



City of -- Ville de
MIRAMICHI

Strategic Plan

March 2006



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Overview of Strategic Plan





Introduction

In 2005 a community of committed citizens, employees and elected leaders from the City of Miramichi embarked upon a strategic planning process focused on three fundamental questions:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be in the future?
- How do we get there?

While the planning process has, and will continue to require persistence, teamwork and a commitment to thinking and doing things in new ways, it has resulted in a renewed awareness and appreciation for the potential of the region's greatest resource, its people. Ultimately the future success of the City of Miramichi is dependant upon everyone's ability and desire to work together while demonstrating the City's shared values on a daily basis.

As the City of Miramichi moves into the implementation phase of its strategic planning process there are fundamental needs required to effectively work towards realizing the City's vision. Internally, its success is dependent upon the leadership of Mayor and Council to support and enable the Strategic Planning and Operations Committees to develop and implement the steps required for long-term success. Equally important to the success of the planning and implementation process is the demonstrated commitment of Council, the City Manager and Directors to focus and work within the key functions and responsibilities of their respective positions while supporting one another in the process.

There are no easy or quick solutions to the long-term challenges faced by the City of Miramichi. Building and sustaining an economically viable and healthy community requires a shared vision and the willingness of all citizens to take responsibility for our City's future. Solutions must to be developed using an effective consultative process that promotes collaboration, innovation, partnerships and ownership among a diverse range of stakeholders. The time is now.



Role of the Strategic Planning Committee

The role of the Strategic Planning Committee is to serve as the primary body responsible for addressing the ongoing 'big picture' planning and implementation needs for the City's Strategic Plan. For example, this Committee would be responsible for the development of all communications strategy for the City's strategic plan.

Strategic Planning Committee Membership

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Role of the Operations Committee

The City Manager serves as the key communication liaison between the Operations Committee and City Council.

The role of the Operations Committee is to:

- Promote communication so as to understand the function and issues of each department and staff member within the City;
- Create an organization within the city structure, which can deal with and promote the strategic plan in terms of city organization and services; and
- On a weekly basis, create a medium, which will allow all staff to discuss and be aware of what is happening within the City.



Rules of the Operations Committee

- Committee meetings will be conducted on a weekly basis on a mutually agreeable day.
- Committee meetings will have a time constraint of sixty minutes unless otherwise agreed.
- Committee membership will direct the agenda.
- A formal set of minutes will be kept for all committee meetings.
- Membership of the committee agrees to be present for all meetings or if in absence, provide an alternate representative.
- Membership understands that this is a working committee of staff and partnerships and additional committee work may become a requirement.

Operations Committee Membership

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Key Positions - Functions and Responsibilities

For any substantial and sustainable change to occur within the City of Miramichi, the City Manager, Council and Directors have all agreed that the following functions and responsibilities for the following positions must be respected and supported by all of the above mentioned stakeholders.

Council's Key Functions and Responsibilities

1. Set policy, develop strategic goals and overall objectives jointly with City Manager and Directors as part of a 3 year strategic plan for all departments and staff to follow.
2. Approve annual budget, tax and utility rates required to maintain required level of service.
3. To provide direction, enable and support City Manager and Directors to fulfill their roles.
4. Promote the City in a positive image and create positive community spirit.
5. Lobby and work effectively with other levels of government.
6. To play an appropriate role in the recruitment of personnel for specified positions (i.e. Directors and City Manager).
7. To provide fair and equitable government.
8. Support Directors in the creation of 3 year department plans that are in alignment with the City's vision, mission and strategic goals.
9. Represent the best interests of the community at all times and listen to the opinions and ideas of our constituents.
10. Work to ensure that decisions are fair and consistent and that they support the City's strategic priorities.
11. Make informed and appropriately researched decisions in an open environment.
12. Create a climate that promotes growth and development opportunities for our citizens.
13. Communicate, demonstrate and support the implementation of the City's vision, mission and values at all times.



City Manager's Key Functions and Responsibilities

1. Assist Council in strategic planning.
2. Advise Council and provide direction on the development of policy and guidelines.
3. Manage the City's strategic plan and communicate results.
4. Asset and financial management (i.e. coordinate, manage and maintain fiscal control of City budget).
5. Have a general understanding of all City department services.
6. Communicate Council's ideas to Directors.
7. Communicate Director's plans to Council.
8. Guide Director's in delivering Council's ideas and ensure the implementation of Council's decisions in day-to-day operations.
9. Act as communication liaison, facilitator and agent of consensus between Directors and Council.
10. Assist and support Directors in departmental planning.
11. Develop and support the most effective organizational structure and management team processes that will increase efficiencies and eliminate waste.
12. Support Managers and Directors, but take the lead when required to provide direction on collective agreements.
13. Be accountable to Council for City departments and staff activities.
14. Provide and support professional and career development training for Directors.
15. Responsible for signing off on management reports.
16. Initiate policy and ideas with Directors to bring to Council.
17. Provide ongoing performance-related feedback to Directors.
18. Communicate and demonstrate City's vision, mission and values at all times.



Director's Key Functions and Responsibilities

1. Manage department under the policy and guidelines as established by Council and communicated through the City Manager.
2. Establish strategic plan with departmental objectives and be accountable to the City Manager for all departmental activities.
3. Establish and administer budget and operation plans to meet departmental objectives in conjunction with other departments and the City's strategic priorities.
4. Be cost efficient and affective in all aspects of service delivery to the public.
5. Clearly define staff position descriptions, roles, responsibilities and expectations.
6. Employee labour relations, staff recruitment, retention and succession planning.
7. Provide and support the delivery of ongoing performance appraisals for staff.
8. Direct, supervise, motivate, support and coach staff, while maintaining a safe and productive work environment.
9. Draft policy for approval by Council.
10. Provide and support professional and career development for staff.
11. Communicate departmental issues and needs clearly to the public, staff, City Manager and Council.
12. Provide ongoing performance-related feedback to City Manager.
13. Communicate and collaborate with other directors on a regular basis.
14. Communicate and demonstrate City's vision, mission and values at all times.



Shared Values

Shared values are the beliefs that promote trust and link an organization and community together and serve as the foundation of an organization. In their absence consistent and sustainable change will not occur. Every community leader, employee and citizen must work together to demonstrate these shared values so that they go beyond words written on paper.

The following shared values evolved from open public forums, interviews, surveys and group sessions. The real work begins now that we know that success and change cannot effectively take place until everyone commits to demonstrating the following beliefs on a daily basis.

Respect and Integrity

We believe that at the core of any great community is respect and integrity. We are committed to treating all people in a polite and respectful manner, as we ourselves would like to be treated. We also agree to be open and truthful with each other and encourage frank discussion, while being sensitive and open to differing points of view.

Communication, Trust and Cooperation

We believe in effective communication and supporting and helping others. We are committed to listening carefully and checking for understanding. We are available to support one another and are committed to the achievement of our stated goals.

Personal Accountability, Fairness and Consistency

We are responsible for our actions and need to work effectively with each and every day to solve problems, learn and improve.



What is a Mission Statement?

A mission statement represents the purpose of the City's existence. The mission statement should be the first consideration for any elected official, employee and citizen to use when making, implementing and evaluating decisions or ideas.

City of Miramichi's Mission Statement

The mission of the City is to provide services and encourage growth to ensure an outstanding quality of life for all of its citizens.

To achieve its mission, the City of Miramichi is committed to promoting the following three strategic priorities at all levels within the organization.

- 1) Effective and efficient use of resources;***
- 2) Economic growth and sustainability; and***
- 3) Consistency.***



Strategic Priorities and Objectives

Strategic priorities are part of the City's mission statement and provide the framework for the identification of objectives that the City Manager, Directors and staff can all use to develop, implement and measure their 3 year departmental plans.

Strategic Priority #1 - Efficient and Effective use of Resources (People, Financial & Capital)

Objectives (People):

- Commitment to increased collaboration, consultation and teamwork between Council, staff and citizens
- Greater awareness and communication between Directors, City Manager and Council regarding the challenges and progress of departments in addressing the City's strategic priorities.
- Develop and implement a long-term human resource plan that is focused on recruitment, retention and performance.
- Ensure that we are maximizing the value of people's time at all levels (i.e. effective and efficient meeting and reporting procedures/processes).
- Develop an effective communication strategy in terms of the City's strategic plan for staff and the public.

Objectives (Financial):

- Develop departmental budget strategies that are in alignment with the City's strategic plan and ensure that there is two-way communication between Council, Directors and City Manager throughout the process (Identify medium and long-term financial goals).
- Commit to staying the course once plans have been developed.
- Ensure that departments set targets and are able to measure their financial objectives.
- Develop an effective consultation process between Council, City Manager, and Directors prior to making major budget decisions.



- Develop, implement and communicate a budgeting and planning process that is effective and transparent at all levels.
- Leverage the value of strategic partnerships to access financial resources.

Objectives (Capital):

- Work together to inventory major current capital resources (i.e. buildings and equipment).
- City Manager, Directors and Departments work together to assess and provide a plan/strategies to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the way current capital resources are purchased and used (i.e. buildings and equipment).
- Focus on value in terms of investing in long-term sustainability where capital expenditures are required (i.e. energy efficiency and durability).
- Implement energy efficient practices (eco-efficiency).
- Eliminate asset duplication and revisit existing studies where appropriate.

Strategic Priority #2 – Economic Growth and Sustainability

Objectives:

- Commit to building mutually beneficial (pro-active & forward thinking) partnerships with the business community (i.e. Chamber of Commerce) and all levels of government (i.e. Enterprise Miramichi).
- Promote the City of Miramichi in a positive manner at all times.
- Provide a competitive and realistic tax rate that reflects the City's strategic priorities.
- Promote a positive climate and required conditions for diversified business development and growth.



Strategic Priority #3 - Consistency

Strategic Objectives:

- Work and think as a team at all levels.
- Increase the level of two-way communication at all levels.
- Demonstrate the City's shared values at all times.
- Develop, implement and review 3 year plans within departments that reflect the City's vision, mission, strategic priorities and objectives.
- Develop and implement a human resource plan within all departments.
- Provide appropriate leadership and management training for Council and directors.
- Provide proper time to research and seek appropriate input concerning long-term consequences of major decisions.
- Commit to effective policies and procedure and the City's strategic plan.

Organizational Structure

Changing the way we are structured as a City can help us carry out our mission by improving our ability to work. By directly linking our re-structuring efforts to the strategic priorities we will increase our potential to perform at a higher level through improved communication, reduced duplication, greater clarity and saved time.

Before we embark on a change to our existing organizational structure we need to ask, *"What will the benefit of this change be for the City, staff and its citizens?"*

The Operations Committee will be responsible for developing and presenting recommendations for changes to the City's existing organizational structure that are in line with the City's strategic priorities and objectives.



Departmental Planning

Through the Operations Committee and within the departments, the City Manager, directors and staff will develop 3 year plans to provide the foresight and continuity required to help the City meet its strategic priorities and objectives.

First, a planning framework will be developed using the City's strategic priorities and objectives to ensure consistency throughout all departments which will enable directors and staff to work with greater clarity and focus.

As with any plan, the key to its success will lie in the process used for implementation and the determination of how the achievement of key objectives is measured. These key areas will be addressed in individual department plans. Success will also require a high level of understanding and support from Council as directors and staff learn new approaches in planning, implementation and evaluation within their teams and departments.

The process is as, if not more, important as the plan itself.



What is a Vision Statement?

A vision statement is a guiding image of success and the strategic plan is the blueprint that will help the organization and community get there. It is a description in words that speaks to the desire of all stakeholders.

The vision statement should require stakeholders to stretch their expectations, aspirations and performance. Without a desired and valuable vision, why bother?

The following vision statement for the City of Miramichi is the result of input from all stakeholder levels. It will ultimately be achieved by using the talents of the region's people and by demonstrating shared values, focusing on the mission, and working towards the strategic priorities and objectives.

City of Miramichi's Vision Statement

To be the most progressive, prosperous and healthiest community in Canada.