



# From Great Ideas to Great Communities

A Guide for Implementing  
Integrated Community Sustainability  
Plans in Nova Scotia



Sustainable  
Communities



# Acknowledgements

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## Foreword from the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM)

In May of 2011, the UNSM's Municipal Sustainability Office hosted a workshop for municipal staff and elected officials on bridging the "planning to implementation gap."

At that session, participants identified a key resource required to help them move forward with implementing their integrated community sustainability plans (ICSPs) was a guidebook. So after much planning, researching, compiling, writing and reviewing, we are very pleased to present to you this implementation guide: *From Great Ideas to Great Communities*. We believe this valuable resource provides a comprehensive framework for building a culture of sustainability within your municipality to ensure it is part of everyday decision-making.

**Our aim was to create a practical guide, filled with resources and examples from communities that have made gains with implementation.** We recognize that some municipalities are just starting out with implementation while others are a few years into the process. This guide does not discriminate. It provides leading practices and ideas for moving forward, regardless of your municipality's size or capacity, or where it is on the implementation continuum. Its ultimate purpose is to help you become sustainability leaders as a means to protect and enhance the many things you value about your community, ensuring it remains vibrant and healthy for many years to come.

**We want each and every one of our municipalities to be successful in reaching their sustainability goals, and we anticipate that this guide will serve as a roadmap to help along the journey.** It is our belief that continuing on a path to sustainability is the best direction forward for Nova Scotia's municipalities. With this in mind, we encourage you to use the guide to kick-start your implementation process or support efforts already underway. It is not expected that you can undertake all of the recommended actions put forward, but instead, you pick and choose those activities that best suit your municipality's unique circumstances.

**In closing, we would like to thank Service Nova Scotia & Municipal Relations for their financial support and the advisory committee members for their thoughtful input and time.**

We would also like to thank Chris Lindberg and his team at Golder Associates for articulating their implementation expertise in a guide that we feel will be of great value to our municipalities. Finally, we would like to extend a very big thank you to Debbie Nielsen, UNSM's Municipal Sustainability Coordinator, who guided this project from idea to reality.

Sincerely,

**Frank Fawson**

Chair of UNSM's Sustainable Practices Committee  
Councillor, Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

## Foreword from Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations (SNSMR)

Every municipality in Nova Scotia has prepared an ICSP which presents a vision for their future; a future where the principles of sustainability are entrenched in the daily operation of the municipality. Perhaps even more importantly, the content of these plans reflects the values and aspirations of the people who live, work and raise their families in Nova Scotia.

As futurist Leonard Sweet points out, the future is not something we enter, it is something we create. To be resilient and vibrant, municipalities must take-on the broad objectives of becoming more sustainable. Municipalities must also be flexible, open to new ideas and open to new ways of doing things. In essence, this is a process of adaptation; but directed, focused adaptation, whereby the municipality, its communities and its residents play a role in shaping the future.



The ICSPs contain a wealth of information, ideas, goals, objectives and actions that will guide communities towards a sustainable future; however, implementation is a challenge. This is not a surprise to anyone who is involved in the daily management and operation of a municipality. They are complex organizations where the challenges can be overwhelming, and sometimes initiating change can be very difficult.

SNSMR is pleased to have collaborated with the UNSM to create this important guide to assist Nova Scotia municipalities in undertaking the challenge of implementing their ICSPs. It contains a framework for implementation, examples of leading practices, and proven methods for integrating sustainability objectives into municipal operations. It showcases successful examples from within Nova Scotia, highlights the key concepts for sustainable planning, and is full of tips, ideas and resources that can be used to help guide the implementation of your ICSP.

It is my hope that *From Great Ideas to Great Communities* will help you to make meaningful progress on implementing your ICSP. I look forward to continuing my work with municipalities on sustainability and working together to create a more sustainable province.

Sincerely,

**Graham Fisher,**  
Senior Planner,  
Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations



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## Quick Reference

Overview and quick-start  
implementation priorities for  
municipalities

## How to use this guide

The purpose of this guide is to help Nova Scotia municipalities effectively implement their *Integrated Community Sustainability Plans (ICSPs)*. It outlines how to build a culture of sustainability and integrate sustainability goals and principles into everyday municipal decision-making.

Designed to be practical and easy to use, the guide includes a framework, step-by-step guidance, and priority strategies and actions. It includes examples and resources from various Nova Scotia and Canadian communities that have had success with implementing their ICSPs.

The guide can be used in a variety of ways:

- as a **training** resource for staff, elected officials, and community stakeholders,
- as a **planning** tool, to guide work planning and priority setting, and
- as a **reference inventory** of leading practices, tools, actions and examples.

The guide is divided into six main sections:

Quick Reference	Explains how to use the guide, provides an overview of the framework and navigation tools. Includes a set of “quick start” actions for implementation identified by Nova Scotia municipalities.
Sustainability in Nova Scotia	Provides an overview of the rationale, context and role of integrated community sustainability planning in Nova Scotia.
A Framework for Implementation	Outlines common challenges with moving from planning to implementation and introduces the guide’s seven-part framework for action.
Leading Practices	Provides a detailed set of leading practice examples, tools and ideas for each of the seven implementation action areas.
Using the Framework	Presents a set of priority actions for getting started, provides a road-map of ongoing implementations tasks and outlines the different roles of staff and elected officials.
Resources	<p>Presents links to online resources, case-studies and tools, and includes a quick reference summary table of all of the leading practices in the guide.</p> <p>All of the resources in this guide are available on the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities’ Municipal Sustainability Office website at <a href="http://www.sustainability-unsm.ca/icsp-implementation-guide-resources.html">www.sustainability-unsm.ca/icsp-implementation-guide-resources.html</a></p>



## A framework for implementation

Implementing an ICSP is no simple task and just creating and distributing the plan is not enough to make it happen. The key to success in the long-term is to make sustainability a central part of everyday thinking and decision-making at all levels of your municipality.

This guide presents a framework (illustrated above) for making this important shift by strengthening and aligning activities in seven key action areas: [Vision](#), [Govern](#), [Engage](#), [Plan Act](#), [Manage](#) and [Report](#).

## Recommendations suitable for every municipality

As every municipality faces its own unique opportunities and challenges, this guide uses a set of icons to prioritize actions relative to each municipality's resources and where they are in their implementation journey:



**Starting Out:** Important but relatively straightforward actions that municipalities might consider in their first 2-3 years of implementation.



**On the Path:** Higher investment actions for municipalities with in-house sustainability capacity. Better suited for years 3 - 5.



**Advanced:** Activities for municipalities with dedicated sustainability staff resources that have already made significant progress with implementation.



Recommended actions are presented in several sections of the document:

- ▶ **Quick Reference** – This section includes a shortlist of 10 “quick start” actions (see following page) based on input from Nova Scotia municipalities.
- ▶ **Leading Practices** – This section presents leading practices, recommended actions and examples for each of the seven action areas.
- ▶ **Using the Framework** – This section presents a set of recommended priorities for the first two years and a table of recurring quarterly and annual activities.
- ▶ **Resources** – This section includes a quick reference summary table of all of the recommended actions from the Leading Practices section.

## Nova Scotia examples

The Leading Practices section of this guide includes examples from different sizes and types of Nova Scotia municipalities to reflect a diversity of needs, approaches and capacity. Additional examples from other Canadian municipalities are included to illustrate leading practices and tools. The Nova Scotia municipalities profiled in the guide are listed below in order of decreasing population size.

Municipality	Population
Halifax Regional Municipality	390,096
Municipality of the County of Colchester	37,523
Municipality of the County of Antigonish	19,589
Municipality of the County of Inverness	14,896
Town of Truro	12,500
Town of Bridgewater	8,260
Municipality of the District of Shelburne	4,828
Town of Antigonish	4,236
Town of Bridgetown	949

## Quick start actions

The “quick start” actions below were identified by Nova Scotia municipalities as the highest priority actions to advance implementation. They are drawn from the recommendations throughout the rest of the guide.

IDENTIFY CHAMPIONS	Identify champions from each department who will be responsible for implementing the plan and assign a senior individual to be accountable, such as the CAO.
EDUCATE AND COMMUNICATE	Ensure council, staff, community members and stakeholders understand the value and importance of the plan. Use workshops, lunch-and-learns, networking events and annual briefings. Create an ICSP poster to mount in key locations.
COMMIT	Signal to council, staff, community members and stakeholders that implementing the ICSP is a priority. For example, ask senior staff to sign a declaration to prioritize the ICSP in decision-making and “walk the talk” in day-to-day operations.
PARTNER WITH THE COMMUNITY	Establish a community advisory committee (or similar body) to support implementation. Create simple partnership and networking mechanisms for community members and stakeholders (e.g. Sustainability Champions Pledge, Annual Sustainability Forum).
SET TARGETS AND PRIORITIES	Update the ICSP as needed to ensure that core goal areas have specific, measurable long-term targets. Work with each department to identify short-term priorities for action.
UPDATE TEMPLATES AND BUDGETS	Update communications and report templates to add sustainability priorities and criteria (e.g. council and senior management reports, communications documents, sustainability checklists). Revise budget forms and processes to include information on the sustainability implications of each line item.
MONITOR AND REPORT	Identify and monitor key indicators and report on performance to council (quarterly), the Province (annually) and the community (annually).
CELEBRATE	Recognize and celebrate achievements and leadership (e.g. through newsletters, events, awards, etc.). Consider hiring a student intern to coordinate activities.
ALIGN POLICIES, PROCESSES AND OPERATIONS	Review current policies, plans and operations to identify the best opportunities to support the ICSP goals. Establish a multi-year work plan to update the ICSP, and align regulations and activities. This includes creating a formal process for reviewing and renewing the sustainability plan.
WORK REGIONALLY	Engage with regional organizations to access funding and identify joint initiatives for collaboration.







# Sustainability in Nova Scotia

Key sustainability planning concepts  
and context for Nova Scotia

## Why a guide?

Over the past five years, all 54 municipalities in Nova Scotia have developed **Integrated Community Sustainability Plans** (or ICSPs). Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations (SNSMR) provided resources to assist municipalities in ICSP development, including a step-by-step planning handbook and templates.

These ICSPs are long-term (e.g. 20-30 year) plans, developed in consultation with community members, that establish environmental, cultural, social and economic goals for community development. An ICSP may be either a stand-alone plan or part of a comprehensive Municipal Planning Strategy.

Starting in the fall of 2012, municipalities were asked to develop and submit an annual ICSP progress report to SNSMR. These progress reports review the work undertaken with respect to ICSP implementation, and report on progress towards the top priority goals and actions.

The transition from sustainability planning to implementation, however, is no easy task. ICSPs include aspirational goals, strategies and actions that impact every aspect of community life. Achieving these goals requires new approaches, technologies and decision-making processes. Consequently, this guide has been developed to help Nova Scotia municipalities successfully move forward with implementing their ICSPs.

The purpose of this guide is to help Nova Scotia municipalities effectively implement their ICSPs.

The guide provides a process and framework for building a culture of sustainability and integrating sustainability goals and principles into everyday community decision-making.





## Defining Sustainability

At its core, sustainability is based on a fundamental value that is common to most, if not all, Nova Scotians: our children and our grandchildren (i.e. future generations) are at least as valuable and important as we are, and deserve at least the same opportunities that we have.

Sustainability is often thought about in terms of multiple “pillars” or “dimensions” that create a thriving community. As illustrated below, Nova Scotia has identified four pillars that municipalities must consider in their ICSPs: society, culture, environment and economy. These pillars should not be thought of as competing priorities but rather as key dimensions to be considered and optimized in every decision.

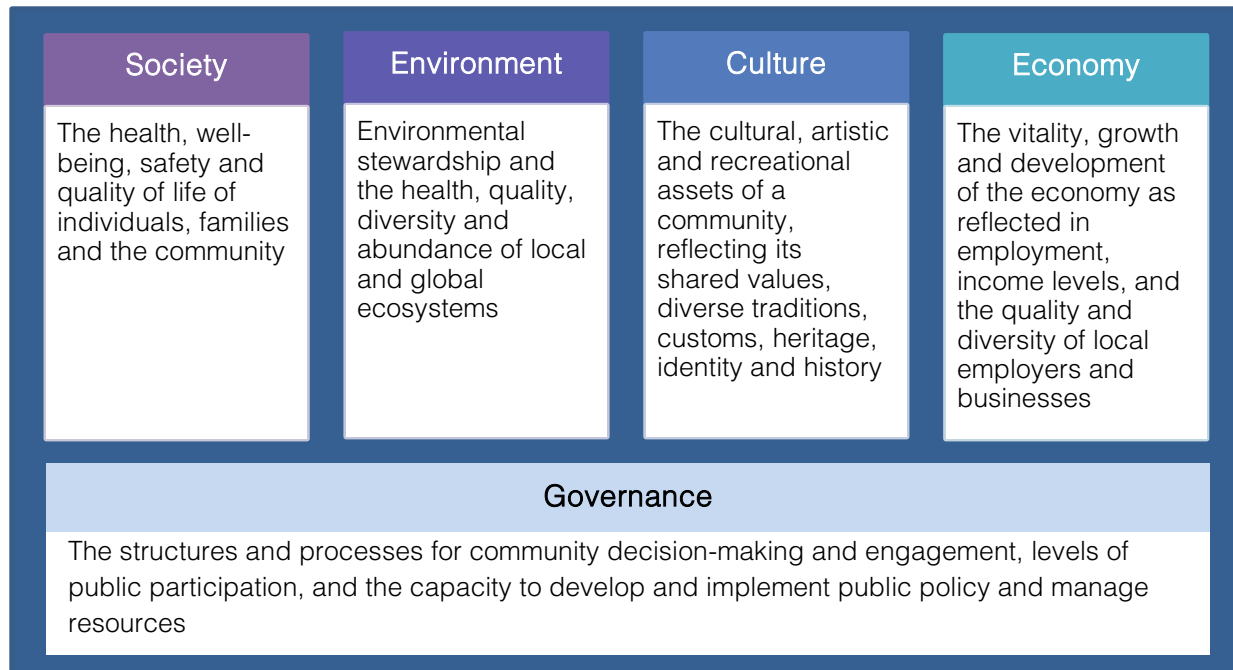
Many communities have identified governance as a fifth pillar for implementing their ICSPs. Effective, transparent and accessible governance structures and processes are essential for engaging community members and managing resources to achieve sustainability goals.

### *Sustainability Is ...*

Development that meets the needs of the present, without adversely affecting the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Our Common Future, 1987).

#### Key principles include:

- Long-term thinking & planning
- Living within the limits of the environment
- Focusing on quality of life
- Integrating & aligning activities
- Optimizing multiple bottom lines
- Equity within & across generations
- Community engagement & partnership



## The role of an ICSP

ICSPs are intended to be the highest-level planning document in a municipality and set the direction for all other plans and policies. They should present a clear vision and set of long-term goals that are important to community members, such as safe streets and clean water.

As illustrated below, implementing an ICSP is the shared responsibility of the municipality and the community members, organizations and businesses that support the vision.

Specific municipal activities are identified through core planning processes (e.g. land-use planning, economic development, recreation etc.) and delivered through a municipality's programs, services and policies.

Additional information on ICSP governance and the relationship with community partners is provided in the **Govern** section later in this guide.





# A Framework for Implementation

A framework for bridging the gap between ICSP development and implementation

## The challenge of implementation

Implementing an ICSP is no simple task, and just creating and distributing the plan is not enough to make it happen. The broad scope and ambitious goals of sustainability challenge local governments to change the way they think, plan and make decisions.

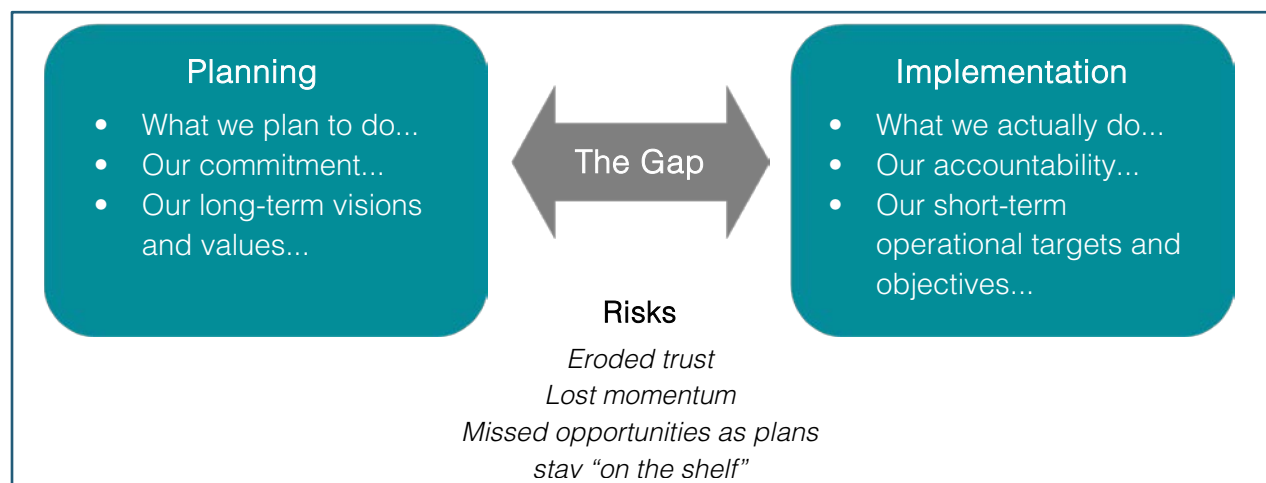
Nova Scotia municipalities report barriers such as a lack of resources, inconsistent support from senior decision-makers, competing departmental priorities, and existing plans and policies that conflict with sustainability.

As a result, many municipalities report that there is a significant gap between what they plan or commit to doing in the long-term and what they actually deliver in the short-term.

As illustrated below, this “planning-implementation gap” erodes public trust and results in inefficiencies and lost opportunities. This often results in the perception that the ICSP is just “another plan on the shelf” rather than an overarching framework for action.

### Common Barriers to Implementation

- Lack of political will
- Lack of shared vision
- Limited financial & human resources
- Lack of understanding of sustainability
- Attitudes & inertia
- Lack of accountability & incentives
- Policy misalignment & lack of integration
- Decision-making silos & absence of tools
- Lack of community engagement
- Inconsistent signals & actions
- Inter-municipal competition
- Weak senior government support
- Lack of data & technology



## A Framework for Implementation

### A framework for bridging the gap



The key to bridging the “planning-implementation gap” is to make sustainability a central part of everyday thinking and decision-making at all levels of the organization. As illustrated above, this shift can be made by strengthening and aligning activities in seven key action areas: **Vision, Govern, Engage, Plan, Act, Manage and Report**.

In many municipalities, these seven areas operate independently with competing and sometimes conflicting priorities. A municipality’s vision and long-term sustainability goals may point in one direction while its plans and actions may be headed in a variety of different directions. This can be further compounded by a lack of meaningful engagement in community governance and by management systems that are not set up to track, report or incent the right metrics or behaviour. The result is increasing frustration among staff and community members as objectives aren’t met.

For example, many municipal ICSPs make a long-term commitment to reduce water and energy consumption. However, provincial building codes and local land-use and development guidelines may prohibit innovations such as green roofs, grey water systems and rooftop solar energy collection. Furthermore, budget processes and pricing structures may not account for life-cycle costs and benefits when setting fees or assessing energy and water-related capital expenditures. With all these conflicting signals, the status quo is supported, if not reinforced, and new practices or ideas are seen as risky ventures. This may result in a significant planning-implementation gap as high-level goals fail to drive short-term actions.

## A Framework for Implementation

Implementing an ICSP therefore requires coordinated action to integrate sustainability into all seven action areas. The following table presents the recommended strategy for each area and defines the types of municipal activities (or leverage points) involved. More specific leading practices, actions and examples are provided in the next section.

	RECOMMENDED STRATEGY	MUNICIPAL LEVERAGE POINTS
VISION	Commit to a clear long-term sustainability vision with specific goals, targets and indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Vision, values &amp; principles</li> <li>▶ Goals, targets &amp; indicators</li> </ul>
GOVERN	Create municipal and community structures and teams to oversee implementation and move on actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Decision-making bodies</li> <li>▶ Community partners</li> <li>▶ Administrative support</li> </ul>
ENGAGE	Educate, connect and inspire elected officials, staff, community members and stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Communications</li> <li>▶ Activities &amp; events</li> <li>▶ Awards &amp; recognition</li> <li>▶ Education &amp; training</li> </ul>
PLAN	Integrate sustainability goals and priorities into new and existing plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Social, economic and environmental plans (e.g. land-use, transportation, growth management, economic development, parks &amp; recreation)</li> <li>▶ Strategic planning</li> </ul>
ACT	Refocus or revise programs, services, regulations and advocacy to be consistent with sustainability goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Programs &amp; services (e.g. recreation, social services)</li> <li>▶ Utilities &amp; public works (e.g. infrastructure, buildings, water, waste, sewers, energy)</li> <li>▶ Regulations (e.g. zoning, guidelines, standards, permits)</li> <li>▶ Advocacy</li> </ul>
MANAGE	Embed sustainability considerations and analysis in corporate processes, policies and management systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Finance &amp; budgeting</li> <li>▶ Human resources</li> <li>▶ Administrative policies (e.g. procurement, codes of conduct)</li> <li>▶ Management systems</li> </ul>
REPORT	Publicly monitor, assess and report on progress towards achieving sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Internal monitoring &amp; reporting</li> <li>▶ External monitoring &amp; reporting</li> <li>▶ Assessment &amp; evaluation</li> </ul>





# Leading Practices

Leading practice examples, tools and ideas for each of the seven action areas

## Overview

This section outlines key concepts, leading practices and actions for each of the seven **action areas**. This guide uses a set of icons to prioritize recommended actions relative to each municipality's resources and where they are in their implementation journey.



**Starting Out:** Important but relatively straightforward actions that municipalities might consider in their first 2-3 years of implementation.



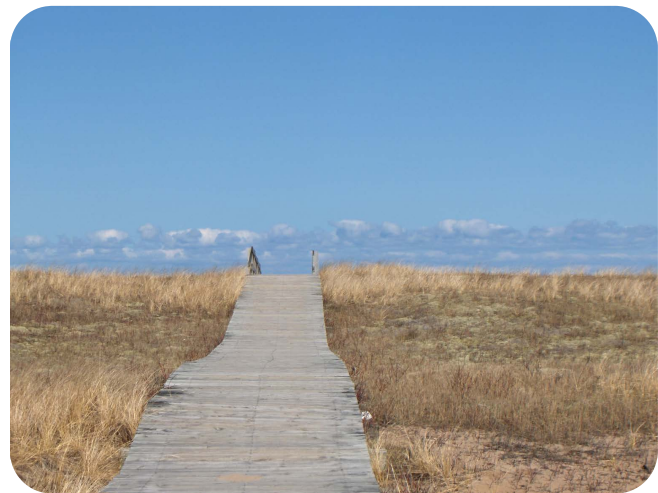
**On the Path:** Higher investment actions for municipalities with in-house sustainability capacity. Better suited for years 3 - 5.



**Advanced:** Activities for municipalities with dedicated sustainability staff resources that have already made significant progress with implementation.

Related examples from Nova Scotia and across Canada are provided, with additional details in the appendices.

On first glance, this section may seem overwhelming; however, no municipality is expected to act on all of these ideas in the first five years (though some might!). Instead, these practices and actions should be used as an inventory of ideas for municipalities to consider and draw from as they move forward on their sustainability journey. Finally, while actions are organized by implementation stage, each municipality has its unique strengths and challenges and should make its own decision on the best timing for a particular action.



A few overarching tips to keep in mind include:

- ▶ **Integrate over initiate.** Look for opportunities to leverage existing systems, staff and projects before starting a new initiative. For example, using a capital project that is already approved to pilot more sustainable procurement practices or using property tax or utilities mail-outs to promote sustainability ideas.



- ▶ **Recognize that sustainability requires change.** Success requires a concerted, strategic effort to align organizational culture with the new sustainability direction.
- ▶ **Start small and do a few things well.** Few municipalities can afford to complete all priority actions in every ICSP goal area each year. Choose a few strategic priorities every year to focus on and build from there.
- ▶ **Use the full range of tools at your disposal.** Don't rely solely on voluntary action through education and outreach to achieve your sustainability objectives. Changes to public expenditure, regulations, financial levers (e.g. fees, taxes) and advocacy activities are also needed.
- ▶ **Scale implementation activities to match your resources and capacity.** All of the ideas in this guide are scalable and should be adapted to meet your needs. For example, a small community may complete their strategic plan, communications plan and annual work plan in a single afternoon.

## Vision

Commit to a clear long-term sustainability vision with specific goals, targets and indicators.

Vision refers to the long-term sustainability vision, goals, targets, indicators, values and principles committed to in the ICSP and related policies. It is the most important element in the implementation framework as it defines the direction the municipality is going in and what it wants to achieve.



Many municipalities struggle with setting specific targets because they are concerned they may not be able to achieve them. However, making change happen often requires setting a bold objective even if you don't know how you're going to achieve it. This uncertainty can be managed in a variety of ways:

- ▶ **Identify short-term milestones** to maintain momentum (such as completing a specific study or setting a target by a certain date),
- ▶ **Focus on continuous improvement** (such as committing to year-over-year reductions in water consumption without specifying a specific reduction target),
- ▶ **Set bold targets where there is an urgent need**, a leadership opportunity and/or an established leading practice to adopt (such as targets for greenhouse gas emissions, waste reduction and housing affordability), and
- ▶ **“Back-cast” from your goals and targets** to the current state to develop a roadmap for action. Forecasting attempts to predict future conditions based on current trends (e.g. increases in car use and urban sprawl). In contrast, “back-casting” attempts to identify different pathways to leverage or change current trends to achieve a desired future state (e.g. lower car use and more dense development). For ICSPs, municipalities should “back-cast” from their long-term goals to identify the short-term actions and pathways that could lead to achieving the goals. These actions then become inputs for departmental and strategic planning processes.



## Leading Practices

### 1. Clear Sustainability Framework

Municipalities excel when there is a shared understanding of what sustainability is and what it means for residents. This ideally includes:

- ▶ a clear and robust **definition** of sustainability,
- ▶ a **rationale** for why sustainability planning is relevant for the community,
- ▶ an overview of key sustainability **concepts and principles**,
- ▶ a description of the community's sustainability **pillars or dimensions**, and
- ▶ an **analysis** of relevant sustainability issues and examples of how sustainability planning will benefit the community in the long-term.

#### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

**Sustainability Framework.** Develop a stand-alone document that outlines what sustainability means for your municipality. Include examples of local actions and champions, if possible. Have council and senior staff formally adopt the policy (e.g. as an addendum to the ICSP). Post and distribute widely.

**Sustainability Scan.** Conduct and publish a scan of relevant local, regional and national sustainability issues and trends. Describe what has changed since developing the ICSP and use it to inform planning discussions. Update every 1-3 years.

### 2. S.M.A.R.T Goals, Targets and Indicators

Leading ICSPs include goals and targets that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely (S.M.A.R.T.). This can be achieved by:

- ▶ Using concise **goal statements** to communicate a clear and inspiring direction (e.g. *We are a leader in water conservation and management*),
- ▶ Incorporating **specific, measureable time-bound outcomes** either as part of the goal statement or as an accompanying target, (e.g. *Reducing per-capita water consumption by 40% by 2035*) and,
- ▶ Identifying **indicators** for measuring and reporting on progress (e.g. *Per-capita residential water consumption*).

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- Set priority targets.** Convene key staff and stakeholders to identify a set of priority ICSP goals that are well-suited for targets and indicators. Each department can identify 1-2 targets in their areas of responsibility. Formally commit to these targets as an addendum to the ICSP and include them with your annual council priorities.
- Adopt best practice targets.** For some issues, established ‘best practice’ goals and targets created by third-party organizations can be adopted, such as the *STAR Communities Rating System*.<sup>1</sup>
- Identify core indicators.** Make sure chosen indicators use data that is easy to collect and manage. Where data is not available, look for an alternative measure or delay reporting on that indicator until you have the resources to track it. Consider adopting an existing indicators framework, such as the *FCM Quality of Life Reporting System*.<sup>2</sup>
- Conduct follow-up analysis.** Some goals in the ICSP may require additional research and baseline analysis before a target can be set.
- Complete targets and indicators.** Establish a complete set of targets and indicators within four to five years of ICSP completion, with a mix of ambitious and conservative targets.
- Update municipal vision and values.** If not already done, update the municipality’s corporate vision and values to align with the ICSP.
- Develop a corporate sustainability plan.** A corporate operations sustainability plan may be a simple reiteration of the relevant ICSP goals and targets, or a more customized plan that aligns with corporate standards, such as the *Global Reporting Initiative*<sup>3</sup>.

### 3. Comprehensive and Holistic Vision

ICSPs are intended to cover a full range of social, economic, environmental and cultural outcomes, supported by strong municipal leadership and governance.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- Gap Assessment.** Review your ICSP commitments against the goal areas above to identify any gaps. In many cases, you may already have commitments in these areas that were simply not included in the ICSP. Consider working with community members to adapt existing goals (or develop new ones) to fill in the gaps. Formalize this commitment as an addendum or amendment to the ICSP.

◆ **Rate your community.** Rate the comprehensiveness of your plan and the sustainability of your community using a tool, such as the *STAR Community Rating System*.<sup>4</sup>

The figure below presents common goal areas found in ICSPs from across Canada. It can be used as a checklist to assess whether your ICSP addresses all of the key action areas.

Environment	Society	Culture	Economy	Governance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solid waste</li> <li>• Energy</li> <li>• Water</li> <li>• Air quality</li> <li>• Ambient light and noise</li> <li>• Natural ecosystems and biodiversity</li> <li>• Climate change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Poverty and affordability</li> <li>• Food security</li> <li>• Desirable Community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arts and culture</li> <li>• Recreation</li> <li>• Community identity</li> <li>• Diversity and inclusion</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Heritage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local economy</li> <li>• Business and industry</li> <li>• Workforce and employment</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Buildings</li> <li>• Infrastructure</li> <li>• Housing</li> <li>• Targeted sectors (Agriculture, Tourism etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land-use planning</li> <li>• Accountable leadership</li> <li>• Sound management</li> <li>• Civic engagement</li> </ul>


#### 4. Commit, Maintain and Renew

Municipalities should develop a clear timeline and cycle for maintaining and renewing the sustainability plan as a “living document” that is tied in with the development and renewal of other key plans and strategies.


### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- **ICSP on a page.** Create a one-page summary of the ICSP commitments that can be distributed to all employees. Include a summary of the sustainability framework on the back side.
- **Reinforce commitment.** Municipalities need to ensure there is a clear, consistent commitment from senior staff and council to the sustainability plan and its implementation. For example, get senior management to formally sign a copy of the ICSP and a declaration committing to integrating it into their own planning and decision-making. Post it prominently online and in municipal offices.
- **Annual maintenance.** Annual maintenance could include reviewing and updating any ICSP milestones, targets and indicators that have not already been finalized. Incorporate this review into existing planning processes.


## RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

-  **Develop an ICSP cycle.** Develop and seek approval for a long-term timeline and cycle for maintaining and renewing the ICSP. Integrate this into long-term budget planning.

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-  **ICSP update.** Conduct a comprehensive review of goals, targets and indicators (recommended every 3 – 5 years). Revise existing goals (or add new ones) to keep them clear, relevant and comprehensive, update targets and indicators based on progress to date, and renew the community commitment to the plan.

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-  **ICSP renewal.** Consider renewing the plan every 10-15 years through an extensive engagement and assessment process to develop a new ICSP. This should be coordinated with the renewal of other long-term documents, such as the Municipal Planning Strategy.

## Vision Snapshots

A selection of brief “snapshot” examples is provided below to illustrate how different communities have approached the Vision action area. The **Resources** section of this guide provides additional case studies and tools.

<p>Town of Bridgewater, NS</p>	<p>The Town of Bridgewater’s ICSP contains six goals with approximately 60 actions which will be implemented during a 5-7 year timeframe. Each goal area includes a set of draft targets to help monitor progress. The Town produces an ICSP Implementation Report that describes actions undertaken during the year. See <a href="http://www.bridgewater.ca">www.bridgewater.ca</a></p>
<p>Municipality of the County of Colchester, NS</p>	<p>Colchester’s ICSP was developed in-house with existing staff and emphasizes the incorporation of the principles of sustainability into normal municipal practices and decision-making. The plan also includes specific strategies that help inform decision-making. See <a href="http://www.colchester.ca/">www.colchester.ca/</a></p>
<p>Town of Antigonish, NS</p>	<p>Antigonish’s ICSP includes 40 goals and strategies to address sustainability which are measurable and achievable, developed with strong public and council input. The Town used an early adopter approach to engage local partner organizations to help co-create and implement the ICSP. See <a href="http://www.townofantigonish.ca/">www.townofantigonish.ca/</a></p>
<p>Comox Valley Regional District, BC<sup>5</sup></p>	<p>Comox Valley’s Sustainability Strategy is structured around a clear framework of global 2050 targets that will be achieved through a set of visions, phased targets (e.g. 2020, 2030, 2040), goals, objectives and actions for each of eight key community systems (e.g. food, housing and land-use). It includes a detailed section on implementation and monitoring, which outlines specific milestones to achieve and indicators to measure. See <a href="http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca">www.comoxvalleyrd.ca</a></p>
<p>Town of Canmore, AB<sup>6</sup></p>	<p>The Town of Canmore’s council has publicly pledged their commitment to sustainability. It has been integrated into its vision, high-level documents, and press releases. To make this commitment a reality, the Town’s senior leadership team has also signed on to a sustainability declaration.</p>
<p>Town of Morinville, AB</p>	<p>Morinville’s sustainability plan received the 2011 Visionary Communities Award from the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association. It was recognized for its commitment to specific and measurable 25-year goals and targets, as well as its strategic framework and focus on integrating sustainability into decision-making. It includes a concise “sustainability plan on a page” that summarizes their six pillars and 30 goals. See <a href="http://www.morinville.ca/town-government/strategic-and-business-plans">www.morinville.ca/town-government/strategic-and-business-plans</a></p>



## Govern

Create municipal and community structures and teams to oversee implementation and identify short-term actions.

This section describes the structures (e.g. committees, organizations, teams) and processes for overseeing ICSP implementation activities both within the municipality and in the broader community. This oversight is described at three distinct levels: decision-making, coordination and partnership.

ICSPs are generally described as being “*community-owned but municipally-led*” because of the high level of public engagement in developing the plan and the central role of the municipality in funding and coordinating activities. To do this well requires a clear allocation of roles and responsibilities to individuals and teams. It also requires careful attention to managing the organizational changes needed to support sustainability.

Effective implementation requires the development and management of both community (external) and municipal (internal) structures.

These should be integrated with existing structures and scaled to meet the resources and needs of the municipality. The table below outlines the key decision-making, coordination and partner roles based on research by the University of Waterloo, Federation of Canadian Municipalities and Golder Associates<sup>7</sup>.





Role	Community (External) Structure	Municipal (Internal) Structure
<b>DECISION-MAKING</b>	<p><b>ICSP ADVISORY COMMITTEE</b></p> <p>This is a multi-organization group that “owns” the ICSP on behalf of the community. It may be structured as a committee, an issue-based task force or an independent not-for-profit organization. Size is typically 10-15 members drawn from local partners and major employers. The municipality participates as an equal partner, usually represented by an elected official and/or a senior administrator.</p> <p><b>Responsibilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversee community-wide implementation efforts</li> <li>• Identify and recommend short-term priorities and actions</li> <li>• Facilitate community networking</li> <li>• Monitor progress</li> <li>• Oversee maintenance and renewal of the ICSP</li> </ul>	<p><b>SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM</b></p> <p>This is a multi-departmental group that decides on the municipal role in implementing the ICSP. This responsibility is generally assigned to the senior leadership team that brings recommendations to council for final decision-making.</p> <p><b>Responsibilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversee municipally-led implementation efforts</li> <li>• Identify and recommend short-term priorities and actions</li> <li>• Facilitate internal networking</li> <li>• Monitor progress</li> <li>• Coordinate with and support the ICSP Advisory Committee</li> </ul>
<b>COORDINATION</b>	<p><b>COMMUNITY ICSP COORDINATOR</b></p> <p>This is an individual or small group that supports the community-wide decision-making body. This role is typically assigned to a municipal staff member, such as the sustainability coordinator (if that role exists).</p> <p><b>Responsibilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support community decision-making body (e.g. coordinate meetings, notes, conduct research, apply for grants)</li> <li>• Ensure good communication</li> <li>• Collect monitoring information from partners and prepare progress reports</li> <li>• Manage and recruit partners (including the municipality)</li> </ul>	<p><b>MUNICIPAL ICSP COORDINATOR</b></p> <p>This is an individual or small group that coordinates municipal sustainability activities. This may be assigned to a current employee or a new full or part-time position. Generally this person plays both the municipal and community coordinator roles with administrative assistance.</p> <p><b>Responsibilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support municipal decision-making (e.g. coordinate meetings, notes, research, grants)</li> <li>• Ensure good communication</li> <li>• Collect monitoring information and prepare progress reports</li> <li>• Engage and educate municipal employees</li> <li>• Liaise with the community ICSP coordinator and implementing partners</li> </ul>

Role	Community (External) Structure	Municipal (Internal) Structure
PARTNERS	<p><b>SUSTAINABILITY CHAMPIONS NETWORK</b></p> <p>Community partners are crucial for building awareness and for identifying and implementing the tasks required to deliver the ICSP. Many communities formalize these partnerships through a “Sustainability Champions” network. This involves a simple form that community organizations and individuals fill out that outlines their commitment to the ICSP. There may be different types of champions depending on their level of commitment, role in the community and whether they are an individual or an organization.</p> <p><b>Potential Responsibilities and Benefits:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and promote the ICSP</li> <li>• Report annually on their sustainability activities</li> <li>• Participate in training, networking and capacity building activities</li> <li>• Identify and take on actions to improve community sustainability</li> <li>• Eligible for recognition and awards</li> </ul>	<p><b>SUSTAINABILITY TEAM</b></p> <p>In addition to the formal decision-making and coordinating roles described above, many municipalities also recruit motivated employees as internal “sustainability champions” for sustainability teams. These teams ideally include representation from each department and a mix of junior and senior staff. They focus on municipal office operations and developing a culture of sustainability.</p> <p><b>Potential Responsibilities and Benefits:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build sustainability awareness and understanding</li> <li>• Identify and promote actions to improve the sustainability of municipal office operations (such as recycling, paperless meetings, etc.)</li> <li>• Promote ICSP priorities within their respective departments</li> <li>• Eligible for recognition and awards</li> </ul>

## Leading Practices

### 1. Community Oversight and Partners

Some municipalities draw on the community advisory committee that helped develop the ICSP, while others partner with a new or existing not-for-profit organization for oversight. With either, it is important to establish clear terms of reference and a transparent process for selecting members and making decisions.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- **Establish a community committee.** Establish an advisory committee and identify municipal representatives. Clarify the role of this committee relative to other municipal advisory committees.

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- **Identify a community ICSP coordinator.** Identify or recruit an employee who can support the community decision-making committee.

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- **Recruit sustainability partners.** Create a simple form and webpage for local organizations and individuals to become sustainability partners. Promote this program and hold networking events (see the Engage section of the guide for more ideas.)

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- **Manage partner collaboration.** In addition to decision-making, a process is needed to support and foster collaboration among the diverse community partners. One approach is the “constellation model” where partners are encouraged to create separate, self-organizing, action-oriented teams (or constellations) around different sustainability issues. Constellations are convened by organizations that want to take action on a particular issue and then disband if interest wanes. More information available from the *Centre for Social Innovation*<sup>8</sup>.

## 2. Municipal Structures and Teams

Identify which individual(s) and department(s) have the responsibility for overseeing implementation and reviewing/renewing the sustainability plan and ensure they have the mandate (or authority) to fulfill this role.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- **Establish a senior decision-making committee.** Use integrated teams, processes and structures to facilitate the coordination and integration of sustainability activities across different plans and departments. Place sustainability staff in the CAO’s office and assign key roles to senior leaders. Engage council regularly and include sustainability as part of the briefing for newly-elected officials.

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- **Identify or hire a municipal sustainability coordinator.** Identify staff champions and assign a senior individual to be accountable for implementation, such as the CAO. If possible, assign resources for dedicated staff to coordinate activities.

**Establish a volunteer internal sustainability team.** This team should not be the ones solely responsible for accomplishing internal sustainability activities due to risk of burn-out, but can help provide ideas and promote awareness.

**Hire a sustainability intern.** Students or recent graduates can help play a coordinating role as interns. With an internship structure in place, this can provide a low cost, permanent position that rotates interns through in 8-month placements.

### 3. Work Regionally

Many sustainability issues are most effectively addressed at the regional level through joint initiatives and servicing agreements. Areas where regional ICSP collaboration makes the most sense are presented below.

**Ten Priority Areas for Regional Collaboration<sup>9</sup>**

- Solid waste resource management
- Regional economic development and tourism
- Regional transportation, including active transportation
- Joint services (such as water and wastewater utilities)
- Land-use and watershed planning
- Lobbying for regional funding and issues
- Sharing of ideas, human resources, best practices and networking
- Joint public education materials
- Renewable energy projects
- Emergency and protective services

### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

**Regional forums.** Hold a regional public forum to discuss the similarities and differences among the ICSPs in the region and identify priorities for collaboration. Coordinate this forum with a joint meeting of elected officials.

**Regional network.** Create an informal (or formal) network to connect municipal staff working on sustainability issues. The network can be used to share best practices, tools, studies and opportunities.

**Regional ICSP partners.** Bring together regional municipal representatives and organizations to review their ICSPs and identify areas of common interest and priority. Develop a simple document (such as a declaration or memorandum of understanding) that makes a high-level commitment to working together to advance sustainability in the region.

## Govern Snapshots

A selection of brief “snapshot” examples is provided below to illustrate how different communities have approached the Govern action area. The [Resources](#) section of this guide provides additional case studies and tools.

<p>Municipality of the District of Shelburne, NS</p>	<p>Shelburne’s ICSP is written as a community plan. It has established a sustainability committee made-up of residents from each of its seven districts and two councillors. It oversees the implementation of the ICSP and serves as a resource for municipal staff in the areas of public outreach and engagement. The District of Shelburne also hired a Sustainable Development Coordinator and established a sustainability department to implement the plan.</p>
<p>Municipality of the County of Colchester, NS</p>	<p>Colchester’s ICSP is written for, and managed by, the ‘corporate’ municipality rather than the broader community. It identifies ways that the municipality can support community groups but does not place responsibility on these groups. Senior management is primarily responsible for implementation of the ICSP within each department, with the Director of Community Development as the overall team lead.</p>
<p>Town of Bridgewater, NS</p>	<p>Bridgewater’s ICSP was designed as a municipal plan with contributions from other community stakeholders. Implementation is led by the Town through specific committees and major decisions are made by the CAO, other senior management, or council. The Town has retained a full-time <b>Sustainability Planner</b> to oversee ongoing planning and implementation work.</p> <p>Activities are managed mainly by the Town’s Planning Department; however, ICSP responsibilities and actions are distributed widely through the organization, including Engineering, Public Works, Water &amp; Waste Water, and Parks Recreation &amp; Culture staff and department heads. The Town also has a <b>Green Team</b> consisting of a small team of staff who review sustainability issues in municipal operations (e.g. energy management).</p> <p>The Town established the <b>Bridgewater &amp; Area Community Sustainability Network</b> (<a href="http://www.sustainablebridgewater.ca">www.sustainablebridgewater.ca</a>) to engage the broader community in the implementation of the ICSP. Members sign a <b>Sustainability Charter</b> to join. The group is steered by its membership and administered by the Sustainability Planner but has no formal decision-making or advisory role. There is no standing community “sustainability committee” or comparable advisory committee to assist with the implementation of the plan.</p>

<p>Town of Antigonish, NS</p>	<p>The Town of Antigonish engaged a variety of partners through an <b>early adopter program</b> to help create its ICSP. These partners became the Sustainable Antigonish Roundtable (<a href="http://sustainableantigonish.ca">http://sustainableantigonish.ca</a>) in October 2012. This inclusive, nimble community-based and community-driven network includes more than 200 individual volunteers representing some 50 businesses, non-profits, municipal governments, and other stakeholders. Regular community sessions and programs as well as periodic conferences are held by host organizations.</p> <p>A <b>Sustainability Committee</b> has been endorsed by council. The Committee includes all departmental heads as well as stakeholders from the community, and is chaired by a council member. The Committee’s mandate is to make recommendations to council on all matters regarding the development, implementation and progress of the ICSP and the Municipal Climate Change Action Plan. The Committee also helps with disseminating information, identifying ways to build capacity and engaging the community.</p>
<p>Town of Hinton, AB<sup>10</sup></p>	<p>Hinton restructured all of its community advisory committees to reflect its community sustainability plan (CSP). council wanted the boards and committees to reflect the CSP principles and provide advice that is based on the needs of the community as a whole. Their new model includes an over-arching committee – the <b>Community Engagement &amp; Accountability Committee</b> – whose role is to broadly represent the voice of the community by gathering public input to develop recommendations to council that advance programs, services and initiatives aligned with its mandate and CSP. See <a href="http://www.hinton.ca">www.hinton.ca</a></p>
<p>Community Ownership Governance Models<sup>11</sup></p>	<p>The <b>City of Kingston</b>, ON and the <b>Town of Cochrane</b>, AB both have established non-profit organizations as “community owners” of their ICSPs. Both plans are to be implemented within the community with the municipality as a key partner in pursuing its goals.</p> <p>In both cases, the municipality provides some funding to the non-profit in return for the delivery of specific activities. These include i) building awareness and communicating the plan, ii) engaging community members and organizations, iii) preparing periodic progress reports and iv) maintaining and renewing the vision.</p> <p>Each organization also administers a community partner program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Sustainable Kingston invites organizations to become <b>Community Partners</b> and individuals to make a <b>Citizen’s Commitment</b>. See <a href="http://www.sustainablekingston.ca">www.sustainablekingston.ca</a></li> <li>▶ Cochrane’s S.P.U.R. (Sustainability Partners Uniting Resources) invites individuals to become <b>Sustainability Ambassadors</b> who actively promote the plan or <b>Citizens of Sustainability</b> who lead by example. Organizations and businesses can become <b>Sustainability Champions</b> and contribute to collective action. See <a href="http://cochrane sustainability.ca/">http://cochrane sustainability.ca/</a></li> </ul>



# Engage

Educate, connect and inspire elected officials, staff, community members and stakeholders through meaningful and innovative engagement.

ICSPs are developed through high levels of public and employee engagement, often using new and innovative processes and tools. As a result, they can generate significant enthusiasm as well as raise expectations for the level and quality of engagement in community decision-making.

Constant communication and meaningful engagement are essential to reinforce the community’s commitment and create a culture of sustainability. Mechanisms such as websites, newsletters, events, and competitions can be used to keep the community informed, motivated, and connected. This section looks at the various ways that municipalities can engage internally and externally to build their capacity and inspire action toward sustainability.



## Leading Practices

### 1. Constant Communication

Build awareness and understanding through the integration of sustainability information into formal and informal communication. Customize your messages so that they are genuine and relevant to different audiences.

#### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- **Website and social media.** Create a specific ICSP section on your website (supported by social media links) as a “first stop shop” for information exchange on sustainability activities.
- **Integrate sustainability messages in existing communications.** Use existing municipal tools (e.g. memos, newsletters, bulletin boards, mail-outs, municipal intranet) to communicate about sustainability. Include sustainability messages in presentations and press releases.

- **Signatures and letterhead.** Add your sustainability vision, a tagline or a related statement to standard email, letter and report templates.

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- **Create an annual communications plan.** Work with your communications staff to identify and create opportunities to promote sustainability.

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- **Create a sustainability newsletter.** Create a simple one-page quarterly electronic or printed newsletter to distribute to interested partners and community members.

## 2. Connect and Celebrate

Use events, awards, competitions and publications to connect sustainability champions, build pride and celebrate successes and lessons learned.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	
●	<b>Annual action planning workshop.</b> Create an annual sustainability planning workshop or event with internal and external partners to identify and prioritize activities for the coming year.
●	<b>Support grassroots activity.</b> Encourage grassroots community sustainability efforts, and try to amplify the effect of activities initiated by individuals or small groups (e.g. providing micro grants, meeting space and/or meeting time for at-work sustainability initiatives).
●	<b>Ask for ideas.</b> Make it easy for community members, partners and stakeholders to give feedback and suggest ideas for action. Leverage online tools and social media as well as tried-and-true suggestion boxes.
●	<b>Recognize champions.</b> Develop tools to recognize and profile internal and external sustainability champions (e.g. annual sustainability awards, employee/citizen of the month). Partner with local media and organizations and consider making the award presentations a part of existing successful events. Hold an annual sustainability celebration.
■	<b>Surveys.</b> Create regular (e.g. quarterly, annual) simple online surveys for employees and stakeholders to assess their sustainability interests, priorities and ideas.
■	<b>Make sustainability a standard part of engagement.</b> Develop a booth and/or set of promotional materials that can be part of any municipal engagement activity. Work with staff who deliver engagement (e.g. open houses, public forums etc.) to integrate ICSP goals and issues into their processes.
■	<b>Challenge.</b> Use internal competitions to build awareness and generate new ideas. Organize sustainability competitions between business units or neighbouring municipalities.



- **Disrupt the status quo.** Initiate and create events that help set things in motion, disrupting the status quo to generate an understanding of the need for change. For example, remove garbage cans from employee offices.

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- ◆ **Develop an integrated engagement policy.** Develop a community engagement policy or strategy that outlines the municipality's tools, timelines and processes for engagement and consultation, including digital engagement and social media.

### 3. Educate and Train

Proactively educate staff, council, stakeholders and community members on sustainability drivers, issues, benefits, solutions and tools.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	
●	<b>Organize lunch and learns.</b> Bring in speakers (e.g. local champions, sustainability professionals) to talk about sustainability issues. Have the sustainability coordinator present an update to employees and departments annually.
●	<b>Make the ICSP part of staff orientation.</b> Include the ICSP and other materials (e.g. related policies, sustainability 101) in employee orientation programs, emphasizing how sustainability is at the core of the organization's values.
●	<b>Train employees on new tools.</b> Train employees to use specific decision-making tools, such as sustainability management systems.
■	<b>Memberships, certification and conferences.</b> Stay current and track leading practices and trends through relevant memberships and certification, by attending conferences and scanning external regulatory standards, industry development and sustainability publications.
■	<b>Create a resource library.</b> Benchmark and compare your organization's sustainability plans and performance to national leaders, best practices, and emerging practices from other countries. Post this information online.
■	<b>Share best practices.</b> Develop or join sustainability organizations or networks to share information and best practices. This includes building or supporting internal networks.
■	<b>Develop and share sustainability stories.</b> Discuss case studies of successful sustainability initiatives in your organization. Create stories about what the municipality could be like in the future. Repeat stories frequently and using different means (e.g. start meetings with a quick sustainability story.)

**Use Community-Based Social Marketing (CBSM) techniques.** CBSM emphasizes direct, personal contact among community members to encourage action. It is a comprehensive approach focused on removing barriers to action through prompts, commitments, norms and vivid communications.

**Develop a training program.** Invest in ethics, environmental, and sustainability training for all employees. Provide ongoing training and support for employees on why sustainability is important, what the municipality's commitment is and how to use decision-making tools to implement the sustainability plan.

**Mentor and coach.** Supplement formal training with mentoring and coaching to ensure staff members have the skills and knowledge needed to implement new sustainable procedures and ensure consistent behaviour.

## Engage Snapshots

A selection of brief “snapshot” examples is provided below to illustrate how different communities have approached the Engage action area. The **Resources** section of this guide provides additional case studies and tools.

<p>Municipality of the District of Shelburne, NS</p>	<p>The <b>Sustainability Committee</b> acts as a resource for municipal staff in the areas of public outreach and engagement. The Municipality also gives out a <b>sustainability award</b> each year to an individual or organization demonstrating leadership in sustainability. A dedicated sustainability website provides contact information, project updates, resources and links to surveys for residents' input. See <a href="http://www.municipalityofshelburne.ca/sustainability.html">www.municipalityofshelburne.ca/sustainability.html</a></p>
<p>Town of Antigonish, NS</p>	<p>Members of the public receive updates through the local <b>newsletter</b> "Talk of the Town," annual sustainability <b>awards</b>, and other fun local activities. Information is provided through both the Town's website (<a href="http://www.townofantigonish.ca/sustainability.html">www.townofantigonish.ca/sustainability.html</a>) and Sustainable Antigonish (<a href="http://www.sustainableantigonish.ca/">www.sustainableantigonish.ca/</a>).</p>
<p>Town of Bridgewater, NS</p>	<p>The Town has organized the annual <b>Growing Green Festival</b> (<a href="http://www.growinggreenfest.com">www.growinggreenfest.com</a>) with other communities in the region. Community businesses, organizations, and local residents receive recognition for sustainability actions through the <b>Active Transportation Leadership Award</b>, as well as general promotion of sustainability-related activities in the community.</p> <p>The Town also communicates through the <b>Bridgewater &amp; Area Community Sustainability Network</b> website (<a href="http://www.sustainablebridgewater.ca">www.sustainablebridgewater.ca</a>), monthly e-newsletters and email communications. The membership also meets quarterly to learn about sustainability and steer the Network.</p>

Charlottetown,  
PEI<sup>12</sup>

The City of Charlottetown has put in place a number of initiatives to engage employees. They have created an **ICSP Standing Committee** comprised of the CAO, three council representatives and senior management to direct implementation efforts. The committee is supported by a **working group** of 16 senior managers who attend a sustainability-focused workshop approximately every six weeks to set goals and prioritize actions.

Internal engagement efforts have included **lunch-and learn** dialogue sessions, **workshops** and **sustainability eLearning**. The City also created the “**City Hall Energy Challenge**.” The City identified eight “power surgers” – individuals who, when they see employees taking exceptional measures to reduce their energy consumption, reward them with credits on their energy bills. Winners from the first “Energy Challenge” were profiled through a City-wide email, and their photographs and green efforts were proudly displayed at City Hall.

Community engagement efforts have included the use of **social media** (Facebook, Twitter), a **Community Dialogue** series in partnership with the library, a **Sustainability Speakers** program and *Idea City*, which solicits ideas from community members.

Resort  
Municipality  
of Whistler  
(RMOW), BC<sup>13</sup>

The RMOW has an extensive internal and external engagement program for sustainability, most of which is communicated through the stand-alone **Whistler2020 website** ([www.whistler2020.ca/home](http://www.whistler2020.ca/home)).

Whistler2020 **Community Task Forces** convene annually to prioritize strategic actions for implementing the ICSP. Each task force reviews the results of past recommended actions, evaluates the most current indicator data, strategically assesses local and regional opportunities and then presents a recommended set of actions.

Actions are then adopted by the municipality and its partners, and an online **Action Browser** database allows residents to browse recommended actions and their status.

RMOW has also launched the **iShift Whistler2020 Take Action Challenge** for citizens and businesses. This is led by the **Whistler Centre for Sustainability**, a not-for-profit organization created to lead sustainability learning and practices within the community.

## Plan

Integrate sustainability goals and priorities into new and existing plans.

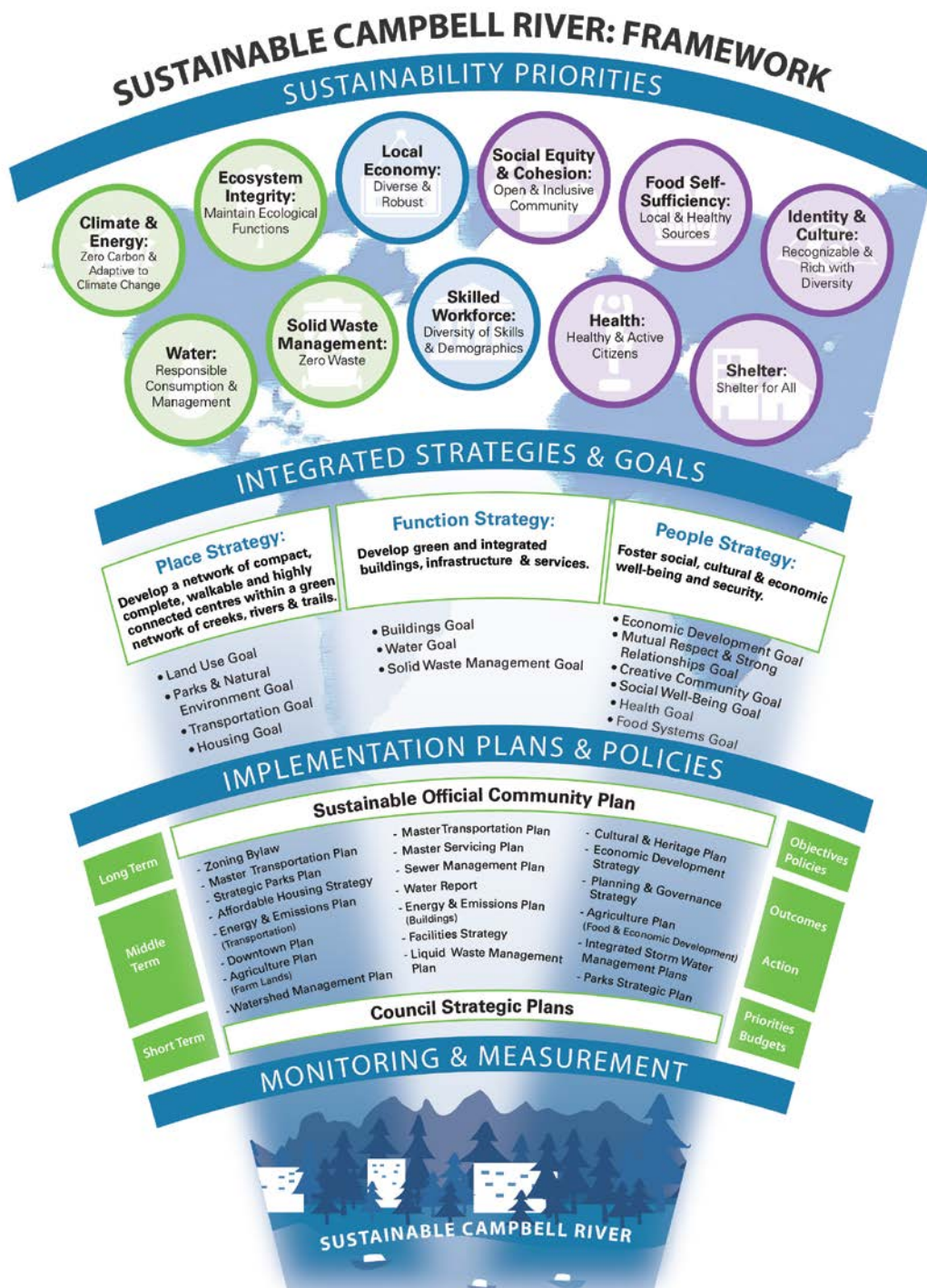
ICSPs are broad plans that impact all aspects of municipal operations and planning. Consequently, to implement their ICSPs, local governments have to systematically integrate sustainability goals and priorities into their new and existing plans and planning processes. This includes the full range of community plans (e.g. land-use plans, economic development, parks and recreation) as well as strategic and departmental plans.

**ICSPs are most effective when positioned as the highest level community plan, guiding all other planning done by the municipality and community organizations.** This can be communicated using a “strategic framework” graphic that shows the relationships among the ICSP and other levels of planning. A sample strategic framework from Campbell River, BC is provided on the following page.

**As highlighted in the diagram, a municipal planning strategy and a multi-year strategic plan are highly recommended to translate your ICSP’s long-term vision into shorter-term actions.** The strategic plan should draw from the planned actions of the various medium-term community plans and integrate council, community and stakeholder priorities. Its structure and priorities should be directly linked back to the long-term ICSP goals and outcomes. “Back-casting” is one useful tool to chart a path from the long-term ICSP to the short-term strategic plan priorities.<sup>14</sup>







This example of a strategic framework diagram is from Campbell River's ICSP ([www.campbellriver.ca/CityHall/Departments/Sustainability/Green/Pages/SustainableOfficialCommunityPlan.aspx](http://www.campbellriver.ca/CityHall/Departments/Sustainability/Green/Pages/SustainableOfficialCommunityPlan.aspx)).

## Leading Practices






### 1. Strategic Planning Framework

Modify strategic planning and council priority-setting processes to integrate sustainability and align with long-term goals.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	
●	<b>Strategic framework diagram.</b> Develop a strategic framework diagram and a brief narrative that explains how to use it. The Town of Morinville, AB has created a good example. <sup>15</sup>
●	<b>Set department goals.</b> Set measurable sustainability goals at the department and business unit (e.g. program) levels. Require that sustainability is integrated into annual business plans.
●	<b>Brief decision-makers.</b> Include a briefing for council and senior staff on the sustainability plan and accomplishments as part of the preparation for strategic and business planning.
●	<b>Align council priorities.</b> Use the ICSP to frame council priority setting processes. Move towards a single document (e.g. strategic plan) that presents council and staff priorities.
●	<b>Identify annual priorities (“Year of ...”).</b> Work with community partners to select a small number (e.g. 2-3) of ICSP goals for special focus each year.
■	<b>Develop a standard planning policy.</b> This should define common planning terms (vision, mission, goals, objectives, indicators) and how they should be used in different types and levels of planning to ensure consistency.
■	<b>Update templates.</b> Update templates used to prepare for strategic planning and budgeting to reference the sustainability goals and priorities.
■	<b>Strategic plan.</b> Develop a 2-5 year strategic plan that identifies the sustainability priorities for the municipality as a whole. This plan should be framed using the goal areas of the ICSP. If you already have a strategic planning process in place, then revise the format and structure of the strategic plan to link with the sustainability plan and its indicators. Involve those responsible for implementing sustainability (such as environmental managers) in the design and delivery of strategic planning processes.

## 2. Align Municipal Plans

Actively review and update new and existing plans to ensure they integrate sustainability and align with long-term goals.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	
	<p><b>Plan inventory and gap analysis.</b> Map current plans against your sustainability goals to develop an inventory of existing commitments and actions to identify gaps and priorities for plan review and renewal. Include information on when each plan was created and the timeline for updating and renewing them.</p>
	<p><b>Innovate through planning charrettes.</b> Planning charrettes bring together technical experts, stakeholders and decision-makers in an interactive workshop format. Participants are tasked with identifying the best options for addressing a design challenge, such as intensifying a neighbourhood while meeting social, economic and environmental objectives. They can be applied at multiple-levels, from an individual project to a community-wide growth plan.</p>
	<p><b>Integrated planning cycle.</b> Develop a long-term (10+year) plan for the review and renewal of key planning documents. Prioritize timing based on sustainability priorities.</p>
	<p><b>Update municipal planning strategy.</b> Amend or develop a new municipal planning strategy to support the ICSP.</p>
	<p><b>Adopt best practices.</b> Use best-practice guides and frameworks (e.g. <i>Smart Growth</i>, <i>Climate Change Adaptation</i>, <i>LEED® for Neighbourhood Development</i>)<sup>16</sup> to guide land-use planning.</p>

## 3. Analyze and “Back-cast”

Conduct research and analysis to support plan development, such as “back- casting” from long-term goals to identify key milestones for achieving them.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	
	<p><b>Conduct studies.</b> Conduct research each year to inform planning on priority goals (e.g. leading practices, technological options, development potential). Use innovative planning tools (such as charrettes<sup>17</sup>) to engage experts and community members.</p>
	<p><b>Community survey.</b> Conduct a survey of community needs, priorities and perceptions every 3-5 years. Use this survey to monitor progress, identify issues and set priorities.</p>



■ **Assess sustainability benefits.** Ground planning processes in a thorough assessment of financial and resource implications. Use full-cost accounting tools, such as lifecycle analysis, to assess the long-term capital and operational costs and benefits.

◆ **“Back-cast” implementation pathway<sup>18</sup>.** Forecasting attempts to predict future conditions based on current trends (e.g. increases in car use and urban sprawl). In contrast, “back-casting” attempts to identify different pathways to leverage or change current trends to achieve a desired future state (e.g. lower car use and more dense development). For ICSPs, municipalities should “back-cast” from their long-term goals to identify the short-term actions and pathways that could lead to achieving the goals. These actions then become inputs for departmental and strategic planning processes.

## Plan Snapshots

A selection of brief “snapshot” examples is provided below to illustrate how different communities have approached the Plan action area. The [Resources](#) section of this guide provides additional case studies and tools.

<p>Town of Bridgewater, NS</p>	<p>The ICSP is being actively integrated into many of the Town’s planning documents, including: Council’s Community Plan, the Planning Review and the Downtown &amp; Waterfront Master Plan. Currently, the ICSP is scheduled for review around 2015.</p>
<p>Town of Truro, NS</p>	<p>Integration of the ICSP into other documents and plans began with amendments to the procurement policy and a fleet-efficiency program.</p>
<p>Town of Antigonish, NS</p>	<p>Since the development of the ICSP, all the Town’s plans are affiliated with the strategic direction and goals identified within it. These include the Town’s strategic plan, municipal planning strategy, departmental plans and the Capital Investment Plan. Organizations mandated to support municipal work, such as the Regional Development Authority, have also been using the ICSP as a central document in the completion of studies and projects. Council often refers to the goals in the ICSP for their decision-making.</p>

<p>City of Campbell River, BC<sup>19</sup></p>	<p>Campbell River has both a Sustainable Official Community Plan (SOCP), which serves as its overall land-use plan, and an ICSP. The ICSP includes a strategic planning framework that shows the clear linkages between long-term sustainability priorities all the way down to Council Strategic Plans. This framework situates shorter term budgets and decisions in the context of longer term policies by identifying 10- and 25-year planning tools and bylaws, and their relationships to both “ends” of the framework (i.e. Sustainability Priorities and Council Strategic Plans).</p>
<p>Town of Morinville, AB<sup>20</sup></p>	<p>Morinville developed a simple strategic planning framework diagram that links its municipal sustainability plan with their strategic and business planning, budgeting and reporting. The Town’s three-year strategic planning cycle dovetails with the electoral cycle and includes producing a comprehensive progress report on the sustainability plan in advance of each municipal election. To further reinforce the importance of its ICSP, Morinville updated its strategic and business planning templates and processes reflect its sustainability goals.</p>
<p>Plan Integration and Assessment</p>	<p>The <b>Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA)</b> has developed a simple tool to assist municipalities with inventorying, aligning, integrating and communicating their various plans and strategies with their sustainability plan. This <b>Planning Integration Template</b> maps the goals of each plan against the sustainability goals to identify strengths and gaps.<sup>21</sup></p> <p>An example of how this type of tool can be applied is the <b>City of Calgary’s (AB) Triple Bottom Line Policy Framework (TBLF)</b>. The Framework is a council-approved summary of existing City policies and plans regarding the economy, environment and society. It summarizes more than 350 policy statements into more than 20 themes so that all decisions are more consistent with already-approved policy. Staff receive training on the TBLF approach which is also embedded in the City’s corporate initiatives (e.g. business planning, Integrated Risk Management) and “Triple Bottom Line” statements are a required component of reports to council committees.<sup>22</sup></p> <p>An example of a similar approach is <b>Dawson Creek’s (BC) Sustainability Baseline Report</b>. This analysis looked at current policies, programs, regulations and projects and compared these against a best practice sustainable community framework to identify opportunities and gaps.<sup>23</sup></p>

## Act

Use programs, services, regulations and advocacy to achieve sustainability goals.

Act looks at what local governments actually do and deliver. It includes programs (such as fire, police, social services), regulatory requirements (e.g. zoning, guidelines, standards, permitting processes, other bylaws), financial tools (e.g. taxes, fees, pricing), public works (e.g. buildings, parks, roads, fleet, other infrastructure, major projects) and utility services (e.g. water, sewers, solid waste, energy).



This section provides ideas for aligning these processes, policies and practices with sustainability goals and priorities. This includes adding or discontinuing programs or services to better support the ICSP. By necessity, this section stays at a high level and does not outline specific programs and initiatives as these are covered by other issue-specific guides.

A clear and consistently reinforced commitment from senior staff and council is critical to success. If senior management do not reference the ICSP and do not act on (or enforce) corporate sustainability initiatives (e.g. recycling/ composting, vehicle idling) then they signal to employees that the ICSP is not a real priority.

## Leading Practices

### 1. Take Early Action

Jump-start implementation by taking early action through pilot projects, strategic initiatives and “low-hanging fruit.”

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	
●	<b>Support individual action.</b> Make it easier for employees to make sustainability decisions at work (e.g. recycling, battery collection, subsidized transit passes, ride sharing, secure bicycle parking). Post tips and information in public places (e.g. lunchroom, bathrooms).
●	<b>Support community action.</b> Use community grants and employee volunteer programs to contribute to sustainability-related initiatives in the community.
●	<b>Pilot projects.</b> Use pilot projects to test new ideas and approaches. For example, select a public works project to pilot new green procurement or building approaches.
●	<b>Invest in quick wins.</b> Identify investments with short-payback periods, such as energy, lighting and water efficiency upgrades.
●	<b>“Walk the talk.”</b> Senior staff and managers should demonstrate their commitment through leading by example and enforcing new policies with staff (e.g. modeling anti-idling, recycling, transportation choices)
■	<b>Revolving fund.</b> Develop a fund to support upgrading equipment and buildings to reduce energy consumption and reinvest operational savings into the fund.
■	<b>Apply for grants.</b> Identify provincial and national grants for sustainability innovation (e.g. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities Green Municipal Fund: <a href="http://www.fcm.ca/home/programs/green-municipal-fund.htm">www.fcm.ca/home/programs/green-municipal-fund.htm</a> ).
■	<b>Adopt standards.</b> Gain certification for projects from outside agencies (e.g. Fairtrade, EcoLogo, Forest Stewardship Council, LEED®).
■	<b>Advocate for sustainability.</b> Many aspects of the ICSP require action by regional, provincial or national stakeholders. Municipalities should make their positions clear through sending letters, convening meetings, participating in events and joining networks.

## 2. Align Programs, Regulations and Incentives

Systematically review existing municipal programs (e.g. fire, police, social services), regulatory requirements (e.g. zoning, guidelines, standards, permitting processes, other bylaws) financial tools (e.g. taxes, fees) and key policies (e.g. procurement, project management) and develop new policies as needed to implement sustainability priorities.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	
●	<b>Reduce barriers.</b> Review current regulations to identify requirements that may prevent innovative development (e.g. green roofs, renewable energy). Revise restrictive regulations or create special zoning to pilot innovations.
●	<b>Use developer sustainability checklists.</b> Require developers to submit a sustainable building features checklist as part of their permit applications. Use this checklist to build awareness and prioritize applications for processing. See the <b>Resources</b> section for examples.
●	<b>Develop project tools (e.g. checklists, selection criteria, templates)</b> to help align activities and decisions with sustainability objectives. A common first step is to develop one or more forms for staff to complete at each stage of project planning and development. These forms help staff to identify the possible positive and negative impacts of an initiative on various sustainability goals, and prompt staff to identify alternative approaches to optimize project outcomes. For an example, see the Whistler Sustainable Purchasing Guide. <sup>24</sup>
■	<b>Develop a Sustainable Purchasing Policy</b> These policies encourage staff to purchase quality products, services and construction at competitive prices while considering key environmental and social benefits over the entire life-cycle of the product or service. The Municipal Collaboration for Sustainable Purchasing (MCSP) is a group of Canadian municipalities that share resources and lessons learned in this important area <sup>25</sup> .
■	<b>Develop a supplier code of conduct.</b> Supplier codes of conduct set minimum performance standards for suppliers and their subcontractors. They are developed to encourage (or require) suppliers to support of the broader sustainability purchasing policy.
■	<b>Align program and service plans.</b> Update guidance materials for program and service planning to include the ICSP. Engage a program (e.g. fire services, police) to pilot and refine the guidance.
■	<b>Gap analysis.</b> Map out and assess current programs against ICSP objectives, and revise or develop new offerings to improve alignment.

- **Adopt zoning standards.** Adopt sustainability-friendly zoning from other communities and best-practice guides (e.g. West Coast Environmental Law Smart Bylaws Guide)<sup>26</sup>.

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- **Develop guidelines.** Pilot the use of innovative design guidelines to achieve ICSP goals, such as storm-water management, intensification and climate change adaptation.

### 3. Align Operations and Utilities

Systematically review existing processes, policies and practices for delivering municipal public works (e.g. buildings, parks, roads, fleet, other infrastructure, major projects) and utility services (e.g. water, sewers, solid waste, energy.) Ensure processes, policies and practices have been updated and new approaches have been developed, as needed, to implement sustainability priorities.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	
●	<b>Adopt project standards.</b> Gain certification for projects from outside agencies (e.g. Fairtrade, EcoLogo, Forest Stewardship Council, LEED®)
●	<b>Use demand-side management (DSM).</b> DSM reduces capital and operational costs by focusing on improving energy efficiency and decreasing consumption rather than simply increasing supply.
■	<b>Align financial and non-financial incentives.</b> Use financial and in-kind tools (e.g. fee structures, processing times, staff support) to promote sustainable behavior and decisions.
■	<b>Integrate project planning.</b> All projects should consider how their design and development can be used to maximize their social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits. To do this well requires bringing together multi-departmental teams and using ICSP goals to drive and evaluate design options. Focus on identifying how modifying the timing, sourcing, design, construction or operation of a project can provide additional benefits to the community.



## Act Snapshots

A selection of brief “snapshot” examples is provided below to illustrate how different communities have approached the Act action area. The [Resources](#) section of this guide provides additional case studies and tools.

<p>Town of Bridgewater, NS</p>	<p>Each year since 2010, Council has committed substantial funding (both from the Gas Tax as well as from local tax revenues) toward the implementation of sustainability initiatives described in the Town’s ICSP. A variety of actions have been implemented including: incorporation of <b>active transportation</b> considerations into street works, extensive <b>energy retrofits</b> for municipal facilities, several <b>community-focused sustainability programs</b> and a large-scale <b>planning &amp; land-use review</b> using sustainability principles.</p>
<p>Municipality of the County of Antigonish, NS</p>	<p>The County of Antigonish is making changes to its permitting processes, and rate structures, and developing incentive programs to support its ICSP goals. Some low-hanging fruit have been grasped (e.g. <b>energy efficiency programs, an energy audit, LED holiday light exchange, composting program, clear bag garbage collection, anti-idling policy, sustainable procurement policy</b> in development). Bylaws are under review for alignment with the ICSP.</p>
<p>Town of Bridgetown, NS</p>	<p>The greatest success of Bridgetown’s ICSP process came from working with the community’s physical and human assets (e.g. buildings, green spaces, recreation facilities, community leaders and volunteers) and its available resources to best meet the needs of the community.</p> <p>The Redevelopment Plan section of the ICSP (which focuses on the adaptive reuse, rehabilitation and greening of buildings, structures and properties as the foundation of economic and community development) has resulted in the completion of several sustainability actions, including projects to <b>reuse existing buildings</b> (such as a new library), an <b>ice rink energy efficiency</b> project, and the relocation and expansion of the <b>Farmers’ and Traders’ Market</b>.</p>
<p>Municipality of the County of Colchester, NS</p>	<p>Colchester has emphasized incorporating the principles of sustainability into its regular business decisions and new designs. For example, it took action early to integrate LEED® Silver standards into the design and construction of the new Tatamagouche Library and the Truro-Colchester Civic Centre.</p>



<p>Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), NS<sup>27</sup></p>	<p>HRM conducted a <b>Corporate Sustainability Analysis</b> that resulted in 12 high-level corporate-wide recommendations from which staff identified 3 immediate priorities: <b>green buildings, green procurement, and green corporate culture</b>. Early actions have included ensuring new municipal facilities achieve a minimum of LEED® Silver certification and implementing green vendor requirements. HRM also participates in the national <b>Municipal Collaboration for Sustainable Purchasing</b>.</p> <p>One of HRM's most significant green building accomplishments has been the establishment of a <b>special reserve fuelled by the annual financial savings resulting from energy projects</b>. Because HRM will continue to see savings from energy projects, the reserve maintains a continuous supply, and is a secure source of funding for energy projects.</p> <p>In 2012, HRM launched a <b>Solar City initiative</b> which uses an innovative financing and delivery mechanism allowing the municipality to provide turn-key installations for up to a 1,000 solar hot water systems per year to homeowners that are paid for over 10 years as a supplement to their property tax bill.</p>
<p>City of Charlottetown, PEI<sup>28</sup></p>	<p>Charlottetown has actively partnered with the community to tackle sustainability actions that are outside of its jurisdiction. One example is their <b>Community Micro-Grant Pilot Project</b> that provides grants of up to \$2,500 for youth and community initiatives. Other early actions include developing a <b>Regional Transportation Plan</b> and a <b>Water Conservation Program</b>. To model sustainable behaviour, the City Hall is powered with 100% <b>EcoLogo-certified energy</b> from Bullfrog Power.</p>
<p>Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW), BC<sup>29</sup></p>	<p>The RMOW has developed a <b>Sustainable Purchasing Guide</b> that outlines a six step process to integrate sustainability into purchasing decisions, as well as technical <b>Assessment Sheets</b> that provide detailed assessments of a common set of products purchased by the municipality. The RMOW also has a <b>Capital Project Planning Tool</b>, which is an excel-based worksheet that is used to assess major capital projects against the municipality's sustainability objectives, the flexibility of the project and return on investment.</p>

# Manage

Embed sustainability into corporate processes, policies and management systems.

This section addresses how local governments manage their organization to achieve their sustainability objectives. This includes creating the right organizational structure and administrative policies needed to facilitate implementation. The ultimate goal is to make sustainability a part of everyday life, much like health and safety is in many organizations. This requires a proactive, systematic approach that touches on all aspects of organizational management and culture.



## Leading Practices

### 1. Manage the Sustainability Culture Shift

Implementing sustainability requires significant changes to formal and informal structures, processes and practices at all levels of the organization. All of these changes are key for aligning the organizational culture with your long-term sustainability goals. A transition or change plan is important to help anticipate and manage resistance to change and overcome organizational inertia.

#### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- **Create a small transition team.** Identify a few respected individuals (ideally representing each management level or municipal department) to work with the sustainability coordinator to monitor “the pulse” of the organizational culture. These team members should meet monthly or quarterly to assess the pace and depth of the cultural shift, and identify ideas to accelerate the process.
- **Identify annual transition activities.** Meet annually to identify and prioritize key activities across the seven action areas for supporting the culture shift (e.g. engage, manage etc.). Bring priority ideas to the senior leadership team to include in annual implementation and work planning.

**Leverage successful change initiatives.** Identify what recent initiatives have required a significant change in corporate culture, such as adopting health and safety policies. Engage the key staff involved to learn from their experience and consider “piggy-backing” sustainability messages on their planned initiatives.

**Set transition targets.** Identify a simple set of measures and associated targets for tracking integration. This could be as simple as the percentage of employees who are aware of the ICSP, believe that it is a corporate priority and/or can identify the most relevant goals for their department. Integrate these questions into existing employee surveys or into a stand-alone sustainability survey.

**Formally assess integration.** Plan a workshop and/or survey to assess the degree to which the culture shift has been successful and identify areas of strength and weakness. Consider using the framework and leading practices in this guide to structure the assessment. Benchmark performance every year or two to track progress.

## 2. Align Employee Responsibilities and Incentives

Implementing sustainability successfully requires the support and participation of all employees. Municipalities can enable employee participation by integrating sustainability responsibilities into job descriptions, performance review processes and incentives.

### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

**Update recruiting materials.** Refer to sustainability values, goals, and performance in recruiting materials. Position it as a selling feature.

**Personal sustainability goals.** Include sustainability in personal goal setting processes. Identify relevant sustainability metrics, actions and targets for employee performance. Be clear about how employees will be measured and ensure that the targets sought are within each employee’s control.

**Update orientation materials.** Make the ICSP a part of the orientation package and process for new employees. See the leading practices under “Engage” for more ideas around outreach and education.

**Recognize champions.** Leverage existing employee programs (e.g. employee of the month, volunteer of the year) to recognize employees who display sustainability values and skills and/or deliver sustainability results. See the leading practices under “Engage” for more ideas around celebration and awards.

**Create a learning (or ideas) database.** For example, many organizations require employees to submit a minimum number of health and safety “learnings” each year. Institute a similar process for sharing ideas and insights on sustainability successes and challenges.

**Update key job descriptions.** Over time, various job descriptions may need to be updated (and new ones developed) to include key employees’ sustainability responsibilities. As positions open up, take the opportunity to integrate sustainability into job advertisements and descriptions.

**Update training programs.** Develop new modules (e.g. Sustainability 101) to support the personal growth of employees to develop their sustainability capacity. This includes developing training on how to use new decision-making processes and tools. See the leading practices under “Engage” for more ideas around education and training.

**Align executive compensation.** Re-design executive-level compensation to reward departmental and municipal-wide sustainability performance.

**Update human resource policies.** In the long-term, ensure that the terms of reference for the next update of human resource policies considers sustainability. In the short-term, look for small changes (such as updating the employee code of conduct) that can reinforce the sustainability commitment. Work with labour representatives to identify ideas and options.

### 3. Update Administrative Policies and Decision-making Processes

Update corporate administrative policies and decision-making processes to align with sustainability goals and values, and develop or adopt new policies as needed. This includes putting in place more integrated planning and decision-making processes that use holistic criteria for evaluating options. The value of these policies and approaches has been demonstrated in the building industry, where experienced development teams have managed to deliver high-performance buildings at little or no construction cost premium.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	
●	<p><b>Update templates for internal reports</b> (e.g. Council, CAO) to include a section on sustainability. This can start with a simple open-ended question such as “Describe how this initiative supports the ICSP” and evolve into a more rigorous process over time.</p>
●	<p><b>Adopt voluntary codes or principles.</b> Voluntary codes are codes of practice and other arrangements that influence, shape, control or set benchmarks for the behavior of the municipality and its employees. Examples of principle-based commitments include the United Nations Global Compact for Cities, the Melbourne Principles, the Natural Step principles and the Aalborg principles. Other examples include codes of ethical and sustainable conduct for employees, the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment and purchasing-related policies.</p>
●	<p><b>Sustainable meetings.</b> Adopt a “sustainable meetings” policy to reduce waste and source local, healthy food. This may include purchasing compostable cutlery and plates, requiring caterers to reduce packaging and providing appropriate waste and recycling materials in meeting rooms.</p>
■	<p><b>Pilot integrated approaches to decision-making.</b> The best solutions are integrated and support multiple sustainability objectives. Arriving at these solutions requires that municipalities break down “decision-making silos” and coordinate planning across departments. This may be as simple as holding a planning workshop with staff from different business units working on shared targets. Choose a specific project to pilot these new approaches, such as a planned capital project. Bring representatives from across the municipality together to develop this process and any new decision-making tools needed to support it.</p>
■	<p><b>Integrate sustainability measures and targets into key management systems.</b> Ideally, municipal environmental, health and safety and financial management systems are integrated and jointly reported on through tools such as balanced scorecards and associated reports. Scorecards provide summary snapshots for staff and decision-makers showing key financial and non-financial measures.</p>

#### 4. Align Budget and Finance Processes

Integrating sustainability into the budget development process and the information provided to decision-makers.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	
●	<p><b>Secure dedicated resources:</b> Set aside financial and human resources to support the coordination and implementation of the sustainability plan. This may start with a small budget to hire a sustainability intern or to provide micro-grants to local sustainability projects.</p>
●	<p><b>Highlight key initiatives.</b> Identify a small number of annual top priorities for implementing the ICSP and flag them in the budget process. Top priorities can be identified by engaging with each department early in the process. Ensure that council and key staff are briefed on the projects and their rationale.</p>
■	<p><b>Engage departments to rate budget line items.</b> Develop a process for rating each budget line item based on its importance for implementing the ICSP. This could include a simple scoring matrix based on each item's importance for municipal operations, importance to citizen's and stakeholders and importance for the ICSP. Engage each department to brief them on the rating system and how to apply it.</p>
■	<p><b>Adopt full-cost accounting tools.</b> These approaches assess the total cost of an initiative by looking at capital and operational costs throughout its lifecycle (such as lifecycle analysis). They may also factor in potential external costs from unintended impacts. The full-cost is then used to evaluate different options and set appropriate fees (such as development cost charges). In municipal operations approaches to full cost accounting are often used to assess water and waste management practices; Alberta Environment provides an excellent Guide to full cost accounting.<sup>30</sup></p>



## Manage Snapshots

A selection of brief “snapshot” examples is provided below to illustrate how different communities have approached the Manage action area. The [Resources](#) section of this guide provides additional case studies and tools.

<p>Municipality of the District of Shelburne, NS</p>	<p>The District of Shelburne established a <b>sustainability coordinator</b> position to implement its ICSP. Significant effort has gone into developing tools for employees and council for implementation (e.g. decision support tool, staff workbook).</p> <p>Various <b>decision support tools</b> are used to prioritize capital projects and other actions. <b>Capital planning</b> links directly back to the ICSP and new policies and regulations have/are being developed (e.g. coastal management, wind turbines) as a result of the ICSP. In most cases, <b>staff reports</b> go to council with a recommendation reference to the ICSP and demonstrate how the recommendation fits within the ICSP framework. Finally, <b>training</b> on how to use the ICSP as a decision-making tool is provided to staff and council.</p>
<p>Municipality of the County of Inverness, NS</p>	<p>The CAO has taken on the responsibility of ensuring that projects fall within the scope of the ICSP as approved by council, as well as directing staff to work within the guidelines laid out in the ICSP. ICSP recommendations are considered when proposing and approving the County’s <b>capital budget</b> and <b>Capital Investment Plan</b>. The ICSP has also been used to guide community “town hall” meetings.</p>
<p>City of Charlottetown, PEI<sup>31</sup></p>	<p>Charlottetown created an internal ‘<b>Sustainability Road Map</b>’ through information collected from surveys and a ‘<b>Municipal Government Sustainability Self-Assessment Tool</b>’. It has also created a <b>corporate education and training</b> program for city staff, and engaged staff from across departments to co-create a sustainability “<b>decision-making filter</b>”. This system helps employees and the finance department evaluate an initiative’s alignment with the ICSP and its triple-bottom-line return on investment.</p>

City of  
Calgary, AB<sup>32</sup>

Calgary has put in place a number of key management initiatives and tools many of which can be applied in other (and smaller) municipalities, including:

- ▶ Implementing an **environmental management system** that is registered with ISO 14001 and integrated with **health and safety** management and reporting.
- ▶ Creating an **Office of Sustainability** that is situated in the City Manager's office.
- ▶ Working with the **Human Resources** department to align its workforce strategy with the City's sustainability goals. This includes integrating sustainability into **orientation and training** materials.
- ▶ Working with the **Communications** department to ensure that all communications dockets include a link to one of the City's long-term sustainability goals or a related long-term plan.
- ▶ Holding **integrated workshops** with business units across the City to link their short- and long-term plans with the City's sustainability commitments.
- ▶ Creating a **suite of decision-making tools**, including a "Sustainability Appraisal/ Matrix" to help staff employ a systems approach to project development and execution.
- ▶ Formally integrating their **2020 Sustainability Direction** into their three-year business planning and budgeting process.

## Report

Publicly monitor, assess and report on progress towards achieving sustainability goals and targets.

The adage “what gets measured, matters” definitely applies to ICSPs. Municipalities need to put in place an ongoing process for collecting information, assessing progress, responding to challenges and reporting to internal and external decision-makers as well as the general public. Timely evaluation and “course correction” will help to identify problems and develop solutions that can save time, money and effort. It will also build excitement and momentum by recognizing and celebrating local accomplishments.

Progress monitoring and reporting can be costly and time-consuming. Some tips for success are:

- ▶ **Choose the right indicators.** Review the ICSP goals, targets and indicators to make sure that the data is easy to collect and manage.
- ▶ **Scale your effort to match your resources.** Choose a few key priority goals to focus on in early reports, and expand your reporting over time.
- ▶ **Report on results, activities and stories.**

**Results reporting** looks at the changes in key indicators over time. **Action reporting** describes

what the municipality and its partners have been doing. **Stories** provide more personal examples, case studies and vignettes that show how individuals and organizations are making change happen.

The responsibility for reporting is generally shared by the municipality, the decision-making body responsible for the ICSP (e.g. the ICSP Advisory Committee) and the community partners. The following chart is a sample reporting cycle outlining the roles of these three groups.

### Why measure and report on sustainability?

1. To increase public awareness and understanding about sustainability
2. To identify critical issues and responses to improve progress
3. To inform decisions and influence actions
4. To advance sustainability

*From Measuring & Reporting on Sustainability: A Report on Lessons Learned published by the Fraser Basin Council*

	Annually	Every 3-5 Years
ICSP Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request information from municipality and community partners</li> <li>Produce monthly or quarterly <b>newsletter</b></li> <li>Produce <b>Annual Community Progress Report</b> with key community indicators and success stories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request information</li> <li>Conduct community partner survey</li> <li>Produce <b>Comprehensive Community Report</b> with complete indicators and success stories</li> </ul>
Municipality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track key internal (municipal) and external (community-wide) indicators.</li> <li>Provide information to ICSP Advisory Committee</li> <li>Produce quarterly internal <b>performance scorecard</b></li> <li>Produce <b>Annual Municipal Progress Report</b> either as stand-alone document or as a section in the <b>Annual Community Progress Report</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update all ICSP indicators</li> <li>Provide information</li> <li>Conduct community and employee surveys to assess needs, satisfaction and current state</li> <li>Produce <b>Annual Municipal Progress Report</b></li> </ul>
Community Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track information on organizational performance and activities</li> <li>Provide information to ICSP Advisory Committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track information</li> <li>Participate in survey</li> <li>Provide information</li> </ul>

## Leading Practices

### 1. Monitor and Report on Municipal Activities

Establish clear mechanisms and systems for tracking and reporting on progress towards achieving your sustainability goals and targets.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	
●	<b>Piggyback on existing data.</b> Identify relevant data that is already being collected for use as sustainability indicators. Consider environmental factors, such as resource use and emissions, as well as process performance. Ensure that indicators are clearly linked to established objectives.
●	<b>Create a baseline assessment/inventory.</b> Look for opportunities to benchmark performance against peer organizations.
●	<b>Integrate sustainability into report templates.</b> Add a section or question about the ICSP to all standard reports, including council reports. Start simple (e.g. how will this advance the ICSP?) and refine the approach over time.

- Produce an annual corporate progress report.** Report on local government sustainability activities using a small set of performance indicators. This may be a section of the community progress report or a stand-alone document.
- Produce a comprehensive progress report.** This should be produced every 3-5 years and provide an overall assessment of implementation status and priorities, as well as reporting on the changes in all ICSP indicators.
- Develop a corporate scorecard.** Tools such as the **balanced scorecard** are used for ongoing monitoring and reporting to staff and decision-makers on key performance metrics. The balanced scorecard is a performance measurement framework that adds strategic non-financial performance measures to traditional financial metrics to give managers and executives a more 'balanced' view of organizational performance. The intent is to provide a framework that not only provides comprehensive performance measurements, but also helps planners identify what should be done and measured and enables executives to execute their strategies. See the **Resources** section for additional information.<sup>33</sup>
- Adopt a reporting framework.** Programs such as the *Global Reporting Initiative* provide a clear process, framework and set of tools for reporting, and facilitate benchmarking.<sup>34</sup>
- Integrate key reports.** Over time, the ICSP report should become the primary tool for reporting on finances, activities and performance.

## 2. Monitor and Report on Community-wide Activities

Commit to a process of regular (e.g. annual) public reporting on community-wide sustainability achievements and outcomes.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #90EE90; border-radius: 50%;"></span>	<b>Integrate sustainability reporting.</b> Include sustainability targets and performance in community publications and reports.
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #90EE90; border-radius: 50%;"></span>	<b>Assign responsibility and funding for community reporting.</b> Some municipalities produce the community-wide report themselves while others give this task to the community advisory committee and provide funding and/or in-kind support.
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #90EE90; border-radius: 50%;"></span>	<b>Commit to a reasonable and achievable reporting cycle.</b> For example, annual reporting on achievements and core indicators with bi-annual (or tri-annual) comprehensive reporting that might include a resident survey.

- **Report annually on activities and progress.** Produce a report on community-wide sustainability activities and progress towards long-term outcomes. Celebrate leadership and successes!

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- **Collect information from community partners.** Create a form and process for partners to regularly report on their activities, stories and results. Feature partners on the website and in publications.

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- ◆ **Consider using a third-party reporting framework.** Examples include the FCM *Quality of Life Reporting System* and the *STAR Communities Rating System*<sup>TM, 35</sup>.

### 3. Evaluate and Assess

Establish processes to analyze and learn from successes and failures.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	
●	<b>Include time for reflection.</b> Set regular formal and informal opportunities to reflect on priorities, trends and progress.
■	<b>Integrate evaluation with project/program lifecycles.</b> Integrate monitoring, reporting and evaluation as part of all projects or programs.
■	<b>Budget for evaluation.</b> Work with municipal council to ensure there is sufficient budget for data collection and reporting.
◆	<b>Align evaluation processes with the ICSP.</b> Over time, all programs and services should have goals and outcomes that align with the ICSP and provide the basis for evaluation and assessment.
◆	<b>Conduct a third-party audit.</b> Engage third-party auditors to conduct performance and report-content verification.



## Report Snapshots

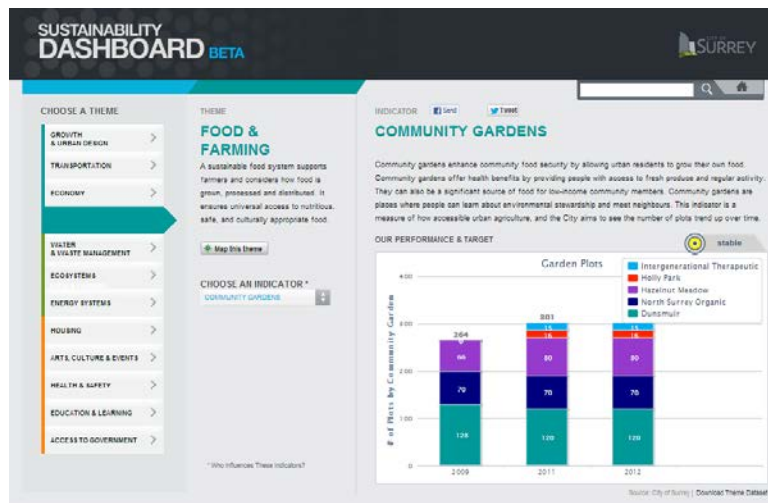
A selection of brief “snapshot” examples is provided below to illustrate how different communities have approached the Report action area. The **Resources** section of this guide provides additional case studies and tools.

<p>The Municipality of the District of Shelburne, NS</p>	<p>Shelburne produces <b>quarterly reports</b> on ICSP implementation progress, includes regular updates in its municipal <b>newsletter</b>, and produces an <b>annual progress report</b>. These reports primarily provide table summaries of the <b>actions</b> the Municipality has committed to and their current budget and progress status. These are available through the Sustainability Department’s webpage (<a href="http://www.municipalityofshelburne.ca/sustainability.html">www.municipalityofshelburne.ca/sustainability.html</a>).</p>
<p>Town of Bridgewater, NS</p>	<p>The Town has a dedicated “Sustainable Bridgewater” microsite (<a href="http://www.bridgewater.ca/sustainability">www.bridgewater.ca/sustainability</a>) that is organized by their six “sustainability solution areas”: energy, transportation, infrastructure, food, economy, and education. It produces an annual implementation report that provides a narrative summary of the <b>actions</b> the Town has taken in each area. It also produces an annual <b>Energy Management Report</b> on municipal energy performance.</p>
<p>Cochrane, AB<sup>36</sup></p>	<p>The Town’s non-profit partner S.P.U.R. (Sustainability Partners Uniting Resources) produces a quarterly <b>newsletter</b> as well as an <b>annual report</b>. This attractive report includes a combination of <b>actions, stories</b> and <b>indicators</b>, and includes a combination of graphs, progress symbols and pictures. It is produced by a dedicated team of volunteers with a modest budget. Reports are available through the S.P.U.R. website (<a href="http://cochranesustainability.ca/">http://cochranesustainability.ca/</a>).</p>

Online Sustainability Dashboards

The City of Surrey and the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) have both developed interactive online reporting systems that track and communicate progress towards their sustainability goals:

- **Surrey’s interactive “Sustainability Dashboard”** (<http://dashboard.surrey.ca/>) was developed by staff. It reports on indicator performance, shows current activities by topic, and uses interactive maps to share real on the ground projects, such as rapid transit routes, community gardens, emergency shelter beds, or integrated storm water management plans. Data for any indicator can be downloaded with the click of a button.<sup>37</sup>



- **RMOW’s “Whistler2020 Explorer”** ([www.whistler2020.ca/explorer](http://www.whistler2020.ca/explorer)) was developed using software from Credit360 ([www.credit360.com](http://www.credit360.com)). Citizens can review indicator trends and performance by priority or by strategy, and provide feedback with the click of a button. Additional reports on specific issues and areas are also available, including the results of their regular community surveys.<sup>38</sup>





# Using the Framework

Tips for using the framework and the role of staff and elected officials

## Getting Started

The framework can be used to guide work planning, identify ideas for action and engage colleagues and stakeholders around the challenges (and opportunities) for implementing the ICSP. The table below presents tips for getting started in in the first year of implementation in each of the seven framework action areas.

Getting Started: Priorities for Year 1	
Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Create and distribute a summary “<b>ICSP on a page</b>” to all employees.</li> <li>▶ <b>Reinforce commitment</b> through a declaration from senior management.</li> </ul>
Govern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Clarify your internal and external <b>governance model</b> and develop terms of reference for who will <b>coordinate</b> municipal activities and who will have senior <b>decision-making</b> authority.</li> <li>▶ Set up a simple <b>sustainability partners</b> program and recruit members.</li> <li>▶ Invite staff to join an informal <b>sustainability team</b> to promote the ICSP internally.</li> </ul>
Engage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Create a basic <b>website</b> (or page) for posting news and updates on the ICSP and update existing <b>communications tools</b> (e.g. signatures, newsletters) to include sustainability messaging.</li> <li>▶ Create an annual <b>sustainability celebration and action-planning</b> event to bring together staff and community champions to identify ideas and priorities.</li> </ul>
Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Develop a <b>strategic framework</b> that shows the relationships among the ICSP and other key plans.</li> <li>▶ Update <b>report templates</b> for council and senior administration to include a question on the linkages to the ICSP.</li> </ul>
Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Invest in <b>quick wins</b> with short payback periods (e.g. lighting upgrades).</li> <li>▶ Identify a <b>pilot project</b> to test new approaches (e.g. procurement, zoning).</li> </ul>
Manage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Create a small <b>transition team</b> to support a sustainability culture shift. Consider hiring a post-secondary <b>student intern</b> to help with coordination and outreach.</li> <li>▶ Update council and employee <b>orientation materials</b> to include the ICSP.</li> <li>▶ Highlight <b>key sustainability initiatives</b> for each departmental budget.</li> </ul>
Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Work with the ICSP Advisory Committee to produce an <b>annual progress report</b> with key measures, actions and lessons learned.</li> </ul>

## Ongoing Tasks

The table below presents recurring quarterly, annual and periodic tasks for implementing your ICSP in each of the seven framework action areas.

	Monthly or Quarterly Tasks	Annual Tasks	Periodic Tasks (every 3-5 years unless noted)
Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update indicators and targets as needed</li> <li>Reinforce commitment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive review of targets and goals</li> <li>Renew ICSP (every 10-15 years)</li> </ul>
Govern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External (community) committee meetings</li> <li>Internal (municipal) decision-making committee and sustainability team meetings</li> <li>Recruit and manage community partners (ongoing)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work planning workshop for internal and external committees</li> <li>Renew committee membership and roles</li> <li>Review sustainability human resource needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic planning workshop</li> <li>Review terms of reference and sustainability job descriptions</li> </ul>
Engage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing communications activities (newsletter, website, social media)</li> <li>Monthly (or quarterly) sustainability partner networking events</li> <li>Monthly (or quarterly) lunch-and-learns for employees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work planning (communications, partner events, education, memberships)</li> <li>Action planning workshop and celebration with sustainability partners</li> <li>Award(s) event(s)</li> <li>Update education materials and resource library</li> <li>ICSP refresher briefings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review communication tools and best practices</li> <li>Community and employee surveys</li> <li>Review education and training plan</li> </ul>
Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align municipal plans (ongoing per work plan)</li> <li>Monthly (or quarterly) internal reporting on strategic plan implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department goal setting and work-planning</li> <li>Review and update annual priorities, including for plan update and renewal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Back-cast implementation pathways</li> <li>Develop or update Strategic Plan</li> </ul>
Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver programs and services (ongoing per work plans)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual progress review</li> <li>Review pilot project(s)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program and service reviews</li> </ul>
Manage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly (or quarterly) transition team meetings</li> <li>Monthly (or quarterly) ICSP check-in with each department</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess sustainability culture shift</li> <li>Update sustainability learning database</li> <li>Set personal sustainability goals</li> <li>Review and update tools and templates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review sustainability staffing needs and job descriptions</li> <li>Update management systems</li> </ul>
Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor and report on milestones (internal) using scorecard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activities and progress report</li> <li>Collect indicator data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive progress report</li> <li>Evaluate ICSP implementation</li> </ul>

## The role of staff and elected officials

The table below outlines some of the key roles of staff, senior administration and elected officials in implementing the ICSP.

Elected Officials <sup>39</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Provide leadership</b> in advocating for the ICSP, facilitating public involvement, and approving the plan and the budget required for implementation.</li> <li>▶ <b>Be effective participants</b> in the ICSP communication strategy through regular meetings and communication with constituents and the media.</li> <li>▶ <b>Act as liaison between committee and council</b> as appointed members of community-based committees (e.g. by advocating for council adoption of committee recommendations).</li> <li>▶ <b>Secure resources</b> by ensuring that at budget time, adequate staffing and other resources (including professional development training) are available for ICSP implementation.</li> <li>▶ <b>Review</b> annual reports on ICSP implementation progress and be accountable for achieving results.</li> <li>▶ <b>Continue to learn</b> by reviewing reports on best practices in sustainability so that they can be integrated into the ICSP on a regular basis.</li> </ul>
Senior Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Demonstrate commitment</b> by communicating the importance of the ICSP and leading by example. Reinforce commitments through messaging.</li> <li>▶ <b>Set clear expectations</b> for staff and formalize them through job descriptions and performance review processes.</li> <li>▶ <b>Manage and oversee implementation</b> by setting work plans and developing budgets that reflect the ICSP priorities.</li> <li>▶ <b>Integrate sustainability objectives</b> into processes and initiatives, such as the terms of reference for renewing plans or developing regulations.</li> </ul>
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Connect</b> with colleagues and peers across departments to maximize resources</li> <li>▶ <b>Take ownership</b> of sustainability initiatives.</li> <li>▶ <b>Seek training</b> opportunities to build sustainability literacy and capacity.</li> <li>▶ <b>Bring opportunities</b> and ideas to the attention of senior administration.</li> <li>▶ <b>Build a culture of sustainability</b> by promoting the ICSP and “walking the talk”.</li> </ul>






# Resources

This section provides a summary of the recommended actions and a compilation of key resources


## Summary of Actions

The following table presents a summary of all of the leading practices and actions contained in this guide. For additional details on each action see the Leading Practices section above.


As noted earlier, this guide uses a set of icons to prioritize recommended actions relative to each municipality’s resources and where they are in their implementation journey.


















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**Starting Out:** Important but relatively straightforward actions that municipalities might consider in their first 2-3 years of implementation.

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- 
**On the Path:** Higher investment actions for municipalities with in-house sustainability capacity. Better suited for years 3 - 5.

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- 
**Advanced:** Activities for municipalities with dedicated sustainability staff resources that have already made significant progress with implementation.

Leading Practice	Level	Action
<b>VISION</b>		
1. Clear sustainability framework		Develop a sustainability framework
		Conduct a sustainability scan
2. S.M.A.R.T. goals, targets and indicators		Set priority targets
		Adopt best practice targets
		Identify core indicators
		Conduct follow-up analysis
		Complete targets and indicators
		Update municipal vision and values
		Develop a corporate sustainability plan
3. Comprehensive and holistic vision		Gap assessment
		Rate your community
4. Commit, maintain and renew		ICSP on a page
		Reinforce commitment
		Annual maintenance
		Develop ICSP cycle
		Update ICSP
		Renew ICSP

GOVERN		
1. Community oversight and partners	●	Establish community committee
	●	Identify community ICSP coordinator
	●	Recruit sustainability partners
	■	Manage partner collaboration
2. Municipal structures and team	●	Establish senior decision-making committee
	●	Identify or hire a municipal sustainability coordinator
	●	Establish volunteer internal sustainability team
	■	Hire a sustainability intern
3. Work regionally	■	Host regional forums
	■	Develop a regional network
	■	Identify regional ICSP partners
ENGAGE		
1. Constant communication	●	Use website and social media
	●	Integrate sustainability messages in existing communications
	●	Customize signatures and letterhead
	■	Create an annual communications plan
	■	Create a sustainability newsletter
2. Connect and celebrate	●	Host annual action planning workshop
	●	Support grassroots activity
	●	Ask for ideas
	●	Recognize champions
	■	Administer surveys
	■	Make sustainability a standard part of engagement
	■	Challenge
	■	Disrupt the status quo
3. Educate and train	◆	Develop an integrated engagement policy
	●	Organize lunch and learns
	●	Make the ICSP part of staff orientation
	●	Train employees on new tools
	■	Stay current with memberships, certification and conferences
	■	Create a resource library
	■	Share best practices
	■	Develop and share sustainability stories
	■	Use Community-Based Social Marketing (CBSM)
	◆	Develop a training program
◆	Mentor and coach	
PLAN		
1. Strategic planning framework	●	Develop a strategic planning framework
	●	Set departmental goals
	●	Brief decision-makers
	●	Align council priorities
	●	Identify annual priorities (“Year of...”)

	<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop a standard planning policy
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Update templates
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop a 2-5 year strategic plan
2. Align municipal plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Plan inventory and gap analysis
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Innovate through planning charrettes
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Integrated planning cycle
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Update Municipal Planning Strategy
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adopt best practices
3. Analyze and “back-cast”	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Conduct studies
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Administer community survey
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Assess sustainability benefits
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	“Back-cast” implementation pathway
<b>ACT</b>		
1. Take early action	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Support individual action
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Support community action
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Initiate pilot projects
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Invest in quick wins
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	“Walk the talk”
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Create a revolving fund
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Apply for grants
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adopt standards
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Advocate for sustainability
2. Align programs, regulations and incentives	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Reduce barriers
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Use developer sustainability checklists
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Develop project tools (e.g. checklists, selection criteria, templates)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop a sustainable purchasing policy
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop a supplier code of conduct
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Align program and service plans
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conduct a gap analysis
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adopt zoning standards
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop guidelines
3. Align operations and utilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Adopt project standards
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Use demand-side management (DSM)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Align financial and non-financial incentives
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Integrate project planning
<b>MANAGE</b>		
1. Manage the sustainability culture shift	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Create a small transition team
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Identify annual transition activities
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leverage successful change initiatives
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Set transition targets
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Formally assess integration

2. Align employee responsibilities and incentives	●	Update recruiting materials
	●	Personal sustainability goals
	●	Update orientation materials
	●	Recognize champions
	■	Create a learning (or ideas) database
	■	Update key job descriptions
	■	Update training programs
	◆	Align executive compensation
	◆	Update human resource policies
	3. Update administrative policies and decision-making processes	●
●		Adopt voluntary codes or principles
●		Sustainable meetings
■		Pilot integrated approaches to decision-making
■		Integrate sustainability measures and targets into key management systems
4. Align budget and finance processes	●	Secure dedicated resources
	●	Highlight key initiatives
	■	Engage departments to rate budget line items
	■	Apply full-cost accounting tools
<b>REPORT</b>		
1. Monitor and report on municipal activities	●	Piggyback on existing data
	●	Create a baseline assessment/inventory
	●	Integrate sustainability into report templates
	■	Produce an annual corporate progress report
	■	Produce a comprehensive progress report
	■	Develop a corporate scorecard
	■	Adopt a reporting framework
	◆	Integrate key reports
2. Monitor and report on community-wide activities	●	Integrate sustainability reporting
	●	Assign responsibility and funding for community reporting
	●	Commit to a reasonable and achievable reporting cycle
	●	Report annually on activities and progress
	■	Collect information from community partners
	◆	Consider using a third-party reporting framework
3. Evaluate and assess	●	Include time for reflection
	■	Integrate evaluation with project/program lifecycles
	■	Budget for evaluation
	◆	Align evaluation processes with the ICSP
	◆	Conduct a third-party audit

## Tools and Resources

The UNSM has developed a dedicated area on website to serve as a “first stop shop” for Nova Scotia municipalities to find and post resources related to using this guide and implementing their ICSPs: [www.sustainability-unsm.ca/icsp-implementation-guide-resources.html](http://www.sustainability-unsm.ca/icsp-implementation-guide-resources.html).

UNSM invites municipalities to visit the site and to submit their own resources and tools to share with the rest of the province. Downloads for all of the tools, case studies and examples mentioned in this guide are also provided on this website.

This section presents an annotated list of tools, case studies and other resources for municipal governments to assist with the implementation of their ICSPs. Information is organized by the seven-part implementation framework used throughout this guide. A short description of each tool or resource is provided along with a website address for additional information.

### Vision

#### The Natural Step Canada Case ICSP Studies

The Natural Step Canada has a number of case studies on the development of ICSPs, including:

- ▶ The Story of Williams Lake’s “Imagine our future” (BC)
- ▶ The District of North Vancouver’s Sustainability Journey (BC)
- ▶ The Wolfville Sustainability Initiative (NS)
- ▶ The award-winning Whistler 2020 Vision (BC)

These can be downloaded for free at [www.naturalstep.ca](http://www.naturalstep.ca)

#### ICSP Planning and Assessment Guides

There are a number of free guidebooks for developing and assessing ICSPs, including:

- ▶ The report **Tools and Recommendations for Successful Rural Sustainability Planning in BC** by the Fraser Basin council looks at i) what makes a successful sustainability process for a rural area in BC, ii) what actions are suitable for a rural sustainability strategy; and iii) the rural area’s relationship with urban and provincial sustainability goals. Visit [www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/tools\\_resources.html](http://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/tools_resources.html)
- ▶ **Integrated Community Sustainability Planning: A Guide** by The Natural Step Canada provides a step-by-step process with extensive appendices and tools. Visit [www.naturalstep.ca](http://www.naturalstep.ca)



- ▶ **Municipal Sustainability Planning Guide** by the Alberta Urban Municipal Association provides a step-by-step process with extensive appendices and tools. Visit <http://msp2010.auma.ca/>
- ▶ The **Catalyzing Change** report provides a nine-part framework for assessing the potential effectiveness of an ICSP and benchmarking it against other plans. Developed by Stratos Inc. in partnership with a number of municipal associations, the report also identifies leading practices from a review of 14 Alberta ICSPs. Visit [www.stratos-sts.com](http://www.stratos-sts.com)

### Sustainability Plan Inventories

Sustainability plan inventories provide a “one stop shop” for reviewing how different communities have approached sustainability planning and the lessons learned. Notable examples include:

- ▶ The **Canadian Sustainability Planning Inventory (CSPI)** is a searchable database of more than 1,000 sustainability plans and affiliated documents collected from all 13 Canadian provinces and territories by the Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities. Visit <https://wagner.augustana.ualberta.ca/cspi/>
- ▶ The **Planning Samples eBinder** by the Fraser Basin council provides ICSP examples related to four aspects of ICSP development: i) getting ready, ii) planning, iii) lessons learned and iv) further resources. Visit [www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/spctools.html](http://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/spctools.html)
- ▶ **Share the Wheel** is a wiki website dedicated to making sustainability plans more accessible. It is organized by municipality and includes review documents and tools from across Canada. Visit [www.sharethewheel.com](http://www.sharethewheel.com)

## Govern

### Community Partner Programs

Numerous municipalities have created formal “community partner” programs. These allow organizations and individuals in the community to pledge their commitment to the ICSP. A few examples are provided below:

- ▶ **The Town of Bridgewater (NS)** has established a Community Sustainability Network. Members sign a Sustainability Charter to join. See [www.sustainablebridgewater.ca](http://www.sustainablebridgewater.ca)
- ▶ **The Town of Cochrane (AB) S.P.U.R. (Sustainability Partners Uniting Resources)** invites individuals to become **Sustainability Ambassadors** who actively promote the plan or **Citizens of Sustainability** who lead by example. Organizations and businesses can become **Sustainability Champions** who contribute to collective action. See <http://cochranesustainability.ca/>

- ▶ **Sustainable Kingston** (ON) invites organizations to become **Community Partners** and individuals to make a **Citizen's Commitment**. See [www.sustainablekingston.ca/get-involved](http://www.sustainablekingston.ca/get-involved)
- ▶ **Whistler** (BC) has established Task Forces, formal Whistler 2020 Partners, and Whistler Implementing Partners. For an overview of their partnership options and packages, visit [www.whistler2020.ca/what\\_are\\_we\\_doing/taking\\_action](http://www.whistler2020.ca/what_are_we_doing/taking_action)
- ▶ The **Town of Antigonish** developed an “**Early Adopters Kit**” to engage community organizations in creating and implementing their sustainability plan. See [www.townofantigonish.ca/doc\\_details/226-antigonish-early-adopter-kit](http://www.townofantigonish.ca/doc_details/226-antigonish-early-adopter-kit)

### Sustainability Committee Terms of Reference

Numerous municipalities have established community-based sustainability committees to oversee implementation. A few examples of committee descriptions and terms of reference are provided below:

- ▶ **Town of Hinton** (AB) Community Engagement Accountability Committee description and minutes at [www.hinton.ca/index.aspx?NID=485](http://www.hinton.ca/index.aspx?NID=485)
- ▶ **The County of Frontenac** (ON) Sustainability Advisory Committee description and minutes at <http://frontenac.credit360.com/Committees/sustainability/sustainability>

### Community Governance for Sustainability

The resource **Passing Go: Moving Beyond the Plan** is written by Amelia Clarke from the University of Waterloo and published by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Green Municipal Fund. It provides a framework, tools and resources for engaging and collaborating with community organizations in the development and implementation of sustainability plans. Available at [www.fcm.ca/home/programs/green-municipal-fund/resources/planning-resources/tools-and-reports.htm](http://www.fcm.ca/home/programs/green-municipal-fund/resources/planning-resources/tools-and-reports.htm)

A complementary approach to collaboration is the “**constellation model**” in use by the **Urban Sustainability Directors' Network (USDN)**. Partners are encouraged to create separate, self-organizing, action-oriented teams (or constellations) around different sustainability issues. Constellations are convened by organizations that want to take action on a particular issue and then disbanded if interest wanes. For more information see <http://socialinnovation.ca/constellationmodel> and [www.usdn.org](http://www.usdn.org)



## Regional Sustainability Collaboration

**The Fraser Basin Council (FBC)** is a charitable non-profit society that brings people together to advance sustainability in the Fraser Basin and across British Columbia. Established in 1997, FBC is a collaboration of four orders of government (federal, provincial, local and First Nations), along with those from the private sector and civil society. It offers a compelling and successful model for regional governance and collaboration, with programs that range from sustainability plan development to regional monitoring and reporting to issue-specific collaboration. See [www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/](http://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/)

## Engage

### The Natural Step Canada Sustainability Education

The Natural Step Canada has a number of free toolkits in English and French, including:

- ▶ The **Sustainability Primer** is written for a general audience and provides an overview of key sustainability issues, drivers and ideas.
- ▶ The **Natural Step Sustainability At Home** provides practical tips and resources for citizens to apply at home.

These can be downloaded for free at [www.naturalstep.ca](http://www.naturalstep.ca)

### Community Engagement Guides and Examples

Excellent guides for municipal engagement include:

- ▶ **Digital Sustainability Conversations: How Local Governments Can Engage Residents Online** is a comprehensive, step-by-step guide and toolkit prepared for Albany, New York and the Urban Sustainability Directors Network. Available at [www.albanysustainability.org](http://www.albanysustainability.org)
- ▶ Alberta Municipal Affairs' **2012 Public Input Toolkit** is a comprehensive reference guide for in-person and digital (online) engagement. Available at [www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/documents/MDRS/Public\\_InputToolkit\\_2012.pdf](http://www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/documents/MDRS/Public_InputToolkit_2012.pdf)
- ▶ **Foundations for Success: A Strategy to Improve Civic Engagement** is the City of Victoria's (BC) municipal engagement strategy and provides an overview of when, why and how it engages citizens and stakeholders. Available at: [www.victoria.ca/EN/main/departments/communications/engaging-victoria.html](http://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/departments/communications/engaging-victoria.html)
- ▶ The Canadian Institute of Planners developed **A Kid's Guide to Building Great Communities**, which provides ideas and examples for planners and educators on how to engage kids in community initiatives. Available at [www.cip-icu.ca](http://www.cip-icu.ca) under Publications.

## Plan

### Sustainable Cities Institute “One Stop Shop”

The **Sustainable Cities Institute** is a dynamic online platform of sustainability resources maintained by the National League of Cities in the United States. It includes a comprehensive and extensive collection of case studies, city profiles, model RFPs (requests for proposals), model policies and legislation, and reports and guides all organized by 11 sustainability themes. See [www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org](http://www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org)

### Provincial Sustainability Planning Resource Hubs

Various provinces offer comprehensive websites on municipal sustainability planning, including:

- ▶ **Smart Planning for Communities (SPC)** is a BC-wide collaborative initiative to assist local governments and First Nations communities with addressing their long-term sustainability challenges by providing resources and tools for planning socially, culturally, economically and environmentally sustainable communities. The SPC is delivered by the Fraser Basin Council, and its website hosts a variety of tools and case studies. See [www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/spc\\_home.html](http://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/spc_home.html)
- ▶ The **Alberta Urban Municipal Association Municipal Sustainability Planning** website contains an action resource section with a variety of tools and resources organized by: economy, environment, society, culture, and governance. See <http://msp2010.auma.ca/>

### Best Practice Guides

Many sustainability best practice planning guides have been developed, a few of which are listed below:

- ▶ The Canadian Institute of Planners maintains a **Healthy Communities Information Gateway** that includes a Healthy Communities Practice Guide that touches on issues such as age-friendly communities, active transportation and community design. See [www.cip-icu.ca/web/la/en/pa/FC2909D2F91F40E5BC3E7CA1B24FCFDD/template.asp](http://www.cip-icu.ca/web/la/en/pa/FC2909D2F91F40E5BC3E7CA1B24FCFDD/template.asp)
- ▶ The BC **Climate Action Toolkit** provides an extensive library of climate change planning and adaptation guides and resources. See [www.toolkit.bc.ca](http://www.toolkit.bc.ca)
- ▶ West Coast Environmental Law maintains a **Smart Bylaws Guide** to assist local governments to implement smart growth strategies through policy and bylaw changes. See <http://wcel.org/issues/urban/sbg>
- ▶ The Real Estate Foundation of BC recently released an **Urban Farming Guidebook: Planning for the Business of Growing Food in BC’s Towns and Cities**. This is available at [www.refbc.com/resources/research/sustainable\\_food\\_systems](http://www.refbc.com/resources/research/sustainable_food_systems)

- ▶ The **STAR Communities Rating System™** provides a comprehensive set of goals, standards and indicators for municipalities. It was developed with input from dozens of municipalities in the United States and Canada, and its technical guide is available free for download. Visit [www.starcommunities.org/rating-system](http://www.starcommunities.org/rating-system)
- ▶ **Toward a Sustainable Community: A Toolkit for Local Government** is a compact guide that outlines policy directions, actions and examples for local government sustainability. Visit [www4.uwm.edu/shwec/publications/cabinet/reductionreuse/SustainabilityToolkit.pdf](http://www4.uwm.edu/shwec/publications/cabinet/reductionreuse/SustainabilityToolkit.pdf)

## Act

### Development Sustainability Checklists

A number of municipalities have developed sustainability or green building checklists that developers have to complete as part of the building permitting process. The Fraser Basin Council Smart Planning for Communities project hosts an extensive list of examples on its website at [www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/Further\\_Resources.html](http://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/Further_Resources.html)

Notable examples include:

- ▶ **Port Coquitlam (BC) Sustainability Checklist for Rezoning & Development Permit Applications** provides a comprehensive assessment of a development project's contribution to sustainability by balanced scoring of environmental, economic and social criteria. See [www.portcoquitlam.ca/Assets/Planning+Division/Sustainability+Checklist+updated.pdf](http://www.portcoquitlam.ca/Assets/Planning+Division/Sustainability+Checklist+updated.pdf)
- ▶ **Town of Gibsons (BC) Smart Development Checklist** is required as part of any new application for development. See [www.gibsons.ca/images/stories/2013%20Forms/Smart%20Development%20Checklist%20V2.pdf](http://www.gibsons.ca/images/stories/2013%20Forms/Smart%20Development%20Checklist%20V2.pdf)
- ▶ **Town of Canmore (AB) Sustainability Screening Report Checklist (SSR)**. Canmore provides a guide, a downloadable Excel-based form and a list of submitted SSRs on their website at [www.canmore.ca/Municipal-Sustainability/Sustainability-Screening-Reports/](http://www.canmore.ca/Municipal-Sustainability/Sustainability-Screening-Reports/)

### Sustainable Procurement

Procurement is one of a municipality's strongest leverage points for sustainability. Three key resources for sustainable procurement are:

- ▶ The **BuySmart Network** is a key source of information and education on sustainable purchasing administered by the Fraser Basin Council in BC. It has an extensive resource library and examples of successful private and public sector initiatives. Visit [www.buysmartbc.com](http://www.buysmartbc.com)

- ▶ The **Municipal Collaboration on Sustainable Purchasing** was initiated to leverage the collective experience of municipalities to advance their sustainable purchasing initiatives through sharing ethical and sustainable purchasing resources. As of 2012, there were fourteen Canadian municipalities in the project: Edmonton, Grand Prairie, Guelph, Halifax Regional Municipality, London, Olds, Ottawa, Saanich, Saskatoon, Surrey, Vancouver, Victoria, Whitehorse, and Wood Buffalo. Sharing resources and best practices allows participants to fast track their individual municipal programs. An annual report is produced and is available at <http://blog.reeveconsulting.com/resources/>
- ▶ **Metro Vancouver's Sustainable Supply Chain Logistics Guide** can help businesses work with their clients and suppliers to avoid waste, make better use of resources, and improve financial, environmental and social performance. It includes an online self-assessment tool. See [www.metrovancouver.org/smartsteps/bestpractices/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.metrovancouver.org/smartsteps/bestpractices/Pages/default.aspx)

### Sustainable Communities Awards and Database

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) maintains a number of resources and case studies on sustainability action, including:

- ▶ The FCM **Green Municipal Fund database** provides a variety of case studies on various municipal infrastructure projects: [www.fcm.ca/home/programs/green-municipal-fund.htm](http://www.fcm.ca/home/programs/green-municipal-fund.htm)
- ▶ The FCM **Sustainable Communities Award** features a wide selection of successful, innovative initiatives from across Canada: [www.fcm.ca/home/awards/fcm-sustainable-communities-awards.htm](http://www.fcm.ca/home/awards/fcm-sustainable-communities-awards.htm)

## Manage

### Sustainability Job Descriptions

Numerous municipalities have hired full or part-time Sustainability Coordinators or managers to lead implementation activities. Sample job descriptions these communities are provided at [www.sustainability-unsm.ca/icsp-implementation-guide-resources.html](http://www.sustainability-unsm.ca/icsp-implementation-guide-resources.html).

Additional case studies, job descriptions and guidance for sustainability staff can be found on the **Sustainable Cities Institute** library at [www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org/view/page.basic/report/tag.subtopic/Subtopic\\_Sustainability\\_Officer](http://www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org/view/page.basic/report/tag.subtopic/Subtopic_Sustainability_Officer)





## Building a Culture of Sustainability

A number of excellent guides outline tools and practices for building a municipal culture of sustainability:

- ▶ **Embedding Sustainability into the Culture of Municipal Government: A resource for municipal change agents** is a joint publication of The Natural Step Canada, the Network for Business Sustainability and the Beedie School of Business at Simon Fraser University. It provides practical guidance and Canadian examples for municipal staff to support a culture of sustainability in their organizations. Available at [www.naturalstep.ca](http://www.naturalstep.ca)
- ▶ **Best Practices Scan of Sustainability Decision Making and Planning for the Municipal Sector** is a publication of The Natural Step Canada that outlines top tips and leading practices. Available at [www.naturalstep.ca](http://www.naturalstep.ca)
- ▶ **The Sustainability Champion's Guidebook** by Bob Willard is a practical, easy-to-follow guidebook that helps sustainability champions at any level in an organization lead a transformation to a smarter, more successful, and more sustainable enterprise. It outlines the transformational steps to take, tips and techniques to use, and “derailers” to avoid. For more information see [www.sustainabilityadvantage.com](http://www.sustainabilityadvantage.com)

## Integrated Design and Decision-Making

Adopting integrated design and decision-making processes, tools and ways of thinking are key to long-term success. Resources include:

- ▶ **BC Green Building Roundtable** commissioned a detailed guide on integrated design. While focused on building and infrastructure decisions, it provides a process and set of tools that can be applied in multiple decision-making contexts. The guide can be found on the Cascadia Green Building Council website at <http://legacy.cascadiagbc.org/education/integrated-design-process-workshop-resources/?searchterm=IDP>
- ▶ The **Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation** has a brief Integrated Design Guide available at [www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/inpr/bude/himu/coedar/upload/Integrated\\_Design\\_GuideENG.pdf](http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/inpr/bude/himu/coedar/upload/Integrated_Design_GuideENG.pdf)
- ▶ The **National Charrette Institute** (NCI) in the United States is a nonprofit educational institution that builds community capacity for using holistic, collaborative “charrette” planning processes for planning. They provide guides, tools and training. For more information see [www.charretteinstitute.org](http://www.charretteinstitute.org)



## Integrated Management Systems

Many municipalities are working to integrate their financial, environmental and health and safety management systems into a single sustainability management system. Examples of current efforts include:

- ▶ The **balanced scorecard** is a performance measurement framework that adds strategic non-financial performance measures to traditional financial metrics to give managers and executives a more 'balanced' view of organizational performance. Though more commonly used for internal 'corporate' reporting, they can be adapted to address the full range of ICSP issues. **The City of Nanaimo (BC)** is working to align all of its plans through a balanced scorecard approach. Information is presented online using a simple graphic interface. See [www.nanaimo.ca/PerformanceMeasurement/BalancedScorecard](http://www.nanaimo.ca/PerformanceMeasurement/BalancedScorecard)
- ▶ **The City of Calgary (AB)** has implemented an environmental management system that is registered with ISO 14001 and integrated with health and safety management and reporting. A single annual report is produced that addresses both areas. See [www.calgary.ca/UEP/ESM/Pages/State-of-the-Environment/Resources.aspx](http://www.calgary.ca/UEP/ESM/Pages/State-of-the-Environment/Resources.aspx)

## Report

### Measuring & Reporting on Sustainability: A Report on Lessons Learned

The **Fraser Basin Council** has been producing sustainability "snapshot" reports on the Fraser Basin region since the year 2000. Their 2011 report, **Measuring & Reporting on Sustainability: A Report on Lessons Learned**, provides comprehensive guidance on the development of indicators, collection of data, reporting of results and how to move from indicators to action. It is available at [www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/Library/Resources/Indicators/report\\_indicators\\_lessons\\_2011.pdf](http://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/Library/Resources/Indicators/report_indicators_lessons_2011.pdf)

Their annual **Sustainability Snapshot** reports provide excellent examples of how to blend reporting on indicators, actions and stories in an accessible and attractive format. All of their indicator reports are available for download at [www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/resources\\_indicators.html](http://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/resources_indicators.html)

An additional resource is **The Good Indicators Guide**, published by the NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement, which provides a great overview of the purpose, selection and use of indicators. See [www.apho.org.uk/resource/item.aspx?RID=44584](http://www.apho.org.uk/resource/item.aspx?RID=44584)

## Developing Sustainability Indicators

There is no standard system (yet!) for municipal sustainability indicators. A few strong initiatives and tools to consider are:

- ▶ The **Canadian Sustainability Indicators Network** (CSIN) aims to advance best practices in measurement and sustainability indicator systems in Canada and beyond in an effort to achieve progress toward global sustainable development. Using CSIN tools and resources, sustainability indicator and reporting practitioners exchange ideas, data and methods, and circulate announcements. Based on a “community of practice” approach, new and experienced practitioners share lessons learned and discuss relevant issues of theoretical, strategic, technical and practical importance. Visit [www.csin-rcid.ca](http://www.csin-rcid.ca)
- ▶ The **Sustainable Measures** website provides a comprehensive overview, searchable database and training materials related to sustainability measures. They also produced a **Guide to Sustainable Community Indicators**. Visit [www.sustainablemeasures.com](http://www.sustainablemeasures.com)
- ▶ Launched in 2012, the **STAR Communities Rating System™** provides a comprehensive set of goals, standards and indicators for municipalities. Visit [www.starcommunities.org/rating-system](http://www.starcommunities.org/rating-system)
- ▶ The **FCM Quality of Life Reporting System** provides a standard set of indicators tracked by select Canadian municipalities. Visit [www.fcm.ca/home/programs/quality-of-life-reporting-system.htm](http://www.fcm.ca/home/programs/quality-of-life-reporting-system.htm)
- ▶ Developed by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), the **Indicators of Well-being in Canada** is a program that gathers data from different sources and presents a comprehensive, up-to-date picture of the well-being of Canadians and Canadian society. Visit [www4.hrsdc.gc.ca/h.4m.2@-eng.jsp](http://www4.hrsdc.gc.ca/h.4m.2@-eng.jsp)

## Corporate Knights Sustainable Cities Rankings

**Corporate Knights** produces a ranking of sustainable cities in Canada and the United States. Their methodology was developed in collaboration with The Natural Step Canada and is available for review (and use) by municipalities. See [www.corporateknights.com/report-types/sustainable-cities-ranking](http://www.corporateknights.com/report-types/sustainable-cities-ranking)

## Online Reporting Tools and Approaches

A number of interactive online reporting systems have emerged that allow municipalities to track and communicate progress towards their sustainability goals. These systems allow citizens and decision-makers to view goals, targets, trends, indicators, actions and reports in an accessible, 'real-time' format. Examples include:

- ▶ **The City of Surrey (BC) has developed an interactive “Sustainability Dashboard”** (<http://dashboard.surrey.ca/>). Created in-house by City staff, it reports on indicator performance, shows current activities by topic, and uses interactive maps to share real projects on the ground.
- ▶ **Credit360** ([www.credit360.com](http://www.credit360.com)) provides customized reporting software to businesses and municipalities. Municipal clients include the Resort Municipality of Whistler, BC ([www.whistler2020.ca/explorer](http://www.whistler2020.ca/explorer)) and the County of Frontenac, ON (<http://frontenac.credit360.com/>).
- ▶ **The Eco Portal** is a web-based tool for managing and reporting on environmental, health and safety performance. See [www.ecoport.com](http://www.ecoport.com)
- ▶ **The City of Nanaimo (BC)** uses a simple graphical tool to present its balanced scorecard indicators and reports. See [www.nanaimo.ca/PerformanceMeasurement/BalancedScorecard](http://www.nanaimo.ca/PerformanceMeasurement/BalancedScorecard)

## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> For more information, see the STAR Communities Rating System [www.starcommunities.org/](http://www.starcommunities.org/)
- <sup>2</sup> For more information, see the FCM Quality of Life Reporting System [www.fcm.ca/Documents/reports/Quality\\_of\\_Life\\_in\\_Canadian\\_Communities\\_EN.pdf](http://www.fcm.ca/Documents/reports/Quality_of_Life_in_Canadian_Communities_EN.pdf)
- <sup>3</sup> For more information, see [www.globalreporting.org](http://www.globalreporting.org)
- <sup>4</sup> For more information, see STAR Community Rating System™ [www.starcommunities.org/rating-system](http://www.starcommunities.org/rating-system)
- <sup>5</sup> Summary based on the Comox Valley Sustainability Strategy available at [www.comoxvalleyrd.ca](http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca)
- <sup>6</sup> Example adapted from *Embedding Sustainability into the Culture of Municipal Government: A resource for municipal change agents*, available at [www.naturalstep.ca](http://www.naturalstep.ca). Additional information on Canmore's sustainability planning and declaration is available at <http://canmore.ca/Municipal-Sustainability/Environmental/Environmental-Sustainability-Action-Plan-ESAP.html>
- <sup>7</sup> The structures and descriptions are adapted from work by Golder Associates as well as Clarke, Amelia (2012), *Passing Go: Moving Beyond the Plan* published by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Green Municipal Fund. Report available at [www.fcm.ca/home/programs/green-municipal-fund/resources/planning-resources/tools-and-reports.htm](http://www.fcm.ca/home/programs/green-municipal-fund/resources/planning-resources/tools-and-reports.htm)
- <sup>8</sup> For more information, see <http://socialinnovation.ca/constellationmodel>
- <sup>9</sup> These priority areas are based on the input of 26 municipal staff and councillors who participated in the May 2011 *Bridging the Planning-Implementation Gap Workshop: Practices and Opportunities for Implementing ICSPs* held by the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities' Municipal Sustainability Office. Report available at [www.sustainability-unsm.ca](http://www.sustainability-unsm.ca)
- <sup>10</sup> For more information, see the *Information on the new Boards & Committees structure* section of Hinton's website at [www.hinton.ca/index.aspx?nid=592](http://www.hinton.ca/index.aspx?nid=592)
- <sup>11</sup> Kingston's description is adapted from the Governance Model section of Sustainable Kingston's website at [www.sustainablekingston.ca/community-plan/proposed-governance-model](http://www.sustainablekingston.ca/community-plan/proposed-governance-model). Cochrane description adapted from <http://cochrane.sustainability.ca/>.
- <sup>12</sup> Examples adapted from *Embedding Sustainability into the Culture of Municipal Government: A resource for municipal change agents*, available at [www.naturalstep.ca](http://www.naturalstep.ca). Additional information is available in the 2011 Charlottetown Annual Sustainability Report available from [www.city.charlottetown.pe.ca/sustainablecity.php](http://www.city.charlottetown.pe.ca/sustainablecity.php)
- <sup>13</sup> For information on the Whistler partnership, task forces and iShift program see [www.whistler2020.ca/what\\_are\\_we\\_doing/taking\\_action](http://www.whistler2020.ca/what_are_we_doing/taking_action). The Action Browser database is at [www.whistler2020.ca/whistler/site/actionbrowser.acds](http://www.whistler2020.ca/whistler/site/actionbrowser.acds)
- <sup>14</sup> For more information on back-casting see [www.naturalstep.ca/backcasting](http://www.naturalstep.ca/backcasting)
- <sup>15</sup> Morinville provides an overview of its strategic planning process at [www.morinville.ca/town-government/strategic-and-business-plans](http://www.morinville.ca/town-government/strategic-and-business-plans). Their strategic framework is integrated into their 2035 sustainability plan and 2011-2013 strategic plan.
- <sup>16</sup> For example, *Smart Growth principles* ([www.smartgrowth.bc.ca/Default.aspx?tabid=133](http://www.smartgrowth.bc.ca/Default.aspx?tabid=133)), *Climate Change Adaptation* (<http://srd.alberta.ca/MapsPhotosPublications/Publications/documents/ClimateChangeAdaptationFrameworkManual-April%202010.pdf>), *LEED® for Neighbourhood Development* ([www.cagbc.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Programs/LEED/RatingSystems/Neighbourhooddevelopments/default.htm](http://www.cagbc.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Programs/LEED/RatingSystems/Neighbourhooddevelopments/default.htm)).
- <sup>17</sup> Charrette is a term used to describe a collaborative design event that brings together various stakeholders and experts in an in-depth exercise to explore ideas and create a feasible plan. For more information, visit [www.charretteinstitute.org/charrette.html](http://www.charretteinstitute.org/charrette.html)

- <sup>18</sup> For more information on back-casting, see [www.naturalstep.ca/backcasting](http://www.naturalstep.ca/backcasting)
- <sup>19</sup> For details on Campbell River's ICSP and SOCP, visit [www.campbellriver.ca](http://www.campbellriver.ca) or go directly to [www.campbellriver.ca/CityHall/Departments/Sustainability/Green/Pages/SustainableOfficialCommunityPlan.aspx](http://www.campbellriver.ca/CityHall/Departments/Sustainability/Green/Pages/SustainableOfficialCommunityPlan.aspx)
- <sup>20</sup> Details on Morinville's strategic planning framework are at [www.morinville.ca/town-government/strategic-and-business-plans](http://www.morinville.ca/town-government/strategic-and-business-plans).
- <sup>21</sup> The AUMA tool is available at [www.auma.ca/live/digitalAssets/40/40421\\_Planning\\_Integration\\_Template\\_and\\_Worksheet.doc](http://www.auma.ca/live/digitalAssets/40/40421_Planning_Integration_Template_and_Worksheet.doc)
- <sup>22</sup> The Triple Bottom Line Policy Framework is available at [www.calgary.ca](http://www.calgary.ca). An overview of their triple-bottom line approach can be found at [www.calgary.ca/UEP/ESM/Pages/Strategic-environmental-initiatives/Triple-Bottom-Line/Triple-Bottom-Line.aspx](http://www.calgary.ca/UEP/ESM/Pages/Strategic-environmental-initiatives/Triple-Bottom-Line/Triple-Bottom-Line.aspx)
- <sup>23</sup> Dawson Creek's Sustainability Baseline Assessment is available at [www.dawsoncreek.ca/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Sustainability\\_Baseline.pdf](http://www.dawsoncreek.ca/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Sustainability_Baseline.pdf)
- <sup>24</sup> Whistler's purchasing policies are available through the Whistler2020 website at [www.whistler2020.ca/whistler/site/genericPage.acds?context=1967998&instanceid=1967999](http://www.whistler2020.ca/whistler/site/genericPage.acds?context=1967998&instanceid=1967999)
- <sup>25</sup> Information on the Municipal Collaboration for Sustainable Purchasing is available at <http://blog.reeveconsulting.com/resources>. Their annual reports are also available at this site.
- <sup>26</sup> The Smart Bylaws Guide is available at <http://wcel.org/issues/urban/sbg>.
- <sup>27</sup> Adapted from [www.halifax.ca/solarcity](http://www.halifax.ca/solarcity) and [www.halifax.ca/environment/Sustainability.html](http://www.halifax.ca/environment/Sustainability.html). The description of the special reserve fund came from the 2010 Corporate Sustainability Analysis available at [www.halifax.ca/environment/documents/2010\\_CSA\\_final.pdf](http://www.halifax.ca/environment/documents/2010_CSA_final.pdf). Information on the Municipal Collaboration for Sustainable Purchasing is available at <http://blog.reeveconsulting.com/resources/>
- <sup>28</sup> Examples adapted from *Embedding Sustainability into the Culture of Municipal Government: A resource for municipal change agents* available at [www.naturalstep.ca](http://www.naturalstep.ca). Additional information is available in the 2011 Charlottetown Annual Sustainability Report available from [www.city.charlottetown.pe.ca/sustainablecity.php](http://www.city.charlottetown.pe.ca/sustainablecity.php)
- <sup>29</sup> Whistler's purchasing policies are available through the Whistler2020 website at [www.whistler2020.ca/whistler/site/genericPage.acds?context=1967998&instanceid=1967999](http://www.whistler2020.ca/whistler/site/genericPage.acds?context=1967998&instanceid=1967999)
- <sup>30</sup> See [http://mccac.ca/site-admin/file-manager/files/Resources/Reports/Guide\\_to\\_AENV\\_FCA\\_Program.pdf](http://mccac.ca/site-admin/file-manager/files/Resources/Reports/Guide_to_AENV_FCA_Program.pdf)
- <sup>31</sup> Examples adapted from *Embedding Sustainability into the Culture of Municipal Government: A resource for municipal change agents*, available at [www.naturalstep.ca](http://www.naturalstep.ca). Additional information is available in the 2011 Charlottetown Annual Sustainability Report available from [www.city.charlottetown.pe.ca/sustainablecity.php](http://www.city.charlottetown.pe.ca/sustainablecity.php)
- <sup>32</sup> Examples adapted from *Embedding Sustainability into the Culture of Municipal Government: A resource for municipal change agents*, available at [www.naturalstep.ca](http://www.naturalstep.ca). Additional information on Calgary's approach to integrating sustainability can be found at [www.calgary.ca](http://www.calgary.ca). An overview of their office of sustainability is at [www.calgary.ca/CA/cmo/Pages/Office-of-Sustainability.aspx](http://www.calgary.ca/CA/cmo/Pages/Office-of-Sustainability.aspx)
- <sup>33</sup> Description of balanced scorecard adapted from [www.balancedscorecard.org/BSCRResources/AbouttheBalancedScorecard/tabid/55/Default.aspx](http://www.balancedscorecard.org/BSCRResources/AbouttheBalancedScorecard/tabid/55/Default.aspx)
- <sup>34</sup> For more information, see [www.globalreporting.org](http://www.globalreporting.org)
- <sup>35</sup> For more information on the STAR Communities Rating System see [www.starcommunities.org](http://www.starcommunities.org). For more information, on the FCM Quality of Life Reporting System see [www.fcm.ca/Documents/reports/Quality\\_of\\_Life\\_in\\_Canadian\\_Communities\\_EN.pdf](http://www.fcm.ca/Documents/reports/Quality_of_Life_in_Canadian_Communities_EN.pdf).
- <sup>36</sup> See <http://cochranesustainability.ca/> to access their quarterly and annual reports.
- <sup>37</sup> City of Surrey. Sustainability Dashboard. <http://dashboard.surrey.ca/>





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<sup>38</sup> See the Whistler2020 Explorer at [www.whistler2020.ca/explorer](http://www.whistler2020.ca/explorer). An overview of their monitoring program is available at [www.whistler2020.ca/performance/Overview](http://www.whistler2020.ca/performance/Overview)

<sup>39</sup> The role of elected officials is modified from Clarke, Amelia (2012), *Passing Go: Moving Beyond the Plan* published by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Green Municipal Fund. Report available at [www.fcm.ca/home/programs/green-municipal-fund/resources/planning-resources/tools-and-reports.htm](http://www.fcm.ca/home/programs/green-municipal-fund/resources/planning-resources/tools-and-reports.htm)