



Shaping Aurora's Future

Town of Aurora's Strategic Plan Update 2006



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	2
PREFACE.....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	2
HOW THE PLAN WAS DEVELOPED	4
RESEARCH FINDINGS.....	5
KEY STRENGTHS.....	5
KEY WEAKNESSES.....	6
KEY OPPORTUNITIES	6
KEY THREATS	7
DETAILED STRATEGIC PLAN	8
VISION	10
GOALS & OBJECTIVES	10
ACTION STEPS	17
IMPLEMENTATION AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES	35

*Your views have
helped develop a plan
on how the Town can
reach its desired future*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Strategic Plan update would not have been successfully completed without the extraordinary efforts, professional attitude and concentrated energy of the many Town of Aurora residents and stakeholders, over the 6 months of this undertaking. We would like to thank the many participants who attended the numerous consultation events and took the opportunity to provide direction, comments and critique. The residents and stakeholders in the Town of Aurora have helped shape how the Town can reach its desired future.

However, particularly critical contributions were made by the project Steering Committee: Director of Planning and Development, Sue Seibert; Permit Information Officer, Ruth Beaton; Economic Development Officer, Dino Lombardi; CEO of the Aurora Library, Colleen Abbott; the Project Manager John Rogers (CAO); and project coordinator, Cindy Janzen.

We would also like to thank Town Council and the Senior Management Team for their time, support and advice throughout the strategic planning update process.

PREFACE

A Strategic Plan is one of the most important documents that a municipality can have. It is important because it sets out the Vision of what the municipality is trying to achieve and the steps necessary to achieve the Vision.

A Strategic Plan reflects the needs and expectations of the residents as identified through multiple public consultation activities. Residents provide opinions based on their experience of living and working in Aurora as well as outlining what would make living in Aurora more positive and desirable in the future.



The decisions we make today will determine how we live tomorrow

Armed with the knowledge of what residents would like the Town to be, Town staff, Council and stakeholders can then identify a sequence of Actions that need to be undertaken to successfully attain the Vision, Goals and Objectives. This series of Action steps may lead to changes in other Town guidance documents such as the Community Plan, Transportation Plan and Culture and Recreation Plan.

A Strategic Plan clearly acknowledges those things that a Town can do by itself, what things must be done in cooperation with others and what decisions rest with other levels of government. Equally important, a Strategic Plan provides an environment in which Town stakeholders – businesses and residents – can make informed decisions and thrive.

A Strategic Plan sets out the direction for the Town and the path of how to get there. But, like for all of us, circumstances change and so the Strategic Plan is not carved in stone. The path of how to achieve the Vision must be periodically reviewed, refined and, if needed, modified.

The previous Strategic Plan for the Town of Aurora was developed in 1993

The strategic plan is representative of the views of the whole community

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Aurora is concerned with future economic development, sustainable environmental management practices, cultural heritage preservation and community development.

The previous Strategic Plan for the Town of Aurora was developed in 1993. To meet the needs of its growing population, the Town started a process to update the Strategic Plan. The original Strategic Plan included a corporate mission statement, six values with context statements, objectives and strategic Actions for each value. The document has since been updated to reflect changing issues and influences on the Town and the values of Town Council and residents. The plan was updated in 1995, 1998, and 2001. The plan evolved since its inception in 1993 and included six general corporate objectives, a series of long-range strategies and Action-oriented short-term initiatives. The Town regularly updates the plan so it remains relevant and useful.

The 2006 updated Strategic Plan will emphasize the development of local assets, which capitalize upon the many strengths and opportunities in the area.

DPRA was retained by the Town of Aurora to guide the process of updating Aurora's strategic plan.

The Town feels strongly the Strategic Plan be representative of the views of the whole community. The Town undertook the Strategic Plan update process to identify and assess growth and development opportunities that will ensure the future economic, social and environmental sustainability and health of the Town. The plan is based on current community values, priorities and overall expectations of Town services.

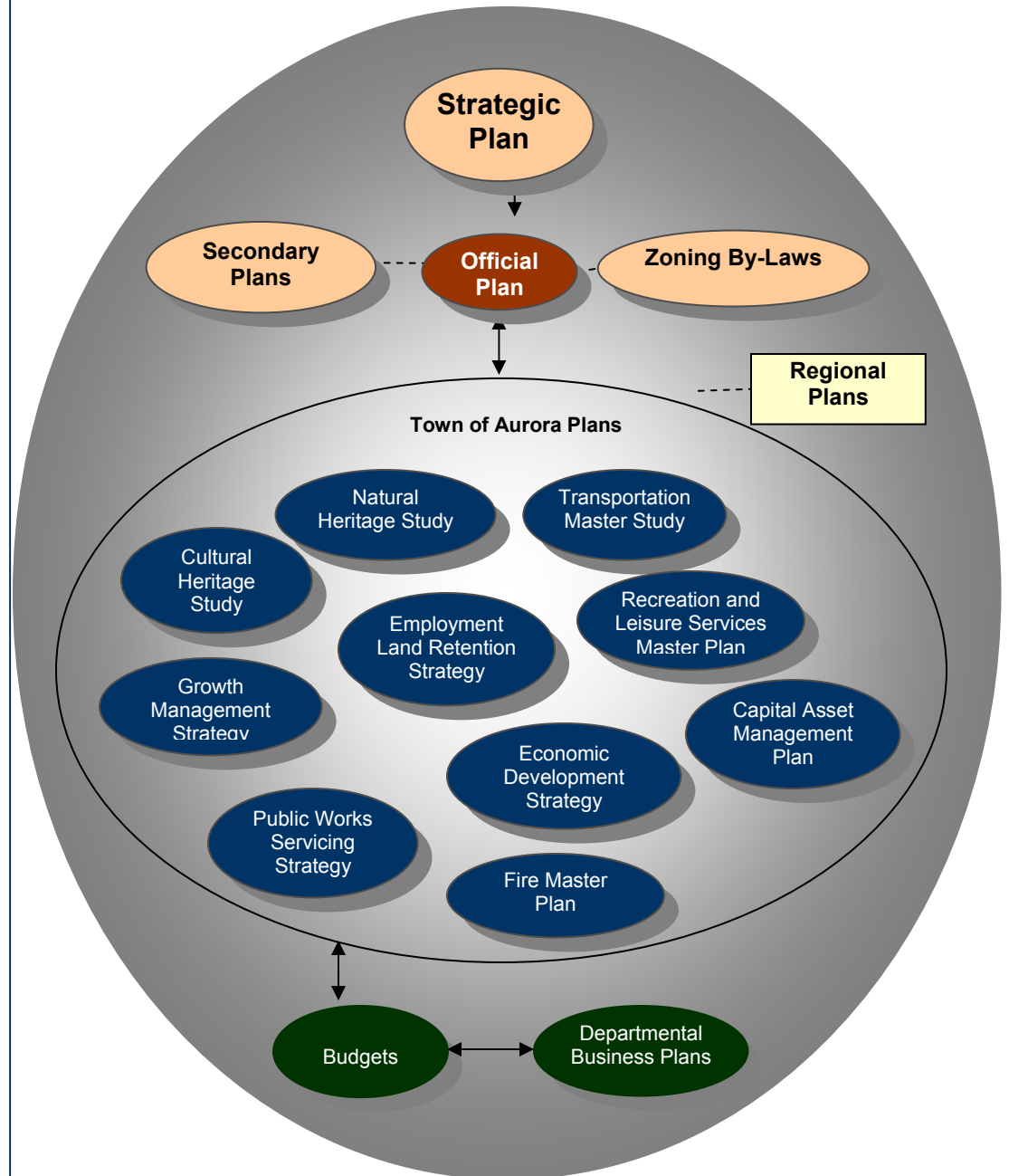
The context in which the Vision and direction of the Town of Aurora Strategic Plan were prepared and how residents and community organizations took part in developing the Plan are described in this document.

Aurora's Strategic Plan is an umbrella document that provides guidance and direction for all of the Town's plans, programs and services (See Figure 1). The Strategic Plan will also incorporate recommendations from recent legislation (e.g. Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Plan).

The Strategic Plan will be implemented through an annual priority setting process, the development of operational work programs and annual budgets; these are discussed further in the implementation section.

Figure 1: Strategic Plan Relationships

An umbrella document that provides guidance and direction for all of the Town's plans, programs and services



This Strategic Plan document is organized into the following three sections:

- ❖ How the Plan was Developed
- ❖ Research Findings
- ❖ Detailed Strategic Plan 2006

Input from various stakeholders including, Town staff, Council, residents and various stakeholder groups of the Town of Aurora

Consultation Activities

HOW THE PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

The Strategic Plan was updated with input from various stakeholders including, Town staff, Council, residents and various stakeholder groups of the Town of Aurora. The work program provided stakeholder engagement opportunities, including:

- Identification of key issues through interviews with stakeholders;
- On-line opportunity to provide input;
- Identification of key trends (strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities) through research;
- Visioning Sessions with stakeholders (to develop a draft Vision, Goals, Objectives and Actions); and
- Open Houses for residents to review the process, provide input to a draft Vision, Goals and Objectives and provide suggestions on how the Town can achieve the Objectives and comment on the draft Strategic Plan.

The following outlines consultation activities used in updating the Strategic Plan.

CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES

- Media Release and Memo to Senior Staff and CAO (December 2005)
- Orientations Sessions – January 26th, 2006
- On-line comment submission following the orientation sessions
- Notices in the Town Page of the Era Banner (prior to each event)
- Website updates (throughout the planning process)
- Information Posters/Flyers (prior to each event)
- Invitations letters to stakeholders (prior to each event)
- Interviews with Stakeholders – January/March 2006
- Visioning Workshops – March 21st, March 23rd, and April 3rd 2006
- Open House #1 – May 10th, 2006
- Open House #2 – May 31st, 2006

*Research included
results from 2004
Citizen Survey*

*The key strengths
identify the character
of the Town that can
be reinforced to
ensure a strong future*

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The process of updating the Strategic Plan included an Environmental Scan Report and a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis. An Environmental Scan is a component of strategic planning processes to conduct a needs/feasibility assessment and a SWOT analysis with key stakeholders and residents who have a vested interest in the Town. In addition, the SWOT assists in identifying the key issues that should be addressed as part of the Strategic Plan update. Results from the Citizens Survey, conducted in 2004, were also reviewed to determine the views of the Town of Aurora residents.

The following is a summary of the trends and key findings identified through the Environmental Scan and SWOT analysis. The Environmental Scan Report presents the complete detailed findings.

KEY STRENGTHS

The key strengths identify the character of the Town that can be reinforced to ensure a strong future.

- Well educated and relatively affluent population that treats Aurora as a highly desirable location to live
- Located near 2 major highways (404 and 400) and has major transit corridors (Yonge, Bathurst, Bayview and Leslie) making it an ideal location for commuting
- Development of Wellington-404 lands opens up more space for employment lands and residential development
- Increased development, high resale values of homes and number of homes sold (despite the cost) shows that Aurora is still a highly desirable place to live
- High home resale values and sustained employment and development
- Well developed parks system and recreational facilities
- Majority of the population are couples or families – who are more likely to settle in Aurora, and less likely to move after a shorttime
- Strong sense of community pride with high levels of support from volunteers
- Substantial retail opportunities and recreational options minimize need to travel beyond Aurora's borders

These are concerns that could be problematic and need to be addressed

The opportunities and circumstances that could be taken advantage of to lead to improvements in the Town

KEY WEAKNESSES

These are concerns that could be problematic and need to be addressed.

- Some residents use the Town as a 'base' for commuting – creating the perception of a "bedroom community". This has an impact on the service clubs
- Increased reliance on personal vehicles for transportation would imply that transit could be better utilized
- Some developments are spread out over a large area, making sprawl a potential risk factor
- High incomes and land costs make it difficult for a wide range of incomes to settle in Aurora
- A sizeable component of Aurora's population is rapidly approaching retirement age. This could lead to a contraction in the size of the available work force, impacting local businesses and organizations

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

The opportunities and circumstances that could be taken advantage of could lead to improvements in the Town.

- Work with developers to build more housing options – more energy efficient, linked to natural heritage areas, walking trails, etc.
- Maintaining the Town's employment lands – attract more businesses to maintain diversity and create more job opportunities for Aurora's well educated, trained and skilled population
- Taxes from new businesses will also act to replace diminishing future development charges
- Protect additional natural areas that can be equipped with walking trails and benches to facilitate recreational opportunities
- Improved community education and communication
- Explore public/private partnerships
- Further interaction of other stakeholders and agencies with the Town regarding the Strategic Plan
- Redevelopment of downtown making it a more attractive destination and gathering location
- The newly created VIVA regional transit system may encourage more transit use
- Increases in population density can create opportunities for public transit, creation and use of connected walking/cycling corridors – promoting healthy living and reducing single occupant vehicle trips

These are the issues and concerns that must be dealt with in a focused manner to find resolution and lead to an improved quality of life for Aurora residents

- Preservation of the Town's built cultural heritage. This can form the basis for additional tourism opportunities

KEY THREATS

These are the issues and concerns that must be dealt with in a focused manner to find resolution and lead to an improved quality of life for Aurora residents.

- Rapidly increasing population means an increase in density in the coming years. This will need to be considered for future Town planning initiatives
- Fear of increased crime
- Growth threatens air and water quality/quantity as more vehicles are on the roads
- Loss of revenue from development charges and building permits as the Town approaches 'build-out'
- Potential loss of green space/natural areas
- Increased traffic congestion
- Potential loss of diversified economy
- Adequacy of Town staff resources to deliver quality programs and services to residents
- May not be able to meet upgrade standards in the future for facilities as a result of financial issues, or lack of available land for development
- Developments may surpass the ability of the infrastructure to operate within acceptable sustainability thresholds
- Perception that environmental impacts are not being considered when making planning decisions

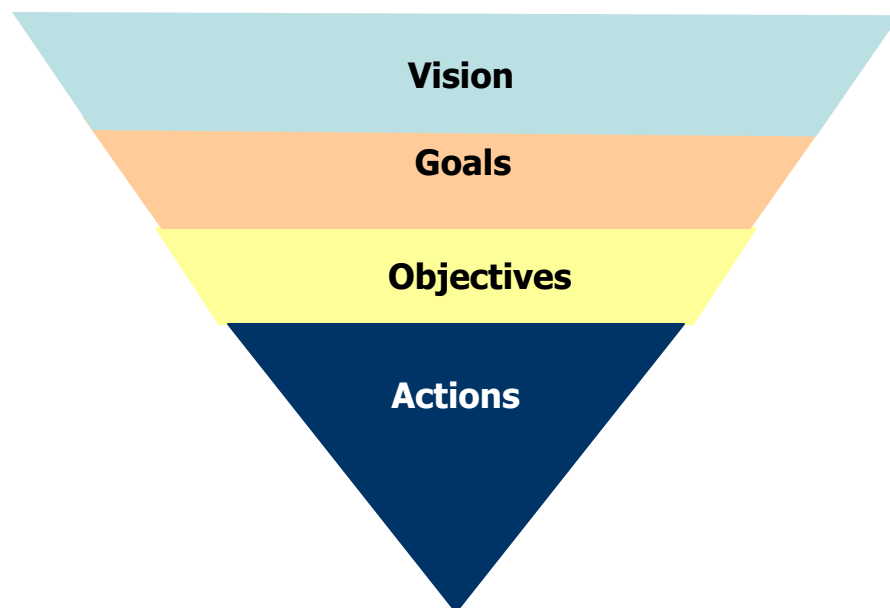
DETAILED STRATEGIC PLAN 2006

The Strategic Plan has five key components:

- 1) A **Vision Statement** – a statement of the Town’s values and ideals.
- 2) **Goals** – qualitative statements that highlight the key issues raised during the strategic planning process and add depth to the Vision statement.
- 3) **Objectives** – measurable steps that, taken together, lead to meeting Goals.
- 4) **Actions** – specific tasks with timeframes and assigned responsibilities that must be undertaken in order to achieve the objectives.
- 5) **Implementation and Performance Measures** – how the Strategic Plan will be adopted and used by the Town Council and staff, as well as how they will report on the progress in completing Actions.

The Strategic Plan has five key components

Figure 2: Key Components of a Strategic Plan



*Strong local
economy*

*Historic Culture
and Character*

*Healthy
Environment*

*Transparent, and
accountable
government and
engaged citizens*

Four key themes emerged from the SWOT analysis and public consultation activities that identify priority items and key attributes for the Town. Overall Aurora residents aspired for the four components that make up a Town where they would like to live, work and play.

- ❖ Development and maintenance of a **strong local economy** that is diversified and offers residents high-paying opportunities for employment
- ❖ A Town that respects its **historic culture and character**
- ❖ Importance of a **healthy environment** and the **social and physical well-being** of the residents that live, work and play in the Town of Aurora and sound environmental management to **preserve and protect Aurora's green spaces**
- ❖ A government that is **transparent, accountable** and ensures measures exist to **engage citizens** in decision-making

These four themes were further explored with stakeholders through the Visioning sessions and open houses to develop a strategic Vision, Goals and Objectives for the Town

The draft Vision and Goals were then used to develop a number of draft Objectives. Objectives are more specific steps that aim to achieve the Goals. These draft materials were refined by the Project Team and presented back to stakeholders at open houses for confirmation and any further additional comments/revisions.

For each objective, a number of Action steps have been identified to assist stakeholders, Council and Staff with the implementation of the plan. Each Action step represents an activity that must be carried out by one or more Town departments. The draft Action steps were identified at open houses and follow-up discussions with Town staff.

The Vision, Goals and Objectives reflect the information collected from staff interviews, open houses, the visioning workshops and the background research on trends and issues affecting Aurora. The information obtained represents a cross-section of both community interests and expertise.

*Stakeholders want
Aurora to be.....*

*Vision is supported
by four goals*

VISION

The earlier Vision for Aurora was revisited and updated during the 2006 consultative process. The new Vision statement takes into account the opinions and comments expressed by residents, community organizations and Town employees. Stakeholders want Aurora to be:

A welcoming and dynamic town with a strong sense of community pride and volunteerism committed to healthy and inclusive lifestyles inspired by its natural heritage, historic culture, diverse neighbourhoods, thriving businesses and natural environment.

The specific issues raised throughout the Strategic Plan review process are addressed more directly in the Goals. Goals are the foundational elements that the Town works toward achieving so that the Vision is attained. They are discussed in more depth in the following section.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

In order to achieve the Vision for Aurora, the issues raised during the consultative process have been distilled into the following four Goals (in no particular order or priority):

- Goal A:** Foster and enhance a strong and stable economy consistent with the attributes of a sustainable community.
- Goal B:** Promote a sustainable community that respects its historic culture and character and embraces diverse cultural development and renewal in harmony with sound environmental management and business development activity
- Goal C:** Promote a healthy environment that fosters social and physical well-being
- Goal D:** Ensure transparent, accountable and open governance in concert with informed and involved citizens

The natural environment and historic culture are the most noted and defining characteristics of Aurora. Protection of the environmental assets, including natural environment and historic culture goes hand in hand with economic prosperity.

Urban form and the quality of Aurora's urban life also relate to both the environment and economic development. Aurora is perceived by some as a bedroom community, where many people live within the Town but commute to jobs beyond its borders. Residents want to enhance the municipal facilities and services to build a Town where they can live, work and play. Ensuring a well-protected natural environment with access to abundant outdoor recreational opportunities, and provision of a full range of services, including affordable housing, are linked to economic vitality.

All four Goals, and the related Objectives, affect each other. Therefore, they must be addressed in a balanced way as the Town moves forward to achieve the Vision.

The Objectives have been further defined in terms of specific Actions. Each Action has been allotted a timeframe and the lead and contributing responsibilities for each Action have been assigned to the appropriate Town Department. The Objectives associated with each Goal are summarized below.

Goal A – Foster and enhance a strong and stable economy consistent with the attributes of a sustainable community.

The Importance of this Issue....

Fostering a strong and stable economy in Aurora is integral to building a welcoming community for individuals and businesses. By growing responsibly, with careful consideration of the environmental and social issues involved, we can ensure the long-term sustainability of our quality of life.

The Rationale for this Goal and its Objectives....

Background research and the SWOT analysis indicated a population boom during the late 1980s and early 1990s, doubling the size of Aurora in less than 15 years. The Town has consistently experienced a higher growth rate than the province and has been above the province's annual growth rate over the last 20 years, sometimes by as much as 6.0%.

The increase in population has resulted in the growth of Aurora's labour force and made the Town more attractive as a regional commercial and economic centre.



Forecasters anticipate that Aurora will continue to grow over the next two decades, given many factors including its proximity to Toronto, its attractiveness as a community, and an expanding industrial and commercial base. In addition to population growth, the Town of Aurora has experienced significant economic growth over the last twenty years. The growth is a result of attractive business conditions present in the region, as well as the increasing population. The Town of Aurora's relatively undeveloped spaces and proximity to several major highways (both regional and provincial) makes it an ideal location for businesses and people looking to work closer to home and shorter commute times.

Comments received through the consultation process indicated that many respondents felt the economy was of importance with respect to promoting Aurora as a desirable place to do business as well as a place to live and visit.

The SWOT analysis and public comments also identified the need to attract a diversity of employment opportunities. A diverse economy is a stable economy that can sustain fluctuations in the economy. Participants also mentioned the importance of eliminating the bedroom community feel to Aurora by promoting efforts to reduce commuting through local economic initiatives.

Three Objectives support the Goal of fostering a strong and stable economy in Aurora:

A1: Develop economic opportunities to aid in the growth and progress of Aurora as a desirable place to do business

A2: Support the growth of a variety of businesses to encourage a sustainable business environment

A3: Increase the quantity and diversity of employment opportunities in Aurora to enhance local live/work opportunities and to promote efforts to reduce commuting through local economic initiatives

These Objectives reflect the needs of stakeholders in Aurora and acknowledge that fostering a strong and stable economy has two components: supporting those businesses that already exist as well as encouraging new businesses. By fostering a strong and stable economy, the Town and its residents hope to ensure economic vitality for the region through diversified employment opportunities, and a reduction in commuting needs.

Three objectives support the goal of fostering a strong and stable economy



Three objectives to support the goal of promoting a sustainable community that respects its historic culture and character

Goal B – Promote a sustainable community that respects its historic culture and character and embraces diverse cultural development and renewal in harmony with sound environmental management and business development activity

The Importance of this Issue....

Maintaining, respecting historic culture and character and natural features in Aurora contributes to quality of life. Having access to areas of unique natural beauty also contributes to the environmental sustainability of our Town. Responsible and balanced growth and environmental management take into account the value of these natural features and historic culture, now and in the future.

The Rationale for this Goal and its Objectives...

Residents of the Town of Aurora identified the preservation and maintenance of the historic culture and natural environment as a high priority through the visioning sessions and the open-house components of the consultation process.

Many respondents indicated that there was a sense that Aurora did not have a 'vision' or cultural policy for arts and culture. The results indicated a need for Cultural Heritage preservation in Aurora, including old homes that are threatened by new home or business development. Others felt that the Town could put more support behind the preservation and rehabilitation of the downtown historic core.

The Objectives for Goal B describe the various components of historic culture and character, such as architectural heritage, planned growth, historic downtown, historic and cultural activities and art and heritage preservation. The results from the background research, SWOT analysis, and community consultation activities led to the creation of three Objectives to support the Goal of promoting a sustainable community that respects its historic culture and character.

B1: Plan for the future to continue controlled and well-planned growth

B2: Promote and market the beauty and uniqueness of the historic and natural areas throughout Aurora

B3: Plan for the preservation and the restoration of local heritage areas and buildings

Goal C – Promote a healthy environment that fosters social and physical well being

The Importance of this Issue....

Fostering the social and physical well being in the Town of Aurora is central to maintaining and enhancing our quality of life. It is important for the Town to recognize and enhance the many natural features and green spaces within the Town including, but not limited to, Mackenzie Marsh, Arboretum, Sheppard's Bush and the Oak Ridges Moraine.

The Rationale for this Goal and its Objectives....

The background research, SWOT analyses results and the information obtained from the visioning sessions and open houses noted the high quality of life experienced by Aurora residents and the desire to improve it for the future. Pets and wildlife are also part of our lives, hence part of what we want the future to be like to make life more enjoyable.

As communities grow, there is always a concern that the current quality of working and living environments will be impacted. Residents want to ensure the Town has the resources to protect the natural environment and practice sustainable initiatives.

Growth and new development are inevitable in Aurora. A key threat to come out of the SWOT was that Aurora's growing population could have a negative impact on the affordability of housing as well as the natural environment, natural heritage and green spaces. The results confirm the environment and climate are very appealing to Aurora residents and their conservation is important.

A key opportunity for the Town should be to develop strategies to encourage stewardship of the Town's natural resources. Wildlife is a component of environmentally sensitive areas and the physical environment, so is to be considered in protecting the natural areas.

Many noted the desire for a healthy lifestyle that included the expansion of trails and bike lanes throughout the Town to promote non-vehicle transportation, more activities for youth, more parks and recreation activities for youth and seniors and increased safety in the Town.



Six objectives support the goal of promoting a healthy environment and fostering the social and physical well being of residents



Six Objectives support the Goal of promoting a healthy environment and fostering the social and physical well being:

- C1:** Maintain, respect, preserve and enhance natural environment, natural heritage and green spaces
- C2:** Enhance and promote public safety
- C3:** Develop strategies to encourage stewardship of Aurora's air, water and land resources
- C4:** Encourage healthy lifestyles by promoting healthy, active lifestyle choices
- C5:** Promote community involvement and volunteerism opportunities.
- C6:** Review and improve accessibility for persons with disabilities

These Objectives acknowledge that many different factors contribute to building a community that is healthy and physically secure for its residents. The environment, social supports, health and wellness issues, and personal validation all play a part and need to be taken into account.

Goal D – Ensure transparent, accountable and open governance in concert with informed and involved citizens

The Importance of this Issue....

By ensuring a transparent and accountable government, Aurora makes itself an attractive community for individuals and businesses. Innovation coupled with responsibility and informed and involved citizens will ensure our financial viability for the future.

The Rationale for this Goal and Objectives....

Some stakeholders indicated that with the forecasted changes to the Town, the public would like to see Council and staff move towards even more proactive planning for change and become a leading voice at the provincial level. To accomplish this, Council, residents and Town Staff need to ensure that conditions for effective team work and open/constructive dialogue are in place. Fiscally, the Town must remain open and accountable.

The Town has recently developed a number of new facilities. Some respondents suggested that the next step Aurora should take is communicate with residents about their perceptions of the effectiveness of the facilities and then plan for proposed changes.

Another suggestion put forward was that the Town maintain and enhance support for the community's citizens groups to carry out community-based initiatives (arts, environmental, clean-up, etc.).

Other suggestions included: the Town "be more web-friendly so people can pay taxes/invoices on-line;" and "create an education program for residents about levies and assessments to help them understand what they are getting for their dollar." This led to the development of the Objective to improve customer services and open information flow.

Four Objectives support the Goal of ensuring transparent, accountable and open governance in concert with informed and involved citizens:

Four Objectives support the Goal of ensuring transparent, accountable and open governance in concert with informed and involved citizens

D1: Continue the commitment of fiscal responsibility and accountability

D2: Enhance customer service

D3: Be accountable and transparent to residents by ensuring open and accessible information flow and accessible decision-making

D4: Create a respectful environment that fosters team work and open dialogue, consistent with a Character Community.

These Objectives acknowledge the responsibilities required by governance that contribute to informed and involved citizens.

Action items must be relevant, useful, and achievable.

Actions to be initiated over short, medium and long terms.

ACTION STEPS

The following section outlines the specific Action steps as identified by community residents, stakeholders and Town staff.

There are a number of key points that were considered while developing the Action items:

- Each Action must be directly linked to achieving an Objective which supports the Goals and overall Vision for the Town.
- The Action item(s) must be relevant, useful, and achievable.
- Must assign responsibility to one or more Town Departments to initiate the implementation of the Action(s).
- Must assign an appropriate timeframe to accomplish the Action(s).

The Actions are summarized in tabular format below, organized by Goals and Objectives. Each table also identifies the estimated timeframe for completing the Actions as well as the parties who would have responsibility for completing the tasks.

A brief description of the periods used for timeframe (short, medium and long) is provided below, along with the abbreviations used to identify Town Department responsibility.

Timeframe

Short term (ST) = Action initiated within 24 months;
Medium Term (MT) = Action initiated within 24-60 months; and
Long Term (LT) = Action initiated after 60 months

Responsibility

The Department that should lead the initiation of the Action as well as other Departments that should contribute are listed in the table below. In some cases the Action could require contribution from all Departments.

CAO - Chief Administrative Officer
BD - Building Department
CS - Corporate Services
ED - Economic Development
FS –Financial Services
LG - Legal Services
LS - Leisure Services
PL&D - Planning and Development Services
PW - Public Works

Goal A: Foster and enhance a strong and stable economy consistent with the attributes of a sustainable community.			
Objective A1: Develop economic opportunities to aid in the growth and progress of Aurora as a desirable place to do business			
Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsibility	
		Lead	Contributor
❖ Expand the content on the Town's web page to highlight economic trends and issues facing Aurora	ST	CAO	
❖ Develop and implement a tailored marketing program to attract more businesses to Aurora	ST	ED	
❖ Continue to review the Town's Official Plan and identify opportunities to ensure an adequate supply of land and infrastructure to meet Aurora's future commercial and industrial needs	ST	PL&D	ED, PW
❖ Continue to liaise with external agencies through municipal, regional and senior levels of government to investigate potential opportunities to attract economic investment	ST	ED	CAO
❖ Investigate opportunities to provide financial incentives to businesses who offer/provide environmentally friendly or energy efficient services and programs	MT	ED	CAO
❖ Implement the recommendations of the economic sectors analysis/competitive positioning study that identifies Aurora's economic sectors of importance and those emerging sectors of significance	MT	ED	CAO

Responsibility

CAO - Chief Administrative Officer
 BD - Building Department
 CS - Corporate Services
 ED - Economic Development
 FS - Financial Services
 LG - Legal Services
 LS - Leisure Services
 PL&D - Planning and Development Services
 PW - Public Works

Timeframe

Short term (ST) = action initiated within 24 months
 Medium Term (MT) = action initiated within 24-60 months
 Long Term (LT) = action initiated after 60 months

Goal A: Foster and enhance a strong and stable economy consistent with the attributes of a sustainable community.			
Objective A2: Support the growth of a variety of businesses to encourage a sustainable business environment.			
Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsibility	
		Lead	Contributor
❖ Continue to monitor developments to ensure a strong business community through the establishment of policies that lead to a more balanced economy that offers a variety of choices	ST	ED	
❖ Develop a strategy to promote cultural and tourism events that are supported by and contribute to local businesses	MT	LS	BD, ED, PW, FS
❖ Review and update government program initiatives to revitalize private and public properties and buildings, including the downtown core.	MT	CAO	All

Responsibility

- CAO - Chief Administrative Officer
- BD - Building Department
- CS - Corporate Services
- ED - Economic Development
- FS - Financial Services
- LG - Legal Services
- LS - Leisure Services
- PL&D - Planning and Development Services
- PW - Public Works

Timeframe

- Short term (ST) = action initiated within 24 months
- Medium Term (MT) = action initiated within 24-60 months
- Long Term (LT) = action initiated after 60 months

Goal A: Foster and enhance a strong and stable economy consistent with the attributes of a sustainable community.			
Objective A3: Increase the quantity and diversity of employment in Aurora to enhance local live/work opportunities and to promote efforts to reduce commuting through local economic initiatives			
Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsibility	
		Lead	Contributor
❖ Enhance relationships with growth industries, including commercial, industrial, manufacturing, high tech and education in an effort to promote their continued growth in the area	ST	ED	
❖ Create a marketing program to encourage new and existing business in the Town of Aurora	ST	ED	
❖ Develop a strategy in coordination with other levels of government to encourage live/work options in Aurora.	MT	CAO	All
❖ Work with educational institutions to identify, promote and create employment opportunities	MT	CS	CAO

Responsibility

- CAO - Chief Administrative Officer
- BD - Building Department
- CS - Corporate Services
- ED - Economic Development
- FS - Financial Services
- LG - Legal Services
- LS - Leisure Services
- PL&D - Planning and Development Services
- PW - Public Works

Timeframe

- Short term (ST) = action initiated within 24 months
- Medium Term (MT) = action initiated within 24-60 months
- Long Term (LT) = action initiated after 60 months

Goal B: Promote a sustainable community that respects its historic culture and character and embraces diverse cultural development and renewal in harmony with sound environmental management and business development activity

Objective B1: Plan for the future to continue controlled and well-planned growth

Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsibility	
		Lead	Contributor
❖ Work in partnership with housing organizations and finance institutions to monitor the range of housing options required in Aurora (inclusive of housing for seniors)	ST	PL&D	
❖ Working with local partners, develop a comprehensive database presenting the Town's Cultural Heritage, which would be used as a guiding document to continue controlled and well-planned growth while protecting the Cultural Heritage	ST	PL&D	BD
❖ Implement a policy that requires developers to demonstrate the ability of the infrastructure to service residential and commercial needs	ST	PL&D	All
❖ Review targets for density increases in various areas of the Town and establish how such increases can be sensitively integrated	MT	PL&D	All
❖ Review policies to ensure growth is effectively directed in a way that takes advantage of existing infrastructure and services	MT	PW/LS	PL&D
❖ Continue to ensure policies and by-laws for developments are sensitive to the environment	MT	PW/PL&D	All
❖ Continue to provide analysis of short and long-term impacts of development proposals	MT	PL&D	All
❖ Promote various affordable housing options in order to support a diverse local economy by encouraging the development of smaller homes, apartments and townhouses and safe rental opportunities (i.e. basement apartments that meet safety standards and residential options for seniors)	MT	PL&D	BD, LG, CAO

Goal B: Promote a sustainable community that respects its historic culture and character and embraces diverse cultural development and renewal in harmony with sound environmental management and business development activity			
Objective B1 (continued): Plan for the future to continue controlled and well-planned growth			
Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsibility	
		Lead	Contributor
❖ In consultation with local agencies, service providers, community based groups, clients and residents create a list of Best Practices that should be used for controlled and well-planned growth.	MT	PL&D	All
❖ Cooperate and partner with local agencies, service providers, community based groups, clients and residents on growth management issues to ensure all Best Practices are being followed	MT	PL&D	CAO

Responsibility

CAO - Chief Administrative Officer
 BD - Building Department
 CS - Corporate Services
 ED - Economic Development
 FS - Financial Services
 LG - Legal Services
 LS - Leisure Services
 PL&D - Planning and Development Services
 PW - Public Works

Timeframe

Short term (ST) = action initiated within 24 months
 Medium Term (MT) = action initiated within 24-60 months
 Long Term (LT) = action initiated after 60 months

Goal B: Promote a sustainable community that respects its historic culture and character and embraces diverse cultural development and renewal in harmony with sound environmental management and business development activity			
Objective B2: Promote and market the beauty and uniqueness of the historic and natural areas throughout Aurora			
Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsibility	
		Lead	Contributor
❖ Market the beauty and uniqueness of Aurora, including the downtown core, through historical tours and cultural activities	ST	LS	All
❖ Increase the enforcement of property maintenance standards in the downtown core	ST	CS	
❖ Develop strategies to use more art throughout the Town to reflect the Cultural Heritage	MT	LS	
❖ Develop and implement a Master Plan (Secondary Plan) for the downtown core, which will include revitalization, restoration and beautification initiatives and cultural opportunities	MT	PL&D	
❖ Support the development of local theatre	LT	LS	

Responsibility

CAO - Chief Administrative Officer
 BD - Building Department
 CS - Corporate Services
 ED - Economic Development
 FS - Financial Services
 LG - Legal Services
 LS - Leisure Services
 PL&D - Planning and Development Services
 PW - Public Works

Timeframe

Short term (ST) = action initiated within 24 months
 Medium Term (MT) = action initiated within 24-60 months
 Long Term (LT) = action initiated after 60 months

Goal B: Promote a sustainable community that respects its historic culture and character and embraces diverse cultural development and renewal in harmony with sound environmental management and business development activity			
Objective B3: Plan for the preservation and the restoration of local heritage areas and buildings			
Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsibility	
		Lead	Contributor
❖ Develop and implement a Heritage Strategy	ST	PL&D	All
❖ Integrate heritage preservation into all aspects of municipal planning	ST	PL&D	All
❖ In cooperation with the Aurora Heritage Committee and other community-based heritage organizations, maintain and update an inventory of local heritage areas and buildings	MT	PL&D	BD
❖ Preserve and maintain the heritage of Aurora's communities through promoting community programs and events	MT	CAO/LS	PL&D

Responsibility

CAO - Chief Administrative Officer
 BD - Building Department
 CS - Corporate Services
 ED - Economic Development
 FS - Financial Services
 LG - Legal Services
 LS - Leisure Services
 PL&D - Planning and Development Services
 PW - Public Works

Timeframe

Short term (ST) = action initiated within 24 months
 Medium Term (MT) = action initiated within 24-60 months
 Long Term (LT) = action initiated after 60 months

Goal C: Promote a healthy environment that fosters social and physical well-being			
Objective C1: Maintain, respect, preserve and enhance natural environment, natural heritage and green spaces			
Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsibility	
		Lead	Contributor
❖ Expand education and awareness programs (e.g. mail-outs, pamphlets, maps, signage) which promote low impact use of the natural environment	ST	LS	CS/PW
❖ Continue the maintenance and expansion of an interconnected trail system that links natural heritage features and also enhance the linkages of open spaces with park benches and natural features	ST	LS	
❖ Continue to review Official Plans, environmental plans and other reports or studies to ensure consistency between them on matters dealing with environmental features to ensure all policies and requirements are protecting the open spaces, environmentally sensitive lands and urban landscapes	ST	PL&D	All
❖ Continue to develop and implement strategies to manage environmentally sensitive lands	ST	PW	
❖ Develop, implement and monitor an environmental education strategy for the Town to increase environmental awareness and to promote low-impact use	ST	PW	
❖ Identify and promote sustainable initiatives	ST	CAO	All
❖ Plan, Implement and monitor various environmental protection procedures to ensure the protection of surface water courses and ground water sources	ST	PW	
❖ Assess options and costs to acquire, protect and manage more natural open space areas	MT	LS/FS	CAO, LG, CS
❖ Develop a Corporate Master Environmental Plan including operational practices to improve the environment.	MT	PW	All

Goal C: Promote a healthy environment that fosters social and physical well-being			
Objective C2: Enhance and promote public safety			
Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsibility	
		Lead	Contributor
❖ Review and update standards for lighting, signage, intersections and pedestrian crossings	ST	PW	CAO
❖ Strive to increase public safety through greater compliance/enforcement and by-law infractions related to public safety in all parks, open spaces and on Aurora streets	ST	CS	
❖ Continue to enhance public awareness on safety within buildings and structures through educational programs	ST	BD	ED, Fire Dept.
❖ Continue to provide appropriate summer and winter maintenance to road networks to ensure safe and efficient movement of people, goods and materials	ST	PW	
❖ Encourage better traffic movement through and outside of the downtown core.	MT	PW	CS
❖ Foster safe passage ways for pedestrians and cyclists within the town.	MT	PW	CS
❖ Review parking options and available public transit	MT	PW	CS

Responsibility

CAO - Chief Administrative Officer
 BD - Building Department
 CS - Corporate Services
 ED - Economic Development
 FS - Financial Services
 LG - Legal Services
 LS - Leisure Services
 PL&D - Planning and Development Services
 PW - Public Works

Timeframe

Short term (ST) = action initiated within 24 months
 Medium Term (MT) = action initiated within 24-60 months
 Long Term (LT) = action initiated after 60 months

Goal C: Promote a healthy environment that fosters social and physical well-being			
Objective C3: Develop strategies to encourage stewardship of Aurora's air, water and land resources			
Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsibility	
		Lead	Contributor
❖ Develop and promote clean air initiatives on public and private properties	ST	PW	PL&D, LS, CAO
❖ Expand education and awareness programs relating to water conservation practices on public and private properties	ST	PW	CAO, LS
❖ Expand education and awareness programs relating to energy conservation practices on public and private properties	ST	PW	LS, CAO
❖ Create awareness of the Town's tree cutting by-law	ST	CS	LS, BD
❖ Continue to work with other partners to identify and implement Regional actions aimed at air and water protection.	ST	PL&D	BD, PW
❖ Continue to create and promote waste diversion education programs and work with Regional partners to reduce waste going to landfill	ST	PW	
❖ Continue to promote safe and reliable potable water	ST	PW	
❖ Continue to maintain and update existing infrastructure and fleet	MT	PW	All
❖ Research, develop and promote electricity innovation measures	MT	CS	PW

Responsibility

CAO - Chief Administrative Officer
 BD - Building Department
 CS - Corporate Services
 ED - Economic Development
 FS - Financial Services
 LG - Legal Services
 LS - Leisure Services
 PL&D - Planning and Development Services
 PW - Public Works

Timeframe

Short term (ST) = action initiated within 24 months
 Medium Term (MT) = action initiated within 24-60 months
 Long Term (LT) = action initiated after 60 months

Goal C: Promote a healthy environment that fosters social and physical well-being			
Objective C4: Encourage healthy lifestyles by promoting healthy, active lifestyle choices			
Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsibility	
		Lead	Contributor
❖ Continue to provide recreational programs and services that are responsive to the changing needs of residents	ST	LS	
❖ Continue to develop awareness programs that promote the benefits of recreation in supporting healthy lifestyles	ST	LS	
❖ Work co-operatively with partners promoting health and wellness in a safe environment	MT	CAO	CS
❖ Promote and enhance opportunities for passive recreation (i.e. walking, cycling, natural areas and bird watching)	MT	LS	PL&D
❖ Continue to update the Culture and Recreation Master Plan to encourage healthy and active lifestyle choices and to ensure community-based arts and cultural activities can flourish	MT	LS	All

Responsibility

CAO - Chief Administrative Officer
 BD - Building Department
 CS - Corporate Services
 ED - Economic Development
 FS - Financial Services
 LG - Legal Services
 LS - Leisure Services
 PL&D - Planning and Development Services
 PW - Public Works

Timeframe

Short term (ST) = action initiated within 24 months
 Medium Term (MT) = action initiated within 24-60 months
 Long Term (LT) = action initiated after 60 months

Goal C: Promote a healthy environment that fosters social and physical well-being			
Objective C5: Promote community involvement and volunteerism opportunities.			
Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsibility	
		Lead	Contributor
❖ Continue to encourage, support and recognize the efforts of volunteerism and outstanding community contributions	ST	CS/LS	All
❖ Develop and implement a strategy aimed at increasing youth engagement	MT	LS	FS
❖ Implement and promote a volunteer management program including a process to inform residents of issues and volunteer opportunities	MT	CS	
❖ Develop and implement a strategy aimed at increasing senior engagement	MT	CS	
❖ Investigate and establish a multi-cultural advisory committee	MT	CAO	All
❖ Create and implement a grant for residents, non-government organizations and students aimed at local projects that focus on healthy environments and social and physical well-being	MT	CAO	LG, CS
❖ Develop partnerships to assist with public education, planting events, restoration and preservation projects	MT	LS	PW

Responsibility

CAO - Chief Administrative Officer
 BD - Building Department
 CS - Corporate Services
 ED - Economic Development
 FS - Financial Services
 LG - Legal Services
 LS - Leisure Services
 PL&D - Planning and Development Services
 PW - Public Works

Timeframe

Short term (ST) = action initiated within 24 months
 Medium Term (MT) = action initiated within 24-60 months
 Long Term (LT) = action initiated after 60 months

Goal C: Promote a healthy environment that fosters social and physical well-being			
Objective C6: Review and improve accessibility for persons with disabilities			
Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsibility	
		Lead	Contributor
❖ Ensure the accessibility and safety of new and existing facilities and infrastructure	ST	BD	All
❖ Undertake an accessibility needs study	MT	CAO	CS
❖ Continue to review and update the Accessibility Plan	MT	CAO	
❖ Provide accessible cultural and recreational programs and services for residents with disabilities	MT	LS	CS
❖ Continue to provide public awareness to eliminate barriers	MT	CS	

Responsibility

CAO - Chief Administrative Officer
 BD - Building Department
 CS - Corporate Services
 ED - Economic Development
 FS - Financial Services
 LG - Legal Services
 LS - Leisure Services
 PL&D - Planning and Development Services
 PW - Public Works

Timeframe

Short term (ST) = action initiated within 24 months
 Medium Term (MT) = action initiated within 24-60 months
 Long Term (LT) = action initiated after 60 months

Goal D: Ensure transparent, accountable and open governance in concert with informed and involved citizens			
Objective D1: Continue the commitment of fiscal responsibility and accountability			
Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsibility	
		Lead	Contributor
❖ Review and update fiscal and Departmental performance indicators annually, including development charges, and assess and report to the community	ST	FS	CAO
❖ Undertake a business planning and budgeting process that addresses community needs	ST	FS	
❖ Develop a communications and public education protocol that conveys the costs associated with community needs	ST	CAO	FS
❖ Continue to monitor our service fees and tax rates in comparison to other municipalities	ST	FS	CAO
❖ Continue the commitment of long-term financial planning	ST	FS	
❖ Continue to assess community needs, priorities and service delivery improvement opportunities	ST	CAO	
❖ During decision-making processes financial considerations will continue to be a guiding principle	ST	FS	All
❖ Explore public and private partnerships to develop a Corporate Fund Raising Program.	MT	CS	

Responsibility

CAO - Chief Administrative Officer
 BD - Building Department
 CS - Corporate Services
 ED - Economic Development
 FS - Financial Services
 LG - Legal Services
 LS - Leisure Services
 PL&D - Planning and Development Services
 PW - Public Works

Timeframe

Short term (ST) = action initiated within 24 months
 Medium Term (MT) = action initiated within 24-60 months
 Long Term (LT) = action initiated after 60 months

Goal D: Ensure transparent, accountable and open governance in concert with informed and involved citizens			
Objective D2: Enhance customer service			
Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsibility	
		Lead	Contributor
❖ Establish customer service standards that will be met when delivering municipal services	ST	CAO	All
❖ Develop tools and mechanisms to achieve the customer service standards including enhancement of e-services.	ST	CAO	
❖ Support and enhance program delivery and ensure appropriate staff complements by identifying staff skills and providing training for all staff	MT	CS	All
❖ Conduct internal and external customer satisfaction surveys	LT	CAO	All

Responsibility

CAO - Chief Administrative Officer
 BD - Building Department
 CS - Corporate Services
 ED - Economic Development
 FS - Financial Services
 LG - Legal Services
 LS - Leisure Services
 PL&D - Planning and Development Services
 PW - Public Works

Timeframe

Short term (ST) = action initiated within 24 months
 Medium Term (MT) = action initiated within 24-60 months
 Long Term (LT) = action initiated after 60 months

Goal D: Ensure transparent, accountable and open governance in concert with informed and involved citizens			
Objective D3: Be accountable and transparent to residents by ensuring open and accessible information flow and accessible decision-making			
Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsibility	
		Lead	Contributor
❖ Continue to improve communication flow to provide ease of access to information.	ST	CAO	All
❖ Seek input and encourage participation from the residents to foster informed decision-making	ST	CAO	All
❖ Communicate and continue to improve a corporate-wide communication strategy.	ST	CAO	All

Responsibility

CAO - Chief Administrative Officer
 BD - Building Department
 CS - Corporate Services
 ED - Economic Development
 FS - Financial Services
 LG - Legal Services
 LS - Leisure Services
 PL&D - Planning and Development Services
 PW - Public Works

Timeframe

Short term (ST) = action initiated within 24 months
 Medium Term (MT) = action initiated within 24-60 months
 Long Term (LT) = action initiated after 60 months

Goal D: Ensure transparent, accountable and open governance in concert with informed and involved citizens			
Objective D4: Create a respectful environment that fosters team work and open dialogue, consistent with a Character Community			
Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsibility	
		Lead	Contributor
❖ Create and maintain a code of conduct for dialogue exchange between Council members, staff and residents	ST	CAO/LG	All
❖ Implement training sessions for Council and SMT members aimed at improving communication, team building, trust and leadership	ST	CAO	All
❖ Continue to review Town policies and procedures.	ST	CAO	All
❖ Improve internal information flow, in order to maintain positive, informed working relationships.	ST	CAO	All

Responsibility

CAO - Chief Administrative Officer
 BD - Building Department
 CS - Corporate Services
 ED - Economic Development
 FS –Financial Services
 LG - Legal Services
 LS - Leisure Services
 PL&D - Planning and Development Services
 PW - Public Works

Timeframe

Short term (ST) = action initiated within 24 months
 Medium Term (MT) = action initiated within 24-60 months
 Long Term (LT) = action initiated after 60 months

IMPLEMENTATION AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This section briefly explains the implementation steps required to ensure that the Strategic Plan is adopted and used by the Town Council and staff as well as how they will report on the progress in completing Actions.

In order to ensure that the Strategic Plan continues to be used as a significant document in the Town Council's decision-making, a clear implementation process must be put in place.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

The objective of the implementation process is to assist the Town in determining over time whether or not the Actions identified in the Strategic Plan have been effective. One of the limitations of municipal strategic planning is that while communities can articulate Visions, Goals, Objectives and Actions, they almost always fail, because there is no commitment to implementation, assessment of whether or not the Actions have been taken and whether or not the Actions have been effective.

The first phase of the implementation process will begin with the development of draft performance measures based on the Strategic Plan's Action, to be completed upon acceptance of the plan by Council. The measures will require staff input to ensure they are as accurate and relevant as possible. Staff are the most important stakeholder group, since much of the responsibilities for the Actions, implementation and performance measurement will fall to them.

Performance measurement can be defined as a data collection and monitoring system established to monitor and improve results of government policies and programs. Governments do this to track progress towards achieving specified Goals or Objectives, and to report on the progress made in achieving these Goals and Objectives.

This section has been prepared to assist and support Town of Aurora Departments in measuring their performance at implementing the Actions outlined that are linked to the implementation of the overall Vision and direction in the Strategic Plan.

To assist the Town in determining whether or not the Actions identified in the plan have been effective.

The following summarizes the suggested Actions/tasks for Town staff to follow in order to ensure the Strategic Plan is used as a guiding document in the Town's clear and transparent decision-making procedures.

1. Endorsement of the Strategic Plan by Town Council.
2. Communication with community, stakeholders and Town staff of the updated Strategic Plan
3. DPRA to assist in the development of draft performance measures based on the Actions identified in the Strategic Plan. The intent of the draft measures is to provide Town staff (i.e. those charged with responsibility of monitoring the success of the Strategic Plan) with a starting point. The objective is that each Department will need to massage/modify the measures so they are as accurate and relevant as possible.
4. The Strategic Plan will require a leader/champion to ensure the Actions are implemented. It is suggested the CAO oversee and monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plan. The CAO should oversee and monitor the implementation of all the Action steps to assess progress and recommend changes to Actions and timeframes as may be required.
5. It is also suggested the CAO appoint a Strategic Plan Implementation Committee^[1] to assist in gathering performance measurement data from departments; analyzing the information; providing reports on departmental and overall Town success at implementing Actions; and providing suggested changes to components of the Strategic Plan (e.g. Actions/measures/timing) to reflect changing social conditions.
6. The Departments responsible for implementing an Action item will need to develop operational work plans, with the associated performance measures and multi-year budgets to support implementation of the items. The work programs should be evaluated (via the performance metrics) and revised annually. Annual business plans should be submitted to the CAO's office/Strategic Plan Implementation Committee
7. The CAO as the Chair of the Strategic Plan Implementation Committee should report progress in achieving the Objectives and Goals annually to Town Council. Similarly, the Strategic Plan Implementation Committee should report progress on an annual basis to Town staff and Community Residents.
8. The Strategic Plan Implementation Committee is to meet annually with Department leaders to review and revise annual work programs which align with the Strategic Plan and its associated Actions. Semi-annual meetings should also be held to assess progress with respect to implementation of Actions.

9. Senior Management Meetings are an excellent opportunity to discuss the implementation of Action items identified in the Strategic Plan. The CAO as Chair of the Strategic Plan Implementation Committee should have a standing item on the Senior Management Meeting agenda that deals directly with the Strategic Plan on a semi-annual basis.
10. Once the performance measures have been finalized, it is suggested that Senior Management deal with implementation of the Plan on an annual basis. This mechanism will ensure that the direction set out in the Strategic Plan is regularly addressed.
11. The Senior Management will commit to a consistent reporting mechanism to report progress on the action items.
12. The Strategic Plan Implementation Committee should develop a protocol and template for staff reports and budget submissions to Council that conforms with the direction of the Strategic Plan. The objective is to ensure that Actions taken and work performed by staff in some way supports the overall Vision and direction set out in the Strategic Plan.
13. The Senior Management and staff will be responsible for updating existing reports (i.e. Places to Grow Plan) to be brought into conformity with the updated Strategic Plan.
14. Any recommendations that do not conform must be explicitly described and justified so that a fully informed decision can be made.

^[1] It is strongly suggested that staff who were involved in the development of the plan be considered as part of any implementation committee. DPRA suggests the CAO Chair the committee, other members include Sue Seibert, Dino Lombardi, Ruth Beaton, Colleen Abbott, plus one or two more interested staff members.