

ROADMAP 2021

A Strategic Economic Plan For St. John's

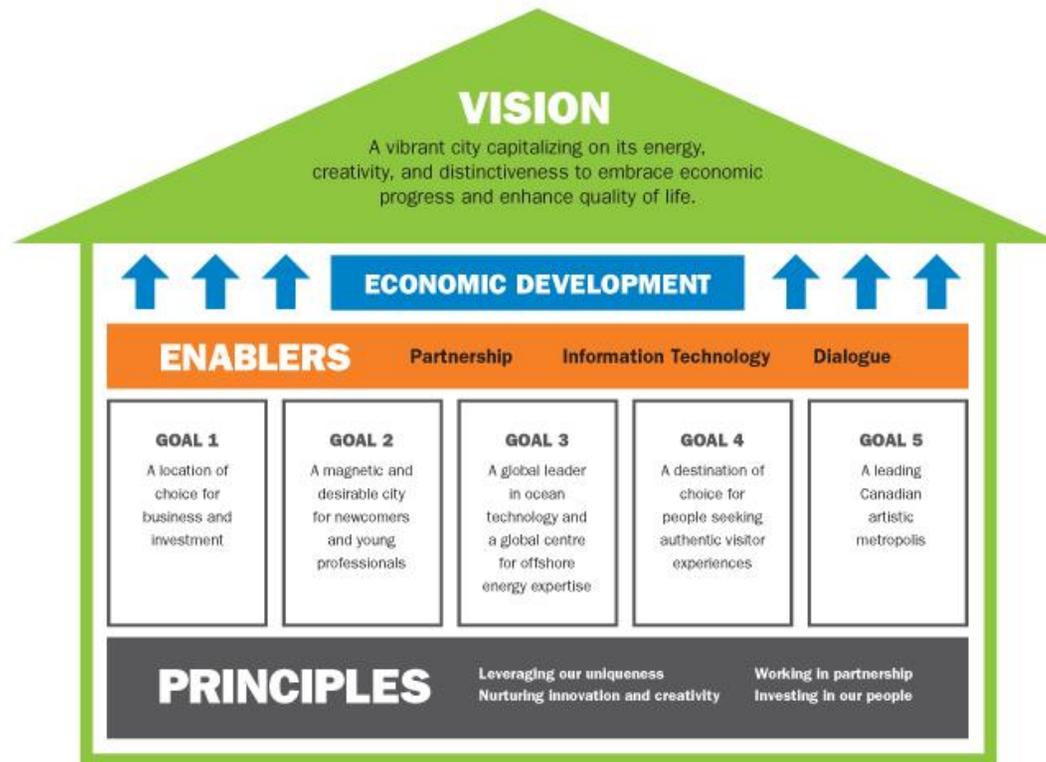
Year Three Review

October 2015



About Roadmap 2021

Roadmap 2021 is a long-term vision and action plan to guide economic development in St. John's. The Roadmap articulates a vision, sets guiding principles, identifies strategic goals and outlines a series of priority actions to be undertaken by the City of St. John's and its various partners. Roadmap 2021 was launched in December of 2011.



The economy since the launch of Roadmap 2021

At the time of the development and launch of the Roadmap in 2010/11, economic and business optimism in St. John's were at an all-time high. Newfoundland and Labrador was leading the country in economic growth, public and private investments had reached record levels, personal incomes were rising, and unemployment was continuing to decline. During the period from 2010-2014, the St. John's economy continued to perform well, with gross domestic product growth of just over 3%, retail sales growth of more than 30%, and employment growth of over 6%.

In early 2015 however, the economic picture in St. John's was beginning to change. Global economic uncertainty created by declining oil prices, was having an impact across the country and here at home.

With lower than expected oil revenues, the 2015 Provincial budget was one of cut backs and restraint. Real GDP growth in St. John's in 2015 is forecasted at just .3%, with little or no growth anticipated in the labour force. The unemployment rate is forecasted to increase by 1.2 points in 2015, and retail sales are expected to remain flat. Although business confidence is still relatively high compared to other jurisdictions, a certain degree of caution has crept into the local business community.

While most economists predict a return to higher commodity prices, there are no clear signals for a recovery in the short-term. St. John's is not immune to global economic pressures, however, investment associated with major project development in the province is expected to continue. Oil producers have indicated that they remain committed to Newfoundland and Labrador's offshore and this offers confidence in the longer term.

Roadmap review

Roadmap 2021 was developed as an evergreen plan; one that would be regularly reviewed, updated and kept current. To that end, annual progress reports have been published and, as was intended after every three years of implementation, a review of the Roadmap was completed in the summer of 2015. The purpose of the review was to consider whether the Roadmap's goals and general directions were still relevant, and whether there was need for significant adjustments to the action plan.



The review process included:

- Individual conversations, and a consultation session, with the Roadmap Liaison Committee - a volunteer committee of external public and private stakeholders;
- A review of current economic information and reports;
- Meetings with City Departments where there were alignments with the Roadmap's goals;
- Meetings with the Working Group - a committee of staff from three levels of government.

The review concluded that the goals and actions as defined in the Roadmap are still relevant. However, additions to the action plan were identified through the review process as outlined on the following pages.



ST. JOHN'S IS A LOCATION OF CHOICE FOR BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT

Business and investment activity bring employment, opportunities and innovation. Retaining and nurturing business is key to generating long-term, predictable economic activity. Our aim is to create an environment that enables business to grow, diversify and flourish in a city that celebrates business achievement.

ACTIONS	TIME-FRAME ¹	CITY ROLE ²	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
IMPROVING CITY PROCESSES AND BUSINESS RELATIONS			
1. Enhance business information/support through Access Centre.	Short	Lead	City departments
2. Explore options for business “pop-ups” centres and services.	Short	Partner	City departments, Business servicing agencies
3. Explore opportunities to better define land areas, zoning and infrastructure which could advance strategic industries identified in the Roadmap and Envision, Municipal Plan.	Ongoing	Lead	City departments
SUPPORTING GROWTH AND DIVERSIFICATION			
4. Seek opportunities to encourage start-up business initiatives.	Short	Partner	Start-up organizations
5. Connect with provincial innovation action plans.	Short	Partner	Government
RESEARCH, INFORMATION AND POLICY			
6. Develop demographic information to inform business development.	Short	Lead	Other municipalities, Business, Government
7. Identify opportunities for developing industry and business profiles.	Medium	Partner	Government, Industry associations

¹ Short = 2 years, Medium = 5 years, Long = 10 years, Ongoing = an existing initiative that will be continued and/or enhanced.

² Lead = City assumes the primary role for ensuring implementation. Partner = City works in conjunction with other organizations.

One or more other organizations may assume the lead in implementation. Influence = City encourages implementation. One or more other organizations may assume the lead in implementation.



ST. JOHN'S IS A MAGNETIC AND DESIRABLE CITY FOR NEWCOMERS AND YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

A qualified workforce is an essential ingredient for economic development and innovation. Securing a vibrant and healthy workforce necessitates a focused approach to both retaining and attracting professionals and skilled labour. Our aim is to nurture youth and young professionals (the Nexter generation), embrace diversity and promote St. John's as an ideal city in which to live and work.

ACTIONS	TIME-FRAME ¹	CITY ROLE ²	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
FOSTERING A VIBRANT COMMUNITY			
1. Promote and support cost effective and open events and activities.	Short	Lead	City departments
2. Continue delivering the Local Immigration Partnership initiative.	Ongoing	Lead	Community, Education, Government, Multicultural agencies
3. Explore options for publically available wireless technology.	Short	Lead	Business (service providers)
4. Explore the development of neighbourhood profiles, program and services in support of inclusive and welcoming communities.	Ongoing	Lead	City departments, Community, Neighbourhood associations
INFORMATION AND MARKETING			
5. Develop an attraction tool kit which would be useful in the attraction of employees, students.	Short	Influence	Governments

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ST. JOHN'S IS A GLOBAL LEADER IN OCEAN TECHNOLOGY AND A GLOBAL CENTRE FOR OFFSHORE ENERGY EXPERTISE

St. John's has a critical base of research facilities, companies and expertise related to offshore petroleum development and ocean engineering and technology. Local expertise in harsh environments has specific application to opportunities emerging in other jurisdictions including the North. The core competencies that have been developed locally can be leveraged and applied around the globe. Our aim is to promote and solidify St. John's position as a leader in ocean technology and as a centre for offshore energy expertise.

ACTIONS	TIME- FRAME ¹	CITY ROLE ²	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
MARKETING AND PROMOTION			
1. Continue to support positioning St. John's as the centre of ocean and arctic technology expertise with particular focus on key inbound conferences and business missions.	Ongoing	Partner	Governments, Industry associations
COMMUNICATION AND DIALOGUE			
2. Pursue, with neighbouring municipalities, opportunities to learn, explore and develop constructive approaches to maximizing benefits stemming from the petroleum industry.	Short	Lead	Other municipalities

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ST. JOHN'S IS A DESTINATION OF CHOICE FOR PEOPLE SEEKING AUTHENTIC VISITOR EXPERIENCES

Tourism makes an important contribution to the St. John's economy. St. John's offers visitors an intriguing blend of history, culture and natural experiences, all within an urban setting. Compelling provincial marketing campaigns are increasing awareness and opening opportunities for future growth. Our aim is to ensure that St. John's has the infrastructure, amenities and products necessary to enhance the visitor experience and support the continued development of tourism.

ACTIONS	TIME-FRAME ¹	CITY ROLE ²	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
DEVELOPING TOURISM PRODUCTS AND PROGRAMS			
1. Participate in and consider for St. John's, the outcomes from the North East Avalon Tourism Product Study currently in progress.	Ongoing	Partner	Government, Business/ industry
2. Consider niche areas for targeting industry-development focused conferences and events, e.g., genetics, food industry.	Medium	Partner	Destination St. John's, Governments, Industry, Post-secondary, Healthcare/research

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ST. JOHN'S IS A LEADING CANADIAN ARTISTIC METROPOLIS

The arts community in St. John's is distinct and original. The vibrancy, attractiveness and livability of the city are inherently tied to the arts. Artists also make a significant economic contribution. Our aim is to support artistic endeavours, ensure the availability of appropriate creative spaces, nurture relationships between the arts and business, and foster an engaged community.

ACTIONS

	TIME-FRAME ¹	CITY ROLE ²	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
DEVELOPING AUDIENCES			
1. Encourage the development of arts-culture-tourism familiarization program within the community to support better integrated awareness of cultural programming with tourism sector.	Short	Partner	Destination St. John's, Business/industry
INVESTING IN THE ARTS			
2. Continue to deliver city grant program to artists and arts organizations and consider, in reviews, the need for long term growth and development factors	Ongoing	Lead	

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“Getting cities right matters for the economy at large. There is mounting evidence that well designed economic development initiatives at the local level can have positive impacts and contribute to economic change.”

- *New urban economies: How can cities foster economic development and develop new urban economies* URBACT, 2015