

# Waskesiu Townsite

## Vision 2020 and Beyond

### Community Action Plan



Prepared by the  
Waskesiu Community Council

Community Approved Version, August 2015

Waskesiu 2020 and Beyond - Community Action Plan

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	4
Waskesiu – A Community Profile.....	4
Location.....	4
History of the Waskesiu Townsite .....	4
Vision Statement – Waskesiu Community Council .....	6
The Waskesiu "Vision 2020 & Beyond" Community Action Plan .....	7
Where are we at in this Process?.....	8
Summer 2015 – Goals & Objectives.....	9
Enhancing the Waskesiu Experience – Eight (8) Major Categories .....	10
Implementation Strategy .....	12

## Appendix A – Implementation Strategy

## Appendix B – Stakeholders



*"If you don't know where you're  
going, any road will get you there."*

*Lewis Carroll*

## Acknowledgements

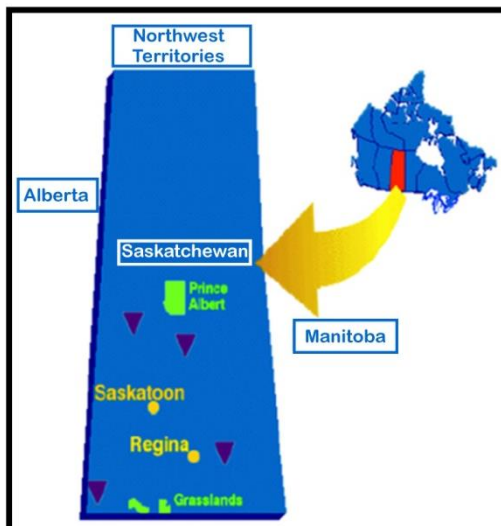
This Waskesiu "Vision 2020 and Beyond" Community Action Plan has been developed with input from every major stakeholder group in the Waskesiu community, from hundreds of Waskesiu residents (both seasonal and permanent) and visitors, and from Parks Canada Agency. That input was garnered through a series of individual and group meetings and at a highly successful community open house held in Waskesiu during August of 2014.

The "Vision 2020 and Beyond" process has been successfully led, and is fully supported, by the Waskesiu Community Council ("**Council**") under the guidance of its Chair (Brian Morgan) and the members of its Community Development and Planning Committee (Brent Hamel & Jim Kerby).

## Waskesiu – A Community Profile

### Location

Prince Albert National Park is 3875 square kilometres in size. The Park is the largest protected wilderness area in Saskatchewan, representing approximately 0.6% of the total area of the Province, and is located 90 kilometres north of the City of Prince Albert.



Prince Albert National Park protects a diverse range of physical and cultural resources within the Southern Boreal Plains and the Plateaux Natural Region. The Park includes over 1500 lakes and seven watersheds, which amounts to approximately 10% of the total Park area. It is often referred to as "Saskatchewan's Playground", and is dedicated to future generations of Canadians and other visitors for their understanding, appreciation and enjoyment.

Prince Albert National Park is one of just seven national parks in the Canadian national parks system that has a townsite community located inside the Park boundaries.

The townsite of Waskesiu is situated on the south end of Waskesiu Lake, near the east boundary of the Park. The beautiful lake and the boreal forest, which surrounds the townsite, provide residents and visitors with a unique sense of place.

### History of the Waskesiu Townsite

On May 9, 1927, the Honorable Charles Stewart, Minister of the Interior, announced the establishment of Prince Albert National Park with a seasonal headquarters at Waskesiu Lake. Waskesiu Lake was considered the finest and most easily accessible of a chain of northern lakes, particularly because of the presence of a large natural beach area.





## Vision Statement – Waskesiu Community Council

The people of Waskesiu take great pride in being part of a model four-season community, a community that respects its heritage, character and, above all, its natural environment. The elected members of Council, working in partnership with the townsite's commercial sector, its seasonal and permanent residents, and Parks Canada Agency, want to identify and clearly articulate a common, shared vision for our community – a sense of purpose to guide, enhance, protect and manage the Waskesiu townsite.



Waskesiu is both a destination and a departure point for a variety of leisure experiences within Prince Albert National Park. It has historically offered, and should continue to offer, visitors and residents with a wide variety of services and amenities. The townsite should also offer a choice of affordable recreational experiences for all ages. Special events, whether

longstanding or new, should provide opportunities to enjoy Waskesiu and the Park in a variety of ways, while helping to build an even stronger sense of community.

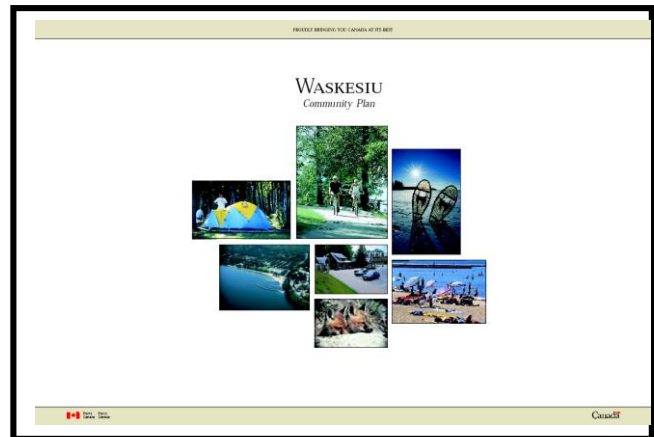
The Waskesiu Community Council actively supports tourism and other economic opportunities that are consistent with the heritage of Waskesiu, and national park values.

Waskesiu must find new ways to thrive and innovate – but to do so a clear vision is needed. Working together - as a community - will help to ensure that Waskesiu continues to be a special meeting place for generations of families to enjoy a vibrant array of facilities, services and unique recreational opportunities while respecting, and protecting, Waskesiu's abundant wildlife and, above all, its astounding natural beauty.



## The Waskesiu "Vision 2020 & Beyond" Community Action Plan

Waskesiu's Community Council, recognizing the changing nature of our community and the challenges we collectively face, committed to identifying a mid-to-longer term Waskesiu "community vision" with input from our entire community, to be followed in due course by a "Community Action Plan". The results of that valuable and collaborative work are reflected in this **Community Action Plan** – an action plan geared towards ensuring that Waskesiu continues to be, and is *enhanced* as, a vibrant, environmentally healthy, economically viable, and unique community. Moreover, consistent with (and as a supplement to) the 2000 Waskesiu Community Plan, this Community Action Plan is designed to inform, coordinate, and help guide the future planning process in Waskesiu.



This Community Action Plan incorporates brand new ideas - along with a number of ideas previously articulated by the community and/or by Parks Canada Agency in various plans and policies that pre-date this Plan. All of Waskesiu's key stakeholder organizations, and many of its residents, will recognize some of their own desired outcomes in this Community Action Plan, as well as some new goals that, hopefully, they will actively support through community planning and collective action. The Waskesiu Community Council's goal has been to synthesize all of these ideas into a set of common, clearly articulated, and "outcome-based" goal statements for the entire Waskesiu community.

Making our "community vision" a reality cannot be achieved by any one organization alone. It requires real collaboration and meaningful commitment on the part of Waskesiu's residents, local businesses, Parks Canada Agency, and all of Waskesiu's community stakeholder groups.

This Community Action Plan will - hopefully – continue to foster even more vibrant discussions, more new ideas, more collaborative actions, and many positive outcomes in the years to come.



## Where are we at in this Process?

As discussed above, our community has already completed a series of individual and group meetings, including a number of meetings with Parks Canada Agency's management team and senior leadership, and a presentation at the 2014 Prince Albert National Park Round Table. In addition, a highly successful "Vision 2020 & Beyond" community open house was held in late August, 2014.

Parks Canada and the Community Council continued to build on the momentum during our joint meetings in late October and December of 2014, and again in February of 2015. A successful **"Waskesiu Community Leaders Round Table"** was held in Saskatoon on Saturday, May 9, 2015, with representatives from the Waskesiu Community Council, Parks Canada Agency, and all of Waskesiu's major stakeholder groups\* present and actively participating.

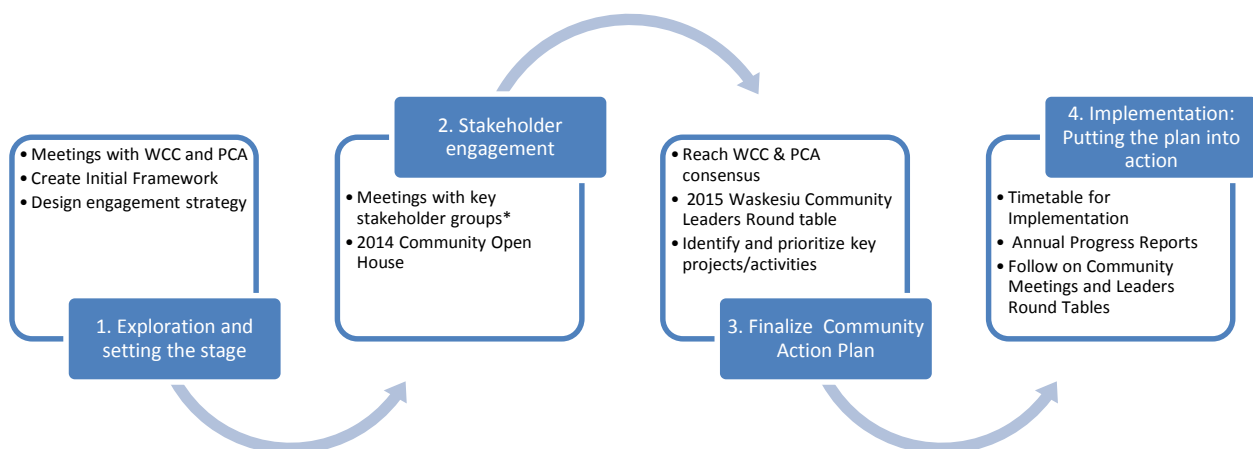
To be clear, the Community Action Plan is intended as a "living document" that will, by necessity, adapt and change over time as new challenges and opportunities arise. In that context, the "final step" in this phase of the process was the presentation of the Community Action Plan at a community meeting in Waskesiu. That meeting was held on **Sunday, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at the Terrace Gardens** at which time the following resolution was passed unanimously:

*That the membership of the Waskesiu Community Association hereby:*

*(1) ratifies, endorses and enthusiastically supports the Waskesiu 2020 Vision "Community Action Plan", including the Implementation Strategy contained therein; and*

*(2) urges the Waskesiu Community Council, Parks Canada Agency and each of the other key stakeholders identified in the Community Action Plan, to immediately commence implementation of the Plan.*

Now that community endorsement of this document has been obtained, we will move to Phase 4 (below) – and the Waskesiu community will start "putting the plan into action".





\* The key stakeholders groups involved with this highly collaborative process included Parks Canada Agency, the Waskesiu Seasonal Residents Association (the "WSRA"), the Waskesiu Foundation Inc. (the "Foundation"), the Waskesiu Chamber of Commerce (the "Chamber"), the Waskesiu Heritage Museum (the "Museum"), Friends of the Park ("FOP"), the Waskesiu and Area Destination Marketing Organization (the "DMO"), the Lobstick Golf Club Inc. (the "WGC"), and the operator of the Waskesiu Lake Marina (the "Marina").

## Summer 2015 – Goals & Objectives

To recap, our near-term goal (summer of 2015) will be to:

- (1) have the Waskesiu community, including Parks Canada Agency and all of the key leadership groups in Waskesiu, **confirm and endorse** our community's "**2020 Vision**" (including the Community Action Plan and Implementation Strategy) for enhancing the Waskesiu experience;
- (2) clearly **identify the key projects/activities** (the "**Key Projects & Activities**") that are to be actively pursued (and implemented) by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020;
- (3) **clearly prioritize** the Key Projects & Activities (by year) in the Implementation Strategy;
- (4) identify each of the **lead community stakeholder(s)** responsible for advancing/implementing each of the Key Projects & Activities (the "**Lead Stakeholders**"); and
- (5) start to **successfully implement** Waskesiu's **Community Action Plan**.

## Enhancing the Waskesiu Experience – Eight (8) Major Categories

This Community Action Plan, and the related Implementation Strategy, have been organized around eight (8) broad categories (the "**Major Categories**" of key projects and/or activities), each of which are identified below. It should be recognized, however, that many of the projects and activities identified within these major categories are closely interrelated with other projects and/or activities identified within other categories.

Major Categories	
<b>1. Infrastructure</b>	<p>This major area includes the repair and/or rejuvenation of existing community infrastructure and, in some cases, the construction of new community infrastructure – either in the Waskesiu townsite or within the immediately surrounding area (e.g. the Marina). The infrastructure area also contemplates support for community revitalization through efforts that address the needs of seasonal and permanent residents, and visitors to the Park. As designed, we will be giving first priority to those projects identified in the 2015-2017 time period, and second priority to those that fall in the 2018 -2020 time period.</p>
<b>2. Image</b>	<p>This major area relates to projects or activities that support a positive visual (and also positive environmental) "image" for the townsite – including recognition for, and protection of, Waskesiu's "quaint village" atmosphere within its core community, surrounding beaches and picnic areas. It is anticipated that the goals and objectives associated with improving the overall "image" of Waskesiu will be accomplished through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) continued efforts at beautification – including "hands on" activities (like the flower planting program) that can be implemented quickly and maintained by interested volunteers;</li><li>ii) developing appropriate guidelines for design; and</li><li>iii) encouraging and supporting local businesses in maintaining, and hopefully enhancing, this special Waskesiu 'feel' and 'character'.</li></ul>
<b>3. Recreation and Amenities</b>	<p>This major area covers the promotion of recreation (and related recreation assets) in Waskesiu - including by establishing strategic priorities and projects designed to meet the recreation needs of residents and visitors to Waskesiu. This will include providing well maintained, quality, easily accessible, and visitor friendly recreation services - with an emphasis, where reasonably possible, on making those recreation assets readily available during the shoulder and winter seasons as well (and not just solely focused on the busy summer season).</p>
<b>4. Visitation</b>	<p>This topic area covers the community's recognition of the importance of increasing visitation to Waskesiu – hopefully to enjoy our unique, natural, cultural and economic environment. This must be accomplished to help ensure the ongoing presence and success of the local business community. The approach will need to be undertaken in a multi-dimensional way, including business owner buy-in to support the vision, and promoting awareness of - and ensuring meaningful community support for keeping and attracting - a wide range of arts, entertainment and cultural special events from (at a minimum) mid-May to mid-September. The success of those undertakings will, in turn, be enhanced by Waskesiu-based organizations working together, as part of real partnerships, with other Waskesiu organizations to successfully plan, undertake and promote their events.</p>

## **5. Community Life**

This major area covers the systems, activities and facilities that support all arts, cultural, heritage, recreation, leisure, and learning opportunities. Positive community life will, in general, usually be accomplished through ensuring access to quality services and infrastructure, while nurturing positive relationships and alliances. This particular concept includes overall community safety, and maintaining a very positive and dynamic social fabric

## **6. Natural Environment**

This major area addresses how the community will protect, enhance (and, where and as needed, will attempt to mitigate and/or restore,) ecosystem integrity and biodiversity throughout Waskesiu and the surrounding areas – but with the understanding that nature and humans are not separate. This area also includes the celebration of Waskesiu’s unique heritage and cultural environment.

## **7. Economic Direction & Support**

This major area covers the local Waskesiu economy - how we increase both visitation (as noted above) and real opportunities for business growth. It is hoped that residents and others can optimize the impact locally, and support local services and livelihoods. It addresses economic diversity and resiliency, opportunities for entrepreneurship, meaningful work, and creating a positive climate for local businesses. That area includes, among others, tourism, small businesses, and recreational-based activities.

## **8. Community Planning, Policy and Practice**

This major area addresses the expectation of seasonal residents and businesses for good and equitable local government – namely, as identified in the WCC/PCA Letter of Understanding:

*"....effective and efficient in its operations and principled in its actions".*

As fellow leaseholders, they want the assurance of fair lease rates (with the comfort of knowing that land rents collected are equitable) and that funds raised by governments are being spent wisely.

## Implementation Strategy

As noted above, this Community Action Plan has identified eight (8) Major Categories of "Key Projects and Activities", with each category requiring specific actions.

Early in the visioning process, the Waskesiu Community Council's Community Development & Planning Committee acknowledged that priorities needed to be established, and that an "implementation strategy" needed to be developed that clearly identified the specific short-term, medium-term, and longer-term actions needed to make the 20/20 vision a reality by December of 2020.

As such, the **Implementation Strategy** set out below provides the initial roadmap of specific actions to be undertaken in order to actually achieve the goals identified in the Community Action Plan. For this to occur, strong leadership, collaboration and commitment are required from all sectors of the Waskesiu community. As such, solid partnerships, active volunteers, and shared funding arrangements will all be very important.

To provide continuity and help guide the implementation process, including the preparation of an annual progress report, it is recommended that a "Community Action Plan Implementation Committee" be established, and that it include members of the WCC's Community Development and Planning Committee.

### Implementation Strategy Legend – Defined Terms

**Lead** - the organization that has agreed to take on the leadership role to ensure the identified project/activity is advancing, and is ultimately completed, in a timely manner as contemplated in the Implementation Strategy. On a case by case basis (to be determined) this may entail commitments of the necessary financial and/or in-kind contributions, and/or the commitment of human resources, required to ensure success of the project or activity in question.

**Partner** - the organization(s) that has/have agreed to assist the Lead to help ensure the identified project/activity is advancing. On a case by case basis (to be determined) this may entail commitments of additional financial and/or in-kind contributions, and/or the commitment of human resources, required to help ensure success of the project or activity in question.

Chamber = Waskesiu Chamber of Commerce

DMO = Waskesiu & District Destination Marketing Organization

FOP = Friends of the Park

Foundation = The Waskesiu Foundation Inc.

Marina = Licence of Occupation holder for the Waskesiu Lake marina

Museum = The Waskesiu Heritage Museum

PCA = Parks Canada Agency

Volunteers = Waskesiu Volunteer Committee (yet to be formed)

WCC = Waskesiu Community Council

WGC = Lobstick Golf Club Inc. (Waskesiu Golf Course)

WSRA = The Waskesiu Seasonal Residents Association Inc.



## Implementation Strategy

AREA	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNER	TIMING					
				2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Infrastructure	Establish a parking strategy to address parking congestion in portions of the Waskesiu townsite and at the Marina	PCA	Marina/ WCC/WSRA						
Infrastructure	Develop and finalize a conceptual plan for the main beach aquatic area (e.g. potential walking pier, boardwalk, swimming platform or other amenities)	PCA	WCC						
Infrastructure	Recapitalize sewage lift stations and forced main line (major utility assets)	PCA							
Infrastructure	Develop and finalize a Marina recapitalization and revitalization plan, including implementing the Marina portion of the new parking strategy	PCA	Marina						
Infrastructure	Complete the Marina recapitalization and revitalization	PCA	Marina						
Infrastructure	Release by PCA of Elk Street lots for staff accommodation. Consider the potential development of the lots by a third party	PCA							
Infrastructure	Expand the seasonal staff trailer park	Chamber	PCA						
Infrastructure	Recapitalize the washroom/shower facility at the staff trailer park	PCA							
Infrastructure	Increase the number of lots available for staff accommodation at the seasonal staff trailer park	PCA							
Infrastructure	Revitalize the multi-season camp kitchen near the main beach	Foundation	PCA						
Infrastructure	Complete the main beach playground renewal ("Bears on the Beach") project	Foundation	PCA						
Infrastructure	Complete the planned Nature Centre revitalization project	PCA							
Infrastructure	Enhancement of the Nature Centre Interpretive Trail (i.e. from the Nature Centre to the main beach playground)	PCA	Foundation						

AREA	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNER	TIMING					
				2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Infrastructure	Enhance the Waskesiu townsite camping offering	PCA							
Infrastructure	Revitalize the Beaver Glen campground including site electrification	PCA							
Infrastructure	Develop a plan to revitalize the Paul Horne Arena to facilitate year round activities	Chamber	Foundation/ PCA						
Infrastructure	Develop an improved/expanded Waskesiu trail network	PCA	Foundation						
Infrastructure	Paving of all or an agreed portion of the remaining golf course paths ("Paving the Way project")	WGC	Foundation						
Infrastructure	Plan and develop a main community gathering area (e.g. an elevated shelter/stage)	WCC	Chamber/ PCA/WSRA/ Museum/ Foundation/ FOP						
Infrastructure	Construct a main community gathering area (e.g. elevated shelter/stage)								
Infrastructure	Plan and develop an off-leash dog park	Chamber	PCA						
Infrastructure	Plan and develop a bike park (for future consideration should there be sponsorship)	TBD	TBD						
Infrastructure	Plan and develop a skateboard park (for future consideration should there be sponsorship)	TBD	TBD						
Image	Development of a Waskesiu townsite public art strategy	FOP	WCC/ PCA						
Image	Townsite centre beautification & revitalization program (e.g. flowers, lights, signage, clean-up)	Chamber	Foundation/ WCC/ Museum/ PCA						
Image	Improve and develop additional thematic and informational signage, heritage/cultural identifiers; work to improve "way finding" for visitors to Waskesiu	PCA	Museum/ WCC						

AREA	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNER	TIMING					
				2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Image	Volunteer support for cleaning , maintaining and enhancing existing flower planters, beaches and picnic areas	TBD	Volunteers						
Image	Revitalize the existing native plant garden (near the Museum/Friends of the Park) and potentially expand the reach of the native plant program within the townsite	FOP	Volunteers						
Recreation and Amenities	Develop and finalize a comprehensive Community Recreation Action Plan	WCC	Chamber						
Recreation and Amenities	Implement the comprehensive Community Recreation Action Plan	Chamber	WCC/ Volunteers/ PCA						
Recreation and Amenities	Plan and develop the Waskesiu Mini golf and related recreation area revitalization project. To be undertaken at the existing Chamber of Commerce recreation site including additional recreation offerings (e.g. Pickle ball court, badminton net, shuffleboard, revitalized basketball court)	Chamber	Foundation/ PCA						
Recreation and Amenities	Promote existing and create additional winter activities within the townsite (e.g. ice fishing shacks, cross country ski trail maintenance, outdoor ice surface, toboggan hill, winter festival)	Chamber/ Ski Club	PCA						
Recreation and Amenities	Plan and develop additional water-based activities and infrastructure (e.g. swimming lessons, canoeing lessons, a main beach swimming platform, etc.)	Chamber	PCA/WCC						
Visitation	Improve community messaging/information and delivery systems and capability; Improve overall communications capability for key stakeholders and PCA	WCC	PCA/ WSRA						

AREA	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNER	TIMING					
				2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Visitation	Work with relevant stakeholders and other agencies to promote Waskesiu as a preferred resort and business conference destination	DMO	Chamber/ FOP						
Visitation	Develop a strategy to attract/plan more annual events (including recurring annual conferences and festivals) year round; Help to enhance support for, and awareness of, existing annual events	DMO/ Chamber	PCA/WCC						
Visitation	Identify issues and options to improve PCA reservation system for campgrounds	PCA							
Community Life	Create and implement a Waskesiu Volunteer Committee, Volunteer Coordinator and a Volunteer Action Plan	WCC	WSRA/ PCA/ Chamber						
Natural Environment	Continue and if possible expand the urban reforestation program	WCC/PCA	Foundation/ WGC						
Natural Environment	Expand existing recycling program	PCA	WCC						
Natural Environment	Enhance the existing composting program	PCA							
Economic Direction and Support	Develop and implement an Economic Development Strategy designed to, among other things, sustain and enhance the viability of Waskesiu's business community	Chamber	WCC/PCA						
Community Planning, Policy and Practice	Work with Parks Canada to improve and modernize the Waskesiu Community Plan, the Cottage Regulations and the Commercial Guidelines (e.g. identify and address any areas of inequities and possible courses of action to remove or reduce those inequities)	WCC	WSRA/ Chamber						