

Staff Report



To	City Council
Service Area	Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
Date	Monday, June 28, 2021
Subject	Guelph. Future Ready Progress Report

Recommendation

That the Guelph. Future Ready Progress Report, dated June 28, 2021, be approved.

Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Council and the community with a progress report on the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and Strategic Initiatives (SI) in the [2019-2023 Strategic Plan: Guelph. Future Ready](#).

Key Findings

With the creation and implementation of the new Strategic Plan, the organization has started the shift towards a more performance-based and data-driven culture that clearly links corporate strategic goals to resource allocation and measurable performance results.

Several deliverables are foundational to this culture change and one of the first deliverables is the Guelph. Future Ready Progress Report. This [digital report](#) (see Attachment 1) highlights key data and stories to present a balanced and transparent view of how the corporation is making progress towards achieving its strategic plan, including key performance indicators (KPIs) and strategic initiatives (SIs).

The past 15 months have been unlike any other. The COVID-19 pandemic has hampered progress in some strategic areas and accelerated it in others (such as digital service delivery). Overall, the organization has performed well. Staff have worked hard to maintain a solid financial foundation, adjust the focus of key initiatives to respond to the current environment and have taken on new critical work to address inequity and systemic racism (as noted in attachment 2).

In addition, as part of the Future Ready implementation, the corporation has undertaken a significant review of its corporate performance management (CPM) culture, supporting policies and systems and identified key areas for improvement. Staff have identified key actions over the coming year to address these areas, working across all service areas to increase skills, knowledge and capacity to undertake more consistent data-driven corporate performance management activities at both the strategic and operational levels. More detail can be found in the [Performance Management Framework Update](#) Information Report presented to Council on March 12, 2021.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications resulting from this report.

Financial implications related to implementation of the action plans to achieve success in the KPIs and SIs will be presented to Council through the normal budget process.

Report

Background

Since the Guelph. Future Ready Strategic Plan was approved, our community has experienced unprecedented challenges and change. Despite the challenges over the past year, the City has made significant progress in many key areas of its strategic plan and has also taken on new important work to respond to community needs such as the COVID-19 pandemic response and recovery as well as the deep reflection and action required to address systemic racism and inequity.

While COVID-19 has presented the organization with challenges never seen before, staff have risen above and beyond to continue providing exceptional services and value for tax dollars. That said, there are still important areas for improvement and the Future Ready Progress Report highlights these. It will be important, as Council deliberates the 2022/2023 multi-year budget, to consider what resources are required to support progress in these areas of strategic importance.

Overall, the [Future Ready Progress Report](#) provides Council with an update on the City's progress against its 2019-2023 [Future Ready Action Plans and Performance Measurement Framework](#) presented to Council on September 28, 2020. This report is also in alignment with Objective 2 in the [CAO presentation to Council](#) on January 11, 2021: "Given the budget investment by Council, provide Council an annual report reflecting the City's operational successes for 2020 as part of our Strategic Plan by Q2 2021."

The [digital report](#) (see Attachment 1) is presented according to Strategic Priority Area, e.g. Powering our Future, Sustaining our Future, etc., in alignment with the [2021 Budget presentation](#), and the [2019-2023 Strategic Plan: Guelph. Future Ready](#). This report is a critical component of the organization's performance and public accountability cycle as shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 Performance and Accountability Cycle



Progress Report Summary - KPIs and SIs

Powering our Future: An economy that empowers us

This strategic priority area has a goal that the City of Guelph contributes to a sustainable, creative and smart local economy that is connected to regional and global markets and supports shared prosperity for everyone. It has two (2) KPIs and seven (7) SIs. For detailed information on all Strategic Plan KPIs and SIs, refer to Attachment 2. Below are progress highlights:

- **Our Food Future:** The organization has made some significant progress to support new and existing businesses to adapt to the current business environment as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, the [Our Food Future](#), Smart Cities project team has started implementing its Build Back Better 10 Point Plan resulting in the creation of seventeen (17) new circular businesses to date. This KPI has been updated to better reflect the work of this project as presented in Attachment 3.
- **Employment Survey:** The Economic Development and Tourism department has been working in partnership with community-based agencies to support local business who have faced unprecedented challenges. In order to gain basic baseline data on Guelph's business community, an abridged employment survey will be conducted by the end of 2021. This information will be used to track employment activity in Guelph and assist in connecting businesses with relevant support programs.
- **Innovation Strategy:** The development of the City's Innovation Strategy is reporting a slight delay, as the program was impacted by resourcing limitations during the pandemic. Plans are in place to re-start these efforts in the second half in 2021.

Sustaining our Future: An environment that sustains us

This strategic priority area has a goal that the City of Guelph cares for the local environment, responds to climate change and prepares Guelph for a net-zero-

carbon future. It has three (3) KPIs and four (4) SIs. For detailed information on all KPIs and SIs, refer to Attachment 2. Below are progress highlights:

- **Achieving 100RE:** The City of Guelph continues to move towards the target of 100% renewable energy by 2050 (100RE). As reported in the [2019 Environmental Sustainability Report](#), corporate energy consumption was reduced by 1.45% (2.2 million kWh) and 24.4% of all corporate energy was supplied from renewable sources.
- **Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory:** Staff are working to develop a community energy and GHG inventory. While doing so, a robust process is to be established that will allow for ongoing tracking of the Community Net Zero Carbon by 2050 KPI. These data are to be shared with the community and are to enable the City of Guelph (community and corporation) to make informed decisions on how to reduce community-wide energy consumption and GHG emissions.
- **Improving Measurement:** Staff recognize that additional work is required to measure the percentage reduction of climate risk exposure for the City's built and natural assets and percentage reduction in GHG emissions to achieve Community Net-Zero carbon targets. KPIs in this area are in a planning year; the work happening to gather the data available, and in some cases, gather data previously uncollected, is part of Guelph's larger journey in maturing its corporate performance management processes. Additional detail regarding the corporate performance management journey of the organization can be found in the [Implementing a Performance-Based Culture](#) section of this report below.
- **Climate Adaptation Plan:** The schedule for this SI has been delayed. Later this year, a project manager will be in place to develop the governance structure and prepare the Request for Proposals that will be released pending Council's approval of this 2022 capital budget request.
- **Sustainability Master Plan:** This work has not yet started. A request for a staff resource and budget will be put forward in the 2022 budget cycle to undertake this body of work.

Navigating our Future: A transportation network that connects us

This strategic priority area has a goal that the City of Guelph fosters easy, accessible movement through trails, paths, roads and corridors to tie the community together and connect Guelph's economy with other regions. It has four (4) KPIs and five (5) SIs. For detailed information on all KPIs and SIs, refer to Attachment 2. Below are progress highlights:

- **Guelph Transit Innovation:** Transit and transportation have been considerably impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic with an immediate loss of revenue as ridership levels declined up to 85% and transportation patterns seeing significant disruption. Guelph Transit maintained base-route service levels on a 30-minute schedule throughout the day, seven days per week, and financial losses were kept to a minimum. Due to the operational decisions made, savings of approximately \$3.8M were realized to minimize impact of revenue losses. There was also innovation in service delivery as shown through the [Guelph Transit Microtransit Service Delivery Model](#) Information Report presented to Council on October 30, 2020.
- **Investing in Green Infrastructure:** In terms of the City's goals to invest in green infrastructure identified in the strategic plan, the City's fleet has 3.2% of

its vehicles using clean and efficient technology. Using the current replacement schedule planned for 2021 to 2023, there are potentially nine (9) more light-duty vehicles and nine (9) transit buses, including one (1) expansion bus that can be ordered as electric drive vehicles; however, COVID-19 has negatively impacted automotive supply chains and current procurement of vehicles may be delayed. This KPI has been clarified to reflect the City's focus on green fleet technology; measurement processes to determine the level at which all infrastructure is using clean and efficient technologies needs to be developed (see Attachment 3).

- **Non-Auto Modes of Transportation:** In 2018, 18% of trips conducted in Guelph were carried out by non-auto modes, which means they were carried out without the use of a vehicle. The City is adding more trails as part of the [Guelph Trails Master Plan](#), which will develop a cohesive city-wide trail system that will connect people and places through a network that is off-road wherever possible and supported by on-road links where necessary.
- **Road Safety:** Safety on public highways is a priority and, from 2015-2019, 1.4% of all collisions in Guelph resulted in a major injury or fatal outcome. The [Community Road Safety Strategy](#) is being implemented. Some of the work being done by Engineering and Transportation Services to reduce the number noted above includes installation of ladder crosswalks, red light cameras and leading pedestrian interval locations (a pedestrian head-start before vehicle traffic at a signal). Development of the Connectivity Index will be done concurrently with the [Transportation Master Plan](#) (TMP) to ensure alignment. The TMP update to Council in December 2021 will also provide information on the [Vision Zero](#) initiative. The goal of this work is to eventually eliminate all traffic fatalities and major injuries; this will take time and ongoing support from Council and the community.

Working Together for our Future: A modern government that works with us

This strategic priority area has a goal that the City of Guelph runs an effective, fiscally responsible and trusted local government with engaged, skilled and collaborative employees. It has five (5) KPIs and four (4) SIs. For detailed information on all KPIs and SIs, refer to Attachment 2. Below are progress highlights:

- **Employee Engagement:** An important success to highlight is the Employee Engagement Index score that improved by 17.9% from 41.5% (2019) to 59.4% (2020). Ensuring higher staff engagement has been even more important during the last year where many teams have experienced significant impacts during the COVID-19 pandemic. Improved communications from leadership to ensure staff are supported through remote work and other disruptions has been important. These efforts have been critical through the past year and also provides a good foundation for improvement in future years.
- **Digital Service Delivery:** A key area of opportunity is the implementation of the City's customer service strategy and continued digitization of city services. While the pandemic drove many services online in an accelerated way, the City is unable to provide any baseline data regarding the percentage of digital transactions it currently provides to citizens, users or businesses because of a lack of data. There is a plan in place to measure, collect and report this data in the future. In addition, a contract Program Manager has been hired for this work

which should help accelerate progress. The strategic initiative 'creation of a Digital Services Team that leads the digitization of service delivery' is reporting schedule and budget as yellow. A business case for further investment in the software tools to implement the City's customer service strategy and the staffing complement to manage it will be included in the 2022 budget process. Included in this business case will be the reduced dependency on the current, traditional methods of customer service.

- **Credit Rating and Tax Burden:** Despite significant financial challenges over the past year, the [City's credit rating](#) was maintained at AA+ for 2020. From 2015 to 2020, the City of Guelph has maintained AA+ stable outlook. The total tax and rate burden as a percentage of household income is 5.1% for 2020. The strategic initiative to 'implement the [Long-Term Financial Planning Framework \(LTFF\)](#)' is reporting schedule as yellow due to the delay of a dashboard launch. However, there is now an [LTFF online presence](#) with financial policies, including debt, reserve and budget policies. These documents assist in communicating the budget to the public. The LTFF will be a document that evolves and grows as the City grows. The initial LTFF Policy was approved by Council in February 2020. Since that time, staff have worked on alignment of our financial policies to this LTFF that included the Debt Management Policy in 2020 and the General Budget Policy in 2021. The remaining body of work, including a corporate financial dashboard and Corporate Revenue Policy, is now expected in 2022. Early indications support that the City's adoption of a multi-year budget process will have a positive influence on the City's credit rating assessment signaling the maturation of the City's LTFF.
- **Satisfaction with Government Services:** Working collaboratively as an organization is a way that we can improve citizen satisfaction with government services provided by the City of Guelph. In the [2019 Citizen Satisfaction Survey](#), 89% of respondents were satisfied with the services provided to them.

Building our Future: A community that supports us

This strategic priority area has a goal that the City of Guelph makes strategic investments that nurture social well-being, provide landmark beauty and offer a safe place where everyone belongs. It has seven (7) KPIs and seven (7) SIs. For detailed information on all KPIs and SIs, refer to Attachment 2. Below are progress highlights:

- **Corporate Assets:** In 2020, 68% of assets were in "fair" or better condition. The strategic initiative to 'implement the [Corporate Asset Management Plan](#)' is reporting scope and budget as yellow. Establishing a more precise target for this KPI requires working with City Council, service areas, and the community to set Levels of Service targets.
- **New Affordable Housing:** Building new affordable housing units is the focus of the KPI regarding the percentage of affordable housing units (ownership and rental). In 2020, the 25% target for new developments and the 4% target for secondary rental units were met; however, the 1% target for primary rental units was not met. Detailed target and results information can be found in the [Guelph Growth Management and Affordable Housing Report](#) presented to Council on April 9, 2021. The targets were created as part of the [City of Guelph's Affordable Housing Strategy \(2017\)](#) and will be reviewed in 2024. The implementation of this strategy is reporting scope and schedule as red, and budget as yellow. Budget for a temporary staff resource was approved in 2021

and is pending discussions with Wellington County. At the time of writing, further discussion on this item is scheduled for the Committee of the Whole Meeting on June 7, 2021.

- **Perceptions of Safety:** Safety is a multifaceted concept and a difficult one to measure with a single data point. One of the ways to measure safety is through survey data. A community survey presented in the [Guelph Police Service \(GPS\) Strategic Plan](#) reported at least 88% of residents perceive themselves to be safe or somewhat safe in the city in all scenarios surveyed. The next survey will be conducted in 2022. It is important to note that there are a number of factors that contribute to how safe people feel, and many of those factors are beyond police control. Another measure, the Violent Crime Severity Index (CSI), indicated that Guelph had the least amount of violent crime in 2019 compared against all other Census Metropolitan Areas (CMA) in the country. For additional information on the CSI, please see page 50 of the [November 2020 Guelph Police Services Board report](#).
- **Community Safety and Well-Being Plan:** The City, along with partner organizations have been working for many years to improve wellbeing and safety in Guelph and most recently are re-imagining what safety means to our community from an anti-racism and equity perspective. This work informed the development of Guelph's Community Plan (2019) and a series of collaborative action plans created by partners in the areas of mental health and substance use, prevention of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and increasing resilience, creating supportive housing and ending chronic homelessness. With this, the community has recently set the ambitious goal for Guelph - *to set the standard for the elimination of systemic racism*. All these things underpin wellbeing and safety. The City continues to work with an external advisory committee¹ to plan the next steps required, and to identify the extent of the needed investment required to complete this work. This work is guided by legislative requirement under the Police Services Act (O.Reg. 527/18), however the community recognizes the limitations of that framework, and is working with an approach that best fits Guelph, and the impacts of inequity, systemic racism and oppression. This blueprint will continue to evolve and will serve as a community wide framework to guide meaningful engagement, identify action plans and develop measurements of success.
- **Emergency Response Times:** Another factor in how safe people feel is response times for emergency services. This KPI was divided into response times for fire, police and paramedic services. In Fire Services, 61.5% of call responses met the target of 4 minutes from call received to first unit arrival. In Police Service, the median Priority 1 response time returned to previous levels after a 50 second slower time in 2019, with a 50 second faster time of 6 minutes and 25 seconds in 2020. A lower call volume in 2020 and human resourcing may have contributed to this positive variance. Additional information can be found in the [2019 GPS Annual Report](#). Finally, in Paramedic Service in 2020, 68% of

¹ Working group consists of representatives from the Guelph Police Services, Upper Grand District School Board, Canadian Mental Health Association, Social Services Department - County of Wellington, Guelph Community Health Centre, Family and Child Services, Toward Common Ground, Neighbourhood Support Coalition, Wellington Catholic District School Board, Immigrant Services, Wellington Guelph Drug Strategy and the Corporation of the City of Guelph.

Canadian Triage and Acuity Scale (CTAS) 1 cases had a response time within 8 minutes; this exceeds the selected target of 65%. Detailed information about target setting and results can be found in the [Paramedic Service Response Performance 2019 and Performance Plan 2021](#) Council report. The Committee of the Whole Meeting on June 7, 2021 will provide Council with the updated 2020 Paramedic Service Response report. Note that the Paramedic Service response time performance for Sudden Cardiac Arrest involves multiple agencies and public access defibrillators. The actual response times of public access defibrillators are often difficult to capture consistently. Paramedic Service may be a department of the City of Guelph, but they also provide service to the County of Wellington.

- **Guelph Residents' Connection to the City:** The last KPI in Building our Future is meant to provide an overall perspective of the residents of Guelph and their feeling of connection to the city. The strategic plan and all the preceding KPIs and SIs are contributory factors to this KPI. The [2019 Citizen Satisfaction survey](#) reports 86% of residents expressing a sense of belonging to Guelph.
- **Construction of Key Assets:** The [Baker Street redevelopment](#) and the [South End Community Centre](#) (SECC) projects both made significant progress in 2020 obtaining budget approval. This timing also allowed the City to debenture both projects during the current period of low market interest rates securing 10-year debt for under 2%. However, both the Baker Street redevelopment and the SECC have had schedule impacts due to COVID-19 restrictions that disrupted community consultations. Furthermore, design changes have been considered to help make the buildings more sustainable and environmentally friendly. Council was presented with the business case for the [City's Operations Campus](#) at the Committee of the Whole Meeting on May 3, 2021 and approved all recommendations at the Council Meeting on May 31, 2021.
- **Equity in the City:** A new strategic initiative has been added to the plan to reflect the [organization's focus on equity](#), namely, 'Complete the Community Plan Refresh, Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities Action Plan to ensure that the City delivers equity in service delivery and policy.' Staff are developing the plan to carry out this work in 2021 and beyond. See Attachment 3 for details on changes in the strategic plan regarding equity.

Implementing a Performance-Based Culture

The Future Ready Progress Report is the first major deliverable of the new performance-based culture. As this work progresses, staff aim to provide more frequent performance updates to stakeholders and improvements to overall data collection and availability are planned. This is an important first step in moving towards being more performance-oriented and data-driven as an organization.

The organization has created a strategic plan KPI dashboard. Many of the data points in this dashboard will remain constant since the indicators are reported annually or over a longer period of time. Over time, staff plan to automate these data so that collection and reporting will be more real-time in nature. Another goal for this dashboard is to develop and consolidate other operational dashboards and KPIs in one place. Displaying data this way will help Council and stakeholders get a more comprehensive picture of how the organization is performing both at a strategic and operational level. This will serve as a basis for staff to evaluate all the strategic KPI data available to them, determine gaps, and make it easier to do corporate performance management at a departmental level.

Since this is a cultural shift in the way the organization approaches data and reporting, it can be expected that there will be some limitations to the first progress report. The main limitation is that some of the KPI targets require additional definition with the KPI owners so that they can be accurately assessed using a “Green-Yellow-Red” traffic signal system. A “direction of travel” for each KPI has been identified for 2021 and that will be used as the assessment criteria for the next progress report.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications resulting from this report.

Financial implications related to implementation of the action plans to achieve success in the KPIs and SIs will be presented to Council through the normal budget process.

Consultations

The Executive Team and the Corporate Management Team have been integral to the leadership and completion of this work. The strategy team has been working with the Performance Management Advisory Group (PMAG) to develop a process that results in efficient, enhanced reporting of strategic plan KPIs and strategic initiatives. The PMAG is a cross-departmental group consisting of stakeholders from across the organization at various levels from DCAO to individual contributors. The departments involved in the PMAG are listed below:

- Corporate Communications and Customer Service
- Economic Development and Tourism
- Engineering and Transportation Services
- Environmental Services
- Finance
- Guelph Fire Services
- Guelph Police Service
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Operations
- Strategy, Innovation and Intergovernmental Services

Strategic Plan Alignment

This report provides a progress update of the KPIs and SIs approved as part of the [Future Ready Action Plans and Performance Measurement Framework](#) Council report presented on September 28, 2020.

Attachments

Attachment-1 Link to the Digital Component of the Future Ready Progress Report

Attachment-2 Overview of Strategic Priority Areas KPIs and Strategic Initiatives

Attachment-3 Updates to the Strategic Plan documentation

Departmental Approval

None.

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