

## 6.0 Sustainability

### Goal

Foster integrated decision making on all issues to ensure that environmental protection, economic development and social equity are addressed, for current and future residents alike.

### Guiding Principles Met

Foster prosperity for people, business and government  
Protect and preserve green spaces and sensitive areas  
Protect agricultural land  
Housing meets the needs of the whole community  
Create a culture of sustainability  
Create strong, compact and complete neighbourhoods  
Provide alternative transportation  
Revitalize the Downtown  
Create a youth friendly city

### Context

A sustainable city is resilient in the face of change, and balances the interests of the community with economic and ecological vitality while looking to the future through planning, active participation of the community and the protection of choices for current and future residents.

To successfully support and build a complete community, a complex collection of issues and interests must be balanced. No one influence in a community is more important than any other and sustainability cannot be effectively initiated without the participation of individuals and groups in different roles and with differing interests and values as part of the process.



The Official Community Plan aims to provide a foundation for the creation of a complete community which meets the needs of all residents, is resilient in the face of change and assists in the development of a framework that will protect the interests of and opportunities available for current and future Vernon residents. This goal requires the participation of all residents, businesses and organizations that are at the



heart of this city. Vernon has the unique and enviable opportunity to grow into a beautiful, balanced and sustainable city that is framed by all members of the community and meets the needs of all residents.

There are many challenges in the process of creating a culture of sustainability and changes will need to be made, but none are beyond the capacity, resilience and community identity that have long defined this city.

Agricultural productivity, economic development, significant natural features, recreation, municipal infrastructure, housing, accessibility, employment and the protection of environmental services are all interconnected. None of these issues can be considered in isolation, as each impacts all of the others. To make space for green and open spaces, housing forms and densities require modification. The creation of housing for all members of the community, accessible and reliable transportation energy efficiency, entrepreneurship and employment are all part of the balance sheet, not simply land values and material costs.

Balancing City budgets and community services influence all considerations from road widths, transit availability, locations of parks, access points to lakes, hillsides and trail systems, the intensity of development and the opportunities provided to the youth of the city.

Vernon has a solid foundation and all of the pieces are here. We need to provide opportunities for them to work together. We need to actively consider the social, economic and environmental implications of all decisions, and ensure that the interests of both current and future residents are part of the discussion. Vernon will need to create a culture of sustainability which grows from community history, addresses local and global challenges and reflects the community's vision of how to grow and adapt into the future. The Official Community Plan is a foundational piece in creating that culture of sustainability.

As a corollary to the OCP, an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) is a provincial initiative which originated from the 2005 Federal/Provincial/UBCM Federal Gas Tax Agreement. It ties in with provincial interests to address climate change and encourage the development of healthier, less costly and more sustainable communities. The ICSP initiative is intended to go beyond the funding opportunities of the Gas Tax Agreement by promoting the development of partnerships to support the growth of community sustainability planning over the long term. The City is committed to the development of an ICSP in conjunction with community stakeholders.

## Supporting Policies

- 6.1 Encourage the integration of policy initiatives and capital projects across City departments and community organizations to promote the inclusion of all interests, issues and impacts.
- 6.2 Maintain and support the inter-departmental sustainability working group to coordinate City programs, policies and operations to promote sustainable decision making within the City.
- 6.3 Include discussion of sustainable decision making in Council and Committees of Council to encourage consideration of social, economic and environmental factors in all discussions and resolutions.
- 6.4 Apply the Development Scorecard for inclusion and consideration in all development permitting processes.
- 6.5 Continue the community-wide Sustainability Awards program to recognize sustainable initiatives undertaken by residents, community groups and local businesses.
- 6.6 Encourage and facilitate the introduction of low cost, achievable sustainability actions in all City, community and development projects to provide opportunities for the whole community to contribute to Vernon's resilient future.
- 6.7 In cooperation with community stakeholders, undertake an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP).