

Staff Report

Report To: Community Services Committee
Report From: Pamela Coulter, Director of Community Services
Meeting Date: February 18, 2026
Report Code: CM-26-004
Subject: Committee Orientation and 2026 Annual Organizational Work Plan

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CM-26-004 respecting Committee Orientation and the 2026 Annual Organizational Work Plan, the Community Services Committee recommends that City Council receive the report for information purposes.

Highlights:

- Committee orientation provides helpful information for members respecting committee procedural and legislative matters.
- The City Clerk and Committee Administrator have done a detailed orientation with new members prior to the first meeting of the new Committee.
- 2026 marks the first year where an organizational work plan is being introduced (versus individual work plans being presented).

Vision 2050 - Strategic Plan Alignment:

The Vision 2050 strategic plan, along with the budget, are the key documents that guide Council and staff. Vision 2050 gives current and future Councils a compass bearing to help set goals and for staff to develop workplans that are ambitious and achievable.

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: The recommendation contributes to core service delivery or a corporate initiative that enables service delivery for one or more strategic priorities.

Previous Report/Authority:

[CM-25-018 Organizational Project Management System](#)

Background:

The role of the Committee is to provide advice and recommendations to Council, host public meetings as directed by Council and monitor and evaluate the financial and operational performance of programs and services. Orientation ensures that standing committee members are well-prepared to serve effectively, enhancing the committee's overall efficiency and strategic focus. It reduces risks, improves governance, and fosters a collaborative environment that supports the committee's mandate.

Historically, staff have developed work plans, and presented these as part of the annual orientation at Committee; however, the practice was not consistent across the organization. As part of this work, the organization implemented individual annual work plans for each division, which captured projects being led by each staff. These individual work plans were then presented to the Committee at the start of each year. Projects, within the work plans, were identified based on the direction provided by Council through the City's long-term strategic plan, various Master Plans, and the 2023 Service Review. Traditional work plans were aligned with the 5-year capital budget and annual operating budget, and considered the Asset Management Plan. These individual work plans were used to focus staff effort, increase productivity, accountability, and transparency, and to give the Committee a glimpse of what was planned for the coming year.

The 2023 Service Review identified that the City should strengthen the annual workplan process to develop an organizational business plan to align with the Strategic Plan.

In 2026, as part of the work toward an organizational approach to business planning, an organizational work plan has been developed that captures the core services delivered by each division and includes a compiled list of all projects, providing a holistic view of the organization's work.

Analysis and Options:

This is the first year that City has developed an Organizational Work Plan for the work that will be done across the organization.

The 2026 business planning process focused primarily on developing an integrated organizational work plan, including reviewing and analyzing dependencies and linkages within the organization to identify opportunities for collaboration and greater alignment, and to ensure that the planned work was achievable as a first step.

Core service profiles have been included in the organizational work plan to provide perspective on the scope, complexity, and volume of work managed through the organization on a day-to-day basis.

The basis for the projects and core services remains the same, with a focus on advancing the 2050 Vision priorities, implementing recommendations and actions from various master plans, implementing actions from the 2023 service review, addressing the infrastructure deficits identified in the asset management plan, and implementing projects approved in the 5-year capital plan and reflecting the operating budget.

Although projects are assigned to a single division as the lead for the initiative, staff from other divisions within the department and from other departments within the organization play a critical role in the resources required to achieve the expected outcomes. All projects rely on involvement and collaboration with at least one other division, with some requiring participation by staff from all of the divisions across the organization. The resourcing demands for these projects are substantial, and the management of the different divisional contributions is complex and challenging.

Through conversation, collaboration, and connection, staff have developed an organizational work plan that outlines a clear path for the organization, one that strikes a balance between our “wanting to do it all” and our capacity to deliver. Our goal is to realistically represent what can be achieved in 2026 and to deliver projects that advance the 2050 Vision strategic priorities and continuously improve the provision of core services.

In the future, other components of the business planning process may include: development of a multi-year project plan encompassing both projects that are funded by capital and the operating budget; the development and management of a measurement framework to measure,

analyze, monitor and report on key performance indicators for core service; and, the establishment of a governance framework for the regular monitoring, reviewing and reporting on progress of all projects, identifying the successful achievement of milestones and reporting to the Strategic Leadership Team on areas where the achievement of goals may be at risk so that corrective action can be identified and action taken earlier.

Resource Alignment:

Financial Resources

As presented, the organizational work plan is consistent with each division's capital and operating budget.

Human Resources

The annual organizational work plan is intended to be achievable and realistic, based on current staffing levels.

The Strategic Leadership Team recognizes that staff resources are stretched and has worked collaboratively to reduce the overall number of projects that, together with core services, will focus the efforts of staff in the year ahead.

Time and Scheduling

The projects within the organizational work plan are intended to be completed or started within the calendar year. Going forward, regular reporting will be provided to Council on the status of projects.

Technology and Infrastructure

ProjectTeam, the City's new project management solution, is being used to manage all projects within the organizational work plan.

Climate and Environmental Impacts:

The recommendation supports both the City's Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan and the City's Climate Mitigation Plan.

Communication and Engagement:

This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the meeting. The annual organizational work plan will be posted on the City's website, and a media release will be issued highlighting this initiative.

Report Developed in Consultation With:

The organizational work plan has been developed under the guidance of the Strategic Leadership Team, with input from the project leads and staff from all City departments, to ensure a realistic, achievable organizational work plan.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 - Annual Organizational Work Plan

Reviewed by:

Pamela Coulter, Director of Community Services

Michelle Palmer, Senior Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Operational Effectiveness

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Pamela Coulter, Director of Community Services at pcoulter@owensound.ca or 519-376-4440 ext. 1252.