

# *A Report Prepared For*



## **A Review of the Potential Impact of the Re-Location of the TransCanada Highway at Kakabeka Falls and Consideration of Potential Responses**



From TCI Management Consultants  
August 2013



Kakabeka Falls  
William Armstrong (1856)  
*Toronto Public Library*

## Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Change in Purpose and Scope of Original Study .....	1
Recommendations and Rationale .....	2
<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Background .....	4
1.2 The Community of Kakabeka Falls.....	6
1.3 Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park.....	6
1.4 Highway 11/17 – TransCanada Highway .....	7
<b>2. The Interviews and Analysis .....</b>	<b>10</b>
2.1 Ministry of Transportation Ontario and Stantec Consulting Ltd. ....	10
2.2 Interviews and Research with Other Ontario Government Ministries.....	13
2.3 Background and Interviews With Kakabeka Falls Business Owners and Operators.....	14
2.4 Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats Analysis (SWOT) Analysis .....	15
<b>3. Case Study: The Experience of the Township of Terrace Bay with Economic Revitalization .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>4. Conclusions and Implications Arising from the Interviews: .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>5. Consideration of Possible Joint Community Economic Development Activities .....</b>	<b>24</b>
5.1 The Concept for Developing A Sustainable Tourism Model for Kakabeka Falls .....	24
5.2 Two Concepts for the Revitalization Efforts for Kakabeka Falls “Main Street” .....	27
<b>6. Recommended Next Steps .....</b>	<b>31</b>

## Appendices

1. *Profile of the Kakabeka Falls Business Community*
2. *Photographs of Kakabeka Falls Business “Main Street” Along Highway 11/17 Corridor ”*
3. *Photographs of “Drive Thru” of the Present Kakabeka Falls “Main Street”*
4. *Listing of Available Ontario Government Programs to Assist Communities in Community Development*

# **A Review of the Potential Impact of the Re-Location of the TransCanada Highway at Kakabeka Falls and Consideration of Potential Responses**

## **Executive Summary**

### **Change in Purpose and Scope of Original Study**

In November of 2012, TCI Management Consultants was retained by the Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge to assess the potential impact of a bypass of the Trans-Canada highway (11/17) upon the village of Kakabeka Falls in the Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge. Currently there are on the order of 2 million vehicles with 4.6 million potential visitors passing through the Village, about 4.3% (200,000) of which visit the nearby Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park. It was feared that with the relocation of the highway, which would be approximately 3 km from the Village, visitor levels and the resulting economic impact would drop precipitously. However, several factors soon became apparent early on in the work that caused a change in the basic scope of the assignment to be recommended by TCI, and accepted by the Municipality. These were:

- 1) the revelation from MTO that the highway relocation was, at the earliest, 10 years away (and very likely further off than that);
- 2) the assurance (by MTO) that the relocation was definitely going to happen at some point and that the final recommended route selected would be fixed for the longer term (and therefore any assessment of impact of the route would not affect the ultimate decision to bypass the community or the route that the bypass would take); and
- 3) the fact that a very recent (November 2012) study of impact had already been undertaken, had elicited a relatively poor response rate from businesses, and thus it was recognized that yet another study of impact would likely generate an even poorer response rate.

Accordingly, it was determined to change the focus of the present study to one that recommended a more strategic response to the eventual relocation of the highway by increasing the attractiveness of the Village of Kakabeka Falls as a destination location. It was recognized that this strategy could yield results well before the bypass was in place, and represented a direction that the community should be headed in, in any event.

## Recommendations and Rationale

In light of this changed focus to the assignment, the key recommendations are outlined below. The key underlying strategy here is to increase the awareness and attractiveness of Kakabeka Falls and its nearby Village as a 'must see' attraction so that a greater proportion of tourists will choose to visit it. If and when the bypass goes ahead, this will obviously have been a wise strategy to have adopted. **But even if the bypass never proceeds, this is a logical and prudent course of action for the community.** The specific recommendations are as follows:

- a) **Create a Kakabeka Falls Business Association (KFBA):** Having a formal and recognized business association in place is essential to garnering the attention and respect that the Village will need if it is to obtain grants (through the municipality) needed for community improvement. Such organizations have existed in the past but there is nothing in place at present. Our interviews with the business community, most of whom have a strong dependency upon the tourism industry, strongly supported this direction.
- b) **Establish Economic Development Officer position for Oliver Paipoonge:** Taking advantage of the Ontario Government support for an Economic Development Officer (EDO) position for the first few years, and recognizing the significant amount of work to be done in Kakabeka Falls, the municipality should establish this position without delay. Key responsibilities of the EDO with respect to Kakabeka Falls, should be:
  - *help establish the KFBA (as outlined in a) above)*
  - *become involved in the creation of a Main Street Improvement program (see c) below)*
  - *create a marketing strategy for the Village (see d) below)*

(It must be recognized that an EDO position will have responsibilities elsewhere across the municipality and that this agenda for Kakabeka Falls will only be a subset of his/her job responsibilities.)

***Note: This recommendation was adopted by the municipality as this report was being prepared.***

Once these two fundamental supports are in place (i.e. the KFBA and the EDO position) a number of other improvements should be made to the Village to increase its attractiveness and overall appeal to visitors. These are:



- c) Embark on 'Main Street' Improvement Program:** A key task of the EDO will be to develop in effect a 'Main Street Improvement Program' for Kakabeka Falls (though consultation with the by then newly-formed KFBA). This would be modeled in large part on the similar efforts of the Township of Terrace Bay, profiled in the Report. This plan should consider as key elements:
- *the development of more activities and events*
  - *more and improved signage*
  - *improved links and connections with Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park*
- d) Develop marketing strategy:** Once the Main Street improvements are underway, the KFBA and the municipality will be in a much stronger position to more effectively and aggressively promote the Village. A marketing strategy should be developed to promote the new activities, events, new businesses, etc. that will have been developed in the community.

In terms of a general timeframe over which these activities could occur, the following scheduling over essentially a 5-year period is recommended:

Time Period	Implementation of Recommendation
Now until end 2013	b) establish EDO position (as noted, implemented in June 2013)
2014	a) develop KFBA
2015, 2016	c) embark on Main Street Improvement Program
2017 and on	d) develop marketing strategy

Once these recommendations have been implemented, the Village will be in a much stronger position to withstand any changes that the relocation of the Trans-Canada highway may bring (recognizing that it will still be several years off).

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Kakabeka Falls is the largest community (500 residents) in Oliver Paigoonge Municipality 25 km west of the City of Thunder Bay. It is the largest commercial centre along the TransCanada Highway between Thunder Bay and the City of Dryden 325 km to the west.

It is known as the location of Ontario's second highest waterfalls (Kakabeka Falls 130 ft vs. Niagara Falls 167 ft) and is called the "The Niagara of the North". Kakabeka Falls is the largest visitor attraction (200,000 annual visitors) in the Thunder Bay area. The actual fall's location is immediately adjacent to the community and has been a Provincial Park since 1955. It is the most visited Provincial Park and the largest tourist destination in Northwestern Ontario.

Canada's major east - west highway the TransCanada Highway (Ontario Highway 11/17) passes directly through the community with 1.5 million vehicles annually transiting the community's main street.

The highway provides a critical national infrastructure asset and is the only principal road connection between Thunder Bay and Winnipeg a distance 700 km across Northwestern Ontario. Highway 102, located 15 km west of Kakabeka Falls, provides a "bypass" option for commercial and other traffic that wants to bypass the City of Thunder Bay. The majority of the traffic however, elects to use the TransCanada route (Highway 11/17) that passes through Kakabeka Falls.

The close proximity of the community of Kakabeka Falls to the waterfalls and the fact that more than 3.5 million people<sup>1</sup> are passing through the community annually has created a major regional tourism attraction with a long history. The story of Kakabeka Falls incorporates thousands of years of First Nations history and the most recent history of 300 plus years covering the early European explorers, the voyagers and the fur trade, the movement of the RCMP and troops to the Riel rebellion when Kakabeka Falls presented a major physical barrier, the first national railway and supporting early industrialization (hydro electric power) of what is now the City of Thunder Bay.

Kakabeka Falls has provided a long history of settlement and activities associated with the falls. For 130 years, "modern" tourist visitors have had the opportunity to visit this major natural feature.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on 2.3 persons per vehicle an accepted standard.

This has led to a century plus history of Kakabeka Falls being a source of permanent and seasonal employment in the area. It is responsible for a large portion of business revenues generated in the community. There are currently about 22 businesses in the community and the majority has a medium to high dependency on the revenues generated from visitors to Kakabeka Falls.

There were two publically perceived overhanging threats to the community of Kakabeka Falls and the municipality of Oliver Paigoonge at the time this study was commissioned. They were:

1. A 15-year decline in the number of visitors (particularly Americans) to the community and the Provincial Park, widely expected to continue; and,
2. The perceived threat that a proposed plan to relocate the present Highway 11/17 that passes directly through the village with a new four-lane limited access highway that would bypass the community. Potential visitors would require a 3 km route of additional travel to reach Kakabeka Falls. Many local citizens and business operators are fearful that this will occur in the near future and will contribute to a further erosion of visitors creating additional economic challenges to the community.

The Oliver Paigoonge Municipality in support of these concerns undertook to commission a study<sup>2</sup> regarding the economic impact of the re-routing of the TransCanada Highway in the area of Kakabeka Falls and to consider potential responses by the municipality and the area's business community. TCI Management Consultants was the selected firm and work commenced in December 2012.

However, an early recommendation from the consultant to the client following the initial round of research and interviews in January 2013 was to not undertake the economic review of the potential impact since a similar study had recently been undertaken. The results of that study were provided as part of a major report publically released in November 2012 that assessed potential routes for a four-lane highway in the vicinity of Kakabeka Falls<sup>3</sup>. Portions of the results of a Business Impact Study results were incorporated into the main study. The study had a small participation rate and the study as such could not be considered totally reliable for the projection of the economic impact. It was recognized that yet another survey on the impact of the bypass would

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<sup>2</sup> *Oliver Paipoonge Municipality Request for Proposal for a Review of the Re-Location of the TransCanada Highway at Kakabeka Falls and Consideration of Potential Responses, September 2012, due October 16, 2012.*

<sup>3</sup> *Transportation Environmental Study Report Highway 11/17 Route Planning Study Between Kakabeka Falls and Shabaqua Corners, prepared for Ministry of Transportation Ontario, by Stantec Consulting Ltd., November 2012.*



likely yield an even smaller response rate. Moreover, it became clear early on in TCI's work that the bypass was, at the earliest, at least ten years in the future.

Accordingly, TCI in consultation with Oliver Paipoonge Municipality, agreed that the present study should focus on the potential responses on how the municipality and the Kakabeka Falls business community might use existing government programs within the "present window of opportunity" seeking to improve the visitor experience to Kakabeka Falls and to address ways and means that tourist visitor levels could be stabilized and potentially increased in the future.

The project manager for Oliver Paipoonge Municipality agreed with the recommendation and the focus of the project was amended supporting the new priority.

## **1.2 The Community of Kakabeka Falls**

The community of Kakabeka Falls is adjacent to the large waterfalls (also named Kakabeka Falls) that are on the Kaministiquia River that flows into Lake Superior in the southern portions of the City of Thunder Bay. The village area has about 500 permanent residents and 22 active businesses. It is the largest populated area within the municipality of Oliver Paipoonge and serves as the main commercial center for the municipality and adjacent Conmee Township.

Highway 11/17 passes directly through the community. This highway is designated as the TransCanada Highway. It provides the main east-link for private vehicles and commercial trucking connecting western Canada to central Canada and Atlantic Canada. The highway is considered a critical national transportation infrastructure asset.

## **1.3 Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park**

Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park surrounds the falls and is located at the western edge of the community. It was established in 1955 after many years of private ownership of the falls site.

The decision to create a provincial park on the site was in response to the need to provide public protection to an important natural heritage feature. It also occurred around the time of the completion of the TransCanada Highway and the Lake Superior Circle Tour that enabled more tourists easier access to the Northwestern Ontario Region.

Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park is classified as a Natural Environment Park meaning there are major restrictions that protect the natural environment and any developments must have minimum environmental impact.

The park area is about 5 sq km (1,236 acres). It contains two campsite areas (169 sites in total) and has about 18 km of trails and seasonal cross-county ski trails. Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park has the largest attendance of any provincial park in Northwest Ontario. The present annual attendance to the park hovers around the 200,000 level making it the largest attended tourist attraction in Northwestern Ontario. (This attendance has fallen in recent years from a peak of 340,000 annual visitors in 1990 to the present 200,000 level.) This drop is consistent with a similar decline in the number of tourism visitors to Canada/Ontario and Northwestern Ontario. Between 1990 and 2012 (22 years) the number of mainly US visitors to Canada has dropped by 40%.

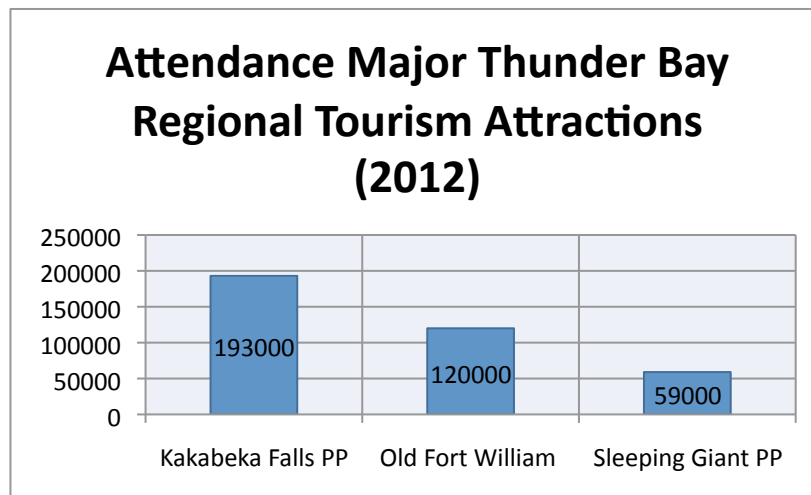


Chart 1

Parks Ontario and Regional Tourism Organization 13C (Northwestern Ontario)

This is largely due to the fact that there are fewer US visitors entering Canada since “9/11” and the US Government’s requirement for expensive passports (\$US 165) for each adult and minor for re-entry into the United States. (The latest numbers would indicate that about 36% of US citizens currently hold active passports.) This is the lowest among the major industrialized countries of the world. American visitors to Canada and the Northwestern Ontario region are down by about 40% since the peak year of 1989.

#### 1.4 Highway 11/17 – TransCanada Highway

Responsibility for maintenance of the TransCanada Highway in Ontario is with the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO). The ministry’s longer-term plan for the TransCanada Highway in Ontario is to develop a separated four-lane highway across the Ontario section bypassing existing population centers to create a largely unobstructed transportation corridor reaching from the Ontario-Quebec border to the Ontario-Manitoba border.

The Ontario portion of the TransCanada Highway is the largest single provincial government contribution to the TransCanada Highway route and accounts for more than 1/3 of the total length of the route. This means that Ontario will face the largest portion of the total investment required to complete a four-lane TransCanada Highway across the entire province. The remaining portions of a four-lane TransCanada Highway are all west of Sudbury in a region with generally low traffic volumes. The remaining 1,600 km beyond Sudbury (most westerly Ontario point with four-lane access) would be a multi-billion dollar, multi-year investment to provide a four-lane TransCanada Highway across Northern Ontario.

The traffic volume data of vehicles<sup>4</sup> passing through the community of Kakabeka Falls is provided in several categories. A chart follows the description of the traffic volume categories.

1. **Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)** is the average number of vehicles in a 24 hour period including two-way traffic. For the period January 1 to December 31 the AADT is 4,200 vehicles per day in Kakabeka Falls.
2. **Summer Average Daily Traffic (SADT)** is defined as the average 24 hour, two-way traffic for the period July 1 to August 31 excluding weekends. In Kakabeka Falls there are 5,400 vehicles per day (excluding weekends) passing through the community daily. This presents a 28% increase in the volume of above the 4,200 vehicles from the AADT above.
3. **The Peak Hourly Volume (PHV)** is the highest volume of vehicles in a single hour during any single one hour period during the year – for Kakabeka Falls the PHV is 588 vehicles. For comparative purposes, if all traffic was evenly distributed across 24 hours, the AADT there would be 175 vehicles per hour. The Peak Hourly Volume is therefore about 3.3 times greater than the AADT hourly average.

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<sup>4</sup> *Provincial Highways Traffic Volumes (1988 -2009), Ministry of Transportation Ontario, 2012*

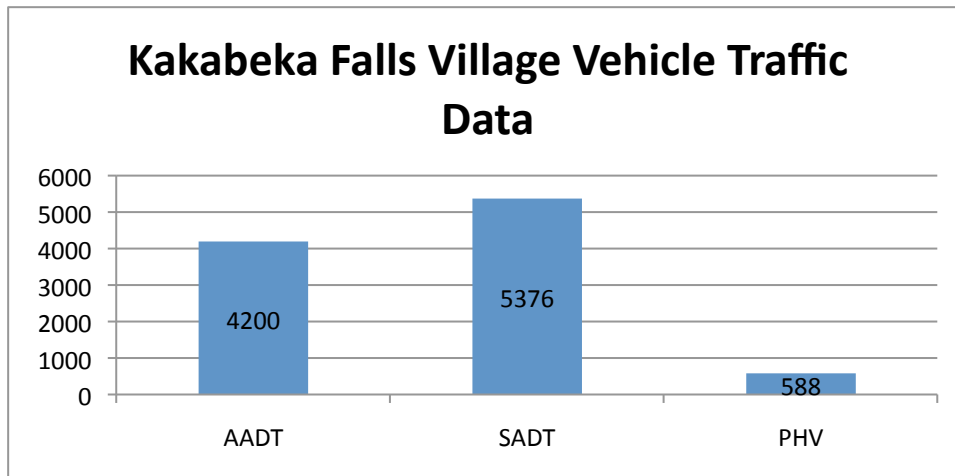


Chart 2  
Provincial Highway Traffic Volumes 1988 – 2009, Ministry of Transportation Ontario

A 1979 Route Planning Study for the route of extending the four-lane highway (TransCanada Highway/Ontario Highway 11/17) from Thunder Bay to Kakabeka Falls recommended a route that terminated about 5 km northeast of the community. A portion of this route has been constructed immediately west of the City of Thunder Bay and it anticipated that this would be extended in the future to match the highway alignment that was identified in the 1979 study.

As part of the long-term planning for extending a four-lane TransCanada Highway in the area of Kakabeka Falls, the Ontario Ministry of Transportation commissioned Stantec Consulting Ltd. to undertake a Highway 11/17 Route Planning and Environmental Assessment between Kakabeka Falls and Shabaqua Corners (where the present Highway 11/17 divides and Highway 11 heads to Atikokan and Fort Frances and Highway 17 heads to Dryden, Kenora and finally to the Ontario/Manitoba border.)

The study's purpose was to determine the optimum route for this section. The assessment was to be considered against a series of criteria that included:

1. highway engineering;
2. social and cultural environment; and,
3. the natural environment factors.

Based upon this work, an optimum route was identified (this is the one that is currently being considered, where the access point would be about 3 km from the Village).

## 2. The Interviews and Analysis

### 2.1 Ministry of Transportation Ontario and Stantec Consulting Ltd.

Discussions with officials of the Ministry of Transportation and their consultants for the project indicated two important points regarding the planning for four-lane limited access highways.

1. The “rule of thumb” for making the “business case” supporting major public investment in a four-lane highway is to have a minimum Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) number in excess of 10,000 vehicles per day. At the present time the AADT number for Kakabeka Falls is only 4,200 vehicles – less than 50% of the “target” for justifying construction of a four-lane highway. It should be noted that in the past there have been a few cases where political considerations trumped this target, but such cases are rare.
2. The reality of route studies such as the one Stantec undertook regarding the Kakabeka Falls / Shabaqua Corners (where Highway 11/17 divides) proposed route is that they are undertaken 10 to 20+ years in advance of construction. For example, the proposed route extending the present four-lane highway from west of the City of Thunder Bay to Kakabeka Falls area was identified in 1978. Thirty-four years have passed and it is only partially constructed. Thus, the prospect that construction of a four-lane highway bypassing Kakabeka Falls will take place in the next decade is remote. However, if and when construction takes place, the preferred route would be the one most likely to be implemented.

The Stantec study involved extensive studies and public consultations that identified a series of route options. All of the options excluded a route passing directly through the community of Kakabeka Falls utilizing the existing TransCanada. The bypassing of Kakabeka Falls was consistent with the past policy direction that the Ministry has taken regarding the building of other four-lane divided highway in the province for the past 75 years.

Our research could not find a single case where an existing community in Ontario has been exempted from this policy objective when it came to the routing of a four-lane limited access road.

Stantec consultants developed seven alternative routings options for the Kakabeka Falls and Shabaqua Corners route. All options identified had the eastern end aligned with the western terminus of the 1979 study, 3 km northeast of the centre of the community of Kakabeka Falls.

1. First General Option – a northerly route that crossed the Kaministiquia River 5 km to the northwest swinging to a point matching the 1979 western terminus. This route is the closest point to the centre of the community of Kakabeka Falls (about 2.5 km as the crow flies). This would require 3 km of one-way travel from the new TransCanada Highway to the centre of the community.
2. Second General Option – a southerly route that crossed the Kaministiquia River 2.5 km west from the centre of Kakabeka Falls and then swinging to the northeast terminating with the terminus identified in the 1979 study. This route's closest point to the centre of the community of Kakabeka Falls is about 2 km.

In response to a request in a public consultation meeting (December 2010) from the Kakabeka Falls Highway By-Pass Committee (an ad hoc group of members of the public and the Kakabeka Falls business community) additional consideration was given to a new alternative route option (BCD1R). This route was within the category of the Second General option. This route was 1 km shorter (one way) to the Kakabeka Falls "Main Street" business community area.

The concern of the Kakabeka Falls Highway By-Pass Committee was that the volume of tourists electing to stop in the community would be reduced and tourist revenues would decline commensurately. The belief was that a turn-off as close to the community as possible would provide the best alternative.

Stantec's consultants considered the advantages and disadvantages of this option but did not carry it forward. Reasons for not proceeding with the BCD1R option were the additional significant costs arising from the relocation of six hydro towers that would be required and for a longer bridge-crossing requirement across the Kaministiquia River.

In response to the Kakabeka Falls Highway By-Pass Committee's concerns, the Oliver Paigoonge Municipality and Council organized funding from various public sources to undertake this study: "An Economic Review of the Potential Impact of the TransCanada Highway at Kakabeka Falls and Consideration of Potential Responses".

The Request for Proposal for the above study was released in September 2012 with consultant responses due October 16, 2012. TCI Management Consultants were selected and a contract for the project was put in position in November 20, 2012.

Review of the recently released (at the time) Stantec November 2012 report<sup>5</sup> and interviews with officials of the Oliver Paigoonge Municipality, the Ontario Government,

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<sup>5</sup> *Transportation Environmental Study Report Highway 11/17 Route Planning Study Between Kakabeka Falls and Shabaqua Corners*, prepared for Ministry of Transportation Ontario, by Stantec Consulting Ltd., November 2012.



the Regional Tourism Organization and members of the Kakabeka Falls business community and Stantec in December 2012 indicated several important changes and material developments that had altered the situation.

Stantec had in the course of their assignment recognized the importance of the tourism industry and undertook additional efforts regarding the special situation of Kakabeka Falls. This work included:

1. Commissioned a Business Impact Study<sup>6 7</sup>;
2. Adjusted evaluation criteria to incorporate a factor to assess the route options' impact on the Kakabeka Falls Business Area;
3. Updated the Business Impact Study to incorporate the distance from the nearest interchange;
4. Undertook a user study of visitors to Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park;
5. Prepared concepts for potential signage for the municipalities that the proposed route would cross (including Oliver Paipoonge);
6. Development of an interim five-lane plan to extend the life of the existing highway through the business area;
7. Development of a possible vision of revitalized "Main Street" area for the community of Kakabeka Falls; and
8. Undertook additional traffic studies that demonstrated 70% of the existing traffic passing through the town would continue after the construction of the four-lane highway (details follow).

The Stantec final report incorporating this suggested route option (BCD1R) was released in late November 2012 just after this report was commissioned.

Note should be made that the expansions of the scope of work in support of the potential impact on an existing major tourist destination is very unusual in these type of studies. The Ontario Government and their consultants put forward a series of ideas, and resource studies that could provide "a starting point" for a discussion regarding possible joint municipal and business community initiatives responding to the prospect that the TransCanada Highway would no longer pass directly through Kakabeka Falls in the longer-term.

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<sup>6</sup> *Business Impact Study – Highway 11/17 Route Planning Between Kakabeka Falls and Shabaqua Corners*, prepared for Stantec Consulting Inc, by urbanMetrics Inc., May 5, 2010.

<sup>7</sup> Efforts were undertaken to obtain a copy of the Business Impact Study. This study was subject to Ontario Government Privacy Regulations regarding the release of information commercially confidential information. A copy of the report was provided but the data made available was of limited or no use because of the Freedom of Information requirements.

## Stantec Detailed Study of the Composition of Kakabeka Falls Traffic Volumes in 2010

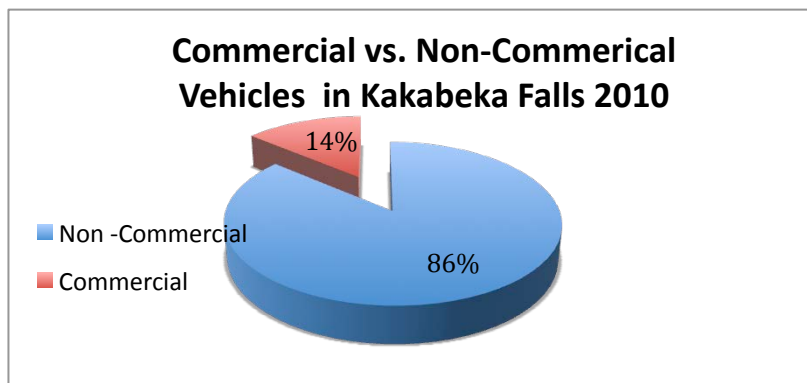


Chart 3

Stantec Consulting Ltd. Transportation Environmental Study Report Highway 11/17 Route Planning Study

Stantec Consulting Ltd. undertook additional traffic volume studies directed at the volume and composition of the traffic within the community of Kakabeka Falls. The study indicated that 14% of vehicle traffic in Kakabeka Falls consisted of commercial vehicles and that 70% of the vehicles on Highway 11/17 in Kakabeka Falls were from the local or general area of Kakabeka Falls.

## 2.2 Interviews and Research with Other Ontario Government Ministries

New information in discussion with provincial government representatives revealed that:

1. It was highly unlikely that construction of the new four-lane highway in the area would be undertaken before ten to twenty years if not longer.
2. The recommended TransCanada route option was unlikely to be changed from the consultant's recommendation largely because it presented the best social and environmental options and was the lowest cost option during a period of difficult financial times for the Ontario Government .
3. Financial support for a Kakabeka Falls "Main Street" Improvement Program was available from various Ontario Government Ministries. Cited was recent experience of Terrace Bay that undertook a \$3 million "Community Economic Development " project with 90% federal and Ontario government funding designed to improve the visitor experience to the community.
4. Access to funding for this type of project requires an active and sustainable community business association – it was noted this was not the present situation in the business community of Kakabeka Falls.
5. An overall concern that Kakabeka Falls was an important regional tourism attraction was "slipping" in terms of its attractiveness to visitors, but that with a

- coordinated community and municipal effort the community could provide an improved visitor experience.
6. Note was also made of the fact that the Oliver Paigoonge Municipality (the third largest municipality in population in Northwestern Ontario) does not have an Economic Development Officer (EDO) in its present structure unlike many other smaller municipalities in the region.
  7. Ontario government financial assistance of up to 90% of the salary for such a position is available for a period<sup>8</sup>. Such a position was regarded as being an important linkage between public and potential private sector funders, the municipality and the concerned business community involved in a Community Economic Development project.
  8. The fact that the development of a four-lane TransCanada Highway is not likely to occur for at least ten years, provided a “window of opportunity” for undertaking a “Community Economic Development” project to prepare the community for the likely far-off day when it will be constructed reducing the number of potential visitors to the community. It will also provide an improved visitor experience to the community in the period leading up to construction, providing improved opportunities for jobs and revenue generation from the visitors.

### **2.3 Background and Interviews With Kakabeka Falls Business Owners and Operators**

The “main street” of Kakabeka Falls is the Highway 11/17 corridor. These businesses are spread along both sides of the highway over a distance of just less than one kilometer (about 820 m or 2,700 ft).

The business locations are scattered and there are large gaps of open space between many of the establishments. The architecture is mixed, signage is not unified and some are difficult to see from Highway 11/17. The appearance and state of maintenance of individual buildings covers a wide range from attractive and well maintained to unattractive and poorly maintained. Overall the impression that first time visitors have of Kakabeka Falls “Main Street” is that it is a “tired, unattractive town” conveying little reason to stop when the City of Thunder Bay with more and known (brand name) options is less than 30 minutes away.

The highway speed limit along this section of Highway 11/17 is 50 kph. This means that a vehicle passing through Kakabeka Falls traveling at the speed limit takes a little over 60 seconds to transit from one end to the other end of the community and to determine if and where to stop.

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<sup>8</sup> Discussions with Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, December 2012.

The businesses inventory for the community of Kakabeka Falls is as follows:

1. There are 22 commercial businesses along Kakabeka Falls Village Main Street.
2. Ten of the existing businesses provide goods. Six of these have a high dependency on the tourism market while two have a medium dependency, one a low dependency while one is under development with an unknown application.
3. There are 12 service businesses along the “main street”. The majority (10) have a high dependency upon the tourism sector while two have a low dependency.
4. There are two vacant structures presently.
5. Combined, 16 businesses have a high dependency on village visitors, while two have a medium dependency and two have a low dependency.

Additional details are provided in Appendix 1.

Interviews with more than 60% of Kakabeka Falls business owners or operators indicated the following:

1. The majority of the community’s businesses have a significant dependency on local and distance visitors to Kakabeka Falls.
2. Many business operators have a high seasonal dependency on revenues generated from the “tourism months” to offset lower levels of revenue generated during the “off-season”.
3. A number of the businesses “shut down” for the off-season period.
4. Several operators noted the reduced level of American and other visitors and overall lower average expenditure level per visitor levels in the community during recent years.
5. Many of the business owners and managers believed that construction of a new four-lane TransCanada Highway in the vicinity of the community of Kakabeka Falls was going to take place in the immediate future and the loss of visitors to the community and to the Provincial Park would have an early and substantial negative economic impact upon their businesses and themselves.
6. There is currently no active organization that collectively represents the business interests of owners and operators in the community of Kakabeka Falls, but there was general agreement that “something should be done about it”.

## **2.4 Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats Analysis (SWOT) Analysis**

SWOT assessments are often used situational analysis tool. The technique is used in public and private sector environments and in small and large projects as a means to assess the situation and provide insights towards potential solutions.

The following chart (Chart 4) provides an appreciation of the situation that the municipality and the business community in Kakabeka Falls faces in regards to the two major drivers affecting the tourism market locally:

1. The longer-term possibility that the present Highway 11/17 (TransCanada) will be improved to a four-lane limited access highway that will potentially take about 460,000 vehicles and just over one million people 3 km away from Kakabeka Falls.
2. The fact that nationally, provincially and regionally, the number of American visitors has declined steadily over the past 14 years by a factor of 40% and this continuing decline has become the “new normal” or reality for the tourism sector.

The SWOT assessment that follows is based upon our reviews of background materials, interviews with provincial and municipal officials, and interviews with the local business community.

**STRENGTHS/WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS ASSESSMENT (SWOT)  
FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR INCREASING VISITORS AND VISITOR SPENDING LEVELS KAKABEKA FALLS**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Natural tourism attraction (Kakabeka Falls second highest waterfalls in Ontario) is adjacent to the village (the largest tourist attraction in the Thunder Bay Region - 200,000 annual visitors). Incredible tourism destination asset next door.</li> <li>2. Trans Canada Highway passes the falls and directly delivers into the village business centre 4 million persons annually.</li> <li>3 Kakabeka Falls is preserved as the most visited provincial park in the region offering campsite, hiking and cross country trails and safe, warm swimming areas – there is a walking connection to the village area from the park – in addition to servicing the village, it is an important regional recreational asset.</li> <li>4. Public monies are available to re-develop the village business area into a more attractive tourist destination in advance of highway re-routing with minimum costs to the Municipality and the business owners.</li> <li>5. Other regional examples exist of a similar recently completed project – Terrace Bay.</li> </ol>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creation of an appealing attractive tourism destination village and business area incorporating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved signage leading into the village and in the village area</li> <li>- Improved streetscape and road alignment</li> <li>- Crossovers for pedestrians for crossing the highway</li> <li>- A multi-use path for hikers, bikers and snowmobiles</li> <li>- Creation of public gathering places</li> <li>- Improved trail linkage to Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Organization of a sustainable business organization to develop and implement with other stakeholders a re-development plan for the village.</li> <li>3. Cooperation with other tourism organizations in joint marketing and special events.</li> <li>4. Improved cooperative relations between the KF Provincial Park, the village business organization and the municipality.</li> <li>5. Take advantage of the present situation at this time in advance of the village being bypassed in the future.</li> <li>6. Take advantage for the trend of more Canadians taking in Canada vacations.</li> </ol>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The majority of the existing businesses have a high dependency on revenue generation from regional and distant visitors who stop to shop/supply /eat/ in the village area - business levels have declined in recent years.</li> <li>2. Lack of critical mass of businesses – few and widely spaced apart</li> <li>3. Limited village appeal in the business area that is spread out and has limited visual and esthetic appeal.</li> <li>4. Partial signage in proximity of the village regarding, <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The significance of Kakabeka Falls to the distant traveler in advance of village entry is not apparent (another Fenelon Falls or Sturgeon Falls)</li> <li>b) Identification of the goods and services available in the village to travelers.</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. No current organization representing the business interests of the Kakabeka Falls Village</li> <li>6. Municipality at this time has no dedicated resources to assist economic development activities.</li> <li>7. Longer term decline in the visitor levels to Kakabeka Falls PP by 41% from peak years.</li> </ol>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>THREATS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Longer term (10 to 20 years) the Village will be bypassed as the TransCanada Highway is routed away from the village to a new four lane – the Kakabeka Falls turn-off will be about 3 km from the village – this situation represents a window of opportunity.</li> <li>2. Declining U.S. visitor levels to Canada and the Thunder Bay Region.</li> </ol>

Chart 4



### 3. Case Study: The Experience of the Township of Terrace Bay with Economic Revitalization

Given the emerging direction from this work that a key strategic initiative would be to adopt a “Main Street” revitalization approach as a response to the current situation, it was determined to examine the Township of Terrace Bay that had relatively recently undertaken a similar and reportedly successful initiative. This is a brief description of the community economic development project undertaken by Terrace Bay between 2007 and 2011. The main employer, a pulp mill, was set to close. The remote location of the town and the absence of alternative employment options complicated the situation.

The municipal leadership and business community united to focus on the most realistic economic alternatives. Priority was given to enhance the tourism visitor experience to the community. Terrace Bay has the advantage of being located on the TransCanada Highway and hugs the scenic Lake Superior coastline.

A Community Development Plan was undertaken led by the Municipality with consultations from the community and the business owners. To obtain public funding the business community was required to form a “Terrace Bay Business Association”.

There were three parts to the project:

1. A community “gateway” and improved highway signage leading to Terrace Bay attractions.
2. Building of a replica “lighthouse” adjacent to the commercial area providing a new tourism attraction and viewing platform to Lake Superior and the Slate Islands Provincial Park.
3. Design and construction of a common external façade and upgrading the business area (interconnected shopping mall) to provide an attractive community centre (the “mall makeover” project).

The Terrace Bay Downtown Redevelopment project cost \$3 million<sup>9</sup>. Fully 90% of the cost was provided by federal and provincial grants. The Township provided 10% of the total project costs. The Township’s contribution was reduced to 8% as a result of national business donations.

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<sup>9</sup> Northern Ontario Heritage Fund \$1.5 million, OMAFA \$400,000, FedNor \$500,000 and stimulus money from the federal provincial governments \$300,000. Other donors included the Toronto Dominion Bank Green Fund and others who provided donations that lowered the municipal investment from 10% to about 8% of the total project investment.

Twenty-five businesses came together (virtually all). No direct investment required was required on their part. The only economic cost to some of the businesses was a small loss of sales during the construction phase. Many of the business owners took the opportunity to invest in an upgrading of their businesses in conjunction with the “mall makeover” project.<sup>10</sup>

From project concept to completion took five years (2007-2011).

Since completion of the project, the number of travelers stopping in Terrace Bay has reportedly increased. A gift shop invested in new highway signage reported a payback on the \$4,000 investment in two months. Visitors to the “Lighthouse” exceeded 11,000 for the 2012 season when the attendance counters broke in September.

Essential to the success of the project were:

1. Agreement, leadership and organization of the business community;
2. Commitment and agreement from the elected officials and public staff to lead in the obtaining of the project financing and over-all project coordination;
3. Support of the federal and Ontario governments at the political and civil service levels; and,
4. A commitment to continuous improvements such as free Wi-Fi in the business area – the 2013 project.

Photos of the project and its elements before and after follow A video of the project can be found at:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GkcWwAGbmml&feature=channel\\_video\\_title](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GkcWwAGbmml&feature=channel_video_title)

### ***The Main Business Area of Terrace Bay – Simcoe Plaza – Before and After***



<sup>10</sup> Representatives (local government and business) in Terrace Bay are open to a visit from a Kakabeka Falls delegation to see the project elements and to discuss their process and experience.



**New Terrace Bay Welcome Sign**



**Old Terrace Bay Welcome Sign**



**New Highway Gateway Signs On Entry to Terrace Bay**



**The Replica of the Slate Island Lighthouse Provides a Viewing Point to Lake Superior.  
The New Feature Is Attracting 15,000 Annual Visitors.**



**Direction Signs to Terrace Bay Attractions Utilize Large Photographs  
Showing the Sight**



## 4. Conclusions and Implications Arising from the Interviews:

Conclusions and Implications Arising From Possible Re-Location of the Highway 11/17 (TransCanada) Away From “Main Street” Kakabeka Falls	
Conclusions	Implications or Opportunity
1. Kakabeka Falls has the largest number of visitors to any tourism attraction in Northwestern Ontario.	1. <i>Kakabeka Falls will not disappear and will be protected in longer-term (through the Provincial Park) and provides the rationale for the basis for economic development in the community.</i>
2. The prospect that a new Highway 11/17 four-lane highway will be developed in the next ten years is a very small possibility.	2. <i>Public and business anxiety is not justified. Rather this delay should be seen as a “window of opportunity” to improve the Kakabeka Falls tourist experience.</i>
3. Visitor levels to Kakabeka Falls and Kakabeka Provincial Park have declined by about 40% from previous levels and there are no indications visitor levels will return to previous historic levels.	3. <i>a) Provide a new and improved visitor experience for Kakabeka Falls visitors b) Direct efforts with tourism organizations to attract new audiences to Kakabeka Falls including internal Canadian visitors.</i>
4. The majority of the 22 businesses and the jobs generated full-time/part-time and seasonal in Kakabeka Falls have a high dependency on non-local customers and visitors to Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park.	4. <i>Efforts must be undertaken to attract more visitors to Kakabeka Falls who stay longer and spend more.</i>
5. There is no presently active association business association in Kakabeka Falls. There is a history of the rise and fall of such organizations in the community. It is essential for liaison with governments or tourism organizations.	5. <i>It is essential that the Kakabeka Falls business community finds new leadership for a renewed inclusive and sustainable business organization.</i>
6. The overall appearance of the “Main Street” of Kakabeka Falls is not attractive to potential visitors to the community and to visitors it seems “tired”.	6. <i>Opportunity for a “Main Street” revitalization considering streetscape features, building design, traffic features and signage.</i>
7. There is very limited signage in advance of entry to the community on the TransCanada to make potential visitors to Kakabeka Falls aware of a) the significance of the Kakabeka waterfalls or b) the goods and services available in the community.	7. <i>The municipality and a renewed Kakabeka Falls business organization and Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park jointly work towards improved signage of the features and goods and services available in Kakabeka Falls.</i>
8. There is a lack of connectivity between a) Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park and Kakabeka Falls business community and b) between both and regional and other tourism promotion organizations	8. <i>A renewed Kakabeka Falls business organization to ensure Kakabeka Falls positions itself as the largest regional tourism asset is clearly required.</i>
9. The provincial government is sympathetic and concerned about the situation in Kakabeka Falls as a major regional tourism asset and has present programs available to assist in the a “Main Street” renewal effort	9. <i>The municipality and the business association explore and indicate interest in using the available programs and to establish contact with elected public representatives regarding the plans for the community.</i>

10. The Municipality of Oliver Paigoonge has no position to provide a focus for economic development related activities.	<i>10: The municipality is in the process of reviewing the creation of such as position.</i>
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## 5. Consideration of Possible Joint Community Economic Development Activities

### 5.1 The Concept for Developing A Sustainable Tourism Model for Kakabeka Falls

Following is a description of the overall concept for the development of a Sustainable Tourism Model for Kakabeka Falls. Additional details are provided in the chart that follows.

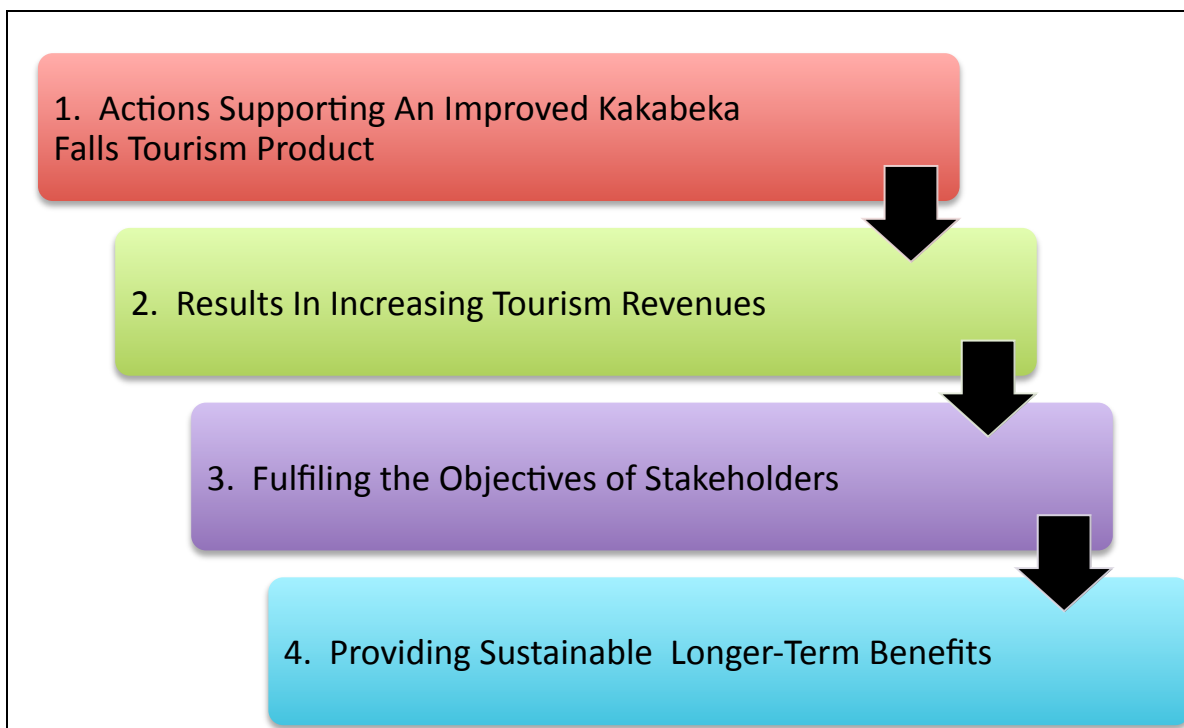


Chart 5

This provides a process towards providing a revitalized tourism experience and product for visitors to Kakabeka Falls that produces a sustainable, more secure future to the stakeholders and provides them longer-term benefits. It involves the cooperation of multiple stakeholders (a recommended Kakabeka Falls business organization, the Oliver Paigoonge Municipality, Regional Tourism Organization<sup>13C</sup> [Northwestern Ontario] and the cooperation of various ministries of the Ontario Government).

It commences with a series of coordinated action programs that is directed at Kakabeka Falls providing an improved visitor experience to the community.

1. This results in an increase of tourist related revenues because:
  - a. It increases the number of visitors to Kakabeka Falls;
  - b. These visitors will tend to stay longer in the community; and
  - c. These visitors because of a better visitor experience will spend more money per visitor.
2. This results in a higher level of tourism-related revenues and other benefits including:
  - a. Increased revenues to business owner and operators;
  - b. Expanded sustainable employment including full-time, part-time and seasonal jobs;
  - c. These improvements provide a source of community pride and make available additional benefits to the community and area of Kakabeka Falls; and,
  - d. Greater revenues to governments in the form of sales and other taxes.
3. This leads to longer-term fulfillment of objectives for the community in regards to the achievement of:
  - a. Economic objectives;
  - b. Social objectives; and,
  - c. Community and environmental objectives.

The following Chart 6 provides a visual representation of the process and components for the delivery of an improved tourism experience for the visitor to Kakabeka Falls and the benefits that flow from it. The model is robust and provides the benefit that it will deliver more visitors to Kakabeka Falls and to Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park that will offset the potential loss of visitors to the community from a re-routing and upgrading of the TransCanada Highway at some point in the future.

When the TransCanada Highway is relocated, signage and other marketing efforts should be reinforced along the new transportation corridor in the area adjacent to Kakabeka Falls providing an incentive and reason for taking the exit to Kakabeka Falls to enjoy the unique, natural heritage site and to take advantage of new amenities and improvements that make a visit to Kakabeka Falls an enjoyable and memorable experience.

A Model for Achieving Sustainable Benefits for Kakabeka Falls from Tourism

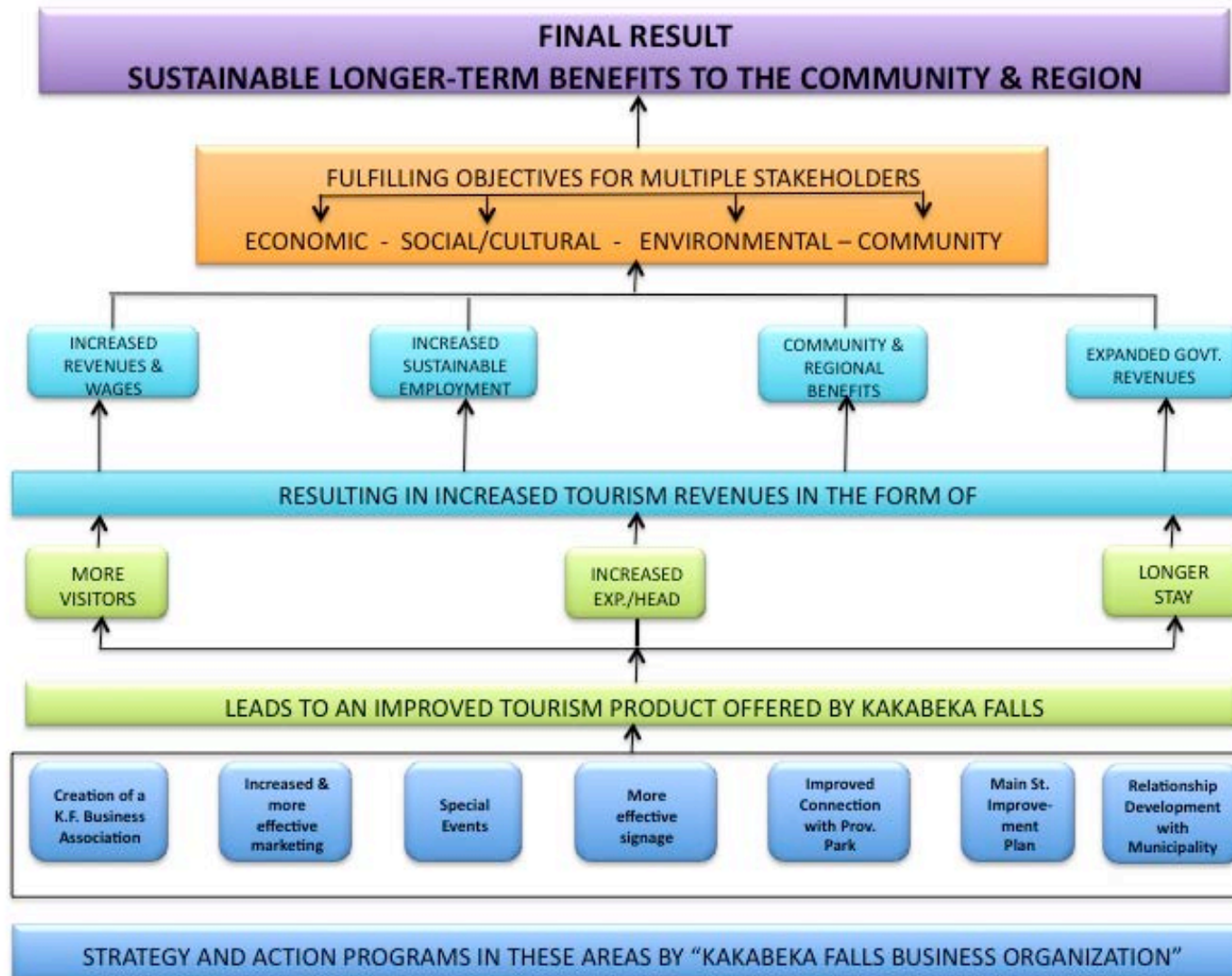


Chart 6

## 5.2 Two Concepts for the Revitalization Efforts for Kakabeka Falls “Main Street”

In 1998 the (then) Kakabeka Falls and Area Business Association commissioned a study<sup>11</sup> on Tourism Development for the community. The report set out a series of recommendations regarding tourism development in Kakabeka Falls including a concept for a Streetscape Plan. A copy of the conceptual drawing is provided on the following page (Chart 7).

Features of the conceptual Streetscape Plan in 1998 included the following.

### **1. Urban Design Goals**

- a. Designed to create a more urban, small village character for Kakabeka Falls;
- b. Narrowing the perspective view of the village main street approaching from the east or west Highway 11/17.

### **2. Features**

- a. Reduced four traffic lanes to two traffic lanes;
- b. Development of boulevards on both sides of the highway incorporating pedestrian traffic;
- c. Entrances to commercial properties will be consolidated into defined driveways to maximize boulevard continuity;
- d. Creation of a multi-purpose recreation trail on south side of the highway linking the village to Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park.

### **3. Visually Coordinated Streetscape Improvements Coordinated and Designed with a Theme that Reinforces an Overall Village Character**

- a. Street and commercial signage;
- b. Lighting;
- c. Street furniture;
- d. Road signage.

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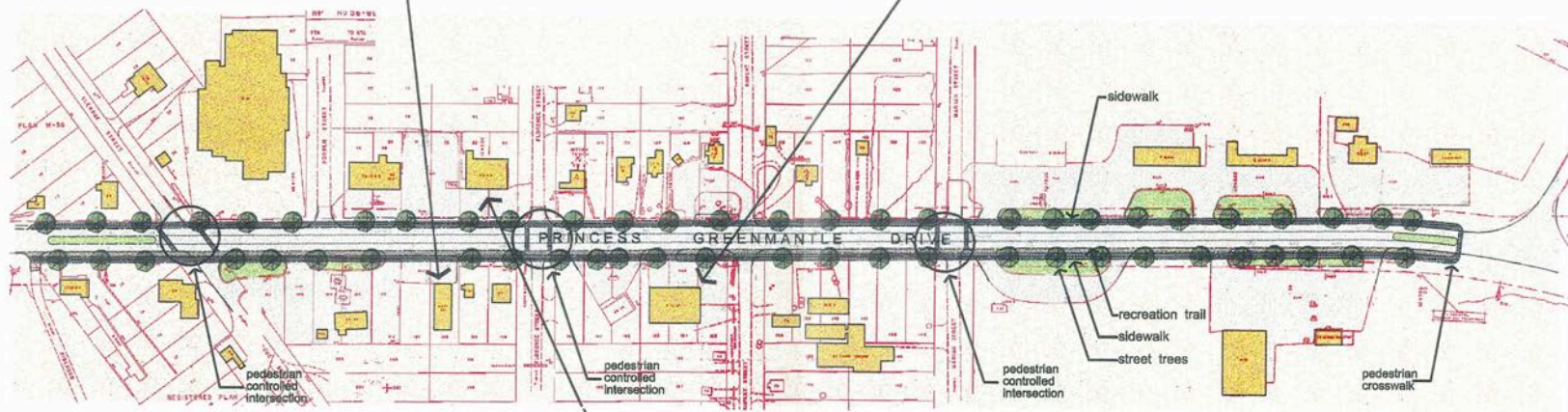
<sup>11</sup> “Harnessing the Potential” - A Tourism Development Study for Kakabeka Falls - Boreal Ecosystems Associates Ltd. with Kuch Stephenson Architects Ltd. - prepared for The Kakabeka Falls and Area Business Association - February 1998.



before ▲  
◀ after



before ▲  
◀ after



REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN  
1 : 1000



before ▲  
◀ after

# KAKABEKA MAIN STREET REDEVELOPMENT

PROPOSED MAIN STREET REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

KUCH STEPHENSON  
ARCHITECTS

131 Court Street North, Thunder Bay, Ontario  
P7A 4V1  
tel: 345 4093 email: kstarch@kuch.com



DATE: FEBRUARY 20, 1998  
DRAWN: C. STECHSHN

PROJECT: 9755

**P1**

Fourteen years (November 2012) later, Stantec Consulting Ltd. in conjunction with their study<sup>12</sup> for the Ontario Ministry of Transportation for the proposed routing for a four-lane TransCanada Highway in the area of Kakabeka Falls provided their concept of possible design considerations that might be undertaken to improve the streetscape of the community.

Between the two concepts, there are numerous similarities in the ideas. The principal feature of the Stantec proposed concept incorporated the following features:

1. Lowering of the speed limit in the village area of Highway 11/17;
2. Adding traffic calming features:
  - a. Tree planting
  - b. Use of median planting
  - c. Creation of pedestrian crosswalks
3. “Bookending” the village entrance with roundabouts;
4. Adding sidewalks and multi-use trails;
5. Allowing on-street parking;
6. Landscaping features:
  - a. Grass medians
  - b. Boulevards
  - c. Benches
  - d. New light standards capable of displaying banners
  - e. Creation of a public place for people to gather
7. Moving the entrance to Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park closer to the village;
8. Connecting the village with Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park with a multi-use trail;
9. Enhancing business and community signage.

*Source:*

*Transportation Environmental Study Report  
Highway 11/17 Route Planning Study – November 2012  
For Ministry of Transportation – Prepared by Stantec Consulting*

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<sup>12</sup> *Transportation Environmental Study Report Highway 11/17 Route Planning Study – November 2012 for Ministry of Transportation – Prepared by Stantec Consulting.*





## 6. Recommended Next Steps

Action Items Leading to Improving the Kakabeka Falls Visitor Experience			
Action Item & Rationale	Description	Responsibility	Timing
<b>1. Creation of a Kakabeka Falls Business Association</b>  <b>Rationale</b> <i>It is essential that if this plan is to be implemented that a business organization is required to lead and to be the "official agent" for governments to deal with.</i>	Kakabeka Falls has a history of the rise and fall of business organizations. There is no active business association at this time. Business owners and operators must come together to become a credible active and sustainable business organization, as the support of governments at three levels will be essential to the achievement in whole or part and they require a stable and credible organization that they can deal with for now and the future.	<b>Prime:</b> Kakabeka Falls business owners and operators	First priority - Immediate
<b>2. Increased Marketing</b>  <b>Rationale</b> <i>Expanded marketing &amp; promotion will be required to promote the improvements to the Kakabeka Falls visitor experience</i>	As the largest tourism destination in the region, Kakabeka Falls must be a player at the table when decisions are made regarding advertising and marketing. Also to protect its position as the leading tourist attraction in NW Ontario using Kakabeka Falls as a lever and magnet to attract more visitors to the area and region.	<b>Prime:</b> Kakabeka Falls business organization – promotion committee	Early on after in the structure of the organization.
<b>3. Special Events</b>  <b>Rationale</b> <i>Special events can provide large and delivery potential target audiences</i>	The existing Kakabeka Falls Street Festival draws the largest annual audience to the community. Consideration should be given to other special events over the four seasons, or the music festival or concerts. These may be directed to target audiences that could represent repeat visitors.	<b>Prime:</b> Kakabeka Falls business organization – special events committee	Early on after formation of the organization.

Action Item & Rational	Description	Responsibility	Timing
<b>4. More &amp; Improved Signage</b>  <b>Rationale</b> <i>There is presently limited notice to travelers of what lies ahead in Kakabeka Falls and no information to tell them about the size and importance of the falls.</i>	<p>In the time a TransCanada highway traveler has to transit the community (just over 60 seconds) it is too late in most cases to have them make a stop-decision. Nothing identifies the significance of the falls in advance of entry. Signage in co-operation with MTO can provide well-designed and informative signs regarding the attraction of the falls and the goods and services available in Kakabeka Falls. The sign examples from Terrace Bay might be considered as a possible model.</p>	<p><b>Prime:</b> Kakabeka Falls business organization – promotion committee</p> <p><b>Secondary</b> Cooperation with Ontario Ministry of Transportation</p>	Year 2
<b>5. Improved connections with Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park</b>  <b>Rationale</b> <i>Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park is a critical stakeholder responsible for the major tourism attraction and should be involved with the new business organization and the physical connection (trail) between the Park and the village should be improved and better positioned.</i>	<p>There should be an active engagement between Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park (KFPP) and the new business organization. Currently there are “two solitudes” that share the same interests and challenges. More visitors to the KFPP mean more visitors to the town. More visitors to the town mean more visitors to KFPP. At minimum there should be KFPP observer status with the new business organization. Better would be a full membership. There is wide recognition that the present trail connecting KFPP to the town is: a) badly located and hard to find from both ends and b) is not attractive or lighted at night to facilitate a safe connection between the two key stakeholders. Action in this regard will encourage and facilitate pedestrian traffic between KFPP and the community</p>	<p><b>Prime:</b> Kakabeka Falls business organization and Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park management</p>	Early priority

Action Item & Rational	Description	Responsibility	Timing
<b>6. “Main Street” Improvement Program</b>  <b>Rationale</b> The community of Kakabeka Falls to passing travelers seems to be a “hodge-podge” and is neither attractive nor provides a compelling reason to stop.	The present visual experience to travelers transiting the TransCanada of Kakabeka Falls is not consistent. It offers various states of design attractiveness, the state up-keep is uneven, there are abandoned buildings, several vacant lots, no sidewalk, no places for people to cross a busy highway and little streetscaping along the stretch. Many signs for business and not positioned for optimum travelers view or cannot be read at 50 kph. The overall first impression to the passing traveler of Kakabeka Falls is of “tired” community. Funding to assist in the funding such a community development program is available from existing Ontario Government <sup>13</sup> programs for this purpose. Additional funding may be available from special economic initiatives undertaken periodically by the federal government. Ongoing government and political liaison is considered vital to enabling this project.	<b>Prime:</b> Kakabeka Falls business organization  <b>Secondary</b> Oliver Paigoonge Municipality	This is a longer-term project that will require continuous attention from Year One. Experience from Terrace Bay suggests a minimum of five years is required from concept to completion.
<b>7. Establishment of an Economic Development Position for Oliver Paigoonge Municipality</b>  <b>Rationale</b> Oliver Paigoonge Municipality is notable for the absence of an economic development responsibility in the organization given its size and rank. Ontario Government funds are available to provide the majority of the costs for a several initial years	Not only for the Kakabeka Falls opportunity but also for other community economic development opportunities the municipality should have a dedicated position that coordinates the internal and external requirements for economic development.	<b>Prime</b> Oliver Paigoonge Municipality	It is understood that the Municipality has commenced the steps towards fulfilling this new position

<sup>13</sup> A listing of Ontario Government programs that could potentially be employed to assist in the financing of a community development program is provided in Appendix 4.

## **Appendices Section**

- 1. Profile of the Kakabeka Falls Business Community**
2. *Photographs of Kakabeka Falls Business “Main Street” Along Highway 11/17 Corridor ”*
3. *Photographs of “Drive Thru” of the Present Kakabeka Falls “Main Street”*
4. *Listing of Available Ontario Government Programs to Assist Communities in Community Development*

### **Notes and Acknowledgements By Appendix Section**

1. *Data prepared by TCI Management Consultants based on field research.*
2. *Photographs by TCI Management Consultants (September 2012) and street “strip map” from Transportation Environmental Study Report Highway 11/17 Route Planning Study Between Kakabeka Falls and Shabaqua Corners, prepared for Ministry of Transportation Ontario, by Stantec Consulting Ltd., November 2012*
3. *Photographs by Google Inc “Street View” - photographs April 2012, May 2012 and August 2012 - (in the process of obtaining publication rights from Google Canada).*
4. *Source – Meetings and materials provided by the Ontario Government website –December 2012 and May 2013.*

## Village of Kakabeka Falls – “Main Street” Census By Type of Business or Main Focus

Kakabeka Falls “Main Street” Business Inventory by Main Type of Business		
Type and Main Focus	Number	Dependency on Tourism
<b>RETAIL GOODS</b>		
Bait	2	High
Feed/Tack Etc.	1	Low
Gas & Service Station /Convenience Store/Other	3	High
Grocery	1	Medium
LCBO	1	Medium
Souvenir/Gift	1	High
Under Development “The Pines”	1	?
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>SERVICES</b>		
Beauty Salon/Aesthetics	1	Low
Coffee Shop	1	High
Food Restaurants	4	High
Food Seasonal Ice Cream/Snack Food	2	High
Laundromat	1	Low
Motels	3	High
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	
<b>OTHER BUILDINGS</b>		n/a
Church	1	n/a
Post Office	1	n/a
Residential or Apartment	2	n/a
School	1	n/a
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	
<b>VACANT STRUCTURES</b>	<b>2</b>	
<b>TOTAL STRUCTURES</b>	<b>30</b>	

There are 22 commercial businesses along Kakabeka Falls Village Main Street

Ten of the existing businesses provide goods. Six have a high dependency on the tourism market while two have a medium dependency, one a low dependency while one is under development with an unknown application.

There are 12 service based businesses in the village. The majority (10) has a high dependency upon the tourism sector while two have a low dependency.

There are two vacant structures presently.

Combined 16 have a high dependency on village visitors, while two have a medium dependency and two have a low dependency.

## **Appendices Section**

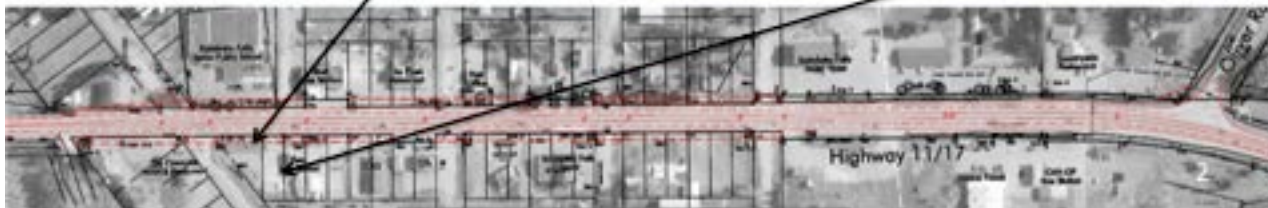
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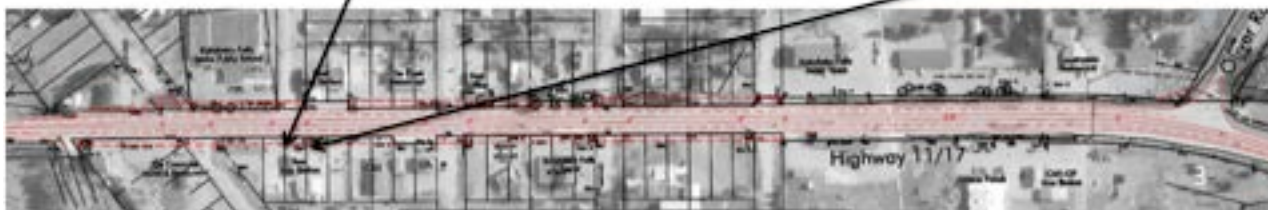
Kakabeka Falls “Main Street”  
South Side (West to East)



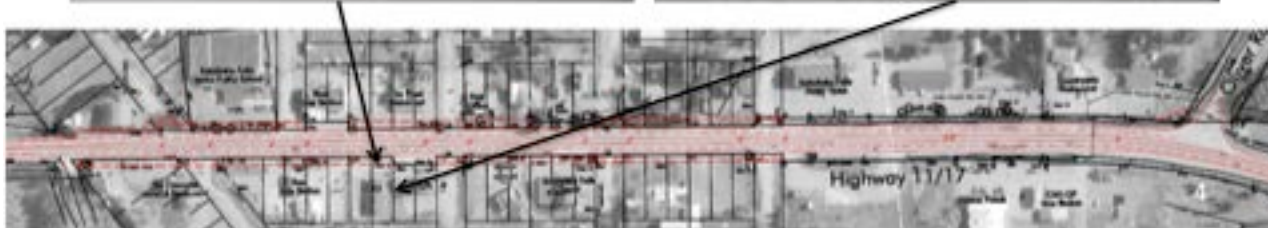
Kakabeka Falls “Main Street”  
South Side (West to East)



Kakabeka Falls “Main Street”  
South Side (West to East)

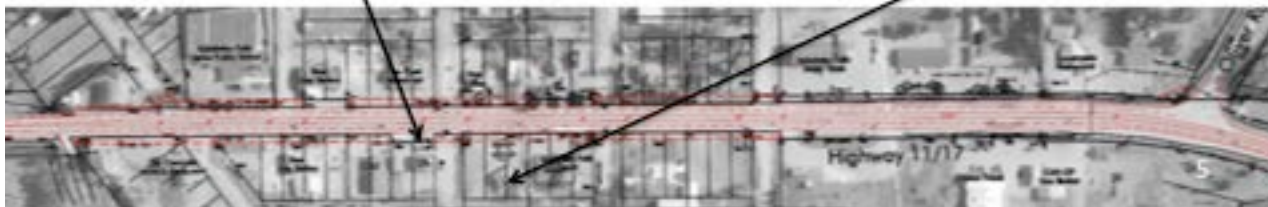


Kakabeka Falls “Main Street”  
South Side (West to East)

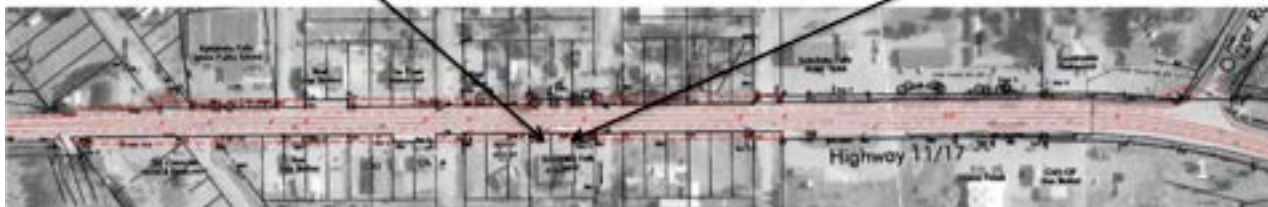




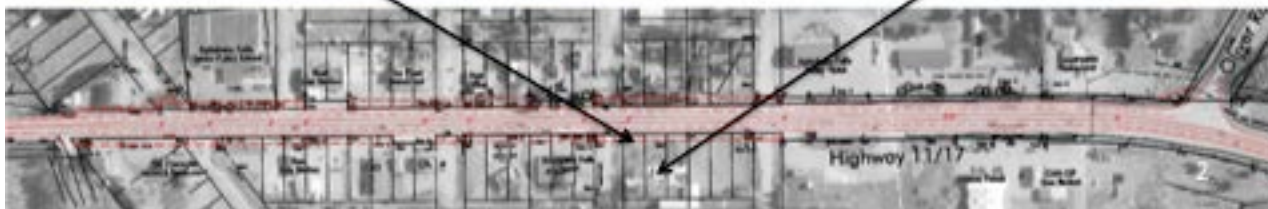
Kakabeka Falls “Main Street”  
South Side (West to East)



Kakabeka Falls “Main Street”  
South Side (West to East)



Kakabeka Falls “Main Street”  
South Side (West to East)

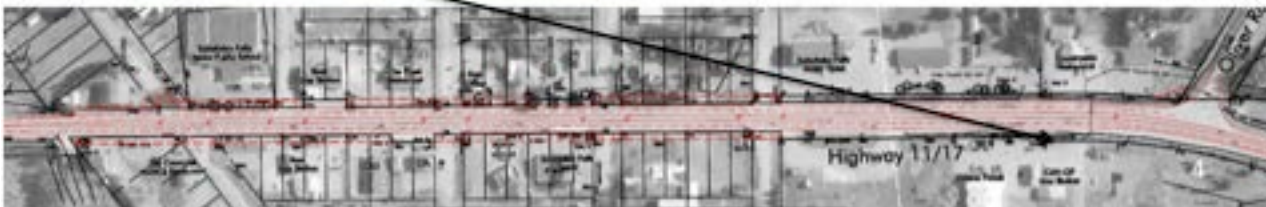




Kakabeka Falls “Main Street”  
South Side (West to East)



## Kakabeka Falls “Main Street” South Side (West to East)



## Kakabeka Falls “Main Street” North Side (West to East)



## Kakabeka Falls “Main Street” North Side (West to East)



## Kakabeka Falls “Main Street” North Side (West to East)





Kakabeka Falls “Main Street”  
North Side (West to East)



## Kakabeka Falls “Main Street” North Side (West to East)





## Kakabeka Falls “Main Street” North Side (West to East)



## Kakabeka Falls “Main Street” North Side (West to East)



## **Appendices Section**

1. *Profile of the Kakabeka Falls Business Community.*
2. *Photographs of Kakabeka Falls Business “Main Street” Along Highway 11/17 Corridor ”*
3. ***Photographs of “Drive Thru” of the Present Kakabeka Falls “Main Street”***
4. *Listing of Available Ontario Government Programs to Assist Communities in Community Development*

**West End Entry to Kakabeka Falls Community “Main Street” Drive Through Along Ontario Highway 11/17 (Source Goggle Maps)**



Photograph 1



Photograph 2



Photograph 3



Photograph 4





Photograph 5



Photograph 6



Photograph 7



Photograph 8





Photograph 9

Photograph 9



Photograph 10



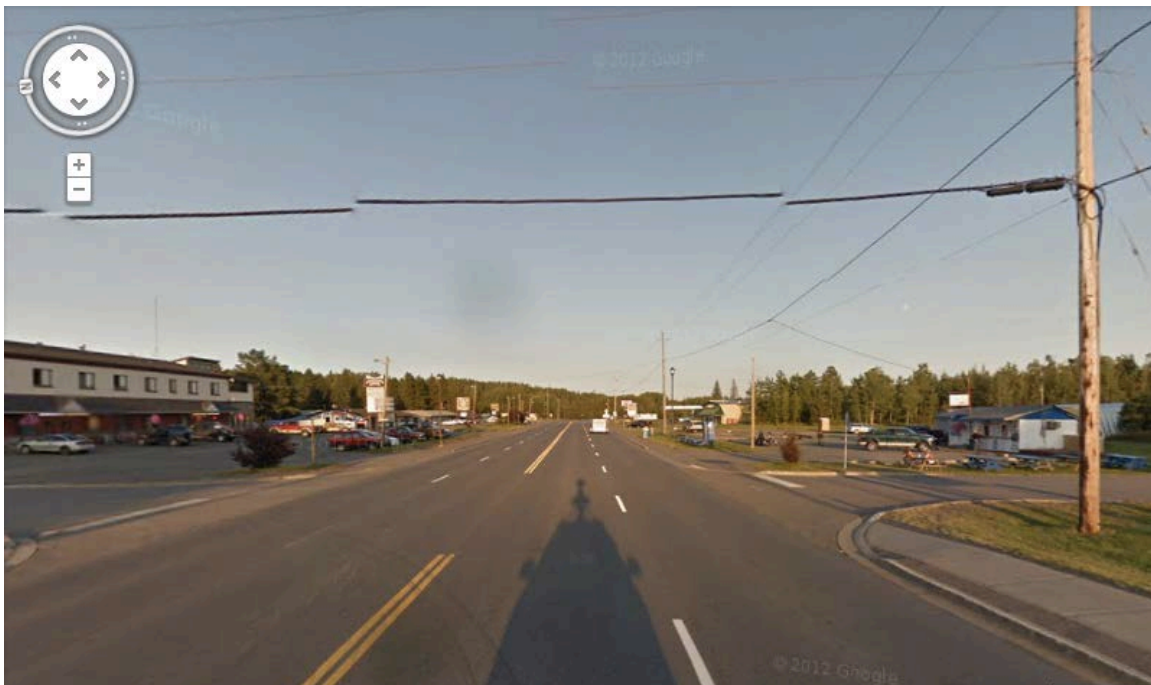
Photograph 11



Photograph 12



Photograph 13



Photograph 14





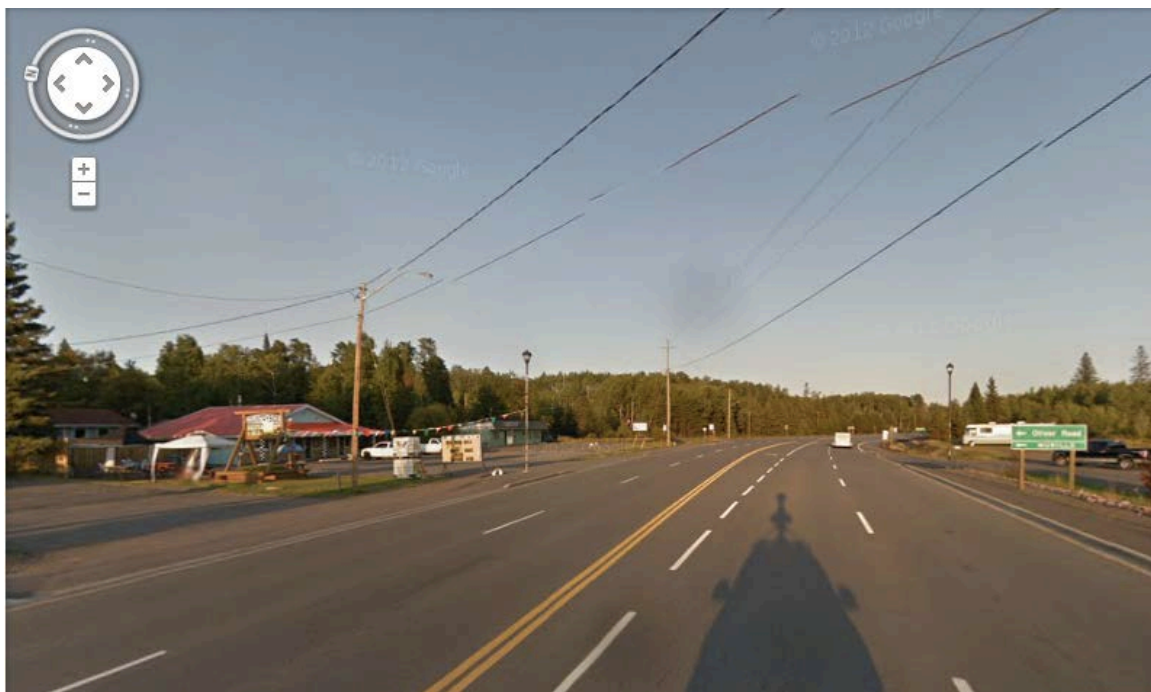
Photograph 15



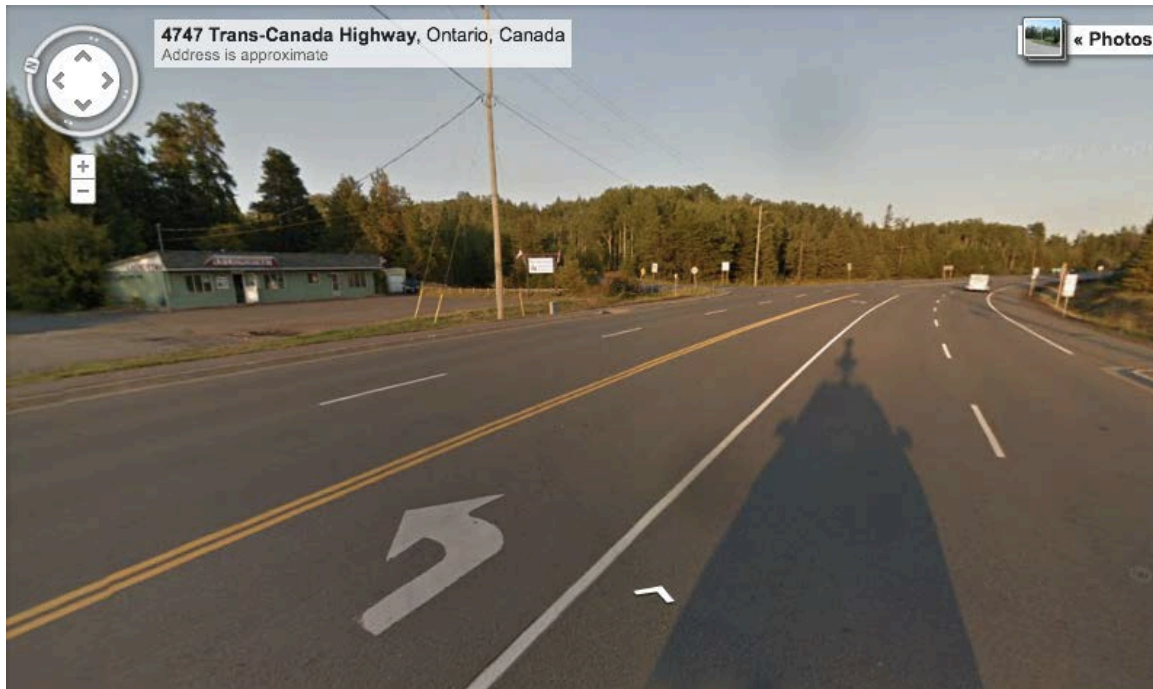
Photograph 16



Photograph 17



Photograph 18



Photograph 19

Exit East End of the Kakabeka Falls Community Ontario Highway 11/17

Source: Google Maps

## ***Appendices Section***

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## Ministry of Northern Development and Mines

# Infrastructure and Community Development

Investing in Infrastructure to Promote Growth and Economic Development



## Table of Contents

- 1. [Who is Eligible](#)
- 2. [What is Eligible](#)
- 3. [How to Apply](#)

Modern and reliable infrastructure is a cornerstone of building thriving, prosperous communities everywhere. The NOHFC Infrastructure and Community Development Program helps northern communities make the investments necessary to improve critical infrastructure and develop partnerships that find effective ways to create jobs and improve economic prospects in the North.

This program has been enhanced to provide a greater emphasis on regional collaboration through the Regional Economic Opportunities Partnership initiative. Communities can now apply collectively for funding to projects that will support long-term sustainable economic development on a regional scale.

## Who is Eligible

- Eligible applicants may include partnerships and alliances comprising municipalities, private sector businesses and organizations, federal government and other government-related agencies.
- Municipalities, First Nations, not-for-profit corporations and educational institutions may apply individually.
- For projects under the Regional Economic Opportunities Partnership initiative, a region must encompass at least two northern local governments (municipal or First Nation) and the resulting collaboration should include training and educational institutions, sector organizations, not-for-profits, and industries as appropriate. The number of communities and partners may vary depending on partnership opportunities, geography, and project type.

## What is Eligible

- Essential and strategic community infrastructure necessary for the creation of jobs in the North.
- Eligible regional projects could include labour force development, population strategies, capacity building, development of economic development plans, training requirements, sector-based research projects, business retention and attraction strategies, and infrastructure requirement

- studies and other regional non-capital projects which align with the Growth Plan and the existing and emerging priority sectors.
- Eligible infrastructure projects include, but are not limited to: industrial parks, winter roads projects, waterfront development, community facilities for economic development purposes (e.g. call centres)

Other projects considered necessary to further an economic goal or improve the quality of life in Northern Ontario may be reviewed by the NOHFC Board on a case-by-case basis.

For more information please download our full program brochure or contact us today.  
Please download the Program Brochure below for complete details including eligibility, funding and guidelines.

## **How to Apply**

Send completed application forms to:  
Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation  
70 Foster Drive, Suite 200  
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario  
P6A 6V8  
fax: 1-705-945-6701  
email: [nohfc.ndm@ontario.ca](mailto:nohfc.ndm@ontario.ca)  
For More Information call our toll free line 1-800-461-8329.

Last modified: Jun 2, 2013

## Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food

# Rural Economic Development (RED) Program

## Rural Economic Development (RED) Update

In its 2013 Ontario Budget, the government reiterated its commitment to "continue its existing investments made through the Rural Economic Development (RED) program". At this time, options are being developed to re-launch a re-focused RED Program. New Applications Guides and Forms will be made available on this site. Please visit this site again for updates.

For more information:

Telephone : 1 888 588-4111

Fax: 1-519-826-4336

Email : [red@ontario.ca](mailto:red@ontario.ca)

**Author:** OMAFRA Staff

**Creation Date:**

**Last Reviewed:** 13 July 2013

## Example of the Application of Rural Economic Development Program – Town of Minto

The screenshot shows the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food website. The header includes the Ontario logo, the text "MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD", and links for "Ontario.ca" and "Français". A search bar is located in the top right. A navigation menu below the header lists: HOME, ABOUT, AGRICULTURE, FOOD, RURAL, RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS, NEWS, and CONTACTS. On the left side, there is a "News" sidebar with links to Top News, News Archives, Agricorp, Court Bulletins, Media Contacts, New on the Site, New Products, and Story Ideas. Below this are links for Explore Government, Resources, and Contacts. The main content area features a news article titled "Minto Kick-Starts Main Street Revitalization" dated August 25, 2009. The article text describes the project's goal to attract new businesses and investment in three downtown areas (Clifford, Harriston, and Palmerston) through funding from the Rural Economic Development Program. It mentions a 2010 Summit to discuss enhancing the downtowns. Quotes from John Wilkinson (MPP for Perth-Wellington) and David Anderson (Mayor of the Town of Minto) are included. A "QUICK FACTS" section lists two bullet points: the project's funding of \$406,800 and Ontario's total investment of \$77.5 million since 2003. A "LEARN MORE" section provides links to discover the Town of Minto and learn more about the Rural Economic Development Program. Contact information for Kelly Synnott and Brent Ross is provided, along with a toll-free number, local number, and email address.

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MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

Ontario.ca | Français

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- Story Ideas

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Contacts >

## Minto Kick-Starts Main Street Revitalization

**NEWS** August 25, 2009

The three downtown areas in Minto are joining together to attract new businesses and investment.

Through funding provided by the Rural Economic Development Program, the Main Street Minto Revitalization Project will look for ways to draw new investments to the area over the next three years. A rural Downtown Revitalization Summit will be held in 2010 to discuss ways to enhance the downtowns of Minto and foster economic development.

The goal of the project is to create 165 jobs over the next three years in the communities of Palmerston, Harriston and Clifford. Improving the downtown streetscapes of these three communities, will help increase pedestrian traffic and encourage residents and tourists to stop and shop in the community.

### QUOTES

"This much needed project will help beautify the downtown areas of Clifford, Harriston and Palmerston, bringing new investment and retail opportunities to Minto. Renewing interest in our downtown areas will contribute to our local economy, create new jobs and make us even prouder to call Minto home."  
- **John Wilkinson**, MPP for Perth-Wellington

"We are truly thrilled to welcome the province as a partner in this exciting project. With this support, we will move even closer to our goal and beautifying our communities, drawing new investments and creating jobs."  
- **David Anderson**, Mayor of the Town of Minto

### QUICK FACTS

- The project is receiving \$406,800 through the **Rural Economic Development Program**, which invests in community-based projects in three priority areas: revitalized communities and downtowns, enhanced skills training, and improved access to health care services.
- Since 2003, Ontario has invested \$77.5 million in 240 projects through the Rural Economic Development Program.

### LEARN MORE

Discover The **Town of Minto**.

Learn more about the **Rural Economic Development Program**.

For more information, contact:

Kelly Synnott, Minister's Office, 416-326-6439  
Brent Ross, Communications Branch, 416-326-9342

For more information:  
Toll Free: 1-877-424-1300  
Local: (519) 826-4047  
E-mail: [ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca](mailto:ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca)



Red River Expedition at Kakabeka Falls (1877)  
Francis Anne Kaplan  
*Library and Archives Canada*





Kakabeka Falls  
Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park  
Kakabeka Falls, Ontario  
Second Highest Water Falls in Ontario  
“Niagara of the North”