



Township of Macdonald, Meredith and Aberdeen Additional

Strategic Plan 2024-2029

Prepared for:

Township of Macdonald, Meredith & Aberdeen Additional
208 Church Street P.O. Box 10
Echo Bay, Ontario P0S 1C0

Prepared by:

J.L. Richards & Associates Limited
Engineers • Architects • Planners
314 Countryside Drive
Sudbury Ontario P3E 6G2

Developing this Strategic Plan

Strategic planning is a process through which a municipality can look to the future and be proactive to ensure that Council, staff, and community stakeholders are working toward common goals. The process provides Council the opportunity to set priorities, focus staff and financial resources, assess and adjust practices where needed, and monitor successes over time.

Strategic planning also offers an opportunity for members of the community to participate in setting and achieving desired outcomes for the Township. The strategic planning process began with a community survey to gather feedback. The survey was hosted online, and pen and paper versions were shared by municipal staff at community events from October to November 2023. The survey asked participants to identify their visions for the future of the Township, the current strengths and challenges of the Township, and for priorities and new ideas for the Township to consider. Feedback from the community survey was shared with staff and Council in the form of an Engagement Summary Report in late November 2023.

On December 5, 2023, Council met for a strategic planning workshop, to review the Engagement Summary Report findings and develop draft ideas for a mission statement, vision statement, and strategic goals. On January 30, 2024, Township staff met for a similar workshop to further refine these ideas into implementable priorities and action areas.

This work resulted in a Draft Strategic Plan that was presented to Council and shared publicly. A second survey, from April to May 2024, gathered community feedback on the Draft Strategic Plan. Findings from this survey were summarized in a second report to Council and informed final revisions to the Strategic Plan.

The final Strategic Plan was then presented to Council for adoption.





Photos source: www.northernontario.travel

Vision Statement

We envision a dynamic community with opportunities for all ages, rooted in our values and looking to the future.

Mission Statement

We provide value to residents and visitors by:

- delivering high-quality and fiscally sustainable services and amenities; and
- preserving the small-town feel and family-oriented values of the community.

Values Statement

Community



We have a small-town feeling, where neighbours know and look out for each other, and residents feel a sense of belonging.

Distinct



We have much to offer and maintain an identity distinct from and complementary to our neighbouring municipalities.

Inclusive



We provide value and opportunity to participate in the community for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

Rooted



We have a proud, multi-generational history and celebrate our ways of life. This includes agriculture, rural living, family-oriented lifestyles, and more.

Stewardship



We are good stewards of the municipality's resources and provide the community with a high return on economic, environmental, and social investments.

Self-Reinforcing Growth



We pursue growth in ways that are sustainable and maintain the benefits of our size and quality of life.

GOALS

By 2029 MMAA will have...

A strong baseline understanding of current and coming needs, and how to meet them

With a new Council term underway, some recent staff transitions, and on the heels of the Covid-19 pandemic recovery, the Township is undergoing much change. It is important that we continue to take stock of current resources and needs as we plan for the future. Over the term of this strategic plan, we aim to carry out necessary review and capacity-building to ensure the Township has a strong understanding of current needs and resources with which to move the community forward towards the long-term vision.



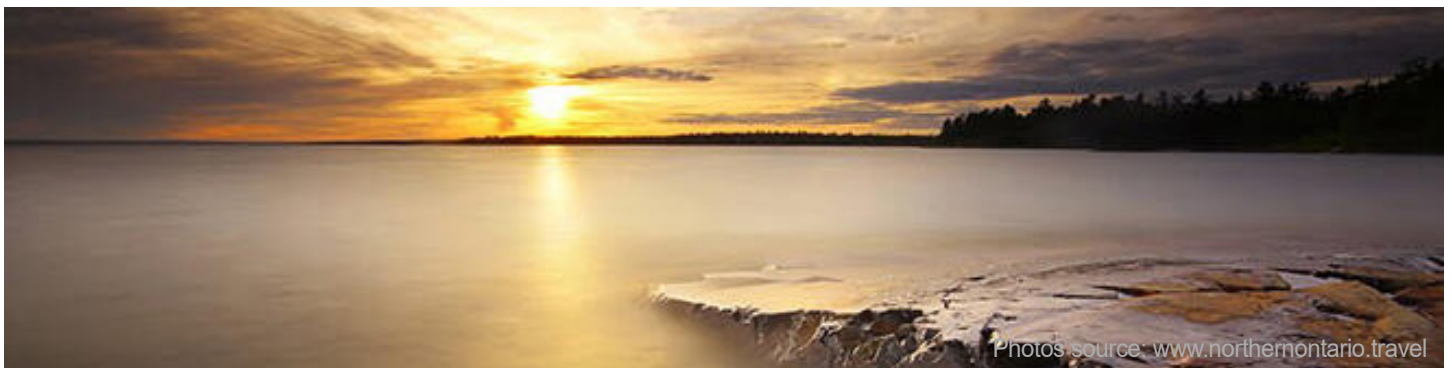
Priorities	Action Items
Continued review of current services and capacity, and needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue the vacant lands study; • Conduct a Landfill Capacity study to prepare for operation, closure and post-closure management of the landfill and plan for future waste management services consistent with provincial direction; • Conduct a Service Review, including identifying opportunities for service sharing; • Identify and propose registration for courses and training to strengthen staff capacity and encourage implementation of new ideas.
Study needs and demand for future growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of business properties; • Strategy for economic development attraction.
Develop an enhanced budget process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a review of, and align, budget process to implement Council's strategic plan priorities; • Conduct a review of service levels and costs for all services and incorporate into budget to inform future service level change discussions; • Prepare regular performance reports to Council describing progress towards strategic priorities established in the annual budget process; • Prepare a multi-year operational plan, with phased goal setting to accomplish operational tasks across priorities.

By 2029 MMAA will have...

Transitioned to a proactive approach to decision making

All municipalities face the challenge of limited time or resources, which can contribute to a reactive approach to responding to municipal needs. The Township aims to equip themselves with the foresight, tools, and strategies to anticipate and prepare proactively and consistently for our future needs. This also includes preparing for new ideas and ways of working in support of this goal in order to strike when the right opportunity and funding arises.

Priorities	Action Items
Mid-term and long-range planning to set the Township up for success later on.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Periodically review and update the Asset Management Plan;Prepare a long-term financial plan to provide guidance for budgeting, borrowing, capital financing, reserve and reserve fund management;Periodically review 'core' by-laws such as Procedure, Delegation, Procurement and User Fees;Implement Desbarats to Echo Bay Planning Board Official Plan;Initiate a Zoning By-law review, following the above implementation.
Planning for future housing needs, with focus on seniors, affordability and attainability, and environmentally efficient development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue the housing need study, including a review of development potential and servicing capacity;Prepare plans for development phasing.
Accessibility-focused decision-making broadly, to anticipate an aging population with a range of abilities and access as opportunities permit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Prepare an implementation plan for the most recent AODA audit;Conduct public engagement to establish community accessibility and inclusivity needs.
Regularly pursuing future opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Implementation of a community improvement plan to incentivize housing development, energy efficiency, and renewable energy.Continue to compile data for accurate, data-informed decision making;Prepare and regularly update a listing of current and upcoming funding opportunities.



Photos source: www.northernontario.travel

By 2029 MMAA will have...

High quality services and amenities to attract and retain residents and visitors

The Township has a long history of providing high-quality services to residents, and this is intended to continue. It is important to Council that residents receive high value in return for their commitment and investment to the community and that residents of all ages feel that the Township has sufficient resources and activities for their quality of life. Over the course of this Plan, we aim to create improvements to local amenities and services in three key areas: recreational amenities related to quality of life, accessibility for inclusive access and decision making, and improved customer service and communication of municipal process.



Priorities	Action Items
Improve recreational facilities and infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider a recreation master plan, to consider such features as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Enhanced biking and walking trails; · A central multi-use recreation facility and/or competitive level sportsplex; · A new splashpad; · Waterfront access for the public; · Standard sized sports fields to meet demand.
Encourage investment in local amenities from non-municipal sources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a strategy for external investment opportunities, such as corporate sponsors and commercially shared private/public spaces.
Provide modern, accessible, and varied amenities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update facilities for AODA compliance on a prioritized basis; • Update park bathroom(s).
Create strong investment for the community to enjoy, to retain youth, and attract new residents over time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a resourcing plan for staffing needs in line with the service review; • Consider a land purchase for proposed service investments; • Conduct regular community engagement activities to inform decision making around service expansions and updates.
Improve municipal communication, transparency, and customer service for the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out improvements to electronic records management processes on a prioritized basis; • Upload public documents online for easy availability; • Hold public relations and customer service training for staff.

By 2029 MMAA will have...

A reputation as a distinct and desirable community

As a Township, we have a strong shared understanding of our unique community identity. We also aim to maintain this distinct identity while welcoming moderate and intentional commercial, recreation-based, and residential growth. There is great opportunity to leverage our proud identity as a competitive advantage for economic development within the Desbarats-Echo Bay area and Northern Ontario more broadly.

Priorities	Action Items
Key capital and social infrastructure investments, as opportunities permit, to create flagship local features and encourage MMAA as a destination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider options and prepare a strategy for year-round, multi-use arena promotion for rentals;• Conduct long-term infrastructure planning, including study to consider consolidation of municipal buildings into a single location.
Articulate our unique community identity, based on local values and way of life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare periodic updates to marketing and messaging;• Promote volunteer opportunities through the municipality;• Communicate the Strategic Plan to the public and staff.
Generating interest among construction and investors for new housing, tiny homes, and commercial.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare a review of vacant lands for sale;• Digitize a business directory for online use;• Consider retaining economic development staff support for MMAA and/or the region.



Photos source: www.northernontario.travel

Monitoring & Reporting

The Strategic planning process doesn't end with this document. It is important to monitor the plan for progress, to identify potential barriers, and to report regularly on the success of the plan. For a transparent process between Council, staff, and the public, the Township intends to monitor the Strategic Plan through:

- Council's Annual Budget Process
 - During annual budgeting, Council will review the Strategic Plan and identify their priorities for the coming year. It is these priorities that Council will set financial and staff resources towards.
 - At the end of every fiscal year, staff will prepare a recap of municipal spending and achievements throughout the year. This will help taxpayers identify where municipal taxes were spent and how they contributed to accomplishing that year's priorities.
- Reports to Council
 - Four times per year, staff will prepare a report to Council which provides an update on completed and ongoing staff activities in support of the Strategic Plan. Members of the public are welcome to attend these Council meetings or review the report in the Council meeting agendas. One of these updates will occur through the budget process.
 - Staff reports to Council will be updated to include a section for staff to select which Strategic Plan goal their report best corresponds with. This way, staff, Council, and the public can see how everyday operations are working towards the success of the Strategic Plan's goals.
 - Status Updates for each of the Strategic Plan goals
- On a semi-regular basis, the Township will update the Township website to include information about the Strategic Plan, the status of ongoing priorities and actions, and progress towards the overall goals.



