

Foundation: Efficient and Effective Government

Introduction

We know that the city's workforce is vital to getting the work done and achieving success on the six strategic themes contained within The City of Kitchener Strategic Plan, but how we do that work – the corporate systems that support that work – are equally as important.

Formerly identified in the City of Kitchener's Corporate Plan (2002), these corporate systems, and their accompanying strategic directions, now form the foundation of Efficient and Effective Government within this strategic plan.

Those key corporate systems that underpin our everyday work include:

prudent management of the city's finances, innovative use of information technology, high-quality, accessible customer service, proactive communications with Kitchener residents and safety and security practices within city facilities.

Of course, the city's human resources have also been identified as a critical corporate support system however, because our workforce is such a significant foundation for building future success, the city later developed the People Plan (2008) to capture its many efforts, and provide strategic direction, for building a workplace

capable of retaining and attracting the best and brightest talent.

As a foundation, our focus on efficient and effective government services is intended to strengthen the performance and accountability of municipal government in Kitchener. It ensures that city staff continues to take a comprehensive look at what we should be doing – and how we should be doing it – so that we can ensure the delivery of services, programs, policies and initiatives that Kitchener citizens need, want and can afford.

*The details of the foundational document for Efficient and Effective Government, known as the **City of Kitchener Corporate Plan (2002)**, can be found in **Appendix 3**.*

“Proudly Providing Valued Services”

City of Kitchener Corporate Mission Statement, 2002



KITCHENER CITY HALL

'A different future for city government and public service'

The foundation of Efficient and Effective Government has evolved since 2001 when city council first initiated major changes in both the organization's structure and its approach to doing business. The newly restructured City of Kitchener that emerged reflected council's desire for "a different future for city government and public service."

Essentially, council's vision painted a picture of a more customer-focused and community-minded city government – an organization that:

- Is capable of adapting and improving
- Has the community's confidence and trust
- Provides timely and quality infrastructure and valued services
- Fosters the community's appreciation of the public value provided by our services
- Ensures two-way flow of information among our community, administration and council
- Clearly understands and anticipates the public's needs and priorities
- Encourages and initiates effective public discussion around important issues
- Has no silos – services are accessible and customers are satisfied

Council also identified that city staff would achieve the vision of this more responsive, understanding and open city government through providing high-quality customer service to citizens everyday; building connections and relationships with community and business partners; striving for responsible results and continuing to change, improve and strengthen our organization wherever and whenever possible.

The details of the pillars of Efficient and Effective Government – prudent financial management, maximizing the use of Information Technology, responsive customer service, proactive communications and positioning the municipality as a leader in the public sector – are outlined on the following pages.

Financial Management

The Goal:

We strive to ensure long term corporate financial stability and fiscal accountability to our taxpayers.

Strategic Directions:

- Invest and manage assets strategically
- Ensure the effective and responsible stewardship of public funds within a supportive policy framework
- Strive for competitive, rational and affordable taxation levels

- Ensure corporate fiscal targets are consistently met
- Maximize value through cost effective service delivery
- Explore new sources of sustainable revenue
- Ensure openness and transparency of city finances

Information Technology

The Goal:

Maximize technology to support timely, relevant and accurate information; optimizing technology solutions that will enhance our ability to interact and communicate more effectively with our internal and external clients; and develop an enabled and knowledgeable workforce.

Strategic Directions:

- Develop an integrated, enterprise – wide framework of electronic information systems and automated business processes
- Utilize leading edge technology to provide reliable and convenient access to city services, information and business processes through a full range of access points
- Maximize technology to support timely, relevant and accurate information
- Optimize technology solutions that will enhance the city's ability to

interact and communicate more effectively with our internal and external clients

- Develop an enabled and knowledgeable workforce

Customer Service

The Goal:

Provide services to the public that match or exceed the customer's expectations and adopt standards that put people first to ensure excellent customer service.

Strategic Directions:

- Initiate corporate-wide customer service standards and policies to ensure consistent levels of service in all departments and locations
- Initiate corporate-wide customer service standards and policies
- Monitor level of service and customer satisfaction
- Develop a service model that can adapt to new service delivery opportunities
- Ensure is service delivered in an effective and cost efficient manner
- Provide information to support management decision making
- Review the service delivery model and develop a framework to be used in the development of a detailed customer service delivery model.

Communications

The Goal:

Proactively communicate with Kitchener residents in an effort to share information; educate and engage the public, and promote enterprises, programs and services; to create a corporate culture where internal communications is a priority for all City of Kitchener employees.

Strategic Directions:

- Inform and engage the public on the Corporation's key decisions, programs, services, policies and initiatives, and manage sensitive issues through the development and implementation of strategic communications plans.
- Share information with city staff and council on corporate-wide decisions, policies, issues and initiatives that require strategic planning and advice.
- Provide all city staff with the tools and training they can use to share information with one another on projects and initiatives of a departmental or divisional nature.
- Increase public participation and generate revenue by promoting the city's programs, services and enterprises through the development and implementation of strategic marketing plans.

- Develop and maintain a consistent identity for the Corporation and its Enterprises through professional graphic design and the management of the approved Corporate brands as outlined in the *Corporate Standards Manual*.
- Provide convenient and cost-effective printing, duplication and bindary services for the city and its affiliated groups.

Public Sector Leadership

The Goal:

To position the municipality as a leader in public sector policy, processes and systems.

Strategic Directions:

- Ensure accountability and transparency in all public processes.
- Anticipate and be responsive to legislative changes and external pressures.
- Develop an organization that is aware, responsive and prepared to deal with emergency situations.
- Promote continuous improvement to ensure corporate policies, processes and systems are sustainable, innovative and adaptable.