

To: Economic and Development Services Committee

From: Anthony Ambra, P.Eng., Commissioner,  
Economic and Development Services Department

Report Number: ED-25-73

Date of Report: May 28, 2025

Date of Meeting: June 2, 2025

Subject: 2024-2025 Plan 20Thirty Annual Update

Ward: Ward 4

File: 03-05

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## **1.0 Purpose**

On June 20, 2022, City Council considered Report [DS-22-144](#) concerning the proposed Plan20Thirty Downtown Revitalization Action Plan and passed the following resolutions:

- “1. That, pursuant to Report DS-22-144 dated June 1, 2022, Plan 20Thirty Downtown Oshawa Revitalization Action Plan forming Attachment 3 be approved, in principle, as a general guide for continued revitalization of the downtown; and,
2. That Development Services Department prepare Terms of Reference for Council review and endorsement for a Downtown Steering Committee comprised of cross-departmental City staff and external stakeholder representation to support the continual adaptation and improvements as it relates to the Downtown, while also monitoring and supporting the implementation of Plan 20Thirty actions; and,
3. That staff report on the progress of Plan 20Thirty on an annual basis through the Development Services Committee; and,
4. That a copy of the Plan 20Thirty Downtown Oshawa Revitalization Action Plan with the related staff report and Council resolution be forwarded to the Region of Durham, the Greater Oshawa Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Oshawa Business Alliance, Ontario Tech University, Durham College, Trent University Durham GTA, Durham Workforce Authority, Spark Centre and the Business Advisory Centre Durham.”

The purpose of this Report is to provide an annual update as noted in Recommendation 3.

Attachment 1 to this Report is a copy of DS-22-144 which includes Plan 20Thirty as an Attachment. Owing to its size, DS-22-144 is not affixed to this Report but can be viewed at the following link: <https://pub-oshawa.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=7785>.

## **2.0 Recommendation**

That the Economic and Development Services Committee recommend to City Council:

That Report ED-25-73 be received for information.

## **3.0 Input From Other Sources**

The following have been consulted in preparation of this Report:

- Commissioner, Community and Operations Services Department
- Oshawa Tourism

## **4.0 Analysis**

### **4.1 Background**

In June 2021, Oshawa City Council approved Report DS-21-124 “Proposed Terms of Reference for Downtown Action Plan ‘Plan 20Thirty’”. Through July and August of 2021, staff activated a public call for committee participants and prepared Report DS-21-166 to appoint members and begin work for the development of Plan 20Thirty. Oshawa City Council appointed 13 members to the Plan 20Thirty committee that included representatives from the following sectors:

- Retail
- Cultural
- Culinary
- Professional Services

The committee also included Downtown residents, Downtown Development Industry representatives and Institutional Sector representatives from Ontario Tech University and the Social Services sector. A representative for the Personal Services sector was never filled.

The committee was chaired by the Director, Economic Development Services, and production of all materials associated with this report, aside from the Vision Setting report, were produced by the Economic Development team. Other City departments were engaged for dialogue on an as needed basis throughout the work of the Plan 20Thirty committee and it will be the responsibility of the Director, Economic Development Services, to incorporate action items into the annual work plan for the branch, and collaborate with other departments across the City to ensure the proposed work moves forward through to 2030.

Public consultation was also completed as part of forming the final initiatives within the action plan with 165 individuals completing the feedback form through a four week consultation period.

Ultimately, the work of the Plan 20Thirty committee along with public input formed the renewed revitalization action plan and introduced 7 pillars to define the areas of focus for initiatives to be undertaken, which include:

- Business Growth, Expansion and Retention
- Residential Growth
- Social Experience
- Physical Environment
- Communication
- Modernization and Innovation
- Red Tape Reduction and Customer Service

Additionally, the vision statement that was endorsed to guide the work of the Plan 20Thirty objectives was “A balanced, lively and modern urban centre where all thrive.”

Report DS-22-144, Plan 20Thirty Downtown Oshawa Revitalization Action Plan, was endorsed by City Council on June 20, 2022.

On June 26, 2023, Report [ED-23-124](#), Annual Update on Plan 20Thirty Downtown Revitalization Action Plan was endorsed by City Council which included 13 items that were completed or in progress and three key areas of focus for 2023-2024.

On June 24, 2024, Report [ED-24-75](#), Annual Update on Plan 20Thirty Downtown Revitalization Action Plan was endorsed by City Council which included 20 items that were completed or in progress across six key areas of focus for 2024.

## **4.2 Completed Initiatives and Items Underway**

From the time of endorsement of the Plan 20Thirty Downtown Revitalization Action Plan, City staff, along with support from various community stakeholders, have made positive movement in addressing the Council endorsed initiatives. Staff have completed actions within each of the seven pillars of the plan. The following actions have been completed, or are nearing completion, since the endorsement of Reports DS-22-144, ED-23-124 and ED-24-75:

### **Pillar One: Business Growth, Expansion and Retention:**

- Business and Economic Development staff have utilized the information from the previously completed retail gap analysis and accompanied is information with demographic data of residents and visitors to the downtown area. Understanding the specific interests, lifestyle qualities and needs of these individuals allows staff to anticipate what sort of retail offerings are most desirable. This information is being utilized to inform investment attraction efforts to support a diversified downtown commercial experience that meets the needs of the community.

- In Q4 2024, Business and Economic Development staff launched a formal business retention and expansion program to assist in understanding local business needs to inform initiatives and actions for the future. The program began with a survey to collect information and follow-up site visits to respondents are underway. Several downtown business operators responded, and their input will be utilized to inform potential programs and supports delivered through the branch.
- As part of the investment attraction efforts to support new business openings in the downtown area, Business and Economic Development staff developed an electronic campaign targeted at franchise enterprises to learn more about Oshawa and operating a business downtown. Staff continue to follow up with any interested parties to further cultivate interest and relationships.
- In an effort to achieve higher and better use of underutilized properties, the City recently considered applications for the redevelopment of the City-owned former bus terminal located at 47 Bond Street West. The goal of this proposed redevelopment is to transform the fully serviced space and land into a development that will contribute to downtown Oshawa. The outcomes of the received applications continue to be under the deliberation and direction of Oshawa City Council.

### **Pillar Two: Residential Growth**

- In 2024, Planning Services staff at the City of Oshawa brought forward technical zoning amendments which impacted the urban growth centre area. The Council endorsed amendments introduced increases to residential densities and ensure that proposed developments and investments are aligned with highest and best use scenarios. To further support and activate residential growth in the downtown area, the City continues to waive development charges in the area as an additional incentive.

### **Pillar Three: Physical Environment**

- Through Report [CO-25-17](#), Community and Environmental Services Staff brought forward recommendations to support the municipal parking system in the downtown area, with an emphasis on improving wayfinding and communications measures relating to the overall parking infrastructure. Pending City Council direction, this Report contemplates the introduction of an interactive map available to visitors and digital signage to promote enhanced communications to the public. Should these recommendations be endorsed, Business and Economic Development Services staff will support amplifying the enhancements to the broader community through social media and e-newsletters.
- Following a successful trial in the King Street Phase 4 Streetscaping project of new flower planters that correspond to the colour palette in the Downtown Oshawa brand guidelines, taller planters to support the experience of temporary sidewalk patios and Downtown Oshawa metal gateway signage, City staff received funding and direction through the 2025 Mayor's budget to expand these enhancements along the King Street Corridor. Business and Economic Development staff have worked with staff in Parks and Road Operations Services to plan locations and plantings. It is anticipated that the extension of these planters will commence in Q4 2025.

- Following endorsement of Report [ED-23-185](#), staff installed a new temporary artwork titled 'Turning The Wheel' on the McMillian Parkade in Downtown Oshawa. This temporary artwork, produced by local artist Dani Crosby, commemorates the rich history of the John Bolase Warren Flour Mill, showing Oshawa's heritage in a vibrant and innovative way. The artwork was installed in September 2024 and has been profiled as part of Culture Days and Doors Open.
- In Q2 2024, Business and Economic Development staff introduced the Graffiti and Vandalism Remediation Fund as outlined in Report [ED-24-41](#). The one-time fund of \$100,000 was established to support the business community in addressing the remediation of graffiti and vandalism acts to properties. This grant provides businesses with funds for eligible commercial or industrial property graffiti and vandalism repairs, or to implement eligible preventative measures. The fund has been accessed by 13 properties to date and supports a clean, vibrant and safe downtown streetscape experience.

#### **Pillar Four: Social Experience**

- As part of the efforts to coordinate hotel and event packages to extend visitors experiences in the downtown area, Oshawa Tourism has recently launched a Peony Festival Package. This package includes overnight accommodation at a downtown hotel, a connection to the City-led Peony Festival and an experience at Parkwood Estate Tea House.
- Pillar Four of Plan 20Thirty had included an action to "support the outcomes of the Arts Resource Centre ("A.R.C.") feasibility study to effectively position the proposed Culture Hub as an asset in Downtown Oshawa." City Council received Report [ED-24-103](#) for information, as a result there are no recurring actions aligned to this initiative within Plan 20Thirty.

#### **Pillar Five: Communications**

- Business and Economic Development staff are working on the launch of a new campaign entitled "We Are DTO". The campaign is a concept aimed at reclaiming the narrative of what downtown Oshawa stands for. This human-centered approach aims to inspire support, pride, and empathy, positioning DTO as a leading advocate for local businesses. The campaign, which will be a series of short-videos focusing on the people that provide experiences and spaces in downtown Oshawa, with an overarching goal of contributing to both social and economic vitality.
- Pillar Five of Plan 20Thirty had included an action to "develop a Downtown Committee that has cross-department City representation and external stakeholder representation to support the continual adaptation and improvements as it relates to Downtown Oshawa, while also monitoring and supporting the implementation of Plan 20Thirty actions." Through Report [ED-24-75](#) City Council did not endorse the recommendation to develop the committee and as a result there are no recurring actions aligned to this initiative within Plan 20Thirty.

### **Pillar Six: Modernization and Innovation**

- Through a workplan item assigned to Oshawa Business and Economic Development staff by the Ontario Auto Mayor's Caucus, staff established a working group and authored a white paper entitled "EV Adoption in Canada: Best Practices from Municipalities Leading EV Adoption." The recommendations contained within this report can aid in the overview of EV charging infrastructure needs in downtown Oshawa.

### **Pillar Seven: Customer Service and Red Tape Reduction**

- In December 2024, the City of Oshawa launched the Oshawa Application Portal (CityView) to enhance customer experience and streamline application processes for a variety of City services. As part of this deployment, Business and Economic Development staff are transitioning Community Improvement Plan applications to the Portal to support enhanced levels of customer experience and ease administrative requirements established by the previous paper copies of the application.

## **5.0 Financial Implications**

Though some of strategies and actions detailed in Plan 20Thirty for Downtown Oshawa can be completed using existing staff resources and funding, there could be a potential need for increased staffing capacity in the future as noted in Section 5.7 of Report DS-22-144 in order to efficiently deliver some of the items in Plan 20Thirty. It is recognized that to accomplish some action items, other sources of funding, partnerships and community involvement will be required.

Should additional City funding be required for individual action items, appropriate reports will be presented to City Council for consideration as part of the Mayor's budget process or a separate report.

## **6.0 Relationship to the Oshawa Strategic Plan**

This Report responds to the Oshawa Strategic Plan Priority Area:

"Innovate: Vibrant Culture and Economy" with the goal to advance downtown as an urban core.



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