STRATEGIC PLAN

Capital Region Northeast Water Services Commission 2025-2029

C·R·N·W·S·C

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PREPARED FOR

Capital Region Northeast
Water Services Commission

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

In early 2024, the Capital Region North-east Water Services Commission (CRNWSC) began work on developing a strategic plan to guide the work of the commission in the years ahead. The 2025 - 2029 Strategic Plan represents a positive and dynamic shift in the Board's direction from the past and looks into our future in addressing and revising our current strategic needs while embracing a vision for the future of the CRNWSC. I am pleased to see the significant progress made by the board over the past year to identify its goals and priorities and to solidify its mission and vision. Developing a Strategic Plan is significant work that requires the active participation of the board and communities we serve.

While considerable steps have been taken in 2024 to begin addressing the priorities of the Board, much work remains to be done. Hence it is critical that the board adopt a strategic plan that will provide direction in the coming years.

I want to thank the members of the board as well as the Commission Manager for their dedication to collaboration and cooperation in the development of this plan.

Bill Tonita, Chair

CRNWSC

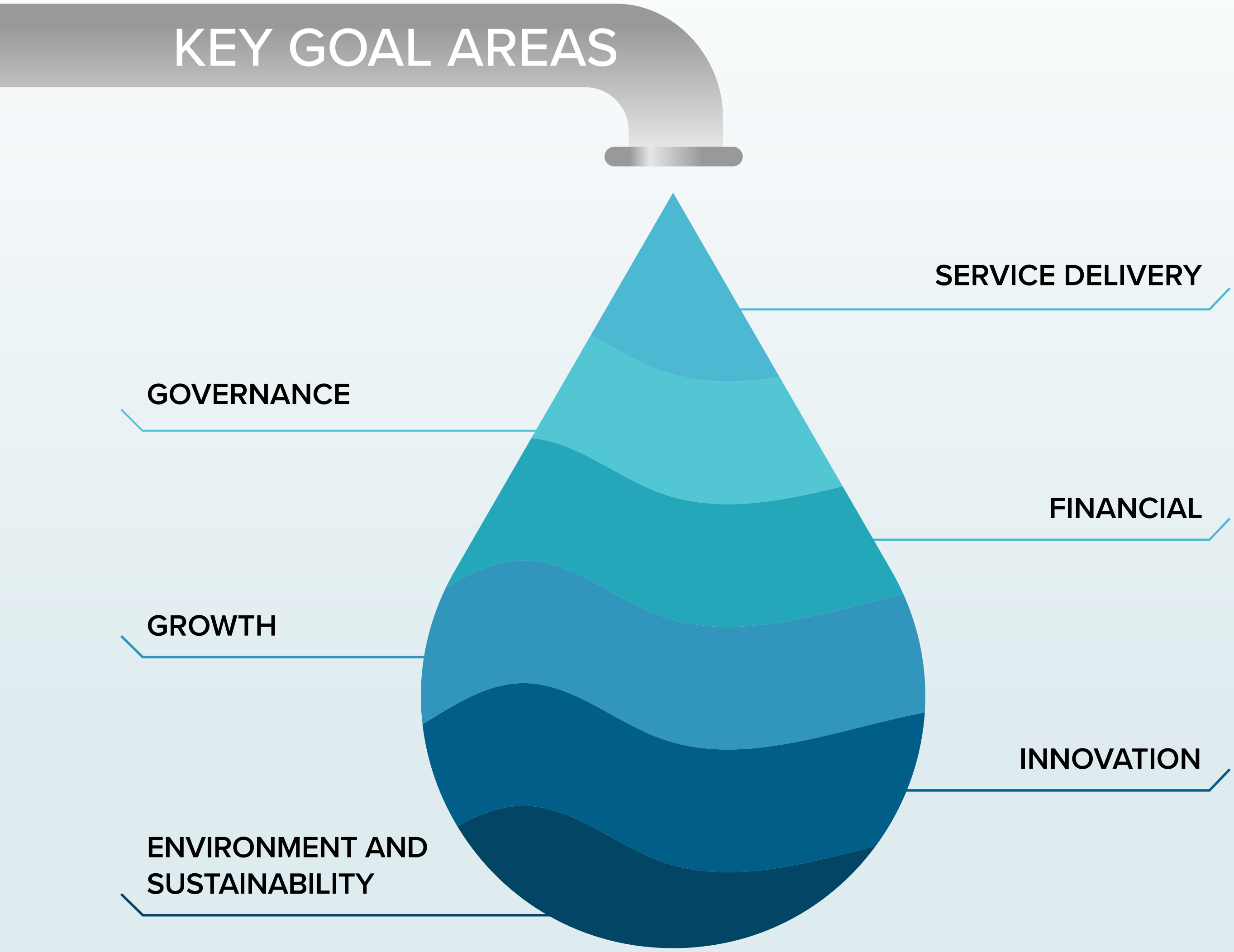

EXIT

INTRODUCTION

The Capital Region Northeast Water Services Commission (CRSWSC) is governed by six municipal members who work together to lead the Commission and ensure a reliable supply of clean water to its members and customers. The Commission members include the Town of Bon Accord, City of Fort Saskatchewan, Town of Gibbons, Town of Redwater, Strathcona County, and Sturgeon County.

The Board and Commission Manager met in February and again in September of 2024 with the express purpose of developing and articulating strategic direction for the Commission now and into the future. This work culminated in November with the adoption of this cohesive 5 year Strategic Plan.

The Commission's Strategic Plan includes an articulated Vision, Mission and Values to guide how the Board and Administration will continue to work together to achieve desired outcomes and support its members and customers over the long term. Goals and associated actions over the next five years are identified across six key areas of interest to support the Commission's continued evolution and excellence in service delivery.



VISION

The CRNWSC's vision is our aspiration for the future. This vision will continue to guide our strategy and operations for years to come.

Stewarding clean water to support thriving communities for generations to come.

MISSION

The CRNWSC's mission is the reason we exist, and how we will achieve our Vision:

The CRNWSC efficiently provides safe, reliable water to communities through transparent and active collaboration among members and customers.

VALUES

The Commission has articulated four core values that guide how we operate. These values are a shared commitment within our Board, for our Administration, and to our members and customers:

Future Focused

- We have a strong sense of purpose and direction, and carry this through from our strategy to daily operations.
- We govern and operate ourselves strategically with a focus on future outcomes.
- Our actions are intentional, proactive, and aligned with our vision.

Innovation

- We think critically, maintain an open mindset and respectfully challenge new ideas.
- We encourage research and open discussions to guide the rationale behind decision making.
- We foster curiosity and forward thinking in the name of excellent service delivery.

Collaboration

- We continuously invest in the relationships with our members, stakeholders, and customers to foster growth and understanding of our business, and find economic and effective resolutions for our differing needs, wants and expectations.
- We work as a team to connect our vision to our realities as a regional service commission.
- We engage our neighbours and partner with other agencies and organizations to support our mission.

Transparency

- We demonstrate good governance through openly sharing information and how we make decisions as an organization, providing access to information and data, and reporting back to our members.
- We proactively engage with our members and customers on the costs of managing our assets to determine levels of service.
- We demonstrate we care about our customers and members and build their trust in us as an organization through responsiveness to their inquiries.

GOALS

The Commission has established the following goals to articulate how we will work to achieve our Vision and Mission. These goals guide the direction and focus of our organization's resources and efforts in the coming years. Further, concrete Actions the Commission can take in the short-term (next five years) have been identified for goals where appropriate. Some Actions also support more than one goal (as can be seen in Action Plan), but for brevity have only been listed here once.

SERVICE DELIVERY

SD Goal 1: We have updated Water Servicing Agreements (WSAs) with customers in place.

Action 4: Engage with the City of Fort Saskatchewan and collaborate on a new WSA.

Action 5: Renew John S. Batiuk Regional Water Commission WSA.

Action 19: Establish WSAs with each member municipality.

SD Goal 2: We have a clear picture of future infrastructure needs.

Action 1: Meet with every member municipal Council to build relationships and deepen understanding of community planning and servicing needs.

Action 6: Complete a long term (50 years) capital plan that addresses actual and forecasted network capacity needs, and includes consideration for areas adjacent to the Commission's current service reach.

Action 22: Continue ongoing assessment of infrastructure in rolling 5-year window.

GOVERNANCE

GV Goal 1: Our governance structure aligns with current and future needs.

Action 2: Practice strong and consistent communication to member communities following each Board meeting.

Action 3: Complete a governance structure review to ensure alignment; explore potential changes to member representation and voting structure.

GV Goal 2: Our bylaws and policies are clear and up-to-date.

Action 9: Complete a comprehensive review of bylaws and policies, and update and amend as necessary.

Action 23: Establish cadence for ongoing bylaw and policy review to support good governance over the long term.

GV Goal 3: We continue to engage in professional development to ensure a high functioning board and strong governance.

Action 17: Review and update the Strategic Plan.

Action 18: Creation and implementation of training programs and Board on-boarding resources.

FINANCIAL

FN Goal 1: We have a good handle on our business and are positioned to leverage opportunities.

Action 11: Complete a comprehensive rate review and fees and charges update to match current context. Share this work with members and customers.

Action 13: Advance discussions with EPCOR regarding the commission supply line and associated considerations regarding capacity, supply, and bulk rates.

GROWTH

GR Goal 1: We are intentionally growing our services in step with our members' needs.

Action 12: Obtain and compile regular (twice yearly) reporting on growth of member communities to support analysis of monthly water rate trends and to inform supply allocations.

Action 15: Get better clarity around long-term growth of current members to inform service needs and make updates to the long term Capital Plan.

GR Goal 2: We understand the scale and direction of future growth opportunities.

Action 16: Complete feasibility/market analysis to understand growth beyond current members of Commission and explore how the Commission wants to navigate this growth.

INNOVATION

IN Goal 1: We employ new and emerging technologies in a responsible way.

Action 7: Support Board members in attending related technical conferences within first two years of their term.

Action 8: Consider and incorporate intelligent technologies when engaging professional services (examples could include condition assessments, metering approaches, etc.).

IN Goal 2: We seek ways to be sustainable as an organization to provide better service delivery.

Action 14: Complete Emergency Response Plan to address risks for service delivery and establish clear redundancy measures in the system.

Action 10: Leverage available software technologies to streamline Board governance and Administration, including identification of better solutions for files storage and sharing.

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

E&S Goal 1: We understand the potential long-term impacts to our watersheds to ensure a clean and secure water source.

Action 20: Work with members, neighbouring commissions, EPCOR and the Regional Water Customers group to better understand and participate in watershed discussions regarding the health and security of regional water supply over the long-term.

E&S Goal 2: We maintain a uniform approach to conservation in the region.

Action 21: Connect with neighbouring commissions, the Regional Water Customers group, advocacy organizations, and provincial entities to better articulate conservation messaging and initiatives as it applies to the CRNWSC.

THE COMMISSION DISCUSSED IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE ACTIONS AND PRIORITIZED THEM OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. THE FOLLOWING PAGES LAY OUT AN ACTION PLAN THAT SUPPORTS THE COMMISSION'S ACHIEVEMENT OF THEIR IDENTIFIED GOALS. THE ACTION PLAN IS INTENDED TO SUPPORT LONG-RANGE PLANNING, BUDGETING AND RESOURCE NEEDS AND SHOULD BE REVISITED TO ASSESS PROGRESS ON AN ANNUAL BASIS.

ACTION PLAN

$ - In Operating Budget **$$ -** Additional Operating Budget or Capital Consideration Required

YEAR	QUARTER	DURATION/ TIMELINE	ACTIONS	COST	RESOURCES & RESPONSIBILITY	GOAL ALIGNMENT
2025	**Q1**	Starting in late 2024, complete by end of Q1 2025	**Action 1:** Meet with every member municipal Council to build relationships and deepen understanding of community planning and servicing needs.	**$**	Commission Manager and Board Chair	**SD Goal 2:** We have a clear picture of future infrastructure needs. **GR Goal 1:** We are intentionally growing our services in step with our members' needs.
	Q1	Ongoing, within 1 month of each Board Meeting	**Action 2:** Practice strong and consistent communication to member communities following each Board meeting.	**$**	Commission Manager and Board Members	**GV Goal 1:** Our governance structure aligns with current and future needs. **GV Goal 3:** We continue to engage in professional development to ensure a high functioning board and strong governance.
	Q1	1-3 months (end of Q1 2025)	**Action 3:** Complete a governance structure review to ensure alignment; explore potential changes to member representation and voting structure.	**$**	Board time and input, Engagement of External Resource(s)	**GV Goal 1:** Our governance structure aligns with current and future needs.
	Q1	3-6 months (end of Q2 2025)	**Action 4:** Engage with the City of Fort Saskatchewan and collaborate on a new WSA.	**$**	Commission Manager	**SD Goal 1:** We have updated Water Servicing Agreements (WSAs) with customers in place. **SD Goal 2:** We have a clear picture of future infrastructure needs.
	Q1	6-9 months (end of Q3 2025)	**Action 5:** Renew John S. Batiuk Regional Water Commission WSA.	**$**	Commission Manager	**SD Goal 1:** We have updated Water Servicing Agreements (WSAs) with customers in place. **FN Goal 1:** We have a good handle on our business and are positioned to leverage opportunities.
	Q1	1 year (end of Q4 2025)	**Action 6:** Complete a long term (50 years) capital plan that addresses actual and forecasted network capacity needs, and includes consideration for areas adjacent to the Commission's current service reach.	**$$**	Commission Manager and Engagement of External Resource(s)	**SD Goal 2:** We have a clear picture of future infrastructure needs. **E&S Goal 1:** We understand the potential long-term impacts to our watersheds to ensure a clean and secure water source **GR Goal 1:** We are intentionally growing our services in step with our members' needs. **GR Goal 2:** We understand the scale and direction of future growth opportunities.
	Q1	Ongoing	**Action 7:** Support Board members in attending related technical conferences within first two years of their term.	**$**	Board Members	**IN Goal 1:** We employ new and emerging technologies in a responsible way. **IN Goal 2:** We seek ways to be sustainable as an organization to provide better service delivery. **GV Goal 3:** We continue to engage in professional development to ensure a high functioning board and strong governance. **GR Goal 1:** We are intentionally growing our services in step with our members' needs. **GR Goal 2:** We understand the scale and direction of future growth opportunities.

$** - In Operating Budget **$$ - Capital consideration required

YEAR	QUARTER	DURATION/ TIMELINE	ACTIONS	COST	RESOURCES & RESPONSIBILITY	GOAL ALIGNMENT
2025	**Q1**	Ongoing	**Action 8:** Consider and incorporate intelligent technologies when engaging professional services (examples could include condition assessments, metering approaches, etc.).	**$**	Commission Manager, Board Members & External Resources	**IN Goal 1:** We employ new and emerging technologies in a responsible way. **IN Goal 2:** We seek ways to be sustainable as an organization to provide better service delivery. **GR Goal 2:** We understand the scale and direction of future growth opportunities.
	Q2	Review started in late 2024, updates and amendments ongoing for 1.5 years (end of 2026)	**Action 9:** Complete a comprehensive review of bylaws and policies, and update and amend as necessary.	**$$**	Board time and input, Commission Manager, and Engagement of External Resource(s)	**GV Goal 1:** Our governance structure aligns with current and future needs. **GV Goal 2:** Our bylaws and policies are clear and up-to-date **GV Goal 3:** We continue to engage in professional development to ensure a high functioning board and strong governance. **IN Goal 1:** We employ new and emerging technologies in a responsible way.
	Q2	3-6 months	**Action 10:** Leverage available software technologies to streamline Board governance and Administration, including identification of better solutions for files storage and sharing.	**$$**	Commission Manager	**IN Goal 2:** We seek ways to be sustainable as an organization to provide better service delivery. **GV Goal 2:** Our bylaws and policies are clear and up-to-date **FN Goal 1:** We have a good handle on our business and are positioned to leverage opportunities.
	Q2	3-6 months	**Action 11:** Complete a comprehensive rate review and fees and charges update to match current context. Share this work with members and customers.	**$$**	Commission Manager, Board Approval, and Engagement of External Resource(s)	**FN Goal 1:** We have a good handle on our business and are positioned to leverage opportunities. **GR Goal 2:** We understand the scale and direction of future growth opportunities.
	Q2	Every 6 months	**Action 12:** Obtain and compile regular (twice yearly) reporting on growth of member communities to support analysis of monthly water rate trends and to inform supply allocations.	**$**	Commission Manager	**GR Goal 1:** We are intentionally growing our services in step with our members' needs **SD Goal 2:** We have a clear picture of future infrastructure needs.
	Q4	1 year	**Action 13:** Advance discussions with EPCOR regarding the commission supply line and associated considerations regarding capacity, supply, and bulk rates.	**$**	Commission Manager	**FN Goal 1:** We have a good handle on our business and are positioned to leverage opportunities. **E&S Goal 1:** We understand the potential long-term impacts to our watersheds to ensure a clean and secure water source. **SD Goal 1:** We have updated Water Servicing Agreements (WSAs) with customers in place. **GR Goal 2:** We understand the scale and direction of future growth opportunities.

$ - In Operating Budget **$$ -** Additional Operating Budget or Capital Consideration Required

YEAR	QUARTER	DURATION/ TIMELINE	ACTIONS	COST	RESOURCES & RESPONSIBILITY	GOAL ALIGNMENT
2026	**Q1**	Potential to start earlier 6 months - 1 year (by end 2026)	**Action 14:** Complete Emergency Response Plan to address risks for service delivery and establish clear redundancy measures in the system.	**$$**	Commission Manager, Engagement of External Resource(s)	**IN Goal 2:** We seek ways to be sustainable as an organization to provide better service delivery. **E&S Goal 1:** We understand the potential long-term impacts to our watersheds to ensure a clean and secure water source. **SD Goal 2:** We have a clear picture of future infrastructure needs.
	Q1	1 year (by end 2026)	**Action 15:** Get better clarity around long-term growth of current members to inform service needs and make updates to the long term Capital Plan.	**$$**	Commission Manager, Engagement of External Resource(s)	**GR Goal 1:** We are intentionally growing our services in step with our members' needs **SD Goal 2:** We have a clear picture of future infrastructure needs.
	Q1	3-6 months (by end of Q2 2026)	**Action 16:** Complete feasibility/market analysis to understand growth beyond current members of Commission and explore how the Commission wants to navigate this growth.	**$**	Commission Manager, Board time and input	**GR Goal 2:** We understand the scale and direction of future growth opportunities.
	Q2	1-3 months (by end of Q2 2026)	**Action 17:** Review and update the Strategic Plan.	**$$**	Commission Manager, Board time and input, and Engagement of External Resource(s)	**GV Goal 3:** We continue to engage in professional development to ensure a high functioning board and strong governance.
	Q2	3-6 months (by end of Q4 2026)	**Action 18:** Creation and implementation of training programs and Board on-boarding resources	**$$**	Commission Manager, Engagement of External Resource(s)	**GV Goal 3:** We continue to engage in professional development to ensure a high functioning board and strong governance.
	Q3	1 year (by end of Q3 2027)	**Action 19:** Establish WSAs with each member municipality.		Commission Manager	**SD Goal 1:** We have updated Water Servicing Agreements (WSAs) with customers in place. **GR Goal 1:** We are intentionally growing our services in step with our members' needs **FN Goal 1:** We have a good handle on our business and are positioned to leverage opportunities.
	Q4	Ongoing	**Action 20:** Work with members, neighbouring commissions, EPCOR and the Regional Water Customers group to better understand and participate in watershed discussions regarding the health and security of regional water supply over the long-term.	**$**	Commission level discussion	**E&S Goal 1:** We understand the potential long-term impacts to our watersheds to ensure a clean and secure water source.
	Q4	Ongoing	**Action 21:** Connect with neighbouring commissions, the Regional Water Customers group, advocacy organizations, and provincial entities to better articulate conservation messaging and initiatives as it applies to the CRNWSC.	**$**	Commission Manager	**E&S Goal 2:** We maintain a uniform approach to conservation in the region.

$ - In Operating Budget **$$ -** Capital consideration required

YEAR	QUARTER	DURATION/ TIMELINE	ACTIONS	COST	RESOURCES & RESPONSIBILITY	GOAL ALIGNMENT
2027	**Q2**	Ongoing	**Action 22:** Continue ongoing assessment of infrastructure in rolling 5-year window.	**$$**	Commission Manager	**SD Goal 2:** We have a clear picture of future infrastructure needs.
2028	**Q4**	Ongoing	**Action 23:** Establish cadence for ongoing bylaw and policy review to support good governance over the long term.	**$$**	Commission Manager, Board time and input	**GV Goal 2:** Our bylaws and policies are clear and up-to-date.