



Governance and Priorities Committee Report

For the Meeting of October 23, 2014

To: Governance and Priorities Committee
From: Jason Johnson, City Manager
Subject: Quarterly Reporting to Council – Quarter 3

Date: October 16, 2014

Purpose

Quarterly reports are prepared to update the City Council and the community on the progress being made towards the Strategic Plan. This reporting process facilitates an important dialogue between City Council and staff on projects and issues of importance to the organization and community.

A new strategic plan will be developed with the new term of Council, early in the term. This is an important focus for a new Council. Building on the continuous improvements that have been made through the year, the planning process, the resulting plan and regular progress reporting will be revised going forward.

Background

1) Continuous Improvements to Quarterly Reporting Process

This report includes the Quarterly Report on Strategic Priorities, Quarterly Operational Plan, and Departmental Highlights Reports.

The Departmental Reports are intended to provide a greater overview of the emerging issues and operational progress being made within each department. Many items and services fall outside of the strategic priorities of Council, however are essential to the quality of life and satisfaction of Victoria citizens and businesses. Corresponding to a new strategic planning process and informed by an improved Financial Plan in the New Year, departmental reports will routinely report on indicators and metrics aligned with the service metrics and performance measures.

Report Content	Comments	GPC Date
Q2 Report – April to June		July
Quarterly Report on Strategic Priorities Quarterly Report on Operational Plan		
Introduction to Quarterly Departmental Reports	Draft for Council's information and feedback	

Q3 Report – July to September			October
	Quarterly Report on Strategic Priorities Quarterly Report on Operational Plan Quarterly Departmental Reports		
New Term of Council			November – January
	Council Orientation Council Strategic Planning Quarterly Reporting Process		

The Operational Plan denotes the many activities underway and provides greater context for where resources and priorities are being placed. Where timelines have been changed or milestones reached since last reporting, it has been noted.

The Departmental Highlights Report provides additional information about metrics, trends and seasonal changes within departments, and a sense of how, as a whole, the operations are structured for greatest effectiveness.

Within the new strategic planning process, more visual ways of presenting the information will be developed.

2) Highlights of the Third Quarter

Much was accomplished to deliver on Council's strategic priorities and enhance service delivery during this quarter. The existing strategic plan in many ways has been achieved and requires renewal timed with the new term of Council.

Of the 18 initiatives outlined in the strategic plan, all have a green status or are complete, with exception of #18, "Maximize opportunities from sewage treatment infrastructure construction" which is paused, due to recent developments at the regional level.

Notable items this quarter related to strategic initiatives include:

- July concluded a number of significant consultation processes, including the Bike Master Plan and the Harbour Dialogue. Each resulted in very high engagement and included ambitious timelines.
- On September 15, a number of changes were introduced to make parking easier and shift motorists from higher-demand on-street parking spots to available spaces in the City's five parkades. Customer feedback has been very favourable and statistics from the first three weeks demonstrate an 18% increase in parkade users over the same period last year. An extended period will be monitored to determine longer term trends and patterns.
- Construction continues on the City's largest infrastructure project, the Johnson Street Bridge. Recent changes to road alignment on the west side approach were made. The City continues to work closely with all parties to resolve the change orders submitted by the designer and construction contractor. All parties met in September at City Hall and have agreed to mediation to find resolution to change order requests.

- A new approach to procurement is being utilized to support a number of strategic initiatives. The City of Victoria has issued a "Market Sounding" to gauge interest in securing a long-term tenant to lease the iconic Crystal Garden. As well, a call for proposals has been issued for technical expertise and capacity to explore local sewage treatment options. The City will soon issue a marketing sounding to explore potential partners for exploring options for Fire Hall #1 replacement or refurbishment.
- A lot of work has occurred this quarter in relation to planning for sewage treatment. Responsive to changes at the regional level, Council directed staff to commence work to explore local options for sewage treatment. Additional consulting support is being retained and a public engagement approach to support decision-making on this important issue has been developed for Council's consideration in October.
- This quarter Council directed staff to create opportunities for the public to provide input on a proposed increase by Kinder Morgan to marine shipping. 51 people attended a public meeting in September to provide input. In preparation for the National Energy Board hearing on this matter, the City is gathering the community's input to ensure the public's views are reflected in the City's response to the pipeline expansion. The City is also accepting evidence from experts in the community, to include with the submission. The City is accepting input until October 31, 2014. At the time of this report, 359 surveys have been completed online.

3) Operational and Departmental Highlights

- Work has now commenced on orientation and strategic planning processes for the new term of council. Strategic planning for the new term of Council will begin in December 2014, after orientation of councillors has occurred. A new orientation program is being designed for the Mayor and all Councillors to complete together, which will tour Council out to city sites and properties to garner greater insight into City services.
- In July, the third quarter starts with the deadline for paying property taxes. \$187.79 million is collected in property taxes, of which \$112 million is municipal taxes. This year there was an increase in mail payments, and a decrease in online payments. Online banking decreased by 12%, likely due to the security breach experienced by the Canadian Revenue Agency during tax filing period. Drop box payments increased this year by 28%, likely due to the added reception in the foyer of City Hall during the renovation. 92% of total requisition was collected, which is stable from last year and 45% of homeowner grants were claimed online; this was an increase of 10% over the year prior.
- The 2014 tax notice was also communicated much differently this year resulting in positive feedback from the public in terms of understanding where their tax dollars go, and what services or improvements they receive as a result. There were several mentions on social media of the tax notice information.
- Customer service renovations: Each renovation focuses on simple changes that make the customer reception areas brighter, more professional and more accessible for the public. The new Customer Service Ambassador position in City Hall is now in place and has been operating since late June. Customer feedback has been very positive and a number of changes have been made within City Hall as a result of improved relationships and understanding of customer needs. A baby change table has been introduced, parking

spaces outside of City Hall have been reconfigured, and improved signage is being implemented. City Hall has also become pet friendly.

- An employee portal (intranet) is in its final stages this quarter, to be launched in December. It will provide quick access to information for employees, enabling them to access City policies, FAQs and staff information quickly. This facilitates improved information sharing and decision making. The next step is to explore more ways of reaching outside workers; those without routine computer access.
- The City's website victoria.ca continues to grow in visitation and unique visitors, and consistently sits above 70,000. Web visitation spikes significantly during community events, such as on Canada Day this quarter. This is also due to the integration with social media, timed with these events.
- Recent enhancements were made to provide quick access to popular sections of the website, such as Webcasting and VicMap. In addition to refreshing the homepage, the City introduced responsive design ensuring that the website adapts to the needs of the user's mobile or computer device. Mobile visitation to the site is now nearly 30% of all visits.
- Online recreation registration was also introduced alongside the fall registration period. Staff have received positive feedback and registration has been higher than expected.
- In an effort to support implementation of the parking services improvements timed for September, Citizen Engagement staff were assigned to co-lead the project with the Parking Services Manager. This interdisciplinary approach resulted in meeting ambitious project timelines and in-house staff training to support operational changes.
- The Elections team has been preparing for a call for nominations, which took place in early September. Supporting a number of changes to the election this year, a "future voter" effort is being made and for the first time a new Candidate Profile Guide is being introduced to make it easier for voters to find information about the Victoria candidates. Staff are also working with neighbouring municipalities on specific communication strategies to encourage voter turnout across the Region.
- In October, the City issued a Request for Proposals including a new approach to relining water mains. The City is seeking a contractor to provide a structural spray-in-place lining to rehabilitate potable water mains. This has been completed with success in other municipalities, and is being considered in Victoria for mains on Vancouver Street from McLure to Fort Streets, and Sumas Street from Garbally to Manchester roads. Spray-in-place technology has the potential to minimize excavation costs and impacts.
- A number of staff across the organization are engaging in discussions to improve the way the City communicates capital investments and community impacts, such as a traffic. This will inform new communications tools and information in 2015 to provide greater understanding of where tax dollars are invested and infrastructure is improved.
- This past quarter, extensive work has continued on an improved financial plan. Over 70 interviews with managers and supervisors across the organization have occurred to engage staff in improving the financial plan process and product. Greater emphasis has been

placed on communicating services, services levels and actuals over past years. "Great ideas" forums are now underway with staff across the organization to identify improvements that can be made to improve customer service, save money and innovate services.

- In early September, the City ratified a three year agreement with Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 50. The agreement is for the period January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2016. The agreement was ratified by the Greater Victoria Labour Relations Association in late August, and by CUPE on September 4, 2014. CUPE is the City's largest labour union representing 850 employees.
- The Human Resources department is currently in transition with an assessment of all service areas underway, with an eye to modernizing processes and positioning the department as a strategic partner in moving the organization forward. A number of improvements are currently being implemented including streamlining the Job Evaluation process for great expediency of process. Job descriptions are being repackaged for ease of understanding for potential applicants and an improved sense of both the position and the candidate the City is seeking. This work will continue and is important to instilling and presenting the cultural values of customer service, community partnership and continuous improvement of the organization.
- A new online event feedback form was launched, timed coincidentally just prior to Rifflandia, to provide the public with an easy way to submit comments and for staff to consolidate feedback on festivals and events. The new online form is easy to use and enables the public to include a photo or document with their submission, as well as request a response if required at www.victoria.ca/eventfeedback.
- Introduced in early September, the Interim Boulevard Gardening Guidelines were developed to help beginners and experts garden on City of Victoria boulevards more confidently and responsibly. Staff are exploring consolidated consultation on both boulevard gardening and community gardens as a larger discussion around food security, while capitalizing on streamlining engagement efforts.
- Over the third quarter a team management approach has led the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department. During that time, thoughtful review of the current structure and the many services delivered by the department and staff occurred. An obvious opportunity was identified to explore how the City can support the arts and culture division in helping to grow the economy while building a more vibrant community. Recruitment for the Parks and Recreation Director is underway.
- To build on the synergy that can come from related areas working more together, the Arts and Culture division is being aligned and located with the Victoria Conference Centre to provide services. Under the economic development umbrella led by the Victoria Conference Centre, the alignment supports strengthening the arts and cultural programming while adding to and enhancing the conference business of the centre. It was also considered how Parks and Recreation staff could be better aligned within the department for greater ability to deliver service. Subsequently, the restructure will also see Sports Services embedded into the Parks division and Recreation Programs integrated with the recreation division.
- The City is about to commence consultation on the Clawthorpe Park playground and children are encouraged to participate. Consultation in the fall will enable the City to

advance the improvements in playground equipment earlier in 2015, in time for summer installation. Traditionally, playground consultation has been done in winter/spring, with playground installation taking place in the fall of the same year. Earlier engagement allows for capital investment sooner.

- City fire trucks were decaled to highlight the City's many neighbourhoods served by the department. The fire trucks will also be used as a new communications tool for the City website, promoting www.victoria.ca and getting the vote out during the upcoming general election. The Fire department's presence is being improved on the City's website this quarter and greater communications support to the department will be provided in 2015.
- With the internal promotion of Paul Bruce in the second quarter to the City's new Fire Chief, recruitment for Deputy Chief of Administration was completed and Chris Royle was successful candidate. The recruitment for the second Deputy position is currently in progress. Collective bargaining with the International Association of Firefighters commenced in September and continues into October.
- In July, the City held a Development Summit to hear from community partners, development community and staff on ways to improve relationships and processes to help grow the city and manage development thoughtfully and efficiently. As a result, a comprehensive action plan has been developed and all departments are working to deliver. Understanding perceptions and customer needs will improve development processes. Council approved the action plan in September.
- Through the summer, the City sought feedback on Harbour Vitality Principles. Feedback was sought on draft Harbour Vitality Principles for three strategic sites along the Inner Harbour: Belleville Terminal, Ship Point and Lower Wharf Street site. Once approved, the principles will be used to support Inner Harbour revitalization and help position the City and other landowners for potential capital funding, grants and development opportunities. Council will consider the principles in October.
- This spring established new target turnaround times for development and rezoning applications, as well as permit applications, in order to provide greater understanding to applicants of what to expect during the process. These turnaround times are now posted online and in the Development Centre.

Although all projects have progressed, timelines have shifted slightly on a number of operational items due to the timing of council meetings and new term of Council. Where timelines have shifted it has been noted in the operational plan.

4) Operational Plan and Departmental Highlights

An operational plan for each department is included to denote the many activities underway. It provides greater context for where resources and priority is being placed. Where timelines have changed or milestones reached since last reporting, it has been noted.

Departmental Highlights Reports have also been included. This is an endeavour to provide additional information about metrics, trends and seasonal changes.

5) New Council Orientation and Strategic Plan

An orientation for the new council will be provided early in the new term. Dates will be outlined in the coming weeks for the elected Mayor and Councillors. Orientation is a critical opportunity for new and returning councillors to garner greater insight into the organization and service areas, as well as opportunities and challenges facing the organization and emerging from the community. It's an important foundation for strategic planning and supports team building for the new council, early in the term.

Building on a solid orientation foundation, strategic planning will occur through several meetings held during the first two months. The strategic plan will be objective-based and results-oriented. The new plan should be informed by public input and will be regularly reported on both in the organization and in the community.

6) List of Attachments

- a. Quarterly Progress Report – July to September, 2014
- b. Operational Plan by department
- c. Department Highlights
- d. List of Third Party Reports

Recommendation

That Council receive this report for information.

Respectfully submitted,



Jason Johnson
City Manager