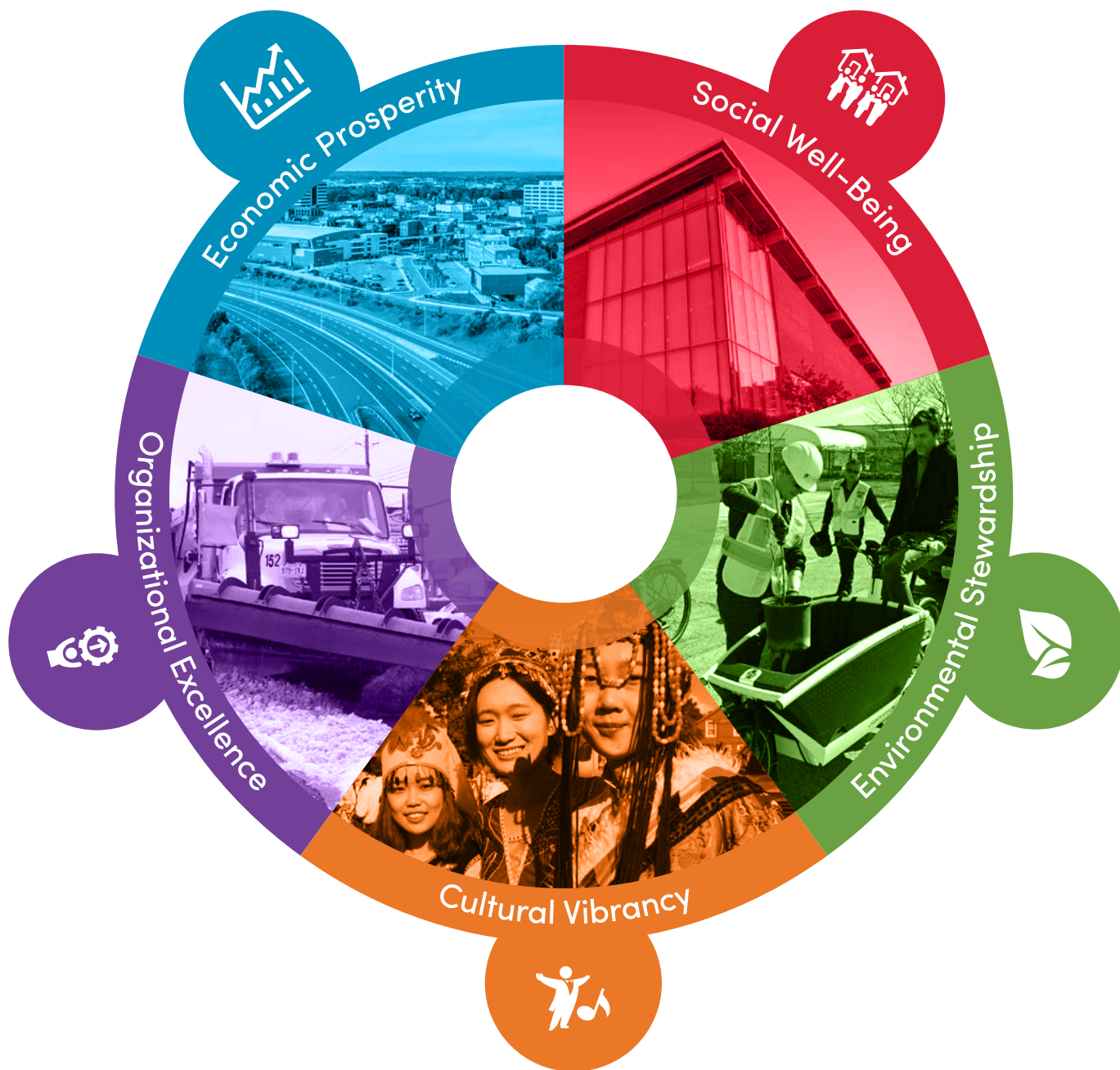


# The City of St. Catharines Strategic Plan

2023 to 2027





# Message from Mayor Mat Siscoe

On behalf of St. Catharines City Council, we are pleased to present our City's Strategic Plan for the period 2023 to 2027.

**I'd like to start by thanking my colleagues on St. Catharines City Council.** This Strategic Plan is the result of inspiring conversations with Councillors while we worked together to develop a road map that reflects conversations we've had within our neighbourhoods and across the community. It is through Council's dedication, teamwork, and collaboration that this Strategic Plan has been adopted with unanimous support.

**Thank you also to our employees at the City of St. Catharines.** It is through their dedication, professionalism, and community service that our directions and motions at Council become realities in our community.

**And, most importantly, thank you to residents and businesses in our city.** Whether out in the community, in my office, or through municipal consultations, I have heard clearly what matters most to people in St. Catharines. You have told us you want a community that is safe. A community that is affordable. A community that is caring, prosperous and innovative.

Above all, we have heard the importance of accountability for municipal governments. To this end, I'm pleased that this term we will be publishing annual reports on the status of our Strategic Plan that will be available to all.

To follow our progress, please stay tuned to

**[stcatharines.ca/StrategicPlan](https://stcatharines.ca/StrategicPlan).**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mat Siscoe'.

Mat Siscoe  
Mayor

# St. Catharines City Council

2022-2026



**Councillor  
Jackie Lindal**

Ward 1  
Merritton



**Councillor  
Greg Miller**

Ward 1  
Merritton



**Councillor  
Matt Harris**

Ward 2  
St. Andrew's



**Councillor  
Joe Kushner**

Ward 2  
St. Andrew's



**Councillor  
Mark Stevens**

Ward 3  
St. Georges



**Councillor  
Kevin Townsend**

Ward 3  
St. Georges



**Councillor  
Caleb Ratzlaff**

Ward 4  
St. Patrick's



**Councillor  
Robin McPherson**

Ward 4  
St. Patrick's



**Councillor  
Dawn Dodge**

Ward 5  
Grantham



**Councillor  
Bill Phillips**

Ward 5  
Grantham



**Councillor  
Carlos Garcia**

Ward 6  
Port Dalhousie



**Councillor  
Bruce Williamson**

Ward 6  
Port Dalhousie



# What is a Strategic Plan?

For municipal governments, a Strategic Plan is a roadmap that provides goals and directions. It is the framework for priority setting, budget development and the organization of work within the municipality.

Strategic Plans provide direction on the following questions:

## **Vision Statement**

What does success look like for the community?

## **Mission Statement**

What is the municipality's role in achieving this success?

## **Guiding Principles**

What principles guide City Council and employees?

## **Goals**

Where should we focus our efforts and what are the desired results?

## **Strategic Directions**

What high level activities will move us closer to our goals?

## **Priority Initiatives**

What initiatives will have the greatest impact on advancing our goals?

## **Performance Reporting**

How will we know we are successful?



# Vision

St. Catharines will be a safe, innovative, sustainable, and caring city today and for future generations.

# Mission

The City of St. Catharines municipal government leadership will focus on accountability, affordability, innovation, and responsible stewardship of community resources.

# Guiding Principles

- Safe environments for all
- Accountable and transparent
- Effective operational foundations and delivery of core services
- Respect for community affordability
- Proactive communication with each other, our community, and those beyond our borders
- Commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Focus on innovation and partnerships
- Results-oriented
- Conservation and sustainable use of resources



# Goals

The City of St. Catharines Strategic Plan is based on advancing the following five goals, focused on pillars of economic prosperity, social well-being, environmental stewardship, cultural vibrancy, and organizational excellence.

## 1 Economic Prosperity

St. Catharines will maintain and expand as a home to thriving businesses and a diverse and resilient economy.

## 2 Social Well-Being

St. Catharines will strengthen neighbourhoods and communities through quality-of-life opportunities that are accessible to all.

## 3 Environmental Stewardship

St. Catharines will be recognized as a leader in environmental sustainability and resilient in the face of escalating climate change events.

## 4 Cultural Vibrancy

The rich culture, heritage, and vibrancy of St. Catharines communities will be communicated and celebrated by the City.

## 5 Organizational Excellence

The City of St. Catharines will achieve excellence in financial and service sustainability and high customer satisfaction.

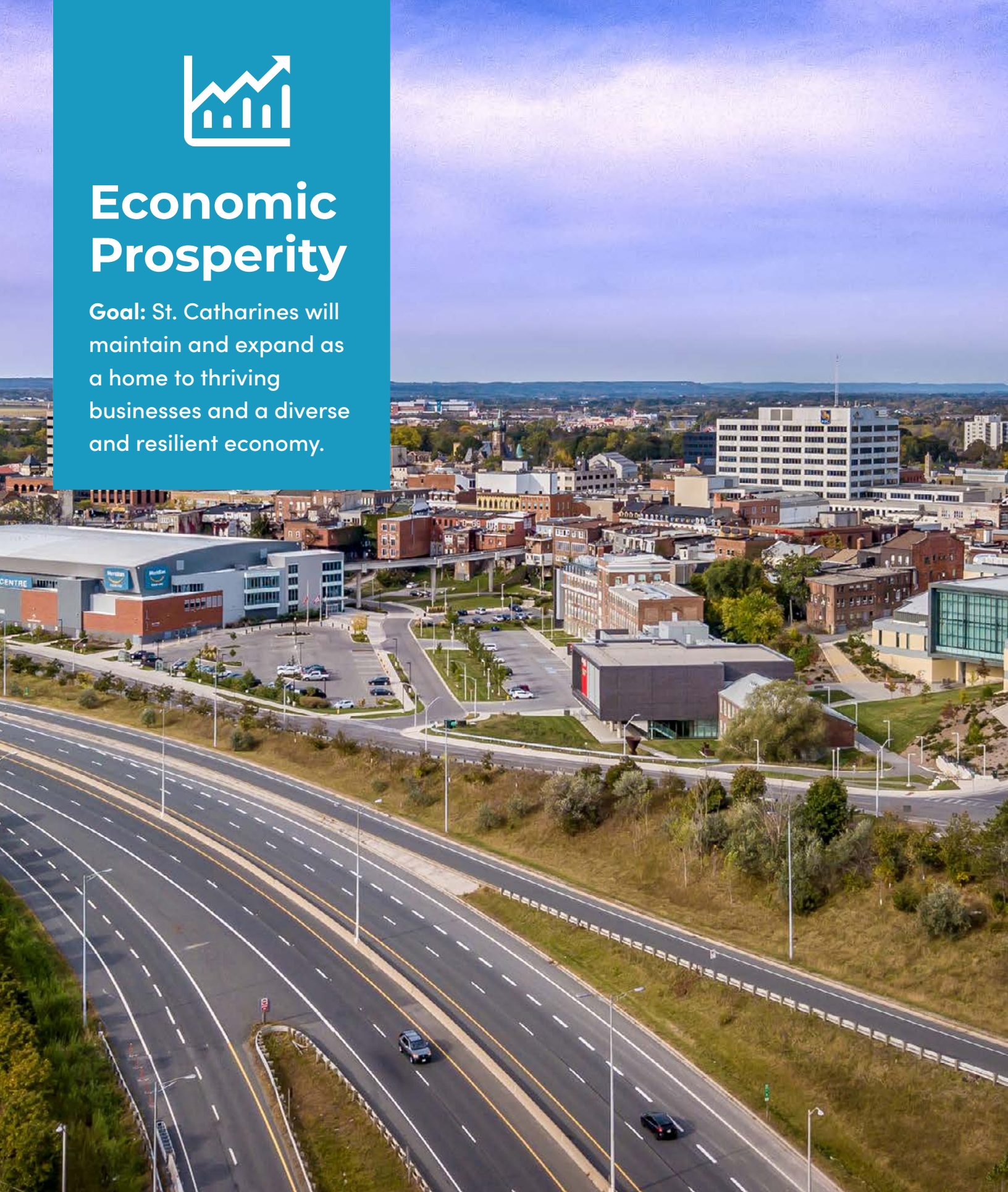
The City has established a plan to advance these goals with strategic directions and priority initiatives, outlined on the following pages.





# Economic Prosperity

Goal: St. Catharines will maintain and expand as a home to thriving businesses and a diverse and resilient economy.





## Strategic Directions:

- Sustain emphasis on attracting, retaining, and expanding businesses
- Promote St. Catharines as a great place for business through strong communications and marketing
- Support entrepreneurship and the growth of existing businesses
- Continue Strategic Economic Diversification
- Develop talent attraction and retention strategies and promote work opportunities within our community
- Harness authentic tourism assets to promote St. Catharines as a premier visitor destination
- Advance a positive and progressive environment for development
- Enrich the urban growth centre vitality through creative placemaking initiatives
- Cultivate the community as a hub for film and television production
- Build an inventory of community assets to anticipate development needs in the city

## Priority Initiatives:

- 1 Community Improvement Review
- 2 Economic Development Strategy Implementation
- 3 Strategic Economic Development Partnerships
- 4 GO Station Redevelopment
- 5 Community Improvement Plan Implementation (until such time that review is complete)
- 6 Support the Ontario Marine Strategy
- 7 Advance the Civic Square concept and explore Downtown Gateway Signage opportunities
- 8 Strategic Tourism Partnerships
- 9 Film Policy Update

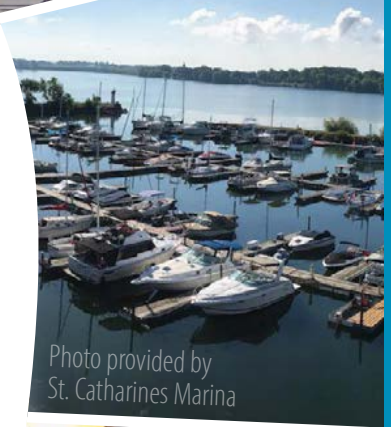


Photo provided by  
St. Catharines Marina





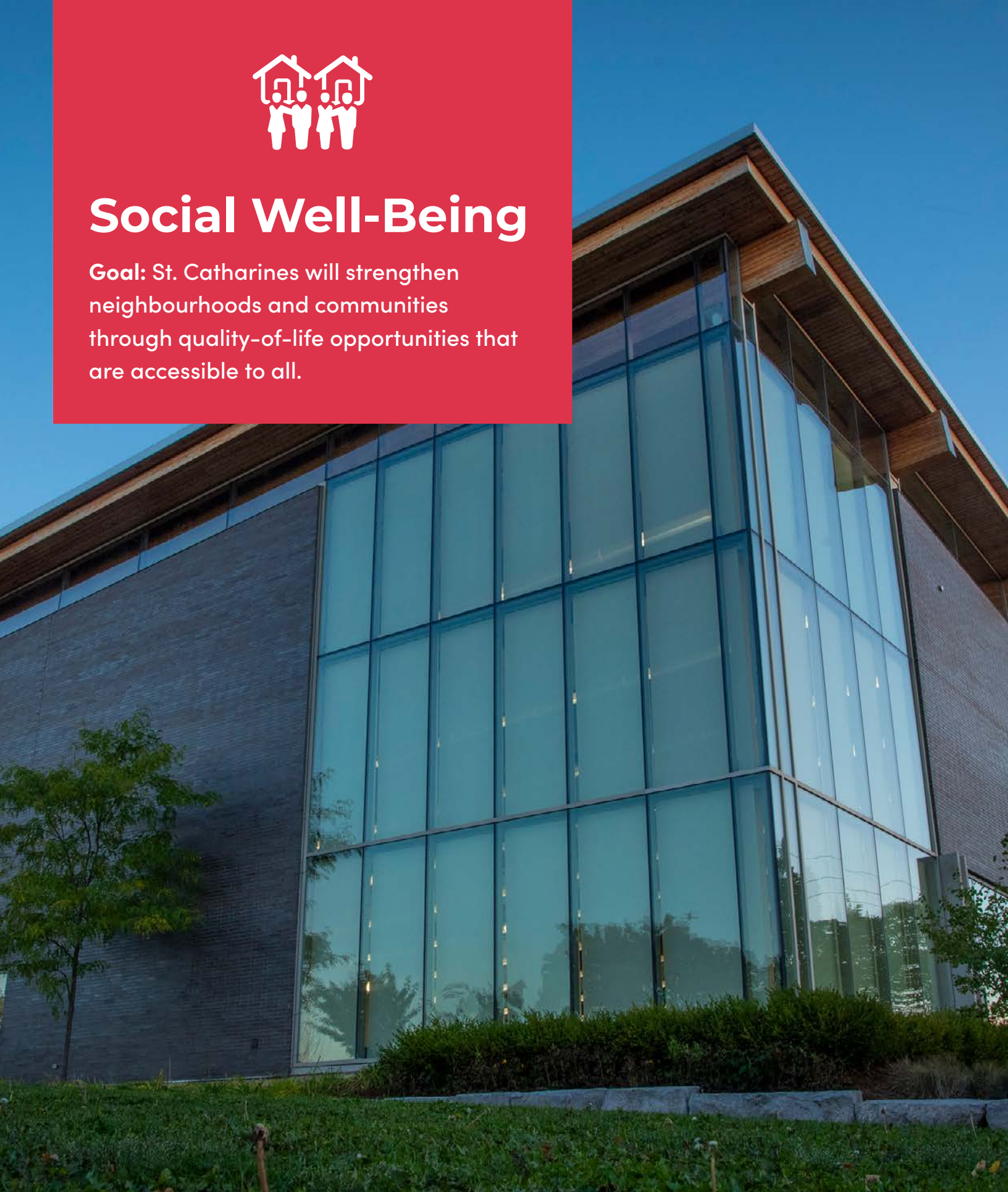


Photo provided by  
Niagara Food Tours



# Social Well-Being

**Goal:** St. Catharines will strengthen neighbourhoods and communities through quality-of-life opportunities that are accessible to all.



## Strategic Directions:

- Advocate to other levels of government to address homelessness
- Facilitate, encourage and advocate for affordable and attainable housing options
- Enhance neighbourhoods through regeneration, particularly in the downtown core
- Develop and promote a diverse system of connected parks, open spaces and trails
- Provide quality, well-maintained indoor and outdoor recreation facilities with programming based on community and best practices
- Comply with provincial timelines for planning approvals to contribute to housing targets
- Facilitate greater certainty on underground infrastructure capacity
- Increase City capacity for volunteerism and community engagement through best practices
- Leverage City assets to expand and enhance community hubs

## Priority Initiatives:

- 1 Advocacy campaigns for federal, provincial and Regional affordable housing and homelessness investments
- 2 Housing Action Plan Update
- 3 Parks Policy Plan Implementation
- 4 Recreation Master Plan Implementation
- 5 Municipal Development Corporation
- 6 Ontario Street Secondary Plan
- 7 Waterfront Access Master Plan (including continued refinement of beaches management strategies and waterfront access in Port Weller East)
- 8 Development Approval Process Optimization
- 9 Wastewater Infrastructure Grant Applications Flow Monitoring Incentives Advocacy
- 10 Older Adult Tax Deferral Program
- 11 Street Outreach Resources to support transition from encampments









# Environmental Stewardship

**Goal:** St. Catharines will be recognized as a leader in environmental sustainability and resilient in the face of escalating climate change events.





## Strategic Directions:

- Protect, preserve and enhance the City's tree canopy
- Prepare community for impacts of climate change particularly increasing frequency and severity of weather related events
- Strive for a corporate reduction in emissions of 40 to 45 per cent by 2023 and net zero by 2050
- Work toward an integrated multi-modal transportation network that facilitates the movement of people and goods
- Ensure community planning is consistent with environmental sustainability through compliance with Garden City Plan, Regional Official Plan Amendments and Provincial Policy Statement
- Pursue opportunities aligned with the Ontario Climate Change Action Plan
- Comply with new Consolidated Linear Infrastructure Requirement
- Increase use of permeable materials
- Communicate successes to the community and advocate for support from other levels of government

## Priority Initiatives:

- 1 Tree Planting Strategy and Implementation
- 2 Master Servicing Plans for Underground Infrastructure + Related updates for Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Plans
- 3 Active Transportation Plan Development, Resourcing, and Implementation
- 4 Continued Implementation of Corporate Climate Adaptation Plan
- 5 Creation of a Formalized Climate Mitigation Plan and Emissions Monitoring System
- 6 Shoreline Protection Program
- 7 Continued Implementation of Corporate Energy Demand Management Plan









# Cultural Vibrancy

**Goal:** The rich culture, heritage, and vibrancy of St. Catharines communities will be communicated and celebrated by the City.



Photo provided by  
Niagara Wine Festival

## Strategic Directions:

- Protect the City's heritage assets
- Provide exceptional venues and programming for the arts and heritage of St. Catharines that are accessible to community groups
- Support festivals and events that showcase the vibrant culture of St. Catharines
- Expand opportunities in Sport Tourism by aiding bid development and attracting signature events
- Support for community groups and civic receptions in a manner that is fair, equitable and fiscally sustainable
- Support the protection of heritage properties in St. Catharines
- Integrate public art in neighbourhood and placemaking strategies
- Celebrate and promote the City's current historic role in the Welland Canals

## Priority Initiatives:

- 1 Community Hosting and Bid Assistance for Significant Sports Events (World Rowing, Junior Golf, Minto Cup, World Junior Hockey)
- 2 Grape and Wine + Folk Arts Festivals and Partnerships
- 3 Support for Community Cultural Events to celebrate diverse communities / neighbourhoods
- 4 Targeted Downtown Heritage Preservation Study
- 5 Sustained Funding and Implementation of SCCIP Program
- 6 SCCIP Funding Review
- 7 Culture Plan Update

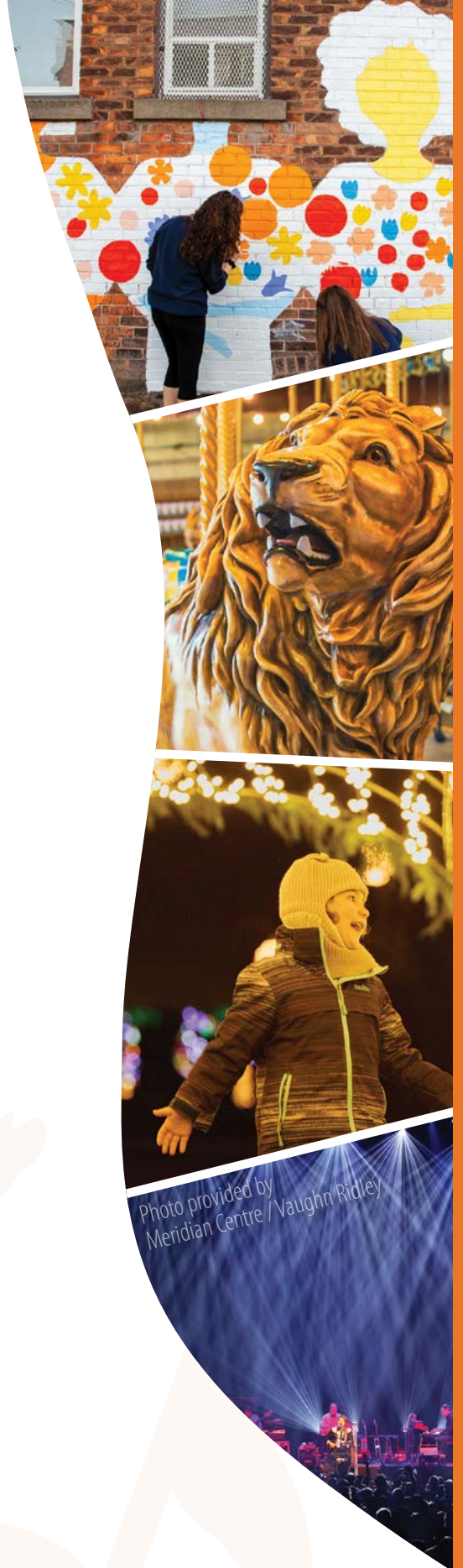


Photo provided by Meridian Centre / Vaughn Ridley

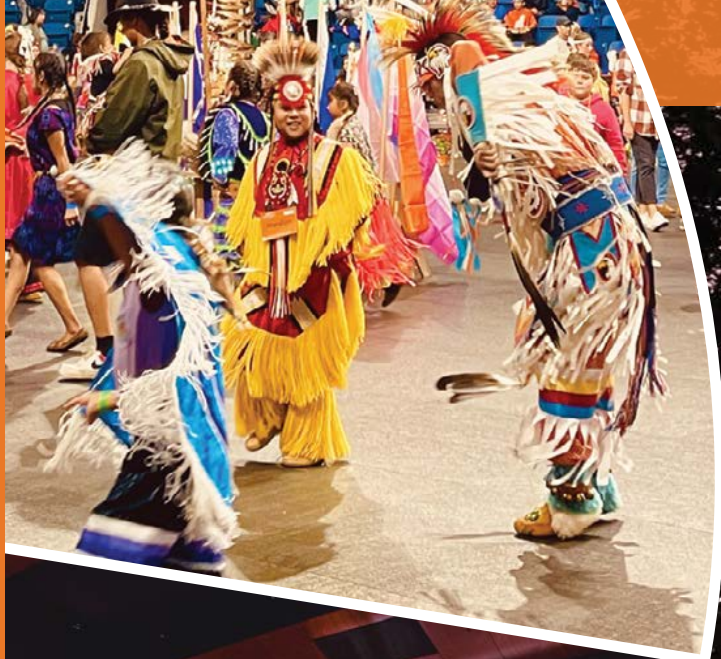


Photo credit Lauren Garbutt



Photo credit Paul Sampara





Photo provided by  
Niagara Wine Festival



# Organizational Excellence

**Goal:** The City of St. Catharines will achieve excellence in financial and service sustainability and high customer satisfaction.



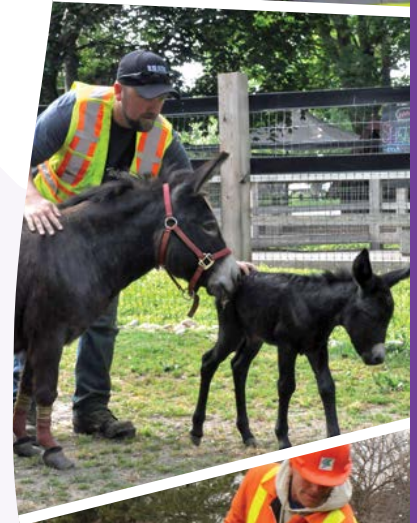


## Strategic Directions:

- Balance fiscal stewardship with services and service levels
- Examine City services and service levels to balance neighbourhood quality with opportunities for taxpayer affordability
- Maintain quality assets in a good state of repair; identify and close the municipal infrastructure gap
- Modernize processes, systems, and performance measurement
- Attract, retain and engage talented employees; aspire to become an employer of choice
- Provide exceptional customer service and communication to the community

## Priority Initiatives:

- 1 Core Service Review
- 2 Managed Public Debt based on Modernized Asset Management and Work Order Management System
- 3 Customer Service Improvement through People Strategy and wait time reductions
- 4 Multi-Year Budget Process
- 5 Corporate Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy
- 6 Parking Services Review
- 7 Social Procurement Policy









# Acknowledgements

## **Thank you to Members of St. Catharines City Council**

for their vision and leadership in developing this Strategic Plan. The Plan was unanimously approved by Council and provides a crucial road map for the prioritization of funding and resources during the 2022-2026 term.

## **Thank you to the many residents and businesses**

who provided input into the development of the Strategic Plan. Whether participating in a community survey, speaking with Members of Council, volunteering with the City or participating in Advisory Committees, this Strategic Plan is the result of numerous conversations with the community on what matters most for the future of St. Catharines.

## **Thank you also to the employees of the City of**

**St. Catharines** for their commitment to the community we serve. It is through their hard work and commitment that this Strategic Plan goes from vision to reality.

To follow progress and performance reporting on the City of St. Catharines Strategic Plan, please stay tuned to:

**[stcatharines.ca/StrategicPlan](https://stcatharines.ca/StrategicPlan)**

The City of St. Catharines  
**Strategic Plan**

2023 to 2027



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