

ICSP

INTEGRATED COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY PLAN 2012

Municipality of the District of Chester



How the Municipality is working toward community sustainability



Our Community's Vision

We envision a municipality twenty years from now that is stable and diverse. Our emphasis is on fiscal responsibility, lifelong learning, mobility, and a resilient economy. Development has been controlled and is sustainable, while respecting the environment, our heritage, and traditional lifestyles. Young people are staying, former residents are returning, and the number of new residents has increased. Development of community facilities and services, including those for seniors, is keeping pace with population change. Our recreation assets and our education system are superb. We have worked to protect the coast and environmentally sensitive areas. We are nationally recognized as a model for healthy communities. partnerships between governments, the private sector, and community groups are critical to our success. (from the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan 2008)

*“Living and working here
for generations to come.”*

PURPOSE:

This report is intended as a 'check-in' on the progress toward implementing our Municipality's Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) that was developed in 2008, and the subsequent implementation report. The ICSP will require many years, multiple planning strategies, and many willing community partners to fully implement it. The Municipality is one of those partners. This document is specifically **written from our point of view**. It attempts to do three things:

1. Better define the progress we've made;
2. Better define the role(s) that our government might play, and how best to engage the community; and
3. Help us move toward the adoption of the ICSP's goals and philosophies as guiding principles for our operating decisions, policies and future directions.

METHODOLOGY:

Department Heads were canvassed and interviewed to capture the scope of their work and assess this against the action items of the ICSP. The activities of the departments reflect the direction provided by Council.

As part of this exercise, we have taken the action items enunciated in the ICSP and assigned leader, catalyst, or supporter roles to the Municipality. As a **leader**, the Municipality might initiate and conduct the project or program and seek assistance from community partners. As a **catalyst**, the Municipality may initiate a project or program, but will rely on community partners to implement them. As a **supporter**, the Municipality might respond to community led projects and programs and potentially provide support, usually in the form of funding or staff time. In some cases we recognize that the Municipality may take on multiple, or dynamic, roles (see multiple colored dots).

For each of these categories, a progress icon has been assigned, except for in the 'supporter' category. This is because we have either not taken the lead, or we are currently unable to ascertain the level of the commitment that may be forthcoming from the Municipality.

At the end, we attempt to reflect upon the current activities of the Municipality and the action items offered in the community ICSP. The information is synthesized into several **recommendations** that could be under the control of municipal operations and that can help us attain the community's ICSP goals.

A scan of the financial supports to the ICSP is also provided.



FEATURE PROJECT

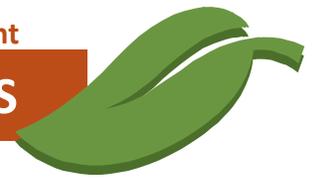
COMFIT WIND ENERGY

The Municipality is planning a community-owned wind project at the Kaizer Meadow Environmental Management Centre. The project is part of the Nova Scotia Community Feed-In Tariffs (COMFIT) program. Although final designs decision have not been made, the project is proposed to be a large-wind project, which generates over 2 MW.

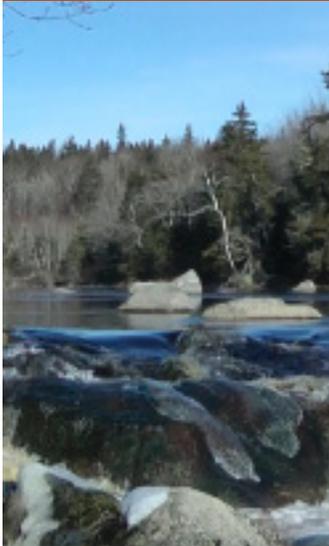
The Province has established a Renewable Energy project with a goal of obtaining 40% renewable electricity supply by 2020, using only environmentally-friendly sources such as hydro, wind, solar, biomass, and tidal. This is a significant commitment since Nova Scotia currently produces most of its power from coal.

The COMFIT program is one of the main ways that the Province intends to reach this ambitious goal. The program is comprised of locally-based renewable electricity projects that are community-owned and feed directly into the distribution grid.

The Kaizer Meadow wind turbine will be fully owned by the Municipality. Minas Basin Pulp and Power has been contracted to oversee the design, construction and long term operation of the project. This project will help to create more resilient and sustainable communities by creating economic activity and reduce our carbon footprint. The project will initially cost about \$5 million, and it is expected to start generating just under \$1 63,000 in revenue the first year, growing to approximately \$660,000 in year 20.



WATER RESOURCES AND SENSITIVE AREAS



GOALS

Identify and protect environmentally sensitive, and water resource areas

NOTES FROM THE ICSP

This goal has an ecological and human health imperative. Concerns were identified to include wetlands protection, lake and groundwater quality, the health of our marine ecosystems, and potential water resource areas. Students expressed concerns over unsustainable forestry practices, which can impact water quality. Senior staff noted the need to move toward more compact, self-sufficient communities, but recognized that these also require a central water system and a protected water supply. Wetlands were recognized to be intrinsically valuable, and improved wastewater treatment systems are required to protect this resource.

What activities in the Municipality are already underway and supportive of the ICSP?

- We are responsible for regulatory compliance for water quality protection both at the landfill site, and with our municipal sewer and storm water networks.
- Our responsibility extends to commercial and residential developments where we ensure regulations are met or exceeded for sewer, stormwater, and road development during and post construction.
- We have taken the lead to protect the water supply source at Spectacle Lake.
- We are coordinating the assessment of valuable groundwater recharge zones with the provincial inventory.
- We assess land for public purposes. This assessment also considers the environmental sensitivities and values of the land.

POTENTIAL MUNICIPAL ROLE

ICSP **action** items Complete In Progress/Ongoing To Do



LEADER

- Conduct a municipality wide water resources study, which considers issues related to existing and future development and identifies environmentally sensitive watershed areas.
- Review land-use bylaws and municipal planning strategies with the goal of developing controls to protect important land parcels.
- Seek watershed designations under the Environment Act (e.g. water supply area at Spectacle Lake).



CATALYST

- Initiate a public information program focussed on wetland preservation, water supply protection, and forest management.



SUPPORTER

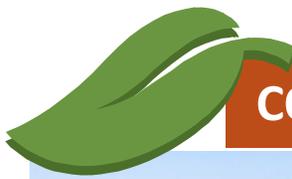
none

How might the Municipality take the lead or is already leading?

We continue to work on further reducing solid waste volumes, establishing a central water supply for the Village of Chester, and encouraging the development of compact, self-sufficient communities.

What community organizations/regional partners might we work with, or support as they lead the effort?

Several community groups exist that have already taken a leadership role in the municipality. For example, the Friends of Nature, The Nature Conservancy of Canada, and Bluenose Coastal Action Foundation are very active and could be valuable partners around an education and awareness campaign on sensitive watershed areas. The NS Department of the Environment, Water and Wastewater Branch is another valuable resource.



COASTLINE AND LAKESHORE PROTECTION



GOALS Maintain access to, and protect coastline and lakeshore environments from uncontrolled development and erosion.

NOTES FROM THE ICSP

Citizens suggested that coastline/lakeshore areas that face public access, development, and erosion pressures should be identified. Action in this area will become more critical as climate change progresses and private ownership demands remove more land from the public realm.

What activities in the Municipality are already underway and supportive of the ICSP?

- We have recently developed an assessment tool that values lakeshore and coastlines for their scenic qualities and the recreation opportunities they afford (boat launches, beaches, kayaking/canoeing).
- It is the Municipality's policy to provide for the dedication of recreation lands when land is being subdivided.
- We are mapping vulnerable coastal areas as part of the Municipal Climate Change Action Plan.

POTENTIAL MUNICIPAL ROLE

ICSP action items Complete In Progress/Ongoing To Do



LEADER

- ★ Review land-use bylaws and municipal planning strategies with the goal of developing controls to protect coast and lakeshore areas.
- ★ Identify coastal areas not yet developed or facing erosion or other pressures.



CATALYST

- Initiate a public information program focussed on the hazards of locating too close to shorelines.
- Publicize the emergency preparedness plan(s).



SUPPORTER

- Set priorities for protection of public access and acquire key land resources. A range of activities should be considered: swimming, kayaking, boating, birding, etc.
- Support and encourage land donations [and develop/ promote mechanisms to receive and protect them].
- Develop a public information program. Focus on sensitive area preservation, and awareness programs supportive of eco-tourism opportunities.

How might the Municipality take the lead or is already leading?

One opportunity to address the access issue would be the development of a comprehensive open space strategy. A strategy could determine needs and gaps for both recreation opportunities and environmentally sensitive lands.

What community organizations/regional partners might we work with, or support as they lead the effort?

The outdoor recreation community (rod and gun clubs, trails organizations) and land trusts are valuable sources of local wisdom, and motivated partners to help establish access to lakes and shorelines. The Bluenose Coastal Action Foundation also has excellent experience in coastal and sensitive areas (e.g. roseate tern nesting sites), protection, and awareness. The NS Department of Environment Protected Places Branch is actively seeking sensitive area protection for which the Municipality could become a more engaged partner.



COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING



GOALS Initiate and maintain a community-based planning process with the object to develop self-sufficient, mixed-use communities.

NOTES FROM THE ICSP

Citizens recognized that scattered development is unsustainable from economic (delivery of services), health (access to services and more sedentary lifestyles), and social (erosion of 'community') perspectives. More compact, mixed-use development lessens the burden on the land base, fosters social engagement, allows better transportation options (transit, walking, bicycling), and promotes healthier lifestyles. Change requires broad-based, creative solutions made in cooperation with an engaged citizenry.

POTENTIAL MUNICIPAL ROLE

ICSP **action** items Complete In Progress/Ongoing To Do

What activities in the Municipality are already underway and supportive of the ICSP?

- The Municipality increasingly uses the community-based planning model to actively engage a spectrum of citizens in the planning process (e.g. Kaizer Meadow Landfill, the Highway 3 Streetscape Plan, and the two planning advisory committee groups).
- We support the creation of community-based strategic plans such as the one currently underway for the Aspotogan region. A component of this project involves 'volunteer matchmaking' and it is being coordinated with the Lunenburg-Queens Volunteer Partnership--a project of the municipal recreation departments.



LEADER

- Implement and maintain a municipality-wide community based land-use plan and development by-laws.
- Review the municipal planning strategy to identify development goals, growth centres, urban form, and related items.
- Coordinate background studies such as water resources and sensitive areas, and other studies as warranted.



CATALYST

- Review policy objectives and approaches to unify the ad hoc, fragmented approach to planning (e.g. highway and intersection planning).



SUPPORTER

none

How might the Municipality take the lead or is already leading?

The Municipality should be the lead agency for community-based planning. The Municipality could foster the establishment and strengthening of more community groups that are taking a long-term view of planning in their neighborhoods.

What community organizations/regional partners might we work with, or support as they lead the effort?

The Aspotogan Heritage Trust, the Western Shore and Area Improvement Association, the New Ross Regional Development Association, VOCTADA, and the Village Commission are active local groups that are leading the planning discussions in their communities. We should continue to support these groups and seek to reflect their local goals in municipal programs and policies whenever feasible.



TRANSPORTATION



GOALS Encourage the development of a transportation system to support change.

NOTES FROM THE ICSP

It was recognized that transportation plays an important role in the overall sustainability plan--not just under the economy pillar. Two specific transportation needs were identified. The first was to explore alternate transportation within and between communities as well as to Halifax and Bridgewater. The second was to develop self-sufficient communities, which would reduce the need to travel to other areas.

What activities in the Municipality are already underway and supportive of the ICSP?

- Enhancements (e.g. connectivity, safety) to the Municipal trail system to serve as a link between communities that encourages active transportation and recreation
- Developing and maintaining sidewalks that support a multi-modal transportation network
- Potential development of recreational trail systems at Landfill
- Availability of finances for projects is secured through Capital Investment Program and ongoing operational budgets
- Adoption of the AT Policy which reinforces the Municipality's commitment to a transportation network supportive of active, healthy communities

POTENTIAL MUNICIPAL ROLE

action ICSP items Complete In Progress/Ongoing To Do



LEADER

- Develop an active transportation strategy
- Improve sidewalks and the multi-purpose trail for local commuting.



CATALYST

- Develop a comprehensive transportation strategy that is best suited to local needs and capability.
- Trim roadside vegetation to improve visibility and safety, thereby encouraging walking and biking in our communities and rural areas.
- Widen and/or pave shoulders to encourage walking and biking.
- Promote better speed control and road sharing in all areas.
- Develop inter- and extra-municipal links (e.g. Metro Transit, Kings Transit).



SUPPORTER

- Identify community-based transportation options (e.g. Dial-a-Ride).
- Encourage carpools.

How might the Municipality take the lead or is already leading?

The Municipality has an established, and extensive, trail network that is maintained regularly. Funds to support maintenance are budgeted annually, and steps are being taken to cultivate an "alternate transportation" mindset in the community as well as programs to encourage less travel. Development of procedures for the operation and maintenance of our trail system was identified as a "to do".

What community organizations/regional partners might we work with, or support as they lead the effort?

The Municipality has the opportunity to work with several organizations to realize this goal, either in a catalyst or supporter position: TIR on road improvement; individuals and residents on municipal projects (sidewalks, trails, etc.); trail groups as well as DNR for trail-related development.



GOALS Offer programs to support existing and new businesses.

NOTES FROM THE ICSP

Participants of the consultation process were in favour of supporting initiatives related to renewable energy and traditional occupations. Support was identified through a number of ways (e.g. low interest on loans, skill development opportunities, incentives for purchasing local, etc.). A support system will attract and keep businesses, which will build a stronger community.

What activities in the Municipality are already underway and supportive of the ICSP?

- Developing the Eco-Park at Kaizer Meadow
- Organizational and financial support for the LQRDA as the primary agency for business development in the region

POTENTIAL MUNICIPAL ROLE

ICSP **action** items Complete In Progress/Ongoing To Do



LEADER

none



CATALYST

- Establish or strengthen local businesses through information exchange.
- Promote an on-going buy-local campaign.



SUPPORTER

Identify the requirements for skills upgrading, including international trends, and develop a program for skills upgrading.

Foster on-the-job training, including co-op learning.

Establish a mentoring program, engaging the skills of summer residents and retired citizens.

Foster mutual support between businesses.

Encourage centralized farmers, fishers, and crafters outlet(s), and a cooperative transportation system.

Encourage partnerships between local sustainable development groups.

Coordination with local vendors.

How might the Municipality take the lead or is already leading?

The LQRDA is the lead agency for business development. We provide financial and organizational support. In addition, there is potential for a mentoring program for engineers-in-training. Contact would need to be made with post-secondary schools. In 2011, revisions were made to our procurement policy to give preference to local purchases, which meet the Atlantic Trade Agreement thresholds.

What community organizations/regional partners might we work with, or support as they lead the effort?

Partners might be post-secondary schools for a mentoring program and local vendors for a purchasing policy.



EMPLOYMENT



GOALS

Create year-round employment with a focus on knowledge based, traditional industries, and environmentally related opportunities.

NOTES FROM THE ICSP

All stakeholders supported quality employment. Those that are environmentally responsible or tied to the environmental industry were favoured (e.g. renewable energy). Traditional occupations (like fishing, forestry, tourism) were also recognized as an important part of our identity. Suggestions were to find new approaches to old trades and to create year-round employment.

What activities in the Municipality are already underway and supportive of the ICSP?

- Promotion and expansion of the Eco-Park to enable potential employment of local residents
- Conceptual development of a specialized training centre at Kaizer Meadow to provide educational opportunities on an international scale
- Coordination with the strategic goals of the LQRDA, including workforce development

POTENTIAL MUNICIPAL ROLE

ICSP **action** items Complete In Progress/Ongoing To Do



LEADER

★ Develop the eco-business park at the landfill.



CATALYST

none.



SUPPORTER

Identify target industries and opportunities, and their infrastructure requirements.

Develop a plan for infrastructure investment.

Encourage informal meeting groups such as breakfast clubs. Engage summer residents and retired citizens.

Invest in expanding the tourism season, alternate resource use, and maximizing the potential of current assets and resources.

Encourage cooperation among the arts and crafts communities.

Develop training and education in sustainable forest practices.

How might the Municipality take the lead or is already leading?

The Municipality's major role in this category is further development of the Eco-Park. Some infrastructure is already in place (e.g. roads, land). The Municipality is cultivating opportunities in this area through marketing and connecting with potential partners. We can support apprenticeship programs and trade organizations by offering mentoring opportunities or working with them to build training programs.

What community organizations/regional partners might we work with, or support as they lead the effort?

There are a significant number of organizations that the Municipality can work with to foster an environment that is attractive to both potential employers and employees: NSCC, ACSBE, LQRDA, chambers of commerce, Chester Merchants Group, Chester Municipal Heritage Society, Ross Farm, Chester Arts Centre, Chester Playhouse, local artisans, NS Department of Labour and Advanced Education, and universities.



HEALTHY COMMUNITY

GOALS Encourage the development of a healthy community.



NOTES FROM THE ICSP

A healthy community goes far beyond having good health care. A healthy community provides every citizen with opportunities for personal development and social well-being. Recreation, sport, and leisure programs support health and active living for every age and ability. Our communities recognize the importance of a well-planned, comprehensive network of social and health services, facilities, and resources to provide efficient and effective delivery of services to all residents.

What activities in the Municipality are already underway and supportive of the ICSP?

- We have adopted our first Active Transportation Policy.
- The Municipality has committed resources to park development in Wild Rose Park, the Green Gym in Chester Basin, Lordly Park, and the Croft Road Park.
- We have added amenities to parks and beaches, improved our wharves and boat launches and continued to expand our network of parkland and trails.
- The Municipality is also taking part in the Municipal Physical Activity Leadership (MPAL) Program in partnership with the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness. The goal of this program is to increase the capacity of the Municipality to integrate physical activity into its policies and programming.
- We also help administer the position of the South Shore Physical Activity Coordinator with DH&W.
- The Highway 3 Streetscape Plan is one of the Municipality's first plans that has active transportation and walkable communities as a basic principle.

POTENTIAL MUNICIPAL ROLE

ICSP **action** items Complete In Progress/Ongoing To Do



LEADER

- Update the inventory of recreation facilities.
- Assess the need for additional facilities.
- Develop a plan to expand the trail and active transportation systems.
- Identify potential needs for recreation and health [wellness] facilities.



CATALYST

- Support emergency and pandemic relief planning.
- Increase support for fire departments.



SUPPORTER

- Document need for health facilities and staffing (e.g. long-term care, in-home care, emergency services) especially in light of an ageing population and its attendant disabilities.
- Work with the province to establish health facilities and services.
- Establish a permanent committee for health professional recruitment and retention.

How might the Municipality take the lead or is already leading?

The Active Living Strategy, Active Transportation Policy, recreation programming, and park development activities are all key components of a strategy to achieve healthy, active communities.

What community organizations/regional partners might we work with, or support as they lead the effort?

As we move forward and continue to develop policies and programs to achieve this goal, the Municipality can work cooperatively with the Regional Emergency Management Organization (REMO), South Shore District Health Authority, the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness, and the Lunenburg-Queens Recreation Directors and Coordinators Association.



ECO-FRIENDLY LIFESTYLES



GOALS

 Make eco-friendly lifestyles practical for residents.

NOTES FROM THE ICSP

Our communities need to develop in a manner that will allow us to become more “self-sufficient self sufficient. Programs, incentives and education are all necessary to achive this goal.

What activities in the Municipality are already underway and supportive of the ICSP?

- We are a leader in waste management and environmental improvement.
- The development of the Eco-Park for green business and a training and research centre for environmental innovation, places the Municipality front and center when it comes to promoting eco-friendly lifestyles.
- The Municipality is participating in the Community Feed-In Tariff Program (COMFIT)—a program that allows locally-based renewable electricity projects. As part of the project, the Municipality will own a 2 MW wind turbine that will be located at the Kaizer Meadow facility.

POTENTIAL MUNICIPAL ROLE

ICSP **action** items Complete In Progress/Ongoing To Do



LEADER

- ★ Review land-use controls and foster less auto-dependent development patterns.
- Encourage new developments to include opportunities for eco-friendly lifestyles. ●
- Produce an information and education program. ● ●
- ★ Sustain funding programs for recreation/community groups. ●
- ★ Improve solid waste diversion specifically related to construction and demolition debris.



CATALYST

- Develop a buy-local and buy-seasonal campaign.
- ★ Promote alternate modes of transportation.
- Create incentives and penalties that foster acceptable solutions.



SUPPORTER

- Provide rebates for eco-friendly practices, and prizes for achievement and performance.
- Encourage sustainable forest management practices.

How might the Municipality take the lead or is already leading?

The Municipality’s land-use controls, waste management programs and grant funding for community groups allow us to take a lead role on many of the projects that foster an eco-friendly lifestyle. We also can take a lead in creating awareness and educating the public.

What community organizations/regional partners might we work with, or support as they lead the effort?

The Municipality could engage with community organizations that are already working towards sustainability, including Clean Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia Departments of Energy and Environment, the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities Sustainability Office, RRFB, Region 6 Solid Waste Management, and the Ecology Action Center. In addition, we can continue to support initiatives such as Farmers’ Markets and the Hubbards Barn and Community Park.



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

GOALS Support the provision of affordable housing.



NOTES FROM THE ICSP

Our communities must have a range of housing options to meet everyone's basic needs. We must have programs and policies that encourage housing which considers the varying physical needs and economic circumstances of the residents. To accomplish this goal, the Municipality must actively work with various provincial and non-profit agencies as well as with builders and developers. With community values and rural culture being important to our citizens, we also realize the desire to make it easier for seniors to remain in their homes and communities as long as possible.

What activities in the Municipality are already underway and supportive of the ICSP?

- The Age Friendly Community Assessment looked at the range of housing options available and the demand that may arise for more affordable and diverse types of housing as our population ages.
- We are working with the South Shore Housing Action Coalition in assessing housing needs on the South Shore and to determine ways to adapt policies to foster affordable housing.
- We continue to review land-use controls that will influence affordable housing options.

POTENTIAL MUNICIPAL ROLE

ICSP **action** items Complete In Progress/Ongoing To Do



LEADER

- ★ Review land use controls to remove potential impediments for constructing affordable housing.
- Meet with members of the development and construction community.



CATALYST

- ★ Quantify need for affordable housing and adapt policies to foster.
- ★ Meet with provincial housing representatives to determine available support.
- Review approaches in other communities for affordable housing solutions.
- Encourage builders and developers to construct affordable housing.



SUPPORTER

Consider cooperative housing units and land trusts.

How might the Municipality take the lead or is already leading?

The Municipality is reviewing land-use controls as part of a review of the Municipal Planning Documents. We could also consider developing an awareness and education program for homeowners and developers.

What community organizations/regional partners might we work with, or support as they lead the effort?

The South Shore Housing Action Coalition has already taken a lead role in determining the need for more affordable housing and the need to adapt policies to provide access to safe, clean, and affordable housing for residents on the South Shore. We are working with the group as they meet with representatives from the Department of Community Services. We have also engaged the Department of Seniors, and the Centre for Aging at Mount Saint Vincent University, who are working on programs to address the needs of an aging population.

CHILDREN, YOUTH, and FAMILIES



GOALS Develop programs and services attractive to youth and families.

NOTES FROM THE ICSP

The ICSP recognizes that in order to attract new families and retain the youth that grow up in our communities, we need to make communities more attractive and provide the experiences and opportunities that they desire. This goal shares a close link with the social need for better jobs, medical facilities, and housing opportunities. The youth consulted identified a desire for active lifestyles that includes festivals and events; and a culture that values and participates in physical activity, recreation, and the fine arts.

What activities in the Municipality are already underway and supportive of the ICSP?

- The Municipality creates and promotes physical activity, arts, and leisure programs that are tailored to families and youth.
- The Municipality has also helped spearhead recent after-school programming initiatives in three local schools.
- Kaizer Meadow is one example where local employment opportunities might be developed.
- The Municipality's Highway 3 Streetscape Plan is designed to appeal to families and youth as they seek to create affordable, safe, and accessible mixed-use communities.

POTENTIAL MUNICIPAL ROLE

action ICSP items Complete In Progress/Ongoing To Do



LEADER

- Review land-use bylaws and municipal planning strategies with the goal of encouraging mixed land uses and mixed economies.
- Continue to create community school contracts with the school board.



CATALYST

- Study the need for community service clusters (e.g. doctors, dentists, day-care, etc.).



SUPPORTER

- Encourage schools to teach entrepreneurship and independence.
- Support High School apprenticeship programs (e.g. O2: Options and Opportunities) and partner students with employers for short work terms.
- Support early intervention programs for children with problems.

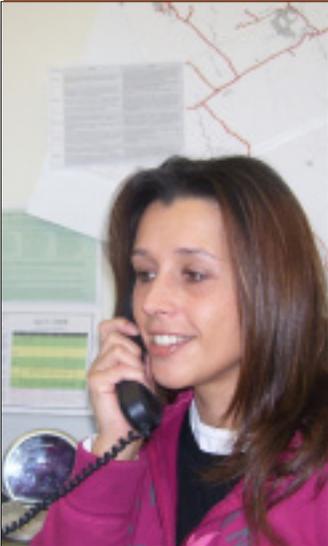
How might the Municipality take the lead or is already leading?

We will continue to provide unique and engaging programming; with emphasis placed on maintaining these as economically accessible to as many people as possible. The Municipality could also pursue the provision of open spaces in which to recreate in adventurous, and low cost ways in family-friendly, accessible environments. Supporting the 'creative economy' is one way to attract families and youth who typically participate in this sector.

What community organizations/regional partners might we work with, or support as they lead the effort?

The Municipality has successful relationships with several organizations, such as the Aspotogan Heritage Trust, who has a community coordinator offering programs for youth, families and seniors and is a valuable partner. Other long-term and potential partners include family resource centres, chambers of commerce, tourism and arts organizations. In addition, the Lunenburg-Queens Regional Development Agency has a large role to play in laying the economic and social foundations on which to build community programming.

COMMUNICATION



GOALS Improve communication between communities and beyond.

NOTES FROM THE ICSP

Improving communication between communities would enhance interaction and allow them to grow on each other's strengths. Senior staff felt that the Municipality can act as a catalyst in improving communications within the area as well as between communities and municipal government. Recommendations from residents included connecting people with common interests, initializing a community calendar, holding more community events, and emphasizing community assets.

What activities in the Municipality are already underway and supportive of the ICSP?

- Communications Plan development
- Maintaining municipal websites and social media accounts as an online information hub
- Municipal publications (e.g. plans, budgets, brochures)
- Increasing frequency of the municipal newsletter to encourage opportunities for public education and input during by-law and policy adoption process
- Actively seeking community participation in municipal committees (e.g. Citizens' Landfill Monitoring Committee) to shape visions and actions
- Publishing community events listings in local newspapers

POTENTIAL MUNICIPAL ROLE

ICSP

action

items



Complete



In Progress/Ongoing



To Do



LEADER



Use the municipal website to promote communication and feedback.



Maintain the municipal newsletter system.



CATALYST



Invite representatives from each community to meet and discuss issues.



Document problems and deficiencies.



Identify means to improve communication and actions such as cooperative event planning.



Develop a communications plan (information and dissemination).



Continue and enhance training programs for computer and internet use.



SUPPORTER

Improve internet infrastructure.

How might the Municipality take the lead or is already leading?

Although the Municipality cannot control communication between communities, we can serve as a role model and encourage open and direct exchanges. Communication between communities does not just fall under the Municipality's responsibilities.

What community organizations/regional partners might we work with, or support as they lead the effort?

Working with all groups and organizations in achieving ICSP goals will inherently foster and improve communications.

HERITAGE AND THE ARTS



GOALS Encourage and support heritage and the arts.

NOTES FROM THE ICSP

Heritage and the Arts are major contributors to the quality of life enjoyed by our communities. These elements attract visitors and investment to the Municipality. Artistic and cultural activities form the basis for many community events and contribute to our sense of identity. Our communities will continue to celebrate and invest in the arts and culture and encourage volunteer participation and partnerships throughout the community. We recognize the importance of our heritage resources in shaping our communities. Our communities each have their own heritage and stories to share.

What activities in the Municipality are already underway and supportive of the ICSP?

- We support heritage and the arts by providing contained support and grants to the arts community, heritage societies, and our tourism industry.
- A successful heritage preservation workshop was held to provide education and information to our heritage advisory committees and to Municipal Heritage Property owners.
- The Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee has now become part of the Planning Advisory Committees so that heritage issues can be more efficiently incorporated into the planning process.

POTENTIAL MUNICIPAL ROLE

action ICSP items Complete In Progress/Ongoing To Do



LEADER

none



CATALYST

- Sustain funds programs; establish a cultural foundation to manage the funds; and coordinate, market and provide training.
- Host municipal-wide celebratory events to educate residents about our local skills and talent pool.
- Establish a municipal coordination services centre--a virtual arts and culture centre for marketing, resources, and grant writing assistance.



SUPPORTER

Inventory heritage and arts resources including buildings and the cultural landscape, artists and crafts people, and our history.

Support local cultural heritage centres.

Develop education programs about our heritage and art skills.

Develop education programs about managing and marketing our arts and heritage products.

How might the Municipality take the lead or is already leading?

The Municipality is creating heritage preservation standards and guidelines to clarify how designation as a heritage property affects property owners and to make the processes associated with registration, de-registration, and alteration more transparent.

We should also continue to provide organizational support and grants to our Arts and Heritage sectors.

What community organizations/regional partners might we work with, or support as they lead the effort?

The Chester Arts Council, Chester Playhouse, Ross Farm Museum, Friends of Oak Island, heritage societies, the Aspotogan Arts & Crafts Association, local artists and tradespeople, LQRDA, Destination Southwest Nova, and the Bluenose Coast Tourism Association are actively engaged in promoting our arts and cultural heritage. The Municipality should continue to foster a good working relationship with each of these organizations and support the work they do in shaping our communities.

CONCLUSIONS

As a partner in the community's ICSP, the Municipality is addressing many of the action items identified. Our actions do not necessarily exist in a pure form as suggested in the wording of the action items, but nevertheless, the intent and scope of many of them is being addressed. Our work is not complete, so a concerted effort should be made to frequently assess our implementation progress.

There is an opportunity for the Municipality to engage community partners identified in this Plan to take on a leadership role. By empowering groups in this manner, we can broaden our role as catalyst.

There are some goals that do not fall within the direct responsibility of the Municipality. They are business support, affordable housing, and the heritage and arts. However, in such cases we often provide substantial financial support and/or staff time in lieu of direct leadership roles.

This report has attempted to maintain the philosophy found in the original ICSP while focussing on the municipal perspective. By clearly defining our role, we can bring ICSP principles to the fore of our operational thinking.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The goals and objectives of the ICSP represent a large and ongoing commitment on behalf of all community partners. The recommendations offered here are only those that are under the control of municipal operations and Council's direction.



LEADER

- The Municipality should annually monitor the progress we are making on addressing the action items in the ICSP. This should be done in the context(s) of the explicit intent of the items, and how our ongoing operations support the ICSP's goals.
- Annually review programs, projects and initiatives of the ICSP and amend, edit, add, delete as appropriate so that the ICSP becomes a "living document".
- Consider developing comprehensive strategies that consider issues such as open space planning, Eco-Park development, and solid waste reduction.
- Develop an ICSP brand, communication, and outreach campaign to increase the awareness and engagement of residents and community partners.
- Continue to review the priorities of the ICSP in long range planning documents to address compact, self-sufficient communities, environmentally-sensitive lands, and community-based planning opportunities.
- Identify and incorporate ICSP priorities into operations and the annual budget process.



CATALYST

- Foster the establishment and strengthening of more community groups that are taking a long-term view of planning in their neighborhoods.
- Explore third-party funding opportunities to support community organizations' ICSP related projects.
- Explore ways in which the Municipality may catalyse organizations and create ICSP leaders in the community.
- Review policy objectives and employ a 'Whole of Government' approach to unify planning across federal, provincial, and municipal (including interdepartmental) levels.



SUPPORTER

- Continue to support community development groups and seek to reflect their local goals in municipal programs and policies whenever feasible.
- Consider establishing an ICSP grant fund for projects and programs that support ICSP goals. The Municipality should identify annual priorities to guide funding requests.

ICSP FINANCIAL SUPPORTS

The following list represents a scan of financial supports made available to community groups or expensed by the Municipality since the inception of the ICSP in 2008. Some of these are annual expenses, some the most recent values available, while others have been one-time inputs. For this reason a total has not been generated. They are listed here to demonstrate the Municipality's commitment to supporting the goals of the ICSP.

Plan Development	ICSP (Plan development and Implementation Report)	\$78,498
	Highway 3 Streetscape	\$46,278
	Active Living Strategy (salary contribution 2008)	\$20,000
	Climate Change Action Plan (Municipal contribution)	\$4,000 (of total \$40,000 project)
Trails	Maintenance (annual)	\$80,000
Recreational Programming	Program costs (gross annual, offset by revenue from fees)	\$45,000
Eco-Park Development (since 2009)	Infrastructure, power, engineering, roads, planning, and consultations (net, expenses are offset by revenues)	\$161,486
Water Sampling	Kaizer Meadow and Sewer Treatment Plants (annual)	\$27,363
Groundwater Infiltration	Manhole repair (annual)	\$60,000
Land Acquisition (2012)	Preservation for public use (e.g. recreation)	\$65,000
Water Supply	Land acquisition	\$192,000
	Water distribution study	\$10,000
	Watershed capacity report	\$30,000
Solid Waste	Waste reduction (operations, programs, transportation and processing, annual)	\$750,000
Grants/funding (2011)	Lunenburg-Queens Regional Development Agency (LQRDA)	\$38,172
	Bluenose Coast Tourism Association	\$56,600
	Other - recreation/heritage facilities	\$195,000
	Other - organizations supporting ICSP initiatives	\$17,000
Active Transportation	Construction - Hubbards Sidewalk	\$455,000
	Construction - Duke Street Phase I Sidewalk	\$104,000
Recreational Facilities	Parks & Skate Park Maintenance (annual)	\$11,500
	Green Gym	\$16,000
Wind-to-Energy Project (2011)	Minas Basin/NSP/Province	\$58,015
Heritage Workshop	Organization and Hosting	\$1,100
Communications	Newsletters and brochures (annual)	\$17,370
	Website (annual)	\$2,000
	Advertising community events (annual)	\$2,400
Staff	Contributions to the salaries of the Active Transportation and Active Living Coordinator, Fire Services Coordinator, Senior Planner, Communications Officer, and Emergency Management Officer. In partnership with the Department of Health and Wellness, we administer the position of South Shore Regional Physical Activity Coordinator.	
Aerial Photography Acquisition	To support planning and infrastructure development	\$140,000
Energy Audit	To identify mitigation opportunities in municipal operations.	\$10,153