

Village of Belledune

Strategic Plan

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All municipal decision makers have a moral and legal responsibility to the voting public of their community and to all residents and business owners, that they be wise and accountable stewards of the financial and other resources placed within their care. Given the turbulent economic climate facing North America and much of the world in the last months of 2008, the Village Council of Belledune considers it of even greater importance now that it provide leadership in identifying community projects which need to be addressed; by prioritizing those projects; and by setting into place a strategic plan to guide Belledune's direction in the coming years. It is with great pleasure that Village Council presents its first Strategic Plan for Belledune. The Plan is the result of many hours of work by Council members and employees. It sets out a road map for the future of Belledune. We are committed to the realization of the Mission, Vision and Goals that have been identified. This Strategic Plan is not intended to be a static document. While the core mission will not change, the Plan will be reviewed and amended from time to time to maintain a vision for the Village of Belledune that is collectively shared and in keeping with changing priorities and economic conditions. Our hope is that all stakeholders will join in helping to implement the strategies and action steps that are described in this very important document. Comments and suggestions are always welcomed from our community.

Mayor Nick Duivenvoorden

DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Biodiversity: refers to the variety and diversity of all forms of living things in a particular area or region at a particular time.

Core Operating Values: refers to operating philosophies or principles that guide an organization's internal conduct as well as its relationship with the external world.

CAO: refers to the Chief Administrative Officer of the Village of Belledune.

CDO: refers to the Community Development Officer of the Village of Belledune.

Council-CAO System of Governance: refers to a system of governance whereby the elected Council, led by a Mayor, is responsible for making policy; passing bylaws; approving budgets and appropriations; and having overall supervisory authority. Under this system, the appointed Chief Administrative Officer is responsible for managing and supervising government operations and for implementing the policies adopted by the council.

Economic Development: refers to a sustainable increase in living standards. It implies improved business opportunities and employment opportunities, increased per capita income, better education and health as well as environmental protection.

Infrastructure: refers to and includes such things as the Village of Belledune's roads, sidewalks, culverts, bridges, sewers, reservoirs, potable water supply systems, buildings, equipment and the like.

Mission: refers to the overall purpose of the existence of the Village of Belledune.

Population Growth: refers to a desirable, sustainable increase in the numbers of people living and working in the Village of Belledune.

Stakeholders: refers to persons, groups or organizations that have a direct or indirect stake in the Village of Belledune because actions taken by the Village can affect its stakeholders and/or the Village can be affected by the actions, objectives, and policies of the stakeholders.

Strategic Planning: refers to a process of determining the Village of Belledune's long term vision together with the goals and actions that will be pursued in order to fulfill that vision. Once developed, the strategic plan sets the stage for creating the future reality that is envisioned and provides a road map to follow. Never static, the strategic plan is annually updated to reflect changing priorities and economic realities.

Strategic Areas of Concentration: refers to areas in which the municipality will significantly focus its human, financial and technological resources over a particular period of time towards the achievement of stated, measurable results.

Sustainable and Sustainability: refers to having a prosperous and vibrant community today which meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs and to maintain a vibrant and positive community. It is concerned with how people, businesses and organizations can work together to improve the health of both the individual and the community, and preserve the environment for future generations.

Vision: refers to a picture of the Village of Belledune in the future as we want the municipality to appear. The vision that is adopted in a strategic plan answers the question "Where do we want to go?"

INTRODUCTION TO BELLEDUNE

The Village of Belledune is located in the northern part of the Province of New Brunswick on Canada's east coast. It is a community, rich in culture, whose history goes back more than 200 years. Originally peopled by English, French, Irish and Scottish immigrants, Belledune's new settlers soon discovered the area possessed many natural attributes. The rich soil throughout the community, the abundance of wild animal life on the land and that of fish and other marine creatures in the waters of the Bay of Chaleur, provided ample resources to feed and cloth the new settlers and their families. The community of Belledune prospered. The waters of the Bay of Chaleur and the fertile surrounding land, to this day, continue to sustain the residents of Belledune, albeit in a much different way.

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Village of Belledune is to provide open, effective, accountable governance combined with responsible, efficient service delivery.

OUR VISION

Our vision for the Village of Belledune is that of:

- a **sustainable**, prosperous community, committed to preservation of its rural identity through the encouragement of growth in an environmentally and economically sound fashion;
- a progressive, open-minded community providing effective governance combined with responsible and efficient service delivery;
- a welcoming community in which a viable, goal oriented, productive environment is provided for all residents and extended partners;
- a vibrant, safe, positive community which provides needed municipal services for all its citizens;
- a community where business and industry can grow and prosper in an economically and ecologically sustainable manner.

OUR STAKEHOLDERS

We recognize the following individuals, groups, organizations and natural resources as having a stake in the future of the Village of Belledune. These are our stakeholders:

- Our Residents – from youngest to the eldest members;
- Our Business and Industry Partners - the smallest business to the largest industry;
- Belledune’s Village Council and Belledune’s Municipal Work Force;
- Our Service Institutions - Schools, Churches, Hospitals and Support Groups;
- Our Visitors, Tourists and Neighbouring Communities;
- Our Regional Agencies, Organizations and Special Purpose Bodies;
- The Province of New Brunswick and the Federal Government of Canada
- The New Brunswick Municipal Associations;
- The Federation of Canadian Municipalities;
- The Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators;
- The RCMP and Other Protective Agencies;
- Belledune’s Flora, Fauna and Other Natural Resources.

OUR CORE OPERATING VALUES

Council and employees of the Village of Belledune embrace the following core operating values in a spirit of teamwork and of corporate commitment to the highest quality of service delivery. We will:

- endeavour to be aware, respectful, sincere, understanding, dedicated and open minded;
- seek to maintain the highest standards of professional and ethical conduct;
- deliver honest, accountable and transparent municipal governance;
- seek to maintain open lines of communication;
- encourage the sharing of services and collaborative initiatives which will improve delivery;
- encourage diversity in our employees and in our community;
- value our unique quality of life, recognize and appreciate diversity and respect our traditions;

OUR CORE OPERATING VALUES (continued)

- recognize and respect the different opinions of our stakeholders;
- seek to be fair and equitable in all our dealings;
- encourage employee wellness and maintain a healthy balance between work and daily living;
- seek the highest standards of fiscal management;
- encourage excellence, innovation, creativity, visionary thinking and life-long learning;
- promote the effective use of new technologies in service delivery;
- strive to be worthy stewards of the resources which have been entrusted to our safe keeping;
- respect the environment and leave a positive legacy for future generations.

STRATEGIC AREAS OF CONCENTRATION

The following strategic areas of concentration have been identified as being of highest priority by the Village Council of Belledune:

- Population Growth
- Employment, Economic Development and Promotion
- Governance
- Water and Wastewater Management
- Tourism, Recreation, Healthy Living and Wellness
- Post Secondary Education
- Infrastructure

STRATEGIC AREAS OF CONCENTRATION (continued)

- Tax Base
- Environmental Leadership
- Municipal Government Restructuring

POPULATION GROWTH

Goal: The desired outcome is to end population decline; achieve measurable increases in annual population growth in Belledune; and reduce out-migration.

Immediate and/or On-going Actions:

- ✓ Belledune Village Council will commit to support well-designed and viable housing development projects. (on-going)
- ✓ The CDO will undertake background research necessary to identify the types and levels of training required by industries in Belledune. (initially to be completed by June 2009)
- ✓ The CDO will identify the types and levels of training and education being sought outside of Belledune by students from the community. (on-going, first material to be identified by September 2009)
- ✓ Belledune Village Council and senior staff members will initiate positive steps to enhance the levels of training and education that can be made

POPULATION GROWTH (continued)

Immediate and/or On-going Actions:

available in Belledune. (on-going with regular reporting to Council on steps being undertaken)

- ✓ The CDO will research and report on the possibility of a satellite educational campus being established in Belledune, together with facilities for student housing. (Spring 2010)

EMPLOYMENT, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PROMOTION

Goal: The desired outcome is the expansion of employment opportunities and jobs for Belledune's workforce; measurable increases in the level of economic development activity; and the promotion of Belledune as a desirable community in which to live and to conduct business.

Immediate and/or On-Going Actions:

- ✓ Belledune will ensure that the Community Development Officer (CDO) is provided with the tools that are reasonably considered necessary for the employee to accomplish his/her designated work. These include computer software/hardware and the capacity to undertake required research and development of promotional and marketing resources. (2008 – 2009)
- ✓ The CDO will develop a marketing strategy to achieve the desired outcome. Significant emphasis will be placed on job creation; tourism and green initiatives as business opportunities and on other areas as are identified after further research and discussion. (Marketing Strategy will be developed by January 2009)

EMPLOYMENT, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PROMOTION (continued)

Immediate and/or On-Going Actions:

- ✓ Advertising materials will be developed such as printed brochures, digital and audio-visual promotional materials as well as other appropriate forms of advertising that will benefit Belledune in all areas of its desired development. Marketing tools will be effectively utilized. (Promotional materials developed by May – June, 2009, development on-going thereafter)
- ✓ Belledune’s web site will be redeveloped to incorporate a variety of promotional advertising that will complement economic development, employment initiatives and tourism expansion. (September 2009)
- ✓ A plan will be developed that will result in location of a Welcome Centre in Belledune, for the purpose of advising visitors about Belledune’s attractions, to answer questions, and to proactively inform and promote. (CDO to develop plan by 2009; physical facility to be in place by 2010)

GOVERNANCE

Goal: The desired outcome will be informed policy makers supported by a proactive, professional management team and a highly skilled and motivated municipal workforce.

Immediate and/or On-Going Actions:

- ✓ A modern Council-CAO form of governance will be established in Belledune. (April – June 2009)
- ✓ The recruitment process for a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) will be commenced. (December 2008)
- ✓ Position descriptions, policies and operating guidelines appropriate for a Council-CAO system of governance will be developed. (commencing January 2009 and continuing)
- ✓ Improvements will be made in the working space/environment for Belledune's employees. (June 2009 and ongoing)

GOVERNANCE (continued)

Immediate and/or On-Going Actions:

- ✓ An office for the Mayor and a committee meeting room for Council will be made available. (2010)
- ✓ The CAO will annually report to Council on the health of Belledune operations and will identify any weaknesses which, in the CAO's professional opinion, require correction. (on-going)
- ✓ Best practices will be incorporated in the delivery of all government services. There will be a focus on excellence in customer service delivery in all areas of the municipal operation. (on-going)

WATER AND WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT

Goal: The desired outcome will be development growth; a clean environment resulting from responsible environmental management practices; establishment of wastewater services within Belledune; and actions which will encourage safe, potable water throughout the community.

Immediate and/or On-Going Actions:

- ✓ Council will give formal commitment to a plan for wastewater management development. This plan will involve an initial designated area (2009) and will include plans for future expansion. (ongoing)
- ✓ Belledune will investigate the merit of a regional approach to the management of wastewater and water operations.

TOURISM, RECREATION, HEALTHY LIVING AND WELLNESS

Goal: The desired outcome will be measurable, annual increases in the number of tourists and other visitors to Belledune; the development of meaningful recreation and leisure service opportunities for all of Belledune's residents; and the promotion of healthy, active life styles throughout the community.

Immediate and/or On-Going Actions:

- ✓ Cooperation with surrounding communities to promote each others' tourist facilities and attractions will be encouraged. (on-going)
- ✓ New tourist facilities and attractions for Belledune with a focus on current and new conservation areas will be encouraged. The active and passive use of village owned land for recreational purposes will be promoted. (on-going)
- ✓ A Recreation, Culture & Leisure Service Coordinator will be employed, initially for a two-year trial period. Responsibilities will include providing recreation, cultural and leisure services and healthy, active living programs year round for residents of Belledune. (2010 or 2011)

POST SECONDARY EDUCATION

Goal: The desired outcome is a better understanding of workforce and workforce requirements to improve access to trades training and job opportunities.

Immediate and/or On-Going Actions:

- ✓ A database on current post secondary trades' training opportunities that are available in or near the Village of Belledune will be developed. This will be accomplished by identifying, through surveys and other means:
 - the number of workers who have moved from Belledune to seek trades' training;
 - the nature of trades' training that has been obtained;
 - the number of workers and number of those who are about to enter the workforce who require trades' training; and
 - the future potential pool of workers in the Belledune area who can benefit from location of trades' training facilities in the area.

(Target Date – June, July & August 2009)

POST SECONDARY EDUCATION (continued)

Immediate and/or On-Going Actions:

- ✓ Belledune will respond effectively to the labour training needs that are identified. (ongoing)
- ✓ The CDO will develop and maintain a database of skilled employee categories required for new industry and businesses in Belledune; (January 2010 for development; maintenance on-going)
- ✓ Strategic actions concerned with post secondary education that are identified under Population Growth will be initiated.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal: The desired outcome is the development of standards and guidelines for all municipal infrastructure in the Village of Belledune.

Immediate and/or Ongoing Actions:

- ✓ Belledune will develop and maintain up to date standards and policies for the construction and maintenance of roads, ditches, culverts, sidewalks and walkways. (May 2009)
- ✓ A long-range plan for the maintenance of Belledune’s infrastructure – buildings, recreation, park facilities (including industrial), water and sewer infrastructure, roads, sidewalks, and the like will be developed. (November 2009)
- ✓ The maintenance, improvement and expansion of infrastructure will be promoted. (ongoing)

TAX BASE

Goal: The desired outcome is that of a long-term, sustainable tax base in and for the Village of Belledune.

Immediate and/or Ongoing Actions:

- ✓ Belledune will engage in meaningful, productive discussions with industry officials towards the maintenance of continuing plant operations.(on-going)
- ✓ Work with industry officials, business leaders and other stakeholders to secure replacement industries for those in Belledune that may no longer be viable, so as to maintain the industrial tax base and labour force of the community. (on-going)
- ✓ Belledune will ensure that economic development promotional materials provide factual, timely and user-friendly information to existing and potential businesses. (on-going)
- ✓ Belledune will explore ways to bring about property tax reform. (on-going)

ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP

Goal: The desired outcome is recognition of Belledune as a municipal leader in the promotion of community environmental sustainability.

Immediate and/or Ongoing Actions:

- ✓ Belledune will promote collaboration with all concerned stakeholders to preserve and protect the environment. (ongoing)
- ✓ All areas of Belledune’s municipal operations will be examined to assess where energy savings can be realized and pollution can be reduced. (on-going)
- ✓ Policies, procedures, standards and partnerships that promote a greener municipality will be developed. (on-going)
- ✓ The community will be engaged in discussion of green initiatives; in the maintenance of biodiversity; and in ways in which natural resources and healthy ecosystems can be preserved and the beauty of Belledune safeguarded. (on-going)

PROVINCIAL MUNICIPAL RESTRUCTURING

Goal: The desired outcome is positive recognition by the Province of New Brunswick of Belledune's position and requirements in the event that municipal government restructuring may be proposed and/or legislation requiring municipal boundary realignments is being considered.

Immediate and/or Ongoing Action:

- ✓ Village Council of Belledune will proactively make known its views and preferences to government in respect of any changes affecting Belledune which may be proposed or intended as a result of any review of local governance in the province.
- ✓ The Belledune community will be advised of Council's views and preferences through news releases and/or public meetings. Citizen engagement will be emphasized.
- ✓ The Village Council will endeavour to make sure the public is aware of any changes and the implications of such changes to municipal restructuring that may be proposed.

ACTIONS AND TARGET DATE SUMMARY

2008

- Meet with employees to review strategic plan and expectations. (November)
- Adopt strategic plan as a working document subject to continual review and amendment. (December)
- Begin the recruitment process for a Chief Administrative Officer. (November and December)

2009

- Prepare a detailed position description for the CAO. (January)
- Develop performance evaluation policy for municipal employees. (February)
- Secure expanded office space. (June and ongoing)
- CAO to assume responsibilities. (April/May)
- Develop a means to adequately assess the progress made in achieving the goals and actions set out in Belledune's Strategic Plan.

- The CDO will undertake background research necessary to identify the types and levels of training required by industries in Belledune. (initially to be completed by June)
- A database on current post secondary trades' training opportunities that are available in or near the Village of Belledune will be developed in June, July and August.
- The CDO will identify the types and levels of training and education being sought outside of Belledune by students from the community. (on-going; first material to be identified by September)
- Belledune's web site will be redeveloped to incorporate a range of promotional advertising that will complement economic development, employment initiatives and tourism expansion. (September)
- Belledune will develop and maintain up to date standards and policies for the construction and maintenance of roads, ditches, culverts, sidewalks and walkways. (May)
- A long-range plan for the maintenance of Belledune's infrastructure – buildings, recreation, park facilities (including industrial), water and sewer infrastructure, roads, sidewalks, and the like will be developed. (November)
- A plan will be developed by the CDO that will result in location of a Welcome Centre in Belledune, for the purpose of advising visitors about Belledune's attractions, to answer questions, and to proactively inform and promote.
- Advertising materials will be developed such as printed brochures, digital and audio-visual promotional materials as well as other appropriate forms of advertising that will

benefit Belledune in all areas of its desired development. Marketing tools will be effectively utilized. (Promotional materials developed by May – June; development ongoing thereafter)

- Belledune Village Council and senior staff members will initiate positive steps to enhance the levels of training and education that can be made available in Belledune. (ongoing with regular reporting to Council on steps being undertaken)

- Council will give formal commitment to a plan for wastewater management development. This plan will involve an initial designated area and will include plans for future expansion.

- Belledune will investigate the merit of a regional approach to the management of wastewater and water operations.

2010

- The CAO will conduct a survey of residents/ business owners to determine satisfaction level with Services being provided. (September)

- The CDO will research and report on the possibility of a satellite educational campus being established in Belledune, together with facilities for student housing. (Spring)

- A Welcome Centre will be established in Belledune.

- The CDO will develop and maintain a database of skilled employee categories required for new industry and businesses in Belledune; (January for development; maintenance is ongoing)
- Office space for the Mayor and a committee meeting room for Council will be made available.
- A Recreation, Culture & Leisure Service Coordinator will be employed in 2010 (or in 2011), initially for a two-year trial period. Responsibilities will include providing recreation, cultural and leisure services and healthy, active living programs through the year for residents of Belledune.

ONGOING – No Specific Date Attached

- Belledune Village Council will commit to support well-designed and viable housing development projects.
- The CAO will annually report to Council on the health of Belledune operations and will identify any weaknesses which, in the CAO's professional opinion, require correction.
- Best practices will be incorporated in the delivery of all government services. There will be a focus on excellence in customer service delivery in all areas of the municipal operation. Cooperation with surrounding communities to promote each others' tourist facilities and attractions will be encouraged.

- New tourist facilities and attractions for Belledune with a focus on current and new conservation areas will be encouraged. The active and passive use of village owned land for recreational purposes will be promoted.
- Belledune will respond effectively to the labour training needs that are identified.
- Strategic actions concerned with post secondary education that are identified under Population Growth will be initiated.
- The maintenance, improvement and expansion of infrastructure will be promoted.
- Belledune will engage in meaningful, productive discussions with industry officials towards the maintenance of continuing plant operations.
- Work with industry officials, business leaders and other stakeholders to secure replacement industries for those in Belledune that may no longer be viable, so as to maintain the industrial tax base and labour force of the community.
- Belledune will ensure that economic development promotional materials provide factual, timely and user-friendly information to existing and potential businesses.
- Belledune will explore ways to bring about property tax reform.
- Belledune will promote collaboration with all concerned stakeholders to preserve and protect the environment.

- All areas of Belledune’s municipal operations will be examined to assess where energy savings can be realized and pollution can be reduced.
- Policies, procedures, standards and partnerships that promote a greener municipality will be developed. The community will be engaged in discussion of green initiatives; in the maintenance of biodiversity; and in ways in which natural resources and healthy ecosystems can be preserved and the beauty of Belledune safeguarded.

ANNUALLY

- Use Strategic Plan expectations in performance evaluation of municipal employees; Review and track implementation of the Strategic Plan to ensure it is being implemented.
- Conduct market research/survey periodically to better understand service levels and customer needs.

BI-ANNUALLY

- Conduct a review of Belledune’s policies, procedures and by-laws to ensure their continued relevancy.

BELLEDUNE – FACTS AND FIGURES

Advantages

The year round, deepwater port provides uncluttered access to domestic and international markets with excellent direct connections to rail and highway.

- Belledune has one of the lowest property tax rates in New Brunswick.
- Land, and plenty of it, is available in industrial parks or on green sites.
- The stable labor force in this region is both skilled and motivated. Specialized training, tailored to industry needs, can be provided.
- A wide range of municipal and regional services are available to businesses and their employees.
- Affordable housing, ranging from modest to executive styles, help to attract and retain employees.
- The quality of life in this spacious community is Belledune's best kept secret.

Business is Valued

The Village of Belledune has evolved as the major primary resource processing centre of northern New Brunswick. The community is home to such companies as Xstrata Zinc Canada, NB Power, Shaw Resources Inc., Chaleur Saw Mills, Separation Technology Inc. and others. We value the industries and businesses that locate in Belledune.

The Port of Belledune

The Port of Belledune consists of three main terminals situated in water that is deep enough to dock most large ocean-going vessels, up to 80,000 DWT. The Port handles mainly bulk and break bulk commodities, as well as providing roll on and roll off service. On site storage is available for in- and out-bound products. Every attempt is made to accommodate customer needs. New business and industry is welcomed at the port. Superior services, professional personnel, excellent infrastructure and location combine to make this port the main anchor of economic development for the community and the region. Additional information is available at: www.portofbelledune.ca

Low Tax Rates

According to a recent interim report from the Atlantic Institute for Market Studies, Belledune has the lowest property tax rate in the Province of New Brunswick, currently standing at \$490.00 per person. Industries located here benefit from a municipal tax rate per hundred dollars of assessment which translates to the lowest industrial municipal tax rate in the province. The Province also collects property tax at a separate rate.

Industrial Land

Over 7,200 acres of land in Belledune has been zoned for primary resource processing, manufacturing and port related activities. Two industrial parks with paved streets and fire Hydrants provide 250 acres of business-ready land. Both parks are serviced by the Village of Belledune. They are near the Port of Belledune which owns one park; the second is owned by the municipality. The land in these parks is reasonably priced and ready for users. The remaining zoned land is mainly open space or wooded areas. Existing industries have acquired large sections of this land but are open to negotiations for future use. The balance of the land is owned by the Crown, (federal or provincial public property). This land can also be made available for industrial use.

Surrounding Area

Belledune is located on the border of Restigouche and Gloucester counties in central northern New Brunswick. Restigouche East region includes the City of Campbellton. The Town of Dalhousie is west of Belledune and the Chaleur region, which includes the City of Bathurst, is east of Belledune. Regional support services and a vibrant labor force are drawn from both of these jurisdictions.

Population and Labour Force

Belledune's immediate population is 1,700 people. The surrounding community, within a half hour drive of the Village provides a population base of approximately 71,469 people. The total participating labor force in the Belledune region is 35,020. Local employers are impressed by the stability of the work force. Most workers have deep roots in the region. They are least likely to move away and they are most likely to stay with their employer.

The region's labor force is characterized by:

- Youthfulness – a majority of the work force is between 15-34 years of age;
- Start-up Wage Levels and Expectations – these are lower than in major urban centers.

Education and Language

A high proportion of the work force possess post secondary education, trade, vocational or technical training. Many are bilingual, speaking both English and French. Post-secondary level instruction is available in the region through extension and online services from the University of New Brunswick and l'University de Moncton. Two campuses of the New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) system are located nearby in Campbellton and Bathurst. The colleges offer technical, trade, occupational training and upgrading programs for full time, part time and evening students. The NBCC also offers upgrading and can provide for specialty training requirements in Belledune. NBCC also works with local business to develop training courses to meet the needs of local industry. English and French High schools are located in Bathurst, Dalhousie and Campbellton. Belledune has two schools ranging from kindergarten to grade eight.

Healthcare

Two provincial regional hospitals are located in the Belledune area. The Chaleur Regional Hospital in Bathurst has 270 beds and the Restigouche Hospital Centre located in Campbellton has 213 beds. Also available in the area is the Victorian Order of Nurses and the New Brunswick Extra Mural Hospital services. A modern well equipped health clinic is located in Belledune with two family doctors. Many outpatient services are offered including diagnostic and blood testing.

Municipal Services

Police services for Belledune are provided through contract with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Fire protection is provided through a highly trained, volunteer, community fire department. Two fire stations with 50 volunteer firefighters have all the essential equipment to fight fires in the area. Mutual assistance agreements ensure that, regional fire departments will respond to major industrial fires, or disasters. Environmental health, general government and development services are also offered by the municipality. Belledune is fortunate in that it can offer excellent services at low tax rates because of its significant industrial tax base.

Village government also participates in many regional commissions and bodies. Provincial and federal services are offered at the regional level with offices mainly located in Bathurst or in Campbellton.

Housing

A variety of quality accommodations are available in Belledune and in the region. Older houses in reasonable condition can be purchased for between \$50,000 and \$80,000. New homes can cost between \$100,000 and \$200,000. Vacancy rates for rentals in the area are 8% to 10%. Rent is reasonably priced with many options.

Recreation

Belledune offers many different types of recreational opportunities. Belledune Days Festival is an annual weeklong celebration of the community.

Quality sporting and entertainment facilities like the Veterans Arena, and the Belledune Recreation and Cultural Centre provide perfect venues for entertainment, social or communications events.

Tennis courts, baseball and soccer fields, as well as school facilities offer a wide choice of sporting options. Regionally, the KC Irving Civic Centre in Bathurst and the Memorial Civic Centre in Campbellton can accommodate thousands of spectators at an assortment of events from hockey to music concerts.

Utilities and Communications

NB Power operates a 450 megawatt coal fired plant in Belledune. Interconnections to the provincial power distribution system ensures a steady supply of electricity to the industries that are located in Belledune.

NB Power rates are competitive and are amongst the lowest in Atlantic Canada and eastern United States.

Competitive rates, value packages, cluster services and plans and available for cell phone connections, land line service and internet connections.

Quality of Life

One of Belledune's most appealing attributes is the quality of life offered in this rural community. Walking along the twenty three kilometers of shoreline that overlooks the internationally recognized Bay of Chaleur creates a sense of awe with visitors and with residents alike. This body of water has been designated as one of the fifty most beautiful bays in the world.

Peaceful, safe, stable and enriching are some of the adjectives that best describe the quality of life in Belledune. Large building lots with plenty of open spaces create an ideal atmosphere for family living. Most homes are within minutes of the bay or forest. Outdoor activities in all seasons are part of this active community. Food products, fuel, financial services and other necessary commerce are located within the village. Urban centres, with all the amenities are a short drive away in both directions.

Commitment to the Environment

Environmental leadership continues to be a Village of Belledune trademark. The utilization of leading edge, environmental technology by industries which locate in the community is vigorously promoted. Examples of environmental leaders which have chosen Belledune as the location industry are: Xstrata; NB Power; Shaw Resources; and Chaleur Sawmills.

The Village of Belledune is an active supporter of the Belledune Regional Environment Association.

Belledune has played an important role in the promotion of drinking water monitoring; the protection of fish resources; and the establishment of fencing for the protection of moose.

A founding member of the Nepisquit-Chaleur Solid Waste Commission, Belledune has participated in all government environmental impact assessment studies which have been carried out in the community.

Funding donations have been made available to environmental groups and strong emphasis is placed on the need for new industries to follow best environmental practices.

**Belledune is a community that supports “Green Initiatives.”
It is a great place to live and work or to operate a business!**