



Township of Scugog Staff Report

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Report Number: CAO-2021-005

Prepared by: Lisa Fitton, Executive Assistant to the Mayor & CAO

Department: CAO

Report To: Council

Date: June 28, 2021

Reference: CAO-2020-003, Strategic Plan Update June 2020; CAO-2019-003, Strategic Plan Session Overview and Draft Strategy, March 18, 2019

Report Title: **Strategic Plan Update, June 2021**

Recommendations:

1. **That** Report CAO-2021-005, Strategic Plan Update, June 2021, be received; and
 2. **That** the updated list of accomplishments (Appendix A) be circulated to all Township staff and copy be added to the Township website Scugog.ca/strategicplan for public information.
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1. Background:

In March 2019, Council approved the Township of Scugog Strategic Plan which was released to the public in spring, 2019. The final strategy included updates to the Township Vision, Mission and Values as well as seven Strategic Directions. Under those seven strategic directions, was a comprehensive list of projects and initiatives identified through the work of the Speak Up Scugog Survey, Scugog Employee feedback and Council Strategic Planning

Sessions. In June 2020, an update report on the 2019 status of the Strategic plan projects and initiatives was presented to Council. This report will provide Council an update on the progress of major projects and initiatives up to May 31, 2021.

2. Discussion:

Our Strategic Plan is comprised of seven Strategic Directions: Roads & Other Infrastructure, Financial Sustainability, Economic Development, Municipal Services, Natural Environment, Community Engagement and Complete Community. This plan provides a guiding document that outlines the planned major projects, initiatives and advocacy work for the Township of Scugog.

Major projects and initiatives are outlined in the Strategic Plan tracking document (Attachment 1) which is reviewed and updated by departments providing achievements accomplished under each directive. Several of the projects under each of the strategic directions provide start and end details and will note the percentage completed to date. Other initiatives referenced as ongoing, including policy, process and financial reviews, represent a continuing focus on improving the foundational aspects of the municipality and relationships, and do not end at a specific date. In addition, items highlighted yellow indicate the project/initiative is dependent on funding or approvals by other levels of governments or groups. A column has also been added to indicate if the item is achievable in this term of Council with a response of yes, no or potentially. The potentially will be dependent on other factors such as success of grant submission, approvals from external sources and will also be explained in the comments area.

These major projects / initiatives are in addition to the regular operations of the municipality along with other projects undertaken by each area. The COVID-19 pandemic has and continues to affect the business of the Township and there have been projects that are delayed or deferred. While our facilities are closed to public access, staff continue to work and deliver services to our residents

In addition, many of the services provide by Scugog are impacted by the economy, the active housing market, and provincial regulations or other drivers. Our capital program has increased significantly due to an increased focus on maintaining our assets through strategic investments in our roads, facilities and equipment to ensure they are safe and available for use over the long term.

The increased workloads experienced in the pandemic environment and continuing demands anticipated in the future puts additional pressure on staff capacity and the ability to focus on strategic priorities. Despite this, it is important to note that the strategic priorities of the Township are continuing to move forward. Overall, there are close to 80 varying major

projects and initiatives associated with the Strategic Plan. Out of these strategic projects, work plans and associated tasks are derived for staff.

2.1 Status Overview of the Strategic Directions and Major Projects / Initiatives



Strategic Direction #1 Roads & Municipal Infrastructure / Leverage and Improve Transportation, Infrastructure and Facilities

- Total number of major projects identified – 17
- Projects completed in 2020 – 5; scheduled for completion in 2021 – 4
- Ongoing projects – 3
- 71% of the projects / initiatives scheduled to be complete (include ongoing) by 2021
- Remaining have timelines assigned and/or are being reviewed



Strategic Direction #2 Financial Sustainability / Improve Financial Sustainability through Innovative Funding and Delivery of Services

- Total number of major projects / initiatives identified – 12
- Projects completed in 2020 – 3
- Ongoing projects – 4
- In progress projects / initiatives - 4



Strategic Direction #3 Economic Development & Tourism / Create, Grow and Attract Employment Opportunities

- Total number of major projects / initiatives identified – 14
- Projects / Initiatives completed in 2020 – 2
- Ongoing projects / initiatives – 2
- In progress projects / initiatives – 10



Strategic Direction #4 Municipal Services / Provide Services that are Efficient and Effective

- Total number of major projects / initiative identified – 11
- Projects / initiatives completed in 2020 – 2
- Ongoing projects / initiatives – 4
- In progress projects / initiatives – 5



Strategic Direction #5 Natural Environment / Protect and Enhance our Natural Environment

- Total number of major projects / initiatives identified – 8
- Projects / initiatives completed in 2020 – 1
- Ongoing projects / initiatives – 4
- In progress projects / initiatives – 3



Strategic Direction #6 Community Engagement / Encourage the Involvement of all Scugog Residents in Sustaining and Enhancing the Quality of Life in our Community

- Total number of major projects / initiatives identified – 7

- Projects / initiatives completed in 2020 – 1
- Ongoing projects / initiatives – 5



Strategic Direction #7 Complete Community / Enhance our Communities to be Inclusive, Healthy, Safe and Connected

- Total number of major projects / initiatives identified – 12
- Projects / initiatives completed in 2020 – 1
- Ongoing projects / initiatives – 8
- In progress projects / initiatives – 3

2.2 Accomplishments & Efficiencies

Although Township business has continued throughout the pandemic, it is not business as normal under the stress of a COVID-19 environment. Council and Staff continue to adapt to the new work environments, protocols and meeting virtually. While staff are proud to offer all municipal services, there are challenges operating in a pandemic environment.

The continual changing of provincial guidelines focused on containing the spread of the virus has required staff to drop everything a number of times to respond immediately to the new parameters. Communication to the public has taken a new focus as we help the public maneuver the constantly changing requirements and program impacts. In addition, Scugog offered the SCRC as a vaccination clinic to help residents of north Durham access vaccination opportunities.

There is increasing pressure on staff capacity considering this new way of working combined with the increasing development in our community, and increasing activity levels in many other areas experienced over this last 1½ years.

In addition to externally driven pressures, the senior leadership experienced significant turn over with changes in the CAO, Director of Finance, Director of Corporate Services and a new Director of Community Services.

In February 2021, the Community Services department was restructured and divided into two departments. The two departments formed are Public Works and Infrastructure Services and Community Services. Public Works and Infrastructure Services is responsible for Public Works, Infrastructure Asset Management, Engineering, Major Capital Projects and Transportation to allow a focus on asset management over the long term; and Community Services is responsible for Parks, Recreation, Culture, Events and Corporate Communications to promote a focus on front facing customer service; and the resulting impacts will allow Corporate Services to focus on modernizing technology within the Township, in addition to Clerk responsibilities. This restructuring and departmental staff changes have been completed. As the Township grows, the structure of the organization must continually evolve to maintain services, meet the demands of our growing community, and deliver on the strategic priorities. This new structure will assist in accomplishing those goals.

In 2020 and the first part of 2021, there have been some significant accomplishments achieved in addition to successfully delivering services in the COVID environment, and dealing with increasing activity levels from development and the economy.

The Township website was refreshed, as well in 2020 the My.scugog.ca engagement site launched adding a platform for communication regarding projects and initiatives. Technology continues to play a major role in allowing municipal business to continue with several staff working from home. Our Council, Committee and all other meetings are now held virtually, this includes meetings with local residents and area businesses. An online platform for credit card payments has been made available for a variety of permits and payments providing members of the public an option to use the third party to process payments. Access to online services is becoming a necessity and some members of the community may not have ready access to these services. The Scugog Memorial Public Library will be assisting with this issue. A WiFi Hotspot Lending Pilot Project has been funded by the Library Board Reserves and will launch in July 2021. Providing a device and hotspot that can be borrowed from the Library.

Internal processes continue to benefit from adapting to using technology available. The budget presentations were recorded and presented through social media with public questions being encouraged and addressed before, during and after the event.

Roads and infrastructure projects remain a key priority while there have been challenges related to COVID protocols for our contractors as well as price increases. Works completed include: Marsh Hill Road rehabilitation south end of Epsom to Scugog Line 9 and Byron Street, Portview Road rehabilitation, Pine Point Road rural rehabilitation, Scugog Line 4 rural rehabilitation, Russel Road returned to hard surfacing. Additionally, culvert replacement and relining on Townline Road, McLaughlin Road and Edgerton. Along with construction, the Township Wide Speed Limit Review Study was completed and several new policies established including the new Adopt-a-Park Policy, Special Events Policy and an Anti-Idling By-law.

The Roads and Municipal Infrastructure continue to be a high priority along with our waterfront and economic development / tourism areas. The Port Perry Waterfront Action Plan has been completed providing the Township with a plan with short, medium and long terms projects that will enhance our waterfront area as an important aspect of our tourism, culture, recreation and economic development. Also, a draft Community Improvement Plan for the Port Perry Downtown area has been developed and staff will be initiating the stakeholder consultation phase very soon. Development Services has also assisted in establishing the Open Streets Task Force and a recommended concept is being prepared. Amendments related to cannabis have been drafted for the Official Plan and Zoning By-law a Public Open House was held earlier in June 2021.

Efficiencies continue to be a focus

- New radio system for Public Works – better quality, coverage throughout Township and connected to EMS system for emergencies.
- Road Maintenance Modernization Review was undertaken.

- Safe drop lock box was put in place which is used by all departments for payments and private information.
- Tax statements are now emailed rather than sending them in the mail to save postage and reduce foot traffic in the office.
- Work is continuing for sending A/P invoices by email with authorization to pay or have them scanned and approved then forwarded. Not all departments have the technology needed to electronically code and sign the scanned copy.
- Efforts at updating the website will allow residents to obtain and pay for marriage licenses and many other services electronically rather than in person.

3. Financial Implications:

Efficiencies gained in all departments resulted in positive financial streamlining and fiscal management. Township projects and initiatives include an efficiency analysis as well as ongoing research for funding opportunities and partnerships. Improvements have also been made in the administration and monitoring of capital projects. Additional identified savings have been made since 2016 through the closure of capital projects resulting in an additional \$465,000 being returned to the reserves in 2021.

4. Communication Considerations:

This report will be shared in a news release and on social media to communicate to the public an update on the progress of the Strategic Plan. This report will be made available on [Scugog.ca/strategicplan](https://scugog.ca/strategicplan).

5. Conclusion:

Though delays and deferrals related to COVID-19 continue, solid progress has been made in many areas of the Strategic Plan. In total, 93% of the major projects / initiatives have been completed, are ongoing or are underway. With Council's strong commitment to addressing the roads and infrastructure needs, the Township is positioned to address over 80 percent of the identified major projects / initiatives by 2022 in this area. The success and advancement of the strategic plan is a direct result of the commitment and endorsement from Council as well as hard work and dedication of all Township staff.

The challenges of dealing with the impacts of COVID-19 and the changing nature of the pandemic with health protocols and varying steps/stages are anticipated to continue for some time. Excellent progress has been made to date on the projects / initiatives considering these challenges along with capacity issues. Staff plan to review the Strategic Plan projects / initiatives over the coming months to determine if updates / changes are required. An update on this review will be provided to Council later in the year.

Staff stepped up in the face of the COVID-19 emergency and have worked to maintain a full suite of services to the community. Adaptations were made for some to work from home or work a combination of home and office. Staff and Council both rose to the

challenge of learning new technology and embraced virtual solutions to keep the business of the Township moving forward.

Currently, the Township is still operating in a state of emergency. Changes have been made to our facilities in the way of new policies, protocols and procedures. We look forward to a staged reopening of the province. Staff will continue to work to successfully deliver and implement the Strategic Plan.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Reviewed By:

Lisa Fitton
Executive Assistant to the Mayor & CAO

Ken Nix
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Strategic Planning Tracking May 2021