

*“Realities... Challenges...  
Opportunities”*

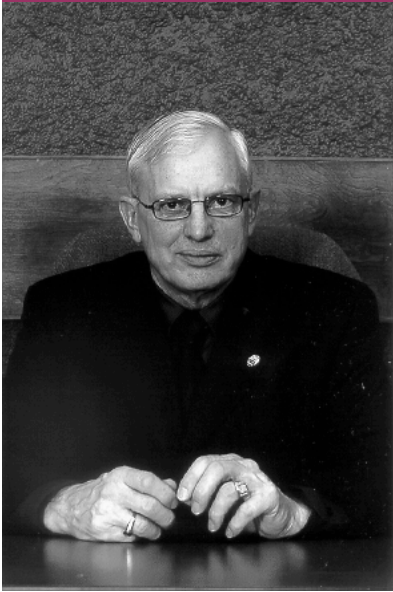


*Strategic Plan  
June 2011*

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## **Message From Mayor Roy Avis**



*Our community is facing an era of change that will undoubtedly prove to be a significant milestone in the long and rich history of Fort Frances. Although the current economic realities are still at the forefront of all activities, there are also opportunities that must be pursued to help maintain the vitality of our beautiful community.*

*I believe the title of our new strategic plan, “Realities....Challenges....Opportunities”, is reflective of this moment in time and the exciting path we are embarking on. Mayor, Council and Administration cannot do this alone. We have engaged our citizens in the formulation of this plan through public consultation and the invitation to submit written proposals. We thank everyone who provided input to this process and encourage all members of our community to participate in your local government by providing feedback to your Mayor, Council and Administration.*

*My thanks go out to Council, Administration and our citizens for their efforts and care related to this important initiative. Now lets get to work!*

*Sincerely,*

*Roy Avis  
Mayor*



***Councillors Andrew Hallikas, G.Paul Ryan, Sharon Tibbs  
Mayor Roy Avis, Councillors Ken Perry, Rick Wiedenheoft,  
John Albanese***

## Message From Chief Administrative Officer Mark McCaig



*Is the glass half full or half empty? When considering the future of our Town, this may be something more than just the simplest of platitudes. The economic challenges facing our community are still here and they must continue to be addressed in a prudent manner but we must also consider our strengths and the opportunities that lie before us. Our community should collectively work together to decide what Fort Frances should be now and into the future.*

*Realities....Challenges....Opportunities is the blueprint for Town activities over the current term of Mayor and Council. New challenges and opportunities will arise and we must be able to adapt and respond in a manner that is consistent with the statement of corporate mission, values and goals listed in this plan. I fully commit all of our administrative resources to the effective delivery of all aspects of this strategic plan. We look forward to working with Mayor, Council and the entire community in a meaningful and engaged manner.*

*I thank Mayor, Council and staff for their efforts in the development of this important document. I would also like to thank the citizens who jumped in and put their mark on this initiative. Local government works better with the active participation of its citizens.*

*Regards,*

**Mark McCaig**  
Chief Administrative Officer

## Methodology

*In preparing this strategic plan Fort Frances Town Council had the opportunity to review the experience and methodology from the last strategic plan, “Our Vision, Our Future, Our Town.” Mayor and Council also solicited input from our citizens through a public meeting and an invitation to provide written submissions. This information along with new and updated issues and information were brought forward in a day long planning session held with senior members of the Town’s management team and Rainy River Future Development Corporation.*

*At this session the Community Vision Statement and the Corporate Vision Statement were reviewed and reaffirmed. In addition a list of Corporate Values was developed. Four broad categories of goals were developed those being;*

- Economic Development*
- Essential Services*
- Quality of Life*
- Corporate Initiatives*

*Within each of these categories a series of individual strategies to meet those goals were then developed.*

*The results of the strategic planning session were reviewed by management. Responsibilities and timelines were then brought forward for further Council input and approval. This document is the culmination of this exercise.*

## Challenges and Opportunities



*The following factors were identified as being challenges and opportunities:*

- *Healthcare Delivery*
- *First Nations Relationships*
- *Tax Base Shift Due to Reduce Industrial Assessment*
- *Environmental and Green Initiatives*
- *Expectations of Local Government*
- *Regulatory Requirements*
- *Aging Population*
- *Economic Development*
- *Widening Infrastructure Funding Gap*
- *Broadband Initiatives and Emerging Technologies*
- *Service Provision Within the District*

## Challenges and Opportunities

- *Customer Service*
- *Focus of Council has changed – more on essential services than quality of life*
- *Forest Industry*
- *Building Lots Shortage and Development*
- *Doctor Shortage*
- *Geographical Challenges*
- *Mining and Exploration Opportunities*
- *Out-Migration of Youth*
- *Aging Municipal Workforce*
- *Community Clinic*
- *Ability to Recruit Professionals*
- *Governance of RRDSSAB*
- *Local Economic Implications From Strong Canadian Dollar*
- *Arbitrated Settlements for Emergency Services Workers*
- *Vacant Commercial Buildings*
- *Provincial Election Implications*
- *Changing Business Model at Local Mill*

## ***Listing of Activities and Services:***

### *Economic and Community Development*

*Building*

*Planning*

*Business Licensing*

*Economic Development Advisory Committee*

*Tourism*

*Sub Division Development*

*Condo Development*

*Economic Incentive Plan*

*Business Retention*

*Health Services*

*Industrial Developments/Commercial*

*Fort Frances Power Corporation*

*Rainy River Future Development Corporation*

*Sponsorships*

*Community Services*

*Land Management*

## *Listing of Activities and Services:*

### *Quality of Life Services*

*Health care*

*Planning and Development*

*Library*

*Museum*

*Sports and Recreation*

*Senior Services*

*Day Care /Resource Centre*

*Marina – Waterfront*

*Public Transportation*

*Theatre*

*Trails/Active Transportation*

*Parks and Cemeteries*

*Doctor Recruitment*

*By-law Enforcement*

*Marriage Services*



## *Listing of Activities and Services:*

### *Essential Services*

*Sewer and Water*

*Roads*

*Airport*

*Infrastructure*

*Fire – Police*

*Landfill / Waste management*

*Emergency 911*

*Hydro – Fort Frances Power Corporation*

*By-law Enforcement*



## *Listing of Activities and Services:*

### *Governance and Corporate Initiatives*

*First Nations*

*Budget*

*Financial Planning*

*Legal Services*

*DSSAB*

*Community Clinic*

*IT and Human Resources*

*Administration and Finance*

*Mayor and Council*

*Executive Committees*

*By-law Enforcement*

*Planning*

*Service Agreements*

*Regional Initiatives (common voice)*

*Succession Planning*

*Senior Government – Lobbying and Advocacy*

*Partnerships*



## Community Vision Statement



*“Together we are a community committed to sharing, developing and enhancing, economic, health, quality of life and educational opportunities.*

*Together, we will ensure that these opportunities contribute to a sustainable environment and a welcoming atmosphere in which all people can partake in the richness, diversity and growth of the Town of Fort Frances.”*

## **Corporate Mission Statement and Values**

*“The Corporation of the Town of Fort Frances provides the leadership to deliver services in a responsible and efficient manner.*

*By working together we can create a safe, sustainable and attractive community that promotes economic growth, prosperity and improves our quality of life”.*

*The Corporation of the Town of Fort Frances Values:*

1. *Vision / Innovation*
2. *Professionalism*
3. *Fiscal Responsibility / Accountability*
4. *Sustainability / Stewardship*
5. *Quality of Life*
6. *Transparency / Openness*
7. *An Engaged Informed Community*
8. *Community Leadership*
9. *Partnerships*

## **Economic Development Goals And Strategies**

*The Town of Fort Frances will endeavour to help foster a diverse and vibrant economy through the pursuit of active partnerships and the prudent provision of municipal services.*

*We will strive to be receptive to all opportunities that will provide mutual value and stimulate economic growth.*

### **1. Finalize Official Plan**

*Finalization of Official Plan review and corresponding Zoning By-Law to incorporate the amendments to legislation (ie. Planning Act and Bill 51) recognize provincial interests and ensure compliance with Provincial Policy Statements.*

**Dec. 2011**

### **2. Economic Development Plan( next 3 year plan has been put in place by RRFDC**

*The Town is utilizing Rainy River Future Development Corporation (RRFDC) to produce a plan to advance economic development within the community. The project timeline is for three years and a FedNor funding component will be applied for. Town administration will work closely with RRFDC on this initiative.*

**October 2011.**

### **3. Financial Partnership Programs**

*The Town of Fort Frances believes that it has a role to play as a partner in economic progress. It will review its Partnership Incentive programs that allow it to work with the Private Sector to facilitate economic growth.*

**April 2012**

### **4. Condo Initiative Review**

*The Town will reexamine the progress made to date with the current developer and make alterations to the project where required.*

**October 2011**

### **5. Forestry Adhoc Committee**

*Strike a committee with Abibow and other stakeholders to address challenges, opportunities and issues related to our region's primary industry.*

**January 2012**

### **6. First Nations Partnerships**

*Strike a committee with neighbouring First Nation Communities to explore and develop areas of mutual economic opportunity.*

**February 2012**

**7. *Municipal Mining Strategy***

*The Town will work with RRFDC to develop a strategy that will review existing initiatives and prepare the community to maximize the potential that the Town of Fort Frances receives as a result of mining activity.*

***December 2011***

**8. *Go Local Initiative***

*Coordinating a cooperative retail effort to promote local goods and services.*

***February 2012***

**9. *Commercial Renewal Strategy***

*The Town will develop a strategy to minimize the number of vacant commercial and institutional establishments by facilitating tenancy (ie. Former Pizza Hut) or reclamation of potential brownfield sites. (Rainy Lake Hotel).*

***October 2013.***

**10. *Residential Property Development***

*Examination of potential sub division development of town owned properties.*

***November 2011***

**11. *Future Use of Huffman School Property***

*Examination of the future of the school building with a focus on potential opportunities for the building and associated property.*

***April 2012.***

## **Essential Services Goals and Strategies**

*The Town of Fort Frances will endeavour to provide sustainable essential services that meet or exceed regulatory standards in the most cost effective manner*



### **12. Fire Services Master Plan**

*To complete a fire and rescue services master plan, while taking into consideration the recommendation of the Ontario Fire Marshall status report with recommendations on future directions.*

**November 2011**

### **13. Emergency Plan Review**

*To review and update the emergency preparedness plan and recommend all necessary changes to appropriate by-laws.*

**Annually**

### **14. Police Services Review**

*As a result of recent reductions to the OPP contract the Town will work with the Police Services Board to monitor our satisfaction with new service levels and communicate any concerns to the Contract Services branch of the OPP.*

**May 2012**

**15. Long Term Management for Municipal Infrastructure and Renewal Program**

*As a result of becoming PSAB 3150 compliant, the town is moving towards a full asset management system, with the integration of GIS technology. Prior to developing long term renewal plans for each municipal infrastructure system, an infiltration/inflow investigation study on the existing sanitary sewer system is required. This study will be completed by the fall of 2011 with the long term planning program to take place after this completion date.*

- i) Infiltration / inflow investigation study – **February 2012***
- ii) Long term planning program – **October 2012***

**16. Implementation of Water Meters Within the Community**

*Moving towards all buildings in the community having water meters installed. This assignment will move forward in conjunction with the installation of the Hydro smart meter project as the new communication system for the hydro smart meters will be utilized for collecting water meter data.*

**February 2013**

**17. Quality Management System for Water System**

*The Town's QMS Team has been working on this assignment since April 2008. Full implementation of the project will occur after acceptance of submitted documentation.*

**August 2012**

**18. Airport Management System**

*Develop a safety management system for the airport operations in accordance with Transport Canada regulations. This is a 4 phase approach where phase three has been submitted for approval.*



**January 2013**

**19. Traffic Management Review**

*Review existing traffic management infrastructure for effectiveness and compliance.*

**September 2014**

**20. Emergency Services Review**

*Advocacy for reforms to the arbitration process as it pertains to Emergency Services.*

**November 2013**

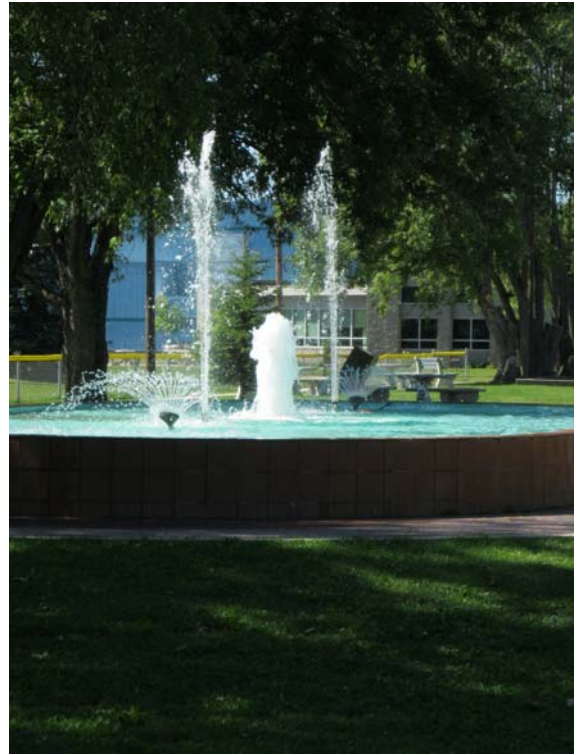
**21. Mutual Aid Agreements**

*Re-structuring agreements with partnering municipalities and developing a new agreement with International Falls.*

**December 2011**

## Quality of Life Goals and Strategies

*The Town of Fort Frances will endeavour to provide equal opportunity for all of our residents to live a balanced, healthy and fulfilling life that promotes individual growth and community harmony, in a manner that reflects our community diversity while balancing fiscal responsibility with affordability.*



### **22. Active Transportation Plan**

*Bring forward the recommendations of Phase II of the Active Transportation Plan to Council and implement any direction.*

**October 2013**

### **23. Childcare Services Review**

*Implementation of the Before and After School program and review the existing childcare program at the Children's Complex focusing on the feasibility of the provision of infant care.*

**July 2013**

## **24. Expansion of Cemeteries**

*This project will be assigned to the Engineering Area of the O & F Division where all Town owned lands in close proximity to the existing cemeteries will be reviewed with the understanding that a cemetery expansion plan will be developed. The Ministry of Consumer and Business Services will be required to approve the expansion plan.*



**November 2013**

## **25. Doctor Recruitment Initiative**

*Continue to work towards an enhanced community approach to doctor recruitment and redefine the partnership structure.*

**March 2012**

## **26. Assisted Living Initiative**

*Council will support the initiative undertaken by the Assisted Living Action Group (ALAG) through consultation and the provision of assistance that is within the Town's capabilities and in conjunction with other local authorities. ( ie. Riverside, RRDSSAB)*

**December 2011**

**27. Senior Issues**

*Integration of various seniors groups into the Sister Kennedy Board of Management. Expand the role of the Sister Kennedy Board by including members of local seniors groups to help provide Mayor and Council with advice on local senior's issues.*

**February 2012**

**28. Parks Operational Review**

*A review of parks operations will be conducted to assess cost and operational effectiveness. An investigation into an allocation of space for the exercising of dogs will also be conducted.*

**February 2012**

**29. Recreational Review**

*To investigate the feasibility of the establishment of outdoor tennis, basketball and volleyball courts.*

**March 2012**

**30. Kiwanis Sunny Cove Camp**

*Investigate the long term use and potential of the camp for youth programs and economic development opportunities.*

**May 2014**

## **Corporate Initiatives Goals and Objectives**

*The Town of Fort Frances will endeavour to provide open, transparent responsible governance consistent with corporate values and objectives.*

### **31. Sustainable Community Plan**

*To complete a community plan for the Town of Fort Frances that would address environmental, social and economic sustainability for Fort Frances. The plan would include a full energy audit of municipal buildings, issues of economic sustainability, community environmental issues and recommend strategies to ensure long-term community sustainability.*

**July 2013**

### **32. Property Standards Review**

*Establish a sub committee of PDEC to act in an advisory capacity through the periodic oversight of property standards.*

**October 2011**

### **33. Local Government Week**

*A continuation of recent efforts to educate the public on the workings of local (municipal) government in Ontario. This is being done in partnership with the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario and the Province of Ontario.*

**Annually**

**34. Customer Complaint Process Review**

*Ongoing process and will be reviewed annually.*

***Annually***

**35. Succession/Mentoring Program**

*Town administration will develop a plan to help identify contingencies, synergies and long term staffing needs for the corporation.*

***Ongoing***

**36. Community Foundation**

*To investigate the establishment of a community foundation that will enable the Town to raise funds for charitable endeavours through a non-profit entity.*

***May 2012***

**37. Review of Budget Implications**

*Service delivery review in consideration of a potential change in industrial assessment related to the AbiBow appeal filed in 2011 and including 2009 and 2010.*

***November 2011***

**38. Energy Management**

*Conduct full energy audits of all municipal buildings to identify areas of potential conservation, financial savings and retrofit opportunities.*

***January 2012***

### **39. Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board**

*Advocate for a restructuring of the governance of the RRDSSAB in an effort to achieve a level of equity that is reflective of the Town's contribution and interests.*

**Ongoing**

### **40. Accessibility Act Compliance**

*The Town has been working to fulfill its compliance obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). There are two more phases that require compliance being:*

#### *1. Employment, Communication and Transportation*

**Employment-** *The Town is required to implement full accomodation for persons with disabilities to support equal opportunities for employment within the organization*

**January 2014**

**Communication** – *The Town must implement systems to provide information in accessible formats*

**January 1, 2015**

**Transportation** – *Handi-Van hours must match the same schedule as our Dial-A-Ride program*

**January 2013**

*Fares for Handi-Van use must match the Dial-A-Ride Program*

**January 2017**

#### *2. Built Environment – Will involve the remediation of all municipal structures to provide full consideration of accessibility requirements*

**No Timelines Have Been Established**

#### **41. Lottery Licensing Review and Report**

*An administrative report will be done to clearly illustrate the process for granting lottery licenses to the community. The exercise will attempt to inform Council and the community of the regulatory responsibility the Town has in the granting of lottery licenses.*

**December 2011**

#### **42. Old Public Library**

*The disposition of the former Public Library to an entity that helps Fulfill the greatest public need.*

**December 2011**



#### **43. Website Redesign**

*A redesign of the Town's website to enhance user friendliness and improve communications to the community and other stakeholders. The utilization of customer surveys will be investigated to assist in various municipal undertakings.*

**September 2011**

#### **44. Grant Research and Oversight Review ( fiscal)**

*Town Administration will implement a mechanism for a continual review of various grant programs for consideration by the A & F committee as a regular agenda item.*

**October 2011**

**45. Regional Airport Initiative**

*The Town will work with all regional stakeholders ( municipalities, First Nations) to develop a co-operative model that will help share the operational costs of the Fort Frances Airport.*

***January 2012***

## **TIMELINES**

<b>Item #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
43	Website Redesign	IT	September 2011
4	Condo Initiative Review	Planning and Development	October 2011
42	Old Public Library	CAO	October 2011
44	Grant Research and Oversight Review (fiscal)	Human Resources	October 2011
32	Property Standards Review	Planning and Development	October 2011
2	Economic Development Plan	CAO, RRFDC	October 2011
12	Fire Services Master Plan	Community Services	November 2011
10	Residential Property Development	All Divisions and Council	November 2011
37	Review of Budget Implications	Treasurer, A & F	November 2011
1	Finalize Official Plan	Planner	December 2011
21	Mutual Aid Agreements	Community Services	December 2011
7	Municipal Mining Strategy	CAO, RRFDC	December 2011
26	Assisted Living Initiative	CAO, Council	December 2011
41	Lottery Licensing Review and Report	Clerk	December 2011
38	Energy Management	Sustainability Coordinator	January 2012
5	Forestry Adhoc Committee	CAO	January 2012
45	Regional Airport Initiative	CAO	January 2012
28	Parks Operational Review	O & F, CAO	February 2012
8	Go Local Initiative	RRFDC	February 2012
6	First Nations Partnerships	CAO and Council	February 2012
27	Senior Issues	Community Services	February 2012
29	Recreational Review	Community Services	March 2012
25	Doctor Recruitment Initiative	CAO and Council	March 2012
11	Future use of Huffman School Property	All Divisions and Council	April 2012
3	Financial Partnership Programs	CAO, RRFDC	April 2012
14	Police Services Review	Community Services	May 2012
36	Community Foundation	EDAC, RRFDC, CAO	May 2012
17	Quality Management System for Water System	Operations & Facilities	August 2012
15	Long Term Management for Municipal Infrastructure	Operations & Facilities	October 2012
18	Airport Management System	Operations & Facilities	January 2013

## **TIMELINES**

<b>Item #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
16	Implementation of Water Meters Within the Community	Operations & Facilities	February 2013
23	Childcare Services Review	Community Services	July 2013
31	Sustainable Community Plan	CSEC & Sustainability Coordinator	July 2013
22	Active Transportation Plan	Community Services	October 2013
9	Commercial Renewal Strategy	CAO, RRFDC	October 2013
24	Expansion of Cemeteries	Operations and Facilities	November 2013
20	Emergency Services Review	CAO, Council	November 2013
30	Sunny Cove Camp	Community Services	May 2014
19	Traffic Management Review	Operations and Facilities	Sept 2014
13	Emergency Plan Review	Fire Chief	Annually
33	Local Government Week	Clerk	Annually
34	Customer Complaint Process Review	CAO	Annually
35	Succession/Mentoring Program	Human Resources	Ongoing
39	Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board	CAO, Council	Ongoing

## Community Profile

Population:      Town of Fort Frances      8,103  
                          Rainy River District      21,564  
                          (includes Atikokan)

Median Family Income:      \$54,859

Rainy River District Labour Force      10,800

### Rainy River District Employment By Industries

Agriculture	920	Wholesale Trade	200
Manufacturing	1,455	Retail Trade	1065
Construction Industries	790	Finance and Insurance Industries	385
Business Services Industries	990	Education Service Industries	870
Health and Social Service Industries	1,460	Other Services	2,665

Website: [www.fort-frances.com](http://www.fort-frances.com)

## Local Employment

Abitibi-Bowater	Pulp and Paper Mill	700
Canada Safeway	Retail/Grocery Store	120
Rainy River District School Board	Education	530
Riverside Health Care	Health	450
Rainycrest Home for the Aged	Health	170
Northwest Catholic District School Board	Education	145
Wal-Mart	Retail	100

## Utilities

Electricity	Fort Frances Power Corporation
Water	Town of Fort Frances
Natural Gas	Union Gas
Telephone	Bell Canada
Cell Phone	Northwest Mobility Dryden Telephone (DMTS)