



# SACKVILLE 2022

Strategic Plan



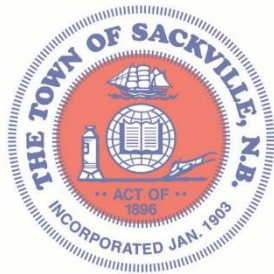




# Contents

1	Message from the Mayor
2	How We Got Here
5	What We Stand For
7	Strategic Directions
8	Efficient and Effective Governance and Leadership
10	Enhanced Delivery of Programs and Services
11	Ensure Well Maintained and Sustainable Public Infrastructure
13	Economic and Community Development Leadership
17	Quality Lifestyle
18	Implementation – The Balanced Scorecard
	Appendix A – Key Informants

# MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



My fellow Citizens,

Strategic plans by, definition, look to the future but strategy starts with keeping the lights on, the garbage sorted, the water drinkable, the snow removed, the streets safe and emergencies averted or managed. When our Mission calls for *"...quality of life rooted in a healthy natural environment and sustainable approach..."*, it should go without saying that without excellent core services, there is no mission. This is not optional.

In the real-time environment of everyday Sackville, what the Strategic Plan contributes is a way of doing things, so that our values become more than plaques on the wall. Everything we do will be governed by these values and our success should be judged by how effectively we deliver them every day.

We'll be reporting back to you regularly on our progress in getting this done. And we'll be asking for your feedback on how we're doing. Thanks so much for your help on this

Sincerely,

*John Higham* (SIGNATURE)

Mayor, Town of Sackville

# HOW WE GOT HERE

The picturesque Town of Sackville nestled on the edge of the expansive and fertile Tantramar Marshes is one of New Brunswick's (NB) oldest communities. The Mi'kmaq first visited the area over 7,000 years ago with the first permanent Acadian settlers arriving in the 1700's. This community of approximately 5,558 (2011 Census) is located in the centre of Canada's Maritime Provinces and is accessible by land, air, rail and sea.

The Town is home to Mount Allison University (MTA), a primarily undergraduate liberal arts university. MTA has been ranked by Maclean's magazine as the number one undergraduate university in the county for 18 out of the past 24 years and is a key economic engine for the Town. MTA is also responsible for the influx of approximately 2,500 students during the academic year, swelling the local population by approximately 45%. Sackville is home to rich and diverse arts and cultural resources centred on MTA's gallery, theatre, and noted fine arts and music programming.

With annual operating budgets of over \$10 million in general services and over \$1.7 million in water and sewer services, the Town of Sackville maintains a wide variety of assets which contribute to a high quality of life. Sackville is uniquely positioned to provide residents and businesses with a stable financial environment, rustic downtown atmosphere, and small-town community charm.

Currently, the Town's 2010-2015 Strategic Plan period has come to an end and there is recognition of the need to prioritize the Municipality's goals and objectives for the future. This led to the issuance of a request for proposal for Strategic Planning Services to assist the Town with the development of a new Strategic Plan. The Sharp Group was awarded this contract through a competitive bidding process.



## Project Objectives

The Sharp Group was asked to assist and guide the Town of Sackville in establishing a sense of identity and the examination of short and long-term priorities for the Municipality. Specifically, the Consultants were tasked to:

1. Work with the Council and Senior Staff and facilitate consultation with the community to identify **strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats** for the Town of Sackville.
2. Assist the Community, Council and Senior Staff with the identification and **prioritization of goals and objectives** for the Municipality.
3. Assist the Community, Council and Senior Staff in the creation of a “**Strategic Plan**” which accurately captures the outcome of discussions and provides guidance for the future implementation of identified goals and objectives.

## Building on Strategic Plan 2010-2015

The Town of Sackville’s previous five year Strategy guided the Town from 2010 to 2015. The consultants met with the main author of the previous plan and conducted, with Town management, a line by line review of its recommendations, noting the extent to which these had been actioned. Much of the success of the earlier plan was rooted in the implementation of the key recommendation: “*Recruitment and retention of a Chief Administrative Officer and the development of a good governance model for Council-CAO relations*”. The current Chief Administrative Officer was appointed in May of 2013 and other staff positions filled subsequently. Stability within the CAO position since 2013, as well as a more efficient governance structure, and improved human relations were noted throughout consultations as key achievements resulting from the previous strategy.

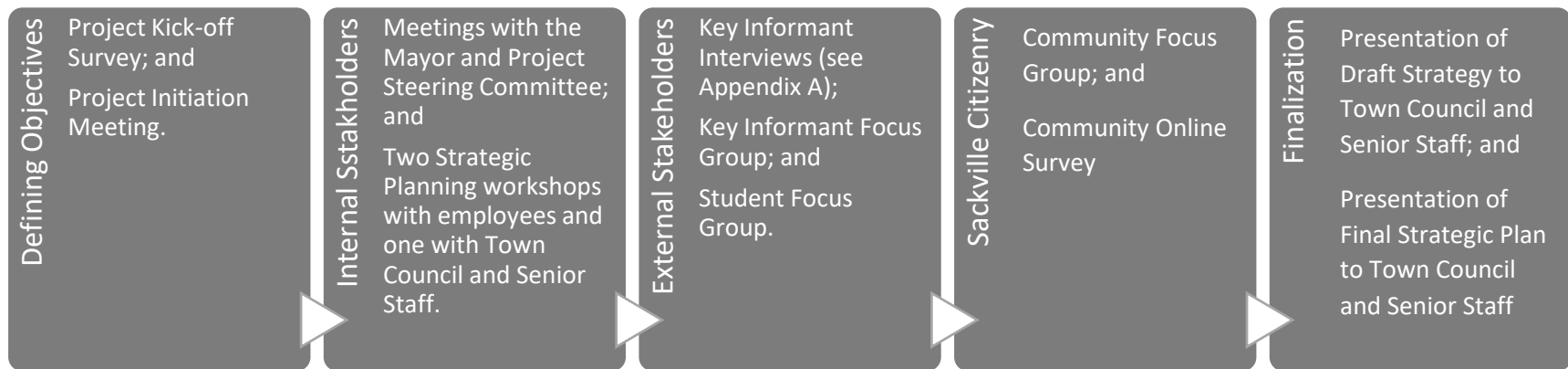
It was suggested that the new Strategic Plan needs to adopt a realistic point of view on what is achievable given the size of the Town and the resources available. Larger municipalities, for example, can sometimes afford staff positions dedicated to task areas like economic development, marketing and communication. In the case of Sackville, budget restrictions will more likely suggest the need for structuring appointments around the ability and responsibility to multi-task across disciplines.

The Sharp Group also wishes to note that a feeling of optimism seemed quite widespread during consultations with regards to the ability of current Town management, and newly elected Mayor and Council, to manage the level of change and progress that the Town of Sackville needs to move forward.

## Consultation Process

The Town of Sackville Strategy 2017-2022 is derived from research and analysis, as well as an extensive consultation process including Steering Committee meetings, internal Town staff workshops, key informant interviews, stakeholder focus groups and surveys.

Figure 1: Consultation Model





# WHAT WE STAND FOR

## Our Vision

*Defines where we aspire to be and what we want to achieve long term, and helps us focus on what is important to getting there.*

*Sackville, New Brunswick is a community at the centre of social innovation and sustainable economic development, where a valued natural environment creates a vibrant backdrop for living, working, and playing.*

## Our Mission

*Expresses who we are, whom we serve and how we do it.*

*The Town of Sackville, New Brunswick is committed to creating a quality of life rooted in a healthy natural environment and sustainable approach. This calls for balance between economic, social and environmental considerations in the pursuit of economic and community development opportunities.*

## Our Values

*These values support the vision and shape our organizational culture. This is what we believe.*

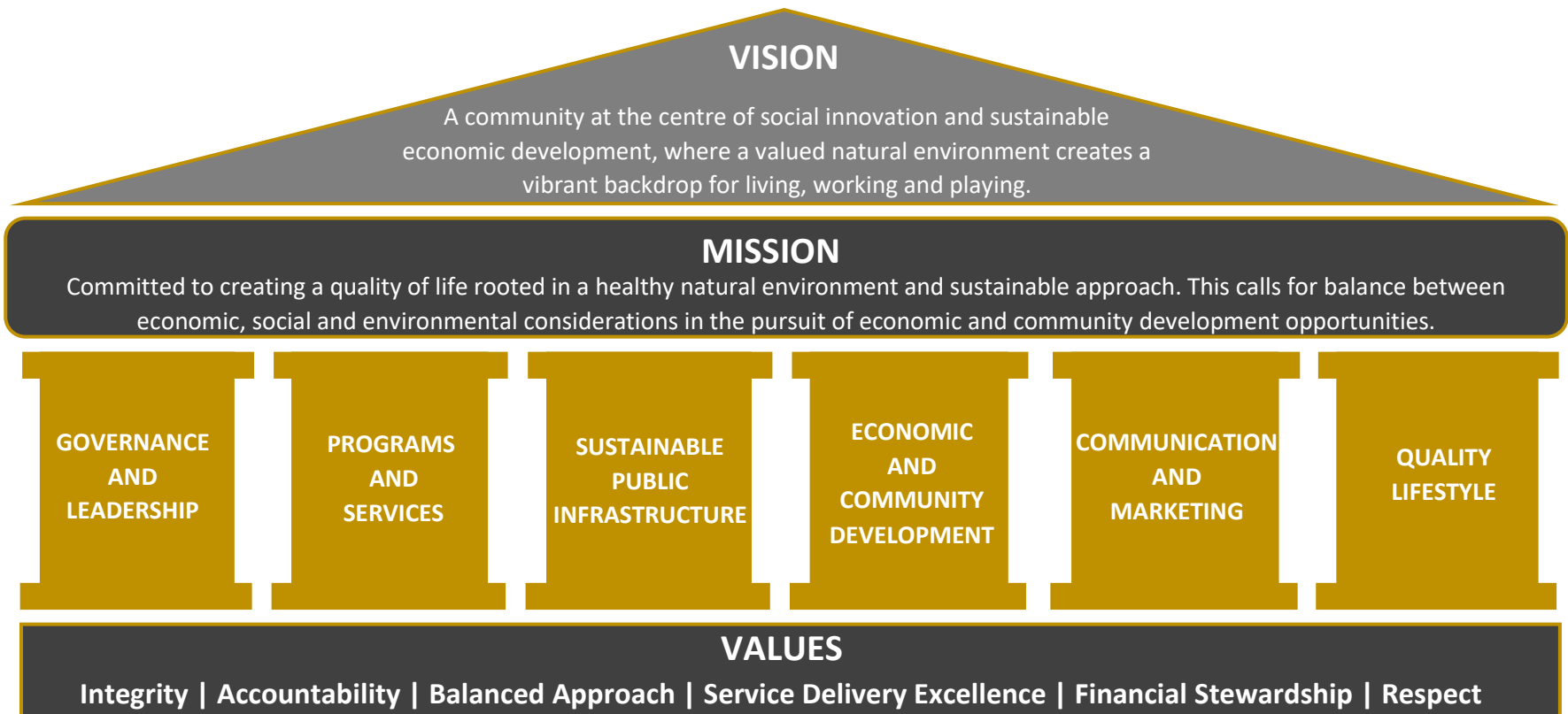
<b><i>Integrity</i></b>	Modeling a culture of truthfulness, sincerity, transparency and fairness through an open and accessible local government.
<b><i>Accountability</i></b>	Committing to meaningful community engagement and assuming responsibility for actions, decisions and policies.
<b><i>Balanced Approach</i></b>	Embracing a triple bottom line point of view where economic, social and environmental factors conspire in a sustainable approach to long-term development.
<b><i>Service Delivery Excellence</i></b>	Committing to the high quality, efficient and effective delivery of programs and services to ensure a vibrant, safe and healthy community.
<b><i>Financial Stewardship</i></b>	Ensuring that the citizens of Sackville receive optimal value for their tax paying investment through responsible planning and management of resources.
<b><i>Respect</i></b>	Working to build a better community where every person is respected and has the opportunity to reach his/her potential.

While touched on above under “Balanced Approach”, it is worth reiterating that the Town of Sackville is committed to ensuring the actions of the municipality are governed by the environmental conscience which permeates throughout the community.



# STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The Strategic Directions form the pillars of the Strategic Plan's action framework. They are designed to provide order to the Town of Sackville's future activities by setting priorities and goals which build from our organization values to achieve the mission and vision of the Town. As the Strategic Plan is implemented, the Town must measure progress, identify the successes and challenges encountered and report on those findings through clear metrics. With the adoption of this Strategic Plan, the Mayor is the ultimate authority responsible for ensuring it is acted upon and the Chief Administrative Officer is responsible for its implementation, and then delegating applicable responsibilities to staff.



## STRATEGIC DIRECTION #1

# Efficient and Effective Governance and Leadership

The Town of Sackville, in adopting this Strategic Plan, is committed to a leadership position through the continual pursuit of efficient and effective governance. As outlined in the organizational values of the municipality, operating in an open, transparent and accessible manner, while ensuring actions are governed by the Town's environmental conscience is paramount to achieving this goal.

### ACTION 1: IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN 2022

Objective	Timing	Metrics
Assign responsibility, develop implementation plans and deliver on the objectives and actions outlined in this Strategic Plan.	Ongoing	Action Items Completed

### ACTION 2: ENGAGE COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

Objective	Timing	Metrics
Engage community representatives and groups to assist with the implementation of initiatives outlined within the Strategic Plan.	April 2017	Volunteer database. Number of representatives engaged on initiatives.

### ACTION 3: ANNUAL RESIDENTS SURVEY

Objective	Timing	Metrics
Develop and implement an annual residents survey which is used to gauge satisfaction, identify areas that require attention and prioritize goals and objectives of the Town.	Jan. 2018	Implementation of annual survey results in annual planning and budgeting procedures.

An important consideration in the engagement of community representatives is the issue of “volunteer burnout”, identified throughout consultations. It should be noted, that in the “Sustainable Sackville” Plan of 2010 under “Coordinated Volunteer Services” it recommends: *Facilitate the development of a community volunteer database (including MTA staff, students and community members at large) that includes skills and areas of interest (sports, social, cultural, environmental).*” This would be a relevant recommendation to action prior to engaging community representatives in the implementation of the strategic plan and would likely lead to more meaningful engagement.

#### ACTION 4: EXPLORE REGIONAL EFFECIENCIES

Objective	Timing	Metrics
Consult and implement the modernized legislation initiatives of the Provincial government, and explore new opportunities for more effective delivery of services and programs through a regionalized approach.	Dec. 2017	Summary report of initiatives and opportunities identified for exploration.

The Town of Sackville’s central location and strong core services offering were repeatedly noted as key strengths. Opportunities exist for Sackville to build relationships with the major urban centres such as Amherst in Nova Scotia and Moncton in New Brunswick to align its development efforts with those municipalities and the provincial government. Sackville’s central location and access to services positions the Town well for partnership and building stronger relationships with the surrounding municipalities.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION #2

# Enhanced Delivery of Programs and Services

Service delivery excellence is a core corporate value for the Town of Sackville and is a key strategic direction for the Town over the long-term. Continuing to actively manage and improve on the Town's core services within a sustainable fiscal framework is a top priority and essential to maintaining the overall quality of life that Sackville has become known for. Sackville is committed to ensuring the Municipality's responsibility to provide quality core services (e.g. streets, policing, etc.) and this remains priority number one.

### ACTION 5: STRENGTHEN INTERNAL CAPACITY

Objective	Timing	Metrics
Enhance plans for managing emergencies and business disruptions to protect lives and continue to deliver critical services to the community.	July 2019	Emergency response time, business complaints.
Strengthen employee engagement, performance management and accountability for results across the organization.	Dec. 2019	Implementation of performance management framework.

### ACTION 6: ENSURE THE RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP OF PUBLIC FUNDS

Objective	Timing	Metrics
Provide citizens with competitive, rational and affordable level of taxation.	Ongoing	Tax rates vs. comparable municipalities
Improve the design and delivery of programs and services so that they provide what citizens want in the most reliable, convenient and cost-efficient way.	Throughout strategic period	Residents survey – satisfaction with programs and services



### STRATEGIC DIRECTION #3

## Ensure Well Maintained and Sustainable Public Infrastructure

Almost 60% of Canada's core public infrastructure is owned and maintained by municipal governments. Municipal infrastructure gets people and goods moving, provides safe drinking water, handles our waste, creates spaces for sport and recreation, and helps protect our homes against flooding and other natural disasters. This foundation enables our communities and local businesses to grow, and ensures Canadians can lead safe and healthy lives.

### ACTION 7: UPGRADE AGING INFRASTRUCTURE

Objective	Timing	Metrics
Strengthen the capability and capacity within the Municipality to manage all of the Town's assets so that they are affordable, dependable and sustainable in the long-term.	Dec. 2017	Asset inventory database with condition level reporting.
Improve the Town's ability to leverage funding opportunities for the development and renewal of infrastructure through federal or provincial programs and other partnerships	Dec. 2017	New project funding contracts obtained.

### ACTION 8: ACTIVELY MANAGE FLOOD RISKS

Objective	Timing	Metrics
Implement flood mitigation projects	Dec. 2020	Completion of phases within approach
Enhance measures to manage storm water and improve water quality in the Town's watersheds	Feb. 2019	Water quality reports

The Sharp Group wishes to note that Sackville's aging dyke systems were seen as an opportunity by some who suggested that the Town should "own" its inherent flooding issue and become a leader in the areas of climate change and flood crisis management. New state-of-the-art flood management systems could even have spin-off tourism attraction benefits.

*"Town leaders (e.g. Town Council) would benefit from visiting and learning about other small towns around North America that have developed strong economies in an environmentally friendly and sustainable manner, communities that have been reborn and are sustainable. I would suggest also, that perhaps the New England States might be a source for finding communities similar to Sackville who have been able to capitalize on their strengths and develop a strong, sustainable, diversified economy"*



#### STRATEGIC DIRECTION #4

### Economic and Community Development Leadership

In commenting on “the single most important thing the Town could do to capitalize on its strengths and opportunities”, key informants spoke of supporting organic private business growth (tapping into MTA’s training resources where appropriate), with a focus on entrepreneurship and existing small to medium-sized businesses. This was seen as a strategy to reduce the dependence on a limited number of larger employers and therefore, decrease the employment risk, should one of these employers shut down or move out of town.

The Town was seen as a body which could provide favourable business incentives, and take a leadership role in business community building through networking events, seminars, etc.

#### ACTION 9: ADOPT A BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Objective	Timing	Metrics
Create and promote a positive environment for business.	Dec. 2017	CFIB Business Confidence Index
Pursue and support start-up business ventures.	Dec. 2017	New business permits, business occupancy
Attract and support local small/medium business growth opportunities.	Dec. 2017	Commercial tax revenues
Facilitate the re-establishment of an organizational structure to further the business community of Sackville.	Dec. 2017	CFIB Business Confidence Index

#### ACTION 10: DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE POPULATION STRATEGY

Objective	Timing	Metrics
Strategically work to attract and retain young families, create student employment opportunities, and find ways to get active seniors to become engaged and stay engaged within the community.	Dec. 2020	Population growth Migration statistics Housing statistics (starts, avg. price, etc.)

### ACTION 11: ENGAGE IN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Objective	Timing	Metrics
Engage in strategic partnerships and collaboration with government, hospitals, schools, Mount Allison University, business and community organizations.	Throughout strategic period	
Support Sackville Schools 2020	Throughout strategic period	Financial investment; and Resource (human and facility) investment in-kind.

It was notable that another online survey, conducted as part of the recent *“Our Sackville - Review of Municipal Plan and Zoning By-law”* concluded that the leading item residents would like to see more of was “maintenance and appearance of heritage buildings”. This provides a strong case for the establishment of incentives for meeting design guidelines and for preserving heritage places.

### ACTION 12: ENHANCE AND PRESERVE THE TOWN’S HISTORIC LOOK AND FEEL

Objective	Timing	Metrics
Enhance programs to support re-development of heritage stock (appearance and maintenance).	Dec. 2019	Residents survey
Increase attention to beautification throughout the Town, particularly at the Town entrances and downtown area.	Dec. 2019	Residents survey



## STRATEGIC DIRECTION #5

# Communication and Marketing

Improved marketing and communications was mentioned as an opportunity throughout consultations. A communication strategy needs to differentiate Sackville from its competitors. This will start with a positioning statement that fits the Town's Mission and answers the questions, "Who is Sackville? How is it different? What's in it for me?"

### ACTION 13: COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING PLAN

Objective	Timing	Metrics
Develop a Marketing and Communications Plan that identifies the Town's positioning and provides guidance for marketing initiatives re: tourism, events, etc.	Dec. 2018	Plan development
Co-promote with Mount Allison	Ongoing	Website traffic; Tourism traffic
Conduct a strategic review of tourism products, packaging, etc. plus linkages with the NB Cultural Coast and/or SERSC	Dec. 2018	Tourism traffic
Update Tourism Strategy and ensure alignment with SERSC Tourism Strategy and the NB Cultural Strategy	Dec. 2018	Adoption of a current Tourism Strategy

As suggested above, the Marketing and Communication Plan will start with the development of a Positioning Statement for the Town's public facing communication activities; essentially a statement that encapsulates the core elements of

Mission and Vision, while answering three questions from the point of view of stakeholders: 1) Who are you? 2) How are you different? 3) What's in it for me?

New branding for the Town of Sackville should emerge from the positioning exercise. Positioning and branding should be tested during the development process.

### **Potential Brand Values for Testing**

One of the dominant impressions reported by the consultants and heard throughout this process, was a deeply felt attachment to this place and a real desire to treat Sackville's environment with respect, while at the same time building an economy based on 21<sup>st</sup> Century innovation.

This feeling of attachment should be reflected in the development of branding, along with brand values that reflect Missions and Vision, such as:

- A new kind of small town known to punch well above its weight
- Social innovation
- Sustainable approach that balances economic and community development
- Quality of life rooted in healthy natural environment
- Vibrant backdrop for living, working, and playing
- A feeling of community conscience



## Quality Lifestyle

Sackville was consistently noted as a great place to live, boasting a rural feel with urban-like access to services and amenities. Community infrastructure (e.g. trails, parks, civic centre, etc.), access to key services (e.g. education and health) and amenities (e.g. downtown restaurants, arts-based organizations, etc.) were all noted as very strong and not typical for a community of Sackville's size. Furthermore, the population was also noted as friendly, intelligent, hardworking and always willing to step up and help each other when in need (strong volunteer base).

## ACTION 14: RECREATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Objective	Timing	Metrics
Update the Recreation Master Plan.	2018	Adopted Recreational Master Plan
Support a broad range of recreational facilities and programs, including clearly defined trail systems and bicycling routes.	ongoing	Annual Citizens Survey New trail development
Focus attention on active living.	Ongoing	

## ACTION 15: ARTS AND CULTURE STRATEGY

Objective	Timing	Metrics
Facilitate collaboration among industry representatives on the potential for developing an arts and culture sector strategy	2021	
Build on arts, culture and heritage for the community and visitors	2021	







The unusual richness of the community's arts, culture and heritage resources constitutes a huge benefit, not only for the lifestyle of residents but as a tourism resource. As mentioned under Action 13 above, the potential for packaging these resources in a coherent manner should be further explored under the heading of Tourism Strategy.

# Implementation – The Balanced Scorecard

Although the balanced scorecard was originally designed to serve private businesses, it offers even greater benefit to the public sector. The balanced scorecard is a strategic planning and management system that is broadly applicable to organizations regardless of size or type. It is widely used across sectors and increasingly in the public sector. It is the preferred strategic planning tool of government departments and is being used more and more in local government.

The Balanced Scorecard which follows provides a method of aligning business activities to the vision and strategy of the organization, monitoring organizational performance against strategic objectives and, in the process, improving internal and external communication. The scorecard is meant to be a living document which is altered as decisions are made and new realities arise. It should not be seen as static or rigid like a set of rules, rather a visual snapshot used to communicate your organization's activities at a particular point of time. It is recommended that the Town of Sackville adopt a balanced scorecard approach. Information collected through the recommended annual residents survey should link to the balanced scorecard which is adopted. This will serve as a visual roadmap and communicate both internally and externally the activities of the municipality.



OBJECTIVES		METRICS
 <b>Governance &amp; Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt and implement Strategic Plan 2022;</li> <li>• Develop and implement an Annual Residents Survey;</li> <li>• Engage community representatives in implementation of Strategic Plan;</li> <li>• Achieve employee and organizational stability within the Municipality;</li> <li>• Achieve a stable financial position; and</li> <li>• Explore opportunities for improved delivery of services and programs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic action items implemented;</li> <li>• Volunteer database development;</li> <li>• Number of representatives engaged on initiatives;</li> <li>• Employee turnover; and</li> <li>• Summary reports of initiatives and opportunities identified for exploration.</li> </ul>
 <b>Programs &amp; Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen capacity to manage the Town's assets so that they are affordable, dependable and sustainable in the long-term;</li> <li>• Leverage funding opportunities for the development and renewal of infrastructure;</li> <li>• Actively manage flood risks and implement flood mitigation projects; and</li> <li>• Develop measures to manage storm water and improve water quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency response times;</li> <li>• Citizen and business comments;</li> <li>• Development performance management framework;</li> <li>• Tax rates vs comparable municipalities; and</li> <li>• Residents survey – satisfaction with programs and services.</li> </ul>
 <b>Sustainable Public Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen the Town's capability and capacity to manage all of its assets so that they are affordable, dependable and sustainable in the long-term.</li> <li>• Enhance plans for managing emergencies and business disruptions</li> <li>• Strengthen employee engagement, performance management and accountability</li> <li>• Ensure responsible stewardship of public funds</li> <li>• Continued improvement of design and delivery of programs and services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asset inventory database development and reporting;</li> <li>• New project funding contacts obtained;</li> <li>• Infrastructure projects engaged on;</li> <li>• Reduced business disruptions due to flooding; and</li> <li>• Watershed water quality reports.</li> </ul>
 <b>Economic &amp; Community Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt a business development strategy;</li> <li>• Develop a comprehensive population strategy;</li> <li>• Engage in strategic partnerships with government, hospitals, schools, Mount Allison University, business and community organizations;</li> <li>• Enhance and preserve the Town's historic look and feel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CFIB business confidence, new business permits and business occupancy rates;</li> <li>• Commercial tax revenue;</li> <li>• Population growth and migration statistics;</li> <li>• Housing statistics (new starts, average sale price, etc.); and</li> <li>• Resident's survey.</li> </ul>
 <b>Marketing &amp; Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a marketing and communications plan;</li> <li>• Conduct a strategic review of tourism products, packaging, etc. plus linkages with the NB Cultural Coast and/or SERSC;</li> <li>• Revisit Tourism Strategy and ensure alignment with SERSC Tourism Strategy and the NB Cultural Strategy; and</li> <li>• Co-promote with Mount Allison for mutual benefit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing Plan development;</li> <li>• Accommodations room nights sold and/or vacancy rates;</li> <li>• Number of tourists (at VIC);</li> <li>• Website and/or web-based promotion statistics; and</li> <li>• Mount Allison enrollment.</li> </ul>
 <b>Quality Lifestyle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revisit the Recreation Master Plan;</li> <li>• Support a broad range of recreational facilities and programs;</li> <li>• Facilitate industry representatives on the potential of developing an arts and culture sector strategy; and</li> <li>• Build on arts, culture and heritage for community and visitors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual citizens survey;</li> <li>• Kilometres of new trail development;</li> <li>• Arts and culture sector strategy;</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX A

# Key Informants

The consultants conducted key informant interviews with the following informants:

- Carl Ward
- Josh Cormier
- Ellen Pickle
- Peter Mesheau
- Tanya Becker
- Dr. Robert Campbell
- Amanda Fauteux
- Ron Toogood
- Lori Bickford
- Dr. Michael Fox
- Robert Inglis
- Malcolm Fisher
- Julia Feltham
- John Lafford
- David Hunter
- Jeff Schnurr
- Dr. Nauman Farooqi
- Susan Lafford
- Gerry Moore
- Chris Ward
- Craig Evans
- Aaron Lloyd
- Jeff Ollerhead
- Kim Meade
- Gloria Jollymore
- Amanda Cockshutt
- Elizabeth Wells
- David Bruce
- Sandy MacIver