# Part Two: The Strategy

## 5. Vision

5.1     This section outlines the vision for Bermuda in the future, drawing on the many inputs received during public consultation.  Setting out this vision will not in itself mean that it will be achieved. However, it does give an idea of the Bermuda which residents would like to see and thus gives direction to the policies and actions which are needed in the future. This vision is set out under five main themes.

5.2     The tools at Government's disposal – including legislation, economic and fiscal instruments,  guidance and the sharing of knowledge – will be aimed at meeting these objectives and will be guided through an effective implementation and monitoring system (see Section 8: Monitoring and Follow up).

## Theme 1: Building and Maintaining an Inclusive Strong Economy

5.3     Imagine:

- An island where we continue to have the resources to import the technology and goods we need, and to travel from the island to broaden our horizons and gather new ideas.

- An island where we achieve an economy which constantly improves the quality of peoples' lives; offering high quality employment, with internationally recognised labour rights and fair trade principles.

- An island where businesses which choose to locate here share responsibility for their impacts on the infrastructure, particularly transport and housing, and play a full role in training Bermudians; while Government and private sector work together to ensure that our education systems adapt quickly to changing needs.

- An island where we reduce our reliance on imports, and sustain our economic growth by looking for new opportunities and achieve diversification, working in partnership with our current businesses, forming joint ventures with overseas partners and reassess our protectionist model.

- An island where we redevelop our waterfronts and pedestrianise parts of Hamilton, installing sidewalks along the major roads, and phase major construction such as the causeway, the hospital, the police station and the courts.

- An island society where through constructive dialogue, access to education, careers advice and support of good business ideas, we have levelled the playing field from its current imbalance, and freed residents from their racial prejudices. Where everyone has the skills and opportunities to progress to a suitable job and we are welcoming to all visitors – both workers and tourists.

# Theme 2: Transforming Governance and the Public Sector

5.4     Imagine . . .

- A Bermuda where we really do all work together to achieve this shared vision.
- An island where we put sustainable development at the heart of what we do, making these goals the driving force for policy-making and action in Bermuda.
- A Bermuda where we take holistic decisions, evaluating and incorporating the social, economic and environmental costs and benefits of our choices.
- An island where we adopt a precautionary approach, ensuring that there is full evaluation of potentially damaging activities to avoid or minimise risks of serious or irreversible damage to the environment or human health.
- A Bermuda where we encourage broad participation in decision-making, continuing to develop partnerships between Government, business and the island's people and institutions.

# Theme 3: Protecting and Enhancing our Environment and Natural Resources

5.5     Imagine . . .

- An island where open space and natural habitats are preserved for current and future generations to enjoy by building in different ways and concentrating on building in a few key areas; redeveloping previously developed sites rather than encroaching on green space; slowly restoring habitats to pristine condition; using landscaping to help with shading and screening; encouraging organic agriculture; and making maximum use of our marine environment without exploiting and damaging it.

# Theme 4: Sustaining our Communities

5.6     Imagine . . . .

- An island society where we celebrate Bermuda's diversity, promote social cohesion, provide equal rights for all, and care for the vulnerable who cannot care for themselves.
- An island where everyone can afford to put a roof over their head without having to work two jobs, where we invest in our youth as an asset, and have adequate systems to help and rehabilitate those that find themselves in trouble.
- An island where our growing numbers of seniors have security and our healthcare system ensures high quality treatment for everyone, no matter what their income.

## Theme 5: Living within Bermuda's Limits

5.7        Imagine . . .

- An island where we ensure that our population only grows at a rate which can be sustained by our infrastructure and where we continually reinvest in our roads, water, energy and education infrastructure.

- An island with a reputation as one of the most environmentally conscious places on the planet. One where we make responsible lifestyle choices and use cutting edge technologies to minimise our use of water and energy and the creation of waste and pollution, as well as promote efficient buildings and vehicles.

- An island with a resource efficient economy. An economy which generates as much economic value as possible from the lowest possible input of raw materials and energy. An economy, which, at the same time, reflects the true costs of pollution, inefficient resource use and negative social impacts in the prices we pay for all products and services.

# 6.    Bermuda's Strengths and Weaknesses

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|---|---|
| These are things Bermuda has in its favour and which need to be protected or enhanced. | These are risks which may impact on Bermuda now or in the future. |
| a. Economy<br><br>A buoyant economy with high GDP per capita and strong growth.<br><br>High levels of employment.<br><br>Strong sources of Government revenue to fund services.<br><br>Low levels of public debt. | Little of Bermuda's wealth is inherent; it relies on currency in-flows from overseas. Both tourism and international business are driven by decisions made overseas.<br><br>Bermuda doesn't have the population to support the current economy, requiring increased numbers of work permit holders and associated pressures on infrastructure.<br><br>Negative impacts of uncontrolled growth on housing and infrastructure.<br><br>Dependence on international stability.<br><br>High cost of living marginalises the poorest. |
| b. Governance<br><br>Stable, democratic governance and strong judiciary. | Can be difficult to react to long-term issues if wider society does not see or understand the need for action.<br><br>Public information needs to be strong to ensure informed debate and opinions based on fact rather than anecdote.<br><br>Bermudians averse to 'big government' but often expect Government to remedy any problems. |

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|---|---|
| c. Incomes and wealth<br><br>High levels of income. | Unequal distribution of wealth leading to resentment and anti-social behaviour.<br><br>Increased consumption leading to increased need for foreign currency in-flows to maintain the status quo. |
| d. Intellectual capital, inflow of new ideas and a global outlook<br><br>Good education statistics with increased numbers of Bermudian graduates. | Increasing cost of housing, wider career opportunities elsewhere and small socially conservative society can lead to a middle class 'brain drain'.<br><br>Reliance on human assets and resources requires a strong education system. Any failures in the education system compound problems in the future<br><br>Socio-economic status (class) determines success in education and henceforth, economic opportunity. |
| e. Infrastructure<br><br>Well-developed tourist and business infrastructure, international airport, international reinsurance and banking. | Constant need to invest in infrastructure maintenance requires high levels of Government revenue and efficient budgeting, otherwise revenue generators may relocate. |
| f. Friendliness of people | Resentment because of inequality and stresses placed on infrastructure from increased population. |
| g. Adaptability of a small population. | Change-averse because differences may be frowned upon. Small societies are often conservative in nature. |
| h. Natural beauty<br><br>Strategic location.<br><br>Climate. | Increased consumption leads to increased waste and environmental impact.<br><br>Increased global mobility and technology undermines historic benefits of location.<br><br>Climate change. |
| i. History<br><br>Attracts tourists and gives a sense of identity and belonging.<br><br>Cultural identity of pastel house, pink beaches, 'laid-back' attitudes, and Bermudian accent. | Historical legacy of inequality. Difficulty of reconciling histories of different races.<br><br>Heritage and culture under threat from global influences. |

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|---|---|
| j. Diverse people and cultures, racially and ethnically. | Slow integration of these cultures, and poor mutual understanding. |
| | Failure in some sectors of society to accept that non-Bermudians are fundamental to the economic health of the country and that social unrest will result in a certain amount of 'flight'. |
| k. Culture of self-reliance and self-help. | Growing sense of entitlement and expectation. |
| | Perceived increases in anti-social behaviour. |
| | Substance abuse. |
| l. Strong philanthropy, a giving culture through charities, corporations, churches and volunteerism. | Desire to highlight donations like badges of honour. Ease of finding funding can lead to ineffective delivery, and a lack of co-operation between some charities. |
| m. Healthy population with long life expectancy. | Aging population which is not replacing itself. |
| | Increased burden on pensions and healthcare system. |

6.1     These strengths and weaknesses suggest that there is much for Bermuda to build upon. Quality of life is already high in Bermuda and as such, this is to be admired. Yet there are risks to this stability and prosperity which must be borne in mind as Bermuda moves forward. The trick will be to tackle the negatives, enhance the positives, and keep in mind the constant risks which the changing world brings.


# 7.     Priorities for Action

7.1     Government, on behalf of the electorate, sets the rules and framework for almost every activity in Bermuda. It can empower various sectors of the population, add or remove obstacles to change, provide certain services not provided by the private market, and is duty bound to regulate and monitor private sector businesses, services and charitable service providers.

7.2     If there is one main message from the Project Team's work over the last year, it is that while the public overwhelmingly welcomes and supports the project, and sees it as essential to the future well-being of Bermuda, there is serious and significant public concern that vested interests, and the status quo will eventually prevail. There is also concern that any outcomes will remain unimplemented, that Cabinet will not make the hard decisions which many feel are necessary to sustain Bermuda into the future, and that the population will not be willing to undergo the necessary changes.

7.3     To maintain Bermuda's quality of life, to minimise the risks above, and to make the most of Bermuda's strengths in the face of such unknowns, it makes sense to take the current levels of Government revenue and invest them in the priorities set out below.

7.4     It is important to note that these priorities:

- have been identified through extensive and far-reaching public consultation;
- have been identified through analysis of the main unsustainable trends;
- offer win-win solutions by making the links between a number of currently unsustainable or undesirable trends; and
- are at the root of a number of issues meaning that tackling these will give biggest return on investment.

7.5  Of these six main priorities, three – Sustainable Consumption, Open Space and Housing – are **policy issues**, meaning that Bermuda simply needs to decide what it wants to do. The other issues – Systematising Social Services, Workforce Development, and Government Delivery – are predominantly **systemic issues**, meaning getting the systems and implementers in a fit state to do what we already know we want them to do. Bermuda's size should, in theory, lend itself to easy systematisation, though silo-based thinking and the desire to protect turf can mitigate against this.

## Primary Priorities

7.6  **More sustainable consumption patterns.** While Bermuda will never be entirely self-sufficient, strategies for energy, water, waste and sewage should be guided by a desire to manage reliance on imported resources. All imports to Bermuda have a negative impact on Bermuda's balance of payments and lead to increased waste levels. Bermuda can prepare for possible future shortages and inevitable rising prices in a number of commodities by developing appropriate systems now. This involves reusing waste and wastewater, and minimising resource use where possible, thereby reducing capital outflow and negative impacts on air and water quality.

7.7  **Open space protection and management**. Once land is built upon, it effectively eliminates other uses. Rehabilitating and restoring land for other uses is expensive as is the case on the former baselands. It therefore makes sense to use this limited resource wisely by directing development to brownfield and previously-developed sites. At the same time, protection and restoration of Bermuda's native habitats helps to strengthen the services they provide, such as climate regulation, prevention of erosion and flooding, shading, and cleansing water and air. Many people feel an innate human need to commune with nature, a need which further development may deny future generations.

7.8  **Affordable housing.** Housing, and more accurately, the lack of affordable housing is at the root of many social problems as people are stressed economically trying to find adequate housing. It can be a contributing factor to resentment, xenophobia, and stress. The inability to purchase, or in some cases, rent a 'piece of the rock' can lead to feelings of disenfranchisement and marginalisation, and a lack of respect for wider society and the future of the island. The issue has two elements – affordable rental units and affordable starter homes for young people and families. The need exists to ensure that there is a system in place that provides for a variety of housing types (and prices), and to necessitate each and every neighbourhood in Bermuda to contribute its fair share to meet the needs of the entire population.

7.9 **Systematisation of social services provision**. Anti-social behaviour is perceived to be increasing, while the social services provision which helps support vulnerable individuals is currently fragmented across a number of Government departments and a host of charitable organisations. Considerable funding is provided by Government, corporate donors and individuals, with no clear system for effective delivery and no clear standards. As a result, considerable amounts of money are spent with little focus and no picture of whether this spending is achieving positive change.

7.10 **Workforce development and entrepreneurship**. As a small island, Bermuda's main resource is its people. It is very difficult to predict what the economic drivers of Bermuda will be in the future, but investing in a flexible workforce and supporting entrepreneurs is essential to meet the needs of a changing economy. Having a decent job can also mitigate against anti-social behaviour and eases the burden on financial social services. As history has shown us, Bermuda cannot realistically be entirely self-sufficient and will always need to rely on some work permit holders for some skills, but a reduced reliance on immigration would also ease pressure on infrastructure. To feel valued in their own island, Bermudians need to have the fullest access to job opportunities, while avoiding filling jobs with unqualified employees. If Government and employers work together to give all Bermudians the tools to fulfil their potential, tensions arising around race, inequity and immigration are likely to fade.

7.11 The Center for Labor Market Studies in their report *The Bermuda Labour Market and the Demand for Higher Educational Qualifications for Bermudians* (Fogg and Harrington 2005) found that

"During the last decade employment of Bermudians and non-Bermudians increased; however during the past four years non-Bermudians have become a substitute for Bermudian workers in part because Bermudian workers lack the skills and abilities required to gain access to employment in the high growth skills sectors that have become the economic mainstay in the nation."

This does not mean that Bermudians are not able to develop these skills just that the economy has moved faster than Bermudians' skill-bases.

7.12 **Accountability and delivery in Government.** The success of this strategy and implementation plan, and ultimately the future viability of Bermuda lie in an effective and accountable Government and Civil Service. For example, Government manages:
- education;
- social services provision;
- numbers of people through the work permit system;
- land through a planning system; and
- infrastructure, such as roads.

7.13 Government must plan its activities and deliver effectively in partnership with other actors (see section on Partnership in Theme 2). Without clear business planning, staff turnover means that there is often no consistent strategic approach to any specific issue or any effective handover when posts fall vacant or change. Equally, information exchange and

collaborative working are often poor. Ministries and Ministers are, in some situations, not aware of parallel initiatives taking place in other departments. We need to gather better information, disseminate it more widely, overcome turf wars, streamline the Civil Service and tie Departments together. As an example, the 1994 Bermuda Commission on Competitiveness stated that "Bureaucracy and inertia are some of the major challenges faced by entrepreneurs attempting to set up new businesses in Bermuda." This is still true. Bermuda cannot afford to be complacent in a globally competitive world.

# 8.  Monitoring and follow-up

8.1  In order to continually adapt to a rapidly changing world, a system is required to monitor and respond to:

- progress (or lack thereof) against the contents and commitments in this strategy and implementation plan;
- unsustainable trends and patterns in a range of areas, from housing to employment; and
- international best practice in sustainable development, technological advances, and sectoral policies and actions.

8.2  For Bermuda, this system will comprise a number of mutually reinforcing elements:

8.2.1  The formation of a **Sustainable Development Unit (SDU)** within the Central Policy Unit (CPU) of the Cabinet Office.  This location in the centre of Government directly under the Secretary to the Cabinet and reporting to the Premier and the whole of Cabinet will reinforce the cross-Ministry nature of sustainable development.

8.2.2  Keeping abreast of **international best practice** through membership in the Association of Small Island States (AOSIS),  observer status at the UN through associate membership of the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and attendance at the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) processes of the UN.

8.2.3  Engaging in **peer review** of sustainable development strategies, offering our insights to other jurisdictions, and sharing lessons and information on how to tackle common problems.  It is proposed that Bermuda would, at the next review of its sustainable development strategy, take part in such a review process. Bermuda should also consider a peer review of implementation processes after a period of two or so years. As well as there being benefits for the review country, the reviewers themselves also benefit.  Bermuda should offer to take part in other peer reviews to stay abreast of good practices and maintain links with the international community on sustainable development.

8.2.4  **Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA)** of all future policies, initially by the

SDU in consultation with Ministries, eventually leading to Ministries themselves developing this capacity. This will aid co-ordinated policy-making in the future and ensure that future policies reinforce rather than undermine sustainability.

8.2.5    Continued **stakeholder engagement and scrutiny** through the Sustainable Development Round Table (SDRT) and Public Access to Information (PATI) legislation.

8.2.6    Developing a set of **headline indicators** of sustainable development linked to key policies and actions in this document and reported on annually to act as a barometer of progress.  These would need to be supported by more systematised data collection across the board to track trends and patterns and inform policy-making.

8.2.7    Publishing an **annual report of progress** against the contents and commitments in this strategy and implementation plan coupled with a report on the headline indicators. This should also involve a quarterly report prepared for the Premier, Cabinet and the SDRT by the Civil Service Executive (CSE) and the SDU.

8.2.8    Indicators and reporting progress against implementation should drive Government's agenda, the Throne Speech, and CPU projects for the following year.

8.3    Such a system should succeed in keeping these priorities at the forefront of Government and in the public mind, and also improve accountability of politicians, civil servants and other actors.