Community Sustainability: The Role of Heritage
Presentation Topics

What are Sustainable Communities?

Sustainable Communities and the Role of Heritage
Community Sustainability

Sustainable communities are planned, built and modified to promote sustainable living.

They are managed in ways that balance the environmental, social, economic and cultural needs of residents; to create a safe, green, friendly, prosperous environment in which people want to live and work, now and in the future.
Four Pillar Approach to Planning Sustainable Communities

- Environmental stewardship
- Economic stability
- Social equity
- Cultural diversity

1. Ecological sustainability, economic growth and social equity are compatible and mutually beneficial.

2. Environmental protection must be entrenched in economic policy making.

3. Social equity and cultural diversity must be incorporated into decision-making.

4. Development - *development* means more than simply growth
Guiding Principles Behind Sustainable Communities

1. Conserve natural resources, protect environment and ecosystem integrity.

2. Reduce energy demand, minimize dependence on fossil fuels, use alternative & renewable energy.

3. Make the most efficient use of natural resources, decrease waste & pollution entering the environment.

4. Meet local needs with local (re) sources and encourage and foster local economic activity.

5. Train, educate and develop the local workforce.

6. Considering quality of life issues for all age groups, and promote quality of life & public health in decision-making.

7. Protect working landscapes.

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations
Common Features of Sustainable Communities

Ecological Protection - measures to protect nature, restore native habitat, or develop greenways.

Density and Urban Design – transit-friendly designs and urban density levels that make transit economically efficient; higher densities also allow for more public green space.

Town Centre - compact, mixed-use developments with neighbourhood centres, so that people have a place to gather, and do some local shopping.

Local Economy - development of local economy. Zoning land for mixed uses as well as zoning for commercial or industrial uses; encouraging home based businesses.

Transportation - alternatives to the motor car. Narrower, interconnecting streets with sidewalks and pedestrian links; traffic calming; dedicated cycle-lanes; car-free shopping districts.

Quality of Life/Livable Communities – neighbourhood parks, open spaces, tot-lots, facilities for the arts, seniors or youth. Nature is preserved as much as possible; streams and forests left in their natural state are part of the community, with trails to make them accessible.

Energy - energy efficient construction; passive or active solar design; district heating and cooling systems; ground source heat extraction; other forms of local energy generation.
# Planning for a Sustainable Future – Challenges & Opportunities

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<th>Community Challenge 2009 +</th>
<th>Strategic Planning Potential Benefit to Communities</th>
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<td>Loss of traditional economic base</td>
<td>Identification of new economic opportunities.</td>
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<td>Declining tax revenues in the face of increasing local government costs</td>
<td>Increased efficiencies in operations = reduced annual costs</td>
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<td>High costs to develop and maintain the necessary infrastructure and to provide services and facilities</td>
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<td>Unplanned sprawl threatening municipal tax base and rural lifestyle</td>
<td>Sustainable development and compact urban design</td>
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<td>Threats arising from climate change</td>
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<td>Lack of employment opportunities &amp; lack of opportunity for young people</td>
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<td>Escalating fuels costs</td>
<td>Energy audits and opportunities to reduce energy consumption and GHG emissions</td>
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<td>Balancing development and environmental protection</td>
<td>Opportunities to integrate development with environmental protection objectives.</td>
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Heritage & Sustainable Communities

Heritage conservation can serve as a tool for achieving sustainability.
Sustainable communities are highlighted by a four pillar approach to strategic planning which fosters economic, cultural, social and environmental sensitivity, awareness and success.

Heritage planning and conservation also has strong foundations in all four of these areas – heritage is an ideal contributor to communities developing strategies for a sustainable future.
Heritage contributes to long-term community sustainability in several major ways:

1. reuse of buildings and structures
2. the economy: jobs
3. heritage tourism
4. community revitalization
5. small business incubation
6. quality of life
7. increased property values

Other positive impacts:

1. revenues from the movie industry
2. enhancement of crafts businesses
3. neighborhood stabilization
4. the economic integration of neighborhoods
5. connections between historic facilities and the performing arts
6. tax generation
Reuse of Buildings and Structures

- Heritage conservation’s contribution to environmental sustainability takes the form of “embodied energy,” or the total expenditure of energy involved in the creation of a building and its constituent materials.

- When a heritage building is lost this energy is thrown away. It is often replaced with new materials that have consumed vastly more energy.

- Heritage buildings can have multiple uses, such as social housing or environmental demonstration projects, museums, shopping and arts amenities.

- Heritage buildings can also provide a mix of old and new green design innovations.

- Historic places are also valuable to present and future generations for their environmental efficiency.

- Heritage projects can incorporate re-used materials and original green design features with environmental products, technologies and practices such as grey water recycling, alternate sources of energy, etc.
Building rehabilitation – direct jobs

- In Canada, an estimated 3,800 to 5,300 people are employed in occupations in which they undertake specialized built heritage work. This number does not include employees involved in heritage buildings on an occasional basis (such as engineers, non-specialist architects, and contractors).

- In 2004, heritage buildings incurred approximately $254 million in capital expenditures. Due to the greater labour intensiveness of built heritage work, employment related to these expenditures was estimated to be around 2,200 people, plus another 200-300 people employed in a professional capacity.

- In addition, many indirect jobs are generated through the provision and processing of materials (such as lumber, stone, clay, glass, and metal).

- A study out of the United States found that public works money invested in the rehabilitation of heritage buildings generates more jobs and income than the same amount of money invested in new construction and highway construction.
Strengthening the Local Economy & Celebrating Culture

**Heritage Tourism** – service industry jobs

- Heritage tourism is an area that consistently emerges as a major component of the economic wellbeing of communities.

- Heritage tourism is one of the fastest growing segments of the world’s economy.

- There are 34.5 million American and Canadian Heritage Tourism Enthusiasts, and heritage conservation could attract this large pool of potential tourists to destinations in Canada, generating a considerable amount of jobs and economic activity.

- When tourism is identified as part of a community’s overall development strategy, the identification, protection, and enhancement of historic resources is vital for any sustainable effort.

- If heritage tourism is done right, the biggest beneficiaries are not the visitors but residents who experience a renewed appreciation for and pride in their community and its history.

- By ensuring that the historic environment is protected and sustained, it will be retained as a resource for future generations.
# Strengthening the Local Economy & Celebrating Culture

Culture, heritage and the arts have long contributed to the appeal of tourist destinations.

A comparison of American historic/cultural travelers and average American travelers.

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<tr>
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<th>Historic Traveler</th>
<th>Average Traveler</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nights stayed per trip</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>3.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Money spent per trip</td>
<td>$722</td>
<td>$457</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage that spent more than $1,000 when they travel</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of time hotels, motels, and Bed &amp; Breakfasts are used</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>56%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage of time when shopping is part of the trip</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>33%</td>
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<td>Percentage who participate in 4 or more activities while traveling</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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*Travel Industry Association of America (TIA). 2002.*

- Supporting and developing new cultural facilities and activities ensures a lasting cultural legacy.
“Historic building conservation is an element of almost every successful downtown revitalization strategy. Conversely, examples of very expensive failures in downtown revitalization have all had the destruction of historic buildings as a major element.”

The most cost effective program of economic development of any kind in the US is a program of the National Trust for called the Main Street Program which involves commercial district revitalization in the context of historic preservation.

- Over the last 25 years the amount of reinvestment in heritage streetscapes has been $23 Billion. There have been 67,000 net new businesses created generating 308,000 net new jobs and 94,000 building renovations.

- Every dollar invested in a local Main Street Program leveraged nearly $27 of other investment.

- Revitalized main streets attract small locally-owned business and foster new business opportunities.
Quality of Life

In a globalized world it is necessary to be economically competitive, so communities must position themselves to compete worldwide. A large measure of that competitiveness will be quality of life, and built heritage is a major factor.

Conserving heritage conveys a wide range of social and quality of life benefits to residents:

- Historic places tend to bring together people of all ages.
- Historic places often become focal points for important community events and celebrations.
- A municipality’s cultural life can be considerably enhanced by conserving its historic places, working in tandem with the promotion of cultural and artistic activity.
- Historic districts in both Canadian urban centres and smaller communities are often attractive locations to artistic and cultural groups.
- Historic places and heritage planning provides opportunity for public service and volunteerism.
- Protecting historic places promotes architectural interest and diversity in public spaces.
- Properties within local designated historic districts appreciate at rates greater than other local areas, and faster than in similar, non-designated areas.
Community Sustainability = A four pillar approach to decision-making

- Ecological sustainability, economic growth and social equity are compatible and mutually beneficial.
- Environmental protection must be entrenched in economic policy making.
- Social equity and cultural diversity must be incorporated into decision-making.
- Development - *development* means more than simply growth.

Heritage preservation plays an important role in community sustainability because:

- It reuses old buildings, and saves energy and materials (environmental sustainability)
- It helps to build and stabilize the local economy through job creation (economic sustainability)
- It contributes to the overall quality of life of residents (social sustainability)
- It fosters and supports the arts and culture (cultural sustainability)
Integrate planning and design by embedding heritage into land-use policy with flexible mixed-use zoning.

- Ensure heritage projects are financially and economically successful.
- View heritage buildings as a source of cultural tourism revenue.
- Develop links between heritage planning and downtown revitalization.
- Secure buy-in of local business interests.
- Approach heritage buildings as green building demonstration projects.

What Can Communities do to Promote Heritage?

- Link heritage to the green agenda - integrate heritage planning with broader environmental objectives.
- Promote original green design features and building maintenance.
- Integrate heritage planning with broader social objectives (housing, institutional uses, arts & culture).
- Approach heritage conservation as way to unite community towards a common goal.