

2025 TOWN OF COBOURG OPERATIONAL PLAN

Actioning the Town of Cobourg Strategic Plan





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ACTIONING THE TOWN OF COBOURG STRATEGIC PLAN

The *Town of Cobourg Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027 and Beyond* is a living document that provides Council and staff with the framework for decision making. Council's strategic plan defines the long-term goals for Cobourg. The annual Operational Plan will outline the steps staff will take to achieve them.

The Town of Cobourg Annual Operational Plan will evolve year-over-year to respond to policy changes, new challenges, unexpected funding opportunities, and the shifting needs of residents. Developed by the Town's senior management team, the annual operational plan acknowledges that the journey to achieve Council's strategic vision, is not a linear path, but a continuous process of assessment, adjustment, and improvement.

Executive Summary

In 2025, strategic priorities will include continuing to track established key performance indicators (KPIs), finalizing recommendations from the Service and Organizational Review, alongside the Operational Actions outlined below.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are a set of quantifiable metrics used to track and measure progress towards specific goals and objectives. The development of KPI's will help staff identify areas of success, as well as areas that need improvement. As Staff continue to work towards achieving the goals set out in the *Town of Cobourg Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 and Beyond*, some KPI's will remain consistent while others will be added to better represent new initiatives.

In 2020, the Town of Cobourg underwent a **Municipal Service Delivery Review**. Funded by a grant from the Province of Ontario, the intent of this program was to assist municipalities become more efficient and modernize service delivery while protecting front line jobs.

The Town contracted KPMG (Business Consultants) to conduct a review of municipal services. The process included public engagement to better understand what programs and services are most appreciated by members of the community, as well as meetings with directors and managers to outline our current operational structure and demand on staff. KPMG's report highlighted the valued services provided by the Town of Cobourg and areas where changes could be made to address the demands of our growing community.

In 2021, Council directed the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare an **Organizational Review Implementation Plan** with recommendations from the Organizational Review findings. The objective of the plan is to improve service to our community and find opportunities to enhance the reception of our service to members of the public. The recommended changes outlined in the Organizational Review Implementation Plan will serve as the foundational items to help staff achieve the strategic vision of Council. All changes are dedicated to better service to our citizens and resultantly greater appreciation of staff efforts. With over 90% of the recommendations in the report now complete, staff will implement the remaining recommendations in 2025. Key priorities for completion include the purchase and implementation of a Human Resources Information System (HRIS), ongoing customer service enhancements, and the hiring of a Manager for Infrastructure and Major Capital Projects.

Staff have presented the 2024 Operational Plan Annual Report and will provide a mid-term progress report on Council's Strategic Plan in a dedicated report to Council. To strengthen public communication, Council has allocated \$20,000 in the 2025 budget to update residents on progress toward the objectives of the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan report will form the basis for a Council mailout to the community, ensuring residents are informed about key achievements and ongoing initiatives for the remainder of the Council term.



Operational Actions

Strategic Pillar: Thriving Community

Strategic Actions

1. Provide the physical infrastructure to support a healthy community that will enable each of us to flourish and reach our full potential.
2. Institute development policies that promote the provision of a mixture of housing options that support the community.
3. Invest in Programs and services that encourage active lifestyles for all age groups.
4. Maintain resiliency and competitiveness through investments in people and resources in collaboration with other public sector agencies and levels of government.



Operational Actions

Strategic Pillar: Thriving Community

Development Dashboard

1. Complete Development plans for 117 Durham Street
2. Town Official Plan Update (Anticipated Completion 2026)
3. Cobourg East Community Secondary Plan (Anticipated Completion 2026)
4. Complete a review and update of Employment Lands
5. Hire and on-board a new Asset Management Coordinator
6. Hire and on-board a new Manager, Infrastructure & Major Capital
7. Construct the Waterfront Boardwalk
8. Update Comprehensive Zoning By-law
9. Lucas Point Channel Diversion Project
10. Venture 13 – Adjustments to rental model to maximize revenue
11. Complete Archeological work for Harbor Reconstruction Project
12. Aging Well at Home Program – Cobourg Fire Community Education Program
13. YMCA New Facility Project – Lands and Feasibility Process



Operational Actions

Strategic Pillar: Service Excellence

Strategic Plan Actions

1. Assess points of contact with customers to identify ways to streamline communications, increase stakeholder engagement, demonstrate user friendliness and provide optimal service.
2. Embrace new technologies that will improve customer service and increase efficiency and accessibility.
3. Ensure that human resources policies and practices make Cobourg the employer of choice to attract and retain the best talent.
4. Develop and Implement Key Performance Indicators and Continuous Improvement Plans for municipal programs and services to measure Customer Satisfaction, Community Impact and Efficiency.



Operational Actions

Strategic Pillar: Service Excellence

Development Dashboard

1. Limited Fixed Route Transit, One-Year Trial Program (Until Sept 2025)
2. Implement Cloud Permit (Digitize Planning Application Process)
3. Planning Inquiry Process – Introduce Metrics to Gauge Department Efficiency
4. Updated Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) and Community Engagement on the MYAP
5. Development and launch of Business Licensing Online Application Software
6. Planning and Preparation of the 2026 Municipal and School Board Elections
7. Establishing & Regulating Bylaw update (Fire)
8. Standard Operating Procedures and Operating Guideline Review and update (Fire)
9. NFPA 1033 the Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigators -training remaining applicable staff
10. Introduce new software to enhance reporting (Fire)
11. Public Education Campaign on Fire Safety and Prevention
12. Complete remaining NFPA 1021 Fire Officer II training for remaining Firefighters
13. Updates and preparation of debt policy, reserve policy, and development charges policy
14. Update the disaster recovery plan and business continuity plan
15. Launch new cobourg.ca and experiencecobourg.ca websites
16. Procure and implement a Human Resources Information System
17. Pilot OS Ticket Internally for Improved Customer Service
18. Implement the Town of Cobourg Customer Charter
19. Implement the Town of Cobourg Customer Service Policy

Operational Actions

Strategic Pillar: Sustainability

Strategic Plan Actions

1. Preserve and promote the heritage, history and culture of Cobourg to sustain it as a vibrant and appealing destination.
2. Protect Cobourg's harbour and waterfront for use and enjoyment by residents, visitors and future generations.
3. Take a community approach to making the future of Cobourg equitable, resilient, and sustainable in response to our ever changing natural environment, including efforts to address climate change.
4. Enhance our Financial and Asset Management Plans to provide appropriate levels of services and ensure long-term sustainability.



Operational Actions

Strategic Pillar: Sustainability

Development Dashboard

1. Addressing Bill23 Heritage Matters
2. Parks Master Plan Update
3. Update Procurement Policy to promote electric and alternative energy products
4. Asset Management Plan – Next Phase
5. Implementation and Roll-Out of STRA Licensing and Enforcement
6. Downtown Parking and General Parking Review
7. Review and Consideration of Residential Licensing Regulation
8. Purchase an EV for Fire Prevention
9. Policy and update to year end surplus including correct allocation to tax stabilization reserve
10. Reduce backlog of open capital projects by 10% (Community Services)
11. Update Town of Cobourg Emergency Plan
12. Establish new Emergency Operations Centre





DEVELOPING KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

To achieve Service Excellence as set out by this plan, staff are developing Key Performance Indicators and Continuous Improvement Plans for municipal programs and services to measure Customer Satisfaction, Community Impact and Efficiency.

As Staff continue to work towards achieving the goals set out in the *Town of Cobourg Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 and Beyond*, some KPI's will remain consistent while others will be added to better represent new initiatives.

Key Performance Indicators

Strategic Pillar: Thriving Community

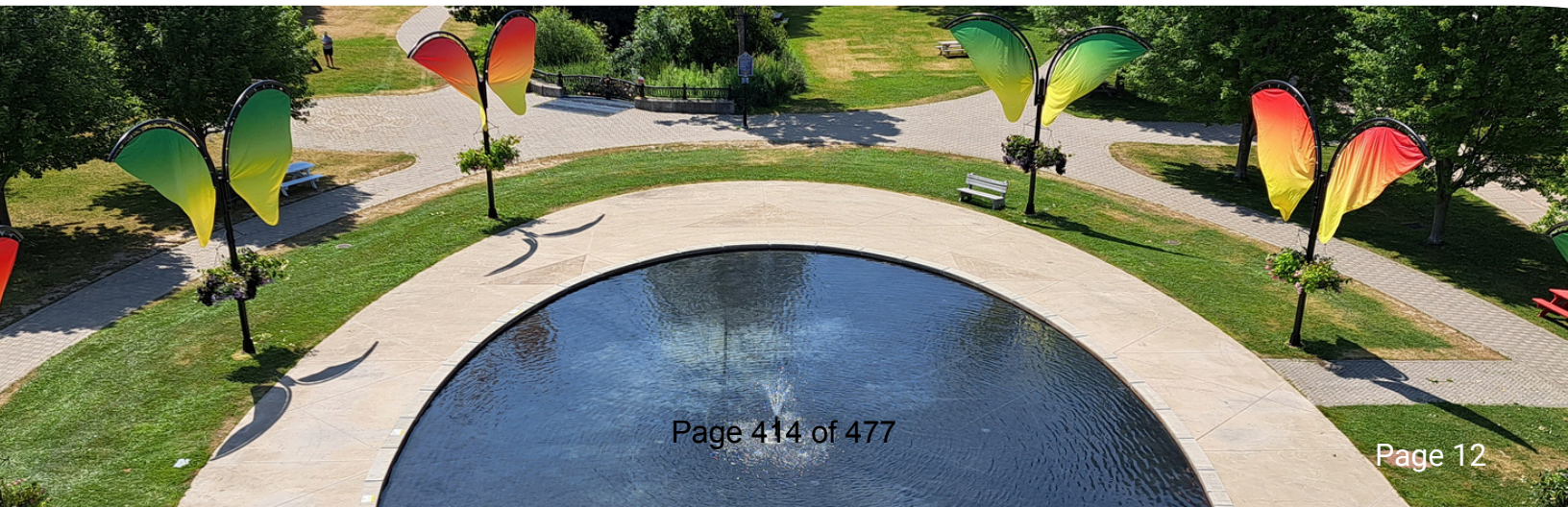
Community Engagement Meets Population Sample

About the indicator: 380 represents a 5% margin of error with a 95% confidence level for a sample size of 21,000 people. To ensure community engagement for major projects such as the Multi-Year AccessAbility Plan or annual budget deliberation can be considered an appropriate sampling of community input, staff aim to engage with at least 380 individuals.

How this is measured: Engagement is measured by number of surveys completed, number of residents spoken to at community pop-up sessions and number of residents interacted with at community stakeholder meetings.

Why this measurement is important: Ensure a large enough sample size to accurately demonstrate community needs.

Status: This remains in progress for 2025. We are further expanding community engagement strategies, and staff are spending time actively connecting in-person with the community. Staff continue to seek additional opportunities for the community to engage and will explore a new engagement tool for the next budget round that will allow for participatory budgeting.



Key Performance Indicators

Strategic Pillar: Thriving Community

Building Permits Issued and Inspections Provided within Legislated Timelines

About the indicator: The Ontario Building Code states the Chief Building Official shall issue a building permit or provide reasons why the permit cannot be issued within the legislated timelines, being 10, 15, 20, or 30 days, depending on the type of building per the OBC. The Town of Cobourg aims to process all building permit applications within the legislated timelines once a complete application has been submitted, applicable law has been met, and fees have been paid. The OBC also legislates inspection times of 48 hours which too, the Town aims to comply with.

How this is measured: All Town of Cobourg Building Permit Applications and Inspection requests are processed through Cloud Permit. Cloudpermit can be used to track these legislated timelines however, it is important to note that it does not consider delays for incomplete applications, time applications are waiting for other departments/agencies approvals to meet the requirements of applicable law, changes requested to/by applicants, or while fees are waiting to be paid.

Why this measurement is important: Ensure the Town of Cobourg is meeting the legislated timelines for building permit issuance and inspections.

Status: Town staff are working with software provider to implement changes to clearly report on this metric. It is anticipated these changes will be complete in 2025.

Key Performance Indicators

Strategic Pillar: Thriving Community

1000 Fire Safety Education Initiatives

About the indicator: The Cobourg Fire Department seeks to increase its community engagement and education initiatives. The Fire Department has set a goal of 250 home visits per platoon in 2024 for a total of 1000 Fire Safety Education visits.

How this is measured: The Cobourg Fire Department currently tracks calls and community engagement initiatives through the Fire Prevention Division.

Why this measurement is important: Community engagement is a powerful vehicle for bringing about environmental and behavioral changes that will improve the health and safety of our residents.

Status: 130% - Cobourg Fire Department completed 530 visits in 2024, exceeding the target of 400. Cobourg Fire Department has set a target of 1000 visits for 2025 and each year going forward. This represents visiting approximately 10% of the 10K households in Cobourg each year.



Key Performance Indicators

Strategic Pillar: Service Excellence

25% Improvement in Citizen Satisfaction with Municipal Website

About the indicator: The municipal website is one of the most important sources of information for residents. Therefore, staff believe it should be easy to navigate and provide an enjoyable user experience. Staff completed a community engagement survey in Q1 2024 to gain insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the previous municipal website. Following the launch of the updated Municipal Website in September 2024, Staff will conduct community engagement to educate residents on the new site in hopes that usability and overall satisfaction with the site will improve by 25%.

How this is measured: Resident satisfaction will be measured in person and online through EngageCobourg.ca, residents spoken to at community pop-up sessions and interacted with at community stakeholder meetings.

Why this measurement is important: Assess points of contact with customers to identify ways to streamline communications, increase stakeholder engagement, demonstrate user friendliness, and provide optimal service. Embrace new technologies that will improve customer service and increase efficiency and accessibility.

Status: The website launch has been moved to late March, 2025. Work to migrate the content has been 75% completed.

Key Performance Indicators

Strategic Pillar: Service Excellence

Average length of service for Town of Cobourg Employees is 5 years or more

About the indicator: With improved policies and benefits packages being provided by neighboring municipalities, employee retention is becoming increasingly competitive. Through improved employee appreciation, flexible working environment and compensation review, the Town of Cobourg is doing what it can to attract and retain talented and experienced personnel.

How this is measured: Human Resources Department tracks staff onboarding and departure dates. An average term of stay report will be provided to Council annually through the end of year Operational Plan dashboard update.

Why this measurement is important: To ensure that human resources policies and practices make Cobourg the employer of choice to attract and retain the best talent.

Status: On-track – With an average tenure of 8.9 years, staff retention is ahead of the target of 5 years.



Key Performance Indicators

Strategic Pillar: Service Excellence

Complete 175 hours of Cyber Security Training Per Year

About the indicator: Small municipalities are strategic targets for cyber attacks based on the assumption that they are not equipped with appropriate cyber security measures and their significant financial impact. The Town of Cobourg Corporate Services Division is making initiatives to ensure that all Town of Cobourg employees receive cyber security training.

How this is measured: Human Resources Department in partnership with the Corporate Services division will monitor mandatory training hours. This metric is based on a staff composition of 150 full time staff. All staff will receive a minimum of one hour of training per year and additional training provided to management and other identified staff.

Why this measurement is important: Training will provide staff with the knowledge and skills to identify potential cyber threats, helping to reduce the likelihood of falling victim to an attack.

Status: Partially Complete – With a total of 153 hours completed in 2024, staff are slightly behind the goal of 175 hours. Staff will continue to work towards achieving 175 hours of IT training for the corporation in 2025.

Key Performance Indicators

Strategic Pillar: Sustainability

Reserves as a Percentage of Expenses

About the indicator: This measure shows how much money is saved for future capital needs and unexpected expenses compared to our overall spending. Reserves, also known as "savings," are set aside to cover large capital expenditures like road and bridge construction. The percentage tells us how much we have in reserve compared to our annual needs. The Town of Cobourg aims for reserves as a percentage of expenses greater than 30%.

How this is measured: This data is based on the Town of Cobourg's audited financial statements.

Why this measurement is important: Financial sustainability refers to the ability to provide and maintain service and infrastructure levels without resorting to unplanned increases in tax rates or reductions in service.

Status: Reserves as a Percentage of Expenses – 23%

The Town's reserves currently sit at 23% of expenses, falling short of the 30% target. While the 2024 reserve target was not met, the Town remains committed to maintaining adequate reserves despite ongoing economic pressures that have impacted reserve allocations. To address this, staff will be preparing an updated reserve policy along with revised allocations to ensure the Town meets its targeted reserve levels, strengthening long-term financial sustainability.

Key Performance Indicators

Strategic Pillar: Sustainability

Improved Project Tracking and Budgeting

About the indicator: The Town of Cobourg is committed to providing transparent and timely financial reporting to Council and the community. In 2024, staff will introduce quarterly financial reporting and project status updates.

How this is measured: A quarterly financial report will be provided by the Director of Corporate Services to Council quarterly through Regular Council. Additionally, staff have developed a new program dashboard to provide quarterly updates to Council and the community on the Strategic Operational Actions identified in the annual operational plan. The dashboard will be easily accessible to all members of the community via the Town website.

Why this measurement is important: Regular financial reporting promotes better financial control by enabling staff to monitor cash flow, manage working capital, and control expenses. Quarterly reporting will allow staff to identify current and future risks as well as provide a more informed estimation of future budget requirements.

Status: Council received first quarterly budget report in April 2024. Program dashboard completed and first update to Council scheduled for June 26, 2024.



HOW WE WILL USE THIS OPERATIONAL PLAN

This operational plan identifies projects and initiatives that are aligned with the *Town of Cobourg Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 and Beyond*. The plan and corresponding program dashboard will be our instrument to monitor progress.