

**Canada Water  
Book on Flooding**

*Agenda 21 promotes human settlement planning and management in disaster-prone areas. The Canada Water Book on flooding describes what Canadians have done to prevent and prepare for floods by:*

- *establishing a federal-provincial/territorial Flood Damage Reduction Program to reduce the amount of property damage and suffering caused by floods;*
- *identifying flood risk areas and discouraging floodplain development to reduce social and economic costs;*

**(b) Promoting Sustainable Land Use Planning**

It is increasingly recognized that sustainable housing and human settlements must be treated as comprehensive systems with many components. That understanding is changing land use processes. New models of community design have been developed that encourage more environmentally responsible planning. This includes a variety of housing types and forms that reduce land requirements and encourage public transit, walking and cycling as alternatives to automobile use.

In recognition of the shortcomings of prevailing residential development patterns, flexibility and innovation in the planning and design process are being promoted through "Affordability and Choice Today," a national program designed to encourage regulatory innovation.

Government policies are beginning to stress greater land use intensification in communities and a mix of dwelling types. Well-designed infill housing and apartments in existing homes can double a community's density and create more efficient use of community resources. Given limited resources, efforts are being undertaken to integrate housing and community support services, such as infrastructure and transportation systems, more effectively. For example, the Government of Ontario's Land Use Planning for Housing policy statement encourages municipalities to provide opportunities for residential intensification and requires that 25 percent of new development be affordable. It is also developing a number of other initiatives to encourage more compact communities. In Montreal, a working group is examining sustainable urban development and the more efficient delivery of municipal services in the region.

Improved land use also applies to rural areas. The recent New Brunswick Commission on Land Use and the Rural Environment recommended policies to encourage compatible rural development, environmental protection and the preservation of valuable agricultural land. The Rural and Small Town Program of Mount Allison University is completing a pilot project with several communities to create practical tools and documents around the themes of strategic planning, self-help, community leadership and sustainable development.

Although some indicators have already been developed, such as those for community quality of life, there is still a great need for more instruments to measure progress toward a sustainable quality of life. This means clearly defining objectives and putting into place the appropriate indicators to track this progress.