

Village of Glenwood



Integrated Community Sustainability Plan

July 2011

*The future is not something we enter. The
future is something we create.*
- Leonard I. Sweet, Author/Futurist

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Introduction

This Integrated Community Sustainability Plan has been prepared by the Village of Glenwood under the direction of Council. It is the product of public input and strategic planning sessions. This document will provide critical information for decision makers as they govern our community.

Given the stewardship municipalities have to influence, guide, and protect the delicate balance and relationship between our community's culture, economy, environment, governance and social health, decision makers must strategically anticipate the future and develop guiding instruments to aid them. This document is such an instrument. Provincial and Federal funding agencies are making Integrated Sustainability thinking a prerequisite for funding.

This document presents vision, descriptions, priorities, strategies, and implications that will help create our community's future. These components provide a platform from which action planning can take place moving Glenwood towards its preferred future.

We use a strategic management to:

- guide our actions and decision making process;
- develop priorities and service delivery plans;
- outline current and future direction;
- link identified priorities to resource allocation;
- provide guidance for emergent situations, ensuring flexibility and responsiveness;
- establish a frame work for accountability and evaluation.

Integrate community sustainability planning broadens our traditional scope. As a Municipal Corporation, we strive to make sound decisions, provide visionary direction and to reflect the needs and desires of the community. This plan will assist us in creating our desired community for all to enjoy.

Sustainability Planning

Sustainability Planning is an opportunity for the Village to proactively address future challenges. It is a guiding framework designed to lead us to a future with a stable economy, a participatory governance model, ecological integrity, a vibrant cultural scene, and strong social cohesion.

It is an opportunity to engage citizens in dialogue about what they value in their community and what they want the future to look like. It is an opportunity to access the wisdom and expertise of community members, to discover innovative solutions that address social, cultural, economic, environmental, and governance challenges today while leaving a positive legacy for future generations.



Sustainability . . . living in a way that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Brundtland Commission, 1987

“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”. *Canada-Alberta Agreement for Federal Gas Tax*

An Integrated Community Sustainability 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. *Alberta Transportation*

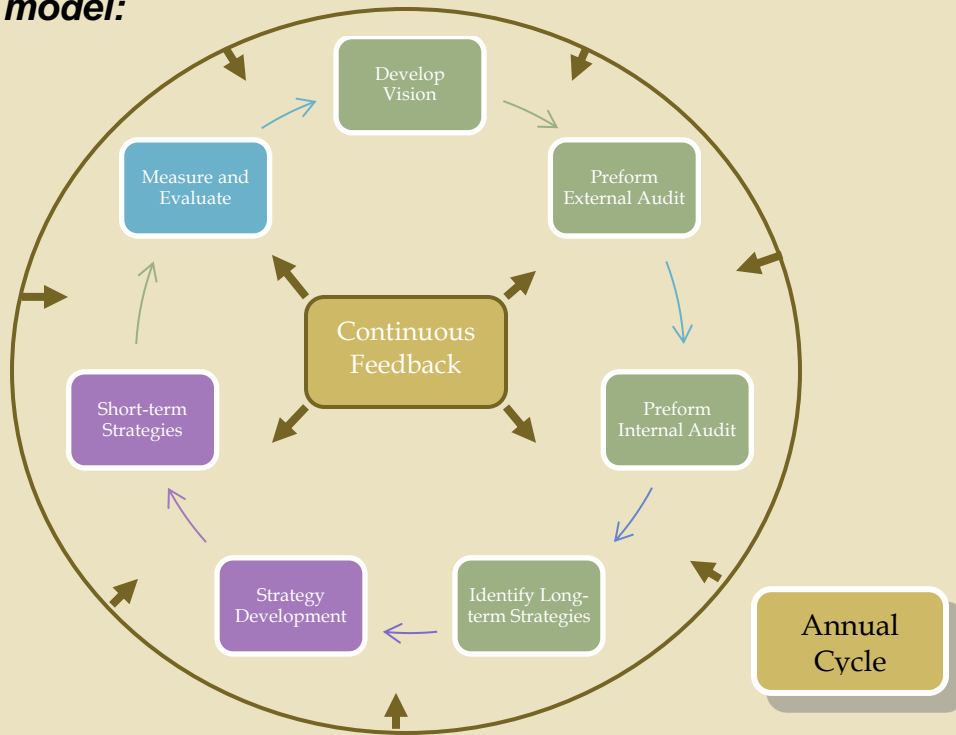
Village of Glenwood's Integrated Community Sustainability Plan

The diagram below outlines the Village's **existing** or **soon to be developed** long-term planning documents. The vision, descriptions, priorities, strategies, and implications of this Integrated Community Sustainability Plan were drawn from these plans and the public consultation associated with their development.

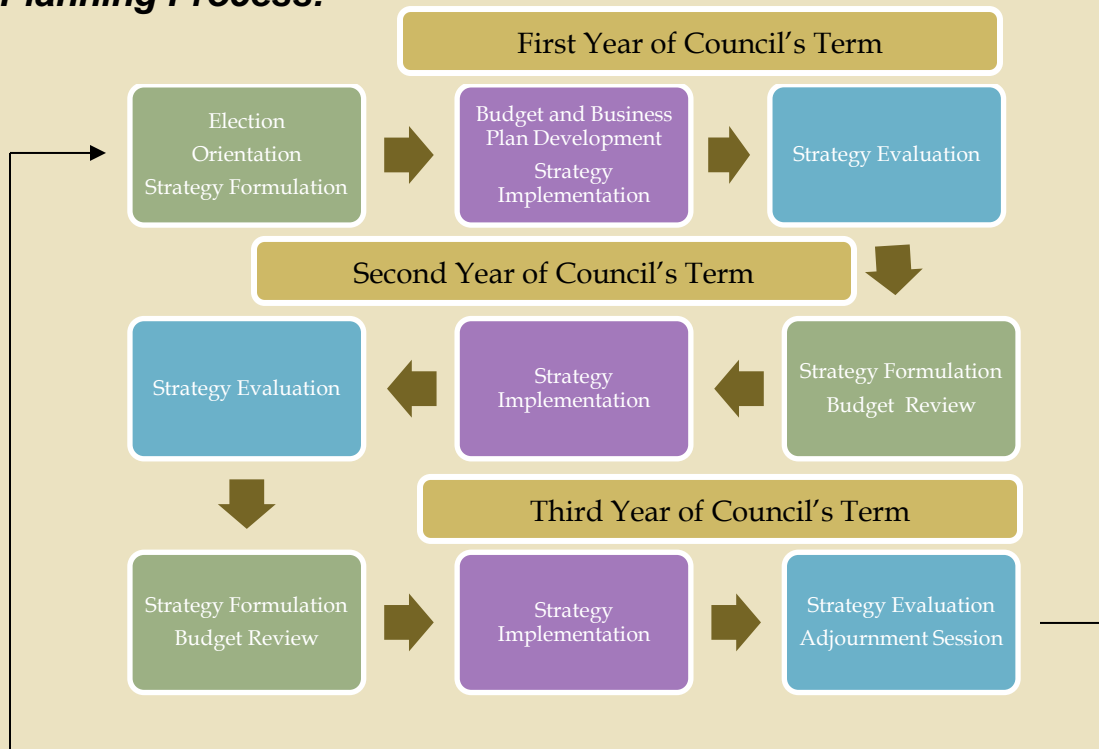


Village's Planning Model and Process

Planning model:



Planning Process:



Municipal Corporation of the Village of Glenwood

Located twenty-five minutes northwest of Cardston, Alberta and east of the Rocky Mountains, Glenwood is a residential community with a proud heritage. The Village is a friendly, family oriented community with a population of approximately 280 people. The community recognizes that without a plan or road map in place any momentum we may have gained in the past in moving towards a sustainable future may be lost. By building on our past and looking towards our future, the Village will use this document and the various other plans to assist in decision making as we craft our desired future.

Purposes of a Municipality

The purpose of a municipality is to provide good government, services, facilities or other things that, in the opinion of the council, are necessary or desirable for all or part of the municipality and to develop and maintain safe and viable communities.

Municipal Government Act, Sec. 3

Village Mission Statement

The mission of the Village of Glenwood is to preserve a lifestyle that facilitates community involvement, friendliness and a government receptive to the needs and desires of the community; to be a progressive, fiscally responsible community promoting sustainable development and growth; and to provide facilities and services necessary to ensure a clean, attractive and safe community.

Vision

The Village's Vision is presented as a collage of ideals or themes. These ideals when put together create an image, which represents the Village's long-term strategic direction.

- A family-oriented community.
- An innovative and proactive organization that successfully adapts to emerging trends, threats and opportunities.
- A human resource team with the expertise and technical skills to provide high quality municipal services and programs.
- A strategic planning process that facilitates organized growth, development, and environmentally sustainable practices.
- Maintaining healthy relationships with neighbouring municipalities and participating in shared service initiatives.
- Planned and maintained infrastructure systems.

- Community Services that provides quality leisure opportunities.
- Facilitating an open, receptive, and participatory governance process, where community input is linked to the decision-making.
- An organization that recognizes the importance of our heritage and traditions.
- Maintaining and enhancing a healthy commercial sector.
- A financially viable organization with multiple revenue streams that aggressively targets financial assistance programs.

Values

As an organization, we value and support honesty, fairness, professionalism, and accountability, while focusing on exceptional service delivery. We value our staff and their contributions of innovation, creativity, collaboration and open communication. We feel these elements are vital to achieving our vision.

Success Factors

The following “Success Factors” are organizational attributes that provide criteria for Council to evaluate the viability of our municipal operations.

- Essential natural, physical, and human resources
- New investment in the community with a healthy property assessment base
- Ability to utilize new technology
- Sound financial position with strategic use of revenues
- Quality municipal services
- Comparative property tax rates
- Positive feedback and trust from residents
- A long-term focus and clear vision
- A governance structure, which anticipates future opportunities and events
- Governance efficiency with effective partnerships
- Capacity building with maximized resource utilization

Significant Opportunities and Challenges

The Village is striving to fulfill its purpose of providing good government, services, and facilities in a well-managed environment.

Glenwood finds itself with adequate programs and services and looks to improve the level of service and quality of infrastructure in the coming years. In addition, the Village is also facing shifting demographics, stagnant growth, aggressive labour market, economic instability, advances in technology, increasing operating standards,

infrastructure deficit, competitive financial assistance programs, need for sustainable practices, and a variety of other factors.

Our strategic management process attempts to anticipate the impact of these factors and to strategically align our resources to effectively address these emerging opportunities and threats. We feel that properly adapting to these emerging factors will keep our community viable and successful.

Citizen Engagement Strategies

Citizen involvement in the decision-making process is vital for successful governance. The following engagement strategies are designed to facilitate an open and receptive governance process, where community input is linked to decision-making.

- Scheduled evenings with Council, informal open house format for questions.
- A monthly newspaper column written by the Village discussing their responsibilities and activities.
- Citizen suggestion drop off box located at Village Office.
- Web site information portal with Council agendas, minutes, and announcements.
- Making as many public appearances as time and circumstances allows.

Dimensions of a Sustainable Community

The Village's aim is to address the current municipal service needs of its residents. It must also position itself for future initiatives. Council desires to improve on the quality of life its residents currently enjoy. Yet proactively and strategically position the community for future generations. In order to accomplish this, Council will focus on the 5 main dimensions of a Sustainable Community. They are:

- 1) Culture
- 2) Economy
- 3) Environment
- 4) Governance
- 5) Social

The vision, descriptions, priorities, and strategies of the Vision have been integrated into the five dimensions of a sustainable community. Each dimension is defined and presents a guiding action plan for decision makers as they address today's challenges and anticipate the path to our desired future.

Culture:

We value and support honesty, fairness, professionalism, and accountability, while focusing on exceptional service delivery. Glenwood residents have a strong sense of community pride. Our unique heritage, traditions and multi-cultural makeup is woven into the fabric of the community. However, we will encourage respect and tolerance in our community.

Our community benefits from a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious groups who call Glenwood and its surrounding area home. Increasing our awareness and understanding can enrich the social fabric of our society and improve our quality of life.

Preferred Future Initiatives

Priority #1: A family oriented community

Priority #2: An organization that recognizes the importance of our heritage and traditions

Priority #3: Planned community services that provides quality leisure opportunities

Economy:

Our community has one community store which receives significant local support and provides an important commercial service to our residents. We are a residential community. Our community is known for our large, affordable lots and we look to attract new residential and commercial growth to the area, while improving our position as a tourist destination.

Preferred Future Initiatives

Priority #1: An innovative and proactive organization that successfully adapts to emerging trends, threats and opportunities.

Priority #2: A strategic planning process that facilitates organized growth, development, and environmentally sustainable practices.

Priority #3: Maintaining and enhancing our small commercial sector.

Priority #4: A financially viable organization that aggressively targets financial assistance programs.

Strategies:

- Provide support to local home based businesses.
- Work with regional groups to expand our economic opportunities.
- Aggressively target grant funding programs
- Maintain a competitive tax rate for other small and regional communities.

Environment:

Our residents realize the importance of our environmental stewardship.

Preferred Future Initiatives

Priority #1: Implementation of a planning process that facilitates a cooperative use of municipal water, development and environmentally sustainable practices

Priority #2: Progressive infrastructure systems

Priority #3: Maintaining healthy relationships with neighbouring municipalities and participating in shared service initiatives

Strategies:

- Research the benefits of a water commission with Cardston County.
- Completion of our new water treatment plant.
- Installing meters in every residential home.
- Install and utilize a new software program to provide our residents with more accurate readings of their water consumption.
- Move to full cost accounting for our delivery of water.

Governance:

The Village looks to build a solid foundation of governance that its residents can rely on. With the shared services agreement with the Town of Raymond, continuity and sustainable operations and planning is expected to ensure that Glenwood is on a sustainable path for the future. Our community is actively seeking regional partnerships that will provide 'win-win' scenario's for all involved by reducing each communities overall expenses, while providing an improved level of service.

Current Reality:

Our Council has recognized the importance of democratic participation in the decision making process and will strive to facilitate this value through open houses, public meetings and the use of its website. The website is in need of maintenance, as it is not fulfilling our ability to communicate effectively with our residents. The Village has also had difficulty with preparing its financial statements and meeting its obligations under the Municipal Government Act (MGA). This is partly due to the demographic, fiscal and geographical realities of our community. To meet some of these needs, our community has participated in a Shared Services Agreement with the Town of Raymond which has allowed it to fill some of its organizational deficits with qualified individuals who have been able to contribute to our organization.

Preferred Future Initiatives

Priority #1: Facilitating an open, receptive, and participatory governance process, where community input is linked to the decision-making process.

Priority #2: Continue to promote training and advancement from within the organization and from within the community.

Strategies:

- Improve our website's appearance, dependability and functionality.
- Continue participation in the Shared Services Agreement with the Town of Raymond.
- Install and transition our financial records to a new financial software package.
- Encourage and support additional educational opportunities for our municipal employees.

Social:

How our community will increase the quality of life of our residents by providing them with a diverse and improved selection of entertainment and volunteering options.

Description of Success

Our community has the facilities and human resources to stage a variety of cultural, social and performing arts events, all of which play a role in building and maintaining the high quality of life in our community. We respect our culture and heritage through the preservation of structures and community participation in the staging of heritage events.

Current Realities

Our community has a proud and diverse history of rural western Canadian culture. Our endeavours in the areas of arts, culture, and heritage are based on local volunteer talent and organizations. The ethnic and cultural demographics of our community are changing as well due to the current economic growth.

Current realities include:

- Pioneer Day celebrations and Glenwood Days are integral components of our community pride.

Preferred Future Initiatives

Priority #1: Maintain our existing facilities and venues.

Priority #2: Become a more active participant in programming events for our residents.

Priority #3: Improve our resident's access to education and personal improvement.

Strategies:

- Address the operational capabilities of our existing recreation venues to ensure their continued use and preservation and where necessary, plan for expansion.
- Look at feasibility of providing additional programming services to our residents in conjunction with our community venues.