
The Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Information Report to Council

SUBJECT: 2022 – 2026 Council Strategic Plan Update
DATE: 2023-03-21
REPORT #: CAO-23-041
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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Strategic planning is an organization's process of defining its vision, direction and long-term goals, creating specific plans to achieve them, implementing those plans, and evaluating the results.

At the beginning of each Council term, the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer coordinates the development of a Strategic Plan to establish key goals and initiatives that will move the community forward. Council's Strategic Plan provides direction to Town Staff about areas of focus as the organization works toward achieving its vision.

During the September 26, 2022, Council Meeting, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) presented a final update on the 2018 – 2022 Council Strategic Plan, Service Delivery Review, and Municipal Modernization initiatives.

Staff look forward to building on the success of the 2018 – 2022 Strategic Plan as Council embarks on the strategic planning process.

NEXT STEP / CONCLUSION

The purpose of this Information Report is to provide Council with a proposed process and timelines for developing the 2022 – 2026 Strategic Plan. This strategic plan process allows Council an opportunity to collaborate and confirm their priorities for the term, enabling staff to develop an implementation plan to deliver on the focus areas.

An effective strategic planning process has many benefits. It ensures organizations take the time to envision their desired future state and are aware of opportunities and challenges. It also helps them to anticipate risks and understand what resources will be needed to seize opportunities. Additionally, a robust strategic planning process provides a strong sense of direction, connects people around a shared vision, and creates accountability.

On February 9, 2023, the Senior Management Team (SMT) undertook an all-day strategic planning session to perform an internal and external environmental scan of critical issues and challenges facing the Town. The visionary and practical strategic plan process focused on refreshing the Strategic Plan that guided the previous term of Council (2018 – 2022) and identified opportunities to improve and expand the community vision.

The draft strategic planning schedule is as follows:

- **February 9, 2023:** Senior Management Team Environmental Scan and SWOT
- **March 22 – April 5, 2023:** One-on-one meetings with Council Members
- **April 19, 2023:** Joint Council and SMT Strategic Plan Session
- **May 2023:** Stakeholder Interviews and Public Engagement
- **Early June 2023:** Joint Council and SMT Strategic Plan Session
- **June 27, 2023:** Draft Plan Presentation to finalize pillars, objectives, action plans, and key performance indicators
- **July 2023:** Final Plan Presentation

It is vital that the development of the Strategic Plan is an inclusive process, engaging and collaborating with residents, business owners, agencies, community partners, staff and Council in a variety of formats. With this approach, the Strategic Plan will reflect the vision and priorities of our community, including all five villages and both urban and rural areas.

Securing confidence and buy-in from Council, Town Staff, and community stakeholders surrounding the Strategic Plan's ability to drive the Town forward is also of the utmost importance. Therefore, a robust communications plan will be developed to ensure that the engagement process and the Plan are clearly communicated to the community.

Upon Council's approval of the Strategic Plan, Staff will develop a plan for ongoing monitoring and updates to Council and the community on the action plan and strategic plan accomplishments.

Senior Management Team looks forward to working with Town Council to develop Council's 2022 – 2026 Strategic Plan. This critical document will act as a roadmap as the organization strives to achieve its shared community vision and delivers programs and services that meet the needs of the community today and into the future.