Best Practices for Sustainable Community Development
(Using the Five Domains of Sustainability as a guide)

ENVIRONMENT
• Know what is fragile and irreplaceable in your region.
• Know what is renewable and can be used in constructive and economical ways.
• Designate “no-build”, “no-development” zones with public policies.
• Know what existing policies (local, state, federal) relate to the natural resources in your locale.
• Establish incentives and performance-based criteria for the appropriate public behavior.

SOCIO-CULTURAL
• Know the history of the place.
• Celebrate the positives of cultural history.
• Describe the future of a learning community; a creative, progressive community
• Emphasize future opportunities; diminish negative thinking.
• Emphasize transparent and participatory government and decision-making.
• Seek collaboration from and with neighboring communities.

TECHNOLOGIES
• Promote and invest in technologies that will save resources, time, money, or expand new opportunities.
• Eschew technologies that are not efficient and that may be wasteful of other resources in the long-run.
• Reevaluate low-tech, older technologies for new applications to new issues.
• Assess all technologies in a systems context with the other four domains of sustainability.
• Encourage and promote investments in new technologies that have long-term, positive implications for the whole community.
• Evaluate all infra-structure decisions to seek multiple solutions with single system expenditures.

ECONOMICS
• Evaluate all public expenditures on both a first-cost and life-cycle cost basis.
• Seek a balance of proportionate expenditures, based upon appropriate ratios of those who will gain from a public investment.
• Apply economic analyses and sustainability indicators to each of the other four sustainability domains; analyze the aggregate for balance among the five, and for potential “unintended consequences”.
• Be cautious of obligating future generations of community dwellers to expenditures that may not enhance their community or their lives.
• Seek public/private partnerships in all community investments.

PUBLIC POLICY
• Perform assessments of local, state, and federal public policies that have become barriers to sustainable development; perform these assessments continuously, or on regular cycles (i.e., such as Master Planning cycles).
• Make broad use of volunteer, citizen and stake-holder advisory groups for each of the five domains of sustainability.
• Recognize and celebrate good, sustainable development projects and work on behalf of the community.
• Correlate public policies with good planning and good strategic thinking.
• Establish “Sustainable Community Development” as the first priority for the expenditure of public funds, especially for buildings and infra-structure; utilize the EcoStep toolkit for assessments and evaluations.