

## 5. Set, review, comply and respond

Create strategic goals, review long-term sustainability, and ensure compliance to provincial and federal regulations governing municipal infrastructure.

### a) Setting and maintaining strategic goals

Strategic planning focuses on long-term goals and strategies of an organization. Strategic plans have a solid external focus, relate to key projects of the organization and identify major goals, actions and resource allocations relating to long-term survival, value and growth of the organization.

Setting goals is an opportunity for your municipality to ensure that your business goals, stakeholders' goals and strategic goals align accordingly. Any decisions being made within your municipality must reflect these goals. When creating strategic goals, your municipality should consider the following tips:

- Strategic goals should incorporate sustainability, economic, social, environmental and governance related objectives
- Consultations will aid your municipality in developing realistic goals that satisfy the desired service levels of the public and other stakeholders;
- Strategic goals should be clearly written/documented and categorized for each major asset group such as transportation, parks and recreation, water etc.

Strategic maintenance refers to a document or a plan that outlines your municipality's key objectives for maintenance related activities, desired service levels, regulations or standards that the activity must comply with or must operate within, and parameters for making informed decisions. A maintenance strategy has four key building blocks:



When completing periodic reviews, it is important to consider asset renewal alternatives such as new and emerging technologies relating to total asset or software replacement, in place rehabilitation or assistance. There are four key steps for assessing asset renewal alternatives:

1. Explore suitable options to proposed renewal project;
2. Define a process for comparing and assessing renewal alternatives and evaluate selected options with other municipal departments;

3. Determine and record the preferred renewal alternative, ensuring that is both financially and physically sustainable for your municipality; and
4. Complete a follow-up report, looking specifically at goals, outcomes, benefits and challenges.

#### **b) Developing a lens for long-term sustainability**

Developing a lens for long-term sustainability is the act of developing in-house policies that set, govern and monitor the status of your municipality's capacity for ensuring sustainable assets. This lens will ensure that procedures and policies are being applied consistently throughout the entire municipality.

##### **Common best practice:**

- **Coordinating infrastructure works:** is a cost-effective strategy that aims to coordinate various physical works projects related to municipal infrastructure. It equally reduces the overall disturbance, identifies innovative solutions, and increases cross-departmental operational efficiency. One of the major benefits of coordinating infrastructure work is that it eliminates the duplication of unnecessary work. In order to effectively coordinate infrastructure works, it is vital to develop a detailed and periodically reviewed asset inventory, as explained in step one.

For example, if a pipe bursts beneath a road that is need of resurfacing, coordinating the two projects will reduce reinstatement costs, time and disturbance to the public. It will also permit your municipality to attain more competitive pricing for bundled work.

#### **c) Compliance monitoring**

Compliance monitoring refers to the act of adhering to rules, regulations and industry standards governing municipal infrastructure, assets, finances and governance. Any document that prescribes conditions or requirement that the asset must comply with or that outlines parameters within which the asset must be operated need to be studied and tracked. There are three major categories of rules to consider:

1. **Legal Obligations:** any legal documents that influence or have an impact on the assets and/or how they operate.
2. **Standards and Guidelines:** any non-legislative or contractual rules that influence or have an impact on the assets and/or how they operate.
3. **Industry Policies:** any internal industry policies that influence or have an impact on the assets and/or how they operate.

##### **Best practices include:**

- Assembling a single collated list with reference to all relevant rules, regulations, policies and industry standards;

- Developing policies to outline main compliance requirements, the method of monitoring compliance, current and desired compliance status, and any pertinent historical and/or circumstantial factors that may inhibit or encourage compliance;
- Assigning a designated officer to monitor legal and industry compliance; and
- Completing periodic revisions.