

Rethink to Thrive Strategy Update: Q3 / Q4 2021

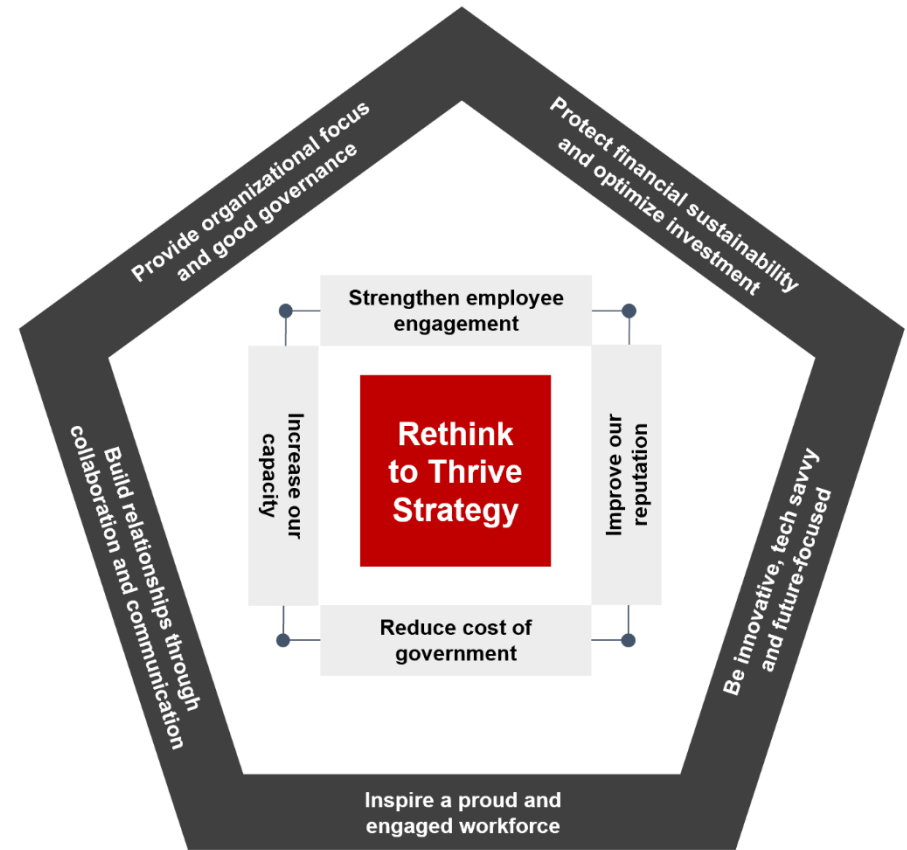
Background

The City of Calgary has created a strong foundation for thinking differently through its One City, One Voice culture. Approved by Council on 2020 June 29, Administration’s Rethink to Thrive Strategy provides an opportunity to grow and strengthen our corporate culture and outlines how Administration will work together to continue to achieve Council’s direction. At its core, Rethink to Thrive is about how the organization will work differently to continue to achieve The City’s purpose to make life better every day. The City Manager and the Executive Leadership Team are the stewards of this internally-focused strategy through the Executive Leadership service line.

Strategy Updates

Considerable work has been undertaken to advance the strategies within Rethink to Thrive despite ongoing constraints due to The City’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has allowed Administration to remain nimble and rethink internal and external processes and approaches to serving Calgarians during a time when traditional service delivery has been significantly challenged.

Since Council’s approval of the strategy, the City Manager has been working with the Executive Leadership Team to ensure a shared understanding of the objectives and strategies, as well as the initiatives that are currently contributing to the strategy’s progress. Key highlights of several of these initiatives can be found further in this report.



Key Highlights (Please note: This list is not exhaustive)

STRATEGY AREA	HIGHLIGHTS
<p>Provide organizational focus and good governance</p>	<p>2022 adjustments and Council priorities: The 2022 Adjustments to the One Calgary 2019-2022 Service Plans and Budgets struck a balance between strategic savings and critical investments, resulting in a 2022 tax rate increase of 3.87 per cent. This amounts to an additional \$6.20 per month for the typical single residential property.</p> <p>Through their approval of the tax rate and user fees, Council's 2022 priorities include critical investments in our community, including advancements of the climate change strategies; improved maintenance, and healthier green spaces in parks; funding for affordable housing; improved snow and ice control; and improved community and public safety.</p> <p>Council has clearly emphasized that investing in Calgary's future is a priority, while at the same time committing to high quality core services and critical infrastructure. These priorities will support Calgary's economic recovery while balancing the financial impact on Calgarians, responding to the evolving needs of citizens and businesses.</p> <hr/> <p>Organization realignment project: In July, 35 new business units were designed and approved for The City's new organization structure. These new business units represent the functions that were identified and mapped to each of the new departments in early 2021. This marked the completion of the design stage, the second of five stages for the Realignment's implementation.</p> <p>In the following stage (develop), future directors were confirmed within the future structure. Confirmed directors will help lead the transition to the new structure, while remaining director positions are being recruited for. All director positions are anticipated to be filled by January 2022.</p> <p>The division and section layers of the new organization structure were also finalized as part of the develop stage. Work to map positions, budget, and employees to the new structure is now taking place, along with updating and, in some cases, creating processes for cross-collaboration in the new structure. Before the end of the year, our leadership team, from Directors to section leaders/supervisors, will know where they fit in our new organization</p>

	<p>and what the organizational model looks like. Then, early in the new year, employees will learn of the new structure and where they fit in it.</p> <p>Starting on January 3 and through 2022, we will be taking the time to build new teams and relationships, understand the opportunities our new structure provides, and have the systems and tools ready to support our new structure when it comes into effect.</p> <p>Employee feedback gathered early 2021 continues to be incorporated into the structure and transition planning. Additional opportunities to gather more specific input from subject matter experts is on-going by the department implementation teams.</p> <p>Organizational governance: The organization realignment provides an opportunity to revisit and clarify organizational governance and accountability frameworks as well as clearly define roles and responsibilities to ensure the future success of the organization.</p> <p>Recent efforts have focused on advancing service governance to align with the timelines of the organization realignment project, and to ensure continued timely and seamless delivery of services that span across departments and business units.</p> <p>We will continue to advance other organizational opportunities including shifting senior leadership to focus primarily on strategic governance, and reviewing cross-corporate committees, including mandate, roles, and opportunities to reduce duplication and simplify Administration committee structures.</p>
	<p>Council orientation: In accordance with the Municipal Government Act and Council Policy, the Council Orientation program was designed to align learning sessions to key activities on the Council Calendar (i.e. Swearing-In, Strategic Meeting of Council, Organizational Meeting, 2022 Budget and Business Planning, etc.), as well as sharing information that would be important to understand early in Council’s term. Activities also included initial onboarding support, such as information technology tools, office space, administrative and financial supports, and education and awareness on relevant Council policies.</p> <p>“Deep Dive” sessions were created as an opportunity for additional topics identified by either administration or members of Council to be explored more in-depth. Additional</p>

	<p>orientation opportunities will be extended beyond December to allow for continuous learning throughout the Council term.</p> <p>All materials have been prepared and provided electronically and will remain as an electronic repository of relevant information for future reference. Sessions have been offered in a hybrid format with in-person participation limited to Members of Council, the Executive Leadership Team, and presenters, with a remote option for others to join by Microsoft Teams.</p>
<p>Protect financial sustainability and optimize investment</p>	<p>Looking ahead to Service Plans and Budgets 2023-2026: Service plans and budgets are the foundation for understanding our service delivery, the value it provides, and how this contributes to the quality of life in our community. Development of the 2023-2026 Service Plans and Budgets is a collaborative process that will integrate all related financial and service initiatives, including those related to capital investments and growth.</p> <p>In addition, Administration will be aligning all aspects of the 2023-2026 Service Plans and Budgets with the multi-year service planning and budgeting principles developed in response to the Financial Task Force and approved by Council in June 2021. This includes use of new communication tools to help explain how various Council reports work together, as well as proactive and multi-faceted engagement processes to ensure that the diverse needs and voices of Calgarians are incorporated.</p>
<p>Inspire a proud and engaged workforce</p>	<p>Corporate employee survey results: The City of Calgary is committed to strengthening the workplace and inspiring a proud and engaged workforce. The biennial Corporate Employee Survey (CES) offers employees across the Corporation the opportunity to collectively share how satisfied they are with their work environment, what works well, and areas that have room for improvement.</p> <p>Results from the CES provide valuable insight as we evolve as an employer and build a more innovative organization to support the changing needs of our citizens.</p> <p>The last year-and-a-half has been full of change and City staff have adapted, thrived, and met challenges during times of such great uncertainty. Overall results from the Corporate Employee Survey indicate improvements or stable results in most areas.</p>



Some highlights include:

- Employee Satisfaction Index continues to be strong and is currently at 131.4
- Employee Engagement scores increased by 1 at 75
- All 4Cs – character, competence, commitment, and collaboration – measures increased
- Taken collectively from a variety of measures, we see improvements in employees’ perception of:
 - Collaboration: opportunities to work with other departments, cooperation between the different work groups with my business unit, and encouragement to collaborate with my work group
 - Culture of trust: people I work with cooperate to get the job done, and trust in the people I work with
 - My input is valued: encouragement to act when seeing a problem or opportunity, encouragement to share knowledge, ideas, opinions, and new ways of doing things, and my opinions are valued

Leadership teams will receive a detailed report from a business unit perspective. They will then share successes and progress made, as well as address potential issues within their business units and divisions.

Health, Safety and Wellness (HSW) month:

Health, Safety and Wellness (HSW) month occurs every October. This month-long initiative provides physical and psychological safety messages, leader and employee discussion tools, and educational opportunities to advance safety culture at The City.

This year’s theme was Health, Safety and Wellness in times of change. The last 20 months have been challenging for everyone and psychological safety is emerging as a critical part of workplace safety. Several activities were available to support staff in their personal and professional lives. 2021 events were organized in three parts:

1. Psychological safety: included keynote talks by leading expert Dr. Timothy Clark to leaders and front-line staff and a series of videos about psychological safety featuring leaders from across the organization.



2. Staying healthy at work challenge: included short videos and print materials for stretching, mindfulness, and ergonomics for use in safety moments and by individuals.
3. Introduction of learning case studies for operations: a tool that can be used by leaders to facilitate safety discussions about real events with their staff.

More than 690 employees attended the keynote talks with satisfaction rates greater than 90 per cent reported through post-event surveys. Other features from this year's HSW month have been designed to be used year-round as part of ongoing safety discussions and evaluation between leaders and employees.

Experience Inclusion 2021:

The principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging guides the work we do as public servants. They affect how we listen, involve, and include citizens and each other. Experience Inclusion has been an annual event for employees since 2015 and provides employees with an opportunity to engage in safe and meaningful conversations while listening to the perspectives of others.

This year's theme of "Our Journey to Inclusion and Belonging in Times of Change" recognized the value of talking about lived experiences with inclusion and the steps we can each take to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion practices in the Corporation.

Representatives from various business units presented alongside subject matters experts from outside The City. A moderated panel discussed inclusion, belonging and psychological safety from different perspectives. This furthered the conversation that began for leaders and employees on the stages of psychological safety during Health, Safety and Awareness Month in October.

The health and safety of employees continues to be a priority for The City. This includes both physical as well as psychological safety, which is particularly relevant as we continue to grapple with changes to our social and political landscape; recognizing local demonstrations for equity and inclusion last year and the discovery of the unmarked graves at former Indian residential schools.

The pandemic required the event to become virtual, which increased the number of employees who could participate and watch recordings when convenient. Over 900 City employees participated in this year's live events, with over 670 participating in the

	<p>livestream and over 300 who watched the recording. This represents above average levels of participation in similar live events organized by The City.</p> <p>Overall, most employees who completed the Experience Inclusion participant survey reported a positive experience with this year’s event and hope to operationalize their learnings by being more inclusive and embedding the principles of psychological safety within the workplace.</p>
	<p>COVID-19 Employee vaccination policy: On November 1, 2021, The City’s COVID-19 Employee Vaccination Policy came into effect. The Vaccination Policy is the most recent mitigation step The City has taken to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. As part of a bigger push by government, industry, and citizens, the rate of fully vaccinated in Alberta is now at 84 per cent with City employees at 92 per cent fully vaccinated. Employees who are not vaccinated are being monitored with testing. The City also developed a contractor and volunteer vaccination policy to help ensure contractors who work side-by-side with our employees are fully vaccinated or frequently tested for COVID-19.</p> <p>These policies are an added layer of safety for employees, contractors, volunteers, and citizens in providing city services. We continue to work on The City’s return to work plans and are awaiting guidance from Alberta Health Services when it is safe to return to work. We continue to provide contact tracing and managing isolation for employees who test positive for COVID-19. Lastly, we are monitoring regulations and recommendations of Alberta Health Services and Alberta Occupational Health and Safety to ensure effective management of the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>
	<p>Our journey to becoming an anti-racist organization: The past few months have been one of growth. As part of the public safety stream, we have initiated a scoping exercise with City partners and staff to map out the nature, patterns, and priority areas of hate-motivated activities in municipal enforcement and service delivery. These discovery conversations will feed into the development of a public safety strategy. In addition, we conducted extensive research, municipal scans, and literature review on causes and strategies to address hate activities and enhance public dignity. As a result of this foundational work, the vision of the Municipal Anti-Racism Public Safety Strategy has been developed: <i>To envision a public life where all Calgarians can work, live, and play with a sense of wellness, safety, dignity and belonging free from systemic racism and racialization.</i></p>

As part of the community stream, we have completed 36 events to date, with a total of 1,114 participants spanning 13 languages. These engagements will continue until the end of December. Along with community feedback and recommendations from these events, we will be engaging a group of 12 individuals, acting as a Priority Collaborative Group, to help review, prioritize, and identify recommendations for an Anti-Racism Community Action Strategy.

As part of the organizational stream, we have engaged staff over the past six months to begin discussions on the experiences of systemic racism on the job. In parallel, a high-level organization-wide racial equity assessment was completed and will inform the design of a racial equity assessment model and approach for helping The City to become an anti-racist organization. Reoccurring themes articulated by staff include:

- Indication of the presence of racism at the City
- Indication of fear for retaliation or complicity
- Potential for bias in talent attraction, recruitment, hiring, and career progression
- Leadership's commitment to anti-racism
- Anti-racism training and resources
- A desire to have safe spaces for open conversations around race and racism

The program team is working with City staff to undertake immediate actions including:

- Conduct leadership alignment workshops
- Develop an anti-racism case for change
- Establish an integrated governance structure
- Update key policies
- Start collecting diversity data
- Provide targeted anti-racism training and education
- Disseminate anti-racism communications

The program also continues to provide additional organizational support including:

- Collaborating with the Calgary Police Services' Anti-Racism Working Group
- Advising other programs to use an anti-racism lens, e.g., Tomorrow's Chinatown, Black Lives Matter Murals, and Calgary Housing Company

<p>Build strong relationships through collaboration and communication</p>	<p>Corporate Marketing and Communications Strategy: In early 2021, The City developed a Corporate Marketing and Communications Strategy to share timely and relevant information with citizens, businesses, and employees. Messaging from this strategy includes stimulating economic recovery, investments made with citizens' property tax dollars, and specific COVID-19-related supports. The initiatives promoted through the campaign were based on City of Calgary research indicating City topics which Calgarians want more information on.</p> <p>This strategy is a coordinated approach to share and amplify information to Calgarians about pandemic and post-pandemic response with targeting by urban and suburban quadrants, business owners, and City partners, with a focus on multicultural audiences within those groups.</p> <p>Along with a variety of messaging, the campaign includes a mix of channels ranging from digital banners, YouTube ads and social media, to print ads in community newsletters and translated ads for multicultural print publications and radio. Phase two of the campaign wrapped up in Q3.</p> <p>The first two phases of the campaign made a strong impact with 14.9 million impressions of digital ads, and another 1.3 million impressions on social media. All of these impressions directed citizens to calgary.ca/respond. The webpage had over 22,000 page views with over 80% resulting from the digital ads and the most popular topics were the downtown-focused messages and economic recovery. This strong start to our multi-year integrated campaign confirms it has been seen by many Calgarians and has a direct impact in helping The City meet the information needs of our citizens.</p> <p>Phase 3 of the campaign began on November 1 and runs until the end of the year with planning underway for 2022.</p>
<p>Be innovative, tech savvy and future-focused</p>	<p>Calgary Restrictions Exemption Program (REP) business support grant The Business and Local Economy team created the Calgary REP Business Support Grant to mitigate the costs associated with implementing the Restrictions Exemption Program for those businesses mandated to do so under the Municipal Vaccine Passport Bylaw. This program was created using funds remaining from the previous Calgary Reopening Grant program. Being prepared and nimble allowed The City to support small businesses in a relatively quick timeframe, within three weeks of implementation of the REP.</p>



The program began accepting applications on October 12, providing a \$2000 grant to all businesses required to participate in the REP. As of November 29, The City received 3,799 applications for support, and payments had been issued for 2,173 grants for a value of \$4.3 million. The budget remaining to be distributed was equal to 302 additional grants. Applications will close on December 10 and any remaining funds will return to the Calgary COVID Business Support Program.

Digital Service Squad:

The Business and Local Economy (BLE) team has received a grant through BusinessLink’s Digital Economy Program to implement a Digital Service Squad (DSS) program. Under this program, BLE will hire up to 15 post-secondary students to help small businesses increase their digital presence and capabilities. Members of the DSS will provide individualized service to businesses, helping identify digital needs and providing recommendations on the best ways to address them. Recruiting for these students will run from December 6 – 17 in preparation for a full program launch in Q1 2022.

BLE will work with community partners and post-secondary institutions to ensure that we are reaching small businesses across The City and providing students with meaningful opportunities to expand their skill set. It will also be an opportunity to incorporate principles of digital equity in our city. The Digital Economy Program is a partnership between BusinessLink and Digital Main Streets made possible through funding from the Government of Alberta.

Appendix

Rethink to Thrive Strategy

OBJECTIVES				
Improve our reputation	Reduce cost of government	Strengthen employee engagement	Increase our capacity	
STRATEGIES				
Provide organizational focus and good governance	Protect financial sustainability and optimize investment	Inspire a proud and engaged workforce	Build strong relationships through collaboration and communication	Be innovative, tech savvy and future-focused
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Council with the best professional advice in a timely and effective manner • Empower decision making at the right levels of the organization • Review organizational alignment and focus senior leaders on managing strategic risks • Review corporate governance and find opportunities to identify duplication, reduce or consolidate work and reporting, and clarify accountability • Focus on the corporation's capacity, resiliency and agility to respond to emerging issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase service efficiency and effectiveness • Work collaboratively to find permanent savings in The City's operating base budget • Optimize capital planning and infrastructure investment • Advance The City's interests with Provincial and Federal governments and the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board • Continue service planning and budgeting with a focus on putting citizens at the centre of our service delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus the organization on safety (physical and psychological), respect, and inclusion • Modernize our workforce practices and create a clear connection between business needs and policy • Provide opportunities for learning and development • Drive individual and team performance • Continue to reinforce the Code of Conduct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share timely and relevant information with citizens, businesses, and employees, and actively correct misinformation • Develop a corporate communications strategy focused on investment and value, and encourage employees to be ambassadors of City information • Foster positive, collaborative and productive relationships with key stakeholders and partners • Provide great customer service by being open and accessible and responding to requests in a timely manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage innovation and experimentation and promote a "fail fast" mentality • Create a Calgary that is more resilient in the face of stresses and shocks • Leverage technology, data and analytics to make better decisions and work smarter • Be champions for business success and apply a business-friendly lens to planning and service delivery • Enable others to innovate and be innovative by creating the right mindset and conditions for success