



The Corporation of THE CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

REPORT

To: Mayor Linda Buchanan and Members of Council

From: Andrew Devlin, Manager, Transportation Planning

Subject: MOBILITY STRATEGY – PRELIMINARY GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Date: February 24, 2021 File No: 16-8350-20-0036/1

The following is a suggested recommendation only. Refer to Council Minutes for adopted resolution.

RECOMMENDATION

PURSUANT to the report of the Manager, Transportation Planning, dated February 24, 2021, entitled "Mobility Strategy – Preliminary Goals and Strategies":

THAT staff be directed to utilize the Mobility Strategy – Preliminary Goals and Strategies as the basis for community and stakeholder consultation;

AND THAT staff be further directed to consider feedback from Council and the public to refine the preliminary goals and strategies.

SUMMARY

This report outlines the scope and process staff are using to deliver the City's updated transportation plan and introduces a preliminary vision and set of initial goals and strategies. Staff are seeking Council direction to proceed with obtaining public and stakeholder input and feedback on the preliminary vision, goals and strategies in order to confirm they reflect the needs and values of the community at-large and to solicit input on ideas and feedback that can be used to support plan development through the remainder of 2021.

BACKGROUND

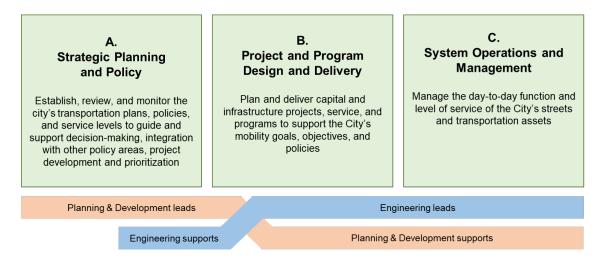
Oversight of the City's mobility system is a collaborative effort

The City's mobility system – our network of streets, sidewalks, and pathways – creates the foundational space to move people and goods in a way that supports our economy

Document Number: 2015329 V4

and helps people get where they are going and can influence how they integrate and experience their community. The day-to-day responsibility for conceiving and developing people positive changes to this network is a joint responsibility of the City's Planning and Development department and Engineering, Parks, and Environment department. Figure 1 outlines the three core components of the City's mobility and transportation services and high-level roles and responsibilities.

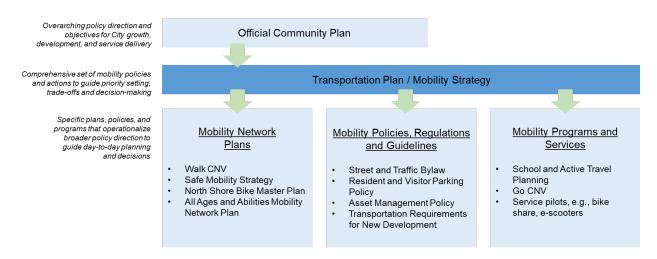
Figure 1: Functions and responsibilities of the City's mobility system



The City's transportation plan sets overall policy guidance for mobility decisionmaking

The City's transportation plan serves as our first point of reference for decision-making on all aspects of our mobility system. The plan supports the City's Official Community Plan and establishes priorities and objectives that are operationalized and implemented through a range of supporting modal or network plans, regulations, guidelines, and programs. Figure 2 illustrates the relationship between the City's transportation plan and other key plans, policies, and programs.

Figure 2: Hierarchy of key plans, policies, and programs



Date: February 24, 2021

The current Transportation Plan was last updated in 2008 and has played a critical role over the last decade in shifting our approach to planning, managing, and operating the transportation system from one focused on moving vehicles to one focused on supporting the development of a more multi-modal system that provides increased priority to walking, cycling, transit and goods movement. This overarching policy guidance has been further reinforced through the City's Official Community Plan update in 2014. The current plan has supported significant expansion of the City's sidewalk, cycling, and multi-use path system, guided the development of neighbourhood-level traffic calming efforts, enabled introduction of new ways to manage on-street parking in the City's busiest areas, and guided delivery of new safety and traffic control infrastructure

Justification for updating the transportation plan

In recent years, the ability of the 2008 Transportation Plan to provide effective overarching direction for mobility decision-making has been limited as a result of evolving best practices, changing local and regional mobility needs and demands, and increasingly complex conditions on our streets. Where possible, staff have advanced new policy directions for Council consideration to address key gaps, including the North Shore Bicycle Master Plan (2012), Walk CNV (2019), Asset Management Policy (2019), and the Safe Mobility Strategy (2020). The 2008 Transportation Plan lacks clear direction on how to navigate trade-offs between these plans and new needs and demands on our streets which is creating challenges. Council has recognized this and identified updating City-wide Transportation Plan (herein after referred to as the "Mobility Strategy") as a key priority in their 2018-2022 Council Strategic Plan.

DISCUSSION

Scope and purpose of the new strategy

The Mobility Strategy will replace the 2008 Transportation Plan and establish a comprehensive and streamlined framework for transportation decision-making and investments to address current needs and future opportunities and challenges. The new strategy will be organized around three main components:

- 1. <u>Vision and Goals</u>: The desired outcomes we want our mobility system to achieve that reflect our community values and priorities. Progress towards the vision and the supporting goals will be measured through a set of key targets.
- 2. <u>Strategies</u>: Broad statements outlining what needs to be done to realize our goals. Strategies can, and should, help achieve multiple goals.
- 3. <u>Actions</u>: The specific policies, actions, processes, and criteria we will use to guide and inform our day-to-day transportation planning, design, operation and investment decisions to support the strategies.

In order to maximize the utility of the Mobility Strategy for the City, the scope of the plan will also include the following considerations:

- 1. Shifting focus from transportation to mobility: Mobility is more than the action of moving from A to B. It is having safe and affordable choices to count on to get to the places necessary for a healthy life, like our jobs, schools, parks, community centres, or shops. Our new plan will be referred to as the City's Mobility Strategy in order to better reflect the broader role that our transportation system plays in shaping our lives, our community, and our City's ability to meet other objectives for well-being, health, economic development, and the environment.
- 2. Shifting focus from plan to playbook: A playbook includes a range of not only discrete actions, but also policies, processes, and criteria that can be used to set and readily communicate expectations and guide decision-making. The City's transportation system is complex and the Mobility Strategy needs to provide guidance to support everything from where new mobility lanes should be constructed to how pavement rehabilitation is prioritized. The playbook structure will allow the City to have a clear framework to weigh trade-offs and set implementation priorities through the City's Annual Financial Plan and Corporate Business Plan.
- 3. <u>Shifting focus to the near-term:</u> The new plan is intended to guide planning and decision-making over the next five to 10 years. This planning horizon recognizes that the mobility system in the City and across Metro Vancouver is in a continual state of change and that our strategies and actions need to be flexible and resilient enough to ensure progress towards desired outcomes.
- 4. <u>Building on relevant policies and actions from existing plans</u>: The Mobility Strategy will become the first point of reference for decision-making on all aspects of our mobility network. The strategy's framework will seek to assimilate relevant direction from recently developed plans, policies, and process like the Safe Mobility Strategy and Walk CNV Pedestrian Plan and provide more clear guidance on how to interpret and weigh trade-offs between different plans and policies.

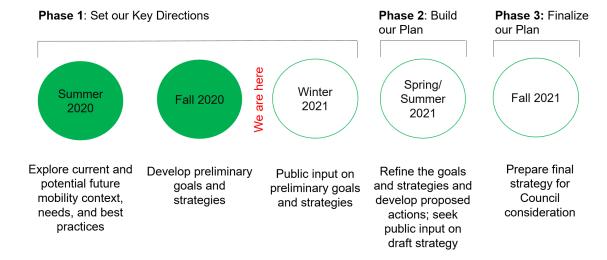
Approach and timeline for strategy development

Development of the Mobility Strategy is following a multi-phase approach as outlined in Figure 3 on the following page.

Phase 1 of the project has been underway since approximately summer 2020 and has focused on developing the preliminary goals and strategies that could form the foundation of the new plan. These preliminary goals and strategies are the focus of the remainder of this report. Public input on these preliminary goals and strategies is pending.

Phase 2 of the project will involve using the public input obtained in Phase 1 to confirm or refine the preliminary goals and strategies and develop a draft plan that includes a full set of supporting actions. Staff intend to engage Council in a workshop in the spring to allow for an opportunity to provide direct input and feedback on the development of the draft strategy. This draft strategy will be presented to the public for input in summer 2021.

Figure 3: Strategy development phases and timeline



Phase 3 of the project will involve finalizing the plan and providing it to Council for consideration by the end of fall 2021.

Approach to developing the preliminary vision, goals and strategies

Goals and strategies are critical components of any effective plan. They establish the overarching policy direction, tone, and critical outcomes that influence and shape the specific actions, policies, or initiatives that need to be considered in a plan. Development of the preliminary goals and strategies for the Mobility Strategy considered a range of inputs and information, as outlined below.

Existing City goals and objectives

The preliminary goals and strategies are intended to reflect and reinforce objectives in the City's Official Community Plan (2014), Walk CNV (2019), Safe Mobility Strategy (2020), and other policies that prioritize a people-oriented community connected by a safe, equitable, sustainable and accessible multi-modal transportation network. The tables summarizing the preliminary goals and strategies later in this report provide further justification and rationale for each preliminary goal and strategy and how they relate to, support, or further advance existing City aspirations.

2. Current and emerging mobility trends

The preliminary goals and strategies are intended to position the City to effectively respond to both conditions that have emerged since the last plan update, as well as new circumstances that may shape the future of mobility in ways that are in line with our broader City objectives. Three fundamental challenges and opportunities that the Mobility Strategy needs to consider are:

- A changing region is impacting our City. The Metro Vancouver region is one of the fastest growing areas in Canada. Our City is the urban core of the North Shore and our central location means many people travel both to and through our City on a daily basis. In the last decade, the North Shore has added nearly 10,000 new jobs, but only 7,000 new residents, which means more people are commuting here from elsewhere in the region due to a lack of available housing. Many of these individuals drive because transit alternatives are not convenient or competitive, which adds to congestion on our streets.
- Our streets are busier than ever, which is increasing the competition for limited space. More people and jobs mean more cars, bikes, and people traveling on foot on our streets. In the last decade, the emergence of ride-hailing, electric assist bicycles and scooters have expanded the options we have for moving around. The boom in online shopping has meant more trucks and delivery vehicles are on our streets than ever before. Our street network (which includes travel lanes, bike lanes, transit lanes, and sidewalks) accounts for nearly 20% of all land in the City, but we have little room to add to or expand our streets. This means we need to make best use of the space we have through more flexible and responsive allocation of space on our streets to ensure everyone has the space they need to move in ways that are healthy, safe, and reliable.
- Our mobility habits and attitudes are shifting. In the last decade, the share of trips made in the City by walking, cycling, and transit has grown to nearly 30%, which is amongst the highest in Metro Vancouver. While the share of trips we take using a vehicle has dropped to about 70% in the same period, when we do drive, we are driving more upwards of 15.5 km per day, compared to around 14 km per day about a decade ago. In the last year, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly altered how and why we travel. Staying closer to home meant many of us walked or biked more than we would normally, especially through the spring and summer of 2020. While the long-term effects are not fully known, there is a potential that once the pandemic is behind us, we may decide to drive more and use transit, shared mobility and ridehailing less, which could mean more traffic and congestion.

The tables summarizing the preliminary goals and strategies presented later in this report provide further information on these and other key trends that have been considered in shaping the preliminary goals and strategies.

3. Common feedback and concerns about moving around the City

The City regularly receives input from the public and stakeholders about their experience moving around the City. Common themes include:

Reliability: "It's becoming increasingly frustrating to move around the City.
 Congestion seems to happen almost daily – even on weekends – and means travelling across the City take a long time. I am having trouble hiring or retaining

employees because of long and unreliable commutes. Finding a parking or loading space close to my destination can sometimes be difficult."

- Safety: "I feel unsafe and uncomfortable moving around the City, especially when
 I am travelling on foot or by bicycle. Cars are travelling too fast, especially on
 local residential streets, which makes me less inclined to let my kids walk to
 school. I worry that people driving cars or buses can't see me when I am walking
 at night."
- Choices: "I am interested in driving less, but it's not always easy or convenient for me to walk, use a bike or take transit. Real transportation choices aren't available to me, so I need to drive."

The preliminary goals and strategies attempt to reflect and respond to these common experiences and needs. This feedback, however, is not necessarily indicative of all perspectives. As a result, it is critical to provide the community atlarge with an opportunity to tell us how the preliminary goals and strategies align with and respond to their values, experiences, and priorities.

Preliminary vision, goals and strategies

The full framework of preliminary vision, goals and strategies for the Mobility Strategy is outlined in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Preliminary vision, goals, and strategies "at-a-glance"



The vision for the new strategy is proposed to be "healthy streets that work for everyone." This vision is intended to recognize that City streets are becoming more dynamic and serve more than just one function. Along with moving cars, they move transit, people on foot, cyclists, and freight. They can serve as common spaces for relaxation, socializing, shopping and getting exercise. Beyond their transportation function, streets serve as critical elements of a City's environmental, cultural, and public utility infrastructure. The preliminary vision is an idea for a commitment to enabling the myriad of needs and demands on our streets in ways that supports our overall health and well-being.

The vision is supported by four preliminary goals (see Table 1) that are intended to clarify the key conditions that need to be in place to ensure our "streets work for everyone." Once the goals are confirmed, targets to measure progress towards the desired outcomes will be developed.

Table 1: Preliminary Goals

Goal		Why is this important?		
1.	Complete Streets: Our streets help us connect to people and places with easy, reliable, and convenient options for every trip.	The Official Community Plan (2014) prioritizes the development of a multi-modal transportation system across the City. Moving towards a network of complete streets means providing a more integrated and reliable transportation system that recognizes we all need or want to move around in different ways and our streets should gives us access to the best mobility choices for the range of trips we take.		
2.	Safe Streets: Our streets are places where people of all ages and abilities can move safely and comfortably, without risk or fear of harm, no matter where they are going or how they get around.	In 2016, the City adopted a goal of achieving zero fatalities and injuries on City streets. Safe streets are foundational to creating a healthy and people-oriented City.		
3.	Sustainable Streets: Our streets help us reduce the greenhouse gas emissions our community generates and promote a resilient urban ecosystem.	More than 40% of carbon pollution generated in our City comes from burning fossil fuels to power vehicles, which contributes to climate change, air pollution, and smog. In 2019, we adopted a new community greenhouse gas reduction target of net zero emissions by 2050. The decisions we make about our transportation system will shape our ability to meet this commitment.		
4.	Vibrant Streets: Today, and into the future, our streets are places that support livable neighbourhoods and the prosperity of our local businesses and institutions	A healthy city is one where streets and sidewalks hum with economic and social activity, where people meet and shop and enjoy the beautiful city we live in side by side with goods delivery and freight shipping. Our goal is to use our streets and sidewalks to improve the city's prosperity, health and happiness.		

The preliminary strategies are the broad statements that define the key steps we could take to meet the goals. There are 12 preliminary strategies that are organized around three "themes" or directions:

- 1. **Provide more mobility choices**, by making it easier to choose the best option for the different trips we take;
- 2. **Transform our streets**, by re-imagining how we design and allocate space on our streets to make them safe, useful and welcoming; and
- 3. **Manage our streets efficiently**, by lessening the strain that a growing region and changing mobility needs put on our transportation system.

Each preliminary strategy includes examples of possible ideas for actions the City or our partners could take to support the strategy that reflect current and emerging best practices in transportation planning. These are provided to better illustrate each preliminary strategy and generate possible ideas through public input.

<u>Table 2: Key Direction 1 – Provide More Mobility Choice</u>

Strategy	Why is this important?	How could we do this?
1. Make walking, cycling and rolling the best choice year-round for our shorter distance trips	Today, about 11% of auto trips we take in the City are under 1.5 km and about 29% of auto trips are under 5 km – distances that could be shifted to walking or cycling, respectively, with better infrastructure and amenities in place. Other cities have demonstrated that people will drive less if there are safe, connected, convenient and reliable options for using active ways of moving around.	 Accelerate expansion of protected walking, rolling and cycling routes to connect all key destinations using low-cost, quick-build designs. Provide better amenities, like e-bike charging stations, places to rest, weather protection, public washrooms, and wayfinding. Help shared bike and scooter services become more readily available.
2. Make transit the best choice for our longer distance trips	A transit bus can carry the same number of people that would normally fit into about 50 cars. Making transit faster, frequent and reliable will make it more convenient for more people to shift to transit, which can help free up space on our City streets so they can move more efficiently.	 Improve bus speed and reliability by expanding bus lanes or using intersection priority to allow buses to bypass congestion. Create mobility hubs to provide seamless connections between transit, cycling, and ride-hailing in the City's busiest areas. Work with TransLink to expand the coverage of transit service across the City and North Shore.

3. Make shared	We all need to use a vehicle some
and zero emission	time, but not everyone has access
vehicles the best	to a personal vehicle. Vehicle
choice when we	ownership is also expensive –
need to use a car	costing over \$10,000 each year –
	let alone the costs to the City or
	developers associated with
	providing parking. Vehicles are
	also one of the biggest emitters of
	carbon emissions in our
	community. Making it easier to use
	shared and zero emission vehicles

environment.

will help our pocket books and the

- Accelerate expansion of our network of public and private electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- Support easier, affordable, and more equitable access to car- and ride-sharing services

 including for families and persons with disabilities.

Table 3: Key Direction 2- Transform Our Streets

Strategy	Why is this important?	How could we do this?
4. Make streets safe and comfortable for all	Every year, there are 10 collisions that occur on our streets that result in a serious injury or fatality. Countless other incidents or nearmisses go unreported. In recent years, people walking or riding a bicycle have accounted for nearly all serious injuries and fatalities on our streets.	 Deliver quick-build safety improvements at high-injury intersections and corridors Separate and protect different types of road users who have to share the same street Right size travel speeds on different streets through a combination of speed limit and street design changes Work with neighbourhoods to create plans to minimize short-cutting traffic Explore the use of new technology to reduce the demands of local police and bylaw officers to enforce street rules and regulations
5. Tailor streets to prioritize different mobility needs	Our streets are busier than ever with vehicles, buses, trucks, bikes and people on foot all needing space to move. A "one-size fits all" approach to street design can increase risks of conflicts between different users. Tailoring how we design our streets to prioritize different users or functions will create a more complete mobility network to help keep traffic moving while enhancing safety, comfort and street life for people traveling by foot or by bike.	Establish a new street class framework to outline what streets in the City will prioritize walking/cycling, transit, goods movement, or vehicles and their design and place-making elements

6. Make our curbs more dynamic	Over 90% of curbspace in the City is dedicated to parking. This leaves less room for a growing number of other users including ride-hailing and taxis, transit, delivery vehicles, bikes, and scooters to have a safe space to pull over and access homes or businesses.	•	Establish priorities for curbspace like parking, loading, and public space that vary by type of street Ensure every block in the City's busy commercial and residential areas has a dedicated loading or drop-off zone Price access for curbspace where appropriate so it is used most efficiently
7. Reclaim street space for people and nature	COVID-19 has shown that our streets are more than just thoroughfares, but also gathering spaces and places for businesses. Green street elements bring life to the street, capture carbon from the air, reduce heat island effects and provide critical storm water management functions. Giving our streets a better sense of place will encourage people to spend more time outdoors and help improve connections to our neighbours and community.	•	Repurpose space on our streets for public plazas, parklets, and patios, especially in neighbourhoods that have few gathering spaces Make our public open spaces flexible to be quickly reconfigured by day or season Provide more street trees Repurpose underutilized street space for vegetation and bio-swales to reduce runoff

Table 4: Key Direction 3 – Efficiently Manage Demand on Our Streets

Strategy	Why is this important?	How could we do this?
8. Supporting sustainable mobility through new developments	Our City is expected to grow by 6,000 people and 6,000 jobs in the next decade. New residential and commercial development gives us an opportunity to achieve better outcomes that make it easier to move around the City in ways that create fewer impacts.	 Enable affordable, mixed use growth and development that is close to transit through our land use and housing policies and bylaws. Reduce the amount of parking that developers provide, especially close to frequent transit, to lower the number of vehicle trips on our streets and help relieve the economic pressure of owning a vehicle. Require new developments to provide better mobility options for residents and employees.

9. Keep urban freight and deliveries moving	The ability to have goods delivered quickly and reliably is an essential component of City living and business. The rise in on-line shopping and more dynamic supply chains has meant more deliveries, usually by truck. Between 2012 and 2019, Canada Posts parcel delivery volumes alone jumped nearly 100%. Getting deliveries to our front doors is becoming increasingly difficult.	Ensure key corridors City are prioritized for movement that minim impacts or conflicts w vulnerable road users Explore the creation of hubs to centralize del and storage in our bu neighbourhoods to re truck traffic Promote the use of so and quieter service a delivery vehicles for " delivery in our busies neighbourhoods	r goods nize vith s. of logistic liveries siest educe maller nd last-mile" t
10. Making our mobility system more responsive	Our mobility system includes traffic signals, travel lanes, traffic regulations, and different trip options. Small disruptions in any component of our mobility system has the potential to multiply into system-wide issue. A stalled vehicle on Highway 1 can create congestion on local streets, or SeaBus problems might cause a sudden spike in demand for taxis or ride-hailing. Emerging technologies can help cities better prepare and respond to these situations to keep us moving safely.	work with TransLink other partners to creareal-time mobility management system optimize signals, curk regulations, and prov traveller information to changing condition	to oside ide o help sponse
11. Strengthen our connections to the region	In the last decade, the North Shore has added nearly 10,000 new jobs, but only 7,000 new residents, which means more people are commuting here from elsewhere in the region. Our port-oriented industries mean we play a critical role in the region's gateway economy. Making it easier to get to and from the City and North Shore is good for our livability and the economy.	 Work with our North S municipalities, First N TransLink and the Pr expand rapid transit a the Burrard Inlet Prioritize infrastructur projects that increase resilience of our east street network 	lations, ovince to across re e the

12. Modernize our	Maintaining our streets, sidewalks	•	Define people- and
mobility asset	and bridges in a state of good		experience-focused level of
management	repair is critical to delivering a safe		service standards to guide
	and efficient transportation system.		decisions about mobility asset
			management
		•	Develop a comprehensive
			mobility asset management
			plan that is refreshed regularly

Consultation approach and how input collected will be used

The purpose of Phase 1 consultation is to introduce the Mobility Strategy project to the community and seek input to confirm whether the preliminary goals and strategies are aligned with the values and priorities of the community at-large. The input collected through this phase will be used by staff to refine and adjust the preliminary goals and strategies and proceed with developing supporting actions and policies.

Due to on-going COVID-19 public health restrictions, staff anticipate needing to primarily utilize on-line and digital consultation in Phase 1. The consultation window is tentatively scheduled to run mid-March to mid-April 2021. The following consultation tools will be deployed:

- A dedicated project website on the City's "Let's Talk" page that would contain all project information and resources
- A plain-language discussion guide that will outline the preliminary goals and strategies, as outlined in this report. The discussion guide will also include additional information and statistics on today's mobility network, how and why we move around, and key issues and challenges to provide appropriate context for the preliminary goals and strategies
- An on-line survey for collecting input on the preliminary goals and strategies. The survey will be designed to allow participants to provide input on as many or as few of the preliminary goals and strategies as the participant wishes. This approach will make it easier for people to participate in ways that better meets their time availability and level of interest. Staff are exploring the ability to make hard copies of the survey available at the City Library, Recreation Centres and other locations for those who are not able or comfortable with providing input through an on-line survey
- Virtual meetings with key stakeholders to solicit input and perspectives

Consultation on the preliminary goals will focus on trying to understand: what is important to people when they move around the City, how well do the goals advance the direction outlined in the City's Official Community Plan, how well does the public thinks the City is doing at achieving these goals today, and what suggestions does the public have for refining the goals.

Consultation on the preliminary strategies will focus on trying to understand: how important is each strategy to the public, what ideas does the public have for steps the City can take to deliver on each strategy, what considerations or potential impacts should be considered, and what ideas does the public have for additional strategies.

Council will receive an information report summarizing the outcomes of Phase 1 consultation in spring 2021.

ADVISORY BODY INPUT

The preliminary goals and strategies have developed with input from the following City committees: Integrated Transportation Committee, Advisory Planning Committee, and the Environment Task Force. Input from the North Shore Young Citizen Forum has also been incorporated. These groups and committees will continue to be engaged through the remainder of the plan development process.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Approximately \$200,000 has been appropriated from the 2019 and 2020 Project Plans to support development of the Mobility Strategy. Major project components that the budget are being used to fund include: staff time, project consultant support, consultation and communications, and material development. Additional funding will be requested in future Annual Financial Plans to, as appropriate, support implementation of the new strategy once adopted by Council.

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The Mobility Strategy will establish new policy direction and supportive actions and strategies that will have cross-organizational implications. The preliminary goals and strategies have been reviewed by the City's Policy and Projects Team and Leadership Team.

STRATEGIC PLAN, OCP OR POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Mobility Strategy is intended to support and build upon the key transportation-related objectives and policies in the City's Official Community Plan (2014). The strategy is also intended to support the vision and all five priorities of Council's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Andrew Devlin, MCIP RPP

Manager, Transportation Planning