

To: SPECIAL COUNCIL

Meeting Date: 2/15/2022

Subject: 2021 Year in Review

Submitted By: Cheryl Zahnleiter, Deputy City Manager, Corporate Enterprise

Prepared By: Brooke Lambert, Director Corporate Strategy

Report No.: 22-003-CRE

File No.: N/A

Wards Affected: All Wards

RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT Report 22-003-CRE 2021 Year in Review be received.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Purpose

The 2021 Year in Review is a key component of the City's corporate performance management framework. It communicates the City's achievements as they relate to the goals and objectives of the Cambridge Connected Strategic Plan.

This review is important to ensure that the City is transparent and accountable to the public and other stakeholders on an ongoing basis.

Key Findings

The 2021 Year in Review highlights the City's pandemic response and key milestones achieved by the City as of December 2021. It does not include the City's financial statements for 2021 which will be presented to Council later in 2022.

Financial Implications

The 2021 year-end financial statements will be provided to Council in the second quarter of 2022.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

- ☐ Strategic Action; or
- ☒ Core Service

Objective(s): Not Applicable

Strategic Action: Not Applicable

Program: Governance

Core Service: Corporate Performance Management

BACKGROUND:

The City of Cambridge is committed to achieving excellence in customer service. This work is supported by an integrated corporate performance management framework that includes the strategy, tools and practices needed to drive the continuous improvement of City services and operations.

At the centre of this framework is the City's Strategic Plan, Cambridge Connected, which was approved by Council in 2021. Implementation of the strategic plan includes outlining what the City will do to meet the goals and objectives of the plan and then reporting back to the community on the progress made.

The 2021 Year in Review is a web-based product with content accessible on the City's website, including the City's COVID-19 response (Appendix A) and other City accomplishments (Appendix B). This approach is consistent with that of 2020 given the continued impacts related to the COVID pandemic. While no hard copy document will be available, information will be accessible and available to those who are interested.

ANALYSIS:**2021 Pandemic Response and Accomplishments**

2021 has continued to be a year focused on meeting the challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Much of the City's approach has been to ensure a coordinated, informed and flexible response to the evolving needs of the situation. During this time, the City has also continued to provide essential services, innovate where needed, and keep key projects moving ahead – all while keeping cost-containment and financial sustainability at the forefront.

The City of Cambridge's pandemic experience and response has been captured in the attached 2021 pandemic timeline. These significant experiences have greatly impacted everyday life and employees have come together to respond to emergency orders and limit the spread of the virus in our community.

Public Value “At a Glance”

As part of the 2021 strategic plan update, a new Public Value statement was included in the Cambridge Connected framework. Public value means that as a city, we commit to considering the “big picture” impact of all our actions and to communicating how we are delivering value through our work. The principles of sustainability, leadership, collaboration, transparency and engagement are core to how we deliver service excellence and promote pride of place in Cambridge.

Some 2021 highlights for each of these principles are included below:

Sustainability

- Cambridge named a “Tree City of the World” for continued management of the City’s urban forest
- 5th straight year receiving the Canadian Award for Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association
- 130 kilometers of trails maintained
- 6.7 kilometers of road renewal and 5 kilometers of pipe renewals (water, sanitary and storm pipes)
- Purchased 2 electric ice re-surfacers, and planning for the introduction of new hybrid pumper trucks and installed 6 EV charging stations at 17 Cambridge St. to support our growing electric fleet
- Upgraded 15,600 water meters as part of our Smart Metering Project (for a total of 35,000 to date – 87% complete)

Leadership

- Received the E.A. Danby Award (shared with Ottawa, Windsor and Pelham) for the safe and innovative delivery of the 2020 by-election
- 20 government relations reviews or advocacy initiatives completed
- 13 new actions approved as part of the Cambridge Connected strategic plan

Collaboration

- Cambridge Bee City collaborative partnership resulted in a “Bee City Canada” designation for the City of Cambridge
- 17 weeks of extended patios and pedestrian-only areas made possible through partnerships in downtown Hespeler and Galt Business Improvement Areas
- 50% by 2030 GHG emissions reduction target adopted by all eight municipal councils in Waterloo Region

- Collaborated with Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region to implement “Enhanced School Zones” at 2-3 schools across the City

Transparency

- Upgraded existing technology in Council Chambers to deliver virtual and hybrid meetings to the public.
- Shared information about city progress and results with 51+ news releases and 982+ Facebook posts
- Received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association recognizing transparency in budgeting
- More than 70,000 customer service calls answered by Service Cambridge

Engagement

- Asked for input and involved the public in decision-making with 133 responses to the 2022 Budget Engagement Survey and 18 projects shared on Engage Cambridge
- 260 staff reports submitted
- 243 delegations heard at Special Council Meetings
- 34 Special Council meetings streamed live and posted on YouTube

Approving the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan – Cambridge Connected

In January 2021, Council approved the updated goals and objectives of the Cambridge Connected strategic plan. The plan was developed with considerable community engagement, including through Engage Cambridge, online focus groups and outreach.

City Council also approved 13 new strategic actions as part of the final phase of the strategic plan. Six actions are within the City's mandate to lead, and seven will be achieved in collaboration with others. Overall, more than 2,000 responses were received to inform the direction of the plan.

Taking a Leadership Role

The City of Cambridge is committed to achieving the goals and objectives of the strategic plan by focusing on areas where we can best leverage our efforts. Below is a summary of some of the highlights from 2021.

- **We created and activated spaces that offer things for people to do.** Several important steps were taken towards laying the groundwork for meeting the recreation needs of the future. This included completing two major milestones for the new Cambridge Recreation Complex – as well as approving an extensive renovation to Preston Memorial Auditorium, the Fountain Street Soccer (including a partnership with Conestoga College that will contribute \$1.5 million towards the project). We also continued to activate community spaces by creating two outdoor event locations for safe, summer fun (Forbes Park in July and Churchill Park in August) and continuing to celebrate events such as the 20th Anniversary of the Cambridge Centre for the Art, Canada Day, Oktoberfest, Remembrance Day and “My Winter City”.
- **We provided age-friendly services that are accessible to all.** In 2021, services continued to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the changing nature of public safety requirements. Staff responded by offering creative and flexible options designed to meet the needs of all community members safely. Some highlights included City summer camps (1400 spaces filled to 98% capacity), Adult Day Program, Without Walls (WOW) and committed to becoming recognized as an Age-Friendly Community by the World Health Organization.
- **We established our core areas as attractive destinations.** The health of our unique core areas is vital to our sense of community and our economic prosperity. Many thanks go to the staff and volunteers who participated in activities like our spring clean-up efforts and the Ambassador Team who focus on making connections and supporting everyone who lives, works and visits the

downtown cores on an ongoing basis. In 2021, a big step was taken with the approval and launch of the Core Areas Improvement Plan. This plan includes several financial incentive programs for those hard-hit businesses as well as programs that provide important financial aid for building owners to revitalize our historic downtowns. Other assistance for the three Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) included additional funding and waiving permit fees to help fund the holiday decorating program.

- **We enhanced equity and inclusion efforts.** As a growing and evolving community, Cambridge recognizes the need to address the systemic inequities that impact many people in our City. In 2021, this led to the creation of a Diversity and Inclusion Communication and Training Strategy aimed at internal and external communication efforts. The purpose of this is to educate and build awareness of relevant events, training, facts, trends and other useful and timely information that ensures our services meet and advance the needs of our community. The Cambridge Fire Department also formed an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Team. Other activities related to equity and inclusion included celebrating Black History Month, the first national day for Truth and Reconciliation as well as holding the first Cambridge Newcomer Connections conference in partnership with Idea Exchange and the Kinbridge Community Association.
- **We laid the foundation for future community building.** The North Cambridge Business Park achieved some exciting milestones in 2021. This includes the first phase of servicing and the construction of the north-south collector road, including watermain, sanitary sewer water, sanitary pumping station and forcemain, storm sewer and storm water management for North Cambridge Business Park as well as the IP Park Industrial Campus. We also completed a Storm Water Management Funding Study, which was a multi-year project that will transition storm water management funding from the tax base to a dedicated rate structure.
- **We enhanced opportunities to enjoy built and natural heritage.** The Cambridge Farmer's Market has been a presence in the Galt Core for over a century. Preserving, enhancing and improving the building for current and future generations was a key initiative for the City in 2021. This was made more complex with the decision to keep the historic market open on Saturdays – thus ensuring the visitors, shoppers and vendors could continue to enjoy the space throughout the pandemic. This meant more than 65,000 visits to the market, which directly supported approximately 40 market vendors. We also invested in heritage restoration at the David Durward Centre (east façade), Riverbank

buildings (storm windows), Galt Arena (masonry), Hespeler Town Centre (heritage assessment) and Dickson Stadium (structural repairs).

Collaborating with our Partners

The City recognizes that many priorities can only be addressed by establishing strong partnerships across sectors and jurisdictional boundaries. Below is a summary of some of the ways we contributed to the wellbeing of our residents, businesses and the broader community.

- **We enabled small business to succeed.** The City of Cambridge provides essential support to the local business community and small businesses. In 2021, the City continued this support throughout the lockdowns with the #OrderFromHome campaign and restaurant map. Providing new ways for customers to experience the core areas of Hespeler and Galt, the City also ramped up support by putting in place road closures allowing for patios and enhanced pedestrian access to #supportlocal.
- **We looked at ways to increase housing options.** Exploring ways that tiny homes can form part of an attainable and affordable housing strategy is one way the City can support the increase of housing options in the City. The Tiny Home School of Architecture Partnership is expected to identify best practices, develop tools and resources and initiate a broader community conversation. We also worked with the Region on ensuring a smooth pilot project as they build 6 affordable units out of shipping containers. This is the first project of its kind in the Region and is scheduled for completion in 2022.
- **We encouraged safe and healthy neighbourhoods.** In 2021, Council approved the implementation of a 40km/hr neighbourhood speed limit pilot project in four neighbourhoods throughout the City. Reduced speed limit neighbourhoods are intended to set an expectation for more conscious driving in residential neighbourhoods. If this project is successful, neighbourhood reduced speed limits could be adopted in other individual neighbourhood areas (an expansion of this pilot) or adopted City wide in residential areas.
- **We improved access to social supports.** Cambridge is not alone in experiencing the damaging effects of social, mental health and addiction challenges within the community. One approach that has gained support is the potential for wrap-around services delivered as part of a comprehensive Consumption and Treatment Site (CTS). In October, Council endorsed a potential location for these services at the Regional building (150 Main) and will continue to work with partners to develop a path forward. This includes continued advocacy at the Provincial and Federal level around the additional resources

needed to support those in our community who are struggling to get the help they need.

- **We took action to combat climate change.** Developing strong partnerships within our region is an important part of addressing the global climate emergency. At the City, we continue to work with Reep Green Solutions to implement innovative programs that focus on helping residents live sustainably. We have also focused on improving our operations by tracking our energy consumption and reducing GHG emission. All of this is included in the Energy Conservation and Demand Management (EDCM) plan. The City is part of Climate Action WR, (a partnership with the Region of Waterloo, City of Kitchener and City of Waterloo). Further, in 2021 Council endorsed TransformWR, a community climate change strategy that was endorsed by all eight Councils in the Region of Waterloo.
- **We prepared for emergency prevention and recovery.** Emergency management was not only focused on responding to the current pandemic but has continued to evolve the response framework by developing and refining the Emergency Operations Centre Hybrid model.
- **We worked to promote and develop more transportation options.** Ensuring that our residents can travel throughout the Region in a variety of ways is an important priority. The City continues to partner with the Region to advocate for better GO Transit connections, including the completion of a Feasibility Study looking at how Cambridge can connect with the Kitchener GO rail line. In addition, the City worked with the Region to implement the Transit Supportive Strategy (TSS). TSS highlights for 2021 include funding for the installation of secure bike storage facilities near ION Bus / Stage 2 ION stations and allocation of the remaining TSS funds to facilitate Regional affordable housing projects in Cambridge.

Continuing to Deliver on Core Services

In addition to a comprehensive pandemic response and taking action on the strategic plan noted above, the City also took a proactive approach to ensuring high quality services and programs could be delivered to the community, innovate where needed, and keep key projects moving ahead. These accomplishments are outlined in Appendix C.

EXISTING POLICY / BY-LAW(S):

There is no existing policy/by-law.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

2021 financial information is currently being finalized and will be presented after the annual audit of the City's finances has been completed.

PUBLIC VALUE:**Leadership:**

2021 was a challenging year. Balancing the need to respond to the challenges associated with the pandemic, while also delivering core services as well as making progress on the strategic directions as set out by the Cambridge Connected Strategic plan required a strong vision, focused leadership and a committed team approach by all of Council, staff and the community as a whole.

The Year in Review is an opportunity to share the accomplishments of Council, Staff and the many partners that work with the City of the past year. By consistently demonstrating leadership on the priorities that are important to the citizens of Cambridge, we are able to see many steps forward (big and small) in key directions.

Transparency:

The Year in Review and associated corporate performance management framework guided by Cambridge Connected is one way that the City can ensure clear, transparent and regular communication and evaluation of its collective efforts. By sharing this information in a way that ties together the strategic actions and the year's past activities, a direct link can be established. Further, by integrating the Strategic Plan, business plan and reporting, there is enhanced accountability and responsibility.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE INPUT:**Advisory Committees Consulted:**

Not Applicable

PUBLIC INPUT:

Posted publicly as part of the report process.

INTERNAL / EXTERNAL CONSULTATION:

There was no internal/external consultation undertaken.

CONCLUSION:

The 2021 Year in Review is an opportunity to share the accomplishments of Council, Staff and the many partners that work with the City of the past year. By consistently demonstrating leadership on the priorities that are important to the citizens of Cambridge, we are able to see many steps forward (big and small) in key directions. This report provides highlights related to the public value principles; sustainability, leadership, collaboration, transparency and engagement. It also includes key milestones that move the City towards accomplishing various strategic actions. It should be noted that the City also continued to deliver and improve essential core services in addition to the coordinated and flexible pandemic response.

Lastly, the Year in Review and associated corporate performance management framework guided by Cambridge Connected is one way that the City can ensure clear, transparent and regular communication and evaluation of its collective efforts. By sharing this information in a way that ties together the strategic actions and the year's past activities, a direct link can be established. Further, by integrating the Strategic Plan, business plan and reporting, there is enhanced accountability and responsibility.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: **No**

By-law: **No**

Budget Amendment: **No**

Policy: **No**

APPROVALS:

This report has been reviewed by the Chief Financial Officer and City Solicitor.

It has been reviewed and approved by the Director, Deputy City Manager and City Manager.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1. Report 22-003-CRE Appendix A - Pandemic Timeline**
- 2. Report 22-003-CRE Appendix B - 2021 Year in Review**
- 3. Report 22-003-CRE Appendix C - 2021 Core Service Highlights**