

Economic Development & Tourism



**2020-2025
Strategic Action Plan**





The 2020 – 2025 Economic Development Strategic Action Plan lays the groundwork required for the Town of Calmar Economic Development to work towards creating and maintaining a strong, vibrant local economy. The development of this plan brought together residents and businesses to ensure the plan reflected the needs and desires of the local community. Their input, along with the reference of past and current plans provided a key source from which to develop the BIG 7 goals and 55 detailed action items. This plan will be reviewed annually and adjustments will occur as required to best serve the community of Calmar.

GOAL



Promote Calmar

By 2021, the town of Calmar will have a dedicated Brand and targeted marketing initiatives to grow Calmar.

- Enhance website.
- Advocate for highway signage.
- Produce a series of project specific videos.
- Expand and enhance social media platforms.
- Collaborate with residential builders on an attraction campaign.
- Explore and attend networking events to represent and promote Calmar.





GOAL



Enhance Tourism

Calmar will develop a thriving destination tourism sector to attract year-round visitors to the community.

- Build and promote the Rock Park.
- Explore and build on Farm Tourism activities.
- Host a Cultural Food Fair.
- Explore the feasibility of the Bed + Breakfast and Air B & B market.
- Design and implement a community wayfinding strategy.
- Promote the 'Best Of' Destinations in Calmar.
- Increase local knowledge of tourism.
- Develop a local campground.
- Attend tourism events to promote assets and collaborate with tour operators.

GOAL



Fibre Optics

Calmar residents, businesses and visitors will easily have access to high quality high speed internet by 2022.

- Gain a better understanding of existing capacity and infrastructure.
- Explore funding scenarios.
- Identify needs and requirements.



GOAL



Downtown Vitalization

Downtown will become a pedestrian friendly destination with a clear brand and place for people to gather, live and support local businesses.

- Increase downtown parking options.
- Define the downtown boundaries.
- Explore options for grant funding to develop a formal downtown plan.
- Collaborate with downtown business on a promotional campaign.
- Leverage new architectural guidelines and promote vision.
- Explore and implement a summer pop-up program.
- Actively create and promote summer activities in the downtown.

GOAL



Business Development

Calmar retains and attracts business investment that contributes to the long term financial sustainability of the town.

Business Support

- Increase business and entrepreneurial support to local business.
- Implement a business visitation program.
- Develop joint business marketing initiatives.

Business Attraction

- Develop and implement a business attraction plan.
 - Gain clarity on existing business mix (industrial, commercial, home based).
 - Leverage strengths in agriculture and trades driven sectors.
 - Inventory and gain understanding of available space (land and buildings) for business.
 - Explore environmental focused businesses.
- Create and promote an investment readiness package.
- Advocate to reclaim areas of contamination.



GOAL



Invest in Calmar

The municipality plays a key role in acquiring financial support and investment to enhance and grow the community.

- Inventory empty lots and land available for development to explore options to purchase.
- Collaborate with local business on development projects.
- Explore options to run services to available developable land.
- Explore funding scenarios to invest in Calmar.
- Implement a business incentive strategy for new development.

GOAL



Community Collaboration

Community engagement is nurtured and leveraged to create opportunities for growth in Calmar.

- Host an Economic Development Summit.
- Initiate opportunities for Council, administration and business to collaborate.
- Engage youth in planning and projects.
- Collaborate with local groups and boards.
- Develop a business satisfaction survey.



The detailed action items were designed based on the ideas developed within the BIG 7 goals. The initiatives along with the suggested timelines will be reviewed annually and are subject to annual budget approvals.

NO.	INITIATIVE (ACTION)	TIMELINE
1	Formal adoption of the Strategic Action Plan.	Immediate
2	Launch a Business Visitation Program.	Immediate
3	Initiate opportunities for Council, Administration and business to collaborate.	Immediate - 2020
4	Create a series of promotional videos.	Immediate - 2025
5	Advocate to reclaim areas of contamination in undeveloped lands.	Immediate - 2022
6	Explore funding scenarios to invest in our community.	Immediate 2020
7	Explore grant funding to engage a qualified firm to help brand Calmar.	Immediate - 2020
8	Launch a formal downtown vitalization sub-committee.	Immediate - 2020
9	Partner with residential developers on promotion strategy.	Immediate - 2019
10	Explore and Leverage Canada's Universal High Speed Internet Program.	Immediate
11	Explore the opportunity & feasibility to develop a local campground with sani-dump.	Immediate - 2025
12	Engage youth in planning and future projects.	Immediate 2025
13	Explore regional and provincial opportunities to network and promote Calmar.	Immediate - 2025
14	Invite regional Food Trucks to Calmar.	Immediate - 2019

15	Advocate for the implementation of Provincial Highway directional signage to Calmar.	Immediate - 2020
16	Explore options to becoming an active member at the Canadian Home Builders Association (CHBA).	Immediate - 2020
17	Develop a fibre optic business plan to identify need, requirements, costs and funding options.	Immediate - 2022
18	Develop a digital business and entrepreneurial resource package.	Immediate - 2020
19	Partner with downtown businesses to promote the best of destination businesses in Calmar.	Immediate - 2020
20	Identify a temporary street front location to host summer pop up shops.	Immediate - 2020
21	Develop, implement and market a business attraction plan.	2020 - 2021
22	Develop and implement a business satisfaction survey.	2020 - 2020
23	Develop a roadside business directory on the east and west entrances to town.	2020 - 2021
24	Explore and engage in opportunities to meet and collaborate with tourism operators regionally and provincially.	2020 - 2020
25	Develop a campaign to increase the local's knowledge on local tourism destinations.	2020 - 2020
26	Host an information session on running an Air B & B.	2020 - 2020
27	Create and promote an Investment Readiness Package.	2020 - 2021
28	Inventory available land and buildings.	2020 - 2021



29	Develop a tax incentive program to include new business and resident development.	2020 – 2021
30	Work with the Public Communications Committee to review and enhance the town website.	2020 – 2021
31	Engage a qualified firm to develop a branding strategy.	2020 – 2021
32	Engage a firm to collaborate on a formal Downtown Vitalization Plan.	2020 – 2021
33	Develop a promotion and marketing plan.	2020 – 2021
34	Expand and enhance social media presence on Instagram and LinkedIn.	2020 – 2021
35	Develop a Canadian Provinces Rock Park, and botanical garden area.	2020 – 2025
36	Partner with Communities in Bloom to develop and promote a destination garden area.	2020 – 2022
37	Explore opportunities to partner with private farmers to develop tourism product. (ex. Corn Maze)	2020 – 2025
38	Host a Cultural Food Fair.	2020 – 2025
39	Develop history and cultural experiences for visitors to explore Calmar (ex. Museum).	2020 – 2025
40	Explore and develop joint marketing initiatives to promote local business.	2020 – 2022
41	Complete a feasibility assessment for new development projects of interest to the community.	2020 – 2022
42	Host an Economic Development Summit.	2020 – 2021
43	Develop an event strategy to engage the community and attract visitors to town.	2020 – 2022
44	Host a local business Trade Fair.	2020 – 2023

45	Implement a downtown façade improvement grant program to meet architectural guidelines.	2021 – 2022
46	Actively create and promote summer activities in the downtown.	2021 – 2022
47	Collaborate with existing community groups to host a year round farmers market.	2021 – 2022
48	Enhance community signage to promote and showcase the town. (ex. Gateway signs)	2021 – 2022
49	Collaborate with downtown business on a promotional campaign.	2021 – 2022
50	Work with the PCC to create a social media community engagement strategy.	2021 – 2022
51	Identify tourism destinations and develop an extensive wayfinding strategy.	2021 – 2023
52	Develop the "World's Biggest something" that represents the community's brand.	2022 – 2025
53	Collaborate with local businesses on development projects.	2021 – 2025
54	Complete a cost analysis to run services to highway commercial lands.	2021 – 2022
55	Implement an incentive strategy for new development.	2022 – 2025

Michelle Levasseur
Economic Development Officer

E: mlevasseur@calmar.ca

T: 780.985.3604 (223)

W: www.calmar.ca

