

REPORT

Senior Management Team

To: Mayor Johnstone and Members of Council
Date: March 10, 2025

From: Lisa Leblanc
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer &
Director of Engineering
File: 05.1035.10
(Doc#2651315)

Item #: 2025-80

Subject: Council Strategic Priorities Plan – First Semi-Annual Report for 2025

RECOMMENDATION

1. *THAT the report titled “Council Strategic Priorities Plan – First Semi-Annual Report for 2025” from the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer dated March 10, 2025 be received for information.*
 2. *THAT the priorities, lenses and foundations as adopted by Council on May 8 2023 be confirmed as reflective of Council’s priorities.*
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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 2023-2026 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 Westminster 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,
- 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,
- Resiliency, and
- Healthy Governance.

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

On November 25, 2024 Council received a report as part of the 2025 budget processes, which explained the implementation strategies and resource requirements proposed by staff to continue working toward the objectives of Council's Strategic Priorities Plan, while taking care to implement the Plan with thoughtful consideration of the Lenses and Foundations. This report informed the Five-Year Financial Plan Bylaw which was adopted by Council on February 10, 2025.

The last time that staff provided Council with a Strategic Priorities Plan Status Update was on September 23, 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 labour market challenges impacting staff recruitment and contracted services, the dynamic and demanding regulatory environment, and a high volume of emerging items. In addition, the Homes and Housing work is being advanced on very tight timelines due to regulatory and funding requirements, and some of the work is reliant on review by third parties, with timelines for completion that are out of the control of City staff. 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.

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.

As outlined in the November 25, 2024 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. Both departments are now established with Directors in place, and other foundational supports being established. In addition, Human Resources Department has gained traction on recruitment, committee work that came out of last year's bargaining processes, and getting ready for bargaining with four unions in 2025.

While the work of advancing the Strategic Priorities continues, staff have continued to deliver core services and other Council direction, including significant work on the pilot Crises Response Pilot Project, and establishment of 5- and 10- year plans for prevention, support, transition services, and supportive housing and wrap-around services.

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 financial updates to review 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 report titled “Council Strategic Priorities Plan – First Semi-Annual Report for 2025” from the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer dated March 10, 2025 be received for information.
- 2. THAT the priorities, lenses and foundations as adopted by Council on May 8 2023 be confirmed as reflective of Council’s priorities. or
- 3. That Council provide staff with different direction.

Staff recommend Option 1 and 2.

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

APPROVALS

This report was prepared by:

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This report was approved by:

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