

Report to Corporate Services Committee

To: Chair and Members
Corporate Services Committee
From: Anna Lisa Barbon, CPA, CGA
Managing Director, Corporate Services and City Treasurer,
Chief Financial Officer
Subject: Strategic Plan Variance Report
Date: February 8, 2021

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Corporate Services and City Treasurer, Chief Financial Officer, the following report on the Strategic Plan Progress Variance **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Executive Summary

As part of the Strategic Plan reporting cycle, variance reports are completed for any actions identified as 'caution' or 'below' plan in the Semi-Annual Progress Report. These reports are submitted to the appropriate Standing Committee following the tabling of the May and November Progress Reports. This report provides an overview of the actions relating to the Corporate Services Committee.

Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

Council's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan includes the Strategic Area of Focus 'Leading in Public Service.' This includes the Expected Result 'The City of London is trusted, open, and accountable in service of our community' and the Strategy 'Improve public accountability and transparency in decision making.'

Analysis

1.0 Background Information

1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee (SPPC): November 25, 2019, June 23, 2020, November 17, 2020.

2.0 Discussion and Considerations

2.1 Background

On April 23, 2019, Council set the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan for the City of London. This is a critical document that identifies Council's vision, mission, and the strategic areas of focus for 2019-2023. It identifies the specific outcomes, expected results and strategies that Council and Civic Administration will deliver on together over the next four years.

The Strategic Plan also includes a commitment to report regularly to Londoners on the implementation of the Strategic Plan, demonstrating progress being made and how this work is having an impact in the community.

As part of the Strategic Plan reporting cycle, variance reports are completed for any actions identified as 'caution' or 'below' plan in the Semi-Annual Progress Report. These reports are submitted to the appropriate Standing Committee following the tabling of the May and November Progress Reports.

2.2 Discussion

This report outlines the actions corresponding to the Corporate Services Committee that, as of November 2020 that were identified as 'caution' or 'below plan'. This report covers two milestones that were flagged as 'caution'.

Overall Strategic Plan Progress

As of November 2020, 547 (93.3%) of all actions are complete or on target. 15 (2.6%) actions were marked as 'caution' (actions behind by one quarter or three months or actions that are in progress or not yet started that are flagged as possibly not being completed by the target end date). There were no actions that were noted as 'below plan'.

Variance Explanations

1. Strategic Area of Focus: Leading in Public Service

Outcome: The City of London is a leader in public service as an employer, a steward of public funds, and an innovator of service

Expected Result: Maintain London's finances in a transparent and well-planned manner to balance equity and affordability over the long term.

Strategy: Review and update the City's financial strategic planning, principles, and policies.

Action: Update the Corporation's Strategic Financial Plan

- Current End Date: 12/31/21
- Revised End Date: 12/31/22.
- Rationale and Implications: Due to the service impacts and changing priorities associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, the completion date for the update of the Corporation's Strategic Financial Plan is expected to be delayed. Some of the foundational work (originally anticipated to be completed in 2020) required for the update of the Strategic Financial Plan was deferred due to other priority work related to monitoring and responding to COVID-19 financial impacts. These deferred activities, including reviewing the Debt Management Policy and the City's internal debt cap (among others), are anticipated to be completed in 2021. The compilation and review of the remainder of the Strategic Financial Plan is now anticipated to occur in 2022, in advance of the development of the 2024-2027 Multi-Year Budget.

2. Strategic Area of Focus: Leading in Public Service

Outcome: The City of London is a leader in public service as an employer, a steward of public funds, and an innovator of service

Expected Result: Maintain London's finances in a transparent and well-planned manner to balance equity and affordability over the long term.

Strategy: Develop tax policy to align with Council priorities of the Strategic Plan.

Action: Develop future tax policy objectives

- Current End Date: 6/30/22
- Revised End Date: No new end date proposed at this time.
- Rationale and Implications: To adapt to COVID-19, a host of changes were announced by the Province that not only impact but inform tax policy. On March 25, 2020, the Minister of Finance announced the Province's decision to postpone the 2020 Assessment update which impacts property assessments not only for 2021, but possible future year phase in values. 2021 property assessments are generally based on the fully phased-in January 1, 2016 current values, consistent with 2020 values. At this time no new dates have been provided on when municipalities can expect updated assessments. Further as part of the 2020 Budget announced in November (Ontario), the Province announced significant changes to the Business Education Tax Rates, as well as the optional small business property subclass. While amendments to the *Assessment Act* has been passed, the regulation regarding this option class has not yet been filed.

