evolution of the community



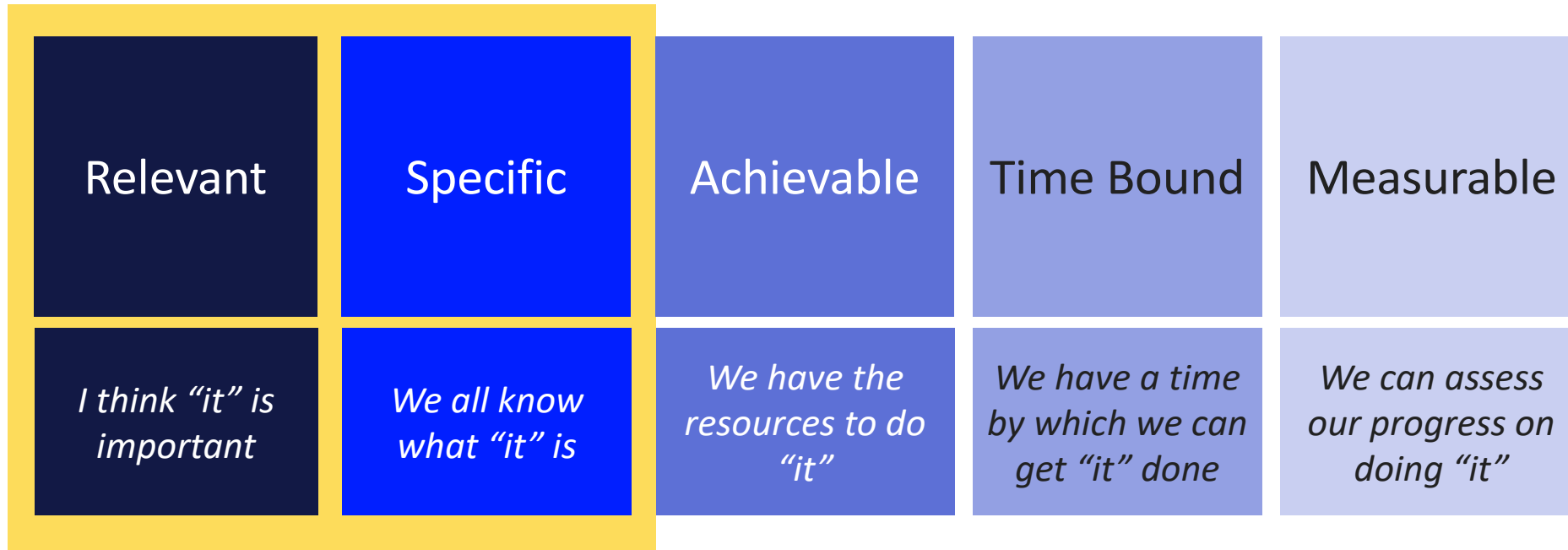
Strategic plans exist along a spectrum in terms of their scope and content...

A municipality does not just shape the community when it spends or sets rules...

- A critical function is how a municipality convenes other community leaders (business, neighbourhood, health, education) to consider the overall health of the community, identify issues and needs, and solve them collectively.
- Another critical function is how the municipality advocates and collaborates with the County, neighbouring municipalities, and provincial and federal governments.

“What we can control...”			“Things the community needs”	
Invest	Deliver	Regulate	Lead / Convene	Advocate

Focus for today: SMART Goal Framework



SWOT Analysis



Introduction to the SWOT

- The following slides present a summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the Town of Collingwood as both a municipal administration and a community, and a summary of identified opportunities and threats for consideration as part of the strategic planning process.
- This SWOT analysis **aggregates all of the input provided to date** – including qualitative insights gathered through the in-person and virtual engagement sessions as well as quantitative data from Forum Research’s Market Research Survey.
- It is **not** an exhaustive list of everything we heard, but rather a synthesis of the key themes.

Strengths of the community (1/2)

- **Civic pride:** We heard from many community members – both longstanding and new residents – who are proud to live in Collingwood and who demonstrate a strong attachment to the community and an interest in its collective future.
- **Engaged community:** Residents are highly engaged and are eager to collaborate with the Town and provide input on key projects and plans. They act as a resource for the Town, given their professional and educational backgrounds and expertise.
- **Strategic location:** The Town is the urban node of the South Georgian Bay region, serving many smaller communities in Simcoe and Grey counties but also located within a short drive to Barrie and around 90 minutes to the Greater Toronto Area. This makes Collingwood an attractive location for those who want access to more urban amenities and opportunities but in a stunning, more intimate environment. Some have called Collingwood a “city in a town.”
- **A growing community:** Due to its strategic location and abundant amenities, Collingwood is a fast-growing community and is considered a highly desirable place to live for all ages, including retirees and young families. The Town has seen incredible growth in the past few years and is expected to grow by another 20% or more in the next 10 years, which brings both challenges and opportunities including increased tax revenues, and continuing community vibrancy and diversity.
- **Exciting, vibrant downtown:** Collingwood’s downtown serves as a major attraction for residents and visitors alike. The Town’s vibrant downtown core is characterized by its heritage buildings, intimate feel, and a variety of independent shops, restaurants, and services. The downtown and nearby waterfront are also home to many successful events that draw in residents and visitors.
- **“Small town feel”:** While the Town continues to grow and evolve, Collingwood retains its small town-charm, neighbourliness, and sense of intimacy and community spirit. Many new residents are attracted to Collingwood from larger urban centres due to the Town’s perceived quieter pace of life, sense of community, attractive downtown, and many natural amenities.

Strengths of the community (2/2)

- **Local business and economic development:** With a supportive business environment, entrepreneurial spirit, and a fast-growing population, Collingwood is a top location for opening and operating a business.
- **Active lifestyle:** Many residents of Collingwood live a healthy, active lifestyle. The Town has several multi-use trails and provides a range of recreational programming that is well utilized by local community members, especially for young families (e.g., pool).
- **Four-seasons destination:** Collingwood is a year-round destination for tourists and visitors alike, offering a mix of some of Ontario's best summer and winter outdoor amenities, further bolstering the local hospitality and retail sectors. Many tourists and visitors choose to eventually settle in Collingwood full-time to take advantage of these year-round amenities.
- **Natural environment:** Collingwood's natural surroundings, including the Niagara Escarpment, Southern Georgian Bay, woodlands, trails and greenspaces are an essential part of community identity and quality of life and a key reason people want to live in and visit Collingwood. In the market research survey, residents identified the quality of the Town's parks/greenspaces as the top strength that makes Collingwood a vibrant place to live.
- **Healthcare:** Residents are generally pleased with the provision of healthcare services in town and show an appreciation for the dedication and level of service that healthcare professionals provide, although there is concern about the future replacement and expansion of Collingwood General and Marine Hospital, which is required to meet the needs of the community.
- **Arts and culture:** Collingwood offers a vibrant arts and culture scene with an active and engaged arts community. The Town is currently working through Phase 3 of the Arts Centre Feasibility Study, which will eventually support Council in their decision-making on the potential development of a new arts and culture centre.
- **Post-secondary:** The Town hosts a Georgian College location that provides access to education and training and there may be opportunity to attract more educational institutions, which in turn can support the attraction and retention of young people.

Strengths of the corporation (1/2)

- **Committed staff:** Town staff are dedicated and knowledgeable and are driven to make a meaningful impact on the community. The management team provides strong leadership within the organization and front-line staff are recognized by residents for being responsive and delivering quality programs and services – more than 4 in 5 residents reported being satisfied with the overall level and quality of services provided by the Town of Collingwood in the market research survey.
- **Satisfaction with Government:** The market research survey demonstrated that 3 in 4 residents are satisfied with the Town’s government, particularly for those who are newer to the community.
- **Council-staff relations:** Council and staff generally have a collaborative and respectful working relationship and are in overall alignment regarding their distinct roles and responsibilities, though this relationship is always a work in progress.
- **Effective financial management:** The Town is in a strong financial position and the majority of residents believe there is value-for-money in Town services (according to the market research survey). However, there is concern about the current level of investment in asset management and some significant “big ticket” investments that will need to be made in the near-term.
- **Corporate planning and management:** Senior leadership has made strides in transforming internal planning, processes and communications to help build organizational alignment on key priorities, understand and allocate resources and capacity, and communicate progress and successes to Council and the community. The Operational Plan is considered an important internal achievement in this regard.
- **Strategic, proactive planning for the future of the community:** The Town has completed or has underway a number of integrated and interconnected projects to support future planning for the community, including the updated CBSP and Downtown Visioning Master Plan, Official Plan, Affordable Housing Master Plan, Climate Change Action Plan, and Arts Centre Feasibility Study, among others. This focus on planning will then shift to implementation in the next few years.

Strengths of the corporation (2/2)

- **The Town does not work in isolation:** There is spirit of collaboration in Collingwood and the Town works with a range of community groups, NGOs, private sector companies to support the delivery of programs, services and events and provide expertise on community initiatives.
- **Emphasis on community engagement:** Council and staff place a strong emphasis on hearing from diverse perspectives and engaging with a variety of community members to inform the policymaking process, and the Town's commitment in this regard appreciated by the community. Through the creation of the Community Engagement Action Plan, the Town is also working to ensure its engagement strategies, tools and tactics meet community needs and are in line with leading practices.

Weaknesses of the community (1/2)

- **Concerns about growth:** While most residents and stakeholders are aligned that the Town can, should, and will continue to grow, there is apprehension in what this growth might bring (e.g., Collingwood no longer feeling like a small town), what form this growth should occur, and what the costs on the municipality will be (e.g., adding pressure to the existing infrastructure deficit). In particular, there are concerns about the appropriate height of buildings and the level of densification in the downtown as well as increased traffic and availability of parking.
- **Housing supply and affordability:** Like many other municipalities, Collingwood is struggling with a lack of housing supply. In the market research survey, residents identified housing as the most important priority facing the Town. There is also a concern that increasing housing costs are pushing out longstanding residents, limiting the ability for the younger generation to stay in Collingwood, and adversely impacting the ability of existing and potential new businesses to attract employees (due to limited availability and affordability of housing). The Town has recently developed and approved an Affordable Housing Master Plan focused on the housing needs of moderate-income households but will need to work closely with other levels of government to improve housing across the continuum.
- **Some tensions in the community:** Collingwood is a welcoming community, but as the Town has grown, there are some tensions between longstanding residents who were “born and raised” in the Town and those who are newcomers. Many newcomers to the community are bringing a different set of priorities or aspirations for the future of Collingwood that will impact how the community can/should move forward with key projects and priorities.
- **Social challenges:** Due to the current housing crisis, visible homelessness and encampments along with mental health and substance use challenges are now a reality in Collingwood. The presence of visible homelessness can have a multitude of impacts to municipalities, from increased use of emergency services and social services, impact on municipal spaces (e.g., library, community centre), healthcare costs, perceptions of community safety, etc.

Weaknesses of the community (2/2)

- **Car dependency:** Collingwood remains predominantly car-dependent. While acknowledging that vehicle access is important for businesses and tourism, some residents seek more active transportation modes and better public transit options and are calling for improved local infrastructure (e.g., widened/protected bike lanes) to enhance mobility and safety when navigating the Town. Some even recommend closing off some downtown streets to vehicles to allow for pedestrian corridors and animated streets, although not all are in agreement, particularly when it comes to location (such as Huronontario Street). There are also concerns about inadequate parking, parking fees (particularly in the downtown), and pedestrian safety on side streets with speed limits often not respected.
- **Inadequate community infrastructure:** Many community assets have not properly scaled as the community has grown. In particular, many community members are eager for a new hospital complex, new or expanded schools, a multi-use recreation complex, and an arts centre, with the current facilities that exist being built long before Collingwood's rapid population growth.
- **Healthcare services and professionals:** There is a need for a new or expanded hospital in Collingwood to replace the aging facility. The lack of family physicians in the community is also a top-of-mind issue for residents.
- **Labour supply:** Collingwood faces a significant labour shortage which is impacting the ability of local employers to fully staff businesses, particularly for those in the tourism, retail, and hospitality sectors.

Weaknesses of the corporation

- **Infrastructure and asset management:** The Town has a significant state-of-good repair backlog with costly major projects in the pipeline, (e.g., water treatment plant, wastewater treatment plant, arts centre, multi-use recreation centre). Notably, water/wastewater infrastructure emerged as the third most important issue in the market research survey. In addition, the Town needs to maintain its existing assets (e.g., roads, bridges, etc.), with many residents reportedly not satisfied with Town services related to roads and active transportation.
- **Customer service:** Although the Town has made important strides in improving customer service, notably through the centralization of customer service via Service Collingwood, there are some service areas that may need continued focus, along with continuing to improve inquiry and issue response timelines.
- **Alignment on priorities:** Staff seek better guidance from Council on where to prioritize given organizational realities and capacity constraints. There is also a desire for greater overall alignment on approved priorities to mitigate against more items being added to the list that may be in response to more operational matters or requests from residents.
- **Long-term financial planning:** There are concerns about the the need for a new Strategic Financial Plan for the Town, which existed in the past. and can help the Corporation to understand its long-term financial picture and to maintain its strong financial position.
- **Staff complement and capacity:** There are dualling perceptions regarding staff capacity, with one side believing that the Town may be overstaffed, particularly at the management level, and the other believing that the Town's existing staff are at capacity and that additional positions are needed to deliver on Town priorities and commitments, as defined by Council.

Threats to address / prepare for / mitigate (1/2)

- **Housing supply and affordability:** Elevated home prices and rental costs are making it difficult for people of all ages to buy or rent a home in Collingwood and leading to an increase in visible homelessness in the downtown core. There is also a lack of diversity in housing stock to accommodate different demographic needs (renters, seniors, families, singles, low income, etc.) in the community. This can harm future economic development if employers cannot find suitable housing for their employees and can also have other adverse impacts on the community (e.g., increased homelessness deterring visitors to the downtown, pressure on related supports and services).
- **Increasing resident expectations and priorities:** As Collingwood has grown, so too have the expectations of residents, particularly amongst newcomers from larger urban centres who seek enhanced services and increased levels of services (such as recreation programming, snow plowing, etc.). At the same time, there is external pressure to keep property taxes low to ensure affordability for residents. This places increased pressure on the Town to “do more with less or the same.”
- **Changing provincial mandates and legislation:** Provincial legislation continues to have direct implications on municipal service delivery, including land use planning and finances resulting from significant changes to the *Planning Act* and others. There is also ongoing uncertainty around regional restructuring.
- **Current economic climate:** Inflation, higher interest rates, and the increasing cost of living has made everyday life more difficult for many residents. Municipalities are also feeling the pinch of increased operating and capital costs and are constantly having to balance the need for increased revenue to maintain current and/or enhance service levels with the ability of residents to pay higher taxes or user fees in the current economic climate.

Threats to address / prepare for / mitigate (2/2)

- **“Gap filling” for other governments:** Residents are increasingly looking to municipalities to step in, fill gaps, and address challenges in areas outside of municipal jurisdiction, such as human and social services, healthcare, etc. Looking ahead, Collingwood will need to further define its role in areas that are technically the purview of the other governments but are of top priority for the community.
- **Climate change:** Given its unique geography and location on Georgian Bay, the Town – both the community and the municipal administration – will continue to be impacted by the effects and costs of climate change and extreme weather events. Climate change is also expected to impact winter tourism across the South Georgian Bay region, and there is a concern that the Town is not moving fast enough on this front.
- **Economic shifts:** Collingwood has a diversified economy with a growing entrepreneurial base, but the community will need to continue its focus on supporting local businesses and preparing for a changing economy (e.g., movement towards a knowledge-based economy).
- **Impacts of tourism:** While acknowledging that tourism is an economic strength for the community, it can and will continue to bring certain challenges that need to be planned for such as increased traffic volumes and pressure on the existing housing supply.
- **Erosion of public trust in government:** As demonstrated by lower voter turnout in recent elections at all orders of government (including in Collingwood) and the increasing vitriol of social media, there is an increasing sense of apathy and distrust toward government among some members of the public.

Opportunities for the future (1/3)

- **Fostering economic development:** Collingwood is recognized for strong local businesses, and the Town has made investments to attract, support, and grow businesses. Continuing to support existing businesses while also advancing entrepreneurialism, innovation, and investment attraction remain an important part of the Town's role in fostering a prosperous local economy.
- **Leverage and build on the Collingwood's reputation:** While Collingwood and the wider region saw a population boom aided by the pandemic and resulting exodus from urban cores, the main features that attracted new residents remain in the post-pandemic world. Collingwood should continue to leverage its momentum as a desirable destination for individuals, families, entrepreneurs and businesses to support its ongoing success and distinguish itself as a vibrant, innovative community.
- **Managing growth:** Growth is one of the most top-of-mind issues for residents and stakeholders. The recently approved [Official Plan](#) sets out the overall vision for the growth, but the Town is at a juncture in defining what the community will look like in the years ahead, with a number of exciting projects on the horizon, including the redevelopment of the Grain Terminals and the Poplar Regional Health and Wellness Village. At the same time, the Town will need to ensure that it is making the appropriate investments in infrastructure and services to support this growth (e.g., transit expansion, facility upgrades or new projects, etc.).
- **Addressing the housing crisis:** Related to growth, housing is another top priority for residents and stakeholders. The Town has been proactive in articulating its role in supporting more affordable and attainable housing options (vs other actors, such as the County) through the creation of the [Affordable Housing Master Plan](#). The next step, however, will be to ensure successful implementation of the Plan through the allocation of sufficient resources and funding to deliver on the recommendations.

Opportunities for the future (2/3)

- **Building a diverse and age-friendly community:** Although Collingwood has a slightly older population currently, it will be important for the Town to ensure that it not only a retirement destination but affordable for residents of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities, particularly younger families. This diversity will support the overall vibrancy and richness of the community.
- **Leveraging Collingwood's Downtown:** While many municipalities saw their downtowns struggle during the pandemic and are now focused on revitalization, Collingwood's downtown is a success story. The upcoming Downtown Visioning Master Plan is an opportunity to consider what the future of the downtown should be as the Town grows and what enablers are needed to ensure its continued success. A few priorities that emerged from the market research study to ensure the downtown remains successful and vibrant include better access to the waterfront, better pedestrian access, and more events.
- **Regional collaboration and planning:** The Town sees value in engaging with other municipalities South Georgian Bay area and there may be an opportunity to increase collaboration with neighbouring municipalities in Simcoe and Grey Counties (e.g., The Blue Mountains, Wasaga Beach) in terms of shared services, programs, facilities, and tourism. This approach, which recognizes that municipal borders are fluid for residents, can support efficiencies in service delivery and costs and allow for more effective long-term planning for infrastructure investments.
- **Intergovernmental Advocacy:** The Town will need to continue to advocate to other orders of governments on issues and challenges outside its jurisdiction in terms of what it delivers, regulates, or invests in (e.g., new hospital, physician recruitment, community safety and well-being, core infrastructure to support growth and new housing, etc.).
- **Continuing to engage – and leverage – the community:** As noted, residents of Collingwood are highly engaged and are eager to collaborate with the Town and provide their expertise on key projects and plans, as evidenced by the success of the Town's advisory committees and task forces, including the SDG Task Force. In addition, the Town is also on a path of continuous improvement to increase resident engagement in and awareness about what the Town is doing and its role, what services it delivers and how it funds those services to make local government more accessible and, potentially, increase civic dialogue and engagement.

Opportunities for the future (3/3)

- **Focus on sustainability:** The Town and community have demonstrated a commitment to sustainability through their participation in the UN's Social Development Goals and the ongoing work of the Task Force. This may be a useful framework for the Town in terms of setting priorities and measuring success for the 2024-2028 planning cycle, but it will also need to be mindful of organizational realities, such as resources, funding, and jurisdiction.
- **Continue to foster a collaborative Council-staff relationship:** Council-staff relations are always a work in progress, and there should be continued focus on ensuring clear lines of communication and appropriate understanding of and respect for the distinct roles and responsibilities of each in terms of who “steers” and who “rows”.
- **Build organizational alignment:** Given the transformation that lies ahead for Collingwood, it will be important that Town staff and Council are aligned on the key priorities that should be advanced through the Town's operating plans and budget process. The Strategic Plan should act as the guiding document to cultivate that alignment, as long as all parties feel a sense of fidelity to and ownership over it. There will also be a need to ensure that the Town has the capacity, resources and expertise required to deliver on the priorities on the plan.
- **Performance measurement:** There is an opportunity, as part of this strategic planning process, to review how the Town measures success and progress in terms of delivering on community priorities. Some have suggested looking to key community indicators, such as the SDG indicators, to understand whether the Town is achieving its goals as opposed to more standard corporate performance measures, which tend to be more focused on outputs and performance than on outcomes in the community.

Draft Strategic Framework



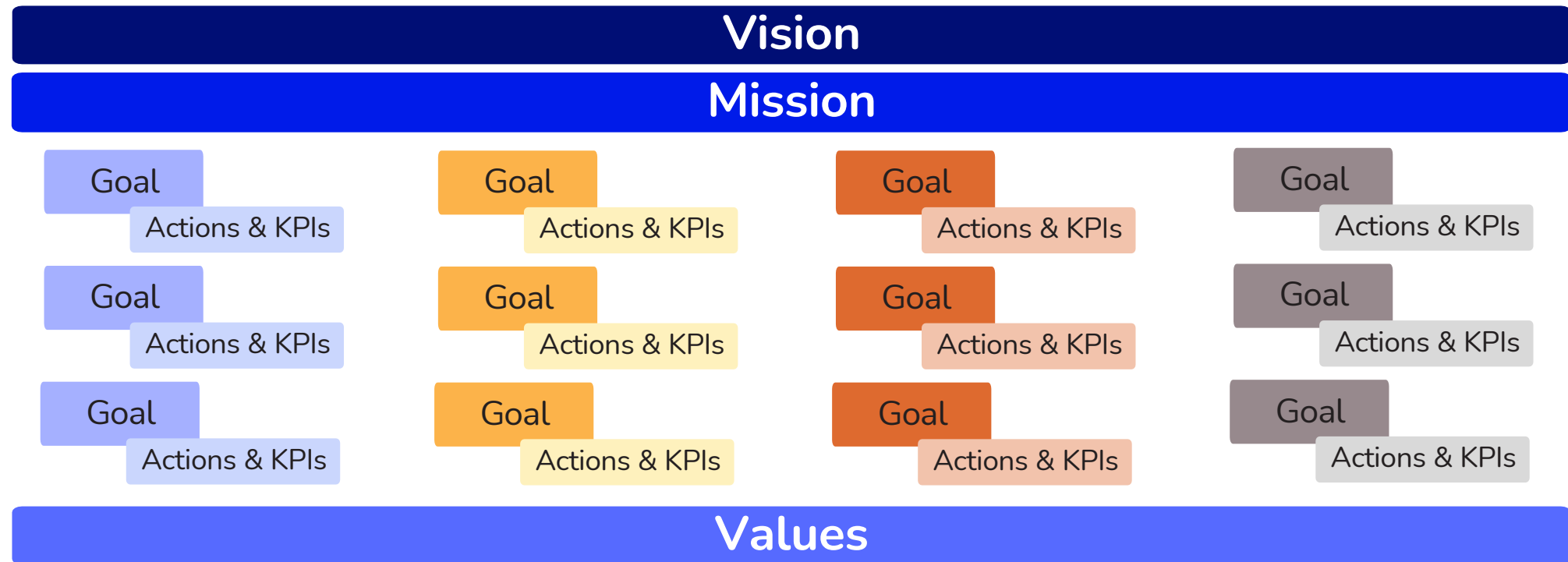
Introduction to the framework

- The following slides present an **initial draft** of strategic pillars and goals, based on the consultation process.
- **These pillars and goals are not set in stone and should be considered as a “thought starter” for our discussion.**
 - Our goal is to solicit input from Council and start to build consensus on the high-level road map.
- They are **deliberately broad this stage and are not intended to be specific** – we are at the goal-setting and visioning stage.
- Our focus is on setting out priorities and **answering WHAT, not HOW.**
 - *Are these pillars and goals on the right track?*
 - *Are we missing anything when you think about your aspirations for the Town over the next few years?*
 - *What is or should be the Town’s role in advancing these goals?*
- We will then work with Dept. Heads to understand “what the Town could do ” in response to today’s discussion about “what we want to achieve” and bring that back to Council.

LEGEND

- ▶ The colored boxes represent potential **key priority areas, or pillars.**
- ▶ Each pillar is accompanied by an **explanatory statement.**
- ▶ The gray boxes represent potential **goals.**

Sample strategic plan structure



Refresher | Collingwood's 2020-2023 Strategic Plan

Transparent and Accountable Local Government

Continuously improve the Town's financial context and build sustainability

Enhance strategic financial knowledge

Communicate financial health

Invest in asset sale proceeds

Enhance public trust

Continue public communication and engagement on Town activities

Act on recommendations from Judicial Inquiry

Enhance emergency preparedness

Engage youth in governance

Public Connections to a Revitalized World-Class Waterfront

Update Waterfront Master Plan for grain terminals and spit and take action

Report back on White paper public engagement

Support and Manage Growth and Prosperity

Update our land use planning and regulatory framework

OP Review

Enact and pass bylaws to provide more certainty to development industry

Seek economic development that attracts youth, supports existing business and entrepreneurship

Deliver and implement Economic Action Plan

Determine whether to implement a business development accelerator

Enhance Community Well-Being and Sustainability

Work collaboratively with healthcare, social services and community groups

Support groups in South Georgian Bay in identification of gaps and collaboration on solutions

Enhance community safety and well-being

Preserve the Town's environment and take action on climate change

Demonstrate that the Town is a Green Leader in its own operations

Climate Action Plan

Baseline and improve Town's environmental performance measures

Encourage Diverse Culture and Arts Offerings

Encourage and grow their arts and culture community by facilitating networks and helping to find and align resources

Encourage a vibrant, strong and self-directed local arts and culture community

Enable opportunities to align and focus funding

Promote public viewing of arts and culture

Encourage and where needed support community events and festivals that enhance the experience of Collingwood

Annual plan and report on community events and festivals

Recognize and celebrate Collingwood's growing ethnic diversity

Draft Strategic Framework | Pillars and Goals

Managed Growth	Economic Prosperity	Environmental Sustainability	Community Vitality	
<i>We grow in a way that celebrates and protects what makes our community special.</i>	<i>We foster a dynamic and resilient economic ecosystem, driven by innovation and an entrepreneurial spirit.</i>	<i>We are stewards of our natural environment and collaborate with our partners to create a more sustainable future for all.</i>	<i>We are a community where everyone belongs.</i>	
Encourage the development of a range of housing options across the housing continuum.	Advance local and regional workforce development through collaboration and partnerships.	Protect and enhance Collingwood's natural environment and built heritage.	Enhance the health, well-being, and safety of the entire community.	
Continue to support the downtown as a commercial centre and vibrant and welcoming gathering space.	Establish Collingwood as a hub for the 21 st century economy.	Continue to be a municipal leader in taking action against climate change.	Celebrate Collingwood as an inclusive community for all ages, ethnicities, cultures, and abilities.	
Invest in critical infrastructure and asset management to meet current and future needs.	Support business retention and expansion and drive local entrepreneurship.	Partner with non-profits and local groups to support community sustainability initiatives.	Foster community belonging through arts, culture, and events.	
	Encourage the growth and resiliency of Collingwood's four-seasons economy.	Expand active transportation and transit options across the Town.		
Transparent and Accountable Government				
<i>We commit to service excellence through collaboration, continuous improvement, and fiscal prudence.</i>				
Ensure effective financial management.	Drive continuous improvement in service delivery.	Promote Collingwood as an Employer of Choice.	Build multi-sectoral and intergovernmental partnerships to meet our community needs.	Continuously explore opportunities to enhance civic engagement.

Pillar #1: Managed Growth

We grow in a way that celebrates and protects what makes our community special.

Encourage the development of a range of housing options across the housing continuum.

Continue to support the downtown as a commercial centre and vibrant and welcoming community gathering space.

Invest in critical infrastructure and asset management to meet current and future needs.

Pillar #2: Economic Prosperity

We foster a dynamic and resilient economic ecosystem, driven by innovation and an entrepreneurial spirit.

Advance local and regional workforce development through collaboration and partnerships.

Establish Collingwood as a hub for the 21st century economy.

Support business retention and expansion and drive local entrepreneurship.

Encourage the growth and resiliency of Collingwood's four-seasons economy.

Pillar #3: Environmental Sustainability

We are stewards of our natural environment and work with our partners to create a more sustainable future for all.

Protect and enhance Collingwood's natural environment and built heritage.

Continue to be a municipal leader in taking action against climate change.

Partner with non-profits and local groups to support community sustainability initiatives.

Expand active transportation and transit options across the Town.

Pillar #4: Community Vitality

We are a community where everyone belongs.

Enhance the health, well-being, and safety of the entire community.

Celebrate Collingwood as an inclusive community for all ages, ethnicities, cultures, and abilities.

Foster community belonging through arts, culture, and events.

Foundation: Transparent and Accountable Government

We commit to service excellence through collaboration, continuous improvement, and fiscal prudence.

Ensure effective financial management.

Drive continuous improvement in service delivery.

Promote Collingwood as an Employer of Choice.

Build multi-sectoral and intergovernmental partnerships to meet our community needs.

Continuously explore opportunities to enhance civic engagement.

Vision, Mission and Values



Understanding these elements of the strategic plan...

The strategic vision, mission, and values are the guiding forces behind an organization, though each serves a slightly different purpose.

Vision	Mission	Values
<p>The Vision is aspirational: “in four years, we will be...”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Future-focused✓ Inspiring and motivating✓ Intentional and purpose-driven (e.g., not a long list of adjectives or descriptors)	<p>The Mission reflects the day-to-day guide for operations: “Every day we...”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Based on core competencies✓ Motivates and inspires employee commitment✓ Realistic, specific, short, clear and easily understood	<p>Values inform what the Town does every day as it works to achieve its vision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Principles or beliefs core to the Town’s identity and culture✓ Values should be authentic to the Town – they should emphasize what makes Collingwood, Collingwood

Refresher – Collingwood’s 2020-2023 Strategic Vision

“Collingwood offers residents and visitors a healthy lifestyle of activities in beautiful and safe settings, including an active transportation network, an inclusive multi-generational artful community with strong civic pride, an animated waterfront and boating facilities, and is a hub of successful entrepreneurs and businesses offering rewarding jobs.

Leading-edge staff support Council and community decisions that are progressive, accountable and sustainable, protecting and leveraging Collingwood’s core strengths: a vibrant downtown and community, a healthy natural environment attractive in all seasons, an extensive waterfront interconnected with the town, and our strong cultural and built heritage.”

What we heard about the vision:

- ▶ 48% of staff said the vision still resonates. About 24% disagreed.
- ▶ Some input suggested the vision is too long and could be simplified and focused.
- ▶ Others noted it should be more aspirational – what does Collingwood want to be vs. what it is today.

Key Questions

- Does the strategic vision still resonate with you?
- Does it feel authentic to Collingwood?
- Is anything missing?
- Could anything be articulated more clearly or differently?

Mission

A mission statement is a short statement of the core purpose of an organization.

Collingwood does not currently have a separate mission statement. However, over 70% of staff expressed interest in creating a mission as part of this process.

Examples of municipal mission statements for illustrative purposes....

Town of Huntsville	Delivering quality services for the people of Huntsville through responsible decision-making.
Town of The Blue Mountains	Council and Staff together foster the trust of our community and support our region's diverse cultural and natural heritage through thoughtful consultation and organizational excellence.
Town of Saugeen Shores	The Town provides high-quality municipal services that allow the community to thrive today and in the future.
City of Vaughan	Citizens first through Service Excellence.

Values

Values are the philosophies, principles or beliefs that guide the conduct, activities and operations of an organization. They serve as the foundation of how the Town approaches day-to-day service delivery and as it works to achieve the vision and mission and should guide the conduct of Council and staff.

Below are examples of values from other municipal strategic plans (for illustrative purposes):



Wrap Up



Next Steps

- Revise the draft strategic plan framework based on today's workshop.
- Work with Department Heads to develop key initiatives for each strategic goal, including draft performance measures that can support tracking, evaluating and reporting back on progress.
- Develop options for consideration for the Town's Strategic Vision, Mission and Values.
- Review and validate the next iteration of the strategic plan with Council.

Additional thoughts and feedback on the Community-Based Strategic Plan can be shared with Stacy Hushion at **shushion@strategycorp.com**



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