



NEYAASHIINIGMIING LAND USE PLAN & CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation are in the process of creating a community-driven Land Use Plan and Capital Infrastructure Plan. To gather input and direction from on-reserve and off-reserve members, we have hosted a virtual community meeting (sixty-seven attended), distributed a survey (forty responses), held knowledge holder interviews (seven interviews) and completed four community mapping workshops (seventeen members participated). We have compiled the input from our community members who have participated in the process in a detailed document, and from this input we will identify issues that are important to members, areas that must be protected in the community, and opportunities for growth. We will then create a long-term plan for land use at Neyaashiinigiing and will draw from this knowledge to complete the Capital Infrastructure Plan. The following is a snapshot of what we have heard from the community so far.

Neyaashiinigiing is beautiful. The whole land is sacred. Members want to protect the alvars and bluffs, shorelines and beaches, creeks and their water sources. They want to protect the trails, the medicines, the animals and their habitat, and sacred places.

Housing is a major concern for members. There are not enough houses on the reserve and no long-term plan or policies for housing at Neyaashiinigiing. Members said that the process for acquiring Certificates of Possession (CPs) to build their own homes is not clear or fair. Off reserve members feel left out of the processes for decision making at Nawash. Many want to move home or have a place to visit (cottage or rental) to reconnect with the land and their culture. Members who visit Neyaashiinigiing would like to know the locations of communal First Nation land, such as beaches, trails and other natural spaces.

Several members think the First Nation should upgrade or build housing and First Nation-owned buildings in the existing developed areas before allowing development to expand into natural areas. This First Nation-directed development would include renovating and making available the many houses that are in disrepair or abandoned and updating and repurposing vacant First Nation buildings such as the old school and old economic development building.

Many members like the idea of creating walkable community hubs where houses are grouped close to businesses and social services. Nawash could meet diverse housing needs (e.g., for families, single people, seniors) using different types of housing such as single-detached homes, townhouses, apartments, or tiny homes. Members do not want trees on residential lots to be clear cut for new homes, since they need the trees for privacy and want to keep the land in a natural state.

Poor community health and well-being is a major concern to members. Many members who are struggling with mental health and substance abuse issues need support and to be included in the community. It was also mentioned that some members are living on the street in Owen Sound and other cities.

Members are concerned that the landfill may be affecting the surrounding environment, especially water quality. Some members have cluttered yards and Nawash should help them dispose of unwanted goods in a safe and careful way. Some members think that Nawash should process recycling as well as garbage, because there are limited recycling options with the current service.

