



# City of Dryden 2020-2025 Community Strategic Plan

**November 2019**



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Image source: Explore Northwest Ontario





# Executive Summary

The City of Dryden is physically located on Wabigoon and Thunder Lakes, in the heart of the Kenora District of Northwestern Ontario. Dryden offers a unique quality of life blended by its natural beauty and its geographic location as a hub for the northern and surrounding communities. Recognized by its citizens for its strong sense of community that is evident through its volunteerism and the familiar sense of pride, Dryden is well positioned to respond to the opportunity for future growth and prosperity.

In early 2019 Council initiated the creation of a 5-Year Community Strategic Plan for the City of Dryden. City Council and staff recognized the need to establish a results-based plan that would guide decisions, planning and budgeting into the future. This Strategic Plan provides the long-range guidance that enables the City to advance priorities, strengthen municipal operations, identify key performance outcomes and allocate the resources required to pursue implementation. The pages that follow reflect the collective vision of the community, municipal staff, City Management and Council. It is truly an inclusive community strategic plan that will provide a roadmap to the future. Successful implementation of the plan will require strong aspirational leadership to stay true to the course.

The extensive consultation provided an opportunity for broad engagement of the public, including residents, businesses, and other stakeholders. Input was gathered through on-line surveys, interviews, and public meetings. The process also recognized the value of input from municipal staff, management and Council. Information was collected through individual conversations, group discussions, and a facilitated strategic planning workshop. Participation was high from these groups.

A series of six key strategic goals were identified and validated, all of which are further informed by accompanying strategic priorities which will guide tactical initiatives identified within the municipal departmental business or work plans. The six goals in the Strategic Plan are as follows:

1. Community Diversity and Inclusion
2. Community Safety and Wellbeing
3. Infrastructure
4. Fiscal Sustainability
5. Economic and Investment Diversity
6. Communications and Our People

It is important to recognize that while the Strategic Plan will serve as a guide for municipal activities, it is not meant to be exhaustive. There will be other activities undertaken by the Municipality that align with legislated responsibilities, initiatives already underway and emerging priorities that may require immediate attention. The Strategic Plan will serve to focus efforts and guide resource allocations to address the most significant priority areas identified during the planning process.



The strategic goals and priorities have been created within the context of the City's Vision and Mission statements and the five Guiding Principles that reflect corporate values. Collectively, this is the foundation on which the Strategy is built and from which it will be implemented and monitored.

## Strategy Structure

The following pages offer a concise summary of the City of Dryden's Strategic Plan 2020-2025. Chapter 1 presents the core elements of the strategy, namely, the City's Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles. Chapter 2 identifies the Strategy's Goals, Objectives, and Strategic Priorities. These serve as the roadmap for the initiatives to be pursued over the life of the strategy. Chapter 3 describes the methodology used to create the plan and Chapter 4 covers moving strategic planning to implementation and monitoring.

Supplementing the Strategic Plan is a Technical and Input Summary Report. This report presents primary and secondary research findings and analysis of all consultations that formed part of the Strategic Plan methodology.



Image source: Ontario's Sunset Country Travel



# 1. Community profile

# CITY OF DRYDEN, ON

## Snapshot on demographics and Labor Force (2016 Census)



### Population



**7,749**

↑ 2% from 2011

### Age Groups

Under 14 **15%**

15 to 64 **64%**

65 + **21%**

### Labor Force

**61.8%**

↑ 1% from 2011

### Median Household Income



**\$70,493**

Dryden's households are not far behind the province at \$70,493 in 2015, compared with Ontario's \$74,287

### Unemployment

**7.7%**

Dryden's unemployment rate increased only slightly from 7.6% in 2011 to 7.7% in 2016

## Education and Field of Study

Education	Dryden
No certificate; diploma or degree	22%
Secondary (high) school diploma	29%
Apprenticeship or trades certificate	9%
College; CEGEP	25%
University below bachelor level	2%
University at bachelor level or above	13%



**11%**

of people with a bachelor degree have an architecture, engineering, and related technologies degree

# CITY OF DRYDEN

Snapshot on industry and occupations  
(Census 2016 | Canadian Business Patterns)



## Business Patterns (2017)

**361**

Businesses with  
employees in the City of  
Dryden



**18%**

are businesses in retail  
trade



**67%**

of establishments  
(with employees)  
employ 1 to 9 people

## Labour Force by Industry

### Top employing industry sectors

 Health care & social assistance **11%**

 Retail trade **11%**



**+135** jobs  
from 2011

The industry that added most jobs  
was accommodation and food  
services

## Labour Force by Occupation

### Top employing occupations

 Sales and service **27%**

 Trades, transport & equipment operators **16%**

 Education; law; social; community and government **15%**



**+130** jobs  
from 2011

The occupation that added most  
jobs was health care and social  
assistance

Data sources:

Statistics Canada, 2016 Census | Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey | Canadian Business Patterns, 2017





## 2. Strategic Plan



## 2. Strategic Plan – Vision, Mission, Guiding Principles

The vision, mission and guiding principles form the core elements of the Strategic plan reflecting the desired future for the City of Dryden, and the means by which this Vision will be achieved.



### 2.1 Corporate Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles

#### 2.1.1 Vision

Dryden is recognized as a vibrant, safe, healthy and inclusive community with a diverse economy, providing an exceptional quality of life.

#### 2.1.2 Mission

To deliver sustainable municipal services and infrastructure with courtesy, integrity, transparency and fiscal responsibility.





### 2.1.3 Guiding Principles

#### Inclusion

- Community leadership honours, welcomes, and accepts all people, hearing their diverse voices and working to strengthen cultural relationships and building community inclusiveness
- Encompasses efforts to ensure that programs and services are accessible to all
- Engagement and communication efforts reflect diverse community needs

#### Safety

- Actions and planning place people and community safety at the centre of all decisions
- Safe, shared use of community spaces is promoted as an element of quality of life

#### Community Pride

- Well-maintained properties, assets and infrastructure are appealing to residents and visitors
- Civic engagement informs policy and planning through interactions with municipal leadership
- Volunteerism and community leadership is present

#### Regional Leadership

- Reflects Dryden's focus on being the regional hub
- Commitment to innovation and knowledge-sharing
- Build and maintain effective local and regional partnerships

#### Quality of Life

- Champion environmental stewardship, protecting our natural beauty and our access to nature
- Maintain alignment with community values and priorities
- Ensure that all decisions consider how quality of life will be impacted or enhanced





## 2.2 Strategic Goals and Priorities

### 2.1 Goal: Community Diversity and Inclusion

The City of Dryden will celebrate its diversity and inclusiveness, while ensuring our doors are open and all who enter are welcomed.

#### Strategic Priorities:

1. Develop support systems to welcome and familiarize new and existing citizens to the City of Dryden
2. Continue to foster positive relationships with Indigenous Peoples and neighbouring First Nation communities

### 2.2 Goal: Community Safety and Wellbeing

The City of Dryden places safety and wellbeing at the core of our existence and all we do.

#### Strategic Priorities:

1. Support implementation of Community Safety and Wellbeing plan, including senior and youth programs and services
2. Undertake appropriate efforts to form the Federal and Provincial partnerships required to support community safety and wellbeing strategies
3. Explore opportunities to enhance public/affordable/safe transportation in Dryden



Image source: Explore Northwest Ontario





### 2.3 Goal: Infrastructure

The City of Dryden is progressive in its efforts to maintain and strengthen our infrastructure to maximize our opportunity for growth.

#### Strategic Priorities:

1. Complete and maintain asset management plan as per legislated requirements to drive longer term capital and resource planning
2. Develop long-term preventative maintenance and capital investment plans to extend the lifecycle of infrastructure, facilities and fleet
3. Utilize grant opportunities to maximize project specific funding with a focused priority on;
 

Recreation Centre facility upgrades to replace end of life mechanical systems, rehabilitate building envelope, improve accessibility and address arena expansion for the growing user demand (DREAM) and supporting regional and localized special events

Shovel ready road and underground infrastructure projects such as; Van Horne Ave, Duke St, Earl Ave, Colonization Ave, Thunder Lake Road, Government St Watermain Upsizing and other infrastructure projects directly related to the Asset Management Plan

### 2.4 Goal: Fiscal Sustainability

The City of Dryden operates in a fiscally responsible manner through established practices that ensure a sustainable future for our community and our municipality.

#### Strategic Priorities:

1. Seek creative, new revenue sources
2. Increase City reserve funds
3. Continue the City's debt repayment plan to 2021
4. Sustain existing funding sources and efforts

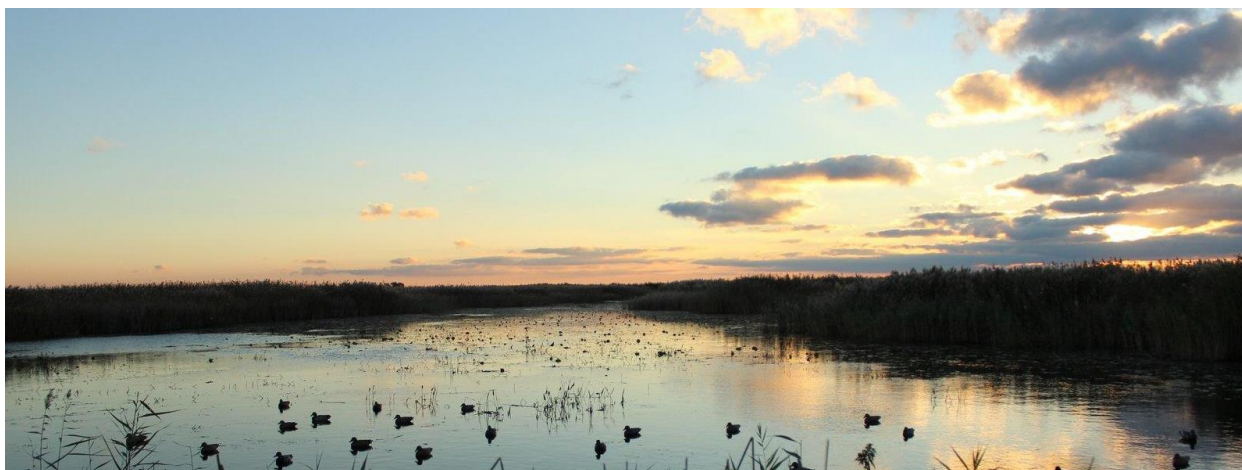


Image source: Ontario's Sunset Country Travel



## 2.5 Goal: Economic and Investment Diversity

**The City of Dryden recognizes and responds to opportunities that diversify our economy and positions us to achieve positive return on investments.**

### Strategic Priorities:

1. Waterfront Development
2. Utilize a portion of the MAT (Municipal Accommodation Tax) to further build community capacity and local tourism activities and attractions
3. Attract new businesses by promoting Dryden as a regional business and transportation hub
4. Implement re-branding initiatives
5. Support existing business in Dryden
6. Identify and respond to economic related actions identified in the Community Improvement Plan
7. Partner with Indigenous organizations and communities and other organizations to foster local and regional economic growth
8. Identify necessary resources to drive economic competitiveness

## 2.6 Goal: Communications and Our People

**The City of Dryden respects our employees and our citizens and is committed to responsive and transparent communication.**

### Strategic Priorities:

1. Develop and implement formal communication plans
2. Support Management, Mentoring and Leadership Training
3. Develop a corporate wide customer service training strategy
4. Enhance organizational culture and communications to promote employer of choice qualities and commitment to the Municipal mission



Image source: Explore Northwest Ontario





## 3. Strategic Plan Methodology



## 3. Strategic Plan Methodology

### 3.1 The Planning Process

Extensive secondary research was collected and reviewed, followed by a comprehensive engagement plan. This plan involved Council, municipal management and staff, and broad community representation of businesses, citizens, and local service organizations. This information gathering was undertaken to provide evidence-based data to populate the strategic planning framework. Key components include:

- Background key document review – Reviewed relevant details within historical or recently completed studies, reports, policies, and plans for the city
- Community Profile – Presents the socio-demographic landscape including its economic, workforce, and quality of life components
- Community Engagement
  - Community on-line survey: This survey was designed to provide information to three concurrent and related projects, including the City of Dryden Branding Strategy, the Community Improvement Plan, and the Strategic Plan. A total of 196 completed surveys were collected over the period June 20 to July 26<sup>th</sup>. It was also distributed in paper copy to local senior citizens as an alternative to on-line completion.
  - One-on-One Interviews: Telephone interviews were conducted with fifteen local leaders and community representatives. These discussions provided the venue for a deeper dive into challenges and opportunities facing the city.
  - Invitation to Indigenous Leaders: Chiefs of Eagle Lake First Nation and Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation were sent letters of invitation to participate in a meeting to discuss Dryden's shared vision and strategic priorities. To date, these meetings have not taken place.
- Council and Staff Engagement
  - Council and Management Engagement: A facilitated strategic planning workshop was held on June 27<sup>th</sup>. The workshop provided Council and Management the opportunity to explore the community's strengths, challenges, opportunities, and priorities. The proposed vision, mission and guiding principles were also reviewed. The workshop was facilitated by MDB Insight utilizing the Queens Executive Decision Centre technology platform.
  - Staff Engagement: A one-hour session was facilitated on June 27<sup>th</sup> to provide department Managers and Front-line staff the opportunity to offer their insight and perspectives.
  - Municipal Employee Survey: An on-line survey was shared with all employees of the Municipality, resulting in input from 30 participants.

Following the analysis of all data and input received, additional sessions with Council and Management were held. Additional direction was provided and decisions made relating to the stated Vision, Mission, Guiding Principles, and Strategic Goals and Priorities. Management also met to review the goals and priorities in relation to implementation and monitoring of progress. It is these later elements that will be reflected in the departmental business or work plans.



## 4. Implementation





## 4. Implementation and Monitoring

Moving beyond the development of the Strategic Plan are two critical elements that shift the process from planning to that of implementation and monitoring. Implementation of this Strategic Plan will reflect accountability, responsiveness, timeliness, and transparency. Under the leadership of the City's Senior Management Team, departmental business or work plans will be prepared and approved annually in support of the budget process. These departmental business plans will tie directly to the strategic vision for the City of Dryden and will advance tactical and strategic actions that support its six strategic goals looking out to 2025.

The value and need of organizational alignment and cumulative results is paramount as municipalities work within fiscal constraint, increased accountability, and limited resources. Navigating the organization's ecosystem requires a firm understanding of departmental business plans, the municipality's official plan and other strategies, and synergies and common themes that span across these. It requires clarity in communication internal and external within the municipality, conscious thinking of how to align activities and responsibilities along the organizational spectrum from the broad organization focus to those at each level in the organization hierarchy. This takes significant planning and thinking.

Key performance measures will be reported through targeted metrics. These will be presented in an Annual Report Card to Council and the community, updating on progress of the Strategic Plan implementation and outcomes. In essence, this report card will reflect on what was identified as priority, the progression of actions related to that priority, and an examination of impact to the strategic goal as a result of these efforts.

As the City of Dryden moves forward with the implementation of a Performance Measurement platform, emphasis will be placed on those areas that are within the city's ability to influence, and the resources required to measure performance. It is important to recognize that a balance is necessary with emphasis on measuring what is of utmost importance, and what will reflect the progression and impact.



Image source: City of Dryden



# DRYDEN

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