

Staff Report

Chief Administrator's Office



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REPORT TO: Council

DATE OF MEETING: December 13, 2021

SUBMITTED BY: Kathryn Dever, Director, Strategy and Corporate Performance,
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PREPARED BY: Karen Cooper, Manager, Strategic and Business Planning,
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WARD(S) INVOLVED: All Ward(s)

DATE OF REPORT: December 7, 2021

REPORT NO.: CAO-21-006

SUBJECT: 2021 Business Plan Year-End Progress Report and
Recommended 2022 Business Plan Project List

RECOMMENDATION:

That the 2022 Business Plan Project List in Appendix A to Report CAO-21-006 be approved.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- This report presents the Recommended 2022 Business Plan Project List (Appendix A) and the 2021 Business Plan Year-End Progress Report (Appendix B).
- Progress was made on completing 9 projects including 7 strategic projects and 2 business projects in 2021.
- The Recommended 2022 Business Plan Project List contains 36 projects, including 12 Strategic Plan actions, 12 business projects from 2021 and 12 new business projects.
- Funding provisions for the 2022 Business Plan projects are included in the 2022 Budget.
- The community was informed by posting the report on the City's website with the agenda in advance of the Council meeting.
- This report helps implement the City's Strategic Plan commitment to accountability by providing a year-end progress report on the 2021 Business Plan and recommending projects for the 2022 Business Plan.

REPORT:

2021 Business Plan Year-End Progress Report

2021 saw Kitchener continuing to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The City placed the safety of citizens and staff as a top priority through its pandemic response and recovery efforts, while also supporting the economic sustainability of businesses and employers. To achieve these priorities, staff implemented innovative approaches to modernize service delivery and improve efficiencies. Many staff continued to work from home, providing services online, offering existing programs in new virtual formats, providing training and supports to local businesses and establishing centralized service counters at city hall.

Through this challenging time, staff demonstrated resiliency and made progress on the 2021 Business Plan projects. As of December 31, 9 projects have been completed, including 7 strategic plan projects and 2 business projects. As indicated in the following illustration 13 of 25 Strategic Actions have now been completed with 7 being completed in 2021.



Award Winning Strategic Plan and Projects

Council can be proud of how staff adapted to the challenges of the pandemic and continued to deliver on the community priorities outlined in the Strategic Plan, which remained relevant to the public.

The innovation and quality of the Strategic Plan was recognized by Municipal World with their inaugural Innovation Award presented to the City in November 2021.

The Cycling and Trails Master Plan won the Award of Merit as part of the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) 2021 Awards for Planning Excellence program in the category of Sustainable Mobility Transportation and Infrastructure. It also won the Transportation Planning Project of the Year award from the Ontario Traffic Council. The award recognizes excellence in transportation planning by highlighting projects that display innovation, support sustainability and contribute to people's quality of life.

Housing for All, Kitchener's housing strategy received the Peter J Marshall award for demonstrating creativity and success in implementing new, innovative ways of serving the public from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

Completed Strategic Actions

The City made considerable progress in the projects under the five goals of the Strategic Plan. The following 7 strategic plan actions were completed in 2021:

1. Connectivity & Year-Round Maintenance of Multi-Use Trails

Strategic Plan Action: Prioritize actions, connectivity and year-round maintenance to multi-use trails and pathways through the Cycling and Trails Master Plan, with an initial target of year-round access to a minimum of an additional 3 km of existing trails by 2022.

The City upgraded over 4 km of existing trails to provide year-round maintenance between 2019-2021, exceeding the initial target of 3 km by 2022. An additional 4.485 km are planned for upgrading to provide year-round maintenance in 2022.

2. Community Climate Action Plan

Strategic Plan Action: Develop a Community Climate Action Plan with partner organizations by 2020.

Kitchener Council, along with all municipalities in Waterloo Region, endorsed Transform WR as the community climate action plan with a community greenhouse gas emission reduction target of an 80% reduction (based on 2010 levels) by 2050 (80by50). It also included an interim community GHG reduction target of 50% by 2030.

3. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Strategic Plan Action: Create an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy focused on better engaging and serving marginalized and under-represented people, as well as creating a more inclusive City workplace.

Kitchener's Corporate Strategy on Equity and Anti-Racism was developed by the Mayor's Task Force on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. The strategy is made up of the following actions:

- Establish a full-time **permanent staff team** to lead Equity, Anti-Racism and Indigenous Initiatives work at the City of Kitchener (**Complete**)
- Develop an **Equity, Inclusion & Anti-Racism Policy** which outlines the corporate commitment to equity, inclusion and anti-racism and specific expectations for leadership, staff and volunteers to support this commitment (**Complete**)
- Develop a **Funding Opportunity for Black, Indigenous & Racialized Groups** to support community-led programs, initiatives or events meant to decrease inequities and increase opportunities and well-being for racialized communities in Kitchener (**Complete**)
- Develop, implement and maintain a **Corporate Equity & Anti-Racism Training Strategy**, including ongoing, mandatory training for all staff, volunteers, leadership and members of City Council (**Complete**)
- Develop and Implement a **Longitudinal, Systematic Demographic Data Collection Strategy** for the Corporation in order to better understand how representative staff, clients and stakeholders are of the community, and help identify systemic barriers and opportunities to make the workplace and services more inclusive (In Progress)
- Develop an **Equity & Anti-Racism Communications Guide** for staff, leadership and the Communications Division as a practical tool and educational resource (In Progress)

- Conduct an **Equity Audit of Human Resources Policies & Practices in Hiring, Recruitment & Promotion** at the City and implement recommendations (**Complete**)
- Develop recommendations for a revised **Youth Mentorship Program for low-income youth** to replace the original youth mentorship program which has been run by the City for the past 20 years (In Progress)
- The Task Force also recommended that an **Equity and Anti-Racism Advisory Committee to Council** be created and it has now been established. (**Complete**)

4. **Multi-Language Customer Service**

The Strategic Plan Action to provide on-demand customer service support in many languages is now being provided through the Corporate Contact Centre.

5. **Customer Satisfaction Program**

The Strategic Plan Action to develop a corporate-wide Customer Satisfaction Program that allows for the collection of real time feedback from customers accessing city facilities, programs, and services was initiated in 2021.

6. **Online Customer Experience**

Strategic Plan Action: Enhance customer experience online by delivering customized information, providing easy access to services, and allow financial transactions by 2021.

The MyKitchener portal launched with the website revamp in March of 2021. It is the City's new online experience for anyone who lives, works or plays in Kitchener and is a first of its kind in Canada. People can create an account to access a new self-serve portal and personalize their online experience with the city.

7. **Customer Experience Review Program**

The Strategic Plan Action to develop a comprehensive Customer Experience Review Program has been initiated in 2021 to help ensure services are easy and convenient to access from the customer's perspective ahead of the 2022 target timing.

In addition, elimination of the **Tree Planting Backlog** of the Urban Forestry Strategy has been completed with the planting of over 630 trees in 2021. Much work on the development of a tree canopy target occurred in 2021 and is to be presented to Council in early 2022.

Completed Business Plan Projects

Two business plan projects were completed in 2021:

1. **Transformation and Relaunch of Kitchener.ca**

Relaunch Kitchener.ca as a user-first designed site that is easy for residents to quickly find any information they are looking for, as well as to have the information they are interested in, delivered to them.

2. **Electronic Agenda Management**

Create, prepare, approve and publish meeting agenda packages and minutes in a more efficient, collaborative, streamlined manner.

Recommended 2022 Business Plan Project List

The 2022 Business Plan project list included as Appendix A to this report contains both strategic actions and business projects that are a priority for Council and/or for staff.

Strategic Actions

The 12 Strategic Actions to be completed in 2022 and in 2023 include:

People Friendly Transportation

1. Encourage and incentivize alternative modes of transportation by developing and subsidizing a bikeshare program by 2021.
2. Install a continuous and protected cycling network that connects adjacent neighbourhoods to the downtown by 2022.
3. Develop a plan to create pedestrian-first streets between Victoria Park and City Hall and between the ION and Kitchener Market by 2022.

Environmental Leadership

4. Starting in 2019, leverage the Energy Efficiency Reserve Fund and other resources to reduce consumption and emission at our facilities and in our operations.
5. Implement the Sustainable Urban Forest Strategy with a focus on establishing a tree canopy target by 2020
6. Reduce waste diverted to landfills by implementing new diversion programs at our facilities and events by 2021.

Economic Vibrancy

7. Foster creation of a city-wide network of incubators, accelerators and co-working spaces by completing buildout of 44 Gaukel in 2019, advancing work on a Creative Hub and undertaking business cases in 2019-2021 for food manufacturing and health/med-tech industries.
8. Complete a comprehensive review of city-owned properties by 2020 to determine how they could be effectively used to advance city strategic objectives.
9. Develop a vision for downtown Kitchener and continue to position downtown Kitchener as a leading destination for redevelopment opportunities, with at least one new city-owned property brought to market by 2020. Finalize the Innovation District (Bramm Yards) Master Plan by 2021 and the Civic District Master Plan by 2022.

Caring Community

10. Better utilize existing facilities, provide relevant programming at community centers, & support equitable distribution of leisure programs and resources across neighbourhoods. Start work on the Mill Courtland Community Centre expansion by 2020 and the Rosenberg Community Centre by 2021. Complete the Huron Brigadoon Community Centre by 2021 and complete an Open Space Strategy by 2021.

11. Engage a broad cross-section of the community including the arts and creative industry sector and multi-cultural communities to develop an inclusive arts and culture Plan by 2021.

Great Customer Service

12. Set clearly communicated and specific service levels for frequently asked about or accessed City services, including: tree maintenance, parking, property standards complaints, snow clearing and grass cutting by 2022.

Business Projects

In the 2022 Business Plan List there is a significant increase in the number of business projects. This is due to the backlog of projects delayed in 2021 during the pandemic now being addressed in 2022 and taking on new projects as work begins to return to a new normal. Of the 25 business projects, 12 projects are continuing from 2021 and 12 are new projects.

The 12 continuing business projects are:

1. Budd Park Strategy
2. Cameron Heights Pool Feasibility Study
3. Southwest District Pool Business Case
4. Ice Demand Study
5. Mobile Time Entry
6. Development Charge (DC) and Community Benefits Charge (CBC) Studies
7. Long Term Financial Plan – Implementation
8. Point of Sale and Expansion of Payment Options
9. Facilities Infrastructure Program
10. Rehabilitation of City Hall Outdoor Spaces – Construction Phase 1&2
11. Implementation of Significant Parks Projects
12. Implementation of the Federal Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF)

The 12 new business projects are:

1. New Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Target(s)
2. Demographic Data Collection Strategy to guide the identification and removal of systemic barriers in City programs and services.
3. Launch of the Grant Program for Black, Indigenous & Racialized groups (RISE Fund)
4. Fire Station 8 Location Study
5. City Hall Customer Service Counter
6. Budget System Implementation
7. Climate Event Sensor Implementation
8. Asset Management Planning
9. Concur Invoice Automation
10. E-invoices for Miscellaneous Receivables
11. Water Infrastructure Program
12. Sustainable Urban Forest Strategy (SUFS) Implementation

The 2022 Business Plan Project List approved by Council will be incorporated into the City of Kitchener 2022 Business Plan document, with updated core service and departmental profiles. The 2022 Business Plan will be published and posted on the website in early 2022.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

The Strategic Plan states:

“We are committed to being accountable to the community we serve. The 2019-2022 Strategic Plan contains measurable, specific actions and a timeline for completion. Our long-term financial plan, budgets and annual business plans will be aligned to implement the Strategic Plan. We will measure and report on our progress to council and the public throughout the life of this plan. We will report to council three times a year and share results (both our successes and challenges) with Kitchener residents. The City’s Compass Kitchener Citizen Advisory Committee will review and assess our progress, and publicly report on an annual basis how well we are doing.”

This report helps implement City accountability by providing a year-end progress report on the 2021 Business Plan and recommending projects for the 2022 Business Plan.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Capital Budget – provisions for capital funding for Business Plan projects have been included in the 2022 Budget.

Operating Budget – provisions for operating funding for Business Plan projects have been included in the 2022 Budget.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

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

CONSULT – In 2018, Compass Kitchener consulted the public on developing community priorities for the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, which informed preparation of the 2022 Business Plan project list.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

- CAO-20-008 2020 Business Plan Year End Progress Report and Recommended 2021 Business Plan Project List

APPROVED BY: Dan Chapman, Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A – Recommended 2022 Business Plan Project List
Appendix B – 2021 Business Plan Year-End Progress Report