

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

At the **March 2022 discussion** about the overall strategic planning approach, Council advised on two key items as important to include in preparing the strategic plan and related community engagement:

- **Include a focus on core City services:** An overview of services the City of Kitchener is responsible for was incorporated into online and in-person engagement tactics. Educational components have been included in each of the Engage page ideas boards to provide context for residents when they respond with their ideas. Context about the City's responsibilities was included as context for the Neighbourhood Conversations sessions. The 'We Are Kitchener' campaign launched in 2022 is continuing, with social media and physical banners and signage throughout the community building awareness of key City services in an engaging way.
- **Apply broad/open approaches and engage through different means:** A broad variety of online and in-person means were used to engage residents, with a focus on open-ended questions, exploratory discussions/exercises, use of new tools within the Engage online platform, and a staff street team doing pop-up engagements at more community locations and events than previous strategic planning cycles.

During the **May 2022 review** of the Environics survey results Council requested staff ensure the following through the next phases of community engagement:

- **Seek a broad range of voices and equity deserving groups:** Engagement reached a broader diversity of Kitchener residents, provided a variety of ways for people to participate in-person and online, maximized community connections to encourage participation from equity deserving groups; the current Resident Panel was selected to mirror the demographic diversity of Kitchener.
- **Learn more about satisfaction with City services, public engagement processes, sustainability, housing affordability and recreation programs:** These topics were all included as key topics in the engagement. Exploring willingness to pay more for services / satisfaction with value for tax dollars formed part of engagement later this year to support the 2023 Budget.

In the **August 2022** discussion on broad community engagement efforts underway, and key trends shaping Kitchener's future from a horizon scan summary as input into future scenario development, Council noted the following:

- **Ensure focus on what the City can do or influence within its mandate:** Staff and Compass Kitchener continued to hear broad ideas and aspirations as wider community engagement concluded; staff will filter these to actions that the City can take to respond, including working closely with the Resident Panel to focus on the City's accountability.
- **Key trends impacting Kitchener include belonging, placemaking, sustainability, housing affordability, innovation, technology and institutional trust:** Staff incorporated these key trends into scenario development toward a proposed new 20-year Vision (which will be shared with Council in May), and the proposed strategic goal areas highlighted in this report.

In **January 2023**, the Compass Kitchener Advisory Committee provided Council their community priorities for the new Strategic Plan. While no direction was sought at that meeting, Council engaged with the committee Chair and Vice-chair to explore the priorities a bit more deeply, while noting the close alignment to what Council heard during the election campaign.

At the **February 2023** discussion on key goal areas, based on synthesis of broad community engagement inputs, to be used by staff to identify indicators of success and potential actions in which the City could make progress over the life of the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, Council provided the following feedback:

- **Support for the proposed 5 Strategic Goal Areas** as reflecting key priorities toward which to make progress over the next 4 years (draft working titles): Belonging and Participation; Housing, Land Use and Mobility; Environment and Climate Action; Economic Prosperity and Opportunity; and Good Government.
- **Include the following when developing proposed Actions for the term of Council:** engagement, newcomer experience; housing attainability, protecting good rents, green space; 15-minute neighbourhoods; climate; creative industries, film/music/arts; government relations strategy, technology/innovation, data-driven decisions.

At the **May 2023** discussion on a new 20-year Vision, key priorities and the approach to action planning, Council provided the following input:

- **Support for setting an initial set of Actions** for the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, to enable Council and the organization to respond to emerging issues, needs and opportunities throughout the 4-year period.
- **Add Physical & Mental Health and Innovation Culture (external) to the Top Priorities** representing the primary focus of actions, budget investments, business planning and resource requests, especially for the first 1-2 years of the strategic plan.
- **Support for the Goal Areas and statements with a request to organize goal areas and actions** to indicate actions underway already, new ones planned, and internal-facing ones.
- **Refine the Vision story** to provide more focus on where the City can make an impact toward community aspirations.