

## **IV. ECONOMIC STATUS**

### **4.1 Economic Base**

#### **4.1.1 Economic Profile**

The economy of Atikokan is based on forestry, a thermal generating station, government services, retail services, tourism and a mixture of light manufacturing businesses.

The leading employers for residents of Atikokan are Atikokan Forest Products (random length/width lumber and woodchip mill), Fibratech Manufacturing Ltd. (particle board plant) and the Atikokan Thermal Generating Station. These companies utilize the abundance of natural resources in the area.

The thermal generating station, under the direction of Ontario Power Generation, supplies about one-quarter of the energy demand for Northwestern Ontario. OPG burns low sulfur lignite coal brought in from Western Canada. Ontario Power Generation has been responsible for the immigration of a number of people, as well as providing employment opportunities for many Atikokanites.

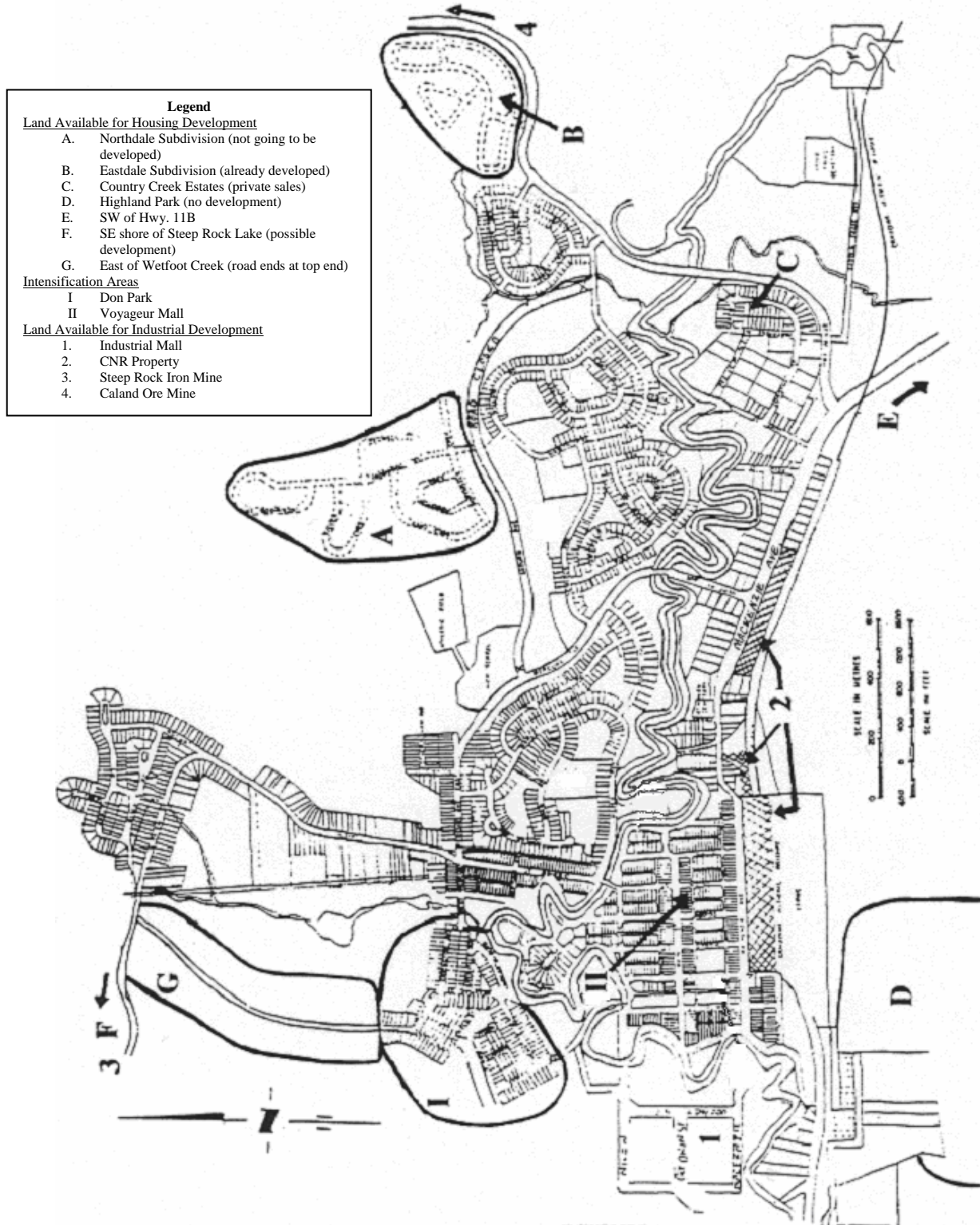
There are a number of government services available in Atikokan. The government services provide employment for numerous people who bring a variety of skills and trades to the Atikokan area.

The retail sector is also a major large employment contributor in Atikokan. Atikokan has a number of stores, shops and restaurants catering to the residents of Atikokan as well as visitors.

Tourism is a major industry in Atikokan. The natural beauty of the area attracts thousands of visitors every year. Much of Atikokan's retail sector is directed toward providing complete customer service to tourists. There are a number of resorts, lodges, camps and outfitters in the Atikokan area that greatly enhance the tourism industry.

The outdoors and wildlife are a central theme for most of the light manufacturing businesses in Atikokan. Atikokan's unique wilderness setting has resulted in canoe and paddle manufacturers becoming established in Atikokan. In addition, there are manufacturing businesses that produce Atikokan souvenirs.

**Figure 4.1.1: Land Available for Housing and Industrial Development and Intensification Areas**



**4.1.2 Land Development**

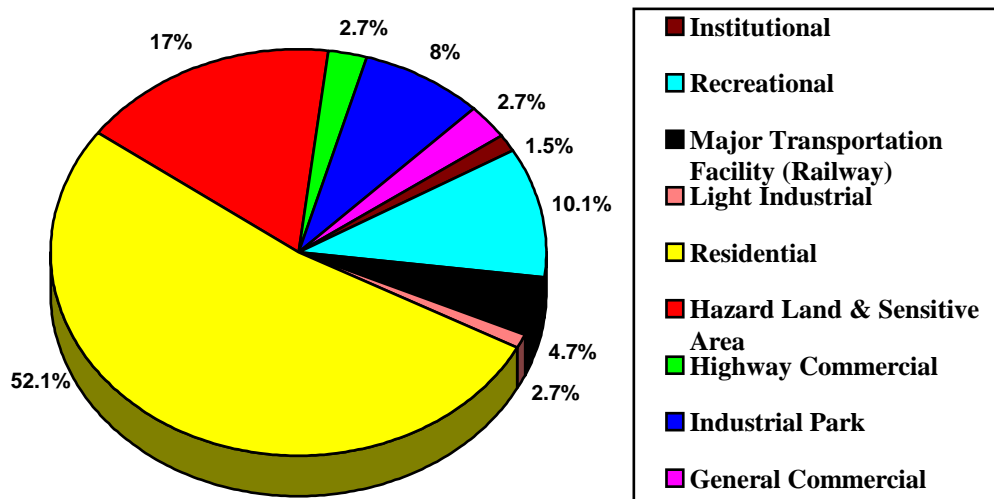
There are 372.93 km<sup>2</sup> of land within the Atikokan boundaries that are being developed under four general headings:

- Industrial and Commercial
- Residential
- Recreational
- Conservational

A large percentage of the land remains in a natural state with the urban town site being the major land user. Industrial areas are located in the northern half of the municipality. Recreational uses are generally located in conjunction with the river, although some parks are located in residential areas.

Approximately 7.26 km<sup>2</sup> of the Township of Atikokan is allocated to urban land use. Residential (52.1%), Hazard Land & Sensitive Area (17.0%) and Recreational (10.1%) comprise the greatest amount of urban land.

**Urban Area Land Use**



Source: Measurements taken from the Township of Atikokan Official Plan (Urban Area Land Use) 1980 Map using a planimeter, Scale 1:10 000.  
Some updates: Township of Atikokan Official Plan 2002

**4.1.3 Industrial and Commercial Land Availability**

Located in the Industrial Park is the Atikokan Industrial Mall. The Industrial Mall is a metal building built on a cement foundation and is equipped with a sprinkler system and gas and electrical heat. There are 8 units in the mall, each unit being 30.9m x 9.1m. Units are available for rent from the Township of Atikokan. Building plans are available for viewing at the Township Administration Office.

Sections of the Steep Rock and Caland mine sites have the potential to be developed into industrial areas. Other areas are so dangerous that access is forbidden.

Signs have been erected which prohibit access to the most hazardous areas and trespassers can be fined. A hazardous site map is also available. For more information on the mine sites contact the Ministry of Natural Resources at (807) 597-6971.

The Canadian National Railway has substantial land available for lease in the core of Atikokan. The lots are located between the railroad tracks and Mackenzie Ave and are fully serviced. For more information on the availability of C.N.R. lots, contact a C.N.R. Land Manager at (416) 217-6807.

Commercial locations are available in downtown Atikokan. Freestanding properties are available for lease or purchase and some spaces are available in the Voyageur Mall.

#### 4.1.4 Mining

There has been active exploration for gold, base metals and iron ore in the Atikokan area almost continually since the late 1800's. The area holds strong potential for gold deposits and supports base metal exploration. There is a large low grade iron ore deposit at Bending Lake located 64 km north-west of Atikokan. Development of this ore body seems unlikely for the foreseeable future given the present demand for iron ore.

#### Mines Prominent in Atikokan's History

MINE	MINERAL
Atikokan Gold Mines	Gold
Bergman Occurrence	Gold
Caland Ore	Iron Ore
Fern Elizabeth Mines	Gold
Harold Lake Mine	Gold and Iron Ore
Independence Mines	Gold
Steep Rock Iron Mines	Iron Ore
Tip Top Copper Mine	Copper

Presently the following companies (among others) are conducting mineral exploration in the Atikokan area:

##### Allegheny Mines Ltd

Working in the Sapawe Lake area - gold and base metal exploration

##### Atikokan Resources Inc.

Working in the Lumby Lake area –silver base metal exploration

##### Pele Mountain Resources Inc.

Working in the Moss Lake area – gold-silver exploration

##### Penland Firth

Working in the Sawbill Bay area on Marmion Lake - gold exploration

#### 4.1.5 Forestry

Logging is an important part of the local economy. In Atikokan, both Fibratech Manufacturing Ltd. and Atikokan Forest Products are in full production.

The district is divided into four management units - Sapawe Crown Management Unit, Abitibi Consolidated, Quetico Park Management Unit (which is unlicensed) and the Flanders Management Unit. Aside from Quetico Park, the units are managed on a sustained yield basis.

The wood from these management units goes to three companies: Abitibi Consolidated, Atikokan Forest Products Limited, and Voyageur Panel, with their mills located in Fort Frances, Sapawe, and Barwick respectively. (The sustainable resources for Voyageur Panel are managed by Abitibi Consolidated).

#### Major Forest Manufacturers of the Atikokan Area

PRODUCT TYPE	COMPANY	SPECIES OF TREES
Lumber, Timber	Atikokan Forest Products Nickel Lake Lumber	jackpine, spruce, white pine
Oriented Strand Board	Voyageur Panel	Aspen, balsam, poplar, birch
Particle Board	Fibratech Manufacturing Ltd.	poplar, birch
Pulp and Paper	Abitibi Consolidated (wood goes to Fort Frances mill)	jackpine, black & white spruce, red & white pine, fir, tamarack, cedar, balsam
Wood Chips	Atikokan Forest Products	slats from jackpine and spruce

#### 4.1.6 Agriculture

The soil characteristics of Atikokan are too shallow, sandy and rocky to support most farming operations.

#### 4.1.7 Fish Farming and Hatchery

A local entrepreneur operates Snow Lake Fish Farms in the closed Caland Ore pit located five kilometres north of town. The farm raises brook trout, rainbow trout and salmon in the sterile, disease-free and predator-free waters.

To support sport fishing and education, the local Sportsmen's Conservation Club has built a walleye fish hatchery and education centre. They release hundreds of thousands of fingerlings into local lakes annually.

Of the nearly one hundred and thirty lakes in Quetico Park, five are so deep and infertile that lake trout is the only fish species reported. Sixty-seven lakes are deep

enough to contain lake trout and have adequate areas for walleye, northern pike and bass. The remainder of the lakes contains only warm water species.

There are seven species of sport fish, sixteen species of coarse fish and twenty-three species of minnows in the Atikokan area.

#### Common Lake Species

TYPE OF FISH	SPECIES
Sport Fish	lake trout, northern pike, small mouth bass, walleye
Coarse Fish	lake whitefish, lake herring, white sucker, yellow perch, rock bass, green sunfish
Minnows	shiners, bluntnose, Iowa darter, Johnny darter, log perch

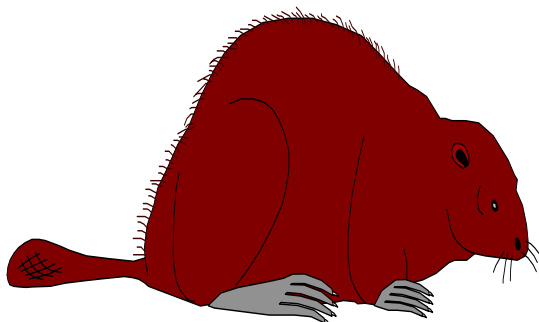
#### 4.1.8 Trapping

There are roughly 100 trappers in the Atikokan area. Many of the trappers are Aboriginal from the Lac La Croix First Nation bordering Quetico Park. Very few trap as a full-time job; most consider it seasonal work, balanced by summer guiding.

#### Fur Types and the Length of Season

TYPES OF FUR	LENGTH OF SEASON
Beaver and Otter	October 5 - May 15 of the following year
Bobcat, Lynx, Wolverine	October 25 - last day of February of the following Year
Mink	October 15 - December 31
Muskrat	October 5 - May 21 of the following year
Fisher and Marten	October 25 - last day of February of the following year
Coloured Fox (all red fox)	September 15 - last day of February of the following year
Grey Fox, Red Squirrel and Weasel	October 25 - last day of February of the following year
Coyote, Timber Wolf, Skunk	no closed season
Black Bear	season varies - refer to hunting regulations

Source: Ministry of Natural Resources



All trapping of beaver is on a quota basis which is set by the Ministry of Natural Resources District Office. These fur bearers must be sealed or stamped before being sold by the trapper.

## 4.2 Housing

### 4.2.1 Atikokan Housing Stock

In 2001, Atikokan had 1,485 households. The majority (89.9%) of Atikokan's housing stock is detached housing. Apartments, duplexes, other housing and miscellaneous type houses make up the remaining 10.1% of Atikokan's housing stock.

**Table 4.2.1: Residential Units by Type and Size (2005)**

TYPE OF UNIT	# OF UNITS	% OF TOTAL UNITS
Detached Homes	1335	89.9%
Semi-Detached Homes (Duplexes)*	40	2.7%
Apartments	70	4.7%
Other	40	2.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1485</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Statistics Canada – Census 1996, Updated: Atikokan Township 2005

\*This number reflects the total number of units, there are 20 total duplexes

The existing assisted seniors and family housing units in Atikokan are as follows:

**Housing Units by Size and Type (2005)**

TYPE OF UNIT	# OF UNITS
Seniors	
Fotheringham Ct. (OHC) 1 BR	35
Rivercrest Terrace (Non-Profit) 1 BR	8
2 BR	4
<b>TOTAL – SENIORS</b>	<b>47</b>
OHC Family (duplex)	26
Native Non-Profit Housing	17
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF UNITS</b>	<b>90</b>

Source: Township of Atikokan 2005

### 4.2.2 Housing Activity and Costs

The following table shows historical housing activity and the average resale prices.

**Housing Prices and Activity (1986-1997)**

YEAR	# OF UNITS SOLD	AVERAGE PRICE	% CHANGE
1986	64	\$ 39,083	n/a
1987	80	\$ 34,409	-12.0%
1988	117	\$ 33,240	-3.4%
1989	101	\$ 44,203	+33.0%
1990	70	\$ 36,964	-16.4%
1991	49	\$ 32,021	-13.4%
1992	75	\$ 40,223	+25.6%
1993	58	\$ 40,167	-0.1%

<b>YEAR</b>	<b># OF UNITS SOLD</b>	<b>AVERAGE PRICE</b>	<b>% CHANGE</b>
1994	83	\$ 45,777	+13.9%
1995	87	\$ 45,655	-0.3%
1996	92	\$ 44,796	+0.1%
1997	83	\$ 57,011	+27.0%
1998	81	\$ 54,289	-5%
1999	57	\$ 59,223	+8.3%
2000	48	\$ 44,023	-25.7%
2001*	45	\$ 51,674	+14.8%
2002	n/a	n/a	n/a
2003*	53	\$ 32,268	n/a
2004	70	\$ 48,146	+32.9%
2005*	29	\$ 42,997	-10.8%

Source: Real Estate Activity Report – Avenue A Realty – 2005

\* 2001 includes January to September, 2003 includes March to November, 2005 includes January to June

Rents in Atikokan are also very affordable relative to other communities.

#### Rental Rates by Dwelling Type

<b>TYPE OF RENTAL HOUSING</b>		<b>MONTHLY RENT</b>
Detached	2 BR	\$ 550.00
	3 BR	\$ 575.00
	4 BR	\$ 600.00+
Apartments	1 BR	\$ 400.00
	2 BR	\$ 450.00

Source: Various rental units

#### 4.2.3 Intensification Opportunities

Atikokan has numerous opportunities for intensification. Most of the existing residential areas can accommodate some intensification; residential lots in Atikokan are fairly large by urban standards. Areas that are particularly suited for intensification include: Don Park and Main St.<sup>1</sup>

#### Potential Supply of Housing in Intensification Area

	<b>SITE</b>	<b>SIZE (Ha)</b>	<b>EXISTING RES. UNITS</b>	<b>MAXIMUM # OF RES. UNITS</b>		
				<b>Det</b>	<b>Semi Townhouse</b>	<b>Apartment</b>
I	Don Park	22.3	194	335	669	n/a
II	Voyageur Mall	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	50

Source: Municipal Housing Statement 1991 Update (AEDC), Updated: Atikokan Township 2005

<sup>1</sup> Charles Scott, Municipal Housing Statement 1991 Update (Atikokan: Atikokan Economic Development Corporation, June 25, 1992), 52.

#### 4.2.4 Housing Development

##### Land Availability

Three areas have been identified by the Township as sites for residential growth.

- |  |          |
|--|----------|
| A. Northdale Subdivision (not being developed)         | 300 lots |
| B. Eastdale Subdivision                                | 183 lots |
| C. Country Creek Estates Subdivision (privately owned) | 49 lots  |

Three additional areas could offer alternatives for residential growth. These areas have not been surveyed.

- E. Area south-west of Hwy. 11B
- F. South-East shore of Steep Rock Lake
- G. Area east of Wetfoot Creek

Refer to 4.1.1 for location of available land for housing development.

Source: Municipal Housing Statement 1991 Updated: Atikokan Township 2005

#### 4.2.5 Lot Sizes and Price Ranges – Country Creek Estates

##### Lot Sizes and Price Ranges

Country Creek Estates has 43 available lots with 50 foot frontage. However, lots are being sold as a total package with 100 foot frontage (two lots). Lot prices are negotiable. For more information contact Shirley Pierce at [fjperce@shaw.ca](mailto:fjperce@shaw.ca).

Source: Country Creek Estates Information 2005 (Privately Owned)

Residential Building Permits**Residential Building Permits in Atikokan  
1991-2004**

YEAR	RESIDENTIAL PERMITS		VALUE OF RES. PERMITS	
	All	New Units	All	New Units
1991 <sup>1</sup>	11	0	\$ 182,500	\$ 0
1992	37	2	\$ 447,000	\$ 135,000
1993	34	5	\$ 735,798	\$ 445,000
1994	50	5	\$ 971,000	\$ 572,000
1995 <sup>2</sup>	11	2	\$ 230,000	\$ 150,000
1996	34	4	\$ 581,000	\$ 368,000
1997	32	5	\$ 764,000	\$ 565,000
1998	40	6	\$ 261,000	\$ 841,000
1999	20	3	\$ 80,000	\$ 342,000
2000	69	4	\$ 348,000	\$ 741,700
2001	75	1	\$ 496,000	\$ 120,000
2002	76	6	\$ 336,000	\$ 701,000
2003	134	3	\$ 587,000	\$ 534,300
2004	76	3	\$ 868,000	\$ 384,000

<sup>1</sup> 1991 data is for June to December

<sup>2</sup> 1995 data is for January to July

Source: Township of Atikokan