

**TOWN OF ESPANOLA:
OUR GATEWAY TO GROWTH 2023 - 2027**



STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

2024 Progress

A photograph of a large, white, curved sign for the Town of Espanola. The sign features the word "Espanola" in large, blue, 3D block letters. Below it, the text "Welcome • Aanii • Bienvenue" is written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. The sign is mounted on a stone wall. The background shows a building and some greenery.

Espanola
Welcome • Aanii • Bienvenue

Prepared by

JOSEPH BURKE, CAO/CLERK

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Created by the public and for the public, members of our broader community, board and committee members, service club members, along with Council and staff, this plan is helping guide the municipality towards achieving the goals and specific objectives identified throughout the strategic planning process.

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INTRODUCTION

The Town of Espanola's 2023–2027 Strategic Plan was adopted by Council on June 13th, 2023.

Over the past year and a half, the Municipal Staff with support from Council have been working hard at implementing the priorities and initiatives outlined in the plan. This report serves to provide a bi-annual update of progress since adoption. All in all, the Strategic Plan has been instrumental in establishing priorities and principles that inform staff and Council's approach to managing the business of the municipality. While the Town has experienced some significant change with the idling of the Pulp and Paper Mill which resulted in the loss of approximately 450 jobs, the objectives of the Strategic Plan remain relevant and in many ways are even more important today in order to position the municipality for success and economic diversification.



OUR MISSION

The Corporation of the Town of Espanola is committed to effective governance and operations while working toward the creation of a plentiful and varied supply of affordable housing. We will strive to build a place residents are proud of and visitors are attracted to, with the provision of infrastructure that reliably serves existing and new development. We will aspire to advance a prosperous and diversified local economy and a healthy and active quality of life for all ages.

CORPORATE VALUES

Working together:

- We value respect and integrity
- We value affordability
- We are open and accessible
- We value inclusion



OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

This plan is organized into six broad community goals for Espanola:

1. Housing 

A plentiful and varied supply of housing, including low and medium density, ownership and rental market, and rent-geared-to-income.

2. Pride of Place: 

A place residents are proud of and visitors are attracted to.

3. Infrastructure: 

Infrastructure that reliably serves existing and new development.

4. Quality of Life: 

A healthy and active quality of life for all ages.

5. Economy: 

A prosperous and diversified local economy.

6. Town Government: 

Effective Municipal Governance and Operations.



GOAL 1: HOUSING



Like most small northern towns, Espanola's housing stock is predominantly single-family homes built in an earlier generation. Rental housing is scarce. As throughout Ontario, the price of housing and rents have recently escalated rapidly, due to both a lack of supply and to demographic factors. On the positive side, Espanola is seeing an unprecedented interest from housing developers.

Responses to the March 2023 public survey showed "A lack of housing options" to be by far the Town's most serious issue. Respondents favoured the Town offering incentives to developers to build affordable housing units, identifying municipal land for affordable developments, and conducting a housing needs assessment. Responses to the survey's "Top-of-Mind Issue" question emphasized the need not just for more housing, but also for a greater variety of housing types, including senior-oriented options.

Our consultation with community organization and agencies identified a lack of housing, certainly a lack of rental housing, to be a key impediment to attracting employees, professionals, and trades, to recruiting doctors and nurses, and to accommodating the needs of young adults and aging seniors. We heard strong support for a clear Town priority and bold solutions.

The District Social Services Administration Board is responsible for offering housing subsidies and rent-geared-to-income housing. The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board has several hundred on their wait list for subsidized housing in Espanola. The need is glaringly obvious.

Progress Summary

1. Reviewing and updating the Town's Community Improvement Plan (CIP) and investigating the provision of a tax increment grant incentive for all new rental units, accessory units in existing homes, and encouragement for new units to meet accessibility standards.

- Review of CIP is complete and investment of over \$500,000 in incremental tax relief for multi-residential builds has been allocated from 2025-2030 including geared to income, accessible and seniors units. Due to financial constraints, relief for accessory units not recommended in absence of provincial or federal funding.

2. Investigating the potential of existing Town-owned properties for the purpose of facilitating housing development.

- Feasibility of water and sewer servicing has been analyzed and established for most appropriate Town owned property. Grant application submitted to service under Housing Enabling Water Systems Fund. Results pending.
- As part of the housing action plan for the Town, a land utilization strategy is under development.

3. Expanding water & sewer infrastructure to facilitate new housing developments while also allocating water and sewer capacity to facilitate more infill units in existing parts of town.

- Water and Sewer Capacity Assessment Complete. Results are favourable with no major capacity concerns in any assessed areas.

4. Developing a Housing Action Plan which incorporates Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) funding pre-requisites for affordable/geared-to-income housing.

- Complete.



5. Engaging with interest groups and community partners that may have an interest in sponsoring and/or developing more housing, including more Seniors Housing.

- Engagement with 3 potential partners in development of Town owned property as part of grant application mentioned at #2.
- MSDSB multi-residential 10-unit build is underway.

6. Exploring opportunities to acquire property to facilitate housing development or redevelopment, and to proactively pre-plan, pre-zone, pre-subdivide such property for sale on condition that the development will be built as planned.

- Proposals submitted to various land owners and pre-zoning of existing Town properties complete.

7. Reviewing building and planning processes to ensure:

- a. Applicants are made aware as soon as possible of all applicable submission requirements.
 - b. Clear and useful explanatory materials and guidelines are available.
 - c. Regulations applied are, to the extent legally possible, tailored to the complexity of an application.
 - d. Applicants, particularly for new housing, commercial and industrial projects, continue to be given support through the process.
- Created additional staff capacity to educate applicants including two employees completing planning and building related professional development courses in winter 2024.



8. Upgrading the Town's website to provide guidance on the creation of accessory apartments in existing dwellings and other building requirements.

- Drafts have been created and are under review. Posting expected early in 2025.

9. Advocating with the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board and other relevant parties for a substantial allocation of funding for Espanola rent-geared-to-income (RGI) housing.

- Continued advocacy as part of ministerial delegations and applications for funding specific to infrastructure.



GOAL 2: PRIDE OF PLACE



The Town of Espanola began as a company town and was incorporated in 1958. The original downtown's role as the commercial hub has declined as the more modern stores in the south end sprang up. Gas stations and motels on small highway sites could no longer meet modern expectations. Centre Street is now dotted with vacant sites, revolving businesses, and some poorly kept buildings.

The public survey made it clear that the public has had enough of the poor appearance and lack of vitality on Centre Street. Respondents had a lacklustre view of community beautification and property standards enforcement. Centre Street's appearance – both in terms of the public streetscape and private properties – was among the highest "Top-of-Mind" issues.

Our community group consultations confirmed public impatience with the vacant lots, rundown buildings, and lack of community pride they witnessed on Centre Street, and with the Town's perceived lack of action in the past.

Although funds and legislation may limit the Town's practical ability to deal with private properties, the public has expressed support for a proactive approach to the appearance of Centre Street.

The Town's existing Community Improvement Plan does provide for a Tax Increment Grant program for new multi-residential, seniors, or affordable units.



Progress Summary

1. Using its Community Improvement Plan, and potentially tax increment grant incentives, to stimulate beautification and redevelopment on Centre Street.

- Some of this is occurring naturally through word-of-mouth about the CIP. The incremental tax relief grant has been capped given the more than \$500,000 investment from 2025-2030 for multi-residential housing. The 2025 budget is proposing the same \$25,000 budget for the other grants in the program which do contribute to beautification.

2. Taking a more proactive approach to property standards on Centre Street.

- The Property Standards Officer has been keeping an eye out for infractions along Centre Street and appropriate orders have been put in place.
- In the spring and summer, patrol focus is on exterior yards for Garbage, Brush, Damaged Trees, unlicensed vehicles, Machinery, and dilapidated structures. An eye will be kept out on grass/weeds on in the coming weeks/months.
- Increased funds are proposed in the 2025 budget for additional property standards support from the bylaw enforcement officer.

3. Exploring ways to create local outdoor art, sculptures, murals etc.

- EDO & Recreation collaborating on Seniors Grant applications to improve outdoor spaces. CBO received applications for building murals and is heading up the response to those inquiries. One mural has been painted by a private property owner featuring the Town's name.
- Recreation recruiting volunteer artist for update to indoor mural.

4. Investigating the establishment of a multi-purpose Tourist Information Centre on Centre Street, potentially featuring Indigenous and local history/ arts and farmer's market.

- Economic Diversification Strategy discussions opened and ongoing with NOHFC/MND and FedNOR
- Grant Application submitted for strategy development.



GOAL 3: INFRASTRUCTURE



Infrastructure – roads, water and sewer pipes, drainage, public buildings – are the bones of the town. The survey demonstrated this. Aging infrastructure was second to housing among public concerns voiced in the public survey. Road quality and maintenance is considered somewhat unsatisfactory.

The multi-year, multi-million-dollar reconstruction of Centre Street/Hwy 6 has clearly been established in the previous Council term as a continuing priority with this Council, subject to ongoing “Connecting Link” funding from the Province. Cost escalation on this project has required a significant draw on the Town’s reserves.

Similarly, the Town is committed to a two-stage upgrade of its water system. The first stage was completed in 2022 with a total investment of approximately \$6 million. An additional \$8.8 million was slated for 2023 and 2024 and this project has been largely completed with only minor deficiencies remaining.

Pipes in the eastern section of town are 60 -70 years old, originating to the development of the area and long-recognized as in need of updating. Design work for replacement has already been undertaken, but once again the cost is beyond the Town’s means; funding from upper levels of government will be required.

Infrastructure – particularly water and sewer capacity – is essential to accommodate both new development properties and to infill in existing developed areas. A study has been completed to determine how much new development can be serviced before the formidable question of expanding water and sewage treatment facilities will need to be addressed. The Town has substantial remaining capacity.

Progress Summary

The Town will pursue the completion of Highway 6/Centre Street reconstruction through the following initiatives:

1. Phase 3 of Hwy 6 Reconstruction (McDonalds to Second Avenue) – 2023.
 - Complete
2. Phase 4 of Hwy 6 Reconstruction (from Station Road to Tudhope Street) – 2025, subject to MTO approval of a prior year funding submission from the Town.
 - Funding Approved, construction planned for Spring 2025.
3. Phase 5 of Hwy 6 Reconstruction (From Foucault to Kei Will Drive) – 2027, subject to MTO approval of a prior year funding submission from the Town.
 - Engineered designs complete, expecting favourable decision on funding to complete project in 2026.



Town of Espanola

The Town will pursue the expansion and upgrading of water and sewer services through the following initiatives:

1. Undertaking a study to determine water and sewer capacity available to accommodate new development, and subsequently maintaining an accurate sense of available water and sewer capacity.

- Complete.

2. Replacing the trunk watermain on Mead Blvd.

- Complete.

3. Developing a multi-year program and seeking funding to replace water and sewer services in East Espanola (south of Second St.)

- Asset management planning underway which will include 10 year plan by July 1, 2025.
- Currently have multiple pre-designed projects for streets in Town and awaiting funding opportunities.



GOAL 4: QUALITY OF LIFE



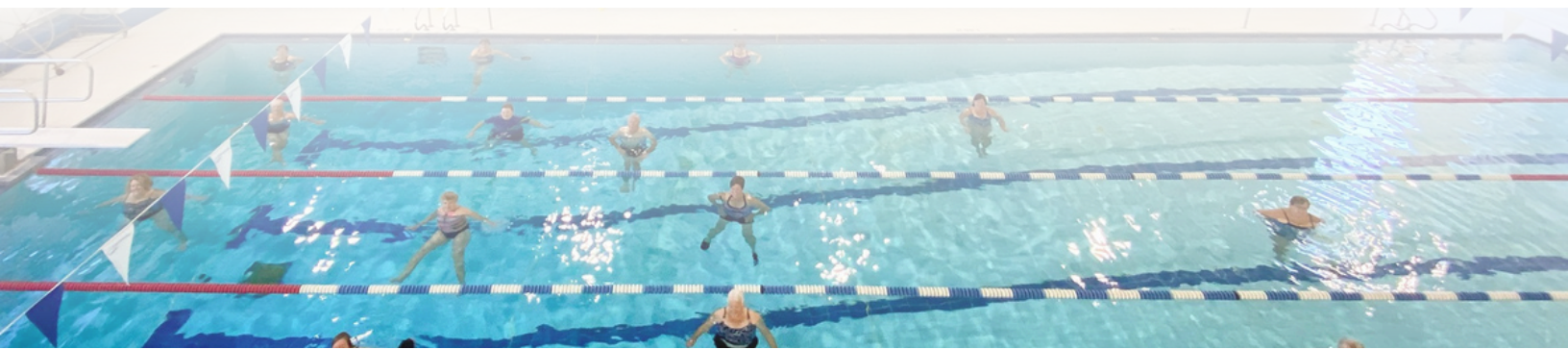
Espanola's quality of life arose consistently in our consultations as the key feature of the town, drawing people from Sudbury and area and drawing both old and young to return to town. Asked what is most appealing about Espanola, respondents cited its proximity to amenities, its parks and trails and open spaces, and its recreation/culture opportunities. The Library and recreation facilities were among the services with which people are most satisfied.

In answer to the "Top-of-Mind-Issues" question, recreation for all ages, and community activities more generally, led the list of public desires.

Our consultation with community organizations consistently highlighted both past successes of recreation and library programming as well as the need for more volunteers and more support for volunteer-driven community activities. The trails, Boogie Mountain, and the Lions skating oval were some of the most often mentioned. Similarly, the Regional Recreation Complex is recognized as a rare jewel for a town of Espanola's size, but underutilized.

In addition to the issue of seniors-suitable housing, our consultations noted the transportation issue for residents – particularly but not only seniors – without cars.

The constellation of health and seniors' services in Espanola is a source of community pride and a pillar of the economy. Support for recruitment in that sector remains strong.



The Town will pursue its support for volunteers generating community events and activities through the following initiatives:

1. Tasking the Recreation and Culture Committee to revisit all previous recreation-related plans and studies and to prioritize potential initiatives arising from them.

- Recreation and Culture Committee revitalized and has continued meetings through Q2, Q3 and Q4 of 2024. Committee assisted with number of community events and plans are in place to have the Committee begin working on establishing the process for the development of a new Recreation Master Plan in 2025.

2. Organizing a forum for dialogue with and among volunteer organizations to share best practices and ideas for promoting more volunteerism.

- Official forum not created, but dialogue with volunteer organizations is consistent both at the Department and CAO/Clerk level.
- Reinstatement of facility user group bi-annual meetings planned.
- Planning for volunteering workshops underway to streamline training for Town volunteers and service groups.



3. Continuing to find ways to support volunteer groups and local organizations developing local recreation facilities, community activities, and green spaces (e.g., Black Creek Trail, the Snowmobile Trail, Boogie Mountain, walking and bicycle trails, and the Lion's skating oval).

- Budgeted for a winterized washroom at Black Creek trail for winter 2023, 2024, 2025.
- Hosted AGM meetings at ERRC for all Non-for-profit organizations free of charge.
- Continued assistance to Lions club with outdoor rink and ice oval through expertise, equipment, and maintenance.
- Assisted Lions with rental of ATV for snow removal purposes in 2024.
- Continued lending of recreation equipment to non-for-profits who require it including Legion and Boogie Mountain.
- Recreation Team has taken over installation of pickle ball nets at tennis courts to assist the Pickle Ball Association. Lines will be taped on arena floor to support the indoor pickleball use during inclement weather.
- Recreation Team hosted 3 swims to raise food for Food Bank during Q4 2023-Q2 2024 and hosted 5 free swims for food donations over the Q4 holiday season collecting hundreds of items for the Food Bank. Council also donated \$1,500 to the Food Bank in Q2.
- Partnership with Noojmowin Teg Health Centre to host free black light skating.



4. Seeking opportunities to increase the year-round use of the Espanola Regional Recreation Complex.

- New Membership structure Q1 of 2024 has driven membership numbers up by over 30% compared to Q1 of 2023. We are observing higher daily pool usage and increased gym usage as a result.
- Lowering the Fitness Centre user age limit from 12 to 9 has resulted in more families utilizing the Centre.
- Q4 2024 saw the second annual “Rockin Round the Xmas Oval”. This event was well attended with 500+ participants.
- Young at Heart fitness classes started Q4 2023 and continue through Q4 2024. This type of fitness class has led to a new demographic of gym users.
- Hiring of personal trainers allows the Department to offer fitness classes, personal training, and intro to gym. These services have not been offered within the last 5-7 years.
- Spin Classes started in Q2 of 2024 and continue.
- Increased pool hours due to co-op placement during Q2 helped boost pool attendance.
- Extended ice season to April 30th in 2024 allowed us to host our 2nd annual Espanola 3 on 3 event, Paper Kings prospects camp, extended seasons for lumbago and figure skating, and numerous other rentals.
- Female changeroom operational in Q4 of 2023 has allowed us to become more accessible for female athletes and permanent renovations underway with successful grant funds in this regard.
- Utilization of squash court for intro to pickleball and volleyball has been well attended.
- Continual training of aquatics staff has allowed us to offer more swimming lessons Q4 2023- Q2 2024.
- Fulltime Pool Operator position filled in Q3.
- ParticipAction initiative to encourage active lifestyles was well received in Q3.

5. Finding ways to support volunteer groups and local organizations highlighting Espanola's history and heritage, through such means as walking tours, heritage plaques, school programming, and exhibition spaces.

- ERRC is now housing and monitoring the last bale produced by Domtar Espanola.
- Minor revamp of complex display cases to showcase those historical items inside.
- EDO assisted EPL in the funding application to hire an Archive Intern who has been hired and is working directly on organizing and documenting historical items and archives at the Library.
- 25 Year Complex Facility Anniversary celebration and Wall of Fame Celebration hosted in Q4 recognizing significant community leaders including volunteers.



The Town will pursue its priority to improve access to health and seniors' services through the following initiatives:

1. Continuing to support the recruitment program for doctors and nurses.

- Council approved the annual donation of \$20,000 to the Hospital for physician recruitment in 2024.

2. Continuing to support the implementation of the Community Safety and Well-being Plan and improved communication of the social services and seniors' services available within Espanola and area.

- Major implementation of the plan continues in partnership with the Hospital and Community of Care Planning Network.
- Highlights include, the development and adoption of a new Age-Friendly Community Plan, active planning ongoing in implementation of regional Ontario Health Team, collaboration on housing related grant applications, strong leadership by the MSDSB on affordable housing front including the building of a 10-unit residential complex in Espanola, new regional medical care van service rolling out July 2024, and re-alignment of governance structure to align with Ontario Health and Community of Care Planning Network tables. In addition, on the community safety side, traffic speed radar signs have been installed or are being installed in various locations in the region and the Town now has surveillance at exit and entrance points to Town to assist the OPP in the event of an accident or relevant investigations.

3. Consulting with relevant parties concerning the Care Van service.

- Attendance of staff at Seniors Clubs meetings to discuss local service and new regional service.
- Successful grant application for purchase of new regional care van and service rolled out in July 2024.

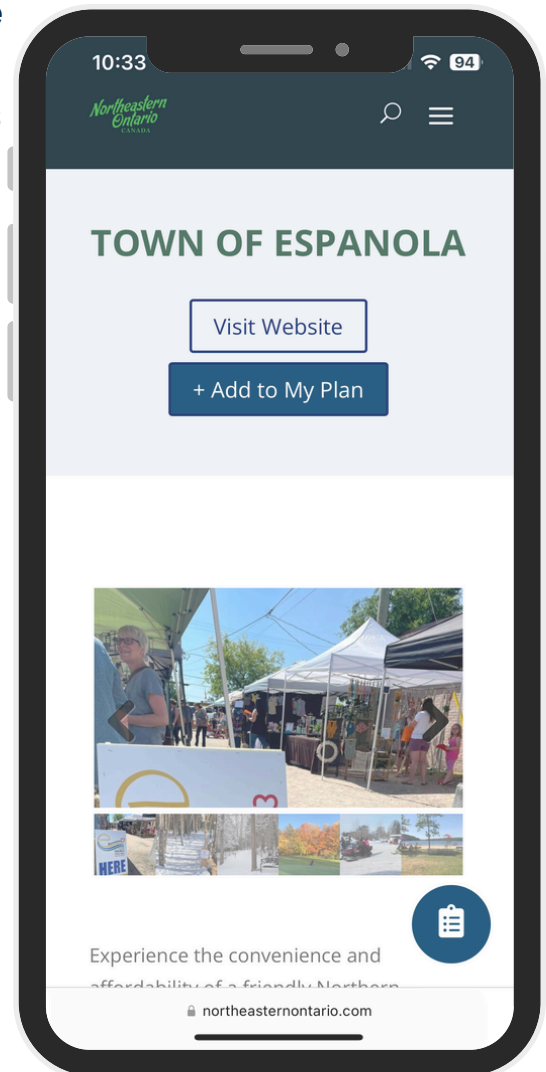
GOAL 5: ECONOMY



The economy of Espanola is heavily reliant on the pulp and paper operations as well as its hospital, schools, and retail sector. As a result, residents are well aware of a need to diversify the local economy.

The most obvious approach, as noted both by survey respondents and local organizations, would be to aggressively extract tourism dollars from the high volume of Manitoulin-bound traffic and from the Sudbury area. A wide variety of potential events and other attractions were proposed.

In addition, the need to market Espanola as a desirable place to live, work and to start a business was identified.



Progress Summary

1. Exploring ways to support and help to publicize community-driven, inclusive events that draw visitors from the broader region and the traffic to/from Manitoulin.

- Rewrote Social Media Policy to allow for sharing of community events and programs on Town accounts.
- The Downtown Summer Markets were hosted in a more visible location to assist with organic publicity (visible from Hwy 6) to attract through traffic headed to/from the island.

2. Investigating ways to increase the number of EV charging stations in Espanola.

- The EDO instead encourages local businesses to consider EV charger access as a perk to offer for their customers. One new charger was installed at a private business in Q4 of 2023.
- Options for municipally led implementation are not financially suitable at this time pending external funding.



3. Approaching various agencies to obtain funding for an aggressive campaign to market Espanola as a desirable location for trades, professions, businesses and entrepreneurs.

- 2023 Job Fair & Career Expo in May; Domtar Employee Job Fair held in Fall 2023 to assist anyone in need with a career/job transition.
- 2024 Youth Career Fair was hosted in early May 2024 and presented in collaboration with the Domtar Action Center. The Fair came weeks before the last round of mill layoffs. We continue to see a need for tradespeople in the area and are actively promoting Espanola as a great work-life balance home. Planning for 2025 Fair started in Q4 of 2024.



4. Working with educational institutions, local industries, and other partners to attract the trades and skilled labour to Espanola.

- Actively promoted Cambrian College//Employment Options Try A Trade & other programs in 2023.
- Continuing work with Employment Options//Cambrian College to promote their offerings and building the local workforce capacity with reskilling opportunities.

5. Exploring opportunities to address accommodation service gaps.

- 2023: Commenced discussions with possible new service providers; additional/renovated accessible public washrooms subject to available funding
- 2024 to date: The newly finalized and approved Age-Friendly Community Action Plan has created a number of implementation items that will directly address some of the service gaps in the Espanola community. Implementation items will be included in the annual budget going forward.



GOAL 6: EFFECTIVE MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS



Espanola's financial position provides a solid basis for pursuing Council and community priorities. Its debt load is well below the maximum permitted by the Province and its reserves remain healthy. A review of its residential tax rates and tax burden compared to other northeastern Ontario towns shows that Espanola taxes are moderate, certainly compared to towns within Greater Sudbury. Likewise, median household incomes and median population age are in that comparative middle-of-the-road area.

Turnover on staff has been significant. Leadership positions including CAO/ Treasurer, Chief Building Official, and head of Recreation have all experienced turnover recently.

The Town recognizes its obligation to refurbish the Public Works building to meet the standards in the Access for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. The garage portion of the building also requires attention due to the number and size of service vehicles.

Respondents to the public survey indicated concern that the Town was not doing what it could to mitigate the energy use and environmental impact of its facilities and operations. The Town expects to be able to take advantage of new federal grant programs to combat climate change as well as to achieve operating cost savings.



Progress Summary

The Town will pursue its priority on the retention and productivity of staff through the following initiatives:

1. Supporting staff training and development activities.

- A significant emphasis is always put on training. Some general highlights from Admin/EcDev/Building include:
 - Management team Mental Health First Aid Training Completed in Q1 of 2024.
 - Management and select staff completed Information and Privacy Management Course (2024).
 - Internal Asset Management training for Management Team (2024).
 - Deputy Clerk completed AMCTO Primer on Planning Program (2024).
 - Front Receptionist completed Introduction to Permit Administration through the OBOA (2024).
 - Tax Clerk completed Municipal Tax Administration Certificate through Seneca College (2023).
 - Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Front Receptionist completed Privacy and Information Management Course through University of Guelph (2023).
 - Economic Development Officer completed the EDAC Community Accelerator Course.
 - Building Services staff completed Introduction to Cloud Permitting through CMHC, OBOA Lighting Power and Detection Course, OAPSO Training Part 2 for Property Standards Officer, OBOA Plumbing All Building Course, OBOA Annual Meeting & Training Session, and multiple webinars and day seminars regarding the updates to the Ontario Building Code 2024 throughout the last half of the year.

- Highlights from the Community and Recreation area include:
 - Joint Health and Safety Certification - 2 employees
 - Additional certification of Facility Attendants in Ice Making and Ice-Plant operations.
 - Lifesaving Society Emergency and Standard First Aid certifications - 14 employees
 - Manager of Community and Recreation completed ORFA Advanced Recreation Management Program.
 - ORFA Basic Refrigeration Certification - 1 employee
 - ORFA Legal Awareness 1 - 1 employee
 - Canadian Certified Playground Inspector Certificate - 1 employee

- The breadth of Firefighter training is significant with all new recruits having to complete the Firefighter I training course. In addition, officers have recently completed additional training in Fire Code, Instructor and Inspection training modules, have attended the regional training centres for instruction courses, and four of our officers also attend the Northeastern Fire Education Conference (annually).

- Similarly, the breadth of training for the Public Works Department is extensive. Below are some highlights of training completed in 2024:
 - Certified Road Supervisor - 1 employee
 - First Aid - 10 employees
 - Aerial Work Platform (Genie) - 3 employees
 - Working from Heights - 7 employees
 - Propane Safety - 4 employees
 - Traffic Control/Book 7 Training - 6 employees
 - Wheel Loader Operation Training - 6 employees
 - Loader-Mounted Snowblower training by manufacturer - 6 employees.
 - Mental Health and Stress Management - all employees

- Water Related Training:
 - Operator Response Skills & Modern Challenges – 4 employees
 - Mandatory Renewal Course – 4 employees
 - Cross Connection Control – 6 employees
 - Trenching and Excavating – 6 employees
 - Asbestos Abatement – 8 employees
 - Entry Level Course – 2 employees
 - Tapping Water Mains – 6 employees
 - Buried Utility Locating – 8 employees
- Confined Space Training – 11 employees
- Guelph Road School;
 - T.J. Mahoney Construction Section – 2 employees
 - Report Writing & Presentation Skills – 1 employee
 - Effective Management – 1 employee
 - Other Licensing Milestones:
 - DZ licensing – 2 employees
- Other areas where PW employees require licensing/training include #10 Truck Crane – all employees, Water Distribution & Wastewater Collection Licenses – select employees, Safe Chainsaw operation – all employees, Backhoe, grader, trackless, plow truck training – all employees.

2. Enhancing corporate events, including thank-you events, in collaboration with volunteer groups and community event organizers.

- Hosted 25th Anniversary event for Complex and Wall of Fame with well over 100 in attendance in October.
- Standard volunteer appreciation events hosted, reviewing suite of events in 2024 to consider changes in 2025 if any.

3. Ensuring sufficient cross-training so that some aspects of each Town position can be performed by one or more other positions.

- Since the implementation of the condensed work week,, administrative staff have built additional capacity to cover the front reception. 4 staff members are now trained to cover front reception duties in the absence of the front receptionist. In addition, an additional staff member has been trained for payroll.

4. Considering hours of work options.

- Complete - new condensed work week policy implemented.

The Town will pursue its priority on planning for future facility needs through the following initiatives:

1. Designing (2023) the upgrades to the Public Works office to meet accessibility standards and constructing (2024) the upgrades.

- This project was deemed complete within budget as of October 2024.

2. Designing (2026) the upgrade of the Public Works garage to expand capacity and constructing (2027) the upgrade.

- Design work to get underway in 2025.

3. Seeking opportunities, including grants and returns on investments, to reduce the net energy use and environmental impact of municipal buildings and operations.

- Internal grant committee meeting regularly with EDO and members bringing future funding opportunities to the team for discussion. Pathway to net-zero project well underway with report on facility energy efficiencies expected by Q3.
- Major grant application submitted for Complex facility which could result in major energy savings (GICB).

4. Inviting the Library Board to investigate and report on future options to address the lack of adequate Library space.

- Discussions expected in 2025/2026.

5. Investigating and reporting on future options to address the lack of adequate space for the Town administration.

- Due to budgetary pressures and competing priorities, this initiative is on hold.

MOVING OUR STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN FORWARD:

Progress Summary

- Post this Plan and our annual progress reports on the Town's website.
 - Complete
- Provide copies of the Strategic Action Plan to community organizations in the Town, other neighbouring municipalities and agencies, and our employees.
 - Complete
- Use this plan to promote our path forward to community organizations and other governments. Knowing what we're trying to achieve, can we team up and get further faster together?
 - Complete and ongoing
- Staff will refer to this Plan when making relevant recommendations to Council.
 - Practice implemented and ongoing
- Council will refer to the Plan when we make individual decisions throughout the term. Is it helping us to get where we said we wanted to get?
 - Practice implemented and ongoing
- Every annual budget will itemize how it furthers the priorities of this Plan.
 - Practice implemented and ongoing
- The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) will report to Council each year on progress achieved toward the priorities, noting any new opportunities or barriers relevant to our priorities.
 - Bi-annual reports implemented and ongoing

- Council will convene a public meeting each year to review the action plan, to report on progress, and to explore partnerships for the future.
 - This has not taken place, intention to do so in 2025.
- At the end of the 2026 term of office, Council will encourage the incoming Council to review the Plan to identify and address the local challenges and opportunities at that time.

