



Future Focus 2024-2027
Corporate Strategic Plan

December 2023



2022-2026 BLUEWATER COUNCIL

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- DEPUTY MAYOR JOHN BECKER
- COUNCILLOR WINONA BAILEY
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Greetings from the Mayor

On behalf of Bluewater Council, I am pleased to present the *Future Focus 2024-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan*. *Future Focus* will act as the overarching document for the Municipality and Council as we plan for the years ahead. Bluewater is a vibrant community that is growing and evolving, and with that comes new challenges and opportunities for the organization that we must address collectively and with intention.

The *Future Focus 2024-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan* will guide the strategic priorities of our organization while also giving us the flexibility we need to adapt to whatever comes our way, whether that be legislative changes or external events that impact our community. *Future Focus* recognizes our role as a community builder – we deliver municipal-wide programs, services and infrastructure that meet the needs of our community today while building resiliency for the future.

I would like to thank my Council colleagues and our Staff team for their contribution to the development of *Future Focus* and for their service to our community every day. *Future Focus* provides the roadmap for how we will manage change and deliver results within our organization.

Bluewater Council and Staff will continue to work collaboratively on implementing *Future Focus*, executing our Wildly Important Goals (WIGs), and transparently reporting on our progress. It is our great privilege to serve the residents and taxpayers of Bluewater and we look forward to the work ahead.

Mayor Paul Klopp



ABOUT THE *FUTURE FOCUS* CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN

Like many municipalities across Ontario, Bluewater faces financial sustainability challenges, an uncertain economic climate (e.g., interest rates, inflation), and continuous improvement expectations from residents and taxpayers. A *Future Focus* strategic plan is a necessary change management tool for Bluewater to meet these challenges proactively, with focus and determination.

The key to successful strategic priority setting is to avoid the temptation of being all things to all people; an all-too-common problem across Ontario municipalities engaged in strategic planning.

Focus and concentration on a small number of “must succeed” priorities *at any given point in time* is crucial to success.

To their credit, Bluewater Council has embraced the merits of the *Future Focus* approach to developing genuine strategic priorities.



***FUTURE FOCUS* APPROACH TO STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

Effective service delivery requires strategic focus, developing and integrating assets, nimble communication, and stable financial planning over time. Steady, incremental continuous improvement can play a key role in creating a mature/sustainable Bluewater. *Future Focus* is a critical change management tool positioning Bluewater to deal with aging infrastructure, resolving potential unfunded liabilities around asset management, and meeting public expectations around service levels.

Bluewater’s *Future Focus* 2024-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan is an adaptable roadmap for change that avoids the common pitfall of strategic plans that are in fact not “strategic” at all. *Future Focus* rejects the ineffective approach of working on numerous “priorities” at once. Instead, *Future Focus* eats the ‘change management elephant’ one bite at a time.

The *Future Focus* 2024-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan will launch Bluewater on a sustainable operational and financial trajectory. The timing of the *Future Focus* Strategic Plan is beneficial - it can guide Council towards proactive management of the financial challenges associated with Bluewater’s existing facilities, infrastructure, and assets.

COUNCIL'S END-OF-TERM PERFORMANCE BRAND DRIVES *FUTURE FOCUS*

All successful Corporate Strategic Planning exercises begin with the *End in Mind*. It is vitally important for Bluewater Council to consider the end-of-term performance brand that it wishes to secure.

Bluewater Council wants to identify/function as:

A Focus on the Fundamentals/Modernizer Council

This performance brand reflects Council's desired accomplishments when viewed through the lens of Bluewater's residents and taxpayers at the end of the Council term.



The following performance brand statement clearly articulates Council's commitment to taking actions to modernize service delivery to achieve "One Bluewater".



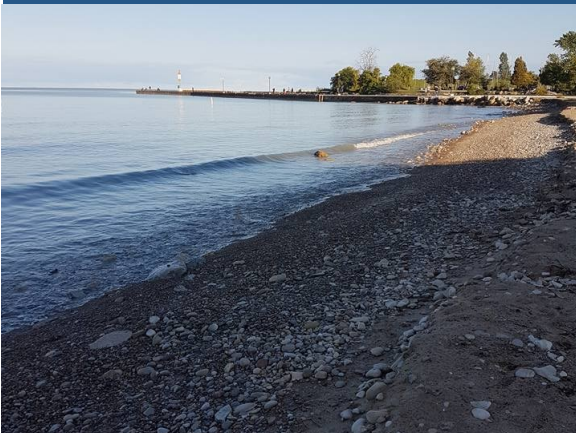
A Focus on the Fundamentals/Modernizer Council

A Financially Responsible Bluewater Council Committed to...

- *Governance & Service Delivery Modernization*
- *"One Bluewater" Sustainable Asset/Facility Management*

PERFORMANCE BRAND CHARACTERISTICS:

- Convergence around service delivery restructuring to reduce asset/facility duplication
- One Bluewater sustainable asset management to avoid capital costs
- Responsible tax burden management
- Convergence around service delivery restructuring to improve results
- One Bluewater asset management to improve operational efficiency
- Fire services modernization
- Governance modernization



Council's Wildly Important Goals (WIGs) are the drivers of positive change imbedded within Bluewater's *Future Focus Corporate Strategic Plan*.

When establishing Wildly Important Goals (WIGs), Bluewater Council considered a range of challenges identified in the data-driven Situation Analysis:

- ◇ *One Bluewater* served by a consolidated core facilities approach where appropriate
 - Making progress by addressing the ongoing challenges of Amalgamation.
- ◇ Proactively addressing the Reality of Unfunded Capital Liabilities (\$) by
 - Meeting O Reg 588/17 Asset Management Obligations.
- ◇ Freeing-up fiscal capacity to address Council's evolving "Wildly Important Goals"
 - Modernizing Bluewater's existing service delivery models/facilities mix before adding any new services/assets.
- ◇ Modernizing Bluewater's Governance Structure
 - Potentially reducing size of Council and restructuring Ward compositions to secure a more balanced mix of taxable assessment.



Future Focus Corporate Strategic Plan

**COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:
WILDLY IMPORTANT GOALS (WIGs)**



Bluewater Council's Future Focus

Strategic Priorities:

Wildly Important Goals (WIGs)

Focus on the Fundamentals WIGs:

WIG #1 - "One Bluewater" AMP

Complete an O. Reg. 588/17 compliant Asset Management Plan that embraces a "One Bluewater" affordable approach to asset/facilities consolidation (where appropriate).

- Council approval by mid-2025.

WIG #2 - Multi-Year Roads Sustainability Plan

Create a Roads Sustainability multi-year business plan that incorporates targeted levels of proactive surface maintenance hours/\$ funding, as well as required capital upgrades to maintain Pavement Quality scores.

- Create Roads Sustainability business plan during 2025 and begin implementation in 2026 budget cycle.
- Monitor Pavement Quality and report publicly on actual + forecast reductions in capital unfunded liability by end of 2026.

WIG #3 - User Pay Cost Recovery

Execute a 2-phase cost recovery improvement project to update user fees and reduce the property tax base burden for Bluewater services appropriately funded by users or applicants receiving benefit. Tax base relief to be redeployed to fund One Bluewater Wildly Important Goals.

- Phase 1 cost-recovery focus on Development Approvals Process (Planning & Building) and Cemetery service delivery channels (2027 Budget cycle).
- Phase 2 cost-recovery focus on Recreation programming and other appropriate service delivery channels (subsequent budget cycles).



Bluewater Council's

Future Focus

Strategic Priorities:

Wildly Important

Goals (WIGs)

Modernized Service Delivery WIGs:

WIG #4 - Annual Budget Transformed by Results Targets and Reporting

Transform Bluewater's annual budget cycle by introducing service delivery RESULTS TARGETS and Key Performance Indicator (KPI) RESULTS REPORTING.

- Pilot Implementation in last quarter of 2025 followed by full implementation for additional Bluewater services in 2026 and beyond.

WIG #5 - "State of the Infrastructure" Annual Report

Deliver "State of the Infrastructure" annual reporting to Council to track progress in reducing unfunded liabilities identified in the Asset Management Plan and maintain momentum around Identified asset/facility divestiture commitments.

- Deliver initial "State of the Infrastructure Report by end of Council term.

WIG #6 - Fire Master Plan & Station Location Review

Execute a Fire Master Plan & Station Location Review to modernize Bluewater's current fire & emergency services delivery model.

- Execute Fire Master Plan & Station Location Review in 2024 to inform "One Bluewater" Asset Management Plan due by mid-2025.



Bluewater Council's

Future Focus

Strategic Priorities:

Wildly Important Goals (WIGs)

Modernized Service Delivery WIGs:

WIG #7 - Council Composition/ Ward Boundary Review

Design and execute a Council Composition/Ward Boundary Review emphasizing robust community consultation and expert technical analysis.

- Council Composition/Ward Boundary Review to be initiated by mid-2024 and completed by early 2025.

WIG #8 - Initiate Formal Shared Services Program

Initiate a formal/on-going Shared Services program with neighbouring municipal partners

- Create a service sharing program “framework” with partner municipalities for evaluating, service sharing proposals
- Select/begin implementing pilot service sharing deals before the end of Council’s term.

Growth & Development WIGs:

WIG #9 - Growth-Focused Development Strategy

Prepare and execute a growth-focused development strategy that is Bluewater-wide in scope; addressing servicing capacity constraints that exist in some communities and shortages of developable land in others.

- Preparation of growth-focused development strategy to be completed by mid-2025 to leverage senior government funding opportunities as they emerge.

Building WIG Clusters to Drive Future Focus Execution

Councils can sometimes fall victim to the understandable urge to have lots of “priorities” - they have plenty of good ideas and they want to get lots done for the communities they serve. It is hard to say No to good ideas. However, the management science is clear. If you try to focus on 10 priorities simultaneously, you will achieve none and actually end up having *no strategic* priorities. This well-meaning *non-strategic agenda* will be a *mile wide and an inch thick*. You will fail (according to the management science).

Focusing on a small number (2-4) Wildly Important Goals at any given point in time is the recipe for strategic success. Council endorsed clusters of 2-4 Wildly Important Goals will drive the change agenda imbedded in Council’s Focus on the Fundamentals/Modernizer performance brand.

Bluewater Council may have many WIGs (i.e., strategic priorities) but has wisely opted to deal with them in achievable clusters of 3 or 4 at a time. Accordingly, the Council endorsed WIGs have been organized into clusters that allow for a phased execution organized around the triaged timelines “Do Now” followed by “Do Next”. (See figure on next page.)



Relentless Focus on Execution to Achieve Success

The Performance Concepts team has successfully worked with Bluewater Council and Staff to develop an actionable and measurable *Future Focus* Corporate Strategic Plan that will allow the Municipality to strategically manage the direction of this term of Council and beyond. *Future Focus* establishes a framework to guide governance and decision making moving forward.

The various components of the *Future Focus* Corporate Strategic Plan (Council Performance Brand, 3 WIG clusters, and KPI informed service delivery targets) all work together to promote a culture of continuous improvement in Bluewater and align the whole organization in working towards achieving strategic restructuring and long-term sustainability.

Success will require a relentless focus on efficient service delivery execution using a range of tools and techniques. Restructuring Bluewater’s service delivery model will be complex and demanding in terms of Council and staff resources and bandwidth. It will require focus and perseverance to drive a successful implementation. Rigorous Council/senior staff leadership and due diligence will be key to success moving forward. The result should be a sustainable “One Bluewater.”



WIG #	Bluewater Council - Wildly Important Goals (WIGs)	Cluster #1 – Do Now (2024 to Mid-2025)	Cluster #2 – Do Next (2025 to 2026)	Cluster #3 – Do Next (End of Council Term)
1	“One Bluewater” AMP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council approval by mid-2025 			
2	Multi-Year Roads Sustainability Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create Roads Sustainability business plan during 2025 & begin implementation in 2026 budget cycle Monitor Pavement Quality and report publicly on actual + forecast reductions in capital unfunded liability by end of 2026 			
3	User Pay Cost Recovery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1 cost-recovery focus on Development Approvals Process (Planning & Building) + Cemetery service delivery channels (2027 Budget cycle) Phase 2 cost-recovery focus on Recreation programming and other appropriate service delivery channels (subsequent budget cycles) 			
4	Annual Budget Transformed by Results Targets and Reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot Implementation in Q4 2025 followed by full Implementation for additional Bluewater services in 2026 and beyond 			
5	“State of the Infrastructure” Annual Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver initial “State of the Infrastructure Report by end of Council term 			
6	Fire Master Plan & Station Location Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Execute Fire Master Plan & Station Location Review in 2024 to inform “One Bluewater” Asset Management Plan due by mid-2025 			
7	Council Composition/Ward Boundary Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council Composition/Ward Boundary Review to be initiated by mid-2024 and completed by early 2025 			
8	Initiate Formal Shared Services Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a service sharing program “framework” with partner municipalities for evaluating service sharing proposals Select/begin implementing a pilot service sharing deal before the end of council term 			
9	Growth-Focused Development Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of growth-focused development strategy to be completed by mid-2025 to leverage senior government funding opportunities as they emerge 			

Future Focus Corporate Strategic Plan

Focusing on a limited number (2-4) Wildly Important Goals *at any given point in time* is the key to success. Bluewater Council endorsed clusters of 2-4 Wildly Important Goals will drive the change agenda envisioned in Council’s *Focus on the Fundamentals/Modernizer* performance brand.

EXECUTION TIMELINE FOR COUNCIL-ENDORSED WILDLY IMPORTANT GOALS (WIGs)

Municipality of
Bluewater



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Zurich , ON N0M 2T0
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Appendix A—Updates

Future Focus 2024–2027 Corporate Strategic Plan outlines the Municipality’s widely important goals from 2024–2027. Each goal in the Plan was carefully considered. The merits, challenges and desired outcomes were discussed at length by Council and staff in adopting the plan. However, as with any guiding document, timelines may change, and goals may evolve to suit the needs of the Municipality.

These updates to the Municipality’s strategic goals have been made since the Plan was adopted.

Goal 7—Council Composition/Ward Boundary Review

The following motions were made at the January 10th, 2024, Council Meeting. The result is that the Council Composition and Ward Boundary review will not move forward as part of the 2024 Cluster 1 Wildly Important Goals as identified on pages 8 and 10.

Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review

MOVED: Councillor Hessel **SECONDED:** Councillor Lamport

THAT Council approve \$60,000 in the Council operating budget for the completion of a Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review, and further that Council authorize the Manager of Corporate Services to proceed with the Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review as identified in the Future Focus 2024-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan adopted by Council on December 18, 2023, including issuing a Request for Proposal to retain a third-party consultant. **LOST.**

MOVED: Councillor Hessel **SECONDED:** Councillor Groot

THAT Council direct staff to bring back a report on council composition in surrounding municipalities.

Ayes: Groot, Hessel, and Lamport

Nays: Klopp, Becker, Bailey, Harris, Walden, and Whetstone

LOST. 3–6 on a recorded vote

MOVED: Councillor Bailey **SECONDED:** Councillor Whetstone

THAT Council direct staff to develop a public input survey on the public interest for completing a Council composition and ward boundary review, and that the survey and communication materials be bought to Council for approval. **LOST.**

Bluewater Council – Wildly important goal	Cluster 1 – Do now (2024-Mid-2025)	Cluster 2 – Do next (2025-2026)	Cluster 3 – Do next (end of Council term)
Goal 1: “One Bluewater” Asset Management Plan (AMP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council approved by mid-2025 	X	-	-
Goal 2: Multi-year roads sustainability plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create Roads Sustainability business plan during 2025 and begin implementation in 2026 budget cycle Monitor pavement quality and report publicly on actual and forecast reductions in capital unfunded liability by end of 2026 	-	X	-
Goal 3: User pay cost recovery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1 cost-recovery focus on development approvals process (Planning and Building) plus cemetery service delivery channels (2027 budget cycle) Phase 2 cost-recovery focus on recreation programming and other appropriate service delivery channels (subsequent budget cycles) 	-	-	X
Goal 4: Annual budget transformed by results targets and reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot implementation in Q4 2025 followed by full implementation for additional Bluewater services in 2026 and beyond 	-	X	X
Goal 5: “State of the Infrastructure” annual report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver initial “State of the Infrastructure” report by end of Council term 	-	-	X
Goal 6: Fire Master Plan and station location review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Execute Fire Master Plan and station location review in 2024 to inform “One Bluewater” AMP due by mid-2025 	X	-	-
Goal 8: Initiate formal shared services program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a service sharing program “framework” with partner municipalities for evaluating service sharing proposals. Select/begin implementing a pilot service sharing deal before the end of council term 	-	X	X
Goal 9: Growth-focused development strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of growth-focused development strategy to be completed by mid-2025 to leverage senior government funding opportunities as they emerge 	-	X	-

*Goal 7 was removed from the timeline following 2024 budget discussions.