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**Date** February 28, 2023 **Report No.** 2023-192

**To** Mayor and Members of City Council

**From** Brian Hutchings  
Chief Administrative Officer

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## 1.0 Type of Report

Consent Item ☐  
Item For Consideration ☒

## 2.0 Topic 2023-2026 Council Priority Setting 2023-192 [Financial Impact: None]

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## 3.0 Recommendation

- A. THAT Staff Report 2023-192 '2023-2026 Council Priority Setting' BE RECEIVED; and
- B. That the 2023-2026 Council Priorities as outlined in Appendix A BE ENDORSED; and
- C. THAT Staff BE DIRECTED to report back bi-annually to provide update on the 2023-2026 Council Priorities.

## 4.0 Purpose and Overview

This report summarizes the priorities proposed by Brantford City Council for the term of 2023 - 2026, and directs staff to develop a plan for implementation, to identify required resources and a plan on reporting to Council.

## 5.0 Background

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In December 2018, at the inaugural meeting of Council, Mayor Davis identified the need to review existing Council priorities and proposed that Council hold a priority-setting session to establish new priorities for the City of Brantford.

In February 2019, Council approved the Council Priorities for 2019-2020. In June 2019, a plan was presented and endorsed by Council, along with the short-term objectives staff would undertake to address each priority (Report 2019-384). Staff were directed to report to Council annually on the progress of the 2019-2020 Council Priorities.

In October 2020, Mayor Davis and Members of Council endorsed nine priority outcomes. The following was resolved at the October 15, 2020 meeting of Council:

**2021-2022 Council Priority Setting [Financial Impact: None], 2020-462**

- A. THAT Staff Report 2020-462 '2021-2022 Council Priority Setting' BE RECEIVED; and
- B. That the 2021-2022 Council Priorities as outlined in Appendix 'A' BE ENDORSED with the following amendments:
  - i. Outcome # 1 Item b entitled "Improve municipal capacity for by-law enforcement, including extended hours, expanded scope, to address concerns related to property standards, noise, nuisance, and compliance with COVID-19 regulations" BE MOVED to a tier 1 placement; and
  - ii. The title of the Outcome #1 BE CHANGED to "All Neighbourhoods in the City are safe, vibrant, attractive, and inclusive"; and
  - iii. Outcome # 2 BE AMENDED to read as follows "Social Service supports is provided to Brantford residents in need"; and
  - iv. Outcome # 2 Item c (Commence one or more additional housing developments, funded through proceeds from the disposition of municipal assets) BE MOVED to a tier 1 placement and be re-titled as item a having all others renumbered accordingly.; and
  - v. Outcome # 2, as amended, Item b (Together with health care partners, participate in the continued implementation of the Brantford-Brant Community Drugs Strategy) and c (Support the continued implementation of the Elder Abuse Prevention Strategy and other age-friendly initiatives) BE MOVED to a tier 2 placement; and
  - vi. Outcome # 3 Item d (Investigate City-wide traffic technologies to enhance traffic safety) BE AMENDED to add the words 'including Mobile Radar Units'; and
  - vii. Outcome # 3 Item f (Develop a long-term plan for public transit growth) BE AMENDED to include "including Transit service options in NW business park that coincide with shift changes"; and
  - viii. Outcome # 4 Item d (Enhance communication to residents demonstrating evidence of high value for tax dollars) BE MOVED to a tier 1 as placement 'a' having all items renumbered accordingly; and
  - ix. Outcome # 5 Item d (Forge strong relationships with the People of the Six Nations of the Grand River to support projects that contribute to growth and

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- prosperity) BE AMENDED to include "and the County of Brant" after the word River; and
- x. Outcome #6 Item a (Present results of the building and development process review and proceed according to Council direction, building an "Open for Business" reputation for the City of Brantford) BE AMENDED by removing the words 'present results' and replaced with 'implement recommendations'; and
  - xi. Outcome # 7 Item b (Demonstrate the City's commitment to environmental leadership through visible projects such as electric or hybrid fleet investments) BE MOVED to a tier 1 placement.; and
  - xii. Outcome # 7 Item d (Complete the City of Brantford Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Assessment Tool and the five milestones under the Partners for Climate Protection Program) BE MOVED to a tier 1 placement.; and
  - xiii. Outcome #7 Item b (Demonstrate the City's commitment to environmental leadership through visible projects such as electric or hybrid fleet investments) BE AMENDED by removing all words after 'projects'.; and
  - xiv. Outcome #7 Item f (Develop partnerships and capacity and achieve funding from other levels of government to construct an anaerobic food and organic waste digester) BE MOVED to a tier 2 placement and renumber accordingly.; and
  - xv. Outcome #7 Item a (Remediate brownfield lands and consider options for redevelopment) BE MOVED to a tier 3 placement and renumber accordingly.; and
  - xvi. Outcome # 7 Item a (Remediate brownfield lands and consider options for redevelopment) BE AMENDED to read as "Redevelop brownfield lands in conjunction with private sector and non-profit organizations which includes public consultation"; and
  - xvii. Outcome #7 Item a (Redevelop brownfield lands in conjunction with private sector and non-profit organizations which includes public consultation), as amended, BE MOVED BACK to a tier 1 placement.; and
  - xviii. Outcome # 8 Item e (Increase funding allocations for ongoing maintenance of municipal parks and amenities along the Grand River) BE REMOVED.; and
  - xix. Outcome # 8 Item a (Increase investments in flood mitigation and remediation) BE MOVED to a tier 1 placement; and
  - xx. Outcome # 9 Item a (Update the Municipal Cultural Plan) BE MOVED to a tier 1 placement and renumber accordingly.; and
  - xxi. Outcome # 9 Item b (Complete updates to the Museum Sustainability Plan) and c (Continue to explore cultural opportunities within the Mohawk Lake District) BE MOVED to a tier 1 placement.; and
  - xxii. Outcome # 9 Item e (Expand the Cenotaph) BE AMENDED to read as "Proceed with improvements to the Brant County War Memorial"; and
  - xxiii. Outcome # 9 Item d entitled "Establish a cultural hub in collaboration with arts organizations" BE AMENDED to replace 'establish' with 'advance' and BE MOVED to a tier 2 placement; and
  - xxiv. Outcome # 9 Item f tier 3 BE ADDED to read as "Promote complementary private sector enterprises and increase tourism marketing for arts history culture and sustainable places"; and
- C. THAT Staff BE DIRECTED to report back to Council in December 2020 with a plan to implement the 2021-2022 Council Priorities including a summary of required resources to be considered within the 2021 Estimates Process; and
- D. THAT Council CONDUCT a priority session review in one year time.

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There were bi-annual updates provided to Council in 2021 and 2022.

At the September 27, 2022 Committee of the Whole – Planning and Administration meeting, staff provided a final update on the progress of the 2021-2022 Council Priorities. All nine priority outcomes had at least one tier 1 actionable goal. 77% of tier 1 actionable goals are complete, while 18% of goals remained on track. That detailed chart update of all 48 Council Priorities can be found in *Appendix B*.

At the October 4, 2022 meeting of Council staff were DIRECTED:

A. THAT Staff Report 2022-629 Council Priorities – Update BE RECEIVED; and

B. THAT Staff BE DIRECTED to contract a facilitator to establish the 2022-2026 Council Priorities set in December 2022 at a cost of \$25,000 to funded from the Council Priorities Reserve (RF0558).

As Council prepared to begin a new term of Council, the CAO undertook the process of contracting a facilitator further to Council direction, following all City procurement policies and working closely with the Purchasing department. In November, 2022, the CAO reviewed three proposals.

Tania Caza, from Tango Business Coaching and Consulting in Brantford was contracted to undertake the project of consolidating data and facilitating the creation of a Strategic Plan/Priorities for the City of Brantford Council for the years 2023 – 2026. During the initial stage of this process, a number of community stakeholders were interviewed as part of a data-gathering exercise in order to capture the critical important issues that Council and the City will focus on for the next 4-year term.

Tango also undertook reviewing municipal documents and plans, which included previous Council Priority Reports, Service Review documents, Master Plans, and previous Annual Reports and Consolidated Financial Statements. Additionally, Tango Business Coaching conducted in person and zoom interviews with Mayor Davis and Members of Council, as well as a number of staff, including the CAO, General Managers, Director of Communications, Community Engagement and Customer Service and Indigenous Affairs Advisor. *A full list of interviews is included in Appendix A.*

A Priority Setting session was held on January 28, 2023, where the Mayor and Councillors were guided through a process of discussion and collaboratively developed a ranking of the strategic themes. Any further clarity of the strategic themes or additions to the Potential Priority Action areas were included throughout this process.

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The Council Priorities will provide guidance to the City on how to set and prioritize their goals for implementation for the four-year term, 2023 to 2026.

## **6.0 Corporate Policy Context**

This report supports the implementation of 2023-2026 Council Priorities.

## **7.0 Input From Other Sources**

City of Brantford - Clerks Services

City of Brantford – Executive Leadership Team

## **8.0 Analysis**

### **8.1 Ten Priority Outcomes**

At the facilitated priority setting session on January 28, 2023, Council members present were moved into 3 break-out groups to discuss each of the Strategic Themes and corresponding Potential Priority Action Areas. They were provided with approximately 90 minutes to discuss and debate the merits of the strategic themes and were also provided with a mandate of determining their top 3 strategic themes and why, which would be presented back to the larger group.

The following Decision-Making Criteria were provided as a framework for Council to help them categorize the initiatives:

1. Does the Strategy advance one or more of the outcomes that Council has deemed important to the future success of Brantford?
2. Does the Strategy minimize the need for municipal resources? If not, is a funding strategy in place to mitigate impacts to taxpayers?
3. Will the Strategy be visible to the community, clearly demonstrating value for tax dollars?
4. Is the Strategy consistent with appropriate municipal responsibilities for the City of Brantford?
5. Will the Strategy support the entire City, and provide timely solutions to urgent issues?

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The following questions were provided to aid further in digging deeper into these discussions:

- 1) Which of the ten Strategic Themes outlined above are most important to you? Why or why not?
- 2) Do you see any missing Priority Action Areas that Council might consider in the 4-year term?

Councillors had approximately 5 – 7 minutes per strategic theme to discuss its merits as well as the priority action areas. Each group determined its top 3 Strategic Themes based on the discussion and the Decision-Making Criteria laid out above and each group presented their top 3 Strategic Themes to the larger group.

**The following ten priority outcomes were identified:**

1. Develop strategies to build trust amongst Council while evolving the corporate culture. *(This Strategic Theme was rewritten. It was previously: Develop a process that will improve decision-making and transparency.)*
2. Focus on productive and collaborative partnerships.
3. Move people more effectively.
4. Create a vision and strategy for managing development and affordable housing.
5. Develop a planning and implementation schedule for various projects related to City assets.
6. a) Effectively and consistently engage with the community.  
  
b) Invest in a long-term strategy and plan to manage the homelessness crisis, inclusive of related issues of mental health and addiction issues, and safety and security concerns.
8. Create a vision statement for the long-term future of the City.
9. Commit to and implement the downtown revitalization plan and vision.
10. Build a greener Brantford.

\*NOTE: Ranked in position 6 are two strategic themes that were tied in the ranking exercise NOT in theme.

## 8.2 Potential Action Areas

Following discussion and presentations, Council members were asked to each individually rank the ten Strategic Themes in order of highest priority to lowest priority. The chart below (and attached as Appendix A) shows the results of this ranking along with suggestion action areas that could be investigated by staff.

	Strategic Theme	Potential 2023-2026 Priority Action Areas
1	Develop strategies to build trust amongst Council, while evolving the corporate culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate and implement tools and methods to assist Council and the City in building trust and improving the corporate culture through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaboration and Communication Efforts.</li> <li>Decisions that are bigger-thinking and evidence-based.</li> <li>Considers DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion).</li> <li>Innovative Thinking</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2	Focus on productive and collaborative partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>County of Brant and Six Nations Council:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growth and Transportation Planning - Ensure that regular, purposeful conversations occur with the City's partners at the County of Brant and Six Nations Council to ensure that any growth and transportation plans are in collaboration and respectful of the diverse needs of these partners.</li> <li>Shared Services - Partner with the County of Brant and Six Nations to find efficiencies on many services that are currently being duplicated by all parties.</li> </ol> </li> <li><i>Urban Indigenous Strategy</i> - Advance the commitment by the City to reconciliation by providing direct support (financial or in-kind) to the local organizations and centres that support this sector.</li> <li><i>Relationship(s) with Other Indigenous Groups</i> - Commit to building ongoing sustainable relationships with key groups in addition to Six Nations of the Grand River Elected Council that will be proactive and productive in navigating plans in the future.</li> <li><i>Other Groups</i> – Development Industry, GRCA, Laurier, Conestoga, the Health Unit, Brantford General Hospital</li> </ul>
3	Move people more effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Regional Transportation and Transit Plan</i> - As a part of the growth plans and overall transportation and transit plan, include a specific regional strategy to collaborate with the County and Province to move people in and out of the City efficiently to other parts of the region.</li> <li><i>Overhaul City Transit</i> - Reimagine Brantford Transit to a reliable service that people prefer to use rather than</li> </ul>

	Strategic Theme	Potential 2023-2026 Priority Action Areas
		<p>driving because it is a modern, reliable, and consistent transit system that will move our community through all parts of the City, while considering the ability to flex with the growth of the City. Prepare to invest in a significant solution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Connect West Brant</i> - Strategize on a timely and effective solution to connect West Brant in a meaningful way to the rest of the City that fits in with the overall transportation plan.</li> <li>• <i>Plan for More Roundabouts</i> - Ensure the master transportation plan includes roundabouts as a quicker, safer, greener, and more efficient manner to move traffic. Where possible retrofit into the current road plan.</li> <li>• <i>Street Safety</i> - Investigate and recommend further opportunities where investing in technology to enforce speed and traffic safety could be beneficial.</li> <li>• <i>Considers Accessibility</i> – Ensure any plans for growth or change is considerate of the diverse needs of the community, including age, mobility, social and cultural requirements.</li> <li>• <i>Considers Funding and Affordability</i> – Ensure the City considers affordability, the funding requirements, and the ability to garner such funding in a way that imposes the least burden on the taxpayer.</li> </ul>
4	Create a vision and strategy for managing development and affordable housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Impacts of Bill 23</i> – research and create optionality with regard to a revised funding strategy.</li> <li>• <i>Diversification of housing</i> – ensure that affordable housing with multi-use buildings is included in the overall growth plans for the City of Brantford, and ensure that low-income housing is distributed evenly across the City.</li> <li>• <i>Planning for Growth</i> - Develop a policy for growth that is aligned with the City's future Vision and Official Plan, ensure that the current and future needs of the majority of the community are met, and that it is considerate of current and future financial requirements.</li> <li>• <i>Boundary Lands</i> - Develop a planning committee to ensure the Boundary Lands expansion is built out according to the vision of the Official Plan, and it remains financially on target to ensure the core services are delivered.</li> <li>• <i>Considers Diversity Needs</i> – Ensure any plans for growth or change is considerate of the diverse needs of the community, including age, mobility, social and cultural requirements.</li> <li>• <i>Considers Funding and Affordability</i> – Ensure the City considers affordability, the funding requirements, and the ability to garner such funding in a way that imposes the</li> </ul>



	Strategic Theme	Potential 2023-2026 Priority Action Areas
		least burden on the taxpayer.
5	Develop a planning and implementation schedule and commit resources for various projects related to City assets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Brantford Municipal Airport</i> - Investigate the potential opportunities for the airport and how it can support economic growth for the City and the County.</li> <li>• <i>Brantford/Brant Community Healthcare System Brantford General Hospital Site (BGH)</i> - Develop a funding strategy through a variety of methods, including fundraising, to meet the \$150M-\$200M requirement to build the new BGH.</li> <li>• <i>Southwest Community Centre</i> - Execute a plan to deliver this previously approved and funded project for the community by the end of the term.</li> <li>• <i>Heritage Designations</i> - Introduce programs that would encourage and incentivize property owners to designate their properties.</li> <li>• <i>Considers Funding and Affordability</i> – Ensure the City considers affordability, the funding requirements, and the ability to garner such funding in a way that imposes the least burden on the taxpayer.</li> </ul>
6	Effectively and consistently engage with the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Engagement</i> - Build a process that will use multiple methodologies to engage a majority of the community in various activities of the City with a focus on closing the feedback loop.</li> <li>• <i>Communication</i> - Establish a consistent and regular communication strategy from Council to the community that is straightforward, easy to understand, and demonstrates a unified front in recognizing the diverse needs of the community (including aging, social and cultural needs).</li> <li>• <i>Advocacy</i> - Build an intentional strategy for Council and the City in promoting community pride in the City of Brantford.</li> <li>• <i>Neighbourhood Associations</i> - Strategize on ways to leverage and engage the Neighbourhood Associations in a more meaningful way that helps them.</li> <li>• <i>Volunteer and Non-Profit Organizations:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>Outsourcing Opportunities</i> - Investigate areas of operation within the City that could be better operationalized by an outside organization. Examples are summer camps, select recreation activities, the Santa Claus parade</li> <li>b. <i>Funding and Committed Support</i> - Help re-establish key volunteer and non-profit organizations through financial support and promotional activity.</li> <li>c. <i>Community Hubs</i> - Investigate the desire and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	Strategic Theme	Potential 2023-2026 Priority Action Areas
		<p>capability of utilizing schools as a community hub for after-hours programming.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Education – proactively meet people where they are promote the diversity of the City and celebrate that we live in a multi-cultural city</i></li> </ul>
6	Invest in a long-term strategy and plan to manage the homelessness crisis, inclusive of the related issues of mental health and addiction issues and safety and security concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Investment &amp; Strategy</i> - Develop a strategy in consultation with the Health Unit and Community Services and Social Development with heavy and direct investment and ongoing funding to commit to a long-term, consistent plan directly managing the Homelessness Crisis, inclusive of the related social issues of mental health and addiction and any related criminal activity impacting safety and security in some areas of the city. A multi-faceted strategy that may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Consultation with the Province and other communities on strategies that have worked, both from a prevention perspective and a support perspective.</li> <li>b. Development of support centres that provide safe consumption, with wrap-around services.</li> <li>c. Identifying locations for these support centres that are distributed throughout the city.</li> <li>d. Ongoing research and outreach to support the root cause creating this social crisis.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Policing</i> – Ensure there is a maintained policing program as a presence and response to ensure the safety of our community.</li> <li>• <i>Community Involvement</i> - Create a communication and education strategy, using real stories, to help the community feel safe and want to be together in public spaces.</li> </ul>
8	Create a vision statement for the long-term future of the City.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What kind of city should we become in 20, 50, or 100 years?</li> <li>• What will the legacy of this Council be?</li> <li>• Decide on a bigger vision that will allow Council to take advantage of opportunities that are presented in a more decisive manner.</li> <li>• Decide on visions for each of the neighbourhoods.</li> </ul>
9	Commit to and implement the downtown revitalization plan and vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Perception of Safety in the Downtown Core</i> - Build a communication strategy that showcases the Downtown Core as one that is safe. Options to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. hold events,</li> <li>b. tell stories,</li> <li>c. engage with social influencers to be real-time with Downtown activities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Vision for the Downtown</i> - Articulate a future vision for the</li> </ul>

	Strategic Theme	Potential 2023-2026 Priority Action Areas
		<p>downtown core that will define the city and ensure that people want to spend time and invest there.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Downtown Infrastructure</i> - The construction and implementation of the infrastructure plan for the downtown ought to begin by the end of the 4-year term.</li> <li>• <i>Proactive Engagement</i> – Ensure the plans and opportunities are proactively communicated to Council and the larger community.</li> </ul>
10	Build a greener Brantford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Advocacy for Green Initiatives</i> - Continue with the current initiatives being taken by the City and ensure there is focused action through the Climate Action Plan with advocacy from Council. Examples are to create policies to support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Electrifying fleets</li> <li>b. Energy-Efficient Buildings</li> <li>c. Development of the Green Bin program</li> <li>d. LED lighting</li> <li>e. Advocating with the Province to support initiatives</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Plan for Green Initiatives</i> - Ensure that all master plans and transportation plans include green initiatives as part of the future vision for the City. Examples are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Protection of natural areas and underground water</li> <li>b. Planning for EV movement for the community</li> <li>c. Use of renewable energy</li> <li>d. Include biodiversity</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Strategic Green Decision-Making</i> - When resolutions or policy decisions come-forth to Council, ensure there are evidence-based metrics in place to assist in making strategic decisions. For example, quantify the amount of greenhouse gases or carbon footprint saved in a dollar amount.</li> <li>• <i>The Grand River</i> - Plan for the river to be an integral and unique part of the City, both from a tourist perspective but also to improve the Quality of Life for the community.</li> <li>• <i>Trail System</i> - Ensure there is a commitment and plan by the City to maintain and improve the trail system and continue to promote them to draw in tourists and the community.</li> </ul>

Further detail is included as attached Appendix A.

Upon endorsement of Council Priorities for 2023-2026, staff will review and provide a report to Council outlining an implementation plan in September, 2023, including a summary of required resources to be considered within the 2024 Estimates Process.


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## 9.0 Financial Implications

There are no immediate financial implications associations with this report. Financial resources required to address Council Priorities for 2024-2026 will be brought forward for Council review through the 2024 budget process.

## 10.0 Conclusion

On January 28, 2023, Mayor and Members of Council participated in a priority setting session facilitated by Tango Business Coaching. Council identified priority outcomes and initiatives to be addressed throughout 2023 - 2026. Following endorsement, staff will provide a report outlining next steps to address 2023-2026 Council Priorities.



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Brian Hutchings  
Chief Administrative Officer

Prepared By: Sasha Hill Smith, Manager, Government Relations & Corporate Initiatives

Attachment

Appendix A: Council Priority Setting Summary, Tango Business Coaching

Appendix B: 2021-2022 Council Priority Tracking Report

In adopting this report, is a by-law or agreement required? If so, it should be referenced in the recommendation section.

By-law required ☐ yes ☒ no

Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and/or City Clerk ☐ yes ☒ no

Is the necessary by-law or agreement being sent concurrently to Council? ☐ yes ☒ no