

Staff Report

Presented By: Kara Van Myall, Chief Administrative Officer

Meeting Date: April 28, 2025

Subject: 2025 Major Initiatives, Division and Capital Highlights Quarter 1 Update

Attachment(s): Major Initiatives Quarter 1
Division Highlights Quarter 1
Capital Highlights Quarter 1

Recommendation

That Council receive the 2025 Major Initiatives, Division and Capital Highlights Quarter 1 Update report for information.

Report Summary

The Major Initiatives, Division and Capital Highlights from the annual Business Plan are reported every quarter to update Council and the public on the progress of the annual activities related to the Saugeen Shores Strategic Plan. This report includes the updates for Quarter 1, 2025 and details the 37 Major Initiatives as well as 90 Division Highlights and 40 Capital Highlights. The progress completion is also included as a live feed on the Town website. There are no significant issues being flagged with completing the work program as outlined.

Background/Analysis

This report includes the reporting for Quarter 1 (Q1) of 2025 and outlines the details of the 37 Major Initiatives as well as 90 Division Highlights and 40 Capital Highlights. Links are included on the Town [website](#) for the public to see in real time what the Town is doing and where the work is trending on each component of the [2025 Business Plan](#). Overall, the Major Initiatives are trending at 38% completion, which is ahead of schedule for the end of Quarter 1. Division Highlights are tracking at 30%, and Capital Highlights are at 38% completion, both ahead of schedule for Q1.

Live Feed links:

- [Office of the CAO](#) (CAO Office, Strategic Initiatives, and Human Resources)
- [Community Services](#) (Facilities, Parks, and Recreation)
- [Operations](#) (Operations and Public Works)
- [Corporate Services](#) (Clerks, Finance, and Information Technology)

- [Development Services](#) (Building and By-law Enforcement, Engineering, and Planning and Development)
- [Fire Services](#) (Fire Rescue and Emergency Preparedness)

CAO Office

Major Initiatives Completion Rate Q1	45%
Division Highlights Completion Rate Q1	23%
Capital Highlights Completion Rate Q1	7%

Community Economic Development Initiative (CEDI)

On January 31, 2025, the Town and Saugeen First Nation strengthened their partnership by signing a Friendship Accord, Wijiwenyidiwaad Miinwa Zgaabiignigan (Friends with one another and We are connected). The CEDI program concluded with this event. Moving forward, this collaboration will continue with a focus on four economic development pillars: Tourism and Cultural Exchange, Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development, Environmental Stewardship, and Youth and Workforce Development.

Corporate Communications

In Q1, over 50 news items were published, including 12 news releases/statements, 16 weather notices, and 12 public notices. Additionally, 280+ social media posts were shared across Facebook and Instagram.

Engage Saugeen Shores

As of March 21st, the platform has 770 subscribers, 2,445 total visits, 100 contributions, and 46 new members.

Municipal Healthcare Administration Review (MHAR)

The MHAR, led by Optimus SBR, is analyzing municipal healthcare touchpoints and recommending improvements. Staff reports will be submitted after each of the four phases, with the final report expected by the end of August.

Positive Workplace Culture

The results of the 2024 annual WorkWell engagement survey was presented to staff. The management team and staff worked collaboratively to identify key focus areas for 2025. The Town achieved a score of 74, which resulted in a nine percent (9%) increase in the 2024 engagement score compared to 2023 – marking a 17% increase over the last two years. The target for 2025 is an increase of +3 points to move to the Healthy WorkWell level.

Staff Growth and Development

Staff continue to develop to reach their highest potential, with another Cohort of staff members (14) completing the Leadership Excellence Achievement Program (LEAP) in Quarter 1.

Recruitment Process Improvement

In December of 2024, the HR team launched a new Applicant Tracking System on the Town's Career page. Since launch, the team has successfully published 19 job postings, received over 600 applications, and significantly enhanced the experience for both applicants and hiring managers.

Community Services

Major Initiatives Completion Q1	42%
Division Highlights Completion Q1	28%
Capital Highlights Completion Q1	43%

Aquatic and Wellness Centre Construction

Staff and Council moved back into the newly renovated office and Council Chamber early 2025. Many positive comments have been received regarding the new layout and appearance of this component of construction.

Work is currently progressing well at the AWC site with no expected project delays. With all disciplines of construction being tendered, all indications are that the project will be completed on budget. The extreme winter weather experienced this year did cause issues with workers and materials being able to arrive on site due to many road closures during the January to March period. The construction company has indicated that they have been able to continue work with no impact to the critical construction path.

The Lap Pool has been excavated with the floor, walls and piping installed. The excavated areas around the pool have also been backfilled. Forming and construction of the leisure pool is expected to begin shortly. All areas of the structure have been enclosed with block or insulated metal panels. Portions of exterior steel cladding have been installed with completion scheduled for this spring.

Roofing work has been completed as the weather allowed. The remaining final touches to the roofing will be completed within the next few weeks. The majority of exterior and interior masonry work has been completed. This includes all walls that make up change rooms, mechanical rooms, janitorial rooms, and storage rooms on the main floor.

Many of the second level office walls have been framed. Drywall is being installed as walls are framed and electrical has been roughed in. HVAC, Plumbing, and Electrical crews continue to complete installations as construction work progresses. These trades will remain on site throughout the construction process.

North Shore Park Redevelopment

It's been three and a half years since the catastrophic late summer storm changed North Shore Park forever. After extensive consultation and deliberations over the past several years the Town is moving into the construction phase and rebuilding North Shore Park. In March construction equipment moved in to begin the reconstruction laid out in Phase 1 of the Park Master Plan. The work this spring will include walking paths, a new central activity area including a new playground, pavilion, gardens, and accessible space. It will re-naturalize the old harbour entrance and playground space, add additional tree planting and landscaping, improved open green play space and make parking improvements along the roadway. Work is planned to be completed by late June in advance of the busy summer season.

Jubilee and Helliwell Parks Redevelopment

Phase 1 of the Master Plans for both Jubilee and Helliwell parks is well underway. Over the winter the Town has completed the detailed design for Jubilee and will be going to tender in

early Q2 with construction planned for Q3. Jubilee improvements will include a new pavilion adjacent to the splash pad, and a brand-new location for a second pavilion behind the Chantry Seniors Centre. A new multi-use court will be added where the back ball diamond was located (thanks to a \$50,000 donation from Southampton Rotary), all these features will be connected with a fully accessible asphalt walkway. At Helliwell, the detailed design has begun to build two new full soccer fields in place of the original one field. A washroom will also be added to Helliwell. This work is expected to begin in Q3 of this year.

Southampton Town Hall Accessibility Improvements

Accessibility at the Southampton Town Hall has improved with a major upgrade to the elevator. The elevator has been modernized to allow for significant improvements in ease of use.

Active Transportation Wayfinding Signage Strategy Underway

Staff will be working with Plural, a team of community-focused landscaped architects, planners and designers, to develop the Town's Active Transportation Wayfinding Signage strategy. The project will kick-off in April and conclude with the presentation of the strategy to Council in Q4. The project includes signage inventory and assessment, signage design and plan development, public engagement, an implementation, maintenance and replacement plan and a final strategy.

Becoming a HIGH FIVE® Registered Organization

The Town is now a HIGH FIVE® registered organization. HIGH FIVE® is a global quality standard for recreation and sport developed by Parks and Recreation Ontario (PRO) with the support and endorsement of the Province of Ontario. Being a HIGH FIVE® registered organization helps to ensure staff are well-trained in healthy childhood development principles, creating environments where children can thrive. This commitment to excellence will benefit the community and set a standard for others to follow.

AWC Community and Partner Engagement Update

The program-based community engagement campaign took place throughout March to further refine program development for the AWC. The campaign invited users to plot their desired programs in the AWC on large scale timelines outlining the various program offerings. As of right now, the Town has engaged close to 600 residents and have over 2200 "dots" plotted on the boards.

The partner engagement campaign launched in March. Targeted engagement surveys were sent to various community partners (i.e. community sports organizations, seniors' groups, volunteer groups) to garner input on what they would like to see within the AWC. A public call out was issued through social media to ensure all interested groups had an opportunity to receive the survey.

Feedback from the community and partner engagement will be used to help inform AWC programs and scheduling.

Operations

Major Initiatives Completion Q1	10%
Division Highlights Completion Q1	13%
Capital Highlights Completion Q1	27%

Water/Wastewater Master Plan

The Notice of Study Commencement was issued for this project on March 4, 2025. The intent is to determine the best long-term state of the water and wastewater systems (Water Treatment/Distribution and Storage, and Wastewater Treatment/Collection). It is important to accommodate the growth that is expected in future decades. As such, the consultant is currently establishing the impact on proposed developments, to determine the true uncommitted hydraulic reserve capacities of the plants.

Water Treatment Plant Expansion Class Environmental Assessment

The Southampton Water Treatment Plant is the Town's source of drinking water. The capacity of the plant must be increased to plan for future municipal growth. The Class Environmental Assessment (EA) planning project is underway and coordinated with the Water/Wastewater Master Plan. The consultant is completing the technical review of the existing treatment plant.

Southampton Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

This plant upgrade will improve the headworks pretreatment, provide flow equalization, and will result in a capacity increase of approximately 20%. This work is necessary to accommodate medium-term growth in the Southampton Urban Area. The Town applied for funding under the Housing Enabling Fund but was not successful. A new grant application has been submitted. While funding for the project is not necessary for the project to proceed, funding for this major project will reduce financial pressure on the Town. A design optimization meeting in April resulted in refinements to the design to improve efficiency and decrease capital costs. General Contractors have been prequalified for this project and tendering is now expected at the end of Q2.

Port Elgin Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion EA

Similarly to the Water Treatment Plant expansion project, the Master Plan study will inform this project, due to the importance of proper growth forecasting. The RFP for Engineering Services was awarded in Q4 of 2024, and the Notice of Study Commencement was posted on March 7, 2025.

Blue Box Transition and Source Separated Organics Study

These efforts are being discussed and coordinated at the at the County level, through the Waste Management Subcommittee. The Committee met in February and is meeting again in May. BASWRA is planning to bring a delegation to Council on May 12th, regarding the blue box transition process.

Landfill Optimization

Council approved the Terms of Reference (TOR) at its March 10th meeting. The notice of submission for the Landfill EA has been made public on April 1st, with the official start date as April 4th. There is a 30-day comment period following, and thereafter the Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks is expected to take approximately 6 months to review the Terms of Reference.

Winter Operations Plan

The winter of 2024/2025 was exceptional in many ways. This provides an opportunity to assess winter control and various lessons learned will be incorporated into the revised plan.

Furthermore, the additional sidewalk plow route will be added to the plan. Public Works staff have been hard at work revising the plan now that winter has eased off, with the assistance of the GIS group for revised mapping. Staff intend to bring the plan forward to Council in Q3.

Corporate Services

Major Initiatives Completion Rate Q1	39%
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Division Highlights Completion Rate Q1	39%
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Capital Highlights Completion Rate Q1	29%
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Lamont Sports Park Wi-Fi

Testing and preparation of all Wi-Fi equipment has been completed and is awaiting pole installation and better weather to complete. Installation is planned for early May in Q2.

SSPS Backup Platform

Town IT are working with Owen Sound Police Services to implement disaster recovery infrastructure in the event data held at the SSPS station becomes unavailable or destroyed. Final work will be completed in April of this year.

Staff Workstation Lifecycle Replacement

Planned replacements for devices currently at or near end-of-life are replaced in batches throughout the year over a 5-year lifespan. The first group of 2025 workstations has been ordered and is underway, ensuring staff have reliable and supported infrastructure.

Efficiency Identification and Rollout

Several key items have been identified including a standardized SharePoint launcher being integrated into the new Town intranet (Insite) replacement, as well as a new cloud-based mechanic platform to allow access to records from either of the Town shops in a more flexible delivery method (can use tablets while in front of the vehicle/implement being repaired).

Finance Division Update

The Finance team has been dealing with a staffing shortage. An acting Treasurer has been appointed at the March 24, 2025 Council meeting, and added staffing resources have been put in place to support the Division and the associated backlog of work. Certain initiatives are on hold while staff recover from the impact of the backlog. Those initiatives that are not likely to be completed in 2025 include the Financial Platform, Risk Management Policy, Transition Citywide to Cityworks for TCA reporting, Customer Portal for water and property tax billing, and Long-term revenue goals. Staff will focus on improving the timeliness of Financial Performance Monitoring, a base which will provide the stability needed to successfully implement the remaining initiatives.

Council Leave Policy

In the first quarter of 2025, the Clerk's Division reviewed and confirmed the legislative and Town alignment of this policy, one of the requirements heading into the 2026 Municipal Election. This

policy satisfies the requirement for a policy that addresses pregnancy and parental leave for Members of Council.

Stop Gap Ramp Program Policy

Council received for information a report on April 14th on the next steps and ongoing approach for the Stop Gap Ramp Program Policy – an initiative to help make businesses in Saugeen Shores more accessible. Participating business will receive a letter to gather feedback on the Program and to request an update on the condition of the ramps. This letter will also serve to raise awareness of the StopGap initiative among new business owners and offer the opportunity to distribute new window decals.

Road Naming Policy

Council adopted a Road Naming Policy on April 14th to assist the Town, developers, and other members of the public when new roads are named or re-naming is proposed. The policy ensures that the majority, if not all, of the road names proposed hold significance for the heritage, culture, and story of Saugeen Shores.

Animal Control

The Clerk's Division has begun a review of options available to address the need for a new Emergency Vet Clinic and Pound to serve the community. A temporary solution is in place utilizing the Owen Sound Animal Shelter, but a permanent solution will be recommended in Q2 to meet this need.

Development Services

Major Initiatives Completion Rate Q1	31%
Division Highlights Completion Rate Q1	25%
Capital Highlights Completion Rate Q1	42%

Building Activity

As of the end of March, 35 permits had been issued, and 25 residential units had been created.

Enforcement Activity

In Q1, the By-law Enforcement Officer focused on supporting winter control which included issuing 34 tickets and 19 warnings for overnight parking infractions. As the weather changes, By-law Enforcement will shift the focus to Clean Yards, Signs, Zoning and the Beaches/Parks.

Land Asset Management Activity

As of the end of March, there are: 7 inquiries from, or active discussions with, parties that have expressed interest in acquiring Town lands; and, 1 inquiry and 2 applications for encroachment agreements. These activities are expected to result in several reports to Council in Q2.

Northeast Southampton Floodplain Mapping

Analysis continues in the 2-zone floodplain mapping project which has potential to yield helpful results for consideration of flooding hazards in development applications.

Grant Awards

The Town was awarded \$1.9 M of funding to support the construction of Ridge Street south to Bruce Road 25.

Fire Services

Major Initiatives Completion Rate Q1	85%
Division Highlights Completion Rate Q1	73%
Capital Highlights Completion Rate Q1	50%

Fire Inspection Cost Recovery

It was highlighted in the 2025 Business Plan that cost recovery initiatives are recommended when multiple visits or consultations are required to assist residents or businesses with fire code compliance. Initial visits or reviews are as always free but follow-up visits or reviews to ensure compliance will be subject to these cost recovery measures. This includes inspections and fire safety plan compliance. The recovery method is found within the approved 2025 Fees and Charges Bylaw.

Fire Training Centre

The Fire Training Centre has been recently completed and is in the commissioning phase to season the heat protection tiles and brick for future burns has begun. An open house will be conducted in June 2025 for members of Council and Town firefighters and their families to celebrate the Centre of Excellence.

Public Education Division Expansion

An expansion of the Fire Services Public Education team has begun with small changes made to the job description and job posting. The 8 positions will be posted on April 1st with interviews and new positions expected to be filled in May. We are very excited about filling these positions as an expansion of our emergency planning education programs while assisting with fire and life safety programming.

2025 Firefighter Recruit Program

The 2025 recruit program is progressing well with 16 recruits taking part in a rigorous program that commenced on January 4th and will end in July. The commitment is unparalleled in both the amount of training and scope. Recruits will have over 300 hours of theoretical and practical training in this time with testing for NFPA 1001 Firefighter I & II certification complete prior to their abilities to join the stations and respond to calls.

Replacement of Equipment – SCBA

An invitation to firefighters who wish to participate in an extensive technical review for the fire departments next Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) procurement. This process will be conducted on a weekend in June where the three major suppliers will supply packs for a structured assessment with standardized scoring followed by a technical presentation. It is expected that the new packs will be in service by Q4.

Police Services

The Saugeen Shores Police Service has had a busy start to the year, with 3 major case investigations being initiated. This consumed significant resources and time.

The Community Safety and Policing Act which came into force on April 1st 2024, has major emphasis on Senior Supervision, qualified Senior Investigators, and duty officers. The changes to the legislation and regulations required the police service to bolster the senior ranks, which is being achieved through internal promotional processes. The desired rank structure proposed will include, 1 Chief, 1 Deputy Chief (New position), 1 Inspector, 1 Detective Sergeant (New position), 2 Detective Constables, 4 Platoon Sergeants, 16 Constables, and 1 Constable Training Officer. This structure will help provide adequate and effective supervision, criminal investigations independence, a full-time training officer to meet the increased demands on training and fully staffed frontline platoons that consist of a Sergeant and 4 Constables.

Improving mental health outcomes for all police service members is a priority. The Saugeen Shores Police has historically addressed this need through the Employee Assistance Program; however, it was underutilized and lacked police specific understanding to address the needs of our members. A new contract with police specific mental health supports was implemented in January, which involves a non-denominational chaplaincy model of providing mental health supports to members. The program has been well-received.

Major Initiatives:

1. Increased Authorized Strength – To fulfill the requirement for 27 officers, a cadet will be hired who will attend the Ontario Police College.
 - In Progress. This position is actively being recruited, and applications being accepted both internally and externally
2. Recruitment and Retention Initiative - Convert both contract Special Constable positions from 40-hour contracts to permanent full-time positions.
 - Complete - Both full time contract Special Constable positions have been converted to fulltime permanent positions effective March 10th, 2025.
3. Recruitment and Retention Initiative - Convert the fulltime contract support services II member position to a permanent full-time position
 - Complete – This position has been converted to a permanent fulltime position effective March 10th, 2025
4. Detective Sergeant – Promote a current Sergeant to the Detective Sergeant role. The detective Sergeant will oversee Criminal Investigation and Drug Investigations.
 - In Progress – This is anticipated to be addressed in Q3
5. Deputy Chief Position - The Community Safety and Policing Act which came into force on April 1st, 2024, has major emphasis on Senior Supervision, qualified Senior Investigators, and duty officers. The changes to the legislation and regulations require the senior ranks to be bolstered.
 - Complete – Inspector Jeremy Mighton was promoted to the rank of Deputy Chief

- Further – with the Inspector position left vacant though the promotion of Jeremy Mighton to Deputy Chief, an internal promotional process began to fill the Inspector position – Sergeant Ken Cook has been selected as the successful candidate and assume the role effective April 7th, 2025.
6. Enhanced Mental Health and Medical Supports for members - Through Kindsight, members have been enrolled in a non-denominational chaplaincy model of mental health supports to build resiliency and options for members. In addition, members will be enrolled in a 1-year trial medical support system to enhance existing access to medical services.
- Complete – This service began in January 2025, and will continue throughout the year. This is already proving to be a very successful initiative.

Linkages

- Strategic Plan Alignment: Pillar 2: Building the Best Municipal Team
- Business Plan Alignment: CAO Business as Usual

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding

Budget implications and funding sources as outlined in the 2025 Business Plan.

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