

REPORT

Senior Management Team

To: Mayor Johnstone and Members of Council
Date: September 23, 2024

From: Lisa Leblanc, Deputy CAO
File: 05.1035.10
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Item #: 2024-514

Subject: Council Strategic Priorities Plan Quarterly Status Update

RECOMMENDATION

1. **THAT** the staff report titled “Council Strategic Priorities Plan Quarterly Status Update” from the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, dated September 23, 2024, be received for information; and
 2. **THAT** subsequent Strategic Priorities Plan status updates be provided to Council on a semi-annual basis.
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PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the Strategic Priorities Plan quarterly status update and to seek direction from Council to reduce the frequency of these status reports to semi-annually.

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. At the time of adoption of the reporting template, Council requested that staff provide quarterly updates.

On November 20, 2023, Council received a report as part of the 2024 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 2024 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.

The First Annual Report on Council's Strategic Priorities Plan was included on the Council Workshop agenda on July 8, 2024.

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 significant workload challenges, 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.

The Community Belonging and Connecting strategic priority status report includes a more fulsome contextual narrative. As a new and more conceptual strategic priority area, evaluation metrics are not yet known and a baseline does not exist. As the new Community Services department continues to form, analysis and evaluation of how best to achieve results in this strategic priority area continues to be adapted into staff work plans.

Staff have found that reporting on a quarterly basis does not result in constructive reporting, as not enough has changed from one quarter to the next to make for meaningful updates. As a result, staff recommends that reporting be reduced to semi-annually, including an Annual report near the anniversary of adoption of the Strategic Priorities Plan.

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 (Q2) financial update included in the September 23, 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 3 options for Council's consideration:

1. THAT the staff report titled "Council Strategic Priorities Plan Quarterly Status Update" from the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, dated September 23, 2024, be received for information; and
2. THAT subsequent Strategic Priorities Plan status updates be provided to Council on a semi-annual basis.
3. THAT Council provide staff with different direction.

Staff recommend Options 1 and 2.

CONCLUSION

Provided in the attachments to this report is a summary of progress on each of the Strategic Priorities during the first quarter of the second year of the Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 - Strategic Priority 1 - **Community Belonging and Connecting** Year 2 Q1 Status Report
- Attachment 2 - Strategic Priority 2 - **Homes and Housing Options** Year 2 Q1 Status Report
- Attachment 3 - Strategic Priority 3 – **People-Centered Economy** Year 2 Q1 Status Report
- Attachment 4 - Strategic Priority 4 – **Safe Movement of People** Year 2 Q1 Status Report
- Attachment 5 - Strategic Priority 5 – **Asset Management and Infrastructure** Year 2 Q1 Status Report

APPROVALS

This report was prepared by:

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This report was approved by:

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