



# STRATEGIC PLAN

FY 2022-2024

# VISION

The City of Grand Rapids Department of Public Works will be a recognized leader in the delivery of public services; known for our responsiveness, reliability, good stewardship of fiscal and human resources and caring attention given to every person we encounter.

# MISSION

Effectively maintain and develop public infrastructure and provide services to the community to achieve positive social, economic and environmental outcomes.

# CORE VALUES

Our values are what we stand for. They are embedded throughout the entire plan and guide all our work.

***Accountability:*** Always acting with integrity and transparency and being responsible for what we do and say.

***Collaboration:*** Working together in partnership with others; teamwork.

***Customer Service:*** Professionally serving those who live in, work in or visit the city. Providing respectful, excellent, high quality service and assistance before, during and after the person's interactions with the City.

***Equity:*** Leveraging City influence to intentionally remove and prevent barriers created by systemic and institutional injustice.

***Innovation:*** Challenging how things have been done before. Fulfilling community needs by offering new ways to serve our customers and enhance operations. Being nimble, self-aware and open to feedback.

***Sustainability:*** The ability to be maintained; making decisions with an understanding of how those decisions will impact the environment, people and communities, and finances, both today and in the future.

# Environmental Stewardship

Protect Grand Rapids environmental and natural resources. Promote, educate and implement sustainable policies and practices.

## Objective 1: Improve the amount and quality of recycling throughout the City

### Strategies:

1. Sustain improvements realized through the 2020 Environment, Great Lakes and Energy recycling quality grant
2. Conduct a review of the recycling violations value stream and implement process improvements
3. Explore alternatives for recycling materials management end processor
4. Launch targeted recycling campaign to enhance public education, awareness and improve quality of recycled materials
5. Promote recycling to community organizations including neighborhood associations and the Rental Property Owners Association (RPOA)



# Environmental Stewardship

## Objective 2: Facilitate compost operations for the community

### Strategies:

1. Implement year-round composting operations through a private contractor
2. Develop and pilot a program for food waste diversion
3. Contract to complete debris clean-up at the composting site

## Objective 3: Identify and implement innovative practices to protect the environment

### Strategies:

1. Replace existing diesel trucks with CNG or hybrid vehicles to reduce carbon emissions
2. Maintain green infrastructure sites, traffic islands and rain gardens in the City right-of-way to reduce stormwater burdens
3. Decrease idle time for refuse and recycling vehicles
4. Research and implement alternatives to reduce salt usage
5. Explore recommendations from the MSW Consultants operational assessment that target positive environmental outcomes
6. Create environmental issues review process for all new equipment purchases; exploring opportunities for transition to green alternatives
7. Research opportunities to use eco-friendly materials for street maintenance
8. Explore system changes to reduce the number of private materials management haulers that navigate our streets



# Operations Management

Provide the highest quality public works services to serve the community, maintain a cost-effective operation, protect the City's infrastructure investments and be a model of innovation.

## Objective 1: Improve overall city pavement condition using best management practices

### Strategies:

1. Create programs to proactively manage and triage systemwide surface deficiencies
2. Enhance pavement condition index (PASER rating) and extend the asset life through collaboration with engineering and the Vital Streets program
3. Enhance the appearance of the City and maintain compliance with EGLE standards to support stormwater management through improved street sweeping operations
4. Complete trench repairs in a manner that adds quality and reduces the risk of rework through a documented quality control trench program

## Objective 2: Continually improve the effective delivery of winter maintenance services to ensure safe winter road conditions for vehicular and pedestrian traffic

### Strategies:

1. Adhere to procedures and policies established in the Winter Operations Plan; reviewing plan annually
2. Ensure all route boundaries and maps are accurate and update accordingly
3. Maintain bike lanes throughout the city by plowing snow to the curb
4. Administer the city contract for the sidewalk snow removal program

# Operations Management

## Objective 3: Effectively maintain the city's Materials Management Program including refuse, recycling and yardwaste to reduce cost, improve service levels, and drive operating efficiencies

### Strategies:

1. Conduct a review of the yard waste value stream and implement process improvements
2. Review and evaluate the pay-as-you-throw structure with consideration given to set collection frequencies
3. Review and evaluate the out-of-cart setout option to determine the overall effectiveness and sustainability of the program
4. Explore cost-savings measures that could be implemented to improve overall operational efficiency
5. Explore innovative practices to minimize the amount of waste and recyclables delivered to disposal or resource recovery facilities
6. Expand collection system supervisory support to reduce risk to continuity of operations
7. Evaluate impact of COVID-19 on community behavior towards materials management

## Objective 4: Obtain American Public Works Association (APWA) Accreditation

### Strategies:

1. Establish a project work team to facilitate accreditation process
2. Complete Pre-Accreditation documentation
3. Complete streets operational assessment
4. Incorporate anticipated expenditures for accreditation into annual budget process

# Financial Management & Business Practice

Exercise good stewardship of financial and operating assets using sound, cost-effective business judgement and expand our commitment to an ongoing process of continuous improvement, financial resiliency and asset management.

## Objective 1: Sustain a financial plan that supports our strategic direction

### Strategies:

1. Adherence to budget, projections and forecasting models
2. Increase the number of citizens participating in materials management fee-based services
3. Expand refuse and recycling commercial customer base
4. Pursue additional grant funding opportunities
5. Reduce negative balance refuse accounts to mitigate risk
6. Analyze trench repair program to ensure financial alignment to performance benchmarks
7. Implement revenue growth recommendations from the MSW Refuse Operational Assessment
8. Research and analyze outside service agreements and contractual obligations to maximize cost effectiveness
9. Annually review all refuse fees to ensure cost-recovery and market competitiveness



# Financial Management & Business Practice

## Objective 2: Employ best practices in business management to achieve efficiencies and increase staff engagement at all levels

### Strategies:

1. Regularly review and update department Standard Operating Procedures
2. Improve existing processes through Kaizen events, value stream mapping and other lean tools
3. Document policies and procedures into a formal departmental operating plan by function
4. Develop standard work for all positions

## Objective 3: Leverage technology systems to support data collection, performance management and decision making

### Strategies:

1. Explore innovative IT solutions for refuse customer billing
2. Continuation of the Public Service Group Key Performance Indicator program
3. Expansion of current analytics, metrics and benchmarking including the creation of a data management plan
4. Expand work with Socrata open data portal
5. Implement online scheduling for bulk collections

# Financial Management & Business Practice

**Objective 4: Reinvest, maintain and enhance system assets in a planned and equitable strategic way to best leverage available resources**

**Strategies:**

1. Create an asset management plan for refuse and recycling carts
2. Invest in quality equipment to support the changing needs of the department
3. Assess and adopt procedures that focus on streamlining asset repairs and maintenance to reduce downtime
4. Maintain system assets including alleys, bioswales, medians, cobblestone streets, and porous pavement around tree grates in accordance with the departments operational plan to support sound asset management principles



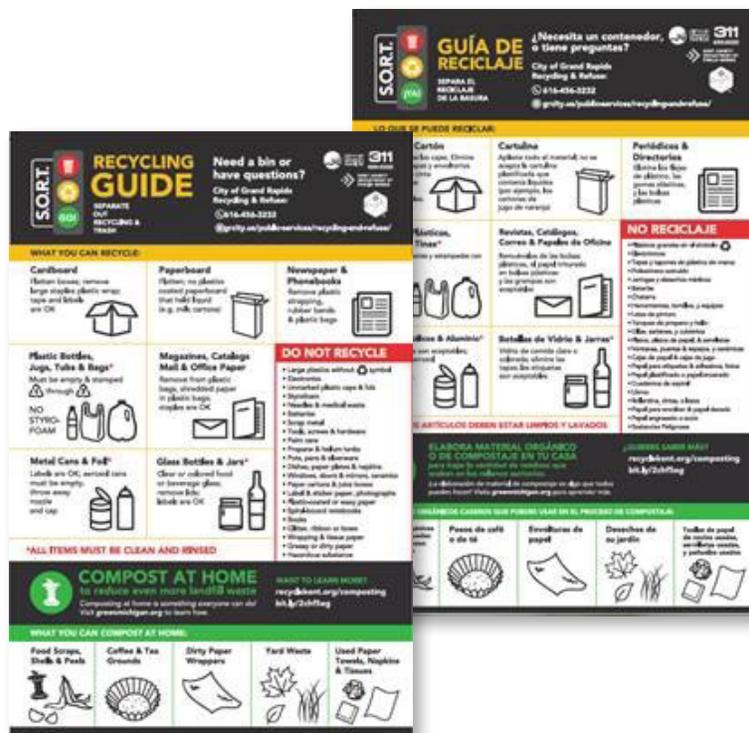
# Customer Experience

Provide excellent services and information to exceed customer expectation and elevate customer voice.

## Objective 1: Enhance communication with the public

### Strategies:

1. Evaluate and implement communication and engagement tools that improve the customer experience
2. Collaborate with neighborhood associations, community groups and individuals to promote awareness of Public Works services
3. Attend neighborhood clean-ups and other related events to gather feedback and lift community voice
4. Facilitate increased opportunities for communication with the community through SMS and email
5. Regularly review and update printed and electronic customer communication material
6. Implement programs and processes to reduce barriers to communication



# Customer Experience

## Objective 2: Review, track and continually improve levels of service

### Strategies:

1. Collaborate with 311 to regularly review and update scripts
2. Implement a customer satisfaction survey, establishing benchmarks to track systematic program and process improvements
3. Meet or exceed established benchmarks for refuse, recycling and yardwaste misses
4. Meet or exceed established benchmarks for customer response time in administrative and operational processes

## Objective 3: Embed equity in all programs, processes and operations throughout the Department of Public Works

### Strategies:

1. Ensure regional equity in all core services
2. Collaborate with Home Repair Services and other community partners to provide service support for citizens in need
3. Apply racial equity lens to all new initiatives programs and processes using the GARE toolkit
4. Facilitate targeted neighborhood clean-ups

# Leadership & Employee Development

Attract, hire, train, and retain high performing employees while further identifying and developing our future leaders through the support and development of a workforce that is aligned with our mission, vision and values

## Objective 1: Strengthen internal workforce professional development

### Strategies:

1. Require professional development of staff at every level
2. Leverage the Learning Management System to track professional development and provide additional professional development opportunities
3. Create individual performance goals anchored to strategic planning and operational priorities
4. Collaborate with Risk Management to continue offering safety training and emergency response readiness
5. Train all Department of Public Works staff in equity policies and practices
6. Expand customer service training for all frontline staff
7. Expand opportunities for winter maintenance staff training and education



# Leadership & Employee Development

## Objective 2: Examine organizational structure and staffing strategies to ensure an adequate pipeline of quality employees

### Strategies:

1. Evaluate administrative support needs and backfill vacant positions
2. Identify critical leadership and operational positions and develop a comprehensive succession plan
3. Monitor staff levels to meet essential service needs and create a skills matrix
4. Collaborate with Human Resources to recruit and develop a workforce that relates to and reflects the values of the City and the community we serve
5. Regularly review and update classifications to align with the industry and maintain parity within the City of Grand Rapids
6. Expand collaboration with the Public Works Academy
7. Ensure continuity of knowledge with workforce transition

## Objective 3: Develop and maintain a workplace culture based on City and department values that improves employee communications, engagement, and satisfaction

### Strategies:

1. Improve internal communication to enhance staff awareness and engagement
2. Implement use of the ACE employee recognition program
3. Implement use of annual culture survey
4. Establish recurring staff meetings and huddles in all teams
5. Give employees the tools and support to pursue their health and happiness, including work-life balance