



Town of Watson Lake  
Integrated Community Sustainability Plan

2006- 2007

2006

## CONTENTS

Community Overview.....	3
The Planning Process.....	4
Our Sustainability Principles.....	6
Community Vision Statement.....	7
Community Values.....	7
Our Long Term Goals.....	8
Measures of Success.....	9
Community Inventory & Assessment.....	11
Community Evaluation.....	12
Priority Setting.....	14
Infrastructure Priorities.....	16
Cooperation with Liard First Nation.....	19
<b><i>Inventory &amp; Assessments</i></b>	
Capital Project Infrastructure.....	20
Social Health & Cultural Services.....	21
Economic.....	22
Environmental.....	23
Capacity Building & Job Training.....	24
Potential Service Agreements.....	25

# Community Overview

In the late 1920's Grant McConachie was vying for the first airmail route from Edmonton to Alaska. As a part of the criteria for the bid he had to prove that he had refueling stops along the route. Grant flew over the route and thought that the peninsula, which jutted out into the large lake, "Fish Lake", was the right distance for a refueling stop and had a good topography for a dirt strip. He dropped off Vic Johnson, who developed the primitive airstrip. The nearest settlement at this time was Lower Post, 20 miles to the south. There was a foot trail from Lower Post to the east end of Fish Lake.

Originally known as Fish Lake, Watson Lake was renamed for Frank Watson, who settled here in 1898 with his wife Adela Stone, of Kaska First Nations heritage. Watson who was born in Tahoe City, California, had come north looking for gold.

When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor in 1942 the Americans became anxious about the possibilities that the Japanese would fly over the Aleutians, come through Alaska to the Yukon then over the province of British Columbia to attack the US from the "rear". Plans were made to reinforce the northern American defenses, the air route became a natural course for this strengthening.

The Alcan Hwy was built with combined American and Canadian Forces to supply the Air Route. The building of the Alaska Hwy was a phenomenal feat in that it was completed in just under 9 months. Once civilian traffic was allowed to travel on the difficult road, people began to settle at the junction of the Alaska Hwy and the "Airport Rd". By the late 60's most people lived in "Watson Lake" at the highway.

Watson Lake was incorporated as a town in 1984, at historical mile 635 on the Alaska Highway in the southeastern Yukon Territory, It is the Gateway to the Yukon, close to the British Columbia border. Population in June 2006 was 1515. (Yukon Bureau of Statistics).

Watson Lake is near the Liard River, at the junction of the Robert Campbell Highway and the Alaska Highway. The Cassiar Highway's northern end is 22 kilometers west of Watson Lake. The town is also served by the Watson Lake Airport; the airport was formerly served by Canadian Pacific Airlines and other local and regional airlines, but now only provides corporate and charter services.

Watson Lake is an important communication and distribution center for the southern Yukon. It is also the main centre of the tourism industry and is the service centre for the mining industry, especially for the Cassiar asbestos mine in northern British Columbia and the Cantung tungsten mine on the Yukon-Northwest Territories border in the Mackenzie Mountains.

Watson Lake attractions include the "Signpost Forest". The Signpost Forest was started in 1942 by a homesick U.S. Army G.I. working on the Alaska Highway, who put up a sign with the name of his hometown and the distance. Others followed suit and the tradition continues to this day. Today there are more than 61,000 signs of various types from locations across the world. We also boast a state of the art "Laser Light Theatre" and a historical display of our rich aviation history in the Watson Lake Airport Terminal, as well as the last remaining Hangar from WWII and the infamous Northwest Staging route.

Watson Lake and the neighbouring Upper Liard settlement are the home of the Liard River First Nation, a member of the Kaska Dena Council. The Two Mile area immediately north of the core of town is a concentrated area of First Nations residents, while the town extends five miles out to the turn-off of Airport Road. (Originally, Airport Road extended directly to the Alaska Highway, but most of it is now part of the Campbell highway.) Local demographics indicate that 40% of the residents are of First Nation descent. The Liard First Nation is one of the last First Nation groups who have not had a Land Claim settlement finalized.

The Town of Watson Lake faces a few specific community development challenges in the future.

- The loss of population over the past 10 years coupled with a decline in regional economic development is eating away at the community tax base and its ability to pay the capital and operating costs associated with long overdue infrastructure improvements.
- With the potential for Oil & Gas development in this area, in the not too distant future, we need to identify and address the specific areas of need such as medical, educational, land use, social service delivery (etc) prior to this development.
- We are not unique in our need for a consistent labor force with the ability to sustain a diversified economic and business base. This is a bit of the cart and the horse scenario.

## The Planning Process

### Integrated Community Sustainability Plan

The Town of Watson Lake participated in the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) in part to meet the requirements of the Canada Yukon Gas Tax Agreement signed in May 2005. This agreement, signed by Canada and Yukon, set out the terms for the transfer of \$37.5 million to Yukon municipalities, First Nations and unincorporated areas over a five-year period from 2005/06 to 2009/10. This includes approximately \$1.9 million dollars over this time period.

As set out in the Canada Yukon Gas Tax Agreement, the Yukon Government (YG) developed a template that sets out the minimum process and content requirements for Yukon ICSPs. This ICSP follows the template.

Some of the content of the ICSP was based on the current updating of the *Official Community Plan* that followed its own distinct planning process, which included significant opportunities for community input.

The Town of Watson Lake had contracted Jerry Bruce of Bruce Community Development to start the planning process months before the announcement of the Gas Tax Agreement. On Mr. Bruce's recommendation the Mayor & Council hired Deb Hadwen as a Community Development Officer whose primary responsibility was to coordinate and facilitate the ICSP process.

Over the past year we have conducted public meetings.

On Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> 2005 an introductory meeting to explain the process was held in the Recreation Center Community Hall. Individuals and community groups were personally invited to attend. Each notice

of the meetings was advertised in the Yukon news, our local rolling ads and the Watson Lake News, at least 14-days notice was given in each instance with personal and phoned contacts by Deb Hadwen, as reminders.

The January 12<sup>th</sup> 2006 public forum was a Community Dinner in partnership with the Liard First Nation. It was well attended and the participants were very receptive to the ideas presented.

April 7<sup>th</sup> 2006 a working group met at the WL high school and the complete list, to date, was presented to attendees. Ideas from the community were exhausted. Part of the meeting was a verbal listing of each individual item and then attendees at the meeting were able to speak more to these listed items, as well as add any others they chose.

This comprehensive list of issues and ideas was published in the next Watson Lake newspaper for public consumption and comment. Approx. 48 of the identified 61 community service groups were met with in individual meetings attended by Deb Hadwen, on most occasions by Rick Harder, and Alex Morrison (LFN appointee) to explain the process and to collect the citizens' impressions on the current "state of affairs" in Watson Lake. All were asked for their ideas on what they felt should be the values, goals and objectives for the Town. We received numerous written submissions from such groups as the Chamber of Commerce, Community Wellness, High school, the elementary school, South East Yukon Proper Land Use Society, Ski Club and Community Club. After the third meeting, all of the ideas, comments and suggestions were compiled and then categorized under 5 general headings: Infrastructure, Education, Recreation Program & Activities, Economic Development and Social Services. Mayor & Council requested that the list be reviewed and then each item separated into categories of responsibility: community organizations, Liard First Nations, Government services and those of Municipal responsibility.

HS Productions was contracted to develop a DVD of the process steps and the chronicling of the meetings we conducted. This was also presented at the 2<sup>nd</sup> and third meetings as well as at the individual meetings, as it was available.

The Municipal responsibility list numbered 14 items for the first year.

They are not prioritized:

- Downtown revitalization
- Sign Post Forest Upgrade
- District Heat Expansion
- Water & Sewer Upgrades
- Upgrade for 9<sup>th</sup> st.
- Filtration system for the drinking water
- Waste Water treatment facility
- Upgrade dump and recycling, waste reduction and recovery
- Upgrade of local park equipment and areas, install outhouses at Wye Lake Park
- year round indoor pool
- new fire hall
- sidewalks and curbs from hospital to JES to Dr's office
- Airport Development
- Board walk upgrades
- Cogeneration heat system

The ICSP process continued until the ICSP template was available, and the steps we took were then documented in written form.

The draft of the identified issues, goals, values and sustainability principles was presented to council on **October 10<sup>th</sup> 2006**. Council made the motion to accept the draft with minor revisions. The revisions were completed and when the official template was received the first complete draft was presented to Council on **Nov. 7<sup>th</sup> 2006**. Once approved, it was made public on **November 8<sup>th</sup> 2006**. The community as a whole had the opportunity to speak to the final draft during the two weeks following and then to make final submissions on **Nov. 21<sup>st</sup> 2006** at the next scheduled council meeting. At that time any revisions were made and council made a motion to accept this Part I. Part II was given first reading at a regular meeting of the Mayor and Council on **Jan. 23, 2007**. It then was available for a two week public review and comment. The public hearing was held **March 6<sup>th</sup> 2007** with no written submissions or delegations. The final document will be submitted to the Review Committee for approval, which ultimately would allow us to access the Gas Tax Agreement funding for our prioritized projects.

## Sustainability

The concept of sustainability includes the ability of people to meet their basic personal needs. These needs include the infrastructure and resources that allow people to live comfortably, as well as the physical and emotional health, which allows them to realize their full potential.

It is equally important that these personal needs are met in a way that does not make it more difficult for others to meet their own needs. This includes the needs of future members of our community and of society in general.

We are all dependant on nature to provide the basic necessities of life including clean air and water. As well, nature provides the food we eat, the raw materials that provide shelter and many of the objects that enhance our lifestyle.

There are limits on the ability of nature to provide these necessities, and too often we damage nature beyond its capacity to renew itself. The damage that we do to nature can be divided into three categories:

## Our Sustainability Principles

### Increasing Accumulations of Substances Extracted From the Earth

Many substances that we extract from the earth such as oil, gas, metals and minerals, contribute to the lifestyle that we enjoy today. However, as these substances build up in the ecosystem, living organisms and the ecosystem itself can be damaged. Problems can include an increase in greenhouse gasses contributing to climate change, and metal levels in nature that can impact our wildlife.

In practical terms, this means we should increase recycling and reuse of these materials, and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels.

## Increasing Accumulations of Substances Produced by Society

Society also produces matter that is not found in nature. Chemical fertilizers and pesticides are among many synthetic compounds that we produce and disperse into nature. The build up of these compounds in the food chain harm wildlife, and can cause diseases such as cancer in humans.

This means discouraging the use of these persistent human made substances, and finding safer, natural alternatives.

## Physical Degradation of Nature

We meet many of our needs as a society from renewable resources. This includes harvesting fish and other animals for food, and harvesting trees for the manufacture of wood and paper products. We can continue to use these resources, but we must do so at a rate and methods that allows them to replenish themselves.

In practice, this means minimizing the destruction of habitat that supports the natural diversity of the ecosystem, and using wood and paper from sustain ably harvested forests.

## Community Vision Statement:

Watson Lake will be a progressive community with a vibrant, diversified economy – a regional center, which is a good place to live and work.

## Community Values:

Collectively, the values of the residents of Watson Lake define what the community is today, and guide us as we plan for the future. As with other communities, we want to ensure that our community values continue to be reflected in the decisions that we make as a community, and in the direction that we move. While we also recognize that our residents have different perspectives on many things, we believe that these broad values are reflective of the people who call Watson Lake and the Yukon, their home.

**The land, rivers and forests surrounding our community that provide for our physical and spiritual needs.**

The marshes, rivers, lakes and forests provide clean air and water, as well as fish and game which members of our community rely on. This wilderness also provides many recreational and economic opportunities, and contributes to the quality of life that we all enjoy here.

**A diversified, sustainable economy that provides a range of opportunities for current and future residents.**

Residents must be able to make a living, and our municipal government depends on a tax base to support improvements to infrastructure and services. Watson Lake has experienced “feast and famine” cycles, and we need to develop a diverse economy in order to insulate us from future “famines” while adapting to new opportunities in the changing world. We temper our enthusiasm on economic boom times and would like the scale and pace to allow us to maximize local benefits, while minimizing negative impacts.

**A safe and secure community where residents take individual and collective responsibility for the well being of all.**

We also recognize that people require more than a job and a roof over their heads to truly succeed. Many elements go into creating the conditions to allow citizens to reach their full potential. Healthy & active lifestyles, a sense of safety & security, and education & training are among the essential building blocks for our residents. Within this Liard Basin area we have many avenues to provide these needs and with these base services the opportunity to upgrade and enhance them to meet the changing needs.

**A unified community that celebrates its diversity.**

While many of us come from different places and backgrounds, we share a sense of pride in our community and the belief that only by working together can we achieve our common goals. Community pride also equates to every aspect of our lives here, from the infrastructure that supports a healthy environment, to recognition of where we have come from to every where we can see ourselves going, the heights of educational awareness and provision of service, to the wide realm of recreational opportunities which exist and can exist within our community.

**A vibrant, active lifestyle with artistic, cultural and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.**

The history, heritage and culture of our unique community spans many generations and has evolved through many different phases. We are all aware of the significance of the historically rich “times gone by”. It is with pride that we work together, members of First Nation heritage, old-timers, newcomers and interested people to preserve the footprints of the legacies. Not only do we have a rich transportation history, it is all about the people who have accomplished this through sheer grit, determination and ingenuity.

**Lifelong learning that respects cultural differences and meets the varied needs of all residents.**

We all continue to grow as we learn. We cannot remain stagnant in the evolution of our lives and the paths we take. We must be cognizant not only of our local needs but our relationship with the world that surrounds us, outside of our territorial boundaries.

## OUR LONG TERM GOALS

**Manage our municipal operations using methods and technologies that are environmentally and economically sustainable. (Value 3, 4)**

Infrastructure is defined as any service, which adds to the health and well being of the citizens of Watson Lake and area. Identification of where we are right now in the provision of all services is essential in order to then identify areas of need and to decide which directions and the priority we would then put on them.

There are many assets to living in a small community, however the very real possibility that we will be impacted with exponential growth is a very real scenario, which we have to consider and plan for.

**Support economic opportunities for residents, which are environmentally sustainable while utilizing all economic sectors available without becoming reliant on one. (Value 3, 4)**

Good sound land planning to allow for population growth and business opportunities is essential to maximizing our potential over the next few years. A receptive attitude towards diversification and sustainable developmental growth would be assessed with the opportunity as presented.

**Maintain a collaborative working relationship between the Town of Watson Lake and the Liard First Nation, which allows the two governments to meet resident's needs in the most effective and efficient way possible. (Value 1-6)**

The historic joint council meetings and co-applications for funding dollars would continue, as well as the commitment to preserve the unique history and traditions of this area. All residents are considered equal in their need to have a healthy, secure and positive environment in which to live.

**Work with the Liard First Nation, the Yukon Government, and Yukon College to ensure that learning opportunities for Watson Lake residents are relevant and appropriate for all regardless of their background or future goal. (Value 1, 5)**

The ability to maximize the potential in each of the areas is the exercise and the expected outcome.

**Support cultural and recreational activities as tools to:**

- I promote community unity
- II Improve the quality of life
- III Retain existing residents, and
- IV Attract newcomers to the community (Value 3, 6)

**Work with community members and other governments to ensure residents are safe and secure in their community and physically & emotionally healthy. (Value 1, 2, 6)**

The following short and mid term goals speak to our previously mentioned long term goals.

## **MEASURING OUR SUCCESS**

It is important that our community goals are aligned with the values of our community members.

It is also critical to set out ways to measure whether or not we are reaching our goals.

The following are benchmarks of success, which we can use to accurately measure our success or the lack thereof.

## **GOALS, VALUES, AND MEASUREMENTS OF SUCCESS**

**The Town of Watson Lake will continue to upgrade and develop the infrastructure, the fabric that the Town exists on.**

Measures of success for this goal will be considered over a longer period of approx. 10 years to allow for variances.

This goal is aligned with the community value of “ a diverse and stable economy that supports residents and local governments in the long term.”

The Town of Watson Lake will measure success in reaching these goals in the following ways:

- increase in the number of residential lots serviced by water & sewer
- develop residential lots, serviced and unserviced available for sale, as the housing threshold dictates
- increase in the funding applications to accomplish these goals

**The Town of Watson Lake in partnership with the Liard First Nation and the business owners will provide a business environment, which allows for positive growth and potential.**

This goal is aligned with the community value of “ creating a diverse and stable economy which supports residents and local governments in the long term.”

The Town of Watson Lake will measure success in reaching these goals in the following ways:

- update the Official community plan, including the Airport plan and the ICSP to incorporate the necessary developmental stages and community concerns, required for sustainable growth
- increase in number of joint council meetings, memorandums of understanding, service agreements and cooperation between both governments to provide the type of community that we can be proud of.
- Facilitate more education of the government bodies and the townspeople as to the potential industrial growth and what the ramifications of such are.

The Town of Watson Lake would continue to work cooperatively with the Liard First Nation on all issues in order to remember, maintain and enhance the lives of all of the citizens of Watson Lake.

This goal is aligned with the community value of “ maintain the history, heritage and culture of this community.”

The Town of Watson Lake will measure success in reaching this goal in the following ways:

- completion of a community heritage assessment of the pictorial and written history and facilitate the preservation of that history
- support the LFN in finding funding or to successfully fund culture camps and to help identify ways in which to pass on the traditions
- access funding to upgrade and enhance the present historical aspects of the area.
- Increase participation in recreational areas and activities to provide a wider range of activities
- simple records of participation will be kept

The Town of Watson Lake will use resources such as the ICSP, Firesmart ,OCP as well as the other community driven planning, to build on our existing sustainable infrastructure.

This goal is aligned with the community values of “ community pride and unity”, “ physically and emotionally healthy population”, and a natural environment that surrounds and sustains the community”.

The Town of Watson Lake will measure success in reaching this goal in the following ways:

- will review the ICSP process yearly, over viewing the accomplishments and gathering the current community input in the areas of heritage, education, recreation, infrastructure, services and future growth & development
- Review the OCP every year to ensure it accurately reflects the present needs.
- build on existing infrastructure, construct to replace old or install more sustainable services

## COMMUNITY INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

Rick Savage of Quest Engineering has just drafted an infrastructure assessment. A copy of which is attached.

Checklists: as attached

## COMMUNITY EVALUATION

Community Infrastructure in areas that are eligible for Gas Tax agreement funding can be evaluated for their contribution, both positive and negative, to the sustainability principles of the Town of Watson Lake.

### Water & Sewer Infrastructure

A new well was drilled and the pump house received a major upgrade this past summer, 2006. Although this has possibly increased our volume of water available, there are still issues with the size of the chlorine retention tank, which affects the contact time of the chlorine and water.

The existing reservoir needs to be enlarged in order to accommodate a large structure fire. It has been shown in the past instances that we do not have the capacity in our reservoir at present to supply enough water to adequately extinguish a large structure fire.

There are still homes within the core of the residential area that do not have water or sewer available to them. This forces them to depend on aging wells and septic systems and puts our environment at risk of private system leakage or contamination.

Development of water and sewer to the east and west of the main core of Town would allow development of these areas to become accessible.

All houses at 2, 2 1/4, 2 1/2 Mile are dependent on a water delivery system from the Town bulk fill station, which is delivered to the individual tanks in people's homes. Although the water quality meets the acceptable "Safe Drinking Water Standards" there have been instances of "Boil Water Advisories" over the past years and the risk of unchlorinated water getting into the distribution system.

It has been recommended that a filtration system be installed for the water in order to alleviate or dramatically decrease the iron and manganese content.

Upgrading the water and sewer systems would help Watson Lake to meet the following two sustainability principles:

- Ensure that all residents are able to meet their own needs and realize their full potential, in a way that does not reduce the ability of others to do the same.

- Minimize and eventually eliminate our contribution to the accumulation of substances produced by society. Society produces matter that is not found in nature. Chemical fertilizers and pesticides are among many synthetic compounds that we produce and disperse into nature. The build up of these compounds in the food chain harm wildlife, and can cause diseases such as cancer in humans. This principal means discouraging the use of these persistent human made substances, and finding safer, natural alternatives.

## **Solid Waste Disposal / Recycling depot / Hazardous Waste Collection**

The Town of Watson Lake maintains a landfill site and a regular garbage collection. The Recycling depot is located in town and not at the landfill site just to the west of town. It acts as the collection center for people to bring in their recyclables. It is capable of handling hazardous wastes. The landfill site is open at all times with areas for different types of refuse clearly marked. The main household garbage is deposited in a large trench where it is burned, to decrease the volume of the waste.

There is very little active public education on the subjects of Solid Waste Management and Recycling.

The Town will be researching "best practice" options for the near future, in the management of solid wastes and to change to a no-burn policy.

The establishment of a more comprehensive recycling depot and landfill site with broad ongoing education of the public will help us meet the following community sustainability principles:

- Ensure that all residents are able to meet their own needs and realize their full potential, in a way that does not reduce the ability of others to do the same.
- Minimize and eventually eliminate our contribution to the accumulation of substances extracted from the earth.
- Minimize and eventually eliminate our contribution to the accumulation of substances produced by society.
- Minimize and eventually eliminate our contribution to the physical degradation of nature.


## **Community Energy System**

We presently benefit, from a partial district heat distribution system. Waste energy from the Yukon Electric diesel generators, is utilized to generate heat for our high school, seasonal pool and recreation center. Future plans include expansion of this system in three loops to accommodate the hospital / multi-care facility, elementary school, apartment building, town administration building as well as a few residences and businesses that are located on the loop routes.

Residents depend on oil, propane and wood as fuel sources.

The expansion of the District Heating System would help Watson Lake meet three of its sustainability principles:

- Ensure that all residents are able to meet their own needs and realize their full potential, in a way that does not reduce the ability of others to do the same.
- Minimize and eventually eliminate our contribution to the accumulation of substances extracted from the earth.
- Minimize and eventually eliminate our contribution to the physical degradation of nature.



## Active Transportation

There is presently a sidewalk along the service road of Adela Trails. The Robert Campbell Hwy. has a designated bicycle / pedestrian route along one side, from the junction of the Alaska Hwy to the Airport Rd. The Town boasts 65 km's of hiking trails as well as the 5km trail around the Wye Lake Park in the middle of Town.

It has been noted that the trail system is in need of maintenance, clearing.


A series of sidewalks and the clearing of trails would benefit the residents in meeting the following sustainability principles:

–Ensure that all residents are able to meet their own needs and realize their full potential, in a way that does not reduce the ability of others to do the same.

## Service Agreements

Service agreements between two local governments can help reduce costs and avoid needless duplication of services. This can help contribute to the financial sustainability of both governments and the community as a whole.

A Memorandum of Understanding was formed and signed by both the Mayor & council of the Town of Watson Lake and the Chief & council of the Liard First Nation in March 2006.



There is an existing Mutual Aid Agreement to provide “aid one to the other” with Upper Liard in the Yukon and Lower Post in B.C., to provide fire protection services in the event of a major occurrence. Both Lower Post and Upper Liard have one Fire Truck and a small volunteer contingency crew.


## Potential Service Agreements:

See attached Schedule

## Priority Setting

Current and imminent projects in Watson Lake will help meet community priorities in the areas of water and sewer upgrades, district heat expansion and solid waste management. Needless to say that our community does not differ in the well rounded need for a variety of development, which would improve the lives of community members and enhance our sustainability.

### Water & Sewer Infrastructure.



We have just completed an overhaul of the pump house, which is the main distribution point for the Town drinking water. It is recognized that a filtration system would enhance the quality of the water as well as decrease the sediment build up in the pipes. At the present time we are required

to flush the system at least twice a year. This causes drastic discoloration and a decrease in resident's confidence in the usability of the water.

We have experienced, during the past three major structure fires, depletion of our supply of water to a critical level. A new or enlarged reservoir would be a beneficial investment.

The original water and sewer systems were installed in the 1970's with two subsequent expansions. Refer to infrastructure analysis for components on water and sewer infrastructure. There are two water mains and approx 40 feeder lines to unused lots, which freeze seasonally. It has been noted that the looping of these lines and installing valve stops at the vacant lots would help to alleviate the recurring freezing and subsequent massive water leakage into the ground. The Liard First Nation owns their own water hauling service, which delivers water to the residents who live outside the existing infrastructure reach.

### **Recycling and Waste Management**

As mentioned previously, the Town has a regular curbside garbage collection service, which is deposited at the landfill site and then the household garbage is burned. It is anticipated that we will move to a no-burn policy within 2 years. This move will give us the impetus to formulate a new recycling program with a strong component of public education.

We do partner with Raven Recycling to collect and redeem dollars for the refundable recyclables and participate in the yearly Hazardous Waste and Electronic collection campaigns initiated by the Yukon government.

### **Municipal Energy Management**

The Town of Watson Lake conducted an initial feasibility study on the waste heat from the Yukon Electric diesel generators. From that study a plan was put in place to develop a district heating system, which could be purchased from the Town. At present the first phase of this district heat has been completed and all indications are that it is a very viable alternative for energy which decreases the private use of fossil fuels and in such decreases the contribution to the accumulation of substances produced by society.

A potential idea that could be explored is the concept of co-generation. Using our sustainable forests to produce a product, which could be used to generate enough heat to supply the majority of residences within the Town. This possibility would also allow for the development of a forest industry, which would benefit the community as a whole in jobs, economic income and affordable heat.

### **Economic Development**

The economy of Watson Lake has certainly had its boom and bust cycles. It appears that we are presently coming out of a bust period. A local mine has again been in production for about 1 year and the prospects of exploration and mineral resource development are progressing.

The potential of Oil & Gas is becoming more concrete with an anticipated activity within the next 5 years.

Forest industry activity is occurring on a small-scale basis. It is defined in the Price Waterhouse report commissioned by the Watson Lake Chamber of Commerce.

There is hope that light manufacturing may come in the form of an Aircraft float manufacturer. The Town's commitment to remembering our past as well as heritage development, would speak to our future upgrades of the Sign post Forest and the continued recognition of our history and the people who made it happen.

As the second largest community, and the Gateway, to the Yukon we have an enviable position within the structure of our territory. We take that seriously and it is reflected in the dedication the Town's people show in their personal and professional lives.

### **Infrastructure and Services for Seniors**

We have a very active Seniors Club, which has been in existence for many years. With the help of these knowledgeable citizens and elders the Town remains aware of the ongoing needs. Our hospital provides basic services to them and we are fortunate for the level of care they receive from the Doctors. We have two, four-plexes which are considered senior's residences. Home care is available and the Seniors Club provides a Meals on Wheels service. A new multi-care facility is under construction with anticipated occupancy in 2007. This is hopefully going to expand the services available and the levels of care available to our infirm and elderly residents and allow them to remain in their home community.

## **Infrastructure Priorities**

### **1. Drinking Water Filtration**

The upgrade of the pump house was the initial phase in the improvement in the water distribution system. The next step is to filter the water and increase the quality of the water beyond the standard for "Safe Drinking Water". This filtration would also help to alleviate the sediment build up in the pipes. This project will have a very positive impact on the residents of the area and increase the public trust in the drinking water quality.

This project is eligible for Gas Tax Agreement funding

### **2. Expand the Capacity of the Reservoir**

■ We have experienced, during the past three major structure fires, depletion of our supply of water to a critical level. This not only impacts our ability to fight fires but also puts us in a dangerous position of not having drinking water for our residents. A new or enlarged reservoir is a necessary investment to our critical infrastructure. This vital upgrade would ensure that the community residents would not run out of drinking water in the event of a major fire but would also allow us to enjoy a more safe and secure environment.

This project is eligible for Gas Tax Agreement funding.

### **3. Water & Sewer Upgrades**

An assessment of the condition of the existing infrastructure, which services most of the residents of the Town core, has been completed. Priorities based on the highest need areas for replacement and or expansion have been recommended and the Mayor and Council will be making decisions based on all factors involved. The future growth of the business and residential aspects of this area could be dependent on the type of service delivery available.

This project is eligible for Gas Tax Agreement funding.

### **3. Upgrade Landfill site and Recycling Waste**

Our environmental stewardship has been fairly passive in the past few years. GJ Bull & Assoc prepared a Solid Waste Management Plan for the Town in Feb. of 2003. It assesses the current system and lays out the steps to improve the way we do things. The most important step within this plan is the education of the public and then to put the steps in place to accomplish a no-burn policy within 2 years.

This initiative will speak to all of the sustainability principles adopted by the Town. This will extend the life of the landfill site and allow citizens to feel that they have a proactive role in saving the environment from further abuses.

Any capital project costs would be eligible under the Gas Tax Agreement funding.

### **4. Sign Post Forest Upgrade**

Our Sign Post Forest and our unique history are renowned worldwide. We have built on this trademark with the addition of the Northern Lights Center and the focus on the Airport with the significance that aviation has had on who we are. The consistent focus on honoring the First Nation Culture and Heritage continues as a part of our everyday lives.

This initiative will improve our economic base in the area of tourism and the attraction that Watson Lake has for the traveling public. Community pride and ownership will also be enhanced with the overdue attention to these distinctive landmarks.

This initiative is not eligible under the Gas Tax Agreement funding.

### **5. Upgrade Landfill Site and Recycling Waste**

We are presently licensed by YTG to operate and maintain a landfill site, which burns its household waste. This permit expires as of Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> 2007. Steps must be taken to evolve into a "no-burn" facility by then. Although the community is active at recycling, a large percentage of the burned waste could be recycled if we had the resources to handle it properly and the financial ability to provide a wider ranging and more comprehensive education program.

## **6. Repair & Upgrade Administration Building**

The skylight roof feature of the main front hall, although bright and airy has proven to be less than adequate in the detrimental effects of heat loss and leakage. The northern climate does not allow skylights to perform at their best. Internal damage is resulting from the deficiencies in this structure.

## **7. District Heat Expansion**

Feasibility study funds have been applied for under the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Green Municipal Funds in order to assess the values in expansion of the District Heating System to businesses, residences and government buildings along three defined "loops". This initiative, will also be able to utilize a biomass system for generating electricity as its heat source, and will meet our sustainability principles of "reducing and eventually eliminating the degradation of the environment".

District Heat Expansion is an eligible expense under the Gas Tax Agreement.

## **8. 9<sup>th</sup> Street Upgrade**

The original foundation of this roadway has not stood up to the climatic conditions. The roadway is sinking into the marshy undersurface. Correction of this problem will require excavation of this portion of the road and rebuilding it from the foundation up. It is the primary emergency service road and has the benefit of having few driveways directly accessing it.

This initiative is an eligible expense under the Gas Tax Agreement.

## **9. Down Town Revitalization**

It has long been expressed that the "first impression" to our visitors is less than stellar. The Community voiced their ongoing commitment to the upgrade of the Down Town, dealing with such issues as esthetics, planning, physical changes and personnel skills enhancement.

## Cooperation with the Liard First Nation

The Yukon Government ICSP template requires that local governments in close proximity to each other demonstrate that efforts have been made to work together in the development of their respective ICSPs.

Beyond this requirement, the Town of Watson Lake recognizes the importance of and continues to work with the Liard First Nation in order to better the lives of all residents of the community, and to realize financial and capacity benefits through shared planning and services. This belief is reflected in one of the community goals adopted in this plan.

There is consistent communication between the Town of Watson Lake and the Liard First Nation throughout the planning process, as well as the commitment for joint ownership of the ICSP process.

The Town of Watson Lake and the Liard First Nation have fostered a very strong relationship, one, which has been set to pen under the Memorandum of Understanding, signed on March 17<sup>th</sup> 2004 by Mayor Richard Durocher and Chief Liard McMillan. There have been three Joint Council Meetings held on Nov. 17<sup>th</sup> 2005, Dec. 13, 2005 and Feb. 13, 2006 to discuss Community Sustainability Planning. In September 2005 a joint application between The Town Of Watson Lake and the Liard First Nations was made to the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund to apply for funding for the BST surfacing of the roads at 2, 2 1/4 and 2 1/2 Mile. This application has since been accepted and preliminary work has been done. The actual road surfacing should be accomplished in the spring of 2007.

	Watson Lake Working Session						
	Sustainability Impacts of Proposed Project & Initiatives						
	SP #1 Meeting Residents Needs	SP #2 Substances Taken from earth	SP #3 Substances Produced by society	SP #4 Physical Degradation of nature			Total
<b>Proposed Project/Initiative</b>							
Expansion of Reservoir	1	0	0	1			2
Downtown Revitalization	1	0	0	1			2
Sign Post Forest Upgrade	1	0	0	1			2
District Heat Expansion	1	1	1	1			4
Water & Sewer Upgrades	1	1	1	1			4
Upgrade 9th St	1	0	0	1			2
Filtration System for water	1	1	1	1			4
Waste Water Treatment Facil.	1	1	1	1			4
Upgrade Dump& Recycling	1	1	1	1			4
Upgrade of local park equip.	1	0	0	0			1
Year Round Pool	1	0	-1	0			0
New Fire Hall	1	0	0	0			1
Sidewalks & Curbs	1	0	0	0			1
Airport Development	1	0	1	0			2
Wye Lake Boardwalk	1	0	0	0			1

Capacity Building/Train/Educ	Type	In Community?	Tr/Ed Needed?	Tr/Ed available?
Municipal or FN Admin positions	CAO	yes	yes	yes
	Exec. Officer	yes	yes	yes
Education	Principal	yes	no	no
	Teachers	yes	no	no
	Teacher aides	yes	yes	yes
Health	Health Aide	yes	yes	no
	Nurse Pract.	no	no	no
	Doctor	yes	no	no
	Nurses	yes	no	no
Transportation Utilities	Driver /pilot	yes	yes	no
	Water TTmt	yes	yes	no
	Sewage TTmt	yes	yes	no
	Landfill operato	yes	yes	no
	Power Plant O.	yes	yes	no
	Water Del.	yes	yes	no
Justice	Court Wrkr	yes	yes	no
	Probat. Off.	yes	yes	no

Capital Project/ Infrastructure	Do we have it?	What is the condition?	Is there enough?	Do we need it?
City Hall	yes	good	yes	yes
Airport	yes	good	no	yes
Community Buildings	yes	good	yes	yes
Community Hall	yes	good	yes	yes
Dock facilities	yes	fair	no	yes
Community Energy Systems	yes	good	no	yes
Fire Station	yes	good	in the works	yes
Health clinic	yes	good	yes	yes
Hospital	yes	fair	no	yes
Housing	yes	good	no	yes
Internet Service	yes	good	yes	yes
Library	yes	good	yes	yes
Police building	yes	good	yes	yes
Post office	yes	good	yes	yes
Recreation parks	yes	fair	no	yes
Roads	yes	fair	yes	yes
Schools	yes	good	yes	yes
Sewage collection & disposal	yes	fair	no	yes
Solid waste disposal	yes	fair	no	yes
Water service	yes	fair	no	yes
Public transportation	no	na	no	no
Youth Center	yes	good	yes	yes
Theatre	yes	good	yes	yes

Type of Typical job	# of jobs	Comm. Reside	Full time	Seasonal	Wage Range
Arts & Crafts	8	yes	no		
CAO / Exec Dir	2	yes	yes	no	70-100,000
Accounting Officer	3	yes	yes	no	50-70,000.
Environmental Specialist	7	yes	yes	no	50-100,00
Logger /Forester	30	yes		yes	10-70,000.
Health aid / nurses	20	yes	yes	yes	20-82,000
Heavy Equip Operators	60	most	some	some	50-100,000
Mechanics	8	yes	yes		50-90,000
Construction	40	yes	yes	some	25-100,000
Housing Mangaer	2	yes	yes	no	25-55,000.
Public Safety Officer	1	yes	yes		70,000.00
Justice of the peace	4	yes	p/t		500-5,000.
Community Coroner	2	yes	p/t		500-1000.
Fire Fighters		yes	1f/t		1000.-70,000
Emergency Response	8	yes	p/t		1000-30,000
Business owners	150	most	yes	yes	10-150,000
Counsellors	8	yes	some		30-80,000
Water treatment operator	4	yes	yes		28-49,000
Sewage Treatment Operato	4	yes			28-49,000
Landfill operator	4	yes			28,49,000
Power Plant operator	3	yes	yes		40-80,000

POTENTIAL SERVICE AGREEMENTS				
WATSON LAKE ICSP 2006/2007				
Potential Service	Provider	Cost	Provides currently ?	Future Interest?
water/sewer	Town	na	yes	yes
Solidwaste/recycling	Town	na	yes	yes
snow removal	Town	na	yes	yes
bylaw services	Town	na	yes	yes
district heat	Town	na	yes	yes
recreation	Town	na	yes	yes

Resource Category	Type of Service	Does this exist?	Can it be improved?
Health	Nutrition	yes	yes
	Weight Loss	yes	yes
	Aids prevention	yes	yes
	Substance Abuse	yes	yes
	Family Planning	yes	yes
Public Safety	Fire Protection	yes	yes
	Emergency Response	yes	yes
	Police Protection	yes	yes
	Search & Rescue	no	yes
Recreation Programs	Small children	yes	yes
	Teens	yes	yes
	Adults	yes	yes
Social Service Programs	Child Care	yes	yes
	Domestic Violence	yes	yes
	Seniors	yes	yes
	Disability services	yes	yes
	Counselling adults	yes	yes
	Counselling teens	yes	yes
	Legal services	yes	yes
	Suicide prevention	yes	yes
Self Government LFN	Self Government status	no	yes
Cultural programs	Elders Group	yes	yes
	Music	yes	yes
	Food bank	yes	yes
	Food preparation-elders	yes	yes
	Dance group	no	yes
	Arts & crafts	yes	yes
	Language programs	yes	yes
	Spirit camps	yes	yes
	Storytelling	yes	yes

Environmental Assets/ needs	Do we have it?	Do we need it?
Safe drinking water	some	yes
Adequate supply of water	no	yes
Certified Water treatment operator	some	yes
Safe sewage disposal & ttmt	yes	yes
Permitted landfill	yes	yes
Recycling program	some	yes
Used Oil storage	some	yes
Lead acid battery collection area	yes	yes
Developable land	no	yes
Fuel spill prevention plan	yes	yes
Hazardous waste response plan	yes	yes
Erosion Control	no	no
Contaminated sites identified	yes	yes
Healthy subsistence food	yes	yes
Environ. Educ. Programs	yes	yes
Healthy wildlife populations	yes	yes
Hazardous waste collection area	yes	yes
Protected watershed plan	no	yes
Environmental Impact stmt	no	yes