

# **Evaluating Implementation of the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan for Shelburne, Nova Scotia**

Plan 6000

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## Executive summary

The Town of Shelburne (Shelburne), like many rural Nova Scotia communities, endures trends of population and economic decline. Faced with a declining municipal tax base, the Town is increasingly challenged to meet local demands for basic municipal services and infrastructures.

Recognizing the unsustainable circumstance of municipalities in Canada, the federal and provincial governments created the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan program to promote and fund municipal investments in sustainable infrastructure that result in cleaner air, cleaner water, or reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Shelburne completed its draft ICSP during the summer of 2009.

Developing a sustainability plan, however, does not guarantee successful municipal development. Indeed, many communities fail to successfully implement plans. But a select few communities across the country have successfully implemented sustainability plans by developing tools to prioritize sustainability in the municipal decision-making process.

This study evaluates Shelburne's ICSP implementation framework and designs a decision-support tool for use by staff and council that incorporates the Town's sustainability principles into the municipal decision-making process.

A review of planning literature to characterize effective municipal plans began this study. The study then examined Shelburne's decision-making processes and environment through Strengths and Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis. SWOT analysis contributed 12 recommendations to improve the implementation of Shelburne's ICSP. The decision-support tool incorporates nine recommendations into its design.

The study then examined the Town's ICSP, and incorporated its sustainability pillars, and goals and actions into the decision-making tool. Generalized to sustainability priorities, Shelburne's five sustainability pillars became the framework for the decision-support tool. ICSP goals and actions were summarized into 19 themes. The themes informed the tool's assessment criteria.

The resulting decision support tool requires further testing prior to its implementation in Shelburne's decision-making processes. Proposed users, including council, administrative and departmental staff, and committees can test the tool to determine whether: the tool incorporates sustainability principles into the municipal decision-making process, the tool evaluates the *sustainability* of decisions before the Town in the context of its community values and goals, and the use or function of the tool can be improved.

The study recommends four additional steps to improve Shelburne's ability to implement its ICSP: to promote transparency in the municipal decision-making process, to update the Town's Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw, to hire through the Joint Services Board technical staff to increase planning capacity, and to develop a sustainability committee comprised of local residents.

Although the study concludes with this summary report, the author will continue to work with the Town, as required, to implement the tool into the municipal decision-making processes.

An evaluation tool provides municipalities with opportunity to incrementally implement sustainable development. Resultant actions become the ultimate performance measure of the decision-support tool's effectiveness (Becker 2004).

The leadership demonstrated by Town staff and council to support the decision-support tool's development suggests strong commitment and leadership, key factors in successful plan implementation.

## Toward Sustainability: Plans and Plan Implementation

Municipalities across Canada face increasing challenges to maintain essential services and infrastructures without matching increases in resources or capacities. Indeed, shifting economic and political priorities have directed responsibility for the renewal of critical social and physical infrastructure onto municipal governments (Connolly et al. 2009). Local governments struggle to replace aging infrastructure, limit urban sprawl, offset rising energy costs, and adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change. Municipalities risk perpetuating unsustainable development if sustainability principles are not linked to infrastructure renewal projects (Connolly et al. 2009).

Recognizing these challenges, in 2005 the federal and provincial governments developed a national program to fund municipal investments in sustainable infrastructure that result in cleaner air, cleaner water, or reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations administers this program in Nova Scotia. To qualify for funding, each municipality must create an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP). These plans require local governments to consider their community's long-term economic, environmental, and social needs in the context of municipal decision-making. Relevant beyond infrastructure development, ICSPs can guide municipal investment, or evaluate programs or services in the context of the community's vision of sustainability. Therefore, municipalities can also direct program funding to build local capacity, including community-based planning resources or expertise, for sustainable development. As a document, ICSPs are meant to complement existing community planning policies and processes.

Although welcome, the annual federal funding that each municipality receives for sustainability projects is disproportionately small in relation to the need. Responding to the day-to-day demands still consume the administrative and financial capacities of many local governments. Consequently, many municipalities' ability to plan for *long-term* sustainability remains limited. Indeed, the urgent continues to drive out the important (Van Der Heijden 2005). Without implementing sustainability plans, local governments limit their capacity to improve their decision-making processes and break from the cycle of short-term reactionary management.

Examples of successfully implemented sustainability plans occur in municipalities across Canada including Canmore, AB, Kamloops, BC, Stratford, PEI, Strathcona County, AB, and Whistler, BC. Bridging the plan-implementation gap, these communities show, requires process and deep commitment to integrate sustainable development principles into the municipal decision-making process at its most basic level. As an aid to municipal decision makers, each community developed a decision-support tool that incorporates sustainability principles within its decision-making process. Growth and development, characteristics shared by each community threatens traditional community values and provided a catalyst for development of the decision-support tool. Well-functioning local government decision-support tools encourage awareness and participation, partnerships and collaboration, and ownership and accountability among

community members, thereby increasing capacity of municipalities to implement their plans successfully (Connolly et al 2009; Evans et al. 2005; Roseland 2005).

### ***Toward Sustainability: A Community on Nova Scotia's Southwest Shore***

In the summer of 2009, communities across Nova Scotia developed ICSPs ahead of the provincial government's March 2010 planning deadline. The author became familiar with one such community, the Town of Shelburne (Shelburne), a small rural community located along Nova Scotia's southwest shore (Figures 1 and 2).

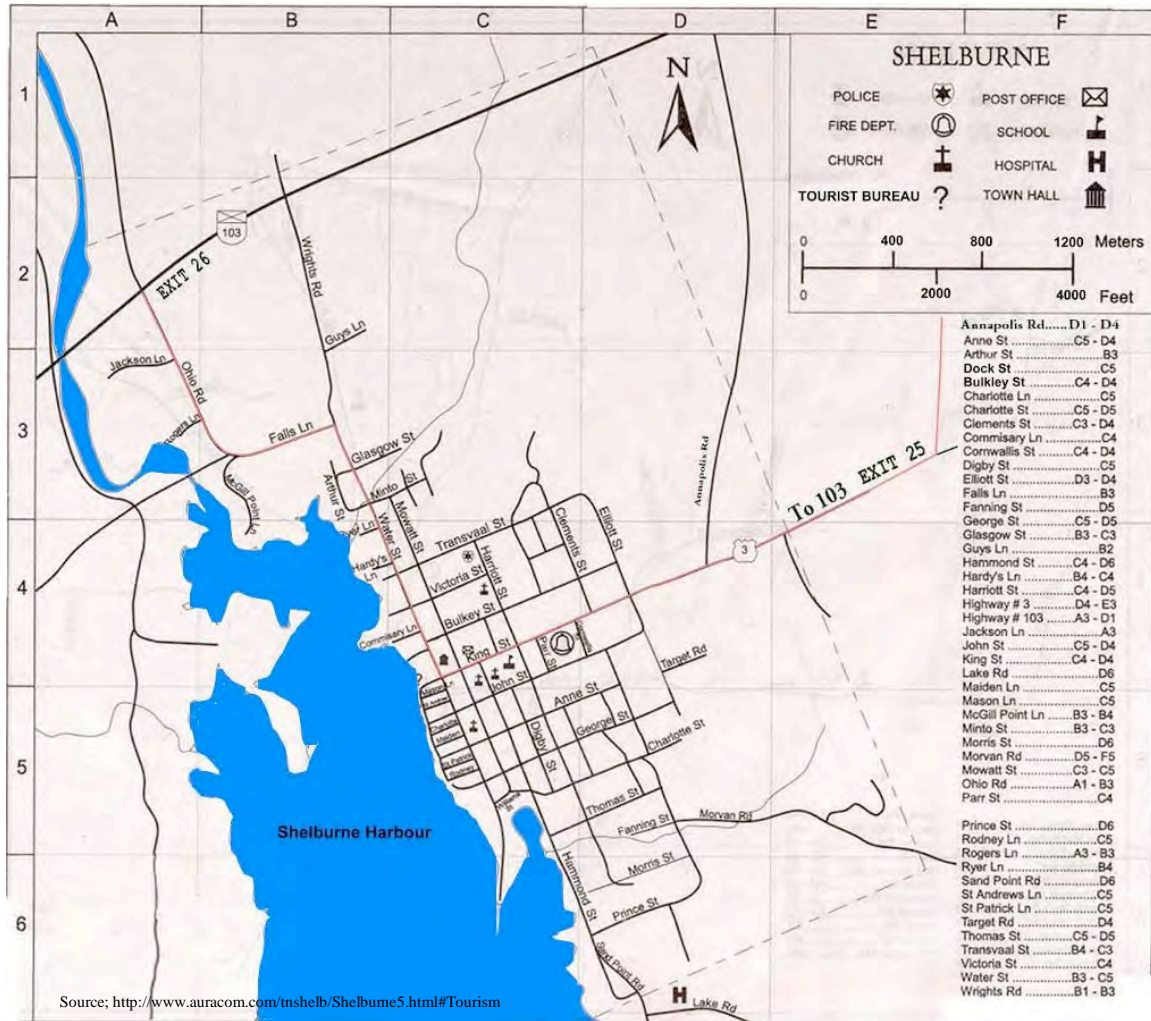
Figure 1. Map of Nova Scotia



Two hundred and ten kilometers southwest of Halifax, the Town of Shelburne's famed harbour, marine tradition, and storied history shapes the rural community's identity and future. Founded by British Loyalists in 1783, the community experienced both rapid development and decline in its early years of settlement with a population estimated to have peaked at 10 000 (Town of Shelburne 2001).

Local marine industries, including shipbuilding and fishing, developed in Shelburne during this period, however, and maintained a resident population that declined to 300 in 1808 (Town of Shelburne 2001). As Shelburne developed, its economy diversified as other resource-based industries developed regionally, including forestry and mining. In time, commercial and industrial marine industries grew.

Figure 2. Map of Shelburne, Nova Scotia



By the 1950s and 1960s, retail and service sectors also established to serve local residents, while healthcare and educational institutions located in the community to serve the regional population. As the local economy grew, infrastructure also developed to meet the increasing demand of local residents. In 1988, the Town adopted its first Municipal Planning Strategy, which outlined optimistic goals for increased residential, commercial and industrial development in the community.

Economic decline returned in Shelburne in the 1990s. Declining natural resource industries, primarily the fishery, impacted negatively all aspects of the local and regional economy. Fewer local jobs resulted in population decline as residents—especially youth—sought employment or educational opportunities outside of the region (Stantec 2009). Shelburne’s population declined from 2245 to 1875 (-16.5%) between 1991 and 2006 (Statistics Canada N.D.).



Population decreases result in fewer households and local businesses. Because the Town of Shelburne generates revenue primarily through property taxation, population decline results in reduced municipal revenue. Financial demands on the Town, however, do not decrease in parallel. The Town must continue to supply basic services, and maintain and modernize its existing infrastructure. Short-term financial demands dominate the municipal decision-making process.

Shelburne developed its ICSP to, in part, guide the community's long-term sustainable development. The plan identified and described future goals and priorities for the Town, and suggested actions and indicators to measure the Town's progress.

The Town's comprehensive report lists 36 sustainability goals and 100 actions to promote sustainability initiatives within the community. Even after prioritizing 30 actions, the effort required to implement the ICSP may seem overwhelming to local decision-makers who previously struggled to maintain only the status quo.

With this context, the study evaluates the Town's ICSP implementation framework and designs a decision-support tool for use by staff and council that incorporates the Town's sustainability principles into the municipal decision-making process.

Simple criteria developed to assess proposals based on established guidelines proved effective in implementing sustainable development projects in case study communities described by Connolly et al. (2009). Incorporating Shelburne's ICSP principles into the context of municipal operations proactively encourages decision-makers to consider sustainability.

## **Sustainability: Broadly Defined and Broadly Applied**

Municipalities across Canada acknowledge the need for sustainable development. Past decades of rapid growth and development result in increasingly steep environmental and economic costs in Canadian communities. Estimated at \$123 billion, Canada's municipal infrastructure funding deficit grows by \$2 billion annually (Mirza 2007). Amid increasing pressure to reverse these trends, municipal governments remain reliant on economic growth to finance basic service provision. McAllister (2004) suggests the need for property revenues in the context of downloaded provincial responsibilities and increased public demand for services constrains local governments' ability to limit unsustainable development. Further, individual property rights undermine the pursuit of collective goals. Municipalities must replace traditional with innovative decision-making to find balance between competing values (McAllister 2004) and promote sustainable development.

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations' (2007 p.4) ICSP framework defines sustainable development as:

Infrastructure development that ensures that the use of resources and the environment today does not damage prospects for use by future generations.

Sustainable development is a way of planning new development so that it makes maximum use of brownfield sites, reduces urban sprawl, encourages the use of public transport, discourages the use of the private car, and minimizes the impact on air quality and the local environment.

This definition provides municipalities latitude in application of the concept. Not surprisingly, attempts to achieve sustainable development are fraught with conflicts as competing interests attempt to balance social, environmental, and economic goals (Conroy and Berke 2004). Indeed, Rees (1995) advocates for a factor-10 reduction of global economic activity to achieve an economy-environment balance; he challenges planners to shape the sustainability agenda. Scale and scope of effort aside, the concept of sustainable development has won over the public; proponents must now narrow the theory-practice divide (Campbell 1996; Connolly et al. 2009).

Municipalities are well suited to advance the concept of sustainability (Evans 2005). Authority to govern local land use is a powerful municipal control over the physical development of their communities. Through relatively close relations between municipal leaders and residents, local governments understand the necessity, desirability, and practicality of embracing methods of sustainable development (Camagni et al. 1998) to manage their community in the context of increasing responsibilities downloaded from senior level governments without matching increases in financial resources (Roseland 2005).

In developing the ICSP program, senior level governments in Canada also recognized the important role of municipalities in advancing sustainable development. Desired outcomes of the ICSP process—municipal responsibilities—include investment in environmentally sustainable infrastructure; promotion of effective local government and healthy, vibrant communities; cleaner air, cleaner water and lower greenhouse gas emissions; and partnerships with other municipalities to address shared challenges facing Nova Scotia communities (SNSMR 2007; Government of Canada 2005).

Developing an ICSP may result in continued municipal receipt of Gas Tax funding, but progressing toward sustainable development is not guaranteed. In evaluating sustainability principles supported by comprehensive plans in 30 US communities, Berke and Conroy (2000) concluded that municipal plans are often narrowly focused on improving livability in the built environment without supporting other sustainable development principles including harmony with nature, a place-based economy, equity, the polluter pays principle, or responsible regionalism. Managing the built environment has been the historic mainstream of community planning; however, municipalities must expand their practice of sustainable development to become functionally *sustainable*. Berke and Conroy (2000) recommend that planners examine the linkages between plans, plan implementation, and the resulting sustainability outcomes to understand how municipalities can promote sustainability principles.

Structural and procedural barriers limit the capacity of municipalities to implement community-based sustainability plans. Implementing community-based plans typically

involve changes in relationships and shifts in the traditional power structure governing communities (Connelly et al. 2009). Sustainable community development principles (collaboration and participation) conflict with established (economically based) processes (McAllister 2004). Further, grassroots initiatives do not easily integrate into established governance structures (Rydin and Pennington 2000). A combination of the dominant economic rationale, bureaucracy, inertia, and lack of a sense of crisis to motivate decision-making based on sustainability principles also contributes to the unwillingness to accept change (Adger et al. 2003). In the context and complexity of community-based sustainability plans (Bulkeley 2006), managing multiple stakeholder processes requires municipal planning capacity beyond the traditional so that short-term demands can be met by long-term sustainability solutions (Campbell 1996).

Conroy and Berke (2004) examined how to better develop sustainability principles in planning practice. They studied the planning process (support for sustainability principles, participation efforts of planners, resources), the integration of sustainable principles as an organizational planning concept, the effect of a state mandate for sustainable policies, and the local community context (affluence, population change). They concluded that a state mandate for sustainability policies most strongly influenced policy inclusion in local plans, with local commitment to and participation in the planning process, and population growth as contributing factors (Conroy and Berke 2004). Their recommendations included educating planners to better implement sustainability principles.

Regardless of plan quality, plans must be implemented to achieve policy goals. Indeed, critics argue that over the many steps between plan design and implementation the process is likely to fail resulting in poor policy implementation (Pressman and Wildavsky 1973). Hopkins (2001) notes that if plans are created and implemented independent of local context, implementation is unlikely; however, he continues, if plans evolve from local context and are used in daily activities, they are more likely to become successfully implemented (2001). Community involvement is essential to make plans that matter (Burby 2003). Plan use can promote public engagement in the planning process, but the typical style and construction of plans does not facilitate public participation (Mandelbaum 1990). Therefore, municipalities can better engage the public in the planning process—and increase the likelihood of implementation—by designing a planning framework that promotes communication and involvement.

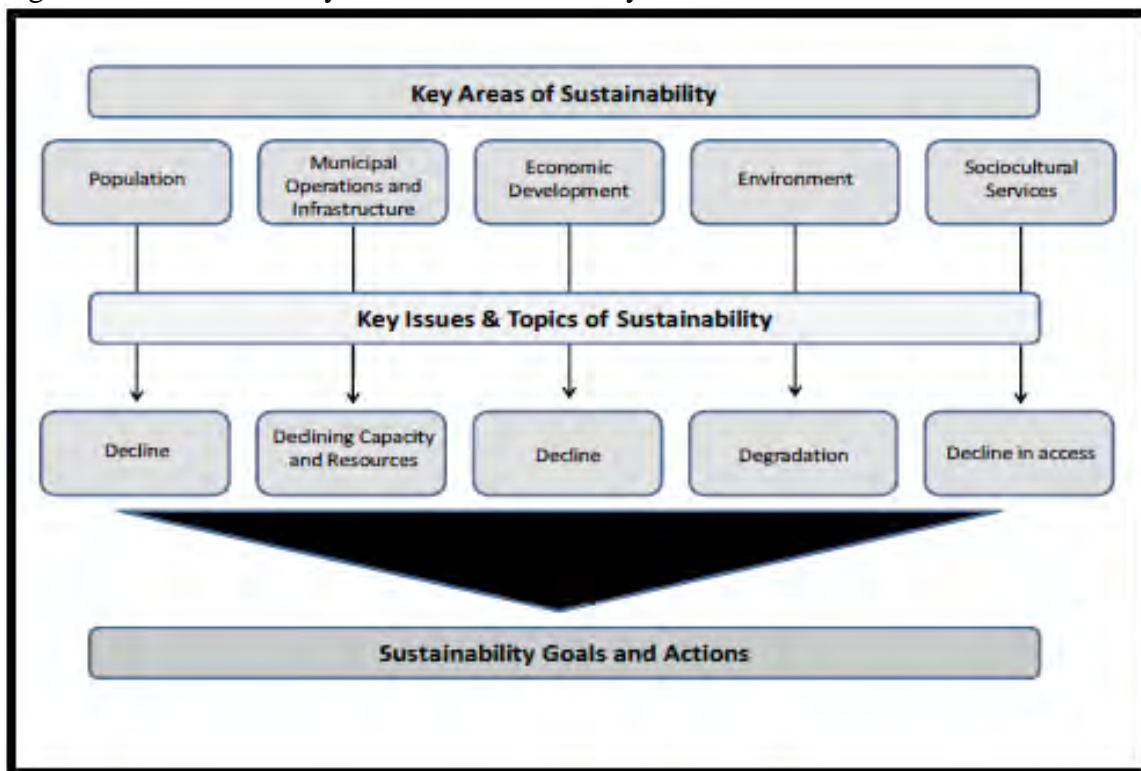
Laurian et al. (2004) devised a study to identify factors of local government comprehensive plan implementation. They concluded that plan implementation is generally poor. According to their study, successful plan implementation depends on plan quality, capacity of the planning authority, and the scale of land development. To improve plan implementation, they recommended building the capacity of the planning authority, improving the quality of local plans, and focusing on the critical evaluation of small-scale development projects. Clear policies from good plans make helpful guidelines for staff to manage land development. But Talen (1996) cautions that decision makers too easily avoid their responsibilities to implement progressive policies when evaluation criteria in planning process are ill suited to the context of community.

Evaluation methods are required up front in the planning process to include dynamic elements into plans and promote their implementation (Talen 1996).

## Shelburne's Integrated Community Sustainability Plan

Facilitated by consulting planners from Stantec Limited (Stantec) and advised by an ICSP Committee of municipal councilors, Shelburne developed its ICSP from April to September 2009. Public participation, the foundation of the ICSP planning process (SNSMR 2007), occurred through focus groups and public open houses. Focus group participants, recruited by Stantec on behalf of the Town, represented a cross section of the community, including local youth, young professionals, business owners, seniors, and municipal staff and council. Through the consultation process residents iteratively discussed / generated and evaluated visions for Town's sustainable future in the context of community qualities and assets, issues, ideas for sustainability, and core values (Stantec 2009). Five sustainability priority areas emerged from the first round of public consultation: Population, Municipal Operations and Infrastructure, Economic Development, Environment, and Sociocultural Services (Figure 1).

Figure 3. Shelburne's Key Areas of Sustainability



Source: Stantec 2009

Shelburne's sustainability goals also resulted from residents' input during the first round of community consultation. Thirty-six goals guide Shelburne towards the community's vision of its sustainable future (Appendix III). The goals are high-level statements of

community intent to focus the Town’s awareness, resources, and actions towards each sustainability priority area.

During the second and final round of public consultation, residents evaluated the sustainability goals and specified municipal actions to implement the Town’s ICSP. One hundred actions guide Shelburne toward achieving its sustainability goals (Appendix IV).

Shelburne’s ICSP Committee subsequently selected 30 Actions as priority. To each prioritized Action, the Committee assigned organizational responsibility (municipal department(s), committee(s), council, or suggested regional partners) and time frame (short, medium, or long) to facilitate ICSP implementation.

The Town incorporated sound process in developing its ICSP, but implementing plans—not their design—promotes sustainable community development (Berke and Conroy 2000, Conroy and Berke 2004, and Laurian et al. 2004).

## **Toward Sustainability: The Implementation Problem**

Ny et al. (2007) use jigsaw puzzles as a metaphor to explain the process of planning and envisioning sustainable futures. Just as a completed puzzle’s image provides direction for its builder, a municipality’s envisioned sustainability future provides direction for the community. With a clear vision of *success*, communities, just like puzzles, can develop with purpose. Shelburne’s ICSP provides the Town with a purpose.

But successful implementation requires more than purpose alone. Building a puzzle or a sustainable future requires the coordinated and incremental organization of individual pieces or stakeholders, respectively. Strategic implementation through purposeful decision-making facilitates success.

Shelburne’s ICSP may provide the Town with a strategic plan, but the plan does not detail an effective implementation strategy. To increase the Town of Shelburne’s capacity to implement its ICSP, this study develops a decision-support tool to apply sustainability principles in evaluating municipal decisions.

## **Toward Implementation: A Solution Proposed**

As revealed in the literature, developing community-based sustainability plans alone does not result in sustainable community development. Rather, sustainable development requires *implementing* sustainability plans. According to Connolly et al. (2009) implementing community plans requires overcoming social process barriers to decision-making, and mobilizing institutional and community organizations. Regarding Shelburne, the degree to which sustainability priorities influence traditional patterns of decision-making determines success of ICSP implementation.

Overcoming process barriers—traditional patterns of decision-making—and replacing them with sustainability solutions guided this study and informed the four objectives:

- Evaluate the Town of Shelburne’s implementation and decision-making processes
- Develop assessment criteria to evaluate sustainable municipal development
- Determine the scope and application of the decision-making tool
- Approve the decision-making tool for use by the Town of Shelburne

If the ICSP describes *the hopes for the Town’s future*, then the study seeks to describe, in part, *the Town as it exists today*, and suggest *decision-making processes to achieve its future*. Shelburne’s ICSP requires the Town to innovate. Innovation requires the Town to abandon, in part, traditional structures, functions, policies, and processes—including decision-making. Evaluating the Town’s current decision-making processes identifies organizational capacity, and capability to change (Van Der Heijden 2005). In the context of the Town’s current organizational environment, innovative process solutions, therefore, can be implemented more easily.

Based on lessons learned from evaluation of the Shelburne’s decision-making process; principles and vision of its ICSP; and literature reviewed regarding effective plans, processes, and implementation strategies, the study recommends process improvements to better achieve the Town’s sustainability goals. Process improvements include a decision-support tool that functions as a guide for municipal staff and council, ensuring that the Town’s sustainability priorities provide context for local decision-making.

## Toward Implementation: Approach and Method

The study began formally on September 9, 2009 after consultation with Town of Shelburne staff. In the meeting, the Town articulated its desire for the study: to incorporate sustainability priorities, as described in its ICSP, into the decision-making processes of municipal staff and council. Following the meeting, the Town’s Planning and Advisory Committee agreed to participate as community advisors for this study.

The first phase of the study began with review of relevant planning literature in general, and of sustainability planning literature in particular. Topics of investigation included characteristics of effective municipal plans, planning processes, and plan implementation; sustainability and community-based planning; and planning process evaluation techniques. Research into these topic areas continued iteratively, through the duration of the study.

The second phase of the study examined the Town of Shelburne’s decision-making processes and environment through the lens of municipal documents and consultation with staff. Documents reviewed included the Town’s Municipal Planning Strategy, Land Use Bylaw, Integrated Community Sustainability Plan, council meeting minutes, budget, and capital investment plan. This investigation summarized results through SWOT analysis. Strengths and Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis separated results by jurisdictional control: internal or external to the organization. Internal factors (strengths and weaknesses) are those under the control of the municipality, and external factors (opportunities and threats) are those outside the

municipality's control. The study selected SWOT analysis for its non-technical approach and easily interpreted results.

In the third phase of the study, SWOT analysis results, ICSP sustainability principles and priorities, and relevant planning literature became the basis for the evaluative content of the Town's decision-support tool. Sustainability principles derived from priorities of the ICSP framed the tool's categories of assessment: People, Municipal Operations and Infrastructure, Economic Development, Environment, and Sociocultural Services. Developing content for each category resulted from comparison between the Town's *future* sustainability goals detailed in the ICSP, and the *current* context of decision making outlined in SWOT analysis. Informed by relevant planning literature, the study designed the general content of the decision-support tool to aid municipal decision makers to bridge the divide between the Town's *future* goals and *current* sustainability context.

Following the content design, the fourth phase of the study determined the application of the tool. This phase answered the questions of the tool: used by whom, why, and when? Decision support frameworks from other municipalities, including Canmore, AB, Kamloops, BC, Stratford, PEI, Strathcona County, AB, and Whistler, BC, informed this process. Telephone and email consultation with municipal staff from Kamloops, Stratford, Strathcona County, and Whistler also contributed here. Topics discussed during staff consultations included intended purpose of the tool, its user groups, barriers to implementation, general results, and lessons learned. Decision-support resources from Whistler also served, in part, as a model for the creation of Shelburne's tool.

The final phase of the study involved validating the content, design, and application of the decision-support tool. During consultation with the Town's staff and Planning Advisory Committee, the study iteratively amended the structure and function of the decision-support tool to reflect the needs and expectations of the community as discussed by participants. Consultation occurred between September to November through telephone and email correspondence, and in-person meetings.

### ***Toward Sustainability: Evaluating Shelburne's Implementation and Decision-Making Processes***

Shelburne's sustainability challenges are not unique; these problems are documented in communities throughout North America and described in planning literature. Numerous examples of effective municipal plans and planning processes are also described.

By examining successful examples, the Town can learn from other municipalities, and apply these lessons to develop and implement effective, long-term plans and planning processes. Characteristics of successful municipal plans and planning processes are described below:

- Senior government support
- Local growth and development pressure

- Good planning policies and documents
- Local commitment (residents, staff, and council)
- Planning staff educated in sustainable planning principles
- Processes to evaluate municipal development decisions (criteria, tools, frameworks)
- Public participation in the planning process
- Local and regional partnerships (businesses, community groups, governments), and
- Mechanisms to promote accountability of decision-makers

These characteristics become assessment criteria for the SWOT analysis of Shelburne's plan implementation and decision-making processes. The table below summarizes the assessment of Shelburne in the context of municipal characteristics of effective planning processes.



Table 1. Evaluating Shelburne’s Plan Implementation and Decision-Making Processes: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

Qualities and Themes of Successful Plan Implementation and Decision-Making	Internal Factors: Under the Control of Town Governance		External Factors: Outside the Control of Town Governance		Recommendations for ICSP Implementation and Decision-Making
	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	
<b>Local Growth / Development Pressure as Catalyzing Issue for Sustainability</b>	Internal strength not identified	Local population and economic decline – diffuses focus on sustainable development	External opportunity not identified	Further population and economic decline threatens the Town’s financial solvency and reinforces economic primacy in decision-making	Without issue catalyzing residents, Town leadership important to advance sustainable development projects  Overcoming economic primacy important for implementing sustainable development projects
<b>Planning Policies and Documents</b>	ICSP - community-based vision for the Town’s sustainable future; prioritizes goals and actions to guide plan implementation	ICSP – five sustainability priorities, 36 goals, 100 actions; scope of plan daunting, making its implementation a challenge  Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw – does not reflect Shelburne’s current environment or support the ICSP	External opportunity not identified	External threat not identified	Identify and incorporate ICSP goals and actions into municipal decision making process  Update Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw

<b>Social Capacity and Local Commitment</b>	Council, staff (administration), and residents demonstrated leadership and commitment in developing the ICSP	Decision-making processes do not promote broad-based community participation	External opportunity not identified	External threat not identified	Encourage council, staff, and residents' participation in ICSP implementation and municipal decision-making processes
<b>Institutional Capacity – Resources, Staff, and Technical Experience</b>	Capacity building – eligible expense under ICSP Municipal Funding Agreement	No planning staff to advise council on sustainability initiatives	Proposed ICSP Action – share technical staff (planner / engineer) with Municipality of Shelburne and the Town of Lockport	External threat not identified	Build institutional capacity to better implement sustainable development initiatives
<b>Municipal Decision Support – Information and Evaluation</b>	Internal strength not identified	No standard evaluation process in municipal decision-making by council or committee	External opportunity not identified	External threat not identified	Increase resources to standardize / support municipal decision-making
<b>Public Participation</b>	Proactive engagement of residents during Town's ICSP	Residents – not involved actively in decision-making process (little opportunity for direct participation)	External opportunity not identified	External threat not identified	Increase residents' participation in municipal decision-making through proactive engagement
<b>Partnerships and Collaboration</b>	Partnership established with Municipality of Shelburne, Town of Lockport (Joint Services Board)	Intra-Municipal collaboration – departmental independence limits cooperation	Inter-Municipal cooperation on ICSP Actions – Energy Strategy planned with Municipality of Shelburne	External threat not identified	Engage proactively with municipalities and organizations to develop partnerships for sustainable development initiatives Increase cooperation between municipal departments

<b>Accountability Mechanisms</b>	Annual ICSP progress reporting proposed	No formal records of evaluation process used in municipal decision-making by council or committee	External opportunity not identified	Residents' expectations increasing for transparency in municipal decision-making	Increase transparency – support decision makers and inform public
<b>Senior Government Support</b>	See Institutional Capacity	Internal weakness not identified	Federal-provincial Gas Tax Agreement – annual ICSP funding for sustainable development	External threat not identified	Strengthen relationship with senior governments

## **Internal Strengths**

### ***Planning Policies and Documents***

The ICSP describes Shelburne's vision and goals for the Town's sustainable future, and lists municipal priorities and actions to focus plan implementation. The priorities reflect current community values and municipal needs in the context of sustainability. The ICSP marks the beginning of Shelburne's path toward a more sustainable future—not the end. The Town must guard against the perception that in developing the ICSP, the community has become more *sustainable*. Developing and implementing a plan require distinct processes (Connolly et al. 2009). Shelburne can become more sustainable when it integrates principles of the ICSP into its traditional decision-making processes.

### ***Social Capacity and Local Commitment***

Broad-based community engagement in sustainable development initiatives improves their implementation by encouraging residents' sense of ownership both in the process and results of municipal decision-making (Connolly et al. 2009). Evans et al. (2005) describe the link between community engagement and local government as social capacity, and conclude through case study that stronger social capacity results in greater achievements of sustainable development.

Local participation and commitment improves sustainability policy inclusion in community plans (Conroy and Berke 2004). The comprehensive scope of the ICSP indicates significant community commitment to the planning process. Indeed, council, administrative staff, and residents contributed the content of the ICSP. Building on local commitment in the ICSP development process, the Planning Advisory Committee, with council and staff support, advised the development of this study's decision-support tool.

But sustainability is only one important issue facing the Town. Within the context of complex and conflicting responsibilities, sustained consistency and commitment challenge municipalities to implement sustainability policy (Connolly et al. 2009). In case study communities studied by Connolly et al. (2009), municipalities fostered commitment for sustainable development by encouraging public participation in the municipal decision-making process. Participation increases the sense of community ownership in a plan, and collective responsibility for its implementation.

The Town can facilitate plan implementation by encouraging participation of additional staff and residents in the municipal decision-making process.

### ***Institutional Capacity – Resources, Staff, and Technical Experience***

As a concept, *capacity building* is lauded as a boon to sustainable development (Connolly et al. 2009; Laurian et al. 2004; Campbell 1996), but not clearly defined. Evans et al. (2005) describe *capacity* in terms of institutional and social components (see Public Participation below for discussion of social capacity). Institutional capacity for sustainable development includes the human resources, organizational structure, learning potential, knowledge retention, and leadership ability—the capability—that enables

action in the pursuit of sustainability. Institutional capacity increases as a consequence of conscious decision-making and innovated problem solving (Evans et al. 2005).

Strategic planning has not traditionally guided Shelburne's municipal development. Without a planning tradition (no planning staff for example), the Town's capacity to guide its future sustainable development remains limited; however, through the ICSP funding process, opportunity exists to build capacity for sustainable development. The Municipal Funding Agreement recognizes building municipal capacity as an eligible category of expense (SNSMR 2007). Capacity building is defined as:

The process of building the potential for a municipality to collaborate and form relationships with experts, professionals, and other organizations to develop skills that enable it to develop and implement an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan. (SNSMR 2007, p.4)

The federal and provincial governments perceive municipal capacity building as an investment in, rather than a cost of a more sustainable future. The Town can use the financial support available through the ICSP to build institutional capacity and better direct its sustainable development.

### ***Public Participation***

The Town proactively recruited residents to participate in the ICSP process. Shelburne residents participated in development of the Town's ICSP through focus group and public meetings. Residents provided broad-based perspective and opinion that became the values, vision, and sustainability priorities of the ICSP.

Evans et al. (2005) identified proactive public participation—leadership—as a characteristic of local governments with successful sustainable development initiatives. Shelburne can build on its ICSP experience to proactively engage residents in municipal decision-making and sustainable development initiatives.

### ***Partnerships and Collaboration***

The federal and provincial governments encourage partnerships and collaborations between municipalities to achieve mutual sustainability objectives (SNSMR 2007). Additional partnerships are also encouraged with private and public organizations, First Nations, and other levels of government (SNSMR 2007).

The Town partners formally with the Municipal District of Shelburne (MDS) and the Town of Lockport (Lockport) to form the Joint Services Board (JSB). The JSB administers waste management, building inspection, and incarceration services for each municipality. Cooperatively managed and funded, the JSB exemplifies successful inter-municipal partnership. To further Shelburne's sustainable development initiatives, the Town can help expand the scope of the JSB, or use the partnership as a model for new collaborations with other municipal or non-municipal organizations.

### ***Accountability Mechanisms***

Shelburne's ICSP commits the Town to an annual public review of progress toward sustainability Goals and Action implementation. Formal reporting promotes dialogue between residents and council, and builds social capacity (Evans et al. 2005).

During the annual review, the Town can discuss challenges to and celebrate achievements of sustainable development, with the long-term goal of leveraging future initiatives.

### **Internal Weaknesses**

#### ***Local Growth / Development Pressure as Catalyzing Issue for Sustainability***

Increasing population traditionally fuels economic growth and municipal development. Municipalities historically embrace local development for the increased property taxes generated through physical and economic expansion; however, when expansion threatens perceived community values (social, cultural, or environmental), development can catalyze residents' opposition to traditional municipal growth (Connolly et al. 2009; Conroy and Berke 2004).

Population and economic decline diffuse rather than focus Shelburne's demand for sustainable development. Myriad factors responsible for declining trends in population and economy fall largely outside the Town's control and provide no unifying issue to focus residents' actions.

In absence of an issue to catalyze public support for sustainable development, local governments must drive the *sustainability* agenda by encouraging dialogue and leading implementation (Evans et al. 2005). For example, municipalities can promote sustainable development by undertaking pilot projects that demonstrate tangible linkages between the community's sustainability vision and physical assets (Connolly et al. 2009; Evans et al. 2005). Demonstration projects test sustainability concepts, encourage public discussion, and provide opportunity to further sustainable development initiatives.

#### ***Planning Policies and Documents***

The Town's ICSP summarizes the vision and values of the community characterized by five sustainability priorities, 36 goals, and 100 actions. The scope of the ICSP may inhibit its implementation. Additional prioritization can aid implementation of the Town's ICSP. Indeed, the ICSP Committee subsequently assigned short, medium, and long-term implementation targets to the top 30 sustainability actions.

Where sustainability projects succeed, municipal governments implement incremental actions (Evans et al. 2005). Incremental actions make change palatable and promote acceptance of larger sustainability initiatives. To overcome paralysis from the myriad sustainability priorities, goals, and actions, Shelburne must initiate incremental change, and leverage success for future sustainability initiatives.

The Town's Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use Bylaws do not reflect current economic, environmental, or socioeconomic community conditions. First drafted in 1988, the document retains the tone and outlook of the period, characterized by local population increases and relatively stable resource-based industries. Updating the MPS to reflect the current municipal context and aligning the document with the ICSP objectives can strengthen the Town's ability to advance its sustainable development.

### ***Social Capacity and Local Commitment***

The small size and relative stability of the community, combined with the experienced and capable municipal staff has resulted in a self-reliant and traditional municipal administration. The Town Clerk, as the senior administrator, acts as the primary advisor to council, and departmental staff. Although the Town proactively engaged with the public during the ICSP process, residents do not have a strong tradition of public engagement in the routine municipal decision-making processes.

Residents can participate formally in Shelburne's municipal decision-making process through membership in one of its thirty-two established committees; however, many committees, for example the Cemetery Commission or the Library Committee, have a limited role in community governance. Many committees meet infrequently, and membership often includes a high proportion of municipal councilors. Council members currently hold exclusive membership of the Finance and Municipal Audit, and the ICSP Committees.

In addition to increasing direct participation in the municipal decision-making process, the local governments can increase residents' indirect participation in municipal affairs by improving customer services, staff communications training, or presence of elected officials at public events (Evans et al. 2005).

Participation encourages commitment; by increasing public participation in municipal decision-making—directly or indirectly—the Town can strengthen local commitment to implement the ICSP.

### ***Institutional Capacity – Resources, Staff, and Technical Experience***

Limited financial resources focus the Town's attention on the short-term economic demands of municipal governance. Consequently, the Town neither engaged in long-term planning nor developed planning resources or capabilities.

Developing institutional capacity for long-term planning can result in improving the guidance of sustainable development. Building, sharing, and retaining expert knowledge within a municipality is key to implementing long-term sustainable development projects (Evans et al. 2005). This concept, described as institutional learning, promotes information sharing, cooperation, and collaboration between and within municipalities. Indeed, Shelburne recognized a need for institutional learning in developing succession planning as a priority action in its ICSP.

The Town can improve its institutional capacity by prioritizing institutional learning as it progresses incrementally toward its ICSP goals and actions.

### ***Municipal Decision Support – Information and Evaluation***

As demands on municipalities become increasingly complex and interrelated, decision-makers—through institutional learning—must increase in parallel their capacity to evaluate and manage relevant information. Key to institutional learning is not the understanding of technical information, but the ability required to manage complexity (Connolly et al. 2009). In case study communities studied by Connolly et al. (2009), municipalities developed simple criteria to evaluate development proposals based on established sustainability guidelines.

Incorporating a simple sustainability evaluation into a municipal decision-making process may seem insignificant in the context of the long-term sustainability objectives; however, evaluating municipal decisions contributes incrementally towards local sustainability objectives (Evans et al. 2005).

### ***Public Participation***

See Social Capacity and Local Commitment above.

### ***Partnerships and Collaboration***

Partnerships, as discussed above, need not be external to a municipality. Building links between municipal departments that improve information sharing and coordinate joint action can improve the implementation of sustainability policy (Evans et al. 2009). Town departments function to a degree, in isolation from or competition with each other for limited municipal funding. Instead of proactive collaboration and joint requests submitted between departments for capital equipment during the budgeting process, each department makes individual requests for capital funding forgoing potential cost savings from cross-departmental cooperation. Cross-sectoral linkages result in a shared vision and commitment to *do things differently* (Connolly et al. 2009).

### ***Accountability Mechanisms***

Shelburne has developed a self-reliant and traditional municipal administration. Staff advises council or committee through formal and informal processes. The Town's administrative structure and limited staff preclude development of staff reports as a means of advising council, committee, or informing residents. Consequently, formal public records of information and evaluation on which council based its decisions do not readily exist. Without public record, residents have one less opportunity to stay informed or become engaged in municipal decision-making. Also, decision-makers lose the opportunity to justify their actions based on the information context.



## **External opportunities**

### ***Institutional Capacity – Resources, Staff, and Technical Experience***

The Town recognizes the need to increase the technical expertise—planning or engineering—of its staff, but lacks the resources to hire full-time personnel. Neighbouring municipalities share a similar circumstance.

Building on the Joint Services Board’s inter-municipal partnership, Shelburne proposed, as an Action of its ICSP, the sharing of technical staff between the Town, the MDS, and Lockport. Prioritized as a short-medium goal, the Town’s proposed action demonstrates leadership among regional municipalities, and an innovative and pragmatic solution to increase local institutional capacity.

The JSB partnership may become more strategic and result in additional collaborations strengthening the sustainable development of each municipality through collective action.

### ***Partnerships and Collaboration***

Partnerships between municipalities can promote, in part, sustainable development initiatives. Shelburne and the MDS are developing jointly an energy strategy that will shape their consumption of energy and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

To participate in the strategy, the Town must join the MDS as a member of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). Membership in the FCM provides the Town with expert knowledge and resources, including funding, for sustainable development and other municipal initiatives.

Partnering with the MDS and the FCM can positively impact future sustainable development initiatives by building institutional capacity, and facilitating institutional learning. Shelburne’s successful external partnerships indicate an organizational strength and future opportunity to advance the Town’s sustainable development initiatives.

### ***Senior Government Support***

The ICSP not only sets direction for Shelburne’s sustainable development, it also begins the relationship between the Town and senior level governments in context of sustainable infrastructure development. The ICSP program challenges the municipality to overcome economic primacy and envision its future through a lens of sustainability. Annual federal-provincial Gas Tax funding provided for the Town’s ICSP initiatives does not satisfy financial demand, but it does institutionalize the *concept of sustainability* into Town governance.

Municipalities have a responsibility to engage with senior governments to advance municipal capacity for sustainable development beyond the scope of the ICSP (Evans et al. 2005). As the Town progresses towards its sustainable development goals, it also advances its relationship with senior governments. As Shelburne’s incremental actions increase its sustainability, the Town gains credibility with senior governments, which improves the potential for future senior level support and funding.

## **External threats**

### ***Local Growth / Population Decline***

Shelburne's population and economic decline erodes the municipal tax base and threatens the Town's ability to provide basic services for its residents and to meet increasing demands for infrastructure repair, replacement, and upgrade. Necessarily concerned with financial resources, the Town prioritizes economic considerations on municipal decision-making. Shelburne cannot control trends in population or local economic development; however, the Town can change its perspective on community health and expectation for growth. Connolly et al. (2009) note that other communities successfully implemented sustainable development projects overcame economic primacy by considering factors including quality of life and environmental health in the decision-making process. Sustainable development then becomes an investment rather than a cost (Connolly et al. 2009).

With the support and financial resources of the government sponsored ICSP, the Town can challenge itself to implement incremental sustainable development initiatives for the long-term health of the community.

### ***Accountability Mechanisms***

Shelburne's small population and relative stability matched with long-serving, trusted, and experienced staff results in informal communication and information sharing characterizing the municipal decision-making process. Residents and councilors, however, require modernization of traditional municipal information sharing and decision-making. Residents increasingly expect public records of information and debate justifying council decisions. Councilors require methods or tools to help them manage increasingly large volumes of complex information prior to decision-making. Post decision-making, councilors require records of debate to justify their decisions.

The federal and provincial governments will require increasing sustainable development initiatives built on the ICSP framework. The more credible Shelburne's sustainable development process, the more likely the Town will benefit from additional funding opportunities.

Transparency and accountability in municipal decision-making can affect positively the relationship between the municipality and residents, leading to increased participation, commitment, and support for future sustainable development initiatives.

The SWOT analysis of Shelburne's plan implementation and decision-making processes measures, in part, the capability of the Town to implement its ICSP. The Town can increase its capacity to implement its ICSP when maximizing its current strengths and future opportunities, while recognizing and mitigating current weaknesses and future threats. In the following section the study develops Shelburne's decision-support tool by applying results of the SWOT analysis to the summarized framework of the Town's ICSP.

## Toward Sustainability: Building a Decision-Support Tool

### Sustainability Pillars to Principles

In Shelburne's ICSP, five pillars support the community's sustainable future: Population, Municipal Operations and Infrastructure, Economic Development, Environment, and Sociocultural Services. These sustainability pillars do not define a detailed sustainable future.

Principles, however, can define and direct actions to achieve sustainability goals (Evans et al. 2005) while allowing decision-making participants flexibility in achieving sustainable development (Ny et al. 2006). Based on Shelburne's sustainability pillars and community values described in the ICSP, this study developed sustainability principles for use in the decision-support tool. The principles, listed below, were developed iteratively subject to discussion and feedback from Shelburne's Planning Advisory Committee:

***People:*** Residents are Shelburne's greatest assets. The actions of the Town will provide residents with an equitable and uncompromised quality of life.

***Municipal Operations and Infrastructure:*** Maintaining and upgrading traditional municipal operations and infrastructure poses an increasing challenge for the Town. Shelburne will supply residents' demand for services through sustainable development characterized by innovation and strategic evaluation.

***Economic Development:*** Shelburne's economy drives community development. The Town will build the local economy to support the long-term sustainable development of the local, regional, and global community.

***Environment:*** Shelburne's economic and social health depends on the health of the environment. The Town will act as wise steward of the land and sea and reduce waste, limit pollution, and protect vulnerable environments.

***Sociocultural Services:*** Shelburne's web of community spirit defines and supports the Town. Shelburne's residents will achieve their community vision ...where a diverse population can live, learn, work and play...

This study adopts these principles as the primary framework/assessment categories for the decision-support tool (Appendices I and II).

### Sustainability Themes: Summarized ICSP Goals and Actions

To incorporate the 36 goals and 100 actions of Shelburne's ICSP into the decision-support tool, the study summarized sustainability goals and actions by topic. Related topics were classified as a theme.

For example, Municipal Operations and Infrastructure goals 7, 8, 9 (Appendix III) addressed the Town’s water supply, and became the theme: *Protect and conserve municipal drinking water supply*. Remaining goals and actions were similarly sorted. Table 2 shows the distribution of goals, actions, and summary themes by sustainability pillar.

Table 2. Shelburne’s ICSP Goals, Actions and Themes by Sustainability Pillar

Sustainability Pillar	ICSP Goals	ICSP Actions	Summary Themes
Population	3	8	2
Municipal Operations and Infrastructure	8	31	4
Economic Development	8	17	3
Environment	8	23	5
Sociocultural Services	9	21	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>19</b>

The study recognized 19 sustainability themes in Shelburne’s ICSP goals. Themes of ICSP actions reflected those of ICSP goals; however, the greater number and specificity of actions resulted in sub-themes further detailing Shelburne’s sustainable future. Table 3 summarizes the sustainability themes of ICSP goals and actions.

Table 3. Summary of Shelburne's Sustainability Goals and Actions

Sustainability Pillar	Sustainability Issue	Future Sustainability Focus	ICSP Theme Area(s)	
			Goals	Actions
Population	Population Decline	Population Stabilization	Value residents quality of life	Measure, monitor, and report on quality of life
			Promote the Town's quality of life as amenity	Market Town's quality of life to attract new residents
Municipal Operations and Infrastructure	Declining Capacity and Resources	Effectively Managing by Respecting Resource and Capacity Limits	Respect municipal resource limits	Incorporate declining municipal resource revenue into long-term management decision
			Manage development through effective land use and good governance	Evaluate municipal decisions: ICSP Goals and Actions, municipal procurement, cost-benefit analysis  Expand planning capacity: share technical staff (Joint Services Board), upgrade Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw, succession planning, join Federation of Canadian Municipalities  Improve planning information and communication: develop electronic records and mapping, expand website and online resources
			Protect and conserve municipal drinking water supply	Protect source water of municipal drinking water supply, study groundwater capacity, assess feasibility of central water expansion, promote conservation through education

Sustainability Pillar	Sustainability Issue	Future Sustainability Focus	ICSP Theme Area(s)	
			Goals	Actions
			Develop sustainable sanitary and storm sewer	Improve sanitary and storm sewer service through wastewater treatment and performance monitoring, upgrade treatment plant, promote on-site storm water retention, up grade infrastructure
Economic Development	Economic Decline	Capitalizing on Core Assets to Diversify and Strengthen the Town's Economy	Promote cooperation between local and regional businesses	Establish regional economic partnerships: local, regional businesses, municipalities
			Promote local economic assets: resource-based industries, port and marina	Support local economy: promote key economic assets and tourism  Develop economic assets: refurbish wharf, promote port and marine industry, remediate brownfields
			Support local entrepreneurship	Expand local economy through strategic partnerships: evaluate gaps for economic expansion, promote organizational cooperation and incentive programs
Environment	Environmental Degradation	Protection and Consideration of the	Adapt and mitigate climate change impacts	Study and mitigate potential climate change impacts

Sustainability Pillar	Sustainability Issue	Future Sustainability Focus	ICSP Theme Area(s)	
			Goals	Actions
		Environment in Decision-Making	Promote regional ecosystem protection	Protect regional environment: participate in biosphere reserve preservation, maintain public coastal access
			Develop active transportation infrastructure	Develop active transportation infrastructure and examine regional transit service
			Retrofit / replace municipal infrastructure, as required, with energy efficient designs	Modernize built environment: green retrofit and replacement projects for municipal buildings, utilize alternative energy technologies  Reduce greenhouse gas emissions: join Federation of Canadian Municipalities Partnership for Climate Protection
			Enhance the Town's natural urban environment	Improve urban environment: beautification, natural vegetation, urban forest retention
Sociocultural Services	Decline in Social Services	Protection of Existing Social Services for Shelburne Residents	Promote social interaction and healthy lifestyles for all residents	Develop parks and open spaces
			Develop Shelburne's creative cultural community	Promote Osprey Arts Center as a community amenity and regional institution, enhance marina and promote its use as sail racing center

Sustainability Pillar	Sustainability Issue	Future Sustainability Focus	ICSP Theme Area(s)	
			Goals	Actions
			Proactively maintain local healthcare services	Continue doctor recruitment and healthcare facilities upgrades, build partnership with Roseway Hospital
			Develop lifelong learning opportunities for local residents	Partner with local campus of Nova Scotia Community College to strengthen community education opportunities
			Invest in a safe, efficient, visually appealing urban environment and marina	Invest in the built environment through community design upgrades, upgrade marina



Summarized ICSP themes reveal three ways in which implementation can improve Shelburne's sustainable development: offering decision-makers new perspectives, detailing strategic projects and tasks, and suggesting amendments to the decision-making process.

## **Decision-Support Tool Assembly: SWOT Recommendations and ICSP Principles and Themes**

In designing Shelburne's decision-support tool the study referred to working examples from Canmore, AB (2009), Stratford, PEI (2008), and Whistler, BC (N.D.). The content of this study's decision-support tool resulted from SWOT analysis and ICSP principles and themes. Although the *tool* is described in singular, it is build of two components: Matrix A and Matrix B (Appendix I and II). Both matrices produce qualitative assessments of sustainable development decisions. Content of Matrix A includes an economic assessment designed to reflect the financial reality of the Town. Because resources are limiting, implementing sustainability projects requires wise financial investment. Matrix B includes a more balanced assessment based on Shelburne's sustainability principles. ICSP principles build the framework for each tool, on which assessment criteria are based. Criteria are based on results of SWOT assessment and ICSP goal themes.

## **Toward Sustainability: Determining Support-Tool Application**

### **Tool Evaluation**

Matrices A and B are complementary. Through Matrix A, proposed actions are evaluated by including sustainability principles, municipal finances, and community-based opportunities in an initial assessment. Matrix B provides a more balanced and complete secondary sustainability assessment detailed by ICSP goals and actions, and results of SWOT analysis.

Matrices A and B incorporate three recommendations from SWOT analysis into their design: providing an evaluation framework to assess municipal decisions, contributing a sustainability perspectives to encourage decision-making beyond economic primacy, and establishing a public record of the sustainability discourse, thereby increasing residents' awareness and council's accountability.

To complete Matrix A, decision-makers are required to describe a proposed action by the sustainability principles that it does and does not support. Further, decision-makers also must suggest methods to maximize the strengths and mitigate the weaknesses of each action. By introducing sustainability principles into the decision-making process, the tool promotes perspective beyond traditional economic primacy; however, the Town's financial resources, capacity, and expertise limit Shelburne's ability to implement goals and actions of its ICSP. Therefore, financial aspects of sustainable decision-making are prioritized in Matrix A to acknowledge the community's constraints.

Themes from the Town's ICSP including declining municipal population and resources, and potential climate change impacts appear in Matrix A to encourage perspective grounded by the legitimate challenges that Shelburne faces.

The final section of Matrix A encourages decision-makers to consider how the proposed action contributes to the broad sustainability goals of the community. The tool encourages flexibility, coordination, and complementary actions to promote Shelburne's sustainable development.

The study recommends completing Matrix A as an initial assessment of proposed actions. Outcomes of the screening process include approval, denial, or requests for more information to complete the assessment. Approved actions are subject to Matrix B for further assessment. Actions denied or subject to further assessment can be resubmitted for evaluation pending sustainability amendments.

Differing from Matrix A, Matrix B incorporates more (and more specific) ICSP goals and actions into its evaluation framework. Weaved into the assessment categories, recommendations from SWOT analysis also inform the sustainability evaluation.

Each sustainability principle receives equal weighting. Proposed actions may not score high in all categories due to the specificity of some assessment criteria; however, evaluation of Matrix B is balanced by the results from all sustainability priority areas.

Shelburne's ICSP list goals and actions as project targets to measure the Town's sustainable development; however, these targets do not provide objective measures to evaluate the Town's processes of decision-making. Therefore, subjective assessments of sustainability incorporated into Matrices A and B guide the Town's decision-making process. Results are specific to the time, context, and personnel completing the assessment. The Matrices provide value for decision-makers not for individual written responses or numerical outputs (Matrix B), but for the perspective gained in the process of consultation, discussion, and dialogue that result from the sustainability evaluation.

Without objective measures, success of tool implementation is difficult to quantify. Use of the tool, however, can be monitored. For example, feedback from users regarding the effectiveness of the decision-support tool can be collected, with results compared over time. Ultimate success of the tool can be gauged by the progress that the Town makes towards its ICSP goals and actions.

Just like the goals and actions of the ICSP, the decision-support tool must be implemented to influence the Town's sustainable development. If the tool is perceived as onerous to complete, its implementation is made more difficult as noted in the case of Strathcona County, AB (Mr. Kelly Rudyk, personal communication, November 23, 2009). Matrix A requires proposed actions assessed through brief written responses. Successful implementation of the decision-support tool requires input from tool users to develop the tool to comply with their needs of information and limits of time (personal communication (Mr. Kelly Rudyk, personal communication, November 23, 2009). The

Planning Advisory Committee also suggested holding informal information sessions with tool users (staff and council) to explain and facilitate use of the decision-support tool.

### **Tool Scope and Use**

Daily municipal decisions depend on, to a great degree, the Town's annual budget. Shelburne allocates nearly its complete financial resources in this process, leaving little discretionary spending for staff or council. Planning Advisory Committee advised implementing the decision-support tool during the budget development process and when bringing financial requests before council. The Planning Advisory Committee also recommended limiting the tool users to those involved in the budgeting process, including council, municipal department superintendants, senior administrative staff, and non-council members of the Finance and Audit Committee.

Although desirable, the tool cannot be used to evaluate all budgetary expenses. Focusing evaluation on certain types of decisions, by scale or scope, is therefore required. Laurian et al. (2004) caution, however, that the combined effect of small-scale decisions has important consequences for municipal sustainability. To guide decision-support tool use for evaluating large and small-scale sustainability actions, the Town of Stratford, PEI (2008a) implemented a framework for municipal decision-making. Adapted for use by Shelburne, this framework appears as Table 4.

Table 4. Decision-Support Tool Implementation Guide

Scope of Implementation: Decision-making Framework	Committee / Departmental Staff	Municipal Clerk	Council
<b>Service, Program, or Event</b>			
New < \$2500	√		
New > \$2500 < \$10,000		√	
New > \$10,000			√
Expanded (any %)			√
Discontinue			√
<b>Capital Project</b>			
New < \$2500	√		
New > \$2500 < \$10,000		√	
New > \$10,000			√
Supplement > 10%			√
<b>Policy or Bylaw</b>			
Any Change	√		
<b>Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw</b>			
Five-year Review			√
<b>Procurement: Goods or Services</b>			
New / Lease < \$2500	√		
New / Lease > \$2500 < \$10,000		√	
New / Lease > \$10,000			√
<b>Tenders and Requests for Proposals</b>			
New < \$2500	√		
New > \$2500 < \$10,000		√	
New > \$10,000			√

The framework distributes responsibility for conducting sustainability assessments, incorporating municipal actors into the sustainability decision-making process. Final authority remains with council to evaluate results of the decision-support tool.

Requiring departmental and administrative staff to use the tool can encourage cross-departmental cooperation, a component lacking in many municipal sustainability initiatives (Connolly et al. 2009).

Not only for use by municipal staff and council, the tool can also be implemented to proactively shape the qualities of proposed actions that come before council. Indeed, the decision-support tool developed by the Town of Canmore (2009) was designed for this purpose. By encourage residents and organizations to use the tool to self-evaluate their proposed actions, the Town encourages education and participation in the decision-making process further strengthening the Town's ability to successfully implement its ICSP.

## Toward Sustainability: Validating the Decision-Support Tool

Due to time constraints, the study did not complete planned testing of the decision-support tool to validate the tool for its use by Shelburne council, staff, and committee. Therefore, the decision-support tool remains as a draft of its final version. Prior to its implementation, the Town can test the tool by evaluating current or past projects varying in scope, budget, and complexity. In the testing process, tool users can ask the following questions: did the tool incorporate sustainability principles into the municipal decision-making process? Did the tool help evaluate the *sustainability* of decisions before the Town in the context of its community values and goals? How can the use or function of the tool be improved? Although the study concludes with this summary report, the author will continue to work with the Town, as required, to implement the tool into the municipal decision-making processes. Results of the testing process can then be integrated into subsequent versions of the decision-support tool prior to its finalization.

The support tool cannot guarantee that Shelburne will become more sustainable. Only residents, staff, and council can make the Town more sustainable by changing their behaviors and incorporating a sustainability perspective into their decision-making. This requires a cultural shift in values (Connolly et al. 2009). No plan or plan implementation strategy alone can accomplish this task. Incremental actions, however, can contribute to positive progress over time. Rees (1995) cautions that progress towards sustainability must occur faster than society's demonstrated willingness to act. Regardless of pace of change, implementing the decision-support tool can help Shelburne to incrementally encourage dialogue between residents, staff, and council and implement practices that have proven effective at encouraging sustainable development in other communities.

## Conclusion

Some argue that the current concept of sustainability romanticizes a sustainable past and envisions a future too holistic and vague to offer any utility (Campbell 1996). Indeed, sustainability planning offers much to municipalities, but it cannot provide a magic /easy solution to their economic, environmental or social problems. Infrastructure deficits facing municipalities, for example, result from decades of traditional community building, cycles of growth and decline, and continued investment in the status quo. Communities cannot escape the realities that they face, limited by resources, institutional capacity, and knowledge (Connolly et al. 2009). Reversing patterns and consequences of traditional development will take decades and require fundamental changes to the way that communities build and govern themselves, but communities can overcome the challenges that they face by incorporating principles of sustainable development into their decision-making processes.

Sustainability plans in general, and Integrated Community Sustainability Plans in particular, provide municipalities one important component to advance their sustainable

future. Developing a sustainability plan alone, however, does not ensure successful implementation. Many factors contribute to successful plan implementation. The decision-support tool captures many of these elements of successful implementation programs and applies them to Shelburne's specific context. The tool encourages the incremental adoption of Shelburne's sustainability plan into the municipal decision-making process, promotes the perspective, strategy, and processes amendments prescribed by the goals and actions of the ICSP.

The tool can provide the Town with an opportunity to incrementally implement sustainable development actions. Resultant actions provide the ultimate performance measure of the decision-support tool's effectiveness (Becker 2004).

Impetus for creating Shelburne's decision-support tool resulted from municipal concern about population and economic decline; other Canadian communities developed decision-support tools in response to residents' concerns of rapid population growth and economic development. The leadership demonstrated by Town staff and council to build this study's tool suggests strong commitment and leadership, key factors in successful plan implementation.

The decision-support tool remains in draft form. Prior to its implementation, the Town must test the tool to validate its function. Proposed users, including council, administrative and departmental staff, and committees can apply the Tool in decision-making and evaluate its results. In the testing process, tool users can ask the following questions: did the tool incorporate sustainability principles into the municipal decision-making process? Did the tool help evaluate the *sustainability* of decisions before the Town in the context of its community values and goals? How can the use or function of the tool be improved? Although the study concludes with this summary report, the author will continue to work with the Town, as required, to implement the tool into the municipal decision-making processes.

The study recommends four additional steps to improve Shelburne's ability to implement its ICSP. Firstly, to promote transparency in the municipal decision-making process, and encourage information sharing with the residents, the study recommends that the Town include results of the decision-support tool in the proposed (ICSP action #8 in Appendix IV) annual review of ICSP progress. By presenting the results of the tool's use to Shelburne residents, the Town can encourage dialogue and build social capacity for sustainable development initiatives.

Secondly, the study recommends updating the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use ByLaw (ICSP Action #20 in Appendix IV) to coordinate Town policies with the ICSP. Uniting Shelburne's policy documents, provide the Town with stronger policy resources to focus and guide the sustainable development of the community. Updating the MPS will also align the documents with current community values and needs, improving the potential for good municipal governance.

Thirdly, the study recommends increasing the institutional capacity of the Town by partnering with the Joint Services Board to hire and share planning or engineering staff (ICSP Action #20 in Appendix IV) to facilitate local sustainable municipal development. By partnering with regional municipalities to hire technical staff, the Town benefits in three ways: by increasing its planning expertise, by sharing the cost of staff, and by further strengthening its partnerships and collaboration with local governments.

Finally, the study recommends increasing public participation in the sustainable decision-making process by creating a sustainability committee comprised of local residents. By creating a formal role for residents, the Town proactively increases participation in the municipal planning process, building social capacity, education, and awareness in the sustainable development process.

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## **Appendix I: Decision-Support Tool for the Town of Shelburne A**

## Decision-Support Tool for the Town of Shelburne A

Implementing the Town of Shelburne's sustainable vision can only occur incrementally through the individual and combined decisions of staff and council. The strategic questions below help decision-makers evaluate any action, project, or proposal against the Town's sustainability priorities.

---

### Vision Statement

Shelburne is a full-service community where a diverse population can live, learn, work and play while enjoying a peaceful and well-balanced quality of life. We welcome friends and guests to enjoy Shelburne's natural and historic beauty.

Name of Proposed Action Evaluated \_\_\_\_\_

---

### Sustainability Principles

Which principles are most strongly supported by the proposed action?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>People:</b> Residents are Shelburne's greatest assets. The actions of the Town will provide residents with an equitable and uncompromised quality of life.  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Environment:</b> community development will support long-term ecosystem health of the land, air, and sea  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Municipal Operations and Infrastructure:</b> Maintaining and upgrading traditional municipal operations and infrastructure poses an increasing challenge for the Town. Shelburne will supply residents' demand for services through sustainable development characterized by innovation and strategic evaluation. | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Sociocultural Services:</b> Shelburne is a strong for the web of community spirit that defines and supports the Town. Shelburne's residents will achieve their community vision ...where a diverse population can live, learn, work and play... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Economic Development:</b> Shelburne's economy drives community development. The Town will build the local economy to support the long-term sustainable development of the local, regional, and global community.  |   |

How does the proposed action support each principle checked above?

How can each positive impact be maximized?

Which principle(s) is/are not supported by the proposed action?

How can each negative impact be mitigated?

**Municipal Investment**

Is the proposed action a good financial investment?

What is the action's approximate cost?

Does the action reduce long-term costs?  
By how much?

If so, what is the approximate payback period for the investment?

What non-market costs\* influence the investment?

Is this action an investment in the community's sustainable future? If so, can the community afford the long-term capital / operating costs considering declining trends in municipal population / resources and climate change?

Capital \$	Operating \$	N/A

\* Non-market costs: costs of an activity or product not captured by the market price but borne by the community. For example, the market price of gasoline does not include costs resulting from its use (air pollution) or production (environmental contamination).

**Sustainability and the Community**

Does the proposed project support other sustainability actions? If so, how?

Were alternative actions considered? If so, what were they?

Does the action promote partnerships with stakeholders within or external to the Town? List.

How does this action promote or limit future sustainability actions? If so, how?


**Additional Comments**

**Final Assessment**

- Yes, action approved. Proceed to Matrix B for secondary assessment.
- Assessment pending. More information required.
- No, action not approved as proposed.

Evaluated by \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluated on \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix II: Decision-Support Tool for the Town of Shelburne B**

## Decision-Support Tool for the Town of Shelburne B

Implementing the Town of Shelburne's sustainable vision can only occur incrementally through the individual and combined decisions of staff and council. The strategic questions below help decision-makers evaluate any action, project, or proposal against the Town's sustainability priorities.

### Vision Statement

Shelburne is a full-service community where a diverse population can live, learn, work and play while enjoying a peaceful and well-balanced quality of life. We welcome friends and guests to enjoy Shelburne's natural and historic beauty.

Name of Proposed Action Evaluated \_\_\_\_\_

### Sustainability Principles

Rating	Score	Comments
0	Unacceptable	
1	Poor	
2	Satisfactory	
3	Good	
4	Excellent	

### Population

The proposed action enhances residents' quality of life.		
The proposed action promotes residents' health and wellness.		
The proposed action raises awareness among residents of the Town's sustainability principles.		
The proposed action strengthens the identity of Shelburne as a sustainable community.		
The proposed action enhances residents' sense of place.*		
Total	/20	Population

\*Sense of Place: unique characteristics of a community that create authenticity and foster a belonging

### Municipal Operations and Infrastructure

	Score	Comments
The proposed action facilitates innovative and sustainable solutions to traditional problems.		
The proposed action encourages the development of active transportation infrastructure.		

The proposed action promotes energy efficiency and reduces municipal energy consumption or greenhouse gas emissions.		
The proposed action utilizes existing municipal resources, including infrastructure.		
The proposed action lowers capital expenses or operating costs.		
The proposed action respects the long-term community need and financial capacity of the Town.		
Total	/20	Municipal Operations and Infrastructure

**Economic Development**

	Score	Comments
The proposed action increases the municipal tax base.		
The proposed action provides an adequate return on investment (economic, environmental, sociocultural).		
The proposed action supports the local economy through investment in community assets.		
The proposed action encourages partnerships with organizations, businesses, or municipalities.		
The proposed action increases local entrepreneurship or employment.		
Total	/20	Economic Development

**Environment**

	Score	Comments
The proposed action reduces consumption of non-renewable energy and resources.		
The proposed action increases water quality and reduces its consumption and/or waste.		
The proposed action enhances the natural urban environment, including parks or open space.		
The proposed action mitigates or adapts Town assets to reduce climate change impacts.		
The proposed action improves stewardship of the Town's natural resources and protects sensitive environments.		
Total	/20	Environment



**Sociocultural Services**

	Score	Comments
The proposed action promotes local arts, culture, and/or heritage.		
The proposed action increases social capacity and encourages participation in municipal decision-making.		
The proposed action facilitates social interaction and cultural expression among residents.		
The proposed action promotes health, education, and/or public safety.		
The proposed action benefits residents and increases social equity.		
Total	/20	Sociocultural Services

**Matrix Total Score**

Total	/20	Population
Total	/20	Municipal Operations and Infrastructure
Total	/20	Environment
Total	/20	Economic Development
Total	/20	Sociocultural Services
Grand Total	/100	
Percent	%	

**Final Assessment**

Name of Proposed Action Evaluated \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluated by

Yes, action approved. Proceed with caution.

Approval pending. More information required.

Evaluated on

No, action not approved as proposed

## **Appendix III: ICSP Goals for the Town of Shelburne**

Town of Shelburne ICSP Goals

Population

Issue: Population Decline

Future Focus: Population

Stabilization

ICSP Goals: Population

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | Market and promote the Town's quality of life to target audiences.         |
| 2 | Support a quality of life valued by residents.                             |
| 3 | Ensure municipal initiatives are guided by the needs of current residents. |

Municipal Operations and

Infrastructure

Issue: Declining Capacity and

Resources

Future Focus: Effectively managing by respecting resource and capacity limits

ICSP Goals: Municipal Operations and  
Infrastructure

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| 4  | Respect the limitations of Town resources by understanding the current commercial and residential tax base to assess future resource capacity.                   |
| 5  | Manage land use and development in a manner that maximizes infrastructure efficiency, minimizes potential land use conflicts, and reflects the community vision. |
| 6  | Maintain and improve upon municipal operations and infrastructure in a manner that demonstrates good governance and leadership.                                  |
| 7  | Develop a Source Water Protection Plan.  |
| 8  | Develop a stronger understanding of the relationship between central water and groundwater resources in the Town.  |
| 9  | Become a leader in water conservation and educate residents on their role as water consumers and conservationists.   |
| 10 | Maintain a high quality, cost effective sanitary sewer service.  |
| 11 | Manage storm water in a safe and cost-effective manner.  |

Economic Development

Issue: Economic Decline

Future Focus: Capitalizing on core assets to diversify and strengthen the Town's economy

ICSP Goals: Economic  
Development

- 12 Local and regional businesses work cooperatively to enhance and promote services and regional economic assets.
- 13 Develop focused promotion of the Town's key economic assets.
- 14 Support efforts to investigate and pursue research and development of value-added options within primary resource sectors including fisheries, forestry, and mining.
- 15 Support and stimulate entrepreneurship.
- 16 Collaborate with business development entities and local business to examine the waste generated from existing businesses and re-envision this as new services or products.
- 17 Instigate and participate in a collaborative effort to mitigate conflicting interests and maximize opportunities for aqua-culturalists.
- 18 Develop a viable, active, well-maintained and well-used Port and Marine Terminal.
- 19 Support tourism operators to increase tourism ensuring a quality experience for all guests and the development of sustainable practices.

Environment

Issue: Environmental  
Degradation

Future Focus: Protection and consideration of the environment in decision-making

ICSP Goals: Environment

- 20 Partake in climate change adaptation case studies and pilot programs to assess and mitigate vulnerability as opportunities to do so arise.
- 21 Create a beautifully treed and landscaped community.
- 22 Become an active collaborator in efforts to designate, protect and promote ecosystem health on the Southwest Shore.
- 23 Explore opportunities to maintain and improve upon existing municipal buildings using sustainable building design.
- 24 Explore opportunities to become improve energy efficiency and energy conservation.
- 25 Develop a safe and efficient network for active transportation and transit in the Town.
- 26 Monitor opportunities resulting from changing electricity and energy distribution/markets.
- 27 Integrate district heating and cooling systems in conjunction with municipal infrastructure as opportunities to do so arise.

Sociocultural

Issue: Decline in Social Services

Future Focus: Protection of existing social services for Shelburne residents

ICSP Goals: Sociocultural  
Services

- 28 Residents enjoy a community that fosters social interaction and healthy lifestyles for all ages and abilities.
- 29 Work collaboratively to provide quality, accessible local health services that meet the primary needs of residents.
- 30 Work collaboratively to provide formal and non-formal educational services.
- 31 Enhance the built environment so it is safe, efficient, stable and visually appealing.
- 32 Integrate cultural infrastructure into other physical projects and initiatives.
- 33 Develop a creative community that demonstrates the importance of art and culture to a vibrant economy and community.
- 34 Develop viable, active, well-maintained and well-known Marina.
- 35 Shelburne intends to phase in free wireless internet service throughout the community.
- 36 Digital preservation of archives and artifacts.

## **Appendix IV: ICSP Actions for the Town of Shelburne**

Town of Shelburne ICSP  
Actions

ICSP Actions: Population		Priority Timeline	Responsible Party/Partnership
1	Work with RDA/Chamber to identify potential target audiences. (Target audiences identified through the ICSP process include the professional who can live anywhere as their business is not geographically tied, the entrepreneur looking for an improved quality of life, and the family seeking a more peaceful environment in which to grow).	Short-Medium	Rural Strategy Committee/Municipality of the District of Shelburne
2	Identify core Town of Shelburne quality of life/values which would attract respective audiences.	---	---
3	Explore possibility of partnering with RDA/Chamber to fund marketing/public relations firm to assist in developing the marketing/promotional material.	---	---
4	Deliver targeted marketing campaigns / promotions to identified audiences highlighting the characteristics that make Shelburne an attractive place to live, learn, work and play.	---	---
5	Based on the core community quality of life values identified in the ICSP, develop a list of sustainable indicators that contribute to Shelburne's quality of life.	---	---
6	Track progress on an annual basis against indicators.	---	---
7	Develop future municipal policies and programs to strengthen areas of weakness.	---	---
8	Undertake an annual public review of progress made on ICSP goals and actions and receive public input on overall direction of the ICSP.	---	---

ICSP Actions: Municipal Operations and Infrastructure		Priority Timeline	Responsible Party/Partnership
NEW	Succession Planning.	Short-Medium-Long	Council
9	Understand the historical effects of population decline and develop future revenue projections based on projected population to gain a deeper understanding of future capacity.	---	---
10	Seek additional means of revenue generation to assist in the reduction of its dependence on the property tax base.	Short-Medium-Long	Council/ Municipality of the District of Shelburne/ Lockport

11	Establish a protocol for subjecting all proposed municipal projects to a cost/benefit analysis which includes consideration of indirect costs (environmental/social/long-term capacity), life cycle assessment) as part of regular operations and investment decisions.	Short	Council/PAC Dalhousie Project
12	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects: Tax Reform Study.	Short-Medium-Long	Council/UNSM/Municipality of the District of Shelburne
13	Develop mapping illustrating the current inventory of residential, commercial, and industrial lots within the Town, and status of utility service (current / proposed central water, sanitary / storm sewer service).	Short-Medium	Public Works
14	Tailor the inventory for the development community to highlight potential locations for future development to facilitate development to meet the needs of seniors, young professionals and families, and students.	---	---
15	Identify Brownfield sites for redevelopment as key opportunity sites in the planning framework.	---	---
16	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects: Study and implement alternative transportation routing.	---	---
17	Review fee structures and update as appropriate.	---	---
18	Ensure the updated Capital Investment Plan is publicly available on the Town website.	---	---
19	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Develop a decision making framework for the evaluation and recording of the extent to which decisions advance ICSP goals.	---	---
20	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Provision of Land Use Planning Services: Expand upon a strategic alliance under a joint services board for the provision of skilled technical services (engineering, planning); update the MPS and current By-Law.	Short	Council/PAC/Municipal District of Shelburne
20	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Provision of Land Use Planning Services: Expand upon a strategic alliance under a joint services board for the provision of skilled technical services (engineering, planning); update the MPS and current By-Law.	Short-Medium	Council/Municipal District of Shelburne/Lockport
21	Explore possibility of membership with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.	---	---
22	Establish a municipal procurement policy to guide purchases of environmentally sustainable products and services.	---	---
23	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Develop and maintain electronic mapping for land use (Zoning and Future Land Use) and servicing infrastructure (Water, Sewer, Storm water).	---	---
24	Create and maintain Municipal website as the primary source for corporate and community information, and the conduit for communication between the Town and residents.	---	---



25	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Conduct a feasibility study for the development of an organics (compost) facility.	---	---
26		Short (October 2010)	Water Utility/PAC/Council
27	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Develop Source Water Protection Plan.	---	---
28	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Clean and paint water towers.	---	---
29	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Develop criteria for assessing the sustainability of proposed expansions to the water distribution system.	Short	Council/PAC Dalhousie Project Council
30	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Expand Water Distribution System.	Medium-Long	Council
31	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Groundwater Study.	---	---
32	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects: Initiate a water education and outreach program about well water health, well maintenance and community water conservation.	---	---
33	Explore the development of a phased plan to revise water utility charges to reflect usage and promote conservation.	Short	Clerk's Office/Council
34	Adopt and implement a water conservation program for municipal operations.	---	---
35	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Environmental risk assessment of sewage effluent.	Medium (2012)	Council/Public Works
36	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Develop and implement an overflow monitoring and reporting framework.	---	---
37	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Upgrade sewage treatment plant.	Medium (2012)	Council/Public Works
38	Encourage the collection of storm water on residential, commercial, and industrial properties through the promotion of rainwater collection barrels / tanks.	---	---
39	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Repair, upgrade and expand storm water infrastructure.	Short-Medium-Long	Nova Scotia Business Inc/Chamber/NS Power/Regional Development Agency
39	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Employ a consulting engineer to assess infiltration locations in the sanitary sewers.	---	---

ICSP Actions: Economic Development		Priority Timeline	Responsible Party/Partnership
------------------------------------	--	-------------------	-------------------------------

40	Partner with regional and local business groups and other municipal units (e.g., Municipality of the District of Shelburne) to identify and help pursue economic development opportunities based on making use of local natural, labour, and technical resources.	Short-Medium-Long	Nova Scotia Business Inc/Chamber/NS Power/Regional Development Agency
----	---	-------------------	---

41	Survey residents about local shopping habits and desires, and use this information to develop a long-term campaign to keep more dollars circulating within the Shelburne community. This campaign has to do more than promote available services, but must also identify basic products and services that residents are currently leaving Town for, and work with local businesses to investigate when accommodating such needs locally would be viable.	Medium	Chamber
42	Develop and deliver a campaign to buy local and promote needed services.	Short-Medium-Long	Retail Committee/Chamber
43	Developed focused marketing program to promote key economic assets. This could be done in conjunction with Action 4 and 40.	---	---
44	Work with RDA, Province and other interested Municipal Units to investigate and pursue research and development of value-added options within primary resource sectors including fisheries, forestry, and mining.	---	---
45	Conduct a gap analysis of business development services currently available to local entrepreneurs and civic leaders.	---	---
46	Disseminate results of gap analysis to local businesses, business development entities and stakeholders.	---	---
47	Use results of gap analysis to determine where there is missing support in the development of local business order to foster a stronger, more diverse economic base.	---	---
48	Work with Nova Business Inc. to promote payroll rebates for the attraction and retention of employment.	---	---
49	Work with the regional development authority, County of Shelburne and the province to hold a workshop with key business owners to explore opportunities in this goal area.	---	---
50	Identify and jointly promote/create incentive programs.	---	---
51	Work with the Department of Municipal Affairs, Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, County of Shelburne and local business to host a workshop to address core issues and determine next steps in addressing key issues.	---	---
52	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Research new technologies and materials for wharf upgrade and provision of associated services and amenities.	Long	Port Authority
53	Collaborate with stakeholders and economic development bodies to identify target audiences for the promotion of the Port of Shelburne and the Shelburne Marine Terminal Shelburne's Wharf. This could be done in conjunction with Action 4, 40 and 43.	Medium-Long	Port Authority
54	Pursue funding for Brownfield remediation and remediate the land expropriated from Irving in 2005.	Short-Medium	Port Authority Committee

55	Employ a Tourism Coordinator to ensure Shelburne's tourism efforts and operators are coordinated in the most cost-effective manner, resulting in promotional literature / messages being disseminated efficiently through transparent and collaborative efforts amongst tourism operators, regional tourism bodies, and the province.	Short (2009)	Municipal Units (5) of Discover Shelburne County
56	Develop policy and participate in research which enables and encourages collaborative sustainable tourism marketing efforts.	---	---

ICSP Actions: Environment		Priority Timeline	Responsible Party/Partnership
57	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Participate in research and/or land use planning pilots, case studies and/or training to assess and mitigate vulnerability to flood and erosion risk along the coast due to storm surge and sea level rise changes.	Short-Medium	Council/PAC/Province
58	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Identify vulnerable infrastructure and amenities along the shoreline and Include climate change adaptation best practices into the Town's Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-Law.	Short-Medium	Council/PAC/Province
59	Continue and enhance Town beautification efforts by creating / enhancing a landscape feature at all Town entrances and highway exits leading into Town.	---	---
60	Continue to apply for and participate in the Communities in Bloom program. Communities in Bloom provide an opportunity to showcase Shelburne's natural beauty, simultaneous to it historic charm. <a href="http://www.tians.org/sustainable/index.cfm?id=27">http://www.tians.org/sustainable/index.cfm?id=27</a>	---	---
61	Establish landscape design guidelines for public spaces that feature native plants, and when possible, represent the Town's heritage.	---	---
62	Establish within Town bylaw development guidelines for the protection of a property's existing trees and requirement for street line tree planting.	---	---
63	Monitor, support and participate in the activities of the Southwest Shore Biosphere Reserve.	---	---
64	Explore opportunities to conserve shoreline and protect public access to the shoreline within the land use bylaw and in partnership with other adjoining municipal units.	---	---
65	Inventory Municipal Buildings in need of repair and replacement.	Short	Civic Building Committee/Public Works
66	Explore opportunities in current grant programs to receive funding to replace/retrofit buildings.	Short-Medium	Council/Municipal District of Shelburne

67	Undertake needed roof repairs on civic buildings (Study structural integrity of Town Hall It is believed that the southeast corner of Town Hall is not structurally sound, posing a potential safety concern. As well, findings of such a study may warrant a move of Town Hall operations.)	---	---
68	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Integrate lower or non-carbon intensive water and space heating systems, and / or cooling systems into municipal buildings as opportunities to do so present themselves.	---	---
69	Participate in a collaborative effort to join the Partners for Climate Protection Program (PCP).	Short-Medium	Municipal District of Shelburne/ Lockport
70	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Undertake a cost-benefit analysis of waste transportation options.	---	---
71	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Establish and maintain marked and signed bikeway network throughout Town connecting residential streets with commercial areas, recreation facilities, public institutions, parks, harbor front access points, and recreation trails.	---	---
72	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Establish and maintain walkway / sidewalk on priority public streets in the Town (along main commercial streets and main corridors within the Historic Waterfront, extend the harbour-side walkway to the Osprey Arts Centre and Yacht Club.	---	---
73	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Participate in the development of local / regional networks to provide local / regional transit.	---	---
74	Enhance the network of marked and signed pedestrian crosswalks at roadway intersections near commercial areas, recreation facilities, public institutions, parks, harbor front access points, and recreation trails.	---	---
75	Explore opportunities for funding for development of trail network.	---	---
76	Monitor and evaluate opportunities for the municipal purchase of wholesale energy.	---	---
77	Integrate renewable energy into municipal infrastructure upgrades.	Medium-Long	Council/NS Power
78	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Undertake a solar suitability assessment and implement a deployment program.	---	---
79	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Support the required research and implementation of district heating and cooling systems through funding, policy and development bylaws for new or existing	---	---
ICSP Actions: Sociocultural		Priority Timeline	Responsible Party/Partnership
80	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Create and implement an open space plan / active living plan for the Town.	---	---

81	Enhance existing parks, including updating playgrounds and recreational venues.	---	---
82	Continue to participate as a funding partner in Community Programs.	---	---
83	Collaborate with the Municipality of the District of Shelburne and the Province for the enhancement and protection of local swimming beaches.	---	---
84	Continue to support the community-led Doctor Recruitment committee through its evolution of physician recruitment through to an advisory and supportive role on clinic improvements (upgrades or retrofits to existing facilities), continued physician recruitment needs, and necessary studies.	Short-Medium-Long	Position Recruitment Team/Council
85	Complete necessary planning, design, engineering and feasibility studies for the construction or retrofit of an existing building for a Town Clinic.		
86	Build and maintain a strategic alliance with the Roseway Hospital.	Short-Medium-Long	Municipality of the District of Shelburne/Position Recruitment Team
87	Continue to support, in partnership with the Province, Community Programs.	---	---
88	Maintain and enhance the Town's relationship with the Nova Scotia Community College to make best use, and to help promote, this community asset.	---	---
89	Continue to actively participate in the Police Advisory Board (being formed at the time of writing) and bring forward constituents concerns regarding safety and security.	---	---
90	Council will utilize information provided by the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities and other professional entities to inform decisions regarding sustainable street lighting, and will opt to integrate streetscape design criteria for lighting fixtures along main travel corridors.	---	---
91	Develop and implement a streetscape/community design plan, which illustrates and provides guidance for an expansion of Dock Street heritage site design features throughout Town, and specifically to Water and King Streets.	---	---
92	Pursue potential funding opportunities for the main street plan with ACOA.	Short-Medium	Council/Waterfront Development Committee/PAC
93	Promote and help to support the Osprey Arts Centre as a key destination for arts on the Southwest Shore.	---	---
94	Support the construction of a municipal building to house a long boat. Currently, a 30x40 building is needed to house a long boat. Collaboration with the Yacht Club is possible on this project, as they may want to make use of the building as well. Such a project, while adding to the property the Town may be responsible for, directly benefits a key cultural aspect of the community, and helps to sustain a traditional skill set.	---	---

95	Council will support collaborative initiatives where local artisans share studio space and other resources in a manner that contributes to the Town's creative economy.	---	---
96	Partner with the Shelburne County Museum to identify the role for and partake in the implementation of the Museum's Five Year Strategic Plan.	---	---
97	Gas Tax Funding-Eligible Projects Research new technologies and materials for marina enhancement and provision of services and amenities.	Medium-Long	Marina/Port Authority
98	Collaborate with Shelburne Harbour Yacht Club to promote the Marina and the Harbour as a sail race training centre.	---	---
99	Research the costs and benefits associated with the provision of a free wireless internet service throughout the community.	---	---
100	Work with SCA&GS to secure funding to support the digital archival and preservation of artifacts.	---	---