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EAST SIDE PLANNING INITIATIVE Seymourville, Manitoba

ISSUES IDENTIFIED

CONSULTATION & COMMUNICATION

Consultation with communities by government and industry has not been effective. We usually hear about initiatives after the fact. We need to be consulted on all projects and kept informed on an on-going basis.

Recommendations: Consultation & Communication

- The new Aboriginal Affairs Committee of cabinet should ensure that the NACC communities are not forgotten.
- The inter-departmental group needs to keep the Round Table informed of all activities on the east side on an on-going basis.

COMMUNITY and REGIONAL PLANNING

(a) Community Planning

The community of Seymourville will be incorporating and thereby have better control. There needs to be short and long term planning that maintains some type of guidelines and restrictions for development. A comprehensive plan needs to be prepared to deal with economic development and land use issues. Expert assistance is required to facilitate and provide advice regarding the development of a community vision and action plan through a general community meeting, document preparation and plan implementation.

A land use study needs to be conducted within our boundary and surrounding area.

(b) Regional Co-ordination

The regional round table [Nopiming United Round Table (NURT)] has been allocated monies for all the local communities and First Nations to work together on common economic development issues. Pine Falls has also promised money for NURT activity. Up to this point, NURT hasn't been taken seriously. It is important to have regional as well as community meetings to identify the effects and impacts on the larger area. A regional perspective will provide input regarding what we see from the larger picture as part of the continuing Round Table process.

(c) Impact Assessments

Assessments of impact need to be conducted on proposed developments before they proceed to determine if that is what we want.

(d) Community Boundaries

Establishment of NACC communities occurred during the 1970s under the Schreyer government. To date, surveys to clarify community boundaries have not been done.

Recommendations: Community and Regional Planning

- ESPI needs to support and encourage the development of community plans.
- Communities need to attain appropriate expertise to assist with the development of their community plans.
- Land use studies need to be conducted within community boundaries and the surrounding area.
- Every effort needs to be made to include the regional round tables in planning initiatives.
- A regional vision needs to be developed collaboratively with all players.
- Impact assessments need to be conducted before developing the east side.
- Legal surveys need to be completed for all NACC communities.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

(a) Contaminants

Chemical spraying by Hydro and the Department of Highways contaminates the vegetation and fish consumed by local people. Calcium on the roadways ends up in the lake.

(b) Waste Management

Sewage is being dumped on the side of the road by the cottagers.

(c) Biodiversity

Erosion has resulted in the loss of the beach that had been used by locals for recreation. The water level is low and the area is now full of clay.

Clear-cutting in Ontario forced the marten to migrate to this region – they have since migrated elsewhere.

Recommendations: Environmental Issues

- Water quality needs to be maintained and monitored.
- Regulations for sewage disposal need to be developed and clearly communicated to cottagers through signage and pamphlets to raise awareness.
- Enforcement mechanisms for waste disposal need to be developed to ensure compliance.
- Bio-diversity in the region needs to be maintained through appropriate study and consultation for sustainable development.

ALL WEATHER ROAD

(a) Safety and Community Access

The roads are in poor condition, making them hazardous for local residents. Two kilometers of Tembec's Road, for example, is not maintained for winter conditions which adversely affects the safety as well as access to communities from Loon Straits to the northern reserves.

(b) Access to Opportunities

Opening up the land on the East Side will increase access to economic and employment opportunities to improve the economic well-being of communities.

(c) Reduction of Costs

The current high costs of transportation also contribute to the poor health of the region due to the high costs to purchase the fresh produce that contributes to healthy diets. There are also high costs associated with flying to Winnipeg and staying in the city to access health services.

Recommendations: All Weather Road

- Maintain existing roads.
- Provide an all-weather road to northern communities to ensure access to economic development opportunities, reduce the high costs of food and access to health services.

TRADITIONAL LIFE STYLE

There is a danger of a lot of recreational development with cottages and tourism that affects hunting. It must be remembered that 96% of the people living in this region are First Nation.

Recommendation: Traditional Life Style

- Protect Aboriginal and Treaty Rights by maintaining hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering.

HEALTH & SOCIAL ISSUES

The poor health on the East Side is four times higher when compared to the rest of the province. High costs of transportation for food and health services contribute to the poor health of the region.

There is a lack of education and increasing social problems.

Recommendation: Health and Social Issues

- Open up the land on the East Side with appropriate study and consultation for sustainable development to increase access to opportunities to improve the well-being of communities and to reduce the high costs for food and health services.