

2009 Annual Report

Atikokan Economic Development Corporation



FedNor's Louise Paquette and Carmen DeMarco, with Garry McKinnon and Dave Elder (August 12/2009)



Atikokan

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
A Community Futures Development Corporation

April 28, 2010

2009 was an exciting year for the Atikokan Economic Development Corporation.

We have been trying to find a suitable location with improved accessibility and visibility for several years. The departure of a tenant at 214 Main Street West afforded us the opportunity to address those challenges and on June 1st we were open for business at the new location. Our freshly renovated offices included a board room and training room with outside access and equipped with videoconferencing. We were also able to integrate our Employment Centre to take advantage of the synergies co-location represents. It was indeed a pleasure to co-host the AEDC Grand Opening with Madame Louise Paquette, Director General of the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario (FedNOR).

Our organization welcomed some new faces to permanent positions and although it is always difficult to say goodbye to long serving personnel, it is also refreshing to welcome new ideas and approaches which come with new people. The AEDC is committed to ensuring our new staff gets the training necessary to ensure they continue our high standard of service.

Increased activity and interest in the area of mineral development was a welcomed change from the unfortunate circumstances of the forest sector. Employment in prospecting and exploration helped a great deal. The promise of great things to come in the development of mines and mineral processing is cause for optimism, if not celebration. Our office is committed to working with these companies to assist in any way we can.

Although the forest sector is generally very depressed, Atikokan has been fortunate to attract the attention of a group of investors who purchased the assets of Proboard Ltd. and established Atikokan Renewable Fuels (ARF). In addition, the Province of Ontario has committed to converting the Atikokan Generating Station (AGS) to biomass fuel. The completion of the conversion of ARF and AGS should result in increased wood harvesting and transportation activity in addition to creating new manufacturing jobs at the pellet plant and preserving jobs at the generating station.

Thank you to all the volunteers that have helped make 2009 another good year for the AEDC.

Sincerely,

Dave Elder,
Chair,
Atikokan Economic Development Corporation
Board of Directors





Town of Atikokan

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Thank You from the Mayor

On behalf of my colleagues on Atikokan Town Council I would like to thank the Atikokan Economic Development Corporation Board and staff for the support you provide in all community development and economic development initiatives that benefit the citizens of Atikokan.

The support of the Local Initiatives fund contributions is critical to the success of our many local organizations. Those organizations also rely on the Atikokan Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) for support and advice and benefit greatly from access to facilities and equipment that the AEDC willingly makes available.

The leadership that the AEDC is providing in the mining sector to assist in making a new mine(s) to become a reality in our community is very much appreciated as well.

The Atikokan Employment Centre which is administered by the AEDC is also an essential service to the workers and their families 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

NEW LOCATION FOR AEDC OFFICES

We opened the doors at our new location (214 Main Street West) on June 1, 2009. We are thrilled with the additional space and improved access for our clients. It is extremely advantageous for us to be located in the same building with the Atikokan Employment Centre. We are particularly proud of our videoconference equipment, which is state-of-the-art, available to the public, and is being well utilized.

Right: AEDC Chair Dave Elder is presented the ceremonial key by Louise Paquette, Director General of FedNOR.



ATIKOKAN LABOUR ADJUSTMENT ACTION CENTRE

In the fall of 2007, the closure of two manufacturing plants (Atikokan Forest Products and Fibratex) put approximately 300 people out of work indefinitely.

To assist the affected workers, the Ministry of Training Colleges and University signed an agreement with the AEDC to open a temporary Labour Adjustment Action Centre. Open to the community from March 2008 until November 2009, it was staffed by two full-time contract employees and a varying number of part-time peer helpers. Goals and direction for the Centre and its services were established and monitored by an Adjustment Committee (which included representatives from the AEDC).

"In response to mass lay-offs that took place in 2007, the Atikokan Economic Development Corp signed a contract with the Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities to open a temporary Labour Adjustment Action Centre in an effort to assist the affected workers and their families. The services provided by the Centre were available to from March 2008 to November 2009.

The AEDC held responsibility for the financial administration of the contract and played an instrumental role in the operation of the Centre by providing valuable support and guidance to the Action Centre Staff, Committee and Chair. Financial contributions from the AEDC included \$5000 from the Local Initiatives Fund to host H2S Alive and Emergency 1st Aid training. Additional contributions included use of office furniture and equipment, temporary office space, internet and access to meeting rooms."

- Lisa Belanger, Labour Adjustment Action Centre Coordinator

Although the economic crisis within Atikokan continues, reality dictates that the Action Centre can only have a limited life and funding. During the final six months of operation, the Action Centre Committee and staff focused primarily on identifying and addressing gaps in services. Long-term solutions have been identified and documented in a report and a transitional committee has been formed to help move the process forward.

The committee expects that a Community Information and Referral Service will open its doors in the spring of 2010.

ATIKOKAN RENEWABLE FUELS (ARF)

Yes, this project is delayed somewhat but the owners are not concerned. They stated from the beginning that they wanted to do it right, not first.

The large equipment (formerly Fibratech) has been sold and removed. The project leader was extremely pleased with the quality of hard work done by the local Atikokan crew. The equipment buyers stated that this was the smoothest equipment removal project that they had been on in the world, and the worker co-operation and skill was outstanding. This major task was accomplished in the safest manner and totally incident free.

ARF is currently deeply involved in engineering the plant and developing construction drawings. The environmental engineering has made some major design changes and added costs to the project due to new regulations. The wood yard has been prepared for receipt of fibre (also via local workers). A contract has been negotiated for total wood handling and processing.

The recent announcement of requests for pricing of wood pellets at the Atikokan Generating Station is a great opportunity for ARF, but product is not required until 2012. In the meantime, ARF is working with an Atikokan business searching for national and export pellet customers.

The OPG timeline and the MNDMF forest allocation process which closes March 31, 2010 are the biggest factors in the construction schedule. A firm forest allocation is needed to know which species and quantity of trees will be processed. These trees are inventory in the eyes of the financial institution and the guaranteed supply needs to be in place to keep progress in the right direction. The project will see a considerable increase in size with the addition of a planned biomass powered co-generation facility on the ARF site. This co-gen unit will enable ARF to use 100% of the tree, as all unused limbs, bark and trimmings will be used as fuel for the co-gen unit. This facility will require the hiring of an additional 8 people per shift. An official announcement about this co-gen facility will be made after ARF is aware of the forest the MNDMF is allocating for their use.

It is also very exciting that Lakehead University recently announced that they will be working with ARF in a research project on developing higher grade biomass pellets. Dr. Mathew Leitch will be leading this project to help the development of the wood pellet and make northwestern Ontario the leader in biomass fuels.

MINING AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT

Two very hot prospects are on the horizon in the area of mining and mineral development. Bending Lake Iron Ore has been successful in securing a financing commitment for the first rotary hearth pig iron mills they have planned for a brownfield site in Atikokan. Brett Resources is moving ever closer to the development on a gold mine at the Hammond Reef property on Sawbill Bay. Each of these projects has the potential of incredible impact for the region; the notion of both proceeding is monumental.

AD HOC ENERGY COMMITTEE

The Mayor's Ad Hoc Committee on energy research continued to advocate for and monitor some significant research initiatives during 2009. The partnership with Ministry of Energy, OPG and OCE (Ontario Centres of Excellence in Energy) provided for overview for a number of research projects. These research projects involved Lakehead University, Confederation College, University of Toronto, McMaster University, University of Western Ontario and Queen's University. Lakehead University was involved with three of the six main projects. Total funding contribution by the Ontario Government has been \$4.0M, with another \$4.5M contributed by various partners.

While the emphasis to date has been on research to enhance the continued operations at the Atikokan OPG facility, other significant results have emerged. This will lead to an opportunity for Atikokan:

1. To become a research centre in developing and commercializing operating best practices and techniques in energy production, both large and small scale;
2. The development of common standards and practices for wood pellet production;
3. The development for new forestry harvesting techniques and new commercial products related to forestry.

The Committee will continue working with other partners such as the Centre for Research and Innovation in the Bio-Economy (CRIBE), and Industry Canada.

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT READINESS PROJECTS

A committee of AEDC/Council has been established to work on three different projects (funded by the Ministry of Northern Development & Mines) which will provide us with information that will facilitate investment to Atikokan:

1. **Asset Inventory** (identify available land; prepare development strategy)
2. **Labour Market Study** (data about our labour force; identify trends and priorities)
3. **Gap Analysis** (products/services currently available, suggest opportunities for expansion and diversification)

We anticipate all of these reports in early 2010, accompanied by presentations from the consultants, and will then be developing an implementation strategy.

DID YOU KNOW?

"On average, for every \$1 of lending through the Community Futures Program, another \$1.65 was raised via owner's equity and third-party funding."

Source: "An Economic Impact Analysis of the Community Futures Lending Program on Ontario's Economy"

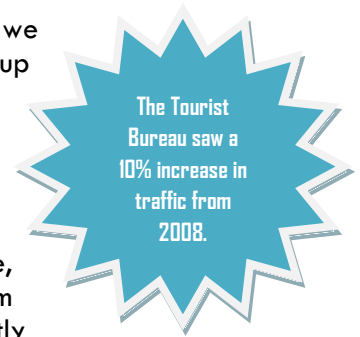
We're hangin' in there.

I guess that's the best way to sum up 2009-10 from a Chamber perspective.

That's understandable in this small community hit hard by the downturn in the forest industry, on top of twenty-five years of smaller declines. We need some growth - we all know it. We're reasonably confident we'll finally get that growth over the next few years.

Our membership stands at 68, roughly the same as 2008-09. Our membership fees remain the lowest in the region, and among the lowest in the province.

Our biggest activity as an organization is operating the tourist bureau, which we are able to do thanks to a partnership with the Town. In 2009 visitation was up noticeably, as over 2,600 people signed in there between Victoria Day and Labour Day - a 10 percent increase over 2008. Interestingly, almost all of the increase was in American visitors.



Our manager Jolene Wood did a great job organizing our student workers. And our volunteers did yeoman service - let me salute Pat and Cliff Ducharme, Gary Parker, Ginny Leif, Marie Warren, and Jack Switzer - sadly, we lost him this year. He contributed so much to this community over the years; he is greatly missed.

One of the highlights in 2009 was getting the tourist bureau Internet-connected. That allowed us to work right out of the Tourist Bureau when coverage was needed, and allowed our students to get more involved in Chamber projects.

This year, we are planning to add a fourth student to the payroll, and to make the Tourist Bureau area wi-fi accessible. You'll be able to connect to the Internet or use your Blackberry 24/7 right from the parking lot, come May.

After a disappointing turn-out of vendors at the 2009 Trade Show - there were similar events going on in Kenora and Fort Frances - we and our Trade Show partners, the Lions Club, have decided to move the 2010 Trade Show to September. That's right - this is the official announcement that the 2010 Atikokan Trade Show will be September 17-18, at Little Falls.

The move will change the show considerably. We hope to attract more big ticket vendors, more home-based businesses and artisans, and, in partnership with the Centennial Museum, revive the home-making and horticultural show. It'll be the place to be on September 17-18.

"Thanks to local initiatives, we are in the process of overhauling the Chamber website. The new version should go live during [2010], and be far more attractive for potential visitors to the community.

None of [this] would have been possible without our partnership with the AEDC. It provides low-cost office space, helps us employ our manager, and continues to be a big supporter of the Chamber and our programs."

**- Mike McKinnon, chair
Atikokan Chamber of Commerce**

One of the reasons for the date change was money. We didn't make enough at the 2009 Trade Show, and that's the main reason our 2009 finances look so shabby. The loss we sustained for the year has pretty much used up all of our reserves. We even had to lay off our manager for several weeks in January. We're working to get that turned around.

Our manager, Jolene, in her second year in the post, is now able to bring experience to her work - it makes a great combination with the initiative and determination she consistently shows. We're lucky to have her!

I want to thank my fellow board members for their commitment in 2009-10: vice-chair Val Fraser, treasurer Maureen James, Fred Colvin, Ed Enge, Sandra Gauthier-Poelman, Kim Cross, Tracy Brown and Councillor Mary Makarenko. A special thanks, too, to past-president Judi Simmons; after 15 years on the Chamber board she's moved on to Dryden. Finally, none of this would have been accomplished without you, our members.

The Atikokan Trade Show


September
17 & 18, 2010

Being part of the Chamber is one of the best ways for a business to give back to the community it serves. And we are stronger as businesses, and as a business community, when we work together and support one another.

AEDC WEBSITE

The AEDC was one of the first CFDCs in Ontario to have a website.

In October 2009, www.atikokaninfo.com was upgraded to a private hosting server. There are a number of reasons for this move, one of which was the fact that the site was experiencing far too much traffic for a traditional shared hosting environment to handle. After the move, the site saw loading times decreased by more than 50%. There were also numerous improvements made to the architecture of the site which increased its presence on all major search engines.



OUR WEBSITE IS
RECEIVING
ABOUT 450
VIEWERS/DAY
ON AN ONGOING
BASIS

The highest concentration of site viewers came from Canada, United States, Germany, United Kingdom, India, Australia, Ireland, China, Philippines, and the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. Within Canada, atikokaninfo.com received viewers from 346 different cities.

OUR SERVICE AREA

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

AEDC's COMMITMENTS SHINE BEYOND ATIKOKAN

"We would like to thank the LIP committee for supporting projects in our area. The curling rocks for the kids have been ordered, and we will be purchasing brooms. The septic tank has been installed for the sanitation station at Inwood Park, and the building is being built off-site in a prefab manner. Thank you once again for your continued support in our town."

- Jennifer Gonyou, Director
Local Services/Upsala Recreation Board

LOCAL LOAN DISBURSEMENT

SELF-EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS, LOANS & THE COMMUNITY

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

- ❖ Providing financial support;
- ❖ 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 AEDC have been extremely helpful to us with assistance, support and advice, not only when we were purchasing our business but also a year later when we needed some assistance. The staff is always very warm and friendly and they make you feel like family."

- Carrie Zacharias, owner
Carrie's Corner

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

SELF-EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

SECTOR	YEAR ENDED DEC. 31/09	SINCE INCEPTION
Hospitality	0	6
Service	4	54
Tourism	0	6
Aquaculture	0	2
Manufacturing	1	10
Transportation	1	6
Retail	0	20
Forestry	0	6
TOTAL	6	110

BUSINESSES & JOBS CREATED/MAINTAINED

YEAR	BUSINESSES STARTED	BUSINESSES MAINTAINED	JOBS CREATED	JOBS MAINTAINED
2004	6	29	148	203
2005	2	20	8	191
2006	8	31	139	293
2007	8	11	19	43
2008	15	12	21	82
2009	3	12	4	42
TOTAL	42	115	339	854

FROM A FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVE...

During 2009, our office disbursed new investment funds of \$489,489 towards new loans. In total, 16 loans were refinanced, amalgamated and/or disbursed.

"The AEDC has provided me with guidance, excellent advice, and financial support. I don't know what I would do without their office."

**- Pat Winters
PJ's Pizza & Pasta**

Seven Community Futures Development Corporations within northwestern Ontario have formed a corporate pool for dispensing larger loans. Atikokan currently has 13 of these regional investments totaling \$699,282 in that portfolio. This partnership allows the AEDC to consider investments in excess of \$150,000 by sharing the risk with six other partners (up to a maximum loan of \$500,000).

Combined,
that's more
than a million
dollars
injected into
northwestern
Ontario's
economy

YEAR	LOANS ISSUED	LOAN AMOUNT	REPAYMENTS	PORTFOLIO BALANCE
2007	28	\$713,394	\$446,325	\$3,603,534
2008	24	\$802,530	\$493,915	\$4,385,956
2009	16	\$489,489	\$329,159	\$4,315,278

INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO ACTIVITY

SECTOR	AMOUNT OF LOANS ISSUED IN 2009	CURRENT # OF LOANS IN PORTFOLIO	CURRENT AMOUNT OF LOANS
Hospitality	0	10	\$649,077
Agriculture	\$35,000	1	\$35,000
Mining	0	1	\$100,195
Service	\$86,833	21	\$670,202
Tourism	\$58,605	10	\$582,153
Manufacturing	\$67,000	9	\$577,202
Transportation	\$62,000	10	\$455,258
Retail	\$18,051	13	\$649,042
Forestry	\$152,000	13	\$544,649
Research/Development	\$10,000	1	\$62,500
TOTAL	\$489,489	89	\$4,315,278

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

We gratefully acknowledge the following for the many volunteer hours throughout the year that they contribute: Dr. Ken Sawchuk (Chair), Elizabeth MacKay, Robin Johnson, Cecil Leif, Tami Stinson and Elvin Rydberg.

As in past years, the 2009 Atikokan Bass Classic benefited greatly by the services provided by the Atikokan Economic Development Corporation. We were granted a \$5,000 Local Initiative Project (LIP) grant to purchase a 20'x40' tent to provide shelter for the portable kitchen. The Atikokan Bass Classic has to raise about \$26,000 a year in cash sponsorship to deliver the week long fishing festival - that's a relatively small amount of money considering we generate over \$1,000,000 worth of economic activity to the benefit of our great little town (as estimated by the AEDC). Last year, the AEDC aided this fiscal injection by very kindly providing us with free office space, office supplies, internet and photocopying. The six weeks prior the tournament, we were allowed to 'commandeer' the AEDC Meeting Room and turn it into a welcoming place to 'meet and greet' the competitors, a shop to sell maps and merchandise from and a volunteer recruitment and registration centre. Every year we need to borrow \$10,000 from the AEDC to purchase the needed supplies to operate our beer gardens. We make about \$11,000 a year on these gardens, so its success is important to the success of the tournament. We so appreciate the unblinking support Mr. McKinnon provides every year when he endorses that cheque. Once when asked why, Garry said, "are you kidding - you guys always pay us back". The most important support the AEDC provides the ABC is mentorship and courageous support. The staff does their utmost to guide us through.

- Mike Sorenson, Atikokan Bass Classic

Self-Employment Benefit Successes

WELCOME TO OUR BUSINESS COMMUNITY!

We are proud to have worked with the following SEB clients who have opened their doors for business this year:

"The AEDC has been instrumental in achieving my goals of becoming an independent contractor as well as lots of help with the paper work and encouragement."

- **Tim DeGagne (T. DeGagne Trucking)**

KLEEN LINE PAINTING

Brad Boutilier



"We are thankful for the opportunity to have had the support of the AEDC in developing our business plan and participating in the S.E.B. Program. We utilized their reference library for research, and attended various seminars that allowed us to obtain information needed for the opening of our business. We found everyone so helpful and pleasant. We want to thank the AEDC staff for their support in the process. We are looking forward to attending more seminars being offered by the AEDC as we know that they will be beneficial in our development as new business owners."

- **Annette Tanner and Mike Zwicker
(Maid-2-Order Cleaning)**

"The AEDC helped with knowledgeable advice and built my confidence on starting a new business. Without the SEB program, I probably wouldn't have started a business at all. I heard about the program from an individual who had participated in it previously, and highly recommended it. Thanks to the AEDC and [its] staff."

- **Chris Campbell
(Northwest Construction)**

Atikokan Employment Centre

ANNUAL REPORT

This year brought about a great deal of activity within the office. With the announcement of Second Career Funding, clients were in exploring options available to them. The province saw a huge uptake on this program, which resulted in the cut-off of all funding in October. This was the first time in years funding re-employment programs had been eliminated indefinitely. This posed many challenges for our clients in terms of what alternate options would be available.

Participation of our Employment Ontario programs has even surpassed previous years. Last year we assisted clients in the negotiation of over \$112,000 in funds from the Ontario Skills Development Program, \$476,000 in funds from the Ontario Second Career Strategy, and \$40,000 in funds from the Ontario Targeted Wage Subsidy Program, which in turn created three full-time jobs within the community and assisted local groups in securing project money through the Job Creation Partnership to undertake a variety of special projects. In addition to assisting these local groups we also assisted over 20 residents to apply to these positions, which resulted in employment and skill building opportunities for 12 people.

Additional activities undertaken by the Employment Centre in 2009 included the continued participation on the Atikokan Labour Adjustment Action Centre Committee, to assist workers adjust to their new circumstances, free WHMIS training to over 100 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 also planned and coordinated the newly expanded Atikokan Career & Job Fair 2009, which saw more than 200 people come through the door for assistance.

We have also partnered 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 came to our community monthly to provide services to the community; this has been well-received and continues to be an in-demand service.

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

Local Initiatives Program Summary

INVESTING IN COMMUNITY PROJECTS



The Local Initiatives (LIP) is funded by Industry Canada/Fednor for the purpose of supporting local economic community development projects that fit within the community's Strategic Plan. We would like to recognize our LIP committee members (three from the AEDC Board, and two members from the community-at-large) who volunteer many hours throughout the year to review all of our funding submissions. Thank you to Mary Makarenko (Chair), Dave Homer, Shannon Riding (Upsala representative), Sally Burns, and Jan Lewis. Last year, those dollars made the following possible:

\$	Atikokan Labour Action Centre	\$5,000
	Offer safety training to unemployed residents	
\$	Transcription Services Feasibility Committee	\$5,000
	Conduct sector-based opportunity feasibility study	
\$	Atikokan Literacy Inc.	\$3009.95
	Promotion and marketing	
\$	Atikokan Renewal Committee	\$5,000
	Manufacture canoe-shaped garbage cans for community	
\$	Atikokan Bass Classic Committee	\$5,000
	Tent to house portable kitchen	
\$	Perch Lake Bass Challenge Committee	\$5,000
	Advertisement & event equipment purchase	

"With the LIP funding that we received from the AEDC we were able to raise awareness of the scope of our services with an updated website, updated signage with new name and logo and a portable, professional looking banner for public events off site. As a result, we have an updated and more attractive image that has, and is, raising awareness of our facility in the community."

**- Becky Groulx
Atikokan Literacy Inc.**

"Thank you AEDC for all the help in making the Perch Lake Bass Challenge the event it has turned out to be. Without the \$5K grant we would not have the top of the line equipment to make this a top of the line event. There has been such great feedback that we now have a lengthy waiting list for anglers. We are getting many people from outside Atikokan e-mailing wanting in for future years. I also found the staff excellent to deal with. All of them were very helpful and always a pleasure to talk to."

**- John Homer, President
Perch Lake Bass Challenge**

\$	Bow to Stern Association	\$4,250
	Website design, banner stands, and sandwich boards	
\$	NWO Tourism Association / Kenora District T.A.	\$2,500
	Organize a Sunset Country marketing forum	
\$	Sno-Ho Club	\$2,887
	Website re-development	
\$	Atikokan High School Reunion Committee	\$1,000
	Host an AHS reunion during the Atikokan Bass Classic	
\$	Friends of Quetico Park	\$5,000
	Website, e-commerce training, office equipment	
\$	Atikokan Economic Development Centre	\$5,000
	Produce an education/promotional community brochure	
\$	Atikokan Native Friendship Centre	\$3,840
	Widely promote Atikokan Bass Classic event	
\$	Centennial Triple P Planning Committee	\$1,000
	Non-competitive triathlon	
\$	AEDC / Regional CFDs	\$750
	Attend nine-day trade show to promote local entrepreneurs	

"The LIP funds allowed us to redevelop our website. We're very excited about this because of the tourism and volunteer potential. We now offer up to date information, maps and videos are accessible, as well as business links."

**- Kim Cross, Past President
Sno-Ho Club**



"People loved the Triple-P (Paddle, Pedal, Pound) event, and we're hoping to make it annual. It's a fun, non-competitive triathlon that attracted 60 participants last year; 21 from out of town. The money we received from LIP paid for course set-up, advertising and insurance costs."

**- Julie Slack
Triple P Organizer**



LOCAL INITIATIVE PROJECTS IN ACTION



The Youth Initiative's property, before and after construction.



"The Youth Centre is a positive demonstration of faith in our community. We were granted LIP funds to purchase siding for our new building. We hired local contractors to demolish and haul away the old building. At our peak, we had one supervisor and five full-time employees working. All supplies purchased to build the building have been made locally. We have accessed grant funding to hire a full time intern, and a part time employee."

**- Lorraine Gauthier Stromberg
Atikokan Youth Initiative**

\$	Atikokan Youth Initiative	\$4,500
\$	Purchase siding for the new Main St. location	
\$	Atikokan Economic Development Centre	\$1,663
\$	Hire a community asset inventory consultant	
\$	Masonic Hall	\$5,000
\$	Building upgrades and expansion	

\$	Atikokan Intergenerational Centre for Arts	\$800
	Purchase a second-hand pottery kiln	
\$	Upsala Local Services Board	\$3,800
	Curling equipment for children	
\$	Upsala Local Services Board	\$5,000
	Washrooms/sanitation station at Inwood Park	

"We have been the beneficiary of a few grants from your organization over the past few years and in 2009 received funding that allowed us to purchase a kiln for our pottery studio. That particular piece of equipment allows us to deliver improved programs and services in the community. Community artists are indicating that it is more efficient and provides a higher capacity output for their product. We anticipate that additional craftspeople in town will be using it in the near future as the Centre plans to organize more pottery classes soon. We are most appreciative of your support in regards to this purchase. We would also like to thank you for your past and continued support of our Arts Centre. Over the years we have benefited greatly in having your organization as one of our contributors and as a partner in the community."

**- Joseph Fredrich
Chair - AICAA**

Local Initiatives working across Northwestern Ontario

"The North Western Ontario Tourism Association (NWOTA) and the Kenora District Camp Owners Association (KDCA), in partnership with Sunset Country Travel Association, and Patricia Region Tourist Council, were able to host Working Together, Succeeding Together - A Marketing Forum for Tourism in Sunset Country in September 2009, thanks to the generous support provided by the AEDC. This event offered attendees the opportunity to work together to attract customers, improve service to customers, and generate spinoff jobs that will benefit the entire region. The regional tourism industry is stronger as a result of the collective planning effort that included the thoughtful advice of AEDC board members and staff."

- Tannis Drysdale (KDCA/NWOTA)

Workshops & Seminars



The AEDC is 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:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ❖ E-Commerce | ❖ Value Added |
| ❖ Self Employment Assistance Program | ❖ How to Start a Small Business |
| ❖ How to Write a Business Plan | ❖ Customer Service |
| ❖ Understanding Why People Buy | ❖ Hearing Assistive Devices |
| ❖ Funders Forum | ❖ Protecting your Business |
| ❖ Patents & Copyright | ❖ Bookkeeping |
| ❖ Marketing on a Shoestring | ❖ Mining/Prospect announcement |
| ❖ Bending Lake Open House | ❖ Selling on E-Bay |
| ❖ Services for Business | ❖ Build a Business Website |
| ❖ RCMP Recruitment | ❖ Armed Forces Info. Session |
| ❖ Traffic Control Certificate Program | |

We are very proud to announce that as of November 2009 we are involved with the Manitoba Business Centre. This allows us to select from their menu of workshops/seminars and offer our chosen topics in the Board Room or Training Room. This initiative will clearly improve the competencies of our business community over time.

This is an example of the information sessions offered during a typical month:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| ❖ Introduction to Balance Sheets | ❖ Financial Statements |
| ❖ Positive Employee Relations | ❖ Management Tools |
| ❖ Pricing Through the Supply Chain | ❖ Branding Basics |
| ❖ Opportunities and Pitfalls of High Risk Capital | ❖ Business Plan Re-Boot |
| ❖ Developing a Policies and Procedures Manual | ❖ GST Information |
| ❖ CRA - Small Business Tax Information Workshop | ❖ Developing Proposals |
| ❖ Your Small Business Website: How to Write for the Web | |

Meet the AEDC Staff

Executive Director

Garry McKinnon

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

Senior Community Development Advisor

Paula Sanders

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

Community Development Advisor

Gord Knowles

Business planning and advice, loan compliance, self-employment counseling, community relations.

Office Administrator

Annette Bryk

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

Administrative Assistant

Brigitte Tribe

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



Atikokan Employment Centre Counselor

Lisa Marusyk

Employment counseling, return to work plans, advice on resume and cover letter writing.

Atikokan Employment Centre Employment Resource Worker

Sue Bates

Employment centre reception, maintain jobs board, assist with job searches.

Chamber of Commerce Office Manager

Jolene Wood

(the AEDC contributes towards the wages for the Office Manager position)

Relief reception, monthly community events calendar, assistance with AEDC events.

Looking Ahead

OUR PRIORITIES FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR...

INVESTMENT READINESS

In our continuing efforts to attract investors to our community, the AEDC (in conjunction with the Town of Atikokan) will have completed:

a) Community Asset Inventory

This comprehensive study will result in a print ready document that identifies Atikokans' assets and opportunities. The process will also identify some "best bets" options for Atikokan and highlight gaps/deficiencies. At the conclusion of this activity, we hope to have a template for a process that can be duplicated with other communities.



b) Labour Market Study

This report will provide a detailed profile of the workforce in terms of education, skills and abilities. It will include recommendations for future planning. We expect to have this information captured in digital format so we can include it on our website and transmit it electronically if requested.

c) Gap Analysis

This document will be the summary of three separate information/workshop sessions held to gather ideas and comments from the local business community. Products and services currently available in Atikokan will be identified, as well as suggestions to address gaps and priorities. Our goal is to facilitate local retailers to expand and diversify, and encourage new business start-ups.

The Investment Readiness Committee will explore these findings, and then develop and implement a strategy to continue progress in these areas.

WEBSITE ENHANCEMENT

Our site, www.atikokaninfo.com, had just under one million page views in 2009, and we expect to hit two million in 2010. We are planning for improvements to our website for next year.

Our www.atikokaninfo.com website will be moving from a shared server to one that is dedicated to our use. This change alone should dramatically increase load speed and reduce error messages. A complete review and update of content will be completed to ensure any out of date information is purged and to keep the content current. As investment readiness activities are completed, the resulting information will be included on our website. Probably the biggest challenge facing us from the perspective of website functionality is improving the interactivity of the site and ensuring a seamless flow to and from the Town of Atikokan website.

BUSINESS SECTOR SUPPORT

The AEDC will undertake to conduct greater statistical research and market intelligence in 2010. This will consist of data mining and trend analysis in an effort to identify emerging opportunities and trends. Our information will be shared with clients in hopes of encouraging investment.

TRAINING

We will continue to offer monthly videoconference seminars, as well as arrange guest speakers in our meeting rooms that deliver presentations on various business topics. Our objective is to offer high quality information workshops that are of interest to the merchants in our area.

Reaching the AEDC

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have suggestions or comments about our organization or our website, we encourage your feedback; please contact us.



By telephone: 807-597-2757 or
1-888-334-AEDC



By e-mail: atikokaninfo@atikokaninfo.com



In person: 214 Main Street West
(corner of Main/Marks St.)



By mail: P.O. Box 218
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