Nipawin, Saskatchewan, Canada
2012 Community Profile
Overview

Nipawin is one of Saskatchewan’s larger towns and is famous for sport fishing, hunting, and world-class golf. The region is where Saskatchewan was introduced to the world. In 1691, the first European explorer, Henry Kelsey, paddled in with First Nations guides and, discovering the abounding lushness, paved the way for the fur trade of the 1700s. Today, the economy centres around the agriculture, agri-processing and supply services, fabrication, forestry, mining, and tourism industries. The advantages to locating business in Nipawin are many—excellent recreational, medical and educational facilities, excellent roads and municipal infrastructure, business start-up incentives, a stable work force, good water sources, lower labour costs and a 600 million dollar hydroelectric project. Nipawin’s sheltered location on the majestic Saskatchewan River, where boreal forest meets the prairie, has much to offer visitors and residents alike.

Accessibility

Nipawin is situated on two major highways: Highway 35 from the U.S. border, and Highway 55, the Northern Woods and Water Route, which crosses Saskatchewan from Alberta to Manitoba. Secondary grid road 790 west provides a direct route to nearby Fort à la Corne Provincial Forest, the site of successful diamond exploration. There is scheduled bus, courier, transport and Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) rail service. Torch River Rail, a community shortline railway, operates from Nipawin to nearby communities to the west. The town’s regional airport, under review for expansion, has two runways: a 902 m paved and lit runway, and a 914 m turf runway. Chartered and private aircraft are accommodated.

Location

Although the Nipawin region is referred to as “north east Saskatchewan,” it is in fact within the southern half of the province. The reference more correctly describes the setting which consists of northern forest as well as the most northeasterly farming in the province.
NIPAWIN, SASKATCHEWAN

Location: north east Saskatchewan (province)
Elevation: 364.05 m
Longitude: 104° 01'
Latitude: 53° 22''

Distances to major Saskatchewan cities:
- Prince Albert: 141 km via Highway 55
- Saskatoon: 274 km via Highways 55 & 2
- Regina: 362 km via Highway 35

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Population

Nipawin’s population is approximately 5,485. It is important, however, to note that the villages of White Fox and Codette are less than 10 km away, and the unincorporated subdivision of Klemmer lies adjacent to Nipawin. The combined population, nearly 7,000, is in fact the largest urban concentration in the profiled north east market area (see map below). This explains the Saskatchewan Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure finding (2010 Traffic Volume Map) that the Highway 35 south commuting corridor handles by far the highest volume of traffic in the region, an average of some 3,550 vehicles per day.

Trade Area

The total market population of the region is approximately 40,000. It is important to point out that there are roughly 7,000 people residing to the north and east of Nipawin, and most of them live well beyond the convenient access of either Prince Albert or Melfort. Nipawin is their major shopping centre. The most distant north eastern community, Cumberland House, is 163 km from Nipawin, as compared to 304 km from Prince Albert.

The influence of the Nipawin and district tourism industry, which brings thousands of visitors annually, is a further indication of the strength, importance, and potential of trade in the Nipawin area.
Value of Trade

Entrepreneurship is vital to job creation in Saskatchewan. The small business sector, those with less than 5 million dollars in annual sales or with fewer than 50 employees, represents 98.5% of all businesses in Saskatchewan. Employing nearly 140,000 people, small business represents one-third of Saskatchewan’s labour force. In 2009, this important sector contributed an estimated 35% of the province’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

In 2010 province-wide sales amounted to approximately 3.5 billion dollars. In the Nipawin region alone there were approximately 250 million dollars worth of sales. This represented more than 7% of the Saskatchewan business pie.
Services and Amenities

Nipawin's considerable distance from major cities encourages the populace to shop locally, which has assisted in fostering a strong business community. The downtown shopping district is comprised of a fairly extensive array of services and amenities including smaller discount department stores, grocery stores, banks, automobile service centres and dealerships, specialty shops, pharmacies, hardware stores, hotels, restaurants, a bistro, professional and government offices, medical clinics and post office. Additionally, there are a number of businesses along Highway 35 south and north, and Highway 55 east, which include mainly supply and service centres, gas stations, restaurants, and lodging.
Town Services

The Town of Nipawin’s physical infrastructure and services—as extensive as many larger cities—make it a highly favourable place in which to reside and operate a business. Due to the town’s geographical setting, distinctive neighbourhoods and street layout have emerged which offer variety and choice in both architecture and lifestyle.

Nipawin is known for its excellent drinking water which the Town draws from aquifers deep below the sandy soils the area is known for. Holding capacity is 5,000,490 L. A new water treatment plant is presently under construction.

The Nipawin Fire Department consists of a full-time Chief and 24 paid volunteers providing 24-hour service. It also operates an emergency rescue including the “Jaws of Life.” Police services are contracted from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) which employs a detachment of 13 officers with 5 vehicles. The department is responsive to community needs and conducts safety and youth educational programming in town and area schools.

The Nipawin Municipal Airport (YBU) is maintained by the Town. An automated weather observing system (AWOS) provides accurate and up-to-date weather information and the airport’s non-directional beacon has a radius of 90 km.
Education

There are two elementary schools, Wagner and Central Park. The latter incorporates a state-of-the-art learning assistance facility and is joined to the town’s public library and art gallery. Together with the L. P. Miller Comprehensive Collegiate, the career-focused and recently-built regional Cumberland College, a preschool and day care centre, there are excellent facilities for lifelong learning in Nipawin.

Health Care

The health sector is one of the town’s largest employers and serves over 15,000 residents. There is a specialized district surgical hospital, two medical clinics, and an advanced care paramedic ambulance service with an annual call-volume of approximately 1500. There are dental, vision, chiropractic and massage clinics as well as alternative health services.

Nipawin maintains housing and specialized services for people with special needs and for the elderly. An assisted living complex is in the planning stages.

Recreation

Nipawin is an active community. The 1150-seat Centennial Arena is home to the popular Nipawin Hawks Junior ‘A’ hockey franchise. Jubilee Arena offers sports programs for minors. Figure skating, dance, martial arts, swimming instruction and a host of other organized sporting and social activities are offered in the community. An indoor pool is planned as part of a Town recreation master plan. The Evergreen Centre houses a curling rink, an auditorium, conference rooms and licenced dining facilities. There are numerous green areas and playgrounds throughout town as well as walking and hiking trails featuring a suspension bridge at the Regional Park.

Arts and Culture

Nipawin possesses a vibrant arts community. There are sculptors, painters, photographers, crafters, writers, a community performance group and a camera club. The unique Nipawin Living Forestry Museum, located south of Nipawin’s historic CPR bridge on “Old Highway 35,” hosts live steam tractor and milling events each summer.
Preparing for Growth

While Nipawin is already a thriving service centre, new opportunities in biomass, mining, oil, gas, tourism and agri-business, as well as an increasing demand for additional shopping experiences by the region’s residents and tourists, make the attraction of anchor service industries paramount. Welcoming new residents and businesses, expanding existing ones, growing the area’s skilled workforce, providing adequate housing and recreation, and maintaining and expanding town infrastructure, are priorities.

The Nipawin 2020 Action Plan is the vehicle by which Nipawin’s priorities have been identified and are now being managed strategically. At the top of the list are: municipal reclassification from town to city status, downtown revitalization, professional recruitment, a regional tourism plan, improvements to rail, air, and ground transportation, added infrastructure including a business park and recreation complex, and building business relationships with neighbouring communities including First Nations and Métis.

Building Stimulus

Town of Nipawin Municipal Services offers a range of incentives designed to stimulate the building of new businesses, single family and multiple unit housing, as well as the renovation and/or expansion of existing ones. Successful applicants may qualify for the exemption of both municipal and school taxes for either three or four years, or for other incentives as outlined in the applicable policy.

Housing

The average cost of a home in Nipawin is $137,500. The Town’s Action Plan emphasizes the need for starter housing to meet present demands and also as a means of attracting more young professionals to the community.
Tourism

There are three golf courses, two regional parks, a provincial park, two protected forests, rivers, lakes, and a museum—all within easy access. The town’s location, at the edge of the northern boreal forest and with a lake on either side, makes it a premiere tourist destination.

An urban forest of jackpine is home to Nipawin’s 18-hole Evergreen championship golf course, one of Saskatchewan’s finest. The Nipawin area is internationally renowned for sport fishing and hunting. Tobin Lake, which lies just downstream from Nipawin, and the Saskatchewan River at Nipawin, are home to the Premier’s Walleye Cup tournament. Winter ice fishing and snowmobiling make Nipawin a four-season destination. The Trans-Canadian Snowmobile Trail skirts the town and is well-maintained and utilized.

Outfitting services, houseboat holidays, and accommodation ranging from rustic camping to lodges, a resort hotel, and bed and breakfasts are available. Increasingly, tourists are choosing to locate seasonal homes in the town and area.

Nipawin is a mural town. Highlighting historical points of interest, the many colourful works of art around the town are an enjoyment to visitors as well as residents and are a testament to the quality of community involvement and commitment.

Twin Lakes Community Planning

The Twin Lakes area, of which Nipawin is the hub, encompasses Tobin and Codette lakes and surrounding environs. Working towards betterment of the community, the Twin Lakes Community Planning Association (TLCPA) recently instituted an action plan with a sustainable framework. It serves to ensure the future of the region’s tourism and other important commercial interests, where people, development, industry, and nature exist together in harmony.
Internet Resources:

www.nipawin.com
www.tlcpa.ca
www.highways.gov.sk.ca

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