



2023 - 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

Support pilots by external partners such as utilizing hotel rooms for short term stays to move occupants out of encampments, an overnight drop in space and be a part of the follow up meetings for lessons learned and next steps.



Strategy #2: Actively lobby for continuum of care treatment

Sobering assessment centre plan is complete, operational funding (\$1.5M/yr) and capital funding (\$2M) is secured. In partnership with the Province, the City is completing a Community Safety and Well-Being Plan which will define the next steps. Mayor Fawcett is talking to the Premier about our plans.



Strategy #3: Ensure the safety of people

Creation of the Downtown Operational Team to collaboratively tackle downtown challenges. Police and Fire had mandatory training of Four Seasons of reconciliation which was offered to other staff through the other city departments.



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

The scope of a water capacity study has been completed with the RFP currently under development. Funding has been proposed in the 2024 annual budget to undertake this study. The study will look at operational modifications of the existing network in addition to capital improvements in order to support growth in the south of Brandon. The study is anticipated to take approximately 10 months.



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

Final draft complete and undergoing internal review. Final draft for public engagement and council consideration in February 2024.



Behind

Strategy #6: Encourage the redevelopment of downtown

Reviewing design options for new library/arts building with final design to council planned for March 2024. Exploring options with potential developer of Princess and 10th Street Site. Preparation of market downtown housing incentive underway with engagement planned for February/March 2024.



On Track

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

Collecting new revenues through a land drainage levy is anticipated for 2025. Public consultation and a new by-law is anticipated in 2024.



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

An asset management consultant (KPMG) is currently working with City Administration to enhance and advance an asset management plan. An initial assessment of maturity and a 3 year plan has been developed through collaboration with city staff. This process will include a capital investment strategy. The City also continues to work with Cityworks advancing operational planning and financial tracking.



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

There were some delay's in the final preparation of the report, however it has been completed. The results of the study will be presented to Council on March 4, 2024.



Strategy #10: Expand the cultural aspects of the community

Riverbank Inc. is working on an overall design for the gardens with construction to start in 2024. Parks also has funds proposed in 2024 Budget to assist in the construction of this project with the main pathway.



Strategy #11: Address recreation and service gaps in neighborhoods

A mapping and inventory process to determine the recreational amenities in each ward is underway. This to be completed by the end August 2024.



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

Vision Zero recently launched a media campaign with a focus on unmarked crosswalks and crosswalk protocol. Brandon School Division and Vision Zero will develop a model around Pathways to School to identify, assess and improve key designated pedestrian routes to and from schools. The movement to consider the reduction of speed limits within the City continues.



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 is continuing to work towards the completion of the Current Communications Channels and Plan, but priority has been given to focusing on pressing projects with complex communications needs.



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

A second Informal Discussion Meeting between the Police Board, Police Executive and City Council members took place on December 11th, 2023.



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

Climate Action Plan adopted by Council. Next task is implementation, staffing and budget considerations.



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

City Planning, Engineering and Environmental Initiatives will be collaborating with the residents of Brandon to discuss a modal shift in transportation. Options for a dedicated bike lane on 26th street are being considered and will be taken to the public for comment in the near future. Other pop up lanes are being considered in other areas of the city.



Strategy #17: Evaluate the transit system to increase ridership

Transit route planning & long term strategy update:

Phase 1 is 44.21% complete as of the last progress payment (December 31, 2023). The learning task (deep dive into data, route analysis, etc.) is 97.4% complete along with 27% of the visioning task. The project team has reviewed the detailed analysis and provided feedback to the consultants. The next step is to add 2023 ridership data to the analysis so all comparisons (including other transit systems) are up to date as of year end. A vision/engagement session has been scheduled with council for February 12th from 6pm to 9pm.

Some key observations noted by Watt include:

- Most of the city is within walking distance of a transit stop, system is operated efficiently.
- 2019 was the most cost-effective year in the past five year period, with a 9% increase in operating cost.
- System is showing signs of outgrowing the Hub & Spoke model. Routes are pushing against the 30 minute limit, leading to a cascading effect of delays for entire system, especially in afternoon.
- One way loops are inefficient and are a deterrent for riders.
- Low ridership along several routes/corridors including Victoria Avenue and north of Assiniboine River routes (both 4 & 5). Need to balance service coverage with allocation of resources where needed.
- Amount of service provided to community lags behind, opportunities for increased frequency and coverage. Incremental increases in municipal contributions could further support and expand transit services. Capacity constraints and increased trip denials on Access Transit are of concern (escalating ridership).



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.



