

**STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
ON-LINE TELECONFERENCE**

**Thursday, January 21, 2021
Following the Full Authority Meeting (~12 pm)**

A G E N D A

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

2. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- a) Minutes of the NPCA Strategic Planning Committee meeting dated December 17, 2020

Page # 1

4. CORRESPONDENCE

5. DELEGATIONS

6. PRESENTATIONS

- a) SWOT Analysis and Gaps (For information)

Page # 4

7. CONSENT ITEMS

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a) Strategic Planning Update & SWOT Analysis Summary (For Receipt)

Page # 17

9. NEW BUSINESS

10. ADJOURNMENT

**STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
ON-LINE TELECONFERENCE
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, December 17, 2020
12:20 p.m.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: K. Kawall (Chair)
R. Brady
D. Bylsma
J. Hellinga
D. Huson
B. Johnson
B. Mackenzie
W. Rapley
M. Woodhouse
B. Wright
E. Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT: S. Beattie

OTHERS PRESENT: D. Cridland

STAFF PRESENT: C. Sharma, C.A.O. / Secretary – Treasurer
G. Bivol, Executive Co-ordinator to the C.A.O. / Board
N. Green, Project Manager
R. Bisson, Manager Communications and Public Relations

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:20 p.m.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Recommendation No. SPC-18-2020
Moved by Member Bylsma
Seconded by Member Woodhouse

THAT the Strategic Planning Committee Meeting agenda dated Thursday December 17, 2020 **BE APPROVED** as presented.

CARRIED

2. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None declared.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) Minutes of the NPCA Strategic Planning Committee meeting dated November 3, 2020

Recommendation No. SPC-19-2020

Moved by Member Smith
Seconded by Member Wright
THAT the Minutes of the NPCA Strategic Planning Committee meeting dated November 3, 2020 **BE APPROVED**.

CARRIED

4. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

5. DELEGATIONS

None.

6. PRESENTATIONS

None.

7. CONSENT ITEMS

None.

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a) Verbal Update on the Strategic Plan - C. Sharma, C.A.O. / Secretary – Treasurer presented to the Board and sought direction from the Committee on proceeding with the Strategic Plan in light of the newly enacted Bill 229. By consensus, the Committee directed that the process proceed with a high level workplan and overview to be presented in January and a report on items that could be advanced. It was noted that public consultation would not occur before March, 2021.

9. NEW BUSINESS

None.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Recommendation No. SPC-20-2020

Moved by Member Huson

Seconded by Member Woodhouse

THAT the Strategic Planning Committee meeting of December 17, 2020 **BE** hereby **ADJOURNED** at 12:54 p.m..

CARRIED

K. Kawall
Committee Chair

C. Sharma, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer / Secretary
- Treasurer



Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority

SWOT Analysis

January 2021

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
HR and Staff <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Improvements have been made to NPCA culture○ Excellent leadership from CAO and all staff○ Staff: Science based conservation and ecology expertise○ Improved communications capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ History of low morale (too many reorganizations, AG Report) etc.○ Risk of staff burnout and understaffed relative to <u>volume</u> of tasks, and<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ may need <u>more depth</u> in planning and natural heritage○ Head office -- rented facility -- not well suited for staff collaboration and culture.○ Communications tools need to be updated○ Scale of communications program insufficient to adequately promote programs and drive membership sales
Reputational Assets <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Strong reputation with some groups○ Respected for value of recreational and educational programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Continued perception issues makes working with others more difficult than it really should be.
Financial <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Track record of improvement”○ Commitment to fulfill goals including Auditor General matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Limited/loss of revenue streams, reduced over the years○ Limited funding for land acquisition○ Excessive reliance on municipal levies: 2/3 of revenue○ High cost of owning and maintaining facilities and lands that do not necessarily generate revenue

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
Governance <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ New and improved board of directors; broad range of expertise,○ Improved procedural or administrative bylaws○ Commitment to transparency, accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Board strategic priorities and workplan are unclear○ Lack of Performance Measurement○ Board is large for effective decision making○ Board practices (bias, confidentiality, role, staff)
Mandated Role <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The NPCA is at once a regulator, conservator of land (acquiring and managing), operator of revenue generating properties and a developer.○ Role makes NPCA important and relevant to 500,000 residents○ Increasingly important role given growing salience of Climate Change, flood control, etc.○ Reduction in role arising from provincial policy may reduce number of “structural” conflicts that NPCA is drawn in to	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Complex, evolving role made uncertain by changes to CA Act○ Lack of consensus around overall regulatory role.○ NPCA staff does not have equal capacity at each category of tasks.○ Different roles means potential for criticism from different angles○ Source of controversy. Criticism from all sides:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Public frustrated we don’t deliver stronger protection○ Developers say we always oppose everything and stray from our core missions○ No consensus on the right balance○ Need to develop consensus around new role.
Volunteer base <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Significant but underutilized asset	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Not enough programming opportunities for volunteers○ Aging volunteer base○ Not enough youth engagement on volunteer opportunities

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Land asset base

- Diverse lands, allow for flexible programming and revenue generation
- Strong property management
- Services outside the box, such as the Balls Falls Hamilton's Zip Line etc.

Operations: Strong reputation in...

- Water Quality Monitoring
- Integrated Watershed Management
- Restoration Program that helps build, enhance or repair watershed
- Data Management: Natural Heritage Inventory and the Digital Elevation Model are important data sets
- Commitment to strong municipal relationships;

Weaknesses

NPCA may perceive itself as behind on:

- Land purchases to meet the needs of the environment

NPCA may perceive itself as behind on...

- Developing sub-watershed plans with its municipal partners.
- Promoting and creating conservation of wildlife corridors (Welland Canal/NEC)
- Investing in trail systems in and near the larger municipalities.
- Environmental monitoring.
- Updating floodplain maps
- Investing in public amenities at Conservation Areas (signage, washrooms, etc.)
- Benefitting from public feedback re parks operations

SWOT Analysis

Opportunities	Approaches to consider
Expectation of Evolution in CA-Municipal Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Become a leader in advising municipalities on:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ restoration, policies and other means to protect and enhance biodiversity in urban areas○ establishing natural heritage parks within municipal settings○ climate change○ Green infrastructure assets○ updating watershed plans and develop sub-watershed plans in appropriate○ designating wildlife corridors○ Engage with active Transportation Committees to explore synergies, partnerships
Federal/Provincial “Build Back Better” and Green Infrastructure Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ensure there are ready-to-go projects to take advantage of “Build Back Better” initiatives
Improve Trails and Trail Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Trails: Develop a trail system master plan for the whole watershed/ NPCA properties.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Using unopen road right of ways○ Hydro and pipeline corridors○ Secure connecting links○ Paddling: Develop a paddling route on the Welland River

SWOT Analysis

Opportunities	Possible Approaches
Economic Development Links to Niagara tourism 12-month season <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Bruce trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Invest in amenities, such as Trails, Parking, etc.○ Increase Eco-Tourism as revenue generating activity
Public Expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Increased in salience of CA role (Climate Change resilience)○ Increased access to parks as a result of pandemic○ Public expectation that we will lead in environmental protection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Increase public communications
Provincial expectation of improved Coordination of Land Use Approvals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Improve timeliness of process○ Streamline Natural Heritage management: Work with Region to have one natural heritage team in Niagara, too much duplication

SWOT Analysis: Threats and Approaches to Consider

Threats	Approaches to consider
<p>Reputation with public on transparency etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ lack of public knowledge regarding role of NPCA○ Renewed risk of public criticism related to long-standing reputational issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Deliver on and communicate role and change
<p>Lack of credibility among stakeholders in key areas of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ lack of strong municipal environment policies puts them and NPCA at odds in the eyes of the public;○ Climate Change: 2019 Declaration of Emergency but no visible action○ watershed report cards: perceived as not doing enough to not act	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Deliver on and communicate action
<p>Changes to the Conservation Authorities Act</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Bill 229 limits how the NPCA is funded through regular levies from municipalities○ Creates great uncertainty as to our future○ Regulations still to come	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Need to remain flexible in face of continued change

SWOT Analysis: Threats and Approaches to Consider

Threats	Approaches to consider
<p>Municipal Relations: Reputation Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some perceive it as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ an “advocacy body” not a partner in regulation and service delivery.○ increased layer of red tape○ a hurdle and expense imposed by Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Improve capacity to communicate our priorities to Municipal Partners
<p>Municipal Relations: Finance Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Uncertainty of future revenue streams○ Impact of changes to the CA Act and ability to raise funds through municipal levy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Improve capacity to demonstrate need for budget increases○ Improve capacity to negotiate with 15 municipalities on “optional services”○ Assess opportunities to increase revenues from non-earning properties.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Explore creation of a 'destination' site to generate revenues in the prime tourist area○ Working more closely with the Foundation
<p>Municipal Relationship (Land Use Planning)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Region appears to be assuming more of NPCA role○ Some view NPCA as obstacles to development, not partners in green infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Roles and responsibilities need to be sorted out and clarified

SWOT Analysis: Threats and Approaches to Consider

Threats	Approaches to Consider
Effects of climate change increase costs/burden <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ More extreme weather events and Great Lakes erosion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Creating strategies for climate change resilience within existing programs and services.○ revisit the plan written in 2010 and improve the resiliency of the shoreline.
Further Unexpected COVID demands and impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ COVID 19 impacts on staff, revenue generating programs and events○ Increased demand for parks	
Growing Development pressures in the watershed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Focus on evidence-based science-led approaches

Gap Analysis

Gap Analysis

Gaps	
Need for Shared vision <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Lack of consensus on board○ “are we champions for the environment or not?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Achieve consensus on new vision/direction
Need for HR Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Investing in People (NPCA staff/Human Resources and Volunteers)
Need to deliver on Opportunities for Continuous Improvement Business /Operational Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Technology for tomorrow, Culture of innovation○ Improve capacity for decision making and performance management<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decision Support Systems• Continue to promote new values and culture• Board Training and Performance Measurement• Set and manage to KPIs• Evaluate Office requirements• Communications (telling the story)
Need to improve funding situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Service Modernization and Continuous Improvement to put “best foot forward”○ Evaluate opportunities for increased own source revenues○ Improve capacity to advocate for appropriate budget increases with municipal and provincial partners○ Increase relationships with partners (conservation etc.)

Gap Analysis

Gaps

Need to promote Sustainable and Climate Resilient Watersheds

- progressive watershed science and policies,
- resilient infrastructure,
- Risk Hazard management/safe communities,
- sustainable growth,
- evidence-based decision making,
- restoring biodiversity and
- water risk management

- **Improve Water quality:** Improve ground and surface water health
- **More/Better Environmental Data:** Establish NPCA as the trusted data clearinghouse for environmental data
- **Climate change mitigation:** Become the leading authority on climate change mitigation
- **Biodiversity:** Source of expertise on how to increase biodiversity in region – i.e. tree planting (e.g. increase by 25% the number of trees in parks)

Need to Optimize NPCA Assets/Lands

- Green Infrastructure,

- **Increase Land Conservation:** Conserve, restore, protect more land in the watershed and increase land acquisition
- **Invest in Sustainable Infrastructure:** in management of NPCA lands and assets

Need to Optimize Services to the Public and Community Connections

- Recreation,
- Wellbeing,
- Cultural Heritage

- Improve Communications of programming to public and municipal partners
- Improve customer feedback mechanisms and community engagement
- Enhance “Friends of” Programs
- Become a regional leader in environmental education



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Report To: Strategic Planning Committee

Subject: Strategic Planning Update & SWOT Analysis Summary

Report No: SPC-01-21

Date: January 21, 2021

Recommendations:

1. **THAT** Report No. SPC-01-21 RE: Strategic Planning Update & SWOT Analysis Summary **BE RECEIVED.**

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress related to resuming the strategic planning process, including a high-level work plan and items that can be advanced within Q1-2021.

Background:

In December 2020, the Province of Ontario revised the Conservation Authorities Act through Schedule 6, Bill 229. At the Dec. 17th meeting, staff sought direction from the Committee on proceeding with the Strategic Plan considering the newly enacted Bill 229. By consensus, the Committee directed Staff to proceed with the strategic planning process with a high level workplan and overview of items that could be advanced within the context of the updated Conservation Authorities Act.

Discussion:

The strategic planning project work plan was reviewed and timelines were adjusted accordingly (Appendix 1). The pause in the strategic planning process (due to Bill 229) has delayed the anticipated delivery of a draft strategic plan by approximately a month (estimated completion for Q3 2021).

Staff, in collaboration with the consultant, determined the NPCA will be able to proceed with developing core values, mission statement, themes, and broad strategic objectives through staff and board engagement sessions in February and March, respectively.

The strategic objectives and actions will be further refined once more information is provided by the Province of Ontario in consultation with Conservation Ontario about the mandatory programs and services defined in the Conservation Authorities Act (2020), section 21.1.

While the timing of this additional guidance from the Province is uncertain, it is currently known that the mandatory programs and services will be those (within an Authority's area of jurisdiction) that meet any of the following descriptions and that have been prescribed by the regulations:

- i. Programs and services related to the risk of natural hazards.
- ii. Programs and services related to the conservation and management of lands owned or controlled by the authority, including any interests in land registered on title.
- iii. Programs and services related to the authority's duties, functions and responsibilities as a source protection authority under the *Clean Water Act, 2006*.
- iv. Programs and services related to the authority's duties, functions and responsibilities under an Act prescribed by the regulations.

In addition, an Authority may provide programs and services, within its area of jurisdiction, under a memorandum of understanding (or other such agreement) with a municipality (CA Act 2020, section 21.1.1 (1)) as well as any other programs and services that it determines advisable to further the purpose of the Act (CA Act 2020, section 21.1.2 (1)). As per direction by the Strategic Planning Committee at the Dec. 17 meeting, staff assessed the current NPCA areas of services with respect to the CA Act changes to help inform the next steps in the strategic planning process (Appendix 2).

The NPCA strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) provided by the Board of Directors and staff have been analyzed and synthesized by project consultant, StrategyCorp. The SWOT analysis is an important front-end component of the strategic planning process and will be used for critical aspects of the strategic plan development (e.g., themes, strategic objectives). The SWOT analysis reveals the following high-level gaps for consideration during the development of the new NPCA strategic plan:

- Need for shared vision;
- Need for Human Resource strategy;
- Deliver on opportunities for continuous improvement;
- Improve funding situation;
- Promote sustainable and climate resilient watersheds;
- Optimize NPCA assets/lands;
- Optimize services to the public and community connections.

A presentation will be given by the project consultant at the meeting.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications.

Links to Policy/Strategic Plan:

Adoption of the Strategic Planning Committee Terms of Reference and Work Plan tie in with the NPCA Mission Statement's objective to:

"To implement our Conservation Authorities Act mandate by remaining a responsive, innovative, accountable and financially sustainable organization."

Related Reports and Appendices:

Appendix 1: Updated strategic planning project work plan

Appendix 2: Current Areas of Service and impact of Bill 229

Authored by:

Original Signed by:

Natalie Green, M.Sc., PMP
Project Manager

Submitted by:

Original Signed by:

Chandra Sharma, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer

Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority															
Strategic Planning 2020															
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> Approved: July 23, 2020; Updated: Jan 11, 2020 </div>	Quarter 3			Quarter 4			2021 -Quarter 1			2021 -Quarter 2			2021 -Quarter 3		
	JUL-2020	AUG-2020	SEP-2020	OCT-2020	NOV-2020	DEC-2020	JAN-2021	FEB-2021	MAR-2021	APR-2021	MAY-2021	JUN-2021	JUL-2021	AUG-2021	SEP-2021
Strategic Planning Committee	23-Jul		17-Sep		03-Nov	17-Dec	21-Jan		none	21-Apr	19-May	16-Jun			
Public Advisory Committee			24-Sep		26-Nov			25-Feb		29-Apr		17-Jun			30-Sep
Full Authority Board	16-Jul		17-Sep	15-Oct	19-Nov	17-Dec	21-Jan	17-Feb	17-Mar				21-Jul		
1. Initiation															
a) BOD Committee: approval of revised terms of reference and proposed work plan	✓														
b) BOD Committee: Preliminary ideas/direction/themes/requirements	✓														
c) Creation of staff working group	✓														
c) Kick off meeting staff working group		✓													
2. Information Gathering															
a) Gather lessons learned from previous NPCA & other strategic plans		✓													
b) Scope of work for procurement of consultant		✓													
c) Communications and Engagement Plan		✓													
Stakeholder analysis		✓	✓												
e) Trends & opportunities analysis				✓											
f) Strength & Weaknesses analysis				✓											
g) Procure a consultant for facilitation, engagement sessions, writing				✓											
3. Engagement															
a) Staff Engagement															
Themes, Mission/Vision/Values, Key Strategic Objectives & Actions development								X							
b) Board Engagement															
Themes, Mission/Vision/Values, Key Strategic Objectives & Actions Consultation (Board)									★						
c) Stakeholder engagement (part 1)															
Online survey for input on themes / strategic objectives									X						
d) Stakeholder Survey Results										X					X
4. Strategic Plan Development															
a) Compile information from staff/board committee engagements															
b) Draft Themes, Key Strategic Objectives & Actions (based on 3a & 3b)									X						
c) Develop key performance indicators & measure/metrics										X					
e) Draft reporting process on Annual Outcomes (implementation section)										X					
f) Strategic Plan draft prepared											★			X	
g) Stakeholder Engagement (Part 2)												X			
Virtual Public Information Centre, Feedback Draft Strat Plan												X			
Stakeholder Engagement Summary of Results													X		
5. Draft Strategic Plan															
a) Draft Strategic Plan - staff (CAO & Work Group & SLT) review										X					
b) Draft Strategic Plan - Committee review and approval												X			
6. Launch of Strategic Plan															
a) BOD Review and Approval of Strategic Plan														★	
b) Final Strategic Plan production														X	
c) Launch with media and communications														★	
7. Post-Strategic Planning															
a) Project close (compile docs, document lessons learned, evaluation of Committee/Work group)														X	
b) Initiate implementation of Strategic Plan (Q3 - 2021)														X	
c) Assess and report on performance indicators (annually)															Ongoing

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PROGRAMS & SERVICES

From the Conservation Authorities Act (2020):

Purpose:

The purpose of the Act is to provide for the organization and delivery of programs and services that further the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources in watersheds in Ontario.

Mandate:

The objects of an authority are to provide, in the area over which it has jurisdiction,

- (a) the mandatory programs and services required under section 21.1;
- (b) any municipal programs and services that may be provided under section 21.1.1; and
- (c) any other programs or services that may be provided under section 21.1.2. 2020, c. 36, Sched. 6, s. 6 (1).

While the timing of additional guidance from the Province about mandatory programs & services is uncertain, it is currently known that the mandatory programs and services will be those (within an Authority's area of jurisdiction) that meet any of the following descriptions and that have been prescribed by the regulations (section 21.1):

- i. Programs and services related to the risk of natural hazards.
- ii. Programs and services related to the conservation and management of lands owned or controlled by the authority, including any interests in land registered on title.
- iii. Programs and services related to the authority's duties, functions and responsibilities as a source protection authority under the *Clean Water Act, 2006*.
- iv. Programs and services related to the authority's duties, functions and responsibilities under an Act prescribed by the regulations.

In addition, an Authority may provide programs and services, within its area of jurisdiction, under a memorandum of understanding (or other such agreement) with a municipality (CA Act 2020, section 21.1.1 (1)) as well as any other programs and services that it determines advisable to further the purpose of the Act (CA Act 2020, section 21.1.2 (1)). These two are noted as 'Other' in the table below.

Below is a very preliminary assessment of current NPCA programs and services with respect to the recently updated Conservation Authorities Act (2020, Bill 229, Schedule 6), specifically completed for the purpose of Strategic Plan.

Note: impact of Bill 229 on areas of services and where these may fit within the context of the updated CA Act may be updated as more information becomes available. NPCA is also working with Conservation Ontario and the provincially-led CA Act Committee to ensure a broad range of watershed programs can be defined under the Mandatory programs category.

Appendix 2 – SPC-01-21

Current Areas of Service <i>Broad services of NPCA, does not necessarily align with divisions/departments.</i>	Impact of Bill 229	Related “bucket(s)” in CA Act (2020) How services may fit into (or help fulfill) the CA mandate. These are meant to be broad and not necessarily aligned with current divisions/dept.
Community outreach and engagement (public education, Public Advisory Committee, stewardship activities, volunteers, special events)		Natural Hazards (i), Conservation Lands (ii), Source Protection (iii)
Compliance & Enforcement (including Section 28 & Section 29 of the Act)		Natural Hazards (i), Conservation Lands (ii), Prescribed by regulations (iv)
Corporate Services and Administration (communications, HR, finance, asset & records management, Governance and administration)		Other (to further the purpose of the Act)
Flood protection, flood forecasting & warnings		Natural Hazards (i)
Integrated Watershed Planning (Data collection, management, analysis, mapping)		Natural Hazards (i), Conservation Lands (ii)
Lands and Parks - Education (e.g., nature school, cultural heritage programming, special events)		Natural Hazards (i), Conservation Lands (ii)
Lands and Parks - Operations & Infrastructure (other related services & events, photography, filming, weddings, 3 rd party operations, trails, camping)		Conservation Lands (ii)
Niagara River Remedial Action Plan		Other (MOU/SLA)
Planning & Permitting (includes delegated Responsibility by the Province to comment on section 3.1 Natural Hazards of PPS)		Natural Hazards (i), Prescribed by regulations (iv), Conservation Lands (ii),
Restoration		Natural Hazards (i), Conservation Lands (ii)
Source protection		Source Protection (iii)
Watershed monitoring (groundwater & surface water monitoring, benthos, ecological)		Natural Hazards (i), Conservation Lands (ii)