



**e-Dialogues™**  
for sustainable development

[www.e-Dialogues.ca](http://www.e-Dialogues.ca)

**Royal Roads University**  
**Integrated Community Sustainability Planning**

**e-Audience Dialogue**

---

### **Chris Ling**

Good morning this is the Audience forum for those wishing to comment on today's e-Dialogue on Integrated Community Sustainability Planning. You can view the Panel discussion by opening a new browser window. This forum will be open for 24 hours. It is not possible to post directly to the panel's conversation.

Please introduce yourself, and let us know your thoughts on the panel's conversation.

Please notify me at [chris.ling@royalroads.ca](mailto:chris.ling@royalroads.ca) if you wish to report any spam or inappropriate posts.

### **Gregory Pastirik**

---

My name is Gregory Pastirik. I am the Municipal Intern with the municipal government of the Town of Sylvan Lake, Alberta.

I am currently doing the preliminary work to provide Council with options for direction for the development of a Municipal Sustainability Plan, likely along the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association framework.

Looking forward to hearing from all of the other audience members and all of the presenters.

### **Ann Dale**

---

Welcome, Gregory, I am hoping for a very interesting discussion. It usually takes a few minutes for everyone to come on-line and just as with face-to-face meetings, we all 'straggle' in.

## Gwendolyn Hallsmith

---

Gwen here, posting from the capital of the Independent Republic of Vermont. It's exciting to see posts from Kim and Dominica - glad to hear your projects are going well. Took me awhile to figure out the audience posting requirements for this dialogue.

Here in Montpelier we've undertaken the enVision Montpelier project, another 100 vision, 30 year strategy for the city. We've just completed our vision and goals, and will take up targets and strategies beginning in the fall. We've invited the city of Olympia, Washington to participate in a "race" to see which of us can be the first sustainable state capital. We'd be happy to have other cities join the race. I'll attach a description of it.

**File attachment** [Capital City Challenge flyer.pdf](#) (33.73 KB)

## Gregory Pastirik

---

Has anyone noted any issues with The Natural Step philosophy/framework? Either theoretically, as a part of MSP/ICSP development or even during implementation?

## Chad Park

---

Hi Patrick, my name is Chad Park, and I'm a sustainability advisor with The Natural Step. I'd be happy to connect with you separately if you like to talk about issues we've seen, how the underlying approach of The Natural Step Framework (backcasting from principles) has been adapted in different contexts, and how it can be used to complement other approaches. I also encourage you to speak directly with Nina Gales from Olds, as she's got some great hands-on experience from her work there.

Glad to hear that Sylvan Lake is looking into an approach for ICSPs. I know the area well, having spent much of my summers growing up at my family's cabin on Crimson Lake near Rocky Mountain House. I'll be there again in late August, so maybe we can get together then.

[cpark@naturalstep.ca](mailto:cpark@naturalstep.ca) - (613) 978-8487.

Sandrine Prasil

---

Hi everyone, I am Sandrine Prasil, working at Environment Canada in conservation of biodiversity. 2010 will be the International Biodiversity Year; Edmonton will also received the International Council for Local Environment Initiatives:

<http://www.iclei.org/index.php?id=7756>

<http://www.iclei.org/index.php?id=6239>.

I was wondering 1- how urban biodiversity is currently considered in municipal integrated planning and 2- how do you see the potential contribution in the future of the federal, in protecting biodiversity in urban settings?

**Gwendolyn Hallsmith**

---

Hello Sandrine! Here in Montpelier we're conducting a Bioblitz in July, where we've invited a national team of scientists to come and help all of the city's interested citizens take a comprehensive inventory of the city's species. We've also engaged a consultant to produce an inventory of the natural communities in the city, and we're using both the results of the Bioblitz and the Natural Communities inventory in our enVision Montpelier plan.

**Ann Dale**

---

Gwendolyn, where are you going to publish your inventory, and do you intend to conduct it every year, and where did you get the funding for it? Many thanks.

**Gwendolyn Hallsmith**

---

The funding for the inventory came from a planning grant from the State (or Independent Republic, depending on your point of view) of Vermont. We might need to do it every ten years or so, since Natural Communities are a bit more permanent than that - although with climate change, we might see more rapid progression of species, I suppose.

Ann, thanks for mentioning the Challenge in the other dialogue. (It is frustrating that we can't post directly there. It's not as if we have a lot of people in the audience). I had hoped to talk to Kim, but it's just not possible this way.

One point is that Cities PLUS is a sponsor of the Challenge already, since Montpelier

and Olympia are both members. But the race is actually starting in the US - we're both US cities.

You said that two frameworks have been mentioned, but in fact St. John and Calgary (and to a certain extent the AUMA Guide) are based on a framework I helped develop based on the Earth Charter called EarthCAT. It can be seen on [www.earthcat.org](http://www.earthcat.org). It outlines the systems approach to sustainability planning and a framework for human needs.

## **Ann Dale**

---

Thanks, Gwendolyn, it is not our intention to be elitist in the separation, it is what our system can handle, we are going forward with a large research proposal to try and develop better software, I am well aware that there is as much, if not more expertise in the audience, my apologies. Ann

## **Gwendolyn Hallsmith**

---

Ann, Thanks - I realize it is not the intent and that it's beyond your control. I was just providing some feedback.

If communities are interested in a framework specifically designed for sustainable economic development, then can use one GCI developed in cooperation with Hunter Lovins, Bernard Lietaer, and Michael Miller of America's Development Foundation called Local Action for Sustainable Economic Renewal. It's available at no charge on our web site:

[www.global-laser.org](http://www.global-laser.org).

## **Chad Park**

---

Hi Ann (or anyone else), I'm wondering about people's experience in trying to get individuals on the same page when it comes to the whole concept of sustainability. I find that to be one of the biggest challenges - groups having a very broad range of understanding and definitions for sustainability. My own observation is that those ICSP processes that feature a significant capacity-building component fairly early on have often been more successful. But it can be hard to find the right balance between "capacity-building/education" and "community consultation", particularly for local governments leading a process. And sometimes it's hard for some to see the business case for an education component preceding or built into a planning process. Have

others faced this challenge or seen innovative approaches?

## **DBabicki**

---

Thank you Ann, Chris and all of the other dialogue participants - I thoroughly enjoyed this session and must admit would love to have the opportunity to continue this dialogue- I think there is so much we can learn from each other!

A quick answer to your question Ann about capacity/education and community consultation. At the District we have also used the Natural Step as our Strategic Framework. In the end though, we have used it more as a corporate tool than a tool to frame our engagement with the community. One of the reasons for this is that TNS, while a very powerful sustainability framework, it is a difficult concept to communicate. We found even at the corporate level that it has taken a lot of effort to educate people around the 4 systems conditions and many at the senior level have decided that as consequence it is not the right tool/framework to use at the community level. Whistler has been quite successful at using TNS on both the corporate and community level but they have also used a lot of resources to do so - is it the most effective way to communicate sustainability is still question that needs to be answered.

Look forward to connecting with all of you at some point.

Warmest wishes, Dominica

## **Chris Ling**

---

We would be grateful if you could complete our post-dialogue survey at:

<http://www.survey.crcresearch.org/?sid=7>

Please answer as soon as possible and thank you in advance for helping us with this work on e-Dialogues.

This forum will remain open for 24 hours - and we encourage you to continue the discussion if you are able.