

## Convening for Action in British Columbia



## The Province of British Columbia's Expectations and Programs for Green Communities

Infrastructure grant programs enable the Province to influence behaviour and advance the "New Business As Usual" under the Green Communities Project

## The New Business As Usual:

Visualize What We Want British Columbia to Look Like in 50 years

### *The Mission is to Create a Legacy*

- 1. Influence choices by individuals and organizations*
- 2. Use the term "sustainability" as a lens for considering approaches that influence choices*

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## Today's Expectations are Tomorrow's Standards

### The Green Communities Project & Infrastructure Grant Programs



## Green Communities Project

The **Green Communities Project** encompasses a number of plans and strategies that complement and/or support Living Water Smart. Examples include **A Guide to Green Choices**, **Resources from Waste: A Guide to Integrated Resource Recovery**, and **Smart Planning for Communities**. Conceptually, the Green Communities Project comprises four areas of activity as shown below:



#### Link to YouTube Video:

[Copy the link below](#)<sup>1</sup> to view a YouTube video clip of **Laura Tate**, Manager of Vancouver Island Growth Strategies with the Ministry of Community & Rural Development, when she explained the four pieces of the puzzle at the **2008 Comox Valley Learning Lunch Seminar Series**.



She also describes what is in *A Guide to Green Choices*. "We are providing local government with the information to make better decisions," she said.

## Provincial Plans & Strategies

"Living Water Smart is a provincial strategy; we must look at it as a shared responsibility," adds **Glen Brown**, an Executive Director with the Ministry. "Actually, it is not one strategy; the Province has a number of strategies, including the **Green**



**Communities Project** and the **Climate Action Plan**. These are the visionary documents that shape the Ministry of Community Development's grant programs; they provide us with direction as to where the Province wants to go."

"The Province is looking at raising the bar as far as what we are trying to accomplish with standards, provincial legislation and infrastructure grant programs."

#### Link to YouTube Video:

[Copy the link below](#)<sup>2</sup> to view a 10-minute YouTube video clip of Glen Brown at the **Showcasing Innovation at the University of Victoria** event in October 2008 when he explained how the Province is employing its infrastructure grant programs to influence green infrastructure policies and practices, and thereby facilitate change on the ground.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VodC4Le4Lv0>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=486R40Is4I0>

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#### Link to YouTube Video:

[Copy the link below<sup>3</sup>](#) to view a YouTube video clip of Karen Rothe at the **Metro Vancouver Water Balance Model Forum** in March 2009 when she elaborated on why the Ministry is "about innovation and integration, and making it real".



## A Guide to Green Choices

"The Ministry of Community Development is about innovation and integration, and making it real. The other piece of importance to the Ministry is providing communities with the tools to ensure the right development in the right place at the right time," states **Karen Rothe**, the Ministry's Manager for Metro Vancouver and Fraser Valley Growth Strategies.



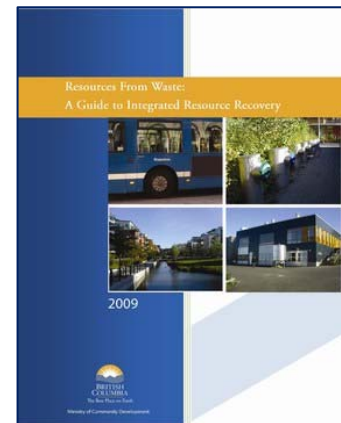
"To help local governments continue the extensive work they are already doing in fostering green communities, the Ministry has developed **A Guide to Green Choices** to provide practical advice and ideas in making land use decisions."

"Released in September 2008, this Guide is expected to work in tandem with many other provincial programs and projects already underway, including **Living Water Smart**, the **BC Climate Action Plan**, Smart Planning, and the **Water Sustainability Action Plan**. The Guide helps to establish expectations as to what communities can or should look like," concludes Karen Rothe.

## Resources from Waste Guide

"Integrated Resource Recovery is an approach and a set of tools for planning and managing community infrastructure to maximize the recovery of value from waste resources," states the Ministry's **Jody Dong**. "In April of 2009, the Ministry released the **Resources from Waste Guide** in order to assist local governments to plan and implement a wide range of IRR projects.

"Local governments can benefit from this whole-systems planning approach to infrastructure, which will help to achieve community sustainability and economic diversification," adds **Deborah Rasnick**, the Ministry's Project Director for Integrated Resource Management.



<sup>3</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xs4YVllcpgs>

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## Fostering Innovation and Integration

The mandate of the Ministry of Community Development is to foster partnerships, collaboration, innovation and integration through the program elements that comprise the Green Communities Project. The goal is to build capacity that will result in sustainable, healthy and vibrant communities. The continuous process for improvement is illustrated by the graphic below

"Ultimately it is the Ministry's grant programs that provide the incentives that enable the Province to influence behaviour; and reward those who meet program objectives for doing business differently on-the-ground," states **Glen Brown**.



### **The New Business As Usual:**

"We are using the slogan **The New Business As Usual** to convey the message that, for change to really occur, practices that until now have been viewed as the exception must become the norm moving forward. We have to build regulatory models and develop models of practice and expertise to support *The New Business As Usual*," stated **Dale Wall**, **Deputy Minister** when he announced the launch of the new Water Balance Model and the Vancouver Island Learning Lunch Series at the Gaining Ground Summit in May 2008.



## Leveraging Change through Grants

"Integration of legislative goals and strategies with grant programs is achieved through the combination of **Eligibility Requirements, Evaluation Criteria, and Conditionality of Contracts**," explains Glen Brown. "These three items provide the road-map for transitioning from today's expectations to tomorrow's standards. Over time, we are incrementally raising the bar. "

"Conditionality of Contracts refers to what we ask local governments to do if they are successful in meeting the Eligibility Requirements and Evaluation Criteria. This is where we establish the clear link to program goals and objectives."

**Leveraging Change through Infrastructure Grants**

**TODAY:** Eligibility: Open to all projects  
Assessment Criteria: The greener the better  
Conditions: e.g. Water Conservation Plan

**TOMORROW:** Eligibility: All projects must meet a green standard  
Assessment Criteria: Strong support for green projects  
Conditions: e.g. Watershed Management Plan

*Today's Expectations are Tomorrow's Standards*

**Program Goals and Objectives**

- Based on the principles of sustainability
- Integrated, holistic approaches to resolve issues
- Sustainable infrastructure does not mean building your way out of problems
- Engineering rules and approaches are changing
- Manage the resources

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## Smart Planning for Communities

"*Smart Planning for Communities* is a new BC-wide collaborative initiative to assist local and First Nations governments in addressing their long-term sustainability challenges," reports



**Susanne Theurer**, Sustainability Facilitator with the Fraser Basin Council and a former local government planner. "The program recognizes that a flexible approach is needed — an approach that allows communities to build on,

enhance and integrate existing planning processes while also exploring innovative tools and frameworks."

"Rather than following a single-agency approach, *Smart Planning for Communities* calls for collaboration among organizations and teams of people working together to develop and implement integrated strategies for a sustainable future. The program helps to build mutually beneficial partnerships and develop an information-sharing and resource network. The result will be stronger, more vibrant and sustainable communities."

## About the Water Sustainability Action Plan

Sponsored by the Province of British Columbia and the Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia, the **Action Plan** is being delivered through partnerships and regional pilot projects and programs. Partnerships under the Action Plan umbrella include the Water Bucket Website Partnership, Convening for Action on Vancouver Island (CAVI), the Green Infrastructure Partnership, and the Water Balance Model Inter-Governmental Partnership.

Through outreach and education, the guiding vision is to influence land and water practitioners to learn about and use practices that better balance the necessary relationships of settlement activity and ecological assets in local and regional landscapes.

"Under the Action Plan umbrella, the Water Sustainability Committee of the BC Water & Waste Association is the managing partner and is responsible for providing leadership, facilitation and organizational services for program delivery. The Water Sustainability Committee is a roundtable of organizations that have a specific interest or mission in implementing the Action Plan," explains **Glen Brown**, Chair.

