

MEDIA RELEASE

July 26, 2017

2017 Strategic Plan Update Highlights Progress Across All Four Strategic Goals

Nelson – At the Committee of the Whole meeting held, July 17, 2017, Council received an update from City Manager, Kevin Cormack, on progress towards Council's strategic goals. Council established four overarching goals and a number of strategies and projects to move the community and the City towards achieving these goals. The strategic goals are:

1. Enhance Sustainability of City Services and Infrastructure
2. Strengthen Neighbourhoods
3. Expand Local Jobs, Local Prosperity
4. Achieve Excellence in City Governance

The Strategic Plan defines each of these goals, how success will be measured, what is to be achieved over the term of Council and how the City plans to achieve it.

The 2017 update provided a progress report for the first six months of the year. Highlights from the update include the following:

- Council continues to make infrastructure renewal a priority; infrastructure projects in water, sanitary sewer, Nelson Hydro, facilities and roads are on track. Water and sanitary sewer infrastructure is being delivered at up to 50% of the estimated cost in these master plans.
- The water master plan is being updated, including relooking at the potential impact of climate change on water supply and analyzing further options of developing a secondary source. Through a combination of water main replacements, removing parks from the potable water supply and conservation, the City is using 10% less water than in 2011.
- Assessments have been completed for roads and facilities. Council increased contributions to these budgets to ensure the renewal and upgrades required are adequately funded. This was done without increases in overall taxation.
- Developing long-term reserves in the City's key utilities is on track. Ongoing capital upgrades for water, sanitary sewer, and electric utilities as well as roads are sustainable with annual inflationary or near inflationary increases.
- The City is working with the Province and Interior Health on developing an emergency water supply; testing and design will be completed in 2017. The City is also updating its emergency response plan.
- The City continues to be successful in generating non-tax revenues including higher rentals revenues; a \$4,500,000 grant for the Hall Street Phase II project; \$300,000 for the Civic Centre upgrades and \$100,000 for 610 Railway Building.
- Collective agreements have been negotiated with key employee groups at or near inflationary levels.

- Use of technology to deliver services is expanding including homeowner grants, dog licensing and the new PayStation kiosk.
- The Railtown Sustainable Neighbourhood Plan and the Downtown Urban Design Strategy were completed. The City is working with the private sector on proposed new developments in the downtown and Railtown. Initial public sector projects such as the redevelopment of I.O.D.E. Park and Hall Street Lakeside Park and improvements at the Cottonwood Park are underway.
- The City has achieved a 25% reduction in its Green House Gas emissions in its own operations from the 2009 base year. The Eco-Save program continues to allow homeowners to make cost effective energy retro-fits. Canada's first community funded Solar Garden was fully subscribed and is now in operation.
- Nelson received international recognition by being the smallest community ever to be recognized as a Smart21 Community for its investment in and use of technology, highlighted by the City's own NelsonFibre. The customer base for NelsonFibre continues to grow.
- The City is seeing healthy private sector investment in new housing projects including three proposed rental projects. Nelson CARES Society was successful in receiving a provincial grant to renew the old Lakeside Motel site; Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) is working with the City on developing a rental housing project in Nelson. City staff have completed a progress report on the Housing Strategy that will be presented to Council in September and Council continues to lobby senior levels of government on housing affordability.
- Funding was received to complete the Hall Street Corridor project; over 80% of this project will replace end of life core infrastructure including storm water, water, sanitary sewer, roads, sidewalks and electrical.

Mayor Kozak says "When Council was first elected we set an ambitious work plan. This update indicates we are making good progress across all areas." Kozak continues "Although it is challenging to manage the cost of all the services we provide, I believe by focusing on sound planning, we are making cost effective investments which have allowed us to attract grants from senior levels of government and CBT."

The details of achievements can be found in the 2015-2018 Strategic Plan Update Report. The full report can be found at www.nelson.ca under Publications and Reports.

Mayor Kozak states "A couple of highlights for me this year are the \$4,500,000 grant we received to complete Phase 2 of Hall Street. Phase 2 will address the ongoing increases in flooding we have seen in this area. And secondly, the interest we have generated from both the public and private sectors to move forward on the vision articulated in future planning documents like the Railtown Plan. Nelson is a multi-faceted and innovative community. This council does not shy away from complicated issues and works hard to move things forward."

Media Contacts:

Deb Kozak, Mayor – (250) 352-8236

Kevin Cormack, City Manager – (250) 352-8203