



Community Strategic Plan

Township of South Stormont

April 2021
MDB Insight Inc.



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Executive Summary

The Township of South Stormont is built on a history of community pride, uniquely tied to a collection of places that no longer exist – the lost villages flooded to create the St. Lawrence Seaway. Over sixty years later, the community is preparing once again for a new surge of economic transformation: new investments, changing global markets, exponential adoption of technology, and city dwellers yearning to live near beautiful outdoor spaces. Indeed, now is the opportune time for South Stormont to update its mission and vision, its guiding principles, and strategic themes, goals, and objectives.

MDB Insight was retained to coordinate the community strategic planning exercise. Several background documents were reviewed and analyzed, and an economic profile of the community was prepared. Council was engaged on three occasions to provide direction for the strategy, and community engagement was broad and meaningful. A survey of residents exposed a deep sense of belonging to the towns, villages, and rural areas of South Stormont. Individual interviews provided specific ideas for the focus the Township should take in the future. Township management and frontline staff offered insightful perspectives into the day-to-day operation of local government, as well as valuable suggestions for change.

As a result of these thought-provoking discussions, South Stormont arrived at its Mission Statement, the description that outlines the Township's reason for existing:

Through dedicated leadership and strong infrastructure, the Township of South Stormont delivers sustainable, quality services to its residents and businesses while ensuring a vibrant and healthy community for future generations.

A hopeful glimpse into the future was also agreed upon. Township Council incorporated the aspirations of the community into the Vision Statement:

South Stormont is a progressive, family-friendly community, welcoming all to celebrate its natural beauty and exceptional quality of life.





Council agreed upon a set of guiding principles that encompass the values of the community and the municipality, serving as a lens through which to evaluate all decisions, extending beyond the life of the strategic plan.

Those guiding principles are:

- Collaborative
- Considerate
- Progressive
- Welcoming and Safe
- Informed Decision-making

Based on the feedback from Council, staff, residents, and businesses, a set of strategic themes emerged. These overall pillars, upon which the rest of the strategy is built, support the creation of a community brand.

Those strategic themes are:

- Strong Community
- Sustainable Infrastructure
- Economic Growth
- Pride of Place
- Corporate Capacity

Goals and objectives were developed expanded based on the strategic themes, assembled in priority sequence, focusing on the Township's ability to influence change.

The following pages of the Community Strategic Plan describe the goals and objectives in greater detail.





Mission

Through dedicated leadership and strong infrastructure, the Township of South Stormont delivers sustainable, quality services to its residents and businesses while ensuring a vibrant and healthy community for future generations.

Vision

South Stormont is a progressive, family-friendly community, welcoming all to celebrate its natural beauty and exceptional quality of life.



Guiding Principles

Guiding principles (Figure 1) provide a broad philosophy that encompasses the values of the community and the municipality. They serve as a lens through which to evaluate all decisions, and they support the development of a culture where everyone understands what is essential. Guiding principles extend beyond the life of the strategic plan and ground strategy design and delivery.

Figure 1: Guiding Principles

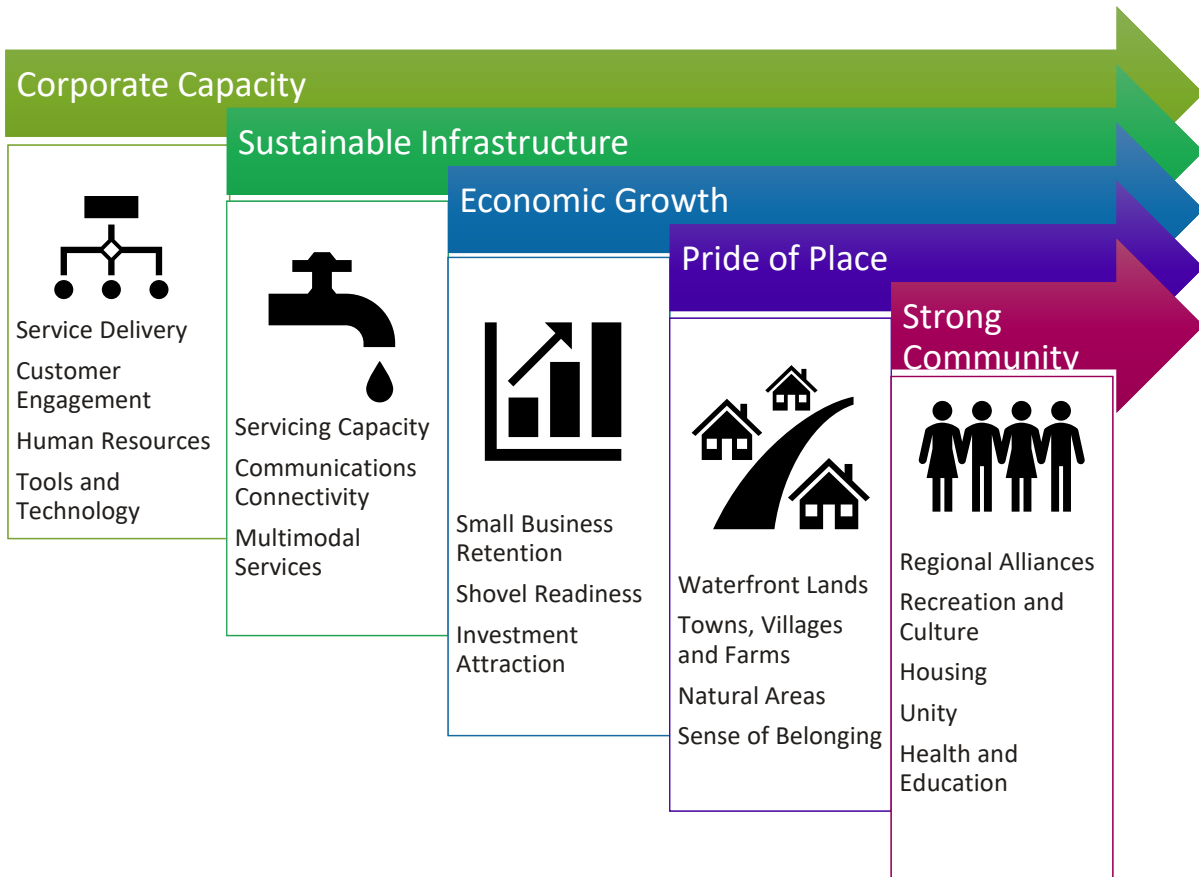




Strategic Themes and Priorities

Priority areas identified during community engagement, interviews, and discussions with Council and staff were grouped into five relevant themes of strategic importance, using the Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Risks, and Results (SOARR) Analysis, available in the Technical Report. These Strategic Themes and Priorities (Figure 2) act as a community brand and are used to develop the primary goals and objectives of the Community Strategic Plan for the Township of South Stormont.

Figure 2: Strategic Themes and Priorities





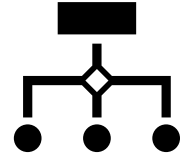
Strategic Goals and Objectives

Building on the strategic directions, a set of goals and objectives have been developed to help direct future planning. These goals reflect the vision and desired outcomes that emerged from the strategic planning process and give a view into the various aspirations of the Township's stakeholders. They are set out in order of the municipality's ability to influence outcomes. Specific deliverables and performance measurement metrics would be implemented in other corporate plans.



Goal 1: Corporate Capacity

The Township of South Stormont is organizationally effective using innovative practices to enhance operational efficiencies and corporate capacity to deliver services, programs, initiatives, and projects.



Objective 1.1: Implement Service Delivery and Policies Review

- Enable Township staff to review Division/Department business plans on an annual basis, prior to budget review by Council, refreshing program mandates, reviewing outcomes and metrics, and presenting considerations to changes in service delivery.
- Explore formal and informal opportunities to collaborate across municipalities for expanded service delivery, reduced cost, and improved community benefit.
- Update statutory documents required by the Municipal Act and other legislation to confirm compliance and practicality.
- Ensure recommendations in reports and plans are acted upon on a priority basis to mitigate legal implications and to inform annual budgets.

Objective 1.2: Customer Engagement

- Promote a culture that serves and engages internal and external customers in a professional, prompt manner, reflecting the ethics and values of the community.

Objective 1.3: Human Resources

- Ensure the Township's staff complement is sufficient to resource ongoing work plans, service delivery levels, and approved projects.
- Establish a Preferred Employer Strategy to enhance employee relations, support employee retention and attraction, and optimize succession planning.

Objective 1.4: Tools and Technology

- Empower Township staff to use cost-effective tools, technology, software, and systems, in their day-to-day work performance.
- Effectively manage Township assets, projects, programs, and services through appropriate budgeting, planning, forecasting, and reporting.



Goal 2: Sustainable Infrastructure

Careful, future-focused planning ensures that the Township of South Stormont can respond to the needs of residents and businesses today and into the future through maintained infrastructure and planned growth and development.



Objective 2.1: Servicing Capacity

- Secure utilities to service the needs of residential, commercial, and industrial customers, with consideration to sustainability.
- Prepare and update a Long-Term Financial Plan to support the Asset Management Plan.

Objective 2.2: Communications Connectivity

- Advocate and facilitate the establishment of a modern broadband network, allowing businesses and residents to have affordable access to internet connectivity.

Objective 2.3: Multimodal Services

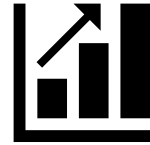
- Explore innovative transportation connections via multiple modes of transportation to ensure the Township's residents and businesses can pursue business, social connections, and recreation within the municipality and regional communities.





Goal 3: Economic Growth

The Township of South Stormont is ready for investment opportunities, prepared for the changing needs of developers, and willing to take an active role in attracting new investment while retaining and expanding existing businesses.



Objective 3.1: Small Business Retention

- Empower Township staff to collaborate with small- and medium-sized local businesses, farmers, associations, and other relevant stakeholders to foster retention and expansion of the existing agricultural, commercial, and industrial base.
- Harness cooperation between local, regional, and provincial economic development programs to keep and grow labour force talent.

Objective 3.2: Shovel Readiness

- Examine the Township's land-use planning policies and bylaws, business procedures, and protocols for responsiveness and flexibility to address the needs of developers and businesses within the requirements of legislation.

Objective 3.3: Investment Attraction

- Position and promote South Stormont's advantages as a competitive business investment location or preferred tourist destination.





Goal 4: Pride of Place

The Township of South Stormont nurtures community pride by cultivating connections between society and landscape and reinforcing a feeling of belonging among those who live, work, and play in South Stormont.



Objective 4.1: Waterfront Lands

- Collaborate with the St. Lawrence Parks Commission, Ontario Power Generation, other partners, and stakeholders to advance key priorities, projects, and recommendations in the Waterfront Development Plan.

Objective 4.2: Towns, Villages, and Farms

- Promote linkages among communities within the Township by improving links that are physical (trails and parks), economic (collaborations and partnerships), and social (events, festivals, pop-ups) between citizens in towns and villages, in rural areas, and on farms.

Objective 4.3: Natural Areas

- Promote the ecological importance and conservation of the Township's forests, wetlands, streams, rivers, and other natural areas in South Stormont.

Objective 4.4: Sense of Belonging

- Influence a community brand that welcomes visitors, residents, and businesses, through collaboration, initiatives, and planned experiences with local service clubs, community groups, businesses, and residents.
- Develop a multi-channel communications strategy to disseminate information and engage with citizens and staff, to inform the development and implementation of budgets, plans, and services.





Goal 5: Strong Community

The Township of South Stormont is a collection of communities that are individually unique and stronger when unified. By collectively celebrating the friendliness and resilience of everyone, challenges may more easily be overcome, and solutions efficiently uncovered.



Objective 5.1: Regional Alliances

- Utilize regional alliances to advocate senior levels of government for financial support of community amenities, service, and programs.

Objective 5.2: Recreation and Culture

- Support local facilities, programs, and amenities that enable all residents to access and participate in recreation, understand, and appreciate local heritage, and enjoy and celebrate local culture.



Objective 5.3: Housing

- Empower developers and businesses to supply a diverse mix of financially attainable, quality housing stock to respond to the needs of all residents.

Objective 5.4: Unity

- Promote social cohesion and community unity by reflecting an inclusive and welcoming community.
- Carry out ongoing monitoring to ensure adherence to the Community Strategic Plan.

Objective 5.5: Health and Education

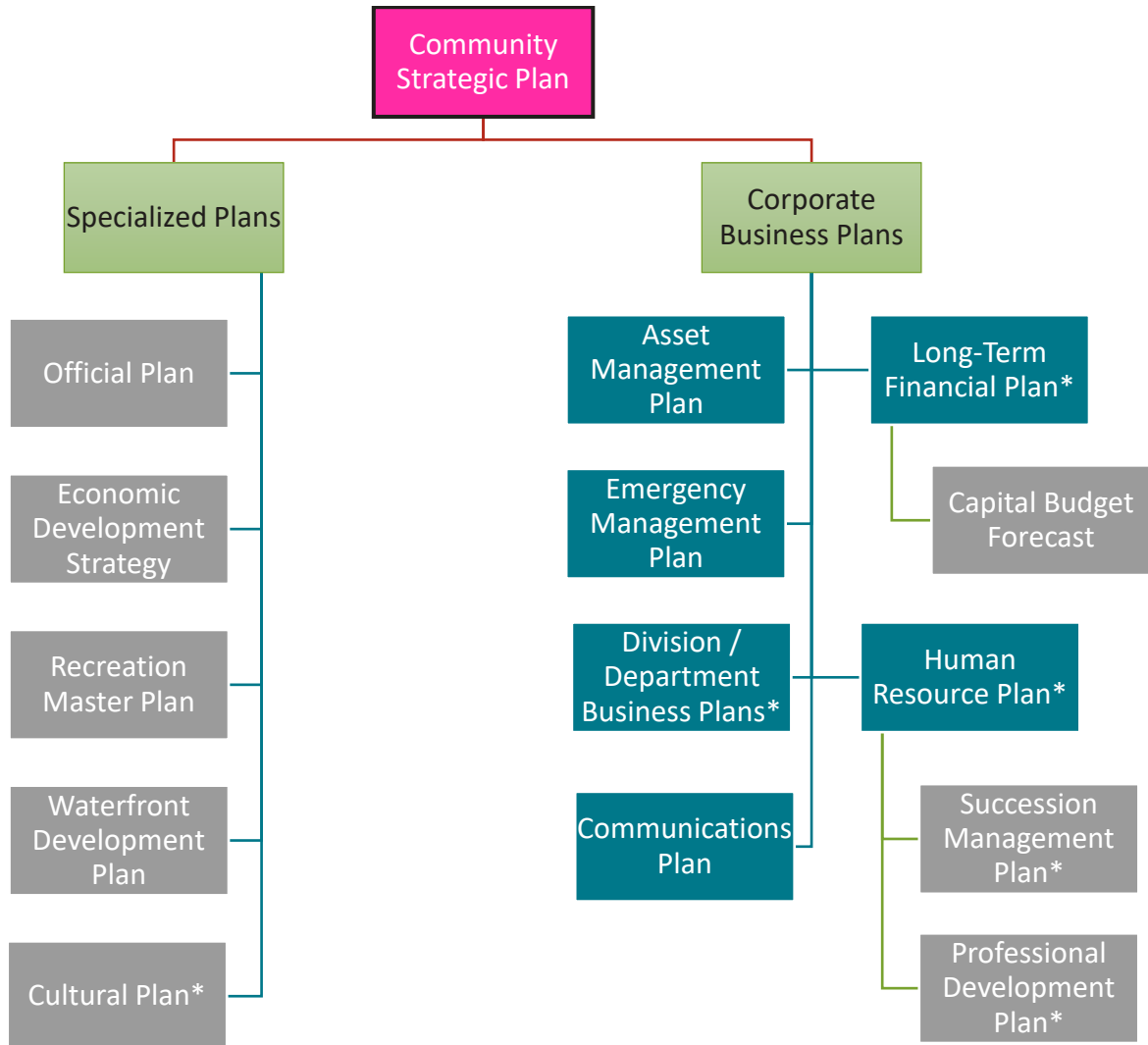
- Support local facilities and services that improve access to medical services, health, and social services, public education, public transportation for the wellbeing of all residents.



Implementation

The Township of South Stormont Community Strategic Plan is one component in the integrated implementation of the municipality's overall organizational system (Figure 3). Plans noted with an asterisk (*) below are yet to be investigated or developed.

Figure 3: Integrated Implementation





Appendix

See separate Technical Report containing:

- Methodology
- Document Review
- Consultation Summary
- Examples of Best Practices

