

**REBOUNDED AND RENEWING**



# FOREWORD

We are pleased to present the Annual Plan for 2023-2024. The theme for this year's plan is "Rebounding and Renewing".

RPC's organizational planning involves a strategic planning cycle spanning a 5-year period. We are currently in our third year of the strategic planning cycle and are pleased to present 2023-2024 objectives meant to facilitate strategic goals for the organization.

Similar to other organizations, our strategic planning cycle began just prior to declaration of the pandemic. The ripple effect resulting over the last two years has warranted revisiting whether our current strategic plan remains aligned with the priorities of our province and organization. As a result, we will be exploring the potential for a new strategy prior to 2025.

Presented herein are objectives that assist first and foremost with strengthening our presence as a Research and Technology Organization (RTO) in New Brunswick (NB). Created to fulfill the science and engineering needs of the province and beyond; our organization strives to contribute to the better-good of our communities by providing services necessary to support safe, productive and prosperous communities.

Much like the previous year, this year is projected to continue on the trajectory of pandemic recovery. Operations spanning the organization are becoming busier, indicating signs of recovery in the economy. New Brunswick, Atlantic Canada and the entire Nation are rebounding, and RPC is as well.

Despite increased activities, inflation rates and economic turbulence continue to have significant impacts on the organization. Moreover, the competitive labour market has caused concerning attrition rates. Like most Canadian entities, RPC is rebounding, yet still very much recovering.

Our scientists, engineers and support staff have been challenged now more than ever to think outside the box. This is in part due to necessity resulting from labour challenges and partly due to good business practices. Our employees have been challenged with streamlining activities and improving efficiencies; a feat that has been swiftly embraced to offset the economic uncertainty we face. The rapid changes underway can be described as akin to changing a tire while driving down the freeway since business activities continue while evolving. This speaks to the caliber, dedication and passion of our scientists, engineers and support staff.

Despite challenges faced, new methods have been developed and new services are being offered. Tests are being converted to rapid, molecular-based methods and we are overhauling our laboratory information management system (LIMS). We are automating processes, moving to greener chemistry initiatives, implementing consumable reduction efforts and changing the way we report and invoice. We are increasing business development efforts, boosting our social media presence, and exploring new options to support employee work-life balance.

We are examining all of our processes and discovering new ways to perform them; an outcome from the pandemic, and a necessity to serve our clients with excellence. We are adjusting to the post-pandemic world and are stronger for it.

Undeniably, the most significant change for RPC this year will be welcoming a new leader. Our long-standing CEO, Eric Cook, retired June 30, 2022. Eric served as the organization's CEO for 18 years. The employees are eternally grateful for Eric's leadership and are motivated, energized, and keen to welcome his successor.

Rebounding. Renewing.

## ANTICIPATIONS FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR

- 1. Onboarding a new leader:**

A new CEO is expected to be appointed to lead our organization in the upcoming year. Our employees are energized and motivated to welcome this leader. With business operations churning at a healthier rate compared to the previous year, this is an exciting time to join such an impressive organization.
- 2. Business growth/recovery:**

We anticipate continued growth by offering several new services in the upcoming year from both our scientific and engineering work streams.
- 3. Efficiency improvements/cost-cutting efforts:**

We will continue on the rebounding/renewing path via improvement of scientific methods and identifying and implementing efficiencies across the organization. We foresee continuation of 5S initiatives and implementation of additional modules of our new laboratory information management system (LIMS).
- 4. Retention of talent:**

Our employees are a cornerstone to RPC's success. Our highly educated and dedicated staff have consistently demonstrated their commitment and loyalty, especially throughout the pandemic. As pressure continues in the labour market, we anticipate increased efforts to engage and retain our workforce. Exploring various options to improve work-life balance will be a key focus to this initiative. Cost effective ways to improve our value proposition as an employer will be pursued.
- 5. Business development and marketing:**

We anticipate an aggressive strategy to bolster business development, communication and marketing efforts.
- 6. Relevance as a Research and Technology Organization (RTO):**

This year we anticipate continued strengthening of RPC's relationship with government, community and industry stakeholders. Initiatives will include highlighting the impact of our mandated activities on our communities and pursuing an operational grant to sustain these activities. We expect to remain closely aligned with GNB priority areas, and partaking an important role in progressing these priorities. New Brunswick's future is bright, and RPC is well positioned, eager and motivated to embrace it.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

RPC'S VISION STATEMENT (FROM STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025)	4
RPC'S MISSION STATEMENT (FROM STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025)	4
RPC'S VALUES	4
RPC BEYOND BORDERS	4
PROGRESS ACHIEVED WITH ANNUAL PLAN 2022 - 2023	5
LESSONS LEARNED	7
FORWARD-LOOKING	8
2023-2024 ANNUAL PLAN	9
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS & 2023 - 2024 FINANCIAL BUDGET	11
CONCLUSION	12



## RPC'S VISION

For science and technology to drive smart decisions that promote a prosperous and sustainable New Brunswick.



## RPC'S VALUES

- Safety
- Quality
- Service
- Integrity
- Socially Responsible
- Customer Focused
- Results Driven



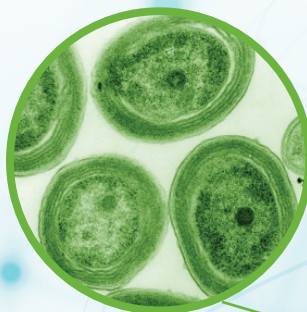
## RPC'S MISSION

To deliver science and technology solutions for the prosperity of New Brunswick.



## RPC BEYOND BORDERS

As a research and technology organization (RTO) created by the Province of New Brunswick, our priority is to provide services for the betterment of New Brunswick's industries and communities. Albeit, our services extend beyond our border, supporting industries across the entire globe. New tests commissioned in the upcoming year are also expected to span across borders; our radon testing technology has been revised to support a broader population and our engineers transcend borders routinely to support the energy sector. Many of our scientists are advancing aquaculture, forestry and agriculture initiatives across Atlantic Canada and beyond. In addition, our cyanobacteria, cyanotoxin and legionella services are anticipated to benefit communities across Atlantic Canada.




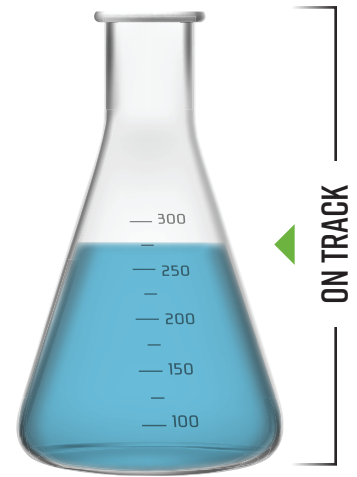
# PROGRESS ACHIEVED WITH ANNUAL PLAN 2022 - 2023

## PROGRESS ACHIEVED REGARDING CORPORATE PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED IN THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL PLAN ARE SUMMARIZED BELOW:

### PROGRESS WITH SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

- Continued to launch new science and engineering services
- Increased business development efforts via strengthening current relationships with stakeholders and fostering new ones
- Increased efforts to involve employees in client relation efforts
- Discontinued non-viable service lines
- Amalgamated fish health diagnostics laboratories to eliminate redundancies
- Increased grant and funding efforts resulting in successful support of several projects

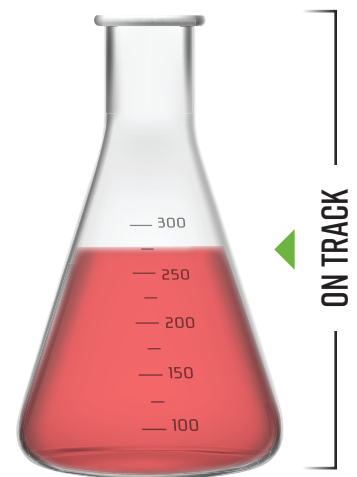
 **KPI:** Achieve budgeted operational revenues  
**Result:** On track



### PROGRESS WITH EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS


- Increased social media presence across LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter platforms
- Strengthened relationships with GNB
- Continued monthly town hall meetings with employees
- Continued monthly management meetings
- Conducted routine meetings with clients and stakeholders
- Used communications screens to disseminate a wide range of information to employees
- Increased social activities via the Employee Engagement Committee
- Conducted several employee surveys
- Delivered presentations across a variety of sectors
- Released a high-impact scientific paper comparing illicit and legal cannabis

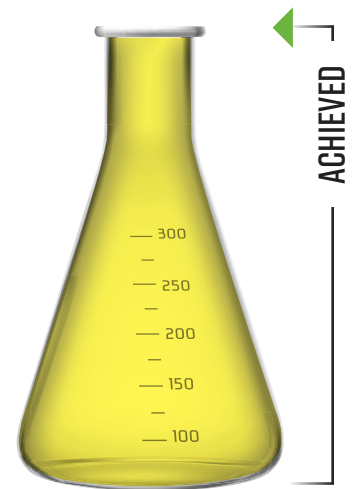
 **KPI:** Completion of a Communications Plan  
**Result:** On track



## PROGRESS WITH OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

- Success with cost reduction efforts
- Completed efficiency improvement projects
- Onboarded a Director of Finance
- Completed roll-out of multiple Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) modules
- Sustained Quality and Safety initiatives
- Amalgamated fish health services
- Advanced 5S implementation
- Obtained a large suite of new accredited tests
- Converted to greener chemistry methods

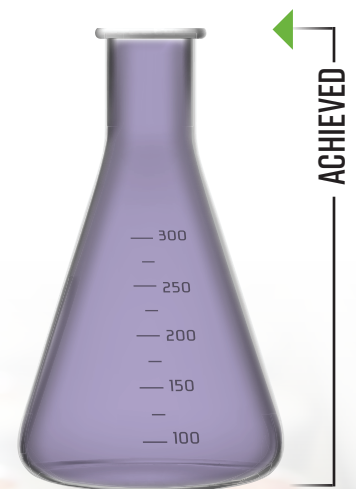
 **KPI:** Achieve budgeted net earnings  
**Result:** Achieved



## PROGRESS WITH CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR)

- Energy efficiency audit completed
- Continued to identify best practices for Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)
- Improved awareness of challenges faced by our Indigenous Peoples through Inaugural Indigenous Awareness Day
- Observed Truth and Reconciliation Day
- Expanded recycling program initiatives
- Continued supporting employee volunteering initiatives by implementing volunteer time allowance for all employees
- Met assigned fundraising goal with our corporate charity
- Promoted science through experiential learning via undergraduate and graduate project work, speaking engagements and social media
- Participated in high school Co-op programs
- Partnership with Working New Brunswick and NB Multicultural Association

 **KPI:** Publication of Environmental Social Governance Report (ESG)  
**Result:** Achieved



# LESSONS LEARNED

## WE HAVE IDENTIFIED SIX KEY LESSONS LEARNED OVER THE PAST YEAR:

- 1) **Agility:** Being able to pivot quickly and having qualified resources to do so is essential for business continuity.
- 2) **Efficiencies:** Being as efficient as possible allows the organization to recognize its true capacity. Operating according to efficient processes also raises employee morale and assures we are providing our clients the best services possible.
- 3) **Talent:** Our employees are highly trained, gifted and talented. Being creative with retention efforts is imperative. The labour market is competitive and is expected to become more so before it stabilizes.
- 4) **Diversity:** Diversifying services so revenue sources span across multiple sectors is essential.
- 5) **Expect the unexpected:** Although self-explanatory, we have learned to be prepared, respond swiftly to change, and to adapt quickly.
- 6) **Relationships:** Connection, communication, collaboration and cooperation are strengths of our organization. These relationship-building activities are critical to reduce duplication and redundancies in the Province.



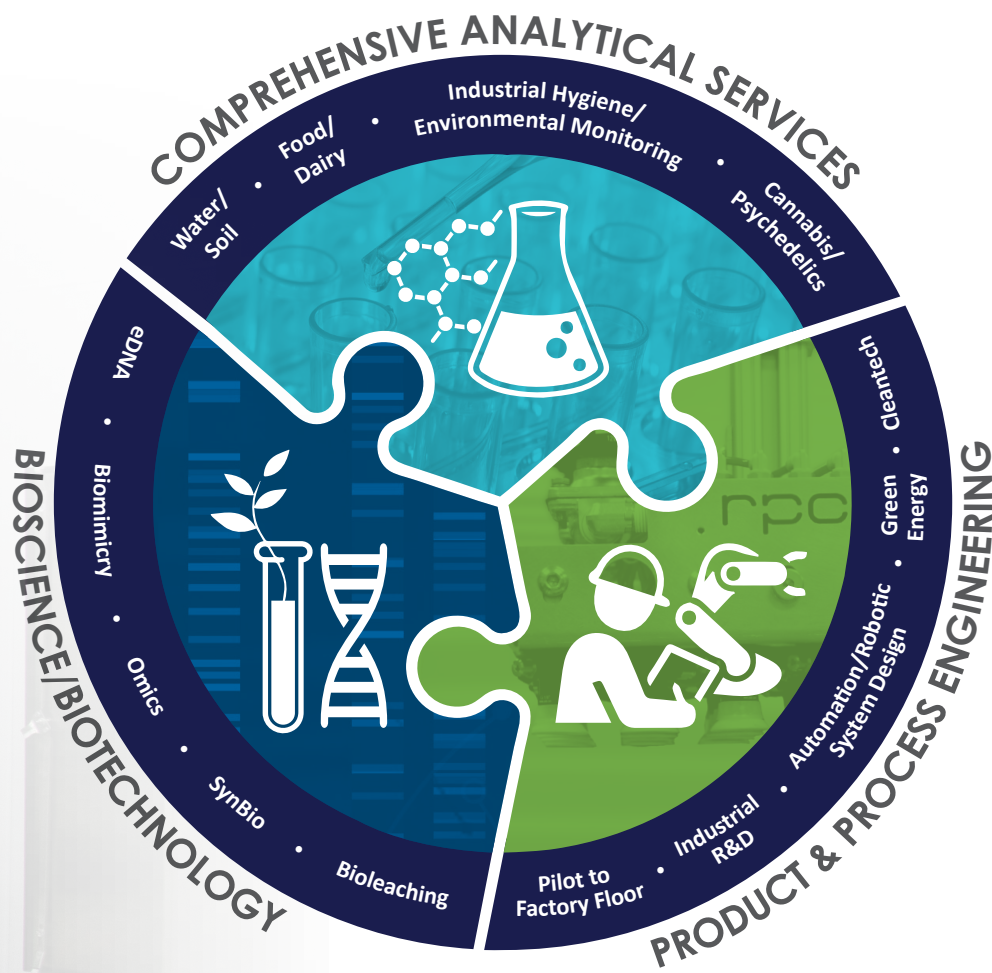


# FORWARD-LOOKING

As previously mentioned, our strategic plan for 2020-2025 was published to guide RPC from its 58<sup>th</sup> to 63<sup>rd</sup> year as New Brunswick's RTO. With climate change, social responsibility, environment, domestic supply, and productivity on the forefront of our minds; RPC's services have become more relevant than ever. From rapid-response research and environmental testing to essential analytical services and customized engineering solutions; we plan to continue propelling New Brunswickers into an innovative future by tackling challenges together.

## KEY OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN ARE:

- ▶ Sustainable Growth
- ▶ Effective Communications
- ▶ Operational Excellence
- ▶ Corporate Social Responsibility



# 2023 - 2024 ANNUAL PLAN


## BELOW ARE THE CORPORATE OBJECTIVES FOR THE 2023-2024 YEAR:

### SUSTAINABLE GROWTH: PLANNED ACTIONS

Initiatives in support of the Sustainable Growth Corporate Objective include:

- Formalizing a business development, marketing and communications plan
- Formalize a plan for expansion of services offered from our Moncton facility
- Refresh RPCs website
- Complete RPC branding initiatives
- Leverage eligibility for research talent funding
- Explore options to strengthen marketing opportunities
- Align RPC's mandate with GNB priority areas to strengthen RPC's relevance as NB's RTO

#### Key Performance Indicators:

- 
- ▶ Achieve the budgeted results
  - ▶ Establish operational and capital funding model with GNB
  - ▶ 50% increase in website traffic compared to previous year
  - ▶ Increase revenue in Moncton by 20% compared to previous year

### EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS: PLANNED ACTIONS

Initiatives in support of the Effective Communications Corporate Objective include:

- Implement business development/communications/marketing strategy and resourcing
- Strengthen presence on social media platforms (LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook)
- Onboard a sales/marketing/business development professional
- Continue to build on current initiatives including:
  - Monthly "Town Hall" meetings
  - Communications screens
  - Government newsletters
  - Employee engagement committee
  - Employee engagement surveys
  - Performance reviews
- Continue to strengthen relationships with academia

#### Key Performance Indicators:

- 
- ▶ Successful implementation and action of a communications plan with required resources
  - ▶ 50% increase in click rates on social media platforms compared to previous year
  - ▶ Increase social media followers by 15% compared to previous year
  - ▶ 75% top box score in all employee engagement surveys

## OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE: PLANNED ACTIONS

Initiatives in support of the Operational Excellence Corporate Objective will include:

- Continue supporting cost accounting and reporting objectives, including initiatives to move to more efficient procurement and management of consumables
- Continue implementation and go live with the additional modules of our new Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS)
- Continue 5S initiatives
- Continue to explore opportunities for optimization and efficiencies of processes
- Increase revenues and manage costs to achieve budget targets



### Key Performance Indicator:

- ▶ Completion of 50% of LIMS project
- ▶ Expand offering to include 5 new tests or services
- ▶ 100% complete implementation of 5S initiatives organization-wide
- ▶ Achieve budgeted net earnings

## CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR): PLANNED ACTIONS

Initiatives in support of the Corporate Social Responsibility Corporate Objective include:

- Identify best practices for equity, diversity and inclusion policy
- Continue recycling programs and execution of plastics recycling pilot
- Continue to support volunteering for charitable efforts
- Meet assigned fundraising goal for our corporate charity
- Promote science through experiential learning, Take Your Kids to Work Day, undergraduate and graduate student mentorship, speaking engagements and social media
- Planned applied science day for university students
- Outreach with middle school



### Key Performance Indicator:

- ▶ Publish 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Environment and Social Governance (ESG) report
- ▶ Publish an equity, diversity and inclusion policy
- ▶ Complete plastics recycling pilot project
- ▶ 50% of employees volunteering to charitable organizations

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS & 2023-2024 FINANCIAL BUDGET

RPC is budgeting operating revenues of \$19.2 million for 2023-24. Other revenues consisting of investment income and amortization of deferred capital funding brings total budgeted revenues to \$19.9 million. Total expenses are budgeted at \$20.7 million and a budgeted deficit of \$800,000 for the fiscal year.

Summary budget information is outlined below.

## 2023-24 Budget (in \$000's):

	2022-2023 Budget	2022-2023 Forecast	2023-2024 Budget
Revenues:			
Operating revenues	\$ 19,069	\$ 18,470	\$ 19,201
Other revenue / funding	710	698	653
Total revenues	\$ 19,779	\$ 19,168	\$ 19,854
Expenses:			
Personnel	\$ 12,554	\$ 11,763	\$ 12,868
Operating and administrative	6,015	6,250	6,204
Depreciation and amortization	1,610	1,575	1,582
Total expenses	\$ 20,179	\$ 19,588	\$ 20,654
Surplus / (Deficit)	\$ (400)	\$ (420)	\$ (800)

RPC's 2023-24 capital budget is \$1.3 million consisting of equipment and facilities upgrades, as well as the ongoing implementation of an upgraded Laboratory Information Management System.

# CONCLUSION

Despite challenges faced by the organization, we are resilient. We will continue to strengthen as we navigate through these challenging and uncertain times. With 2020-2022 behind us, we see bright days ahead. We are energized, engaged, motivated and prepared to embrace the bright future New Brunswick holds.

We remain dedicated to our clients and their success, and will continue to tackle challenges together. We are eternally grateful for our stakeholders; whose loyalty pushes us to strive for scientific and engineering excellence in all we do.

As we navigate the future ahead of us, we are prepared to drive New Brunswickers, our clients, Canadians and the world to the next level of innovative excellence.

