



TOWN OF MIDLAND – COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLANNING PRIORITIES

2014/2015 – 2018/2019

Revised based on input from February 1, 2016, Special Council Meeting

Foreword:

On January 21st and again on February 12th 2015, members of Midland Town Council together with the CAO and Deputy CAO met to develop a high level strategic direction for the municipality, and to identify key priorities to be undertaken during the current term of Council. This document highlights the strategic priorities agreed to by Council.

PRINCIPLES THAT WILL GUIDE THE WORK OF COUNCIL OVER THE COMING FOUR YEAR TERM

- We will collaborate and work together.
- We will value the input of others and focus on the positives.
- We will show leadership at Council.
- We will create certainty for our constituents and partners.
- We will transform ourselves by letting go of the things that we should not be focusing on and instead, embrace opportunity.
- We will consider a new role for Council; one that moves us away from being ‘doers’ and one that moves us forward as ‘facilitators’ and ‘partnership builders.’
- We will consider what services should be provided; what the appropriate level of service should be and whether there are more efficient and more effective ways of delivering service.
- We will contain our costs and we will act in a transparent, responsive, accountable and responsible manner.
- We will consider the importance of doing things right and doing the right things.



TOWN OF MIDLAND

STRATEGIC PLANNING PRIORITIES OF COUNCIL

Rationale & Introductory Remarks:

As members of Council, we are united in our desire to advance a number of critical Council priorities over the next four-year term. We have made an unwavering commitment to work together for the best interests of our constituents, our partners and our community as we address the challenges facing the Town of Midland. We will turn these challenges into opportunities and we will be clearly focused in our efforts to bring about positive, lasting change.

Midland is a community like no other. We have much to be proud of and, at the same time, much to accomplish. We must address a number of critical challenges, not the least of which is the need to reduce taxes. Our tax rate is among the highest in the County of Simcoe and the income levels of our residents are among the lowest. We must bridge that divide, and you will see in the following priority list, that we have placed an emphasis on cost containment and fiscal responsibility as a critical first order priority.

We will emphasize economic development and the importance of diversifying our employment base to capitalize on new work-related and employment trends, and we will work to promote greater collaboration between industry and academia. We will also review our Official Plan to ensure that Midland is open and ‘ready for business.’ At the same time, we will be looking closely at municipally owned assets to determine if there are opportunities for economic advantage through a higher and better use of these facilities. We will, in few words, be exploring the opportunities to utilize Town assets to drive economic growth and development. We will work hard as your elected leaders to foster an environment that supports economic development, growth and prosperity.

You will also see that we have acknowledged the need to be strategic and to think strategically; to strengthen our existing partnerships and to build new alliances with academia, the business community, the arts sector and our constituents generally. We will place community engagement among our top priorities for the next four years. We will lead by example but we will look at creating stronger connections across our community and we will look forward to making positive changes with you as a member of our team.

We will lead by example and focus on service and organizational excellence by ensuring that our service delivery model advances efficiencies and effectiveness improvements. We will think about new and better ways of doing business and we will ensure that Town staff and Council are well positioned with the proper skills to be able to advance new models of service delivery and continued customer satisfaction. More directly, we will be transforming our service delivery model and contemplating whether and how to move away from direct service provider to service facilitator and convener. To this end, we will advance a review and rationalization of Emergency Services at the Town of Midland. We will also be moving forward with our Core Services Review and Infrastructure Review and we will be looking to adopt best departmental practices for service delivery. At the same time, we will be developing and implementing a Customer Service Standard so that we can ensure that every interaction with the Town of Midland is one that exceeds expectations. This will be our goal.

In carrying out our responsibilities over the coming four year term, we will operate on the basis of a number of key principles. We will collaborate and value the input of others. We will create certainty for our constituents. We will transform the services we provide so that we offer efficiencies and effectiveness for all. We will focus on doing things right and doing the right things. We will, in all of our actions – individually and collectively – emphasize the important role we play as decision makers and ambassadors for the Town. We will focus critically on containing our costs and we will operate against a backdrop of fiscal responsibility and prudence. We will, as your elected Council, earn your trust and your confidence and we will work together to place the Town of Midland and its residents in a position of real strength, today and tomorrow.

We will be taking some early steps to improve our communications and the first order of business will be to improve the audio system for Council meetings. It is our hope that you will see more communications from Council as we make every effort to keep you apprised of our progress.

Our strategic priorities focus on five (5) key areas, as follows:

- ✓ Fiscal Responsibility and Cost Containment
- ✓ Organizational Excellence
- ✓ Economic Development
- ✓ Developing Partnerships, Promoting Collaboration & Alignment
- ✓ A Healthy Sustainable Community

We have identified a number of focused, strategic actions that will guide our work as a collective. It is our belief that these five areas offer an important and balanced focus for Council to address the economic, social/cultural and environmental priorities, all supported by an organization that is driven by excellence.

Council is committed to working towards achieving their five strategic priorities as indicated within this Strategic Plan over their four year term of Council. As part of their commitment Council will review their strategic priorities and related strategic actions on a yearly basis. This review will act like a report card by highlighting the related accomplishments over the previous year and setting the priorities for the upcoming year. These yearly reviews will be reflected as Schedules to this original Council Strategic Plan.

If you have questions, comments or suggestions, we invite you to contact us...our doors are open.

The following represents Council’s strategic priorities for the 2014/15 – 2018/19 term of Council:

**Midland Town Council
Priorities for the 2014/15 – 2018/19 Term**

Priority: Fiscal Responsibility & Cost Containment
Strategic Action: Broad Fiscal Direction By Council To Reduce Taxes. Reduce Taxes
Strategic Action: Emergency Service Review & Rationalization
Strategic Action: Municipal Review & Restructuring through the creation of a Municipal Business Plan
Priority: Organizational Excellence
Strategic Action: Transformative Government & Governance. Is there a new role for the Town of Midland related to service delivery? How can the Town transform and transition itself from a provider of services to a facilitator of services? Provide leverage to assist with sources of funding.
Strategic Action: Core Service Review Assess our core services and develop an Organizational Excellence Strategy that focuses on doing things right and doing the right things.
Strategic Action: Team Building & Skills Development Across the Organization Build a whole team approach through team building efforts including skills development for Council and staff.
Strategic Action: Imaging & Rebranding Building a ‘whole team approach’ by focusing on Midland’s positive future.
Strategic Action: Communicating to our Constituents Work hard to ensure that our citizens are well informed of our efforts at Council. Open the avenues of communication to engage our community and keep them apprised and involved.
Priority: Economic Development & Tourism
Strategic Action: Job Retention & Job Creation Develop a strategy to address job creation and retention. Work with schools and academia and capitalize on the changing employment trends and work landscape to develop a Home-Based Business Strategy.
Strategic Action: Town Asset Inventory & Reuse Strategy How Can Municipal Assets Drive Change? How Can We Use Our Assets More Efficiently and More Effectively?
Strategic Action: Council Support to EDCNS Promote greater collaboration between employers. Explore the notion of an innovation hub and work with academia and industry to capitalize on the next era of economic growth and development.
Strategic Action: Midland Bay Landing Review goals and composition of the Waterfront Steering Committee
Strategic Action: Downtown Midland Master Plan Community & Stakeholder engagement to build sense of shared ownership and support.

Priority: A Healthy Sustainable Community

Strategic Action: Enhance & Strengthen Recreational & Cultural Assets.

Complete an optimization and valuation study of Little Lake Park as a first order priority and consider optimization of other Town recreational facilities. Support the work of the Cultural Advisory Committee.

Strategic Action: Improved Quality of Life

Focus on opportunities to increase affordable housing in Midland. Focus on access to and the retention of existing health care services in Midland. Advance pilot projects under the Sustainability Plan and explore opportunities to advance the Energy Conservation & Demand Management Plan. Consider opportunities to explore walkability, livability and active transportation. Explore the development of an Anti-Poverty Strategy and consider ways in which the Town could support more active engagement of lower income families in Town-operated recreational activities.

Priority: Develop Partnerships, Promote Collaboration & Alignment

Strategic Action: Community Engagement Strategy

Develop a comprehensive Community Engagement Strategy to encourage involvement at the community level and in particular, focus on engaging Youth. Establish a Youth Committee to inspire the next generation of community leaders.

Strategic Action: Strengthen Existing Partnerships & Build New Alliances

Facilitate inter-municipal and County level dialogue. Engage with upper levels of government. Support neighbouring municipal events and festivals and secure an invitation to attend adjacent Council meetings so that issues of common concern can be regularly tracked and addressed.

Schedule "A" to Councils Strategic Plan

Midland Town Council Review of 2015 and Priorities for 2016

The following is based on the review of the Council Strategic Plan for 2015 which occurred during a Special Meeting of Council held on February 1, 2016. The items highlighted below were changes (additions/deletions) to the original Strategic Actions approved by Council in 2015.

Priority: Fiscal Responsibility & Cost Containment
<p>Strategic Action: Broad Fiscal Direction By Council To Reduce Taxes. Reduce Taxes, with the objective of moving to the 75% percentile by 2018.</p> <p>Accomplishments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Obtaining OPP Costing• Consideration of potential sale or merger of MPUC• 75% percentile by 2018 is not realistic• Main focus on fiscal responsibility while little done on the other four priorities <p>Priorities for 2016:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Managing expectations of cost containment in light of the many new initiatives
<p>Strategic Action: Emergency Service Review & Rationalization</p> <p>Accomplishments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shared Fire Chief Role with the Town of Penetanguishene <p>Priorities for 2016:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fire Service Review Report to be presented by the Chief
<p>Strategic Action: Municipal Review & Restructuring through the creation of a Municipal Business Plan</p> <p>Accomplishments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Audit Committee new mandate• Continuing to implement KPMG recommendations• Decisions related to fiscal responsibility have been responsible and measured• Combining of Public Works and Parks Department under Operations umbrella• Shared Building Department with Penetanguishene• Shared Transit Service with Penetanguishene <p>Priorities for 2016:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to look at attrition, shared services with neighbouring municipalities, integration with the County, contracting out, technological change and overall review for efficiencies to decrease wage and salaries portion of the budget• Staff report related to the organizational review changes that were made and the related impact of same including savings and efficiencies• Looking at new ways of doing projects including pilot and low cost approach• Consultant lead IT Business Analysis Review and Corporate Business plan

Priority: Organizational Excellence

Strategic Action: Transformative Government & Governance.

Is there a new role for the Town of Midland related to service delivery? How can the Town transform and transition itself from a provider of services to a facilitator of services? **Provide leverage to assist with sources of funding.**

Accomplishments:

- Facilitation of recreation and tourism services

Priorities for 2016:

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Strategic Action: Core Service Review

Assess our core services and develop an Organizational Excellence Strategy that focuses on doing things right and doing the right things.

Accomplishments:

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Priorities for 2016:

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Strategic Action: Team Building & Skills Development Across the Organization

Build a whole team approach through team building efforts including skills development for Council and staff.

Accomplishments:

- Concerns related to Council/Staff relationship

Priorities for 2016:

- Improve Council and Staff communication including one on one communication with Department Heads
- Clarify the roles of both Council and Staff
- Options to facilitate team building for Council and Department Heads
- Ensure skills development provided to both Council and Staff

Strategic Action: Imaging & Rebranding

Building a 'whole team approach' by focusing on Midland's positive future.

Accomplishments:

- Possibly too many focuses at once including joint hub with Penetanguishene, North Simcoe and Town of Midland

Priorities for 2016:

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Priority: Organizational Excellence (continued)

Strategic Action: Communicating to our Constituents

Work hard to ensure that our citizens are well informed of our efforts at Council. Open the avenues of communication to engage our community and keep them apprised and involved.

Accomplishments:

- Hiring of a Marketing and Communications Coordinator with focus on an enhanced municipal website, and usage of social media including Facebook and twitter
- The visioning exercise was a Community engagement example
- Seem to be more reactive in our responses rather than proactive

Priorities for 2016:

- Addition of "Town Hall" Meetings to encourage community engagement
- Review alternate methods for 2018 Municipal election including on-line voting
- Living streaming of Council meetings and improved audio system in the Council Chambers

Priority: Economic Development & Tourism

Strategic Action: Job Retention & Job Creation

Develop a strategy to address job creation and retention. Work with schools and academia and capitalize on the changing employment trends and work landscape to develop a Home-Based Business Strategy.

Accomplishments:

- Home based business review

Priorities for 2016:

- The Towns tourism initiatives need to be guided by a plan with links to DMO initiatives
- Support start up locations for small businesses such as a “The Creative Space”

Strategic Action: Town Asset Inventory & Reuse Strategy

How Can Municipal Assets Drive Change?

How Can We Use Our Assets More Efficiently and More Effectively?

Accomplishments:

- Lease review process

Priorities for 2016:

- Determine the value of assets that are provided to Community Groups through areas such as municipal leases

Strategic Action: Council Support to EDCNS

Promote greater collaboration between employers. Explore the notion of an innovation hub and work with academia and industry to capitalize on the next era of economic growth and development.

Accomplishments:

- EDCNS incorporated North Simcoe Tourism a DMO and hired a Tourism Director

Priorities for 2016:

- Need to continue our commitment to the EDCNS to allow for long term plan
- Potential expansion of EDCNS to include business retention and expansion component to assist small businesses
- Communicate economic initiatives and success to the community

Strategic Action: Midland Bay Landing

Review goals and composition of the Waterfront Steering Committee

Accomplishments:

- MBL project continues (slowly)

Priorities for 2016:

- Continue MBL project while strengthening public communication/engagement on project status

Priority: Economic Development & Tourism (continued)

Strategic Action: Downtown Midland Master Plan

Community & Stakeholder engagement to build sense of shared ownership and support.

Accomplishments:

- Downtown master plan process is underway
- Reduced costs related to encroachments for patios in the downtown core

Priorities for 2016:

- Continue with the project working collaboratively with BIA and merchants possible areas:
 - Work on side streets
 - Finalize “Big Dig” start date and ensure businesses and residents are aware
 - Pilot low cost streetscape changes
 - Ensure budget room

Priority: A Healthy Sustainable Community

Strategic Action: Enhance & Strengthen Recreational & Cultural Assets.

Complete an optimization and valuation study of Little Lake Park as a first order priority and consider optimization of other Town recreational facilities. Support the work of the Cultural Advisory Committee.

Accomplishments:

- Enhanced the usage of Little Lake Park through Little Lake Park Committee
- Better utilization of Little Lake Park including events in Spring and Fall (in addition to Canada Day and Winterfest)
- Expand amenities at Little Lake Park and improve access for pedestrians and cyclists
- No plan to deal with food security
- Unfocused commitment to culture, specifically the Cultural Plan
- Lack of funding related to trails and walkability
- Lack of poverty relief strategy and limited funds for affordable housing

Priorities for 2016:

- Assist Culture Midland in leveraging grant opportunities for additional resources
- Additional usage of Little Lake Park (funds allocated in budget)
- Focus on attention to and retention of health care in Midland

Strategic Action: Improved Quality of Life

Focus on opportunities to increase affordable housing in Midland. Focus on access to and the retention of existing health care services in Midland. Advance pilot projects under the Sustainability Plan and explore opportunities to advance the Energy Conservation & Demand Management Plan. Consider opportunities to explore walkability, livability and active transportation. Explore the development of an Anti-Poverty Strategy and consider ways in which the Town could support more active engagement of lower income families in Town-operated recreational activities.

Accomplishments:

- Good work in energy conservation, visioning exercise and walkability initiatives within the Town
- Downtown Safety Committee and their related findings
- The Towns engagement related to the County's 10 Year Affordable Housing Strategy
- Municipal Energy Plan underway

Priorities for 2016:

- Municipal Energy Plan and Community Energy plan (Council Led)

Priority: Develop Partnerships, Promote Collaboration & Alignment

Strategic Action: Community Engagement Strategy

Develop a comprehensive Community Engagement Strategy to encourage involvement at the community level and in particular, focus on engaging Youth. Establish a Youth Committee to inspire the next generation of community leaders.

Accomplishments:

- No formal community engagement strategy

Priorities for 2016:

- Creation of a Youth Committee

Strategic Action: Strengthen Existing Partnerships & Build New Alliances

Facilitate inter-municipal and County level dialogue. Engage with upper levels of government. Support neighbouring municipal events and festivals and encourage adjacent municipal attendance at Council meetings and secure an invitation to attend adjacent Council meetings so that issues of common concern can be regularly tracked and addressed.

Accomplishments:

- Participated at both Staff and Council level in the County Conference
- Participation of First Nations and Metis in Planning process
- Shared Building Department with Penetanguishene
- Shared Transit Service with Penetanguishene
- Shared Fire Chief with Penetanguishene
- EDCNS – joining of four North Simcoe Municipalities
- Provision of a shared staff resource to assist Culture Midland
- Collaboration with the County re: library and planning
- Ongoing concern related to Midland being responsible to cover costs for assets that are utilized by residents in the neighbouring municipalities

Priorities for 2016:

- Working to improve relationship with Chamber of Commerce and BIA
- Continue work with building alliances with First Nations and Metis
- Meet with the Councils of the four neighbouring municipalities on a yearly basis
- Consider participatory budget process with Midland residents

The original Strategic Plan of Council will be amended by including the highlighted changes (additions/deletions) which are reflected within this schedule that relate to the Council Priority and/or Strategic Action