



TOWN OF HANOVER

STRATEGIC PLAN

FINAL REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2010

Table of Contents

Strategic Plan	1
Corporate Values	2
Valued Community Features and the Need for Change	3
Valued Features – Characteristics to Retain	3
Characteristics to Change	3
The Strategic Plan.....	5
Strategic Directions and Goals	5
Action Plans	6
Updating and Implementing the Strategic Plan.....	11
Appendix A: S.W.O.T. Workshop Summary	



STRATEGIC PLAN

Introduction

Over the summer of 2010, Town of Hanover Council members and Department Heads met on a number of occasions to prepare a Strategic Plan for the municipality. Town of Hanover elected officials and staff have a strong commitment to planning and initiated this process to respond to ongoing changes in the social and economic circumstances affecting Ontario municipalities. The Strategic Plan was seen as an essential management tool that would ensure the continued growth and development of the community.

The Vision, Strategic Directions, Goals and Action Plans that are articulated in the Strategic Plan set the overall direction for all municipal initiatives. The Strategic Plan describes a desired future for the Town that protects those aspects of the community that residents value and successfully responds to external influences that threaten the quality of life and sense of community residents identified as their reason for selecting Hanover as a place to live.

The Strategic Plan will be the foundation for future municipal decision making and provide direction for setting budgets, allocating resources and setting priorities on an annual basis.

The Strategic Plan was developed through a number of workshops with the Council and senior staff. Prior to the workshops, the community was consulted through surveys, focus groups and interviews and this information was available to Council and senior staff as they prepared the Plan. A background report was also prepared that summarized other relevant information on past initiatives, current projects and trends affecting the municipality. Two review groups were established to comment on the work undertaken by Council and senior staff as the Strategic Plan was prepared. The review groups had representatives from the community and from municipal staff.

The workshop participants conducted a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis as a starting point for the Strategic Plan (the results are included in Appendix A). Consultants from dmA Planning & Management Services facilitated the strategic planning workshops.

This Strategic Plan is organized as follows:

- Vision Statement and Corporate Values
- Valued Community Features and the Need for Change
- The Strategic Plan - Strategic Directions and Goals
- Action Plans
- Updating and Implementing the Strategic Plan



VISION STATEMENT – HANOVER IN 2020

We are a vibrant town where residents of all ages enjoy the amenities of a larger community, safe, healthy lifestyles, full employment, excellent services and personal fulfillment. We support growth to ensure a prosperous future while respecting and celebrating our heritage; preserving our downtown; protecting our natural resources; and welcoming all to a friendly, caring and supportive community. Our progressive community is committed to good government, effective management of municipal services, productive partnerships and collaborating with our neighbours to build local economies and community services for our mutual benefit.

CORPORATE VALUES

Progressive – embracing change; anticipating and planning for the future and striving for continuous improvement.

Public Service – responding efficiently and effectively, with compassion and respect, to citizens' needs.

Positive Working Environment – team members working together in a supportive, interactive environment that is personally and professionally rewarding.

Accountability – acting on behalf of the community in a fair, honest and transparent manner.

Responsible – preserving, protecting and enhancing the social and environmental attributes of the community in a fiscally responsible manner.



VALUED COMMUNITY FEATURES AND NEED FOR CHANGE

Valued Features – Characteristics to Retain:

Regional Service Centre – Hanover's role as a service centre for the region – providing a wide range of social, health, education, retail and employment opportunities. The Town will continue to provide recreation and other services that meet the needs of residents in the broader region

Small Town Atmosphere - the social characteristics of the community (safety, caring, community cohesion) that are highly valued and the manner in which residents are engaged in the community through volunteer and other activities

Progressive Attitude – the willingness of residents, Council and Staff to embrace the opportunities associated with change and build a positive and progressive future for the community

Financial Sustainability – the retention of a solid financial foundation, fiscal responsibility, and a strong and viable infrastructure for the future

Effective Municipal Management – a Council and Staff that are accountable to the community, while effectively and efficiently performing their responsibilities

Attractive Community – the physical and natural beauty of the community; the river system, parks and natural features of the Town

Characteristics to Change:

Economic and Employment Base – a more diversified economy; broader range of job opportunities; better representation of higher paying jobs; more opportunities for two professionals in the same household to find employment; greater representation of “new economy” jobs focused on technology, information and innovation

Regional Cooperation – stronger partnerships and more regional cooperation around economic development and service delivery; improved working relationships to create a more cooperative and mutually advantageous working environment

.....continued



..... *Characteristics to Change (continued).*

Downtown – a revitalized downtown encompassing a stronger retail and economic role but also a downtown that is unique and attractive for both residents and visitors; an active, engaging, busy “centre of the community”

Population Profile – a more balanced and diverse demographic profile with respect to age, household structure and multiculturalism; a more diverse community and one that is attractive and maintains youth and families

Social Support – more attention to addressing social issues in the community including youth disengagement, affordable housing, social isolation, drugs and substance abuse



THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Council and Department Heads identified four strategic directions, each with an associated goal, which identify the Town's priorities and in conjunction with the action plans, describe the major initiatives that will be pursued in the next five years to realize the Vision for the community.

Strategic Directions and Goals:

Strategic Direction #1: Regional Service Centre

Goal: To enhance and strengthen Hanover's position as a regional service centre while creating stronger working relationships with neighbouring municipalities and service providers for our mutual benefit.

Strategic Direction #2: The Economy

Goal: To achieve greater economic diversification and a broader range of attractive employment opportunities to retain existing residents and businesses and attract investment and new families to the community.

Strategic Direction #3: The Downtown

Goal: To work with the Downtown Improvement Association and the Chamber of Commerce to strengthen the downtown as both the social and economic centre of the community.

Strategic Direction #4: Healthy Community

Goal: To enhance essential community and social services and support initiatives that contribute to healthier residents, more active and rewarding lifestyles and safer, more sustainable environments.



Action Plans:

Action plans describe the key initiatives that will be undertaken to address each Strategic Direction. The action plans broadly identify a future course of action. They do not specify day-to-day tasks, timetables and resource requirements. This level of detail will be reflected in annual operational plans that will be prepared by staff to complement the Strategic Plan. Further, the action plans focus on the most important initiatives rather than everything that might be done to pursue the goals in the Strategic Plan. In many cases the action plans signal a change from past practices or a new approach to doing business. The action plans will be incorporated in the annual business planning process of the Town, where detailed schedules and resource requirements will be outlined.

Each Action plan has also been assigned a level of priority as follows:

High (H)	- to be acted upon in the short term and fully implemented in one to two years.
Medium (M)	- to be initiated within the next two years and implemented within the five year time frame of the Strategic Plan.
Ongoing (O)	- to be acted upon as time and resources permit, but within the next three to five years. These initiatives may not be fully implemented within the five year time frame of the Strategic Plan.

The action plans are closely inter-related and together define a future strategy for the Town. Many of the action plans must be pursued together to be successfully implemented.

All action plans will ultimately be approved by Council prior to implementation. While the action plans will be implemented, as warranted, by all Municipal Departments, a Lead Position, Department or Committee has been designated for each Action Plan. The Lead Position/Department/Committee will assume responsibility for the Action Plan but other Municipal Staff or external agencies and interests may assist with implementation. The Public Library Board, Police Services and Fire Department have not been identified as a Lead Department for any of the Action Plans but did participate in the strategic planning process and will play a supporting role in the Plan's implementation.

The Lead Position/Department/Committee is identified in the plan as follows:

CAO	- Chief Administrative Officer
EDC	- Economic Development Committee
PD	- Planning & Development
PW	- Public Works
CS	- Corporate Services
PRC	- Parks, Recreation & Culture



REGIONAL SERVICE CENTRE

Overview

Hanover will continue to act as a regional service centre providing a wide range of retail, commercial, recreational, educational and health services to residents in Town and in the surrounding area. The municipality will enhance and improve these services to better serve residents throughout the region. The Town will also actively engage its neighbours in an ongoing dialogue to establish partnerships and foster regional cooperation around economic development and service delivery. Through stronger and more effective relationships with area governments and other public and private service providers, Hanover will increasingly work with our neighbours on initiatives that are to our mutual advantage.

OUR GOAL AND ACTION PLANS

Goal

To enhance and strengthen Hanover's position as a regional service centre while creating stronger working relationships with neighbouring municipalities and service providers for our mutual benefit.

Action Plans	Lead	Priority
1. Continue discussions with senior levels of government and neighbouring municipalities to ensure land for economic development and expansion is available	CAO & Mayor	H
2. Undertake studies, secure finances and review planning and zoning as necessary for new development lands to ensure that servicing is in place and approvals can be secured to facilitate development	PD	M
3. Prepare an economic development and marketing strategy to promote and attract investors to the new development areas	EDC	M
4. Undertake a traffic and roads study to address long term requirements for access to new development areas and to improve circulation within the Town	PD & PW	M
5. In conjunction with neighbouring municipalities, review all charges and fees associated with shared services and services provided to others with the objective of greater equity and improved access, including the reduction of any financial barriers non-residents experience when using Town of Hanover services	CS	H
6. Develop a program to communicate the Town's commitment to and the importance of regional partnerships and strong working relationships with surrounding municipal or other authorities and to identify mutually beneficial initiatives.	CAO	M



THE ECONOMY

Overview

In recent decades the economic base of the Town has shifted from a thriving manufacturing sector focused on the furniture industry to a regional service centre. At the same time, broader social and economic trends have seen the aging of the community, a narrowing in the type and quality of employment opportunities available to residents and increasingly a situation where the community's youth must leave Hanover to pursue their careers. Hanover's quality of life is therefore closely associated with the local economy. To retain residents and attract families to the community, the Town will pursue a more diversified economy; a broader range of more attractive job opportunities; and a greater presence in the "new economy" focused on technology, information and innovation.

OUR GOAL AND ACTION PLANS

Goal

To achieve greater economic diversification and a broader range of attractive employment opportunities to retain existing residents and businesses and attract investment and new families to the community.

Action Plans	Lead	Priority	
1. Continue to implement the recommendations of the 2009 Business Retention and Expansion Study	EDC	H	
2. Strongly support and actively participate in the recently established Grey Bruce Regional Economic Development Committee	EDC & Council	H	
3. Create a more effective and efficient agency for economic development by reviewing the roles, mandates, resources and partnerships among the Town, Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Improvement Association and Project Centre	CAO	H	
4. Attract a training centre, post-secondary education institution or other expanded educational and training facility to Hanover	EDC	M	
5. Work with Hanover's municipal partners and the Airport Commission to recognize and promote the Saugeen Municipal Airport as a regional service and important resource for regional economic development	EDC	M	
6. Create a committee with municipal, private sector and other representatives to explore opportunities to enhance the infrastructure necessary to support new technologies, such as wireless connectivity, and attract new industries and businesses to Hanover	PD	H	



DOWNTOWN

Overview

Hanover's strategy for the future of the downtown has both an economic and social dimension. A unique, thriving and sustainable retail sector will increase the choices available to residents, attract visitors and complement existing retail plazas. This will be achieved through the continued efforts of the Town in conjunction with the Downtown Improvement Association, the Chamber of Commerce and other stakeholders. The downtown will also be an active people place; a true centre of the community that contributes to the small town social atmosphere, sense of community, social interaction and engagement that are highly valued features of Hanover today.

OUR GOAL AND ACTION PLANS

Goal

To work with the Downtown Improvement Association and the Chamber of Commerce to strengthen the downtown as both the social and economic centre of the community

Action Plans	Lead	Priority	
1. Prepare a plan for the beautification of the downtown and as warranted design standards and themes to create a desired image, positioning the downtown as an attractive retail and commercial focal point for residents and visitors	PD	H	
2. Support programs that will encourage downtown property owners to make façade improvements and upgrade buildings	PD	H	
3. Investigate possible financial or other incentives that the Town could offer to attract businesses to the downtown and encourage existing business owners to make improvements	CS	H	
4. Prepare a traffic and parking study to deal with issues in the downtown	PD & PW	M	
5. Review zoning, planning and other regulations, revising as warranted, to support higher end residential development in the downtown	PD	M	
6. Improve pedestrian and cyclist access to and through the downtown	PD & PW	M	
7. Improve the visibility of the Civic Centre and its role as a focal point of the downtown with a high quality marquee, with ample space for community events or activities	PRC	O	
8. Explore opportunities to expand downtown events and promotions	PRC	O	
9. Through improved communication and marketing, establish a stronger connection between the downtown and other areas of the community to create greater familiarity and use of all parts of the Town	CAO	O	



COMMUNITY

Overview

Hanover will provide an environment and the service and support required to ensure all residents can enjoy a healthy lifestyle. While the Town has prepared plans and continued to improve its parks and recreational resources, strategies are required for cultural resources and to address the specific needs of youth and older adults. Hanover will plan and develop the community and design programs and services to inform and encourage residents to make healthy choices, adopt active lifestyles, and benefit from safe, secure and sustainable natural and built environments. The Town will address the challenges of providing the best possible health care; affordable housing; quality education and superior recreation to meet the needs of an aging and changing community.

OUR GOAL AND ACTION PLANS

Goal	To enhance essential community and social services and support initiatives that contribute to healthier residents, more active and rewarding lifestyles and safer, more sustainable environments.		
	Action Plans	Lead	Priority
	1. Prepare a Cultural Plan in conjunction with the arts and cultural community to investigate needs and opportunities that promote the social and economic benefits of a creative community	PRC	H
	2. Prepare a youth engagement strategy to involve youth in a discussion of their needs, opportunities to improve services, and ways in which they can be actively involved in community events and projects	PRC	H
	3. Undertake a study in consultation with older adults to determine social and recreational needs, requirements for improved accessibility and the most appropriate approaches for serving the older adult of the future	PRC	H
	4. Prepare an Active Transportation Plan to enhance opportunities for walking, cycling and wheeling in Hanover	PD/PW/PRC	M
	5. Undertake an energy audit of all municipal buildings to identify opportunities for green energy initiatives and greater sustainability	PD	M
	6. Improve communication concerning social, health and other community programs through the publication of a newsletter, improved use of websites or other means	CAO	M
	7. Facilitate a process to bring together social and community service agencies and create a network to explore social needs, joint service delivery and enhanced multi-agency social planning	CAO & Mayor	M
	8. Continue to work closely with the medical community on physician and health professionals retention and recruitment	EDC	O



UPDATING AND IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Updating the Strategic Plan:

The Town will regularly update the Strategic Plan. While the Vision and Goals will be applicable for the short-term (three to five years), the Action Plans will be reviewed annually. Action Plans that have been completed will be eliminated, while revisions and additions will be made as applicable. The Vision and Goals will also be formally reviewed by Council on a regular basis to ensure they continue to reflect the preferred future for the municipality.

The Strategic Plan and Managing Service Delivery:

In addition to regularly updating the Strategic Plan, formal procedures will be adopted to ensure it is used in the ongoing management of municipal affairs. These procedures will ensure that Staff reports and recommendations are consistent with the Strategic Plan. A formal process for incorporating Strategic Plan goals and priorities in the annual budget process will also be developed.

Monitoring Implementation and Success:

The Strategic Plan includes twenty-nine action plans. In almost all cases, the successful implementation of the Action Plan will be apparent with the introduction of a new policy, the completion of a study or the development of a new facility or service. In this sense, it will be apparent when the Action Plan is complete. However, the Town will also identify a number of performance measures that track the desired outcomes of the Strategic Plan. These measures will generally be quantifiable and available from secondary source information (such as the census) or from municipal data bases established for this purpose. The measures will monitor the Town's success in achieving a more diverse age and demographic profile; expanding employment; attracting business; creating healthier lifestyles, etc. For each of the measures a baseline will be established and targets set for monitoring future performance and the success of the action plans. The monitoring measures will be identified by Staff and put in place during the first year of the Strategic Plan's implementation.



APPENDIX A

SWOT ANALYSIS

APPENDIX A: S.W.O.T.

Strengths

- Amenities of large urban centre
- Progressive, positive attitude of community, staff, Council
- High level of volunteerism
- Ambience of small town
- Location/hub of area
- Strong retail section
- Health and education facilities
- Housing – good supply, affordable, seniors
- Size - big enough to provide services, but small enough to be a manageable community
- Public buildings and amenities (arena, pool, recreation facilities)
- Natural beauty – river system
- Strong Council
- Safe community
- Council commitment to financial responsibility
- Services - retail/places to eat (attractive to residents/visitors)

Weaknesses

- Deteriorating downtown core
- Limited diversity/multiculturalism
- Industry/lack of diversity of industrial base
- No post secondary institution
- Imbalanced demographic profile (aging and lack of diversity)
- Small population/limited land base
- Low paying jobs
- Youth/drug issue/drugs generally (social isolation)
- Accommodation for visitors - poor supply of hotel/motel; no conference/convention facilities
- Lack of things for youth to do
- Lower post secondary education levels/unskilled labour force
- Retention of youth
- Centralization of services (health/education)
- Lack of regional cooperation /attitudes restricting cooperation
- Infrastructure - difficulty of maintaining and ongoing cost of investing in infrastructure
- Main street congestion
- Affordable housing is not available
- Land for expansion is limited

Opportunities

- Willingness to plan - doing this strategic plan is an opportunity to embrace change
- Regional cooperation will be necessary because all area municipalities must cooperate to survive
- Progressiveness of community will continue to grow - the Town's reputation for progress will attract investment
- Service partnerships
- Existing labour force - can build on skilled labour and attractive place to live to attract new investment
- Create healthy community to respond to increasing emphasis on health; expand local clinic/hospital; emphasize healthy Town attributes to attract/retain residents and employers
- High tech work - people can work from anywhere- attract new economies; people who are not tied to a location by their job will choose to live and work in Hanover for the quality of life
- Social atmosphere - to attract seniors; become a retirement community for active and affluent seniors
- Work to become the "Saugeen Community"- greater cooperation/partnerships with surrounding areas; a stronger regional focus
- Tourism - take advantage of more "at home" tourism and older adult tourism to attract day trips to Hanover
- Energy costs - greener community- walkable town. Build a "green community" to create a healthy and more affordable community for the future
- Post secondary education - opportunity to become a satellite learning centre
- Communication plan/branding - opportunity to create a stronger identity for the community
- Community expansion - growth bringing new opportunities
- Government services for the region - Hanover becomes a government service centre for the region. Attract government offices
- Downtown core - as a retail opportunity/balance big box stores. Provide a unique retail experience for residents and visitors

Threats

- Energy costs/transportation costs
- Continued loss of youth/families/aging of population
- Lack of meaningful jobs
- Deteriorating financial future/loss of tax base to maintain existing services
- Limited land and lack of regional cooperation resulting in no new land for development
- Changing tax base - loss of assessment/high taxes
- Aging infrastructure
- Decay of downtown
- Changing regional market resulting in less demand for Hanover retail services - new competitors (large retail stores like Walmart being developed in surrounding communities) - internet shopping

- Perception of community not being safe/drug perception
- Loss of provincial/federal funding
- Cost of emergency services
- Need to retain existing industry
- Social change - loss of volunteers; small town atmosphere/identity
- Loss of schools, etc. due to consolidation or demographic change (declining enrolment)
- Maintenance of strong Council/progressive staff as individuals retire or change
- Competitive environments - can Hanover retain a competitive advantage relative to other area communities?
- Complacent - lack of planning for the future