

# 2012 Annual Report

## Atikokan Economic Development Corporation



*Construction of two new biomass silos, and truck loading bay/transfer area at Atikokan Generating Station. (courtesy OPG)*



# Atikokan

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
A Community Futures Development Corporation

**April 22, 2013**

It was once again a very busy year for the Atikokan Economic Development Corporation, as the community continues to morph into something new, exciting and challenging.

Atikokan's industrial projects continue to show promise, and all are progressing with a sense that leads us to believe good times are coming. Ontario Power Generation's Atikokan station continues its transformation to biomass, and the economic impact of the project has been felt by local business. Atikokan Renewable Fuels will be a big beneficiary of the OPG project, and they are quickly moving to get up to full operational status - high-paying employment opportunities for the former Fibratech site are a boom for the community. Both Osisko Mining and Bending Lake Iron Ore are moving forward, with the former's environmental assessment work just entering the home stages of completion; it is a project that should it proceed, will become a game-changer for Atikokan. With all this in mind, we continue to try and prepare for an increased demand for homes, education, senior services, social services and the growth of business, both commercial and industrial.

In 2012, the AEDC and Town continued to work as a cohesive unit with regular joint meetings and collaboration on a number of NCIR projects – the work has yielded positive results. I think it is fair to say that now more than ever, we have worked together to plan not just for the immediate future, but for Atikokan's long-term prosperity.

We continue to strive to the whole of our catchment area; in particular efforts in Upsala have continued to strengthen thanks to the collaborative efforts of Upsala's dedicated volunteers, the Employment Centre and AEDC staff. Both the AEDC and the Employment Centre have worked hard to ensure there are programs and services available, and the community has responded positively. First Nations have a voice on our Board, a welcome and unique perspective that had been lacking for some time.

With a heavy heart, we said goodbye to the Local Initiatives Program. Since 2003, more than \$625,000 was distributed to assist local groups and programs in delivering programs, improving the community and adding to the already-rich quality of life we enjoy in Atikokan. Some wonderful programs, including the Atikokan Bass Classic, benefited and grew exponentially from this program – it was a privilege to deliver this program for so many years.

I am pleased to extend my most sincere appreciation to all of the volunteers and staff who have committed countless hours to ensuring 2012 was a successful year for the AEDC.

Dave Elder, Chair





# Town of Atikokan

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April 22, 2013

## Thank You from the Mayor and Council

On behalf of Atikokan Town Council and staff, I would like to again thank the Atikokan Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) Board and staff for their ongoing support in community and economic development initiatives that benefit the citizens of Atikokan and area.

The Town of Atikokan has faced numerous challenges in recent years with the downturn in the forest products industry in the mid-2000's. However, in the past few months the forest sector is improving and growth is taking place. We are very hopeful of the Osisko Hammond Reef Gold and Bending Lake Iron Ore mines starting up as well.

The work that the AEDC is providing in the mining sector to assist in making a new mine(s) such as Osisko and Bending Lake, to become a reality is very much appreciated. The numerous Northern Community Investment Readiness studies such as the "Accommodation Study" and "Industrial Lands Inventory" contain valuable information that will help our town prepare for a mine opening. We acknowledge and thank the AEDC for the many hours of work required to enable these studies to take place.

Having access to capital through a Community Investment Fund at the Atikokan Economic Development Office for businesses is also very important, especially at a time when it is becoming more difficult for the private sector to acquire such capital from other sources.

The Atikokan Employment Centre, which is administered by the AEDC, continues to be an essential service to the workers and their families in Atikokan. If it wasn't for the AEDC we probably wouldn't have an Employment Centre in Atikokan.

Other AEDC services such as those provided to the local Chamber of Commerce, the Energy Committee, and tourism related activities all help to make for a better Atikokan. Special thanks for meeting with Atikokan Town Council and staff on several occasions this past year to develop strategic plans that enable both groups to move forward in the same direction. We are especially pleased with the efforts of the AEDC in attempting to get more seniors' apartments in Atikokan.

Congratulations on another successful year. Your efforts in community and economic development are necessary and very much appreciated.

Yours truly

Dennis Brown  
Mayor

# Committee Reports

## INVOLVEMENT AND UPDATES

### MINING AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT

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Osisko Hammond Reef has completed their drilling program of more than 1,000,000 feet. The draft environmental assessment report has been submitted to the government. A feasibility study is slated for completion during the first half of 2013. The company is investigating additional properties in the area.

Bending Lake Iron Ore is continuing with their environmental assessment process. Meetings continue to take place with potential off-shore investors.

The Town of Atikokan and the AEDC are in regular communication with both companies and continue to pledge any support and assistance we can provide.

### ATIKOKAN THERMAL GENERATING STATION

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OPG is proceeding with construction of the \$170-million Atikokan GS biomass conversion project. Atikokan GS will be one of the largest biomass plants in North America. The project will create about 200 construction jobs and help to protect existing jobs at the plant. The project includes plant modifications to provide peak capacity and the construction of a fuel storage and handling system that can handle up to 90,000 tonnes of biomass fuel annually. Construction activities will ramp up over the summer. The project is expected to be completed in 2014.



*Chris Fralick, Plant Manager, Northwest Thermal; Tom Mitchell President, OPG; MPP Bill Mauro; Mayor Dennis Brown, Township of Atikokan; Brent Boyko, Station Manager, AGS (credit OPG).*

### SENIORS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

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Mayor Brown and the AEDC have been meeting with the Seniors' Forum and other interested parties in an attempt to identify seniors housing options for Atikokan. Many options have been explored without positive outcomes. As a result of the lessons learned to date, a strategy has been developed for interested seniors to fill the need for suitable seniors' apartments. A community meeting will be held in the first quarter of 2013 to determine whether there is an appetite to continue.

## PATH OF THE VOYAGEUR

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The Path of the Voyageur is a themed tourism route that follows the historical path of the original voyageurs through this part of the region during the days of the fur trade.

It is designed to connect the communities along the route through history, paddling heritage, culture, tourism and modern day outdoor adventure activities. Along this route has been bundled other paths such as The Trans Canada Trail, The Heart of the Continent, RV and Motorcycle Touring, and the Heritage River System. Cyclists are fast becoming users of this route. Our community partners are Atikokan, Kenora, International Falls, Rainy River, Old Fort William and Quetico Park.

This past year the committee has worked diligently on the application for funding to hire a coordinator for the project. This is in its final stages. We have just a few more hurdles to cross to bring this project to fruition. **Marlene Davidson, Chair**

## PATH OF THE PADDLE

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TransCanada Trail (TCT) is the world's longest network of multi-use trails. When completed, by the target date of 2017, the Trail will stretch over 22,000 km from the Atlantic to the Pacific to the Arctic Oceans, linking 1,000 communities and 33 million Canadians. Due to its magnitude and geographic scope the trail is multi-use by various non-motorized means including use by foot, bike, ski, hike, portage and paddle.

Path of the Paddle TCT is the establishment of predominate waterway routes and portage trails in our region. Path of the Paddle Atikokan Regional Trail includes the area of Quetico Park, Atikokan community and surrounding area as well as Turtle River Park. Our committee has been working with the Town of Atikokan, local trail groups, Beaten Path Nordic Ski Club, Quetico Park, Turtle River Park, MNR, Outers, individuals, and community partners to become one of many connecting links across northwestern Ontario.

Once established these waterway routes, land-based trails and portages will provide access to our regional area, community and parks with a wide array of goods and services to the users of the Trail. Millions of Canadians and international visitors will use the TransCanada Trail which will specifically result in regional promotion, heightened identification and awareness, an increase in tourism - to get active and to explore our wonderful Path of the Paddle Atikokan Regional Trail, see [www.tctrail.ca](http://www.tctrail.ca).

We also have an Atikokan representative that serves on the Path of the Paddle Chapter, which is the incorporated structure that oversees the four regional trail committees. Currently, there are over 50 volunteers working on those working groups. **Michelle Savoie, Chair**

## HEART OF THE CONTINENT

The Heart of the Continent Partnership is a cross-border coalition of stakeholders working together on international projects that promote economic, cultural and natural health of the lands on the Ontario/Minnesota border. This past year, the group continued work from the highly successful 2011 International Community Congress in Thunder Bay and Grand Portage, MN, and the Atikokan Team formed a working group in order to move their idea of an international Familiarization Tour forward. The group spent the past year working on plans for bringing the tour to fruition; it has turned out to be a much larger project than we had anticipated! In early 2013, a representative from the Atikokan team will speak at the Heart of the Continent's quarterly meeting as the guest speaker, to bring the group up to date with the project and solicit ideas to move it forward. The group is beginning to forge a relationship with the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB), northern Minnesota's tourism and economic development group. With the experience and the resources this group has with these types of projects, it is hoped that the tour can become a reality in the not-too-distant future.

"The Town of Atikokan continues to work with the Atikokan Economic Development Corporation in identifying qualifying projects for Northern Communities Investment Readiness funding. This year's projects have again given both of our corporations and other stakeholders valuable information to prepare us for the potential growth in the mining and forestry sectors. The LIP grants serve as a valuable financial contribution and the Town was able to complete three projects this year.

The Atikokan Bass Classic is our largest community event that brings people to Atikokan from all over Canada and the United States. Many organizations like the Atikokan 4x4 Mudslingers, Atikokan Motocross and many others host events throughout the week that extend our visitors stay and give our citizens a wide variety of events to take part in."

Angela Sharbot, CAO/Clerk, Town of Atikokan

## OUR SERVICE AREA

The AEDC offers its services to the residents of Upsala, Lac La Croix, Lac Des Mille Lacs and Seine River. We continue to strengthen our relationship with these outlying areas, as we attend meetings together and finance projects within their communities.

Map courtesy of [www.oacfdc.com](http://www.oacfdc.com)



**DID YOU KNOW?** The AEDC's service area is over 2,400 square kilometers!

# LOCAL LOAN DISBURSEMENT

## SELF-EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS, LOANS & THE COMMUNITY

**Our mandate:** Working in partnership with the people of Atikokan and the surrounding areas, to generate and maintain permanent employment through the creation and support of self-employment initiatives and economic-based community projects.

The AEDC works with local residents to create and maintain jobs by:

- ❖ By providing access to a loan program;
- ❖ Providing technical and advisory support, such as help with their business plan, cash flow projections, staffing issues, training, etc.;
- ❖ Works with the Town of Atikokan and community groups, planning to the future;
- ❖ Participating in the Self Employment Benefit Program.

The Self-Employment Benefit Program (funded by The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities) is administered by our office and offered to residents within our service area. It is a very successful program, as it provides financial support and monitoring to new entrepreneurs engaging in business start-up.

“The Self-Employment Benefit program run by the AEDC was at first a daunting thought. After getting on the program, I found out quickly how easy and helpful the program is for those wanting to start their own business.”

- Whalen Jones, The Jones Clean Sweep

### An S.E.B. Success Story



“When deciding to open my own small business in Atikokan, I was recommended to talk to the Atikokan Economic Development Corporation. From the first time that I met with them, they helped me in a way that made them invaluable with the start-up process. They showed me how to do a business plan and how to market my business. They made the whole start-up process less stressful and easier to manage as a single proprietor.

The AEDC continues to provide advice and support now that my business is opened. I would not have been able to establish a business on my own without them. The AEDC is a wonderful tool for anyone looking to start a small business in Atikokan, and I highly recommend them.”

Melissa Lesperance, Owner, Canoa Day Spa

### SELF-EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

SECTOR	YEAR ENDED DEC. 31/12	SINCE INCEPTION
Hospitality	--	7
Service	2	61
Tourism	--	6
Aquaculture	--	2
Manufacturing	--	10
Transportation	--	6
Retail	2	26
Forestry	--	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>124</b>



"I really appreciate, and am grateful to, the AEDC and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities for helping. Customers tell me they appreciate not having to travel to get furniture, especially with the price of gas these days. Many like the fact that they can visit [the corporate website], make their choice, and I can have it delivered here to the store."

Donna Hobbs, Owner, Picture This Home Décor

### BUSINESSES & JOBS CREATED/MAINTAINED

YEAR	BUSINESSES STARTED	BUSINESSES MAINTAINED	JOBS CREATED	JOBS MAINTAINED
2007	8	11	19	43
2008	15	12	21	82
2009	3	12	4	42
2010	4	8	11	40
2011	3	18	11	31
2012	5	8	13	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>244</b>

**FROM A FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVE...**

During 2012, our office disbursed new investment funds of \$371,500 towards new loans. In total, 13 loans were refinanced, amalgamated and/or disbursed.

Since 1988, Atikokan Economic Development Corporation has dispersed more than \$12.3 million in Atikokan and the surrounding region.

With the AEDC, five additional Community Futures Development Corporations within northwestern Ontario form a corporate pool for dispensing larger loans: Superior North (Terrace Bay), Rainy River Futures (Fort Frances), Greenstone EDC (Geraldton), Thunder Bay Ventures and Lake of the Woods Business Incentive Corporation (Kenora).

Atikokan currently has 12 of these regional investments totaling \$720,815 in that portfolio. This partnership allows the AEDC to consider investments in excess of \$150,000 by sharing the risk with five other partners (up to a maximum loan of \$500,000).

YEAR	LOANS ISSUED	LOAN AMOUNT	REPAYMENTS	PORTFOLIO BALANCE
2009	16	\$489,489	\$329,159	\$4,315,278
2010	18	\$411,335	\$421,120	\$3,677,491
2011	26	\$988,900	\$776,059	\$3,890,331
2012	13	\$371,500	\$481,214	\$3,260,853

“With the help of the AEDC, I have been able to successfully start a small computer repair business to service the town of Atikokan!

I have now been up and running strong for a year, thanks to their support!”

Rob Potts, Owner, AnyKeyAtikokan PC Repair



## INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO ACTIVITY

SECTOR	AMOUNT OF LOANS ISSUED IN 2012	CURRENT # OF LOANS IN PORTFOLIO	CURRENT AMOUNT OF LOANS
Hospitality	--	8	\$446,559
Agriculture	--	1	\$34,933
Mining	--	2	\$145,925
Service	\$88,500	20	\$598,129
Tourism	--	5	\$274,777
Manufacturing	\$2,000	4	\$273,215
Transportation	\$10,000	8	\$362,686
Retail	\$271,000	12	\$749,324
Forestry	--	4	\$312,805
Research/Development	--	1	\$62,500
Culture & Arts	--	--	--
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$371,500</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>\$3,260,853</b>

All funding applications received by the AEDC are reviewed by our Community Investment Fund Committee. This committee is comprised of four members from the community at large, and three members from the AEDC Board, all of whom have extensive business experience.

We gratefully acknowledge the following for the many volunteer hours throughout the year that they contribute: Dr. Ken Sawchuk (Chair), Elizabeth MacKay, Kim Cross, Cecil Leif, Jack Pierce, Tami Stinson and Elvin Rydberg. A special thanks to the efforts of Robin Johnson and Bob Botham, who have moved on to new and exciting opportunities.



### DID YOU KNOW?

In 2012, more than 274 meetings and seminars were held at the AEDC offices by non-profit groups? And that doesn't include the Atikokan Bass Classic, who utilized the Board Room for 62 days, from June 25-August 25.

# A Letter of Thanks



To the Atikokan Economic Development Corporation,

Liz and I would like to thank the Atikokan Economic Development Corporation for the assistance provided us during the twenty nine years we were in business as Tamaracks and various incarnations of Voyageur Books and Gifts. Given the difficult economic times Atikokan has faced since the closing of the mines, we were forced repeatedly to reposition ourselves in the local market. The advice given us by all members of your team was critical to our success as a retailer.

Over the years, you provided a series of in town workshops that impacted every segment of our business. We were particularly grateful for your help in linking us with the Confederation College Fort Frances campus. You made it possible for us to attend a number of invaluable workshops which touched on every aspect of our retail operation. Particularly helpful was your connecting us with small business advisor, Don Lovissa, who not only led targeted small business workshops in Atikokan and Fort Frances but, most important, provided one on one assistance for Voyageur Books over a five year period. With his help, we were able to develop a specific marketing and operational strategy that gave our store a competitive advantage that added value to the products we sold and differentiated us from our competition in a distinctly superior way. While our strategic plan had to be modified several times during the twenty years we operated Voyageur Books & Gifts, the lessons learned from Don became ingrained so that in difficult economic times we were able to survive and prosper.

The AEDC has been instrumental in developing a strong business network in the community through its ongoing support for the Atikokan Chamber of Commerce and providing many other opportunities for us to interact with other businessmen both within Atikokan and in neighboring communities throughout the northwest. Your office helped organize a number of campaigns which have improved downtown Atikokan, including the upgrading of Main Street, the establishment of a central park and loans to allow businessmen to renovate their storefronts,

We cannot say enough about the assistance we received from Paula Sanders and Gord Knowles when we decided to sell our store. They provided advice and encouraged a number of potential entrepreneurs to consider purchasing our operation. With their help the business changed hands within two months of the initial contact. They recognize the importance of keeping every business in the community viable and vibrant, no matter how small they are.

On a macro scale, the AEDC provided strong leadership and support to keep our large companies, most notably the OPG power generation facility. Without your continued advocacy on behalf of our community, Liz and I would have been forced to leave Atikokan. With your strong support we have enjoyed forty-two years here and look forward to many more.



Liz & Don MacKay

# Atikokan Chamber of Commerce

## ANNUAL REPORT

BY MIKE MCKINNON, PRESIDENT

The Chamber inched forward in the past year, holding its own in anticipation of some significant growth in the Atikokan economy.

Financial constraints continue to be a major issue, and we went some way to address them with a small membership fee increase, the first in at least ten years. We continue to have the lowest membership rates in northwestern Ontario.

The extra funds did help us avoid the late winter/early spring financial crisis we have faced the past couple of years. We were able to retain our manager, albeit on limited hours (ten per week) throughout the year.

Our membership is up two this year, to 75.

The highlight at our annual meeting and awards banquet was the introduction of a new health and safety award, thanks to the continued strong support of the Chamber by Ontario Power Generation. Congratulations to the first winner, Atikokan Fire Rescue.

We also got some much appreciated support from 93.1 The Border, which stepped in at the last minute to sponsor the business excellence award, which went this year to The Bargain! Shop. Congratulations, too, to the Barnard Family (winners of the Tramin Ambassador Award), Sunset Windows & Doors (AEDC Entrepreneur Award), and Heather Maynard (TBayTel Customer Service Award).

Again, our biggest activity as an organization was operating the tourist bureau, which we do in partnership with the Town. Chamber manager Jolene Wood secured grant support to hire five students working as ambassadors this past summer. Visitation was down somewhat this year; 3,243 travelers signed in (versus about 3,700 last year). About two-thirds of them were Canadians; over one-quarter of them were Americans; and 106 were from overseas. Most of the drop-in visitors occurred in May and July.

The bureau is Internet-connected, and we have also established a wi-fi hot spot for travelers, so are able to serve them 24/7 from Victoria Day to mid-September. This also allows us to use the bureau as a Chamber office.

On the retail front, the Chamber hosted a pair of popular Showcase events, one in September, and the other in late November. These one-day events held downtown incorporated local merchants, visiting merchants, and local home-based businesses at several different venues. They were a rousing success - the early September event was the busiest Saturday of the of the summer, many of the merchants told us, and the November event (on a Thursday evening), helped local merchants reach many Christmas shoppers.

The Chamber and the AEDC again partnered to take advantage (one final time) of the FedNor Local Initiatives Program. We launched the Atikokan song (and video) with Jinx, started the creation of a photo bank for community use, and secured a new display case for the tourist bureau.

None of these things would have been possible without our partnership with the Atikokan Economic Development Corp. It provides low-cost office space, helps us employ our manager, and continues to be a big supporter of the Chamber and our programs.

I want to thank my fellow board members for their commitment in 2001-11, especially vice-chair Val Fraser and treasurer Maureen James. Board members Fred Colvin, Brent Boyko, Doug Moynihan, Amy Holzwarth, Greg Sanders and Councillor Mary Makarenko have been faithful to their responsibilities.

Now entering her fifth year as Chamber manager, Jolene Wood continues to grow in the position. It's nice to have an experienced hand! Her commitment, initiative, and flexibility have been integral to our success.

Finally, thank you to the 75 businesses, organizations and individuals - our members - who make the Chamber a reality. Being part of the Chamber is one of the best ways for a business to give back to the community it serves. We are stronger as businesses, and as a business community, when we work together and support one another.

### Thanks from a Local Initiatives Project Participant

"LIP funds allowed us to purchase a trade show booth in Fort Frances. It was a huge benefit to the participating small business owners as they were able to interact with a wide audience of potential customers. It was a great learning experience and provided a means of Atikokan businesses to reach a larger audience outside the community.

The funding we received for a display case will give visitors at the Tourist Bureau a glimpse of what Atikokan businesses have to offer them, and possibly give them incentive to visit the community. The retail businesses of Atikokan will benefit greatly from the exposure they will receive while their wares are on display there.

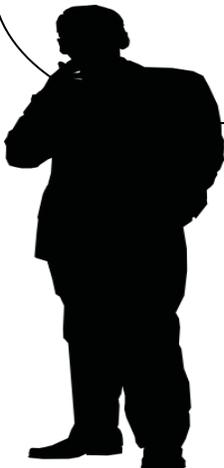
With LIP dollars, we were able to hire a local businessperson to work with a local songwriter to create a promotional CD. These will be given to visitors and sent to perspective Atikokan residents. A creative, unique way to say that Atikokan is a great place to live!

The funding we were given to host the Christmas shopping event was helpful to the many small, home-based businesses who participated. It gave them an opportunity to display their products and be a part of holiday shopping. The retail stores also benefited from the increased traffic downtown and marketing literature.

Lastly, we received financial assistance to compile photographs taken by local residents. These will be used to help community groups promote Atikokan via flyers, brochures, websites, etc.

The Atikokan Chamber of Commerce sincerely appreciates the financial support we have received from LIP to complete these important initiatives for our community."

- Jolene Wood, Chamber of Commerce



#### Regular users of the AEDC Facilities include:

- Atikokan Minor Hockey
- Atikokan Figure Skating
- Chamber of Commerce
- Amateur Radio Club
- Ringette
- Sno-Ho Club
- Relay for Life
- Rainbow Centre Daycare
- Path of the Voyageur
- Family Health Team

As well as meetings, seminars, training and conferences hosted by the AEDC, AEC, Town of Atikokan and numerous non-profit and for-profit businesses, including Osisko & MNR.

# Atikokan Employment Centre

## ANNUAL REPORT

In our operations as a full suite Employment Ontario Service Provider we are pleased to have accomplished and in most cases far exceeded all targets set forth by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. During the past year we have excelled in customer service, service coordination and effectiveness.

Participation in our Employment Ontario funded programs remained strong, with specific attention paid to those clients with the most challenges. In past years we focused a great deal of attention on Second Career clients, however now we are focusing more attention on the supports that get the client directly to employment. In comparison to last year, we saw a dramatic downturn in jobs locally, mainly due to the layoffs with Osisko and the trickle-down effect. We are continuing to see a shift in many social and health related positions in our community. Our self-serve resource centre is continually being utilized by job seekers for job searching, resume development and cover letter assistance. This year through our incentive dollars we were able to support four local employers and provided financial incentives for five unemployed individuals. Through our support dollars we were able to provide employment supports to 10 individuals in the form of work clothing, accommodation expenses, short-term training and mileage. These supports made it possible for individuals to embark on their employment plans successfully and pursue sustainable employment.

Additional activities of the Employment Centre included WHMIS training to unemployed and employed residents, a variety of group information sessions to clients including Interview Skills Techniques, Resume Writing Clinics, Young Worker Awareness Training, Babysitting Training, Cover Letter Writing Workshops and Job Search Techniques Training. We have continued our partnership with Norcat Training to provide a variety of e-learning opportunities including Fall Protection Training, Confined Space Entry, Transportation of Dangerous Goods and also continued to partner with the Learning Hub to provide on-line learning to individuals. In an effort to expand the training courses we offer locally we purchased the Lockout/Tagout program through the Industrial Accident Prevention Association. This course will be beneficial to those seeking work in an industrial or construction environment. We also hosted a Fall Prevention and Aerial Boom Platform Training course in partnership with Tramin Ltd. This course was very well received and we look forward to partnering with them again to provide Confined Space Entry Training and Common Core Surface Miner.

We also planned and coordinated the Atikokan Career & Job Fair 2012 which saw a number of students come through the door for assistance; however we did not see an adequate number of our targeted participants to justify spending that much time and money to embark on another Career Fair. We revisited this event and decided to host monthly career seminars that focus on different fields, but are more specific.

We have maintained our partnership with Service Canada to offer in-person client appointments for individuals that are having challenges with or questions about Employment Insurance, CPP/OAS or Boater's Registration. Representatives from Service Canada come to our community monthly to provide services to the community. This service has been well-received and continues to be an in-demand service.

This year we continued our satellite services to the community of Upsala. Additionally we have begun to offer support to the unemployed and underemployed of Seine River First Nation. We make bi-monthly visits to Seine River and built a good relationship with this community and look forward to assist them in moving forward. As a result of our work in Seine River we felt it would be beneficial to be further trained in Aboriginal Cultural Issues. We embarked on staff training which in turn resulted in us hosting a one-day training session on Aboriginal Cultural Sensitivity. This session was open to the Atikokan Inter-Agency Members and was very well attended. As a result we will be partnering with Confederation College on further projects including a Team Building seminar in the upcoming year.

With the announcement of the layoffs at Osisko Hammond Reef we contacted Osisko and worked closely with their Human Resource Department in filtering information and resources to them. We did six pre-layoff presentations in partnership with Service Canada. Each session provided basic information about the programs and services available and where to access them. These sessions were very well attended and made the transition to unemployment a bit less daunting for these individuals.

During the Holiday season we used our Loonie Blue Jean money to purchase items for a Holiday Hamper to raffle off the week prior to Christmas. This initiative proved a great way to encourage some of the high risk clients that weren't using our services to come in and get to know the staff in addition to having the opportunity to win a huge hamper full of Christmas dinner essentials! We opened the door to many new clients and were able to engage them in our services.

It has been a busy year for the Employment Centre and as we offer the full suite of services we predict the activities of the office within the community to increase as we make plans to continually enhance and expand the services we provide within the community and beyond.

### Thanks from a Local Initiatives Project Participant

"On behalf of the Northwest Training and Adjustment Board I would like to thank the AEDC for their assistance and the funding that contributed to the success of our 2, 5, and 10 year Mining Hiring Requirements Forecast for the Kenora and Rainy River Districts.

In March 2013 we were able to come to Atikokan to present our report in person along with Jamie Wolcott, Labour Market Economist from the Mining Industry Human Resources Council. At that time we shared the report with all of the community members and council that were able to attend in person. This study developed a report which encompasses industries in all phases of the mining cycle: exploration, development, extraction, processing and reclamation along with other aspects that will be covered like the proposed localized mining specific data that will help address labour market issues that are being impacted by this very important industrial driver of our Northern economy. We need to fully understand the extent of the current and future needs of the industry and detailed mining specific data was not available at a district level. The development of a customized regional mining forecast will begin to address this gap.

The Kenora and Rainy River Districts are both seeing a large increase in the mining sector at all levels of exploration and mining. It is crucial at this time and we understand the significance of this sector to both of our regions as well as all of northern Ontario and are grateful for your contribution towards the study. The final report is also available on our web-site."

- Sonja Wainio, Northwest Training and Adjustment Board

# A Letter of Thanks

To the Atikokan Economic Development Corporation,

This letter is to acknowledge the services offered by the AEDC.

My first involvement was on behalf of Local Initiatives Funding, where a committee was set up to lobby the Ontario government to keep the Atikokan OPG plant from being mothballed. The successful applicant of that grant contracted me to produce a video that not only enabled me to work with a caliber of people in Atikokan who were very well informed, it also showcased my skill and knowledge base. The video was used as lobbying tool by the Township of Atikokan and the committee which formed to oppose the closing of the OPG plant.

From there, the AEDC once again, supported a larger project in the form of the development of a feature film based on the White Otter Castle. It is not unusual for a film project to take many years to get off the ground, but it is most worthwhile to point out that the AEDC was one of the first supporters at the table. This project is on-going, and that funding is still at the basis of this projects growth.

All staff at the AEDC is incredibly knowledgeable and helpful. Garry McKinnon has always provided me with valuable direction and advice. His understanding of all the financial funding bodies' requirements has saved me hours of research and prevented me from wasting time applying for grants that are not suitable.

As a small proprietorship, I've relied on his wealth of knowledge many times over the years. As well, Paula Sanders consistently brings a savvy, smart and intelligent insight to the discussion regarding any project ideas that I have brought forward. The team at the AEDC is immensely valuable.

Patricia Lambkin



Members of the Pictograph Art Gallery proudly show off the new signage purchased with funds from the Local Initiatives Program.

# Atikokan Bass Classic

A LOCAL SUCCESS STORY, CELEBRATING 25 YEARS



Photos by Jessica Bjorkman and Caylie Anderson, courtesy ABC

Without the AEDC's helping and guiding hand, the Atikokan Bass Classic would still be a rinky dink bass tournament. With your help the tournament:

- Injects over \$1,000,000 every year into the local economy
- Promotes the supreme fishing opportunities to be had in our area throughout North America via Outdoors in the Heartland's popular television and YouTube airings
- Anchors a week-long Family Festival
- Employs two staff
- Attracts clients to stay at local outfitters during their August slow period
- and lots more.....as you already know.

Again, on behalf of the Atikokan Bass Classic, thanks.

Tight lines,  
Mike Sorenson



The Bass Classic event in Atikokan means increased traffic into our business. The organizers come to buy prizes, and the participants and visitors purchase gas and other in-store items. We appreciate the many hours that volunteers contribute for both the Bass Classic and Mudfling events as our business is busier than usual during those times.

**Voyageur Bait and Tackle**

Any activity that brings visitors into the community, and shoppers downtown is a good thing for local business. We are grateful to all the organizers that work so diligently on The Bass Classic and all of our other events. This provides dollars into our restaurants, hotels and stores which circulate within Atikokan.

**Voyageur Books and Gifts**

The Bass Classic is a great fund raiser for us to continue to support our charities in town, but more than that it is an opportunity for our little town to "show its stuff." Over the years we have heard out-of-towners say that this is the best organized, and most fun of all the fishing events held in N.W. Ontario. Kudos to those who spend hours upon hours making the "Bass Classic" the success it is. Best Wishes and thank you! **Atikokan Lions Club**

What does the Bass Classic mean to the business sector as a whole? I can tell you that the Bass Classic has a tremendous financial gain to our business. The Bass Classic runs for three days but we see business increases/benefits for 2 months prior to the event. This is seen through increased sales in gas, tackle, and confectionary goods. This increased traffic also ensures employment for students. The Classic is an Atikokan event that the whole community has embraced and has now turned into an Atikokan reunion. Not only ex-Atikokanites come back for the celebration, but the entire Northwestern region has that date highlighted on their calendar year. Thanks to the Bass Classic Committee, all the volunteers, the Town and the AEDC, Atikokan is once again on the map as the place to be. **Johnson's Esso**

# Local Initiatives Program Summary

## INVESTING IN COMMUNITY PROJECTS



The Local Initiatives (LIP) was funded by Industry Canada/Fednor for the purpose of supporting local economic community development projects that fit within the community's Strategic Plan; due to cuts in funding, the program was wrapped up in December 2012. We would like to recognize our LIP committee members who volunteered many hours throughout the year to review all of our funding submissions. Thank you to Mary Makarenko (Chair), Dave Homer, Shannon Riding, Marilyn Ricci, and Jan Lewis. We are pleased to report that \$74,992 of the allocated \$75,000 was invested into community projects. In all, more than \$630,000 was disbursed from 2001 to 2012. Last year, those dollars made the following possible:

\$	Atikokan Sportsmen's Conservation Club	\$5,000
	Upgrade fish hatchery and Little Falls area	
\$	Beaten Path Nordic Trail Committee	\$4,700
	Impact analysis study of BPNT on Atikokan	
\$	Beaten Path Nordic Trail Committee	\$10,000
	Installing bridge to connect municipal trails to TC Trails	
\$	Town of Atikokan Investment Readiness Committee	\$1,875
	Phase Two of GIS Project	
\$	Town of Atikokan Investment Readiness Committee	\$3,125
	Prospectus for Northdale & Eastdale sites	
\$	Town of Atikokan Investment Readiness Committee	\$1,875
	Residential Land Availability & Suitability Analysis	

"Without the LIP grants we would not been able to build our sun shelters which were used by our local residents and the picnic traveling public - plus we were able to employ two of our local men. Over the years the LIP has helped us many times and we greatly appreciated it."

**Mary Gonyou, Upsala Recreation Board**

"The Town of Atikokan applied for and received LIP funds through the Atikokan Economic Development office for the purchase of a tent. The process was fast and easy, and the staff at the AEDC were very helpful."

**Pat Halwachs, Town of Atikokan**

"We are thankful for the Path of the Paddle signs financed thru LIP. This project is providing Atikokan with incredible promotion and we expect to attract visitors from all across Canada. The signs will be situated in the downtown area, as we are hoping tourists will shop and dine during their visit. Thank you for helping us put Atikokan on the map!"

**Michelle Savoie, Path of the Paddle**

\$	Town of Atikokan Investment Readiness Committee	\$1,000
	Temporary Housing Study	
\$	Atikokan Sportsmen's Conservation Club	\$5,000
	Two promotional highway signs & Website webmaster	
\$	Town of Atikokan	\$10,000
	Purchase community tent	
\$	Upsala Recreation Board	\$5,000
	Sun Shelters	
\$	Atikokan Bass Classic	\$5,000
	Upgrade/enhance community storage truck	
\$	Northwest Training & Adjustment Board	\$5,000
	Labour Market report	
\$	Atikokan Chamber of Commerce	\$718
	Attend Fort Frances Trade Show	
\$	Pictograph Gallery	\$2,688
	Signage	
\$	Town of Atikokan	\$3,100
	Signage & Installation	

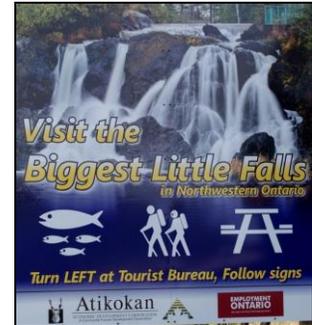
"LIP funding has made some great things happen this year for Beaten Path Nordic Trails, Atikokan's local cross country ski club. LIP funding allowed us to leverage an equal amount of funding for our Trails Development Project from the Trans Canada Trail Assoc. The combined funding allowed us to address several key safety issues in order to get the Atikokan section of the trail up and running with a temporary winter ice bridge. Retaining walls were built, culverts installed at the TCT/Hwy 11 intersection and safety signage purchased and installed. Since the trail was accessible from Atikokan this season, it received lots of use from skiers and snowshoers....the project was a huge success!

Additional LIP funding made it possible to hire Saulteaux Consulting to estimate our club's impact on the local economy. Over 150 people responded to the online survey and the results have proven to be surprising...in a good way! We plan to use the results and recommendations of the study to increase our economic impact in the future, and to work towards greater financial sustainability for our ski club."

**Lise Sorenson,  
Beaten Path Nordic Trails**

\$	Atikokan Chamber of Commerce	\$1,600
	Atikokan Merchants go Christmas Crackers	
\$	Atikokan Chamber of Commerce	\$1,200
	Atikokan Tourist Bureau Display case	
\$	Atikokan Chamber of Commerce	\$4,997
	Atikokan Media Stock Photo Project	
\$	Atikokan Chamber of Commerce	\$4,990
	The Atikokan Song	

“LIP funds have helped The Sportsmen’s Conservation Club in many ways during the past year. The grant has allowed us to turn Little Falls into a real tourism destination. We created 4 jobs for 20 weeks, and had many partners on this project.



We also received money to place professional signage on the highway promoting the attraction. Lastly, LIP resources went towards hiring a local business person and creating a website for our Club. It is a great promotional tool for our community, and we have already arranged a bus tour from the US because of it.”

John Charbonneau,  
Sportsmen’s Conservation Club

## Northern Communities Investment Readiness Program (NCIR)

With the assistance of the Northern Communities Investment Readiness Program (NCIR), The Town of Atikokan and the AEDC have worked jointly on many community initiatives. The goal is to obtain an understanding of what our community needs to be working on to be prepared, and attractive, for potential investors. Over the past 5 years, the committee has completed 15 various projects to gain the data that financiers require.

Last year, the committee hired consultants to complete the following:

**GIS Project, Phase 2:** In digital format, we now have access to the official plan and zoning maps. Municipal infrastructure has been included to view hydro poles, water, sewer, fire hydrants, etc. online. This information helps for community planning and to streamline administrative requirements for building permits. All users can now find accurate data quickly on the Town of Atikokan website ([www.atikokan.ca](http://www.atikokan.ca)).

**Temporary Accommodations Study:** This report quantifies the existing temporary accommodations, identifies potential expansion plans, and assesses current and future needs for temporary housing. The analysis has identified the demand for temporary accommodations in 2013 to include a potential of 350 construction workers seeking housing.

Inventory of existing accommodations include 409 year round beds with an additional 529 beds available during the summer months (total 938 beds). When the Osisko construction begins (projected for 2014) the demand will increase by (up to) another 1,200 workers. The study also included recommendations to help alleviate potential housing shortages.

**Residential Development Analysis:** Findings contain key information including vacant lots within the Town of Atikokan, larger areas with infill opportunities, and potential for the Northdale and Eastdale subdivisions. Current development projects within the Atikokan area have the potential of creating 800 new permanent jobs. The committee is being pro-active by preparing for this expected population growth and determining a reasonable supply of housing that is able to accommodate a broad range of income levels. A total of 158 vacant single dwelling lots have been identified throughout the Town. It is projected that approximately 70% (112 lots) can meet single dwelling residential potential. Another 31 larger vacant lots were identified. These lots could accommodate multi-residential units. Projections are that 55% (17 lots) would meet this requirement. The Town of Atikokan also has infill opportunities that could host an additional 90 lots. Northdale and Eastdale subdivisions can host an approximate total of 532 lots.

To receive a copy of any of these reports for more information, please contact the AEDC Office.

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## Workshops & Seminars



The AEDC and the Atikokan Employment Centre are committed to offering ongoing education for our clients and residents within the communities we serve. We encourage suggestions from you if there are topics of interest that you would like to know more about. Last year, we hosted information seminars on the following:

- ❖ Information for Trade Show Exhibitors
- ❖ Self-Employment Benefit Workshops
- ❖ Resume Writing Workshop
- ❖ Cover Letter Writing Workshop
- ❖ Emergency First Aid Training
- ❖ Fall Prevention & Aerial Boom Platform Training
- ❖ Aboriginal Cultural Sensitivity Workshop
- ❖ Interviews: Your Key to Employment
- ❖ Marketing 101
- ❖ WHMIS Certification
- ❖ Service Excellent Training
- ❖ E-Mail Creation Seminar
- ❖ Lockout/Tagout Courses
- ❖ Smart Serve Certification
- ❖ Traffic Control Training
- ❖ CEDC Mining Presentation
- ❖ Exporting Workshop

# Videoconference Training

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In 2012, the AEDC continued to offer a rich selection of videoconference-based workshops and seminars through the Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre (CMBSC). A number of new and existing entrepreneurs took advantage of these low-cost, subject-focused courses, and had nothing but praises for their efficiency and professionalism. Many of these courses were well-attended and included participants from all over northwestern Ontario; CMBSC's selection is now almost at the point of offering daily courses on a year-round basis. A special thanks to the CMBSC for their continued efforts in providing this vital educational tool.

Some seminars attended by clients through the CMBSC in 2012 included:

- ❖ Canada Revenue Agency – Payroll Info.
- ❖ Canada Revenue Agency – T4 Prep.
- ❖ Effective Employee Orientation
- ❖ Survey Design for Customer Research
- ❖ Start a Non-Profit
- ❖ Understanding Financial Statements
- ❖ Microsoft Office 2003 Training
- ❖ Selling & Negotiating
- ❖ Having A Competitive Advantage
- ❖ Common Business Mistakes
- ❖ Intro to Pricing & Costing
- ❖ Developing Proposals
- ❖ Interviewing Skills
- ❖ How to Buy A Business
- ❖ Understanding Search Engines
- ❖ Advertising & Promotion
- ❖ Marketing Basics
- ❖ Savvy Sales Strategies, 4 parts
- ❖ IP - What's In It for You?
- ❖ Your Small Business Website
- ❖ Business Opportunities & Ideas
- ❖ Performance Management
- ❖ CRA Small Business Tax
- ❖ Workshop Capital
- ❖ GST Information Workshop
- ❖ Embracing Diversity at Work
- ❖ Elements of Customer Service
- ❖ Employee Relations
- ❖ Marketing Cluster, 4 parts
- ❖ Your Business Plan
- ❖ Recruitment & Selection
- ❖ Knowledge Building, 4 parts
- ❖ Dynamic Sales Presentations
- ❖ How To Brand A Small Business
- ❖ Developing Marketing Plans
- ❖ Marketing Research
- ❖ Selling To Canada Government
- ❖ Business Opportunities & Ideas
- ❖ Financial Analysis
- ❖ How To Write for the Web

# Meet the AEDC Staff

## Executive Director

*General management responsibilities including personnel, financial planning and management, business planning, government relations, technical and advisory services to businesses and organizations.*

**Garry McKinnon**

## Senior Community Development Advisor

*Business planning and advice, self-employment consulting, marketing and promotion, liaison with community groups and organizations.*

**Paula Sanders**

## Community Development Advisor

*Business planning and advice, loan compliance, self-employment counseling, liaison with community groups and organizations.*

**Gord Knowles**

## Office Administrator

*Contract administration, financial recordkeeping, loans administration, benefits administration, official minutes of board and committee meetings.*

**Annette Bryk**

## Administrative Assistant

*Reception and customer relations, banking, correspondence, recordkeeping, community information.*

**Brigitte Tribe**



## Atikokan Employment Program Manager

*Employment program development, employment counseling and community outreach.*

**Lisa Marusyk**

## Atikokan Employment Centre Case Manager

*Employment Centre client file management, resume and cover letter assistance, data management.*

**Sue Bates**

## Atikokan Employment Centre Employment Resource Worker

*Employment Centre reception, maintain jobs board, assist with job searches.*

**Cindy Simard**

## Chamber of Commerce Executive Director

*(the AEDC contributes towards the wages for the position)*

*Relief reception, monthly community calendar, assistance with AEDC events, business relations.*

**Jolene Wood**

# Looking Ahead

## OUR PRIORITIES FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR...

The area served by the Atikokan Economic Development Corporation is going through a time of transition. In the fullness of time, this transition may turn out to be of monumental magnitude. Growth in mineral development, forest products, energy and tourism sectors are all expected in the short-term.

Projected activities for the future are based on the recommendations in the corporate strategic plan, a review of historical activity levels, and a scan of anticipated activities and events in the region. It reflects an ambitious, yet achievable level of activity for a CF of this size.

The greatest challenge for the AEDC continues to be the development of a strong working relationship with our first nations. With the appointment of a board member from Seine River First Nation, we are hopeful that they can assist us with our outreach. Our goal is to develop a strategy and menu of activities to assist in developing long-term relationships.

Atikokan, in particular, will face a capacity challenge in the very near future. The AEDC will work with the Town of Atikokan to address these challenges, as required.

Concurrent with these activities, the AEDC will continue to assist groups and organizations working on such diverse projects as seniors' apartments, a new recreation and wellness centre, power and water for a community campground, and anti-bullying campaigns.

Above all, the AEDC will continue to be "Working in partnership with the people of Atikokan and the surrounding areas, to generate and maintain permanent employment through the creation and support of self-employment initiatives and economic-based community projects."

## Reaching the AEDC

COMMENTS? SUGGESTIONS? IDEAS?  
HERE'S HOW TO GET A HOLD OF US



(807) 597-2757  
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