

# **2023 – 2026 CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN**







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# STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

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In 2023, the Township of West Lincoln completed a thorough process to refresh its Corporate Strategic Plan, which included extensive consultation with the community. West Lincoln is set to see incredible growth in the coming years. Having a concrete and up-to-date strategic plan helps the Township to anticipate the community's needs and set and track realistic objectives and goals with which to address them.

During the process, the Township heard what needs to keep moving, what needs to improve and what the community values in West Lincoln. The resulting document signifies a successful collaboration with Council, Staff, businesses, community leaders and residents of which we can all feel proud.

The Township's 2023-2026 Corporate Strategic Plan outlines an achievable road map to guide Council in making informed decisions and investments and to address programs and initiatives that will make the most positive difference in West Lincoln over the next four years.



*I love the town and I love the people... you can go to Tim Hortons and see people you know and the next thing you know there is a whole group of people chatting... some often do not know each other.*

**West Lincoln Resident**

*April 2023*



# MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

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On behalf of Township Council and Staff, I am so proud to present a refreshed Corporate Strategic Plan that accurately represents our collective goals to meet the varying needs of our growing community over the next four years.

As Mayor, a main priority since taking office has been to look for, deliver and support ways to bring the community together. Being shut-down during the pandemic did not work well for our engaged and socially active community. We love the urban / rural feel of West Lincoln, and we love to get together and celebrate.

Additionally, we heard throughout the consultation process that it is extremely important to residents and stakeholders that we continue to respect our urban / rural roots, preserve our natural resources and support our local businesses. This includes paying attention to our downtown core while promoting sustainable growth that increases opportunities for all.

West Lincoln is unique and vibrant, and I am delighted with how well this plan embodies the distinct spirit and identity of our community.

Please continue to connect with your neighbours, support local businesses and organizations and engage with Council and Staff as we build, champion, enrich and advance together.

Sincerely,



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Cheryl Ganann  
Mayor



# 2023-2026 COUNCIL

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Mayor Cheryl Ganann  
905-818-0022  
cganann@westlincoln.ca



Councillor Terry Bell  
905-957-4231  
tbell@westlincoln.ca



Councillor Shelley Bradaric  
905-902-5342  
sbradaric@westlincoln.ca



Councillor Joann Chechalk  
416-567-7323  
jchechalk@westlincoln.ca



Councillor Mike Rehner  
289-213-4108  
mrehner@westlincoln.ca



Councillor William Reilly  
365-366-3447  
wreilly@westlincoln.ca



Councillor Jason Trombetta  
905-961-0215  
jtrombetta@westlincoln.ca

# ABOUT WEST LINCOLN

West Lincoln is one of twelve lower tier municipalities in the Niagara Region. We have the largest geographical land base (387.02 km<sup>2</sup>) in the region with a population of approximately 15,454 and a growth projection of 38,370 by 2051.

West Lincoln is a progressive municipality known for its strong community, agricultural roots and natural assets. Due to our large geographic area, we represent a blended community of different perspectives, beliefs and interests with many residents who have lived in the region for generations.

The Township is made up of many rural communities such as the hamlets of St. Ann's, Silverdale, Bismark, Caistorville, Fulton, Grassie and Wellandport among others. Smithville is the largest urban centre in the Township and serves as the principle area for growth in industrial, commercial and residential sectors.

West Lincoln's 2023 Budget is comprised of \$5.2 million in Capital and Special Projects and \$21.0 million in Operating expenditures.

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Population: 15,454

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Density: 39.9 people per sq. km.

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Average age: 40.1

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Median age: 40.8

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Households: 5,295

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Median after-tax household income: \$92,000

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Businesses: 1,405

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Jobs: 5,155

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*Sources: Statistics Canada 2021 Census and  
2019 EMSI data obtained with support from  
Niagara Region Economic Development*

# 2023 – 2026

## CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN

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The Township of West Lincoln has developed a refreshed Corporate Strategic Plan with three overarching themes, one foundational theme and 20 key strategies to advance the community over the next four years.

- 1 BUILD** a safe, connected, caring and active community
- 2 CHAMPION** strategic and responsible growth
- 3 ENRICH** our strong agricultural legacy
- 4 ADVANCE** organizational capacity and effectiveness





# VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

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## Vision

Celebrating its rural and agricultural roots, the Township of West Lincoln will be a safe, engaged and vibrant municipality that fosters connections, opportunities and a strong sense of community.

## Mission

The Township of West Lincoln provides responsive municipal services that enhance the quality of life in our community.

## Values

**Service:** We take pride in providing responsive, friendly customer experiences that adapt to meet the varying needs of the community.

**Respect:** We value the contributions and diverse perspectives of all our community members and partners.

**Leadership:** We understand our roles, are empowered to contribute our ideas and are recognized for our contributions.

**Teamwork:** We commit to supporting each other and learning together in a positive work environment.

**Inclusion:** We foster a safe, welcoming and engaging culture.

# BUILD A SAFE, CONNECTED, CARING AND ACTIVE COMMUNITY

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West Lincoln envisions a community with strong, safe and active transportation connections. This includes safe passage in and around the Township through advocacy for an escarpment crossing, a truck bypass and ongoing maintenance of road conditions and safety. We will explore opportunities for various approaches to transit within West Lincoln and expand community walkability.

We prioritize the safety and well-being of all community members. We will continue to ensure our fire and emergency services are appropriately equipped to meet required standards. To support our growing community, we will lobby for increased police presence. We will also aspire to improve healthcare access through collaborations with local service providers and all levels of government.

Leveraging community partnerships and existing assets, including the West Lincoln Community Centre and the West Lincoln Public Library, we will enhance recreational programming and other initiatives to support people of all ages. We will also maximize the use of parklands and playgrounds.

West Lincoln will cultivate a welcoming and inclusive community that fosters a sense of pride and belonging. In partnership with others, we will collaborate to coordinate, host and promote community events, gatherings and other opportunities to bring people together. Lastly, we will lobby for services and programming that meets the needs of families and individuals at all stages of life, with a focus on child care, long-term care for seniors, and other needed social services.

## **Our key strategies for the next four years are:**

1. Implement the transportation master plan to support safe, efficient and strong transportation connections for all modes of transportation, including a trail system.
2. Investigate transit options from the new Niagara Regional Transit Commission.
3. Develop and begin to implement a parks and recreation facilities master plan.
4. Provide Fire and Emergency Services and Public Works and Recreation Operations with the appropriate resources to reflect the growth that our community is anticipating.
5. Strengthen the community's safety and wellbeing through effective emergency planning and the lobbying of increased health care options.
6. Leverage our facilities and develop partnerships to enhance quality and appropriate community programming and expand community events, gatherings and local attractions.
7. Lobby for community services and programs – including child care and long-term care for seniors, and other social services – that address the emerging needs of a growing population.

# CHAMPION STRATEGIC AND RESPONSIBLE GROWTH



West Lincoln is committed to preserving the Township's natural assets. We will champion strategic and responsible growth while protecting our agricultural and rural assets and rich ecosystem. We will protect the high-quality of life enjoyed by our community by promoting environmentally sustainable growth and business strategies.

Working with other municipalities, the private sector and community groups, we will develop synergies that promote mutually beneficial economic development opportunities and outcomes across the Township. The growth of West Lincoln is dependent on the active participation of many stakeholders in every step of development and redevelopment processes. Growth strategies will also consider the needs of our rural and urban community.

The current economic development plan provides a foundation for our next four years, with a focus on streamlining approval processes and securing grants, when available, to support growth. We will identify service gaps to inform business development strategies with an effort to meet the needs of the community.

## **Our key strategies for the next four years are:**

1. Work collaboratively with developers and builders to support appropriate residential and commercial growth, including infill and intensification initiatives.
2. Lobby for and encourage the development of mixed forms of housing across the Township.
3. Ready the Township for strategic growth through the development of a land asset inventory as well as a commercial gaps analysis of West Lincoln.
4. Foster strategies that accelerate the development and beautification of the downtown core of Smithville and other hamlets, and encourage growth across all sectors, where possible.
5. Facilitate the development of urban and rural employment parks by targeting distinct sectors and employment uses.
6. Lobby for broadband capacity across the entire township.
7. Encourage the greening of Smithville by naturalizing restoration areas and linkages, including those areas especially where secondary trail and corridor uses can co-exist.



# ENRICH OUR STRONG AGRICULTURAL LEGACY

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Agriculture is one of the most important industries and employers in West Lincoln and the Niagara Region. The Township values our strong, diverse agricultural base, recognizes that our farmlands are non-renewable and acknowledges that our farmers are leaders in land stewardship. They feed our community and our economy.

West Lincoln is committed to protecting farmers and their land for the long-term, to support a thriving agricultural industry. Through appropriate policy development, West Lincoln will encourage the expansion, diversification and intensification of innovative farming opportunities while preserving land and responding to climate change.

To better understand the unique role the Township can play in positioning the agricultural sector for innovation and growth, we will engage a breadth of stakeholders, including local area municipalities, OMAFRA, academia, researchers and innovators in the field. This work will set direction for future agricultural opportunities, investments and projects, including strategies to attract agri-business and agri-tourism opportunities.

While this broader feasibility work is being undertaken, we will celebrate our agricultural roots through: a “Support Local” campaign that promotes our farmers and their products; the growth of our Farmers’ Market; strategies that increase the safety of farmers; and initiatives that amplify agricultural contributions to our community.

## **Our key strategies for the next four years are:**

1. Consult with farmers to inform policies and strategies that support agricultural operations and growth, including value-added agricultural activities, while preserving land and responding to climate change.
2. Undertake feasibility work with others, to explore West Lincoln’s role in leveraging opportunities for growth and innovation within the agricultural sector.
3. Educate the community about the importance of locally sourced food and agriculture products through a ‘Support Local’ campaign.
4. Grow the Farmers’ Market.
5. Safeguard our farming community through a safety signage initiative and an emergency response program.

# FOUNDATIONAL: ADVANCE ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND EFFECTIVENESS



To ensure the success of the Strategic Plan, the Township must invest in advancing organizational capacity and staffing across all departments to keep pace with community growth, ensure adherence to legislative requirements and meet emerging needs. This includes being efficient, innovative and committed to approaches that are sustainable, effective and fiscally responsible.

Through proactive asset management, we will continue to care for our roads, bridges and culverts, water, wastewater and storm water, land improvements, equipment, buildings and facilities. We will strategically invest and manage our reserves according to good investment practices, to maximize returns.

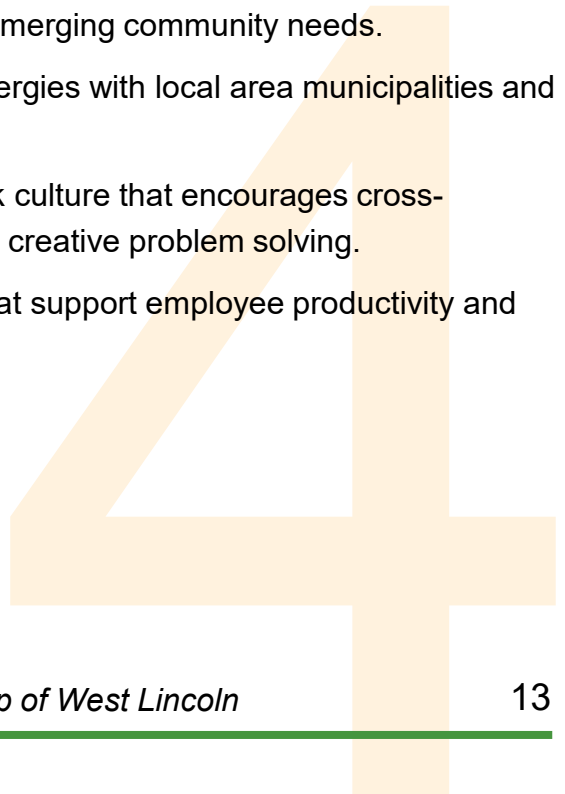
For broader impact locally and regionally, West Lincoln will strengthen relationships with local area municipalities and Niagara Region to explore joint and shared services and creative synergies.

The Township values the talent, expertise, leadership and dedication of our workforce. Supporting the ever-changing needs of employees, we will invest in talent attraction and retention strategies, professional development, wellness practices and engagement opportunities. We will continue to cultivate a culture of inclusion, innovation and excellence.

To support modernization and quality customer service, we will continue to explore and implement tools to promote efficiencies and provide an enhanced customer experience. We will implement environmental sustainability practices at an operational and service level.

## **Our key strategies for the next four years are:**

1. Explore additional revenue streams and funding, to ensure the Township has sufficient funds to maintain and upgrade its assets to support service delivery.
2. Develop and expand new services to address emerging community needs.
3. Develop and implement mutually beneficial synergies with local area municipalities and the Region.
4. Foster an open, generative and productive work culture that encourages cross-departmental communication, collaboration and creative problem solving.
5. Invest in tools and professional development that support employee productivity and customer service.



# THANK YOU

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Thank you to Township Council for their leadership, commitment and collaboration during the strategic planning process. Together, you have set a road map for the next four years as an organization and as a community.

Thank you to West Lincoln's local businesses, organizations and community leaders for sharing your ideas on how the Township can support economic success over the next four years.

Thank you to residents of West Lincoln for taking the time to share what the Township is doing right and what we could do better to improve our community as a great place to live. Whether submitting ideas online or speaking with the consultant, we heard that you value living in a place where you can establish roots, gather with your neighbours and find opportunities that support your future.

Thank you to the staff and senior leaders who contributed ideas and offered feedback throughout the strategic planning process. Your guidance on what it means to work at the Township of West Lincoln and how we can improve the services we provide to our customers has been essential.





# CONNECT WITH THE TOWNSHIP

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## Social Media

Like / follow the Township of West Lincoln on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for important events, news, updates and alerts.



@TWPWestLincoln

## Subscribe to News & Newsletters

Sign up to receive Public Notices, Planning Notices, Council News, Farmers' Market News and / or Road Closures and Construction Alerts directly in your e-mail inbox.

[subscribe.westlincoln.ca](https://subscribe.westlincoln.ca)

## Report A Concern

Have you seen an issue in the Township of West Lincoln that requires our attention? Let us know by filling out our online Report A Concern form.

[www.westlincoln.ca/report-a-concern](https://www.westlincoln.ca/report-a-concern)

## Contact Us

Address: Township Administration

318 Canborough Rd., Smithville, L0R 2A0

PO Box 400

Phone: 905-957-3346

Fax: 905-957-3219

Website: [www.westlincoln.ca](https://www.westlincoln.ca)

# West Lincoln

Your Future Naturally