



PORT COLBORNE

CITY OF
PORT COLBORNE
STRATEGIC PLAN
2020 • 2023





Message from Mayor William Steele

As elected officials, we are entrusted by our citizens to make the best possible decisions for the present and the future. I welcome this City of Port Colborne 2020-2023 Strategic Plan as a key tool to guide us in that decision-making as we embrace the growth that is upon us and preserve the history that made us.

I look forward to working together with City staff and our community partners to fulfill our vision and see our city reach its full potential.





Message from CAO Scott Luey

I am pleased to present the City of Port Colborne 2020-2023 Strategic Plan, and thank you for taking the time to read it.

Our 2020-2023 Strategic Plan is a roadmap that will take this city and our organization into the future by having a shared vision and focusing on community and corporate priorities that align and support this vision. The world we live in changes quickly, with new challenges and opportunities appearing daily. Having a commitment to a clear path forward makes that world easier to navigate.

Our City's hardworking and professional staff take pride in the work they do and are committed to making a positive impact everyday for our residents. They are excited about having a strategic plan to help guide our day-to-day responsibilities, and about working collaboratively with Council and the community to create our future.

As CAO, I, along with our Directors and Managers, will continue to ensure organizational alignment with Council's priorities; provide implementation and oversight; and keep our community regularly informed on the progress we're making.

Our future is bright and we are ready to get to work.

Message from the Corporate Leadership Team

Great things happen when we all travel in the same direction and follow the same map. As a Corporate Leadership Team, we are unified in our support for the City of Port Colborne's 2020-2023 Strategic Plan and are committed to its success. We look forward to working collaboratively with Council and with staff across all divisions, to bring it to life.





Introduction

Welcome to the City of Port Colborne's 2020-2023 Strategic Plan. This plan will be a guiding document to assist Council and staff in priority setting, resource allocation, and decision-making for the remainder of the 2019-2022 Council term and into the next. It will also provide the community with a reference document, illustrating the City's priorities and the actions planned to achieve those priorities. Residents, businesses, and stakeholders will be able to see and understand the path forward and the benefits that will come from it.

This plan is a living document, as strategic planning is an ongoing process that requires flexibility and responsiveness to the ever-changing municipal landscape and global events. The COVID-19 global pandemic has illustrated unanticipated events can and do impact our ability to deliver our services in the way we originally intend. However, those services still need to be delivered. A strong strategic plan can be the map we refer to in order to maintain the level of service our constituents require when we are faced with implementing sudden and unexpected models of delivery.

A strategic plan will also provide a line of sight for City staff to see the connection between their day-to-day responsibilities and the vision and mission of the organization. This will help to ensure there is organizational alignment to deliver on Council's priorities.



Community Engagement

In April 2021, Council directed staff to obtain resident input on community issues and priorities to assist staff in finalizing a new strategic plan. A survey available in online, digital, print, and hard copy formats was conducted over 12 days amongst residents of Port Colborne, 18 years of age or older, who were not employed by the City. The survey was widely advertised in both traditional and social media, giving the community the opportunity to identify issues and priorities without viewing and being influenced by the draft strategic plan. A total of 620 total surveys (3 hard copy and 617 online) were received, indicating a participation rate of 4%, which represents favourable participation relative to municipal survey averages. The survey report can be found on the City's website.

Analysis of the data revealed consistent patterns, and helped to identify issues and priorities important to the community. These issues and priorities were analyzed in conjunction with the draft strategic plan's statements, principles, pillars, goals and action items. The input received suggests there is a shared vision and common goals for the unique and valued assets found throughout the community.

Overall, the community's needs, values and vision show a strong connection to the concept of sustainability, which is the foundation of our path forward. Areas such as arts and culture, parks and recreation, economic development and tourism, and land use planning figured highly in the survey results and link closely to a number of studies and plans in the draft strategic plan. With the results of the survey, we are confident that the priorities that matter most to the community reflect the numerous projects, initiatives, and action items we have laid out, and we look forward to getting our plan underway.



Timelines

City staff have been delivering programs and services as well as planning, implementing, and managing many projects and initiatives in 2019 and 2020 that align with the key pillars outlined in this plan. Therefore, 2020-2023 is being used as the time frame for the City's strategic plan to reflect the ongoing work and strategic focus of City staff. Following feedback from Council and staff, we have decided that a 3 year plan is of most value to keep that work relevant and that focus sharp. While this strategic plan is based on a three-year horizon, our mission and vision statements arise from an ongoing broader discussion about what makes us who we are and where we want to go.





What We Stand For

We are a small city and we want to retain that character and feel, yet we are also on the cusp of residential, commercial, industrial, and economic growth which will bring exciting new opportunities. We must balance welcoming change and preserving our quality of life. We must create the future we want for our city. Our strategic plan will help us build this future. Some things won't change. We will continue to preserve our waterfront while supporting the need to integrate industry with our residential, commercial, and tourism sectors, and our business districts. We will continue our commitment to excellent customer service throughout the organization in everything we do. We will continue to value our partnerships with key stakeholders and committed volunteers from non-profit organizations who do so much to improve our community. We will look to the future in a positive, pro-active way, while honouring the qualities that have made our community so unique.





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Vision Statement:

A vision statement expresses an organization's desires for the future. This is our vision statement:

A vibrant waterfront community embracing growth for future generations

Mission Statement:

A mission statement expresses the immediate goals of an organization, clearly and concisely. This is our mission statement:

To provide an exceptional small-town experience in a big way

Corporate Values:

Corporate Values are guiding principles and beliefs supported by everyone in an organization so that they can work toward common goals in a cohesive and positive way. These are our corporate values:

Integrity – we interact with others ethically and honourably

Respect – we treat each other with empathy and understanding

Inclusion – we welcome everyone

Responsibility – we make tomorrow better

Collaboration – we are better together



Pillars of Sustainability

The United Nations definition of sustainability is the reconciliation of environmental, social, and economic demands - the “three pillars” of sustainability – for the immediate and future well-being of individuals and communities. The social pillar gauges social equity including quality of life. The environmental pillar captures green factors such as energy, pollution, and emissions. The economic pillar assesses business environments and economic health.

These pillars are key to balanced decision-making and by embracing them as an important part of our strategic plan, we can ensure that both our major decisions and our everyday choices are rooted in an awareness of the need for true sustainability.





Strategic Pillars

Our strategic pillars are based on key themes that emerged from roundtable discussions with Council and staff, and were developed to support our Vision and Mission Statements. These pillars include the specific actions we will take to achieve our goals in each area, and have been divided into Community Pillars and Corporate Pillars.

Community Pillars

These pillars are areas that directly benefit our residents, businesses, and visitors.

1. **Service and Simplicity - Quality and Innovative Delivery of Customer Services**
2. **Attracting Business Investment and Tourists to Port Colborne**
3. **City-Wide Investment in Infrastructure and Recreational/Cultural Spaces**

Corporate Pillars

These pillars are the day-to-day practices, processes, and governance that Council and staff are focused on to ensure maximum value and benefit for our residents.

1. **Value: Financial Management to Achieve Financial Sustainability**
2. **People: Supporting and Investing in Human Capital**
3. **Governance: Communications, Engagement, and Decision-Making**



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Community Pillars

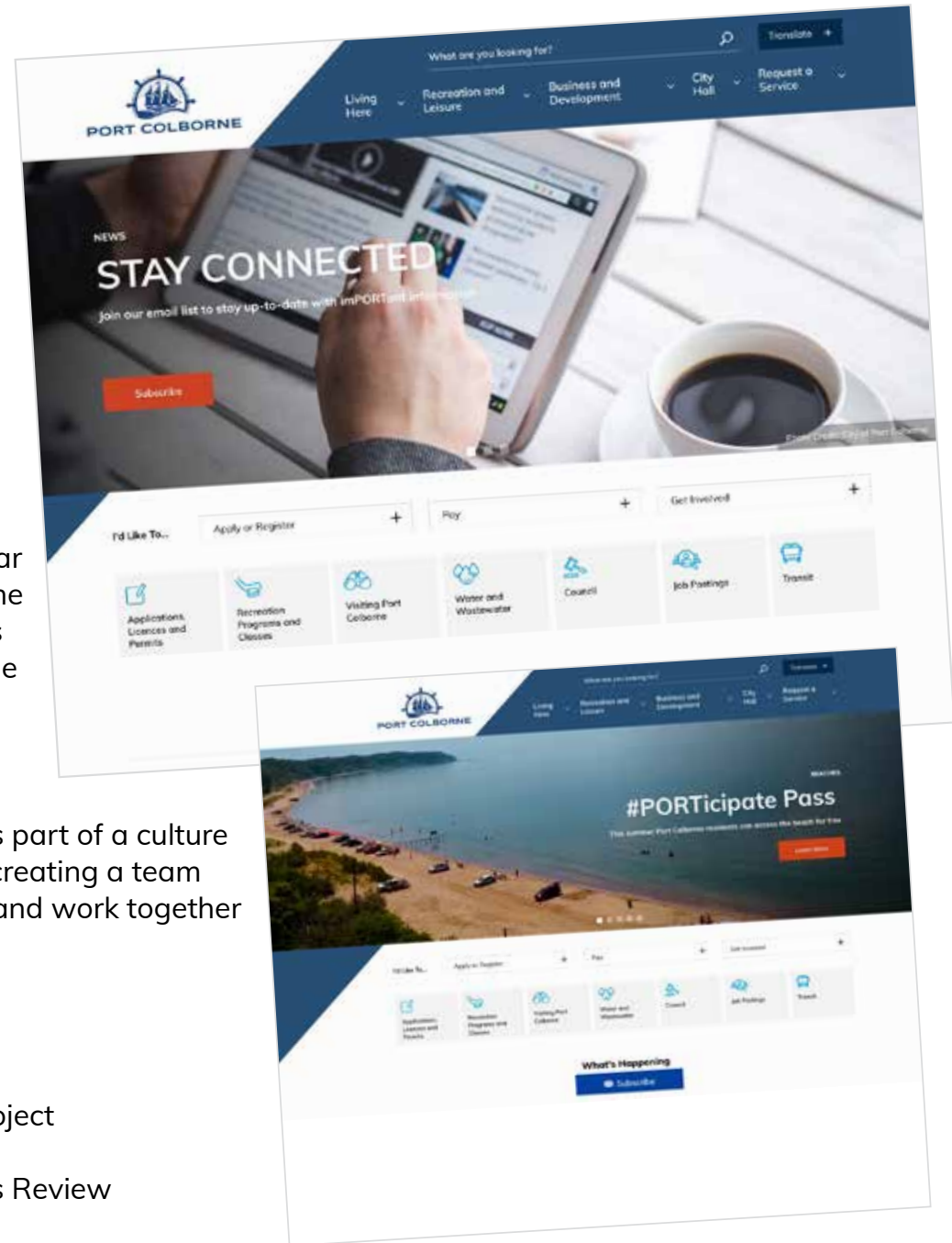
1. Service and Simplicity: Quality and Innovative Delivery of Customer Services

Our goal is to make interacting with our City simple through clear communication, efficient and effective processes, and making the best use of appropriate technologies. We will create a seamless “one stop shop” with exemplary customer service throughout the organization to meet the needs of our community.

It’s all about the service. City staff are committed to customer service excellence and providing quality programs as well as exploring and implementing different service delivery models as part of a culture of innovation. The future is collaborative and we’re focused on creating a team culture where we share information, implement best practices, and work together to achieve the best possible experience for our community.

Action Items

- Complete Customer Relationship Management (CRM) project
- Implement Service Delivery Review
- Partner with Niagara municipalities on a Shared Services Review
- Create a smart city strategy and open data initiatives





2. Attracting Business Investments and Tourists to Port Colborne

Our goal is to ensure that Port Colborne is investment-ready. In addition to commercial and industrial investment, we will become a desirable tourist destination showcasing the unique historical, cultural, and natural elements of our community for visitors and residents alike.

Port Colborne and Niagara region are poised for growth and increased economic and tourist activity given our affordable housing options, available industrial and commercial land, and wide array of cultural and recreational amenities to create memorable tourist experiences and a lifestyle second to none. There are several economic development projects and tourism initiatives underway that will bring investment, jobs, and new residents to our community and support our downtown, our waterfront, and City businesses.

Action Items

- Implementation of City Real Estate Project
- Create Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan
- Investigate opportunities and potential partnerships to facilitate the redevelopment of the east side industrial lands
- Comprehensive Review of Community Improvement Plans
- Continued implementation of Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan
- Implementation of Tourism Strategy and Action Plan
- Implementation of Cruise Destination Strategy and Action Plan
- Repurposing and renewal of Niagara South Coast Tourism Association (NSCTA)



3. City-Wide Investment in Infrastructure and Recreational/Cultural Spaces

Our goal is to build new infrastructure, renew existing infrastructure, and upgrade facilities and public spaces for our residents and future growth.

The City of Port Colborne, along with the rest of Niagara region, is expected to experience considerable population growth over the next 20-25 years. In addition to new residents, the city is also attracting more tourists and increased industrial and marine activity. Building and sustaining a city requires well thought-out growth management plans in a variety of areas, as well as strong capital financing strategies. These plans are all inter-related to ensure the best possible decision-making, now and in the future.

Action Items

- Infrastructure Needs Study (INS)
- Asset Management Plan (AMP)
- Facility Condition Assessments
- Growth Management Strategy
- Long Term Capital Plans - Budgets
- Downtown CIP Project – Planning/Visioning Phase
- Renew / integrate cultural-related strategic plans (Museum, Library)
- Investigate creation of a Cultural Block to provide residents and visitors with a safe, accessible outdoor destination that is also a platform for programmes and events
- Create a renewed vision for the Roselawn Centre in concert with community partners
- Implementation of Parks and Recreation Master Plan





Corporate Pillars

1. Value - Financial Management to Achieve Financial Sustainability

Our goal is to provide strong governance and proactive planning that manages our taxpayer dollars wisely and anticipates the city's future financial needs.

Our constituents seek value. We strive to provide value in all we do. We embrace that “perception of value” is a moving target and sometimes we need to invest today to improve tomorrow. Incremental and continuous improvement is our norm.

Action Items

- Development of Financial Policies and Strategies
- Implement a new streamlined budget process
- Rates and Fees Review
- Create business plans for City assets (i.e., Nickel Beach, Sugarloaf Marina)
- Pursue federal-provincial grants, naming rights, and sponsorships, and public private partnerships
- Undertake an expenditure review of City programs focusing on cost containment and maximizing value for taxpayers



2. People: Supporting and Investing in Human Capital

Our goal is to have programs and initiatives that attract and retain talent and create a culture of continuous improvement and performance excellence at the City of Port Colborne. An engaged and empowered workforce generates the kind of positive momentum that brings effective results.

Our City is committed to the health, safety, and well-being of our staff. How we work and where we work are changing. Our workforce is becoming ever more agile as we adapt and become increasingly more responsive.

Action Items

- Develop a performance management model of employee evaluation
- Develop a recognition and rewards program for City staff
- Prepare succession plans
- Complete employee engagement survey and action plan
- Create an in-house professional development program
- Create a Diversity and Inclusion Committee
- Create a City Wellness Committee





3. Governance: Communications, Engagement, and Decision-Making

Our goal is to promote sound decision making; fair and equitable representation; a commitment to openness and transparency; active public engagement through corporate communications and outreach; and strong partnerships with key community stakeholders.

These are the qualities of good governance. They create trust and confidence in elected officials, City staff, and public sector organizations, and they are the standard to which we hold ourselves.



Action Items

- Review of Council governance documents including Procedure By-law, Code of Conduct and Transparency and Accountability Policy
- Review the mandate of Council Committees & Terms of Reference
- Comprehensive review of Council governance system
- Develop Council professional development and training resources
- Implement new agenda management software
- Create new records retention management system
- Develop and implement a corporate-wide rebranding strategy
- Create a new website and social media strategy to support enhanced communications and customer service
- Develop an external and internal communications strategy for increased awareness, information sharing, and public engagement



Implementation Plan

A strategic plan is only as strong as its implementation, and to be sure that progress is being made it is vital to provide regular updates. A pledge to reporting on our action items reflects the City of Port Colborne's ongoing commitment to accountability and transparency. With this in mind, updates on strategic plan progress will be made available through the City's website on a quarterly basis.



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www.portcolborne.ca