



# Integrated Community Sustainability Plan Template

## Introduction

In May 2005, the Government of Canada and the Government of Alberta signed an agreement to transfer federal gas tax funds to Alberta municipalities. Alberta Transportation administers the fund transfer.

The 2005 Canada-Alberta Agreement includes a requirement that municipalities develop an “Integrated Community Sustainability Plan” (ICSP), which unfortunately was neither defined at the time (or later), nor identified through any official government template. Many Alberta municipalities have chosen since that time to follow AUMA’s Municipal Sustainability Plan (MSP) process, and the result has been a comprehensive, long-term sustainability plan for the community or region. For a comparative chart showing ICSPs and MSPs, please view APPENDIX A.

AUMA is pleased to present for your consideration an ICSP template that can, in our view, be utilized to fulfill the ICSP requirement of the Canada-Alberta federal gas tax transfer agreement. The template has been developed due to the lack of a template being forthcoming from either the Government of Alberta or the Government of Canada. It is meant to be used ONLY as a method to fulfill the ICSP requirement, and is not a substitute for comprehensive, long-term, strategic sustainability planning that includes an intensive citizen engagement process. For such work, the MSP process continues to be our recommended course of action. The ICSP template included here could be used as the first step towards a more comprehensive sustainability planning process.

## What is an ICSP?

Definitions from both the Government of Canada and the Government of Alberta are vague. Here is what we can surmise from the documents available.

From the **Canada-Alberta Agreement** for the Federal Gas Tax (<http://www.infc.gc.ca/altformats/pdf/gtf-fte-ab-eng.pdf>):

**“ Integrated Community Sustainability Plan”** means any existing or new long-term plan, developed in consultation with community members, for the community to realize sustainability objectives it has for the environmental, cultural, social and economic dimensions of its identity”.

Under the Agreement, Municipalities are required to provide:

“Assurance prior to the expiry of this Agreement that the Municipality is able to successfully integrate the preparation of the Multi Year Capital Infrastructure Plans with an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan”.

From the **Alberta Transportation website**

(<http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/Content/docType607/Production/NDCC-QandA.pdf>):

### **“What constitutes an Integrated Community Sustainable Plan?”**

An Integrated Community Sustainable Plan is a multi faceted plan that encourages the implementation of environmentally friendly municipal infrastructure. This includes public transit, general energy consumption reduction, water quality and conservation, road rehabilitation, etc.

### **Are there any federal reporting requirements for the municipalities?**

... Some of these requirements include municipal submission of an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan, a detailed Multi-Year Capital Plan, and project applications as well as descriptions and details regarding the outcomes achieved under the program.

Reporting procedures for the new program are under development and will be posted to the website when available.

### **Are there any provincial reporting requirements for the municipalities?**

Yes. It is proposed that the provincial requirements and reporting procedures for the NDCC program be similar to those being introduced for the new Alberta Municipal Infrastructure Program.”

## What does an ICSP mean to municipalities?

Given the information we have, AUMA suggests that an ICSP is an existing or new long-term plan that includes:

1. Some community consultation;
2. Consideration of environmental, cultural, social and economic dimensions;
3. Encouragement for the implementation of environmentally friendly municipal infrastructure; and
4. Development of a Multi-Year Capital Infrastructure Plan (MYCIP) using the tools on Alberta Transportation's Alberta Municipal Infrastructure Program (AMIP) webpage:  
<http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/2910.htm>
5. Linkage or integration of the Municipality's Multi-Year Capital Infrastructure Plan (MYCIP).

If your municipality completes AUMA's 2010 ICSP template, you will in our view have fulfilled the requirements of the ICSP that are laid out by the Government of Alberta and the Government of Canada.

If your municipality already has a long-term plan that contains the first 4 elements above, and you have linked your MYCIP to that long-term plan, you have already completed your ICSP.

The short exercise of filling out the ICSP template may encourage you to take on sustainability planning in a bigger way in your municipality. The development of a Municipal Sustainability Plan helps set the tone for all other plans that your Municipality has and works through each year, including the annual budget process. The Municipal Sustainability Plan provides a check and balance for actions developed and taken under other municipal plans.

# ICSP Template

**Municipality Name:**

**1. Sustainability Vision:**

2. Sustainability Dimensions	3. Actions	4. Timeline (Short, Medium or Long-term)	5. Lead Department or Individual	6. Link to Multi-Year Capital Infrastructure Plan	7. Link to Other Municipal Plans
Economic/Financial					
Environmental					
Social					
Cultural					
Governance					

**8. Community Consultation:**

**9. Attachments:**

# How to Complete the Template

## 1. Sustainability Vision: What is it?

- A statement of the municipal government's values and the identification of some strategic issue areas to develop actions plans to move towards the municipality's vision.

### **Sustainability Vision:** Where do I find it?

- If your municipality has a long-term, Sustainability Vision for the future that has been adopted by Council, enter it here.
- If you do not have a long-term, Sustainability Vision, municipal administration should prepare a draft vision, and present it to Council for approval. The Sustainability Vision can be drafted by reviewing reports of community consultations, and municipal planning documents. Examples of Sustainability Visions are available here:

[http://msp.auma.ca/Comprehensive\\_Track/Tools%3A+Downloads/](http://msp.auma.ca/Comprehensive_Track/Tools%3A+Downloads/), Tools J, K and L.

- ➔ If you were carrying out a more comprehensive sustainability plan (for example: AUMA's recommended MSP process) you would involve citizens in the development of the Sustainability Vision. More than just a Council vision, the visioning process outcome is a statement of the *community's* values and the identification of some strategic issue areas to develop actions plans to move towards the *community's* vision. A successful community vision should be "felt in the heart and understood in the mind".

## 2. Sustainability Dimensions: What are they?

- For the ICSP, municipalities are asked to consider four Sustainability Dimensions – social, cultural, economic and environment - when planning and making decisions that affect the future growth and development of their communities. Sometimes an Action will fit under more than one Sustainability Dimension (more on that below).
- The adoption and implementation of the ICSP contributes to the governance dimension of sustainability, and its adoption can be noted under the Governance dimension.

### **Sustainability Dimensions:** Where do I find them?

- You do not have to fill out the Sustainability Dimensions in the ICSP Template – they have already been included.
- AUMA recommends consideration of five Sustainability Dimensions, including the four required for the ICSP. More information and tips on how to consider the Sustainability Dimensions in your planning process is available at:

<http://msp.auma.ca/Overview/Five+Dimensions+of+MSP/>.

- ➔ If you were carrying out a more comprehensive sustainability plan (for example: AUMA's recommended MSP process), you would also include the Governance/Leadership dimension of sustainability, which informs the MSP by showing how your municipal government will ensure and champion the actions outlined to achieve your vision. It is also about how municipalities

can be more accountable and transparent in their operations through improved communications, and ensuring enhanced opportunities for citizen engagement in local government issues (e.g. budgeting and policy development). The Governance/Leadership dimension also includes actions that will engage community members in the implementation of the MSP in a meaningful manner.

### 3. **Actions:** What are they?

- A list of initiatives and investments that will be integrated into business plans and budgets of the municipality.

#### **Actions:** Where do I find them?

- Actions can be copied from existing municipal plans and documents, and placed into the ICSP according to the Sustainability Dimension that they fit under.
- Actions can be created through discussions about municipal sustainability, then recorded in the template, and recommended to Council for adoption.
- If an Action fits next to more than one Sustainability Dimension, it is important to link it to all Sustainability Dimensions with which it fits. This way, you will begin to see how actions are integrated and affect multiple Sustainability Dimensions in your municipality.

➔ If you were carrying out a more comprehensive sustainability plan (for example: AUMA's recommended MSP process), you would include a "Backcasting" step before moving to Actions. The Backcasting step involves having a Citizen Advisory Group describe your community's success for each Sustainability Dimension, and formally record what success looks at, then look at your community's current reality. Backcasting allows you to figure out which actions are necessary to take you from your community's current reality to your description of success.

### 4. **Timeline:** What is it?

- Estimated timelines should be placed beside each Action. It is not necessary to attach specific dates, however, it is important to indicate whether the Action is going to occur: Immediately, or in the Short-term (1-2 years), Medium-term (2-5 years) or the Long-term (5 years +).

#### **Timeline:** Where do I find it?

- Timelines should be drafted into the ICSP Template for each Action, and Council should discuss and approve the completed Template.
- ➔ If you were carrying out a more comprehensive sustainability plan (for example: AUMA's recommended MSP process), you would have a Citizens Advisory Group that would recommend a fuller Municipal Sustainability Plan (MSP) to Council.

### 5. **Lead:** What is it?

- The Lead is the person or position within the Municipality that will ensure that the Action is carried out.

**Lead:** Where do I find it?

- Leads should be drafted into the ICSP Template for each Action, and Council should discuss and approve the completed Template.
- ➔ If you were carrying out a more comprehensive sustainability plan (for example: AUMA's recommended MSP process), you would likely have partner community organizations that would take the lead on certain Actions. As the ICSP is a shorter process, and does not involve the community as intensely, it is likely that the Leads for Actions will be assigned to Municipal Administration.

**6. Link To Multi-Year Capital Infrastructure Plan:** What is it?

- Alberta Transportation developed a template for a Multi-Year Capital Infrastructure Plan (MYCIP), that Municipalities were asked to fill out to comply with the Alberta Municipal Infrastructure Program (AMIP).

**Link To Multi-Year Capital Infrastructure Plan:** Where do I find it?

- All municipalities received funds under the Alberta Municipal Infrastructure Program (AMIP), and were asked to use the MYCIP tools for planning, applying for, and reporting on the AMIP grant: <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/2910.htm>.
  - Use your municipality's MYCIP both as Actions for the ICSP, and link them to proposed new Actions that are set out in the ICSP.
  - The MYCIP Actions that are considered "environmentally-friendly infrastructure" are particularly important to include under the "environment" dimension of sustainability.
- ➔ If you were carrying out a more comprehensive sustainability plan (for example: AUMA's recommended MSP process), you would review all municipal plans and documents and incorporate them into the MSP – not just the MYCIP.

**7. Link to Other Municipal Plans:** What are they?

- Other municipal plans include: Municipal Development Plans, Recreation Master Plans, Strategic Plans, Economic Development Plans, Budgets, etc.
- This is the area where you show ICSP actions that have a linkage to other municipal plans.

**Link to Other Municipal Plans:** Where do I find them?

- All planning documents are housed with the Municipality.

**8. Community Consultation:** What is it?

- Any meeting, information session, exchange or written communications, on any topic, between the municipal administration and/or Council, and people living in your municipality.

**Community Consultation:** Where do I find it?

- Most municipalities engage their citizens on a daily basis through communications, posting of Council agendas and minutes. Less frequent community consultation is often carried out through public surveys, town hall meetings, annual public meetings, coffee shop chats, etc. Reports are often written up regarding those exchanges, and can be used to demonstrate that the municipality has consulted with the community.
- If your municipality has not consulted at all with citizens in the past year, the ICSP development might be a good opportunity to get citizen input. A couple of very simple methods of community consultation on the ICSP are:
  - provide the DRAFT ICSP to citizens and ask for their input in writing.
  - hold a public meeting where the ICSP is presented to citizens and feedback is obtained and written up into a report.
- For additional techniques of citizen engagement, please download the “Citizen Engagement Toolkit” from the AUMA website:  
[http://www.auma.ca/live/AUMA/Toolkits+%26+Initiatives/Citizen\\_Engagement\\_Toolkit](http://www.auma.ca/live/AUMA/Toolkits+%26+Initiatives/Citizen_Engagement_Toolkit).  
The Citizen Engagement Toolkit will take you through a step-by-step process to provide you with a “Citizen Engagement Plan”, a formal document that can be easily transmitted to your Council for review.
- After having pulled reports of previous community consultations, or organizing a new community consultation, you should be able to indicate which community consultation is linked to each Action in the ICSP Template.

➔ If you were carrying out a more comprehensive sustainability plan (for example: AUMA’s recommended MSP process), you would establish a Citizens Advisory Group at the beginning of the process, and that Group would form sub-groups, or recruit other citizens in an (approximate) year-long process of citizen engagement and interaction with municipal Council.

9. **Attachments:** What are they?

- Any plans or documents that have been listed in the ICSP Template, and you feel are a necessary part of the ICSP package.

**Attachments:** Where do I find them?

- All planning documents are housed with the Municipality.

## APPENDIX A

### ICSPs and MSPs Comparative Chart

ICSP	MSP
Some community consultation	Extensive community engagement, including the establishment of a Citizen Advisory Group that makes recommendations to Council. The MSP process also includes citizen input well beyond the Citizen Advisory Group.
Consideration of environmental, cultural, social and economic dimensions	Setting out actions and working towards them in five dimension areas: environmental, cultural, social, economic and governance.
Encouragement for the implementation of environmentally friendly municipal infrastructure	Plans for environmentally friendly municipal infrastructure, and also examines how such infrastructure impacts all five dimensions of sustainability.
Development of a Multi-Year Capital Infrastructure Plan using the tools on Alberta Transportation's Alberta Municipal Infrastructure Program webpage: <a href="http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/2910.htm">http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/2910.htm</a>	The MSP sets the tone for the MYCIP and any other plan. Once the MSP is complete, it provides a framework for reviewing and potentially revising existing plans, and creating new plans.
Linkage or integration of the Municipality's Multi-Year Capital Infrastructure Plan	Ideally, all municipal plans and the annual budget are linked to the MSP, as it includes the "tone" or broad principles and values for how the community wishes to develop.