

2012 Indicators Report: Discussion and Recommendations

Indicator Selection

The first step of the project was to determine and select the indicators to monitor. Appendix E of the Full ICSP includes all 56 potential indicators for consideration, including 29 priority indicators recommended for monitoring. Between approval of the Full ICSP and the creation of the ICSP Summary Document in 2011 some indicators were omitted and others added. In the summer of 2013, Appendix E indicators were compared with Indicators in the Summary Document to produce a list of 36 indicators. This list was further refined based on what indicators were feasible and appropriate given resource availability (time, complexity of indicator and available data). A final list of 29 core indicators were used for the 2012 indicators report. The intent is to build on these original indicators in the future as data becomes more available and as the process becomes more established.

Indicator Compilation

From start to finish, the 2012 Indicators required approximately 1 month of full staff time. This is a sizable chunk of time for relatively few indicators that are for the most part readily accessible. This was the first year of indicator collection, which most definitely increased the timeline, and challenges such as inconsistent or complex indicators certainly slowed the process but as the indicators reporting becomes more established more indicators will be added, so a month may be a reasonable time commitment.

#	Original Recommendations <i>(Made by summer student after writing 2012 Indicator Report)</i>	Implemented? <i>(Date)</i>	Comment
1	<p><u>Indicator Additions</u></p> <p>For the 2014 indicators report several indicators are recommended for addition. They are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Efficient Water Use; ○ Housing Diversity; ○ Business Licenses; ○ Low Income Prevalence; ○ Length of Tenure; ○ Volunteering (# of hours spent); ○ Commute Times/Distances; and, ○ Number of Trail connections. <p>The data for these indicators can be obtained relatively easily, either through existing census data, a community survey or for the trail connections, a day of walking the trails. These indicators would provide much needed information in each of the strategy areas and create a more complete picture of where the Highlands is with regards to sustainability. Lastly, the 2014 Indicators Report should be easier to compile, as indicators reliant on census data will not need updating (next census is schedule for 2016).</p>		<p>Some of these suggestions require a community survey.</p> <p>Inclusion of additional indicators should be reviewed by staff as part of the next data collection.</p>

#	Original Recommendations <i>(Made by summer student after writing 2012 Indicator Report)</i>	Implemented? <i>(Date)</i>	Comment
2	<p><u>Indicator Revisions</u></p> <p>Some of the current indicators require revisions to increase their relevance. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Renewable Energy Installations-currently woodstoves are the only renewable energy sources being captured by the district but most likely Highlanders are installing other sources of renewable energy in their homes. This indicator could be asked in a community survey, for example by asking what measures residents are taking to ‘green’ their homes. ○ Community Gardens- currently there is only one community garden in the Highlands and that number is not anticipated to increase in the near future. A better indicator may be the number of community members producing food, which also could be determined through a community survey. ○ Transit Ridership-transit ridership in the Highlands is non-existent and that number is not anticipated to increase in the near future. Commuting via public transit is captured in another indicator (although it is not Highlands specific) making this indicator potentially unnecessary. 		<p>Two of the suggested revisions would require a community survey; the last one could be changed for the next data collection.</p> <p>Changing of indicators should be reviewed by staff as part of the next data collection.</p>
3	<p><u>Reporting Schedule</u></p> <p>Originally, the indicators were to be reported out on annually. However, based on data availability and release schedule, for example census data is released ever five years, it was determined that indicators should be reported on every two years. In addition, data was collected when feasible for 2010 but 2012 was chosen as the baseline year.</p>	<p>December 2013 (Acted on following first Indicators Report)</p>	
4	<p><u>Priority Actions</u></p> <p>In 2012, 9 priority actions were selected for implementation. Of those 9 actions, 3 have been completed to date. Given the reporting schedule for the indicators will be every two years it is recommended that priority actions also span a two-year timeframe. This will give more time to complete the actions. In addition, it may be helpful to separate the actions into internal and external categories; with actions that are the responsibility of staff separated from those that are community actions.</p>	<p>Could be implemented following January 11, 2016 Council Meeting</p>	
5	<p><u>Community Survey</u></p> <p>For many of the indicators quantitative data does not exist. A community survey is one way of gathering indicator data on more difficult, often qualitative indicators. The community survey could ask broad, big picture questions such as “What are the most important issues facing the Highlands?” but it could also ask resident specific questions such as if residents are producing their own food. It is recommended that a community survey occur before the 2014 indicators report is due.</p>		<p>Not on Council’s strategic priorities at this time. Would be done as part of an indicator data collection occurrence.</p>

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6	<p>Format</p> <p>For the 2012 indicators the format includes: a tracking spreadsheet, an indicators guide and an indicators report. The format was modeled on the Victoria Foundations Vital Victoria Annual Indicators Report, which has a ‘flashier’ easy to read report publically available and then a technical guide, which includes sources. A tracking spreadsheet was also created which includes tabs for each of the indicator years and will be used to track progress over the next 20 years.</p> <p>The Center for Sustainability provided the Highlands with an “Indicator Analysis and Tracking Tool” to use to track indicators from 2008-2030. The tool is an excel document and includes a space for each indicator to track for the 20 year period. In the summer of 2013 the decision was made not to use this tool but to create a new, pared down spreadsheet. As indicators reporting becomes more established another format for storing and comparing the data over a twenty-year period may be needed.</p>		Recommend continue with current format.
7	<p>Best Practices</p> <p>Over the last few years the Center for Sustainability, Whistler has produced Integrated Community Sustainability Plans for over a dozen small communities in B.C. Many of those communities seem to be struggling with the indicators reporting component of the ICSP, which is the responsibility of the local governments and are hiring the Center for Sustainability to complete the indicators as well. It would be worthwhile to connect with other small communities who have undertaken ICSP’s to determine if they have completed indicator reports in-house and what some of the successes and challenges have been.</p>		Not on Council’s strategic priorities at this time. Would be done as part of an indicator data collection occurrence.