

CITY OF WARMAN

# STRATEGIC PLAN

# 2021 2025

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## THE CONTEXT

As the City of Warman plans for the period 2021-2025, it is coming from a place of strength. The City has achieved nation-leading growth while maintaining its high standards for community safety, green space, and recreational opportunities.

However, along with growth comes different kinds of pressures. Many new infrastructure needs arise from the evolution from a town into a City, and from a bedroom community into a destination in its own right. In addition to emergency response, facilities, and recreation needs, the City is seeking to expand its social infrastructure, including services for youth and seniors, affordable housing, and expanded post-secondary opportunities.

Although Saskatchewan is poised for a strong recovery coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, the economic conditions that triggered Warman's phenomenal growth in the 2010s will be different going forward. In order to become a place to work as well as live, the City will look to diversify and support small business development, while also attracting larger industrial and technology firms to the area.

Careful planning and fiscal responsibility have been and will continue to be key to the community's success. The City of Warman is working to maintain its status as a safe, clean, active city; a City that continues to grow sustainably by providing its residents with a high quality of life through diverse recreational and economic opportunities.

The last planning period covered 2017 to 2020. With a new Council elected in November 2020, and with the emergence into a post-pandemic period, the time is right to set a path for the next four years and see more residents and businesses call Warman home. This report reflects the discussions and priorities held by City Council and Senior Administrators in a strategic planning session facilitated by Morris Interactive in April 2021.

Notable achievements from the last planning period:

- ▶ Fastest growing city in Canada
- ▶ Completion of Prairie Oasis Park
- ▶ Commercial development in the north end and high rate of business growth
- ▶ Opening of Traditions Elementary School and Holy Trinity Catholic School
- ▶ Groundwork for accelerated growth and housing development in across the City
- ▶ Second highway to Martensville (Township Road 384)
- ▶ All-council support for P4G (Partnership for Growth) planning district including the City of Warman, City of Saskatoon, Rural Municipality of Corman Park, Town of Osler and City of Martensville

The City of Warman experienced exponential growth over the past two decades. The most current population estimate based on the 2016 census is 11,020, up 55% from 2006. The majority of the community's recent growth can be attributed to younger families moving in.



## VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

### ***Vision***

The City of Warman is a safe and caring community. We foster a culture of innovation and growth and provide unlimited opportunities for our citizens and stakeholders as part of a thriving region.

### ***Mission Statement***

The City of Warman embraces growth in a sustainable fashion while balancing affordability. We provide the highest quality of services to ensure Warman is the best place in the province to live, work, play and invest.

### ***Statement of Values***

1. The City of Warman promotes a culture of excellence and strives for continuous improvement in its governance, services and facilities.
2. The City of Warman treats all visitors, citizens, and employees with dignity, respect, and fairness.
3. The City of Warman encourages ideas and collaboration through stakeholder input that results in effective, ethical, and transparent decision-making.
4. The City of Warman embraces growth. We are committed to planning for the future, and developing the infrastructure to support and stimulate continued growth.
5. The City of Warman is cost conscious and focused on value. We provide wise and effective stewardship of our resources for the benefit of all.



# STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

During the process of developing a strategic plan, the City of Warman identified what it does best, its areas for improvement, its main risks, and the conditions for success. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats below inform the parameters under which the City operates, ensuring a strategic plan that it is ambitious while also being achievable.

## ***Strengths***

- ④ Young and growing population
- ④ Fiscally sound
- ④ World class parks and recreation
- ④ Full amenities for a small city
- ④ Newer infrastructure and high-quality services
- ④ Strong administration

## ***Weaknesses***

- ④ Limited affordable housing and rental units
- ④ Limited control over water costs
- ④ Lack of local ambulance service
- ④ Outflow of dollars to Saskatoon rather than local businesses
- ④ Large commuter population

## ***Opportunities***

- ④ Regional growth and mutual collaboration
- ④ Expansion of Great Plains College
- ④ Young population and family friendly community
- ④ Increase day-time population through local economic development
- ④ Leadership in environmental responsibility

## ***Threats***

- ④ Up front costs of new infrastructure
- ④ Limits to municipal revenue generation powers
- ④ Revenue sharing tied to PST is declining
- ④ Provincial and federal off-loading
- ④ Social issues post-COVID

## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

The Warman City Council has identified four pillars for action and prioritization in the next planning period. These include:

- ④ Services
- ④ Infrastructure
- ④ Growth & Innovation
- ④ Governance

While this document provides a high-level plan for the next four years, the City regularly develops and assesses plans for specific areas of responsibility, such as parks & recreation, capital assets, sustainability, land use, and economic development. The following pillars complements that work.

## **Services**

The provision of services is at the heart of what Warman, and any municipality, does to improve the quality of life of its citizens. In the next four years, the City will endeavour to:

- ▶ Maintain the high quality and affordability of city services
- ▶ Secure a funding commitment for local medical response
- ▶ Examine new practices for waste reduction and recycling opportunities
- ▶ Continue recreational investments in new neighbourhoods, including responding to newcomer recreation needs and developing new ball diamonds. A master plan recreation, culture and parks, available [here](#), further outlines the City's intentions in those areas.

## **Infrastructure**

Closely related to services is the development of infrastructure. The biggest expense for any municipality is capital spending. Investment in new infrastructure needs to be balanced against affordability in property and business taxes. As a fast-growing city, Warman continually has new needs. At the same time, the City benefits from having overall newer and well-maintained facilities and roads.

While the city has prepared a capital plan that identifies infrastructure needs for a ten year period, the following projects have been prioritized for this Council's term:

- ▶ Reconstruct lift stations
- ▶ Evaluate options and move forward on a 2<sup>nd</sup> ice rink
- ▶ Acquire land and complete a building plan for a new public works & operations centre
- ▶ Establish partnerships and identify a location for a new RCMP building
- ▶ Continue with planning with a view to a new aquatic facility and implementation of the facility portfolio report by 2031

## ***Growth & Innovation***

The City of Warman is known as a boom town; a place that embraces growth. Good planning ensures such growth occurs sustainably, and for the benefit of all residents.

As the City matures into an economic hub in its own right, emphasis will continue to be put into attracting new businesses and diversifying the economic base. The City aims to:

- ▶ Hit the 15,000 population mark by 2025, while outpacing Saskatoon-level growth
- ▶ Complete 100 purpose-built rental units by 2025, and 200 by 2030, to alleviate pressure on home affordability
- ▶ Create a plan for improvements for Central Street (e.g. business attraction, walkability, visitors) including a potential BID (business improvement district)
- ▶ Increase opportunities in the industrial, environmental and technology sectors
- ▶ Provide opportunities to reduce the proportion of residents who are daily commuters
- ▶ Update the economic development plan and develop and monitor a set of indicators to assess business and economic growth
- ▶ Increase the number of business licenses and storefronts by at least the rate of population growth

## ***Governance***

Good governance is imperative to maintaining a healthy, safe and attractive community. The City of Warman benefits from skilled and committed staff. Meanwhile opportunities are emerging from closer regional collaboration.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has interrupted normal business practices and means of communication, this presents an opportunity to examine how best to move into the future:

- ▶ Continue to promote regional collaboration where it provides the City's residents with better and more cost-effective services
- ▶ Examine a connected pathway to Martensville to improve physical connections
- ▶ Communicate and celebrate successes
- ▶ Bring back the Spring Open House once it is safe to host public gatherings
- ▶ Assess workforce needs and examine opportunities to bring environmental and engineering services in-house
- ▶ Examine the City's asset management philosophy and establish a policy on the costs and benefits of saving versus borrowing for both existing and new infrastructure
- ▶ Continue to lobby other levels of government for equitable funding and advocate for the best interests of the citizens of Warman
- ▶ Monitor and implement the City's environmental master plan, including meeting the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' climate protection milestone #4



## SUMMARY

The City of Warman is in an enviable position. It has excellent infrastructure and services, a young and growing population, and a reputation as an affordable and attractive place to live. But with its pace of growth, maintaining the current state of affairs takes constant effort and planning.

The City has identified the four pillars of services, infrastructure, growth & innovation, and governance as key to its ongoing success. Key deliverables up to 2025 include upgrades to its lift stations, Central Street, ball diamonds and a second ice rink; the development of local medical response and a new RCMP building; strong population and economic growth; and leadership in ensuring Warman and the surrounding PG4 region is the most attractive place for business investment in the nation.

Building on its strong foundations, and with this plan in place, the City of Warman is positioned to grow and thrive while preserving the small town values of those who call it home.

In order to promote accountability, the City of Warman Council will review the strategic plan and assess progress in meeting its objectives annually. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the need for flexibility and responsiveness, and emerging threats and opportunities may prompt a change in priorities. Yet Council commits to making decisions that ensure that Warman continues to be the best place in the province to live, work, play and invest.



