

# Information Report

**Title:** Integrated Strategy Progress Update

**Report Number:** Strategic Initiatives-2023-12

**Director:** Chief Administrative Officer

**Manager:** Strategic Initiatives

**Meeting Date:**  
Wednesday, November 22, 2023

**Date to be considered by Council:**  
Wednesday, November 22, 2023

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## Executive Summary:

The Integrated Strategy (Attachment 1) brings together the key priorities from the organization's Strategic and Comprehensive Plans. It provides a focused road map that aligns the major initiatives and priorities from across the organization. This Integrated Strategy does not include everything the Municipality does in the community. Rather, it identifies and connects the new or ongoing priorities that the organization is working on to provide quality services that address the needs of our citizens, provide long-term sustainability, and improve the well-being of the community. The purpose of this report is to provide highlights of the significant work accomplished in each of the focus areas identified in the Integrated Strategy.

## Context and Background Information:

Progress on the Integrated Strategy (Attachment 2) is complemented by many other initiatives under way across the organization that are not included in this report. It is important to note that all actions help to achieve the mission and vision of the organization which are the following:

### Our Mission (Why we exist)

The Municipality of Kincardine provides quality services that address the needs of our citizens, provide long-term sustainability, and improve the well-being of the community.

### Our Vision (What we aspire to)

Energy. Opportunity. Balance Lifestyle.

### Our Focus Areas and Strategic Objectives:

17 strategic objectives within four areas of focus identify what the Municipality of Kincardine is trying to accomplish. The four areas of focus are:

1. Fostering a resilient economy
2. Planning for a sustainable future
3. Enhancing quality of life
4. Providing responsive and effective government

The purpose of this report is to provide progress on the actions within each focus area of the Integrated Strategy (Attachment 2: Progress on the actions within the Integrated Strategy).

The following provides some highlights on actions under each focus area.

### **Focus Area 1: Fostering a resilient economy**

#### **1: Work with the nuclear sector (clean energy) to leverage current and future opportunities.**

- Work to enhance relationships with nuclear (clean energy) supply chain have been ongoing through quarterly meetings with Bruce Power, staff and Council attendance at the CNA Conference and individual meetings with the nuclear supply chain.
- The Municipality continues to have delegations with primarily Provincial ministries to promote the area as a supportive community for the nuclear (clean energy) sector. The Mayor and CAO continue to meet with the Clean Energy Frontier and CAO participates in the Municipal Innovation Council (MIC). Recent initiatives with MIC were presented to Council through a delegation.

#### **2. Improve investment readiness**

- Work to increase and attract new builds in the business parks has been occurring through Economic Development by connecting business park owners with businesses seeking space in the Municipality. Work is underway to create an investment package to share more information on the community and reasons to invest here.
- A new cloud-based e-permitting software to streamline and improve the development process has been implemented. The program allows staff to set parameters applicable to permit uploads. Some of the features include up to date interactions, where the applicant can see exactly where their permit is in the review process, and they can receive interactive emails and required submission details. Staff still assist users who are not confident with the program or who don't not have internet access to ensure their permit application is processed and interaction to ensure completeness is provided.
- A special meeting was held with Council on September 11, 2023, to provide updates from the Bruce County and Municipal staff on the development process as well as developments that are in progress. Ongoing communication will be promoted as developments advance and arise.
- A Development dashboard has been created to communicate and track development <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/6f5c442b04d1428d835711e7b46e0ea1>

- Development team meetings are held monthly for staff to coordinate and advance development with the County.

### **3: Support business expansion and retention to support a diversified economy.**

- Much work has happened this year to support downtown Kincardine businesses to prosper during the reconstruction project. This work includes providing weekly updates on the project, supporting the Passport program, putting up parking and detours signage, marketing/advertising campaign including radio ads, newspaper ads, community mailouts, etc. To see more visit <https://www.kincardine.ca/en/build-invest-grow/downtown-dig.aspx>
- Work with community partners to attract anticipated workforce needs and develop actions to retain the current workforce occurred this past year through several activities including a Job Fair & Career Expo in partnership with the Chamber, collaborating with the County of Bruce on resident/workforce attraction initiatives, and participating in sessions with 4 County Labour Market Planning Board to understand labour force challenges and opportunities.

### **4. Leverage opportunities to attract visitors to the Municipality.**

- The past summer special events were hosted with community partners to foster a sense of community belonging and attract visitors to the community. Some of these municipal signature events included: Canada Day, Eldon Humphreys Plaque unveiling, Market in the park (May long weekend to September long weekend), Cruise Day, Gathering of the Bands, The Scottish Pipe Band - every Saturday throughout the summer, The Phantom Piper - every day of the week except Saturdays throughout the summer, and the Marine Heritage Event.
- Work to enhance the downtown core experience, e.g., seasonal decorations lights, banners etc. is underway.
- The Tourism and Visitor Centre was moved from Hwy 21 to the Arts Centre on Queen Street this year and newly branded as the “Welcome Centre”. Visitor traffic increased. An evaluation for this location will take place and plans for 2024 will be identified in 2024.

## **Focus Area 2: Planning for a sustainable future**

### **5. Evaluate and proactively plan for infrastructure to meet population growth and long-term sustainability.**

- The municipality is working with local partners to advocate for coordination of skilled trades training, as well as the need for the planned high school to be constructed in the community. A delegation of municipal representatives met with provincial representatives at the 2023 ROMA and the 2023 AMO conferences. Additionally, the municipality has held meetings with the local public school board to discuss what supports they may require to help them undertake their approved capital project.
- Community consultation has occurred for the Community Improvement Plan (CIP). Work with Bruce County is in progress to align the programs with the Spruce the Bruce program. Initial draft of CIP is complete and will be coming to Council in 2023.

- An update to the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund Policy will take place following the work of the Community Improvement Plan.
- Work to advocate, collaborate and communicate on housing needs and support has taken place through delegations at AMO's annual general meeting as well as at OMFRA. The Municipality also provided input to the province on the top 5 next steps to enact related to the housing affordability task force's recommendations.
- Construction continues and will be completed in the fall of 2023 with final efforts in 2024. RED grant funding secured to reimagine downtown Kincardine.

## **6. Protect and preserve our environment.**

- The Municipality continues to investigate opportunities to enhance waste diversion programs through grants and partnerships. One successful pilot was the Food Cyclers Food Waste Diversion Program. This pilot program included 210 participating households with subsidies from the Municipality of Kincardine, the Municipal Innovation Council, with support from Bruce Power. The program ran from May – August 2023 and usage was tracked for 12 weeks to calculate total waste diversion. Based on the pilot from 210 FoodCyclers in use, a total of 62.5 metric tonnes of food waste was diverted from landfill/year. 210 FoodCyclers would divert 81.3 MT CO2 equivalents per year, the equivalent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of taking 18.1 gasoline powered vehicles off the road every year!
- Staff have started exploring the potential to purchase EV vehicles for future fleet replacements. The 2024 budget will bring forward considerations to expand EV charging stations within the community to better support the EV opportunities on a public basis.
- Organizational environmental practices to reduce the overall carbon footprint of the Municipality have taken place including the reduction of paper through use of electronic tools to support day-to-day administration, digital document approvals, implementation of new payroll system, and increasing use electronic document management system to avoid paper records.
- An Ad Hoc Committee was formed by Council to make recommendations for a tree canopy and natural vegetation policy, and a tree preservation bylaw for private property. Staff prepared two draft policy options for the committee's consideration, and the committee has determined which policy it will present to council for its consideration. The committee has reviewed multiple options related to a tree preservation bylaw from other jurisdictions, as well as the drafted private tree bylaw presented previously. The committee has determined its preference for how a private tree bylaw would apply within the municipality, and staff are working to provide a draft.
- A delegation at AMO was held with the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs to request support of an initiative in Kincardine that would include notification to property owners impacted by municipal drainage projects to consider the opportunity to work with ALUS. The Minister supported the program and requested support for new related programs it is rolling out for agricultural property owners.

## **7. Ensure municipal facilities and owned lands make the best use of each asset.**

- Staff conducted a review of all municipal owned lands and assets in the Municipality that may be deemed surplus or underutilized and identify the best use for the future e.g., affordable housing or future development opportunities.
- Staff continue to optimize the use of our facilities through condition assessments, retrofits and grant programs to improve income generation.

### **Focus Area 3: Enhancing Quality of Life**

## **8. Create vibrant parks, green space, recreation facilities and programs for residents or visitors of all ages and abilities.**

- Work is underway to create and implement a Parks and Recreation Plan that helps the municipality plan for and provide parks for the community.
- Work with user groups to develop a phased-in plan and budget for future upgrades to Connaught Park and the Tiverton Ball Diamonds has been included in the Parks and Recreation Plan as a process to develop engagement as well as to determine the future of Connaught Park.
- Staff are working with user groups to build a splash pad in Tiverton with a goal of construction in 2024.
- Bike lanes were installed on Bruce Ave, Queen Street, and Huron Terrace to enhance pedestrian and cycling amenities to improve active and safe transportation networks.
- Staff meet monthly with representatives from the Kincardine Lions Club to support them with their fundraising campaign and the development of an RFP for construction of an All Wheels Park.

## **9. Enhance the experience at the lakefront.**

- A Waterfront Master Plan has been created to organize and prioritize a plan for all waterfront assets. One of the first actions in the plan is to design a new boardwalk as approved by Council.
- In partnership with NII, County of Bruce and University of Windsor year two of three to implement the Smart Beach program is coming to an end. Year two focused on data collection. The Smart Beach program is to assist in education and awareness of potential hazards existing due to water conditions.
- A Pier Safety Ad-hoc Committee was established to research best practices as it pertains to the usage of the Piers.

## **10. Support arts, culture and heritage to enrich the lives of residents and attract visitors.**

- Actions were pushed to the 2024 workplan due to staff shortages in the summer.

## **11. Create improvements in inclusion, diversity, equity and access.**

- Work towards actions to address truth, healing and reconciliation were implemented over the past year. Actions included:

- A series of learning circles throughout the year to provide awareness and understanding on the history of the land from a First Nations, Metis and Inuit perspective; the significance of cultural medicines, as well as cultural ceremonies and creating actions in the workplace.
- Hosted an Indigenous crafters market.
- Supported the creation of an Indigenous crosswalk which was painted by Ojibway artist Jeffrey (Red) George (Ma-Mi-No-ga-boo).
- Raised every child matters flag in June and the Survivor flag on the National Day of Reconciliation.
- Created and shared resources to create awareness and inspire actions towards reconciliation. Displays were hosted at the Davidson Centre, the MAC and Tiverton Arena.
- Partnered with Walker House to host the Legacy of Hope exhibits from May 2023 to September 2, 2023, at the Welcome Centre and Walker House. The purpose of the exhibits is to create awareness of the residential school system and inspire actions towards reconciliation.
- Worked with community partners to build awareness and understanding to improve inclusion, diversity, equity and access through events and training sessions:
  - Multicultural festival
  - Pride training
  - Pride festivities and parade
  - Seniors forum
  - Hindu Open House
  - Welcoming communities open house
  - Black History month promotions
  - Afro Caribbean Awards
  - Promotions to create awareness about religious and cultural significant events.
  - Flag raising ceremonies etc.

## **12. Support community wellness in the Municipality of Kincardine.**

- Participate with community partners in the implementation of the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan and report back on activities and outcomes.
- Work to recruit and retain physicians and health care staff in the Municipality of Kincardine including the following actions.
  - Recruited and hosted 12 locum physicians for a total of 25 weeks of clinic coverage allowing for local physicians to cover more ER shifts, the hospital and vacation.

- Participated in recruitment events this quarter including a job fair booth in September at The McMaster University Family Medicine Annual Recruitment Event in Kitchener. There were 40 Medical residents in attendance.
- Attendance at the CaSPR (Canadian Society of Physician Recruitment) repatriation expo in Dublin Ireland with over 300 Canadians studying medicine in attendance. As well as shared a booth with other Southern Ontario Physician Recruiters at the Royal College of General Practitioners in Glasgow, with over 1000 UK physicians in attendance.
- The Municipality of Kincardine hosted The Rural Medicine Retreat Grey Bruce which took place August 25-27th with 30 physicians and family visiting Kincardine for the weekend. It was a fantastic success showcasing what the area has to offer including a bon fire at Inverhuron Provincial Park, yoga, surfing, paddle boarding, the Scottish festival, trivia night and brunch at the Bruce Power visitor center. Pictures at <https://www.ruralmedicineretreatgb.com/gallery.html>
- Education - hosted 4 medical residents completing their 2-month rural rotation and two medical students.
- Two Nurse Practitioners working for the Family Health Team provide same day emergency room diversion appointments to reduce the number of non-urgent care trips to the ER.
- Work continues on the onboarding of the newly signed physicians to ensure appropriate support is in place for the physicians and family.
- Hosted 4 medical residents completing their 2-month rural rotation and two medical students.
- The locum houses have been fully occupied by physicians, while they complete their residency rotation, to work locum coverage or ER shifts. The Society of United Professionals Union owns the locum houses and generously donates the use of these houses which are crucial to physician recruitment efforts.
- The Municipality of Kincardine has supported the hospital expansion with a total of \$1,200,000 from the Healthcare Reserve Fund. An additional \$300,000 was provided by the Municipality in 2016 to fund the planning costs for the hospital redevelopment project. The total financial support amounts to \$1,500,000.

### **13. Protect people, property, and the environment from the effects of dangerous conditions caused by people and nature.**

- Work with the Ontario Provincial Police and community partners on education regarding Human Trafficking, Sexual Violence and Harassment continues. Actions included:
  - An anti-Human Trafficking media campaign, including 3 "commercials" and 3 billboards across Grey and Bruce Counties.
  - Training was also provided trauma to South Bruce OPP officers and other local police forces and OPP detachments.

- Participated in community outreach events.
  - Hosted an internet safety seminar to teach parents and youth to be safer online.
  - Funded an officer and representatives from the two local school boards to attend the Committee of Youth Officers of Ontario annual conference.
  - Conducted a training session with social and mental health workers from the public-school board to educate them about the local resources available to assist them if a student came to them with questions or concerns about Human Trafficking, Sexual Assault, and/or Intimate Partner Violence.
- Continued advancements of fire training facility construction including auto extraction pad, car fire simulator, and silo props. Fire fighters have some work to finish in the mechanical room of the structures as well as interior wall completion. Painting of the exterior of the sea cans is complete except for railings.
  - Equipment was purchased and training programming for water and ice rescue program including safety gear (rope, carabiners, helmets, lights). Staff are currently looking at a second Rapid Deployment inflatable. Eight additional PFD's were purchased in 2023.
  - Fire Services continues to involve themselves in as many community events as possible. Staff have recently completed inspections for compliance with all schools. Completion of fire drill scenarios in care and treatment occupancies and facilitated fire extinguisher training for agencies and municipal staff. Completion of Emergency Workers Centre drill as well as had the Emergency Response Plan approved by Council. Continued partnerships with communities in the County through CEMC meetings as well as local responder groups.

#### **Focus Area 4: Providing Responsive and Effective Government**

##### **14. Ensure the organization has the optimal number of engaged human resources to support municipal operations and deliver excellent services.**

- The focus on employee engagement will be an ongoing initiative. The Municipality held town hall meetings this year to address policy updates and has provided a forum to receive employee feedback. There are plans to complete an employee engagement survey in the near future. A focus on leadership development and succession planning will be started in 2024.
- The Municipality of Kincardine has identified safety as one of the key values. The JHSC meets to discuss and address workplace hazards, review incident investigations and workplace inspections. Corporate health & Safety procedures continue to be updated and a Continuous Improvement Program for workplace safety is under review. The focus on workplace safety will never be complete and will be an ongoing initiative.
- Work to evaluate the implementation of the Organizational Review, including revised organizational structure is in progress.



- Council received the Governance Review Final Report on June 8/23 with 27 recommendations. 16 of the recommendations have been completed including approval of the procedures by-law (R6 to R11), new report template (R15), Terms of Reference Template for Committees (R13 & R18), new Council staff relations policy (R14) and a Recruitment and Appointment of Advisory Committees of Council policy (R17). Council also identified the 3 to 5 focused priorities (R1). The next steps are the development of a new strategic plan and additional training for Council and committee members.

**15. Serve, communicate, collaborate and engage with the community to build trust and confidence in municipal services, Council and staff.**

- Work to refresh the Municipality of Kincardine and Tourism websites to be user friendly and efficient is underway.
- A draft framework to create and implement an inclusive public engagement is underway to encourage two-way dialogue with the community. More work to develop coaching tools and resources will be developed in 2024.
- Actions to develop transparent customer service standards across the organization has started with the onset of training. Work to differentiate the customer complaints process and tools will be completed through the refresh of the website, the implementation of the Cityworks program and the need for a policy review of the current complaints process.
- Quarterly reports have been developed and submitted to Council in order to keep Council and the public informed on Departmental progress.
- Council received training on Code of Conduct in 2022 from the Integrity Commissioner and adopted an updated "Code of Conduct for Members of Council, Local Boards and Committee Members Policy By-law" at the June 5, 2023 meeting. Council also has access to the Integrity Commissioner for questions or concerns regarding the Code of Conduct or questions regarding Pecuniary Interest. Committee members will receive further training on the new Code of Conduct.
- Staff have been working with Brue County IT to develop a shared services agreement for IT Services. A draft agreement and MOU have been prepared and a staff report was brought forward to Council in October and approved in November.

**16. Ensure the Municipality provides value for money and long-term sustainability.**

- Regular review and assessment of the Municipality's tax rates, user fees and development charges happens throughout the year:
  - Tax rates are determined through the annual budget process.
  - User Fees are reviewed annually in October.
  - Development charges are reviewed every 5 years.
- An updated Budget Policy was approved by Council in May 2023 to provide a standardized framework for the development of the annual operating and capital budget.

- The Asset Retirement Obligations (AROs) policy has been adopted by Council. An internal ARO Working Group has been formed and work has been ongoing. The financial obligation will meet legislative requirements and will be reported in the 2023 financial statements.
- Asset Management funding is discussed annually through the budget process. A 3% annual tax rate increase has been adopted informally by Council for purposes of supporting long-term capital and funding the Lifecycle Reserve Fund. A funding gap continues to exist due to balancing affordability of property taxes for constituents and maintaining current infrastructure. An annual AMP update report has been provided to Council in October 2023.
- The Municipal Accommodation Tax Introductory Report was presented to the former Council in June 2022. The implementation decision was to be considered by the new Council. A staff report is planned for 2024. Implementation would require significant staffing and budgetary resources and would span multiple budget years.

#### **17. Improve organization efficiency and be more innovative.**

- The Municipality actively participates in the Municipal Innovation Council to uncover best practices, shared service opportunities, and knowledge exchange.
- The Municipality has adopted a progressive records management and access to information protocol and practices to make data open to the public through the Laserfiche Project. Staff are being trained on how to use the new repository, including how to save, find, and send records. An inventory has been completed of off-site storage locations. All historic treasury roll files have been scanned. Staff have completed digitizing cemetery records and continue digitizing current treasury rolls files.
- Work to streamline internal and external online services is underway including a
  - Online Bids & Tenders platform has been tested and will gradually be rolled out to all departments for procurements.
  - Implemented new online payment platform to receive donations.
- A four-year policy review schedule in order to minimize risk and ensure compliance with new laws and regulations, and ensure they align with the Municipality's mission, vision, and goals. Council has been presented with a number of policy updates and new policies. One year of a four year cycle has been completed.
- Additional cybersecurity measures have been purchased including licenses for Microsoft Azure. More training is planned for staff with regard to email safety and security. Staff will use KnowBe4 as a platform to monitor and support staff while testing for vulnerabilities in adaptive environment. Have been adding additional layers of authentication for various sites.
- An RFP for a new payroll and timesheet system was undertaken and UKG has been approved as the successful proponent. Implementation phase is to begin in Q4 2023 and is expected to last 6-12 months. Implementation will require significant staff time.

Progress on these actions would not have been possible without the commitment and work of Municipal staff, Council, Committees of Council, and volunteers.

**Next steps**

A community friendly report will be developed to communicate the progress on the Integrated Strategy. This will be shared on the Municipal website as well as on social media channels.

Key performance indicators will be identified for both internal measures as well as community level measures. This work will coincide with the development of a community profile which will be instrumental for the beginning stages of the 2024 strategic planning process.

**Implementation Considerations:**

Future updates on the Integrated Strategy will occur in June 2024 and November 2024. The process to initiate a Strategic Plan will be commencing in early 2024 and once the new Strategic Plan is approved by Council, the Integrated Strategy will no longer be necessary.

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**Attachments:**

**Attachment 1:** Integrated Strategy – April 2023 to December 31, 2024

**Attachment 2:** Progress on the actions within the Integrated Strategy

**Prepared by:** Senior Leadership Team

**Submitted by:** Lorie Fioze, Manager of Strategic Initiatives