

# Strategic Plan Presentation

## Township of Bonnechere Valley

November 10, 2004

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### APPENDICES: DEPARTMENT CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS:

APPENDIX I: Administration

APPENDIX II: Public Works

APPENDIX III: Sewage & Water

APPENDIX IV: Recreation & Culture

APPENDIX V: Waste Management

APPENDIX VI: Fire Department

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This document describes the initiation of the Strategic Plan development, its purpose, expected results of developing and having the plan in place, and the process to develop and implement the plan.

Council's Vision and Values documents are laid out, along with the Mission Statement and Council's over-arching goals to achieve the Vision.

The six Township departments then list their Critical Success Factors for achieving the Township Goals and Vision, setting immediate and longer term priorities, with "completed by" dates for immediate priorities. The Plan is presented to the public on November 10, 2004.

The final step will be development of specific, measurable goals for immediate priorities, with agreements on tracking results and outcomes.

## **1. Introduction**

### **Purpose**

Beginning in January 2004, the Council of the Township of Bonnechere Valley began discussions with The Delfi Group to lead development of a Strategic Plan for the municipality, covering the five-year time frame up to the year 2009. The purpose of the plan is to guide the Township into the future, providing a "road map" for employees, a reference document for taxpayers and community volunteers, and a decision-making template for Council.

### **Expected Results**

At the outset, Council listed a number of results that they expect to see unfold from development of the plan, as follows:

- a) The focus will remain on delivering key services and controlling costs
- b) Future Councils will have a sense of continuity
- c) Fairness and equality (no favoritism)
- d) Better benchmarks for better measurement of results
- e) Excellent communication so that everyone knows where we are going
- f) Appropriate alignment of our service delivery structure ("knowing the business we are in")
- g) Well-served taxpayers

## **Process**

- a) The process for developing the plan began with Council's definition of a common Vision shared by all five Council members. Council also defined a set of written Values covering such areas as professionalism, leadership, internal / external communication, succession and diversity.
- b) Council then listed the Township's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, and developed a Township Mission Statement that incorporates key strengths in order to maximize key opportunities.
- c) With the Vision (long-term) and Mission (guiding day-to-day decisions) in place, Council next summarized the Vision into seventeen overarching Goals, and assigned these goals to each of the six municipal departments: Administration, Public Works, Water and Sewage, Recreation and Culture, Waste Management, and the Fire Department.
- d) Departmental teams went through each of the goals and determined what they must keep doing and what they must start doing differently to achieve each goal. This step in the process produced one hundred and eight-eight "Critical Success Factors", with agreed upon priority dates for the immediate "must dos", and an approximate year for longer term priorities.
- e) All of these process outputs were presented at a public meeting on November 10, 2004, in the Council chambers, for review and comment.
- f) Next steps are as follows:
  - Each Department converts top-priority Critical Success Factors into measurable goals and action plans, assigns employee ownership, tracks and reports
  - Council reviews reports from each department on their progress toward achieving the priority goals, and also develops and tracks Council-specific goals and actions
  - As goals are achieved, other priorities from the list of Critical Success Factors move up onto the list of specific, measurable goals
  - New developments in the Township are recognized and incorporated into the plan, which becomes a living document that evolves with the Township and continues to guide the Township into the future.

## **2. Our Values**

It is Council's belief that the future success of Bonnechere Valley Township will be greatly enhanced if succeeding Councils maintain a culture of leadership and professionalism. To this end, Council developed the following list of statements in order to provide current and future Council members with a template for collegiality, communication and mutual focus on success and effectiveness.

Entitled "The Leadership Way", this document can serve to orient new Councillors, guide current activities, and as a compass for Councils to always find their way to the best path, even in the most challenging times.

### **The Leadership Way – the values of those who have gone before you**

#### **a) Leadership**

1. The job of Councillor is a privilege to serve the community. We have no axes to grind, no hidden agendas, and a dedication to making BVT the best it can be for staff and taxpayers.
2. We govern best when we reach consensus rather than by majority rules.
3. We do not "presume" to know the public interest. We seek input from those we represent, and use our role to find new directions that individuals may not readily see.
4. We role model confidence with realistic expectations, and accept constructive criticism from others who may have an interest in municipal politics.

#### **b) Professionalism**

1. Our conduct and decorum is friendly, appreciative and professional.
2. We are elected spokespersons and representatives for the people of our township. Being timid is not appropriate, because it opens the door to intimidation from the public and press.
3. We boldly speak our minds in full public view, role-modeling self-confidence and assuredness.
4. We refuse to allow the "old boys' club" label to stick.

### **c) Succession**

1. We commit to constant improvement, results, and the creation of a township where there are ongoing challenges and a firm foundation for the next Council.
2. We accept terms in office, not political careers. Our strategic plan is a process, regularly refreshed to keep government interesting and effective.

### **d) Teamwork**

1. We develop a camaraderie, and closeness as a team.
2. Governance is not a game. We do not strive to “win the debate” or “outshine the competition.”

### **e) Personal Balance**

1. We give to our community because we believe that our participation makes our community a better place to live.
2. We accept that we must make sacrifices in our personal lives to devote the time required to deliver good government. At the same time, we respect the private lives of each Council member, and endorse the need for down time to personally revitalize and attend to family responsibilities.
3. We like what we do, and pace ourselves in order to enjoy what little free time we have.
4. We seek to live lives balanced by work, play and spirit. We diplomatically say “no” to avoid burnout.

### **f) Goals and agendas**

1. We share a number of common values, and the same ultimate goal – to represent and do the best for the taxpayers of Bonnechere Valley Township.
2. Each of us is prepared to settle for gradual progress respecting most of our problems. “All or nothing” is rarely an option.
3. We seek to be open and forthright. Our agendas are transparent to fellow Councillrs.

**g) Honesty**

1. We relate to each other as honest, respectful equals representing a valid constituency in the decision making process.
2. Each of us is here to provide an open and honest agenda aimed at finding the best way to meet the interests of our taxpayers.

**h) Acceptance and consideration**

1. We recognize that our colleagues on Council are equal in importance, each bringing their unique style to the table. When our styles clash, we learn to work together without being overly critical
2. We “think first”, showing respect and confidence in one another.
3. We practice consideration for opinions, unique talents and areas of expertise.

**i) Communication**

1. The Mayor and Committee Chairs consciously seek opinions and contributions at the various meetings, and openly and equitably try for consensus.
2. We accept that negative opinions sometimes expose the flaws in our thinking, and that disagreement engenders learning and, occasionally, great ideas.
3. We come prepared to think before we speak, listen with compassion and an open mind, and actively seek out opinions contrary to our own, bringing differing views and opinions into focus. Then we act.
4. We have no “sacred cows” at council meetings. We disagree without ridicule and challenge without destroying.
5. We keep each other up-to-date and aware of issues in our assigned areas of involvement.
6. We adhere to an organizational policy of excellent, open communications among council, staff, the public and all concerned.
7. We keep the public informed of Council’s actions and positions by means of the Township’s Official Communication Strategy.
8. Each of us has the right to express and be valued for our opinions.
9. We are as good at listening as we are at presenting our ideas, with confidence and absolute safety.

10. We recognize that no member of Council has the right to be silent, when acting on behalf of those they represent, or to refuse to hear the views of others.
11. We encourage each other, and we encourage others who may feel timid about speaking up.

**j) Creativity**

1. Every great act starts as an idea.
2. Our table is always open and issues are our stock in trade.
3. It is our right and duty to review a broad range of issues affecting our township on behalf of our taxpayers.

**k) Diversity**

1. Diverse perspectives are brought to the table in order for Council to effectively make decisions, which ultimately affect the entire township.
2. Bonnechere Valley is a council of ideas where differing opinions are forged into a consensus.

**l) Fairness**

1. Regardless of differences of opinion (including that of the Chair), all council, staff and taxpayers receive a fair hearing at any meeting table, observing rules of procedure that maintain openness and equitable treatment.
2. At the Council table we are responsible for the well-being of others and fairness must reign. The equal right to speak is a driving force.

**m) Effectiveness**

1. We stay fresh by periodically reexamining our accomplishments, evaluating our effectiveness, and keeping perspective on the three years we have to accomplish our Mission.
2. We resist old habits of trying to manage the responsibilities of staff.
3. We question the “culture of busyness” (work for work’s sake) and ensure that our meetings are required and productive.

**n) Win/Win:**

1. We seek win/win consensus. If consensus is not possible, and a Councillor is out-voted, we accept best alternative solutions for the betterment of the Township.
2. We make political problem solving a healthy exercise by placing principles before personalities.
3. We override win/lose attitudes with the belief that good debate is healthy and emotions stay at the Council table.

**3. Our Vision**

**Preamble**

Created from the merger of three rural settlement areas and one village, Bonnechere Valley Township was organized by agreement, on a representative basis, to manifest the rural and village settlement interests of its constituents.

As of 2004, we are a democratically elected body charged with working collectively as a Council, while informing, consulting with, serving and involving the public, to set policies that are fiscally responsible, fair and equitable to all taxpayers and residents. We manage our direction to ensure that polices, services, programs, regulations, money spent and use of municipal resources are delivered efficiently, correctly and consistently according to resolutions as adopted by council.

**Our Vision: It's April 14, 2009, and . . .**

The Township's Council is made up of qualified and committed residents representing four wards whose boundaries have been redrawn since 2004. In a fair and unbiased manner, the Council gives effect to public views and addresses issues of public policy affecting the entire municipality.

**a) Customers:**

An effective monopoly, every taxpayer and voting resident is a customer of Bonnechere Valley Township who either chooses to live here for their own reasons, or cannot afford to



go elsewhere for services. Other customers include tourists and visitors, businesses and corporations, and seasonal residents. Our focus on leadership continuity means that future Councils are also our customers.

The municipality's taxpayers consider us to be successful as a responsive lower-tier government since we work very well as a leadership team, and listen, consult and communicate before making changes that affect taxpayers' lives.

**b) Funding and budgeting:**

Funding continues to be complicated by the fact that short-term provincial changes make long-range planning difficult. Funds from federal and provincial sources have stayed the same or actually diminished in some areas. And taxpayers continue to be unwilling to accept increases in property taxes or user fees, unless Council is able to prove that any increases are justified.

To offset this, we have successfully refocused on increased residential building and expanded the commercial tax base by identifying and facilitating added value business in key resource areas, such as forestry, tourism and mineral extraction.

We also cope very effectively with the often-competing pressures of provincial versus taxpayer interests. Bonnechere Valley Township has adopted the competitive spirit and methods of the marketplace, and trimmed budgets while providing improved and more efficient services to taxpayers. Since 2004, these measures have resulted in savings of a minimum of \$300,000.00 (in 2004 dollars) over what they would have been paying had there been no changes.

**c) Services:**

As a matter of policy, Bonnechere Valley Township provides services in areas where it clearly outperforms the private sector, and has exited from areas of business that are more effectively performed privately or through contracting out.

All services offered (directly or contracted out) address necessary aspects of the every day life of taxpayers, and are characterized by Council's responsibility for dependability, reliability, responsiveness and efficiency. Responsibility for all customer service remains with Council.

Core services and related activities provided are those that relate to the Township's core mission and include:

- planning and development
- fire protection
- police services and public safety (including School Crossing Guards)
- by-law enforcement
- roads, parking and transportation
- parks, recreation and culture
- sidewalks, clean water and sewer services within the village of Eganville
- sidewalks, water and sewage to some new residential and commercial areas just beyond the 2004 village limits.
- support for clean water for all rural areas
- rural septage handled by an upgraded Village system capable of treating septage from throughout the Township
- waste management
- Secure funding / money management
- Emergency preparedness
- development of a strong tax base
- communication with the population served

Other services offered are as follows:

- The Roads and Fire departments maintain satellite facilities
- The waste site attendants' facilities have expanded to accommodate growth and change

- The Township Offices provide taxpayers and residents with a gateway access service to county, provincial, and federal departments and services

We actively support services for persons requiring assisted living supports, a retirement home to serve our growing seniors community, and youth recreation opportunities.

**d) Staffing and Structure:**

Our staffing numbers have remained stable since 2004 (including our excellent fire department), with dedicated Managers supported by a strong Council. Employees at all levels are hard working and responsive to customers and maintain high standards of efficiency in delivering services. Relations between Council and Municipal staff are healthy. Township residents have created a community-based volunteer organization to support the work of Council and Township staff.

Our committee and departmental structure has remained relatively unchanged, except for the addition of a staff role whose top priority is to keep Council informed of legislative developments and availability of grants, and to coordinate new legislation.

Council Chambers have been functionally improved to facilitate the professionalism of government (appropriate furniture, technology, décor, etc.).

**e) Population and Demographics:**

Our population has expanded to include a greater number of year-round residents, many of whom are retired or semi-retired. Most live in single homes outside of the village area. Although our demographics are continuing to age but we are experiencing a small boom in young families attracted by our lower than average housing costs.

Regardless of age or situation, we support and advocate for the needs of our evolving demographics.

## **f) Business**

Our commitment to economic development throughout the Township has fostered significant expansion in the retail, commercial, industrial and tourism/hospitality sectors.

The Village of Eganville has established its reputation as a pretty, inviting little town nestled in the pastoral valley of the river banks, where travellers stop to take in the sights, enjoy the amenities and learn about the historic significance of the area. The Eganville business community is thriving with viable retail and commercial businesses and professional services filling all available storefronts.

## **g) The Plan**

Taking the future into our hands in 2004 generated a Strategic Plan that is now in place with resources assigned and plans approved and implemented. As a result, there are fewer “surprises” and our taxpayers enjoy a fair tax rate that equals or betters the rate in neighbouring municipalities.

## **4. Our Threats and Weaknesses**

Achievement of the Vision can be and will be hampered by internal and external circumstances that must be considered in advance, in order to minimize their effect.

Council’s perceptions of Township concerns are as follows:

### **Threats**

#### **a) What worries you about the Township?**

- Deteriorating and unattractive downtown core
- Over-regulation by provincial and federal bodies so that the rural environment, rather than feeling free and spacious, will feel stifled and constricted
- Lack of funding
- Increasing costs in roads, garbage, salaries, engineering
- No replacement plan for key Managers
- Higher taxes and taxpayer dissatisfaction;
- There once was an idea that those who pay should have the say in how a service is managed. As of now that is quite untrue with policing and increasingly less true in other areas as federal and provincial regulations dictate what municipalities must do, without the additional financing to address additional costs
- Increasingly we are being limited in our ability to find local solutions to local problems,

- There is also a trend to regulate an increasing number of things that we never interfered with before. New residents who have not yet assimilated rural living patterns demand some of this.
- Stagnant growth, deteriorating infrastructure, excessive taxes, aging population
- Lack of planning by previous or future Councils

**b) What are we good at now that's likely to change?**

- We are still good at allowing people to live without a rulebook in their back pocket. As more regulations are dictated from higher levels of government and we bow to concerns about liability those rules are going to increase along with our costs to enforce them.
- The standard of service will deteriorate if the funding to provide them is not there
- We are good at many things but must review how, why and at what cost.

**c) What's changing out there in the world that could hurt us?**

- Big box stores and big banking are drawing funds out of the local economy
- Over regulation by MOE, MNR, etc.
- Quickly aging Median Age along with more fixed incomes
- Aging demographic means service requirements will change
- Poor reliability of power and phone lines which are antiquated systems
- Slowness of technical trends to reach us in this township
- County government expanding its role and the possibility of one tier government is in the future. This could result in greater 'big government' attitudes and a loss of our rural way of doing things
- As government becomes more complex, I see a greater reliance on government staff for answers and guidance to aid the decision makers. There will need to be greater diligence by those elected to ensure that we do not allow that reliance to lead us away from where the people want us to go
- Higher tier governments (federal and provincial) paying less attention to municipalities
- Slow or no growth to increase tax base. Lack of provincial funding.
- Downloading has helped cause our economy to slide locally.
- People are not willing to wait; they want everything right away.
- People are frustrated and distrustful with government generally.
- Lack of community involvement and the dependence on council for many amenities
- No-one likes to pay more taxes.

**d) What will make it difficult to ensure we have the right people working with us?**

- Competitive salary levels, benefits, and a secure place of employment
- If we become more unionized or if we allow our relationship with the union to become adversarial, it will make hiring and staff changes more difficult. Additionally, we will be challenged to keep good staff if we can not afford to maintain wage and benefit levels that offer fair compensation for the skills we require.

- Understanding each other as to goals and objectives that each of us may have different priorities for
- e) **What will make it difficult for us to ensure we have the finances, equipment, etc. needed to be successful?**
- Tax base, eroding commercial base, no businesses
  - Resistance to tax increases coupled with reduction in funding from provincial and federal sources may reduce municipalities to pauper status. Also regulations that mandate what municipalities must do allow less discretion in how we spend property tax dollars.
  - Raising taxes any higher than they are now and convincing the governments that the need for a cash infusion is a must.
- f) **What important things are we *not* good at that we don't seem to be able to improve on?**
- We seem to be unable to extend our road network to reflect current demographics. We pay for road maintenance for miles of roads serving one or two families while ignoring shorter roads serving many more. This limits future development in areas where people want to live.
  - Holding the line on taxes
  - Garbage: a constant struggle, with waste site leaching becoming a bigger problem; already higher in our Township
- g) **What current strengths are we likely to lose? Why?**
- The level of service falling due to lack of funds required.
  - Our staffing costs are currently reasonable and we have good people working for us. If CUPE unionizes office staff we could find our flexibility in work assignment and responsiveness to taxpayer concerns affected.
  - Equity in our tax system: MPAC a problem, but out of our control

**Weaknesses:**

- a) **What don't we do as well as others?**
- Parts of our downtown core are aesthetically unattractive! Nothing to draw tourists and visitors other than a few little supply shops and the Museum
  - The community as a whole is weak in taking an interest in the politics and don't pull together enough until there is a tragedy or out of necessity. There is a "somebody should do this or that" and many expect Council to do all.
  - We do not respond to change as well as some other, better funded municipalities and business organizations
  - We don't attract "commercial" entities
  - Walmart and Canadian Tire are killing our retail
  - No long-range plan for downtown revitalization
  - Many roads have been neglected

- Not ready for emergency fund requirements
- Communication must improve with staff and taxpayers
- Create support for a business infrastructure that encourages local shopping

**b) What do our customers say they don't like about our Township?**

- "Their perception is their reality"
- We don't retain business, we don't attract new ones, nor do we provide shops that would attract shoppers in any special ways. We need modern retailers for clothing, household necessities and more variety
- Our taxpayers seem to feel that there is nothing happening in our community and generally don't want to get involved
- They sometimes feel we do not always listen or communicate well enough
- Some feel taxes are too high and that they do not get much for their tax dollars. They seem upset when they have to follow new regulations or pay for services that were previously included in their taxes
- There appears to be a tendency in both councilors and staff to be overly deferential towards bureaucracy at higher levels of government
- Too much equipment rusting and not being used
- Union issues

**c) What do we think our employees say they don't like about our Township?**

- Pay scale????
- They seem to want to do their job but again little involvement in the community.
- Some employees do not feel as though the township is eager to support them. Some do not trust the township to treat them fairly. Some feel there needs to be better communication and that the communication should involve the township listening to their concerns.
- Our employees resent interference by politicians in how they do their work
- They require more up-to-date equipment, such as computers, fire prevention, road equipment replacement

**d) What do our suppliers say they don't like about our Township?**

- Very little growth in the township which stymies the business they do in the township
- Our suppliers resent our parochialism and some feel they get particular treatment because they are "outsiders".

**e) What do our sub contractors and partners say they don't like about our Township?**

- That there is not enough work for them here
- Our partner in Admaston Bromley Township does not like our desire to re-negotiate our Fire department Agreement with them.
- Our partners see us as trying to control things
- Would like to see more "contracting out"

**f) What factors position our Township poorly in today's world?**

- Nothing to have travelers want to stop; the appearance of a depressed area

- Our infrastructure is getting lazy and worn
- A weakening in the vitality of our retail business community
- Our lack of a senior care facility.
- Our limited communication capacity in rural areas (i.e. cell phone coverage and broad band Internet)
- A growing dependency upon property taxes to fund provincially mandated services.
- Resistance to trying new ways of doing things and being risk adverse, position us poorly
- Poor tax base and lack of development
- Highly dependent on service, tourism, and logging / sawmills (lower paid jobs)

**g) What sets our Township apart from the rest of the world in a negative way?**

- Main corridor through town is awkward and does nothing to draw traffic into town
- The bridge cannot take more traffic congestion
- The main highway is narrow and hilly
- Lack of parking, lack of serviced lots
- Lack of area to develop
- Lack of tax base, restricting many services due to lack of funding
- Lack of health services locally for an aging population and retiring baby boomers.
- No or little growth.
- Our parochialism sets us apart from the rest in a negative way
- No local Tim Hortons

**h) What factors detract from us working well together as a team?**

- The slow growth and an actual decline in the business world
- We still do not completely trust each other (taxpayers vs. government, unionized staff vs. government and our government vs. other governments)
- Lack of trust and suspicion of hidden agendas sometimes keep us from working well together as a team
- Union affects “team” atmosphere: pits management against employees, non-union against union employees

**i) What else do you *not* like about our Township?**

- Not enough togetherness and understanding of the changes brought about by amalgamation; protecting turf can get in the way
- A feeling that the village community is “preeminent” when it represents only about 1/3 of the public view; this feeling is widely shared in rural settlement areas
- There is a perceived tendency that governance involves being shrewd in advancing the interests of ward constituents (NOTE that this could be overcome by greater understanding of the collective strengths we possess when acting as a team, yet representing the interests of our respective wards in a balanced way)
- Lack of involvement in community events and apathy in many areas
- Lack of financial resources
- No local Tim Hortons



## 5. Our Top Strengths and Opportunities

Internal and external strengths and opportunities will enhance the achievement of the Township Vision. Council's analysis brought out the following points:

### Strengths

#### a) We are best at:

- providing basic municipal services: roads, water, sewer, development control through zoning, and local recreational and cultural facilities
- traditional labor and capital-intensive areas of work, where private sector competition is absent and where multiple/legislated objectives must be met
- Serving the area: BVT, NAW, KHR – Arena, Library, Core Village
- Doing a good job on timely service delivery (admin, fire, roads)
- Being a “close knit” Council with one main objective: to make our Township the best it can be

#### b) Our customers like our Township because:

- roads are maintained and they are happy with most services
- of quality of life: our regulations are less oppressive than urban areas, meaning freedom to live “the rural way of doing things” without offending some By-law
- they like our approachable Township staff
- of the quality of leadership: they see a strong, dedicated Council working for the betterment of the Community, each member available to hear about and discuss public views
- it is a rural, picturesque setting (visitors)
- Eganville is a clean, well-maintained, scenic town (“jewel of the Bonnechere”), with quality of life, clean water and air, and most facilities up to date

#### b) Our employees like our Township because:

- office staff seem to enjoy their work environment and feel justly compensated for the work they do
- they enjoy the respect of their managers
- they enjoy working in their home community providing services to taxpayers
- they feel ownership and partnership
- they receive fair pay (?), good equipment and working conditions, and benefits
- roads department staff feel empowered by their union and feel as though they are protected through the union from abuses

#### c) Our suppliers and sub-contractors like our Township because:

- of the prompt way we pay our bills for goods and services rendered
- we try to do business locally
- they find us easy enough to talk to
- being able to provide their services to us helps them to survive in a small market community.

**d) Our “competition” likes our Township because:**

- of our good management, good facilities
- The Township has no competition; it operates a very effective monopoly and when services costs go up, taxes are increased to pay for them.
- Townships such as ours are the only ones we can really compare to and we have some benefits they don’t and vice versa.

**e) What factors set us apart *and* position us well in today’s world?**

- a good choice for folks looking to get away from the urban life
- a good choice for retirees searching for solace from the city bustle
- lower cost of living makes the retirement buck go further
- more affordable property values
- Not crowded with quality of life, clean water and clean air
- close enough to Ottawa to offer big city cultural experiences on a day visit basis
- Eganville offers many business and professional services without requiring long trips
- tourism positioning factors for our township are:
- “cottage country”: the prominent geographic feature of three lakes
- the location of its hub village community, Eganville, on a major route to Ontario's largest and most popular Provincial Park
- access to forests which are the prime growing area for white pine logs and for quality sugar maple and basswood
- access for aggregate and other mineral resources extraction
- improvements in transportation enhancing all of the above
- we are an average township, comparable to any of our size
- superb landscape and scenery with the lakes and rivers situated in our township
- two major regional roads meet in our Township
- we are the geographic centre of Renfrew County

**f) Factors that contribute to us working well together as a team:**

- current council is open to communication and consultation with staff and taxpayers
- we strive to create a climate where all points of view get a fair hearing.
- transparency
- absence of hidden agendas
- diversity as council members
- willingness and co-operation to serve our taxpayers as best as possible.
- a sense of common values, “for the good of our taxpayers” – same goal
- dedicated: everyone is on Council for the right reason

**g) What else do *you* really like about our Township?**

- I personally enjoy the low population density and the availability of outdoor recreational opportunities.
- I appreciate the good mix of goods and services available in Eganville and the generally non-intrusive nature of local government.
- Lifestyle is what is most attractive about living in Bonnechere Valley, including:

- the security of knowing your neighbor
- geographic location relative to the rest of the world
- fresh air and clean water
- outdoor activities available including golf, canoeing, fishing, hunting and skiing
- We have the necessary services to provide a quality of life that is peaceful and serene, yet we are close enough to enjoy the benefits of urban centers
- landscape
- small enough to know many residents, but large enough for many services
- we own a hydro-electric generation asset
- we have modern educational facilities
- our service clubs, our churches and our not-for-profit organizations
- our river system: the Bonnechere watershed
- abundance of fish and wildlife
- our museums, historical societies and heritage sites
- our community newspaper

## Opportunities

### a) Where do you think we can do *more* of the things we're good at?

- Decide if our main focus should be a retirement and tourist catering area. Once we decide, then focus our attention and development on the services either would require
- take more advantage of opportunities and programs that are out in the field and designed for municipalities
- extend services such as road maintenance to those on private roads and water and sewer to open new development opportunities
- Look at "service delivery": how to improve contracting out, landfill sites, planning, cost savings through joint services with other townships
- Bump up our "open for business" attitude,
- Good road system for business access
- We have strong potential for tourism development based upon outdoor recreational experiences (so long as we do not put up too many road blocks to affordable development)

### b) What *new* things are we well positioned to start doing, and where?

- I am not sure we should undertake anything new until we learn to be efficient at what we currently do.
- Work with the province and the feds to maximize the funding available in order to help our community keep the services we have and improve our infrastructure to standards required
- Better plan for "road" maintenance and upgrading
- Start to look seriously at waste costs
- Hydro generation plant ready to become profitable
- New computer program for Accounting
- Long-range plan to help with the "ups and downs" leads to better administration and direction for management and future Councils

**c) What's changing out there in the world that we can take advantage of?**

- A lot of tourists and travellers pass through the Township
- Gap is expanding between city high-cost housing and our low cost housing
- Our geography is well suited to attract people who want a rural lifestyle with the city not too far away. The demand for space, especially near rivers and lakes, attracts more retired or semi-retired residents
- Retirees are moving to the area (aging baby boomers) – they are more active, more interested in social, leisure sports, different cultures
- Time to travel distance of 100 km from Kanata is shortening
- The development of previous waterfront cottages into primary residents – cater to these changing needs, retirees with modest disposable income.
- Support business or development in order to increase our tax base.
- Doors to municipal financial assistance from feds and the province seem to be opening.
- County and provincial initiatives that are available can help.
- Stay with the times and be abreast of positive trends.
- Work to improve our image through education and information.
- Encourage our young people to work and live in our community
- Keep up with the time in the technical end of things.
- People are looking for more personalized service
- The population is aging but those that are aging are more active and retiring at an earlier age. We can market ourselves as a good place to spend those retirement years
- High speed communication is becoming more essential to daily living and we need to see that it is available here
- People expect government to listen to them and to explain things. The old attitude that you can't fight city hall is being challenged daily
- Quality of life is becoming a major issue. People want to be free of crime and petty interference in their daily lives. They want opportunities to enjoy a more casual lifestyle but with a safety net of reliable government services.
- Demand for cell-phone service and high speed or at least "DSL" Internet

**d) What corporate strengths are we not maximizing?**

- One or two people away from having an excellent roads department
- CAO's potential through maximizing his admin. support
- There needs to be an effort to tap the reservoir of potential volunteers in our community to share in decision making and management of some municipal services. Council's Leadership potential to motivate active involvement of outside volunteers to produce "value added" may be the spark of initiative, or catalyst, that is needed.
- Wind Turbines, increasing electricity production – brown fields
- We can always improve on equipment and techniques
- Retired people with expertise
- We need to do more in selling our geographic location in order to boost tourism
- Ability to prioritize when there is so much to be done.

- Our township owns a fortune in equipment that is often under-utilized. Equipment and services should be better shared with other communities.
- Ability to outsource
- The people in this area have a strong work ethic. The same is true of township staff.
- There is a community longing for the sense of neighborhood and vitality that once flourished here.
- Provided with the proper technological tools, our staff has the great potential to move this community forward.
- Is there some significance that the two most imposing landmarks in the village, as the hub of the municipality, are churches?
- Geographically, the community also joins two major transportation routes, one from the southeast, Lake Ontario region and the other from the east and the Capital, Ottawa.
- Both routes provide linkages to Algonquin Park and the Near North.
- In terms of natural resources, the region possesses the following resources in abundance: aggregates and limestone; marble (mine under development in an adjacent township); hardwood and softwood forests.
- The lines we have drawn in the dirt and on maps creating the little kingdoms we call townships need to be lightened and sometimes erased
- Services such as recreation, culture, fire protection, road maintenance and policing need to be viewed and funded based upon who can provide the best service at the best cost
- Facilities such as arenas, libraries and parks need broader bases of funding and greater community involvement

## 6. Our Mission

Council distilled key strengths and opportunities into one statement that when used as a day-to-day guide and reference point will always show the way to the best decisions. The Mission of the Township of Bonnechere Valley is:

**to make our community an affordable, efficient place where people choose to live, work, visit and participate in a culture that fosters communication, rural lifestyle, personal growth, and healthy commerce.**

## 7. Our Overarching Goals to Achieve our Vision

Vision statements can only be achieved when they are translated into actions. Council broke the Vision down into seventeen overarching goals, and then assigned these goals to each of the departments, as follows:

Overarching Goal:	Public Works	Sewage & Water	Recreation & Culture	Admin-istration	Waste Mngmnt	Fire Dept
1. Excellence in quality customer service is our business.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. We know and manage our assets effectively and efficiently.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. We meet or exceed the applicable provincial standards for performance under current legislation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. We support development and maintenance of attitudes of personal responsibility and professional pride among employees	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5. We recognize that what we do has a direct effect on health and safety of the public and Township staff.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6. We regularly evaluate services against objective standards, and how they are delivered.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
7. We work to maintain effective communication among all departments Council and the public.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8. We abandon outmoded practices and support employees to innovate and bring forward new ideas.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9. We recognize that we serve a community with a variety of ages and disabilities.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
10. We recognize and accept that we are the first line of contact with the public.	✓		✓	✓		✓
11. We plan for smooth and effective staff succession.	✓			✓		✓
12. Admin. operations are effective and efficient, with a high degree of functional flexibility			✓	✓		✓
13. We place a high priority on developing and working with community volunteer organizations.			✓	✓		
14. Admin staff provide Council with reliable, objective information in a timely manner, without personal bias.				✓		
15. We provide continuity of service delivery during transition from one Council to the next.				✓	✓	✓
16. We serve the public's need for quality of life.			✓		✓	✓
17. We preserve our roots and embrace cultural diversity.			✓			

## 8. Our Departmental Critical Success Factors

The documents in the Appendices list the Critical Success Factors that each of the Township’s six departments believe must be achieved in order to realize the Township Vision. The achievement of the Strategic Plan and the creation of the actions that move it forward is ultimately the work of not only Township employees, but every member of the taxpaying public. With Council’s leadership, however, it is the employees (staff, contract and volunteer) who lead the way through their dedication and commitment to not only their employment agreements, but to the people of the township whom they serve.

The departmental Critical Success factors are included as follows:

- a) Administration .....Appendix I
- b) Public Works.....Appendix II
- c) Water and Sewage.....Appendix III
- d) Recreation and Culture .....Appendix IV
- e) Waste Management.....Appendix V
- f) Fire Department. ....Appendix VI

## 9. Tracking Success

For progress to take place, it must be measured. Each department, and each employee responsible for each action step, will achieve specific goals that add up to achievement of the overall Vision. Tracking of this progress starts with the individuals who are actually doing the work, translates into departmental reports, and ultimately is reviewed by Council.

## 10. Next Steps

Following ratification by Council of the Strategic Plan, Department Managers will meet with their teams to translate top-priority Critical Success Factors into specific goals and actions steps to achieve the goal, with delegated people “owning” each goal or action. This process is essentially the creation of or adjustment to work plans to move in the desired directions, and will fit with the Township’s performance management processes.

## **11. Conclusion**

The Township of Bonnechere Valley is at a significant plateau in its history, with tremendous, challenging opportunities before it. The remarkable cohesiveness and leadership vision of the current Council is the bedrock of this plateau, with the Township's taxpayers forming the fertile land upon which the Township's future depends for strong community-based culture, leadership excellence, business wisdom and experience, and entrepreneurial creativity.

The professional, dedicated volunteers and employees of Bonnechere Valley are the polished tool-kit that will ultimately make the difference in getting to the future. And with this strategic plan as their road map, the Vision for 2009 and beyond is already in sight.