



Saint John Police Force

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

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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide the Saint John Board of Police Commissioners (Board) with an overview of 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 the Saint John Police 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: Ongoing

- Chief’s Community Action Group
 - The focus of this group is to bring together representatives from across a broad spectrum with the shared mission of a safe, healthy Saint John 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: The committee most recently met in October 2023. The discussion centered on a shared interest in creating a permanent central/one-stop shop for accessing a variety of social services, including emergency lodging for our homeless population. On November 24, 2023, the Saint John Police participated in consultation for a permanent Homeless Hub set to open in April 2024, on Somerset Street. The Chief’s Community Action Group will be monitoring the effectiveness of this provincial initiative.

- Community Engagement Team

- The new Community Engagement Team was developed in 2022 consisting of one sergeant and four neighbourhood 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: A shared calendar has been implemented to assist in tracking all of our community-based initiatives and activities. A new Community Engagement Sergeant has been identified; Sergeant Jeremy Edwards, who began in his new role on November 27, 2023. He will be working with our community partners and managing the activities of our Neighbourhood Officers. The new “Healthy Me” program has now been implemented and is being delivered to local schools by our Neighbourhood Officers.

- Alternative Response Unit and Online Crime 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. Since online reporting began in March 2023, we have seen a significant increase in the number of monthly reports. In the first three months (March-May), there was an average of 36 reports per month. In the last three months (August-October), there was an average of 82 reports per month. This represents a 78% increase in these periods.

- Foot Patrols

- Beginning in 2022, the Saint John Police Command Team and Community Engagement Team began proactively conducting foot patrols in our priority neighbourhoods. The purpose was to enhance community engagement, to prevent and deter crime, and to develop a more in-depth understanding of the concerns facing these various communities in order to collectively engage in

problem solving. Saint John Police Foot Patrols are conducted during the spring, summer and fall months. In 2022, a total of 46 foot patrols were conducted.

Current status: In 2023, a total of 42 foot patrols were conducted, 22 of which were focused in the Uptown and Waterloo Village neighbourhoods due to concerns raised about problematic activities in these areas. A new schedule will be developed in early 2024.

- Traffic Management Plan

- In 2022, Traffic Management Officers were assigned to each of the four platoons in the Patrol Division. For 2023, a total of 10 special traffic campaigns were identified and posted to our website.

Current Status: For 2023, a total of eight education and enforcement campaigns have been conducted by our Traffic Management Officers. Our annual Festive RIDE program is now underway for the month of December. Once again, the Saint John Police are partnering with Justice and Public Safety, Kennebecasis Regional Police Force, and Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

- 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 is being monitored by the City of Saint John 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, Saint John Police hosted 12 student tours. For 2023, Saint John Police has hosted 9 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 engaging in various activities.

Current status: The 2023 contest was held during National Police Week, May 14-20, 2023. This year’s winner was 6-year-old Sawyer Toews who spent the day the day with us at Peel Plaza on June 22, 2023.

- Holiday in a Box
 - In 2021, the Saint John Police launched the “Holiday in a Box” campaign. The campaign is held leading up to the Christmas season. The Saint John Police collects shoe-sized boxes from the community filled with necessities and small gifts, which are in turn wrapped by Saint John Police staff and distributed to vulnerable adults through representatives from our five priority neighborhoods.

Current status: In 2021, we collected 467 boxes and in 2022 we collected 675 boxes as well as 200 gift cards. Our 2023 campaign was launched on November 14, 2023, and will conclude on December 13, 2023.

- Salvation Army Christmas Kettle Campaign
 - The Salvation Army’s Christmas Kettle Campaign is one of Canada’s largest and most recognizable annual charitable events. In addition to the critical fundraising impact of the Campaign, the Christmas kettles boost the Army’s visibility and awareness. In fact, there are more than 2,000 kettle locations across Canada that support a wide range of Salvation Army programs.

Current status: Members of the Saint John Police Command Team and the Saint John Police Association have been pairing up to support the annual Salvation Army Christmas Kettle campaign during November and December 2023.

- Chief's Difference Maker Award

- At the beginning of the 2023 school year, Chief Robert Bruce implemented the Chief's Difference Maker Award for students between grades 6-8 at local middle schools. The focus is to build positive, healthy, strong relationships with our youth and to recognize young student leaders who make a difference in their school and community. Awards are presented monthly to one student at each school who is identified by the school as a student who demonstrates leadership in punctuality, good manners, kindness, and citizenship.

Current status: Ongoing. Awards are presented by Chief Robert Bruce, or his designate, on a monthly basis as nomination forms are received by his office.

- Healthy Me

A new school-based program "Healthy Me" has been implemented and is being delivered to grade 6 students by Neighbourhood Officers. The program was designed in 2016 by Charlottetown Police in partnership with youth workers and students to address various issues that students encounter. It has been presented and approved by the Anglophone South School District and Centre scolaire Samuel-de-Champlain. The four lessons delivered during the program include:

- Who Am I (values and what influences them, peer pressure, self-reliance, etc.)
- Coping Skills (dealing with obstacles, handling negative emotions, positive coping mechanisms, etc.)
- Unhealthy Coping (vaping, tobacco, alcohol, drugs, etc.)
- Cyberworld (dangers of social media, sharing photos, "think before you post", etc.)

Current status: Ongoing. Neighbourhood Officers are delivering the program in local schools.

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: Since the beginning of 2023, a record number of briefing notes were submitted. To date, the 20 briefing notes below have been approved. Another 18 briefing notes are in progress.

- 1. Body-Worn Cameras**
- 2. Canine Handler Training Program**
- 3. E-Bikes – Equipment, Fleet & Uniform Committee**
- 4. Electronic Media Processing System**
- 5. Events Calendar on SharePoint**
- 6. Fitness Initiative - The Amazing Footrace 2023**
- 7. Fridges / FIS / Property Control**
- 8. Hard Copy Files for Non-Hard Files**
- 9. Implementation of Mobile Devices in Patrol Vehicles**
- 10. Management of Currency Payments for Criminal Record Checks**
- 11. Phased Interview Model for Suspects Training Course**
- 12. Policy & SOP – Quality & Structure**
- 13. Process for Final Approval of Policy / SOPs**
- 14. Professional Development Day for SJP Civilians**
- 15. Relocation of Body-Worn Cameras**
- 16. Relocation of Front Desk Staff**
- 17. SharePoint Pilot Project – Support Services**
- 18. Tasers - Equipment & Training**
- 19. Therapy Dog Program**
- 20. Training Calendar**

- **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: Due to the CUPE Local 486 labour disruption, the initial launch date for the new RMS has been impacted. The revised launch is targeted for May 2024, with training planned for the month of April 2024. The project team continues to meet regularly with Versaterm and complete the required configuration.

- 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 ongoing.

Current status: A Management Review of the Saint John Police was completed by New Brunswick Policing Standards in March 2023. We are awaiting the final report from the Province. An Operational Staffing Review is underway and projected to be completed early in the new year. A number of internal quality assurance reviews are being conducted by supervisors on sudden death investigations, sexual-based crimes, human sources, mental health related calls for service, impaired driving, missing persons, and hazardous pursuits.

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. Performance management templates for Sworn Supervisors, Management and Professional Staff and Civilians were approved and launched July 2023.

- 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 Saint John Police in March 2023. The second course is scheduled for January 2024 to encompass the remaining supervisors. An invitation has also been sent to the New Brunswick Association of Chiefs of Police for any other agency who would like to send candidates on our course.

As part of a new provincial exchange program through the New Brunswick Association of Chiefs of Police, Inspector Marie-Eve Mackenzie-Plante of the RCMP had been temporarily assigned as Divisional Commander of Support Services with the Saint John Police for a six-month term, which ended on October 20, 2023. In turn, Constable Tyler White was selected by the RCMP to participate in a six-month developmental term with their agency, which began on November 14, 2023.

- Platoon Assignments
 - Beginning in 2022, various members in the Patrol Division 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 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 platoon capabilities of being more self sufficient and less unit dependent.

Current status: Members on assignments continue to receive training specific to their respective roles. Assignments will be reevaluated after the 2024 platoon list is implemented.

Financial Sustainability

The following initiatives undertaken by the Saint John Police reflect a commitment to fiscal responsibility and the pursuit of long-term financial sustainability. The strategies implemented have laid the foundation for continued financial health, ensuring resources are managed prudently and aligned with the overall goals of the organization:

- Consolidation of Purchases
 - In 2023, Saint John Police successfully negotiated with vendors such as Grand and Toy to consolidate purchases, resulting in better pricing structures for office supplies. This approach leverages the buying power of the organization to secure discounts and more favorable terms.

- Multi-Angle Review of Procurement
 - All requests for goods and services are thoroughly vetted to ensure that each purchase is essential, adds value, and is secured at the lowest possible cost. This comprehensive review process safeguards against unnecessary expenditures and aligns purchases with organizational priorities.

- Subscription Expense Review
 - Ongoing expenses, particularly subscription-based services, are regularly evaluated to confirm that they remain necessary and that the Saint John Police benefits from the most competitive rates. This ensures that the organization pays only for what is needed and at the best available price. We managed to secure 2023 pricing for our CPKN subscription for 2024.

- Internal Cost Review and Approval Processes
 - A more rigorous internal cost review mechanism has been implemented. All credit card charges now undergo an approval process that includes scrutiny by the Senior Financial Manager. This adds a layer of accountability and ensures that expenses are justified and within policy guidelines.

- Streamlined Financial Reporting
 - Financial reporting processes have been refined to provide department managers with detailed insights into their expenditures. This enhanced transparency equips managers with the necessary information to maintain budgetary compliance and make informed financial decisions.

- Fine-Tuning of Financial Reports
 - Further improvements to financial reports are in progress, with a focus on delivering detailed analyses of wages and salary allocations to department heads in 2024. These insights are expected to assist in workforce planning and cost management.

- Cost Distribution and Reimbursement Initiatives
 - The Saint John Police has effectively utilized opportunities to distribute costs where feasible, including collaborations with other agencies that have resulted in the ability to charge out relevant costs. Additionally, the organization has engaged in initiatives that offer guaranteed reimbursements, particularly for projects such as undercover operations supported by the province.

- 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: Contract work with Dallas Mercer Consulting was reduced significantly with the focus on finalizing two return to work files. A new Human Resources Administrator was hired in May 2023 and will be managing disability to ensure files are not dormant.

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. In the last three months, saintjohnpolice.ca had 84K users and 163K sessions, which is down 14.9% compared to the previous period. Of interest, 84% of visits were through social media links, 8.6% were via organic search, and 5.6% were through direct visits to the website. The most visited pages have been our news releases and homepage. The most visits in the last three months were on Tuesdays. Our Facebook page currently has 14.5K followers (70% women and 30% men) and our Facebook visits are up 83.6% over last year. Our Twitter account currently has 15.1K followers.

- 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 Saint John Police 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: Ongoing. 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

Saint John Police Sponsorship Program with the Atlantic Police Academy, creation of a recruitment video and ongoing staffing processes.

Current status: In 2022, the Saint John Police hosted 18 recruitment sessions with high schools, post-secondary institutions, newcomers, and community career fairs. Our first three sponsorship candidates began full-time employment in September 2023.

To date for 2023, Saint John Police has participated and/or hosted at least 18 separate community engagement events that had some recruitment component. This included community meetings, career presentations, and school visits/tours. The Saint John Police also participated in Camp Courage hosted in Saint John between August 28-31, 2023. This was an interactive camp offering young females and gender-diverse teens an opportunity to explore a career in First Response.

We are pleased to report that we had an outstanding number of applications for the 2024 Sponsorship Program and the recruitment team has recently identified five candidates for the 2024 class at the Atlantic Policy Academy.

Further to this, we are in the process of identifying another round of candidates to attend a second Atlantic Police Academy class beginning in August 2024. This is a significant milestone as the Academy has now agreed to host two classes in 2024 allowing us to fill vacancies faster through the Sponsorship Program. The recruitment team has also engaged a number of experienced officers who are currently engaged in a staffing process.

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.