

Compass Kitchener

2019-2022 Strategic Plan Evaluation



KITCHENER'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2019 - 2022

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Compass Kitchener
2021 Report Card
City of Kitchener Strategic Plan

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Compass Kitchener
2021 Report Card
City of Kitchener Strategic Plan

Comments from the Chair

I am pleased to present Compass Kitchener's 2021 Report Card on the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan. The COVID-19 virus has, over the past 20 months, led to a multitude of changes in cities and workplaces across Canada, and throughout that time the City of Kitchener has demonstrated its ability to adapt to unexpected circumstances. Despite having to make a number of temporary staffing changes, laying off some of its staff and diverting other staff to emergency tasks during COVID-19, the City has now completed 13 of the 25 projects outlined in the Plan - definitely an accomplishment to be celebrated!

One of Compass Kitchener's roles is to evaluate and advise Council on the City's implementation of its Strategic Plan. Compass Kitchener designed its evaluation process following consultation with representatives of all the City of Kitchener's Advisory Committees and with members of the City's Corporate Leadership Team. This report outlines the Committee's approach to evaluation, the criteria relied upon throughout that process, and the recommendations that the Committee felt would further strengthen the City's results.

Using criteria outlined in the report, each project was evaluated and categorized, determining whether it "Exceeds Expectations", "Meets Expectations", or "Does Not Meet Expectations". Compass Kitchener committee members were very impressed to find the evaluation process revealed that of the 13 completed projects it evaluated, six projects exceeded expectations, the other six met expectations and one we have not yet evaluated.

Notable as well is the fact that many of the completed projects were exceptional in addressing needs and concerns that intensified during the period of the pandemic in areas including:

- Building the City's economy and recovery from COVID
- Creating new ways to do business with the City online
- Setting out plans for climate action
- Supporting human-powered transportation and recreational use of trails

Having advocated for social issues to be included in the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, Compass Kitchener was very impressed with the outstanding City work on:

- Initiatives addressing homelessness and access to affordable housing
- Initiatives addressing equity and anti-racism

Compass Kitchener congratulates Council and staff on the leadership shown in implementing the Strategic Plan and looks forward to evaluating the remaining projects upon their completion.



Judy Stephens-Wells
Compass Kitchener Chair

Compass Kitchener
2021 Report Card
City of Kitchener Strategic Plan

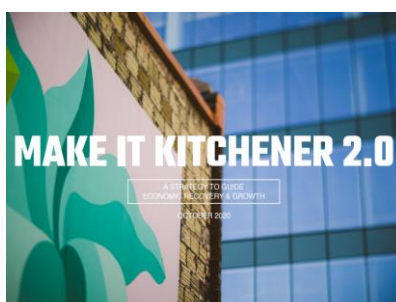
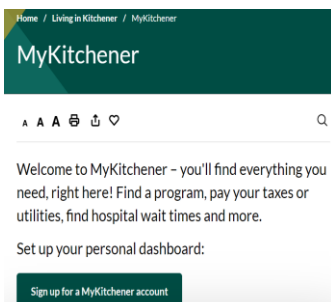
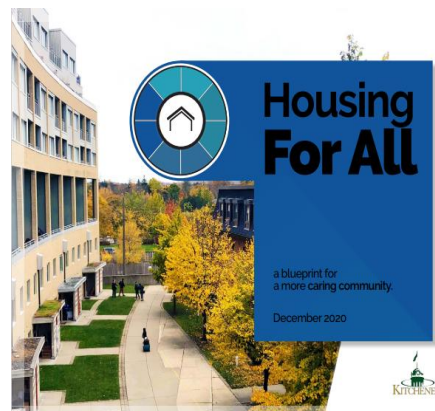
Introduction

The City of Kitchener's vision is "Together we will build an innovative, caring and vibrant Kitchener." To help achieve this vision, the Strategic Plan approved by Council in June 2019 contains 5 goals and 25 action statements.

Compass Kitchener, a citizen advisory committee reports directly to Council with an evaluation of how well the City is doing in implementing the Strategic Plan. Compass Kitchener developed evaluation criteria in collaboration with the Corporate Leadership Team in 2019 and reported to Council on their evaluation approach in 2020. Compass Kitchener consulted with representatives from all citizen advisory committees on the evaluation of progress in implementing the strategic plan in 2021.

This report presents Compass Kitchener's 2021 Report Card on the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan which covers progress made in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Compass Kitchener did not report in 2019 because the plan was approved in June 2019 and launched in September 2019. Compass Kitchener did not report in 2020 because Advisory Committee meetings were not held for most of 2020 due to the pandemic.

Compass Kitchener is pleased to report that of the 13 actions completed to date, 6 exceeded expectations, 6 met expectations and one we have yet to evaluate. The six projects that exceeded expectations are illustrated below.



The report concludes with Compass Kitchener's recommendations for suggested improvements.

Report Card

Approach

Compass Kitchener takes the viewpoint of interested citizens and considered Timing, Impact, Accountability and Budget criteria in undertaking the evaluation. Compass Kitchener considered evaluation criteria for the strategic actions developed in consultation with Kitchener's Corporate Leadership Team. Compass Kitchener also reviewed progress reports staff provided to Council, information on the projects included on the website, presentations from staff and input from representatives from the other citizen advisory committees in preparing the evaluation. Answering the following questions guided the evaluation.

Timing

- Were strategic actions completed in the expected timeframe?

Impact

- How did strategic actions deliver on anticipated or desired impacts?
- How did progress on, or completion of strategic actions make a difference in the city and for citizens?

Accountability

- How well did the City do on presenting progress reports that were relevant, timely and publicly profiled?
- How well did the City do in making progress on developing a Strategic Plan Dashboard to improve reporting?
- How well were the public engaged?

Budget

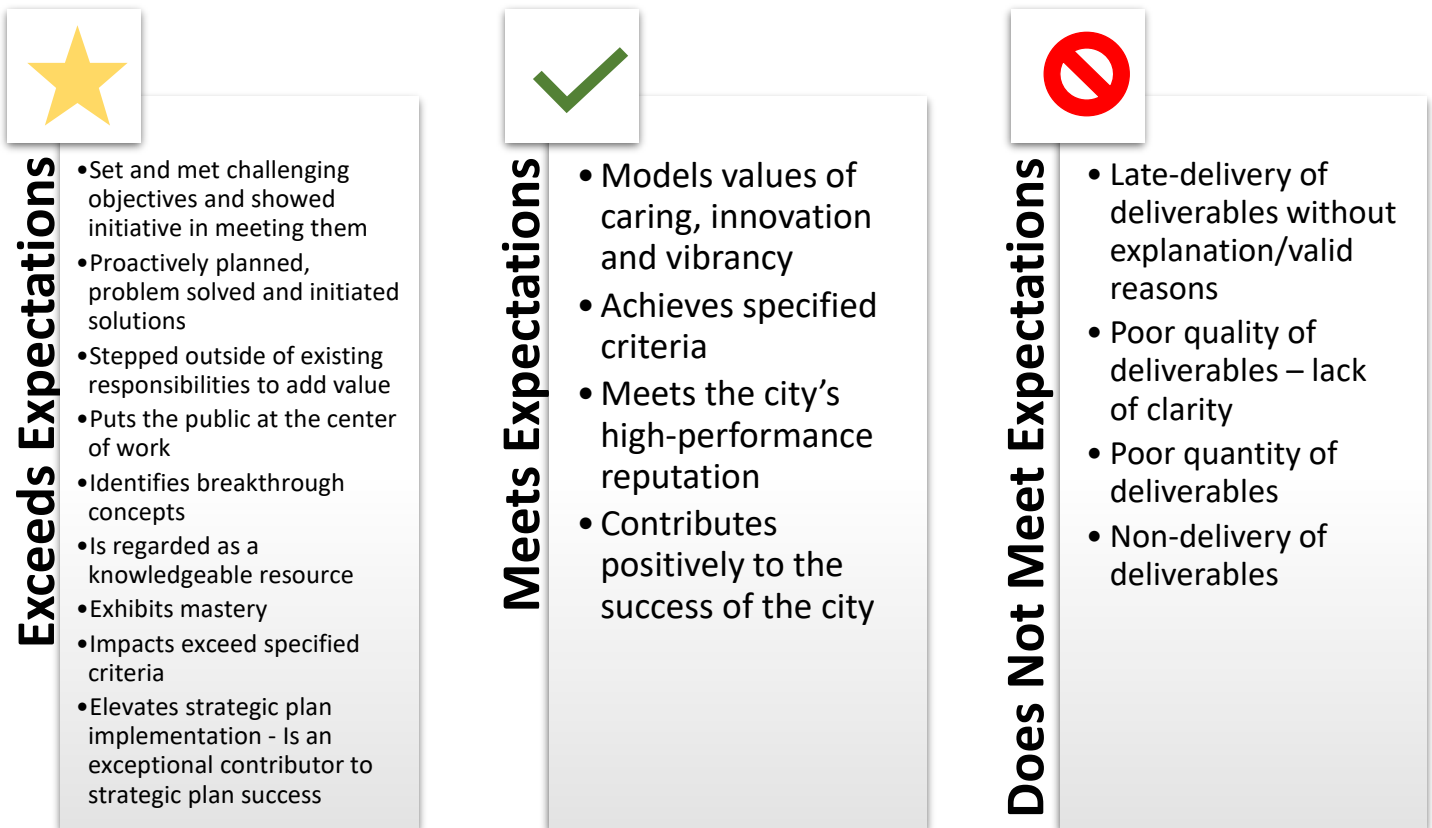
- Were strategic actions completed on or within budget?

Evaluation Rating

After completing the evaluation process Compass Kitchener rated completed actions as:

- Exceeding Expectations
- Meeting Expectations, or
- Not Meeting Expectations

The following chart explains the classification for the three rating categories.



Evaluation Results

Completed Actions

It was very positive to see action completions across the five Strategic Plan goals. Twelve of 25 strategic actions have been completed to date. Three actions were completed in 2019, three actions were completed in 2020 and 6 actions were completed in 2021. Completion of strategic plan actions by goal and date is illustrated in the following chart:



Exceeded Expectations

The following six projects exceeded expectations:

- Cycling and Trails Master Plan
- Affordable Housing Strategy
- Make It Kitchener 2.0
- Customer Service Portal
- Corporate Climate Action Plan
- EDI Strategy

Our evaluation of the 12 completed projects we evaluated follows.

Cycling & Trails Master Plan Strategic Plan Action

**Exceeds
Expectations**



Strategic Plan Goal: People Friendly Transportation

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

Completion Status: Completed in 2021 ahead of schedule and exceeded target with year-round access provided to an additional 5+ kms of existing trails.

The Cycling & Trails Master Plan – Project Overview

The Cycling & Trails Master Plan guides development of safe and convenient active transportation options. It focuses on creating networks for all ages and abilities that reflect current best practices. The Plan helps the City reduce automobile dependence and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, provide more recreation and leisure options, increase physical activity and improve public health outcomes, increase social connections, and reduce infrastructure demands. The implementation strategy is action-oriented and identifies immediate priorities over the next 3 years, and short-term priorities within 10 years to build momentum for cycling and trail use through strategic investments in engineering as well as education and encouragement. Developed over a fifteen-month period through four phases, a Summary Report and 5 component reports make up the Master Plan. ([link](#))

Award Winning

The Master Plan won an **Award of Merit** from the Canadian Institute of Planners based on its excellence, innovation, impact on the profession, implementation potential and overall presentation. The jury noted that “all signs point to increasing the use of cycling and other forms of personal mobility over time in Kitchener with the roll out and implementation of the plan. It could certainly change the trajectory of travel patterns in the City of Kitchener and improve health and modal split.”

The Master Plan was also named the **Transportation Planning Project of the Year** by the Ontario Traffic Council (OTC). The award recognizes excellence in transportation planning by highlighting projects that display innovation, support sustainability and contribute to people’s quality of life.

Compass Kitchener Evaluation

- Project information is available on city website, linked from the strategic plan page.
- An effective and meaningful public engagement strategy was employed. Throughout the process, the City engaged with over 3,200 residents.
- The 3 km target has been reached ahead of schedule and exceeded.
- It was excellent to see involvement of Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee given the challenges some users have previously encountered with multi-modal trails.
- Impressive to see work sped up on some aspects of work on trails during COVID, when there was a clear need for safe forms of outdoor recreation and transportation, and when special COVID funding could be leveraged
- It would be wonderful to see the City’s smart technology lighting used to monitor the level of usage of the trails (to help measure impact)
- Way-finding can still be a challenge using the trails - many would find paper maps of assistance (as opposed to struggling with technology while biking)

Affordable Housing Strategy Action

**Exceeds
Expectations**



Strategic Plan Goal: Caring Community

Action: Create an Affordable Housing Strategy for Kitchener by 2020 in collaboration with the Region of Waterloo, community groups and the development industry.

Completion Status: On Time - December 2020

Affordable Housing Strategy – Project Overview

Housing for All, Kitchener's affordable housing strategy, declares that housing is a human right and sets out tools that the City can use to help make housing a reality for all. While still in the early stages of implementation, Housing for All is already responsible for the development of over 100 units of new supportive housing. To create the plan, Kitchener brought together a diverse group of people to provide advice on developing the strategy, including people with lived experience, the non-profit community, the development community, academics, members of Council and city and regional staff.

A Needs Assessment report presented to Council in January 2020 documented the complete range of housing needs in Kitchener across the housing continuum. Targets to meet the needs were developed. The strategy is called, "Housing for All" sets out the objective that everyone has a home and the actions within the strategy outline a clear course of action to meet housing needs and the targets, and address issues over a five-year period. ([link](#))

Award Winning

- Housing for All won the Peter J. Marshall Innovation Award – "a visionary plan with more than 40 actions to help support the right to housing in Kitchener". "Kitchener's innovative approach to housing is an excellent example of how municipal decision making can help contribute to a more equal society."

Compass Kitchener Evaluation

- Complete information on the website, including implementation progress, is linked on the strategic plan page
- Impressive collaborative effort and important inclusion of people with lived experience. Lots of opportunity for input through workshops, Engage Kitchener surveys, 1 on 1 interviews etc., with about 500 people involved.
- Successfully switched from in-person to virtual engagement enabling timely project completion viewed as exceeding expectations due to challenges posed by COVID
- Given the level of concern regarding homelessness and access to affordable housing voiced through the consultation leading up to the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, we were very impressed by the comprehensiveness of the strategy.
- Through developing the strategy, Kitchener pioneered providing people with lived experience a voice in influencing the planning decisions that affect them the most.
- Importantly, understanding of the affordability problem was expanded to address affordability across the whole spectrum of housing - from homelessness through affordability of both rental accommodation and home ownership.
- Recognizes housing as a human right, priority on homelessness & supportive housing, advocates for people in encampments – consistently uses a people centered approach.
- Impressive to see "Quick wins"- provided temporary site for A Better Tent City when displaced from Lot 42, committed land for YWCA supportive housing, tiny homes allowed and then promoted through a design competition.
- The increase in affordable housing stock that matches community need and demand, with the objective that everyone has a home, can be measured.
- Progress needed on implementing Inclusionary Housing

Make it Kitchener 2.0 Strategy

**Exceeds
Expectations**



Strategic Plan Goal: Vibrant Economy

Action: Develop the Make it Kitchener 2.0 Strategy by 2020 with a focus on transformative actions to ensure the attraction, success and retention of diverse businesses, talent, and arts/culture across the city.

Completion Status: On Time 2020

Make it Kitchener 2.0 - Project Overview

Make it Kitchener 2.0 is an ambitious plan to support economic recovery and to propel our community and economy forward by investing in catalytic growth opportunities and creating a resilient future where everyone can make a difference. It has four components: Made by our Community, Our Call to Action, A Transformative Investment Strategy and The Path Forward. Approved by Council on Oct 26, 2020. ([link](#))

Compass Kitchener Evaluation

- Good Info on website linked from Strategic Plan.
- Broad engagement - including 100 1-1 Interviews, 13 round table discussions (5-10 participants each), Online Survey - 494 respondents - 600 ideas, 80 facilitated workshops - 150 participants - 700 ideas & comments
- Completed on time viewed as exceeding expectations given the challenges posed by COVID-19
- Compass Kitchener was impressed with the bold, innovative and aspirational tone of the strategy:
 - “It’s not just about doing more, it’s about doing better!
 - We need to solve major societal challenges such as affordable housing, environmental sustainability and the elimination of systemic barriers.
 - We need to aspire to have our own distinct vibrancy and vibe.
 - We need to focus on growing employment sectors: health and social innovation and creative industries.”
- The plan is structured very well - Shows exactly what the strategy is and how the funding allocation is divided between the 5 areas. Shows what is immediate and what is longer term and explains the impact.
- While maintaining and supporting a vibrant active city is emphasized, one concern is that references to "makers" seems to place great emphasis on "Creative Industries" – which often focuses primarily on commercially oriented creative endeavours by private companies and excludes the visual, performing and other artforms by not-for-profit entities. The strategy’s photographic images are not inclusive of the significant contribution that this sector makes to animation of our community and the number of people that it employs. Pleased to see that the recovery plan refers more specifically to arts and culture (a term which includes private sector and not-for-profit arts components).
- It is excellent that the plan was written at a time that made it possible to address Post-COVID recovery - given the challenges so many businesses have faced during COVID. The Make it Kitchener 2.0 recovery document sets out a clear list of Initiatives and their status. Hopefully detailed documents outlining plans and SMART goals for the other aspects of the MIK 2.0 Strategy will also be developed.
- Compass Kitchener appreciates that the plan does not rely on any tax increases – instead it is innovative in using other sources for funding that won't impact residents and businesses.
- Encouraged to see the proposed support of businesses addressing the UN SDGs - which aligns well with the City's interest in localizing the SDGs to the Kitchener context.

Online Customer Service Portal Development

**Exceeds
Expectations**



Strategic Plan Goal: Great Customer Service

Action: Enhance customer experience online by delivering custom information, providing easy access to services, and allowing financial transactions by 2021.

Completion Status: On Time 2020

Online Customer Service Portal Development – Project Overview

A centralized online service portal “MyKitchener” was launched in March 2021 in tandem with an updated website, where citizens can access their e-services in one place through a personalized, single sign-on account. MyKitchener is unique among municipal customer service portals in Canada because people can create a highly personalized and customized experience for themselves, setting up their own individual accounts to include services they interact with. Based on their address, MyKitchener also pulls information people may be interested in, including their nearest park, community centre, swimming pool, road closures in their area etc.

The City released the portal recognizing that additional work was needed and citizens can provide input so there is continuous improvement as changes are made. Accessibility is enhanced as the portal works with Google microphone, making it possible to access the portal using Alex or Siri. Accessibility is also enhanced by a multi-language translation service. Staff have already made improvements driven by customer feedback, including: improving the address finder feature, adding an “unsubscribe all” feature to notifications, and adding a support widget that links to the 24-7 Corporate Contact Centre team and MyKitchener email. ([link](#))

Compass Kitchener Evaluation

- Lots of information on the website but no link from strategic plan page
- Substantial community consultation and input throughout the design process, with over 5000 citizens and consulted. Well documented public participation.
- The new portal is excellent. It was identified as one of the top highlights of the Strategic Plan accomplishments at the May 2021 All Advisory Committees meeting.
- Easy to navigate. 76% of users say they find the portal easy to use.
- Big Improvement over previous website. Bigger font would be appreciated.
- To date, MyKitchener has been highly successful with 8,582 registered accounts by August 20, 2021 (just under 5 months) – far exceeding expectations for the first year to have 3,500 people create accounts by end of 2021.
- Compass Kitchener is impressed that new widgets and functionality will continually be developed and launched on MyKitchener over time and customer experience improvements will continue to be driven by feedback from citizens through the City’s Customer Satisfaction Program. Being able to have improvements to the City’s website implemented while the portal was being launched and on an ongoing basis is very good and will make the site more user friendly, engaging and effective.
- As there is really no easy vehicle for communicating regarding a concern/complaint (if you try to look up options for doing that there are just a few specific links, eg. bylaw complaints), Compass Kitchener was pleased to learn that this “Report a Problem” widget is under development.
- Compass Kitchener was really impressed to learn that the MyKitchener experience has made the City a leader in online municipal services in Canada. Staff involved in the development of the project are frequently asked to speak at conferences and to other municipalities who are now considering development of a similar online experience.

Corporate Climate Strategic Action Plan

**Exceeds
Expectations**



Strategic Plan Goal: Environmental Leadership

Action: Launch and implement a Corporate Climate Action Plan by 2019 to achieve an absolute greenhouse gas emission reduction of at least 8% by 2026

Completion Status: On Time 2019

Corporate Climate Action Plan – Project Overview

The Corporate Climate Action Plan is a detailed strategy to reduce the city's corporate greenhouse gas emissions by 8 per cent by 2026. Numerous changes in five key areas will allow the city to mitigate its contribution to climate change and adapt the city's infrastructure to protect against increasingly unstable weather. The five key areas identified as opportunities are: Buildings, Pumping Stations, Fleet, Outdoor Lighting and Waste. The Corporate Climate Action Plan was approved by Council April 15, 2019. Reporting annually on greenhouse gas emission reduction has commenced and continues to 2026. ([link](#))

Compass Kitchener Evaluation

- Story Board on the city website is engaging way to reach the public with info.
- Public engagement incorporated a combination of staff, stakeholder and public engagement, including interviews and group work, workshops, staff survey, front line visits and discussions intranet, steering committee, stakeholder review, greencity committee, environmental committee, and the Mayor's State of City Address in 2019.
- Compass Kitchener is impressed that Kitchener took a leadership role and modeled behaviour to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with concrete actions and changes on this very important issue.
- The 2019 progress report notes greenhouse gas emissions have been reduced by 27 per cent since 2010. The 2020 progress report notes emissions fell well below that goal, more than 20% below our benchmark year (2016). This is due to the pandemic, which closed many facilities and altered the way the City provides service. Although 2020 was not a typical year, it has shown reductions can be achieved.
- The Vision, Goals and process of data gathering are explained well.
- Compass Kitchener was pleased to see that the Annual Reports talk about ties to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- The Action Plan is visually well laid out and graphically pleasing.
- The Action Plan covers a lot of ground. However:
 - This is a very technical report with lots of parts that are difficult for a lay person to understand. It has to be read several times for understanding.
 - Explanations are needed with graphs.
 - Report would be easier to navigate if it had page numbers.
 - Summary that explains - what does this mean for me as a citizen - would be helpful.
 - Progress reports could be more succinct or have a short summary/coherent story.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

**Exceeds
Expectations**



Strategic Plan Goal: Caring Community

Action: Create a comprehensive Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy by 2020 to combat systemic barriers to full economic and social participation in the city.

Completion Status: The strategy was originally scheduled to be complete by December of 2020, but shortly after the COVID-19 pandemic began in March of 2020, the work was paused and then Task Force engagement shifted to an online format, with the end date revised to June 2021.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy - Project Overview

The strategy is now called the Corporate Equity and Anti-Racism Strategy. ([link](#)) Given the urgency of the issue, the Mayor's Task Force with the support of staff directed and completed work on developing the strategy and implementing its actions and deliverables. The strategy consists of the following 9 deliverables:

1. A full-time permanent staff team to lead equity, anti-racism and indigenous Initiatives (Complete)
2. An Equity, Inclusion & Anti-Racism Policy which outlines the corporate commitment and specific expectations for leadership, staff and volunteers to support this commitment (Complete)
3. A fund for Black, Indigenous & Racialized Groups for community-led actions to decrease inequities and increase opportunities and well-being for racialized communities (Complete)
4. A Corporate Equity & Anti-Racism Training Strategy (Complete)
5. A Demographic Data Collection Strategy to better understand and help identify systemic barriers and opportunities to make the workplace and services more inclusive (underway)
6. An Equity & Anti-Racism Communications Guide for staff and leadership (underway)
7. A Human Resources Equity Audit and implement recommendations (underway)
8. Recommendations for a revised Youth Mentorship Program for low-income youth
9. An Equity & Anti-Racism Advisory Committee to Council (Complete)

Compass Kitchener Evaluation

- While there was extensive and innovative involvement of Task Force members including 17 representatives from community organizations, 20 community members representing diverse groups, perspectives and lived experience, support of 13 staff and participation of 3 members of Council, broader public engagement was limited.
- Social issues like equity, inclusion and diversity are very important to Compass Kitchener. We advocated to Council for the Strategic Plan to include addressing social issues that were not considered in previous strategic plans.
- Given the diversity of Kitchener's population and the importance of issues of equity, diversity and inclusion in our community, Compass Kitchener is very pleased to see the work accomplished by the Mayor's Task Force and the development of the City's Corporate Equity and Anti-Racism Strategy.
- The community representation on this Task Force was the most significant driving force for the success of this work, which had a clear focus on action-oriented items that can be feasibly implemented to set the foundation for sustained, meaningful change throughout the city administration.
- The nine actions chosen by the Task Force represent the strategy. The actions went to Council individually for approval or were addressed by staff, rather than having the strategy approved by Council. Six of the nine actions have already been completed which is an incredible accomplishment. This demonstrates a clear commitment to address inequity issues and exceeded expectations in reflecting a needed "Just Do It" attitude.
- Compass Kitchener looks forward to seeing more equity-based work come from the new staff team established to fully address systemic barriers to full economic and social participation in the city.

Met Expectations

The following six projects met expectations:

- Community Climate Action Plan
- Multi-language Customer Service
- Customer Satisfaction Program
- Reduce Stigmas through staff training and CTS support
- Complete Streets
- Urban Design Manual

Community Climate Action Plan

**Meets
Expectations**



Strategic Plan Goal: Environmental Leadership

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

Completion Status: Delayed from 2020 to 2021 completion

Community Climate Action Plan – Project Overview

The Community Climate Action Plan, entitled Transform WR, outlines the community path to an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and identifies actions within the region to reduce emissions by 30% by 2030. Local councils endorsed the strategy and Regional Council approved it in June 2021. The strategy aligns with Kitchener's strategic plan and commitment to environmental leadership. The strategy has been developed through the ClimateActionWR collaborative lead by Reep Green Solutions, Sustainable Waterloo Region and funded by the cities of Kitchener, Waterloo, and Cambridge as well as the Region of Waterloo. ([link](#))

Compass Kitchener Evaluation

- The plan itself is available online - which is good. However, if a person looks to the City's website in trying to find out about the City of Kitchener's work on a community climate action plan, it is very difficult to find.
- City staff were part of a strong collaborative effort engaging the Region, municipalities, townships and environmental non-for-profits with input from over 1,600 people.
- It is a bold plan with many objectives - people will be pleased to see that.
- Until the specifics regarding implementation and planned actions are developed and widely shared it is not possible for people to see how the objectives will be achieved.
- The plan itself is a very lengthy document. Many people do not have time to read a document of this length. It would be helpful to have a short accessible summary of the strategy to share with the public.
- For the strategy to be effective, not only do people need to be aware and engaged, but this has to happen early enough in the process to factor in longer-term decisions people will be encouraged to make e.g. investments in more environmentally friendly home heating equipment; decisions regarding proximity of home to work and the mode of transportation used to travel between the two.
- Given the broad collaboration, large number of entities involved and the impacts of COVID it is understandable that the timeframe was extended.

Multi-Language Customer Service

**Meets
Expectations**



Strategic Plan Goal: Great Customer Service

Action: Provide on-demand customer service support in many languages through the Corporate Contact Centre by 2020.

Completion Status: 2021 Delay due to staff redeployment in pandemic

Multi-Language Service – Project Overview

The introduction of this service eliminates the need for customers experiencing language barriers to struggle to be understood, to have to bring family or friends who speak English to their interactions with the City, or to have to make appointments to return for what they need so that an interpreter can be present. On-demand multi-language interpretation, which will link customers to an interpreter in their chosen language within 1-2 mins, ensures that all customers can have equitable, comfortable and consistent service experiences as they interact with City services.

While progress on the introduction of multi-language interpretation was delayed by the pandemic, staff secured a vendor and are finalizing training content for customer-facing staff in 35 City facilities. Staff training is underway with multi-language interpretation services being advertised and offered to the public later 2021. The new on-demand interpretation service will enable customers experiencing language barriers to have on-the-spot access to an interpreter in the language of their choice, for telephone and in-person interactions, in more than 200 languages, 24-7.

Compass Kitchener Evaluation

- Compass Kitchener could not find information about this action on the website.
- We understand that the need for this service was well documented in earlier public engagement.
- It is very positive to see that this initiative has started. Our understanding is that it had to be started with fewer languages and narrower scope than first intended – and Compass Kitchener looks forward to the City pressing on with making available interpretation in the full range of languages and broader scope as originally planned, when possible.
- It will be important to have good vehicles for gathering feedback about users' experience with interpretation services in order to address any challenges identified.
- It will also be important to have an effective plan to publicize the availability of these interpretation services - carefully designed to reach the audience that will benefit from this service. If people are not made aware that this interpretation service is available, the language barrier will still stand as an obstacle.

Customer Satisfaction Program

**Meets
Expectations**



Strategic Plan Goal: Great Customer Service

Action: Introduce a corporate-wide Customer Satisfaction Program that will allow for collection of real time feedback from customers accessing city facilities, programs, and services by 2020.

Completion Status: 2020 On time

Customer Satisfaction Program – Project Overview


Introduced in late 2020, the Customer Satisfaction Program allows the City to check in regularly with customers by collecting just-in-time/real-time feedback about our programs, services and facilities whether online, in-person or by phone. Customer feedback about satisfaction, ease of use and open-ended comments are used to identify improvements to the customer experience and are shared directly with service areas and senior management.

Compass Kitchener Evaluation

- Despite being launched in the midst of a pandemic, staff were able to adjust the program to reflect the new service delivery models and limited-service offerings.
- At the time of our evaluation, the program has collected more than 5,500 responses about 23 City programs, services and facilities. This feedback provided by customers has helped staff identify more than 20 recommended improvements, 7 of which have been fully implemented, as well as a number of additional suggested improvements under consideration by service areas.
- This is a great start, but we would like to see more done to enhance public awareness of this Great Customer Service initiative - ensuring that there are a variety of ways for people to submit their feedback - e.g. surveys or questionnaires available at community centres, feedback forms circulated to participants in various City programs and activities e.g. youth night. It is difficult to find a vehicle on the City's website for voicing a concern or complaint other than for specific items like By-Law complaints.
- We wonder how will the public learn about this Customer Satisfaction Program and how can they provide their feedback?
- We were pleased to learn that this program, which enables the City to make data-driven decisions about customer improvements, is leading edge for Canadian municipalities and will continue to grow and evolve over time.

Note: Compass Kitchener was advised that the Great Customer Service strategic action: **Implement a comprehensive Customer Experience Review Program to help ensure services are easy and convenient to access from the customer's perspective by 2022** has been completed after our evaluation was completed. Compass Kitchener will evaluate implementation of this action in 2022.

Reduce Social Stigma and Support Safe Consumption and Treatment Facilities

Meets Expectations 	Strategic Plan Goal: Caring Community Action: experienced by those living with mental illness and addiction in our community through staff training and supporting the creation of appropriate safe consumption and treatment facilities in Kitchener. Completion Status: No Timing noted in Strategic Plan - Action is complete as of 2020
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Reduce Stigma through staff training – Project overview

An anti-stigma learning program for City staff was launched in the fall 2020 learning catalogue, with focus given to addressing both mental health and addiction topics. The number of participants since 2020: 37 staff (as of January 2021) The City is now providing Anti-stigma training as a core learning program with ongoing evaluation and customization as required to meet the diversity of staff needs throughout the organization and to ensure the content is relevant to evolving community needs. For 2021 the City partnered with Sanguen Health to provide updated Anti-Stigma training. This is a local, “boots on the ground” organization that will offer more relevant training four times in 2021. This course provides an introduction to harm reduction, recognizing overdose and overdose risk, reducing stigma toward those who use substances and how to respond to people in complex mental health situations with compassion, dignity and respect.

Compass Kitchener Evaluation

- Information is not available on the city website about the training initiative
- Valuable experience was gained through the initial offering of training which has led to updating and strengthening the relevance of the program through development of a partnership with Sanguen Health to provide the training. Compass Kitchener looks forward to seeing more City staff participate in this training program.
- Given the time and thought that has gone into development of this program Compass Kitchener wonders if any of the City’s anti-stigma training could be made available to others in the community, beyond City staff (i.e. shared with people from other organizations that deal with the public) - especially if training is done online.


Support Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS) - Project Overview

Kitchener Council support for CTS at Duke St was approved in 2019. CTS interim use of the Duke Street site became operational in October 2019 and full use began in 2020. ([link](#)) A Regional report on the first year of operation reported few impacts on neighbours. 80% of Community Advisory Group members agreed or strongly agreed that the CTS feels like part of the community. 90% agreed or strongly agreed the CTS and its partners are responsive to addressing concerns with the CTS. When asked if the CTS has negatively impacted the community, 70% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Community Advisory Group members said more CTS locations and more rehabilitation services are needed in Waterloo Region to support people using substances. When asked about what could be improved at the CTS, clients said: They’d like the site to be open 24 hours a day. They are also concerned about stigma if others see them enter the site.

Compass Kitchener Evaluation

- Info on the regional website is good but downloading is difficult. We suggest the City’s strategic plan page link to the regional information. Not clear how availability of service at CTS is publicized. How do people find out about it?
- The Region conducted public engagement and with its operating partner Sanguen, circulated info and held information sessions for neighbours and stakeholders. It is encouraging to see that a number of the initial community concerns raised have not been realized since the CTS commenced operation
- Compass Kitchener is pleased that the CTS in Kitchener was quickly set up and is addressing a critical need in the community.

Complete Streets Guideline

Meets Expectations 	Strategic Plan Goal: People-Friendly Transportation Action: Develop a set of Complete Streets (safe and comfortable) guidelines and an associated evaluation scorecard by 2020 to apply to roadway construction projects Completion Status: 2019 - Ahead of schedule
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Complete Streets – Project Overview

The plan for Complete Streets is to move away from car-centric designs to ones that make it safer and easier for pedestrians, cyclists and transit. The guidelines and scorecard were approved by Council on October 21, 2019. ([link](#))

City staff partnered with Wilfrid Laurier University’s CMEG 305 Community Engagement and SE 330B Social Innovation in the City classes to deliver community engagement for Complete Streets. Staff, students and advisors worked together to plan and execute community engagement tactics and analyze and summarize the feedback provided by the community.

Having Complete Streets guidelines in place is expected to help the city avoid costly retrofits for traffic calming, sidewalk infill and cycling facilities that often occur years after a street is built, because these features were not included in the original scope of capital projects. Slight increases in capital funding may be required for higher order streets with enhanced pedestrian crossings and cycling facilities. These will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and will be guided by the Cycling and Trails Master Plan. The Guidelines note that Complete Streets can have increased maintenance costs.

Compass Kitchener Evaluation

- There is a link to the Complete Streets project page from the strategic plan page on the city website and it includes a number of transportation projects.
- Two phases of engagement were conducted to gather initial feedback and confirm the Complete Streets guidelines are reflective of community priorities. During the first phase, a variety of engagement tactics were conducted to reach a broad cross-section of the community and hear from a variety of perspectives including over 600 residents, city advisory committees, stakeholders.
- The guidelines and scorecard are quite technical. The full report is 134 pages, however there is a 20-page Community Edition which is helpful and more understandable for the public.
- It was positive to see that during the pandemic the City accelerated implementing some “slow streets” features that advanced the complete streets philosophy.
- While the Complete Streets guidelines outline an ambitious plan designed to make the City a better place to move around, it is too early to assess the impact of the guidelines or to see an increase in the number of complete streets demonstrated through mapping.

Urban Design Manual

**Meets
Expectations**



Strategic Plan Goal: Vibrant Economy

Action: Complete a new Urban Design Manual by 2019 that expresses city building and design expectations to ensure vibrant new development throughout Kitchener.

Completion Status: 2019 – On time

Urban Design Manual - Project Overview

The Urban Design Manual spells out what the city expects from the designs of new construction and infill throughout the city, in the designs of everything from green space to highrises, parking garages and new neighbourhoods. The manual calls for the innovative use of technology, whether in the street or a public meeting: things like using augmented reality 3D models at public meetings, so that people can get a much better sense of what a future development would look like. Part A contains guidelines which set the direction for urban design in Kitchener. Applicable guidelines from Part A will be referenced in an Urban Design Report accompanying a Development Application, where required. Part B contains supplementary guidelines completed through other studies such as streetscape master plans. Part C contains design standards. These provide detailed guidance for elements such as parking, landscaping, lighting, accessibility and more. Council approval: September 9, 2019. ([link](#))

Accountability may include a development review scorecard to grade implementation, periodic industry and public surveys, and audits of approved projects. Reporting to be provided bi-annually, to accompany the Kitchener Great Places Awards starting in 2021.

Compass Kitchener Evaluation

- The website includes the manual but not the process to develop it, or the staff report.
- The guidelines were developed utilizing the feedback, comments and collaborative efforts of public and local stakeholders throughout the process. This included: 26 stakeholder and committee meetings, 6 coffee shop chats, an open house at Doors Open Waterloo Region, 6 design charrettes with central neighbourhoods and a survey on Engage Kitchener. Draft guidelines were presented to stakeholders twice -- once in April 2018 and again in February of 2019. The commenting period was followed by stakeholder interviews with interested parties, and more than 300 written comments were received.
- The guidelines are quite technical and written for a professional audience. It would be helpful to have a more public oriented summary.
- Although the new Urban Design Manual sets out a great vision for designing our City going forward, there is growing public concern regarding the number of tall, high density developments currently being built which exceed various City guidelines, and the perception that the City has received little from developers in return for these structures that exceed guidelines - i.e. little received in terms of affordable housing, parks, vibrant public spaces/streetscapes, cultural amenities – amenities that would improve the quality of life for the growing population in our community. The concern is about both how much control the City actually has to attain developers' compliance with its guidelines, and the scarcity of compensating resources received from developers when projects do exceed the guidelines.

Projects to be Completed

Twelve of 25 strategic actions listed below are underway but not yet complete. They will be evaluated on completion.

EVALUATION	PROJECTS TO BE COMPLETED	TIMING
TBD	Vibrant Economy strategic action: Complete a comprehensive review of city-owned properties by 2020 to determine how they could be effectively used to advance city strategic objectives.	Delayed due to pandemic
TBD	People-Friendly Transportation strategic action: Encourage and incentivize alternative modes of transportation by developing and subsidizing a bikeshare program by 2021.	Delayed to 2022
TBD	People-Friendly Transportation strategic action: Install a continuous and protected cycling network that connects adjacent neighbourhoods to the downtown by 2022.	Underway
TBD	People-Friendly Transportation strategic action: Develop a plan to create pedestrian-first streets between Victoria Park and City Hall and between the ION and Kitchener Market by 2022.	Underway
TBD	Environmental Leadership strategic action: Starting in 2019, leverage the Energy Efficiency Reserve Fund and other resources to reduce consumption and emission at our facilities and in operations.	2019 Start now on hold
TBD	Environmental Leadership strategic action: Implement the Sustainable Urban Forest Strategy with a focus on establishing a tree canopy target by 2020 and eliminating the current (2018) tree planting backlog by 2022. Strategy complete. Tree canopy target complete. Tree planting backlog underway	Underway
TBD	Environmental Leadership strategic action: Reduce waste diverted to landfills by implementing new diversion programs at our facilities and events by 2021.	Delay due to pandemic
TBD	Vibrant Economy strategic action: Foster the creation of a city-wide network of incubators, accelerators and co-working spaces by completing the buildout of 44 Gaukel in 2019, advancing work on a Creative Hub and undertaking business cases in 2019-2021 for the food manufacturing and health/med-tech industries. 44 Gaukel completed in 2019. Hub & business cases to complete	Delay due to pandemic
TBD	Vibrant Economy strategic action: 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.	Delay due to pandemic
TBD	Caring Community strategic action: Better utilize existing facilities, provide relevant programming at community centers, support the 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 and an Open Space Strategy by 2021.	Delay due to pandemic
TBD	Caring Community strategic action: 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.	Delay due to pandemic
TBD	Great Customer Service strategic action: 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.	Underway

Recommendations and Conclusions

In the evaluation of each the completed projects Compass Kitchener noted suggestions for improvement. This section of the report summarizes the following seven areas that we recommend need attention.

- Budget and Project Management Accountability
- Website and Strategic Plan Accountability
- Progress Reports and Presentation
- Affordable Housing
- Public Engagement
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
- Strategic Plan Dashboard

The report concludes with our overall conclusion.

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.

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.

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,

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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.

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.

Public Engagement

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:

- 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.

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.

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.

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.

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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)

Overall Conclusion

We cannot stress enough how very impressive it is to see 12 Strategic Plan projects completed and extensive public consultation incorporated into many of the projects, despite the challenges posed by COVID-19.

Consistent project management standards, statement of desired impacts and clear articulation of budgets and timelines would strengthen project results, transparency and accountability.

Consistent reporting on all Strategic Plan projects, on a Dashboard on the City's website, would keep the public better informed of the City's accomplishments.

Compass Kitchener would like to work with CLT to refine the process of developing criteria for evaluating impact for the next Strategic Plan.

It is very impressive that six of the twelve completed projects clearly exceeded expectations - an outstanding accomplishment that we want to recognize and celebrate!

Congratulations to Council and staff and the many citizens who provided input on the excellent work to date.