



Report to Council

Department: Office of the CAO
Division: Office of the CAO
Date: June 7, 2021
Prepared by: Chris Nepszy, P. Eng., PE, CAO
Report Number: CAO-2021-02
Subject: Corporate Strategic Plan: 2021 Progress Update
Number of Pages: 16

Recommendation(s)

That Report CAO-2021-02 entitled Corporate Strategic Plan: 2021 Progress Update prepared by Chris Nepszy, CAO dated June 7, 2021 be received for information.

Purpose

A Council-directed Corporate Strategic Plan is an essential tool which establishes overall direction and priorities, aligns organizational efforts, and supports future decision-making. The purpose of this report is to provide a progress update to Council on the status of initiatives identified in the 2019-2022 Corporate Strategic Plan.

Background and Discussion

The development of the 2019 – 2022 Corporate Strategic Plan included extensive preparation, engagement, and outreach.

Council established six key **values for the Town's 2019-2022 Corporate Strategic Plan** as follows: 1) Progressive and Sustainable Infrastructure, 2) Healthy Community and Quality of Life, 3) Financial and Economic Stewardship, 4) Vibrant Growth and Development, 5) Citizen and Customer Experience and 6) Organizational Effectiveness and Resiliency.

Each priority area listed was broken down into recommended goals and actions based on the cumulative feedback from all who were engaged during the consultation process and can be viewed at www.essex.ca/StrategicPlan.

Progress reports are prepared to update Council and the community on the progress being made towards the Strategic Plan. This reporting process facilitates an important dialogue between Council and administration on projects and issues of importance to the organization and community. This progress report is not meant to be a complete description of the works completed by Administration during the past year. Staff are also engaged in delivering core services and participating in other significant Town initiatives.

The following was noted in the 2020 Fall Progress Report and continues to remain true:

"...facing a global pandemic has made this year unprecedented and challenging for many in our community. Even with the required shift in focus, we maintained and delivered on our commitment to provide essential municipal services to citizens, stakeholders, and business owners. Staff members from across our organization have stepped up and found innovative ways to continue to not only provide critical programs and services, but to achieve progress on many of the initiatives identified in the Corporate Strategic Plan."

Updates on each objective and initiative are attached to this report. As can be seen, all the priorities are not mutually exclusive. Although initiatives are grouped under the most relevant of the six (6) key values, many support the achievement of goals of multiple areas. This overlap helps to convey the cooperation, interdepartmental coordination, and the engagement of external partners needed to achieve our strategic goals.

As of May 2021, of the 64 Strategic Objectives identified in the Strategic Plan, 58 have been completed or ongoing and 6 have yet to be started. It is apparent that the overwhelming majority of objectives are on the track to completion and demonstrates **the Town's** commitment to accountability, sustainability, and willingness to take responsibility for our actions. This shared commitment is at the centre of the relationship between Council, staff and the community and enables us to work together to make the vision outlined in the plan a reality.

This term of Council is the first time we are reporting out on the progress of the Corporate Strategic Plan. This report is part of that dialogue on initiatives and their importance as well as the potential need to re-assess priorities to determine if we continue with all actions, or implement a pivot strategy. Particularly in these dynamic times, flexibility and willingness to **adapt is crucial for the plan's success.**

Finally, it continues to be critical that the leaders of the municipality, both elected and administrative, understand the priorities when considering the policies and future direction **of the municipality. The elements of a strategic document identify the Town's priorities, which** in turn provide the framework for the future allocation of funds, development of work plans, reports and dedication of resources.

Financial Impact

Administration will continue to identify financial impacts associated with the recommended actions, much of which has been included in the 2021 budget. Remaining work plan actions **will be incorporated into future budgets for Council's consideration.**

Consultations

Doug Sweet, Deputy CAO

Alex Denonville, Manager, Communications

Link to Strategic Priorities

- ☒ Manage, invest and plan for sustainable municipal infrastructure which meets current and future needs of the municipality and its citizens.
- ☒ Create a safe, friendly and inclusive community which encourages healthy, active living for people of all ages and abilities.
- ☒ Provide a fiscal stewardship and value for tax dollars to ensure long-term financial health to the municipality.
- ☒ Manage responsible and viable growth while preserving and enhancing the unique rural and small town character of the community.
- ☒ Improve the experiences of individuals, as both citizens and customers, in their interactions with the Town of Essex.
- ☒ **Improve the Town's capacity to meet the ongoing and future service needs of its citizens** while ensuring the corporation is resilient in the face of unanticipated changes or disruptions.