

# Staff Report

Chief Administrator's Office



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**REPORT TO:** Finance and Corporate Services Committee

**DATE OF MEETING:** August 14, 2023

**SUBMITTED BY:** Dan Chapman, CAO, 519-741-2200 ext. 7350

**PREPARED BY:** Angie Fritz-Walters, Strategic Plan Engagement and Program Manager, 519-741-2200 ext. 7059  
Kathryn Dever, Director, Strategy and Corporate Performance, 519-741-2200 ext. 7370

**WARD(S) INVOLVED:** All Wards

**DATE OF REPORT:** July 27, 2023

**REPORT NO.:** CAO-2023-337

**SUBJECT:** 2023-2026 Strategic Plan Development – Proposed Strategic Plan Content

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the initial set of Actions for the City of Kitchener 2023-2026 Strategic Plan as contained in Appendix C to report CAO 2023-337 be approved.**

## **REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:**

- This report provides Council with the proposed content for the City's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, including an initial set of Actions, and a refined 20-year Vision story.
- Staff and the Compass Kitchener advisory committee implemented meaningful, inclusive, and deliberative community engagement to inform the Strategic Plan, including the Plan WITH Us Resident Panel.
- There are no financial implications associated with this staff report.

## **BACKGROUND:**

The City's Strategic Plan sets priorities and a plan for action to guide progress and resourcing over the term of Council towards our long-term community vision. It represents a commitment to the public to move forward on the things that are most important to them. This report represents the final in a series of engagements with Council and focuses on an initial set of Actions to address key needs and opportunities expressed through extensive community engagement and prior strategic discussions with Council.

\*\*\* This information is available in accessible formats upon request. \*\*\*  
Please call 519-741-2345 or TTY 1-866-969-9994 for assistance.

## **REPORT:**

The Strategic Planning process has included a variety of inputs from a number of groups, including Compass Kitchener, staff and the Resident Panel. Staff have engaged with Council over the past 18 months at a series of six strategy sessions. Council's deliberation and direction throughout the process has been summarized in Appendix A.

Based on Council direction at its May strategy session, staff undertook the following:

- Refined the 20-year Vision story (Appendix B) to increase focus on areas where the City can have the greatest impact on community priorities.
- Developed an initial set of Actions for the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, to enable progress on key Council and community priorities, needs and opportunities.
- Organized the Goal Areas and statements to indicate Actions underway already supporting the priorities, new ones planned, and internal-facing ones.

The Strategic Plan content in this final report has broad community support demonstrated through extensive engagement, and reflects Council's priorities identified through previous discussions.

### **Proposed 2023-2026 Strategic Plan Actions**

At previous strategic sessions, Council supported the 5 Strategic Goal Areas. Council also supported adopting an adaptive approach to set an initial set of Actions the City will commit to. An adaptive approach will allow Council to adjust resources to respond to emerging needs and opportunities within the 4-year timeframe.

The initial Actions proposed for years 1 and 2 of the Strategic Plan, subject to Budget approval, are outlined below for each 2023-2026 Strategic Goal Area. Refer to Appendix C for Goal Area Statements and details for each Action.

#### ***Building a Connected City Together:***

- Housing For All Implementation
- Localized Transportation Safety Improvement Program
- City-wide Active Transportation Routes
- Official Plan Comprehensive Update

#### ***Cultivating a Green City Together:***

- Corporate Climate Action Plan 2.0
- Clean Energy Transition Strategy
- District Energy Business Case
- Green Development Standards
- Implement tree canopy target plan
- Implementing actions from Parks master plan
- Parkland Acquisition Strategy
- Grand River Park Strategy

#### ***Creating an Economically-Thriving City Together:***

- Accelerate Commercial Business Approvals
- Implement Health/Medical Technology Innovation Campus

- Creative Industries School
- Strategy for Events and Festivals
- Entertainment Venue Management
- Implement Arts and Culture Master Plan

***Fostering a Caring City Together:***

- Advance Truth and Reconciliation
- Municipal Newcomers Strategy
- Enhance City's Engagement Practices
- Community Centre Operating Model
- City-Led Recreation & Leisure program review
- Leisure Facilities Master Plan Update
- Community Grants Review

***Stewarding a Better City Together:***

- Digital Kitchener Strategy
- Implement City-wide Data Strategy
- Strengthen employer identity/value proposition
- Support a Psychologically Safe Workplace
- Procurement innovation

Implementation of these initial Actions will take place through the annual Business Plan, with any required resource requests brought to Council through the annual Budget process. In support of the adaptive approach supported by Council, staff will assess progress made, emerging needs and opportunities, and bring forward adjustments with associated Budget implications to Council within the 4-year Strategic Plan timeframe.

**Community Input on Draft Strategic Plan and Actions**

Public engagement has far exceeded that of any previous strategic planning processes. A final round of consultation in June and July focused on the Strategic Goal Areas and Actions, with an opportunity for the community to share feedback through a survey on the Engage Kitchener page from June 28-July 16, 2023. The survey was promoted through outreach with community partners and contacts, as well as the City's social media channels.

The findings from the consultation indicate broad support for the proposed Strategic Plan Goals and Actions. A detailed report of survey input is included in Appendix D, with key highlights below from the 184 responses received:

- Over 75% agree or strongly agree that the goals and actions will help our city change in the right direction.
- Actions that support housing affordability remain a key priority, with many comments indicating implementation of the Housing for All actions are important to them.
- There is strong support for climate action, including active transportation and improving the tree canopy. Several comments suggested the City could be even more bold and/or quicker to act in these areas.
- Those who indicate that they do not agree with the direction in the draft strategic goals and actions cite concerns with the concept of a 15-minute City, a “woke agenda” and do not support climate action as a priority.

- There is a higher level of support for the Goals and Actions from those under 40 years of age and those identifying as a member of one of the following groups: person with a disability; member of a racialized group; immigrant or refugee; 2LGBTQ+; or First Nations, Inuit or Métis.

**Final Steps in the Strategic Planning Process:**

- Content refinement from today's discussion as required
- Final Council approval (August 28, 2023)
- Indicators / evaluation criteria development by staff and Compass Kitchener (fall 2023)
- Strategic Plan launch and communications (fall 2023)

**STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

This report supports the development of the 2023-2026 City of Kitchener Strategic Plan.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Capital/Operating Budget – Strategic Actions which require funding will be brought forward to Council through the annual Budget process and reflected in the annual Business Plan.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

CONSULT AND COLLABORATE – This report includes input from broad and diverse community engagement to support and inform the creation of Kitchener's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan.

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the council / committee meeting.

**PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:**

CAO-2022-160 [Preparing for the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#)

CAO-2022-198 [Results of Environics 2022 Survey of Kitchener Residents](#)

CAO-2022-413 [Strategic Foresight and Community Engagement Update](#)

CAO-2023-047 [Compass Kitchener Advisory Committee Community Priorities](#)

CAO-2023-081 [Prioritizing Strategic Goal Areas](#)

CAO-2023-217 [20-Year Vision, Key Priorities and Approach to Action Planning](#)

**APPROVED BY:** Dan Chapman, CAO

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Appendix A – Summary of Council Input into the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan

Appendix B – 20-year Vision Statement and Story for Kitchener (Refined)

Appendix C – 2023-2026 Strategic Plan – Proposed Initial Strategic Actions

Appendix D – Community Engagement Survey Responses on Draft Strategic Plan