RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF PINEY
STRATEGIC PLAN 2026



PINEY
Municipality / Municipalité


CARRICK
MIDDLEBRO
Piney
BADGER
MENISINO
SPRAGUE
SANDILANDS
WOODRIDGE
VASSAR
WAMPUM
ST.LABRE
SOUTH JUNCTION

MESSAGE FROM COUNCIL

Welcome 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 updated 2026 Strategic Plan. This document builds directly upon the foundation of our previous plans, serving as a reliable roadmap to guide our municipality forward over the coming years. It also reflects what we mean when we say Piney is Simply Better: a place where space, nature, community and opportunity come together, and where thoughtful progress strengthens the rural quality of life we value.

This updated strategy focuses on cultivating a resilient local economy while encouraging meaningful community participation. Our goal is to ensure Piney remains a stable, welcoming and prosperous place to live, work, build and grow. The plan was formulated using direct input from your Councillors, the everyday operational experience of municipal staff, and constructive feedback from our community engagement meetings.

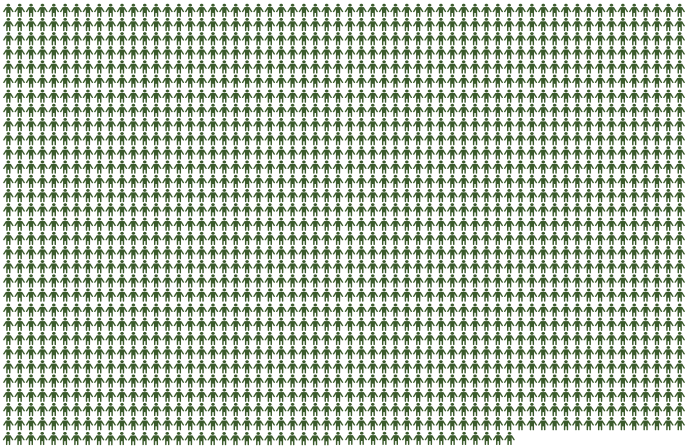
Moving forward, our strategic focus centres on fostering healthy, inclusive communities, economic sustainability, environmental stewardship and community planning. Supporting these priorities are our ongoing operational pillars of communication, sustainable governance and service delivery. Together, they reflect a balanced approach: creating opportunities for residents and businesses while protecting the qualities that make our communities special. Simply Better is not about being better than somewhere else; it is about choosing what matters most and planning carefully to preserve it for the future.

This strategic plan is a living document and a moving window in time. It provides a stable framework for current and future Councils, municipal staff and ratepayers while remaining flexible enough to adapt as new developments occur. By thinking long term, working collaboratively and making responsible decisions, we can continue to build a resilient, sustainable municipality that is ready for what comes next.

We encourage residents, business owners and partners to review the plan and consider how its priorities can help us live, experience, build and grow Simply Better in the RM of Piney. Your perspective remains vital to our progress, and we welcome your thoughts and suggestions. **Thank you to everyone who contributed to this shared vision for our future.**

WHO ARE WE?

The RM of Piney provides a quiet rural lifestyle at the extreme southeast corner of Manitoba, along the Canada-US border. The municipality, with a population of **1,843 (2021)**, is a heavily forested area of **2,433** square kilometres of which **75%** is Crown land.



Population of 1,843 (2021)

OUR VISION & MISSION

VISION To create a safe, healthy and prosperous environment to live, work and play in; 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 our way of looking at how the RM of Piney is doing, choosing our priority goals and setting an exciting direction for the next 5+ years.

To keep things on track, we will check in on the plan periodically to revise 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.

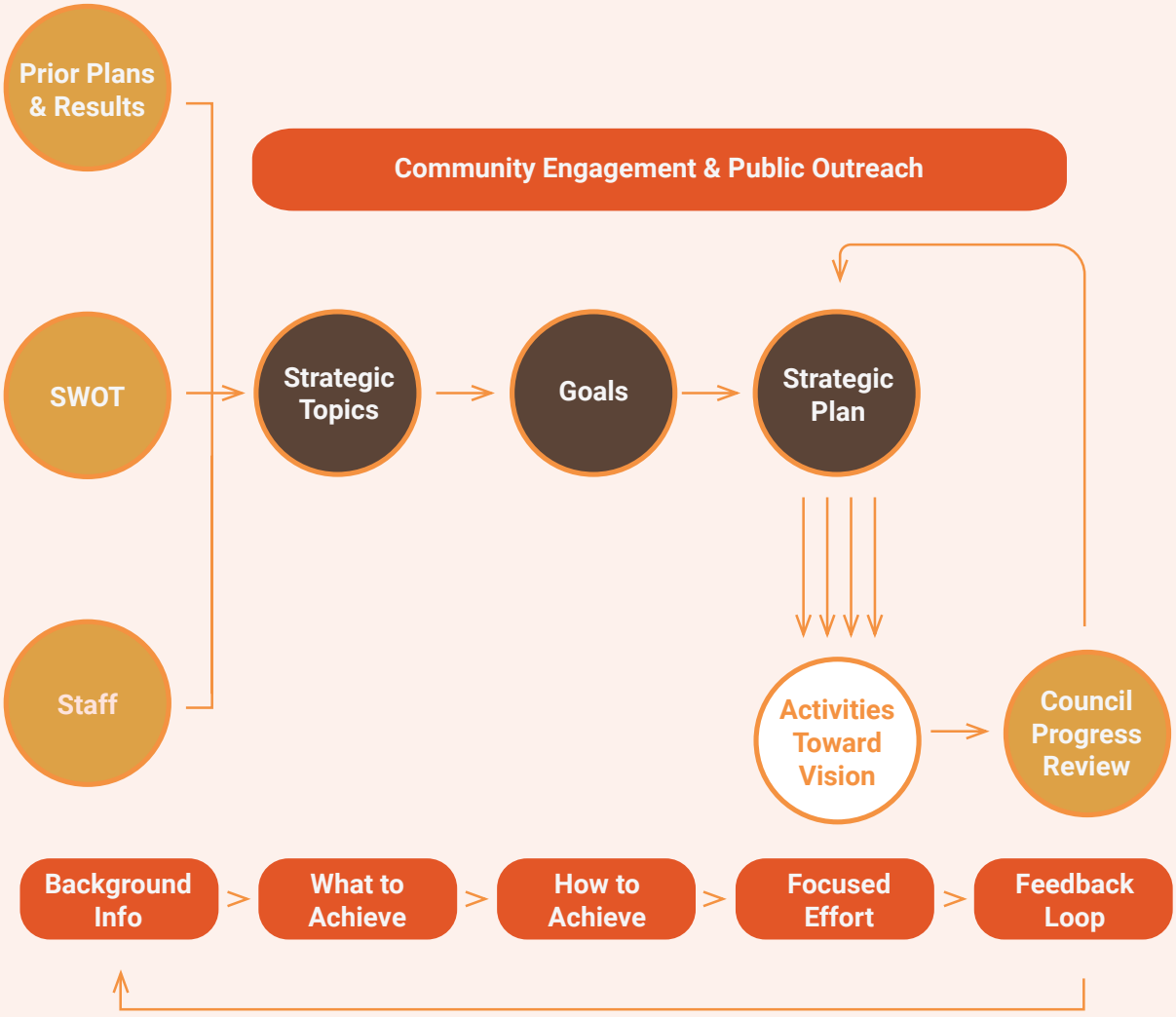
STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS

The first step is to assess the current situation through a review of the prior 2022 strategic plan and 2025 snapshot of activities, assess current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT details in **Appendix 1**) and seek staff input to provide background information. The next step is to identify goals to achieve our vision. Goals and activities are grouped under seven strategic topics that are more fully described in **Appendix 2**.

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

The strategic plan reflects the community input through discussions with Council and a public engagement session and BBQ on July 22, 2026. Specific activities are 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 PLAN PROCESS



STRATEGIC TOPICS

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

Support the common goal of improving people's lives in **Healthy Inclusive Communities**.



Balance **Economic Sustainability** with exceptional rural quality of life.

Engage in effective two-way **Communication** about the RM.

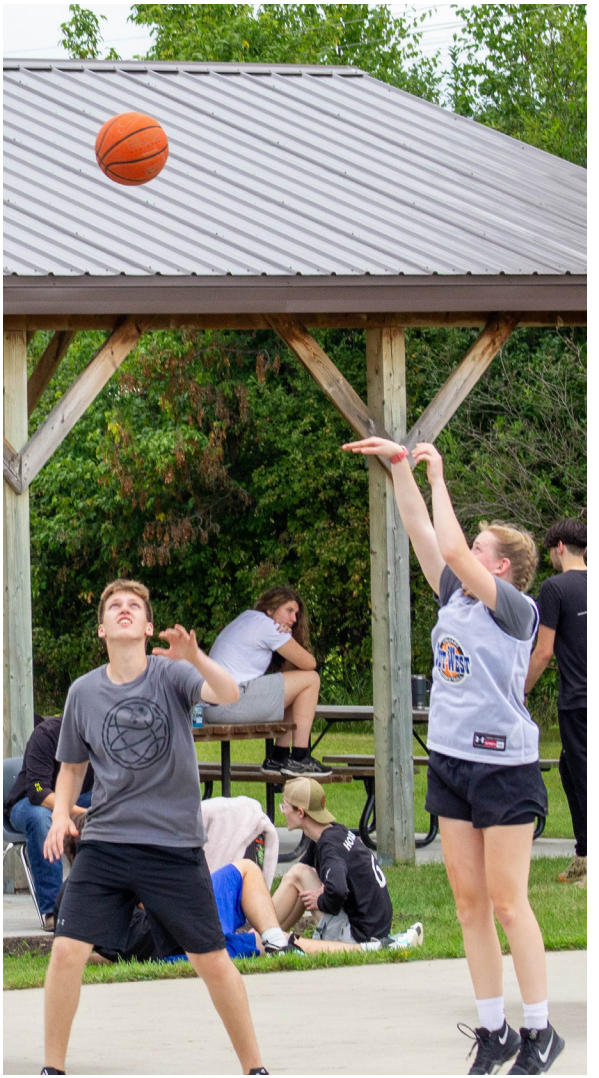
Better understand vulnerabilities of our municipality through **Environmental Stewardship**.

Be responsive to growth and development trends in **Community Planning**.

Provide **Sustainable Governance** based on informed decisions.

Match resources with **Service** goals, needs and expectations of the people in our community.









STRATEGIC GOALS

Many goals and respective activities are identified to work towards achieving our vision. As the RM of Piney can not work on all goals while also continuing to provide core municipal services and ongoing initiatives, priorities are selected.

Priorities are identified as 1, 2 and 3 and priority 1 will be the focus 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. For reference, RM of Piney core services as compared to provincial services are noted in **Appendix 3** with current initiatives in **Appendix 4**.

	GOAL	ACTIVITIES	PRIORITY
HEALTHY INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES	Strengthen Community Well-Being Through Accessible Health, Recreation, and Social Opportunities.	Implement the Recreation Master Plan.	1
	Support Inclusive, Age-Friendly, and Accessible Communities.	*Support housing growth to meet demand.	2
	Strengthen Community Planning That Supports Healthy, Connected and Sustainable Growth.	Foster community design that support healthy residents.	3
ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY	Support a Diverse and Resilient Local Economy.	*Promote our investment readiness for business, residential and tourism opportunities.	1
		Support the PR210 Intermunicipal Prosperity Initiative.	2
		Protect natural assets for a sustainable economic future (e.g. aquifer.).	3

	GOAL	ACTIVITIES	PRIORITY
ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY	Support Business Start-Up, Expansion, and Rural-Friendly Development.	Transition to a dedicated Economic Development Officer with a Piney economic development and tourism strategic plan.	1
		Partner with investors to leverage new opportunities.	3
	Strengthen Workforce, Housing, and Community Supports That Enable Economic Success.	*Continue to explore improved cellular service options.	1
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP	Strengthen Climate Resilience and Community Safety.	Monitor threats to our groundwater using a science-based approach.	2
		Investigate energy alternatives and funding for improved efficiency and cost savings.	3
	Promote Sustainable Practices and Environmental Awareness.	*Foster the connection between innovation and sustainability for a resilient economy.	3
		Support local solutions that protect our environment.	3
COMMUNITY PLANNING	Strengthen Community Safety, Enforcement, and Regional Resilience.	*Manage growth opportunities within the RM and their respective challenges.	1
	Manage Growth Through Coordinated Land Use and Environmental Stewardship.	Identify and secure lands specifically needed to continue community growth and plan for public land dedication.	3
		Work with developers to foster community growth.	3

The "*" denotes the top activities as per the July 2026 community engagement session.

	GOAL	ACTIVITIES
OPERATIONAL ANCHORS	**COMMUNICATION** Engage in effective two-way **Communication** about the RM.	• Improve communications to inform residents and other stakeholders. • Lobby higher levels of government with strategic items.
	SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE Provide **Sustainable Governance** based on informed decisions.	• Develop an operational staffing plan to maintain business continuity. • Base decisions on a business case analysis approach that incorporates life-cycle costing. • Strengthen digital resilience through cybersecurity protection and AI awareness.
	SERVICES Match resources with **Service** goals, needs and expectations of the people in our community.	• Ensure transportation infrastructure is meeting the growth and evolution of our region. • Investigate and implement supports for wildland fire resilience. • Invest in water management plan within the RM.






CANADA
EH



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 out-migration 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, opportunities for families, support for schools and more local services for a prosperous environment.

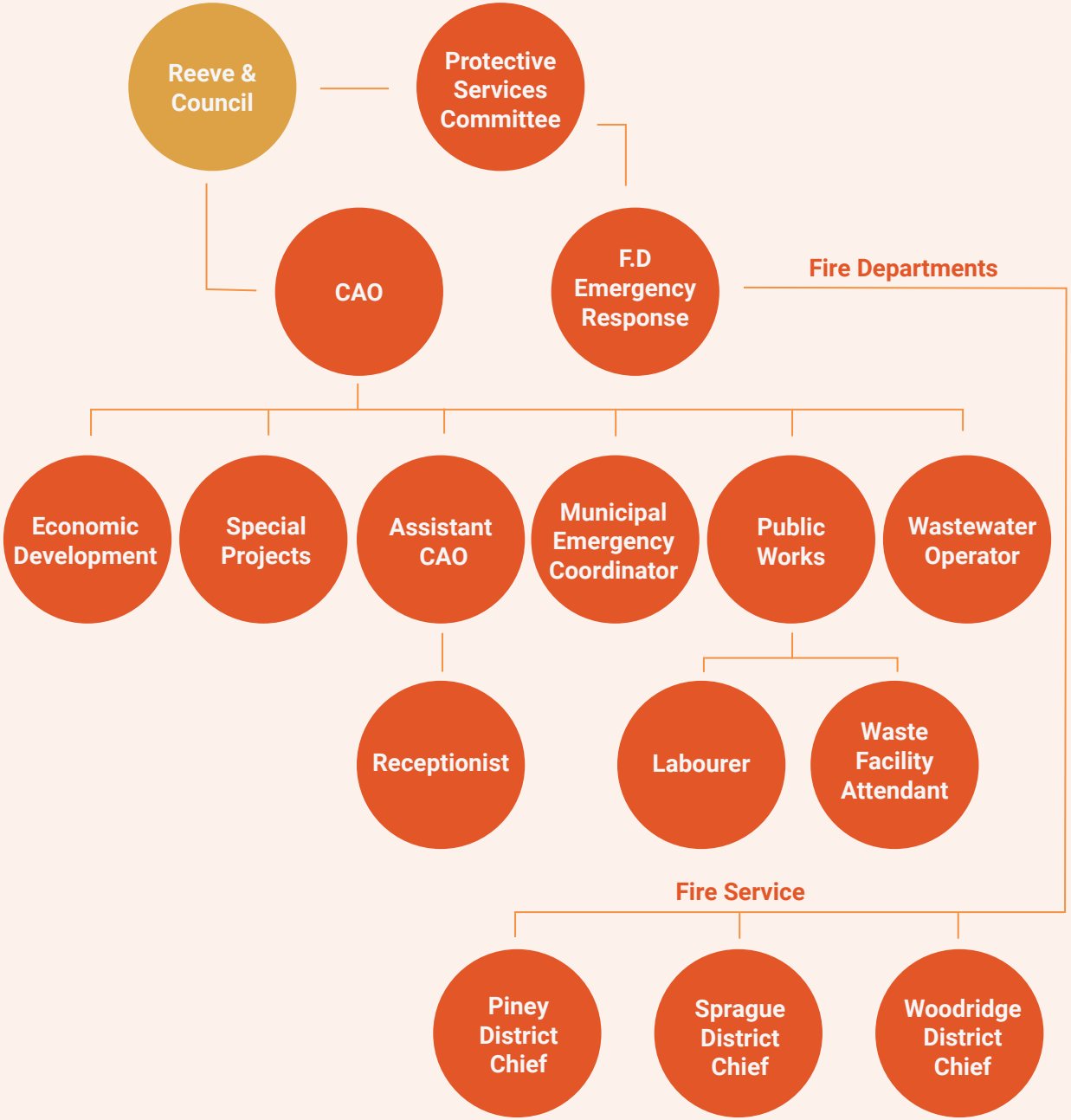
Planning is about using a proactive rather than a reactive approach; learning, growing and being adaptable. Many initiatives take time and that's why we need to invest in land around our communities to address future growth, and why we need to invest in economic development, housing, people and the infrastructure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

While reviewing the 2022 Strategic Plan, 2025 snapshot of activities and strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) in the RM, many goals and activities emerged. 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 years. Periodic strategic plan reviews will monitor and determine whether priorities should be shifted 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 focused efforts to move an organization forward for its betterment and to realize its vision.

OUR ORGANIZATION



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 and its residents are benefiting from.

- Buffalo Point Piney Stuartburn Recycling and Waste Management
- Piney Stuartburn Weed & Building Board
- East Borderland Community Housing Working Group
- Piney Regional Senior Services
- Piney Regional Chamber of Commerce
- South East Community Services Co-op
- Southeast Regional Transportation Initiative (SERTi)
- BPP Rent & Ride
- Southeast Cell Committee
- Vita Vet District Board
- Eastman Mutual Aid
- Former LGD Ad Hoc Committee
- Southern Health Community Stakeholders Committee
- Eastman Regional Municipal Committee (ERMC)
- Economic Development Association of Manitoba (EDAM)
- Rural Manitoba Economic Development (RMED)
- PR210 Intermunicipal Prosperity Partnership
- Triple R Community Futures
- Winnipeg River Watershed District
- Seine Rat Roseau Watershed District
- Red River Basin Commission

SUMMARY

This five-year strategic plan guides the RM of Piney's focus and activities 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

STRENGTHS

- STARS dispatch distance; ability to provide first response.
- Firefighters trained to Level 1 standards; great fire department and supporters.
- Council works together to achieve common goals.
- Council and staff use innovative planning to prepare for future trends.
- RM strives for strong communication; seeks community input, listens and responds.
- High quality of life; clean water, air, low crime, abundant recreational opportunities.
- Large network of pre-existing forestry and municipal roadways to leverage in future expansion or recreation projects.
- Caring people, dedicated volunteers creating strong communities.
- Great place, affordable to retire, familiarity of people moving back.
- Strong residential sub-division land sales.
- Use and implementation of evolving technology to provide better services to the public and facilitate their needs.
- Effective and valued staff cross trained; ability to provide consistency in services and firehalls.
- Community-owned recreation infrastructure.
- Recreation land availability with diversity.
- Stable mill rate with healthy financial reserves and no RM debt to meet future changes.

WEAKNESSES

- Misalignment of employment opportunities and careers sought.
- No one large central community.
- Majority of land is tax exempt crown land. 75% of RM lacks services & amenities.
- No intercommunity associations amongst communities.
- Need to manage higher costs with few potential grants, low tax base.
- Higher cost to provide similar services throughout a large municipality; dumps, fire halls, recreation.
- Employment opportunity, housing, lack of options and diversity.
- Low population density that is older by proportion as compared to provincial average limits the labour force.
- Communication and coordination of resources and residents are challenged during emergencies.
- Stronger growth in seasonal properties (vs residential).
- Same volunteers; need support by younger people & families.
- Shortage of properties to buy and rent. Lacking housing developers.
- Dependant on contractors to provide municipal services.
- Changing physical landscape and ecosystem.
- Portion of highway 210 not paved.
- Service reductions create some reliance on US health care.
- Inconsistent messaging between gov't levels.

- Limited resources to improve drainage infrastructure; areas lacking drainage.
- Local transportation service underutilized.
- Communication and related technology tools can be very time consuming
- Inherited infrastructure, critical infrastructure, owned by other government levels.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Opportunity for outdoor recreation.
- Low cost of living with affordable residential real-estate.
- Potential 55+ and assisted living housing construction.
- Natural and diversified resource rich.
- Agriculture; land, value of land, proximity to border, ability to move agricultural products.
- Tourism and local attractions.
- Affordable land available for new/expanding businesses, recreation opportunities and campgrounds.
- Nice place to move for recreation/tourism.
- Established 3-phase energy, hydro available or in place.
- Natural gas line.
- Farm days, community festivals and events.
- Established trade routes (CNR, major highway, proximity to ports of entry).
- Population growth in SE Manitoba.
- Innovative RM partnerships with other RMs and non government entities.
- 75% crown/provincial land.
- Skilled labourers.
- Manitoba Age Friendly initiatives may provide additional tools and resources.
- RM funds available for projects.
- General revenue of land sales and housing (other revenue sources).
- Get kids involved in cutting grass, work. Entrepreneurial opportunities.

THREATS

- Lack of housing and lack of developers.
- Closure of schools which service the municipality.
- Disasters (man-made, natural, economic) including wildfires with abundance of forests.
- Increased government red tape and regulations.
- Increasing risk of cyber security.
- Shortage of employees.
- Loss of grant opportunities.
- Loss of RCMP detachment and lack of law enforcement.
- Cost of infrastructure to meet needs.
- More people living in forest areas and the challenges to keep people and structures safe from fires.
- Intermunicipal relationships.
- Inflation.
- Risk of misinformation in digital world.
- Regional cell phone reception spotty, affordability of high-speed Internet.
- Closure of recreation infrastructure and facilities.
- Limited services for seniors including housing and care.
- Growing population and subdivisions add challenges (noise, dust, city vs country expectations).
- Increasing CN rail crossings financial liability.

- Media reliance on provincial information not aligned with municipality (previously with burn bans).
- Loss US health care, distance to hospital and services.
- Silica sand project impacts.
- Crime potential with more people; disregard for community (ATV, fire).
- Lack of land line support & maintenance.





APPENDIX 2

DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGIC TOPICS

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

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.

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 evolving market trends, global downturns and climate change 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).

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.

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 challenges such as increased off-road vehicle traffic, environmental damage, crime, higher service standards and evolving public needs and preferences. These challenges 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.

COMMUNICATION

To engage in effective, informative and relevant, two-way 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, RM newsletter, social media, community engagement opportunities, open houses as well as 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.

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.

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 planning, 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 the municipal networking.

APPENDIX 3

RM OF PINEY VS MANITOBA RESPONSIBILITIES

RM OF PINEY – CORE SERVICES



COLLABORATIVE



MANITOBA GOVERNMENT SERVICES



APPENDIX 4

CURRENT/ONGOING INITIATIVES

The RM is involved in numerous initiatives and is continuously striving to improve and evolve the services delivered to residents. Below is a list of the current initiatives.

- Recreation Master Plan
- Recreation Commission Committee
- Trail Development Plan
- Association of Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities (AMBM)
- Economic Development Council for Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities (CDEM)
- Age-Friendly Community
- Southeast Cancer Care Transportation Program
- Tourism and Economic Development
- Asset Management
- FireSmart ™
- Forestry Education
- Crown Land Acquisition
- Building Inspections
- Wildfire Resilience
- Emergency Preparedness
- Fiber Internet Extension (Valley Fiber)
- Seedlings Program
- Radon Gas Testing

APPENDIX 5

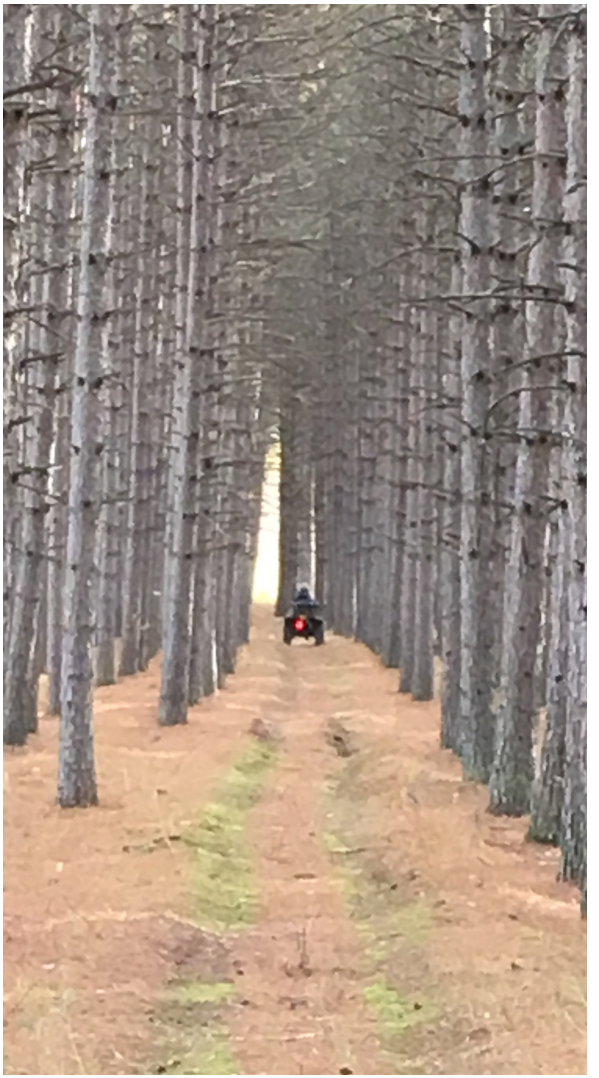
20-YEAR PLANNING

Planning for a Resilient Future

Looking 20 years ahead allows the RM of Piney to shape a future that reflects our community's values, needs, and aspirations. Long-term planning is essential for establishing priorities that guide decision-making across multiple Council terms and administrative cycles. Many transformative projects, such as infrastructure upgrades, economic development initiatives, and environmental stewardship, require years of preparation to secure funding, assess feasibility, and coordinate resources. By thinking strategically and planning proactively, we ensure that our municipality grows in a way that is logical, efficient, and sustainable. This long-term vision provides a framework for consistent progress, helping us respond to emerging challenges while staying true to our goals.

LONG-TERM GOALS	• Maintain viability of recreation services. • Monitor external threats to inclusive, safe, welcoming communities. • Anticipate housing growth impacts and incorporate policies within our development plans to support the vision of that growth. • Assess the need for greater enforcement of community safety. • Improve public amenities along travel routes. • Growing active transportation infrastructure. • Overall water management strategy for the municipality. • Water & wastewater infrastructure for Woodridge. • Expansion of public utilities to meet population growth and business needs.











Compiled
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