

# **Town of Bay de Verde**

## **Integrated Community Sustainability Plan**

**2010**

**Bay de Verde - 2010**

# TOWN OF BAY DE VERDE

## Table of Contents

	<u>Page #</u>
Community Introduction	1
Community Assessment	3
Community Vision	7
ICSP Pillars	
Environmental Sustainability	8
Economic Sustainability	9
Social Sustainability	11
Cultural Sustainability	13
Governance Sustainability	14
Collaboration and Partnerships	16
Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation	17
Conclusion	18

# **Community Introduction**

## **Geographic Location**

The Town of Bay de Verde, located at the tip of the Trinity Conception peninsula, is one of the oldest communities in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. It is located approximately fifty kilometers north of the capital City of St. John's. The Town of Bay de Verde is approximately five kilometers from Baccalieu Island; famous for its massive sea bird colonies. The Town is approximately fifteen kilometers from the Town of Old Perlican and seventy five kilometers from the Town of Carbonear.

## **Brief History**

The name Bay de Verde is derived from a combination of English, Portuguese and French languages. It was so named by John Guy, one of the earliest colonists of Newfoundland, who visited here in 1611 and named the community Green Bay, from its appearance in mid-summer.

The earliest recorded settlers were the Tavenors, a family who settled here in the early 1600's. William Tavenor was born in the community in 1639. The Tavenors left Bay de Verde in the early 1700's and settled in Trinity, Trinity Bay.

Since early settlement, the two main religions were predominately Roman Catholic and Anglican. The two churches in the community are over one hundred years old. There are ten cemeteries in the community, three are family owned and the others are owned by religion denominations. The oldest headstones are dated in the early nineteenth century.

## **Employment opportunities**

The cod fishery has always been the only industry in the town. This fishery, for all intents and purposes, ended with the cod moratorium in 1992. However, Bay de Verde continued to be an active fishing community with the expansion of crab and shrimp plants which employs hundreds of workers during the open seasons. The excellent harbour provides a safe home for many fishing boats during the fishing season.

## **Population**

The population of the town is approximately four hundred and fifty. This has declined, because of low birth and out migration, from a high of nine hundred a number of years ago. The population is expected to remain constant over the next several years.

## **Relationship with Surrounding Communities**

Bay de Verde is located at the end of the Baccalieu Trail (Trinity Bay South Highway) and can be considered isolated, especially during the winter months. There are three other communities in close proximity, a Local Service District, an unincorporated community and incorporated Town Council.

## **COMMUNITY INTRODUCTION**

The Town relies on the ambulance and medical facilities located in the Town of Old Perlican for medical services. The Town has its own fully equipped Fire Department.

### **Particular points of pride**

In 1996 one of our local residents donated a house to the Town of Bay de Verde to be used as a heritage house. The Bay de Verde Heritage Committee was subsequently organized and took over responsibility for the restoration of the building. The house was built in 1896 by John Blundon, a local merchant and fisherman, and his family to accomodate his lifestyle.

The house has two sections - main section, which has big rooms, high ceilings and an elaborate staircase - was occupied by the Blundon family. The other section had small rooms, low ceilings and a servants staircase and was used as servants' living quarters. Also, the servant quarters were occupied by shipping men or share men.

The house has been restored to show the unique lifestyle of an outport merchant and his family in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Consequently most of the rooms have been developed to reflect their lifestyle. However, the primary function of the house is to preserve and present the artifacts that represent the culture and heritage of Bay de Verde. There are approximately eight hundred artifacts in the house. The house contains the Baccalieu Island Interpretation Centre, the museum - including the veteran's panel, merchant bedrooms, servant's quarters and the attic, which houses numerous fishermen's artifacts.

Outside the Heritage House there is a History Board, which was donated by the Johnson Family Foundation, NLTA and the Museum Association of Newfoundland and Labrador. Included in the Heritage Site is two Board Walks, a Net Loft, Fish Flake and Store. The Heritage Committee is presently construction a "Root Cellar".

The Town of Bay de Verde is in an ideal location to develop a major tourism industry. Focus should be placed on nearby Baccalieu Island, whale watching and passing ice bergs.

### **General Outlook**

The future of Bay de Verde is looking prosperous as there appears to be increasing activity in the fish and shrimp plants and talks are underway for the construction of a Chitosen Plant. Landings of crab, shrimp and other species of fish continues to increase each year. When the plants are in full operations, most residents of the town find employment there. Workers from outside the town also find employment at the plants. This helps to build the economy of Bay de Verde.

The Town of Bay de Verde has a bright future, and it is the goal and responsibility of elected officials and residents to ensure that our plans for the future are realized. We hope to improve infrastructure in a number of areas, including water and sewer, roads and recreation facilities. Working closely with the Bay de Verde Heritage Committee, we envision a more active cultural community in the future with tourism destinations, trails and activities for all.

## Community Assessment

### Priority issues identified in community assessment

Governance	<p>Policies and procedures manual needed</p> <p>Need to develop economic development plan and tourism plan for the community; should be part of ICSP</p> <p>Inclusive and flexible plans will help the town adapt to changes</p>
Administration	Staff levels are adequate
Financial	<p>The town is in a fairly good financial position. There is no long term debt as such but arrears of principal and interest owed to NMFC has been a problem for several years.</p>
Service Delivery	<p>There is a need for more recycling and waste diversion procedures.</p> <p>A comprehensive recreation program would benefit residents.</p> <p>Need for upgraded industrial water supply.</p>
Infrastructure	<p>The town has an adequate town hall/fire hall which should take care of the needs of the town in the short term.</p> <p>Ongoing battle to keep roads in good condition.</p>
Community well-being	<p>Average income is below provincial average but may be above average for other outports.</p> <p>Population is ageing.</p> <p>Age-friendly programs and activities are needed.</p>
Regional Cooperation	<p>Expertise is required in certain areas but is expensive; nearby communities should cooperate and work together to hire professional help.</p> <p>Municipal services are increasingly complex and difficult to maintain effectively and cost efficiently.</p>

The results of the Self-Assessment indicated that the Town of Bay de Verde was reasonably successful, but that there were still areas that could be significantly improved with better planning. This process played an important role in the development of the goals and projects for this ICSP.

#### **PSAB**

New regulations tied to the Gas Tax Funding Agreements has required that every municipality comply with the requirements of the Public Sector Accounting Board with respect to accounting and financial reporting. These standards also require that as a town we have to understand exactly what infrastructure and assets we own and are responsible for. It has been a challenging process, but it will provide the town with a detailed list of assets, lifecycles and values for every significant item owned by the Town of Bay de Verde. This will aid in our decision making process as we move forward with infrastructure investments.

### Basic Questions of Sustainability

Another part of the community assessment, as suggested by the Department of Municipal Affairs, is the completion of a table of basic questions of sustainability. The results of this table for the Town of Bay de Verde is as follows:

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

## **Statistical Data**

The following statistical indicators and information is sourced from the Community Accounts website. The population of the town has decreased from 534 in 2001 to 470 in 2006, which represents a decrease of 12%. This is typical of most small outport fishing communities in Newfoundland and Labrador. The average age of persons in Bay de Verde in 2006 was 47.8 years, in comparison to the provincial average of 42 years.

The average gross income per capita in 2006 was \$15,800 in comparison to the provincial rate of \$23,000. As in many Newfoundland and Labrador communities with traditional industries the rate is higher for men than for women. One important factor in determining the sustainability of a community is where the income originated, or how much of it is from government social programs. In Bay de Verde a significant portion of the income came from social programs.

## **Public Consultation**

Council met with the lead person which council had appointed to prepare the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan to decide some guidelines to help set direction for each of five pillars as required for the ICSP process. Council began by reviewing the issues identified in the self assessment process and then attempted to find out how our community would be better off in the foreseeable future.

Council decided that to give residents the best opportunity to consider and absorb the proposed vision and to provide appropriate time for comments that a mail out approach would work best. A questionnaire (Appendix I) was sent out to all householders with a request to return comments to the town hall. Only seven questionnaires were returned. From an analysis of the questionnaires returned the council determined that the main issues were related to the environment.

## Community Vision

The basic municipal mandate of all incorporated communities:

*We are obligated to collect taxes, provide services and represent the people we serve in accordance with the terms of our incorporation and the provisions of the Municipalities Act.*

More specifically, council's responsibility is to provide a comparable level of service to residents in the jurisdictional areas as outlined for municipal governance. In doing so the town council will act prudently and responsibly with the disbursement of revenue collected as outlined in the annual budget for the mutual benefit of the town.

The Town of Bay de Verde has a vision that is based on an overall approach to community sustainability so that under this ICSP it will:

Operate the municipality with fiscal responsibility and accountability through land use, financial and strategic planning while engaging the public when possible.

Through a combination of municipal policies and public education ensure the protection of the natural environment in and around the community

Develop a business friendly environment by reducing barriers for new and existing business operations while increasing communications and celebrating local successes.

Ensure information and adequate social programs are available to all residents.

Engage any and all partners in the community and enhance existing relationships in the region to accomplish goals as identified by council and residents.

## Environmental Sustainability

The Town of Bay de Verde is situated, for the most part, on a point of land which is mostly surrounded by the waters of Conception Bay. Therefore, any environmental runoff is quickly disposed off by ocean tides. Untreated sewage and affluent from the local fish plant, which is now released into the saltwater harbour, should be diverted outside the harbour parameters. Related to this problem may be new regulations being proposed by the Federal Government, which would require that waste water be treated before entering public waterways.

The town has a water and sewer system which serves most of the town. However, an industrial water line is urgently needed to supply the local fish plant with a reliable and adequate supply of fresh water. Also, parts of the town require sewer infrastructure.

Environmental Goal	Project
Clean coastline and harbour	Eliminate practice of releasing raw sewerage and industrial affluent into the harbour; explore alternative methods for dealing with this problem in the immediate future
Composting	Encourage composting
Tidy Town	Encourage activities that will make our town tidier and cleaner. Provide area for residents to dispose of non-household garbage, such as appliances, pending pick up by contractors.
Sewer Outfall Repair	Partner with the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador to repair sewer outfall. The estimated cost is \$87,000 and will be financed from Gas Tax Funding in 2013. This will improve waste going into public waterways.
Sanitary Sewer System	Installation of sewer system for Cherry Hill and surrounding area. Cost estimated to be \$1,958,200 and will be cost shared with the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador under a 90-10 basis.

### **Clean Coastline and Harbour**

This will be partnered with the Local Harbour Authority and the Provincial Government and fits the community vision because it will nurture a pristine environment.

## **Economic and Financial Sustainability**

---

### **Current State**

As identified in the introductory section, the town is totally dependent upon the fishery for its economic well being. The fishery has been the mainstay of the town for generations and the shutdown of the cod fishery in 1992 was a potential disaster. However, the local fish plant diversified and, with the processing of crab and shrrimp, has continued to be the economic engine of the town. As stated earlier, the fish plant needs a reliable and adequate supply of fresh water in order to operate efficiently.

Other than the hospital in a nearby town, there are no major sources of employment within reasonable commuting distance. Therefore, in order for residents to obtain full time employment they have to either move to other centers for short periods of time or leave the community on a long term basis.

The town has a rich history as it relates to the fishery and efforts are being made to develope a tourism industry based on this.

The town is burdened with a substantial debt for arrears and late charges owing to Newfoundland Municipal financing Corporation. This is hindering the ability of the town to obtain long term financing for capital projects. The town does not have any other long term debt at this time.

### **Existing Relevant Plans**

The town has developed a heritage house and are planning other projects relating to the tourism industry, such as walking trails, whale and iceberg watching and scenic tours to Baccalieu Island and other close by sites.

Plans are in place to purchase new fire fighting equipment to replace equipment that has exceeded its usefull life.

Economic and Financial Goals	Project
Installation of an Industrial Water line	<p>Partner with the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador to install a water line to service the fish plant. Estimated cost of the project is \$2,990,000 which will be shared on a 90-10 basis.</p> <p>Three year project which is to start in 2010.</p>
Purchase New Pumper Fire Truck	<p>Partner with the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador to purchase a new fire truck, which will cost approximately \$235,000, to be cost shared on a 90-10 basis.</p>
Liquidation of arrears and late charges on NMFC loans	<p>Town should negotiate with the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador to eliminate this debt and have it removed from the town's financial statements. The amount of debt is \$726,828</p>

## **Social Sustainability**

### **Current State**

If there is one area where the Town of Bay de Verde is very lucky is certainly with regard to social setting. The community is still small enough that there is a strong sense of connection with those who grew up in the area as well as a good social network in place for those who happen to move here. That being said there are still things we can improve upon. As the population ages and the youth either move away or new people move into town we are slowly losing small aspects of the social fabric and the town has not played a significant role in promoting social interaction, mostly because it didn't need to up until now.

### **Existing Relevant Plans**

Because there has been a strong tradition of closeness within the community there are no existing plans that seem to have a direct bearing on this section of the ICSP. Because social issues are so broad there are existing plans at the provincial level that are relevant but they are not specific to our community so while we did consult those plans they were not directly utilized in the development of our goals and projects.

### **Major Themes in this Section**

A great deal of effort in this section is dedicated to engaging residents in various capacities and ensuring that they are kept well informed about the situation in the community and the operations of the town. Specific attention will be given to youth and seniors as identifiable groups that are at the greatest risk of being potentially left out.

<b>Social Goals</b>	<b>Project</b>
Ensure appropriate community services	Assess needs of different age groups in the community
Engage youth	After needs assessment develop youth strategy
Better communication with residents	Develop community website to better communicate to younger audiences.
Recreational activities	Explore needs of community with a view to identify and fill gaps
Ensure pleasure boat owners have appropriate facilities	Improve slipways and docking areas

## **Goal Description**

Ensure appropriate community services.

Partner with other communities in the area.

The following projects are related to the completion of this goal:

Meet with nearby communities to discuss partnerships that would be of mutual benefit in meeting the needs of residents.

Identify gaps in service

Explore ways of working together to fill gaps.

This goal has no effect on land use.

Success of this goal will be measured by partnership with nearby towns to share facilities and services or develop new ones.

## **Project Description**

Work with other communities to provide effective and cost-effective services.

Partnership with nearby communities.

Ensure appropriate community services.

Discuss benefits of working together to ensure needs of residents are met; identify gaps and develop tentative approach to fill gaps.

There will be a small amount of travel expenses involved which will come from the current budget.

## **Cultural Sustainability**

### ***Current State***

Basic subsistence activities, such as community dances and Saturday night house parties, that were once a necessary part of life have since been pushed aside by busy schedules and changing lifestyles. The town has not, in the past, been actively involved in promoting such cultural activities.

The town has developed a Heritage House which serves as a museum relating to the strong ties of the town to the fishery.

The Town does not have a community library that can be used by its residents.

### ***Existing Relevant Plans***

The Heritage Committee continues to expand and improve the museum facilities each year.

### ***Major themes in this section***

The town will take steps to plan activities that are designed to celebrate and promote culture. Building on the core issues we will plan to host cultural events which should include an annual festival. The town will investigate the possibility of starting a community library.

<b>Cultural Goal</b>	<b>Project</b>
Revive Traditional Activities	Organize traditional seasonal events.
Capture Local History	Community library to preserve local books and other records.  Provide space in the municipal building for a library.  Continue to improve and maintain the museum.

## **Governance Sustainability**

### **Current State**

For many years the Town of Bay de Verde has been quite effective in running an efficient town with the resources it has available. The fact is, however, the running of a town properly is becoming increasingly expensive and complex. This includes almost every aspect - economic planning, financial management, human resources, provision of core services, the regulatory environment, waste management and so on. It is impossible for a town the size of Bay de Verde with its limited resources to have all the necessary expertise on staff. The town has a full time clerk/manager, and a full time maintenance person.

### **Existing Relevant Plans**

Setting aside the issue of governance as a specific set of objectives is a new approach for the Town of Bay de Verde and as such we have no existing plans to draw from. However, the council does have basic procedures that influence how we operate but they are not really official documents approved by resolutions of council.

### **Major Themes of this Section**

Many of the governance issues are basic in nature yet not officially adopted. There are many areas that require work. The actions listed in this section are focused on setting a basic standard that can be adopted as required. This is true with regard to the development of policies and procedures and future staffing issues. Council also included objectives to help define the decision making process and is planning to devote some resources toward financial planning. The council's current debt ratio exceeds the limit set by Municipal Affairs for approving additional long term financing.

<b>Governance Goal</b>	<b>Project</b>
Maintain documented policies and procedures	Develop and adopt official council procedures and policies manual.
Efficient and effective decision making.	Governance review, committee restructure for councillors on effective meetings and decision making
Ensure appropriate financial resources are secure	Develop five year financial plan Examine tax and fee structure Develop economic development strategy that includes a tourism plan.

## **Integrated Community Sustainability Plan**

### **Collaboration and Partnerships**

The matter of solid waste management and disposal was always a regional issue but due to the new Provincial Waste Management Strategy it will become a much larger regional initiative. There will likely be costs involved with the collection and delivery to the planned waste site. Encouraging residents to reuse and recycle along with composting can have a significant impact on the amount of waste which will be collected and transported to the disposal site.

## **Integrated Community Sustainability Plan**

### ***Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation***

This is new to the Town of Bay de Verde. We have tried to capture goals and objectives in each pillar. We have identified those that we feel can be done by the town clerk with the help of some councillors and the financial resources that are available.

A committee, from council members and, hopefully from town residents, will be set up to monitor progress. The committee will set the guidelines.

Projects will be monitored semi-annually and will be evaluated against a set of questions which will be developed by the committee.

## **Integrated Community Sustainability Plan**

### **Conclusion**

The Town Council of the Bay de Verde looks forward to the implementation of this plan and the development of further initiatives that will help our community to become and even better place to live.