



**TOWNSHIP OF MUSKOKA LAKES**

**2015-2018**

# STRATEGIC PLAN



# Letter from the Mayor

## TOWNSHIP OF MUSKOKA LAKES

Your Township of Muskoka Lakes Council have engaged our permanent and seasonal residents, business owners, and staff to provide Council with wide ranging ideas and suggestions on how we can enhance our Muskoka. I am proud to present the result: Township of Muskoka Lakes Strategic Plan 2015-2018.

The Plan reflects the ideas and comments from hundreds of people who participated in the planning process. As I'm sure everyone will appreciate, it has been necessary to prioritize the 'needs and wants' identified through this process to ensure we follow a fiscally prudent path. Your Council and Senior Management Team have done a great job of working these ideas into a plan that is practical, as well as forward looking and promising to bring positive improvements to the Township.

One over-riding message was heard throughout our consultations. There is a clear and collective passion for Muskoka Lakes - our iconic environment, culture and lifestyle. Council shares this love for Muskoka Lakes and is committed to its protection and responsible development.

Thank you to all who have participated in this process. The Strategic Plan 2015-2018 will be a 'living' plan that will be closely monitored and 'fine-tuned' annually to reflect changing circumstances and to take advantage of new opportunities. As 2018 nears its end, I am confident we will all look back and say "Our Muskoka is a better place today than it was in 2014".

Don Furniss

Mayor, Township of Muskoka Lakes





## OUR MUSKOKA

Is a diverse community, where generations interact with nature, recreation, history and tourism. These unique attributes all combine to make Muskoka an iconic choice to visit, live and work.

## VISION

To respect, maintain and enhance **OUR MUSKOKA**.

## MISSION

Recognizing and respecting the diversity of our residents and economy, we will openly engage the public to achieve **OUR VISION** with balance, transparency, sustainability, accountability and fairness.

## VALUES TO WHICH WE ASPIRE\*\*

### STEWARDSHIP

We embrace our role as stewards of the community's fiscal, natural and cultural resources.

### ACCOUNTABILITY

We accept responsibility for decisions and actions taken in relation to Township business, and conduct ourselves in an open, transparent fashion.

### ENGAGEMENT

We seek and value input from residents, businesses, and staff.

### EMPLOYEE ENRICHMENT

We recognize staff as critical assets and are dedicated to attracting, developing, retaining, and empowering the highest quality work force.

\*\*Commitments that the Municipality strives toward as an organization and will use to guide its actions and operation

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA

# INFRASTRUCTURE



### GOAL:

ASSESS EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE AND EQUIPMENT, AND UNDERTAKE PLANNING TO ADDRESS CURRENT AND FUTURE NEEDS

### Objectives:

- Develop short term and long term (10 year) maintenance, renovation/construction, equipment plans and replacement schedules including capital funding plans to address current and future needs **MEDIUM-TERM**
- Undertake a long term Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan including long-distance trail networks to evaluate existing assets and recommend opportunities associated with growing public interest in year round recreation, outdoor sports, and fitness activities including cycling, hiking, ATVing, snowmobiling, outdoor and skating. **MEDIUM-TERM**
- Identify and access regional, provincial and federal programs and other opportunities (i.e. Triple "P", community donation) to fund new municipal infrastructure (i.e. public docks and launches, parking, waterfront development projects, trails systems) **MEDIUM-TERM**





## STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA

# ENVIRONMENT & HERITAGE

### Goal:

INCREASE PROTECTION OF UNIQUE AND SIGNIFICANT NATURAL FEATURES, HERITAGE PROPERTIES AND BUILDINGS

### Objectives:

- Revitalize Heritage Committee by establishing Terms of Reference and confirm its mandate to designate significant natural and heritage features **MEDIUM-TERM**
- Develop strategy to implement designation process where appropriate and raise awareness of these designations **MEDIUM-TERM**

### Goal:

BUILD ON CURRENT EFFORTS TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE THE HEALTH OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND WATERWAYS

### Objectives:

- Commit to septic inspection program and compliance monitoring to prevent soil and water contamination **ON-GOING**
- Partner with Muskoka Watershed Council and other watershed stakeholder associations to educate public on importance of maintaining water quality and provide support to remedy problems **ON-GOING**
- Collaborate with Province and other stakeholders to better manage water levels to protect shorelines against flooding and/or low levels **ON-GOING**
- Review Municipal maintenance programs to ensure alignment with environmental stewardship including storm water management **ON-GOING**

### Goal:

DECREASE NOISE AND LIGHT POLLUTION TO PRESERVE MUSKOKA'S NATURAL AND UNSPOILED BEAUTY

### Objectives:

- Improve effectiveness of by-law enforcement by moving to more proactive (patrolling) in addition to reactive (complaint-driven) enforcement **LONG-TERM**
- Educate residents about by-laws governing noise and light pollution to preserve serenity of natural environment and protect the dark-sky **MEDIUM-TERM**



## STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**Goal:** ENHANCE QUALITY OF LIFE IN MUSKOKA LAKES THROUGH SUPPORT TO COMMUNITY AND HEALTH SERVICES

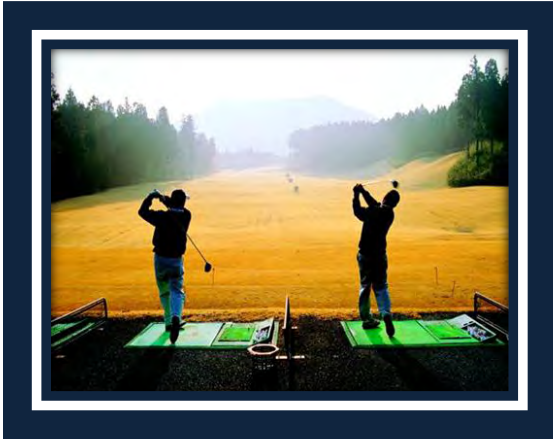
**Objectives:**

- Support affordable housing development in the Township and increase residents' and developers' awareness of supplement and incentive programs available through the District and the Province **SHORT-TERM**
- Promote community emergency plans and procedures to protect residents in case of emergency **SHORT-TERM**
- Raise awareness among Muskoka Lake staff of the community and social services available from District and Provincial governments; and, advocate on behalf of residents for access to these services as required **SHORT-TERM**
- Support development of the new Health Hubs in and around Muskoka Lakes to increase awareness and access to health and community services, supports and programs available to residents **SHORT-TERM**
- Partner in regional transportation initiatives to enhance local transportation services **MEDIUM - TERM**
- Partner with regional volunteer initiatives to enhance training and development opportunities for volunteers and community groups **SHORT-TERM**

**Goal:** STIMULATE USE OF COMMUNITY CENTRES AND ARENAS TO ENHANCE SUSTAINABILITY

**Objectives:**

- Develop strategies to increase usage and explore opportunities for revenue generation **MEDIUM-TERM**
- Engage residents in sustainability planning to ensure Community Centres / Halls and Arenas remain vital community hubs for residents, cottagers and visitors **LONG-TERM**



**STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA**

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Goal:** COLLABORATE WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS TO CREATE A TOWNSHIP ECONOMIC STRATEGY AND PLAN

- Objectives:**
- Clarify Township’s role in economic development and available economic development resources **SHORT-TERM**
  - Collaborate with other local and regional partners to develop a year round local economic strategy including tourism, and an implementation plan **MEDIUM-TERM**
  - Execute brand strategy to showcase the unique and iconic nature of the Municipality and its local culture and traditions **MEDIUM-TERM**

**Goal:** IMPROVE QUALITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND AFFORDABILITY OF HIGH-SPEED INTERNET SERVICES

- Objectives:**
- Determine existing levels of service across Muskoka Lakes to increase understanding of the extent and nature of service issues and consult with primary service providers to advocate for improved high speed services **MEDIUM-TERM**





**STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA**

# TOWNSHIP GOVERNANCE

**Goal:** ENHANCE THE MUNICIPAL WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN QUALITY STAFF

**Objectives:**

- Undertake a comprehensive third-party organizational review to ensure appropriate departmental alignment, distribution of staff and resource allocations that reflect the goals of the organization outlined in the strategic plan **SHORT-TERM**
- Apply administrative and HR policies and procedures consistently throughout the organization to reflect a culture of fairness and equity; and, build stability in leadership by filling vacancies in a timely manner to avoid disruption to staff and service **MEDIUM-TERM**
- Develop corporate training and development programs to ensure on-going skill development, high customer service levels, and that staff potential is fully engaged and increase cross-training of staff to improve organizational resilience. **MEDIUM-TERM**

**Goal:** ESTABLISH GUIDELINES TO SUPPORT STRONG AND EFFECTIVE COUNCIL LEADERSHIP

**Objectives:**

- Implement a Code of Conduct that outlines responsibilities and accepted practices for Council including a clear complaint process **SHORT-TERM**
- Design a comprehensive procedural by-law that ensures compliance with the Municipal Act, and develop orientation and training strategies to guide council in conducting meetings and communicating with the public and staff **SHORT-TERM**

**Goal:** ESTABLISH SERVICE DELIVERY STANDARDS THAT MEET CHANGING DEMANDS

**Objectives:**

- Detail service standards within each Municipal Department to ensure commitment to high standards and allocate the required resources for implementation **MEDIUM-TERM**
- Analyze demographic and other trends to inform long term planning, policy, programs and services **SHORT-TERM**

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA

# TOWNSHIP COMMUNICATION

### Goal:

IMPROVE PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND  
ENHANCE QUALITY AND TIMELINESS OF  
COMMUNICATIONS

### Objectives:

- Redevelop website layout and content to improve ease of navigation and enhance search function **SHORT-TERM**
- Develop and execute a corporate communications strategy to keep public and staff informed of issues, events, and activities **MEDIUM-TERM**
- Expand use of digital or new communication and service delivery tools (i.e. social media, online payment and bookings) **MEDIUM-TERM**
- Explore opportunities to provide remote access to Council deliberations **MEDIUM-TERM**