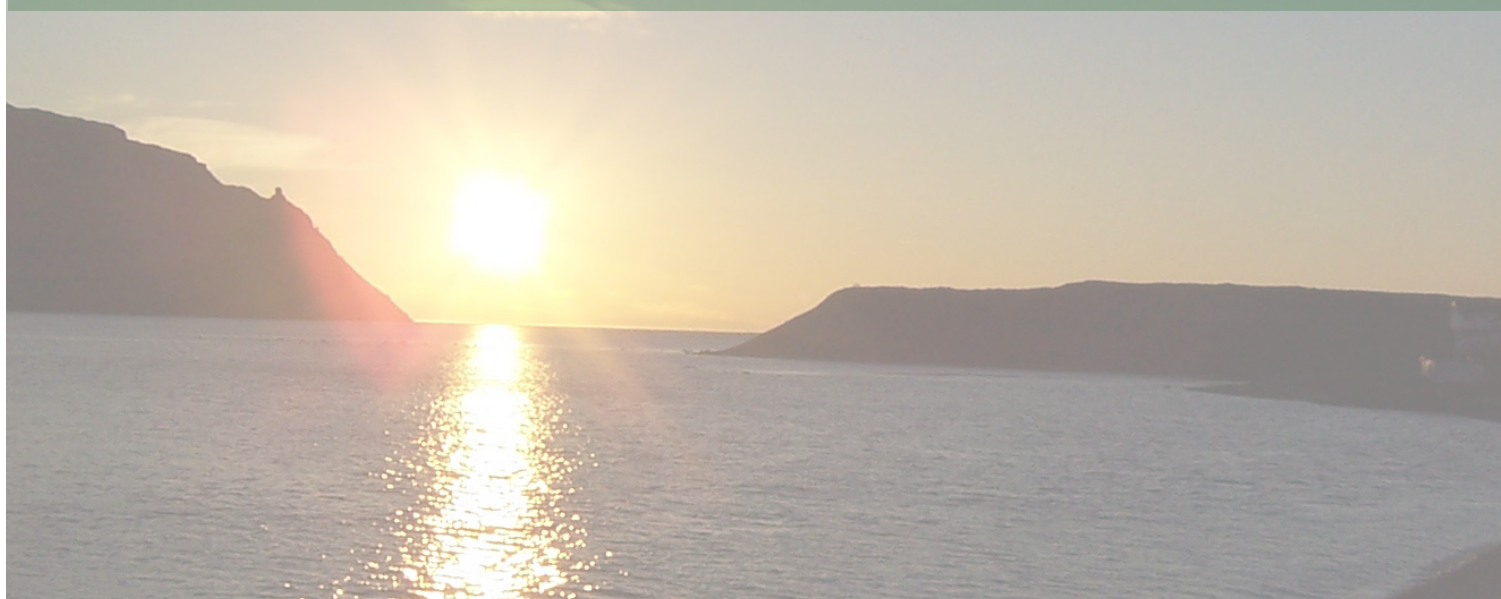
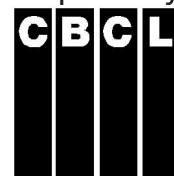


Town of Norris Point Integrated Community Sustainability Plan 2009



Prepared by:



CBCL LIMITED
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Appendix A Municipal Plan Background Report

1. Introduction

An Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) is a long-term plan, developed in consultation with community members, which provides direction for the town to realize the sustainability objectives it has for the environmental, cultural, social and economic dimensions of its identity. It is crucial that municipalities craft a vision for the future and plan for the strategic realization of their goals in the context of a changing climate, aging infrastructure, uneven growth and decline, economic change, social concerns and cultural shifts. By planning for sustainability, municipalities engage citizens, establish a common vision and shared goals, build local capacity, encourage positive outcomes and seek pro-active solutions.

In 2006, the federal and provincial governments signed the Canada – Newfoundland and Labrador Agreement on the Transfer of Federal Gas Tax Revenues (the Gas Tax Agreement). The Gas Tax Agreement includes a commitment to develop Integrated Community Sustainability Plans at the local level. The agreement includes a clause that requires the province to ensure that municipalities develop ICSPs and permits them to use a portion of their gas tax allocation to develop the plans.

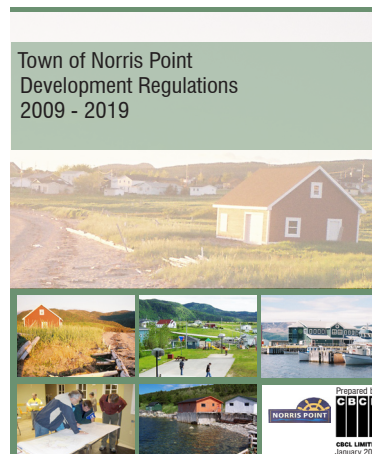
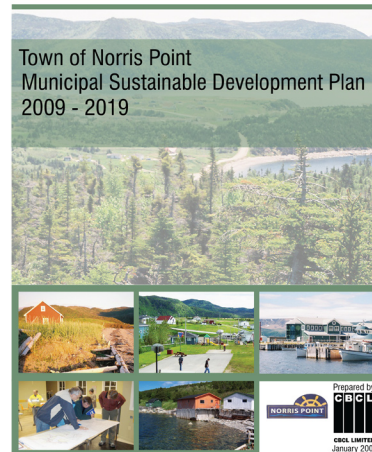
This plan has been prepared to meet the Town of Norris Point's requirement for preparation and submission of an ICSP in order to secure continued access to its allocation of funds under the Gas Tax Agreement. This funding is essential for the successful implementation of the Town's sustainability vision through pro-active goals and strategic actions.



1.1 Norris Point Municipal Plan Review Process

In the summer of 2008, the Town of Norris Point, undertook a review of its Municipal Plan. This document is derived from the Town of Norris Point's Municipal Sustainable Development Plan, 2009-2019 which sets out in greater detail specific goals, objectives and policies of the Town, consistent with the principles of sustainable development. The Municipal Plan, prepared under the *Urban and Rural Planning Act, 2000* is legally binding upon the Council of the Town of Norris Point and is required to be reviewed every five years. The Plan review process provided opportunities for community consultation and public input was used to identify community values and priorities.

In November 2008, the Town Council, with assistance from Municipalities Newfoundland Labrador, administered a Sustainability Self-Assessment Tool Kit. The Assessment confirmed a number of areas already identified in the municipal planning process where efforts are required to improve the Town's future sustainability such as upgrading and improving Town infrastructure and creating opportunities to attract and retain the population base.



2. Community Engagement

Community sustainability depends upon the engagement of community members in the process of visioning, goal setting, planning, and action. Through the Municipal Plan review Process, residents of Norris Point were informed, consulted and given the opportunity to provide input. On October 16, 2008, a public meeting was held at the Town Hall. A mailed invitation that included information about the Municipal Plan review process was sent to all residents of Norris Point. Following the meeting, residents had the opportunity to provide further input by email and phone. Public input was summarized in a two-page flyer and circulated to all households in the town for further comment.

As a result of public interest and input received during the Review Process, Council is committed to ongoing consultation with citizens and will seek input from the public on matters that:

- Require an exercise of Council discretion in arriving at a decision on a development application;
- Involve significant development proposals that are of interest to the community at large;
- Would require adoption of a new, or change of existing Town policy, or an amendment to the Municipal Plan or Development Regulations; and
- Would result in significant expenditures of town resources for implementation.

As part of its commitment to openness and transparency in decision-making, Council will develop a policy to guide its consultation processes that is consistent with the requirements of the *Urban and Rural Planning Act, 2000*.

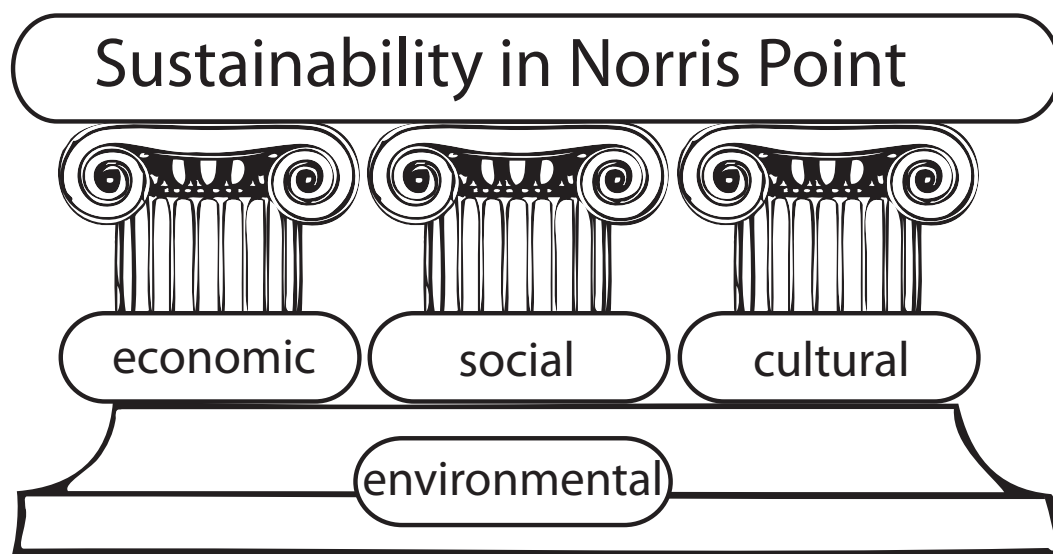


Norris Point community members participate in shaping the future at a public meeting in October 2008



3. Sustainability Issues in the Community Context

Sustainability is the ability to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meeting their own needs. A sustainable Norris Point is the ultimate goal of the municipal planning process; the positive actions that community leaders and citizens take to get there constitute the process of sustainable development. Sustainability in Norris Point is supported by the environmental, social, cultural and economic aspects of the community. Viewing sustainability as related to these main aspects of community is helpful for identifying community issues and understanding the multi-faceted ways in which a community can implement sustainable development. The natural environment is the base upon which all other aspects of community are built. Nature is often the first thing that comes to mind regarding sustainability; our understanding is broadened by the awareness that community is sustained, not only by nature, but also by the economy, society and culture. When the environment is thriving, the economy is prosperous, social networks are strong, and local culture is vibrant, these key aspects of community act as pillars supporting future sustainability. An integrated approach to understanding sustainability recognizes that when one of these community aspects suffers, the whole town is set back from fully achieving its potential.



Norris Point is sustained by the economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects of the community.



The context in which the Municipal Plan was reviewed is detailed in the Municipal Plan Background Report (Appendix A). The following section outlines the key resources, major issues and anticipated challenges that Norris Point will face over the next decade.

3.1 Planning for Social and Cultural Sustainability

According to the 2006 census, Norris Point has a population of 700, and experienced a population decline of 10.8% between 2001 and 2006. This is a greater loss than in the province as a whole, which experienced a decline of 1.5% during the same period. The remaining population is predominantly middle age and older. However, the community does have a relatively healthy number of children between the ages of five and 19. The challenge will be for the community to retain its youth and also encourage new younger families to locate in the community. Recently, the province has been experiencing an overall slowing of outmigration, and in early 2008, the population increased as people returned to their home province. For communities like Norris Point that has access to recreational opportunities and health care facilities in an attractive setting, new growth seems to be driven by young retirees.

Although the overall population in Norris Point has declined, there are some new and returning residents in Norris Point constructing new houses resulting in three to five housing starts per year. While it is difficult to project future populations, as long as positive economic trends continue in the province, Norris Point can expect some modest residential growth in the coming years. Additional areas within the community to accommodate new development are required.

Health-related facilities and services have located in Norris Point, such as the Bonne Bay Health Centre and Bonne Bay Physiotherapy Clinic. The concentration of these facilities and services in Norris Point make it an important regional centre for health care. This community strength should be built upon to expand supportive services and special care to the aging population in the region.



Bonne Bay Health Centre (Western Health Website 2008)

In planning for the future, Norris Point needs to consider how to balance a traditional way of life that has historically defined the culture, with current shifts in economic realities. The community faces the opportunities and challenges of preserving traditional cultural landscapes (such as the historic harbourfront and the fishing stages in Wild Cove) while adapting to new realities and celebrating new cultural opportunities.

Events such as the Trails, Tales and Tunes Festival, the 2008 radio broadcast, participation in Tidy Towns, and the endeavors of various community volunteer groups have built strong social and cultural connections. While these things have been done for the benefit of the community, these events and activities also support what has become a vibrant tourism and cultural industry within the town that leads to greater economic sustainability.



Traditional fishing stages in Wild Cove



Jenniex House



Historically significant harbourfront

3.2 Planning for Environmental Sustainability

Environmental sustainability is the base upon which economic, social and cultural sustainability must be built. As an enclave community located within Gros Morne National Park, Norris Point will benefit economically and socially by protecting its natural environment. Protecting the environment in Norris Point is essential for attracting tourists and ensuring continued



*Norris Point
surrounded by
Gros Morne
National Park*

economic benefits from the tourism industry. From a sustainability perspective, the park is a tremendous resource and growth of the town should support the synergies that exist between local economic development and the National Park.

Norris Point was settled amidst abundant natural resources that are appreciated for their aesthetic and recreation uses. New development that respects and enhances the natural environment will improve quality of life, making Norris Point an attractive place to live. Open spaces for recreation, the reduction and treatment of municipal waste streams, preservation of areas to ensure a long term supply of potable water and land for subsistence agriculture, are environmental issues that are addressed in the municipal plan.

Norris Point is not unlike other communities that are experiencing impacts from climate change. As a coastal community, there is growing concern over coastal erosion and rising sea levels. Residents will have to consider how land development practices need to be adapted within the context of climate change.



3.3 Planning for a Sustainable Built Environment

The Municipal Plan addresses the need to link dispersed areas of development and enhance the town's "sense of place". This will lead to a more cohesive future development pattern and provide better opportunities for economic development and tourism. A number of the developed commercial buildings, particularly near the old cottage hospital - now the Julia Ann Walsh Heritage Centre – are underutilized. Plan policies provide for redevelopment of this area into a recognizable Town Centre, by encouraging a mix of commercial uses and streetscaping. The historic waterfront is another area of focus where new development is encouraged.



Underutilized commercial area needing better integration with the rest of the town



Julia Ann Walsh Heritage Centre provides a good opportunity to strengthen this node.

With a limited but stable tax base to manage town affairs and maintain and replace aging infrastructure, the challenge for Norris Point is to encourage new development that utilizes existing infrastructures such as roads, water and sewer services. Furthermore, Town Council must ensure that extensions to municipal services do not place undue tax burden on residents – now or in the future. The Plan sets out clear policies to guide new growth in a manner that is in line with the character of the town, and located close to services so that walking is encouraged. The Plan provides opportunities for different forms of housing that will accommodate the aging population.

3.4 Planning for a Sustainable Economy

These are times of economic uncertainty. There have been significant positive changes in the economic outlook for Newfoundland; however the global economic downturn is predicted to slow economic growth across Canada. The Municipal administration is on solid footing with stable tax base, low debt servicing ratio and sufficient means to borrow



Bonne Bay Marine Station

funds for needed capital infrastructure investment. The Town partners with a variety of community groups to secure resources to improve civic amenities. Plan policies encourage a wide range of business development opportunities, both in identified commercial areas and as home based businesses.

While traditional resource industries continue to generate economic activity, the Town has embraced tourism as a key economic driver. It has worked hard with a variety of groups, individuals, organizations and businesses to provide a range of tourism products and lengthen the tourism season. Having a sustainable economy also means that the town uses tax revenues efficiently, and in ways that will provide community-wide benefits.



Tourism facilities in Norris Point

3.5 Issues Summary

- Need to attract new residents, specifically young couples with children, to combat aging population, sustain community over the long term.
- Need land identified to accommodate local demand for affordable housing.
- Need to balance new development with preserving important cultural landscapes and heritage of the community.
- Ensure a balance of land uses in the community that provides for new residential and commercial development, areas for agricultural production and open space recreation.
- Need to address the impacts of climate change on the community, particularly along the shoreline.
- Need to ensure development within the town is compatible with the surrounding Gros Morne National Park.
- Need to manage land uses in the Municipal Water Supply Watershed to ensure an adequate quantity and quality of potable water for the community.
- Sewage treatment (or lack thereof) needs to be addressed to reduce environmental impacts on the waters of Bonne Bay.
- Need to encourage new businesses to concentrate in the central commercial area of town.
- Ensure that new development does not place undue burden on taxpayers by encouraging development in areas that can be easily serviced from the existing water and sewer system.
- A variety of housing options needs to be available in the community to accommodate the aging population.
- There is a need to support and balance new development in a manner that supports development of the tourism sector that has been identified as a key component of the Town's economic development strategy.

These issues were used to develop a vision for the Community, and to set community-wide goals and actions consistent with community sustainability principles.



4. Community Vision

4.1 Community Vision Statement

"Norris Point is a vibrant community that prospers economically, socially and culturally by placing a high priority on the protection of the environment and natural beauty of the community, its history and culture. Norris Point is a safe, caring community that offers a high quality of life for its residents through the provision of municipal services, opportunities for active living, and sound planning. A range of tourism attractions, services and cultural events bring visitors who sustain the local economy and provide opportunities for new business."



4.2 Community Goals

The following community-wide goals are consistent with the Vision and will guide the Town of Norris Point over the next decade:

Compact Built Environment

To minimize future costs of municipal servicing by managing growth in a manner that ensures orderly development, and encourages a compact physical structure to the Community by utilizing land that is available within the boundaries of existing serviced development.

Ecological Integrity

To enhance and preserve the ecological integrity of the community in a manner that supports viable species habitat, and natural resources that sustain the local economy.

Community Health and Well-being

To foster community well-being and active lifestyles by supporting the preservation and promotion of cultural resources, and ensuring that there are opportunities for active recreation for all citizens.

Sustainable Economy

To support new opportunities for business growth in tourism, health care and other sectors by working with community partners, business operators and the public.

Sound Fiscal Management

To manage growth, development and provision of services in a manner that is in keeping with the financial resources of the community.

Open and Accessible Government Decision-Making

To provide opportunities for citizen input regarding development decisions affecting the Community.

Implementation of the Municipal Plan, its policies, standards set out for development, and priorities for infrastructure will help the town realize its vision. The following section outlines the elements required for implementation of the Municipal Plan, and the priorities for investment in infrastructure and other initiatives that will address identified issues.



5. Implementation

The Norris Point Municipal Plan lays out a ten-year vision for efficient, safe, sustainable and well-designed development within the Town. Municipal services, policies, regulations, and expenditures will be used to achieve the sustainable development goals of the community.

Successful implementation of the Plan involves:

- Effective administration of the Plan;
- Adoption of Development Regulations;
- Adoption of annual and municipal and five-year capital works budgets;
- Preparing and implementing recommended studies;
- A consistent procedure for considering amendments to the Plan and Development Regulations; and
- Working in partnership with citizens, groups and organizations to achieve the collective goals of the Community.

5.1 Amending and Reviewing the Plan

During the next decade, conditions in the Town may change, and where necessary, amendments to the Municipal Plan may be considered and adopted by Council. Council may consider amendments to the Municipal Plan when:

- There is an apparent need to change policy due to changing circumstances;
- Studies have been undertaken which contain recommendations or policies that should be incorporated into the Municipal Plan;
- A Provincial Land Use Policy has been released that requires a change in policy by the Town; and
- There is a development proposal that provides sufficient information and rationale to support a change in the Municipal Plan.

An amendment to the Municipal Plan will only be made where the change is consistent with the Vision, goals and objectives of the Plan.



5.2 Municipal Land Assembly

Municipalities are empowered by the *Municipalities Act, 1999* to acquire lands for municipal works or economic development purposes. Such projects generally entail the Town acquiring parcels of land from private landowners or other levels of government for a variety of reasons including:

- To facilitate new growth and development in an area which is actively being revitalized or redeveloped where such land assemblies cannot by virtue of time or money be assembled privately;
- To facilitate the development of municipal parks, recreation and conservation areas;
- To facilitate development of municipal parking lots;
- To encourage or make available lands which by virtue of ownership are not available for development but which are necessary for logical and contiguous growth of the community; and
- To facilitate redevelopment of a major non-conforming use where the redevelopment is either a conforming use or is consistent with the Municipal Plan.

During the next decade, Council may undertake land assembly projects and transactions that are consistent with the goals and objectives of the Plan.



Municipal Park

5.3 Municipal Budgeting and Capital Works Program

The Town of Norris Point has an annual operating budget of approximately \$400,000 and through prudent fiscal management has a low debt-servicing ratio. A number of capital projects have been identified that need to be financed within the means of the community to repay, in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the community and implement this Plan.

Over the next decade, the Town will:

- Invest in capital works projects to upgrade and pave existing streets and water and sewer services in the community by utilizing cost-shared federal-provincial infrastructure programs;
- Work with local and regional development organizations to propose and secure funding to implement several identified community development projects;
- Work in cooperation with the Waterfront Development Committee to secure external funding to implement development priorities identified in the Waterfront Development Plan; and
- Support efforts of the Julia Ann Walsh Heritage Centre Committee to re-develop the former Cottage Hospital as an important historical, social and cultural component in the revitalization of the Town Centre area.

Implementation of capital works projects will be undertaken as funding is available. In an effort to ensure that adequate funds are available at the appropriate time to implement capital projects identified in this Plan, Council shall prepare and submit every year, a five-year forecast of their anticipated capital expenditure requirements. This is required for compliance with Section 94 of the *Municipalities Act, 1999*.

The following tables identify priority works that have been identified to implement the Municipal Sustainable Development Plan over the next decade. It includes municipal public works projects, identified studies, community partnership projects and initiatives. Projects will be pursued with due consideration of the financial position of the town, its revenue sources, borrowing capabilities and available funding opportunities. Where possible, the Town will partner with community economic development agencies to support and pursue funding opportunities for identified projects as necessary.



Table 5.1 Municipal Infrastructure

Municipal Infrastructure	Cost	Funding Arrangement	Contribution to Sustainability of Community
Water and Sewer Servicing: Replacement of old water and sewer service lines, and new servicing of some unserviced streets in the community	\$463,592	Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF) Application No. 23002, 2008. 90/10 funding agreement – approved for implementation 2009. \$46,359 Municipal Contribution through approved borrowing.	1. Cleaner water: new pipes will prevent contamination of local groundwater. 2. Additional residential hook-ups: reduction in homes using on-site services (septic systems). 3. Reduced long-term maintenance: cost savings passed on to the community.
Roads: Street upgrading within the community	\$725,021	Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF) Application No. 22970, 2008. 90/10 funding agreement – approved for implementation 2009. \$72,502 Municipal Contribution through approved borrowing.	1. Improves public safety. 2.Reduced long-term maintenance: cost savings passed on to the community.
Buildings: New Town Hall (Administrative offices and Council chamber)	NA		1. Improved community access to local government. 2. Location in or near Town Centre consistent with community
Upgrading and Improvements to Community Recreation Facilities	NA		1. Supports goal of community health and well-being



Table 5.2 Research and Design Studies

Research and Design Studies	Estimated Cost	Contribution to Sustainability of Community
Sewer system capacity and treatment plant study	\$25,000	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensures system has sufficient capacity to accommodate future growth of the community. 2. Provides an opportunity to plan review options for waste treatment in a manner that reduces environmental impact on receiving waters. 3. Contributes to environmental sustainability of both the town and Gros Morne National Park .
Restructuring of the intersection of Neddies Harbour Road with Route 430-15 as part of a Town Centre Improvement Program	\$45,000-\$70,000	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contributes to improved public vehicular and pedestrian safety. 2. Integration of street network with community development.
Town Centre Improvement Plan	\$45,000	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will encourage walkability within the town, new business development and self-sufficiency within the community. 2. Reduced green house gases by reducing necessity for out of town trips.
Coastal Erosion Research Project	\$45,000	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Addresses climate change impacts 2. Improves ability of Town to anticipate and adapt to climate change.



Table 5.3 Community Partnership Projects

Community Partnership Projects	Estimated Cost	Contribution to Sustainability of Community
Neddies Harbour and Marina Proposal	\$4,934,700 (\$600,000 secured from Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, 2008)	1. Will stimulate tourism and economic development within the community. 2. Contributes to economic sustainability.
Integrated Trails and Walkways Proposal - Phase I, 2a, 2b and 3.	\$142,605 \$998,960 (Total project cost - entire trail network)	1. Supports active living within the community, improved quality of life. 2. Supports tourism and economic development.
Wild Cove Traditional Fishing and Day Use Area Proposal	\$216,238	1. Supports cultural and heritage preservation, community pride and active living among residents.
Walking Trails Special Features Proposal	\$111,601	1. Supports active living within the community. 2. Supports tourism and economic development..
Civic Signage, community identity and interpretation	NA	1. Supports initiatives that together improve economic sustainability of the community. 2. Supports cultural heritage preservation, community pride..
Improvements to the Downtown	NA	1. Creates identifiable commercial centre for business investment. 2. Consistent with economic development goals and objectives. 3. Creates centralized business area, reducing out of town trips, walkability, improved quality of life.



Community Partnership Projects	Estimated Cost	Contribution to Sustainability of Community
Town Events areas and visitor arrival centre	NA	1. Consistent with economic development in the tourism sector..
Julia Ann Walsh Cottage Hospital redevelopment	NA	1. Supports health and culture of the community. 2. Contributes to social and cultural sustainability of the community. 3. Adaptive re-use of heritage building.
New Residential Area Subdivision Design Plan	\$25,000 Potential FCM Green Fund contribution for sustainable planning and community design	1. Planning for sustainable development model subdivision designed to protect ecological integrity of site and surrounding area. 2. Contributes to compact form of Community.
Marine Research Centre Intake Pump Relocation	NA	1. Contributes to sustainability of Marine Research Centre. 2. Consistent with community economic development goals. 3. Supports tourism as significant component of local economy.
Community Garden Project	NA	1. Addresses food security issues. 2. Reduced reliance on imported foods. 3. Contributes to health and well-being of community.
Promote no vehicle idling	NA	1. Reduces greenhouse gas emissions. 2. Contributes to environmental sustainability and health and well-being of the community.



5.4 Projects Supported by the Town

The Town of Norris Point has developed a number of partnerships with groups and organizations within the Town and within the region. The Town is a participant in the Western Regional Waste Management Initiative that is developing new infrastructure designed to reduce the number of waste disposal sites throughout the region and provide new state-of-the-art facilities for municipal waste disposal. Through this committee, waste reduction initiatives through recycling, composting and other means are being considered and will be implemented over the next few years.

The Town also participates on the Sustainable Tourism Committee within western Newfoundland and Labrador.

Within the Community, the Town works with the Waterfront Development Committee to pursue projects in support of tourism development and improved quality of life for residents.

Further partnerships include the Lions Club as well as supporting the Julia Ann Walsh Heritage Centre, the Trails, Tales and Tunes Festival, community participation in Tidy Towns Newfoundland and Labrador, and partnerships with Grenfell College in Corner Brook that lead to a highly successful 2008 radio broadcast from the Julia Walsh Heritage Centre.

It is the intention of Council to support activities and projects that provide a public benefit for Norris Point and that are consistent with the goals and objectives of the Plan. It is recognized that Town support may include financial, in-kind, promotional, use of public land, and assistance in the approvals process where appropriate.

