STRATEGIC PLAN
Town of Paradise

2015-2018

"What's the use of running if you're not on the right road?"
On behalf of my colleagues on council, it is a pleasure to unveil our new strategic plan for 2015-2018. This three year plan represents our commitment to the residents of Paradise to continue to strive to provide the very best programs, the highest level of municipal services, and continued wise investment in our town’s future. Through good planning and strategic investment we are able to maintain the growth and prosperity that has been the hallmark of our success in recent years, and at the same time - step back, evaluate, and prioritize both capital and operational investments that will keep us moving forward.

Paradise continues to experience unprecedented growth in all areas, and we have the youngest “family based” demographic in all of Newfoundland and Labrador. These are exciting times to be part of local government in Paradise. I’m extremely proud to be your mayor, to be part of an incredibly strong council and professional team, and to be part of such an important strategic planning process.

Our vision is to “create a Paradise for everyone”. And we intend to deliver! We want to ensure that residents of all ages and interests feel the same strong sense of pride and community that is being developed, and enjoy the amenities and unique experience that living in Paradise inevitably provides.

This strategic plan helps focus our thoughts and prioritizes our investment and commitments to the people of Paradise for the next three years. The same high level of “day to day” municipal programs, operations, and services will continue. But this plan highlights the priorities and initiatives that we feel are necessary and achievable over the next three years, and we are proud to share them with our residents and the general public.

Finally, I encourage you to get involved, be engaged, and help support the community building process that is essential to our community’s success. You (the people) are our community. We value and appreciate everything you do and the many ways you contribute to our community life. We are here to assist and support you in whatever ways we can – and I thank you for making Paradise your home and for your contributions to our growth and development.

Dan Bobbett, Mayor
Town of Paradise
Strengths and Assets

- Incredible (and new) recreation facilities, scenic walking trails, open spaces, and active living programs for people of all ages
- Great location close to the airport, waterfront, hospitals, shopping, university, and other amenities
- A growing community with plenty of room to expand
- Urban core with appealing pond side and rural appeal – the best of both worlds
- Strong and capable professional staff
- Engaged citizens and a strong volunteer base
- An ideal size from a servicing perspective
- Diverse and supportive council
- Young community demographics – growing families
- Strong & diverse economic base – residential, commercial, industrial
- In tune and supportive of green technologies and environmental initiatives
- Continuously monitoring and addressing strengths and deficiencies
- Revised operational structure that is “fine tuned” and supportive
- A “preferred” location to live and raise a family
- Immediate availability for commercial/light industrial development
- Community built on good planning and wise financial investment
- Recreation and community based programming for people of all ages; one that truly responds to the entire population and community demographics
Vision

To create a Paradise for everyone.

Mandate

To provide municipal services and represent the people of Paradise to the best of our abilities.

Values

Responsible local government that is effective, transparent, and accountable

A family oriented community that is responsive and engaged

A place where people feel safe, supported, and nurtured

Strong sense of belonging, well developed neighbourhoods, and a unique community pride

Openness, accessibility, and inclusion — a town that is welcoming to everyone — regardless of their age, interests, or abilities

Good neighbour and a strong regional partner

Greeting everyone with a warm welcome — regardless of where you call home

A place that embraces innovation and new technologies

A leader in local government & community development

“Leaders establish the vision for the future and outline the strategy for getting there.”

—John Kotter
Mission Statement

We are committed to strategic investment, open and responsible financial management, a safe community environment, outstanding recreation programs and facilities, and a full suite of local services that are applied fairly and consistently to help ensure our sustainability and success as a community.

“We are limited not by our abilities, but by our vision.”
Critical Areas Identified

1. Traffic and Transportation
2. Prudent Fiscal Management and Accountability
3. Infrastructure
4. Environmentally Friendly Building and Development
5. Facilities
6. Communications
Traffic and Transportation

**Desired Outcome**
To maximize efficiencies in traffic flow, heighten awareness, and develop a public transportation system that is effective, affordable, and accessible.

**Key Issues**
- Congested traffic in and around Paradise – but especially during rush hour in the morning and evening
- Need for another major entrance and exit to relieve traffic congestion
- More education and awareness of routes, traffic patterns, car pooling, and other options to help relieve traffic congestion
- Lack of public transportation
- Traffic flow and access/egress for areas of commercial and light industrial development
- Safe and practical links and connections within the region and with major highways and by-passes

**Strategic Actions**
- Review and implement the more practical recommendations from the Traffic Improvement Plan and other transportation reviews that were undertaken
- Work with other municipalities in the region to develop a more affordable regional public transportation system and other regional transportation initiatives
- Work with traffic consultants (and service providers) to maximize internal traffic patterns, to better synchronize lights and traffic flows, and to provide other initiatives to improve safety and traffic efficiency
- Work with various levels of government and funding partners to develop a plan (and timelines) to complete the expansion and widening of Topsail Road through Paradise
- Continue with plans to develop “roundabouts” at identified locations throughout Paradise to improve traffic flow, relieve congestion, and develop safer and more effective traffic patterns
- Develop and implement a traffic communications and awareness campaign to better educate the public about usage, routes, safe driving practices, car pooling, and other options to help alleviate congestion and improve public safety
- Undertake a detailed review and assessment of access/egress, connections, traffic patterns, and other options relating to St. Thomas’ Line and surrounding areas
Prudent Fiscal Management and Accountability

 Desired Outcome
Ensure that the town provides sound financial planning, good day to day management and oversight, and applies the highest levels of scrutiny and public accountability to every facet of its financial operations for the benefit of taxpayers.

 Key Issues
• The number (and cost) of various operational and capital demands being made of council as we continue to grow and develop
• Increasing need for wise investment, greater controls, and overall financial accountability during a period of economic instability and uncertainty province-wide
• Conflicting priorities for important large-scale capital projects and investments (waste water treatment; town hall; aquatics center; underground infrastructure)
• Increasing regional operational costs – fire, water, waste water
• Demands for public accountability and fiscal responsibility
• Recognition of our “stage of development” as a town – still growing; increasing demands; need for capital investment; inability to do everything at once

 Strategic Actions
• Develop a practical strategy/tool to help assess the overall impact of new developments and investments from an economic development perspective to help prioritize where the best investments can (and should) be made
• Devise and implement a new “Business Attraction and Retention Strategy” to help attract and retain local investment and highlight the many advantages of doing business in Paradise
• As a council and senior staff, develop mechanisms to better “prioritize” demands on a day to day (and longer term) basis to better distinguish “needs from wants” in our investment strategy
• Develop strong financial partnerships and investor confidence by expanding (and nurturing) public and private partnerships and expanding the town’s financial and political influences
• Review, develop, and implement best practice financial policies, procedures, and protocols in municipal government to safeguard our financial security and help ensure sustainability

Don’t go for small commitments on big things, but aim for big commitments on small things.
—Jeroen de Flanders
Infrastructure

**Desired Outcome**
To maintain basic infrastructure to ensure we are investing not only in new buildings and modern facilities, but that we are continuing to invest in sustainable infrastructure that will serve the people of Paradise for many generations to come.

**Key Issues**
- Need to replace aging infrastructure within the town that was built many years ago
- Connecting all Paradise so residents feel part of the town’s growth and prosperity and are getting their share of the town’s infrastructure investment strategy
- Ensuring that the town continues to address basic problems with underground infrastructure on an ongoing basis - curb and gutter replacement, sidewalks, trailways, pedestrian walkways, storm water management systems, and so much more
- Need to establish life-cycles and timelines for infrastructure reinvestment
- Ensuring there is sufficient infrastructure capacity for continued expansion, growth, and development

**Strategic Actions**
- Complete and implement ongoing infrastructure assessments and studies that have already been identified
- Develop a systematic approach to connect older existing developments within the town to new and improved infrastructure systems and standards
- Work with staff and professional engineering consultants to develop a plan (and timelines) to rebuild and redevelop areas within the town that require upgrading
- Work towards development and implementation of a full-fledged Asset Management Plan to ensure there is adequate and ongoing investment in the town’s basic infrastructure requirements

“The result of bad communication is a disconnect between strategy and execution.”
—Chuck Martin, IBM
Desired Outcome
To have the Town of Paradise developed in accordance with the highest standards and best building and development practices available.

Key Issues
• Address issues surrounding diversified and affordable housing options
• Monitor the pace of development to help ensure a high level of oversight and compliance
• Control the degree and extent of clear-cutting within the town
• Being mindful of applying green initiatives and high standards of environmental controls into our building and development regulations
• Making sure builders, contractors, and developers understand the vision and adhere to the regulations and development controls being applied (and the rationale) for implementing them

Strategic Actions
• Develop a public awareness and communications plan about the value of implementing practical green initiatives into our building regulations and redevelopment plans, and how they help the environment and make us more sustainable
• Work with developers to identify and apply best practice development design and emerging development standards that are cost effective, environmentally friendly, and practical
• Utilize modern design technologies, social media, and user-friendly apps to promote (and share) sound environmental development practices
• Review the town’s building and development regulations to identify ways to implement practical green initiatives and standards (i.e. review building and development regulations with a green lens)
• Integrate higher density housing into remaining development to ensure suitability and maximum value
• Rigorously apply current conservation sub-division design standards to the town’s development regulations and ensure that builders and developers apply these standards going forward
Facilities

**Desired Outcome**
Continue to develop new, modern facilities within our means, but prioritize our needs, explore options, and ensure that we do not over-extend ourselves as we maximize our capital investments for the overall good of the town.

**Key Issues**
- Need for more functional office and working space at the town hall to accommodate our revised operational structure
- A proposed community center for the St. Thomas’ Line area
- Discussion around the need/expectations for a new aquatics center for Paradise
- Addressing more basic facility needs and investments such as a new waste water treatment facility for the town
- Decision needs to be made whether or not to invest in an artificial turf soccer field

**Strategic Actions**
- Undertake a detailed Alternative Space Review to consider various options for an expanded professional space for staff and council as an interim “Town Hall” until we are in a better position to invest in a new building
- Within the next 12 months, undertake a detailed analysis of both capital and operational costs and a feasibility study around building a new aquatics center for the town that will meet its needs for the next thirty years (and beyond) that will help council make an informed decision on whether to invest (or not) – and when
- Identify partners and investors in a proposed new dragon boat facility and look at various building and design options that can be discussed with potential investors
- Develop and/or research effective mechanisms that can be successfully applied to municipal facilities to determine costs/benefits for building new facilities and other capital investments
- Apply detailed building assessment review standards to existing facilities to determine their feasibility, life cycles, building requirements, and refurbishing costs

*The essence of strategy is choosing what “not” to do.*
—Michael Porter
Communications

Desired Outcome
To keep residents well informed of things that are happening in the town using a myriad of communications systems and technologies to provide practical information about plans, programs, services, facilities, and operations on an ongoing basis.

Key Issues
- Making sure our communications reach all residents – regardless of their age or interests
- Maximizing new social technologies and devices
- Keeping communications as simple and user-friendly as possible
- Making sure residents receive a prompt and professional response
- Eliminating problems associated with claims by taxpayers/residents that they simply “were not aware” or did not have access to the information
- Providing a number of different means to accommodate various citizen requests for information
- Improving the lines of communication between senior staff/council; senior staff/employees; and generally improving the flow of information and communications internally

Strategic Actions
- By September 30, 2015 a format, design, and timelines need to be developed for an Internal Newsletter to help keep staff informed, knowledgeable, appreciated, motivated, and engaged
- Maintain a schedule of regular meetings of senior staff to share priorities, exchange ideas, provide updates, and generally improve information and communications at the highest professional level within the organization
- Work with communications specialists and web designers to develop a new “user friendly” website using the most modern technologies and integration systems based on best practice and website design
- Within the next two years develop a Public Engagement Strategy that examines all aspects of public engagement, needs, input mechanisms, delivery models, demographics, response times, and added value.
- Develop a Communications Committee comprised of staff, communications professionals, and council representation and develop a detailed “Terms of Reference” for the committee
- Review and apply standards for the highest levels of openness and accountability to be applied within all town structures and departments
- Schedule an open meeting with council/CAO at least 3 times annually
Communication and Implementation Reviews

Strategic plans require continuous communications, review, and monitoring if they are to be as effective as they can be in focusing our priorities and maximizing our efforts and investments. There are three (3) distinct components to an effective strategic plan – and all three components are interdependent.

Each of the three stages is as important as the other. If either is missing – the plan simply does not work. An incredible strategic plan is totally ineffective if it is not communicated to staff and to the public. Similarly, a plan that is not carefully and closely monitored and purposefully implemented is equally ineffective. So, all three components are required to successfully develop and implement a strategic plan.

Strategic plans require focused communications and regular monitoring and reviews. Integrate strategic planning meetings into your staff’s meeting schedule. At least annually, a strategic plan review should be undertaken with senior staff and council and a completion scoring applied to measure success. Integrate your plan into your operations and decisions. Don’t view the plan as an “added” burden. It is designed to help frame and focus your priorities on things that matter most. Share the plan, implement the actions, and monitor your success.

Remember, a strategy, even a great one, doesn’t implement itself.