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**MEMORANDUM****CSC-C 6-2019****Subject: Shape Niagara – Council Strategic Planning Process****Date: February 20, 2019****To: Corporate Services Committee****From: Kristen Delong, Manager of Internal Control & Organizational Performance**

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With the beginning of each new term of Regional Council, staff prepares a background report which serves to inform the new Council on the current state of Niagara.

Combining the background report information with Councilor's individual knowledge, Council identifies the priorities that will be the focus of the organization for the next four years and creates a new Council strategic plan.

Staff will be leading Council through their strategic planning process over the coming months; this memo serves to introduce the process and outline the initial timelines.

***Why a strategic plan?***

A strategic plan sets the direction and establishes priorities for the organization. It defines the organization's vision for success and prioritizes the activities that will make this vision a reality. The strategy will tell staff what they should be focusing on, so that work can be aligned with Council's priorities.

***What is Shape Niagara?***

For this current Council, staff have been working to prepare two reports which capture both the results of an extensive community engagement initiative, *What We've Heard*, with information collected through an environmental scan of Niagara, *Setting the Stage for Strategy*. The combination of these reports captures the voice and ideas of residents, input from senior staff from across the organization, and trends and influencing factors. This work has been branded as the Shape Niagara initiative.

***Expected Timelines***

With only four years to make a meaningful impact, it is important to identify a strategy early in the term that is focused and clear in its direction. This will set the stage for staff's work plans for the next four year period, and ensure the entire organization is moving in the same direction towards the set out goals.

Staff from the Internal Control & Organizational Performance division will be bringing the *Setting the Stage for Strategy* report to Committee of the Whole on April 4, 2019, and will provide a re-cap of the *What We've Heard* report.

A Council workshop will be scheduled in May, 2019 that will bring all Regional Councillors together to identify and prioritize their strategic objectives for the term. At this workshop, Council will be provided the opportunity to renew the vision for the organization, set their strategic objectives and goals, and begin identifying criteria for an implementation plan to action the strategy.

The final strategy is expected to be brought to Council for their approval at the July 18, 2019 Council meeting. From there the implementation plan will be developed and brought forward for Council's approval in alignment with the 2020 budget planning process.

Respectfully submitted and signed by,

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