



REPORT

TO: Mayor Lawlor and Members of Council

FROM: Susan Silver, Senior Advisor – Strategic Initiatives

DATE: November 20, 2023

REPORT NO.: ADMIN-2023-033

SUBJECT: Council's Strategic Plan DRAFT

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. ADMIN-2023-033 dated November 20, 2023 regarding Council's Strategic Plan DRAFT be received;

AND FURTHER THAT the draft Town of Halton Hills 2023-2026 Strategic Plan as presented in this report ADMIN-2023-033 be endorsed in principle;

AND FURTHER THAT staff report back to Council at the December 11, 2023 Council meeting with a proposed final plan reflecting additional input or proposed feedback collected.

KEY POINTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- A comprehensive approach has been deployed to support the development of Council's Strategic Plan.
- Inputs have been gathered across a wide variety of methods, both quantitative and qualitative, to ensure the strategic plan reflects the views of the community.
- A statistically valid survey was conducted along with an online survey open to all members of the community. Focus groups were held to further understand survey data.
- Council has participated in one-on-one interviews and multiple facilitated workshops to provide opportunities for learning, discussion, and information review.
- Council has worked collaboratively to define vision, mission and values along with strategic priorities and objectives as reflected in the attached draft.

- This report brings forward an initial draft of Council's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan for consideration and endorsement in principle.
- Members of the public/stakeholders are invited to give feedback by providing comments via the Town's LetsTalk platform, which will be available November 21 – December 7, 2023.
- Upon review of feedback, a proposed final strategic plan will be presented to Council at the December 11, 2023 Council Meeting, which is also open to the public for delegation.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

A strategic planning exercise to identify Council's strategic priorities is conducted each term of council. Through report [ADMIN-2023-010](#) dated March 27, 2023, Council approved the process to support the development of this term's strategic plan.

Upon approval of the process, staff issued two requests for proposals (RFP); one for the town survey, and one for facilitation of the overall process. RFP's were issued in early April and submissions were reviewed as per the Town's competitive bidding process. Both contracts were awarded to Deloitte LLP in May.

As identified in ADMIN-2023-010, the process consisted primarily of:

- Conducting a statistically valid public survey and focus groups
- Providing opportunity for additional engagement through an open online survey
- Interviewing council members
- Holding facilitated workshops to review and discuss inputs and develop council's priorities
- Calibration with senior staff for resourcing and fiscal considerations

This work has also been underpinned by Council's active participation in orientation and workshops specific to various topic areas throughout this term of Council.

Community Survey(s)

Both a statistically valid phone survey and an online open survey were conducted to gather input across the community. All market research in the form of surveys and focus groups were administered by the Deloitte consultant team.

Phone Survey and Focus Groups

Beginning June 22, residents were randomly selected from the Town's population using a mix of landlines and cell phone numbers. Respondents were screened to ensure they live in the Town of Halton Hills and were over the age of 18. This scientific methodology resulted in 450 completed surveys, which results in a margin of error for the study of +/- 4.62% at a 95% confidence level.

Results were weighted to the exact proportions of the population by age and gender (Census 2021 Statistics Canada). Appendix A provides a summary of the results of the phone survey.

Once the community survey was completed, three focus groups were conducted with a total of 22 participants to further explore key issues that emerged from the survey and to gain additional insights from community members. The focus group participants were from various age groups and included those living in urban and rural areas of the Town. Respondents from the town survey who expressed willingness to participate in focus groups were randomly selected and contacted to participate in the consultation.

Online Survey

An online survey in open link format was made available June 29 – July 23 to residents via the Town's LetsTalk platform. Respondents were screened to ensure they lived in the Town and were over the age of 18.

This methodology resulted in 534 completed surveys, in addition to the 450 phone interviews completed during the scientific data collection phase. Survey results from both methods will be posted to the [Community Survey](#) LetsTalk page.

Workshop Activity and Strategy Sessions

- On June 12, 2023, Council met with Deloitte consultants for the purpose of introductions and to review the draft survey questionnaire. Preliminary information on the upcoming plans for strategic plan development was also shared.
- On July 13, 2023, Deloitte facilitated Council's process overview session at a council workshop. The session helped to set the foundation for the strategic planning process, including an overview of the strategy development, workplan and approach to engagement.
- Over the months of July and August, one-on-one interviews with all Council members were held with Deloitte consultants.
- On September 20, 2023, Council participated in a session delivered by a facilitator from the Queens Executive Decision Centre, on behalf of Deloitte. This session utilized group decision support technology to develop draft vision, mission and values.
- The following day, September 21, 2023 Council met again to review and refine the outcome of the previous day session and to work on strategic priorities. Council was provided pre-read material which summarized key learnings from the previous strategic plan, council and senior management interviews, survey themes, and a Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Risks and Results (SOARR) analysis. A knowledge exchange panel with keynote presentations was also part of this day.
- On October 10, 2023 outcomes from the September 20-21 workshop were reviewed with Council and additional refinements made. Information from this session was also reviewed on October 18 with the Senior Management Team (SMT) for the purpose of providing insights related to resourcing, implementation considerations, including business plan and budgets, and overall content.
- On November 6, 2023 Deloitte presented the outcome of the sessions to date for review with Council and to receive direction to proceed with a draft for presentation to the public at the November 20, 2023 Council meeting.

Council has worked collaboratively throughout multiple facilitated sessions and reviewed a range of qualitative and quantitative research and analysis. The draft strategy reflects the outcome of that work completed over the past months.

2023-2026 Strategic Plan Draft

Draft snapshot pictured here is available as Appendix B to this report.

Vision

The Town of Halton Hills is a growing, nature-rich community that is proud of its small-town feel and urban rural mix where all people feel welcomed, safe, and connected.

Mission

To efficiently provide services that foster a higher quality of life for residents, making Halton Hills a desirable place to live, work, and invest.

Values

Integrity and honesty	We are truthful, make fact-based decisions, and act in the best interests of the town.
Transparent and accessible	We welcome communication and information sharing in an open and receptive manner.
Effective stewardship	We build on our collective strengths to achieve the best possible outcomes as stewards of our community, corporate assets, resources, and the natural environment.
Connected	We stay informed and engaged with our community.
Respectful and caring	We demonstrate appreciation and support for all through our inclusive and collaborative approach.

Strategic Priorities and Objectives



Thriving Economy

- Expedite development of employment lands.
- Attract and retain businesses that align with town's priorities.
- Promote redevelopment and growth of commercial areas.
- Support agricultural business viability.
- Advance residential intensification, where planned.



Natural Areas and Heritage

- Increase public access to parks, natural areas and green spaces.
- Protect and enhance biodiversity, the river valley watershed, and Niagara Escarpment landforms.
- Preserve built and natural heritage features of our communities.



Infrastructure and Asset Management

- Ensure that the town has resilient infrastructure to reduce impacts on the community.
- Ensure that Town assets, infrastructure and services keep pace with population and housing growth.
- Improve road safety.
- Maintain and renew green infrastructure.



Safe and Welcoming Communities

- Ensure that facilities and programs meet the evolving needs of the community.
- Support community-driven and partnered recreation and sport programming.
- Ensure emergency services align with town growth.
- Enhance outreach and engagement within our communities.

Community Engagement and Feedback

The following details the efforts to inform, engage and consult with the community throughout the development of council's strategic plan:

- Statistically valid phone survey
- Online survey
- Media release regarding survey
- Acton and Georgetown BIA and Chamber of Commerce newsletter(s)/eblast
- Targeted email campaign to community organizations (143) and Hillview membership (889)
- Focus groups
- Promotion of the draft plan to include:
 - Media release
 - Council agenda
 - Social media posts
 - E-blasts and targeted emails
 - E-newsletter articles (The Current, InvestHH, ICreate, Halton Hills Public Library, eFun)
 - Facility screens
 - Website banner with link
 - Advertising: Facebook, Coffee News and Spotify

With the release of the draft strategic plan, members of the public/stakeholders are invited to give feedback by providing comments via the Town's LetsTalk platform, which will be available November 21 – December 7, 2023.

Council members also have the opportunity for outreach through their individual channels.

Budget and Business Plans

As noted in ADMIN-2023-010, Council's Strategic Plan Development Process, the overall strategic plan process includes an implementation or execution phase that considers alignment to budgets and business plans (Figure 1 below). Given the concurrent timing of the strategic planning sessions and the budget/business plans work, staff have developed business plans that are generally consistent with priorities and objectives.

Staff are assessing current approved plans and strategies along with future proposed capital projects to document proposed initiatives that line up with and support the defined priorities. This will also take into consideration discussion with council members during the facilitated working session.

A preliminary list of proposed initiatives will be brought forward in the December 11th staff report. Given the multi-year aspect of a strategic plan, the initiatives will be monitored, reported on, and updated as necessary throughout this council term.

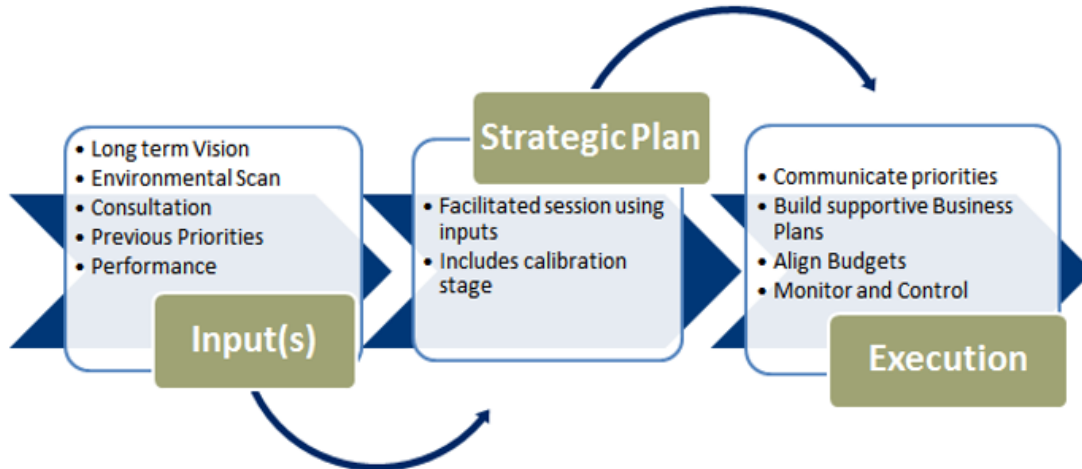


Figure 1: Process overview

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report is administrative in nature and the work completed on this project will ultimately result in an updated strategic plan.

RELATIONSHIP TO CLIMATE CHANGE:

This report is administrative in nature and does not directly impact or address climate change and the Town's Net Zero target. Considerations given to climate change, including adaptation, mitigation, or the corporate energy plan as part of the strategic plan priorities are separate from the process of developing Council's Strategic Plan.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Public Engagement has been conducted as outlined in this report. This includes community surveys, focus groups, opportunities to delegate, and information shared on the Town's website/engagement platform.

INTERNAL CONSULTATION:

Members of the Senior Management Team have been consulted throughout the process. Purchasing and Finance have also been consulted.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

This report will be funded through an existing approved budget source. Total available project funding is \$97,966. Financial implications related to implementing the priorities set as part of the strategic plan that is ultimately approved are not included in any funding related to this project.

Attachments:

Appendix A – Summary of Statistically Valid Survey

Appendix B – Halton Hills Strategic Plan Infographic DRAFT

Reviewed and approved by,

Richard Cockfield, Director of Strategic Planning

Chris Mills, Chief Administrative Officer