

A Community-Based Strategic Plan{PRIVATE }

for

The County of Haliburton

September 17th, 1997

The Strategic Planning Committee

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY {PRIVATE }

1. The County of Haliburton has embarked on a community-based strategic planning process. During July and August, 1997, it held two public consultation events which led to the development of a County vision statement and a number of important areas for action.
2. In the plan document, each strategic orientation is associated with a summary plan for action; profiles for each of the orientations are included in the appendix.
3. The vision statement for the County to strive towards over the next 5 to 10 years is:

A County with a co-operative environment within which the different players and population groups have worked together to achieve: a sustainable natural environment; a more stable, diversified and year-round economy based on clean, small to medium sized economic activities; residential development, both seasonal and permanent, in keeping with maintaining a small town atmosphere, environmental integrity and adequate accessible services; and a strong sense of regional identity with a more inclusive and tolerant community with all it takes to provide a high quality of life for families and individuals.

4. The strategic orientations are illustrated in Figure 1. Each strategic orientation is considered to represent a major set of opportunities or challenges that need tackling in order to achieve the vision.
5. Twelve recommendations have been made. The relationship between them and the strategic orientations are laid out in Figure 2. The recommendations deal both with ensuring that a permanent process for managing change in a sustainable way is put in place and with a number of specific actions that should be pursued in order to take Haliburton County into the 21st century. The recommendations dealing with those strategic orientations that were specifically analysed in the context of this strategic planning process are set out below.

Recommendation 1:

It is recommended that County Council endorse the vision of the County as stated to provide the overall framework for planning and managing development in the County.

Recommendation 2:

It is recommended that: A. the County take steps to set up: 1. a Community Forum; and 2. a Community Strategic Planning Steering Committee; and that B. the County endorses the creation or reinforcement of working groups in each of the strategic orientations that are the subject of this plan document.

Recommendation 3:

It is recommended that the County endorse the principle of creating an Economic Diversification Group and invite the Haliburton County Development Corporation to take a lead role in creating this.

Recommendation 4:

It is recommended that County Council make a decision to initiate the preparation of the County Official Plan.

Recommendation 5:

It is recommended that County Council endorse the principle of developing a coherent marketing plan for the County.

Recommendation 6:

It is recommended that the Economic Diversification Group identify the key sets of clusters of activities/resources and the necessary infrastructure so that: 1. this can be used in a marketing plan for the County; 2. advice be given to the County and local government and other players as appropriate; and 3. specific opportunities as they become identified be transferred through the Development Corporation, the Chamber of Commerce and the BIAs to potential investors, entrepreneurs and new or existing residents.

Recommendation 7:

It is recommended that a County Environmental Advisory Group be established with broad representation from the population and appropriate economic activities. The Group's primary tasks would be in an advisory capacity. As it evolved, specific projects could be taken under the wings of the Group.

Recommendation 8:

It is recommended that a County-level Youth Group (e.g. a Youth Council) be established or recognised as soon as possible and that they be encouraged to set up an agenda for discussion for the coming year. A network of players and a core of committed youth already exist, thus providing the logical starting point for such a structure.

Recommendation 9:

It is recommended that the County encourage the creation of an Association for Retired People in Haliburton County so that it becomes the working group in the seniors/retirees orientation.

Recommendation 10:

It is recommended that once the CTAP Committee completes its mandate, a transportation working group be put in place.

Recommendation 11:

It is recommended that the County endorse the establishment of a Haliburton County Marketing Group to develop a coordinated marketing plan and strategy for the County, both internally and externally. This Group would work through the County-level coordinator with other working groups (particularly the Community Strategic Planning Steering Committee, the Economic Diversification Group, the Youth Council and the Retirees Group) to confirm the overall direction for a marketing plan, and then to identify specific activities which might be undertaken by other players and groups in the County.

Recommendation 12:

It is recommended that County Council either support the allocation of staff time to this set of activities directly or negotiate with a third party to acquire funding to support such a coordinator position.

1. The Context for Haliburton County's Strategic Plan

The preparation of a community-based strategic plan for the County of Haliburton must be seen in the context both of: 1. major trends affecting how development is managed, particularly in Ontario; and 2. recent developments within the County itself.

A. *Four major trends are influencing the way development is being managed:*

- i. in Ontario, the redefinition of the roles of the provincial government and the devolution of more responsibilities to municipal and County levels of government;
- ii. the search for ways to make government at all levels more effective and efficient;
- iii. major shifts in the economic system, specifically regarding the development of the information economy;
- iv. increasing awareness of the value and need for local management of change, and especially for substantial citizen input into planning and management on an ongoing basis.

B. *Recent developments in the County of Haliburton:*

- i. increasing County-wide thinking in various domains, e.g. the restructuring of health services provision;
- ii. discussions over the restructuring of local municipal government, including various amalgamation scenarios;
- iii. recognition that the County needs a strategic plan to help guide its actions, and those of others, into the 21st century on matters relating to development (in the broadest sense) and to provide a basis for building productive partnerships;
- iv. recognition that the County needs to prepare a County Official Plan that is consistent with the (strategic) plan.

Recognizing these forces and events, the County of Haliburton decided to embark on a community-based strategic planning process in the summer of 1997. The emphasis of this was twofold: 1. to utilize existing information sources and reports in the County as much as possible and not to embark on any new data collection exercises; and 2. to base the strategic thinking on community input. To help achieve this, the County retained the services of Dr. Christopher Bryant, Econotrends Ltd., to facilitate the process of community input and synthesize the information and recommendations received.

Two events were organized with both permanent and seasonal residents being invited (July 24th and August 21st). The participants developed vision statements for the County, as well as identifying the major directions for change they felt important for the County and debating the most important initiatives required. This strategic plan is the result of the synthesis of these public debates as well as the many reports and existing information that exists in the County.

2. The Community-Based Strategic Plan

2.1 *How to Read and Use Haliburton County's Strategic Plan*

An effective community-based strategic plan must recognize the multiple players and enlist them and the local population in an ongoing process of strategic planning and action. The process must be sufficiently decentralized to help people take responsibility for initiating and implementing actions. The plan must also reflect the citizen input, i.e. it must remain an 'honest' document.

An effective way of achieving this is to base a vision statement on citizen input, and organize planning and subsequent action around the most important sets of opportunities and challenges (i.e. strategic orientations) that need to be tackled. These were defined with input from the first public consultation event.

The strategic plan for the County of Haliburton is based on these principles. Following them will undoubtedly make the County a model for sustainable community development in Ontario.

The community-based strategic plan is presented in two parts:

1. The plan

This is the plan document itself. It contains: the County vision statement; and for each strategic orientation, a diagnosis, a vision statement, one or more objectives for the medium term, and a set of recommended initiatives and a recommended time-frame.

Being a community-based plan, it involves both County Council and many other players. County Council roles are stated in recommendations throughout the document and summarized in section 6. Many specific actions require the involvement and decisions of other players; however, some fundamental initiatives require immediate attention and a proactive role by the County.

2. The profiles

A synthesis of the information used to arrive at the diagnosis for each strategic orientation is contained in Appendix I, as a series of profiles. The supporting information can be found in the Summary Reports of the two public consultation events and the other information sources listed in Appendix II.

Given that two of the most important recommendations in the strategic plan are: 1. the creation of a coordinating mechanism in the County to ensure adequate coordination and communication between different players and groups; and 2. the establishment of new working groups or the reinforcement and/or continuation of existing ones, this presentation format permits the plan to be used easily as a working document, including any necessary updating.

3. The County of Haliburton

3.1 *Situation Analysis*

Before laying out the VISION statement and its accompanying STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS, the first step is to present a synthesis of the general situation that the County finds itself in. The table on the following page summarizes the strengths and weaknesses of the County. Strengths and weaknesses, although almost always relative to other areas, are primarily concerned with the internal characteristics of an area. These key characteristics are consistent with those reported in the various documents consulted for the County.

On the positive side, the County residents, both permanent and seasonal, enjoy a particular type of quality of life, related to the small town atmosphere and relatively low population density in the area. It is also an area that is remarkable in the expanses of relatively untouched natural beauty that is accessible to people and maintains a general lack of pollution. The County also possesses some significant forest resources with economic potential. There is a good mix of population groups (e.g. seniors, retirees, youth, artists, etc.), and overall, the people are seen to be welcoming and there is an active social and recreational life available. Wage rates are reasonable, partly related to the low economic expansion in the area. In terms of internal infrastructure, there is a variety of social and cultural activities, an evolving trails system, a solid educational system, with special mention going to Sir Sandford Fleming College and the School of Fine Arts. And, of course, there is an improved water and sewage system and a reasonable road system.

On the negative side, weaknesses worth underscoring include the lack of intercommunity cooperation and the perceived divisions that exist between the seasonal and permanent populations, as well as between other segments of the population. In relation to quality of life, weaknesses are noted in relation to the regulation of environmental protection, and some emerging concerns regarding noise pollution on some lakes. On the demographic side, high unemployment and income dependency levels are certainly weaknesses, as are overall low education and skill levels. Several inadequacies are noted by residents in relation to infrastructure such as transportation and senior services, although sometimes this seems to be more related to a lack of information on what is really available. There are certainly weaknesses regarding access to certain educational opportunities which contribute to youth leaving the County. On the business side, small local markets are a weakness. And generally, there are several weaknesses related to the structure and actions (or lack thereof) of municipal and County government.

Strengths and weaknesses are subject to change, particularly in relation to how the County performs compared to other areas. In terms of demographic growth, for example, while population growth in the 1990s is slower than in the late 1980s, it is still growing faster than many of the surrounding counties (see Profile for the Economic Diversification orientation).

There are a number of general opportunities and constraints that the County faces over the next decade. These arise both from an appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses, as well as an appreciation of where the County sits compared to other areas and in relation to the broad forces shaping our economy and society. The key strengths to build on are: the quality of the natural environment; the extensive forest resource base; the small town atmosphere; the changing needs of an aging community. Key trends that can be utilized to capitalize on these strengths are: the early

retirement phenomenon; the increased importance of small and medium sized business in the economy; developments in information and communications technology; the strong volunteerism present in the County. Some of the weaknesses also present challenges which can become opportunities. Hence, the lack of environmental regulation combined with the redefinition of provincial government roles provides opportunities at the municipal and County levels to influence the conditions of development in a way consistent with the VISION. The lack of opportunities for youth combined with an energetic group of youth create an opportunity for youth to become more involved and help chart the future for the County.

Armed with this general perspective on the situation the County finds itself in, it is time to lay out the VISION (section 3.2) for the County and the principal recommendations that are based on the public consultation process (section 3.3). Then, the more detailed strategic orientation plans and recommendations are laid out in section 4.

{PRIVATE }	Strengths	Weaknesses
General atmosphere	Small town, slower pace Good quality of life Low crime rate A family place	Parochial, lack of intercommunity cooperation Divisions too large between seasonal/permanent residents
Resources (natural)	Pristine diverse beauty - accessible, less pressured Lack of pollution Significant Forestry resources Attractive building lots Aggregate minerals	Inadequate environmental protection and enforcement of standards Quality of septs Water quality Noise pollution
Resources (people)	Good population mix Integrity of people Versatile, friendly Good volunteer base Active clubs/associations Logging and mining history Diverse skills, reasonable wage rates	Aging community Lack of ethnic diversity High unemployment and income dependency Young people tend to leave Low education/skill levels Splits in the population Families/children at risk
Infrastructure (internal)	Recreational trails Other recreational activities The educational system School of Fine Arts & Sir Sandford Fleming College Improved water and sewage Improved health services	Inadequate services/opportunities: Seniors, children Transportation Emergency system Skills upgrading Post-secondary education Lack of information re: services, e.g. seniors' services
Infrastructure (external)	Proximity to large population concentrations Air traffic infrastructure	Inadequacies in external transportation (e.g. passing lanes)
Employment	Forestry potential Arts and crafts potential Tourism, especially eco-tourism Potential in changing service needs	Inadequate youth opportunities Too much emphasis on tourism A seasonal economic base Inadequate development of manufacturing
Business	Potential for small business development within County	Less support from government Too far from large markets Small local market Shopping dollars leakages Access to supplies Lack of natural gas
Ways of doing things	Most municipalities support development of the principal centres	Local government: Not proactive enough; Too fragmented; Lack of cooperation No County vision Not enough public input Little long term planning Resistance to change Information is 'sticky'

3.2 A Vision for Haliburton County

The following VISION statement was produced from the public consultation; it summarizes what people would like to see the County strive towards over the medium term:

HALIBURTON COUNTY VISION STATEMENT

A County with a co-operative environment within which the different players and population groups have worked together to achieve: a sustainable natural environment; a more stable, diversified and year-round economy based on clean, small to medium sized economic activities; residential development, both seasonal and permanent, in keeping with maintaining a small town atmosphere, environmental integrity and adequate accessible services; and a strong sense of regional identity with a more inclusive and tolerant community with all it takes to provide a high quality of life for families and individuals.

The vision statement is described in more detail in the Summary Report from the July 24th public consultation. It is important that the County as a whole 'buy into' this vision, because it provides the rationale for working with all of the strategic orientations identified in this plan document, and others that are currently being tackled (the health services restructuring, education and local government restructuring). It also provides the basis for any significant marketing effort in the County.

The vision statement for Haliburton County is a multifaceted one. This is in keeping with the fact that there are many legitimate interests and players in the County other than the County governments. This vision statement provides something important for each resident, permanent and seasonal, to associate with. It will evolve over time, as needs, opportunities, challenges and information change, giving rise to new and/or modified strategic orientations. However, it is important to start somewhere.

Recommendation 1:

It is recommended that County Council endorse the vision of the County as stated to provide the overall framework for planning and managing development in the County.

The STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS that are at the base of the plan are shown on Figure 1. They include those that are included directly in this document, as well as those that are being pursued outside of the process that led to this plan, but which are consistent with it. The latter are: health services; local government restructuring; education. The diagram demonstrates that each orientation is of County-wide concern, and that each can be linked directly to the VISION statement.

3.3 *The Plan: Process and Project*

In the strategic plan, there are three types of initiatives that emerge from the public input and the subsequent analysis and synthesis:

- i. There is a high level of concern in the County for organizing and maintaining a significant public input into planning and managing development within the County.

This is considered an important component of the perceived quality of life people wish to achieve. It is concerned with process, participation and communication.

Hence, one of the most important initiatives recommended deals with setting up a permanent process:

- a. for facilitating public input. This would be through a Community Forum, held at least once per year, to encourage debate on whether the strategic orientations are still appropriate, and to provide a County-level coordinating committee and other groups in the County with some evaluation of progress. This would be open to all residents, permanent and seasonal.
- b. for facilitating coordination and communication between different working groups, monitoring progress, and communicating with County Council. A Community Strategic Planning Steering Committee would be created, with representation from County Council. It would not be a Committee of Council. Although small, it would have representation from key segments of interest (or the strategic orientations) in the County.
- c. for planning and initiating action within the strategic orientations. This would be achieved by setting up new, or reinforcing or modifying existing, working groups. These groups would have somewhat different tasks depending upon the specific strategic orientation (see section 4, Strategic Orientation Plans).

The working groups would be managed through volunteer effort. Some participants represent an organization or institution. While it is unrealistic under today's economic climate to expect public support at market costs for chairing and running the working groups, County Council either directly or indirectly (through obtaining third party funding) could provide a small financial contribution to each working group, on the basis of a fixed amount per meeting, to a maximum number of meetings per year. This money could be utilized by the working group at its discretion to further the activities of the group. There could also be a token payment made for chairing such a group; and the chair position could revolve.

Recommendation 2:

It is recommended that: A. the County take steps to set up: 1. a Community Forum; and 2. a Community Strategic Planning Steering Committee; and that B. the County endorses the creation or

reinforcement of working groups in each of the strategic orientations that are the subject of this plan document.

2. There is a high level of concern for the conditions under which development should take place in the County.

This is related to the widespread concerns for maintaining and enhancing the quality of life already enjoyed by the County's residents. It is related to the vision people have of the County for the future, i.e. a place where a small town atmosphere dominates, where development respects the integrity of the natural environment, where adequate services exist for the population's needs and where all segments of the population have a valued role to play.

It is recommended that some of these conditions be considered for incorporation into the eventual County Official Plan. As part of the preparation for that, the working groups noted above would have an important role to play in advising on conditions and appropriate standards and, for some strategic orientations, in facilitating negotiations between the different players involved.

3. Other than action related to these process questions, concrete and tangible action is required in several of the strategic orientations.

In most cases, these actions ultimately involve many different players making decisions, either individually or collaboratively. County Council can decide to play a major role however, by acting as a catalyst or by supporting the various working groups who would be spinning off projects to other players or, particularly in the economic development group, to the private sector.

One major way in which County Council can provide leadership is by endorsing the vision for the County (Recommendation 1) and then by supporting a determined marketing effort, both internally and externally to the County.

4. The Directions for Change for Haliburton County{PRIVATE }

A number of strategic orientations, or sets of critical opportunities and/or challenges, have been identified (Figure 1). At this point in time (summer 1997), the community participants consider these to be the most important orientations in which change is necessary in order to achieve the vision for the County. This is in addition to the orientations of health services, local government restructuring and education, all the subject of ongoing debate and/or action. The vision and set of strategic orientations identified are what set Haliburton County apart from other areas.

The strategic orientations in this plan document can change over time. As conditions, information and assessments change, some strategic orientations might be dropped, others might be modified and new ones could be added. Thus, this plan document must be regarded as a working document. It is important to underline that the directions for change are not contingent upon local government restructuring, though some changes might be facilitated by it. This is why the recommendations from the plan can be considered and decisions taken to endorse the plan without waiting for restructuring to take place.

In the plan statements, a common format for each strategic orientation is used: 1. a situation statement; 2. a diagnosis; 3. a vision statement; 4. principal objectives; 5. key initiatives and time-frame.

The diagnosis is based on an assessment of the principal strengths and weaknesses (mainly internal characteristics of the County), and opportunities and constraints (partly related to internal characteristics and changes, partly to major trends) faced by each strategic orientation. More detail on the Profile of the County with respect to each strategic orientation is found in the Strategic Orientation Profiles in Appendix I.

The vision is for the medium term, i.e. for a time-line of 5 to 10 years. However, many of the initiatives required to achieve the different orientation visions can, and should, be implemented immediately.

4.1 County-level Management and Planning:

4.1.1 Situation statement

Throughout Ontario, the redefinition of the roles of provincial and municipal governments has been creating pressures and uncertainties. In Haliburton County, there has also been an ongoing debate regarding restructuring of local government. Regardless of specific restructuring proposals, some County-wide management processes are essential and the governance process that will emerge will inevitably include both public, private and community sector players.

4.1.2 Diagnosis: Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints

{PRIVATE }Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Examples of County achievements, e.g. water/sewage improvements Various County-level bodies and processes (e.g. HHHSB) Attempts at integrating seasonal populations into planning process at County level</p>	<p>Local government fragmentation Lack of cohesiveness and cooperation within County Lack of communication with residents Internal transportation and accessibility issues Lack of County focus in objectives Inadequate public debate/input Lack of strong 'County' identity (vision, image) No County Official Plan Lack of clarity in roles of players Seasonal population not adequately represented in political processes</p>
Opportunities	Constraints
<p>Local government restructuring Potential for 'seed' funding as model for development Knowledge base of seasonal and retired population Strong spirit of volunteerism Better use of information sources and technology</p>	<p>Funding cutbacks Difficulties of orchestrating widespread participation (e.g. because of the seasonal rhythm in the County) Inter-group conflict</p>

In summary, significant weaknesses exist in the County related to lack of cohesiveness and the adequacy of representation of different segments of the population in the management processes. However, the need to do something has been recognized, partly through the restructuring debate. In addition, several County-wide initiatives have been started in several domains. This is an appropriate moment in the County's development to introduce a more coherent County-wide system of managing change.

4.1.3 A vision for County-wide management and planning

The vision is to have a County with a widely accepted vision that serves as the basis for a more collaborative and cooperative management and planning process. In particular, the governance structure would integrate all legitimate interests and be accessible to all, including the seasonal population. Within whatever restructured government structure (which itself would be more effective and efficient) that emerges, the vision includes: an effective way of coordinating and communicating between all County-wide services as well as the efforts of other groups in the County; a regular means of assessing planning and implementation that is accessible to all to encourage community input; a County Official Plan which addresses the issues of standard criteria for development; the County vision would also be built on the respect for local community identity.

4.1.4 Principal objectives

1. To develop a County-level vision and a structure of governance that is inclusive of the full spectrum of population groups and interests; and specifically in government, to encourage efficiencies in managing the development process and joint ventures (inter-government, and public-private) for realizing efficiencies in purchasing and resource coordination.

4.1.5 Key initiatives and time-frame

1. Adopt and support the County vision statement

Supporting the vision statement implicitly involves supporting the principal means required to achieve this vision, namely a strong commitment to continued community input and the principle of using strategic orientations as a means for implementing action.

Recommendation 1:

It is recommended that County Council endorse the vision of the County as stated to provide the overall framework for planning and managing development in the County.

Time-frame: immediate.

2. Create a Community Forum at the County level

This Forum would meet on at least an annual basis. It would provide an opportunity for broad community input to validate the choice of strategic orientations, to assess progress made in different orientations and thereby provide help to the Community Strategic Planning Steering Committee in its communication and monitoring roles. It would also present a means for the community in the broadest sense to provide advice to the County and local governments, as well as other players.

Time-frame: decision to endorse the principle, immediate. Beginning setting up the mechanisms, within the next two months.

3. Support the creation of a (Community) Strategic Planning Steering Committee

This group would carry on the work initiated through the County Strategic Planning Committee. However, in this case it would have a broader composition (representation from some, if not all, of the strategic orientations). Its tasks would involve coordinating and communicating between the different working groups (in each strategic orientation) and between these groups and Council. While it would not have any responsibility itself in terms of coordinating County-wide services, it would provide advice or information to the County and other players on these matters. This group would therefore contribute substantially to the creation of an environment conducive to collaboration and cooperation.

Recommendation 2:

It is recommended that:

- A. the County take steps to set up: 1. a Community Forum; and 2. a (Community) Strategic Planning Steering Committee; and
- B. the County endorses the principle of the creation or reinforcement of working groups in each of the strategic orientations that are the subject of this plan document (rationale provided in each of the following sections) (see Figure 1).

Time-frame: immediate.

4.2 *A More Stable and Diversified Economic Base*

4.2.1 Situation statement

Diversification of the economic base is critical to providing a stable and adequate employment base as well as a solid tax base. At the same time, economic activities that are encouraged and sought out should be consistent with the overall County vision. This means they should maintain the natural environment and the County's attractiveness as an area in which to live, play and work. This is an orientation in which the private sector has a tremendously important role to play. Yet, the County and the community can have a significant impact upon directions through appropriate marketing, support for appropriate infrastructure and acting as a catalyst in transferring ideas on opportunities to the private sector.

4.2.2 Diagnosis: Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints

{PRIVATE }Strengths	Weaknesses
Available industrial park space Good road system Stanhope airport Accessibility to Toronto and Ottawa Educational facilities Natural environment Significant forest resources Available human resources and attractive labour rates Quality of life Business flexibility Tourism facilities for each season	Perception of distance from major metropolitan areas Too small a local market for some businesses Concerns over health and technology infrastructure Perception of some resistance to change
Opportunities	Constraints
Potential links between arts/crafts/tourism/culture Potential links between natural resources management and education Potential links between wood-based industries (e.g. furniture) and the 'image' of the County Home-based occupations Needs and expertise of seniors and retirees Opportunity to enact by-laws to frame appropriate development	Funding cutbacks Lack of clear image for the County Conflicting 'visions' of what constitutes progress in the County

In summary, the County possesses many positive attributes, but they have yet to be effectively capitalized upon. These attributes include the forest resources, the existing industrial park projects and their capacities, the seasonal and retired population base and the linkages between economic

development and the other positive attributes of the County, namely the natural environment and the particular type of quality of life available in the County.

4.2.3 A vision for a more stable and diversified economic base

The vision for the economic base in the County is: a modern business base with access to the appropriate infrastructure of technology and services for the 21st century; a business base that is flexible and adaptable to changing markets and circumstances; businesses that build upon the strengths of the County (natural resources (especially forest resources), environment, small/medium scale development); development that maintains the existing quality of life (the image, the lifestyle), implying limited growth and respect for the natural environment), and a strong support system for cottagers and home-based businesses (hi-tech. services, health services, trails, . . .).

4.2.4 Principal objectives

1. To have County Council endorse a statement for the economic development strategy that reflects this vision;
2. To build a team of stakeholders to implement the economic development orientation strategy;
3. To develop a skills inventory and information communication strategy and develop a data base that is flexible in its uses.

4.2.5 Key initiatives and time-frame

1. Build an Economic Diversification Group

This would be the working group in the economic diversification orientation. Among the several interests that should be involved, the Haliburton County Development Corporation stands out, particularly through its Community Economic Development Committee. The Economic Diversification Group would be independent of the Corporation, yet the Corporation would undoubtedly play a significant role in it. The role of this Group would be to generate ideas for economic development projects, transferring them as appropriate to municipal and County government, to the Development Corporation and to other project groups. Other players who should play a part include the Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce and agencies involved in labour training.

This Group could be set in motion very quickly.

Recommendation 3:

It is recommended that the County endorse the principle of creating an Economic Diversification Group and invite the Haliburton County Development Corporation to take a lead role in creating this.

Time-frame: immediate for endorsing the principle.

2. Take a decision to develop a County Official Plan

Taking this decision immediately in harmony with setting in motion the Community Strategic Planning Steering Committee and the other working groups would provide the Official Plan preparation process with a rich input of information and an unequalled opportunity to validate the plan with the community at

all stages. This would prove beneficial to several of the projects that would emerge in other strategic orientations.

Recommendation 4:

It is recommended that County Council take a decision to initiate the preparation of the County Official Plan.

Time-frame: immediate.

3. Endorse the development of a marketing plan for the County that reflects the vision for the County and for the economic diversification orientation.

This involves working with the marketing orientation (the specific strengths of the County in relation to infrastructure which can be used in marketing are noted in the Marketing Orientation - section 4.7). There is an obvious overlap with the economic diversification orientation. However, the marketing plan would deal with more than the development of economic activities.

Recommendation 5:

It is recommended that County Council endorse the principle of developing a coherent marketing plan for the County.

Time-frame: as soon as the vision statement for the County has been endorsed and while the various working groups are being established.

4. Endorse the principle of identifying clusters of economic activities/resources in the County as opportunities for the Economic Diversification Group to pursue

Identifying clusters of activities and resources in the County that reflect opportunities which the County, the Economic Diversification Group, the Marketing Group and any other player can pursue is consistent with several aspects of the vision statement for the County and this orientation. It will help tie economic activities to the resource base (natural and human) thereby stressing integration, rather than opposition. It can help market the County based on its key assets of environment and community. It makes sense given the emphasis on small and medium scale business enterprise in the vision and a good part of it is dependent upon being able to access and utilize modern information and communications technology.

Based on the many specific business projects that were identified over the course of preparation of the strategic plan, several clusters appear. They overlap to a certain extent. They are:

a. *Arts/crafts/tourism/culture/environment*

Opportunities to develop further the arts/craft linkages with tourism and extending it by integrating this with the economic, social and cultural history of the area. This could build on existing events and experience such as the Studio Tour. It could also involve the setting up of a specific locale to help

market the products and services of the arts and crafts community. This would be a natural extension of ecotourism in the area as well (culture, history, folk festivals, etc.).

b. *Natural resources management, outdoor education and training/education in relation to sustainable resource management practices*

If there are problems perceived in the management, use and protection of the natural environment and its resources, there is also the possibility of developing demonstration projects for sustainable practices and using these as the basis for an educational/training program. This could extend not just to forestry practices, but also to trails management, particularly since trails are becoming such an important feature of the County's tourist resources. Various partners could be envisaged here, including the provincial facilities present in the County, notably the Leslie M. Frost Natural Resources Centre, the Stewardship Councils and the Haliburton Forest and Wildlife Reserve Ltd. This is also entirely consistent with the various recommendations that have emerged from the various forestry groups recently (see Profiles for Economic Diversification and Natural Resources/Natural Environment).

c. *Wood-based industries (e.g. furniture), forest resources and natural environment*

The link that could be made is between economic activity and the wise use of natural resources, and as well, conceivably contributing to the image of an environmentally friendly County. There appears to exist several opportunities in the wood products area that can be built upon.

d. *Home-based occupations/cottage industry, expertise of seasonal residents and information technology*

Here, there are opportunities to investigate the by-laws covering home-based occupations (see references in the Profiles on Economic Diversification). Home-based occupations are an important component to many people's life-style, and some may even become larger sized businesses one day. This could be one of the drawing cards to turn more cottagers into permanent residents. Having access to an appropriate information communication technology infrastructure is essential for many of these activities which are frequently service and information-processing/analyzing in nature. This technology can also provide the glue to tie these business endeavours together with other businesses to provide for a flexible and adaptable business base. [It is significant that recent steps in this direction have already been taken in the context of investigating ways of developing an appropriate telecommunications infrastructure.]

e. *Expertise of seniors and retirees, services, networks and information technology; using this as a means of encouraging growth in permanent population*

Some comments have already been made on this under (d).

Other projects with implications for economic development are dealt with under other orientations (e.g. the Youth Orientation; the Seniors/Retirees Orientation; and the Marketing Orientation).

These and other specific projects depend partly upon an adequate infrastructure being available. This infrastructure includes: the industrial park space for certain activities; an adequate communications infrastructure to underpin the business and activity networks implied in several of the above clusters; and continued attention to transportation facilities and infrastructure.

Recommendation 6:

It is recommended that the Economic Diversification Group identify the key sets of clusters of activities/resources and the necessary infrastructure so that: 1. this can be used in a marketing plan for the County; 2. advice be given to the County and municipal government and other players as appropriate; and 3. specific opportunities as they become identified be transferred through the Development Corporation, the Chamber of Commerce and the BIAs to potential investors, entrepreneurs and new or existing residents.

Time-frame: as soon as the Economic Diversification Group has been formed.

4.3.1 Situation statement

Sustainable development involves achieving and maintaining a balance between economic and residential development on the one hand, and conservation and protection of the natural environment and its resources, on the other hand. Any change raises questions regarding our ability to maintain the integrity of the natural environment and to manage resource use in a sustainable way. These issues are particularly acute in an environment known for the beauty of its natural resources, which has also stimulated one of the most important economic activities in the County, namely tourism and cottaging. Finding ways of identifying potential and actual conflicts and improving practice where appropriate is a major challenge, particularly when much of the concerned population does not live in the County for much of the year.

4.3.2 Diagnosis: Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints

<p>{PRIVATE }Strengths</p>	<p>Weaknesses</p>
<p>Many untouched areas Low development densities Many people are involved and caring Large forested areas, with both visual and important economic value (Crown and private land). Resource operators adaptable to change Absence of large manufacturing industries Large number of lakes.</p>	<p>Lack of process for setting standards Some close-minded people Poor image associated with forestry (partly perception) Lack of secondary industries using natural resources Lack of: Access to information Local coordination Appropriate local regulation Enforcement of protection</p>
<p>Opportunities</p>	<p>Constraints</p>
<p>General awareness of issues Need recognized to develop sustainable practices (openness of forestry to change) Councils can contribute to sustainability through by-laws (e.g. develop standards regarding noise and boating levels) Light industry can use resources (e.g. furniture, canoes, maple syrup) Technology Local decisions can be 'made in Haliburton' solutions</p>	<p>Funding cutbacks and downloading of responsibilities No conflict resolution forum Lack of political direction and commitment Lack of clarity in who has jurisdiction? Provincial resources still needed for establishments such as the Leslie Frost Centre Inadequate communication Appropriate local human resources</p>

In summary, the County possesses an attractive and valuable natural environment, which incorporates some important resources. Weaknesses in relation to management, protection and use are related to

the lack of clarity in roles and inadequate exchanges between the principal stakeholders in the context of a changing and currently uncertain environment. However, there are important opportunities to be seized given the recognition of the issues and the willingness of many people to participate in constructive exchanges with a view to development of a sustainable approach to managing, using and protecting the natural environment and its resources.

4.3.3 A vision for the wise management, use and protection of the natural environment and its resources

The vision for this orientation was based upon the creation of a County-wide group in which resource issues could be discussed and a dialogue maintained between stakeholders. It would encourage a broader participation by individuals and stakeholders as well as informing the political process in terms of a management system. This would provide an opportunity to bring together key stakeholder groups to enhance mutual understanding. An excellent example are the forest resources. These are not just a key component of the natural environment, but are also a vital economic resource to the County: 1. in relation to logging and other forest-based activities; 2. in relation to tourism; and 3. in relation to cottagers, also a very important contributor to the County's economic base. The vision for this orientation would therefore involve a mechanism to help sort out these types, of sometimes conflicting, demands on the same resource.

4.3.4 Principal objectives

1. The primary objective is to develop a County-wide group to bring all the interested parties together to develop an effective management system for natural resources and the natural environment.

4.3.5 Key initiatives and time-frame

1. The development of a County-wide Group on Natural Resources and the Natural Environment, the County Environmental Advisory Group

This Group would include representatives from cottager/ratepayers associations; individuals; forest-based activities; forest land owners; and other institutions/agencies and people with specific interests and/or expertise in this field. Once constituted, its initial tasks would include undertaking an inventory of resources (groups, expertise) available from both the profit and non-profit sectors. It would strive to: further understanding of how to 'regulate' and monitor the environment; develop appropriate guides; advise County council and municipalities on environmental issues (water, forestry, waste), particularly in relation to the development of appropriate by-laws and regulations; and it would mediate and facilitate meetings between different stakeholders.

A number of specific projects were identified that could be undertaken by the Group, depending upon resources. However, these projects could also be undertaken by other players or groups of players. The specific projects identified through citizen input included: developing and implementing an education awareness program; developing Web sites to create a resource inventory; develop and introduce various educational programs; investigate the development of Clyde and Bruton townships as a park by the municipality (Dysart et al.); develop a guide for Lake Stewardship; provide guidelines for an eventual 'environmental regulatory officer'.

Decisions on these and who might be best to manage specific projects must await the creation of the Group. In relation to the resources needed for this group, any special projects would have to depend upon funding acquired for each specific purpose.

Recommendation 7:

It is recommended that a County Environmental Advisory Group be established with broad representation from the population and appropriate economic activities. The Group's primary tasks would be in an advisory capacity. As it evolved, specific projects could be taken under the wings of the Group.

Time-frame: immediate regarding the principle. Need to identify an initiator to begin establishing the network.

4.4 Roles of Youth in the Community{PRIVATE }

4.4.1 Situation statement

Youth represent one of the keys to the future of the County community. They possess energy, initiative and creativity. Unfortunately, many young people leave the County for economic, social and cultural reasons. It is important to identify how young people can contribute to shaping the community so that they can remain a permanent part of it.

4.4.2 Diagnosis: Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints

{PRIVATE }Strengths	Weaknesses
Youth with talent and willingness to contribute Youth enthusiasm (Some) supportive adults Broad range of interests among youth	Lack of job and post-secondary opportunities Perception of inflexible institutions Perception of intimidation and discouragement Some vandalism Lack of information
Opportunities	Constraints
Energies and creativity of youth Places to meet Encouraging, respectful and supportive adults Recreational opportunities Volunteerism	Negative attitudes re: youth (too much prejudice) Costs and rules, hours of accessibility (opening) Transportation Lack of employment opportunities

In summary, while youth constitute an important segment of the County population, the lack of various opportunities has meant that many leave the County permanently. However, the youth of the County are a vibrant part of the community. They have much to offer and many are willing to contribute if only there were effective mechanisms for them to be heard.

4.4.3 A vision for the roles of youth in the community

The vision for youth in the community is to be able to enter into, and maintain, a productive dialogue with others in the County, and to be able to have access to an adequate range of opportunities (employment, education, recreation, leisure, contributing to the community). In this way, each young person would be able to identify strongly with the County.

4.4.4 Principal objectives

1. To develop a strong connection between youth and governing structures;
2. To create an ongoing dialogue between youth and adults; to draw together a group of supportive, motivated adults to empower youth;
3. To contribute to the development of richer educational opportunities, including alternative learning environments, the arts and non-competitive recreation;

4. To contribute to the development of a broader range of employment opportunities that also contribute to the further education of youth;
5. To develop an adequate transportation system.

Some of these objectives overlap with other orientations, e.g. transportation, and are dealt with in other sections.

4.4.5 Key initiatives and time-frame

1. Creation of a County-wide governance structure involving youth, e.g. a Youth Council

Objective: to develop an appropriate governance structure that permits the voice of youth to be heard in the community.

Partners: potentially everyone - but notably: parents, youth, teachers, police, coaches, business owners, employers, politicians, government, social agencies, transportation providers, service clubs.

Resources: A Rotary youth weekend; a planning group of youth and adults.

Steps: advertise invitation to participate; make public aware of the issues; select procedure to represent the broader population and interests in an ongoing structure/forum for dialogue and action.

Specific immediate tasks that such a Council could investigate could include:

a. The possibility of creating a recreation 'centre', with lounge area, youth information area, computers; with youth involved in running the centre; development of or access to swimming pool, skateboard park, in-line skating surface.

Some of these very specific aspects could be dealt with separately, and a type of network of facilities developed. This would necessitate initially drawing up an inventory of what really does exist.

b. Engaging in a more effective dialogue with educators and representatives of the educational system. In particular, the investigation of ways of providing other post-secondary opportunities in the County would be debated.

c. Working with the Economic Diversification Group, specifically people in relation to skills and training, to develop a youth registry for summer and other employment opportunities.

[It is significant to underline that action is already being taken in this orientation since the last public consultation on August 21st, with plans going ahead for holding a Haliburton County Youth Forum in October, partly with the objective of setting up a Youth Council. This is going ahead with direct support from several partners in the County.]

Recommendation 8:

It is recommended that a County-level Youth Group (e.g. a Youth Council) be established or recognized as soon as possible and that they be encouraged to set up an agenda for discussion for the coming year. A network of players and a core of committed youth already exist, thus providing the logical starting point for such a structure.

Time-frame: immediate.

2. Transportation system with a governance structure to ensure the voice of youth is heard. This is dealt with under the transportation orientation.

4.5 Roles of Seniors/Retirees in the Community

4.5.1 Situation statement

The County has an important population of seniors and retired people. Their number can be expected to increase over the next decade. Some have been long-time seasonal residents before moving in permanently. Seniors and retirees represent a very important group, because of their incomes, free time, expertise and social and professional networks. It is important to ensure they become a fully involved segment of the community, not just in terms of responding to their needs but also in encouraging them to perform productive roles for the community.

4.5.2 Diagnosis: Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints

{PRIVATE }Strengths	Weaknesses
Attractiveness of natural beauty of area Small town atmosphere Opportunities for volunteerism Proximity to large urban areas Variety of activities (clubs, etc.) A caring community Good cooperation among social agencies	Dispersed nature of County Dispersed population Accessibility issues Lack of specialized health care
Opportunities	Constraints
Increase in early retirees People (retirees and seniors) with time, interest, money and networks Seniors and retirees are a varied group Need for volunteers in many community endeavours	Lack of publicity about the area Isolation related to dispersed nature of area and population Difficulties in staying abreast of what is available

In summary, seniors and retirees are an important segment of the County population. Apart from having various needs, they also have a tremendous amount to offer the community. They represent a source of income and demand, they have a huge variety of expertise amongst them, they have time available and they have access to various social and professional networks that could be used in the community's development. For many, however, they remain very much a hidden resource.

4.5.3 A vision for the roles of seniors in the community

The vision for seniors and retirees in Haliburton County was that the County would become widely known as one of the choice locations for retirement in Ontario. They would contribute substantially to an increase in the permanent population. At the same time, seniors and retirees would be recognized for making valuable contributions to the County community, and not just as consumers of services.

4.5.4 Principal objectives

1. To develop an organizational means by which seniors and retirees could assess their own needs and organize their own contributions to the County community;
2. To support and enhance the level of services currently available in the County;
3. To ensure that suitable health care, housing and transportation are provided (and adapted as changes occur in needs and other circumstances).

4.5.5 Key initiatives and time-frame

1. Development of an association e.g. the Haliburton Association of Retired People.

This would act as the working group for the seniors/retirees orientation. Since it would not only have the roles of the other orientation working groups such as dialogue and planning, but also could have an important role in providing information about services and activities available to seniors, it could be started using volunteer effort and initiative.

Some specific projects that could be pursued by such a Group (or independently by others) include:

1. Development of a Web site specifically about seniors and retirees in the County.
2. Contribute to developing a viable public (coordinated) transportation system (e.g. minibuses, . . .) (see transportation orientation).
3. Development of a program to use seniors/retirees as mentors to youth in business start-ups (this would be undertaken in association with the Economic Diversification Group, and the Development Corporation is clearly a privileged potential partner in this). Ideas of how to implement this are given in the August 21st Summary Report.
4. Creation of a newspaper (or a specialized column) focusing on seniors. Ideas on how to implement this are given in the August 21st. Summary Report.

Recommendation 9:

It is recommended that the County encourage the creation of an Association for Retired People in Haliburton County so that it becomes the working group in the seniors/retirees orientation.

Time-frame: immediate for the principle of starting the group. Within six months, a core group could be established including having undertaken an investigation of the interest in this from among the existing retirees/seniors in the County.

4.6 *Transportation within the Community*

4.6.1 Situation statement

With a small and dispersed population base, there are important challenges in relation to transportation needs and services within Haliburton County. These needs vary substantially between different population segments and between different locations in the County. Access to services (both public and private) is an important factor in quality of life and so it is not surprising that transportation issues arise in many of the other orientations.

4.6.2 Diagnosis: Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints

{PRIVATE }Strengths	Weaknesses
Reasonably good road system Volunteerism strong Active service clubs The CTAP (Community Transportation Action Program) Committee Seniors organizations Existing Board of Education busing system Local press	Dispersed population in relation to service centres Perception of slowness in snow plowing Lack of specialized health care Lack of coordination Lack of information dissemination
Opportunities	Constraints
Willingness of people to serve as volunteers Travel to out-of-town hospitals Local business as potential support School buses Use of newspapers for information dissemination Specialized outreach clinics	Funding cutbacks Difficulties of modifying infrastructure (communications) Difficulties of communicating between very different services and user groups

In summary, there are serious weaknesses in the County regarding accessibility within the County. However, a Steering Committee is currently in the process of developing a strategy regarding transportation. This a response to the Community Transportation Action Program under the auspices of the provincial government. Addressing the transportation issues should be considered as an important contribution to the work of the youth and seniors strategic orientations, as well as being an important asset to use in building greater community solidarity.

4.6.3 A vision for transportation in the County

The vision is of a transportation system with the following characteristics: a 'made in Haliburton' initiative (small and manageable) that would be economically viable and available and accessible to all residents. This transportation system would be based on use of resources available now.

4.6.4 Principal objectives

1. To put in place a coordinated transport system providing accessibility to basic services, that would be economically feasible and that would make use primarily of existing resources and infrastructure.

4.6.5 Key initiatives and time-frame

1. Once the CTAP Committee's current mandate is complete, to establish a working group on transportation with broad representation from service providers and user groups (including youth). This would not only permit an ongoing dialogue between users and providers, but also permit the review and further development of partnerships. This could be undertaken initially by organizing a joint meeting of all interested parties, including players whose clientele are potential users of a transportation system, e.g. retailers in the main centres, health services, etc.

Among the several ideas that could be used as projects to help achieve the vision are:

1. An investigation of the possibilities of using the school buses for community transportation
2. Coordination of volunteer drivers
3. A more systematic dissemination of information regarding transportation services

1. Better Use of the School Buses:

Objective: ultimately to access the school routes used by the school board as a form of community transportation and immediately, to determine if this type of coordination is possible.

Potential partners: school board, private operators and Access Centre.

Main steps: understand present mandate and legislation with respect to public being transported on school bus; understand funding arrangements. Undertake a market survey or feasibility analysis.

Time frame: 6 months

Resources: advertising; coordination of routes; information gathered by CTAP Committee.

2. Coordination of Volunteers:

Objective: to get from Point A to Point B in the most direct route possible by coordinating the use of volunteer drivers.

Essential resource: a central contact point, e.g. a main telephone number for everyone in the community.

Main steps: identify one coordinator for all transportation services; identify present volunteers; breaking down the barriers/mandates to meet a variety of needs; screening/training.

Recommendation 10:

It is recommended that once the CTAP Committee completes its mandate, a transportation working group be put in place.

4.7 Building and Marketing the County Community{PRIVATE }

4.7.1 Situation statement

So many actions to help the community's development depend upon the vision people have of their community and a strong community identity. This is because many of the initiatives people want to pursue involve an important dose of volunteer support. Building a sense of community is therefore critical. This has important spin-off effects upon our ability to market the community to the outside world as well.

4.7.2 Diagnosis: Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints

{PRIVATE }Strengths	Weaknesses
Volunteerism strong, as is attachment to local community Small town atmosphere Willingness to change Availability of land (e.g. industrial park space potential) Attractive environment (forests, lakes, rolling highlands) General accessibility	Perception of lack of cohesiveness within County Lack of opportunity for youth employment Perceptions of inadequacies in infrastructure Perceptions of lack of a customer service attitude
Opportunities	Constraints
Untapped available labour force The seasonal population, their knowledge and networks Increase customer service appreciation Web site/telecommunications Cooperation between businesses Greater recognition of need for County-wide thinking Educational opportunities Increasing global outlook Use the forest industry and sustainable practices to sell the 'green' character of the County.	Lack of communication and coordination between community events Lack of funding Lack of business involvement

In summary, there is recognition of the need for a stronger County community identity as well as the key assets that the County can build on. In addition, there are many opportunities that can be harnessed to promote community identity and market the County to the outside world. Some of the constraints provide important ideas concerning the strategies that can be pursued.

4.7.3 A vision for the County community identity and image

The vision for this orientation is achieving a strong Community identity and solidarity and developing an 'image' based on the vision for the County as a whole that can be used to develop a coherent and dynamic marketing plan for the County. The marketing activities would be coordinated through a single marketing group.

An important part of this image would be a high level of cooperation between the players in the County in ensuring that appropriate infrastructure is coordinated. This would involve ensuring the necessary infrastructure is in place to support light industry, and that adequate services for business and the population exist to support year-round living opportunities. This necessitates effective communication between the different working groups tackling the other strategic orientations.

4.7.4 Principal objectives

The principal objectives are:

1. To establish a County-wide marketing group;
2. To develop a positive image for the County, stressing a 'Think County' message, and marketing it to the County population and to the outside world through a coherent marketing plan;
3. To ensure the image projected is supported in fact by the appropriate activity levels and infrastructure

4.7.5 Key initiatives and time-frame

1. The creation of a single coordinating body for building community identity and coordinating marketing for County within the context of a coherent marketing plan.

Objective: To establish a broadly representative working group (e.g. The Haliburton County Marketing Group).

Activities: to develop ideas and a strategy to deal with the two interrelated aspects of marketing a community (which could be dealt with via two sub-groups within the Group), namely building the community identity (marketing to the community) and marketing the community to the outside world. Some answers to the fundamental marketing questions are listed in the following table.

Resources: once a Marketing Group is established, it is important to develop the broad lines of an overall plan quickly. Then, working with the Economic Diversification Group and other groups, to identify what the needs are for professional marketing resources and then assemble the necessary financial resources.

Recommendation 11:

It is recommended that the County endorse the establishment of a Haliburton County Marketing Group to develop a coordinated marketing plan and strategy for the County, both internally and externally. This Group would work through the County-level coordinator with other working groups (particularly the Community Strategic Planning Steering Committee, the Economic Diversification Group, the Youth Council and the Retirees Group) to confirm the overall direction for a marketing plan, and then to identify specific activities which might be undertaken by other players and groups in the County.

Time-frame: immediate for the endorsement of the establishment of the Haliburton County Marketing Group. A six month time-frame is reasonable from the start-up of such a group to establish the broad lines of the plan, develop the necessary partnerships and acquire any necessary resources for professional marketing services.

{PRIVATE }POSSIBLE COMPONENTS OF A MARKETING PLAN FOR THE COUNTY

Key marketing questions	Building community identity	Marketing the County externally
What are we marketing?	A common vision for the County and unity and solidarity within the County	The image of the County and its assets (small town, friendly, 'green', sustainable, a family environment, industrial park space, the 'corridor' on which Haliburton and Minden are located facilitating external transportation, etc.)
Why are we marketing it?	Strengthen community identity at County level to strengthen solidarity, readiness to contribute to the community and 'buying in' to the County vision	Expand the permanent population base, bring in people with business ideas, attract appropriate business investment
To whom are we marketing it?	The County's permanent and seasonal population, businesses (customer appreciation - extends to locals as well as visitors!) Youth	The seasonal population and their networks, visitors, business people (actual and potential) in the major urban centres (especially Toronto and Ottawa)
How are we marketing it?	Generating ideas for common signage, County-wide events, possibly an events coordinator within/or outside (e.g. in Chamber of Commerce) the marketing group, provide advice and feedback to local community efforts, support (morally) community-building events and infrastructure (e.g. informal meeting spaces in the towns, an effective County-wide transportation system), encourage dialogue between all segments of the County community. Enlisting youth to generate ideas, work through schools.	Develop: an interactive Web site for the County; appropriate signage and logo; work with Chamber of Commerce to enhance role Make use of people's networks: work through the seasonal population; a Retirees' Association, etc. Ensure there's an adequate information base for each strategic orientation Make traditional marketing tools more flexible Investigate development of regional alliances in some instances for some marketing efforts

5. Process and Action: Two Essential Building Blocks for Confronting and Shaping the Future

There are two main challenges to be confronted in order to make progress towards achieving the VISION in this Community-Based Strategic Plan for Haliburton County:

1. Maintaining an effective process.

This involves:

- a. ensuring effective communication and coordination at the County level between the different working groups, the County, the municipalities and all of the other players;
- b. keeping people involved (because they are what count);
- c. ensuring adequate monitoring and analysis;
- d. when appropriate, undertaking reviews and modifying decisions (by the County, the different players)

2. Moving to action continuously.

Action is directly linked to process. Indeed, decisions to support the working groups (process) are also decisions to support actions. Partly this is because people see participation and opportunities as ESSENTIAL aspects of their quality of life, and partly because effective process will give rise to more concrete or tangible actions. Ensuring continuous action is also essential to keep people interested and committed to the process. Hence, process and action need to be pursued simultaneously.

Some additional comments are needed regarding the PROCESS side. What is important is to pay constant attention to the linkages between the Community Strategic Planning Steering Committee, the working groups in the different strategic orientations, and of course, the linkages with County Council (Figure 2).

This raises the question of resources for maintaining the process. First, some involvement will be through people's professional expertise and involvement (e.g. agencies, institutions), i.e. they are already being paid to become involved in this way. Second, other involvement for some people will be through their political positions, i.e. they are representatives of County Council and local municipalities. Third, however, there is undoubtedly a significant volume of work involved in communicating, coordinating and monitoring the ongoing activities of the different groups. This therefore could be undertaken by someone responsible for coordinating and communicating regularly with the different groups. This could be a County Council commitment, either funded directly as part of the responsibilities of a staff person or indirectly, through negotiating for third party financing of such a person's time.

Recommendation 12:

It is recommended that County Council either support the allocation of staff time to this set of activities directly or negotiate with a third party to acquire funding to support such a coordinator position.

Earlier in this plan document, the possibility of allocating some resources to the working groups was also raised. This could be undertaken in a creative manner as well as developing partnerships with third parties for financial support for some or all of the working groups identified. It is not unlikely however that the arrangements would be different for different working groups.

One possibility would entail using third party sources to pay for chairing a working group. The chair could rotate, say, every three or four months. An alternative would be to make contributions to a resource pool for each working group (the chair could still rotate) for the group to use to further its own activities as a group. These are matters of detail and can only be worked out after the establishment of the principle of the different working groups.

Time-frame: immediate for the principle. Iron out details regarding resources within 2 months. The Community Strategic Planning Steering Committee would have to assume the responsibilities in the interim.

6. The County of Haliburton: An Essential and Proactive Role

An important aspect of a community-based strategic plan is that there is no single player responsible for everything. Many of the actions are located firmly in the private and community 'sectors', while the public sector involvement is spread amongst several players (County Council, municipalities, Board of Education, etc.).

HOWEVER, COUNTY COUNCIL DOES HAVE AN IMPORTANT SET OF ROLES TO PLAY BECAUSE OF ITS VANTAGE POINT IN THE COUNTY, AND BECAUSE IT IS MADE UP OF DULY ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE.

The key roles for the County in relation to the process and anticipated actions that can arise out of this community-based process that the County Council has initiated are shown on Figure 3. Other than making decisions regarding infrastructure development at appropriate times and coordination of its own services (not shown on this figure) consistent with the overall directions laid down in this plan document, the County can play a significant part in:

1. creating the climate for continued public input;
2. being seen to endorse the initial vision statement for the County and certain key directions (initiate the preparation of a County Official Plan, endorse the principle of developing a marketing plan for the County);
3. providing strong moral support and encouragement to different groups; and
4. providing directly or indirectly for resources to aid in the coordination, communication and monitoring functions and in the effective functioning of the various strategic orientation working groups.

The decisions to endorse or support the different recommendations can all be made immediately. In one case (Recommendation 12), the actual implementation requires finding resources to support an action (the coordinator), but in most other cases actions can be initiated and the resource details can await negotiation with or without the involvement of a third party. Indeed, the commitment of many of the people who have participated thus far, and from many who have expressed regret at being unable for various reasons to participate during this initial part of the process, is so high that some of the recommendations are either on the verge of or are actually being put into action (e.g. the youth group).

THERE IS THUS AN UNPRECEDENTED OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNTY COUNCIL TO SHOW LEADERSHIP IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTY THROUGH ENCOURAGING COMMUNITY EFFORT.

This would capitalize on the high level of support and commitment within the population, and benefit from the many other initiatives that are under way in the County.