

Council Initiatives

Update and Next Steps

Recommendation

That the recommendations set out in Attachment 2 of the March 15, 2021, Office of the City Manager report OCM00151, be approved.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the October 19/21, 2020, City Council meeting, the following motion was passed:

2. That City Council provide for an exemption for section 2c and section 3b of Policy C518C Council Initiative Policy, which refers to the Administrative resources required to support the initiatives, and that the exemption apply until Administration reports back to City Council in first quarter of 2021.
3. That Administration provide a report to Council in first quarter of 2021 on a possible path forward including amendments to Council Initiatives Policy C518C returning the policy to the pre-April 2020 version and a survey of sponsoring Councillors about whether their initiatives can be sunset immediately, can be wound down by end of term, or could proceed in other ways going forward.

At the October 22/23, 2019, City Council meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration survey councillors to assess the status of each of their initiatives and report back on the high-level status, specifically:

1. ought a given initiative continue indefinitely and why, or will it wrap up by the end of the term, or can it be wound down now?
2. if the initiative should continue, does it require any adjustment in scope, name, description, resourcing or membership?

Executive Summary

Council Initiatives focus on a variety of areas, demographics or sectors within the city in an effort to make Edmonton more inclusive and livable for everyone. Councillors, in collaboration with Administration, external stakeholders and partners, work to advance the goals and objectives for each initiative over a four-year term set out by the terms of reference and work plan for each initiative.

Recent consultation with Council Initiative sponsors indicated that:

- Twelve initiatives should be sunset (three immediately, nine by September 2021);
- Eight initiatives should continue to the end of the current Council term; and
- Four initiatives were tied between continuing and sunsetting.

Administration recommends three initiatives be sunset immediately and the remaining 21 initiatives be reinitiated for the purposes of completing their work plans before the end of the current City Council term. Administration will return to the September 7, 2021, City Council meeting with an update on the 2017-2021 Council Initiatives. For initiatives that may continue past September 2021, the incoming City Council will decide whether they continue during the 2021-2025 City Council term.

Report

Council Initiatives are constituted by City Council with the goal of improving certain aspects of Edmonton's future. Councillors, in collaboration with Administration, external stakeholders and partners, work to advance the goals and objectives for each initiative over a four-year term set out by the terms of reference and work plan for each initiative.

At the October 22/23, 2019, City Council meeting, City Council directed Administration to report back to the March 17, 2020, Executive Committee meeting on the status of the Council Initiatives, including whether the initiatives should continue and, if so, whether adjustments to scope, name, description, resourcing or membership would be required. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and Council's direction to suspend Standing Committee meetings at the March 13, 2020, Special City Council meeting, Administration was unable to bring the update responding to Council's direction. Since this time, Council has given new direction on the Council Initiatives and the information prepared for the March 17, 2020, Executive Committee meeting is no longer relevant.

At the April 29/30, 2020, City Council meeting, City Council directed amendments to the Council Initiatives Policy C518C to facilitate a temporary subordination of the original 24 Council Initiatives under four new initiatives that were aligned with the four strategic goals of ConnectEdmonton. At the October 19/21, 2020, City Council meeting, Council directed that the four new initiatives be suspended and that Administration return with a path forward for the previous 24 Council Initiatives in the first quarter of 2021.

Administration surveyed sponsoring Councillors to learn whether the Council Initiatives could be sunset immediately, continue to the end of the current City Council term, or proceed in other ways. Overall, the consultation with sponsors indicated that:

- Twelve initiatives could be sunset (majority indicated initiatives should sunset immediately or before the end of the current Council term)

- Active Transportation
- City Design
- Community Hubs - recommend to sunset immediately
- Edmonton's Next Gen - recommend to sunset immediately
- Food and Agri-Business Diversification
- Literacy
- Live Active, Health and Recreation
- Multiculturalism
- Northern Relations
- Traffic Safety
- Transportation Innovation
- Urban Isolation/Mental Health
- Eight initiatives could proceed in other ways, with the incoming City Council making the decision:
 - Arts, Heritage and Culture
 - Child Friendly Edmonton
 - Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention
 - Housing
 - Indigenous Peoples Strategy
 - Seniors
 - Winter Cities
 - Women's Initiative
- Four initiatives had no majority (tie between "continue" and "sunset")
 - Edmonton in Bloom
 - Edmonton's Poverty Elimination
 - Energy Transition and Climate Resilience
 - Public Engagement - recommend to sunset immediately

A summary of survey results for each initiative is provided in Attachment 1.

Based on feedback from the majority of Councillors, Administration recommends the following:

- that two initiatives be sunset immediately;
- that ten initiatives be reinitiated to close out their work plans and be sunset in September; and
- that the eight initiatives identified to continue be reinitiated for the purposes of providing an update on this work before the end of the current Council term.

For the initiatives that are being reinitiated, Administration, in consultation with the respective Councillor(s) leading the initiative, will determine the most appropriate way to either close these off or stay involved.

For the initiatives that had no majority, Administration recommends the following:

- that the Edmonton in Bloom, Edmonton’s Poverty Elimination and Energy Transition and Climate Resilience initiatives continue, with the incoming City Council making the decision on whether they continue during the 2021-2025 City Council term.
- that the Public Engagement initiative be sunset immediately, as Administration has assumed this work as regular business.

Administration would then report to City Council early in the 2021-2025 term to determine whether the new Council wishes to renew these eleven initiatives.

Public facing engagement activities for the reinitiated initiatives would need to be completed before July 1, 2021. Administration will bring an update on all the Council Initiatives to the September 7, 2021 City Council meeting.

Next Steps

The Council Initiatives that have been absorbed into Administration’s regular business will continue to advance in alignment with the City’s strategic priorities. The work of initiatives that have been sunset will also be absorbed into Administration’s regular business or be transitioned to external organizations. More information can be found in Attachment 1.

If the recommendations in this report are approved, Administration will return to City Council with any necessary amendments to Council Initiatives Policy C518C to resource the existing initiatives until the end of this Council term. Following the general election in October 2021, Council Initiatives will be reassessed and further amendments to the Policy can be made at that time.

Financial / Budget Implications

There are no budget or financial implications associated with the recommendation of this report. A description of how several Council Initiatives are incorporated into Administration's regular business is outlined in Attachment 1.

Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management

Corporate Outcome(s): Conditions of Success			
Outcome(s)	Measure(s)	Result(s)	Target(s)
The City adheres to established directives, policies and guidelines.*	Number of Council Initiatives Reports	2020: 2 2019: 1 2018: 2	2 reports annually, per initiative

Risk Assessment

Risk Element	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Score (with current mitigations)	Current Mitigations	Potential Future Mitigations
Political Influences	Policy change may result in delays in achieving strategic objectives	3 - possible	3 - Major	9 - Medium		
Public perception	Poor public perception of the City during COVID-19 affects its ability to achieve its objective	3 - possible	3 -Major	9 - Medium		

Attachments

1. Summary of Council Initiatives
2. Recommendations

Others Reviewing this Report

- C. Hodgson, Acting Deputy City Manager, Financial and Corporate Services
- C. Owen, Deputy City Manager, Communications and Engagement
- G. Cebryk, Deputy City Manager, City Operations
- A. Laughlin, Deputy City Manager, Integrated Infrastructure Services
- D. Jubinville, Acting Deputy City Manager, Employee Services
- R. Smyth, Deputy City Manager, Citizen Services
- K. Petrin, Acting Deputy City Manager, Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development
- K. Fallis-Howell, Acting City Solicitor