

Report to: General Committee Meeting Date: April 26, 2021

SUBJECT: Building Markham's Future Together (BMFT) 2020 – 2023

Strategic Plan Update

PREPARED BY: Meg West ext. 3792

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the report entitled Building Markham's Future Together (BMFT) 2020 – 2023 Strategic Plan Update be received; and

2. THAT Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide the 2020 progress update on Building Markham's Future Together (BMFT) 2020 – 2023 Strategic Plan.

BACKGROUND:

Public and private sector organizations regularly use a strategic plan to serve as a blueprint for priority actions to guide decision makers in achieving desired outcomes as identified by their stakeholders.

At the start of each new Council term, Markham Council and Staff revisit the strategic plan to confirm the City's goals and objectives and identify key priorities for the term.

BMFT establishes the City's vision, mission and values as the framework for both Council decision-making and day-to-day employee focus and ensures that resources are allocated to support the strategies and initiatives that help the City achieve its desired outcomes.

On January 28, 2020, Council approved its 2020—2023 Council Strategic Plan (Appendix A). The following four goals are contained in the strategic plan to guide decision-making for this term of Council:

- Goal 1 Exceptional Services by Exceptional People
- Goal 2 Engaged, Diverse, Thriving and Vibrant City
- Goal 3 Safe, Sustainable and Complete Community
- Goal 4 Stewardship of Money and Resources

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

On March 17, 2020, the Province of Ontario declared a state of emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The City closed all of its facilities and staff that could work from home did so. While essential services continued, a number of programs and services were put on hold or were modified to be conducted online in response to the pandemic.

Markham was one of the first municipalities in Ontario to move to virtual Council and Committee meetings, with the first virtual meeting of Council being held on March 27th. The City has quickly transitioned to remote service provision, with in-person services by appointment, while continuing to follow public health mandates.

In spite of the pandemic, the City prioritized its commitments in 2020 to maintain momentum on a number of the key actions identified under Council's four goal areas. Some BMFT actions that were planned to commence in 2020 were delayed to later in the year or deferred to 2021/2022 to prioritize COVID-related work.

Staff have prepared a detailed summary of the 2020 accomplishments, which includes the additional COVID-19 -related activities (attached as Appendix B).

Goal 1: Exceptional Services by Exceptional People

Goal Statement: We embrace a bold and innovative culture that empowers and inspires excellent services within a collaborative and healthy work environment.

Strategic Objective:	Key Actions:	2020 Accomplishments	
1.1. Deepen our understanding of what our community and stakeholder's value and need to inform municipal leadership and continuous improvement of our services.	 1.1.1. Implement effective mechanisms for ongoing stakeholder feedback and engagement (i.e. regular customer surveys, focus groups) 1.1.2. Leverage technology for direct two-way communication to effectively gather feedback on services and push information out to stakeholders 1.1.3. Develop a corporate-wide language translation policy to ensure consistency in translation services across the Corporation 	 Undertook 10 customer surveys. Completed Winter Maintenance Council Review of Service Levels, including an externally conducted survey that found 79% of residents are satisfied with the level of service received from the City. YourVoice Markham, a public facing interactive platform, has more than 30 projects completed, active or in the development stage. Successfully launched IBM Watson Assistant for Citizens to provide Ai enabled 24/7-, access for the public to trusted information related to COVID-19 and City services. Launched the COVID-19 public website and Staff Hub to keep internal and external audiences informed and connected. Completed renovation and opening of Morgan Pool. 	
1.2. Leverage leading technologies to enable city building and evolution /	1.2.1 Implement new technology to enhance business operations (CRM, EAM, Program Registration, Facility Booking	 Implemented mobile GIS/ACR Forestry Field Application. Electronic Plan Review (ePlan) staff seamlessly processed a full complement 	

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transformation of our services.	systems, and Staff scheduling software)	of new and existing planning applications on-line.
	 1.2.2 Streamline the development process 1.2.3 Advance Digital Markham / "Frictionless City" Pilot test digital city technology in "living labs" Expand digital access and literacy programs Continue to embrace innovation and relevant technologies in delivery of service Leverage "Smart City" technologies to enhance and extend infrastructure lifecycle and improve efficiencies 1.2.4 Implement cyber security program to safeguard City technology infrastructure 	 Supported City bid for Top Intelligent Community of 2020. Markham ranked among the Top 7. ePropertyTax - Increased the number of property tax accounts enrolled in ePropertyTax to 18.9%, exceeding the 2020 target of 16%. Updated the City's website to ensure ongoing AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) compliance. Implemented MPL Digital literacy and inclusion programs for the public. Undertook necessary planning and infrastructure upgrades to support the MS365 pilot project. Continued implementation of the cyber security program, including system patching and mandatory awareness
1.3. Attract and retain the right talent and invest in and empower our people to drive innovation and service excellence.	 1.3.1 Empower employees to continue to take risks and pursue innovation Reduce barriers / bureaucracy Clarify roles, accountabilities (including for Centres of Expertise) and authorities 1.3.2 Continue to implement the People Plan (attraction, retention, succession planning, formalized knowledge transfer, mentoring, learning and secondment opportunities) 1.3.3 Provide Staff access to technologies to improve service delivery 1.3.4 Continue to invest in Staff training 	 Implemented Well-Being Program for staff, conducted the Total Well-Being Index, and established a Total Well-Being Team. Identified leadership education and development strategy, commencing with introduction of the virtual Harvard Manage Mentor program in support of leadership growth and extension of management capabilities. Introduced updated branding and staff onboarding program. Implemented tools to support business process modernization and service delivery CRM, EAM, ePlan, program registration system, M365 solutions. Adjusted in person training to live virtual and e-learning training while leveraging Markham Learn Centre. Included cyber security and anti-Black racism training, among others.

Other 2020 accomplishments arising as a result of COVID-19

Goal 1: Exceptional Services By Exceptional People

• Activated the Emergency Operations Centre in response to COVID 19 - staff from several departments supported and managed the Emergency Operations Centre during activation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (March to June).

- Supported program implementation for various successful COVID-19 business support programs:
 - Digital Main Street's shopHERE, powered by Google (more than 350 participating artists and small businesses),
 - Markham Small Business Recovery and Digital Resilience Program (full capacity),
 - o "Open for Business" by Ritual ONE and DoorDash,
 - o SkipTheDishes holiday promotions,
 - o Destination Markham Shop Local campaign, and
 - o Successfully launched first-ever behavioural/geo-targeted B2B digital ad campaigns to help small businesses overcome the challenges of COVID-19.
- Enhanced digital engagement through the introduction and facilitation of fully functional virtual Council/Committee meetings, Budget Committee meetings, Advisory Board Committee meetings, Tree Appeal Hearings and public consultation.
- Amended the Parking By-Law to allow for virtual screening and hearings for parking ticket matters.
- Drafted strategy and by-law for COVID 19 related temporary patios, and reviewed and permitted 50+ such patios.
- COVID Enforcement initiative By-law Officers fully mobilized on COVID 19 enforcement, seven days a week, with extended service.
- Implemented an outreach program to connect with over 4,500 local seniors to reduce social isolation when their seniors clubs were closed due to the pandemic.
- Introduced the Park Ambassador Program, which assigned fitness staff to cycle through our parks and trail systems to educate the community on social distancing rules and other COVID safety measures.
- Initiated Live Chat service through the library to support online public access, where staff provided 11,400 real-time sessions to assist with library card registration, account information, and coaching in accessing and using the library's digital resource.
- Supported the City response to COVID 19 pandemic through interpretation and advice related to new and evolving Provincial legislation.
- Supported the City response to COVID 19 through the redeployment and training of over 100 staff.
- Supported staff during COVID 19 by developing and implementing training and guidelines, distributed PPE and introduced COVID 19 screening and related health and safety protocols, engaged staff through a variety of communications, and conducted Work From Home Survey to obtain staff feedback and ensure that staff were supported.

Goal 2: Engaged, Diverse, Thriving and Vibrant City

Goal Statement: We are an inclusive city, engaging everyone in building a livable, caring and culturally vibrant community while respecting our past.

We enable a strong economy; we proactively work to attract investment in our community; and we effectively manage change to meet future needs.

Strategic Objectives:		Key Actions:	2020 Accomplishments
2.1	Enhance community cohesion and inclusion by creating strong neighbourhoods that are connected to the broader community.	2.1.1 Implement neighbourhood partnership strategy • Customized to the community; neighbourhood action plans • "Good neighbour" handbook 2.1.2 Expand community hub concept (currently at Aaniin CC) across the City (2021 start) 2.1.3 "Discover Markham" celebrate Markham's past, diverse communities and events (2021 start) 2.1.4 Create special events strategy including standardizing requirements and streamline processes 2.1.5 Plan for a major civic square with cultural amenities	frant Program 2020-21 funding cycle, Council approved funding for 53 applicants, totaling \$184,500 out of \$256,000 available, as well as \$30,000 to the Markham Arts Council. Commenced Markham Centre Secondary Plan
2.2	Support arts, culture, recreation and sport to enrich the fabric of our communities.	 2.2.1 Implement Public Arts Master Plan 2.2.2 Continue to implement the Public Realm strategy across all parts of the City 2.2.3 Enhance the Volunteer program a opportunities across the City 2.2.4 Update the Diversity & Inclusion action plan 2.2.5 Evaluate the advancement of arts and culture opportunities for Markham 	 Facilitated the implementation of Public Art installations. Introduction of anti-Black racism strategy in July 2020. Developed and rolled out Anti-Black Racism training. Received 400 pieces of artwork for the gallery.
2.3	Build Markham as the best place to live, invest, work, and experience rich diversity.	Strengthen the City's brand strate with a strong value proposition (2022 start) Develop, adopt and implement the Economic Development Strategy (2021 start) Investigate the creation of a development corporation to manage development and infrastructure in targeted growth areas Launch Destination Markham	Association of Chinese Canadian Entrepreneurs, Global Affairs Canada, York University and ventureLab. Supported World Hakka convention planning. Established the DMC Board and supported the development of their business

Other 2020 accomplishments arising as a result of COVID-19 -

Goal 2: Engaged, Diverse, Thriving and Vibrant City

• Supported the Markham Creates Community Challenge, resulting in more than 125 submissions – showcasing Markham's outstanding artistic talents and ability to come together as one strong and resilient community, while apart.

- Closed Enterprise Blvd on Sundays and Public Holidays to support active transportation while promoting local active lifestyle programming during the summer months.
- Signed Shared Use Agreement with Markham Stouffville Hospital for Cornell Community Centre.
- Developed and implemented Virtual Recreation and Fitness Programs for the community when the community centres were closed because of the pandemic, which attracted 2,451 programs participants and 21,602 fitness participants.
- Developed an engaging 6-week Park Pop Up program for 1,661 children ages 6 to 12 during the summer that met legislative COVID-19 requirements and children's need for play.
- Provided virtual programming for cultural facilities during the summer.
- Leveraged YouTube to keep residents engaged and active during COVID-19 lockdowns, which attracted 53,742 participants in our fitness video classes, along with 722 YouTube subscribers and an offering of 123 YouTube Classes.
- Curated the COVID-19 Stories Exhibit, a community memory journal of 100+ stories, to share and reflect on the experiences brought on by the pandemic, to provide an outlet for stress and anxiety, and reduce social isolation.
- Provided virtual library programming and camps to provide the community with continued access to learning and social opportunities, which served 110,600 participants.

Goal 3: Safe, Sustainable and Complete Community

Goal Statement: We strive to achieve complete communities with an excellent quality of life. We ensure community safety and enhance the natural environment and built form through sustainable integrated planning, infrastructure management, and services.

Strategic Objective:	Key Actions:	
3.1 Accelerate delivery of an	3.1.2 Advocate for higher order transit including Yonge Subway	Whistle Cessation implementation on 13
enhanced comprehensive	3.1.3 Pursue the integration of transit- oriented design in development	crossings throughout the City.
transportation network in partnership with	3.1.4 Provide incentives for growth within areas where appropriate infrastructure already in place (2021 start)	Launched secondary plans for Markham Centre and Markham Rd/Mount Joy
other levels of government /	3.1.5 Optimize local and regional roads plan	including components related to transit-orientated
private sector.	3.1.6 Includes maximizing capacity at peak periods (e.g. leveraging technology	development.
	and intersection design) 3.1.7 Implement Active Transportation Master Plan and first and last mile solutions (biking, walking, transit)	Main Street Unionville Summer Traffic Calming implemented.
	3.1.8 Expand road safety program	Completed the Road Safety Audit.
3.2 Build complete communities that	3.2.1 Finalize and implement affordable housing strategy	In February 2020, Council received the proposed Draft
offer a range of housing and employment opportunities,	 Multi-generational, including purpose built secondary suites Rental housing 	Affordable and Rental Housing Strategy including an inclusionary zoning framework, which is a new

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transportation options and outstanding community amenities.	 3.2.2 Develop policy / approval process to ensure net zero-ready sustainable development in support of the Municipal Energy Plan 3.2.3 Prepare an employment strategy for appropriate major transit station areas and promote locally, regionally and provincially significant employment zones (along 400 series highways)(2021 start) 3.2.4 Implement Integrated Leisure Master Plan for the City of Markham's parks recreation, culture and libraries 3.2.5 Establish a City-wide parking strategy (2021 start) 	bringing together industry leaders to engage in challenging conversations and considering implementation of affordable housing measures.
3.3 Ensure business continuity of our services and infrastructure, and enable community resiliency and community safety.	 3.3.1 Develop a Citywide system to communicate directly to residents during emergency (alert system) 3.3.2 Continue to implement the Flood Control Program 3.3.3 Continue to implement strategies to address impacts of extreme weather • Emergency preparedness • Proactive infrastructure protection 	Continued implementation of the Flood Control Program by completing West Thornhill Phase 3A for \$10.9M, bringing the total investment in stormwater projects completed to \$75.5M.
3.4 Protect and enhance our natural environment and built form.	 3.4.1 Develop a wildlife and biodiversity strategy (2021 start) 3.4.2 Increase our tree canopy to mitigate climate change 3.4.3 Promote retrofits to existing buildings and homes to reduce energy consumption and expand the use renewable energy sources in order to achieve our Net Zero Emissions by 2050 target 3.4.4 Update waste diversion plan (Best-off the-Best Strategy Phase 2) 3.4.5 Create the Markham Centre Rouge River trail system 3.4.6 Develop an urban parks strategy to support the Official Plan's intensification strategy 3.4.7 Pursue partnership opportunities for programming in the Rouge National Urban Park 	the Unionville and Cornell communities. • The City relaunched the #greenMarkham campaign

	 2050 - borehole construction started. Developed and implemented two pilot projects related to bringing City facilities in line with the City and Federal Government goal of Net Zero Emissions by 2050. Council approval of Best of Best #2 Waste Diversion Strategy and Single-use Plastic Reduction Strategy, and implemented Styrofoam packaging ban from curbside collection. Completed construction of five parks totalling 18.8 ha. Council endorsed the Cornell Rouge National Urban Park (RNUP) Gateway Study. Rouge Valley Trail – Phase 4A Construction (Markham Rd to Tuclor Lane and 14th Ave to Treeline Court)
	Rd to Tuclor Lane and 14th Ave to Treeline Court) • Secured grant funding from
	the Municipal Natural Assets Initiative to develop a preliminary natural asset inventory for the City of Markham.

Other 2020 accomplishments arising as a result of COVID-19-

Goal 3: Safe, Sustainable and Complete Community

- Implemented a Corporate Security Control Centre within the Civic Centre Centralized CCTV systems and Access Control system allowing staff to remotely monitor facilities from one central location, enabling quicker response to incidents.
- Commissioned he City's first Emergency Reception Centre at Aaniin Community Centre and Library.
- Rapid response cleaning of facilities due to COVID exposure citywide.

Goal 4: Stewardship of Money and Resources

Goal Statement: We demonstrate exceptional leadership using sound, transparent and responsible fiscal & resource management and policy development to mitigate risks while enabling efficient and effective service delivery.

Strategic Objective:		Key Actions:	2020 Accomplishments	
4.1	Align the short- and	4.1.1 Funding strategy:	Obtained Council approval of the 2021	
	long-term financial	 Align capital / capacity 	budget, with a zero % property tax rate	
	strategy with BMFT	planning to BMFT,	increase. The Budget preserved current	
	and changes in the	and maintain readiness	service-levels, continued investments in	

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	business environment to ensure the ongoing viability of the City.	le b c c • II fi fi fi le a 4.1.2 Fi le fi tt • C s	o respond to egislative or other cusiness environment changes dentify strategy to fund resource requirements over the onger term for growth and strategic initiatives Revenue strategy: Advocate to other evels of government for enhanced revenue ools Consider alternate sources of revenue	• !	Council approved priorities, as well as ensuring sufficient funds in the Life Cycle Reserve for the next 25 years, based on known inflows and outflows. The City of Markham had the lowest 15-year property tax rate in the GTA. Continued to pursue E3 opportunities - Achieved \$1.7 million of E3 savings as part of the 2020 budget. Since 2009 over \$29.4M in savings have been achieved, which equates to a tax rate increase avoidance of 24.5%.
4.2	Proactively manage our assets to maximize the return (financial, social, environmental & cultural) on taxpayer investment.	4.2.2 A s c ii 4.2.3 C A 4.2.4 E c n fi 4.2.5 L te e iii a e C	Establish process for evaluating public and private sector partnerships and pusiness opportunities 2021 start) Advance detailed service planning for continuous mprovement Continue to implement Asset Management Plan Develop a comprehensive risk management framework (2021 start) Leverage "smart city" echnologies to enhance and extend improve efficiencies —part of Goal 1 — Digital Strategy		Awarded the City's Waste Management Collection Contract. Went to market with one of the largest (\$1M) single year Block Pruning tenders in the GTA and completed all 7 City blocks to its entirety before yearend. Created and implemented semi-annual ePlan reporting dashboard. Dashboard tacks environmental impacts, review cycles, hours per review and applicant activity. Achieved World Council on City Data (WCCD) Platinum Level with ISO and ISO 37120 Sustainable Development of Communities: Indicators for City Services and Quality of Life. Asset Management Plan Progress Update Report was presented to Council. The risk assessment framework was developed for Asset Management projects to reflect preliminary budgeting numbers relative to unknown factors and/or risks. Achieved targeted operating costs savings for facilities through reduced utility consumption \$1.2M below the 2020 approved budget.
4.3	Increase transparency and accountability of our stewardship of services, policies, processes, money and resources.	4.3.2 I	Establish public reporting aligned to BMFT, including key metrics Develop and mplement a plan to communicate and make key City policies available on City website	•	4 Auditor General Reports completed and presented to Council: Cyber Security Follow-up Audit Development Charges Follow-up Audit HRIS Follow-up Audit Information & Records Management Audit Commenced Risk Assessment and Audit Planning for new AG term.

Other 2020 accomplishments arising as a result of COVID-19-

Goal 4: Stewardship of Money and Resources:

- COVID-19 Presentations to Council Staff provided five Fiscal Update presentations and other presentations on business continuity that enabled Council decision making to support relief measures for residents and businesses and strategies to mitigate financial and resource impacts of COVID-19 on the City.
- The City submitted applications to the Audit & Accountability Fund: Intake 2, and the COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream: Local Government, through which Markham is eligible to access \$7,381,614 in grants.
- As part of Markham's economic recovery plan during COVID-19, the Destination Markham Corporation (DMC) was asked to lead a marketing strategy focused on promoting a 'buy local, shop local and stay local' campaign. RRRF Funding of \$470k was secured for DMC to help tourism and hospitality businesses respond to COVID-19.

Metrics identified for the four BMFT Goal Areas to show achievements towards goal area

High-level strategic metrics were identified for each of the four Goal areas. Please see Appendix C for detailed measures of success. Given this is the first update on BMFT since it was approved in January 2020, ongoing analysis on metrics will be included in future reports.

In order to gather measureable data for the strategic plan the City planned to undertake a Citizen Satisfaction Survey in 2020 to gather input from residents on quality of life, delivery of City services, and use of tax dollars. Due to the pandemic, the City delayed the survey and we are evaluating options to undertake a citizen satisfaction survey in 2022.

Engaging our Customers

The City of Markham is known as a municipal leader in providing high quality services. Service is a core value for staff and at the heart of the work we do within our own departments and for the community. Markham's quest for organizational excellence formally began in the late 1990's to ensure service excellence across the organization. Using the National Quality Institute's (now Excellence Canada) excellence framework as a guide, a strong focus on customer/client satisfaction has been the cornerstone of our efforts and success to date.

Engagement & Evaluation Tools used by City Staff to interact and gather feedback from customers

• Annual Customer Satisfaction Surveys: every year each department identifies services to measuring using the corporate survey process. In 2020, the overall

- satisfaction rate for the services surveyed was 76.3% (this includes internal and external surveys).
- **Post-Program/Project Evaluation:** these assessments are completed by clients following programs or upon completion of projects in the community.
- **Data Analysis:** Library and Recreation use tools such as *Environics* to gain a better understanding of market data about the Markham community. Research, benchmarking trends and other data is used to inform decision making and strategy development.
- **Surveys & Polls:** surveys are used throughout the City to collect data about resident experiences, preferences, needs and opinions. *e.g. in-person survey conducted onsite at recycling depots*.
- **Interviews**: individual, intensive, structured designed to probe deeply into stakeholder needs and opinions. *e.g. Aaniin Library Post- Occupancy Evaluation to determine how customers are using library space*.
- Focus Groups & Consultations: facilitated discussion to collect data from a group of individuals on a specific topic e.g. Smart City Focus Groups to collect input on community issues that could be addressed through Alenabled technology.
- **Community Conversations:** used at MPL as part of their unique Community Development framework, this facilitated discussion focuses on understanding the broad goals and challenges of the community.
- **Online Engagement**: the City of Markham maintains online engagement tools to provide residents with a platform for ongoing input into issues that matter. *E.g. Your Voice, used for service planning.*

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Funding for Building Markham's Future Together 2020 - 2023 Strategic Plan priorities are identified and approved as part of the annual budget process.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

Many of the Building Markham's Future Together 2020 – 2023 Strategic Plan priorities focus on supporting our staff and recognizing their contributions as detailed in this report.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Building Markham's Future Together 2020 – 2023 Strategic Plan sets the direction for the Council term.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

All four Commissions have contributed to the accomplishments of Building Markham's Future Together 2020 – 2023 Strategic Plan.

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RECOMMENDED BY:

Andy E. Taylor Trinela Cane

Chief Administrative Officer Commissioner, Corporate Services

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Arvin Prasad Claudia Storto
Commissioner, Development Services City Solicitor and

Director of Human Resources

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ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A
Appendix B
Building Markham's Future Together 2020-2023 Strategic Plan
Building Markham's Future Together 2020-2023 Strategic Plan –

2020 List of Accomplishments by Goal Area

Appendix C Building Markham's Future Together 2020-2023 Strategic Plan –

Measures of Success