

TRANS CANADA WEST PLANNING DISTRICT

DISTRICT PLAN - RM of ARCHIE “Rural Development and Quality of Life Findings”

WORKSHOP # 1 – April 22, 2006

COMPILED BY: LOMBARD NORTH GROUP (1984) LTD.
505 – 93 LOMBARD AVENUE,
WINNIPEG, MB R3B 3B1
PHONE: (204) 943-3896 FAX: (204) 947-5696

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 Background

The following discussion provides an overview of local planning issues developed by workshop participants in the RM of Archie. Issues examined related to “Rural Development” directions and “Quality of Life” within the municipality. This workshop represents the first of two workshops on Rural Development.

The workshop focus included discussion of issues which may impact the development of strategies to guide rural economic diversification, livestock siting and how participants view their community’s current Quality of Life. Forty- three individuals participated in the first workshop held April 22nd, 2006. This level of participation was especially notable as it represented an estimated 40% of the households in the Rural Municipality of Archie.

These findings will be used as the basis for the second Workshop scheduled for June 14TH at 7 PM in Elkhorn. The objective of the second workshop will be to identify concrete directions and actions to resolve the priority issues identified in Workshop #1 and to assess how these actions might contribute to the development the RM of Archie, the RM of Wallace and Village of Elkhorn into the communities they aspire to become.

1.2 The Process

Rural Development Workshop #1 was divided into two parts. Part One represented an overview the forces shaping the RM of Archie and the possible character of the municipality if current trends continue into the future. This historical overview of socio-economic trends, rural land use and resources provided an introduction to current circumstances. Its purpose was to help participants to reflect upon the

questions **“Where are we today?”** and **Where might we be tomorrow, if we take no steps to influence the direction of our community?”**

Additional information was provided by residents who conducted a current census for Archie for the year 2006. Their informal census indicated the municipality had a probable population of 291 people which represented a population less than our statistical estimate of 367 by 76 people. The District Planning advisors reviewed the process used to complete the informal census and believe this estimate to be more accurate than the previous statistical projection based upon past birth/death and net –migration rates.

The second part of the workshop involved dividing the participants into smaller discussion groups of approximately 10 people. Each discussion group was asked to consider the background information presented and based upon their personal experiences and perspectives on rural development needs, asked to consider the following statement:

The long term health of our rural communities will be a key to sustaining a viable agricultural/food and resource development and diversified District economy. The pace of change within Manitoba and the District’s rural economy is reflected in peoples’ discussions concerning:

- **Managing the impacts of livestock intensification;**
- **Resource development opportunities; and**
- **Improving rural economic opportunities to retain and attract population/ jobs to the District.**

Some of the implications of these concerns as they are expressed in rural Manitoba include:

- 1. Increasing public expectations placed upon the agriculture sector, local councils and senior government authorities to address concerns over the social and environmental issues associated with livestock management;**
- 2. Need to understand how “best agricultural practices” will be specifically applied to local conditions in the Planning District;**
- 3. How best to facilitate resource development**
- 4. How can we, as a group of communities, use our infrastructure assets, opportunities and quality of life to attract immigration and investment; and**
- 5. How can we create agricultural diversification opportunities to stimulate job creation and reverse present trends towards rural de-population.**

Participants were asked to discuss within their groups those considerations they felt to be important in the creation of a rural development strategy and livestock siting guidelines for Archie.

Each participant considered the following issues:

- i) How can Archie develop opportunities to diversify its rural economy?
- ii) How can Archie best manage the location and development of livestock operations; and
- iii) How can Archie improve its quality of life to retain people, attract investment and expand employment opportunities?

In response to these issues participants identified 24 current assets and opportunities they believe give the Municipality a competitive advantage and help Archie diversify the local economy and promote the municipality as a good place to invest. Participants also identified 20 challenges they felt needed to be resolved to stimulate economic development and encourage support for the agriculture sector and entrepreneurial investment within the municipality.

The workshop ran out of time and consequently the Archie participants were unable to decide on how they would fit the findings of the four discussion groups into issue areas or themes which reflected similarities among the various groups' proposals. Instead of a Workshop assigning importance each Discussion Group ranked importance assigned to its own issues.

Discussion Group participants were asked to assess the importance of each idea developed within its group. Importance was established by the cumulative value all participants from each Discussion Group assigned to the ideas they felt strongly about. Each participant was given a budget of \$100 to spend on promoting, for the workshops consideration, the ideas they believe require the greatest attention from the Planning District. Under the rules, each participant could spend no more than \$40, or no less than \$10 on any one item they decided to support. However, just as in the real world each participant found they did not have enough resources to do all things and had to make trade-offs.

2.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Following, we present the workshop findings as defined by the total value assigned by participants from each Discussion Group. Responses are presented in descending order of the importance for each of the questions, as defined by the values assigned by participants, to their discussion group's listing of ideas.

2.1 Community Opportunity and Constraints

Several common elements emerged among the four Discussion Groups' review of opportunities and assets within Archie that would be beneficial in the attraction of economic development. These include availability of land and relatively cheap taxes; good accessibility and connectivity of Municipality to nearby centers, markets, services and the Trans Canada Highway. Two Discussion Groups ranked opportunities differently. One placed most value on community engagement and

support for initiatives. The other placed the emphasis in its allocation of value onto the quality of environment. Several themes were recurrent among all the Discussion Groups although not necessarily within the top three priority rankings among the different groups.

Common ideas about opportunities and assets shared by many of the Discussion Groups included:

- Low taxes
- Quality of potable water
- Accessibility of the Municipality to PTH#1 and other centers
- Low cost of living (ie cheap land, low taxes, low housing costs, low cost products for bio-diesel development).

Unlike the identification of priorities among community opportunities or assets, opinions on challenges and priorities were quite diverse. Views on the importance, nature and priorities assigned to Archie's challenges which would have to be overcome to be successful in diversifying the rural economy. Similar ideas raised regarding the priority challenges included:

- Lack of investment and or fear of outside investment in Archie
- Lack of consensus on the future development direction for the Municipality
- Loss of population and youth
- Lack of employment opportunities

Following are the individual findings and rankings of priorities developed by each working group for Archie's "assets and opportunities" and "challenges". Total values allocated by group participants are included in parentheses.

Part A): Assets and Opportunities

Considering Archie's prospects today, the following represent the Workshop's assessment of assets and/or opportunities viewed as advantages for Archie to diversify its economy and which may provide a possible competitive edge in promoting Archie as a good place to invest and encourage entrepreneurial initiatives in support of economic development. The top three priorities selected by each group are printed in bold type for convenient reference and are so defined because they received the highest allocation of values from participants.

Group 1 Priority Rankings- ASSETS & OPPORTUNITIES

- 1. Availability of land and space (230)**
- 2. Opportunity for recreational facilities/tourism (200)**

3. **Good transportation links, road access to nearby centers in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, Trans Canada Highway (170)**
4. Processing of water (bottle to sell) expand on RM's good water (150)
5. Good climate sure crop area livestock and cereals (130)
6. Safe place to live (90)
7. Low taxes (70)
8. Residents coming out. Open discussion. Participation. Community harmony (60)

Group 2 Priority Rankings- ASSETS & OPPORTUNITIES

1. **High quality water available in McAuley – with potential elsewhere in the R.M. (210)**
2. **Quality of life is good. e.g. clean air, open spaces strong volunteer base (185)**
3. **Low tax mill rate (assessment) (170)**
4. Ready access to transportation links, e.g. P.T.H. No.1 and P.T.H. No.16 (140)
5. Natural gas mainline through R.M, (120)
6. Low cost housing (85)

Group 3 Priority Rankings- ASSETS & OPPORTUNITIES

1. **Ability to funnel community energy into whole community participation (460)**
 - **Nursing home**
 - **Small manufacturing**
 - **Garage/gas station**
 - **MTS high speed internet-home business**
 - **Osmosis system**
2. **Total community support of economic development (265)**
Need community involvement, everybody opinion counts
3. **Encourage building of Potash mine (105)**
4. Encourage a co-op facility, fertilizer, gas, lumber (90)
5. Recreation facility (90)
 - Walking trails

- cross country skiing
- Sled/ATV groomed trails

Group 4 Priority Rankings- ASSETS & OPPORTUNITIES

1. **Cheap raw product here, convert into bio-diesel/ethanol-finish cattle. Finished goods (270)**
2. **Good access to all markets and services (240)**
3. **Availability of cheap land lower taxes (230)**
4. Good access to water (210)
5. Open a retirement home, creates employment (60)

Part B): Challenges

Local challenges that need to be resolved to improve economic development of the agriculture sector and quality of life prospects within Archie are consolidated below under each Discussion Group, where the top three priorities (received the most value) have been highlighted for convenient reference.

Group 1 Priority Rankings- CHALLENGES

1. **Investment (220)**
2. **Ground water contamination, keeping what we have (180)**
3. **Lack of employment, youth are moving out (170)**
4. Population too small to support current council amalgamation could be solution (160)
5. Fear of amalgamation, loss of identity (150)
6. Find something to keep whole community happy (90)
7. Keeping water fresh (80)
8. Look beyond livestock manufacturing e.g. canoe building (50)

Group 2 Priority Rankings- CHALLENGES

1. **Lack of consensus on direction for community development (230)**
2. **Government (220)**
 - **Lack of pro growth government (municipal, provincial, federal)**
 - **Politically remote (from Winnipeg and local riding office)**

3. **Fear of outside investment (165)**
4. Loss of community services, e.g. school closure (135)
5. Community is slow to adapt/accept change (110)

Group 3 Priority Rankings- CHALLENGES

1. **Ethanol plant attached to a feedlot (190)**

Group 4 Priority Rankings- CHALLENGES

1. **Lack of vision and leadership (280)**
2. **Bad communications: cell phone reception, high speed internet (240)**
3. **Lack of community spirit, ability to work/tolerance together (190)**
4. No natural gas (150)
5. Secondary highway with weight restrictions (140)

2.2 LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT AND SITE SELECTION

There were a number of similarities among the site selection priority concerns each discussion group identified. For example, from the livestock operators' perspective, there were 24 concerns identified. Among the priority concerns expressed by the four discussion groups most included from the livestock operators perspective:

- Identifying locations which permit operations of a size adequate to sustain a viable enterprise
- Location to have access to good quality and quantity of water
- Protection of the environment and quality of life within the local area
- Clear rules to guide siting decisions and approval process

From the non-livestock community perspective, 24 concerns were identified. Among the top three priority concerns shared among the Discussion Groups there were a number of similarities these included:

- Protection of the environmental quality
- Establishing separation distances that adequately address community and environmental concerns ie odour and protection of water quality
- Understanding implications for jobs and investment in municipality

Part A) "Livestock Operator" Site Selection concerns:

Issues expected to be most important to Livestock Operators when considering locations for livestock siting in Archie are:

Group 1 Priority Rankings - Livestock Operator Concerns

1. **Location needs to permit an operation of a size adequate to allow a family to have an income to make operation viable (280)**
2. **Location enables operations to promote quality of life, air, water, noise, roads, services (210)**
3. **Access to good quality and quantity of potable water (180 -tied)**
4. **Expects water quality is maintained over the long term to support continued livestock operations and quality of the environment (180- tied)**
5. **Consistency in the application of requirements under the approval process (180 - tied)**
6. **Farmers have the largest burden of responsibility to educate the public on the nature of life stock operations (160)**
7. **Right to farm under rules and regs already in place (130)**
8. **Smaller operators fencing off ravines/water reduces livestock numbers which can be maintained (90)**
9. **Use of fear mongering, non-scientific data to restrict livestock development (50)**
10. **Diversification in farming operations is required to be economic. Price differential between wholesale values farmers get (which is not increasing) and input costs (which are increasing) require farm enterprises to be larger to remain viable(10)**

Group 2 Priority Rankings- Livestock Operator Concerns

1. **Water (350)**
 - **Sufficient water (quality and quantity)**
 - **Protection of water source**
2. **Environment (230)**
 - **community and environmental acceptability**
 - **appropriate regulation and enforcement with some flexibility to meet local conditions**
3. **Pricing and return on investment (economic viability) (185)**
4. **Good roads (80)**
5. **Age and access to skilled labor (55)**

Group 3 Priority Rankings- Livestock Operator Concerns

1. **Water availability and quality (480)**
2. **Separation distances as it affects size of operations and regulation certainty to enable livestock operations to fit in with non - livestock residents so investment in livestock not put at risk (420)**
3. **Site's to have good access to quality roads which are maintained in good condition (175)**
4. **Economically viable operations (125)**

Group 4 Priority Rankings- Livestock Operator Concerns

1. **Ensure planning guidelines clearly state rights of individuals. When planning rules for livestock siting in our area are satisfied operations can proceed without further hearings or discussion necessary- applies to everyone no exceptions (380)**
2. **location and rules make it possible to develop a viable operation (size, number) (280)**
3. **Access to adequate supply of quality water (170)**
4. **Location in close proximity to good local road infrastructure (160)**
5. **Opportunity to diversify livestock and farm operations (110)**

Part B) "Community" Stakeholder concerns:

Issues expected to be the most important to Community Stakeholders when evaluating livestock operations site selections in Archie are:

Group 1 Priority Rankings- Community Concerns

1. **Potential impacts upon Quality of Life. Keep the smell down so as to not bother adjoining neighbours (230)**
2. **Lack of jobs in Agri sector due to obstructions limiting diversification or expansion of farm operations(160)**
3. **Reasonable assessment of the proposed livestock site location with fair discussion of risks and plus's' (140)**
4. **Concern personal gain overriding community welfare (80)**

5. Water quality changes due to livestock operations (60)
6. Harmony amongst residents and between communities and livestock operations (60)

Group 2 Priority Rankings- Community Concerns

1. **Sitting and setback regulations that provide separation distances which address community and environmental concerns (125)**
2. **Odor, noise and dust (235)**
3. **Groundwater protection (220)**
4. Economic benefits (215)
 - Job creation that results in positions with a “living wage”
 - Opportunities for local investment
5. Manure management. Sufficient land base to ensure sustainable spreading of manure (105)

Group 3 Priority Rankings- Community Concerns

1. **Environmental concerns protection of air quality, water quality (450)**
2. **Maintain separation distance which does not place livestock operations in proximity to dwellings (330)**
3. **Manure management compliance and monitoring to reduce impacts of smell(220).**
4. More intensive livestock will drive residents away and will devalue land that people are trying to sell (200)
5. Additional truck traffic impacts on the quality of the roads and maintenance costs (Not Ranked)

Group 4 Priority Rankings- Community Concerns

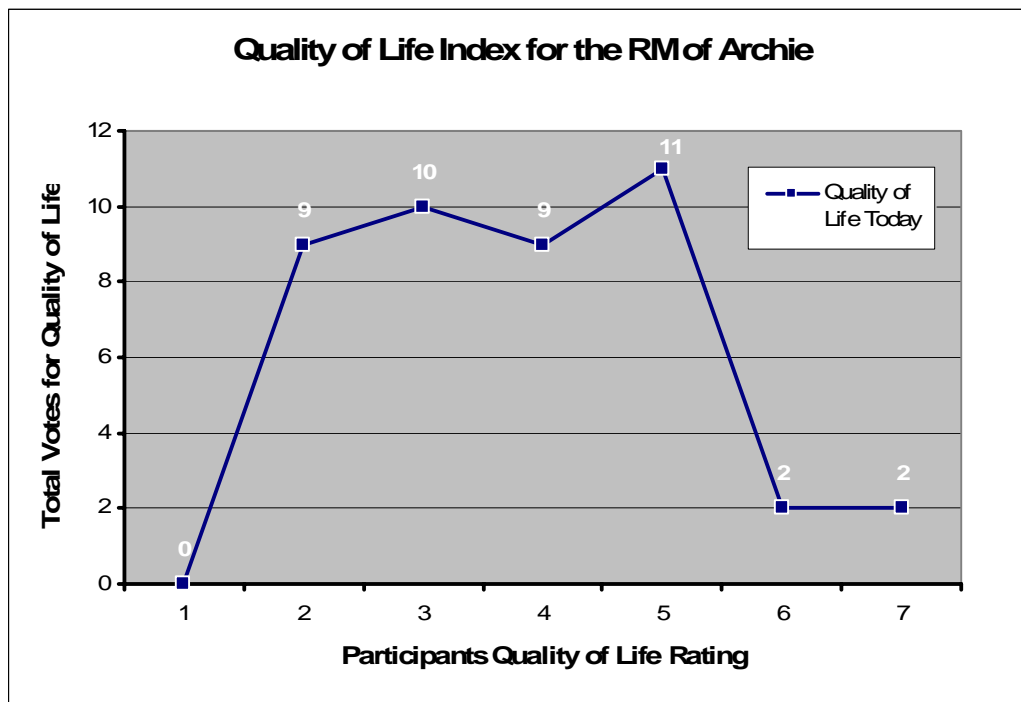
1. **Creation of standards to attract new investment (340)**
2. **Create employment to keep youth in community (310)**
3. **Expand population base to retain existing services (240)**
4. Rules to protect environment, public services, and both livestock and non-livestock stakeholders (210)

2.3 Quality of Life Index: RM of Archie

At the conclusion of the First Workshop on Rural Development and Quality of Life in Archie participants were asked to assess the RM of Archie's current state "quality of life".

Quality of life is oft described by the health of a community. Improving the quality of life within our communities requires that we integrate physical development with environmental, economic and social perspectives on the needs of the community. Sustainable development, a related concept, means we endeavour to meet the needs of today without compromising the ability of future residents or generations from meeting their needs. The first step in creating a Vision for the RM of Archie within the Planning District is to discuss where we might now sit on the "Quality of Life Index". As no such index really exists the workshop created its own in the following exercise.

Participants were asked to consider the opportunities and challenges which presently define the quality of life in the community. In the absence of any formal index we created our own by using a seven step scale to understand how the workshop might rate the quality of life in Archie today. Each participant after considering opportunities and challenges discussed at the workshop individually ranked the RM of Archie on the quality of life index. Where a rating of 1 was assumed to be the worst place ever and a rating of 7 was considered the best place ever.



Forty- three participants rated the present quality of life and their rankings created the following graph for the RM of Archie quality of live index. The index may be interpreted as follows:

Quality of Life Index Ratings:

- Rating of 2 or less is very negative;
- Rating of 3 is tends toward negative;
- Rating of 4 is neutral, person is non-committal to a negative or positive rating;
- Rating of 5 tends toward positive;
- Rating of 6 or higher is very positive.

Given the current mix of opportunities and challenges in Archie 65 % or 28 of the 43 workshop participants' ranked the Archie's current quality of life rating either neutral or toward the negative while 26% or 11 participants rated it toward the positive and 9% or 4 out of 43 rated quality of life in Archie as very positive.

Compiled by David Palubeski, MCIP

Planning Advisor Trans Canada West Planning District

Lombard North Group
505-93 Lombard Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3B3B1
Phone 204-943-3896
Fax 204-947-5696
e-mail dave@lombardnorth.com