

STRATEGIC PLAN

January 2021 - December 2023



Message from the Mayor

Early in 2020, City Council began the process of updating our Community Strategic Plan. What started out as just another ordinary year quickly turned into a year like no other. As we tackled a worldwide pandemic several opportunities were made clear to us.

Through our community engagement with residents, stakeholders and staff some themes emerged as to what our residents see as priorities in our City. In November 2020, our colleagues at Fanshawe Corporate Training Solutions presented City Council with the strategic priorities that emerged through our survey.

I'm pleased to say that we as a Council have already begun working on some of the top priorities. These include new enhanced public transit which will launch in early 2021, security camera installations in downtown and increased safety patrol in the area. The provincial government has committed \$1 million to open a 24/7 year-round homeless shelter for our most vulnerable citizens. In 2021, we will be investing more money into our capital projects program than we have in the last ten years. Thanks to funding from the upper levels of government, this is being achieved without impacting the municipal tax base.

I look forward to implementing these priorities during the remainder of our Council term.

Mayor Joe Preston



Strategic Priorities, Goals and Commitments



Compassionate Community

GOAL

Support and engage vulnerable people to enhance the quality of life for all citizens

Commitment #1

Open a 24/7 shelter in a single location for the most vulnerable in need by September 2021

Commitment #2

Increase the number of affordable housing units by 150 by December 2023

Commitment #3

Conduct a strategic analysis of senior services and programming opportunities for enhancement purposes by September 2021

Commitment #4

Implement Street Outreach Program to support vulnerable people by January 2022

Commitment #5

Create a Youth Engagement Plan to align youth services and programming by June 2022



Vibrant Community

GOAL

Enhance opportunities for connection and development to promote growth for people and businesses in the City

Commitment #1

Develop one new community event each year totalling three events by December 2023 in alignment with the City's health and safety plan

Commitment #2

Implement downtown enhancement projects such as community improvement program, safety patrol program and camera installation by June 2021

Commitment #3

Merge the City of St. Thomas and the County of Elgin economic development entities to enrich services and resources by January 2022

Commitment #4

Provide fully serviced (e.g. water, sewer and storm sewer), market ready industrial lands for new development at Windon Farm by June 2022

Commitment #5

Establish a formal committee by June 2021 with representation from local school boards and post-secondary institutions that meets twice per year to address education and skilled training needs in the community



Thriving Community

GOAL

Invest in the development of planned assets to advance access for people in the community

Commitment #1

Invest \$3 million dollars from Capital Tax Funds to improve roads, bridges, parks and sidewalks by December 2023

Commitment #2

Expand the city trail system by 3 kilometres by December 2023

Commitment #3

Build a new animal shelter by December 2023 supported by money raised through capital fundraising efforts by the community stakeholder group

Commitment #4

Create a physical concept plan and determine the location for a new community and aquatic centre in order to be prepared for future funding opportunities by December 2021

Commitment #5

Implement 75% of the Transit Master Plan to increase the transit experience, provide extended hours of service and greater connectivity by December 2023



GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Environmentally Responsible Community | Lead from a sustainable perspective.



Often the completion of a Strategic Plan signals the opportunity to move onto other projects and the actual implementation of the plan can take a back seat. As a result of the dedication and thoughtful input by many, and the desire to see St. Thomas flourish in a meaningful way, this will definitely not be the case with this very exciting road map that has come together.

Over the next three years the vision of City Council, staff, stakeholder groups, and the public at large will be seen as elements of the plan unfold.

A very special thank you to the Corporate Training Solutions Team at Fanshawe College as they quarterbacked the work that led to the development of this Strategic Plan.

This Strategic Plan is a call to action.... let's go!

Wendell Graves,
City Manager

