

# HIAWATHA

## A VISION FOR OUR FUTURE

Comprehensive  
Community Plan

2020



## HIAWATHA FIRST NATION COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN 2020

### Acknowledgments

We want to acknowledge the involvement of many in the production of this Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP).

*First* - Chief and Council for initiating and having the foresight to undertake a two-year-long project and for their commitment to see the Citizens of Hiawatha become the drivers of a plan that is community-driven.

*Second* - to the families of Hiawatha who came together as family units to provide their thoughts and wishes on what they would like to see their community become in future years.

*Third* - the Administration and L.I.F.E. Centre staff for their participation in providing documentation and overviews of the services being provided to the Citizens of Hiawatha. The staff also need a big shout-out for organizing the many excellent community events that take place at Hiawatha.

*Fourth* - the staff at the Old Railroad Stop restaurant who were always cheerful and accommodating and who also had the best muffins and butter tarts known to mankind.

*Fifth* - the CCP Steering Committee who provided guidance and represented their family units in the progression of the CCP.

*Sixth* - the CCP community coordinator, Lynda Booth, who gently and sometimes not so gently organized meetings and participation. Lynda and her family were also responsible for providing many of the meals that families and others got to enjoy while participating.

It has been great working with you and getting to know many Citizens of Hiawatha.

*Dan Brant*

*Catherine Irwin Gibson*

*Brad Greyeyes-Brant*

#### Hiawatha First Nation

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K9J OE6

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Kirk Edwards - Councillor    Cynthia Gray - Councillor  
Jeff Loucks - Councillor    Kathryn Wilson - Councillor  
Donald Paudash - Councillor (passed away August 2019)

#### Hiawatha CCP Steering Committee

Lorne Paudash	Darla Blodgett	Ellisa Johnson
Janet Wood	Georgette Howard	Lisa Cowie
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# Table of Contents

<b>Message from Chief Laurie Carr</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>The Plan</b>	<b>6</b>
WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN (CCP)?	7
Summary of Hiawatha's CCP	7
Preparing and Carrying Out the CCP Process	8
How to Use This Report	9
<b>A History</b>	<b>10</b>
HIAWATHA: THE RHYTHM OF THE SEASONS	11
Building a Community	12
<b>We Celebrate</b>	<b>14</b>
HIAWATHA EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS	15
The Annual Pow Wow	15
The Community Picnic	16
Indigenous Day	17
The Fireworks	17
The Seven Grandfathers Gala	18
Serpent Mounds	19
Christmas Party	19
<b>Who We Are</b>	<b>20</b>
DEMOGRAPHICS	21
Knowledge of Anishinaabemowin	23
Housing Conditions	23
Education Level	24
Labour Force	25
<b>The Community Map</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Our Lands</b>	<b>28</b>
THE PLACE WE CALL HOME	29
Development Maps	30

<b>The Community View</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>One Vision</b>	<b>34</b>
CORE COMMUNITY FOCUS	35
HIAWATHA'S VISION: TEN GUIDING PRINCIPLES	36
Our Vision of Culture and Language	37
Our Vision of Our Lands	39
Our Vision of Our Community	41
Our Vision of Housing	43
Our Vision for Education	44
Our Vision for Health	46
Our Vision for Governance	47
Our Vision for Administration	49
Our Vision for External Relations	50
Our Vision for Economic Development	51
<b>Action Plans</b>	<b>52</b>
TURNING VISION INTO REALITY	53
ACTION ITEMS SUMMARY	54
Culture and Language	55
Land	57
Community	59
Housing	61
Education	62
Health	64
Governance	66
Administration	68
External Relations	70
Economic Development	72
<b>Summary</b>	<b>75</b>



HIAWATHA FIRST NATION



ADMINISTRATION OFFICE



### Message from Chief Laurie Carr

Aannii Citizens of Hiawatha,

TWO YEARS AGO, Council embarked to complete a Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) for our First Nation. We wanted to ensure that all Citizens' voices were heard and written into a plan that guides the future of our Community. We knew that this exercise was going to take time, as a plan of this nature had to come from our Citizens.

It is important to provide services in the best way possible for the enrichment and good health of all our Citizens, now and into the future. The CCP Report provides us with insight into what you feel is important for our Community now, and our next seven generations. Chief and Council will endeavour to make the vision you outlined a reality.

We wish to thank everyone who participated in the development of our Comprehensive Community Plan and we trust that each of you will find some of your input in this document. As we move forward, we will all be working together to reach our vision and make Hiawatha First Nation a vibrant, proud, independent and healthy people, balanced in the richness of our culture and traditional way of life.

Miigwetch,

Chief Laurie Carr  
On Behalf of Council

123 Paudash St., Hiawatha, ON K9J OE6 | Telephone (705) 295-4421 | Fax (705) 295-4424

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*"We, the Mississaugi of Hiawatha First Nation, are a vibrant, proud, independent and healthy people balanced in the richness of our culture and traditional way of life."*



# The Plan

This CCP belongs to all Citizens of Hiawatha, whose voices together have painted a beautiful vision for the future of Hiawatha Nation

## WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN (CCP)?

A COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN (CCP) IS FUNDAMENTALLY A planning document that is created by and for the community. It develops a general vision of what the community wants to look like in the future and elaborates this vision into specific Objectives, Action Items and Additional Thoughts. How to prioritize these is also considered.

The CCP is revisited every five to ten years but is meant to be relatively steady. It is a beacon to the future, guiding the community and repeated like a mantra as every step on the path is considered and carried out. Meanwhile the Objectives, Action Items and Additional Thoughts are flexible and can evolve according to changing circumstances and opportunities.

The CCP includes ways of measuring progress, and this is critical to seeing it come to life.

## Summary of Hiawatha's CCP

Hiawatha Citizens were of one voice in declaring their vision for their future, their desired outcomes and the way they see this vision coming to life.

They were adamant that the overarching priority is the protection of their Michi Sauggi identity, which is rooted in their culture, tradition and their respect for the environment. This is fundamental to Hiawatha Citizens when planning for the future. Michi Sauggi values influence every other area of the CCP as well: Land, Community, Housing, Education, Health, Governance, Administration, External Relations and Economic Development.



This CCP belongs to all Citizens of Hiawatha, whose voices all carry equal weight and together have painted a beautiful vision for the future of Hiawatha First Nation. The depth and clarity of this vision speaks to a vibrant future for Hiawatha First Nation.



## Preparing and Carrying Out the CCP Process

In the spring of 2018, Hiawatha First Nation's Chief and Council retained Daniel J. Brant and Associates to conduct the CCP process. Daniel Brant and Catherine Irwin-Gibson conducted most of the engagements and work, with assistance from Amy Brant and Brad Greyeyes-Brant. The CCP Team guided and supported the development of the plan. This included listening and asking questions (and especially, taking notes!) and writing this report.

The CCP Team worked closely with Lynda Booth, a Hiawatha Citizen, who was instrumental in the development of the CCP. We are deeply appreciative of her hard work, great sense of humour, frankness and gentle ability to guide us. We would sincerely like to honour her dedication to Hiawatha First Nation.



*Special thanks to Lynda Booth for her hard work, great sense of humour, frankness and gentle ability to guide us!*

The Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) Steering Committee was formed and it brought together one representative from each of Hiawatha's families and one youth representative to guide the CCP process. This committee was made up of Lorne Paudash, Darla Blodgett, Ellisa Johnson, Janet Wood, Georgette Howard, Lisa Cowie, Olivia Howard, Lori Flynn, Diane Sheridan, David Crookes and Lynda Booth.

One particularly significant contribution of the Committee was in their guiding the consultations to revolve around family meetings, rather than holding community-at-large meetings to consult on the CCP. These provided for greater feedback and openness in discussions.

After gaining insight from Hiawatha staff on the state of programs and services offered at Hiawatha, Citizens both on and off territory were invited to host family meetings. Families at Hiawatha were instrumental in leading the charge, identifying priorities and objectives for the CCP. Over twenty family meetings were held with all eleven of Hiawatha's families, including one off-reserve family meeting. The team also held meetings with the Seniors' luncheon and two delegations of Youth.

Four different surveys and questionnaires, both formal and informal, were shared with Hiawatha Citizens by email and in person. Many of these surveys were conducted at community events. The CCP Team attended the 2018 and 2019 Pow Wows, the 2018 and 2019 Seven Grandfathers Galas, the 2018 and 2019 Community Picnics, the 2018 and 2019 Indigenous Day celebrations, fireworks displays and the 2018 and 2019 Christmas parties.

Each survey or questionnaire included the opportunity for respondents to subscribe to receive information updates regarding the CCP by email. Hiawatha Citizens were invited by email, newsletter and direct mail appeal to meet the team, personally in their hometown or by phone. Through these appeals, the team heard from Citizens by email, by phone or in person.



At their direction, members of the Council were not interviewed in their role as Council members but through their personal participation in family meetings as individual Citizens of Hiawatha First Nation.

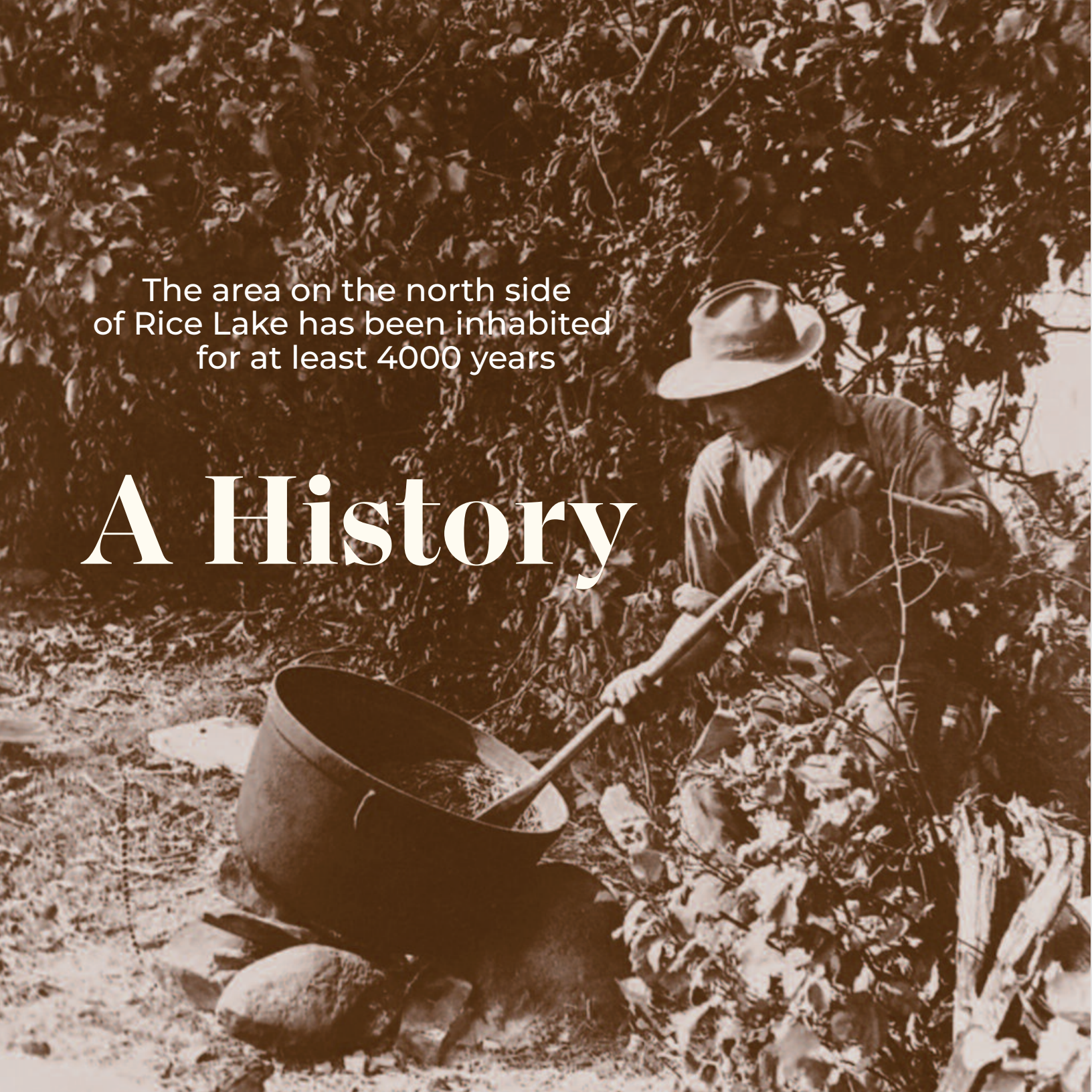
## How to Use this Report

This CCP belongs to every Citizen of Hiawatha First Nation. It was designed by the community and lays out the desired future of the community.

Chief and Council can use the CCP to guide their strategic planning; staff and the Administration can use it to implement and design programs, but it is ultimately the responsibility of the whole community to transform the vision into reality. It comes down to every Citizen of Hiawatha using it to guide their personal efforts as they participate in community activities.

The CCP is a road map for getting to the future that Hiawatha Citizens have chosen. It should be read and understood by all staff and elected leadership, both current and as they come on board to the organization. It can be amended as required to better implement the vision, and should be revisited every five years. This is to ensure that as the community evolves and circumstances change, the long-term vision and goals are adjusted accordingly.

The CCP is divided into separate areas of focus. Through the CCP process, Hiawatha's Citizens have together developed a general vision for each of these areas, establishing where they want to be in the coming decades. That vision is then elaborated into specific goals. Action Items are then created to be the means for achieving these objectives. Everything in this CCP is taken directly from discussions with Hiawatha Citizens.



The area on the north side  
of Rice Lake has been inhabited  
for at least 4000 years

# A History

## HIAWATHA: THE RHYTHM OF THE SEASONS

RICE LAKE WAS KNOWN AS PEMEDASHCOUTAYANG, meaning ‘lake of the plains where fire moves across’, or ‘lake of the burning plains’. The name refers to the seasonal burns which were held each spring to return nutrients and health to the land. The area on the north side of Rice Lake has been inhabited for at least 4000 years.

The area was the site of battles between different nations in the first half of the 1600s. This led to peace treaties in the late 1600s, which in turn led to one of the most well-known agreements, the Dish with One Spoon, whereby the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe nations agreed to share hunting rights to areas between Lake Ontario, the St. Lawrence River and the Ottawa River. This allowed the Mississauga Nation to move south of Lake Huron after 1700. Since then, the area has been largely recognized as Anishinaabeg territory. Through these moves and into more recent history, the community at Hiawatha has remained connected to its sister Michi Sauggi communities at Alderville, Curve Lake and Scugog.

Traditionally, Hiawatha Citizens lived according to the rhythm of the seasons. Spring was the time for the maple syrup and the burns, collecting turtle eggs and fishing for largemouth bass. Summer brought around birch bark gathering for basket-weaving (in time for the strawberry harvest), hunting, fishing, berry gathering and guiding; cottagers, tourists, hunters and fishers have been visiting Hiawatha for over a century. In the fall, Hiawatha Citizens would set their sights to gathering wild rice, hunting and trapping, and collecting puff balls. And in winter, the people of Hiawatha would hunker down, focusing on hunting and trapping to sustain their food supplies.

Prior to the 1870s and the influence of the Indian Act, the governance system of Hiawatha shared power between the chiefs of four clans. According to *The Village of Hiawatha: A History*:

“Each clan had a function for the people: the Crane and the Loon clans were the leaders of the people. Both clans served as a balance to the other. Between these two clans stood the Fish clan, who were the intellectuals of the nation and the Turtle is usually recognized as the head. They would settle any disputes that occurred between the two chief clans. The Bear clan functioned as the police force of the people and because they spent much of their time close to nature they also became known for their medicinal skills. The Marten clan was the warrior clan, who protected the people from invaders and were also known as good hunters. The Deer clan were known as the gentle people



In 1923, the Williams Treaty was signed, covering a large section of Ontario that, until this time, was not covered by treaty and which included much of Hiawatha's traditional territory. According to Elders interviewed at the time, the traditional hunting territories extended from Toronto to French River, to the Ottawa River and then down to the Bay of Quinte, much like the agreement of the Dish with One Spoon, circa 1685.<sup>2</sup> These treaties have been upheld in court and any surrenders of harvesting rights were proven to be unintentional, granting compensation to Hiawatha and other nations for their lost rights.

Over time, colonialism tore away at the traditions and the language of the Michi Sauggi through daily life. The revitalization of Hiawatha's Michi Sauggi culture began in earnest during the 1990s when a revival of awareness and the recognition of the importance of their culture became prominent among community Citizens. It continues to this day and is part of the defining values and principles that contributed to this CCP's development.

1-2 *The Village of Hiawatha: A History*, by Heather Y. Shpuniarsky and the Village of Hiawatha Book Committee, 2016: Hiawatha First Nation. Page 79.

and the poets of the nation. In different regions it is the moose or the caribou who is head of this clan. The Bird clan represented the spiritual leaders of the people and, like the eagle who is seen as the head, they pursue higher elevations of the mind. This system was not just a system of governance, but also one that ensured the health of the people as one could not marry within one's clan. It is said that the Deer clan disobeyed this rule and, despite frequent warnings, were destroyed."<sup>1</sup>

### Building a Community

In 1829, an 1120-acre plot of land on the north shore of Rice Lake was granted and homes were built for Chief Paudash's community. Throughout this period, Hiawatha was strong in its advocacy and cooperated regularly with many other First Nations, including its sister communities of Scugog, Alderville and Curve Lake, but also the Haudenosaunee at Six Nations and the greater Ojibwe and even nearby settler communities to protect their rights and interests.







# We Celebrate

A community that plays together stays healthy together; Hiawatha's members have a tradition of welcoming everyone to the party!

## HIAWATHA EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS

THE COMMUNITY ORGANIZES AND HOLDS EVENTS, FUNCTIONS, GALAS and exhibits far more than most First Nations. Some of these events have a storied history which speaks to the desire of maintaining traditional activities. The following pages reflect and illustrate the events that make Hiawatha proud.



### The Annual Pow Wow

Hiawatha has been hosting a traditional Pow Wow since 1994. This event is the first on the Pow Wow circuit, held each year on Victoria Day long weekend. It attracts dancers, drummers, artists, vendors and visitors alike to share in the culture and shake off their winter coats. The community supports this event heartily and looks forward to it each and every year.



### The Community Picnic

A community and family celebration for sure and one that has been happening since 1866. Not only is there plenty of food but the picnic features challenges such as kids’ foot races much as one would witness in the 1800s. Adults get involved in the fun as well with games such as catching a water balloon. The location in Cobourg is the site of this event which happens in July each year. Citizens look forward to the camaraderie, games and food. Even the local constabulary enjoys the event.



### Indigenous Day

The normal parking lot for the Pow Wow is converted to the grounds for another celebration marking Indigenous Day. This event is held close to June 21st and features information booths, activities for the kids – and axe throwing. Of course, there has to be food ... and plenty of it. Again, the community enjoys the day in the fresh air and provides hospitality to visitors to join in on the celebration.

### The Fireworks

A massive fireworks display is held as a finale to Labour Day weekend celebrations but in fact, it could be a stand-alone celebration. The fireworks attract Citizens and visitors from the region to join in and witness this extravaganza.



### The Seven Grandfathers Gala

The traditional teachings of the Seven Grandfathers are foundational to the philosophy and worldview of the Michi Sauggi people. The teachings reflect, acknowledge and respect the principles of Wisdom, Love, Respect, Bravery, Honesty, Humility and Truth. The Gala is held annually in May and is probably the most sought-after ticket in town. It also honours its Citizens who have accomplished an extraordinary feat or who are simply deserving of recognition. It is of course well attended and very well-executed.



### Serpent Mounds

A historic site and sacred place selected by ancestors a thousand years ago and revered today by Hiawatha Citizens. Formerly operated as a Provincial Park, then returned to the Hiawatha First Nation, this area is a symbol of the revitalization of Michi Sauggi culture. The site majestically overlooks Rice Lake, holding a reverence that can only be afforded by the strength of a culture that has survived.

### Christmas Party

No question about when this is held and while the event is primarily for the children, many of the adults get involved with the party as well. There is music, food, and even the Boston Bruins Alumni show up and of course old Saint Nick (he is not a Hiawatha Citizen but welcomed in any case) is on hand to usher in the Christmas season. Kids have their faces painted so their parents won't recognize them and the adults take part in an Ugly Christmas Sweater contest. A fun time every year — sun, rain, snow or freezing rain!





# Who We Are

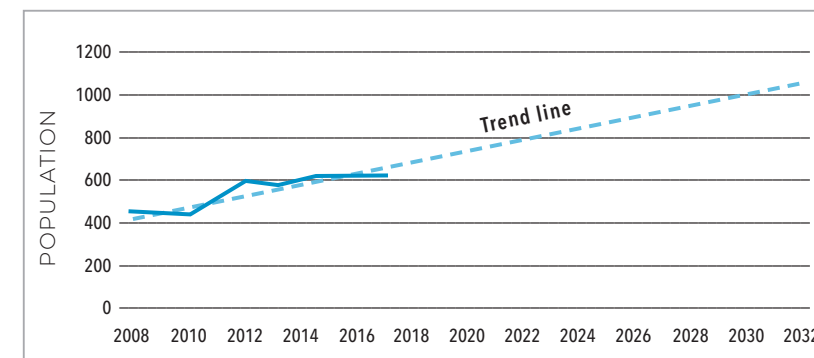
Hiawatha's growing community looks forward to achieving its potential and all the benefits that will bring, both culturally and economically

## DEMOGRAPHICS

THE COMMUNITY HAS GROWN SLIGHTLY IN THE LAST HALF-CENTURY and as of 2019 had a Citizenship of 796 Citizens. The current on-territory is 255 and off-territory is 541. Over one decade (2008-2017) Hiawatha's population grew from 438 to 637, representing a 45% increase in population and a further 25% from 2017 to 2019. The total population of the Citizens of Hiawatha is projected to reach nearly one thousand one hundred (1,100) people by 2032 (*see below*).

### Hiawatha Population Comparison

Year 1 is 2008;  
Year 25 is 2032

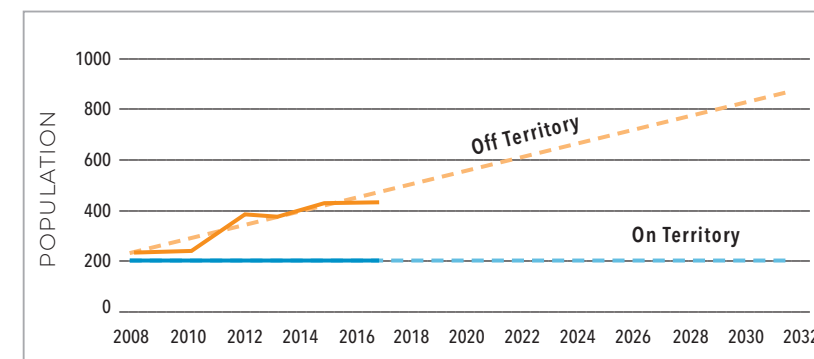


Source (both charts): Indian and Northern Affairs, Indian Registry System, Population Statistics Report

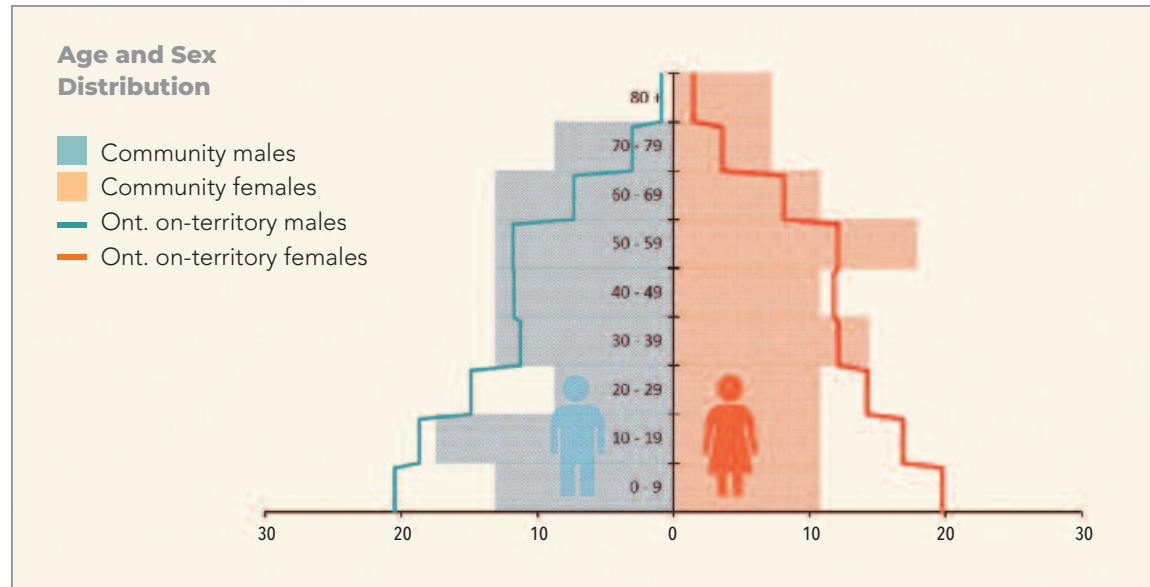
- **The breakdown between on- and off-territory Citizens** indicates the majority of population growth will take place off the territory. The illustration below charts the growth patterns for the decade ending in 2017 and projects estimated growth in each of the on- and off-territory population until 2032.

### On/Off-Territory Population Comparison

Year 1 is 2008;  
Year 25 is 2032

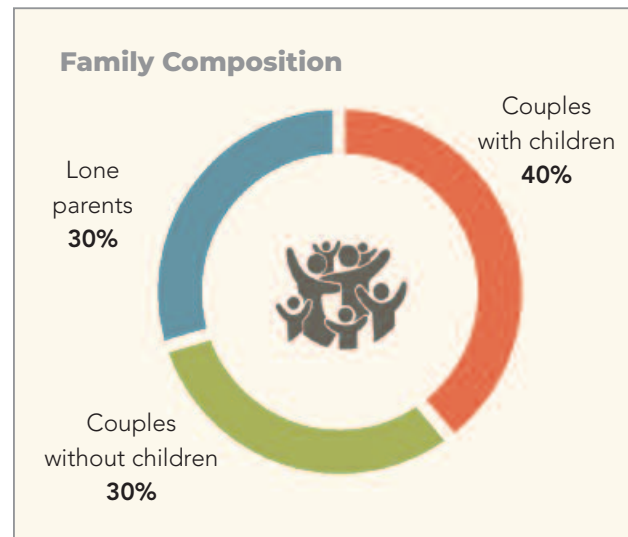


Source (both charts):  
 Statistics Canada,  
 Census of Population,  
 Catalogue Number:  
 41260001, October 2019



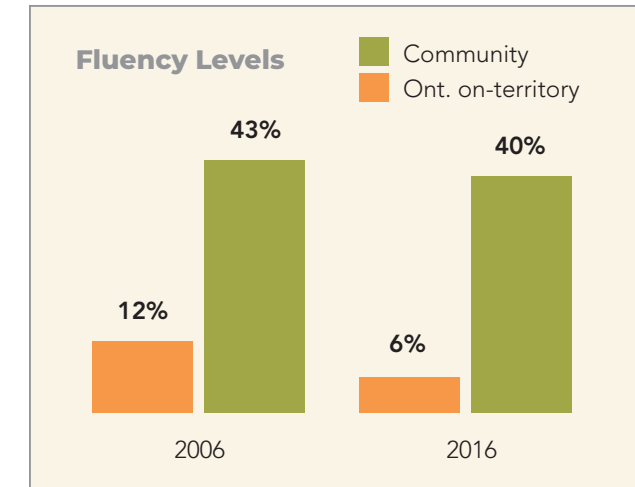
- **The age and sex distribution** as compared with other First Nations in Ontario is slightly different in that the population distribution is fairly even among the ages whereas most First Nations have a far stronger youth presence (*see above*).

- **Among the families of Hiawatha** the breakdown is also fairly even (*see at right*), with couples with children at 40%, couples without children at 30% and lone parents at 30%.



### Knowledge of Anishinaabemowin

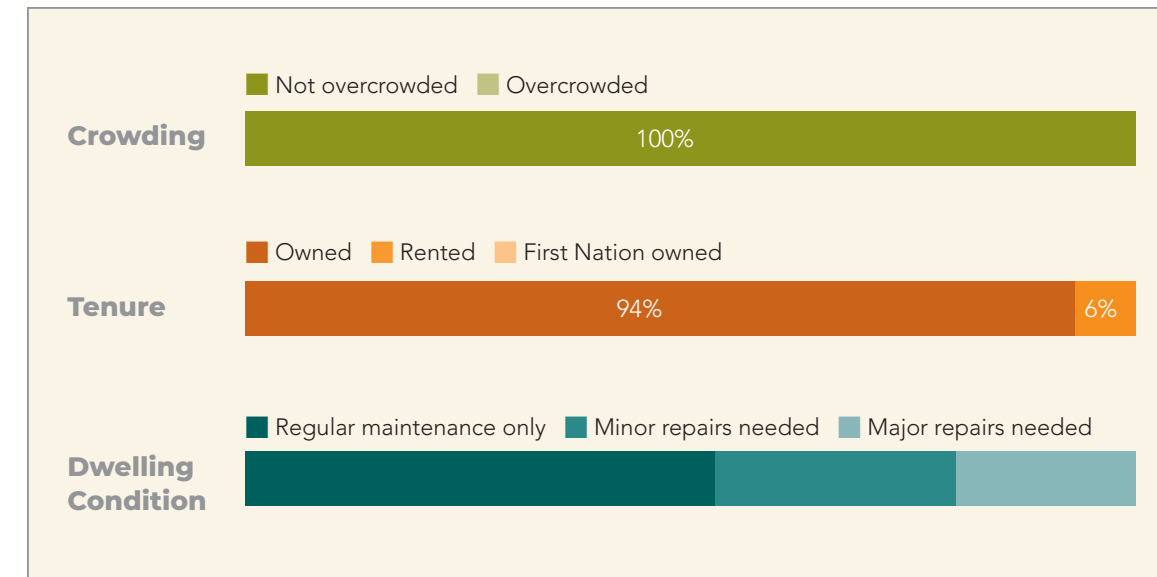
The knowledge of Anishinaabemowin has dropped by 50% from 2006 to 2016. The fifteen remaining speakers represent a spark that can be called upon to reignite the efforts of language revitalization.



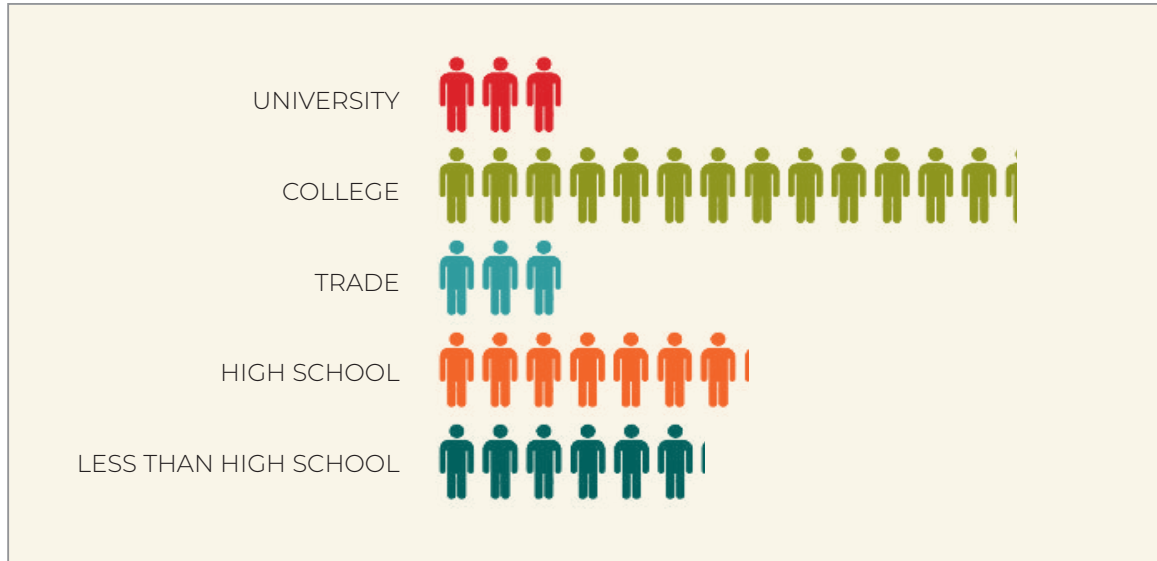
Source (both charts):  
 Statistics Canada,  
 Census of Population,  
 Catalogue Number:  
 41260001, October 2019

### Housing Conditions

The conditions reported below reflect the overall nature of housing at Hiawatha. Community-wide, housing conditions are generally good, although 20% report requiring major repairs. The land tenure is Certificate of Possession and 94% report owning their house with 6% being in First Nation housing.



Source (at right and on opposite page): Statistics Canada, Census of Population, Catalogue Number: 41260001, October 2019



### Education Level

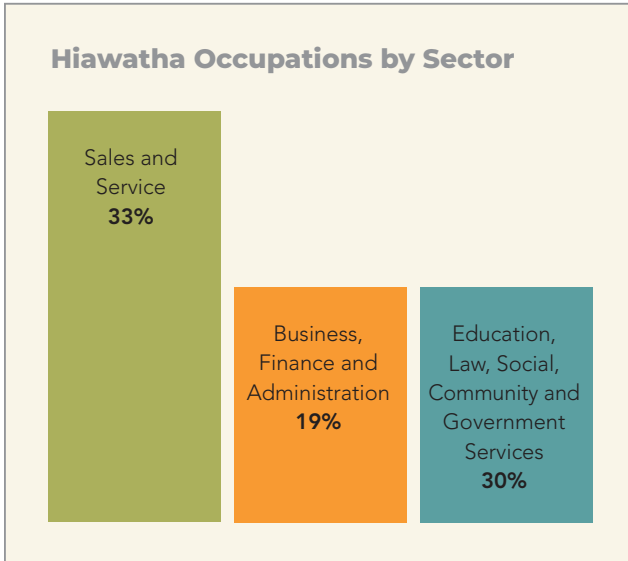
The education level at Hiawatha is quite high, with 48% of the population having some post-secondary education and an additional 9% with trades training. The following chart provides a comparison to both provincial-in-general and Indigenous statistics in the area of education achievement.

	INDIGENOUS	ONTARIO	HIAWATHA
HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA	71%	85%	<b>82%</b>
TRADES OR APPRENTICE CERTIFICATE	4.4%	6.0%	<b>9%</b>
SOME POST-SECONDARY OR CEGEP	23.9%	42.6%	<b>39%</b>
BACHELOR'S DEGREE	7.3%	17.3%	<b>9%</b>
MORE THAN A BACHELOR'S DEGREE	2.7%	7.98%	<b>N/A</b>



### Labour Force

The graphic below provides a breakdown of the occupation sectors that currently employ Citizens of Hiawatha. The majority are in the sales and service industry.



# The Community Map

An essential guide to the location of community landmarks, recreation centres, public buildings and service locations.

Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag  
Child and Family Services



Child Care Centre



L.I.F.E. Centre



Oshki-Aya'aa Manidoo-Gamick  
(Young Spirit Centre)



George Cowie Emergency  
Services Building



Six-Plex Apartment Buildings



HFN Tent and Trailer Park



Old Railroad Stop Restaurant and Gas Bar



Five-Plex Apartment Building



Dana Paudash Memorial Park



Lakeview Pow Wow Grounds



Church



Cemetery



Administration Building



Well-Being Centre



Hiawatha

RICE LAKE

# Our Lands

With an ancient and storied history, the area Hiawatha First Nation calls home is truly unique and one needing careful consideration when planning for the future

## THE PLACE WE CALL HOME

ON THE NORTH SHORE OF RICE LAKE, Hiawatha is situated approximately 20 kilometres southeast of the city of Peterborough, Ontario. The community area consists of approximately 2,145 acres of land of which 1,523 acres are held under Certificates of Possession.

Serpent Mounds is also part of Hiawatha First Nation. It is located on the north shore of Rice Lake but is not contiguous to the main part of Hiawatha. The site is located approximately five kilometers south of the village of Keene. Serpent Mounds covers approximately 333 acres of land and includes large burial mounds and traces of habitation dating back over 2000 years. It was declared a National Historic Site in 1982. It was operated as a provincial park from 1955-1995 and then by Hiawatha until 2009. It had offered campsites, trailer sites, cottages, a beach and a cultural centre. Many Citizens have expressed a desire to see this site opened again. Although there are a number of proposed uses, no plan has been agreed upon.

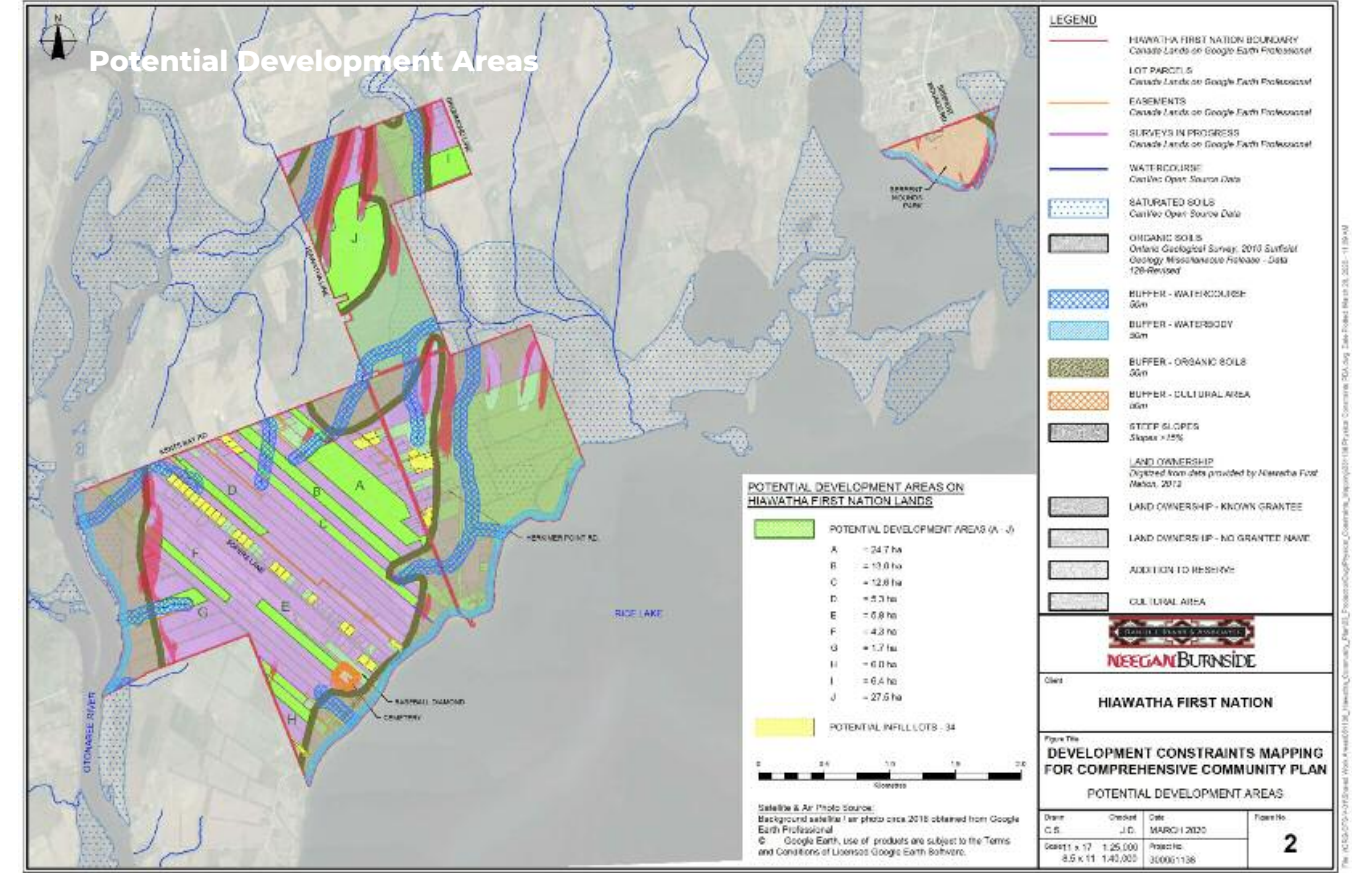
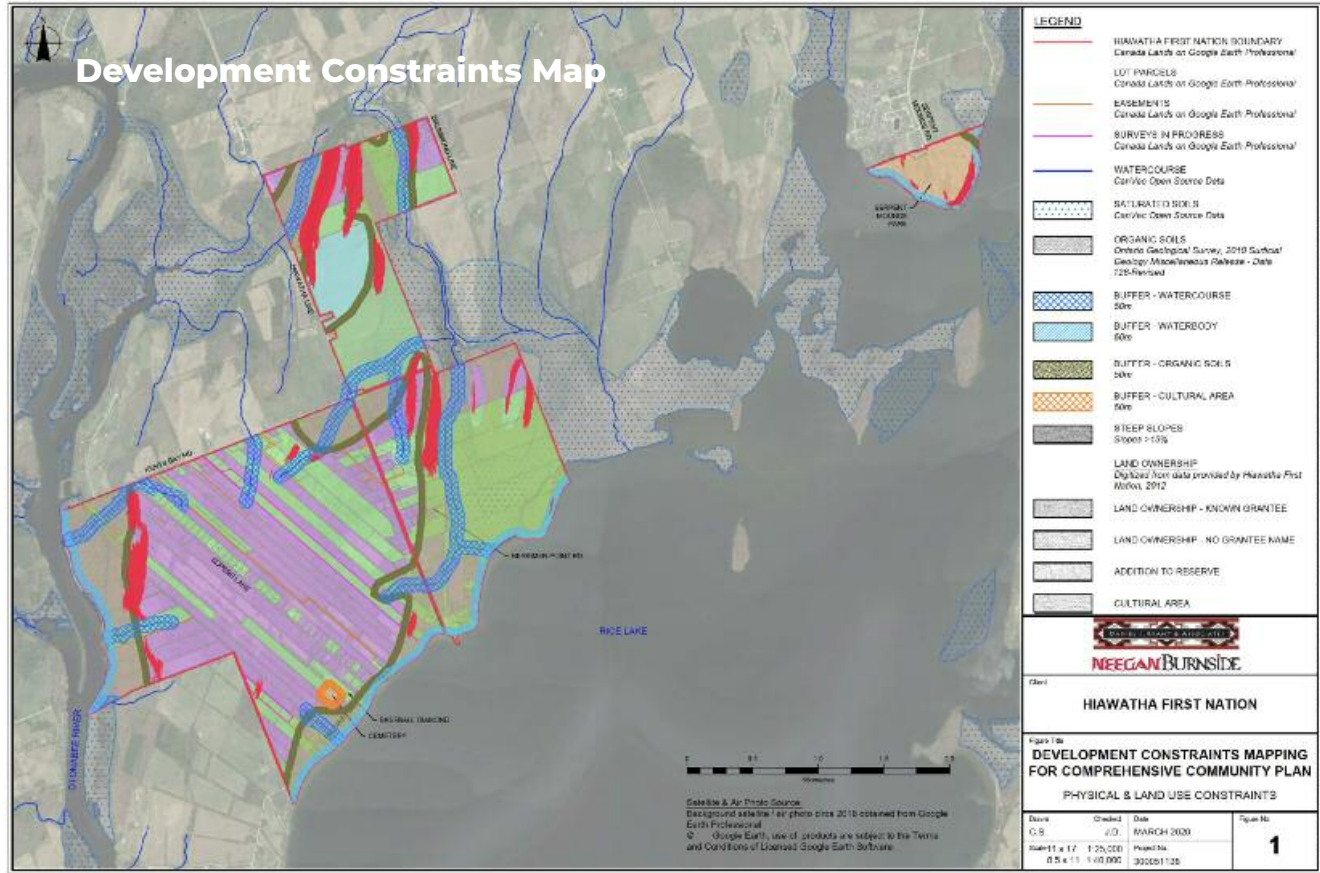
The illustration at right outlines the borders of the current land base as well as indicating the location of the Serpent Mounds area.

To supplement the general boundaries map, the engineering firm of Neegan Burnside was retained to develop two maps, the first being a development constraints map (*see next page*) illustrating the areas of the community that have been utilized and another showing which areas could be developed.

This map reveals that opportunities for new development are extremely limited, as much of the unused area is either very low land or swamp, which is therefore not suitable for any type of development.







## Development Maps

The Development Constraints map (above) illustrates a number of important features: most importantly, where the land is restricted from any type of easy development. The cross-hatched areas (shown in blue) show where a watercourse is located and the blue-dotted areas indicate saturated soil. Both these areas indicate environmentally sensitive areas. Culturally sensitive areas are shown in orange, and of special note is nearly the entire area of the Serpent Mounds. Purple areas indicate land under survey and the deep red areas represent sloped areas.

The second map (opposite page) illustrates where potential development could take place. There are two significant items for special consideration shown on this map. First, the infill lots (bright yellow) could be

residential lots, primarily along Soper's Lane (see photo far right). The light green areas could be utilized for development but have not to date been designated for such use.

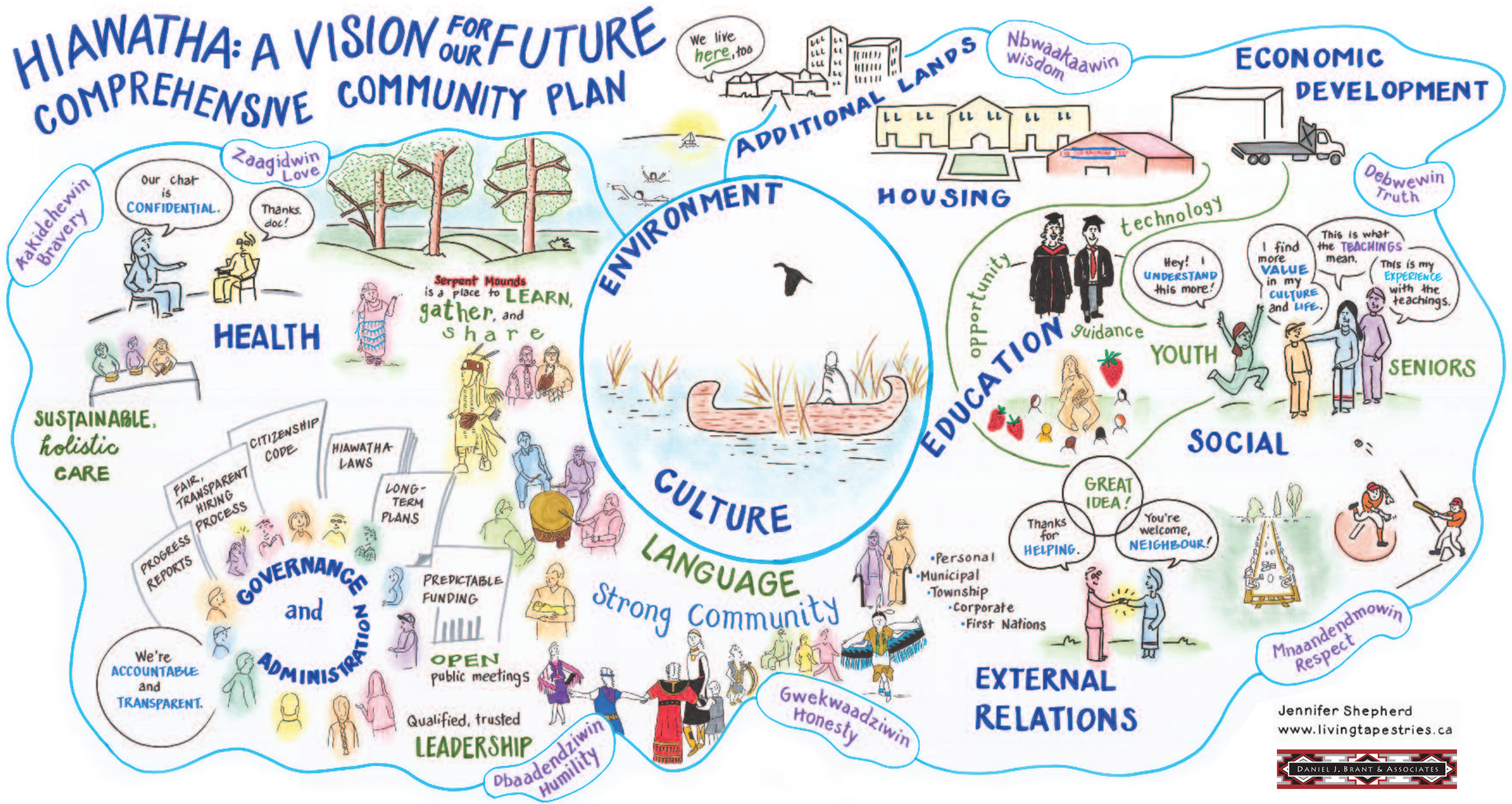
Large-format versions of the same maps can be seen in the Administration Office and are helpful in providing a more detailed view of these areas.



Map Source (both):  
Neegan Burnside, First Nations Management

# The Community View

This illustration represents a pictorial map of what was reported during the interviews and discussions with families and Citizens of Hiawatha. The importance of culture is central and the values of the Seven Grandfathers surrounding the community and connected by lifelines are significant. This illustration was constructed at Hiawatha with input from youth reps. The different elements are connected through paths which speak to the relationships of how the community sees itself.



Jennifer Shepherd  
www.livingtapestries.ca



# One Vision

Joining together to share their hopes, dreams and aspirations, the people of Hiawatha came up with a clear and focused vision

## CORE COMMUNITY FOCUS

HIAWATHA CITIZENS KNOW IN THEIR VERY BEING THAT THEIR MICHİ Sauggi identity influences who they are and how they view themselves within the world. Their identity informs them and empowers them. They hold strong to their identity while being very proud to be planning the future of Hiawatha together with other Citizens of their Nation.

Hiawatha Citizens want their Michi Sauggi culture, language and identity to form the basis of their lives and their community, holding fast to the Seven Grandfathers' teachings. They have expressed that culture and identity need to be at the very core of everything they do.

Therefore, while the CCP has been divided into ten areas of focus, it is important to remember two things: first, that the most important areas of focus are Culture and Language; second, that no other area of focus can be considered separately from Culture and Language.

The other areas of the CPP's focus are Land, Community, Housing, Education, Health, Governance, Administration, External Relations and Economic Development. Each of these must be considered through the lens of Culture and Language.

What follows are the expressed thoughts and wills of the Citizens of Hiawatha First Nation. These principles are outlined in detail on the following pages.



**HIAWATHA'S VISION: TEN GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

**1**  
**Culture and Language**

The Michi Sauggi teachings, as an essential part of the community, influences every decision made by Council, how Citizens conduct themselves, the values placed on the lives of Citizens, relationships and our role in the world.

**2**  
**Land**

Hiawatha First Nation will have enough land for its Citizens to live at home – a safe space to practice traditions and ceremonies on their traditional territories. The land continues to serve us well; its use is community-focused.

**3**  
**Community**

We are a respected, friendly, neighbourly and safe community: A good place for our families to grow up, and a place that looks after every part of our community.

**4**  
**Housing**

Every Hiawatha Citizen has the opportunity to live on the territory. Our seniors are able to travel their whole life journey in the community with dignity and comfort.

**5**  
**Education**

Hiawatha encourages all of our young people towards a bright, well-educated future, strengthened by our Anishinaabeg teachings.

**6**  
**Health**

Hiawatha First Nation is a healthy community with bodies and minds that serve us well, and are well cared for by Hiawatha services.

**7**  
**Governance**

Hiawatha First Nation asserts its sovereignty through the legislation and enforcement of our own laws. Our leaders are strong, transparent and accountable, developed from a young age. They can depend on predictable funding and investments that are aligned with our Anishinaabeg values.

**8**  
**Administration**

Our Administration is a highly competent, qualified, effective, efficient and motivated organization, accountable to results laid out in clear strategic and operational planning.

**9**  
**External Relations**

Hiawatha First Nation has positive relationships with surrounding communities and sister First Nations, leading environmental protection in our neighbouring communities.

**10**  
**Economic Development**

Hiawatha First Nation has a vibrant and diversified economy with many Hiawatha-owned businesses.



**1**  
**Culture and Language**

OUR VISION OF

**Culture and Language**

MICHI SAUGGI CULTURE WILL BE AN ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTIC OF the community. In every aspect of the decisions made by Council – in the way our Citizens conduct themselves, in the values we place on our lives; in our relationships with each other and with the world – our vision is to first consider the teachings of our Michi Sauggi culture.

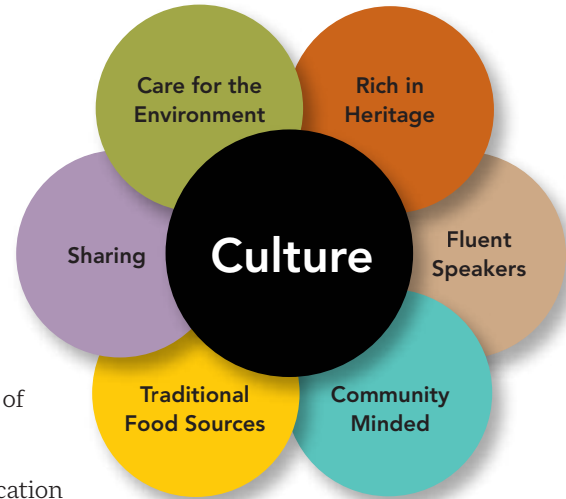
We will be fluent in Anishinaabemowin. We will speak with each other and with our children in our language of Anishinaabemowin.

We will practice our traditions. Our traditions will be a part of our everyday life. Every Citizen of our community will play a role in maintaining our culture, learning what other communities can share and passing it on to the next generation.

We will be stewards of the land. Through our knowledge of traditional practices, we will be respected as experts in conserving and protecting the environment — the air, the animals, the birds, the waters, the fish, the lands, the forests — and in our interactions with the environment. Others will look to us for guidance.

**Our Culture and Language Goals**

- 1) An enriched culture
- 2) A strong sense of heritage
- 3) Cultural and Language learning opportunities for all those who want to learn
- 4) To honour and champion those who continue Michi Sauggi traditions, particularly those who speak Anishinaabemowin
- 5) To have many more fluent speakers of our language of Anishinaabemowin across all age categories
- 6) Culture and Language are part of our children’s education system, in a way that complements the rest of their education
- 7) To be community-minded and have reinvigorated cultural practices including basket-making, clothing- and regalia-making, and traditional ceremonies
- 8) To have reinvigorated food procurement practices including sugar-bushing, hunting, fishing, rice growing, gardening and trapping, with conservation and our traditional values in mind
- 9) A daily diet which includes traditional food sources
- 10) To have surrounding communities look to Hiawatha Citizens for advice on how to best care for the environment
- 11) Ensure that our environment is clean, protected and cared for by ourselves and our neighbours. We want the environment and the Earth to be better off because of Hiawatha’s involvement
- 12) Collaboration with our sister communities on many issues



OUR VISION OF  
**Our Lands**

OUR VISION IS THAT HIAWATHA FIRST NATION HAS MORE LANDS. There is room for all of us to live and practice our traditions on Hiawatha lands.

Every Hiawatha Citizen who wants to live on territory is able to do so. There is space for us here. Our land serves us well. We have reliable drinking water. We have space for our traditional practices and food sources.

We have community-focused land that makes Hiawatha a safe space.

Serpent Mounds is honoured and serves a purpose. It is a site for ceremony, education and recreation, enjoyed by Hiawatha Citizens and visitors alike and shared with our sister Michi Sauggi communities.

## Our Land Goals

- 1) More land is available for Hiawatha Citizens to build homes on the reserve or on lands adjacent to the territory
- 2) More land is accessible to Hiawatha Citizens for gatherings, harvesting and traditional practices in remote traditional lands. These lands belong to Hiawatha First Nation
- 3) The land helps to nurture our community and foster our culture
- 4) The community is a safe place to enjoy, with walking trails, waterfront access for the community, sidewalks and community gathering spaces
- 5) Gathering spaces allow for us to host community-wide events
- 6) We have a reliable source of drinking water
- 7) Serpent Mounds is honoured as a protected ceremony site. Serpent Mounds is also an attraction for people, businesses, groups and associations for hosting activities and events and where one can learn about the history of Hiawatha and the Michi Sauggi culture



## OUR VISION OF Community

HIAWATHA FIRST NATION IS A CLOSELY-KNIT COMMUNITY. Our current location is our territory, part of protecting our identity as a Michi Sauggi community. We are proud of our community; our families respect each other; we know our neighbours; we celebrate and have fun together.

Hiawatha First Nation is a safe community. We look after ourselves and each other; visitors respect the rules. Our police work with us to maintain a safe community.

Our community is proud and respected. We take an interest in our personal and community property. Our Citizens are well-respected in neighbouring communities.

## We See to the Needs of Every Age Group

- **Hiawatha Youth are championed.** We invest in our young people’s activities. We provide opportunities for them, take care of them, and provide services for our troubled youth. Our youth are proud to be Anishinaabe
- **Our children can grow up according to Our Ways.** They are cared for in a culturally appropriate way. We work with Child and Family Services to ensure this. We also work with our parents to make sure they have the supports they need to raise their children in a healthy environment
- **Our adults have possibilities for work, learning and enjoyment at Hiawatha.** There are spaces and programs available for our adults to enjoy a healthy lifestyle in the comfort of their community
- **Our seniors are honoured.** They are sources of cultural knowledge and part of our learning. They are guides for our youth and have a special place in the fabric of our community



## Our Community Goals

- 1) Hiawatha First Nation’s programming brings people together, joining in harmony different factions of the community
- 2) Hiawatha First Nation is a safe community for our children. We work closely with public safety officials and other relevant authorities
- 3) Hiawatha First Nation works closely with Child and Family Services to support both children and parents and to ensure our Citizens are protected in the Anishinaabe way
- 4) Youth programming gives them confidence in themselves and in their Michi Sauggi identity, providing support when they need it and helping them find their true path
- 5) Hiawatha adults have better job opportunities, recreational options and supports
- 6) We learn from our seniors by incorporating them into the programming for all other age groups
- 7) We de-stigmatize mental health and intergenerational trauma, encouraging and aiding all Citizens on their healing journey



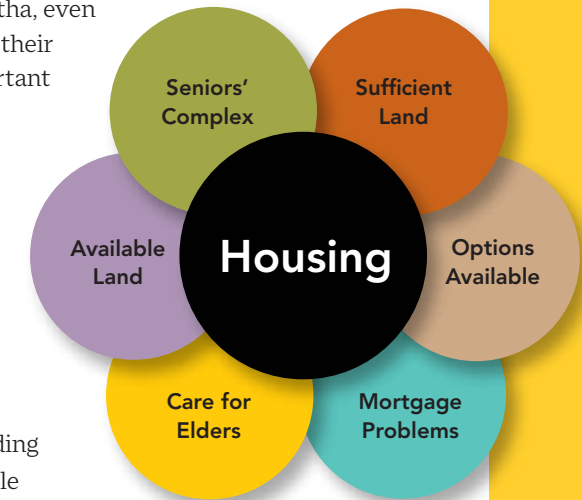
## THE VISION FOR Housing

EVERY HIAWATHA CITIZEN HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE ON OUR territory. It is very important as our children grow up and as family members retire from careers elsewhere that these Citizens have the opportunity to return to live at Hiawatha if they want to.

It is important to us that every Citizen has the opportunity to live at Hiawatha, even if they cannot afford to build their own home. Our seniors are able to travel their whole life journey in the community with dignity and in comfort. It is important that housing options exist for our aging Citizens and that these options are sustainable for both the community and for participating Citizens.

## Our Housing Goals

- 1) More space for housing
- 2) Diversified housing options for different levels of income and need, including subsidized housing, rentals and home ownership options
- 3) Options for our Elders as they require care outside the home, including a Seniors’ Complex that is both affordable and financially sustainable





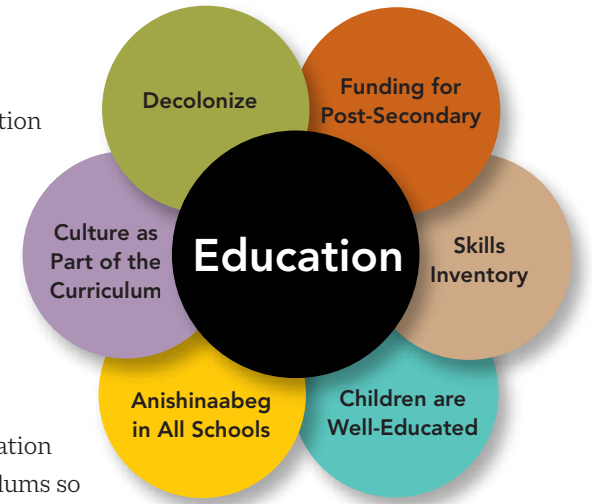
OUR VISION FOR  
**Education**

HIAWATHA FIRST NATION CHILDREN SEE A BRIGHT FUTURE AHEAD for themselves. We help to guide them towards employment opportunities at home and in line with their interests.

We are well-educated. There are no limits to what our children can achieve. We provide for their post-secondary education. Educated Citizens mean that we have a diversity of human resources in our community that provides for our needs across most trades and professions. Anishinaabeg teachings are integrated into our learning. There is no segregation from non-Indigenous children. Our Michi Sauggi education complements the whole of our education.

**Our Education Goals**

- 1) Hiawatha First Nation provides funding for post-secondary education for its Citizens
- 2) We are able to hire Citizens for most of our professional and trade needs. We help keep track of the skills of our Citizens
- 3) Our Child Care Centre is at the forefront of early childhood education
- 4) Our children are well-educated Citizens of our Nation
- 5) Agreements with nearby schools at every level result in the integration of Anishinaabeg culture and Anishinaabemowin into their curriculums so that children are not excluded or segregated in order to learn about their Anishinaabeg culture at school
- 6) Our seniors participate in the education of our children







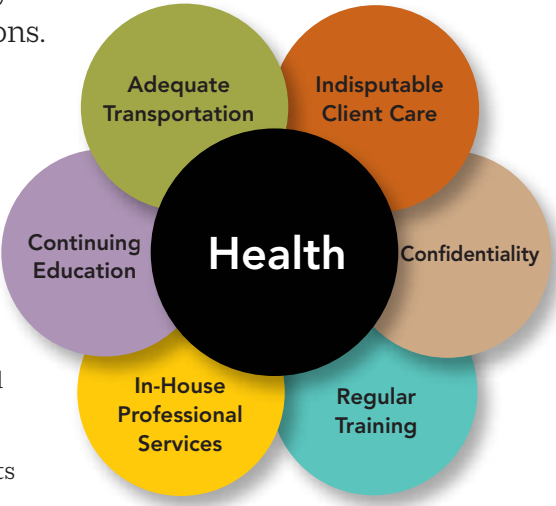
OUR VISION FOR  
**Health**

HIAWATHA FIRST NATION HAS A HEALTHY COMMUNITY. Our physical bodies serve us and our community well and are free from diabetes and avoidable afflictions.

Our services are professional and confidential. They are accessible to all of the Citizens who require them and those who need them are pleased with the services available.

**Our Health Goals**

- 1) Our health outcomes are constantly improving
- 2) Hiawatha First Nation has top-quality health care and health education
- 3) Type 2 diabetes and other preventable health ailments are eliminated
- 4) Our L.I.F.E. Center and health care providers are staffed with professionals who maintain confidentiality and are held accountable for the quality of their services



OUR VISION FOR  
**Governance**

HIAWATHA FIRST NATION ASSERTS ITS SOVEREIGNTY. We are an internally and externally self-governing nation. We have our own laws and we enforce them. Wherever possible, we have opted out of the Indian Act to create our own laws, including Citizenship and Electoral Codes.

Hiawatha is led by strong leaders. We trust our elected leadership because they are qualified and work with competent advisors. Our leaders are transparent and accountable. They communicate regularly with Citizens. Council meetings are public and open; decisions that have an impact on our community are decided with the involvement of Citizens.

Our electoral terms serve our needs. Our elected officials have time to reach their objectives. Elections are staggered and favour participation and consensus.

We invest in our future leaders. Hiawatha's Youth Council helps to provide input from our young Citizens and helps develop the leadership for tomorrow.

Funding is predictable and allows for planning. Hiawatha has sustainable own-source revenue streams which can provide for our programming.

Our investments are aligned with our Anishinaabeg values. We are socially responsible in our investment strategies and conscious of their impact on the Earth.

**Our Governance Goals:**

- 1) Hiawatha First Nation asserts its rights, defending them and protecting them
- 2) Hiawatha First Nation has its own set of laws and has taken control of its own future
- 3) Hiawatha First Nation enforces its own laws as part of the assertion of its sovereignty
- 4) Elected leadership benefits from four-year terms so that objectives can be met
- 5) We hold our elected leadership accountable for producing results based on our stated objectives
- 6) Elected leaders are transparent and accountable and communicate regularly with Citizens on their progress
- 7) Council meetings are open to Citizens
- 8) Council regularly consults Citizens on decisions that are of the public's interest and that impact Citizens significantly
- 9) Our Nation has a Youth Council that meets regularly and helps to make decisions along with the Chief and Council
- 10) Hiawatha First Nation has predictable funding that allows for long-term planning
- 11) Hiawatha First Nation has own-source revenues that provide for our program funding
- 12) Hiawatha First Nation invests its assets in socially responsible investment products that align with our Anishinaabe values



OUR VISION FOR  
**Administration**

OUR ADMINISTRATION IS A HIGHLY COMPETENT, QUALIFIED, EFFECTIVE, efficient and motivated organization. We hire the best qualified candidates to work for and manage the Administration of our community services.

The human resources of our Citizens are recognized. We ensure that there are opportunities for the next generation of our Citizens to work at Hiawatha.

Our Administration has clear strategic and operational planning and is held accountable for achieving best results in a transparent manner.

Our Administration is ready and able to make the Comprehensive Community Plan a reality!



**Our Administration Goals**

- 1) Hiawatha First Nation has a fair and transparent hiring process
- 2) Administration staff and management are qualified, competent, effective, efficient and motivated
- 3) The capacity and skills of our Citizens are tracked and recognized
- 4) Our Administration has regular strategic planning sessions and clear visioning sessions
- 5) The Administration reports on the implementation of their strategic plan and vision, as well as on the implementation of these plans
- 6) The Administration aggressively implements the Comprehensive Community Plan





OUR VISION FOR  
**External Relations**

HIAWATHA FIRST NATION HAS POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS with surrounding communities and sister First Nations. We have built strong relationships with municipalities, townships and neighbouring Indigenous communities, fostering partnerships and opportunities for our Citizens.

We are leading environmental protection with our neighbouring communities. Our influence and positive relationships prevent our neighbours from polluting our land and waters.

**Our External Relations Goals**

- 1) We regularly work with neighbouring communities to identify risks and opportunities to achieve better outcomes through partnership
- 2) Relationships with our Michi Sauggi sister nations are positive and healthy
- 3) We protect the waters, the land, the air and the animals. This comes through in our partnerships with neighbours as much as in our own internal decision-making



OUR VISION FOR  
**Economic Development**

HIAWATHA FIRST NATION HAS A VIBRANT AND DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY with many Hiawatha-owned businesses. We invest in creating work for our Citizens, both on and off the reserve. Our on-reserve economy allows for monies earned to be spent here, too! Hiawatha has a strong Eco-tourism industry.

Our own-source revenue ventures align with our Anishinaabeg values. We are part of making the world a better place.

**Our Economic Development Goals**

- 1) Hiawatha First Nation has developed businesses both on and off the territory, creating work opportunities for our Citizens
- 2) Hiawatha has aligned its own-source revenue streams with Anishinaabeg values
- 3) Monies earned by Hiawatha Citizens can be spent in multiple ways on the territory and at Hiawatha-owned businesses. “Economic leakage” has been significantly reduced on the territory
- 4) Hiawatha First Nation has promoted and developed an at-home Eco-tourism industry
- 5) Citizens have supports available to develop their own economic ventures



Both short- and long-term planning  
is required to reach our goals.  
This is the road to the future

# Action Plans



## TURNING VISION INTO REALITY

FOR EACH OF THE AREAS THAT HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED IN THE VISION section, and through discussion during family conversations, the Action Items necessary to bring the vision to reality became an essential part of the plan. While detailed and comprehensive plans were developed, the actions necessary to turn the vision to reality came from the Citizens themselves. The plans as described cover time frames from immediate to long term, being 20-50 years. While Culture and Language was a central concern woven through almost all discussions, the remaining items do not reflect any rank of priority assigned by the families or Citizens of Hiawatha.

This section of the Report provides an indication of what the Citizens feel needs to take place in terms of actions in order for more detailed work plans that will see concrete activities. During the creation of this CCP some plans had already started to be implemented, such as the development of a new Administration complex, which is being constructed behind the L.I.F.E. Centre.

Some of the actions will necessitate further detailed study and will require considerably more Citizen involvement.

Some areas, such as the revitalization of Serpent Mounds, could have a far-reaching impact and serve to support the ideals of reconciliation.



## ACTION ITEM SUMMARY

### 1 Culture and Language

Culture and Language was a central concern and theme; suggestions were given as to what needed to be addressed to revitalize the culture: from language classes and education agreements, to bricks and mortar in developing a new cultural centre.

### 2 Land

Hiawatha needs more land. To most Citizens, it is seen as 'home', whether they are currently living at Hiawatha or not. As such, considerable work needs to be done which will include not only Citizens but relations with surrounding communities.

### 3 Community

Create, improve and diversify programs, honour Hiawatha Citizens, and improve communications. Address seniors' and youth concerns.

### 4 Housing

Additional land can be utilized to provide homes for Citizens who want to live at Hiawatha. Plan for additional seniors' homes, taking into account all levels of affordability.

### 5 Education

Revise early childhood education practices, negotiate with local school boards for curriculum changes, for adequate funds for post-secondary and also to support lifelong learning potential.

### 6 Health

Confidentiality of health services, provision of health care in the community and health education that will improve the overall health condition of the Citizens.

### 7 Governance

Working with neighbouring communities, developing internal codes and laws and furthering the transparency of Council are elements that Citizens feel should be embraced.

### 8 Administration

Longer-term strategic planning, a handbook of services, transparent hiring processes, and a database of student academic accomplishments are all items that could be addressed in the administration of services to the Hiawatha Citizens.

### 9 External Relations

Set examples for environmental standards that could be used by neighbours; implement strong diplomatic measures with surrounding communities.

### 10 Economic Development

Encourage new businesses, acquire more land and identify investment both on and off territory.

### Culture and Language



## Culture and Language

CULTURE AND LANGUAGE ARE WHAT MAKE HIAWATHA A VIBRANT, PROUD and independent Indigenous community. The importance is not lost on any of its Citizens and the desire to maintain, revitalize, and nurture Michi Sauggi culture and language is deeply embedded. Hiawatha Citizens fiercely embrace their community values and want to protect their unique position within the Mississaugi Nation.

- 1) Build a Cultural Centre that will host regular activities and learning experiences related to language, ceremony, traditional teachings and culture
- 2) Organize more regular cultural programming through existing venues such as the L.I.F.E. Centre, schools and community groups
- 3) Provide free Anishinaabemowin classes to all sectors and age groups of our community. Offer these classes at different times, with different themes and locations (including online)



- 4) Ensure the education service agreements with local school boards help us achieve our vision in such a way that it complements our young peoples' education
- 5) Protect and promote traditional practices through education, cultural events and by supporting those who practice them. These practices include – but are not limited to – maple syrup production, hunting, fishing, rice growing, trapping, drumming, basket-weaving, clothing- and regalia-making, traditional gardening and food conservation
- 6) Host cultural events at Serpent Mounds together with sister communities. Highlight the importance of sharing sacred space at Serpent Mounds, remembering our common history and honouring our ancestors
- 7) Invite our sister Michi Sauggi communities to our events
- 8) Hold shared Council meetings with sister Michi Sauggi community councils and identify opportunities for partnerships with them
- 9) Create a community skills list that will survey and identify those who practice traditional skills and speak Anishinaabemowin, and match them to existing and evolving needs, working with our sister nations as we grow our knowledge base

Those who know their traditions and to practice their ceremonies must be recognized, supported and encouraged to practice these at home and share their knowledge with Hiawatha Citizens. There are Citizens who have this knowledge and whose resources are not being utilized. As culture and language are further learned and shared organically, the need for community-led action will have translated into individual and family-led initiatives that are passed on more traditionally. Michi Sauggi culture must influence how individuals make decisions at home and in their personal lives.

The promotion of traditional cultural practices and Anishinaabemowin involves identifying those who are qualified to teach participants, organizing and funding the courses and identifying how best to reach potential participants. Relationships with sister Michi Sauggi communities can grow incrementally over the years, and evolve as the political, social and cultural climate changes.

The most impactful way of implementing Culture and Language objectives is to make them the central focus of every decision at Hiawatha.



## Land

THE TIES TO THE LAND IS A CHARACTERISTIC THAT SEPARATES THE worldview of Indigenous people from the mainstream Canadian identity and thus adds to the uniqueness of the Michi Sauggi of Hiawatha. These ties appear inseparable and inform the actions our Citizens embrace.

- 1) Undertake a comprehensive plan to allow Hiawatha Citizens to live on territory and make more land available for gatherings, traditional practices and business. This plan would include:
  - a. Evaluating demand for on-reserve housing and how Hiawatha Citizens want to live there
  - b. Evaluate the space needs for cultural and community events
  - c. Identify and acquire land that is contiguous to the existing Hiawatha community and in proximity that allows for traditional practices and community gatherings as well as for business development

- 2) Make accessing our land safer and easier by investing in trails and sidewalks, amongst other practical amenities
- 3) Research the different possibilities for the reopening of Serpent Mounds, including the operation of provincial parks and cultural and business centres, to gain an understanding of the management and resources required to operate Serpent Mounds in a way that is sustainable and meets the needs of Hiawatha
- 3) Evaluate the different options for ensuring reliable long-term access to drinking water, including exploring options with local municipalities whose water sources feed into Rice Lake, such as the Trent Water System
- 4) Hiawatha First Nation needs to both protect the groundwater levels and explore the options of pumping water in from other municipal water systems. This may include advocating for the construction and anticipated expansion of a water treatment plant that would service the existing community

Land continues to be a resource opportunity that must be flexible according to the changing needs of the community. Many Hiawatha Citizens want to live at home on the territory, close to their families. They want to gather together and practice their traditions. As it is, HFN Territory is far too small to meet all of the demands for space. This is a clear priority for the community and will require specific planning to reach its objectives.

As different objectives are met, the target continues to be a moving one that responds to the next priority. In many ways, the land objectives are related to many of the other planning areas and these areas are all dependent on land objectives being met in a relatively short timeframe.



## Community

HIAWATHA, ALTHOUGH BEING A SMALL COMMUNITY, HAS DEVELOPED definite characteristics of being independent, taking care of itself, being welcoming to others and above all, resolute in their identity. In order to meet their goals, Citizens have identified some actions that could be taken to strengthen their community.

- 1) Create, improve and diversify programs that deal with the following issues:
  - a. Relationship healing through ceremony
  - b. Decolonization
  - c. Mediation services for individuals and families to work on their healing journey, together or alone
  - d. Destigmatization of mental health and intergenerational trauma

- 2) Honour Hiawatha Citizens who do positive things for the community through ceremonies, awards and the sharing of their stories
- 3) Improve communication between departments, Council and Citizens. Make a concerted effort to have regular two-way communication between Hiawatha programs and the community
- 4) Work on communications and marketing around the individual's responsibility for strengthening relationships and working on a healing journey
- 5) Create a program that places seniors in different educational and cultural settings. For example, involve Elders in the child care program, in school and language classes for kids, learning alongside them in classrooms. By creating activities where youth and Elders can mix, mingle and build relationships, room is created for the transfer of knowledge between Elders and youth
- 6) Increase funding and programming for youth, especially in programs that challenge them and encourage leadership
- 7) Create opportunities for youth to be heard, including through the creation of a newsletter published by youth and distributed to the community. Hiawatha youth are resilient and intelligent and ready to lead!
- 8) Create new opportunities for Hiawatha Citizens to gather
- 9) Create jobs and business opportunities
- 10) Make accessing our land safer and easier by investing in trails, sidewalks, cleanliness of public spaces and other measures

Hiawatha Citizens were adamant that Hiawatha First Nation must continue to be Michi Sauggi. They were adamant that they want to build a beautiful future for the youth, and this involves cherishing Elders, working on their own experience of colonialism, and providing a brighter future for their children.



## Housing

A HOUSE ALONE PROVIDES SHELTER, albeit a basic necessity, whereas a home provides not only shelter but security and a warmth emanating from community support. The provision of housing is a responsibility shared between the governing body and the occupant; the options for safe and affordable housing must be available for all Citizens. With every new generation, the need for housing grows and with it the demand for more developable space. Actions required were identified as:

- 1) Identify additional lands suitable to home building
- 2) Evaluate/quantify the demand among Hiawatha Citizens to live on territory and their housing requirements (rental, subsidized, home ownership)
- 3) Continue the development of plans for a seniors' living complex for Citizens and their loved ones
- 4) Plan housing options for all levels of affordability: subsidized housing, rental units and home ownership/owner-built land use, and mortgage options for Citizens

Although Hiawatha Citizens are well-housed, many Citizens spoke of wanting to live at Hiawatha, to be with extended families, contribute to the community and continue to live at Hiawatha into their golden years. Purchasing land and developing it takes many years. However, this can be achieved through negotiations and persistent communications with both neighbours and different levels of government.





## Education

LEARNING AND HAVING A SOUND EDUCATION HAS IN PAST YEARS generally been articulated as having only one path; but that is a pedantic western approach. The vision of Hiawatha with respect to education includes Anishinaabeg teachings and also utilizing those who pursue higher education to contribute back to their community. This starts at the earliest stages possible and continues to include seniors. Actions identified to achieve this vision are:

- 1) Research and revise early childhood education in the Hiawatha Early Years program in accordance with most recent best practices

- 2) Negotiate with local school boards to develop curriculums that meet the objectives of Hiawatha First Nation:
  - a. Better integrate Anishinaabeg culture and Anishinaabemowin into the schools' curriculum for all students
  - b. Improve extra-curricular activities related to Anishinaabeg culture
  - c. Develop programs in collaboration with schools and universities
  - d. Involve seniors in the education of our children
  - e. Develop metrics to track the progress of our Citizens' cultural and language education
  - f. Regularly review and amend service agreements with local educational institutions
- 3) Ensure that funds are properly set aside for post-secondary education for Hiawatha Citizens, such that those who wish to study can be provided for
- 4) Promote the decolonization of Hiawatha Citizens at all ages, through the lifelong learning of Anishinaabeg paradigms, cultural practices and Anishinaabemowin

Hiawatha has the opportunity to demand its desired outcomes for education from the local school boards and educational institutions. Where these are not providing adequate curriculums, they must be revisited. Hiawatha's cultural education is a right, not a privilege, and an obligation that many schools are failing to acknowledge. Special circumstances will be required to ensure that Anishinaabemowin and Anishinaabeg teachings are made available to Hiawatha students alongside non-Indigenous students.

Hiawatha Citizens were adamant that lifelong learning opportunities are important to them and that they value education. This is consistent with Hiawatha's history: education values run deep in Hiawatha veins. It is important to Hiawatha Citizens that they can provide for post-secondary education opportunities, especially for their youth.





## Health

PERSONAL HEALTH AND THE HEALTH OF A COMMUNITY ARE SYNONYMOUS. Having adequate health care is fundamentally important; the benefits of an effective health delivery system cannot be underestimated. Health includes knowledge and understanding of relational things like food, good water and clean air, along with medical and mental health services. Citizens' thoughts on achieving these are:

- 1) Develop and enforce strict policies relative to patient care and confidentiality, which must be maintained and strictly enforced
- 2) Provide regular and stringent training on confidentiality protocols
- 3) Expand services at the L.I.F.E. Centre to include a regular physician, a nurse and the provision of mental health services at Hiawatha. Funding must be made available to attract the required staff

- 4) Improve transportation to specialist medical services off-territory
- 5) Implement new strategies to prioritize and promote health education for all Hiawatha Citizens. Total health and wellness is achievable through promotion of and education on food sources, exercise and physical activities that help to reduce the rate of diabetes in the community
- 6) Develop a comprehensive strategy to lower Hiawatha's Type 2 diabetes rates, with ambitious and serious (measurable) goals for eliminating the disease

Hiawatha's future depends in large part on the health of its Citizens. Issues with health and well-being are but symptoms that other areas of life may be out of balance. For example, research has shown that intergenerational trauma is correlated with Type 2 diabetes and other chronic illnesses. By helping to address the root causes and providing good health education, Hiawatha Citizens can eradicate diabetes from their lives.





## Governance

GOOD GOVERNANCE IS SOMETHING THAT IS OFTEN TAKEN FOR GRANTED, but in reality, good governance is a product of well-considered policies, leadership and commitment. Hiawatha Citizens expressed a desire for Council to make laws and take control of the future. The Chief and Council are seen as the governing body, with no question as to their authority or responsibilities.

- 1) Work with neighbouring First Nations and other communities to improve the lines of communications, educating them on our rights and keeping “our rights” front-of-mind
- 2) Identify when outside laws are applied that Hiawatha could develop internally, and plan to legislate in these areas
- 3) Develop an internal Hiawatha policy ensuring that Hiawatha is properly consulted by neighbouring communities prior to their making decisions that have an impact on the First Nation (and share this policy also with neighbouring townships and municipalities).

- 4) Develop a Hiawatha Election Code to allow for staggered elections with half of Council elected every two years, and for longer terms
  - a. As part of the electoral reform, implement a Youth Council and involve them in the elected Council’s decision-making process
- 5) Align Hiawatha’s investments with Anishinaabe values
- 6) Develop and enforce Hiawatha legislation, enacting specific legislative sovereignty towards self-government
- 7) Develop a Hiawatha Citizenship Code to guide future generations at Hiawatha
- 8) Develop the technological infrastructure to render Council meetings accessible to Citizenship through live-streamed meetings

Hiawatha Citizens were adamant that Hiawatha government can, and must, take a leadership position in asserting their sovereignty. Hiawatha’s government has an opportunity to influence the communities around them and the future of the Nation’s governance systems through the steps it takes. This starts with internal legislation and enforcement of these laws and policies at home. Developing these laws takes time and presents an opportunity for Hiawatha to take control of and create the future it wants for the community. Internal laws and governing documents are very useful tools for making this CCP vision a reality.

Meanwhile, rendering Council meetings easily accessible to all Hiawatha Citizens develops trust and accountability and creates cohesion amongst the community. It has been said that change happens at the speed of trust; building this transparency and accountability into the daily and weekly operations of the governance will build an even stronger community.

Some of these foundational and powerful laws can be developed in the next few years, and should be strived for in the first five years. This will provide a strong framework on which to implement the whole of the CCP. Reaching out to sister nations and allied nations can further help to develop these laws in ways that can benefit from other communities’ experiences.



## Administration

A STRONG AND WELL-ORGANIZED ADMINISTRATIVE BODY supporting the governance objectives is vital and key to serving a community well. Having well-informed and educated personnel providing a public service is instrumental to having a solid support system for the community.

- 1) Develop and promote the strategic planning culture in the organization, reviewing the Plan every two to three years
- 2) Develop work plans annually for every employee, in line with executing the strategic plans
- 3) Report to the community bi-annually on the progress of the work plans and strategic plans
- 4) Create an annual handbook of services available at Hiawatha and distribute it to Citizens each year. Maintain an electronic version of this handbook on the website and update it to reflect changes in services and/or staff. Include details on the frequency of services and contact information

- 5) Promote a transparent hiring process for Hiawatha’s Administration positions by developing a community hiring board that involves Citizens
- 6) Develop a Human Resources succession planning guide to meet future hiring needs as the organization grows, evolves and responds to employee retirement. Alert Hiawatha Citizens to the future needs of the Administration to allow for educational planning as well as succession planning.
- 7) Live-stream presentations of the annual report and provide an opportunity for questions and Citizen feedback
- 8) Create opportunities for Citizens to provide input on the annual report and strategic direction for the following year
- 9) Develop a database of students whose post-secondary education has been funded by Hiawatha and keep track of their completed degrees, so as to attract and look out for future employees from among qualified Citizens.

Hiawatha Citizens were clear that they want more transparency and accountability from their Administration. This can be achieved through more frequent and varied communications. For example, regularly live-streaming events and announcements, posting reports using Hiawatha’ communications channels, etc.

The services offered through the Administration office and their availability remain in part a blind spot for Hiawatha Citizens. Citizens benefit from increased planning – both strategic planning and the related work plans – and then seeing the results from that planning coming to fruition. Increasing the frequency of communications throughout the year will raise the level of confidence the community has in the abilities of its Administration.

The Administration is regarded as a good place to work. Citizens want the opportunity to work for the Administration and to have it provide future work for Youth as they complete their post-secondary education. Developing a Human Resources succession planning guide will help the Administration plan for needs five to ten years into the future and will help Citizens plan for the possibility of work within these areas. Furthermore, to help increase trust, the Administration can work with Citizens to ensure an impartial hiring process that reflects both reality and the community’s perception. The Administration works hard to deliver quality services and deserves to be perceived accordingly.



## External Relations

HIAWATHA HAS ALWAYS HAD GOOD RELATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBOURS and there is every intention of maintaining those friendships. Many of the actions cited have indicated some necessity of dealing with neighbours, with the two highest priorities being education and environment.

- 1) Develop gold-standard environmental policies aligned with Anishinaabeg values
- 2) Promote the application of these policies to help develop shared environmental values in surrounding municipalities and other First Nations
- 3) Implement strong diplomatic measures and cultivate positive relationships with surrounding municipalities and townships
- 4) Identify opportunities for shared partnerships with surrounding municipalities with a view to enacting other objectives of this Comprehensive Community Plan

Hiawatha has an opportunity to take a regional role in protecting the region's environment now and into the future. The strength of relationships with other municipalities and townships in the region will influence the ability to implement this Comprehensive Community Plan and to reach the objectives that Hiawatha Citizens have set out. As such, these relationships are important to protecting Hiawatha's culture and language, as well as the lands, waters, air and animals in the region. They will also have an influence on our ability to purchase lands close to the territory. Hiawatha Citizens have expressed their priority for protecting these values and Hiawatha's decisions and external relations must reflect these priorities.





## Economic Development

HIAWATHA HAS EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO MOVE TOWARDS SELF-sufficiency and in order to do so, a solid economic base must be established. Citizens also need support to create and operate businesses. Michi Sauggi principles and values are to be held in the forefront of any business operation in Hiawatha. Citizens felt this could be accomplished by:

- 1) Providing encouraging support for new business development by Hiawatha members, including start-up loans, marketing approaches and entrepreneurial training opportunities
- 2) Identifying investment opportunities both on and off territory for Hiawatha to expand its own-source revenues, in line with Anishinaabe values
- 3) Acquiring lands close to as well as away from the territory to enable Hiawatha investment opportunities that create jobs and provide income for the First Nation

- 4) Managing Hiawatha businesses at arms-length, with profit-oriented objectives
- 5) Encouraging small- and medium-size business development through opportunities for land rental, conditional on the development and implementation of those business plans
- 6) Setting guidelines and policies for the development of an Eco-tourism industry, promoting training for guides and outfitters and reviving the use of traditional knowledge for enterprise at Hiawatha and on Hiawatha-owned lands

Hiawatha has the ability as a local government body to promote business development through the use of policy tools. Investments can be used to develop work opportunities for Citizens. Own-source revenues can align with Anishinaabe values while allowing Hiawatha to grow independently from government sources of funding – without abandoning this funding. The idea of an office building or industrial complex with office space for Hiawatha businesses was suggested a number of times, as were industrial neighbourhoods and apartment buildings and corporations that could provide employment opportunities for qualified Hiawatha Citizens.

Using acquired lands for Hiawatha-owned businesses or Hiawatha Citizen-owned businesses helps to promote Hiawatha Citizens and their enterprises. Additional policies to support the development of home-owned businesses are also ways to promote Hiawatha Citizens and further support them. These policies can be low-cost but provide fruitful returns to individual Citizens, providing income and also improving the economy of the whole community, as funds earned by the community can be spent in the community and multiply revenue streams at Hiawatha.

Additional Hiawatha business opportunities lie in returning to Hiawatha traditions, such as through the Eco-tourism industry. This opportunity has the benefit of improving the knowledge of traditional practices and Anishinaabeg values. Hiawatha can develop guidelines and policies encompassing this industry to ensure that it is in line with the values of the community.



## Summary

The Comprehensive Community Plan is the product of a great amount of input from Citizens meeting as families, at kitchen tables, with staff, and through Citizen participation in the identification of priorities and the completion of surveys.

Hiawatha has endured as a community. The harvest of wild rice and a traditional way of life were interrupted by forces not within the community but by ‘progress’ decided by settlers living upstream of the Trent River, which flows into Rice Lake.

Hiawatha is determined to take steps to revitalize the culture that makes this community uniquely Indigenous. This has been established as a priority by the Citizens of Hiawatha and is having a profound effect on programming, policy and education alike.

Hiawatha has its challenges but it has a strong community spirit. This is evident in the many community activities that are organized and held annually. Some, like the Summer Picnic, have roots going back to the late 1800s and continue to this day, while others, like the Seven Grandfathers Gala, are new traditions. These gatherings, old and new, speak to the true heart of the community and this is something that the Citizens of Hiawatha should be proud of. It speaks to a value found in the traditions of the Michi Sauggi people of Hiawatha that will be carried on into the future.

To use a phrase coined at the Seven Grandfathers Gala - *Hiawatha is Hiawasome!!*







