

# Community collaboration will be key to regional sustainability

By KATIE TOWER  
STAFF REPORTER

Keep the word teamwork in mind. That's what will be required over the next few months as the ball gets rolling on a regional sustainability plan that will determine how communities throughout Tantramar can collaborate to tackle significant challenges over the next 30 years.

The process got under way last month when partners were brought together to brainstorm their ideas during a workshop hosted by EOS Eco-Energy Inc. and the local planning commission, entitled Tantramar 2040: Issues and Opportunities.

The workshop was the first in a series of workshops that aimed to identify and prioritize regional issues, a first step towards developing an action plan based on those concerns.

"This was a way for us to bring a group of people together who've never had an opportunity to come together and talk about their concerns, and to see what commonalities they share," said Tracey Wade, a planner with the Tantramar Planning District Commission.

Kate Friars, executive director of EOS Eco-Energy, said the workshop discussions featured a broad range of perspectives, with representation from municipalities throughout the region, Mount Allison University students and staff, local seniors and Fort Folly First Nations.

"We wanted people to just come together to brainstorm

and think as broadly as they could," said Friars.

The workshop was a way for the key players to make initial connections and helped develop a base for the next step in the process, said Wade.

As a result of the first workshop, the facilitators have been able to zoom in on the best opportunities for regional collaboration – energy, food system, transportation, solid waste, local business development, water, and social supports.

The second workshop, which is slated for mid-November, will bring essential information on those topics to the table. Wade and Friars are both conducting research on those issues as they pertain to the local region.

Then, the discussion will centre around how the communities would like to approach the challenges and opportunities together.

Under transportation, for example, a shuttle service could be implemented to ensure more accessible and environmentally-friendly driving.

As well, under education, it was suggested the regional partners could work with the school districts to incorporate more sustainability initiatives into the curriculum.

And, under food systems, another initial recommendation is that the communities could also work together to further promote and encourage more residents to buy local produce.

For the latest information on the regional sustainability plan, check out [www.tantramar2040.ca](http://www.tantramar2040.ca).

## Property owners in proposed heritage conservation areas urged to attend meeting

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meeting on Nov. 1 to hear from the public before moving