

Sustainable
Chequamegon
Initiative
Strategic Plan
2006-2011

Sustainable Chequamegon Initiative Strategic Plan 2006-2011

The Sustainable Chequamegon Initiative, a project of the Alliance for Sustainability.

Alliance for Sustainability Steering Committee

Jack Beagan
Bill Bussey
Savita Jones
Tim Kane,
Bob Krumenaker
Bruce Lindgren
Pete Mann
Lee Ann Merrill
Mary Rehwald
Nancy Sandstrom
Steve Sandstrom
Roy Settgas
Jane Silberstein
Amy Syverson
Linda Webster
Chris Worth
Mayor of Ashland
Mayor of Bayfield
Mayor of Washburn
Tribal Chair, Bad River
Tribal Chair, Red Cliff
County Representative

Sustainable Chequamegon Initiative Planning Committee*

Beth Armstrong
Jo Bailey
Terry Beirl
Nan Fey
Grant Herman
Lauren Hildebrandt
Matt Hudson
Ted May
Mary Rehwald
Steve Sandstrom
Fred Schnook
Jane Silberstein
Linda Webster
Tom Wojciechowski

For more information, contact:
Jane Silberstein, 715-682-7017
jane.silberstein@ces.uwex.edu

* The Sustainable Chequamegon Initiative Strategic Plan was produced and authored by members of the Planning Committee.

Forward

A group of individuals in the Chequamegon Bay Area of Northwest Wisconsin, eager to advance the principles and concepts of sustainability, established The Alliance for Sustainability (AFS) in 1992. AFS is a 501 c-3 nonprofit organization. In 2005, AFS launched a new project: The Sustainable Chequamegon Initiative. This initiative has engaged hundreds of area residents during the last year who are now eager and ready to further the vision of AFS and establish a Sustainable Chequamegon Center for the region.

Vision of the Alliance for Sustainability:

"The Alliance for Sustainability acknowledges its responsibility for leadership in creating a sustainable community. A sustainable community respects its own diversity and accepts responsibility for social, economic and ecological well being of the present and future generations through individual and collective actions."

What do we mean by "sustainable development?"

*"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains two key concepts: the concept of "needs," in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs." (World Commission on Environment and Development. *Our Common Future. The Brundtland Report*. Oxford University Press, 1987, p. 43.)*

It is the understanding of all who authored this document that sustainable development is a concept founded on the belief that to sustain life on this planet, the current generation must preserve as many options and resources as now exist for future generations. Actions toward sustainability are intended to preserve these options with the result being healthy people, a healthy economy and a healthy environment.

Sustainability was once diagrammed as a three-legged stool with each leg representing a form of capital (social, natural and financial), where all forms of capital were given equal importance, the following diagram is now considered more useful. This diagram represents a systems view of sustainability. Economy (the built environment) and society (human culture) are limited by the carrying capacity of the natural environment (the earth's natural resources).

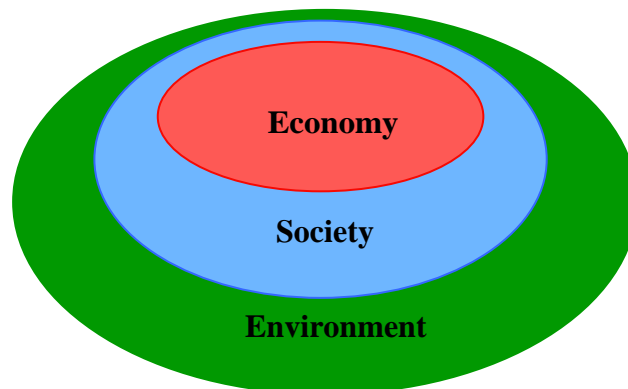
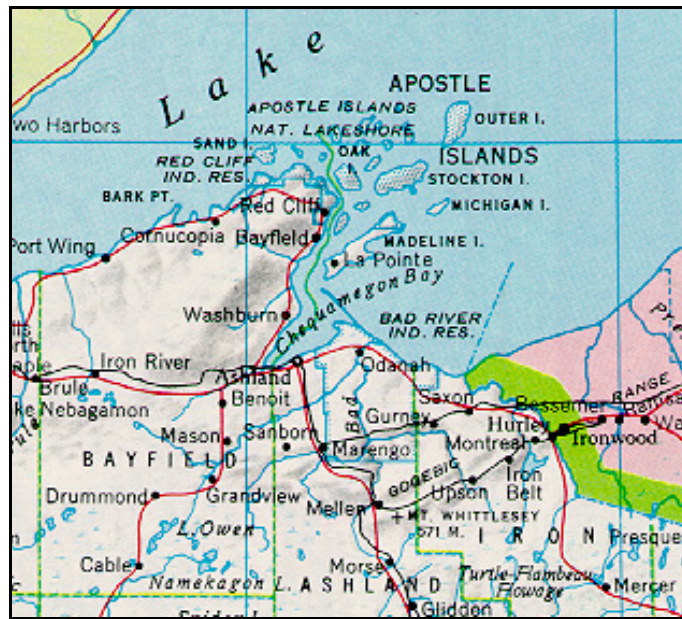


Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	i
Forward.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iii
Sustainable Chequamegon Initiative: History, Project Design, Budget.....	1
<i>The Setting</i>	2
<i>The People</i>	2
<i>The Sustainable Chequamegon Initiative – A Grass Roots Movement</i>	3
<i>The Vision</i>	4
<i>Guiding Principles for Project Design</i>	5
<i>Year One Goals</i>	7
Function(s) of Start-Up Interim Director(s) (10-weeks, Summer, 2006).....	7
Function of 10-week, Summer 2006 Intern(s).....	7
Function of full-time Director, First Six Months, Sept. 06-Feb. 07.....	8
Function of Fall Administrative Assistant.....	8
Revenue for fundraising campaign for Start-up costs for Summer 2006.....	8
<i>Start-up budget –10 weeks</i>	8
<i>Base budget - 12 months</i>	9
Sustainable Chequamegon Initiative: Goals and Objectives.....	10
<i>Housing</i>	11
<i>Education</i>	13
<i>Business</i>	15
<i>Government</i>	17
<i>Transportation</i>	18
<i>Energy/Waste</i>	20
<i>Agriculture and Food Security</i>	23
Appendix A – The Natural Step Framework.....	24
Appendix B – Eco-municipality resolutions adopted by the Cities of Washburn and Ashland, WI.....	26

Sustainable Chequamegon Initiative



History, Project Design, Budget



The Setting

The Chequamegon Bay region encompasses a unique population of some 20,000 people around the south shore of Lake Superior. Three cities (Ashland, Washburn, Bayfield,) and two bands of Lake Superior Chippewa (Ojibwe) -Red Cliff and Bad River - are situated around the bay. The area abounds with year-round recreational opportunities. The communities serve as a “gateway” to the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, a beautiful 21-island archipelago that attracts boaters, kayakers, sailors, and campers eager to explore its natural wonders.

The natural beauty of the Chequamegon Bay region is perhaps its strongest asset. The local economy has experienced significant changes over the past century. Until the 1960s, much of the region relied on resource extraction, shipping, and manufacturing. After the logging, large sawmills, and shipping industries were depleted, the region suffered a severe economic downturn whose effects continue to be felt to this day. The two county jurisdictions encompassing the Chequamegon Bay region (Ashland and Bayfield County) rank significantly higher in unemployment and incomes are lower than the statewide average.

Despite the economic issues in the region, there exists a growing diversity of niche-based businesses ranging from small manufacturing, tourism, healthcare, and higher education to sustainable timber harvesting and organic farming. Although many people struggle to make ends meet economically, there is a strong sense of place and a creative community synergy in the Chequamegon Bay region. People share several common values - clean air to breathe, safe water to drink, and healthy food to eat. One thing that truly draws common ground with area residents, regardless of background or political beliefs, is that Lake Superior and other natural treasures in the area must be protected. There is a sense that these resources are not only vital to the region, but that they are extremely vulnerable.

The People

The Chequamegon Bay region is both a destination point for tourists and a home for people who love the natural beauty of the area. Ashland is the largest community in the region (8,000), and functions as a regional center for a 50-mile radius. Over a thousand people drive to Ashland to work from the surrounding area every day. Ashland is home to two colleges - Northland College and Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College - and a major medical center.

The Red Cliff and Bad River Chippewa reservations lie on the northern and eastern points of the arc that makes up Chequamegon Bay. They each provide leadership in natural resource preservation and treasure their connection to *Aki* (Earth) and their cultural heritage built around Lake Superior. The Chippewa (Ojibwe) believe that their decisions must consider their impact seven generations into the future.

Bayfield is known for its hillside charm, apple and fruit farms, active marinas, and the Big Top Chautauqua tent that draws crowds from 300 to 900 a night for sixty to seventy live cultural performances every summer. Bayfield and Washburn are small communities that are popular tourist destinations and are proud of their family-oriented schools, businesses, libraries, and amenities. The Chequamegon Bay region is well served by a daily newspaper that is widely read, a locally-owned television station, and four additional weekly paper publications.

“Jobs” is a top issue on surveys of the communities. Many people work several part-time or seasonal jobs, but permanent, full-time employment is often difficult to find and many worry about the drain of young people with skills moving away to urban areas that offer higher paying jobs.

Despite this concern, the people of the Chequamegon Bay region have a strong sense of community and there is a growing energy among many residents that the time has come to develop a new economic paradigm that will build itself around a sustainable “brand” for the Chequamegon Bay and create more jobs. There is a realization that current systems used to produce energy, get rid of waste, grow food, and transport ourselves from one place to another are not sustainable. Many residents have a vision for how this region could become a **national rural model** for how a region can actually build the new linkages that are necessary to reduce its ecological footprint. We want future generations to enjoy a life that is better than what we have today. The energy of many Chequamegon Bay residents for this **eco-municipality vision** provides a unique opportunity for the region to develop a sustainable economy and lifestyle.

The Sustainable Chequamegon Initiative – A Grass Roots Movement

A new spirit took root among hundreds of citizens in the Chequamegon Bay region in the Spring of 2005 following an international conference in Ashland sponsored by the Alliance for Sustainability, entitled; “Sustainable Sweden: the Eco-municipality Movement”. The conference was the outcome of many slideshow presentations to local governments and other institutions by an Ashland city councilor who had visited Sweden the preceding summer. She visited several of Sweden’s seventy “eco-municipalities” that are known throughout the world for having moved toward a sustainable society over the past twenty years. These municipalities all have adopted *The Natural Step (TNS)* (see Appendix A), a scientific framework based on sustainable principles to bring about systematic changes in business, government, education, energy production, waste disposal, transportation, and agriculture. After hearing these presentations, thirteen entities, including three city councils, two tribal councils, and four educational institutions, donated at least \$1,000 each to co-sponsor the “Sustainable Sweden” conference that was held in February 2005 at the AmericInn in Ashland.

This conference was a **turning point** for the Chequamegon Bay region. Over 200 participants listened to Torbjorn Lahti, father of the eco-municipality movement in Sweden, and Sarah James, co-author of *The Natural Step for Communities*, present their experiences and stories of many communities in Sweden who have embraced and moved toward sustainable communities. Attendance included elected officials, mayors, city and tribal employees, educators, business owners, builders, planners, and interested citizens. The main focus of the conference was to have participants brain-storm, discuss, and prioritize potential local community action projects that would be based on sustainable development principles outlined in *The Natural Step*. In the end, over four dozen projects were identified. Several organizational meetings following the conference moved many of these initiatives forward.

In June, 2005, a delegation of Swedish municipality leaders came to present their success stories to 450 area residents in the Big Top Chautauqua tent. They received a standing ovation for their ideas and for the work local citizens had begun. In July, 2005, the Washburn City Council reached national recognition for passing an eco-municipality resolution (Appendix B). In early fall, the City Council of Ashland followed suit. **Together,**

Washburn and Ashland became the first two communities in the United States to pass eco-municipality resolutions (Appendix B). These resolutions guide the governments to use *The Natural Step* in policy decisions.

In October 2005, ninety people joined a **first round of Study Circles**. These nine discussion groups, of eight to twelve citizens each, met one night a week for two months in homes, businesses, and libraries throughout the Chequamegon Bay region to discuss the book *The Natural Step for Communities* by Torbjorn Lahti and Sarah James and how the sustainable development ideas described in the book might be incorporated in these communities.



Washburn City Council and staff with Torbjorn Lahti, summer 2005.

In January, 2006 a public celebration of outcomes from these Study Circles led to a **second round of Study Circles** and the formation of three organizational committees, including the **Planning and Organization Committee** which spent two months compiling this strategic plan for 2011 (“Sustainable Chequamegon Initiative: 2006-2011”)

Other significant events that have taken place in the past year:

1. Ashland Mayor Fred Schnook and Washburn Mayor Irene Blakely signed the U.S. Mayors’ Climate Change proposal along with 218 other mayors in the U.S. who want to reduce their contributions to global warming.
2. Bayfield became one of four communities in Wisconsin to pilot a “Travel Green” certification program. Twenty-four businesses volunteered to participate. Sustainable Bayfield, one of several groups created through the Sustainable Chequamegon Initiative, surveyed Apple Fest booth vendors in 2005 to assess the quantity of waste generated at this annual October event that draws thousands of people to Bayfield. Vendors will reduce the waste stream at the 2006 Apple Fest. The Bayfield group also sponsored a sustainable business seminar and is developing bio-diesel guidelines for city and Apostle Islands National Lakeshore use.
3. In Ashland, one study circle lobbied successfully to increase the Bay Area Rural Transit (BART) bus ridership, and to increase funding that will improve the frequency and availability of stops in the region.
4. In Washburn, the Public Works Director replaced inefficient showers in the city’s parks with a more sustainable, on-demand shower heating systems.
5. *The Daily Press*, the daily newspaper for the region, published a 30-page special section on “Northland Innovations”, which told the stories of twenty success stories of sustainable enterprises in the Chequamegon Bay region.
6. The Alliance for Sustainability (AFS), a local, non-profit group that has relied on volunteers to sponsor educational programs for the past thirteen years, created the Sustainable Chequamegon Initiative (SCI) which is seeking a Sustainable Chequamegon Center to be staffed in 2006 (this proposal). The AFS board will have oversight of this Center.
7. Washburn Elementary School has developed a school-wide plan to become a Green & Healthy School.

The Vision

The “Sustainable Chequamegon Initiative” (SCI) refers to the sustainable development movement in the communities of the Chequamegon Bay region initiated in 2005 by the

Alliance for Sustainability. It is a name that describes a group of people “on fire” about working together to make significant and positive change. It also is a name to lend a “sense of place” for these regional, collaborative efforts. People on the shoreline view the same night sky and see each other’s twinkling lights from around the bay, and an environmental challenge to one community is a challenge to the others. The strong collaborative spirit, rare between small towns, is the core of this growing movement.

We see a tremendous opportunity to harness the passion and energy people here have for developing a more sustainable way of life. The need for a sustainable economy and a new way of life is apparent in our modern wasteful society. People in this region recognize that we cannot rely solely on outside factors to provide food and energy. We believe that the word “waste” in this region will become known as a “re-useable resource”. We no longer want to rely on energy production from fossil fuels that are causing unprecedented changes to our environment. We believe that the definition of a sustainable community is one in which people take pride in meeting most of their needs locally, thereby creating a sense of place and a feeling of collaboration among its residents. We believe we can meet the needs as a region by protecting our natural resources that provide the base for our quality of life and our economy.

Sustainable development through the use of *The Natural Step* principles has been proven to work for over seventy communities in Sweden. We believe the Chequamegon Bay region, with its energetic people, provide a unique opportunity to develop a sustainable community in North America based on the principles of *The Natural Step*. A significant foundation for sustainable development is already here; we now need the financial resources to move this work forward. Our over-arching vision is to use the emerging techniques and experiences in the Chequamegon Bay region as a strong rural model for sustainable community development in North America.

Guiding Principles for Project Design

The following principles will guide us in opening and staffing a new **Sustainable Chequamegon Center** in June, 2006.

- A. **Principle One – *The Natural Step* will be our model for sustainable development.** We will encourage and facilitate efforts that recognize and meet the four system conditions within *The Natural Step* framework (see box inset and Appendix A). The Sustainable Chequamegon Center will have an open door policy to businesses and organizations interested in seeking funding and finding networking support for innovative sustainable design projects. Adopters of sustainable practices will use the Center to share skills, and find suppliers, markets, and many other connections to improve their operations through publicity and networking formats (*Green Pages*, newsletters, email lists of

Community guidelines for a sustainable society based on *The Natural Step* framework:

- 1. Eliminate contribution to fossil fuel dependence and to wasteful use of scarce metals and minerals.**
- 2. Eliminate contribution to dependence upon persistent chemicals and synthetic substances.**
- 3. Eliminate contribution to damage of natural ecosystems (e.g. land, water, soil, wildlife, forests).**
- 4. Meet human needs fairly and efficiently.**

suppliers and buyers, etc).

- B. Principle Two: We will follow the A-B-C-D process in our outreach.** This grassroots guideline calls for (A) building **awareness** around The Natural Step through training and seminars, (B) conducting **baseline assessments** of current practices, (C) creating a **clear vision** of goals for the future, and (D) **determining a path of action** towards that vision with benchmarks to measure progress.
- C. Principle Three – We will develop sustainability indicators in the Chequamegon Bay Region.** Sustainability depends upon social, natural and economic practices. We will collect data and show progress in these three areas. Because many natural resource agencies have offices in our region and have been monitoring data on the physical, chemical, and biological health of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, we will incorporate their data efforts when developing sustainable indicators on ecological health. Their research will help move our efforts forward more quickly.
- D. Principle Four – We will continue to focus on local financial contributions and investments for our efforts.** We consciously designed our 2005 international conference to run with 100% local contributions. We were able to raise \$17,000 from thirteen institutions by showing the educational outcomes for each of them, which was a sizable increase from the usual annual AFS budget of \$2,500. We now require a paid staff and a Sustainable Chequamegon Center office site to tie our many efforts together. We will continue to use local funding for many educational programs; however, we will need start-up funds to open a staffed center. Grant requests that focus on special projects can serve as models for other North American rural areas interested in sustainable economic development. We may seek outside funding for conferences that highlight national or international speakers, rural initiatives that can model seller/buyer/ and producer/consumer networks for other rural communities, and innovative and economic development initiatives that provide jobs. This Center also will seek funding for loan programs and other incentives for local businesses and institutions interested in joining our Vision 2011.
- E. Principle Five - We will specialize in communicating sustainable development ideas.** We will publish printed and web-based newsletters to outline on-going developments and opportunities. The Center will find inspirational international models for local initiatives and help publicize local successes nationally and internationally. We will provide an opportunity for “ownership” in the Center, to encourage new membership, and to welcome loyal supporters to remain with us. We will sponsor conferences, round-table discussions, and meetings with a variety of stakeholders.
- F. Principle Six: We will promote healthy working conditions for our staff.** We will offer staff pay that is competitive with other respected nonprofit groups, and support our staff in avoiding burn-out. We will also hire and train interns from colleges and universities to implement baseline research of communities and businesses. We will provide training for our volunteers, support professional development for our paid staff, and celebrate their contributions.

G. Principle Seven: We will follow a systems approach. We will not only support sustainable projects in several sectors (business, agriculture, education, government, healthcare, waste management, housing, natural resources management, energy, and mass transit), we also will help foster links between people working in these different sectors.

Year One Goals:

- 1) Encourage and help the communities of Bayfield, Red Cliff, Bad River, La Pointe (Madeline Island), and other local governments to adopt *Natural Step* resolutions.
- 2) Seek a local donor match to finance 50% of our goal.
- 3) Conduct a “Community Shareholders” fundraising campaign in 2006 to support the start-up of a Sustainable Chequamegon Center with a paid staff.
- 4) Draw 400-500 attendees to the June 28, 2006 “Pie and Politics” evening at Big Top Chautauqua with Rocky Anderson, Mayor of Salt Lake City, a city which has won international recognition for its sustainability practices over the past five years.
- 5) Sponsor a community presentation of ideas from an eight-member Chequamegon Bay delegation to Sweden in June, 2006.
- 6) Open the Sustainable Chequamegon Center in summer, 2006 (see start-up budget).
- 7) Develop trust and visibility with local governments, businesses, schools, and colleges.
- 8) Create an inter-active website, and national eco-municipality “brand” for our region.

A. Function(s) of Start-Up Interim Director(s) (10-weeks, Summer, 2006):

- (1) Open Center/office with direction from SCI, AFS.
- (2) Help co-ordinate “Pie and Politics” major event, June 28.
- (3) Develop internal sustainable funding plan and lay groundwork for SCI to become national rural model for sustainable community development.
- (4) Research and contact potential sources to fund the Center over the next 3-5 years.
- (5) Lay the groundwork for communications strategy for members, stakeholders, users of services that will begin to be offered by the Center.
- (6) Report monthly progress to Alliance for Sustainability.
- (7) Work with communities, community groups, planning committee, etc.
- (8) Supervise summer interns; recruit Northland College interns for fall.
- (9) Form hiring committee & hire full-time Director for fall, 2006.

B. Function of 10-week, Summer 2006 Intern(s)

- (1) Help publicize & recruit attendees for “Pie and Politics” and other SCI summer events and sum up ideas from these event(s).
- (2) Carry out action research on current practices in agriculture, government, and education (first priorities), using the “A-B-C-D” process.
- (3) Develop an interactive website for AFS and SCI.
- (4) Begin baseline assessment research in one or more areas (agriculture, government practices, education, small businesses, other).
- (5) Take minutes of major meetings and distribute.
- (6) Carry out office duties – copying, printing, setting up, etc.
- (7) Perform part-time receptionist duties.
- (8) Provide record-keeping and accounting support when needed.

C. Function of full-time Director, First Six Months, Sept. 06-Feb.07.

- (1) Finalize strategic plan for AFS, SCI, and prepare a 5-year business plan for the AFS board to approve.
- (2) Coordinate SCI initiatives for fall/winter 2006.
- (3) Continue to seek funding for first 3-5-years of SCI work.
- (4) Build positive contacts with businesses, government organizations, tribes, educational institutions and other organizations.
- (5) Participate in conferences and meetings as approved by AFS Board.
- (6) Report to monthly AFS Board meetings.
- (7) Develop stable financial funding patterns for AFS.

D. Function of Fall Administrative Assistant

- (1) Take minutes of AFS Board meetings, and distribute to members.
- (2) Perform office duties – copying, printing, setting up, etc.
- (3) Act as part-time receptionist.
- (4) Oversee basic accounts.

E. Revenue for fundraising campaign for Start-up costs for Summer 2006

- (1) Transfer funds from AFS surplus budget (15-20%).
- (2) Carry out a Community Shareholders campaign (30-40%).
- (3) Local donor(s) match: (50%).
- (4) Other (5%).

Start-up Budget – (10 Weeks, summer, 2006):

Costs	Expenditures	Donations
Interim Director(s) 10 wks (6/17-8/18) 32hrs/wk @\$20/hr + 25% fringe benefits	\$8,000	
First Intern 10 wks(6/17-8/18) 40hrs/wk @ /\$8.75/hr/(\$350wk) +13% fringe benefits	\$4,000	
Office Expense, supplies	\$2,000	\$2,000
Second Intern, donated		\$4,000
Equipment, other		\$3,000
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$14,000</u>	<u>\$9,000</u>

Revenues for summer budget:

AFS transfer:	\$2,500
Fundraiser(s)	\$5,000
Local match:	<u>\$7,500</u> (50%)
TOTAL:	<u>\$14,000</u>

Base Budget – First Twelve Months of Full Operation, 9/06/06 – 9/05/07:

Fundraising Goal: \$42,000/six months; \$84,000/one year

Interim Director 9/06-8/31/06 @ \$40,000/full-time (48wks) +35% for fringe benefits (SS, UI, WC, and health plan pd for by individual on his/her own.)	SIX MONTHS: \$27,000	TWELVE MONTHS \$54,000
Part-time Assistant 9/04/06-8/31/07 @\$13/hr(\$9984) @/16hrs wk (48wks) +13% fringe benefits (SS, UI, WC) = \$11,200	SIX MONTHS: \$5,600	TWELVE MONTHS \$11,200
Office Expenses: Phone, supplies, printing, other @ \$500/mo.	SIX MONTHS: \$3,000	TWELVE MONTHS \$5,500
Professional Development & Travel	SIX MONTHS \$3,000	TWELVE MONTHS \$4,500
Accounting Services	SIX MONTHS: \$1,000	TWELVE MONTHS: \$1,000
Space Rental @\$400/month (may be donated)	SIX MONTHS: \$2,400	TWELVE MONTHS: \$4,800
TOTAL: (depending on in-kind space/supplies/furniture)	SIX MONTHS: <u>\$39,600 - \$42,000</u>	TWELVE MONTHS: <u>\$76,200 - \$ -81,000</u>

Sustainable Chequamegon Initiative

Strategic Plan Goals & Objectives



Alliance for Sustainability
SUPPORTING DIALOGUE

Housing

Goal 1: Builders, contractors, designers, homeowners and municipalities in the Chequamegon Bay Region understand and embrace green building techniques.

Objective A: Coordinate design and construction of a Green Model Home that will provide the region with an example of an affordable green building design and techniques.

Actions:

- a) Raise funds for design, construction and land/lot purchase.
- b) Develop a contract with local designers and builders that includes an established project outline, supplies and costs for design and construction.
- c) Complete construction of the home.
- d) Develop an educational tour with materials and information on different aspects of the green-building techniques used in the model home.

Objective B: Educate builders, contractors, designers and homeowners about green building techniques in both new construction and remodeling projects.

Actions:

- a) Coordinate green building workshops for training and certification of trade members; and “how-to” workshops for homeowners through Wisconsin Green Building Association, Wisconsin Green Built Home and the Midwest Renewable Energy Association.
- b) Provide information defining green building to these trade members; encouraging them to adopt green building techniques and to be listed in the *Green Pages* (See Business section, Objective B).
- c) Provide green building reference stations at libraries with “how-to” books and guides, brochures, information on workshops, and copies of the *Green Pages*.

Objective C: Make green building and reusable materials affordable and readily available.

Actions:

- a) Develop section of *Green Pages* that lists local green building contractors and designers, businesses that supply or sell green building materials and sustainably harvested wood, and a glossary defining such materials with the certification requirements (Energy Star, ISO, ERG, Smart Wood etc).
- b) Develop the *Green Materials Bulletin*; a printed and online reference providing people with contact information of local homeowners/builders that have materials and supplies that can be re-used/recycled (See Energy/Waste section, Objective C).
- c) Encourage distributors of green building materials in the upper Midwest and Great Lakes regions to consider outlets in the Chequamegon region on the basis of the new markets created by the eco-municipality commitments in the area.
- d) Encourage more businesses to offer local green building materials including sustainably harvested wood.
- e) Support efforts of local and regional sustainable forestry cooperatives to educate managers of local forests not currently meeting sustainability standards so that they can provide green material resources to the region.

Objective D: Encourage government to adopt standards for green building practices in building codes, permitting processes, and offer incentives to homeowners to use green building techniques.

Actions:

- a) Encourage ordinances that require recycling of all possible building materials whenever a demolition is approved.
- b) Encourage ordinances that promote LEED or WI Green Built Home guidelines that set standards in energy conservation for homes and buildings.
- c) Reward green building with tax incentives and/or reduction in utility fees.
- d) Provide information to homeowners on financial incentives through various programs including Focus on Energy.

Objective E: Encourage local municipalities to adopt land use plans that utilize compact development and encourage the preservation of natural areas.

Actions:

- a) Establish density ranges for local development that encourage compact development and traditional neighborhoods.
- b) Map natural areas to be preserved, and specify the criteria (e.g. steep slopes, agricultural land, wetlands, etc.).
- c) Designate areas for transit-oriented development and locate denser development in those areas.

Goal 2: Affordable and energy efficient housing is available in each community.

Objective A: Encourage municipalities to develop standards for affordable and sustainable housing, and encourage these standards to be included in new developments.

Actions:

- a) Encourage ordinances that allow a percentage of any new development to be available specifically to residents with income below county median levels.
- b) Encourage municipalities to support the rehabilitation of existing housing with energy efficient improvements.
- c) Create a fund for rehabilitation of existing housing to be used by owners who plan to use energy efficient building materials and techniques.
- d) Adopt standards for the energy efficiency of existing housing.
- e) Encourage municipalities to allow alternative forms of occupancy, such as co-housing and cooperatives.

Imagine In 2009...

"Lakefront Nature Condominiums" were completed and built where the old James River plant used to be in Ashland. Adding 40 units to Ashland's residential base, the development drew enough buyers to fill the units in the first year of opening. Built with techniques that enabled the building to use 70% of standard energy requirements, the building has won two national awards and is a major enhancement to Ashland.

Education

Goal: All Chequamegon Bay educational institutions have adopted *The Natural Step (TNS)* system conditions as operational guidelines and infuse sustainability principles into and throughout their curricula.

Objective A: Collaborate with regional schools and the CESA #12 office so that 75% of CESA#12 schools are recognized as Green & Healthy Schools.

Note: The Green & Healthy Schools program utilizes guidelines designed through a DNR/DPI collaboration which outlines operations and goals for ten different sections: Chemical Management, Community Involvement, Energy, Facilities & Grounds, Indoor Air Quality, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Mercury, Transportation, Waste & Recycling, and Water. We would add Wellness to this list, which would include encouraging school districts to utilize more regionally-produced food for their school meals and adding more physical activity and time outside as part of their daily curriculum. In addition to operations, sustainability principles can be infused into the curriculum at each grade level for all eleven of these topical areas.

Actions:

- a) Continue support for the Washburn Elementary School to become the region's first Green and Healthy School.
- b) Support (letter of support, part of a grant or other) regional/state efforts to establish a Regional Place-based Curriculum Specialist who works out of the CESA #12 office to help area schools incorporate health and sustainability practices into district operations and infuse wellness and sustainability into a comprehensive spiral place-based K-12 curricula.
- c) Assist with publicity to illustrate the benefits of becoming a Green & Healthy School and to help the larger region understand how intimately connected Green & Healthy Schools are with overall regional sustainability efforts.
- d) Facilitate networking among the school personnel and regional Green Businesses and resource agencies so there is more community collaboration for place-based education in the schools.
- e) Develop an expanded pool of speakers and educational program volunteers who would be available for school district in-services to support sustainability operations and curricula.

Objective B: Extend the cross-societal benefits of K-12 sustainability efforts by enabling schools to serve as sustainability centers for people of all ages throughout the region.

Actions:

- a) Encourage regional businesses and entrepreneurs to provide programs for students on sustainable agriculture, green building, alternative energy, etc.
- b) Evaluate societal benefits of the eleven sections of Green & Healthy Schools as a framework for sustainable operations for businesses – to broaden the benefits of Green & Healthy Schools across society and work to further enhance student engagement within the community.

- c) Convene school representatives to discuss the potential for a Tour of Sustainable Schools to be opened to the public for idea-exchanges. Develop an annual Tour of Sustainable Schools that highlights sustainable practices within the schools. The tour may include:
- Washburn Elementary School with its new rooftop array of solar panels – some for solar electricity generation, and others for solar hot water.
 - Ashland, Bayfield and Washburn School Districts with their locally adapted schoolyard restoration efforts composed of a variety of northern native plants. These are complemented and/or patterned after display gardens in Bad River and Red Cliff - where there is additional emphasis upon Native uses of these plants.
 - Washburn Elementary School with its school garden where they are growing vegetables used in the school lunch program.
 - Ashland Elementary and High Schools “community gardens” which use their expansive open space to provide families the opportunity to grow their own vegetables at the school site. The expansion is paid for by contributions from those using the garden sites.

Objective C: Collaborate among all educational institutions (K-12 schools (public and private), Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College (WITC), Northland College, Ashwabay Outdoor Education Foundation (AOEF), Lac Courte Oreilles Community College (LCOCC) and Clearwater Folk School) to work toward enhanced regional sustainability.

Actions:

- a) Expand visibility of *TNS* in schools, and facilitate the adoption of the *TNS* system conditions as operational principles in the educational institutions.
- b) Serve as a center for educational networking in support of sustainability initiatives and collaborative grant writing among institutions.

Objective D: Provide educational leadership in the form of summer sustainability institutes and major higher-education areas of study in Environmental Leadership and Sustainability.

Actions:

- a) Collaborate with Northland College, WITC, LCOCC, regional agencies, tribes and other partners to offer summer institutes and other conferences to teach people from throughout the nation about the principles and practical applications of sustainability. The first one could be held in the summer of 2007.
- b) Explore the variety of Environmental Leadership and Sustainability programs across the nation to identify common attributes and unique elements of each. Work with interested faculty from each institution to review other programs, reflect upon specific institutional strengths and interests, and design a program specifically for the northern Wisconsin and Chequamegon Bay area.
- c) Encourage Northland College, WITC and LCOCC to collaborate to offer Environmental Leadership and Sustainability as major areas of study, which include service learning and other practical applications throughout the region. Provide assistance as needed for program design and marketing to enable the program to become a reality.

Business

Goal: All forms of business have a basic awareness of *The Natural Step (TNS)* and 60% have adopted the four system conditions by 2011.

Objective A: Study Circles within and for businesses in the Chequamegon area are offered on a continual basis.

Actions:

- a) Training, workshops, and consultation to businesses interested in creating study circles are available to interested businesses.
- b) “Train the Trainers” workshops are created and a schedule that insures that training is available to those that want it is established.
- c) An annual schedule of Study Circles is published and made available to area businesses.

Objective B: Collaborate with Northland College, WITC, and LCOCC to develop and implement a Natural Step for Business course, seminars and other programs to provide area businesses and employees with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively follow the core principals of *TNS*.

Actions:

- a) *TNS* course and course fee structure is developed by Fall 2006.
- b) *TNS* course is offered on an ongoing basis.
- c) One-day workshops on sustainable business practices are offered on a regular basis.
- d) A *TNS* Tool Kit for Business has been developed and is available to area businesses.
- e) Informational materials that support the premise that environmentally sound business practices are also economically sound have been developed and distributed to area businesses.

Objective C: Survey current business practices (i.e. energy use, green products, recycling, etc.), resulting in a baseline status for community change.

Actions:

- a) Publish and reward best practices.
- b) Develop and implement survey of business practices.
- c) Establish benchmarks to measure progress.
- d) Utilize data to propose and implement strategies for change.
- e) Encourage participation in the Wisconsin Travel Green program.

Objective D: Research and publish *Green Pages* (Green Business Directory).

Actions:

- a) Establish criteria for inclusion in directory.
- b) Determine cost of publication and distribution of directory.
- c) Collaborate with phone directory publications (phone & online sites) for possible co-sponsorships.

- d) Directory is published annually.

Objective E: Maintain business focus groups.

Actions:

- a) Survey local businesses and research area economic data to identify businesses and business owners that could be invited to participate in focus groups.
- b) Develop a clear and concise communication plan to effectively inform area businesses on the purpose of focus groups and meeting schedules.
- c) Develop focus groups with area businesses on topics such as the importance of Fair Trade practices, green purchasing, energy conservation techniques, and other related topics.
- d) Develop a business network that includes all area businesses.

Objective F: Hold annual Sustainable Business Conference.

Actions:

- a) Assess the level of knowledge and needs of local businesses as it relates to sustainable business practices.
- b) Collaborate with Chambers of Commerce and Bayfield/Ashland County Economic Development Corporation to develop marketing strategies for the annual conference.
- c) Assess funding options available for conference including grants, donations and registration fees.

Government

Goal: The city and county governments of Ashland and Bayfield County, Red Cliff and Bad River Tribes operate according to the guiding principles of *The Natural Step (TNS)* and the region is an eco-municipality model for other areas of the state.

Objective: Provide the necessary support/services to ensure that government entities adopting *TNS* incorporate this framework in all phases of governance.

Actions:

- 1) Develop a toolkit for governments that wish to become “green” or sustainable or follow the principles of *TNS* and introduced to all local governments in the Chequamegon Bay area. This should serve as an invitation to those governments that have not yet adopted resolutions and a practical guide for those which have.
- 2) A Sustainable Chequamegon Initiative committee will work with the League of Women Voters and other organizations to promote citizen participation in government. Participation in government is key to “sustaining sustainability”.
- 3) Provide or ensure training in *TNS* for local governments – elected, appointed officials and all employees.

Transportation

Goal: The transportation system for the Chequamegon Bay region includes diverse modes of sustainable travel and increasingly sustainable fuel sources, resulting in a 30 percent reduction in fossil fuel consumption by 2011.

Objective A: Compliment, expand and enhance public transportation services.

Actions:

- a) Work with Bay Area Rural Transit (BART) to continue developing a comprehensive regional service network.
- b) Foster the integration of BART services with tribal and elderly and disabled population transportation networks.
- c) Research and develop in-town electric vehicle shuttle service that accommodates student, worker and senior activities.
- d) Research the potential linkage between the BART system and area school buses for providing after-school and weekend activities.
- e) Identify “Park and Ride” or Walk and Ride” stations located in each community to allow for non-BART travelers to access public transportation in the communities - especially for area events.
- f) Work with Travel Green Wisconsin to develop packets and website descriptions of “Sustainable Chequamegon” transportation options for vacationers and summer residents for area Chambers of Commerce.
- g) Promote long-term planning for a two-car light rail system that could eventually reconfigure the BART system.

Objective B: Provide personal transportation options to compliment BART services for customers and community members who need temporary transportation.

Actions:

- a) Encourage public purchase of high efficiency, low emission vehicles at BART drop off sites. These vehicles could use the same public access lanes as bicycles.
- b) Encourage local business entrepreneurship related to the provision of a community fleet of co-op cars leased by the hour, day or week to co-op members.
- c) Coordinate carpooling, park and ride stations and car co-ops.

Objective C: Create a system of non-motorized travel routes for bicycles, pedestrians and skiers.

Actions:

- a) Promote the design, funding, acquisition of easements and construction of non-motorized linkages connecting Chequamegon Bay communities.
- b) Work with Ashland, Bayfield and Washburn to identify, mark and enforce bike lanes for safe urban travel.
- c) Develop and promote bike-to-work incentive programs with corporate support (e.g., lockers and showers at work, reduced insurance co-pays, technical support).
- d) Research the economic viability of three-wheeled bike taxis that are linked with other non-bicycle services that compliment the BART system.

Objective D: Support development of transportation corridors among the five communities to promote natural landscapes, minimize roadside advertising and include more roadside rest areas for tourists and bikers.

Actions:

- a) Work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and Wisconsin Scenic Byways Program to develop and implement design standards for roadside aesthetics in the Chequamegon Bay region.
- b) Market sustainable transportation initiatives at roadside rest, historical markers and park-and-ride sites.

Objective E: Provide fossil fuel alternatives to area consumers.

Actions:

- a) Work with area communities and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to provide incentives for using public transportation (fossil fuel tax and road maintenance surcharges, etc.). The value of the surcharges could be returned through “complimentary” tickets for BART.
- b) Encourage the provision of storage and access to bio-diesel and/or other alternative fuels for city vehicles; BART buses and Apostle Island water craft (Apostle Island National Lake Shore, Bayfield ferry line, U.S. Coast Guard). Locally produced sources would be given priority including Ashland Agricultural Experiment Station.
- c) Develop a new vision for gas stations/convenience stores. Research and identify tax incentives for businesses to provide access to alternative fuels, especially bio-diesel and its future fuel cousins. These stations could provide both fuel, and locally produced convenience items from green sources and provide the maintenance functions for the co-op cars, electric carts and bike taxis.
- d) Secure funding for 12-volt generators and inverters attached to exercise bike at the health center, retirement homes, schools, college, etc.

Objective F: Link area sustainable transportation opportunities with the Midwest.

Action:

- a) Work toward establishing linkages with transportation systems in Superior, Duluth, Madison and eventually Minneapolis/St. Paul.

Energy/Waste

Energy

Goal: In 2011, The Chequamegon Bay region has reduced total fossil fuel consumption for electricity and heating by 30% since 2006 through the use of renewable and alternative energies, green building techniques and city-wide policies, coordinated by SCI's Energy Conservation and Awareness Program.

Objective A: Partner with Bayfield Electric and Xcel Energy to produce cleaner energy.

Actions:

- a) Gain technical and financial support for small scale renewable energy generation.
- b) Assist utilities and new producers in providing 20% of energy from alternative sources including five commercial scale wind turbines in the region.
- c) Work with Xcel Energy and City of Ashland to provide heat for businesses on main street Ashland from Xcel Energy's hot water line.
- d) Lead coalition of partners that enables the Xcel Bayfront plant to convert to 75% bio-based fuels.
- e) Create an inventory of current energy sources and total usage in region.
- f) Develop an online energy use database that is automatically updated for each billing cycle; providing homeowners, businesses and government offices the ability to receive their monthly energy use and bills online and monitor their energy use.

Objective B: Reduce dependence in region on imported forms of energy by 20% from 2006.

Actions:

- a) Promote energy efficiency through the formation of a Chequamegon Energy Conservation Program, which provides education and awareness by working with residences and business to improve building and business efficiency.
- b) Facilitate energy audits and energy load assessments to businesses and residents as part of the energy program so that 50% of businesses and 50% of homes have had an audit completed by 2011.
- c) Develop an energy inventory and monitoring database connected to the web that allows homeowners, businesses and government buildings to enter their monthly energy use in order to record and observe trends and progress.
- d) Identify and publicize financial assistance opportunities for energy efficiency.
- e) Provide technical assistance for citizens interested in seeking funding for energy efficiency remodeling projects.
- f) Partner with Wisconsin Focus on Energy program to enlist state expertise and funds to further energy efficiency.
- g) Investigate and promote opportunities for utilizing Combined Heat and Power (CHP) systems.

Objective C: Produce a *Green Home Bulletin*, a tool for homeowners wanting to connect with others in the region who have incorporated green designs into their homes; lists a contact number and description of projects as well as a guide for green building materials and builders in the area (see Housing section, Objective C, action b).

Actions:

- a) Research format and content for bulletin.
- b) Identify volunteers to write and distribute the bulletin.
- c) Solicit contributors and ‘subscribers’.
- d) Develop a business plan for the bulletin.
- e) Develop an online web page where homeowners can post their information and link to a local used material bulletin web page.

WASTE – Reusable Resources

Goal: Concept of “Waste” has been replaced with “reusable resources”. This conceptual change occurred over the past five years through education as well as practical applications of new technology. Almost no “waste” in the region is land filled today.

Objective A: Assess how the region is managing its waste stream.

Actions:

- a) Convene a meeting with cities, townships and the tribes to get an overview of waste management practices in the region.
- b) Coordinate an assessment of the current systems with waste contractors.
- c) With assistance from contractors and municipalities quantify the annual waste generated in the region by type.

Objective B: In cooperation with the Ashland bio-based agriculture station install a low- or no-emissions waste-to-energy system that re-uses non-recyclable waste in the region to create syngas for local transportation needs.

Actions:

- d) Research best technology and assist in securing grants for pilot project.
- e) Assist in conducting a comprehensive inventory of biomass resources in the region.
- f) Encourage and promote involvement of cities, tribes and counties in bio-based energy projects.

Objective C: Create a compost collection center located in all towns as part of a region-wide contract with a new reusable resource management company.

Actions:

- a) Secure a grant that provides education on composting and enables establishment of centers and distribution of bins.
- b) Provide compost generated at each center to local citizens and farmers.
- c) Encourage and facilitate the development of community gardens, available in all towns, where compost is also available and wooden raised beds for senior citizens allow for easier gardening.

Objective D: Provide comprehensive recycling centers in all communities of the Chequamegon Bay region (see Housing, Objective C).

Actions:

- a) Encourage drop off and resale of used lumber and other construction and building materials.
- b) Create the used material bulletin, print and web based -linked to the new *Green Home Bulletin* - that allows citizens to list any building materials or other used items for sale, exchange or give-away.
- c) Assist small businesses in starting repair and reuse shops for items that had previously been sent to landfills.

Agriculture & Food Security

Goal: Strong, sustainable, and local food systems that ensure access to affordable and nutritious food for people in the region have been established.

Objective A: Follow the lead of F.E.A.S.T.* in our agricultural outreach.

Actions:

- a) Collaborate with our well-established Chequamegon Bay Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (F.E.A.S.T.), to carry out baseline inventories of who our regional farmers are, what they produce, what they would like to produce, how far away their markets are, how they access transportation, and what barriers they face in selling to local markets.
- b) Collaborate with F.E.A.S.T. to secure funding to train local farmers in sustainable agriculture techniques and to develop local distribution networks.
- c) Provide on-going support for F.E.A.S.T.'s 2035 goal of creating a regionally self-sufficient food system within the Chequamegon Bay area which can provide an adequate, affordable, nutritious and fresh diet from local producers for all citizens at all times.
- d) Publicize community gardening projects (Odanah Gitiganing Gardens, Ashland Green Thumb Gardens, public school gardening projects, Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center Three Sisters Garden, and Red Cliff raspberry gardens), and encourage more community and home gardens.
- e) Support and promote local Farmer's Markets.
- f) Collaborate with F.E.A.S.T. in grant-seeking for expansion of the Mobile Farmer's Market, a pilot project to serve locally grown produce in local schools, and for expansion of agriculture production in the region.

Objective B: Collaborate with Ashland and Bayfield counties to develop the Experimental Agriculture Station in Ashland into a bio-based research facility.

* F.E.A.S.T.(Food, Education, Agriculture, Sustainability & Tradition)

Appendix A

The Natural Step Framework

The Natural Step Framework: A Guide for Sustainable Development

In a sustainable society, nature is not subject to systematically increasing:

- 1. Concentrations of substances extracted from the Earth's crust.**
- 2. Concentrations of substances produced by society.**
- 3. Degradation by physical means.**
- 4. And in the sustainable society, human needs are met worldwide.**

Source – *The Natural Step Story* by TNS founder, Karl-Henrik Robért

Appendix B

**Eco-municipality resolutions adopted by the Cities of Washburn and
Ashland, WI**

RESOLUTION #05-021

City of Washburn, Wisconsin

Adoption of Sustainable Community Development Policy

WHEREAS, in the sustainable society, nature is not subject to systematically increasing concentrations of substances extracted from the Earth's crust, because human society mines and brings into use substances from below the Earth's surface, that along with their emissions are steadily accumulating at levels far greater than their natural occurrence and cannot break down further; and,

WHEREAS, in the sustainable society, nature is not subject to systematically increasing concentrations of substances produced by society, because human society has been manufacturing synthetic substances faster than these materials can be broken down, and,

WHEREAS, in the sustainable society, nature is not subject to systematically increasing degradation by physical means, because human activity is breaking down natural systems—land, water, forests, soil, ecosystems—by depletion and destruction faster than these natural systems can renew themselves; and,

WHEREAS, in the sustainable society, human needs are met worldwide, because if people around the world cannot meet basic human needs—air, water, food, shelter, means of livelihood, mobility, equal treatment, equal access, safety, participation in decisions that affect our lives, the right to peaceful enjoyment of life, a connection with nature, and psychological and spiritual connection and meaning—then this inequality will continually undermine the goals identified above; and,

WHEREAS, by endorsing sustainable community development, The City of Washburn is joining an international network of eco-municipalities, and taking the initiative to become one of the first four eco-municipalities in the United States; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Washburn has a pledge of support through mentorship and consulting from The National Association of Swedish Eco-Municipalities;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that The City of Washburn hereby endorses the principles of sustainable community development, as proposed in The Natural Step Program, and agrees to apply these principles in its planning, policy making, and municipal practices.

Adopted by the Common Council for the City of Washburn, Wisconsin this 11th Day of July, 2005.

Irene Blakely, Mayor

