



TOWN OF BURLINGTON

INTEGRATED COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

2010

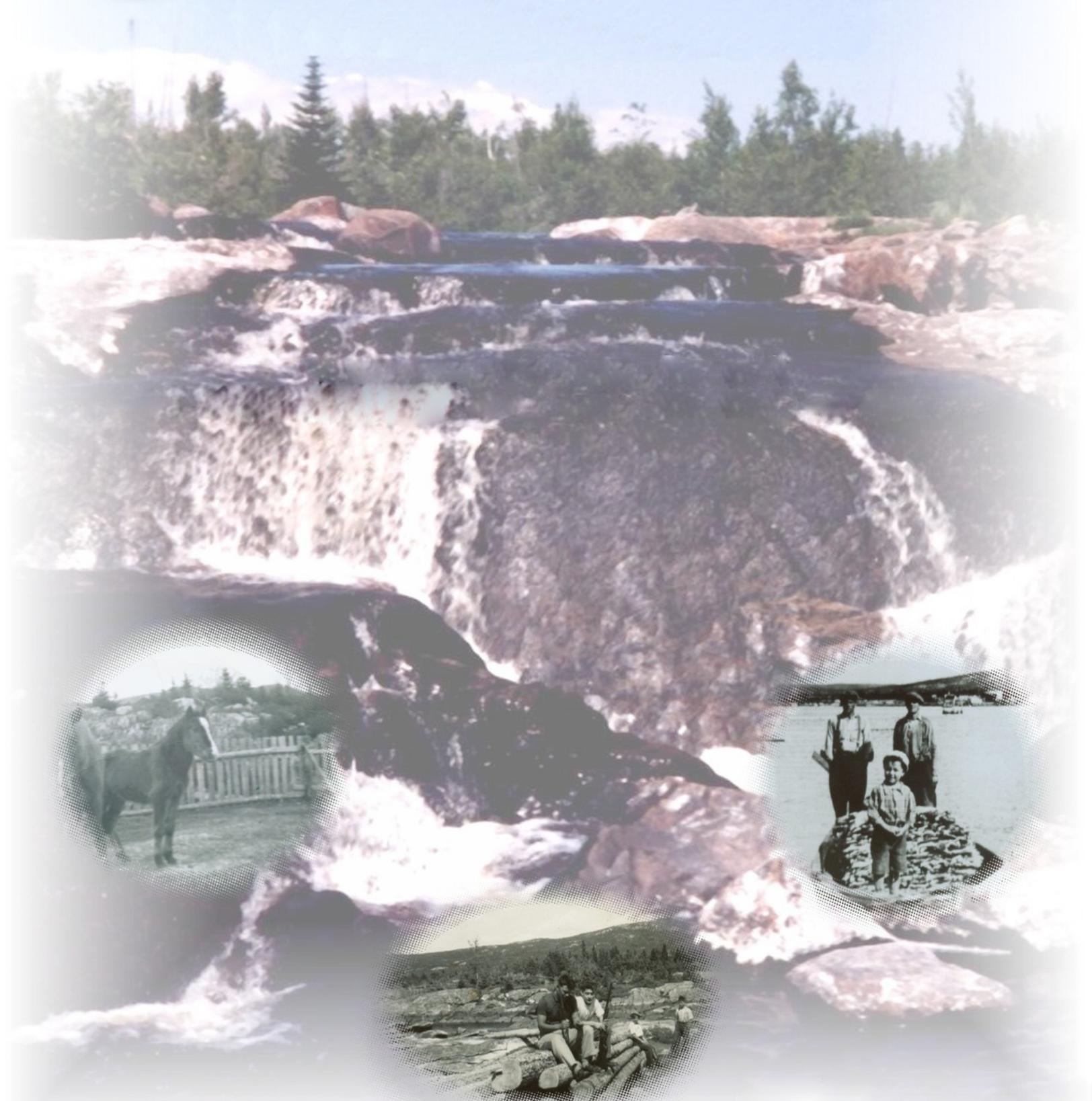


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Burlington – Profile

Location

Burlington once named Northwest Arm is located at the north side of the mouth of Green Bay. It was an incorporated fishing and lumbering community that was permanently settled in the mid 1800's. Burlington was renamed in 1914 or 1915 and nobody seems to know who renamed it or why.

Brief History

In August 1933, the community was completely destroyed by fire that was caused by careless campers who were camping in the woods between Burlington and Middle Arm, a small community just a few miles from Burlington.

The fire destroyed homes, livestock, sawmills and valuable timber. Since this was in the depression years, a lot of long hours and hard work was gone up in smoke in just a few hours. A lot of people did not rebuild, instead they left to make a new start elsewhere. Fishing, lumbering and boat building were the three main areas of employment, however, this is no longer the case.

Employment/unemployment

Although the fishing and logging are no longer the main employers for the town, many people are employed in Alberta (commuting), while others are employed on the Baie Verte Peninsula, and surrounding areas. The mine at Pine Cove and Rambler have created employment for some residents of Burlington. Other families did relocate to Alberta as well as a number of young people have moved to further their education and/or seek employment.

Key industries/developments

We are within a 30 minute drive of a regional service centre. As a result we have some residents who commute to work in service industries and government offices. We also have some small businesses, but they are much fewer than they are now.

Population

The 2006 Census population for Burlington was 376 with 146 households. Many young families want to stay in Burlington as it is a quiet town, however, maintaining full-time

employment is still an issue. The average age is between 37-47 years. This was taken from the census data from Community Accounts.

Relationship with Surrounding Communities

The Town of Burlington is surrounded by Smith's Harbour, Local Service District and Middle Arm, Town Council. The relationship with both towns has been somewhat positive, but certain issues have risen which cause conflict. The Burlington Volunteer Fire Department provides service to Smith's Harbour, 4 km from Burlington, a user fee is collected from the LSD. A new fire truck has just been purchased by the town as the Fire Dept. held their 25th Anniversary. This will be the first truck since 1984. The waste disposal site is shared by the three towns, with all expenses being cost shared based upon number of homes in each town. Many issues have risen over the disposal site.

Particular Points of Pride

Burlington is very proud of comedian/actor Shaun Majumder and singer/songwriter Rex Goudie who both have always recognized their roots being Burlington. Both of these people have put Burlington "on the map". Interest is still there with regard to people visiting the town and inquiring about their careers. As well, Burlington has a beautiful salmon river known as Two Mile Falls, which many anglers enjoy.

General Outlook

The future is uncertain as the population shrinks but we still have people wanting to stay in Burlington and raise their families. As well people who are retiring want to purchase homes here. With the mining in the area being revitalized it brings a positive outlook to the general area.

Community Assessment

The first step to determine our course for the future was to compile the information required for an initial assessment of our community. Thanks to Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador we completed the first step in our assessment back in October of 2008 when the council and staff sat with a member of the MNL staff and completed the Municipal Sustainability Self-Assessment Tool Kit. This was the first time that our council and staff had really considered many issues beyond the usual day to day requirements. The report from the session was very useful in identifying issues that the town should examine as we attempt to become a sustainable community. The major results from this report that we plan to address in the near future are contained in the following table:

Self Assessment Category	Issues or Needs identified in the Report
Governance	Increase interest in municipal elections & voter turnout, generate more candidates Develop Policy & Procedure Manual No committees of Council/Review Plans regularly Training for councillors to understand decisions made & implications of the decisions.
Administration	Part-time administrator and no regular maintenance person.
Finance & Financial Management	We budget very effectively with our limited resources. Lower DSR (debt servicing ratio)
Service Delivery	Increase fire emergency response time Focus on waste diversion and reduction in waste Regular preventative maintenance to w/s system. Provide safe drinking water
Infrastructure	Complete one phase of w/s. Lift station and one outfall to dispose of sewage Complete recreation facilities
Community Well-Being	Youth retention programs & community activities to maintain population Educate residents in environmental protection Encourage local arts & cultural development to enhance community togetherness and the well-being of residents.
Regional Co-operation	To work on a regional level regarding common issues that affect us in the region.

The following are the five Pillars addressing needs based upon the Municipal Sustainability Self-Assessment Report

<i>Pillars</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Environment	Significant Issues or Needs	More public education More environmentally friendly operations
	Current Partnerships	None-but opportunities
	Local Assets	School and youth
Economic	Significant Issues or Needs	Increase communication with local businesses Need more development in the area
	Current Partnerships	Baie Verte Peninsula Economic Development Association
	Local Assets	Existing businesses, Emerald Zone
Social	Significant Issues or Needs	Needs of seniors/youth Recreation More Community Events
	Current Partnerships	None
	Local Assets	People (senior, youth) Some recreation facilities Volunteer Groups
Cultural	Significant Issues or Needs	Youth appear disinterested Loss of cultural aspects Recreation More Community Events
	Current Partnerships	None
	Local Assets	People (senior,youth) Some recreation facilities Volunteer Groups
Governance	Significant Issues or Needs	Low interest in council activities Long term planning Financial barriers Limited tax base
	Current Partnerships	None
	Local Assets	Former councilors

In addition to the Self-Assessment by MNL and the public mail out.

Basic Questions of Sustainability

<i>Basic Questions of Sustainability</i>	Yes	No	Page #
In general are you able to get candidates to run for municipal council?	X		
Does your council hold at least one public council meeting per month?	X		
Has the municipality been able to avoid an operating deficit continuously in the past 2 years?	X		
Is your debt servicing level within the Provincial benchmark of 30%		X	
Is your Municipal Plan up to date? N/A			
Do you have adequate municipal buildings to meet your current needs?	X		
Do you currently meet all conditions of your permit to operate your water system?	X		
Are you able to meet all Provincial and Federal requirements for sewage treatment?	X		
Do you have sufficient water and sewer infrastructure to meet the needs of your residents?	X		
Does your council keep at hand, adopted rules of procedure?	X		
Do you currently employ all the staff you require to meet the operational needs of your municipality?	X		
Is your solid waste collected at least once a week and disposed of at a department of Environment approved site?	X		
Do you provide, or contract for, adequate emergency response services?	X		

In addition to the other assessment information we have also reviewed our asset management data collected as required for our PSAB compliance. While this

information is mostly raw data it will be used to help focus our efforts on areas that have the greatest demand and relevance in terms of lifespan and replacement costs.

Based on the combination of the previous three tables it is obvious that the Town of Burlington is in need of a solid and measured approach to future activities to address the issues as identified by council and by residents and stakeholders. Areas requiring priority action include increased communication with and participation by residents and the business community, setting and encouraging environmental priorities, more culturally focused community events and securing the resources to maintain the existing infrastructure.

It will be very difficult to address all the issues identified above with limited resources so the goal will be to address the priority issues first or to develop strategies that can accomplish multiple objectives simultaneously. These goals and activities are discussed in detail in the Community Strategic Goals and Actions section of the plan.

Community Vision

A community vision was a first for the council of Burlington. After reviewing our purpose and hope for the town the following was stated.

We are obliged to collect taxes, provide the best service possible and represent the people we serve fairly based upon the terms of our incorporation and the provisions of the Municipalities Act.

Council met to begin the development of some guiding principles to help set direction for each of the five pillars as required for the ICSP process. Even though this plan will address a 5 year term council decided to develop a vision that would carry the community 10 years into the future and chose 2020 as a time when we could see change making a difference. Council began by reviewing the issues identified in the assessment process and then attempted to answer the question "How can our community be better in only 10 years?" The answers were then grouped by similarity and refined into a concise list of principles.

The Town of Burlington has a vision that is based on a holistic approach to community sustainability so that by the year 2020 it will:

- ***Through a combination of municipal policies and public education ensure the protection of the natural environment in and around the community.***
- ***Develop a business friendly environment by reducing barriers for new and***

existing operations while increasing communication and celebrating local success stories.

- Ensure information and adequate social programs are available to residents of all ages. Programming will include recreation, healthy living, education and any other needs as identified by the community, even if they are not municipal services.**
- Celebrate our history, culture and people through programs and events designed to engage residents and visitors alike.**
- Operate the municipality with fiscal responsibility and accountability financial and strategic planning while engaging the public whenever possible.**
- Engage any and all partners in the community and enhance existing relationships in the region to accomplish goals as identified by council and residents.**

Community Strategic Goals and Actions

The Town of Burlington has significant work to accomplish. If we are to reach our vision of a truly sustainable community we must set appropriate goals that are reflective of our community vision. In 2003 an Economic Action Plan was developed involving members of council, residents and a representative from the Emerald Zone. Since that time many of these goals have been met and along with new goals set by council and resident responses from a mail out these goals will be placed in categories as outlined in the Pillar Table. Some of these goals are achievable as they are not costly goals. However, other goals involve high costs and will be achieved as funding becomes available. Each project has been given a priority listing in the initial table and the priority indications are as follows:

Priority #	Timeframe
1	within 1 year
2	within 3 years
3	within 5 years

Environmental Sustainability

Current State

The Town of Burlington is situated in an area where there has not been significant environmental damage since the area was first settled. There are no issues around chemical or other types of contamination and we have very clean air and a clean water supply for residents. With regard to natural resource usage in the area there has been significant forestry harvesting activities in the general area but most areas have already grown back and even those that are cleared were harvested with relatively small machinery and are quite a distance from the town so there are no significant forestry related issues.

The only real area of concern for the town is with regard to the sewage released into the harbour as it is completely untreated. The main issue is that the harbour is fairly sheltered and does not flush out the waste as quickly and cleanly as we would like. There is one lift station and to be replaced would cost approximately \$250,000.00 even with a 90/10 cost share for infrastructure the town cannot afford it at this time. As a result, it is a priority and has been listed in the project listings. The town will continue to explore new approaches that may be of greater environmental benefit and less cost as identified in the project listings. Also related to this issue is the potential for Federal regulations that would require sewage treatment for all waste entering public waterways. Again we cannot currently afford any conventional treatment methods but we will explore alternatives.

Existing Relevant Plans

The waste site is designated to close within a few years, therefore, the town will see the closure of the current site which is shared by three towns and will be governed by the Provincial Management Waste Strategy.

Major Themes in this Section

The goals and projects identified in this section were developed with the major issues identified through the assessment and public consultation as mentioned previously. The majority of other goals and projects focus around the idea of engaging residents and businesses in an attempt to encourage them to be more environmentally friendly as well. The overall objective of this section is to enhance the environmental sustainability of the town and the overall area and the identified goal.

Economic Sustainability

Current State

As identified in the introductory section, the town has had some economic success in the past with resource based industry focused around forestry but the trend has been downward in recent years. With the slowdown in forestry and the faltering fishery residents in the town have struggled to find sufficient employment. We have been lucky in the fact that we are within commuting distance of a larger regional service centre where some people can still maintain stable employment, while others are commuting to Alberta for employment. The mining industry has brought some employment for others and local companies employ residents from the town.

Existing Relevant Plans

With regard to Economic Sustainability and economic development considerations there are local businesses in the area that continue to develop their businesses. There seems to be a trend in the area that things are improving economically.

Major Themes in this Section

The Town of Burlington is a picturesque community that holds a lot of potential in tourism. Currently there is a walking trail and boardwalk with a gazebo and resting area, which provides a scenic view of the river in the community. Tourists are able to watch salmon jump from this area in the river. A museum in the community depicts how Burlington was “Back in Time”, when the Baie Verte Peninsula was once referred to as the Burlington Peninsula. This museum offers tourists and residents alike a glance back at how Burlington came to be, and the developments that have taken place. Being a small, rural community in Newfoundland and Labrador several challenges exist in tourism development for the community. Lack of funding for tourism initiatives poses the most prevalent barrier, which has implications on the ability to attract tourists to the area through promotional means, and also to develop the tourism attractions that are in the community. There are tremendous opportunities for tourism development in Burlington. The topography of the area would offer walkers and hikers an amazing view of the

scenic lookouts over both land and water. Anglers can take advantage of some of the best salmon fishing waters in the region. The heritage needs to be further developed by reconstructing some of the infrastructure that once existed in the community offering visitors a gateway to the past in conjunction with the “Back in Time” museum.

Social Sustainability

Current State

If there is one area where the town of Burlington is very lucky is certainly with regard to social setting. The community is still small enough that there is a strong sense of connection with those who grew up in the area as well as a good social network in place for those who happen to move here. That being said there are still things we can improve upon. As the population ages and the youth either move away or new people move into town we are slowly losing small aspects of the many social activities that once were, however, many activities are held during the year to encourage social gatherings.

Existing Relevant Plans

Because there has been a strong tradition of closeness within the community there are no existing plans that seem to have a direct bearing on this section of the ICSP.

Major Themes in this Section

A great deal of effort in this section is dedicated to engaging residents in various capacities and ensuring that they are kept well informed about the situation in the community and the operations of the town. Specific attention will be paid to youth and seniors as identifiable groups that are at the greatest risk of being potentially left out. There is also a dedicated effort to increase community events to encourage activities for all ages.

Cultural Sustainability

Current State

Despite a very strong sense of history in the community there are various aspects of traditional local culture that are being lost between generations. Basic subsistence activities that were once a necessary part of life have since been pushed to the wayside by busy schedules and changing lifestyles. While in the past the town has not actively been involved in promoting or even considering cultural issues this section of the plan will begin to develop a cultural perspective to the towns operations.

Existing Relevant Plans

Similar to the social section there are no immediate existing plans that have bearing on this section of the plan. Again there are larger Province-wide initiatives but they are at a level that is not likely to directly impact the town's cultural projects.

Major Themes in this Section

The direction of the Town of Burlington with regard to its cultural sustainability is generally focused around activities designed to celebrate and promote our culture. The development of programs centered on the history and aspects of local culture along with a focus on a strong local story telling tradition will form the core of our approach. Building on the core issues we will plan to promote cultural events culminating in various festivals. In addition to these events there is also a focus on collecting and preserving the culture that we currently enjoy. With people such as Shaun Majumder and Rex Goudie, the town can host activities with regards to the history/culture of Burlington.

Governance Sustainability

Current State

The category of governance is one that has always been a part of the operations of Burlington but never before was it set aside as a specific set of objectives as it is in this plan. Based on our assessment we have been fairly successful with regard to issues of governance simply by attempting to run an efficient town. There are however certain significant issues that we had not considered extremely relevant that we now understand are a foundational part of a sustainable community and municipality. On the administrative side of our operations we are currently in a position where our Town Clerk is part-time, and our maintenance person is on a call-in basis.

Existing Relevant Plans

Setting aside the issue of governance as a specific set of objectives is a very new approach for Burlington and as such we have existing plans which seem to benefit and work for the town. We do have basic procedures that influence how we operate but they are very limited and in some cases they are not official documents supported by motions/approvals of council.

Major Themes in this Section

Because many of these governance issues are basic in nature yet not officially adopted there are many areas that require work. The actions listed in this section are focused on setting a basic standard that can be adapted as required. This is especially true with regard to the development of policies and procedures manual for operations. Council also included objectives to help define the decision making process and is planning to devote some resources specifically toward financial planning. Some issues of the financial viability of the town are addressed in this section as well. Our current Debt to service ratio is approximately at the 45% benchmark and we need to bring it lower if we are to increase our capacity to borrow to complete future capital works projects.

Collaborations and Partnerships

Municipal Services

There are certain areas of service delivery where partnerships make a great deal of sense for the Town of Burlington. Perhaps one of the original collaborations with surrounding communities was with regard to the emergency services in the area. The Burlington Fire Department is one of two fully trained and equipped emergency responder groups in the area. As such the town has a service agreement with the neighboring Local Service District for emergency service provision. The local area contains a number of communities and residents outside the town often look toward Burlington for certain services even though they are not residents of the town. The issue of solid waste collection and disposal was always a regional issue but due to the new Provincial Waste Management Strategy it will become a much larger regional initiative. While the details are still being worked out we do know that there will likely be a small increase based on the cost of collection and transportation to the local transfer station and then to the regional waste site. Encouraging residents to reduce reuse and recycle along with encouraging composting can have a significant impact on the tonnage of waste collected and transported and will help the town with regard to the Pillar of Environmental sustainability.

Other Regional Services

There are some services that are not necessarily provided directly by the town but are still very important to the community and the town can have influence over in some ways. The two main areas of regional services of this nature are with regard to economic development and education.

On the economic development front the town has been somewhat active in partnering with the local area. Like many communities we have determined that one of the potential areas for economic development is the tourism industry and as such we have great salmon river which can increase tourism in the area.

With regard to the education for the region there is a K-12 school in the nearby community and residents have access to some post secondary opportunities in the nearby regional centre. People in this area go to school together, shop in the same location, go to the same health care facility, and many of them work in the same centre. The younger generation, especially see the whole area together and don't seem to notice the differences between the communities.

General Cooperation

While the youth see the whole area as being one community they are not alone. There are initiatives in the region that the town is involved in that indicate the cooperation between the communities. There are those who are still resistant to the idea of cooperation but through mechanisms people can see the benefits of working together.

Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

With a plan of this nature it is imperative that it include some kind of strategy to ensure that the goals and projects are completed on schedule and evaluated to maintain relevance of listed objectives. Without continual implementation checks, this plan runs the significant risk of becoming just another piece of paper sitting on a shelf. With the effort invested in the development of this ICSP the council is committed to making certain that it becomes a standard document that is used and revised on a regular basis.

Implementation

In this case the council has decided on a staff centered approach when it comes to the implementation to guarantee that work is completed on time. The Town Council will become responsible for the implementation of the major objectives to ensure that assigned tasks are being completed. While the plan requires a significant amount of work to be completed the implementation should flow smoothly and not require significant additional time from the staff. Once every six months the Town Council will be responsible for a quick review of scheduled tasks and noting what has been completed and why or why not. This information will then be presented to the next meeting of the individuals chosen to monitor and evaluate the success of the plan.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation of the plan is of the utmost importance to its success and as such should involve a number of key players to ensure it remains active and relevant. The council has determined that the best option is to review and revise the plan as required on a regular schedule. The committee will be comprised of the Mayor and councillors.

Every 6 months

- Review the Priority 1 projects that were scheduled to begin or conclude during the previous 6 months.

Every year

- Review and revise all projects as required
- Review all goals and revise as required
- Allow ample opportunity for public comment

Every three years

- Review

For the specific review of each project and goal the committee will utilize the following 5 step process:

1. Has the objective been completed to your satisfaction? If yes go to step 2, if no go to step 3.
2. Is there any further action required regarding the objective?
 - a. If no then you are finished with this objective and can remove it.
 - b. If yes then you must determine what further steps must be taken and develop an appropriate new objective.
3. Is the objective still a necessary part of your ICSP?
 - a. If no then either remove or amend the objective as required.

b. If yes then continue to include the objective as part of your ICSP.

4. If an objective requires change you must determine what those changes need to reflect. Things such as funding, other resources, schedules and community priorities must be considered.

5. Finally amend any objectives as per the above steps and include them in your revised ICSP.

Once changes are made and the public is given adequate opportunity to comment, the changes must be approved by council and are then to be submitted to the Department of Municipal Affairs.

Conclusion

The municipality of Burlington has undergone changes in the recent past. From economic and demographic downturns to new explorations of our sense of community there have been both good and bad along the way. This Integrated Community Sustainability Plan outlines our goals and projects for the next few years in an attempt to make this a better community and to make it a more open, efficient and prosperous municipality.

With the time and effort invested in this ICSP the council of Burlington has committed to making this plan a regular part of its operating procedures and to follow the goals and projects laid out herein. The council supports this document and the sustainability objectives it has identified and will strive to ensure that it is not only followed but also updated and revised on a regular basis to make certain that it remains relevant and up to date.

The town of Burlington is looking forward to the implementation of this plan and the development of further initiatives that will help revitalize our beautiful and happy community.