



## Issue Paper

# Shared Municipal Services

Riding Mountain National Park of Canada

Wasagaming Community Plan Review 2007

### Background:

Wasagaming and the community of Onanole in the Rural Municipality of Park (RM of Park) both provide a range of municipal services to their seasonal and year-round residents and commercial businesses. Given the proximity of the two communities, it seems reasonable that as one community they would share in the provision of these various municipal services to gain economic, social and environmental benefits. These municipal services include the provision of potable water, wastewater treatment, garbage pickup & recycling, road maintenance, structural fire protection, and solid waste disposal.

Formal agreements between Parks Canada and the RM of Park for the provision of some municipal services already exist, although they may need to be updated. The Wasagaming Tenants' Association has been supportive of the establishment of these agreements because of the economic and environmental benefits and are encouraging Parks Canada to update existing and develop new agreements.

The following provides more detail on some of the municipal services and current, or potential, agreements.

### Potable Water

Parks Canada upgraded Wasagaming's water treatment system in 2004/05 at a cost of approximately \$5.0M to meet Federal and Parks Canada Agency standards. In 2004 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the RM of Park whereby Parks Canada agreed to provide safe drinking water on a cost recovery basis. The remaining steps involve completing a formal water services agreement.

The Elkhorn Resort already receives potable water from the Parks Canada water treatment facility under a specific water services agreement.



Wasagaming Sewage Lagoons

### Wastewater Treatment

High nutrient levels in surface and sub-surface waters in the Clear Lake Basin, originating from faulty effluent disposal systems inside and outside the national park, pose a potential threat to the long-term ecological integrity of the Clear Lake Basin. These faulty systems can also impact the social and economic well being of residents in the area.

To help address these issues, Parks Canada has completed the design and Phase I construction of an upgrade to the Wasagaming wastewater treatment system. Phase II of the upgrade is expected to start in 2008-09. The infrastructure upgrade has been designed with the capacity necessary to accept and treat effluent from some areas within the RM of Park.

Parks Canada has agreed in principle to accept effluent from the Elkhorn Resort for treatment and

is willing to enter into an additional service agreement with the RM of Park to accept and treat effluent from other areas within the community of Onanole.

### Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling

There is a formal arrangement to share recycling services with neighbouring communities through the South Mountain Waste Management Group. Also, Wasagaming currently uses the RM of Park landfill on a fee for service basis. This service agreement expired in 2001 and a new agreement needs to be negotiated.

Parks Canada would prefer an expanded solid waste agreement with a more cooperative approach would result in a more cost effective solid waste management program meeting goals related to environmental stewardship. Upcoming issues, such as relocating to a regional landfill when capacity of the existing landfill site is reached, could be addressed with the RM of Park during the negotiations for a new service agreement.

### Garbage Pickup

Parks Canada currently provides garbage pickup services to residents and businesses within Wasagaming. While in the process of negotiating a new solid waste agreement, Parks Canada has agreed to pickup garbage from a number of businesses and subdivisions within the RM of Park on a cost recovery basis.

### Structural Fire Protection

Under a longstanding agreement, the RM of Park provides structural fire protection services to Wasagaming on a cost recovery basis. This agreement is presently under review.

### **Considerations:**

- shared municipal services will help to meet Parks Canada's goals related to No Net Negative Environmental Impact and Environmental Stewardship;

- shared municipal services should decrease costs of providing the service, reduce duplication of services and result in financial benefits to all users: Parks Canada; lessees, licensees and permit holders in Wasagaming; and to the RM of Park and its residents;
- shared municipal services may serve as an economic foundation for self-governance for Wasagaming;
- pursuing agreements for the identified shared municipal services could lead to further partnerships that will enhance quality of life in both communities.

### **Issue:**

Although federal legislative mechanisms exist to establish agreements with other jurisdictions for the provision of municipal services, the 2000 Wasagaming Community Plan does not provide specific policy direction for the development of such agreements.

### **Questions**

1. Do you support a community plan amendment that directs Parks Canada to develop municipal service agreements with other jurisdictions such as the RM of Park?
2. What service agreements should be pursued?
3. Are there additional municipal services that should be considered for agreements?