



# 2023-2026 Strategic Plan Evaluation Report to Council

August 2025

# This report was prepared by members of the **Compass Kitchener Advisory Committee**:

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# Purpose of the Report Card

Evaluate the two strategic actions completed in 2024:

1. Accelerate Commercial Business Approvals
  2. Advance Truth and Reconciliation
- ▶ Reflect on the development and implementation of the 2023–2026 Strategic Plan
  - ▶ Provide feedback and recommendations to inform future planning.

# Evaluation Approach

We assessed projects using **four main criteria**:

1. Responsible Project Delivery
2. Impact/Public Value
3. Transparency & Communication
4. Public Engagement

Projects were **rated** using the following **rating scale**:

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Does not meet expectations

An **equity lens** underpinned the evaluation of all projects

# Project 1 - Accelerate Commercial Business Approvals



## Rating: Exceeds Expectations

- Delivered on time with strong cross-departmental collaboration.
- Identified 55 improvements—65% were “quick wins.”
- New tools introduced: business roadmap guide, pre-application process, digital permit review.
- On-site team visits improved clarity and reduced approval timelines.
- Translation and interpretation services available for use on site visits, enhancing accessibility.
- Public engagement was user-focused and robust.

## Key Recommendation:

Expand beyond the downtown core and engage equity-seeking business communities.

# Project 2 - Advance Truth & Reconciliation



## Rating: Exceeds Expectations

- Commendable shift: from time-bound deliverables to a relational, ongoing commitment
- City is learning, adapting, and acting as a respectful partner, not a lead
- Example: Wiinjiindamaan Project, city supported Indigenous-led initiative
- City demonstrated sensitivity in shaping communications about this project, respectful of the fact that project leadership came from the group of collaborating entities rather than from a single entity
- **Key Recommendation:**  
Continue to embed Truth & Reconciliation across all departments and communicate progress in ways that elevate Indigenous leadership

# Strategic Plan Implementation - Reflections

- City's adaptive planning model is a major strength
- Public engagement was more inclusive than ever
- Resident panel stood out
- Use of project charters and mid-point check-ins shows progress in planning maturity
- Improved focus on outcomes, not just outputs

## Suggestions

Clarify Compass Kitchener's role in engagement initiatives

Continue to publish progress data and budget information

Strengthen storytelling to show how the plan affects residents' daily lives



# Update on Projects from the 2019-2022 Plan

Several previously incomplete projects are now complete or progressing well:

- Downtown Cycling Network (complete)
- Incubator and Accelerator Project (in progress)
- City-Owned Property Review (complete)
- Rosenberg Community Centre Business Case (complete)
- Bramm Yards Vision (complete)
- Open Space Strategy (Phase 1 complete)
- Arts and Creative Industries Action Plan (in progress)

## Observation

The City's adaptive approach has enabled carry-forward and continuity across planning cycles.



# Looking Ahead: Key Themes

- ▶ Continue to address key complex challenges: housing, climate change, social isolation
- ▶ Prioritize completion of the Arts and Culture Action Plan
- ▶ Improve access to budget data to support deeper evaluation, and
- ▶ Shift evaluations toward strategic goal progress, not just completed projects.

# Closing Remarks

- ▶ Compass Kitchener values the City's collaborative approach and openness
- ▶ We extend sincere gratitude to staff for their cooperation, openness and responsiveness throughout the evaluation process
- ▶ We offer this report in the spirit of partnership, progress, and shared purpose and look forward to continuing in our role, helping to build a more connected, responsive, and inclusive Kitchener—together.

