



Governance and Priorities Committee Report

For the Meeting of August 20, 2015

To: Governance and Priorities Committee **Date:** August 10, 2015
From: Jason Johnson, City Manager
Subject: Highlights for Quarter 2 and Progress Update on Operational Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present an update on progress towards strategic objectives and implementation of the operational plan. It also includes the quarterly update for the Victoria Police Department, and a report outlining single source contracts issued during the first half of the year.

The operational plan notes current timelines and milestones for each 2015 initiative approved in the strategic plan and financial plan. Quarterly Highlights are also included to report on activities of the past quarter. New process measures to capture service levels have also been included and will continue to be refined over the next quarter, informed by the parallel 2016 financial planning process. These measures endeavour to provide comparators each quarter, as well as annually. Staff will continue to focus on establishing key performance indicators in the 2016 financial plan, measuring return on investment and allocation of resources to achieve specific-objectives and results.

The second quarter of the year saw the operationalizing of the new Council-approved strategic plan and 2015 financial plan. Much progress has been achieved this quarter and many initiatives have been completed. At the same time, there are a few projects where timelines have been delayed slightly but will complete in 2015, and four projects that have been deferred to 2016 to allow for more public engagement or to accommodate delivery of other priority projects. The Topaz Park tennis courts, an arterial upgrade to Cook Street, improvements at Pioneer Square, and a waterworks project on Inskip in Esquimalt have been deferred to 2016 and are described further within the operational plan.

In terms of the highlights of Quarter 2, there was a continued emphasis on building stronger relationships and increasing community involvement in operational and service processes. The second annual Development Summit occurred in June, bringing neighbourhoods, developers and contractors together with City staff to share ideas on improvements to land-use processes and improving turnaround times. Improved information tools were also introduced, with a new Development Tracker and partnership with PlaceSpeak to notify residents of neighbourhood development activity in real-time.

Meetings with neighbourhood associations on how the City can better support strong, neighbourhoods, have begun. These meetings are also engaging neighbourhood associations on the topic of local area planning to inform how these plans can be more meaningful and accelerated.

The City has engaged Jim Diers to help build shared understanding for strong neighbourhood planning approaches, and the City hopes to bring Mr. Diers back in October for public sessions.

A well-attended co-design workshop on the Cook Street corridor with the North Park Neighbourhood Association has resulted in improved plans for the area, and staff continue to work with the neighbourhood to advance preliminary design into reality for implementation in 2016. These types of partnerships demonstrate the value of community input in the planning phase, shifting a traditional paving project to a more complete streets planning approach.

Staff engagement in organizational development also remains a high priority. The strategic plan and operational plan were the focus of the May employee forum, setting the course for the coming year. "Great Ideas" sessions will occur in the fall on specific topics, and focussed training on Placemaking and neighbourhood engagement are underway. A very successful Public Works Day event occurred in May, bringing together elementary school children, retired and current staff to educate and celebrate Public Works. Union relationships are improving with greater information sharing and consultation with CUPE occurring over the past quarter. The City continues to liaise with CUPE through the development of the parking ambassador model, an in-house parking model to be introduced in January 2016. The collective agreement with the Carpenter's Union was also finalized this quarter, leaving only the Electrical union agreement to be completed this quarter. Safety in the workplace is a shared objective of staff, all unions and the organization as a whole, and the City was recently recognized by Worksafe BC for having the greatest improvement in claim durations compared to three other large municipalities.

Staff continue to break down silos and apply more interdisciplinary approaches to project management. Recent recruitments in Parks and Recreation and Sustainable Planning and Community Development departments, have added leadership capacity and fresh perspective in two key operational areas. Thomas Soulliere and Jonathan Tinney joined the Leadership Team this quarter, and a three-person interdisciplinary team has been hired to add capacity for inter-departmental projects, such as David Foster Harbour Pathway and active transportation. In addition, with Jonathan Huggett taking on responsibility for the Johnson Street Bridge Project and focussing on its strategic scope, a new approach to internal coordination of the public realm elements has been introduced.

Forty-two job competitions occurred in the second quarter and we continue to look for internal development opportunities for staff. In 2014, 60% of positions were filled internally. A new on-boarding system is being introduced to support new staff joining the organization so they can hit the ground running, armed with the information and support they need to succeed.

A joint leadership session also occurred with VicPD, to share each other's strategic plans, and discuss opportunities for collaboration. The next session is scheduled for mid-September. Victoria Police recently transferred their police boat to the Victoria Fire Department for harbour response, and the two departments continue to increase collaboration on emergency response and planning.

The summer season is always a busy one from a cultural and festival perspective. A highlight was Victoria's first Car-Free Day to occur on Douglas Street, only to be followed by a well-attended International Buskers Festival, Tour de Victoria, Canada Day, and most recently, the Symphony Splash. Victoria also celebrated two Twin City Anniversaries with Suzhou, China and Morioka, Japan since the last update. Both visits celebrated the Capital Region's relationships with Japan and China, with the installation of a Bell of Friendship in Centennial Park, and a bronze and granite dragon statue installed at Butchart Gardens.

This quarter saw increased organizational focus in the strategic area of *Social Inclusion*. An interdepartmental team identified options and supports for those seeking shelter in parks. Parks washroom hours were increased, improved signage and information have been developed, and more clean-up is occurring in parks to balance impacts and provide services. An outreach position and storage options for shopping carts are being developed. Three new rainbow crosswalks were also introduced timed with Pride Week. The crosswalks resulted in the highest social media engagement the City has experienced to date.

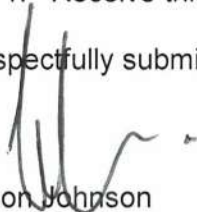
Each year, proactive reviews of specific operational service areas are completed to identify opportunities for improved service delivery and capacity building. This quarter, efforts focussed on real estate services, emergency management and bylaw enforcement. Work will continue in quarter three.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. Receive this report for information and provide feedback to inform future reporting.

Respectfully submitted



Jason Johnson
City Manager

List of Attachments:

Appendix A: Quarter 2 Operational Plan
Appendix B: Quarter 2 Highlights
Appendix C: VicPD Quarterly Report
Appendix D: Single Source Report