



**September 14, 2010**

## **City Council Report**

**TO: Mayor & Council**

**FR: Lake of the Woods Development Commission**

**RE: Visitor Information Services 2011**

### **Recommendation:**

THAT the Lake of the Woods Discovery Centre become the permanent, year round visitor information centre for the City of Kenora, and;

THAT during the summer months, the Thistle Pavilion on the Harbourfront provide visitor information services during the months of May to October, and;

THAT visitor information services are no longer delivered from the Visitor Information Centre on Highway 17 East, and;

THAT wayfinding signage for visitor information services be erected from the entrances and throughout the community directing the travelling public to the centres.

### **Background:**

With the estimated completion date of the new Lake of the Woods Discovery Centre in March 2011, the Tourism Committee was asked to assess the operation of Visitor Information Centres in the City of Kenora and provide a recommendation on the provision of visitor information services in Kenora including the number of Centres, their location and months and hours of operation. Currently, the visitor information centre on HWY 17 East is open for service year round. The Thistle Pavilion currently provides visitor information services during the months of June, July and August.

In both 2009 and 2010 during the months of June and July the Thistle Pavilion serviced approximately 1,000 more visitors than the visitor centre on Hwy 17 East.

	HWY 17 East Travel Centre	Pavilion
June & July 2009	1783	2716
June & July 2010	1408	3000

Further to this, staff members have indicated that the large majority of visitors to the Hwy 17 East location are arriving from the West. It has also been observed that many visitors have difficulty recognizing the Hwy 17 East location as a visitor centre due to poor signage and its location.

It should also be noted that there are significant cost in terms of staffing requirements to operate three centres.

Based on this information the above recommendation is being put forward.