

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2024



Date

November 19, 2019

An updated plan that includes community values, natural heritage features, quality of life and a shared vision of the future.

# CONTENTS

- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ..... 2**
  - STRATEGIC PLAN BACKGROUND .....5
  - COMPONENT #1 .....5
    - MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT .....6
    - VALUE STATEMENTS .....7
  - COMPONENT #2.....8
- A. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ..... 9**
  - A.1 INTERNET AND CELL COVERAGE.....9
  - A.2 NATURAL HERITAGE FEATURES ..... 10
  - A.3 HOME OCCUPATIONS AND HOME INDUSTRIES ..... 11
  - A.4 TOURISM ..... 11
- B. MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND COMMUNICATIONS ..... 12**
  - B.1. WASTE DIVERSION..... 12
  - B.2. TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE..... 14
  - B.3. PROPERTY STANDARDS WITH A COMMON SENSE RURAL FLAVOUR. .... 15
  - B.5 HOUSING ..... 15
- C. MARKETING ..... 16**
  - C.1. NATURAL HERITAGE FEATURES ..... 16
  - C.2. HISTORICAL DESTINATIONS..... 16
  - C.3. COMMUNICATION..... 18
  - C.4. ADVERTISING ..... 18
- D. RECREATION AND TOURISM ..... 19**
  - D.1. TRAIL SYSTEMS..... 19
  - D.2. FITNESS HEALTH PROMOTION..... 19
  - D.3 WATER ACCESS..... 20
  - D.4 VOLUNTEERISM..... 21
  - COMPONENT 3..... 22
- WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? ..... 22**

# Strategic Plan 2019-2024

NOVEMBER 19, 2019

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document is the updated community strategic plan of the Township of Nipissing for the 2019-2024 time period.

1. Following the 2018 election, Council compiled a summary of all issues brought forward to them during the campaign period.
2. A Town Hall meeting was held on June 3, 2019 at the Nipissing Community Centre to talk to and collect information from residents.

At the Town Hall meeting, topics of discussion were focused but not limited to the following categories;

- Recycling Program and Landfill Operations
- Dock Facility – Wades Landing
- Strategic Plan Update
- Provincial Modernization and Efficiencies Funding

After reviewing the information collected and talking to many residents in the Township of Nipissing, it is very clear that the families and residents of the community want to continue to maintain the high quality of life afforded them while at the same time allowing and even encouraging growth at a sustainable rate. This Strategic Plan, developed for the Township of Nipissing, attempts to provide that balance by celebrating and building on what is available in the Township and encouraging investment and growth at a manageable rate.

**This Strategic Plan will continue the momentum and make updates to the 2013 Strategic Plan**

The focus of Council has been on the following key themes;

A. Economic Development

**Goal:** To sustain the current “quality of life” identifying partners and saleable products and services that could provide growth and development opportunities in the Township of Nipissing.

B. Municipal Services and Communications

**Goal:** To ensure the provisions of effective communication and municipal services are maintained and continue to meet the needs of the community.

C. Marketing

**Goal:** To work positively toward creating a greater awareness by the community and public at large as to the amenities, services and opportunities that are available

D. Recreation and Tourism

**Goal:** The community will work toward developing and enhancing the physical, social and environmental opportunities afforded by tourism and recreation.

Each of the themes generated a number of areas that reflected the quality of life in Nipissing Township as well as identifying areas for improvement and the potential for incremental and sustainable growth.



Picture: Council Chambers, Nipissing Township

**The following areas were identified for review:**

- A.....Economic Development
  - A.1.....Internet and Cell coverage
  - A.2.....Natural Heritage Features
  - A.3.....Home Occupations and Home Industries
    - A.3.2.....Youth Intern/ Retention
  - A.4.....Tourism Initiatives
- B.....Municipal Services
  - B.1.....Health and Safety
  - B.1.....Waste Diversion
  - B.2.....Transportation Infrastructure
    - B.2.4.....911 signage
    - B.2.5.....Speed Limits – MTO
  - B.3.....By-Law Enforcement
  - B.3.....Property Standards
  - B.5.....Consent Granting Authority
    - B.5.1.....Housing
  - B.6.....Zoning By-law Update
- C.....Historical Destinations
  - C.2.....Historical Destinations
  - C.3.....Public Education
  - C.4.....Advertise Municipal Facilities
    - C.3.2.....Town Hall Meetings
- D.....Recreation Parks/Beaches
  - D.2.....Fitness/Health Promotion
  - D.3.....Water Access
  - D.4.....Volunteerism

# STRATEGIC PLAN BACKGROUND

To provide a sense of direction, Nipissing Township Council initiated an outreach to the community development process by holding a Town Hall meeting at the Community Centre.

The Strategic Plan basically embraces three components:

## Component (1)

A clearly defined purpose/direction or “mission” that is generally understood by all members of the Township. Along with this is a “vision” that can guide people so they can find their way within a shared mission.

## Component (2)

Clearly defined goals that must be met if the Township’s mission is to be optimally served.

## Component (3)

A platform for an action plan through which the goals are met.

A Strategic Plan is not in and of itself, an action plan; rather it is a direction setter.

A successful Strategic Plan will enable the Township to avoid two major pitfalls. One is the “status quo” or resting on our laurels or drifting along and the other occurs when the Township tries to do everything all at once, to be all things to all people. The point of the Strategic Plan is to strike a balance to ensure everything is consistent with the mission.

To be successful, the implementation of the Strategic Plan involves making choices. How much can our available resources support at one time? What priorities must be addressed in order to serve our vision and/or health of Nipissing Township? What should be addressed immediately? What has to be done first in order to facilitate follow-up initiatives? What can we defer? What partnerships are need to be developed? As well, the plan has to address how these decisions will be implemented.

# COMPONENT #1

The Strategic Plan Steering Committee is all members of Council:

- 1. Tom Piper.....Mayor
- 2. Liz Moore.....Deputy Mayor
- 3. Linda Andersen.....Councillor
- 4. Tom Marchant.....Councillor
- 5. James Scott.....Councillor

## MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

The **Mission Statement**, **Vision Statement** and the Township of Nipissing's **Values** remain unchanged.

### MISSION STATEMENT

*"The Township of Nipissing is dedicated to maintaining its rural township atmosphere and its safe, healthy environment through the provision of effective and efficient government and planning so that all residents benefit."*

Note: A Mission Statement defines the business the community is in, for whom and how it will fulfill its business commitments.

### VISION STATEMENT

*"The Township of Nipissing is a proactive community that respects and protects its history while enhancing and embracing the needs of its citizens and the opportunities provided by its natural resources."*

Note: A vision statement defines the prescribed future of a community. It sets a target for a community to measure its goals, objectives and actions plans.

# VALUE STATEMENTS

## *The Township of Nipissing*

- Values *culture and excellent customer service*
- Values *history and heritage*
- Values *quality services for all citizens*
- Value *open and transparent governance*
- Value *honesty and integrity*
- Value *inclusion and diversity (in all municipal activities)*
- Value *fairness and equality*
- Value *commitment to a team of creative problems solvers*
- Value *accountability to all citizens*
- Value *respect for the natural environment*

The premise of the Strategic Plan is built on the following assumptions. The Corporation of the Township of Nipissing was incorporated on February 10<sup>th</sup>, 1888. On January 1, 1970, the Township of Nipissing annexed the unincorporated Township of Gurd. Nipissing Township is a rural community with three designated Hamlet areas.

Given that the Township is well past the century mark in age, it has amenities of significance it might be able to build on. Also, given the fact it doesn't have any so called "main" streets or "downtown", it has to look at other areas to attract people. The community might focus on a grass roots approach, a plan that includes community values, natural heritage features, quality of life and a shared vision of the future.

The past forms the basis for building a future. Community amenities can be anything from roads with easy access to highways, parks and greenspaces, trail systems, public beaches, fitness centres, schools, post offices, public docks and clean air. Heritage and cultural values also become very important as they help to create a "point of differentiation". In summary, a community has to know who they are and what they have to offer. This forms the basis for developing a plan of action.

A number of things come into play when "promoting" and "building" your community. For example, decision makers of successful communities today are those who think about how they can utilize existing facilities and amenities in new and creative ways. In the Township of Nipissing they could include a different perspective like parks, cemeteries, and the



community cenotaph or civic space. This is where the grass roots approach comes in; build and market what you have including your past. The local museums, natural heritage features, community centres, outdoor recreation areas, tourist camps, home occupations, home industries and the volunteer strength are untapped resources. The Township can act as a catalyst to organizations or businesses that see the need; this could be Council or someone that is passionate about the quality of life in Nipissing so that it can be marketed to ensure incremental growth that is sustainable, resulting in expansion over a period of time.

Nipissing Township sees itself as a destination that believes in its inherent potential. We want people to stay here or move here so that businesses can expand. If that happens, they invest in our community because they see the value of living in a “pristine”, quiet area with numerous attractions and potential.

To that end, component #2 in the development of the Strategic Plan is an attempt to identify major themes and areas that the Township can build on to maintain and enhance the wonderful quality of life that currently exists.

Any recreation and tourism feature should be geared to recognize the needs of both the travelling and vacationing public (tourists) and local residents.

## COMPONENT #2

Following the 2018 election, Council compiled a summary of all issues brought forward to them during the campaign period. A Town Hall meeting was held on June 3, 2019 at the Nipissing Community Centre to engage with residents and compile their thoughts, suggestions and visions.

At the Township Hall meeting, topics of discussion were focused but not limited to the following categories:

- Recycling Program & Landfill Operations
- Dock Facility – Wades Landing
- Strategic Plan Update
- Provincial Modernization and Efficiencies Funding

Using the data collected, Council then proceeded to review and update the Strategic Plan. Under each theme a number of **areas** were addressed and when analyzed further a number of **objectives** that would serve as **action statements** were identified. These action statements reflect the Township of Nipissing Mission, Vision and Value statements.



Picture: Township Office, Nipissing Township

## **A. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Goal – To sustain the current “quality of life”, identifying partners and saleable products and services that could provide growth and development opportunities in the Township of Nipissing

The following areas are significant and could result in providing sustainable growth opportunities in the Township.

- A.1. Internet and Cell Coverage
- A.2. Natural Heritage Features
- A.3. Home Occupations and Home Industries
- A.4. Tourism

### **A.1 INTERNET AND CELL COVERAGE**

Many Canadians benefit from the availability of Internet service, despite where they live, whether in urban or rural centres, or remote areas. The Township of Nipissing must continue to support projects that will increase the availability of high-speed internet services and cell phone coverage.

High speed service builds strong communities as residents and businesses of all types are becoming more reliant on broadband internet for their daily activities.

Not only does high speed internet and cell phone coverage have the ability to improve the quality of life of Township of Nipissing citizens, it also improves Health and Safety for all residents. Many rural activities such as agriculture, forestry, hunting, fishing, fur trapping, snowmobiling and the use of all-terrain vehicles can occur in remote and isolated areas of the Township. Accidents can happen and the availability of cell phone coverage can help to summon emergency services and potentially save a life.

Availability of these services will facilitate: 1. Telecommuting (remote work) to accommodate home-based employment and 2. Improve student access to web-based resources for homework and distance education.

Objectives:

A.1.1.

Continue to advocate the need for full access to high speed internet and cell phone coverage.

A.1.2.

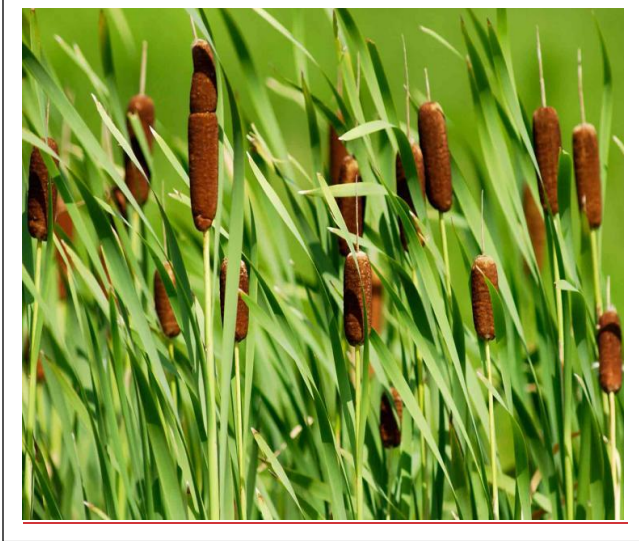
Identify key contacts at major cell phone suppliers and communicate the need to secure basic cell phone services in non-serviced areas of the municipality.

A.1.3. Collaborate through Blue Sky with other municipalities to seek Broadband Service Improvements.

## **A.2 NATURAL HERITAGE FEATURES**

The Township of Nipissing's Official Plan identifies and number of Natural Heritage features on land and/or water locations. They include ecological, geological, archaeological and historical features.

This significance is often related to one or more functions, such as; scientific research; education and interpretation; species maintenance; conservation of unique or representative occurrences of fauna, flora, landforms, geology, historical and cultural features.



Picture: Typha Latifolia, (Cattails)

#### A.2.1

Increase awareness and educate the public about the values and benefits of protecting and promoting Natural Heritage Features. This will benefit Eco-Tourism Initiatives.

### **A.3 HOME OCCUPATIONS AND HOME INDUSTRIES**

From the public meetings, it continues to be apparent that Home Occupations and Home Industries are alive and well in the Township of Nipissing.

#### A.3.1

Continue to promote and/or update the Township Webpage.

#### A.3.2

Youth Retention: Development activities that foster a feeling of belonging to a place.

### **A.4 TOURISM**

Canada's incredible geographical variety is a significant tourist attractor. Ontario leads all provinces in tourist expenditures and visits. In 2015, tourism in Ontario employed over 389,000 and is the largest single employer of young workers. Every 1 million dollars spent by tourists creates 13 jobs and generates \$604,800 in wages and salaries.

After reviewing the Township website, the Township of Nipissing has approximately twenty resorts and numerous ice bungalow businesses that operate within the Township.

Objectives:

#### A.4.1.

Modify existing accommodations section of website to include pictures of tourism establishments.



Picture: Fish Bay, Lake Nipissing

## B. MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND COMMUNICATIONS

**Goal** - *To ensure the provision of effective communication and municipal services is maintained and continue to meet the needs of the community.*

The following areas were identified as significant in order to deliver first rate Municipal Services

- B.1 Waste Diversion
- B.2 Transportation Infrastructure
- B.3 Property Standards with a common sense approach and rural flavour.
- B.4 Housing

### B.1. WASTE DIVERSION

The Township of Nipissing has two landfill sites. The Wolfe Lake location, 3513 Highway 534, is open Saturday and Monday 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. and Thursday from 4:00pm – 8:00p.m.

The Bear Creek landfill site is located at 2719 Highway 654 near Sunset Cove Road. This landfill site is opened Friday and Sunday 10:00 a.m. – 6:00p.m. and Wednesday from 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

A Landfill Attendant and/or an Assistant is present when sites are open. Questions can be answered immediately and positive feedback has been received by the public as per the state of the Township Landfills. Both landfill sites have recycling bins that are open with the same hours of the dump operation. Recently, many upgrades have been put into place. Residents no longer need to climb stairs to recycle as large bins at either landfill location have been sunken in the landscape, making the walkways level with the natural ground. This idea has made recycling accessible for all Township of Nipissing residents at either location.

In addition to this, containers have been placed at both landfills to accept electronic waste and textiles. Early indications have shown to be positive as citizens have been filling the bins and diverting waste away from the landfill.

#### Objectives:

##### B.1.1.

Continue to capitalize on programs that can generate revenue from Electronic Waste.

##### B.1.2.

Continue to investigate and implement procedures to divert waste away from either landfill location.

##### B.1.3.

Create educational flyers and distribute information with tax newsletter and by using the Township Webpage.

##### B.1.4

Continue to participate in the City of North Bay Hazardous Waste Program.

##### B.1.5

Use of Modernization and Efficiencies Funding to upgrade capital Facilities and improve Safety of Operations.

##### B.1.6

Continue to build reserves for eventual landfill closure and required monitoring.

##### B.1.7

## Monitor Clear Bag Initiative

### B.1.8.

Continue progress with the use of an Ad Hoc Landfill Committee to generate new ideas and improve public education programming.

## **B.2. TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE**

The Township of Nipissing has 150km of roads and twelve (12) bridge and culvert structures. As per the Official Plan, the intent is to adequately accommodate the transportation needs of the municipality and to maintain these roads in a good state of repair within the financial capabilities of the Township while adhering to the Minimum Maintenance Standards set out by the Province of Ontario and adopted by the Township. It is not the intent of the plan to assume any existing private roads.

### Objectives:

#### B.2.1

Continue to support the current infrastructure so that current high level of satisfaction are maintained.

#### B.2.2

Maintain an Asset Management Plan for the Township of Nipissing's roads and bridges. Priorities should be set for major and minor rehabilitation recommendations identified in the aforementioned plan.

#### B.2.3

Maintain the current system of adequacy by setting aside the estimated minimal annual capital program funding for structures as per the Asset Management Plan.

#### B.2.4

Add directional road signs to road system signage.

#### B.2.5

Continue to lobby for speed limit reductions on Provincial Highways in designated Hamlet Areas.

### **B.3. PROPERTY STANDARDS WITH A COMMON SENSE APPROACH AND RURAL FLAVOUR.**

Property standards has been a common comment during many public discussions. The topic is a delicate balance between the public opinion and respect of personal property.

Council continues to weigh the options of this difficult topic.

Objectives:

#### **B.3.1.**

Investigate the implications of a clean yard by-law.

#### **B.3.2.**

Establish clean yard property standards for safety and upkeep to yards and to improve the general aesthetics for residents and visitors.

#### **B.3.3**

Investigate a standard that will have a focus on keeping lands clear of inoperative vehicles and debris.

### **B.5 HOUSING**

the Minister of Municipal Affairs has granted a request delegating approval authority for land division applications to The Township of Nipissing.

This will allow the Township to have more control over land use and development as detailed in the Township of Nipissing's Official Plan

Objective:

#### **B.5.1**

Ensure an adequate supply of affordable building lots to accommodate affordable housing.

#### **B.5.2.**

Ensure the availability of affordable and safe housing to residents.

#### **B.6**

Zoning By-law Update: Continue review and update of comprehensive zoning by-law.



## C. MARKETING

Goal – to work positively toward creating a greater awareness by the community and public at large as to the amenities, services and opportunities that are available.

The Township of Nipissing is a friendly and clean community that has a great deal of untapped potential.

C.1. Natural Heritage Features

C.2. Historical Destinations

C.3. Communication

C.4. Advertising

### C.1. NATURAL HERITAGE FEATURES

The Provincial Policy Statement establishes policy direction for matters of Provincial Interest. Municipal Official Plans and land use decisions must be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement including natural heritage policy direction. Section 2.1.1 of the PPS states that “natural features shall be protected over the long term”; and Section 2.1.2 states that “The diversity and connectivity of natural features in an area, and the long-term ecological function and biodiversity of natural heritage systems, should be maintained, restored or, where possible, improved, recognizing linkages between and among natural heritage features and areas, surface water features and ground water features.”

Objectives:

C.1.1.

Support Nipissing Township Eco-Committee general principles as found in their Terms of Reference.

C.1.2

Continue to support suitable Green Energy Initiatives

### C.2. HISTORICAL DESTINATIONS

The Township of Nipissing physical environment is unique on its merit when discussing size, location, pristine wilderness and its abundance of water. However, it should never be forgotten the great amount of history this area holds.

#### C.2.1

The Township of Nipissing Museum has outlined in its Statement of Purpose “To provide a safe repository for the historical artifacts of our Township and area, and to make them available for public viewing”.

#### C.2.2

To encourage the preservation of our cultural heritage by holding annual events that invite participation by residents and visitors

#### C.2.3

To welcome members of the community and visitors to the Museum and provide educational tours of the building and contents.

#### C.2.4

To play a role in identifying and celebrating the history of the founding families of our area. To maintain a high standard of preservation of buildings, grounds and collection of artifacts.

#### C.2.5

Continue to enhance the visual appeal of the facility.



Picture: Nipissing Township Museum

### **C.3. COMMUNICATION**

Currently, newsletters are created to ensure the flow of information into the community. Although this method of delivery has proven to be effective, citizens still make it a point that information is not being received.

Recently, the Council utilized public forums at the Township of Nipissing Community Centre. The interactive exchange was positive, indicating that the venue was valuable.

Objectives:

#### **C.3.1.**

Continue to deliver a quarterly newsletter.

#### **C.3.2**

Continue to use Town Hall Meetings as required for information input/output.

### **C.4. ADVERTISING**

With the completion of the four-laning of Highway 11, travel to the Township from the Southern areas of the province have improved. The Township of Nipissing offers close to 40,000 hectares of recreational land that remains for the most part untapped.

Objectives:

#### **C.4.1**

Publicize the Township website address on Newsletter, Township vehicles and Signage.

#### **C.4.2**

Promote areas that are considered “heritage” in nature.

#### **C.4.3**

Allow one photo to be placed with each Business in the Accommodations sections of the Township webpage showcasing what it has to offer. Upon completion, the result will display a collage of what the Township of Nipissing has to offer.

#### **C.4.4.**

Advertise municipal facilities that the Township offers in newsletters.

## **D. RECREATION AND TOURISM**

Goal – The community will work toward developing and enhancing the physical, social and environmental opportunities afforded by tourism and recreation.

Community input identified the following areas that would enhance the quality of life in Nipissing Township.

D.1 Trail Systems

D.2. Fitness Health Promotion

D.3 Water Access

D.4 Volunteerism

### **D.1. TRAIL SYSTEMS**

The Trans Canada Trail Foundation was motivated to complete a national trail system by the year 2017 in conjunction with Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Funds became available for trail building projects and Council took advantage of the available funding completing a trail section through the Township.

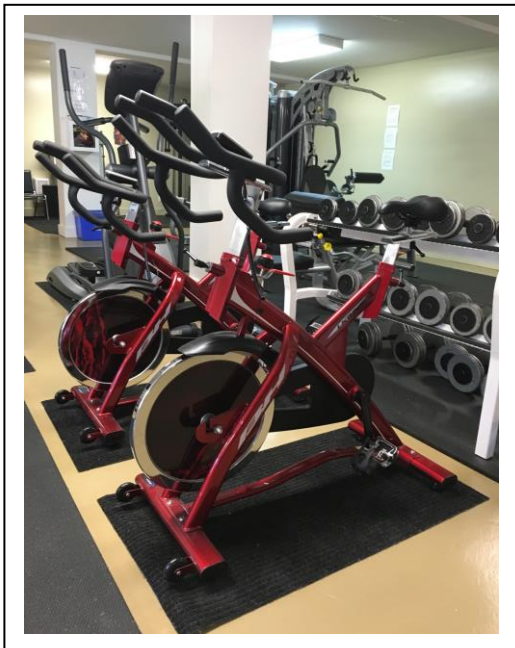
Correspondence from the spring of 2016 indicated that the MTO (Ministry of Transportation) is in the process of developing a Provincial signage policy prescribing where and when signs should be placed as well as the size/format for the signs.

Objectives:

D.1.1 Eco-Committee/Council should continue to pursue MTO for approval of the installation of twenty-six (26) Trans Canada Trail way-finding signs to identify the connection of the Trans Canada Trail through the Township of Nipissing.

### **D.2. FITNESS HEALTH PROMOTION**

Healthy eating and active living can help create a healthier community. Regular physical activity is essential for health and well-being. People who eat nutritious foods and are physically active are likely to live longer, healthier lives.



Good health is associated with being physically active three or more times a week, making the Fitness Centre in the township vitally important. It should also be noted that many of the users of the fitness center are from the Municipality of Callander.

The Township of Nipissing owns and operates an unsupervised, well established Fitness Centre at 2381 Highway 654.

Objective:

D.2.1

Continue to investigate new products that will be beneficial to healthy and active living.

D.2.2

Review funding Stream like the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) to see if funds are available to install a second entrance to facility.

D.2.3

Budget reserve for equipment replacement

### **D.3 WATER ACCESS**

People value the beauty, tranquility, fisheries, and recreational benefits of the lakes within the Township boundaries. Demand for public access appears to be rising as more people take part in boating and sport fishing.

There are approximately 150 water access lots alone on Lake Nipissing. Although there are private marinas in the South Bay of Lake Nipissing, there is only one government dock located at Wades Landing. Besides residential uses, public water access is also used by commercial resorts to bring customers out to the islands. In recent years, new owners or subsequent generations have begun to make improvement to these islands or update systems on the islands. Water access is crucial for launching boats and loading barges with materials to improve existing properties.

Objectives:

D.3.1.

Continue dialogue with Oceans and Fisheries Canada to ensure transfer of this public facility to the Township of Nipissing. This will secure continued public access to Lake Nipissing. If transfer occurs, a By-law regulating the use of the facility would be recommended.

#### D.3.2.

Include improvements to the McQuaby Lake ramp and Chapmans Landing in the Long-Term Capital Forecast.

#### D.3.3.

Public Beaches; recent investments in the public beach facilities at Wolfe Lake Beach (Wolfe Lake) and Link's Beach (Lake Nipissing) will ensure these facilities are available for public use in the long term.



Picture: Wades Landing

## D.4 VOLUNTEERISM

One of the more well-known benefits of volunteering is the impact on the community. It allows residents to connect to their community and make it a better place. Volunteering can help people make new friends and contacts, increase social and relationship skills and can help youth gain skills that can be transferred to the workplace.

#### D.4.1

Continue to support and promote volunteerism and community spirit.

## COMPONENT 3

### WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

A number of new goals have been developed in this plan to meet the existing mission, vision and value statements.

We now must move forward with our plan of action.

Council continues to be responsible for the implementation of the Strategic Plan, they have tremendous responsibilities and commitment ahead.

Financial resources are important to the timely and effective implementation of any Strategic Plan. Council will consider Strategic Plan goals during its budget deliberations.



Picture: Township Office Field