

# Home & Garden 2010

## Plan

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- Transportation – sustainable options for moving people within and outside the community;
- Materials and solid waste – implementation of reduce, reuse, recycle practices;
- Communication – options and opportunities for information exchange, including a vibrant town centre;
- Affordability and Housing – affordable options for living and accommodations, including green building practices;
- Learning – opportunities for life-long learning and enrichment;
- Economic Development – vibrant, diverse local economy;
- Governance and Partnership – opportunities for citizen participation in governance, high-level communication, active volunteerism;
- Built Environment – town developed and maintained infrastructure that supports sustainability.

The plan sets out detailed short, medium and long term priorities for each of the 15 strategic areas, and initiatives to make them happen.

The plan was prepared and spearheaded the multi-stakeholder Sustainable Sundre Committee, which is made up of citizens, community group representatives, councillors and town staff.

The decision to put the extensive and comprehensive plan together was driven by what the committee calls a “growing recognition worldwide that all life sustaining resources are finite and that the mechanisms of nature for regenerating and replenishing these resources must be protected or restored.”

As well, the committee was spurred on by the fact provincial and federal governments have been calling for communities to become sustainable by linking funding support to sustainability initiatives.

Now that it is in place the plan will serve as a master document to guide and inspire all other community plans in areas such as economic development, municipal development, and town operating practices, and capital and infrastructure expenditures.

The Sustainable Sundre Committee, originally called the Citizens Advisory Group, developed the plan through an exhaustive public consultation process involving everyone from school students to seniors, from business leaders to health care providers, and from all variety of community

organizations and groups.

Much of the committee’s goals and plans have centred around the newly adopted Sundre Vision: “The citizens of Sundre and district, current and future generations, enjoy an enhanced quality of life in a safe, caring, cooperative, culturally vibrant, affordable and healthy community. They have the opportunity to direct their destinies in a well-planned, sustainable future.”

Organizers say the path forward under the plan will involve community groups and organizations, including the Chamber of Commerce, the Greenwood Neighbourhood Place, and others.

The Sustainable Sundre Committee says the plan itself provides the community with an opportunity to “reflect on what residents want for their community and to move proactively towards this desired state, rather than reacting to problems as they arise.

“In order to achieve sustainability, communities like Sundre must plan with an understanding of the consequences of their actions today on the future.”

Since being adopted, the plan is already being used extensively by the Town of Sundre in the planning of its operations and in setting out long-term strategies.

- Dan Singleton

## Gardening success is possible

Want to ensure gardening success? Start with the correct soil!

The type of soil you select is vital to the success of your garden project – and yet most of us are confused with the choices.

“Black earth, top soil, lawn soil, and potting soil all basically look the same,” says Syd Pell, a specialist in this field. “But it’s true that choosing the wrong one can lead to poor results.”

“Soils are actually made up of several different ingredients, blended for a specific gardening use. These ingredients may include topsoil, sand, manure, sphagnum peat moss, humus, compost, perlite and bark. The mix ratio determines how well the soil will support the specific requirements of each plant type, such as nutrients, root support, drainage and moisture retention.”

Here’s handy tip sheet for some of the most popular selections:

- Lawn Soil is specifically blended to support over-seeding and the growth of healthy grass. It’s a blend of sphagnum peat moss, compost and manure. These ingredients increase porosity, allowing more water and nutrients to reach the roots.

- Garden soil is blended to support and nurture the delicate roots of vegetables and flowers. It often comprises nutrient-rich ingredients such as composted matter, manure, and peat.

- Topsoil and Black Earth work as a base for gardens and lawns, filling in holes and levelling. Typically low in nutrients, this soil should be amended with other more nutrient rich products. Premium topsoils in

the Scotts Pro Blends line, add compost and sphagnum peat moss for improved nutrients and drainage.

- Organic Compost is designed for in-ground gardens. A good choice is Organic Compost, also in the Pro Blends line. It is a superior blend of compost and manure containing essential organic matter from leaves and yard clippings. Add it to flower and vegetable beds for healthier plant growth plus more abundant vegetables and blooms.

- Potting Mix. Since container-bound plants live in a self-contained eco system, a specially blended, high quality potting mix is essential. A safe bet is Moisture Control Potting Mix in the Miracle-Gro line. It contains coconut fibre, which holds moisture and promotes strong root growth and better drainage.

“And then, the finishing touch,” adds Pell, “is to top it all with mulch. This will not only make your garden look great, but mulch also inhibits weed growth, helps conserve soil moisture and acts as a plant blanket by moderating soil temperatures. A popular choice is an innovative product called Nature Scapes Mulch which is guaranteed not to fade to gray.”

Are you looking to have a backyard free from the traditional synthetic lawn and garden products? Many people desire to have a thick healthy lawn and lush beautiful garden and want to be able to do this in an ecofriendly way. It’s easy to do, you just need to know which products to choose.

“People are looking for proactive

lawn care ideas as well as taking immediate care of any pest problems in a more environmentally friendly way,” says Betsy Gallacher a marketing director at Scotts. Gallacher also indicated that “weeds in the lawn and insects in the garden” are the two most common problems people experience during the summer.

Corn Gluten is an excellent product that if applied in early spring will prevent both crab grass and weed seeds from germinating – helping people kick off the season with less lawn problems and maintenance. To help prevent weeds from establishing a foothold in your lawn, be proactive and keep a thick healthy lawn throughout the season to help crowd them out. And there are many good natural fertilizers on the market available at all major retailers.

For the garden there are several eco products available for use on and around plants. Look for ingredients like pyrethrins combined with canola oil for the best results against insects on plants. And keeping your pets safe while controlling slugs is easy with iron phosphate based products. Scotts EcoSense offers a wide range of high quality, effective products for both lawn and garden care. Creating your “eco” friendly backyard has never been so easy.

An important thing to know about using these types of products is how to apply them. Since these are alternative products, a more frequent application is necessary for optimum results. Be sure to read and follow label instructions.

- News Canada

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