

Tillsonburg  
CONNECTED. ENRICHED. INSPIRED.

# Community Strategic Plan



2021 – 2030



# Message from the Mayor

This is a Community Strategic Plan and hearing from local residents, businesses, and community groups was essential to develop the priorities identified in this document. Even during challenging times associated with the global pandemic the focus remained on ensuring every opportunity was available for effective and efficient public engagement. I am pleased to report that more than 400 individuals from throughout our community contributed their ideas. Whether you completed our community survey, prepared submissions from your organization, or participated in a focus group, please be assured that every contribution was carefully considered and helped to formulate the eventual roadmap that will guide our community over the next ten years.

As we listened to our community, key themes emerged such as ensuring affordable and attainable housing options, enhancing our trails and community amenities, attracting and retaining strong employment opportunities, fostering community partnerships, and maintaining our family-oriented small-town appeal. These needs are addressed within our Community Strategic Plan with tangible priority projects and timelines. Municipal accountability and regular community updates will remain key to delivering on the framework of this living document.

The Mission, Vision and Values identified in this comprehensive plan reflect who we are

On behalf of Municipal Council and the Town of Tillsonburg, I am pleased to present our new Community Strategic Plan.

as a community, where we have come from, and importantly focuses on where we are going to enhance and protect the legacy of our unique community.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Town employees for contributing their ideas during this process. Our team at the Town is proud to serve the people of Tillsonburg and demonstrate their commitment to the community on a daily basis.

We are grateful for the contributions and guidance of our community as we continue to strive for local government excellence. I hope you will take the time to review the objectives we've presented in this document and the aspirational goals as contributed by our community partners and hold us accountable for results.

This Community Strategic Plan, as reinforced by the population of the Town of Tillsonburg, is designed to guide the municipality over the next several years, while remaining flexible to ensure opportunities remain available to succeed and prosper within the overall scope of our shared collective Vision.

We look forward to continuing to work with you to build a Tillsonburg that is connected, enriched and inspired.

**Sincerely,**

**Stephen Molnar, Mayor of Tillsonburg**

# Town Council

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# What is a Strategic Plan?

The Town of Tillsonburg Community Strategic Plan provides a roadmap for municipal projects, priorities and initiatives by working with residents, businesses, community partners and employees to answer the following five questions:

*Vision Statement*

1

What are we working toward as a community?

*Mission Statement*

2

What is the Town of Tillsonburg's role?

*Corporate Values*

3

Which values are most important in serving Tillsonburg?

*Goals,  
Strategic Directions,  
Priority Projects*

4

Where should we focus our energy and attention?

*Performance  
Measurement  
Framework*

5

How will we know the plan is successful?





# Vision

What are we working toward as a community?

“Our vision for Tillsonburg is to grow a vibrant and engaged community built on partnerships and entrepreneurial spirit. The vision includes diverse housing, employment options, modern amenities and sustainable growth that remains true to our culture and heritage and positions the community as a regional centre.”



# Mission

What is the Town of Tillsonburg’s role?

“The Town of Tillsonburg strives for excellence in local government by providing efficient and effective municipal services, facilitating partnerships, attracting and supporting businesses, promoting local heritage and identity, advancing the community as a regional centre and demonstrating results to the community.”

# Corporate Values

## Which values are most important in serving Tillsonburg?

### *Serving Our Community*

We have heard from our community that the following values are most important when interacting with Town representatives and employees.

- **Integrity** – Doing what is right and making decisions in the best interest of the community.
- **Service** – Providing exceptional customer experiences and effective municipal services.
- **Accountability** – Demonstrating value for tax dollars and visible progress on municipal initiatives.
- **Efficiency** – Making each tax dollar go as far as possible.
- **Transparency** – An open government that is forthcoming with information and decisions.
- **Respect** – Valuing the role that each resident, business and organization plays in making Tillsonburg a great community.
- **Communication** – Raising awareness for municipal services, initiatives and decisions and offering opportunities for the community to become involved.
- **Professionalism** – Information and services provided by highly knowledgeable and skilled municipal experts.
- **Consistency** – Clear policies and procedures that are applied with fairness for all residents, businesses and community partners.

Values are the behaviours that govern how individuals in an organization interact with each other and their customers.

### *Working as one team*

To succeed in serving our community, our team prioritizes the following values when working together.

- **Respect** – Valuing the role that each employee, regardless of title or position, plays in making Tillsonburg a great community.
- **Teamwork** – Breaking down silos and working as one team in service to the community.
- **Service** – Providing exceptional customer experiences and effective municipal services.
- **Accountability** – Demonstrating value for tax dollars and visible progress on municipal initiatives.
- **Integrity** – Doing what is right and making decisions in the best interest of the community.
- **Professionalism** – Investing in the growth of employees to deliver value to Tillsonburg.
- **Communication** – Sharing knowledge across the organization to engage employees and meet the needs of customers and partners.
- **Transparency** – An open government that is forthcoming with information and decisions.
- **Trust** – Relying on colleagues for responsive support to meet customer needs and achieve shared goals.



# Corporate Goals

Where should we focus our energy and attention?

The following goals guide the implementation of the Town of Tillsonburg's Community Strategic Plan:

1

*Lifestyle and Amenities*

Within the community Tillsonburg will strive to offer all residents the amenities, services and attractions they require to enjoy balanced lifestyles.

2

*Customer Service, Communication and Engagement*

The Town of Tillsonburg will strive for excellence and accountability in government, providing effective and efficient services, information, and opportunities to shape municipal initiatives.

3

*Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion*

Through community and regional partnerships, Tillsonburg will attract and retain a diverse range of businesses, creating employment opportunities for residents and a balanced tax base.

4

*Community Growth*

The Town of Tillsonburg will accommodate and support sustainable growth.

5

*Connectivity and Transportation*

Tillsonburg will strive to improve connectivity for residents and businesses through traditional and digital infrastructure.

The actions and priorities under each of these goals are described on the following pages.

# Lifestyle and Amenities

## *Goal:*

Within the community, Tillsonburg will strive to offer residents the amenities, services and attractions they require to enjoy balanced lifestyles.

## *Strategic Directions:*

- Work with Oxford County and community partners to ensure an adequate supply of affordable, attainable housing options.
- Provide an expanded, accessible network of parks and trails.
- Update municipal sports facilities consistent with modern standards.
- Develop a robust, long-term asset management plan to inform evidence-based decisions regarding the maintenance, rehabilitation and replacement of community facilities.
- Facilitate the enhancement and diversification of retail and dining opportunities in the downtown.
- Increase opportunities to enjoy culture, events and leisure activities in Tillsonburg.
- Maintain and enhance programs and facilities to support an active, engaged senior population.
- Maintain and enhance programs and facilities to support an active, engaged youth population.
- Target new programs, services, amenities and attractions that will be a magnet for young families.
- Expand community partnerships in the delivery of programs and amenities.
- Preserve and naturalize Lake Lisgar and its surroundings as a community attraction.

## Priority Projects

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### *Ongoing Projects*

- Physician recruitment program
- New playgrounds construction
- Trail system upgrades

### *Immediate Term*

*(1–3 year implementation start)*

- Community Centre rehabilitation
- Enhanced tree planting
- Affordable housing collaboration with Oxford County
- Partnership for a new splash pad
- Secure a new walk-in clinic
- Long-term care advocacy
- Assessing Police Services\*
- THI- MSA & MOU\*
- Filming Location Registry\*

### *Short Term*

*(3–5 year implementation start)*

- Property standards review & enforcement plan
- Create additional community events

### *Medium Term*

*(5–10 year implementation start)*

- Feasibility study for increased/enhanced cultural amenities

\* added in updated version



# Customer Service, Communication and Engagement

## *Goal:*

The Town of Tillsonburg will strive for excellence and accountability in government, providing effective and efficient services, information, and opportunities to shape municipal initiatives.

## *Strategic Directions:*

- Continue to develop digital service delivery while maintaining counter and telephone channels.
- Develop a communications strategy to increase awareness of Council decisions and municipal programs, projects and services.
- Increase opportunities and promotion for public engagement in municipal initiatives.
- Engage community groups, including advisory committees and service organizations, in shaping municipal initiatives.
- Enhance employee engagement and training as the foundation for exceptional customer service.
- Explore opportunities for service efficiencies in partnership with adjacent municipalities.
- Advocate for community needs with other levels of government.
- Position Tillsonburg as a leader in the municipal sector.

## Priority Projects

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### *Ongoing Projects*

- Continued roll-out of enterprise-wide workflow management
- County-wide service delivery study implementation

### *Immediate Term*

*(1–3 year implementation start)*

- Consolidated Town Hall initiative
- Navigation improvements on municipal website
- Mobile application for reporting and service requests
- Employee Engagement Strategy
- Volunteer Recognition Program
- Youth Engagement Strategy and Youth Advisory Committee
- Consolidated customer service counter/Corporate Office Lease Renewal\*
- Ground Lease\*

### *Short Term*

*(3–5 year implementation start)*

- Multi-year budgeting
- Financial Sustainability Plan
- Municipal service review

### *Medium Term*

*(5–10 year implementation start)*

- Environmental Sustainability Plan

\* added in updated version

# Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion

## *Goal:*

Through community and regional partnerships, Tillsonburg will attract and retain a diverse range of businesses, creating employment opportunities for residents and a balanced tax base.

## *Strategic Directions:*

- Continue to streamline and expedite the building approval process.
- Instill an “open for business” culture across the corporation that prioritizes economic development and business attraction.
- Ensure adequate supply of “shovel ready” land for business attraction and expansion.
- Develop a “made in Tillsonburg” approach to education, training and development based on the workforce needs of current and prospective employers.
- Support local businesses in post-COVID-19 recovery.
- Explore the feasibility of an enhanced tourism product offering in Tillsonburg.
- Facilitate attainable housing options for local employees.

## Priority Projects

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### *Ongoing Projects*

- Marketing and build out of Van Norman Innovation Park
- Continued roll-out and resourcing for Cloud-based permit application system
- Continued promotion and facilitation of COVID-19 business support programs
- Increase diversity in manufacturing and other key sectors

### *Immediate Term*

*(1–3 year implementation start)*

- Boundary expansion initiative
- Economic Development Strategy update
- Corporate-wide rapid response approach for new business opportunities

### *Short Term*

*(3–5 year implementation start)*

- Build out of new industrial land purchase



# Community Growth

## *Goal:*

The Town of Tillsonburg will accommodate and support sustainable growth.

## *Strategic Directions:*

- Promote, preserve and enhance the downtown core as the retail centre and community hub for Tillsonburg.
- Continue to offer relevant, leading incentives for revitalization and diversification in the downtown and throughout Tillsonburg.
- Pursue the acquisition of additional municipal land to accommodate growth.
- Plan and develop a long-term financing strategy for new services and infrastructure to support growth.
- Work with Oxford County and the development community to proactively plan for a variety of housing options that are affordable and attainable for current and prospective residents.

## Priority Projects

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### *Ongoing Projects*

- Replenish and grow municipal reserves
- Growth of emergency services

### *Immediate Term*

*(1–3 year implementation start)*

- Boundary expansion initiative
- Development Charges Study
- \*Energy Capacity Issue
- \*Project Big Swing
- Enhanced development standards that benefit the community (including tree planting, affordable housing, walkability, livability, connectivity)
- Identify opportunities for infill development

### *Short Term*

*(3–5 year implementation start)*

- Enhanced public engagement in planning policies and placemaking
- Recreation Master Plan

### *Medium Term*

*(5–10 year implementation start)*

- Downtown Parking Strategy
- Resourcing review to service growth

# Connectivity and Transportation

## *Goal:*

Tillsonburg residents and businesses will be connected to each other, regional networks, and the world through effective traditional and digital infrastructure.

## *Strategic Directions:*

- Develop a multi-modal transportation network with improved connectivity to the 401 and VIA Rail.
- Leverage the municipal airport more effectively to increase access, visibility and business activity in Tillsonburg.
- Provide alternatives to automobile travel through active transportation and public transit.
- Develop a robust, long-term asset management plan to inform evidence-based decisions on the maintenance, rehabilitation and replacement of municipal infrastructure.
- Continue to support and advocate for reliable, affordable and universal access to broadband services.

## Priority Projects

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### *Ongoing Projects*

- Town participation in regional transit initiative
- Asset Management Plan

### *Immediate Term*

*(1–3 year implementation start)*

- Airport Master Plan and implementation

### *Short Term*

*(3–5 year implementation start)*

- Transportation Master Plan (includes investigation of truck route and Concession Street extension)
- Electric vehicle infrastructure study

### *Medium Term*

*(5–10 year implementation start)*

- Master drainage planning study

# Performance Framework

## How will we know the plan is successful?

### What gets measured, gets done.

In addition to demonstrating progress on the priority projects listed in this document, the Town of Tillsonburg is committed to tracking and reporting the following performance indicators on an annual basis to monitor Tillsonburg's progress toward community goals.

#### *Lifestyle and Amenities*

- Average percentage of household income spent on housing
- Proportion of residents in core housing need
- Number of trees planted
- Total kilometers of trail network
- Total paved kilometers of trail network
- Total kilometers of cycling network
- Kilometers of trail network per capita
- Acres of parkland maintained
- Acres of parkland per capita
- Average household distance to a municipal park
- Average age of play structures
- Accessibility – number of compliant play structures
- Facilities condition rating
- Accessibility – number of compliant facilities

- Percentage of downtown storefronts as dining and retail
- Number of annual community events
- Number of community partnerships
- Net new community physicians
- Number of recreation program registrations
- Waterpark utilization
- Number of facility rentals
- Prime time facilities utilization rate
- Off-peak facilities utilization rate

#### *Customer Service*

- Number of services available online
- Number of services available through centralized customer service counter

#### *Communication, Engagement*

- Customer satisfaction rate
- Employee engagement rate
- Annual local tax increase
- Rolling four-year average tax increase
- Average time for service resolution
- Average number of monthly visits to municipal website
- Number of public engagement campaigns



# Performance Framework

## How will we know the plan is successful?

### *Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion*

- Number of jobs created through new investment
- Number of jobs retained
- Number of business starts/firm creation growth
- Number of net new business starts
- Percentage of tax base related to employment
- New commercial/industrial assessment
- Total acres of employment land
- Total acres of employment land available for development
- Acres sold/developed in Van Norman Innovation Park
- Working age population, 15 to 64 years of age
- Employment participation rate
- Number of local post-secondary training programs

### *Community Growth*

- Population growth
- Taxable assessment growth
- Value of construction activity
- Number of building permit applications
- Total value of building permits
- Downtown vacancy rate

- Average fire response times, in minutes
- Number of registered heritage properties
- Acres of land available for industrial development
- Acres of land available for commercial development
- Acres of land available for residential development
- Number of housing units created as rent geared to income
- Number of single-family detached units
- Number of semi-detached units
- Number of rowhouse units
- Number of multi-residential units
- Number of secondary units
- Rental vacancy rate
- Value of funding applications approved through Community Improvement Plan
- Average building permit approval time, in days
- Number of public input opportunities in planning issues

# Performance Framework

How will we know the plan is successful?

## *Connectivity and Transportation*

- Average road condition rating (Pavement Condition Index)
- Average bridge condition rating (OSIM)
- Number of road lane kilometers maintained
- Number of road land kilometers resurfaced or reconstructed
- Number of sidewalk kilometers maintained
- Number of sidewalk kilometers rehabilitated
- Percentage of properties with access to high-speed internet
- Number of passenger trips, T:GO in-town
- Number of passenger trips, T:GO inter-community
- Kilometers of water/wastewater distribution pipes
- Kilometers of stormwater collection pipes
- Number of stormwater collection ponds
- Number of watermain breaks
- Number of sewer back-ups
- Number of sinkholes
- Number of potholes
- Aircraft movement
- Airport hangar square footage
- Total rail volume
- Number of companies accessing rail



# Acknowledgements

**Thank you** to the over 400 local residents who participated in the Town of Tillsonburg's strategic planning process. From improving local amenities such as the Community Centre and trail network, to strengthening community connections, to creating opportunities for youth, every contribution was considered and drove the development of this final Community Strategic Plan.

**Thank you** to local businesses and service clubs who took the time to participate in focus group sessions. Feedback from local leaders was instrumental in determining priorities related to supporting businesses and facilitating community partnerships.

**Thank you** to the many employees who shared their views and ideas. With a steadfast commitment to the people, businesses and organizations in Tillsonburg, employees are important contributors to the community's success.

**Thank you** to Members of Tillsonburg Town Council for their leadership, guidance and community commitment during the strategic planning process. Together with employees and the community, Council has established a forward-thinking vision for Tillsonburg, a roadmap for moving the community forward, and a commitment to demonstrate results.

