

REPORT

Senior Management Team

To: Mayor Johnstone and Members of Council
Date: July 8, 2024

From: Lisa Leblanc
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer &
Director of Engineering
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Item #: 2024-419

Subject: **Council Strategic Plan – First Annual Report**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receive this report for information, and confirm that the priorities, lenses and foundations as adopted by Council on May 8, 2023 continue to reflect Council priorities.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a status report on the progress that has been made toward achieving the objectives of the Strategic Priorities Plan which was adopted by Council on May 8, 2023, and seek confirmation that the priorities, lenses and foundations continue to be supported.

BACKGROUND

Council adopted the 2023-26 Council Strategic Priorities Plan on May 8, 2023, including 5 Strategic Priorities, plus 4 lenses and 3 foundations that describe the context within which the Strategic Priorities are to be advanced. This Plan guides the work of City Departments during this four year term of Council.

The 2023-2026 Council Strategic Priorities Plan is guided by the Vision that New Westminister is: *A vibrant, compassionate, resilient city where everyone can thrive.*

City Council has adopted **Five Strategic Priorities** that guide the workplans of all City Departments; they are:

Strategic Priority 1 - Community Belonging and Connecting:

Goal: A community where everyone belongs and has the opportunity to connect and contribute.

Strategic Priority 2 - Homes and Housing Options:

Goal: Clear the way for all types of homes needed by people today and tomorrow, prioritizing homes for those with the greatest need.

Strategic Priority 3 - People-Centered Economy:

Goal: A local, nimble, resilient economy that serves our local community.

Strategic Priority 4 - Safe Movement of People:

Goal: Prioritize the movement of people on foot, cycle and transit on streets that are safer for all.

Strategic Priority 5 - Asset Management and Infrastructure:

Goal: Resilient infrastructure that meets the community’s needs today and into the future.

The Five Strategic Priorities are also informed and guided by **Lenses** and **Foundations**:

Lenses were included in Council’s Strategic Priorities Plan to highlight the policy, principles, guidance and actions that Council and staff are thoughtfully considering and integrating:

- Reconciliation,
- Climate Action and Environment,
- DEIAR (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism) and
- Public Engagement.

Foundations refer to the strategies, plans, policies, procedures and actions to ensure the five Strategic Priorities are appropriately supported by improving:

- Organizational Effectiveness
- Resilience and
- Healthy Governance

Subsequent to adoption of the Plan, a Quarterly Report template was endorsed by Council on September 25, 2023.

On November 20, 2023, Council received a report as part of the 2025 Budget Process, which explained the implementation strategy proposed by staff to achieve the objectives of Council's Strategic Priorities Plan, while taking care to implement the Plan with thoughtful consideration of Lenses and strengthening the Foundation of the organization.

The 2025 Operating and Capital budgets were adopted by Council on March 11, 2024; staff have been advancing work as described to Council during the budget process.

DISCUSSION

Provided in Attachments 1 through 5 are the status reports for each of Strategic Priorities. As you will note in the reports, a significant amount of progress has been made on each of the priorities, and some notable challenges have been encountered which place achievement of the goals at risk. The most significant risks identified in the status reports relates to ongoing staff vacancies, labour shortages more generally - including for contractors and consultants - and, with respect to the Homes and Housing Options priority, the dynamic and demanding regulatory environment that has introduced a significant degree of additional work for Planning and Development Department staff in particular. A number of Information Technology challenges have also become more acute, which has resulted in the diversion of some resources away from goals reliant on IT support, including advancing a number of data management objectives.

In addition to advancing the goals outlined in the Strategic Priorities, Council has also directed staff to apply the Lenses and Foundations as we conduct our work. Provided in Attachment 6 is a status report on work done in that regard. A multi-departmental group of staff meet monthly to plan and coordinate work being done to address each of the Lenses and Foundations. The staff group has developed a framework to guide this work, which applies the learnings of the Medicine Wheel, combined with the Asset Management competency model which help to define the maturity level of the organization with respect to each of the Lenses and Foundations. The teachings of the Medicine Wheel teach us that there are many stages to growth and that evolution is a cycle, not a destination. It reminds us that we are all in different seasons of maturity and each season has its own strengths and challenges. We recognize that the Lenses and Foundations are all interconnected and must work together in order to function to their highest levels.

As outlined in the November 20, 2023 report to Council, a significant part of strengthening the foundation of the organization has required the creation of 2 new departments: Community Services and Energy & Climate Action. An Acting Director of Community Services is now in place, to provide leadership and support for the staff responsible for implementing the People-centred Economy and Community Belonging & Connecting priorities. The new Energy & Climate Action Department continues to be formed, with both Deputy Directors now in place, and recruitment for the Director underway.

While the work of advancing the Strategic Priorities and establishing 2 new departments continues, staff have continued to deliver core services and other Council direction, including establishment of the pilot Crises Response Team and taking action to advocate

for affordable housing and substance use supports, emergency management and opening the təməsewtxw Community and Aquatic Centre.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council adopted the 2024-2028 Financial Plan, and all projects identified in the Strategic Priorities Plan are funded from the approved Budget.

Refer to the quarterly (Q1) financial update included in the July 8, 2024 agenda, which addresses the budget adjustments required in response to work advanced to date.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON

The Strategic Priorities Plan is being advanced by all departments at the City.

OPTIONS

There are 2 options for Council’s consideration:

- 1. That Council receive this report for information, and confirm that the priorities, lenses and foundations as adopted by Council on May 8 2023 continue to reflect Council priorities; or
- 2. That Council provide staff with different direction.

Staff recommend Option 1.

CONCLUSION

The first year of work toward achievement of Council’s Strategic Priorities Plan has been completed. Provided in the attachments to this report is a summary of progress on each of the priorities, and an overview of the work done to respond to the lenses and foundations adopted as part of the Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 - Strategic Priority 1 - **Community Belonging and Connecting** Year 1 Status Report
- Attachment 2 - Strategic Priority 2 - **Homes and Housing Options** Year 1 Status Report
- Attachment 3 - Strategic Priority 3 – **People-Centred Economy** Year 1 Status Report
- Attachment 4 - Strategic Priority 4 – **Safe Movement of People** Year 1 Status Report
- Attachment 5 - Strategic Priority 5 – **Asset Management and Infrastructure** Year 1 Status Report
- Attachment 6 - **Lenses and Foundations** Year 1 Status Report

APPROVALS

This report was prepared by:

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This report was approved by:

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