

# RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF PINEY STRATEGIC PLAN 2022





## MESSAGE FROM COUNCIL

Greetings to all who have an interest in the Rural Municipality of Piney, Manitoba. On behalf of your Council, it is my pleasure to introduce our municipality's 2022 Strategic Plan. It is a newly updated plan that builds on our first strategic plan written in 2016. I would encourage all residents and ratepayers as well as those interested in learning more about our Municipality to read it. Strategic plans are a good source of information, and they can stimulate thoughts and new ideas that might improve our existing way of doing things, as well as reaffirm the things that are working well.

The plan was formulated using input from your Councillors who used knowledge they have gained in discussions with people within their Wards.

Municipal staff provided input that reflected their experience in dealing with the everyday needs of people. Community meetings with any who were interested also provided great input. Every effort was made to obtain as much information as possible.

We hope that the plan will stimulate even further ideas from everyone. Be sure to let your Council know of any suggestions you have.

The strategic plan is used as a guiding document for this Council and future Councils, as well as municipal staff and ratepayers so that the general direction in which we are heading is better understood.

This plan is a moving window in time that will be modified as necessary as new developments occur and improvements are identified. Future municipal Councils might change some priorities based on their experiences, but they will have a good foundation on which to build. I would like to thank all who worked on the plan and all those who made invaluable suggestions.

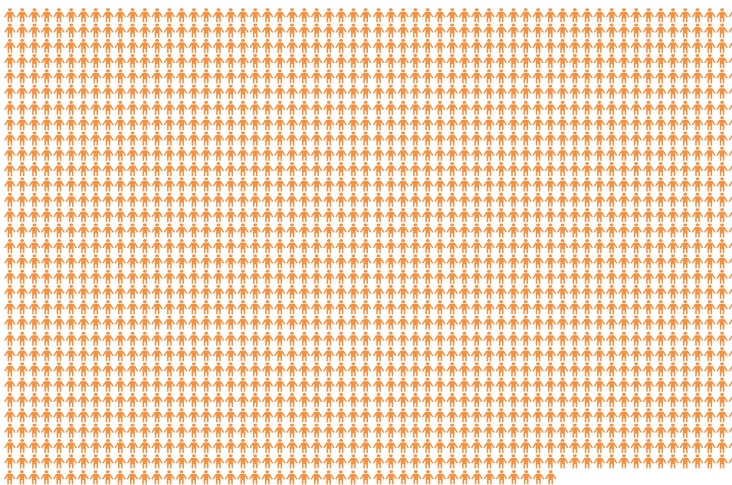
**Yours truly,**

**Wayne Anderson**  
**Reeve**  
**RM of Piney**

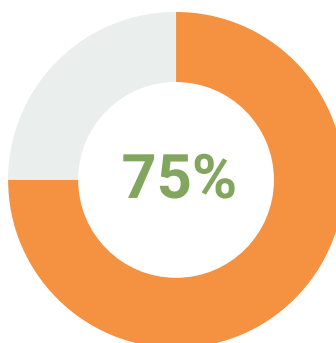
## WHO ARE WE?

The RM of Piney provides a quiet rural lifestyle at the extreme southeast corner of Manitoba, along the Canada-US border with a population of:

1,843



The RM of Piney is a partner in Sunrise Corner for the promotion of tourism and economic development with its neighbouring municipality of Stuartburn. This municipality is a heavily forested area of **2,433** square kilometres of which Crown land makes up **75%**.



**There is a growing interest in the RM of Piney and other regions of rural properties; southeastern Manitoba is one of the fastest growing populations.**

## OUR VISION & MISSION

**Our Vision** is to create a safe, healthy and prosperous environment in which to live, work and play, and to encourage sustainable development that will complement and enhance the way of life for all.

**Our Mission** is to implement responsible governance for all; focused on family, communities and a diversified economy.

**Our municipal government strives to provide common-sense service delivery that sustains a varied economy and communities that foster multi-generational families.**

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategic planning is a process to review how the RM of Piney is doing, to identify priority goals and set specific direction over the next 5+ years. The strategic plan will be reviewed periodically and revised as necessary with changing circumstances.

**For the public our plan is intended to:**

- Communicate the long-term vision and related priorities to meet community needs and expectations.

**For businesses and community organizations our plan is intended to:**

- Reflect the RM's commitment to support business growth and to healthy, safe, sustainable environments.

**For Council and staff our plan is intended to:**

- Inform policy, operational and budget priority decisions.
- Provide a structure for oversight and management of services and initiatives.

Governments both large and small face ongoing challenges to maintain the public's trust and establish better accountability to residents for the tax dollars that are collected and spent on their behalf. The RM of Piney is no different.

**Transparency, fairness, accountability and a number of guiding principles are central to providing services to our communities and achieving the desired results of this strategic plan.**

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

**Our primary guiding principles describe how we carry out our day-to-day activities, undertake initiatives and pursue strategic activities:**

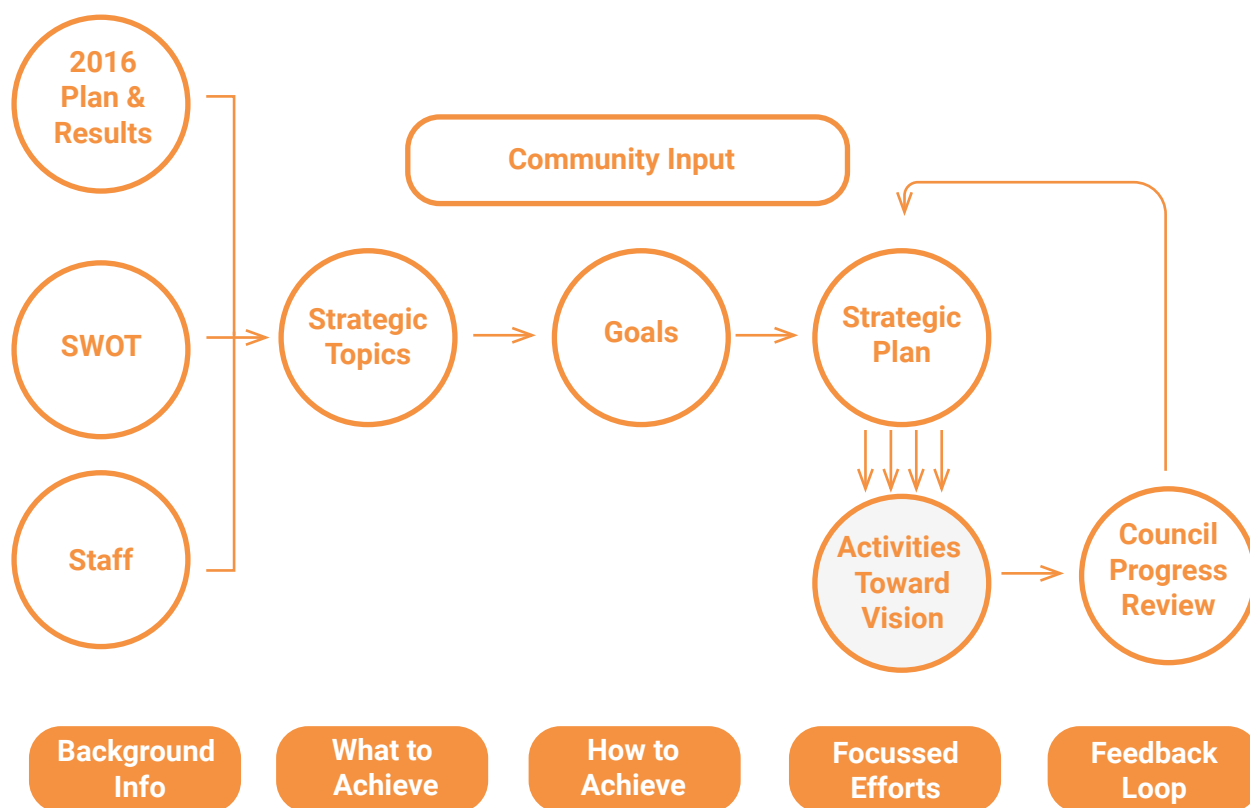
- Provide services in a fair, efficient, understandable manner.
- Engage in regional networking and/or partnerships to keep costs affordable and/or expand options.
- Incorporate sustainability in our actions.
- Maintain stable mill rates to minimize future tax impacts.
- Actively seek grants and alternate non-tax revenue funding sources to support community initiatives.
- Use and implement evolving technology to provide better services to the public and to facilitate their needs.

## STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS

The first step is to assess the current situation through a review of the prior strategic plan from 2016, assess current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT details in Appendix 1) and seek staff input to provide background information. From this assessment a number of strategic topics emerged that are more fully described in Appendix 2. The next step is to identify goals to achieve our vision.

**Council establishes goals with input from staff, the community and consideration of various funding sources, staffing and other resources.**

The strategic plan reflects the community input sought through the RM Newsletter, a classroom session at Ross L Gray school, and public engagement sessions in Piney, Sprague and Woodridge June 20-22, 2022. Specific activities or actions will then be developed to achieve each goal. If specific activities do not achieve the goal or if circumstances change, then different priorities will be addressed through periodic Council strategic plan progress reviews.



## STRATEGIC TOPICS

**Strategic topics are important items to be addressed to achieve our vision. These topics can also be considered as a way to organize types of goals, as described in Appendix 2.**

- Be responsive to growth and development trends in **Community Planning**.
- Provide **Sustainable Governance** based on informed decisions.
- Balance **Economic Sustainability** with exceptional rural quality of life.
- Engage in effective **Communication** about the RM.
- Match resources with **Service** goals, needs and expectations of the people in our community.
- Support the common goal of improving people's lives in **Healthy Inclusive Communities**.
- Better understand vulnerabilities of our municipality through **Environmental Stewardship**.



## STRATEGIC GOALS

Many goals were developed to work towards achieving our vision. The RM of Piney can not work on all goals at the same time while still providing core municipal services and ongoing initiatives. The RM of Piney core services as compared to provincial services are noted in Appendix 3 with current initiatives in Appendix 4.

Priorities are identified as 1, 2 and 3 as priority 1 will be addressed before those identified as priority 2. The priority 3 items, while still important, may not be addressed within the time frame of this 5 year planning horizon but are documented for the future or should conditions change.

STRATEGIC GOALS		PRIORITY
<b>Community Planning</b>	Identify and secure lands specifically needed to continue community growth and plan for public land dedication.	1
	*Manage growth opportunities within the RM and their respective challenges.	1
<b>Sustainable Governance</b>	Decisions based on business case analysis approach incorporating life cycle costing.	2
	Further develop our asset management program.	2
<b>Economic Sustainability</b>	Establish a sustainable funding model for economic development.	1
	*Promote our investment readiness for business, residential and tourism opportunities.	1
<b>Communication</b>	Improve emergency communications and working relationships of all stakeholders.	1
	Lobby higher levels of government with strategic items.	1
<b>Services</b>	Manage water within the RM.	1
	Establish affordable transit options using the RM or a regional approach.	1
	Ensure transportation infrastructure is meeting the growth and evolution of our region.	2
<b>Healthy Communities</b>	*Develop a Recreation Master Plan to effectively support and guide recreation.	1
	Support housing growth to meet demand.	2
<b>Environmental Sustainability</b>	Promote environmental sustainability in waste management.	1
	Plan and prepare for environmental adaptation.	3

The "\*" denotes the top 3 goals as per the June 2022 community engagement sessions.



## BACKGROUND

The RM of Piney recognizes that they are on Treaty 1 and Treaty 3 land. The RM of Piney wants to recognize and work with the Indigenous community who reside within and in close proximity to the RM of Piney.

The RM of Piney and other rural communities are facing a number of challenges related to their changing human capital needs such as slow or stagnant population growth, an aging population and the out-migration of youth.

Low population growth and outmigration have put pressures on local schools. With the majority of business activity driven by small business operations and entrepreneurs, increased economic development activity would boost employment opportunities, housing initiatives, families taking jobs, support for schools and more local services for a prosperous environment.

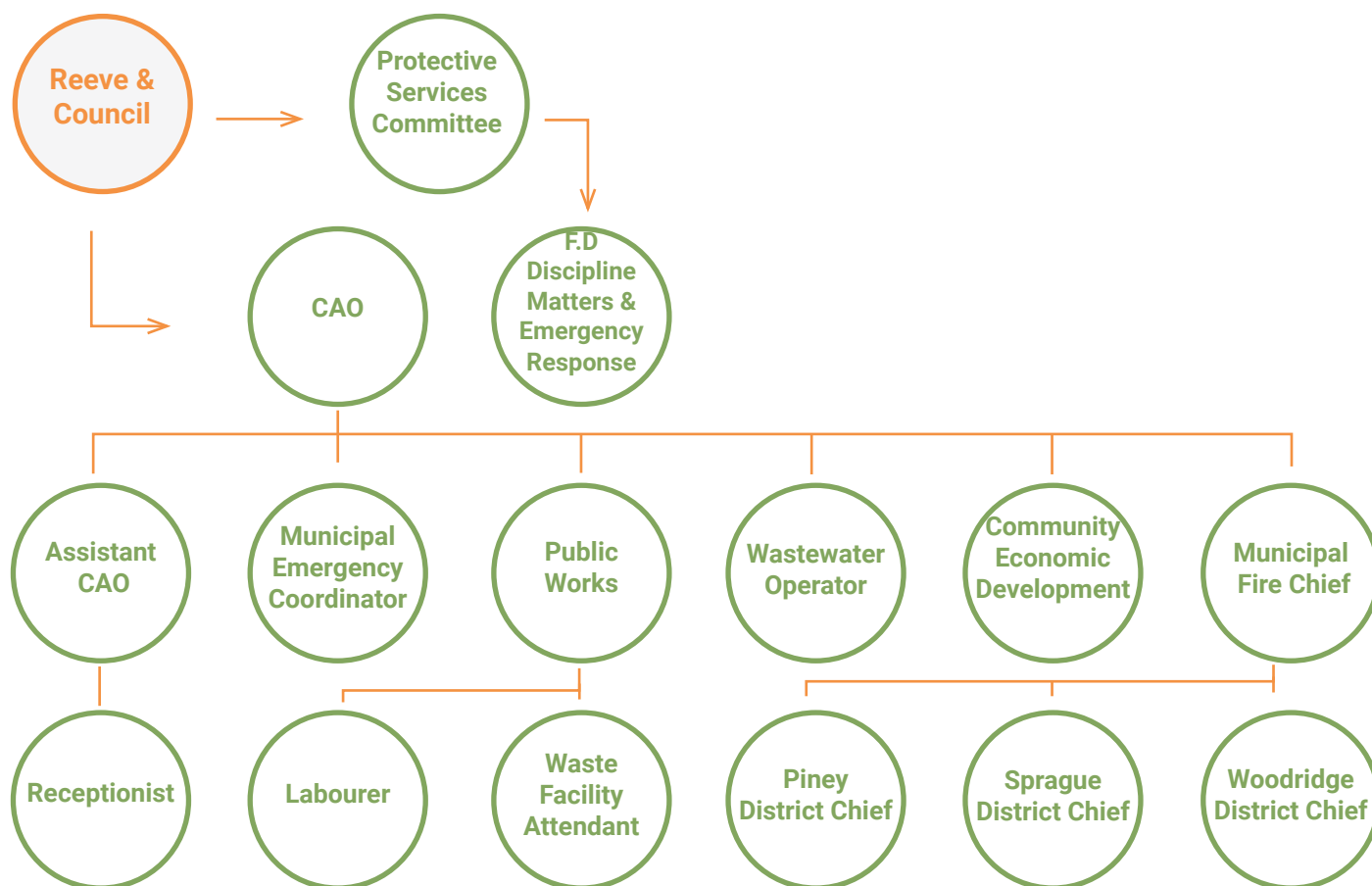
Planning is about using a proactive rather than a reactive approach; learning, growing and being adaptable. Many initiatives take time and that's why we need to invest in land around our communities to address future community growth, why we need to invest in economic development, housing, people and the infrastructure to have healthy, inclusive communities. Southeast Manitoba is the fastest growing region in the province and the RM of Piney is expected to see and plan for significant growth over the next 10 years. The RM is cognizant that growth must be managed with the potential for some "undesirables" and will work with all stakeholders to manage issues that could arise.

A number of strategic planning topics emerged while reviewing the 2016 Strategic Plan and the current assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) in the RM. The SWOT is a basis to consider goals and priorities for action. Different goals will require various time-frames and resources to accomplish. Some goals may not be completed or started over the next 5 or so years. Periodic strategic plan reviews will monitor and determine whether different priorities should be addressed based on the current circumstances.

This document is not intended to list all the operational and ongoing activities of the RM but to identify which goals require specific focus or priority over the next 1-5+ years.

The operational activities are the foundation of the RM of Piney's efforts and as such an alternate planning focus. Strategic goals and actions are those which are new, different or require focussed efforts to move an organization forward for its betterment and able to realize its vision.

**Our organization and partnerships** are listed below.



## PARTNERSHIPS

The RM of Piney is involved in many partnerships and strives to work cooperatively with our indigenous communities, neighbouring municipalities, various stakeholders and other levels of government. The following list represents some of the partnerships the RM has undertaken.

- Buffalo Point Piney Stuartburn Waste Management Board.
- East Borderland Community Housing Working Group.
- Eastman Mutual Aid.
- Eastman Tourism.
- LGD Piney Community Resource Council.
- Former LGD Ad Hoc Committee.
- Piney Regional Chamber of Commerce.
- Piney-Pinecreek Airport.
- Piney Stuartburn Economic Development Board.
- Piney Stuartburn Weed & Building Board.
- Recreation Commissions Committee.
- Red River Basin Commission.
- Seine Rat Roseau Watershed District.
- Southeast Cell Committee.
- Southeast Community Services Co-op.
- Southern Health Community Stakeholders Committee.
- Southeast Provincial Trail System.
- Triple R Community Futures.
- Vita Vet District Board.





## SUMMARY

This strategic plan provides direction and focus in a written document to be monitored over the next 5 years or until another strategic plan is developed. Having a clear mission and vision enables the municipality to develop a strategic plan that is a literal road map for success. It is our guiding document into how the RM of Piney can create healthy communities into the future.

## APPENDIX 1 SWOT

(Includes  
community input)

### STRENGTHS

- Effective and valued staff cross trained; ability to provide consistency in services and fire halls.
- Volunteer Firefighters trained to Level 1 standards; great fire dept and supporters.
- STARS dispatch distance; ability to provide first response.
- Geographic size; room for growth, resource rich, diversity of nature.
- Strong land sub-division sales.
- Stable mill rate with healthy financial reserves and no RM debt to meet future changes.
- Low taxation.
- RM strives for strong communication; seeks community input; listens & tries to respond.
- Council works together to achieve common goals as well as consistent, fair, public policy direction.
- Council and staff use innovative planning and foresight; being prepared for future trends.
- Community owned recreation infrastructure (not RM owned).
- Recreation availability.
- Great place /affordable to retire, familiarity of people moving back.
- Close to US (shopping).
- Good people.
- Volunteers/strong communities.
- High quality of life; clean water, air, low crime, abundant recreational opportunities.
- Core municipal services provided.
- Use and implementation of evolving technology to provide better services to the public and facilitate their needs.

### WEAKNESSES

- Communication and related technology tools can be very time consuming.
- Inconsistent messaging with use of too many communication tools.
- Low population density that is older by proportion as compared to provincial average limits the labour force.



## APPENDIX 1 SWOT

(Includes  
community input)

- Same volunteers; need younger people.
- Not enough younger people/families.
- No one central community; No meeting areas.
- No intercommunity associations amongst various communities (amalgamate ie exercise).
- Isolated RM; limited number of neighboring RM partners.
- Loss of public transportation.
- High cost to provide services and receive services; long distance to products and services, some services not found regionally.
- Lack of jobs/employment opportunity, housing.
- Not enough places to buy (need independent investment).
- Lack of highway 210 being paved (lack of business).
- Economically depressed.
- Some community residents reliant on US health care (service reductions).
- US medical/border hours (concerts).
- Entertainment business is lacking.
- Higher cost to provide similar services throughout a large municipality; dumps, fire halls, recreation.
- Limited resources to improve drainage infrastructure; areas lacking drainage infrastructure.
- Dependant on contractors to provide municipal services with potentially inconsistent service.
- Inherited infrastructure; critical infrastructure, owned by other government levels.
- Low assessment base results in less tax revenue; majority of land is tax exempt crown land.
- Lack of travel routes into RM especially from the east.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Manitoba Age Friendly initiatives may provide additional communication methods.
- Potential 55+ housing construction.
- Access to good health care; both across the border in the US and in Canada.
- Low cost of living with affordable residential real-estate.
- Population growth in SE Manitoba.
- Skilled labourers.
- Funds available for projects.
- Opportunity for outdoor recreation; trail system/network, hunting, cross country skiing, eco-recreation, horseback riding, guided trail walks (mushrooms, lady slippers, blueberry picking).

## APPENDIX 1 SWOT

(Includes  
community input)

- Tourism; local and regional attractions.
- Farm days, community festivals & events.
- Public opinion influenced with Sunrise Corner & media messages.
- Nice place to move for recreation/tourism.
- General revenue land sales and housing.
- Get kids involved ie cutting grass, work.
- Affordable land available for new/expanding businesses, recreation opportunities and campgrounds.
- Agriculture; land, value of land, proximity to border, ability to move agricultural products.
- Natural and diversified resource rich (peat moss, clean water, abundant wildlife, forests).
- 75% crown/provincial land.
- Established trade network (CNR, natural gas line, major highway, proximity to ports of entry).
- US Border; opportunity for work.
- Airport at border; unique.
- Growing RM partnerships with other RMs and non government entities.

### THREATS

- Risk of misinformation in digital world and a multitude of sources.
- Media reliance on provincial information not aligned with municipality (previously with burn bans).
- Regional cell phone reception spotty, affordability of high speed Internet.
- Disasters (man-made, natural, economic).
- Sand fracking.
- Loss US health care, distance to hospital and services.
- Mobile health clinic.
- Increased government red tape and regulations.
- Closure of schools which service the municipality.
- Closure of recreation infrastructure and facilities.
- Lack of housing and lack of developers.
- Shortage of employees.
- Limited services for seniors; housing, care.
- Growing population/subdivisions adds challenges (noise, dust, city vs country expectations).
- Loss of RCMP detachment/lack of law enforcement.
- Crime potential with more people; disregard for community (ATV, fire).





## APPENDIX 2 DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGIC TOPICS

The strategic plan with goals and activities are based on seven strategic topics.

### COMMUNITY PLANNING

#### **To be responsive to growth and development trends.**

Planning is required to prepare for the growing interest in Southeastern Manitoba and a shift to living outside the city. Plans need to match land use, level of interest and investment readiness for residents, business and tourism. This may include trails, community lots and zoning bylaws for such enterprises as retreats. Growth and development need to be reviewed to ensure they are responsive to meet our future regional opportunities and managed with potential threats such as increased ORV traffic, environmental damage, crime, higher service standards and the public "wants". These threats need to be acknowledged and understood better as the RM moves forward with community growth. The RM may need to invest in greater enforcement of by-laws, animal control and community safety programs.

### SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE

#### **Based on informed decisions.**

Governance will be guided by transparency, sustainability, consistency, accountability, inclusivity and common sense service delivery decisions. Good governance requires trust in the expertise and experience of municipal staff, a team approach and an understanding of roles and responsibilities in the delivery of municipal services. Governance also considers the financial impact of its activities and a move from a reactive to a proactive planning approach.

### ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

#### **Balance economic development and exceptional rural quality of life through economic growth, housing, tourism and marketing.**

To support a diversified economy to become resilient to climate change, global downturns and evolving market trends and to support the people that work and live within our region as part of our healthy communities. Support new business launches and expansion of existing businesses for a stable and growing economic base with consideration for our rural way of life. Our diversity includes forestry, agriculture, peat moss, mining, tourism, manufacturing, local products and a local Chamber of Commerce. (Economic growth, jobs, families, students, housing are intertwined).

### COMMUNICATION

#### **To engage in effective, informative and relevant communication with Council, staff, community and stakeholders about the RM.**

To engage in effective communication is to understand and to be understood, to share ideas and increase knowledge of community services and needs; to better understand each person's perspective. Other communication attributes are accuracy, timeliness, relevancy and informative. Communication tools currently include RM website updates, RM newsletter, social media, community engagement opportunities, open



## APPENDIX 2 DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGIC TOPICS

The strategic plan with goals and activities are based on seven strategic topics.

houses as well individual interactions. Public education and community consultation initiatives are ongoing for the general and business communities. Effective communication between Council and senior staff will ensure the prioritization of activities based on current capacities, resources and goals.

### SERVICES

#### **To match resources with service goals, needs and expectations of the people in our community.**

Services are provided for people in our community by matching defined service levels and resources with community needs and adapting to changing expectations from both community and other government agencies. Services include transportation and drainage, community safety, emergency response, waste disposal, public health and assistance programs, community planning, development plan, municipal land use, rural program delivery, recreation and cultural. Services are provided through an environment where staff retention and service delivery are a priority, employee opportunities allow staff to grow with the demands of their job and build municipal networking.

### HEALTHY INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

#### **To support the common goal of improving people's lives; health, physical activity, recreation, culture.**

The provision of activities within our spheres of jurisdiction that supports the social well being of our communities and enhance the quality of life which may include health, physical activity, recreation, culture and social connections. Focus is on community planning which local government has the ability to influence and change. Healthy communities are impacted by clean air, clean water, chronic disease prevention as well as healthy lifestyle choices and opportunities. Inclusive communities do not discriminate against age, disability, culture or the individual but thrives on bringing people together.

### ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

#### **To better understand the vulnerabilities of our municipality, its resources, natural resources and the communities within them.**

To meet changing environmental, climatic and social expectations while maintaining sustainability. Climate and community resilience include fires, droughts, floods, recycling programs and energy conservation. To keep our communities, safe, sustainable and looking forward for our piece in a changing world. Piney is 75% crown lands, with significant natural lands. Green programs should include plans which maintain diversity in our green spaces as this diversity will help address environmental uncertainty.



## APPENDIX 3

## RM OF PINEY VS MANITOBA RESPONSIBILITIES

### RM of Piney – Core Services



### Collaborative



### Manitoba External Services



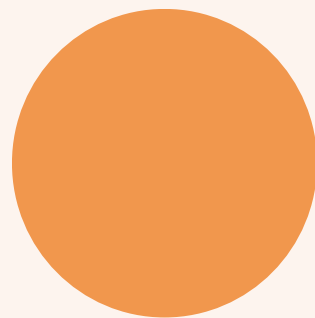
## APPENDIX 4 CURRENT INITIATIVES

The RM is involved in numerous initiatives and is continuously striving to improve the services provided to residents. Municipal initiatives are not stagnant as services continually evolve. Below is a list of the current initiatives.

- Recreation Master Plan.
- Trail Development Plan.
- Transit /Transportation Plan.
- Regional Transit Study.
- Community Diversity Plan.
- Southeast Community Services Co-Op (SECSC).
- Age-Friendly Community.
- Sunrise Corner – Tourism and Economic Development.
- Asset Management.
- Public Works Delivery.
- Transfer Stations.
- BPPS Recycling and Waste Management.
- Seine Rat River Conservation District.
- Crown Land Acquisition.







Sustainable  
Development

