

**ATIKOKAN  
COMMUNITY  
STRATEGIC  
PLAN  
2001**

# **The Voice of Atikokan (second edition)**

**unabridged**

Atikokan Community Strategic Plan Public Input Summary

27 June 2001

*edite Warren Paulson*

### ***Our Vision***

Atikokan, Canada's Canoe Capital, is known as a safe, healthy community with a diverse economy, strong ties to the wilderness, and a creative spirit.

### ***Our Values***

We value:

- Friendliness and generosity
- Healthy and nurturing lifestyles
- Resourcefulness and tenacity

### ***Our Theme***

The canoe embodies the integrity, spirituality, artistry and innovation of northern Canada, and is a symbol that inspires these qualities in the people and businesses of our community.

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## The Process

Developing a community strategic plan must – by definition – involve the community. We invited all community members to attend four public input meetings. In addition, we sent special invitations to members of organizations and businesses in town.

The process<sup>1</sup> at the public meetings was to go from big to small. By starting with a vision of the future, participants determined what they would like our town to be like in the future. Later, they developed goals for achieving that vision. The next step will be to involve community groups and businesses in looking at how they can contribute to the vision.

### Step 1: SWOT Analysis

Residents completed a SWOT analysis to determine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing Atikokan. This information was used in step two as the basis for the vision statement. It was also used later during the goal-setting process as background information.

Strengths represent features that are internal and in the present. That is, Atikokan's strengths are positive features about Atikokan today.

Weaknesses represent shortcomings that are internal and in the present. That is, Atikokan's weaknesses are those challenges over which we have control.

Opportunities represent future, external possibilities for the town. These are the things we may become, and form the basis for the community vision statement.

Threats represent future, external difficulties the town may face. These things may not be within our control to change. However, by predicting them, we can better respond to them.

### Step 2: Visioning

The vision statement was developed in three steps. During the second public meeting, work groups answered five questions that led to the development of a vision and values statement. They were:

1. In ten years, what will be **special** about Atikokan?
2. In ten years, why will people want to **live** here?
3. In ten years, why will people want to **visit** here?
4. What are the most important **values** of our community?
5. What key **measures** will we use to monitor our progress?

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<sup>1</sup> This section describes the process we used in developing a community strategic plan. It does not outline the results of the various public meetings. A synopsis of the results can be found in the section "The Results." A full-text version of the community meetings can be found in the appendix.

Using this information, a small group of five volunteers<sup>2</sup> met and drafted a vision statement, values statement and a theme. This work was brought back to the third public meeting for review. The group made some amendments.

### ***Step 3: Goals development***

Developing the goals was a matter of asking what we need to have in place two – three years out if we are to achieve our vision. At the third public meeting, groups answered this question, using six criteria from the vision statement:

1. Canoe capital
2. Safe [community]
3. Healthy
4. Diverse economy
5. Wilderness ties
6. Creative [artistic] spirit

### ***Step 4: Objectives review and validation of the plan***

At the fourth meeting, participants validated the plan by assessing the objectives against the goals (and ultimately the vision). This ensured that the objectives (short-term actions) are consistent with the goals (medium-term results) and the vision (long-term future).

### ***Step 5: Putting the plan to action***

After the fourth public meeting, we will arrange meetings with various community groups. The purpose of these meetings will be to determine – and get commitment on – how they can contribute to the plan.

Some community groups, including the Chamber of Commerce and Quetico Park, are already taking this plan and making it a part of their planning and lobbying:

In addition, we are arranging meetings with the following groups to look at their participation in the community plan.

<b><i>Organizations</i></b>	<b><i>Opportunity</i></b>
Tracks to Town, Downtown Atikokan Renewal Committee, Atikokan Horticultural Society, Focus Atikokan, Chamber of Commerce, Museum Board	Discuss opportunities for improving the look of the community in a manner consistent with the plan, and consistent among the groups. (Objectives 1.1, 1.3)
Chamber of Commerce	Discuss the various business initiatives in the plan, and how the Chamber and local retailers might realize them. (Objectives 1.1, 1.2, 1.3,

<sup>2</sup> Vision team volunteers were Marg Thurier, Heather Maynard, Maureen Hatherley, Glenn Nolan, and Sheila Ferguson.

<b>Organizations</b>	<b>Opportunity</b>
	1.5, 1.8, 4.1, 5.2, 5.11, 6.3, 6.4, 6.7)
Museum Board (including the Atikokan Mining Attraction, Centennial Museum and Canoe Heritage Centre)	Discuss the objective dealing with historical interpretive centres. (Objective #1.4)
Sno Ho, Atikokan Economic Development Corporation	Discuss the "Northworld" project, and its implementation (Objective 1.5)
Atikokan Intergenerational Centre for Arts and Alternatives, Pictograph Gallery	Discuss the implementation of arts and culture objectives (Objectives 1.6, 2.2, 2.4, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.6)
Atikokan Public Library, Reading Plus, Contact North, Confederation College	Discuss the development of an adult education centre in the community (Objective 3.1)
Local builders, Atikokan Township	Discuss the need for and development of building lots in the community. (Objective 4.6)
Atikokan Economic Development Corporation, Beaten Path Nordic Trails, Quetico Park	Discuss the development and use of multi-use trails in Atikokan (Objective 5.6)

The AEDC has committed to monitor the plan. The organization will consult with community groups annually, and report on the progress being made.

*ASCC Wallace Hatchery potential to develop into The Wallace Hatchery for North & Northwestern Ontario nois are already made in that direction*

## The Results

### *Atikokan Community Vision*

Atikokan, Canada's Canoe Capital, is a safe, healthy community with a diverse economy, strong ties to the wilderness, and a creative spirit.

### *Atikokan's Core Values*

We value:

1. Harmony with the land
2. Friendliness and generosity
3. Healthy and nurturing lifestyles
4. Independence and tenacity

### *Atikokan's Theme*

The canoe embodies the integrity, spirituality, artistry and innovation of northern Canada, and is a symbol that inspires these qualities in the people and businesses of our community.

### *Atikokan's Goals*

The following goals were developed at the third public input meeting, based on the six key elements of the vision statement. They represent what we would like to have accomplished in the next two – three years in each of the six identified areas.

#### **1. Goals for a Canoe Capital**

- A. The canoeing theme is present throughout the town.
- B. Visitors enjoy a positive, extended experience. People in Atikokan have a sense of ownership. They appreciate the value of the park and our wilderness, and feel a pride that they want to share.
- C. We will use the Atikokan River as a canoe route (and it will be clean).
- D. Our ties with Quetico Park will be strong: park visitors will start and end their trips in Atikokan, taking advantage of local suppliers and events.

#### **2. Goals for a Safe Community**

- A. Our community will be known as a safe place to live and visit for people of all ages.
- B. We will practise and promote safety in all of our wilderness pursuits.

#### **3. Goals for a Healthy Community**

- A. Our residents will strive to be healthy in body, mind and spirit. Local health care organizations and professionals will offer a diversity of quality services. Local businesses and groups will support healthy lifestyles in their work.

#### **4. Goals for a Diverse Economy**

- A. Our economy will be year-round, complemented by seasonal winter and summer jobs.



- B. We will attract people here for a variety of sporting and cultural activities and events attractive to a variety of people.
- C. Our economy includes a strong forestry sector.
- D. We will have and promote a diverse infrastructure that supports small – medium sized professional businesses.
- E. We will successfully encourage the development and expansion of small – medium sized manufacturers, particularly those producing wilderness-related products.
- F. All of our businesses will demonstrate service excellence at all levels.

#### **5. Goals for our Wilderness Ties**

- A. We will have developed strong links with Quetico Park and other wilderness areas.
- B. Local organizations, programs and events will encourage art in the wilderness.
- C. Local schools will offer wilderness programs to their students.
- D. We will have many successful business activities related to our wilderness ties (outfitters, manufacturers, outdoor equipment stores...)
- E. Local art, such as murals and store-fronts will reflect our wilderness roots and our history.
- F. Local wilderness-oriented groups will successfully encourage residents and visitors to enjoy the outdoors year-round.

#### **6. Goals for our Creative (Artistic) Spirit**

- A. We will have inspiring settings for residents and visitors to create art.
- B. We will have a popular events schedule of artistic and cultural expression.
- C. We will celebrate and rejoice our successes.
- D. We will provide education and training in the creative arts for people of all ages.
- E. Local networks and by-laws will encourage and sustain a strong local artistic community.

#### ***Atikokan's Projects (Objectives)***

Some of these projects were identified during this planning process. Others have been gleaned from numerous local initiatives, studies and documents<sup>3</sup>. Some of the projects are currently in

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<sup>3</sup> A key source of information was the document *Atikokan 2000 – preparing for the next 100 years*, published by the AEDC. Information from the 1994 strategic plan was also used. See the bibliography for details.

progress while others are not. They are grouped according to the six themes above. During the public meetings, they were prioritized as “high,” “medium” or “low.”

### 1. Projects for a Canoe Capital

#	Project Description	Goal	Who	Priority
1.	Downtown core beautification and revitalization – McKenzie Avenue, Main Street and O’Brien Street – develop mini parks, upgrade lighting and landscaping, develop additional historic/cultural displays such as the history murals and the artifact displays	1.A 1.B	DARC Focus Atik Hort Soc Trck 2 Town Township Retailers Chamber	High
2.	A canoe interpretive/heritage centre will be established.	1.A 1.B 1.C 1.D	Canoe Hrtg Township Chamber	High
3.	Canoes will be visually present throughout the town – benches, hanging, outside and inside.	1.A 1.B 1.D	DARC Focus Atik Hort Soc Trck 2 Town Township Chamber <sup>4</sup>	High
4.	<p>Develop an interactive interpretive centre that celebrates the key themes of the 100 years of the history of Atikokan and the cultural/economic development of Atikokan.</p> <p>This major tourist destination attraction is projected to cost \$2.5 million. It will involve the amalgamation of the Atikokan Centennial Museum. The Atikokan Mining Attraction and the proposed extension of the Canoe Museum collection, which is based in Peterborough, Ontario.</p> <p>As well, the interpretative centre will feature an expanded and enhanced collection and display of artifacts and a suitable setting will be provided for the safe protection of achieves for future research. The key themes of the interpretative centre will be</p>	1.B 1.D	Museum AMA Canoe Hrtg Township	High

<sup>4</sup> These groups are all meeting this fall to determine how they can work in a more unified fashion.

#	Project Description	Goal	Who	Priority
	<p>a. Mining (gold and iron ore), including artifact placements in the downtown core and the Highway 11 - 11 B junction, mine pit lookouts, bus-on-rail tours of the mine sites</p> <p>b. Transportation and communication (voyageurs, railroads, highways, airports, telecommunications)</p> <p>c. Electricity generation, including the early hydroelectric power dams and the Atikokan Thermal Generating Station development and the Valerie Falls development.</p> <p>d. Logging and the manufacture of forest products (saw milling, particle board)</p> <p>e. Tourism (Quetico Park, other tourism services such as the White Otter Castle tours, pictograph tours, eco-tours, rock hounding, etc.)</p> <p>f. First Nations settlements</p> <p>In addition, develop a historic mine site tour using a tour bus modified to operate on a rail spur line owned by Ontario Hydro which runs by the former open pit mines to the Atikokan Generating Station. The bus will be fitted with video monitors and video players programmed to show excerpts of the films of the early iron ore mine development interspersed by comments timed to describe the scenic outlooks and present day historical features.</p>			
5.	Secure external funding to support a joint venture by the Atikokan Economic Development Corporation and the Atikokan Chamber of Commerce to develop and implement a 3 year "Northworld" public-private partnership approach to tourism marketing designed to promote the Atikokan-Quetico region in the U.S. and Europe, with a special emphasis on extending the tourism season to include the "shoulder" and winter seasons, and on the historic/cultural experience opportunities, eco-tourism, rock hounding, snowmobiling, festivals and carnivals, as well as the traditional hunting, fishing, canoeing opportunities.	1.A 1.B 1.C 1.D	AEDC Chamber Q Park Tourist Ass'ns Geologists Sno Ho	High

#	Project Description	Goal	Who	Priority
6.	We will host a Waterwalker Film Festival.	1.B 6.B	AICAA Chamber	Medium
7.	There will be regular articles in the newspaper that enhance our knowledge of and appreciation for our wilderness surroundings.	1.B	Progress Q Park	Medium
8.	We will have a Canoe Fest (possibly as part of Sports Days) including a parade, fun canoe races, portaging races, canoe comedy festival.	1.A 1.B 1.C 1.D	SportsDays Chamber Retailers	Medium
9.	The ANFC annual Pow-Wow will be a drawing card that attracts local residents and tourists. It will represent a "coming together" for Natives, and cultural education.	1.B 1.D	ANFC Arts Orgs Chamber Q Park Outfitters	Medium
10.	We will complete the Atikokan to Fort Frances portion of the Heritage Waterway Canoe Route (Voyageur route from Atikokan to Minaki to Winnipeg)	1.A 1.B 1.C 1.D	AEDC Township Q Park	Medium

## 2. Projects for a Safe Community

#	Project Description	Goal	Who	Priority
1.	Develop and deliver safety education: use of lifejackets, safe boating, day care, socializing, bullying, DARE, fire safety.	2.A 2.B	Police Fire Dept Schools	High
2.	We will develop a skateboard park.	2.A 3.A	Township <sup>5</sup> AICAA	Med
3.	Hold contests related to wilderness safety (during CanoeFest / Sports Days).	2.B	Q Park	Low
4.	Provide a drop-in centre that provides more activities for youth (less TV, healthy alternatives).	2.A 3.A	AICAA Parks&Rec	Low

<sup>5</sup> Township to provide space.

#	Project Description	Goal	Who	Priority
5.	Improve street lights.	2.A	Township	Low

### 3. Projects for a Healthy Community

#	Project Description	Goal	Who	Priority
1.	We will develop a one-stop adult education centre that offers everything from career counseling, a testing centre, through to literacy upgrading, college and university courses, a distance education video-conference classroom, and skills training for business and industry .	3.A	Reading Plus Library Con College <sup>6</sup> AEDC Contact North	High
2.	We will have enough health-care professionals to provide quality care for residents, and quality lifestyles for those professionals.	3.A	NW Health	High
3.	Health education will be integrated into our school system, and will reinforce health care as a career.	3.A	School Bd Schools	High
4.	Mental health and addiction assistance programs will be available, and residents will know how to access them.	3.A	NW Health Com Couns	High
5.	Our water will continue to be clean and safe.	3.A	Township	High
6.	More non-smoking public places (such as restaurants, stores) will be established in the community.	3.A	NW Health Township Chamber Retailers	Medium

### 4. Projects for a Diverse Economy

#	Project Description	Goal	Who	Priority
1.	Ensure that we have knowledgeable service providers who integrate and enhance visitors' experience. (For example, waiters have information on what to do in town, businesses adopt the canoeing theme, there are links between Atikokan and Quetico.)	4.F 4.A 4.B	Chamber AEDC	High

<sup>6</sup> Invite Confederation College president to speak at a local event, such as Chamber meeting.

#	Project Description	Goal	Who	Priority
2.	<p>Develop a historic mine site tour using a tour bus modified to operate on a rail spur line owned by Ontario Hydro which runs by the former open pit mines to the Atikokan Generating Station. The bus will be fitted with video monitors and video players programmed to show excerpts of the films of the early iron ore mine development interspersed by comments timed to describe the scenic outlooks and present day historical features.</p> <p>Develop a business plan including the necessary market research for the historic mine site tour.</p>	5.E	AMAA Retailers AEDC	High
3.	<p>The community of Atikokan is soon to benefit from the assistance of the NOHFC who have committed up to \$600,000 to match an investment by Bell Canada to extend fibre optic digital telecommunications to Atikokan and other communities along Highway 11. This new service will make it possible for</p> <p>a. The Atikokan Public Library to undertake a major renovation and re-equipping of its facility as a telecommunications access node (virtual reference library) for the whole community and to provide barrier-free services to those in the community unable to access the Internet and other information retrieval systems</p> <p>b. The development of facilities to support distance video-conferencing (virtual classroom) education and tele-medicine diagnostic and treatment services.</p>	4.D	AEDC Library	High
4.	Complete an airport runway and navigational aid upgrade.	4.A 4.D 4.E	Township AEDC	High
5.	Study to ascertain the economic viability of North-South scheduled and charter air services between Atikokan and key United States gateway airports to support the extension and expansion of the local tourism sector.	4.A 4.D 4.E	Township AEDC	High
6.	Identify opportunities for increasing the community's housing stock through the possible establishment of a community land bank, in-fill housing, and new subdivision locations.		Township Local builders	High

#	Project Description	Goal	Who	Priority
7.	Study the privatization and commercialization for the former Nym Lake Fire base, and park facilities with a view to encouraging the development of a major four – season resort on site.  Identify other lake properties in the Atikokan region, both on patented and Crown land, that are suited to and will qualify for the development of four-season resorts.	4.A 5.D	AEDC MNR	High
8.	Study to establish the spin-off economic development potential associated with the Ontario Hydro Atikokan Generating Station.	4.A	AEDC Hydro	Medium
9.	Upgrade the snowmobile route between Atikokan and Crane Lake, Minnesota with state-of-the –art signs and safety standards. For this to be effective, the route will need to be supported by an aggressive marketing program directed at snowmobile owners in the State of Minnesota.	4.A 4.B	SnoHo AEDC	Medium

#### 5. Projects for our Wilderness Ties

#	Project Description	Goal	Who	Priority
1.	High school students will have the opportunity to learn wilderness skills (Outers Program).	5.C	Schools Volunteers	High
2.	We will host a wilderness trade show.	5.D 5.F 4.A	Chamber Local Business	High
3.	Atikokan will have an outdoor store (selling high-quality equipment).	5.F 4.A	AEDC	High
4.	We will have a program to certify outfitters, and our local outfitters will support it.	5.D 5.F 3.A	Q Park	High
5.	Atikokan will have more manufacturers (canoes, paddles, camping equipment).	4.E 5.D	AEDC	High
6.	Atikokan will have multi-use trails in and around the community that are well-marked, well-mapped and well-maintained, including pedestrian lanes in well-traveled	5.F	Township	High

#	Project Description	Goal	Who	Priority
	areas.			
7.	Local wilderness clubs will have codes of ethics.	5.A 3.A		High
8.	<p>We will have established a strategic partnership to implement the Quetico Environmental Research and Education Centre. This strategic partnership should involve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A consortium of public and private sector sponsors, including</li> <li>○ The Federal Ministry of Industry, Science and technology</li> <li>○ The provincial Ministries of Northern development and mines, Natural Resources, Economic Development, Trade and Tourism</li> <li>○ Several major universities in the United States and Canada</li> <li>○ National Aeronautical and Space Administration (NASA) private foundations and</li> </ul> <p>The region's forest production companies</p> <p>The long-term telecommunications linkup and integration of continuous, real-time observations from land-based sites and satellites to form a "picture" of and assess the impact of changes in the biosphere on the three climatic zones associated with Quetico Provincial Park and the flora and fauna within the park and then, by means of and educational interactive a research centre, effectively share the learning from this research with the World scientific community as well as with lay persons, young and old.</p>	5.A 3.A	QC Q Park AEDC Township Prov Gvt Fed Gvt Industry	High
9.	We will develop a conceptual plan and investigate to see if a public-private consortium might emulate the "Skiing Mecca" concept as was developed at Biwabik, Minnesota. Consideration should be given to relocating the facility for downhill skiing so that it is suited to full season operation. Given changing demographics in the tourism market place, downhill skiing should be	5.F 5.B	Township	High



#	Project Description	Goal	Who	Priority
	integrated with an upgraded local network of cross country ski trails should be extended, in cooperation with the existing outpost camp owners, resort owners and outfitters, so that 'hut to Hut" and other outdoor winter camping excursions can be offered to local skiers and tourists.			
10.	We will offer wilderness ethics courses, that are well-supported by residents.	5.A 5.F 3.A	Schools Volunteers	Medium
11.	Murals and store-fronts downtown will reflect our wilderness ties.	1.A 5.E	Township DARC Chamber	Medium
12.	We will have and active and successful local canoe club.	5.F 1.C	Volunteers BPNT	Medium
13.	Develop a "Rock Hound Tour" itinerary that includes accessible sites offering attractive rock hounding opportunities for enthusiasts.	4.A		Medium
14.	Establish cottage lot subdivisions for development within the boundaries of the Municipality of the Township of Atikokan.		Township	Low

## 6. Projects for our Creative (Artistic) Spirit

#	Project Description	Goal	Who	Priority
1.	Atikokan will have venues for artists to learn and practice arts such as pottery, painting, photography.	6.A	Arts Orgs	High
2.	We will promote nature in the community as a means toward artistic and cultural expression.	6.B 5.E	Arts Orgs	High
3.	We will host an arts festival, attracting local and regional artists, actors and musicians.	6.B	Arts Orgs Chamber	High
4.	Galleries and parades will display and promote local artistic and cultural work.	6.B	Arts Orgs Chamber Township	High

#	Project Description	Goal	Who	Priority
5.	We will host races, such as cycling, canoeing, running.	6.B 3.A	Volunteers Township Q Park	High
6.	Local arts groups will develop and deliver successful artistic workshops.	6.B	Arts Orgs	High
7.	We will recognize and reward home improvements.	6.C 2.A	Township Chamber	Medium
8.	Local by-laws will encourage artistic endeavours.	6.E	Township	Low

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## Appendix 1: SWOT Analysis Results

In this summary, "Green" represents votes by participants on those items they believed were most important. "Red" represents votes by participants on those items they believed were least important.

Strengths represent current positive attributes of our town. Weaknesses represent current negative attributes of our town.

Strengths		Green	Red	Score
Note	Close proximity to Quetico Park	10		10
	Active arts (intergenerational centre/gallery programs	8		8
	Advanced communication	7		7
	Wilderness, lakes and natural attractions (incl White	6		6
	Fish farm and hatchery and cleaned up Caland site	4		4
	Volunteerism	4		4
	New schools	3		3
	Really long days in Summer	4	2	2
	Opportunities in school system (incl Outers)	4	2	2
	Affordable housing	3	2	1

Weaknesses		Green	Red	Score
	Everything closes on the weekends in the summer	8		8
	Dependency on one industry and natural resource	6		6
	Poor visual first impression	6	1	5
	Lack of shopping opportunities	5		5
	Lack of hospitality training	4		4
	Can be closed to newcomers	3		3
	Poor infrastructure: The base ratio	3		3
	Lack of growth, new blood, new money	3		3
	"Still" a mining town, use theme to look ahead	3		3
	Lack of Vision	3		3

Opportunities represent future potential for our community. These are often the result of external changes, that we may capitalize upon. Threats represent future potential negative events that could impact on our town. These may be events beyond our control, but that we can respond to.

Opportunities		Green	Red	Score
	Canoe Capital of Canada theme	12		12
	Ecotourism	10		10
	A theme to unite business	8		8
	Infrastructure	6		6
	Quetico Park, regional, national, international	7	2	5
	Spinoffs from canoeing –packs, paddles, energy bars,	4		4
	Electronic expansion of reach to niche market	3		3
	Secondary Industry	5	2	3
	Partnerships with Native community	3		3
	Sale of cottage lots	1		1

Threats		Green	Red	Score
	Loss of major employers (hydro, forest)	9	1	8
	Overuse of Quetico Park	6		6
	Government monies diminishing	6		6
	Water quality	4		4
	New competition from Global Market	4		4
	Pollution	3		3
	Shortage of Health Care	3		3
	Energy – rising utilities costs	2		2
	Closure of soft services (libraries, pool)	2		2
	Ely – online competition for Quetico Park	2		2

## Appendix 2

### AMA Submission

ATIKOKAN THEME  
Attn. Marg Lambkin  
P.O. Box  
Atikokan On. POT ICO

We suggest that Atikokan's development theme should continue to be its proud, unique and diverse history and character.

The town slogan could be

*Atikokan - Canoe Capital of Canada,  
Atikokan where our Past presents our Future,  
Atikokan Has the Courage to Care,  
Atikokan where Time Stands Still  
etc.....*

### RATIONAL

1. Atikokan has a very proud and colourful history and character that is *unique* and distinct from any other community in the world. It is this history that makes its residents proud and draws visitors who are looking for a destination that offers something different than other tourist spots.

#### HISTORICAL

Early Native cultures after the ice age  
North West Fur Trade  
Early Explorers  
Dawson Trail, route for soldiers on way to Riel Rebellion  
Railway with Atikokan as "golden spike" between Thunder Bay & Winnipeg  
Early pioneers such as Tom Rawn  
Many early iron & gold mines and logging to fuel them  
White Otter Castle  
The Prisoner of War Camps  
The Diversion Project ( which more than doubled the magnitude of the building of the Panama Canal) followed by development of Charleson, Caland & SRIM  
Quetico Park development

#### CHARACTER

wild life, plant life  
water ways  
canoeing  
people  
industry  
way of life

sports & recreation  
the arts

2. Throughout the years various businesses have already emphasized some of these historical themes in their name, promotion and / or decor

White Otter Castle ....	White Otter Castle Inn & Restaurant	
Diversion Project	Diversion Restaurant	
Mining	Union Pub Hoggarth Pit Bowling Alley Iron Mine Steep Rock Hotel Iron City Cleaners	
Early Explorers	Radison Motel Voyageur Mall	
Mining History	Atikokan Centennial Museum Atikokan Mining Attraction	
Total history of the area	Atikokan Centennial Museum Atikokan Public Library	
Lumbering	Skidders Restaurant attempted this	
Canoeing	Canoe Canada X/Y Company paddle manufacturing Two Canoe manufacturers in town Atikokan Progress titles Atikokan As the Canoe Capital of Canada	
Quetico	Quetico Park Quetico Centre Quetico Electric	Quetico Bus Lines Quetico North Quetico Wilderness Outfitters
hunting/fishing	Sportsman Restaurant	
people, pioneers	commemorative tree park at Bunnel Park streets named after early pioneers and mining personnel signs commemorating our athletes Pioneer Centre	
Native	Ojibway name of town Pictograph Gallery Native Friendship Centre	
Plant & wild life	Pines Motel WildWood Country Gifts	
etc.		

3. Other or new businesses could focus on similar or undeveloped aspects of our character.

- \* using the paddle as door handles, coat hooks and inside decor,
- \* displaying logging tools and old logging photos
- \* displaying photos and historical information of the building that business is occupying
- \* displaying photos and uniforms of our athletes, teams
- \* fixing up the original Bank of Commerce on Clark St. with an indoor mural of business being carried on (*to be viewed throughout the window*)
- \* etc.

*( There may be sources of funding for such an endeavour. Also in some communities a certain percent of the taxes already paid by business is set aside to encourage businesses to join in.)*

4. The miniparks' artifacts commemorate the mining and Atikokan Centennial Museum's main park features mining, logging, the log cabin, and railway. The proposed Canoe Museum will present the canoe. Future artifacts of other facets of our character could be obtained and presented by other groups in the community. Beautification and plantings by DARC and the Horticultural Society, as well as the Walking Trails, River and Riverfront development etc. complement all these.

5. The six murals downtown depict the history & magnitude of the diversion of the river system, the draining of the lake and mining . The one done by A.H.S. students, also touches on the broader history of natives, pioneers, railway, lumbering, canoeing and pioneers. It is hoped that future murals, celebrating our unique history and character, will be undertaken by other groups. These not only serve as decoration, but are meaningful and teach the tourist and our young people about our area and serve our early and present residents proud.

6. The banners promote Atikokan as the Home of the Steep Rock Iron Range

7. The study done by DARC lays out exciting plans for developing the store fronts to emphasize the pioneer character they initially had.



8. The rust colour, characteristic of the iron mining, the pictographs and our mud has been used on some of the banners, garbage cans, benches and artifacts and could be extended to other furnishings and signage to pull it all together.

## CONCLUSION

As shown on the previous pages, an enormous amount has already been in existence or initiated with our history and character as the theme. This focus unifies development, while allowing for individuals and special interests to present their individual portion of the whole picture.  
( apologies to any that have been forgotten)

## RECOMMENDATION

1. This *theme* of Atikokan's proud, unique and diverse history should continue as the focus for development.
2. A *slogan* be chosen for promotion and identity

Yours truly,  
Atikokan Mining Attraction Association Inc,

Chairperson

## Appendix 3

### Marsha Rydberg Submission

#### ATIKOKAN/DREAM OR REALITY

I'd like you sit back and relax, and come on a tripe with me. If you have children bring them. If not borrow a few.

Mr. Toastmaster, fellow Toastmasters, and guest. You are driving down highway 11 heading east. The children are fighting in the back. The way children do - she's sitting on my side - no I'm not - are we there yet? With this ringing in your ears you drive over a hill and see a sign showing that there is a town a short distance to your left. Well! This seems like a good time to take a break. Besides it is time for lunch.

You turn left and head down a road that although it is not manicured it is still neat and well kept. You come up over a railway tracks and see a large brightly coloured sign that says "Welcome to Atikokan, Canoe Capital of Canada", and a picture of people canoeing.

The road is lined with Maples and Cedar trees, and dotted among them are benches and brightly coloured canoes tipped partially on their side with what looks like thousands of beautiful multi coloured flowers spilling out of them. The Businesses that line the road are neat and tidy. The signs giving direction are clear and colourful. One sign points the way to a Centennial Museum, so you decide that is a good place to stop and let the children wear off some energy. Driving along the road to the Museum you notice on your right a nicely kept river with canoes going up and down. Once you have parked you can see a road on your left with all different kinds of shops. You decide to explore this first. The side walks are made out of cobble stones, and here and there are trees planted with black iron railing around them to help protect them. You also notice the benches and other artifacts. The stores and restaurants are warm and inviting. The sales people, and waitresses are cheerful and helpful. They are full of information about the area. After about half an hour you decide to pick up a lunch and have a picnic under the trees by the Museum. As you cross the bridge going to the Museum the children ask if they can go for a ride in a canoe. You tell them you'll ask about it later.

Lunch being over it is now time to visit the Museum, which is a large log building situated behind you with a train, truck and other large artifacts around it. On entering the building you are greeted by a member of the staff, who welcomes you and asks if you would like a guided tour or prefer to wander through alone. You thank her and say this time you will go alone.

The first sight that greets you is the history of the Logging industry the way it is done in the present, complete with the machinery. You feel as if you are out in the bush with the workers. Next you enter into an area depicting the open pit mining. It is set up as if you are standing on the edge of the pit looking down into it. You can see the trucks and machinery working. One area shows what happens to the iron ore as it goes through the pellet plant. Each section shows a bit of the town and what life is like at that period. From the mining you go to the logging the way it was done in the past, followed by the early

Railway, and ending with the Native Canadians, and the fur trade. You now feel you have traveled through time and understand the history of this area.

As you are leaving the museum you stop a Museum employee and ask about the canoes going up and down the river. He explains that you can purchase a ride and guided tour from the voyageurs who are rowing the larger freighter canoes or you can rent a small canoe and go for a ride yourself.

We decided that we would take a tour. The voyageurs were great! They kept us regaled with stories of the river and area from the fur trade days. Every now and then they would add a humorous antidote. All in all it was very informative and entertaining. We laughed and talked all the way back to our car.

As we drove out of Atikokan we looked at each other and knew that not only would we be back (we could hardly wait), but we would be telling all our friends about it as well. We'd just spend the best day we could remember. There wasn't a peep out of the two sleepy heads in the back.

If you have bought this dream, and would like to see it become a reality, then it is time to get involved. Volunteer with one of the organizations that are trying to make this happen. They'd sure appreciate it, every hand will help take the dream one step closer to reality.

Appendix 4 Vision of A Atikokan's Future.  
Heather Maynard Submission

(Written by Herman Morphet, circa 1980)

Herman Morphet.

Atikokanites will be proud to have been children in, grown up in, and retired in Atikokan in the future.

The forest industries will continue to provide jobs and dollars, simply because they will be well managed using local input and <sup>the timber</sup> ~~they~~ will continue to grow. Growth may be enhanced by introduction of strains of soft and hard wood, bred for fast growth, straight, ~~and~~ tall. wood. free of major defects.

A number of industries adding value to the wood will be added to the Atikokan scene. Among these will be, production of shapes and beams from chips and high quality waterproof binders. More products like Moongs saddles could be produced. More small plants producing furniture and housing components will be on stream. Hunting and fishing will be maintained at present levels or enhanced by better management.

Fish farming shows great promise because the pits for years will have no outlets. Fear of contaminating adjacent wild fisheries such as is

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now being shown at seaside fish farms and farms located on streams will be not exsistant in Atikokan.

Lindsay might take advantage of NORFONTH new initiative in ~~pro~~ financing the promotion and marketing of farm raised fish, in order to increase his production and sales.

There could also be a farm established in the Steep Rock pit if warranted. The success of the pizza distributorship and meat packing plant should allow an industry of at least finishing cattle, hogs, chickens, etc in the area, <sup>and a cheese factory.</sup> More ~~so~~ plastics manufacturing.

4.

following successes by the carpet mfr. and shower wall. should be practical.

There should be a resurgence of gold mining - with luck - leading to higher population levels of younger people with growing families.

The "Come On Home" program should stir up a steady movement of people to Atikokan which may be only a trickle at times but at other times should result in a substantial number of visitors with some coming back to stay.

These could be young entrepreneurs seeking new and different opportunities,

tradesmen coming back as opportunities show up, early retirees coming back with ideas of starting their own businesses, perhaps doing something they had dreamed about most of their lives. Other seniors would come because of reasonably priced housing and abundant recreation of all sorts.

Many people might come who have lived and worked here, Others might come to visit and like the area enough to retire here.

While searching out ideas for year round recreation, it should be noted that Ahtokan has its



full share of promising musicians and could attract more. What might develop is a jamboree type festival featuring a special kind of music suited to, and describing the area, and living in it. With a good sound studio, songs and music could be developed that would not only be heard in the area, but could spread the district's fame, acting as a magnet to attract other musicians and visitors just coming to listen and enjoy.

A large part of Alikan's economy

should be derived from visitors

These people - sportsmen, growing families and seniors, would come for the wilderness experiences of hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, boating, canoeing and motoring through the vast unspoiled spaces we still have at our disposal.

The Quetico remains a great drawing card for canoeists. It could also be a favored area for snowshoeing and cross country skiing.

If operators were allowed to place temporary shelters in the park.

A snowmobile trail should be allowed across park areas between Atikokan

and Elig.

A complete trail network with signed, groomed trails, sheltered rest stops should criss cross the area and connect northern centres. Sales and service shops should do well.

A popular sport for winter and summer could be ~~see~~ ultra-light flying.

Tourist operators should show more ingenuity in offering various sports and attractions.

With the advent of boating to Atikokan with the Waterway, it should be recognized that Atikokan is not the terminus, but just another beginning to visit area lakes and rivers.

Canoeing and kayaking could be interesting because the country is headwaters country.

Lakes are usually placid and deep with good fishing. Many fur bearing animals exist in the swamps and marshes.

Few visitors may intimately know what an impact, beaver can have in developing their own habitat. Their engineering projects also provide habitat for other animals, birds and fish.

Could a special high strength boat or canoe be produced in Atikokan for use in head waters streams and lakes?

Learning about history and how

natives and early settlers lived seems to fascinate many people. There is tremendous potential to tell this story in the actual surroundings. Natives may have had many famous gathering spots but they also must have spent much time in small family groups in the headwaters. How <sup>did they live?</sup>

Atikokan has tremendous potential to tell about the natives, gold mines (all 200 of them in the area) ~~and~~ the tremendous story of the iron mining. The railroad story must be told before the artifacts are gone. The train station should be used <sup>in place</sup> with displays and rolling stock adjacent to it ~~and~~ inside the building.

with various interpretive displays, areas of natural beauty and just attractive rest areas should be part of the trail system and of visitors <sup>experience</sup>. Bus tours should be provided, so that groups could see Little Falls, then walk back from the Rec Centre down town and be picked up for viewing another leg of the trail system, the Mining attraction, museum and displays or <sup>go on</sup> a tour around the pits.

Residents should learn that the best way to get things done is to do them ourselves. Working as volunteers on

The many interesting projects available, will give a feeling of satisfaction accomplishment and pride in a job well done that others, will want to come and experience.

A Atikokan will once again be on all maps and in peoples minds either as a memory of an enjoyable vacation or as a desire to see and experience its pleasures.

A Atikokanites will once again be proud of their town, and will want to tell others about it.

**Produced by:**

Warren Paulson

Director, Information Technology & Programs

Quetico Centre

P.O. Box 1000

Atikokan, Ontario P0T 1C0

tel: 807-929-3511 ext 216

fax: 807-929-1106

e-mail: [warren@queticocentre.com](mailto:warren@queticocentre.com)

www: [www.queticocentre.com](http://www.queticocentre.com)



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