



STRATEGIC PLAN

2023-2026



Developed

May 2023

Community

Futures



Winnipeg River



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FORWARD

On behalf of the Rural Municipality of Whitemouth Council, it is my pleasure to present the **2023-2026 Municipal Strategic Plan**. This plan is a living document and a blueprint for what we intend to achieve in service to our community in the coming years.

The Strategic Plan represents the shared vision our Council and Administration have for the future of our municipality. This plan focuses on the exploration of new and innovative projects, programs, and methods of service delivery to enhance the quality of life for our region's ratepayers and visitors.

Additionally, this plan addresses the importance of continuously improving our high-quality public services, while ensuring fiscal accountability.

The Strategic Plan for the Rural Municipality of Whitemouth is the result of many hours of consultation, and the thoughtful exchange of ideas between members of Council and Administration. A special thanks to Community Futures Winnipeg River for their assistance and guidance throughout this important process. The Strategic Plan outlines the municipal direction and priorities for the next four years and sets the course for the future of the Rural Municipality of Whitemouth.

On behalf of Rural Municipality of Whitemouth Council,

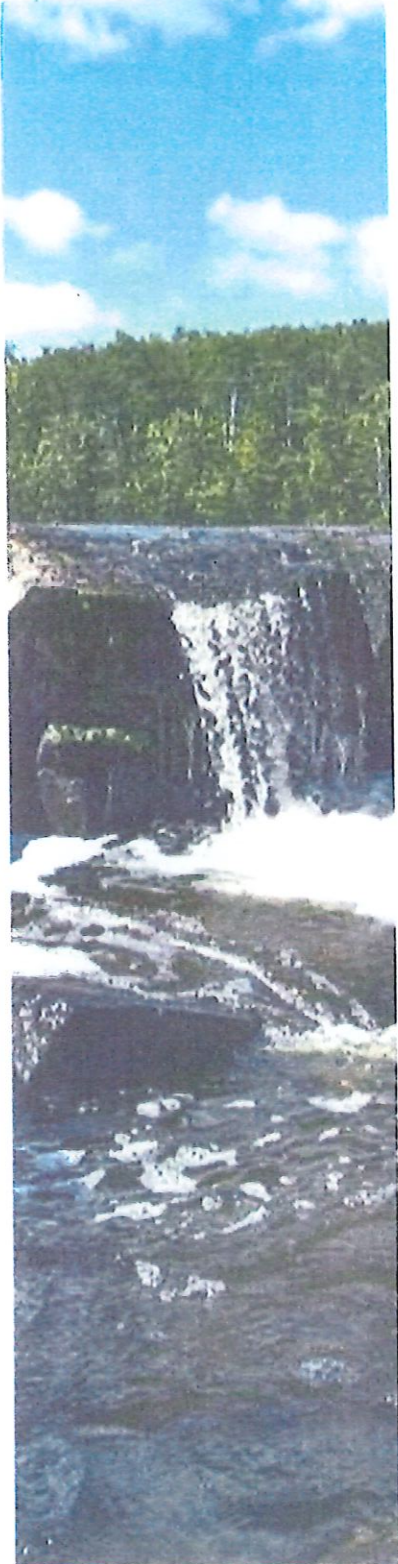
Walter Amerongen, Reeve

Tim Honke, Deputy Reeve

Duncan McDougald, Councillor

Delmer Staerk, Councillor

Blaine Stead, Councillor





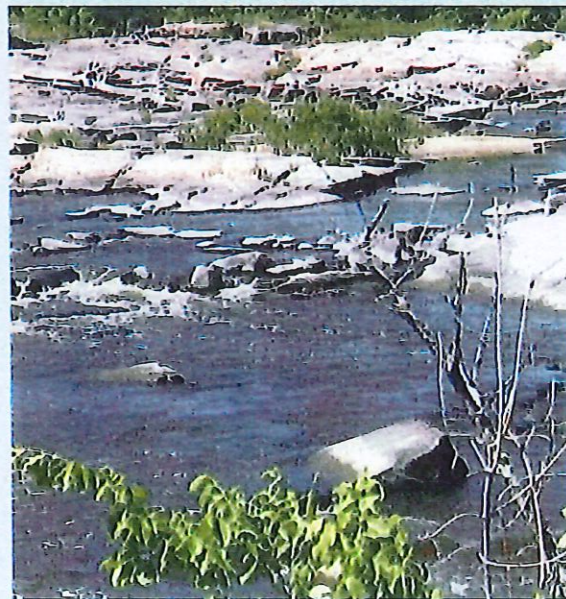
LOCAL AREA

The Whitemouth River Valley is situated midway between the city of Winnipeg and the town of Kenora. The area stretches over a district of fertile field, winding streams, hills, and valleys. The Valley is named after the river which runs through it from south to north, called Whitemouth. The area is a diversified geological beauty mixed with a friendly and courteous community spirit. From the Seven Sisters Hydro Dam, through the rolling valleys of the various falls along the Whitemouth River, prairie grasslands blend with Canadian Shield and forest.

It is this location that drew Indigenous Peoples to the sacred junction of the Whitemouth and Winnipeg Rivers dating back almost 9000 years ago and the European Settlers in the 1800s to the Town of Whitemouth, as the railway building era began making the town into a staging and supply center. After the railway era had quietened, farming such as dairy, grain, hog and poultry became the mainstay of the region.

There are over 17 centennial farms in the area, with several still in operation. These farms are a proud lineage and indeed a testament to the hard-working people in the region.

Manitoba's celebrated history has primarily been told in mainstream media from a settler perspective. We would like to acknowledge that the Whitemouth River Valley Heritage Driving Tour is located on traditional territory of Anishinaabe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, Dene and Metis people. The RM of Whitemouth is located on Treaty 1 and Treaty 3 Territory and the homeland of the Métis Nation. We respect the treaties made on these territories.





MUNICIPAL PURPOSES

According to the **Municipal Act**, the purposes of a municipality are:

- (a) To provide good government
- (b) To provide services, facilities, or other things that, in the opinion of the council of the municipality, are necessary or desirable for all or part of the municipality
- (c) To develop and maintain safe and viable communities

STRATEGIC PLANNING ROLES

Council Roles

The Rural Municipality of Whitemouth is responsible for the governance of the municipality by setting policy and determining the priorities for services, programs, and infrastructure. Council balances the needs and expectations of residents in a financially responsible manner and is accountable to the community. Specific to the strategic plan, Council's roles are to:

- Set policies that align with the strategic plan;
- Ensure appropriate resources are provided to achieve Council's goals and strategies;
- Review progress and performance to track the success of the plan annually; and
- Review the strategic direction on a regular basis and ensure that the plan is responding to pressures in the local, regional, and global environment

Administration Roles

The Rural Municipality of Whitemouth is responsible for implementing the strategic direction of Council through solid business planning, resource management, and service provision. Specific to the strategic plan, Administration's roles are to:

- Ensure current services and programs align with the strategic plan;
- Implement and maintain the service standards set by Council;
- Ensure the efficient use of Rural Municipality resources; and
- Develop and maintain administrative systems and processes, such as annual and long-term budgeting that support the implementation of the plan

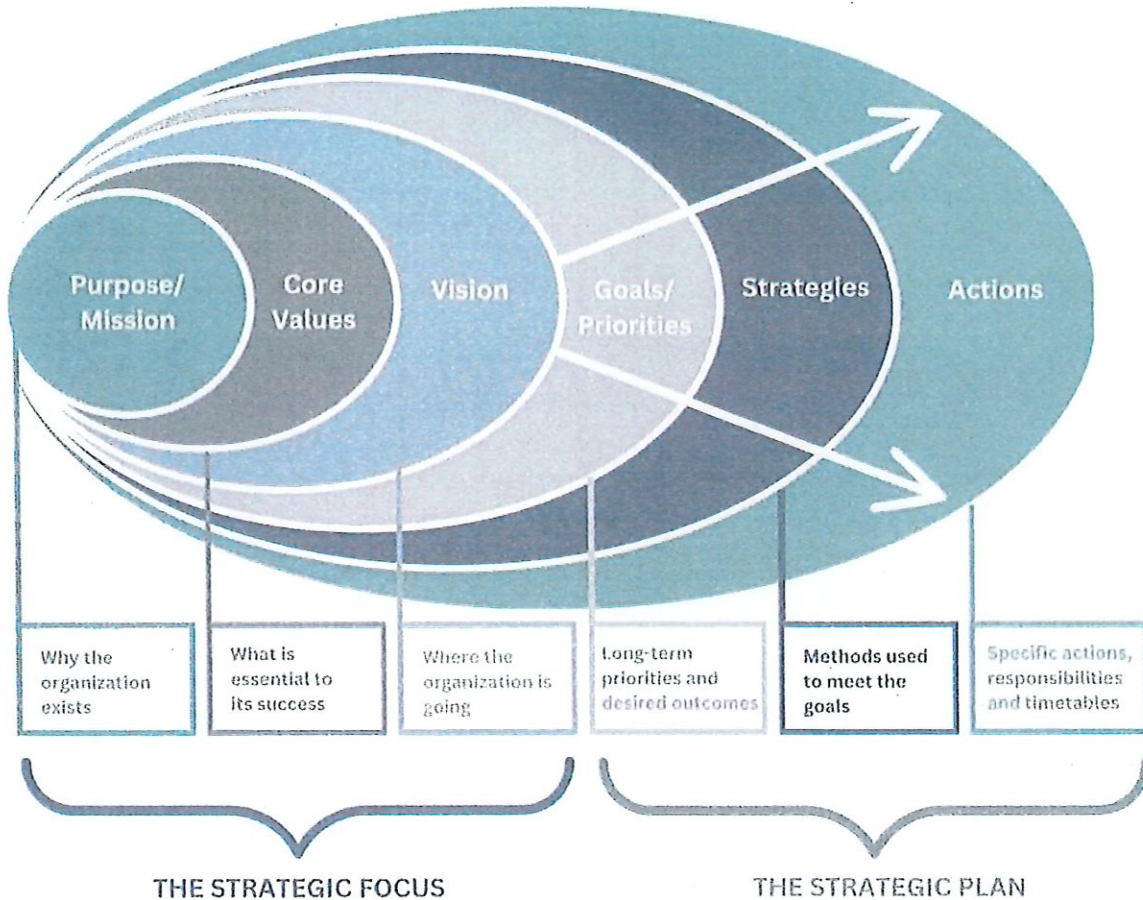
STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

In February 2023, the Rural Municipality of Whitemouth conducted a strategic planning process with consultation provided by Community Futures Winnipeg River (CFWR). A strategic plan is a living document used to establish the direction of an organization and to guide its activities and initiatives. Strategic plans typically have a 3-5-year horizon and set the vision, mission, and broad strategic goals for the organization. Through strategic planning you create a picture of the current environment; envision the future of the organization; identify issues, opportunities, and priorities; and determine ways to make the vision a reality.

February 2023	First Strategic Planning Session	Council and Administration met with CFWR to discuss the existing mission, vision, and value statements; to identify strengths and challenges; and to determine priorities of the municipality for the next four years.
February 2023	Documentation	Meeting notes from the first session were provided to the Council and Administration by CFWR for review. Revised guiding statements were also drafted.
February 2023	Second Strategic Planning Session	Council and Administration met with CFWR a second time to review the edited guiding statements; and dive further into the priorities by determining related goals and strategies.
May 2023	Documentation	Meeting notes and the draft Strategic Plan were developed by CFWR and provided to Council and Administration.
May 2023	Review and Adoption	Council reviewed the Strategic Plan. Plan was revised based on input and adopted by Council following final review.
2023-2026	Implementation	The plan is communicated, implemented, monitored, adjusted as required, evaluated, and celebrated.
Annually	Annual Planning	The strategic plan is reviewed and considered within operational planning and budgeting processes of the organization each year.

PLANNING MODEL

The following planning model was developed to visually depict the various planning components.



Notes

1. The planning components are shared among all Council members.
2. Council will review and determine goals and strategies on a regular basis.
NOTE: The goals and strategies within the Strategic Plan were identified in February 2023. Additional goals and strategies (related to the priorities) identified should be added to the Strategic Plan at regular times (i.e. quarterly).
3. Administration to track progress made towards the goals and strategies determined within this Strategic Plan.
4. Specific projects and initiatives can be planned and tracked in more detail using the Annual Plan Template included as a separate document.

RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF WHITEMOUTH

“ Mission | Our purpose

The Rural Municipality of *Whitemouth* provides responsible municipal leadership, administration, and services that enhance the quality of life for our citizens and visitors. ”

Organizational Values | Our Guiding Principles

The following values describe our leadership principles and guide our decision making, relationships, and service to the community:

COMMUNITY FOCUSED

We will work collectively with our citizens, stakeholders, and neighboring municipalities to address the needs and opportunities within the Municipality.

RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP

We will provide dependable, fair, inclusive, and proactive leadership in guiding the direction and managing municipal resources.

ACCOUNTABLE AND APPROACHABLE

We will be accountable and approachable to our citizens for the public responsibility entrusted in us.

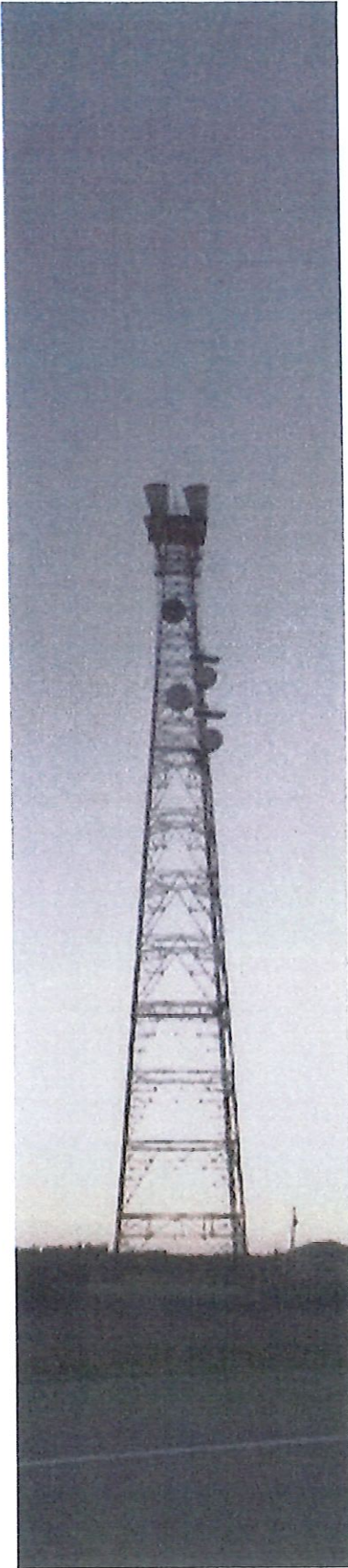
INTEGRITY

We will uphold the highest ethical principles as we carry out our work and communications in a respectful, transparent, honest, and reliable manner.

OPEN MINDED

We will be open minded and considerate of all information and input in order to make the best decisions possible for the Municipality and our citizens as a whole.





RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF WHITEMOUTH

Core Services | What we do

The following core services and functions are performed by the Rural Municipality of Whitemouth:

GENERAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Council operations, fiscal services, strategic direction, capital planning, by-laws, policies, and administration

PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Fire services, emergency measures, by-law enforcement, and animal control

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Roads, trails, drainage, and signage

GENERAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Infrastructure services related to water, wastewater, and sewer

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Solid waste management, including garbage and recycling

LAND USE AND PLANNING SERVICES

Long-term development plans, zoning, building permits, and inspections

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Business attraction and retention, infrastructure development support, tourism, and local marketing

RECREATION AND CULTURAL SERVICES

Boat launches, docks, trails, and parks

SUPPORTING SERVICES

Support to other important public services including police services, public libraries, community centres, and various health and social services



RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF WHITEMOUTH

As the local government of a diverse and resilient rural population, we recognize that sustainable local growth, enhanced tourism, and quality infrastructure and services are vital to our future.

“ Vision | **What we desire for the future** ”

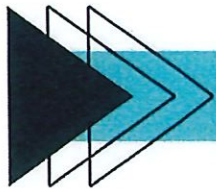
The Municipality of *Whitemouth* fosters an inclusive and welcoming environment that values collaboration, innovation, and responsible stewardship of local resources. We are recognized for our natural beauty, cultural diversity, entrepreneurial spirit, and extensive tourism opportunities. Quality infrastructure, vast services, and natural resources produce a highly desired environment to live or visit. We envision bustling communities developed through purposeful and sustainable growth, creating a legacy for future generations.



PRIORITIES

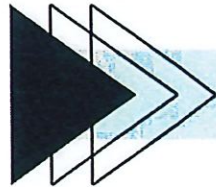
Priorities reflect the important issues, opportunities, and key focus areas, that when addressed, will allow the organization to flourish. Priorities are the things that matter most. They are additional to the day-to-day operations. Priorities are not listed in order of importance. They represent specific areas in which the organization must focus on to succeed.

From 2023-2026, the Rural Municipality of Whitemouth will strategically focus efforts to achieve positive results within the following five priorities:



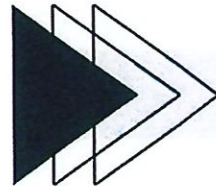
Local Governance and Administration

Providing responsive and efficient government by demonstrating leadership in transparency, accountability, fiscal responsibility, good governance, community engagement, and continuous improvement of our program and service delivery.



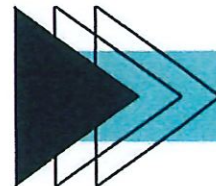
Community Services

Identifying and addressing community needs by engaging the public in meaningful communications, collaborating with local groups, and partnering with neighboring municipalities and local and provincial health providers to achieve common goals and enhance community services.



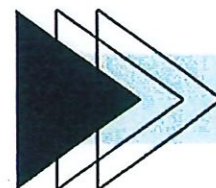
Community Economic Development

Working to develop, diversify and transform our local economy by promoting small business development, community innovation and strategic collaborations. Achieving sustainability through a balance of residential and commercial growth.



Infrastructure and Equipment Enhancements

Maintaining and enhancing assets and infrastructure within the municipality in order to meet residential and commercial needs to encourage area growth and sustainability in our area communities.



Accessible and Affordable Housing

Supporting the provision of affordable and accessible housing across the entire housing spectrum, while minimizing environmental, social, economic impacts of new development, and ensuring the required resources are in place.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goals are broad statements that describe outcomes the organization wants to accomplish. Goals stem from the mission and vision and can be long-term, short-term, or medium-term in nature. There are four types of goals – time-based; performance based; qualitative or quantitative; and outcome or process based.

Strategies are the methods or directions the organization will embark on to help reach the desired goals. It usually takes various strategies to reach a single goal.

Goals and strategies (methods and directions) have been documented for each of the four priorities as a result of information gathered and planning discussions. The goals and strategies support the mission and core functions of the organization. *Further goals and strategies will be added to the Strategic Plan as they are identified. The goals and strategies will be reviewed each year while selecting annual projects/activities and budget items.*



STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1 LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Providing responsive and efficient government by demonstrating leadership in transparency, accountability, fiscal responsibility, good governance, community engagement, and continuous improvement of our program and service delivery.

Goal 1.1: Operate an efficient and effective government to ensure responsiveness to citizens and secure the long-term sustainability of the local community.

- 1.1.1: Define and implement processes to effectively identify and respond to the diverse existing and future community needs.
- 1.1.2: Ensure that governance and administration practices, financial procedures, and accountable, effective, and inclusive decision-making processes are followed.
- 1.1.3: Continually review and seek ways to improve municipal efficiencies and service levels to best meet the needs of community members.
- 1.1.4: Create an effective internal communication system that promotes transparent dialogue among all local government staff and officials, and contributes to a more knowledgeable and informed work environment.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 1.2: Create a culture of transparency and accountability in municipal operations and decision-making processes.

1.2.1: Create and maintain open and accessible communication channels between the local government and citizens.

1.2.2: Provide clear and consistent communication on the progress of initiatives, services, and activities to ensure transparency, and encourage citizen engagement.

1.2.3: Publish key decisions and updates on a municipal website, in quarterly newsletters, and on social media channels.

Goal 1.3: Foster an environment of accessibility and openness where community members can engage with the local government.

1.3.1: Encourage feedback and engagement by conducting public hearings, surveys, and other interactions with community members to ensure their voices are heard.

1.3.2: Implement technology-driven solutions to improve communication and collaboration between local government and citizens in the rural municipality.

1.3.3: Create a welcoming atmosphere by establishing an open-door policy that fosters mutual respect and open communication between local government office and community members.

Goal 1.3: Develop effective strategies to recruit and retain qualified employees.

1.4.1: Develop and execute a succession planning strategy aimed at recruiting and retaining employees with the skills and qualifications necessary to meet current and future needs of our local government.

1.4.2: Offer competitive wages and comprehensive benefits packages to encourage employees to stay and contribute towards the growth of the local government.

1.4.3: Promote the local government as a desirable and attractive place to work by taking active steps to enhance the work environment, ensure job satisfaction, and create a conducive atmosphere for growth.

1.4.4: Encourage and resource staff training and professional development opportunities that ensures employees have the knowledge, skills, and technical understanding to succeed.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

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STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2 COMMUNITY SERVICES

Identifying and addressing community needs by engaging the public in meaningful communications, collaborating with local groups, and partnering with neighboring municipalities and local and provincial health providers to achieve common goals and enhance community services.

Goal 2.1: Increase ratepayer participation in local committees.

2.1.1: Encourage involvement by fostering an environment of education and engagement around local committees and initiatives.

2.1.2: Ensure meetings are accessible, convenient, productive, and enjoyable.

2.1.3: Upgrade technology to improve virtual experience.

2.1.4: Provide information about existing committees and ways the public can get involved in the decision-making process.

2.1.5: Create comprehensive orientation packages to provide new volunteers.

2.1.6: Ensure committees engage in meaningful dialogue and actively seek feedback from ratepayers, both online and at in-person meetings.

Goal 2.2: Enhance recreational services in the community and improve access and quality of amenities, programs, and activities.

2.2.1: Acquire funds to support a full-time staff position.

2.2.2: Expand recreation budget to provide the local population with improved recreational opportunities.

2.2.3: Research funding opportunities.

2.2.4: Revisit partnering with municipal neighbours to cost-share for a Recreation Director.

Goal 2.3: Lobby for a full-time doctor in the Rural Municipality of Whitemouth.

2.3.1: Maintain effective communication with the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority and demonstrate need and population/service growth in area.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 2.4: Proficiently own and ensure a safe, comfortable facility for the provision of daycare services in Whitemouth and surrounding areas.

2.4.1: Ensure proper maintenance, inspections, and upkeep procedures are followed.

2.4.2: Assess and address issues with the facility in a timely manner.

2.4.3 Develop and maintain a user agreement for the service provider utilizing the space.

2.4.4: Promote the Whitemouth Child Care Centre across local government channels.

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STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3 COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Working to develop, diversify and transform our local economy by promoting small business development, community innovation and strategic collaborations. Achieving sustainability through a balance of residential and commercial growth.

Goal 3.1: Create a strong economic foundation through strategic planning and sustainable retention and growth of local population and businesses.

3.1.1: Develop a plan for long-term sustainability, including budgeting for infrastructure, developing revenue sources, and economic development initiatives geared towards job generation.

3.1.2: Foster an atmosphere of entrepreneurship and innovation within the local community to encourage the development of small businesses and strengthen economic growth for the area.

3.1.3: Create a conducive economic environment that will attract investors, funders, and other stakeholders from outside the region in order to attract investment to the area (i.e.: Market the municipality's *Building Incentive By-law*).

3.1.4: Identify and promote Rural Municipality land use opportunities that enhance the community and establish a balance of commercial, industrial, residential, and recreational land uses and taxation structures.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 3.2: Improve visibility of community assets and culture through collaborative planning and actions for balanced, sustainable visitor growth.

3.2.1: Develop and implement a marketing plan to effectively promote the community across various municipal government channels.

3.2.2: Utilize technical resources to enhance the visibility and generate interest around the cultural, historical, and recreational assets in the community.

3.2.3: Collaborate with local businesses, educational institutions, and non-profits to jointly create and promote experiences around local assets and points of interest.

3.2.4: Plan for community readiness to accommodate increased visitors, including more washrooms, garbage cans, parking, wayfinding signs, digital marketing, and sustainable tourism education to protect the environment.

3.2.5: Foster collaboration between public and private sectors to increase tourism and stimulate local economic growth.

Goal 3.3: Leverage local resources and create new economic opportunities to diversify the municipality's revenue sources.

3.3.1: Develop strategies and foster an ongoing dialogue to ensure the effective use of local resources and collaboration between organizations and local government to achieve common objectives (i.e.: Community Futures Winnipeg River, Eastman Tourism, Community Development Corporations, etc.)



STRATEGIC PRIORITY #4 INFRASTRUCTURE AND EQUIPMENT

Maintaining and enhancing assets and infrastructure within the municipality in order to meet residential and commercial needs to encourage area growth and sustainability in our area communities.

Goal 4.1: Create equitable employment opportunities and community-wide wealth through the expansion of local infrastructure.

4.1.1: Create an effective funding and budgeting process that aligns local government initiatives with the infrastructure needs of the local community.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

4.1.2: Develop existing lagoon area for future development to address priority needs.

4.1.3: Evaluate the feasibility of potential new development in the industrial park.

4.1.4: Ensure the necessary utilities are available to the Industrial Park and commercial district.

4.1.5: Research the possibility of supporting the development of a community-owned campground or RV park.

Goal 4.2: Establish a framework to facilitate the local government's financial and technical assistance for the development of a new lagoon.

4.2.1: Leverage local government capacity to create a sustainable plan for the new lagoon's development.

4.2.2: Supporting initiatives that promote the new lagoon's long-term economic prosperity.

Goal 4.3: Procure upgraded equipment to enhance community services.

4.3.1: Identify and create vendor relationships that enable local government to receive the best overall value in the selection and procurement of upgraded equipment (i.e.: plow truck, grader, loader, firetruck, half tons...etc.)

Goal 4.4: Invest in necessary infrastructure upgrades and expansions to bring water and sewer to underserved communities within the municipality.

4.4.1: Develop a plan to address water and sewer needs in Elma and River Hills.

4.4.2: Monitor ongoing water and sewer infrastructure maintenance and repairs to ensure safe and quality access to water and sewage services for all citizens.

Goal 4.5: Increase access to improved roadways for all local citizens and visitors to ensure public safety.

4.5.1: Invest in the improvement of gravel roads to mitigate public safety risks.

4.5.2: Collaborate with local organizations and businesses to leverage resources and create public safety initiatives.

4.5.3: Develop an effective strategy to maintain existing roadways and prioritize ongoing maintenance needs.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

5

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #5 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Supporting the provision of affordable and accessible housing across the entire housing spectrum, while minimizing environmental, social, economic impacts of new development, and ensuring the required resources are in place.

Goal 5.1: Provide affordable and accessible housing solutions that improve the lives of residents and serve the diverse needs of the community.

5.1.1: Maintain and enhance the assets and investments of the Rural Municipality to meet residential and commercial needs and encourage area growth and sustainability.

5.1.2: Promote economic development and appropriate zoning regulations to encourage the construction of affordable and accessible housing options, and ensure sustainable and equitable growth of the community. (i.e.: Industrial Park).

5.1.3: Promote the construction of affordable housing options in the community through incentives and collaboration with local developers.