



# **Portugal Gove St. Philip's**

## **Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028**

02 December, 2022

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## Executive Summary

This Strategic Plan has been developed to assist Council in its decision making and budgeting over the next five years, as it endeavors to meet the needs of residents within the limits of available fiscal and human resources. The work of preparing the Plan included a review of relevant documents (see Section 2), comprehensive consultation (Section 3), including an online resident survey (406 respondents), key interviews, a Town staff survey, public sessions and a review of ten benchmark communities with successful strategic plans.

The results of this work were analyzed and consolidated (see Section 4) into a set of strategic priorities for the next five years, with the following as a proposed new Vision Statement:

***Portugal Cove-St. Philip's offers a vibrant heritage with safe and inclusive neighborhoods for residents of all means and abilities, while preserving our rural character. The health and wellness of our residents and sustaining our natural environment are core values, ensuring that families, youth and seniors can thrive.***

Within this vision, the Plan is constructed as follows:

Five Strategic Action Areas:

- Enhancing our Parks, Recreation, Culture and Heritage Assets,
  - Maintaining a Rural/Urban Balance,
  - Ensuring Accessibility, Equity and Access for all,
  - Protecting and Repairing our Environment, and
  - Providing Responsive, Responsible and Cost-effective Services.
- ... with maintaining a Sustainable and Safe Community as the core value.

These five Strategic Action Areas are expressed in a series of goals and twenty-five Specific Initiatives to be acted upon during the life of the Plan. Using the results of the consultation process and additional analysis, the initiatives were assigned priorities (Top, Medium and Lowest). The following emerged as top priorities:

- Update/implement the Asset Management Plan,
- Improve Town-owned roads,
- Investigate the feasibility of assuming all roads in Town, with possibly a joint management arrangement for provincial roads,
- Widen road shoulders to accommodate pedestrians and increase safety,
- Support the initiatives of the Advisory Committee on the Environment,
- Work with the community to refine existing events and develop new ones,
- Implement the Trails Master Plan, and
- Develop the Lifestyle Centre.

Section 5 presents an Implementation Plan for the twenty-five initiatives, including a timetable, resource requirements, suggested targets and responsibilities.

The Plan is to be made actionable and accountable in five ways:

- Upon completion, a summary version of the Plan to be made available online to the community,
- Regular staff reports on how significant upcoming decisions help advance the Plan,
- Press releases issued by the Town may refer to the Plan and how the matter being referred to aligns with it,
- Town to make an annual report card to the public on how the Plan is being implemented, and
- A three-year refresher update of the Plan to be prepared.

# 1. Introduction

This Introduction to the document outlines the **importance of a strategic plan** to the community and why it is an essential component of overall planning. It also provides a brief **orientation and background** to this specific effort.

## The Project to Date

This document reports on the development of a new Strategic Plan for the Town of Portugal Cove-St. Philip's (an initial strategic planning process was undertaken in 2015). The work has included extensive consultation with residents in different forms, review of background documents and strategic plans for benchmark communities both within and outside the province. Overall guidance has been provided by the Steering Committee comprising the CAO, the Town Clerk, and the Director of Economic Development, Marketing & Communications.

Council recognizes the need for an overriding strategic plan to guide the governance and management of the Town into the future, starting with the 2023 – 2028 period. As such, the Plan needs to capture long-term priorities and set overall direction for the Town.

As the overriding management document for the municipality, this Plan will become part of Council's budgeting cycle and guide major decision making.

## Why a Strategic Plan is Important & Necessary

The essence of strategic planning is making rational choices about the allocation of limited resources. Municipalities have to provide for the needs and aspirations of their residents in a variety of service areas, from the provision of hard infrastructure to softer services such as recreation and cultural programs (in addition to meeting obligations brought on by the provincial and federal governments). The result is that the demands from residents inevitably exceed the capacity to respond.

A Strategic Plan, based on input from residents, staff, Council and other stakeholders, examines the demands and puts forward overall priorities to be addressed using the limited financial and human resources available. For the general community, the Plan is a signal that their Council is tuned to their needs, while being fiscally and socially responsible.

The Portugal Cove-St. Philip's Strategic Plan can therefore be useful in three different ways:

- **In the formulation of public policy:** A Strategic Plan provides an overarching policy umbrella within which all other municipal policies should be aligned. With a Plan in place, all subsequent municipal policies developed should be seen as avenues through which the

Strategic Plan is fulfilled. Policies that are in place prior to development of the Strategic Plan should be reviewed and updated in terms of how they help realise the Plan.

- **As an aid in making specific decisions:** From time to time, decisions may need to be made with a relatively quick turnaround. Examples include grants that may become available or requests made by individuals or companies. In such situations, making decisions according to whether they further the goals of the Strategic Plan can be very helpful in weighing various options and making a decision.
- **As a message to the community:** Promoting the fact that the municipality has a Strategic Plan in place to guide its future decisions sends a powerful message to residents, businesses, potential suppliers, other governments and key stakeholders. It shows that the municipality is proactive and forward-thinking and strategic in its approach to dealing with the world, which creates a sense of trust and respect among those who are interacting with the municipality in whatever capacity.

# 2. Review of Background Documents

A Strategic Plan is not developed in isolation, but is formulated within the **context of a variety of background reports and policies**. This section provides a brief overview of the documents reviewed and outlines the implications for the Plan.

Following is the result of a review of twelve background documents, with an outline of Key Priorities and Findings having relevance to the Portugal Cove-St. Philip’s Strategic Plan.

## PCSP Trails Master Plan, August, 2022

### Key Priorities and Findings:

- Purpose: To protect and enhance the cultural landscapes of PCSP; to develop a guiding document for the future development of and investment in the trail network over time.
- Guiding principles:
  - Improve connectivity & access to local destinations & surrounding communities
  - Protect the natural environment and rural character
  - Create a trail network that provides year-round recreation opportunities
  - Prioritize sustainability in implementation of the Plan.
- Recommendations for development or enhancement of 19 trails and sites throughout the Town, including river banks, pole lines, pond loops, Princes Mountain Lookout, Blast Hole Ponds Biking Area and several connector trails.

## Killick Coast Strategic Agriculture Plan 2022 – 2027

### Key Priorities and Findings:

- Mission: To build agriculture and food sustainability on the Killick Coast through modern collaborations between government, agri-businesses and residents, that fosters innovation, health, wellness and new investments.
- The Plan is built on four Strategic Pillars:
  - Enterprise expansion,
  - Economic impact,
  - Identity & healthy lifestyle, and
  - Enable the Plan through policy (Small Farm-Food Producers Policy & the Provincial Regional Planning Model).
- Each strategy is supported by a series of goals and initiatives.

## Municipal Budgets 2019 & 2021

### Key Priorities and Findings:

- Council’s budgeted expenditures for 2019 and 2021 are outlined in the table below.

- Protective Services – expenditures were mainly on fire protection (92% and 76% in 2019 and 2021 respectively). \$32,000 was spent each year on emergency preparedness.
- Environmental Health – categories included water supply, sewage and garbage collection.
- Recreation & Cultural Services – categories included administration, recreation facilities and cultural facilities. Recreation and cultural programs and activities accounted for over 17% of the total for each year.
- Fiscal Services was the largest expense category, covering debt charges, transfers, etc. Municipal debt in 2021 stood at \$1,720,433. The debt servicing ratio of 16% in 2021 is seen as a reasonable level.

### **PCSP Municipal Expenditures, 2019 & 2020**

<b>Category</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2021</b>
	% of total	% of total
General Government	13.6	13.4
Protective Services	4.2	5.4
Transportation Services	14.2	18.7
Environmental Health	10.9	10.9
Planning & Development	6.4	7.5
Recreation & Cultural Services	9.1	8.4
Fiscal Services	41.6	35.7
Total Expenditures	\$13,639,326.00	\$13, 213,507.00
Debt Servicing Ratio	17%	16%

### **PCSP Community Lifestyle Recreation Centre, Business Case, January 15, 2019**

#### **Key Priorities and Findings:**

- A market assessment and financial analysis was prepared for a PCSP Lifestyle Centre. Included in the proposed 51,179 sq. ft., two-level structure were a Town Office, Library, Walking Track, Gymnasium, Stage, Community Centre, fitness and function rooms.
- A review of social-economic trends, a 2016 community survey by MQO Research and existing facilities suggest a strong need and desire for a lifestyle centre in PCSP.
- An order of magnitude budget was prepared, resulting in a proposed cost of \$14.2M, including construction costs, initial furniture, fixtures and equipment.
- An annual operating financial statement was generated using various assumptions and estimates about expenses and revenues. It estimated total annual expenses of \$807, 302.00 and revenues of \$795,170.
- The conclusion included the statement that ‘community centres generally do not make positive net returns and that careful attention must always be paid to maximizing program revenues while carefully managing all expenses’.

## **PCSP Municipal Service Level Review, 2018**

### **Key Priorities and Findings:**

- The strategic objective: to identify six service areas having the greatest impact on resident satisfaction and municipal operations, and, for each area, to recommend best practise standards, tailored to the Town's needs.
- The six service areas selected following analysis, were:
  - Roads maintenance,
  - Strategic planning,
  - Garbage & recycling,
  - Issuing permits & licences,
  - Recreation programs, and
  - On-line customer services.
- For each of the six areas, best practise communities were analyzed and delivery standards proposed.
- Implementation priorities were set for each of the servicing standards; immediate, short-term (1 – 2 years), medium-term (3 – 5 years) and long-term (6 – 10 years).

## **PCSP Community Work Plan (Placebuilder), June, 2016**

### **Key Priorities and Findings:**

- In the words of then Mayor Moses Tucker, the plan provided “an opportunity to identify potential projects which will help the Town to build a common vision, based on input from our residents”.
- The Plan made a series of recommendations in the following areas:
  - Land use planning
  - Infrastructure (subdivision standards, trail network, etc)
  - Preservation of community character
  - Preservation of habitat & agricultural land
  - Economic development
- Eight physical developments were recommended: a Town Centre on Portugal Cove Road; a commercial area in Rainbow Gully Park, harbour front developments in Portugal Cove & St. Philip's, three recreation developments and a farmers' market.

## **PCSP Municipal Asset Management Plan, May 31, 2016**

### **Key Priorities and Findings:**

- Plan objective: To maximize benefits, manage risk and provide satisfactory levels of service to the public in a sustainable manner.
- The estimated replacement cost of all municipal assets (water, wastewater, roads, bridges, buildings, vehicles) at December 31, 2014 was \$142M, or \$19K/resident (assets such as trails not included). 88.7% of the total was absorbed by the municipal road, water and sewer network.
- 97.4% of municipal roads and 66.7% of bridges were determined to be in good condition.



- It was determined that PCSP should be raising \$1.6M/year in long-term capital financing (compared to less than \$300K as of December, 2014).
- The Town to undertake an annual comparison of actual vs planned service level indicators and identification of significant variances.

### **PCSP Strategic Plan, Final Working Session #4, August 27, 2015**

#### **Key Priorities and Findings:**

- Objective: To be recognized as a leader for excellence in governance and service delivery.
- Develop Level of Service Standards for key service areas. Intended results to include:
  - Improved citizen satisfaction,
  - Greater accountability for both Council & staff, and
  - Enhanced communications with the public.
- Implement interactive technology to assist residents in accessing municipal services.
- Investigate a new committee system to enhance communications between Council & residents.
- Review key internal processes to ensure a cross-departmental approach to service delivery.
- Develop a long-term fire protection plan.

### **PCSP Municipal Plan & Development Regulations 2014 – 2024**

#### **Key Priorities and Findings:**

- Provide a full range of municipal services in the most economical manner and within the Town's fiscal capacity.
- Maintain a rural character and protect environmentally sensitive areas (e.g., flood prone areas such as Murray's Pond River, Main River and Broad Cove River).
- Encourage green technologies, including the use of renewable resources.
- A new community Recreation Centre was first called for in the Town's 2005 Infrastructure Assessment and Master Plan.
- The Town's road network includes 209 roads totalling 128 kilometres, 47% of which is owned and operated by the provincial government.

A review of the Municipal Plan and Development Regulations is currently underway.

### **PCSP Habitat Conservation Plan, March, 2014**

#### **Key Priorities and Findings:**

- The plan was prepared to further the Town's support for the long-term conservation of wildlife habitat.
- Five management units were proposed; Voisey's Brook Park, wetlands south of Blast Hole Ponds and the Main River, Beachy Cove Brook and Broad Cove River Gullies.
- The goals of the Stewardship Agreement signed by Council on June 19, 2015 are:

- To conserve wildlife habitat and promote enhancement and/or restoration of habitat, where applicable.
- To maintain and/or increase wildlife use of the management units, and
- To increase public education and awareness of the importance of wetland, upland and coastal habitat for conserving wildlife.

### **PCSP Integrated Community Sustainability Plan, July 22, 2010**

#### **Key Priorities and Findings:**

- The purpose was to secure continued access to allocations under the Gas Tax Agreement.
- The Plan addressed the sustainability of PCSP under five pillars: Social, Governance, Environment, Economy and Culture.
- Goals, Actions and Strategies were recommended under each of the five pillars. Following is a selection of goals:
  - Environment – reduce toxic chemicals entering the local system,
  - Economic – improve transportation options (e.g., a local shuttle bus service),
  - Society – Support a variety of housing types, including affordable and seniors housing,
  - Culture – promote the local library, and
  - Governance – strengthen Municipal-Provincial relations (e.g., a joint strategy for roads management).

### **PCSP Parks & Recreation Master Plan March, 2007**

#### **Key Priorities and Findings:**

- Purpose: to provide parks and recreation planning guidelines, prepare conceptual plans for infrastructure and identify programming priorities and clearly articulate recreation development priorities.
- Key challenges include:
  - Accommodating the needs of the rapidly growing population,
  - To refine, formalize and integrate walking trails, ATV/snowmobile trails and linear park systems,
- Key recommendations include:
  - A multi-purpose Edu-Rec Centre at Beachy Cove Elementary,
  - Park development at Rainbow Gully, Voisey's Brook, etc,
  - Gateway park development at Portugal Cove Wharf,
  - Heritage park development at St. Philip's Anglican and Holy Rosary Catholic Churches,
  - Blast Hole Pond Outdoor Adventure Centre development,
  - Freshwater Forest Cottage development, and
  - a Farmers' Market.

## 3. Consultation Results

This section presents a high-level summary of the various consultation avenues leading up to the development of this Strategic Plan. First, the results of a very extensive **community survey** are presented. Next, recognizing the unique and highly knowledgeable perspectives of municipal employees, the results of a **staff survey** are discussed. This is followed by a summary of input from **public sessions** held in October 2022 where community groups and individuals were invited to provide input. Next are major themes resulting from a series of interviews with **key community stakeholders**. Finally, the results of a **benchmarking analysis** of the strategic plans of other similar and surrounding municipalities was undertaken. Collectively, this data provided the main input for the identification of strategic priorities, goals and actions.

### 3.1 Community Survey

This section reports on three aspects of the online community survey, held from mid-to late October 2022. A random draw for an iPad provided an incentive to boost response overall, and particularly at the younger end of the age spectrum. Overall, 406 responses were obtained, comprising a very good sample from which to draw conclusions.

Following is a discussion of various parameters relating to the representativeness of the survey, followed by reactions to the current Vision Statement, and then by the priority action areas that respondents would like to see reflected in the Plan.

#### A) Representativeness of the Survey

The survey results represented the overall population of Portugal Cove-St. Philip's on several key dimensions:

- **age groups:** all age groups were represented in the survey response, from under 18 to over 75; the largest group represented was the 35-44 age bracket
- **household types:** most households described themselves as comprising 'adults and children' (62%)
- **most respondents residents:** most respondents were current residents of PCSP (96%) – 3% were either planning to move to the community or were former residents
- **length of time lived in PCSP:** respondents reported having lived in PCSP for a wide range of times, from less than 1 year (2%) to over 50 years (5%) – the most common response was 11 to 20 years (31%)

- **employment status:** most respondents reported themselves to be ‘full-time employed’ (66%) with a further 7% reporting themselves as ‘self-employed’ and 11% as ‘retired’
- **many commuters:** 63% reported that they needed to leave PCSP for work on a regular basis – of these respondents, the most common destination in this regard was St. John’s (80% of those regularly leaving PCSP for work) and Mount Pearl (9%)

## B) Thoughts About Vision Statement

### Current Vision Statement:

*The Town of Portugal Cove – St. Philip’s aspires to be a sustainable and complete community, offering residents and visitors access to connected and safe neighbourhoods, natural open spaces, agricultural lands and soaring coastlines. A vibrant heritage combined with increased economic opportunities will create a preferred place for people to live and grow, to be close to work, to pursue recreation, to invest and to visit.”*

Respondents were asked to comment on the overall length of the Vision Statement, as well as certain key phrases and themes within it.

#### • regarding the length of the Vision statement overall:

- 50% thought it was ‘just about right’
- 27% thought it was ‘too long and complex’
- 18% said it ‘doesn’t matter to me’

#### • regarding phrases and themes in the Vision Statement:

The question asked was: “Unpacking this Vision Statement above, there are a number of phrases that describe who we are and what we do. From the list below, which five are the most meaningful and accurate to you in describing the Town you would like to live in?”

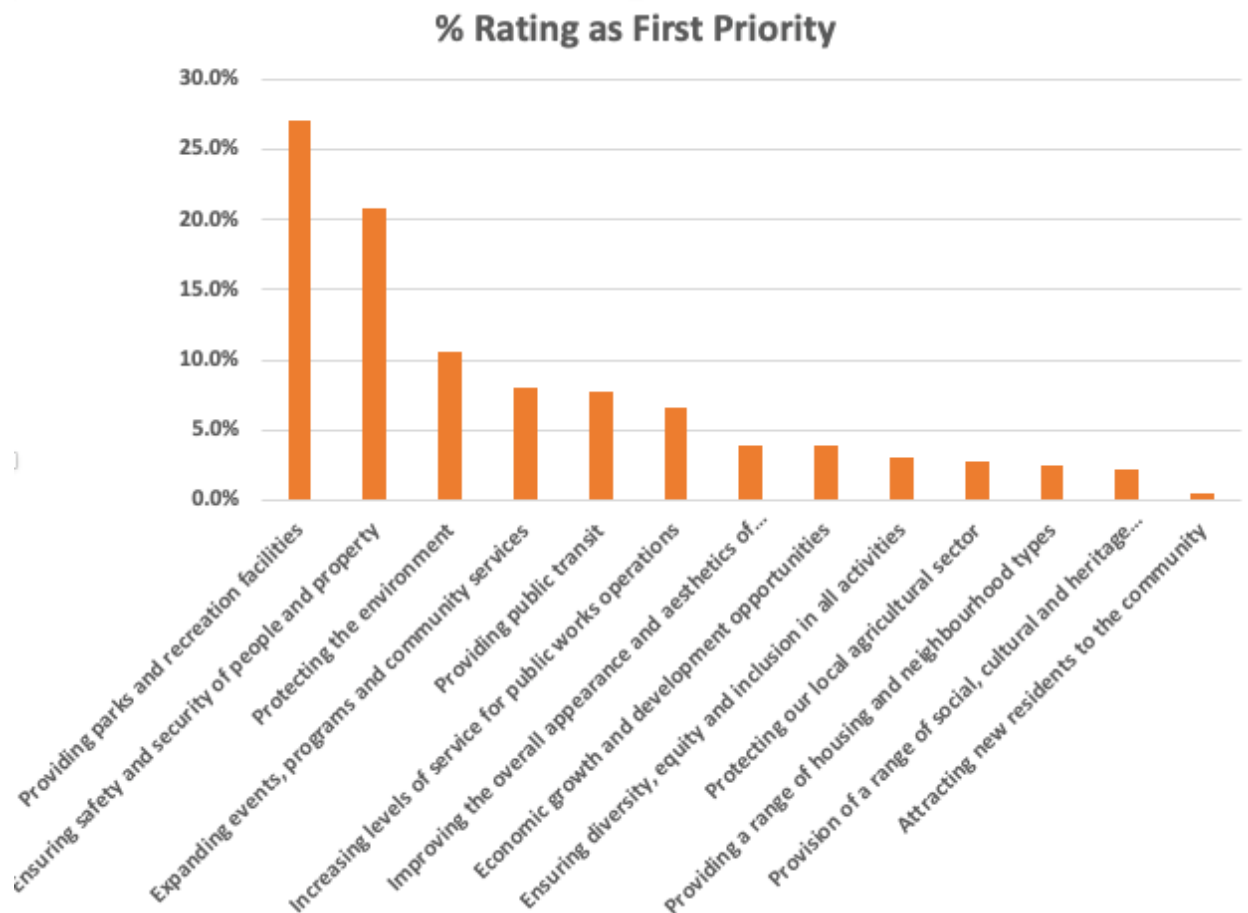
Phrase in the Vision Statement	Number of Respondents indicating it was one of their ‘preferred five phrases’	Percentage of Respondents
Preferred place for people to live and grow	254	15.0%
Access to connected and safe neighbourhoods	236	13.9%
Access to natural open spaces	217	12.8%
Sustainable community	183	10.8%
Preferred place for people to pursue recreation	177	10.4%
Complete community	156	9.2%
Access to soaring coastlines	121	7.1%

Increased economic opportunities	96	5.7%
Access to agricultural lands	68	4.0%
Preferred place for people to invest	56	3.3%
Preferred place for people to be close to work	46	2.7%
Preferred place for people to visit	46	2.7%
Vibrant heritage	41	2.4%

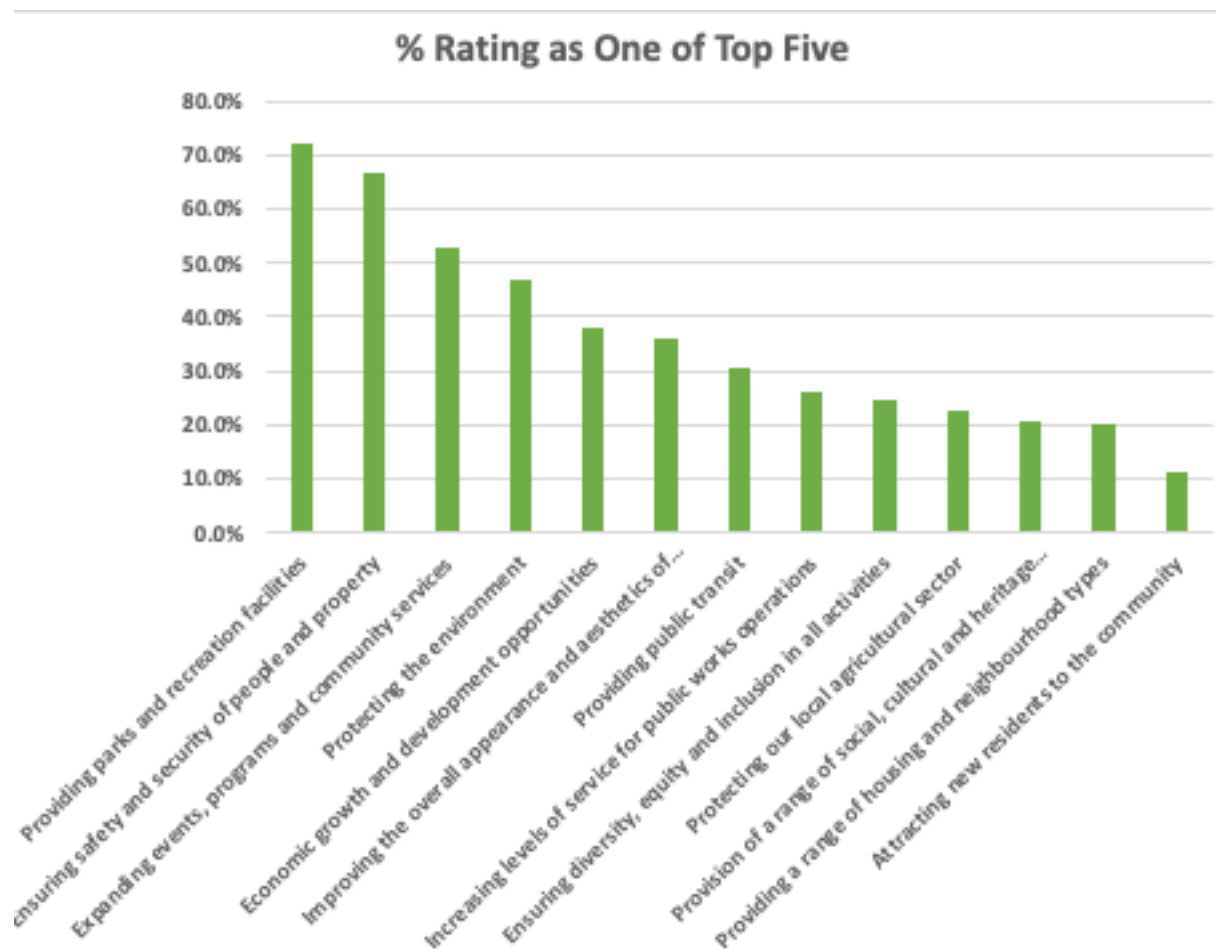
- the yellow highlighted sections of the chart above show the most popular and liked phrases of the Vision statement, which should be incorporated into any revised Vision Statement in the new Strategic Plan

### **C) Priority Action Areas**

- top priorities in terms of action areas for the Town were ‘providing parks and recreation facilities’ and ‘ensuring safety and security of people and property’, by a fairly wide margin (each being rated as the top priority by more than 20% of respondents)
- a third high priority was ‘protecting the environment’, which was rated as the top priority of just over 10% of respondents
- a ‘middle group’ of priorities (where between 5% and 10% of residents rated the area as a top priority) were: ‘expanding events, programs and community services’, ‘providing public transit’ and ‘increasing levels of service for public works operations’
- the lowest-ranking priority was ‘attracting new residents to the community’



- the question also asked residents to rate their **top five** priorities; again ‘providing parks and recreation facilities’ and ‘ensuring safety and security of people and property’, emerged as the top two priorities, each with 60% or more of respondents indicating it was in their top five
- a third high priority was ‘protecting the environment’, which was rated as the top priority for just over 10% of respondents
- a ‘middle group’ of priorities (where between 5% and 10% of residents rated the area as a top priority) were: ‘expanding events, programs and community services’, ‘providing public transit’ and ‘increasing levels of service for public works operations’
- the lowest-ranking priority was ‘attracting new residents to the community’



### **A Portfolio Approach to Priority Identification**

Based on the above, it is possible to develop a portfolio approach to the assessment of priorities by placing the 'number one priority' and the 'one of the top five priorities' on a grid – this results in the following framework (the portfolio analysis is shown first, followed by the interpretive key):

		Top (Number One) Priority		
		Highest Priority (20% or more of respondents rating as Number One)	Medium Priority (5 - 20% or more of respondents rating as Number One)	Lowest Priority (less than 5% of respondents rating as Number One)
One of the Top Five Priorities	Highest Priority (50% or more of respondents rating as one of Top Five)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>providing parks and recreation facilities</li> <li>ensuring safety and security of people and property</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>expanding events, programs and community services</li> </ul>	
	Medium Priority (20% - 50% or more of respondents rating as one of Top Five)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>protecting the environment</li> <li>providing public transit</li> <li>increasing levels of service for public works operations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>improving the overall appearance and aesthetics of the community</li> <li>economic growth and development opportunities</li> <li>ensuring diversity, equity and inclusion in all activities</li> <li>protecting our local agricultural sector</li> </ul>
	Lowest Priority (less than 20% of respondents rating as one of Top Five)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provision of a range of housing and neighbourhood types</li> <li>provision of a range of social culture and heritage amenities</li> <li>attracting new residents to the community</li> </ul>

#### Interpretive Key

	<b>Key Priority</b> for the Strategic Plan: <i>absolutely must be included in the Plan</i>
	<b>Secondary Priority</b> for the Strategic Plan: <i>address once key priorities have been secured</i>
	<b>Lowest Priority</b> for the Strategic Plan: <i>address only if Key Priorities have been secured and secondary priorities are underway</i>

**Key priorities** are ones that are deemed very important by the community; they represent areas where most (50% or more) residents want to see services provided and improvements made, and where a significant fraction of the community has indicated the area as their **top** priority.

**Secondary priorities** are also important: areas where a significant constituency in the community feel that services are important and would like to see improvements made.

**Lowest priorities** are areas where only a relatively small percentage of residents see the area as being of strategic significance. Note that this is not to say that these areas are not important by themselves; just that they are not seen as the highest priorities for the community overall. (Note that



often lower priority areas are ones where there can be very vocal minorities and organizations involved.)

Often in strategic planning, a municipality will choose to address these various priority areas as follows:

**Key priorities** are areas where the municipality will take complete responsibility and direct action to address the needs of the community.

**Secondary priorities** are areas where the municipality will also spend concerted effort, often working with other levels of government and community organizations, to provide services and enact improvements – while typically not as ‘top of mind’ as the key priorities, these tend also to be very important and critical to the provision of an overall package of goods and services.

**Lowest priorities** tend to be areas where the municipality sees its role as being supportive of other organizations and agencies who take action and initiative.

So based upon this analysis, the ratings of the priority action areas *according to the community* would be:

<b>Key Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• providing parks and recreation facilities</li><li>• ensuring safety and security of people and property</li><li>• expanding events, programs and community services</li></ul>
<b>Medium Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• protecting the environment</li><li>• providing public transit</li><li>• increasing levels of service for public works operations</li><li>• improving the overall appearance and aesthetics of the community</li><li>• economic growth and development opportunities</li><li>• ensuring diversity, equity and inclusion in all activities</li><li>• protecting our local agricultural sector</li></ul>
<b>Lowest Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• provision of a range of housing and neighbourhood types</li><li>• provision of a range of social culture and heritage amenities</li><li>• attracting new residents to the community</li></ul>

## 3.2 Staff Survey

### General

- 6 respondents described themselves as ‘management’ (38%); 10 (62%) as ‘Town Hall staff’
- aside from the Fire Department (0 responses) there was representation from all Town Departments
- in each person’s individual Department or work area, half of respondents (8, or 50%) felt that they were doing a good job providing services to the public; seven (44%) felt that they were ‘somewhat’ doing a good job; only 1 respondent felt the correct response was ‘no’
- looking to other Departments (i.e. beyond their immediate work areas), a majority (10 respondents or 63%) felt that a good job was being done; the remainder (6) felt that the correct response was ‘somewhat’
- most staff (14, or 88%) reported hearing comments from the public regarding the nature of the services provided by the public; the major themes reported in this regard were:

#### *What is Done Well*

- Programs and events (8 mentions)
- Recreation facilities (2 mentions)
- Snow clearing (1 mention)
- Friendly staff (1 mention)

#### *What Is Not Done Well*

- Planning and Development response time (5 mentions)
- Road maintenance (4 mentions)
- Responding to climate change (2 mentions)
- Complaints about e-services (2 mentions)
- Recreation Programs for teens (1 mention)
- Garbage collection (1 mention)
- Poor / rude attitude of employees (1 mention)
- Inconsistency between staff messages and Council messages to public (1 mention)
- Library services and hours (1 mention)

### Perceptions of Strengths and Weaknesses of Town

#### *Strengths*

- Programs and events (3 mentions)
- Knowledgeable, hardworking, capable staff (3 mentions)
- Great communications with public and social engagement (2 mentions)
- Good customer service (2 mentions)
- Good balance of rural and urban (1 mention)
- Sense of pride in the community (1 mention)
- New CAO a strength (1 mention)
- Positive attitude; staff members get along with each other well (1 mention)

### ***Weaknesses***

- Town is short-staffed (2 mentions)
- Council decision-making poor (2 mentions)
- Poor communications between Council and staff (2 mentions)
- Need a modern indoor community recreation centre (1 mention)
- Planning and Development response time (1 mention)
- Close the gulf between Portugal Cove and St. Philip's (1 mention)
- Need a commercial centre for the Town (1 mention)
- Need improved recreation programs for teens and adults (1 mention)
- Improvements to roads under Town jurisdiction (1 mention)
- Need to cultivate a 'we're all in this together' attitude (1 mention)
- Need improved policies (1 mention)

### **Are we as a municipality prepared for growth?**

Two thirds of staff responding to this question (8 of 12 respondents, or 67%) felt that the Town **was** prepared for growth; 4 respondents (33%) felt that the Town was not prepared; reasons for this were:

- Need more space (2 mentions)
- Staff is currently overworked; need more staff to provide services to our growing community (1 mention)

### **Priorities: If only one thing could be done what would it be?**

- New indoor community recreation centre (Lifestyle Centre) – with gym and swimming pool - 8 mentions (of 11 responses overall, so 73% of respondents)
- Larger Town Hall facility with all staff under one roof (1 mention)
- Take responsibility for and improve Town-owned roads (1 mention)
- Develop an affordable housing strategy (1 mention)

### **Growth in Services in 5 Years?**

- New lifestyle Centre will be offering new programs and services (4 mentions, of 10 responses, 40%)
- Expansion of water and sewer to more areas (2 mentions, of 10 responses, 20%)
- Higher levels of service (1 mention, 10%)
- More staff to handle greater workloads (1 mention, 10%)
- Small shopping centre (1 mention, 10%)
- Probably won't grow too much, with inflation / cost increases (1 mention, 10%)
- Fear of too many houses and small lots (1 mention, 10%)

### **Most important services PCSP provides to residents?**

- Basic public works and essential services: garbage collection, fire protection, snow clearing, water and sewer (7 mentions, of 11 responses, or 64%)
- Recreational facilities and programs (3 mentions, 27%)
- Communications with residents (1 mention, 9%)

- Ensuring a safe, clean, sustainable community (1 mention, 9%)
- All services are important (1 mention, 9%)

#### **How could current programs, products and services be improved?**

- Need a Lifestyle (Recreation) Centre (5 mentions of 11 responses, or 45%)
- Public Works Depot (3 mentions, 27%)
- More space for staff (3 mentions, 27%)
- Replace eServices with a more user-friendly platform (1 mention, 9%)
- Improve overall communications with Town residents (1 mention, 9%)
- Streamline outside committees and advisory groups (1 mention, 9%)
- Create a commercial hub / town square (1 mention, 9%)
- Staff training to improve customer service (1 mention, 9%)

#### **What new services should be considered?**

- Investigate public transit links to St. Johns / region (3 mentions out of 10 responses, 30%)
- Develop the Lifestyle Centre (2 mentions, 20%)
- More pedestrian trails (2 mentions, 20%)
- ATV trails (1 mention, 10%)
- Farmer's Market (1 mention, 10%)
- Assume all roads within the Town (1 mention, 10%)
- Develop affordable housing (1 mention, 10%)
- Greater focus on advanced economic development (1 mention, 10%)
- Arts, Wellness & Heritage Centre (1 mention, 10%)
- Luxury-grade marina (1 mention, 10%)
- Use and promotion of renewable energy (1 mention, 10%)
- Greater focus on advanced economic development (1 mention, 10%)

#### **What existing services should be discontinued?**

- Possibly the Library (free up for better use of space) (3 mentions out of 8 responses, 37%)
- Discontinue use of outside cleaners; instead hire full-time evening janitor (1 mention, 16%)
- Discontinue municipal enforcement in favour of RNC presence (1 mention, 16%)
- Discontinue allowing credit card payment of taxes – costs Town (1 mention, 16%)

#### **Final Comments Regarding the Strategic Plan?**

- Need an area in Town Hall where Town staff can go to decompress (1 response)
- Plan should adopt SMART Goals<sup>1</sup> (1 response)
- Town should brand itself as a 'high quality place to live' with 'high quality' services (1 response)

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<sup>1</sup> **SMART** stands for *Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely*.

### 3.3 Public Sessions

#### Meeting with Community Organizations

Seven community organizations attended a consultation session at the Grounds Café on October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Following is a brief summary of their presentations and followup discussions. They were asked to propose a theme that should be reflected in the Strategic Plan Vision Statement and secondly, what would be their top priority for the Strategic Plan. These are included below.

#### PCSP Heritage Committee

**Activities:** Include artifact & story collection, heritage walks, story boards, cemetery restoration and Picco's Ridge Memorial.

*Themes to be reflected in the Vision Statement: Diversification, inclusion, a strong sense of community pride and excitement towards the future.*

*Top Priority for the Strategic Plan: Development of a Cultural Centre.*

#### PCSP Chamber of Commerce

**Activities:** 130 members, small business week, passport campaign, Agriculture Strategic Plan, proposed Cultural Centre.

*Top Priority for the Strategic Plan: Cultural Centre. Implementing the Agricultural Strategic Plan; food sustainability.*

#### Partners for the Arts

**Activities:** Collaboration with business, broadening their network, Arts Festival (3<sup>rd</sup> annual in 2023), Cultural Centre, workshops for artists.

*Theme to be reflected in the Vision Statement: Diversity and inclusion in community programming and facilities.*

*Top Priority for the Strategic Plan: Cultural Centre to support the arts, wellness and heritage.*

#### PCSP Inclusion Committee

**Activities:** include Hippocampes, Boccia, Portable FM Loop System, ASL classes, diversity training, acoustic sound panels for Rec Centre and mental health first aid.

*Theme to be reflected in the Vision Statement: Recognition of inclusion throughout the community.*

*Top Priority for the Strategic Plan: A commitment by Council that inclusion become part of every project.*

## **Advisory Committee on the Environment**

**Activities:** include climate change mitigation, preservation of wetlands, water quality monitoring (e.g. Millers Pond), riparian repair, residential composters and the Environment Fair.

***Top Priority for the Strategic Plan:** The Town to ensure that all planning and development will be conducted in harmony with its natural history, extant landscape, community history and its Killick Coast neighbours. “We are not just protecting the environment but repairing/enhancing it and protecting the health of the community”.*

## **PCSP Citizens for Fairness**

**Theme to be reflected in the Vision Statement:** Preserve the community’s rural character.

***Top Priority for the Strategic Plan:** Seniors housing that is accessible and affordable. Determine which projects are absolutely essential. Can there be more efficiencies? Do a comparative budget analysis.*

## **Northeast Eagles, NEMHA**

***Top Priority for the Strategic Plan:** An ice surface/community centre in PCSP. A high demand for ice time – their team using surfaces around the region; could easily use 80 hours in a new surface + other users.*

## **Other points made at the session:**

- The Plan should address the needs of those without a voice, e.g., the lower income and disabled.
- We should have a proactive approach to managing growth, e.g., provide roads and other infrastructure before attracting new residents.
- Healthy living has three dimensions – spiritual, physical and mental.
- PCSP has double the cost of many other communities (e.g., two waste water plants, two ball parks, etc.).
- It is important to be working in collaboration with neighbouring communities.
- Most important strategic action area?
  - Seniors & low income people (but don’t want ghettos),
  - Cultural – an important word,
  - Emergency preparedness planning,
  - A safe community,
  - High quality of life,
  - A small commercial mall,
  - Asset management (the Town’s aging infrastructure).
- What should be the measurables/targets for a successful Strategic Plan?
  - Health & happiness,
  - Realization of the Cultural Centre,

- Improved health of waterways, etc,
- Sustainable economic growth.

## Public Meeting

A public meeting was held at the Town Recreation Centre, October 16, 3 – 5 pm. 14 people attended.

**Purpose:** to receive public input into the 2023 Town Budget and the Strategic Plan.

Following is a summary of the points raised.

- Council requested to extend the subsidy it has provided for transportation (via Go Bus) from Sharpe's Store to downtown St. John's of a young man with disabilities.
- The Provincial Government should be lobbied for an improved fiscal framework for municipalities.
- The Town has 3 or 4 dead end streets without a turnaround for emergency vehicles.
- Hiking/Biking: the Town needs to expand its support for these activities. Road shoulders need to be widened and sidewalks added in some areas. Expand the trail system to accommodate both walking and biking. The inclusive lens should also be applied to this work.
- On-site wells: groundwater has a high iron content; some residents have to install expensive filtration systems.
- Affordable housing for seniors: This is a serious need in PCSP. The Town needs an Ageing in Place strategy, with the provision of housing and services. "Half of our seniors are having to move to accommodation in other towns". In five years time, we need to be on target in our accommodation of seniors.
- Developers would be glad to devote say 20% of a development to affordable housing, with the right package of incentives. The Town needs regulations for affordable housing. Rent to own schemes may be an option.
- A lifestyle centre is needed, particularly for our young people and to accommodate functions.
- A satellite town office on the east side of Town would greatly benefit seniors.
- The best strategy to accommodate all the Town's needs is to expand and attract more families.
- PCSP needs to collaborate with neighbouring communities. This could be done in many ways; by jointly organizing events, for example.
- The contribution of land to the Town by developers should be better planned and done on a watershed basis.
- Public Transit: Council needs to pursue options for a transit service.
- A small community hub with retail outlets and services is needed.
- The Town needs improvements in its water supply, a new depot and an expanded Town Hall.
- The Town needs a sound asset management plan.

- The Town should have projects planned, costed and ready to go when funding becomes available.
- Sewage effluent in ponds and streams is an issue in some areas. This can be repaired. Houses are located too close to ponds. There is need for a serious review of the design of on-site sewage systems.

### 3.4 Key Interviews

Interviews were completed with eight key individuals (who were also established members of community organizations), selected in consultation with the Steering Committee. The following emerged as priorities.

- **Rural Character:** (4 respondents) Maintain the rural nature of PCSP. The top priority of one respondent was for the Town to remain exactly as is.
- **Walking & Hiking:** (4 respondents) The Town is losing opportunities to expand the network of trails every day (due to development). Road shoulders should be widened and made safer. A large volume of commuter traffic is being routed through PCSP from Paradise and CBS – safety concern (Provincial Government should be pressured to solve this). The PCSP Lions Club is looking for a 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary legacy project (possibly a walking trail).
- **Subdivision Development:** (4 respondents) New developments have no rural character; lots are stripped of vegetation, poor green space planning. Contractors fighting to build in floodplains. The planning & approval process needs improvement.
- **Concern for the Environment:** (3 respondents) More protection of wetlands is needed. The Town needs to engage more residents in recycling and composting and provide more mulch development.
- **New Facilities:** Not in favour of expensive buildings (1 respondent). The Town needs a small commercial hub (1 respondent). A gathering place is needed; to have a coffee, buy a snack, crafts, go for a walk. In the long term, develop a market (2 respondents). A seniors home is top priority (1 respondent). PCSP seniors are in homes and on waiting lists all around the region. The Rec Centre needs to be renovated for catering functions. Proposed cultural centre – good. An indoor rec facility is badly needed for the winter season, for sports programs as well as community use, including rental space for functions, space and programming for seniors and youth (2 respondents).
- **Serving Lower Income Residents:** Housing and affordable programs needed for lower income people (family living) (1 respondent). Lower income families are having to move elsewhere in the region. More accessibility for the disabled. The lack of rental housing is caused partly by the Town's regulations being restrictive in allowing two apartment units. The opportunity to build at higher density is limited (large lots required in areas without water and



sewage services), Solutions could be found through the Town working in partnership with local developers; offering of incentives presents opportunities.

- **Education:** (1 respondent) A high school in PCSP is a top priority. An average of 100 students enter the system each year (kindergarten). High school students are currently being bussed to Prince of Wales Collegiate in St. John's, which is seeing increased demand from centre city growth, New Canadians, etc. A high school would complete the PCSP school system and be a big attraction for young families moving in. It would add facilities for community use and increase community pride (e.g., to graduate in your own community).
- **Public Transit:** (1 respondent) A priority particularly for lower income residents.
- **ATV Use:** (2 respondents) The Town should give some thought to ATV use in and around the community (e.g., in Gander & Corner Brook). Build a trail in a wooded area of Town.

### 3.5 Benchmark Communities

An important part of preparing a Strategic Plan for PCSP is looking at other communities with established plans, including neighbouring towns or those similar in size and located next to an urban centre. The purpose is to learn about best practices in implementing strategic plans and, in the case of neighbouring communities, to generate some possible collaboration opportunities.

Ten communities were investigated:

- Within the province: St. John's, Mount Pearl, Paradise, Torbay and Happy Valley-Goose Bay – these were selected as they were other communities within the regional or provincial context having detailed and well-defined strategic plans.
- Other provinces: Sidney, B.C., Olds & Edson in Alberta and Erin & Arnprior in Ontario – these were selected as they are all communities of a similar size to PCSP and have well-defined strategic plans. Three of these communities (Sidney, Erin & Arnprior) are within the orbit of a larger city (i.e., a similar context to Portugal Cove – St. Philip's)

The chart on the following pages contain a summary of the essence of each Plan (in terms of Vision, Mission and strategic action areas) as well as a summary of the key themes and ideas represented in the Plan.

## Community Strategic Plans – Newfoundland and Labrador: SUMMARY SHEET

Community; Planning Period; Population	Vision	Mission	Values	Strategic Plan Action Areas
<b>St. John's</b> <b>2019 – 2029</b>  <b>Population:</b> <b>111,000</b>	<i>"St. John's is a progressive city, shaped by its geography and history, where people want to live and feel they belong."</i>	<i>"Guided by our vision, values and strategic directions, we are a team of Councillors and employees delivering valued programs and services in a fiscally responsible manner, for the betterment of the entire community."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue to do things better</li> <li>- Be innovative</li> <li>- Create a positive environment</li> <li>- Be respectful</li> <li>- Take ownership</li> </ul>	<p><b>1) A Sustainable City:</b> A City that is sustainable today and for future generations; economically, environmentally and financially.</p> <p><b>2) A City that Moves:</b> A City that builds a balanced transportation network to get people and goods where they want to go safely.</p> <p><b>3) A Connected City:</b> A City where people feel connected, have a sense of belonging, and are actively engaged in community life.</p> <p><b>4) An Effective City:</b> A City that performs effectively and delivers results.</p>

Community; Planning Period; Population	Vision	Mission	Values	Strategic Plan Action Areas
<b>Mount Pearl</b> <b>2019 - 2023</b> <b>Population:</b> <b>23,000</b>	<i>"A smart city of engaged citizens, leading the way in sustainable growth."</i>	<i>"Leading the way as a progressive, family-oriented and business-friendly city, providing quality services."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transform the City through technology and innovation</li> <li>- Engage staff, residents and businesses as partners in change</li> <li>- Attract new growth and investment</li> <li>- Renew the urban landscape and maximize the City's physical and natural assets</li> <li>- Get back to basics while adding value and making the City better wherever possible</li> <li>- Manage sustainable investment in infrastructure and programs</li> <li>- Provide effective governance and leadership</li> </ul>	<p><b>1) DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION – A1NEXT</b> Digital transformation will be a cornerstone of our economic development strategy through the A1Next initiative.</p> <p><b>2) CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT</b> - Citizen engagement encourages two-way communication with our citizens, businesses and key partners within the City and on the Northeast Avalon.</p> <p><b>3) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b> - Economic development will diversify and increase our commercial and residential tax base.</p> <p><b>4) URBAN RENEWAL:</b> Urban renewal will encompass all of our physical, natural and cultural assets. We will work to re- energize our older residential and commercial areas, and will build on our current network of trails through a renewed emphasis on integrating Waterford River restoration within our plans.</p> <p><b>5) ENHANCED SERVICE DELIVERY:</b> Enhanced service delivery will focus on a return to the basics, ensuring that residents are getting the best service we can provide. We will adopt "Make it Better" as our service commitment, reminding us that City Council and staff are here to serve the citizens of Mount Pearl.</p> <p><b>6) SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE:</b> Sustainable infrastructure will guide new capital expenditure and enable prioritization and investment to meet capital replacement needs. We will enhance our asset management and identify sustainable approaches, adopting emerging technology and green approaches wherever possible.</p> <p><b>7) GOOD GOVERNANCE AND INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE:</b> Good governance will ensure that Council and senior management can effectively fulfill its responsibilities on behalf of citizens. Investing in our people will build a team that will make Mount Pearl the best managed municipality in the province</p>

Community; Planning Period; Population	Vision	Mission	Values	Strategic Plan Action Areas
<b>Paradise</b> <b>2019 - 2022</b>  <b>Population:</b> <b>23,000</b>	<i>"Your Paradise – creating a thriving, well-balanced community together"</i>	Not stated	Not stated	<p><b>1) Infrastructure and Economic Growth:</b> To ensure that appropriate infrastructure is put in place that will guide, support and encourage subsequent investment, new enterprise development and the growth and expansion of existing businesses. To pursue a proactive economic development approach aimed at growing and diversifying the economic base of the municipality.</p> <p><b>2) Social and Cultural Health:</b> To advance the social and cultural health of Paradise such that all residents feel part of, and can contribute to, building their community.</p> <p><b>3) Regional Collaboration:</b> To ensure that Paradise sets a leading example by running its own operations in a sustainable manner and encourages residents and other municipal stakeholders to do likewise, thus ensuring a healthy ecology and environment for the Town today as well as for generations to come.</p> <p><b>4) Governance and Engagement:</b> To continue the current regional initiatives and become a leading advocate for regional collaboration on the Northeast Avalon.</p> <p><b>5) Environmental Stewardship:</b> To ensure that Paradise is transparent and accountable in all its dealings with the public and other stakeholders, and that it communicates with those stakeholders on an on-going basis.</p>

Community; Planning Period; Population	Vision	Mission	Values	Strat Plan Action Areas
<b>Torbay</b> <b>2018 - 2021</b>  <b>Population:</b> <b>7,900</b>	<i>"A well planned, inclusive community serving the needs of all residents and a desired place for all age groups to enjoy life."</i>	<i>"Leading the way as a family-oriented and business friendly community that is well-run, well-maintained, and well-respected".</i>	<p><b>Service Excellence:</b> Delivering quality and sustainable municipal programs and services .</p> <p><b>Financial Responsibility:</b> Prudent management of the Town's finances for the delivery of efficient, effective, and responsive services .</p> <p><b>Fairness and Respect:</b> Honesty and integrity in working with residents and businesses in a courteous, equitable, and ethical manner .</p> <p><b>Effective Communications:</b> Maintaining effective and timely lines of communications with employees, residents, and businesses to deliver and receive messages aimed at building harmonious working relationships .</p>	<p><b>Long Term:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To acquire an <b>adequate and sustainable potable water supply</b> to meet current and future needs of Town .</li> <li>2) To determine the most viable option to meet <b>Wastewater Treatment</b> obligations in order to be ready to submit a funding application when funding becomes available for such projects .</li> <li>3) To evaluate the <b>feasibility of a Commercial Center (Business/ Industrial Park)</b> within the Town of Torbay to support its growing population, attract new businesses and increase its commercial tax base .</li> </ol> <p><b>Immediate (2018)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To <b>renovate and expand the existing Kinsmen's facility</b> to fulfill the growing needs of community groups and to continue to grow community spirit/togetherness .</li> <li>2) To develop a <b>Traffic Safety Strategy</b>, including a Transit Plan, to address the many safety issues for pedestrian and vehicular traffic throughout the Town .</li> <li>3) To develop a comprehensive <b>Ten-Year Infrastructure Plan</b> covering all existing Town assets and their annual operational cost, plus any proposed Council prioritized new assets together with their estimated capital and annual operational cost .</li> <li>4) To <b>complete construction of the history house/museum</b> to meet the Town's cultural and historic needs, to build community pride, and increase tourist potential by marketing the many features of the Town.</li> </ol>

Community; Planning Period; Population	Vision	Mission	Values	Strat Plan Action Areas
<b>Happy Valley – Goose Bay</b> <b>2017 - 2022</b>  <b>Population:</b> <b>8,000</b>	<i>“As the heart of Labrador, the Town of Happy Valley-Goose Bay is a diverse, multicultural, and leading northern community, built on the strengths of its people to create prosperity, opportunities, and a high quality of life.”</i>	<i>“The Town of Happy Valley-Goose Bay takes a leadership role to ensure the diverse needs of the community are met through the delivery of responsive and accountable municipal programs, services, and resources.”</i>	<p><b>Respect:</b> We value people, all communities, other levels of government, and each other</p> <p><b>Strong Governance and Openness:</b> Financial accountability, transparency, full disclosure, and high service delivery standards ground our decisions and actions</p> <p><b>Environmental Stewardship:</b> We value our abundance of natural resources and are committed to protecting, preserving, and sustaining our environment</p> <p><b>Strategic Investment:</b> We support strategic investments that strengthen our community, provide opportunities, and that are responsive to community needs in an ever-changing world</p> <p><b>Community Wellness:</b> We commit to building a safe, active, and healthy community that supports wellness for people of all ages</p> <p><b>Cultural Diversity and Inclusiveness:</b> Cultural diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion contribute to the strength of our community. In this respect, we are committed to taking actions to promote and encourage collaboration and cooperation with our Indigenous communities.</p>	<p><b>1) Economic Vibrancy:</b> Foster a strong and stable economy that supports entrepreneurship and local businesses, and ensures the community benefits from major economic development opportunities in the region</p> <p><b>2) Quality of Life and Inclusivity:</b> Promote a strong sense of belonging, health and wellness, and engagement in community life</p> <p><b>3) Infrastructure Renewal:</b> Ensure local infrastructure meets community needs, improves communications and accessibility, and contributes to health and wellness</p> <p><b>4) Municipal Leadership:</b> Provide local governance that is transparent, collaborative, and fiscally responsible that exemplifies service excellence</p> <p><b>5) Environmental Stewardship:</b> Prioritize the ongoing protection and enjoyment of the environment by enhancing the quality of natural areas and ensuring the town is developed in an environmentally sound and responsible manner</p>

## Community Strategic Plans – Elsewhere in Canada: SUMMARY SHEET

Community; Planning Period; Population and Context	Vision	Mission	Values	Strategic Plan Action Areas
<b>Sidney, B.C.</b> <b>2019 – 2022</b>  <b>Population:</b> <b>11,000;</b> 30 km. from Victoria (pop. 92,000)	<i>“The Town of Sidney is a leader in good governance and service delivery and is recognized for being trustworthy, connected to the community, visionary, innovative, resilient and an employer of choice.”</i>	<i>“The Town of Sidney provides good governance, services, and stewardship of public assets, and fosters the social, economic and environmental well-being of the community for current and future generations.”</i>	Council and staff believe in and commit to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsive and responsible quality service</li> <li>• Open, inclusive and accountable local government</li> <li>• Financial sustainability</li> <li>• Community sustainability and environmental commitment</li> <li>• Collaboration and cooperation</li> <li>• Respect for our First Nations and Peninsula neighbours</li> <li>• Stewardship of public assets</li> <li>• Municipal leadership and innovation</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Complete Community:</b> The Town will strive to be a complete community with a mix of amenities and a quality living environment</li> <li><b>2. Environmental Stewardship:</b> The Town will be stewards of our environment.</li> <li><b>3. Economic Vibrancy:</b> The Town will continue to adapt and prosper as a diverse commercial centre for business and employment.</li> <li><b>4. Community Engagement:</b> The Town will strive to engage the public in its decision-making processes.</li> <li><b>5. Organizational Excellence:</b> The Town of Sidney will remain a leading organization in the provision of governance and quality services.</li> <li><b>6. Community Infrastructure:</b> The Town will be a leader in the management of its assets.</li> </ol>
<b>Olds, Alberta</b> <b>2022 - 2032</b>  <b>Population: 9,200;</b> standalone community, 215 km. from Edmonton (pop. 1 million)	<i>“Alive With Opportunity”</i>	Not stated	Not stated	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Our residents and town staff actively communicate and engage with us through <b>open dialogue</b>.</li> <li>2. Our community is supported and enabled through <b>skillful governance</b>.</li> <li>3. Our thriving community is built on strong and <b>collaborative relationships</b>.</li> <li>4. <b>Sound fiscal practices</b> are balanced with a commitment to prioritizing value for our citizens.</li> </ol>
<b>Edson, Alberta</b> <b>2022 - 2025</b>  <b>Population 8,000;</b> standalone community, 200	<i>“Edson is a safe and welcoming community, a vibrant town in an ideal location that draws people together through culture,</i>	<i>“Location is our advantage, diversity is our strength, people are our power. Edson provides opportunities for all who love life in a place</i>	The values expressed here are the guiding principles that help determine how the Town will operate, both in public and privately: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ADAPTABILITY:</li> <li>- FOCUS ON RESULTS</li> <li>- INCLUSIVITY</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creating a <b>Connected Community that is Safe and Inclusive</b></li> <li>2. Fostering a <b>Robust and Adaptable Economy</b></li> <li>3. Responding to a <b>Changing Global Environment</b></li> <li>4. Ensuring <b>Quality Infrastructure</b></li> <li>5. Providing <b>Effective Leadership and Community Engagement</b></li> </ol>

km. from Edmonton (pop. 1 million)	<i>recreation, hard work, pride, and opportunity."</i>	<i>where community comes together."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PRIDE</li> <li>- SERVICE EXCELLENCE</li> <li>- TRANSPARENCY</li> </ul>	
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Community; Planning Period; Population and Context	Vision	Mission	Values	Strategic Plan Action Areas
<b>Erin, Ontario</b> <b>2019 – 2023</b>  <b>Population:</b> <b>11,800;</b> 31 km. from Guelph (Pop. 144,000)	The Town of Erin will be recognized for well-managed growth that is attractive to businesses, residents & visitors while preserving its unique rural and small town feel.	To achieve stable growth and long-term sustainability while creating a prosperous, healthy, environmentally progressive, livable, and inviting community through well managed municipal services, programs, assets and amenities.	Community-focused Engaged Accountable Authentic Service Excellence Innovative Respectful	<b>1) Growth Management: Goal:</b> Well-managed and environmentally sustainable growth, through the realization of the proposed waste water servicing system needed to support an enviable, livable and flourishing future <b>2) Investment in Community Assets: Goal:</b> Invest in and maintain community assets that meet service excellence <b>3) Economic Prosperity: Goal:</b> Healthy and sustained economic growth, improve community well-being, and increase local employment opportunities. <b>4) Healthy Lifestyle and Sustainable Community: Goal:</b> Sustain and foster the Town's unique, liveable and nature-oriented charm and sense of place.
<b>Arnprior, Ontario</b> <b>2020 – 2023</b>  <b>Population: 9,700;</b> 70 km. from Ottawa (Pop. 1 million)	<b>Our strategic vision / mission for 2023 includes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A vibrant healthy economy with robust, sustainable growth and good jobs and opportunities in all sectors</li> <li>• Sustainable financial model with sound fiscal responsibility and accountability to create efficiencies and synergies, balance tax and non-tax revenue, and manage debt effectively</li> <li>• Build infrastructure to support future development and protect the environment with increased access to transportation options</li> <li>• Be known for open, exceptional and highly effective customer service delivery where our residents feel included in the process and decisions being made</li> </ul>		Our Strategic Plan focuses on the following core values: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honesty + Integrity</li> <li>• Teamwork + Collaboration</li> <li>• Open + Transparent</li> <li>• Respect, Inclusivity + Accessible</li> <li>• Accountability, Dependability + Reliability</li> </ul>	1) Economic Development 2) Asset Management 3) Community Well-Being 4) Operational and Financial Efficiencies 5) Affordable, Accessible Housing Options 6) Transportation Options



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have access to the services and supports that promote well-being, health and safety, providing a superior quality of life through recreation and cultural amenities, sufficient health care and community services for all ages</li> <li>• All residents are provided the four A's of housing options - accessible, affordable, appropriate and available</li> </ul>		
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## Themes Reflected in Strategic Plans

The chart below identifies the major strategic themes contained within these plans (identified by means of an 'X' in the chart.) This provides a checklist of potential strategies that could be considered by PCSP.

Theme	In Newfoundland and Labrador					Elsewhere in Canada				
	St. John's	Mount Pearl	Paradise	Torbay	Happy Valley – Goose Bay	Sydney, BC	Olds, AB	Edson, AB	Erin, ON	Amnrior, ON
<i>Environmental Stewardship</i>	X	X	X		X	X			X	
<i>Public Transit and Traffic Safety</i>	X			X						X
<i>Effectiveness and Accountability</i>	X	X								
<i>Digital Transformation</i>		X								
<i>Citizen Engagement</i>	X	X	X			X	X	X		
<i>Economic Growth and Development</i>		X	X		X	X		X	X	X
<i>Urban Renewal / Infrastructure Renewal</i>		X			X	X		X		X
<i>Regional Collaboration</i>			X							
<i>Social and Cultural Health / Quality of Life</i>			X		X	X			X	X
<i>Municipal Leadership / Providing Good Governance</i>		X	X		X	X	X	X		
<i>Investing in People (Staff)</i>		X								
<i>Completion of Specific Projects</i>				X						
<i>Inclusivity</i>					X			X		
<i>Fostering Collaborative Relationships</i>							X			
<i>Sound Fiscal Basis</i>							X			X
<i>Global Responsibility</i>								X		
<i>Provision of Affordable Housing</i>										X

The top themes reflected in the 10 strategic plans reviewed were:

- Economic Growth and Development (*7 plans mention*)
- Environmental Stewardship (*6 plans mention*)
- Municipal Leadership / Good Governance (*6 plans mention*)
- Civic Engagement (*6 plans mention*)
- Asset Management / Infrastructure Renewal (*5 plans mention*)
- Healthy Community (Physical, Social, Cultural) (*5 plans mention*)

## 4. A Strategy for Portugal Cove-St. Philip's

This section contains the strategy itself. First a proposed revised **Vision Statement** is presented. Next, **Strategic Action Areas** and related **Goals** that will create the conditions to realize the Vision are outlined. Finally, specific recommended **Strategic Actions and Initiatives** are presented.

### 4.1 Well Positioned for the Future

Portugal Cove-St. Philip's is a progressive, growing municipality with a rich resource of both natural and cultural heritage. Its core values are built around preserving this storehouse of assets, maintaining its rural character and providing the services and amenities expected by its residents, at a reasonable cost. The Town is well-positioned within the Northeast Avalon Region to collaborate strategically with neighbouring communities on projects of joint municipal or regional interest.

This Strategic Plan has been developed to help guide the future growth and development of Portugal Cove-St. Philip's, focusing on the next five years.

### 4.2 Vision Statement

Fundamental to crafting a Strategic Plan is to have a Vision Statement that captures the priorities and aspirations of residents.

The Town's current Vision Statement is as follows:

*"The Town of Portugal Cove – St. Philip's aspires to be a sustainable and complete community, offering residents and visitors access to connected and safe neighborhoods, natural open spaces, agricultural lands and soaring coastlines. A vibrant heritage combined with increased economic opportunities will create a preferred place for people to live and grow, to be close to work, to pursue recreation, to invest and to visit."*

The themes that most resonated with respondents during the Strategic Plan consultations were:

- vibrant heritage
- preserving rural character
- sustainable community
- safe and inclusive
- health and wellness
- live and grow

Based on this input, following is a proposed ***Revised Vision Statement***:

***Portugal Cove-St. Philip's offers a vibrant heritage with safe and inclusive neighborhoods for residents of all means and abilities, while preserving our rural character. The health and wellness of our residents and sustaining our natural environment are core values, ensuring that families, youth and seniors can thrive.***

### 4.3 Five Strategy Areas and Rationale

Below is the five-pillar strategic framework for the Strategic Plan that incorporates the various perspectives raised during the consultation process and the analysis conducted by the Study Team, with a Sustainable and Safe Community as the core.



The five pillars are referred to in the balance of this document as Strategic Action Areas. A number of potential strategies and actions emerged during the research phase for each of these areas from several sources, including:

- Background documents,
- Benchmark communities,
- Community survey,
- Staff survey, and
- Key stakeholder interviews.

With the benefit of additional analysis, the table following outlines recommended strategies and specific initiatives for each of the Strategic Action Areas. Also included is the recommended priorities for each initiative (Top, Medium and Lowest priority, by colour code).

## List of Recommendations At-A-Glance

### *A Note on the Priorities of Strategic Initiatives*

Within the five Strategic Action Areas and the thirteen Goals identified, are twenty-five specific initiatives that bring the strategy to life. Most, but not all, of these strategic actions share the same priority as the overall Goal with which they are affiliated. However, in some cases, the assigned priority for initiatives may differ from that of the overall Goal (even though they clearly belong with that particular Goal). This was a matter of judgment by the consulting team based upon input from the stakeholder consultations as well as their experience in strategic planning in many other communities. As the Strategic Plan is implemented, town staff and Council may decide in their wisdom to alter these suggested priorities (and the same of course goes for **any** of the strategies contained in the Plan).

Top Priority
Medium Priority
Lowest Priority

Strategic Action Area	Strategy Goal	Specific Initiatives
A) Enhancing Our Parks, Recreation and Cultural Assets	Provide Parks and Recreation Facilities	1. develop the Lifestyle Centre
		2. implement the Trails Master Plan
		3. develop ATV policy, including consideration of an ATV Trail
	Expand Events, Programs and Community Services	4. work with community to refine existing events and develop new ones
		5. implement initiatives of the Heritage Committee
	Improve the Overall Appearance and Aesthetics of the Community	6. continue the tree-planting program for PCSP

<b>B) Maintaining Our Rural / Urban Balance</b>	Pursue Economic Growth and Development Opportunities While Preserving the Town's Rural Character Overall	7. investigate feasibility of encouraging commercial centre / hub in the community
	Protect the Local Agricultural Sector	8. support the Chamber in the implementation of the Strategic Agriculture Plan
<b>C) Ensuring Accessibility, Equity and Access for All</b>	Providing Public Transit	9. investigate possibility of transit link to St. John's with Metrobus
	Ensure Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in All Activities	10. develop and apply an 'inclusion lens' through which all Council decisions are considered
	Attract New Residents to the Community	11. continue to advocate for the PCSP high school included in the last provincial budget
	Provide a Range of Housing and Neighbourhood Types	12. investigate incentives for developers to provide a range of housing types including affordable units
		13. develop additional senior's housing
		14. loosen regulations regarding apartments
	Provide a range of social, cultural and heritage amenities	15. support the Chamber of Commerce in their bid to develop a Cultural Centre for PCSP
		16. pursue the PCSP Library becoming affiliated with the Provincial Public Library network
<b>D) Protecting and Repairing Our Environment</b>	Protect the Environment	17. support the initiatives of the Advisory Committee on the Environment
		18. enact Planning Regulations to ensure more appropriate residential site development
		19. actively encourage more recycling and composting
		20. do more to protect wetlands
<b>E) Providing Responsive, Responsible and Cost-Effective Services</b>	Ensure Safety and Security of Property and People	21. improve Town-owned roads
		22. widen road shoulders to accommodate bike lanes and increase safety
		23. investigate feasibility of assuming all roads in Town, with possibly a joint management arrangement for provincial roads
	Increase levels of Service for Public Works Operations	24. expand the Works Depot or build a new one
		25. update / implement the Asset Management Plan

Following is a discussion of the Strategies and Specific Initiatives in more detail.

## **Enhancing our Parks and Recreation Facilities**

### **Goal: *Provide Parks and Recreation Facilities***

The intent is to provide an enhanced level of parks and recreation facility assets, to ensure that residents have access to top-level facilities that are the equal of any other community and that further contribute to PCSP's already-high quality of life.

### **Specific Initiatives:**

#### **1. Develop the Lifestyle Centre**

Construction and operation of the new proposed Lifestyle Centre was one of the top strategic initiatives emerging from the consultation process. Original plans going back to 2011 were for a new, large fitness centre that included a pool, a gym, community meeting space, day care and museum, at a then-estimated cost of \$25 million<sup>2</sup>. A market and financial analysis for a proposed 51,000 sq ft facility was completed in 2019. An order of magnitude cost of \$14.2 million was estimated at that time. We understand that more recent discussions have been held on how the facility can be scaled back but still include the essential community elements. Accordingly, a clear priority in the Strategic Plan is for this essential facility to finally be planned in detail (site and location), with community consultation, so that it is an operating community asset at the conclusion of the Plan.

#### **2. Implement the Trails Master Plan**

The recently-completed (August 2022) Trails Master Plan outlines a comprehensive and responsible plan for the development of a more integrated trails network throughout the municipality. Included are nineteen proposed projects at an approximate cost of \$2 million. Implementation of this plan is thus also seen as a very important priority that will further contribute to this overall goal.

#### **3. Develop ATV policy, Including Consideration of an ATV Trail**

Responsible and proper ATV use is an issue throughout the municipality as revealed through the consultation process. On the one hand, some residents do not like the peace and quiet of their rural environment disrupted by ATV noise and commotion. On the other, some residents greatly enjoy driving their ATVs and regard the experience as a quintessential part of the rural outdoor lifestyle. Accordingly, the strategic action recommended here is to develop a specific ATV policy that will accommodate both sides in a reasonable compromise. This may involve the development of a separate ATV trail

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<sup>2</sup> See: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/portugal-cove-st-philip-s-tables-25m-rec-centre-plan-1.1102138>



(possibly a dedicated route) – note that no new ATV Trails were proposed as part of the Trails Master Plan so this would be an additional initiative.

### **Goal: *Expand Events, Programs and Community Services***

The object is to maintain and expand the rich offering of events and programs to the community (some 32 separate events listed on the Town website).

#### **Specific Initiatives:**

**4. Work with the Community to Refine Existing Events and Develop New Ones**

This strategic initiative recognizes the importance of maintaining and refining popular existing events, but also to continually develop new ones to ‘refresh’ and update the product.

**5 Implement initiatives of the Heritage Committee**

The Heritage Committee consists of a very active and engaged group of residents who volunteer their time to help the Town preserve its culture and heritage. For the coming year (and in the years ahead) they have planned a number of activities including documentation of artifacts and archival materials; development of new community events (such as a maple tapping workshop and a Christmas week celebration); and restoration, preservation and placement of an old ship anchor (with interpretive signage). These activities should be supported by the Town through funding and (possibly) staff support as appropriate.

## **Maintaining our Rural/Urban Balance**

### **Goal: *Improve the Overall Appearance and Aesthetics of the Community***

The intent is to increase resident pride in the community and enhance ‘sense of place’ but also make it more attractive for new residents, potential investors, etc.

#### **Specific Initiatives:**

**6. Continue the Tree-Planting Program for PCSP**

Additional tree planting was suggested several times during the consultation process, which is not only environmentally friendly but also enhances the sense of rural character of the community and its proximity to nature.

### **Goal: *Pursue Economic Growth and Development Opportunities While Preserving the Town’s Rural Character Overall***

A strong theme of ‘appropriate economic development’ emerged during the strategic plan process. On the one hand, being largely a residential ‘bedroom’ community, PCSP’s tax base is stretched to provide a full range of amenities and services to its residential

population, so it is desirable to increase its percentage of commercial and industrial assessment. On the other hand, community residents definitely do not want to see suburban sprawl and rampant industrial and commercial development. ‘Appropriate development’ is the watchword.

### **Specific Initiatives:**

#### **7. Investigate the Feasibility of Encouraging Commercial Centre/Hub in the Community**

An example of the type of appropriate development sought by residents would be a small commercial hub providing a set of basic services. This would enable residents to **not** have to make longer trips to St. John’s or Mount Pearl for basic shopping necessities, and would further enhance a sense of community. The strategic initiative here is possibly for the municipality to undertake an initial investigation into the feasibility of certain services (i.e., the extent to which the local market would support them) and then use this information to approach potential developers, investors and retail/service tenants.

### **Goal: *Protect the Local Agricultural Sector***

Protection of the ‘rural feel’ and ‘small town way of life’ emerged as strong sentiments throughout the consultation process, and underlie many of the strategic initiatives of the Plan. Although a somewhat lower priority in the public consultation process, support for the Chamber of Commerce in implementing the Killick Coast Strategic Agriculture Plan emerged as a consideration that should be ‘on the table’ once other top priority issues in the Town’s Strategic Plan have been addressed. In addition, the preservation of agricultural land is a priority for the Town and the Northeast Avalon Region.

### **Specific Initiatives:**

#### **8. Support the Chamber in Implementation of the Strategic Agriculture Plan**

The Chamber of Commerce has taken leadership in the recognizing the importance of the agricultural sector in PCSP and the Killick Coast Region, and developed a plan for its support and promotion. The Town should meet with the Chamber to discuss ways and means through which it could support this plan in a cost-effective and appropriate manner. (In this regard the municipal role would be much like the support of the Cultural Centre, discussed elsewhere in this Plan.)

## **Ensuring Accessibility, Equity and Access for All**

This was an issue that emerged ‘loud and clear’ in the stakeholder consultation process, yet did not register as high a priority in the community survey. However, across North America, the importance of being aware of diversity, inclusion and equity considerations in all major public decisions is becoming increasingly important (and will remain so as

the populations of towns and cities everywhere becomes increasingly multicultural and diverse). Accordingly, this Plan assumes that Town staff and Council will adopt a position of leadership in the community with respect to these issues.

### **Goal: *Provide a Public Transit Service***

The consultation process recognized that living in PCSP, but participating in a regional economy, at present requires access to a private vehicle of some sort. As well as being environmentally questionable, this fact also discriminates to a large extent against some disadvantaged populations: those not able to drive, or to afford a vehicle. Also, as the population of the municipality grows, demand for such connection will presumably increase as well. Accordingly there was considerable interest expressed in exploring the possibility of PCSP becoming integrated into the regional Metrobus system, in the way that Paradise is connected, for example. However, this is potentially expensive and logistically complex, and so it was suggested that PCSP explore the possibility with Metrobus.

#### **Specific Initiatives:**

##### **9. Investigate Possibility of Transit Link to St. John's with Metrobus**

A strategic initiative is for PCSP to meet with Metrobus and explore the conditions for a transit link(s) into the Metrobus system, considering population threshold requirements, timing, optimal routing, cost-sharing arrangements, conditions for experimental prototype routes, etc.

### **Goal: *Ensure Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in all Activities***

#### **Specific Initiatives:**

##### **10. Develop and Apply an 'Inclusion Lens' Through Which all Council Decisions are Considered:**

This strategic initiative is for the Town to develop and adopt an 'inclusion lens' through which major Council decisions are viewed as one of several criteria determining the desirability of the particular policy or matter being discussed (other considerations being 'financial implications' and 'environmental impact' as elsewhere discussed in this document). Several examples of such 'inclusion lenses' as an aid to municipal decision-making can be found elsewhere<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> See for example, City of Ottawa: <https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/creating-equal-inclusive-and-diverse-city/equity-and-inclusion-lens>; City of Halifax: <https://www.halifax.ca/about-halifax/diversity-inclusion/diversity-inclusion-framework>. See also Alberta's Guide to Municipalities in developing inclusion tools: [https://www.abmunis.ca/sites/default/files/measuring\\_inclusion\\_tool\\_for\\_municipal\\_governments\\_2019.pdf](https://www.abmunis.ca/sites/default/files/measuring_inclusion_tool_for_municipal_governments_2019.pdf)

## **Goal: *Attract New Residents to the Community***

Although overall this was the lowest priority emerging from the community survey, there are nonetheless certain actions that will improve the overall attractiveness of the community for existing residents while at the same time increasing its' appeal to newcomers. (Initiatives in this category can be thought of as *primarily* improving the quality of life for existing residents while *secondarily* improving the Town's attractiveness to newcomers.)

### **Specific Initiatives:**

#### **11. Continue to Advocate for the High School Included in the Last Provincial Budget**

The recent announcement of the building of a new high school in the municipality<sup>4</sup> is a major boost for the Town and will serve to increase its overall sense of community as well as be a major service for young families in the area (also potential new residents moving into the municipality). The Town should continue its support for this provincial decision in as many ways as reasonably possible).

## **Goal: *Provide a Range of Housing and Neighbourhood Types***

This is another area where the stakeholder consultation process revealed a somewhat higher priority being accorded to these initiatives than the community consultation, and is perhaps another area where staff and Council can demonstrate leadership to the rest of the community. There are three related strategic initiatives in this category.

### **Specific Initiatives:**

#### **12. Investigate Incentives for Developers to Provide a Range of Housing Types Including Affordable Units**

This initiative proposes that the Town convene a working session with representatives of the local and regional development industry to discuss ways and means of developing a greater range and diversity of housing types throughout the municipality. This might begin with a review of what other, similar-sized municipalities have done to incent the industry resulting in greater diversity of housing stock. This information could then seed a discussion with the industry, and various initiatives proceed from there.

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<sup>4</sup> See: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/portugal-cove-st-philips-new-school-1.6415538>

### **13. Develop Additional Seniors' Housing**

The consultation process revealed huge interest in the notion of a range of housing types being made available, specifically to enable seniors to 'age in place' – i.e., not have to move out of the community where their friends and families are located. Part of a housing strategy that might emerge from the preceding recommendation might include an assessment of the potential to develop affordable and possibly assisted living facilities in the community.

### **14. Loosen Regulations Regarding Apartments**

Another aspect of a housing strategy that might emerge from the investigations related to Initiative #12 might involve a review of the current planning regulations concerning apartment development, with a view to relaxing certain requirements where appropriate. This could include the development of more two-unit apartment homes in the community, ultimately increasing the diversity and perhaps affordability of housing stock.

## **Goal: *Provide a Range of Social, Cultural and Heritage Amenities***

Most communities provide for their residents a range of social, cultural and heritage-related services and amenities. Together with sports, parks and recreation offerings, these make a complete community and a highly desirable place to live. The consultation process revealed a number of expressions of interest in this regard which, although not the highest priorities, were nonetheless important community assets that residents want addressed as they can be realized and afforded. There are two strategies in this area.

### **Specific Initiatives:**

#### **15. Support the Chamber of Commerce in their Efforts to Develop a Cultural Centre for PCSP**

The recent budget sessions revealed strong support among certain organizations and constituencies for the development of a Cultural Centre in PCSP. This is an initiative spearheaded by the Chamber of Commerce and there is some momentum and progress in their plans towards planning this initiative. Recognizing their leadership, the Town should support these efforts where it can and where it is fiscally responsible to do so.

#### **16. Pursue the PCSP Library Becoming Affiliated with the Provincial Public Library Network**

The municipality maintains its own public library, which is reportedly not used to a great extent. The municipality should explore whether or not it may be possible to transfer this

responsibility over to the province and have the library become an affiliate or branch of the provincial system (in the way that the Paradise library is, for example). As the population of the Town continues to grow, and more young families move into the area, such an affiliation and integration into the provincial system would enable the library to further develop as a centre of community activity.

## **Protecting and Repairing Our Environment**

### **Goal: *Protect the Environment***

In this time of climate change and uncertainty, a high priority is to continue to pursue ways and means of protecting and repairing the highly-valued natural environment within the Town's boundary.

### **Specific Initiatives:**

#### **17. Continue to Support the initiatives of the Advisory Committee on the Environment**

PCSP is fortunate to have residents with the knowledge base and passion to pursue the measurement of environmental health in areas such as water quality and habitat adjustments. The Advisory Committee on the Environment undertakes a portfolio of activities aimed at advising Council on matters such as the impacts of development on the natural system and ways in which adjustments and repairs can be made. One of the important issues espoused by the Committee is that there are instances of sewage effluent seeping into the Town's waterways from private sewage disposal systems. It is therefore seen as a high priority for Council to continue supporting the Committee to see that such issues are fully assessed and rectified. On a broader scale, it is seen as vital that the Town look for opportunities to work with neighbouring municipalities and other partners towards maintaining a healthy environment in the long term.

#### **18. Enact Planning Regulations to ensure more appropriate residential site development**

The major point made during the consultation phase was that the typical approach to residential development at present is to first flatten and scrape all vegetation off the complete site. Then, once the building is completed, top soil, tree seedlings and other vegetation is re-introduced. The benefits of more selective site excavation include reduction of runoff and increased absorption of surface water, in addition to the aesthetic value of retaining more of the natural landscape.

#### **19. Actively encourage more recycling and composting**

Stakeholders expressed concern at what they considered a low take-up by residents of the garbage recycling program and secondly, the number of households actively engaged in

composting. In both cases, the Town should consider a renewed promotion of these practices and their environmental and community benefits, possibly in collaboration with neighbouring communities such as Paradise, Bauline and Torbay.

## **20. Do more to protect wetlands**

Wetlands are considered by some to be of little value, areas to be filled in and built upon, etc. The Town is making an important contribution to conservation of natural areas through its Stewardship Agreement signed in 2015. Concern was expressed during the consultation phase that more should be done to protect the wetlands of the Planning Area, given their strategic importance in, e.g., reducing greenhouse gases, providing wildlife habitat and flood control. Some communities are using wetlands as part of their wastewater filtration system<sup>5</sup>. Their importance can probably best be emphasized through land use planning policies and the delineation of more wetlands as conservation areas.

# **Providing Responsive, Responsible and Cost-Effective Services**

## **Goal: *Ensure Safety and Security of Property and People***

It is a high-level priority to provide cost-effective public services within the fiscal and human resources available, the safety and security of property and people as first-order priorities.

## **Specific Initiatives:**

### **21. Improve Town-owned Roads**

Road maintenance was one of the six priority service areas identified in the 2017/18 Service Level Review and it remains a high priority. Concerns about safety and vehicle maintenance bills caused by poor road surfaces were expressed during the consultation phase. Council has been addressing this need and will continue to do so during the life of this Plan.

### **22. Widen road shoulders to accommodate bike lanes and increase safety**

Stakeholders expressed a keen interest in the Town becoming more walkable, including having wider and more secure road shoulders. They find that walking on narrow shoulders with uneven surfaces to be unsafe. The same holds true for bikers. A survey of road shoulders is required, with priorities set for widening and repair. Shoulders in the vicinity of the Town's schools for example, should be given priority.

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<sup>5</sup> Municipalities across Canada (as well as in this province) are recognizing that natural assets such as wetlands can provide equivalent or better services than expensive engineered ones and are including them in their asset management planning. For further information on the national Municipal Natural Assets Initiative, see [www.mnai.ca](http://www.mnai.ca).

**23. Investigate the feasibility of assuming responsibility for all roads, with possibly a joint management arrangement for provincial roads**

It has been estimated that around 47% of roads within the Town are owned and operated by the provincial government, including all entry and exit points. We understand there to be little co-ordination between the NL Department of Transportation and Infrastructure and the PCSP Public Works Department in terms of maintenance schedules, snow clearing, etc. A joint management arrangement between the two governments could benefit all parties. Council should initiate discussions to this effect.

**Goal: *Increase Levels of Service for Public Works Operations***

**Specific Initiatives:**

**24. Expand the Works Depot or build a new one**

This has been a long-standing issue, with the existing Depot being inadequate in a number of respects. This needs to be addressed during the 2023-2028 tenure of this Plan. In 2021, a group from Memorial University addressed the issue and developed a high-level cost estimate for building a new Depot and Salt Storage Facility. The estimated cost was \$4.7 million.

**25. Update/implement the Asset Management Plan**

Continuing to maintain/replace existing infrastructure and invest in new infrastructure is a top-level priority for the Town. The PCSP Asset Management Plan completed in 2016 reported the estimated replacement cost of all municipal assets was \$142 million (as of year-end 2014), not including assets such as the trail network. It was determined that PCSP should be raising \$1.6 million/year in long-term capital financing and undertaking an annual comparison of actual vs planned service levels. This should become a key component of this Strategic Plan.



## 5.Implementation Plan

This section of the Report discusses the implementation of the Plan. It includes a proposed **timeframe** (over a 5-year period) for implementation of each of the action areas. This is followed by suggested **resource requirements** (at a very high level) for implementation of the Plan, and suggested **targets, milestones and outcomes** to track the progress and achievement of each. Finally, some recommendations regarding how PCSP can ensure that the Strategic Plan is kept front and centre in terms of **guiding policy formulation** and **decision-making**.

It should be emphasized that this Implementation section is to serve as a guide, not a hard-and-fast requirement. It is recognized that as time passes, new opportunities arise, unexpected events occur, people move on, etc. So the implementation of any particular recommended strategy may be advanced or delayed by a year, may cost more or less than originally anticipated, and in extreme cases, may no longer be required over the life of the strategic plan. And new imperatives and priorities may arise. Accordingly, this implementation plan is presented as a high-level guide for staff, not an absolute schedule that must be followed to the letter.

### Timetable for Strategic Initiatives

The chart below outlines the suggested timeframe for each of the Specific Initiatives. While some can be started and completed all in the same year, others necessarily extend out several years over the life of the plan (and in many cases would presumably extend out beyond the 5-year time horizon).

## Timetable for Specific Actions

The following is the proposed timetable for implementation of the Specific Initiatives over the Plan's five-year lifespan. Note that these are suggestions only; from one year to the next, Council may decide to alter the timetable depending upon changing circumstances.

Top Priority
Medium Priority
Lowest Priority

Strategic Action Area	Specific Initiatives	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
<b>A) Enhancing Our Parks, Recreation and Cultural Assets</b>	1. develop the Lifestyle Centre						
	2. implement the Trails Master Plan						
	3. develop ATV policy, including consideration of an ATV Trail						
	4. work with community: refine existing events and develop new ones						
	5. implement initiatives of the Heritage Committee						
<b>B) Maintaining Our Rural / Urban Balance</b>	6. continue the tree-planting program for PCSP						
	7. investigate feasibility of commercial centre / hub in the community						
	8. support the Chamber in the implementation of the Agriculture Plan						
<b>C) Ensuring Accessibility, Equity and Access for All</b>	9. investigate possibility of transit link to St. John's with Metrobus						
	10. develop and apply an 'inclusion lens' through which all Council decisions are considered						
	11. continue to advocate for the high school, as included in the last provincial budget						
	12. investigate incentives for developers to provide a range of housing types including affordable units						
	13. develop additional senior's housing						
	14. loosen regulations regarding apartments						
	15. support the Chamber of Commerce in their bid to develop a Cultural Centre for PCSP						
	16. pursue the PCSP Library becoming affiliated with the Provincial Public Library network						
<b>D) Protecting and Repairing Our Environment</b>	17. support the initiatives of the Advisory Committee on the Environment						
	18. enact Planning Regulations to ensure more appropriate residential site development						
	19. actively encourage more recycling and composting						
	20. do more to protect wetlands						
<b>E) Providing Responsive, Responsible and Cost-Effective Services</b>	21. improve Town-owned roads						
	22. widen road shoulders to accommodate bike lanes; increase safety						
	23. investigate feasibility of assuming all roads in Town, with possibly a joint management arrangement for provincial roads						
	24. expand the Works Depot or build new one						
	25. update / implement the Asset Management Plan						

## Resource Requirements

The table below shows expected financial and human resource implications of the plan, again at a high level.

### ***Priority Legend***

Top Priority
Medium Priority
Lowest Priority

Strategic Action Area	Specific Initiatives	Financial Implications		Human Resource Implications
		Capital	Operating	
<b>A) Enhancing Our Parks, Recreation and Cultural Assets</b>	1. develop the Lifestyle Centre	- capital cost estimate contained in previous assessment?	- operating cost estimate contained in previous assessment?	- significant one-time human resources implications involved in working with architects and engineers in the planning and development of the facility (likely in the order of 1 person-year shared between several persons) - on-going operation of facility will require additional staff and budget resources as well
	2. implement the Trails Master Plan	- capital cost estimate contained in previous assessment?	- operating cost estimate contained in previous assessment?	- likely fairly minor: some additional maintenance required
	3. develop ATV policy, including consideration of an ATV Trail	- none, unless a specific ATV trail and route is developed	- some minor cost for maintenance and supplies	- some additional maintenance required, likely ½ to 1 day per week
	4. work with community to refine existing events and develop new ones	- none to minimal	- moderate, depending upon event	- staff time to review existing events and identify ways/means for improvement - some staff time to work with existing organizations to develop ideas for new event(s) - suggest target time of ½ day per week
	5. implement initiatives of the Heritage Committee	- none	- minimal	- to be determined, but likely only small amount of staff time
<b>B) Maintaining Our Rural / Urban Balance</b>	6. continue the tree-planting program for PCSP	- suggest set target of 100 trees per year; @\$75 per tree = \$7,500 per year	- minimal	- some staff time in organizing tree planting sessions – possibly with volunteer groups -
	7. investigate feasibility of encouraging commercial centre / hub in the community	- possibly some amount if market feasibility of various retail uses was to be tested (say, \$10,000)	- minimal	- to be determined, but likely small

	8. support the Chamber in the implementation of the Strategic Agriculture Plan	- none	- minimal	- to be determined, but likely only small amount of staff time
<b>C) Ensuring Accessibility, Equity and Access for All</b>	9. investigate possibility of transit link to St. John's with Metrobus	- none	- none initially , although may be some on-going subsidy required	- some time involved to assess initial feasibility of the concept with Metrobus (likely only 1-2 days)
	10. develop & apply an 'inclusion lens' through which all Council decisions are considered	- none	- none	- staff time to develop 'lens' (set pf questions) – likely 1-2 days
	11. continue to advocate for the high school, as included in the last provincial budget	- none	- none	- minor – as staff time is available when other priorities have been accomplished
	12. investigate incentives for developers to provide a range of housing types including affordable units	- none, unless financial incentives are determined to be necessary	- none, unless financial incentives are determined to be necessary	- staff time to plan and host 'round table' – target 4-5 days of effort (total) on part of several staff
	13. develop additional seniors' housing	- as in item #12 above	- as in item #12 above	- as in item #12 above
	14. loosen regulations regarding apartments	- as in item #12 above	- as in item #12 above	- as in item #12 above
	15. support the Chamber of Commerce in their bid to develop a Cultural Centre for PCSP	- none	- none	- minor – as staff time is available when other priorities have been accomplished
	16. pursue the PCSP Library becoming affiliated with the Provincial Public Library network	- none	- none	- minor – as staff time is available when other priorities have been accomplished
<b>D) Protecting and Repairing Our Environment</b>	17. support the initiatives of the Advisory Committee on the Environment	- depending upon project, possibly target \$5,000 per year maximum	- none, or very small	- minor: aim for 1-2 days over course of year
	18. enact Planning Regulations to ensure more appropriate residential site development	- none	- none	- to be determined: some amount of staff time to review and modify existing regulations
	19. actively encourage more recycling and composting	- cost of communications campaign (target on the order of \$5,000 - \$10,000	- none	- minor – suggest target 1 day

		- explore possibility of doing this with a volunteer organization partner		
	20. do more to protect wetlands	- possibly hire external expertise to develop plan: suggest \$25,000 - \$30,000	- dependent upon results of study	- to be determined: suggest 1-2 days per week over duration of policy development
<b>E) Providing Responsive, Responsible and Cost-Effective Services</b>	21. improve Town-owned roads	- suggest annual amount set aside for road repair (e.g., \$50,000 per year)	- higher road maintenance standard will likely require increase in road maintenance budget	- to be determined: could require additional personnel on part or full-time basis
	22. widen road shoulders to accommodate bike lanes and increase safety	- could be contained within budget estimates in #21	- could be contained within budget estimates in #21	- could be contained within budget estimates in #21
	23. investigate feasibility of assuming all roads in Town, with possibly a joint management arrangement for provincial roads	- none (to undertake assessment)	- none to minimal	- to be determined
	24. expand the Works Depot or build new one	- capital cost estimate contained in previous assessment?	- operating cost estimate contained in previous assessment?	- to be determined
	25. update / implement the Asset Management Plan	- possibly hire external expertise to develop plan: suggest \$25,000 - \$30,000	- dependent upon results of study	- to be determined: suggest 1-2 days per week over duration of plan preparation

## Targets, Milestones and Outcomes

The table below presents suggested targets, milestones and outcomes of the Strategic Plan. In essence, it presents a series of guideposts to track progress of the implementation of the Plan.

### Priority Legend

Top Priority
Medium Priority
Lowest Priority

Strategic Action Area	Specific Initiatives	Suggested Targets, Milestones or Outcomes
<b>A) Enhancing Our Parks, Recreation and Cultural Assets</b>	1. develop the Lifestyle Centre	- completion of the Lifestyle Centre by end 2027
	2. implement the Trails Master Plan	- implementation of the Trails Master Plan throughout the plan period, with some progress each year
	3. develop ATV policy, including consideration of an ATV Trail	- assessment of feasibility and route for a trail, and development of an ATV usage policy, in place by end 2024
	4. work with community to refine existing events and develop new ones	- plan new event in 2024 and have ready for launch in 2025
	5. implement initiatives of the Heritage Committee	- work with Heritage Committee to identify reasonable implementation program for 2023 to 2025
<b>B) Maintaining Our Rural / Urban Balance</b>	6. continue the tree-planting program for PCSP	- continue annual tree-planting throughout period - suggest target of (say) 100 trees per year
	7. investigate feasibility of encouraging commercial centre / hub in the community	- longer-term initiative: develop a commercial hub plan in consultation with developers and business community and have ready for implementation in 2026
	8. support the Chamber in the implementation of the Strategic Agriculture Plan	- on-going: ensure regular meetings between Town and Chamber to discuss ways of implementing strategy – encourage Chamber to give annual report on progress to Town Council
<b>C) Ensuring Accessibility, Equity and Access for All</b>	9. investigate possibility of transit link to St. John's with Metrobus	- target initial discussion with Metrobus in 2025 (after initial research on demand and likely use undertaken in 2024) – then proceed accordingly
	10. develop and apply an 'inclusion lens' through which all Council decisions are considered	- create 'lens' in 2023 and apply continuously to Council decisions thereafter - 'lens' would consist of a set of questions for staff to address and prepare response to Council for each major Council decision
	11. continue to advocate for the high school, as included in the last provincial budget	- report to Council regularly (at least annually) on success of advocacy efforts
	12. investigate incentives for developers to provide a range of housing types including affordable units	- host round table with development community to identify ways and means of incenting them to provide a wider range of units in 2023

		- undertake any actions deemed reasonable and useful in 2024 and on
	13. develop additional seniors' housing	- specific initiatives should begin in 2025
	14. loosen regulations regarding apartments	- as in item #12 above
	15. support the Chamber of Commerce in their bid to develop a Cultural Centre for PCSP	- as in item #8: ensure regular meetings between Town and Chamber to discuss ways of implementing strategy – encourage Chamber to give annual report on progress to Town Council
	16. pursue the PCSP Library becoming affiliated with the Provincial Public Library network	- meet with provincial library system representatives to determine likelihood of getting a provincial branch in PCSP (given population growth trends) - gather information on library usage and possibly survey community demand, then make case in 2024/25
<b>D) Protecting and Repairing Our Environment</b>	17. support the initiatives of the Advisory Committee on the Environment	- provide funding and staff support for at least one project per year: e.g., community gardens (2023); water quality monitoring (2024), etc.
	18. enact Planning Regulations to ensure more appropriate residential development	- review existing regulations in 2024; plan to make any revisions (should it be determined to do this) in 2025 and on
	19. actively encourage more recycling and composting	- develop and implement communications and advocacy campaign in 2023; continue efforts throughout period
	20. do more to protect wetlands	- develop plan in 2023, plan to begin implementation in 2024
<b>E) Providing Responsive, Responsible and Cost-Effective Services</b>	21. improve Town-owned roads	- have plan developed in 2023; target improvements made to all Town owned roads by end of 2027 (i.e. the next 5 years)
	22. widen road shoulders to accommodate bike lanes and increase safety	- identify areas where this can be done in 2024; undertake improvements over next 2 years
	23. investigate feasibility of assuming all roads in Town, with possibly a joint management arrangement for provincial roads	- undertake investigation in 2024; implement as possible in 2025 and beyond
	24. expand the Works Depot or build new one	- develop expansion plan in 2024; implement in 2025 and beyond
	25. update / implement the Asset Management Plan	- target upgrade and completion in 2024



## Suggested Roles and Responsibilities

The table below outlines the suggested roles and responsibilities for each of the strategic initiatives contained in the Plan. These are divided into **primary** responsibilities (i.e. the Department or agency charged with initiating and completing the action) and **secondary** responsibilities (i.e., other Departments or organizations who would be expected to support and assist in the implementation effort).

Strategic Action Area	Specific Initiatives	Primary Responsibility (ies)	Supporting Responsibility
<b>A) Enhancing Our Parks, Recreation and Cultural Assets</b>	1. develop the Lifestyle Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council resolution</li> <li>• Recreation and Community Services Department lead</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• other Departments as required</li> </ul>
	2. implement the Trails Master Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreation and Community Services Department lead</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• other Departments as required</li> </ul>
	3. develop ATV policy, including consideration of an ATV Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreation and Community Services Department lead</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• other Departments as required</li> </ul>
	4. work with community to refine existing events and develop new ones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreation and Community Services Department lead</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• other Departments as required</li> <li>• community groups and organizations, to be determined</li> </ul>
	5. implement initiatives of the Heritage Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administration and Finance Department, working with Heritage Committee to determine sequence and priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• other Departments and community agencies as required</li> </ul>
<b>B) Maintaining Our Rural / Urban Balance</b>	6. continue the tree-planting program for PCSP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Works Department lead</li> </ul>	-
	7. investigate feasibility of encouraging commercial centre / hub in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Development, Marketing and Communications lead</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consultation with local development / investment community</li> </ul>
	8. support the Chamber in the implementation of the Strategic Agriculture Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipal Departments as required</li> </ul>
<b>C) Ensuring Accessibility, Equity and Access for All</b>	9. investigate possibility of transit link to St. John's with Metrobus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Development, Marketing and Communications lead</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consultation with Metrobus</li> </ul>
	10. develop & apply an 'inclusion lens' through which all Council decisions are considered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior staff to develop policy and approach</li> <li>• Council to pass resolution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consultation with community groups as required</li> </ul>

	11. continue to advocate for the high school, as included in the last provincial budget	• Economic Development, Marketing and Communications lead	• other Departments as required
	12. investigate incentives for developers to provide a range of housing types including affordable units	• Economic Development, Marketing and Communications lead	• Planning Department support • consultation with local development/ investment community
	13. develop additional seniors' housing	• as in #12	• as in #12
	14. loosen regulations regarding apartments	• as in #12	• as in #12
	15. support the Chamber of Commerce in their bid to develop a Cultural Centre for PCSP	• Chamber of Commerce	• other Municipal Departments as required
	16. pursue the PCSP Library becoming affiliated with the Provincial Public Library network	• Recreation and Community Services Department lead	• other Municipal Departments as required
<b>D) Protecting and Repairing Our Environment</b>	17. support the initiatives of the Advisory Committee on the Environment	• Planning and Development Department, working with Advisory Committee on Environment	• other Municipal Departments as required
	18. enact Planning Regulations to ensure more appropriate residential site development	• Planning and Development Department, working with Economic Development, Marketing and Communications	-
	19. actively encourage more recycling and composting	• Economic Development, Marketing and Communications	• Advisory committee on the Environment to support
	20. do more to protect wetlands	• Planning and Development Department, working with Advisory Committee on Environment	• other Municipal Departments as required
<b>E) Providing Responsive, Responsible and Cost-Effective Services</b>	21. improve Town-owned roads	• Public Works Department	-
	22. widen road shoulders to accommodate bike lanes and increase safety	• Public Works Department	-
	23. investigate feasibility of assuming all roads in Town, with possibly a joint management	• Administration and Finance	• Public Works Department: input and assistance as required

	arrangement for provincial roads		
	24. expand the Works Depot or build new one	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council resolution</li> <li>• Planning and Development Department, working with Public Works Department</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• other Municipal Departments as required</li> </ul>
	25. update / implement the Asset Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administration and Finance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Works Department: input and assistance as required</li> </ul>

## How the Plan will be Made Actionable and Accountable

The steps below are recommended in order to demonstrate to the public and others that the Strategic Plan is being used as an active document and is integral in influencing and affecting municipal policy and actions:

- 1) upon completion, a summary version of the Plan should be made available online for the community with an accompanying public meeting/presentation;
- 2) regular staff reports should be prepared on how all significant upcoming Council decisions help advance the goals of the Strategic Plan<sup>6</sup>;
- 3) press releases issued by Town may refer to the Plan and how the matter referred to is aligned with it.
- 4) the Town should present an annual report card to the public on how the Plan is being implemented; and
- 5) approximately half way through the implementation of the Plan, a three-year refresher update should be prepared.

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<sup>6</sup> Many municipalities routinely prepare reports to Council on the budget implications of major Council decisions. This plan suggests also a similar report on the extent to which major Council initiatives further the Town's diversity, equity and inclusion objectives (see Recommendation #10, the 'diversity lens'). The suggestion above would add a third dimension to staff reporting which would also examine the extent to which key Council initiatives would further the Strategic Plan itself.