

Building Our Future Municipality of St.-Charles

STRATEGIC PLAN 2014 - 2019





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A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

The Municipality of St.-Charles is ready for change. It is through the dedication, inspiration and commitment of our residents and council members that we were able to create a plan and vision for our future. I am extremely delighted with our 2014-2019 strategic plan and look forward to collaborating with the community in order to achieve our attainable goals. The invaluable information sets the framework for council to unleash the growth potential of the Municipality of St.-Charles. The strategic plan is our stepping stone, our driving force, and it is imperative that we review this document on a yearly basis in order to remain focused and inspired. It is with great pride that I acknowledge the valuable input from our citizens that made this document so comprehensive. I look forward to seeing these inclusive goals accomplished in the next five years so that the Municipality of St.-Charles will change with the times, while remembering the foundation for which it was built, as well as our history.



PURPOSE OF OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

People are the cornerstone of every good community. Communities are defined by the motivations and actions of its people. A good strategic plan understands the importance of a community working together toward a better, more prosperous future.

Strategic planning is, above all else, a *process*. Strategic planning involves the preparation of a long-term vision, goals and a suite of specific action-items that enable a community to move forward – collectively.

There are four key reasons for undertaking a strategic plan:

- 1) to establish a vision of where people want to be
- 2) to develop a plan for how to get there
- 3) to manage/allocate resources efficiently
- 4) to articulate the shared priorities of all involved

Collaborative in nature, the community strategic plan process is always a timely opportunity for the residents to participate in establishing new priorities and achievable items for the near future. The Strategic Plan for St.-Charles is founded on the principles of participatory planning.

Our Strategic Plan begins with a vision statement crafted by St.-Charles residents. The vision statement helps define the community based on the specific values it cherishes most. The Plan also includes a Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis engaging community members to better understand how St.-Charles can grow in the next five years. Finally, the Plan establishes priorities and actionable items that should be achievable within the next five years. Whether led by Council, Staff, or community members (sometimes referred to as “champions”), the Strategic Plan is a collective roadmap intended to provide guidance for the community to flourish. For this to happen, everyone must work together to ensure the success of the Plan.



THE FORMATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The St.-Charles Strategic Plan has been developed through a series of public consultations, workshops, online questionnaires, and interviews with Council and municipal staff.

Throughout the development of this Plan, the community was not only in charge of providing opinions on priorities, it was also instrumental in identifying what tools/programs were needed to succeed.

Often, Strategic Plans seek to complement other existing documents, such as Official Plans, and as such must be tailored to meet other priorities and objectives being pursued. In this case, the community started off with a “blank slate” and took the time to focus on what it saw as most important for building a more prosperous, more *inclusive* community.

An online and mail-out questionnaire kicked off the conversation. The questionnaire was designed to:

- 1) familiarize the community with the Strategic Planning process
- 2) to enable community members to fully grasp local issues
- 3) to openly address their opinions through achievable recommendations

A subsequent component of the questionnaire also requested community members to weigh-in on the production of a new vision statement for the community. Presented in draft form during the second public workshop, the survey provided an additional opportunity for community members to carry the conversation forward and to refine the message and wording used in the final version.



LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY: The First Step to Building Community Capacity

Community planning is first and foremost a social exercise, where people come together to share ideas, to offer opinions, to engage in constructive debate, to establish new priorities and thus, actively influence the direction of their community.

St.-Charles is a tight-knit, and highly engaged community. As part of the process, several workshops were conducted during the summer of 2013. Participants were not only encouraged to voice their opinions about what works and what needs to be improved in the community, they were also given electronic audience polling devices to help prioritize the issues and challenges that require prompt attention.

The two strategic planning events were promoted to the whole community. Each event started out as an informal community BBQ, followed by vigorous workshop exercises intended to get people talking honestly about their community.

Approximately one hundred St.-Charles residents attended the first session; seventy-five attended the second one. Clearly, St.-Charles residents are passionate about the future direction of their community.



LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY: The First Step to Building Community Capacity

A word cloud of positive responses to the question "What do you like about St.-Charles?". The words are arranged in a circular pattern, with the most prominent words in the center. The words include:

- Community Spirit
- Proximity to Lake Nipissing
- Natural Beauty
- Facility
- Charles because its a Beautiful
- Inexpensive
- Living in St West Arm
- Convenience
- Small Town
- Country
- Fishing
- Small Community
- Area
- Outdoor Activities
- Santé
- L'environnement
- Natural Environment

Community Responses to the Question:

"What do you like about St.-Charles?"

Community Responses to the Question:

"What are the drawbacks to St.-Charles?"

A word cloud of negative responses to the question "What are the drawbacks to St.-Charles?". The words are arranged in a circular pattern, with the most prominent words in the center. The words include:

- Charles Amenities
- Health
- Communautes
- Draw-backs
- People
- Shopping
- Hardware
- Support
- Lack of Businesses
- Building Supplies
- Local
- English Schools
- Manque
- Welfare
- Involvement
- Way
- Lack of Services
- Town

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN - S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

An Environmental Scan is a community audit that seeks to identify the **Strengths**, **Weaknesses**, **Opportunities**, and **Threats** of the community. Its main purpose is to help everyone better understand how the community perceives itself. The items identified in the environmental scan are meant to be the nuts and bolts of the community. While this process may reveal obstacles (perhaps even some that are impossible to address), a good SWOT showcases areas of mutual agreement amongst stakeholders. It provides a focused assessment of how and where people can work together to thrive socially, economically and culturally.

STRENGTHS



- ✓ Close knit community
- ✓ Stunning natural environment
- ✓ Strong civic engagement
- ✓ Waterfront living at an affordable price
- ✓ Proximity to regional centres
- ✓ Rich agricultural heritage
- ✓ Plenty of recreational activities
- ✓ Rural & agricultural lifestyle

WEAKNESSES



- ✓ Limited local employment opportunities
- ✓ Lack of health care professionals
- ✓ Lack of english schools in town
- ✓ Lack of “curb appeal”
- ✓ Lack of transportation services
- ✓ Lack of retail and personal services
- ✓ Lack of support and programs for youth

OPPORTUNITIES



- ✓ Outdoor activities such as trails for snowmobiling and hiking
- ✓ Improve waterfront access
- ✓ Affordable & accessible cottage country
- ✓ Affordable agricultural land
- ✓ Mineral exploration opportunities
- ✓ Open up crown land for additional waterfront development
- ✓ Economic development using local infrastructure and buildings

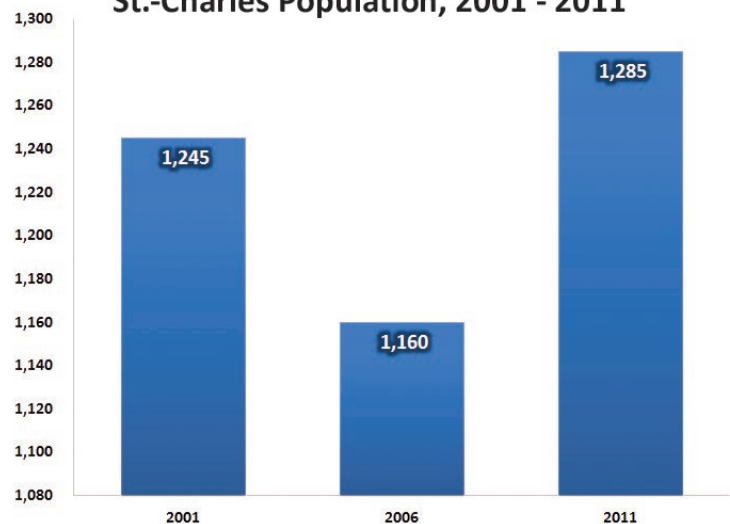
THREATS



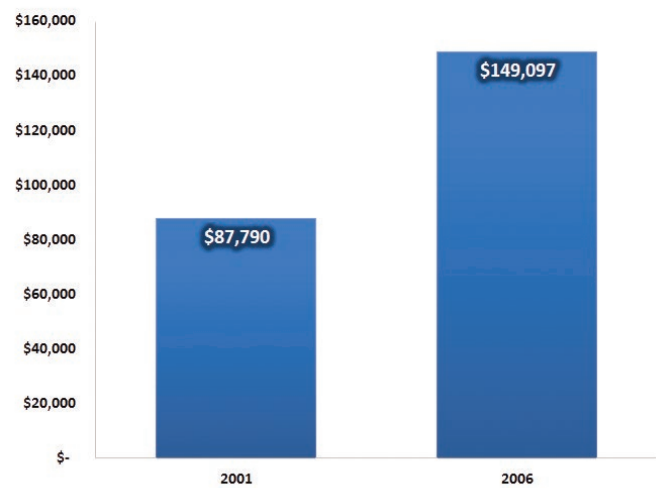
- ✓ Youth retention
- ✓ Retail leakage
- ✓ Aging population
- ✓ Standing still in the face of a changing world
- ✓ A lack of recreational (waterfront) real estate
- ✓ Water quality issues in the West Arm of Lake Nipissing

SNAPSHOT OF ST.-CHARLES

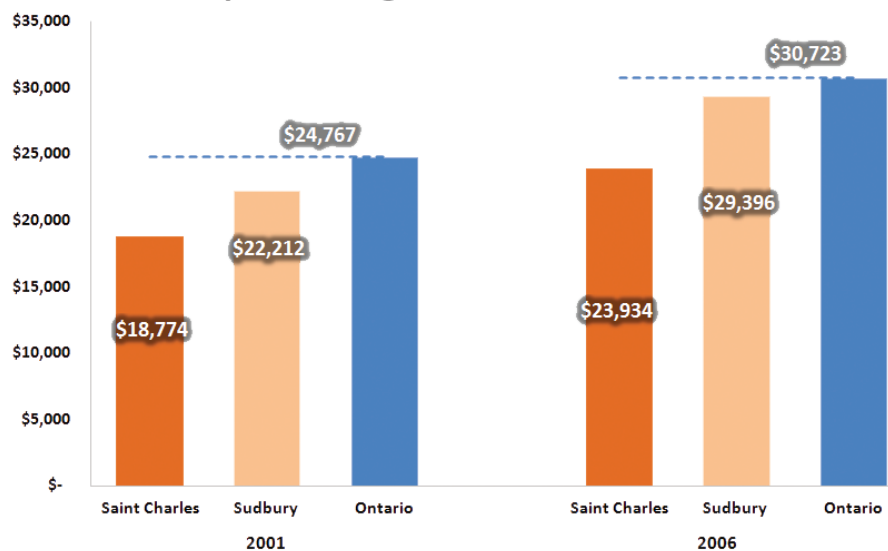
St.-Charles Population, 2001 - 2011



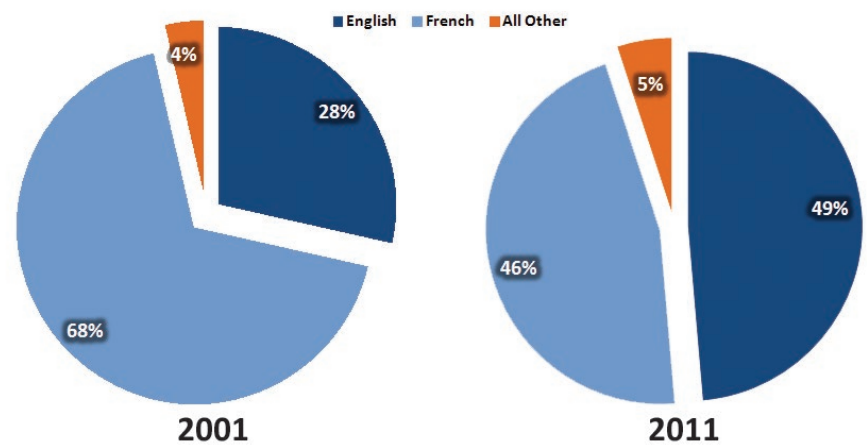
Average Dwelling Value in St.-Charles, 2001 and 2006



Per Capita Average Income, 2001 and 2006

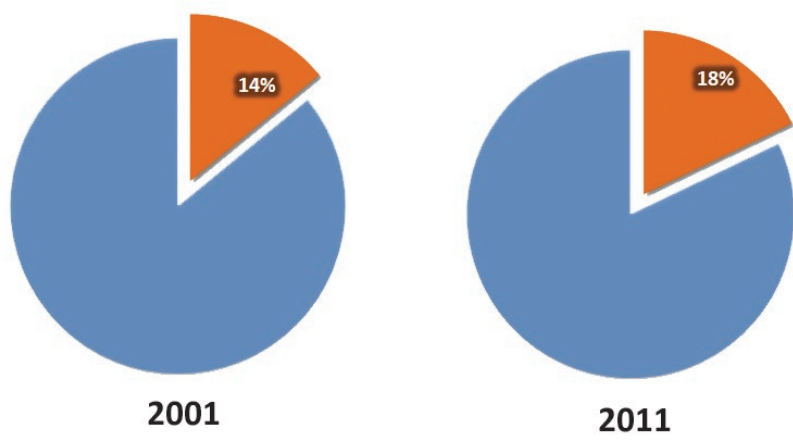


Mother Tongue in St.-Charles

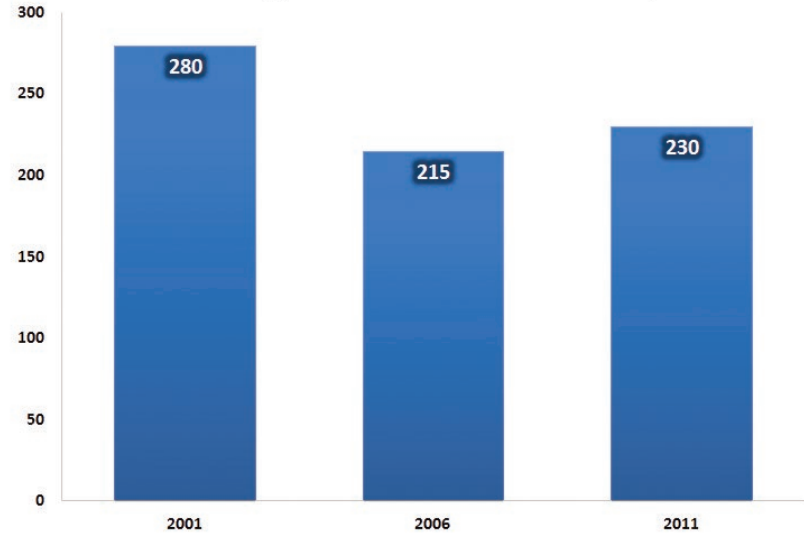


SNAPSHOT OF ST.-CHARLES

Seniors aged 65 and over in St.-Charles



Children aged 0 to 18 in St.-Charles, 2001 - 2011



VISION STATEMENT

St.-Charles is a safe and affordable community where residents, young and old, support each other through a shared sense of commitment, friendship and community spirit.

Our history was built on farming, forestry and above all, hard work. Our future shall be determined by the skills and aspirations of our most valuable asset, our people.

Our commitment to recreation, health, education and our rural roots are the foundations that shall guide us into the future.



FOUNDATIONS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The success of a strategic plan hinges on the selection of clear goals and objectives for the entire community, including: council, staff, community leaders, businesses and citizens to get behind.

These goals and objectives need to be:

Specific
Measurable
Attainable
Realistic
Timely

In working with the community three areas have been identified as the “foundational pillars” that will sustain St.-Charles as a welcoming, caring and prosperous community.

The goals, objectives, and implementation strategies as set out herein, are the result of community consultation, collaboration and professional judgement based on best practices. The Strategic Plan should provide orientation for the next three to five years. That being said, many of the actions identified in this Plan can and should be deployed by Council and staff quickly to avoid any further **slippage**.

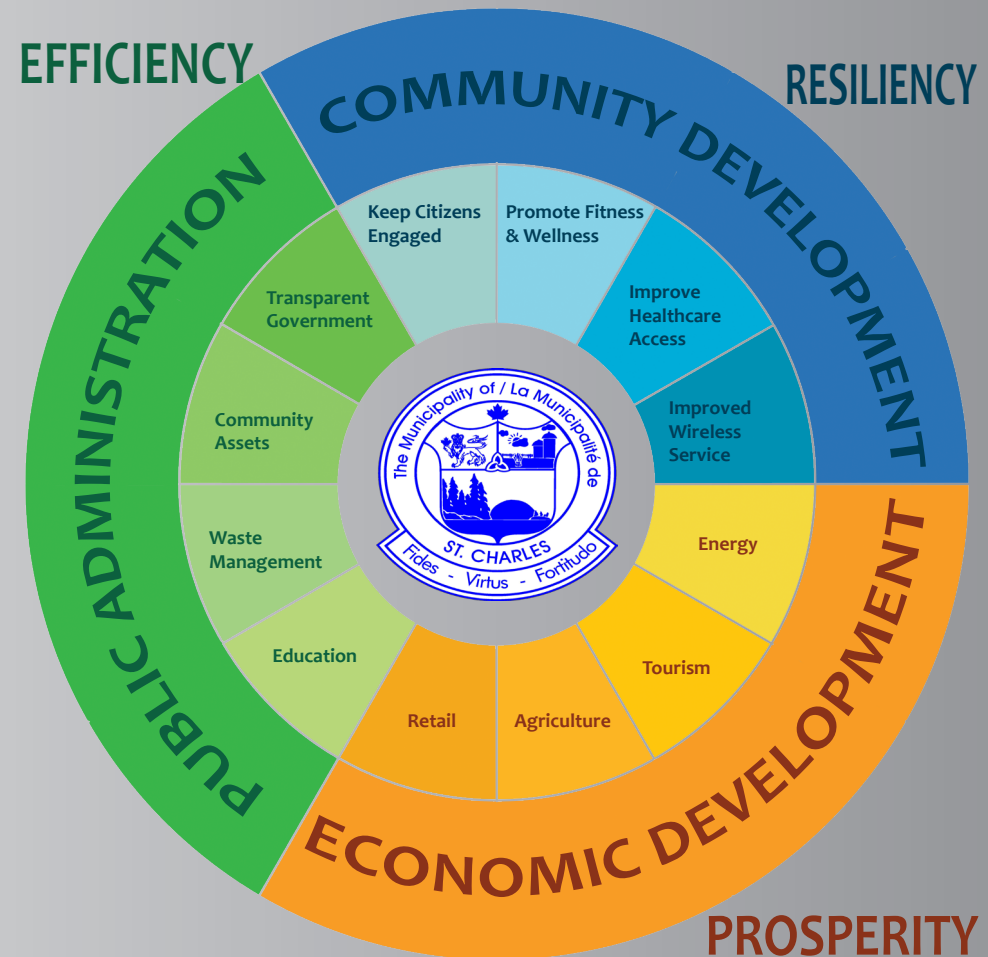
The following pages provide a menu of tasks to be accomplished by Council staff, community champions and residents alike. While we acknowledge that embarking on any new endeavour will require allocating resources (financial and human), the Strategic Plan identifies a mix of priorities that will ultimately further the growth of the community. While deliberately crafted to keep financial costs to a minimum, the Strategic Plan is designed to help stimulate economic and community development by placing the onus of responsibilities on local community leaders.

The Strategic Plan is presented by identifying an objective, which is then accompanied by direct actions that should guide development of the community. In turn, direct actions and implementation become the yardstick to evaluate success and monitor the appropriate course of action.

GOALS:

Over the next five years, the people of St.-Charles are committed to the following:

- 1) Building **Resiliency** through community development
- 2) Building **Prosperity** through a commitment to economic development
- 3) Bringing **Efficiency** to public administration of assets, processes and governance



OBJECTIVE 1: Keep Residents Engaged

An engaged citizenry is key to both community and economic development. Without citizen and business participation a community will languish. Partnerships and co-operation are the key to success at every turn. Council must, at every turn, ensure that the community is not just “on-side”, it must be *involved*. Building community capacity means that governments, citizens and outside stakeholders must work together to solve community problems. This can happen on an ad-hoc basis, but a structured team is a more effective way of dealing with community and economic development issues. In addition to capacity building this group should be responsible for maintaining linkages with non-local government and other outside agencies to ensure that St.-Charles is fully abreast of programs, initiatives and funding sources that support economic and community development.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- ✓ Identify a small group of business & community leaders to participate in a local Community Development Advisory Committee (5-7 members)
- ✓ Develop an economic development plan identifying key projects and funding sources
- ✓ Liaise with funders & Community Futures Development Corporation
- ✓ Monitor initiatives in neighbouring communities in the Region
- ✓ Co-ordinate a base of volunteers to support community programs and events
- ✓ Maintain regular dialogue with the community through mail-outs, email and social media channels

KEY PLAYERS:

- ✓ Mayor, Council and Staff
- ✓ Residents
- ✓ Businesses
- ✓ Faith and education leaders
- ✓ Province of Ontario
- ✓ Neighbouring municipalities and business associations (Chambers of Commerce)

TIMING: IMMEDIATE & ON-GOING

OBJECTIVE 2: Promote Fitness & Wellness

The Town of St.-Charles is blessed with an abundance of indoor and outdoor recreational amenities. These facilities are an important and cherished asset that play an key role in keeping the community connected, happy and healthy. With an aging population, it is reasonable to anticipate that participation levels in certain, more strenuous activities will begin to wane. Nonetheless, keeping residents physically fit and active should be considered a strategic priority for St.-Charles. Fitness and wellness programs should be maintained and delivered throughout the year to ensure that all ages are engaged in some form of activity, and that public investments in municipally-owned facilities are fully maximized.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- ✓ Create a Wellness Committee
- ✓ Create walking trails within the community of St.-Charles
- ✓ Identify local fitness and wellness enthusiasts that can lead and inspire others
- ✓ Support existing recreational/sporting clubs
- ✓ Encourage new clubs by providing organizational support and access to facilities
- ✓ Market and promote recreational assets to outside users (sports clubs, special events, tournaments, etc)
- ✓ Develop and promote signature events that inspire local residents to participate
- ✓ Access funding at the provincial level

KEY PLAYERS:

- ✓ Mayor, Council and Staff
- ✓ Citizens
- ✓ Local Amateur Sports Clubs
- ✓ Sudbury District Amateur Sports Clubs
- ✓ Province of Ontario
- ✓ Community

TIMING: IMMEDIATE & ON-GOING

OBJECTIVE 3: Stay on Top of Healthcare Gaps

Overcoming structural and systemic challenges in healthcare is a matter of province-wide concern. Nonetheless, local residents have repeatedly expressed their concerns about timely access to healthcare services in the community. While the Municipality has made clear and visible commitments to improve access to family healthcare in St.-Charles, an aging population base will, without doubt, continue to place pressure on the local practitioners to keep pace with demand. To this end, St.-Charles needs to ensure that its residents have access to both services and facilities that minimize the need to travel great distances. Working with local healthcare providers, St.-Charles should create a local healthcare service plan to ensure that the community is appropriately serviced by a roster of permanent and visiting physicians, nurses, therapists, personal service workers (PSWs) and other healthcare professional.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- ✓ Collaborate with Sudbury East Community Health Centre and the Sudbury & District Health Unit to identify existing and future gaps in local healthcare services
- ✓ Develop a volunteer association to provide transportation or support to medical appointments
- ✓ Create a community-wide wellness strategy designed to promote healthy lifestyles, exercise and well-balanced nutrition
- ✓ Create a program to connect local building contractors with seniors to enable residents to age in place
- ✓ Reach out to public and private seniors housing providers to identify commercial opportunities for new seniors housing project(s)
- ✓ Reach out to Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) to identify opportunities to develop linkages between the community and healthcare practitioners

KEY PLAYERS:

- ✓ Mayor, Council and Staff
- ✓ Sudbury & District Health Unit
- ✓ Ministry of Health
- ✓ Northern Ontario School of Medicine
- ✓ Community

TIMING: IMMEDIATE & ON-GOING

OBJECTIVE 4: Continue to Push for Better Wireless and High Speed Coverage

Connectivity is a challenge for many – if not most - smaller, more “remote” communities across Canada. While it is true that there have been major advancements in mobile and wireless service levels, there is still much to be done to ensure that small communities are not left behind in a world that is being transformed by high-speed digital communication. Ensuring that fast and reliable service levels are available for all residents and businesses is something that every community, including St.-Charles, should be striving toward.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- ✓ Create a Working Committee made up of education, business and elected officials to canvass existing and would-be service providers to improve service
- ✓ Connect with a community college or university program to carry out a “special project” that would improve the local services conditions
- ✓ Explore opportunities to provide a community-based WIFI service
- ✓ Work with the Association of Ontario Municipalities (AMO)
- ✓ Work with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) on an initiative that would support faster speeds and better coverage

KEY PLAYERS:

- ✓ Mayor, Council and Staff
- ✓ Community
- ✓ Business
- ✓ Educators

TIMING: IMMEDIATE & ON-GOING

OBJECTIVE 5:

Position St.-Charles for New Commercial Retail Investment

Empty store-fronts have the ability to undermine the confidence that people have in a community. Papered storefronts convey a message that the town's best days are behind it. St.-Charles cannot afford to let this sentiment take shape. Economic development, and specifically new investment in commercial storefront business activities are needed to drive the Municipality forward. St.-Charles has a reasonably strong inventory of under-utilized building which can be easily re-purposed or re-tenanted for new commercial uses. Despite the presence of two stable grocery stores as well as a permanent, full-line LCBO, the community's commercial base has clearly shrunk. The town needs to reverse this trend.

Efforts to position St.-Charles for additional retail services are fundamentally important to the long-term well being of the town. When money is invested in the community, taxes are collected; people are employed; residents have the ability to stay closer to home; motorists get out of their cars to have a look around; and, above all else, home-buyers take note that the town has a more vibrant feel.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- ✓ Work with local real estate brokers to support marketing of vacant and underutilized properties.
- ✓ Undertake annual spring clean-up programs for the town
- ✓ Provide building, permitting and temporary tax relief for St.-Charles
- ✓ Explore the application of a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) to help stabilize the commercial properties in the town
- ✓ Consider flexible planning that would fast track the redevelopment of vacant commercial buildings for other purposes
- ✓ Explore opportunities for a façade improvement program for select properties
- ✓ Consider steps that would increase directional signage into St.-Charles
- ✓ Actively recruit business owners already doing business in the Sudbury District to consider the benefits of a St.-Charles location
- ✓ Connect young local entrepreneurs (or those with a good 'business idea') with Business Planning and other available Skills Development programs offered as part of the Small Business Centre Program

- ✓ Conduct regular face-to-face meetings with all business owners in St.-Charles to ensure that any anticipated changes can be appropriately planned for
- ✓ Host an annual business owners forum to discuss local issues affecting the business community

KEY PLAYERS:

- ✓ Mayor, Council and Staff
- ✓ Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- ✓ Regional Business Centre (Sudbury)
- ✓ Fednor
- ✓ NOHFC
- ✓ Community
- ✓ Business

TIMING: IMMEDIATE & ON-GOING



OBJECTIVE 6:

Play to Local Strengths in Agriculture

Local agriculture is a strategic asset for St.-Charles. Agriculture should be promoted as a driver for both economic development and community well-being. Agricultural land is becoming one of the most sought after land classes in Ontario, and St.-Charles provides a strong locational opportunity for both new and fledgling farm operators to take root. Agriculture has been shown to have a strong multiplier effect. For every job created on the farm, several additional jobs are created. In order to seize the opportunity, St.-Charles needs to collaborate with local and outside agriculture interests to foster a bottom-up approach to marketing St.-Charles to “southern” growing interests. The community should also take full advantage of the tourism aspects that are aligned with local agriculture. The St.-Charles area currently has a strong and growing presence in the horse and livestock industry. Many jurisdictions across Ontario have successfully leveraged these assets as agri-tourism platforms, including stabling, recreational trail riding, summer camps, children’s education tours, etc.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- ✓ Establish an Agricultural consortium with neighbouring municipalities, Community Futures Economic Development Corporation
- ✓ Analyze soil maps to identify fertility and climatic conditions suitable for agriculture
- ✓ Develop a marketing strategy to ensure opportunities are communicated to established and fledgling farmers
- ✓ Develop and outreach program designed to attract young, new farmers to Canada

KEY PLAYERS:

- ✓ Mayor, Council, and Staff
- ✓ Existing Farming communities
- ✓ Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs
- ✓ Rural Education Programs (University of Guelph, Ridgetown College, Durham College)
- ✓ Ontario Agri-Food Education
- ✓ Community Futures Development Corporation

TIMING: ON-GOING



OBJECTIVE 7:

Unlock the Potential of Waterfront Development as Driver for Tourism

The market for recreational properties in Ontario continues to be a buoyant part of the real estate sector. In all corners of the province, municipalities that have direct access to lakes and rivers have managed to position themselves for investment; creating jobs in construction, property management and tourism. Whether it is for cottaging, camping, recreational boating or fishing, the demand for waterfront properties presents itself as an economic opportunity that should not be overlooked because of administrative challenges.

St.-Charles is privileged to have abundant waterfront land assets much of which remains inaccessible and unserviceable under the current land ownership structure. With strong leadership the Municipality should lay the groundwork for a new process that would facilitate the release of certain crown lands within the municipality for recreational real estate and economic development purposes.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- ✓ Establish a Waterfront Development Committee
- ✓ Engage with the Province of Ontario to establish a process for the municipality to acquire lands for the purposes of limited recreational lot creation
- ✓ Prepare a subdivision plan and marketing plan to sell off the lots

KEY PLAYERS:

- ✓ Mayor, Council and Staff
- ✓ Province of Ontario (Municipal Affairs, Ministry of Natural Resources)
- ✓ Waterfront Development Committee Advisory Panel (Real Estate, Legal, etc.)
- ✓ West Arm Property Owners Committee
- ✓ Citizen Advisory Panel

TIMING: MEDIUM TERM & ON-GOING

OBJECTIVE 8:

Promote Renewal Community Energy Micro-fit Programs

Provincial regulations have, for the past decade, promoted the production and distribution of renewable energies. A number of municipalities across Ontario have embraced the importance of contributing to the energy challenges of the Province, either through wind, solar, or a combination of both. While local wind conditions may not be sufficient to warrant small or medium sized wind farms, there is likely an opportunity to develop a solar production facility in (or near) St.-Charles. There are also several flat roofs in the community that provide ample space for roof-top solar installations. As a rural and agricultural-based community, St.-Charles finds itself in a position where real estate is readily available and relatively affordable for the development of solar energy projects. The Community Energy Partnership Program, available through the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association provides a 90% Grant for technical and site feasibility studies for community energy projects.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- ✓ Work with the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association to develop a Road Map for St.-Charles to succeed in community-based energy initiatives (Community Energy Partnership Program)
- ✓ Identify local citizen and business interests to support efforts
- ✓ Identify lands that could be declared surplus
- ✓ Promote the location and land value to solar energy outfits
- ✓ Work with a solar energy developer to understand the attributes of St.-Charles as a production opportunity

KEY PLAYERS:

- ✓ Council, Mayor and Staff
- ✓ Ontario Power Authority
- ✓ Ministry of the Environment
- ✓ Local Distribution Company
- ✓ Ontario Sustainable Energy Association
- ✓ Community
- ✓ Business Leaders
- ✓ Land Owners

TIMING: MEDIUM TERM & ON-GOING

GOAL 3: PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION | BRINGING EFFICIENCY TO PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION OF ASSETS, PROCESSES AND GOVERNANCE

OBJECTIVE 9:

Maintain a Transparent and Accountable Municipal Council

St.-Charles is a small, tight-knit rural community. Its residents are represented by four councillors and one mayor. Elected officials have a duty and responsibility to engage in clear and transparent decision making. And, while it is true that council chambers are very cramped, the public is always welcome to attend and make representations to council on matters of public or private interest. Every council is ultimately accountable to its electorate. Citizens, regardless of whether they are present or not, need to know that key decisions affecting the public interest are being made on a timely basis; and the protocols of good governance are constantly being upheld. A transparent and accountable municipal council is ultimately underscored by clear, accurate and timely record keeping all of which are back stopped by effective communication tactics. The Town's website is currently used to manage and inform the public about the affairs of Council (Committee of the Whole), including access to all minutes and forthcoming meeting agendas.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- ✓ Create an annual report card which outlines progress on projects
- ✓ Maintain online communication channels to bring community closer to elected officials to disseminate important information
- ✓ Leverage social media to disseminate information about meetings and decisions
- ✓ Consider the use of web-casts to enable residents to stay connected to council proceedings

KEY PLAYERS:

- ✓ Council, Mayor and Staff

TIMING: IMMEDIATE & ON-GOING

OBJECTIVE 10:

Leverage Community Assets to their Full Potential

St.-Charles has a small but vital inventory of public buildings and assets that collectively define the essence of the community. The Community Centre, the Recreation Centre, the Fire Station, the Health Centre and the Administrative Offices are all vitally important to the Municipality's image. Taken together, they also speak to the Town's core strengths as a safe, supportive and welcoming community. The Strategic Plan recognizes the important role that each facility plays toward the creation of a complete community. It also recognizes that some of these assets could be better leveraged by members of the community, as well as those looking to stage special events in a small town setting. The Community Centre and the Recreation Centre (and the parkland around them), have the potential to be positioned as catalysts for tourism, special events, and perhaps most importantly, community growth and development. The availability of recreation amenities should be the primary calling card for attracting new families to St.-Charles.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- ✓ Conduct a review of municipally-owned assets
- ✓ Compare St.-Charles's assets with other surrounding municipalities to determine competitive advantage
- ✓ Establish a marketing strategy to lease the best assets for gatherings, weddings, summer events
- ✓ Support existing festivals and summer events
- ✓ Raise funds
- ✓ Create festivals in honour of the history of St.-Charles and market the event to those who left the community

KEY PLAYERS:

- ✓ Staff

TIMING: MEDIUM TERM & ON-GOING

GOAL 3: PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION | BRINGING EFFICIENCY TO PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION OF ASSETS, PROCESSES AND GOVERNANCE

OBJECTIVE 11:

Improve Waste Management Through Composting and Recycling Programs

Residents of St.-Charles have expressed a clear interest in improving the delivery of local waste management services. The community has suggested that there are now obvious opportunities to both reduce and divert waste from landfills by using “off-the-shelf” recycling programs that are common place throughout much of the province.

As a community development initiative, St.-Charles should strive to ensure that its waste management efforts are better in-line with best practices. The community should work toward a cost-effective solutions to separate household waste through composting and recycling programs. Composted materials, for example could be made available free of charge each spring for local gardening and community planting efforts.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- ✓ Set up a waste management education programme
- ✓ Monitor and evaluate strategies to divert waste from landfill
- ✓ Create a “backyard” composting programme
- ✓ Encourage local businesses to promote recycling

KEY PLAYERS:

- ✓ Mayor, Council and Staff
- ✓ Province of Ontario
- ✓ Community
- ✓ Business

TIMING: MEDIUM TERM

OBJECTIVE 12:

Rebalancing the Delivery of Educational

St.-Charles has one elementary school: École St.-Charles Borromée. The school, which is operated by the French Catholic School Board, provides classrooms for kindergarten to grade 8 students. At present the school has an enrolment of approximately 50 students. The community has discussed the potential to expand the mandate of the school, to provide regular, non-catholic, English-based instruction to complement the existing curriculum. The lack of an English language school has been identified as an impediment to attracting new families with school-age children to St.-Charles. Obviously, this is a sensitive issue that will require some mutual “understanding” on the part of both the French and English community in St.-Charles. The extent to which the existing school building could be better utilized is a topic that we believe warrants further consideration.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- ✓ Establish a Working Committee to consult with parents, educators, school boards and local politicians to explore possibilities for greater efficiency
- ✓ Initiate a joint meeting with local school board officials
- ✓ Analyze enrolment and transportation data to understand the implications (costs and benefits) of an integrated school
- ✓ Establish a model for shared educational facilities that could be deployed elsewhere

KEY PLAYERS:

- ✓ Mayor, Council and Staff
- ✓ School Boards
- ✓ Educators
- ✓ Parents
- ✓ Children
- ✓ Ministry of Education
- ✓ Local MPP

TIMING: IMMEDIATE & ON-GOING



Funding Assistance was received by Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation and FedNor

www.stcharlesontario.ca