



Welcome to the Municipality of Powassan

*MUNICIPALITY OF POWASSAN*  
*COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN*

**In Partnership with**



**Prepared For:**  
**Prepared By:**  
**Date:**

**Municipality of Powassan**  
**Harriman & Associates and Saad Consulting**  
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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **“Addressing our Future”**

After reviewing the data and meeting with various stakeholders in Powassan ( for the purpose of this report the term Powassan throughout the report refers to the Municipality of Powassan), it is very clear from the Consultants’ perspective, that the citizens are passionate and proud of the quality of life the region affords. That is why the development of the Strategic Plan is so important. A concerted effort was made to keep the Plan brief and easy to read.

The identification of key people to serve on a Strategic Plan Steering Committee, in June of 2006, was a very positive step. The first major accomplishment of the Steering Committee was the development of a Mission Statement, Vision Statement and Value Statements. Harriman & Associates and Saad Consulting reviewed the data collected from other various meetings with people in the region. Five common themes or areas resulted and a key goal for each was identified. They included:

#### **A. Economic Growth and Development**

**Goal:** To work with key partners and stakeholders to develop and diversify the economic opportunities that is available in the Powassan area.

#### **B. Image, Identity and Community Attitude**

**Goal:** To continue to work positively as a community by focusing together on the region to make the Mission/Vision a reality.

#### **C. Tourism**

**Goal:** To market the rich heritage of Powassan as a major tourism area that offers its citizens a healthy, active lifestyle.

#### **D. Agriculture**

**Goal:** To continue to support farmers to diversify, to address market demands and long term sustainability.

#### **E. Recreation and Leisure**

**Goal:** To encourage the development of sport and recreation under one “umbrella” for Powassan.

Related to each of the above mentioned goals, descriptions and key initiatives are provided in the main document. Supporting these descriptions is a number of



“action statements” or objectives that, in essence, begin to provide the direction the Plan should take. Overall, there are thirteen areas that are described. They include:

1. Housing
2. Knowlton Ridge Equestrian Centre
3. Astronomy Public Observatory
4. Support Industry for the main street
5. Giesler Boatworks
6. Growth Marketing Strategy
7. Powassan as a “hub”
8. Community Attitude
9. Tourism
10. Agriculture
11. Powassan Recreation Advisory Committee
12. Staff Liaison
13. Trails

A total of sixty-four “action statements” or objectives begin to address these initiatives.

The third component of the Strategic Plan as described in the main document begins to identify the direction that would allow the Municipality to address the initiatives. Again, the Strategic Plan Steering Committee is being progressive by looking at all the major initiatives in order to gain a better understanding of each of them and then going through an exercise that will result in a ranking of these initiatives. This will provide them with another step in the right direction as they can review the ones they have identified at the top of this list and take the discussion to the next level.

Given that many of the initiatives are realistic, Powassan should be an exciting, dynamic place to be over the course of the next half decade.



## STRATEGIC PLAN BACKGROUND

In order to provide direction and a plan of action to allow Powassan to position itself positively over the next five to ten years, Council initiated what is called a “*Strategic Planning Process*”. A key part of this process is the development of a **Strategic Plan**.

Basically, a Strategic Plan would allow the municipality to remain on track in respect to its mandate. The mandate includes:

- a) Carrying out an economic analysis that involves reviewing data already collected.
- b) Creating a community Mission and Vision Statement.
- c) Identifying key community objectives for the next decade.
- d) Listing municipal priorities and projects.
- e) Completing a Human Resources Study (separate document)

**Strategic plans basically embrace at least three components:**

- 1. An articulation of purpose or “Mission” that is generally understood by all members of the community. This could also include a Vision Statement;**
- 2. An articulation of goals that must be met if the community’s mission is to be served optimally; and**
- 3. A platform for an action plan through which the goals are met.**

A strategic plan is not in and of itself an action plan; rather it is a direction setter.

A successful strategic plan will enable the community to avoid two opposite and equally undesirable circumstances. One is the “status quo” or resting on our laurels – drifting along, and the other occurs when the municipality tries to do everything all at once, to be all things to all people. The point of the strategic plan is to establish a dynamic balance to ensure things are consistent with the mission.

To be successful, the implementation of a strategic plan involves making choices. How much can our available resources support at one time? What priorities must be addressed in order to serve our vision and/or the health of the community? What must be addressed immediately? What has to be done first in order to facilitate subsequent initiatives? What can (or should) be deferred until resources or partnerships become available? Of course, the plan must also address how these decisions will be implemented.



The consulting team of Harriman & Associates and Saad Consulting was retained to develop the plan and facilitate the process. This is in response to Powassan's "Request for Proposal", January 17, 2006 (Appendix # 1 ) and will address three of the four main products – an Economic Analysis, a Community Action Plan document and a Statement of Municipal Priorities and Projects 2006 – 2011.

The Human Resource document was presented under separate cover.

### COMPONENT #1

In June of 2006, a Strategic Plan Steering Committee was identified and they have worked diligently to develop a Mission and Vision Statement.

Members of the Strategic Plan Steering Committee include:

1. Gord Cardwell.....Chairperson
2. Bob Young.....Mayor
3. George Thompson.....Councillor
4. Roger Glabb.....Councillor
5. Blair Beatty.....Councillor
6. Nancy Barner.....Councillor
7. Gerry Giesler.....Councillor
8. Peter McIsaac..... Councillor
9. Roberte Cardwell .....Member
10. Roger George.....Member
11. Andrew Busch..... Economic Development Coordinator
12. Roger Labelle..... CAO Clerk
13. Nicky Kunkel..... Deputy Clerk
14. Keith Harriman.....Consultant
15. Dave Saad.....Consultant

\* Councillors Christina Golding, Joan Jacobs and Dave Britton are to be complemented for their work on the Steering Committee during their respective term of office.



The results of their work include the following **Mission Statement, Vision Statement** and **Powassan's Community Values**.

#### MISSION STATEMENT

*“Through efficient and effective leadership, Powassan supports a high quality of life for all of its citizens. Its citizens have a strong sense of pride and ownership in the community”.*

*To this end, Powassan:*

- *Provides responsible stewardship of community resources*
- *Is progressive in its approach to new economic growth that will support and enhance existing business.*
- *Will work towards the creation of strong internal and external partners that will allow for maximizing of all community resources.*
- *Will continually work towards community growth and revitalization.*
- *Will strive to ensure a progressive quality of life for all residents*

#### VISION STATEMENT

*“Powassan is a community that embraces change while respecting the rich heritage of the area. It is a municipality based on strong fiscal government with a durable economy that recognizes the rights of all citizens, respects the environment and the amenities that it affords and offers to citizens a healthy, active lifestyle”.*

#### VALUE STATEMENTS

##### THE MUNICIPALITY OF POWASSAN

1. Values community growth.
2. Values being recognized as a safe community.
3. Values progressive development.
4. Values responsible governing.
5. Values strong relationships with community partners as well as other communities.



Through a series of public consultations, focus groups and individual discussions, an abundance of data was collected. After reviewing it, the consulting team found that the vast majority of input collected could fall under a number of key areas. They include:

- A. Economic Growth and Development**
- B. Image, Identity and Community Attitude**
- C. Tourism**
- D. Agriculture**
- E. Recreation and Leisure**

Using data collected through a variety of consultations and meetings, the consulting team then proceeded to develop the main **goal** for each of the five areas. This was then analyzed further to develop a number of objectives that would begin to serve as **action statements** in order to meet the goal and reflect Powassan Community Mission and Vision Statements. This allowed us to move into Component #2 of our strategic plan.

## COMPONENT #2

### **A.**

#### **ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

***Goal** - to work with key partners and stakeholders to develop and diversify the economic opportunities that are available in the Powassan area.*

Through a series of public consultations, focus groups and individual discussions over a five to six month timeframe, the following areas were identified as potential partners or stakeholders that could increase sustainable economic opportunities in the area.

1. Housing
2. Knowlton Ridge Equestrian Centre
3. Public Observatory
4. Support Industry for Main Street
5. Giesler Boat Builders

#### **A.1. HOUSING**

Affordable housing and senior housing were both areas identified that could have a significant impact on the area. The abundance of land for development combined with the quality of life opportunities for families, seniors and retirees makes for an attractive economic generator for the area. Over the next five to ten years, Council will:

#### **Objectives:**



**A.1.1.**

Develop a housing strategy that identifies existing housing stock and potential demands as well as available land in the Powassan community for affordable housing and closeness to the town centre as well as other local municipalities.

**A.1.2.**

Continue to market the fact that housing prices are affordable compared to other municipalities such as North Bay or Huntsville.

**A.1.3.**

Update the demographics of the Powassan community to show what kind of housing is most needed and will most likely attract those residents that prefer its quality of life.

**A.1.4.**

Market Powassan's strengths that include a vibrant downtown core, proximity to Hwy 11 and other major centers to potential residents.

**A.1.5.**

Apply for available funding through appropriate ministries.

**A.2. KNOWLTON RIDGE EQUESTRIAN CENTRE**

During the data collection phase of our information sessions, the recent development of Knowlton Ridge Equestrian Centre was mentioned several times as a new industry that could attract people to the area. It is considered one of the top training facilities in Northern Ontario. Over the next five to ten years, Powassan Council will:

**Objectives:**

**A.2.1.**

Meet with the owners of Knowlton Ridge Equestrian Centre to determine what has to be done to grow this exciting industry.

**A.2.2.**

Establish a small task force to study the potential economic spin-offs of the equine industry to the Powassan community.

**A.2.3.**

Meet with Mr. Chris Rees and Ms. Hailey Bertrand to review their document that speaks to the impact that the equine industry can have in Northern Ontario.

**A.2.4.**

Encourage and support the owners of Knowlton Ridge Equestrian Centre to pursue partnerships with others in the equine industry in Northern Ontario with the intent on forming a "**Northern Ontario Association**" and promoting the Powassan area as the hub.

**A.2.5.**

Explore the possibility of having a small action group with expertise in economic analysis, to monitor the growth of this industry so that they can measure the impact it is having on the community.



### **A.3 ASTRONOMICAL PUBLIC OBSERVATORY**

Dating back to the mid 90's, the Near North area is on record as declaring the need for a major tourism destination attraction. Passage North was to be the hub for the region with a wide variety of additional attractions supporting the primary attraction. To date the Near North area has not seen such a destination attraction materialize. The Public Observatory, to be located at the south end of Powassan, has the potential to be that hub. It has the capacity to be the central location of a multi-disciplined tourist attraction. During the next five to ten years Council will endeavor to:

#### **Objectives:**

##### **A.3.1.**

Continue to provide support with the Public Observatory Committee keeping the Public Observatory a high profile with Council.

##### **A.3.2.**

Determine the potential spin-offs both physically and economically from such a development, i.e. restaurants, service stations, motels and tourism growth.

##### **A.3.3.**

Market the Public Observatory as a potential national and international attraction.

##### **A.3.4.**

Set up a task force to identify and market the prospects of linking Algonquin Park and the Canadian Ecology Centre in Mattawa to the Public Observatory from a student centered perspective as a major educational attraction.

##### **A.3.5**

Develop a strong relationship between the Public Observatory and the Almaguin Nipissing Travel Association in terms of the role they could play in the marketing and promotion of this venture.

##### **A.3.6.**

Access any governing agencies that could potentially provide a variety of resource support to make the project a reality.

### **A.4. SUPPORT INDUSTRY FOR THE MAIN STREET**

The community supports the importance of Main Street in Powassan and in Trout Creek as a key promotional tool as was expressed in the public consultation process. The municipality can use a community planning approach to identify a specific area of importance and to establish goals and objectives specific to this area. This initiative is called a "Community Improvement Plan" with added powers. The authority lies within the Planning Act, Section No. 28, but requires special designation within the Official Plan. Section 28(2) specifically allowing municipalities to designate a "Community Improvement Project Area" where there is an Official Plan in effect. Council, over the five to ten years, should:



**Objectives:**

**A.4.1.**

Continue to focus redevelopment in both core areas by making it a regular part of Council discussions.

**A.4.2.**

Seek community input to strike a balance between seeking long-term business investments and keeping the main streets a “green belt” area for pedestrian traffic.

**A.4.3.**

Encourage the development of housing projects close to the downtown core to create traffic usage.

**A.4.4.**

Encourage MoPED (Municipality of Powassan Economic Development) to take a leading role in developing sustainable long-term investments in the downtown core.

**A.4.5.**

Forge closer partnerships with downtown businesses to show support for the revitalization of the downtown.

**A.4.6.**

Continue to develop themes such as The Maple Syrup Festival and the Farmers Market that will attract visitors from outside the community as well as inside.

**A.4.7.**

Designate the Main Streets as a “Community Improvement Area” and continue to invest resources to keep them at a high standard.

**A.4.8.**

Establish a “Communities in Bloom” committee that can use the downtown as its focal point in encouraging people to make the community attractive and clean.

**A.5.**

***GIESLER BOAT BUILDERS***

In the 1920’s a decision was made that would have a profound effect on a Powassan family. Barney Giesler realized that quality products and craftsmanship was a marketable commodity. After closing his blacksmith business and building and selling several cedar boats that handled the waters of Lake Nipissing, Barney became a legend with particular attention to quality. The rest became history as the Giesler family carved out a market that has survived for eighty six years. The quality of work and craftsmanship that started the business in the 1920’s is still present today and will likely continue for more generations to come.

This family run manufacturing operation is as unique to Powassan as the polar bear is to Cochrane. One only has to tour the business and feel the rich history to appreciate the important role this has played in the economic and social fabric of the Municipality.



Without exception the success of this business is driven by the age old philosophy of pride. The municipality has benefited over the years from the success of this business and will continue to benefit. It is in the best interest of all to ensure continued support for this business. Over the next five to ten years Powassan Council will:

**A.5.1.**

Meet with the owners to develop a joint marketing effort.

**A.5.2.**

Continue to support the Giesler Boat business as a marketing tool to portray its rich heritage.

**A.5.3.**

Include the Giesler Boat business in all promotion and marketing strategies as an icon of the area.

**B.**

**IMAGE, IDENTITY AND COMMUNITY ATTITUDE**

**Goal** - *To continue to work positively as a community by focusing together on the region to make the mission/vision a reality.*

Input from focus group discussions indicated that the community had to work together to continue developing a positive regional image. The following areas could enhance that image.

1. Growth Marketing Strategy
2. Defining Powassan as a “hub”
3. Community Attitude

Community image, identity and attitude reflect the people side of the equation. They speak to how the region collectively, as well as individually, portrays itself to visitors, potential investors and potential future residents. They also are key components as to how the current residents interact with each other.

**B.1. GROWTH MARKETING STRATEGY**

In a survey that was carried out at one of the public forums, those present ranked a “Growth Marketing Strategy” as the second overall priority for Powassan. This type of exercise will require someone who will serve as the champion who can build a team to ensure this strategy is developed, implemented, evaluated and updated. A Growth Marketing Strategy touches on a number of areas that include Product Definition, Target Market and Incentive Opportunities.

**Product Definition** – The Municipality must be viewed as a collective product that needs to be clearly defined. The reality of the situation is that with the emergence of Knowlton Ridge Equestrian Centre and the development of the



Public Observatory, Powassan has the two anchors that are clearly primary products that will be the main reason for tourism growth. But what are the other products that exist or could be developed? An inventory of all products will be required including all existing businesses, municipal services, tourism related amenities, artisans as well as attractions and amenities afforded by surrounding communities. The products must be clearly defined and allow for packaging based upon the nature of the family or group that is coming to the area. Over the next five to ten years, Council will:

**Objectives:**

**B.1.1.**

Identify a “champion” who has the skills to build a dynamic team to market the region.

**B.1.2.**

Build an inventory of all the “products” that include businesses, municipal services, tourism related amenities and artisans of the entire region.

**B.1.3.**

Develop a marketing strategy possibly using the Almaguin Nipissing Travel Association as a partner to promote the “Products” of the region.

**Target Market** – The diversity of the product will be attractive to a number of target markets. There will be specific markets who are dedicated to the equine industry or to the astronomy interest area. Awareness of the product should be uppermost in terms of reaching this market. Provincial and national bodies or organizations can serve as valuable tools in terms of reaching these markets. The generic traveler looking for hands on experience is another target market that has to be identified. Family travel and early retirees are looking for inexpensive holidays that are fun and exciting and provide new experiences. Many studies have been done in the area of target markets and working with organizations such as ANTA and the Ontario Tourism Marketing Corporation could be advantageous to Powassan. Blue collar families, equine and astronomy buffs, all of Northern Ontario looking for a “southern experience” and the Golden Horseshoe are all areas that will require further investigation. Over the next five to ten years Council will:

**Objectives:**

**B.1.4.**

Utilize any provincial or federal support to assist in the development of an overall Marketing Strategy that will identify the brand, image and products that are marketable.

**B.1.5.**

Once the local area attractions have been clearly defined, identify the target audience and develop strategies to get at that segment of the market.

**Incentive Opportunities** – Incentive opportunities are twofold. Incentive travel within the business sector can be a very lucrative source of revenue. This type of industry requires the proper amenities to be available in order to provide a first



class experience. Regional and provincial tourism bodies have staffs who address incentive travel specifically and this would be worth pursuing. The second area of incentives is much more internally focused. If Powassan is serious about attracting new economic opportunities and growing existing ones then the Municipality should determine who the key players are and bring them together to build economic incentive packages for prospective investors. This is definitely a “give/get” scenario in that the municipality may feel that it is giving something up, but in the long run the benefits of “investing in new opportunities” will pay dividends. Over the next five to ten years Council will:

**Objectives:**

**B.1.6.**

Create an inventory of all local, provincial and federal organizations that can provide resource support to market the region.

**B.1.7.**

Continue to have Council develop partnerships with local industry by providing incentive packages that will not only support local business but sustain them from a tourism perspective.

**B.1.8.**

Identify the “key” players in the region and collectively discuss the kinds of incentive packages that could be provided.

**B.2. DEFINING POWASSAN AS A ‘HUB’**

Powassan is considered as a destination location for many of the smaller towns and villages in the area. As part of the Growth Marketing Strategy, the building of awareness as to the amenities that Powassan has available would be beneficial to local business. It is the feeling of the consulting team not a lot of time and energy that should go into this aspect of the strategy other than to ensure that these potential markets are aware of what is available within Powassan and that they do not necessarily have to venture to the larger areas. The “hub” concept has also been dealt with earlier in our objectives.

**B.3. COMMUNITY ATTITUDE**

During the numerous meetings held to collect data on what direction the region should be taking over the next five to ten years, it was clear that many people still harbored strong feelings about the amalgamation of Trout Creek, Himsworth South and Powassan into the greater Powassan area. The major concerns centered on a number of things that included the name “Powassan”, taxes, road maintenance and equalization of services. While the concept of downloading services has affected most cities and towns in Ontario to the point municipalities have had to be very creative to keep the financial picture in focus, most have survived and continue to be creative in resolving issues. Knowing that “attitude” is a concept that requires time, energy and effort to address positively over the next decade, it is recommended that Council should:



**Objectives:**

**B.3.1.**

Provide workshops on the “change process” to the public so they can understand what is required to move forward.

**B.3.2.**

Identify key partners from each of the communities of Trout Creek, Himsworth South and Powassan to address the areas of concern as a team with the same objectives in mind, i.e. people with expertise in road maintenance from each of the three communities work together to identify issues and present a united approach when they share their resolutions of issues and recommendations to the Council and the public.

**B.3.3.**

Set up a task force to identify and develop a communication process that keeps the public informed. Follow up on communication is key to the success of the process.

**B.3.4.**

Provide an annual forum for citizens of all areas to present concerns to the appropriate people with a follow-up commitment, (these forums could be held in each of the three major communities annually or rotated every year).

**B.3.5.**

Identify “champions” who can share other parts of the strategic plan that will have a positive impact on Powassan over the next ten years and beyond.

**C.**

**TOURISM**

**Goal - To market the rich heritage of Powassan as a major tourism area that offers its citizens a healthy, active lifestyle.**

From economic growth and development to image, identity and community attitude, the end result appears to be the development of tourism related products that will serve as the basis for long term sustainability of the region. If tourism is to be a major part of future growth and development, it might warrant more in depth investigation than this study gives it.

An *Investment Readiness Strategy* might identify additional secondary attractions as well that would benefit from the association with primary attractions. Linkages to other attractions in the area, with the primary one being Algonquin Park will make for a proactive regional tourism package to be promoted. (Appendix No.2).

Tourism is an ever growing and ever changing industry. It has been identified as one of Northern Ontario’s most important industries accounting for more than 1.663 billion dollars in 2001. Tourism makes a significant impact on generated dollars for all three levels of government as well as being a major contributor to



the economic growth of Ontario by providing over 56,000 jobs. For more information refer to Appendix No. 5

Powassan Council over the next five to ten years will:

**Objectives:**

**C.1.**

Review the strategies that the Northern Ontario Tourism Strategy have developed to assist with market penetration to identify which products would most benefit Powassan.

**C.2.**

Identify the overlap of other objectives outlined in this document that would eliminate duplication or could be combined, i.e. Knowlton Ridge Equestrian Centre/marketing strategies.

**C.3.**

Strengthen the working relationship with ANTA (Almaguin Nipissing Travel Association) to develop an infrastructure to support tourism related packages that would be attractive to tourists.

**C.4.**

Investigate the Agritourism concept to attract visitors to the region.

**C.5.**

Work closely with the Near North Trails Association and the OFSC to further develop trails in and about the area.

**C.6.**

Identify and encourage the key players in tourism to develop a database of attractions and amenities that results in a marketing strategy for tourism activity in the Powassan region.

**D.**

**AGRICULTURE**

**Goal-** To continue to support farmers to address market demands and long term sustainability.

**Agricultural Overview**

The profile of farming in the region is one of transition. While some sectors are declining others are increasing. For the most part the reason for the change is attributed to the demand as well as climate. While the percentage of farm land relative to the Province is relatively small, the economic impact of the agriculture sector is significant in this area and is worthy of support. In the past several years a stronger presence of Amish farmers has established themselves in the region. The strengths they bring include farming and construction. This potential growth area should be pursued in partnership with the existing families in the area.



The study commissioned by the Sudbury East and Nipissing Parry Sound Federation of Agriculture has provided a sound economic impact analysis that clearly demonstrates the importance of this sector in the local and regional economy. (See Appendix #4)

There needs to be a greater effort in providing support for the agricultural community. Policies specifically targeted at supporting agricultural operations may be introduced into an Official Plan with inherent rights. Council may want to consider increasing the level of support for the farmers market through promotion or location. The development of an Agricultural Advisory Committee with council representation would go a long way in addressing this issue.

The Odyssey Report produced in 2002 identified strategic directions and recommendations for long term sustainable farming in Ontario. The recommendations range in nature from organizational issues to ownership and autonomy. The information in this report is approximately five years old but contains valuable direction for the recognition and survival of the farming community in this region. It is the opinion of the consultants that a review of the recommendations be made that relate to this region as a support to a significant sector of the community. Over the next five to ten years Council will:

**Objectives:**

**D.1.**

Encourage the development of roadside vendors to U-Picks by promoting it as part of the communication plan for the region.

**D.2**

Begin introducing policies targeted at supporting agricultural operations in the "Official Plan".

**D.3**

Develop a database that can track farm operations and provide the necessary information required to support the industry over the long term.

**D.4**

Provide support to allow farmers to continue monitoring and tracking new crop development with the New Liskeard Agricultural Research Station and the Verner Test Site in West Nipissing.

**D.5**

Review the Odyssey Report/2001 to identify recommendations and strategic directions that support the current farm infrastructure in this region.

**D.6**

Continue to support the Agricultural Society Fall Fair.

**D.7**

Support the development of an Agricultural Advisory Committee with Council representation to address the local farmers' needs.



**E.**

**RECREATION AND LEISURE**

**Goal - To encourage the development of sport and recreation under one “umbrella” for Powassan.**

In 2005, Powassan commissioned the development of a Recreation Action Plan. A report was completed and presented to the Council. It was the decision of the Council to not accept the report. Upon review of the report, it is the recommendation of the consulting team that the report is accepted and the recommendations are used as a guide for a newly formed joint Recreation Committee. There appears to be some misgivings about some of the content of the report that may be a misunderstanding of the recommendations that have been presented. Specifically, reference is made to the future of the Trout Creek Arena. The reference to reviewing the viability of replacing the ice plant should it break down has been misconstrued as recommending the closure of the arena by certain segments of the population. In essence, the recommendations speak to due diligence being carried out in terms of the securing the funds to replace the ice plant should it cease to operate. To further clarify, the consulting team would add to this section of the Recreation Plan that all avenues to generate funds to keep the arena in an operational state be explored prior to any decision being made as to the future of this facility. Based upon governance precedent, such due diligence would be carried out on any municipally owned facility prior to moving forward.

The Provincial Government is working to develop a Sport and Recreation Capital Infrastructure Development Fund to address issues such as the ice plant in the Trout Creek arena.

There are a number of good recommendations in the report that if implemented would be very proactive in terms of improving the recreation opportunities in the area. A key recommendation references the need to bring all community recreation committees together under one umbrella. A focus group was held with the current joint committee that is in place and it would be advisable to formalize this committee and have them act as the coordinating body for all recreation in the Municipality. Geographical and age representation should be considered as part of an overall terms of reference for such a committee. The overall Terms of Reference may include the following, used by the current committee:

**1. Powassan Recreation Advisory Committee**

Powassan Recreation Advisory Committee is made up of citizens appointed by Council representing respective organizations and age groups. The purpose of the Advisory Committee is:

- To provide a forum for citizens' suggestions or concerns.



- To advise appropriate staff on community recreational needs.
- To make staff aware of and sensitive to public needs; and
- To be accountable to Council for the delivery of sport and recreation services.

**MEMBERSHIP:**

The Committee shall consist of an equal distribution of members from across the Municipality. Anyone interested in sitting on the Committee may submit a one page outline as to why they want to be part of the Committee and also outline their past involvement in sport and recreation.

**TERM OF OFFICE:**

1. In the inaugural year of the Advisory Committee, 4 members will be designated as two year terms and 3 members will be designated as one year terms. At the conclusion of the first year, three members will be appointed for a two year term. At the conclusion of the second year, four members will be appointed for a one year term. This pattern will be followed for the duration of the life of the Advisory Committee in order to ensure continuity as well as turnover.
2. A member may only sit for three consecutive terms on the board.
3. The Chair of the Board will be elected by the Board for a two year term

**DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. The Advisory Committee shall serve in an advisory capacity only to make recommendations to the Council on recreation projects, programs, or activities.
2. To monitor the implementation of the Sport and Physical Activity Plan and to update action steps based upon the direction of sport and recreation in the area
3. To provide a forum for public input into the future sport and physical activity and recreational needs of the citizens
4. In cooperation with staff, present an annual report outlining the outcomes of the recreation programs over the past year
5. To serve as a resource for the staff person

Powassan Council will over the next five to ten years:

**Objectives:**

**E1.1.**

Review the Recreation Action Plan with the intent of accepting it at this time. If the report is accepted, then continue with the following objectives:

**E.1.2.**

Pursue the Provincial Government “Sport and Recreation Capital Infrastructure Development Fund” to access funds for repairs needed, such as the ice plant in the Trout Creek arena.



**E.1.3.**

Bring all the community recreation groups under one umbrella by forming a committee structure that allows this to happen.

**2. STAFF LIAISON:** Recreation Coordinator

In order to move forward based upon community needs, it would be recommended that a community needs study be carried out in order to gain an understanding as to the overall recreation requirements of the citizens. This will also have an impact on the future direction of facility development in the area. Along the same lines, it would be beneficial to develop a joint use agreement with the local school boards to allow for access to local schools at a minimal cost to the user groups.

Too often youth get lost in the big picture and it would be recommended that a Youth Council be developed with a “for youth...by youth” mindset. Engaging the youth in sport and physical activity planning will create a greater sense of ownership and will go a long way towards addressing the issue of inactivity and obesity amongst our young people.

Volunteerism is on the decline with issues such as harassment, liability, bullying and police checks that have to be dealt with. Leadership development programs are available for community volunteers and should be pursued. Municipal liability coverage for sanctioned volunteer boards would be a huge asset to volunteer groups. The development of an annual volunteer recognition program would be a great way to show support for volunteers. All of these items should be viewed as an investment in people and quality of life and should not be viewed as a financial burden on the community.

The staffing issue was discussed and the plan to combine economic development and recreation would not be recommended. The current staff person overseeing recreation has done an excellent job on a part time basis in the areas of program development and community awareness programs (community brochure). It would be advisable to keep her involved based upon her knowledge of recreation in the area. It would also be advisable to move forward with the recommendations in the study with regard to future staff needs and coordination.

Over the next five to ten years Powassan Council will:

**Objectives:**

**E.2.1.**

Complete a community needs study to gain an understanding of the recreational requirements of the citizens.

**E.2.2.**

Develop a “Youth Council” to actively engage them in physical activities.



**E.2.3.**

Develop an annual Volunteer Development Recognition Program to salute the volunteers in the region.

**E.2.4.**

Consider hiring a Coordinator to oversee recreation program and service development and to manage this aspect of the Strategic Plan.

**E.2.5.**

Review the Recreation and Leisure goal annually to determine its role in the region.

**3. TRAILS**

The Multi Use Trail Study appears to be a very good document with a lot of support for the making of trails a priority in the area. There are a number of trail systems in the municipality that have great potential. The three trails known as the Pine Trails are marked and serve as an excellent venue for locals to use to enhance physical activity in the area. The report refers to five multi use trail systems.

They include:

1. Urban Powassan
2. Urban Trout Creek
3. Powassan to Trout Creek
4. A longer trail system between these two areas
5. Water Trails utilizing the South River

As the Municipality moves forward with the development of a marketing strategy including the major attractions mentioned earlier (Public Observatory and Knowlton Ridge Equestrian Centre), trail development should be viewed as a viable secondary attraction. Environmental tourism is quite popular and the trail system lends itself quite nicely to the overall package. Riding trails do exist within the confines of Knowlton Farms, but extensions of these trails to include additional community trails would only enhance the existing product. Over the next five to ten years Powassan Council will:

**Objectives:**

**E.3.1.**

Review the Multi-use Trail Study.

**E.3.2.**

Incorporate the Multi-use Trail Study in the market strategies along with the communication plan.

**E.3.3.**

As recommended in an earlier section of this report, work with key organizations to develop snowmobile trails that will bring winter traffic to the area



### COMPONENT #3

#### ***PLATFORM FOR AN ACTION PLAN***

This stage of the Strategic Plan begins to take the goals and objectives (action statements) and identifies a platform for an action plan to meet the desired goals that spin off from the Mission and Vision Statements. Putting Powassan's Strategic Plan to work will be a highly participatory exercise involving several existing committees and newly created committees along with some special purpose task groups. Overall responsibility for ensuring the Plan's implementation rests with Powassan Council and the Strategic Plan Steering Committee. The role of the Steering Committee will change to that of an Implementation Committee.

#### ***BEGINNING IMPLEMENTATION STAGES***

The first step toward implementation should be the identification of local champions and working committees best suited to pursue each of the Plan's objectives and associated actions, and the establishment of appropriate timelines. In doing so, Powassan Council should take care to strike a balance that reflects both the need to move the Plan expeditiously and the need to avoid what has been termed "planning fatigue", a condition in which so much energy has been devoted to planning related activities that the major activities are degraded. Maybe this will be avoided when the Strategic Plan Steering Committee meets to discuss the initiatives and ranks them thus allowing those responsible to deal with the first five or six.

Powassan will be kept informed of the timetables for each action area and the group(s) responsible for them. Reports from the action groups will be available for review. Any policy implications arising from the Plan's implementation will be vetted through normal governance procedures including Council.

#### ***EXAMPLE OF COMMITTEE PARAMETERS***

It will be the responsibility of each committee to create a report that will contain all, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- A list of recommendations (consistent with the directions, goals and objectives as described herein)
- A timeline
- A costing component
- Strategies that will enable the objectives to be obtained.
- A rationale



### **COUNCIL'S ROLE**

We would recommend that Council appoint someone who will monitor progress and manage the receipt of the reports from the different work groups.

Financial resources are integral to the timely and effective implementation of any strategic plan. The annual budgeting process should allow for the determination of some resources to each of the major areas. It is also understood that ongoing commitments to staff and department operations mean that additional or new funds are required to satisfy competing needs. The recommendations of each committee will definitely influence the budget and resource allocations. Powassan Council will be responsible for re-distributing and when possible, increasing the revenues available to the region to ensure successful completion of the major recommendations. It is advisable to the Municipality to host a round table discussion with all the Federal and Provincial funding agencies to heighten their awareness of the future direction of the municipality and at the same time provide guidance as to the potential funding opportunities for the projects identified

### **REPORTING MECHANISM**

One of the initial tasks to be undertaken is to structure a process for a Progress Report. This should be done at least twice a year by the Mayor. One of the reports could be oral and the other a written one. The reports should include an assessment of progress on specific objectives. They might also assess the implications of current resource constraints and other environmental variables on the Municipality's ability to meet the goals.

Based on the information gathered by the consulting team, Powassan has been progressive in its attempts to maintain a standard of service for its residents. While this report has not presented a myriad of recommendations, the recommendations that have been brought forward, when implemented, will have a significant impact on the future growth and prosperity of the area. The success of some of the recommendations will require a level of interdependency amongst the key stakeholders and champions in order to achieve a high level of success.

The depth of the housing study will have significant impact on zoning, housing requirements, marketing strategies and service requirements. This will be a long term work in progress as one anticipates the challenges and opportunities that this study will present.

The development of the astronomy Public Observatory will create a "reason to visit Powassan" and will encourage economic growth and opportunities for new and existing business. From a tourism perspective, it will open up a whole new industry for not only Powassan, but conceivably for the complete region.



The face of farming in the area will change out of necessity as well as a result of opportunities afforded by the equine industry.

All of the above will change the image and identity of Powassan and lead the area to re-brand itself to reflect what it will become.

All of the above will create an opportunity for youth to remain in the area and will provided a focus for their post secondary education in terms of human resource services that will be required for the area.

The Strategic Plan proposed for Powassan is forward looking and sets a direction for the next half decade and beyond. It is also realistic and within the Municipality's capacity to achieve the recommendations as outlined. Significant progress towards its implementation should be reported by the end of the 2007/2008 calendar years.

