
TOWN OF SMITHS FALLS

STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2026

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION

FEBRUARY 15, 2023



SMITHS FALLS

RISE AT THE FALLS



Background

The Town Council and senior staff held a strategy session on January 11th to update the existing strategic plan, identify priorities along with objectives and initiatives with a focus on the next four years. The group conducted an environmental scan by looking at trends, opportunities, and threats. Based on this, six priorities were agreed upon. Draft goals and initiatives were created for each priority.

Vision (2023-2033)

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

1. Investing in our infrastructure to keep up with the growing needs of our growing community.
2. Redeveloping our waterfront and downtown.
3. Creating a healthy community with “Quality of Life” services for residents.
4. Building a diverse economy with a strong business sector.
5. Growth in population.
6. Preserving and enhancing our heritage buildings and services.

Elements to be considered:

1. Organizational Sustainability - invest in our people, talent.
2. Environmental Sustainability and Climate crisis (decarbonizing etc)
3. Helping marginalized people to move out of poverty.

Guiding Principles

Integrity and Honesty

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

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 taxpayers/residents money as if it were our own.

Citizen Focused / Service Oriented

- We will put the community first and strive to know what taxpayers/residents 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 equally and equitably.
- We will care for the community and its' people.

Opportunities

1. Take advantage of the continued demand for housing that leads to new assessment, growth in population and economic expansion.
2. Becoming more environmentally friendly and a leader municipality for environmental stewardship.
3. Improve transportation networks within the town as well as to and from other communities.
4. Resources/staff capacity to complete the day to day and strategic work required.
5. Better collaboration with Parks Canada to move projects forward.

Threats

1. Infrastructure deficit - demand to update aging assets, maintain and add municipal infrastructure & services.
2. Lack of affordable housing and food security.
3. Inflation / rising cost of resources.
4. Need to remain attractive by delivering in demand services as we compete to attract new residents, business, and talent.
5. Healthcare needs driven by Covid 19 and an aging population outpacing community resources.

Trends

1. Planning for aging community – compact development, mixed density, active/alternative transport options.
2. Housing demand and affordability.
3. Inflation and infrastructure costs rising.
4. Demographics: It is estimated that we will continue to see an increase in new residents including aging residents as well as a need to attract younger residents and families to fill workforce gaps ,this will require a diverse mix of housing and services and programs to support the new population.
5. Remote working expectations

Priority	Goal	Draft Strategic Initiatives
Transportation Networks	To enable improved mobility by examining existing transportation networks both within Town and beyond in a way that supports employment & accessibility.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to Implement the Active Transportation Plan, connect pedestrian and cycling networks including the Beckwith Street bike lanes to regional cycling infrastructure, and develop a central trail hub. 2. Develop and implement a Transportation Master Plan. 3. Conduct a comprehensive review of the current conditions of all roads and sidewalks within town. 4. Identify gaps for improved and increased pedestrian activity.
Housing	Support more diverse built housing stock to ensure all our citizens have a home they can afford.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support and implement the housing related programs in the Community Improvement Plan. 2. Continue to implement the recommendations of the Housing Advisory Committee including providing municipally - owned lands for

		<p>affordable housing and potential partnerships with not-for-profits.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Update the Official Plan to unlock additional residential development lands. 4. Complete a Housing Needs Study to determine current needs of residents and forecast for the future, and update the zoning policies as required. 5. Advocate at the Provincial Level for affordable housing, seniors housing and long-term care needs.
<p>Redeveloping Waterfront and Downtown</p>	<p>To enhance the waterfront experience for our residents and visitors by developing places that attract people</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Placemaking - activate and link waterfront areas (parks and paths) to entice and attract visitors and residents to the waterfront at all times of day and all year round. 2. Animate the dormant lock station under Beckwith Street. 3. Refresh the Downtown Revitalization And Waterfront Integration Master Plan. 4. Examine the feasibility of creating a local farmers market. 5. Support and implement the downtown revitalization programs included in the Community Improvement Plan. 6. Complete and implement the Heritage Conservation District to preserve Smiths Falls Heritage.

Infrastructure Renewal	<p>To manage our infrastructure in a proactive manner and position the Town for growth.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update the current Asset Management Plan to include all municipal infrastructure (buildings and fleet). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integrate the updated Asset Management Plan into our long-term financial plan. 2. Create policies to ensure climate and environmental sustainability is applied to infrastructure projects. 3. Prioritizing projects to decrease liability exposure.
New Business Attraction	<p>Create employment, expand economic activity and broaden the tax base to build a thriving local economy.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a business attraction and retention plan that will include targeting franchised hotels/restaurants and green industries (industries/businesses producing a product, service or initiatives that contributes to the preservation and enhancement of the quality of the environment). 2. Ensure adequate availability of serviced industrial and commercial land. 3. Attract High Frequency rail service to Smiths Falls.
Parks and Trails	<p>To enhance quality of life and provide diverse recreational opportunities for residents & visitors.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop engaging green spaces through improving and connecting a network of paths, trails including waterfront trails, parks, and a trail head within Smiths Falls. 2. Develop an implementation plan incorporating inclusive playgrounds that welcomes users of all abilities to learn, play and grow together.

		<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Operationalizing the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to identify investments.4. Develop a parkland dedication by-law that leverages greenspace improvements through the development approvals process.