



AGENDA ITEM REPORT

Meeting: Regular Meeting of Council, Operations - 21 Sep 2022
To: Members of Council
From: David Stewart, CAO/Treasurer
Department: Administration
Subject: Hastings Highlands Strategic Plan (2019-2023) Update 5

Recommendation:

That Council accept this report "Hastings Highlands Strategic Plan (2019-2023) Update 5" as submitted by the CAO/Treasurer, as information only.

Origin:

'Welcome Home' is how we want our residents and visitors to feel about Hastings Highlands.

The Municipal Strategic Plan has been developed to guide Council and Staff into the future (2019-2023). It will be the focus over the next several years. It includes Guiding Principles that will influence decisions and actions. It also includes 4 Strategic Priorities and specific Actions under each.

Background information:

The Hastings Highlands Strategic Plan 2019 to 2023 was approved by Council on November 20, 2019. The plan sets out the following:

- A vision statement
- A mission statement
- Three (3) Guiding principles
- Four (4) strategic priorities
- Sixteen (16) goals
- Thirty-three (33) action items

As part of the municipality's strategic plan, Council has requested a report regularly on the strategic plan implementation process.

A strategic plan update; including a summary of actions completed to date is **attached** for Council to review. This update has been completed in consultation with members of the municipality's leadership team.

Financial impact:

Not Applicable

Link to strategic plan:

Strategic Priority #4 - Exceptional Service and Governance

Goal: Strengthen Performance Management and Accountability for Results Across the Organization

Action: Report regularly on the Community Strategic Plan implementation process

References:

Not Applicable

Attachments:

[Update #5 September 21 2022 Hastings Highlands Strategic Plan](#)

Prepared By:

David Stewart, CAO/Treasurer

Reviewed By: Municipal Clerk September 12, 2022

Reviewed By: CAO/Treasurer September 14, 2022



HH Community Strategic Plan 2019-2023 Update #5 – September 21, 2022

The Municipality's strategic plan is on the home page of the website and displayed in council chambers for members of council, staff, and stakeholders to see daily.

Our Vision Statement:

"An enviable community, with a progressive vision and financial stability, prepared for the future."

The municipality's vision statement appears in staff email signatures, on the reverse of business cards, on the wall in Council Chambers and now on Council and Committee Agendas.

Our Mission Statement:

"To provide a community that is Beautiful by Nature for all residents and visitors to thrive, prosper and enjoy life."

Our Guiding Principles:

- We Care
- We're All In This Together
- Welcome Home

The municipality's guiding principles appear on the reverse of business cards and on the wall in Council Chambers. CAO refers to these frequently when communicating with municipal employees and stakeholders.

Our **Strategic Priorities:**

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1 – FINANCIAL STABILITY

- **Goal: Maintain a Competitive Tax Rate**
 - **Action – Complete an alternative revenues study so that the municipality is prepared for the future in the event that intergovernmental aid is reduced.**
 - In 2022, Council approved a 1.54% municipal tax rate increase.

- **Goal: Promote Assessment Growth**
 - **Action – Undertake a review of the zoning bylaw with an eye to the future and building our community.**
 - In 2022, Council passed Bylaw 2022-004 A Bylaw to Amend the Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw to Conform with the General Policies in the County of Hastings Official Plan and Bylaw 2022-005 A Bylaw to Amend the Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw to Conform with the Natural Vegetative Buffer Policies in the County of Hastings Official Plan. An appeal of Bylaw 2022-005 was received by the municipality and submitted to the Ontario Land Tribunal.

- **Goal: Maximize Resources**
 - **Action – Explore opportunities to sell unused assets such as land, buildings and facilities.**
 - In 2020, Council approved a sale of surplus municipal land policy that addresses the sale of unused assets such as land, buildings and facilities and has actively listed and sold properties using this policy tool.

- **Goal: Increase Non-Tax Revenue through Government Grants**
 - **Action – Investigate having an expert grant writing resource(s) available to research and respond to government grant application programs.**
 - In 2020, Council approved an agreement with GrantMatch to act as the Municipality's expert grant writing agent. GrantMatch is an organization that develops and manages government funding application processes, including grant identification, funding matching, grant strategy development, funding application development and writing. Their services are on an ad-hoc, as needed basis and no funds are paid out for their services until Non-Tax Revenue through Government Grants are successfully received by the Municipality.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2 – RATIONALIZE INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Goal: Maintain Roads and Bridges**
 - **Action – Implement Hastings Highlands Road 62 revitalization plan.**
 - In 2020, Over 5.7 kms of Hastings Highlands Road 62 was revitalized including downtown Maynooth. New road, storm sewers, guiderails, sidewalks, curbs were just some of the road enhancements completed.
 - In terms of Hastings Highlands Road 62 Revitalization Plan Next Steps; The pre-engineering and pre-construction tender package for the next section of Hastings Highlands 62 from Robinson/Koss Road to Papineau Creek bridge (approximately 6.8 kms) has been completed. As a result, this section is classified as "shovel ready" in anticipation for any Federal and Provincial Infrastructure funding streams or should Council be interested in including this project in a future capital budget.
 - In 2021, Council approved the Cost Evaluation to Complete Hastings Highlands Road 62 Report. This report will assist the Municipality with lobbying senior government partners for additional funding to complete the next steps in the plan.
 - In 2021, a letter was sent to the Federal Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Provincial Minister of Infrastructure and the Warden and Council of Hastings County to request immediate financial support to proceed with the revitalization of HH Road 62 (Formerly Provincial Highway 62).
 - Presentation/delegation requests to speak to Cabinet Ministers on the Municipality's Hastings Highlands Road 62 Plan are ongoing and often take place at municipal associations conferences.

 - **Action – Review, refine and implement Road Needs Study**
 - In 2022, Council will review and consider by year end the updated 2022 Road Needs Study which was developed alongside the Municipality's updated asset management plan. This plan is costed annually through the municipality's capital budget.

- **Goal: Maintain Buildings and Facilities**
 - **Action – Implement the municipal building and facility strategic plan.**
 - Council continues to review and implement recommendations contained within the building and facility strategic plan.
 - In 2021, Council approved \$200,000 to fund the reserve for building capital expenses to assist with funding future building and facility needs.
 - In 2022, Council approved \$18,200 to fund the reserve for building capital expenses to assist with funding future building and facility needs.

- **Goal: Be Stewards of Municipal Assets**
 - **Action – Regularly update the municipality's asset management plan.**
 - In 2022, the Municipality's Asset Management Plan will be updated to comply with Ontario Regulation 588/17. Due to Covid-19 challenges the

Ministry of Infrastructure extended deadlines as follows: July 1, 2022 – plans are required for core municipal assets, July 1, 2024 – plans are required for all municipal assets and July 1, 2025 – plans are required to include service levels and their appropriateness; a lifecycle management and financial strategy; funding sources and needs; and other assumptions.

- **Goal: Fire Services Plan**
 - **Action – Update establishing regulatory bylaw.**
 - In 2020, Council updated its establishing regulatory (level of service) bylaw as part of the fire services plan.

 - **Action – Complete a review of fire services.**
 - In 2022, Council approved a third-party independent consultant to complete a review of fire services and community risk assessment.

 - **Action – Develop a viability plan.**
 - In 2022, Council will review and consider recommendations from a third-party independent consultant's review of the municipality's fire services.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3 – BUILD OUR COMMUNITY

- **Goal: Affordable Housing**
 - **Action – Investigate opportunities for tiny homes.**
 - In 2022, Mayor Hagar authored a report to Council for information on the Housing Action Plan – Tiny Homes; including a vision statement and five (5) action items.

 - **Action – Create an investment package to attract future development.**
 - No summary of action is available for this update.

- **Goal: Enhance the Quality of Life**
 - **Action – Develop a community safety and well-being plan in partnership with other municipalities.**
 - In 2022, Council approved Bylaw 2022-014 being the North Hastings Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. The plan is a living document, and the coordinating committee will continue to meet as part of community collaboration and planning.

 - **Action – Strengthen recreation programming.**
 - Municipal staff continues to work within Covid-19 continuity plans for recreation programming at select municipal facilities while following public health guidelines.



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- **Action – Improve and promote programming at municipal facilities.**
- Municipal staff continues to work within Covid-19 continuity plans for programming at select municipal facilities while following public health guidelines.

- **Goal: Care for the Environment**
 - **Action – Develop and implement a flood response plan.**
 - In 2022, the Community Emergency Management Coordinator(s) worked to complete a draft flood response plan that has been reviewed by Ministry Officials at the Solicitor General's Office - Emergency Management Ontario. It will be reviewed by the new Council in 2023 as part of the municipality's emergency management plan review.

 - **Action – Investigate a septic inspection program.**
 - In 2019, the Chief Building Official authored a report to Council for information on the topic of investigating a septic inspection program.
 - In 2020, the building department updated their home page on the municipality's website to include educational resources and videos on this topic.

 - **Action – Improve water quality within lakes located in Hastings Highlands through implementing water quality impact tests.**
 - Council continues to investigate ways to improve shoreline health in Hastings Highlands through education, policy development and manageable enforcement.
 - Council acknowledges that Hastings Highlands is a lake based economy with six (6) cold water at capacity lakes that must be given a responsible level of consideration in order to be stewards of the lakes. Shoreline health is a primary consideration when making decisions in the municipality.
 - In 2021, Council approved a new user fee for a silt fence deposit for building permits issued within 30 meters of a water body that is refunded once proof of the silt fence installation is satisfactory to the municipality.
 - In 2021 and 2022, Council invited experts/professionals in the field of water and shoreline health to provide Expert Talks/Presentations.
 - In 2022, Council approved a Shoreline Health One-Page Information/Education Sheet to be provided to contractors, real estate agents, businesses, potential property owners and other stakeholders.

- **Goal: Succession Planning**
 - **Action – Create deputy department head positions in a timely manner in an effort to train/nurture them for key leadership positions.**
 - Council has approved the creation of deputy department head positions in a timely manner to address succession planning needs.
 - In 2021, the Municipality won a national award through the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA) for its succession planning program.

- In 2022, Municipal staff will continue to establish and implement plans for succession on an ongoing basis.

➤ **Goal: Leaders in Waste Management**

- **Action – Research and implement alternative solutions to waste management.**
- In 2020, a Waste Optimization Study was completed and presented to the Waste Management Committee.
- **Action – Educate stakeholders on waste and recycling management practices in the province.**
- In 2020 and 2021, the Chair of the Waste Management Committee met with the Ministry of the Environment to request for funding to educate stakeholders on waste and recycle management practices in the province.
- **Action – Develop and implement a waste management plan to address the need to significantly downsize waste sites.**
- In 2020, the Waste Management Committee reviewed the Waste Management Optimization study and has recommended to Council not to downsize or close any waste sites.
- In 2021, Council updated select waste user fees so that cost recovery is being maintained for select user pay waste services.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #4 – EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE AND GOVERNANCE

➤ **Goal: Build a Strong Customer Service Culture**

- **Action – Provide a resource designated to promote and implement exceptional and quality customer service.**
- In 2020, Council approved a new resource portal designed to promote and implement exceptional and quality customer service. As part of the new portal was a series of four (4) new policy governance tools to enhance the municipality's customer service experience and create a more consistent experience for all customers.
- In 2021, the municipality created an online community engagement site - 'Have Your Say Hastings Highlands'. This platform allows the public to share ideas to help shape municipal decisions on projects, policies and initiatives that are important to the community.
- In 2022, Council approved a new resource for administrative support designated for Building and Operations Services.
- Hastings Highlands continues to be recognized in the municipal sector for its customer service management policy tools and progressive approach to managing stakeholder requests.



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- **Action – Implement a customer service management system.**
- In 2020, a new customer service management system was implemented for Hastings Highlands as part of the municipality's goal of building a strong customer service culture.
- In 2021 and 2022, more municipal departments started plugging into the system as the program continues to evolve.
- In 2022, Council received new and improved comprehensive quarterly customer service reports based on data collected by the customer service management system.

- **Goal: Plan and Implement Emergency Management**
 - **Action – Ensure compliance with applicable legislation in community emergency management and planning.**
 - In 2020, Council approved the appointment of the roles of Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC) and two (2) Alternate Community Emergency Management Coordinator's.
 - In 2021, Council updated the municipality's emergency management program and emergency management response plan to ensure up-to-date compliance with the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act.

 - **Action – Strengthen our safety and security protocols at municipal buildings and facilities.**
 - In 2020, an emergency station has been set up outside the Council chambers that contains a defibrillator, first aid kit along with the municipality's emergency response plan.
 - In 2021, enhanced safety measures have been installed at the Hastings Highlands Centre to address public health, safety, security, and well-being while complying with public health and safety guidelines.
 - In 2021, the Joint Health and Safety Committee has been restructured and additional staff have been certified in provincial legislation to strengthen corporate safety and security of municipal employees in the workplace.
 - In 2022, Council approved the purchase and installation of additional security cameras at select municipal facilities to strengthen safety and security.
 - In 2022, the municipality enrolled in the Health and Safety Excellent Program through the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) and is current working through an action plan.

 - **Action – Complete regular Hastings Highlands Centre building evacuation drills and emergency management exercises.**
 - The Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC) or Alternate will be working with the Field Officer from the Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management to conduct provincially mandated emergency management exercises.



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- **Goal: Strengthen Performance Management and Accountability for Results Across the Organization**
 - **Action – Ensure employees are supported with relevant tools, knowledge and skills to deliver on the community strategic plan.**
 - CAO has been utilizing regular staff meetings to introduce policy and procedure changes as well as offer any supportive resources or training staff may require for enhancing individual skill sets to strengthen performance management and accountability across the organization.
 - CAO has instituted regular personal development sessions with department heads to strengthen performance management. CAO is working with department heads to implement similar regular personal and professional development sessions with staff throughout the organization. Note - that these regular personal and professional development sessions do not replace annual performance evaluations, they are in addition to.
 - CAO continues to ensure that investments are made into providing the team with the materials and equipment they need to do their work has been demonstrated as we continue to successfully manage through the Covid-19 pandemic by way of the municipality's business continuity plan all while still checking important action items off the corporate strategic plan and meeting the evolving day to day customer demands.
 - CAO has created a work plan/dashboard of work priorities that is shared monthly with Council. The work plan has evolved over the last few years and serves as the CAO's way of monitoring and managing what action items each department has ongoing and/or are upcoming. The CAO uses this tool to 'check in' with Department Heads on a regular basis and to review individual work plans. This tool is also a great resource to account for what has been completed throughout the year in the organization. The work plan items do not include most items considered to be day to day operations for departments.

 - **Action – Invest in/support the professional development of both staff and council to improve service and support.**
 - In 2020 and 2021 Both staff and Council members have had the opportunity to attend professional development sessions through professional municipal government associations and world-renowned leadership institutions in the last few years. This culture will continue in 2022 and beyond to improve service and support.
 - In 2021, the CAO arranged a virtual training session for Council and select staff. Topics included: The Importance of Good Governance, The Legal and Policy Framework and Leading Together.
 - In 2022, the CAO received Council's support for four (4) designated team building/development and wellness days to support staff and improve the work culture.
 - In 2022, all team members were given the opportunity to participate in mental health workshops hosted by the Canadian Mental Health Association.



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- **Action – Ensure both staff and council live by their signed code of conduct.**
- In 2021, Council received updated training on Good Governance.

- **Action – Make decisions as a Municipality as a whole and not as wards.**
- In 2020, Council approved the rebranding of Hastings Highlands Fire Service stations and vehicles that eliminated municipal boundaries.
- In 2020, Council Vacancy Policy was updated to remove reference to Wards.

- **Action – Report regularly on the Community Strategic Plan implementation process**
- First update report – June 17, 2020, by CAO
- Second update report – November 18, 2020, by CAO
- Third update report – June 16, 2021, by CAO
- Fourth update report – January 19, 2022, by CAO
- Fifth update report – September 21, 2022, by CAO