

REPORT FOR ACTION

Strategic Plan 2023 Key Results and Initiatives

Date: April 11, 2024
To: The Board of Governors of Exhibition Place
From: Don Boyle, Chief Executive Officer
Wards: Ward 10 - Spadina-Fort York

SUMMARY

This report highlights the key results for the second year of the 2022-2026 Exhibition Place Strategic Plan. The key results represent initiatives successfully implemented by staff that strengthen the organization and align with the six (6) Strategic Plan Goals: Exceed Client and Visitor Expectations, Promote Site Animation 365-Days a Year, Solidify Position as a Leading Convention and Event Space, Enhance Brand Identity and Promotion, Invest in our People and Culture, and Ensure Competitively Priced Services and Sustainable Operations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Chief Executive Officer recommends that:

1. The Board receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no negative financial implications to this report.

DECISION HISTORY

The 2022-2026 Strategic Plan establishes a framework to guide the decision making of the Exhibition Place Board of Governors, management, and staff toward our long-term goals and vision.

At its meeting on February 19, 2021, the Board received a report that outlined the recent Request for Proposal evaluation process and an award to enter into a consulting agreement with Optimus SBR for the provision of facilitator services for the

development of the Strategic Plan 2022-2026 for Exhibition Place.
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.EP16.11>

At its meeting on September 28, 2021, the Board received an update report and presentation by Jesse Burns, Senior Manager, Optimus SBR, on the Exhibition Place 2022-2026 Strategic Plan Update.
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.EP19.7>

At its meeting on June 9, 2022, the Board approved the draft 2022-2026 Strategic Plan as outlined in the report from the Chief Executive Officer, Exhibition Place on May 26, 2022.
<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.EP24.12>

At its meeting on April 5, 2023, the Board received an update on year one of the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan as outlined in the report from the Chief Executive Officer, Exhibition Place on March 21, 2023.
<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.EP3.10>

COMMENTS

Exhibition Place's Strategic Plan establishes a vision as Canada's premier destination for conventions, exhibitions, events, and entertainment. Achieving this vision relies on aligning planned initiatives with the Strategic Plan's core values and goals. The following key results are a snapshot of the organization's Strategic Plan performance.

Supporting a Culture of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion ("DEI")

With the leadership and action of the DEI Committee, several initiatives were achieved in 2023. Two new procedures were implemented to integrate inclusivity throughout the organization's systems and processes. An "Equity Lens" was introduced and modelled after the City of Toronto Equity Lens, which will support staff when assessing the potential impact that a policy or procedure may have on equity-seeking groups. A second initiative, "The Land Acknowledgement and African Ancestral Acknowledgement Guidelines," has been embedded as standing openings in all organization-wide gatherings and public meetings. This step reminds staff that understanding our history and reconciliation is an ongoing journey.

Training has been crucial in modelling a culture of inclusivity. Through engagement, our DEI committee identified a three-year training program. This year, we provided training presentations and video programming covering topics such as Truth and Reconciliation, Human Rights, authentic 2SLGBTQ+ allyship, and mental health courses focusing on positive leadership and resiliency. These sessions were well received, with roughly 60 staff attending each training workshop.

Building a Green Future Through Sustainability Initiatives

After signing the "Net Zero Carbon Events Pledge" in 2022, Exhibition Place further demonstrated commitment to sustainability by signing the "Sustainable Tourism 2030

Pledge" this year. Staff continue to embed this duty in promoting sustainability in operations.

The Capital Works Team has been instrumental with integrating sustainability into multiple state of good repair projects. The roof replacements in the Industry Building and the Food Building now feature white roof membranes, improving occupant comfort and reducing heating-related energy consumption by 8% to 9%. Additional enhancements within the Industry Building include the installation of 10,000 sq ft of new green roofing and energy-efficient LED lights. These lights are estimated to decrease energy usage by 30% to 40% while amplifying overall brightness by 25%, which enhances the space. The same LED upgrades are installed in the Better Living Centre and the Queen Elizabeth Building.

Promoting Site Animation Throughout the Grounds

The Board approved the Community Focus Group and Partnership Policies, recognizing that community engagement is central to promoting site animation. The Community Focus Group Policy introduced a more informal engagement opportunity for residents to provide activation ideas to Exhibition Place staff. In 2023, focus groups brainstormed potential activations through facilitated workshops. The Partnerships Policy approved in September 2023, establishes a framework for Exhibition Place to support local organizations interested in hosting community-planned programming on the grounds. This new framework was introduced in the 2024 planning process. The results will be reported to the Board in 2025.

In the spring and summer of 2023, the Exhibition Place Team engaged and partnered with various organizations to activate and promote site animation. Expanding on the success of 2022, weekly outdoor yoga classes were offered from May to July in cooperation with 10XTO Athletic Club (Hotel X), with each class drawing 15 to 25 participants. In July, one of Exhibition Place's conservancy projects - the urban beehives on the roof of the Enercare Centre, was utilized in collaboration with Toronto Bee Rescue to host beekeeping and education workshops for the community. Additionally, a partnership with TO City Hall Live brought weekly concerts to the Gazebo in Centennial Square, showcasing Toronto's musical talent, and enjoyed by over 150 attendees weekly. The busy summer schedule was capped off with a Community Appreciation Day event in September, which drew over 250 residents. The day was filled with music, treats, games, and a community walking tour of the grounds.

Enhancing the End-to-End Client Customer Experience

Ensuring customer and client satisfaction and safety while providing a welcoming atmosphere is fundamental to exceeding their expectations. In 2023, staff in our Operations and Facility Services Division implemented a "floor rehabilitation strategy" that utilized bio-degradable materials to improve surface maintenance standards while ensuring the safety and aesthetic integrity of the asset. This strategy involved targeted repairs and preservation within the Enercare Centre's Galleria, Heritage Court, and Mid-Arch.

Further, new policies and procedures have been implemented to enhance and support client services. The Event Management Division met regularly with our audio-visual suppliers and applied new processes to audit and expedite quotations for clients' requirements. Because of these new processes, 75% of our show clients have seen savings in audio-visual rental prices. Moreover, the Operations, Events, and Finance staff collaborated to streamline the post-event final billing settlement process by applying a new daily costing system and approval procedure for our major shows. As a result, financial settlements were cut in half to under 30 days.

New Technological Innovations

New technologies provide opportunities to enhance our event space and exceed the expectations of our clients and visitors. Exhibition Place became one of the first venues in Canada to feature virtual reality technology for the Beanfield Centre. Prospective clients can now experience immersive virtual tours of the Beanfield Centre, viewing potential uses and layout of the event space. The Sales and Marketing staff premiered this new capability at the Canadian Meetings + Events Expo tradeshow this past summer which was also presented to the Board at its meeting of September 15, 2023 (EP5.6). Throughout the tradeshow, staff engaged with 182 visitors at our booth, resulting in 10 new clients and positive media coverage.

To simplify and speed up the parking process, Exhibition Place partnered with the Toronto Parking Authority to introduce a new mobile parking pilot program. The new program introduced exclusive mobile payment options in lot 852 for all Toronto FC matches. 13,964 vehicles used the mobile pay app for a seamless customer experience with expedited entrance times.

Attached as Appendix A is a summary of the Strategic Plan 2023 Key Results and Initiatives, and key performance indicators (KPIs).

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SIGNATURE

Don Boyle
Chief Executive Officer

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A - Strategic Plan 2023 Key Results and Initiatives