



STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2027

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Executive Summary

The 2025 to 2027 Strategic Plan for The Municipal Employees' Pension Plan (the Plan, MEPP) outlines a forward-thinking roadmap that builds long-term financial sustainability, strengthens Plan integrity and accountability, enhances member services, and embraces innovation. Building on our history of providing retirement income and pension services and delivering retirement security, this Strategic Plan introduces new and existing initiatives designed to respond to evolving member needs, market conditions, and the organization's strategic priorities.

The Municipal Employees' Pension Commission's (the Commission) strategic planning process includes the review of internal and external trends that might impact the Plan, its members or Plannera Pensions and Benefits' (Plannera), the Plan administrator.

To support the Commission, Plannera completed an environmental scan for 2025 to 2026, which provides valuable insights on trends and developments in the areas of demographics, technology, economy, politics, and regulations. The environmental scan identified three main areas of trends for consideration in the 2025 to 2027 planning cycles and a high-level summary can be found in Appendix 1 of this document.

In the 2025 to 2027 Strategic Plan, the Commission will build on existing initiatives while introducing new initiatives to support the strategic priorities and objectives. The Strategic Plan will also inform the Commission's work plan, outlining the specific tasks and actions needed to achieve each strategic priority and initiative.



Strategic Direction

The **mission** is MEPP's core purpose and what it does.

The **vision** pictures the future and describes what long-term success looks like.

The Commission's **principles** guide how it operates and the standards for how the Commission behaves.

Together, MEPP's mission, vision, and the Commission's principles guide the outlook for 2025 and beyond.

Who We Are

MEPP is a defined benefit (DB) pension plan maintained for eligible employees of school divisions, cities, towns, villages, rural municipalities, regional colleges, regional libraries and other specified employers in Saskatchewan. The Plan provides pension, disability, death, and termination benefits for all eligible members.

The Commission is responsible for managing the Plan and its investments in the best interests of members and their beneficiaries. It must act with care, skill, and diligence while considering members' diverse needs.

Mission

Deliver predictable and reliable retirement income to plan members.

Vision

A forward-thinking defined benefit plan that enhances member financial well-being for a secure retirement.

Commission Principles

Accountability

We are accountable to the members and the employers for our administration of the Plan. We operate in a transparent manner.

Stewardship

We are committed to excellence in governing the Plan by providing the highest quality of service, robust governance and risk management, diligent investment management and informed decision making.

Integrity

As trustees of MEPP, we hold ourselves to the highest standards of integrity. We strive to act always with honesty and in a manner worthy of the trust our members have placed in us.

Fairness

We administer the Plan in the best interests of all members. We strive to ensure that our decisions are equitable for all members by adhering to decision-making that is fair and open-minded. Our actions are courteous, considerate and responsive.

Innovation

We see embracing innovation as key to enhancing adaptability, developing competitive advantages and positioning the Plan to seize new opportunities to meet the evolving needs of members while mitigating emerging risks.

2025-2027 Strategic Priorities and Initiatives

Sustain Long-Term Financial Stability

- CEM Investment Benchmarking
- Investment Valuation System Replacement

Strengthen Plan Governance and Accountability

- Asset Liability Study
- Plan Governance Enhancements
- Commission Composition Review and Implementation

Enhance Member Experience

- Member Education
- Member Communication and Engagement
- Modernization of Services

Explore Options for Growth and Innovation

- Onboarding New Employers
- Plan Design Enhancements

Strategic Priority: Sustain Long-term Financial Stability

The Commission is committed to ensuring long-term financial stability for the Plan, so members have a secure and predictable retirement income. A financially stable plan can better withstand economic fluctuations, demographic shifts and evolving regulatory requirements, reducing the risk of funding shortfalls or increased costs for employers and members. By prioritizing financial stability, the Plan can maintain intergenerational equity, adapt to future challenges and instill confidence among members.

Objectives

- Maintain adequate funding levels to ensure the plan remains well-funded by monitoring and adjusting contributions, benefits, investment strategies and actuarial assumptions to align with long-term liabilities.
- Ensure prudent investment management with a diversified investment strategy to manage risks that support sustainable growth and protect against market volatility.

2025-2027 Initiatives

CEM Investment Benchmarking

The Commission is committed to completing an independent and objective review of the Plan's investment performance, risk and costs compared to pension plans of similar size and type and the CEM's universe of pension plans.

- CEM benchmarking is conducted annually.

Investment Valuation System Replacement

The current system is reaching end-of-contract and research has shown there are superior options available. A Request for Proposal (RFP) for a new system was issued in 2024-2025.

- Complete a fit-gap analysis and undergo development and testing in 2025-2026.
- Implement system in 2026-2027.

Strategic Priority: Strengthen Plan Governance and Accountability

The Commission strives to demonstrate leading practices in pension plan governance and recognizes that good governance is critical to ensuring the pension plan operates with integrity, transparency, and efficiency, ultimately protecting the interests of members and employers. Good governance requires appropriate control mechanisms that encourage good decision-making, proper and timely execution, and regular review and assessment. By prioritizing accountability, the plan fosters trust among stakeholders, ensures fiduciary responsibilities are met, and strengthens its ability to adapt to evolving industry standards and challenges.

Objectives

- Enhance the accountability and governance of the Plan by strengthening oversight, improving decision-making processes, and ensuring compliance with regulators.
- Organizations that appoint people to the Commission understand the Commission's needs when making their appointments and their membership are accurately reflected in the Commission's composition.

2025-2027 Initiatives

Asset-Liability Study

The Commission is committed to conducting an asset-liability study every three to six years to provide for the alignment of the plan's assets and investment risk with its' underlying liabilities.

- Conduct the asset liability study focusing on beliefs, optimization and recommendations and decisions.

Plan Governance Enhancements

Enhancements to plan governance will ensure the Commission is following governance best practices and the Commission's work is accountable to members and employers.

- Assess the feasibility and value of creating sub-committees and, if necessary, initiate any related legislative changes required.
- Conduct the RFP process to select actuarial and legal service providers.
- Implement exception-based reporting and dashboards.

Commission Composition Review and Implementation

Under legislation, a Commission Composition Review is required to be completed every five years to ensure the Commission remains an accurate reflection of its membership to carry out its decision making and fiduciary responsibilities in the best interests of all members. The current review will be completed in March 2025.

- Review and implement recommendations from the Commission Composition Review.
- Initiate any proposed legislation changes through the legislative amendment process.

Strategic Priority: Enhance Member Experience

Enhancing member experience ensures Plan members fully understand and engage with their pension benefits, leading to better retirement outcomes. Clear communication, user-friendly tools, and responsive service help members navigate complex pension information and make informed financial decisions. By prioritizing member experience, the Plan builds trust, improves satisfaction, and strengthens long-term engagement, ultimately supporting the Plan's overall effectiveness and financial sustainability.

Objectives

- Ensure members receive clear, relevant, accurate and timely information about the Plan, including their benefits and responsibilities.
- Foster strong partnerships with participating employers to fulfill their obligations and educate members on the Plan's value and benefits.
- Maintain an up-to-date suite of services that meet evolving member needs.

2025-2027 Initiatives

Member Education

Improving current member education and expanding the types of education offered ensures members have the necessary information to make informed decisions about their benefits and retirement planning.

- Refresh workshops and webinar delivery for educational sessions.
- Expand one-on-one 'pre-retirement' consultations, focusing on members under 55.
- Expand Retirement Information Consultant services to include estate and tax planning.

Member Communication and Engagement

Increasing awareness and usage of member resources and providing timely, appropriate information to Plan members helps members to understand their benefits, builds trust and enhances overall satisfaction with the Plan.

- Expand the use of social media platforms to enhance communication with Plan members.
- Host focus group sessions with young members to explore opportunities to enhance financial education and understand engagement preferences.

Modernization of Services

The Commission is committed to developing strategies to digitalize member experiences, simplify online services, and reduce reliance on paper.

- Roll-out of secure messaging and document upload for members and employers.
- Explore options for expansion of self-service features on the member portal.

Strategic Priority: Explore Options for Growth and Innovation

The Commission is committed to exploring options for growth and innovation to ensure the Plan remains adaptable, competitive, and capable of meeting the evolving needs of members and employers. Prioritizing innovation enables the Plan to respond proactively to regulatory changes, demographic shifts, and emerging risks while maintaining sustainability and value for stakeholders.

Objectives

- Investigate opportunities to grow the Plan’s membership and assets under management, positioning it as an attractive option for potential employers and facilitating growth where it strategically aligns and adds value.
- Explore options to make the Plan more flexible for members and employer.

2025-2027 Initiatives

Onboarding New Employers

As part of ensuring sustainable growth, MEPP will explore options for onboarding new employers and create a process for onboarding to occur.

- Research new employers who could be interested in joining MEPP, including how to make the Plan an affordable and attractive option for new employers.
- Create a process to onboard new employers, including possible legislation changes.

Plan Design Enhancements

Plan design enhancements will include exploring options to make the Plan more flexible for members and employers to ensure long-term sustainability, make the Plan an attractive option for both employers and members and respond to evolving member needs.

- Identify and assess options to increase the flexibility of the Plan that could offer an alternative to members transferring commuted values out.
- Identify and assess options that could support a changing workforce demographic of shorter career stints and job hopping.
- Leverage market analysis insights to identify opportunities for Plan enhancement.

Timeline of Initiatives

| | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 |
|--|------|------|------|
| <i>Sustain Long-term Financial Stability</i> | | | |
| CEM Investment Benchmarking | | | |
| Investment Valuation System Replacement | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a fit-gap analysis and undergo development and testing | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement system | | | |
| <i>Strengthen Plan Governance and Accountability</i> | | | |
| Asset Liability Study | | | |
| Plan Governance Enhancements | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the feasibility and value of creating sub-committees and, if necessary, initiate any related legislative changes required | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct the Requests for Proposals (RFP) process to select legal and actuarial service providers | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement exception-based reporting and dashboards | | | |
| Commission Composition Review and Implementation | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and implement recommendations from the Commission Composition Review | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate any proposed legislation changes through the legislative amendment process | | | |
| <i>Enhance the Member Experience</i> | | | |
| Member Education | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh workshops and webinar delivery for educational sessions | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand one-on-one 'pre-retirement' consultations, focusing on members under 55 | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand Retirement Information Consultant services to include estate and tax planning | | | |
| Member Communication and Engagement | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the use of social media platforms to enhance communication with Plan members | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host focus group sessions with young members to explore opportunities to enhance financial education and understand engagement preferences | | | |

| | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 |
|--|------|------|------|
| Modernization of Services | | | |
| • Roll-out of secure messaging and document upload for members and employers | | | |
| • Explore options for the expansion of self-service features on the MEPP member portal | | | |
| <i>Explore Options for Growth and Innovation</i> | | | |
| Onboarding New Employers | | | |
| • Research new employers who could be interested in joining MEPP, including how to make the Plan an affordable and attractive option for new employers | | | |
| • Create a process to onboard new employers, including possible legislation changes | | | |
| Plan Design Enhancements | | | |
| • Identify and assess options to increase the flexibility of the Plan that could offer an alternative to members transferring commuted values out | | | |
| • Identify and assess options that could support a changing workforce demographic of shorter career stints and job hopping | | | |
| • Leverage market analysis insights to identify opportunities for Plan enhancement. | | | |

Appendix A: Planner's Environmental Scan Summary

The environmental scan (E-Scan) provides insight into shifting trends in technology, demographics, politics, the economy and regulations. These trends may impact the strategic and operational goals of MEPP and its members. Key highlights from the 2025 E-scan are:

Digital Evolution



Rapid advancement in artificial intelligence and technology:

- Creating exciting new opportunities to use technology to serve clients.
- Increasing risks of data mishandling and cybersecurity threats.
- A rise in the use of technology for malicious purposes.
- May cause difficulty keeping pace with evolving technologies.

Implications:

- Need to ensure members' data is secure.
- Opportunity to improve member services and reduce cyber risks by leveraging AI.

Societal Dynamics



Significant demographic trends and an affordability crisis:

- Reduced spending, driven by high inflation and high interest rates.
- A rise in subscription-based consumption that emphasizes convenience, value for money and the ability to personalize offerings.
- A national crisis in housing affordability.
- A generational shift as Baby Boomers exit the workforce and Gen Z enters.
- Mental health conditions becoming a leading driver of long-term disability claims.
- Canada's economy vulnerable to stagnation and recession due to changing immigration policies.

Implications:

- Surplus management is a priority and a decision on how to allocate the surplus must reflect the Plan's demographic profile and long-term sustainability objectives.
- Need to ensure intergenerational inequity is minimized.
- A growing prevalence of job-hopping may be leading to increased fund transfers out.
- Longer life expectancies can lead to larger liability and funding pressures.

Global Landscape



Shifts in the global landscape, persistent inflation and ongoing global instability:

- Continued global and economic instability with political uncertainty in major democracies, ongoing conflicts and continued economic recovery.
- Shifting values and interest in climate change and expectations to utilize responsible investment practices.
- Stabilizing inflation and lowering interest rates.

Implications:

- Investments may be impacted by market volatility and shifting interest rates.
- Currency risks due to political instability can impact the value of international investments.
- Inflation and interest rate pressures resulting in higher costs can impact real returns on investments.

Appendix B: SWOT

