



## REPORT

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**TO:** Mayor Lawlor and Members of Council

**FROM:** Chris Mills, Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** April 3, 2024

**REPORT NO.:** ADMIN-2024-007

**SUBJECT:** Strategic Plan Implementation Framework and Mayor's Priorities

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### RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. ADMIN-2024-007, dated April 3, 2024, regarding the Strategic Plan Implementation Framework and Mayor's Priorities, be received;

AND FURTHER THAT Council approve the Terms of Reference for the Growth and Infrastructure Committee, and the Healthy Environment and Community Committees, as outlined in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3;

AND FURTHER THAT The Mayor appoint the members and Chair of the two identified committees;

AND FURTHER THAT a By-law enabling each Committee to have delegated authority to provide direction to staff be approved by Council.

### KEY POINTS:

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

- On December 11, 2023, Council approved its new Strategic Plan.
- Effective and efficient Strategic Plan implementation will require ongoing monitoring, action, resources and a new approach in the form of the Strategic Plan Implementation Framework.
- The new Framework will consist of two special committees of Council – the 1) Growth and Infrastructure Committee; and the 2) Healthy Environment and Community Committee, to provide a forum for in-depth discussion on options and/or direction on potential Strategic Plan implementation projects.

- The new Framework will support Strategic Plan implementation, operational efficiencies, and proactive monitoring and reporting.
- To supplement the work of the Growth and Infrastructure Committee, and the Healthy Environment and Community Committee, the Mayor has identified three special priority areas: 1) Realizing the Vision – Vision Georgetown Working Group; 2) Guelph Street Revitalization - Task Force; 3) Watershed Planning Committee (Black Creek).
- Strategic Plan implementation, as well as the supplementary Mayor's Priorities, will continue to require annual budget and departmental business plan integration, cross-departmental collaboration, and public engagement.

## **BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:**

### **1. Context**

Through [Report No. ADMIN-2023-034](#), at its December 11, 2023 meeting, Council approved its 2023-2026 Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is to guide decisions, planning and budgeting over this term of Council. The Strategic Plan consists of the Vision, Mission, Values, and Priority Areas that define the Town of Halton Hills, specifically:

- Thriving Economy
- Natural Areas and Heritage
- Infrastructure and Asset Management
- Safe and Welcoming Communities

The Strategic Plan provides a roadmap for Council, staff and the public on what should be done and sets expectations of Town departments for implementation of supporting activities.

The development of the Strategic Plan was a significant undertaking. A number of initiatives were proposed within its priority areas. These require ongoing monitoring, action and resources. Since the Strategic Plan was being completed in parallel with the preparation of the 2024 Budget and departmental Business Plans, many elements to support the Strategic Plan were captured either in the 2024 workplans or in the 10-year capital program. Beyond 2024, resourcing and timelines will be developed and assessed as part of the annual budget and business plan process.

### **2. Implementation Framework**

Historically, Strategic Plan items were included in Departmental Business Plans and funded through the annual budget process. On an annual basis, Strategic Plan progress was reported to Council, typically at the end of the year.

Going forward, integration with the annual Budget and Business Plan process will continue. However, based on close consultation between the CAO's Office and the Mayor's Office and resulting direction, a new Implementation Framework is being put in

place to ensure ongoing management, monitoring and measurable progress in implementing the Strategic Plan - through a new committee structure.

As shown in Appendix 1, the Framework's main elements are:

- Two special committees of Council:
  - Growth and Infrastructure Committee
  - Healthy Environment and Community Committee

The new Framework has a number of benefits, including:

- Ongoing and proactive Strategic Plan monitoring and reporting
- Dedicated staff support with senior Management oversight to drive Strategic Plan implementation
- Advancement of the Mayor's priorities – which supplement and are independent of the work of the two special committees
- Identifying and implementing potential operational efficiencies
- Direct Council engagement and involvement
- Increased public and stakeholder awareness of Strategic Plan implementation
- Continued amplification of cross-departmental collaboration
- Continued Strategic Plan integration with the annual Budget and Business Plans

In addition, the Mayor has identified three special priority areas realized through the establishment of the following:

- Realizing the Vision – Vision Georgetown Working Group
- Guelph Street Revitalization - Task Force
- Watershed Planning Committee (Black Creek)

## **2.1 Special Committees**

As shown in Appendix 1, the Growth and Infrastructure Committee will oversee the Strategic Plan priority areas of Thriving Economy and Infrastructure and Asset Management. There are close relationships and synergies between the latter two priority areas. Detailed Terms of Reference for the Growth and Infrastructure Committee are attached as Appendix 2.

The Healthy Environment and Community Committee will oversee the Strategic Plan priority areas of Natural Areas and Heritage and Safe and Welcoming Communities. There are close relationships and synergies between these two priority areas. Detailed Terms of Reference for the Healthy Environment and Community Committee are attached as Appendix 3.

The Committees will provide a forum for in-depth discussion on matters focused on economic development (e.g. expedite development of employment lands, business attraction and retention; target industry sectors; agricultural-business, tourism); growth (e.g. residential intensification, transportation, asset and infrastructure resiliency, planning and management); environment and natural areas (e.g. biodiversity, climate

mitigation and adaptation); parks; green spaces; green infrastructure; heritage (e.g. natural and built heritage resources); and meeting evolving community needs (e.g. facilities, programs, cultural services, emergency services, community development, outreach and engagement).

Among others, each committee's goals and objectives include:

- Provide opportunities for Council monitoring of programs, initiatives, services, plans, strategies and/or funding opportunities related to applicable Strategic Plan priority areas.
- Assist with action prioritization, and the review of requests for any new and/or unplanned initiatives, projects and/or partnerships, and their prioritization for potential Budget inclusion, as appropriate.
- Act as Council and community ambassadors to raise community and stakeholder awareness of Town actions related to Strategic Plan priorities.
- Provide direction to Town staff, where appropriate. Any direction having a staff resource and/or budget impact will require review and decision by Town Council.

Each committee will consist of one Councillor from each Ward, as appointed by the Mayor along with the Chair. The Mayor will serve as an ex-officio. External stakeholders and community members may be invited to attend meeting(s) as guests and/or to delegate.

Town staff will provide support to each committee. This will include staff with subject-matter expertise, including Department Heads, as appropriate. The overall strategic plan program will continue to be managed from the Office of the CAO. Clerks will provide overall committee oversight and administrative support.

The committees will meet quarterly.

The two committees are being established as 'special committees' of Council. As per the Town's Procedure By-law, the Mayor or Council may establish special committees to address specific business matters and shall meet as often as necessary to address such matters.

Special Committees shall submit either meeting minutes or an annual report to Council for receipt, at a minimum. The Terms of Reference for both special committees (Appendix 2 and 3) indicate that a summary of the Committee's actions and accomplishments will be presented to Council on an annual basis.

A committee will be able to provide staff direction, which will in turn be brought before Council through a recommendation report for all of Council to vote on.

## 2.2 Mayor's Priorities

In addition to the work of the Growth and Infrastructure Committee, and the Healthy Environment and Community Committee, the Mayor has identified three special priority areas or initiatives. The Mayor will chair and lead the political oversight of these initiatives, which involves the establishment of independent project-specific working groups, task forces and/or committees. That is, the two special committees outlined earlier will not direct any project-specific working groups, task forces and/or committees that may be established for the Mayor's priorities.

The Mayor's priorities are in keeping with the directions of Council's Strategic Plan. They are significant initiatives and are in addition to the Town's ongoing operations and services. The priorities focus on actions that have a special opportunity for success and can make a significant impact during this term of Council. They are intended to:

- Fast-track *environmental management*, enhance and celebrate our natural landscapes and waterways. Focus will be in Acton and north-west Esquesing Township and implementing the Black Creek Subwatershed Study;
- Create a vision and plan for commercial revitalization and residential development in the suburban *Guelph Street corridor*, and
- To implement the plan and *realize the vision of the new community* being built southwest of Georgetown.

Committees created for the Mayor's priorities will guide progress in each initiative and, as appropriate, provide commentary, advice and make recommendations to Council and/or the two Strategic Plan Committees. Membership will include Councillors, Town staff, residents, subject matter experts, stakeholders and community associations. Other participants will be invited to join in on an ad hoc basis as the subject matter warrants.

Meeting agendas will be developed by lead staff members, the committee chair (Mayor) and Vice Chair (a Council member). Meeting frequency and schedules will be governed by the issues to be addressed.

As prepared by the Mayor, the Mayor's Priorities area are:

### 2.2.1 Realizing the Vision – Vision Georgetown Working Group

**Goal:** To implement the community planning principles and values contained in the Vision Georgetown Secondary Plan as the building industry undertakes planning and construction in partnership with the Town. To fast track, streamline approvals and expedite decisions so that construction can proceed efficiently. The developers are aiming to complete the block planning and subdivision phases by the end of 2024.

**Subject Matter:** community name, energy planning and implementation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, parkland acquisition and natural assets, and other matters as they arise.

**Staff Lead:** Planning and Development, Support: Transportation & PW, Recreation and Parks, Business, Environment and Culture

**Participation:** Two Councillors with history of Vision Georgetown; plus one local Councillor from any Ward. Total elected officials: 4

Town staff, landowners, Core working group of 8-10 people

By invitation, school board, stakeholders and subject matter experts based on topics being discussed, local businesses in the energy sector, Halton Hills Climate Action, Halton Environmental Network, etc.

**Meeting Schedule:** monthly

### **2.2.2 Guelph Street Revitalization – Task Force**

**Goal:** To develop an aspirational long-term vision and develop a strategy for redevelopment and revitalization of the Guelph Street corridor in Georgetown for input into the Secondary Plan. This group will also assume the role of the community engagement committee - name and function will be defined in the Terms of Reference for Planning and Development's Guelph Street Secondary Plan project.

**Subject Matter:** Principles of complete streets and place making, housing needs and targets, mixed-use, intensification, green development, suburban strip-commercial redesign and redevelopment. Integrate a robust economic development perspective and broad/innovative community engagement.

**Staff Lead:** Planning and Development, Support: Business, Environment and Culture, and other staff as needed.

**Participation:** Two or three Ward 3 and 4 Councillors. Total elected officials: 3 or 4

Town staff as appropriate, Secondary Plan consultants, area property owners, Chamber of Commerce, major real estate agencies, potential investors, adjacent business community, area residents, etc. Invitations for participation will be determined as the secondary plan and project charter is designed.

**Meeting Schedule:** monthly

### **2.2.3 Watershed Planning Committee (Black Creek)**

**Goal:** To implement recommendations of the Black Creek Subwatershed Study in partnership with Halton Region and CVC, which will, in turn, promote environmental policies and action to protect and enhance the Credit River watershed. Future action will include a subcommittee which guides the development of a master plan for Fairy Lake

and Prospect Park, including outdoor education and recreation; water, shoreline and park management; biodiversity, flora and fauna.

**Subject Matter:** Black Creek Subwatershed Study, Fairy Lake Water Quality Study, Recreation Master Plan, SNAP proposal by CVC, source water protection initiatives, Halton Region water and wastewater management, green infrastructure and natural assets, climate adaptation and mitigation measures, biodiversity, parks acquisition and facility plans

**Staff Lead:** Business, Environment & Culture, Support: Transportation & Public Works and Recreation & Parks staff.

**Participation:** Local Councillors from wards one and two (one each) plus one councillor from either ward three or four. Total elected officials: 4

Town staff, CVC, Source Water Protection staff, Halton Region water and wastewater staff, area residents, including farmers and rural landowners, Acton Agricultural Society, Acton BIA , major area businesses and environmental groups.

**Meeting Schedule:** monthly

Once the subwatershed implementation plan has been established, a sub-committee will be formed to focus on a Master Plan for Fairy Lake and Prospect Park.

Ward one Councillors would all participate, plus the Mayor and perhaps another councillor from another Ward. Recreation and Parks will take lead on the Fairy Lake and Prospect Park master plan subcommittee.

### 3. Next Steps

Key next steps include:

- Confirming membership for each committee.
- Scheduling the first meetings of the two special committees.
- Preparing project charters for the Mayor's Priorities.

#### Agriculture Round Table

Beyond the Framework outlined in this report, staff recognize that at its December 13, 2023 meeting, Council approved [Resolution No. 2023-0251](#) which, in part, directed staff to review and develop policies that recognize and enhance the role of the farming community in maintaining key natural heritage features, good farming practices, climate change, and viability of farming.

A meeting with appropriate stakeholders will be scheduled to discuss Terms of Reference for an 'Agricultural Round Table'. Roundtable members will include the

Mayor, Ward 2 councilors (Regional and Local), and members of the agricultural community.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

This report is directly related to the effective and efficient implementation of the entire Strategic Plan. The new Framework is critical to the Strategic Plan's success, proactive progress monitoring and reporting, integration with the annual budget process and departmental business plans, and public engagement.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO CLIMATE CHANGE:**

This report impacts and/or helps address climate change and the Town's resiliency through climate adaptation.

Actions taken related to climate change elements, including adaptation, mitigation, the legislated corporate energy plan and the mandatory asset management planning are supported by pre-existing Council-approved plans and strategies. While these are separate from the Strategic Plan, their implementation supplements and aligns with the general direction of the Strategic Plan, especially related to the priorities of Thriving Economy, Natural Areas and Heritage, and Infrastructure and Asset Management.

In addition, through the Mayor's Priorities, there are opportunities to operationalize environmental stewardship and climate elements.

The new implementation Framework also integrates the intent behind the establishment of a new Environment and Climate Governance Framework to facilitate internal and external coordination, and to support, enable and leverage community actions, as endorsed in principle by Council on May 29, 2023 via report [BEC-2023-005](#).

### **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:**

Public Engagement will be required; consultation with Communications staff to follow.

Progress in implementing the Strategic Plan will be widely shared with the community. A key change from past reporting on the Strategic Plan will be a shift away from a stand-alone annual report to a more dynamic and ongoing reporting approach that will utilize the new committees. The scope and tools selected to maximize public awareness are planned to expand over time, ultimately leading to the launch of a web-based interactive status dashboard.

Moving in this direction is a significant shift in the management of the Strategic Plan. By regularly reporting on and communicating, the Town is making an important first step towards being proactive throughout the year on the Strategic Plan, rather than relying on an annual monitoring report. This shift requires recognizing that this will be a work in progress and hence will take some time to be refined. That said, the new Framework sets the right path forward.



**INTERNAL CONSULTATION:**

Close consultation took place with the Mayor's Office, as well as with the Senior Management Team.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

This report has the potential to require funding in a future budget year and therefore needs to be referred to budget committee for tracking purposes.

It is anticipated that resources (operating and capital) will be required to effectively and efficiently implement Council's Strategic Plan, as well as the Mayor's priorities. Pending the launch of the new committee framework and committee discussions, priorities, deliverables and timelines will be developed, and resulting recommendations will be brought forward for Council's consideration through the 2025 Budget process, as well as future budgets, as appropriate.

Reviewed and approved by,

Chris Mills, Chief Administrative Officer