

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING ON NOVEMBER 21, 2016
FROM:	ART ZUIDEMA CITY MANAGER
SUBJECT:	STRATEGIC PLAN: SEMI-ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT and 2016 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

That, on the recommendation of the City Manager, the following actions be taken with respect to Council's *2015-2019 Strategic Plan*:

- a) this report on the attached Semi-Annual Progress Report and the 2016 Report to the Community **BE RECEIVED**; and
- b) the approach for completing an impact assessment on the Strategic Plan as outlined in this report **BE ENDORSED**; it being noted that this approach includes engaging an external party to complete an impact assessment on the *2015-2019 Strategic Plan* with a target completion date of January 2019.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
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- o Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee (SPPC): December 2, 18, 2014; January 12, 26, 2015; February 6, 23, 26, 2015; December 7, 2015; May 16, 2016

BACKGROUND

On March 10th, 2015, City Council approved the *2015-2019 Strategic Plan* for the City of London, establishing a vision, mission, areas of focus and numerous strategies for this term of Council. The Strategic Plan includes a commitment that, “on an annual basis, City Council will report to Londoners on the implementation of the Strategic Plan, and demonstrate the progress being made each year and how this work is making a difference in the London Community.”

In December 2015, Council further directed Administration to prepare semi-annual Progress Reports (every May and November) and an annual Report to the Community (every November). These documents serve different, but complimentary, purposes. Council received the most recent Progress Report in May 2016. The most recent Report to the Community was released in December 2015. Both are available online at www.london.ca/stratplan.

The Progress Report and Report to the Community are complementary documents to articulate what *progress* has been made towards implementing the strategies in Council's *2015-2019 Strategic Plan*. In other words, these documents communicate what has been accomplished to date and what work remains.

In addition to measuring progress, understanding the *impact* of initiatives and investments is a key part of strategic planning, implementation, and monitoring. It allows organizations to understand if they are making a difference towards achieving desired outcomes. Measuring impact also provides important information for course correction and for developing new strategies.

This report presents Council with an updated Progress Report for November 2016, featuring a number of significant enhancements from the last report, as well as the 2016 Report to the Community. It also proposes an approach to assess the impact of the *2015-2019 Strategic Plan*, for Council's consideration.

Semi-Annual Progress Report

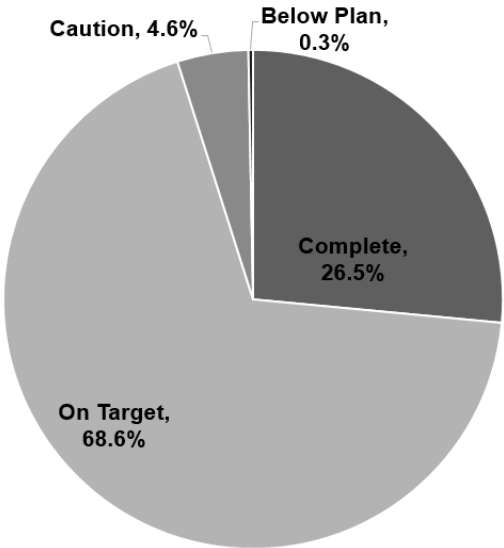
The purpose of Council's semi-annual Progress Report is to identify the status of every strategy in the *2015-2019 Strategic Plan*. An initial Progress Report was received by Council in December 2015. Further details were requested on the planned next steps for each strategy. The May 2016 Progress Report included forward-looking milestones, including dates, to identify next steps on each strategy. The May 2016 Progress Report demonstrated that 97% of the milestones having a target date at or before the first quarter (Q1) of 2016 were completed.

Based on Committee and Council discussions, a number of improvements have been made in the format and reporting of the November 2016 Progress Report:

- Administration has implemented a web-based tool in order to track progress towards Council's Strategic Plan. Prior to this report, tracking process has involved significant manual efforts. With an online tool, Progress reports will be more accessible to Council and the public and more efficient for staff to prepare. Since May 2016, Administration conducted a competitive process and selected ClearPoint as the vendor for this application. All of the strategies and milestones associated with Council's Strategic Plan have been input into the database, and staff in all Service Areas have received training on use of the tool. The Progress Report (attached as Appendix A) is automatically generated from this database, and will be available online at www.london.ca/stratplan
- Building on the ClearPoint database, a new Public Dashboard has also been developed. This Dashboard provides the public and Council with an ability to easily identify what progress has been made, and what work remains, at any level of the Strategic Plan. The Dashboard provides a snapshot of the overall level of progress towards the Strategic Plan, the level of progress towards each of the four Strategic Areas of Focus (Strengthening our Community, Building a Sustainable City, Growing our Economy, and Leading in Public Service), and more specific levels of detail within each focus area. The Dashboard is also available online at www.london.ca/dashboard
- Based on Committee and Council feedback, the Progress Report also now includes additional information including an opportunity to highlight specific accomplishments or provide a text explanation for variance where a milestone has not been completed by the target date.

The November 2016 Progress Report demonstrates, on whole, that work towards implementing Council's Strategic Plan remains on track and moving forward. In total, 271 milestones are completed, 701 milestones are on target, 46 have been identified as caution (milestone is delayed by one quarter/3 months), and 3 milestones are below plan (milestone is delayed by 2 quarters or more/6 months or more).

Progress Report (attached as Appendix A) identifies the status of each milestone, and provides additional details where applicable.



2016 Report to the Community

For many years, the City of London has released an annual Report to the Community to highlight key activities and accomplishments from the past 12 months. This document does not provide an update on every strategy; rather, it summarizes a shorter list of key activities contributing towards delivering on Council's Strategic Plan. It provides a more qualitative, user friendly narrative as a complementary document to the more detailed, qualitative Progress Report.

The 2016 Report to the Community showcases a number of specific accomplishments from 2016 and features photos contributed by Londoners through a photo contest. It is available online at www.london.ca/stratplan.

Proposed Impact Assessment Approach

For the first time in London's history, City Council has established a cycle for strategic planning, budgeting and regular reporting on progress and accomplishments.

In 2015, Council developed a Strategic Plan for the years 2015 to 2019. This overlap of one year into the following Council term provides continuity in direction. The 2015-2019 Strategic Plan then guided the development of the first Multi-Year Budget, for 2016-2019. The next Council will therefore have an existing Strategic Plan and Budget for the first year of the Council term, and as a starting point to develop the next Strategic Plan and Multi-Year Budget. The benefit of the cycle staggering Council terms is that it allows time for new Councils to establish their strategic direction and budgets, while providing continuity and focus (keeping the work going) while these new plans and budgets are developed.

This cycle also incorporates significant reporting and measurement. As noted earlier in this report, this reporting includes Progress Reports every May and November, and an annual Report to the Community every November.

This report recommends adding one additional step to this cycle: the completion of an impact assessment (as pictured below, as the second step in the diagram). The purpose of an impact assessment is to determine what difference an organization is actually making towards their desired outcomes. It provides important information for course correction and the formulation of new strategies, and Strategic Plans.



It is a best practice to have impact assessments conducted by an objective, expert, external party. It is proposed that an impact assessment be conducted by an external party with a target date of January 2019, to provide a helpful starting point for the next Council in building their strategic plan by identifying where focus is needed; and, it would support the creation of the next multi-year budget by identifying where investment may also be required.

In exploring approaches to impact assessments, Civic Administration has compiled an extensive list of available metrics and indicators which could be used in the impact assessment. These metrics are currently collected and readily available. This includes results from the annual community survey, census and other publically available data, and measures collected through the Municipal Benchmarking Network of Canada (MBNC, formerly OMBI) and other efforts. This list of available data could be used as a starting point to conduct an impact assessment.

Should Council wish to proceed in this direction, Administration would conduct a competitive process in order to identify an expert to conduct the assessment. A report would come back to Council, targeted for May 2017, with further information about the process to proceed.

CONCLUSION

The City of London is a complex organization, providing nearly 100 services that Londoners rely on every day. Council and Administration, together with community partners, also undertake many strategic initiatives each year. It can be difficult to communicate everything that is happening because of the volume of work that takes place each year. The Semi-Annual Progress Report and Report to the Community aim to address this challenge by providing easy ways for the community, Council and Administration to track progress and monitor implementation. Council's *2015-2019 Strategic Plan* sets a bold vision for London, and these tools will help us to achieve it.

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