

Carcross/Tagish First Nation
Integrated Community
Sustainability Plan
2007

Contents

Carcross/Tagish First Nation	1
Our Vision for the Future.....	4
Our Values	4
Sustainability.....	5
Our Sustainability Principles	5
Our Long Term Goals	6
Measuring our Success	8
Community Evaluation	11
Priority Setting.....	19
Heritage Infrastructure	19
Waste Water Management.....	20
Transit System Enhancements	20
Housing	20
Economic Development.....	20
Infrastructure and Services for Elders.....	21
Special Needs Infrastructure and Strategy	21
Youth Programs	21
Infrastructure Priorities	22
Waste Water Treatment Facility	22
Street Lighting and Shelters.....	22
Public Building Energy Strategy	22
Public Path System	23
Cooperation with the Department of Community Services and Local Advisory Councils	23
Consultation Process.....	23

Carcross/Tagish First Nation

The Carcross/Tagish First Nation (C/TFN) has been settled in the Yukon for centuries. It is made up of two linguistic groups: the Tagish, who are the longer-standing nation in the area; and the Tlingit, a trading nation that moved into the area over the past 300 years or so and intermingled with the Tagish. C/TFN became the eleventh self-governing First Nation in the Yukon Territory on January 9, 2006 after ratifying self-government and land claims agreements with the federal and territorial governments.

The first nation has a population of over 800, many of whom live outside the traditional territory. Members belong to one of six clans: Daklaweidi (Killer whale), Yen Yedi (Wolf), Deisheetaan (Beaver), Ganaxtedi (Raven), Kookhittaana (Crow), and Ishkahittan (Frog). C/TFN's government is based on this clan system, with representatives from each being appointed to represent their members in making decisions on political and social affairs.

Under the self-government agreement, C/TFN has a wide range of powers. Most importantly, it will have governance over its citizens and its own lands. Specifically:

- C/TFN will have the ability to make laws on its Settlement Land in the areas of land use, resource development, hunting, fishing, the administration of justice, environmental, fish and wildlife protection, licensing, taxation for local purposes and the regulation of business.
- With respect to its citizens, C/TFN will have exclusive powers to make laws in relation to its internal affairs and the management of the rights and benefits realized under the Carcross/Tagish First Nation Final and Self-Government Agreements. C/TFN will have the authority to enact laws with respect to the provision of programs and services in the areas of language, culture and spiritual beliefs; health care; adoption of C/TFN citizens, guardianship, custody, care and placement of C/TFN children, marriage, social welfare, training programs, and other matters.
- C/TFN can negotiate Program and Service Transfer Agreements (PSTAs) with government for the transfer of programs and services falling within C/TFN's jurisdiction.

C/TFN's government is continuing to focus both on building up its capacity to fulfill its mandate under the agreement and on running the day-to-day operations for the first nation. It has undertaken a very aggressive schedule for developing the capabilities of its government through education and training, building skills and knowledge in key positions, but this is making it difficult in the short term to get attention on many new initiatives.

The traditional territories of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation are situated in the Southern Lakes region of the Yukon Territory and extend into Northern British Columbia and Alaska. Four communities are situated in the traditional territory, all of which have a mix of first nation and non-first nation citizens. They are, with their respective populations in brackets: Carcross (437), Tagish (212), Mount Lorne (379), and Marsh Lake (405). These communities do not have formal local governments, but are managed by the Yukon Territorial Government, Department of Community Services. Local representation is provided to the government by Local Advisory Councils. C/TFN works closely with the territorial government and with the councils to ensure that everyone affected by policy decisions are included in the process.

Within its traditional territory, C/TFN has full control over 1,036 square kilometers and surface ownership over an additional 518 square kilometers. In addition, it will have co-management and traditional use rights over four special management areas; Kusawa Park, Agay Mene Natural Environment Park, Tagish River Habitat Protection, and Lewes Marsh Habitat Protection. The first nation has the right to purchase additional land as well.

The economy in the area is driven primarily by tourism. Measured by visitor signings in the Visitor Information Centres, Carcross has the highest number of visitors in the territory. In 2006, over 80,000 people signed the register. Unfortunately, almost all visitors pass through the region on the way to another destination (e.g. Alaska), and as a result do not spend much time or money in the area.

As a result, neither C/TFN nor other business interests in the area have seen a significant benefit. The first nation has an agreement in place with some local tour companies: for example, there is an agreement with a Skagway-based company that allows them to trek up a local mountain in four-wheel drive jeeps, but there have been few employment opportunities for its citizens as a result of these agreements. Tourism does represent a good potential source of revenue and employment for the first nation however, especially as many visitors have expressed interest in first nations culture and products.

A second source of business that is growing in importance is mining. A recent agreement between the first nation and a mining company has resulted in the reopening of a gold mine in the area, and exploration activity in the region has been increasing over the past two years. While developing natural resource industries does provide the potential for large economic returns, there is significant concern within the first nation that introducing larger scale resource exploitation may result in long-term damage to the environment. As well, the increased activity may well affect the migration patterns of local wildlife.

In terms of general community facilities, the region has a heated swimming pool for summer use in Carcross, hiking trails, community centres in all four villages, cross-country ski and snowmobile trails, and historical sites and buildings. With the exception of some of the trail systems and some historic buildings, these facilities are not managed by the first nation.

The Carcross/Tagish First Nation has a number of positive assets that will help it in developing a sustainable community, but as well it faces a number of challenges:

- Strengths:
 - Location relative to Skagway and Whitehorse, two regional hubs for the tourism industry
 - Attractive scenery with abundant wildlife
 - Local knowledge and skills in traditional heritage
 - Actively engaging in education and training programs
 - Members who left the region are beginning to return

- Weaknesses:
 - Small labour pool available for new projects
 - Current unemployment rate in the territory (3.5%) makes attracting a workforce to Carcross difficult
 - Establishing self-government is having to use much of the available resources
 - Limited infrastructure in region (public facilities, accommodations, etc.)
 - Limited employment opportunities – few employers in the region

- Opportunities:
 - Strong interest in the area from outside parties (YTG, tourism companies)
 - Border issues may attract Canadian tourists to the north
 - Growing interest in wilderness and eco-based tourism
 - Country-residential real estate market is growing
 - New technologies are making mineral extraction more friendly to the environment

- Threats:
 - Increase in fuel prices is reducing tourism in the north
 - Border issues reduce US traffic
 - “Brain drain”: citizens are attracted to opportunities outside the traditional territory
 - Whitehorse and Skagway build attractions and by-pass business operations in the South Lakes region

Our Vision for the Future

“The roots of the citizens of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation are so deeply entrenched in our traditional territory that we are part of the lands and waters. We understand our responsibilities to the Creator and our future generations to protect the lands, waters and resources of our traditional territory forever. We have been taught by our ancestors to honour this responsibility and to protect our inherent rights as Aboriginal people of Canada.”

Our Values

The values of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation reflect our strong commitment to the stewardship of the lands and waters. We believe that we can enjoy the benefits our environment provides without compromising them for future generations. We understand that a sustainable community is only possible when its members are healthy and able to work together towards common goals and objectives.

The Carcross/Tagish First Nation believes that:

The land is a resource for all generations.

The Carcross/Tagish First Nation depends on the resources provided by the natural environment in its territories, not only to support a traditional lifestyle, but to develop and support a sustainable economy. C/TFN members must do what they can to ensure future generations have the same opportunities. We do not have the right to make our lives better at their expense.

To protect our land, our citizens must have the right tools.

As the vision implies, the health of the land and the health of the first nation cannot be separated: they are completely dependent upon each other. In order to be effective stewards of the lands and waters, C/TFN citizens must be in balance physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. We must connect ourselves more closely both with the land and with each other. Once that balance is established, it will be possible for us to build our capacity to look after both ourselves and our land: we will become more self-sufficient.

Our communities will be a safe and supportive environment for all of our citizens.

Our members have struggled with understanding who they are and what their place in the community is. The loss of connection with the land and our heritage brought about by the policies of assimilation, especially the effects of the mission schools, has led to divisions within the first nation. There is upset both between members, and with people and organizations outside the first nation. In order for the first nation to develop, these rifts must be healed. We must build a sense of community that includes everyone, even those who may disagree with us. We must be willing to learn from each other, and to respect other points of view.

There is also the issue of dealing with the evolution from an Indian Act band to a self-governed First Nation. Whenever such a significant change in a society occurs, new relationships and new ways of managing affairs have to be developed. Citizens must feel comfortable that their interests are being looked after during and after this transition.

We must provide facilities and services that meet the diverse needs of all our citizens, from educational centres for our youth, through housing and training/educational opportunities for adult citizens, to supported living accommodations and social programs for our elderly members.

Sustainability

We believe that sustainability involves reaching and maintaining a balance in all spheres of our existence. A healthy, sustainable community requires its members to be able to meet their individual needs, and to be able to support each other.

It is equally important that these personal needs are met in a way that does not make it more difficult for others to meet their own needs. This includes the needs of future members of our community and of society in general.

We are all dependant on the environment around us to provide the basic necessities of life including clean air and water. As well, nature provides the food we eat, the raw materials that provide shelter and many of the objects that enhance our lifestyle. We must ensure that nature can replace what we use from it, and that we do not affect its ability to regenerate its bounty.

Our Sustainability Principles

As we plan for the future, the Carcross/Tagish First Nation will use sustainability principles to help guide our decisions. These principles will help ensure that the actions we take today and in the future will move us closer to our goals while continuing to provide for future generations.

Based on the desire to ensure that our community and residents are able to meet their needs within the ability of the environment to maintain itself, we will apply the following sustainability principles to our planning and development:

In our sustainable community, we will:

1. *Do no harm to the land, water, and air*
2. *Encourage a sustainable, independent, healthy lifestyle for our citizens*
3. *Provide opportunities for educational and skills development consistent with our traditional values and practices*
4. *Work collaboratively with all the interests in the area*
5. *Focus on personal and regional development that is consistent with traditional values*

Our Long Term Goals

Our infrastructure, our buildings, roads, community services, and businesses, will not damage the environment's sustainability, and we will encourage awareness of our effects on the land, air, and water.

Everything that we do can affect the environment around us. We can make choices about how we live that will minimize those effects, and ensure that those who come after us can enjoy the same bounty and benefits that our land brings to us now.

Our citizens will strengthen their connection with the land and with each other.

A number of factors have contributed to the loss of connection with the land that many of our community now experience. We believe that re-establishing that connection is critical to our development and growth, and to a greater understanding of who we are.

Those same factors have also played a role in the divisions that have appeared between members of our community. We must work towards establishing a common purpose, and a greater sense of unity for our people. Again, we believe that a connection with the land and our heritage will be a critical part of that connection.

We will focus our efforts to encourage a better understanding of the world around us through education in both traditional skills and values as well as school-based learning.

We recognize the importance of learning, and of having the knowledge and skills that will help us manage our environment, economy, and community more effectively.

The Carcross/Tagish First Nation will enable the capacity development and learning of its citizens.

C/TFN must ensure that the activities of its citizens and government encourage members to become more independent and develop the skills and knowledge associated with both first nations heritage and participation in the local communities

Our infrastructure will support our traditions and beliefs

We must ensure that the services, programs, buildings, and any other support we provide reflects and sustains the principles and values on which our society is based. We must develop systems that are relevant to our community members, and that reinforce our connection with our heritage and our land.

The Carcross/Tagish First Nation will work towards developing shared goals and objectives with other community and government bodies

We share our territory with many people who are not members of our nation, and must ensure that we encourage them to share their experience, knowledge, and participation in the process of building the future of the region.

We will evaluate environmentally-friendly alternatives for housing and infrastructure

As new technologies for building and heating houses and other buildings emerge, C/TFN will evaluate how best to take advantage of them, both to manage the cost of ownership and to help preserve the environment. This will include looking at alternative energy sources, such as bio-fuels, and at new construction methods to reduce the consumption of energy.

C/TFN will look to provide facilities to support a modest population growth

Feedback from participants in the planning process clearly indicated that while some growth in population was seen as desirable, the small-town feel of the region is an important quality-of-life issue.

We will develop a local year-round economy

Most of the tourism-related jobs in the region are seasonal, leading to higher unemployment over the winter. The region has a large number of trails that could attract cross-country skiers, snow-shoe hikers, and ski-doo trekkers to the area. As well, with a cultural facility, courses in traditional crafts could be offered on a year-round basis.

One requirement for developing a sustainable tourism-based economy is the availability of accommodations for visitors. Ideally, these facilities will meet the needs of a broad range of visitors, and would include: camp-sites and parks for tents and recreational vehicles; small cabins; a motel; and a resort, such as the Four-Mountains initiative currently in early planning.

Economic opportunities for current residents and prospective new residents are critical to increasing the population of any community. We will work to expand our economic base to help us meet our goal of a modest growth in population. We also understand the need to diversify our economy to ensure that our community is economically sustainable in the long term. Large resource developments tend to be cyclical in nature. While we welcome the benefits that large projects provide, we will work on longer-term community based economic development to ensure that the community is less affected by any potential downturn in the resource economy.

Measuring our Success

It is important that our community goals are aligned with the values of our community members. It is also critical to set out ways to measure whether or not we are reaching our goals.

To ensure we are making real progress in meeting our goals, we have identified measurements and targets that will indicate success in meeting each one of our community goals.

Values, Goals, and Measures of Success

The land is a resource for all generations

- Our infrastructure, our buildings, roads, community services, and businesses, will not damage the environment's sustainability, and we will encourage awareness of our effects on the land, air, and water
 - The Carcross/Tagish First Nation will adopt and support a community land plan by July of 2008

- C/TFN will sponsor 3 projects that will promote alternative transportation modes to individual vehicles
- We will build a facility to ensure our sewage disposal process does not pose a risk to the environment or to the health of our community members
- C/TFN will evaluate different energy sources to ensure we are using the cleanest and most effective alternatives

To protect the land, our citizens must have the right tools

- Our members must reconnect with the land and with each other
 - Regular social events will be held that will be open to all members where clan stories and history will be shared
 - We will hold an event to allow healing and reconciliation at the mission school site
 - Learning programs will be implemented that encourage youth to approach elders and learn from them
- We will focus our efforts to encourage a better understanding of the world around us through education in both traditional skills and values as well as school-based learning
 - Develop and deliver a program to students on C/TFN history and culture
 - Develop a project plan for an early childhood education centre for implementation in 2009
 - More parents will become involved in school programs and volunteering
 - First nations students will have better attendance across all grades
- The first nation will support the capacity development and learning of its citizens
 - Employment of first nations members will increase
 - The number of first nations members who have certification in a trade or skill will increase
 - The number of businesses owned and/or managed by first nations members will grow

Our communities will be safe and supportive environments for all of our citizens

- Our infrastructure will support our traditions and beliefs
 - We will establish a legal system that is relevant for our citizens and consistent with our values
 - We will build a gathering place in 2008 where cultural and social events can be held in a traditional setting
 - We will ensure the services we provide do not threaten the health or safety of our community

- Our roads will support all forms of transportation
 - Street lights and shelters will be installed for children taking a bus to school
 - A network of walking and bike paths will link different parts of our communities to encourage alternatives to using cars or trucks
 - Sides of roads, especially within communities, will be kept clear of brush

The Carcross/Tagish First Nation will work towards developing shared goals and objectives with other community and government bodies

- Development within our territories will be an inclusive process. Where we have shared interest in our territories, for example within the communities of Tagish and Carcross, we will work towards developing a common set of goals and objectives with community and territorial bodies
 - Joint development of a community plan for Carcross
 - Where appropriate, infrastructure that is developed will be shared with all communities (e.g. a pavilion on the waterfront)
 - All the communities and interests in the region will feel they have an opportunity to provide input to shared planning processes

C/TFN will focus on personal and regional development that is consistent with traditional values

- Build environmentally friendly housing and infrastructure
 - Develop a model sub-division by YE 2008
- Aim for modest population growth
 - Increase member population by 4% each year for the next five years
- Develop a year-round economy
 - Overnight accommodations for visitors available by YE 2009
 - Special events developed and marketed for each season by YE 2008

Community Evaluation

Community Inventory and Assessment Checklists: Capital Project Infrastructure Inventory and Assessment

- Use this list to identify important structures, utilities and transportation assets and the needs that exist in your community.
- If there is something missing from the list add it under “other”.
- If an item doesn’t apply to your community, leave it blank.

Capital Project/Infrastructure	Do you have it? Yes/No	What is the condition? Good/Avg/Poor	Is there enough? Yes/No	Do you need it? Yes/No
City Hall	No	N/A	N/A	No
Airport	Yes	Poor – gravel runway	Yes	No
Community buildings	Some	Poor	No	Yes
Community Hall	Yes	Poor – s/b replaced	No	Yes
Dock facilities	Yes	Poor	No	Yes
Community energy systems	No		No	Yes micro Hydro
Fire station	Yes	Avg	Yes	Yes
Health clinic	Yes	Good	Yes	Yes
Housing	Some	Poor	No	Yes
Internet service	Yes	Good	Yes	Yes
Library	Yes			Yes
Police building	Yes	Good	Yes	Yes
Post office	Yes			Yes
Recreation (parks)	Some	Poor	No	Yes
Roads	Yes	Poor s/b upgraded		Yes
Schools	Yes	Good	Yes	Yes
Sewage collection and disposal	Yes	Avg – poor	Yes	Yes
Solid waste disposal	Yes	Avg	Yes	Yes
Water service	Yes			Yes
Public transportation	No		No	Yes
Active transportation	little	Avg	No	Yes
Youth centre	No		No	Yes
Daycare	Yes	Poor	No	Yes

Community Inventory and Assessment Checklists: Social, Health, and Cultural Services Inventory and Assessment

- Use this list to identify important cultural and social service assets and the needs that exist in your community.
- If there is something missing from the list add it under “other”.
- If an item doesn’t apply to your community, leave it blank.

Resource Category	Type of Service	Does this exist? Yes/No	Can it be improved? Yes/No
Health	Nutrition (Meals on wheels-3days)	yes	yes
	Weight loss	no	yes
	Diabetes	yes	yes
	Substance abuse	yes	yes
	Aids prevention	yes	yes
	Family planning	yes	yes
Public Safety	Police protection	Limited	yes
	Fire protection	Volunteer	yes
	Emergency response	Volunteer	yes
	Search and rescue	Volunteer	yes
Recreation Programs	Small children	No	yes
	Teens	Yes	yes
	Adults	No	yes
Social Service Programs	Child care	yes	yes
	Domestic violence	limited	yes
	Seniors	no	yes
	Disability services	no	yes
	Counseling – adults	limited	yes
	Counseling – teens	no	yes
	Legal services	no	yes
	Suicide prevention	no	yes
Self Government	Self government status	Yes	Yes
Cultural Programs	Elders group	no	yes
	Music	yes	yes
	Subsistence food preparation	limited	yes
	Dance group	yes	yes
	Arts and crafts	no	yes
	Language programs	yes	yes
	Spirit camps	no	yes
	Storytelling	no	yes
	Other		

Community Inventory and Assessment Checklists: Economic Inventory and Assessment

- Use this list to identify important economic and human resource assets and needs that exist in your community.
- If there is something missing from the list add it under “other”.
- If an item doesn’t apply to your community, leave it blank.

Type of Typical Job	Number of jobs?	Is the job filled by a person in the community? Yes/No	Full time? Yes/No	Seasonal? Yes/No	Wage example
Arts and crafts					
CAO					
Accounting officer					
Environmental specialist					
Logger/Forester					
Health aide/Nurse					
Heavy equipment operator		No	yes		
Mechanic					
Construction		Yes	yes		
Housing manager/clerk		Yes	yes		
Public safety officer		Yes	no		
Fire fighters					
Emergency response					
Business owners					
Counselor					
Water treatment operator		Yes	yes		
Sewage treatment operator		Yes	yes		
Landfill operator					
Power plant operator					
Other					
Other					
Other					
Other					

Community Inventory and Assessment Checklists: Environmental Inventory and Assessment

- Use this list to identify basic environmental assets and the needs that exist in your community.
- If there is something missing from the list add it under “other”.
- If an item doesn’t apply to your community, leave it blank.

Environmental Assets/Needs	Do you have it? Yes/No	If this is lacking, does your community need it? Yes/No
Safe drinking water	Not in lakes	Yes
Adequate supply of water	Yes	yes
Certified water treatment operators	Yes	Yes
Safe sewage disposal and treatment (no treatment here)	Yes	Yes - Tagish
Permitted landfill	Yes	yes
Recycling program	Some	Yes
Used oil storage area	No	yes
Lead acid battery collection area	Yes	yes
Developable land	Yes	yes
Fuel spill prevention plan	No	yes
Hazardous waste response plan	No	yes
Erosion control	No	Yes
Contaminated sites identified	Yes	yes
Healthy subsistence food	Yes	Yes
Environmental Education programs		
Healthy wildlife populations	No (declining)	Yes
Hazardous waste collection area	No	No
Protected watershed plan		yes
Environmental impact statement	No	
Other		
Other		

Community Inventory and Assessment Checklists: Capacity Building and Job Training Inventory and Assessment

- Use this list to identify job training, education and capacity building assets and needs that exist in your community.
- If there is something missing from the list add it under “other”.
- If an item doesn’t apply to your community, leave it blank.

Capacity Building/ Training/Education Opportunities Category	Type	Does this job exist in the Community?	Training/education needed?	Is training available in the Community?
		Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No
Municipal or First Nation Administrative Positions	CAO			
	Accounting Officer	Yes	Yes	No
	Other			
	Other			
Education	Principal			
	Teachers			
	Teacher aides			
Health	Health aide			
	Nurse practitioner	No	No	
	Doctor	No	No	
Transportation Utilities	Driver/pilot			No
	Water treatment operator	yes	Yes	No
	Sewage treatment operator	yes	yes	No
	Landfill operator			
	Power plant operator	yes		
	Water delivery service operator	yes	Yes	No
Justice	Other			
	Other			

truck and to allow the operator to have a shower and change his clothes before going out in the community. A project is underway to build such a facility.

Solid waste disposal/recycling depot/hazardous waste collection

The landfill sites for both Carcross and Tagish currently incinerate their trash. It is recognized that this is not an approach that is consistent with our values, and we will work with the Department of Community Services and the Local Advisory Council to move away from incineration and towards reducing the volume of waste generated in the communities and transferring it to a managed landfill. This approach is already in place for Marsh Lake and Mount Lorne.

Certainly this is just exporting the problem, at least to a certain extent, and there are environmental costs associated with transporting garbage. To be more effective, educational programs will be needed to encourage local residents to reduce the amount of garbage they generate and to ensure that hazardous waste is disposed of safely.

This effort ties back to the principles of doing no harm to the land, water, and air, and to the following values and goals:

- Our infrastructure, our buildings, roads, community services, and businesses, will not damage the environment's sustainability, and we will encourage awareness of our effects on the land, air, and water
- The Carcross/Tagish First Nation will adopt and support a land management strategy by the end of 2007

Community Energy System

There is currently no community energy system in place in the region. The high cost of heating the first nation's administration office in Carcross has led the government to begin discussing a new heating system based on biomass fuels. This alternative may become more attractive with the potential development of a potlatch house and ECE centre by the lake to the north of the office.

This initiative ties into the sustainability plan through the following goals and objectives:

- Developing infrastructure that will not damage the environment
- Ensuring our infrastructure supports our traditions and beliefs

Active transportation

There is no formal active transportation infrastructure in the region. There are very few sidewalks or bike lanes to encourage residents to leave their cars at

home. As an example, in Carcross, the main community store, Montana Services, is separated from the rest of the town by sandy dunes and the White Pass railroad tracks. This makes it difficult for people living there to get to the store without taking a round-about approach that takes them onto the highway.

A system of low-maintenance paths could reduce the level of intra-community driving and encourage both local residents and visitors to see the communities from foot rather than driving through. Bike paths could help develop new markets for visitors wanting to get a closer look at the local environment, which would increase the potential for longer stays in the area.

These initiatives could:

- Reduce the use of non-renewable energy sources such as gasoline
- Improve the quality of the air
- Provide local employment for citizens

Public transportation

There is currently no public transportation within the region. With the number of C/TFN members that commute between Whitehorse and Carcross or Tagish and Carcross, and the number of members requiring transportation from others for work or personal reasons (e.g. a doctor's appointment), there may be an opportunity for the first nation to provide a shuttle service to reduce the volume of individual vehicle traffic.

As well, the lack of street lights and shelters at school bus stops makes it more dangerous for children waiting by the side of the road when it is dark during the winter months. This increases the number of cars on the road as parents choose to drive their kids to school, and can contribute to students being late.

Roads

The road system in the region is sufficient for local travel requirements. One issue for Carcross, however, is the accommodation of the large number of buses that stop in the community each day over the summer months. This congestion not only puts a strain on the road system, but creates safety issues with respect to managing both vehicles and pedestrians. It also creates a quality of life issue for Carcross residents as buses block the roads, and the noise and exhaust from their engines makes it unpleasant to be many local yards.

In addition, some secondary roads, particularly in the sub-divisions, require major work as some require resurfacing and others require initial sealing work.

While this is not strictly a first nation issue, many citizens are being affected by it, and it represents a good example of an issue where first nations can collaborate

with other interests in the area in order to come up with a quick and effective solution that is acceptable to everyone.

Priority Setting

The most urgent priority for the Carcross/Tagish First Nation with respect to sustainability is to facilitate the celebration of our heritage and traditions. Without a firm grounding in who we are and where we have come from, it would be impossible to develop a sustainable framework for our community. This celebration is not just a matter of putting together some traditional buildings, the physical aspect of our culture, but as well the education and learning needed to develop mentally, and the spiritual and support resources needed for balance in the other spheres of our lives.

Heritage Infrastructure

It has long been recognized that there is no gathering place within our territory for our people to come together in a traditional setting. Many members have expressed the need for a facility that meets the social and cultural requirements of the first nation. Current facilities are either too small, or in too public a setting for some of the proposed functions.

Such a facility could provide other services as well. Many community members are interested in having a language and cultural training centre. This, and other related functions could be accommodated in a traditional gathering place.

There is also a need for a venue in which local artisans can gather and work on their crafts. The Carcross/Tagish First Nation has a history of producing carvers, sewers, and bead-workers whose works are widely sought after. A facility where these skills can be practiced and shared will help preserve and promote this vital traditional skill-set, and can help attract visitors to the community.

These initiatives support the principles and goals of:

- Encouraging a sustainable, independent, healthy lifestyle for our citizens
- Ensuring our infrastructure will support our traditions and beliefs
- Reconnecting with the land and with each other
- Enabling the capacity development and learning of our citizens

Waste Water Management

C/TFN provides a waste water disposal service for Carcross residents. Currently, there is no facility in which both vehicle and operator can be cleaned safely, especially during the colder months. The building could also be used to perform routine maintenance on the vehicle.

Transit System Enhancements

During the winter months, children in the region often go to school and return home while it is dark. Currently, there are no street lights or shelters for them to use while waiting for the school bus. Not only does this make the wait very cold, but without sidewalks and with high banks, the road-side is not a safe environment for the children.

In turn, this makes them dependent upon their parents or relatives and neighbours for transportation to school. With adults' other priorities and sometimes limited access to vehicles, children can often be late to school, or miss it all together.

A system of shelters to protect them from the wind and cold and street lighting to improve visibility will encourage the use of public transit to get students to school, thus reducing the use of individual vehicles within the community.

Housing

The protracted negotiations over land claims and self-government has had the side-effect of limiting the development of new housing, particularly in Carcross and Tagish. This has made it difficult to attract new business opportunities to the area, particularly in the tourism industry, as there are no places for employees to live, and the long commute from other communities limits the attractiveness of working in the region.

Economic Development

The economy in the region is improving as mining projects are being developed. As well, opportunities to capture a larger share of attention and revenue from the large number of visitors coming through the area can be more effectively exploited. The challenge, especially for the tourism industry, has been the lack of infrastructure, both in terms of formal attractions and support facilities (parking, accommodations, rest rooms, sidewalks etc.). As well, the state of the economy

in Western Canada in general, coupled with a lack of housing in the region, is making it very difficult to attract a qualified workforce to the area.

The plan being developed in Carcross may address some of these issues, at least for that community, but the implementation will require much longer-term and sustained focus from all interests in the region, including C/TFN, YTG, the LAC, and regional tour operators.

Infrastructure and Services for Elders

There are very limited facilities for Carcross/Tagish First Nation Elders requiring homecare. This makes it more difficult for Elders to remain in the community as their need for assisted living increases. They are a vital part of the first nation community, and having them move out of the region to gain access to services represents a serious loss.

Interaction with Elders is an important part of the goal of reconnecting with the land and with each other as they provide younger members of the community with an understanding of their history and heritage, and are able to pass on their knowledge of traditional skills and stories.

Special Needs Infrastructure and Strategy

Some members within our community require a higher level of support than other members do. Whether due to physical disability, mental disorder, or spiritual or emotional need, there are people who need our assistance in order to enjoy the highest possible quality of life.

We need the ability to identify their needs and to bring the appropriate resources to bear on fulfilling them. We don't yet know what this should look like in terms of services or physical facilities, but given the need in the community, it is critical that we get started on this issue quickly.

Youth Programs

As important as Elders, our youth represent our future, and they must be supported and encouraged to develop as members of our community. Recreational and educational programs that promote a balanced lifestyle and an appreciation of our heritage need to be developed.

Venues that would support the playing of both traditional and other sports are needed to build physical capabilities, and meeting places and resource centres are required to provide the educational/mental, spiritual, and emotional support

they need to develop into well-rounded and active adult members of our community.

Infrastructure Priorities

Waste Water Treatment Facility

From the perspective of projects eligible for Gas Tax funding, the top priority is for the waste water haulage garage complex. Not only will the facility reduce the risk of contamination in the community, it will also allow C/TFN to store the vehicle well away from public thoroughfares when it is not in use. In addition, it will provide a venue where minor repairs and maintenance can be made to the truck without the risk of having spills or leaks contaminate the area.

This project addresses the following areas within the ICSP:

- Developing infrastructure that serves all communities
- Building a safe and supportive environment for our citizens
- Providing local jobs for citizens

Street Lighting and Shelters

There are a number of companies that manufacture simple and safe bus shelters. Installing these along with street lighting at strategic locations within Carcross and Tagish will encourage the use of public transit to get students to school. Not only will this reduce the number of cars on the road in the mornings, but it will provide a safe and consistent means of getting children to school for those families that do not have a reliable means of transportation.

This project will help meet the following principles and goals:

- Our roads will support all forms of transportation
- Build environmentally friendly housing and infrastructure

Public Building Energy Strategy

The existing administration building in the community of Carcross is proving to be expensive to heat and operate. Improved insulation, windows, energy management, and potentially a new mechanical system for heating the building will help reduce the amount of energy being consumed and enable a switch from fossil-fuel heating to a more environmentally-friendly renewable energy source.

Success in this initiative may also help with the development of local support industries (e.g. providers of biomass fuels) as well as providing a model for new buildings, including more environmentally-friendly housing.

Public Path System

Both Montana Services and the C/TFN administration building are separated from the main part of Carcross by sand dunes, the White Pass and Yukon Route Railroad, and the Klondike Highway. This has made it difficult for residents to get to these facilities on foot.

Creating a system of paths would encourage people to reduce the amount they drive within the community, and would also make it more attractive to develop the land along the highway, and beside Nares Lake.

Cooperation with the Department of Community Services and Local Advisory Councils

One objective behind the Gas Tax Agreement formula is to encourage different parties within the regions to work together in developing plans for community sustainability. As none of the communities within the first nation's territory are incorporated, there was no opportunity at the local level to have government-to-government collaboration on the plan.

The Local Advisory Councils were encouraged to attend the planning meetings, held in June and July of 2007, and the LAC for Carcross has been actively working with the first nation on developing a community plan to help ensure objectives are developed and met cooperatively.

The Carcross/Tagish First Nation community is committed to continuing its efforts to work with all levels of government, businesses, and private citizens to ensure the highest possible level of consensus is achieved.

Consultation Process

The Carcross/Tagish First Nation advertised their intent to hold three public meetings in the Yukon News, starting on May 23rd, 2007. Announcements were also put up in local stores and the C/TFN administrative building. In order to ensure a broader base of input, the first of the public meetings was held in Tagish, on June 4th, 2007. Subsequent meetings were held in Carcross at the C/TFN administrative building on June 25th and July 12th.

Non-aboriginal input was received at two of the three meetings. As well, informal discussions were held with community residents to ensure the broadest possible range of perspective was gathered. This document has been shared freely with all those expressing an interest.

The first nation is treating this document as a starting point, and looks forward to working with the different parties in the region to continue its development and enhancement.