

From Vision to Action

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS REPORT



October 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Oxford County's first Strategic Plan was approved in March 2013 and shared with the community in June. In July 2013, five employee teams were formed to lead work on the first set of priorities:

- Community engagement**
 - 4. Inform and engage
 - i. Better harness the power of the community through conversation and dialogue *
- Public information**
 - 4. Inform and engage
 - ii. Better inform the public about County programs, services and activities through planned communication *
- Excellence in customer service**
 - 5. Perform and deliver results
 - i. Enhance our customer service focus and responsiveness to our municipal partners and the public by:
 - Implementing clearly defined customer service standards and expectations *
- Monitoring and reporting**
 - 5. Perform and deliver results
 - ii. Deliver exceptional services by:
 - Developing and tracking key performance indicators against goals and report results*
- Service delivery reviews**
 - 5. Perform and deliver results
 - ii. Deliver exceptional services by:
 - Conducting regular service reviews to ensure delivery effectiveness and efficiency*

Work on the *Employer of Choice* strategic direction began with Council approval for the employee engagement survey in September 2013:

- Employer of Choice**
 - 6. Become an employer of choice
 - i. Attract, retain and develop the highest quality staff *

The Council's objective to develop a community sustainability plan was advanced in 2014:

- Community sustainability planning**
 - 3. Think ahead and wisely shape the future
 - iii. Apply social, financial and environmental sustainability lenses to significant decisions by assessing options *

The Vision to Action teams worked over summer to research and review; collaborate among each other when it added value; and develop detailed plans. Over the coming months, these actions will become ingrained in operations as a part of our regular way of doing things.

This won't mean the work is finished. Through a "plan-do-review" continuous improvement approach, the County will have a built-in mechanism for ensuring the work initiated through the Vision to Action campaigns continues to adapt, evolve and align with the Strategic Plan.

Reporting progress on the Strategic Plan to County Council and the community completes one circle of our feedback loop. The 2014 Annual Report shared our interim achievements across each of the Plan's six strategic directions. In 2015, the Annual Report will refresh and reframe how we report back on how our services contribute to the well-being of Oxford County's citizens, municipalities, businesses and visitors.

Service excellence

Strategic Direction 5: A County that performs and delivers results

Customer service has been an area of focus—and pride—for the County for many years. The “Service Excellence” strategy represents a shift in thinking that takes us from viewing customer service as a department to a culture in which regard for our citizens and each other is ingrained in everything we do.

PLAN Our Strategy	DO What we will do	REVIEW How we'll know we did it well
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a culture of service excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launch “Service Excellence” strategy in Customer Service Week• Use motivational and educational tools and techniques• Introduce a service excellence recognition award• Adopt “service excellence” as a core competency for recruitment and performance management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Citizen feedback
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educate staff about service standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update and promote service excellence standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Citizen feedback
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Get better feedback on customer service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote “How did we do” feedback mechanism through online channels• Compile list of willing participants for future feedback• Explore no or low-cost research partnership with UWO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Re-evaluate feedback mechanisms following customer/client research

Our People, Our Strength

Strategic Direction 6: A County that is an Employer of Choice

In many respects, Oxford County is already an Employer of Choice; however, there are areas in which we can strengthen our ability to attract, retain and develop the highest quality staff. The “Our People, Our Strength” Plan is the roadmap for how we will work towards this strategic priority.

PLAN Our Strategy	DO What we will do	REVIEW How we'll know we did it well
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee Engagement survey every three (3) years • Management support • Refresh employee recognition programs • High-value internal communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee engagement survey results • Participation in, and feedback on, recognition programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talent management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and refresh recruitment practices • Support for new hires • Strengthen exit interview process • Succession planning • Explore mentoring program, leadership program • Review performance management practices • Offer career development tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in turnover rate • Employee engagement survey results (re: career development) • % of positions filled internally • % performance appraisals completed • Employee feedback • Participation in programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and refresh online supervisory training program • Develop leadership program • Implement more comprehensive performance management program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee engagement survey results (re: satisfaction with management) • Interest in, and feedback on, leadership programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe and healthy workplaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to meet and exceed requirements for occupational health and safety • Maintain and promote employee and family assistance program • Maintain and promote wellness initiatives • Support work/life balance in a way that meets needs of both employer and employee • Management support and training on mental health in the workplace • Strengthen respect in the workplace policies and practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee engagement survey results (re: health, safety and wellness, and also work/life balance) • Number of WSIB claims filed / injury frequency rates • Participation in employee and family assistance program • Participation in, and feedback on, wellness initiatives

Inform and engage

Strategic Direction 4: A County that informs and engages

At a fundamental level, the County must inform people about the services it delivers and how these services bring value to Oxford's citizens. With a better understanding of the County's role, citizens will then be better equipped to participate in local government. It is this inherent connection between these two drivers that led to the merger and collaboration of the Inform and Engage teams. The resulting product—a workbook for staff—sets out the values and expectations for effective communication and engagement.

PLAN Our Strategy	DO What we will do	REVIEW How we'll know we did it well
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a culture in which community engagement is an integral part of program planning • Better inform staff about the communication process and what makes communication effective (strategic) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a workbook for staff that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community engagement methodology - Worksheets and other resources - Communication planning framework and matrix • Community engagement training for project leaders 	<p>Year 1 evaluation that looks at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectiveness of communication and engagement campaigns, tracked against measures for each project or campaign • Employee use of, and feedback on, workbook and engagement tools • Citizen feedback

Monitoring and reporting

Strategic Direction 5: A County that performs and delivers results

The Strategic Plan is changing the way the County approaches its work. The work of the Monitoring and Reporting team is a common thread across the Vision to Action priorities that compels staff to consider how it will demonstrate the value of services and work in a way that is meaningful and understandable for the community.

PLAN Our Strategy	DO What we will do	REVIEW How we'll know we did it well
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a framework for monitoring and reporting that measures and informs on the successes of the Strategic Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop guidelines and tools for establishing metrics and key performance indicators • Inform the communication process for reporting to the public through corporate publications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community interest in reports indicated through online access, social media engagement, etc. • Implementation of KPIs through service delivery review process

Services that Work

Strategic Direction 5: A County that performs and delivers results

The County's service delivery review, *Services That Work*, is a multi-year project that will help us better understand, and make recommendations on, how to deliver our services in a way that is efficient, effective, and positively impacts the community.

PLAN Our Strategy	DO What we will do	REVIEW How we'll know we did it well
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launch an organized and systematic service delivery review ("Services That Work") to ensure the County is efficiently and effectively delivering services that improve quality of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish the service delivery review process, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Creating an inventory of services- Prioritizing services for assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meet KPIs that are being established for each service as part of the <i>Services That Work</i> project

Services that Work



The project team profiled 58 County services across four domains which, together, work to promote the well-being of our community.

Community Sustainability

Strategic Direction 3: A County that thinks ahead and wisely shapes the future

The proposal for a Community Sustainability Plan was accepted by Council in March 2014 as a means of developing a policy platform from which the County, area municipalities and, potentially, the community can influence decisions that secure our future, including new landfill development, source water protection, caring for an aging population, waste management and other issues that determine quality of life.

The development of a community-driven sustainability plan is supported by the vision and strategic directions contained in the County Strategic Plan, with specific support through the County’s commitment to thinking ahead and wisely shaping the future by applying social, financial and environmental sustainability lenses to significant decisions.

PLAN Our Strategy	DO What we will do	REVIEW How we’ll know we did it well
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a policy framework for furthering the goals and objectives of the community in a manner consistent with the strategic plans of all nine municipalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a community-based decision framework that considers social, economic and environmental sustainability • Establish Steering Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with community, led by project consultant, to develop an evaluation tool

STRATEGIC PLAN

VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

VISION
Vibrant communities, working well and growing stronger ... together!

MISSION
To serve the needs and advance the collective interests of our communities, residents and businesses through customer/client-focused services that improve quality of life.

VALUES
+Excellence
+Accountability
+Innovation
+Integrity
+Teamwork

[Print version with further details](#)

- 1 A County that Works Together
- 2 A County that is Well Connected
- 3 A County that Thinks Ahead and Wisely Shapes the Future
- 4 A County that Informs and Engages
- 5 A County that Performs and Delivers Results
- 6 A County that is an Employer of Choice

More information

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