

2022

CITY OF VICTORIA | Business & Community Relations

Victoria 3.0 Progress Report



Recovery Reinvention Resilience – 2020-2041

CITY OF VICTORIA

Committee of the Whole | July 21, 2022



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Purpose

Provide Council with a progress report on the action items achieved to date within the City's economic action plan, Victoria 3.0: Recovery Reinvention and Resilience

Approve the removal of action 9.8 - Partner with the Urban Economy Forum on UN Sustainable Development Goal 11, "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" (2020 – 2025), as it was determined that the timing of the UN Urban Economy Forum process would not be a fit for the Arts and Innovation District process

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Victoria 3.0 includes three main goals:

1. Supporting businesses to adapt to a new normal and become more resilient considering lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic
2. Creating a city and an economy that is inclusive of everyone
3. Building a sustainable economy over the next two decades which aligns with the City's Climate Leadership Plan and creates a pathway to low-carbon prosperity

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Background

- Hosted six roundtables with 145 participants. A proposed vision for Victoria 3.0 was presented, and participants were asked for their input
- More focused working groups were formed from the roundtables and participants contributed time and insights to help drive forward key action items
- The pandemic arrived placing the plan on hold and requiring staff to reposition the plan focusing on Recovery, Reinvention, and Resilience
- Plan was adopted in May of 2020 and includes 10 categories and 69 action items to be delivered from 2020 - 2026
- COVID-19 continued, and another round of engagement with business leaders was held in 2021 which helped refine and pivot Victoria 3.0 to support businesses through the ongoing pandemic and beyond



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Issues & Analysis

**BUILD
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- 50 of the 69 action items have been completed, partly completed or are ongoing by staff and community partners
- 34 initiatives have been undertaken or are ongoing since staff provided a first annual report on Victoria 3.0 to Council in May 2021

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Recovery: Our Small Businesses are the Lifeblood of Our Economy

1. Support Small Business

- BBV extended through to October 31, 2022
- Downtown Clean & Safe Committee established
- Business Hub Expansion Strategy completed
- “How to” guides created
- Economic success stories to be promoted



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2. Support Youth in the Economy

- Continued economic development education work with high school classes
- Mayor's High School Entrepreneur Award value increased
- Feature young entrepreneurs and youth business start-ups on the Business Hub website
- Host Young Entrepreneur Business Info Sessions at City Hall



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3. Support Indigenous Businesses

- Hold Quarterly Indigenous Prosperity Gatherings
- Continue Indigenous Connect Forum
- Maintain Indigenous Business Directory in partnership with GVHA, SIPP, CRD and Animikii
- Promote Inter-community business licence as a measure for on-reserve businesses to work freely and openly across the region



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4. Support Newcomer Business

- Develop a Welcoming Cities Strategy
- Continue Business Info Sessions at City Hall for Newcomers
- Offer business information and materials in translated versions



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5. Redevelop Victoria Conference Centre

- Undertake a Feasibility Study



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Reinvention and Resilience: Building a Strong and Resilient Local Economy

6. Create an Arts & Innovation District

- In 2021, Council approved funding to support planning for initial studies and public engagement for the Arts & Innovation District
- Work with landowners, other stakeholders, and the public to develop a vision and implementation framework for the Innovation District
- Develop partnerships with post-secondary institutions to support activities in the Innovation District



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7. Create an Ocean Futures Cluster

- Champion the Ocean Futures Cluster and Innovation Hub with Provincial and Federal governments
- Build relationship and create programs with Canada's Ocean Supercluster
- Secure funding to establish Ocean and Marine Innovation Hub
- Develop an Ocean and Marine Innovation Hub
- Partner with First Nations
- Develop a Governance Structure for Cluster Implementation



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8. Tech Is #1 – Tell and Sell Victoria's Tech Story

- Talent Attraction and Retention Initiative
- Attend relevant trade shows to promote Victoria tech ecosystem and attract talent
- Assist tech companies with exporting and international sales
- Develop Digital Promotion Strategy for global audience



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10. Re-Do Victoria's Brand and Story

- Emerging from the work of the Rising Economy Taskforce, Reboot: Greater Victoria's Economic Recovery Plan (2020-2022) report outlined 10 Recovery Pillars under which recommendations and actions were organized.
- One pillar was "Telling Our New Story", which is a call from multiple sectors, business leaders and other stakeholders to develop a holistic regional story that builds on our well-established tourism and hospitality brand, but expands upon it



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Ongoing and Future Action Items

- 19 items remain outstanding, in addition to the many that have started but are ongoing in nature
- City staff and our community partners and organizations will continue to deliver on these initiatives collectively, now and into the future



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Recommendation

That Council:

1. Receive this report for information
2. Approve the removal of action 9.8 - Partner with the Urban Economy Forum on UN Sustainable Development Goal 11, "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" (2020 – 2025) from Victoria 3.0: Recovery, Reinvention and Resilience economic action plan

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Conclusion

Victoria 3.0 has delivered many of the action items within the plan since inception, providing support to businesses impacted by Covid-19 and implementing significant action items to ignite economic recovery into the future.

Staff look forward to continuing to work closely with business leaders, community partners and organizations in delivering the remaining and ongoing actions set out in the plan.