

Champagne and Aishihik First Nations

Integrated Community Sustainability Plan

**Prepared for the Champagne and
Aishihik First Nations**

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Summary

We, the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations people and our government, shall promote a healthy, unified and self-reliant people, while conserving and enhancing our environment and culture.

This Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) is intended to assist the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations in furthering their infrastructure development and improvement goals while adhering to their vision and values. The plan has been a product of extensive consultation with CAFN citizens and staff, and was approved by Chief and Council on September 17, 2009. However, the ICSP is seen by the CAFN as a living document and will be reviewed and, if necessary, revised in the future.

The Champagne and Aishihik First Nations has a current membership of 1,129. However, not all citizens live in the communities — Haines Junction, Champagne, Takhini River subdivision, Canyon, Aishihik Village, and Klukshu — that are the focus of this plan. Having its citizens spread out among a number of communities, many of them very small, is one of the major challenges facing the First Nation in its efforts to provide high quality infrastructure and services.

The following have been identified as infrastructure priorities for either the CAFN as a whole or for specific communities. The priorities have not been formally ranked and most do not have specific timetables attached to them. The rankings and timing will occur as part of the review and revision of the ICSP in the future.

Priorities across communities:

- Ensuring and maintaining safe drinking water in all communities.
- Energy efficiency improvements for CAFN housing.
- New housing development.
- Solid waste diversion and recycling.
- Public transportation: bus service.
- Community aesthetics.
- Renewable energy projects.

Priorities for Haines Junction:

- Cultural centre.
- Energy efficiency upgrade of the main CAFN administration building.
- Energy and water efficiency upgrades of Daku, the old administration building.
- Energy and water efficiency upgrades of the shop buildings.
- Storage building for the water truck.
- Community garden, community greenhouse and composting program.
- Community daycare.

Priorities for Champagne:

- Complete ground water testing.
- Expansion and renovation of the community hall.
- Energy upgrades for the fire hall.
- Construction of a boat ramp.

Priorities for Takhini River subdivision:

- Water system improvements.
- Community safety: second access road.
- New community recreation hall.
- Community garden and greenhouse with composting program
- Construction of a boat ramp.

Priorities for Canyon:

- Improvements to fire hall and community hall.
- New playground.

Priorities for Aishihik Village:

- Well head protection and water treatment system.
- Upgrades to the Aishihik Treatment Centre.

Priorities for Klukshu:

- A water treatment system.
- Community telephone.
- Construction of a boat ramp.

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1 Introduction

In 2005, the federal government agreed to transfer some of the revenue it collects from the tax on gasoline to municipalities and First Nations in the Yukon for them to build or improve infrastructure in their communities. The Champagne and Aishihik First Nation's share of this money over the past five years comes to about \$1.1 million. So far the First Nation has not spent any of this money and it has been earning interest. In early April of 2009 the federal government announced that the gas tax funding would be extended for another four years, to 2014 and that the amount being transferred would be increased. The CAFN can therefore expect to receive approximately \$1.7 million in gas tax funding between 2010 and 2014.

The CAFN wants to move ahead and use this money for projects in the communities of Haines Junction, Takhini, Champagne, Canyon, Aishihik, & Klukshu.

Before it can use the gas tax money, the CAFN has to write an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP). This document is the First Nation's ICSP.

The plan is based on the principles of:

- A self-reliant community capable of maintaining its population and maintaining infrastructure through local funding;
- Infrastructure that respects and enhances the community's cultural identity;
- Infrastructure development that preserves and enhances bio-diversity and the natural environment;
- Public infrastructure that meets basic needs, while generating economic opportunities; and,
- Considering the effects of infrastructure development on other communities.

The gas tax money can only be used for:

- Public transit;
- Drinking water systems;
- Wastewater and sewage systems;
- Solid waste (garbage);
- Community energy systems;
- Active transportation infrastructure (like bike lanes);
- Energy efficiency building improvements; and,
- Capacity building initiatives connected to specific projects.

1.1 Existing documents and plans

A number of existing documents and plans consulted during the writing of this ICSP. A list of these documents can be found in Appendix C.

1.2 Public consultation

As noted in Section 1.1 above, this plan is partly based on other CAFN plans and strategies. But the process of developing the ICSP has also included extensive community consultation.

The Champagne and Aishihik First Nations began the process of creating an ICSP in 2007. Four public meetings were held to introduce CAFN citizens to the ICSP process and to ask for their input on infrastructure priorities in the different Champagne and Aishihik communities. The four initial meetings were held in:

1. Haines Junction on November 6, 2007;
2. Champagne on November 8, 2007;
3. Whitehorse on November 15, 2007; and,
4. Haines Junction on November 29, 2007.

Following these meetings the planning process was put on hold for a number of reasons.

The ICSP planning process was reactivated in the spring of 2009. To help make the consultation process as broad as possible, a survey was designed to help both inform people what the ICSP is about and to gather some general opinions on how people see their home community and what they wish to see changed or improved there. The questions asked on the survey were:

1. Which community do you live in?
2. What do you like best about your community now?
3. What things about your community would you like to see changed or improved?
4. What would you like your community to look like in the future?

A total of 22 CAFN citizens were surveyed face-to-face in Haines Junction on June 26th, July 1st and July 3rd 2009.

A further three public meetings were held in 2009 to discuss the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan and gather more input from Champagne and Aishihik citizens. These were held in:

1. Champagne on July 15, 2009;
2. Takhini River subdivision on July 16, 2009; and,
3. Haines Junction on August 19, 2009.

All seven of the public meetings were advertised by a variety of means.

At a draft stage, this document was posted to the CAFN website and copies were made available at CAFN offices for further input and comment from First Nation citizens.

In total, at least 60 Champagne and Aishihik First Nations citizens have chosen to have input into the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan.

1.2.1 Summary of public input

When asked what they liked and valued most about their communities, most people responded with variations on two major themes: strong social and community connections, and the multiple benefits of living in close contact with the natural world.

On the social and community theme, people specifically mentioned:

- The benefits of living in a small community;
- Communities that are quiet, laid-back and safe;
- That family ties are strong and beneficial;
- There are many elders to learn from; and,
- That the communities are a good place to raise children.

On the environment theme, people specifically mentioned:

- The importance and benefits of living close to the land and close to traditional harvest areas;
- That the land and water are still largely in their natural state; and,
- How inspiring the natural setting and scenery is.

When asked about what infrastructure projects the CAFN should make a priority, people responded with general approaches, specific projects that would encompass most or all of the CAFN communities, and community-specific projects. This was true of both the survey and for the various public meetings. All of the general approaches and specific projects — both community wide and community specific — are included in Section 4 below.

1.3 Cooperation between governments

The Village of Haines Junction and the Champagne and Aishihik First Nation have obvious overlapping interests in the provision of municipal infrastructure and services within the boundaries of Haines Junction. The two levels of government have service agreements (see Appendix B) between them. Despite the overlap of interests, communication and cooperation between the CAFN the Village has often been far from ideal. However, there are currently efforts being made on both sides to improve the levels of communication and cooperation. It should also be noted that because the CAFN interests span a number of different communities, the First Nation has broader municipal infrastructure and services interests than the Village.

The Village of Haines Junction completed its Integrated Community Sustainability Plan in November of 2007. That document has been consulted during the preparation of this ICSP.

The Champagne and Aishihik First Nations have a number of existing service agreements with other levels of government. A list of these agreements can be found in Appendix B of this document.

2 CAFN vision, values, and goals

The Champagne and Aishihik First Nations' Vision is:

We, the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations people and our government, shall promote a healthy, unified and self-reliant people, while conserving and enhancing our environment and culture.

The Champagne and Aishihik First Nations' values and broad goals are can be found in the First Nations 2009/2010 Strategic Plan. These, along with the broad strategies to achieve each are summarized here.

Goal 1: Develop and Maintain a Vibrant Traditional Culture

Strategies

- Facilitate the transfer of elders' knowledge and our culture to our citizens;
- Incorporate elders' knowledge and our culture in our government;
- Practice and live our traditional way of life;
- Revitalize language and culture; and,
- Increase knowledge and use of the land, and learn to thrive on the land.

Goal 2: Maintain an Effective, Accountable, Unified Government

Strategies

- Have culturally-based laws;
- Have cooperative relationships with all levels of governments;
- All staff and leaders work collectively;
- Establish clear processes and procedures for good governance;
- Build and expand strong relationships with other First Nations;
- Ensure programs and services are efficient and meet community needs;
- Develop legislation, regulations and policies to support program delivery;
- Capacity and human resource development at all levels;
- Youth involvement at all levels within CAFN; and,
- Create a strong communication links within CAFN departments.

Goal 3: Encourage, Support and Respect Healthy Lifestyles

Strategies

- Create a link between Elders and Youth;
- Respect all citizens as unique individuals;
- Culturally-based approach to programs and services;
- Promote healthy and sustainable lifestyles and life choices; and,
- Promote self reliance.

Goal 4: Promote and Encourage Education and Training of Citizens

Strategies

- Incorporate education in the culture/culture in all education;
- Foster or build a love to learn in children;
- Support training in trades and post-secondary education; and,
- Promote life-long learning.

Goal 5: Create a Vibrant and Sustainable Economy of Benefit to our First Nations

Strategies

- Influence the economy and industry in our traditional territory;
- Increase our land base;
- Responsible development and healthy environment in balance with economic opportunities;
- Traditional economies and lifestyles protected; and,
- Collaborate with our corporate subsidiaries.

Goal 6: Develop and Maintain Safe Communities

Strategies

- Community members are included in decisions that affect their community;
- Citizens are home owners;
- Develop programs that promote self reliance; and,
- Shelter is available to citizens in need.

Goal 7: Protect, Respect and Sustain the Environment

Strategies

- Maintain environment in keeping with CAFN values and principles;
- Influence and control activities taking place on our land;
- Prepare for and adapt to environmental change;
- Ensure access to traditional harvesting opportunities; and,
- Foster cooperation with other First Nations.

2.1 CAFN and sustainability principles

The Champagne and Aishihik First Nations' vision, values, goals and strategies clearly address the environmental, cultural, social and economic dimensions of the community's identity as is called for under the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan guide and template.

3 CAFN communities: overview and assessment

The ancestors of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations peoples have lived in the region roughly centred on Haines Junction for thousands of years. Archaeological evidence at found near the present day community of Canyon indicates that the area was used by people of the Little Arm Culture (8,000 to 2,500 BC).

As the Champagne and Aishihik name indicates, the CAFN is composed of two separate, though closely related, Southern Tutchone nations that were initially amalgamated for the administrative convenience of the federal Department of Indian Affairs. The Champagne First Nation are the descendents of the Hutshi, Champagne (Shadhala), Klukshu, Neskatahin, and Dalton Post (Sha'washe) people. The Champagne culture has long been heavily influenced by close association, trade, and intermarriage, with the coastal Tlingits. The Aishihik First Nation, smaller than the Champagne, was traditionally based around Aishihik Lake, both the north end where the village site is located and around Otter Falls. The traditional territory of the CAFN covers approximately 41,000 km², 29,000 km² in the Yukon and 12,000 km² in northern BC.

Over the thousands of years that the CAFN people have lived in the region they have had to adapt to many changes and sometimes to survive disasters. A relatively recent example is the Lowell Glacier surging across the Alsek River near Goatherd Mountain around 1725. The ice dam created an enormous lake, submerging much of the valley, including Haines Junction. In 1850 the ice dam broke and the approximately 40 cubic kilometres of water drained in just two days, destroying everything in the flood path.

But it was the coming of the Europeans to the region that has tested the resilience of the CAFN the most as the pace of cultural and economic change, along with the introduction of new diseases became overwhelming. Jack Dalton established the first trading post in the region at Sha'washe on the Tatshenshini River in 1894 and then operated the Dalton Trail along the traditional trading route inland during the gold rush a few years later. Other trading posts followed, including at Champagne in 1902. This provided a catalyst for families from Sha'washe and Neskatahin to move north as the establishment of the boundary between BC and the Yukon had resulted in them being forbidden to hunt in their traditional territory that was now in BC. The small gold rush to the Kluane region in the early 1900s brought more outsiders and the trail from Mendenhall Landing became a wagon road. The pace of change accelerated again with the construction of the Alaska Highway in 1942. Through the 1950s and 1960s, more and more CAFN citizens left their traditional settlements and settled in Haines Junction, sometimes by choice and sometimes at the behest of the federal government employees who found it administratively easier to have the First Nation people close at hand rather than spread across their traditional territory.

In 1973 the Council for Yukon Indians, led by Elijah Smith of the CAFN, began the land claim process to reclaim some of the land and independence that Yukon First Nations had lost over the preceding decades. The Champagne and Aishihik First Nations were leaders

in the process and the CAFN was one of the first four to sign a final agreement in 1993. The signing of the land claim and self-government agreements has given the CAFN the right to enact laws on a wide variety of matters and the First Nation now has complete administrative control of a wide variety of municipal and social services among others.

The Champagne and Aishihik First Nations has a current membership of 1,129. However, not all citizens live in the communities that are the focus of this plan.

All housing and other First Nation infrastructure in the CAFN communities — including Haines Junction to a large extent — is located on settlement land.

3.1 Haines Junction

The community of Haines Junction has its beginnings as a highway construction camp built in 1942 at the junction of the Alaska Highway and Haines Road. Haines Junction is not a traditional CAFN settlement but is located on well used travel routes. The original name for the area was Dakwakada, meaning high cache, which indicates that the area was an important hunting and fishing region. The community only gradually became a place where CAFN people permanently settled in the 1940s and 1950s after Haines Junction began to grow as a regional centre. The number of First Nation residents increased sharply beginning in the 1960s when the federal government relocated families from Champagne and Aishihik to the community.

The 2006 Census put the population of Haines Junction to be 590 of which 240, or 40%, identified themselves as aboriginal. The median income in Haines Junction in 2005 was \$30,528, slightly below the Yukon's median of \$31,352. The census found a significantly lower labour force participation rate in Haines Junction than in the Yukon as a whole (69.5% versus 79.1%) and a lower employment rate (63.2% versus 70.7%). The population of Haines Junction appears more firmly rooted in the community than Yukoners as a whole however, with 64.2% living at the same address as 5 years previously compared to the Yukon figure of 55.1%.

3.1.1 Community services & facilities

Haines Junction enjoys a variety of services and facilities provided by different levels of government and the private sector.

Haines Junction is on the Whitehorse Faro Aishihik hydro power grid and has access to high speed internet. Mail is trucked to and from the community five days per week. Policing is provided by a 3-member RCMP detachment. Fire and ambulance services are provided by volunteers. The community also has a community Health Centre staffed by community nurse practitioners. There is also a locally-based social worker and local counseling services provided by the Yukon government.

The St. Elias Community School offers kindergarten to Grade 12 and had a total student enrollment of 130 (75 in elementary and 55 in the secondary levels) in June of 2009.

Yukon College has a community campus in Haines Junction that offers academic upgrading programs and a variety of continuing education courses.

Recreational facilities in Haines Junction include an arena, curling rink, swimming pool, outdoor basketball court and a skateboard park. There is also a community library with public internet access, a youth centre, and a community hall.

The Village provides a piped water supply within its boundaries that is also connected to some properties owned by the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations. The municipality operates a solid waste landfill and a recycling and waste diversion program also operates in the community.

Haines Junction has a bank with regular hours and an ATM in the general store. The general store supplies fresh produce, groceries and hardware.

3.1.2 CAFN services

The Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, as a self-governing First Nation under the UFA, offers its citizens a wide variety of programs and services through its departments.

3.1.2.1 Executive Office

The Executive Office of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations consists of the Chief and three staff. The function of the office is to provide support to both the Chief and Council and to the directors of the other departments who report to the Chief.

3.1.2.2 Health and Social Department

The Health and Social Department provides services to CAFN citizens in the areas of employment and social assistance, individual case management, elders fuel benefits, community care, elders programs, recreation, and family health and health promotion.

Alcohol and drug programs include education, support, prevention and counselling.

Child welfare assistance includes support for families experiencing child apprehensions or the potential threat of child apprehensions in and out of the Yukon. This includes court support, family mediation and intervention.

Community wellness and crisis intervention programs include education, support, prevention, referrals and counselling in areas such as:

- Family violence;
- Relationship problems;
- Residential school;
- Occupational and other stress/anxiety;
- Anger management;
- Sexual abuse;
- Mental health;

- Suicide prevention;
- Child protection; and,
- Trauma.

The Elders' Wood and Fuel fund helps elders with their heating expenses while the income assistance program assists CAFN citizens in need of help to cover rent, utilities (except telephone), fuel, and other basic needs (food, clothing, incidentals and laundry). The special needs fund assists CAFN citizens on income assistance with help for winter clothing, special clothing for work, furniture allowance, and a Christmas bonus.

The department provides education, support, referrals and counselling in areas such as:

- Legal;
- Parenting;
- Grief and loss;
- Employment;
- Social skills; and,
- Decision making.

The Work Opportunities program provides citizens who are eligible for income assistance with employment through work opportunities created by CAFN.

The Community Care program provides home support services such as cleaning, laundry and cooking, and other assistance based on individual client care plans.

The Elders program provides cultural, social and recreational activities and/or travel to such activities for Elders who do not have access to transportation. The program also coordinates with the Health Centre to schedule medical travel, or assist in scheduling non-medical appointments such as the eye doctor or dentist.

The Family Health and Health Promotion programs provide support to parents and children (0-5 years of age) in all CAFN communities, with an emphasis on nutrition, healthy parenting, and the importance of breastfeeding as well as providing prevention, awareness, educational and promotional activities, programs, workshops and seminars on current health issues (such as FASD, HIV/AIDS, diabetes, and smoking awareness and prevention) by promoting healthy living and a traditional lifestyle.

Recreation programs provide sport and recreation programs to all CAFN Elders, adults and children in order to improve the health and well being of CAFN citizens, and facilitate a healthy community through sport and recreation. Youth programs provide youth with opportunities to explore different ways to recreate in a healthy, engaging and fun way, in addition to providing a safe environment for youth to drop-in and make use of the different youth centre equipment.

3.1.2.3 Housing, Properties and Municipal Services Department

The Housing, Properties and Municipal Services Department both manages and provides services to CAFN rental, subsidy and CMHC housing. The Department also maintains community infrastructure, community buildings and roads. In addition, the Department carries out new construction and renovation projects.

Any problems in CAFN housing requiring repair are reported to the Housing and Municipal Department and recorded as work orders. The work orders are completed by maintenance staff, signed off by a Supervisor and recorded in maintenance records. The housing maintenance staff is also responsible for furnace and woodstove repair, and enlist the assistance of furnace technicians when necessary. The Housing Department also ensures that oil furnaces are serviced on an annual basis.

The Housing and Municipal Department maintains property insurance for all CMHC units and self-insurance for all subsidy units.

Any CAFN citizen may apply to lease a rental-housing unit. Applications are screened and the Housing Committee allocates houses as units become available. The Housing and Municipal Department collects and maintains rental records, service charges and arrears.

Traditional Dwellings fund to assist with traditional and cultural dwellings on CAFN settlement land are allocated to CAFN citizens annually.

The Housing and Municipal Department oversees and constructs new community infrastructure and makes additions or repairs to existing infrastructure. The Housing and Municipal Department also books hall rentals, issues keys and invoices hall renters. The Department is also responsible for the maintenance of these buildings.

Municipal operators from the Department maintain roads in CAFN residential areas and rural settlements. Municipal operators ensure that snow removal is performed to maintain access in CAFN residential areas and rural settlements.

The Housing and Municipal Department ensures that necessary water and sewer services are supplied to CAFN tenants. This includes paying water and sewer bills for tenants connected to the Haines Junction municipal system, hauling water to tenants in Canyon, Takhini, Champagne and ensuring that homes with septic systems are pumped on an annual basis.

3.1.2.4 Heritage, Lands and Resources Department

The Department of Heritage, Lands and Resources is responsible for carrying out cultural, heritage, land, and renewable resources programs and management.

The Genealogy/Family Tree program provides family tree information to CAFN citizens for educational, cultural or personal interest. This includes information on ancestors, descendants and relationships to other citizens.

The small Heritage Resource Library contains books available for citizens to borrow. When the photo and document archives database (along with an archives policy) is complete, historic documents and photographs will be available to citizens. A booklet on potlatch practices is available free to all members.

The Heritage, Lands and Resources Department offers traditional arts and crafts workshops for interested citizens and others.

The Department is responsible for coordinating Community Planning Teams in CAFN communities to facilitate their involvement in decisions about their own communities. The Planning Teams are made up of five General Assembly delegates and three members-at-large. CAFN has Community Planning Teams in: Takhini, Champagne, Haines Junction, Klukshu, Aishihik and Whitehorse.

The Department is responsible for providing emergency measures information and training to citizens and to CAFN communities.

On land use within CAFN traditional territory, the Department assists CAFN citizens with land use issues and concerns, land applications, land use permits, and YESSA applications. The Department can also issue permits for CAFN citizens to carry out commercial harvesting on settlement land. The Heritage, Land and Resources Department is also able to assist with map requests, and provide map information for personal use for CAFN citizens.

The Heritage, Land and Resources Department issues hunting and fishing permits to citizens, including food fishing and gaffing licenses, and bison permits. The Department also issues access licences and consent forms to non-citizens and maintains records of all CAFN trap lines. The Department hosts annual trappers' workshops and other trapping meetings. Community hunts are also the responsibility of the Department.

3.1.2.5 Education Department

The Education Department provides programs and services to CAFN citizens requiring assistance with: K-12 school support, programs and services; Post Secondary program advising and support services; employment and training advising and support services; daycare programs and services; and Southern Tutchone language program services.

The Shawkwunlee daycare, located in Haines Junction, is available year-round and is open to all community children between the ages of 18 months and 5 years. The daycare is licensed and provides language, cultural, and educational programming on a regular basis.

The Education Department offers weekly Southern Tutchone language classes to Haines Junction residents. Students learn the language from fluent speakers in a class-room setting. The department also offers language nest, a program that targets pre-school age

children. Fluent speakers (in most cases elders) spend time teaching and modelling the Southern Tutchone language to the children on a daily basis. The goal of this program is to introduce children to the language in a natural setting and to encourage the inter-generational transmission of Southern Tutchone. To further help children learn Southern Tutchone, a number of written stories have been developed in the language.

The Education Department offers assistance for CAFN citizens taking part in a Master/Apprentice program through the Department of Education (YTG). This is an accredited program through the University of Alaska and is being offered one to two times per year.

The department administers a number of funds designed to help students and their families defray education expenses. The room and board supplementary fund assists parents/guardians with monthly living expenses for their dependent children who must live away from their home communities because the school they attend does not provide their grade level. There is a separate fund to assist with school supplies. CAFN secondary school students are eligible for academic achievement awards administered by the Education Department. There is also tutoring assistance available to help families of CAFN students from K to 12 pay for qualified tutors and some assistance to CAFN graduates for expenses related to graduation. Finally, The CAFN Education Department offers extensive financial support to CAFN post-secondary students through a variety of scholarships and other funding mechanisms.

The Education Department is responsible for a culture camp that is conducted each year during the school spring break (March) to take youth out on the land on CAFN traditional territory. Youth learn about the land, traditional harvesting, Southern Tutchone language, culture, customs, and history.

The Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement (AHRDA) Program focuses on helping CAFN citizens (status or non-status) living in the Yukon to gain experience and opportunities for meaningful employment. Some examples are:

- Trades training;
- Youth;
- Training for short term employment;
- Training for long term employment; and,
- Summer employment.

3.1.2.6 Finance Department

The Finance Department provides financial and support services to the other departments of CAFN. The Finance Department is also responsible for administering the CAFN donations program to cultural and recreation events.

3.1.2.7 Secretariat Department

The Secretariat Department provides support services to the Government of CAFN, Elders Council, Youth Council, CAFN Departments and CAFN citizens. This includes implementation of land claim agreements, arranging monthly Council meetings, organizing General Assemblies and Youth Assemblies, maintaining citizenship and law registries and communication services.

The Secretariat is responsible for providing business support services to CAFN citizen entrepreneurs who are interested in starting or expanding a business. The department also assists with projects based in CAFN communities that will build entrepreneurial opportunity and capacity.

The Secretariat is also responsible for the Community Justice program. It provides alternatives to mainstream justice processes, although assistance is not limited to people who have been charged with a criminal offence. Services include diversion, mediation, community conferencing, traditional talking Circles and Circle sentencing, and assistance with the fine option program. The program provides information and support for people who are in contact with the justice system or Courts.

3.2 Champagne

Champagne, located on the Dezadeash River along a traditional trade route between the coast and the interior, has long been an important gathering area and trading spot for First Nation people. The construction of a trading post in 1902 and the establishment of the boundary between BC and the Yukon (resulting in families from Sha'washe and Neskatahin being forbidden to hunt in their traditional territory that was now in BC) provided the catalyst for people to settle in the community.

The 2006 Census found a total of 24 people living in Champagne when the census was taken in May of 2006. There were 14 occupied dwellings. There are new house lots now developed and the number of residents is expected to increase somewhat.

The community has a community hall (and another older community hall no longer in regular use), a fire hall, an outdoor skating rink and a playground. Champagne is often used for CAFN gatherings, including potlatches, general assemblies, and other meetings.

Economic activity is lacking in Champagne, there is no local industry, commercial centre and very few local jobs. Residents must commute a long distance for work.

3.3 Takhini River subdivision

The Takhini River subdivision is the newest Champagne and Aishihik First Nations community, with the first houses built in the early 1990s. While the current community is new, the location was long used as a summer camp. Traditional trails branch out from the site toward Whitehorse, Champagne and Hutshi to the north.

There are currently 30 homes in the subdivision, 28 of which are occupied. The subdivision has a total of 100 lots surveyed so there is immediate space for another 70 single family dwellings.

There is a municipal-style building that houses a small community hall plus water treatment facility, stores the fire and water trucks and a separate small workshop. Takhini also has an outdoor skating rink and a playground. The Takhini River subdivision is on the electrical grid, however, cell phones do not work in the community.

Economic activity is lacking in the Takhini River subdivision, there is no local industry, commercial centre and very few local jobs. Most working residents commute to Whitehorse for their jobs and children in the subdivision attend school in Whitehorse.

3.4 Canyon

Canyon is located where the Aishihik River crosses the Alaska Highway. Before the building of the highway the Aishihik people of the area would usually use sites around Otter Falls rather than the current site of Canyon. However, archaeological evidence from the bluff overlooking the community indicates that the area was used by people of the Little Arm Culture between four and ten thousand years ago.

Approximately 15 families live in the community. Most employed residents commute to their work in Haines Junction although there is a nearby sawmill that provides some seasonal employment.

Canyon has a fire hall with a small community hall attached. There is also an old well house at the river.

3.5 Aishihik Village

Aishihik Village, located at the north end of Aishihik Lake is the traditional home of the Aishihik people. Following the building of the Alaska Highway and the establishment of Haines Junction as the region's centre, the population of Aishihik Village began to decline.

The community currently has very few permanent year-round residents. There are a number of summer residences and cabins at Aishihik and a community hall that is used for special events. The Aishihik Treatment Centre — used in the past by CAFN for alcohol and drug treatment, and for programming for residential school survivors — is not currently in use but may be reopened in the future. Aishihik is not on the electrical grid.

Aishihik has a boat ramp and an anti-erosion berm built by Yukon Energy to help mitigate damage done by the development of the Aishihik hydro facility. Aishihik has an abandoned airstrip that was built as part of the network of airfields used to ferry aircraft to the Soviet Union during World War II.

3.6 *Klukshu*

Klukshu is a traditional salmon fishing village for the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations located at the source of the Klukshu River where it empties Klukshu Lake. Salmon arrive after swimming up the Alsek River system to spawn.

Klukshu currently has few permanent year-round residents but several families live in the community seasonally. Although salmon runs have been very poor for a number of years, Klukshu continues to be an important gathering village for the CAFN especially during salmon harvest season.

The community has a community hall equipped with a well and a generator (Klukshu is not on the electrical grid) and a playground. Oddly, however, Klukshu does have high speed internet access through the nearby underground fibre optic cable.

4 CAFN community infrastructure priorities

Some of the infrastructure priorities identified — both by the CAFN government and by citizen input — were community specific while others involved two or more of the communities. The sections below distinguish between general and community-specific priorities.

4.1 Priorities across communities

Maintaining and ensuring the supply of safe drinking water is a CAFN priority across all communities. This will be achieved through community-specific projects as required.

4.1.1 Energy efficiency improvements for CAFN housing

The Champagne and Aishihik First Nations own housing in Haines Junction, Champagne, Takhini River subdivision and Canyon. Improving the energy efficiency of this housing stock is an ongoing priority for the First Nation and various projects to address this issue have been and currently are being undertaken. The First Nation will build on these past and current efforts in the future.

Improving the energy efficiency in the First Nation's housing stock results in both costs savings and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Energy efficiency upgrades also provide training opportunities and capacity building for CAFN citizens in green building techniques.

Going hand-in-hand with improvements in energy efficiency is the need to improve water conservation in CAFN housing. Much of the housing (and all of it in Champagne, Canyon and the Takhini River subdivision) is on a water delivery system. The installation of low-flush toilets and low-flow shower heads will reduce water consumption without requiring residents to change their water-use habits at all. Reducing the number of water deliveries required will result in both a cost savings and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Regular inspection and cleaning of water tanks is also required.

A third housing-related priority is the need to replace oil tanks due to the Northern Housing Trust Project identifying non-certified oil tanks. This priority is currently being addressed in order to prevent any contamination from inadequate oil tanks.

4.1.2 New housing development

As noted in Section 3 above, most of the CAFN communities have settlement land that is ready for development, particularly housing development. Along with the available land, the First Nation has a fully functional organizational, administrative and policy infrastructure in place to allow efficient development of new housing to meet future demand. New developments will create opportunities to meet new and much higher standards of energy efficiency and possibly to reduce fossil fuel use through innovative renewable energy systems.

4.1.3 Solid waste diversion and recycling

The need for the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations government and for CAFN citizens to put greater emphasis on waste diversion and recycling was raised repeatedly during the community consultations. Although there are some efforts at waste diversion in the CAFN communities (e.g., a small free store for reusable items in the Takhini River subdivision, separate bins in community halls) the consensus appears to be that the First Nation and its citizens could and should make much greater efforts to increase recycling and reduce waste.

To successfully make waste reduction and recycling a more integral part of day to day activities will require a multi-faceted approach. In general, if people believe that waste reduction and recycling requires too much thought or effort they tend not to do it even when they understand the overall benefits.

A successful waste reduction and recycling program for the CAFN will likely need to have at least four interlinked components:

1. The First Nation government itself making reduction and recycling within its own internal operations a higher priority. This would include making it easy for employees to recycle by providing sufficient bins etc.
2. Using the fact that the CAFN already provides a weekly garbage pickup service to its citizens as the means to improve recycling among individual citizens. Providing people with bins into which they can sort recyclables and having the contractor responsible for garbage pickup also be responsible for picking up the sorted recyclables and delivering them to the appropriate depot would increase the level of recycling in the community.
3. Coordinate closely with the existing recycling program in Haines Junction and with the contractor(s) currently being selected by YTG to transport recyclables into Whitehorse. It should be possible, for example, to ensure that there is a pick-up point in the Takhini River subdivision.
4. Continue to educate and inform about how to divert waste and recycle and why this is a good thing.

4.1.4 Public transportation: bus service

Currently there is no means of public transportation between or within communities. The CAFN provides an on-demand ride service for CAFN elders who need transportation between communities or to Whitehorse for such things as medical appointments.

The idea of modifying or expanding the exiting service to provide a form of public transportation was raised several times during the community consultations. Ideas include:

- Providing a regular scheduled run from Canyon into Haines Junction and return on weekdays for residents in Canyon who work in the Junction;
- Having a similar run from Champagne and the Takhini River subdivision into Whitehorse on weekdays for commuters;

- Having a scheduled run leaving from Haines Junction on Saturday mornings, stopping at each of the communities and going into Whitehorse with a return run in the late afternoon;
- Any transportation service should be open to use by the general public for a fee; and,
- The van or bus should be accessible to people with physical handicaps.

Any success in reducing the number of vehicles driven will reduce the amount of greenhouse gases produced.

4.1.5 Community aesthetics

An often mentioned means to help make life in the communities better and more attractive is to improve community aesthetics. This will involve both individuals and the community as a whole through the CAFN. Issues mentioned include:

- Removal of car wrecks;
- Tree planting and general landscaping;
- General litter pickup; and,
- Attractive welcoming signs for each community.

Cleaner and more attractive communities also help the tourism industry in developing and maintaining the region and its communities as a desirable destination.

4.1.6 Renewable energy projects

The CAFN continues to have a long-term interest in seeing the development of more renewable energy projects in the region. These include:

- District heating systems (especially geothermal) where feasible;
- Construction of wind energy turbines; and,
- Small-scale hydro projects.

Of particular interest to the CAFN is the use of local biomass (especially the large quantity of beetle kill timber) as a means of replacing imported non-renewable fossil fuels. Whether as heat for a single building (see the Cultural centre priority below) or as a district heat source, using local biomass would provide a means of using some of the wood that will be felled as part of the current fuel abatement strategy and provide local employment.

4.2 Haines Junction

Infrastructure priority projects identified for Haines Junction:

1. Cultural centre.

The construction of a cultural centre in Haines Junction has long been a CAFN priority. The plans are already well advanced and construction is expected to begin in 2009. The cultural centre will include space for a Yukon government visitor information centre and the Kluane National Park visitor reception centre.

This project will provide training and capacity building for CAFN citizens in green building techniques.

A possibility that has been raised is to incorporate a biomass heating system in the building that would utilize some of the beetle killed timber in the region. The CAFN is currently part of planning a fuel abatement program in the region that could provide a source of wood chips (see Section 4.1.6 above).

2. Energy efficiency upgrade of the main CAFN administration building.

The main CAFN administration building in Haines Junction would benefit from upgrading its insulation and energy systems. An energy efficiency upgrade would result in both cost savings for the First Nation and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Operations and maintenance cost savings are particularly attractive as they free up ongoing money for other projects and priorities across the CAFN communities.

Like the construction of the cultural centre, energy efficiency upgrades provide training and capacity building for CAFN citizens in green building techniques.

3. Energy and water efficiency upgrades of Daku, the old administration building.

The old CAFN administration building is still in use and is in need of an upgrade to save on operating costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Again, construction projects with a focus on energy efficiency provide training and capacity building for CAFN citizens in green building techniques.

4. Energy and water efficiency upgrades of the shop buildings.

The needs and benefits for upgrading the shops are the same as for the administration buildings.

5. Storage building for the water truck.

The CAFN water delivery truck is currently stored in the general maintenance shop as there is no other adequate heated space for it. This cannot continue in the long term as this means the truck and its related equipment are vulnerable to contamination of various kinds from the mechanical and fabricating work that is done in the shop. A separate, purpose-built building for the truck will be required because of changes to regulations governing potable water in the Yukon. A wash station for the water and pump out trucks would be included.

6. Community garden, community greenhouse and composting program

A community garden and greenhouse, with an associated composting program, was identified as a priority by some during the consultation project. Benefits identified include:

- Having fresher, better vegetables locally;
- Improving health through having better food;
- Providing some seasonal part-time work; and,
- Diverting some community waste by composting it.

Three years ago a small community greenhouse pilot project was started by the Village of Haines Junction. The program initially included the building and sale of picnic tables, planters and other gardening items. The CAFN has had some involvement with it through its social programs. That involvement has led to a greater interest in developing a similar but larger greenhouse and related employment program.

7. Community daycare

Although Haines Junction does have daycare services, the current need for expanded and improved facilities was raised during the consultation process. To expand the space available and meet current standards it appears likely that a new structure will be needed.

Any new construction will be done to the latest energy efficiency standards and will provide training and capacity building for CAFN citizens in green building techniques.

4.3 Champagne

Infrastructure priority projects identified for Champagne:

1. Complete ground water testing.

Potable water is now delivered to Champagne and the use of wells discontinued in the community following the discovery of a variety of contaminants in the well water. The follow up testing and an environmental site assessment was not completed to clearly identify ground water flows in order to positively identify the source(s) of well contamination. Possibilities include the current solid waste site, old dump sites, the old gas station and old or existing septic fields. Of particular concern is that the ground water may be contaminated by unknown old dump sites and that the contamination of ground water (and eventually surface water) will get worse.

2. Expansion and renovation of the community hall.

The main community hall in Champagne is often used for large gatherings and is not always adequate for them. The hall should be extended, renovated to improve energy efficiency, improve the kitchen facilities to the level required to better meet the needs of larger gatherings, and install low flush toilets and summer outhouses to reduce water use.

As with other construction projects with a focus on energy efficiency, the expansion and renovation will reduce operating costs, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide training and capacity building for CAFN citizens in green building techniques.

3. Energy upgrades for the fire hall.

Improving the energy efficiency of the Champagne fire hall will reduce both operating costs and greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, construction projects with a focus on energy efficiency provide training and capacity building for CAFN citizens in green building techniques.

4. Construction of a boat ramp.

The need for a boat ramp at Champagne has been identified as a need for the community to help reduce erosion and make the launching of boats in the Dezadeash River easier.

4.4 Takhini River subdivision

Infrastructure priority projects identified for the Takhini River subdivision:

1. Water system improvements.

The water treatment plant for the Takhini well requires upgrades to meet the new standards for arsenic treatment. The well also requires a water source protection plan. A generator that would power the well pump in the event of a power outage is also required. Finally, the system requires a backup source of water as the second, backup well in the subdivision is dry. One possibility under consideration is to use the Takhini River as a backup source of water.

2. Community safety: second access road.

The Takhini River subdivision has only one access road. A second access would improve community safety in the event of a forest fire or other disaster. An emergency siren for the community would also improve safety during a disaster. The need for street lights for the community, and especially where the school bus stops, was raised as a safety issue.

3. New community recreation hall.

The Takhini River subdivision currently has a small room for gatherings attached to the municipal building. A priority of the community is to have a hall than can host larger gatherings and has some recreation facilities. The community envisions that the new hall would be built to the latest super green standards, thereby keeping operations costs to a minimum.

4. Community garden and greenhouse with composting program

As in Haines Junction, a community garden and greenhouse, with an associated composting program, was identified as a priority by some during the consultation project. In the Takhini River subdivision, access to water would be a large constraint on this project and it would require a water tower to allow gravity fed watering of the plants.

5. Construction of a boat ramp.

The need for a boat ramp at the Takhini River subdivision has been identified as a need for the community to help reduce erosion and make the launching of boats in the Takhini River easier.

4.5 Canyon

Infrastructure priority projects identified for Canyon:

1. Improvements to fire hall and community hall

The fire truck at Canyon would be ideal to include in a parade of antiques, but is woefully inadequate for its intended use as an emergency response vehicle. It needs to be replaced.

Connecting the existing well at the river to the fire hall will allow the reservoir holding tank to be filled for fire emergencies and improve community safety in the event of either a house fire or forest fires.

Improving the energy efficiency of the Canyon fire and attached community hall will reduce both operating costs and greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, construction projects with a focus on energy efficiency provide training and capacity building for CAFN citizens in green building techniques.

2. New playground

The construction of a playground is also a wish of the community.

4.6 Aishihik Village

Infrastructure priority projects identified for Aishihik:

1. Well head protection and water treatment system.

Although Aishihik currently has few year-round residents, the community does have a mothballed Aishihik Treatment Centre. The community well at the centre has no wellhead protection and is below existing ground level, leaving it vulnerable to possible contamination.

A water treatment system to meet the new potable water guidelines is also required for the community well at Aishihik.

2. Upgrades to the Aishihik Treatment Centre.

At a lower level of priority, the Aishihik Treatment Centre will require upgrades, including energy efficiency upgrades, if it is to be reopened in the future. Upgrades will reduce future operating costs and greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, construction projects with a focus on energy efficiency provide training and capacity building for CAFN citizens in green building techniques.

4.7 Klukshu

Infrastructure priority projects identified for Klukshu:

1. A water treatment system.

The current water system at Klukshu consists of a simple pipe that comes from an underground spring with no water treatment. The community hall has a well but it is only

useable when the generator is running. The well requires well head protection and a cartridge filtration system to treat the well water when it is use. A sand filtration treatment system for both the spring is also envisioned as people wish to avoid adding chlorine or other chemicals to the water.

2. *Community telephone*

A need for an accessible telephone, especially for emergencies, has been identified as a community need. The phone would be at the community hall but would need to be powered by a battery bank with likely a combination of wind and solar power generation to keep the batteries charged.

3. *Construction of a boat ramp.*

The need for a boat ramp Klukshu has been identified as a need to help reduce erosion where boats are currently launched into the lake. However, the need for a ramp has been the subject of some dispute and there are concerns that a ramp, and the launching of boats in general at Klukshu may endanger salmon spawning.

Appendix A: Community inventory and assessment checklists

The checklists in table form provided in the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan guide and template were found to be unhelpful and confusing during the process of writing this plan. The series of notes under each of the headings are provided as a substitute.

Capital Project Infrastructure Inventory and Assessment

Notes:

- The First Nation administration buildings are adequate but limited space within them. In Haines Junction the convention centre is used when a large space is needed.
- Daku, the older of the two First Nation administration buildings in Haines Junction is in particular need of renovation and energy efficiency improvements although the newer building could also be much more energy efficient.
- In the Takhini River subdivision a small community hall is attached to the municipal building. The hall is barely adequate for its current level of use and if the community expands the hall will certainly be too small.
- The main Champagne community hall is too small and the kitchen is inadequate for the gatherings that are held there. The second hall is now rarely used and in need of complete renovation.
- The community hall at Klukshu is in good condition and is adequate for its level of use.
- The very small community hall in Canyon is attached to the fire hall and the building is in poor condition overall.
- Aishihik Village has a boat ramp built by YEC as a mitigation measure and it appears to be in good shape.
- Champagne has an informal boat launch that needs improvement to decrease erosion.
- Takhini River subdivision does not have a boat ramp.
- Klukshu has an informal boat launch that has been identified as inadequate by some but the idea of a boat launch is controversial due to the risk of damage to salmon spawning areas.
- Both Aishihik Village and Klukshu are off of the electrical grid and both the Aishihik Treatment Centre and the Klukshu community hall have generators that are adequate for their level of use.
- The CAFN maintains fire halls and equipment in the Takhini River subdivision, Champagne, and Canyon. All of the halls could be improved (and all need energy efficiency improvements). Canyon's hall is in poor condition and the fire truck is inadequate.
- CAFN housing in all communities is in fair condition but there is a constant need for improved energy and water efficiency and new housing to meet increased needs.
- Most CAFN housing and other buildings in all communities rely on septic tanks and fields for sewage disposal.

- Some of the CAFN housing in Haines Junction is on the Village piped water and sewer system and some is on water delivery and individual septic systems.
- Water table is too high on lower bench of Haines Junction for septic fields, therefore the old administration building (Daku) plus 3 houses are on sewage holding tanks.
- Apart from some on the Village of Haines Junction's piped water system, all of the CAFN housing and other buildings are serviced by the First Nation's water delivery trucks.
- The playground equipment in all communities is adequate but limited in size. May want expansion or upgrading in some communities and the lack of a playground in Canyon is an issue in the community.
- CAFN maintains outdoor skating rinks in Haines Junction, Champagne, and the Takhini River subdivision.
- There is no public transportation in the region.
- The Village of Haines Junction has been extending a multi-use trail out from the community toward Pine Lake.
- CAFN maintains the Aishihik road beyond the campground depending on Yukon government funding.
- Klukshu has special requirements around any developments because of the salmon stream.
- The Haines Junction landfill is used by the CAFN citizens and government but is operated by the Village.
- The solid waste burn vessel at Champagne (a YTG facility) is inadequate for the volume of waste that gets put in it.
- The CAFN provides a garbage pickup service for its citizens in Haines Junction, Canyon and Takhini River subdivision.

Social, Health, and Cultural Services Inventory and Assessment

Notes:

- Alcoholic Anonymous meetings are held at the Haines Junction nursing station
- Health programs — including nutrition, weight loss and diabetes— visit all communities.
- Culture camps (that usually include substance abuse recovery aspects) are held regularly.
- The Aishihik Treatment Centre is currently mothballed.
- Policing for all communities is all RCMP provided out of Whitehorse or Haines Junction detachments.
- Emergency response is a joint program with the Village of Haines junction and depends of trained volunteers.
- Search and rescue with Parks and RCMP plus the Canadian Rangers.
- Recreation programs in Haines Junction are run by the Recreation Coordinator. There is cross use of recreation programs in Haines Junction running both ways between CAFN and the Village.

- The CAFN Social department offers many programs.
- Community justice committee — with 3 CAFN plus 3 Village representatives — runs diversion style programs including circle sentencing.
- Law line is accessible from all communities.
- The Yukon government has a hot line plus access to a First Nation councillor by phone.
- A variety of cultural programs happen at different times.
- The Village of Haines Junction runs an elder drop-in program and the CAFN has an elders drop-in lunch program.
- The Haines Junction has a youth drop in centre and programs. These include a youth musical band in Haines Junction.
- There is an active CAFN traditional dance group.
- Daycare is available in Haines Junction.

Environmental Inventory and Assessment

Notes:

- There is arsenic that exceeds the Canadian drinking water quality guidelines in the Takhini and in Haines Junction water supply.
- Takhini does not have an adequate volume in the well and there is no back up source of supply.
- Champagne has had its legacy shallow wells shut down due to contamination and water is now trucked in from Haines Junction.
- Individual septic tanks and fields are ageing and may need work (special problems with ground movement in Takhini from underground streams).
- Haines Junction village sewage lagoon is tested and seems to have no problems.
- There are ongoing issues at Champagne and Canyon's solid waste burners (that are YTG's responsibility). Often too much waste comes in, everything (including toxic waste) is dumped into the burner and often unauthorized people light it.
- CAFN stores used oil which then goes to a local waste oil burner.
- There are defined developable areas in every community except Aishihik (Klukshu has cabin lots).
- Certified domestic heating fuel tanks are now standard and old tanks are in the process of being replaced.
- Erosion control at Aishihik Village site is the responsibility of Yukon Energy.
- There are some known contaminated sites at Aishihik and old army garage site at Canyon. The contaminated wells at Champagne raise the possibility of a currently unknown dump site near the community that may be the source of contamination.
- Some concerns about healthy subsistence foods including a lack of salmon, worms in the whitefish in Dezadeash and ticks on moose and caribou transferred from the imported elk in the region.
- A student bison hunt is held annually as an environmental education program.
- The Village of Haines Junction holds household hazardous waste days and collects batteries etc.

- The CAFN environmental impact statement is contained in the First Nation's vision statement.

Capacity Building and Job Training Inventory and Assessment

Notes:

- CAFN municipal services department has been fortunate in having had a very low turnover of personnel.
- There has been and is a shortage of skilled trades for construction projects, particularly electricians and the mechanical trades.
- Environmental monitoring training through the Yukon Mine Training Association is currently being conducted for CAFN.

Appendix B: Existing service agreements

Water and sewer agreement with Village of Haines Junction. June 1989.

Mutual Aid Agreement CAFN and Government of Yukon (representing Ibex Valley and Mendenhall Fire Departments)

March 2005

Village of Haines Junction and CAFN Fire Protection Services Agreement, 1996.

Appendix C: Documents consulted

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