

# TOWNSHIP OF NORTH HURON 2020-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN



Prepared by LURA Consulting

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# FORWARD

## A Message from the Reeve

On behalf of Council and staff, we are pleased to present the Township of North Huron's Strategic Plan for 2020-2023. This Strategic Plan presents a four-year roadmap for the Township of North Huron, designed to continue to advance the municipality towards prosperity, sustainable economic development, efficient services and competitive positioning. This Strategic Plan provides a new framework, setting the stage for decision-making, priority-setting, resource allocation and ongoing performance management in the Township of North Huron for the next several years.

It has been exciting to see this plan develop. Throughout the process, we received input from residents, businesses, industry, staff and Council through an inclusive consultation process that included community conversations and an online survey. Thank you to all of those who participated in the process. Your input has been invaluable as it has resulted in a strong plan that will help steer us over the coming years. Our Strategic Plan is truly a reflection of the aspirations we collectively hold for our "Community of Communities".



This process has given us the opportunity to come together, talk about what we love and value in our amazing Township, as well as identify what we would like to see change and improve. However, this Strategic Plan is just the start. The real work will be in the plan's implementation, with community partnerships and continued engagement playing a key role. There are many positive initiatives already underway in North Huron and we have a lot to look forward to. As a Council, we are excited by this new chapter, and look forward to working together to continue to build the Township of North Huron into the municipality that we can all be proud of.

Thank you for being a part of our strategic planning exercise and let's continue to work together towards ensuring a successful future.

Bernie Bailey, Reeve

## INTRODUCTION

The Township of North Huron is a municipality located within Huron County. North Huron is a community of communities comprised of East Wawanosh, Blyth and Wingham and has strong rural roots and is home to approximately 5,000 people. The Township boasts excellent farmland, engaged volunteer groups, beautiful and rugged landscapes, and modern and productive agricultural businesses. Residents and visitors appreciate the plethora of services available in a Township that also offers a small, hometown appeal. The lure of the Alice Munro connection attracts visitors from across North America and beyond to experience the history of the Township.



North Huron's new Strategic Plan charts forward a clear path for the Township, as we work towards our new vision for the future of our municipality: The Township of North Huron is a prosperous and engaged municipality that welcomes visitors, families, and residents through strong agriculture, development, culture, and tourism.

This Plan recognizes the importance of identifying attainable goals and a clear

path to achieving those goals. Over a three-month period, Council and staff worked in collaboration to develop the plan, with community members contributing throughout the planning process by providing input to the vision, mission, goals, and actions contained within this document.



## How to Read this Plan

The Strategic Plan is composed of the following pieces that together create the framework:

**VISION** - An aspirational statement that provides a high-level outline of the Township's direction. It defines where we would like to see ourselves in the future.

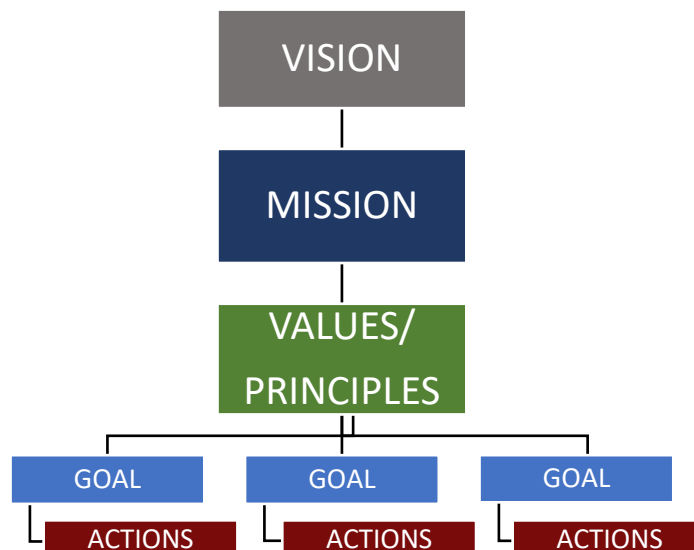
**MISSION** - Defines what we do, for whom and why. It is our purpose statement.

**VALUES/ PRINCIPLES** - Operating principles and values that guide our conduct and actions as we implement our strategic plan.

**GOALS** - An aspirational statement specific to the six themes of the strategic plan, as follows:

- **Economy** – encompasses business, housing, industry, tourism, agriculture, employment, growth, and jobs.
- **Community** – encompasses arts, culture, heritage and education.
- **Governance and Modernization** - encompasses community engagement, communications, accessibility, fiscal responsibility, accountability and internal development.
- **Infrastructure** – encompasses roads, buildings and other capital assets.
- **Services** – encompasses service areas including day care, health and social services and recreation.
- **Environment** – encompasses air and water quality, land, waste and energy.

**ACTIONS** - These are the specific steps that will occur to reach the stated goals. Each goal has a clear set of actions with a list of intended outcomes (how the action will help the Township reach the goal), who is involved (collaborators that will need to participate in the action in order for it to be implemented), timelines and metrics (if applicable). Actions are listed as ongoing, short-term (2020), medium-term (2021-2022), and long-term (2023).



## **Our Strategic Framework**

### **VISION**

The Township of North Huron is a prosperous and engaged municipality that welcomes visitors, families, and residents through strong agriculture, development, culture, and tourism.

### **MISSION**

The Township of North Huron strives to offer an affordable and sustainable high-quality of life by delivering excellent and efficient services to our residents, businesses and visitors.

### **VALUES**

The following Corporate Values will guide the Township of North Huron over the next four years:

- Service Excellence
- Teamwork
- Accountability and Transparency
- Respect
- Integrity

### **PRINCIPLES**

Through integrity and responsible leadership, North Huron implements and maintains policies, practices and regulations that are:

- Focused on exceptional and efficient service;
- Designed to be inclusive and accessible;
- Informed through meaningful and transparent community engagement;
- Focused on growth, development and modernization while being fiscally responsible;
- Aligned with our neighbours, fostering fair and balanced partnerships.

## GOALS AND ACTIONS

### 1. Economy

Our goal is to build a stronger economy through residential growth; retail, commercial and industrial development; tourism; and thriving agriculture.

#	Action	Intended Outcome	Who	Timing	Metrics
1.1	Improve the efficiency and timeliness of the development approval system.	An expedited building process within the Township.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAO (lead)</li> <li>• North Huron Development Team</li> </ul>	Short-term	Reduced timeframe from the submission of an application to the issuing of a building permit
1.2	Complete and maintain an inventory of properties in the municipality (and promote them as appropriate) with a focus on municipally owned lands that could be developed.	An increase in the amount of land that is readily available for development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAO</li> <li>• Council</li> <li>• North Huron Economic Development Committee</li> </ul>	Short-term (completion)  Ongoing (maintenance)	Inventory completed (yes/no)  Inventory maintained (yes/no)
1.3	Collaborate with Huron County to promote business/development opportunities and tourism in North Huron, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing information to attract new businesses, industry and residents to North Huron</li> <li>• Designing and promoting a North Huron experience/tour that would take visitors to notable destinations throughout the area.</li> </ul>	An increase in the number of businesses in North Huron.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Services Department</li> <li>• Council</li> <li>• North Huron Economic Development Committee</li> <li>• Huron County Economic Development</li> </ul>	Medium-term	New collaborative promotions implemented (yes/no)
1.4	Determine the future related to the Wingham Airport.	To make the best use of the Township's assets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Works Department</li> <li>• Council</li> </ul>	Medium-term	Next steps determined (yes/no)

#	Action	Intended Outcome	Who	Timing	Metrics
1.5	Review the current amount of funding being allocated to Grants under the North Huron Community Improvement Plan.	Improved aesthetics in downtown areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clerk's Department</li> <li>• Council</li> <li>• North Huron Economic Development Committee</li> </ul>	Medium-term	Number of dollars allocated to Community Improvement Plans annually
1.6	Establish a visitor information centre at a physical location/kiosk.	To inform visitors of the many different tourist opportunities available in North Huron.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Services Department</li> <li>• Council</li> </ul>	Long-term	Visitor information centre established (yes/no)
1.7	Facilitate the development of Hutton Heights.	Enable development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAO</li> <li>• Economic Development Committee</li> <li>• Council</li> </ul>	Short-term	Development occurred (yes/no)



## 2. Community

Our goal is to be a vibrant and welcoming community that is proud of its roots, fosters volunteerism, has a strong arts and cultural presence, and supports community initiatives and special events.

#	Action	Intended Outcome	Who	Timing	Metrics
2.1	Develop a more efficient events approval policy process and market community events in North Huron.	To enable the continued success of local events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Services Department</li> <li>Council</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Amount of support offered (i.e. financial, in-kind, etc.)
2.2	Develop a process/program to recognize volunteers for their contributions to the community.	To recognize the work of volunteers and encourage continued volunteerism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council</li> <li>Community Groups and Organizations</li> </ul>	Long-term	Program established (yes/no)
2.3	Investigate opportunities to be recognized as a Youth Friendly Community.	To enable a youth voice in local discussions and encourage youth involvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council</li> <li>Community Services Department</li> <li>Community Groups and Organizations</li> </ul>	Long-term	Opportunities presented to Council (yes/no)
2.4	Prioritize accessibility in the Township's buildings and services.	To create spaces and services where anyone can participate fully in Township activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council</li> <li>Clerk's Department</li> <li>Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee</li> <li>Provincial Government</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Individuals with accessibility concerns are able to access municipal offerings (yes/no)
2.5	Complete a Community Safety and Well-Being Plan.	To proactively address risks to promote safety in our community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clerk's Department</li> <li>Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Working Group</li> <li>Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Advisory Committee</li> </ul>	Short-Term	Plan completed (yes/no)

### 3. Governance and Modernization

Our goal is to be a fiscally sustainable, transparent, and forward-thinking municipality that works with its residents and stakeholders through communications and community engagement.

#	Action	Intended Outcome	Who	Timing	Metrics
3.1	Support advocacy efforts for the expansion of high-speed internet.	Ability to access to high-speed internet for all residents and businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council</li> <li>• Huron County Council</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Advocacy work undertaken (yes/no)
3.2	Implement Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) requirements and Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) requirements.	Ensure compliance of municipal facilities and operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council</li> <li>• Clerk's Department</li> <li>• Facilities Department</li> <li>• Recreation Department</li> <li>• Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee</li> <li>• Provincial Government</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Number of requirements implemented.
3.3	Support the Association of Municipalities of Ontario's advocacy efforts for support of rural community needs.	Increase in government financial support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Advocacy work undertaken (yes/no)
3.4	Develop a Community Engagement and Communications Strategy for the Township.	Increase resident engagement in municipal initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council</li> <li>• Senior Management Team</li> <li>• Consultants</li> </ul>	Medium-term	Strategy developed (yes/no)
3.5	Update the Township's digital processes (incl. website, online payment options, etc.).	Ensure efficient operations and service delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Departments</li> <li>• Council</li> </ul>	Short-term	Digital processes updated (yes/no)
3.6	Implement professional development plans for staff.	Support growth, development and retention of Township staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Management Team</li> <li>• All Staff</li> </ul>	Medium-term	Plans implemented (yes/no)
3.7	Evaluate the current size and structure of Council.	Ensure Council is the right size and structure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clerk's Department</li> <li>• Council</li> </ul>	Medium-term	Evaluation undertaken (yes/no)

#### 4. Infrastructure

Our goal is to be a municipality with well-maintained and thoughtfully planned infrastructure.

#	Action	Intended Outcome	Who	Timing	Metrics
4.1	Replace the current standpipe in Wingham.	Necessary replacement of aged infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Works Department</li> <li>Council</li> </ul>	Medium-term	Standpipe is replaced (yes/no)
4.2	Develop a fleet replacement schedule.	Allow for appropriate capital forecasting and planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Works Department</li> <li>Fire Department</li> <li>Recreation Department</li> </ul>	Short-term	Replacement Plan adopted by Council (yes/no)
4.3	Complete infrastructure mapping of all infrastructure.	Update current maps of infrastructure within the Township.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning Department</li> <li>Public Works Department</li> </ul>	Short-term	Infrastructure is mapped (yes/no)
4.4	Update an Asset Management Plan that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A review of current condition of Township facilities and needs assessment</li> <li>An audit of road conditions and related infrastructure, and a road resurfacing schedule</li> <li>A 10-year Capital Plan to establish savings targets to meet capital management needs</li> </ul>	Ensure that asset replacement schedule is known to allow for capital forecasting and planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finance Department (lead)</li> <li>Senior Management Team</li> <li>Council</li> </ul>	Long-term	Asset Management Plan updated (yes/no)
4.5	Determine next steps related to surplus municipal infrastructure/assets.	Support the vision of the municipality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council</li> <li>Public Works Department</li> </ul>	Medium-Term	Next steps determined (yes/no)

## 5. Services

Our goal is to offer high–quality and well-balanced services that create a sense of belonging, support community well-being, promote safety, and encourage healthy and active lifestyles.

#	Action	Intended Outcome	Who	Timing	Metrics
5.1	Continue to be involved in physician recruitment efforts.	Reduce resident to physician ratio locally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council</li> <li>• Wingham and District Hospital</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Involvement in recruitment efforts (yes/no)
5.2	Continue to deliver public education, fire prevention and fire service programs.	Ensure safety of residents and visitors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council</li> <li>• Fire Department</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Continued Fire Department programs and services (yes/no)
5.3	Review service agreements with neighbouring municipalities and amend as appropriate.	Ensure that North Huron receives fair compensation for the services it provides.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAO (lead)</li> <li>• Senior Management Team</li> <li>• Council</li> </ul>	Short-term	Service agreements amended (yes/no)
5.4	Conduct a service delivery review contingent on external funding.	Find efficiencies in service delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Management Team</li> <li>• Council</li> <li>• Consultants</li> <li>• Public</li> </ul>	Short-term	Review is completed (yes/no)
5.5	Support local housing initiatives.	Help lower-income earners and families. access and/or afford housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council</li> <li>• Huron County</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Housing initiatives are supported (yes/no)
5.6	Explore the feasibility of expanding daycare services in Blyth.	Establish sustainable daycare services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Care Services Department</li> <li>• Council</li> <li>• Huron County</li> </ul>	Medium-term	Feasibility is explored (yes/no)
5.7	Explore the feasibility of the relocation of the Blyth Library to a location where the Township is not required to pay rent.	Offer a one-stop shop for community services and limit the Township's expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Management Team</li> <li>• Council</li> </ul>	Medium-term	Feasibility is explored (yes/no)
5.8	Develop a Recreation Master Plan.	Establish a long-term vision and approach for Township-provided recreation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreation Department</li> </ul>	Short-term	Plan is developed (yes/no)

## 6. Environment

Our goal is to protect our natural environment, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support a healthy ecosystem.

#	Action	Intended Outcome	Who	Timing	Metrics
6.1	Review the Township's involvement in the Tree Planting Program with a focus on cost recovery.	Ensure long-term viability of local roadside and urban trees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Works Department</li> <li>Huron County Council</li> <li>Maitland Valley Conservation Authority</li> </ul>	Medium-term	Number of trees planted annually.
6.2	Explore educational opportunities for waste reduction and diversion in North Huron.	Reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Works Department</li> <li>Council</li> </ul>	Ongoing	An increase in marketable recycling (yes/no)
6.3	Explore the possibility of adding more electric vehicle charging stations in the Township on a cost recovery basis.	Enable a transition to clean technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Works Department</li> <li>Council</li> <li>Huron County</li> </ul>	Medium-term	Feasibility explored (yes/no)
6.4	Strengthen the Township's Procurement Policy to increase priority of sustainable and/or energy efficient products.	Reduce the environmental footprint associated with procurement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior Management Team</li> <li>Council</li> </ul>	Long-term	Procurement policy updated (yes/no)
6.5	Implement energy conservation efforts to reduce the carbon footprint in all Township facilities.	Reduce carbon footprint.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Works Department</li> <li>Council</li> </ul>	Long-term	Reduction in carbon footprint at Township facilities
6.6	Explore the possibility of a Township Environmental Advisory Committee.	Enable the advancement of local environmental issues and solutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council</li> <li>Clerk's Department</li> </ul>	Long-Term	Feasibility explored (yes/no)

## IMPLEMENTATION

The Township of North Huron will integrate the direction provided by the Strategic Plan into existing municipal processes, plans and policies in order to leverage the foundation of work completed up to this point. Communication and outreach with the North Huron community are key components for the implementation of this Strategic Plan. The Township will be responsible for reporting on progress at the mid-point of this Plan (between 2021-2022).

Staff reports will continue to identify alignment to the Strategic Plan during the term of the Plan by identifying which goal(s) and action(s) they support. The Plan is scheduled to be renewed in four years (2023).

It is recommended that the Township explore partnership opportunities with key stakeholders (e.g. Huron County, neighbouring municipalities, local community groups/organizations, etc.) as appropriate to support the implementation of this plan.