



SMITHS FALLS
RISE AT THE FALLS
111

Strategic Plan 2019-2022





Smiths Falls Town Council

2018 - 2022

Backrow: Chris McGuire, Jay Brennan, Peter McKenna

Front : Wendy Alford, Mayor Shawn Pankow, Lorraine Allen, Niki Dwyer



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A Message from your Mayor and Council

On behalf of Council, I am very pleased to present the Town of Smiths Falls' new Strategic Plan (2019-2022), a document that will guide Council and staff in decision making over the next four years.

It's an exciting time for the Town of Smiths Falls, with many positive changes having taken place over the past few years, and even more on the horizon. With so much opportunity it's even more important to maintain a clear direction for the Town. In developing this plan, Council and staff first considered what's coming in the near future, and what's needed to help the community grow, thrive and operate as a healthy and successful municipality. Our hope is that this plan will ensure municipal resources are strategically directed, maximizing the benefit of taxpayer dollars.

Strategic Plan development is always an interesting experience for Council; it's through this process that we are able to hear firsthand from residents and taxpayers about what priorities they see for Smiths Falls.

Throughout this process there have been numerous opportunities for the public to provide feedback to Council, by attending a public meeting or by utilizing the community engagement tool, [SpeakupSmithsFalls](#). New to the Town in 2019, this online tool was put to the perfect use through the strategic plan process, providing yet another avenue for the public to have their say about the Town's direction.

It's always exciting to see a common vision emerge. Now that we have a plan in place, myself, Council and staff are looking forward to implementing its vision in the Town over the next four years. It now becomes our job to ensure the priorities identified through the consultation process and in this document are completed, leading us all to a better and brighter future in Smiths Falls.

I would like to extend a big thank you to all who participated in this process. Without your contribution this important document would not now exist, and the future of Smiths Falls would not reflect the collective vision of the community. Thank you for doing your part to shape our community in the coming years.

Mayor Shawn Pankow
Town of Smiths Falls



Developing Our Strategic Plan

In January 2019, Council and senior staff held a strategy session to update the existing Strategic Plan, which expired at the end of 2018. Council and staff identified six draft strategic priorities, along with objectives and initiatives intended to focus on the next four years.

With the draft strategic priorities in hand, the next step was to generate valuable feedback from the community. Public feedback assists Council and staff in ensuring the strategic goals and direction for the Town over the next four years is representative of the public interest.

Towards that end, public engagement efforts were launched in January to invite feedback from residents, taxpayers and businesses in Smiths Falls. The Town's new community engagement tool, SpeakupSmithFalls was instrumental in generating feedback through online consultation.

In addition, in-person consultation was sought at a public meeting and open house at the Smiths Falls Memorial Community Centre on March 7, where approximately 100 people were in attendance. Those in attendance received an overview of the draft plan and participated in a question and answer period, followed by an Open House format. Written comments were also received at the meeting.

Feedback and comments were catalogued and circulated to Council at a Committee of the Whole meeting on March 25.

Finally, a strategy session facilitated by Erik Lockhart, a facilitator from Queen's University, was held in early April that included 27 staff members from a cross-section of municipal departments in Smiths Falls. The primary purpose of the strategy session was to identify the actions that would further the initiatives developed in January, while considering additional initiatives that would assist the realization of each of the strategic priorities.

The final step in this process was the refinement of these action items and initiatives to create an action plan complete with targeted completion dates and performance measures. The final

draft Strategic Plan identifies more than 40 strategic initiatives targeted for completion by the end of 2022.

A common theme emerged throughout this process, that of placemaking and the ways in which the Town could prioritize the support for this concept in Smiths Falls. Placemaking is an important element for any community.

"Placemaking is a collaborative process that engages people in creating and sustaining public destinations at the heart of their community: the places where we recreate, shop, eat, gather, interact and most of all build the social and emotional ties that hold our community together. Project for Public Spaces (based in New York) founded the placemaking movement based on four principles of placemaking – activities and uses; access and linkages; comfort and image; and sociability."



Performance Measures

A Strategic Plan has little value without regular measurement of outcomes to generate data on the effectiveness of an initiative and whether or not it's been successfully completed. The Town of Smiths Falls' Council and staff have considered how best to measure the successful implementation of initiatives in order to reach prescribed goals.

Performance measurement tools identified by staff to measure the success of the initiatives included in the plan are:

- Updates to Council to advise on successful completion of reports, plans, and studies described in the plan.
- Prescribed numeric targets for various projects.
- The launch or completion of targeted capital and infrastructure improvements.
- The launch or completion of identified program(s).

Beyond ensuring the initiatives described in the plan are successfully completed, Council and staff are also responsible for monitoring activities to ensure the overarching intent of the plan is kept at the forefront of decision making over the next four years. As the Town progresses through the initiatives described in the plan, it's important to ensure the Town's focus is consistently moving the community in the right direction.

To ensure the priorities, goals, and initiatives are kept on track with the spirit of the plan, Council and staff will monitor progress through the following:

- Undertake an annual review of the plan to ensure timelines are being met.
- Undertake bi-annual monitoring review to measure success and take corrective action should an initiative stray from the original intent and/or timeline for completion.
- Communicate progress of the plan to the public through newsletters and the website.
- Integrate Strategic Priorities into the corporate performance management program.



Strategy at a Glance

Vision

Smiths Falls is a caring community that provides citizens with a superior quality of life through effective and innovative services. We will achieve this through the following:

1. Building a diverse economy with a strong business sector;
2. Improving our financial position;
3. Creating a healthy community with "Quality of Life" services for residents;
4. Investing in our infrastructure to keep pace with needs;
5. Redeveloping our waterfront and downtown;
6. Preserving and enhancing our heritage buildings and services;
7. Offering a viable commuter transportation service to the City of Ottawa;
8. Building stronger and enhanced relationships with our municipal neighbours;
9. Attracting new manufacturers and service industries and a fully developed industrial park; and,
10. Growth in population.

Guiding Principles

Integrity and Honesty

- We will operate ethically and legally.
- We will treat everyone equally.
- We will have a strong work ethic.

Accountable and Transparent

- We will follow through on what we say we are going to do.
- We will communicate openly.
- We will be fiscally responsible.
- We will spend tax payers money as if it were our own.

Citizen Focused / Service Oriented

- We will put the community first and strive to know what taxpayers expect.
- We will commit to providing outstanding value and benefits for residents.
- We will build relationships and trust between council and constituents.

Sustainability

- We will make decisions through the four pillars of sustainability:
 - Economic, Social, Cultural, Environmental.

Respect

- We will treat everyone fairly.
- We will care for the community and its' people.

Strategic Priorities 2019 - 2022



Housing



Quality of Life



Transportation Networks



Waterfront Development
& Placemaking



Tourism



Town Hall Campus & Square





Housing

Priority: Foster strategically directed housing sector in Smiths Falls to accommodate growth and development.

Goal: Support more diverse built housing stock with accompanying infrastructure (high end to affordable).

Initiatives:

- Form a Housing Task Force and develop a Project Charter.
- Launch the Housing Task Force to:
 - Investigate planning tools to encourage the types of housing in demand
 - Examine housing needs;
 - Review Provincial Policy; and,
 - Refine policies to remove barriers, attract developer(s) and examine planning approvals timelines.
- Develop a Housing Strategy.
- Review changes to building codes, by-laws and other policies to facilitate different types of housing.
- Ensure inventory of land available for Greenfield Development and infill.
- Conduct a Development Charges Study – incent accessible, inclusive community housing via targeted development charges and commercial development charges (vs. residential).



Quality of Life

Priority: Improve the quality of life for Smiths Falls' residents.

Goal: Invest in quality of life features, including activities, to attract and retain people.

Initiatives:

- Implement at least one tangible improvement in each neighbourhood park.
- Expand the urban forest including examination of tree planting incentive program.
- Develop a Recreational Plan to:
 - Understand current inventory and demand;
 - Understand expectations; and,
 - Forecast future needs and wants.
- Create a Parks Master Plan to identify opportunities with a focus on connectivity around waterfront and regional trail networks. Identify location for a Farmers' Market.
- Enhance bylaw enforcement in parks to help stop littering, household garbage dumping in Town garbage cans, and cleaning up after pets.
- Expand child care services to meet growing demand.
- Update 2013 Cultural Plan.



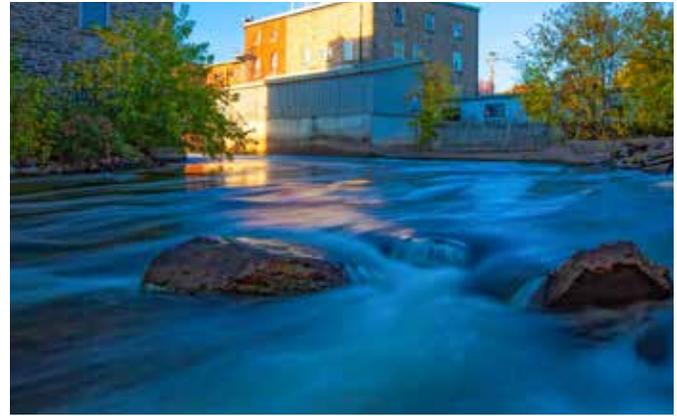
Transportation Networks

Priority: Facilitate improvements to transportation networks in Smiths Falls.

Goal: To enable improved mobility by examining existing transportation networks both within Town and beyond in a way that supports employment and accessibility.

Initiatives:

- Develop a Transportation Master Plan.
- Improve pedestrian accessibility at Old Slys.
- Develop an active transportation plan and a complete streets policy.
- Improve active transportation networks leading to Tweed Campus.
- Make a decision regarding Confederation Bridge.
- Full redevelopment of Lombard and Abbott intersections.
- Complete Beckwith Street redevelopment (Phases 1&2).
- Complete Downtown Parking Study.



Waterfront Development & Placemaking

Priority: Facilitate the development of Smiths Falls' waterfront destinations.

Goal: Enhance the waterfront experience for our residents and visitors by developing places that attract people.

Initiatives:

- Redevelopment of former Water Treatment Plant on Old Mill Road.
- Develop a phasing plan to complete Waterfront Trail (as per Waterfront Integration Master Plan) and pedestrian bridges. Develop wayfinding signage to heritage and new features. Install identification markers of key locations along waterfront.
- Work with the owner, and other stakeholders, of the Bascule Bridge to preserve the structural integrity and the cultural experience of this historically significant asset.
- Facilitate an examination of opportunities to animate the decommissioned combined lock to create a unique tourism, cultural, and entertainment attraction.
- Identify key locations along the waterfront for illumination, including the falls and Bascule Bridge.
- Facilitate development of non-residential waterfront lands along Centre Street.
- Examine Marina Opportunity.



Tourism

Priority: Improve Smiths Falls as a tourism destination.

Goal: Attract visitors to expand the local economy.

Initiatives:

- Develop a Cannabis Tourism Strategy.
- Examine relocation options for Victoria Park campground to encourage overnight stays.
- Develop a heritage walking tour that highlights Smiths Falls' unique built and natural heritage and the people who live here.
- Create a central hub for the trails that come through Town by extending the Ottawa Valley Rail Trail to the Railway Museum.
- Develop Rideau Canal experiential tourism such as the Voyageur tour and other paddle tourism opportunities.
- Develop and implement a Cycle Tourism Strategy.
- Create a space (page) on the Town website dedicated to tourism.



Town Hall Campus & Square

Priority: Create a Town Hall Campus & Square that is a centrepiece for Smiths Falls and the community.

Goal: To create an attractive public place where people come to socialize and interact with fellow members of the community while feeling a sense of civic pride. To preserve the heritage buildings that form the municipal campus while enhancing accessibility and customer impressions.

Initiatives:

- Complete Phase 2 renovations at Town Hall (Customer service, finance, planning, building services, engineering and fire protection services).
- Complete Phase 1 of Town Square, including bandstand.
- Complete Phase 3 renovations of Town hall, including Council Chambers and administration area.
- Complete library renovations.
- Develop a Programming/Event Plan for the Town Square.
- Complete Phase 2 of the Town Square.



**"A vision and strategy aren't enough.
The long-term key to success is execution.**

Each day. Every day."

Richard M. Kovacevich

Thank you to the individuals, stakeholders and community partners who generously contributed time and insight to the development of this plan. This commitment to working together to make Smiths Falls a desirable destination to live, work, and play has been instrumental in the development of many of the objectives found within this plan.

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