

# 2024 STRATEGIC PLAN

# ANNUAL REPORT



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# CITY MANAGER MESSAGE

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As we report on the halfway point of our 2023–2026 Strategic Plan, I'm proud to share this snapshot of the progress we've made together as a city in 2024. The results in this report reflect the commitment, collaboration, and resilience of our community and our staff as we continue to build a vibrant, connected, and thriving Red Deer.

We've seen real momentum in areas that matter deeply to our residents. A 43% increase in park and trail usage and more than 1.3 million trips taken on transit show that Red Deerians are actively using and enjoying the public spaces and services that enhance our quality of life. Our downtown continues to serve as a lively gathering place, with over 356,000 pedestrian visits and a strong calendar of events that brought neighbours, artists, vendors, and visitors together throughout the year.

One of the most encouraging outcomes this year is the substantial reduction in crime across our community. Total Criminal Code offences dropped by 12.7%, and property-related crimes declined by nearly 17%. These improvements reflect the

collective efforts of our protective services teams, community partners, and residents in making Red Deer a safer, more secure place for everyone.

As always, progress comes with challenges. While we've seen strong economic and environmental gains, some areas need renewed focus, such as ongoing investment in aging infrastructure, addressing the maintenance needs of an aging fleet, and continuing to strengthen how we as a community attract investment to our city. These are critical to ensuring long-term sustainability and growth.

Thank you to our residents, partners, and City staff for your contributions to our community progress. Together, we are shaping a Red Deer that is not only growing, but thriving through care, creativity, and a strong sense of community.

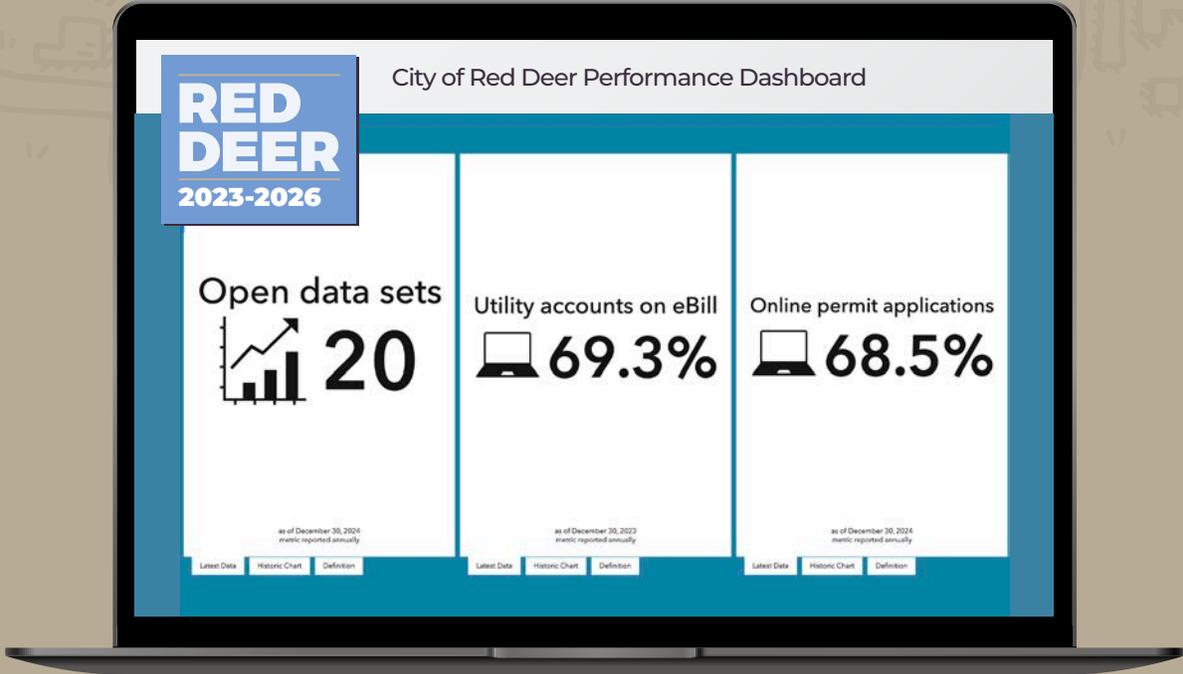
Sincerely,

**Tara Lodewyk**  
City Manager, The City of Red Deer

# FOLLOW OUR PROGRESS

BY VISITING THE ONLINE DASHBOARD AT

[reddeer.ca/StrategicPlan](https://reddeer.ca/StrategicPlan)





# BY THE NUMBERS

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**2024**

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POPULATION  
**112,917**

DEVELOPMENT PERMITS

**1,243**



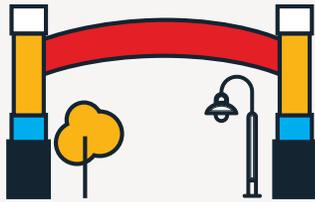
ONLINE PERMIT APPLICATION INCREASE ↑

**27%**

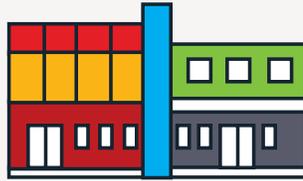


**75%**

OF CITIZENS TRUST THE CITY IS MAKING DECISIONS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMUNITY



DOWNTOWN PEDESTRIAN VISITS  
**356,567**



CART COLLECTION PICK UP SUCCESS RATE

**99.9%**



**18/20**

GOALS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MASTER PLAN MET



MAINTAINED PARK SPACE

**1,031 ha**



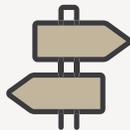
PROPERTY CRIME DECREASE ↓

**17%**



WATER TREATED

**14,900,598m<sup>3</sup>**



PARK AND TRAIL USAGE INCREASE ↑

**43%**

RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES SATISFACTION

**91%**

911 CALLS

**156,496**



WASTEWATER TREATED

**19,628,031m<sup>3</sup>**



TRANSIT TRIPS  
**1.3M**

REPORT A PROBLEM SUBMISSIONS

**4,903**





# THRIVING CITY



# FINANCIALLY RESPONSIBLE



SOMEWHAT MEETING

Indicator	2023 Result	2024 Result
Cost-measured service delivery (Transit)	28.47%	31.29%
Threshold of operating reserves above minimum limit	-76.89%	-115.17%
Threshold of debt limit used	50.61%	46.64%
Public satisfaction with value for tax dollar	71%	Measured every two years

The 2024 assessment of our Financially Responsible outcome highlights achievements alongside important steps taken to align our fiscal practices with community priorities. We saw a boost in cost-measured service delivery for transit from 28.47% to 31.29%, reflecting improved efficiency, and debt usage was reduced from 50.61% to 46.64%, a positive direction. Public satisfaction with the value for tax dollars remains robust at 71%.

The 2025 budget process saw enhanced citizen understanding and public participation. Through this process, we actively engaged citizens to listen to their priorities, ensuring that their voices incorporated into the budget deliberations. Looking ahead, as we complete our long-term financial plan in Q2 2025, we will continue to refine our approach and maintain a course toward sustainable fiscal stability that reflects both strong financial stewardship and the values of our community.

# ENVIRONMENTALLY COMMITTED



## MEETING

Indicator	2023 Result	2024 Result
Sand waste diversion	5747 tonnes	6451 tonnes
Environmental Master Plan goals, partially or fully achieved	17/20	18/20
Environmental grants funded	5	8
Value of environmental grants	\$49,000	\$73,000
Park land environmentally maintained	1031 ha	1031 ha
Recycled aggregate products	31,674 tonnes	21,132 tonnes
Trees maintained by The City	New for 2024	73,332
Trees planted by The City	New for 2024	300

The City is meeting the outcome “Environmentally Committed” and is demonstrating strong dedication to sustainability. In 2024, we diverted 6,451 tonnes of sand waste from landfills, significantly up from 5,747 tonnes in 2023, showcasing our commitment to responsible waste management.

We’ve made notable progress in our Environmental Master Plan, with progress on 18 out of 20 goals, an improvement from the previous year. We also increased environmental grants, funding eight projects with \$73,000, up from 5 projects funded at \$49,000 previously.

Our parks remain well-maintained, consistently caring for 1,031 hectares of environmentally maintained land. Additionally, we’ve enhanced our tracking and data for new tree stewardship initiatives, maintaining 73,332 trees and planting 300 new ones in 2024, contributing to the health of our urban forest.

In 2023, we produced more recycled aggregate products and recycled asphalt milling products than in 2024. While 2024 shows a reduction in recycled aggregate production, this is due to using a stockpile of unused materials from 2023 and highlights our ongoing dedication to sustainability and adaptability in our environmental efforts.

# LOCAL ECONOMY IS STRONG AND DIVERSE



## MEETING

Indicator	2023 Result	2024 Result
Red Deer population	100,844 (2021 census)	112,917
Disposable income per household	\$49,350	Reported every four years per Stats Canada
New business licences	708	815
Business licence renewals	4119	4173
Residential land uptake	31	35
Industrial land uptake	0	8
Development permits	1143	1243
Connection permits	135	137
Building permits	1047	1139

Red Deer continues to build a strong, diverse economy that is both resilient and attractive to residents and businesses alike. The city's growth is clear, with our population increasing from 100,844 in the 2021 federal census to 112,917 in 2024, marking a vibrant and appealing community that continues to attract new residents.

This growth is matched by encouraging developments in local infrastructure and business activities. After a quiet year in 2023 for industrial land uptake, 2024 saw a notable improvement, with eight industrial lots sold or conditionally sold. This renewed interest highlights Red Deer's increasing appeal as a viable location for industrial investment and job creation.

The introduction of the new Zoning Bylaw has been pivotal, facilitating an environment conducive to business growth by increasing the variety of permitted uses and making development easier. In addition, the steady rise in development and building permits—from 1,143 to 1,243 and 1,047 to 1,139 shows sustained confidence in Red Deer's economy.

While new business licences remained constant at 708, there is a promising upward trend in business licence renewals. The City continues to work to create a supportive environment for businesses to thrive.

# VIBRANT AND ENJOYABLE DOWNTOWN



## MEETING

Indicator	2023 Result	2024 Result
Satisfaction with downtown culture	88%	Measured every two years
Downtown pedestrian traffic	328,894	356,567
Downtown events	406	131
Projects in downtown and Capstone	5	1

In 2024, downtown saw stable pedestrian traffic with over 356,000 recorded trips, indicating ongoing appeal and consistent community activations. Citizens continued to enjoy downtown cultural events, with a high satisfaction rate of 88%.

Although the number of events decreased to 131 from over 400 in 2023, downtown still offered frequent opportunities for community gathering and cultural experiences throughout the year from night markets, farmer's markets, Centrefest and the Afro-Caribbean Festival. Additionally, the introduction of a four-season activation grant supported various downtown activities throughout the year.

In Capstone, while there was only one new infrastructure project initiated in 2024, it was for a significant housing project. ALEX, a 62-unit residential development promises to bring more residents to the area, and will aid in the neighbourhood's vibrancy and long-term growth.

Following a public engagement, 2024 also saw the transformation of the former Buffalo Hotel and Club Café site into a bookable public event space at the corner of Gaetz and Ross and is developable land for sale in our downtown.

# PROACTIVELY MANAGED PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE



**SOMEWHAT MEETING**

Indicator	2023 Result	2024 Result
Pavement quality index	61	60
Annual facility condition index	6.2	Measured every two years
Facility condition index to 11%	2028	Measured every two years
Fleet preventative maintenance	49.25%	37%
Completion of electric utility review	60%	90%
Water / wastewater / stormwater infrastructure older than 60 Years	9.77%	11.54%
Electric infrastructure older than 40 years	33.8%	36%
Annual bridge inspections	100%	100%
Sidewalk hazard audit completion	100%	100%
Play structure inspections completed	100%	100%
Pavement repair backlog	15 %	16.2%

In 2024, we saw successes and challenges related to proactively managing public infrastructure.

Aging infrastructure remains an area of focus. Infrastructure older than 60 years for water, wastewater, and stormwater increased from 9.77% in 2023 to 11.54% in 2024, indicating a growing urgency for targeted renewal and replacement projects. Similarly, electric infrastructure older than 40 years also increased from 33.8% to 36%, prompting continued planning and strategic investments to maintain reliable utility services.

Facility Condition Index (FCI) is used in facilities management as a benchmark to compare relative condition of a group of facilities. FCI of less than 11% is considered adequate. At current average

annual funding of \$7.7 million, we expect to hit 11% FCI in 2028. In 2025, 71% of City owned facilities are in good/fair condition, with our facilities averaging 40 years of age.

The Fleet Preventative Maintenance indicator saw a notable decrease from 49.25% in 2023 to 37% in 2024, highlighting increased critical repair demands. This emphasizes the ongoing need for enhanced preventative maintenance practices to improve fleet reliability and reduce breakdowns.

Despite these challenges, The City maintained its excellent performance in inspection and safety standards. Annual inspections for bridges, sidewalk hazards, and play structures consistently achieved a 100% completion rate.

# DIGITALLY ADVANCING CITY



## MEETING

Indicator	2023 Result	2024 Result
Open data sets	20	20
Online permit applications	41.7%	68.5%

Our journey towards becoming a digitally advanced organization has embraced innovation and growth, consistently bringing our community along with us. 2024 marked an impressive increase in online permit applications, reflecting our residents' growing comfort and preference for digital services. Looking ahead, we're actively exploring additional digital advancements, including opportunities in artificial intelligence and other cutting-edge technologies.

Yet, the journey towards digital advancement has not been without its hurdles. We've encountered some community hesitancy towards adopting new digital tools, prompting ongoing educational and communication efforts to ease these transitions. To ensure inclusivity, we continue to offer services across a spectrum—from traditional paper-based processes to fully digital solutions. This balanced approach ensures all community members are supported and included as we progress into the digital future.

One of those significant digital leaps and learning was the launch of Hotspot, our new online parking system. Many users can choose to enjoy a faster and simpler parking experience or continue to pay with coin at a pay station. Beyond offering convenience, Hotspot provides us with real-time data insights, greatly enhancing our ability to manage and allocate parking resources efficiently across the city, enabling smarter, data-informed decision-making.

# WORKFORCE IS HEALTHY, EQUIPPED AND COMPETITIVE



## MEETING

Indicator	2023 Result	2024 Result
Red Deer unemployment rate	7.9%	9.7%
Uptake in leadership training	62%	64%
Training budgets used	73%	78%

### Community Indicators

In 2024, the external labour market presented challenges, as indicated by the rise in the Red Deer unemployment rate from 7.9% in 2023 to 9.7% in 2024.

### City of Red Deer Organization Indicators

Internally, our organization continued to meet the outcome of fostering and maintaining a healthy, equipped, and competitive workforce. Leadership training uptake increased from 62% in 2023 to 64% in 2024, showcasing our commitment to employee growth and leadership development. Our ongoing dedication to workforce wellbeing and development strengthens our capacity to attract, retain, and empower talent within our organization.

**Workforce information from Statistics Canada**

- Approximately 60% of residents holding a post-secondary diploma or certificate
- 22% hold a bachelor’s degree or higher
- Top employment sectors:
  - health care and social assistance
  - retail trade
  - construction
  - manufacturing



# COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLBEING



# COLLABORATIVE RESPONSE TO SOCIAL CHALLENGES THAT CONSIDERS ALL



## MEETING

Indicator	2023 Result	2024 Result
Warm hand-offs by Social Diversion Team	890	1246
Housing Referrals	354	306
Encampment debris removed	New for 2024	106,057 tonnes

Red Deer, like every city across Canada, is facing unique social challenges. Our collaborative approach to social challenges continued in 2024 with many organizations supporting this effort.

The Social Diversion Team has played a crucial role, by facilitating 1,246 warm hand-offs in 2024, compared to 890 in 2023. These warm hand offs ensure people in need are compassionately guided towards essential support services, in alignment with our approach to caring interventions.

The consistency in our ability to successfully make housing referrals means stability and improved quality of life for many of Red Deer's residents.

Addressing encampment debris has always been a priority, but in 2024, we began actively measuring the amount of debris removed. By removing 106,057 kilograms of debris, we've made a noticeable improvement in the safety, cleanliness, and enjoyment of our community spaces.

Through these collaborative actions, Red Deer continues to demonstrate our commitment to fostering a healthy, safe, and inclusive community.

# INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY



**SOMEWHAT MEETING**

Indicator	2023 Result	2024 Result
Community Diversity & Inclusion Plan developed	yes	Completed in 2023
Action Bus trips booked	New for 2024	88,223
Action Bus trips delivered	New for 2024	65,329
Facilities are inclusive	91%	Measured every two years
Facilities are accessible	79%	Measured every two years

Red Deer is dedicated to fostering inclusivity across the community, ensuring every individual feels welcome and supported. A significant milestone in our commitment to inclusivity was the completion of the Community Diversity & Inclusion Plan in 2023, a community plan with actionable steps to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout our community.

As part of the 2025 budget, ongoing funds were approved to invest in City staff as part of the Truth Learning and Relations Building initiative. This program will roll out this year to City staff as part of our organization’s efforts to be more inclusive and to meet the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.

Another critical aspect of our inclusive approach is through providing inclusive and dignified transportation options for residents through the Action Bus service. In 2024, residents booked 88,223 Action Bus trips, and 65,329 of these trips were successfully delivered. This service is invaluable in providing essential mobility options, ensuring that residents with differing abilities can actively participate in community life.

Through our Recreation User Satisfaction Survey, we are proud that 91% of recreation users view our spaces as inclusive, and 79% report facilities being accessible, as defined by survey respondents.

We know there is more that can be done to improve inclusiveness in our community, but as an organization we continue to lead by example and remain committed to Red Deer being an inclusive, accessible, and welcoming community for all.

# SAFE AND SECURE CITY



**STRONGLY MEETING**

Indicator	2023 Result				2024 Result			
Calls for property inspections	673				1106			
911 Calls	190,638				156,496			
Emergency Services incidents	2,538				1904			
Fire incidents with injury and/or death	2				3			
Total Criminal Code offences reported	15,741				13,741			
Total property-related offences reported	8865				7391			
Mischief / damage to property	Q1 264	Q2 391	Q3 351	Q4 280	Q1 196	Q2 315	Q3 356	Q4 236
Break and enters	Q1 189	Q2 259	Q3 237	Q4 189	Q1 101	Q2 135	Q3 154	Q4 111
Theft of motor vehicle	Q1 154	Q2 172	Q3 202	Q4 148	Q1 127	Q2 157	Q3 180	Q4 89
Theft from motor vehicle	Q1 301	Q2 352	Q3 399	Q4 231	Q1 150	Q2 261	Q3 964	Q4 737
Theft over & under \$5000	Q1 909	Q2 1,080	Q3 1,178	Q4 854	Q1 613	Q2 851	Q3 964	Q4 737
EOC/ECC/reception centre activations	New for 2024				6			

In 2024, significant progress was made toward ensuring Red Deer is and remains a safe and secure city.

Crime rates, including total Criminal Code offenses and property-related crimes, showed significant improvement, decreasing by 12.7% and 16.6%, respectively. Quarterly figures indicate a consistent downward trend in property crimes, such as mischief, break-and-enters, and vehicle thefts, a success of targeted policing efforts to curb crime.

On the Emergency Services front, there was a notable decrease in emergency incidents in 2025 dropping to 1,904 from 2,538, as well as an overall decrease in 911 calls.

Meanwhile, property inspections have increased from 673 calls in 2023 to 1,106 in 2024, indicating enhanced community understanding in safety and compliance matters.

With crime trending down, and Emergency Services incidents on the decline, Red Deer continues to be a safe, secure, and resilient community for all Red Deerians.

# GREAT SPACES AND PLACES



## STRONGLY MEETING

Indicator	2023 Result	2024 Result
Park and trail usage	459,681	806,008
Citizen satisfaction with parks and trails	95%	Measured every two years
Facilities are well maintained	76.4%	Measured every two years
Facilities are inclusive	91%	Measured every two years
Facilities are accessible	79%	Measured every two years
Facilities are clean	80%	Measured every two years

Red Deerians value the exceptional spaces and places within our city. In 2024, our parks and trails experienced increased use, with trail pedestrian counts increasing by 43%—from 459,681 trail uses in 2023 to an impressive 806,008 in 2024.

According to the latest Citizen Satisfaction Survey, citizen satisfaction with parks and trails remains exceptionally high at 95%, highlighting consistent public support and enjoyment of these community assets. Additionally, residents provided positive feedback through the Recreation User Satisfaction Survey, with 76.4% agreeing that facilities are well-maintained and 80% confirming that facilities are clean.

Having great spaces and places fosters healthier lifestyles, encourages physical activity, and supports mental wellness by providing areas for social connection. They build a stronger sense of community, making our city more attractive and livable for current residents and appealing to new visitors and potential residents alike. Together, these results reflect our ongoing commitment to enhancing and maintaining outdoor spaces and recreational facilities, directly contributing to the high quality of life and community wellbeing enjoyed by residents in Red Deer.

# CONNECTED PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES



## MEETING

Indicator	2023 Result	2024 Result
Special event permits	134	151
Archives community outreach	15	20
Sense of belonging and community connection	45%	Measured every two years
Physical wellbeing of recreation users	88.9%	Measured every two years
Mental wellbeing of recreation users	52.1%	Measured every two years
Social wellbeing of recreation users	48.3%	Measured every two years
Satisfaction with arts and culture	81%	Measured every two years
Satisfaction with recreation opportunities	91%	Measured every two years

The City of Red Deer is actively working toward the strategic goal of “Connected People and Communities,” with ongoing progress reflected across several key indicators. These indicators demonstrate continued improvement in community activations and highlight the effectiveness of cultural and recreational opportunities provided to residents.

In 2024, special event permits increased from 134 to 151, highlighting a growing number of opportunities for residents to connect socially and culturally within the community.

Additionally, Archives saw an uptick in community outreach, which plays an important role in building community identity by connecting with local history.

By creating spaces for citizens to connect with one another, we are enhancing sense of belonging, physical, mental, and social wellbeing. Specifically, 45% of residents reported a strong sense of belonging, 88.9% reported improved physical wellbeing from recreation participation, and satisfaction rates remained high for arts and culture (81%) and recreation opportunities (91%), all of which are opportunities to connect with fellow citizens.

These outcomes demonstrate our ongoing efforts to strengthen community connections through targeted events, outreach, and providing top recreational and cultural experiences.



# ENGAGED AND CONNECTED CITY



# COMMITTED TO POSITIVE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE



## MEETING

Indicator	2023 Result	2024 Result
Number of Report a Problems	4368	4903
Citizen satisfaction with city representatives	74%	Measured every two years
Satisfaction with snow clearing	67%	Measured every two years
Busses on time	82.4%	82.4%
Transit ridership	1,834,326	1,343,824
Missed cart collections	2.5 per 10,000 carts	1.5 per 10,000 carts
Volume of water treated	14,149,771 m <sup>3</sup>	14,900,598 m <sup>3</sup>
Volume of waste water treated	17,473,186 m <sup>3</sup>	19,628,031 m <sup>3</sup>
Power availability	100%	100%

In 2024, The City continued to demonstrate its commitment to delivering positive customer experience through positive interactions and reliable service delivery.

Red Deerians experience reliable and dependable services, from 100% power availability, to an increase in both the demand for water and wastewater treatment. Carts are consistently picked up as scheduled, with only one and a half carts missed per 10,000 pick-up (that's roughly a 99% success rate).

The "Report a Problem" tool experienced increased usage as it continues to be a responsive channel for citizen service request. Meanwhile, Transit services have consistently delivered on schedule and timely service 82.4% of the time for the past two years.

In our most recent Citizen Satisfaction Survey, respondents indicated a 74% satisfaction rate when interacting with city representatives. Collectively, these results illustrate The City's ongoing dedication to enhancing customer experiences and strategically responding to the evolving needs and expectations of residents.

# STRONG RELATIONSHIPS AND PUBLIC TRUST



## MEETING

Indicator	2023 Result	2024 Result
Citizen-influenced decisions	10	20
Increased public trust	75%	Measured every two years
Percent of Council meetings in closed	New for 2024	23%
Percent of Council meeting agendas released on time	New for 2024	50%

The City remains dedicated to fostering strong relationships with residents and building public trust through transparent governance, inclusive decision-making, and active community participation.

In 2024, residents actively influenced 20 decisions through formal public participation processes. These decisions included critical city projects such as updates to the Zoning Bylaw, the new parking program, the Intermunicipal Development Plan and Budget 2025, to name a few.

Seventy-five per cent of residents reporting they believe that The City makes decisions in the community's best interests. This shows a high degree of confidence and trust among residents.

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# DECISIONS ARE DATA INFORMED

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## MEETING

The Strategic Metrics Monitoring and Reporting program, introduced alongside the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, has evolved significantly over the past two years. The establishment of clear, measurable indicators and regular reporting supports our ultimate goal of making data-informed decisions.

Since implementation, we have observed tangible progress. Internally, business units are increasingly leveraging strategic metrics data to guide operational decision-making. Indicators continue to be refined as data literacy grows within the organization, and new metrics are proactively identified at the outset of projects to better measure their impact.

As the dashboard continues to gather and incorporate additional data, its value will extend beyond our internal operations, becoming a resource for partner organizations, local businesses, and residents. While we are still in the early stages of this initiative, we are optimistic about its future potential and look forward to sharing continued developments in subsequent reports.

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