

GENERAL NOTES ON THIS TEMPLATE

What is Smart Planning (formerly Integrated Community Sustainability Planning)?

Smart Planning encourages communities to take a fresh look at their future and take proactive steps to get there. Smart Planning provides a framework for community sustainability planning, i.e. helps communities plan for their own needs while ensuring that the needs of future generations are also met and does so by incorporating an integrated approach that considers broader environmental, economic and social considerations in each planning process beyond current conventional planning frameworks.

Purpose of this template

The purpose of this community assessment is to assist you in assessing your community's readiness to engage in integrated community sustainability planning, or Smart Planning. It is intended to help your community take stock of the: priority areas in your community; the plans and capacity you have in place to address these priority areas and next steps for moving forward with sustainability planning.

How to use this template

As collaboration, public engagement and education are all key aspects of Smart Planning, it is our hope that you will involve a wide range of community stakeholders in the process of working through this template. This might include business, institutional and community leaders, and local government officials in workshops or other forums.

Ministry of Community Services Smart Planning Community Assessment Template

A. Community Context

One starting point for assessing your community's readiness for Smart Planning is to identify current realities and priority areas within your community. This section will help you identify the strengths, challenges, opportunities and priority areas within your community.

A. 1. General

- a) What makes your community special and unique from other communities?
- b) What are the major challenges facing your community?

A. 2. Individual and Community Wellbeing¹

- a) What are the significant strengths of your community relating to individual and community wellbeing?
- b) What are the significant challenges facing your community relating to individual and community wellbeing?
- c) What opportunities are available to your community to improve individual and community wellbeing and further your community's path to sustainability²?
- d) What priority areas within your community relating to individual and community wellbeing do you need to take action on to further your community's path to sustainability?

A. 3. Economy

- a) What are the strengths of your local economy?
- b) What are the challenges facing your community with regards to the economy (e.g. labour shortage or unemployment in your community)?
- c) What opportunities does your community have to enhance its economic strengths in order to further its path to sustainability?
- d) What economic priority areas do you need to take action on to further your community's path to sustainability?
- e) What is the capacity and condition of the physical infrastructure³ of your community?
- f) What physical infrastructure priority areas do you need to take action on to further your community's path to sustainability?

A. 4. Environment

- a) What are your community's greatest environmental assets?

¹ For example: community spirit, a sense of community, art, heritage, culture, health, education, volunteerism, housing, social support, social development, access to community services etc.

² Sustainability: meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs

³ Includes roads, utility infrastructure, hospitals, schools etc.

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b) What environmental challenges or concerns does your community have?

c) What could your community do to enhance its environmental assets in order to further your community's path to sustainability?

d) What environmental priority areas do you need to take action on to further your community's path to sustainability?

A. 6. Overall Community Priorities

Reflecting on your answers in A.2.-A.5.:

a) What are your community's top five priorities that need action in order to further your community's path to sustainability?

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B. Assessing the Sustainability Dimensions of Your Community's Vision

Smart Planning is characterized by long-term thinking. This section will assist your community to identify: whether your current vision accurately reflects the desired future for your community; the time horizon of your vision; and next steps for your community with regard to your community's vision to ensure a long-term, sustainable future.

B. 1. a) What is your community's long-term vision and where is it identified (e.g. in OCP)?

b) What is the time horizon of this vision?

c) As part of creating your community vision, did you consider future forces (internal and external) that might change your community in the long-term?

B. 2. a) To what extent is sustainability incorporated into your community's vision?

B. 3. Keeping in mind your community's priority areas (as identified in Section A), to what extent are these captured in your community's vision?

B. 4. What next steps could your community take with regard to its community vision to ensure a sustainable future?