



## TOWN OF MINTO

**DATE:** November 1, 2018  
**TO:** Mayor and Council  
**FROM:** Bill White, CAO Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** 2014-2018 Council Term

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### STRATEGIC PLAN

#### Vision

A friendly, safe, affordable, family oriented rural community built on a foundation of respect, volunteerism, and prosperous business, and sustained by people who value neighbourliness, fairness and inclusiveness.

#### Mission

Provide cost effective and responsive local government through superior customer service, internal stability and efficiency, and promoting responsible economic growth, healthy lifestyles, and respect for the natural environment.

### BACKGROUND

Minto's 6<sup>th</sup> Council sworn in December 2, 2014 had a productive term characterized by major community events like Norwell's 75<sup>th</sup>, IPM 2016, Clifford Homecoming, Norgan's 70<sup>th</sup>, Canada 150 and Canadian Softball Championships where the Palmerston Imperials brought home a Canadian title. These festivities involved thousands of volunteers as well as Council and staff to varying degrees. Forever these events are milestones marking this period in Minto's history that showcased the community to a broad audience and attracted millions of dollars in investment in the local economy.

In 2015 Council held a public meeting to update the 2013 Strategic Plan. While attendance was low, a few initiatives were proposed regarding electronic meetings, municipal service corporation and aging community. In 2018 after another public meeting Council approved 10 more changes to actions in response to Committee and staff recommendations. Another change requires each new Council re-consider the Plan at the start of term. Many actions in the original Plan are complete, but in many ways the plan remains valid into Minto's future.

Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory, tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat. [Sun Tsu, Ancient Chinese Military Strategist](#)

Council spent considerable time in the last two years on Succession Planning. It is well documented how the Town's workplace will change over the next few years as 22% of staff is likely to retire. After several reviews in closed session a presentation was given on Succession Planning in open session June 18, 2017. Council has been consistent applying the plan during recent parental and health leaves, and restructured Public Works, and Recreation and Facilities consistent with the Succession Plan.

Council had Department presentations on annual accomplishments from Economic Development, Minto Fire, Building & Bylaw, Public Works, Clerk's, Recreation and Facilities. This summary report is a broader look at actions in community building, fire, emergency planning, public works, infrastructure, parks, facilities, planning, administration and finance.

So live your life that the fear of death can never enter your heart. Trouble no one about their religion; respect others in their view; and demand that they respect yours. Love your life, perfect your life, beautify all things in your life. Seek to make your life long and its purpose in the service of your people. Prepare a noble death song for the day when you go over the great divide."

Tecumseh

### ***Community Building***

Industrial land initiatives included Provincial certification of the 14 acre site in Palmerston bringing the Town the benefit of broader marketing outreach. Council approved Palmerston projects such as Tucker Industries, Felix Weber, Shaun Weale, and Tri-coat. Frank Lambier Court is fully developed while Noble Family Road is serviced and a project underway. One year extensions for Shrimp Canada and Medicinal Cannabis Producer Krosinski were approved. Council increased the industrial land price, while engineering design of the lift station to service the last 16 acres at the north end of Minto Road is started. The approved Harriston Class EA showed 60 acres of land can be serviced for future industrial. By altering its servicing approach the Town cut its future cost in half. Servicing the first 11 acres will require \$2 million future investment, including reconstructing John Street with a lower sanitary sewer for gravity flow and watermain loop to Adelaide Street.

During Council's term all 26 lots on Clifford Ann Street sold and the final transfer of the former Clifford ballfield to Schwindt & Sons completed. This resulted in \$830,000 land sale revenue to the Town and 40 plus new residences. Purchase and re-sale of the Harriston Senior School completed in 2014 resulted in 17 new homes fronting on George Street, 23 Quality Homes Townhouses (permits for 8 issued) and a future 10 lot Lawrence Street subdivision. Town taxes revenue share from these 90 plus homes will exceed \$100,000 per year plus \$100,000 annual water and sewer revenue.

Minto achieved \$105 million in building permits in 4 years while addressing many new provincial Building Code changes. Aside from industrial development, were several large agricultural projects and Minto Rural Health Centre Expansion Palmerston Hospital 2015, Harriston Co-op 2017, and Clair Ridge Estates and Creekbank Meadows residential subdivisions (2017). Besides an active building service, issues such as open fires, ornamental ponds, projecting and political signs, urban chickens, and downtown two hour parking were addressed. A new animal control provider was approved and "life time" dog tags introduced. A short term lease was signed for monster truck rides in Harriston in 2015.

Council approved a major update, prepared in house, to its Community Improvement Plan in 2015 greatly increasing incentives the Town can legally offer to encourage re-development.

This included an expanded boundary to allow incentives for projects outside “downtowns” inside urban areas and structural improvement grants to encourage building rehabilitation. Budgets 2015 through 2018 carried about \$250,000 for structural improvements helping revive Harriston Old Post, Clifford Brent Young Seeds, and the former Palmerston Mac’s stimulating over \$1 million in private investment.

In 2015 Council approved a Business Case Study to form a Municipal Service Corporation and assume operations of the Harriston Lion’s Medical Clinic. The Mayor, CAO Clerk and Treasurer accepted unpaid Board positions to run the clinic as a non-profit corporation. In 2018 the Deputy Mayor and Business & Economic Manager were added to the Board and new leases signed that grow rental income for the next 5 to 8 years. \$75,000 in building improvements funded by the Town will be paid back within 12 years. Council supported the Minto Rural Health Centre opening in 2016 approving a flow through loan of \$1.5 million. The Town’s lease with the County for the Clifford Medical Centre was renewed.

The Jobs & Housing portal launched in 2015 has grown and expanded. Party in the Park grew steadily since 2014. The first Downtown Street Party was held in Harriston after “We Dug It”. Fire and Ice began in 2016, and for the 2017 New Year became the “go to” family event as a partnership between the Town and Minto Fire. The Alumni Attraction Campaign 2016 and Filipino Outreach 2017 are among the unique marketing approaches started in the term. In 2017 Minto received 5 leaves to keep its position in Communities in Bloom Circle of Excellence. Early 2018 the Manager of Business & Economic Development was the youngest ever recipient of EDCO’s prestigious Joseph Montgomery Achievement Award.

In 2016-2017 the Town expanded partnership at the Palmerston Railway Heritage Museum with support of a new Board and the County. Displays were upgraded, facilities improved, artifacts inventoried and events more coordinated including revival of hand car races. Volunteers extend the museum season into the fall. The first Youth Resiliency presentation to Council was in 2015 and the Minto Youth Action Council formed a year later with similar programs in Mapleton and Wellington North under the umbrella North for Youth. In 2018 Minto was designated as a Gold Youth Friendly Community.

### ***Minto Fire & Emergency Planning***

Minto Fire updated its 2012 Master Fire Plan in house with major new initiatives in 2015 including a 5 year public education plan to greatly increase the Department’s social media presence. This was very beneficial during public emergencies as Minto Fire became the place to go to for information during ice storms, tornados and floods. Minto Fire implemented presumptive legislation for post-traumatic stress disorder and certain cancers attributed to firefighters. PTSD programs are made available to firefighters and spouses. Later in the term local initiatives in mental health and suicide prevention emerged under Minto Fire’s leadership. To aid with training and response Council purchased a new tanker

and pumper truck along with a used aerial, and extended its vehicle replacement plan from 20 to 25 years. Agreements with North Perth and Howick (twice) were negotiated.

The Town and Conservation Authority started the Harriston Hydrology Project in 2014 to produce new flood plain maps by 2017. In 2014 the Town bought additional watershed monitoring equipment, and in 2015 Triton completed total station survey of the urban floodplain. 2016 SWOOP mapping from the Province was not accurate enough to overlay flood mapping software to model storm events. June 23, 2017 a 1:100 year storm caused damage to more than 150 properties in Harriston and the rest of Minto. The last two trailers left in the Harriston Trailer park when the flood occurred are now removed. The Town's NDRP grant of \$132,000 was approved paying 50% of new digital mapping received in 2018 and now modelled by the Conservation Authority. In November 2018 possible solutions upstream, in Town and downstream to help reduce flood risk will be presented to the public. The municipal drain process may apply to implement some solutions.

Emergency planning was a priority through the term with exercises and real life issues. In 2015 Treasury finished complicated and detailed reporting to receive funding for the 2014 ice storm. In August 2015 the operation center was called to action for the Teviotdale Tornado. The earliest tornado in Ontario history occurred in north Minto March 18, 2016. The Harriston/Minto Flood June 23, 2017 called for a broad community response with many partners contributing to protecting people and property. The County's After Action Report complimented overall flood response and identified actions the Town could take to improve such as updating mapping. February 20, 2018 a flash melt and rainfall caused a second event affecting the Saugeen River on the 12<sup>th</sup> Line and North Ward Drain. Staff mitigated impacts by pumping water at William and George Street, and has obtained two used pumps to deploy as needed. Long term solutions will come from a pending Watershed Plan.

### ***Public Works & Infrastructure***

Shortly after the Public Works Director departed in March 2017 Council approved a winter control program to deploy Town equipment and operators more effectively. During winter events an afternoon shift to remove snow on rural routes was added without impacting traditional early morning urban routes. This made two Town plow trucks surplus reducing future replacement costs \$600,000. In 2018 the Town bought one heavy duty 550 series truck to replace the 2004 International, a tandem and single axel plow truck. Sale of the three surplus vehicles covered the entire cost of a new heavy duty truck and added \$20,000 to the vehicle reserve. Since 2015 Public Works annual vehicle reserve contributions increased from \$105,000 to \$220,000, much closer to a proper replacement program.

Water meter installation began in 2015 and finished in 2016 dropping water use by at least 20%. Meter reading and billing procedures were adjusted with a new water use bylaw approved in 2017. The approved bulk water policy makes available only 0.75% of total supply to future users. Water restrictions were put in the hands of the Overall Responsible Operator as needed. When the DWQMS Coordinator retired in 2015, the position merged

with the Water Lead Hand. Audits, management review and inspection reports exceeded standards through staff changes. Over \$5 million was invested in water infrastructure during the term. The systems have capacity to meet 25 year growth projections.

Capacity was increased in all three Town waste water systems by inflow and infiltration initiatives and reduced water use due to meters. Clifford lagoon has capacity to service the next 25 years of residential development, while the Palmerston Plant has capacity with upgrades required in 10 to 15 years. The Harriston Lagoon can accommodate most of the projected development although improvements will be needed within 20 years depending on future standards and growth rate. Council passed a new Sewage Use Bylaw in 2017 and invested over \$5 million in waste water infrastructure during the term. A new SCADA system was installed in Clifford 2017 using redirected inflow and infiltration budget no longer needed once independent video analysis verified no major surface or groundwater penetration in the system. In 2015 a Sewage Works Responsibility Agreement was signed with Pike Lake so long term contingencies are in place for their communal systems.

In 2015-16 downtown Harriston was reconstructed from Adelaide Street to just past Jessie Street a major initiative during which the Diggin' It program was developed. Clifford Elora Street was re-built in 2017-18 from Grein's Lumber to West Heritage Road including 0.5 km of water and sewer for large lots at the north end. Other places tried the "Diggin' It" approach to major downtown projects but few were as successful as Minto. Noted infrastructure projects include Harriston George Street 2017, Clifford Ann Street 2015-2016, Palmerston James and Jane 2017, and in rural areas the Bride Road Culvert 2015, 6<sup>th</sup> Line, Blind Line, and 8<sup>th</sup> Line resurfacing 2016-2018. Selling the Town's gravel pit in 2017 to Denison's made \$618,000 available for other purposes when sale price and re-directed reserves are included. Over 750 streetlights were replaced with LED fixtures in 2015 according to the July 2014 Realterm partnership agreement that directed 65% of energy savings to them in return for installing and maintaining the lights for 10 years.

### ***Parks and Facilities***

In 2015 the Town assumed ownership of White's Junction Trail and then extended it to Harriston in collaboration with the County during 2016 roundabout construction. A railway bridge on the trail burned by fire in 2016 was replaced before a second bridge was damaged by flood in 2017. That bridge is set for 2019 replacement. A 1.18 acre park established as part of the Quality Homes project kept a commitment to the neighbourhood that a 1 acre park would be retained with Senior School re-development. In 2016 Harriston Lawn Bowling was transferred to the Town with an operating agreement allowing bowlers on-going access to the building and equipment. The Town took ownership of Mill Street Park with on-going arrangements with Harriston Horticultural Society.

In 2016 the TLC Coordinator became full time by combining part time wages with a winter control role. This greatly enhanced Town landscaping and downtown plantings in the

community. 2016 saw the Town adopt a Tree Planting and Replacement Policy to protect and enhance the tree canopy. Trees for Minto emerged 2014-2018 from the previous Trees for Farms initiative planting thousands of trees during the term. Parking lot design and landscaping at the Clifford and Harriston arenas was improved, while naturalization of open spaces started with the Warden's Forest planting at the Town office in 2016. The Harriston Legion banner program was expanded to Palmerston in 2016 and Clifford in 2018. Council approved outdoor patio standards for downtown areas in 2018 for the 2019 season.

Council approved a centralized booking system for facilities moving the role to admin staff at the municipal office in 2016-2017. The on-line presence was upgraded to increase bookings and improve customer service. Restructuring around central booking placed scheduling responsibility with the Recreation and Facilities Coordinator so staff could be better deployed to increase revenue and reduce cost. In 2016 the Norgan's construction debt was fully paid allowing surplus funds to be dedicated to future improvements. In 2016-2017 day camp and "grass roots" programs began to grow significantly with a banner year in 2018. The new after school program continues to exceed expectations with top-notch staff offering a program popular with kids and parents.

The Facilities Manager completed numerous small capital projects in many facilities such as renovations to the Town Hall Theatre, community hall upgrades, and new dressing rooms in two arenas. The Palmerston Arena lobby upgrades and the Kinsmen pool renovation in Harriston were completed with private and non-profit donations allowing the Town to accomplish more work at a lower cost to ratepayers. Several energy efficiency initiatives throughout facilities have helped control energy and utility costs.

### ***Planning, Administration & Finance***

Responding to County population projections and Growth Plan regulations approved by the Province, Council initiated a secondary planning process in Clifford in 2017 and Palmerston in 2018 to prepare the Town to participate in the County's expanded five-year official plan review set for 2019-2020. In 2016 major changes to the Planning Act were implemented and in 2018 the Ontario Municipal Board reformed requiring changes to public meeting, administrative procedures and notices. In 2016-2017 engineering services were tendered and Triton selected as the lowest cost of 11 bidders. A five year contract was signed. In 2016 a five year extension was given to Duncan Linton's legal services contract.

In 2016, Minto entered into an Asset Roadmap project to expand its Asset Management Plan to meet new obligations in the Federal Gas Tax agreement. The Town engaged Public Sector Digest to implement the CityWide software suite. They appeared before Council in 2016 to update progress. Added modules such as G.I.S. will help track service requests and improve asset maintenance for Public Works, Clerks and other departments. Expansion of asset management obligations has not yet been addressed by the new Provincial government. It is unknown if new O Reg 588/17 standards will apply in the future.

Major policy changes shifts were a challenge for Council reviewing the 2015 FCM Action Plan, Moving Ontario Forward, and Ontario Climate Change Paper proposing new initiatives for rural Ontario. In 2017 Ontario's Long Term Energy Plan was published only to be shelved by the new government in 2018. In 2015 Council dealt with Municipal Act and the Conflict of Interest Act review including, among other considerations, a ranked ballot option, eventually rejected by all municipalities except London. Council approved a code of conduct, fiscal accountability, and complaints policy to prepare for Ombudsman oversight in 2016. The Town adapted to the changing workplace review (Bill 148) and new violence and harassment rules plus changes to firefighter certification and customer services policies for accessibility. A new Purchasing Bylaw passed in 2017 met upgraded Provincial standards.

Council approved a new Performance Review program for staff, the Minto Mettle employee recognition, electronic meeting software Escribe, electronic filing using TOMRMS, eight applications under FIT 4.0 (only 4 could be completed), an electric vehicle charging station, a new delegation of powers bylaw, sidewalk maintenance plan, three new pedestrian crossovers, and a new municipal drain procedure with semi-annual updates so Council can track progress through this complicated process. Council had 9 delegations with Provincial Ministries and the Mayor and staff spoke at various events across Ontario proving Minto has something to offer beyond its borders. Council received a draft cemetery master plan and design options to inter cremated remains at all three facilities. Following public meetings this fall the final master plan and designs will come to the new Council for approval in 2019.

## **COMMENTS**

Any summary of term accomplishments that includes tornados, chickens, monster trucks, fire, ice, and floods has to be interesting. By no means does this summary capture all staff and Council activities over the last four years. This review recognizes a job well done and is the basis for the next Council to carry on the same high standards of service. It was a pleasure being a part to the team supporting Council in its 2014-2018 activities.

## **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Overall budget increases average residential taxpayer.

2015	1.7%	+\$6.9 million capital	
2016	2.9%	+\$6.9 million capital	
2017	1.2%	+\$6.1 million capital	
2018	3.6%*	+\$6.1 million capital	*(+/- 3% due to loss of Provincial funding)

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the sixth Council of the Town of Minto receives as information the C.A.O. Clerks final report entitled 2014-2018 Council Term.

Bill White, C.A.O. Clerk