

TOWNSHIP OF EAST  
ZORRA-TAVISTOCK

# Strategic Plan

2024-2028

Presented by:





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# Executive Summary

The Township of East Zorra-Tavistock's Strategic Plan envisions a forward-thinking and connected community, deeply rooted in its rich history while collaboratively building a promising future. Guided by our mission to serve, support, and nurture a vibrant community, this plan is the result of extensive collaboration between the township's council, staff, and residents. It reflects the collective aspirations and feedback gathered through open houses and online engagement, ensuring that the voices of our community are central to our strategic direction.

Our strategic priorities focus on six key areas: ensuring **Financial Sustainability**, maintaining and enhancing **Infrastructure**, promoting **Good Governance**, optimizing **Service Delivery**, fostering **Community Vitality**, and increasing **Environmental Awareness**. Each priority is designed to address both current and future needs, laying a foundation for sustained growth and resilience.

Financial Sustainability emphasizes prudent fiscal management to secure long-term economic health. Infrastructure investments aim to support our growing community by maintaining and improving essential services and public spaces. Good Governance focuses on transparency, accountability, and effective leadership to build trust and engage residents in local decision-making processes. Service Delivery aims to enhance the efficiency and quality of municipal services, ensuring they meet the evolving needs of our residents. Community Vitality fosters a vibrant, inclusive community where all members can thrive. Environmental Awareness commits us to sustainable practices that protect and enhance our natural surroundings for future generations.

Our shared objective is to **foster a united community, nurturing both well-being and cultural vibrancy**. This executive summary offers a glimpse into the core components and objectives of our municipal strategic plan. In the full document, you will find a comprehensive exploration of our vision, mission, values, and key priorities, laying the groundwork for a sustainable and welcoming Township that respects its rich history and rural roots while forging ahead into a brighter future.





# The Process

## Overview

The Township of East Zorra-Tavistock has embarked on a comprehensive strategic planning process designed to engage and collaborate with the community, staff, council, and key stakeholders. Our approach began with an in-depth assessment of the current state of the township, followed by internal workshops to gather insights from staff and council. We then developed an outline of the strategy, engaging the broader community through surveys and open houses to ensure all voices were heard. Based on this extensive feedback, we refined and finalized our strategy, ready for implementation. This integrative process culminates with a health check to evaluate the effectiveness of our initiatives, ensuring our actions align with the township's long-term vision and goals

### 1. PROJECT INITIATION & CURRENT STATE

**ASSESSMENT** - Conducted an in-depth understanding of East Zorra-Tavistock, including an environmental scan and resource assembly.

2. **INTERNAL ENGAGEMENT** - Held workshops with staff and council to gather insights and perspectives.

3. **PLANNING & STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT** - Developed an outline of the strategy, detailing objectives and aligning with key goals.

4. **EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT** - Engaged with the community through surveys and open houses to gather external perspectives and ensure broad-based support.

5. **REFINEMENT & FINALIZATION** - Refined the strategy based on feedback and analysis, ensuring all elements align with the overall objectives.

6. **IMPLEMENTATION** - ongoing execution of the finalized strategy, ensuring all actions align with the set goals and milestones.

7. **HEALTH CHECK** - Conducted a thorough evaluation of the implemented strategy to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

PROJECT INITIATION  
& CURRENT STATE  
ASSESSMENT

1

INTERNAL  
ENGAGEMENT

2

PLANNING &  
STRATEGY  
DEVELOPMENT

3

EXTERNAL  
ENGAGEMENT

4

REFINEMENT &  
FINALIZATION

5

IMPLEMENTATION

6

HEALTH CHECK

7





# Community Engagement

The Township of East Zorra-Tavistock's Strategic Plan is a collaborative endeavour that outlines our vision, mission, values, and key priorities to guide our community's growth and development. In creating this plan, we engaged residents, businesses, community partners, and Town Council and Staff to ensure it reflects our collective aspirations. Throughout our various engagement efforts, we received excellent feedback and suggestions that helped to guide this strategic plan. Community member engagement was conducted both online and in-person through Open House Monopoly nights and an online survey.

The online survey, conducted over six weeks, revealed that 73% of respondents agreed with the mission, vision, and values of the strategic plan, while 23% provided additional feedback. The survey also ranked strategic priorities, with Financial Sustainability being the most important, followed by Good Governance and Infrastructure.

Key findings from the community feedback include the importance of fiscal responsibility, transparency, communication, and infrastructure maintenance and improvement. The Draft Strategic Plan addresses these priorities with initiatives such as developing a 5-Year Budget, fostering community engagement, and maintaining road quality.

The Monopoly Night Open Houses allowed participants to allocate EZT Bucks to objectives they deemed most important, with the top five objectives receiving 68% of the total funds. These objectives focused on infrastructure improvements, community vitality, and environmental awareness.

The development of this plan has been a collaborative journey, involving public engagement to capture the essence of what matters most to our community. Through this process, we've redefined our mission, vision, and values and set forth ambitious objectives and key initiatives that chart the course for the Township of East Zorra-Tavistock's future.





# Vision

We envision a forward-thinking and connected community, rooted in a rich history, building our future together

# Mission

Our mission is to serve, support, and nurture a vibrant community

73%



*responded positively to the Community Mission, Vision and Values.*





# Values

## 01 Accountability

A commitment to responsible action and continuous improvement driven by transparency, efficiency and innovation, fostering trust and understanding within the community.

## 03 Integrity

The unwavering foundation of ethical conduct, guiding all community members towards principled decision-making and trustworthy behaviour.

## 05 Sustainability

Embodying prudence, resilience, and responsibility in resource and asset management, to meet the needs of the present without compromising future generations.

## 02 Inclusivity

A community ethos where empathy guides actions, diverse perspectives are celebrated, equitable opportunities are provided, and deliberate efforts are made to create an environment where everyone feels valued and included.

## 04 Respect

A shared commitment to valuing and honouring each individual's contributions within the community where differences are acknowledged, celebrated, and leveraged for collective growth.

## 06 Teamwork

Fostering collaborative, cooperative, and compassionate environments that focus on strength derived from diverse perspectives working together towards common goals.





# Strategic Priorities



- 1 Financial Sustainability
- 2 Good Governance
- 3 Infrastructure
- 4 Service Delivery
- 5 Community Vitality
- 6 Environmental Awareness

Over the course of the 2024–2028 term, the municipality has outlined six strategic priorities that will be the focal points of its efforts. These priorities encompass a comprehensive approach to community development.

These strategic priorities collectively signify the municipality’s commitment to a well-rounded approach to development, blending economic advancement, environmental responsibility, efficient governance, and a flourishing community to create a promising and sustainable future for all residents.





# Financial Sustainability



The Township is dedicated to achieving financial sustainability through careful fiscal stewardship and strategic planning. Our focus on financial health aims to ensure long-term economic stability and support the continuous growth of our community. We are committed to addressing key financial challenges by setting attainable objectives and taking targeted actions. This section details our primary goals and initiatives, which include establishing a five-year capital budget, maintaining a competitive tax rate, and preserving adequate reserve levels. By implementing these measures, we seek to create a robust financial framework that fosters the prosperity and resilience of our community for years to come.





# Financial Sustainability

## Objective

- 1.1 Establish 5 year capital budget
- 1.2 Maintain competitive tax rate and reserve levels

## Action

- Develop capital forecast beyond 1 year horizon
- Prepare operating budget that maintains service levels at an affordable rate
- Implement investment policies
- Asset Management planning



As a part of the community engagement survey, members of EZT were asked to rank each priority area from most to least importance to them. Participants expressed that **Financial Sustainability** and continued fiscal responsibility was **most important** to them.





# Good Governance



Upholding the principles of good governance through transparent, effective, and inclusive practices is a core value of the East Zorra-Tavistock. Our commitment to good governance is centered on fostering proactive and strong community engagement, ensuring our residents have a voice in decision-making processes. We prioritize increasing and stabilizing staff retention, implementing robust succession planning, and maintaining sustainable staffing levels while promoting a unified team mentality. Additionally, we are focused on responsible tax management and nurturing positive relationships with ratepayers. By sustaining strong planning practices, we aim to create a responsive and resilient community that thrives on collaboration and trust. This section outlines our specific goals and initiatives, highlighting our dedication to these core principles to ensure the continued growth and well-being of our Township.





# Good Governance

## Objective

## Action

- 2.1** Foster proactive and strong community engagement

  - Develop a comprehensive communication plan/strategy
- 2.2** Increase and Stabilize Staff retention

  - Implement a Staff Development Plan including regular performance reviews and analysis of turnover ratios
- 2.3** Implement succession planning

  - Provide staff development and training opportunities, fostering a team-minded approach between staff and council
- 2.4** Maintain adequate staff levels and promote a unified team mentality

  - Promote healthy work environment
  - Implement responsible hiring policies
  - Promote a healthy work environment with opportunities for growth
  - Assess opportunities for team building activities and engagement sessions
- 2.5** Responsible Tax Management and Rate Payer Relations

  - Manage assets and plan reserves effectively
  - Establish a reasonable level for service goals and foster positive interactions with ratepayers
- 2.6** Sustain Strong Planning

  - Work with studies that are up-to-date
  - Listen to staff and ratepayers for future direction
  - Consult surrounding municipalities





# Infrastructure



The Township is committed to maintaining and enhancing our infrastructure to support a thriving and resilient community. Our infrastructure strategy focuses on achieving an 80% quality rating for our roads, ensuring safe and reliable transportation for all. We are dedicated to rehabilitating and replacing bridge infrastructure as needed, guaranteeing their safety and functionality. Maintaining a comprehensive Asset Management Plan is a priority, as it guides our decisions and investments in infrastructure. Additionally, we are focused on improving Hickson's fire infrastructure to enhance emergency response capabilities. Planning for future growth and its impact on our infrastructure is essential to ensure that our community can accommodate and benefit from development. This section outlines our specific goals and initiatives, demonstrating our commitment to a well-maintained and forward-looking infrastructure.





# Infrastructure

## Objective

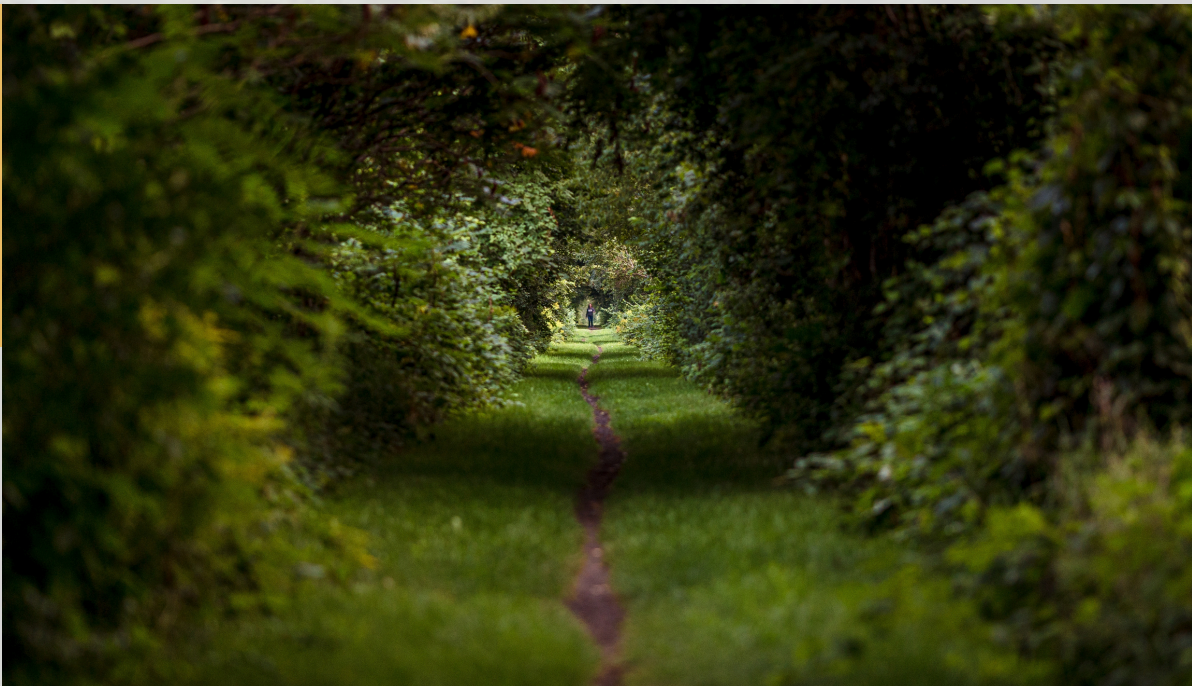
## Action

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>3.1</b> Maintain Asset Management Plan                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Updated every 5 years</li><li>Updated if there are changes to legislation</li></ul>         |
| <b>3.2</b> Maintain 80% quality rating of roads across portfolio         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Conduct a Road Needs study every 5 years.</li></ul>   |
| <b>3.3</b> Rehabilitate and/or replace bridge infrastructure as required | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Review and inspect bridges on bi-annual in accordance with OCIM</li></ul>                   |
| <b>3.4</b> Improve Hickson fire infrastructure                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Build a new fire station</li></ul>  |
| <b>3.5</b> Plan for future growth impact on infrastructure               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Recruit an advisory committee (RAC) and conduct a Development Charges (DC) study.</li></ul> |





# Service Delivery



Focused on optimizing service delivery to meet the evolving needs of our community efficiently and effectively, our approach emphasizes streamlining duplicated services to enhance efficiency and eliminate redundancies. We are committed to maintaining and proactively increasing service levels, ensuring our residents receive high-quality and timely services. Increasing public input is a key priority, as it helps us better understand and respond to community needs. Additionally, we aim to develop robust communication strategies to keep our residents informed and engaged. This section outlines our specific goals and initiatives, highlighting our dedication to delivering exceptional services that enhance the quality of life for all community members.





# Service Delivery

## Objective

## Action

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>4.1</b> Increase public input</p>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Establish advisory groups and gather feedback</li><li>■ Organize community engagement events to encourage dialogue</li></ul>   |
| <p><b>4.2</b> Streamline duplicated services</p>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Conduct service audits and consolidate overlapping functions</li></ul>   |
| <p><b>4.3</b> Maintain and proactively increase service levels</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Consider use of new technologies for service delivery including text-based solutions</li><li>■ Conduct efficiency assessments and monitor service demand trends</li><li>■ Optimize resource allocation</li></ul> |
| <p><b>4.4</b> Develop communication strategies</p>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Define key messages and utilize various communication channels</li><li>■ Provide regular updates and information</li></ul>   |





# Community Vitality



Dedicated to fostering a vibrant, inclusive, and connected community that enhances the quality of life for all residents, East Zorra-Tavistock focuses strategically on community vitality. Our efforts aim to provide diverse and accessible recreational and leisure opportunities, ensure essential services, and strengthen community connections. This section outlines the specific goals and initiatives the Township will prioritize, including enhancing diversity in recreation and leisure offerings, considering the development of a multi-use facility, and supporting access to daycare services. Additionally, we will evaluate opportunities for improved access to doctors, dentists, and medical support, sustain an updated Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and work to better connect our communities. Through these targeted actions, we strive to build a cohesive, thriving, and resilient community that meets the needs of all its members.





# Community Vitality

## Objective

## Action

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>5.1</b> Enhance diversity in recreation and leisure offerings</p>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Evaluate changing recreation needs</li> <li>■ Gather community input on desired offerings.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>5.2</b> Consider Multi-use facility</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Engage the community to gauge interest and gather input on facility design and features</li> <li>■ Develop a fundraising plan and explore grant opportunities.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>5.3</b> Support access to daycare</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Improve communication and support systems to help individuals access daycare services.</li> <li>■ Explore options for expanding daycare availability and affordability.</li> <li>■ Continue to work with County on solutions for daycare</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>5.4</b> Evaluate opportunities for access to doctors, dentists, and medical support</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Encouraging commercial partners to work together on providing space</li> <li>■ Consider future facilities</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>5.5</b> Sustain updated Parks and Rec Master Plan</p>                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Regularly evaluate and update Master Plan on 5-year basis</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>5.6</b> Connect our communities</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Bus service expansion</li> <li>■ Explore additional initiatives such as community events, shared facilities, or recreational programs</li> <li>■ Promote initiatives for community safety</li> </ul>  |





# Environmental Awareness



The Township is dedicated to fostering a sustainable future through proactive environmental stewardship. Our strategic focus on environmental sustainability aims to protect and enhance our natural resources, support ecological health, and promote resilient and sustainable community practices. By setting ambitious yet achievable objectives and implementing targeted actions, we are committed to addressing critical environmental challenges. This section outlines the specific goals and initiatives the Township will prioritize, including advancing climate sustainability, implementing a comprehensive tree management program, and sustaining agricultural practices. We are also focused on beautifying our communities, supporting the natural environment, and promoting electrification and other green initiatives. Through these comprehensive actions, we strive to ensure a cleaner, greener, and more sustainable environment for current and future generations.





# Environmental Awareness

## Objective

## Action

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>6.1</b> Climates Sustainability               | Encourage eco-friendly products and practices  |
| <b>6.2</b> Tree Management Program               | Implement a comprehensive tree management program to maintain existing trees and plant new ones where needed   |
| <b>6.3</b> Sustain Agriculture                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Educate people about grant programs that are available</li><li>Advocate for the protection of agricultural lands</li><li>Promote importance of flowers for pollinator health</li></ul> |
| <b>6.4</b> Beautify the Communities              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Support community involvement</li><li>Improve natural lands and waterways</li><li>Promote aesthetic improvements in downtown areas</li></ul>   |
| <b>6.5</b> Support Natural Environment           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Explore alternatives to road salt</li><li>Preserve natural habitats and heritage sites</li><li>Continue tree planting initiatives</li></ul>  |
| <b>6.6</b> Electrification and Green Initiatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Implement electric fleets</li><li>Expand charging station infrastructure</li><li>Collaborate with the county on achieving net-zero road emissions</li></ul>                            |

