

# THE MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF INVERNESS

*“Discover the Magic in the Masterpiece”*



## INTEGRATED COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

*Prepared by:  
Jim Rutten  
Recreation/Tourism Department  
March 2010*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. RESOLUTION FOR MUNICIPAL COUNCIL ADOPTION OF THE INTEGRATED COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY PLAN .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 General background information .....	4
2.1.1 Population.....	5
2.1.2 Regional Economic Background .....	9
2.1.3 Sixteen community districts.....	12
2.2 Municipal/Community Background Materials .....	15
2.3 Key Areas of Sustainability to be addressed in the ICSP .....	15
2.3.1 Underlying Themes.....	15
2.3.2 Definition of Sustainability .....	17
2.3.3 Priorities by Pillar .....	18
<b>3. ICSP INFORMATION SOURCES AND CONSULTATIONS .....</b>	<b>19</b>
3.1 Steering Committee .....	19
3.2 Community Consultation.....	19
3.2.1 A Plan for Community Based Municipal Development.....	19
3.2.2 ICSP Workshops.....	20
3.3 Other Considerations.....	21
3.4 Vision Statement.....	21
<b>4. SUSTAINABLE PLANNING ISSUES AND TOPICS .....</b>	<b>22</b>
4.1 Asset Directory .....	22
<b>5. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND ACTIONS RELATED TO ASSET BASE.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>6. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS/BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY AND SUSTAINABLE OUTCOMES....</b>	<b>84</b>
6.1 Recommended Process for Requesting Gas Tax Funds.....	84
6.2 List of Projects and Benefits.....	85
<b>7. PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS .....</b>	<b>87</b>
7.1 Moving from a Planning Framework to a Development Process .....	87
<b>8. STATEMENTS OF PROVINCIAL INTEREST .....</b>	<b>88</b>

# **1. RESOLUTION FOR MUNICIPAL COUNCIL ADOPTION OF THE INTEGRATED COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY PLAN**

MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

MARCH 8, 2010

## **ADOPTION OF THE INTEGRATED COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY PLAN**

Moved by: Councilor Susan Mallette  
Seconded by: Councilor Ed MacDonald  
Carried.

The Municipality of the County of Inverness recognizes the importance of long-term sustainability planning. The Integrated Community Sustainability Plan has established pathways for the Municipality to achieve its sustainability goals.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that The Municipality of the County of Inverness hereby adopts and endorses the principles of sustainability as described in the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan, and the Council agrees to implement the actions contained therein.

## 2. INTRODUCTION:

Each municipality that receives federal gas tax transfers under the Canada- Nova Scotia Gas Tax Agreement is required to prepare and provide an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) by 2009-2010.

ICSPs are defined in the federal/provincial gas tax agreements as “a long-term plan, developed in consultation with community members, which provides direction for the community to realize sustainability objectives it has for the environmental, cultural, social, and economic dimensions of its identity.”<sup>1</sup>

In July of 2007, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations released an ICSP Guidebook and a choice of three templates. This document is the ICSP (Template # 3) which projects a planning scope of 25 years and beyond.

While the ICSP is a new experience for this municipal unit, the Municipality of the County of Inverness has been involved in a similar planning process for the past ten years through its commitment to “A Plan for Community Based Municipal Development.”

In 1999 the Municipality worked with the 16 Community Development Associations (CDAs) to create the first community based plan. The plan was developed in order to address the “integrated social, economic, and environmental development of the communities of the Municipality of the County of Inverness.”<sup>2</sup> It was further expressed by the communities that “each community wanted its plans to be developed and supported within the framework of a larger Municipal plan.”

The principal outcome of the 1999 planning process was the recognition that the Municipality is a network of sixteen primary local communities. Since that time the sixteen CDAs, which represent the development interests of their communities, have been supported by a municipal capital project fund and are recognized within a municipal planning framework.

In 2003, municipal Council adopted a renewed “Plan for Community Based Municipal Development,” which identified general objectives to be pursued within the context of developing, promoting and maintaining a healthy environment, a strong culture and a varied economy. These objectives included the need to foster the conditions that would enable:

- I. Individual and community enhancement;
- II. Economic and enterprise development;
- III. Cultural and environmental sustainability.<sup>3</sup>

The 2003 plan lead to the investment of resources for upgrades to existing infrastructure and the development of new projects, the creation of centralized facilities for waste management, the protection of water resources, and increased collaboration within and amongst communities. The Municipality’s commitment to ‘A

---

<sup>1</sup> Canada-Nova Scotia, “Agreement on the Transfer of Federal Gas Tax Revenues Under the New Deal for Cities and Communities 2005-2015

<sup>2</sup> “A Plan for Community Based Municipal Development” G.K Nishi, Architecture and CED Associates, 1999

<sup>3</sup> “A Plan for Community Based Municipal Development” KLOG Growth Centre, 2003

Plan for Community Based Municipal Development” demonstrates the value that has been placed on community consultations within a municipal planning context.

This planning process is currently being updated and revised in consultation with the sixteen CDAs. Given its similarities with the ICSP process and framework, these two plans will be integrated in order to create a longer term planning framework and process for Municipality of the County of Inverness.

Another key planning process that has shaped the ICSP is the innovative and ambitious “Strait-Highlands Green Action” project which was initiated and championed by The Strait-Highlands Regional Development Agency (S-HRDA). The S-HRDA is the lead regional economic development group for a coalition of municipal units, including Inverness County, Town of Port Hawkesbury and Richmond County.

The “Strait-Highlands Green Action” project is a multi-year endeavor valued at over \$700,000, which is supported by 14 public and private partners. The three year project, which began in 2006, involves the development of a local action plan for municipal operations and the community at-large to address a wide variety of issues such as building retrofits, solid waste management, water conservation and transportation.

The initiative involves the completion of three milestones including the creation of a greenhouse gas emissions inventory and forecast for the region, setting emissions reduction targets and establishing a plan to significantly reduce both corporate and community Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. Milestone III was recently released and will shape aspects of the ICSP and future Capital Investment Plans for the Municipality.

## **2.1 GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Municipality of the County of Inverness was incorporated in 1879. Situated on the western, or the “sunset side” of Cape Breton Island, the Municipality has a population of 14,896.<sup>4</sup> Stretching from its southern most point at the Canso Causeway to its northern most point at Meat Cove, the Municipality comprises an area 3,678 square kilometers.<sup>5</sup> The people of this large and sparsely populated Municipality are settled in sixteen long established communities. Overlapping these communities are the six municipal riding districts. The current councilors are;

- Whycocomagh-Lake Ainslie area- Warden, Mr. Duart MacAulay
- Cheticamp-North area - Deputy Warden, Mr. Daniel Boudreau
- Port Hood-Mabou area- Mrs. Susan Mallette
- Margaree/ St. Joseph area - Mrs. Gloria Le Blanc
- Judique- Port Hastings area - Mr. Ed MacDonald
- Inverness-Glenville area - Mr. Ned Mac Donald

---

<sup>4</sup> Statistic Canada 2006 Census

<sup>5</sup> “A Plan for Community Based Municipal Development” G.K Nishi, Architecture and CED Associates, 1999

The Municipality has a rich and diverse cultural make-up. Mik'maq, Gaelic, French, English, and to a lesser degree, Dutch and German speakers are found throughout the Municipality. Waycobah First Nation, located on Whycocomagh Bay, and communities that were historically made up of Scottish and Acadian descendants complement and enrich Inverness County identity, music, dance, and folklore. The need to preserve, enhance and promote this unique and diverse cultural heritage remains a focus of the Municipality and its communities.

The Eastern District Planning Commission provides the planning, subdivision and building inspection services for the Municipality as well as the Counties of Antigonish, Richmond and Victoria and the Town of Port Hawkesbury.

The Cape Breton Island Housing Authority, on behalf of the Nova Scotia Housing Development Corporation, provides services for all municipal units on Cape Breton Island.

The Municipality is served by the Strait Regional School Board and the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial in the Acadian region of Cheticamp and St. Joseph Du Moine. The Mi'Kmaq Kina'Matnewey School Board governs the education system at Waycobah First Nation.

The Cape Breton District Health Authority serves the central and northern communities of the Municipality while the southeastern communities are served by the Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority. There are three community health boards in the Municipality.

The S-HRDA, as previously stated, is the lead economic development agency for the Municipality of Inverness County. The three municipalities served by the S-HRDA are closely linked by geography and by similar economic concerns, issues, trends and opportunities. The well-being and sustainability of each one of the municipalities affects the others and the region as a whole.

The S-HRDA has contributed information towards the population and economic makeup of the region, which includes the municipal units that it serves: Inverness County, Richmond County and the Town of Port Hawkesbury.

#### 2.1.1 Population

The 2006 Census indicates that the population of Municipality was 14,896 (not including Waycobah First Nation which has a population of 623 people).<sup>6</sup> Like most rural counties in Nova Scotia, Inverness County has been losing population steadily since the 1980s. The Municipality's population is down by 14% since 1991. For Cape Breton as a whole, the population loss since 1991 has been about 16%. This population decline compares with a net gain of over 10% for Nova Scotia for the same period, with that gain concentrated in the Halifax Regional Municipality and the counties surrounding it.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> Statistic Canada 2006 Census

<sup>7</sup> "New 5-Year Economic Plan for the Strait Highlands Region," Pinfold Gardner, 2008

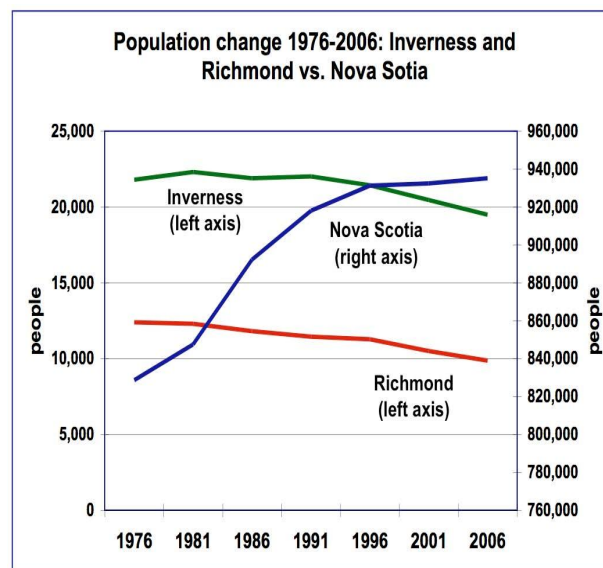
Furthermore, population projections indicate that the Municipality is projected to lose 24% of its population between the period of 2001 and 2021, while Cape Breton Island as a whole would see a loss of 33%, or the equivalent of over 53,000 people. Table 1 and Figure 1 indicate recent population changes.<sup>8</sup>

**Table 1:** Population Change in Inverness County from 1991-2006

Population: Municipality of the County of Inverness						
1991	1996	1991-96	2001	1996-01	2006	2001-06
Population	Population	% Change	Population	% Change	Population	% Change
17,207	16,535	-3.90%	15,601	-5.60%	14,896	-4.5%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 1991-2006 reference

**Figure 1:** Indicates County (including the Town of Port Hawkesbury) population decline as compared to Nova Scotia and neighboring Richmond County population data



Source: "New 5-Year Economic Plan for the Strait Highlands Region," Pinfold Gardner, 2008

In 2004 The Terrain Group Inc. released a report entitled "Population Projections for Cape Breton Municipal Units – 2001-2021." The findings from the report are so concerning that it warrants quoting sections at length.

*"Our projections present a discouraging picture for the growth of Cape Breton Island. The population of Cape Breton Island will continue to fall steadily to 2021. The overall result will be severe depopulation, with island population declining to roughly two-thirds of its current level.*

*The effects of out-migration by young people are powerfully exaggerating the influence of the Baby Boom. The Echo Boomers are now leaving the Island in large numbers because of the apparent lack of economic opportunity.*

*If younger residents continue to leave while older residents stay in place, the population profile for Cape Breton will become increasingly top heavy,*

<sup>8</sup> "Population Projection for Cape Breton Municipal Units 2001-2021" Terrain Group Inc, 2004

*with many more mature adults and seniors than children and young adults.*

*This gradual evolution will cause a related shift in social priorities that has been anticipated for some time. The major shift will not, however, come until 2011, when the first Baby Boomers will hit their 65<sup>th</sup> birthdays and seniors will begin to dominate our society, not only in Cape Breton but also across Canada.*

*A key concern with an increasing number of seniors will be the Dependency Ratio, or the measure of the portion of a population composed of dependents (people who are too young or too old to work). The ratio will actually fall on Cape Breton Island until 2011 because the increasing number of seniors will be more than counterbalanced by a falling number of children. Between 2011 and 2016, however, the increase in seniors will begin to overwhelm the balance of the population.”*

The significance of this level of population decline will compound the complexity of efforts required to sustain the identity of the Municipality of Inverness County.

What is being asked of this Municipality, through the ICSP process, is to find a way to sustain its current identity during a pattern of decline so pervasive that its effects will challenge the foundations of the very institutions and organizations charged with maintaining the social, cultural, economic and environmental fabric of our collective identity.

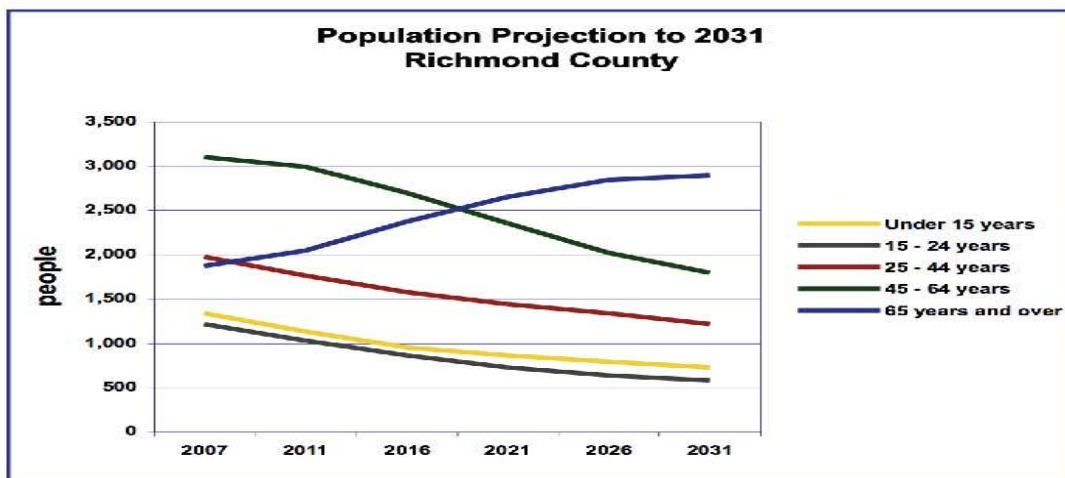
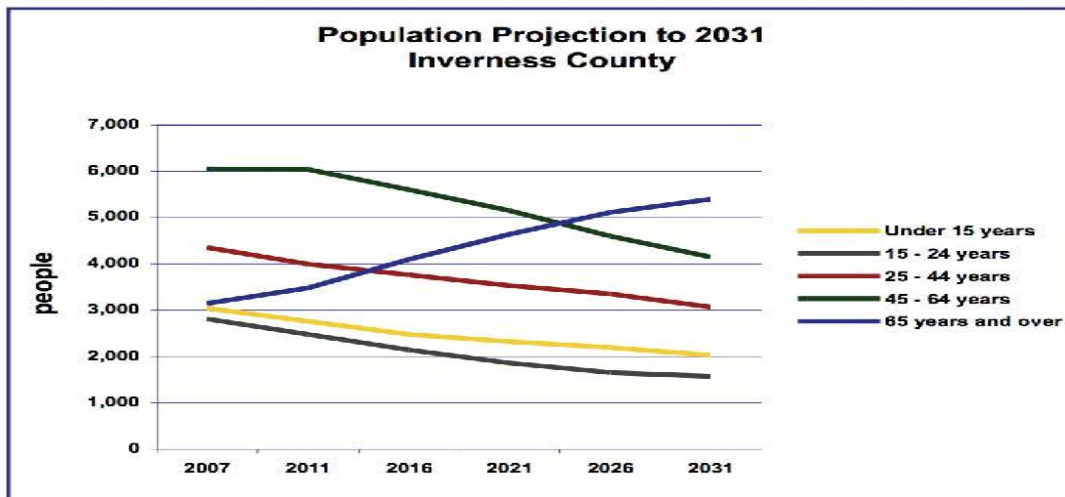
Within this dynamic, however, there is an exception as the population of Waycobah First Nation is highlighted by a growing youth demographic. The 2006 Census indicates that 623 individuals lived on the reservation, with 55% of the population comprised of individuals under the age of 24.<sup>9</sup>

The following figures indicate the change in projected population by age group for Inverness and Richmond County.

---

<sup>9</sup> Statistic Canada 2006 Census





Source: "New 5-Year Economic Plan for the Strait Highlands Region," Pinfold Gardner, 2008

### 2.1.2 Regional Economic Background

Until the early 1960s, the regional economy had been almost exclusively resource-based (mainly fishing and logging, with some mining, agriculture and tourism). Some of the traditional resource sector activity continues to this day, providing for the economic base of several smaller communities within the region.

The structure of the economy began to change in the late 1950s after the construction of the Canso Causeway and with the construction of a pulp and paper mill in Port Hawkesbury. The mill received a substantial upgrade in production capability in the late 1990s and continues to operate despite the difficult economic circumstances facing this sector in North America due to global competitive pressures.

Over the years, other manufacturing and processing plants were established in the Strait area. The resource base attracted some of these, including gypsum mining/manufacturing and aggregate production, with the economics of these industries greatly enhanced by the excellent, ice-free, deep-water harbour.

Today, the Greater Strait Area industries create approximately 2,000 full-time and seasonal jobs. The wider economy of Inverness and Richmond Counties supports another 9,500 jobs in construction, fisheries, agriculture, tourism, small-scale manufacturing (including arts and crafts), wholesale and retail trade, and in delivering education, health and business services.<sup>10</sup>

Though the economy generates employment for between 11,000 and 12,000 individuals, it is not enough to attract and sustain all the people looking for work in the region. The unemployment rate is substantially higher than the provincial average, which causes many in the labour force to look outside the region for employment. This has resulted in net out-migration over the years, contributing to population decline which is now impacting on the labour force availability for certain sectors.

Labour market issues pertaining to the availability of labour, especially in the more rural areas of Inverness and Richmond Counties, is becoming a critical factor in small business ability to expand and grow and, in some cases, even survive. There are increasing cost pressures, especially energy (fuel costs) on many resource businesses (fisheries, farming, forestry) and certain service and retail business. The following table shows comparative labour force activity for Richmond and Inverness Counties, The Town of Port Hawkesbury, and Nova Scotia.

---

<sup>10</sup>“New 5-Year Economic Plan for the Strait Highlands Region,” Pinfold Gardner, 2008

**Table 3:** Labour force activity, S-HRDA Area vs. Nova Scotia average

	2001				2006			
	Richmond	Inverness	Port Hawkesbury	Nova Scotia	Richmond	Inverness	Port Hawkesbury	Nova Scotia
Labour force	4,390	9,451	2,421	457,676	4,305	9,375	2,436	476,125
Employed	3,263	7,561	2,127	407,896	3,590	7,965	2,172	432,595
Unemployed	1,127	1,890	297	49,780	715	1,410	259	43,530
Participation rate	51.8	58.5	64.2	61.6	52.8	59.8	65.2	62.9
Employment rate	38.5	46.8	56.4	54.9	44.0	50.8	58.1	57.2
Unemployment rate	25.6	20.1	12.3	10.9	16.6	15.0	10.6	9.1

Source: Statistics Canada

Labour force data provides a valuable insight into the region's industrial structure and its ability to support employment. Table 4, showing Census labour force data, indicates how industry structure is changing over time and where opportunities for future growth may lie. Caution should be used in interpreting this data because small population size and survey sampling error can result in wide year-to-year swings. Nonetheless, several points are worth noting:

- The general trend in the S-HRDA area is away from goods producing industries – primary sector and manufacturing – towards production of services.
- Services account for 80% of the labour force, up from 73% in 1991.
- There has been a fairly steady decline in the numbers employed in the primary sector (agriculture, forestry and fisheries). This sector accounted for 9.1% of the labour force in 2006, down from 11.6% in 1991. The decline is most noticeable in logging, which is down by half. Offsetting the declines in other sectors is an increase in fishing in 2006. This is likely attributable to an expansion in the crab fishery after 2001.
- There has been a steady decline in the numbers employed in manufacturing. Employment in fish processing has remained fairly stable, while pulp and paper has experienced a significant decline, particularly amongst NewPage workers living in Inverness County. Manufacturing accounted for 11.6% of the total labour force in 2006, down from 15.5% in 1991.
- Construction shows relative stability over the 1996-2006 period.
- Employment in business services has increased steadily, but still accounts for a relatively small proportion of total employment (4%).
- Government services, including education and health, have remained steady at 23% of the total labour force between 1991 and 2006.
- Health services have increased, presumably in response to increased care requirements for an aging population.
- Accommodation and food services have held on to its relative share of total employment (about 8%).
- Other service industries increased sharply after 2001, presumably due to the jobs created with the opening of the EDS/Minacs call centre.
- Arts, entertainment and recreation were identified as a separate industry in 2001. It grew between 2001 and 2006, particularly in Inverness County. In absolute size, it rivals several other industries including finance, retail trade and mining/quarrying.

**Table 4:** Labour Market information by sector for the S-HRDA region

	INVERNESS				RICHMOND				PORT HAWKESBURY				S-HRDA AREA			
	1991	1996	2001	2006	1991	1996	2001	2006	1991	1996	2001	2006	1991	1996	2001	2006
<b>Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting</b>	<b>1,195</b>	<b>1,110</b>	<b>940</b>	<b>1,050</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>1,675</b>	<b>1,440</b>	<b>1,265</b>	<b>1,380</b>
Agricultural and related service industries	230	240	245	160	75	0	145	50	0	0	n.a.	n.a.	305	240	n.a.	n.a.
Fishing and trapping industries	570	550	560	660	215	220	90	190	0	10	10	60	785	780	n.a.	n.a.
Logging and forestry industries	395	320	200	230	155	100	160	60	35	0	n.a.	n.a.	585	420	n.a.	n.a.
Mining, quarrying and oil well	200	190	215	240	35	35	15	30	10	0	45	45	245	225	275	315
<b>Manufacturing industries</b>	<b>945</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>1,120</b>	<b>895</b>	<b>885</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>660</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>2,235</b>	<b>1,535</b>	<b>2,110</b>	<b>1,760</b>
Fish processing	n.a.	n.a.	340	270	n.a.	n.a.	305	330	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	645	600
Pulp and paper	n.a.	n.a.	525	360	n.a.	n.a.	225	200	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	750	560
Other	n.a.	n.a.	255	265	n.a.	n.a.	165	130	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	420	395
Construction industries	530	505	715	585	285	455	355	390	55	100	120	65	870	1,060	1,190	1,040
Transportation and storage industries	295	340	300	355	185	180	190	240	45	85	25	45	525	605	515	640
Communication and other utility industries	200	120	185	130	140	165	60	75	80	45	40	20	420	330	285	225
Wholesale trade industries	175	285	180	185	100	125	80	95	40	80	45	40	315	490	305	320
Retail trade industries	990	835	1,235	1,105	575	460	490	340	425	340	400	350	1,990	1,635	2,125	1,795
Finance and insurance industries	145	160	165	180	65	85	110	100	35	40	70	55	245	285	345	335
Real estate operator and insurance agent	45	110	90	75	30	20	20	30	30	25	20	30	105	155	130	135
Business service industries	80	135	210	365	75	85	85	115	80	45	115	120	235	265	410	600
Government service industries	460	365	475	455	365	265	225	200	180	80	140	130	1,005	710	840	785
Educational service industries	595	555	620	600	440	440	405	285	175	140	110	115	1,210	1,135	1,135	1,000
Health and social service industries	705	715	870	1,020	310	405	450	475	95	120	100	135	1,110	1,240	1,420	1,630
Accommodation, food and beverage services	695	750	875	890	300	300	280	295	185	245	195	135	1,180	1,295	1,350	1,320
Other service industries	600	595	755	855	335	410	345	520	100	120	65	220	1,035	1,125	1,165	1,595
Arts, entertainment and recreation	n.a.	n.a.	160	220	n.a.	n.a.	65	50	n.a.	n.a.	0	25	n.a.	n.a.	225	295
Industry - Non applicable	205	260	190	180	135	250	155	125	50	65	30	50	390	575	375	355
<b>All industries</b>	<b>7,845</b>	<b>7,425</b>	<b>9,100</b>	<b>9,200</b>	<b>4,580</b>	<b>4,335</b>	<b>4,175</b>	<b>4,175</b>	<b>1,990</b>	<b>1,795</b>	<b>1,800</b>	<b>1,785</b>	<b>14,415</b>	<b>13,555</b>	<b>15,075</b>	<b>15,160</b>

Source: Nova Scotia Community Counts web page - data modeled from Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006.

### 2.1.3 Sixteen Community Districts

It is important to recognise the commonalities that exist within the broader economic region served by the S-HRDA. It is equally important to recognise the unique opportunities, challenges and needs that exist throughout the separate communities located within the municipal boundaries. The vast size of the Municipality guarantees that conditions, by ICSP pillar, will vary to some extent by location.

This is the primary function of the CDA structure – to create a mechanism that would allow for place-based, grass-roots development, which addresses community needs and opportunities while enabling an equitable means to scale development efforts to municipal and regional levels of authority and vice versa.

The sixteen community districts of the Municipality are broken into four geographic regions. With the exception of the Margaree region, each community listed is represented by a CDA. In the case of the Margaree region, all listed communities are represented by The Margaree Development Association, which acts as an umbrella organisation for the broader community

- The Northern Region includes the communities of:

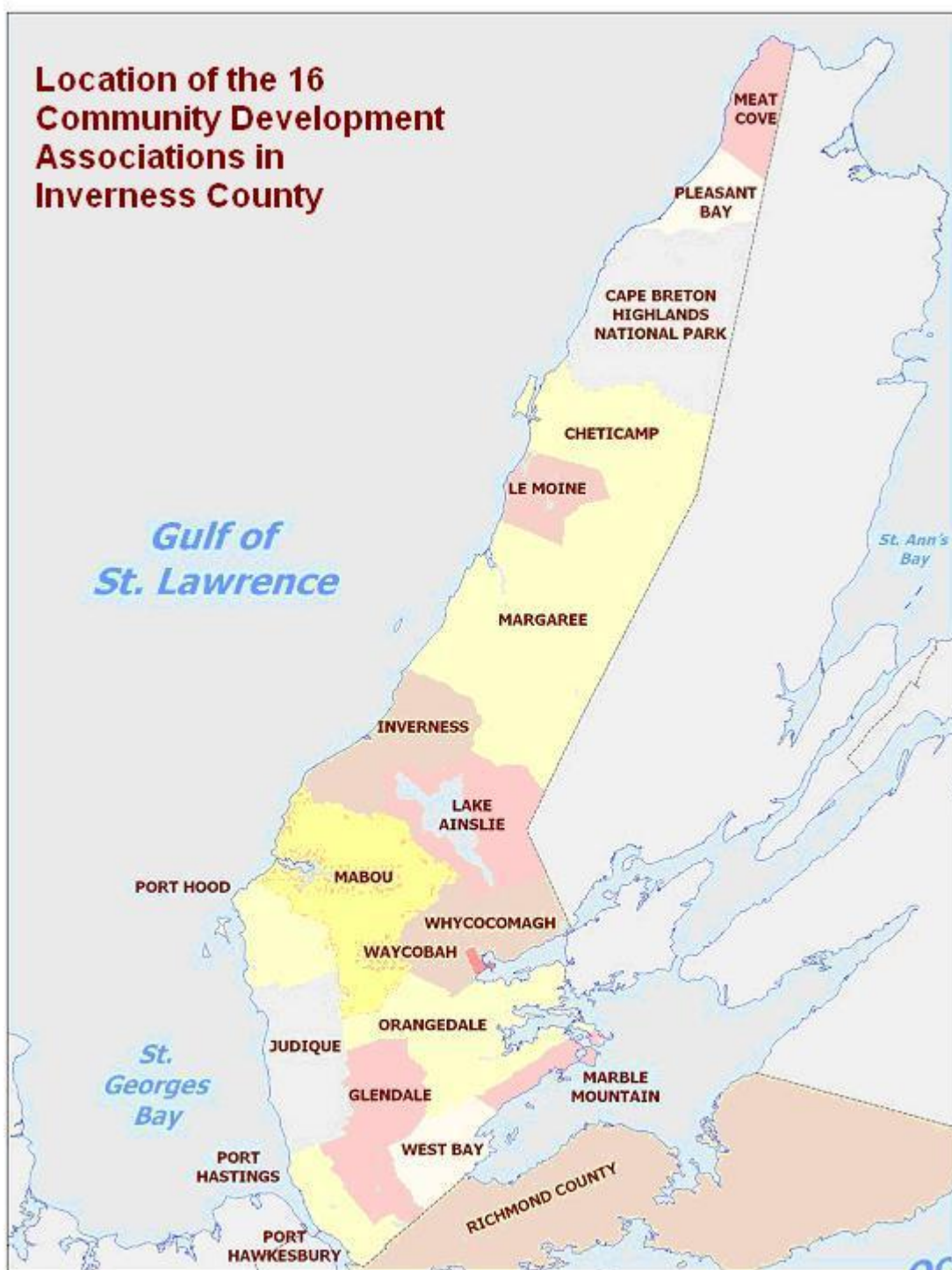
Meat Cove	Cheticamp
Pleasant Bay	St. Joseph Du Moine
- The Margaree Region includes the communities of:

Margaree Forks	Belle Cote
Southwest Margaree	East Margaree
Northeast Margaree	
- The Central Region includes the communities of:

Inverness	Lake Ainslie
Whycocomagh	Mabou
- The Southern Region includes the communities of:

Port Hood	Judique
Glendale	Marble Mountain
West Bay	Orangedale
Port Hastings	

The following map indicates the location of community districts.



In addition to its commitment to “A Plan for Community Based Municipal Development,” in 2005 the Municipality commissioned a study on the “Quality of Life in Inverness County.”

Entitled “The Voice of the People” the goal of the project was to provide the raw data on employment characteristics and demographics for the sixteen CDAs. A secondary objective was to increase CDA leadership ability through participatory research in order to influence policies and programs that contribute to the quality of life in the Municipality.

Surveys were sent to all residents over the age of 18 and a 68% return rate was achieved. The following table highlights some of the findings of the project.

Item	Northern Region	Margaree Region	Central Region	Southern Region	Inverness County	Canada
<b>Demographics</b>						
18-29 yrs	10%	11%	14%	13%	12%	20%
30-45 yrs	24%	28%	24%	26%	26%	30%
46-65 yrs	42%	38%	39%	39%	39%	33%
65 yr +	24%	23%	23%	22%	23%	17%
Lived here all their life	55%	52%	55%	50%	53%	N/A
Grew up here, moved away, returned	31%	25%	26%	23%	26%	N/A
Grew up elsewhere	14%	23%	19%	27%	20%	N/A
<b>Employment</b>						
Full time	21%	24%	29%	37%	28%	51.6%
Part time year round	7%	7%	8%	8%	7%	11.4%
Self employed	4%	8%	6%	5%	6%	15.5%
Retired	33%	29%	32%	27%	30%	
Top Sectors for Employment	*Fishery *Health Care *Retail/Personal Services *Food Services *Building/Trades	*Health Care *Building/Trades *Financial/Business Services *Forestry *Hospitality	*Health Care *Light industrial *Building/Trades *Retail/Personal Services *Education	*Building/Trades *Retail/Personal Services *Heavy Industrial *Light industrial *Health Care	*Health Care *Building/Trades *Fishery *Retail/Personal Services *Light industrial	*Retail/Wholesale Trade *Manufacturing *Health Care *Education *Professional/Scientific / Technical Services

Source: “The Voice of the People – A report on the Quality of Life in Inverness County,” KLOG Growth Centre 2005

These population statistics are consistent with the findings from the Terrain report “Population Projections for Cape Breton Municipal Units – 2001-2021.” This data also indicates that senior and boomer segments of the population will eventually overwhelm the rest of the population.

However, it is interesting to note that some communities have been more successful than others in attracting new residents. Additionally, some communities have significantly higher levels of self employment.

There is a need to stabilize the population decline in the Municipality. In reviewing this data it is recommended that any strategy developed to address this issue needs to be considerate of the various opportunities and challenges that exist throughout the separate communities.

## **2.2 MUNICIPAL/COMMUNITY BACKGROUND MATERIALS:**

- Municipal Planning Strategy and Land-use by-laws
- Capital Projects (Capital Investment Plans)
- Warden's Report
- Inverness County Emergency Plan
- Community Based Plan for Municipal Development (1999,2003, *2010 in progress*)
- The Voice of the People - A Report on the Quality of Life in Inverness County (2005)
- Recreation/Tourism Department Strategic Plan (*in progress*)
- Strait-Highland Regional Development Agency 5 yr Strategic Plan (2009)
- Strait-Highland Regional Development Agency Business Plan (2009-2010)
- Strait-Highland Regional Development Agency Green Action Plan – Milestones 1-3 (2008-2009)

## **2.3 KEY AREAS OF SUSTAINABILITY TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE ICSP**

### **2.3.1 Underlying Themes**

Sustainability is the result of incredibly complex systems intersecting at various scales across social, cultural, economic and environmental spheres of society. It is impacted by the actions that occur at the individual, community, municipal, provincial, national and global level.

The challenge for any municipal unit is that the majority of the dynamics impacting a municipality's goals for sustainability are outside the area of its influence and authority. In undertaking an ICSP it is important to understand the role and responsibilities of the various stakeholders operating within the scope of the Municipality. It is also important to understand their limitations.

At the Municipality of the County of Inverness we view our primary role as becoming a key player in facilitating a local and regional dialogue regarding the importance of increased integrated planning amongst the various stakeholders that impact sustainability.

With that stated, for a comprehensive long term sustainability plan for the Municipality to become effective, any and all proposed initiatives must consider the importance of the following underlying themes and how they will influence the viability of long-term sustainability.

#### **i. Population Decline:**

This theme precedes all others because the scale and scope of the decline will adversely affect all other themes. Unless proactive efforts are directed towards stabilizing this decline the sustainability of the identity of the Municipality of the County of Inverness, in its current form, will prove difficult if not impossible to achieve.



ii. Governance:

For the purpose of this document governance is understood to mean:

*The use of institutions, structures of authority, and the practice of collaboration to allocate resources and coordinate or control activity in society or the economy.<sup>11</sup>*

Considering this definition, six scales of governance impact municipal sustainability: Private Sector, Community, Municipal, NGO, Provincial and Federal. If we are to assume that all six levels of governance are concerned with the common goal of sustaining the Municipality then a greater degree of collaboration and an improved structure of governance is required between and across these levels of authority. If the previous patterns of governance are not improved upon then sustainability will prove difficult if not impossible to achieve.

iii. Municipal Finance:

In the recently released “Annual Municipal Performance Report” the Municipality of the County of Inverness was ranked third among 55 Municipal Units in Nova Scotia. This indicates that this Municipality is high performing in both the effective and efficient delivery of services. However, given population projections, maintaining this standard will become increasingly difficult.

There are two aspects that impact municipal finance: revenue generation and expense control. Revenue is generated through tax and government transfers. As the population decline accelerates, government transfers will likely be reduced. The labour market will be further impacted, which in turn will affect the economy, which will impact the tax base leading to potentially reduced revenues. (An approach to offset this reduction is to raise tax rates, however, at a certain point a ceiling will be reached and increasing rates beyond that threshold will add yet another feedback into the loop that adversely affects revenues). The coming demographic crunch will impede the Municipality’s ability to deliver services mandated by the Municipal Act.

Decline, like growth, is a dynamic process. As the Municipality of the County Inverness navigates its way through the anticipated population decline it will be challenged to delivered comparable levels of service while managing increases in expenditures and reductions in revenue sources.

iv. The Volunteer Sector:

The Municipality of the County of Inverness is in the extremely fortunate position of having a strong and committed volunteer base. In reviewing Municipal databases there are over 300 registered not-for-profit organizations that exist in this County of 14,896 people. This is an incredible statistic.

---

<sup>11</sup> Wikipedia Web Page: Governance

The Volunteer Sector contributes value to every pillar of the ICSP and to the richness, complexity and well being of the Municipality. The Fire Departments, the Sports Systems, our Community Economic Development and Community Development Organizations, Arts, Cultural and Environmental Groups, our Credit Unions and Co-operative Grocery Stores, and more, are all dependant upon volunteer efforts. As the population ages and declines, the question needs to be asked, “How will this incredibly important contribution to our collective identity be sustained?” And furthermore, “What are the consequences if it is not?”

v. Innovation:

In examining the four previous underlying themes it is implied that in order to sustain the identity of the Municipality in its current form, more will likely need to be achieved with less. Supporting and fostering a culture of innovation will need to become an integral component of community and municipal identity.

### 2.3.2 Definition of Sustainability

The Classic Definition:

*“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs.”<sup>12</sup>*

This is the most commonly accepted definition of sustainability. It is the Municipality’s position that what we are attempting to sustain within the ICSP context is the quality, complexity and diversity of the social, cultural, economic and environmental dimensions of our collective identity. In short, within our capacity, we strive to maintain and improve upon the conditions and opportunities that enable a rich and diverse quality of life for the residents of the Municipality.

Because of the inherent complexity of all social, ecological, economic and cultural systems, sustainability cannot be viewed as an isolated and static end goal. At the Municipality of the County of Inverness sustainability is viewed as a complex process.

The planning approach that has been adopted for the ICSP aims to foster a process that both harvests and conserves the assets that are available to us today, while simultaneously embracing a process of change and renewal.

The goal of the approach, through utilizing the ICSP framework and establishing a comprehensive and continuous asset mapping process supportive of “A Plan for Community Based Municipal Development,” is to gather evidence so that we can begin to define what is known, what is uncertain and what is unknown. What we will be left with are informed judgments, which will allow us to proactively engage in a continuum of efforts in an attempt to sustain the unique identity that is the Municipality of the County of Inverness.

---

<sup>12</sup> “The Bruntland Commission,” 1987

### 2.3.3 Municipal Priorities by ICSP Pillar

The ICSP has been developed around the existing asset base within the Municipality. Recommendations for municipal positioning and engagement by asset have been identified within each pillar of the ICSP. While it is recognized that the sustainability of many of the assets are outside the Municipality's area of influence, this should not limit the need for an informed and committed position regarding how this municipality, within the scope of its mandate, intends to engage stakeholders that are affiliated with the sustainability of each asset. The steering committee identified the following priorities by ICSP pillar:

#### Environmental

- Moving towards meeting or exceeding provincial and national standards for solid waste management, water treatment and waste water management;
- Promoting and moving towards adopting renewable energy production and energy conservation measures;
- Ensuring stewardship and the responsible and regenerative use of natural capital stock.

#### Economic

- Creating a common county-wide development framework and practicing a process which fosters collaboration amongst development stakeholders within the region and throughout the Municipality;
- Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives;
- Incubating and assisting local small business, community enterprise, community economic development, and building capacity within Community Economic Development Organizations and Community Development Organizations.

#### Social

- Creating programs and processes that will assist in sustaining the volunteer sector's contribution to the quality of life of the Municipality;
- Collaborating with various stakeholders in order to promote and adopt population health principles which foster healthy vibrant communities;
- Fostering outdoor recreation opportunities/participation and active healthy lifestyles through the support, promotion and development of local recreation infrastructure and assets.

#### Culture

- Enhancing, supporting and promoting the distinct subcultures and languages which collectively makeup the unique identity of the Municipality of the County of Inverness;
- Enhancing tourism through the support and promotion of community festivals and events and local cultural and natural infrastructure;
- Engaging youth in on-going visioning, sustainability planning and community based development.

### **3. ICSP INFORMATION SOURCES**

#### **3.1 STEERING COMMITTEE**

- Duart MacAulay, Warden, Municipality of the County of Inverness (areas of responsibility: economic, environmental, social, cultural)
- Joe O'Connor, CAO, Municipality of the County of Inverness (areas of responsibility: economic, environmental, social, cultural)
- Donna MacDonald, Director, Recreation/Tourism Dept, Municipality of the County of Inverness (areas of responsibility: social, cultural)
- Garret Beaton, Engineer, Public Works Dept, Municipality of the County of Inverness (areas of responsibility: environmental)
- Blaine Gillis, Chief Executive Officer, Strait Highlands Regional Development Agency (areas of responsibility: economic, environmental)
- Karl Grenke, Development/Policy Planner, Eastern District Planning Commission (areas of responsibility: environmental, economic)

#### **3.2 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION:**

##### **3.2.1 A Plan for Community Based Municipal Development 2009/10**

Throughout the months of June and July of 2009 municipal staff began meeting with the sixteen CDAs in order to chart a course for the renewal and revision of “A Plan for Community Based Municipal Development.” During those two months a total of 83 people took part in discussions regarding how the revised plan would be structured and integrated into the ICSP.

Given the complexity of the underlying themes of the ICSP – Population Decline, Governance, Municipal Finance, the Volunteer Sector, and Innovation – and how they will impact municipal sustainability, it has been agreed upon that as much as the communities and the Municipality need to be concerned with growth and development equal attention must also be given to how we hold on to what we already have.

Within the ICSP framework, and through a process that is supportive of “A Plan for Community Based Municipal Development,” the 16 CDAs will be working with municipal staff in order to undertake a comprehensive asset mapping process within their community districts.

Workshops with each CDA will take place throughout the winter and spring of 2010. In each community district all assets under the built, natural, social, economic and service environments will be documented. Aspects and strategies required of their sustainability will be identified.

Assets are defined as popularly recognized attributes and advantages of a community. They are considered essential for the maintenance of community and vital for the sustainability of rural life. Assets are what we want to keep, build upon and sustain for future generations.<sup>13</sup>

Mapping our assets produces a positive and common view of what is considered important in a community. It provides a useful starting point, leading to a strategic planning process and/or community/organizational development. The process of asset mapping provides a critical element of strategic planning – allowing for community engagement in the shaping of plans and policy.

While there is value in and of itself in collecting information through an asset mapping process, the true value of this work will largely be determined in how the information is shared and disseminated. Once the information is collected the Municipality will move towards developing a series of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) web based maps allowing for the profiling of assets and activities that are occurring within communities and throughout the Municipality.

GIS technology, which enables the layering of evidence onto maps, provides municipal governments with extraordinary quantitative and qualitative benefits. The technology can be the basis for revolutionizing how government processes work.<sup>14</sup>

Ultimately, the goal is to create a tool that will enable a stronger understanding of what dynamics (economic, social, environmental, cultural) exist in each of the CDA catchment areas and where attention should be focused from various stakeholders in order to assist in sustaining a vibrant Municipality. A municipal GIS system will foster improved communication within and between communities and across scales of development authority. It will also allow for the promotion of community and county identity both within and abroad.

### 3.2.2 ICSP Community Workshops

The 2010 “Community Based Plan for Municipal Development” will concern itself with sustaining assets specific to each community district. The ICSP has been shaped around sustaining assets by sector. In approaching the ICSP and the community based plan through asset mapping, municipal policy for each sector can be developed and specific roles and responsibilities can be determined for the various scales of development authority operating within the Municipality.

To further compliment this approach, six ICSP community workshops were held in each municipal voting district during the month of September. The workshops were held in the communities of Port Hastings, Port Hood, Inverness, Whycocomagh, Margaree, and Cheticamp. A total of 67 people attended. The attendees were asked to prioritize the sectors that they thought the Municipality and its affiliated stakeholders should be focusing their attention on in order to sustain the identity of the Municipality. This contribution is indicated by priority

---

<sup>13</sup> “Building Communities from the Inside Out,” Kretzmann, McKnight, 1993

<sup>14</sup> Enterprise GIS for Municipalities - An Integrated Approach Subash S. & Arjun Padaki 2001

level within section four, ranked 1-5, with a ranking of 1 being most urgent and a ranking of 5 being the lowest priority.

### **3.3 OTHER KEY LOCAL CONSIDERATIONS IMPACTING SUSTAINABILITY:**

- Regional Commonalities
- Community Development Association planning and activities
- Developments at the Strait Super Port
- Developments at NewPage/Nova Scotia Power Inc regarding biomass electrical generation
- Provincial Statements of Interest

### **3.4 VISION STATEMENT:**

An outcome of the 2003 “Plan for Community Based Municipal Development” was Council’s adoption of the sixteen CDA’s vision statement for The Municipality of the County of Inverness. The vision statement is as follows:

*“The Municipality of the County of Inverness, while preserving our values and traditions, has developed a dynamic process for constantly enhancing our social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being. This process will ensure that we will always have a healthy and vibrant place to live.”*

## 4. SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING ISSUES AND TOPICS

### 4.1 ASSET DIRECTORY:

The federal transfer agreement stipulates that the ICSP must take the four pillars of sustainability (economic, environmental, social, and cultural) into consideration when making infrastructure investments and planning decisions. The following matrix identifies the assets/planning topics that were addressed through the ICSP process. The existing asset base is assigned to its most appropriate ICSP pillar, with the economic pillar remaining consistent with the labour market sector. In addition to the four pillars required of the ICSP process, we have included a fifth pillar "Leadership by Example," in which the Municipality examines the sustainable practices of its most immediate assets.

<b>ECONOMIC</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fisheries</li> <li>• Forestry</li> <li>• Agriculture</li> <li>• Mining</li> <li>• Manufacturing</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Tourism</li> <li>• IT Sector</li> <li>• Retail Trade Industries</li> <li>• Construction and trades</li> <li>• <b>Service Sector</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Education</li> <li>*Health</li> <li>*Fire Department</li> <li>*Senior Care and Housing</li> <li>*Low Income Housing and Services</li> <li>*RCMP</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>*Voluntary Sector</b></li> </ul>	<b>ENVIRONMENTAL</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renewable Energy Potential</li> <li>• Energy Conservation</li> <li>• Water and Sewage Treatment</li> <li>• Solid Waste Management</li> <li>• Parks</li> <li>• Beaches and coast lines</li> <li>• Watersheds</li> <li>• Land Use Planning/Zoning and Bylaws</li> <li>• <b>*Voluntary Sector</b></li> </ul>
<b>SOCIAL</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gatherings/ Festivals</li> <li>• Recreation Programming</li> <li>• Recreation Centres</li> <li>• Sports System</li> <li>• Trails Systems</li> <li>• Active Healthy Living</li> <li>• Libraries and Services</li> <li>• <b>*Voluntary Sector</b></li> </ul>	<b>CULTURAL</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Arts</li> <li>• Cultural Centers</li> <li>• Museums and Heritage Buildings</li> <li>• Dances</li> <li>• Churches</li> <li>• Community Halls</li> <li>• Language</li> <li>• <b>*Voluntary Sector</b></li> </ul>
<b>LEADERSHIP BY EXAMPLE</b> Accessibility and Communications Sustainability Planning, Indicators, Coordination Municipal Buildings and Fleet Municipal Land Holdings	

## 5. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS/ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES AS REALTED TO ASSET BASE

**Topic/Asset #1:** Accessibility and Communications

**ICSP Pillar:** Leadership by Example

**Priority Level:** 1

**Current Reality:**

- The Municipality has entered into an agreement with the Association of Municipal Administrators to develop a new webpage to enhance its online presence
- The Inverness Oran (local newspaper) publishes 'Council Briefs' highlighting municipal discussions and decision making during monthly meetings. CBC Radio highlights outcomes of Council sessions during Information Morning
- The Municipality publishes a quarterly newsletter, "The Participaper", highlighting what the Municipality is doing throughout the County
- Council frequently witnesses presentations from community groups and sector representatives, i.e. school board, federation of agriculture etc.
- All Councilor contacts are made publicly available through the municipal website.

**Sustainability Issue:**

- The Municipality acts as the lead in promoting its competitive advantages as a means of attracting investment and people to visit and relocate to the Municipality. Given the need to stabilize the aging and declining population a broader communications plan that promotes municipal competitive advantages is required. Creating efficiencies in accessibility so as to integrate information, evidence and development efforts is also required.

**Goal/Objective:**

- Develop a new webpage and presence that allows for the integration of municipal documents, activities and decision making outcomes from various departments including council.
- Transition current communication plan from print based to IT web based
- Develop annual asset mapping process and incorporate into GIS based municipal planning systems for planning and promotional purposes

**Stakeholders:** All municipal departments and stakeholders (i.e. S-HRDA, Eastern District Planning Commission, CDAs), provincial and federal stakeholders with database information specific to Inverness County (i.e. Community Counts, Rural Secretariat etc) **Lead:** CAO/Director of Recreation/Tourism

**Strategy/Action:**

- Create new municipal webpage
- Create municipal GIS based planning and promotion systems
- Incorporate annual community asset mapping into CDA development process

**Timeframe:** 1-5 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** tangible asset mapping



**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** all relevant municipal plans

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: Creating a common county-wide development framework and practicing a process which fosters collaboration amongst development stakeholders within the region and throughout the Municipality;

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Governance/Population  
Decline/Innovation

---

**Topic/Asset # 2:** Municipal Land Holdings

**ICSP Pillar:** Leadership by Example

**Priority Level:** 3

**Current Reality:**

- The Municipality owns several properties throughout the County and can acquire land through six different means:
  1. Purchase of land through tax arrears sales
  2. Divestment of land from senior levels of government i.e. 2 Port Hood area wharfs, mine sites in Inverness, schools in Judique, Margaree, Inverness etc
  3. Purchase of land for infrastructure purposes i.e. water/sewer
  4. Application towards purchase of crown land
  5. Expropriation of land for development and infrastructure purposes
  6. Subdivision development resulting in park land reserve (green space)

**Sustainability Issue:**

- The total of all municipal owned land is currently of unknown market value. Resources existing on lands (forest reserves) are also of unknown value. Given the projected decline in population and the impacts this will have on municipal finance, future utilization of these assets could assist in mitigating against any future decline in municipal revenue streams.

**Goal/Objective:**

- Develop GIS maps and databases specific to municipal land holdings
- Gain an understanding of market value of land and resources held within lands and determine potential use of lands.

**Stakeholders:**

- Inverness County Land Registry Office, Tax Office/Finance Department.  
**Lead:** Tax Office/ CAO

**Strategy/Action:**

- Complete databases and maps of all municipal held land and resource stock
- Have lands and resources assessed and determine appropriate use of land i.e. sale, development, sustainable forestry harvest etc

**Timeframe:** 1-5 yrs

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** Tangible asset mapping

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Municipal annual budgetary planning, NewPage biomass electrical generation plans, NS DNR initiatives

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Environmental: Ensuring stewardship and the responsible and regenerative use of the County's natural capital stock.
- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Municipal Finance/Innovation

---

**Topic/Asset #3:** Municipal Buildings and Fleet

**ICSP Pillar:** Leadership by Example

**Priority Level:** 3

**Current Reality:**

- The Municipality has a fleet of: five ½ ton pick up trucks, one ¾ ton pick up truck, one ¼ ton pick up truck, five trailers, one tractor trailer, three garbage trucks, two tandem dump truck, three backhoes, two skidsteers, one excavator, and one tractor
- The Municipality owns the following buildings: Municipal Office/Courthouse, Port Hood High Road office, Transfer building, Public Works garage/office/recycling depot
- The Province leases municipal space (Port Hood Courthouse/Office) for delivery of Court and land registry services. NS Department of Community Services also rents municipal space in Port Hood High Road office
- As part of the Green Action Plan, the S-HDRA has made recommendations for GHG reductions, fuel efficiency/energy conservation and savings specific to municipal buildings and fleet

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Age of some of the building stock (i.e. Court House/Office) will require future upgrades/renovations
- Operating costs relative to energy, insurance and maintenance
- Availability of finances for replacement cost of fleet and renovations to buildings
- Rising energy prices and the potential for priced carbon emissions could further impact operating costs
- Existing lease with Province for use of Port Hood Court House/Office expires in 2014. Operational sustainability of building will be dependant on renewed commitment

**Goal/Objective:**

- Reduce carbon emissions and energy costs through improved energy conservation and efficiency of buildings and fleet
- Ensure that any future upgrades/renovations to municipal buildings consider future operating costs specific to energy consumption

- Secure continued provincial uses of Port Hood Court House/Office and Community Services use of additional Port Hood office

**Stakeholders:** Municipality, S-HRDA, Provincial and Federal departments delivering energy conservation programs. **Lead:** CAO/Council

**Strategy/Action:**

- Undertake energy audits of municipal buildings necessary for accessing energy conservation programs
- Implement Green Action Plan building retrofit recommendations and heat source adjustments where feasible
- Implement Green Action Plan energy efficiency recommendations specific to fleet where appropriate and feasible
- Implement Green Action Plan on-site renewable energy production/consumption where feasible
- Continue dialogue with Province to ensure lease renewal following 2014

**Timeframe:** 1-25 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** Energy conservation measures specific to municipal buildings

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** S-HRDA Green Action Plan

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Environmental: Promoting and moving towards adopting renewable energy production and energy conservation measures
- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Municipal Finance, Innovation

**Sustainability Outcome:** Cleaner Air/Reduced GHG

---

**Topic/Asset #4:** Sustainability Planning, Indicators and Coordination

**ICSP Pillar:** Leadership by Example

**Priority Level:** 2

**Current Reality:**

- Annual audits, budget reports, Capital Investment Plans prepared by the Municipality
- Every five years the Municipality undertakes “A Plan for Community Based Municipal Development” in conjunction with the 16 CDAs
- The Public Works Department creates annual operational plans
- The S-HRDA creates annual business plans, 5-year strategic plans and has completed three milestones of the Green Action Plan
- The Recreation Tourism Department is in the process of developing a strategic plan
- The Eastern District Planning Commission provides future land use planning for planned areas in the county

**Sustainability Issue:**

- There are four separate stakeholders/departments planning on behalf of the municipality: The S-HRDA, Recreation/Tourism Department, Public Works, and the Eastern District Planning Commission. Additionally, the 16 CDAs represent another level of planning as they continue to foster community and economic development initiatives. The challenge remains to integrate the above listed planning initiatives. The ICSP aims to bridge this gap; however, on-going efforts will be required to ensure increased coordination amongst stakeholders/departments.

**Goal/Objective:**

- Create comprehensive GIS based asset maps of county stock under four pillar distinction set forth by ICSP
- Integrate various municipal planning efforts through the utilization of GIS technology, systems, and maps in order to present an accurate snapshot of the Municipality at annual interludes
- Develop revolving 5-yr municipal strategic planning process consistent with ICSP framework

**Stakeholders:** All municipal departments **Lead:** CAO

**Strategy/Action:**

- Maintain ICSP steering committee to guide process
- Work with 16 CDAs to develop annual asset mapping process to ensure asset base does not remain static
- Secure GIS software allowing for the display GIS maps as means of integrating various planning initiatives and establishing municipal asset based management systems
- Identify in-house HR requirements for revolving 5-yr strategic planning consistent with ICSP framework

**Timeframe:** 1-5

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** tangible asset mapping

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** all municipal planning initiatives, by-laws etc, as well as provincial and federal dataset applicable to Inverness County i.e. Community Counts, Rural Secretariat CDI

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: Creating a common county-wide development framework and practicing a process which fosters collaboration amongst development stakeholders within the region and throughout the Municipality

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Governance

---

**Topic/Asset #5:** The Voluntary Sector

**ICSP Pillar:** All pillars

**Priority Level:** 1

**Current Reality:**

- Over 300 registered non-for-profit organizations in the Municipality.
- Volunteer efforts add value to, and impact, every pillar of community and municipal identity.
- Volunteer Community Development Association structure is a core component of municipal community economic development planning.
- Current Municipal engagement process includes hosting a volunteer appreciation night, presenting volunteer awards, and supporting 16 CDAs with an annual Capital Project Fund.

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Aging and declining population will make sustaining the current contribution of the voluntary sector incredibly difficult.
- Without an improved approach for volunteer engagement the decline in volunteer contributions will negatively impact almost every aspect of life in the Municipality.

**Goal/Objective:**

- Develop Volunteer Sector Strategy.
- Pilot strategy with community, provincial, federal stakeholders to assess value of volunteer sector

**Stakeholders:** The Municipality, 16 CDAs, Strait Regional School Board, NS Volunteerism, Rural Secretariat, etc. **Lead:** Recreation/Tourism

**Strategy/Action:**

- Engage Volunteer Sector stakeholders for strategic planning session.
- Undertake asset mapping process in each community district and under all four pillars of ICSP in order to create inventory of all volunteer efforts occurring in the Municipality;
- Engage Strait Regional School Board for conceptualization of youth focused volunteer strategy;
- Engage NS Volunteer Secretariat and Rural Secretariat for assessment of volunteer sector contribution to county identity.

**Timeframe:** 1-5 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** tangible asset mapping process

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** CDA planning initiatives, volunteer initiatives within education system, NS Volunteer Secretariat, NS Rural Team, The Rural Secretariat

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: Creating a common county-wide development framework and practicing a process which fosters collaboration amongst development stakeholders within the region and throughout the Municipality;
- Social: Creating programs and processes that will assist in sustaining the volunteer sector's contribution to the quality of life of the Municipality;
- Cultural: Engaging youth in on-going visioning, sustainability planning and community based development.

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Volunteer Sector/ Innovation /Governance

**Sustainability Outcome:** Quality of life

---

**Topic/Asset #6:** Recreation Programs

**ICSP Pillar:** Social

**Priority Level:** 1

**Current Reality:** The Recreation/Tourism Department has one full time staff person who currently coordinates the following programs:

- Community Based School and Recreation Programs in 13 community districts in Inverness County;
- Summer student youth recreation programming in 6 community districts;
- Financial assistance to support winter active events in all 16 community districts.

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Overtime, programs will need to evolve to remain relevant to changing population;
- Majority of recreation programs are community and volunteer based – aging population will impact volunteer contributions;
- Majority of programs are run out of community halls. Sustainability of community halls paramount to sustainability and delivery of programs.

**Goal/Objective:**

- Tailor recreation programs specific to the needs of an aging population – simultaneously engage youth volunteers for recreation program development;
- Integrate Recreation Programming with Physical Activity Strategy;

**Stakeholders:**

- NS HPP MPAL Program, Recreation NS, community halls, CHBs, Strait Regional School Board **Lead:** Recreation Tourism Department

**Strategy/Action:**

- Develop Recreation/Tourism Department Strategy;
- Ensure Physical Activity Strategy engages aging population;
- Position recreation programming within Volunteer Sector and Physical Activity Strategy
- Increase partnerships and collaborations with CHBs, community based groups;
- Explore municipal policy options that are supportive of community hall operations offering recreation services

**Timeframe:** 1-5 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Physical Activity Strategic Plan, NS HPP MPAL Program, Recreation/Tourism Department Strategy, Volunteer Sector Strategy, Recreation NS planning initiatives, CHBs community health plans

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Social: Creating programs and processes that will assist in sustaining the volunteer sector's contribution to the quality of life of the Municipality;
- Social: Collaborating with various stakeholders in order to promote and adopt population health principles which foster healthy vibrant communities;
- Social: Fostering outdoor recreation opportunities/participation and active healthy lifestyles through the support, promotion and development of local recreation infrastructure and assets.
- Cultural: Engaging youth in on-going visioning, sustainability planning and community based development.

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Volunteer Sector

**Sustainability Outcome:** Quality of Life, Social and Human Health

---

**Topic/Asset #7:** Sports Systems

**ICSP Pillar:** Social

**Priority Level:** 5

**Current Reality:**

- Organized sports systems outside of education system include hockey, baseball, soccer and judo and swimming programs in Port Hawkesbury
- The education system coordinates and facilitates a comprehensive sports system
- Aging and declining population impacting enrolment numbers
- Sports systems entirely run by volunteer efforts
- Municipality delivers private, national and provincial programs aimed at reducing costs of enrolling children/youth in sports systems

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Changes in demographics will impact the sustainability of the current structure of sports systems given enrolment and volunteer numbers

**Goal/Objective:**

- Support structured sports systems where growth opportunities are backed by evidence
- Continue to facilitate the delivery of cost saving measures aimed at reducing registration costs for children/youth
- Assist communities in transitioning structured sports systems into community based recreation systems when sustainability of structured systems no longer proves possible

**Stakeholders:** Various sport systems representatives, various community recreation associations, private, provincial and nationally delivered sports programs, Sports NS, NS HPP **Lead:** Recreation/Tourism Department

**Strategy/Action:**

- Identify actions within Physical Activity Strategy regarding sports systems and use of built environments i.e. arenas, fields, soccer pitches etc.
- Through community asset mapping process identify natural and built environment assets that enable unstructured recreation program delivery

**Timeframe:** 1-25 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** tangible asset mapping

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** various recreation associations, sports programs planning initiatives, Physical Activity Strategy, Recreation/Tourism Strategic Plan

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Social: Collaborating with various stakeholders in order to promote and adopt population health principles which foster healthy vibrant communities;
- Social: Fostering outdoor recreation opportunities/participation and active healthy lifestyles through the support, promotion and development of local recreation infrastructure and assets.

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Volunteer Sector

**Sustainability Outcome:** Quality of life

---

**Topic/Asset #8:** Trails Systems

**ICSP Pillar:** Social

**Priority Level:** 2

**Current Reality:**

- Trans Canada Trail and other trail development occurring throughout County resulted in \$1.4 million worth of trail development in 2009<sup>15</sup>;
- Trails development is an important piece of infrastructure that creates jobs in trades and enables the growth of labour market in recreation/arts sector (220 jobs)
- Over 10 community based groups actively involved in trail development
- The Municipality has committed \$10,000 to trail development each year until 2012

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Volunteer efforts driving force behind trails development – will be impacted by population decline
- While money is currently available for construction phase, maintenance/liability insurance will present operational cost pressures impacting sustainability.

**Goal/Objective:**

- Showcase all trails in the Municipality as world class trails system and tie it to tourism marketing;

---

<sup>15</sup> Presentation to the CDC committee by Trans Canada Trail Association



- Coordinate trails development so that infrastructure is tied to both job creation and labour market sector development i.e. Eco-Tourism development;
- Establish trail development as a crucial built asset that enables physical activity opportunities for local residents

**Stakeholders:** participating CDAs and active trails associations, snowmobile clubs, Recreation/Tourism Department, CDA Committee **Lead:** Recreation/Tourism Department

**Strategy/Action:**

- Undertake asset mapping of trails and profile trails system on website;
- Identify actions targeting local social and cultural use of trails within Physical Activity Strategy
- Utilize new municipal website to profile county trail system
- Undertake assessment of coordinated/package eco-tourism opportunities

**Timeframe:** 1-10 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** Trails development as active transportation system, rail line trail development, tangible asset mapping

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Physical Activity Strategic Plan, Trans Canada Trails Association, Local Trails Associations planning initiatives, participating CDA planning initiatives, Recreation/Tourism Department, various CDA planning initiatives

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives;
- Environmental: Ensuring stewardship and the responsible and regenerative use of natural capital stock.
- Social: Collaborating with various stakeholders in order to promote and adopt population health principles which foster healthy vibrant communities;
- Social: Fostering outdoor recreation opportunities/participation and active healthy lifestyles through the support, promotion and development of local recreation infrastructure and assets.
- Cultural: Enhancing tourism through the support and promotion of community festivals and events and local cultural and natural infrastructure;

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Municipal Finance / Governance / Innovation/Volunteer Sector

**Sustainability Outcome:** cleaner air/human health/social quality of life

---

**Topic/Asset #9:** Recreation Centres

**ICSP Pillar:** Social

**Priority Level:** 3

**Current Reality:**

- 5 arenas, 9 ball diamonds, 6 schools with gymnasiums and soccer pitches open to public, various tennis courts, 5 community recreation (fitness) centres, 1 established golf course, 1 golf course under construction
- The Municipality provides operational support to the Strait Area swimming pool (Town of Port Hawkesbury)
- Recreation infrastructure is relatively mature with the majority of centres over 30 years of age
- The Municipality supports recreation centres on an ad-hoc, case by case basis
- Little to no coordination between communities on recreation infrastructure developments in the Municipality

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Several centres require repairs and maintenance work in order to keep buildings and centres from depleting.
- Aging and declining population impacting enrolments and use of facilities resulting in operational cash flow problems.
- Operating costs relative to energy
- Keeping and maintaining existing stock will become increasingly difficult in the near to medium future.
- Governance issues regarding operational commitment to Strait Area swimming pool

**Goal/Objective:**

- Infrastructure spending to be made on evidence based decision making tied to population projections and population use of facilities
- Provide support to proposed Cabot Links golf development in the community of Inverness

**Stakeholders:** Recreation/Tourism Department, Recreation Associations, Strait Regional School Board, federal and provincial infrastructure funding departments, private sector, IDA **Lead:** Recreation/Tourism Department/CDA Committee

**Strategy/Action:**

- Hold sessions with local stakeholders to undertake SWOT analysis of recreation infrastructure
- Develop strategic direction for long term recreation infrastructure needs – tie recreation infrastructure development to community planning
- Support IDA Labour market project specific to Cabot Links golf development

**Timeframe:** 1-25 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Provincial and Federal infrastructure planning initiatives, CDA planning initiatives, S-HRDA strategic and business planning

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives;

- Social: Fostering outdoor recreation opportunities/participation and active healthy lifestyles through the support, promotion and development of local recreation infrastructure and assets.
- Social: Creating programs and processes that will assist in sustaining the volunteer sector's contribution to the quality of life of the Municipality

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Governance/Municipal Finance

**Sustainability Outcome:** Quality of life

---

**Topic/Asset #10:** Active Healthy Living

**ICSP Pillar:** Social

**Priority Level:** 1

**Current Reality:**

- Only 50% Inverness County residents are physically active enough to receive health benefits
- Promotion of Healthy Active Living is currently done on an ad-hoc, uncoordinated basis. The Recreation/Tourism Department, in partnership with NS Health Promotion Protection, is presently undertaking a comprehensive Physical Activity Strategy

**Sustainability Issue:**

- As the population ages across the Municipality chronic preventable disease will greatly impact upon the health care system.
- Health promotion efforts are being facilitated from federal and provincial levels for municipal delivery.

**Goal/Objective:**

- Position Healthy Active Living as key component of social and cultural development within community development process;
- Utilize abundant natural and built assets to engage both youth and an aging population

**Stakeholders:** 3 Community Health Boards, 2 DHAs, CBDHA, NS HPP, NSOLD, 16 CDAs, Strait Regional School Board **Lead:** Recreation/Tourism Department

**Strategy/Action:**

- Determine action plans in Physical Activity Strategy
- Map all assets which enable healthy active living in all 16 community districts
- Develop and undertake outdoor and senior appropriate programming based on success of previous community based approaches facilitated by Recreation/Tourism Department
- Engage Strait Area School Board to provide opportunities for youth to engage in healthy active living

**Timeframe:** 1-5 yrs

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** HEAL Cape Breton, PA Strategic Plan for Inverness County, three community health board business plans, CBDHA population health planning, NS HPP MPAL Program

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Social: Collaborating with various stakeholders in order to promote and adopt population health principles which foster healthy vibrant communities;
- Social: Fostering outdoor recreation opportunities/participation and active healthy lifestyles through the support, promotion and development of local recreation infrastructure and assets.
- Economic: Creating a common county-wide development framework and practicing a process which fosters collaboration amongst development stakeholders within the region and throughout the Municipality;

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Governance/Population Decline/The Volunteer Sector

**Sustainability Outcome:** Quality of Life

---

**Topic/Asset #11:** Gatherings/ Festivals

**ICSP Pillar:** Social

**Priority Level:** 1

**Current Reality:**

- 17 summer festivals and events occur each summer and fall season.
- For the past seven years the Recreation/ Tourism Department has offered assistance towards communities hosting Winter Festivals.
- Promotion for festivals and events occurs through Recreation/Tourism department quarterly publication “The Participaper” and the Sunset Guide
- Festivals and events are entirely organized and run by volunteers; aging and declining population will greatly impact continuity of festivals and events.

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Volunteer contributions
- Population base

**Goal/Objective:**

- Foster collaboration and coordination between communities
- Gain an understanding of economic impact of festivals and events in the Municipality
- Promote festivals and events as part of a larger tourism plan

**Stakeholders:** 16 CDAs, S-HRDA **Lead:** Recreation/Tourism Department

**Strategy/Action:**

- Engage S-HRDA to assess economic impact of festivals and events in Inverness County
- Tie festivals and events to tourism marketing strategy as part of Recreation/Tourism Department strategic plan.

**Timeframe:** 1-10 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** 16 CDAs planning strategies, Destination Cape Breton Tourism Strategy, Recreation/Tourism Department Strategy, various local tourism associations

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Cultural: Enhancing tourism through the support and promotion of community festivals and events and local cultural and natural infrastructure;
- Cultural: Engaging youth in on-going visioning, sustainability planning and community based development.
- Economic: Incubating and assisting local small business, community enterprise, community economic development, and building capacity within Community Economic Development Organizations and Community Development Organizations.
- Social: Creating programs and processes that will assist in sustaining the volunteer sector's contribution to the quality of life of the Municipality

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Governance/Volunteer Sector/Innovation

**Sustainability Outcome:** Cultural Integrity/Sense of Place, Community

---

**Topic/Asset #12:** Libraries and Services

**ICSP Pillar:** Social

**Priority Level:** 3

**Current Reality:**

- The Eastern Counties Regional Library is the governing body for Inverness County services to which the Municipality provides annual financial assistance
- There is one regional branch library – Coady Tompkins Library in Margaree Forks – and 8 Library Link Communities in Inverness County
- The Margaree Area Development Association owns and manages the building that the library is housed in
- The Municipality provides some ad-hoc site specific operational support to the Coady Tompkins Branch

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Operational costs of Coady Tompkins becoming prohibitive
- Volunteer efforts of MADA enable operations of branch site
- Population to support provincial funding amounts and branch delivery service from Eastern County Regional Library

**Goal/Objective:**

- Assist in establishing operational sustainability of Coady Tompkins Branch
- Continue commitment to Eastern Counties Regional Libraries

**Stakeholders:** Margaree Development Association, Eastern Counties Regional Library, Municipality **Lead:** Recreation/Tourism Department/CDA Committee

**Strategy/Action:**

- Review Coady Tompkins operational budget and make recommendations on how to proceed
- Facilitate discussions with Eastern Counties Regional Library and MADA to explore possible rental fee options
- Continue to support Eastern Counties Regional Libraries as required

**Timeframe:** 1-5 yrs

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** The Eastern County Regional Library Strategic Plan, MADA planning initiatives

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Social: Creating programs and processes that will assist in sustaining the volunteer sector's contribution to the quality of life of the County;

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Governance

**Sustainability Outcome:** Quality of life

---

**Topic/Asset #13:** The Arts

**ICSP Pillar:** Cultural

**Priority Level:** 1

**Current Reality:**

- 220 people employed in the arts and recreation sector within the Inverness County labour market – comparable to mining sector<sup>16</sup>
- E-business initiatives offered by S-HRDA aims to support arts, culture and home based business in marketing and promotion
- Several private galleries exist throughout the county, six key cultural centers promote Inverness County Arts
- In 2009 the Municipality received the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual provincial Community Arts and Culture Recognition Award – a \$10,000 prize, which the county matched to support arts and culture development in the county.
- The Recreation/Tourism department provides promotional support through the Sunset Guide publication

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Operational cost pressure impacting key cultural centers
- Need for improved marketing and communications given innovations in technology and how consumers access product
- Volunteer efforts drive cultural centers operations/developments

---

<sup>16</sup> "New 5-Year Economic Plan for the Strait Highlands Region," Pinfold Gardner, 2008

**Goal/Objective:**

- Incorporate arts and culture into the development process and provide promotional support through municipal channels
- Support the creative rural development movement in Nova Scotia

**Stakeholders:** S-HRDA, Municipal Recreation/Tourism Department, cultural centres, private galleries **Lead:** Recreation/Tourism Department, 16 CDAs

**Strategy/Action:**

- Continue to support the implementation of the S-HRDA E-business efforts
- Continue to provide promotional support through the Sunset Guide
- Asset map arts and culture county assets and showcase on new webpage for increased promotional and marketing presence
- Examine Prince Edward County Ontario development plan as a potential model for sector development<sup>17</sup>
- Hold stakeholder meeting to explore collective governance structure in terms of enhancing marketing and promotion efforts and clarifying roles and responsibilities of stakeholders i.e. municipal, community, S-HRDA, provincial etc

**Timeframe:** 1-5

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** tangible asset mapping

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Building the Creative Economy in Nova Scotia, Recreation/Tourism strategic plan, Nova Scotia Tourism Strategy

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: Creating a common county-wide development framework and practicing a process which fosters collaboration amongst development stakeholders within the Region and throughout Inverness County;
- Cultural: Enhancing tourism through the support and promotion of community festivals and events and local cultural and natural infrastructure;

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Governance, Innovation

**Sustainability Outcome:** Cultural Integrity

---

**Topic/Asset #14:** Cultural Centers

**ICSP Pillar:** Cultural

**Priority Level:** 2

**Current Reality:** There are five key cultural centres in the Municipality:

- The Celtic Interpretive Centre, Judique (promotion of traditional Celtic Music)
- Strasphey Place, Mabou (Performing Arts Centre)
- Inverness County Centre for the Arts, Inverness (presentation and performance venue)

---

<sup>17</sup> "Growing the Creative-Rural Economy in Prince Edward County," PELA Institute for Rural Development, 2008

- The Mi-Carême Centre, Grand E'tang (Acadian Festival/Culture)
- Place des Arts Pere Anselme Chiasson Auditorium, Cheticamp (400 Seat théâtre, performance)
- The Municipality has provided capital and operational funding support to centres on a declining basis from inception through 5 years. Marketing support is provided through the "Sun Set Guide."
- In 2008 the Municipality received the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual provincial Community Arts and Culture Recognition Award – a \$10,000 prize, which the county matched to support arts and culture development in the county.

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Sustainability of centres is under pressure given increases in operational costs.
- Individual marketing efforts lend to competition between centres for tourist visitation – need for integration of efforts and greater collaboration/co-operation
- Aging population will impact the amount of volunteer time that currently allows most centres to operate.

**Goal/Objective:**

- Increase dialogue, cooperation, and marketing amongst and between centres;
- Establish the Municipality as cultural tourist destination and position centres as a primary hub for tourism diffusion into broader market.

**Stakeholders:** Five cultural centres, Recreation/Tourism Department, Destination Cape Breton, Cabot Trail/Margaree/Cheticamp/Inverness Tourism Associations

**Lead:** Recreation/Tourism Department

**Strategy/Action:**

- Dedicate Recreation/Tourism staff time towards facilitation of cultural center promotion for Inverness County;
- Revamp webpage for cultural centre promotion and marketing;
- Examine Prince Edward County Ontario development plan as a potential model to position arts and culture as a focus area of tourism marketing
- Incorporate Cultural Centres as a key programming area of Recreation/Tourism Department and key component of Tourism marketing.

**Timeframe:** 1-10 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Recreation/Tourism Department Strategy, Destination Cape Breton Marketing Strategy, various local Tourism Associations and CDA planning initiatives

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives;
- Economic: Incubating and assisting local small business, community enterprise, community economic development, and building capacity within



Community Economic Development Organizations and Community Development Organizations.

- Cultural: Enhancing, supporting and promoting the distinct subcultures and languages which collectively makeup the unique identity of the Municipality;
- Cultural: Enhancing tourism through the support and promotion of community festivals and events and local cultural and natural infrastructure;
- Social: Creating programs and processes that will assist in sustaining the volunteer sector's contribution to the quality of life of the Municipality;

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Governance/Volunteer Sector/Innovation

**Sustainability Outcome:** Cultural Integrity

---

**Topic/Asset #15:** Museums and Heritage

**ICSP Pillar:** Cultural

**Priority Level:** 3

**Current Reality:**

- The Municipality has a heritage committee with heritage distinction assigned to 21 structures throughout the county
- There are 14 museums and interpretive centres in the Municipality.
- Current plans exist for developing an Inverness County Archives Center.
- Inverness County CAP Society has recently completed "A Working through Time" project in an attempt to coordinate and promote heritage efforts.
- Museums and Centres receive marketing support through "The Sunset Guide" – municipal annual tourism publication. Property taxes often waived
- Quarterly publication of "Ancestors Unlimited" in the Municipal Participaper.

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Majority of museum/heritage centres run by volunteer efforts.
- Aging and declining population will impact volunteer contribution.
- Maintenance and operational costs are becoming a burden.

**Goal/Objective:**

- Foster collaboration between heritage buildings, museums and cultural centers stakeholders
- Position and brand the Municipality as a cultural tourism destination.

**Stakeholders:** Heritage building owners, museum and heritage centers, Recreation/Tourism Department, ICNNS, Heritage Canada, NS Heritage Division, Cultural Centers, CDAs **Lead:** Recreation/Tourism Department

**Strategy/Action:**

- Revamp webpage for heritage and museum promotion tied to tourism marketing;
- Where feasible, assist community groups in the facilitation of the development and implementation of Inverness County Archives Centre

**Timeframe:** 1-20 yrs

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** ICNNS “Working through Time,” planning initiatives within provincial and federal departments, Inverness County Archives Centre developments.

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Cultural: Enhancing tourism through the support and promotion of community festivals and events and local cultural and natural infrastructure;
- Economic: Incubating and assisting local small business, community enterprise, community economic development, and building capacity within Community Economic Development Organizations and Community Development Organizations.

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Governance/Volunteer Sector

**Sustainability Outcome:** Cultural Integrity/Sense of Place

---

**Topic/Asset #16:** Dances and Ceilidhs

**ICSP Pillar:** Cultural

**Priority Level:** 3

**Current Reality:**

- 6 dances and 5 Ceilidhs operate in the Municipality – geared towards the local population for recreation and social activities as well as creating a tourist draw
- The Municipality has created a static map of all dance locations
- Almost all events are run from community halls
- Organized and operated almost entirely on volunteer efforts
- Dances are positioned as central to niche as cultural tourism destination
- Youth demographics are engaged in organization/operations
- Municipality provides promotional support

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Volunteer efforts
- Sustainability of community halls

**Goal/Objective:**

- Foster collaboration amongst and between communities in order to better promote dances within tourism marketing approach
- Utilize cultural expression as demonstrated by Celtic Colours model in order to build unity amongst various community districts

**Stakeholders:** Waycobah First Nation, communities active in delivering dances and Ceilidhs, CDAs, Community Halls **Lead:** Recreation/Tourism Department

**Strategy/Action:**

- Hold roundtable with community stakeholders to develop promotional plan which is incorporated into Recreation/Tourism Department tourism promotion
- Explore options of partnership development with Waycobah First Nation in which Pow Wows could be included in promotion of local dances
- Ensure volunteer sector strategy engages dances as sector of importance

**Timeframe:** 1-10 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Recreation/Tourism Department Strategy, Cultural centre planning

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Cultural: Enhancing, supporting and promoting the distinct subcultures and languages which collectively makeup the unique identity of the Municipality;
- Cultural: Engaging youth in on-going visioning, sustainability planning and community based development.
- Cultural: Enhancing tourism through the support and promotion of community festivals and events and local cultural and natural infrastructure;
- Social: Fostering outdoor recreation opportunities/participation and active healthy lifestyles through the support, promotion and development of local recreation infrastructure and assets.

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Governance/Volunteer Sector

**Sustainability Outcome:** Cultural Integrity/Sense of Place/Quality of Life

---

**Topic/Asset #17:** Community Halls

**ICSP Pillar:** Cultural

**Priority Level:** 1

**Current Reality:**

- Over 30 community halls in the Municipality
- Provide critical built environment space for activities and strategies that impact all four pillars of municipal identity – including fire services/emergency services
- Majority of halls older in age – operational and maintenance costs are impacting sustainability
- Community halls have become the centers of majority of the sixteen community districts – however in many districts efforts and services are being duplicated.
- Halls maintained and operated by volunteer efforts

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Operational/maintenance costs
- Lawsuit with Dioceses of Antigonish could result in the sale of several community parish halls
- Aging and declining population impacting volunteer efforts and utility of halls
- Transitions in community identity impact usefulness of some halls

**Goal/Objective:**

- Foster appreciation and support for community halls as crucial built environment
- Foster collaboration/cooperation within communities over purpose of community halls in community districts where duplication is prevalent
- Utilize community halls as key built environment in Physical Activity Strategy

**Stakeholders:** community halls, parishes, participating CDAs, fire departments, applicable provincial and federal departments **Lead:** Recreation/Tourism Department

**Strategy/Action:**

- Asset map all community halls in the Municipality and document services provided
- Utilize asset map of community halls in CDA planning strategies
- Develop municipal policy supportive of community halls that provide multiple services which lend value to municipal objectives i.e. fire services/emergency services, recreation and physical activity activities

**Timeframe:** 1-5 yrs

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** tangible asset mapping, potentially energy efficiency projects

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Recreation/Tourism Department strategy, Physical Activity Strategy, CDA planning initiatives

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives;
- Social: Collaborating with various stakeholders in order to promote and adopt population health principles which foster healthy vibrant communities;
- Social: Fostering outdoor recreation opportunities/participation and active healthy lifestyles through the support, promotion and development of local recreation infrastructure and assets.
- Cultural: Enhancing tourism through the support and promotion of community festivals and events and local cultural and natural infrastructure

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Governance/ Municipal Finance/Volunteer Sector

**Sustainability Outcome:** Quality of Life

---

**Topic/Asset #18:** Language

**ICSP Pillar:** Cultural

**Priority Level:** 1

**Current Reality:**

- Inverness County is comprised of three unique cultures and languages Mi'kmaq, Gaelic, Acadian. To a lesser extent German and Dutch speakers are found throughout the county.
- St Anne University and Conseil scolaire Acadian provincial school board education governance body in the Acadian region promote Acadian language, Gaelic Class has been established in Dalbrae High School in Mabou, Waycobah First Nation School board facilitates educational programs specific to Mik'maq language, culture and traditions
- Acadian and Gaelic language community groups are supported on an ad-hoc, case by case basis

**Sustainability Issue:**

- In order for minority language to survive, practice of language must be incorporated into the mainstream of community life.

**Goal/Objective:**

- Foster cooperation and collaboration across groups promoting three minority languages in the Municipality;
- As part of tourism marketing strategy promote diversity of three minority languages integral to cultural integrity and uniqueness of the identity of the Municipality

**Stakeholders:** Recreation Tourism Department, Waycobah First Nation/UCB Mi'kmaq Studies, Acadian Region, Le Conseil de Developpement economique de la NS, Conseil scolaire acadien provincial school board, Faige Mabou, Strait Regional School Board **Lead:** Recreation/Tourism Department

**Strategy/Action:**

- Hold roundtable with language stakeholders operating within the Municipality
- Incorporate diversity of language and culture into Recreation/Tourism Dept Strategic Plan and tie to tourism marketing

**Timeframe:** 1-15 yrs

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Culture: Enhancing, supporting and promoting the distinct subcultures and languages which collectively makeup the unique identity of Inverness County;
- Culture: Enhancing tourism through the support and promotion of community festivals and events and local cultural and natural infrastructure;

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Governance/Innovation

**Sustainability Outcome:** Cultural Integrity/Identity

---

**Topic/Asset #19:** Renewable Energy Production Potential

**ICSP Pillar:** Environmental

**Priority Level:** 1

**Current Reality:**

- S-HRDA has completed three milestones of its Green Action Plan. The plan has undertaken an emissions inventory and energy asset map. Action plans have been developed to identify energy conservation opportunities, GHG reduction targets and renewable energy production opportunities.
- Provincial wind atlases indicate that Inverness County has some of the best wind production potential in the province.
- New Page Port Hawkesbury Corp., Nova Scotia Power and the Utility Review Board are in discussion regarding biomass electrical production at the Pulp and Paper Plant in Point Tupper. If implemented, biomass will be sourced throughout the Municipality
- The community of Cheticamp and Grand Etang, in partnership with a private enterprise, is in the exploratory stages of developing a community wind energy project utilizing horizontal wind mills to harness the power of les suet winds.
- Nova Scotia Power has a 0.66 MW Vestas wind mill established at Grand Etang
- Small scale hydro generation exists in Black River

**Sustainability Issue:**

- In order to reduce provincial greenhouse gas emission the Province of Nova Scotia has set an ambitious renewable energy target of 25% of total production by 2015.
- Aggressive development of commercial wind production could increase tax revenues for the Municipality and help to offset declining revenues resulting from impacts of an aging and declining population
- Municipal by-law required to ensure wind development occurs in a sustainable and coordinated fashion
- If biomass electrical production is implemented at Newpage Port Hawkesbury Corp increased harvesting will occur in Inverness County. Monitoring of natural stock will be required to ensure it is not depleted.

**Goal/Objective:**

- Position renewable energy production, specifically wind production, as a priority development goal for the Municipality as a means for achieving reduced GHG, increased job creation and increasing tax revenue from commercial and property assessment of wind energy production infrastructure
- Establish municipal wind development by-law
- Support proposed bio-mass electrical production at New Page

**Stakeholders:**

- Municipality, S-HRDA, NS Power, private enterprise, NS Department of Energy **Lead:** Council/CAO

**Strategy/Action:**

- Where feasible, support S-HRDA recommendations set forth in the Green Action Plan
- Determine municipal human resource requirements to support Green Action Plan recommendations
- Stay informed of developments at New Page

**Timeframe:** 1-25 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** S-HRDA Green Action Plan, Capital Investment Plan, Community planning initiatives in Cheticamp, NS Power/NewPage initiatives, NS Department of Energy

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Environmental: Promoting, and moving towards adopting renewable energy production and energy conservation measures
- Environmental: Ensuring stewardship and the responsible and regenerative use of the County's natural capital stock.
- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives;

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Municipal Finance/ Innovation /Governance

**Sustainability Outcome:** cleaner air, reduction of GHG

---

**Topic/Asset #20:** Energy Conservation

**ICSP Pillar:** Environmental

**Priority Level:** 1

**Current Reality:**

- S-HRDA Green Action Plan undertook a comprehensive energy conservation plan targeting municipal operations for energy savings and retrofits
- Residential and commercial energy audits provided ACAP Cape Breton, NS Power and provincial and federal conservation programs
- A series of conservation programs are offered by Conserve Nova Scotia

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Rising energy costs will create operational cost pressures for residents, municipal government and business alike.

**Goal/Objective:**

- Move towards implementation of Green Action Plan where recommendations are feasible
- Increase promotional efforts for existing energy conservation programs targeting residents and local business

**Stakeholders:**

- S-HRDA, Municipality, Conserve Nova Scotia, energy audit and conservation program providers i.e. ACAP, NS Power etc **Lead:** Council/CAO

**Strategy/Action:**

- Support S-HRDA recommendations set forth in the Green Action Plan
- Promote conservation programs through new website and municipal publications

- Determine municipal human resource requirements to support Green Action Plan recommendations i.e. identified sustainability coordinator within Green Action Plan

**Timeframe:** 1-25 yrs

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** energy efficiency projects

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** S-HRDA Green Action Plan, NS Department of Energy, Conserve Nova Scotia, Municipality

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Environmental: Promoting, and moving towards adopting renewable energy production and energy conservation measures

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Municipal Finance/ Innovation /Governance

**Sustainability Outcome:** cleaner air, reduction of GHG

---

**Topic/Asset #21:** Water and Sewage Treatment

**ICSP Pillar:** Environmental

**Priority Level:** 2

**Current Reality:**

- The Municipality of the County of Inverness Water Utility governs water delivery. The Utility and Review Board sets area water rates
- The Department of Public Works oversees maintenance of water, sewer and solid waste management services with staff of 27.
- 7 facilities exist in Inverness County:
  - Cheticamp – Municipal operated sewage treatment system/Provincially run water system
  - Inverness – Water and sewage treatment system
  - Mabou – Water and sewage treatment system
  - Port Hood – Water and sewage treatment system
  - Judique – Water and sewer treatment system
  - Port Hastings – Shared service with the town of Port Hawkesbury
  - Whycocomagh – Water and sewer treatment
- Upgrades are targeted for the following locations: Cheticamp (phase II), Inverness, Mabou, Port Hood and Judique
- New system development identified for Grand Etang and Harbourview
- Engineer of Publics Works currently conducting an asset mapping of municipal infrastructure including existing water and sewer assets
- Upgrades to existing infrastructure have been identified in the Capital Investment Plan in compliance with drinking water strategy
- Community based water systems exist throughout county. When the system provides service to over 25 families, such as is the case Orangedale, Belle Cote, Margaree Forks, St. Joseph Du Moine, Mabou Harbour, registration with NS Department of Environment must occur



- The S-HRDA Green Action Plan has made recommendations regarding water and energy conservation

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Aging Infrastructure. Several pieces of infrastructure require upgrades within a similar time frame contributing to cost pressures for the municipal unit.
- Unresolved governance issues between Province and Municipality over Cheticamp water service. Before the Municipality can take ownership of the service the Province needs to upgrade the system.
- Given the size of the tax base, it will be required that new infrastructure development (i.e. Grand Etang, Harbourview systems and connecting systems for potential future sub-division developments) is cost shared between the Municipality and Provincial and Federal governments in order for implementation to occur.

**Goal/Objective:**

- Complete asset mapping of all water and sewer infrastructure
- Ensure that municipally operated water and sewage facilities meet provincial and federal requirements
- Foster collaboration with provincial and federal departments to ensure cost sharing commitment to new infrastructure development
- Resolve governance issues at Cheticamp

**Stakeholders:**

- Municipality, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, Nova Scotia Infrastructure Renewal, Infrastructure Canada, Environment Canada, NS Department of Environment **Lead:** Council/CAO/County Engineer

**Strategy/Action:**

- Leverage municipal commitments to access other government programs, including Gas Tax amounts, to implement infrastructure priorities
- Implement priorities set forth in Capital Investment Plans for water and sewage treatment infrastructure requirements
- Set agreed upon benchmarks and timelines with the Province for upgrades at Cheticamp as part of transition plan for the municipality to assume ownership
- Support S-HRDA Green Action Plan recommendations where feasible

**Timeframe:** 1- 20 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** Waste water and sewage infrastructure as set forth in Capital Investment Plans i.e. Harbour View Sewer and Water, Grand Etang Sewer, Redman Sewer, Mabou Sewer, Cheticamp Sewer Phase II

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Drinking Water Strategy, Capital Investment Plan, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, Nova Scotia Infrastructure Renewal, Infrastructure Canada, Environment Canada and NS Department of Environment programs

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Environmental: Moving towards meeting or exceeding provincial and national standards for solid waste management, water treatment and waste water management;

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Municipal Finance

**Sustainability Outcome:** Cleaner Water

---

**Topic/Asset #22:** Solid Waste Management

**ICSP Pillar:** Environmental

**Priority Level:** 2

**Current Reality:**

- The Municipality has 1 solid waste transfer station, 1 recycling transfer depot, 1 second generation landfill site, garbage and recycling pick-up
- The Municipality undertakes testing from second generation landfill site to ensure protection of watershed
- Waste is transported from the municipal transfer station to Guysborough County landfill site.
- Recycled commodities i.e. plastics, cardboard, etc have experienced a drop in market price which is resulting in cost pressures on operational budget lines
- Composting is done by residents and commercial operations. The Municipality retails home composter bins to residents
- S-HRDA Green Action Plan has identified biomass opportunities from waste management operations, as well as methane generation from closed landfill site.

**Sustainability Issue:**

- The handling and shipping of solid waste becomes prohibitive as costs rise relative to energy – reduction in volume of waste required
- Viability of current recycling business model dependant on market prices for recycled commodities i.e. suppressed market prices for cardboard and plastics impacts broader sustainability of how current system functions

**Goal/Objective:**

- Reduce total volume of waste arriving at transfer station
- Utilize renewable energy options arising from solid waste management

**Stakeholders:** Municipal Public Works, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, UNSM, Association of Municipal Administrators, NS Department of Environment **Lead:** Council/CAO/Director/Engineer of Public Works

**Strategy/Action:**

- Explore policy options and municipal best practices on waste reduction
- Explore recommendations set forth in S-HRDA Green Action plan regarding biomass and methane options

**Timeframe:** 1-15 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** Upgrades to transfer stations, compost facility development, landfill facility upgrades, etc.

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Capital Investment Plans, Service Nova Scotia, NS Infrastructure and NS Department of Environment planning initiatives.

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Environmental: Moving towards meeting or exceeding provincial and national standards for solid waste management, water treatment and waste water management;
- Environmental: Promoting and moving towards adopting renewable energy production and energy conservation measures;

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Municipal Finance

**Sustainability Outcome:** cleaner air, cleaner water

---

**Topic/Asset #23:** Parks, Wilderness Area Reserves, Green Spaces etc

**ICSP Pillar:** Environmental

**Priority Level:** 4

**Current Reality:**

- The Municipality has 1 National Park, 7 Provincial Parks, 5 Wilderness Area Reserves, 1 Bird Sanctuary, 1 Heritage River (Margaree), ad-hoc community parks and green spaces i.e Inverness, Port Hastings, Cheticamp, Port Hood, Mabou etc within its boundaries
- Land use planning and zoning reserves portion of future planning for green space development

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Climate impacts, use of space, environmental regulation and enforcement, maintenance

**Goal/Objective:**

- Collaborate with other stakeholders (i.e. Parks Canada/CDAs etc) to promote the abundant natural assets as key component of Recreation/Tourism Department's tourism marketing approach
- Ensure future land use planning reserves portion of land for green space
- Identify natural assets within Physical Activity Strategy as means to increase visitation and use by local residents

**Stakeholders:** Participating CDAs, Municipal Recreation/Tourism Department, Destination Cape Breton, Parks Canada, Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources. **Lead:** Recreation/Tourism and EDPC

**Strategy/Action:**

- Hold exploratory meeting with stakeholders to determine how to best coordinate marketing efforts
- Utilize new webpage for promotional purposes

- Develop physical activity programs supportive of natural asset use i.e. outdoor recreation programs, ski/snow shoe programs

**Timeframe:** 1-5 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Cape Breton Highland National Park Strategic Plan, NS DNR operational plans, Destination Cape Breton Marketing Plan, Recreation/Tourism Department Strategic Plan, Physical Activity Strategic Plan

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Environmental: Ensuring stewardship and the responsible and regenerative use of the County's natural capital stock.
- Economic: Creating a common county-wide development framework and practicing a process which fosters collaboration amongst development stakeholders within the region and throughout the Municipality;
- Social: Fostering outdoor recreation opportunities/participation and active healthy lifestyles through the support, promotion and development of local recreation infrastructure and assets.

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Governance

**Sustainability Outcome:** Quality of Life

---

**Topic/Asset #24:** Watersheds

**ICSP Pillar:** Environmental

**Current Reality:**

- The Municipality is comprised of 4 primary watersheds: Cheticamp River, Margaree River, River Inhabitants, and River Denys. The Margaree River holds Heritage River distinction. Several secondary, territory watersheds and coastal runoff areas also exist.
- In accordance with provincial requirements the Municipality completed a ground source water protection plan
- 7 water and sewer treatment facilities (1 shared service Port Hawkesbury, Province runs Cheticamp water system), new treatment facilities targeted for Grand Etang area and Harbourview, 1 transfer station, 1 solid waste management site, 1 previously operated municipal landfill site at Kenloch
- New construction permits and inspections service provided by Eastern District Planning Commission ensures private septic systems are up to code
- The Bras D'Or Lakes Biosphere Reserve Association is championing the lake for designation from UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) for an area in the world which is deemed to demonstrate a "balanced relationship between humans and the biosphere."
- Mabou Development Association is undertaking a phased strategic planning and development initiative "Mabou Harbour Watershed Stewardship Plan"
- Community efforts in Grand Etang to have identified requirements for developing a sewage treatment facility

- Provincial and Federal sector requirements i.e. Agricultural environmental plans and forestry best practices aimed at reducing impacts on watersheds

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Given the size of municipal tax base, upgrades to existing municipal systems (water sewer, solid waste) and development of new facilities will require partnered support from provincial and federal departments in order to undertake implementation
- Governance challenges. The balance of human and natural needs through planning and environmental regulations ensure safe drinking water, healthy watersheds and sustainable communities. A collective approach, with universal language and goals needs to be taken.

**Priority Level: 1**

**Goal/Objective:**

- Investment in infrastructure aimed at meeting or succeeding provincial and federal standards required of municipal units for water and sewage treatment.
- Continue to undertake monitoring as required.
- Collaborate with various government departments and community groups to ensure a balanced approach to watershed protection and sustainable development

**Stakeholders:** Municipal Public Works Department, NS Department of Environment, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, Infrastructure Canada, Environment Canada, DFO, Mabou Development Association, Grand Etang/LeMoine CDA planning **Lead:** Council/Public Works

**Strategy/Action:**

- Continue to implement ground source water protection plan
- Continue to undertake monitoring as required of municipal obligations
- Display primary, secondary, and tertiary watersheds on new webpage
- Leverage municipal commitments to access other government programs, including Gas Tax amounts to implement infrastructure priorities
- Implement priorities set forth in Capital Investment Plans for sewage treatment infrastructure requirements
- Keep informed and provide support, where possible, to grassroots development initiatives aimed at enhancing a balanced approach to watershed protection and sustainable development

**Timeframe:** 1-25 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** Waste water and sewage infrastructure as set forth in Capital Investment plans i.e. Harbour View Sewer and Water, Grand Etang Sewer, Redman Sewer, Mabou Sewer, Cheticamp Sewer Phase II

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Drinking Water Strategy, Municipal Source Water Protection Plan, Capital Investment Plan, Bras d'Or Lakes Development Standards Ecosystem Overview and Assessment Report for the Bras d'Or Lakes (DFO), Mabou Harbour Watershed Stewardship Plan

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Environmental: Moving towards meeting or exceeding provincial and national standards for solid waste management, water treatment and waste water management;
- Environmental: Ensuring stewardship and the responsible and regenerative use of natural capital stock.
- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Governance/Municipal Finance

**Sustainability Outcome:** cleaner water, sustainable ecosystems

---

**Topic/Asset #25:** Beaches and Coastal Areas

**ICSP Pillar:** Environmental

**Priority Level:** 3

**Current Reality:**

- No substantial flood risk areas exist within municipal coastal area
- 9 community areas have harbors stretched along the length of the coast act as economic driver for the county. Coastline and beaches also act as catalyst for tourism and real estate sector
- The Municipality is fortunate to have several exceptional beaches along the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Northumberland Strait and Georges Bay boasting some of the warmest waters north of the Carolina's. Freshwater beaches exist at Lake Ainslie, while the Bras d'Or Lake also has several beaches
- Boardwalks exist in Inverness, Port Hood, and Cheticamp
- The Municipality is responsible for the removal of any wildlife carcass that wash ashore on beaches.
- Eastern District Planning Commission has identified waterfront development zones in three planned areas.
- Federal and Provincial departments are lead governing organisations responsible for environmental regulation and enforcement

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Climate and human impacts
- Waterfront zoning to ensure human impacts remain minimal to coastal integrity
- Some community beaches that have traditionally been considered available for public access are actually accessed through private land. As land ownership changes hands access in some areas could become restricted
- Maintenance and insurance costs for boardwalks fall to volunteer organisations – declining volunteer levels will impact sustainability of boardwalk structures

**Goal/Objective:**

- Provide support to Nova Scotia State of the Coast strategy
- Increasingly tie beaches to tourism marketing approach
- Ensure that future subdivision development and other related zoning includes easement way for public access to existing beaches.

**Stakeholders:** Stakeholders identified in State of Nova Scotia Coast Report, Municipal Public Works, Eastern District Planning Commission, Coastal Community Network **Lead:** Council/Recreation Tourism Department

**Strategy/Action:**

- Support the NS State of the Coast strategy as requested
- Map all beaches and boardwalks and provide digital imagery (photos, video) to be hosted on website
- Explore potential for increasing the number of publically supervised beaches
- Identify beaches in Physical Activity Strategy as key natural assets enabling physical activity opportunities
- Continue to work with Eastern District Planning Commission to ensure considerate waterfront development planning
- Explore maintenance and insurance requirement with boardwalk stakeholders in three communities.

**Timeframe:** 1-5

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Recreation/Tourism marketing plan, Eastern District Planning Commission zoning, participating CDAs planning initiatives

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Environmental: Ensuring stewardship and the responsible and regenerative use of natural capital stock.
- Social: Fostering outdoor recreation opportunities/participation and active healthy lifestyles through the support, promotion and development of local recreation infrastructure and assets.

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Governance

**Sustainability Outcome:** Quality of life, clean water

---

**Topic/Asset #26:** Land Use planning/zoning subdivision, and building inspection services

**ICSP Pillar:** Environmental

**Priority Level:** 3

**Current Reality:**

- The Eastern District Planning Commission provides the planning, subdivision and building inspection services for the Counties of Inverness County
- Municipal Council has representation on the Board of Directors for the Eastern District Planning Commission
- The Municipal Planning Strategy currently recognizes 5 plan areas: Cheticamp, Inverness, Port Hood, Whycomagh, and Port Hastings

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Through the leveraging of existing assets planning becomes the catalyst for future economic development
- Governance – given responsibilities of the Eastern District Planning Commission (accountable to five municipal units) it is important to ensure that equity remains consistent and that the planning objectives of the Municipality are consistent with the human resource capacity of the Planning Commission

**Goal/Objective:**

- Strengthen ties and integrate, where applicable, planning and zoning of communities with economic development (S-HRDA) and community development (CDA) planning initiatives
- Consistent with the Capital Investment Plan explore subdivision development on municipally owned land in communities slated for growth
- Explore additional planned areas in communities demonstrating growth

**Stakeholders:** The Eastern District Planning Commission, The Municipality, S-HRDA, participating CDAs **Lead:** Council/CAO

**Strategy/Action:**

- As identified in the Capital Investment Plans pursue subdivision on municipally owned land for communities that demonstrate growth potential
- Create asset maps which layer community specific assets (economic and community development) onto zoning and planning (Eastern Planning Commission)
- Upon completion of maps bring together the above listed stakeholders to determine any required adjustments to current Municipal Planning Strategy. Profile maps on webpage

**Timeframe:** 1-5

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** Tangible asset mapping

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Municipal Planning Strategy, S-HRDA planning initiatives, participating CDA planning initiatives, applicable provincial planning initiatives

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: Creating a common county-wide development framework and practicing a process which fosters collaboration amongst development stakeholders within the Region and throughout Inverness County;
- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Governance/Municipal Finance

**Sustainability Outcome:** cleaner water

---

**Topic/Asset #27:** Fisheries

**ICSP Pillar:** Economic

**Priority Level:** 1



**Current Reality:**

- Number of people employed in fishing by Census period<sup>18</sup>
  - 2006 – 660 people
  - 2001 – 560 people
  - 1996 – 550 people
  - 1991 – 570 people
- Value of fish landings \$48,279,000 (2006 Census)<sup>19</sup>
- The most valuable species are shellfish – especially lobsters, scallops, and crabs. Other important species include haddock, herring, mackerel, tuna, and pollock. In recent years dwindling cod stocks have nearly decimated the cod fishery – once a leading industry
- Aquaculture is a growing industry in the Municipality. The provincial department of agriculture and fisheries encourages aquaculture development through training and financial assistance. Oyster aquaculture exist in Mabou and along the Bras d'Or lakes
- 9 community districts along the coast of the County have harbours and wharfs. The harbours and wharfs are managed by the local Small Craft Harbours and local Harbour Authorities.
- The Municipality has ownership of the wharf at Port Hood which also provides a transportation link to Port Hood Island
- The Judique Area Development Association is pursuing the development of a lobster hatchery that would provide benefits to lobster industry along the coast
- North of Smokey-Inverness South Fisherman Association is the lead organization representing fishermen's interests in Inverness County
- Gaspereau fishery along the Margaree River remains a commercial export activity that creates seasonal revenue for residents
- Recreational fishing creates a tourism draw, specifically the salmon runs in the Margaree River
- Gulf Aquarium and Marine Station Cooperative (GAMS) in Cheticamp has been undertaking both biological inventories of the harbour and monitoring the effects of sea level rise on the harbour salt marshes. In addition we have been very much involved in the collecting data through the Community Aquatic Monitoring Program (C.A.M.P.) with the DFO for the last several years. GAMS has also recently completed a report on the feasibility of recycling snow crab processing waste to produce a value added product in Cape Breton
- Stream restoration projects aimed at improving recreational fish habitat have been undertaken by various CDAs and community groups

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Input costs relative to energy, suppressed commodity prices impacting upon operational sustainability of fishery enterprises
- Regulations impacting quotas, harvest season of specific species etc
- Sustainable harvest practices
- Lack of cohesive governance structure involving the various stakeholders i.e. in-shore fisherman, offshore vessels, processors, and various scales of

---

<sup>18</sup> "New 5-Year Economic Plan for the Strait Highlands Region," Pinfold Gardner, 2008

<sup>19</sup> Inverness Profile/Policy and Research," ACOA 2008

- government to ensure equity is established amongst the various scales enabling strategic policy and investment
- Succession planning of existing fishery enterprises required to engage next generation

**Goal/Objective:**

- Promote awareness for the value of the fishery under an ICSP four pillar distinction
- Support S-HRDA in business services aimed at assisting fishery sector enterprises
- Support community based groups engaged in enhancing the fisheries and creating local point of sale outlets
- Improve municipal owned wharves at Port Hood and Port Hood Island

**Stakeholders:** Participating CDAs, S-HRDA, DFO, NS Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, Small Craft Harbours, Harbour Authority, North of Smokey-Inverness South Fishermen's Associations **Lead:** CAO/S-HRDA

**Strategy/Action:**

- Map all harbours and wharfs and quantity of fishing boats/vessels and display outcomes on GIS web-based maps enabling the annual value of fisheries specific to each community and to the county as a whole to be displayed
- Promote S-HRDA business services targeting the fisheries enterprises through municipal communication channels
- Provide appropriate support to community groups i.e. Judique CDA, GAMS, etc within the scope of the Municipalities mandate
- Consistent with Capital Investment Plans undertake improvements to Municipal owned wharves

**Timeframe:** 1-5 yrs

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** tangible asset mapping

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** community, industry association and applicable provincial and federal department planning initiatives, Capital Investment plans

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: Creating a common county-wide development framework and practicing a process which fosters collaboration amongst development stakeholders within the region and throughout the Municipality;
- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives;
- Economic: Incubating and assisting local small business, community enterprise, community economic development, and building capacity within Community Economic Development Organizations and Community Development Organizations.

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Governance, Innovation

**Sustainability Outcome:** jobs and a varied economy, sustained resource stock

---

**Topic/Asset #28: Forestry****ICSP Pillar: Economic****Current Reality:**

- Number of people employed in sector by Census period<sup>20</sup>
  - 2006 – 230 people
  - 2001 – 200 people
  - 1996 – 320 people
  - 1991 – 395 people
- Total forest production: 94,597 cubic meters (2006 Census)<sup>21</sup>
- Much of the forests are privately owned and many are best classified as farm woodlots.
- The NewPage pulp and Paper mill spends in excess of \$240 million annually with estimates of \$80,000,000 to \$100,000,000 impacting of the Strait-Highland Region<sup>22</sup>
- Developments with NewPage and NS Power could see the implementation of biomass electrical production at the NewPage mill. If the proposed project comes on line, wood harvesting will increase throughout the county as a means of sourcing bio-mass
- Beetle infestation impacting on spruce woodlots
- There are 6 commercial small sawmill businesses in the county, the largest of which is located in the Margaree.
- An unknown amount of small portable sawmills exist throughout the county
- Some woodlot owners produce maple syrup. Christmas tree farms and fire wood sales exist throughout the County.
- NS DNR Strathlorne Forest Nursery provides employment for approx. 25 seasonal workers. It is a multi-million dollar complex with the capacity to produce 10 million seedlings per year targeted for forest replanting purposes. Given industry challenges the Nursery has been downsizing and its on-going operation is uncertain. In April 2009 the Nursery was approved for over a \$1 million in Community Development Trust funds to look at transitioning the operation. However, as of the time of this writing the money has yet to be released by the Province. The Nursery complex is an important built asset that enables opportunities for broader sustainability objectives.
- Over-time the Municipality has acquired a substantial amount of land throughout the county through tax arrears sales. Forest resources on these lands are of unknown market value.
- The Municipality receives grants in lieu of full assessed value of resource land

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Input costs relative to energy, suppressed commodity prices and beetle infestation of spruce impacting upon operational sustainability of forestry enterprises
- Sustainable harvest practices

---

<sup>20</sup> "New 5-Year Economic Plan for the Strait Highlands Region," Pinfold Gardner, 2008

<sup>20</sup> Inverness Profile/Policy and Research," ACOA 2008

<sup>22</sup> S-HRDA website [http://www.strait-highlands.ns.ca/shrda/shrda\\_main.nsf/e06d50d35d0e24d384256ea200679012/ae314f35e066506684256f19005fb990?OpenDocument](http://www.strait-highlands.ns.ca/shrda/shrda_main.nsf/e06d50d35d0e24d384256ea200679012/ae314f35e066506684256f19005fb990?OpenDocument)

- Succession planning of existing forestry enterprises required to engage next generation
- Beetle infestation of spruce woodlots impacting the health of overall forests
- If biomass electrical generation is developed at NewPage increased harvesting will need to be regulated to ensure natural stock is not depleted

**Priority Level: 1**

**Goal/Objective:**

- Resolve uncertainty of Strathlorne Forest Nursery Community Development Trust Fund status
- Assess value of forest resources on municipal owned land and determine appropriate use
- Support bio-mass electrical generation proposed at New Page. Assist in ensuring harvesting practices do not deplete natural stock.
- Map forestry sector enterprise assets
- Support S-HRDA in business services aimed at assisting forestry sector enterprises

**Stakeholders:** NS DNR/Private Sector/Municipality/S-HRDA **Lead:** Council/CAO

**Strategy/Action:**

- Lobby NS DNR to determine status of Strathlorne Forestry Nursery. If Community Development Trust Funds are secured for transition planning of the Nursery a community advisory committee is to be established to guide the planning process – ensure that there is Municipal representation on the committee.
- GIS map municipal land holdings – have resource assessed for market value and determine options
- GIS map forestry sector enterprise assets
- Continue to support S-HRDA efforts aimed forestry sector enterprises specifically focused on assistance for succession planning
- If bio-mass electrical production begins at New Page collaborate with other stakeholders to ensure harvesting practices do not deplete natural stock

**Timeframe:** 1-5 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** Tangible asset mapping

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives;
- Economic: Incubating and assisting local small business, community enterprise, community economic development, and building capacity within Community Economic Development Organizations and Community Development Organizations.
- Environmental: Ensuring stewardship and the responsible and regenerative use of natural capital stock.

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Municipal Finance/Innovation/Governance

**Sustainability Outcome:** sustained resource stock

---

**Topic/Asset #29:** Agriculture

**ICSP Pillar:** Economic

**Priority Level:** 1

**Current Reality:**

- Number of people employed in sector by Census period<sup>23</sup>
  - 2006 – 160 people
  - 2001 – 245 people
  - 1996 – 240 people
  - 1991 – 230 people
- \$9.0 million in gross farm receipts (2006 Census)<sup>24</sup>
- The Inverness Victoria Federation of Agriculture is the lead body representing Inverness County farm producers. The federation presents annually to Council on the state of agriculture in the Municipality
- Beef and dairy are the primary sectors of commodity agricultural production in the county. Poultry, egg and pork production also exist in the county
- Community pasture cooperatives exist in Foot Cape and Cheticamp Island. There are no remaining provincially inspected abattoirs in the County
- Agricultural lands have been mapped for the Municipality. Agricultural land is lost each year due to land being left fallow and forest creep taking over.
- The Municipality receives grants in lieu of resource taxes for registered farms
- Microclimates exist throughout the Municipality enabling commercial vineyard in Marble Mountain
- Farm markets have been established in Mabou and Cheticamp. Small scale Community Shared Agriculture models operate in Lake Ainslie and Margaree
- The Central Inverness County Community Health Board has funded the development of a local food map for 2010 fiscal year

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Farm debt levels, input costs relative to energy and suppressed commodity prices impacting operational sustainability of farms.
- Aging farmer population requires succession planning to ensure another generation continues farm production. If the next generation of farm producers does not take over existing operations, taxes to property owners will increase as they lose farm distinction which allows for a reduced tax rate.
- No abattoirs exist on Cape Breton Island. Acts as a deterrent for sector adaptation targeting local markets
- While there is growing demand for local food products in the Municipality, market size continues to act as a deterrent towards developing viable business models.
- Lack of local food produced for local consumption could lead to increased food insecurity as energy costs rise and impact shelf price of commodity food products

---

<sup>23</sup> “New 5-Year Economic Plan for the Strait Highlands Region,” Pinfold Gardner, 2008

<sup>24</sup> Inverness Profile/Policy and Research,” ACOA 2008

**Goal/Objective:**

- Promote existing agricultural assets through municipal communication tools
- Provide support for sector adaption towards local food system development

**Stakeholders:** Inverness/Victoria Federation of Agriculture, Community Health Boards, local farm markets, participating CDAs, NS DNR Strathlorne **Lead:** Council/CAO

**Strategy/Action:**

- Engage S-HRDA for business retention and succession planning applications applicable to the agricultural sector
- Support Inverness/Victoria Federation of Agriculture on lobbying issues specific to local producers sustainability
- Display agricultural land maps on new municipal webpage
- Upon completion of local food map display map on municipal webpage
- Collaborate with community partners i.e. farm markets, community health boards etc. to foster local food system development
- Explore options within NS DNR Strathlorne Forest Nursery transition planning for use in establishing agricultural commodities or local food production

**Timeframe:** 1-25 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** tangible asset mapping

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture Environmental Risk Management Plans, Nova Scotia government food procurement planning and policies, Nova Scotia Provincial Statements of interest for Agricultural lands, Inverness/Victoria Federation of Agriculture, NS Federation of Agriculture/ Ecology Action Centre Food Miles Project, local farm market planning initiatives, Community Health Board planning initiatives etc.

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Environmental: Ensuring stewardship and the responsible and regenerative use of natural capital stock.
- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives;
- Social: Collaborating with various stakeholders in order to promote and adopt population health principles which foster healthy vibrant communities

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Municipal Finance/ Governance/ Innovation

**Sustainability Outcome:** food security/ quality of life

---

**Topic/Asset #30:** Mining

**ICSP Pillar:** Economic

**Priority Level:**

**Current Reality:**

- Number of people employed in sector by Census period<sup>25</sup>
  - 2006 – 240 people
  - 2001 – 215 people
  - 1996 – 190 people
  - 1991 – 200 people
- S-HRDA signed a memorandum of understanding with the Nova Scotia Minerals Resources Branch of Department of Natural Resources (NSDNR) to encourage mineral exploration and development in the county
- Valuable minerals found in the region include gypsum. Much of the gypsum is exported to the United States via the Strait of Canso Superport.
- The county has deposits of barite, used primarily in oil well drilling. Sand and gravel, coal, cement grade limestone, stone, and clay are some of the other minerals found in the region.
- Large coal deposits exist in the Municipality
- Oil exploration is occurring in the Lake Ainslie block
- The mineral sector in the broader S-HRDA region has an annual direct impact of \$20,000,000 to the economy, while directly employing 200 to 230 individuals.<sup>26</sup>
- Mine site land restoration has occurred in St. Rose and Inverness.
- The S-HRDA has mapped previous mine sites in the county which could be used for geothermal energy production.

#### **Sustainability Issue:**

- While the sector does not create the economic impact that it historically did, the mining sector remains an economic driver helping to sustain broader elements of municipal identity
- Mineral extraction can have lasting environmental impacts. Environmental regulation and enforcement is required to ensure watershed protection.

#### **Goal/Objective:**

- Support S-HRDA efforts in encouraging mining exploration and development
- Explore geothermal energy production consistent with S-HRDA Green Plan recommendations
- Ensure land use planning, by-laws and permitting provides watershed protection in the case of new mine developments

**Stakeholders:** Eastern District Planning Commission/S-HRDA/NSDNR/Private enterprise **Lead:** CAO/Council

#### **Strategy/Action:**

- Map known mineral deposits throughout the Municipality and display on GIS based maps – display S-HRDA green action maps indicating previous mine sites and locations
- Implement geothermal Green Action Plan recommendations where feasible
- Review land use planning, by-laws and permitting where necessary

---

<sup>25</sup> “New 5-Year Economic Plan for the Strait Highlands Region,” Pinfold Gardner, 2008

<sup>26</sup> S-HRDA webpage [http://www.strait-highlands.ns.ca/shrda/shrda\\_main.nsf/e06d50d35d0e24d384256ea200679012/ae314f35e066506684256f19005fb990?OpenDocument](http://www.strait-highlands.ns.ca/shrda/shrda_main.nsf/e06d50d35d0e24d384256ea200679012/ae314f35e066506684256f19005fb990?OpenDocument)

**Timeframe:** 1-25

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** Tangible asset mapping

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** S-HRDA planning/NSDNR planning

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Environmental: Ensuring stewardship and the responsible and regenerative use of natural capital stock.
- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives.

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Innovation

**Sustainability Outcome:** jobs and a varied economy, cleaner water

---

**Topic/Asset #31:** Tourism

**ICSP Pillar:** Economic

**Priority Level:** 1

**Current Reality:**

- Tourism Revenue: \$54 million (2006 Census period)<sup>27</sup>
- Cape Breton consistently rated as one of the top Island destinations in the world by leading publications. Recently, Lonely Planet named Cape Breton as one of the top ten bicycle destinations in the world. Velo Cape Breton is an island-wide program that caters to our growing bicycle touring market.
- Visitor information centres exist in Port Hastings, Port Hood, Inverness, Margaree, and Cheticamp.
- The Inverness location is managed by the IDA which has decided that they cannot operate the centre of the 2010 season given operational cost pressures and lack of funding. The Municipality owns the building.
- The Province owns and operates the VIC in Port Hastings
- Operators are represented by local tourism associations in Margaree, Cheticamp, and the Cabot Trail Working Association. Destination Cape Breton is the lead organization representing operators throughout Cape Breton Island
- The Municipality voted down the levee fee proposed by Destination Cape Breton. A new approach is required to secure financing for broader promotional and marketing
- Recreation/ Tourism Department promotes tourism sector with marketing and promotional support through publications of Sunset Guide, coordination assistance with festivals and events, support to cultural centers, facilitation of meetings with local operators and industry representatives etc.
- S-HRDA provides various business supports to tourism operators and advisory support to local cultural centres
- Interprovincial visitation is on the rise. American and European visitors in decline given global economic downturn.

---

<sup>27</sup> Inverness Profile/Policy and Research,” ACOA 2008



- The Municipality provides assistance towards trails development as a means of providing infrastructure development supportive of retaining visitors
- Arts and Recreation labour sector now employs as many people as mining at 220 people (2006 Census) up from 160 people (2011 Census) lending capacity to cultural and eco-tourism tourism opportunities<sup>28</sup>

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Rising energy cost and global economic downturn are impacting upon visitation from US and European visitors. Increased visitation from other markets (i.e. interprovincial) is required to offset loss
- Tourism is a globally competitive market. Marketing plan must be strategic in promoting county competitive advantages to target markets. Adequate levels of financing to undertake necessary marketing are not established
- Governance structures for county stakeholders are fragmented which present challenges in developing a cohesive and strategic approach forward
- The evolution of tourism consumer needs require the tourism product to evolve as well i.e. experiential, eco-adventure, etc
- Rising operational costs impacting on some operators and visitor information centres

**Goal/Objective:**

- Develop Inverness County tourism governance structure incorporating local tourism associations, Destination Cape Breton, Recreation/Tourism Department and other related stakeholders
- Leverage cultural and natural assets to establish Inverness County as a cultural tourist destination
- Continue to support S-HRDA in business development services applicable to tourism operators and cultural centres
- Transition Recreation/Tourism Department marketing approach from print based to IT based
- Working with the IDA determine appropriate operational approach for Visitor Information centre in Inverness

**Stakeholders:** local tourism associations, Destination Cape Breton, Recreation Tourism Department, S-HRDA, TIANS, related provincial and federal departments

**Lead:** Recreation Tourism Department

**Strategy/Action:**

- Undertake in-house Recreation Tourism Department tourism marketing plan
- Hold roundtable planning session with tourism stakeholders to begin to define tourism governance structure and collective approach forward
- Map all cultural assets and display assets of GIS web maps on new municipal webpage
- Work with IDA and industry stakeholders to develop operational plan for Inverness Visitor Centre.
- Lobby for sustained Provincial presence at Port Hastings VIC

**Timeframe:** 1-10

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** tangible asset mapping

---

<sup>28</sup> "New 5-Year Economic Plan for the Strait Highlands Region," Pinfold Gardner, 2008

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Destination Cape Breton planning initiatives, Recreation/Tourism planning, community tourism association planning, S-HRDA planning, applicable provincial and federal departments.

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Cultural: Enhancing, supporting and promoting the distinct subcultures and languages which collectively makeup the unique identity of the Municipality;
- Cultural: Enhancing tourism through the support and promotion of community festivals and events and local cultural and natural infrastructure;
- Economic: Creating a common county-wide development framework and practicing a process which fosters collaboration amongst development stakeholders within the region and throughout the Municipality;
- Economic Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives;
- Economic Incubating and assisting local small business, community enterprise, community economic development, and building capacity within Community Economic Development Organizations and Community Development Organizations.

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Governance/Innovation

**Sustainability Outcome:** jobs and a varied economy

---

**Topic/Asset #32:** Manufacturing

**ICSP Pillar:** Economic

**Priority Level:** 3

**Current Reality:**

- Number of people employed in all manufacturing by Census period<sup>29</sup>
  - 2006 – 895 people
  - 2001 – 1,120 people
- Number of people employed in fish processing by Census period
  - 2006 – 270 people
  - 2001 – 340 people
- Number of people employed in pulp and paper by Census period
  - 2006 – 360 people
  - 2001 – 525 people
- Number of people employed in other manufacturing by Census period
  - 2006 – 265 people
  - 2001 – 255 people
- The primary manufacturing industries are fish processing and pulp and paper production. Main fish-processing plants are found in Cheticamp with pulp and paper production (New page) found at Point Tupper in Richmond County
- Other industries include the manufacture of construction products and equipment. Historically, shipbuilding was important to the region's economy and ship building still takes place in the region with finished vessels being exported to international markets.

---

<sup>29</sup> "New 5-Year Economic Plan for the Strait Highlands Region," Pinfold Gardner, 2008

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Manufacturing sector remains a primary economic driver for the Municipality. The sustainability and growth of the sector is integral to the broader sustainability of municipal identity
- Labour costs relative to global commodity prices, input costs relative to energy are impacting upon fish processing facility operations
- Economic downturn in pulp and paper industry present uncertain business climate
- If biomass electrical generation at Point Tupper begins it could assist in transitioning the manufacturing sector and spurring the forestry labour market sector

**Goal/Objective:**

- Provide municipal support to proposed biomass electrical generation at Point Tupper
- Support S-HRDA in 2009-2010 strategic plan manufacturing sector actions

**Stakeholders:** Private sector/S-HRDA/Council **Lead:** S-HRDA/Council

**Strategy/Action:**

- Stayed informed of proposed biomass developments occurring at NewPage
- Assess value of municipal resource land applicable for biomass stock
- Receive updates on sector trends, needs through S-HRDA

**Timeframe:** 1-10

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** S-HRDA strategic planning, developments at Point Tupper re biomass generation

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives;

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Municipal finance/innovation

**Sustainability Outcome:** reduced GHG, cleaner air

---

**Topic/Asset #33:** Construction and Trades

**ICSP Pillar:** Economic

**Priority Level:** 3

**Current Reality:**

- Number of people employed in sector by Census period<sup>30</sup>
  - 2006 – 585 people
  - 2001 – 715 people

---

<sup>30</sup> “New 5-Year Economic Plan for the Strait Highlands Region,” Pinfold Gardner, 2008

- 1996 – 505 people
- 1991 – 530 people
- Building permit information is as follows:<sup>31</sup>
  - Value of building permits: \$28,809,500 in 2008 up from \$15,533,433 in 2007 (increase due to valuation on new hospital construction and senior housing and continuing care facility in Inverness)
  - Fees: \$35,765 in 2008 compared to \$35,145 in 2007
  - Permits: 206 in 2008 compared to 232 in 2007
- The Municipality has a high proportion of residents with apprenticeship and trades certificate at 14.7% of the population aged 15 years and above – 2.7 % higher than the provincial average.<sup>32</sup>
- The Eastern District Planning Commission provides building permit and inspection services ensuring that new construction meets provincial and federal standards
- The sector is a key economic driver impacting municipal revenue generation as new housing starts add addition tax revenue

**Sustainability Issue:**

- New housing starts and infrastructure projects to maintain workforce
- Availability of skilled labour to match labour market needs as impacted by an aging and declining population
- Succession planning of existing construction and trades establishments

**Goal/Objective:**

- Pursue wind development as means of creating infrastructure aimed at spurring construction and trades labour market sector
- Support S-HRDA business succession and retention planning initiatives

**Stakeholders:** S-HRDA, Municipality, Eastern District Planning Commission, Private Sector, Nova Scotia Construction Council **Lead:** CAO

**Strategy/Action:**

- Support S-HRDA Green Action Plan and position renewable energy production, specifically wind production, as a priority development goal as a means for spurring construction and trades labour market
- Map and display construction and trade establishments to determine gaps that could be filled in sector (i.e. additional plumbers, electricians etc)
- Engage S-HRDA to provide succession planning assistance to construction and trades establishments

**Timeframe:** 1-25 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** Downtown planning, tangible asset mapping

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Eastern District Planning Commission zoning/planning, S-HRDA Green Action Plan, S-HRDA Business and Strategic Planning, The NSCSC Construction Mobility, Retention and Succession Study

---

<sup>31</sup> “S-HRDA Business Plan 2009/2010”

<sup>32</sup> Community Counts Webpage

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Environmental: Promoting and moving towards adopting renewable energy production and energy conservation measures
- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives;
- Economic: Incubating and assisting local small business, community enterprise, community economic development, and building capacity within Community Economic Development Organizations and Community Development Organizations.

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Municipal Finance/Innovation

**Sustainability Outcome:** jobs and a varied economy, municipal finance

---

**Topic/Asset #34:** IT Sector

**ICSP Pillar:** Economic

**Priority Level:** 1

**Current Reality:**

- The routing of new high speed connectivity for Internet use into the rural area of the region is opening opportunity for other information, services and marketing opportunities. This infrastructure acts a catalyst to draw business, investment and population to the Municipality.
- Award winning Halifax Bio-Medical Ltd established in Mabou. The company selected Mabou as its office location given the quality of life offered in the community.
- Communities have anecdotally reported that families who have the ability to work from home through accessing high-speed have moved to the Municipality
- S-HRDA assists local business in e-business supports

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Maintenance of high speed connectivity infrastructure key to sustainability of existing business sector and attracting new business

**Goal/Objective:**

- Citing the Halifax Bio-Medical example, leverage community culture and quality of life, municipal natural assets and high speed connectivity to attract IT business
- Continue to support S-HRDA in e-business supports

**Stakeholders:** S-HRDA, participating CDAs, Municipality **Lead:** S-HRDA

**Strategy/Action:**

- Identity communities with competitive advantages for potential cluster development of IT start ups – ensure future land use planning is conducive to business attraction
- Engage Halifax Bio-Medical in promotions of competitive advantages of the Municipality citing their experience and choice for locating in Mabou
- Promote high speed connectivity access and community culture and quality of life through municipal channels
- Assist in promoting S-HRDA e-business supports to established small business community

**Timeframe:** 1-25 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** S-HRDA strategic planning, Private sector planning

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Population/Innovation

**Sustainability Outcome:** jobs and a varied economy

---

**Topic/Asset #35:** Retail Business Sector

**ICSP Pillar:** Economic

**Priority Level:** 2

**Current Reality:**

- Number of people employed in sector by Census period<sup>33</sup>
  - 2006 – 1,105 people
  - 2001 – 1,235 people
  - 1996 – 835 people
  - 1991 – 990 people
- Main Street façade program has been initiated by the S-HRDA in Cheticamp – targeted for additional communities in the Municipality
- S-HRDA supporting sector through e-business supports and succession planning approaches for
- The Municipality receives tax revenue through commercial retail sector

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Majority of retail sector business models are dependent on support of local population. Aging and declining population will impact the viability of some businesses within sector

---

<sup>33</sup> “New 5-Year Economic Plan for the Strait Highlands Region,” Pinfold Gardner, 2008

- Decline in retail business from communities, such as Inverness, increasingly results in leakage of purchasing dollars as residents travel to larger centres
- Operational and input costs relative to energy
- Succession planning of existing business establishments required for engaging next generation of entrepreneurs. If succession of existing businesses does not occur municipal finance will be impacted by declining commercial tax revenue

**Goal/Objective:**

- Support infrastructure projects and service projects aimed at enhancing retail sector presence

**Stakeholders:** Private sector/S-HRDA **Lead:** S-HRDA

**Strategy/Action:**

- Identify communities that would benefit from Main Street Façade programs. Assist S-HRDA and CDAs in mobilizing community for façade developments
- Support S-HRDA initiatives: e-business, succession planning initiatives that support sector

**Timeframe:** 1-5 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** downtown planning

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Main Street Façade Planning initiative, CDA planning initiatives

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives;
- Economic: Incubating and assisting local small business, community enterprise, community economic development, and building capacity within Community Economic Development Organizations and Community Development Organizations.

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Municipal Finance/Governance

---

**Topic/Asset #36:** Transportation

**ICSP Pillar:** Economic

**Priority Level:** 2

**Current Reality:**

- Number of people employed in sector by Census period<sup>34</sup>
  - 2006 – 355 people
  - 2001 – 300 people
  - 1996 – 340 people
  - 1991 – 295 people

---

<sup>34</sup> “New 5-Year Economic Plan for the Strait Highlands Region,” Pinfold Gardner, 2008

- Municipality transfers assessment tax revenue to the NS Department of Transportation for road maintenance as required
- The Municipality provides transfers to NS Power for street lighting
- There are two airports in Inverness County – Port Hastings Airport and Margaree Airport – to which the Municipality provides funds
- The Municipality has ownership of the wharf at Port Hood which also provides a transportation link to Port Hood Island
- The Municipality has some J-Roads located throughout the county
- Cheticamp Economic Development Commission (CDA) is working with Velo Cape Breton on the promotion of activate transportation (cycling) through the Acadian Region and around the Cabot Trail
- The Strait Area Transit is a not for profit public transportation that has recently been established to serve the strait area. The transit pilot includes one 20-passenger accessible bus, two 7-passenger commuter vans, bus shelters and office equipment for an approximate total of \$191,000. The annual Pilot Project operating budget including staffing, fixed and variable expenses is projected to be \$267,000. The Municipality has been providing annual operating assistance to SAT. The S-HRDA is providing advisory assistance
- Rail America is the Company that owns Cape Breton and Central Nova Scotia Railways. The Provincial Government has provided a \$2 million a year subsidy for the past fives years. This subsidy is now in question.
- Many previous rail lines existing throughout Inverness County have been transitioned into trail systems. The Municipality has committed \$10,000 a year for trail development until 2012
- The Ecology Action Centre is working on a provincial active transportation strategy. The long term vision is to link the province via an active transportation network (includes trails)

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Demographic crunch and economic decline in many rural locations throughout NS is resulting in a decreased tax base for both municipal contributions to NS DOT and the Province's ability to provide adequate road improvement and maintenance
- Use of two local airports
- Operating sustainability of the Strait Area Transit
- Viability of remaining rail lines existing throughout Inverness County

**Goal/Objective:**

- Consistent with the Capital Investment Plan undertake required maintenance/paving of J-Class roads
- Consistent with the Capital Investment Plan undertake wharf improvements at Port Hood
- Continue to support SAT through financial contributions and S-HRDA support
- Provide support to active transportation development within the Municipality
- Provide support to community trail groups undertaking linking of trails system consistent with developing a provincial active transportation strategy

**Stakeholders:** Department of Public Works, Cheticamp Economic Development Commission (CDA), Ecology Action Centre, Recreation Tourism Department, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, Nova Scotia Infrastructure Renewal,



Infrastructure Canada, Environment Canada, NS Department of Environment **Lead:**  
CAO/Council

**Strategy/Action:**

- Leverage provincial and federal support for J-Class road maintenance and wharf improvements
- Utilize trails for local use program development within Physical Activity Strategy
- Assist in determining the viability of additional SAT routes running further into Municipality
- Promote active transportation efforts in Cheticamp and County trail network as part of Tourism marketing plan

**Timeframe:** 1-15 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** active transportation development, road development, wharf improvement as a vital transportation link, SAT as public transportation

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Main Street Façade Planning initiative, CDA planning initiatives

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives;
- Social: Collaborating with various stakeholders in order to promote and adopt population health principles which foster healthy vibrant communities
- Fostering outdoor recreation opportunities/participation and active healthy lifestyles through the support, promotion and development of local recreation infrastructure and assets.

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Municipal Finance/Governance

---

**Topic/Asset #37:** Service Sector – Education

**ICSP Pillar:** Economic

**Priority Level:**

**Current Reality:**

- Number of people employed in sector by Census period<sup>35</sup>
  - 2006 – 600 people
  - 2001 – 620 people
  - 1996 – 555 people
  - 1991 – 595 people
- 73% of County residents over the age of 20 have attained a certificate, diploma or degree, compared to the provincial standard of 77%.<sup>36</sup>
- The Municipality is served by the Strait Regional School Board and the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial in the Acadian region of Cheticamp and

---

<sup>35</sup> “New 5-Year Economic Plan for the Strait Highlands Region,” Pinfold Gardner, 2008

<sup>36</sup> Community Count Webpage

St. Joseph Du Moine. The Mi'Kmaq Kina'Matnewey School Board governs the education system at Waycobah First Nation.

- The Municipality provides annual transfers to the Province to support the delivery of education by the Strait Regional School Board. The School Board oversees six schools: Pleasant Bay, Belle Cote, Inverness, Whycomagh, Mabou and Port Hood. P3 schools exist in Mabou, Port Hood and Belle Cote
- As a result of an aging and declining population school enrollment numbers are declining throughout the Municipality
- Schools provide a critical built space for after school recreation, social and cultural activities
- Adult Education and Literacy programs are delivered by the Inverness County Literacy Association with administration assistance provided by the Recreation/Tourism Department
- Early education is not delivered in Municipality. The Cape Breton Family Place Resource Coalition and Public Health provide services aimed at young families. The Inverness Early Years advisory Group is mobilizing grassroots support for the creation of an Early Education Development Centre in the community of Inverness. The group aims to “work together to enhance a sense of community by creating a welcoming and accessible place for all children that connects present and future services and supports for all families.”
- St. Anne University has a satellite site located in St. Joseph Du Moine
- NSCC Strait Area Campus is home to an extensive Trades & Technology wing and the Business Innovation Centre, giving students real life work experience while they study. It's also home to the Nautical Institute and School of Fisheries divisions of the college that provide Transport Canada-approved marine training.

#### **Sustainability Issue:**

- As the population ages and declines it will become increasingly difficult to maintain the number of existing schools operated by the Strait Regional School Board. Closure of schools will impact upon labour market sector numbers as well as social and cultural aspects of life in communities throughout the Municipality
- Upon the last round of school closures in Inverness County, the Municipality received ownership of several buildings. In some cases ownership has been transitioned back into the hands of the community, as is the case at Cranton Cross Roads in Margaree. In other cases the Municipality was responsible for overseeing the demolition and absorbing the costs, as was the case in Inverness. If Inverness County witnesses additional school closures municipal finance will be impacted by absorbing the costs of dealing with school empty school structures
- Most families require dual incomes in order to manage the cost of living. The lack of community based daycare system acts a deterrent in retaining existing families and attracting new families to the Municipality.

#### **Goal/Objective:**

- Identify and promote mixed use options for existing school stock to mitigate against potential future school closures
- Support grassroots community based daycare developments
- Continue to provide support to the Inverness County Literacy Association

**Stakeholders:**

- Strait Regional School Board, NS Dept Education, Conseil scolaire acadien provincial, Inverness County Literacy Association, Inverness Early Years Advisory Group, participating CDAs and affiliated community groups **Lead:** Recreation/Tourism Department

**Strategy/Action:**

- Provide support to the Inverness Early Years Advisory Group as an exploratory model for community based daycare system development and delivery.
- Continue cost shared delivery of adult education and literacy programs
- Provide support to schools in documenting services provided outside of standard education delivery i.e. Strathspey Place, fitness centres, recreation activities etc
- Incorporate identified mixed use opportunities for current school stock into CDA, community and economic planning initiatives
- Position schools as critical built environment supportive within Physical Activity Strategy and recreation programming

**Timeframe:** 1-10 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** School Board Planning, NS Dept of Education, community and CDA planning initiatives

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: Creating a common county-wide development framework and practicing a process which fosters collaboration amongst development stakeholders within the region and throughout the Municipality;
- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives;
- Social: Collaborating with various stakeholders in order to promote and adopt population health principles which foster healthy vibrant communities;

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Governance/Municipal Finance

**Sustainability Outcome:** Quality of Life/Human Health

---

**Topic/Asset #38:** Service Sector – Health

**ICSP Pillar:** Economic

**Priority Level:** 1

**Current Reality:**

- Number of people employed in sector by Census period<sup>37</sup>
  - 2006 – 1,020 people
  - 2001 – 870 people
  - 1996 – 715 people
  - 1991 – 705 people
- The health sector is the third largest employer by sector in the Municipality next to primary industries (1050 jobs) and the retail sector (1105 jobs)<sup>38</sup>
- The Cape Breton District Health Authority serves the central and northern communities of Inverness County while the southeastern communities are served by the Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority.
- Three Community Health Boards exist in the Municipality – North Inverness and Central Inverness (CBDHA) and Strait Richmond (GASHA). Community Health Boards (CHB) are responsible for assessing local health needs, developing plans for the district health authority and identifying ways to improve the overall health of the community.
- The primary hospital in the Municipality is located in Inverness. Cheticamp has a smaller hospital, while health services are provided one day a week in Margaree and Port Hood. Antigonish and Sydney are the closest centers that provide more specialized health care services
- Upgrades and expansion is occurring at the Inverness Consolidated Memorial Hospital
- Located at the Inverness Consolidated Memorial Hospital site the Inverness Municipal Housing Corporation is undertaking construction of a new a continuing care facility for senior housing and care.
- The Inverness County Hospital Foundation – a community based charitable not-for-profit association – raised \$2.2 million to assist in covering project costs. The Municipality contributed. The Municipality has provided financial support to the Hospital Foundation – additional support was provided to the Cancer Care Centre in Sydney in 2010
- The Inverness Municipal Housing Corporation has ownership of two senior homes and continuing care facilities – the Inverness Manor in Inverness and the Foyer Pere Fiset in Cheticamp, both of which are undergoing expansion
- The Public Health Office is located in the town of Inverness. Home Care is delivered throughout the Municipality
- Municipal residents have higher incidents levels of chronic preventable disease than the provincial and national average<sup>39</sup>
- The Municipality is currently undertaking a Physical Activity Strategy in partnership with NS Health Promotion and Protection aimed at increasing physical activity and reducing chronic and preventable disease levels
- The Municipality receives grants in lieu of tax assessment for health authority properties

**Sustainability Issue:**

- The health sector is integral to municipal sustainability providing for health and human services as well as maintaining high paying employment. The sustainability for the sector is directly tied to population levels – as the population ages and requires additional services cost burdens will occur. As

---

<sup>37</sup> “New 5-Year Economic Plan for the Strait Highlands Region,” Pinfold Gardner, 2008

<sup>38</sup> “New 5-Year Economic Plan for the Strait Highlands Region,” Pinfold Gardner, 2008

<sup>39</sup> CBDHA Community Health Board profiles

the population declines the sustainability of the sector itself will come into to question.

- An aging population is impacting upon the sustainability of the health care sector across the country. Chronic and preventable disease is placing additional cost pressures on a system that will be impacted by a coming demographic crunch. Federal and Provincial governments are beginning to focus on population health measures as a means of reducing chronic and preventable disease levels and associated health care costs.
- Succession planning for staffing purposes. A percentage of health care senior staff and doctors are nearing retirement. Attracting and retaining the next generation of health care providers is required to ensure current services are sustained

**Goal/Objective:**

- Support community based groups focused on population health approaches measures
- Provide Municipal leadership to continuing care facilities aimed at providing quality of life services to the senior population
- Lobby DHA for increased and sustained services at Inverness Memorial Consolidated Hospital
- Working with health care sector stakeholders promote the Municipality as a desirable place for health professionals to work, raise families and invest

**Stakeholders:** CBDHA, GASHA, NS Department of Health, 3 CHBs, affiliated provincial and federal departments, **Lead:** Municipal Housing Corporation/CAO

**Strategy/Action:**

- Continue to provide leadership to continuing care facilities – assess long term implications of aging and declining population regarding services required and sustainability requirements
- Provide support to the 3 CHBs and complete the Physical Activity Strategy to ensure the Municipality provides desirable healthy active living options for county residents. Tailor physical activity programs specific to the needs of an aging population
- Collaborate with health sector stakeholders and utilize municipal communication tools and services to attract and retain the next generation of health care providers
- Position Inverness Memorial Consolidated Hospital as integral asset given geographic location within the Municipality. Lobby for increased services given distances that residents need to travel if the service is not provided at Inverness i.e. Baddeck for kidney dialysis, Antigonish or Sydney for obstetric services etc

**Timeframe:** 1-25 yrs

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Provincial and Federal Health department planning, District Health Authority planning initiatives, Hospital and continuing care facility planning initiatives, CHB community health plans, Physical Activity Strategy

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives;
- Social: Collaborating with various stakeholders in order to promote and adopt population health principles which foster healthy vibrant communities

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Population/Governance

**Sustainability Outcome:** human health, jobs and a varied economy

---

**Topic/Asset #39:** Service Sector – Fire Services

**ICSP Pillar:** Economic

**Priority Level:** 1

**Current Reality:**

- The Municipality is mandated within the Municipal Act to provide fire protection services to residents.
- There are 16 volunteer fire departments located throughout the Municipality. A shared volunteer service with Victoria County is provided for the northern region of Bay St. Lawrence and Meat Cove
- The Municipality provides workers compensation to volunteer fire fighters, grants to fire departments, public fire protection funds through area rate levies
- Fire protection services in the Municipality are entirely driven by volunteer efforts. The aging and declining population is impacting upon the continuity of the quality of services provided, and will continue to do so unless alternative governance approaches are considered
- The Inverness County Fireman's Association presented to council in 2009 requesting an increase in funding. An increase to fire protection area rates was negotiated

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Age of fire department volunteers and the ability to engage the next generation of volunteer fire fighters
- Community fundraising efforts
- Operational costs specific to insurance and equipment requirements
- If volunteer fire departments sector governance and operational structure proves unsustainable the Municipality will be forced to increase fire protection area rates to sustain volunteer efforts or to provide a paid service. Additionally, if the current level of service can not be sustained then property owners will witness an increase in home insurance premiums
- An increase in collaboration amongst volunteer fire departments will be required to offset population impacts on volunteers and finances

**Priority Level:** 1

**Goal/Objective:**

- Undertake Voluntary Sector Strategy – position volunteer fire departments as key pillar of the plan
- Foster complimentary governance, financing and operational options supportive of volunteer fire departments efforts

**Stakeholders:** Municipality, 16 volunteer fire departments, NS Volunteerism, affiliated provincial and federal departments **Lead:** CAO/ Public Works/Recreation Tourism Department

**Strategy/Action:**

- Complete voluntary sector strategy and determine economic impact of volunteer contribution specific to volunteer fire service
- Explore best practices for community governance and financing models specific to volunteer fire departments
- Hold roundtable sessions with sector stakeholders to explore and develop volunteer recruitment and retention plans
- Engage seasonal residents for increased fundraising to offset lack of year round volunteer engagement

**Timeframe:** 1-10 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** volunteer fire department planning initiatives, CDA planning initiatives, NS Volunteerism strategy, Rural Secretariat volunteerism programs, Municipality

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Social: Creating programs and processes that will assist in sustaining the volunteer sector's contribution to the quality of life of the Municipality;
- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Voluntary Sector/ Population/ Municipal Finance/ Innovation/ Governance

**Sustainability Outcome:** Health and Human Safety

---

**Topic/Asset #40:** Service Sector – Senior and Low Income Housing

**ICSP Pillar:** Economic

**Priority Level:** 3

**Current Reality:**

- The Inverness Municipal Housing Corporation owns 4 residences providing housing options to low income and senior residents– 2 senior facilities (Inverness Manor and Foyer Pere Fiset) and 2 Small Options Homes (Port Hood and Mabou providing housing to challenged adults). Operations are overseen and financed by the Province.

- The Inverness Municipal Housing Corporation is mortgaging the construction of the new Manor facility at the Inverness Memorial Consolidated Hospital. The Province will manage the operations and ensure operational sustainability. The previous Manor facility is set to be demolished following the completion of the new facility
- Foyer Pere Fiset is also undergoing a ten room expansion
- The Municipality provides contributions to the Cape Breton Island Housing Authority based on the percentage of their annual deficit
- Senior housing units exist in the community districts of Judique, Port Hood, Mabou, Whycomomagh, Inverness, St. Joseph Du Moine, Cheticamp and Margaree. Private enterprise, community and NGO models partner with CBIHA to form the governance structures of various housing facilities.
- Low income housing is governed by the Cape Breton Island Housing Authority/NS Community Services, private sector homeowners, Small Options, and Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation.
- Low income housing exists in the following community districts: Port Hastings, Judique, Port Hood, Inverness, Margaree, St. Joseph Du Moine, Orangedale, and Cheticamp. Small Options low income housing exists throughout the County.
- Community Services offers a number of programs to help lower income households maintain, acquire or rent safe, adequate and affordable housing. Grants and loans are also available to eligible participants for home repairs and additions, as well as mortgage funds to purchase or build modest houses.
- A Community Service branch office is located in Port Hood at a municipally owned building – the regional office is located in Port Hawkesbury. The CBIHA branch office is located in Inverness while the main office is headquartered in Sydney)
- Of the 55 municipal units in Nova Scotia, Inverness County has the 4<sup>th</sup> lowest percentage of low income families at 7.9% of total families<sup>40</sup>

#### **Sustainability Issue:**

- Governance challenges –low income and senior housing incorporates various levels and scales of government, NGOs and the private sector. Establishing and coordinating a framework for strategic long term low income and senior housing is complex and inherent with competing interests from various stakeholders. Cost sharing needs to remain equitable given the revenue generation potential of various stakeholders
- The ability of the Cape Breton Island Housing Authority to balance their budget given rising cost pressures. In the case of the CBIHA running deficits the Municipality is required to cover a percentage of the deficit
- Maintenance and operating costs of existing low income housing stock
- Changes in demographics will impact low income and senior housing stock requirements – greatly impacting the accessibility of current housing stock
- Low income families and seniors require proximity to services – future housing options need to be encouraged and developed in communities that enable access to required services i.e. public transportation, health, employment etc
- An aging population will likely result in an increase of residents living on fixed income levels. Overtime, increased senior and low income housing options

---

<sup>40</sup> Community Counts Webpage



will need to reflect this demographic change to ensure the current quality of life enjoyed today

**Goal/Objective:**

- Foster integrated planning amongst primary housing stakeholders to determine long term senior and low income housing requirements consistent with housing stakeholders budgetary realities and the needs of an aging population
- Encourage future senior and low income housing development in communities that enable residents a higher quality of life given proximity to services i.e. transit, health, recreation etc
- Ensure the five municipal planned communities offer the potential for a variety of housing options
- Stabilize payments made to cover Cape Breton Island Housing Authority operating deficits

**Stakeholders:** Inverness Municipal Housing Corporation, Cape Breton Island Housing Authority, Community Services, Eastern District Planning Commission, participating CDAs **Lead:** Municipal Housing Corporation/Council

**Strategy/Action:**

- Hold exploratory meetings with housing stakeholders and gain commitments for long term strategic planning and development approaches given aging population trends within Inverness County
- Develop long term senior and low income housing plan that targets communities with appropriate levels of services required of seniors and low income families.
- Hold exploratory meetings with municipal housing stakeholders to determine required changes to existing planned areas to support long term changes in senior and low income housing options

**Timeframe:** 1-10 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Inverness Municipal Housing Corporation, Community Services planning and programming initiatives, Cape Breton Island Housing Authority planning, Eastern District Planning Commission land use planning, participating CDAs

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: Strengthening development through sector adaptation and infrastructure initiatives
- Economic: Creating a common county-wide development framework and practicing a process which fosters collaboration amongst development stakeholders within the region and throughout the Municipality;

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Municipal Finance/ Population/ Governance

**Sustainability Outcome:** Quality of life

**Topic/Asset #41:** Service Sector – Policing

**ICSP Pillar:** Economic

**Priority Level:** 5

**Current Reality:**

- The Municipality provides annual transfers to the Province to support policing in the County. Annual transfers to the Province are also provided for correctional services existing outside municipal boundaries.
- The Municipality is serviced by the RCMP with 16 officers situated across four detachments in the communities of Port Hawkesbury, Waycobah, Inverness and Cheticamp.
- The Major Crimes Unit is stationed in Port Hawkesbury, which provides service to Inverness County
- The Municipality has representation on the Police Advisory Committee for Inverness County
- Community Watch programs exist throughout the Municipality

**Sustainability Issue:**

- Increases in the annual contributions required of the Municipality to support policing given operational requirements of the local RCMP presence are not sustainable at current rate of growth

**Goal/Objective:**

- Stabilize expenditures through an agreed upon ceiling for municipal transfers supportive of policing and resident safety

**Stakeholders:** Municipality, NS Department of Justice, RCMP **Lead:** CAO

**Strategy/Action:**

- Utilize municipal presence on the Police Advisory Committee to ensure decision making impacting operational expenditures in police services does not overburden municipal finance

**Timeframe:** 1-5 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** Police Advisory Committee planning initiatives, NS Department of Justice, Municipal budgeting

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: Creating a common county-wide development framework and practicing a process which fosters collaboration amongst development stakeholders within the region and throughout the Municipality

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Municipal Finance/Governance

**Sustainability Outcome:** Human safety

---

**Topic/Asset #41:** Service Sector – Government Services

**ICSP Pillar:** Economic

**Priority Level:** 5

**Current Reality:**

- Provincial government branch offices located within the Municipality include: NS Department of Community Services, NS Department of Agriculture, NS Department of Natural Resources, NS Department of Transportation
- Federal government branch offices located within the Municipality include: Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Service Canada, RCMP
- Prince Edward Island is in the process of taking government services out of Charlottetown and establishing a renewed presence in more rural communities throughout the province

**Sustainability Issue:**

- A decentralized approach to government services, which creates a more balanced and rural presence throughout Nova Scotia, would enable the creation of employment and increased municipal tax revenue through assessment of provincial and federal properties. This would also ensure that accessibility and communications between citizens and civil servants regarding policy and program development and delivery are reflective of rural resident's needs and realities.

**Goal/Objective:**

- Through UNSM lobby the Provincial Government to decentralized the delivery of government services

**Stakeholders:** Municipality, UNSM **Lead:** Council

**Strategy/Action:**

- Utilize municipal presence within UNSM to explore collective municipal approaches leading to policy change for a more decentralized approach to government service delivery

**Timeframe:** 1-5 years

**Gas Tax Eligible Projects:** N/A

**Links to other sustainability initiatives or planning:** P.E.I examples

**Consistent with ICSP focus of:**

- Economic: Creating a common county-wide development framework and practicing a process which fosters collaboration amongst development stakeholders within the region and throughout Municipality;

**Underlying theme addressed by action/strategy:** Population/Governance

## **6. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

### **6.1 RECOMMENDED PROCESS FOR UTILISING GAS TAX FUNDS**

Most municipal units have affiliated organizations that champion economic and environmental development efforts on its behalf, such as an RDA, Public Works or a Planning Commission. However, it could well be that The Municipality of the County of Inverness is unique in its position among other municipal units in Nova Scotia regarding the organized social and cultural community capacity that exists in this County through the CDA structure.

Development has traditionally been viewed from an economic perspective. Within the ICSP 4 pillar framework, the 16 CDAs have primarily been engaged in development efforts through a social and cultural lens whereby they further community capacity for broader economic development.

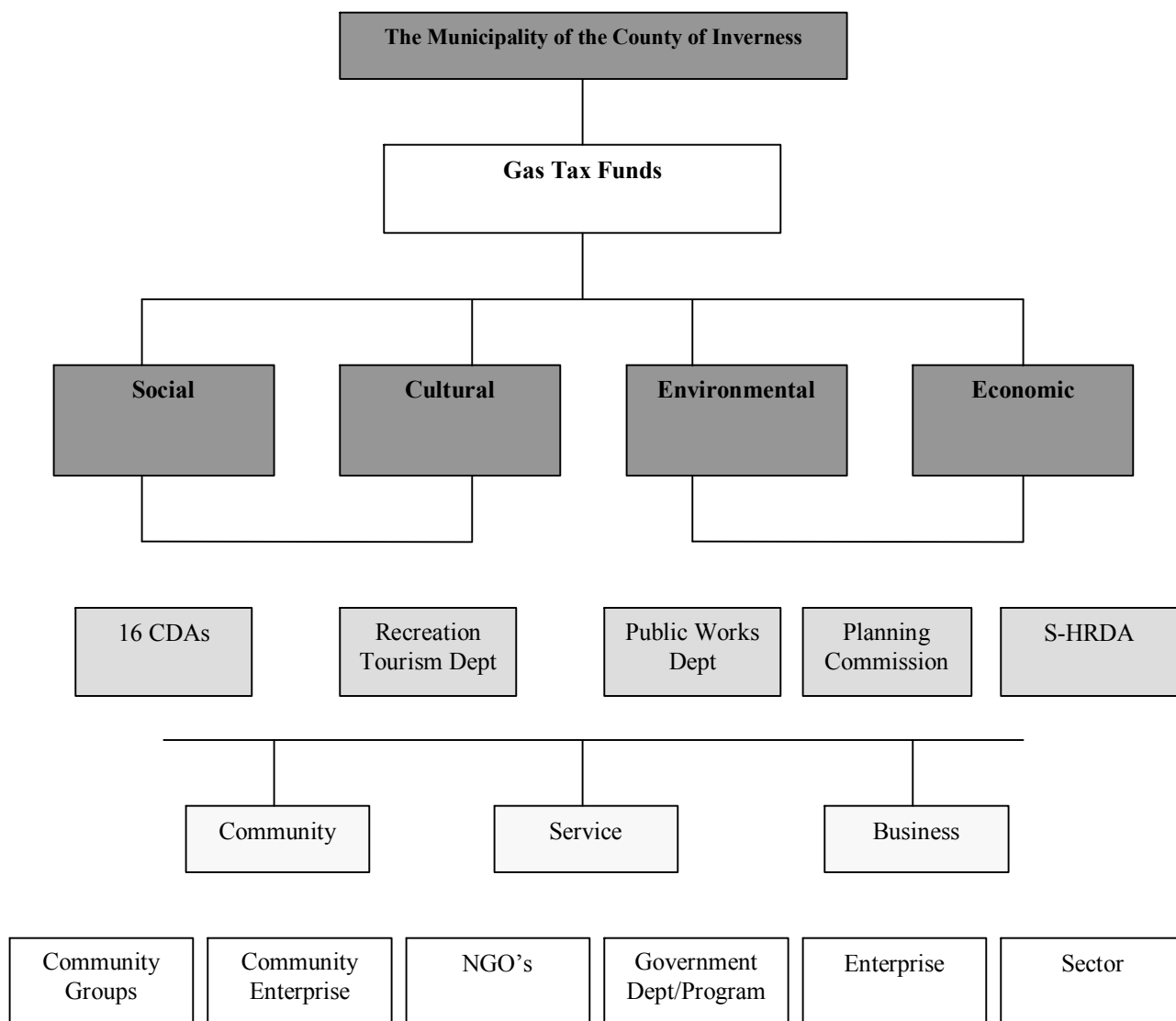
This is not to imply that there is not an economic or environmental component to CDA efforts – only that, given their scale, development efforts primarily stem from the social and cultural ties that the CDAs have to their community.

It is meant to imply, however, that community, municipal, and regional development authorities, and the affiliated network of sector organizations and provincial and federal departments, are not mutually exclusive. Each stakeholder has a role to play in assisting in the sustainability of each ICSP pillar of municipal identity.

The effectiveness and efficiency of the Municipality of the County of Inverness is increasingly dependent upon the resilience of its local communities and the health of the regional economy. In turn, the Municipality is an important player in ensuring the provision of infrastructure that underpins the collective identity of Inverness County.

To validate the pillars of the ICSP (and to facilitate an equitable approach for the allocation of resources that allow for the further leveraging of funding sources), it is recommended that future Capital Investment Plans requesting Gas Tax Funds are developed with consideration given to all four pillars.

The following chart is a proposed development organizational chart for the Municipality of the County of Inverness. The chart indicates how each affiliated Municipal stakeholder is associated to the most appropriate ICSP pillar, and through which the stakeholder primarily approaches development and engages community, business and service.



## 6.2 LIST OF ELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND BENEFITS

This plan has attempted to indicate all potential current and future infrastructure projects that could be eligible for Gas Tax Funds. This has been done in recognition of the fact that future Capital Investment Plans must be cross-referenced with the ICSP in order to access Gas Tax Funds.

In the 2009 Capital Investment Plan the Municipality has identified a number of pre-existing Gas Tax Fund eligible infrastructure projects. Priority infrastructure projects targeted for accessing Gas Tax Funds within this plan remain consistent with those previously identified in the 2009 Capital Investment Plan.

The following table indicates the eligible infrastructure projects. Gas Tax amounts available to The Municipality of the County of Inverness will be applied to each project depending on the success of leveraging additional resources.

Infrastructure Project	ICSP Pillar	Eligible Gas Tax Category	Lead Municipal Stakeholder	Estimated Cost of Total Project	Benefits to Community	Outcome (Cleaner air, cleaner water reduced GHG)	Status
Transfer Station	Environmental	Solid Waste Infrastructure	Public Works Department	\$1,387,461	More efficient, environmentally sound solid waste management	Cleaner Air, Cleaner water	Previous gas tax funds applied to project. Some costs remain
Inverness County Water Utility	Environmental	Drinking Water Infrastructure	Inverness County Water Utility	\$2,644,000	Clean drinking water	Cleaner water	2/3 funding secured
Harbour View Sewer and Water	Environmental	Wastewater Infrastructure	Public Works Department	\$5,213,600	Improved watersheds and ecosystems	Cleaner Water	2/3 funding secured
Grand Etang Sewer	Environmental	Wastewater Infrastructure	Public Works Department	\$5,758,637	Improved watersheds and ecosystems	Cleaner Air, Cleaner Water	Not initiated
Redman Sewer	Environmental	Wastewater Infrastructure	Public Works Department	\$2,237,626	Improved watersheds and ecosystems	Cleaner Air, Cleaner Water	Not initiated
Wharves	Economic	Other (public transit)	Public Works Department	\$350,000	Wharf provides primary transportation link to Port Hood Island	N/A	Not initiated
Cheticamp Sewer Phase II	Environmental	Wastewater Infrastructure	Public Works Department	\$400,000	Improved watersheds and ecosystems	Cleaner Air, Cleaner Water	Not initiated
Mabou Sewer	Environmental	Wastewater Infrastructure	Public Works Department	\$1,800,000	Improved watersheds and ecosystems	Cleaner Air, Cleaner Water	Not initiated
Maple Street Extension, Inverness	Environmental	Wastewater Infrastructure	Public Works Department	\$375,000	Improved watersheds and ecosystems	Cleaner Air, Cleaner Water	Not initiated
Judique Sewer System	Environmental	Wastewater Infrastructure	Public Works Department	\$1,200,000	Improved watersheds and ecosystems	Cleaner Air, Cleaner Water	Not initiated
Paving of J-Class roads, Inverness	Economic	Other (road paving)	Public Works Department	\$125,000	Improved watersheds and ecosystems	N/A	Not initiated
Municipal Land Development	Economic	Other (multi-year planning)	Eastern District Planning Commission	\$500,000	Community and Economic development	Reduced GHG	Not initiated

Source: 2009 Capital Investment Plan

## **7. PARTNERHSIPS, COLLABORATIONS AND GOVERNANCE**

### **7.1 MOVING FROM A PLANNING FRAMEWORK TO A DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

The Municipality of the County of Inverness has demonstrated leadership in integrated planning through its commitment to “A Plan for Community Based Municipal Development.”

Indeed, in 1999, a decade ahead of the required ICSP, this Municipality worked with its constituent communities in order to create a plan that would “integrate the social, economic, and environmental development of the communities of the Municipality of the County of Inverness” and further ensure that “each community had its plans developed and supported within the framework of a larger Municipal plan.”<sup>41</sup>

Despite this head-start in integrated planning, sustaining the identity of the Municipality of the County of Inverness, in its current form is proving, and will continue to prove, difficult considering the impact of the underlying themes of this plan: Population Decline, Governance, Municipal Finance, the Volunteer Sector, and Innovation.

The interdependencies that exist between the Municipality and its constituent communities, and other development stakeholders, indicate that an informed and strategic development process is required. To date an informal planning framework has been established within “A Plan for Community Based Municipal Development,” which has now been reinforced through the ICSP process.

The next step required of strengthening sustainable development efforts would be to evolve from a planning framework to a development process. Through this process the roles, responsibilities and the importance of the various scales of development authority operating within the Municipality would become more clearly understood, appreciated and integrated.

Several of the action steps listed in the ICSP make reference to tangible asset mapping. In order to plan effectively it is essential to have access to evidence to focus our efforts and best inform our collective decision making.

Establishing an annual asset mapping process whereby the assets specific to ICSP planning topics could be displayed on GIS municipal mapping systems would create a powerful tool. This tool would be supportive of strategic planning, decision making and investment aimed at the sustainability of the Municipality.

Transitioning the Municipality’s current planning and governance framework to one that is driven by municipal GIS systems would allow for the integration of efforts and expertise from various scales of development authority. It would also enable the layering of community specific assets onto thematic map evidence.

In displaying such GIS maps, municipal trends and competitive advantages would become more apparent – allowing the Municipality and affiliated stakeholders to proactively approach sustainable development from an informed position of strength.

---

<sup>41</sup> “A Plan for Community Based Municipal Development” G.K Nishi, Architecture and CED Associates, 1999

Therefore, it is the final recommendation of this ICSP that the future implementation of this plan is supported through the establishment of municipal GIS asset management systems and technology.

## **8. STATEMENTS OF PROVINCIAL INTEREST**

- **7.1 DRINKING WATER SUPPLY** (*protection of supplies*)

Consistent with ICSP planning topic/asset #'s 21, 22, 24, 28, 29, 30

- **FLOOD RISK AREAS** (*restricting development of flood plains*)

Consistent with ICSP planning topic/asset #'s 24, 26

- **7.3 AGRICULTURAL LAND** (*protection of land*)

Consistent with ICSP planning topic/asset #'s 29,

- **7.4 INFRASTRUCTURE** (*efficient use of water and waste water systems*)

Consistent with ICSP planning topic/asset #'s 21, 22,

- **7.5 HOUSING** (*addressing needs of all residents*)

Consistent with ICSP planning topic/asset #'s 26, 38, 40,