



Municipality of the District of
St. Mary's

St. Mary's 2026 A Ten Year Strategic Plan



St. Mary's 2026

This document will serve as the new Strategic Plan for the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's. It has been created through input from municipal council, municipal staff and members of the public over the course of several meetings, community conversations including an online survey in 2016.

This plan is intended to guide the work of council and staff over the next 10 years in order to establish a collective vision, plan for the future and communicate priorities. It includes five strategic goals each of which are supported by several objectives and strategies. The goals listed in this document are in no particular order of priority and are all considered equally important.

An implementation plan will be created by council and staff to give specific direction on how to achieve each strategic goal. Information that was collected during the consultation period will also be incorporated in implementation of the plan.

Council and staff are proud to have collaborated with the community and are eager to achieve results in our municipality.

Date adopted by Municipal Council: September 12, 2016



Municipality of St. Mary's

Mission and Vision

Mission Statement

"A strong, responsible Municipal Government that provides services and leadership through believing in our communities, facilitating growth and development while enhancing our quality of life and preserving the beauty of our surroundings."

Vision Statement

"Providing a sustainable Municipality in which our citizens are engaged while encouraging viable growth in the community."



Values

- **Safety, Health and Wellness** – we promote a safe and healthy environment for all
- **Cooperation** – we encourage partnership with general public, businesses, organizations and other levels of government to achieve success and growth
- **Transparency** – we promote open communication by providing easy access to information
- **Respect** – we embrace diversity and treat everyone with courtesy, equality and fairness
- **Engagement** - we will support and encourage a strong volunteer base and create an atmosphere where citizens feel welcome to provide suggestions and ideas leading to continuous improvement
- **Financially Responsible** - we provide quality services that are affordable and effectively meet the needs of our community now and into the future
- **Youth** - we support quality education, long term planning and opportunities for growth
- **Quality of Life** – we support an attractive place to live, work and play
- **Natural Environment** - The beauty of our environment is unique and should be maintained for citizens and tourism opportunities

Strategic Goals

Goal 1: To Increase Population of St. Mary's by 5% by 2021

Objective (a): To Support a Sustainable and Vibrant Community

Strategies:	Create an inclusive environment
	Work toward achieving goals in "Shared Strategy for Advancing Recreation in Nova Scotia"
	Create a public engagement strategy to improve communications in the municipality
	Work with community organizations to offer new and improved special events
	Work with partners to increase level of affordable housing
	Maintain and enhance municipal facilities
	Create a youth retention strategy

Objective (b): Increase Planning and Economic Development Initiatives

Strategies:	Update planning documents
	Collaborate with Eastern Strait Regional Enterprise Network
	Develop a land use planning pilot project with the Province

Objective (c): To Attract Immigrants to Live in St. Mary's

Strategies:	Explore Federal and Provincial program opportunities for immigration
	Support community organizations who are self-mandated to resettle immigrants in St. Mary's

Goal 2: Increase Commercial Assessment by 5% and Reduce Unemployment Rate by 2026

Objective (a): Create Employment Opportunities through Business Attraction, Expansion and Retention

Strategies:	Hire an Economic Development Officer for St. Mary's
	Partner with Nova Scotia Business Inc. and other Provincial and Federal departments
	Collaborate with Eastern Strait Regional Enterprise Network
	Continue to strengthen relations with Community Business Development Centre, Career Connections and Guysborough Adult Learning Association
	Facilitate training opportunities for the public to expand knowledge and skills
	Increase rural internet connectivity and accessibility
	Encourage the creation of a Board of Trade
	Develop a business readiness plan and asset inventory

Objective (b): Increase the Ratio of Commercial to Residential Tax Assessment

Strategies:	Review the assessment roll with intent of confirming appropriate classification
	Improve communications with Property Valuation Services Corporation
	Establish methods to engage and attract developers to invest in St. Mary's

Goal 3: To Achieve Financial and Operational Sustainability

Objective (a): Undertake Regular Review of Programs and Services to Ensure Efficiency and Identify Areas for Improvement.

Strategies:	Enhance community engagement and communication
	Conduct comparative analysis of all Municipal programs and services
	Request regular updates from major mandatory expenses; RCMP, Strait Regional School Board, Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, NS Housing Authority, Eastern Region Library Board
	Conduct an internal evaluation of all municipal programs and services

Objective (b): Evaluate and Improve Municipal Infrastructure

Strategies:	Develop an Asset Management Plan
	Develop a 10 year capital plan to be reviewed and updated annually
	Actively seek funding opportunities

Objective (c): Improve Internal Operations Effectiveness

Strategies:	Develop a succession plan
	Improve staff and council communication
	Provide training opportunities for staff and council
	Review and update policies and bylaws
	Standardize reporting methods for outside Council Committee appointments
	Initiate regular departmental reporting to council
	Improve Occupational Health and Safety practices
	Initiate regular staff meetings and staff performance reviews

Objective (d): To Reduce the Reliance on Reserve Funds

Strategies:	Seek funding opportunities and revenue from other sources
	Perform long range financial planning
	Identify opportunities for shared services
	Review opportunities for growth of assessment base

Goal 4: Improve recognition of St. Mary's

Objective (a): Increase Tourist Traffic

Strategies:	Increase and improve welcome and directional signage
	Increase Eco-Tourism opportunities
	Coordinate with Destination Eastern and Northumberland Shores (DEANS) to improve Visitors Information Centre
	Work with local tourist operators
	Promote local attractions
	Beautification for St. Mary's

Objective (b): Promote St. Mary's Brand to Attract People and Business

Strategies:	Increase social media and website presence
	Improve marketing and promotion

Goal 5: To Be Environmentally Sustainable

Objective (a): Obtain balance between economic development while maintaining the environment

Strategies:	Encourage sustainable use of natural resources
	Identify and promote the use of vacant farmland
	Identify alternative energy solutions
	Implementation of the St. Mary's Active Transportation Plan
	Work with organizations to maintain healthy ecosystems
	Utilize land use planning to identify environmentally sensitive areas

External References

- Statistics Canada
- St. Mary's Municipality's Financial Conditions Index; NS Department of Municipal Affairs
- Property Valuation Services Corporation's 2016 Assessment Roll
- Shared Strategy for Advancing Recreation in Nova Scotia

