



STAFF REPORT
Chief Administrative Officer

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Author: Anna Marie Cipriani
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Recommendation:

1. That Council approve the City of Waterloo 2019-2022 Strategic Plan as presented in report CAO2019-004.

A. Executive Summary

This report presents the 2019-2022 City of Waterloo Strategic Plan. The plan's framework includes an updated corporate mission, vision and guiding principles. There are 6 strategic pillars, 6 goals, and 19 objectives. Sustainability and equity are 2 new overarching themes advanced by and integrated throughout the plan. The plan will be mobilized through the development of 2020-2023 business plans, budgets, work plans and a strategic plan reporting and performance measurement framework.

B. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

C. Technology Implications

There are no technology implications associated with this report.

D. Link to Strategic Plan

This report presents the 2019-2022 City of Waterloo Strategic Plan.

E. Previous Reports on this Topic

Previous reports on this topic include:

- CAO2019-003 Close out of the 2015-2018 City of Waterloo Strategic Plan and 2019-2022 City of Waterloo Draft Strategic Plan (May 27, 2019)
- CAO2019-001 City of Waterloo Strategic Plan 2019-2022: Scan Summary Report (March 4, 2019)

- CAO2018-024 - 2015-2018 Strategic Plan – 2018 Progress Report (September 24, 2018)
- CAO2017-028 - 2015-2018 Strategic Plan – 2017 Progress Report (November 27, 2017)
- CAO2016-009 - 2015-2018 Strategic Plan – 2016 Progress Report (November 14, 2016)
- CAO2015-014 - Final 2015-2018 Council Strategic Plan (June 22, 2015)
- CAO2015-008 Draft 2015-2018 Council Strategic Plan (May 11, 2015)
- CAO2015-004 Strategic Plan Interim Report and Education Session (March 9, 2015)

G. Approvals

Name	Signature	Date
Author: Anna Marie Cipriani		June 6, 2019
Director: N/A		
Commissioner: N/A		
Finance: N/A		

CAO



**City of Waterloo 2019-2022 Strategic Plan Report
CAO2019-004**

Background

This report delivers to the organization and community our strategic focus for 2019-2022. The City of Waterloo 2019-2022 Strategic Plan (Appendix A) is both a corporate and community strategic plan. For the next four years this plan sets the strategic direction for City of Waterloo's volunteers, staff, leadership and Council. This plan is intended to unite and mobilize our collective efforts. The plan's framework includes an updated corporate mission, vision and guiding principles. There are 6 strategic pillars, 6 goals, and 19 objectives. Sustainability and equity are 2 new overarching themes advanced by and integrated throughout the plan.

Next steps

With Council's approval of this plan, the organization will mobilize efforts to make progress on the strategic goals and objectives presented in the plan. The next steps of implementation include developing the 2020-2023 business plans, budgets, work plans and a strategic plan reporting and performance measurement framework.

Advisory committees will be presenting and/or reporting to Council on Committee night November 4, 2019 with information on what they as a committee will do to support the City's progress on the strategic plan objectives.

The plan will be communicated throughout the organization and community via our website and social media in addition to the distribution of printed materials showcasing the plan.



City of Waterloo 2019-2022 Strategic Plan Report

FINAL REPORT

June 24, 2019



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1. Executive Summary

The creation of a strategic plan starts with a profound desire to do things well; to create a road map that effectively aligns effort and resources in a way that supports Waterloo to be the best city it can be. This desire has been reflected at every stage in the creation of this draft strategic plan; by council members seeking to ensure the voices of residents are heard and acknowledged, by staff members who prioritize excellence in the way services are designed and delivered, and by community stakeholders who contributed their energy and ideas to the creation of a responsive and impactful plan forward.

As part of this strategic planning process, council, staff and stakeholders have had an opportunity to reflect on the current vision, mission and guiding principles with the goal of ensuring these broad, directional statements remained relevant to the future Waterloo. Their input and suggested enhancements to the vision, mission and guiding principles are reflected in this report.

The strategic planning process is the process of building on a clear understanding of the current state in order to chart the course for a desired future. Reflecting on the current state, we know that Waterloo is a growing city with an increasingly diverse population. It is a city that is growing at a faster rate than many of its provincial counterparts with a population that increased by just under 8% over the decade between 2006 and 2016; surpassing the provincial growth rate of 5% over the same period.

We also know that the face of Waterloo is changing. As a result of immigration patterns, Waterloo's diversity is increasing at a rapid rate; even faster than neighbouring jurisdictions. With these changes come new opportunities and challenges that impact all aspects of the city's development from programming to service delivery to urban design.

This strategic plan is intended to serve both as a community strategic plan that reflects the goals and priorities of the community, as well as a corporate strategy that serves to guide the municipality in how the city operates and delivers its services.

The draft plan is the result of extensive consultation and was built with forward-thinking perspective that seeks to leverage Waterloo's many strengths in order to work toward a vibrant, sustainable and inclusive future. The research tells us that residents love living in Waterloo. Satisfaction with Waterloo as a place to live is very high and most residents agree that there is a high quality of life. Waterloo is considered an affluent, educated city with strong economic opportunity. This plan seeks to build on these strengths.

Equally important, however, are the challenges the plan seeks to address. While Waterloo reflects a high average income, for example, the recent Wellbeing Waterloo Region Survey results have highlighted that it is also home to a slightly larger proportion of residents living below the after-tax Low-Income Measure (LIM), as compared to the region. The proportion of disposable income spent on rent is higher in Waterloo than elsewhere in the region. This economic dichotomy presents challenges from a planning perspective and underscores the need to consider access, affordability, and inclusivity in a community that is becoming increasingly culturally and economically diverse.

As a growing city committed to effectively managing the physical and environmental impacts of growth, Waterloo is facing an increasing trend toward intensification. Intensification is defined by the Province of Ontario as the development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists. It applies to the processes of development, redevelopment, infilling and expansion or conversion of existing buildings. This increasing intensification impacts not only infrastructure and service delivery, but



it will continue to impact the way neighbourhoods are shaped and the way residents interact with each other.

When asked about Waterloo's strengths, respondents across diverse stakeholder groups routinely cited education, technology, innovation, diversity, collaboration, environmental leadership and a sense of community as the defining attributes of the city. These strengths are consistently reflected in the pillars and priorities that have emerged through the strategic planning process.

The most notable change from prior strategic plans is the extent to which the theme of equity and inclusion has risen to the fore. Waterloo is a city that clearly values and champions diversity, yet the recent Wellbeing Waterloo Survey results reveal challenges related to discrimination. This contrast emphasises the importance of a holistic view of service delivery, resident values, and financial realities. The importance of creating opportunities for equity and social inclusion; for an all-encompassing approach to policy and program design, and for an inclusive approach to service delivery has been a dominant theme among council, staff, and stakeholder groups in the creation of this plan.

Environmental stewardship has also emerged as a leading theme. Waterloo is demonstrating strong leadership in this area and there is a clear will to build on these strengths in addressing issues of climate change and the environment.

The theme of sustainability within this plan reflects a commitment to creating a city that is environmentally, financially, and socially sustainable. In the context of environmental sustainability, there is a strong commitment to supporting and enhancing Waterloo's place as a leader and innovator. The focus on fiscal sustainability relates to good governance and recognition that being a sustainable community requires effective planning for how infrastructure needs will be met and maintained. It speaks to the idea of ensuring that the city can continue to afford the infrastructure, programs, and services that are necessary to economic and community development. The concept of social sustainability refers to the creation of resilient and inclusive communities where there is access to economic and social participation for all.

Lastly, the theme of safety is one that remains top of mind for residents, staff, and community leaders alike. The focus on supporting safe, sustainable transportation reflects a commitment to active transportation, to safe shared use of trails and roadways, and speed reduction. It also reflects a focus on promoting the use of greener transportation modes and on supporting the interconnectivity of transit systems to ensure residents can seamlessly get where they need to go in order to access services, amenities or economic opportunity.

The 2019-2022 Strategic Plan for the City of Waterloo is grounded in extensive input from residents, businesses, council, staff, and stakeholder groups. It reflects a concerted effort to look inward, to draw from the past and respect the evolution of the city. It considers opportunities and trends emerging far beyond the city's geographic boundaries and strives to demonstrate a leadership and innovative approach that will move the City of Waterloo towards its desired future.

The plan that Waterloo City Council is setting forth is intentionally bold. The successful implementation of this plan will require visionary leadership and a willingness to embrace change. Successfully supporting that change will require an investment in building the capacity of staff and stakeholders to navigate change and ensure they are equipped with the skills and resources to lead the City of Waterloo into the future.



2. Methodology

A wide variety of inputs from nearly 11,000 individuals within Waterloo and across Waterloo Region contributed to the development of this strategy. These inputs were captured in a scan summary report that offers a distillation and analysis of the inputs to the strategic planning process and was used to inform the discussion with council and staff. The scan summary report described the various surveys and reports that were considered in the identification and evaluation of key strategic pillars and objectives. Individual inputs included survey responses, direct interviews, facilitated workshops and online feedback across a diverse range of stakeholder groups.

Inputs into this preliminary report included:

- Citizen satisfaction survey results
- TravelWise survey of commuting patterns
- Wellbeing Waterloo Region survey
- Direct interviews with senior city staff and members of council
- Council meeting “council check-in – hot off the campaign trail”
- Staff discussions
- Workshops with members of advisory committees of council
- Engage Waterloo – online public engagement platform
- The scan summary report was intended to synthesize perceptions of Waterloo today and to provide a foundational understanding of the current state. The report offers more detail on the findings of each of these analyses.

Ten preliminary strategic themes emerged from the initial consultation, and are reflected in the scan summary report in more detail:

- Sustainability and the environment
- Safe, sustainable transportation
- Inclusion
- Strong community & resilient neighbourhoods
- Quality of place
- Affordability
- Infrastructure renewal
- Engagement and communication
- Growth & development
- Corporate excellence



Following a review by senior staff, the scan summary report was presented to council on March 4, 2019 offering a background to support their participation in the next phase of the strategic planning process.

This next phase focused on ‘building the plan’. Varied tactics were deployed throughout this phase to ensure a broad cross-section of stakeholders had an opportunity to review, reflect and provide input on the emerging themes and proposed objectives. The first tactic focused on validating the proposed themes and identifying areas of alignment where themes might be combined to more effectively reflect a broader area of focus, while offering the opportunity to highlight any important themes that had not previously been identified. Council advisory committees and city management had an opportunity to engage in this validation process and to provide input through a series of facilitated workshops.

A second, concurrent tactic focused on a review of the mission and vision statements for the city and the municipality. The mission statement describes why the municipality exists; a vision statement is an aspirational description of what an organization would like to achieve or accomplish in the mid-term or longer-term future. It is intended to serve as a clear guide for choosing current and future courses of action.

Members of staff were provided with opportunities to participate in facilitated workshops and to offer input on the mission and vision through an online submission. The goal of this exercise was to assess the validity of the existing mission and vision statements and to identify opportunities for refinement. Feedback from staff revealed a lack of connection to the existing vision statement. It was neither universally well-understood nor actively embraced. Workshop participants were asked to suggest concepts and phrases that more accurately reflected the goals and aspirations for the City of Waterloo.

A third tactic focused on gathering input from key business, community, and education stakeholders through direct one-on-one interviews. Participating stakeholders were asked to provide their views on city’s strongest opportunities for growth, most pressing challenges, and best opportunities for collaboration and strategic partnerships. The inputs amassed from these three consultative approaches were summarized in the staff and stakeholder input summary report attached as Appendix A to this report.

Building on all the inputs gathered through this extensive consultation, council then had an opportunity to participate in a priority-setting workshop. Supported by the Queen’s Executive Decision Centre, members of council were guided through a discussion of each of the proposed strategic themes and objectives. Through a process of discussion and ranking by consensus a priority list of strategic themes and objectives emerged. It is this list of strategic themes and objectives that will comprise the strategic plan for the remaining term of council.

2.1 Consultation Summary Report

Using a combination of staff and consultant-led initiatives, input on the emerging strategic themes was gathered from a broad range of community stakeholders as well as management and staff. This blend of external and internal input was intended to support council in refining the strategic themes and objectives as they advanced the strategic plan development.

The objectives in seeking input during this phase of the strategic planning process were as follows:



1. Review and validation of the proposed strategic themes and objectives.
2. Review of the vision, mission and guiding principles that will support the implementation of the final plan.
3. Analysis of the specific competencies and organizational supports required to execute the specific actions and tactics of the plan.

It is useful to note that while respondents had varying interpretations with respect to how the proposed strategic themes and objectives might be labelled or grouped together, there was consensus that the intent behind the proposed strategic themes was valid. Respondents agreed that a focus on equity, inclusion, sustainability, growth, strong communities, quality of place, affordability, safe transportation, infrastructure renewal, and sustainable economic growth were of primary importance to the strategic direction for the City of Waterloo for the next four years. The theme of inclusion especially resonated across all cohorts.

It was reiterated that the existing vision was neither well understood nor universally embraced by staff or community members. This served to reinforce the importance of council's efforts to articulate a more effective vision statement that would provide the clarity of purpose and cohesion to engage and empower staff activity and reporting.

During this phase respondents also advocated for adjustments to the existing mission statement to ensure that the language was well understood and that it accurately reflects the city's approach to operations and service delivery. The revised mission statement is addressed in the next section as one of the strategic plan components.

3. Strategic Plan Components

3.1 Corporate Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles

As part of the strategic planning process, staff, stakeholders and members of council had an opportunity to revisit the mission, vision and guiding principles for the municipality. The mission is seen as a formal summary of the municipality's purpose.

The vision statement is intended to serve the broader community by describing the desired future state for the city. The vision statement is intended to guide decisions and support alignment of resources and activities with these over-arching goals. The guiding principles describe the intent behind the actions and decisions that the city undertakes. They are intended to inform the decision-making process and guide how the organization operates internally and with the public it serves.

3.1.1 Mission

The following is the updated corporate mission statement developed through this consultative process:

The Corporation of the City of Waterloo is committed to supporting sustainable growth, equity, and an inclusive, vibrant community through the delivery of service excellence. We are supported in this effort through a team of volunteers, staff and elected officials that share a commitment to fiscal responsibility, healthy and safe workplace, effective engagement, and personal leadership.



3.1.2 Vision

Waterloo is an equitable community that leads the world in learning, discovery and caring.

3.1.3 Guiding Principles

The previous strategic plan identified a series of over-arching principles intended to guide all aspects of city operations, programs and service delivery. At council’s direction, those guiding principles have been expanded to include the principles of equity & inclusion, and sustainability.

These guiding principles are intended to inform the implementation of the strategic pillars and objectives.

Figure 1: Guiding Principles





We will reflect these guiding principles in the following ways:

Equity & Inclusion

We work to ensure a sense of belonging, acceptance and value for all in our community.

The aim of equity is to ensure that everyone has access to equal opportunity and benefits. This principle recognizes that treating everyone equitably requires an acknowledgement of unique circumstances and taking steps to eliminate systemic barriers. An inclusive city is one that recognizes and values differences and diversity in planning, decision-making, and service delivery.

Sustainability

All actions and decisions are evaluated through a lens of environmental, social and economic sustainability.

Sustainability refers to the concept of meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainability considers environmental impact as well as impact on social and economic resources.

Fiscal Responsibility

We will act in accordance with good governance best practices to ensure effective management of our financial resources.

Fiscal responsibility entails operating within a framework of policies and processes intended to improve fiscal outcomes and support longer-term financial health, in an environment of transparency and objective measurement.

Healthy & Safe Workplace

We are committed to providing a healthy and safe work environment for all employees and volunteers of the municipality.

A healthy and safe workplace begins with a commitment to offer an environment that promotes a sense of physical and psychological wellbeing, a sense of personal accomplishment that comes from a job well done, and recognition of contribution to the corporate vision.

Effective Engagement

Through diverse communication and outreach efforts we will ensure our community is informed of and has the opportunity to be engaged in conversations and decisions that shape our community.

Effective engagement is the result of an ongoing commitment to dialogue, transparency and the development of strong relationships that are grounded in trust and open communication. Effective engagement seeks to engage people who might not otherwise get involved. It is accessible to people of all abilities and backgrounds and helps to build a sense of ownership and contribution to the community.

Personal Leadership

Employees and volunteers of the City of Waterloo are supported to demonstrate personal leadership in the performance of their role.

Personal Leadership is exemplified by agents of positive change who are passionate about growing



themselves and those around them to achieve success. The City of Waterloo is committed to supporting its employees and volunteers to develop and demonstrate the qualities of leadership that enhance effectiveness, efficiency and the delivery of service excellence.

Service Excellence

We are committed to providing exceptional service that meets the needs of citizens, stakeholders, employees and volunteers of the city.

Through a commitment to service excellence, the City of Waterloo will create and reinforce an internal and external culture that is founded on responsiveness and is customer centric. Embedded in this principle are service standards, performance measurements and a commitment to continuous improvement.

3.2 Strategic Pillars and Objectives 2019-2022

In the creation of a strategic plan consideration must be given to the core foundational components from which the strategic objectives emerge. Consider strategic pillars as the “load bearing walls” of the strategy. The strategic plan for Waterloo reflects six strategic pillars or areas of focus that comprise the 2019-2022 strategic plan. They are:

1. Equity, inclusion, and a sense of belonging
2. Sustainability and the environment
3. Safe, sustainable transportation
4. Healthy community & resilient neighbourhoods
5. Infrastructure renewal
6. Economic growth & development

3.2.1 Equity, inclusion, and a sense of belonging

- In creating a city that supports a strong sense of belonging and access to opportunity for all, we recognize that our operations, programs and approach to service delivery should consider circumstances and solutions to respond to systemic barriers.
- Goal: Strengthen Waterloo as a diverse and inclusive community.
- Objectives:
 - Implement strategies and tactics that strengthen the engagement of diverse and marginalized populations, and all ages, and support an enhanced sense of belonging within the community.
 - Incorporate best practices to maximize inclusion within all city business, operations, and service delivery.
 - Address the needs of an aging population through responsive development, programming, and communication strategies.



- Focus on the economic disparity in our community by ensuring our work considers the impacts of this gap.
- Respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action for municipalities.

3.2.2 Sustainability & the environment

The City of Waterloo is committed to environmental, economic and social sustainability. It recognizes its leadership role in minimizing its environmental impact, prudently managing financial resources considering current and future needs; and creating processes, systems, and relationships that promote social sustainability and actively contribute to healthy and livable communities.

Goal: Transform Waterloo to be an environmentally, economically and socially sustainable community.

Objectives:

- Apply a sustainability lens on all services and projects.
- Enable bold local actions to address the climate change crisis.

3.2.3 Safe, sustainable transportation

Safe, sustainable transportation exists when all users and all modes of transportation are able to share roadways and trail systems safely; when traffic speeds respect the safety of the community; when policy and planning supports the development and maintenance of sustainable infrastructure; and when more residents are able to rely on sustainable modes of transportation such as public transit or active transportation to get where they need to go.

Goal: Improve all modes of transportation to make Waterloo more mobile, accessible and connected.

Objectives:

- Adopt Vision Zero practices and tactics to enable safe travel by all modes of transportation
- To facilitate a modal shift, enable increased use of active transportation and public transit.

3.2.4 Healthy community & resilient neighbourhoods

Investing in the capacity of people to work together to resolve challenges and maximize opportunities helps to build healthy, resilient neighbourhoods that collectively form our community. The city is committed to continuously creating and improving physical, cultural and social environments, and to enhancing resources to foster collaboration, community pride, healthy neighbourhoods and a strong community.

Goal: Position Waterloo as a strong and resilient community.

Objectives:

- Increase the amount of affordable housing in the city.
- Create and maintain safe, accessible and vibrant public spaces that promote opportunities for diverse use.
- Support the arts and culture community to enhance Waterloo's quality of place.



3.2.5 Infrastructure renewal

Careful, future-focused planning ensures that the city can respond to infrastructure needs today and into the future; ensuring that the city maintains existing infrastructure, while planning for new growth and development.

Goal: Focus on infrastructure needs through effective planning and engagement.

Objectives:

- Optimize usage and efficiency of existing facilities and assets
- Dedicate appropriate resources to plan, renew and maintain existing infrastructure.
- Develop engagement strategies that effectively communicate and balance community priorities with operational and financial realities.
- Address the infrastructure deficit.

3.2.6 Economic growth and development

The goal of economic growth and development is to create a diverse economy that works for all, where all can work. The city is committed to placing emphasis on fostering job growth that maximizes opportunities within the local labour market through the provision of employment that aligns supply and demand.

Goal: Foster a robust and diversified economy.

Objectives:

- Actively attract and nurture innovation among businesses to fuel a diverse economy.
- Align economic development and job growth with community development objectives that address economic disparity.
- Celebrate the connection with education partners to fully leverage growth opportunities.

4. Implementation

Resulting from the strategic planning process are several fundamental decisions that are intended to shape and guide the efforts of the municipality in terms of what it does, and why it does it, with a focus on the future.

Managing and implementing the strategy involves the systematic coordination and alignment of resources and activities with the mission and vision respected across the organization. This alignment is best achieved through the development of departmental business plans that define the specific actions and tactics that will advance the strategic objectives defined in the strategy. Through a consultative strategic planning process, council defines 'what we are going to do.' It is through the development of the departmental business plans that management and staff bring their expertise and insights to defining 'how we will achieve it.'



The business planning process allows for an assessment of available resources. Objectives are considered in the context of the full scope of operational requirements. While the strategic plan establishes priorities and charts the direction for the corporation's efforts, the business planning process recognizes that these must be achieved in the context of existing legislated services and ongoing programs and projects.

A proposed business planning template provides a framework for identifying the specific actions that staff will undertake, the resources required and the specific outcomes that the action is intended to achieve. An important feature of this planning framework is that it allows for the identification of both outputs and expected outcomes or impacts. Measuring impact or the *difference* that results from a specific action is a far more compelling measure than measuring output alone. Outputs tell the story of what was produced or what actions were taken, but do not address the value or impact of services. Conversely, an outcome refers to the change that occurred as a result of the efforts or services provided. Each outcome measure should be tied back to the strategic plan in order to ensure that resources are being allocated in a way that best supports the city's strategic objectives.

Departmental business plans then inform the development of individual work plans. This continuity ensures that every employee will be able to tie what they do back to the larger strategic goals. Embedded in the planning framework are key performance indicators that serve to evaluate progress toward a stated objective. Reporting on these indicators supports both effective management and enhanced transparency. It asks, 'did we achieve what we set out to do?' and 'did our efforts have the desired impact?'

5. Metrics and Monitoring

5.1 Best Practices in Municipal Performance Monitoring and Accountability

Performance metrics are an essential component of the strategic plan implementation process. They provide a consistent framework to evaluate the questions identified above:

- Did we achieve what we set out to do?
- Did our efforts have the desired impact? and
- Are we closer to achieving our strategic goals as a result of these efforts?
- Performance metrics allow for an evaluation of tactics and strategies that support efficient and effective planning and resource allocation. Performance metrics are a diagnostic tool that serve to focus energy, attention and effort. They also help to support the city's commitment to accountability and transparency.

The most effective performance measures are designed to measure impact versus outputs. A metric that evaluates the *difference* that a specific action has made is ultimately a more effective indicator of progress toward a strategic goal. Consider a goal of enhanced environmental sustainability. While an accounting of specific activities that were undertaken such as the adoption of new technologies or more sustainable practices can be informative, it is much more useful to be able to report on the impact or



outcomes of those measures such as a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions or a reduced reliance on non-renewable forms of energy.

That said, in a municipal environment it can also be effective to report on work in progress. If the completion of a trails master plan is identified as a strategic priority, for example, it makes sense to report on the progress toward completion of that plan even though the impact of that plan will not be observed until the implementation phase.

Whenever possible, it is desirable to align reporting metrics with regional, provincial, and national goals. This provides important context for residents in helping them to understand how Waterloo is performing relative to other communities. It also supports Waterloo's ability to leverage grant funding and other non-tax revenue by clearly demonstrating how the city's efforts align with broader objectives.

When building a structure for performance measures and metrics, it is important to distinguish between those that measure actions and impact that are within the city's ability to influence, and those that are beyond the city scope of influence. An effective approach to performance measurement will also consider the resources available to effect measurement and reporting so that it achieves a balance between reporting and operational needs. Lastly, performance measures are most effective when viewed as a planning tool and record of impact rather than an assessment of individual performance.

The following sections provide an overview of current best practices in measurement and monitoring in a municipal setting. The value of establishing a measurement framework should not be underestimated, however the City of Waterloo will need to evaluate the metrics it selects in the context of available resources. Planning for a phased approach will allow the measurement and reporting framework to expand as resources permit. The proposed business planning template provides a framework for building key performance indicators into departmental business plans to ensure that there is a direct connection between business plans, individual work plans and the over-arching strategic themes and objectives. Not only does this approach support enhanced strategic alignment across the corporation, it also allows for more effective project planning and resource allocation.

With respect to public reporting, it is recommended that the city initially focus on one or two key metrics for each strategic objective. Each of these metrics should be easily quantifiable and demonstrate impact and progress. As the plan is being implemented, it will be important to identify the performance metrics that will be deployed or how success will be defined and evaluated.

5.1.1 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

While still not fully articulated in a municipal context, there is growing interest in aligning municipal operations and service delivery with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Communities within the region are moving forward to understand how they might align their efforts with these over-arching goals

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals were developed as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2030 Agenda is "a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity" that recognizes extreme poverty as the greatest challenge of our time and calls upon all countries and stakeholders to resolve to take steps toward a sustainable, resilient path. The Agenda and its 17 goals were built upon the success of the Millennium Development Goals developed in the year 2000, which were similar calls to action focused on the reduction of poverty. The current 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) offer a more comprehensive call to action than the Millennium Development



Goals which preceded it. The SDGs seek to address the root causes of inequality and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

The University of Waterloo is the founding institution for SDSN Canada in partnership with the Waterloo Global Science Initiative (WGSi). As host, the University of Waterloo will use its position as home to Canada's largest Faculty of Environment to share knowledge, activate research and help solve the interconnected economic, social, and environmental challenges confronting the world.¹

While the framework to assess municipal operations in the context of the SDGs is still in the early stages of development, there is a growing recognition that communities have the capacity to meaningfully contribute to these goals.

Figure 2: United Nations Sustainable Development Goals



Source: United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals: <<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>>

Cities across the globe, large and small, are beginning to bring SDGs into their strategic planning processes. In North America, Kitchener, Baltimore, San Jose and New York have all integrated SDGs into their strategies.² Communities are engaging with the SDGs to varying degrees dependent upon their planning frameworks and available resources. While some locations develop full-scale SDG action plans, others are identifying opportunities to thread a select few of the goals into different aspects of municipal planning.

Keeping the SDGs top of mind as part of the business planning and reporting process will ensure that the Waterloo is well-positioned to adopt the SDGs as a municipal framework is more fully realized.

¹ <https://uwaterloo.ca/sustainable-development-solutions-network-canada/about>; accessed 5-3-19

² 'USA Sustainable Cities Initiative (USA-SCI)' <http://unsdsn.org/what-we-do/solution-initiatives/usa-sustainable-cities-initiative-usa-sci/>



5.1.2 ISO International Organization for Standardization

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) is an international standard-setting body composed of representatives from various national standards organizations. ISO international standards exist to ensure that products and services are safe, reliable and of good quality. They are strategic tools that reduce costs by minimizing waste and errors and increasing productivity. Standards are developed by cohorts of subject matter experts through a consensus process. Experts from all over the world develop the standards that are required by their sector.

Most relevant to the City of Waterloo are the specific ISO standards that have been identified for sustainable cities. ISO 37120 is the international standard on city indicators and addresses sustainable development in cities. It establishes a set of standardized indicators that provide a uniform approach to what is measured, and how that measurement is to be undertaken.

The intended benefits of adopting this ISO standard of indicators are outlined below:

- More effective governance and delivery of services
- International benchmarks and targets
- Local benchmarking and planning
- Informed decision making for policy makers and city managers
- Learning across cities
- Leverage for funding and recognition in international entities
- Leverage for funding by cities with senior levels of government
- Framework for sustainability planning
- Transparency and open data for investment attractiveness³

ISO standards are intended to represent international consensus on best practices for cities, taking a holistic approach to ending poverty, achieving environmental sustainability and creating prosperity for all. The ISO standards encourage cities to collect data to measure impact, which can be compared with other compliant cities for peer to peer learning. Participation in the ISO certification process offers municipalities access to a consistent, internationally recognized evaluation framework. It should be noted that the ISO certification process is a highly rigorous process that demands a significant resource commitment to maintaining that certification on an ongoing basis. Even without the adoption of the ISO standards framework, however, there may be value in building an awareness of the standards into the departmental business planning process in order to help guide the identification of actions and tactics that support best practice municipal operations and service excellence

It should also be noted that there is close alignment between ISO and the United Nations SDGs. For each goal, ISO has identified the standards that make the most significant contribution to the achievement of the United Nations SDGs.

ISO also has hundreds of standards on intelligent transport systems, water management, business continuity and community resilience, for example, that are designed to make communities safe,

³ <https://www.iso.org/standard/62436.html>



sustainable and adaptive to face challenges.

5.1.3 Canadian Index of Wellbeing

Waterloo has utilized this performance metric as part of the Wellbeing Waterloo Region survey. The Canadian Index of Wellbeing tracks eight quality of life domains, as an alternative to the traditional GDP as an indication of the health of a community. The categories known as 'domains' include community vitality, democratic engagement, education, environment, healthy populations, leisure and culture, living standards and time use.

Other jurisdictions in Canada that have utilized the Canadian Index of Wellbeing include Bruce and Grey Counties, Guelph, Kingston, Orillia, Oxford County, the Province of Saskatchewan, Victoria, BC, and Wood Buffalo, AB.

5.1.4 Municipal Benchmarking Network Canada

Municipal Benchmarking Network Canada is a partnership of Canadian municipalities that identify and collect consistent and comparable data on municipal service areas, and report to the central organization on findings annually. The data is then analyzed to measure performance of municipalities.

The benchmarking framework measures community impact, service level, efficiency and customer service. There is a total of 750 measures for 37 common service areas, which are categories such as by-law enforcement, customer service, childcare, and planning.

Many participating municipalities have open data policies and programs to make data accessible to citizens to increase civic accountability.

Partner municipalities presently include:

- Calgary
- Hamilton
- Niagara Region
- City of Thunder Bay
- City of Windsor
- Durham Region
- London
- Greater Sudbury
- Toronto
- Winnipeg
- Halifax
- Montreal
- City of Regina
- Region of Waterloo
- York Region
- Halton Region

5.1.5 Dashboard Monitoring

Many municipalities in Ontario have implemented a public citizen dashboard, using open source software that allows citizens to access a visual metric of the city's progress on its goals and service delivery. There is an increasing variety of software available to municipalities to offer visual representations of progress to citizens.



Citizen dashboards promote accountability and transparency that the city will deliver on its targets, opportunities for collaboration and creativity, and compatibility with current initiatives. They also promote open government and are seen to contribute to fiscal responsibility by offering good budget value and contributing to responsible asset management.

Goals and metrics are determined by the community. Tracking those various metrics is a nuanced process that balances priority (What is important to the community?) with resource availability (What can we measure? What do we measure already that could support reporting on a given metric?). The choice of metric relies heavily on the availability of data and the ability to collect comparable data over time.

The following are a list of key metric categories and some corresponding common trackable metrics that may support the City of Waterloo in evaluating performance and the achievement of its strategic goals. While these themes should align with Waterloo’s specific strategic objectives, it is important that they are broad enough to remain consistent over time. This is important given that specific strategic objectives and plans may shift every few years. The value of maintaining a reasonably consistent suite of metrics is that it allows for analyzing performance trends over time which, in turn, supports effective planning and resource allocation. The following broad categories are recommended for consideration:

- Community Wellbeing
- Environmental Sustainability/Leadership
- Economic Growth
- Customer Service
- Transportation Measures
- Fiscal Responsibility

Below is a breakdown of specific performance metrics that could be used to evaluate performance within each of the broad categories. The relevant SDG is included for reference.

Community Wellbeing

Table 1 – Community Wellbeing Metrics and Measures

<p>Relevant SDG</p> <p>Goal 3: Good Health & Wellbeing</p> <p>The SDG Good Health and Wellbeing seeks to ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing at all ages. It emphasizes access to health care and the responsibility on governments to create healthy environments.</p>		
Metric / Indicator	Measurement	
Sense of community belonging	Measured by percentage of citizens that answered “very” or “somewhat strong” sense of community belonging in a survey.	



Incidence of low income	Measured via census data.
Housing affordability	Per cent of households spending 30% or more of their total income on shelter costs, from census statistics.
Recreation & Culture Participation	The number of people enrolled in municipal recreation or cultural programming, as a percentage of the municipal population.
Facility Visitors/Library Card Holders	The number of active cardholders (those that have used their library card in the last three years) divided by total population of the city to offer a per capita measurement.
Crime rate	Crime rates per 100,000 population
Residential fire-related injuries or fatalities	Fatalities and injuries (as separate metrics) per 100,000 population
Total and fatal motor vehicle collision rates	Motor vehicle collision rates, and fatal vehicle collision rates, per 100,000 population. This metric provides insight to the safety of the city's street design and is a key contributor to perceptions of public safety.
Emergency department visits	Aging and growing populations tend to have increased emergency department visits. Measuring visits year over year can be an indicator of the capacity of local health care provisions and allows the city to work toward addressing shortages.
Volunteer Engagement	Reporting on the number of volunteers engaged as part of the city's planning and programming efforts can be a useful indicator of overall community engagement.

Environmental Sustainability /Leadership

Table 2 Environmental Sustainability Metrics and Measures

<p>Relevant SDGs</p> <p>Goal 13: Climate Action</p> <p>This SDG calls upon governments to Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning and to improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning. By measuring GHG emissions, waste diversion or energy consumption, municipalities can meaningfully contribute to</p>
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this goal.

Goal 15: Life on Land

This goal recognizes the degradation of terrestrial ecosystems and the negative impacts that things like loss of forests and tree canopies have on the environment, and by extension the economy. Increasing urban tree canopy is an essential way that municipalities can contribute to this goal.



Metric / Indicator	Measurement
Tree Canopy	As land use patterns continue to change from the impact of population growth, protecting and enhancing urban tree canopy is an integral part of creating a healthy, ecologically diverse and vibrant community. This is typically measured by quantifying how many trees the city has planted through parks projects, or capital projects.
Reduction in corporate greenhouse gas emissions	Emissions generated by corporate operations can be categorized by mobile sources (city owned fleet of buses or utility vehicles), and stationary sources (buildings, lights). These are tracked against the community’s reduction targets, e.g. “A corporate greenhouse gas emission reduction of 80% below 2014 levels by 2050.” Emissions are measured via utility bills.
Recreational trails	The total kilometre length of municipal recreational trails can be used as an indicator of environmental leadership; recognizing that trails support a range of recreational activities and allow residents to remain active and engaged with the natural environment.
Energy Consumption	This is typically measured in terms of energy consumption in municipal facilities; tracked against municipal targets for reduced non-renewable energy consumption.
Waste Diversion	Waste diversion goals are tracked by how much waste goes to landfill versus diversion to alternative destinations such as recycling. The amount of waste diverted from landfills provides a measure of the effectiveness of efforts to reduce, reuse and recycle.



Economic Growth

Table 3: Economic Growth Metrics and Measures

Relevant SDGs Goal 8: Decent Work & Economic Growth This goal seeks to create sustainable economic growth by providing decent job opportunities to all who can be in the labour force. Some of its targets include promoting entrepreneurship, innovation and making education accessible for all, which are all metrics that are trackable under the economic growth banner by North American municipalities.	
Metric / Indicator	Measurement
Number of businesses	The number of businesses in a given municipality indicates an important snapshot of economic health and vitality. This metric and related data (e.g. types of businesses in Waterloo) assist in planning for business retention, expansion and attraction initiatives. It also informs policy efforts to help businesses grow. This can be tracked through Canadian Business Counts data.
Business licenses	An alternate way to track number of businesses is through internal databases of new, renewed and not renewed business licences. This can also be an indicator of entrepreneurial activity.
Construction value of building permits	This would be tracked via annual building permit activity summaries. They give an indication of the investment attractiveness of a community. The value and type of construction activity is a good measure of investment in the community in terms of amount (\$) and type (residential, industrial, commercial and institutional).
High Value Job Creation	While job creation is often a measure associated with economic development and growth, it may not distinguish between higher wage jobs and those that correspond with a subsistence wage or are below the low-income measure. A focus on high value jobs is a better indicator of success in advancing toward more equitable economic participation. This is typically measured through business surveys.
Educational Attainment	This can be obtained via Statistics Canada data, tracking percentage of the population aged 15+ with an education level





	higher than a high school certificate or equivalent. This can be benchmarked against Waterloo Region and Ontario’s education levels.
Household Income	This can also be obtained via Statistics Canada data on median or average household income. This data provides an indication of the financial wellbeing of the community.
Unemployment rate	Unemployment rate provides an indication of the health of the economy. High unemployment rates can have a negative impact on the economy. This metric can also be derived from Statistics Canada data.
Average home prices	The health of the residential housing market is a critical component to measure quality of life, the strength of the local economy, and housing affordability. This data can be tracked via the local real estate board, or trends over four years can be derived from Statistics Canada data.

Customer Service

<p>Relevant SDGs</p> <p>Goal 13: Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions</p> <p>While the SDG #13 Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions predominantly speaks to national governments, municipalities must recognize their role in promoting an open, participatory government system at the local level.</p> <p>In particular, the target under this goal that speaks to some of the metrics that can be tracked and reported under customer service is:</p> <p>“Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.”</p> <p>The practice of tracking metrics and publicly reporting creates an environment of accountability that contributes to this goal.</p>		
Metric / Indicator	Measurement	
Customer experience	Measures resident satisfaction with customer service provided by the city via a third-party survey. This metric could include the user experience for city programs as well as the transit rider experience.	
Programs & Services	This measures citizen satisfaction with municipal programs and service offerings. It is measured via a third-party survey.	



<p>Service Levels – Response Time</p>	<p>Measuring response time to respond to and resolve an inquiry can be a useful indicator of service levels. It can also support resource allocation and planning. Many municipalities strive to answer telephone service inquiries within 30 seconds at least 80 percent of the time, for example. This metric tracks their ability to meet that target. This metric can also track indicators such as transit reliability against posted schedules and winter road service standards.</p>
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Transportation Measures

<p>Relevant SDGs</p> <p>Goal 11: Sustainable Cities & Communities</p> <p>This goal calls upon cities to take a sustainable approach to development, addressing challenges like access to transportation infrastructure. Public and active transportation infrastructure is a way to make transportation more accessible for all, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>Goal 9: Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure</p> <p>This goal calls for universal access to good infrastructure that diminishes access barriers for citizens. By promoting municipal accountability for things like road quality, and public transportation use, communities can contribute to this goal.</p>		 
Metric / Indicator	Measurement	
<p>Transit Ridership</p>	<p>This metric is currently measured using the TravelWise survey platform. It allows the municipality to compare changes in ridership from previous years; after significant changes are made to routes, fares and service levels; and to other similar transit systems.</p>	
<p>Active Transportation</p>	<p>Active transportation metrics are typically measured by the provision of total kilometres of active transportation infrastructure. The length in kilometres is measured against total kilometre targets in the community’s transportation master plan, or active transportation master plan.</p>	
<p>Road Quality</p>	<p>This is typically measured using internally defined metrics to measure pavement quality on municipal roads and addressing road quality issues when appropriate.</p>	
<p>Resident Feedback</p>	<p>While this is typically a less precise measure, it can be an important indicator of the impact of speed reduction</p>	



	measures, for example.
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Fiscal Responsibility

Metric / Indicator	Measurement
Total municipal debt	This would be measured by tracking total debt and debt charges. The annual total debt is divided by the number of residents to determine the per capita debt amount. Spending trends are monitored over the long term to make sure debt can be reasonably managed by the municipality and taxpayers.
Spending	Some municipalities set targets to diminish net variance from program budgets. This metric is measured by tracking expenditures and revenues against approved budgets and reporting on any variances.
Tax increase	This metric assists communities with making good on promises to keep tax increases at minimum. As an example, the Town of Oakville pledged to keep tax increases in line with inflation. Performance is measured by the overall change in property tax from one year to the next and how that change aligns with current rates of inflation.
Tax rates benchmarked against comparator communities	Tax rates relative to other municipalities within the region or relative to other municipalities of similar size and demographic composition can be a useful comparator for prospective investors and residents.