



Strategic Asset Management Policy

June 2019

POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Elliot Lake relies on a wide range of diversified assets to provide essential services to its community. By the very nature of its assets, the City must continually balance expenditures, services, and risk across a diversified portfolio of assets. Notably by considering emerging issues such as local risks related to climate change. The critical importance of services to the well-being of today's community, and tomorrow's, is what drives the implementation of a structured approach to asset management.

As a result, the City is committed to creating, implementing and continually improving a balanced approach to management by linking the elements of its various plans with best practices and provincial regulation in asset management. The City's vision for asset management is to proactively manage its assets to enable the achievement of the Strategic Plan, including by:

- Delivering to the community, in the most efficient way possible through asset lifecycle management, levels of service so that its people may prosper;
- Balancing stakeholder expectations, sustainable development, and the actual needs of existing and future assets; and
- Maintaining prudent financial planning and decision making that align with the means of the City's stakeholders and its values.

PURPOSE

Asset management is the coordinated activity of an organization to derive value from its assets. It does not replace existing municipal processes, such as those related to budgeting and strategic planning. Asset management complements and aligns with these processes. The strategic asset management policy aims to:

- Commit the City to support the implementation of asset management methods that are consistent with the organization in order to meet the Council's priority objectives;
- Provide transparency and accountability and to demonstrate to stakeholders the legitimacy of decision-making processes which combine strategic plans, budgets, service levels and risks.

- Communicate to stakeholders the management principles and approach endorsed by the City; and
- Provide a framework for implementing asset management to enable a consistent and strategic approach at all levels of the organization.

DEFINITIONS

Ecological services: Benefits that humans derive from ecosystems without having to act to obtain them. These services are, for example, the production of oxygen in the air, the natural purification of water, or the natural sequestration of carbon in wood.

Institutional memory: The accumulated body of data, information, and knowledge created in the course of an individual organization's existence.

AUTHORITY

Council is the authority of the Strategic Asset Management Policy.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all departments and employees of the City that have a direct and indirect link with assets or asset systems in order to provide services to City stakeholders. It also applies to all assets owned or maintained by the City whose role in service delivery requires deliberate management by the City. It also covers the ecological services provided by the natural assets that serve the City as well as infrastructure related contracts and agreements established with other parties.

POLICY

1.0 Strategic Alignment:

The City's strategic plan requires alignment of many initiatives underway at any given time in order for it to be achieved. This alignment is necessary to properly consider whether the level of service provided by existing and planned assets is congruent and supports that vision. Asset management planning therefore will not occur in isolation from other municipal goals, plans, and policies.

Rather, an integrated approach will be followed to successfully develop practical asset management plans that align with the overarching accountabilities and aspirations of the community served by the City. The City's asset management planning approach will encompass the goals described in the Strategic Plan, the Asset Management Plan, and other strategic documents such as the Emergency Response Plan and the Accessibility Plan, to inform service delivery. These plans were designed to meet the legislative requirements and to achieve the City's mission of working together and serving its community in line with its values.

2.0 Stakeholder Engagement

The City recognizes the importance of stakeholder engagement as an integral component of a comprehensive approach to asset management. The City recognizes the residents, businesses, institutions it serves as stakeholders, neighboring municipal bodies, provincial agencies, and regulated utility partners in service delivery.

Accordingly, the City will foster informed dialogue with these parties using the best available information and engage with them by:

- Providing opportunities for residents and other stakeholders served by the City to provide input in asset management planning; and
- Coordinating asset management planning with other infrastructure asset owning agencies such as municipal bodies and regulated utilities.

3.0 Guiding Principles

To effectively use asset management to support the achievement of the City's strategic objectives, management must ensure that the following features and principles are applied in the asset management system:

- **Holistic** – The City shall take a comprehensive approach that looks at the “big picture” (i.e. the combined implications of managing all aspects rather than treating each aspect in isolation). This includes the interdependencies and contributions of different assets within the asset management system during all phases of the lifecycle.
- **Sustainable** – The City shall make appropriate decisions and provisions allowing assets to better meet future challenges, notably demographic changes, customer expectations, legislative requirements, technological factors, climate change, and other environmental considerations.
- **Human Capital** – The City recognizes that the value provided by its human resources goes beyond the costs they represent. They have an impact on the levels of service, in the short and long term. Human resources must therefore be equipped and trained accordingly to meet the demands placed on them.
- **Affordable** – The City will choose practices, interventions and operations that aim at minimizing the life cycle cost of asset ownership, while satisfying levels of service. Decisions are based on balancing strategic goals, service levels, risks, and costs. The Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015 sets out principles to guide asset management planning by municipalities in Ontario. The City shall adopt the following principles in managing its infrastructure assets whenever applicable:

- **Forward looking:** The City shall take a long-term view while considering demographic and economic trends in the region.
- **Budgeting and planning:** The City shall take into account any applicable budgets or fiscal plans, including those adopted through Ontario legislation.
- **Prioritizing:** The City shall clearly identify infrastructure priorities which will drive investment decisions in alignment with the Strategic Plan as well as Council and Corporate Priorities.
- **Economic development:** The City shall promote economic competitiveness, productivity, job creation, and training opportunities in support of a strong, dynamic, and innovative local economy.
- **Transparency:** The City shall be evidence-based and transparent, basing decision on publicly shared information and make information available to the public providing leadership in local governance and service delivery.
- **Consistency:** The City shall ensure the continued provision of core public services, such as water, sanitation, stormwater management, and accessible transportation in support of public health care and education.
- **Environmentally conscious:** The City shall minimize the impact of infrastructure on the environment by: 1. Respecting and helping maintain ecological and biological diversity, 2. Augmenting resilience to the effects of climate change, 3. Endeavoring to make use of acceptable recycled aggregates, 4. Being good stewards of the rivers, waterways, and natural environment the community enjoys.
- **Health and safety:** The City shall ensure that the health and safety of workers involved in the construction and maintenance of infrastructure assets is protected.
- **Community focused:** The City shall promote community benefits, being the supplementary social and economic benefits arising from an infrastructure project that are intended to improve the well-being of a community affected by the project, such as: 1. Local job creation and training opportunities (including for apprentices, within the meaning of section 9 of the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015), 2. Improvement of public space within the community, 3. Promoting accessibility for persons with disabilities, and 4. Heritage and value of unique architectural assets.
- **Innovation:** The City shall create opportunities to make use of innovative technologies, services, and practices, particularly where doing so would utilize technology, techniques, and practices developed in Ontario.

- **Integration:** The City shall, where relevant and appropriate, be mindful and consider the principles and content of non-binding provincial or municipal plans and strategies established under an Act or otherwise, in planning and making decisions surrounding the infrastructure that supports them.

4.0 Community Planning

Asset management planning will be aligned with the City's Official Plan and the 2014 Provincial Policy Statement, or its successor, of the Planning Act. The asset management plans will reflect how the community is projected to change with respect to development.

The combination of lifecycle management and financial sustainability principles will be the driver in the design and selection of community development or redevelopment that requires new assets, or existing asset enhancements, to take place. Parties involved in the development of the asset management plans will reference the direction established in the master plans as well as the methods, assumptions, and data used in their development. The aim of cross-referencing these plans is to ensure that development and redevelopment occur within the Municipality's means through an understanding of current and future asset needs.

5.0 Climate Change

Climate change will be considered as part of the City's risk management approach embedded in its asset management planning methods. This approach will balance the potential cost of vulnerabilities to climate change impact and other risks with the cost of reducing these vulnerabilities. The City will foster its resilience to climate change in the levels of service delivered through operations, maintenance schedules, disaster response plans, contingency funding, and capital investments. The City's contribution to climate change through greenhouse gas emissions will be mitigated in accordance with its local reduction targets, financial capacity, and stakeholder support.

6.0 Capitalization Thresholds

The City will use a service-based (qualitative) perspective when applying this Policy to municipal asset planning, rather than a monetary value (quantitative). The service-focus intent of this Policy differentiates its requirements for identifying assets from the capitalization thresholds that are developed for the purposes of financial reporting.

For this reason, the capitalization threshold developed for financial reporting will not be the guide in selecting the assets covered by the asset management planning process.

7.0 Financial Planning and Budgeting

The City will integrate asset management planning into the annual capital and operating budgets, and its long-term financial plan. The Asset Management Plan shall be used as a resource in order to:

- Identify all potential revenues and costs (including acquiring, operating, maintenance, replacement and decommissioning) associated with forthcoming infrastructure asset decisions;
- Evaluate the validity and need of each significant new capital asset, including considering the impact on future operating costs; and
- Incorporate new revenue tools and alternative funding strategies where possible.

To do so, the departments review the background information such as the needs assessment provided by Asset Management Plan to prioritize investments. The prioritized investments prepared by the departments are then reviewed by the Senior Management Team for an eventual recommendation for approval by Council.

Service area personnel will reference the Asset Management Plan for their area in order to look up forecasted spending needs identified in the plan, verify progress made on the plan to identify potential gaps, and prioritize spending needs, across the gap identified in the plan and recent developments, for the year to be budgeted for. Finance staff will be involved in the asset management planning process to coordinate the information from the service personnel in the preparation of the budget submission.

For the purposes of sustainably managing water and wastewater assets, the water and wastewater financial plans will be used as a basis for establishing user fees based on long-term capital renewal plans and the maintenance of adequate reserves.

8.0 Governance and Continuous Improvement

The Policy requires the commitment of key stakeholders within the City's organization to ensure the Policy guides the development of a clear plan that can be implemented, reviewed and updated. The Council and Senior Management Team are committed to the success of asset management planning.

The Council is entrusted with the responsibility of overseeing, on behalf of citizens, a large range of services provided through a diverse portfolio of assets. Council, having stewardship responsibility, is the final decision maker on all matters related to asset management in the City. The City Chief Administrative Officer is the executive lead for asset management.

9.0 Benefit of Implementation

Implementation of this Policy will result in the following benefits:

- Planning that optimizes maintenance and replacement of existing assets as well as the development of new assets;
- Prevention of conflicts across the investment priorities set by each of the City's departments, good coordination, and efficient provision of services;
- Capital and urban development projects that are consistent with the City's actual needs;
- Maintenance of the City's institutional memory; and
- Preservation of the ecological services rendered by natural assets.

These benefits will enable:

- Technical and financial capacity of the City to provide the expected levels of service to current and future generations;
- Security, accessibility, and reliability of services provided through the infrastructure; and
- Alignment of City's strategic objectives with asset management and service delivery activities.

POLICY COMMUNICATION

This Policy will be made available to all Members of Council and relevant staff of the Corporation. In addition, it will be published on the City's website for access by wider City stakeholders. Further communications will be provided through standard communications practices adopted by the City, including, but not limited to, email, city website and city intranet, posting on staff bulletin boards and/or any social media as deemed necessary. This policy and other related asset management plans and practices will also figure prominently in semi-annual Town Hall meetings planned in the future.