



SUSTAINABLE MEAFORD Engagement Summary & Policy Recommendations

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December 2012*

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PREFACE

We would like to thank everyone who dedicated their time and provided valuable insight during this process.

To assist Meaford in achieving its sustainability goals and objectives, this Report provides a number of draft policies and an extensive list of potential targets and indicators (Appendix 2) for consideration as part of the ongoing Official Plan 5-year review. However, it is recognized that these recommendations will require careful consideration by the Municipality to ensure that any policy, action or target is appropriate for Meaford and can be successfully implemented. In addition, it may not be possible to implement many of the recommended actions and initiatives for some time, while others will be implemented on a continuous basis over many years, or decades.

It is evident that there is great community interest in supporting sustainability in Meaford. In order to recognize this interest and build on the momentum created through this project, we have identified a number of near-term 'priority initiatives' for the Municipality's consideration.

Project Participants

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I.0 INTRODUCTION

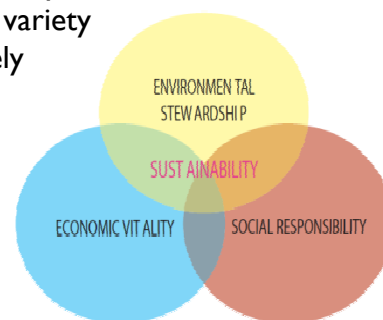
I.1 Purpose

The main purpose of this Report is to provide recommendations with respect to sustainability policies for inclusion in the Municipality's Official Plan as part of the ongoing 5-year review. However, this Report also provides an overview of what sustainability means to Meaford, summarizes the project work plan, summarizes the many comments and suggestions received from the community and stakeholders, and provides recommendations on potential short-term 'priority initiatives'.

It is hoped that this Report will identify community-based ideas that residents, stakeholders and businesses can 'buy-into' and use in contributing to long-term sustainability in Meaford.

I.2 Sustainability & Sustainable Development

'Sustainability' and 'sustainable development' are terms that have recently come to the forefront in land use planning. However, sustainability is a concept that means different things to different people. While the concept of sustainability is firmly rooted in the ideal of striking a balance between competing interests in order to ensure a high quality of life for future generations, this balance can be created in a variety of ways. The diagram to the right is a relatively simple one that is intended to convey the key components of sustainability. Other diagrams attempt to define sustainability by identifying what sustainability should include; as an example, refer to the diagram below from the Region of Niagara.



Many people associate sustainability with the preservation of the natural environment. This may include measures such as technologies that reduce emissions of greenhouse gases (e.g. hybrid cars and wind turbines), or the conservation of natural areas through tools such as nature reserves. These measures to protect the environment are important elements of sustainability. Undoubtedly, the current generation's stewardship of the local environment and our ability to minimize negative outputs into the global ecosystem are important elements of any sustainable community. However, in order to ensure that the current generation leaves a lasting legacy for future generations, environmental stewardship must also be balanced with social responsibility and economic vitality.

Social responsibility means a devotion to equitable treatment for all people. A socially responsible community is one where all residents feel safe, welcome, and are included in the life of the community. This includes ensuring that all members of the community have safe and accessible means of accessing essential services and other amenities, and that there is a vibrant public realm. A socially responsible community is also one that is affordable and where there is social cohesion between diverse groups of people.

Economic vitality requires a diverse range of jobs and access to high quality services in order to support a high quality of life. A prosperous economy is also essential to support and facilitate measures for environmental stewardship and social responsibility.

I.3 Sustainability in Meaford

I.3.1 ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT APPROACH

Like many municipalities in Ontario, the Municipality of Meaford is adopting sustainable development principles into their land use planning framework as part of the community building process. Meaford has adopted an adaptive management approach to meeting its long-term sustainability goals and objectives. As noted in Meaford Building and Planning Services Report PB 2011-063 (October 11, 2011), adaptive management involves 'learning by doing' and *"has the effect of building awareness and community-wide support over time and can place less pressure on human resource capacity while still enabling a municipality to make steady progress along the sustainability continuum"*. Meaford has also adopted this approach in an effort to focus on *"successive implementation of municipal sustainability projects, each project representing incremental steps towards sustainability while avoiding the need for expensive and time-consuming long-term planning and visioning processes"*.

1.3.2 THE SUSTAINABILITY CONTINUUM

According to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario's Sustainability Planning Toolkit, a 'sustainability continuum' identifies activities representative of a municipality in three stages of sustainability:

- Stage 1 - Inactive/Getting Started
- Stage 2 - Planning and Implementation
- Stage 3 - Embedding Sustainability

Following a review of the 3 Stages, the Municipality determined that it is entering Stage 2 on the continuum, in that Meaford has made a commitment to sustainability and some level of sustainability-related planning has occurred.

1.4 Work Plan

The recommendations in this Report are the result of a work plan that involved extensive discussions with municipal staff, stakeholders and the community. The following is a summary of the tasks, discussions and meetings that have contributed to the preparation of this Report.

Task 1 - Compile Inventory of Ongoing Sustainability Initiatives

This task involved a review of current sustainability-related initiatives, within and outside of Meaford, and the review of questionnaires (completed by Meaford senior staff) intended to identify ongoing or planned projects that relate to community and organizational sustainability, with a focus on how these projects would influence or relate to the Municipality's sustainability vision and initiatives.

Task 2 - Sustainability Training

To ensure a common and shared understanding of sustainability in Meaford, educational materials were prepared to provide examples of sustainability definitions, approaches, tools and initiatives in other municipalities, which was presented to municipal staff on May 30, 2012. This was an opportunity for staff to specifically discuss where Meaford is on the Sustainability Continuum and how to move forward effectively.

Task 3 - Analysis of Role and Impact of Meaford in Sustainability

Two individual workshops were conducted with municipal staff to explore the role of individuals, departments and the entire organization in influencing sustainability in Meaford. These workshops started with a brief presentation of ideas, thoughts and observations thus far in the project, and focused on brainstorming/interactive discussions intended to identify 'real' ideas for individuals, departments and the organization to move Meaford along the

Sustainability Continuum. These ideas were then further explored as part of the Municipal Staff Challenge (Task 4).

Task 4 - Municipal Staff Challenge

From June 11 to 22, Municipal Staff were challenged to think about the ideas identified in Task 3, and to identify new ideas, potential actions, practices, initiatives and projects to support and enhance sustainability with the municipal organization and in the broader community.

Task 5 - Dialogue with Community Partners

On June 27, 2012, we met with a broad range of stakeholders and community partners to understand the values, ideas and initiatives of individuals, businesses, agencies and organizations in the community. Building on this sharing of ideas, participants were also encouraged to discuss opportunities for partnerships. Along with building relationships and potential partnerships, this was an opportunity for stakeholders, community partners and the Municipality to consider shared values, goals and objectives with respect to sustainability in the community.

Each of the sessions included:

- A welcome, meeting overview, introductions and overview of key discussion principles
- An overview of the purpose and process of the project
- Identifying background information and documents and other projects or initiatives that should be considered as Meaford moves forward
- A discussion of what participants would like to see happen from a sustainability perspective (using a 'start, stop, change methodology') — and the relative sense of the priority actions

A memorandum, dated August 17, 2012, was prepared by the project team to provide an overview of the main themes that had emerged from the meetings, workshops and activities up to that point (copy attached as Appendix I). Eight categories or themes were identified and are summarized and discussed further in Section 3.0 of this Report.

Task 6 - Dialogue with the General Public

On October 25, 2012, the Municipality held a Public Open House at Meaford Hall to request comments and suggestions on the main themes summarized in the August 17, 2012 memorandum, and on a way forward with respect to approaches and actions the Municipality should take to achieve its sustainability objectives. The Open House was well attended by 40 to 50 attendees who were clearly engaged and demonstrated a real interest in Meaford continuing to become a more sustainable community.

The vast majority of comments received at, and following, the Open House generally supported the themes and ideas identified. There were a wide range of supportive comments and new ideas presented, including the:

- importance of signage from an economic development and tourism perspective
- importance of the urban forest
- need for seniors housing
- need for community activities for seniors
- concept of incentives for the maintenance and investment in heritage buildings
- need for more public transit options
- concept of local energy production and reducing energy consumption

Consideration of these ideas as they relate to the themes is discussed in Section 3.0.

Task 7 - Sustainability Benchmarks, Indicators and Policy Recommendations

The purpose of this Report is to complete this project by providing recommendations on possible benchmarks, targets & indicators, and to propose sustainability-focused policies for inclusion within the Municipality of Meaford's Official Plan.

2.0 BACKGROUND REVIEW AND CURRENT INITIATIVES

The purpose of this Section of the Report is to provide an overview of applicable Provincial and County legislation and policy, the current Meaford Official Plan, and current initiatives in the community.

2.1 Provincial Policy

2.1.1 PLANNING ACT

It is recognized that the concept of sustainable development goes much beyond an Official Plan. However land use decisions in the Province are governed by the Planning Act and the purpose of the Planning Act itself is instructive in this regard as set out below:

- 1.1 The purposes of this Act are,*
- a) to promote sustainable economic development in a healthy natural environment within the policy and by the means provided under this Act;*
 - b) to provide for a land use planning system led by provincial policy;*
 - c) to integrate matters of provincial interest in provincial and municipal planning decisions;*
 - d) to provide for planning processes that are fair by making them open, accessible, timely and efficient;*
 - e) to encourage co-operation and co-ordination among various interests;*
 - f) to recognize the decision-making authority and accountability of municipal councils in planning. 1994, c. 23, s. 4.*

Section 2 of the Planning Act also requires that a municipal Council have regard to matters of Provincial interest in carrying out its responsibilities under the Planning Act. This list is extensive and includes the following matters:

- a) the protection of ecological systems, including natural areas, features and functions;*
- b) the protection of the agricultural resources of the Province;*
- c) the conservation and management of natural resources and the mineral resource base;*
- d) the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest;*
- e) the supply, efficient use and conservation of energy and water;*
- f) the adequate provision and efficient use of communication, transportation, sewage and water services and waste management systems;*

- g) *the minimization of waste;*
- h) *the orderly development of safe and healthy communities;*
- i) *(h.1) the accessibility for persons with disabilities to all facilities, services and matters to which this Act applies;*
- j) *the adequate provision and distribution of educational, health, social, cultural and recreational facilities;*
- k) *the adequate provision of a full range of housing;*
- l) *the adequate provision of employment opportunities;*
- m) *the protection of the financial and economic well-being of the Province and its municipalities;*
- n) *the co-ordination of planning activities of public bodies;*
- o) *the resolution of planning conflicts involving public and private interests;*
- p) *the protection of public health and safety;*
- q) *the appropriate location of growth and development;*
- r) *the promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable, to support public transit and to be oriented to pedestrians. 1994, c. 23, s. 5; 1996, c. 4, s. 2; 2001, c. 32, s. 31 (1); 2006, c. 23, s. 3.*

The above list is extensive and taken together, all of these Provincial interests touch upon the concepts of sustainability and sustainable development. The matters of Provincial interest detailed above are implemented in policy statements approved by the Provincial cabinet. These policy statements and the process for approving those is detailed within Section 3 of the Planning Act. Section 3(1) of the Planning Act enables the Ministry of Municipal Affairs to issue policy statements that have been approved by the Lieutenant Governor and Council on matters relating to municipal planning that in the opinion of the Minister are of Provincial interest.

Section 3 (5) of the Planning Act then requires that any decision by a Council of any municipality in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall be consistent with the policy statements issued under sub-section (1) that are in effect on the day of the decision and shall conform with the Provincial plans that are in effect on that date, or shall not conflict with them, as the case may be. The Policy Statement referenced above is the 2005 Provincial Policy Statement.

2.1.1.1 Planning Act Tools

There are a number of opportunities through the Planning Act to pursue sustainable development in a community. Through the review of development applications (such as applications for approval of plans of subdivision and zoning by-law amendments), a municipality can ensure that sustainable policy objectives are considered and implemented. In addition,

there are other ‘tools’ that a municipality can introduce and utilize to meet these objectives. The following is a summary of some of these tools.

A. Community Improvement Plans – Section 28

Lower-tier municipalities have broad powers to acquire, hold, clear, lease and sell land in designated areas. They also have authority to provide grant or loan incentives to landowners and developers to undertake sustainable activities, such as retrofitting existing buildings for energy efficiency and installation of renewable energy technology.

B. Minimum and Maximum Standards - Subsection 34(3)

Municipalities can pass zoning by-laws that guide development towards more compact and intensified built form. By establishing minimum and maximum heights and densities of buildings and minimum lot area, community resources such as land, infrastructure and nearby services can be used more effectively.

C. Second Units - Sections 17, 22 and 34

The ability to plan for as-of-right second units in detached, semi-detached and row houses can support municipal growth management, intensification, transit ridership, lower-cost housing and aging-in-place goals.

D. Height and Density - Section 37

Municipalities can allow additional building height and density in exchange for facilities, services or matters as set out in a by-law.

Community benefits that may be achieved include streetscaping such as transit stop shelters, tree plantings, bicycle parking and public art.

Benefits can also include elements that help to offset potential impacts of compact and intensified development such as street furniture for pedestrian comfort, light coloured pavement surfaces to minimize heat absorption or green roofs for rain water capture and carbon uptake.

E. Site Plan Control – Section 41

Municipalities are permitted to influence design of development sites, regulating site layout and design, including the placement and orientation of buildings to maximize solar gain in the winter and shade in the summer thereby improving energy efficiency.

Municipalities can also consider external building design details including character, scale and building appearance – e.g., safety through eyes-on-the-street building design, window shading through awnings, overhangs or balconies.

Sustainable streetscape design on adjoining roadways can also be incorporated such as rain-absorbent landscaping, street furniture and curb ramps.

F. *Parkland Dedication – Subsection 42 (6.2)*

Municipalities can provide for a reduction in cash-in-lieu parkland requirements (where parkland cannot be accommodated on-site) in exchange for sustainability features. Examples include green or cool roofing, large-shade-tree plantings paired with good soil, and low-impact storm water management systems.

G. *Subdivision Review and Approval – Section 51*

Municipal review and approval powers can be used to assess the sustainability of street and lot layout at the lot, street and neighbourhood level.

This can include compact form through smaller lot sizes, pedestrian and cycling pathways with connections to off-site walkways and public spaces, and increased green spaces to offset heat island effect.

H. *Development Permit System (Section 70.2 and O. Reg. 608/06)*

This system allows for variations from minimum and maximum standards for height, density and lot area and permits a range of conditions to be imposed on the issuance of a development permit.

These standards include those related to vegetation removal, site alteration, and placement of fill and ongoing monitoring of ground water and soil conditions of remediated properties, to ensure public health and safety and the protection of the natural environment.

Municipalities can also identify discretionary uses subject to specified criteria, such as development conditions in areas adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas or for new construction.

2.1.2 PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) refers to sustainability in economic, environmental and social terms. Section 1.0 of the PPS states that economic growth, liveable and healthy communities, environmental protection and public health and safety are supported by efficient land use and development patterns. Section 1.1.1 (reproduced below) establishes the intent of the Province with respect to the maintenance of healthy, liveable and safe communities, and is premised on the view that additional growth and development is beneficial to the Province, provided it is appropriately planned. This section also indicates that healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by accommodating an appropriate mix of

employment (including industrial, commercial and institutional uses) to meet long-term needs. This means that a variety of employment opportunities and employment types should be provided for, much like a range of housing and housing types is also required.

I.1 Managing and Directing Land Use to Achieve Efficient Development and Land Use Patterns

I.1.1 Healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by:

- a) promoting efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities over the long term;
- b) accommodating an appropriate range and mix of residential, employment (including industrial, commercial and institutional uses), recreational and open space uses to meet long-term needs;
- c) avoiding development and land use patterns which may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns;
- d) avoiding development and land use patterns that would prevent the efficient expansion of settlement areas in those areas which are adjacent or close to settlement areas;
- e) promoting cost-effective development standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs;
- f) improving accessibility for persons with disabilities and the elderly by removing and/or preventing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society; and
- g) ensuring that necessary infrastructure and public service facilities are or will be available to meet current and projected needs.

I.1.2 Sufficient land shall be made available through intensification and redevelopment and if necessary, designated growth areas, to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of employment opportunities, housing and other land uses to meet projected needs for a time horizon of up to 20 years. However, where an alternate time period has been established for specific areas of the Province as a result of a provincial planning exercise or a provincial plan, that time frame may be used for municipalities within the area.

Economic Sustainability

Economic sustainability means that long-term prosperity is critical to a high quality of life both now, and into the future. This means that an adequate supply of land must be made available in the right locations, land use planning decisions should not create economic challenges in the future and the use of land and energy must be efficient. Sections I.1.3.1, I.1.3.2, I.3.1 and I.7.1 are key sections of the PPS in this regard.

Social Sustainability

Social sustainability relates to the creation of communities that are healthy and livable well into the future. Social sustainability is achieved when the environment is treated with care and the physical layout of development is efficient. Section I.1.1 discussed above offers some insight into the particular ways social sustainability should be achieved. Other key sections of the PPS in this regard include Sections I.1.3.5, I.2.1, I.4, I.5 and I.6.

Environmental Sustainability

Environmental sustainability is, in some ways, directly linked to social sustainability. Being environmentally sustainable requires communities to establish necessary restrictions on development, and acquire the knowledge necessary to make good decisions about water resource issues. Environmental sustainability also relates to ensuring public transportation is an option and making sure waste is properly managed. A number of policies relate to environmental sustainability and they are mostly found in Sections 3.1 and 3.2 of the PPS.

2.2 County of Grey Official Plan

The new County of Grey Official Plan (COP), as amended by Official Plan Amendment No. 80, was approved by the Ontario Municipal Board in June 2012. Like many upper tier Official Plans, the COP *“provides a framework for comprehensive, integrated and long-term planning that supports and integrates the principles of sustainable, healthy and strong communities, a clean and healthy environment and economic growth for the long term”* (Section 1.1). There are many goals, objectives and policies throughout the Plan that work together to support this framework.

2.3 Meaford Official Plan

The Meaford Official Plan (OP) was approved in December 2005, the primary purpose of which is to *“provide the basis for managing growth that will support and emphasize the Municipality’s unique character, diversity, civic identity, rural lifestyle and heritage features and to do so in a way that has the greatest positive impact on the quality of life in Meaford”*. The OP has a clear vision that is further articulated through a series of Goals and Strategic Objectives that cover: The Natural Environment, Growth and Settlement, Urban Character, Rural Character, Economic Development, Infrastructure, Natural Resources and Cultural Heritage. These Goals and Strategic Objectives, and the policies of the OP intended to implement them, already speak generally to the ideals of sustainability to a great extent. As noted by Staff in a Building and Planning Services Report regarding this project, *“the environmental, social and economic well-being of the Municipality is quite clearly articulated as something to protect and pursue and this notion is further captured within the designation specific development policies of the Plan”*.

As discussed in Building and Planning Services Report PB 2011-063, dated October 11, 2011, Staff have *“identified some areas for improvement in relation to sustainability-related policy and sustainable development outcomes. The following actions are/have been undertaken as part of the Official Plan review process to date:*

- *Creation of new growth and intensification policies based on the findings of the County of Grey Growth Management Strategy.*
- *Consideration of the use of minimum density policies within yet-to-be-serviced areas of the Urban Area to ensure development at densities that allow efficient servicing and meet intensification targets set out by the County of Grey.*
- *The inclusion of 'affordable housing' definitions and the creation of equitable housing policies stemming from recommendations of the County of Grey Housing Study and proposed upcoming County Official Plan Amendment #110*
- *The creation of new policy proposing expanded permissions for accessory apartment units in most designations, where they can be appropriately serviced, to support efficient use of existing infrastructure and further to assist home owners as they age in place and to provide income supplements through rental incomes.*
- *Review of all existing and proposed Official Plan policies by the Health Promotion team at the Grey Bruce Health Unit and the inclusion of recommendations based on this sustainable/healthy community lens review of the Plan. This review includes comments in relation to provision of private servicing and septic inspections, as well as falls prevention and comments related to best-practices for community and site design to promote ideal health outcomes for Meaford residents.*
- *Refinement and update of the Environmental Protection and Natural Function policies of the Official Plan, in consultation with the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority, to ensure clearest interpretation and highlighting the 'environment-first' philosophy of the Plan.*
- *The development of a Section in the Official Plan specifically focusing on Active Transportation as well as various minor amendments to infrastructure policies of the plan to embed active transportation considerations.*
- *The inclusion of height bonusing provisions through Section 37 of the Planning Act that would allow Council to negotiate community benefits, such as affordable housing or community services, in exchange for greater height permissions for development.*
- *Consideration of policies which would enable reduction of parkland dedication fees required in exchange for sustainable elements such as affordable housing, where appropriate*
- *Overall review of the Plan through a sustainability and healthy community lens and related minor amendments such as promotion of intensification where compatible and additional references to the use of design criteria and site plan control.*

The Municipality is currently undertaking a review of its OP. On November 2, 2012, the Municipality released a draft Background, Issues & Proposed Policy Updates Report for Council and public review. As noted in the

Report, “the primary intents of the Official Plan Review and Update are to bring the Municipal Official Plan into conformity with changes made via OPA #80 to the County of Grey Official Plan and to identify those local planning issues that require consideration as part of the review process”. Nine issue categories are identified in the Report as follows:

1. Conformity with County of Grey Official Plan (as amended by OPA #80)
2. Review of policies in light of the Meaford Economic Development and Corporate Strategies
3. Review of Meaford Harbour policies and associated Special Policy Area #2
4. Updating of Employment Lands and Commercial Designation Policies
5. Incorporation of policies related to Healthy & Sustainable Communities Initiatives and the 2012 Meaford Sustainability Work Plan
6. Attainable Housing Policies
7. Rural Area development policies
8. Refinement of Performance & Reporting Measures
9. Housekeeping and Other Matters Identified by Staff since the approval of the Official Plan

With respect to issue category #5, a number of Action items are identified as follows:

- Creation of New Section D2.6 Active and Alternative Transportation
- Inclusion of health, active transportation and connectivity references and criteria throughout the Plan
- Inclusion of recommended policies, indicators and benchmarks relating to sustainability and arising from the 2012 Sustainability Work Plan (Final Recommendations Report anticipated for presentation at December 2012 Committee of the Whole meeting)
- Creation of New Section D9 – Community & Urban Agriculture
- Creation of Municipal Policy regarding renewable energy in the Municipality of Meaford
- Clarification of the intent to permit trail uses in all designations through creation of a general development policy

2.4 Current Meaford Initiatives

The purpose of this Section is to identify current municipal initiatives, programs and tools that may inform, influence or assist in meeting and implementing Meaford’s sustainability objectives. This summary of initiatives, programs and tools is based on those identified in Building & Planning Services Report PB 2011-063 and input received in discussions with municipal staff and in completed Senior Management Questionnaires.

1. Meaford Downtown Community Improvement Plan

- Adopted in 2008
- Intended to promote investment in the Downtown
- Includes Façade and Heritage Program
- Incentive programs not yet implemented

2. Site Plan Control By-law and Design Guidelines

- Official Plan Amendment No. 2 implemented new authority for municipalities under the Planning Act to require drawings related to exterior design and sustainable design elements

3. Meaford Economic Development Strategy

- Completed in 2010
- Provides specific strategies to improve the strength and resilience of the local economy
- Attempts to align Meaford with 'green businesses'

4. Meaford Corporate Strategy

- Completed in 2010
- Objectives and strategies based on 3 themes: healthy economy; healthy community and customer focused services
- Many strategies are based on the concept of sustainability

5. Library Initiatives

- New accessible library in early planning stages
- Intended to meet the needs of all present and future residents and provide public spaces for events, programs and meeting spaces
- Ongoing discussions with stakeholders and the community to identify needs and long-term plans
- Library continues to promote sustainability through the sale and use of reusable bags, and reducing paper copying where possible
- Established Teen Advisory Group for service development, training and engaging youth volunteers, and strengthening outreach to youth

6. Meaford Agri-business Foreign Direct Investment Strategy

- Completed in 2011
- Strategy identifies key opportunities for the Municipality in lieu of decreasing farm gate receipts and the competitive market for commodity produce
- Meaford to focus on attracting efforts on businesses that target markets such as ethnically and culturally diverse communities
- Strategy to also include the development of a local agri-food cluster in and around Meaford

3.0 WHAT WE'VE HEARD

The purpose of this Section is to provide a final summary of 'what we've heard' from the community, stakeholders and agencies throughout the project consultation process. At the October 25, 2012 Public Open House, the Municipality received general support for the 8 categories identified in the August 17, 2012 Memorandum on emerging themes and therefore, this summary is also based on these categories. However, this summary also builds on the additional comments and suggestions provided by the community at and following the Open House.

Section 4.0 of this Report provides recommended initiatives and policies based on our consideration of what we've heard, best practices in other jurisdictions and what 'makes sense' for Meaford.

3.1 Social Development

Many identified the need to recognize and assist the most vulnerable in the community, and to work towards social justice (and to go beyond charity). This includes providing resources for people with disabilities, lower income families and individuals, and seniors. Some of the suggestions to meet the needs of the community included providing: affordable and accessible housing for all; enhanced local health services; employment services and other life skills classes (e.g. financial management). It was also suggested that there is a particular need for geared-to-income housing for senior couples, and housing for people with special needs. It was also suggested that social 'inclusion' is a key component to getting people out of poverty, whether it is providing opportunities for people to participate in local initiatives and decision-making, or simply providing opportunities for socializing with others in the community.

3.2 Transportation

Related to the desire to address the needs of those most vulnerable in the community are issues related to limitations many have with respect to transportation. Many of those that we spoke to indicated that a major issue in the community is the limited provision of public transportation for seniors, low-income families and students, to and from locations within and outside of Meaford. Transportation is the key to ensuring that: seniors have opportunities to meet with friends or attend medical appointments; people can get to places of employment without necessarily relying on the purchase and maintenance of motor vehicles; and, students can get to their part-time jobs or post-secondary educational facilities.

3.3 Community Design and Heritage

Some of the participants spoke to the need for additional focus on community and urban design in particular as it relates to the downtown area. Some also commented on the need to ensure that heritage buildings are protected, given the challenges that at times can result in balancing urban development, economic development and the preservation of heritage. It was noted that in some cases heritage sites may be good candidates for adaptive reuse as well. It was also suggested that the community could benefit from a greater emphasis on creating and designing safe communities through initiatives such as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), where applicable.

3.4 Recreation and Connectivity

Participants spoke extensively about the need for the ongoing provision and support of active and passive recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities of residents. Some related suggestions included: additional and wider sidewalks; extending and linking trails and pedestrian pathways between living areas, recreation facilities, and the harbor; supporting cycling by providing/requiring bike lanes, racks and storage facilities; providing more local programs for families; facilitating access to a year-round community centre and indoor swimming pool; expanding the urban forest; keeping key pedestrian routes open/cleared/accessible during the winter; providing additional opportunities for organized sport; supporting more community events like the annual fishing tournament and the revitalization of existing recreational infrastructure.

3.5 Economic Development

Many of the participants spoke to the potential benefits of taking a multi-pronged approach to promoting economic development and employment in the community. Someone noted that it is difficult to operate a business in Meaford due to the seasonal nature of tourism in the community. One participant stated that it takes a community to build a business and therefore, there should be encouragement for initiatives that support local spending.

A common suggestion was the need for a broad and highly visible approach to support tourism in the community by providing better signage and more information to the traveling public. There was discussion that there is a need to pursue a more coordinated approach to tourism that promotes all of the amenities that Meaford has to offer, including facilities, campgrounds, public parks for day-tripper picnics and natural areas (e.g. Niagara Escarpment, Bognor Marsh).

It was also suggested that the Municipality could greatly benefit by pursuing public and private opportunities to invest in improvements to the harbour area. There was also much discussion about opportunities in the downtown to attract more residents and tourists, to create 'gathering places' and the encouragement of local spending.

From an employment perspective, it was suggested that there is a need to promote home based businesses and the retention of existing businesses in the community, and to provide additional resources to small businesses. It was also expressed that there is a need to retain youth in the community by providing entry level jobs, career training.

3.6 Agriculture

Participants spoke to a number of issues and ideas to protect and support agriculture in Meaford. Comments and ideas received included: the need for additional economic opportunities in the farming community; promoting organic and sustainable farming; promoting local food access and choices (including promoting the 100 mile concept); promoting awareness of the farmer's role with respect to food supply and as 'stewards of the land'; promoting community gardens; and the need to promote local labour and the need for a better link with the agricultural community.

3.7 Communication

Comments and suggestions were received respecting the need to improve communication between the Municipality and the public, recognizing that not everyone has a computer or access to the internet. However, it was also suggested that the Municipality should continue to explore options for social media and to encourage communication between community organizations and social groups. It was also suggested that there are divisions between the former (pre-amalgamation) municipalities in Meaford and there should be efforts to remove these divisions.

3.8 Municipal Initiatives

Some participants recognized that the Municipality has made significant efforts to reduce costs associated with the provision of energy and water for municipal buildings. For example, the Municipality is eliminating the use of costly water compressors and implementing a more efficient lighting system at the arena. It was suggested that these types of initiatives should be considered for all municipal facilities, vehicles and infrastructure. In addition, it was suggested that the Municipality go paperless. It was also suggested that the Municipality speak to other public and private organizations that have implemented sustainability measures, in an effort to understand experiences (good & bad) and opportunities for consideration in Meaford.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations contained in this Report are based on consideration of the input received from the community, agencies, stakeholders and municipal staff. The key objective of this project was to develop targets, indicators and policies to support Meaford's sustainability objectives – these are identified and discussed in this Section of the Report. However, this Section begins with a discussion respecting 'priority initiatives'.

It is evident that there is a great deal of interest and support for the future of Meaford through our discussions with many people in the community. We believe that the Municipality should make best efforts to build on this momentum by starting to develop the administrative framework and moving forward with certain priority initiatives, in the short-term. It should be noted that, in no way, are we suggesting that other initiatives, targets and policy recommendations are less important; all efforts must work together to support sustainability and creating a complete community in Meaford.

We also believe that it is important for the Municipality to continue its leadership role in proactively supporting sustainability in Meaford. In some municipalities, an individual steps forward to 'champion' the sustainability objectives of the community. This may be a member of Council, a community member, a business leader or a senior member of staff. However, it is evident to us that Meaford is a municipality that would benefit from a number of individuals and organizations working together to champion sustainability. And based on our involvement in this project, we believe that there are many potential 'champions' in this community.

4.1 Priority Initiatives

4.1.1 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A) PARTNERSHIPS

As noted earlier in this Report, the meeting held with stakeholders and community partners on June 27th demonstrated clearly that organizations and agencies that have a 'stake' in the community share a number of common values, goals and objectives when it comes to sustainability and community building. We believe that the Municipality should build on these initial discussions by encouraging further dialogue with stakeholders in the community in order to establish partnerships and strategies for meeting common goals.

B) COMMUNITY HUBS

We heard very clearly from the community and certain agencies that the concept of community hubs works in Meaford and should be supported going forward. Community hubs provide needed resources, often in centralized locations combining a number of services and agencies.

Community hubs are typically established in public buildings where there is the co-location of services and facilities to provide local access to communities. Hubs can operate outside of typical business hours (evenings & weekends) and provide a wide range of services and facilities including: education, parks, meeting places, health services, indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, drop-in centres for parents or youth, social services, etc. Very often, older buildings used for schools, churches, community centres, etc. are the only buildings available, especially in smaller communities, that are centrally located and have the building space (or land for building expansion) to provide these hubs.

As noted in Meaford's draft Background, Issues & Proposed Policy Updates Report, *"a community hub, which would be benefited through the attraction of an 'anchor' organization or champion, could be as simple as a dedicated space/meeting room which could be programmed to host various service providers from the Owen Sound regional offices on a regular scheduled basis and to provide a physical space for the delivery of assistance programs such as the Good Food Box and Back Pack distribution or adult education programs such as financial literacy training"*.

It appears that the community has already incorporated components of the community hub idea, however, we believe there are opportunities to build on and/or create new hubs in the community. Many said that Meaford Hall should continue to be a centre or focal point in the community and in our view, would provide a very good location for a community hub. It was also suggested that the satellite food bank in Meaford could potentially act as a hub by exploring options for establishing other government services at this location. There are other community facilities that could provide this function including community centres, Riverside Hall (which already provides a monthly breakfast program), Woodford Hall, Bognor Hall, various churches, etc.

It was also suggested that, with its changing role and service and facility improvements, the library should be considered as a key hub in the community.

We believe that there is a significant opportunity to build on existing hubs, and support new ones in strategic locations in Meaford. In addition, there was some expression of interest from some agencies with respect to

working with the Municipality in pursuing community hub opportunities, including the potential for funding support. On this basis, we believe that discussions with potential partners in community hubs should be prioritized.

C) VOLUNTEER COORDINATION

Through our discussions with the community, it is very evident that Meaford is supported by a vibrant and committed community of volunteers. However, participants also expressed concern that Meaford has not fully optimized and coordinated this volunteer base. It was suggested that the Municipality hire a Volunteer Coordinator (VC) to coordinate and support volunteers and programs throughout Meaford. It was also suggested that there is a good opportunity to build on existing programs, such as the public planting bed program and the opportunity to encourage high-school students to assist. In these discussions, it was recognized by many that seniors can provide valuable time, experience, talent, skills and mentorship that will contribute to the building of this community.

However, some concern was also expressed with the idea of hiring a VC. It was suggested that organizations align with potential volunteers quite effectively on their own, and that the money spent on hiring a VC would be better spent in other areas, such as effective advertising for the recruitment of volunteers. It was also suggested that Meaford could achieve the same thing by adopting the approach taken in some other municipalities, where a committee of volunteer members (from various organizations, businesses, etc.) fulfilled a similar function with assistance from the Municipality. It is recommended that Municipal staff work with local volunteer-supported groups to discuss how the Municipality of Meaford can best support their efforts and facilitate optimal coordination and engagement of the volunteer base.

4.1.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

There was much discussion regarding opportunities in the downtown to attract more residents and tourists. Based on the input received from a number of people, we believe there are a number of economic development initiatives that could be considered for implementation in the short-term. The following initiatives are relatively inexpensive, could be implemented in the near future and in some cases could also be applied to areas outside of the Downtown:

- creating a pedestrian section in the Downtown by closing off certain streets during certain days/periods in the summer
- encouraging more businesses to open on Sundays
- exploring opportunities to create a 'niche' for the downtown

- recognizing the importance of signage in the community from an economic development and tourism perspective; it was suggested that there is the need for better coordination and more consistent design of signage across the Municipality.

There were also many who discussed the importance of the Farmers Market as a potential economic and social hub connecting farmers and the community. The Municipality of Meaford should continue to support the Farmers Market and assist in expanding its hub role within the Municipality.

4.1.3 WATER CONSERVATION

In an effort to conserve and protect the quality of water, it was suggested that the Municipality could implement a water conservation program in the short term involving programs encouraging and supporting rainwater re-use / harvesting through a sponsored rain barrel program. It was also suggested that the Municipality should research and support appropriate rebate programs (e.g. for the replacement of low-flow toilets).

4.1.4 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

There was general agreement that the provision of affordable, effective and reliable public transportation is a very difficult issue to resolve due the very high costs of public transit in municipalities where there are lower population densities. Most people also agreed that this is not an issue that the Municipality of Meaford could resolve on its own; it would require the cooperation of the County, the Province, service organizations and/or the business community.

However, this is an important issue that deserves further consideration given the impact it has on the mobility and economic status of many in the community.

Suggestions included:

- Build upon and support the 'Handi-van' program
- Work with the County as part of its ongoing Transportation Master Plan review
- Extensions to the Owen Sound transit system
- Investigate programs such as quasi-taxi programs where volunteers can provide day-long taxi service for a set cost (e.g. \$50) allowing seniors and others to attend appointments and run other errands
- Pursuing opportunities for a coordinated, cross-municipal transit system centred on Highway 26
- Considering the viability of a mini-bus system in Meaford and possibly beyond

- Investigate potential for Meaford-Owen Sound service to enhance access to regional recreation centre
- Work with local businesses to explore the potential for vehicle rentals to serve the urban area of Meaford and surrounding rural area.

4.2 Goals, Actions & Performance Management

To ensure that development is truly sustainable over the long-term, there is a need to develop policies, planning processes and protocols that all support the achievement of a number of sustainable development goals. In this regard, a number of municipalities have established benchmarks or targets and indicators to gauge whether or not they are meeting their sustainability goals. Municipalities have also developed sustainable development checklists that are relied upon to determine whether certain types of development are designed to meet their objectives for sustainability in a manner to be as sustainable as possible.

A list of potential sustainability targets and indicators have been prepared for Meaford to support the Municipality in assessing what is happening and if measures put in place are working towards sustainability goals. The sustainability targets and indicators were developed based on existing policy initiatives, valuable input from sessions held with Meaford Staff and a wide range of stakeholders in June 2012, as well as input from the public open house held in October 2012. Best practices from across Ontario, and our team's technical expertise, were used to develop these targets and indicators.

The major themes coming out of these sessions and the open house are described in Section 3.0 and were used as the basis, and augmented, for the draft targets and indicators. These themes include: Natural Heritage/Natural Environment; Social Development; Transportation; Community Design and Heritage; Recreation and Connectivity; Economic Development; Agriculture; Communication and Municipal Initiatives.

For each theme, goals were developed based on Staff, public input and best practices. These goals provide a vision for the Municipality which can be attained through the actions outlined and measured using the targets and indicators provided.

4.2.1 GOALS & ACTIONS

4.2.1.1 Protect What's Important: Natural Heritage/Natural Environment

Meaford Staff and the community have identified protecting and preserving the natural environment as a key to Meaford's sustainability vision. The Official Plan establishes an "environment-first" philosophy for the Municipality. The following goals & actions reinforce this philosophy:

1. Protect the Natural Environment and Conserve the Municipality's Natural Resources
• Protect significant natural heritage features and functions • Support environmental protection and restoration • Minimize light pollution • Reduce the impact of climate change on the natural environment • Educate the community on the effects of climate change • Encourage planning decisions that contribute to the protection, conservation and enhancement of water and related resources on an integrated watershed management basis • Encourage the establishment of an open space system that links environmental and recreational resources both within and beyond the boundaries of the Municipality

4.2.1.2 Social Development

Residents and Staff have highlighted that the Municipality must work to ensure Meaford is socially and financially inclusive, accessible and affordable. Building on this, the following Social Development goals were developed:

1. Ensure Meaford is Affordable and Accessible for All Residents
2. Ensure Residents Have Access to Excellent Healthcare and Wellness Support
3. Provide Employment Services and Other Life Skill Resources for All Residents
4. Establish Community Hubs in Meaford

1. Ensure Meaford is Affordable and Accessible for All Residents
• Expand on free or low-cost community events, services and activities that are welcoming and socially inclusive for all (eg. skating, cultural events, satellite food bank, farmer's market) • Educate businesses on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act • Encourage public and private community facilities to invest in accessibility upgrades • Increase the range of affordable and attainable housing types (including rental housing)

2. Ensure Residents Have Access to Excellent Healthcare and Wellness Support
• Continue to support, maintain and enhance area hospitals and clinics • Pursue qualified practitioners and specialists • Identify existing complementary health services to determine if gaps in services exist (eg. mental health services) • Identify partnership opportunities with community health groups and service providers with an overlap in services • Ensure accessible trails and maintain a full range of recreational fields and facilities
3. Provide Employment Services and Other Life Skill Resources for All Residents
• Develop a strategy to support workforce development training • Offer courses for computer and internet literacy • Support programs or organizations that foster education programs for life skills (eg. Cooking classes, financial management)
4. Establish Local Community Hubs in Meaford That Are Vibrant and Accessible
• Analyze existing public facilities for potential as community hub locations (e.g. Community centres, Riverside Hall, Woodford Hall, Bognor • Hall, churches, farmer's market, etc.) Analyze Meaford Hall and potential for expansion of services to become a stronger community hub

4.2.1.3 Transportation

As previously noted, there is a need to provide for a socially inclusive community that acknowledges all residents including seniors, persons with disabilities, youth, low-income families and individuals. Related to this desire, residents and Staff also highlighted that the Municipality must address the limitations of Meaford's transportation network with regard to lack of public transportation for those who need it most as well as the challenges associated with having rural, agricultural and urban types of areas that differ greatly in form and density. Additionally, providing for an environmentally and economically responsible transportation network will support the desire for more public transit. The vision for Transportation in Meaford is outlined below:

1. Develop an Accessible, Efficient, Integrated, Multi-Modal Transportation Network
2. Ensure Meaford's Municipal Transportation System is Environmentally and Economically Responsible

1. Develop an Accessible, Efficient, Integrated, Multi-Modal Transportation Network

- Explore the concept of a volunteer-led seniors taxi service
- Expand Georgian Handi-van service, if feasible
- Investigate the development of a shared regional public transportation system with adjoining Municipalities (e.g. extension of Owen Sound transit)
- Investigate mini-bus for transit (e.g. shuttlebus which includes destinations outside of Meaford such as regional recreation centre or hospital)
- Promote other non-fossil fuelled modes of transport including biking and walking by ensuring trails are well-connected, maintained, safe, well-lit and are of durable quality materials

2. Ensure Meaford's Municipal Transportation System is Environmentally and Economically Responsible

- Prepare a survey for the community to complete an estimate of the Municipality's current GHG emissions
- Implement an online car-share/pool system and parking lots
- Implement carpool and vanpool parking lots
- Investigate sustainable long-term approaches to building and maintaining roads
- Work to promote alternative transportation and decreased vehicle use, such as Clean Air Days, Car-Free Sundays

4.2.1.4 Community Design and Heritage

Staff and the community both recognized the need to focus more on community and urban design, in particular as it relates to the downtown area. Additionally, there were many who spoke up for Meaford's cultural heritage resources and their protection, preservation and maintenance. Community Design and Heritage goals include the following:

1. Foster Compact Liveable Communities that are Well Designed and are Environmentally Responsible
2. Preserve Meaford's Cultural Heritage Resources

1. Foster Compact Liveable Communities that are Well Designed and are Environmentally Responsible

- Promote compact growth and more walkable developments through site plan control, min. and max. height and density provisions and subdivision approval criteria
- Develop communities that have a mix of uses, housing types and prices
- Require a high standard of building site design for future development (e.g. development of design guidelines)
- Require higher energy efficiency standards for new public buildings
- Investigate incentives for residents to implement green design initiatives (e.g. d/c rebates)

2. Preserve Meaford's Cultural Heritage Resources

- Commemorate designated heritage buildings
- Promote knowledge and learning about Meaford's heritage through heritage walking tours, brochures, etc.
- Develop brochures and website for Meaford cultural heritage resources
- Implement heritage conservation guidelines

4.2.1.5 Recreation and Connectivity

Participants in the engagement sessions held in the summer and fall felt strongly that there is a need to provide and support active and passive recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities of residents. The vision for Recreation and Connectivity in Meaford is outlined below:

1. Create a Connected Multi-Modal Transportation Network which Strongly Supports Active Transportation and the Ages and Abilities of All Residents to Promote A Healthy Community
2. Create a Strong Network of Recreational Facilities, Parks and Open
3. Spaces that Foster Engagement in Local Programs and Events

1. Create a Multi-Modal Transportation Network which Strongly Supports Active Transportation and the Ages and Abilities of All Residents to Promote A Healthy Community

- Provide additional and wider sidewalks
- Extend and link sidewalks and trails between living areas, recreation facilities, the harbor, etc.
- Ensure linkages are made to higher forms of public transportation
- Support cycling by providing/requiring bike lanes where appropriate, as well as bike racks and storage facilities.
- Ensure primary pedestrian routes are open/ cleared/accessible during the winter
- Pursue more signage for & overall awareness of walking and cycling routes, trails and paths

2. Create a Strong Network of Recreational Facilities, Parks and Open Spaces that Foster Engagement in Local Programs and Events

Actions

- Revitalize existing recreational infrastructure (parks, facilities)
- Provide more opportunities for parks and open spaces
- Require more tree planting through development approval process
- Provide additional opportunities for organized sport and community events (e.g. annual fishing tournament)
- Provide more local programs for families including specific programs for teens

4.2.1.6 Economic Development

Residents and Staff have highlighted that the Municipality must work to develop a multi-pronged approach to Meaford's economic development and employment future. This also lends itself to bolstering Meaford's tourism market which was also acknowledged in previous engagement sessions. The Economic Development vision for Meaford includes the following:

1. Implement a Multi-Pronged Approach to Promoting Economic Development and Employment
2. Support and Promote Local Tourism Initiatives and Attractions

1. Implement a Multi-Pronged Approach to Promoting Economic Development and Employment

- Encourage local spending
- Encourage and promote entrepreneurship and home-based businesses and retention of existing businesses
- Attract and retain good full-time jobs
- Encourage businesses to adapt to needs of consumer demands (e.g. after-hours opportunities, opening on Sundays)
- Encourage businesses to support local events within the Municipality
- Provide resources to small businesses (e.g. online marketplace to link local businesses and residents)

2. Support and Promote Local Tourism Initiatives and Attractions

- Provide better signage and information to the traveling public (e.g. brochures, website development)
- Promote Meaford's public events, natural and cultural attractions and heritage (e.g. farmer's market, campgrounds, Niagara Escarpment, Bognor Marsh)
- Pursue public and private opportunities to invest in improvements in the harbour
- Explore opportunities to create a 'niche' for the downtown
- Develop gathering spaces in the downtown (e.g. pedestrian-only streets, more hotels/resort options, more restaurants)

4.2.1.7 Agriculture

Staff and the community both expressed a desire to create stronger linkages between the agricultural community and the Municipality which in turn will attract businesses, tourism and economic opportunities. The vision for Agriculture in Meaford includes the following:

I. Protect, Support and Connect with the Agricultural Community of Meaford

I. Protect, Support and Connect with the Agricultural Community of Meaford
• Promote organic and sustainable farming and local food access and choices (e.g. farmer's market) • Encourage local foods in institutions (e.g. schools; edible schoolyards) • Promote community gardens • Promote local labour through Municipality website (e.g. canneries, storage, etc) • Continue to support the farmer's market as a social and economic hub • Develop stronger advertising for farmer's market as well as closing certain streets, as may be appropriate, to encourage pedestrian traffic • Promote awareness and education of the farmer's role with respect to food supply and as 'stewards of the land' • Assist promotion of the Good Food Box Program and investigate ways to increase local product content • Investigate direct to door local food distribution and CSA operations to build personal relationship with farmers

4.2.1.8 Communication

Participants in the engagement sessions held in the summer want to ensure that communication between the Municipality and public needs to be improved, recognizing that not everyone has a computer or access to the internet. Communication goals include the following:

I. Ensure Strong Communication Between the Municipality and Residents and Businesses

I. Ensure Strong Communication Between the Municipality and Residents and Businesses
• Encourage provision of affordable access to high speed internet • Continue and expand opportunities for internet and access to computers in library and other public buildings • Continue to utilize other means of communication (e.g. newspapers, notice boards) • Continue to explore options for social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Tumblr) • Encourage communication between community organizations and social groups (e.g. a community association summit) • Remove divisions between former (preamalgamation) municipalities in Meaford • Increase number of community events whereby the Municipality and area residents interact

4.2.1.9 Municipal Initiatives

Residents and Staff have highlighted that the Municipality must work to ensure Meaford is sustainable with respect to conservation (energy, water), carbon footprint as well as the Municipality's efficient use of resources. The vision for Municipal Initiatives in Meaford includes the following:

I. Develop Meaford as a Model for A Sustainable Community

I. Develop Meaford as a Model for A Sustainable Community
• Continue to reduce costs associated with the provision of energy and water for municipal buildings (e.g. eliminating use of water compressors and implementing efficient lighting system) • Encourage energy savings initiatives for all municipal facilities (e.g. LEED certified buildings) • Encourage Municipality to use less paper • Implement Low Impact Development measures (bioswales, permeable paving) • Continue Municipality's waste diversion program to increase waste diversion rates (e.g. extend hours of yard waste centre; consolidated drop off for recycling and waste, extend materials accepted) • Investigate the development of a water conservation program which could include rainwater re-use/harvesting, a rain barrel program, and rebate program • Promote energy efficiency standards in buildings, construction and land development (developers should be encouraged to exceed these standards) • Building Department to improve knowledge on green building and construction • Investigate incentives for residents to implement green design initiatives (e.g. d/c rebates) • Investigate having an annual sustainability summit

4.3 Official Plan Policy

As noted in Section 2.3 of this Report, the Meaford Official Plan (OP) has a clear vision that is further articulated through a series of Goals and Strategic Objectives. These Goals and Strategic Objectives, and the policies of the OP intended to implement them, already speak generally to the ideals of sustainability to a great extent.

On the basis of the above, we believe there is an opportunity to improve the current OP from a sustainability perspective through modifications and the addition of policy throughout the OP, and in particular in The Community Vision and Goals & Strategic Objectives Sections.

There are other Sections of the OP that require updating to support the future sustainable growth of the community, but will be updated as part of the broader 5 year OP review. As already noted by municipal staff, these sections or policy areas include:

- General Grey County OP conformity exercise
- Review of policies in light of the Meaford Economic Development and Corporate Strategies
- Review of Meaford Harbour policies and associated Special Policy Area #2
- Updating of Employment Lands and Commercial Designation Policies
- Rural Area development policies
- Policies related to Healthy and Sustainable Community Initiatives and the 2012 Meaford Sustainability Work Plan
- Housing policies, including affordable housing and second units, based in part on the proposed County Housing Official Plan Amendment (anticipated for adoption in 2013)
- Refinement and update of the Environmental Protection and Natural Function policies, in consultation with the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority, to ensure clearest interpretation and highlighting the 'environment-first' philosophy of the Plan

With respect to healthy and sustainable communities, a number of action items as part of the OP Review are identified as follows:

- Creation of New Section D2.6 Active and Alternative Transportation
- Inclusion of health, active transportation and connectivity references and criteria throughout the Plan
- Inclusion of recommended policies, indicators and benchmarks relating to sustainability and arising from the 2012 Sustainability Work Plan (Final Recommendations Report anticipated for presentation at December 2012 Committee of the Whole meeting)

- Creation of New Section D9 – Community & Urban Agriculture
- Creation of Municipal Policy regarding renewable energy in the Municipality of Meaford
- Clarification of the intent to permit trail uses in all designations through creation of a general development policy

4.3.1 THE COMMUNITY VISION

We recommend that the Municipality consider augmenting The Community Vision described in Section A1 of the current OP by:

- Highlighting the importance of the three pillars of sustainability (environmental, cultural/social and economic) as guiding principles for all land use planning decisions in Meaford
- Encouraging development and redevelopment that reflects and integrates the sustainability objectives of the Municipality
- Encouraging, supporting and enabling the involvement and contributions of individuals (regardless of age or economic status) agencies, community groups and businesses

4.3.2 GOALS AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

We recommend that the Municipality augment the Goals and Strategic Objectives Section in the current OP by introducing a new Section specifically focused on sustainability in Meaford. The following is an example of possible goals and strategic objectives for inclusion in the OP.

Goal

To promote and encourage sustainable forms of land use and development.

Strategic Objectives

1. *To minimize Meaford's ecological footprint and the impacts of growth by ensuring that all new development is based on the principles of sustainable development.*
2. *To promote the use of leading edge sustainable development and energy conservation policies designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.*
3. *To provide human and social services, that are within the Municipality's scope of responsibility, that support Meaford as a complete community where people of all ages, backgrounds and capabilities can meet their needs throughout the various stages of their lives.*
4. *To reduce the per-capita consumption of energy, water, land and other non-renewable resources.*
5. *To promote practices which conserve water, and protect or enhance water quality.*

6. *To promote a compact urban form and develop an energy-efficient mix of land uses, where appropriate, to provide liveable, healthy communities.*
7. *To encourage reductions in the use of private automobiles by promoting active transportation and the use of Transportation Demand Management measures, such as public transit, cycling and walking.*
8. *To encourage efficient site design, and building design and construction techniques that minimize space heating and cooling energy consumption, and encourage the upgrading/retrofitting of existing buildings and facilities.*
9. *To support land use and development patterns that minimize adverse impacts on air quality.*
10. *To reduce the occurrence of excessive light emissions while still ensuring that adequate levels are maintained for public safety.*
11. *To support residents in efforts towards food sovereignty and the creation of a sustainable local food economy.*

4.3.3 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Sustainable development policies are intended to recognize the importance of and support sustainable site and building design in both the public and private realms.

4.3.3.1 Green Development Standards and Development Checklists

Firstly, it is recommended that the Municipality consider the development of Green Development Standards (GDS) in consultation with the development industry. GDS's are used to identify municipal standards in a wide range of areas for the promotion of green/sustainable development. GDS's are implemented through the review of development applications and are often realized through the use of a 'development checklist'. Policies to implement this approach could include:

- a) *requiring all development, including all new municipal buildings and projects, to meet the minimum standards necessary to satisfy the applicable required elements outlined in the green development standards;*
- b) *ensuring that Green Development Standards include, but are not limited to, the following:*
 - i) *minimum standards for energy efficient building design to achieve reduced energy consumption and demand;*
 - ii) *minimum standards for water conservation in all buildings, and landscaping and maintenance;*
 - iii) *green building material requirements to promote durability and reduce the heat island effect;*
 - iv) *requirements for waste reduction, reuse and recycling in the construction process;*

- v) requirements for the application of stormwater management at the site level to maximize infiltration and reduce phosphorus loading; and,
- vi) recommendations and standards for the installation of on-site renewable energy generation and energy recovery, where practicable.

In addition, the Municipality should consider the Sustainable Development Policies in the following Section in the development of any future GDS's.

4.3.3.2 Sustainable Development Policies

To further support the Community Vision, Goals and Strategic Objectives of the Municipality, we recommend inclusion of a new Section in the OP specifically dedicated to sustainable development. The following policies should be considered for inclusion in the OP, Green Development Standards and development checklist(s), as appropriate.

Energy Conservation and Efficiency Measures

Energy conservation and efficiency is an important component to achieve sustainability goals and objectives. Energy conservation and efficiency not only reduces environmental footprints, it helps to reduce energy costs for individuals, businesses and organizations. It is a policy of the Municipality to:

- a) support initiatives and educational programs that promote energy conservation and efficiency measures;
- b) promote the reduction in energy consumption in all Municipally-owned, maintained and operated facilities and equipment in a cost-effective manner, including upgrading and retrofitting of existing buildings where practical;
- c) ensure that all new Municipal facilities are designed to incorporate energy conservation measures;
- d) require, where appropriate, new commercial and industrial development to use light-coloured roofing material;
- e) seek to minimize energy consumption by:
 - i) promoting mixed use development, compact urban form and complete communities;
 - ii) maximizing existing infrastructure;
 - iii) encouraging the adaptive reuse of existing buildings;
 - iv) promoting building designs and orientations that incorporate energy conservation features; and,
 - v) promoting walking and cycling, and providing for bicycle parking and secure bicycle storage facilities;
- f) support the use of renewable energy systems, such as geothermal systems (provided such systems do not negatively impact natural heritage features and areas, and hydrologic features and their functions) and solar photovoltaic, solar hot water, and solar air heating systems, in locations where they can operate in full sun year-round;
- g) require new development to be designed to maximize solar gains and encourage building design that allows for future solar installations;

- h) encourage innovative development that incorporates energy conserving principles into building design;
- i) encourage the application of energy conservation measures in the rehabilitation and upgrading of existing buildings; and,
- j) promote increased use of solar energy systems to heat water, air and/or generate electricity;

Air Quality

Air quality can impact us as individuals (health effects), as a society (health care costs) and on a global scale (climate change), but there are many ways to improve and maintain air quality. It is a policy of the Municipality to:

- a) ensure that municipal operations and facilities meet or exceed applicable Provincial regulations with respect to air quality and support incremental reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants;
- b) reduce reliance on private automobiles through the development of compact, mixed use, and pedestrian friendly communities to minimize contributions to air pollution;
- c) support initiatives to reduce and/or eliminate idling times;
- d) promote tree planting and innovative green spaces, such as green roofs on new and existing development, to reduce energy use through shading and sheltering; and,
- e) encourage the provision of renewable energy sources (i.e., other than fossil fuels) to facilitate the use of alternate modes of travel, such as by providing pay-as-you-go electrical outlets for electric-powered bicycles, scooters and vehicles;

Water Conservation

Water conservation can help reduce water and wastewater infrastructure costs and protect these resources for future generations. Moreover, the conservation of water has benefits from environmental, social and economic perspectives. It is a policy of the Municipality to:

- a) encourage the reduction of water consumption levels through the promotion of the efficient use of water and the implementation of water saving technologies;
- b) encourage the use of alternative water supply and demand management systems such as, rain water harvesting and grey water reuse in all new development and/or redevelopment;
- c) encourage property owners to utilize low water use/drought-tolerant landscaping alternatives to minimize water consumption;
- d) support water efficiency measures that reduce the demand for energy to pump and treat water resources;
- e) supporting reductions in stormwater flows to stormwater and sanitary sewer systems by using approaches such as the use of pervious and natural surfaces, and diverting surface runoff to pervious and natural areas;
- f) encourage educational initiatives and awareness programs to educate the public on methods of water conservation;

- g) monitor, analyze and report on water usage and conservation at municipal facilities regularly;
- h) encourage use of rainwater cisterns and barrels, in a manner that would not allow stagnant water to become a breeding ground for mosquitoes, to collect water from rooftops to irrigate lawns and gardens;
- i) promote the responsible disconnection of rooftop downspouts on lots where water can be directed to pervious or grassy areas and gardens provided the water is capable of being absorbed within a couple of days to prevent stagnant water;
- j) promote planting of drought-resistant species, perennials and ground covers that do not require irrigation; and,
- k) work with other government agencies, municipalities and others on integrated and coordinated water conservation initiatives.

Tree Canopy

Supporting the protection and enhancement of tree canopies can contribute to improvements to air and water quality, reductions in greenhouse gases, the support of biodiversity, and enhancement of natural features and systems. It is a policy of the Municipality to:

- a) encourage the planting of native or non-native non-invasive tree species and vegetation that are resilient to climate change and provide high levels of carbon sequestration, particularly through new development and on municipally-owned land;
- b) implement measures to protect, enhance, and expand the tree canopy, including but not limited to:
 - i) requiring tree planting in areas of extensive surface parking; and,
 - ii) promoting development that maximizes areas for tree planting.
- c) require reimbursement, in the form of new trees or financial compensation, for all healthy trees proposed to be removed in development applications; and,
- d) encourage tree planting by local residents and organizations, and educate residents about the benefits of planting trees on their property and the environmental impact of removing trees.

Community and Urban Agriculture

Urban agriculture involves growing, processing and/or distributing food in and around urban areas. Urban agriculture can contribute to a sustainable food supply close to markets, providing high quality and affordable product to communities. A community garden refers to any planter, bed (raised or otherwise), or piece of land that is used to produce flowers, fruits, and/or vegetables as a community, neighbourhood or group initiative. Participation in a community garden project is intended to be peaceful, cooperative and inclusive and to foster intergenerational interaction. It is a policy of the Municipality to:

- a) promote the growing of food and support protection of agricultural land, to enhance food security and support community interaction;
- b) promote the growing and sharing of a wide variety of local produce and preserved foods year-round;

- c) encourage private landowners, including schools, churches and other community groups to initiate community garden projects;
- d) permit community gardens and the keeping of backyard poultry in all land use designations. Community gardens and associated accessory structures, such as garden sheds, shall be minor in scale and secondary to the primary permitted land use(s);
- e) generally not encourage community gardens on lands zoned Environmental Protection in the Municipality's Zoning By-law, however where proposed shall be subject to the approval of the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority;
- f) require that the owners and/or operators of community gardens on privately or publicly owned land, intended for public use, to enter into an agreement with the Municipality address matters including, but not limited to, ownership/operator responsibilities and maintenance, insurance and security requirements, the location and appearance of structures, and irrigation sources and usage;
- g) prohibit community gardens on any site that is known or suspected to have contaminated soils. In accordance with O.Reg. 153/04 of the Environmental Protection Act, only lands where the current or last known use was residential, parkland agricultural will be considered for a community garden unless a Record of Site Condition has been filed for the lands indicating suitability for garden use;
- h) require, where possible, that community gardens be located on lands in close proximity to existing community amenities such as trails, parkland and public washrooms;
- i) require that all community gardens be located such that easy access by pedestrian, cyclists, and persons with disabilities is facilitated; and,
- j) support the establishment of seasonal or year-round marketplaces in key locations where locally grown and preserved foods can be sold, and function as places of social interaction.

Community Gardens - Operations

- a) Each community garden shall be operated under the supervision of a planning committee or 'Community Garden Executive' being a group of 2 or more individuals who agree to represent or administer the operations of the community garden project;
- b) The Community Garden Executive shall act responsibly and democratically, and are encouraged to establish and operate under rules, which govern the fair and inclusive operation and administration of the Garden Collective. The Community Garden Collective is defined as all gardeners who contribute to the productive operation of their respective community garden, and includes the 'Executive';
- c) Community garden projects located on Municipally owned lands must be not-for-profit operations;
- d) Subject to approval from the Municipality, the Collective may place small compost receptacles and water barrels on the garden site or may fence the garden area;

- e) A small accessory structure for implement storage may be permitted on the lands subject to criteria established via the implementing zoning by-law; and,
- f) While permission for the on-site sale of garden products may be considered by Council on a case-by-case basis via a Zoning By-law Amendment application, Community gardens are strongly encouraged to establish distribution partnerships with local food markets, local food banks or charitable meal programs.

Community Gardens - Licensing

- a) All community garden projects must obtain a license from the Municipality;
- b) A standard term of the license is to be three (3) years, with an option to renew;
- c) Where a community garden project is located on municipally owned or managed lands, an extended license agreement will be required. Associated costs are the responsibility of the Community Garden Executive;
- d) The purpose of the license agreement is threefold:
 - i) To outline the specific details of operation, management, administration, and maintenance of the community garden project;
 - ii) To outline the responsibilities of each stakeholder to one another;
 - iii) To detail the Public Liability Insurance obtained by the Community Garden Executive to indemnify the property owner and/or Municipality against any loss or injury of persons or property.
- e) The members and contact information of the Community Garden Executive will be specified in each license. At the end of a group's license term, that same group shall have the right of first refusal to enter into a subsequent agreement with the Municipality for use of the same community garden where on Municipal lands. Prior to the end of the agreement, the Executive shall submit written request to the Director of Community Services if it wishes to enter into a new agreement.

Outdoor Lighting

Appropriately placed and designed outdoor lighting can improve energy efficiency and reduce 'dark sky' and environmental impacts. It is a policy of the Municipality to:

- a) use and promote the use of responsible lighting practices that eliminate or reduce light pollution and glare, while maintaining sufficient light levels for a safe built environment;
- b) use energy efficient lighting fixtures in all new and retrofitted municipal facilities and properties, and in transportation corridors owned and/or maintained by the Municipality, such as roads, trails and parking lots;

4.3.3.3 Sustainability-related Design Policies

Effective urban design can contribute to the economic growth and sustainability of areas of commerce, can ensure accessibility for residents and tourists alike, protect local character, and can generally contribute to the 'sense of place' and pride in a community. On this basis, it is our

recommendation that the Municipality consider a number of policies such as the following.

It is a policy of the Municipality to:

- a) *require all new public and private sector development to incorporate high-quality landscaping, including native or non-native, non-invasive trees and other vegetative plantings, to enhance the site, the streetscape and the surrounding area;*
- b) *require all new development to provide amenity for the adjacent public realm to make these areas attractive, interesting, comfortable and functional for pedestrians by providing street furniture, such as pedestrian-scaled lighting, benches, transit shelters, trash containers, bicycle racks and signage;*
- c) *ensure publicly accessible spaces, such as parking spaces, public transport facilities, and transit stops, shall where practical and appropriate be located near barrier-free paths of travel to public roads, municipal buildings, and other governmental recreational facilities, and other public spaces to enable public surveillance and ease of access for persons with disabilities;*
- d) *require the installation of appropriate lighting to help enhance public safety and security and to define the aesthetic and functional quality of public places;*
- e) *encourage the private sector to be proactive in modifying existing private buildings and facilities to improve accessibility;*
- f) *encourage signs that enhance the desired characteristics of distinctive areas, such as Downtown Meaford; and,*
- g) *support signs designed to complement architectural features, the character of buildings, and the surrounding environment.*

APPENDIX I



Memorandum

planningAlliance

planning
urban design
infrastructure
land development

To	Robert Armstrong, Director Liz Buckton, Planner Planning & Building Services Department	Project Name	Meaford Sustainability
From	Mark Stone, Meridian Planning Consultants Emma West, planningAlliance	Project No.	101105
Date	August 17, 2012		
Re	Sustainability in Meaford – Project Update		

This memo provides an overview of the main themes that have emerged thus far in the Project from the engagement sessions held with Meaford Staff on June 6, 2012 and stakeholders on June 27, 2012. It also reflects some of the input we've received through completed Senior Management Questionnaires and Municipal Staff consultation with youth in the community. Some examples of benchmarks, indicators and policy considerations are also provided to illustrate how these themes have been addressed and implemented in other municipalities.

Two sessions were held with Meaford Staff on the morning of June 6, 2012. Each 90-minute session included a refresher presentation on sustainability, followed by 'break-out' sessions in smaller groups to identify and discuss specific sustainability initiatives currently ongoing in the community. This was followed by a discussion and sharing of ideas respecting what behaviours, actions and initiatives the Municipality should start doing, stop doing and change. Participants were also asked to identify any barriers and opportunities to successfully implementing the Municipality's sustainability goals and objectives.

Two additional sessions was also held with a wide range of stakeholders identified by the Municipality and focused on asking participants to identify background information, documents and other projects/initiatives of influence or relevance. Participants were also asked to comment on what the Municipality should start doing, stop doing and change to make Meaford a more sustainable community.

All participants were asked to provide specific input considering the mandate and perspective of their municipal department or organization. However, participants were also asked to provide input from a personal perspective as to what they believe makes a complete and sustainable community. The amount and range of input, ideas and suggestions we received during these sessions was considerable. It was clear that participants were aware of the importance and interconnectedness of the natural environment, social responsibility and the economy. In an effort to summarize the input received, we have identified 8 categories or themes, in no particular order of importance. They include:

- Social Development
- Transportation
- Community Design and Heritage
- Recreation and Connectivity
- Economic Development
- Agriculture

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- Communication
- Municipal Initiatives

Each theme described below is followed by examples of how other municipalities have addressed these themes through the use of benchmarks, indicators and policy considerations. Furthermore, additional implementation tools were also identified in the engagement sessions which include volunteerism and the establishment of a Sustainability Committee, which are described in the following sections.

Social Development

Many identified the need to recognize and assist the most vulnerable in the community. This includes providing resources for people with disabilities, lower income families and individuals, and seniors. Some of the suggestions to meet the needs of the community included providing: housing for all; local health services; a satellite food bank in Meaford; employment services and other life skills classes (e.g. financial management). It was also suggested that social 'inclusion' is a key component to getting people out of poverty, whether it is providing opportunities for people to participate in local initiatives and decision-making, or simply providing opportunities for socializing with others in the community. Examples of how other municipalities have implemented this theme include:

- The Town of The Blue Mountains' Community Sustainability Plan sets a goal to "require a mix of housing types and uses to accommodate the need for attainable housing for all income groups" and outlines strategies/actions to achieve this goal. which include: encouraging Official Plan amendments that permit accessory apartments within existing housing.
- The Town of Huntsville's Community Sustainability Plan outlines a strategic direction to "provide for full participation of all people with disabilities in Huntsville's community and economic life by 2025". An indicator to measure the success of this strategic direction is to monitor the increase in the total number of buildings/facilities that are universally accessible.

One strategic method that many communities are adopting to provide needed resources to the community is through the establishment of community hubs. Community hubs are typically established in public buildings where there is the co-location of services and facilities to provide local access to communities. Hubs can operate outside of typical business hours (evenings & weekends) and provide a wide range of services and facilities including: education, parks, meeting places, health services, indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, drop-in centres for parents or youth, social services, etc. Very often, older buildings used for schools, churches, community centres, etc. are the only buildings available, especially in smaller communities, that are centrally located and have the building space (or land for building expansion) to provide these hubs.

It appears that the community has already incorporated components of the community hub idea, however, we believe there are opportunities to build on and/or create new hubs in the community. Many said that Meaford Hall should continue to be a centre or focal point in the community and in our view, would provide a very good location for a community hub. There are other community facilities that could provide this function including community centres, Riverside Hall (which already provides a monthly breakfast program), churches, etc.

Transportation

Related to the desire to address the needs of those most vulnerable in the community are issues related to limitations many have with respect to transportation. Many of those that we spoke to indicated that a major issue in the community is the lack of public transportation for seniors, low income families and students, to and from locations within and outside of Meaford. Transportation is the key to ensuring that: seniors have opportunities to meet with friends or attend medical appointments; people can get to places of employment without necessarily relying on the purchase and maintenance of motor vehicles; and, students can get to their part-time jobs or post-secondary educational facilities. Examples of how other municipalities have implemented this theme include:

- The County of Huron's Community Sustainability Plan outlines a target to increase public transit ridership by 30% by expanding and refining the existing service schedule as well as exploring the use of school buses outside of school hours as additional public transportation vehicles.
- The Town of Collingwood's Sustainable Community Plan sets a goal to ensure safe, accessible and affordable transportation. This goal is supported by ongoing initiatives including the Active and Safe Routes to School Program and supporting Active Transportation.

Community Design and Heritage

Some of the participants spoke to the need to focus more on community and urban design in particular as it relates to the downtown area. Some also commented on the need to continue to ensure that heritage buildings are protected, given the issues that at times result from the conflict between urban development, economic development and the preservation of heritage. In some cases heritage sites may be good candidates for adaptive reuse as well. It was also suggested that there needs to be a greater emphasis on creating and designing safe communities through initiatives such as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). Examples of how other municipalities have implemented this theme include:

- The Severn Sound Sustainable Plan identifies the need to recognize and protect cultural identity and local arts and heritage. Strategies include implementing heritage conservation guidelines, art tours and encouraging First Nations' history and indigenous knowledge program development. Indicators include: survey results regarding knowledge of local history, number of brochures distributed to visitors and number of visitors to heritage facilities.
- The Town of Bracebridge's Official Plan acknowledges cultural heritage as an important aspect of community sustainability. The OP includes policies to preserve significant cultural heritage resources and to establish a Municipal Heritage Committee to advise and assist the Town on heritage resource conservation matters.

Recreation and Connectivity

Participants spoke extensively about the need to provide and support active and passive recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities of residents. Some of these suggestions included: additional and wider sidewalks; extending and linking trails between living areas, recreation facilities, and the harbor; supporting cycling by providing/requiring bike lanes, racks and storage facilities; providing more local programs for families; providing a year-round community centre and municipal swimming pool; expanding the urban forest; keeping trails open/cleared/accessible during the winter; providing additional opportunities for organized sport; supporting more community events like the annual fishing tournament and the revitalization of recreational infrastructure. Examples of how other municipalities have implemented this theme include:

- The City of Vaughan's Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan identifies action items which support recreation. These action items include: supporting outdoor recreation activities that engage citizens and visitors in Vaughan's natural and green spaces as well as providing access to, and information about, the City's services at community centres.
- The Town of The Blue Mountains' Community Sustainability Plan outlines a strategy to improve trail networks, awareness and accessibility and seeks to implement this by establishing a Master Trail Plan, enhancing the safety and aesthetics of walking and cycling routes as well as improving signage and ensuring linkages are made to higher forms of public transportation.

Economic Development

Many of the participants spoke to the need for a multi-pronged approach to promoting economic development and employment in the community. A common suggestion was the need for a broader approach to support tourism in the community by providing better signage and more information to the traveling public. There was discussion that there is a need to have coordinated approach to tourism that promotes all that Meaford has to offer, including facilities, campgrounds, public parks for day-tripper picnics and natural areas (e.g. Niagara Escarpment, Bogner Marsh).

It was also suggested that the Municipality needs to take advantage of a great opportunity in the harbour by pursuing public and private opportunities to invest in improvements to the area. There was also much discussion about opportunities in the downtown to attract more residents and tourists, to create 'gathering places' and the encouragement of local spending.

From an employment perspective, it was suggested that there is a need to promote home based businesses and the retention of existing businesses in the community, and to provide resources to small businesses. It was also expressed that there is a need to retain youth in the community by providing entry level jobs, career training, etc.

Examples of how other municipalities have implemented this theme include:

- The Town of Huntsville's Community Sustainability Plan promotes growing and retaining local businesses by encouraging the business community to adapt to the needs of consumer demand and to continue to support promotional events.
- The County of Huron's Community Sustainability Plan identifies action items to assist with the retention and expansion of local businesses which include: developing an online marketplace to link local businesses and residents, showcasing Huron County at trade fairs and establishing high speed internet access throughout the County.

Agriculture

Participants spoke to a number of issues and ideas to protect and support agriculture in Meaford. Comments and ideas received included: the need for additional economic opportunities in the farming community; promoting organic and sustainable farming; promoting local food access and choices (including promoting the 100 mile concept); promoting awareness of the farmer's role with respect to food supply and as 'stewards of the land'; promoting community gardens; and the need to promote local labour and the need for a better link with the agricultural community. Examples of how other municipalities have implemented this theme include:

- The Severn Sound Sustainable Plan recognizes the need to enhance the economic viability of sustainable agriculture. Strategies include strengthening local connections between the production and consumptions of goods and services through the promotion of co-ops between farms, supporting farmer's markets and introducing edible schoolyard concepts to schools.
- The City of Vaughan's Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan outlines actions items which support agriculture. This includes developing policies to create opportunities for near urban agriculture within Vaughan's rural areas, through policies described in the City's new Official Plan.

Through the staff sessions, it was also recommended that the Municipality continue to support the Farmers Market as a social and economic hub, as it provides a good opportunity to bring rural and urban residents together to build community spirit and support the local economy. It was suggested that the Municipality could further support the Market through advertising and closing certain streets to encourage pedestrian traffic.

Communication

Comments and suggestions were received respecting the need to improve communication between the Municipality and the public, recognizing that not everyone has a computer or access to the internet. However, it was also suggested that the Municipality should continue to explore options for social media and to encourage communication between community organizations and social groups. It was also suggested that there are divisions between the former (pre-amalgamation) municipalities in Meaford and there should be efforts to remove these divisions. Examples of how other municipalities have implemented this theme include:

- Multiple municipalities including the County of Huron, The Town of The Blue Mountains and the Town of Collingwood have acknowledged providing affordable access to high speed internet as an action item in their respective Community Sustainability Plans.

Municipal Initiatives

Some participants recognized that the Municipality has made significant efforts to reduce costs associated with the provision of energy and water for municipal buildings. For example, the Municipality is eliminating the use of costly water compressors and implementing a more efficient lighting system at the arena. It was suggested that these types of initiatives should be considered for all municipal facilities, vehicles and infrastructure. In addition, it was suggested that the Municipality go paperless. Examples of how other municipalities have implemented this theme include:

- The County of Huron's Community Sustainability Plan outlines action items to assist with maximizing energy conservation within the development and building. Action items include: facilitating workshops for local builders on best practices for energy efficiency, providing incentives and maintaining a database of government programs and resources for best construction and energy efficiency practices with the overall goal of reducing energy consumption in Huron County by 25% overall.

Additional Implementation Tools identified in the engagement sessions:

Volunteerism and Residents as Resources

Through our discussions thus far, it is very evident that Meaford is supported by a vibrant and committed community of volunteers. However, participants also expressed concern that Meaford has not fully optimized and coordinated this volunteer base. It was suggested that the Municipality hire a Volunteer Coordinator to coordinate and support volunteers and programs throughout Meaford. It was also suggested that there is a good opportunity to build on existing programs, such as the public planting bed program and the opportunity to encourage high-school students to assist. In these discussions, it was recognized by many that seniors can provide valuable time, experience, talent, skills and mentorship that will contribute to the building of this community.

Sustainability Committee

We recommend the establishment of a Sustainability Committee to be comprised of representatives from the Municipality and the community. This Committee would be responsible for providing general oversight to ensure that the Municipality continues to take steps towards meeting its sustainability goals and objectives. In addition, the Committee could make recommendations to Council in this regard and if appropriate, could also be responsible for providing limited funding or grants to members of the committee who require assistance in implementing measures that would contribute to sustainability in the Municipality.

APPENDIX II

Natural Heritage / Natural Environment

TARGETS	INDICATORS
GOAL: Protect the natural environment and conserve the Municipality's Natural Resources • 100% of all locally and provincially significant natural areas in Meaford are protected • Georgian Bay shoreline that is natural, protected and connected • Awareness amongst Meaford population on the importance on protecting the natural environment • Protect against flooding through stormwater management • Continue to protect the dark sky by minimizing light pollution • Increased community stewardship for natural environment, focusing on youth in Meaford • Increased trail access with direct connections to and within the Municipality	• Total land area of significant natural areas • % awareness among population as to importance of natural areas • Length of shoreline protected • Length of trails • Number of trail access points • Number of participants/ organizations in volunteer/ stewardship for the environment • Number of alternative stormwater management facilities • Net gain in environmental areas

Social Development

TARGETS	INDICATORS
GOAL: Ensure Meaford is affordable and accessible for all residents • Reduce the number of individual and families living with low-income/poverty • Ensure all events, services and entry fees are affordable • All new buildings will be accessible in accordance with the AOD Act and Municipality's Accessibility Standards • Inclusion of height bonusing provisions that would allow Council to negotiate community benefits, such as affordable housing or community services • Provide more affordable units with new development	• Statistics regarding poverty in the community • Increase in number of buildings/facilities that are universally accessible • Increase in participation of people with disabilities • Diversity of housing options in Meaford • Increase in number of affordable units • Percentage of new residential development that is affordable

TARGETS	INDICATORS
GOAL: Ensure residents have access to excellent healthcare and wellness support • Medical services on par with similar jurisdictions regarding access to doctors, wait times for medical procedures, long term care beds, etc. • All Meaford residents have access to the health and recreation services and programs that they need	• Number of people using support programs (health and recreation) • Proportion of population with a regular family doctor • Number of hospital beds, long term care beds • Patient satisfaction with overall health services • Number of participants in recreation programs and facilities (incl. fields)
GOAL: Provide employment services and other life skill resources for all residents • All Meaford residents are appropriately trained for 21st century jobs • Identify gaps in skill needs and develop programs to address this	• Number of people using employment support services and other life skills classes as they are developed
GOAL: Establish local community hubs in Meaford that are vibrant and accessible • Establish multiple community hubs in Meaford • All community hub locations operate extended hours and provide a range of services and facilities (e.g. education, parks, meeting places, health services, indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, drop-in centres, social services, seniors and youth programs etc.)	• Number of people using services provided at community hub locations • Number of events per month/year • Attendance at these events

Transportation

TARGETS	INDICATORS
GOAL: Develop an accessible, efficient, integrated, multi-modal transportation network • Increase public transit ridership • Ensure that special needs transport services are available on demand at all times • Increase non-fossil fuelled modes of transport (bike, walk)	• Total public transit ridership when public transit is established • Availability and use of special transport for medical needs, disabled, seniors and youth/low incomes families • Percentage change in transit mode share (less car usage) • Length of roads/bike paths/transit routes/sidewalks per capita

TARGETS	INDICATORS
GOAL: Ensure Meaford's municipal transportation system is environmentally and economically responsible - Decrease transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions - Increase the number of carpool programs	- Percentage reduction in transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions (from a baseline) - Average commuter distance (km) per year - Number of carpool programs - Usage of carpool programs

Community Design and Heritage

TARGETS	INDICATORS
GOAL: Foster compact livable communities that are well designed and are environmentally responsible - Growth in Meaford will be accommodated within Meaford's existing urban boundaries - All new development designed and vetted against urban design guidelines - Reduce energy consumption in Meaford - All new public buildings to be LEED certified - Increase number of green design initiatives	- Pattern of population growth - Total area of buildings retrofitted for energy efficiency - Municipal energy consumption - Number of LEED or Green Building certified public buildings - Number of green design initiatives implemented
GOAL: Preserve Meaford's cultural heritage resources - Preserve and protect all heritage buildings in Meaford - Increased interest in heritage in community - All adaptive reuse is tested against heritage conservation guidelines	- Survey results regarding knowledge of local history - Number of brochures distributed to visitors - Number of visitors to heritage facilities - Number of heritage buildings conserved through adaptive reuse - Number of heritage walk participants

Recreation and Connectivity

TARGETS	INDICATORS
GOAL: Create a multi-modal transportation network which strongly supports active transportation and the ages and abilities of all residents to promote a healthy community • Provide and support active and passive recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities of residents • Improved access to and use of active transportation alternatives (walking, biking, etc)	• Unit length of sidewalks laid or replaced in targeted areas • Percentage increase in pedestrian traffic in targeted areas • % of residents within 1 km of a dedicated biking facility • Average commuter distance (km) per year • Kms of bike paths, recreation trails, bike lanes
GOAL: Create a strong network of recreational facilities, parks and open spaces that foster engagement in local programs and events • Most Meaford residents have access to the recreation services and programs that they need • All park space within a 5-minute walk within the Municipality • Provide a year-round community centre and municipal swimming pool • Expand the urban forest	• Number of available recreation facilities (community centres) • Acres of park land per person • Number of trees planted • Number of planned organized events and programs • Number of people who attend events and use program services

Economic Development

TARGETS	INDICATORS
GOAL: Implement a multi-pronged approach to promoting economic development and employment • Increase number of home-based businesses • Economic development group focus on incorporating new and diverse jobs • Retain youth in community through the attraction of meaningful full time employment • Develop a website used by all local businesses and residents to connect businesses to the local community	• Number of home-based businesses • Number of local businesses • Number of young professionals and students • Number of entry-level employment opportunities • Number of businesses that support local events per year • Number of hits on website

TARGETS	INDICATORS
All local businesses support at least 1 local event per year	
GOAL: Support and promote local tourism initiatives and attractions - Recognition of all Meaford natural and cultural attractions from adjacent Municipalities and tourists - Develop harbour into a strong and viable tourist attraction - Develop viable and engaging gathering spaces in the downtown to encourage local spending	- Number of brochures distributed to visitors - Number of website hits - Number of visitors to parks, campgrounds, natural areas, facilities and events - Number of gathering spaces or initiatives to promote the downtown

Agriculture

TARGETS	INDICATORS
GOAL: Protect, support and connect with the Agricultural Community of Meaford - Bring rural and urban residents together to build community spirit and support local economy - Increase the number of additional economic opportunities in the farming community - Establish local food sources in all public schools - Implement at least 2 community garden initiatives - Increase attendance to local Farmer's Market - Educate all Meaford residents about the contribution of farmer's to the local economy - Promote the Good Food Box Program and addition of local product content.	- Number of new agriculture-related jobs - Number of schools adopting local food sourcing into meals - Number of community gardens initiated - Number of people at weekly Farmer's Market - Number of pamphlets distributed - Number of Food Box participants % Local Food Box content # of direct distribution agricultural operations

Communication

TARGETS	INDICATORS
GOAL: Ensure strong communication between the municipality and residents and	- Number of public buildings with free wi-fi - Number of residents with access to high

TARGETS	INDICATORS
businesses - Improved communication between Municipality and public in all respects - Free Wi-fi in all public buildings subject to certain controls - Affordable access to high speed internet for all residents - Continue to have Meaford news published in local newspapers - Regularly update and moderate social media pages - Engage entire municipality as well as Staff in community events in accessible locations for all - Access to computers in public buildings including the library - Have an annual community associations volunteer summit	- spend internet - Number of publications in local newspapers - Number of posts, hits, likes, etc on social media pages - Number of residents and Staffs in attendance at community events - Number of public computers in public buildings including library - Number of people in attendance each year at community associations volunteer summit

Municipal Initiatives

TARGETS	INDICATORS
GOAL: Develop Meaford as a model for a sustainable community 75% of indoor lighting fixtures are Energy Star compliant - At least 5% of a public buildings' materials (based on total material cost) are comprised of recycled content - Create a zero waste community - All Building Department employees trained in green building and construction practices - Annual sustainability summit with vendors for low energy and low water use initiatives - Increase number of LID initiatives	% reduction on energy consumption - Money saved in going paperless - Percentage of solid waste diverted - Residential and municipal waste consumption per capita - Attendance and number of vendors at sustainability summit - Number of LID initiatives