



Report
15-018-CAO

To: GENERAL COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: June 16, 2015

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Approved by: Gary Dyke

Department: Office of the CAO

Date to Sr. Mgmt. Team: June 10, 2015

File No.:

Ward No.:

Recommendation:

That staff report 15-018-CAO be received as information.

BACKGROUND:

On February 17, 2015, Council approved the process to develop a new Corporate Strategic Plan for the 2015-2018 Council term (for more information please see Report 15-007CAO). This plan will provide a new framework for establishing priorities identified by Council, the Community and the Corporation. Further, it will articulate what the City wants to achieve and how the organization will work towards those goals (including short, medium and longer term action items). It will provide a focus for Council and staff, and will help to guide the allocation of limited resources to those priorities that are most important for the organization.

Cambridge Connected: Our Voice, Our Vision, the City's new Strategic Planning process, was launched on April 15, 2015 (please see Attachment #1 for the Press Release).

Subject:

Cambridge Connected: Our
Voice, Our Vision
2015-2018 Strategic Plan
Update (Phase 1)

It includes three phases:

“Connect” Phase 1 - Setting the stage and asking: “Where we are now?”

“Collaborate” Phase 2 - Identifying potential and asking: “Where do we want to go as a community?”

“Create” Phase 3 - Making choices and asking: “How are we going to move forward together?”

Phase 1 “Connect” - Update

Following the initial Council approval, staff in consultation with the Project team and Steering Committee, continued to develop several key elements of the strategic planning process. LURA Consulting was also retained to provide assistance and support to the Steering Committee and Project Team as required throughout the project.

On March 11th, 2015, an invite-only meeting for all members of the Cambridge Advisory Committees was held from 5 – 7 pm in the Bowman Room at Cambridge City Hall. Over 45 advisory committee members attended this meeting and provided feedback on; the process approach, key messaging, the engagement strategy and key stakeholder groups that should be involved. They also had the opportunity to provide feedback to the staff from the Region of Waterloo, regarding the Regional Strategic Plan, which is also under development.

Based on the feedback from the March advisory consultation session, the City launched the strategic planning process more broadly to the public. On April 15, 2015, the community was invited to share their thoughts on the future of the City, by participating in: Cambridge Connected: Our Voice, Our Vision.

As part of the launch of the first phase members of the community were able to find out more about the strategic planning process at: www.cambridge.ca/ourvoiceourvision.

Members of the community were also asked to share what Cambridge means to them both online, and as part of a series of three open houses and workshops, held cooperatively with the Region of Waterloo:

- April 29, Cambridge City Hall (44 Attendees);

- May 4, Hespeler Memorial Auditorium (35 Attendees); and
- May 7, Preston Auditorium (30 Attendees).

The workshops were advertised in the Cambridge Times, on the City's website, through social media (including facebook and twitter) and by direct email to a stakeholder list of over 900 individuals and organizations.

Over 109 members of the public attended and provided feedback through the facilitated small-group discussions. Three key questions were posed to the participants:

- 1) What does Cambridge mean to you?
- 2) What do you love about your community?
- 3) What would make your community better?

There were also questions asked as part of the open house component that related to the existing vision, mission, values and corporate goals of the City. Opportunities to share other thoughts were also provided.

The project team received feedback through several different methods, including: online, comment forms, workshop discussion and individual "post-it note" submissions (over 1250). This feedback was compiled in the "Phase 1 Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary" (please see Attachment #2).

Emerging Themes

A significant amount of comments and ideas were generated as part of the "Connect" discussion. Following the workshop, the project team compiled and reviewed all of the feedback submitted and have identified some of the key themes or "common threads" that emerged. At a high-level, these include:

Question #1 - What does Cambridge mean to you?

Themes: Community; Rivers; Arts, Culture & Tourism; Heritage & Architecture; Environment, Parks & Recreation; Government; Services, Transportation & Infrastructure; Location; Economic Development, Work & Urbanization.

Question #2 – What do you love about your community? What should we highlight?

Themes: Community; Arts, Culture & Tourism; Environment, Parks & Recreation; Location; Economic Development & Core Areas.

Question #3 – What would make your community better?

Themes: Community/Social; Arts, Culture & Tourism; Heritage & Architecture; Environment, Parks & Recreation; Governance; Economic Development & Core Areas; Services, Transportation & Infrastructure.

Phase 2 “Collaborate” – Launch

With the completion of Phase 1, staff are now preparing to launch the second phase of this process that will involve extensive opportunities for community engagement and discussion. Building on the common threads that emerged in the first phase, the focus will be to generate ideas on potential goals and actions that the City could include as part of the plan. Included in this are the following key pieces:

1. Cambridge Connected Video. This video highlights the opportunity for the community to get involved in the discussion around the strategic priorities and encourages them to participate.
2. Community Survey. This survey will be conducted in partnership with the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce. It will build on the themes identified in Phase 1 and ask the community more detailed questions about the direction they think the city should go in.
3. “Workshop in a Box”. This activity will be available to community groups and other organizations who would like to host their own conversation on the strategic plan. An orientation session for community leaders will be held to provide them with materials and instructions.
4. Focus Groups with key stakeholder groups. Staff will arrange focus groups with key stakeholder groups (Youth, 50 +, New Canadians, etc.) to ensure that a wide range of community perspectives are part of the discussion.
5. Community Event Attendance. Staff will be attending a series of public events and festivals throughout the summer to reach out to the community and engage them in discussion. This schedule will be available on the Cambridge Connected website.

6. **Staff Engagement Schedule.** A series of staff engagement sessions have been scheduled to discuss the strategic plan as well as the new corporate values that have been developed. These sessions will be held throughout the month of June.
7. **Council Workshop.** Members of City Council will be invited to attend a facilitated workshop to share their thoughts on the potential directions of the City. This session is anticipated to be held mid-July.

Management of the Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan is being overseen by the Office of the Chief Administrator and a Steering Committee, Chaired by the CAO, consisting of representation from across the Corporation, including:

- 3 representatives from Council;
- The Corporate Leadership Team (CLT);
- 6 Representatives from the Senior Management Team (SMT);
- The CEO of Idea Exchange; and
- The President or Vice-President of each of the three Collective Bargaining Units.

City Council will be the final decision making authority for the plan.

Further, a Project Team consisting of 25 staff members from all departments in the City was established to assist with the implementation of the process. The Project Team, along with SMT will play a key support role throughout the development of the strategy. CLT and SMT will also play a key role following the adoption of the plan as part of the subsequent implementation and operationalization within the departmental business plans.

NEXT STEPS

Preparation of the Strategic Plan for the City of Cambridge is an exciting opportunity to coordinate, focus and align city activities with community goals. It will provide an opportunity to build on the strong foundations already in place and confirm, refine and identify key directions.

Staff is now looking forward to Phase 2 of the process “Collaborate”, which will take the broader community discussion and start to focus on more specific ideas and actions. As noted, there will be many opportunities for the public and other stakeholder groups to engage in this phase, using a variety of different “tools” and methods.

EXISTING POLICY/BY-LAW:

The City of Cambridge Strategic Planning process will take into consideration the various applicable policies and plans that exists. The Strategic Plan, once approved, will become the new framework for setting budgetary and corporate activities.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

A new capital project in the amount of \$150,000 for the Corporate Strategic Plan was approved by Council (please see Report 15-007CAO). Any expenditure related to this fund will be approved by the Steering Committee.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Public input is a key component of the development of the strategic plan. The public will be engaged through a variety of on-line and in-person approaches, including social media, workshops, focus groups, and community events. A website, including all relevant information and updates has been developed and can be found at: (www.cambridge.ca/ourvoiceourvision).

INTERNAL/EXTERNAL CONSULTATION:

This report has been reviewed by the Senior Management Team (SMT) and the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) as well as the Steering Committee for the Strategic Plan. Staff has also consulted with the Region of Waterloo and will continue to coordinate as appropriate.

COMMENTS/ANALYSIS:

The City of Cambridge’s new Strategic Plan will provide many benefits, including:

- Helping to focus resources towards priority areas;
- Ensuring staff and Council are working towards common goals; and

- Guiding decision-making and budget allocation to the strategic priorities.

When adopted, the plan will also form the foundation for the City's new Corporate Business Planning and Annual reporting programs.

Attachments:

Attachment # 1 – Press Release

Attachment # 2 – Phase 1 Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary