

# Our Plan for Success

Oshawa Strategic Plan  
2020—2023





# Our Plan for Success

“We create our future each day, and our local actions affect the global community today, as well as for generations to come.”

Dr. Roberta Bondar,  
Order of Canada

Thank you to the Oshawa community for their photo contributions to this document.

If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact Service Oshawa at 905-436-3311 or email [service@oshawa.ca](mailto:service@oshawa.ca)

[www.oshawa.ca/osp](http://www.oshawa.ca/osp)

## Purpose of the Plan

The City of Oshawa has a long committed history with strategic planning, beginning with the City's first Strategic Plan in 2005, Creating Our Tomorrow. The second Strategic Plan, Creating Our Sustainable Tomorrow, was established in 2012, through extensive consultation with the public, stakeholders and City employees. In 2015, City Council approved Our Focus, Our Future, based on a refresh of the 2012 Plan.

**Our Plan for Success** is Oshawa's **strategic plan** for the next **four years (2020–2023)**. It is based on a refresh of the 2015-2019 strategic plan and reflects community feedback and the current City Council's understanding of what is important to the community and the corporation.

Having a strategic plan is about envisioning our future through words and pictures, and identifying how we are going to get there. The journey is driven by innovation and commitment, the ability to think and act differently, and to change with the times. It requires us to recognize and balance the difference between “wants” and “needs” and to be visionary and long-term thinkers, making fully informed decisions with all facets of society and future generations in mind.

**Our Plan for Success** is the City's **highest level policy document** and is guided by the two principles of sustainability and financial stewardship.

This Plan identifies five goals that will guide decisions made by the City over the next four years. Each goal is supported by a number of strategies grouped by theme. Implementation of the Plan will require all of us to work together — City Council and employees, the public, stakeholders, City-funded and private agencies, businesses and other levels of government. Progress on this Plan will be reported on by the Departments to Council.

This Plan speaks to our collective commitment to align resources with priorities and ensure our long-term viability, vitality and resilience as a world-class city.



On behalf of City Council, I commit our political leadership to achieve our strategic goals over the term of Council.

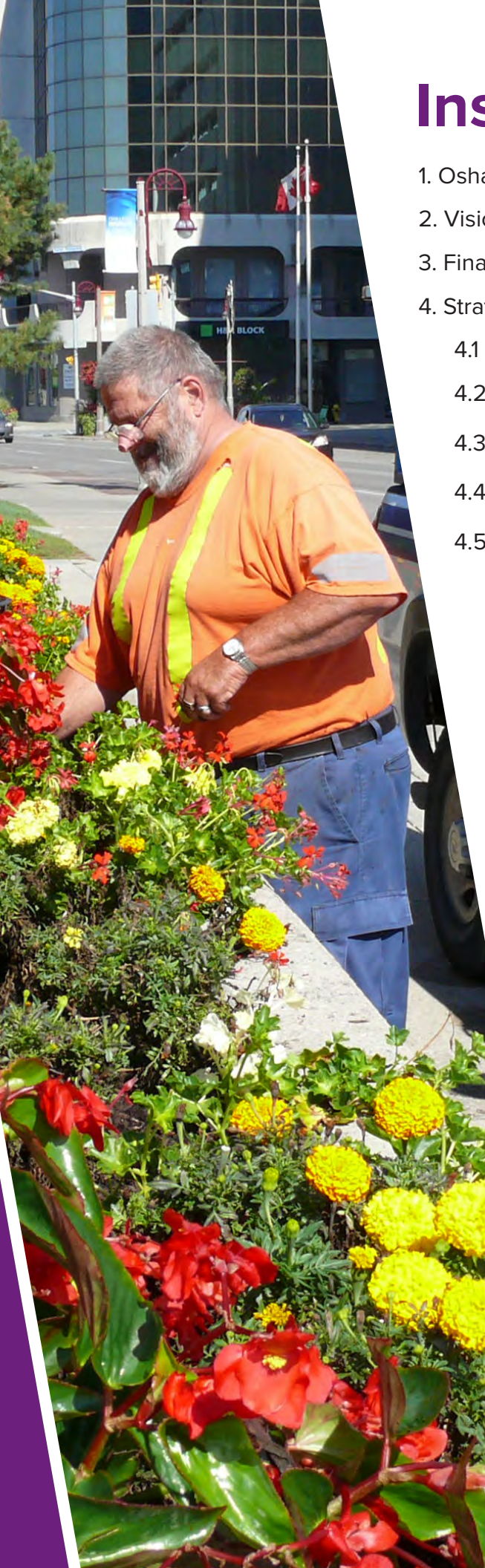
Dan Carter, Mayor



On behalf of City employees, I commit to support the achievement of Council's strategic goals.

Paul Ralph, Chief Administrative Officer





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# 1. Oshawa Past and Present

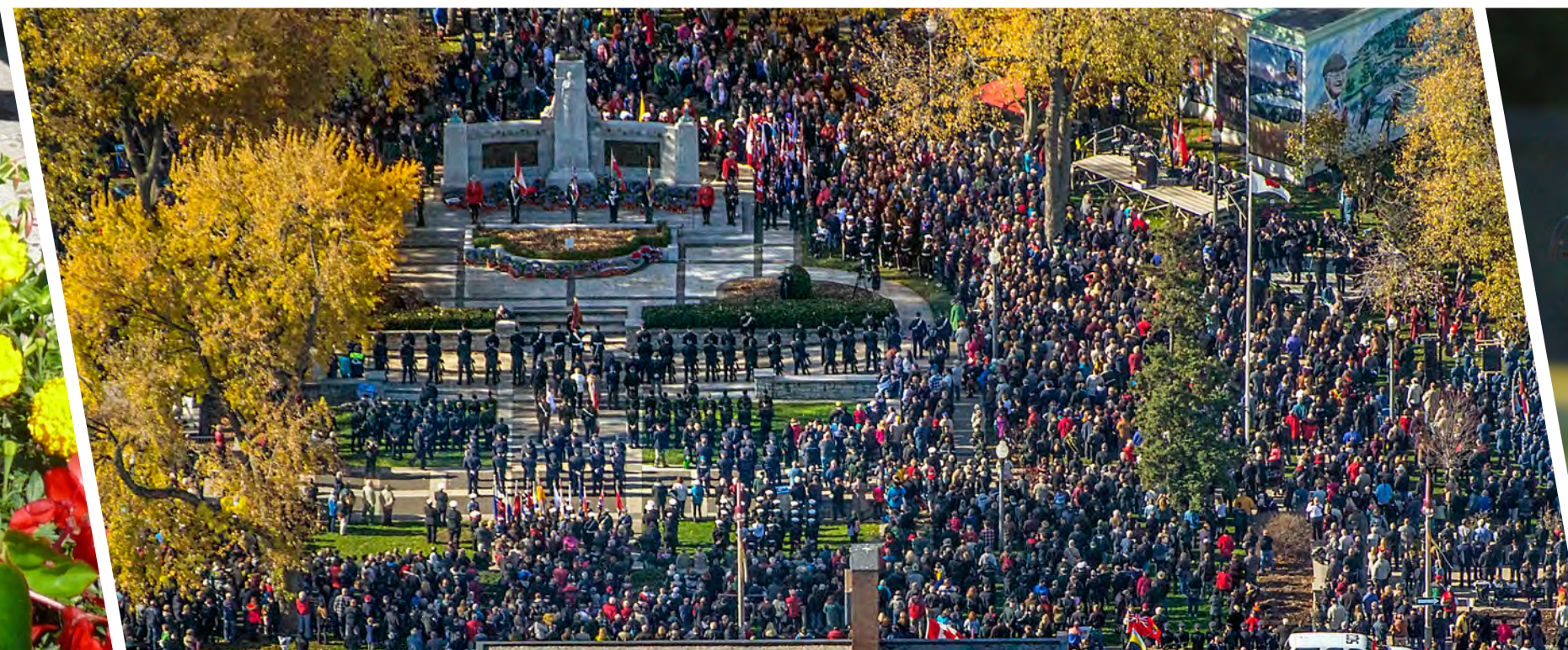
Since the early ancestral Wendat settlements along the Harmony Creek in the 1400's, Oshawa has prospered. The area became a fur trading post near the mouth of the Oshawa Creek in the 1750's and by the mid-1950's, Oshawa's transportation infrastructure began to take shape with the development of the Port of Oshawa and the arrival of the Grand Trunk Railway. These important transportation modes gave rise to the attraction of industry and with it, jobs and people. Oshawa continued to grow both in area and population and became a strong hub for trade and commerce. Today, Oshawa is a well-managed, prosperous, diverse and growing city.

Oshawa is undergoing a profound transition and a technological renaissance that has not been experienced before. The transition from a manufacturing-based economy to a technology and knowledge-based economy has in many ways been fuelled by the growth and influence of four post-secondary institutions – Durham College, Ontario Tech University, Trent University Durham GTA and Queen's University.

The city has excellent road, rail, water and air transportation infrastructure. From the Hamilton-Oshawa Port Authority with its own rail spur, to the Oshawa Executive Airport to Highways 401 and 407 East, goods and people can move anywhere, anytime.

A streamlined development approvals process supports investment in the community. Oshawa has experienced record years of development, new business opportunities are being created and the downtown core is being revitalized where restaurants, cafes and entertainment venues have become a focal point.

Residents benefit from urban and rural living options, best-in-class recreation facilities, a strong community volunteer base, a growing and vibrant arts and culture scene, rich heritage and natural open spaces.





## 2. Vision and Mission

As the City's highest level policy document, **Our Plan for Success** provides a roadmap for the term of Council.

### Community Vision

Oshawa — a prosperous, collaborative, vibrant, inclusive and green city where people and businesses are proud to live, work, learn and play.

### Corporate Mission

Dedicated to serving our community

## 3. Financial Stewardship

Oshawa is operating within the financial reality of global economies, increasing diversity, changing demographics, ongoing infrastructure maintenance, the need for new infrastructure to keep up with growth pressures, and an increasing demand for services, transparency and accountability.

The City currently has high standards of fiscal responsibility and strives to remain affordable in the face of competing demands, requiring the City to be visionary, innovative and think long-term. To this end, the City will be updating its Financial Strategy. This Strategy will address infrastructure investment, reserve funds, debt management, revenue sources and operating costs. It will help to manage costs, save for the future, build partnerships and ensure responsible taxation. The Financial Strategy will provide sound, proactive and financial stewardship within the context of continuous improvement and ensures the long-term financial health of the City of Oshawa.

The Financial Strategy will allow available resources to be aligned with the City's five strategic goals via Department business plans and the annual budget process. This will ensure we are all moving in the same direction.

**The guiding principle of financial stewardship requires the City to:**

- Be proactive and innovative in providing cost effective core programs, services and facilities responsive to community needs while living within our means
- Focus attention on critical areas
- Make informed decisions that support sustainability
- Ensure responsible taxation
- Ensure a sound and sustainable financial future







# 4. Strategic Goals

The City is committed to five inter-related strategic goals with associated themes, which reflect the components of the guiding principle of sustainability.<sup>1</sup> Using sustainability as our lens, the interdependence — the inseparability — of our economic, leadership, social, cultural and environmental goals become clearer and a more collaborative, integrated approach to problem-solving and decision-making results.

### Themes

- Financial Strategy
- Build and Further Diversify Our Economy
- Wise Land Use
- Responsible Taxation
- Safe and Reliable Infrastructure

- Deliberate Community Engagement
- Our Corporate Culture Demands Excellence and Respect
- Develop and Leverage Relationships

- Enrich Our Community Through Diversity
- An Active, Healthy and Safe Community

- Enrich Our Community Through Culture

- Proactive Environmental Management and Combat Climate Change
- Cleaner Air, Land and Water
- Resilient Local Food System
- Less Waste Generation

<sup>1</sup> Sustainability is defined as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” (Brundtland Commission, 1987)





# 4.1 Economic Prosperity & Financial Stewardship

## Ensure economic growth and a sound financial future

Oshawa is proactive about economic growth and has a diversified economy in the manufacturing, knowledge, health and technology sectors. The expansion of post-secondary education continues to attract new investment. A highly skilled labour force supports the city's ongoing success. Transportation assets include a full-service airport, rail, deep water port and multiple, direct highway access. A variety of housing options attract first-time homebuyers and established families. Well planned developments protect our agricultural lands and green/open space. A growing cultural identity, the rebirth of the downtown and the waterfront are creating places of pride, people and prosperity.

Proactive and responsible financial management and sound investments provide and maintain City facilities with effective and efficient core programs and services. The reality of a global economy, increasing costs and limited financial resources remind us of the need to live within our means, and recognize the difference between wants and needs.

The achievement of this goal will be measured by our success in attaining the following strategies grouped under five themes.

Theme	Strategies
Financial Strategy	1. Develop, implement and maintain a proactive and sustainable Council-endorsed Financial Strategy
Build and Further Diversify Our Economy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enhance the potential for job growth by leveraging Oshawa's key economic strengths and assets</li> <li>2. Ensure flexible and timely approvals to advance sound and sustainable development opportunities</li> <li>3. Develop and implement an updated Economic Development Strategy</li> <li>4. Proactively pursue commercial and industrial growth to create investment and job development, and reduce reliance on residential assessment</li> <li>5. Actively support the growth of the city's post-secondary educational institutions and knowledge-based industries</li> <li>6. Develop and implement a renewed downtown revitalization plan</li> <li>7. Emphasize Oshawa's deep water port as a key infrastructure asset and work with the Hamilton/Oshawa Port Authority to develop a mixed use Port located primarily on the East Wharf that is compatible with our community</li> <li>8. Develop and implement the Oshawa Executive Airport Business Plan</li> <li>9. Actively support the growth of the healthcare sector, including a new hospital in north Oshawa</li> <li>10. Develop and implement an action plan to revitalize traditional neighbourhoods to support a one-city approach and renewal that regains opportunities for multimodal transportation, diverse infrastructure and amenities</li> <li>11. Advance strategic initiatives for economic recovery as a result of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic</li> </ol>

Theme	Strategies
Wise Land Use	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create mixed-use, transit-supportive, multimodal, economically diverse, attractive, safe and healthy neighbourhoods</li> <li>2. Identify housing needs and facilitate proposals that satisfy gaps in the city's housing market</li> <li>3. Maintain and protect viable agricultural and sensitive lands, and rural communities outside the urban area boundary</li> <li>4. Ensure the City Official Plan is current and up-to-date</li> <li>5. Continue to improve and protect the Lake Ontario waterfront as an important community asset by implementing such measures as investigating and implementing recreational/parkland options for the newly named Ed Broadbent Waterfront Park, including a Boat Launch</li> <li>6. Work effectively with all levels of government to fund and support effective protection of Lake Ontario waterfront lands</li> </ol>
Responsible Taxation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure responsible, fair and affordable taxation recognizing the connection between wants, needs, priorities and means</li> <li>2. Ensure a transparent annual budget process that promotes public engagement and literacy of municipal taxation and budgeting</li> <li>3. Ensure quality core programs and services that are responsive to community needs</li> <li>4. Proactively apply for public sector funding and pursue private sector partnerships</li> <li>5. Pursue opportunities to maximize revenue options and reduce costs</li> </ol>
Safe and Reliable Infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Proactively work with other levels of government to advocate for and address key infrastructure needs and renewal</li> <li>2. Develop and implement an Integrated Transportation Master Plan and continue to advocate for and support the GO extension to Bowmanville along the CP Rail line through central Oshawa</li> <li>3. Strategically manage and sufficiently fund the City's present and future assets (roads, buildings, parks, open space and equipment) through the Asset Management Planning process</li> <li>4. Proactively address the infrastructure fiscal deficit</li> <li>5. Continue to develop and implement the Council approved city-wide broadband strategy in partnership with community stakeholders that will capitalize on existing infrastructure, attract and grow the creative economy</li> </ol>





## 4.2 Accountable Leadership

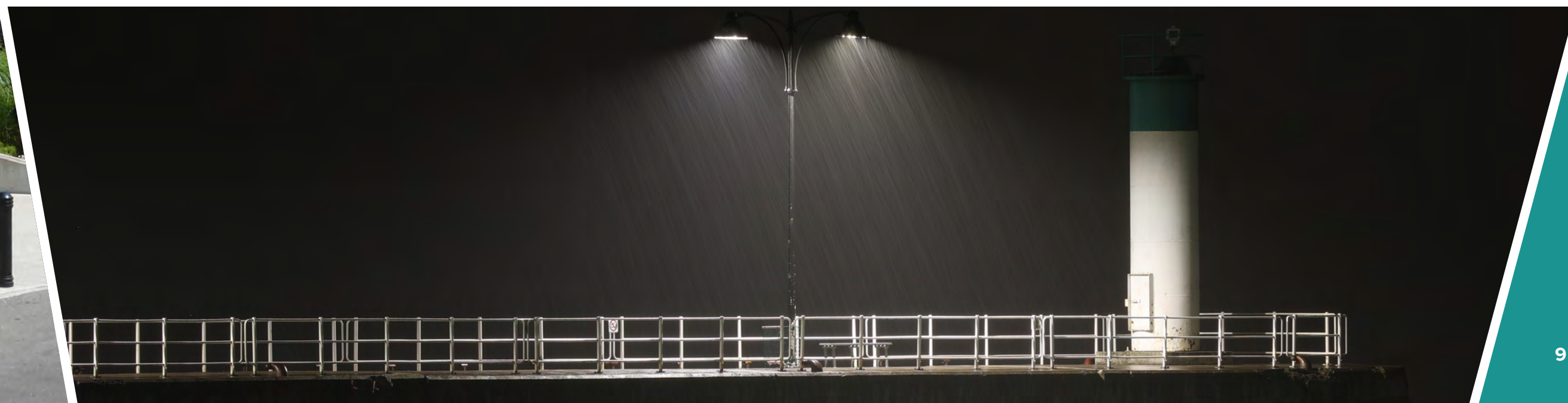
### Ensure respect, responsiveness and transparency

The pursuit of excellence in everything we do, is important to City Council and employees, the public and stakeholders. The City has a tradition of engagement, regularly sharing information and consulting with the community on projects. The leadership recognizes the importance of developing and leveraging relationships with all levels of government and community stakeholders, and continues to streamline operations, manage risks and maintain professionally trained employees within a culture of continuous improvement.

The use of best practices, benchmarking and performance measurement informs decisions. Service Oshawa, the City's customer service centre, provides a single point of contact for many City services. A City Council Code of Conduct and employee core values (ACT - Authenticity, Courage and Trust) contribute to collaborative, integrated and visionary decision-making to help ensure the City's long-term viability, vitality and resilience.

The achievement of this goal will be measured by our success in attaining the following strategies grouped under three themes.

Theme	Strategies
Deliberate Community Engagement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enable public involvement in decision-making, when appropriate</li> <li>2. Seek regular feedback from customers about City services and programs via surveys, online input, public meetings and/or social media</li> <li>3. Celebrate and communicate good news stories of Oshawa</li> <li>4. Inform and communicate with the community regarding the purpose of City by-laws, which address life safety, protect homeowner and business investments, and contribute to an enviable quality of life</li> <li>5. Take every opportunity to inform the public how Oshawa's public service supports our community on a daily basis through a commitment to core values, good governance and outstanding service</li> </ol>
Our Corporate Culture Demands Excellence and Respect	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure strong leadership by investing in the necessary elements to create an environment of excellence and become an employer of choice that attracts and retains the best employees</li> <li>2. Understand and support our most important resource – our employees</li> <li>3. Clarify, be conscious of and respect City Council and employees' roles and responsibilities, maximizing performance</li> <li>4. Embrace innovation in the provision of programs and services</li> <li>5. Assess risks and learn from our mistakes within a context of continuous improvement</li> </ol>
Develop and Leverage Relationships	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify and advocate for issues important to Oshawa, improving inter-governmental relations, and liaising and working with community stakeholders, public sector partners and municipal associations</li> </ol>





## 4.3 Social Equity

### Ensure an inclusive, healthy and safe community

Oshawa's community benefits from best-in-class recreation, cultural and sport facilities, over 1,000 hectares of parkland and open space, a network of trails, and bike lanes and routes. These services provide safe, accessible, no or low-cost health and wellness opportunities, and an enviable quality of life for Oshawa residents. A strong sense of community encourages and supports an active volunteer base of all ages.

The City is committed to embracing the diversity of Oshawa's population and working to create an inclusive and welcoming community for all. The City continues to work with service providers and other levels of government to address equity and poverty-reduction initiatives, including the provision of safe and affordable housing. The Plan sets out a vision to embrace the diversity of the population who live, work, learn and play in Oshawa and is a commitment to create an inclusive and welcoming community.

The achievement of this goal will be measured by our success in attaining the following strategies grouped under two themes.



Theme	Strategies
Enrich our Community through Diversity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to develop and implement corporate and community plans that embrace diversity and strengthen our corporation and community, such as the Diversity and Inclusion Plan, the Age-Friendly Strategy and the Accessibility Plan</li> <li>2. Evolve inclusive City programs, services and facilities to further respond to the growing needs of a diverse population</li> <li>3. Continue to strive to be a barrier-free community</li> <li>4. Continue to engage citizens, residents and stakeholders</li> <li>5. Strengthen, expand and recognize the volunteer sector</li> </ol>
An Active, Healthy and Safe Community	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Advance quality and affordable recreation opportunities to ensure significant and active use of public spaces, both indoor and outdoor</li> <li>2. Provide a safe, reliable and connected active transportation network, which supports transit, cycling and walking via the implementation of the Active Transportation Master Plan</li> <li>3. Identify and develop Oshawa's sport tourism opportunities</li> <li>4. Ensure emergency plans are up-to-date and tested on a regular basis</li> <li>5. Develop, fund and implement the Fire Master Plan and Community Risk Assessment and its recommendations</li> <li>6. Continue to support safe, shared use of roadways, trails, and other transportation systems and effectively focus on accessibility, safety and speed reduction by undertaking such matters as updating and implementing the Neighbourhood Traffic Management Guide</li> <li>7. Partner with local, regional, provincial and federal agencies and other community stakeholders to address social issues including the current issues associated with addiction, mental health and unsheltered and sheltered residents in our community</li> <li>8. Continue to help address economic disparity and poverty in our community and measure our actions, investments and report annually, at a minimum, to Council</li> <li>9. Partner with the Region and other municipalities to develop a Community Safety and Well-being Plan and implement relevant strategies</li> <li>10. Partner with local, regional, provincial and federal agencies and other community stakeholders to address the current lack of affordable housing crisis in our community</li> </ol>



## 4.4 Cultural Vitality

### Support arts, culture and heritage that engage and inspire

Oshawa has a rich history and is a vibrant community of diverse people and meaningful places. Arts, culture and heritage enriches our lives, fosters wellbeing, creates meaningful connections, innovates and stimulates the economy, and inspires residents and visitors. With a wealth of individual artists, musicians, performing artists and creative entrepreneurs living in the city, this dynamic creative community contributes to Oshawa's identity.

Oshawa has a host of dynamic cultural organizations and groups from long-standing organizations to emerging grassroots community groups. Museums, heritage sites, art galleries, hubs, public art installations and award-winning festivals and community events provide many opportunities for the community to engage with culture, create community bonds and strengthen relationships. These assets continue to attract visitors and investment, improve the City's image and promote community and social cohesion.

The achievement of this goal will be measured by our success in attaining the following strategies grouped under one theme.

Theme	Strategies
Enrich Our Community Through Culture	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Work with the community to implement Culture Counts, the Arts, Culture and Heritage Plan<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Broaden and evolve the City's role in arts, culture and heritage</li><li>• Grow culture-led economic development</li><li>• Increase and strengthen communication within and about the arts, culture and heritage sector</li><li>• Build a strong, vital and connected arts, culture and heritage sector</li><li>• Create vibrant places and spaces</li><li>• Provide access and promote inclusion in Oshawa's cultural life</li></ul></li><li>2. Protect and celebrate our community's heritage resources</li><li>3. Work with the community including, but not limited to, the Oshawa Historical Society to construct a new community-based museum as a legacy project for the City's 100th Anniversary in 2024</li><li>4. Protect and encourage our community's art and culture sector</li><li>5. Celebrate and support Oshawa youth programs, sports and athletic activities throughout the City</li></ol>





# 4.5 Environmental Responsibility

## Protect, conserve and promote the environment

Oshawa is fortunate to have a rich natural environment including portions of the Oak Ridges Moraine and Lake Ontario shoreline, as well as wildlife corridors, attractive ravines, woodlots, creeks and significant wetlands. The City is a leader in environmental management and is taking steps to combat climate change through corporate and community greenhouse gas reduction plans, and participating with other levels of government on various climate mitigation and adaptation initiatives.

Residents have a strong environmental ethic and have a right to clean air, clean water and safe food. We understand the direct relationship between the actions we take, the impact that they have on the environment, and the importance of working with others for the success and health of current and future generations. Through hard work and dedication, the city has gained provincial and international recognition as a green and beautiful community.

The achievement of this goal will be measured by our success in attaining the following strategies grouped under four themes.

Theme	Strategies
Proactive Environmental Management and Combat Climate Change	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify, connect and protect natural heritage features, areas and habitats including the city's urban forest canopy</li> <li>2. Identify, evaluate and implement adaptation measures to strengthen the city's resilience to a changing climate, invasive species and other stressors</li> <li>3. Implement corporate and community plans, targets and benchmarking aligned with federally and internationally recognized targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy use</li> <li>4. Ensure City policies and practices, including stormwater management, respect and enhance the natural environment</li> <li>5. Educate the public about the value and importance of all aspects of environmental responsibility</li> </ol>
Cleaner Air, Land and Water	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage and implement actions to continue to improve water quality and water aquifers</li> <li>2. Promote the remediation of contaminated land and brownfield developments</li> </ol>
Resilient Local Food System	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote and encourage local and urban agriculture, including backyard and community gardening and commercial farming operations</li> </ol>
Less Waste Generation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and implement waste management strategies to reduce or avoid waste generation and increase waste diversion rates</li> </ol>

