

INTEGRATED COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING PROGRESS REPORT

By Kuli Malhotra, Project manager
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The federal government has committed to transfer funds equivalent to a portion of the federal excise tax on gasoline to municipalities. This transfer has now become permanent. The federal government and Nova Scotia entered into a Municipal Funding Agreement which set out the terms and conditions of the program. As a requirement for this funding, municipalities are preparing Integrated Community Sustainability Plans (ICSP) which are due by 2010. A draft of the ICSP must be submitted to the Province by September 30th, 2009.

The Integrated Community Sustainability Plan is a long term plan (20 to 25 years) that focuses on identifying issues currently facing municipalities and their communities under the four pillars of environment, economy, culture and society. The ICSP process empowers communities to address current and future needs and propose solutions, while embedding municipal infrastructure requirements within these broader strategies. The Municipality of the County of Antigonish began the process of preparing its ICSP in January of 2009. The County's website provides up-to-date information on the progress: <http://www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca/sustainability.htm>

A work plan was prepared and a Sustainability Committee at the County has been overseeing the development of the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) based on the following stages:

- Stage 1: Information gathering - through existing literature review and through public consultations in every district in the County.
- Stage 2: Identifying a sustainability vision for the County, compiling information (topics/issues, goals, strategies/actions), establishing timelines and stakeholders to implement them.
- Stage 3: Public meeting for feedback and writing the ICSP.

A series of open and advertised community consultations were held between March and June 2009 to identify a vision, goals and priorities in the four areas of Environment, Society, Culture and Economy. Consultations were held with every district of the county as well as the First Nations community. Over 180 people were engaged in this process and the result is the completion of a draft vision and draft list of 38 ICSP goals and priorities for the County of Antigonish.

ICSP VISION

Antigonish is a vibrant, diverse and welcoming community that takes collective action for the well-being and prosperity of our citizens, celebrates our unique culture and heritage, and is committed to a sustainable future.

ICSP TOPICS

<p style="text-align: center;">Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Protection of Watersheds and water sources ✓ Agriculture, Food Safety and Food Security ✓ Water & Sewer ✓ Public Safety ✓ Shoreline Erosion ✓ Land-Use Planning ✓ Municipal Energy planning (conservation and reduction) ✓ Sustainable Procurement (municipal) ✓ Climate Change adaptation and pollution prevention ✓ Crisis management planning (municipal) ✓ Protection of land and controlled land development. ✓ Septic Sludge management ✓ Waste Management and Reduction ✓ Beautification ✓ Pesticide Reduction ✓ Renewable Energy Initiative ✓ Sustainable Performance Indicators 	<p style="text-align: center;">Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Fisheries ✓ Highway 104 twinning in Antigonish ✓ Sustainable Transportation Options ✓ Greater engagement with First Nations Communities ✓ Forestry ✓ Business Retention and Expansion / Green Economy ✓ Incentives for local production and procurement ✓ Poverty Alleviation ✓ Municipal Services and Planning Strategy
<p style="text-align: center;">Society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Affordable and Seniors Housing ✓ Active and Healthy Lifestyles ✓ Community, Organizational and Govt. Partnerships ✓ Volunteerism ✓ Recreational programming and participation. ✓ Community Gardens ✓ Daycare and Homecare 	<p style="text-align: center;">Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Youth Empowerment and Engagement ✓ Preservation and promotion of Heritage and Culture ✓ Tourism Planning and Development ✓ Promotion and Showcase of Local Artisans ✓ Population retention and attraction



NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

The Municipality of the County of Antigonish invites you to join in an Open House on September 15, 2009 between 6:00 pm and 7:00 pm in the Council Chambers at the Municipal Administrative Building (at 285 Beech Hill Road) to review the goals and priorities of the County's Integrated Community Sustainability Plan.

For more information, please visit the County's Sustainability webpage at:
<http://www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca/sustainability.htm>