

Evaluation Framework for the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan

Evaluation Process

In previous years, one of Compass Kitchener's primary challenges during the evaluation process was a lack of sufficient information to effectively assess projects. To address this, Compass Kitchener now sends standardized briefing templates to be completed by project managers for each finished project. The briefing template provided below asks staff to provide a brief summary (e.g., two- to three-sentences) of how the project has met each evaluation criterion, along with any supporting documents for additional information.

Briefing templates will be distributed to project managers in February, with submissions due by the end of the month. Compass Kitchener will commence their evaluations in March by reviewing completed project briefings. If Compass Kitchener has any outstanding questions, members will request short voluntary presentations by project staff.

Prior to finalizing their report and presenting to Council, Compass Kitchener will share the draft report card with CLT in May for review.

Evaluation Criteria

1. Responsible Project Delivery:

This criterion focuses on how well project goals, budgets and timelines are managed. It emphasizes the importance of monitoring and tracking progress to ensure projects are completed efficiently and effectively, achieving goals within financial constraints and deadlines.

- Note: Given that the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan is intended to be adaptive, responsible project delivery also recognizes that timelines may shift due to shifting priorities and needs.

2. Impact/Public Value:

This criterion assesses how the impact of the project will be tracked and evaluated, and the extent to which a project (has the potential) to create positive outcomes for the community and contributes to the goal(s) of the Strategic Plan.

3. Transparency & Communication:

This criterion focuses on the dissemination of information through staff reports and other channels. It emphasizes the importance of relevant, clear, timely, and accessible communication to the community, ensuring that project goals, progress, challenges, and outcomes/impacts are openly shared.

4. Public Engagement:

This criterion evaluates how well a project involves the community and/or relevant parties in its planning and execution.

Equity Lens

Using the definition of equity outlined in Kitchener’s Equity, Inclusion & Anti-Racism policy, Compass Kitchener will also incorporate an equity lens to underpin the evaluation of all projects.

“An equity approach creates the conditions for fair and equal access and opportunity for everyone, by addressing discriminations, exclusions and barriers experienced by distinct groups. Equity is not the same as equality, nor is it the same as inequality.”

Evaluation Rating

Compass Kitchener will evaluate each project using the following rating scale: exceeds expectations, meets expectations, and does not meet expectations.

The evaluation rating will be determined based on the extent to which all **applicable** evaluation criteria are met, recognizing that some criteria may not be applicable to each project. Each individual criterion will be assigned a rating, and based on the ratings of all applicable criteria, Compass Kitchener members will determine an overall rating through a consensus vote.

COMPASS KITCHENER STAFF EVALUATION

FOSTERING A CARING CITY TOGETHER

We welcome residents of all ages, backgrounds and lived experiences. We work together on the decisions that matter to use and have a meaningful influence in our community. We're healthy and thriving as we easily access the diverse and inclusive programs and services we need to succeed.

Advancing Truth and Reconciliation

Advancing Truth and Reconciliation Staff Report
<p>Project Description: Advance meaningful actions to Truth and Reconciliation as identified and through relationship-building with Indigenous communities and rights-holders.</p>
<p>Responsible Project Delivery: This criterion focuses on how well project goals, budgets and timelines are managed. It emphasizes the importance of monitoring and tracking progress to ensure projects are completed efficiently and effectively, achieving goals within financial constraints and deadlines.</p>
<p>Please describe how your project meets this criterion and provide any additional supporting material. If this criterion is not applicable, please explain why:</p> <p>For 2024, the City focused on advancing Truth and Reconciliation in a number of ways, including continuing corporate-wide education and training, the advancement of a water stewardship project, engaging on the Places & Spaces plan, reviewing processes to make it easier for Indigenous communities to access public spaces for cultural and ceremonial needs, and on cross collaborative projects such as the Wiinjindamaan project.</p> <p>It became clear in early 2024 that the project description within the strategic plan (as outline above) that Advancing Truth and Reconciliation is more than a singular item within the strategic plan, but rather is a foundational commitment of the City. This ongoing body of work is not time-bound and cannot be measured in a traditional 'Western' way, as success is, and should be, measured by the depth of relationships built through the process of taking meaningful action.</p> <p>That said, for 2024, staff chose to focus on the Wiinjindamaan project as a singular example of a project that is moving forward successfully, with direct and positive impact. Over the past year, staff have highlighted this project in their strategic action updates to the Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advancing truth and reconciliation remains a foundational commitment of the City of Kitchener. Following a review of this action item in 2024, staff believe Truth and Reconciliation is not time-bound work that can be tied to a single project or action, and will be moving forward with multiple projects and actions on an ongoing basis, therefore removing this item from the

Strategic Action Council Update going forward. We are committed to demonstrating/communicating the city's continued commitment to and progress on truth and reconciliation (all projects and actions) through the city's website in a greater format than the strategic updates to Council allow at www.kitchener.ca/reconciliation.

Wiijindamaan project:

- The Wiijindamaan project is a multi-partner Indigenous land restoration project located within the Pioneer Tower Natural Area. Together, partners involved in the project are working to help create sustainable traditional food and medicines, increase biodiversity through habitat restoration, and reintroduce natural species into the environment.
- The key partners in this collaborative project with the City of Kitchener include Wisahketowinowak Urban Indigenous Garden Collective, White Owl Native Ancestry Association and Conestoga College.
- The Various staff teams manage this initiative through various projects and initiatives, each with their own goals and objectives. Each project is managed within those staff teams and resources.
- The partnership has enabled strong relationship building with Indigenous communities achieving their desired goals (e.g. sustainable traditional food and medicines) and staff from the Parks& Cemeteries (Forestry & Natural Areas) team able to advance advance conservation and land management goals associated with Kitchener's Natural Areas.
- The Wiijindamaan project enters its third year and has taken a more intentional focus on supporting and creating opportunity for Indigenous youth to steward the land through various restoration and planting projects. The City of Kitchener contributes to this project and reports to the college on funding and in-kind deliverables.

Impact/Public Value: This criterion assesses how the impact of the project will be tracked and evaluated, and the extent to which a project (has the potential) to create positive outcomes for the community and contributes to the goal(s) of the Strategic Plan.

Please describe how your project meets this criterion and provide any additional supporting material. If this criterion is not applicable, please explain why:

- Actively investing in projects to build and foster relationships with Indigenous communities creates significant and long lasting social and ecological benefits and builds mutual long-lasting benefits. Youth involved in this project are gaining land-based experiences, meeting and connecting with community and building relationships with City staff.
- Various events happened which brought all nations out to the Wiijindamaan site to participate in ceremonies, attend community feasts and invest in land restoration activities. Relationship building and connection through these events has also grown and is building with First Nations and rights holders (i.e. Six Nations, Mississauga's of the Credit) with people from outside Kitchener coming to and participating in events. This benefit extends beyond the immediate urban Indigenous communities.

Transparency and Communication: This criterion focuses on the dissemination of information through staff reports and other channels. It emphasizes the importance of relevant, clear, timely, and accessible communication to the community, ensuring that project goals, progress, challenges, and outcomes/impacts are openly shared.

Please describe how your project meets this criterion and provide any additional supporting material. If this criterion is not applicable, please explain why:

- Initial [public staff report to Council](#): April 24, 2023
- [CBC Article](#): June 17, 2023
- [Wijindamaan YouTube Channel](#)
- Four (4) updates to Council within the quarterly Strategic Actions report.
- Staff approach communication and transparency about this project with humility, as we do not want to draw the spotlight to ourselves over the success and positive impact of the entire collective working together on this project. Staff are cautious of drawing spotlight to this work when it is less about Kitchener's impact and more about our abilities and investment in growing and developing personal and professional relationships with Indigenous people and communities themselves. We are focused on raising up and elevating the projects and initiatives happening within local Indigenous communities and being strong and sensitive partners in this regard.
- We receive regular communication and updates from our partners and in 2025 will be advancing work to develop and write a land management plan to guide the work and establish goals for Wiinjindamaan beyond the College's original funding grant.
- We are committed to demonstrating/communicating the city's continued commitment to and progress on truth and reconciliation (all projects and actions) through the city's website in a greater format than the strategic updates to Council allow at www.kitchener.ca/reconciliation.

Public Engagement: This criterion evaluates how well a project involves the community and/or relevant parties in its planning and execution.

Please describe how your project meets this criterion and provide any additional supporting material. If this criterion is not applicable, please explain why:

- Our focus has been on seeking out, supporting and engaging community allies and new/additional partners. This includes trying to expand awareness of the project within the immediate neighbourhood and with the people who walk the trail running through the Wiinjindamaan site. We post information including event invitations on the site so nearby neighbours and others feel invited to join. We have not received complaints and continue to meet new people who live nearby and are getting actively involved.
- With much of this work being focused at the staff level and not directly community driven, there is more work/opportunity to advance public awareness of involvement in these initiatives.
- In 2025, staff are working on another project to develop a natural area management plan for Huron Natural Area which integrates and braids Indigenous knowledge and practices into the land management objectives for the park while also seeing substantial investment into physical amenities and

permanent Indigenous space in this park. This park is Kitchener's premier and most popularly attended natural area where 1000's of people visit annually. We see this project as a significant opportunity to grow and advance public awareness.

Overall Evaluation (select one):

Meets Expectations/Exceeds Expectations/Does Not Meet Expectations

Additional Notes (if applicable)

- (Enter text here)
- (Enter text here)