



Issue Paper

Community Self Governance

Riding Mountain National Park of Canada

Wasagaming Community Plan Review 2007

Background

The *Canada National Parks Act* allows agreements to be made with communities for municipal governance that allows the delivery of municipal services. Banff successfully negotiated an *agreement* in 1990 with the Government of Canada and the Province of Alberta, transferring most municipal government powers to an elected Town Council. In Jasper, Alberta an agreement was established in 2001 for the establishment of a specialized, local, elected government responsible for the delivery of most municipal services. In 2006, an agreement acceptable to Parks Canada and the community of Waskesiu in Prince Albert National Park was negotiated, but then set aside in early 2007 when the Province of Saskatchewan chose not to provide the legislation necessary for municipal governance.

To date, the communities of Field, Lake Louise and Waterton have chosen to maintain the current governance structure (i.e., continue to provide advice to Parks Canada in the implementation of their community plans).

In Wasagaming, the Wasagaming Tenants' Association (WTA), through its Board of Directors, provides advice to Parks Canada in the implementation of the Community Plan and the delivery of municipal services. The advantages of alternate governance models have not been fully explored and the WTA Board of Directors has not made self-governance a priority.

Issue

Some seasonal residents in Wasagaming believe that the current governance structure is not sufficient (i.e., no representation by directly elected officials).

What types of governance models could be options for Wasagaming?

- A Jasper-like agreement with a local, elected government responsible for the delivery of most municipal services.
- A "made in Wasagaming" model that could include consideration of merging municipal governance with the Rural Municipality of Park.

What are some of the changes expected with a different governance model?

- Greater ability to direct resources to projects and services important to the community.
- More direct control and responsibility for municipal operations and decisions through their directly elected municipal officials.
- Likely direct taxation, instead of land rent, although it is not known whether costs to residents would increase or decrease.

Considerations

- Significant interest from the community would be required before other governance models are explored.
- Analysis and negotiations of an agreement would require considerable effort by the Wasagaming Tenants' Association.
- As with other national park governance agreements, authority for land use planning, development and environmental matters would be retained by Parks Canada.
- Support of the Province of Manitoba, and/or the Rural Municipality of Park, would be required including legislation changes for municipal governance.

OVER

Question

1. Do you think Parks Canada and the WTA should make a concerted effort to examine the feasibility of other municipal governance models?

2. If yes to question #1, do you know of other governance models that should be examined? Please provide a description or example.

