



Municipality of  
**Leamington**  
live | play | work

# COUNCIL PRIORITIES REVIEW AND RECOMMENDED KEY ACTIONS

Strategic Vision Update 2019-2022

[leamington.ca](http://leamington.ca)

# CONTENTS

**4**

**Planning for Leamington's Future,  
Delivering Great Services Today**

**6**

**Environmental Scan:  
Leamington Today**

**8**

**Vision, Mission and Values**

**11**

**Summary of Key Themes**

**12**

**Economy: Promoting Economic  
Development and Land Use**

**14**

**Community:  
A Focus On Partnerships**

**16**

**Infrastructure**



# MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Leamington is a proud community with a great future.

In 2015, Council and Staff approved a 20-Year Vision that set out long-term goals for our community and some of the specific steps that we would take to get there. Working together, we have already completed many of the projects set out in the 2015 Plan, setting the foundation for Leamington's future.

In early 2019, the new Council and staff met to review the 20-Year Vision, and to set priorities for this term of Council. This document is the result of that work.

As you will see, we remain focused on building the infrastructure we need, delivering the services our residents expect, and promoting growth in our local economy – albeit with new projects to build on those we have already completed.

Some of the plans in this document are matters we can control and fund ourselves. Others are plans that we can take the lead on, but will require cooperation from community partners and other governments for shared funding or policy tools.

“

**We remain focused on the infrastructure we need, delivering the services our residents expect, and promoting growth in our local economy.**

”

We have also identified pressing issues that are not our primary responsibility, but that matter to Leamington residents. On these issues, we will speak up and make sure that other levels of government understand what Leamington needs and expects.

Overall, our plan reflects the policy and funding rules that exist today. These are uncertain times. Rapid change at the Province and a looming federal election means we will need to be flexible and nimble.

Leamington cannot do it alone. Every day, we work with the provincial and federal governments, our municipal neighbours, the County of Essex and a network of community partners and agencies to get the best for Leamington. With this plan, we believe we will stay on the right track.

**- Mayor Hilda MacDonald**



# MESSAGE FROM THE CAO

What a difference four years makes. Beginning in January 2015, the Municipality of Leamington focused its efforts on building the foundation for a new and diversified economic base, helping to ensure a sustainable and resilient community into the future. The 2015 Vision provided the long-term path to achieve this.

The plan is to drive economic development through investment in infrastructure creating a future-ready community. Amenities such as bicycle and walking facilities, a refurbished library and support for the arts are essential to attract and retain an effective workforce in our community and attract the millennial age group. Ensuring an effective workforce is essential to attracting employers to Leamington.

The resulting economic growth during the last four years has been impressive and it is just the beginning. We expect private investment to continue over the course of the next four years, building upon the foundation built through investment in infrastructure.

With incredible growth comes unintended consequences and some growing pains. We recognize that while tremendous progress has occurred, there is still a lot of work to do. Our work will be set against the backdrop of policy change at senior levels of government. Leamington administration is committed to working to manage in the face of that uncertainty.

“  
The plan is to drive economic development through investment in infrastructure, creating a future-ready community. We continue to create amenities needed to attract and retain an effective workforce, which is essential to attracting employers to Leamington.  
”

This 2019 Plan will help us in that work. As you will see, it continues the pattern of investment in our infrastructure with the planned northeast trunk sewer which will assist in supporting a clean environment, help address the current housing shortage, and allow for the development of our industrial lands while supporting continued growth in the agricultural sector. This 2019 plan outlines important objectives in continuing to build community assets and services. It will ensure that our entire administration is aligned and working on our shared goals as determined by Council.

We look forward to the job ahead.

- **Peter Neufeld, Chief Administrative Officer**

# Planning for Leamington's Future, Delivering Great Services Today

In 2015, Leamington's Council approved a **20-Year Strategic Vision**. The Plan set out balanced goals for the long-term growth of Leamington. It identified three key areas of focus. Each area of activity was further defined by Key Actions.



**Infrastructure**



**Economy**



**Community**

## Setting priorities for a New Term of Council

In January 2019, Leamington's Council and Senior Management Team met to re-consider the 20-Year Strategic Vision four years later. The purpose was to consider how the needs of the community had evolved since the Vision was written, and evaluate progress. They concluded that:

- The three areas of activity are still valid.
- Many of the Key Actions had been successfully completed; others were longer term and still relevant.

This 2019-2022 Strategic Priorities Review does not replace the 20-Year Strategic Vision.

It supplements that document by providing an updated list of Key Actions that will help to set priorities for this term of Council.

# How The Plan Will Be Used

- Over the term of Council, Staff will link back in the preparation of annual operating plans and budgets.
- It is intended that it will be a tool for guiding future action, but also the basis of measurement of progress and performance measurement.

## The Process



### Environmental Scan

Council members began with an Environmental Scan, including:

- » The effect of developments in federal and provincial policy.
- » Recent social, economic and environmental developments in Leamington and the surrounding area.
- » Staff input on progress to date on Key Actions in the 20-Year Vision.



### Considering all the tools

Council considered the full range of municipal tools, including:

- » Delivery of Services (both directly and through partners.)
- » Investment in infrastructure.
- » Setting and enforcing policy.
- » Leadership: convening stakeholders and promoting opportunities for Leamington.
- » Advocacy to other levels of government.



### Identifying Gaps

In thinking about each of these areas of activity, Council and staff considered service levels that are mandated by provincial legislation and service levels set at the discretion of Council.

They also looked for services that could be delivered differently.



### Serving all of Leamington

Leamington is not only the neighbourhoods of its increasingly diverse and vibrant urban area. It is also its rural heartland. Council and Staff took care to consider the needs of all of Leamington in composing this set of priorities.



# Environmental Scan: Leamington Today

Since the 20-Year Strategic Vision was adopted by Council, Leamington has experienced a dramatic burst of development and growth. Much of this growth has been driven by investment in the greenhouse industry, and the cannabis industry in particular.

This rapid growth has brought many immediate benefits, such as increased employment opportunities and a growing assessment base for the municipality. New employment has come with growing diversity. Done right, Leamington's growing diversity can be a huge attraction.

It has also contributed to many of the challenges that are often associated with rapid growth. To continue to foster growth in the greenhouse industry, Leamington needs to:

- Invest in infrastructure to service the lands needed for growth.
- Create a strategy to manage growing diversity of Leamington and address the needs and service requirements of persons working in that industry.

Leamington has already invested in its Waterfront and its Uptown, which features both commercial activity as well as significant cultural and heritage assets.

Leamington needs to continue to invest in both areas to create a cohesive, welcoming and functional environment.

- Leamington should expand the use of its Community Improvement Plan (CIP).
- Leamington should ensure that high volume areas are accessible and adequately served by parking.

While economic growth has created more opportunity for residents, poverty is still a challenge. Support services, particularly for those with mental health and addiction challenges, are stretched, affecting quality of life and the safety for all affected.

- Working with all government partners, Leamington needs to ensure there is a full range of community services to meet the needs of residents.

Leamington needs to focus on ensuring that its community remains safe and inviting for all residents.

Leamington has the capacity to continue to make strategic investments in its future. Prudent leadership has improved the overall fiscal situation since the 20-Year Vision was written, but as is the case with virtually all Ontario municipalities, opportunities for investment will always exceed available funds.

Many elements of infrastructure are aging and require investment to ensure they are maintained in a state of good repair.

Climate change is forcing Leamington to adapt and re-evaluate the sufficiency of water management and flood control infrastructure, particularly in south-east Leamington.

Other risks identified included:

- Risk of economic downturn or economic restructuring.
- The vulnerability to sudden change in the greenhouse sector (be it continued rapid growth or sudden decline) due to its relative importance to the local economy.
- Increased housing prices make housing unattainable.
- Changes in federal or provincial policy that affect Leamington.
- Cybersecurity threats.
- Rising cost of fire protection.

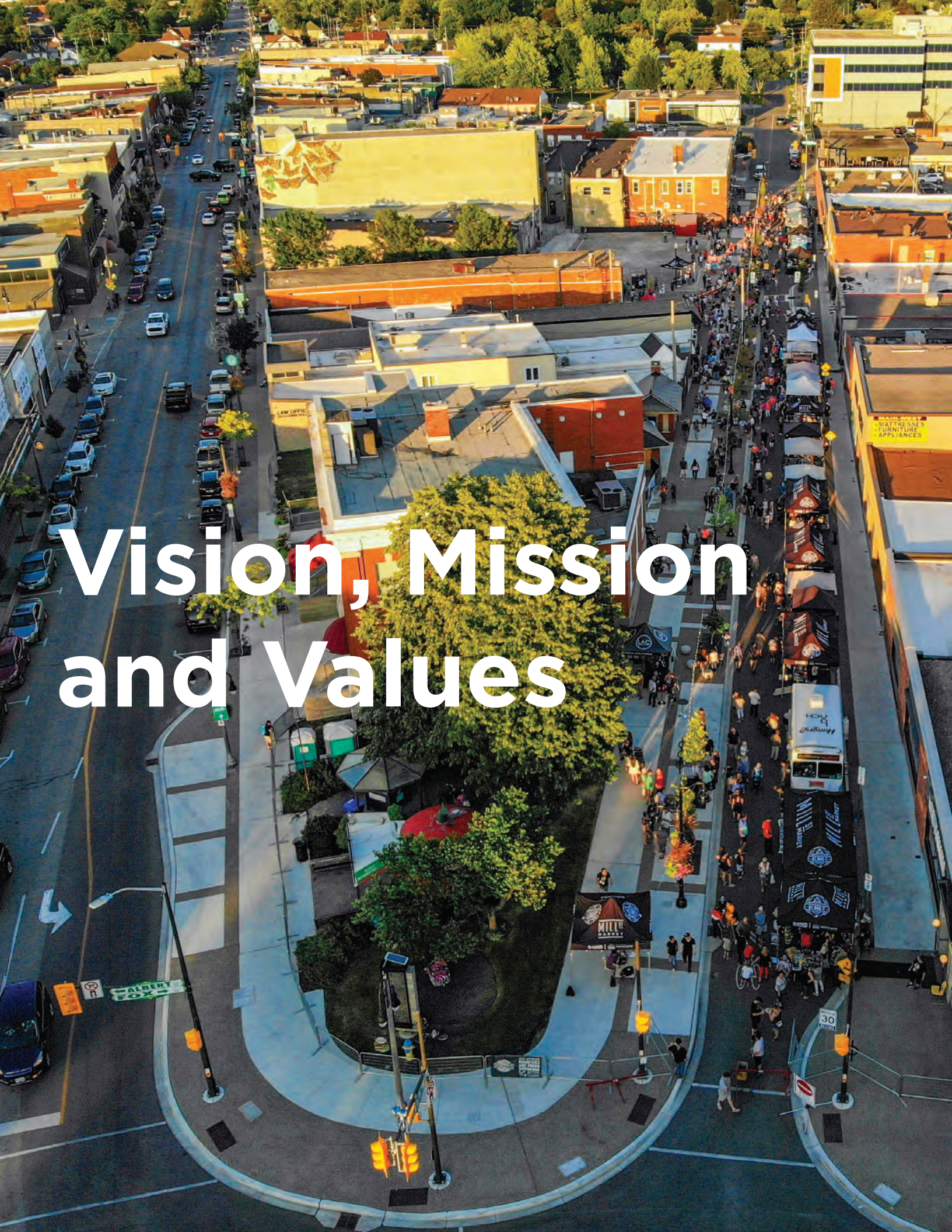
“  
For Leamington, it feels like this is our moment... we have to act now.  
”  
- Session Participant

Council and staff know that Leamington residents expect their municipality to manage risk prudently and always focus on value for money and keeping taxes affordable.

- Leamington needs to balance the requirement to continue to invest prudently in its asset management plan to ensure a state of good repair, while funding the new projects that Leamington needs.

Leamington has a strong team that is ready to face these challenges. It delivered on priorities in the 2015 version of the plan. Leamington can justly claim “we did what we said we would do.” The time is now to build on the track record of success.





# Vision, Mission and Values

# Vision

The 2015-2019 Plan took a long-term view of “the Leamington Experience,” thinking twenty years forward. In this document, our goal is to respect and build on that work. Our vision is to ensure that Leamington is a vibrant, prosperous, future-oriented community that is an excellent place to live, play and work.



# Mission

Inspired by our values and vision, our mission is to make continuous progress on implementing the Vision through the approved goals of Council.

Together, Mayor, Council and Staff:

- Lead, govern and steward Leamington’s resources and assets.
- Deliver services and infrastructure.
- Advocate on behalf of Leamington to other levels of government.
- Engage our residents and convene community members and stakeholders.

# Values

Values Identified in the 2019-2022 Strategic Priorities Process



## Economy

- Open for business and investment
- Integrated and holistic planning



## Community

- Compassionate
- Inclusive



## Infrastructure

- Focused on Customer service
- Fiscally Prudent
- Continuously improving

# Summary of Key Themes



## Economy

- Waterfront
- Tourism
- Uptown Policy
- Leadership



## Community

- International Agricultural Workers
- Community Services
- Community Safety
- Rural Services



## Infrastructure

- Trunk Sewer
- Water Management
- Other Infrastructure Projects



# Economy

# Waterfront

Waterfront Destination Development Master Plan: Continue planning for the next phase of development, including potential property acquisitions.

- Ensure adequate parking to accommodate increased population and visitors.
- Accelerate review of Public Private Partnership (P3) opportunities for next phase of development.

# Managed Growth

- Feasibility study of re-introduction of Development Charge.
- Promote availability of and expand areas covered by the Leamington Community Improvement Plan (CIP).
- Develop and implement a strategy to address derelict buildings.
- Ensure adequate resources to enforce by-laws.



# Uptown

- Activate the Uptown through tourism, events and cultural programming (such as further partnering with BIA).
- Accelerate review of opportunities for the next phase of development, including land acquisition.

# Tourism

- Continue to implement Tourism Strategy.
- Examine opportunities to promote cycling, preparing for new opportunities that may arise from Can-USA Bridge.
- Continue implementation of strategy to promote Leamington as a destination for authentic dining experiences.



# Community

# Agricultural Workers

- Manage the impact of large numbers of international workers including offering adequate housing, services and supports.
- Study best practices in managing impact of short-term residents.
- Monitor and take measures to ensure adequacy of housing and services for agricultural workers.
- Ensure adequate resources to enforce by-laws non-conforming and incompatible uses.
- Promote communication between stakeholders and community groups to foster mutual understanding of issues and common approach to resolution of issues, building on successful work already undertaken by the Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers (OGVG).

# Community Services

- Examine policy measures to promote suitable housing, (ownership/purpose built rental/different unit sizes and mixes of affordability).
- Advocate for greater provincial and county investment and focus on housing and mental health issues in Leamington.
- Examine opportunities for an anti-poverty strategy, including increased support for mental health and addictions, and associated social services.

# Community Safety

- Continue to advocate for community safety issues through Leamington's Police Services Board.
- Use programming and reinvention of uptown spaces to improve the perception of safety issues.
- Review adequacy of current policing model.



# Focus on Rural Services

- Inclusion of rural businesses as eligible for Community Improvement Plan (CIP).
- Drainage Strategy inclusive of phragmites.
- Explore opportunities to expand lighting at key rural intersections.
- Continue maintenance program on rural roads.

# Infrastructure



# Trunk Sewer

- Invest in the project to extend the north east trunk sewer.
- Continue to lobby/advocate for upper level funding.

# Water Management

- Develop and begin to implement a long-term strategy for water management issues in southeast Leamington.
- Develop and begin to implement a long-term drainage maintenance strategy for agricultural lands.
- Develop and begin to implement a phragmites management strategy, including necessary cooperation of neighbouring municipalities.

# Other Infrastructure Projects

- Fire Services capital replacements and upgrades associated with increasing industrial development (Municipal Needs Assessment).
- Prepare and evaluate a business case for measures to promote access to high-speed internet.
- Seek opportunities to incorporate biking facilities where appropriate.





Municipality of  
**Leamington**  
live | play | work

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

519-326-5761

[www.learmington.ca](http://www.learmington.ca)

[communications@learmington.ca](mailto:communications@learmington.ca)

© 2019 The Municipality of Leamington