



**ANTIGONISH
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**
Engagement for Results

**ANTIGONISH AS A LEADING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY
*EARLY ADOPTERS KIT***

Antigonish Sustainable Development Project
Antigonish, Nova Scotia

MESSAGE FROM THE ANTIGONISH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

On May 1, 2007, the Antigonish Sustainable Development Project was launched to develop and deliver a framework to advance sustainability in the Antigonish area. There are many ways to look at the concept of community sustainability depending on who you are and where you fit in the scheme of things. We all have basic needs that must be met; we all desire to live productive, healthy lives, and to have the ability to hand the same opportunities to our children and further generations. Sustainability is about maintaining this capacity. Becoming a sustainable community also provides the opportunity to develop a rich knowledge base of achievable actions and best practices which can then be transferred for other communities seeking to become more sustainable.

The Antigonish area is well positioned to become a model sustainable community in the Province of Nova Scotia and in Atlantic Canada. The *Framework for Antigonish as a Leading Sustainable Community* has been developed by the Antigonish Sustainable Development Steering Committee – a committee established to advance sustainability in the area of Antigonish. The framework provides a process for municipalities, organizations and the community to advance sustainability. The project draws on strengths from various models including The Natural Step Framework, The Five Capitals Model and The Ecological Footprint. The implementation of the framework is expected to begin on September 1, 2007.

This Kit includes Early Adopter General Information, Antigonish Sustainable Development Early Adopter Charter and Frequently Asked Questions. We invite you to become familiarized with the Early Adopter Process and join alongside several other businesses and organizations to participate as an Early Adopter.

For the Antigonish Sustainable Development Committee:



Kuli Malhotra, Project Manager
Antigonish Sustainable Development Project



Frank Gallant, Chair
Antigonish Sustainable Development Steering

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ANTIGONISH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT PROJECT SUMMARY

The Project's Purpose

The Antigonish Sustainable Development Project seeks to assist our community to identify and set goals related to sustainable development, and to come up with a framework required for success.

A Sustainable Community

A growing global population, increased consumption and unsustainable demand for resources continue to compromise the “natural capital” upon which we depend for our well-being and prosperity. Sustainability is intended as a means of configuring human activity so that economic and social needs of societies can be met at present and in the future while preserving bio-diversity and natural ecosystems. While there are many challenges that need to be addressed from a sustainability perspective in health, economy, environment, infrastructure, services and overall quality of life; two immediate challenges that demand our attention are climate change and dwindling natural resources. These challenges cannot be met without important changes personally and in the choices we make in our businesses and public institutions.

There are many ways to look at the concept of community sustainability depending on who you are and where you fit in the scheme of things. We all have basic needs that must be met; we all desire to live productive, healthy lives, and to have the ability to hand the same opportunities to our children and further generations. Sustainability is about maintaining this capacity into the long-term future.

Background

In late 2006, the Antigonish area completed Phase One of Antigonish 2020 Foresight, a community-driven visioning project. In Phase Two, which is currently in progress, the community is engaged in identifying projects that mesh with the visions identified in Phase One. These projects will be categorized and prioritized under the four pillars of the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan: economic, environmental, cultural and social. In addressing all sustainability aspects of the project, collaboration with the organizations and community is ongoing. The Antigonish Sustainable Development Project is an outcome of this process.

Transfer of Knowledge

Becoming a sustainable community provides the opportunity to develop a rich knowledge base of achievable actions and best practices which can then be transferred for other communities seeking to become more sustainable. The Antigonish area is well positioned to become a model

sustainable community in the Province of Nova Scotia and in Atlantic Canada because of the leadership taken in this area by the Town and County, and by community interest groups.

Steps towards a Framework

A model for *Antigonish as a Leading Sustainable Community* was presented in February 2007 to provincial and municipal leaders who expressed support for furthering the initiative. The Deputy Minister of Environment expressed an interest in Antigonish becoming a leading sustainable community based on the model that was presented. The Project team has recognized that Antigonish could very well be considered a pilot community in Nova Scotia for implementing a comprehensive framework. Following upon that, the municipal councils of Antigonish Town and County jointly contributed \$15,000 to launch the project and provide professional project management for a period of three months with the primary outcome as the development of a plan to move the Antigonish area toward Sustainability. The project is guided by the Antigonish Sustainable Development Steering Committee (formed in April 2007) made up of 14 community volunteers representing four pillars (economic, social, environmental and cultural), Municipal Councilors, and academia. The project draws on strengths from various models including The Natural Step (Canada's) Framework, The Five Capitals Model and The Ecological Footprint.

The Framework for Antigonish as a Leading Sustainable Community has been developed. The implementation of the framework is expected to begin in September, 2007.

The Framework

The framework is modular which means that it is flexible and it can be developed in various segments and adjusted as we move towards the vision of a Sustainable Antigonish. The project's core operations will be funded from external sources and therefore will not impact on municipal capacity. The Project staff and/or contractors will work with various stakeholders to complete the following tasks:

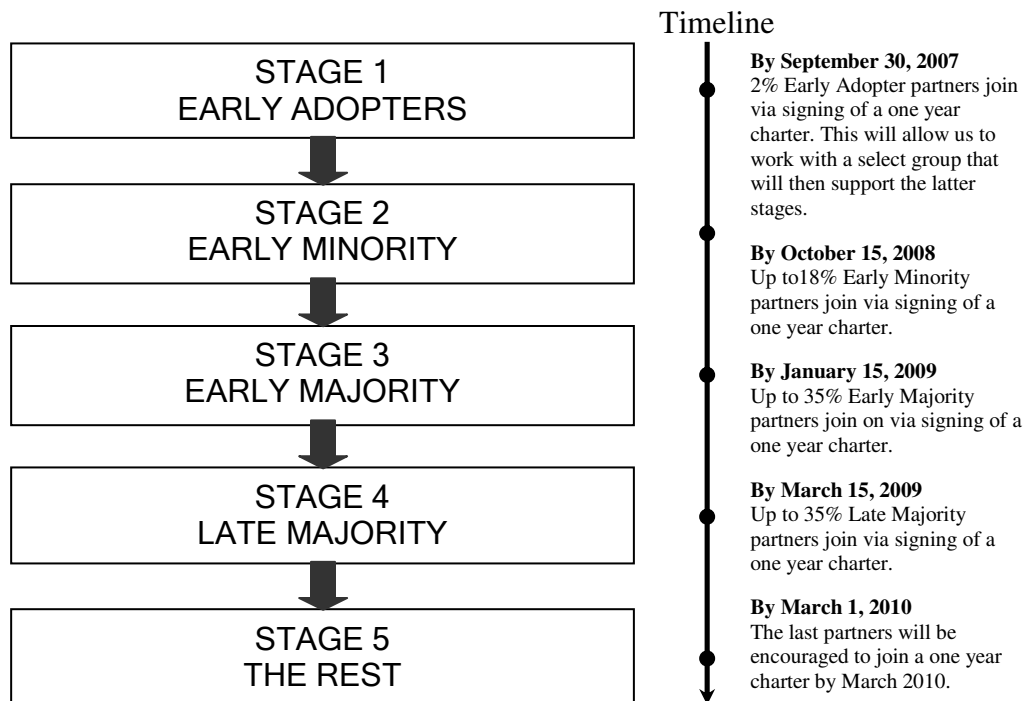
- Aid both municipalities, as appropriate in developing and implementing their sustainability action plans.
- Development of Integrated Community Sustainability Plans (ICSPs) for either or both of the Municipalities.
- Aid organizations and institutions in the Antigonish area in developing sustainability action plans.
- Build educational awareness about and provide solutions to the community at-large for becoming sustainable.

EARLY ADOPTERS GENERAL INFORMATION

Capacity Building and the Adoption Process

The capacity building approach for organizations is based on the Adoption Process¹. The Adoption Process has traditionally been used in marketing and business development and has been adapted for Antigonish based on its success in Whistler, BC and Canmore, AB, and based on recommendations from The Natural Step Canada. The capacity building process tailored for Antigonish has five stages. Beginning with the Early Adopters, the Adoption Process is a sequential approach for building momentum with each earlier stage helping the latter stages. It provides organizations with the opportunity to join at a stage most comfortable for them. Based on an inventory of organization and institutions in the Antigonish Area, there are approximately 700² groups. The goal is to aid at least 50% (350) of organizations to complete sustainability action plans through joining the adoption process. Organizations will be able join in intervals with commitments to develop sustainability action plans. These commitments will be formalized through a charter at each stage that will be signed by organizations in the Antigonish area. The stages of capacity building for the Antigonish area via the Adoption Process are as follows:

Figure 1: Stages of the Adoption Process adapted for the Antigonish area



¹ The Adoption Process is defined in the Appendix 5.6 (Frequently Asked Questions)

² Antigonish Regional Development Authority

For each stage, the following tasks will be completed:

1. Confirm commitment of organizations through signing a one-year charter.
2. Apply specialty streams to enhance organizations' knowledge and expertise for sustainability action.
3. Assist in developing organization-specific sustainability visions, in conducting sustainability audits and in developing sustainability action plans with partners.
4. Evaluate the stage reached, share results and move on to next stage in the Adoption Process.

Specialty Streams for Capacity Building

The capacity building approach incorporates sustainability education through six specialty streams (modules) and the processes to deliver them to ensure the core groups are informed and aligned in moving towards the visions of a sustainable Antigonish. The modules provide sustainability education and guidance in developing action plans for small, medium and large for-profit and non-profit organizations, private and public institutions, government and awareness for the public. The streams and proposed processes for capacity building for all three core groups are explained below.

The speciality streams will run concurrently (overlapping only with those streams offered for the community) with an annual charter signed by the group of organizations participating in each stage. Extra sessions for the streams will be offered on a need-basis to fulfil charter commitments until March 15, 2010. The six specialty streams are as follows:

“Seven Generations Sustainability for Organizations”³ Module

This module helps with strengthening the capacity of business, community and organizational leaders to proactively meet the challenges of environmental sustainability, creating opportunities for enhanced trust, decision making, synergy and high performance. Leading organizations in a range of sectors are viewing environmental issues as an opportunity for growth and transformation. Research indicates that sustainable organizations invest in and protect their future for the benefit of their clients, employees, their financial health and the planet. Developing environmentally sustainable values and activities throughout an organization is an ongoing and challenging process that must permeate the whole organization from the top to the bottom. The module assists those in leadership positions to incorporate a *seven generations* ethic into all activities - promoting decisions for a sustainable environment and a healthy organizational future. This module will run for six months beginning on October 1, 2007 and ending on March 31, 2008 with general evaluations to be completed on a per-session basis and a module evaluation to be completed by April 15, 2008. It is expected that most of these organizations will have joined on as Early Adopters.

³ Seven Generations Sustainability for Organizations: <http://www.peak.ca/pdf/SevenGenerationsSD.pdf>

“I Will if You Will”⁴ Module

“I Will if You Will (towards sustainable consumption)” is a mutual support system that is designed for the community. This module will provide educational awareness and solutions for people to incorporate sustainable practices into their life-styles as a matter of community culture and pride. Key areas where action is possible and desirable: transportation, heating our homes, local and organic foods and wise management of resources such as water and energy. The module was developed by the Sustainable Consumption Roundtable jointly hosted by the National Consumer Council and the United Kingdom Sustainable Development Commission held between September 2004 and March 2006. This module will run for one year beginning on October 1, 2007 and ending on September 30, 2008 with general evaluations to be completed on a per-session basis and a module evaluation completed by October 15, 2008.

“Leader Business”⁵ Module

This module will bring together small, medium and large business organizations to share knowledge on sustainability and its benefits to the economy and their organizations. This module will also assist organizations in understanding the need for good corporate citizenship (balance between economic, social and environmental aspects) and aid in the development of sustainability action plans. The “Leader Business” module was created by Forum for the Future located in the United Kingdom. This module will run for two years, beginning on October 1, 2007 and ending on September 30, 2009 with general evaluations to be completed on a per-session basis and a module evaluation to be completed annually by October 15.

“Good Governance”⁶ Module

Local governments can facilitate the sustainability actions of others through the policies that they put in place. Also, like other organizations and businesses, they can implement sound environmental management of processes and services within their own organizations. This module will assist one or both municipalities to by making available research on best practices and expertise to help implement them. The module is based on the Good Corporate Citizenship Model promoted by the UK Sustainable Development Commission which seeks to create a balance between economic, environmental and social responsibility of organizations – often referred to as the “triple-bottom-line”. This module will be designed to build educational awareness and provide tools for the local government for better planning for the future. This module will run six months beginning on January 1, 2008 and ending on June 30, 2008 with a module evaluation to be completed by July 15, 2008.

“Eco-systems and Human Well-Being”⁷ Module

Everyone in the world depends on nature and ecosystems to provide the conditions for a decent, healthy, and secure life. Humans have made unprecedented changes to ecosystems in recent decades to meet growing demands for food, fresh water, fiber, and energy. The pressures on ecosystems will increase locally, nationally and globally in coming decades unless human attitudes and actions change. Since the decisions that affect ecosystems come from multiple actors, the realities of eco-system damage must become more widely understood. Because sustainable solutions are complex and evolving, both the public and decision-makers must

⁴ I Will if You Will: <http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/publications.php?id=367>

⁵ Leader Business: http://www.forumforthefuture.org.uk/publications/leaderbusiness_page207.aspx

⁶ Based on the Good Corporate Citizenship program: <http://www.corporatecitizen.nhs.uk/>

⁷ Locally developed module

collaborate in innovative problem solving and policy development. This module will explore current trends in eco-system health and discuss local options for strengthening our capacity to lessen our impact on and to live within the earth's life supports systems. By fostering awareness of the importance of our shared interrelationships with all parts of the natural world and the manner in which we are transforming it, we will develop actions that lead to a more sustainable society. Participants in this module will share and develop best practices that will influence sound decision making, policy development and the management of our lifestyles and our effect on the natural world. The conceptual framework for this module comes from the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. This module will run for one year beginning on February 1st, 2008 and ending on January 31st, 2009 with general evaluations to be completed on a per-session basis and a module evaluation by February 15th, 2009.

“Commitment to Humanity”⁸ Module

During the 21st century, human society faces the daunting yet inspiring task of redefining our role as part of the natural world. Extremes of inequality have been shown to accelerate population growth and encourage ecologically damaging forms of resource extraction among the poor, as well as intensify the rate of consumption among the rich. Therefore, the challenge is to reduce disparities through capacity building and to provide everyone with basic human requirements and with access to the knowledge and resources needed for a productive and fulfilling life. This module will be used for enhancing local awareness about these issues while sharing best practices with our community in the areas of social justice, peace, contribution to human needs and the determinants of health. The module will take a holistic approach working with local partners to address sustainable strategies for meeting human needs such as food security, shelter, safety, and mental and physical health on a local and worldwide level. This module will run for one year beginning on May 1st, 2008 and ending on April 30th, 2009 with general evaluations to be completed on a per-session basis and a module evaluation by May 15th, 2009.

Early Adopter Process

The Early Adopter Process focuses on building community capacity by building a common understanding and shared language for sustainability among a variety of community stakeholders, creating local success stories, and then engaging this core group of leaders to disseminate the lessons, knowledge and energy they have gained throughout the community. Stage 1 (Early Adopters) is expected to commence with the signing of a charter by October 2007 – a commitment by Early Adopters to take concrete steps in moving their organizations / institutions towards sustainability. Stage 1 will proceed as follows:

- Between June and September, 2007, interested organizations and institutions will be familiarized with sustainability and the framework of Antigonish as a Leading Sustainable Community. Potential Early Adopters will sign a ‘letter of interest to become an Early Adopter’.

⁸ Locally developed and based on the Good Corporate Citizenship program: <http://www.corporatecitizen.nhs.uk/>

- By September 30, 2007, at least 15 Early Adopter organizations will sign on to the one-year “Antigonish Sustainable Development Early Adopters Charter” which will entail participation in a series of programs designed to familiarize with sustainability, develop an action plan for their organization and aid in capacity building for the later stages of the Adoption Process.
- While developing action plans for their organizations, Early Adopters will also be recognized as the core group in the community that will champion the community’s sustainability planning and capacity building processes. Their organizations will become key drivers in advancing sustainability in Antigonish.

The Early Adopters are a group who are stimulated by the actions of innovators. They are the opinion leaders in the community who watch and analyze information brought forward and then become engaged in the process. Early Adopters serve as examples and help to build further capacity and commitment by demonstrating the viability, benefits, and cost-effectiveness of implementing sustainable practices. Since January, 2007, over 20 interested Early Adopters in the Antigonish Area have already provided letters expressing interest and continue to come forward as the momentum builds. Local groups and organizations representing business, social services, health, education and cultural sectors have expressed strong interest and support in joining on as Early Adopters. In February 2007, an initial model for Antigonish as a Leading Sustainable Community was presented to the Nova Scotia Minister of Environment and other key local and provincial stakeholders who expressed support for advancing the project. Early Adopters are respected and represent businesses, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and municipalities that make the commitment to provide leadership by introducing and incorporating sustainability into their respective organizations.

EARLY ADOPTERS SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE CHARTER OCTOBER 1, 2007 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2008

Purpose

The Antigonish Early Adopters Sustainability Initiative Charter describes the commitments of organizations. Organizations will work with the Antigonish Sustainable Development Project to further sustainability as identified in the Framework for Antigonish as a Leading Sustainable Community within their own organizations and the Antigonish area. The framework is intended to build capacity and commitment among a diverse group of organizations and institutions who will advance sustainable development in the Antigonish area using the Adoption Process.

Scope

The scope of work associated with this charter is outlined in the Project Plan in Schedule 1. The potential costs associated with meeting the commitments of this charter are outlined in Schedule 2.

Objectives

The Antigonish Early Adopters Sustainability Initiative Charter provides concrete steps that will be taken over the period of one year (beginning on October 1, 2007 and ending on September 30, 2008) in an ongoing commitment and journey towards a more sustainable future. Organizations will commit to actively participate in this project in an effort to:

- Build capacity and competence within the organization to become better leaders in sustainable development;
- Create and implement a plan of action that advance sustainability within the organization through concrete actions;
- Serve as role models by sharing the own organization's successes and lessons with respect to sustainability;
- Build an effective network that collaborates and supports progress towards sustainability;
- Build regional momentum towards sustainability by engaging citizens, organizations and governments within the Atlantic Region;
- And identify and act on opportunities collaboratively to help move the region towards sustainability.

Commitments of the Organization

- Collaborate on the design and delivery of capacity building components of this initiative.
- Commit time and finances for 1 – 5 individuals from our organization to attend training sessions and meetings.
- Ensure that the senior leaders from our organization attend strategic functions of this initiative.
- Identify sustainability visions for our organization.
- Conduct a Sustainability Audit of our organization.
- Develop a Sustainability Action Plan for our organization.
- Develop a program to incorporate sustainability into the culture of our organization.
- Participate in a total of at least five workshops and a conference to share success stories and lessons learned, engage in additional learning and collaboratively identify and act on opportunities to help move the Antigonish area region towards sustainability. The expected cost per workshop will be in the range of \$30 to \$50.
- Participate in peer to peer networking with other sustainability partners.
- Play a leadership role in the community and in the region with respect to sustainability.
- Cover the workshop and session fees for our own participation and the associated travel and accommodations for sessions.
- Assist with evaluating the success and effectiveness of this initiative at the end of the charter commitment.

Commitments of the Antigonish Sustainable Development Project:

- Administer the Antigonish Sustainable Early Adopters Sustainability Initiative Charter and facilitate the Framework for Antigonish as a Leading Sustainable Community.
- Collaborate on the design and delivery of this initiative to ensure that project objectives are met.
- Provide high level direction and support, and assist with project management.
- Design and deliver the training workshops and sessions.
- Source local and external expertise as appropriate to aid with initiatives.
- Provide continuous coaching for each of the sustainability partners.
- Facilitate peer to peer networking amongst the partners.
- Provide fundraising support and financial oversight of the project.
- Secure venues and provide logistical support for the initiative.
- Provide internal and external communications.
- Facilitate the development of a communications plan for the charter.
- Assemble and maintain a resource centre (website, books, papers, case studies, PowerPoint presentations, etc.) to support sustainability partners.

Antigonish Early Adopter Sustainability Initiative Charter Agreement

By signing below, we agree to the commitments as described in the Antigonish Early Adopter Sustainability Initiative Charter for a period of one year beginning on October 1, 2007 and ending on September 30, 2008.

For the Organization:

Organization: _____

Name of Representative: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

For the Project:

Name of Representative: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

SCHEDULE 1: CHARTER TIMELINE

September 22, 2007

Signing of Antigonish Early Adopters Sustainability Initiative Charter.

October 12, 2007 (time commitment: 8 hours)

Attend initial full-day planning workshop #1:

- Programming based on types of organization or institution.
- “Leader Business” program.

November – December 2007 (time commitment will vary)

Develop Sustainability Visions for Organization with support from the Project Staff.

January 18, 2008 ((time commitment: 8 hours)

Attend full-day workshop #2:

- Share Sustainability visions.
- Learn about sustainability audits and identifying actions to meet the visions.
- “Seven Generations Sustainability for Organizations” module.

February – March, 2008 (time commitment will vary)

Conduct Sustainability Audit of organization with support from the Project Staff

April 18, 2008 ((time commitment: 8 hours)

Attend full-day workshop #3:

- Share audit findings.
- Session on Developing Sustainability Action Plans.
- “Eco-systems and Human Well-Being” module.

May – June, 2008 (time commitment: varies)

- Develop Draft Sustainability Action Plan with support from the Project Staff.
- Identify at least 10 actions to meet sustainability visions.
- Solidify actions with the support of the Project Staff.
- Implement one action and share with partners through the Project Staff.

June 12, 2008 (time commitment: 8 hours)

Attend full-day workshop #4:

- Share identified actions and best practices.
- “Commitment to Humanity” module.

June 13-14, 2008 (dates to be confirmed)

Attend and participate in “Antigonish as a Leading Sustainable Community” Conference.

June 15 – August 31, 2008

Finalize Sustainability Action Plans with support from the Project Staff.

September 26, 2008 (time commitment: 8 hours)

Attend full-day workshop #5:

- Participate in evaluation of Early Adopters Charter Initiative.
- “Train the Trainer” program.
- Commitment to next steps for capacity building for the Early Minority Stage.

SCHEDULE 2: ADOPTER PARTICIPANT COSTS

HIGH SCENARIO*

Activity	Total Hours (High)	Estimated Wages ⁹ (per hour)	Number of Participants				
			1	2	3	4	5
Workshop attendance (5 workshops)	40	\$20	\$800	\$1,600	\$2,400	\$3,200	\$4,000
Workshop Fees (\$100 / workshop)	-	-	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$2,000	\$2,500
Preparing Sustainability Visions	40	\$20	\$800	\$1,600	\$2,400	\$3,200	\$4,000
Conducting Sustainability Audit	100	\$20	\$2,000	\$4,000	\$6,000	\$8,000	\$10,000
Developing Action Plan	120	\$20	\$2,400	\$4,800	\$7,200	\$9,600	\$12,000
Total:	300	-	\$6,501	\$13,002	\$19,503	\$26,004	\$32,505

LOW SCENARIO*

Activity	Total Hours (Low)	Estimated Wages ¹⁵ (per hour)	Number of Participants				
			1	2	3	4	5
Workshop attendance (5 workshops)	40	\$20	\$800	\$1,600	\$2,400	\$3,200	\$4,000
Workshop Fees (\$50 / workshop)	-	-	\$250	\$500	\$750	\$1,000	\$1,250
Preparing Sustainability Visions	8	\$20	\$160	\$320	\$480	\$640	\$800
Conducting Sustainability Audit	12	\$20	\$240	\$480	\$720	\$960	\$1,200
Developing Action Plan	20	\$20	\$400	\$400	\$400	\$400	\$400
Total:	80	-	\$1,851	\$3,302	\$4,753	\$6,204	\$7,655

*The cost to each organization will vary based on the number of participants attending per organization. The following chart summarizes the low/high scenarios:

<u>Size of Organization</u>	<u>No. of participants</u>	<u>Estimated Cost (Low to High)</u>
1 - 19 employees	1	\$1,851 - \$6,501
20 - 49 employees	2	\$3,302 - \$13,002
50 - 249 employees	3	\$4,753 - \$19,503
250 - 499 employees	4	\$6,204 - \$26,004
500 - 999 employees	5	\$7,655 - \$32,505

1. The above are direct costs as a result of participating in the sustainability initiative. They include the costs for all activities and will be described in the Sample Adoption Charter Agreement include the contribution of time required to meet the objectives.
2. There may be other costs associated including transportation to/from local workshop location (Antigonish Town/County area) that should be estimated by each organization individually.
3. Every effort will be made to provide solutions to support organizations in meeting these costs included but not limited to subsidizing costs through funding programs and joint cost-sharing between organizations.

⁹ Estimated cost (wage/hour) is based on average income in the Antigonish area of \$40,000 derived from the Nova Scotia Community Counts for 2007. Data has been analyzed in collaboration with the Antigonish Area Partnership.

The above costs are estimates and costs can be lower or higher depending on the approach as depicted below:

Example 1: Organization X commits 1 person to sustainability initiatives that attend workshops, sessions and coaching offered through the Project office. The person then acts as a liaison and provides training internally to their organization and works with an internal organizational team to develop a sustainability action plan that is shared with the Project Office for feedback. The total cost up until the development of the plan for Organization X may range between \$300 and \$1000.

Example 2: Organization Y decides to commit 3 people to sustainability initiatives that attend workshops, sessions and coaching offered through the Project Office. Organization X also decides to outsource an environmental consultancy firm to conduct an environmental audit of their organization and get an action plan created through the firm at the cost of \$10,000. The total cost for Organization Y may range between \$11,500 and \$13,000 to meet its charter commitments.

EARLY ADOPTERS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Sustainable Development?

The classic definition

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."¹⁰

A shared framework for Antigonish as a Leading Sustainable Community

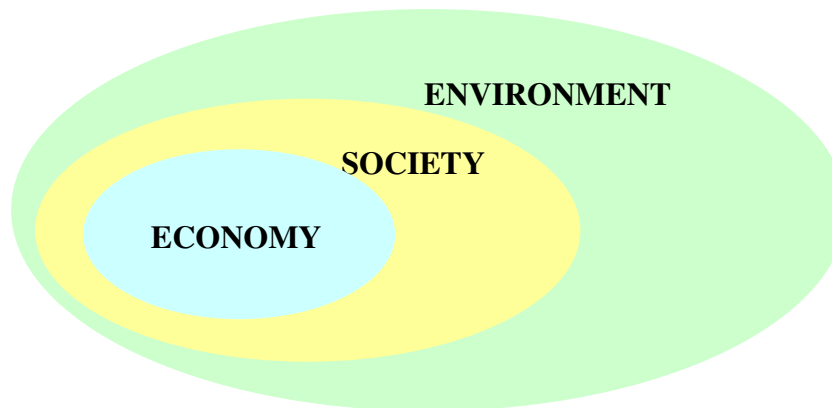
"A dynamic process which enables all people to realize their potential and improve their quality of life in ways which simultaneously protect and enhance the Earth's life support systems."¹¹

What is the difference between Sustainability and Sustainable Development?

Sustainability is the intended outcome. Sustainable development refers to the steps taken to get there.

What is the link between Prosperity and Sustainability?

To further the prosperity of Antigonish, and to maintain a viable economy, the well-being of the community and a healthy culture, we must maintain a healthy environment. To achieve this, it is important that a sustainable approach be taken. The following diagram illustrates how we can best protect our interests for a prosperous and sustainable Antigonish:



The economy is dependant on the health of the society which in turn is dependant on the health of the environment. For prosperity, it is thus important to take care of the environment and society so that our economy can continue to flourish in a sustainable manner. Sustainability is

¹⁰ The Brundtland Report; online: http://www.ace.mmu.ac.uk/eae/Sustainability/Older/Brundtland_Report.html

¹¹ Forum For the Future; online: <http://www.forumforthefuture.org.uk/>

the balancing of these three areas (economy, society and environment) through efficient management of our natural, human, social, financial and manufactured capitals (assets).

What is The Five Capitals Model¹²?

We are facing a sustainability crisis because we're consuming our stocks of natural, human and social capital faster than they are being produced. Unless we control the rate of this consumption, we can't sustain these vital stocks in the long-term. We believe that by maintaining and trying to increase stocks of these capital assets, we can live off the income without reducing the capital itself. But for this to happen, it is the responsibility of every organisation, business or otherwise, to manage these capital assets sustainability. There are five types of sustainable capital from where we derive the goods and services we need to improve the quality of our lives.

Natural Capital is any stock or flow of energy and material that produces goods and services. It includes *Resources* (renewable and non-renewable materials), *Sinks* (that absorb, neutralize or recycle waste) and *Processes* (climate regulation). Natural capital is the basis not only of production but of life itself!

Human Capital consists of people's health, knowledge, skills and motivation. All these things are needed for productive work. Enhancing human capital through education and training is central to a flourishing economy.

Social Capital concerns the institutions that help us maintain and develop human capital in partnership with others; e.g. families, communities, businesses, trade unions, schools, and voluntary organizations.

Manufactured Capital comprises material goods or fixed assets which contribute to the production process rather than being the output itself – e.g. tools, machines and buildings.

Financial Capital plays an important role in our economy, enabling the other types of Capital to be owned and traded. But unlike the other types, it has no real value itself but is representative of natural, human, social or manufactured capital; e.g. shares, bonds or banknotes.

What is The Natural Step Framework?

The Natural Step (TNS) Framework offers a clear and compelling science-based understanding of sustainability and a practical strategic planning framework to help organizations make smart economic moves towards sustainability. The Natural Step framework is now being used internationally by hundreds of organizations, including government departments, universities, municipalities, Fortune 500 companies such as Ikea, Nike, and Interface Inc., and small- and medium-sized businesses. The Natural Step Canada is part of an international non-profit research, education and advisory organization. Its mission is to help organizations, businesses

¹² Porritt, 2000; Capitalism: As if the world matters

and communities make meaningful progress towards sustainability. At the heart of The Natural Step lie four key concepts, or ‘System Conditions’, which collectively define the conditions that must be met for society to be able to live sustainably within the Earth's supporting biosphere. It is only by understanding how the world around us works that we can properly understand how we need to manage our human systems so that they do not breach the limits set by the biophysical world. The four system conditions for a sustainable society under the Natural Step Framework are as follows:

The Four System Conditions for a Sustainable Society

System Condition	In Simple Terms This Means...
1. In a sustainable society, nature is not subject to having systematically increasing concentrations of substances extracted from the Earth’s crust.	This means substituting certain minerals that are scarce in nature with others that are more abundant, using all mined materials efficiently, and systematically reducing dependence upon fossil fuels.
2. In a sustainable society, nature is not subject to systematically increasing concentrations of substances produced by society.	This means systematically substituting certain persistent and unnatural compounds with ones that are normally abundant or break down more easily in nature, and using all substances produced by society as efficiently as possible.
3. In a sustainable society, nature is not subject to systematically increasing degradation by physical means.	This means drawing resources only from well-managed ecosystems, systematically pursuing the most productive and efficient use of those resources and of land, and exercising caution in modifying nature.
4. In a sustainable society, people are not subject to conditions that systematically undermine their ability to meet their needs.	This means using all of our resources efficiently, fairly and responsibly so that the needs of the people, and the future needs of people who are not yet born, stand the best chance of being met.

What is The Ecological Footprint?

“The Ecological Footprint is a resource management tool that measures how much land and water area a human population requires to produce the resources it consumes and to absorb its wastes under prevailing technology. In order to live, we consume what nature offers. Every action impacts the planet's ecosystems. This is of little concern as long as human use of resources does not exceed what the Earth can renew... Today, humanity's Ecological Footprint

is over 23% larger than what the planet can regenerate. In other words, it now takes more than one year and two months for the Earth to regenerate what we use in a single year.”

We maintain this overshoot by liquidating the planet's ecological resources. This is a vastly underestimated threat and one that is not adequately addressed. By measuring the Ecological Footprint of a population (an individual, a city, a nation, or all of humanity) we can assess our overshoot, which helps us manage our ecological assets more carefully. Ecological Footprints enable people to take personal and collective actions in support of a world where humanity lives within the means of one planet.”¹³ To check out your ecological footprint, visit: <http://www.footprintnetwork.org/>.

What is the goal of the Early Adopters Process? What are the outcomes?

The goal of the Early Adopters Process is to build capacity and commitment to plan for and move towards greater sustainability among individuals, public institutions and private organizations in a given community or region. Outcomes of the process include:

- Building a common language and message around sustainability.
- Building organizational support for sustainability.
- Performing a Sustainability Audit of current practices and performance.
- Creating a Sustainability Action Plan.
- Developing and participating in a “sustainability network” of Early Adopters and other like-minded organizations.
- Developing and implementing a community outreach program.
- And once Early Adopters become proficient at incorporating sustainability within their own organizations, they will then begin to collaborate on opportunities for moving the broader region towards sustainability.

How does the Early Adopters Process work?

In a typical Early Adopters process, a group of communities or organizations in the same region come together. Each organization will identify one to three active participants. It is also important that each participating organization have high-level support, even if senior managers are not those who will be participating in the program or implementing changes. Together, Early Adopters will participate in a series of training workshops provided by the Antigonish Sustainable Development Project Office. The office will have support from a network of organizations to develop, implement and evaluate the programs. In the intervals between workshops, Early Adopters will have assignments to take back and implement it within their organization. The basic content of the training will be jointly set by the Project Office and Early Adopters. The content will be flexible and modified to suit the particular needs of one or more of the Early Adopters. For example, if one organization has already completed some training, then their participation as an Early Adopter may take a slightly different form than other Early Adopters. The Early Adopters process takes approximately 1 year, but the timeline is flexible.

¹³ The Ecological Footprint; http://www.footprintnetwork.org/gfn_sub.php?content=footprint_overview

At the end of that year, Early Adopters reconvene to celebrate their successes, review progress on the implementation of their sustainability action plans, and share stories and solutions. There will also be opportunities for promotion and communication about what the Early Adopters are doing throughout the process, and in particular at the end when the group reconvenes.

What are the benefits of becoming an Early Adopter?

Early Adopters will receive many benefits. These include:

- Participation in sustainability training and planning program for up to 3 staff.
- An inexpensive way to develop a sustainability plan for their organizations.
- Ongoing support and coaching from experts in sustainability and input into the development of the organization's sustainability action plan.
- Participation in an Antigonish sustainability learning network with representatives of other Early Adopter organizations in the Antigonish Area.
- Peer networking with other Early Adopter organizations in Antigonish, Atlantic Canada and other regions.
- Potential new revenue opportunities and/or cost savings associated with the various actions and investments that arise through participation in the training, planning and networking.
- Social capital built among employees, other community stakeholders and citizens by participating in the program and sharing a common language for sustainability.

What is the 'Antigonish Sustainable Development Early Adopters Charter' and what are the commitments of organizations?

The Early Adopter Charter is a commitment by Project Early Adopters organizations will commit to using and fostering widespread understanding about sustainability, and through actions, demonstrate how individuals, organizations, and the community as a whole can take tangible, measurable steps toward sustainability. More specifically, within the limits of the organization's resources and capacity, Early Adopter organizations agree to support and adhere to an implementation program, which will be developed specifically for the process taking place here in the Antigonish Area. Early Adopters also commit to:

- Learning about the framework for Antigonish as a Leading Sustainable Community and using it to guide decision-making and new initiatives in their organizations.
- Establishing an internal support network of "champions" within the organization – 2 to 3 staff people who will attend approximately 8 to 10 sessions and workshops over the course of a year.
- Performing sustainability audits within the organization.
- Creating a sustainability action plan for the organization.
- Begin implementing actions based on the plan and report back periodically on the progress made in implementing the action plan and the outcomes from the plan, and share lessons learned with peers.

- Playing a leadership or support role within the community with respect to sustainability.
- Participate in evaluating the program's effectiveness and the outcomes achieved.
- Participate with other Early Adopters in developing a strategy for broad community engagement in the Antigonish Area to promote the lessons, stories and benefits of their experiences with sustainability.