



THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
FINAL AGENDA

COTW 3-2025

Thursday, April 3, 2025

6:30 p.m.

Council Chamber - In Person and Electronic Meeting

Niagara Region Headquarters, Campbell West

1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold, ON

To view live stream meeting proceedings, please visit: [niagararegion.ca/government/council](http://niagararegion.ca/government/council)

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|  | Pages  |
|--|--------|
| 1. <u>CALL TO ORDER</u>  |        |
| 2. <u>LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</u>   |        |
| 3. <u>DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST</u>  |        |
| 4. <u>PRESENTATIONS</u>  |        |
| 5. <u>DELEGATIONS</u>  |        |
| 6. <u>ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION</u>  |        |
| 6.1 <u>CSD 23-2025</u><br>2026 Budget Timetable  | 3 - 6  |
| 7. <u>CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION</u>  |        |
| 7.1 <u>CAO 4-2025</u><br>Growing Better Together: 2023-2026 Council Strategic Priorities Mid-Term Update<br><br>A presentation will precede the discussion of this item. | 7 - 46 |
| 8. <u>OTHER BUSINESS</u>   |        |

**9. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 1, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Regional Headquarters.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

If you require any accommodations for a disability in order to attend or participate in meetings or events, please contact the Accessibility Advisor at 905-980-6000 ext. 3252 (office), 289-929-8376 (cellphone) or [accessibility@niagararegion.ca](mailto:accessibility@niagararegion.ca) (email).

**Subject:** 2026 Budget Timetable

**Report to:** Committee of the Whole

**Report date:** Thursday, April 3, 2025

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## Recommendations

1. That the 2026 budget timetable, attached as Appendix 1 to Report CSD 23-2025, **BE APPROVED**;
2. That this report **BE CIRCULATED** to agencies, boards, and commissions (ABCs) in accordance with By-Law No. 2017-63 “Budget Control”.

## Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to initiate the 2026 budget process with approval of the Budget Review Committee of the Whole (BRCOTW) timetable and to advise ABC’s of the proposed timetable and process changes.
- In alignment with the Budget Planning By-Law, the proposed BRCOTW meeting in May will support discussions on projected services costs and the proposed process for the preparation and presentation of the 2026 budget.
- The proposed 2026 timetable reflects a change in the way the budget is received and approved, with additional time planned for service-based budget discussions and a planned release of budget information for all four budgets (General Tax Levy (Including Agencies Boards and Commissions), Special Tax Levies (Waste Management and Niagara Regional Transit) and Water and Wastewater Rates) ahead of 2026 budget presentations and deliberation.
- The proposed 2026 budget timetable in Appendix 1 recommends approving the 2026 budget before year-end in alignment with the Budget Planning By-Law.

## Financial Considerations

There are no direct financial impacts as a result of this report.

## Analysis

The proposed 2026 budget timetable reflects two phases. The first phase, May to October, leverages BRCOTW dates to provide operational overviews including service responsibilities and jurisdiction and to identify service and/or budget pressures

anticipated for 2026 and beyond. This phase of the budget is intended to drive conversations with Council around service levels in alignment with 2025 approved budget and known pressures and opportunities for 2026. The second phase, November to December (January if required), will provide details and presentations related to the proposed 2026 budget. The first meeting in this phase will provide a consolidated overview of all four budgets (General Tax Levy (Including Agencies Boards and Commissions), Special Tax Levies (Waste Management and Niagara Regional Transit) and Water and Wastewater Rates. Meetings in November and December, ahead of the final report and recommendations for approval, will be leveraged to present more detailed budget for information and to support decision making by Council on the 2026 budget. The meeting on December 11<sup>th</sup> will be utilized for debate and approval.

### **Alternatives Reviewed**

The purpose of this report is to initiate the 2026 budget process and approve the 2026 budget timetable. Information will continue to be developed, analyzed, and summarized for the Budget Review committee to facilitate decision making throughout the budget process.

### **Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities**

The 2026 Budget will provide the financial framework to achieve Council's strategic priorities.

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**Prepared by:**

Beth Brens, CPA, CA  
Associate Director, Budgets, Planning  
and Strategy  
Corporate Services

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**Recommended by:**

Dan Carnegie  
Acting Commissioner of Corporate  
Services/Treasurer  
Corporate Services

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**Submitted by:**

Ron Tripp, P.Eng.  
Chief Administrative Officer

This report was prepared in consultation with Melissa Raquion, Director Financial Management and Planning/Deputy Treasurer.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1      2026 Budget Timetable

2026 Budget Timetable

| Meeting Type     | Topic  | Date                                   |
|------------------|--|--|
| <b>Phase One</b> |  |  |
| BRCOTW           | Budget Planning and Revised Budget Process Overview                | Thursday, May 22, 2025, 4:30 p.m.      |
| BRCOTW           | Service Based Discussion – Public Health and Community Services    | Thursday, June 5, 2025, 4:30 p.m.      |
| BRCOTW           | Service Based Discussion – Public Works and Infrastructure         | Thursday, July 3, 2025, 4:30 p.m.      |
| BRCOTW           | Service Based Discussion - Water & Wastewater Rates                | Thursday, August 14, 2025, 6:30 p.m.   |
| BRCOTW           | Service Based Discussion – Niagara Regional Police Service         | Thursday, September 4, 6:30 p.m.       |
| BRCOTW           | Service Based Discussion – Niagara Regional Transit                | Thursday, October 2, 2025, 6:30 p.m.   |
| <b>Phase Two</b> |  |  |
| BRCOTW           | 2026 Consolidated Budget Overview, Capital, and General Government | Thursday, November 13, 2025, 6:30 p.m. |
| BRCOTW           | 2026 Regional Levy Departments and Waste Management                | Thursday, November 20, 2025, 4:30 p.m. |
| BRCOTW           | 2026 ABCs and Niagara Regional Transit                             | Thursday, November 27, 2025, 6:30 p.m. |
| BRCOTW           | 2026 Water & Wastewater Rates                                      | Thursday, December 4, 2025, 6:30 p.m.  |
| BRCOTW           | 2026 Consolidated Budget for Debate and Approval                   | Thursday, December 11, 2025, 4:30 p.m. |
| Council          | Budget & User Fee By-laws  | Thursday, December 18, 2024, 4:30 p.m. |

# 2023-2026 Council Strategic Priorities Mid-Term Update

Committee of the Whole

CAO 4-2025

April 3, 2025

Ron Tripp, CAO

# Council Strategic Priorities Mid-Term Update

**Growing Better Together 2023 – 2026**

Committee of the Whole April 3, 2025



# 2024 Accomplishments Video

## Niagara Region 2024 Accomplishments A Year in Review

Niagara  Region

# Council's Strategic Priorities 2023-2026

**Effective  
Region**






**Green and  
Resilient  
Region**

**An Equitable  
Region**

**A Prosperous  
Region**

# Strategic Priorities Mid-Term Actions Update

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Council Strategic Priorities Actions</b> | <b>37</b> |
|---|-----------|

|   | <b>Action Status</b>                            | <b># of Actions</b> |
|---|---|---------------------|
|   | <b>Completed</b>                                | <b>5</b>            |
|   | <b>Progressing and On Track</b>                 | <b>10</b>           |
|   | <b>Long-Term Strategies or Capital Projects</b> | <b>7</b>            |
|   | <b>Ongoing</b>                                  | <b>10</b>           |
|  | <b>Paused/Some Delay</b>                        | <b>5</b>            |



# Effective Region Actions

| Priority Action                                   | Status   | Phase/Completion Date |
|---|----------|-----------------------|
| Annual Budget and Long-term Forecast Planning     | On Track | Ongoing               |
| Data Management Plan                              | On Track | Development           |
| Human Resource Plan                               | On Track | Implementation        |
| Transportation Sustainability                     | On Track | Ongoing               |
| Service, Effectiveness and Accountability Reviews | On Track | Ongoing               |
| Shared Services Strategy                          | On Track | Ongoing               |
| Water and Wastewater Asset Sustainability         | On Track | Ongoing               |

# Effective Region Performance Measures

| Performance Measure   | Service Area      | Data                     | Baseline Trend                    |
|---|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Employee Engagement</b>  | <b>Governance</b> | 65%<br>(2024)            | Not Trending in Desired Direction |
| <b>Offers Accepted by Preferred Candidate</b>   | <b>Governance</b> | 86%<br>(2024)            | Not Trending in Desired Direction |
| <b>Niagara Public Purchasing Committee Contracts – Region Participating</b>           | <b>Governance</b> | 11<br>(2024)             | Information Only                  |
| <b>Niagara Public Purchasing Committee Contracts – At Least One LAM Participating</b> | <b>Governance</b> | 20<br>(2024)             | Information Only                  |
| <b>Resident Satisfaction</b>  | <b>Governance</b> | Under Development        |                                   |
| <b>Retention Rates by Time Interval – 1 year</b>                                      | <b>Governance</b> | 85%<br>(July – Dec 2024) | Trending in Desired Direction     |
| <b>Value of Shared Contracts</b>  | <b>Governance</b> | Under Development        |                                   |

# Effective Region Highlights

## Budget Basics

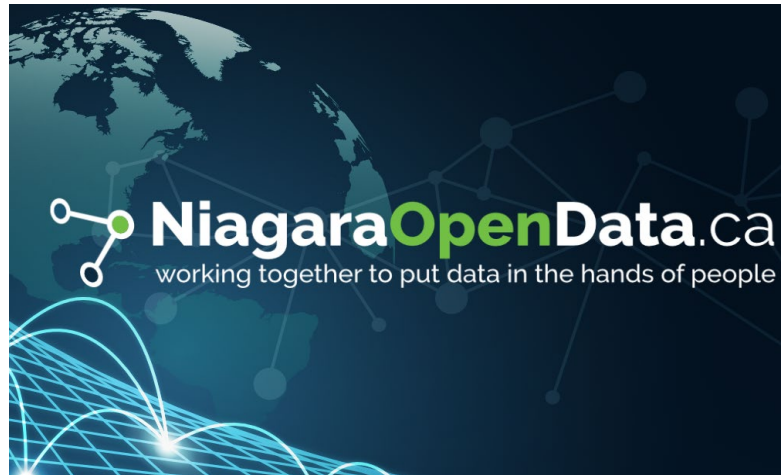
Understanding the Budget

Niagara  Region

**Annual Budget and Long-Term Forecast Planning**

Phase: Ongoing

7



**Data Management Plan**

Timeline: 2025 – 2026

Phase: Development

14



**Shared Services Strategy**

Phase: Ongoing

Niagara  Region

 Growing Better Together

# Green and Resilient Region Actions

| Priority Action                                | Status     | Phase/Completion Date |
|--|------------|-----------------------|
| Climate Adaptation Plan                        | Some Delay | Planning              |
| Community Energy Plan                          | On Track   | Planning              |
| Corporate Climate Change Plan                  | On Track   | Development           |
| Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan | Completed  | Development           |
| Green Fleet Plan and Policy                    | Paused     | Planning              |
| Greening Strategy                              | On Track   | Development           |
| South Niagara Wastewater Treatment Solution    | Some Delay | Planning              |
| Waste Management Plan                          | On Track   | Development           |
| Water and Wastewater Biosolids Management Plan | Completed  | Development           |
| Water, Wastewater Master Servicing Plan Update | On Track   | Implementation        |

# Green and Resilient Region Performance Measures

| Performance Measure  | Service Area        | Data                                 | Baseline Trend                |
|--|---------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Corporate Greenhouse Gas Emissions                         | Governance          | 24,455 tCO <sub>2</sub> e.<br>(2024) | Under Development             |
| Diversion of Waste from Landfill                           | Waste Management    | Under Development                    |                               |
| Region's Sewer Network                                     | Wastewater Services | Under Development                    |                               |
| Corporate Energy Use by Year (Natural Gas and Electricity) | Governance          | 32.85 eKWh/sq. ft.<br>(2023)         | Trending in Desired Direction |
| Regional Tree Canopy Coverage                              | Forestry            | 25.4%<br>(2024)                      | Under Development             |



# Green and Resilient Region Highlights



## Biosolids Master Plan

Timeline: 2021 – 2024

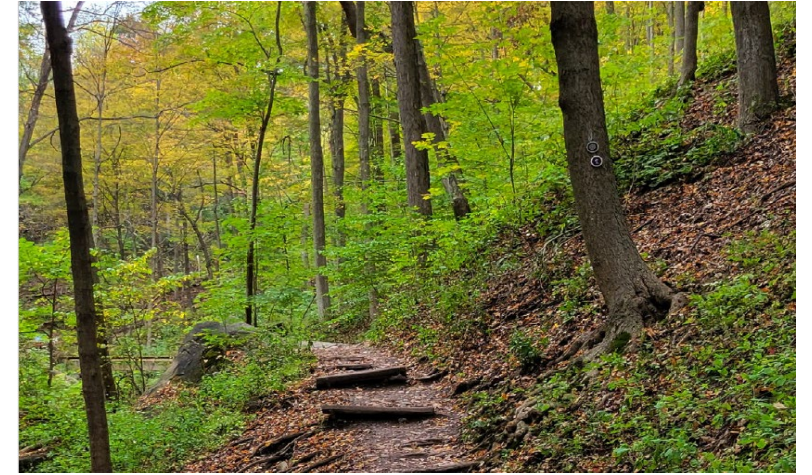
Phase: Development



## Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan

Timeline: 2023 – 2024

Phase: Development



## Water, Wastewater Master Servicing Plan Update

Phase: Development

# Equitable Region Actions

| Priority Action  | Status    | Phase/Completion Date |
|--|-----------|-----------------------|
| Attainable Housing Strategy  | Completed | Development           |
| Community Safety and Well-Being  | On Track  | Implementation        |
| Consolidated Housing Master Plan                                       | On Track  | Planning              |
| Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan                                   | On Track  | Implementation        |
| Growth Management and Staging of Infrastructure Strategy               | On Track  | Planning              |
| Health Equity Strategic Plan   | On Track  | Implementation        |
| Housing and Homelessness Action/Built for Zero Homelessness Plan       | Paused    | Planning              |
| Indigenous Relations Action Plan                                       | On Track  | Development           |
| Poverty Reduction Strategy   | On Track  | Implementation        |
| Support for Affordable and Attainable Development                      | On Track  | Ongoing               |
| Vision Zero Road Safety Implementation and Complete Streets Guidelines | On Track  | Implementation        |

# Equitable Region Performance Measures

| Performance Measure   | Service Area            | Data              | Baseline Trend                    |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Licensed Childcare Spaces in Operation                              | Child Care              | 72%<br>(2024)     | Trending in Desired Direction     |
| Chronically Homeless in Niagara                                     | Community Services      | 629<br>(Feb 2025) | Not Trending in Desired Direction |
| Community Housing Units   | Housing Services        | Under Development |                                   |
| Total Fatal and Injury Collisions per 100,000 Residents (5 yr. avg) | Transportation Services | 82.8<br>(2024)    | First Year Reporting              |
| Total Collisions per 100,000 Residents (5 yr. avg.)                 | Transportation Services | 623<br>(2024)     | First Year Reporting              |
| Staff Employee Demographics – Racialized Non-People Leaders         | Governance              | 15%<br>(2024)     | Trending in Desired Direction     |

# Equitable Region Highlights



## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Plan

Timeline: 2024 – 2027

Phase: Implementation

**Poverty Reduction Strategy** - Working together to prevent and end poverty and increase well-being in Niagara



Council Strategic Priorities - Equitable Region

Niagara Region

## Poverty Reduction Strategy

Timeline: 2024 – 2028

Phase: Implementation



## Vision Zero Road Safety Implementation

Timeline: 2024 – 2027

Phase: Implementation

# Prosperous Region Actions

| Priority Action                                   | Status    | Phase/Completion Date |
|---|-----------|-----------------------|
| Agri-Business Strategy                            | Completed | Development           |
| Core and Emerging Sector Focus                    | On Track  | Ongoing               |
| Economic Development Strategy                     | On Track  | Implementation        |
| Expansion of GO Transit                           | On Track  | Ongoing               |
| Government Relations Strategy                     | On Track  | Development           |
| Labour Force Development Partnerships             | On Track  | Ongoing               |
| Niagara Region Transit Service Support and Growth | On Track  | Ongoing               |
| Signature Sites Strategy                          | Completed | Development           |
| Transportation Master Plan                        | Paused    | Planning              |

# Prosperous Region Performance Measures

| Performance Measure  | Service Area                | Data                     | Baseline Trend   |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Economic Development Opportunities</b>                                | <b>Economic Development</b> | <b>38</b>                | Information Only |
| <b>Engagement of International Audiences with Niagara Canada Website</b> | <b>Economic Development</b> | <b>30,000 +</b>          | Information Only |
| <b>Niagara Region Grant Tracking Metric</b>                              | <b>Governance</b>           | <b>Under Development</b> |                  |
| <b>Partnerships Formed with Global Brands or Organizations</b>           | <b>Economic Development</b> | <b>11</b>                | Information Only |

# Prosperous Region Highlights



## Economic Development Strategy

Timeline: 2022 – 2032

Phase: Implementation

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## Expansion of GO Transit

Phase: Ongoing

23



## Government Relations Strategy

Phase: Development



# Council Strategic Priorities Dashboard



# 2025 – 2026 Council Strategic Priorities

## Priority Actions To Be Completed

- Community Energy Plan
- Community Safety and Well-Being Implementation
- Corporate Climate Change Action Plan
- Data Management Plan
- Government Relations Strategy
- Greening Strategy
- Health Equity Strategic Plan
- Human Resource Plan
- Indigenous Reconciliation Plan
- Waste Management Plan

# Report Recommendation

That the report CAO 4-2025 Growing Better Together: 2023-2026 Council Strategic Priorities Mid-Term Update be **RECEIVED** for information.

# Thank You



**Subject:** Growing Better Together: 2023-2026 Council Strategic Priorities Mid-Term Update

**Report to:** Committee of the Whole

**Report date:** Thursday, April 3, 2025

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## Recommendations

1. That Report CAO 4-2025, Growing Better Together: 2023-2026 Council Strategic Priorities Mid-Term Update **BE RECEIVED** for information.

## Key Facts

- The purpose of the report is to provide Council with a mid-term update on the implementation of the 2023 – 2026 Council Strategic Priorities Actions.
- In July 2023, Council approved the 2023 – 2026 Council Strategic Priorities, which included four Priority Areas: Effective Region, Green and Resilient Region, Equitable Region, and Prosperous Region.
- Council has received update reports on the progress of the Strategic Priorities throughout 2024. The reports included information on the implementation of the Council Strategic Priorities as well as quarterly achievements related to the Priority Actions.
- The Council Strategic Priorities identifies thirty-seven Actions for implementation. Of the thirty-seven Actions, 97 per cent are initiated. This progress underscores the commitment of Council in meeting its Priorities. Each of these Actions is tracked and reported, providing transparency and accountability to both Council and the community.
- In 2025, staff will continue to report achievements quarterly to Council, launch a Council Strategic Priority Dashboard, and further implement the Operational and Communications Implementation Plans.

## **Financial Considerations**

The 2025 Regional Budget prioritizes fiscal responsibility while advancing the 2023 – 2026 Strategic Priorities. It also addresses fiscal challenges, including increasing resource and supply costs, as well as changes in provincial funding and legislation. Actions that require dedicated funding in the 2023 – 2026 Council Strategic Priorities (CSP) are brought forward for consideration in the annual budget process.

The Region’s budget and associated impacts directly affect our ability to achieve Council’s Priorities. The budget is designed in part to support the four Priority Areas and any changes to planned allocations would require reassessment of the commitments identified in the Strategic Priorities.

In 2025, the quarterly achievement reports will include the identification of direct budget dollars for large capital projects and highlight the budget implications on actions, activities and initiatives.

## **Analysis**

In July 2023, Council approved the 2023 – 2026 Council Strategic Priorities (CAO 10-2023), guided by the vision of “Modern communities growing better together.” To achieve the vision, a mission, guiding principles, four priority areas, objectives and planned Actions were developed.

The four Priority Areas identified by Council to meet key community needs for the 2023 – 2026 term of Council include:

- Effective Region
- Green and Resilient Region
- Equitable Region
- Prosperous Region

In 2024, three reports were presented to Council, including updates on the Operational and Communication plans for the Council Strategic Priorities. The Q2 and Q3 Achievements reports, covered 65 updates on various projects and initiatives aimed at implementing the CSP and highlighted key business plan updates. Additionally, in March 2025, staff provided a Q4 Achievements report to Corporate Services Committee.

**Council Strategic Priorities Action Implementation**

A total of thirty-seven actions have been identified within the Council Strategic Priorities, encompassing both short-term and long-term initiatives. These actions are designed to address various community needs and drive progress across the four Priority Areas.

Currently, 97 percent of the Council Strategic Priority Actions are underway. This includes five completed actions, ten actions that are ongoing daily operations for the Region, and seven actions that are long-term strategies or projects, which will extend beyond the current term of Council due to the extensive effort and collaboration required for successful completion.

The table below provides a snapshot of the total number of Actions and how they have progressed over the last two years.

| <b>Council Strategic Priorities Actions Status</b> | <b># of Actions</b> |
|--|---------------------|
| Completed  | 5                   |
| Progressing and On Track                           | 10                  |
| Long-term Strategies and Capital Projects          | 7                   |
| Ongoing  | 10                  |
| Paused/Some Delay                                  | 5                   |

The following outlines where each of the Actions are categorized:

Completed Actions:

- Agri-Business Strategy
- Attainable Housing Strategy
- Energy Conservation Demand Management Plan
- Signature Sites Strategy
- Water and Wastewater Biosolids Management Plan

Actions to be completed within this term of Council:

- Community Energy Plan
- Community Safety and Well-Being Implementation

- Corporate Climate Change Action Plan
- Data Management Plan
- Government Relations Strategy
- Greening Strategy
- Health Equity Strategic Plan
- Human Resource Plan
- Indigenous ReconciliAction Plan
- Waste Management Plan

Long-Term Strategies and Capital Projects, beyond this term of Council:

- Consolidated Housing Master Plan
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Plan
- Economic Development Strategy
- Growth Management and Staging Infrastructure Strategy
- Poverty Reduction Strategy
- Vision Zero Road Safety Implementation
- Waste, Wastewater Master Servicing Plan Implementation

Ongoing or Daily Operation Actions for the Region:

- Annual Budget and Long-term Forecast Planning
- Core and Emerging Sector Focus
- Expansion of GO Transit
- Labour Force Development Partnerships
- Niagara Region Transit Service Support and Growth
- Service, Effectiveness and Accountability Reviews
- Shared Services Strategy
- Support for Affordable and Attainable Development
- Transportation Sustainability
- Water and Wastewater Asset Sustainability

Paused or Some Delay Actions:

- Climate Adaptation Plan
- Green Fleet Policy

- Housing and Homelessness Action Plan/Built for Zero Homelessness Plan
- South Niagara Wastewater Treatment Solution
- Transportation Master Plan Update

Appendix 1 Council Strategic Priorities Mid-Term Implementation Review provides a detailed overview of the progress and current status of each of the Actions identified in the Council Strategic Priorities.

### **Operational and Communication Plan Implementation**

In 2024, operational and communication plans were implemented to integrate Council Priorities into daily operations. Key initiatives included:

- People Leaders training with McMaster DeGroot School of Business
- People Leaders Council Strategic Priorities event
- Strategic Priority Operational Teams
- Quarterly Achievement Reports for Council
- Council Strategic Priorities Public Dashboard development
- Social media campaigns showcasing Quarterly Achievements
- Non-union performance objectives
- Annual budget and long-term forecasting

### **Council Strategic Priorities Public Dashboard**

In April 2025, the Region will launch a Council Strategic Priorities Public Dashboard to enhance accountability and transparency. This initiative aims to ensure the Region is open and transparent with the community, as outlined in the Guiding Principles of the Council Strategic Priorities.

The Public Dashboard displays Niagara Region's Priorities for 2023 – 2026, including its vision, mission, guiding principles, strategic priorities, objectives, and key actions. It offers a quarterly update on Action implementation progress and features performance measures for each of the Priority Areas.

### **2025 Council Strategic Priorities Implementation**

Niagara Region will continue to address residents' needs amid changing political and economic conditions, including new local, national, and international pressures that have emerged since the Council Strategic Priorities inception. The 2023 – 2026 Council



Strategic Priorities continues to address key concerns including, alternative funding needs, sustainable infrastructure, affordable housing and homelessness.

The Council Strategic Priorities will support addressing the concerns mentioned above through the continued execution of the Actions already initiated.

In addition to the implementation of Actions, staff will continue to provide Council with quarterly achievements reports, embed the Priorities into the 2026 budget discussions and further address the Strategic Lenses into the Regions daily operations. Other improvements will include:

- **Council Report Alignment:** Staff will work to expand the content provided in the Council Strategic Priorities report section of the Council Staff Report template to clearly demonstrate alignment with meeting Council's objectives.
- **Council Priorities and Budget:** The quarterly achievement reports will work to include the identification of direct budget dollars for large capital projects and highlight the direct budget implications on actions, activities and initiatives.
- **Operationalizing Priorities:** Staff will be improving the centralization of Divisional work plans using a project management tool. This tool will ensure consistent documentation guidelines, facilitate cross-corporate collaboration, and directly link projects to the Council Strategic Priorities.

## **Conclusion**

The Council Strategic Priorities guide the Region's planning, budgets, corporate business plans and day-to-day operations, enabling the organization to dedicate adequate resources to address the Priorities and Actions approved by Council. Embedding the Priority Actions into the organization, along with reporting to Council on the implementation of the priorities is essential to creating trust, accountability, and transparency to the community.

## **Alternatives Reviewed**

No alternatives were reviewed as this report is for Council information only.

## Other Pertinent Reports

- [CAO 10-2023 Growing Better Together: 2023-2026 Council Strategic Priorities](https://www.google.com/url?client=internal-element-cse&cx=005774670460367375179:knxdu-yx3mm&q=https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx%3FDocumentId%3D32290&sa=U&ved=2ahUKEwjolK_p_bSMAxU2L1kFHb6pA14QFnoECA0QAQ&usg=AOvVaw2uCM1uJqStTHbQxX_t2Mh0)  
(https://www.google.com/url?client=internal-element-cse&cx=005774670460367375179:knxdu-yx3mm&q=https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx%3FDocumentId%3D32290&sa=U&ved=2ahUKEwjolK\_p\_bSMAxU2L1kFHb6pA14QFnoECA0QAQ&usg=AOvVaw2uCM1uJqStTHbQxX\_t2Mh0)
- [CAO 3-2024 Growing Better Together: 2023-2026 Council Strategic Priorities Update](https://www.google.com/url?client=internal-element-cse&cx=005774670460367375179:knxdu-yx3mm&q=https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx%3FDocumentId%3D39281&sa=U&ved=2ahUKEwisj5u0_rSMAxUPKVkFHfGoBhoQFnoECACQAQ&usg=AOvVaw1p0XrQtHAnckD_Iz3F9WhC)  
(https://www.google.com/url?client=internal-element-cse&cx=005774670460367375179:knxdu-yx3mm&q=https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx%3FDocumentId%3D39281&sa=U&ved=2ahUKEwisj5u0\_rSMAxUPKVkFHfGoBhoQFnoECACQAQ&usg=AOvVaw1p0XrQtHAnckD\_Iz3F9WhC)
- [CSD 43-2024 Q2 2024 Financial Update Appendix 2](https://www.google.com/url?client=internal-element-cse&cx=005774670460367375179:knxdu-yx3mm&q=https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/Meeting.aspx%3FId%3Da6c5e2bd-d88f-4811-ad69-4050055c83d4%26Agenda%3DAgenda%26lang%3DEnglish%26Item%3D12%26Tab%3Dattachments&sa=U&ved=2ahUKEwjp8JOPgLWMAxVTD1kFHRxEMRkQFnoECAkQAQ&usg=AOvVaw3w_1mWTJahvBpDNsLL025H)  
(https://www.google.com/url?client=internal-element-cse&cx=005774670460367375179:knxdu-yx3mm&q=https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/Meeting.aspx%3FId%3Da6c5e2bd-d88f-4811-ad69-4050055c83d4%26Agenda%3DAgenda%26lang%3DEnglish%26Item%3D12%26Tab%3Dattachments&sa=U&ved=2ahUKEwjp8JOPgLWMAxVTD1kFHRxEMRkQFnoECAkQAQ&usg=AOvVaw3w\_1mWTJahvBpDNsLL025H)
- [CSD 62-2024 Q3 2024 Financial Update Appendix 2](https://www.google.com/url?client=internal-element-cse&cx=005774670460367375179:knxdu-yx3mm&q=https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/Meeting.aspx%3FId%3Deaafe636-7b8e-4ce4-a2dd-a44dd3535c32%26Agenda%3DAgenda%26lang%3DEnglish%26Item%3D16%26Tab%3Dattachments&sa=U&ved=2ahUKEwibtMHXgLWMAxV0EVkFHQYAMVUQFnoECAMQAQ&usg=AOvVaw3njH2-y8CkTaXCdDEvQGhG)  
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- [CSD 8-2025 Q4 Financial Update Appendix 8](https://www.google.com/url?client=internal-element-cse&cx=005774670460367375179:knxdu-yx3mm&q=https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/Meeting.aspx%3FId%3Dfcdaca46-5a21-4026-ad32-d0836ea36bef%26lang%3DEnglish&sa=U&ved=2ahUKEwickqT_gLWMAxWcFFkFHSDNKhUQFnoECAsQAQ&usg=AOvVaw2cVVOhnUROvQnIBZr0sHUP)  
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Ron Tripp, P.Eng.  
Chief Administrative Officer

This report was prepared in consultation with Bianca Fucile, Corporate Performance Specialist, and Suzanne Madder, Associate Director Strategic Initiatives, and reviewed by Angela Stea, Director Strategic Initiatives, and Michelle Sergi, Deputy CAO.

## Appendices

Appendix 1 Council Strategic Priorities Mid-Term Implementation Review

# Council Strategic Priorities Mid-Term Implementation Review

## Introduction

Since 2023, Niagara Region has aligned many projects, programs, and services to support the implementation of the Council Strategic Priorities. In addition to aligning current business, Niagara Region also continues to deliver core, essential services to its residents and businesses.

We are committed to being transparent and accountable, while continuing to improve services and programs for all Niagara residents and businesses. Part of this commitment includes reporting back to Regional Council on Council Strategic Priorities milestones, successes, and challenges.

## Priority Action Implementation

A total of thirty-seven Actions were identified within the Council Strategic Priorities, encompassing both short-term and long-term initiatives. These Actions are designed to address various community needs and drive progress across the four Priority Areas.

Currently, 97 per cent of the Council Strategic Priority Actions are initiated. This includes seventeen actions that are ongoing daily operations or long-term projects that will extend beyond the current term of Council.

The table below is a summary of the Actions and their progress over the past two years.

| Council Strategic Priorities Actions     |              | 37 |
|--|--------------|----|
| Action Status                            | # of Actions |    |
| Completed                                | 5            |    |
| Progressing and On Track                 | 10           |    |
| Long-Term Strategies or Capital Projects | 7            |    |
| Ongoing                                  | 10           |    |
| Paused/Some Delay                        | 5            |    |



Updates on each of the thirty-seven Council Strategic Priorities Actions and status are provided beginning on page 3.



## Guiding Principles: Strategic Lens Implementation



Along with the four Priorities, Niagara Region Council identified four Strategic Lenses, including Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Indigenous Relations, Fiscal Responsibility, Innovation and Sustainability and Climate Change.

Within the first two years of implementation, staff has effectively integrated these strategic lenses into the planning, execution, and evaluation of numerous projects and initiatives. The following provides some examples within the Region.

- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:** As part of the DEI Action Plan, staff are developing a DEI handbook to provide Niagara Region employees with tools and resources to guide and support incorporating principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion into the Region's operations and services.
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** Through the annual budget process and the modernization of the Procurement By-law, staff are taking actionable steps to ensure fiscal responsibility. Over the past two years, all Directors have participated in continuous improvement presentations, critically evaluating their Division's efficiency in delivering programs and services. By utilizing benchmarking data, staff have identified areas for budget reductions or improvements focusing on financial stewardship when delivering high quality services to Niagara residents.
- **Innovation:** Continuous improvement is a cornerstone of Niagara Region's approach to making significant improvements in service delivery to the community. Examples of this include the implementation of initiatives such as mobile services in Public Health, new customer relationship management software and Organizational restructuring.
- **Sustainability and Climate Change:** CAMRA (Corporate Asset Management Resource Allocation Model) is an asset management tool designed for corporate prioritization. It incorporates risk assessments, council priorities, and other key factors to help staff identify priority divisional projects. Staff are currently working on integrating the sustainability and climate change strategic lens to better consider the environmental implications of projects.

Moving forward, staff will continue to integrate these four lenses into their work while also actively seeking additional opportunities. This includes better incorporating the lenses into Council staff reports, the procurement process and overlaying them in project scopes and project charters.





# Effective Region

## Annual Budget and Long-term Forecast Planning

**Phase:** Ongoing

**Status:** On Track

Each year, staff diligently work on the annual budget process, approaching it with a fiscally responsible mindset and a focus on long-term forecast planning. Several budget-related projects are currently underway, including the development of an improved budget communication tool, the formulation of a debt strategy, the update of the asset management policy, and the implementation of development charge exemptions for attainable and affordable housing.

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## Data Management Plan

**Timeline:** 2025 – 2026

**Phase:** Development

**Status:** On Track

The Data Management Plan is making significant progress. A data management platform has been approved to oversee all data across the Niagara Region corporation. This platform will establish standards and governance, providing comprehensive visibility for all data sources. In 2025, the focus will be developing and issuing a request for proposal.

## Human Resource Plan

**Timeline:** 2023 – 2026

**Phase:** Implementation

**Status:** On Track

Several projects have been successfully completed as part of the Human Resource Plan, including the design of the compensation policy, the review of non-union benefits, and the establishment of the Human Resource data warehouse. Additionally, critical roles have been defined, and action plan reporting for the 2024 employee engagement results has been carried out.

---

## Shared Services Strategy

**Phase:** Ongoing

**Status:** On Track

Staff are continuing to advance the Shared Services Strategy through collaboration with local area municipalities and the formation of a CAO shared services working group. Staff are continuing to support the progress of the Climate Change, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, as well as the Accessibility Compliance Policy Alignments.



## Service, Effectiveness and Accountability Reviews

Phase: Ongoing

Status: On Track

Across the organization, several service, effectiveness, and accountability reviews are nearing completion. These include the modernization of the procurement by-law, the strategic review of Public Health, and the EMS 10-Year Facility Master Plan.



## Transportation Sustainability

Phase: Ongoing

Status: On Track

To advance transportation sustainability at Niagara Region, staff are conducting a transportation operations rationalization study. They have drafted a request for proposal (RFP) and plan to consult with senior leadership in Q1 of 2025 before issuing the RFP.

## Water and Wastewater Asset Sustainability

Phase: Ongoing

Status: On Track

To ensure the sustainability of water and wastewater assets for the Niagara Region, staff have completed a hauled biosolids rate review. Public consultation was utilized to update the user fee, which has been approved and will be effective in Q1 of 2025. Cyclical reviews will be incorporated into future workplans to ensure the fee remains current.







# Green and Resilient Region

## Climate Adaptation Plan

**Phase:** Planning

**Status:** Some Delay

The Climate Adaptation Plan has faced some disruptions; however, Public Health staff have completed a climate change vulnerability assessment, which is being circulated internally. The next steps involve generating an executive report for public distribution and determining the implementation strategy.

## Community Energy Plan

**Timeline:** 2023 – 2025

**Phase:** Planning

**Status:** On Track

Staff are making great progress on Community Energy Plan. In 2025, the focus will be to submit a funding application to the Provincial government and continuing to collaborate with local partners on developing the plan.



## Corporate Climate Change Action

**Timeline:** 2023 – 2025

**Phase:** Development

**Status:** On Track

Senior leadership has reviewed the Corporate Climate Change Action Plan and it will be presented to CLT in Q1 of 2025. Staff are also collaborating with Corporate Communication to design a 5-page high-level summary of the plan and preparing for a Council Workshop.

## Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan

**Timeline:** 2023 – 2024

**Phase:** Development

**Status:** Completed

The Energy Conservation & Demand Management Plan has been completed and published. Staff will now focus on implementing the plan, with the goal of achieving a 20% reduction in emissions across all departments with buildings by the end of 2028.

## Green Fleet Policy

**Timeline:** Paused



## Greening Strategy

**Timeline:** 2024 – 2026

**Phase:** Development

**Status: On Track**

The Green Strategy development began with the completion of a baseline inventory of canopy coverage in Niagara. The next steps of the strategy include developing a web brochure for distribution, sharing the inventory data upon request, and creating a greening strategy framework.

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## South Niagara Wastewater Treatment Solution

**Timeline:** 2016 – 2041

**Phase:** Planning

**Status: Some Delay**

The South Niagara Wastewater Treatment Solution has experienced some disruptions due to unknown funding sources. Currently, staff are working on the detailed design phase and pursuing advocacy efforts for provincial and federal funding.

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## Water and Wastewater Biosolids Management Plan

**Timeline:** 2021 – 2024

**Phase:** Development

**Status: Completed**

The Biosolids Master Plan has been completed. The plan aims to explore and identify future management strategies for biosolids within the Region. Staff are currently working on implementing the recommendations outlined in the report.

## Waste Management Plan

**Timeline:** 2023 – 2025

**Phase:** Development

**Status: On Track**

Staff conducted community engagement to support the development of the Waste Management Plan through public open houses and an online survey. The feedback gathered set the stage for a detailed analysis of potential options. In 2025, the recommended system, targets, and implementation plan will be presented to interested parties before it's finalized.

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## Water, Wastewater Master Servicing Plan Update

**Phase:** Development

**Status: On Track**

Staff are actively working on updating the Water and Wastewater Master Servicing Plan. They have gathered and sent the necessary information to the consultant. The primary focus for 2025 will be the development of this plan.





# Equitable Region

## Attainable Housing Strategy

**Timeline:** 2024 – 2026

**Phase:** Development

**Status: Completed**

The development of the Attainable Housing Strategy is complete. Staff are working towards implementation through the Priority and Land Optimization Framework and the creation of a Student Housing Strategy.

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## Community Safety and Well-Being

**Timeline:** 2021 – 2025

**Phase:** Implementation

**Status: On Track**

The Building Safer Communities grant program funded nine programs, serving over 550 children, youth, and young adults. As well, Niagara Situation Tables ran weekly, spanning all 12 municipalities. Next steps are to conclude the current CSWB plan and draft an update for 2025 – 2029.

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## Consolidated Housing Master Plan

**Phase:** Planning

**Status: On Track**

Staff are actively working on advocacy efforts to support the development of the Consolidated Housing Master Plan. This project was included in the 2024 and 2025 pre-budget submissions and was discussed at Niagara Week and the Association of Ontario Municipalities (AMO) conference.

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Plan

**Timeline:** 2024 – 2027

**Phase:** Implementation

**Status: On Track**

The DEI Action Plan is 38% complete. Completed activities include a program that recognizes staff for advancing DEI and the establishment of a DEI community of practice. In 2025, staff will continue to work on developing a DEI handbook, DEI learning modules, and DEI recruitment, hiring, and promotion processes.

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## Growth Management and Staging of Infrastructure Strategy

**Phase:** Planning

**Status: On Track**

As part of the Growth Management and Staging of Infrastructure strategy, staff are advocating to the provincial and federal governments for infrastructure needs in Niagara, specifically for the South Niagara Wastewater Treatment Solution. Research is being conducted to identify funding sources that align with this project, and it has been included in the 2025 pre-budget submission.



## Health Equity Strategic Plan

**Timeline:** 2020 – 2025

**Phase:** Implementation

**Status:** On Track

As part of the Health Equity Strategic Plan, six programs across two divisions have been trained to collect sociodemographic data. So far, 1,000 forms have been collected, and preliminary analysis has begun. In 2025, the focus will be to update the Health Equity Strategic Plan through staff consultations to support the development of a new plan.

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## Housing and Homelessness Action Plan/Built for Zero Homelessness Plan

**Timeline:** 2024 – 2027

**Phase:** Planning

**Status:** Paused

The development and implementation of the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan has been paused. The Ministry has requested municipalities refrain from completing the new 10-year plan until further guidance is provided.

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## Indigenous ReconciliAction Plan

**Timeline:** 2024 – 2026

**Phase:** Development

**Status:** On Track

The Indigenous Relations Action Plan is continuing to be worked on and finalized. In preparation of the plan, Indigenous cultural awareness training was provided to 1,207 Senior's Services employees.

## Poverty Reduction Strategy

**Timeline:** 2024 – 2028

**Phase:** Implementation

**Status:** On Track

The focus areas of the Poverty Reduction strategy have been finalized, and actions are being implemented. Alongside the strategy, staff have selected applicants for the Niagara Prosperity Initiative grant funding.

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## Support for Affordable and Attainable Development

**Phase:** Ongoing

**Status:** On Track

During the 2024 AMO conference, staff met with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and presented a portfolio detailing the costs and housing unit impacts of six ongoing projects, including 320 Geneva St. This portfolio will be included in the 2025 provincial pre-budget submission.

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## Vision Zero Road Safety Implementation and Complete Streets Guidelines

**Timeline:** 2024 – 2027

**Phase:** Implementation

**Status:** On Track

This strategy has been shared with the Local Area Municipalities, Niagara Regional Police, and Niagara Student Transportation Services, for review. The consultant report is currently undergoing final revisions before a Council report is finalized.



# Prosperous Region

## Agri-Business Strategy

**Timeline:** 2024 – 2028

**Phase:** Development

**Status:** Completed

Staff are actively working on the implementation of the Agri-Business Strategy. They have met with the Federation of Agriculture and will leverage this partnership to champion the strategy, identify collaboration opportunities, and explore the possibility of creating a sector specialist position.

## Core and Emerging Sector Focus

**Phase:** Ongoing

**Status:** On Track

Niagara Region has secured an extension on Federal Funding from FedDev Ontario for the Electric Mobility Sector Specialist position. In 2025, staff will continue to update the ZEV Framework and collaborate with partners to advance this work.



## Economic Development Strategy

**Timeline:** 2022 – 2032

**Phase:** Implementation

**Status:** On Track

The 10-year Economic Development Strategy has seen several projects completed within its first three years of implementation. These achievements include a \$1.56 billion investment from Asahi Kasei, enhancements to NiagaraCanada.com, the implementation of a customer relationship management software, and the development of a physician recruitment campaign.

## Expansion of GO Transit

**Phase:** Ongoing

**Status:** On Track

An advocacy strategy for the expansion of GO Transit has been created and is currently being implemented by staff. Construction on GO Station Development continues in St. Catharines and Niagara Falls.



## Government Relations Strategy

**Phase:** Development

**Status:** On Track

The Government Relations Strategy has concentrated on several advocacy-related projects, including the South Niagara Wastewater Treatment Solution, the Consolidated Housing Master Plan, and the Two-way, All Day GO Service. Additionally, staff have established a local area municipality working group with government relations counterparts and developed an external grant resource.

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## Labour Force Development Partnerships

**Phase:** Ongoing

**Status:** On Track

Staff are actively participating in the Workforce Coalition, established in November 2023, to address the sustainability of a skilled workforce in Niagara. A pilot project, 'Project Phoenix,' was initiated to identify how each partner within the coalition can support meeting the workforce demand. In 2025, the focus will be on advancing the coalition's mandate.



## Niagara Region Transit Service Support and Growth

**Phase:** Ongoing

**Status:** On Track

Niagara Region staff are working with and supporting Niagara Region Transit to secure and maximize federal permanent transit fund opportunities.

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## Signature Site Strategy

**Phase:** Development

**Status:** Completed

The Signature Site Strategy is progressing well with the completion of the Signature Site tool. This tool has been designed to promote Niagara's investment opportunities and maximize visibility for key development properties.

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## Transportation Master Plan Update

**Phase:** Planning

**Status:** Paused

The Transportation Master Plan has experienced has been paused for now, due to its transition from the Transportation division to the Infrastructure Planning and Development division. In 2025, the focus will be on finalizing the request for proposal and resuming work with the new team.

