

Township of Georgian Bluffs - 2019 -2023 Strategic Plan Review and Summary

	Completion (end 2023)	Comments
Overall Completion:	43%	<p>Progress on Strategic Objectives established for the 2019 - 2023 period has been less substantial than was envisaged. Two significant pressures, unanticipated at the time of development of the Strategic Plan have significantly affected the ability to deliver on these objectives;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + COVID-19 Pandemic struck Canada in March, 2020 and impacted service delivery substantially until mid 2021 and continued to impact service delivery to a significant degree until early 2022. Resources of the Township had to be redeployed to effectively manage the municipality through this globally impactful event where the focus was on core service delivery and strategic projects lacked dedicated resources to move them forward. + Since late 2018, the Township has seen significant staff turnover, and has seen ongoing and very high levels of staff vacancy rates, often in excess of 25% vacancy of positions. In a Township of a little over 40 staff, having a quarter of positions vacant for periods significantly impacts the ability of the Township to deliver on Strategic Priorities. Further, at times, there has been significant turn over in management and senior management roles (Managers, Directors and the CAO, with nine (9) CAOs (interim, acting and permanent) engaged during this Strategic Plan period. Lack of consistent direction and oversight, and a more or less continuous period of on boarding has left little resource available to move strategic projects forward. + Significant legislative changes, particularly in 2022 and 2023 in the Planning and Environmental areas at a Provincial level have forced resources to be directed to responding to, interpreting and changing process to meet new requirements. These changes continue to be impactful and should be recognised as the largest and most substantive changes to these areas of legislation in a generation.

1. Improve Communication, Collaboration and Transparency

The Township of Georgian Bluffs wishes to become more transparent and improve communication with all ratepayers, stakeholders, and neighbouring municipalities.
Communication is key in all aspects of Township governance and service.

Objectives:	Completion (end 2023)	Comments
1.1 Improve communications to foster public engagement and participation.	60%	
1.1.1 Establish position of Communications and Strategic Initiatives Officer.	100%	This position has been budgetted for and engaged
1.1.2 Develop and implement a Communications strategy, including policies to support business/industry/tourism within the Township.	0%	Work on this remains a priority, but has not yet been advanced
1.1.3 Continued enhancement of social media presence, website and general communications.	100%	Significant improvement of these forms of communication has occurred and rmean ongoing.
1.1.4 Establish public use computer terminals to allow for barrier free access to Township related, internet based, websites and files.	0%	This was not able to be delivered within the 2019 - 2023 period, but a public access point has been provided at the Adminstrative Offices in early 2024.
1.1.5 Continually encourage stakeholder participation in public, Council and Committee meetings and host town hall style meetings on an annual basis.	100%	Dedicated attention has been made to this, culminating in Connect and Collaborate in 2023, which was a success.
1.2 Monitor implementation of strategic plan and assist departments with implementation of their strategic priorities.	15%	The Strategic Plan has not been leveraged as effectively as it could have been to inform work priorities and budget. However, Council reports try to link items to strategic plan objectives.
1.3 Enhance collaboration with stakeholders, partners and neighbouring municipalities.	100%	Significant movement has been made in this regard. COVID-19 forced increased collaboration, and this continues. Grey County's new Strategic Plan draws specific attention to working together, and this is visible across the organisation.
1.4 Initiate joint Council meetings with neighbouring municipalities to discuss items of mutual interest and benefit.	25%	Joint Council has been limited to date on the BioDigester

2. Foster Economic Growth

The Township of Georgian Bluffs strives to retain, expand, and attract new businesses that support employment opportunities, promote a diversified economy, support value-added agriculture and capitalize on the Township's strengths, defining natural resources, while protecting the natural environment.



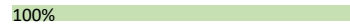
Economic development activities and environmental activities have suffered from dedicated resources over this term of the strategic plan. However, significant progress has been made in Planning, particularly in 2023 in advancing some priorities. Additional work in this area has also been engaged, such as developing a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) which will be foundational for future efforts in this area.

Objectives:

2.1 Retain, expand and attract new commercial activities.



2.1.1 Review planning policies to encourage farm business operations.



This has been completed although largely reflected at a County level.

2.1.2 Identify possible Employment Lands for Development.

0%

This work has not been completed

2.2 Support increasing residential development.



2.2.1 Expand existing servicing/utilities to prepare for new development.

0%

Service extension has not been achieved

2.2.2 Accommodate new and existing utility and service providers wishing to expand their services to residents.



New service agreements (Eh!Te!) and existing infrastructure providers have continue to be supported

2.2.3 Complete revised Zoning By-law, update as required.

0%

Not started; however, this work is anticipated in 2024/25 pending completion of the Official Plan update

2.2.4 Complete Official Plan review.



This is almost completed and anticipated to be finalised in 2024

2.2.5 Streamline planning processes (and increase staffing resources) to enable development and redevelopment.



This work remains ongoing; subsequent, significant and frequent shifts in provincial legislation in respect to planning has driven resource investment into streamlining and changing policy. This work continues.

2.3 Initiate and foster collaboration between Grey and Bruce Counties & neighbouring municipalities to promote the re

50%

Ongoing through work on a County Economic Development level. COVID-19 and lack of resource to participate have restricted Township involvement. Have also begun sharing Tourism media with Grey County and local partners. Also partnered on marketing with Cobble Beach and Owen Sound, and partnered with area tourism operators to distribute Tourism brochures.

2.4 Promote and support development opportunities at the airport to utilize the facility to its potential to become a transportation hub for the Grey Bruce Region, as well as attract aviation businesses that will offer employment opportunities.

N/A

This work was not completed due to the sale of the airport.

2.5 Develop and implement strategic communication policies to support business/industry/tourism within the Township.

0%

This work has not been completed or started.

3. Demonstrate and Enhance Environmental Stewardship

The Township of Georgian Bluffs strives to become a leader in Environmental Stewardship by reducing energy consumption, reducing solid waste, increasing diversion rates of recyclable materials, and lessening the environmental impact of existing and future infrastructure through innovation and upgrading.



Notable successes have been achieved in this area, however, as these were not envisaged in the Strategic Plan, the overall completion here is not reflective of the achievements made within the period. The development and approval of a Corporate Climate Action Plan is one such success. However, overall progress on other environmental initiatives has been slow; the impacts of resource restriction (staffing) and COVID-19 were perhaps most accurately experienced here as this work was deprioritised.

Objectives:

3.1 Continually strive to reduce environmental footprint by reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions to minimize climate change.



3.1.1 Investigate and pursue opportunities to improve the Biodigester to ensure long term sustainability including the acceptance of source separated organics and a reduction in operating costs in order to attract septage waste.

0%

The Biodigester has been a challenge in this period and is currently mothballed awaiting direction from the Board.

3.1.2 Report to Council on new Provincial recycling strategy.



This was completed; the roll out of the Provincial Strategy has however, been delayed with only Blue Box programs thus far in progress toward implementation

3.1.3 Increase recycling and waste diversion

0%

No work on this has been undertaken and no data is available in respect to diversion rates. In 2023 the Township did implement a pilot for organic reductions and this is being expanded in 2024

3.1.4 Investigate opportunities for intermunicipal waste and recycling collection contracts using efficient and clean fuel burning collection vehicles.

0%

The new waste contract effective 2020, does use Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) fueled vehicles. CNG is a cleaner fuel than traditional fuel, (diesel) however, the impacts of this have not been quantified. Work on intermunicipal partnerships was deferred and due to now start in 2024

3.1.5 Investigate opportunities for green box program within secondary settlement areas within the Township.

0%

No work was undertaken on this

3.2 Protect environmentally sensitive areas and habitat.

3.2.1 Design roads to minimize environmental impact using new technologies that reduce erosion, increase water quality from storm sewer collection/discharge.

0%
0%

No work was undertaken in this respect. However, an alternative construction technique in 2023 explored using recycled asphalt as a granular substitute in reconstruction as an environmentally friendly and asset life expanding alternative.

3.3 Manage drinking and storm water.

45%

3.3.1 Operate drinking water systems to maintain a high standard of public health and safety, protect the environment and ensure long term sustainability.

100%

This was completed through ongoing contracts with OCWA

3.3.2 Investigate opportunities to extend water service to supply areas in need of potable water and increase users to ensure water systems are sustainable and economical.

10%

This work was delayed largely as a result of staff turnover and staffing continuity challenges, however, is progressing in respect to Pottawatomi Village supply

3.3.3 Re-evaluate the current water billing model to ensure a fair equitable system that recognizes payment for all water used to promote water conservation.

50%

A study was undertaken and new rates proposed. These were only partially adopted though. The new consumption change appears to have reduced consumption across all systems though and does provide a meaningful means for residents to see savings based on efficiency.

3.3.4 Develop/expand storm water management policies to minimize outflows and improve storm water runoff quality.

10%

No policy work was completed; however, work has been started in Kemble and Balmy Beach in this respect

3.3.5 Provide regular and timely maintenance of municipal drains in accordance with storm water management policies.

75%

Drains have largely been maintained as per the Act.

3.3.6 Develop action plans for improved drainage of the Oxenden and Balmy Beach areas.

25%

This work has started. Oxenden remains not stated.

3.4 Monitor and manage invasive species.

0%

It is noted that the terms in the Strategic Plan are specific to Invasive Species; the Township may not have delivered significant progress on invasive species, but maintains its efforts in managing Noxious Weeds.

3.4.1 Continually map and manage invasive species.

0%

No work has been undertaken on this. Staff have annually managed Noxious Weeds under the Weed Act.

3.4.2 Develop a plan to educate the property owners of invasive species and their obligations to manage.

25%

Resources created for Township website: <https://www.georgianbluffs.ca/en/noxious-weeds.aspx>

4. Increase Available Community, Recreational and Social Opportunities

The Township of Georgian Bluffs is committed to building community through investment in recreation and community centres, and flexible use of community centres and playgrounds.

75%

Investments in community access to facilities has been made. COVID-19 demonstrated the incredible need for community activity and did help motivate action in this area. In addition, work such as the Accessibility Plan not identified in this Strategic Plan has been completed and is influencing this area. However, despite some successes, Asset Management remains a challenge

4.1 Provide enhanced recreational opportunities for residents

49%

4.1.1 Complete a Recreation Master Plan that includes the evaluation of recreation needs, facilities, and budget requirements with recommendations for recreational programming for all ages/abilities.

50%

A Master Plan was completed; however, this did not expand on budget impacts of identified needs, nor expand on indoor community programming significantly.

4.1.2 Undertake arena/community facility condition assessments as part of Master Plan in order to develop long term capital asset management plans.

25%

Some older an partial condition assessments are in place on some buildings; however, these require more comprehensive BCAs to be completed. The Township has undertaken OSIM inspections for bridges and has completed a StreetScan assessment of some roads and sidewalks. These have not been leveraged to date as asset management plan nor capital management plans.

4.1.3 Implement recommendations arising from Recreation Master Plan.

20%

Some progress has been made. Improvements at Sarawak Family Park and Kilsyth Park have occurred. Programming enhancements at Kembler, Derby and Shallow Lake have occurred.

4.1.4 Continually improve public/open spaces to ensure accessibility and safety.

100%

This is ongoing work and several recreational spaces have been improved for safety and accessibility.

4.2 Develop and implement a community safety and wellbeing plan.

100%

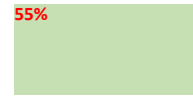
This work was completed with the Township as a stakeholder. The plan remains adopted but largely inactive due to funding challenges.

5. Deliver Effective and Cost-Efficient Services

The Township will strive to be a leader in municipal and customer service excellence. We will continue to offer remarkable service to those we serve. We will promote operational excellence by focusing on fiscal responsibility. The corporation will be fiscally prudent and we will invest in our staff to attract the best employees.

5.1 Enhance online services for more efficient customer service.

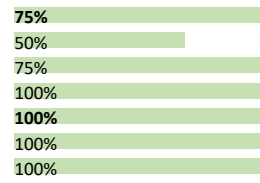
- 5.1.1 Provide opportunity for on-line payments through the Township website.
- 5.1.2 Allow credit card payments (not including property taxes).
- 5.1.3 Create more online forms.



Dedicated attention in this area remains a priority for the Township and notable improvements have occurred. While the team has seen significant transition and change, there remains staffing continuity in this team and this is reflective in the progress made. Noteable additional successes not initial considered in this plan include the launch of EngageGB a new and heavily used engagement platform for residents.

5.2 Create more accessible meetings to encourage citizen engagement.

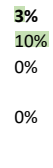
- 5.2.1 Improve agenda/meeting/minute management with appropriate technology.
- 5.2.2 Establish audio/video streaming of Council and Committee meetings.



This work is ongoing with online payments an option for many areas
 This work is ongoing with credit cards available online - some services are payable online
 Online forms continue to be developed as needed

5.3 Exceed set targets for asset management planning.

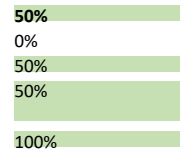
- 5.3.1 Complete condition assessments for all Township assets.
- 5.3.2 Define service levels for Township assets and maintain assets to meet levels of service.
- 5.3.3 Consider and implement recommendations within the Asset Management plan during annual budget process and preparation of financial forecasts.



New technology (eScribe) was adopted.
 This is in place
 This has been partially completed - much remains to be done
 This work has not started, but is scheduled for 2024
 An AMP has yet to be developed - it is anticipated this will inform 2025 budgets

5.4 Ensure proper distribution of workload and retention of staff.

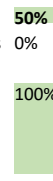
- 5.4.1 Analyze workload yearly based on department.
- 5.4.2 Encourage work/life balance.
- 5.4.3 Support ongoing staff education and succession planning.
- 5.4.4 Complete compensation review every four years.



This has not been started
 This is encouraged - formal policy and process around this is not yet in place
 Training budgets are identified and use is encouraged; however dedicated planning around this area is yet to be completed
 This was undertaken and the next is scheduled

5.5 Manage Fire and Police Services effectively.

- 5.5.1 Develop Fire Master Plan to ensure the community and regulatory requirements are met and exceeded where possible.
- 5.5.2 Continue to negotiate agreements for Fire Services with neighbouring municipalities, including mutual aid in the short and long term in order to ensure protective services meet the needs of the Township while ensuring fiscal and regulatory responsibility.



This was not started - Budgeted for in 2024
 These remain in place

5.6 Develop inter-municipal/inter-local agreements to ensure efficient delivery of services for mutual benefit.



Work has started (Fire Prevention and OPP); more is to follow.