

Oshawa

# Strategic Plan

Innovate | Belong | Care | Lead

2024 to 2027





## Land Acknowledgement

The City of Oshawa is situated on lands within the traditional and treaty territory of the Michi Saagiig and Chippewa Anishinaabeg and the signatories of the Williams Treaties, which include the Mississaugas of Scugog Island, Hiawatha, Curve Lake, and Alderville First Nations, and the Chippewas of Georgina Island, Rama and Beausoleil First Nations.

We are grateful for the Anishinaabeg who have cared for the land and waters within this territory since time immemorial.

We recognize that Oshawa is steeped in rich Indigenous history and is now present day home to many First Nations, Inuit and Métis people. We express gratitude for this diverse group of Indigenous Peoples who continue to care for the land and shape and strengthen our community.

‘Oshawa’ stems from an Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe language) word meaning “a crossing place” and has further translation as “the point at the crossing of the stream where the canoe was exchanged for the trail”. When the word Oshawa was chosen as the name of our city, it reflected and recognized the importance of water and land to our community. Our city’s name is a reminder of this important and powerful connection between people and place in the past but also of the present and for the future.

As a municipality, we are crossing over. We are committed to understanding the truth of our shared history, acknowledging our role in addressing the negative impacts that colonization continues to have on Indigenous Peoples, developing reciprocal relationships, and taking meaningful action toward reconciliation.

**We are all Treaty people.**

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**Dan Carter**  
Mayor



**Tracy Adams**  
Chief Administrative Officer

## Message from Mayor Dan Carter and C.A.O. Tracy Adams

On behalf of Oshawa City Council, we are pleased to present the Oshawa Strategic Plan 2024 to 2027:

**Innovate** | **Belong** | **Care** | **Lead**

Oshawa’s new Strategic Plan builds upon our rich history and past achievements and represents Council’s shared priorities and long-term vision for our great city.

As one of the fastest growing communities in Canada, Oshawa’s evolving landscape presents opportunities and challenges for us to navigate. In response, Oshawa Strategic Plan 2024 to 2027: Innovate. Belong. Care. Lead. sets a clear path forward. The Plan reflects the needs of today’s community while guiding our decisions to ensure Oshawa’s future growth and success.

The Plan, a roadmap for City priorities through 2027, was developed through extensive community engagement, incorporating feedback from more than 6,900 interactions with City Council and staff, community partners and the public. Insights from these engagements helped shape a future vision and mission for Oshawa based on the core principles of leadership, innovation, collaboration, inclusion, safety and sustainability. Four priority areas have been identified to realize this vision, each supported with specific goals, action items and key performance indicators to help measure our progress as we go forward.

We extend our thanks to everyone who participated in developing our new Oshawa Strategic Plan. Your valuable input has helped create a Plan that truly reflects our city’s vibrant culture and economy and seeks to address important challenges to help us create a safe, inclusive and sustainable community.

We look forward to working with you to put this Plan into action as a shared vision for the great City of Oshawa.

# Introduction

The Oshawa Strategic Plan (OSP) is the City’s highest policy document; it details the priority areas of Council and the community.

In September 2023, the City began updating the Strategic Plan. The aim was to review and refresh all aspects of the existing Plan, to ensure they reflect the community’s priorities for 2024 to 2027. The Plan identifies a vision for the long-term future, refines the City’s corporate mission and identifies a series of priority areas, goals and actions to move toward the vision. A key focus of the process was establishing performance metrics, to measure the City’s progress in implementing the Strategic Plan.

The City of Oshawa, located within the Williams Treaties territory and home to seven First Nations communities, covers 143 square kilometres comprising residential communities, a downtown area that offers entertainment, dining and shopping options, rural communities, parklands and waterways, including the Oak Ridges Moraine, Second Marsh and Lake Ontario shoreline.

Oshawa is well-positioned for success today and into the future, with a rich transportation network including active transport components, rail and GO service, 400 series highways, a deep-sea port, and an executive airport. It has a rich history steeped in agriculture and advanced manufacturing businesses and has grown to include other leading industries in education, health care and energy in recent years.

Alongside these changes, the City’s population and demographics continue to grow and evolve. The latest census indicates that Oshawa has become a community of multiple ethnicities, widening its cultural composition. Oshawa has seen a dynamic shift in its age profile that now includes a growing population of older adults, working age adults, and children under 10 years. The City’s population is also bolstered annually by 30,000 post-secondary students. As a result, the services and programs offered by the City adapt and respond to the fabric of the community.

The Oshawa Strategic Plan 2024 to 2027 reflects and responds to these changes. It recognizes the importance of embracing innovation, financial stewardship, and fostering strong partnerships to serve the community. The Plan defines goals, actions and metrics to guide annual work planning and City budgets to support the priority areas.

Council and administration are committed to delivering on these expectations with the vision in mind – Oshawa: A thriving, innovative and caring community where everyone belongs.

# Oshawa: Then and Now

The new Oshawa Strategic Plan builds on Oshawa’s rich history and past achievements as we celebrate our 100+ anniversary as a city.

On March 8, 1924, with a population of 15,000, Oshawa was elevated to city status by proclamation of the Ontario Railway and Municipal Board, becoming Ontario’s 25th city. An already well-established centre for thriving industry and post-secondary education, Oshawa was (and still is) one of the fastest growing communities in Canada, full of promise and being guided into the future by visionary leaders who were driving innovation with high expectations.

Over a hundred years later, we’re still telling that great story. Innovation, collaboration, resilience and visionary leadership have brought us full circle. Some of the greatest milestones in Canadian history have been achieved in Oshawa thanks to many gifted and talented leaders like Christine Thomas, our first female Mayor (1961), Colonel Robert Samuel McLaughlin, E.P. Taylor, Michael Starr and Ed Broadbent, to name a few. Through their leadership and innovation, they

built a solid foundation for Oshawa’s success as a vibrant and diverse city – one that is home to four globally recognized post-secondary institutions, state-of-the-art health care and research facilities, and amazing amenities.

The next 100 years will bring incredible and exciting change in Oshawa as the city’s economic landscape continues to diversify in the fields of energy, health care, education and transportation, as well as emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (A.I.), cybersecurity and electric and autonomous vehicles.

We proudly celebrate a century of success, recognizing the people, leaders and partnerships that have made Oshawa great. As we look ahead, we stand ready to embrace opportunities and innovation that will shape the future of our great city.



# Creating the Oshawa Strategic Plan

Oshawa Strategic Plan 2024 to 2027: Innovate. Belong. Care. Lead. is informed by City Council, staff, community partners, businesses, residents, and the public to serve the local community today and into the future. The new Plan considers the strategic directions from other concurrent City plans and input from the City’s Advisory Committees and the Community Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.

The City, in collaboration with LURA Consulting, undertook a robust engagement process to inform the development of the new Plan. The engagement aimed to:

- Share information about the Oshawa Strategic Plan process and the importance of the Plan for Oshawa.
- Inform the development of the new Oshawa Strategic Plan and set a path forward for Oshawa services, projects, programs, and initiatives.
- Gather insights to help shape the vision, mission, and priorities specific to Oshawa.

City staff led an extensive communication program to promote and communicate the Plan development and engagement.



# Community Engagement

**Total Number of Events:**

**31**

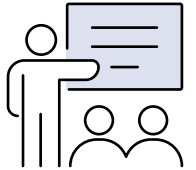
**Total Participation:**

**388** Staff

**6,532** Public

**Total Number of Project Exposure:**  
(through pop-up events)

**14,000**



## What We Heard – Key Elements

Our community values several key elements now and desires more for the future. Among the elements we love about Oshawa today are:

Access to shopping, restaurants, & entertainment	Quality and number of green spaces & parks	Waterfront parks & trails	Active transportation (walking, rolling, biking) & connectivity (trails, sidewalks, bike lanes)

Looking to the future, the community aspires for Oshawa to be:

Affordable, prosperous, vibrant & thriving	Inclusive, diverse, welcoming & accessible	Safe & environmentally sustainable	Innovative, modern & progressive



## Vision

Oshawa: A thriving, innovative and caring community where everyone belongs.

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## Mission

Committed to delivering exceptional services, spaces, and experiences.

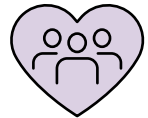
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## Priority Areas



**Innovate**  
Vibrant Culture and Economy

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**Belong**  
Inclusive and Healthy Community

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**Care**  
Safe and Sustainable Environment

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**Lead**  
Governance and Service Excellence



# Innovate: Vibrant Culture & Economy

## Outcome

A prosperous and welcoming community with enhanced job opportunities and cultural experiences.

## Metrics

1. Employment rate
2. Rank level for development approvals process
3. Percentage increase in available service land
4. Number of employers engaged with the City Co-Operative Education Incentive Plan
5. Number of TeachingCity projects, students and faculty involved
6. Number of public art projects installed
7. Office and commercial vacancy rates
8. Diversity of programming and businesses using the Oshawa Executive Airport



# Innovate: Vibrant Culture & Economy



## Goals and Actions

- 1 Attract new businesses and support existing businesses and industry.
  - 1.1 Provide upskilling business workshops, seminars, and coaching for existing businesses.
  - 1.2 Expand Business and Economic Development Services resources to deliver business coaching.
  - 1.3 Launch a “Welcome to Oshawa” business program for new businesses.
  - 1.4 Launch a formal Business Retention and Expansion Program for existing businesses, including support for equity-deserving business owners.
  - 1.5 Ensure a sufficient supply of ‘shovel-ready’ industrial and employment lands.
  - 1.6 Continue to provide development charge exemptions for all developments on industrial lands.
  - 1.7 Continue to facilitate and expedite development approvals.
- 2 Promote and support innovation in business and talent growth.
  - 2.1 Support entrepreneurship, tech businesses and startup incubators through advice, funding programs and referrals.
  - 2.2 Attract and support Oshawa’s emerging growth sectors, including artificial intelligence, augmented reality, cybersecurity, e-sports, electric vehicles (E.V.) and automotive technologies.
  - 2.3 Review and amend the Community Improvement Plan grant program.
- 3 Continue to foster strong partnerships with education institutions, community partners and employers.
  - 3.1 Develop a Co-operative Education Incentive Plan for local employers.
  - 3.2 Advance collaboration with post-secondary faculty and students through TeachingCity research and work-integrated learning projects to address Oshawa’s urban challenges.

## Innovate: Vibrant Culture & Economy



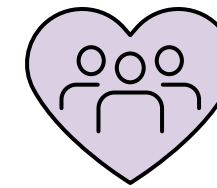
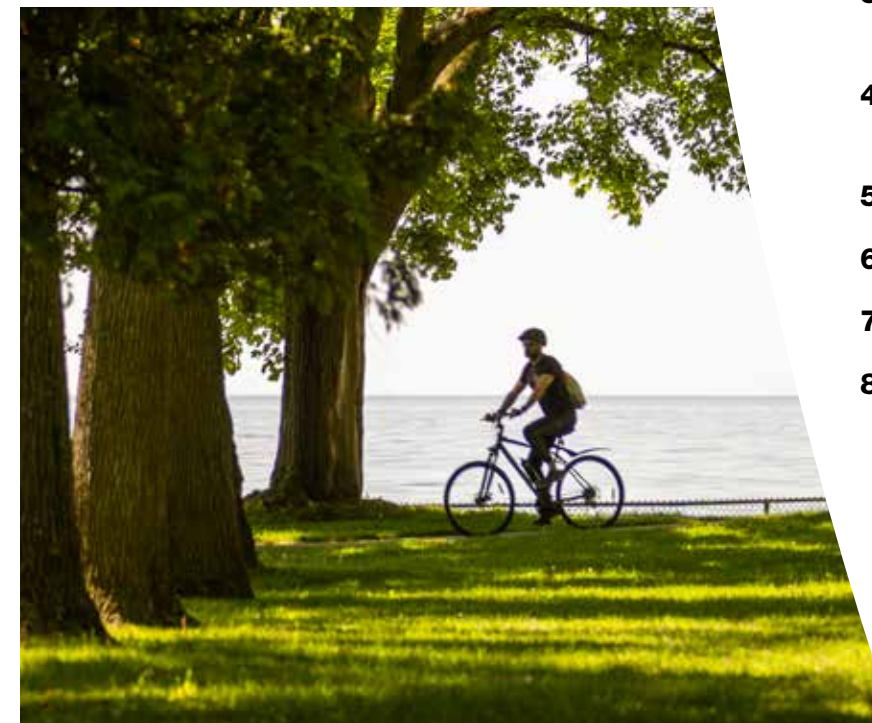
### Goals and Actions

- 4** Attract and promote a vibrant artistic and cultural economy.
  - 4.1** Explore the Cultural Hub Pilot Project at the Arts Resource Centre.
  - 4.2** Advance the Public Arts Master Plan.
  - 4.3** Renew the Culture Counts Plan and include a City Events Strategy.

- 5** Advance downtown as an urban core.
  - 5.1** Expand streetscape improvements.
  - 5.2** Activate passive spaces with arts and events programming.
  - 5.3** Activate, fill, or convert vacant storefronts and office buildings.

- 6** Promote the waterfront as a destination and innovative mixed-use community.
  - 6.1** Continue waterfront land use planning and development with the Hamilton Oshawa Port Authority.
  - 6.2** Work with partners to explore opportunities to activate the waterfront public realm.

- 7** Market the Oshawa Executive Airport.
  - 7.1** Promote the Oshawa Executive Airport as a business asset in economic development and associated marketing collateral.
  - 7.2** Update the Oshawa Executive Airport Business Plan.
  - 7.3** Work with post-secondary education institutions to explore opportunities for airport mechanics or aviation research and development programs.



## Belong: Inclusive & Healthy Community

### Outcome

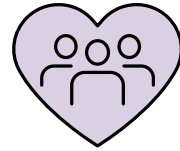
An equitable and active community that fosters a sense of pride and belonging.

### Metrics

1. Participation rate in City programs
2. Participation rates in subsidies for recreation and culture programs specifically designed for those living with low-income
3. Grant funding provided to organizations serving vulnerable populations
4. Number of property tax rebates, reductions and relief program participants
5. Number of built housing units
6. Number of rental housing licenses issued
7. Number of accessory suite permits issued
8. Modes of transportation



# Belong: Inclusive & Healthy Community

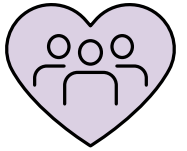


## Goals and Actions

- 1** Commit to meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous communities.
  - 1.1** Develop an Indigenous Relationship Strategy and Reconciliation Action Plan.
  - 1.2** Ensure ongoing mandatory Indigenous Cultural Training for new and existing City staff.
  - 1.3** Develop an Indigenous Consultation and Engagement Protocol.
  - 1.4** Ensure regular education for City leadership on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, Calls to Justice and Treaties.
- 2** Reduce systemic barriers and deliver engaging, equitable and culturally inclusive programs and services for all participants.
  - 2.1** Increase connections with youth through Oshawa Youth Council participation and diversification and TeachingCity projects that connect students with City initiatives.
  - 2.2** Monitor and report on youth participation in all youth opportunities.

- 3** Invest in infrastructure and assets that meet the needs for sustainable growth.
  - 3.1** Advance and report on progress for the actions identified in the Asset Management Plan roadmap.
  - 3.2** Expand the Asset Management Plan to include proposed levels of service, lifecycle strategies and financial strategies for all assets.
  - 3.3** Monitor progress and report annually on the status of initiatives in the Parks, Recreation, Library and Culture Facility Needs Assessment in advance of the Budget to help prioritize investment for sustainable growth.
  - 3.4** Advance road and servicing infrastructure to service employment lands.
  - 3.5** Update the Official Plan and update relevant Zoning By-Laws.

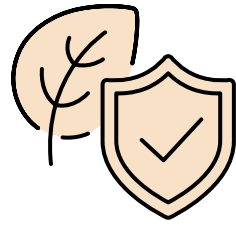
# Belong: Inclusive & Healthy Community



## Goals and Actions

- 4** Support and encourage diverse housing options.
  - 4.1** Support the implementation of Durham Region’s Housing Plan regarding affordability and diversity through activities such as land sale, coordination of services, and in-lieu services.
  - 4.2** Continue to explore and enhance developer incentives that support the remediation of brownfields, multi-unit housing, accessory suites and affordable housing units.
  - 4.3** Improve safe living conditions by ensuring compliance with rental housing licenses, codes and standards (where applicable).
- 5** Support sustainable and safe modes of transportation, including active transportation.
  - 5.1** Develop the Integrated Transportation Master Plan.
  - 5.2** Complete the Active Transportation Master Plan.
  - 5.3** Update parking ratios for new developments.





# Care: Safe & Sustainable Environment

## Outcome

A safe and sustainable community that enhances well-being.

## Metrics

1. Hectares of parks and open space
2. Kilometres of trails and multi-use paths
3. Percentage of tree canopy coverage
4. Percentage of creek banks protected
5. Total City Greenhouse Gas (G.H.G.) emissions
6. Number of electric vehicles (E.V.) in City fleet
7. Number of corporate energy audits performed
8. Number of certified staff trained in basic emergency management



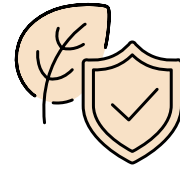
# Care: Safe & Sustainable Environment



## Goals and Actions

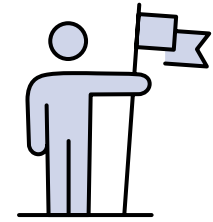
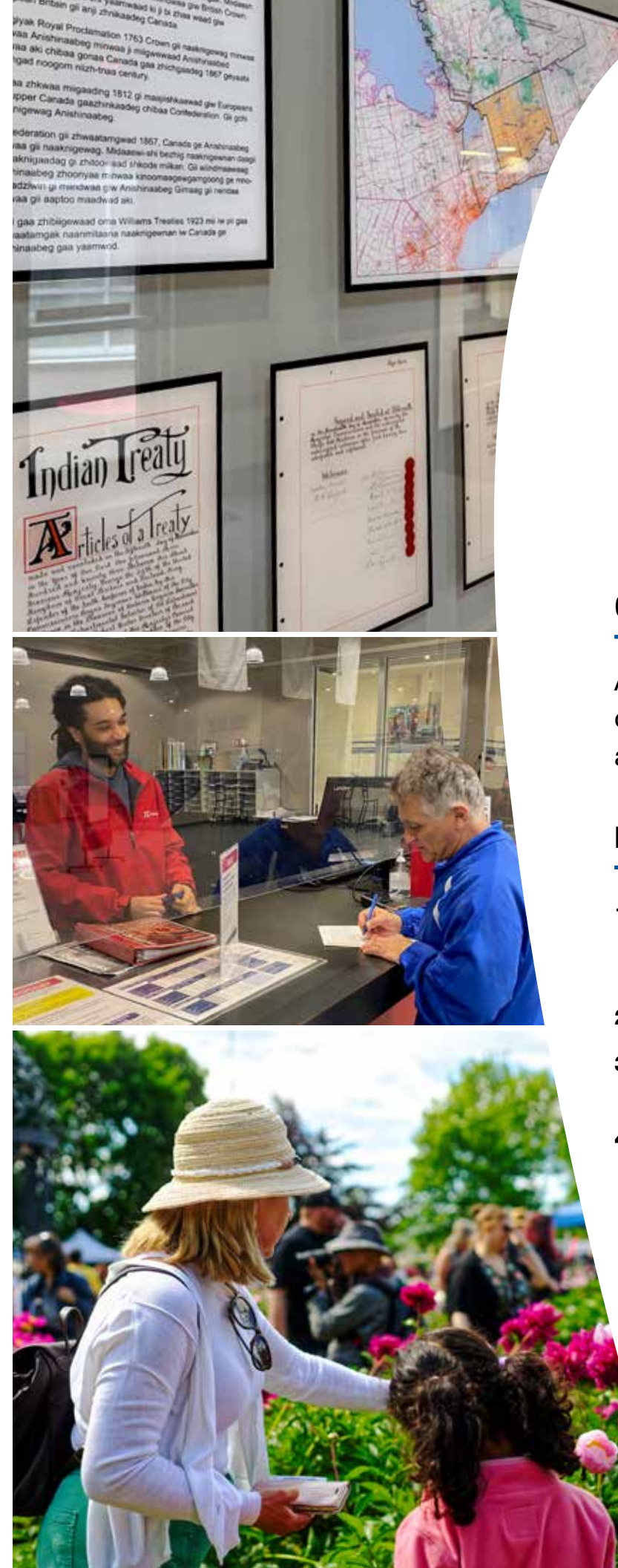
- 1 Collaborate and advocate for effective services, programs, and community safety and well-being support.
  - 1.1 Support the Region of Durham’s implementation of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan.
  - 1.2 Conduct safety audits for existing parks using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (C.P.T.E.D.) and other safety best practices.
  - 1.2 Continue to implement the facility audit program.
  - 1.4 Use Geographic Information System (G.I.S.) technology to monitor, manage and respond to safety issues.
  - 1.5 Establish and implement facility operation and maintenance plans.
- 2 Provide and maintain recreational outdoor spaces, parks, and trails.
  - 2.1 Action strategic parkland acquisition.
  - 2.2 Expand trail connections throughout the city.
  - 2.3 Expand the use and availability of outdoor programmable space.
- 3 Manage impacts on natural assets such as wetlands and waterways and enhance tree canopy.
  - 3.1 Finalize the Forestry Master Plan.
  - 3.2 Continue to work with partners to restore erosion sites along Oshawa’s creeks.
  - 3.3 Partner with community members, schools, youth groups, and volunteers to leverage expertise, resources, and funding opportunities for stewardship initiatives and activities.
  - 3.4 Identify and implement preventative measures to protect against erosion.

# Care: Safe & Sustainable Environment



## Goals and Actions

- 4** Reduce the City's carbon footprint and greenhouse gas emissions.
  - 4.1** Advance, as appropriate, the Corporate Energy Management Plan.
  - 4.2** Advance the Fleet Decarbonization Strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from corporate vehicles.
  - 4.3** Advance the City's Community Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan.
  - 4.4** Enhance partnerships with energy sector agencies and companies such as Oshawa Power and other sustainable producers/suppliers.
- 5** Enhance emergency preparedness and response, including preparing for potential climate emergencies and significant weather events.
  - 5.1** Advance and report on the Fire Master Plan.
  - 5.2** Update City business continuity plans.
  - 5.3** Expand the asset management program to ensure climate change strategies have been considered to assist with the resiliency of the infrastructure.
  - 5.4** Host a minimum of three 'safety in the park' events



# Lead: Governance & Service Excellence

## Outcome

A customer service-centred organization aligned with residents' and community partners' needs.

## Metrics

- 1.** Participation rate in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility, AntiRacism and Indigenous Cultural training and education sessions
- 2.** Service level adherence
- 3.** Value of funds secured for programs, services and infrastructure
- 4.** Participation rates and demographics (as available) for City events and through online interactions

## Lead: Governance & Service Excellence



### Goals and Actions

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- 1** Provide transparent, efficient, and responsible fiscal stewardship and use of resources.
  - 1.1** Complete the Financial Strategy.
  - 1.2** Streamline the budgeting process to enhance efficiency through the adoption of new technology.

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- 2** Expand and embed Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility, Anti-Racism and Reconciliation across policies, practices, and procedures within the organization.
  - 2.1** Conduct a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility and Anti-Racism audit.
  - 2.2** Develop Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility and Anti-Racism Strategy and Policy.
  - 2.3** Provide a mandatory Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility and Anti-Racism training program.
  - 2.4** Develop an Equity and Reconciliation Champions Team Program with staff representatives.
- 3** Expand, embed, and modernize customer-centric service delivery.
  - 3.1** Complete the Customer Service Strategy.
  - 3.2** Explore a single digital portal for the community to access City services.
  - 3.3** Modernize and expand accessible service solutions to provide different avenues for the community to connect to services.
  - 3.4** Enhance customer relations management by deploying a Service Oshawa integrated mobile application for customers to access services or information.
  - 3.5** Implement the CityView land management software to enable residents and businesses to seamlessly engage with the City for permits, applications, and documentation exchange.

## Lead: Governance & Service Excellence



### Goals and Actions

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- 4** Enhance effective communication and encourage all community members to actively participate and learn about City services, programs, and spaces.
  - 4.1** Increase opportunities for community members to learn about City services and initiatives, cultural experiences, and destinations.
  - 4.2** Enhance the “Welcome Package” by offering it online and mailed to new residents.
  - 4.3** Develop a language and translation standard for communicating key programs and services.
  - 4.4** Review alternative methods for community engagement that would be less restrictive and more inclusive of idea sharing and brainstorming than the current Advisory Committees of Council model.

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- 5** Embrace innovation and advance continuous improvement initiatives and actions.
  - 5.1** Implement organizational change management to support a customer-centric organization.
  - 5.2** Update the Continuous Improvement Framework.
- 6** Advocate for increased regional, provincial, and federal support for programs, services, and infrastructure.
  - 6.1** Identify top priorities for advocacy to other levels of government for infrastructure projects and servicing needs.
  - 6.2** Prioritize and advance grant opportunities.

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- 7** Offer community engagement activities that enhance transparency and bring diverse voices and perspectives into decision-making processes.
  - 7.1** Update the community engagement framework and develop a toolkit to guide City projects.
  - 7.2** Introduce enhanced demographics on City forms, where appropriate.
  - 7.3** Undertake a flag raising and proclamation procedure review to identify how the City appropriately marks Days of Significance.

[oshawa.ca/OSP](http://oshawa.ca/OSP)

