

COUNCIL REPORT

To: Mayor & Council

Date: October 6, 2009

From: Jennifer Findlay, Economic Development Officer

Re: Atikokan Path of the Voyageur Regional Tourism Project

Background

Atikokan has been leading regional discussions on the development of a tourism product, which is currently being referred to as "Path of the Voyageur". The first year of the project was spent introducing communities within the region to the project concept and getting buy-in from those communities about the potential for the project.

Meetings have been held on a sporadic basis and have been led by volunteers from Atikokan. Meetings have been attended by representatives from the northwest, including Thunder Bay Tourism, Township of Atikokan, Quetico Park, Fort Frances Museum, City of Kenora Economic Development or Tourism staff, City of Dryden, and the Township of Ignace.

In order to move the project along in a more regular manner, the Township of Atikokan has prepared a submission to hire a Youth Intern. The Township would host and oversee the Intern and continue to lead the project.

Atikokan is requesting that the 5 main municipalities involved in the project contribute \$2 000 to the project for the Youth Intern.

Budget: Operating budget - Tourism

Notice: Agenda item - Property and Planning, Minutes

Pros and Cons:

This project could enable the region to develop a water-based, cultural & heritage tourism product, which would promote the region as a destination. However, past efforts to develop a regional tourism water-based project along these same waterways have failed.

Recommendation:

THAT Kenora provide \$2 000, through the Lake of the Woods Development Commission, to the Atikokan Path of the Voyageur project to enable that project to hire a Youth Intern. The next year, after a review of the Intern's work, will determine whether further investments should be made in this project by Kenora.

Alternately, THAT the Commission investigates other potential funders of this project.