

Q3 - 2024



2022 - 2026
**CITY OF BRANDON
STRATEGIC PLAN**

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Land Acknowledgment

The City of Brandon is located on Treaty 2 land, the unceded territory of the Dakota, and homelands of the Red River Métis.



Message From The Mayor

On behalf of Brandon City Council, I am pleased to present the 2022 – 2026 Council Strategic Plan.

This plan is a roadmap for City Council and Administration to guide us as we make decisions to reflect the priorities of our city, community, and future residents.

We are privileged to live in a city, full of opportunities. Like our predecessors, it is our turn to look ahead and ensure our city has as many advantages as possible for future generations. Today, our community faces unprecedented social needs, aging infrastructure, and increased inflation. We also need to address growth challenges and downloading of cost from other levels of government while keeping affordability top of mind.



This Strategic Plan represents City Council's shared priorities for the City of Brandon and focuses in six key areas:

1. addressing social needs
2. economic growth and development
3. affordability
4. community well-being
5. communication and collaboration
6. environmental sustainability

While we are only one level of government, it is up to us to demonstrate the leadership required so that we can all grow and prosper together.

On behalf of Council and Management,

Jeff Fawcett

Mayor, City of Brandon



Background

In October 2022, Council engaged the services of Siere to assist in developing a Council Strategic Plan, intended to outline Council's priorities and strategies over the next four years.

In early December, the newly elected Council along with members of senior administration met. Council had the opportunity to discuss the challenges facing the community and to collectively identify those priorities that would have the greatest impact on the long-term growth and sustainability of the community. As much as Council would have liked to take on everything, they recognized the need to balance this with the fiscal implications of doing so.

This plan supports the overarching themes of financial sustainability, environment / climate change and bold / innovative that was established with the previous Council, demonstrating the overall consistency in themes between Councils.

This strategic plan outlines the key areas of focus (or priorities) over the next four years. City Council and City Administration will use this plan to help guide annual budgeting and resource allocation in order to effectively implement the strategies contained within. These strategies will be disseminated to staff, committees, and other stakeholders to ensure that collectively the community is working together to fulfill them.

The plan is ultimately a living document and will be reviewed on a quarterly basis with an update being provided to the community on the progress.



Financial
Sustainability



Environment &
Climate Change



Bold &
Innovative



Council Priorities



Work collaboratively to address the evolving trauma-informed opportunities within the community



Foster an environment that supports economic growth and development



Explore alternative sustainable service delivery models



Promote community well-being



Improve the communication and collaboration amongst stakeholders



Address the long-term impact and sustainability of the environment



Work collaboratively to address the evolving trauma-informed opportunities within the community

Trauma informed social opportunities including drug addiction, poverty, and homelessness put increasing pressure on municipal services, police services, and the private sector, not to mention the impact it has on families in our community. A collaborative approach is required to identify the right solution for Brandon. From lobbying other levels of government, to seeking support from the private sector, Council is invested in dealing with the issues at hand, which may also help to resolve some of the underlying causes.

Strategy #1: Develop and implement a Net Zero Homelessness Plan

Community Safety & Well-being plan engagement process in underway and over 1000 responses to community survey already (open until Oct 31). Building foundation in and framing underway for 16th Street North transitional housing. Net Zero Homelessness housing sites ongoing. Proponent shortlisted for 12th Street North property. Seasonal community resource drop-in centre to open at 725 Princess Avenue. Environmental due diligence being completed for Rideau housing site.



Strategy #2: Actively lobby for continuum of care treatment

Design of sobering centre underway to align with provincial funding realities. RFP for operator underway.



Strategy #3: Ensure the safety of people

Most Brandon Police Service staff completed “Managing Unconscious Bias” course with a deadline to have all staff completed by September 30th.



Foster an environment that supports economic growth and development

Knowing that current and future residents want to live in a vibrant and growing city, Council looks to foster an environment that supports population and economic growth. A community's vitality is measured by amenities including a variety of retail stores, airline service, expanded job opportunities, recreation facilities, and increasing values of real estate. While growth brings economic prosperity, Council recognizes the need to balance the desire for growth with the associated costs.

Strategy #4: Facilitate development opportunities for residential, commercial, and industrial use types in both established (infill) and emerging (greenfield) areas

(Beyond identified infrastructure challenges noted in Q1 and Q2) City Council adopted Zoning By-law amendments as part of the Housing Accelerator fund initiatives, enabling more development of housing across the city



Strategy #5: Review, adopt and implement the City Plan

Public hearing held in August, waiting to receive comments from Province before returning to Council for second reading



Strategy #6: Encourage the redevelopment of downtown

Downtown market housing incentive approved. Offer signed for first phase of Princess Development site. Pacific land sale for pickleball facility signed. Library/Arts renovation grant applications proceeding.



Explore alternative sustainable service delivery models

A big part of what makes a community attractive, is how well it is able to continually manage the balance between sustaining existing assets (both above and below ground), meeting the health and environmental standards for things like water and sanitation, making investments in new community assets like recreation, and managing growth, while being aware of the cost of these and the overall impact to residents. To continue to manage this balance it requires a focus on innovative approaches to how services are provided and funded and the collection of information to be able to make sound decisions both in the short and long terms.

Strategy #7: Explore alternate revenue models

Parking fee increase is complete. Vacant building bylaw review and fees complete. Development cost charge review, including industry consultation, is complete and final recommendation to Council is pending. Initial review of storm water pay-for-service program is complete and temporarily on hold. Sanitation pay-for-service review has not started. General fee review happens by department annually.



Strategy #8: Update and advance the Asset Management Plan (AMP)

Efforts of asset management continue with the engagement of a consultant. The asset management task force is currently focused on criticality and service definitions. An initial state of the infrastructure report should be available for 2025. the 2025 Capital Plan is currently under development with the guidance of general asset management principles.



Promote community well-being

Recreation and cultural opportunities are the cornerstones for building a community where everyone is welcome to celebrate shared interests and backgrounds. Council recognizes the role they play in providing the resources to support these opportunities and in ensuring their longterm viability. They also recognize as a growing community, with it comes challenges such as increased traffic and the impact that has on young and old alike. Exploring an approach to work with the community to resolve this challenge will bring about a better understanding, that as a community, we all play a role in ensuring the safety of each other.

Strategy #9: Define and implement a path forward for large community recreation and culture facilities

The outdoor aquatic feasibility study has been completed. The facility is not included in the City of Brandon's 10-year capital plan; however administration will continue to seek out capital funding opportunities for this facility.



Strategy #10: Expand the cultural aspects of the community

The trails are completed, and work is proceeding to prepare for the newest installation of the Sawatzky Sculpture Garden. Contractors are working on landscaping and base work for the "Caribou Gateway Plaza" sculpture, which will be installed before year end. The "Curious Black Bear" sculpture will be placed in the Spring of 2025.



Strategy #11: Address recreation and service gaps in neighborhoods

Administration and Brandon University Students continue to collaborate on a review of existing recreation amenities and an assessment of gaps. The final report to council is expected in December 2024.



Strategy #12: Implement a Vision Zero strategy approach to traffic and pedestrian safety

Progress of the Vision Zero Task force struggles to advance. While some initiatives have been identified, the momentum and action of members is lacking. A strong champion at the Department Head Level is required.



Improve the communication and collaboration amongst stakeholders

Communication is central to our success as a community. As the City, we need to effectively communicate with our residents about the issues important to them. At the same time, we need to have the mechanisms in place to have collaborative communication. The big part of the challenge in effectively communicating is in determining the correct channel (ie. social media, print, Access 12, mailers, etc.) and in the timeliness of messaging. There is opportunity to improve the overall understanding of our Police Board in the community and to look at opportunity to expand the communication between the City and the Board, to better meet the needs of the community. The better our collective ability to communicate, the better we all are.

Strategy #13: Improve communication between the residents and the City

Corporate Communications continues to focus on critical communications areas. Further progress on this strategy cannot occur without additional staffing availability.



Strategy #14: Explore collaboration between the Police Board and Council

A regular Police Board Meeting was held on June 14th, 2024. Police Board and City Council informal meeting scheduled for September 9th - prior to Police Board budget meetings being held - to provide City Council a chance to provide input.



Address the long-term impact and sustainability of the environment

As a community, we have experienced firsthand the impact of climate change. The economic impact, never mind the personal impact, for both a municipality and its residents can be devastating. As stewards of our community, it is important for us to do our parts to minimize our impact on our environment and to assist where we can, to create a green community. There is an economic advantage to being “green” and it is in all our best interests to foster an environment that supports and encourages our citizens to act.

Strategy #15: Adopt the Climate Change Action plan

Ongoing financial and staff resourcing have created challenges to pursue climate change actions. Additional efforts are required to prioritize, align, fund and implement climate change actions.



Strategy #16: Develop and implement an Active Transportation Strategy to improve connectivity in the community

Progress on Active Transportation initiatives is fair given available resources in the corporation. 26th St continues to be a main focus with recent reports to council on progress. A final solution will be presented in 2025 with an intention to advertise this project this year. Delays in 26th Street design has resulted in reprioritizing the timing of other on-street active transportation projects.



Strategy #17: Evaluate the transit system to increase ridership

Phase 1 is 78% complete and phase 2 is 26% complete, with anticipated completion by spring of 2025. A number of options have been generated based on increased connectivity, improved directness of travel and increased frequency levels. Options include multi transfer points for riders to connect more directly to get to their destination more quickly. Due to the sprawling of the city, increased ridership and appealing to non-riders – the hub and spoke model is no longer meeting our community's needs. Short term options are subtle with minimum budgetary increases to allow for proper operational planning and ensuring adequate time for rider education. The next step is the second round of public engagement which will include stakeholder and employee meetings, public open houses and a public survey.



Conclusion

The City of Brandon has an exciting future. With so much to celebrate as a community, the opportunities for education, recreation, annual and special events, industries and organizations are endless.

To ensure the community remains vibrant and growing and a place people choose to live, we need to attend to our social issues, plan for growth in residential and industrial lands, enhance our community well-being and look for ways to protect the environment, while keeping affordability top of mind.

There are many opportunities for collaboration with a broad variety of community stakeholders. It is anticipated that as our strategic initiatives move forward, there will also be the opportunity for not only input and feedback, but for the community to have a tangible impact in supporting these strategies.



