

# Sexsmith Sustainability Plan



*"Share the Spirit"*

# Sexsmith Sustainability Plan

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## *Letter from the Mayor*

The Sexsmith Sustainability Plan was created using Alberta Urban Municipalities Association's process for sustainability planning, which is:

Phase 1-structuring the process

Phase 2-creating a shared understanding of sustainable community success

Phase 3-determining and analyzing strategy areas for success

Phase 4-action planning and

Phase 5-on-going implementation and monitoring

Through the process, we concentrated on the areas dealing with economy, environment, social, culture and governance. Our vision is that "the Town of Sexsmith is where we maintain our heritage while planning for sustainable development in our safe, family-oriented community. "

This plan was born through public consultation and hard work of volunteers on the committee in co-operation with Council and the CAO. This is a living document providing a basis for future elected members to derive direction and maintain the Town of Sexsmith's vision. There will be changes, always, and sustainability needs to be foremost.

Thanks go out to all who have participated in this project and to the committee members for their vested interest in our community.

Sincerely

*Claude Lagace*

Claude Lagace, Mayor

March, 2010



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## *Vision*

The Town of Sexsmith is where we maintain our heritage while planning for sustainable development in our safe, family orientated community.

## *Our Goals*

The community established the following goals for the Sexsmith Sustainability Plan for the Town of Sexsmith residents.

1. Address environmental issues
2. Guide the community to healthy living
3. Create a safe community
4. Continue annexation for business and green spaces
5. Encourage buying local

## *Our Process*

A Sustainability Committee was established for the project in July 2009, which comprised of

Claude Lagace, Mayor

Carolyn Gaunt, CAO

Isak Skjaveland, Councilor

Barb Sparks, Councilor

Jeanne Lomenda, Citizen

Tom Warner, Citizen

Denelle Martell, Citizen

Mandee Takhar, Regional Sustainability Coordinator



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The Committee spent the last 9 months designing and creating the Sexsmith Sustainability Plan. As a community plan, it was essential to involve the residents in various ways during the planning process.

## Community Consultation Phase

The team established a short survey which was distributed from September 2009 to January 2010 to capture the thoughts and opinions of the residents. We asked what they valued about Sexsmith today and what they envisioned for the next 5 and 20 years. The questions are stated below:

1. What do you value about Sexsmith?
2. What changes would you most like to see in
  - a. 5 years?
  - b. 20 years?

During the community consultation phase the team was able to gain input from various sources. We received 104 responses to our survey questions from residents and high school students. Using a community-based approach, the surveys were available at the following events:

- Town of Sexsmith Fall Exhibition
- Grande Prairie Farmers Market Christmas Craft Fair
- Sexsmith Secondary School – Social Studies Classes
- Chamber of Commerce Meeting

## *How Can You Use This Plan?*

The 5 identified dimensions of sustainability, as described below provide a shared and common understanding for the community to proceed into the future in an integrated and collaborative way. Ultimately, this will help to realize the vision that has been created for the future of Sexsmith.

As a community plan, the Sexsmith Sustainability Plan (SSP) can be used in a wide variety of ways.



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- The SSP can be used by the Town of Sexsmith while developing a strategic plan
- Local businesses may use the SSP when making decisions for purchasing and/or delivery of goods and services
- The schools could use the plan while developing student programming to ensure that it aligns with the goals and direction
- Residents can use the plan to identify ways to make their homes more sustainable

Those are just a few examples of how the Sexsmith Sustainability Plan can become a plan that helps us build the future we want for ourselves.

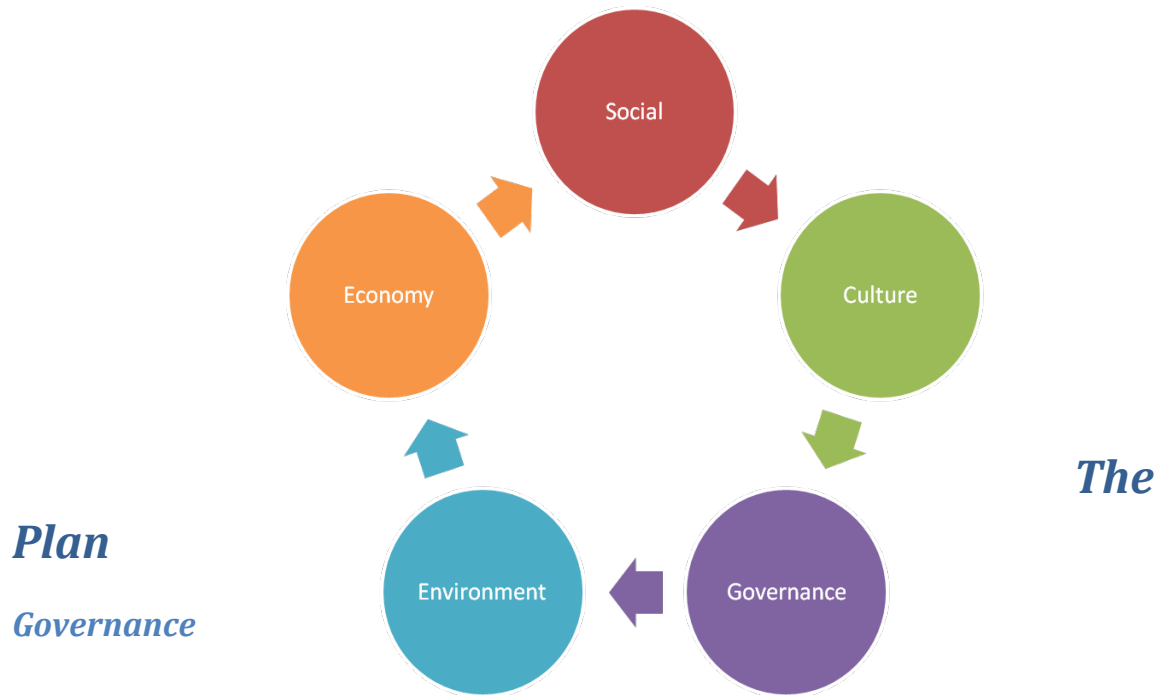
Our plan is divided into 5 dimensions, which are identified below.

1. Governance
2. Environment
3. Economic
4. Culture
5. Social



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## Vision

We would like to enhance our current methods of communication and provide more up to date information to our community.

## Current Reality

There are many forms of communication with the community, however what we realized is that our message is either not reaching the residents, or they are not exploring the current methods available.

Also with the addition of newly annexed lands, revised municipal development plans will be foremost and area structure plans will be required for all new proposed development.

## Preferred Future

Council is managing the Town in a sustainable manner and will continue to do so knowing that the community also has a vested interest in the Sexsmith Sustainability Plan. This process has fostered excellent working relationships through the Chamber of Commerce and leaders in education, health and social areas, and Council will use this as a guideline for our future growth.

## Goals and Actions



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1. Bettering advertising to community with events
  - 1.1. Promote upcoming municipal election in October
  - 1.2. Profile local Council on web, facebook, or in newsletter
2. More law enforcement
  - 2.1. Promote the COPS program
  - 2.2. Actively recruit volunteers
  - 2.3. Explore options of working with the walking club

## *Environment*

### Vision

The town of Sexsmith is committed to reducing our carbon footprint, educating our community and planning for a greener future.

### Current Reality

The Town of Sexsmith has been running a curbside pilot project on recycling for the following materials.

- Cardboard
- Paper
- Plastic
- Tin

We also encourage, sponsor and participate in a town cleanup which is done every spring. Walking trails are being added to annually towards a goal of having a trail that goes throughout the whole Town. Hiking through nature is good for the body and soul.





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Options for more efficient utilities are being explored including solar energy and efficiency lighting in Town buildings. Better methods for road tarring are being used with materials that are more environmentally friendly.

## Preferred Future

Currently there has been a good response to the pilot curbside recycling and in the near future we would like to see this move into a regular service.

We are working on educating the public including business owners, builders and residents on the most efficient method of reducing, reusing, and recycling for sustaining the built and natural environment of Sexsmith.

## Goals and Actions

### 3. Curb side Recycle

- 3.1. Increase recycled products by 3x in 3 years
- 3.2. Increase household participants to 50% in 5 years
- 3.3. Promote the program
- 3.4. Education on what can be recycled
- 3.5. Awareness/education about cardboard recycle in newspaper



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4. Compost
  - 4.1. Offer incentive
  - 4.2. Awareness and education program
5. Walking Path
  - 5.1. Extension to existing path
6. Green business awards
  - 6.1. Create criteria
  - 6.2. Promote benefits
  - 6.3. Advertise program

## *Economy*

### Vision

As a bedroom community we will preserve our strong sense of community, while seeking to create a flourishing and diverse local economy.

### Current Reality

Our local economy grew originally from farming roots and we continue to see agriculture as playing an important role in our economy, however we are receptive to new business as well. A culture of support and facilitation exists in Sexsmith that communicates we are “open for business”. Even with our focus on growth we must remain balanced, with a commitment to not exchange our quality of life for economic growth.

People feel connected through a sense of pride, belonging and will be inspired to pursue their potential. As a bedroom community and while most residents are employed outside of Sexsmith, the number of home-based businesses and county residents coming to Sexsmith continues to grow. Local businesses,



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including the health services, the unique downtown retailers and restaurants, attract customers from the area.

According to some residents, there is a limited choice in terms of retail services in Sexsmith. However, many business sectors desired by the town are not present because our population base can only support certain types of businesses.

As there are current economic strengths that can be built on we should place an emphasis on further development, for example, we are fortunate to have the health services we do and to further enhance and expand these services a new Health Care Centre is being built. Since Sexsmith has a large number of young families within a strong regional economy, the availability of childcare options is important as well.

### Preferred Future

Development of land in town for commercial purposes - specifically along the highway - will enable more businesses to be feasible as they would be strategically located on a major transportation corridor with high visibility and easy access. This will expand services for existing residents, create jobs and enhance the town's appeal to potential residents.

The current housing for seniors is not adequate as it is quite dated and is not meeting the current demand forcing seniors to relocate to other communities. As the baby boomers retire the demand will continue to escalate creating both a problem and an opportunity. We need to explore alternative options on how we can keep our seniors and provide them with the services they need.

The Post Office by its very nature has become a hub of activity for the area and draws a steady flow of consumers to downtown. It is critical for the economic health of Sexsmith that it not be shut down.



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## Goals and Actions

### 7. Expansion of Health Services

- 7.1. Development of the medical centre
- 7.2. Support the centre so they can offer more extensive range of services.
- 7.3. Prepare a communications strategy to promote to farmers

### 8. Housing for Seniors

- 8.1. Lobby Government for senior housing
- 8.2. Retention and Attraction of new Businesses and Industry

### 9. Work with the Chamber of Commerce to better understand what the issues and barriers for businesses

- 9.1. Develop a communication strategy
- 9.2. Create a partnership and hold regular meetings

### 10. Promote “shop local”

- 10.1. Advertise in the local newspaper



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## 11. Keep Post Office in Sexsmith

### 11.1. Keep it downtown

## *Culture*

### Vision

Sexsmith is a town that is rich in cultural pride with many events that showcase the town's ability to stay true to its roots.

### Current Reality

The Sexsmith area, having fertile black soil and easily-cleared, prairie-like land, was among the first districts in the Peace River Country to be completely settled. Consequently, the grain companies built elevators here, beginning in 1917 and peaking when Sexsmith became the Grain Capital of the British Empire in 1949--shipping more grain than any other port in the empire.

On June 20, 1995, CN Rail donated a caboose to the Society which was placed next to the station. This presentation was another event of Chautauqua Day in which the dignitaries arrived in the actual car coming down the track. There are other privately owned buildings that have a historical designation in the Town. A committee is currently being initiated to provide guidelines for any downtown development to be done according to 1920's and 30's facades. The Museum Society continues to search for buildings and tractors to place and restore in our historical downtown.

### Preferred Reality

As a town we would like to offer more events, other than Chautauqua Day's for the town to come together to celebrate who we are.

Some of the events we would like to offer are:

- Farmers Markets for local farmers to showcase and sell their own products
- A winter event to celebrate Family Day



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We would also like to uphold our 1920's downtown core. It is important to us to show where we have come from, in order to know where we would like to head in the future.

## Goals and Actions

### 12. More Events

- 12.1. Offer a farmers market during other events
- 12.2. Create an annual winter event on Family Day
- 12.3. Re-introduce the idea of block parties



## *Social*

### Current Reality

Sexsmith is cherished for its small town feel. People of Sexsmith appreciate how friendly and safe their community is, from the skate park to the walking paths, the sports teams to the family activities, it is not hard to tell the social aspect of Sexsmith is the glue that keeps the community together.

Sexsmith is fortunate to have our own FCSS (Family and Community Support Services) staff member, Megan Dohm. Through working with FCSS, Sexsmith is able to offer a diverse variety of services to our small community.

There are multiple community organizations and clubs, including a book club at the library, the Legion and Elks Club, as well as our Agriculture and Museum society.



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Sexsmith is an ideal community to raise children due to its ample child and youth organizations, such as Cubs, Beavers, 4-H, Girl Guides, Skating club and Karate club just to name a few. There are also 3 schools in Sexsmith

## Preferred Reality

The Town of Sexsmith will continue extending walking paths, host more community celebrations and explore ways to maintain a healthy and active community.



## Goals and

### 13. Promote

- 13.1. Explore the idea of an events coordinator – part time, paid or volunteer
- 13.2. Conduct research to find out what people are passionate about (ex. Auto club)

### 14. More awareness and promotion of current programs

- 14.1. Share an event calendar on website, Facebook page and in newspaper

### 15. Promote fitness and healthy living

- 15.1. Share a map of the walking trails and include km markers
- 15.2. Arena – turf in the summer for lacrosse or ball hockey
- 15.3. Create a walking club

## Actions

volunteerism



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