

# The Town of Carleton Place



## Community Strategic Plan

By:

*McSweeney & Associates*  
MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

May 15, 2007

Town of Carleton Place  
Community Strategic Plan

Prepared by

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In Association with:

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CORPORATION

And

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Mr. Paul Knowles, CAO  
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May 15, 2007

Dear Paul,

I am pleased to submit to you the Carleton Place Community Strategic Plan.

The Plan contains a summary of the economic analysis and the extensive community and stakeholder consultations that have taken place. It also provides a brief description of the desired future state, and action plans for each of the strategic themes agreed to at the stakeholder consultation session.

I look forward to presenting this strategy next week.

Yours truly,

Eric McSweeney  
President

## Table of Contents

1.	Introduction .....	1
2.	Current Situation.....	2
2.1.	What are Carleton Place's greatest strengths?.....	2
2.2.	What are Carleton Place's greatest weaknesses? .....	2
2.3.	What are the opportunities you think Carleton Place should take advantage of?.....	2
2.4.	Describe the type of community you would like Carleton Place to be in 5 to 10 years from now? .....	3
2.5.	What could prevent Carleton Place from becoming the community you would like it to be in 5 to 10 years?.....	3
2.6.	Are there any other high priority issues you feel should be addressed in planning for Carleton Place's future? .....	4
3.	Building on our Competitive Strengths: <i>Our Community Strategy</i> .....	5
3.1.	Our Vision of Carleton Place in 2017 .....	6
3.2.	Economic & Tourism Development .....	7
3.3.	Downtown Transformation .....	10
3.4.	Development of the Creative Industries: Arts and Culture .....	14
3.5.	Heritage and History .....	17
3.6.	Recreation and Natural Environment .....	19
3.7.	Seniors and Youth Development .....	21
3.8.	Transportation and Transit .....	22
4.	Achieving the Vision .....	23
5.	Appendix 1: Environmental Scan .....	24

## 1. Introduction

In the fall of 2006, Town of Carleton Place awarded a contract to McSweeney & Associates (in association with Market Research Corporation and Municipal Solutions) to facilitate the preparation of a community strategy for Carleton Place. The strategy was to provide economic development directions in addition to being a broad-based community strategy.

The first document prepared was a "Community Situation Analysis", which was released on January 22, 2007, and was updated on May 15, 2007, to include the 2006 preliminary census population of Carleton Place. The report (available at the Town Hall and at the library) contains detailed information on the following topics:

- 2006 demographic information detailing Carleton Place's population;
- Carleton Place's housing market;
- Carleton Place's Retail market (including a telephone survey of 400 households) and;
- Carleton place's industrial market.

An extensive program of stakeholder consultation was then undertaken, which included interviews, an open house, meetings, mail out information, and an online survey amongst other communication and feedback techniques. This initial consultation garnered input from over 375 individuals and ten community organizations. A summary of this input has been provided in the "Current Situation" portion of this strategy. The full compilation of comments received is available at the Town Hall or at the library.

Stakeholders from across the Town were then invited to attend a half-day workshop to hear the results of the analysis completed to date and, more importantly, to participate in the development of vision, goals, and actions for several key theme areas. The workshop was held on March 19, 2007 at the Carleton Place Auditorium, and was attended by 26 stakeholders from across the Town, representing a broad cross-section of interests. There was excellent discussion on a variety of points leading to an agreement on the themes for the overall strategies to be pursued, followed by the development of a vision for that theme, and the actions required in the next two to three years to move toward achieving that vision.

This stakeholder input was then used to prepare a draft community strategy, which was released on March 27, 2007, for another similar round of public consultation. Comments received on the draft were compiled and released in a document on May 7, 2007. These comments were considered at a meeting of the community strategy steering committee on May 8, and final directions for changes were agreed to, which has resulted in this current document.

## 2. Current Situation

The following section provides a summary of the key points that were derived from the compilation of all comments provided through the strategic plan community consultation process, and generally reflects the frequency with which the points were made. Their relevance to the strategic planning process was also considered. The compilation of all comments received is available for viewing at the Town Hall and at the library.

### 2.1. What are Carleton Place's greatest strengths?

- Carleton Place's small town atmosphere in a rural setting provides its residents with a sense of charm, safety and a sense of community.
- Its water bodies, the Mississippi River and Lake, and the beauty and recreational assets they provide to Carleton Place.
- Its people, especially their community involvement, the plethora of community groups in Town, and a general feeling of pride of place in Carleton Place residents.
- Green space found in the wide variety of parks and trails that Carleton Place possesses, provides residents with many recreational choices.
- Carleton Place's location provides close proximity to Ottawa and gives it access to world-class amenities and culture.
- Heritage assets and the historic appeal of the built environment.
- It has a competitive cost of living, especially relating to affordable homes.
- The variety of services that are available.

### 2.2. What are Carleton Place's greatest weaknesses?

- Its downtown core, of which residents perceive as being in a state of deterioration, and that stores hours of business do not align with the needs of the commuter population.
- There is a perceived lack of variety in current retail establishments, especially in regards to up-scale vendors.
- There is an opinion amongst the community that there is a lack of a common vision regarding future planning, future developments, and a lack of leadership.
- Infrastructure is viewed as being not kept up-to-date, especially with respect to road and sidewalk maintenance, as well as snow removal.
- The opportunities for youth, - residents feel there is a lack of jobs and activities , and this leads to increased levels of gangs and violence in the community.
- Drugs in the community, which is leading to a biased opinion of Carleton Place by outsiders and increased levels of crime.
- The beach area is perceived as being dirty and unkept – the canoe club, a historical building, in particular is in need of maintenance
- A lack of inter- and intra-community public transportation systems, especially to Ottawa.
- A lack of job availability and lack of opportunity outside retail employment.

### 2.3. What are the opportunities you think Carleton Place should take advantage of?

- Encourage economic and business growth through an economic development organization, and provide facilities and incentives to new business attraction and to retain existing businesses. There is a growing opportunity to attract small businesses that will continue to be forced out of Ottawa for a number of reasons.
- Downtown revitalization efforts, through case study analysis of other communities as well as using the heritage assets along with the river and lakes in beautification initiatives.
- Tourism efforts should make use of the local arts and business communities, historical and heritage assets, the downtown, the Mississippi River and Carleton Place's proximity to Ottawa.
- Transportation efforts should focus on the expansion of Highway 7 and public transportation systems.
- Development of Carleton Place's recreational assets, especially using the Mississippi River in these efforts.
- Promotion efforts for Carleton Place should focus on the Mississippi River, local heritage and a general "riverbank way of life."
- Youth development should focus on increased programs starting with the development of a new youth centre.

#### 2.4. Describe the type of community you would like Carleton Place to be in 5 to 10 years from now?

- A sense of inclusiveness due to Carleton place's small town appeal, level of safety, and attitudes of its residents.
- A creative, interesting and vibrant downtown area.
- A self-sufficient community with all major amenities (and employment) available in Carleton Place.
- An economically diverse community with a solid job base, an increased light industry presence in town, with higher paying jobs and increased part-time employment opportunities for youth and seniors.
- An arts and recreation based community with festivals and events highlighting their activities.
- Strong public transportation within the Town and to Ottawa.

#### 2.5. What could prevent Carleton Place from becoming the community you would like it to be in 5 to 10 years?

- Lack of planning or insight, the fast pace of development, including over-development of big-box stores and generally poor or no planning for future development.
- Politics, especially a lack of clear vision, and lack of leadership.
- Attitudes, especially a local aversion to change and lack of cooperation amongst local groups.
- A lack of opportunities and activities for youth leading to out-migration.
- Ottawa's influence, including the possibility of amalgamation with Ottawa.
- Local businesses not keeping up with market demands or responding to needs.
- Drug problems not being dealt with.
- Municipal services not keeping up with demand.

2.6. Are there any other high priority issues you feel should be addressed in planning for Carleton Place's future?

- Continued efforts placed on municipal services, including infrastructure to support continued growth, expanding parks and recreation facilities while at the same time keeping taxes low.
- Continued development of the downtown, including an image make-over and refocus, and its promotion to tourists and for new business attraction.
- Youth projects need more funding and increased variety in activities while at the same time increasing youth job opportunities.
- Economic development should be undertaken by an independent economic development organization complete with plan and timelines and the plan should clearly define the types of industries and businesses that will make Carleton Place a unique destination.
- Transportation efforts should be focused on developing commuter services to Ottawa and increasing safety along Carleton Place's major arteries, especially Highway 7.
- Services for seniors should be increased through greater residential development and increased activities.

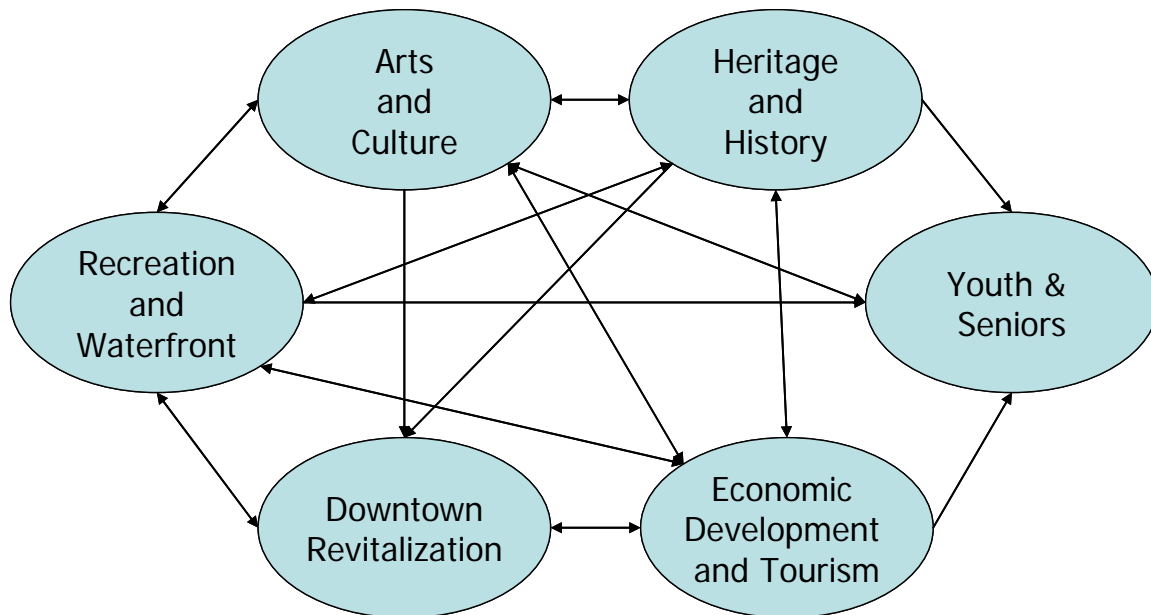
### 3. Building on our Competitive Strengths: *Our Community Strategy*

This strategy has been developed through broad stakeholder consultation and a thorough situational analysis, and will be used to guide community efforts in Carleton Place over the next few years. The following sections of the strategy build on the competitive strengths and opportunities of Carleton Place, and generally outline a desired future state, and actions to achieve the desired future state.

The following theme areas were determined through the consultation process and the stakeholder summit session. As illustrated below, the themes are mutually supportive and there are strong interrelationships between them.

It should be recognised that many of action plans that follow in this draft strategy are beyond the current resources of the Town. In addition, the Town faces several municipal management issues, which are summarized in Appendix 1, "Environmental Scan". Further details on the municipal issues identified in the Environmental Scan are available from the Town Hall.

While several action plans contained in this strategy may be eligible for external funding, there will still need to be dialogue on the reallocation of existing Municipal resources, or on the dedication of new Municipal resources. Responsibility for implementation is a joint responsibility of the Town and the community. A suggestion for how this responsibility may be shared is presented the section entitled "Achieving the Vision".



### 3.1. Our Vision of Carleton Place in 2017

*The following vision statement is written in the present tense, indicating what the “current situation” will be in the year 2017.*

In 2017, arts, culture, downtown, waterfronts, and the Town’s abundance of heritage shapes Carleton Place’s unique brand, all centred on downtown Carleton Place - the economic and social heart of Carleton Place. Downtown’s continuous façade of interesting storefront businesses are supported by an increased density of residents living downtown, including seniors. Residents and visitors delight in its history and heritage, its food and entertainment offerings, and its thriving artistic and cultural community, events, and festivals. These elements contribute to a strong and growing local economy that offers a diversity of employment opportunities for its citizens, including youth, seniors, and young families, all of whom are actively engaged in the community through a variety of services and activities.

Carleton Place provides a multitude of opportunities to engage in recreational, sports, and leisure time pursuits: for young and old; for residents and visitors – and all add to the quality of life enjoyed in Carleton Place. The cultural, waterfront, and industrial heritage of the Town is also closely linked to recreational opportunities. Particular attention to the natural environment has resulted in the preservation and maintenance of a healthy environment: a clean and healthy river; green space; high water quality; protected fish habitat; and a forest canopy. Transit both within Carleton Place, and to Ottawa provides much greater mobility to seniors, youth, and all age groups.

### 3.2. Economic & Tourism Development

Stakeholder feedback indicated a very strong desire for more balanced growth within Carleton Place. There has been strong residential growth, but very little non-residential growth (other than suburban retail growth) to provide diversity of employment opportunities and a balanced assessment base.

For the purpose of this strategy, economic development may be defined as:

- the ***process*** of increasing the rate of wealth creation by mobilising human, financial, organisational, physical and natural resources to create opportunities to generate marketable goods and services; and
- the ***practice*** whereby professional economic developers influence the above process for the benefit of the whole municipality.

One way of looking at the process of generating local wealth is to think of it as “economic gardening”:

- creating fertile economic conditions;
- planting the right seeds;
- having support mechanisms for nurturing growth and marketing of goods/services;
- Supplement with outside investment, resources, and labour attraction as required to fill any gaps.

#### **Desirable Future State**

*The following vision statement is written in the present tense, indicating what the “current situation” will be in the year 2017.*

Carleton Place has a strong and growing local economy that offers a diversity of employment opportunities for its citizens, including youth, seniors, and young families. As a result of a local business environment that makes entrepreneurship and business growth easy, continuous economic growth and expansion is occurring in Carleton Place. This is especially evident in the continual expansion and development of business park lands, and in the growth of professional office space. Full time professional staff will facilitate the growth of Carleton Place, with strategic policy guidance and direction by a multi-stakeholder economic development organization. Business retention and expansion efforts are supplemented with selective target marketing to attract new business to Carleton Place.

Carleton Place is recognized as a destination for great dining, entertainment, nightlife, and specialty items shops that can be accessed seven days a week – all within a quaint and historic setting. Event coordination and tourism marketing help to promote Carleton Place’s tourism sector year-round. Arts, culture, downtown, waterfronts, and the Town’s abundance of heritage has shaped Carleton Place’s unique brand.

#### **Recommendations**

Following are the recommendations for economic development.

1. That the Town and community create an independent economic development committee or organization that actively engages the multitude of economic interests within a good governance framework.
2. That an annual budget be provided by the Town based upon the submission of:
  - a. An annual report on the performance of the organization, specifically addressing performance related to the previous year's operating plan;
  - b. Quarterly progress reports to Council and community;
  - c. An annual operating plan and budget for the organization. The annual operating plan is to implement the economic portions of this strategy (and subsequent economic development strategies, and specifically downtown transformation, economic and tourism development<sup>1</sup>, and possibly arts/cultural economic development).
3. That upon approval of the first and subsequent budgets, the organization should staff with an appropriately trained economic development professional(s) to undertake the approved work plan.
4. To provide for continuity of staffing and operations, while at the same time preserving the right of budget approval, Council must assume the rights, responsibilities, assets, and liabilities of the organization should it be wound down.
5. That the committee/organization consider the development of the following typical first year program of marketing collateral materials:
  - a. Development of an economic development identity;
  - b. An economic development web site (over 90% of site selection searches utilize the web);
  - c. Quick facts brochure;
  - d. An economic profile;
  - e. A lure brochure;
  - f. Kit folder, sales letters, E-newsletter, hard copy newsletter, feature sheets;
  - g. Display banner;
  - h. Industrial and office space availability inventory;
  - i. A business directory (could be a second year activity).
6. That the Town continue to pursue acquisition, planning, and development (followed by marketing) of new business park lands. Public-public or public-private sector cooperation could be considered for this recommendation.

Following are the **tourism**<sup>2</sup> related recommendations, in sequential order. There should be a strong focus on a few areas of tourism product development and marketing:

- a. Arts and culture;
- b. Cultural heritage and history (including WWI ace Roy Brown);
- c. Downtown, waterfronts, and natural areas.

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<sup>1</sup> While ideally there would be separate professionals supporting economic development, tourism and arts/cultural development, the financial reality may not permit this level of commitment in the early years. As a substantial portion of the early work related to tourism is related to research and product development, this work could be handled at first by an economic development officer. At the point when Carleton Place is ready to actively engage in tourism promotion that would be a good time to re-visit whether separate resources could be dedicated to tourism. The need for a separate tourism destination marketing organization can be considered at that time as well.

<sup>2</sup> See immediately preceding footnote

7. Review, confirm and fully understand the tourism segments Carleton Place can draw on: Sunday drivers, sports attendees, boaters, music lovers, heritage/history buffs, etc. What is the demographic of each segment? What is each demographic looking for in a tourism experience?
8. Identify assets with the potential to draw tourists. Consider undertaking Premier-ranked tourism destination methodology<sup>3</sup>, or a variation thereof.
9. Identify gaps in product or service to be improved as well as opportunities that can be exploited (including tourism kiosk, RV/camping facilities, hotels, signage, riverfront amphitheatre, traffic routing, souvenir line, steamboat lunch/dinner cruises, etc.).
10. Address gaps in products or services and exploit opportunities (product development).
11. Begin planning and implementing tourism marketing program to be based upon the experiences available to visitors to Carleton Place.

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<sup>3</sup> The Premier-ranked Tourist Destinations Framework is an assessment and evaluation tool used to inventory and analyze a region's tourism amenities and attractions and identify opportunities for tourism investment and development. It is designed to result in a strategic action plan for tourism to improve the region's performance in the tourism marketplace. See: [www.tourism.gov.on.ca/english/ido/premier-ranked.html](http://www.tourism.gov.on.ca/english/ido/premier-ranked.html)

### 3.3. Downtown Transformation

It is a commonly recognised that downtown Carleton Place could be significantly improved. The downtown is no longer the only provider of goods and services for Carleton Place. Current “suburban” retail development draws customers away from downtown, and planned development further threatens to erode the economic viability of downtown Carleton Place. Growth in online shopping also impacts traditional retail. In terms of downtown revitalization, it is easier to build positive momentum from a neutral position, than to turn around a downward spiral - therefore time is of the essence. Downtown must attract investment, client-focussed businesses, and customers.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation<sup>4</sup> outlines several key benefits that downtowns or business districts can offer:

- “Many consumers are tired of the homogeneity and impersonality of shopping malls, big-box businesses, and chain stores. People value personal attention, name recognition, quality merchandise, and exemplary service — all potential features of traditional commercial districts.
- A community's business district represents a substantial share of its economy: its jobs, tax base, municipal investment, and businesses.
- Because consumers are more mobile today than several decades ago, the market area that a downtown or neighborhood commercial district can potentially serve is much greater than it used to be.
- More and more people enjoy visiting historic places, not just for vacation, but also for everyday business and leisure activities. Traditional community centers offer unique shopping in historic environments.”

#### **Desirable Future State**

*The following vision statement is written in the present tense, indicating what the “current situation” will be in the year 2017.*

Downtown Carleton Place is the economic and social heart of Carleton Place, the centre of focus for its arts, cultural, and heritage amenities, and home to its finest establishments. An eclectic and captivating mix of retail and service businesses excel in providing outstanding customer service to all its patrons, from youth to seniors. In fact, there is a waiting list of progressive yet complementary businesses waiting to profit from a downtown location. Downtown businesses are supported by an increased density of residents living downtown, including seniors (who enjoy the physical accessibility downtown offers). Downtown presents its visitors with a continuous façade of interesting storefronts that capture the essence of historic Carleton Place. Visitors delight in its heritage, its food and entertainment offerings, and in gathering in the “Common” for people activities.

<sup>4</sup> [www.mainstreet.org](http://www.mainstreet.org)

## Recommendations

### Organization:

Successful downtown transformation depends upon strong cooperation and collaboration between public and private sectors. It also involves getting everyone working towards a common vision and assembling the appropriate human and financial resources to implement a downtown revitalization program.

1. Establish a longer term organization to be responsible for:
  - a. overall downtown transformation effort;
  - b. building consensus and cooperation amongst stakeholders;
  - c. to provide leadership to the design and physical transformation of downtown;
  - d. To encourage and promote investment in the transformation of downtown.

This organization requires the involvement particularly of land and building owners, investors and developers, as well as businesses, the Town, BIA, Chamber, arts and cultural communities, and possibly others.

### Design and physical revitalization of public and private property:

It is imperative that downtown be a visually appealing and inviting place to visit. Downtown must highlight its best assets such as heritage buildings and pedestrian-oriented streets. The welcoming atmosphere is created through the total physical package: attractive window displays, parking areas, heritage restoration and compatible new development, street furniture, signs, sidewalks, street lights, and landscaping.

2. That the Town undertake a review of, and amend land use and development regulations to achieve the following:
  - a. Confirm the streets and area to be considered to be "downtown";
  - b. Review and amend the zoning as necessary:
    - i. Consider where and how to achieve "at grade" retail and limited services as the only permitted ground floor use, and encourage offices/other services and residential uses above grade.
    - ii. Provide for consistent front/side yard setback along designated streets to encourage continuous facades or storefronts;
    - iii. Consider appropriate locations for higher densities and heights for residential development in downtown area.
  - c. Develop signage and building design guidelines<sup>5</sup> for designated streets to encourage façades that are sympathetic to the heritage character of Carleton Place;
  - d. Consider designation of the downtown area as a Community Improvement Area under Planning Act;

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<sup>5</sup> With the assistance of the Municipal Heritage Committee

3. That the Town consider financial incentives (including outside organization incentives) for those who voluntarily comply with signage and building design guidelines:
  - i. For compatible façade design work;
  - ii. Municipal fees exemptions;
  - iii. Façade improvement (low cost/interest free loans or grants);
4. That the Town consider<sup>6</sup> designation, guidelines, and other tools to encourage the restoration of heritage assets, including publicly owned assets;
5. That the downtown organization plan downtown parking solutions;
6. That the Town initiate comprehensive planning for the best use of, and integration of waterfront into downtown (including the former Findlay Foundry site);
7. That recreation opportunities/spaces within the downtown be improved to better enable community events and to encourage multi-generational residents and visitors to “spend the day”. Specific initiatives identified by the community include improving downtown greenspace, increasing accessibility, and generally creating a social atmosphere for the downtown.
8. That the Town ensure that the visible physical infrastructure of downtown remains in a state of excellent repair.
9. That the Town encourage a vibrant pedestrian friendly downtown with both public and private gathering areas.

#### Economic restructuring

Success in downtown depends upon presenting the right mix of retail, service and professional services, thereby strengthening the image of downtown as being the “go to place”. Downtown businesses must sharpen their competitiveness and downtown must recruit compatible new businesses that are willing to anticipate and serve the needs of today's consumers.

It is therefore recommended that the following actions be taken:

10. Review and document the current store/service mix;
11. Document contact information for downtown property owners to facilitate communication on downtown planning and economic restructuring, and to encourage owners to act in a manner consistent with the downtown plans;
12. Identify and maintain a list of vacancies and upcoming lease renewals/potential vacancies;
13. Develop downtown's “ideal” merchandise mix, considering arts/culture as an important part of mix (perhaps requiring professional retail analysis recommendations);
14. Identify the desirable uses that are missing or not well located within the downtown;
15. Recruit progressive client-focussed businesses to fill vacancies, encourage owners to fill to desired merchandise mix;
16. Provide ongoing customer service training to owners/employees (perhaps in a variety of formats and ongoing messaging). Consider a reward system such as downtown employee of the month;
17. Develop consensus on extended and consistent store hours;

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<sup>6</sup> With the assistance of the Municipal Heritage Committee

18. Examine the potential to utilize vacancies for arts window displays, or other creative use of vacant spaces;
19. That the Town determine the extent of demand and public support for public transit to facilitate movement within, and to the downtown.

Promotion and marketing of downtown strengths

Finally, the downtown “product” must be marketed and promoted to consumers to create a positive image of downtown’s unique characteristics. An effective strategy includes advertising, retail promotional activity, special events, and marketing campaigns carried out by the BIA. These activities improve consumer (and business and investor) confidence in the downtown.

20. That the BIA focus on developing and implementing a strategy to:
  - a. market and promote the downtown to residents, visitors and tourists, (vs. to potential businesses);
  - b. Organize an annual program of downtown special events, and cooperate/ collaborate with other special events and promotions within Carleton Place for the benefit of downtown (cross-checked against other Carleton Place events, and events of other communities).

### 3.4. Development of the Creative Industries: Arts and Culture

Creative industries<sup>7</sup> are those that contribute to experimentation and innovation across a range of activities making local economies dynamic environments in which ideas flourish. In these environments, people from diverse backgrounds come together to make their communities better places to live work and play. Furthermore, economic competitiveness can be levered by creative industries through the creativeness of their employees.

A main contributor to such an environment is arts and culture. Arts and culture can contribute positively to community development in a variety of ways:

- Artists alone can contribute to overall productivity improvements by virtue of the fact that they are often highly entrepreneurial, in many cases being self-employed;

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<sup>7</sup> Definition of “creative industries” from Wikipedia.org: “The UK Government Department of Culture, Media and Sport define Creative Industries as: “those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property.” The Department’s category list consists of production in the following sectors:

- Advertising
- Architecture
- Arts and Antiques Market
- Crafts
- Design
- Designer Fashion
- Film and Video
- Interactive Leisure Software
- Music
- Performing Arts
- Publishing
- Software and computer Services
- Television and Radio

Some, such as Richard Florida argue for a wider focus on the products of knowledge workers and judge the creative class to include nearly all those offering professional knowledge-based services. As some first world countries struggle to compete in traditional markets such as manufacturing, many now see the Creative Industries as a key component in a new Knowledge Economy, capable perhaps of delivering urban regeneration, often through initiatives linked to exploitation of cultural heritage that leads to increased tourism. It is often argued that, in future, the ideas and imagination of countries like the United Kingdom will be their greatest asset.

There is often a question mark over the boundaries between Creative Industries and the similar term of Cultural Industries. Cultural Industries are best described as an adjunct-sector of the Creative Industries, including activities such as: Cultural Tourism & Heritage; Museums & Libraries; Sports & Outdoor activities; through a variety of ‘way of life’ activities that arguably range from local pet shows to a host of hobbyist concerns. The possible difference would thus be that the Cultural Industries are more concerned with delivering other kinds of value to society than simply monetary value, such as Cultural Wealth and Social Wealth.

- There is a growing recognition that arts and culture is a significant contributor to quality of life in a community, thereby aiding in attraction and retention of people/ labour force and in the retention of youth in a community;
- It can lead to greater cross-cultural and cross-generational understanding;
- With increasing frequency, cultural heritage combined with a flourishing arts sector is a magnet for visitors, contributing to broader based economic growth.

### **Desirable Future State**

*The following vision statement is written in the present tense, indicating what the “current situation” will be in the year 2017.*

Carleton Place is the recognised focal point of the region’s thriving artistic and cultural community. A community centre is at the centre of this beehive of arts and cultural events, assets, and happenings, although many find a home within one of the numerous heritage assets scattered throughout Carleton Place. Carleton Place is recognized as a visitor and tourist destination for the arts and cultural events and the festivals that have sprung from this sector.

The Carleton Place community recognizes the economic benefits and contributions of the arts and cultural community to the growth and development of the Carleton Place economy. As a result, the on-going development of the arts and cultural communities is supported with dedicated specialized human resources, housed within suitable facilities.

### **Recommendations**

Following are the recommendations for creating the desired future state of the arts and cultural sector in Carleton Place.

1. That Arts Carleton Place be responsible for the overall development of arts and culture in Town, including the development of an overall strategy and the following specific actions:
  - a. Creating an inventory of current regional creative and cultural assets, events, resources, and programs<sup>8</sup>;
  - b. Undertake an analysis of the social and economic impact of the contribution of the creative and culture industries to the local community, including a review of the results of Municipal Cultural Planning Forums that have taken place in Ontario;
  - c. Develop a strategy to enhance current arts and cultural amenities to further support, attract, and retain the creative class i.e. arts and cultural programming, museums, art galleries, and urban design<sup>9</sup>;

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<sup>8</sup> This mapping should include surrounding areas.

<sup>9</sup> The Trillium Foundation has granted \$230,500 over two years for the implementation of a strategic plan to build the capacity of Ontario communities, helping them adopt local cultural planning and form learning networks to share practices and knowledge about municipal cultural planning. (Municipal Cultural Planning Partnerships c/o Community Cultural Impresarios)

- d. Plan for a collective approach to promote the economic and cultural benefits of arts and culture and the importance of integrating creative and cultural industries within the overall economic development approach;
  - e. Organize networking opportunities for the arts and cultural communities;
  - f. Marketing of arts and culture beyond municipal boundaries;
  - g. Consider building upon the strength of the arts and cultural components of the Town in any future branding;
  - h. Support the training of a volunteer corps that would be available to provide technical and logistical support functions for events, including those within the auditorium.
2. That the Auditorium Committee continue to focus on its goal of developing an operating theatre that meets required standards. Efforts should be focused on redeveloping the following facilities of the auditorium: air conditioning; replacement of curtains; repairing the balcony, stage, and areas surrounding it, and; constructing a new floor, lighting and sound system.
3. That Arts Carleton Place begin investigating the concept of a community centre for all, including a municipal arts centre, and youth and seniors centres, all within one centre.
4. Arts/culture programs should seek to become more inclusive by incorporating the youth, seniors, and the rural population surrounding Carleton Place.

### 3.5. Heritage and History

#### **Desirable Future State**

*The following vision statement is written in the present tense, indicating what the "current situation" will be in the year 2017.*

The cultural heritage<sup>10</sup> of Carleton Place and its contribution to history is an integral part of Carleton Place's identity. Many Carleton Place heritage buildings are protected through designation and/or through the establishment of a heritage conservation district. Downtown has not only become the economic and social heart of the community, but the centre of Carleton Place's heritage. Cultural heritage not only includes the built environment, but also includes the natural environment, waterfront and river preservation, as well as the Town's population of hackberry trees. The heritage and history is fully appreciated, valued and promoted through development of school programs, public education for residents, the use of the museum, and through heritage walking tours. This preservation of heritage and history is a fundamental plank in increased community pride, and in supporting tourism.

#### **Recommendations**

Following are the recommendations for heritage and history development in Carleton Place.

1. Identify, document, and prioritize (by importance) the cultural heritage and historical assets of Carleton Place (including natural heritage).
2. Designate the most important heritage assets, and consider the viability of a heritage conservation district in downtown.
3. Ensure that design guidelines require the sympathetic design of infill developments.
4. Assist the Historical Society to lead in the creation of a program and initiatives to foster heritage and historical appreciation in Carleton Place. This effort should be a

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<sup>10</sup> Wikipedia definition of cultural heritage: "Cultural heritage ("national heritage" or just "heritage") is the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations. Often though, what is considered cultural heritage by one generation may be rejected by the next generation, only to be revived by a succeeding generation.

Physical or "tangible cultural heritage" includes buildings and historic places, monuments, artifacts, etc., that are considered worthy of preservation for the future. These include objects significant to the archaeology, architecture, science or technology of a specific culture. "Natural heritage" is also an important part of a culture, encompassing the countryside and natural environment, including flora and fauna.

These kind of heritage sites often serve as an important component in a country's tourist industry, attracting many visitors from abroad as well as locally. The heritage that survives from the past is often unique and irreplaceable, which places the responsibility of preservation on the current generation."

combination of efforts of the Historical Society, Town staff, the Carleton Place Museum, the BIA, and other interested groups. Some of the promotional activities could include:

- a. Creation of a standard promotional package for residents and visitors that “sells” Carleton Place including its heritage environment.
- b. Creation of a traveling education kit or schools.
- c. Development of pamphlets outlining the cultural heritage assets and historic background of the Town including walking tours, and distribution to all new residents through the Welcome Wagon program.
- d. Development of signage identifying heritage aspects of Carleton Place.
- e. Promotion of the history of the Mississippi River.
- f. Promoting of legacy of Roy Brown, wool growers, and others.
- g. Creating a written (and electronic) consolidation of Carleton Place history and its historical assets.

### 3.6. Recreation and Natural Environment

#### Desirable Future State

*The following vision statement is written in the present tense, indicating what the “current situation” will be in the year 2017.*

Carleton Place provides a multitude of opportunities to engage in recreational, sports, and leisure time pursuits: for young and old; for residents and visitors – and all add to the quality of life enjoyed in Carleton Place. Carleton Place has professionally expanded both the quantity and quality of facilities and programs available to meet the growing demands of a growing community. Passive recreational activities within the natural environment have also been identified and actively promoted. The cultural, waterfront, and industrial heritage of the Town is also closely linked to recreational opportunities. Recreation is one more aspect of the many ways Carleton Place is greening the community. Particular attention to the natural environment has resulted in the preservation and maintenance of a healthy environment: a clean and healthy river; green space; high water quality; protected fish habitat; and a forest canopy.

#### Recommendations

Following are the recommendations for the recreation and waterfront development in Carleton Place.

1. Create a recreation unit within the Town of Carleton Place’s organizational structure, and engage full time professional staff. Responsibilities are to include:
  - a. Preparation of a recreation master plan that:
    - i. Identifies the needs of the current and future population;
    - ii. Identifies the opportunities to meet those needs through current and future assets and programming;
    - iii. Identifies future sites for recreational uses (or greenspace) and pathways, and reserves these sites for the designated recreational/open space uses.
    - iv. Prioritizes implementation actions.
  - b. The planning and development of recreational and waterfront assets (including the Carleton Place Canoe Club, Roy Brown Park, and the former Findlay Foundry site);
  - c. Recreational and leisure programming;
  - d. Creation of a promotional campaign to raise awareness of the Town’s effort to clean up the natural and built environment;
  - e. Development of an awareness campaign in order to encourage recycling, clean, and green lifestyle choices;
  - f. Recommendations associated with seniors and youth development.
  - g. Development of a pathways and trail system, and promotion of the use of the pathway/trail system to residents and visitors alike.

2. That the Urban Forest/River Corridor Advisory Committee continue to lead the engagement of the Town and community in the implementation of the natural environment maintenance initiatives identified in the previous strategy.

### 3.7. Seniors and Youth Development

#### **Desirable Future State**

*The following vision statement is written in the present tense, indicating what the “current situation” will be in the year 2017.*

Both seniors and the youth of Carleton Place are actively and productively engaged in the community through a variety of services and activities. There are a variety of employment opportunities for youth to develop their employment skills and for seniors to supplement their income (and to mentor youth). There is a post-secondary education facility within Carleton Place which provides trades, apprenticeship and other programs for local youth. There is a wide selection of after-school activities, complete with an expanded youth centre that has been funded and supported by the Town. The local day-care centre is an inter-generational facility staffed by both youth and senior volunteers. There is a variety of choices in housing which is accessible by all groups. Transit both within Carleton Place and to Ottawa provides much greater mobility to seniors, youth, and all age groups. Building and housing physical accessibility has been improved, sidewalks and walkways have been maintained, and more lighting has been added to improve accessibility.

#### **Recommendations**

Following are the recommendations for the seniors and youth development in Carleton Place.

1. Establish a committee to identify and remove obstacles to the active engagement of youth and seniors in the community, and to promote active engagement of youth and seniors. This Committee should work closely with support networks such as Lanark County, and committees such as the new Youth Committee.
2. Create partnerships between school boards, employers, colleges, and other groups to provide opportunities for youth to engage in apprenticeships and other post-secondary employment experiences.
3. Continue to support youth and senior volunteer involvement in Town activities, including the daycare.
4. Identify physical accessibility barriers within the community, and develop an action plan to remove these barriers.
5. Develop after-school programs (sports, academics, arts, computers, tutoring, homework clubs, etc.) through partnerships between the Youth Centres and the local school board (and possible engagement of seniors).
6. Organize collective community action and collaboration (education/school, parents, health care, enforcement) to address drug abuse in Carleton Place.

### 3.8. Transportation and Transit

While this is not a theme of the Carleton Place Community Strategy, there was vocal support for publicly-supported public transit, and it is fundamental to the successful implementation of several of the theme areas of this strategy. A community group has formed and has completed substantial work on identifying this need. An inter-urban transit service likely has the best chance of success if it involves multiple municipalities in a cost-sharing arrangement.

- That the Town determine the extent of demand and public support for a public transit system within the Town to assist in the mobility of seniors and youth, and to support downtown;
- That the Town determine the extent of demand and public support for a public transit system to and from Ottawa to support: seniors with medical appointments; attendance at educational institutions; and commuters working in Ottawa.

## 4. Achieving the Vision

As noted earlier, it is the joint responsibility of the community and the Town to implement the strategy to achieve the vision. Some form of organizational vehicle is required to facilitate the engagement of multiple community stakeholders, and which does not give rise to feelings of alienation, but rather seeks inclusion and collaboration. Some themes in this strategy require the engagement of multiple organizations to implement actions required within that theme, making “inclusion” difficult if a theme is simply “handed off” to a particular organization. Further, there needs to be some forum for engaging the community and Town together on determining priorities in a world of constrained resources – better to do this on a singular platform than to engage various factions in a competition for resources, placing Council in a difficult position of not being able to satisfy any or all.

It is therefore suggested that a community planning team be formed. The role of this team would be to encourage and facilitate the community’s engagement (and ownership) in implementing various action plans of the community strategic plan. It will need to market the strategic plan to the community to encourage buy-in, firmly establishing concurrence in vision, and thereby ensure community efforts (Rotary, Kinsmen, various committees, services clubs, etc.) are working together towards achieving the plan’s vision. The team would make broad based determinations of which actions are short term or long term in nature, and which actions are deemed to be priorities. This phase would benefit greatly from outside facilitation assistance.

The team needs to continue and build upon the momentum built during the strategic plan process. This represents a shift from the Consultant leading the process – to Carleton Place leading the process. The Community Planning Team would also recommend to Council any changes required to the plan, or the need to update the plan. It would be responsible for directing a communications/promotion plan to communicate and make the plan and its vision visible to the community and stakeholders, and to communicate progress in implementation. The team should also explore and pursue funding possibilities to assist in implementation. This team is not a watchdog committee, or official opposition of any type, nor is it directly responsible for implementation, but it ensures the most appropriate organizations take on implementation responsibilities.

Committee members can self-nominate based upon an established set of criteria, which would include a commitment to the content and vision of the plan, and a commitment to cooperate and to foster cooperation amongst various actors, including Council (ie. not be confrontational). A broad cross-section of the community needs to be represented. There is a need to have strong minds, but members must be cooperative and work as a team, involving community organizations and Council. Letters of invitation could be sent to those who were involved to date, and who are committed to seeing it implemented. Council could approve nominations (including one Councillor) of those deemed would best serve the needs described. After initial work has commenced, the team could meet quarterly. It would monitor implementation progress, and report on this progress to Council and community twice per year, but in a positive supportive/encouraging fashion versus critical fashion.

## Appendix 1: Environmental Scan

This Carleton Place Environmental Scan was compiled from the following documents:

- *Community Situational Analysis* (revised May 15, 2007)
- *Carleton Place First Impressions Report* (June 2006)
- Carleton Place Issue/Discussion Papers supplied by the Town on the following topics:
  - Water and Wastewater
  - Zoning By-Law
  - Residential Development
  - Development and Growth
  - Economic Development, Promotion and Advertising
  - Transportation
  - Waste Management
  - Neighboring Municipal Relations and Annexation
  - Taxes and Financial Status
  - Emergency Management
  - Child Care Services
  - Police Services

### Tourism and Culture

According to the *Community Situational Analysis*, a large percentage of residents feel that there are not enough arts and cultural programs in Carleton Place.

From the *First Impressions* report, the Town was assessed to have no predominant tourist activity, event or attraction within its boundaries. Apart from the heritage of Carleton Place, there is little available to draw tourists to Carleton Place. The Visitor's Centre is perceived as being hard to access, as there is no signage indicating its location in and within Town Hall. No person at the BIA office or municipal office is available to offer the same level of service as a trained tourism office attendant. Accommodation seems primarily centered outside of town along Highway 7. None of the hotels in Carleton Place offer conference facilities. The community seems to have little entertainment options.

As well, tourism does not seem to be a great engine in downtown Carleton Place. While Carleton Place has been successful in merging the history within its business core, no specific signage has been installed to invite people into the tourism office. The commercial mix does not cater well to tourists and little or no accommodation is present in the downtown.

### Industrial Development

According to the *First Impressions* report, Carleton Place does not seem to have an industrial focus. Major employment seems to be driven by the education, retail and municipal/health sectors and no one major manufacturing type seems to be present in this community. The workforce in Carleton Place is mostly professionals commuting to Ottawa and therefore lacks the available workforce required for manufacturing industries.

Currently, there are three industrial development parks located in Carleton Place. According the *Community Situational Analysis*, the main competition for these business parks are serviced industrial areas found in Kanata-Stittsville.

Carleton Place can offer competitive location advantages to industry however. The *Community Situational Analysis* indicates that the west of Ottawa has the strongest demand for industrial land and it is likely to receive spill-over from the demand for land in Ottawa, and that the twinning of Highway 7 will shorten the “perceptual distance” between Carleton Place and Ottawa.

In addition to pending developments, there is land available for approximately 400,000 square meters of commercial/industrial development within the Town boundaries. It is unlikely that all vacant land will develop to its maximum potential.

### Commercial Development

According to the *First Impressions* Report, outside of the downtown core, Carleton Place offers little retail available with the exception of Highway 7 commercial developments. In general, while Carleton Place seems to attract upscale/professional residents, its retail sector does not seem to provide them with equivalent retail needs. There seems to be a fair amount missing from the commercial mix such as sporting goods, printing, gift shops, new shoe stores, men’s apparel, women’s high-end clothing store, furniture stores, etc and that residents would have to go elsewhere to purchase these goods. Residents do indeed go elsewhere and spend a significant amount of income outside of the community according to the community survey found in the *Community Situational Analysis*. There seems to be very little in terms of nightlife entertainment available.

The twinning of Highway 7, combined with the general economic outlook, is prompting significant new commercial development, particularly along McNeely Avenue.

Recently, the Town has processed greenfield commercial development applications. Significant obstacles, related to storm water, traffic flow and property owners concerns and appeals have made approval of these applications very difficult. It is difficult to attract new greenfield developments unless there is suitable property available where: property is available for sale by a willing seller at a reasonable price, and; approval obstacles have been addressed. Redevelopment of existing properties can face approval obstacles such as: objections from neighbors; compliance with parking regulations, and; address heritage preservation comments.

### Residential Development

From the *First Impressions* report, Carleton Place residential developments appear to be segmented. New developments are high end oriented, while the downtown core appears to be attracting lower income families and individuals. Downtown residential options are so limited it could impact negatively on what could be a great focus for the community. New developments have little appeal for middle income families. Overall, residential properties appear to be clean and well-kept.

Residential growth has generally been strong with 60-80 homes being constructed annually. Presently there is still land available for approximately 4,300 homes to be developed. In recent years, the value of new homes has increased in Carleton Place with more single family homes and less townhomes being created. The twinning of Highway 7 will likely increase the pace of residential construction.

Residential growth is also strong in areas around the town, particularly in Beckwith Township. All of this development is on private services and, even though the province has adopted policies which favour municipal or communal services over private services, it seems these policies are ignored. If serviced development should proceed, then annexation would need to be negotiated with water and wastewater plants needing expansion.

The passing of the new Official Plan in 2005 has also led to issues of note. These include: determining how many residential zoning categories are necessary; review of dwelling types and definitions; incorporating the amendments of By-law 7-2005 and ensuring there are no conflicts; placing older sections of Town in a zone which protects lot size; interior side yard setbacks be adjusted to match Ontario Building Code requirements; home occupation rules need to be reviewed; review of rules for accessory apartments; and clarification of definitions and requirements for seniors developments.

### Downtown Development

From the *First Impressions* report, there is minimal promotion of the downtown. The business mix is limited in the downtown. Retail options are limited to second-hand stores, spas and beauty salons. Restaurant options are very limited downtown. There are no apparent high-end stores or tourism oriented operation.

### Municipal Services

According to the *First Impressions* report, Carleton Place offers great green spaces for local residents. The sports complex offers access to most if not all sports. It is however, hard to find.

The Town adopted a new Official Plan in 2005. Since then, issues noted within the by law include the following: a review is needed of loading space requirements; inclusion of a table for handicapped parking requirements; consider allowing churches and schools in residential zones; examination of parking to ensure requirements are appropriate; deletion of provisions that have been removed; consideration of changing site triangle requirements; consider changing exterior side yard setback; remove exception and holding zones no longer required; and review group home requirements.

The Town currently has control over 53.1% of the total tax rate. Current debts funded by taxes include the wastewater plant upgrades (funded by water bills, last payment 2007), the second ice surface (funded by user fees, last payment 2014) and the servicing of Hwy 7 (funded by a special charge to owner, last payment 2019). The Town had reserves and reserve funds (savings) totaling \$8.5 million as of December 31, 2005. A financial plan is in place to fund required upgrades and expansions to infrastructure. Issues that will need to be addressed as the Town expands include the new needs and desires of the community and the continual maintenance of infrastructure.

Currently, the Marketing and Promotions Committee, the Economic Development Committee, the Chamber of Commerce, the BIA, special events committees, and independent group (B-BAR), staff and Council directly all have a role in the roles of economic development, promotion and advertising. These activities throughout the community should be better organized and coordinated. It should be clear what group(s) is responsible for each type of activity and their goals should be clearly defined.

Town staff currently complete regular inspections of the roads and ensure compliance with the minimum maintenance standards. New streets are constructed by developers and to the Town's standards and, after completion, the streets are assumed by the Town. The Town also has an annual program to rebuild streets in conjunction with water and sewer replacement and to resurface streets to extend the life of the asphalt. The Province has announced that Hwy 7 from Ottawa to McNeely Avenue will be twinned by 2009-2010. The Town and County have cooperated and jointly prepared a plan which illustrates how McNeely Avenue can be expanded to accommodate increased traffic from new developments. This plan should be implemented as development proceeds before traffic increases. The County is currently in the process of expanding McNeely Avenue.

Highway 7 is to become a freeway which will end at McNeely. Safety is a concern as traffic needs to adjust quickly from the freeway to the semi-urban cross-section between McNeely Ave. and Hwy 15. MTO will be seeking to minimize turns and entrances to improve safety while owners will be seeking to redevelop their properties increasing traffic at their entrances. A Master Plan, which balances these desires needs to be developed.

Waste disposal is a lower tier municipal responsibility and is assumed by Carleton Place. Current waste disposal destination is the private landfill in Carp. The landfill in Carp will be filled to capacity by approximately 2009. Some possible solutions are to expand the Carp landfill (owner has applied), establish a new landfill (i.e. County owned site near Balderson) or establish a new waste disposal facility (i.e. gasification). Any option requires a difficult, expensive and lengthy approval process.

Water and wastewater services in Carleton place are supplied to all homes and business in Carleton Place. Commercial properties are metered whereas residential properties pay a flat rate water and wastewater bill. Collection and distribution systems are generally in good condition. Projects to expand the capacity of the systems will need to be staged to keep pace with development; when these are complete, capacity will allow the full development of all vacant properties within the Town boundaries. Development charges and water quality regulations will need to be reviewed to allow increased capacity.

An Emergency Management Program has been in place in Carleton Place for a number of years, much of the basic requirements being legislated by the Province. The community also has in place an active Community Emergency Response Volunteer Program to provide additional emergency services. Growth will influence this plan and emphasis should be placed on emergency management education.

In regards to child care services, the Town currently operates 349 licensed spaces which offers care to between 400-450 children at any given time. A recreational based youth program is also offered to children between the ages of 9-14 years. It is not a licensed program but is accredited through the High Five program as required by the County of Lanark. Issues with child care include affordability, attracting quality staff, matching fees with utilization rates, location of services and issues with child care subsidy.

Carleton Place currently contracts out its policing needs to the Ontario Provincial Police. This contract expires April 29, 2008. The contract for policing will need to be renewed. As the population increases, additional police officers may be required.