

# STRATEGIC PLANNING CONTEXT

# ENVIRONMENT

A CLEANER, GREENER, MORE  
BEAUTIFUL AND PROUD  
THUNDER BAY

## Strategic Policies and Plans

### **Active Transportation Plan (Ongoing)**

The Thunder Bay Active Transportation Plan was created by the Active Transportation Advisory Committee to address the need for a long-term plan to guide the development of a commuter and recreational network in Thunder Bay. Completed in 2008, the Plan defines existing components of this network, provides recommendations for new infrastructure to improve the network, and sets design standards for new active transportation infrastructure. The Plan provides a framework by which new ideas for developing active transportation are reviewed and improved.

### **Clean, Green and Beautiful Policy (2007)**

Following on recommendations from the Mayor's Task Force on Civic Pride, City Council adopted a Corporate Policy to establish an Advisory Committee on Clean, Green and Beautiful initiatives. The purpose of the committee is to develop a common vision and long-term plan to enhance the function, look and feel of where we live, work and play through public art, beautification, heritage and environmental greening initiatives.

### **Climate Adaptation Strategy (In Progress)**

The Strategy will guide action to adapt to climate change. The goal is to build community resilience to reduce the risks inherent in climate change and take advantage of opportunities associated with current and future impacts of climate change.

### **Corporate Energy Management Plan (2014-2019)**

"The Strategic Approach to Corporate Energy Management" Plan outlines strategic initiatives that will be put into place to manage the Corporation's energy use and create a Corporate culture to ensure the wise use of energy.

### **EarthCare Sustainability Plan (2014-2020)**

The EarthCare Sustainability Plan guides the corporation and the community in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and creating a more sustainable future. A particular focus is placed on making Thunder Bay more robust and resilient in the face of a changing climate through the ongoing development of a Climate Adaptation Strategy.

### **Solid Waste Management Strategy (2014-2034)**

The Solid Waste Management Strategy provides direction for optimizing current and future Residential, Industrial, and Commercial & Institutional (IC&I) solid waste programs to best meet Thunder Bay's needs over the next two decades. It is a blueprint for reducing and managing solid waste, and establishes a broad policy framework for solid waste management over short-, medium-, & long-term planning periods. The plan considers all aspects of waste management and identifies current successes as well as areas for improvement and growth.

### **Stormwater Master Plan (In Development)**

As part of its commitment to environmental stewardship and community sustainability, the City of Thunder Bay has embarked on the creation of a Stormwater Master Plan. This 20-year action plan, will protect water quality and the health of the water resources that shape and define Thunder Bay.

### **Tax Sale Vesting Policy (2008)**

A Tax Sale Vesting Policy was approved and a Vested Property Rehabilitation Reserve Fund created as part of a strategy to improve the appearance of abandoned and neglected properties.

**Transportation Demand Management Plan (2011)**

Council adopted the Transportation Demand Management Plan in 2011, as a guiding document for the development of initiatives that encourage a shift from driving to healthier, less costly and more environmentally friendly travel options. Additional resources are not yet available to further this initiative which would see the development and implementation of a recognizable brand, develop trip planning tools, website, maps, and campaigns aimed at improving public awareness of, and building support for, sustainable travel options, and encouraging their use.

**Transportation Master Plan (1987)**

The study set out a plan for improvements to Thunder Bay’s road network that continues to be implemented. A new study is due to be undertaken.

**Urban Design and Image Route Guidelines (2012)**

The City-wide Urban Design Guidelines provide detailed direction for the implementation of the policies and objectives of the Official Plan, and as a complement to zoning regulations. To guide development throughout the City, a set of City-wide guiding principles have been established and are supported by the detailed Performance Standards contained within this document. The Image Route Guidelines identify short-, medium- and long-term improvements on the City’s most significant corridors.

**Urban Forest Management Plan (2012-2018)**

Completed in 2011, the City of Thunder Bay’s Urban Forest Management Plan is intended to be an all-encompassing, living document that influences all levels of urban forestry management from administration to daily operation. It provides the Parks Division with short- and long-term visions and identifies strategic actions to attain these outcomes. The Plan is a key document to develop a more efficient and effective program, resulting not only in a more sustainable urban forest, but a healthier, more livable city.



# STRATEGIC PLANNING CONTEXT

# ECONOMY A PROSPEROUS & MORE DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY

## Strategic Policies and Plans

### **City of Thunder Bay Official Plan (Update ongoing)**

The Thunder Bay Official Plan is the principal land use policy document that provides a framework to manage growth and guide development decisions through land use goals, objectives and policies. The Official Plan also recognizes the importance of distinguishing the two downtown areas as focal points for business, entertainment, social and cultural pursuits.

### **Community Partnership Policy (2005)**

To govern the establishment of partnerships for major capital projects between community groups and the City, this Policy focuses on supporting projects that align with the Strategic Plan, that are open and accessible to all residents, and that have a business plan for long-term sustainability.

### **Long-Term Tax Strategy (2008)**

The Long-Term Tax Strategy provides a framework to look for opportunities over time to realign property tax ratios to achieve greater fairness and relative business competitiveness.

### **Mining Readiness Strategy (2013)**

The City of Thunder Bay partnered with Fort William First Nation and the Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission to develop a Mining Readiness Strategy to address and strategically plan for growth in Thunder Bay and the Northwestern Ontario Region.

The Strategy will help guide all of Northwestern Ontario in capitalizing on the many opportunities that mining development is expected to bring to the Region.

### **Comprehensive Zoning By-Law (2011)**

The City's Zoning By-law is consistent with City Council's Strategic Plan, the City's Official Plan and Provincial legislation and policies. The By-law features easy to read regulations and clear definitions that provide flexibility, a zoning framework that provides clear development parameters, mixed-use regulations that promote vibrant commercial areas, residential regulations that make it easy to develop and redevelop, parking and drive-thru regulations that reflect industry standards, and landscaping requirements that promote the greening of City streets.

### **Renew Thunder Bay Strategic Infrastructure Plan (2009)**

The Renew Thunder Bay Plan is an incremental capital plan to enhance our quality of life and grow our economy through targeted and highly leveraged strategic infrastructure investments. To be considered, projects must align with Council's Strategic priorities, provide economic growth/benefits, leverage Provincial/Federal funding, provide community synergies and promote community partnership opportunities, improve the quality of life on a City-wide basis, and be highly visible and broadly supported by the community.

### **Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission – Strategic Action Plan (2014-2017)**

As a guiding document for the CEDC, the Strategic Action Plan, Transitioning to Growth, identifies key themes to grow and expand existing business and attract new ones. These themes are: Entrepreneurship; Business Retention and Expansion and Business Succession Planning; Innovative Manufacturing; Training and Educational Community; Logistics and Supply Hub; Social Enterprise, Information Communications & Technology (ICT), Regional Food and Film; and Mining Readiness Strategy.

### **TBayTel Strategic Plan**

The TBayTel Municipal Service Board's work is built around four core guiding principles that serve to ensure TBayTel's continued growth, accountability, and performance in Northern Ontario: financial stability, employment creation, regional economic development, and technological innovation. The Municipal Service Board is a strong proponent of TBayTel's vision, supporting marketplace advancement and enhancing its business reputation.

### **Thunder Bay Event & Convention Centre (Ongoing)**

The Phase 3 Feasibility Study on a proposed Thunder Bay Event & Convention Centre was completed in 2014. The Phase 3 report included an overall project vision, Facility Schematic Design to 20% detail level, together with estimated costs, a business plan, and economic impact analysis. Phase 4 is currently underway, with a focus on funding.

### **Thunder Bay Hydro Strategic Plan**

Thunder Bay Hydro group of companies places strategic priority on three long term goals:

To ensure that the health and safety of our employees and the public is the utility's first priority;

To provide a reliable supply of electricity to the residents and businesses of Thunder Bay; and

To protect and grow the value of the utility to our shareholders.

The company has positioned itself to take advantage of changes in Provincial legislation regarding renewable energy and is moving to develop non-distribution projects to provide future growth in revenue.

### **Tourism Thunder Bay Marketing and Product Development Plans (Annual)**

Tourism Thunder Bay executes annual plans to attract visitors to Thunder Bay and to develop tourism product. The overall marketing plan aligns with the City's tourism position of "Canada's Premier Outdoor City" by identifying consumer segments, tactics and priority research and support towards product development initiatives. The annual strategy communicates leisure and convention promotion, sport tourism plan development and attraction, travel media, travel trade and product development priorities based on performance metrics and consumer travel motivation research.

# STRATEGIC PLANNING CONTEXT

# GOVERNANCE RECOGNIZED AS A BEST-RUN CITY

## Strategic Policies and Plans

### **Asset Management Plan (2014)**

The Asset Management Plan was developed in 2005 using best management practices obtained from other municipalities, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and National Research Canada. Updated annually, the Plan includes a strategy for each asset recognizing that infrastructure in the City of Thunder Bay is aging while demand grows for better roads, bridges, sidewalks, lights, signals and for improved sewer and water systems. This demand is in response to higher standards of safety, health, environmental protection, regulations and to some degree growth.

### **Long-Term Financial Plan (Annual)**

Each year, the City Treasurer updates the long-term financial plan, a comprehensive look at the financial direction the City of Thunder Bay is taking. The plan focuses on key financial issues including, among others, capital financing and debt policy, taxation levels, and long-range decisions for Council.

### **Multi-Year Corporate Review Process (Annual)**

Since 2009, the City Manager has conducted annual corporate-wide cost savings reviews resulting in about \$6 million in budget savings through cost containment and efficiencies including ongoing implementation of the CityLEAN program.

### **Wastewater System Financial Plan (2014-2034)**

The Wastewater long-term financial plan outlines the projected operating and capital plan for the next 20 years, with the goal of achieving financial sustainability, full-cost recovery and affordability for consumers while maintaining the City's existing service levels for sewage collection and treatment.

### **Water Authority Financial Plan (2013-2032)**

Approved by City Council in 2013, The Water Authority Financial Plan maintains our affordable water rates and moves towards:

- sustainability, in keeping with legislation that mandates drinking water system owners to prepare financial plans to raise adequate resources to provide safe drinking water today and into the future
- continuation of a rate structure that benefits those who conserve

Based on the cash flow projections developed in this financial plan, the Water Authority will be financially viable and will provide safe drinking water for both the short- and long-term.

### **Community Communications Plan (Annual)**

The City's Community Communications Committee develops, and Corporate Communications administers, an annual Plan to engage in a proactive communications program and support regular and accessible two-way communication with residents.





# SUMMARY OF KEY TRENDS AND INDICATORS

A high-level strategic overview presented to City Council on March 5, 2015, identified key trends that need to be taken into account and tracked to minimize risks and maximize opportunities while maintaining the foundational approach that has proven successful so far. More recently, this document has been updated with the 2015 Citizen Survey results.

## Participation Rate

Source – Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey Estimates:

| January 2015       |                 |         |
|--------------------|-----------------|---------|
|                    | Thunder Bay CMA | Ontario |
| Unemployment Rate  | 5.3%            | 7.0%    |
| Employment Rate    | 57.6%           | 60.9%   |
| Participation Rate | 60.8%           | 65.4%   |

Table 282-0135 Labour force survey estimates (LFS), by census metropolitan area, three-month moving average, seasonally adjusted and unadjusted (www.statcan.gc.ca)

Source – The Conference Board of Canada, Metropolitan Outlook 2 – Summer 2014:

- The participation rate (number of people in the work force) hit a six-year high in 2013, partially due to increased job-hunter optimism. Annual employment rate increases in 2012 and 2013 fueled this optimism.

Source – North Superior Workforce Planning Board, 2015-2017 Labour Market Plan:

**Table 3A: Annual Migration Estimates – Thunder Bay District**

|       | In-Migration | Out-Migration | Net-Migration |
|-------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| 2002  | 4624         | 4048          | 576           |
| 2003  | 3885         | 3838          | 47            |
| 2004  | 3764         | 4192          | -428          |
| 2005  | 3564         | 4311          | -747          |
| 2006  | 3920         | 4331          | -411          |
| 2007  | 3957         | 3975          | -18           |
| 2008  | 3582         | 3490          | 92            |
| 2009  | 3607         | 3166          | 441           |
| 2010  | 3352         | 3123          | 229           |
| 2011  | 3859         | 3577          | 282           |
| Total | 38,114       | 38,051        | 63            |

- Total net migration has added to the area's population from 2008 to 2011, rather from subtracting from it as it had in the previous four years. Migration into Thunder Bay District may be due to the shifting demand for skilled employees as Thunder Bay region transitions to a knowledge-based economy.

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, Table 111-0028

## Key Population Trends

Source – Ontario Population Projections, Ministry of Finance, Fall 2014:

- Thunder Bay Census Metropolitan Area (CMA)\* population has been stagnant over the last two years, and it is expected that it will not fluctuate significantly for the next 10 years.
- In 2011, the percentage of the population aged 65 and over in Thunder Bay was 17.2%, compared with the provincial average of 14.2%. Thunder Bay has the third highest population of seniors in Ontario. Population projections suggest that by 2031, almost one third of Thunder Bay’s population will be 65 years of age and over.

The implication of a relatively older population is that the demand for health care services and other services required by an aging population will be relatively more acute in the City of Thunder Bay than in the rest of the Province.

Source – Population Projection by Aboriginal Identity in Canada, 2006 to 2031 (Statistics Canada – Catalogue no. 91-552-X):

- The Aboriginal population continues to grow significantly faster than the non-Aboriginal population, Statistics Canada reports that by 2031, the Aboriginal population is projected to be as large as 15% of the population of Thunder Bay. The Aboriginal population is also much younger, 46% of the Aboriginal population in Thunder Bay are under the age of 25, compared to 28% of the total population.

These key trends point to the need to work with community partners on strategies to grow our population, respond to the needs of the growing Aboriginal population and youth and become more age-friendly.

\*Thunder Bay’s CMA includes: Township of Conmee, First Nation Reserve Fort William 52, Township of Gillies, Municipality of Neebing, Township of O’Connor, Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge, Township of Shuniah, City of Thunder Bay

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## Aboriginal People in the Labour Market

Source – North Superior Workforce Planning Board, 2015-2017 Labour Market Plan:

- **Table 9A** shows an overview of Aboriginal people in Thunder Bay’s labour market compared to the Thunder Bay CMA. In all areas of the labour market, Aboriginal people trail the Thunder Bay CMA. Perhaps most stark is the unemployment rate amongst Aboriginal people with an alarming 19.5% compared to 6.9% for the rest of the Thunder Bay CMA.

As the North Superior Workforce Planning Board notes: “This speaks to the ongoing need to continue developing services and programs that can help address the significant workforce issues preventing Aboriginal people from finding and retaining meaningful employment.”

**Table 9A: Aboriginal People in Thunder Bay Labour Market**

|                     | Aboriginal Peoples CMA | Thunder Bay CMA |
|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| In Labour Force     | 56.7%                  | 61.7%           |
| Not in Labour Force | 43.3%                  | 39.6%           |
| Participation Rate  | 56.7%                  | 62.4%           |
| Employment Rate     | 45.6%                  | 58.1%           |
| Unemployment Rate   | 19.5%                  | 6.9%            |