



Saint John Police Force

STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2026
SAINT JOHN BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
UPDATE MAY, 2023



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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide the Saint John Board of Police Commissioners with an overview on the progress of the 2021-2026 Strategic Plan. The plan identified five strategic themes including “Engage our Community”, “Operational Efficiency”, “Focus on Talent Development”, “Financial Sustainability”, and “Improve our Brand”. The strategic themes not only provide direction, but also provide transparency and accountability with 18 initiatives, 38 objectives, 23 measurements and 22 targets as a starting point.

Engage our Community

- Chief’s Advisory Committee
 - The Chief’s Advisory Committee is meeting on a quarterly basis to provide SJPF with feedback on diversity. To date, we have consulted the Committee on issues such as recruitment strategy, body worn cameras, use of force policy and inclusiveness.

Current status – on-going

- Chief’s Community Action Group (CCAG)
 - The focus of this group is to bring together representatives with the shared mission of a safe, healthy Saint John from across a broad spectrum to proactively address the significant issues faced in the city such as homelessness, substance use, mental health, and youth poverty. The CCAG has been divided into six sub-committees.

Current status: A committee member is in the process of meeting with the various sub-committees to review their short- and long-term goals in order to develop a comprehensive go-forward plan for the Chief’s Community Action Group.

- Community Engagement Team
 - The new Community Engagement Team was developed in 2022 consisting of one sergeant and four neighborhood officers. The Team is responsible for developing and maintaining strong connections and partnerships within the community, while applying current law enforcement problem solving strategies and initiatives with a focus on crime prevention.

Current status: Beginning early 2023, four additional neighborhood officers were added to the Team. They continue to maintain office hours out of each of the priority neighborhoods and continue to fulfill their mandate in the community on a daily basis. Bike patrol training is tentative for the spring. Support Services are exploring the purchase of e-bikes for officers. Members are scheduled to receive training in the new “Healthy Me” program this month that they will deliver in local schools starting in the Fall. With an increase in community requests, Support

Services is developing a shared calendar of events to track community engagement efforts more efficiently.

- Alternative Response Unit (ARU) and Online Reporting
 - In August of 2021, we launched our new Alternative Response Unit. Our mission was to prioritize our inbound calls for service to allow our frontline police officers to be more readily available for emergency calls and proactive policing measures. In March 2023, the Saint John Police launched Online Crime Reporting to divert more non-emergency complaints away from frontline response.

Current Status: The Alternative Response Unit is ongoing and monthly statistics are reported to the Board. Between March 1st, 2023, and April 30th, 2023, a total of 56 online reports were received; 23 from businesses and 33 from individuals. In April, 2023, the processing of online reports was assigned to the Alternative Response Unit and will now fall under the Support Services Division.

- Foot Patrols
 - The Saint John Police Command Team and Community Engagement Team began conducting foot patrols in the priority neighbourhoods during the spring, summer, and fall months. A total of 46 foot patrols were conducted in 2022.

Current status – The 2023 foot patrol schedule has been developed and implementation began in April, 2023.

- Traffic Management Plan
 - In 2022, Traffic Management Officers were assigned to each of the four platoons in the Patrol Division. A series of 11 special traffic campaigns, focusing on education and enforcement, were developed and implemented. For the Year 2022, SJPF handled 52,509 Calls, Traffic handled 15.1% and ARU handled 9.2%. For the Traffic Specific Call Types, SJPF handled a total of 8,134 Calls, 40.4% were handled by Traffic and 6.7% by ARU.

Current Status: For 2023, 10 special traffic campaigns have been identified and posted to our website. There are currently two traffic management officers per shift for a total of 8 officers as well as one full time traffic officer. Traffic Management Officers also instructed on an in-house ATV course hosted by SJPF in April, 2023. Traffic Management is also working with the City of Saint John on a new road safety project.

- Building Safer Communities Funding
 - The City of Saint John has received multi-year funding from the Federal Government to be awarded to a local organization to develop preventive programming to combat gun and gang violence.

Current Status – The funding has been awarded and the progress will be monitored by the Public Safety Committee.

- Student Tours
 - Beginning in 2022, the Saint John Police began hosting class tours of Peel Plaza for middle and high school aged students. The focus of the tours is to educate and engage youth aged 13-18 years old on issues related to policing and leadership in our community. The tour also includes a brief recruitment presentation for those who may be interested in a career in policing. Priority is given to forensic and law classes.

Current status: In 2022, SJPF hosted 12 student tours. For 2023, SJPF has hosted 5 tours to date.

- Chief for a Day Contest
 - The Saint John Police continues to host our annual “Chief for a Day” contest during National Police Week. It is an opportunity to engage youth between 5-12 years old in our community. Students are invited to write an essay on a topic that considers the importance of leadership and community through a policing lens. The “Chief for a Day” has the opportunity to spend the day at the Saint John Police Headquarters.

Current status: The 2023 contest is currently underway and the winner will be announced during National Police Week held May 14-20, 2023. The deadline for entry is May 12, 2023, and the topic is “What values would be important for all police officers to demonstrate?”.

- Polar Plunge
 - In April 2023, the Saint John Police participated in a Polar Plunge to raise funds in support of Special Olympics. The SJPF team raised \$1777.00. The NB Chiefs raised a combined total of over \$23 000.00.

Current Status – completed and reported to the Board.

Operational Efficiency

- Briefing Notes
 - All new proposals are submitted in formal briefing notes and reviewed for recommendation at all appropriate levels to ensure that they are in line with the strategic plan and an accurate record of decision making is in place.

Current status – ongoing

- Records Management System (RMS)

- On March 2, 2023, the Saint John Police entered into an agreement with Versaterm for a cloud-based records management system to replace our existing software.

Current status – The tentative implementation schedule is as follows:

Phase #1: Implementation/Configuration (May 2023-September 2023) – Consists of several workshops including system overview, workflows, and module configurations.

Phase #2: Acceptance Testing (October 2023 – November 2023) – Project team will begin functional and performance testing to ensure the system is ready for production.

Phase #3: Training (October 2023 – February 2024) – Preparation of training documentation, train the trainer training followed by end user training. End user training will take approximately 4 weeks beginning in January 2024.

Phase #4: Cutover (February 2024) - Tentative “Go Live” date for SJPF vRMS. Response time and reliability testing will continue for 30 days followed by the final system acceptance sign off.

- **Efficiency Reviews**

- Since 2021, the Saint John Police has conducted numerous efficiency reviews within the organization to ensure that we are providing a cost effective and efficient service, including Corporate Communications, training, uniform and equipment, fleet, auxiliary program, human resources, and policy. The action items resulting from these reviews are on-going.

Current status – An efficiency review of our records department is currently underway.

An Operational Staffing review has begun under the direction of Deputy Chief Honey Dwyer. Going forward, next steps are to engage a consultant to better interpret the analytics and supply comprehensive recommendations.

2022 Quality Assurance Reviews per New Brunswick Policing Standards have been completed. The risking activities for 2022 included Missing Persons, Exhibits, Notebooks, and Strategic Planning. A list of recommendations and an action plan has been developed.

A Management Review of the Saint John Police was completed by Policing Standards in March 2023. We are awaiting the final report from the Province.

Focus on Talent Development

- Performance Management Plan
 - A new Performance Management Committee has been established to identify and implement a new performance management plan for 2023.

Current status – The new performance management system has been implemented for all constables. Phase 2 will be to incorporate supervisors and civilians.

- Leadership Training
 - A number of initiatives have been developed and implemented to provide our members with leadership training to develop future leaders within the organization. Initiatives include the Chief's Leadership Development Series with quarterly updates, an annual Leadership Reading list that is mandatory for all supervisors and those on the promotional list, a new in-house two-week Frontline Supervisor Course, and a new provincial exchange program.

Current status – The first two-week Frontline Supervisor Course was hosted by SJPF in March, 2023. Feedback was received from candidates for consideration on future courses.

As part of a new provincial exchange program through the New Brunswick Association of Chief's of Police, A/Inspector Marie-Eve Mackenzie-Plante of the RCMP has been temporarily assigned as Divisional Commander of Support Services with the Saint John Police for a six-month term, which began on April 5, 2023. Opportunities for SJPF managers are currently being explored with other New Brunswick police agencies.

- Platoon Assignments
 - Beginning in 2022, various members on patrol have been assigned to specialized roles including Neighbourhood Officers, Traffic Management Officers, Investigational Support Officers, and Scenes of Crime Officers. The objective is to provide:
 - To provide developmental opportunities for our frontline members.
 - To create a more timely and effective team approach to service delivery.
 - To provide a more effective and proactive frontline service to the community.
 - To establish platoons' capabilities of being more self sufficient and less unit dependent.

Current status – Beginning in 2023, an additional four patrol officers have been assigned as Neighbourhood Officers. Members on assignments continue to receive training specific to their respective roles.

- Revised Promotional Process – Collective Agreement

- A new promotional process has been identified through the collective bargaining process. Meetings are planned with the Saint John Police Association (SJPA) to begin implementation of our new process.

Current status – in progress

- Revised Interviewing Process
 - There have been changes made to our internal interviewing process for job vacancies to ensure that we are drawing not only on knowledge, but also with more emphasis on experience required to fill the positions.

Current status – completed and reported to the Board.

Financial Sustainability

- Part-Time Policing
 - Senior Leadership explored the possibility of part-time policing by retired police officers. In January 2023, an expression of interest was posted publicly to determine if a suitable pool of candidates existed in our area.

Current status – It has been determined that a suitable pool of candidates does not exist in our area and the proposal is closed.

- New Financial Manager
 - A recruitment process was held for a full-time senior financial manager to better administrate the Saint John Police budget and finances on a daily basis.

Current status – In January 2023, the position was filled by Frank Szalai.

- Fleet Review
 - A fleet review was conducted in late 2021. Since that time, a number of vehicles were removed from the fleet to reduce unnecessary maintenance and replacement costs. The Specialized Support Sergeant in conjunction with CSJ Fleet Services continuously accesses the optimal replacement point of our vehicles to avoid excessive maintenance costs.

Current status: Support Services is recommending the purchase of four new Dodge Chargers in 2023 to replace existing marked patrol units that have reached their optimal replacement point. Support Services are exploring further opportunities to optimize the fleet.

- Dallas Mercer Consulting
 - The Saint John Police have engaged Dallas Mercer Consulting who will act in collaboration with the Return-to-Work Committee to help all parties manage WorkSafeNB and sick leave claims. The purpose is to coordinate the initial return to work and continue to manage the return in a gradual and progressive manner,

until a full, safe and timely return to meaningful and productive work has been achieved.

Current status – in progress. Focus has also been given on building tighter disability management processes to hold all parties accountable (employees, managers, WorkSafe NB, and medical providers)

Improve our Brand

- Corporate Communications (Internal and External)
 - A review of Internal Communications was conducted in 2021. As a result, a new Corporate Communications strategy has been implemented, including a new media relations team, internal newsletter, periodic internal fast facts, updated Sharepoint Site, a new website, a recruitment video, a repository for media and marketing materials, policies and procedures for media relations, media requests/ interviews and communications.

Current status: On March 6, 2023, the new Saint John Police website was launched in conjunction with the new recruitment video and Online Crime Reporting (OCR). Between March 6, 2023, and April 30, 2023, saintjohnpolice.ca had 74K users. Of interest, 93.2 % of visits were through social media links, 84 % were mobile users, 10% were desktop users, and 6% were tablet users. During this period, the highest number of visits on a weekly basis are between 12pm-8pm on Tuesdays through Thursdays and 9am-8pm on Fridays. Tuesday afternoons and Friday mornings are peak periods.

- Dress, Department and Professionalism Policy
 - Our new Dress, Department and Professionalism policy is in draft and currently under first review.

Current status – in progress. This policy is now in second draft. The SJPF continues to emphasize, through policies, procedures and messaging, the importance of professionalism inside and outside the workplace.

- Community Engagement Plan
 - A presentation on our Community Engagement Plan was delivered to the Board. This is a multifaceted plan including the Community Engagement Sergeant, Neighbourhood Officers, Chief’s Advisory Committee, Chief’s Community Action Group, Traffic Campaigns, Foot Patrols, Priority Neighbourhoods’ meetings, Student Tours and various community events.

Current status – on-going. See “Engage Our Community” for a full list of current initiatives.

- Recruitment Strategy

- A recruitment team has been established and is taking more proactive measures to fill current vacancies due to retirements. These measures include media campaigns, community recruitment outreach sessions, career fairs, creation of the SJPF Sponsorship Program with the Atlantic Police Academy, creation of a recruitment video and on-going staffing processes.

Current status – In 2022, the SJPF hosted 18 recruitment sessions with high schools, post-secondary institutions, newcomers, and community career fairs. Four candidates were identified through our new Sponsorship Program and they are currently in training at the Atlantic Police Academy on track to graduate in the fall of 2023 to begin employment with SJPF. In April, 2023, Chief Bruce visited the APA to present to the current class of cadets as well as our sponsorship candidates.

In 2023, SJPF launched a “Join Our Team” section on the new website to streamline job applications. Since the launch, Human Resources have received 63 applications for experienced officers, 56 applications for PSCC operators, and 278 applications for our Sponsorship Program for the 2024 class at the APA. A staffing process is underway to hire experienced officers by the end of Spring. Once this process is completed, the focus will be to identify sponsorship candidates for the 2024 APA class.

Since the beginning of 2023, SJPF has attended one community fair and hosted a virtual recruitment session. Plans are underway to host an in-person career fair at Peel Plaza to further promote the Sponsorship Program for local candidates.

Conclusion

Since the Strategic Plan was adopted by the Board in May 2022, the progress on our objectives, measurements and targets are on course. Expectations have been communicated, both internally and externally, to ensure that, as an organization, we remain focused and accountable to the Plan.