



# SAINT JOHN

## 10-Year Strategic Plan



# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The City of Saint John/  
Menaquesk is situated in the  
traditional territory of the  
Wolastoqiyik/Maliseet. The  
Wolastoqiyik/Maliseet along with  
their Indigenous neighbours,  
the Mi'kmaq/Mi'kmaw and  
Passamaquoddy/Peskotomuhkati,  
signed Peace and Friendship  
Treaties with the British Crown  
in the 1700s that protected their  
rights to lands and resources.

# CONTENTS

Creating a Place to Thrive: Our Commitment to the Community.....Page 4

A Living Document: Evolving with Us .....Page 5

Uplifting Together: A Shared Strategy .....Page 6

Vision and Mission .....Page 7

How We Will Achieve Our Goals .....Page 8

Objectives & Actions .....Page 9

    Vibrant .....Page 10

    Prosperous .....Page 11

    Service .....Page 13

    Accountable .....Page 15

Establishing Catalytic Growth to Propel Saint John Forward.....Page 16

Building on Our Current Plans .....Page 17





## CREATING A PLACE TO THRIVE: OUR COMMITMENT TO THE COMMUNITY

We are proud to present the City of Saint John's 10-Year Strategic Plan. Now more than ever, the future is looking up, and by putting our Strategic Plan into action, we look forward to working together to uplift our community and achieve new heights. We recognize that our port city is so much more than a physical place – it's our people who make it home.

Wherever you are from, we are committed to fostering a community where you can meaningfully connect and fulfill your potential. Our Strategic Plan will guide us along the way in levelling up our expectations while upholding the values of inclusivity, accountability and financial sustainability to create a vibrant community for all Saint Johners.

**This Strategic Plan is a living document intended to help Saint John grow upward, and create a place where everyone can thrive over the next 10 years and beyond.** It builds on the City's vision and mission to establish the overarching strategic direction that will guide all other operational planning.

The goals established in our Strategic Plan are centred on uplifting the community and our citizens. With a

focus on continuous improvement, we will continue to build a city that is vibrant, prosperous, service-oriented and accountable, to be the city of choice. With guidance from a Common Council-appointed Steering Committee comprised of both members of Council and the community, our Strategic Plan has been developed through a comprehensive consultation process with citizens, key stakeholders, employees and economic development consultants.

Our Strategic Plan reflects the aspirations of our community, building on our positive upward momentum and a commitment to action.

The members of Common Council, the Steering Committee and City staff thank everyone who contributed to the development of our Strategic Plan. We look forward to working with the community and our partners to implement the many actions outlined in this document. Together, we are confident we will achieve our goals. This is our commitment to upward growth and uplifting our people.

# A LIVING DOCUMENT: EVOLVING WITH US

The City of Saint John (“City”) offers services and programs to more than 70,000 residents, many businesses and countless visitors. Over the next 10 years, we will focus on expanding in all of these areas, among others. Our Strategic Plan will guide the City’s dedicated employees in delivering services, engaging with residents and businesses and finding innovative ways to uplift the community. Below, we outline how it will be used to demonstrate our commitment to taking action and achieving our goals.

## ALIGNMENT

Municipal actions are guided by the goals identified in our Strategic Plan, which is intended to be a living document. It will be regularly updated to reflect the evolving needs, opportunities and challenges facing our community to ensure we are focused on the right actions at the right time.

Our Strategic Plan provides direction to ensure we continue to keep other strategic plans and related policies current and up to date, while managing resources so we can implement their respective recommendations. These supporting plans include our Municipal Plan (PlanSJ), Transportation Plan (MoveSJ), Parks & Recreation Plan (PlaySJ), Long-Term Financial Plan and Climate Plans.

Achieving the goals described in our Strategic Plan requires us to work with our partners in other levels of government and various agencies. It provides clear direction regarding the collaboration that will be necessary to grow Saint John and advocate for municipal reform.

The actions outlined in the Plan have been organized to align with their primary goals, however considering the holistic approach of the planning process, many of the completed actions will support multiple objectives.

## WORK PLANNING & BUDGETING

Our Strategic Plan guides service areas in the development of their work plans over the next 10 years (strategies, actions and initiatives) and alignment of their budgets to achieve the stated goals and objectives. The City is committed to actioning the Plan, ensuring resources are invested in a balanced manner over the course of its lifespan. The **success** of the Plan assumes a continued healthy growth rate for the City of Saint John, as well as a disciplined approach to funding major projects, with planning to start well in advance of anticipated timelines.

## PERFORMANCE

The goals, objectives and actions in the Plan will be measured at regular intervals to report on progress. Our performance is communicated to the public, our employees and other stakeholders through indicators and targets as part of our performance management program.

## CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

- Update the 10-year Strategic Plan annually to adapt as needed for a growing community.
- Ensure all City plans are reviewed and adjusted as scheduled and support the Strategic Plan.
- Develop work plans that balance limited resources.
- Create a shared responsibility amongst all stakeholders to achieve strategic outcomes for the City.
- Communicate and engage with stakeholders to understand the evolving needs of the City.
- Commit to managing the implementation of initiatives outlined in the Plan and reporting on progress.
- Remain agile (in spirit, structure and resources) to adapt to unforeseen opportunities and challenges, while remaining disciplined to the overall Plan.
- Maintain a healthy growth rate for the City while taking a disciplined approach to budgeting and planning.



## UPLIFTING TOGETHER: A SHARED STRATEGY

Our Strategic Plan provides overarching direction to ensure all of the City's strategic plans and policies are working together, while also guiding the creation of new ones. Our Plan is our promise to keep the public updated as we measure and improve our progress. We will uphold our commitments, working together to take a transparent and financially sustainable approach to follow through on our goals.

By providing a strong foundation of quality services, the City will promote smart growth and upward mobility. Through our dedication to continuous improvement, together we will uplift Saint Johners and empower them to thrive.

Developing a Strategic Plan to best serve our community has been a collaborative process involving citizens, City staff and stakeholders.

### We have employed the following tools and actions as part of the strategic planning process:



Environmental scan of factors impacting the community and organization at the local, provincial, federal and global level.



SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) of Saint John.



Goal, objective and action-setting workshops with the Steering Committee, Senior Leadership Team and City staff.



Public consultation through the City's Shape Your City online engagement platform and focus groups.



Refreshing the organization's vision and mission with the Steering Committee and Senior Leadership Team.



Resource planning and prioritization of strategic actions.



Strategic Plan validation through consultation with the Steering Committee and Senior Leadership Team.



# VISION

**Saint John is more than a place –  
it's the people that make it home.**

We uplift all citizens, raising our community to new heights. Together, we will continue to foster growth, inclusion, and diversity, while strengthening our foundation of quality services and accountability, to help Saint Johners thrive.

# MISSION

**Grow the city. Serve the city. Be the city of choice.**



Photo: Canadian Hockey League / Vincent Ethier



# HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR GOALS

Together, we will reach new heights for the benefit of all who call Saint John home. Through the implementation of our Strategic Plan, we will commit to an unwavering desire to grow, and ensure we meet the needs of tomorrow. We look forward to working side-by-side with our community to build a prosperous and vibrant future.



## COMMON COUNCIL

Council makes decisions that ensure a balanced approach to achieving the objectives and actions laid out in our Strategic Plan. In doing so, Council will ensure that the City is well positioned to deliver on the vision and goals for Saint John.

## CITY EMPLOYEES

Service areas will lead the implementation of our Strategic Plan. The Plan's objectives and actions will be integrated into work plans and progress reports, ensuring that all employees understand how they are helping to uplift a growing and vibrant Saint John.



## STEERING COMMITTEE

An ad hoc Committee of Council will continue to work with City staff to provide recommendations to Common Council related to the annual review of the Strategic Plan. This will ensure continued analysis of the ever-changing strategic landscape, as well as dialogue and discussion on evolving opportunities and challenges. Engagement with members of the community and other stakeholders will be a critical element of the annual reviews.

## COMMUNITY

The community will work with the City, where appropriate, on actions that contribute to achieving the goals set out in our Strategic Plan. All Saint Johners are encouraged to help bring this plan to life by getting involved and staying engaged through the Shape Your City platform and participating in various community activities. Uplift those around you by:

- Attending community events and meetings
- Recognizing and learning about inclusiveness and diversity
- Supporting local businesses and shopping local
- Volunteering with a local nonprofit organization
- Helping out at a Green Machine community clean-up



**NO ACTION IS TOO SMALL – WITH OUR COLLECTIVE IMPACT, OUR FUTURE IS CONTINUING TO LOOK UP.**





## UPLIFT THE COMMUNITY

The Strategic Plan sets out four goals to achieve our vision for serving Saint John.



### VIBRANT

We value a city that pulsates with life through arts, culture, recreation, education, employment, innovation and diversity.



### PROSPEROUS

We are creating an environment where all our citizens, neighbourhoods, natural spaces and businesses thrive.



### SERVICE

We are a professional public service and an engaged, informed community working together to ensure quality and innovative service delivery that benefits all citizens in a growing Saint John.



### ACCOUNTABLE

We are committed, with our partner agencies, boards and commissions, to demonstrate transparency in financial stewardship, performance management and reporting outcomes so our taxpayers and customers see value in their investments.



# VIBRANT

We value a city that pulsates with life through arts, culture, recreation, education, employment, innovation and diversity.

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

### SUPPORTING STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS

PlanSJ: City of Saint John Municipal Plan

#### Foster new partnerships to ensure Saint John remains an arts and culture destination

Introduce a new arts and culture policy					
Leverage Envision Saint John to promote the expansion of arts and culture attractions					
Leverage Envision Saint John to promote arts and culture in branding and tourism					
Support the Saint John Theatre Company to develop a live theatre district in Atlantic Canada					
Explore opportunities for non-City funding in support of arts and culture					

PlaySJ: Strategic Plan for Parks and Recreation

#### Work towards achieving the recommendations of PlaySJ with a proportional share increase of 5% to current parks and recreation budgets

Develop a plan to improve the programming and funding of community centres					
Develop and implement an Arena Strategy					
Implement updated plans for Rockwood Park and district parks					
Implement five new or enhanced recreational programs and services					

Saint John Affordable Housing Action Plan

#### Establish and implement a plan to address the social needs of the community that supports inclusion, diversity, equity and quality of life

Implement the City's actions in the Saint John Affordable Housing Action Plan					
Develop and implement the City's actions for a social plan for the community, including establishing guiding principles and the City's responsibilities; conducting an inclusion, diversity and equity audit; and creating a governance model that includes government and community stakeholders.					

#### Provide increased opportunities to engage a more diverse population for civic pride, participation, beautification and community partnerships

Establish a grant program to support community beautification and partnerships					
Enhance Common Council's Community Champion Awards Program					
Implement communications initiatives to promote civic pride and enhance partnerships					

2023 2024 2025 2026 2027+





# PROSPEROUS

We are creating an environment where all our citizens, neighbourhoods, natural spaces and businesses thrive.

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

### SUPPORTING STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS

Central Peninsula Secondary Plan

City Market Strategic Plan

Long-Term Financial Plan

PlanSJ

MoveSJ: City of Saint John Transportation Strategic Plan

Population Growth Framework

2023 2024 2025 2026 2027+

### Grow our property tax base by 3% annually, including at least 1% of new build assessment

Develop and implement a 10-year Strategic Plan to revitalize City industrial parks and barge terminal	●	●	●	●	●
Redevelop the Market Slip public space	●				
Market the strategic sale of City landholdings for development, including the Boars Head Road facility	●	●	●		
Identify and inventory actions to be implemented from the Central Peninsula Secondary Plan	●				
Implement the approved actions of the Central Peninsula Secondary Plan	●	●	●	●	●
Implement the approved actions of the City Market Strategic Plan	●	●	●	●	●
Ensure the catalytic growth initiatives are planned and actioned (see page 16)	●	●	●	●	●
Develop the framework for a North End Neighbourhood Plan	●	●			
Complete a 10-year review of PlanSJ informed by climate adaptation, neighbourhood plans and the 15-minute city concept		●	●		
Explore the expansion of incentive programs to promote infill development in the Primary Development Area	●				
Support the development of the Waterfront 2040 Plan with key stakeholders	●	●	●	●	●
Increase the capability of two arterial streets to address traffic congestion through other modes of transportation and the use of technology to facilitate future development in the primary development area as per PlanSJ			●	●	●
Advocate for provincial legislation and other measures to address train traffic noise		●			
Improve the municipal tax rate and tax burden competitiveness consistent with the Long-Term Financial Plan	●	●	●	●	●

### Grow our population to 85,000 from current population of 70,000

Implement inclusion and anti-racism initiatives to attract and retain newcomers in the community	●				
Leverage Envision Saint John to develop and attract new businesses	●	●			
Leverage Envision Saint John to develop and implement a Population Growth and Immigration Strategy	●	●	●		



# PROSPEROUS

We are creating an environment where all our citizens, neighbourhoods, natural spaces and businesses thrive.

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

### SUPPORTING STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS

2023	2024	2025	2026	2027+
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### Champion for fair regional cost sharing and property tax reform that recognizes the City's contributions to the region and province

Advocate for the actions in the provincial government's white paper on municipal reform with the province and other stakeholders	●	●	●		
Explore regional service opportunities consistent with the white paper on municipal reform	●	●	●		
Facilitate changes as directed by the white paper on municipal reform	●	●	●		

### Protect our environment

Plant 1,000 trees in streetscapes and green spaces by 2032	●	●	●	●	●
Reduce use of road salt by 5% from 2022 level			●	●	●
Establish a governance model to support advocacy and implement the Climate Change Adaptation Plan		●	●		
Reduce City infrastructure at high risk identified by the Climate Change Adaptation Plan	●	●	●	●	●
Establish a governance model to support the implementation of the Corporate GHG & Energy Action Plan to achieve net zero by 2050		●	●		
Migrate buses and City vehicles to low carbon fuel in accordance with the Public Transit and Fleet Low Carbon Migration Strategy	●	●	●	●	●
Develop and implement a municipal deep energy retrofit program for municipal facilities subject to funding	●	●	●	●	●
Complete a feasibility study on building a district energy system to supply green thermal energy to municipal and community buildings subject to funding and business case	●	●			
Reduce community GHG emissions by 9% below 2015 levels by 2025, 18% below by 2035, and be carbon neutral by 2050	●	●	●	●	●
Reduce corporate carbon footprint by 30% below 2015 levels by 2025 and be carbon neutral by 2050	●	●	●	●	●

Climate Change Adaptation Plan

Corporate GHG & Energy Action Plan

Public Transit and Fleet Low Carbon Mitigation Strategy





# SERVICE

We are a professional public service and an engaged, informed community working together to ensure quality and innovative service delivery that benefits all citizens in a growing Saint John.

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

SUPPORTING  
STRATEGIC  
DOCUMENTS

2023  
2024  
2025  
2026  
2027+

### Deliver excellence in serving our customers to defined service levels

Establish service levels across the organization		●	●	●	●
Complete the planned full implementation of the Integrated Customer Service Centre	●	●	●		
Leverage Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) technology to enhance customer service	●	●			
Implement an annual symposium with the development industry to enhance facilitation and collaboration	●				

### Build and invest in transit and active transportation to increase overall sustainable transportation usage to 20%

Build a reliable, convenient public transit service to increase ridership by 10% over pre-pandemic levels	●	●	●		
Create a long-term strategic plan for Saint John Transit that includes stable, predictable funding levels	●				
Implement a modern public transit service that includes electronic fares, enhanced communications, on-demand service, dynamic routing and enhanced bus stop amenities	●	●			
Create an Uptown hub system to support the efficient movement of transit buses	●	●	●		
Build a Main Street active transportation corridor, subject to provincial approval and support	●				
Prioritize the installation of sidewalks in accordance with the Sidewalk Infill Strategy in MoveSJ	●				
Enhance walkability in the winter by increasing sidewalk clearance to 75% of City sidewalks				●	
Implement five initiatives in accordance with the MoveSJ Cycling Strategy and with stakeholder engagement				●	
Pedestrianize at least one street	●	●			
Complete Harbour Passage and its connections to adjacent neighbourhoods	●	●	●	●	●
Advocate to other levels of government for more municipal control over roadways to serve community needs	●	●	●	●	
Implement prioritized actions in MoveSJ to improve safety and accessibility for all transportation modes			●	●	●
Implement the MoveSJ Goods Movement Strategy priorities to balance economic benefits and heavy truck traffic		●	●	●	●
Upgrade sidewalks so that 75% are in a safe and accessible condition	●	●	●	●	●

MoveSJ



# SERVICE

We are a professional public service and an engaged, informed community working together to ensure quality and innovative service delivery that benefits all citizens in a growing Saint John.

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

### SUPPORTING STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS

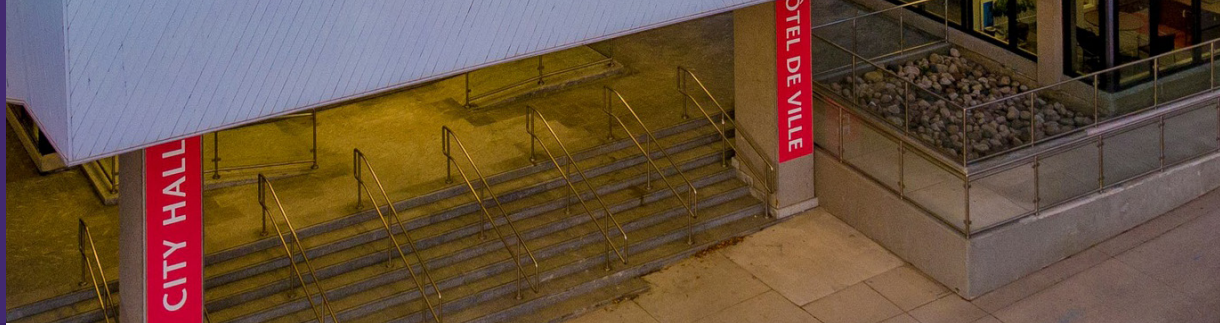
City of Saint John Traffic Calming Policy  
City of Saint John Road Safety Strategy

#### Deliver sustainable public safety programs that meet the needs of a growing and diverse community

Upgrade 40% of current designated accessible parking spaces to meet recognized standards for accessibility					
Implement 20 major traffic calming projects in accordance with the Traffic Calming policy					
Develop a multi-year strategic plan for Saint John Fire informed by the fire service review					
Complete 10 emergency exercises using the simulation theatre that replicate the risk profile of the community					
Improve the outcomes of community standards programs, including Minimum Property Standards					
Implement five transportation safety infrastructure projects recommended by a completed Road Safety Strategy					
Support the Police Commission in the implementation of a five-year strategic plan, as appropriate					
Implement the technology and processes to meet NextGen 911 and related legislated requirements					
Develop a plan to enhance security at all City facilities for community and employee safety					
Work with the province to ensure safe walking and cycling conditions on their bridges and designated highways					
Increase fully accessible signalized intersections (e.g., audible messaging, ramping) for pedestrians to 60%					

2023	2024	2025	2026	2027+





# ACCOUNTABLE

We are committed, with our partner agencies, boards and commissions, to demonstrate transparency in financial stewardship, performance management and reporting outcomes, so our taxpayers and customers see value in their investments.

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

### SUPPORTING STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS

Long-Term Financial Plan

2023	2024	2025	2026	2027+
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#### Deliver excellence in financial stewardship

Enhance reporting and monitoring of agencies, boards, commissions, service agreements and grant recipients

●	●			
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Implement an internal auditing program

●				
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Procure and implement a modern enterprise resource planning (ERP) system to integrate business processes and transform decision making

●	●	●		
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Implement an assessment management system

●	●			
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Leverage City benefits from its ownership of Saint John Energy

	●	●	●	●
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Develop City-sourced revenue to achieve annual contributions of 10% of City revenue

	●	●	●	●
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Develop a two-year operating plan and a five-year capital plan annually approved based on assessment

			●	●
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Pursue opportunities for recognition of best practices for financial stewardship through the Government Financial Officers Association

			●	
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#### Strengthen the competitiveness of the water utility in comparison to municipalities with similar service and infrastructure

Action the utility capital budget policy to support strategic infrastructure investment

●	●	●	●	●
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Seek external funding for future utility infrastructure investment

●	●	●	●	●
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Undertake a feasibility study for universal water metering of all residential customers

				●
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Seek legislative changes to implement a water service levy on vacant and service lots

				●
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#### Focus on continuously improving as a high-performance public service organization

Implement a corporate performance management and reporting system

●	●	●		
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Redesign the continuous improvement program to integrate with the performance management system

	●	●		
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Undertake a minimum of seven major continuous improvement projects

			●	●
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Develop a 10-year Human Resources (Workforce) Strategy

●	●			
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Enhance the existing employee recognition program

●				
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Redesign the current employee performance program

	●	●		
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## ESTABLISHING CATALYTIC GROWTH TO PROPEL SAINT JOHN FORWARD

A catalyst is a person or thing that causes change. Building on this concept, Council has established catalytic growth initiatives that will drive transformational outcomes for Saint John, further uplifting the City. These projects must meet key criteria from an economic development standpoint. They must also advance the City's aspirational goals related to growth; be significant enough to stimulate spillover effects that will spur much larger growth efforts; and require partnerships with other levels of government and the community.

The following eight high-impact initiatives are the City of Saint John's top priorities for catalytic growth. They will play an important role in addressing critical infrastructure and partnerships needed to propel the City forward.

### FOUR KEY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS:

- 1 Innovative Central Peninsula Learning Commons
- 2 Redevelopment of Fundy Quay
- 3 A new comprehensive recreational facility
- 4 Investment in industrial parks

### FOUR ADVOCACY EFFORTS:

- 1 Comprehensive tax reform
- 2 Matching dollars for bilateral funding
- 3 Affordable housing
- 4 Post-secondary education



# BUILDING ON OUR CURRENT PLANS

The many actions laid out in our Strategic Plan make a conscious commitment to update, develop and implement community and service plans. Our Strategic Plan has been evaluated to ensure all plans are properly resourced and balanced to achieve the City of Saint John's desired outcomes.

## COUNCIL PRIORITIES

Saint John Common Council has adopted five priorities for the 2021-26 term: Grow, Green, Belong, Move and Perform. These priorities will guide all aspects of municipal activities, policies, procedures and budgets.

## LONG-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

This plan ensures the City can afford to provide reliable services and sound infrastructure for the next decade and beyond. It also provides a foundation for targets to be implemented in annual budgets.

## PlanSJ

Our municipal land-use plan guides development and investment in Saint John and ensures planning decisions made by the City over a 25-year planning period will serve the long-term best interests of the whole community.

## MoveSJ

Moving people and goods throughout the City requires a balanced transportation network. MoveSJ, which will guide transportation infrastructure investments within Saint John for the next 25 years, integrates active shared modes of transportation and supports sustainable development, healthy communities and a vibrant urban core.

## PlaySJ

The strategic plan for parks and recreation strives to meet the community's recreational needs while staying within our financial means. It provides guidelines and recommendations on how best to improve our quality of life and make Saint John a more attractive place to live, work and play.

## GROWTH PLANS

Economic and population growth will determine Saint John's future. The City's growth plans include our Population Growth Framework and associated growth plans developed by the City's agencies, boards and committees, including the neighbourhood plans and the plan to accelerate the catalytic growth initiatives.

## WORK PLANS

Annual work plans are created to carry out initiatives as described by respective plans. Work plans capture timelines as well as human and financial resources.