City Staff Response to Compass Kitchener's Evaluation of Strategic Plan Implementation

Areas Needing Attention from the City	Staff Response
Budget and Project Management Accountability Evaluating implementation of the Strategic Plan was to include an evaluation of whether or not the work on each strategic action was on budget or not. Budget information was not readily available for most projects, so this was not possible to evaluate at this time. In the future it is important that budgeted cost of the project to be available and reported on as part of a project management plan or terms of reference for the project. Compass Kitchener found it more straightforward to evaluate implementation of strategic actions when they had a terms of reference or work plan that set out expectations for project before the project began.	The Corporate Leadership Team recognizes that project management standards are needed and had this on its workplan. Work did not proceed due to the pandemic. It is expected that in 2022 this work will be co-ordinated by the Strategy and Corporate Performance division.
Website The public can access much information very well on the website, and the website improvements are impressive, however it is not clear how to access information on the key issues that Kitchener is addressing. The City recognizes that more work is needed on the website on an ongoing basis as people seek to find information. At the All Advisory Committees meeting we heard from people who regularly use the site or do research using the site indicating that it is hard to find materials they are searching for; that having found a document it is often hard to retrace one's steps to it; and that the links to documents contained in the website are often no longer functional. It was also suggested that adding some AI elements linked to searches would be useful - so that following a search, text would pop up saying something like " since you searched for xxxx, and you might find the following of interest..." In numerous City reports reference is made to Compass Kitchener and its recommendations, however, if one searches "Compass Kitchener" on the City's website, references to Compass Kitchener come up but not one that provides an explanation of what Compass Kitchener is and its terms of reference. It would be helpful to have the search function take a person to this info for each of the Advisory Committees. In instances where the City is providing links to documents that include lots of photos and/or design elements like tinted backgrounds on full pages etc., it would be very helpful if people could choose between downloading the document as originally presented or a printer-friendly version that uses less ink and paper. The Make it Kitchener Strategy does this but not many others.	The City is committed to continuous improvement on the city website. Staff will enhance the citizen advisory committee content, including Compass Kitchener content, on the website. This will improve the ability of the search function to provide results for citizen advisory committees. Going forward for large corporate documents, like the Strategic Plan, Urban Forest Strategy, Master Plans and the Official Plan, etc. printer friendly options for documents will be provided.

Progress Reports and Presentations Compass Kitchener appreciates that the Annual Business Plan and its regular progress reports are now more celebratory of the accomplishments and reflect a more reasonable number of projects that the City can actually accomplish. In completing our review of the Strategic Plan, the amount of information was challenging to absorb. We found it most helpful when staff presented on their projects to Compass Kitchener. We got a better sense of the project's importance, its key points, challenges and achievements through staff's evident passion, pride and professionalism in addressing the strategic plan actions. Short videos of staff presentations or speaking about their projects would be helpful for the public. Staff and/or involved community members bring the projects to life and make the work relatable. We understand that staff were constrained during the pandemic, but we recommend this be given consideration in determining work priorities during the pandemic recovery.	Staff presentations will be made to Compass Kitchener. Short videos of staff/community members speaking about their projects were planned for public use as part of implementing the strategic plan but put on hold due to the pandemic. A year end video was produced for 2020 and one is being prepared for 2021 year end.
Affordable Housing To effectively address the affordable housing issue, it is critically important for the City to come up with clear definitions for "affordable" and "attainable" housing within the non-for-profit and market contexts, as it is only with clear definitions and the priority ascribed to each, that effective decisions will be made (regarding such things as inclusionary zoning), and that targets will be met at the various levels of need. It is also critically important for the City to develop legally binding agreements, that will ensure that when projects generate housing that can be purchased at an affordable price, those housing units remain affordable in perpetuity (i.e. not just affordable to the first purchasers of those units). Having gathered data that clearly outlines the need for affordable housing at various levels within the rental and ownership contexts, it will be important to ensure that that data is regularly updated and reported on to Council, so that future decisions will be informed by accurate up-to-date data.	Work on defining affordability is underway by planning staff in Kitchener, Cambridge and Waterloo. Note that other municipalities have time limited provisions for securing affordable housing eg, 15 to 25 years. Staff will review this and conditions for legal agreements as part of developing the inclusionary zoning policy and zoning bylaw. The Planning division has the responsibility to maintain the housing data. The Equity, Anti-Racism, and Indigenous Initiatives has the responsibility to report to Council on implementation of Housing for All.
United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Compass Kitchener is encouraged to see SDGs being referenced in work on several strategic plan actions and looks forward to seeing the Kitchener's work on localizing the SDGs come to fruition.	Staff have been working on the foundation for localizing the SDGs to the Kitchener context and anticipate localization will be completed through creation of the next Strategic Plan.

Public Engagement	Staff agree on the importance of communicating back to on people how their input through consultation has been used or made a difference.
The City has placed great emphasis and done much work organizing community consultation processes around issues and projects and has often done so very successfully. There needs to be an emphasis placed on the importance of being sure to communicate back to on people how their input has been used or made a difference. We have heard people voicing frustration with consultation processes in a few veins:	The Communications Engagement staff has been monitoring closing the loop on public engagement to remind staff to include links to reports so people can see how their input was used.
• feeling that the views expressed through consultation processes made no difference to the City; • feeling that some consultations are simply carried out so that the City can say it has consulted with people, when there is no commitment to giving serious consideration to the input provided; and • frustration that a community meeting that might have been held regarding a specific project, didn't happen.	In Development Services, planning staff have made progress on explaining how input received is used in preparing studies and considering development applications.
Ensuring that consultation processes are managed well and lead to meaningful input is something we need to be sensitive to when we hear people raising these frustrations, it raises concerns. It underscores the need for the City to be even more vigilant in ensuring that people who provide input through consultation processes ultimately have an opportunity to gain a sense of how the overall input received impacted decision-making.	The Cycling and Trails Master Plan and the Housing for All Strategy are good examples of resident engagement leading the development of the work. We agree these approaches need to be rolled out more broadly.
Strategic Plan Dashboard	
Compass Kitchener's longstanding recommendation of a Strategic Plan Dashboard tracking progress on the projects in the Strategic Plan has not been addressed. The City's Strategic Plan is not just a plan that sits on the shelf to be dusted off occasionally. It is meaningful and relevant to people. Currently it is too difficult for citizens to access information about the work the City has done on the projects in its Strategic Plan - as a result, the City's accomplishments can go unnoticed. **Why have a Dashboard** • Provide citizens with an overview of the important issues the City has included in its Strategic Plan • Enhance public understanding of the City's work done on each project in the Strategic Plan • Provide easy access to more detailed information about the City's accomplishments, without the frustration of conducting separate searches to try to track down information **Ideal Format – cascading tiers of information** • Tier 1 - a short, simple description of the project and its current status • Tier 2 - links enabling readers to view a few key documents indicating the project's progress or completion (e.g. the draft strategy or final project report)	A simple dashboard including a graphic representation and AODA description, will be added to the Strategic Plan web page to consistently summarize status of projects with links to tier one and tier two information.