
Integrated Community Sustainability Plan



Chester Municipality Charts its Course

Prepared for: The Municipality of the District of Chester
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Institute for Planning and Design

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I Introduction

In September 2005 the Federal and Provincial governments entered into an agreement for the transfer of funds to municipalities across Canada derived from revenues obtained through the gas tax. The Municipality of the District of Chester has entered into a Municipal Funding Agreement with the Province of Nova Scotia that defines the terms and conditions for the disbursement of these funds to the Municipality. One of the conditions is the completion by the Municipality of an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) by 2010.

The Canada-Nova Scotia Gas Tax agreement defines an ICSP as: “a long-term plan, developed in consultation with community members, that provides direction for the community to realize sustainability objectives it has for the environmental, cultural, social and economic dimensions of its identity.”

When complete in 2009, this document will provide that plan and document the steps taken to arrive at the plan.

Beyond the formal requirement outlined above, there is also a moral requirement to act. For too long, our municipality, like so many in the western world, needs to become more sustainable and behave more responsibly towards our environment and the limited resources in the environment. This document will be the first step in a new direction.

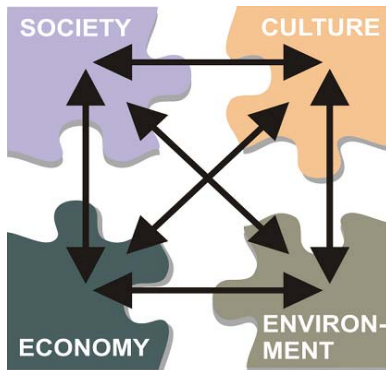


2 What is an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan?

In September 2007 the Department of Services Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations released a document titled “Integrated Community Sustainability Plans” which serves as a guide to the preparation of an ICSP. This document will conform with the requirements set out in that document.

The Province of Nova Scotia ICSP guidelines state, “Sustainable planning examines how people, businesses, and organizations can work together to improve the health of both the individual and the community, and to preserve the environment for future generations.” (p. 4)

The planning approach adopted for Chester attempts to take a fairly comprehensive approach to sustainability planning, since, as the ICSP guidelines also state, “the more comprehensive the sustainability plan, the more informed the management decisions and capital infrastructure investments made by communities will be.” (p. 4)



Key areas of sustainability to be addressed

The ICSP will set a new direction for the municipality. The four pillars of sustainability are cultural, environmental, social and economic. As shown in the accompanying diagram, these pillars can be viewed as pieces of a puzzle. The intent is to strike a balance between the demands of each pillar so that all of our efforts work together as a whole. This will not be an easy balance to strike, and the support of all residents, businesses and investors will be necessary for success.

3 The Process and Deliverables

The ICSP guidelines set out the requirement that a public process be followed in completing the sustainability plan.

Fundamental to any public consultation process is the premise that people should have a say in the decisions that affect their lives. When the success of the project depends heavily on the support of a well-informed and supportive public, this is most important.

The program design for the ICSP is intended to respond to the scope and complexities of the issues to be decided, the geographic diversity of the municipality, the range of interests at play, and the limitations of the program. The process therefore includes two levels of activities:

- Community consultations with local stakeholders
- Broadly-based consultation

In addition, much work involved the Steering Committee, listed in Section 4, to determine the objectives and develop initial vision and action plans prior to the broader public consultation process. Experience has demonstrated that the consultation process can be more valuable and less demanding of public time and commitment when undertaken in this manner.

As this study progressed, an information program was initiated that included a dedicated page on the Municipal web site and the distribution of a newsletter to each household in the Municipality in June. Interviews were also held with a variety of stakeholders to confirm local priorities. In late July, the first public meeting was held (more in Section 6) to discuss the draft Vision statement and to consider action plan options.

After release of an interim report in the fall of 2008 a series of public meetings was held throughout the

Municipality to discuss the plan in detail. After all comments were reviewed the planning team prepared the draft plan you are reading now. The intent now is to work with the Steering Committee to further refine the action plans, assign a budget, and develop a time line for implementation. The intention is to finalize the plan in the spring of 2009.



4 The Steering Committee and its Role

As result of informal discussions among Councillors, the Warden, and senior staff, the Planning Director wrote a memo to Council on 7 September recommending that Council appoint a Steering Committee and hire consultants to prepare an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan as required by the “Gas Tax Agreement”.

The Finance and Public Properties Committee of Council gave instructions to staff to move forward with these suggestions on 17 September. Staff contacted a number of individuals and organizations within the Municipality for suggestions about Steering Committee membership.

Council approved the Request for Proposals on 26 November, with instructions to advertise for consultants, and approved the terms of reference for the Committee on 13 December.

The Committee members and the interests they represent:

- **Joy Calkin** South Shore Health Authority Board member, extensive experience in health care, post-secondary education and management. CEO of international long term care private sector company. Steering Committee Chair.
- **Jim Barkhouse** Business owner and former MLA, recommended by the Village of Chester Tourism and Development Association.
- **Sharon Church-Cornelius** Council member for District 7, Chester West, family business in forestry.
- **Mary-Ellen Clancey** South Shore Regional School Board member, former teacher, school board member, recommended by Aspotogan Heritage Trust.
- **Roy Conrad** Business owner, recommended by Western Shore Improvement Association.

- **Dawn Elliott** Real estate agent, recommended by the New Ross Regional Development Society
- **Phil Ellwood** Manager of the Louisiana Pacific plant at East River, a major employer in the district
- **Marshal Hector** Business owner, Councillor for District I, Blandford - East River
- **Ben Wiper** Business owner; member, Chester Municipal Chamber of Commerce.
- **Allen Webber** Warden

Staff:

- **Geoff MacDonald**, Director of Planning
- **Darrell Hiltz**, CAO
- **Pam Myra**, Municipal Clerk
- **Cindy Hannaford**, Administrative Secretary

Institute for Planning and Design:

- **Jeff Ward** BDEP Delphi MRC
- **Maurice Lloyd** FCIP AtlanPlan
- **Glen Boone** MCIP



5 The Current State

This section will provide a summary of some of the key sustainability issues facing the community today. To begin, it is valuable to review some of the basic facts about the community. Here is a brief overview that incorporates material from Statistics Canada, the Nova Scotia Department of Finance (Community Counts) and other sources as indicated in the footnotes.

Communities of interest

The village of Chester is the commercial and service centre of the district. In addition, there are several other communities that account for the majority of residents in the municipality, as listed below in descending order of size.

Population by community

Community	2001 Pop	Notes
Western Shore	2,508	<i>Includes</i> Beech Hill, Gold River, Indian Point, Martins Point, Martins River, Western Shore.
Chester	2,344	<i>Includes</i> Chester, Chester Acres, Chester Downs, Commons, East Chester, Haddon Hill, Robinsons Corner, Squid Cove.
Chester Basin	2,033	<i>Includes</i> Borgels Point, Chester Basin, Chester Grant, Lower Grant Road, Marriotts Cove, Marvins Island, Middle River, Shaw Island.
Hubbards/ Blandford	1,840	<i>Includes</i> Aspotogan, Bayswater, Birchy Head, Blandford, East River, East River Point, Fox Point, Hubbards, Mill Cove, New Harbour, Northwest Cove, Southwest Cove, Backmans Head, The Lodge, Upper Blandford
New Ross	1,475	<i>Includes</i> Aldersville, Forties, Fraxville, Glengarry, Harriston, Lake Ramsay, Leville, Mill Road, New Ross, New Russell, Seffernsville
Windsor Road	505	<i>Includes</i> Canaan, Sherwood, Windsor Road.
Gold River IR 21	39	
Pennal IR 19	0	

Community definitions and data adapted from Nova Scotia Community counts, except the Reserves which shows data from Statistics Canada. The information for Western Shore may include part of Municipality of District of Lunenburg. The Aspotogan data includes an estimate of that part of Hubbards within the District of Chester.

In the Nova Scotia context, the Municipality is part of a collection of four contiguous counties (Lunenburg, Halifax, Kings and Hants) which together contain nearly 65 percent of the population in the province (520,000 people).

Changes over time

The Municipality of the District of Chester is the eastern portion of Lunenburg County. With an area of 1,120 square kilometres, it has a population of 10,740 (2006 census). The population has grown

modestly, as shown in the following table. The table also presents other indicators:

Changes in population, dwellings and employment

Census year	Population	Private Dwellings	Persons per Dwelling	Median age of the population (except where noted)	Total Employed (not necessarily in District)
1996	10,602	4,215	2.28	39.4*	4,655
2001	10,781	5,848	1.84	42.8	4,680
2006	10,741	6,161	1.74	46.5	5,310

* average age

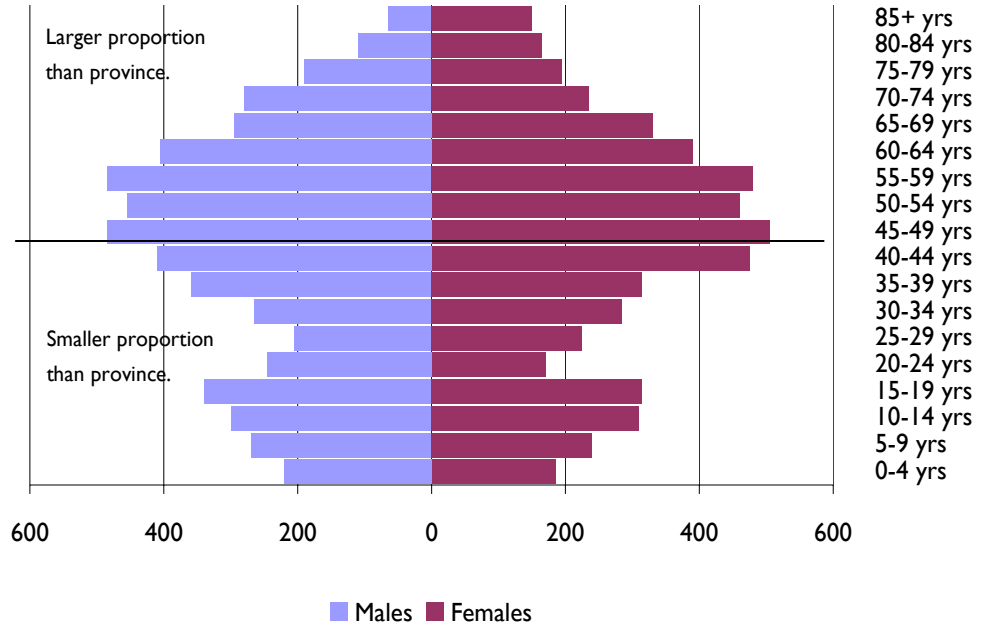
These numbers reveal that while there has been modest population growth the median age of the population has notably increased – the population is aging; meanwhile, the number of dwellings has increased by nearly half and the number of residents employed has also increased at a rate substantially faster than what might ordinarily be expected from the population change figures. Unusual as it might seem, this kind of change is similar to that observed across Canada, especially in those areas with rural populations or on the fringes of large urban centres (in our case, Halifax). Across Canada, the number of households has been increasing even when populations are stable or in decline. This phenomenon is explained by a decline in the average number of people in households, due to such factors as couples having fewer children, children leaving home at an earlier age, marriage breakdown, fewer multi-generational households, and older people living in their homes longer. The rising median age is explained by the smaller number of children being born per couple, greater longevity, and by the exodus of young workers for job opportunities elsewhere. Finally, the proportionally larger number of people employed would seem to be a function of the aging population, wherein there is a proportionally greater number of working age people than there was ten years ago.



The next graphic shows the age and sex distribution within the District. Compared to the province as a whole there is a greater proportion of people over the age of 45 and a smaller proportion younger than 45, which is reflected in the median age. The median

age in Nova Scotia is 41.8 compared to 46.5 in the District.

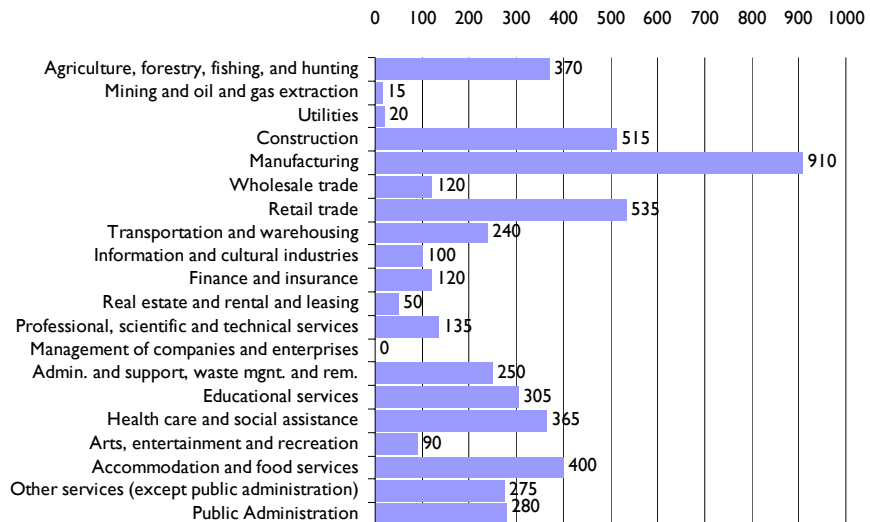
**District of Chester
2006**



Employment

According to Statistics Canada, the major areas of employment are in manufacturing construction and retail trades. The following graph illustrates all employment by category in 2006.

Labour Force by Industry - District of Chester
Total Labour force 5,085 (2001)



The major employers are Louisiana Pacific, GN Plastics and Shoreham Village.

Current conditions: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

We will begin with an appreciation of current conditions. At an internal meeting held on March 19 with the Steering Committee, called Setting the Course, participants were asked to provide their thought on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats* that face the Municipality of the District of Chester at this time in its development. The comments are summarized in the table below:

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy – taxes / stable / strong • Natural elements – Environment • Volunteerism • Character / rep • HRM proximity • Kings county proximity • Peoples Power / Wisdom / Intellectual muscle / Community focused business people • Ross Farm / Bonny Lea / Louisiana Pacific Plant / Atlantic Comp • Forest Resource / Raw Material / Tree Farm / Re-generate • Education • Healthcare • Marinas • Export • Transportation • Progressive / Adaptive • Single Municipal Government for District • Community input consultation • Fishery (Diving) • People / Skills? • Land mass • Public lands / Coastal Access 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Water Supply? ▪ Small population (effective of services / volunteer base) ▪ Aging Population ▪ Mix / diversity ▪ Affordable housing ▪ Delivery of volunteer programs / time ▪ VFD: Age / numbers is a large concern ▪ Solution development / Problem solving approaches / methods ▪ Human capital – skills / training “Grandfathering” “Qualifications” ▪ Link Community Services ▪ Seasonal Employment ▪ Doctor Shortage (retention / recruitment) ▪ Traditional Economic Models ▪ Fishery (see strengths / opportunity) Aquaculture ▪ Downloaded services (see threats) ▪ Alternate Energy ▪ Recreation facility (see opps) ▪ Lack of child care facilities ▪ Resistance to change ▪ Skills + training (ability to attract staff) ▪ Cost of maintaining public land ▪ Attraction of other areas (leakage of \$\$)
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aerospace ▪ Small related business ▪ Alternate energy ▪ Waste diversion ▪ Promoting immigration ▪ Improve & expand recreation ▪ Promote satellite economic development ▪ Surface water supply ▪ Work more closely with first nations ▪ Extended continuing care thru region ▪ Services to mentally challenged build on strength Bonny Lea Farm is an excellent model ▪ To promote heritage for tourism and immigrants 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRM (location) • Kings County (debatable) • Assessments – waterfront values + local can't get access • Pressure on volunteerism • Other governments too centralized here / controlled; services aren't; private sector • Dependency on volunteers / dangerous. VFD / need paid? Taxes • Municipal pressures to deliver services – people asking for a lot (example, potable water)

* This exercise is called a SWOT analysis for short.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public lake access (river) in New Ross ▪ Education ▪ Health Care ▪ Marinas (economic development) ▪ Land (Lots of it) Large individual ownership ▪ Shop Local campaign ▪ Develop year round employment ▪ Input to Province programs (PSOR) ▪ Develop agriculture 	
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Tourism sector facts
 South Shore (average 2000-2006)

- Direct and indirect jobs: 2,700
- Room nights sold per year: 196,600
- Room occupancy:
 - Year round: 42 %;
 - July and August (2007): 65 %
- Provincial Museum Attendance: 145,000

Tourism sector trends
 Tourism trends change like the weather. Here are some recent observations:

- Canadians tend to be visiting Caribbean and European locations more than in the past
- People are also tending to travel closer to home. This phenomenon has been labeled “staycations”
- Visitors are looking for unique world class offerings such as Lunenburg World Heritage Site and tidal bore rafting on the Shubenacadie
- Motorcycling is a growing vacation mode.

NS Tourism, Culture and Heritage

Issues and uncertainties

In 2009, there is more uncertainty than usual about what the future will bring, given unsettled political, environmental and economic conditions around the world. The following comments provide one description of the current state in the Municipality. Building on and expanding on the SWOT analysis, the following presents a review of some of the key sustainability issues and uncertainties that are facing the Municipality, as identified through our stakeholder interviews.

- The population is aging (see page 9) and the level of care needs is going up.
- In certain regulated services such as health care, staff remuneration is controlled at the provincial level and is often not adequate to address local needs or expectations. Staff training may not be keeping up with the changing needs.
- At the other end of the demographic ladder, school enrollment is in decline.
- In the area of subsidized housing, developers are not required to offer subsidized housing options; as a result, few do, though provincial support is available; affordable housing remains difficult to obtain.
- Volunteerism suffers from a difficulty in getting noticed by local media, from population decline, and volunteer burnout.
- In a related vein, service providers have seen a change in expectations among residents – they expect more to be provided. Meanwhile, federal support is difficult for volunteers to obtain.
- There are also no sustaining funds for volunteers, and museums and entertainment

Aquaculture and seaplants

There are approximately ten licensed aquaculture sites on Mahone Bay within the municipal bounds. Species produced are European and American oysters, blue mussels, sea scallops and salmonids. At Blandford there is a hatchery specializing in oysters, quahogs and surf clams. Seaplants are harvested at various locations. NS Fisheries and Aquaculture

The north Atlantic Ocean provides habitat for the bluefin tuna, an important and lucrative food fish. Recently, there has been a renewed interest in bluefin tuna farming (practiced in St. Margaret's Bay in the 1970s) which involves impounding tuna from 5 months to a year or more to increase their weight and value. Tuna farming is dependent on obtaining fish in the wild. The species is in decline and the practice has been declared unsustainable by the World Wildlife Fund. Others counter, however, that it can be sustainable when a means is found to rear the fish from larvae. There is active research in the area.

Various sources

venues are chronically seeking operating funds.

- In the tourism sector, there are remarkably few restaurants and local accommodations in Chester village. External events like SARS and 9/11 have affected tourism. There is a declining tourist business overall with a shrinking season – mainly from mid-July to the end of August.
- In the manufacturing sector, the cost of fuel has had a direct impact on transportation costs and getting goods to market. Also there are challenges with efficiency at the Port of Halifax for overseas shipments and limited capacities for North American rail shipments.
- In private business, competition and high brand advertising by national companies require strong efforts to maintain a local presence.

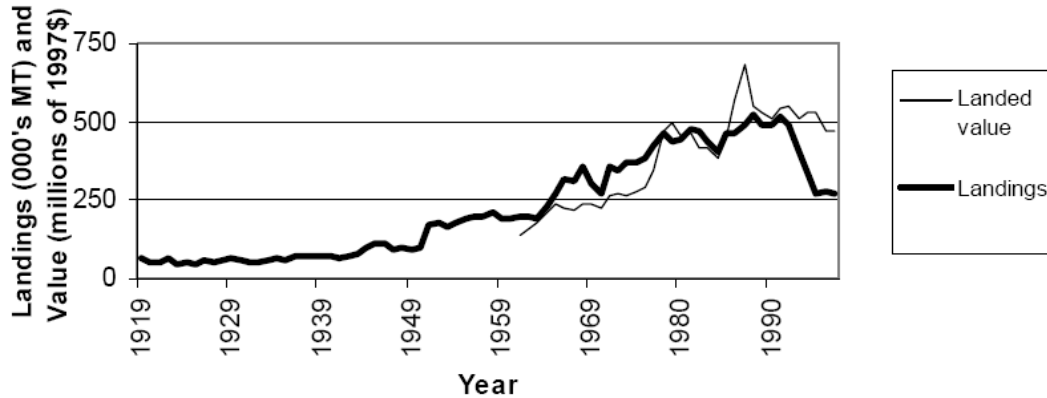
Against these specific issues, let us now offer an appreciation of the current and possible trends in economics and government as they affect our area.

Fisheries

The expansion and collapse of the various fishing industries in the 1990's has had an important impact on the South Shore - perhaps more strongly than anywhere else in the province - due to our traditional dependence on the sea. The crucial year in the Atlantic Canada fishing industry was 1992. That was the year that the cod moratorium was declared and the year that overall landings (all species) in Nova Scotia fell by half. GPI Atlantic reports¹ that the peak year of landings in Nova Scotia was 1988 when more than half a million tonnes came ashore. Before the end of the decade, that number had been halved, as shown in the following chart.

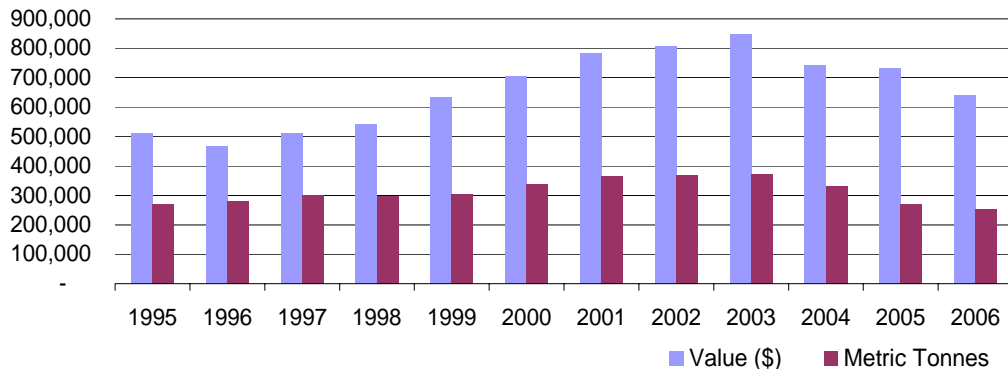
¹ Genuine Progress Index (GPI), Fisheries & Marine Environment Accounts, January 2002 (<http://www.gpiatlantic.org/pdf/fisheries/fisheries.pdf>)

Total NS Landings



The following chart shows the aftermath of that catastrophic time. It shows that over the last 12 years (most recent data), landings have varied between about 250,000 metric tonnes (2006) and 370,000 (2003). The value of these landings has risen and fallen more or less in tandem with the catches (from a low of 466,000 in 1996 to a high of 730,000 in 2005). But the ratio of landings to value has changed, increasing from a low of 1.7 in 1996 to a high of 2.7 in 2005. One cause of this change, apart from inflation, is that the catches we are taking today are of greater value, such as lobster and scallops, than in the past. In the process, more and more fishers are leaving the industry.

Fish Landings and Value in Nova Scotia 1995-2006



In the chart above, note the decline in landings and overall value since 2003. Is this a long term trend? Uncertainty lingers.

Island Conservation

Another aspect of fisheries is the quality of coastal habitat and environment. In support of habitat protection and conservation, the Municipality has been instrumental in securing from families four coastal islands in Mahone Bay to date. Over the past decade, several other local groups including the Mahone Islands Conservation Association (MICA), the Nova Scotia Nature Trust and the Nature Conservancy have also been working to obtain coastal islands for public benefit. Island properties are rare and coveted, so the cost of acquisition in the public interest can be very high. The MICA has proposed an islands conservation area but the only sure means of conservation is ownership.

Various sources

It is also of note that today, some of the fish landed at Nova Scotia wharves are not caught by Nova Scotians. Some fish is purchased from foreign trawlers, with pre-processing already completed aboard the ship. Only the final processing and packaging is done locally.

At the resource management level, local harvesters have complained that the federal department of Fisheries and Oceans has taken an ecosystems approach to fisheries (EAF). The concern is about keeping controlling incidental mortality and impacts on the benthic habitat.² Though logical, there are many uncertainties associated with this approach, which are amplified by its scale and ambition. The depth of habitat understanding must be far better than at present, and the resources to obtain this understanding may be too limited: this places the industry at risk.

On an optimistic note, new opportunities for diversification may lie in aquaculture. Since 1995, total aquaculture receipts have quadrupled from \$10 million to \$40 million. Employment has increased from 200 to 800 full time and part time jobs. This is still a very small proportion of the overall value of fishing to the Nova Scotia Economy. Within Chester District, there are several aquaculture operations, mostly in shellfish and one in salmonids. The Aquaculture Association of Nova Scotia recognized the need to introduce an environmental monitoring program for its operations. The province subsequently developed this program and it has been in place since 2003.

Forestry

The possible collapse of the North American newsprint industry is also of concern in South Shore Nova Scotia. The Bowater Mersey Paper mill in Brooklyn has been an important employer since 1929, maintaining a stable, well-paid work force in the Liverpool area and throughout the region.³ Partly

² Robert O'Boyle and Tana Worcester, "Eastern Canada – Ecosystem approach to fisheries in DFO Maritimes Region," PICES Sci. Rep. No. 33, December 2006.

³ The company saw about a ten percent reduction in its unionized work force in October 2007. It produces 700 tonnes of newsprint per day. Now part of the Abitibi-Bowater organization, in November the plant was

owned by the *Washington Post*, the mill is dependent on the health of the newspaper industry. This industry has seen troubling times in the past decade, largely fuelled by the increase in the number of offshore producers and the rise of the Internet. There have been significant declines in advertising revenues at many newspapers as younger readers – those most targeted by advertisers – now tend to get their news via the Internet.⁴ According to the Newsprint Producers Association, per capita demand for newsprint in North America fell by 16.3 percent between 1975 and 2005.⁵ The business is said to be mature, with little growth anticipated in the long term. Another threat to the newsprint business is the increasing availability of low cost product from foreign suppliers. Chinese capacity has doubled since 2000, while North American capacity fell by 20 percent over the same period.⁶ The aging Abitibi-Bowater mill is less efficient than modern mills. The prognosis is worrisome.

Hardwood supplies are under-exploited in Nova Scotia, and opportunities for maple syrup production or hardwood products may exist. Technological advances are also seen in the production of cellulosic ethanol from wood chips and other non-food sources. There is at least one proponent in Nova Scotia looking at the potential of obtaining oil from wood waste.

the subject of a major company review, which it survived. As it is partly owned by the *Washington Post*, it continued to operate after Bowater filed for bankruptcy protection in April 2009.

⁴ One recent indicator was the announcement in February 2008 that the *New York Times* would be laying off a hundred newsroom employees within the next few months; *The Chicago Tribune* also encountered financial difficulties, filing for bankruptcy protection in December, 2008. Meanwhile, the prognosis remains poor for newspapers in general, as February 2009 saw several major US dailies declare bankruptcy or seek creditor protection.

⁵ Newsprint Producers Association, “Overview of the Newsprint Industry” (http://www.pppc.org/en/2_0/2_2.html)

⁶ CIBC World Markets Equity Research Update: World Newsprint Market, April 20, 2006 (<http://www.cpbis.gatech.edu/resources/industryreports/CIBC/060420%20CIBC%20-%20worldnewsprint.pdf>) It should also be noted that while foreign newsprint is making small gains in North America, it represents, so far, a very small portion of a shrinking market.

Transportation

Members of the steering committee have pointed out the economic importance of our highways. Several of our larger businesses and employers have many employees who live outside the Municipality. Many have more than one job and may live in between their places of work. So, given its position between the large urban centre of Halifax and the strong service centres of Bridgewater and the Valley, transportation is a key factor in the local economy of Chester. The construction of Highway 103 has had and will continue to have an important impact on the District. Indeed, it could be argued that the presence of the highway has more influence on development patterns than municipal planning. So the uncertainty regarding the district tends to centre on the possible expansion of the facility: will twinning of the highway to Tantallon create additional impacts on our area? What about twinning to Hubbards, which is currently under consideration? And let's not overlook the active transportation potential of the rail line.

Rural suburban development

The expansion of residential development surrounding Halifax could have significant, long term impacts in the district. To date, rural suburban expansion in Chester has been incremental. As a result, the costs to the community may not be noted until they become a problem. Low density developments are by their nature virtually impossible to service by conventional public utilities such as transit, sewer and water. History has shown that residents demand more services over time. Low density residential areas also present costs to the community that are not reflected in the land cost and that may not be recoverable via taxes. Among others, these costs include infrastructure maintenance, expansion and renewal, fire service, school expansion, and parks.

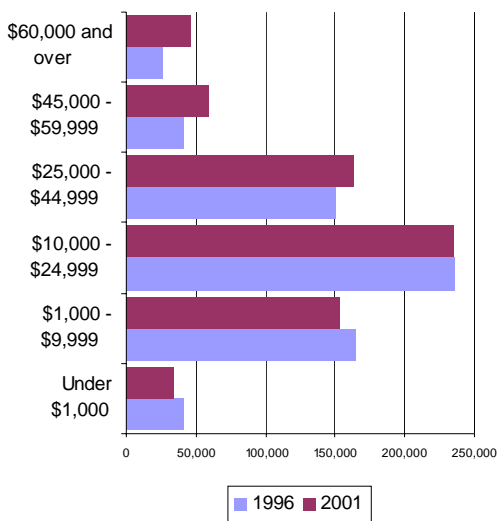
The HRM has implemented the Regional Planning Strategy which has as its aim the restriction of new development to urban, suburban and rural centres. Large lot rural development, which was widespread in the municipality for the past two decades, is expected to be curtailed as approved lots are

gradually purchased by new home buyers. The threat that jurisdictions on the far side of the HRM boundary perceive, however, is the same type of development could jump across the boundary when the present supply of lots is taken up.

It was recently noted in the United States that with the cost of commuting rising with fuel costs, the market had softened for housing within rural suburban developments beyond a 40-mile drive from the workplace.⁷ If user costs continue high, this “virtual barrier” could limit the spread of suburban development in the district.

People in rural areas tend to be highly dependent on private vehicles to get around. Over time, other options may become available for some people. For example, the HRM Regional Plan has identified Hubbards as a rural growth centre to eventually be serviced by rural transit. Bridgewater, Lunenburg, Mahone and the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg have also commissioned (2009) a study of rural transit options for their area. Initiatives such as these may one day present an opportunity for transit in our own municipality. Given this potential, thought should be given to encouraging forms of development that take advantage of transit and walking.

The growing gap between rich and poor
Nova Scotia 1996-2001



The Income Gap

The gradual separation of the population into rich and poor with a stagnant middle class developing throughout the Province (see graph). Though localized data such as this is not readily available, this disparity is clearly notable in the Municipality, with expensive summer houses (both new and old), retired business people, and homes reclaimed from abandoned family properties. Moderately priced homes are scarce in the district.

There have also been cultural changes caused by the demographic makeup of local communities. As older

⁷ US National Public Radio, “Home Prices Drop Most in Areas with Long Commute” April 21, 2008 (<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=89803663>)

people die and younger people move away, old traditions are sometimes lost.

A further measure of income disparity is available when considering government transfer payments. In the Municipality, the amount of government transfers as a percentage of total income is 17.2 percent, which is slightly higher than the provincial average of 15.1 percent. Over the past ten years or so the rate of unemployment has tended to be lower in Chester than Nova Scotia as a whole but the median income has also been lower. A recent report by the Nova Scotia Minimum Wage Review Committee (January 27, 2009) indicated that the number of employees working for minimum wage had increased in recent years.

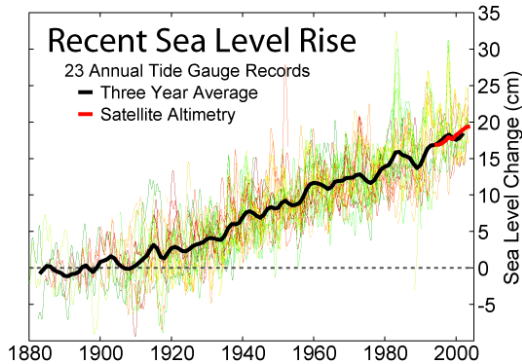
Cultural change is also influenced by the current taxation regime. It has been observed that increased assessments for waterfront property means some long-time residents can no longer afford to live in their homes. This can mean a shift in the makeup of communities. Municipal government has been forced to shift or add priorities since the acceleration of provincial government downloading began in 1996. There is uncertainty as to how much further downloading will occur and how the municipal government will fund the provision of new services.

We should not forget another aspect of wages and changes in population. Are wages the sole reason for migration? How is it possible to retain or lure back young people and how do we attract newcomers of all ages?

Recognition of these kinds of factors will be of assistance as we consider options to address sustainability.

A Threatened Coastal Zone

Tide gauges indicate that the sea level in the local area has risen 35 centimetres between 1896 and 1990 (based on data collected in Halifax). It is believed that most of this change was the result of local movement in the Earth's crust. However, it is believed that contraction of the polar icecaps is new



a factor that is accelerating the rate of increase in sea level rise. At present, there is considerable debate in the scientific community about how much acceleration has occurred and how high the sea level could rise. In a report to Council by Municipal staff⁸ citing reliable data and research, it was concluded that the total rise in relative sea level locally over the next one hundred years could reasonably be predicted to be in the range of 55 to 95 centimetres (22 inches to 37 inches) considering the combined effect of crustal submergence and melting icecap. As shown in the graph at left, these changes have been gradual but there is evidence that they are happening at an accelerated pace.⁹ North America may be more vulnerable than other parts of the world due to variable distribution.¹⁰ While science debates the mechanics and magnitude of impacts, what remains certain is that change will occur and the risk to coastal areas is real. A higher sea level could have significant impacts on vulnerable coastal systems including estuaries and wetlands, lead to accelerated coastal erosion, more storm surge flooding, and possibly impact groundwater salinity. Thus, forward thinking communities will take action to acknowledge these changes and plan for such changes. Steps should take the form of efforts to become more adaptable to change. The Province of Nova Scotia recently released an action plan on climate change which offers guidance. It will also eventually help fund municipal efforts.¹¹

⁸ Geoff MacDonald, Municipality of the District of Chester Planning Department, "Report on Sea Level Rise," 16 October 2007

⁹ This graph was obtained as a public domain image from Wikipedia. It shows the change in annually averaged sea level at 23 geologically stable tide gauge sites around the world as selected and presented by Bruce C. Douglas in "Global Sea Rise: A Redetermination". *Surveys in Geophysics* 18: 279–292 (1997).

¹⁰ CTV News, *Ice shelf collapse could shift axis of Earth, study says*, February 5, 2009

¹¹ Government of Nova Scotia, *Toward a Greener Future: Nova Scotia's Climate Change Action Plan*, January 2009. A follow-up Sustainable Coastal Development Strategy will appear by 2010 and a provincial climate change adaptation fund is expected to be in place by 2013.

6 The Vision

A Vision for a Sustainable Municipality

In March 2008, the Steering Committee members prepared a draft Vision for a sustainable municipality. The Vision describes a preferred future - not where the Municipality is heading. The draft was based on comments received from an on-line survey completed by members of the Steering Committee and statements made during one-on-one interviews with stakeholders. It was discussed at the July 28 public meeting, and later at community meetings in the fall of 2008. Much constructive feedback led to the Vision statement you can read below.

WE ENVISION A MUNICIPALITY TWENTY YEARS FROM NOW that is stable and diverse. Our emphasis is on fiscal responsibility, life long learning, mobility, and a resilient economy. Development has been controlled and is sustainable, while respecting the environment, our heritage and traditional lifestyles. Young people are staying, former residents are returning, and the number of new residents has increased. Development of community facilities and services, including those for seniors, is keeping pace with population change. Our recreation assets and our education system are superb. We have worked to protect the coast and environmentally sensitive areas. We are nationally recognized as a model for healthy communities. Partnerships between governments, the private sector, and community groups are critical to our success.

This statement can be compared with the original version shown in Appendix A. The differences include a stronger emphasis on education, a more inclusive statement about who we hope will be living here, and a more definitive statement about development control. What has not changed is a continual striving for excellence through partnerships and focused community energy, and the fulfilling lives we all hope to lead.

An examination of the Vision along with an understanding of the current state provides insight into the strategic initiatives (gaps) that must be addressed if the Vision is to be attained.

The strategic initiatives, discussed in the next chapter, are supported by strategic action plans presented in Chapter 11 that will link to logistical plans through the budgeting process at all levels of government as well as through actions by the private sector and non-government organizations.



7 Closing the Gaps

Having agreed on an initial Vision statement and understanding it is subject to change, the I/FPD developed a list of challenges, or Gaps, as we call them, between the current state and the desired future (the Vision). The items in this list were classified under one or more of the four pillars of sustainability, environmental, cultural, social or economic. After a discussion of the gaps, each Steering Committee member was asked to select the most important gap within each pillar. The Steering Committee identified the top three gaps were under each pillar – those thought to be most important to develop as action plans. Following is the list of candidate Gaps. The Gaps highlighted in **bold** were brought forward.

GAP ANALYSIS - ENVIRONMENT	
1	Environmental changes (the way we deal with the environment) will be too slow
2	Water supply areas need to be identified and protected
3	A need for central services such as water and sewer
4	Need a plan to deal with sprawl
5	Protect coastline and environmentally sensitive areas
6	Identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas
7	Motivate public opinion to support the ideas
8	Ability to negotiate

GAP ANALYSIS - SOCIAL	
1	Low cost housing program (affordable housing)
2	Accessible health care/appropriate primary health care
3	Flow of information between volunteer groups
4	Need for accessible and managed information regarding health, immigration, etc.
5	Need to re-educate staff, employers, etc.

6	Motivate public opinion to support the ideas
7	Making eco-friendly lifestyle affordable

	GAP ANALYSIS - CULTURE
1	Appropriate space for groups
2	Program to retain youth and attract newcomers
3	Communication between communities
4	Motivate public opinion to support the ideas
5	Environmental scan demand and react quickly

	GAP ANALYSIS - ECONOMY
1	Need to create year round employment opportunities
2	Need to re-educate staff, employers, etc.
3	Need for low cost housing program (affordable housing)
4	Accessible health care/appropriate primary health care
5	Need to attract “knowledge” interests in the Municipality that appeal to younger people
6	Lack of info on how to start a new business - help in planning
7	Need to find other sources of funding
8	The divide between summer residents and year round residents
9	Motivate public opinion to support the ideas
10	Energy Sources (promote alternatives)



Naturally, some of the Gaps highlighted above changed as we discussed priorities with members of the public. The changes and the process leading up to them are described in Chapter 8.

8 Meeting the Public: A Summary What We Heard

A series of consultations was held in 2008 in support of the development of this Sustainability Plan.

Stakeholder Meetings

Prior to the public meetings, more than twenty one-on-one stakeholder interviews were completed throughout the Municipality early in the planning process. These helped inform the public process which began later.

General Meeting

The first major public meeting took place from 7:00 to 9:30 pm on July 30th, 2008 at the Forest Heights Community School. Participants from across the Municipality were encouraged to attend through advertising and personal contact. Although it was a beautiful summer evening an estimated 80 people attended in addition to the Steering Committee Members, an indication of the high level of public interest.

The meeting opened with a welcome by Warden Allen Webber who explained the purpose of the meeting and the hoped for results.

The video entitled “The Girl Who Silenced the World at the United Nations for 5 Minutes” was shown next. This is a video showing Severn Suzuki (daughter of Dr. David Suzuki) making a presentation on sustainability concerns to a United Nations Conference in Brazil in 1992. Ms. Severn represented “ECO – the Environmental Children’s Organization,” a group of 9 to 13 year old girls and boys concerned about what is happening to the world’s physical environment along with all the implications for the future of the world. A very powerful presentation!¹²

The keynote speaker was Clare Levin, Executive Director of the Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative. As taken from its website, “the ACSI is a collaborative project designed to build capacity and

¹² This video is available for viewing on YouTube for readers interested in seeing it themselves.

momentum around sustainability in Atlantic Canada using The Natural Step framework as a guide. It was developed by a grass-roots network of municipalities, businesses and NGOs in Atlantic Canada in order to better understand the challenges and opportunities of sustainability and to move the region toward sustainable solutions. United by a common vision of a sustainable Atlantic Canada — and a common commitment to action — these organizations want to engage other communities, other businesses, and other levels of government to create a broad-based network that acts as a tipping point for greater sustainability in the region.”

Clare outlined the natural step process and, in addition, suggested some practical ways in which individuals could, in their day to day life, contribute to advancing sustainable development. The Natural Step process involves building an awareness of the issues, establishing a baseline describing the current state in the community or region, preparing a compelling vision, and “backcasting” to identify the steps that need to be taken to move from the current state to the state described in the vision.

The planning process being used by the Steering Committee is virtually identical to the Natural Step Process with the addition of Scenario Planning as a means of testing for risk.

Prior to the meeting, the Steering Committee had prepared a draft Vision to put forward for discussion purposes. A Vision is a preferred future state and not a projection based on current trends and circumstances. The first draft of the Vision, prepared by the consultants, was based on input from twenty-one stakeholders who were asked, among other things, to provide words that expressed their Vision of the Municipality twenty years from now. The Steering Committee reviewed and enhanced the draft.

Maurice Lloyd and Jeff Ward of the Institute for Planning and Design, consultants to the Steering Committee, then presented the enhanced draft to the participants at the public meeting and opened up the session for comment. A list of detailed comments

is included in “Appendix B”. In summary, comments ranged from “the Vision is a good start but could be tweaked a bit” to concerns about lack of recognition of the importance of education, need for a better word than growth or at least a better description of growth, enrichment through the use of words like balance, opportunity, beauty and design, social interaction, communication, and comments on carbon neutral. The Steering Committee took these and other comments into consideration in reworking the Vision. The Chair of the Steering Committee stated that the draft Vision was a work in progress and that the comments received were appreciated.

The consultants next led a brief discussion with respect to the four pillars of sustainability. The four pillars are: the economic base; the natural environment; the social structure; and the cultural milieu.



Credit: chesterns.ca

Prior to the meeting, the Steering Committee developed a list of goals around the pillars that, combined with appropriate action plans,

would move the Municipality towards achieving the draft Vision. These were explained to the participants at the meeting as being preliminary and open to discussion and change subject to their input. That was the purpose of the meeting.

Participants were then divided at random into four groups based on the pillars. The four groups went to separate corners of the room and an open discussion was encouraged with members of the Steering Committee acting as facilitators and/or recorders. The output from the discussions, taken from the flip charts used by the recorders and supplemented by comments from the facilitators, as well as subsequent

inputs received by the Steering Committee by mail or E-mail, is included in Appendix B.

This output was used by the consultants to make changes to the goals (the general action needed to achieve the stated Vision) and to prepare the preliminary drafts of the action plans outlining the steps to be followed in reaching the goals and the Vision. The preliminary action plans, presented for discussion, are included later in this report.

Community Meetings

A total of seven public meetings was scheduled by the Steering Committee. A meeting with students at Forest Heights community School was also held later in the process. Six of the public meetings were attended and all of these saw lively, thoughtful input from participants. The meetings were conducted by members of the Steering Committee. During the meetings participants were asked to identify initiatives focused around the four pillars of sustainability, namely the economy, the physical environment, the social environment, and the cultural environment. Participants were then asked to rank the priorities that had been identified. This chapter draws out the ideas that scored highly at the meetings. It also provides a brief assessment prepared by the consultants. The full report and analysis is attached as Appendix C.

ECONOMY

Encourage the development of a transportation system to support change.

There were comments on the transportation system under all of the pillars. They have been grouped here in the economic pillar. The comments emphasized the need for alternate modes of transportation within communities, between communities, and to Halifax and Bridgewater. All modes of transportation were seen as needed to be considered including foot and bicycles, buses, individual automobiles, and cooperative methods such as carpooling.

The above comments deal with the demand side of the equation. Other comments remarked on the need for “concentration of housing and recreation development to reduce transportation” demand. This comment ties into other considerations with respect to the need to create self-sufficient communities.

Create year-round employment opportunities with a focus on knowledge-based and traditional industries and environmentally related opportunities¹³

There is strong support for focusing on renewable energy opportunities such as tidal, solar, wind, geothermal. At the same time, support should not be



Facilitating a small-group discussion.

neglected for traditional economic initiatives including forestry, the fishery, and tourism perhaps using new approaches. There was limited comment on the knowledge-based sector but this may reflect a lack of understanding as to how this sector could be developed.

Offer program support for existing and new businesses

There was interest in this initiative and some of the comments included above are

relevant here. Suggested programs include low interest loans, skill development programs, incentives to purchase local.

ENVIRONMENT

Identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas and water supply areas

¹³ This has been revised from “Create year-round employment opportunities with a focus on knowledge based industries and alternative energy sources.”

Initiate a community-based planning process with the objective of developing self-sufficient mixed-use communities

Protect coastline and lakeshore access¹⁴

These priorities have been grouped for discussion purposes. Overall there is strong support for all three of these priorities and they are very much linked together. The recommended approach is to plan on a watershed basis; the first step would be to conduct an environmental assessment of the entire municipality with specific actions arising from that planning process. The environmental assessment should include information on wetlands, lake and groundwater quality, the health of marine life, the built environment and the identification of potential water resource areas, the need for public access, recreational opportunities, documentation of the options for protecting environmentally sensitive areas, water resources, and lake and coastal access by the public.



Sign observed in New Ross

While this data gathering effort is in process create a citizens' water quality monitoring group.

SOCIAL

Encourage the development of a healthy community

There is recognition in the comments that a "healthy community" means more

than just having health care. Preventative measures are as important as curative measures. A healthy community provides opportunity for all its citizens to develop to their fullest capacity, and this is reflected in the comments.

¹⁴ These have been revised from "Identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas," "Protect coastline and lakeshore access," and "Identify and protect water supply areas."

Comments included:

- Gap in Home Care Programs, system supposedly in place but due to staffing is unable to fulfill needs; the need for resources for families (mental health and addictions); primary health care – wellness/health clinics; encourage more doctors/medical professionals to come here (recruit and other incentives); reliable medical care (nurse practitioners, medical centres) increased affordable recreational facilities (non-competitive and competitive) for seniors and retired people, youth and families; develop programs for youth to become engaged in the community.

Support the provision of affordable housing

- There is agreement that affordable housing is necessary and some suggestions were offered as to how this might come about. The need is for housing from the beginning to the end of life and for all the stages and needs in between.

Make eco-friendly lifestyles practical for residents

- There is general agreement with this priority but some uncertainty as to how to achieve it. There was some consensus that a “buy local” campaign should be launched with one possibility being development of another farmer’s market. There are already markets at New Ross and Hubbards. Education was also seen as being important, as was the development of tools designed to encourage adapting to local ways and conditions.

CULTURE

Develop programs and services attractive to youth and families¹⁵

There were no comments in support of an aggressive welcoming program as stated in the Vision. Rather, the suggested approach seems to be to make the community very attractive to all citizens, especially youth, and thus retain them in the community or draw them into the community. Programs and/or projects recommended include: affordable recreational activities for seniors and retired people, youth and families; enhance and promote existing recreational facilities and programs; and create and encourage a sense of ownership for youth. There may be a need to rethink this part of the Vision and, if desired, define a welcoming program in the action plan.

Improve communications between communities and beyond

There is a feeling that that there is room to improve the interaction between communities. If effectively carried out the result could be that “the sum of the parts is greater than the whole” to the benefit of the entire Municipality. Some recommended solutions include: connect people with common interests; more community events to get people together; community calendar for annual events; emphasize assets of the community – lifestyle, friendly community, place to escape.

Encourage and support heritage and the arts

There is strong support and agreement for this priority. Heritage and the arts are seen as being a major contributor to the economy and an opportunity to be exploited. General comments recommended that the process of developing and expanding the arts and heritage sector should begin with a focus on current strengths such as the Chester Playhouse and the Lido plus the many

¹⁵ This was revised from “Attract youth and new residents via concerted programs”

community events. The first step is to undertake an inventory of the community's assets and events and make these known to residents and visitors. Physical facilities should follow such as a Municipal Culture and Heritage Centre and a Municipal Museum. The Centre would provide a venue for local artists as well as promote and coordinate events and collect and catalogue material. The Museum would showcase farming, fishing, lumbering, and boatbuilding. These efforts were seen as a means of promoting year-around activities.

Additional Community Planning Considerations

There is a growing recognition that the Municipality is coming under development pressure because of its attractiveness and its proximity to HRM. The way to achieve many of the priorities is through a review of the Municipal Planning Strategy and related by-laws. In addition to regulation, positive initiatives are also required such as identifying growth centers and providing the supporting infrastructure.

Listening to Youth

On February 20, 2009, forty students from Forest Heights Community School participated in the consultation program. The meeting was spearheaded by Ben Wiper, a member of the Steering Committee, and supported by Municipal staff. As with the community meetings, the students were asked to identify initiatives important to them based on the four pillars of sustainability, namely the economy, the physical environment, the social environment, and the cultural environment. The students were divided into four groups with each group addressing all of the priorities. The consultant was then asked to examine the recorded output and identify overall priorities. The overall results of the analysis are included in Appendix D and a summary is provided below.

ECONOMY

Two main economic priorities were identified by the students – jobs and energy self-sufficiency – together with a number of other initiatives they suggested:

Jobs Opportunities were seen in tourism, the organic food market, a business park for diverse enterprises, and in manufacturing. The participants expressed a strong desire to have an opportunity to remain in the Municipality after graduation. There was also an emphasis on the softer side of job placement with expanded personnel resources to help graduates find jobs. More on this under social priorities.

Energy Self Sufficiency There was a feeling that initiatives should be taken to make the Municipality and the communities more self-sufficient with respect to energy. Suggestions included generating power from renewable resources and making communities more independent of imported power through development of small scale wind, water, and solar facilities.

Other Economic Initiatives There was a number of other economic initiatives identified that illustrate the interaction between the pillars. The students felt that people should be encouraged to remain in the communities and newcomers should be encouraged to move to the Municipality. They saw transportation as being important to the economy as well as to overall community development. Higher density centres were also seen as important in developing energy self-sufficiency and social aspects such as implementing affordable housing. Development of the cultural sector would provide an opportunity to develop local talent, they said.

ENVIRONMENT

The students had a long list of priorities under the environmental pillar. These included:

Transportation The main focus here was on public transit including commuter buses to Halifax. The

need for inter-community public transit within the Municipality was also stressed.

Waste Resources There was a call for a reduction in the use of plastic bags with, perhaps, an overall ban. There was a feeling that more could be done with recycling and that this should be accompanied by stricter enforcement of existing regulations. The manufacturing sector should be encouraged to use natural products and be rewarded for doing so by receiving tax deductions.

Forestry Clear cutting practices were viewed negatively, and the youth recommended limits or a ban. In any event, harvested areas should be replanted and the amount of protected forest land should be increased. Part of this latter initiative could be tied in to preserving access to coastal areas and protecting water supply areas.

Other Initiatives Other initiatives not ranked as highly but seen as important nevertheless, include developing alternate energy sources (discussed in the economic pillar) and encouraging family and community garden plots. There was also a suggestion that wildlife should be protected and that, perhaps, there was a need for a “Noah’s Ark” approach to gathering and preserving some plant species and wildlife.

SOCIAL

Jobs As with the economic pillar there was a strong message that jobs were the top priority. The words used to describe the preferred future were: “everyone has access to jobs; access to quality jobs/well paying; well paid jobs, variety, benefits, healthcare and satisfaction; jobs that are environmentally friendly and provide some good and make you proud; jobs that provide security and that are continuous”.

Community Support Parallel with the need for jobs was a need for community support including access to good medical facilities and health care in general, the need to develop affordable housing, and

the opportunity to acquire a quality education. Affordable child care with high standards and well trained staff was also seen as important.

Energy The need for the development of renewable energy sources was seen as a social issue as well as being important to the environment.

CULTURAL

Active Lifestyle There was a strong statement that children needed to be more involved in more active lifestyles including cultural events, physical activities, affordable recreation, education in and access to fine arts, and more community events including festivals and pot-luck suppers.

Multiculturalism The students “want to encourage more multiculturalism and invite people from different cultures”. The means for doing this included cultural festivals, celebrating the history of the area through further development of museums, and generally exposure to more cultural activities.

Conclusion

Overall, the priorities of the students reflected the same priorities as those obtained from the consultations with the adult community with perhaps a greater emphasis on the need for jobs and the development of alternate energy resources. The students understood the interaction between the pillars.



9 Senior Staff Initiatives

Introduction

At a meeting on December 11, 2008, the Chief Administrative Officer and Department Heads (Senior Staff) developed a “long list” of initiatives to be pursued under the four pillars of “social, environmental, cultural, and economic” as required within the ICSP process. This was initially an unrestrained process designed without any attempt to prioritize the list. These were seen as initiatives necessary to be undertaken if the Vision was to be realized. This same senior group met a few weeks later and the consultant led them through a prioritization process designed to reduce the “long list” to a manageable “short list”. We then prepared a report on the process for review and modification by participants. The entire report, including the “long List” is included in Appendix D.

Top ten priorities

The following are the top ten (10) initiatives that emerged from the process outlined above. The following list indicates the pillar under which the initiative was placed.

1. Economy – Build communities that people want to live in (sense of community). Be careful of tradeoffs (no Wal-Mart). First decide on what kind of community you want to create.
2. Culture - Identify key features within the Municipality and concentrate on those. Promote natural physical features (obtain title where possible).
3. Culture - Remember that 50% of Nova Scotia’s population is within 100 km of Chester Municipality.¹⁶ How can this be exploited?
4. Environment - Important to protect environmentally sensitive areas plus the water resource areas. Need better tools. Push the Province to get involved and provide better tools.

¹⁶ See Section 5 which notes the four contiguous counties of Lunenburg, Halifax, Kings and Hants contain nearly 65 percent of the entire provincial population.

5. Social - Need incentives/programs to encourage eco-friendly lifestyle.
6. Economy - Invest wisely – look at cost/benefit.
7. Environment - Need for better information e.g. Water to the Village. People need to understand the options, costs and benefits. The cost is very high and implementation may limit the Municipalities options elsewhere. Communications/awareness important e.g. Water conservation.
8. Social - How can affordable housing be achieved? e.g. should the Municipality subsidize the cost of building lots? There is resistance to low income housing (being located in a particular neighbourhood). Municipal land trust? Habitat for humanity? Abbeyfield homes approach.
9. Environment - Better communications to public and better feedback. Also include information other than Municipal. Develop a social conscience.
10. Social - Overcome “residential only” community development. Need is for mixed uses and communities that are more self-sufficient.

Analysis

These top ten priorities were reviewed in detail along with an overview of lower ranked priorities. In some cases similar initiatives appear under different pillars (e.g. 1 and 10, above which illustrates the inter-action between the pillars). Where this happened in this analysis they have been combined. This process resulted in the following seven (7) initiatives recommended by the senior staff:

Initiative 1

Planning and Community Development

Encourage the development self-sufficient mixed-use communities. First decide what kind of community is desired and then develop the policies and programs needed to realize this desire. This may encourage people to live in more compact communities rather than spread along existing roadways. A variety of

modes of transportation must be available both within the communities and between communities.

Initiative 2

Economic Development

The fact that 50% of Nova Scotia's population lies within 100 km of the Municipality is an economic opportunity. People will be attracted to the area because of its natural features as well as its cultural and built environment. Other economic opportunities exist in the development of environmentally related business opportunities, initially focused around the by-products of the landfill. The use of appropriate supportive technology is essential to success in all economic opportunities. Training programs are required to support these initiatives.

Initiative 3

Environmental Protection/Water Resources

Compact self-sufficient communities may require central services such as water distribution which, in turn, require a protected water supply. Environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands need to be protected whether or not they are located within water resource areas. The Province needs to play a leadership role in this initiative along with the Municipality. Waste water collection and treatment systems will also be required.

Initiative 4

Social Change

Programs and incentives need to be developed to encourage an eco-friendly life style.

Initiative 5

Costs/Benefit Analysis Critical

All proposed Municipal projects should be subjected to a cost/benefit analysis as part of the regular operating process.

Initiative 6

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is needed throughout the current and future communities and an overall program

needs to be developed involving all levels of government and the volunteer sector.

Initiative 7

Improved Communications

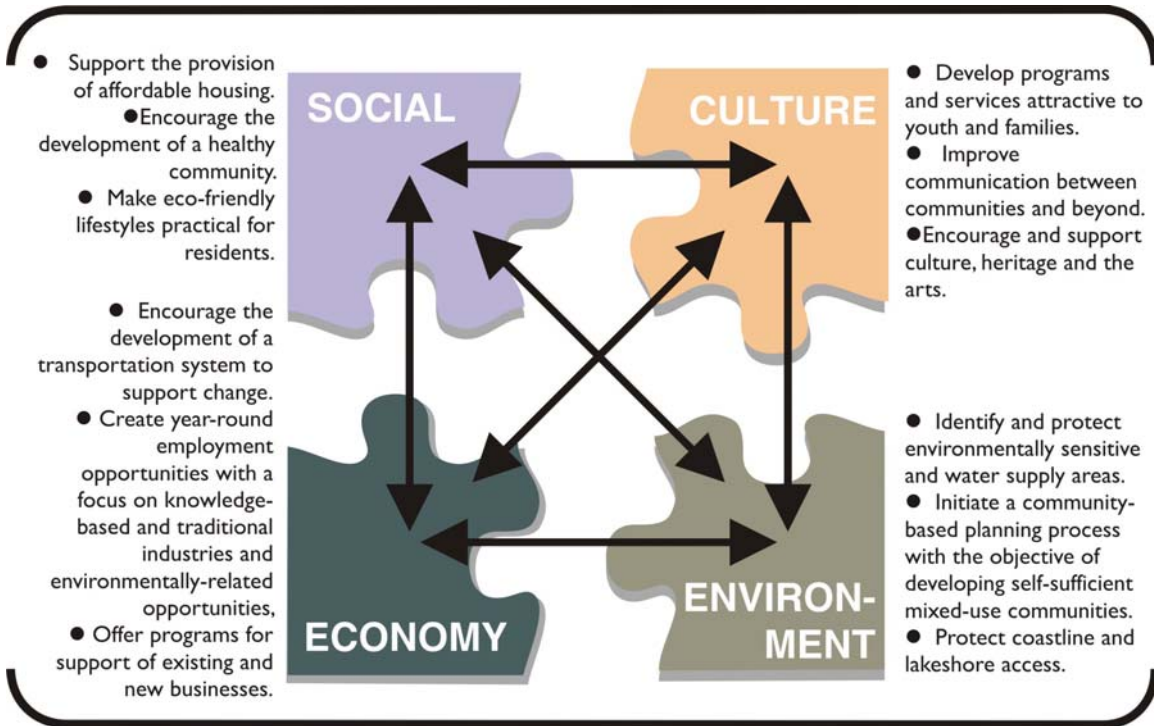
The communities need to continue to get to know one another better and build on each others strength. The municipality has a role to play here as the catalyst in improving communications within communities, between communities, and between communities and the municipal government.



10 Priority Goals

Sustainability Action Plan Priorities

Before moving to the proposed action plans, the following graphic will provide a summary of the four sustainability pillars and the action plans associated with each pillar.



*Motivate public opinion to support ideas: **inform and inspire.***

These priorities have been massaged and modified as the project has progressed. These changes reflect the input from the public meetings and further reflection by the IfPD team as well as from inputs from municipal staff.

At the public meetings we heard valuable comments and insights about the Vision and the priority goals. One of the key deficiencies we heard was that the element of education was not included in the original Vision statement. This has now been added. Education and information exchange are included as explicit components of many of the action plan solutions.

11 Action Plans

Thinking about planning levels.

The analogy of a military commander may be useful in helping to understand the place of action plans in the overall ICSP.

The Integrated Community Sustainability Plan is an overall STRATEGY to move the municipality in the direction of sustainability. To an army commander, a strategy is the broad approach he will take to win a battle.

In carrying out his strategic plan, the commander's logistical or OPERATIONAL approach represents the coordination of minute details of tactics to achieve his overarching strategy goals. This is analogous to our action plans which are intended to coordinate subsequent efforts.

Having decided on the operational intent, the commander will need to achieve specific TACTICS (the minute details) that will ultimately decide the outcome. This may mean how troops are arranged on the field, perhaps to defeat the enemy by attacking from the side. In our case, we call tactical plans our work plans.

Introduction

This section presents twelve action plans to address the gaps discussed in the previous section. Each action plan is formatted the same way, first with a statement of the goal, followed by a brief discussion of the current situation, the proposed action items and time frame, necessary resources to carry out the action plan, potential partners, a risk assessment, and the project dependencies. We emphasize that these are in draft form and subject to change based on further review and implementation.

It may be helpful to distinguish action plans from work plans. They are the difference between operational planning and tactical planning (see sidebar). This document has identified twelve strategies or priorities based around the four pillars of sustainability. Action plans have been written for each priority. Each action plan describes the necessary approach and timeline that the Steering Committee feels will be required to address each priority.

A tactical-level work plan is needed to carry out each action plan. It will list a set of tasks to be completed over a specific period of time (say, 6 or 12 months). Task descriptions will identify the problems to be solved and ways to solve them. They will name specific objectives, responsibilities and expected outcomes.

The work plans will guide those responsible for carrying them out. They are therefore often developed with those responsible for their completion. As management tools, they allow decision makers to measure the success of a particular initiative after the passing of a specific period of time.

This section concludes with a summary table and a five year operational budget plan. It includes a recommendation to establish a Special Committee of Council that would coordinate all action plan activities. This committee would include members of Council and from the community at large and would establish sub-committees as necessary and report to Council on a regular basis.

Water Resources and Sensitive

Goal Identify and protect environmentally sensitive

Current Situation

What needs to be done?

- Most areas have on-site wells – issues such as e. coli; areas with known high levels of uranium and arsenic.
- Certain areas have water supplies or have done studies: Western Shore , Mill Cove, Hubbards (under way), Chester Village (under way)
- No substantial research on local sensitive areas; empirical approach to problems.
- Environmentally sensitive areas may be facing development pressures.
- Unregulated waste disposal may occur.
- Municipality manages wastewater treatment plants.
- Most developments dispersed and with on-site services.
- Limited protection of lakes and waterways.
- Commercial and recreational fisheries depend on productive lakes, streams and rivers.

Describe Action

What people and tools are needed?

- Municipality-wide study of problems, available water resources, problems and opportunities related to existing and future development pattern and pressures; identify environmentally sensitive and watershed areas needing protection.
- Review MPS & LUB setbacks and other regulations; prioritize parcels for protection; develop protection procedures such as land use controls.
- Initiate a public information programs – wetland preservation, water supply protection, forest management.
- Seek watershed designation under *Environment Act*.
- Maintain a high standard of wastewater treatment
- Encourage use of central sewer systems.

Resources

What people and tools are needed?

- Municipal Planning Strategy & Land Use Bylaw (MPS & LUB)
- Capital budget
- *Environment Act*
- Public Works staff

Areas

Environment

and water resource areas

Implementation Partners

*Who can help do it?
What can the community do?*

- Land owners
- Conservation groups
- Province
- Monitor; provide political support
- Citizen groups

Risk Assessment Opportunities/Challenges

What would help us? What could go wrong?

- Public information program
- Need a Statement of Provincial interest on lakeshores and waterways

Project Dependencies

Does this depend on other action plan, program or initiatives?

- Policies re growth centres
- Provincial requirements and regulations
- Community-Based Planning Action Plan
- Funding partners

Coastline and Lakeshore Protection

Goal: Protect coastline and lakeshore (access,		
Current Situation	Actions and Time Frame	Resources
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	<i>What needs to be done?</i>	<i>What people and tools are needed?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of traditional access through ownership changes. • Some coastal areas including islands have been gifted to the Municipality or conservation groups. • Five ocean beaches with Provincial or Municipal public access and 6 public boat launches (Hubbards - Halifax County side, Blandford, Borgels Point, Graves Island, Chester, Western Shore). • Recent plan amendments include setbacks from water-courses and the ocean where development permits are issued. Province offers little guidance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Notable erosion on soft clay drumlins. ○ Historical sea level rise of 1.5 - 2 mm per year. Implications for municipal infrastructure, environment. ○ Predicted sea level rise would at least double historical rate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Municipal Planning Strategy regarding setbacks, lot sizes, and other development regulations • Identify coastal areas not yet developed or facing erosion or other pressures. • Set priorities for protection and public access and acquire key land resources based on priority list. Incorporate a range of types for recreation-scenic, swimming, kayaking, boating, birding and so forth. • Encourage land donations. • Education program – sensitive area preservation; learning and appreciation programs for designated areas for support of eco-tourism; dangers of locating too close to the ocean. • Publicize emergency plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning department • Recreation department • Local harbour authorities • Environment Canada • Transport Canada • Fisheries and Oceans • Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal • Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources • Engineering and Public Works Department

Environment

development and erosion)

Implementation Partners	Risk Assessment Opportunities/Challenges		Project Dependencies
<i>Who can help do it? What can the community do?</i>	<i>What would help us?</i>	<i>What could go wrong?</i>	<i>Does this depend on other action plan, program or initiatives?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation groups • School programs • Possibly Bedford institute or universities (studies) • Regional Aquaculture Development Advisory Committee (RADAC) • St. Margarets Bay Stewardship Association • DFO • Bluenose Coastal Action • Realtors • News media • Landowners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need a Statement of Provincial interest on coastline management • Need a Statement of Provincial interest on lakeshores and waterways • Provincial coastal zone management strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status quo could mean the eventual loss of virtually all public access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitive Areas Action Plan • Community-Based Planning Action Plan

Community-Based Planning

Goal		
Initiate / maintain a community-based planning		
Current Situation	Describe Action	Resources
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	<i>What needs to be done/</i>	<i>What people and tools are needed?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council will respond to requests from neighbourhoods for detailed planning. To date, these include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chester Village Area ○ Shepherds Landing ○ Marvin's Island ○ Shaw Island ○ Marriotts Cove ○ Wake Up Hill ○ Otter Point ○ Chester Downs ○ Island View ○ Mill Cove Park • For most remaining areas of the municipality, Council has enacted a general zone. • The municipality has entered into development agreements for some land development projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement and maintain a Municipality-wide community-based land use plan and development bylaws • Review Municipal Planning Strategy that identifies development goals, growth centres, urban form and related items. • Coordinate background studies such as water resources and other sensitive areas; conduct other studies as warranted. • Review policy objectives and approaches to unify the ad hoc and fragmented approach such as highway and intersection planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning department • Recreation department • Finance department • Engineering and Public Works Department • Community-inclusive steering committee • Hire additional municipal staff or consultants • IT services

Environment

process with the object to develop self-sufficient mixed-use communities

Implementation Partners <i>Who can help do it?</i> <i>What can the community do?</i>	Risk Assessment Opportunities/Challenges <i>What would help us?</i> <i>What could go wrong?</i>		Project Dependencies <i>Does this depend on other action plan, program or initiatives?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation groups • Forestry operators • Voluntary action groups with a history of community-based planning • Landowners • Health Promotion and Protection • Lunenburg-Queens Regional Development Agency • Community development groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved communications links throughout municipality • Public awareness of development and sustainability issues • Economic downturn provides breathing space for planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status quo would mean linear development along existing roadways and unserviceable communities; increasing demands on services and diminishing returns • Economic downturn limits financial resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coastline and Lakeshore Action Plan • Water Resources and Sensitive Areas Action Plan • Transportation Action Plan • Funding partners

Transportation

Goal		
Encourage the development of a transportation		
Current Situation	Describe Action	Resources
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	<i>What needs to be done?</i>	<i>What people and tools are needed?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auto-dependent • Limited active transportation opportunities • Community Wheels – demand-based transit; uncertain funding • Rail trail serves portion of municipality for active transportation use • HRM has considered transit service to Hubbards • Bridgewater, Lunenburg, Mahone Bay and the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg considering bus service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify community-based transportation options (such as Dial-A-Ride, community transit) • Develop a strategy best suited to local needs and capability • Develop active transportation strategy • Improve sidewalks and multi-purpose trail for local commuting. • Cut back roadside vegetation for visibility: encourage walking, biking in rural areas. • Widen and/or pave shoulders: encourage walking and biking • Better speed control and road sharing in rural areas. • Work on both inter-municipal and extra-municipal linkages – e.g., transportation links and hubs with Metro, Kings Transit. • Encourage carpools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation and Parks Committee • Planning department • Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal

Economy

system to support change

Implementation Partners <i>Who can help do it?</i> <i>What can the community do?</i>	Risk Assessment Opportunities/Challenges		Project Dependencies <i>Does this depend on other action plan, program or initiatives?</i>
	<i>What would help us?</i>	<i>What could go wrong?</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public consultation • Establish advisory committee to include members from these groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Business community ○ Service volunteers ○ Community service organizations ○ Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal ○ Community Health Board ○ Bluenose Coastal Action Foundation ○ Recreation and Parks Committee ○ Victorian Order of Nurses ○ Schools ○ Route Enhancement Committee (Aspotogan) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green mobility fund • Sustaining funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of financial support • Lack of community support • Low density land use may make it costly or impractical to achieve certain strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy Communities Action Plan • Affordable Housing

Business Support

Goal		
Offer programs to support existing and new		
Current Situation	Describe Action	Resources
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	<i>What needs to be done?</i>	<i>What people and tools are needed?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited local business market • Some employees may not have knowledge and skills current to their industry • Some small businesses need mentoring • Start-up capital may be lacking • Seasonality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify requirement for skills upgrading including international trends. • Evolve program for upgrading skills. • On-the-job training including co-op learning programs. • Establish mentoring program that could include summer residents and retired people. • Establish or strengthen local business linkages through information exchange. • Foster mutual support between businesses. • Encourage centralized farmers, fish suppliers and crafters sales outlet with cooperative shared transportation system for efficiency. • Continuous buy-local campaign. • Encourage partnerships between local sustainable development groups • Coordination with local vendors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign full time Regional Development Agency staff person resident in Chester District with specific mandate for Municipality • Chamber of Commerce • NSCC Outreach • 2008 Market Readiness Assessment authored by Roger Brooks

Economy

businesses			
Implementation Partners <i>Who can help do it? What can the community do?</i>	Risk Assessment Opportunities/Challenges <i>What would help us? What could go wrong?</i>		Project Dependencies <i>Does this depend on other action plan, program or initiatives?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lunenburg-Queens Regional Development Agency and Halifax RDA (Hubbards) • Chamber of Commerce and other business groups • Established business people including summer residents • Call on the experience and knowledge of retired people settling in the municipality • Department of Economic Development • Chester village Commission • Local development groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial training programs and supports • International initiatives. • Municipal buy-local policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of communication/response from business in need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Action Plan • Employment Action Plan • Heritage and the Arts Action Plan

Employment

Goal		
Create year-round employment with focus on		
Current Situation	Describe Action	Resources
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	<i>What needs to be done?</i>	<i>What people and tools are needed?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several small tech-based businesses in Municipality • Much employment in Municipality is seasonal – tourism and resource based and dependent on external markets • Many retail and service jobs including marine-related, carpentry, lumbering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify target industries and opportunities • Identify infrastructure requirements • Develop plan for infrastructure investment • Informal meeting groups such as a breakfast club, including summer residents and retired people • Invest in expanding tourism season, alternate uses of resources, work with what we have. • Encourage development of eco-business park at landfill. • Encourage cooperation among the art and crafts communities • Training and education in sustainable forest practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign full time Regional Development Agency staff person resident in Chester District with specific mandate for knowledge based industry • Chamber of Commerce, business associations, and development associations • Chester Arts Centre • Retired people as mentors

Economy

knowledge based and traditional industries and environmentally related opportunities

Implementation Partners	Risk Assessment Opportunities/Challenges		Project Dependencies
<i>Who can help do it? What can the community do?</i>	<i>What would help us?</i>	<i>What could go wrong?</i>	<i>Does this depend on other action plan, program or initiatives?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal support • Organize business forum • Department of Economic Development • Department of Natural Resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial support of local centre of excellence for non-resource, non-manufacturing based industry • Provincial direction regarding traditional industry best practices and training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No support or business interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Support Action Plan • Communication Action Plan • Heritage and the Arts Action Plan

Healthy Community

Goal		
Encourage the development of a healthy		
Current Situation	Describe Action	Resources
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	<i>What needs to be done?</i>	<i>What people and tools are needed?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health professional recruitment and retention is difficult • Numerous small-scale recreational/fitness facilities • Purpose of rail trail is not well understood, does not serve all communities • Community Health Board jurisdictions and District Health Authorities do not coincide – not helpful for funding • Proportionally lower funding on a per capita basis than other Nova Scotia municipalities • Recent study by IPSOS Reid: “2008 Recreation & Physical Fitness Survey” • Much emergency support currently relies on volunteer fire department • Bonny Lea Farm Student Work and Training (SWAT) Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In view of aging population and expected increase in related disabilities, document need for health facilities and staffing (including long term care, in-home care, co-ordination of care and emergency services such as expanded home care and paramedics) • Update inventory of recreation facilities and document need for additional facilities • Work with Province to establish health facilities and services • Establish permanent committee for health professional recruitment and retention • Develop plan to expand trail / active transportation system • Commission pre-design report; cost estimates for recreation and health facilities. • Support emergency and pandemic relief planning • Increase support for fire departments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation Department “Active Living Strategy” • Department of Health Promotion and Protection • South Shore Health District (SSH) • Lunenburg Community Health Board • Public fundraising to supplement government funding for health centre, recreation and trails facilities • VON • Private donations • PRO kids program • Bonny Lea Farm staff

Social

community			
Implementation Partners <i>Who can help do it? What can the community do?</i>	Risk Assessment Opportunities/Challenges <i>What would help us? What could go wrong?</i>	Project Dependencies <i>Does this depend on other action plan, program or initiatives?</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community at large • Current health professionals • Recreation groups • Volunteer time and effort • Department of Health Promotion and Protection • Shoreham Foundation • Garden clubs and other local groups • Victorian Order of Nurses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information exchange with other municipalities • Financial support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding not available • Difficulty in selecting site for recreation facility • User conflicts re: trails • Further reductions in health care personnel • Failure of Provincial Health Transition Strategy • Increased levels of poverty • Lack of volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation Action Plan • Communication Action Plan • Heritage and the Arts Action Plan • Health Transition Strategy (DOHPP) • SSH – overall coordination of health care. • Securing partners.

Eco-Friendly Lifestyles

Goal		
Make eco-friendly lifestyles practical for residents		
Current Situation	Describe Action	Resources
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	<i>What needs to be done?</i>	<i>What people and tools are needed?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good solid waste diversion and resource recovery program but construction and demolition waste not addressed evenly across province • Auto-dependent due to dispersed settlement pattern • Import-dependent for food and other essentials • Lack of public knowledge about options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review land use controls and explore opportunities for less auto-dependent development patterns • Encourage new developments to include opportunities for eco-friendly lifestyles • Information and education program • Incentives and penalties moving towards acceptable solutions • Buy-local and buy-seasonal campaign • Sustaining funds program for recreation groups • Rebates for certain practices; prizes for achievement and performance • Improved solid waste diversion specifically related to construction and demolition debris. • Promote alternate transportation modes • Encourage forest management planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning staff • Recreation staff • Lunenburg-Queens Regional Development Agency • Recycling Coordinator • Waste Management Director • Public Works department

Social

Implementation Partners	Risk Assessment Opportunities/Challenges		Project Dependencies
<i>Who can help do it? What can the community do?</i>	<i>What would help us?</i>	<i>What could go wrong?</i>	<i>Does this depend on other action plan, program or initiatives?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development community • Retail community • Department of Agriculture • Department of Environment • Kings County farmers • Fish suppliers • Department of Health Promotion and Protection • Local recreational groups and clubs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial policy supports • Increasing fuel costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited buy-in (lip service) by government and industry • Inappropriate regulation creating unnecessary work • Lack of coordination among solid waste districts across the province 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-Based Planning Action Plan • Business support • Healthy Communities • Communications plan

Affordable Housing

Goal		
Support the provision of affordable housing		
Current Situation	Describe Action	Resources
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	<i>What needs to be done?</i>	<i>What people and tools are needed?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited affordable rental accommodation for average wage earners in the municipality • Long waiting period for accommodation • Limited opportunity for first time home buyers or retirees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantify need for affordable housing; adapt policies • Meet with provincial housing representatives to determine available support • Review approaches and procedures used in other communities and jurisdictions for affordable housing solutions • Review land use controls to remove potential impediments for constructing affordable housing • Meet with members of the development and construction community • Encourage builders and developers • Consider cooperative housing units, land trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal planning staff and council direction • Department of Community Services (Nova Scotia Housing Development Corporation)

Social

Implementation Partners <i>Who can help do it? What can the community do?</i>	Risk Assessment Opportunities/Challenges		Project Dependencies <i>Does this depend on other action plan, program or initiatives?</i>
	<i>What would help us?</i>	<i>What could go wrong?</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developers and builders • Independent Property Owners Association of Nova Scotia • Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation • Non-governmental organizations such as Habitat for Humanity • Businesses whose workers have to commute here to work • Real estate agents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of public support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Support Action Plan • Employment Action Plan • Community-Based Planning Action Plan

Children, Youth and Family

Goal		
Develop programs and services attractive to		
Current Situation	Describe Action	Resources
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	<i>What needs to be done?</i>	<i>What people and tools are needed?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family roots run deep but there is a culture of expectation that people must leave the Municipality to succeed; families are often highly dispersed as a result. • Education is highly valued but there is a prevailing attitude that only a university education can lead to a good career: trades get overlooked. • Some mixed-economy communities such as New Ross have a culture of self-sufficiency and mutual support; others show more dependency. • No link between schools and municipal council: lack of accountability for use of municipal contribution • Children and youth have to fail first and be “needy enough” to get help • Numerous day cares, a private clinic, and Chester Area Family Resource Centre offering support programs • “Schools Plus” program at Chester District School helps young students at risk (pilot) • New Ross Family Resource Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review MPS and LUB to encourage mixed land uses and mixed economies. • Encourage schools to teach entrepreneurship; independence. • Support high school apprentice program (Options and Opportunity Program – O2) – partners students with employers for short term employment. Assist potential mentors to ensure they are properly certified. • Support early intervention programs for children with problems • Study need for community service clusters - space for doctors, dentists, day care operators and so forth • Continue to create community school contracts with school board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-Laws (MPS & LUB) • Lunenburg-Queens Regional Development Agency • Recreation department • South Shore Regional School Board • Municipal planning staff • Department of Education

Culture

youth and families

Implementation Partners <i>Who can help do it? What can the community do?</i>	Risk Assessment Opportunities/Challenges <i>What would help us? What could go wrong?</i>	Project Dependencies <i>Does this depend on other action plan, program or initiatives?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Labour and Workforce Development • Service Canada • Nova Scotia Community College • Nova Scotia Department of Community Services • Nova Scotia Department of Education • South Shore Child and Youth Action Committee • Council for Early Child Development • Child and youth strategies such as educational leadership initiatives and wraparound intervention • Industry Canada - Community Access Program (CAP) • Youth Secretariat • Department of Health Promotion and Protection • Aspotogan Heritage Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good employment opportunities locally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of industry • Decline in economy • Affordable Housing Action Plan • Healthy Community Action Plan • Community-Based Planning Action Plan

Communication

Goal		
Improve communication between communities		
Current Situation	Describe Action	Resources
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	<i>What needs to be done?</i>	<i>What people and tools are needed?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak sense of overall community cohesion: no sense of “We”. • Lack of communication between and within communities in the Municipality • Some computer training is available locally • No reliable high speed Internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite representatives from each community to meet and discuss issues (initial dialogue) • Document problems and deficiencies • Identify means to improve communication and actions such as cooperative event scheduling • Develop plan to improve information dissemination and communication • Use municipal website to promote communication and feedback • Maintain municipal newsletter system • Improve Internet infrastructure and encourage its use • Continue and enhance training programs for computers and Internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation staff • Lunenburg-Queens Regional Development Agency • Chamber of Commerce, business and development associations • Municipal administrative staff • Lunenburg-Queens Community Access Society

Culture

and beyond

Implementation Partners

*Who can help do it?
What can the community do?*

- Local newspapers
- Internet service providers (ISP)
- Service groups and volunteer organizations that have internal communications systems in place
- Mobile library

Risk Assessment Opportunities/Challenges

What would help us?

- ISP buy-in and support

What could go wrong?

- Competition between groups for same funds.
- Loss of free community access to computers.

Project Dependencies

Does this depend on other action plan, program or initiatives?

- Healthy Community Action Plan
- Industry Canada's Community Access Program
- Broadband for Rural Nova Scotia initiative – due for completion by end of 2009

Heritage and the Arts

Goal		
Encourage and support heritage and the arts		
Current Situation	Describe Action	Resources
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	<i>What needs to be done</i>	<i>What people and tools are needed? (Finances, staff, information, equipment)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantial stock of heritage structures throughout Municipality • Strong sense of history • Active visual and performing arts community • Strong folk tradition • Important, popular museum at New Ross/Forties • Lack of coordinated support for the arts • Support for the arts fluctuates seasonally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory heritage and arts resources including buildings and cultural landscape, artists and crafters; oral history • Sustaining funds program; cultural foundation to manage funds, coordinate, market and train. • Support local cultural heritage centres. • Host municipal wide celebratory events, education of residents about local skills and talents. • Education programs about heritage and art skills • Education programs about management and marketing • Municipal coordination services - establish a virtual arts and culture centre for marketing, resources, grant writing assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation department • Practitioners • Local heritage and arts societies • Planning department • Chamber of Commerce • Marketing coordinator • Chester Playhouse • Chester Arts Centre • Ross Farm Museum • Aspotogan Heritage Trust

Culture

Implementation Partners	Risk Assessment Opportunities/Challenges		Project Dependencies
<i>Who can help do it? What can the community do?</i>	<i>What would help us?</i>	<i>What could go wrong?</i>	<i>Does this depend on other action plan, program or initiatives?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage Advisory Committee with expanded mandate; include summer residents and retired people • Arts committee • Sustaining fund donations • Local museums, heritage societies, historic groups, arts and cultural groups • CBC, business associations and development associations • Bluenose Coastal Action • Department of Heritage, Culture and Tourism • Aspotogan Heritage Trust • Hubbards Heritage Society • Destination South West Nova 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal and provincial and municipal support • Business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic downturn • Loss of heritage and arts resources and assets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy Community Action Plan • Community-Based Planning Action Plan • Business support Action Plan • Employment Action Plan • Funding partners

Analysis – separate spreadsheet



12 Financial Implications and Next Steps

Financial Implications

Preferred implementation of the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan during the first and second years of implementation will require an average investment of \$400,000 per year. This is mainly for hiring an additional planner required to launch the community based planning program and to provide additional funds to increase the economic development program with the full-time commitment of an economic development officer. Funds are also required to support planning for the social and cultural programs.

Capital funds will not be required until Year 3 of the implementation program and the amount is unknown at this time. One probable outcome from the community-based planning program will be the requirement to service designated communities with water and/or sewer. The cost for this program is as yet unknown.

Years 1 and 2 are also planning years within the social and cultural pillars. For example, further discussion is required with respect to the type of recreational facilities required. Would community needs be best met with one large, centrally located facility or with smaller facilities distributed throughout the Municipality? Can the recreational facilities be combined with other facilities that could also be designed to serve the arts and cultural community? Once again, the capital and operating costs are unknown and will emerge through the implementation of the action plans.

Construction of any facilities will have implications for future operating budgets which must be addressed along with the considerations of the capital costs. Affordable housing is another issue that needs to be addressed and may have cost implications.

Achievement of the Vision will require commitments and investment by all levels of government, the private sector, and the community.

Appendices

- A Original Vision Statement
- B General Meeting Comments
- C Community Meeting Report
- D Youth Consultation Report
- E Staff Consultation Report

Appendix A Vision Statement Comparison

The following Vision statement appeared in the Interim Report dated September 2008.

TWENTY YEARS FROM NOW, the Municipality will be in the midst of a period of steady, diverse growth. Our emphasis is on fiscal responsibility, mobility and a resilient economy. Growth has been controlled and is sustainable, respecting the environment, our heritage and traditional lifestyles. Young people are staying, former residents are returning, and successful welcoming programs have increased the number of new residents. Development of community facilities and services, including those for seniors, has kept pace with population change. Our recreation assets are superb. We have worked to protect the coast and environmentally sensitive areas. Public access to the coastline and lakes has been markedly improved. We are nationally recognized as a model for healthy communities. Partnerships between governments, the private sector, and community groups have been critical to our success.

The highlighted parts of the statement were either removed or altered. The original statement had 132 words. The revised statement presented below is slightly reduced, totaling 119 words. It shows where the changes were made.

WE ENVISION A MUNICIPALITY TWENTY YEARS FROM NOW that is stable and diverse. Our emphasis is on fiscal responsibility, life long learning, mobility, and a resilient economy. Development has been controlled and is sustainable, while respecting the environment, our heritage and traditional lifestyles. Young people are staying, former residents are returning, and the number of new residents has increased. Development of community facilities and services, including those for seniors, is keeping pace with population change. Our recreation assets and our education system are superb. We have worked to protect the coast and environmentally sensitive areas. We are nationally recognized as a model for healthy communities. Partnerships between governments, the private sector, and community groups are critical to our success.

Appendix B

General Meeting Comments

Appendix C

Community Meeting Report

Appendix D

Youth Consultation Report

Appendix E

Staff Consultation Report