



# MORRIS MUNICIPAL STRATEGIC PLAN

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# HOW TO READ THE PLAN

## Vision

A high-level guiding statement that is not measurable and sets the direction for pillars and corresponding strategies.

## Pillars

Municipal pillars are the fundamental goals of Morris that are used to structure implementation of the Plan through strategies and actions.

## Strategic Objectives

Each pillar is driven by its strategic objective and set of performance measures that will help define success.

## Performance Measures

These are pre-defined deliverables or outcomes to be achieved that reveal the efficacy of the Pillars.

## Strategies (i.e. Action Plan)

Each pillar is accompanied by a set of specific, measurable strategies and actions towards desired outcomes. These may include policy directions, programs or projects for individuals or groups to undertake.

## Timeline

Each action has a corresponding timeline assigned for anticipated completion and to reflect priority actions.

Immediate: 6 months to 1 year

Short-term: 1-3 years

Long term: 3-5+ years

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

This Municipal Strategic Plan has been prepared for the Town. The Plan is intended to set forth the core objectives, strategies, and corresponding actions to capture economic growth and development of Morris over the next three-to-five years.

Serving as a guide, the Plan provides a snapshot of the current economic conditions, opportunities, and strengths of the Town. It gives direction for future investment needs with a focus on how to attract, retain and grow the population and businesses in Morris, as well as support the local workforce.

Positioned within the purview of Council and the Town Staff, the Plan sets out a proactive vision towards building a better community for all Morris residents.



**TOWN OF MORRIS**  
Home of the Manitoba Stampede



## PLANNING PROCESS

1. **Background Information Gathering:** Information and data on Morris’ metrics (i.e. population, economic growth, etc.) are collected to build an overview of the Town’s current state. Weak areas are identified in this process.
2. **Workbook / Workshop:** A workbook and corresponding workshop are introduced to Morris municipal stakeholders to determine a grand unified goal and vision for the Town, pinpoint specific issues to address, and determine a strategic action plan to do so.
3. **Drafting:** The information from the workbook and workshop are compiled into a Strategic Action Plan (e.g. this document) and is presented to Town Staff and Council.
4. **Council Adoption:** Feedback on the final draft of the Strategic Action Plan are incorporated into the final version. This is presented to the public and Town Council for adoption through resolution.
5. **Review and Monitor:** Council is committed to ongoing engagement with the community as part of the review and monitoring of actions on an annual basis.

## 2. COMMUNITY CONTEXT

For any planning process, it is important to have a clear understanding of the community and the context that surrounds it. The information below serves as a ‘snapshot’ of Morris that will help inform and shape the strategies that will guide its growth.

### A Growing Community

Morris has always experienced steady growth since the early 2000s despite minor fluctuations. Since 2011, the population has increased by 261 people to approximately 1975. This continuous growth trend will bring new opportunities to Morris and provides a solid population base to support future economic growth.

### PTH 75 Trade Corridor

Morris is located alongside the PTH 75 Trade Corridor, one of the most critical transport and distribution lines in North America that links Canada straight through the US to Mexico. With its central location on PTH 75, Morris is poised to take advantage of the \$80 billion of trade goods that occur annually along this corridor.

### An Established Tourism Destination

Morris proudly hosts a variety of activities, festivals and events each year, and is home to Manitoba’s only professional Stampede event that is held annually each summer. Collectively, this showcase attracts thousands of people of all ages from far and wide each year.

### Urban Standard Service and Healthcare Hub

Morris offers all the services and infrastructure of a large urban hub within a small town setting. There is a variety of amenities, a hospital, wellness services, recreation, retail and telecommunication lines that are readily available for use and development opportunities.

### Affordable Housing

Morris is growing and has diverse housing options available that contribute to affordability. In 2021, the average household value in Morris was \$229,000, \$100,000 lower than the provincial average. Average monthly rent and property taxes were also notably lower than the rest of the province. Marketing our affordable places to live will support the developing workforce and grow the community.



# COUNCIL PRIORITIES

Morris Council has confirmed the following priorities:

## Top 5 Priorities

1

### **Develop the Industrial Park**

Attract and secure businesses, facilitate necessary infrastructure upgrades, and develop services that take advantage of PTH 75.

2

### **Residential Development & Aging in Place**

Develop a diverse housing stock that is suitable to all including assisted living, while providing age-friendly amenities and services that support the livability of older adults, youth and young families.

3

### **Mobilize the Business Community**

Engage the Chamber of Commerce and existing business community to showcase success stories and develop resources and supports to advance business retention and expansion.

4

### **Use Morris Multiplex to Full Potential**

Investigate the potential for value-added, revenue generating uses within the Multiplex.

5

### **Municipal Asset Management & Economic Development**

Formalize a municipal asset management program and integrate asset investment planning with economic development opportunities.

### 3. VISION

A vision statement represents the future desired state of the Town. Based on input from municipal staff and members of Council, the following vision statement was defined:

*The Town of Morris believes in proactive and positive governance that creates a safe, inclusive, and business-friendly community.*

### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

While Council work towards this vision, the following outcomes will be used to measure success of the plan:

- New Official Development Plan and Zoning Bylaw
- 'Invest in Morris' toolkit launch to engage investors and developers
- New tenants and businesses secured at the commercial/industrial park
- New residential development underway
- Annual community engagement with informal bi-annual engagement activities (i.e. newsletter, town hall, open house, pop-up event, survey, etc.)
- Ongoing communication and collaboration with surrounding municipalities through regular meetings and joint submissions for funding
- Municipal asset management program initiated
- Main Street/PTH75 placemaking strategy implemented
- New revenue generating sources from the Multiplex
- Financing secured for Assisted Living / Active Living Centre development





## MUNICIPAL PILLARS

Pillars establish the foundation of the vision and provide direction for the Town in terms of Council decision-making over the tenure of the Plan (next three to five years).



### Pillar 1 - Market Morris

#### Strategic Objective:

Establish open, transparent communication platforms and channels that showcase Morris as an attractive place to live, do business and visit.



### Pillar 2 - Strengthen and Mobilize the Tax Base

#### Strategic Objective:

Tap into funding opportunities and lead initiatives that address community needs, build on strengths, and increase infrastructure capacity.



### Pillar 3 - Accommodate Economic Growth and Change

#### Strategic Objective:

Identify and support strategic economic development opportunities that facilitate investment, business retention and expansion and job creation.



### Pillar 4 - Municipal Leadership and Resiliency

#### Strategic Objective:

Stewardship over municipal services and facilities to enable them to be self-sustaining, fiscally viable, and proactive in service delivery.

## 4. ACTION PLAN

### PILLAR 1 - MARKET MORRIS

**Strategic Objective:** Establish open, transparent communication platforms and channels that showcase Morris as an attractive place to live, do business and visit.

Immediate: 6 months to 1 year

Short-term: 1-3 years

Long-term: 3-5+ years



ACTION	TIMELINE
Collect high quality photos and videos of businesses and the community for 'Invest In Morris' products including creation of a promotional video	Immediate
Work with regional partners to advance the Mid Canada Trade Corridor and market to industry experts	Immediate
Create an economic development brand and marketing strategy including social media campaign	Short-term
Create and launch 'Invest In Morris' toolkit including profiles, website and web products	Short-term
Develop substantiated business cases that market key economic sectors, including targeted residential development	Short-term

## 4. ACTION PLAN

### PILLAR 2 - STRENGTHEN AND MOBILIZE THE TAX BASE

**Strategic Objective:** Tap into funding opportunities and lead initiatives that address community needs, build on strengths, and increase infrastructure capacity.



Immediate: 6 months to 1 year

Short-term: 1-3 years

Long-term: 3-5+ years

ACTION	TIMELINE
Regularly engage the community, community groups and local businesses to confirm priorities and provide support	Immediate
Undertake necessary studies to initiate a municipal asset management program starting with wastewater infrastructure	Short-term
Target provincial and federal funding opportunities that advance municipal priorities	Short-term
Prepare and implement a Main Street Revitalization Action Plan	Short-term
Collaborate with municipal neighbours, provincial government and other key stakeholders to build regional service capacity	Long-term

## 4. ACTION PLAN

### PILLAR 3 - ACCOMMODATE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND CHANGE

**Strategic Objective:** Identify and support strategic economic development opportunities that facilitate investment, business expansion and job creation.



Immediate: 6 months to 1 year

Short-term: 1-3 years

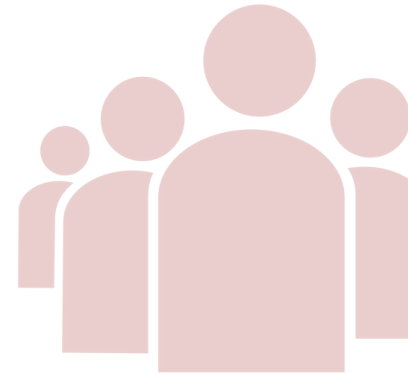
Long-term: 3-5+ years

ACTION	TIMELINE
Undertake a review and update to the Town's Development Plan and Zoning By-law	Immediate
Implement a Municipal Building and Development Incentives By-law	Short-term
Undertake a review of Development Fees and Charges By-law	Short-term
Undertake a review and update to development and building permit procedures, applicant guides and forms	Short-term
Require urban standard servicing studies for new development proposals	Short-term
Nurture local developer/business relationships through applicable incentives and supports	Long-term

## 4. ACTION PLAN

### PILLAR 4 - MUNICIPAL LEADERSHIP AND RESILIENCY

**Strategic Objective:** Stewardship over municipal services and facilities to enable them to be self-sustaining, fiscally viable, and proactive in service delivery.



Immediate: 6 months to 1 year

Short-term: 1-3 years

Long-term: 3-5+ years

ACTION	TIMELINE
Work collaboratively with Federal government, Province of Manitoba and regional municipal partners on PTH 75 improvements and trade-related opportunities	Immediate
Prepare a Municipal Facilities and Buildings Maintenance Plan	Short-term
Draft and implement organized lobbying strategy, including but not limited to PTH 75 condition, flood mitigation, and health care centre	Short-term
Evaluate potential for converting/leasing space in the multi-plex to third-party organizations	Short-term
Support community projects that promote aging-in-place and active living	Long-term
Provide ongoing support and lobbying efforts to advance an Active Living Centre development concept	Long-term

## IMPLEMENTATION

Following a review by Municipal Staff, this Strategic Plan will be finalized with the input of their received feedback before being presented to the general public and Town Council.

Town Council will read and decide to adopt this Strategic Plan through resolution. Once implemented, it will serve as a reliable guide for the day-to-day operations and proceedings of the Town and inform the decision-making of its Staff. Success of this Plan will be measured through Council's performance measures set out within this document.

This Strategic Plan is subject to annual review and revisions by Town Council and Staff where updates can or may be made to better suit new opportunities and priorities of the Town.