

# **International Falls Riverside Property Visioning Process**

## **Background and Summary**

The City of International Falls acquired 122 acres of riverfront woodlands adjacent to the City's southwest boundary in 2012. The property is commonly known as the "Donahue Property" after the last name of the previous owner. The acquisition agreement requires that the City construct a public trail and a monument to the Donahue family on the site.

International Falls is in Minnesota's Koochiching County on the United States/Canada boundary. The City is home to a major wood products industry facility and services

In 2013, the International Falls Economic Development Authority (EDA) contracted with the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) to facilitate a process to create a vision for the property's future use. ARDC is a multi-jurisdictional regional planning agency covering seven counties in northeast Minnesota. Andy Hubley was the staff member assigned to the project. All of ARDC's time and expenses were covered by a grant that the City secured from the Blandin Foundation of Grand Rapids, Minnesota. ARDC also contributed some in-kind funding to the project.

The process began in September 2013 and consisted of four public meetings and the development of this document. ARDC outlined several different scenarios that the City could explore in regards to the property. The process concluded in December 2013.

Questions about the process can be referred to:

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## Donahue Visioning Process

ARDC facilitated four public meetings on behalf of the International Falls EDA. All meetings were held at the conference center in the Americinn in International Falls on Wednesday evenings in September and October of 2013. The attendance varied meeting to meeting. Sign up sheets were distributed at each meeting so contact information was gathered for attendees.

### **Meeting 1: Initial Brainstorming. September 11, 2013**

The first meeting was well-attended. Representatives of the City, the EDA, the Donahue family, and other stakeholders, as well as the general public were in attendance. Donahue family members spoke about the history of the property. Representatives of the City EDA described how the property came to be owned by the City and how the visioning process was initiated. ARDC facilitator Andy Hubley described the visioning process and how it would work. A description of the wetlands on the property was discussed by the delineator. After questions on those subjects were addressed, Hubley kicked off the public input portion of the meeting.

Hubley asked the attendees the following question: *"What does International Falls/northeast Koochiching County need?"* The questions were not limited to the Donahue property-it focused on the entire City and area. Hubley further defined the question by assigning several categories. The full results can be found in Appendix B. The following is a summary.

*Government and City Finances:* Attendees felt the City needs to better market itself and needs to think about the future when making investments. The City needs to increase its tax base, possibility through annexation and business development. The City needs to maintain its level of Local Government Aid and seek more grants. Spending was also addressed as needing to be controlled and funds should be well spent. Some attendees felt the City should focus only on its core services.

*Quality of Life:* Attendees felt maintaining/improving the quality of life in International Falls is imperative. The City needs to market itself as being a good place to live. Community aesthetics, including excellent streets and sidewalks, library, community gardens, and civic buildings and grounds were important. Eliminating blight is imperative. . It needs to find ways to get more people, especially youth, more involved in City events/processes. Recreation opportunities and parks are also a need for a high quality of life.

*Medical Services:* Attendees felt that the area needs to attract more doctors and specialists and that upgrades are needed for the hospital and clinic. There is a need to fully integrate the hospital and clinic. Attendees felt a strong and stable health care system helps attract new businesses and workers.

*Education:* Many attendees had interests in education. Classes that can train a workforce that attracts trade related business are a need. More education in trades was a common theme in the discussion as

was having generally better schools. Better technology was listed as a desire as was having programs at Rainy River Community College that draw in more students from the surrounding area.

*Parks and Recreation:* New opportunities for parks and recreation were a common item discussed at the meeting. A new RV park was mentioned as a need multiple times. Biking, hiking, skiing, boating, and fishing were mentioned by attendees. A desire for trails that were close to town was aired and improvements to community health were associated with trails and recreation. Also mentioned were boating facilities, community arts ideas, and potential partnerships for better overall opportunities.

*Health and Well Being:* Exercise facilities were discussed as a need, including health spas/clubs, more trails, more winter exercise opportunities, and better access to healthy foods.

*Community Pride:* Attendees stated that the community needed a theme or identity and a single clear vision is desired. More volunteer opportunities, annual events, school activities, art, community attitude, a clean environment, highlighting of rich history, and better marketing were mentioned as needs regarding community pride.

*Housing:* Housing needs for the community were described as being related to improved rental opportunities, especially for seniors and low income residents. Summer housing, one level homes, and housing near the golf course, lake and river were noted as desires for senior housing. High end market value homes were not noted as a current need.

*Economic Development:* Several ideas for improving the area's economy were mentioned, including having an international focus, water bottling, sustainable resources, industrial warehousing and assembly, biomass, a conference center, a casino, and sustainable homegrown businesses. Diversification was a popular theme.

*Tourism:* Discussed as a stand-alone item, there were many ideas regarding tourism. Increased camping and RV opportunities, better marketing, increased attractions, a destination hotel/water park, and more trails were discussed as needs. Additional shopping facilities are also desired.

*Other:* Some attendees stated that the Donahue property offered no value to the City of International Falls and that it should be returned to the Donahue family in exchange for the funds the City had already expended to acquire it.

At the end of meeting one, attendees were asked to note which of the ideas generated could be addressed in some way by the Donahue property. Those ideas were noted and led to the discussion in subsequent meetings.

### **Meetings 2 and 3: Idea Grooming. September 25 & October 9, 2013**

Meeting 2 was less attended than the first meeting. Initial discussion was held regarding the project's background and the agreement that governs the City's use of the property. It was noted that the City,

as per the agreement, was responsible for maintaining a trail and a monument that commemorates the Donahues' involvement on the site.

Andy Hubley then reviewed all of the previous meeting's ideas and noted ideas were thought to possibly having some type of association with the Donahue property. The first half of these ideas were thoroughly discussed before the meeting ended. In Meeting 3, which again was well attended, the second half of these ideas were discussed.

#### **Meeting 4: Scenario Development. October 23, 2013**

Meeting 4 was well attended. Hubley had reviewed all the idea development feedback from the previous two meetings and had developed several scenarios with process steps that the City could choose to undertake. The scenarios were not prioritized. The scenarios were discussed and altered as requested. All the scenarios can be reviewed in the next section of this document.

Hubley was asked specifically about a scenario in which the City returns the property to the Donahue's in exchange for the funds it had expended to acquire the property. Hubley stated that it was likely that City could not sell the property (the title is held by the City), which Koochiching County assessed at \$384,000, for drastically less than the assessed value without a public process that offers the property to more buyers.

#### **Additional Meetings**

Following Meeting 4, Hubley redrafted the scenarios based on the meeting's feedback and public input. He presented the scenarios to the International Falls EDA Commission in December, made final changes based on that input and submitted the final report to International Falls prior to December 31, 2013.

#### **Additional Public Input**

Public Comment forms were distributed at every meeting and made available at City Hall. Comments were sent to Andy Hubley at ARDC. The City asked that all comments be sent by November 15, 2013. ARDC assembled the input and offers the following summary.

Seventeen comments were offered outside of the meetings. While the input process was not an official survey, and it was not an official public hearing, it can be noted that the bulk of the comments (13) expressed a desire for the City to keep the property and use it for a public purpose or hold it until a use can be found for it that will help the area economy. Some comments (3) state the property should be returned to the Donahue family. One response simply complimented the process and the facilitation of the meetings. All public input can be reviewed in Appendix A.

## Donahue Property Scenarios

The following are potential development scenarios for the International Falls/Donahue Property. The scenarios are not in order of preference or priority. At this time ARDC feels that all of the scenarios have at least some merit and could be considered. ARDC also notes some minimum actions that should be taken by the City.

### Minimum Actions

- A trail should be constructed. The agreement for the acquisition of the property requires that a trail be maintained on the property. It is not stated what type of trail it should be. It is recommended that the trail be a minimal investment initially – likely just a hiking trail that is perhaps wide enough for cross country skiing (there may be an entity that would offer to groom it). The far end of the trail should be looped in a manner that would accommodate a groomer in the future.
- A monument should be constructed. The acquisition agreement also states a monument to the Donahue's should be erected on the site. The monument should be designed and constructed in a way that would allow it to be easily moved if the site is developed in a manner that might require the monument location to be used differently.
- Secure the property. The City should work to ensure that the site does not become degraded. Measures should be taken to keep ATVs and other off highway vehicles off of the property – particularly its sensitive wetlands and river banks. These vehicles can cause damage unless trails are specifically sited for them. Measures may include, among other ideas, gates, signage, education of neighbors, and development of landscape deterrents. The City should watch for unwanted activity and should enforce rules and laws regarding the property.
- Annex the property. The site should be made part of International Falls. This will allow the City to enforce its own ordinances, laws and rules for the property and not defer to the County. Annexation will also allow the City to have the site be a part of its tax base if it is sold to a private entity.

### Scenario A: Maximum Recreation

This scenario uses the land to create as much recreation opportunities as possible. This scenario could have positive impacts on the area economy, as it may draw additional visitors. It would also increase opportunities for promoting active lifestyles for residents, improving community health and quality of life.

For Scenario A, the City of International Falls EDA should start with a discussion with Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR) regarding the State's interest in developing another Rainy River Watercraft Access at the site. The other river access just upstream can be crowded at times. If the

State is interested, it can be inferred that a paved road and electrical lines would be developed on the property. The City should work with the MnDNR to ensure that the road is striped and signed as a bike route, creating a cycling destination for residents and visitors (see Map 2). A fishing pier (ideally a pier that meets the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act) could also be considered for the boat landing area.

Additionally in this scenario, a campground could be constructed on the site. This campground could be part of the MnDNR boat access development or a stand-alone City project. A drive-to campground with semi-private sites large enough for tents and small to medium sized RVs or trailers has been identified as a need in the International Falls area for some time. The desired campground has been described as being very similar to a campground in State Parks. The campground would have electricity but would not necessarily have sewer and water. Before the City begins more formal examinations of the Donahue property as a potential site for such an endeavor, ARDC recommends conducting a thorough examination of all potential campground sites in the area, as the Donahue site may not be the best site for the campground. If the Donahue property is found to be the best available location, it should be noted that the campground could be kept fairly rustic and could even be temporary...if a better development option presents itself in the future, the campground could easily be removed.

In Scenario A, trails are also a component of the property. These trails would be over and above the required trail to the river. Mountain biking is a growing segment of the recreation spectrum and are even driving economic successes in parts of the State. It is unlikely that the Donahue property is large enough to have enough trails that would create a dramatic tourism increase for the area, but it could provide a local recreation resource and if part of a larger system of mountain bike trails in the Voyageurs National Park region it could help create the critical mass needed for economic success. Very preliminary analysis shows there are other potential sites in the area (see inset).

Any development of mountain bike trails will almost certainly need to involve a coalition of

**Potential Mountain Bike Areas** (very preliminary analysis)

Donahue Property (City of International Falls): 122 acres with wooded uplands and wetlands on the Rainy River west of International Falls. Could be expanded to nearby undeveloped private property with trail easement acquisition (no landowners have been approached to date).

Tilson Creek Trails (State of Minnesota): The MnDNR has ski trails off of Highway 11 south of Rainy Lake. Trails could possibly be adjusted to serve bikes in the summer, or perhaps new mountain bike trails could added to the same area. The area may have too many wetlands to accommodate mountain bikes.

Rainy Lake Visitor Center Area (National Park Service): Near the Tilson Creek Trails is a small area of federal land that is part of Voyageurs National Park. It houses the Rainy Lake Visitor Center which has information, parking, and a boat launch. There is a cross country ski trail on the site that connects users with the Tilson Creek Trails. A mountain bike trail between the Visitors Center and Tilson Creek could be added if Tilson houses additional mountain bike trails.

Private Lands near International Falls: In several locations in the area of Tilson Creek and the Rainy Lake Visitor Center are private gravel quarries. Some of these areas have little gravel resources remaining. It may be possible to work with land owners to build mountain bike trails on the sites.

Swan Lake Road Area (St. Louis County): North of Orr and Pelican Lake is a large area owned by St. Louis County. The area has a network of old forestry roads and old gravel pits. Its terrain and soils might lend itself well to a concentration of mountain bike trails.

Gheen Hill Trails (State of Minnesota): South of Orr is a glacial ridge that is already home to a network of MnDNR administered trails. The trails are designated as mountain bike trails in the summer, grouse hunting trails in the fall, and skiing trails in the winter. The trails are not engineered as single track mountain bike trails, just designated. Improvements to site, which is largely made up of gravel soils, could make it attractive to more mountain bikers. There are multiple unused and active gravel pits in the area that could also contribute to the trail network.

Kab-Ash Trail Area (National Park Service): The existing Kab-Ash Trail connects Kabetogama the Kabetogama Visitors Center area to the Ash River Visitors Center area in/near Voyageurs National Park. The trail could be examined for its potential to add mountain bikes to its allowed uses, or a parallel trail could be added.

user, tourism promoters, and public land managers. The coalition would likely be dependent on volunteers for trail development and maintenance. This is an arrangement modeled by many mountain bike sites around the region, state, and even nation.

A winter trail system under this scenario is very similar to mountain bikes. Cross country skiing is a popular activity in snowy months. There are several kilometers of ski trails in the International Falls area, mostly managed by the MnDNR and Voyageurs National Park. There is still interest in skiing at the Donahue property. That interest has been demonstrated by the fact that skiers already use the site even without grooming. Again the Donahue property could potentially contribute to a larger system of ski trails that could enhance the tourism economy of the area.

Regarding trails on the Donahue property-it should be noted that there is a significant amount of undeveloped private land to the north. If the landowners were agreeable, easements could be acquired and additional trails could be built that connected to the Donahue site's trails. Those easements could help mountain bike and ski trails be a bigger economic factor. Additionally, cross country ski trails could be carefully placed on the adjacent golf course (avoiding tee boxes and greens) to create an even bigger system. Landowners would have to be willing participants; eminent domain cannot be used for trails.

Scenario A does not need absolute immediate attention. The City can wait on the necessary tasks for Scenario A until a time when it is ready to explore the options further.

#### **Scenario B: Immediate Economic Enhancement**

This scenario examines ways that the Donahue property can provide immediate economic impact to the City of International Falls.

A communications tower being constructed on the site could be a possibility. The need for a new tower in the area would have to be reviewed with potential users. One factor is the current use of the historic fire tower on Highway 11 east of International Falls as a communications tower by the National Park Service and a private communications provider. That fire tower has been discussed as a potential tourist attraction. If the tower were opened to the public for viewing of Rainy Lake and Voyageurs National Park, moving the communications infrastructure on it to a new tower may be proposed. Placing it on a higher, dedicated tower may be attractive to the users. The City of International Falls could discuss tower needs with potential users and determine how towers are financed and implemented. If the City learns that it could profit from a new tower, constructing it on the Donahue property is a possibility.

The Donahue property could be put up for immediate sale. A real estate broker could be retained to review the site and determine if the sale would be done as one property or multiple parcels. A price would be determined and the site would be offered. The site could remain for sale for an extended time and remain as a public woodland until a sale was made, perhaps when the economy improves. Another option would be to immediately put the property up on auction and sell the property to the highest bidder and immediately use the funds for City purposes. Again, it is recommended that the City annex

the property before selling it in order to ensure the City increases its tax base. Additionally the City may have to create a new, rural zoning district for the property. The new district would need to allow home development at a very low density to not be required to hook up to City utilities.

The City could explore the property's potential as a wetland bank. The property would remain undeveloped. When another development happened in International Falls, and that development required the altering of wetlands, the wetlands could be replaced by building new wetlands on the Donahue property. By doing this in close proximity to the development and doing it on City owned land, the new wetlands could be built efficiently and would have the maximum mitigation value to the development. This would give the Donahue property an economic asset to the area without having to develop it directly at great cost (due to infrastructure development).

### **Scenario C: Education and Sustainability**

This scenario would give the property an educational and/or sustainability focus. International Falls has schools serving pre-schoolers, K-12, and a two year community college. There are also nearby schools Littlefork/Big Falls, Indus, Baudette, and other communities. The Donahue property could be developed in a manner that gives the schools opportunities for environmental and outdoor education. Many schools in Minnesota provide this type of experience to students. There are facilities in Duluth (Hartley), the North Shore (Wolf Ridge), and the Iron Range (Laurentian). It is possible the International Falls area schools would be interested in a facility closer to the City.

If this scenario is to be explored as an option, it should be led by area educators. A committee of stakeholders would review models of similar facilities, develop an outdoor education strategy, determine infrastructure needs for the site, and determine the Donahue property's suitability. Multiple sites may need to be examined. The City's role would be to provide the site and perhaps own the infrastructure. The City could examine the education plan and the buildings proposed and examine additional use possibilities. Hosting community events, meetings, private retreats/events are just a few of the possibilities. The City's first step would be to contact area educators to determine their interest.

As part of the education component, or perhaps independently, could be a sustainability model. The property could play host to facilities that are geared toward long term community sustainability and health. Larger community gardens were discussed during the public input sessions as was an "aquaponic" greenhouse that could provide the area with year around fresh vegetables and produce. The City of Silver Bay as implemented such a facility in their business park. The greenhouse is a model for sustainability by reusing most of its own waste and using sustainable energy. If the City wishes to explore this idea, it would need to form an exploratory coalition of potential users, including schools, the hospital, care facilities and others.

The property could be examined for siting renewable energy facilities. These facilities could include solar arrays and wind generators, among others. There are many resources available that can help the City explore the idea.



**Scenario D: Long Term Economic Enhancement**

The City of International Falls could explore the property's value for major developments. The City should conduct a study of major infrastructure needs for the site and determine the cost and feasibility for extending water, sewer, and other necessary infrastructure components to the Donahue property. The site could be marketed to potential developers.

One idea for long term economic enhancement at the site could be type of entrepreneur incubator. The area could foster business ideas by local people and organizations. Because the property is away from the City's business and industrial zones, certain types of business could be encouraged on the site. These businesses could have a sustainability component, involve outdoor (hunting, fishing, recreation) products, involve crafts or art, or otherwise fit into a woodland setting. Developing such a campus could also make the site a tourism attraction. On site sustainable utilities and infrastructure could also be a part of the campus and decrease utility costs overall.

The City could remain open to these ideas and be ready for development when the area economy improves and provide recreation facilities on the Donahue Property in the short-term.

## Appendix A

### Additional Public Comments

Comment
<p>I would like to see a Team Building and High Ropes course. This would be designed to serve all community income levels. There could also be activities such as Low Ropes and Character Challenge Course. There could be activities that focus on challenging yourself, family, employee's and employers, vacationing guest etc. There could also be hiking trails, picnic area's etc.</p>
<p>Terrific facilitator-Andy laid out the process and moved it along at a good pace, with great structure. I would recommend Andy as a facilitator for any of these type projects.</p>
<p>We need a better boat access. The Birchdale landing is a traffic jam in the spring. Walleye, Sturgeon &amp; Bass means business. Better yet the DNR puts in boat accesses, puts in the road, etc. Requires a big parking area. The state can also make in leiu payments to make up for lost property tax-revenue. It can be called the Donahue Access. This takes care of the monument issues. Beyond this an RV parking area or park or both.</p>
<p>Donahue Property (DP)– I believe the DP should be considered for both development, primarily residential, along with recreational uses such as ski trails, hiking, snowmobiling and since development usage including fishing.</p>
<p>I would say NO give the prop back. This is too costly to the city for a little use. City has a bike trail which is not used enough for what it cost to build. Have other trails to walk or so I think this is a wasted money. City needs to repair streets is in more need if a person wants to use the river there is lots of places to go, etc.</p>
<p>Too many city personnel at meeting and Donahue family. The Donahue property and "gift" was not known-city kept the deal quiet. Evening process was slanted/directed to only bring forth what it could contribute-no way to express opposition. Who is going to develop all the ideas brought forth-if they are so good (the ideas) why don't the Donahue family do it.</p>
<p>We should thank the Donahue family for making such a generous contribution to the community. I believe in taking the long view that in another generation the land will be a valuable asset to our community.</p>
<p>I believe a campground area for RV's and tents with a boat launch would be beneficial to that area. We just had 2 crews come to this area to work on the Rat Root River and were going to stay at Wooden Frog at Kabetogama. That was such a long distance for them to go so we put them at city beach. But that doesn't accommodate RV's. Please consider this.</p>
<p>I am a Ranier resident but have been closely following the discussions regarding the Donahue property. I think a gift is a gift and there should not be an expectation of close to \$100,000 in fees. Therefore --- unless the property is "free" --- I think the Falls should get their money back. We have a declining population in Kooch Co (census 2010 -- 13,331). We have a declining population in I Falls. It will further decline with the lay offs at Boise. We don't need more property to develop --- there is plenty of vacant property now and it will increase rather than decrease. The cost of water, sewer, roads and other infrastructure is way more than this declining city can afford. I vote that the council get their money back like Matt said would happen. Thank You,</p>
<p>I believe that our city needs to hold on to the Donahue property. We don't need to do anything major with it now, but we can keep it open for the public to enjoy (walking, skiing, horseback riding, shore fishing) and let our future leaders decide how to move forward when the time is right.</p>
<p>I am just one of the young families living in this community, and I've heard quite a few comments about wanting to someday see a resort/hotel with a water park; this would be a great indoor venue for family outings during our long winters. It would be a good idea to have spa services at such a resort / hotel, as well</p>

as a fine dining restaurant featuring locally grown products. The location of the Donahue property is obviously a great venue for river fishing and next to a beautiful golf course, there would really be something for everybody to enjoy!

Keep the property please

Could you list both myself and my wife as being in favor of the City retaining the Donahou property for future development and use? It seems foolish to sell the property and lose the potential benefit for future generations.

Thank you for spearheading the discussion process.

I am a strong believer that we should keep the property in the city's hands! The more assets we have as a city the stronger and more diversified we can become!

Keep the land for public enjoyment until officials in the future determine to develop.

Please consider keeping the property for public enjoyment at this time. Involve civic minded residents/businesses to assist with the trail and monument. Most progressive cities would value and hold tightly a 122 acre parcel abutting the city boundaries a golf course and a major river. Let a future generation of leaders utilize this great asset as a means of growing our city and tax base. Thank you.

I appreciate the City had the foresight to acquire this property at a minimal cost. I have great confidence in Shawn Mason.

Although I'm not aware of immediate use I believe water and sewer to this property is one day needed. I'd hope the City would monitor federal and/or state grant/buy down opportunities as at some point with this assistance water and sewer could become feasible.

I would like the property to be posted for no hunting as it is owned by City.

## Appendix B

### Original Community Ideas (Meeting 1)

The following is a summary of the public input recorded at the first Donahue property visioning session, held on September 11, 2013. The responses are answers to the question: *"What does International Falls/northeast Koochiching County need?"* Responses were categorized by ARDC, the entity that facilitated the meeting.

D = Ideas that attendees thought could be impacted by the Donahue property.

\* = Multiple responses

1. Government and City Finances

- a. Market city
- b. Invest in future
- c. D-Increase tax base\*
- d. Better jobs with transparency
- e. Get youth involved
- f. Get more people to attend meetings
- g. Inform/enlighten/educate regarding government procedures
- h. Improve school
- i. Spend wisely
- j. D-Build new businesses
- k. D-Annex properties
- l. Improve communication
- m. Cooperate with all other governments and stakeholders\*
- n. Taxing district for airport
- o. Mutual respect amongst lawmakers
- p. Maintain LGA
- q. Seek grants
- r. More resources for streets
- s. Cross border relationship building
- t. Stop spending money where it isn't needed
- u. Spend money on streets
- v. Lower water and sewer rates

2. Quality of Life

- a. Convince people I-Falls is a good place to live
- b. Get new businesses
- c. Get a new hospital
- d. Invest in future
- e. Be a generous community
- f. Build community gardens
- g. Have a good street department

h. Have nice City and County squares

- i. Have a nice library
- j. Enhance Voyageurs National Park
- k. Keep the Coffee Landing
- l. Get more people, especially youth, involved
- m. Have better sidewalks
- n. Development of PEG Channel
- o. Identify leadership opportunities
- p. Enhance self-development opportunities
- q. Have hardy spirits
- r. Keep a good transportation system, buses, highways, airport
- s. More training for law enforcement
- t. Walking patrolmen
- u. Eliminate blight
- v. Repair curbs and sidewalks

3. Other

- a. More population\*
- b. Follow through on proposed ideas
- c. Bus service
- d. Fix streets
- e. Return property to Donahue's...it can't contribute to the community

4. Medical

- a. More doctors and specialists\*
- b. Need to update hospital and clinic – bring more jobs
- c. Fully integrate hospital campus
- d. Alzheimer's/dementia unit\*
- e. Dialysis
- f. Pediatric
- g. Veterinarian

- h. New hospital
- i. More home care
- j. Stable and strong health care system

5. Education

- a. Classes that can attract trade related businesses
- b. Have a good school
- c. Offer more trade classes at high school and RRCC\*
- d. Have technical courses
- e. Re-evaluate open enrollment
- f. Zero-tolerance for bullying
- g. New technology available to students
- h. Get school board to take charge
- i. Get permanent superintendent
- j. Bring larger draw programs to RRCC
- k. Nursing school returns
- l. Expand head start
- m. Have strong educational system

6. Parks and Rec

- a. D-New RV Park with short and long term rental options with water and golf course access\*
- b. D-Biking Trails\*
- c. D-More snowmobile rentals
- d. D-Boat rentals
- e. D-Foot traffic access to parks
- f. D-Trails closer to town
- g. D-Connectivity
- h. D-Camping-without having to have a boat\*
- i. Marina
- j. D-Move river access
- k. D-Add ski trails\*
- l. D-Dog Park
- m. D-senior activities
- n. D-Jetty for boats on river
- o. D-Green space
- p. Promote what exists\*
- q. D-Partner with Park service
- r. Improve Hockey Program
- s. D-Writer/Artist Workshops
- t. D-Community dance hall
- u. D-Concert venue
- v. D-More trails/River access\*
- w. Improve playgrounds
- x. Have Summertime playground directors
- y. Enhance Smokey Bear

7. Health and Well Being

- a. Have health spas
- b. Have healthy sewer and water systems
- c. D-Improve easy walking and biking infrastructure\*
- d. Better public transportation\*
- e. D-Better access to healthy food
- f. Make people feel included – reach out
- g. D-Add more ski and snowshoe trails
- h. D-Have bike lanes in City
- i. Family programs
- j. Address drug abuse
- k. D-Have more accessible facilities

8. Community Pride

- a. D-Have a community theme/identity
- b. Consult with other cities
- c. Have a single/clear vision
- d. D-Have better cell service\*
- e. D-Have more volunteer opportunities
- f. Have neighborhood gatherings/block captains
- g. D-Have/keep annual events
- h. Have Backus
- i. Have high school and RRCC sports
- j. Have media (radio/newspaper)
- k. Benefits are well attended
- l. Be a part of things
- m. Have murals
- n. Have Wednesday in the park
- o. Be peaceful
- p. Have nice people
- q. D-Be a world class destination
- r. Be progressive
- s. Be a safe place to raise kids
- t. Maintain a beautiful lake
- u. Be a sister city to Fort Frances
- v. D-Highlight Native American heritage
- w. Take community action
- x. Keep properties neat\*
- y. Advertise community more\*
- z. Trim trees and boulevards

9. Housing

- a. D-Improve rental housing\*
- b. D-Have low cost senior housing
- c. D-Have summer recreational housing
- d. D-Have “snowbird” summer housing with minimal maintenance
- e. D-Have one level housing

- f. D-Have a wider range of housing for all socioeconomic levels
- g. Renew existing urban core, neighborhoods and apartments
- h. D-Have townhouses/condos\*
- i. D-Have riverfront housing\*
- j. D-Have housing along golf course
- k. D-Have high-end housing\*
- l. D-Make bare lots available\*
- m. Be honest with tenants

10. Economic Development (General)

- a. Have an international business focus
- b. D-Have a water bottling business
- c. D-Take advantage of sustainable resources
- d. Have jobs that can sustain families
- e. D-Have industrial, warehousing, and assembly
- f. D-Use biomass\*
- g. D-Have a pellet manufacturing plant
- h. D-Have water based manufacturing facility
- i. Increase jobs
- j. D-Bring in new industries\*
- k. D-Have a conference center
- l. D-Have a casino\*
- m. Work with KEDA on federal trade zone
- n. Clean up commercial zone
- o. D-Diversify\*
- p. Help existing businesses\*
- q. D-Have sustainable, home grown businesses\*
- r. D-Strive to be locally sustainable
- s. D-Determine the market for an integrated aqua-ponic greenhouse\*

11. Tourism

- a. D-Have an RV park on a waterfront\*
- b. Improve marketing\*
- c. D-Increase attractions
- d. Slow traffic down
- e. Train service industry personnel
- f. D-Have a destination hotel
- g. D-Add more trails of all kinds
- h. D-Have a casino barge
- i. D-Improve lodging options\*
- j. Reroute bridge traffic to be able to come in from both highways
- k. D-Build better identity
- l. D-Build RV park with river and golf course access\*
- m. Build RV Park in the Park
- n. Take advantage of Rainy Lake

12. Small Business and Retail

- a. D-More retail businesses\*
- b. D-More entrepreneurs
- c. Have an Applebees
- d. D-Have sit down restaurants
- e. Have clothing retail/Kohls
- f. Have more businesses selling kids shoes
- g. Have a Target
- h. Have a big box store\*
- i. D-Encourage new businesses\*
- j. D-Have a riverboat business
- k. D-Casino\*
- l. Have more online/mail order businesses
- m. Have a co-op store\*