

Appendix:

Minutes and Reports of Groups.

DRAFT FIRST REPORT OF THE TOURISM GROUP - ATIKOKAN STRATEGIC PLAN

The following represents the results of discussions amongst the members of the tourism group attached to the Atikokan Strategic Plan exercise, and summarizes conclusions and recommendations arising from meetings held between May 11, 1993 and June 1, 1993.

GOAL

To identify ways to enhance existing tourism activities, promote and secure new tourism initiatives, and improve opportunities for capturing tourism revenues for Atikokan.

SUMMARY OF STRATEGIES

1. Build upon existing tourism activities within and surrounding Atikokan, to ensure, as a minimum, no net loss, while seizing opportunities to increase economic benefits within the constraints imposed by available resources.
2. Create and support new tourism initiatives representing underdeveloped or untapped sources of tourism revenue, which enhance Atikokan as a destination.
3. Address local attitudes concerning tourism which may limit Atikokan's ability to attract and secure tourism.
4. Establish and promote an identity for Atikokan which can be employed to attract tourism.
5. Manage tourism as an integral component of Atikokan's economic well-being which complements other economic activities.
6. The appearance of the entire community must be recognized and addressed as the most potentially attractive tourism feature, lest it become the most detrimental through apathy and neglect.
7. Tourism should be promoted as a year-round rather than a seasonal activity.
8. A co-ordinated approach is required between all tourism activities and events to ensure that conflicts are minimized and mutual benefits are maximized.
9. Small-scale initiatives should not be overlooked in importance in the face of more impressive proposals.
10. Available activities and current events should be advertised or displayed more effectively within Atikokan in a manner appropriate to the visitor, to ensure that their stay and economic benefits are maximized.

11. Maintain or enhance Atikokan's position as an integral part of district or regional tourism strategies and programs.

12. Attracting tourists to the Atikokan area should complement a more specific objective of attracting tourists to the town, thus increasing the economic gain to the community.

DETAILED STRATEGIES/IMPLEMENTATION

STRATEGY #1: Existing Tourism

Food Services:

Atikokan has an abundance of facilities supplying visitors and residents with food services. Few of these establishments offer a unique product or atmosphere, or apparently actively pursue visitor trade. Hours of business and services provided should cater to tourist's needs and wants. Visitors seem to demand **quality and service** for their dollar and therefore hospitality training for staff is critical to encourage visitors, establish a reputation, and attract repeat business.

Accommodation:

In order to attract visitor and keep them returning, first class accommodation is essential. As with food services, **quality** must be stressed over quantity. In addition, periodic problems with a lack of adequate capacity occur, especially during special events. Measures such as the creation of "bed and breakfast" establishments could address part of the latter problem without large capital investments dependent upon continuous use to amortize costs. Scheduling events to avoid "boom and bust" demand cycles would also help alleviate periodic problems and maximize utilization of current capacity.

Attractions:

a) Quetico Park:

The economic advantages to Atikokan of having a large wilderness park virtually on its doorstep are real and undeniable. The opportunities to capitalize on the attraction, in the instance of wilderness canoeists are, however, limited to a certain degree by park regulations. Park visitation is limited and closely controlled to avoid overcrowding by limiting the numbers of visitors passing through the designated entry points on a daily basis. Although the numbers may not be at capacity at all times, expanded numbers of visitors are nevertheless limited. The real potential for increased use would involve developing other types of wilderness recreation within the park which are not dependent upon canoeing. Such uses as hiking in the summer, and cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in the winter are currently not commonly promoted.

In the case of the Dawson Trail Campgrounds, there are opportunities for expanded use, since visitation is often below capacity. Some visitors, however, may seek other opportunities which allow greater freedom than the rules governing Dawson Trail would allow, for example, the use of power boats.

Atikokan enjoys economic advantages as an outfitting centre and provides other services and accommodation for parties entering and exiting the park interior. However, stays in Atikokan by such parties are limited to short durations at the beginning and end of trips, as a rule.

b) Snowmachine Trails/Events

Through the efforts of the members of the Atikokan SnoHo Snowmobile Club, the extensive snowmachine trail network in the Atikokan area continues to expand and improve. The linking of local trails with district and regional trail systems, including those in the United States, coupled with well-organized annual events, draws increasing numbers of winter visitors to Atikokan. The continued success of this enterprise requires and deserves the wholehearted support of the community, particularly since it attracts visitors at a time of year which traditionally has been slow for tourism.

c) Sports Days

The range of events associated with Sports Days continue to attract a variety of visitors to Atikokan. It is imperative that local support for these events be maintained and as many residents as possible involved in the myriad of tasks necessary to organize and carry them through. New events could be considered such as triathlon-type competitions involving running, biking, and canoeing, or kite flying competitions, especially to involve children.

d) Bunnell Park Campgrounds

The existing facilities at Bunnell Park meet the needs of many "social" campers visiting Atikokan, and groups such as baseball tournament participants who enjoy the social aspects afforded more than privacy and who may have a greater tolerance for boisterous late night activities. The park should continue to serve such purposes, and perhaps could even be expanded.

The current facilities are inadequate in several regards to serve the needs of types of campers other than those mentioned above. Visitors with pulled recreational trailers or motorized recreational vehicles require special facilities and campsites designed specifically to accommodate their vehicles. Pull-through campsites are a must. The use of this type of recreational vehicle can be expected to increase as our population ages, and they are a favourite of recently-retired couples in particular. These, as well as other campers, such as seniors or families with

children may prefer more privacy than currently available, and quieter evening activity. There is a need for a centrally-located and well-planned camping facility in proximity to town and services, which can provide for the aforementioned needs. Ideally it might allow patrons to walk or bike to services and attractions in town. Adequate campsite size, appropriate landscaping and design, water, sewer, and electrical hookups, and noise restrictions should be elements of such a facility.

e) Other attractions which should be promoted and supported include the Mining Theme Attraction, Turtle River-White Otter Park/Castle, Atikokan to Minaki Waterway, Elderhostel, the Museum, and others.

STRATEGY #2: New Tourism

New tourism initiatives should recognize the changing demographics of our society which in turn is reflected in the typical tourist, their needs and wants. Emerging trends indicate more seniors and more Asian and European visitors as a significant part of the potential market. This represents a significant change from the "traditional" market represented by relatively young, American males looking for hunting and fishing opportunities. While maintaining our ability to cater to the "traditional" tourist should not be disregarded, obviously the type of service and attraction required by the emerging market will be significantly different. Facilities, services, and attractions which cater to the needs of seniors are particularly important. Neither should opportunities to capture families with young children be overlooked. The market will be more diverse and those communities offering the greatest diversity will be most attractive to the largest number of visitors and therefore most successful.

Specific Initiatives

Recreational Vehicles:

Current facilities in Atikokan are not adequate to address the needs of visitors with recreational vehicles such as large trailers or motor homes. Camping sites should be available to accommodate these vehicles, with appropriate hook-ups for power and water, and grey water disposal. The number of these vehicles in use is high and likely to increase, and Bunnell Park currently does not meet their requirements. Preferably a site designed to accommodate these vehicles should be near or in the town, close to services and attractions. Bunnell Park could continue to serve those more interested in a basic camping service near town.

Hiking Trails:

A system of hiking trails could be developed to cater to those visitors seeking an alternative to a water-based wilderness

experience. Such trails could be linked potentially to trails within Quetico Park, to expand park useage beyond that currently possible as discussed earlier. Such trails could combine relatively long overnight hiking with shorter day-use opportunities close to Atikokan.

Trail Rides:

The availability of stables and horses/ponies offering trail riding locally may be a viable attraction, in association with suitable trail developement. The possibility of hay rides or sleigh rides could also form part of such an offering.

Kid's Park:

A playground/kid's park available to both residents and visitors alike could be created in an appropriate location such as the old pit on Mackenzie Avenue. Other possible locations would include the White Street park area and the Bunnell Park area.

Boat Tours:

In conjunction with the developement of the Atikokan to Minaki Waterway, boat tours could be offered up asnd down the Atikokan River, with perhaps a lunch stop at a downstream lodge prior to the return trip.

Village Market:

A Saturday morning market where local produce, crafts, and souvenirs could be available for sale to visitors would constitute an interesting attraction if properly presented. A location convenient to downtown could be selected, such as the old railway station. The possibility of local cottage industries developing with a venue for sales such as that described may be viable. Additionally, local craftspeople and artisans could actually be working on their arts and crafts during market hours, in appropriately-designed booths or stalls.

Racquet Centre:

Although used periodically through the spring summer and fall outside of the curling season for dances and other events, most of the time the Little Falls curling rink is unused. With a relatively modest capital cost and without necessarily causing conflicts with other uses, the facility could be converted for the summer months into a racquet centre for tennis, badminton, or even volleyball. Net posts could be devised to run on weighted trolleys for easy set-up and removal, courts could be partitioned using heavy fishing nets suspended from overhead tracks which could be drawn like curtains or pulled back out of the way, and court markings could be temporary in the form of heavy plastic tape. Such an arrangement could be employed to prevent conflicts with other uses or events since all features would be quickly and

easily removed and replaced, even on short notice. In addition to providing local residents with an additional recreational opportunity, visitors, such as campers at Dawson Trail, etc., would have an activity for rainy days. Courts could be booked or rented on an hourly basis and rental of equipment could also be offered. The facility would provide an opportunity for additional student summer employment as well as potential business for the dining lounge. A snack bar could also be incorporated.

Cottaging:

The demand for cottages locally is generally perceived to exceed the limited supply. Tourism arising from non-resident cottagers holds potentially great economic benefits arising from the range of goods and services that are required and possibly purchased locally. The length of stay may be longer as well, also contributing to the potential value added to the local economy. Expanded opportunities for cottaging therefore would be desirable.

The limited amount of patent property locally which is suited to cottaging is a limiting factor to expansion. Additionally, increasing restrictions on such developments of a legislative and administrative nature, limit new opportunities. One possible alternative which partially addresses the foregoing situation could be time-sharing, whereby several parties have joint ownership of a cottage and each uses it for a portion of the season. Given that many may only use their cottages a few weeks of the year, this option can be more cost effective for the individual, while ensuring more complete use of the property. The community could enjoy increased benefits since continued use by several parties could mean increased purchases of local goods and services. More people would be able to afford and enjoy cottaging with the least number of individual units required.

Another option is to increase the number and quality of rental or lease units available locally. Rather than the more traditional "row cabin" resort, the creation of cottages which are similar to private cabins, but which are intended specifically for rental might be viable.

Modifying existing resort facilities with rental units to cater to seniors specifically could offer opportunities. Quality must once again be stressed.

Yet another possibility would be quality travel trailer rentals coupled with established sites at various locations throughout the area. Development of the sites could involve less restriction and expense, since they do not involve permanent structures, and clients could choose from a variety of locations, even possibly moving from one to another periodically. For larger units moving and set-up could be offered.

Gateway:

A permanent gateway or arch could be created at an appropriate location at the entrance to town, which reflects the character of Atikokan and surrounding area. Such a structure could incorporate a number of functions, including the possibility of local service club logos, etc. Uniquely designed, such a structure would also offer tourists a photo opportunity.

Souvenirs:

Quality, unique souvenirs produced locally and which are a reflection of Atikokan may represent an untapped source of local revenue. Present offerings are often made elsewhere and, apart from an affixed "Atikokan" label, have little or nothing to do with the community itself. These are often generic "souvenirs" which are mass-produced and available across the region or province in more or less identical form. Our community has skilled craftspeople capable of producing a few quality items which the visitor can feel represents their visit more appropriately than some commercial product. Also needed would be a well-managed outlet and some sort of co-ordinated effort coupled with quality control.

Guest Guide:

Visitors, potential visitors, and even area residents must know what Atikokan has to offer the visitor. Thunder Bay has a guest guide which has proven very beneficial to the promotion of tourism in their area. Variations on this theme may be possible of more modest proportions to suit local needs. For example, a modest "Rainy Day Activity" guide could be produced and distributed to area resorts and Dawson Trail Campgrounds, informing visitors of activities that are available in Atikokan which would fill an otherwise dreary day camping, especially if they have children.

Promotion:

Although existing programs and means are used to promote area tourism, other means may be explored to advantage. Possibilities could include videos for use at shows and other venues; promoting "non-consumptive" uses of the areas natural resources, such as nature observation, photography, hiking, etc.; and pursuing all opportunities to attract television and other media coverage outside the area of local events, features, and attractions.

STRATEGY #3: Local Attitudes

Actions taken against visitors to our area, whether they be in the form of indifference, discourtesy, or more overt actions, harm the local residents eventually as much as the tourists, both financially and in terms of our image. It is not sufficient that a few people make extraordinary efforts to welcome visitors. Every resident of Atikokan should be an ambassador at home and

away for our community. A few bad apples, as the saying goes, can spoil all other efforts. A concerted effort to get this message home should be made.

Another area of local attitude which can have a significant detrimental effect in terms of visitors' perception is the wanton vandalism which all-too-frequently appears in our community. Great efforts on the part of many to improve the appearance of Atikokan can and have been summarily reduced to an unsightly mess by a few vandals who care little and do less. Tolerance for such behaviour should be virtually non-existent since it diminishes Atikokan not only as a place to visit, but a place to live. Again a concerted effort is required to attack and eliminate this problem.

STRATEGY #4: Local Identity

Symbol:

A distinctive symbol or logo with which visitors could identify Atikokan could be used in advertising, products, etc. The existing coat-of-arms is too complicated to be readily identifiable and really serves a separate purpose. The caribou logo which has enjoyed some limited use and which was created by the AEDC for general use should be considered since it is unique, distinctive, of professional quality, and reflects something associated with Atikokan.

Theme:

A theme or style which is reflective of the communities past and present could be developed to lend the town an identity for visitors. This could be reflected in architectural improvements or new construction relative to commercial enterprises, etc. In surveys visitors indicated that uniqueness rated high in their perceptions and added significantly to their enjoyment of visiting an area. People are looking for something different.

STRATEGY #5: Integration

Tourism must be promoted and managed locally as an integral part of the community's economic foundation. A concerted effort is required to get the message across locally that any actions which encourage or promote tourism benefit, directly or indirectly, everyone in Atikokan. Conversely, actions which discourage tourism cost everyone, directly or indirectly. The attitude that we don't need tourism is misguided. Atikokan needs every economic advantage it can get. If we cannot attract revenue from outside and bring it into our community, we are left to come up with it from within our own pockets, one way or another. The revenues flowing into Atikokan affect the taxes that we pay and the quality and quantity of services which local government can provide, which affects both businesses of all kinds and individuals alike.

A campaign to drive home the importance of tourism not only to Atikokan collectively, but to each of its residents individually should be considered initially as important as campaigns designed to attract visitors. The latter may be effective in getting them here, the former in keeping them coming back.

STRATEGY #6: Appearance

Entrance:

The entrance to the town is most tourist's first impression of Atikokan. The industrial motif currently presented by various establishments currently does not make a favourable impression. The work done by the Beautification Committee and other groups along the entrance is a step in the right direction, but obviously more is needed. Current bylaws need to be enforced. Screens such as fences, trees, etc. need to be placed to minimize negative visual impact and create a pleasing corridor where eyesores are not practically remedied. Derelict cars, trucks, and other equipment which may have some value to the owner might be relocated to a more obscure location for storage, and the township should work with those affected to select appropriate locations.

It should be stressed that Atikokan has really two entrances; one being Highway 11B, the other Highway 807. The possibility of attracting visitors through our "back door" should not be overlooked, and the same concerns over appearance need to be applied.

Town Proper:

The appearance of the town as a whole also creates an impression for tourists, either good or bad. Some residences could be improved by proper care and maintenance, and removal of junk and derelict vehicles. Civic projects might be initiated to encourage residents to take pride in their properties and their town. Again, enforcement of current bylaws would help, if coupled with other programs as mentioned. Programs designed to encourage clean-up of litter along streets are to be commended and should be more actively supported. We have the raw material to make our town an attractive place to live and visit, and we should not drop the ball.

A suggestion was made that perhaps shortfalls in public works funding could be addressed in part by initiating a program of work in lieu of taxes, in the form of tax credits or to offset arrears. In particular many clean-up and beautification projects which might otherwise be low on the list of public works priorities could be tackled. This option would, of course, need to be pursued only subject to any provisions in current collective agreements between the Township and its employees.

STRATEGY #7: Seasons

Although it could be said that room for growth and improvement of tourism is available generally in Atikokan, it may also be fairly said that the greatest potential exists in the slower winter season. Although many events and activities may be organized for winter months, many of these are geared more towards serving the interests of the local population rather than attracting visitors. The increased use of local attractions, facilities and opportunities during the off season needs to be examined more fully. Outdoor winter activities such as alpine skiing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, ice fishing with creature comforts, and alternative species ice fishing derbies (i.e. perch), should be further promoted and developed in addition to the already well-established activities such as snowmachining, curling, hockey, etc.

STRATEGY #8: Co-ordination/Scheduling

Improved co-ordination of events, activities, and promotions will lead to more effective use of available resources to the maximum advantage. Conflicts or competition between activities will be minimized. There needs to be a central source of information where those involved in organizing events can check for such conflicts in order to avoid competing interests, or to plan some co-ordination so that each activity benefits from or complements the other. Co-operative effort also may save time and numbers of people necessary to organize and carry out events. Instead of two or more activities competing for workers, clients, and venues, open spots on the calendar could be identified and filled instead.

STRATEGY #9: Scale

There is a tendency to become pre-occupied with economies of scale. Although the arguments for large undertakings are generally accepted, they do not necessarily represent the best ratio of cost versus benefits in every case. Small enterprises or modest programs aimed at improving tourism should not be overlooked, underrated, or discarded out-of-hand in the shadow of more grandiose schemes. All initiatives, large and small, will contribute economic benefits and smaller undertakings with more modest objectives and cost may be more practically and quickly implemented in many instances.

STRATEGY #10: Advertisement/Bulletin Board

A large, easily-visible, centrally-located bulletin board should be available to visitors listing local events, services, and attractions. Visitors may be completely unaware of what is available or happening and currently there is no effective means of ensuring that they do. An appropriate location might be downtown, at the tourist booth on the highway, at the entrance to town, or all three. A map of town showing where points of interest are, and/or a similar map of the larger Atikokan area could be included.

STRATEGY #11: Regional Context

Existing ties to regional tourism initiatives such as the Rendezvous Trail and Sunset Country should be maintained and strengthened, along with more specific co-operative efforts with surrounding areas and communities. A co-operative approach could benefit all those involved, while a competitive approach may be detrimental to all.

STRATEGY #12: Focal Point

The area surrounding Atikokan contains many established and potential attractions and facilities which must be viewed as assets to the town in terms of drawing visitors. That many of these visitors will, as a matter of course, visit Atikokan proper as a consequence cannot be taken for granted. Atikokan must work co-operatively with surrounding businesses and tourist facilities to ensure that efforts to attract and keep visitors are not unnecessarily duplicated or at cross-purposes. The common interest needs to be accentuated, as opposed to competition.

**STRATEGIC PLAN
LOCAL GOVERNMENT/INFRASTRUCTURE GROUP**

Minutes of Meeting - May 10, 1993

Present: John Herber, Bruce James, Rob Ritchat, Lois Chevrier, Fran Kolton, Austin Donohue, Rick Cain, Wilf Thorburn, Jim Hogan

For our purposes we will use the guidelines set up for comments. This will be used only as a starting point and may be expanded on.

I have numbered the minutes according to the pamphlet to make it easier to follow our discussion.

Discussion - Local Government and Physical Infrastructure

- want no misleading statements from AEDC or Township
- Austin Donohue not participating because of this and all meetings might be for nothing
- must have impact on Council
- 5 years gave \$300,000. to AEDC
- next meeting May 17 at Hydro office - 7:00 p.m.
- give M. McKinnon minutes over summer break
- keep on going as if on a roll

#1 Page 1 - Rick Cain, Chairperson

- have too many councillors
- Council needs to get along better
- management/council/staff working relationship better
- first 4 councillors and Reeve elected in office for 3 years, other 3 councillors for 2 years
- Provincial Government should have less control on how money is spent.
- Municipal Government have more control of funding and decisions.

#2

- slow increase in tax bills and water bills
- continue user fee for recreation facilities
- maintain small town atmosphere and life.

#3 Building or Renovating and building for "Civic Centre"

- utilize the industrial mall for Civic Centre.
- get out of landlord business
- get out of tourism business/promoting
- sell unnecessary businesses
- hire locally and the best person for the job
- do we need this many police officers, or two police forces?
- eliminate funding to EDC office - we don't need them.

#4 Rebuilding infrastructures, staff training, engineering and follow up.

- benches and park beautification
- promote garbage day, voluntary cleanup and recognition
- more interaction between agencies, communication
- sharing of equipment
- should we integrate boards, downsize the number of people on boards
- set up non-profit organization to help with funding for the tax base-lotteries etc.
- public work sharing

#5 All of the above.

#6 12 month operation, find out the use of the airport.

#7 Down loading of services

- A-B -look into different outfits to handle security in court room and transport of prisoners and if legal.
- C -possible to have Hydro to test, explore, locally done, find out cost of testing and what is involved in test
- D -form Public Utilities Commission for sewer, water, etc. - do it locally if feasible.
- E -working together on training already in place.

#8

#9

- put in monthly instalments to pay arrears
- tax base be governed by inflation
- rules pertain to all, business and residence.
- time to get tough

May 17/93 Hydro Office

Attendance - J. Herber, Bob Ritchat, Fran Kolton, Rick Cain, Jim Hogan, Bruce James.

#10 Need for CAO

- make Susan responsible - don't need CAO - especially after work lay off
- if council work together won't need CAO

#11

-sell Mark St. to businesses, move town to Industrial Mall, Police, Fire Hall, Board of Ed. all in the same building.

#12 Trends to 2000 External

- find out what you want for grants and what they are for
- have grant money and know what we use it for.
- use local Township manpower to do lots of the work
- have alternative to any plan - eg. paving.

#13 Internal

- have a rate payers association to help town
- have one, but not very active
- council should listen to rate payers group
- need more people to participate so they will be in the know
- question to retain town lawyer
- have people more aware of what the environmental concerns are.
- maybe look into recycling cardboard boxes
- don't put drugs and pills in the sewer, as it will end up in the river system
- have Keith Lusignan come to meeting for sewer meeting on May 31, 1993 - 7:00pm, Hydro

#14 Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

- have a lot of public participation in different meetings

Weakness

- inability of Council to work together. Council not active in any of the ideas to help Atikokan.
- maybe if we have an active ratepayers group they should have the right to vote on different issues.
- Council is not accountable for actions
- lack of funding
- poor attitude for payment of taxes in Town Office
- enforce by-laws and permits - renovations, building etc.

#15 Preferred Ideal for 2000

- A
 - show leadership
 - Municipal Gov. doesn't really exist
- B
 - provide direction for Council to act responsibly
 - admit mistakes and fix them quickly
 - should plan ahead
 - taxes should be raised
 - show growth to promote growth
 - don't drop services for kids, crime rate might go up
- C
 - What is the actual cost saving if trouble actually happens in Public Works due to cut backs
 - could you get men to respond to this trouble?
 - have more broken hydrants because of cut backs
 - should have more public input into issues
 - have good working relations with workers and management
 - combine Police Chief and Fire Chief to help enforce by-laws - can't say "it's not our job to enforce"; don't pass the buck
- D
 - good start for guidelines for Local Government
 - waste of time on Economy pamphlet
- E
 - act sooner and more authority
 - make arrangements for late payments
 - change of attitude in Town Office
 - is it advisable to have Councillor in arrears on taxes?
 - need someone to enforce the taxes
 - should pay interest and part of principal of taxes.

What factors might contribute to the level of tax arrears

- people not enforced to pay them
- can't blame arrears for today on taxes owed from before.

NEXT MEETING - May 31/93 7:00pm

May 31, 1993

Physical Infrastructure/Local Government

Discussions with Keith Lusignan re: Water Treatment Plant

- o there is a problem with water quality on Vincienne and in Lone Pine because of dead end piping and infrequent flushing
- o problems with frequent flushing as there is a cost associated with this process
 - 1) staff time
 - 2) electrical cost
 - 3) water is wasted
- o 660K annual budget for both H2O and Sewage treatment operations
 - budget pretty straight forward
 - no overruns - in fact operations came in under budget
 - that money goes back to MOE
- o water meters may equalize billing, but will not lower costs
 - could cost \$250. per household to install meters
 - conservation would be the issue behind the installation of H2O meters, not cost reduction
- o need to look at infrastructure if H2O/sewage problems ie. size of pipe to OPP station could be reduced to 3/4 " instead of the current 4" pipe
- o could also institute alternate watering days in summer to control use of H2O
 - check for "bleeders" in winter
- o could realize better communication between Council and MOE
- o winter usage reduced from approximately 700K to 400K
- o 12:00 midnight to 7:00 a.m. only sees a reduction of 50% to water usage in town - high possibility of leakage in system
- o Council should consider taking advantage of capital improvement dollars when available
- o problems with current sewage system include:
 - cracked lines, weeping tile, infiltration, H2O run off into sewage lines, whole system is deteriorating
- o township could test all local buildings to determine where H2O is running off to
 - enforce sewer use by-laws

- o cut off utilities to those who do not pay their taxes
 - enforcement strategy
 - strategy must be equally applied to all. On an average day there is no difficulty handling the flow
 - heavy rains and spring break up place pressure on capacity
 - problems with infrastructure impact negatively on operation of sewage treatment operation
 - need to improve to ensure that water is not being put through sewer treatment - high electrical cost associated with operation of sewage/H2O plant operation - approximately 100K per annum.
- o plant engaged in program of cost reduction
- o could be a problem near OPP/CC area with back up/sewage problems
 - council has been notified
- o MOE imposing strict environmental guidelines on local treatment plants
 - major problem if sewage treatment plant can't handle capacity
 - forcing local councils to look at and improve infrastructure
- o H2O plant now looking at the installation of a "clarifier" to provide a higher quality water
 - some chemical use discontinued (aluminum sulphate)
 - using alternate chemicals
 - council may have to engage in a cost sharing arrangement with the province to see to the installation of the clarifier
 - province should pay the bulk of this cost
- o MOE treatment plants realize savings as chemicals/supplies are bulk ordered - establish and monitor provincial standards without a great deal of interference with those standards from the provincial government

June 7, 1993

Physical Infrastructure

ATTENDANCE - J. Herber, W. Thorburn, Bruce James, Rick Cain, Bruce Donohue

- Bruce Donohue has a presentation on Roads, Sewer and Water.
- There was a five year plan to look after the main through streets. It is felt that another plan must be made up as this one is just about over.
- Township is trying to put the roads in shape in order of priority
- It seems that some funding must be juggled from one sector to put into another to help offset costs to projects of work
- Some funding comes from Ministry of Transport and Ministry of Northern Development , possibly as high as 75%
- They feel they should go ahead with finishing Mercury as there is 90% funding available
- Want to fix O'Brien St. bridge next. We need approximately 67% funding for this. The cost is between 3/4 million to 1.7 million
- It is very hard to get good co-operation from all sources for planning, funding, etc.
- Once the roads are repaired, they must be looked after, not forgotten or else they will fall apart.
- Tax payers must pay for our sidewalks. No funding to help.

WATER AND SEWER SYSTEMS

- There was a study done by Underwood & McLellan on water and sewer. It was estimated that long term plans to repair would cost approximately 7 million.
- It is very hard to get funding to repair. If the Township can't come up with the balance of funds to do these projects, then the funding is lost.
- Township is looking into water meters. Some businesses already have them from years back.- There must be at least a 1 year plan to follow for sewer and water. Then it must be followed. At present there are no real plans to follow.

COMMENTS:

- A three year program could be set up for reorganization
- It also seems that the Town Council must have total control of all situations. It seems that they do not have all the say in matters. E.D.O. and others seems to be running the show.
- It was recommended that a working committee be appointed to look through plans, decide what to do and approach Council to act on these plans.
- Also we might look into putting a jack-hammer attachment on the back-hoe to increase productivity.

June 21, 1993

Physical Infrastructure - Preferred Ideal for 2000

Attendance - J. Herber, Bob Ritchat, W. Thorburn, Rick Cain

#1 - What should Atikokan sewer, water and roads be like year 2000?

- should be good pavement and curbs on main through streets
- all failed roads repaired

#2 What is happening now that you like and should continue?

- not much - town only doing patch

#3 What is happening now you don't like and wish to eliminate?

- uncoordinated patchwork eliminated
- do sewers before roads are fixed
- format of funding should be restructured
- combine Ministries for funding
- take funding in best order and be flexible with it
- Town should be run on 5 day week not 4 days
- Town should listen to public employees more
- should be more communication between elected heads and workers. Also more appreciation should be shown

#4 What should be happening right now that is not?

- yearly maintenance program should be implemented
- should have another 5 year plan to follow
- Council should reassess position as a Council, not as a boss
- should be a good working relation with the Town employees
- Town should not be in construction business, as other maintenance problems will decline

#5 What changes will need to occur by year 2000?

- prioritize sewer and water jobs and roads
- taxes should go up according to inflation rate
- funding criteria at government level should be redesigned
- try to ease problem of rain water draining into sewer by-law enforcement or proper drainage systems

Action Required

New projects/activities to start

- should upgrade equipment and new knowledge for work force

- work force should be retrained, upgraded not Councillors as they are advisers not workers

Page 7 How can money be spend logically for work projects?

- all Ministry money should be put together for the jobs. Don't do part of the job.

Page 8 New projects to start

- should have new 7 year plan

- must have better communication and use more common sense

Existing Projects/Activities to Improve

- follow existing 5 year plan

- don't grab funding just because it's there

- have projects on priority basis

- do the work on O'Brien Street Bridge

Existing Projects to Stop

- stop Mercury job. Don't need this at this time

- eliminate funding at EDO

Business Environment
Strategic Planning Group

Meeting held May 21, 1993

Members Present:

John Collition	Betty-Ann Devey	Lana Lisowecki
Liz MacKay	Mike McKinnon	Brian Miles
Sandra Nash	Warren Paulson	Barry Smith

After discussing the options for focus, it was decided not to deal with the *Looking to the Future* statements which were discussed at the last meeting. Instead, we discussed the first 6 questions from the *Twelve Questions About The Future* handout.

Our responses to the first 6 questions are noted below.

1. Ideal for the year 2000:

- Focus on tourism vs. forestry
- Diversified, export economy
- Provision of services beyond Atikokan
- Community Pride/Image
- Forward looking business environment
- Local availability of goods and services
- More knowledge-based jobs
- A reason for youth to stay
- A theme for Atikokan (mining?)
- Soft tourism (seniors)
- Visually attractive (entrance to town/streets/stores)
- Main Street development
- Better utilization of Quetico Park
- Communications infrastructure - high tech services
 - communication lines

2. Atikokan's Strengths:

- Quetico Park
- Downtown Core
- Mine Sites
- Crystals
- Labs & Fisheries
- AEDC
- Atikokan River
- Education infrastructure
- Training Culture
- High senior population
- Recreational Infrastructure
- Medical Services
- Snow-Ho Club

3. Atikokan's Weaknesses:

- Dependence on logging
- Poor customer service
- Town is reactive, not proactive
- Poor facility management (private & public)
- Chamber of Commerce?
- Airport's future?
- Existing educational levels
- Geographic location
- 4 km off highway
- Railway crossing
- No hinterland

4. Things we prefer remained the same:

- Tourism
- Wilderness - Quetico Park
- Recreational infrastructure
- Learning Culture & Facilities
- Medical Facilities

5. Dislikes we would like to be rid of:

- Apathy (services)
- Dependence on resource extraction
- Appearance of town entrance
- Non-sustainable forestry
- Green Zone (?)
- "Get a Grant" mentality
- "Only want their \$" attitude toward tourists

6. What we wish we had:

- More local competition
- Larger commercial tax base (presently only 35%)
- Export firms/manufacturing
- High tech firms
- Educated work force (specific training/co-op education?)
- Communications infrastructure
- Accessible/affordable computer training
- Improved community co-ordination

Business Environment
Strategic Planning Group

Meeting held May 25, 1993

Members Present:

Linda Braun	John Collition	Kate Gregor
Lana Lisowecki	Brian Miles	Barry Smith

We continued our discussion beginning at question #7 from the *Twelve Questions About The Future* handout.

Our responses are noted below:

7. What will need to put in place for the year 2000?

- Large pool of committed volunteers
- Full utilization of existing facilities -- recreational educational, etc.
- A strategic plan -- cohesive vision of Atikokan - theme...
- Community pride with a common theme --> Facelift
 - collective versus individualistic attitudes
- Strong and active vehicle similar to Chamber of Commerce
- A commitment to eco tourism

8. What action is required in the short-, medium- and long-term?

0 - 2 Years

- Setup diverse committee (8-12 members) with appropriate membership -- restaurant, gas station, tourism, retail, bank, etc.
- Support and enhancement of medium and small business image
- Maintain and develop Sno-Ho Trails

2 - 4 Years

- Increase Accommodations (bed and breakfast)
- Increase billeting
- Local reforestation

5 - 7 Years

Business Environment
June 1st, 1993

Present: Brian Miles, Kate Gregor, Liz McKay, Dan James Sandra Nash, Charles Scott.

8. What action is required for short, medium, and long term ?

Short	Medium	Long
-motivation		
-facelift	same	→
-enhance municipal support with \$ for promotion		
-concentrated marketing of the benefits of tourism	→	
-maintain and enhance telecommunications and transportation		
-establish benchmarks for desirable activities		
-improve customer service	→	

9. What further research and study is required ?

- access other communities successes and learn from their experiences
- consolidate existing plans and projects under one roof
- utilize local information to promote the benefits of tourism diversification of services/industry

10. What benchmarks can be used to measure our results ?

- traffic counts
- improved physical appearance
- merchant surveys
- public satisfaction
- committee evaluation/public participation

12. What must be done by governments (local, provincial and federal) and their agencies to assist in achieving our desired future ?

- lobby for volunteer tax credits
- legislative change to support community direction (\$ and expertise)
- establish B.I.A.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS - ATIKOKAN

GENERAL INTEREST GROUP

MINUTES OF MEETING: MAY 12, 1993

Present: Convenor - Celine Dubois (597-6618)
Recorder - Marilyn Ricci (597-6469)

Angela Charbot	Jen Larose
Renee Matichuk	Cheech Morelli

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Convenor Celine Dubois.

After a general introduction, the consensus of the group was that for this meeting, we would "brainstorm" the twelve questions posed and jot down the points made for later discussion.

QUESTION #1: What does our community need to be like in the Year 2000 if Atikokan is to be a good place to live and work?

- financial stability (employment and municipal)
- good medical facilities
- environmentally conscious (blue box, etc)
- another major industry
- education for children, adults, seniors
- safety, non-violence
- provide for elderly needs, housing, accessibility to services
- good communications system (telecommunications)
- tourism for all ages
- enhanced infrastructure (water, piping, township crews, roads, sewers)
- updated recreational facilities
- cultural centre
- viable taxation base (new industry, etc)
- no industry, more concentration on cottage industry, ecological concerns.
- beautification
- more volunteer service: i.e. less grant orientation

General Interest Group
Minutes of May 12, 1993 meeting (cont'd)

QUESTION #1 (cont'd)

- entrepreneurial programs offered educationally
- development of Caland/Steep Rock area
- retirement community
- good strong retail sector: i.e. fast, reliable product service to the customer
- strong Chamber of Commerce
- more emergency equipment at the Hospital
- strong community leadership
- stronger college presence
- amenable to a major centre: i.e. Thunder Bay
- more artistic availability
- 5,000 population is ideal. Some thought that a larger population would be better
- good social systems
- better community inter-group communications to avoid duplication or conflict of interest issues.
- Inter-Agency communications.

QUESTION #2: What are Atikokan's strengths?

- Quetico Centre and Quetico Park
- the environment
- off the main Highway
- low taxes
- cheap housing
- community spirit
- good recreational facilities
- high volunteerism
- close to Thunder Bay
- central to most places
- fishing, hunting, camping
- good health care
- good seniors facilities
- friendliness
- winter sports - SnoHo, skiing, ice-fishing
- Service Clubs
- Outers Program in School
- Airport: one person was in disagreement
- Hydro, small manufacturing, seniors
- Atikokan-Minaki Waterway system
- capital assets (buildings)

General Interest Group
Minutes of May 12, 1993 (cont'd)

QUESTION #3: What are Atikokan's Weaknesses?

- slow retail service
- slow Medical Clinic service: re-organization is needed
- more dentists needed
- another 30 or 40 seniors units
- transit system
- rental accomodation for young families
- unrestricted snowmobiling
- Teen Acitivities (one person felt that teens are just not taking advantage of good services provided here already).
- High School is not on a semester system
- more co-operation needed between community Boards
- A building is needed for teen activities: use existing facilities
- unskilled labour
- live in yesterday's world (we dream of re-opened mines, upswing in mill activity, etc)
- weak public works infrastructure
- weak local government
- weak Chamber of Commerce
- lack of community planning
- eyesore housing and junk piles in Town
- low municipal standards
- by-law enforcement is poor

QUESTION #4: What do we like about things in Atikokan now that we prefer remained the same?

See the response to Questions #1 and #2 above.

QUESTION #5: What do we dislike about Atikokan that we wish to be rid of?

See the response to Question #3 above and add:

- the Grayson Hall situation: Why not user-pay?
- customer service
- restaurant atmosphere
- bad bars

General Interest Group
Minutes of May 12, 1993 (cont'd)

QUESTION #5 (cont'd)

- poor student guidance
- Junior High kids create some problems in the High School.
(some disagreement on this issue)
- car dumps
- by-laws need enforcing re: derilect buildings
- building licencing is necessary to ensure proper code standards.
- better planning regarding the building of Centres with regard to continued operation costs
- unemployment situation
- the Atikokan population is dependent on the resource industry

QUESTION #6: What is missing in Atikokan that we wish we had?

- more cottage industry (how far can you go with that?)
- cannot buy a cottage lot


The discussion ended at this point. The concensus of Committee members was to hold the next meeting on Wednesday, May 26 but due to a number of circumstance this meeting was cancelled.

The next Committee meeting is as follows:

Date: June 10, 1993 (Thursday)

Time: 8:00 p.m.

Place: home of Celine Dubois
108 Berry Crescent
(Phone: 597-6618)


Celine Dubois, Convenor


Marilyn Ricci, Recorder

RECEIVED JUN 21 1993

Celine Dubois
108 Berry Crescent
Atikokan, Ontario
POT 1C0

Phone: 597-6618

June 18, 1993

TO: Members
General Community Group
Strategic Planning Process - Atikokan

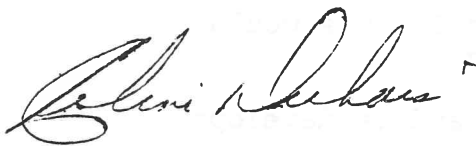
Dear Member:

Please find enclosed the minutes of the June 10, 1993 meeting of the General Interest Group.

As you will note, the next meeting will be held at my home, 108 Berry Crescent, on June 24 (Thursday) beginning at 8:00 p.m.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you.



Celine Dubois
Convenor
General Interest Group

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS - ATIKOKAN

GENERAL INTEREST GROUP

MINUTES OF MEETING: JUNE 10, 1993

Present: Convenor - Celine Dubois (597-6618)
Recorder - Marilyn Ricci (597-6469)

Cathy Carlson Renee Matichuk
Cheech Morelli

As follow-up to the May 12, 1993 meeting, this meeting was a "brainstorming" session on the twelve questions posed by the Atikokan Economic Development Corporation

QUESTION #6: What is missing in Atikokan now that we wish we had?

- stable economy
- teen events: roller-blading, dirt bike paths, energy-challenging events wherever teen congregate, stock car racing, tractor pulls, etc
- adult learning centre all in one campus. Need to have more courses available for people 18 and over. Courses need to have continuity right to completion
- Housing: infrastructure and physical buildings. There are no new buildings. There need to be a new subdivision. Tear down row housing and rebuild
- Hemlock School. If closed, should the site become a park or housing subdivision. Perhaps it should remain a green area
- Need a nice trailer park. Do we want one? This would provide temporary and affordable housing
- need apartment blocks
- land by the hospital is privately owned and is developed for property lots
- No other building lots are available. Right now supply and demand for housing is pretty well equal
- Atikokan has potential for housing expansion because of industrial expansion

General Interest Group
Minutes of June 10, 1993 meeting (cont'd)

QUESTION #7: What will we need to put in place in
Atikokan for the year 2000?

- make Atikokan attractive
- the arena needs redoing
- swimming pool replacement?
- modernized recreational facility: squash courts, badminton, pool, skating, etc.
- need another major grocery chain for competition but there is a question of whether a community of Atikokan's size could sustain two chain stores
- Mining theme park - Caland, Steep Rock tours. These two locations are very impressive
- Atikokan cultural displays like the rock tubing from the mine drilling
- Planning. Strategy. Retrofit the major structures.
- Tourist bureau operation should be privatized? This raised many issues.
- Everything should be wheelchair accessible.
- Can Atikokan raise \$1 million for such things as expansion of recreational facilities?
- Development should occur right out to Nym Lake from after the CN track running through town.
- Someone should have the job of searching out grants. There needs to be accountability concerning this. the EDO, municipal clerk and various other agencies have this responsibility already. More communication with the public is necessary so the public knows who to go to for information.
- There needs to be a way to have medical specialists coming into Atikokan on a regular basis instead of people having to travel such long distances for treatment. Specialists used to come but because of the cleverly thought out Northern Health Travel Grant, the government has been able to eliminate some of this responsibility. Also, there is the air ambulance.

QUESTION #8: What action is required in the short, medium
and long-term?

- ProBoard and Domtar have limited years of life. Is this a concern? Should a study be done? Studies are not fool-proof and cost a lot. Is this really a feasible route (Study) to go?
- push for the second phase of the Atikokan Generating Station. This could provide for up to 1000 jobs in the short term

General Interest Group
Minutes of June 10, 1993 meeting (cont'd)

QUESTION #8: (cont'd)


- Hotels are need for both the summer and winter seasons
- turn Atikokan into a small college town
- encouragement of activities for retirees: Elderhostel, seniors recreation
- transit services for handicapped persons as well as seniors for such events as dances, shows, etc. so that handicapped persons are incorporated more into the community. There needs to be more cooperation here
- Old growth forest. The Quetico Research aspect of the Park should be encouraged.
- close the southern access to Quetico Provincial Park. Change Federal and Provincial laws concerning this to enforce the issue.

QUESTION #9: What further research and study is required?

- there needs to be a study on Council members
- What is the role of the Township and Economic Development Office?
- there should be a job-description of each publicly-funded position and make this information public. Is there overlapping between positions? This question should be part of planning
- The Township has no reserve funds. Atikokan is actually in pretty good shape with its debt-load in comparison with other communities.

The discussion ended at this point. The next Committee meeting is as follows:

Date: June 24, 1993 (Thursday)
Place: 8:00 p.m.
Place: home of Celine Dubois
108 Berry Crescent
(Phone: 597-6618)


Celine Dubois, Convenor

Strategic Economic Plan for Atikokan

HEALTH CARE

Recorder: Sue Diamond
Convenor: Nancy MacKay
Members: Bert Booth, Marlene Davidson, Vivian Gilmore,
Marsha Walker

Page 1: What should health care be like in Atikokan at the end of the decade?

- continued Home Support for seniors
- telecommunications - opens up diagnostic tools for health staff
- care unit at the second phase on seniors complex (village within a village)
- preventative education, i.e., one-stop shopping for seniors re: health care
- promotion of 'healthy' lifestyles - education and provision of wholistic health care needs - i.e., body, mind, spirit
- alternative medicines, such as herbs, relaxation, stress reduction

What is happening now that you like, and feel should continue?

- good medical team - doctors & nurses
- community caring atmosphere
- screening services, i.e., breast screening, eye van, visiting specialists

What is happening now that you don't like, and wish to eliminate?

- elimination of visits to Clinic for prescriptions when they could be given for longer periods - this would curtail OHIP fees and druggists rates
- break our ties with Rainycrest
- cutbacks in health care by N.D.P. government, i.e., hospital beds
- not enough emphasis/recognition of the role of emotional health and its effects on the body

Page 2: What new activities/services should be happening now and are not?

New Activities/Services:

- an information service for seniors
- businesses that cater to seniors
- fitness centres; relaxation & stress reduction classes
- drug and alcohol abuse awareness

New Aticities/Services by year 2000

- health care with computer chip containing patients complete and updated health history
- better information system for disabled, i.e., CNIB, hearing and clothing
- (see above)
- CNIB van twice a year

Page 3: The Situation in 1992

- more seniors staying in Canada for the winter
- access to dental office for disabled
- respite care for primary caregivers not available in Atikokan
- should not be affiliated with Rainycrest

Page 5: Internal Trends to 2000

- extension of care at Health Unit for seniors
- preventative care for drug and alcohol abuse programs for all ages
- redirection of health care for seniors (village within a village)
 - with accessible services to include: dental, vision, nurses, gardening, pets, cafeteria, masseuse, hot tubs, a bubble dome to the library & Pioneer Centre, relaxation & stress management classes, grief counselling, gymnasium and lounge.
- network with other seniors groups all over Canada and U.S.
- group housing more practical than single housing

Page 6: Strengths:

- telecommunications will enable physicians to obtain expert advise from specialists
- adequate health care system in comparison to other communities

Weaknesses:

- government cutbacks
- living in the northwest
- lack of professional health services in the North
- high rate of alcoholism- due to many factors, i.e., isolation, unemployment, climate
- high rate of sexual abuse and lack of adequate treatment centres to treat families
- lack of adequate facilities to meet the needs of the youth
- no one trained in palliative care
- no detox centre with trained staff to work with both youth and adults
- no psychiatric assessment available for adults or children

Page 7: Preferred Ideal for 2000: Revisted

What new Services:

- library- access into building, reading room; automation
 - recognition of the role of mental health/social services in overall well-being/good health
 - integration of native health services/traditions with non-native services
 - schools- computer information centres
 - support groups for children of alcoholism, sexual abuse, physical & emotional abuse, etc.
 - inter-disciplinary meetings such that all health care providers that service a patient have input, including Home Support workers (with patient consent)
 - home support needs a complete overhaul
 - training in patient care, both physical aspects and to help bring joy into people's lives
- role of Hospital: acute medical problems
- mental illnesses
 - central hub of communication

- Page 8: 1. Expanded Home Care
2. Village-witbin-a-Village
3. Additional facilities at the hospital

All three are completely necessary - as it is a progression.

*use the \$240,000 levy to Rainycrest annually to build our village

Page 9: Action Required - New Services

- more professional health services
- Holistic health & fitness centre
- massage therapist
- regular pastoral visits to shut-ins in their homes
- treatment for sexual offenders
- alcohol & drug treatment centres
- upgrade local facilities so they are handicap accessible

Existing Services to be Improved on:

- homecare - one-stop-shopping for seniors
- mental health - wholistic view that includes the emotions and the inter-relationship of mind and body
- youth - consistency in police enforcement of the laws
 - co-ordination of recreational activities
 - summer programs
- child welfare - more family centred treatment - removal of the perpetrator rather than children
- respite care
- youth counselling

ATIKOKAN BOARD OF EDUCATION
ISSUES AND CONCERNS
TO BE SHARED WITH THE
ATIKOKAN STRATEGIC PLAN 2000
RE: EDUCATION COMPONENT:

CONTENTS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Part I: Introduction;
- Part II: Factors Affecting The Vision of the Atikokan Board of Education For The Year 2000;
- Part III: Governance Issues;
- Part IV: The Responsibilities of School Boards;
- Part V: Ontario Royal Commission on Learning;
- Part VI: Education Partnership;
- Part VII: Governance, Trusteeship, and Enhancing Community Involvement;
- Part VIII: The Organizational Structure of School Boards;
- Part IX: The Political Structure of School Boards;
- Part X: Provincial-School Board Consultation;
- Part XI: Summary.

June 2, 1993.

F#:E00AEDC2.063

ATIKOKAN BOARD OF EDUCATION ISSUES AND CONCERNS TO BE SHARED WITH THE
DEVELOPMENT OF AN ATIKOKAN STRATEGIC PLAN 2000 RE: EDUCATION:

F#:E00AEDC2.063

June 2, 1993.

I: Introduction:

The Atikokan Board of Education is a member of the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA). OPSBA has undergone extensive surveys with its member Boards of which there are approximately 100 to prepare position papers on a variety of issues. This endeavour has been spurred by the present Ontario government interest in reexamining several areas of interest pertinent to public school education and Boards of Education. OPSBA prepared three position papers that are relevant to our community examining education for the year 2000. The three position papers were namely: "A Framework For The Future: Principles of Our Education System"; "The Future Responsibilities of Our Education System", and "OPSBA's Proposals For A New Education Funding System". The Atikokan Board of Education has at various times presented directly to Ministry of Education and OPSBA representatives our concerns on several issues. In large part our concerns at the Board level have centered upon financing and maintaining our school system. Information on these topics is available from the Office of the Director of Education in Atikokan. A series of articles on various issues was also published in The Atikokan Progress during the period January to May, 1993, that addressed some of these concerns.

We would like to share some considerations with the Atikokan Strategic 2000 Plan participants that include the following:

Some key issues facing the Atikokan Board of Education are as follows:

- ▶ Insufficient funding support for a Provincial standard of education, equitable for all Ontario students! This problem arises when the Province seems to have funds for special initiatives, not necessarily complementary to core funding for education, health care, etc.
- ▶ Lack of recognition within grant formulas for the cost of operating small school Boards, faced with the same responsibilities as larger Boards, but without adequate human and financial support.
- ▶ While challenged by base funding needs, there is accepted recognition that additional funding is required in other areas such as technological renewal and school care counsellors for pupils.
- ▶ Societal changes are reflected in increased pressures on students. Students need greater coping skills to cope with family violence, alcohol, drugs, emotional changes, health, diet, etc. It is becoming increasingly evident to us as a Board that schools need care providers and more counsellors.

- ▶ Providing for the needs of adult learners for upgrading, retraining and continuing education require improved Provincial strategies to support School Boards or community support agencies.
- ▶ Arriving at some common Provincial understanding as to what is "quality education." This, in turn, requires that a common vision of the purpose of education is attained, as well as how "quality" can be measured.

The Atikokan Board of Education continues to focus on budget control and the future consolidation of facilities so that operating expenses can be brought to a level in keeping with grant and tax revenues.

II. Factors Affecting The Vision of the Atikokan Board of Education For The Year 2000:

What are issues and concerns of the Atikokan Board of Education that shape its vision for the year 2000? The following is not intended to be a comprehensive list, nor a complete or prioritized list. In a positive perspective the following is the immediate short term vision leading to the year 2000:

▶ School and Building Consolidation:

We are all aware that the Province continues to be in a difficult financial position; hence, it is projected that Ministry of Education grant monies to the Board will continue to be less than what we would like. This is a situation that has continued since 1979 and one that successive elected Boards of Education have had to contend with.

If this is to be the case, then the Board must adopt measures by which it can retain staff and services, but otherwise reduce operating costs. This can be achieved by consolidating Hemlock and Saturn Schools as one viable operation, and making full use of Atikokan High School. In the case of AHS we are considering closing of our Clark Street facility that houses our Board Offices, Confederation College programs, Contact North and our Independent Learning Centre. Present rents cover the cost of annual operational expenses at Clark Street, but do not provide sufficient funds for the long term improvements and up-grading of the building. One concern the ABE has as a responsible community corporate organization is that the closure of Clark Street could lead to the curtailment of Confederation College adult courses in Atikokan. This matter has been reported to College representatives. In addition we have applied with other community organizations in seeking grant monies for converting Clark Street into a modern up-graded community adult learning centre. To date we have not had any

indication whether we will be receiving any such grants for up-grading the building.

By consolidating the elementary schools we would eliminate the request from staff to appoint a Principal for each school. In addition we would reduce the expensive duplication of heating and ventilation systems, photocopiers, telephone systems, etc. Long term cost benefits would accrue to enable other school needs to be met.

Our Board policy requires that the community is to be involved in the future directions to be taken in any school closure or consolidation; therefore, a Hemlock School Committee has been struck and is presently active in this regard.

► **Energy Retrofits:**

Another way in which we can gain more money from existing budget levels is to introduce energy efficiencies. In recent years we have obtained various grants to reroof and reinsulate all of Saturn Avenue School and most of Atikokan High School. Also at AHS we have replaced old windows and electric lights in large part with more cost effective systems.

► **Board Policies and Procedures:**

Even a small school board as the Atikokan Board of Education requires for its staff various policies and procedures to be followed. Many identify the creation, implementation, review and evaluation of policies as a key function of Trustees. The Atikokan Board of Education attempts each year to identify a half dozen or so new policies that need to be created to serve the system better, as well as review some older policies for their relevance.

► **Implementing Computers Across The Curriculum:**

Presently a Committee of the Board, involving school administration and teachers as well as Board Administration and Trustees, is preparing a long-term comprehensive plan for the further implementation and use of computers from JK to the OAC level. The Board has a commitment to the necessity of exposing our youth to modern technologies in preparation for involvement in the workplace and to-morrow's lifestyle.

► **Co-operative Education:**

We also wish to reexamine our co-operative education program to make sure that it is the best that it can be.

► **Inter-Board Co-operative Activities:**

With financial pressures in Ontario as they are everyone is examining how operating costs might be reduced while retaining services. In this regard the ABE is willing to consider any co-operative ventures with area boards for retaining or improving cost-effective services.

► **Program Council West:**

This co-operative curriculum oriented activity between the member Boards of Education west of Thunder Bay and the Ministry of Education will be appointing a new PCW Co-ordinator to take office this fall. We have a commitment to assisting the Co-ordinator with a successful and meaningful program for our teachers from grades 7 to OAC. This fall will see for the first time the teachers of grades 7 & 8 become involved with the curriculum and professional development activities that have come to represent the success of PCW.

► **Continued Co-operative Sharing Strategies With The Atikokan Roman Catholic School System:**

Presently we share in daily bus services, library and audio-visual services and professional development workshops; however, the Boards will investigate if we can introduce further co-operative ventures that retain the political integrity of each Board.

► **Telecommunications:**

Not only is telecommunications important to students and staff as an avenue for information access and use, but telecommunications may provide in the future a means of centralizing with other co-operative area Boards of Education the delivery of services without diminishing the importance of local autonomy. These options also will be investigated with the improved telecommunications systems that become available.

► **Grants:**

Since Atikokan has a very limited commercial and householder tax base, and because we have a small student population on which Provincial grants are calculated, the Board will continue to seek as many possible grants that would serve the organization well.

► **Technological Renewal:**

The Board continues to pursue Ministry of Education "technological studies grants" to establish at AHS a new "Design and Technology Program" in grades 9 and 10 replacing the former Drafting - Natural Resources and Automotive - Woodworking shop-round format in effect for the past several years. The main thrust of this proposal will be to combine the collective expertise of three teachers, two technical and one general studies, in an interconnected four shop facility. In this vision is a new communications centre that will become the hub of the new program and around which much of the modular and project-driven activity will revolve. In this networked computer area students will have available to them a multitude of software resources needed to complete assignments in Computer Assisted Design (CAD), Transportation, Electronics, Construction, Audio-Video Productions, Desktop Publishing, etc. Plans are already being discussed to develop a joint venture with Atikokan Television, our local community T.V. station, for the development of a new studio facility to be located in the high school. A different liaison with our local newspaper, Atikokan Progress, regarding future directions in our publishing capabilities is also in the planning session.

It is projected that the Automotive (Tam 4G2) Grade 12 will in all likelihood be discontinued by or in 1995. The Natural Resources offerings in Grade 9 and Grade 11 will remain for the immediate future. They are actually environmental science oriented and are part of our Technological Department for local organizational reasons.

The General Studies and Business Education departments are positive-minded about their involvement in our Broad Based Technology design renewal plans. The Science Department Head and History-Geography Department Head have already been involved in Program Council West Technical Workshops. As the new program begins to develop other areas of study will come on board. Steps have already been taken in the school's resource centre to provide access for our pupils to such ideas such as desktop publishing, library article searches, and career searches. It is envisaged that the communications centre will in the future be networked to the resource centre to maximize student access to a variety of programs.

In an attempt to make the restructured technological programs more appealing to all students despite their intended paths of study, we

hope to encourage as much cross curricular participation as possible. An important feature of our restructure that should encourage this is the location of our proposed communications facility in the heart of the Technical wing. It will become physically necessary to work out an integration - coexistence plan between Technical and Business Departments to make the most effective use of a shared Communications Centre while also bringing the business education elements into our technological plan.

Besides the more structured integration between various subject disciplines working out of the Tech-Communications facility it is our intention to accomodate "walk-in" students from other areas in the school who may be working on individual projects and whom may require some of the programs available in this Central Resource area. Most computers will be networked and able to provide a wide array of software programs that should provide enough diversity that all subject areas will find useful assistance at their finger tips. It is also our intention to timetable so that there will always be a teacher from some subject area in the Centre available to help students.

In preparation for the full implementation of broad-based technology the Board has indicated its support by making the initial investments towards our design technology goals. Despite our tight budget restrictions we have committed approximately \$20,000 for technological renewal initiatives in 1992-93. This is indicative of the strong desire of the Board to upgrade the delivery of technological education.

In summary the Atikokan Board of Education financial concerns centre about the following issues, not necessarily presented in order of concern:

- ▶ **Attempting to meet Provincial program requirements, Education Act requirements, and various government initiatives within the financial constraints dictated within the operation of a small school board with small schools;**
 - the costs associated with the operation of a small school board with a small student population are not met to-day by the grant structure, as readily agreed by many;
- ▶ **The maintaining of our school buildings and revitalizing of school equipment is a serious concern;**
 - our share of Capital Expenditure Forecasts for major retrofits forecast for 1993, 1994 and 1995 represents about 6 mills per year. Most of our buildings are now more than 35 years in age.
 - "Anti-recession monies" provided by the Province are both a blessing and a challenge. Since monies are provided "at the Board's level of grant," this generally means that on every

\$100,000 authorized by the Province for spending, we need to collect approximately \$20,000

- ▶ **Initiating a plan for replacement of capital equipment and purchase of more contemporary equipment;**
 - much of the technical equipment in the high school dates back to the time that Federal monies were available for purchase of equipment, e.g., early 1970s';
 - elementary school photocopiers require updating with feeder options and collating capabilities for better utilization of resource staff time;
 - administration requires software, e.g., tax programs, data management, and specialized financial spread sheets.
- ▶ **Meeting community needs of Crisis Centre families, speech pathologists, special services, and continuing education needs within our community;**
 - suffice to summarize by noting that the Atikokan Board of Education, along with the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Community and Social Services, need to examine further efficiencies through greater co-operation of funding for commonly supported community activities; e.g., utilization of buildings for continuing education.
- ▶ **Hiring or acquiring the services of additional staff;**
 - additional services for students and staff are required in certain areas such as for a computer co-ordinator, drafting teacher, guidance/student services teacher;
 - interesting that we have literally spent millions in Ontario on Grant Eligible Microcomputers, yet provided no money for the hiring of someone on site to co-ordinate all the software available, train staff and maintain programs and equipment.
- ▶ **Providing Northern Ontario pupils with quality programs and options for developing their knowledge and skills for future employment opportunities in Northern Ontario;**
 - at the secondary level single section classes far out number double section electives, e.g., 101 vs. 13 in 1990 - 91; by that, confining pupils to limited timetable options;

- bi-level, tri-level and bi-grade classes are the norm, not the exception; thereby, further taxing teachers with lesson preparations, and limiting the addressing of student needs;
- we provide educational programs for students to go on to College and University and in many cases to leave Northern Ontario, yet we do not provide for those who remain in Northern Ontario alternatives for skill and personal development to contribute to the economies of the North.

III: Governance Issues:

OPSBA has also focused on the following goals and objectives on how we should govern education in Ontario:

- ▶ Providing universal accessibility to public education under the unique mandate of public school boards in providing education to all;
- ▶ Providing political accountability;
- ▶ protecting and enhancing local autonomy and responsiveness to community needs;
- ▶ Establishing partnerships with other Boards, government agencies, parents and community advocates;
- ▶ Addressing adequacy: including affordable and cost-effective delivery of services.

The Atikokan Board of Education supports the above principles and recommends that a balance is required in achieving such. However, in striving to meet this balance, the Board suggests that we should be cognizant that there is a potential for imbalance of public boards in Northern Ontario, in comparison to the richer and more populated Southern portion of Ontario, to fulfil the inherent challenge contained within these objectives.

A concern we have as a small School Board system is, how can we meet the ever-increasing expectations of government and society? This concern is not just a local concern, but addresses the challenge of providing equity of education across Ontario when we have different size school boards, variances in local wealth, an aging population and fewer employed ratepayers. The Province needs to expedite financial

restructuring so that particularly disadvantaged Boards may retain local credibility, and fulfil student learning and care needs.

Part IV: The Responsibilities of School Boards:

Locally elected school boards have the mandate of providing elementary and secondary education to all its citizens.

School boards and the Province share the responsibility for

- ▶ All education/instructional programs from senior kindergarten to adults;
- ▶ School transportation;
- ▶ School capital.

School boards alone are responsible for

- ▶ The local component of education/instructional programs;
- ▶ General interest courses, if any.

The Provincial government is responsible for

- ▶ Job training, skills development beyond secondary education;
- ▶ Child care;
- ▶ Employment support programs;
- ▶ Health and social programs for education;
- ▶ Co--ordination and management of any integrated health and social support system.

In reviewing the preceding mandate the Atikokan Board of Education is quite prepared to reexamine its future role. However, to achieve any revised mandate, our partnership with the government needs to be supported by the various Ministries through a common vision, clear roles and expectations, and with realistic support funding provided to Boards to fulfil agreed upon responsibilities. Boards under the present funding scheme cannot provide everything to everyone.

What community services, including health and social programs, are needed in our schools? The Atikokan Board of Education believes that each school should have a trained care worker to see to the children's emotional and personal health needs! We believe contact with the school should start with our JK program so that specialized support services for speech pathology and learning disabilities may be

addressed early in the student's life. Early assistance can do much to add to the happiness and sense of self-esteem of youngsters. We also believe schools can act in partnership with other community agencies in providing this assistance. At the secondary school level additional counselling staff are required to assist adolescents with a myriad of problems.

How could we design the delivery of these services to best suit Atikokan's needs? We believe that our principle mandate remains the provision of education for our pupils. Yet we recognize that our schools can become a focal point in providing various community support programs and services. We believe pupils need a variety of support services; however, we also believe such programs should be supported through clear roles and responsibilities by other Ministries, or by direct transfer grants to Boards for such services provided by the Board. A School Board, as an organization, with appropriate support funding, can provide an effective infrastructure for the provision of such services without duplicating bureaucracy or creating new agencies or Ministries. This would require we emphasize a clear vision from the Provincial government, so as to foster efficient local support services. If we are mandated to provide auxiliary services by other Ministries we do expect that we should provide such on strictly a cost-recovery basis.

Part V: Royal Commission on Learning:

The Hon. Dave Cooke, Minister of Education, announced on May 4, 1993, the establishment of a Royal Commission on Learning to undertake a Province-wide effort to assess and make recommendations about the goals, standards, and programs to guide Ontario's elementary and secondary schools into the 21st century.

The mandate of the commission includes many of the same areas already identified in this report. The following is quoted from a May 4th News Release and pertains to the mandate of the Commission:

- ▶ **Accountability:** "How can we ensure that our school system is accountable to the public? What are the educational standards, who should set them, and how do we evaluate the progress of students against those standards?"
- ▶ **Governance:** "What are the most effective and efficient ways to organize the education system? What are the roles and

responsibilities of parents, teachers, trustees, and other education partners?"

- ▶ **Program:** "What knowledge and skills do our young people need to participate successfully in a technological society? How should we develop, organize, and deliver curriculum?"
- ▶ **Vision:** "What is our shared vision for the education of Ontario's students? What values and principles should guide our education system?"

Part VI: Education Partnership:

We must have a clear understanding of "governance", the structures of governance, and the roles and responsibilities associated with various possible future reorganized structures.

Governance could be defined as acting with accountability and authority, while conducting the policy, actions and affairs of the Board. It also includes the creating of policy and directing of the administration of policy.

Management or administration could be defined as providing services within the context of Provincial legislation and strategic directions, and within the context of local policy. Local policy and program design would include how services are delivered, how operational plans are determined and implemented, how best use of resource planning would occur and be undertaken, and monitoring all of the preceding.

As mentioned earlier in this report a renewed balance and vision between school boards and the Province needs to be struck. The outcome should be an accommodation for local priorities and local differences in keeping with the Province's responsibility for an equitable system of education with Province-wide standards.

What is the key issue affecting the ability of the Atikokan Board of Education to govern effectively education in our community? Our key problem is a lack of Provincial funding support to attain an acceptable level of educational programming and staffing. This problem is further enhanced by high levels of unemployment; increasing stress for families, teachers, administrators; violence, etc.

However, our present governance we think is effective and satisfactory in light of present circumstances. We have achieved a sense of pride in what we can accomplish in these circumstances.

An additional concern centering on effective governance stems around a lack of support funding for Trustee development, and specialization of Board Office staff as resource staff to Trustees, and the system.

In short our local Trustees feel that our major impediments arise from legislative and Provincial policy mandates that are inadequately financed, or not financed at all.

VII. Governance, Trusteeship, and Enhancing Community Involvement:

OPSBA in 1991 identified the need to strengthen the role of parents and the community-at-large in assisting/advising the local school administration in areas such as program/curriculum, school board budgeting, and policy. At that time the Atikokan Board of Education considered with OPSBA and other member boards the promotion of advisory committees, school advisory committees, public consultation processes on policy, and parental involvement in school programs.

The Atikokan Board of Education is in agreement with this direction, but once again realistic guidelines, policies and expectations need to be made. It needs to be stated that the time demands upon the growing responsibilities of Trustees is already challenging. To expand the responsibilities of Trustees, Board and School administration significantly would not be realistic; however, complementary parent organized groups to support schools and boards can lead to enhanced communications and positive experiences.

We also recognize that decentralized decision-making can improve the quality of education in that, as one example, local needs and issues could be better addressed. However, without appropriate funding support, realistic Provincial mandates and policies, decentralization could add more frustration to trying to meet a variety of community, regional and Provincial demands.

The province has also entertained various types of provincially legislated /or mandated models of public participation, as well as locally developed models. Our Board unanimously supports a locally developed model. Even in Northern Ontario there is much variance between communities; therefore, one model for the Province is not

realistic. However, we can support in our various communities principles for more public participation.

How can we best enhance public participation in activities of our school board? Trustees are elected as community representatives for the improvement of education; hence, Trustees have a responsibility to provide leadership in involving the public. This can be achieved via clearly defined roles and responsibilities for community groups in the consultation process. School closure committees and Home and School Associations are two good examples of the potential for expanded meaningful roles for parents under a defined structure of involvement in a meaningful manner.

VIII. The Organizational Structure of School Boards:

The organizational structure of school boards has been identified in Ontario as an issue. We suspect that is partially due to the increasing and changing demands school boards are faced with each day. At the same time the demand for public involvement, for political and staff accountability continues to be high. This occurs at a time when school boards must continue to ensure that their organizational structures are responsive, cost-efficient, and accountable.

OPSBA in its policy report, Governance and Management of Ontario's Public School Systems, noted the following:

"Effective local governance requires the development of a collaborative relationship between the Board and its Chief Executive Officer in which roles and responsibilities are clear; and in which an appropriate balance between political and professional interests is achieved."

In addition the Atikokan Board of Education has in recent years moved towards the implementation of strategies for effective management that include:

- ▶ Establishing the ABE mission statements or "Statement of Beliefs";
- ▶ Commencing with short term and long term goal-setting at various levels of the organization;
- ▶ Implementing new and revised policies and procedures of a variety of matters such as curriculum development, budget setting, assault, discipline and alcohol and drugs, and school closure.

What is the key issue in effective school board governance facing our board? Too much is being asked of too few! This applies to Trustees, Board Office staff, Principals, and teachers! With fewer dollars to meet the growing requests of the public and needs of staff and students we have more and more stress within the organization. Trusteeship today could easily be a significant part-time job. In order to cope, more emphasis should be put by the Province on collaborative and supportive long-term initiatives and policies. With particularly smaller school boards, too much is being expected of Boards with limited administration and resource staff. We require an improved practical Provincial vision of long-term goals and how in our partnership with the Province our goals can be achieved in a realistic way.

In Northwestern Ontario we have another pending problem. At this time we no longer have a regional supervisory officer training or accreditation program offered at a central location. Boards will be faced in the future with the need to recruit more and more Southern Ontario supervisory officers to provide leadership for Northwestern issues and challenges . . . not necessarily the best model for developing Northwestern Ontario educational leaders!

At the same time it should be recognized that after the closure of our local iron mines in Atikokan our Board went through fourteen years of down-sizing. This experience enabled the Board to establish employee co-operation and consultation processes for staffing, programming, grant procurement and school-based management. To-day this co-operation serves the system well.

IX. THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF SCHOOL BOARDS:

In Proposals For A New Education Funding System OPSBA stated that, "school boards must promote a program of amalgamation and confederation of boards, on a case-by-case basis, to increase their economic viability. Consolidation in some areas of the Province will be required to enhance local tax bases and to realize cost-savings to education through these more cost-effective structures."

The options before Boards are to enter

1. **Co-operative Service Arrangements:** in which two or more school boards combine resources to provide needed services and reduce expenditures. This is probably the most suitable local model for Atikokan. The Atikokan Board of Education has co-operated with

the Atikokan R.C.S.S. Board of Education, and neighbouring Boards, on various initiatives. This idea is gaining more popularity as other neighbouring Boards begin to experience downsizing as the ABE has in past years;

2. **Amalgamation of school boards into larger boards:** In our case geographic distances restrict amalgamation in economic feasibility; however, advancements in telecommunications may in the future enable the ABE to utilize contractual services from other Boards such as "accounts payable."
3. **Confederated school boards:** OPSBA has recommended that confederated school boards could result in local Boards sharing in school plant operation and maintenance, school capital planning, purchasing, business functions, computer services, school transportation, and collective bargaining.
4. **Other alternatives to school boards:** The Ministry of Education has entertained the possibility of establishing "educational authorities", "community service boards", and even education boards or committees falling under the jurisdiction of Municipal Councils.

Further to the co-operative services model the Atikokan Board of Education has a history of developing over more than the past decade cooperative services with our R.C.S.S. colleagues. We have had shared bussing; common school calendars, professional development days; workshops; shared library-audio visual services; shared speech pathology services; community TVO Broadcasting; and various cooperative protocols. Both Boards in light of tight monies are reviewing further co-operative steps that might be undertaken in the future to reduce further operating expenses.

One understandable obstacle our board has encountered in pursuing an Atikokan confederated school board is the interest of our Boards to protect their own constitutional governance mandate. Trustees representing separate school ratepayers are strongly against amalgamated or confederated school boards.

Trustees representing public ratepayers feel that we should explore and develop some form of cooperative model so cost efficiencies could be attained, while protecting religious and linguistic rights recently extended to these community sectors in relatively recent times in Ontario.

What would be the approximate cost-savings to the ratepayers if our board was restructured in this manner? Would the quality of education programs and services improve?

Our sense is that a co-operative services model would enable us to have better whole grade classes versus split classes; have more student electives; perhaps more specialized instructors with full-time scheduling in their speciality, e.g., art, music; administrative cost savings with fewer secretaries and business personnel; cost savings in capital purchases and contractual services, e.g., photocopiers, common telephone system; and perhaps through consolidation of schools in smaller communities cost-efficiencies with fewer schools, e.g., one heating plant, one snow-removal contract. This is an option that we intend to pursue with our separate school Trustees.

X. PROVINCIAL-SCHOOL BOARD CONSULTATION:

Ontario public school boards have noted that when examining political accountability and the role of the Province and of school boards in the delivery of education, an integral component is consultation. There must be in the future recognition that school boards and elected school trustees must have the ability to participate in a more meaningful way in public education policy development.

It has been suggested that to improve consultation and the recognition of local school boards as the "local education government" there must be

- ▶ Regular networking and consultation with the school board political organizations on issues, before final decision-making;
- ▶ Access to related information on the identified issues;
- ▶ An established procedure for such to take place;
- ▶ Recognition among all parties that consultation does not mean consensus.

The Atikokan Board of Education has also stated that consultation for the sake of consultation achieves nothing! To the contrary it raises hopes and results in disillusionment unless consultation leads to the addressing of shared problems by the government. Without significant improvements being the outcome in a relatively short two or three year time-frame, the political consultation process without realistic decisions is a waste of tax-payer's dollars that could be put to much better returns. Yet, consultation must occur; especially in the interest of Northern Ontario Boards that are geographically removed

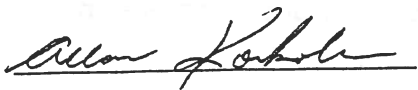
from the everyday contact and visibility of Mowat Block officials and decision-makers. Consultation is also necessary in a meaningful manner for the improvement of our education system in Ontario.

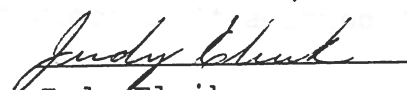
In this regard parents, home and school representatives, and other community representatives may wish to take advantage of providing input to the public involvement process with the Ministry of Education recently announced "Commission on Learning." It makes sense that it would be in the best interests of Atikokan, our school boards and pupils if we presented a common front on issues that we believe would best serve our community.

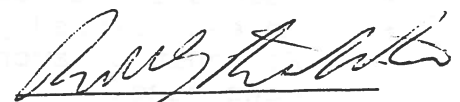
XI. SUMMARY:

There are still many issues that concern the Atikokan Board of Education. For example we have not mentioned consolidation of our buildings and financial planning for future building needs, the revitalization of curriculum programs, introducing modern technologies into our system, maintaining our existing buildings, planning for capital needs of schools, and maintaining a reasonable level of taxation.

It is our hope as a conscientious community corporation that this paper will provide some meaningful input to the community strategies 2000 planning sessions. We trust that this may serve those citizens well who are interested in examining some local issues of the Atikokan Board of Education. If the participants are interested in additional information, we would do our best to be of further assistance.


Allan Korkola
Director of Education


Judy Eluik
Chair
Atikokan Board of Education


Rob Ritchat
Vice-Chair

What the future might hold.

1.) Looking at N.W. Ont. as a good holiday place. Amos Brilman of Stratton, Ont. and a new resident of Canada from Germany, has been taking his German guests onto the Quetico lake system canoeing and as a result, he has inadvertently started quite a tourist trade to Canada, more specifically, the Quetico system. There is nothing like it in Europe and these Europeans are taking their holidays in Canada & bringing friends to experience this beautiful wilderness. How about marketing in Europe? That's if that's the way you want to go, but such a thing could bring abuse. You have to know what you want for this township & district.

2.) For Stikokan to be a good place to live & work, it must be safe, well-kept-up. There should be pride in the community & a positive attitude amongst its people. 'Children First' committee is working on these aspects and it would be advisable to pay close attention to that committee's recommendations.

What Hist. Provides Us

3.) Stikokan's strengths are its location: near so many lakes, hunting, fishing, wilderness experience, beauty, nature, etc.

4.) Weaknesses/Vulnerabilities

As in most small communities, feelings of inferiority, negative attitudes about the town's attributes. I'm always hearing "Nothing for young people here," which is just NOT TRUE. There's a wonderful swim program, both intense (NAKOKITA) & relaxed, lessons & public swimming, bowling, theatre, curling, numerous open air skating rinks (free), community centre, golfing, downhill & cross-country skiing, figure skating, hockey, public skating, St. Pat's Friday night basketball and I could go on and on. The truth is that the kids are more into idleness, parties, dances, restaurants & more leisurely activity which does not tax their physical abilities. It's too bad but that's the truth of the matter. The face of youth is changing. Everything is being provided but their interests are more into socializing. I can't tell whether that is necessarily bad or good. It's a reality that needs to be faced. Again, take a look at "Children First" for proposed answers to the dilemma.

Apathy and lethargy always occurs in the presence of negativity. That's a weakness that most small communities face.

Right now, vulnerable to the fluctuating types

of industry here. It makes for instability in a community, demoralization, family pressure; feast or famine for business, volatility in all aspects of community life.

Where Are We Now?

5.) Beauty of location, wilderness, friendliness

6.) Obviously unstable industry. Haven't lived here long enough to make a deduction here.

7.) Missing from Atikokan is downtown beautification. The plastic hanging baskets of flowers is purely tacky + shameful. That's a simple start to boost morale. Take a look at Steinbach entrances + Warroad, mn. Beautiful!

Also, a new positive outlook on things. This is a major proponent to success.

What We Must

8.) Attitude must be changed, welfare-mindedness needs changing. For things to happen, it has to come from people, not government. Beautification of the community must be added. This can be worked on now.

Workers need to be willing to make sacrifices to keep their jobs open in these

Atiskar industries (Pro Board, Sapawe, etc.). Start taking active action in your companies; insist on necessary changes, etc. Don't be passive waiting for handouts, whatever they may be, (layoffs, raises, whatever). Be proactive.

9.) Action steps (short) - beautification.
How to get volunteers? Only positive reporting and commenting. Plead. Ask all your friends. Spell out the particular job and description and ask people to volunteer ~~for~~ in their area of interest. This will be a long-term process but I think every bit worth it. It takes awhile to change people's minds about things, so keep plugging & don't give up. Let people get their feet wet gradually. Most of us need to know that there's a director who will oversee your volunteer activity and give guidance. It's scary if you feel like you're on your own. Most of us don't have the kind of confidence it takes to be a lone wolf on projects. But it will come over time. Sorry, guys. It will take time but it's worth it.

Volunteers come from the community. They can be anyone.

- 10.) Further follow-up? Germany, France, Netherlands, etc.?

Who Will

11.) I am willing to commit time + resources to make Stikshar better, but not all my time. I want to be asked. Feel free to do so. I need direction. I am not a lone wolf type.

12.) Governments + agencies should BUTT out + a grassroots movement shld. occur from the people. If governments would butt out, they could pay off the Canadian debt which is going to bankrupt us in the end anyway + make all our projects meaningless and if we weren't getting spoonfed by govts., maybe we'd get off our duffs and do something. If not, we deserve what we would then get. Simplistic? Yep, but probably true.